

NEW IN CHESS

# Zlotnik's Middlegame Manual



*With a foreword by Grandmaster Fabiano Caruana*

TYPICAL  
STRUCTURES AND  
STRATEGIC  
MANOEUVRES

Boris Zlotnik

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**Boris Zlotnik**

**Zlotnik's Middlegame Manual**  
**Typical Structures and Strategic Manoeuvres**

**New In Chess 2020**

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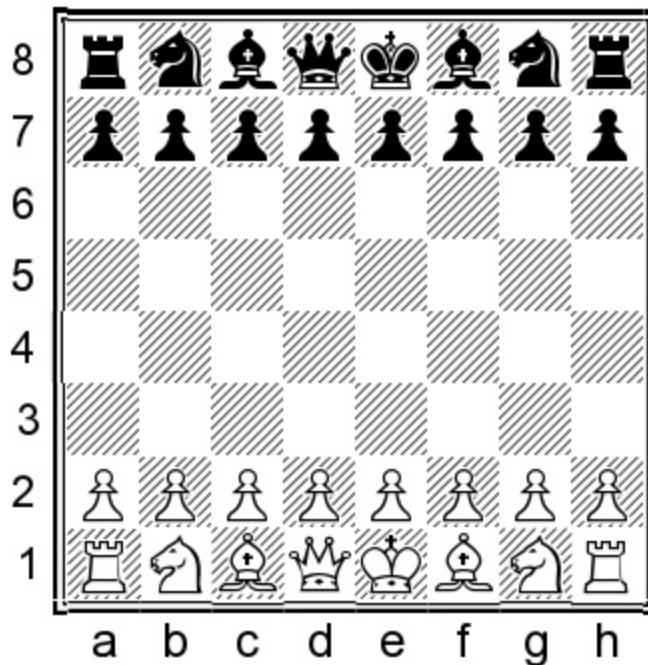
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## Explanation of Symbols

The chessboard with its coordinates:



♔ King

♕ Queen

♖ Rook

♗ Bishop

♘ Knight

± White stands slightly better

∓ Black stands slightly better

⊕ White stands better

⊖ Black stands better

+- White has a decisive advantage

-- Black has a decisive advantage

= balanced position

! good move

!! excellent move

? bad move

?? blunder

!? interesting move

?! dubious move

# mate

ch championship

zt zonal tournament

izt interzonal tournament

ct candidates tournament

tt team tournament

ol olympiad

m match

cr correspondence

## **Foreword by Fabiano Caruana**

Boris Zlotnik was my coach in Madrid, Spain, from the Fall of 2004 to the Spring of 2007. It was during this period that my Elo rating increased from less than 2200 to more than 2500, thereby completing my transition from a serious junior player to a very serious adult player.

*Zlotnik's Middlegame Manual* is a book with a highly didactic, explanatory character, in which all evaluations and conclusions are supported by deep computer analysis. The book is a thorough study of three important types of pawn structures and three main motifs that return in many openings. Together, these are six essential themes that form an integral part of modern chess, and they have been very thoroughly investigated by Boris. The result is an interesting and productive study for chess players of all levels, including coaches.

Today, practically all players use computer analysis mostly for their opening preparation, but also to analyse their middlegame and endgame play. The analyses in this book are much more comprehensive than such lines given by engines, and in many places the assessments of the computer are compared with decisions human players would take in a practical game.

Since the study of chess is a practical activity, this book also contains a large number of interesting exercises on a theme-by-theme basis.

Finally, although the book is primarily devoted to middlegame study, all the games have been completely analysed from beginning to end, with modern opening evaluations, topical game statistics, and surprising endgame discoveries.

*Zlotnik's Middlegame Manual* is a must-have for all serious players, especially those who desire to improve their middlegame and to further uncover the mysteries of our ancient game.

*August 2020  
GM Fabiano Caruana*

## Preface

In 1986 and 1987 in the former USSR and in West Germany respectively my book *Typische Stellungen im Mittelspiel* (in German) was published. The 50,000 copies of the Russian edition sold out in two weeks. I have no information about how well the edition in German fared, both because of the sudden death of the editor (Rudi Schmaus) and because of the close secrecy of the Soviet regime. The book was also printed without my express permission in Italian and Serbo-Croat, which is a good indication that it was quite well accepted in the world of chess.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian editors asked for my permission to reprint this book, even offering to correct and update it themselves. However, this approach did not seem very serious to me, for what was of value in the middle of the 1980s, in the last century, was not necessarily of interest to the 21st century reader. In addition, I was aware of the fact that the changes in chess due to the influence of search engines and large databases would demand a great deal of work on my part to create a book which would meet the standards of the present time. When the president of New in Chess, Allard Hoogland, asked me last year if I wanted to publish anything, adding that he had liked the German edition in its time, I began to think again about updating this book. I think that my decision was also influenced by a number of other things, in particular the three following matters: firstly, a GM resident in Spain told me he earned quite a lot of money using this book in Russian in his classes; secondly, a well-known Spanish trainer gave the opinion that mine was the best book written about the Carlsbad structure; and finally, I found several parts of my book, usually without any acknowledgement or reference to me, copied in other books.

When I began the work, I decided first to expand the contents considerably; but in this case it would go beyond the limits set by the publisher both regarding the agreed size and the agreed deadlines. So I restricted myself to a few important additions and a quite sizable collection of exercises.

As a result, in the book there are two large sections, each one divided into three chapters. In the first Part, dedicated to typical structures which can occur in various openings, as well as the first two chapters: ‘The isolated queen’s pawn’ and ‘The Carlsbad structure’, there is a new chapter on ‘Symmetrical pawn structures’, which are very fashionable in modern chess. In the second Part, devoted to typical methods in various openings, in addition to the first two chapters: ‘Restricted mobility in the King’s Indian Defence’ and ‘Should we exchange the fianchettoed bishop?’ there are also three chapters, instead of the two in last century’s edition; the new chapter is ‘The d5-square in the Sicilian’, which is a forever topical issue in one of the most popular defences. Each chapter in the book illustrates the topic with a number of model games, and corresponding exercises, 162 altogether, are presented in Part III.

My main idea was to keep what was good from the previous edition, to bring up to date and expand the content, and to check it all using current analysis engines. It was precisely this last factor that gave me a dilemma to resolve: many classical games containing interesting ideas do not always stand up to scrutiny with an engine, and thus it was not at all easy to establish that in some cases these ideas were not correct. However, I must admit that if forced to choose between ‘computer truth’ and the human

idea, I have preferred the latter.

We must add that every country where chess is especially popular has a national chess hero, such as Capablanca in Cuba, Euwe in the Netherlands, Olafsson in Iceland, Gligoric in the former Yugoslavia, and so on. I am a representative of the famous Soviet/Russian school of chess, whose founder was the 6th World Champion, Mikhail Botvinnik. It is no coincidence that all the World Champions after the Second World War and until 2006 were representatives of that school, except for the great Fischer.

State support for chess, the abundance of talent and the rigour of the internal championships were the fundamental pillars of the success of this school. It seems to me that contemporary chess players do not know much about Botvinnik and therefore I want to say that he displayed an extraordinary talent for chess. Only two years after first playing in tournaments he gained the ‘Soviet First Category’ title, which is at least the equivalent to a current Elo rating of around 2100. Two years later he drew for 5th-7th place in the Soviet Championship of 1927, which corresponds to a modern Elo of around 2500. In other words, it took him only four years to go from beginner’s level to that of a modern GM. He kept the title of World Champion for many years, without ever being a professional player, as he was a research professor in the field of electrical and electronic engineering and was the manager of a research laboratory. As Tal said, ‘We all began to play chess and developed thanks to M. Botvinnik’.

Botvinnik’s legacy and contributions to chess are enormous, and what is more, they remain as valid as ever. It is, therefore, no coincidence that his name can be found in practically every chapter of this book. However, in addition to Botvinnik, in this book I wish to pay tribute to several classical players, beginning even with a reference to Philidor, passing through almost all the World Champions and arriving at examples from 2020.

Whenever it makes sense for the logic of the book I also mention trainers, such as Igor Bondarevsky for Spassky, and Yury Balashov and Yury Razuvayev for Karpov.

In the book there are also examples of games played by graduates of the chess department of the Central National Institute of Physical Education (known by its Russian initials GZOLIFK), where I worked from 1975 until 1991 and was its director from 1983 to 1991, as well as games by some of my pupils after I moved to Spain in 1992.

The main idea of this book is to pass on to the reader some strategic ideas which will broaden his knowledge of the middlegame, giving him a number of typical patterns which can serve as guides during competitive games. I have to say that the knowledge that these patterns require is more extensive than one might think at the beginning. Here is a striking example: it was in 1969 that the young Anatoly Karpov began his training with GM Semyon Furman, a great expert in opening theory. But very soon there arose a big problem. Furman had an encyclopedic knowledge of the closed openings, but in his games he had practically never opened with 1.e4. At that time, Karpov always opened with that move and he was above all concerned about this question, ‘What to play in the Spanish Opening?’. Furman found a clever solution. He advised the future World Champion to close the centre by means of d4-d5, which bears a certain similarity to positions in the King’s Indian, of which the GM had a deep and wide knowledge. In this book the reader will find several such

examples of one topic leading on to another. For example, in positions of the Carlsbad type, isolated queen's pawn structures frequently occur, while the latter can evolve into symmetrical structures.

I have decided to explain these patterns by making use mainly of classical games, especially by World Champions and other great masters. A large number of these are not modern games and, therefore, the notes on the openings have been updated with references to recent games and in this way they have direct links to the chess of today. I must admit that I had never previously thought that I might include rapid and even blitz games in this book. Yet the level of play of the likes of Kramnik and Carlsen, even in games of this type, is so high that the reader will find more than one game with these time controls in the book.

At present, the influence of analysis engines is very great and nowadays nobody has any doubts that their ability in concrete play is clearly superior to that of any human being. However, this very ability can also help in the solving of positional, strategic problems, and some of these can be seen in this book, such as, for example, the move 17...fxg6!! in the Shirov-Illescas game in Chapter 6 (No. 124). At other times the engine's recommendations are surprising, such as, for example, placing all its pawns on squares of the same colour as its bishop, as can be seen in the note to the move 16... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  in the Botvinnik-Smyslov game in Chapter 5 (No. 101).

It is important to point out that there is a significant difference between a quick analysis, when the engine is left to think about a move for only a few minutes, and a deeper one, when several hours of computation with sufficient processing power are employed. In the first case the computer's conclusions are similar to human thought, but in the second a different way of making decisions is seen. Precisely because of this deep analysis I have been able to find a number of errors in commentaries by famous grandmasters, including Kasparov. Most striking in this respect have been the mistakes in endgames. In many games, classical as well as modern, often the ending is hardly analysed at all. The problem, apart from the analytical complexity for a commentator, is that in many cases a human being has no desire to delve into a position which according to chess logic looks bad, for example with a pawn down, and only an in-depth analysis can reveal that quite frequently these positions have a drawish character.

In the book the reader will find many cases of comparison between human thought and the conclusions of the computer. And there are some very surprising cases, such as the Botvinnik-Smyslov game itself and also the Topalov-Carlsen game (No. 105 in Chapter 5), on the subject of exchanging the fianchettoed bishop, where the engine gives the same evaluation both to exchanging this bishop and to retaining it. I think that all these cases tell us something about the need to make changes to the classical human understanding of chess.

I should say that all the games and all the exercises in this book were checked using Stockfish 11 at a sufficient depth to guarantee the reliability of its analysis. In this verification process I was greatly helped by my nephew Andrey Zlotnik, to whom I am extremely grateful. However, I am aware that even the in-depth analysis of the computer is not free from mistakes, owing to its heuristic character. I recently saw on Facebook a comment by Emil Sutovsky, a famous GM and the Director General of FIDE, about the huge imaginary book that the world of chess needs. According to him, this book should comprise analysis of structures, in other words typical middlegame positions, with an

explanation of the plans and the various finer points which are hidden in these structures, always relating these to the computer's analysis. Emil said that, unfortunately, nobody would write such a huge book. He wondered if, at least, someone would be bold enough to write a part of it. I believe that this present book, which covers six strategic themes, is indeed one of those books which can serve as part of this great imaginary book covering all the themes of the middlegame.

*Boris Zlotnik*

*Madrid, June 2020*

# *Part I*

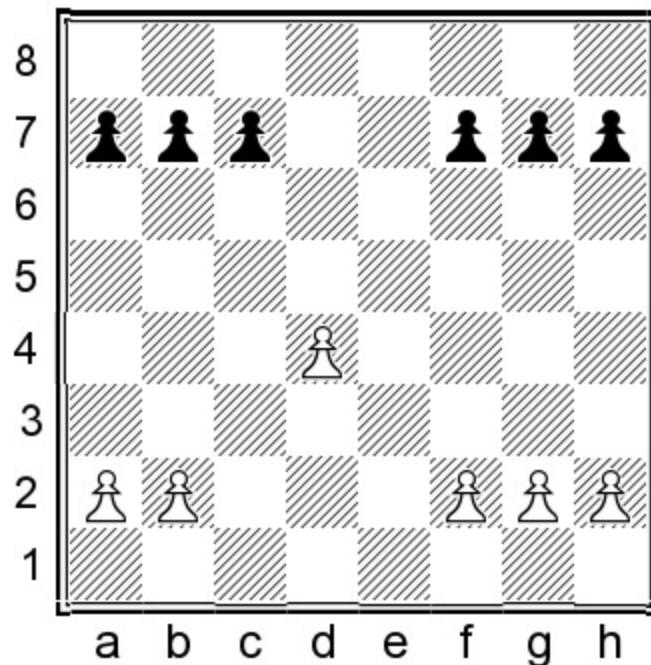
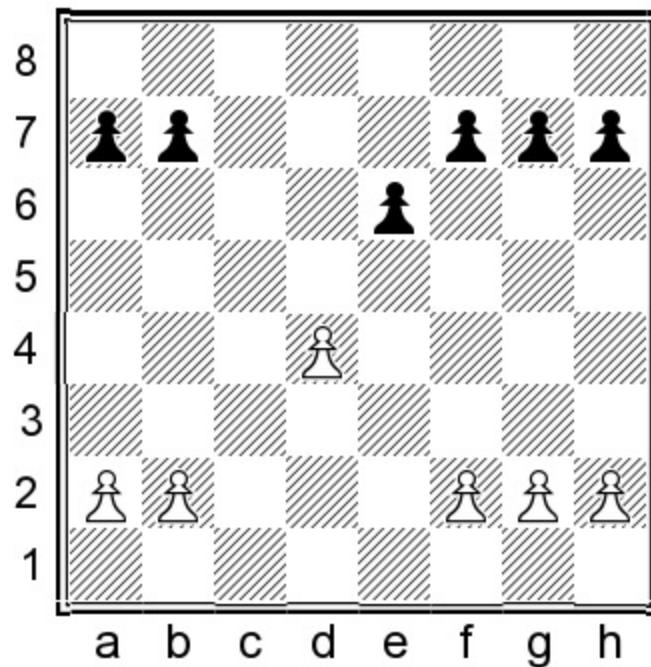
## Typical structures in the middlegame

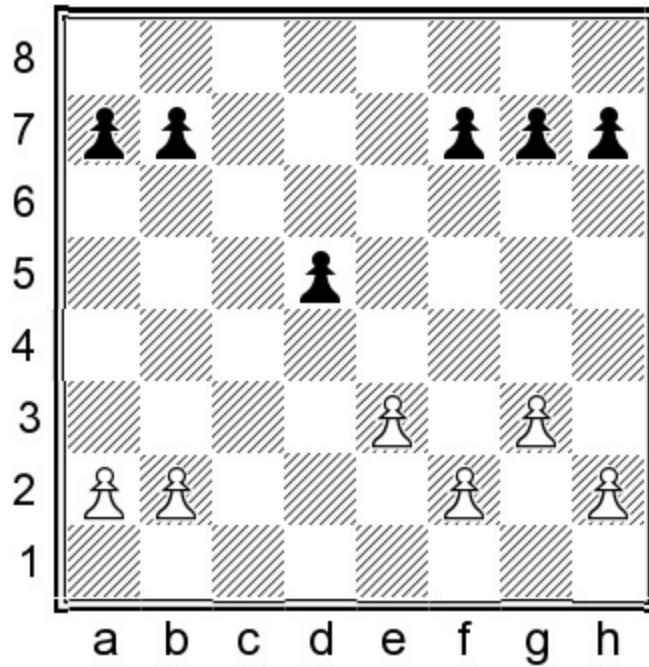
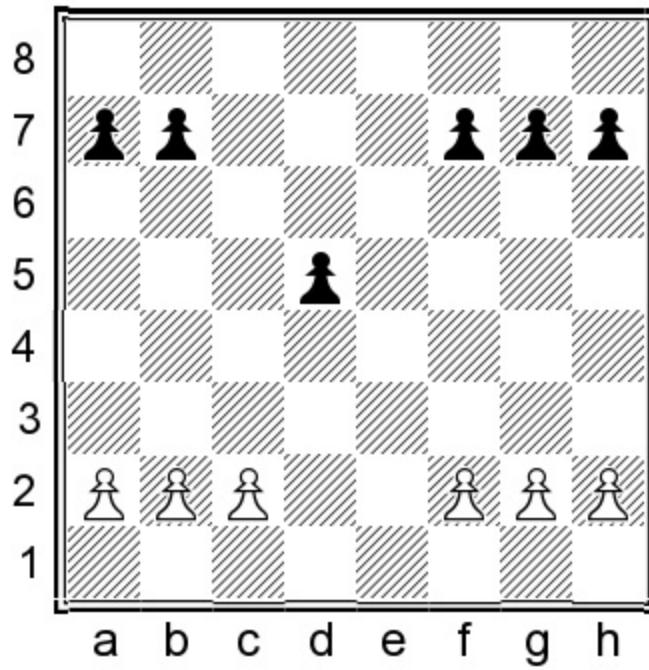
### *Chapter 1*

#### The isolated queen's pawn

##### 1.1. Introduction

‘He who fears an isolated queen’s pawn should give up chess’ – Siegbert Tarrasch.





This position-type, usually with the isolated pawn on d4 (which we shall refer to as an IQP), seems to be the earliest such to appear. As early as the 18th century it was analysed by Philidor. It is curious that it has appeared in several matches for the World Championship and in some cases, e.g. Steinitz-Zukertort (1886), Botvinnik-Petrosian (1963) and Petrosian-Spassky (1969), the winner of the match demonstrated his superiority in handling positions with an IQP and this more or less determined the outcome of the whole match.

In current practice, positions of this type are encountered quite often and furthermore they can arise from a variety of different openings, with both white and black, which accounts for their popularity. The main such openings are:

1. Queen's Gambit Accepted: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Qf3 Qf6 4.e3 e6 5.Qxc4 c5 6.0-0 Qc6 7.We2 cxd4

8.  $\mathbb{Q}d1 \mathbb{Q}e7$  9.  $\text{exd}4$ ;
2. Queen's Gambit Declined, Tarrasch Defence: 1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 4.  $\text{cx}d5$   $\text{exd}5$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}c6$  6. g3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}g2 \mathbb{Q}e7$  8. 0-0 0-0 9.  $\text{dx}c5 \mathbb{Q}xc5$ ;
3. Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Tarrasch Defence: 1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 5.  $\text{cx}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6. e3  $\text{cx}d4$  7.  $\text{exd}4$ ;
4. Nimzo-Indian Defence: 1. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 e6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}b4$  4. e3 0-0 5.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  d5 6.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 7. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8. a3  $\text{cx}d4$  9.  $\text{exd}4$   $\text{dx}c4$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ;
5. Caro-Kann Defence: 1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  c5 4.  $\text{exd}5$   $\text{cx}d5$  4. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 6.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  7.  $\text{cx}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ;
6. French Defence: 1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  c5 4.  $\text{exd}5$   $\text{exd}5$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}gf3 \mathbb{Q}d6$  7.  $\text{dx}c5 \mathbb{Q}xc5$ ;
7. Sicilian Defence: 1. e4 c5 2. c3 d5 3.  $\text{exd}5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  4. d4 e6 5.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}d3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  7. 0-0 0-0 8.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\text{cx}d4$  9.  $\text{cx}d4$ ;
8. Italian Game: 1. e4 e5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}c6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}c5$  4. c3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. d4  $\text{exd}4$  6.  $\text{cx}d4 \mathbb{Q}b4+$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}xd2+$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}bx d2$  d5 9.  $\text{exd}5 \mathbb{Q}xd5$ ;
9. Petroff Defence: 1. e4 e5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  d6 4.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}xe4$  5. d4 d5 6.  $\mathbb{Q}d3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  7. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}e1 \mathbb{Q}g4$  9. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0 11.  $\text{cx}d5 \mathbb{Q}xd5$ .

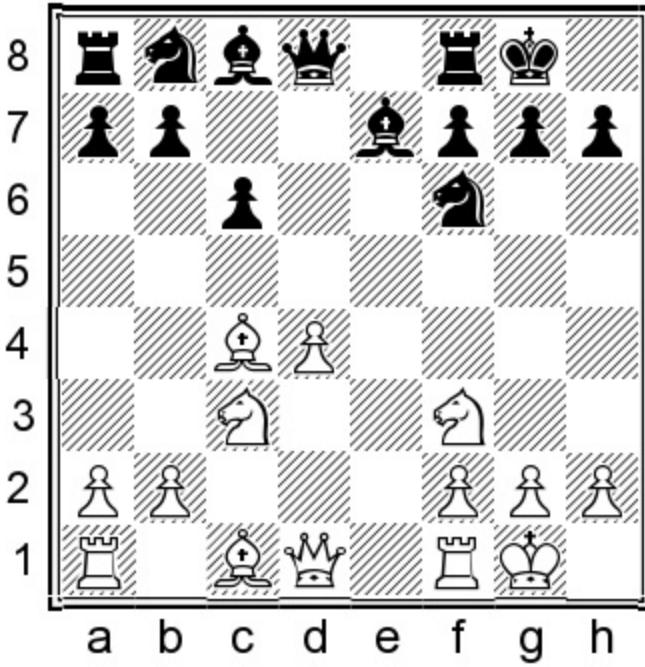
The above are the four most frequently encountered IQP structures. It should be noted that in the fourth type, two variants are possible: one with the white king's bishop fianchettoed on g2 and the other with a pawn on e3 and with the bishop generally developed along the f1-a6 diagonal.

It is interesting that almost two centuries ago, in a series of matches between the two best players of the day, the theoretical debate focused on the theme of the IQP.

Game 1  
 Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Louis Charles de la Bourdonnais**  
**Alexander McDonnell**  
 London match 1834 (6)

It is evident that the same IQP structure can arise from different move-orders and from various openings. The ECO code assigned to this game is that of the Petroff Defence.

**1. d4 d5 2. c4  $\text{dx}c4$  3. e3 e5 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\text{exd}4$  5.  $\text{exd}4 \mathbb{Q}f6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 8. 0-0 c6!**



It is curious that this move was already recommended by Philidor in the 18th century and Stockfish considers it to be the best move, awarding it 0.15. According to Megabase 2020, the main line is 8...Bg4, with a lower evaluation for Black of 0.46. It should be said that the text move can also be seen in modern games.

### 9.h3

9.Be1 Qbd7 10.Qb3 Qb6 11.Qg5 Qbd5 12.Qxd5 Qxd5?! (12...cxd5) 13.Qxe7?! (13.Qxe7! Qxe7 14.Qe2 Qe6 15.Qxe6 fxe6 16.Qxe6+ Qf7 17.Qe5 Qd5 18.Qxd5 Qxd5 19.Qxf7 Qxf7 wins a pawn, although realizing it is not easy in view of the strong position of the Qd5. However, the engine is optimistic and evaluates it at about 1.30) 13...Qxe7 14.Qe5 Qd5, with equality, Artemiev-Ivanchuk, Huai'an 2017.

### 9...Qbd7 10.Qe3

Modern players prefer 10.Qe1, as in the following game, which began with the Petroff Defence: (to the line) 1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.Qxe5 d6 4.Qf3 Qxe4 5.c4 c6 6.Qc3 Qf6 7.d4 Qe7 8.h3 d5 9.Qd3 0-0 10.0-0 dxc4 11.Qxc4 Qbd7 12.Qe1, reaching the same position, but with two moves more, due to the tempi lost with this order of moves. For clarity we are not going to count these two extra moves: (10.Qe1) 10...Qb6 11.Qb3 Qfd5 12.Qc2 Qf6 13.a3 Qe6 14.Qe5 g6 15.Qe4 Qg7 16.Qg5 Qc7 17.Qh4 Qae8 18.Qc5 Qd7 19.Qg3 Qxe5 20.Qxe5 ½-½ Movsesian-Wang Yue, Wijk aan Zee 2009.

### 10...Qb6 11.Qb3 Qfd5 12.Qe2 ♕h8?!

The start of an aggressive but mistaken plan. Stockfish prefers the black position following 12...Qe6!? 13.Qfe1 Qe8 14.Qd2 a5!? 15.Qd1 h6 16.a3 Qf8 17.Qc2 Qc7.

### 13. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ f5?

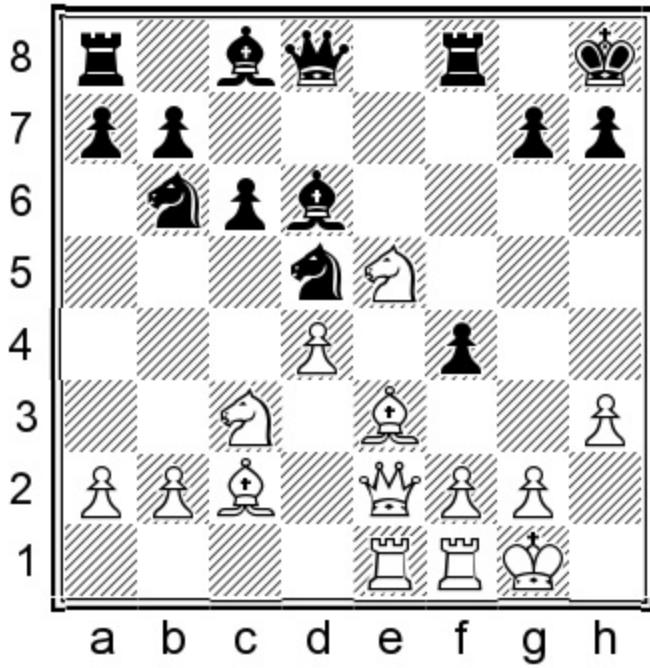
This advance, which McDonnell also tried unsuccessfully in the 17th game of their first match, is a positional blunder, probably based on a miscalculation on the following move. Correct would have been 14...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  15.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$ !? (15.  $fxe3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  g6 18.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  19.  $dxc5$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  21.  $cxb6$   $axb6$ , with a slight advantage to Black) 15...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  17.  $\mathbb{W}d3$  g6 18.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  20. a3 f6 21.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , with approximate equality.

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ??

It was more accurate to play 15.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !  $\mathbb{W}c7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  18. g4!, with a white initiative.

### 15... f4?

Correct was 15...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  18.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  19.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ , with equality.



### 16. $\mathbb{W}h5$ ! $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g6+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}b3+$ $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ! $cx d5$

If 19...  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ ? then 20.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ .

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xd5+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 24. $dxe5$ $f x e3$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

The white position is winning (1-0, 35).

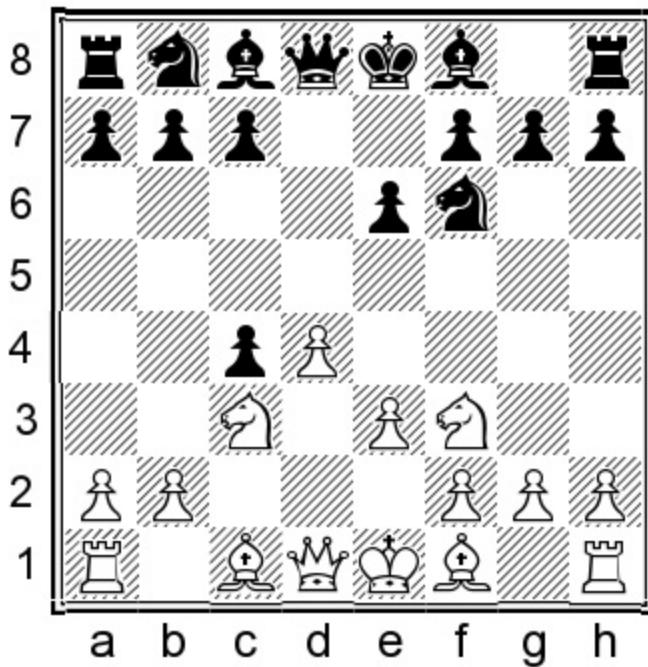
Let us now turn our attention to one of the games from the first ever match for the World Championship, which provides a good illustration of some modern aspects of play in IQP positions. This game was annotated by various illustrious players of the past as well as the present, including

World Champions, although, as we shall see, their annotations are not free of errors.

Game 2  
Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Johannes Zukertort**  
**William Steinitz**  
St Louis Wch m 1886 (9)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Qc3 Qf6 4.Qf3 dxc4 5.e3**

This move vies for first place in popularity with 5.e4, which modern theory considers slightly better, as the statistics confirm: 51.2% and 58.4% respectively.



**5...c5**

Here 5...a6!? 6.a4 c5 7.Qxc4 Qc6 8.0-0 Qe7 9.Qe2 cxd4 10.Qd1 e5 11.exd4 exd4 12.Qxd4 Qxd4 13.Qe5 Qd6 14.Qxd4 Qxd4 15.Qxd4 Qc5, Eljanov-Caruana, Douglas 2016, leads to complete equality.

**6.Qxc4 cxd4**

The capture on d4, opening a path for the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ , is somewhat premature. It was more accurate to play 6...a6!? or 6...Qc6!?. It should be said that although Stockfish awards a more or less equal assessment to both of these moves and the one in the game, the human evaluation of the capture on d4 is more accurate.

**7.exd4 Qe7 8.0-0 0-0**

Annotating this game, Garry Kasparov asserts that 8... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  would hinder  $\mathbb{W}e2$ . However, after 9. $\mathbb{W}e2!?$  (9. $\mathbb{E}e1!?$ ) 9... $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  (9...0-0) 10. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  11. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  12. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (even worse is 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  15. $\mathbb{E}ac1$ ) 14. $\mathbb{E}ac1$ , White's attack is very strong. The engine gives equality after 8... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.a3 0-0 10. $\mathbb{E}e1$  b6 11.d5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  exd5 14. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6!$ .

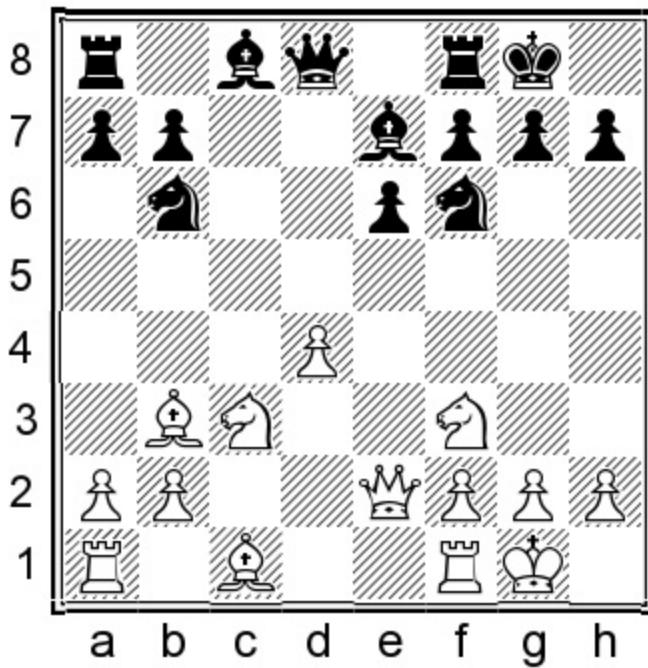
### 9. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7?!$

An inaccuracy. Two better options were 9...a6 10. $\mathbb{E}d1$  (the engine prefers 10. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 11. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  12. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13.d5 exd5 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , although it sees no more than equality) 10...b5 11. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  13.d5 exd5 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  h6, with equal play, Vidit-Vallejo Pons, Riyadh 2017; and 9... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 (Stockfish indicates 11... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  13. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  15. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$ , with equality) 12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  14. $\mathbb{W}h5$  f5, with chances for both sides, Enchev-Pulvett Marin, Sautron 2018.

### 10. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

The engine considers this to be the best move, with an assessment of 0.87.

### 10... $\mathbb{Q}b6$



Black controls the square d5, which is normally used to block White's isolated pawn, preventing its advance. However, after the somewhat premature exchange 6...cxsd4 White has a free hand to develop various plans of attack.

### 11. $\mathbb{Q}f4?!$

Other plans were better, for instance 11. $\mathbb{E}d1$ , with the idea of  $\mathbb{E}d1-d3-g3/h3$ , e.g. 11... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

$\mathbb{W}d6$  13.  $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{E}h3$  (14.  $\mathbb{E}g3!$ ?  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  15.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  g6 17. h4) 14...  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  g6 16.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , with advantage to White, Suba-Bareev, Leon 2008.

11.  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ ? was also better than the text move, e.g. 11...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}fd5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  a5 (14...  $\mathbb{E}c8$ ) 15.  $\mathbb{E}d3$  a4 (15...  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ ?) 16.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  g6? (16...  $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ ?) 17.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , with the better game for White, Aleksandrov-Laxman, Mumbai 2011.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}g3$

Stockfish indicates that even here 12.  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ ? was better, with a slight advantage to White after 12... h6 13.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  14. bxc3 b6 15.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  17.  $\mathbb{W}e3$ .

### 12... $\mathbb{W}a5$

It was more accurate to play 12... b6! 13.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  14. a3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}c8$ , when the engine gives -0.40.

### 13. $\mathbb{E}ac1$

Instead, 13.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  16.  $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  exd5 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  19.  $\mathbb{E}c7$  deserved attention, when Black has to play accurately to neutralize White's initiative.

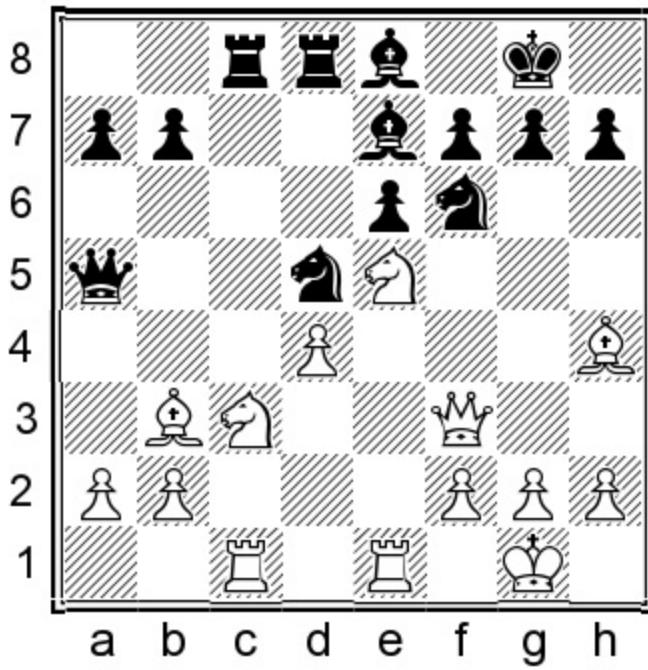
### 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{E}fd8$ 15. $\mathbb{W}f3$

Even with the bishop on g3 instead of g5, it was better to advance f2-f4, as played by Botvinnik in his famous game against Vidmar, Nottingham 1936, which can be seen in the notes to the game Botvinnik-Tolush; 15. f4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ?! (or 15...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  16. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  17. c4) 16. f5!.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

The best square for the queen's bishop in positions of this type. Here it defends the vital f7-square and clears the d-file for the black major pieces.

### 16. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ $\mathbb{E}ac8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}h4$



The position is in a state of dynamic balance, but Black's following move, which in those days was considered a novelty, leads to a transformation in the pawn structure.

**17...♝xc3!?** **18.bxc3**

As tournament practice has shown, the fact that the ♜d4 is now protected by another pawn is balanced by the weakness of the ♜c3, which is often easier to attack. Furthermore the exchange of pieces initiated by the capture on c3 reduces White's attacking potential.

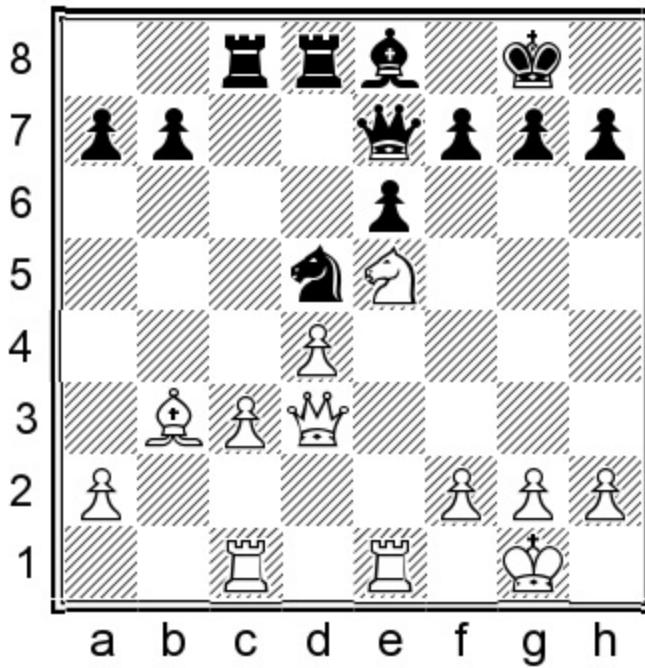
**18...♛c7 19.♕d3**

Better was 19.♕g3!, e.g. 19...♜d6 (19...♝b6 is even worse) 20.c4 ♜d7 21.c5! ♜xe5 22.♝xe5! ♜xe5 23.♜xe5 ♛e7 24.♗g4 f6 25.♕xe6+, and Stockfish gives 0.49.

**19...♝d5!?**

Kasparov awards this move an exclamation mark, in recognition of its strategic intent: 'Forcing the immediate exchange: the fewer pieces there are, the weaker the pawns will be'. However, the engine points out another, equally good, continuation: 19...b5!?, blockading the ♜c3, e.g. 20.f4 a5 21.f5 a4 22.♖d1 exf5 23.♗xf5 ♜d5.

**20.♜xe7 ♛xe7**



**21.Qxd5?**

Zukertort, a brilliant attacking player, overestimates his position. White could maintain equality with an obvious pawn advance: 21.c4 Qf6 22.Qe3 a5 23.Qb1 Qd7 24.Qf3.

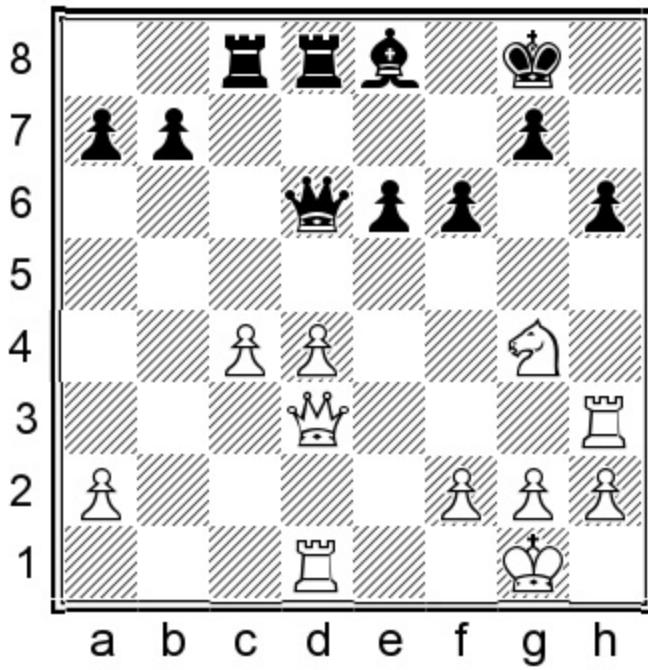
**21...Qxd5 22.c4 Qdd8 23.Qe3?**

The start of a suicidal plan of attack: after the exchange of three pairs of minor pieces it is very difficult to create any serious threats against the black king. White could still have maintained equality with 23.Qe3 b6 24.h3 Qb4 25.Qc3 h6 26.Qec1 Qd6 27.Qf3.

**23...Qd6**

Underlining the weakness of the Qd4.

**24.Qd1 f6 25.Qh3 h6 26.Qg4**



**26...Wf4!?**

Kasparov gives this move an exclamation mark and there is no doubt that it is a good one from the practical viewpoint. However, according to Stockfish, the strongest move was 26...b5! 27.Qxf6+ (27.cxb5?? Wxd4!) 27...gxf6 28.Rxh6 We7 29.cxb5 Wg7 30.We3 e5 31.Rh4 f5, with a clear advantage to Black. It was more prudent, albeit less strong, to prepare the advance ...b7-b5: 26...e5!? 27.d5 b5 28.Rg3 Wh8 29.Qe3 bxc4 30.Qxc4 Wc5, with the better game for Black.

**27.Qe3 Ra4!**

‘To force the rook from the first rank, which will soon be seized by Black’ – Em. Lasker.

**28.Rf3?**

According to the engine, the white position would not be so bad after 28.Rd2! b5 (28...Re8!? 29.Rf3 Wd6 30.Wb3 b5 31.cxb5 Rc1+ 32.Qf1 Wd5 33.Rc3) 29.g3! (Kasparov gave 29.Rf3?! but Black is better after 29...Wd6! 30.Wg6 (30.c5? Rxc5) 30...Wf8 31.Qg4 Rxc4! 32.h3 Wh8) and now:

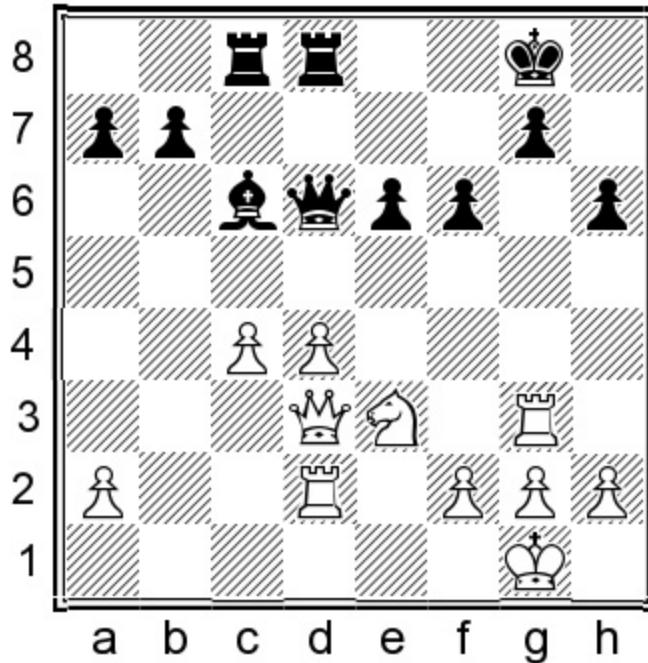
- A) 29...Wf3? 30.Rxh6! gxh6 31.Wg6+ Wh8 (31...Wh8 32.d5!) 32.Wxh6+, with perpetual check;
- B) 29...Wd6? 30.Wg6 Wh8 31.d5! We7 (31...Rxc4?? 32.Rxh6) 32.Rd4 Wf7 33.Wb1, with a white initiative;
- C) 29...Wc7 30.c5 b4 31.Rh4 a5 32.Qc4 Rc6 33.We2, with the evaluation -0.61, i.e. White can still resist.

**28...Wd6 29.Rd2 Rc6?**

It was necessary to prepare the thematic pawn break ...b7-b5 with 29...f5!, e.g. 30.g3 b5 31. $\mathbb{W}c3$  bxc4 32.d5  $\mathbb{E}c5$ ; also good was 29... $\mathbb{Q}h8!$ ? 30. $\mathbb{W}b1$  b5 31.cxb5  $\mathbb{E}c7$  32.g3  $\mathbb{E}b7$  33.d5  $\mathbb{E}xb5$  34. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}b4$ . Kasparov mistakenly gave an exclamation mark to the immediate 29...b5? 30. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  but after 31. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  32.h3 White's advantage is overwhelming.

### 30. $\mathbb{E}g3$ ?

A decisive error, at a moment when White could have maintained equality. In the variation 30.d5! Kasparov did not mention two important replies: 30... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ !? (or 30...b5!?) 31. $\mathbb{E}xf6$  bxc4 32. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{W}g4$  c3 34. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  35.g3 with equality, but not 30...exd5? 31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ) 31. $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  32. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  33. $\mathbb{W}b2$  exd5 34. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  35. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  36.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ , and according to the engine the position is equal.



Black's next move tips the balance in his favour and is a typical defensive resource in IQP positions:

### 30...f5! 31. $\mathbb{E}g6$ ?

31.c5!? offered greater resistance, e.g. 31... $\mathbb{W}e7$  32.f4 (32. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ !?)  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  33. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  34. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  35.dxc5  $\mathbb{E}xd2$  36.h3  $\mathbb{W}d7$  37. $\mathbb{E}e3$ ) 32... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  33. $\mathbb{W}e2$ , although after 33...b6 Black's advantage is clear.

### 31... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 32. $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ !

32...f4? led to a draw after 33.c5! fxe3 34.cxd6 exd2 35. $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  36. $\mathbb{E}xh6+$  gxh6 37. $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  38. $\mathbb{W}f6+$ , with perpetual check.

**33.c5  $\mathbb{E}xc5$  34. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}c1+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  36. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{E}b1$  37. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  38. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  0-1**

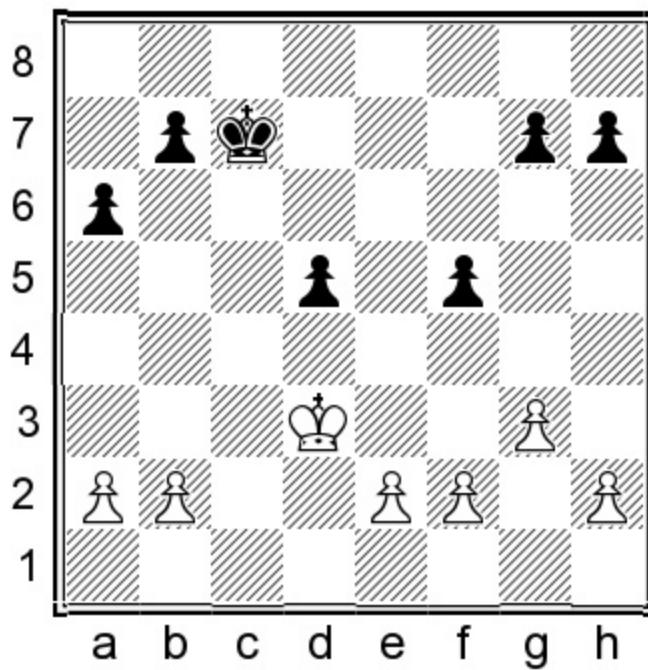
Even from this single game the fundamental strategic ideas of the typical positions with IQP are clear: the side with the isolated pawn has to attack, while the opposing side usually exchanges pieces, trying

to exploit the weaknesses in the enemy pawn structure.

The next two examples demonstrate the disadvantages of the IQP in the endgame.

Game 3

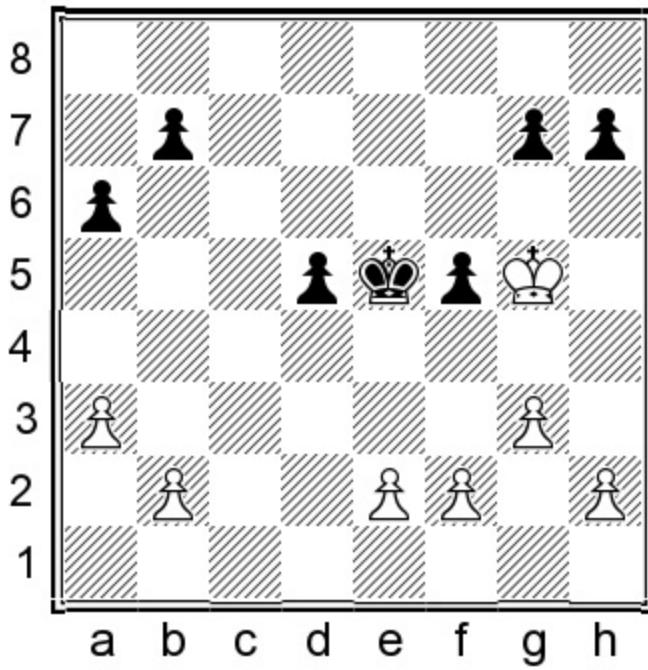
**Gedeon Barcza**  
**Harry Golombek**  
Budapest 1952 (4)



*White to move*

**29.♔d4**

As is well-known, GM Igor Bondarevsky was the trainer of the 10th World Champion Boris Spassky, who gained the title by winning his match against Tigran Petrosian in Moscow 1969. In this match Spassky's main weapon with black was the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit. For this purpose the analysis of the following position was important for Bondarevsky, in order to demonstrate to his pupil just how far their prepared defence could be stretched without breaking. According to his analysis, White could obtain a winning advantage with 29.♔e3!? ♔d6 30.♔f4 ♔e6 31.♔g5 ♔e5 32.a3 (32.h4 a5)



*analysis diagram*

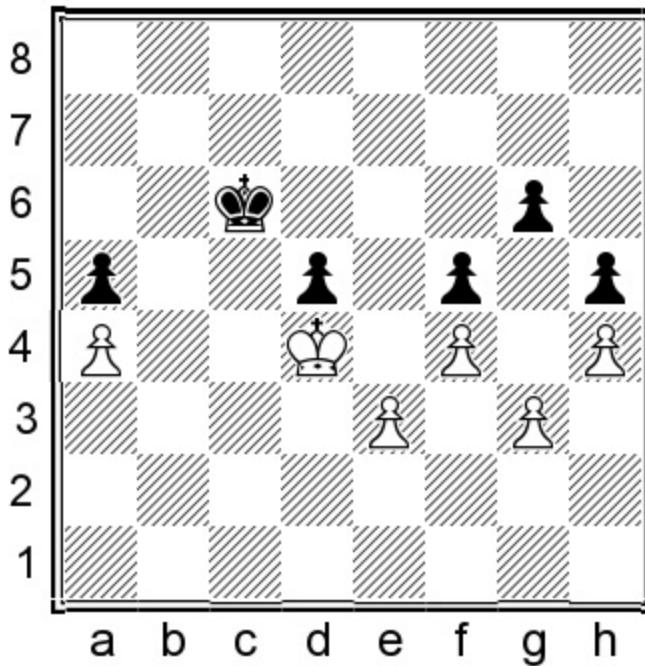
A) 32...b5? 33.b4 ♜e4 34.h4 d4 (also losing is 34...♜e5 35.h5 ♜e4 (or 35...♜e6 36.e3 ♜e5 37.f3) 36.h6 g6) 35.h5 h6+ 36.♗g6 f4 37.gxf4 ♜xf4 38.♗xg7?! (there is an easier win with 38.e3+! dxе3 39.fxe3+ ♜g4 40.e4) 38...♝g5 39.f3 ♜f4 40.♗xh6 ♜e3 41.♗g6 ♜xe2 42.h6 d3 43.h7 d2 44.h8=♛ d1=♛ 45.♛e5+ ♜f2 46.f4, with a winning queen ending;

B) However, as shown by Stockfish, 32...♜e4! holds, e.g. 33.h4 (neither 33.b4 nor 33.b3 would change the outcome) 33...♜e5 34.h5 b6 35.b3 (if 35.h6 g6 36.f4+ ♜e6; or 35.b4 b5 36.h6 g6) 35...a5 36.a4 ♜e4 37.h6 (37.e3!? ♜f3 38.♗xf5 ♜xf2 39.♗e6 ♜xe3 40.♗xd5 ♜f3 41.♗c6 ♜xg3 42.♗xb6 ♜g4 43.♗xa5 ♜xh5 44.b4 g5, and the passed pawns queen at the same time) 37...gxh6+ 38.♗xh6 ♜d4 39.♗xh7 ♜c3 40.♗g6 ♜xb3 41.♗xf5 ♜xa4 42.g4 b5, with equality.

**29.♗d4 ♜d6 30.b4 b6 31.h4 h5 32.a4 a5 33.bxa5 bxa5 34.f4**

Or 34.f3 ♜c6 35.♗e5 ♜c5 36.♗xf5 ♜b4, with equality.

**34...g6 35.e3 ♜c6!**



And, as the game demonstrated, White cannot win:

**36.♔e5 ♔c5 37.♔f6**

37.♔e6?? even loses after 37...♔b4.

37...♔c4 38.♔xg6 ♔d3 39.♔xf5 ♔xe3 40.♔g5 d4 41.f5 d3 42.f6 d2 43.f7 d1=♕ 44.f8=♕ ♕xa4  
45.♕f5 ♕b4 46.♔xh5 a4 47.g4 a3 48.g5 ♕b2 49.g6 a2 50.♕g5+ ♔e4 51.♕g4+ ♔e3 52.♕g5+ ♔e4  
53.g7 a1=♕ 54.♕g6+ ♔f4 55.g8=♕ ♕h8+ 56.♕h6+ ♕xh6+ 57.♔xh6 ♕f6+ 58.♔h5 ♔e5 59.♕g5+  
½-½

In modern times, the methods of play against the IQP are much more sophisticated, and one of these, devised by the famous Russian-Dutch GM Sergei Tiviakov, is a good example.

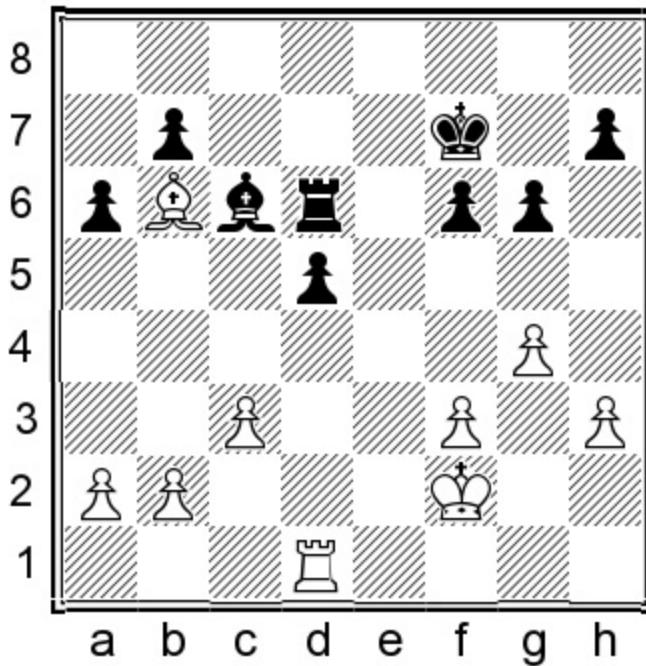
Game 4  
Sicilian Defence  
**Sergei Tiviakov** 2661  
**Igor Miladinovic** 2570  
Algiers 2015 (8)

Inside this game, another one by Tiviakov is included. These two games share a common theme: the ending of ♕+♝ vs. ♕+♝ with bishops of opposite colour. In these two games I shall basically just comment on the endgame, placing diagrams at the important moments.

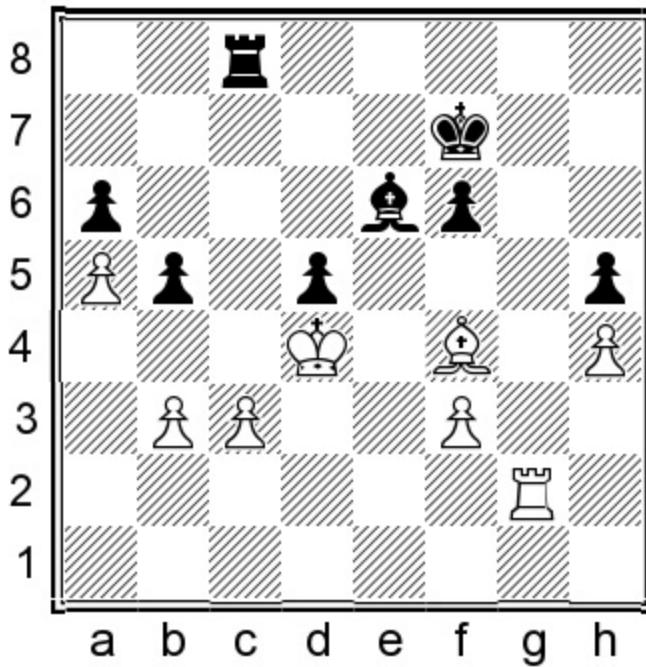
**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3**

2.c3 ♘f6 3.e5 ♘d5 4.♗c4 e6 5.d4 d6 6.exd6 cxd4 7.♗xd5 exd5 8.♕xd4 ♕xd6 9.♗e2 ♘c6 10.♕d3  
♗e6 11.♗f4 ♕d7 12.♗d2 ♗e7 13.♗b3 0-0 14.0-0 ♘fe8 15.♗ed4 ♘xd4 16.♗xd4 ♗c5 17.♗fe1 ♗g4

18.♔e3 ♔f8 19.h3 ♔h5 20.♗b5 ♕ad8 21.♗xd7 ♕xd7 22.♗f5 a6 23.♗d4 ♕xe1+ 24.♕xe1 f6 25.f3 ♔g6 26.♗e3 ♔f7 27.♗f2 ♔d3 28.♗d1 ♔b5 29.♔b6 ♔c6 30.♗f5 ♔d6 31.g4 g6 32.♗xd6+ ♕xd6.

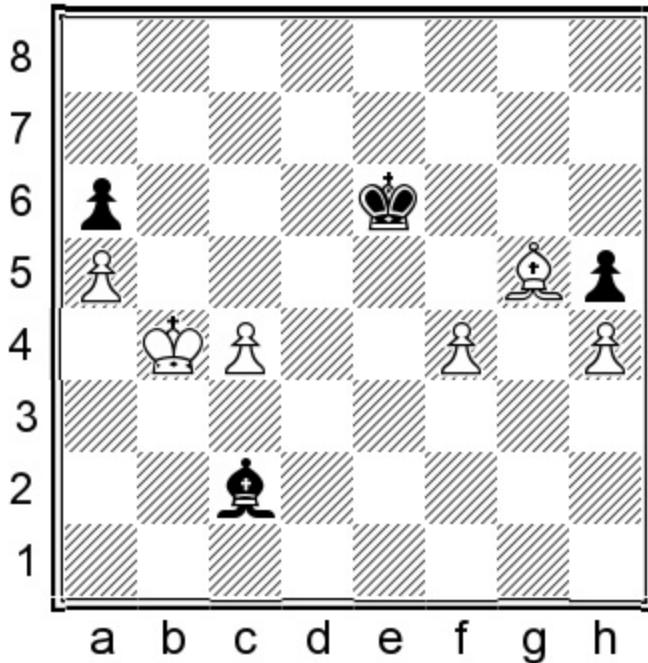


At first sight this is a rather dry position, but Tiviakov reveals its secrets with great skill: 33.♔c5 ♕e6 34.h4! h5 35.gxh5 gxh5 36.♔e3 ♕e8 37.♗d4 ♕e5 38.a4 ♕e8 39.b3 ♔e6 40.♗b4 b5 (Stockfish confirms that several moves maintain the balance here, including this one) 41.a5 ♔d7 42.♗f4 ♔e5 43.♗d4 ♕c8 44.♗d2 ♔f5 45.♗d4+ ♔e6 46.♗e3 ♔f7 47.♗g2 ♔h7 48.♗f4 ♕e8 49.♗d2 ♔g6 50.♔c5 ♕d8 51.♔e3 ♔f5 52.♗d4 ♔e6 53.♔e2 ♕c8 54.♗d6 ♕c6 55.♗f4 ♕c8 56.♗g2



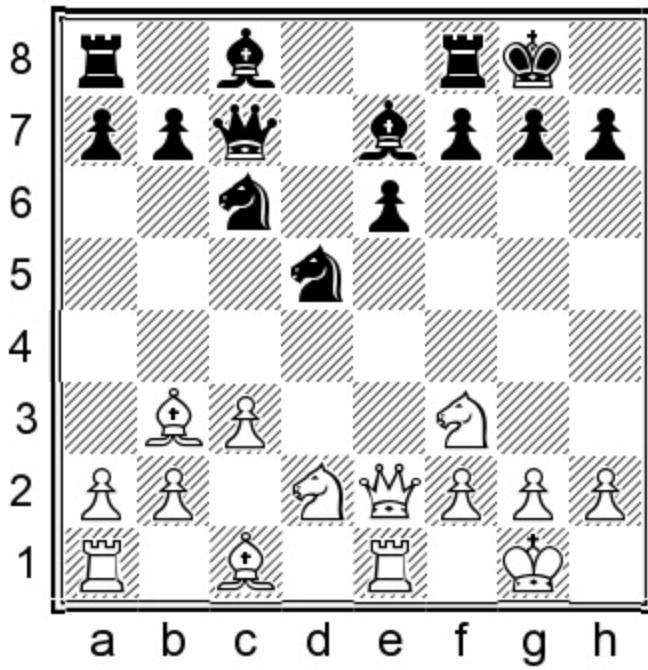
56...♔e7? (Black could have held this slightly worse position by playing 56...♕c6. However, it was much better to give up the pawns on b4 and d5, with the idea of constructing an impregnable fortress, by means of 56...b4!! 57.cxb4 ♔h3 58.♗g1 ♔d7 59.♗e1 ♕c2 60.♗xd5 ♕c3 61.♗e3 ♕xe3 62.♗xe3 ♔b5,

and White can make no progress) 57.♕g7+ ♜f7 58.♗d6+ ♔e6 59.♔a3 ♕g8 60.♗xg8 ♕xg8 61.♔f8! (Black is losing but now both sides make errors...) 61...♗h7 62.♔c5? (returning the favour, after which Black could have saved himself using the same method as above. Although Stockfish confirms that in this position there are two other winning moves, I believe that the most ‘human’ way would be to immediately prevent ...b5-b4: 62.b4! ♔d7 63.♔c5 ♔c7 64.♗g7 f5 65.f4 ♔g6 66.♔e5+ ♔b7 67.♔d6 ♔f7 68.♔d4 ♔c8 (68...♔g8 69.♔e7 ♔c6 70.♔f6 ♔d7 71.♔g6, winning the ♔h5 and the game) 69.♔c6 ♔b8 70.♔b6 ♔a8 71.♔e5 ♔e8 72.♔xa6 with a decisive advantage) 62...♔d7? (once again the pawn sacrifice was correct: 62...b4! 63.cxb4 ♔d3 64.♔d4 ♔e2 etc.) 63.♔g7? (63.b4! ♔c7 64.♔g7 ♔b7 65.♔xf6 ♔d3 66.f4 etc. was winning) 63...b4!! (at last Black seizes his chance, but...) 64.♔xb4 ♔d3 65.♔xf6 ♔c6?! (the most accurate way was 65...♔e2! 66.f4 ♔e6 67.♔d8 ♔d1 68.♔b6 ♔f5 69.♔e3 ♔f6 (69...♔g4!?) 70.♔d2 ♔e6 71.c4 dxc4 72.bxc4 ♔f5 73.♔c5 ♔b3, and White can make no progress) 66.♔e5 ♔c2 67.♔a3 ♔d7 68.♔b2 ♔d1 69.f4 ♔e6 70.♔a3 ♔c2 71.♔g7 ♔d1 72.♔h6 ♔c2 73.♔b4 ♔d1 74.♔g5 ♔c2 75.c4 dxc4 76.bxc4



76...♔d3?? (a fatal error, which allows the white king to penetrate the enemy camp. Instead there were several ways to draw, e.g. 76...♔f5! 77.♔c5 ♔b3 78.♔d4 ♔c2 79.♔e3 (79.♔c5 ♔e4) 79...♔b3, and White can make no progress) 77.♔c5 ♔f1 78.f5+! ♔xf5 79.♔d5. Now White’s advantage is decisive; there followed 79...♔g6 80.c5 ♔f7 81.c6 ♔e8 82.♔d6 ♔g2 83.c7 ♔h3 84.♔d8 ♔g4 85.♔c6 ♔f3+ 86.♔b6 ♔d7 87.♔xa6 ♔c8 88.♔b6 ♔e2 89.a6 ♔f1 90.a7 ♔g2 91.♔f6 ♔f3 92.♔e5 ♔g2 93.♔c5 ♔d7 94.♔d4 ♔h1 95.♔e3 ♔g2 96.♔f4 ♔h1 97.♔g5 ♔f3 98.♔f4 ♔c8 99.a8=♕+ ♔xa8 100.♔xh5 ♔d7 101.♔g5 ♔b7 102.h5 ♔e8 103.h6 ♔f7 104.♔e5 1-0 Tiviakov-Neverov, Warsaw Ech 2005.

**2...e6 3.c3 ♔f6 4.e5 ♔d5 5.♔c4 d6 6.exd6 ♔xd6 7.d4 ♔c6 8.dxc5 ♔xc5 9.0-0 0-0 10.♔bd2 ♔b6 11.♔b3 ♔e7 12.♔e2 ♔c7 13.♔e1 ♔d5**



**14.♘xd5!?**

Creating an IQP structure.

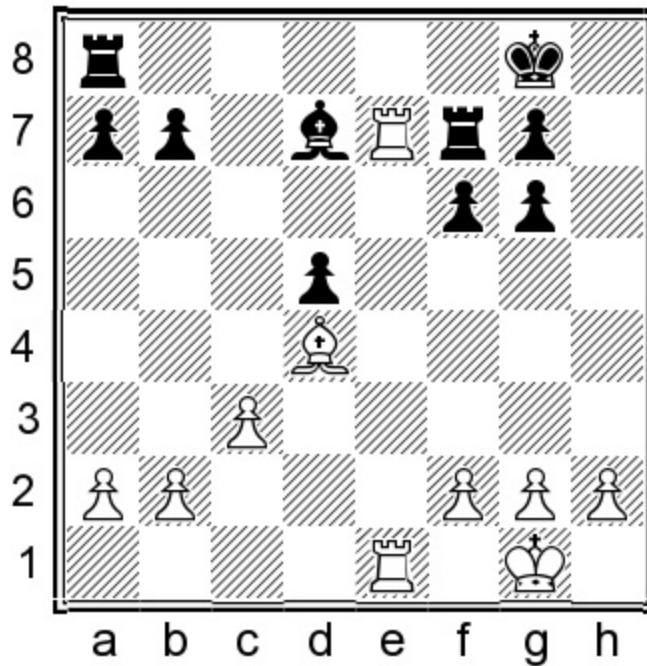
**14...exd5 15.♗d3 ♗d6 16.♘b3 ♘g4 17.♘bd4 ♘f6 18.♘g5!? ♘xg5**

A good alternative was 18...g6!? 19.♘gf3 ♗c5 20.♘h6 ♖fe8 21.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 22.♘e3 ♘xf3 23.♘xf3 ♗c4.

**19.♘xg5 ♗g6**

Of course Black had several alternatives here, e.g. 19...h6 20.♘e3 ♘h5, but he probably thought that the easiest way to draw was to exchange queens.

**20.♗xg6 hxg6 21.♘e3 ♘xd4 22.♘xd4 f6 23.♖e7 ♖f7 24.♖ae1 ♘d7**

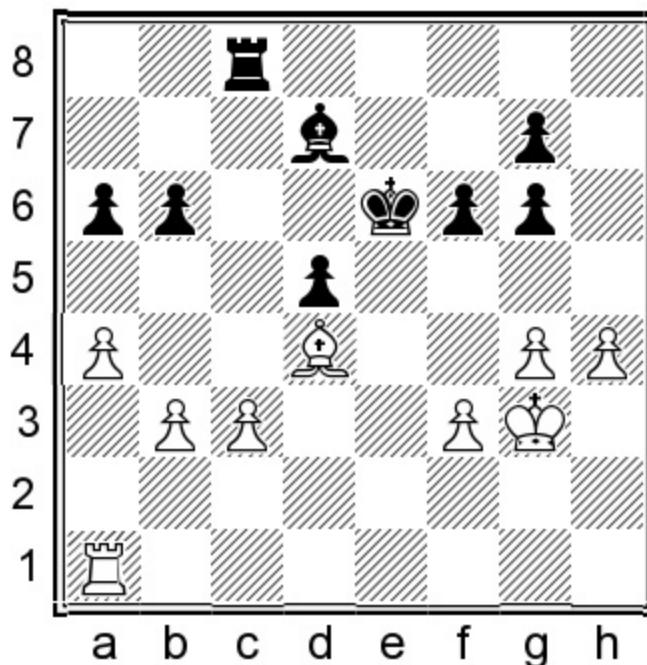


It seems Miladinovic's plan has been successful, as it is not easy to see how White can improve his position. However, Tiviakov knew from experience that in positions of this type there are still many resources. The engine gives the highest evaluation to his next move:

**25.h4! b6 26.♗7e3 ♘ff8 27.f3 ♘fe8 28.♔f2 ♘xe3 29.♘xe3 ♔f7 30.♗d1 ♔e6 31.g4!**

Keeping up the pressure.

**31...♗c8 32.♗d4 ♗h8 33.♗g3 ♗e8 34.b3 ♗c8 35.a4 a6 36.♗a1**



**36...b5?!**

Here and on the previous move Black could have played simply ... $\mathbb{E}c8-b8-b7$ , when White has difficulty in achieving anything tangible, e.g. 36... $\mathbb{E}b8$  37.b4  $\mathbb{E}b7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (38.a5 bxa5 39. $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ) 38... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (41. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  b5 43.a5  $\mathbb{E}e8$  44. $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{E}e2$  45.h5 gxh5 46. $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ ) 41... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  45. $\mathbb{E}h1$  b5 46.a5  $\mathbb{E}e8$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}e2$  48.h5 gxh5 49. $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ .

### **37.a5 $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

The text move is one way to hold the position. Instead, a pawn sacrifice typical of such positions was available: 37...b4!? 38.cxb4  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , leading to a draw.

### **38.b4! $\mathbb{E}e8$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{E}h8$ 40. $\mathbb{E}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}e8+??!$**

It was better to play 44... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  g5! 46.h5  $\mathbb{E}e8$  47. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}c8$ , preventing the enemy king from invading the black camp.

### **45. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6??!$**

Here it was better to play 45... $\mathbb{E}e6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  48. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  49. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  d4+! and Black has sufficient resources to save this ending.

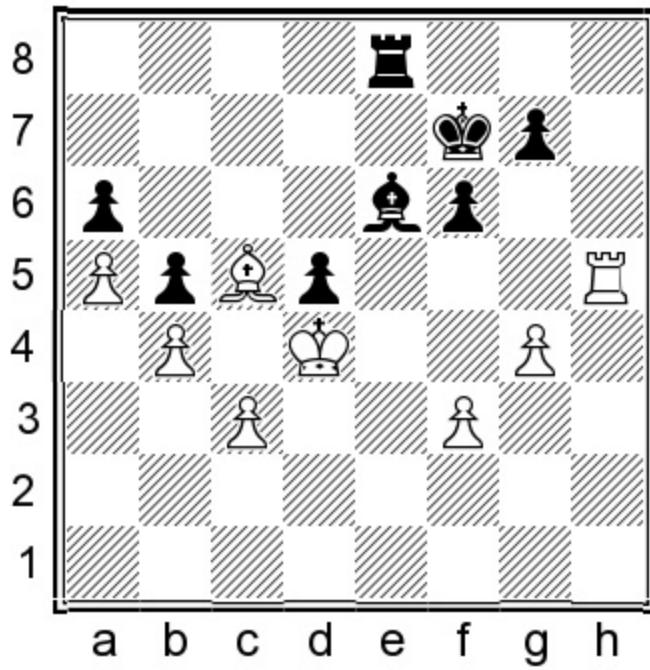
### **46.h5**

The engine points out the stronger line 46. $\mathbb{E}e1!$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  47. $\mathbb{E}e3$  g5 (47... $\mathbb{E}xh4?$  48. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ; 47... $\mathbb{E}c8$  48.f4!) 48.hxg5 fxg5 49. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ !.

### **46...gxh5??!**

It was better to play 46...g5! 47.h6 gxh6!? (47... $\mathbb{E}h8?$  48.h7!  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (48...f5 49.gxf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  50. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xh7$  51. $\mathbb{E}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  52. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  53. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ) 49. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{E}xh7$  50. $\mathbb{E}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  51. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ) 48. $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ , when the black king guards the h-file while the rook controls the c-file.

### **47. $\mathbb{E}xh5$**



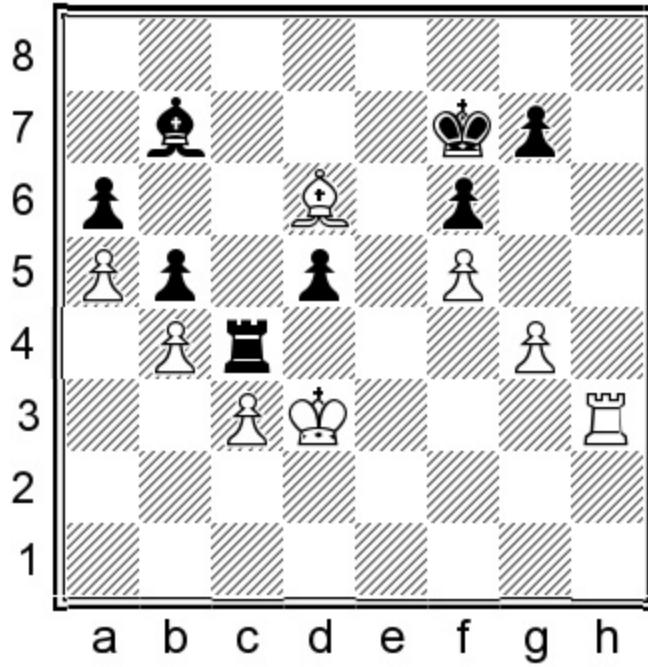
**47...♝d8**

The most accurate was 47...♝c8!, e.g. 48.♝h4 (48.♝h1 ♜e8 49.♝a7 ♜c8) 48...♜e8 49.f4 ♔g8 50.f5 ♔f7 51.♝a7 ♜c8 52.♝d3 (52.♝h3?! ♜c4+= 53.♝d3 ♜xg4) 52...g5!? (52...♜e8 53.g5!) 53.♝h2 (53.fxg6?? ♜xg6+) 53...d4! (sacrificing the isolated pawn to free his bishop) 54.♝xd4 ♜c6 55.♝h3 ♔g7 56.♝e3 ♜c4+ 57.♝d2 ♔f7 58.♝h3 ♔g7 59.♝h5 ♔f7, and there is no apparent way for White to realize his extra pawn.

**48.♝h4 ♜c8 49.f4 ♜b7 50.f5 ♜e8 51.♝d6 ♜c8**

51...♜e4+? 52.♝c5 ♔g8 53.♝b6, winning.

**52.♝h3 ♜c4+ 53.♝d3**



**53...♝g8?!**

On the human level the position is probably already losing, e.g. 53...♝xg4? 54.♜h8! or 53...♚e8 54.♝e3+, leading to a lost ending after 54...♝e4 55.♝xe4+ dxe4+ 56.♝d4 ♜c6 57.♝c5 ♜d7 58.♝f4 e3 59.♝b6! (59.♝xe3?! ♜c7) 59...e2 60.♝g3! ♜f3 61.♝xa6 ♜xg4 (or 61...♝c6 62.♝e1 ♜xg4 63.c4!) 62.♝xb5 ♜xf5 63.c4 and White wins; it seems that Black's best option was to sacrifice a pawn in order to activate his bishop: 53...d4!? 54.cxd4 ♜c6 55.♝f4 ♜c8 56.g5 ♜e8 57.g6+ ♜g8 58.d5 ♜c8!? 59.♝e3 ♜xf5+ 60.♝d4 ♜xe3 61.♝xe3 ♜xg6, and here Stockfish's assessment is 1.20, which means that this ending of bishops of opposite colour is probably a draw.

**54.♝e3 ♜e4**

54...♝xg4? 55.♝e7 ♜c6 56.♝c7 ♜e8 57.♝a7.

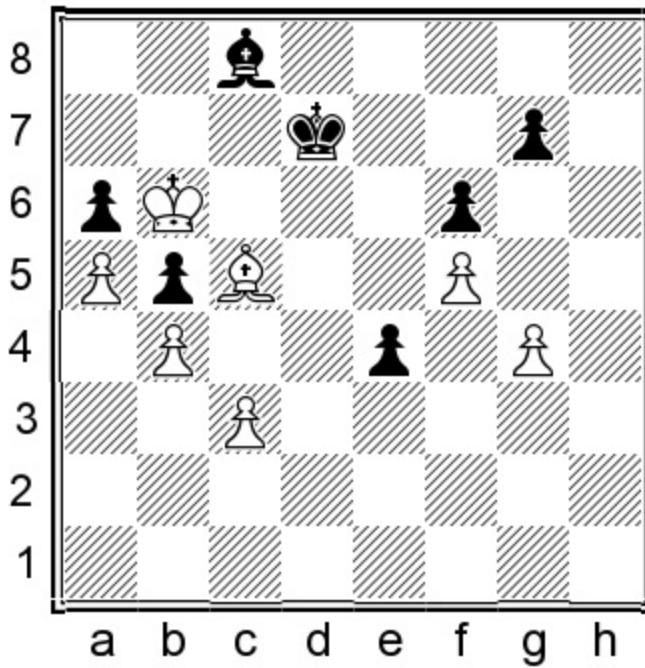
**55.♝xe4 dxe4+ 56.♝d4 ♜f7 57.♝c5**

The black position is now desperate.

**57...♞e8 58.♝b6 ♜d7 59.♝f4 ♜c8 60.♝e3 ♜d6 61.♝d4 ♜d7**

61...♝d5 62.♝c7 was equally hopeless.

**62.♝c5**



White's advantage is decisive, since the demise of the ♘a6 is inevitable.

**62...♘d8 63.♘c6 ♘d7+ 64.♘b7 ♘e8**

Or 64...♘c8+ 65.♘b8 ♘d7 (or 65...♘d7 66.♘b6) 66.♘b6+! ♘e7 67.♘b7 ♘d6 68.♘xa6, winning.

**65.♘xa6 ♘c7 66.♘e3 ♘d7 67.♘f4+ ♘c6 68.♘a7 ♘c8 69.a6 ♘d5 70.♘b6 ♘d7 71.a7 ♘c6 72.♘d2 ♘d6 73.♘e3 ♘d5 74.♘f4 1-0**

As can be seen from these two endings, the main drawbacks of the IQP are that it cannot be defended by another pawn and in addition the square in front of this pawn, as well as various squares to the side of the pawn, can be exploited by the opponent as strongpoints for his pieces. These disadvantages are most apparent following simplification, whereas the side with the IQP possesses several advantages which are present in the middlegame. First and foremost, the IQP confers a space advantage, which makes it easy to regroup the pieces and consequently to create threats in different areas of the board, especially on the kingside. Secondly, the IQP serves as a support for the central deployment of one or two minor pieces, particularly a knight, which creates the conditions for an attack on the enemy castled king. Thirdly, the side with the isolated pawn can exert pressure along the c- and e-files.

Tournament practice and the ample chess literature on this topic allow us to indicate the following plans for each side.

*The side with the IQP has the following four plans available:*

- A) kingside attack;
- B) opening the game by advancing the isolated pawn;
- C) advancing the isolated pawn in order to fix an enemy pawn on an adjacent file;
- D) developing activity on the queenside.

*The side playing against the IQP employs basically two methods:*

- A) simplification of the position, aiming for an endgame;
- B) transformation from an IQP structure to a structure with hanging pawns.

We shall analyse each of these plans in turn.

---

(back to the text) Petroff Defence: 1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  d6 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  5.c4 c6 6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7.d4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.h3 d5 9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0 10.0-0 dxc4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

## 1.2. Plan A: kingside attack

This plan can take two forms: an attack with pieces alone, or an attack with pieces and pawns, which is usually connected with opening lines. The following game is a good demonstration of the first form of this plan.

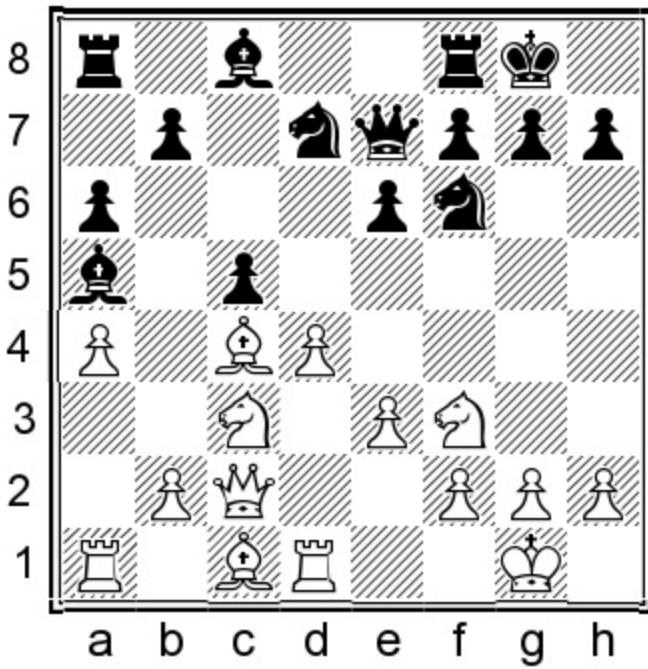
Game 5  
Nimzo-Indian Defence  
**Vladimir Tukmakov**  
**Viktor Kortchnoi**  
Riga ch-URS 1970 (4)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4.e3 0-0 5. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c5 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 7.0-0 dxc4 8. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9. $\mathbb{W}b3$**

9. $\mathbb{W}e2$ ! is the main line, e.g. 9...b6 10. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  cxd4 11.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  12.d5  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  13.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  14.gxf3 fxe6 15.bxc3  $\mathbb{W}c7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  17. $\mathbb{W}c4$ , and Black's better structure compensates for the sacrificed pawn, Matlakov-Vitiugov, St Petersburg 2017.

At grandmaster level, 9.a3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ! is popular, e.g. (9...cxd4!?) 10. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  cxd4 11.exd4 a6 12. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$ , M.Kazakov-Y.Vovk, Katowice 2019.

**9...a6 10.a4  $\mathbb{W}e7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  12. $\mathbb{W}c2$**



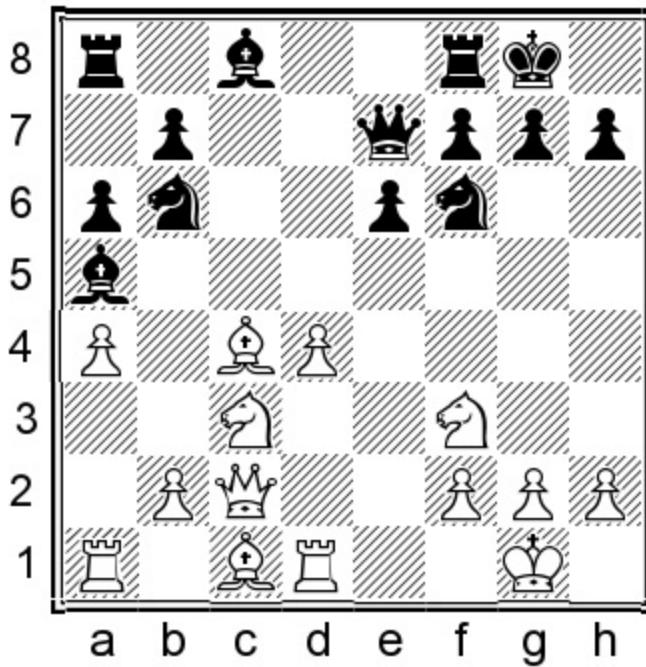
**12...cxd4**

Although the engine confirms that this move maintains the balance, I believe that from the human viewpoint the perspective is different. This move can be considered inaccurate for the same reason as 6...cxd4 in the game Zukertort-Steinitz, since it not only clears the diagonal for the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  but also

opens a path for the  $\mathbb{E}d1$  to transfer to the kingside. It was therefore preferable to play 12... $\mathbb{E}d8$  or 12... $h6$ .

### 13. $\mathbb{E}xd4!?$ $\mathbb{B}b6$

This seems to be the most accurate move, although 13... $b6$  14. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}b4$  15. $d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is only a little worse and Black can neutralize the opponent's slight initiative.



This is a frequent dilemma for White: which diagonal to deploy the king's bishop on? However, Tukmakov is quite clear about it: the square d3 is reserved... for the rook! The engine considers the retreats of the bishop to b3 and d3 to be more or less equivalent to the text move. However, I stand by my earlier comment; for human players, Tukmakov in this case, it is appropriate to base our forward planning mainly on patterns and structures, since it is impossible for us to calculate as deeply as the computer.

### 14. $\mathbb{Q}a2!$ $h6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

A serious mistake. Instead, 15... $\mathbb{Q}bd5!$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18. $\mathbb{E}a3$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  was the only way to maintain equality.

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$

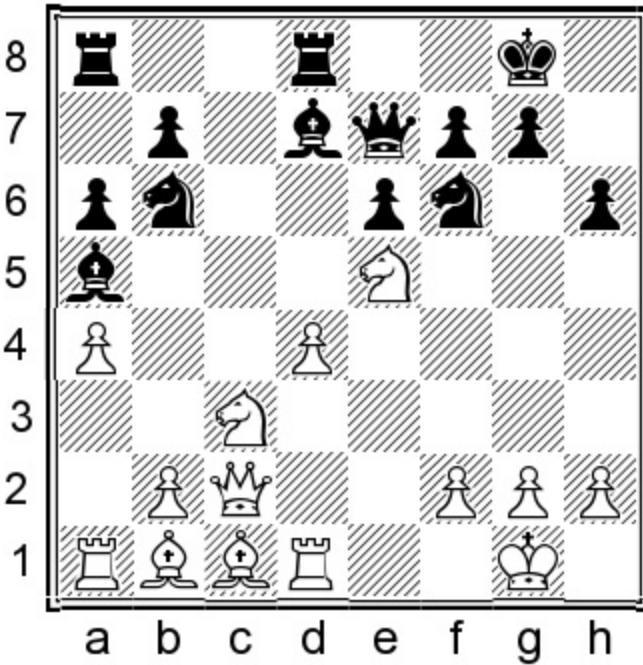
Somewhat unexpectedly, Stockfish indicates that White already has a big advantage after 16. $\mathbb{E}d3!$ , e.g. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (slightly better is 16... $\mathbb{Q}bd5!?$  17. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. $bxcc3$ ) 17. $bxcc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  19. $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ , with an advantage of 2.51.

It also was good to sacrifice immediately on h6: 16. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$ , e.g. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (or 16... $gxh6$  17. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

18.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  19. d5!  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20.  $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  f5 22. dx e6, with a strong white attack) 17. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  18.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  19.  $\mathbb{W}g5$  g6 20.  $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  (or 22...  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  23. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ) 23.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  f6 24.  $\mathbb{W}h3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ , with an extra pawn.

## 16... $\mathbb{E}fd8$

Tukmakov suggests 16...  $\mathbb{E}fc8$ !? 17.  $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  18.  $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (Stockfish adds a variation which I think would be almost impossible to find over the board: 19.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$ ! 20.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ !!, e.g. 20...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{E}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  25.  $\mathbb{W}g4+$ , with a decisive attack) 19...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , however after 20.  $\mathbb{W}c1$  White gains a clear advantage, e.g. 20...  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  21.  $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .



## 17. $\mathbb{E}d3$ !

Another good line was 17. g4!?  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  18. h4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 20. bxc3 g6 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

## 17... $\mathbb{E}ac8$ ??

The most tenacious defence was 17...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ! 18.  $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  g6 20.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  (a good alternative is 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  23.  $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}f8$ + 21...  $\mathbb{F}xg6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  23.  $\mathbb{E}xg6$ +  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ + (24.  $\mathbb{W}e3$ !?) 24...  $\mathbb{W}xg7$  (24...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25.  $\mathbb{W}c2$ ) 25.  $\mathbb{E}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}d1$ , and although White's advantage is clear, Black retains defensive resources.

## 18. $\mathbb{E}g3$ !?

Here and on the next move the sacrifice on h6 is already working: 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  (19...  $\mathbb{G}xh6$ ?? 20.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xh6$  f5 22.  $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  23.  $\mathbb{W}h4$ , winning) 20.  $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{G}xh6$  21.  $\mathbb{E}a5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}c4$

22.  $\mathbb{W}c1!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  23.  $\mathbb{B}xe5$ , with a decisive advantage to White.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19. $\mathbb{W}d2$**

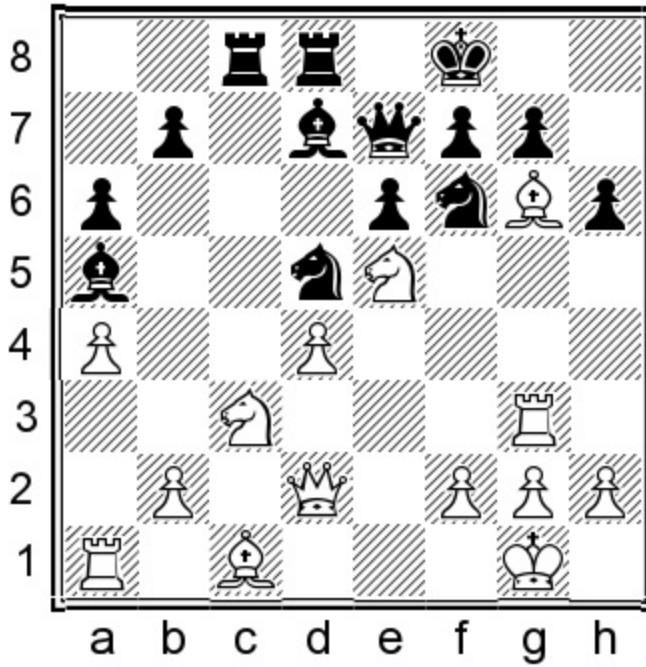
19.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $gxh6$  20.  $\mathbb{W}c1!$  (20.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ ) 20...  $\mathbb{W}b4$  (20...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}h7!$ ) 21.  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  24.  $\mathbb{B}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ , winning.

**19... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$**

19...  $\mathbb{Q}c4?$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  21.  $\mathbb{B}xg7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  24.  $\mathbb{W}h4$ , with a decisive advantage.

**20.  $\mathbb{Q}g6!?$**

White could win with 20.  $\mathbb{B}xg7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  23.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  24.  $h3$   $\mathbb{B}dc8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ .



**20... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$**

The only defensive possibility was 20...  $\mathbb{Q}c7!$ , although after 21.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White maintains the advantage, e.g. 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  23.  $\mathbb{B}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}df4$  24.  $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25.  $\mathbb{B}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $\mathbb{B}xd3$  27.  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  29.  $\mathbb{W}f6$ .

**21.  $\mathbb{W}xh6!$   $\mathbb{W}b4$**

The three alternatives all lose by force: 21...  $gxh6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ ; 21...  $fxg6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  23.  $\mathbb{B}f3+$ ; and 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xg7+$

$\mathbb{Q}e7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xf6+!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  28.  $\mathbb{E}h3+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  29.  $\mathbb{E}h4\#.$

22.  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xg7$

Also winning were 23.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  (23...  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ ) 24.  $\mathbb{W}xg7$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  27.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  28.  $\mathbb{E}f3$  and 23.  $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  24.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xg7$ .

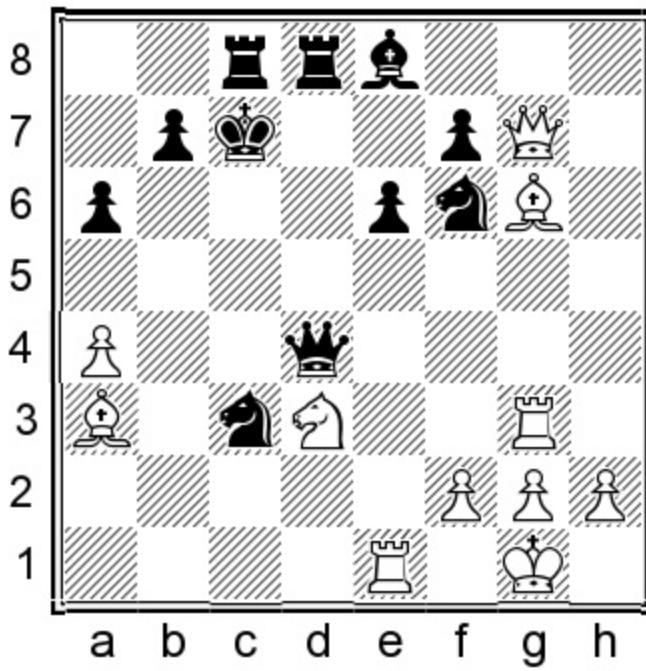
23...  $\mathbb{W}xd4$

Or 23...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  24.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

24.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$

It was more accurate to play 24.  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

24...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  25.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}a3+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  27.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$



28.  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$   $\mathbb{Q}cd5$

Equally hopeless was 28...  $\mathbb{Q}fe4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  32.  $\mathbb{E}g4$ .

29.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$

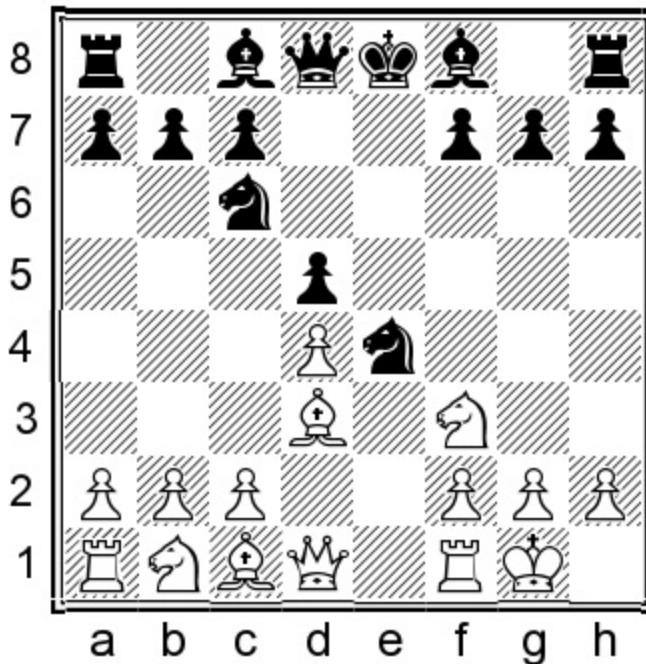
White's advantage is decisive.

29...  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  32.  $\mathbb{W}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  33.  $\mathbb{H}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  34.  $\mathbb{E}c1+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  35.  $\mathbb{H}h5$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{F}f6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $bxc6$  38.  $\mathbb{W}g7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  39.  $\mathbb{H}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  40.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}d2?$  41.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  1-0

In the structure with  $\mathbb{A}e6$  versus  $\mathbb{A}d4$ , the ‘hot spots’ where White often sacrifices his pieces are e6 and f7, while in the structure with  $\mathbb{A}c7/c6$  versus  $\mathbb{A}d4$ , there is a typical sacrifice, as seen in the following game.

Game 6  
Petroff Defence  
**Nils Grandelius 2653**  
**Anna Zatonskikh 2424**  
Douglas 2017 (2)

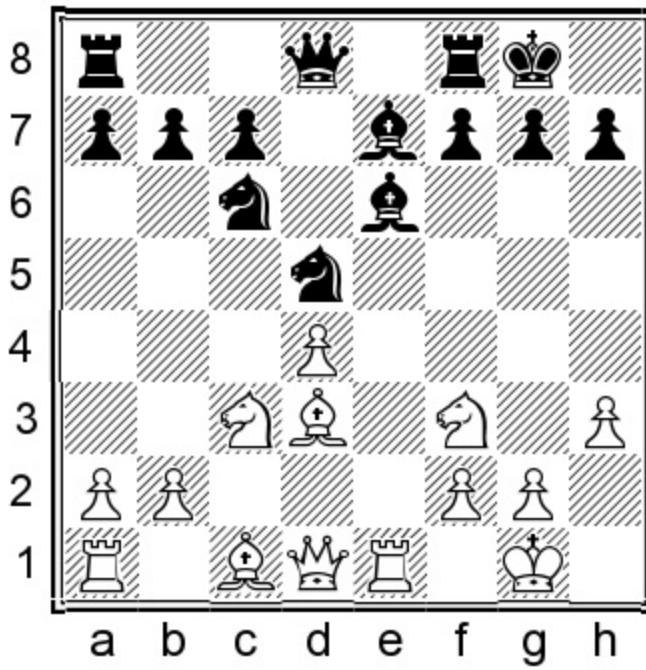
**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{A}f3$   $\mathbb{A}f6$  3. $\mathbb{A}xe5$  d6 4. $\mathbb{A}f3$   $\mathbb{A}xe4$  5.d4 d5 6. $\mathbb{A}d3$   $\mathbb{A}c6$  7.0-0**



**7... $\mathbb{A}g4$**

Much more common, and furthermore with slightly better statistics than the text move, is 7... $\mathbb{A}e7$ , e.g. 8. $\mathbb{A}bd2$  (8.c4  $\mathbb{A}b4!?$ ) 8... $\mathbb{A}xd2$  (Stockfish suggests 8... $\mathbb{A}f5$  9. $\mathbb{A}e1$   $\mathbb{A}xd2$  10. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{A}g6$  11. $\mathbb{A}xg6$  hxg6 12. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ ) 9. $\mathbb{A}xd2$   $\mathbb{A}g4$  10.c3 0-0 11.h3  $\mathbb{A}h5$  12.g3  $\mathbb{W}d7$  13. $\mathbb{A}g2$   $\mathbb{A}g6$  14. $\mathbb{A}f4$   $\mathbb{A}xd3$  15. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  a6 16. $\mathbb{A}ae1$   $\mathbb{A}ae8$  17. $\mathbb{A}e2$   $\mathbb{A}d8$ , with a minimal advantage to White, Giri-Yu Yangyi, Wijk aan Zee, 2020; it is curious that the engine gives practically the same good evaluation to both 7... $\mathbb{A}g4$  and 7... $\mathbb{A}e7$ .

**8.c4  $\mathbb{A}f6$  9. $\mathbb{A}c3$   $\mathbb{A}e7$  10.cxd5  $\mathbb{A}xd5$  11.h3  $\mathbb{A}e6$  12. $\mathbb{A}e1$  0-0**



**13.a3!?**

A typical move, preparing the well-known battery:  $\mathbb{R}c2+\mathbb{W}d3$ .

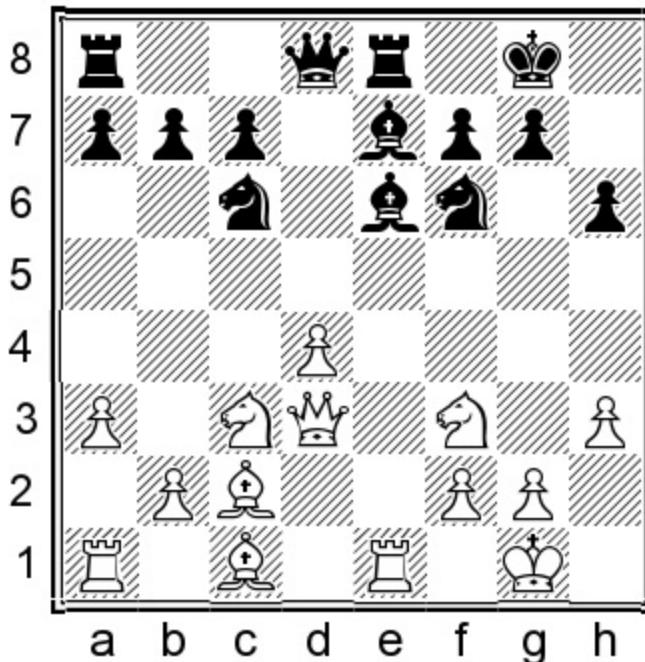
**13... $\mathbb{E}e8$  14. $\mathbb{R}c2$**

It is interesting that even with the black pawn on h7 White's compensation for the exchange sacrifice on e6 would be sufficient (but no more than that), e.g. 14. $\mathbb{W}c2$  h6 15. $\mathbb{E}xe6!$ ? fxe6 16. $\mathbb{R}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  b6 (19... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ?! 20. $\mathbb{E}e1$ ) 20. $\mathbb{R}b5$  bxc5 21. $\mathbb{R}xc6$ , and the engine gives 0.13.

**14...h6?**

This is a serious error, which loses by force. Black could maintain approximate equality with 14... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15. $\mathbb{W}d3$  g6 16. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (Stockfish recommends 16. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 18. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , with an evaluation of 0.23) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $\mathbb{E}xe8+$   $\mathbb{W}xe8$  19. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  20. $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  21. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$ , with equality, Stevic-Fridman, Heraklion 2017.

**15. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**



The following two thematic sacrifices destroy the black position:

**16.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$  gxh6**

Equally hopeless was 16...  $\mathbb{W}d7$ , due to 17.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  g6 18. d5!  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ .

**17.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  fxe6 19.  $\mathbb{W}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

There was already more than one way to win, e.g. 21.  $\mathbb{W}g6+!$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$ .

**21...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22. dxе5  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

Or 23...  $\mathbb{W}g7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ .

**24.  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{W}d2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}f3+$**

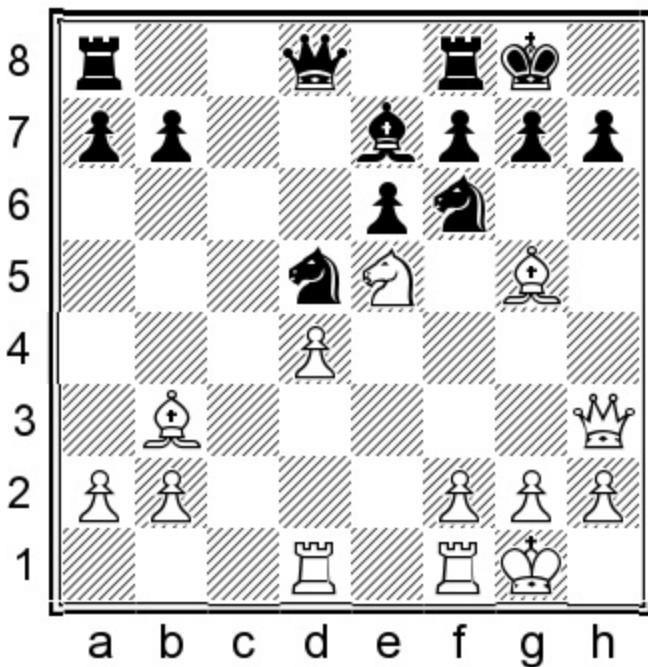
Black resigned.

The next two games exemplify the situation where the piece pressure of the side with the IQP is not sufficient on its own to create threats against the enemy king and in consequence the participation of the kingside pawns in the attack is required.

Game 7  
Nimzo-Indian Defence  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Alexander Tolush**  
Moscow-Leningrad (m), Moscow 1965

## 1.c4 ♜f6

Botvinnik employed the plan with the f2-f4 advance for the first time in the following game, clearly improving on Zukertort's plan: 1...e6 2.♗f3 d5 3.d4 ♜f6 4.♗c3 ♜e7 5.♗g5 0-0 6.e3 ♜bd7 7.♗d3 c5 8.0-0 cxd4 9.exd4 dxc4 10.♗xc4 ♜b6 (10...a6!? 11.a4 ♜d5!? 12.♗xd5 (12.♗d2 ♜7f6) 12...♗xg5 13.♗xg5 ♜xg5 14.♗f3 ♜b8) 11.♗b3 ♜d7 (11...h6!? 12.♗h4 ♜fd5 13.♗g3 ♜d7) 12.♗d3 ♜bd5 13.♗e5 ♜c6 14.♗ad1 ♜b4? (14...♗d7! 15.♗c2 g6 16.♗xc6 bxc6 17.♗h6 ♜e8) 15.♗h3 ♜d5 16.♗xd5 ♜bxsd5? (16...♗fxd5! 17.♗xe7 ♜xe7 18.f4 ♜ad8 19.f5 exf5 20.♗xf5 ♜c6 (20...♗e3? 21.♗xf7+!) 21.♗de1 ♜xd4 22.♗f2 ♜xb3 23.♗c6 ♜xe1 24.♗xe1 bxc6 25.axb3 ♜b8, and it is not easy to realize White's material advantage).

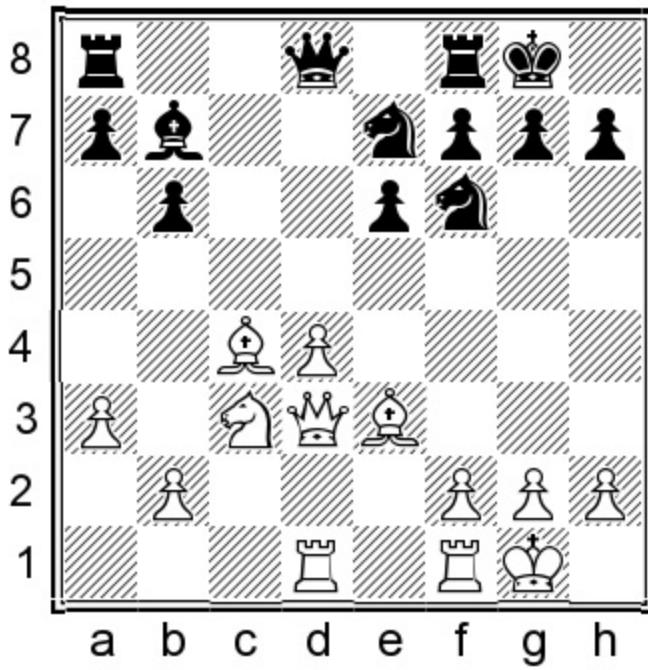


*analysis diagram*

The following move is a patent of the 6th World Champion and one of his contributions to the topic of the IQP: 17.f4! ♜c8 18.f5 exf5 19.♗xf5 ♜d6 20.♗xf7! ♜xf7 21.♗xf6 ♜xf6 22.♗xd5 ♜c6 23.♗d6 ♜e8 24.♗d7 1-0 Botvinnik-Vidmar, Nottingham 1936.

**2.♗c3 e6 3.d4 ♜b4 4.e3 c5 5.♗ge2 d5 6.a3 ♜xc3+ 7.♗xc3 cxd4 8.exd4 dxc4 9.♗xc4 ♜c6 10.♗e3 0-0 11.0-0 b6 12.♗d3 ♜b7 13.♗ad1 ♜e7?!**

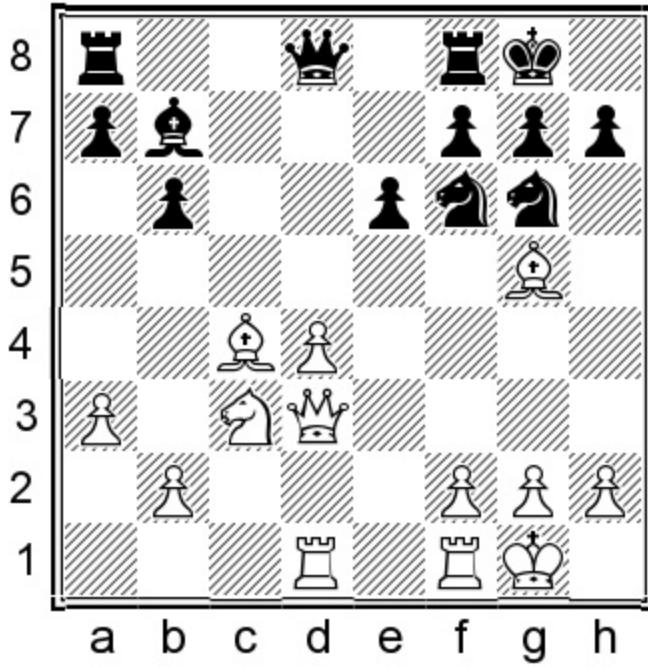
13...h6 was better, preventing the pin that occurs in the game. A possible continuation in that case was 14.f3 ♜e7 15.♗f2 ♜fd5, with equality, Kortchnoi-Karpov, (m/5) Baguio City 1978; but Stockfish disagrees with this human evaluation from the previous century and awards -0.40 to the continuation 13...h6 14.♗a2 ♜e7 15.♗fe1 ♜c7 16.f3 ♜fd8 17.♗b1 ♜f5 18.♗f2 ♜f4 19.♗e2 ♜d5.



We have a typical IQP position, but with a few special features. Black has already exchanged a pair of minor pieces, which in general is favourable for the side fighting against the isolated pawn. However, White has the pair of bishops:

**14.♗g5! ♗g6**

The engine confirms that the text move is perfectly playable and Black even has two paths to full equality: firstly, 14...♗fd5 15.♗xd5 ♗xd5 16.♗xe7 ♗xe7 17.♗xd5 exd5 18.♗b5 ♗d6 19.♗fe1 a6, although, as we know, in practice it is not so easy to defend a position of this type with black, as can be seen from the game Alekhine-Eliskases annotated in Chapter 3 on the subject of symmetrical structures; and secondly 14...♗d6 15.♗xf6 gxf6 16.d5 (16.♗fe1 ♗fd8 17.♗e4 ♗xe4 18.♗xe4 f5, with chances for both sides, Aleksandrov-Kryakvin, Saratov 2006) 16...♗xd5 17.♗fe1 ♗ad8 18.♗xd5 (18.♗xd5!? ♗xd5 19.♗f3) 18...♗xd5 19.♗f3 ♗c5 20.♗d3 ♗h8 21.♗e4 f5 22.♗xd5 ♗xd5 23.♗xd5 ♗xd5 24.♗xd5 exd5 25.♗e7 d4, although in this case too there is some discrepancy with the human view, since it is more difficult to play this ending with black than with white.



**15.f4!**

Almost thirty years later Botvinnik uses the same plan!

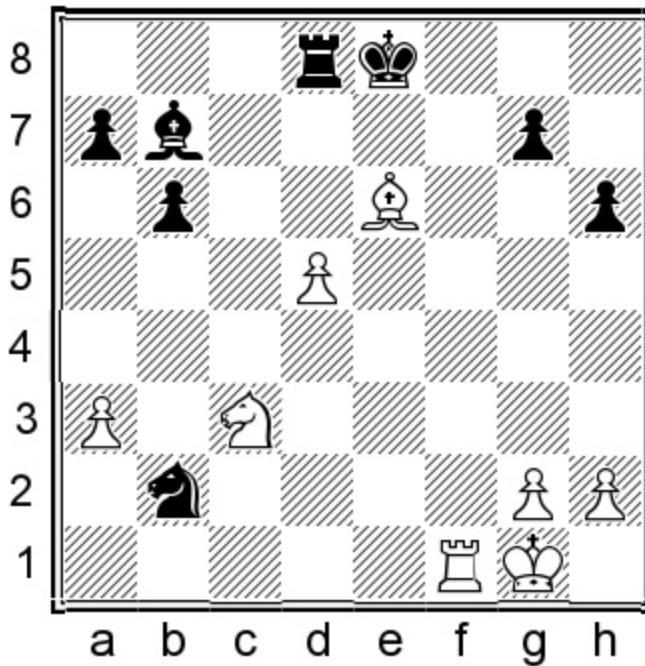
**15...h6 16.f5! exf5 17.Qxf6 Qxf6 18.Qxf5 Qf4?!**

This leads to a difficult ending. Instead, 18...Qc6!? 19.Qd5 Qd7 20.Qb3 Qae8 would have been better, although in this case too White keeps the initiative. Stockfish continues this variation, confirming the evaluation made in the previous century: 21.Qf2 Qg4 22.d5 Qe5 23.Qe2 Qg5 24.Qa4 Qe7 25.Qe4.

**19.Qxf6 Qxd3 20.Qxf7!**

20.Qxf7+?! leads to equality after 20...Qh8 21.Qff1 Qxb2 22.Qd2 Qa6 23.Qf3 Qc4 Bass-Grooten, Graz 1981.

**20...Qxb2 21.Qxf8+ Qxf8 22.Qf1+ Qe8 23.Qe6 Qd8 24.d5**



Despite the simplification, White is better, due to the more active placement of his pieces, in which the isolated pawn on d5 plays an important role.

**24...♝c8 25.♝f7 ♝xe6 26.dxe6 ♞d6**

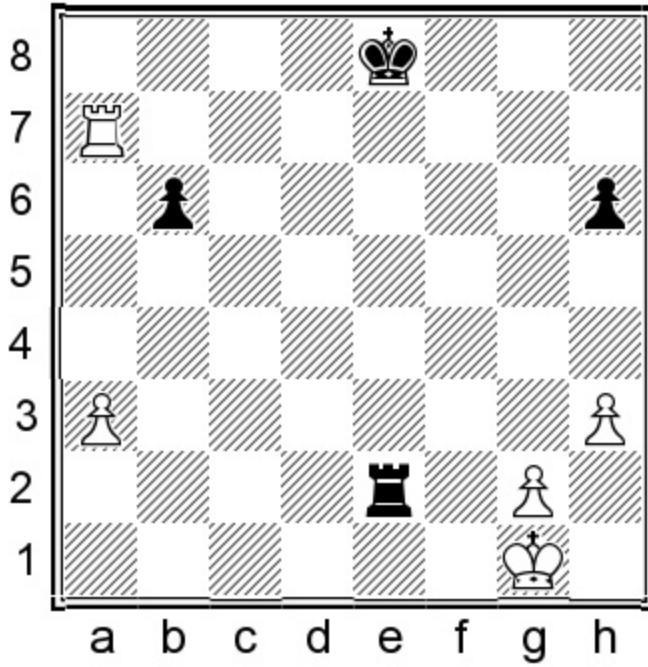
Stockfish confirms that after 26...a6!? 27.♝xg7 ♞d6 Black has good chances of salvation, e.g. 28.♞a7 (28.♝g6 ♔e7 29.g4 ♞xe6 30.♝d5+ ♔f7 31.♝xe6 ♔xe6 32.♝xb6 ♔d6 33.h4 ♔e5 34.♝g2 ♔f4 35.♝h3 ♘d3 36.♝d5+ ♔e4 37.♝c7 ♔f3) 28...b5 29.♝e4 ♞xe6 30.♝c5 ♜e5 31.♝xa6 ♘c4 32.♝b4 ♜e1+ 33.♝f2 ♜e3 34.♞a6 ♜xa3 35.♝xh6 ♜a4. However, White has an extra pawn in several lines, including a famous rook ending with a pawn on g3, g4 or f4, where the frontal attack holds. It should be said though that several famous players have managed to lose this drawn ending, e.g. Tal against I.Zaitsev (with reversed colours) in 1969, Larsen against Taimanov in 1970, Kochyev against Smyslov (with reversed colours and flanks) in 1978, Shirov against Motylev in 2001, etc. Several knight endings also arise in this analysis which are also not easy to draw. In other words, the computer's evaluation in this case has a purely academic character, which is a long way from the realities of practical play.

**27.♝xg7 ♞xe6 28.♞xa7 ♘d3 29.h3 ♘f4 30.♞a4 ♘e2+?**

This leads to a lost rook ending. Instead, 30...♞d3! 31.♞d4 ♘c5 32.♞b4 ♜d6 was much more tenacious.

**31.♞xe2 ♜xe2 32.♞a7?**

An error which could have led to a draw. Instead, 32.♞b4! was correct, although other rook moves along the fourth rank are also winning: 32...♜e6 33.♞f2 ♔f7 34.♞f3 ♜g6 35.a4 h5 36.♞b5 ♜f6+ 37.♔e4 ♜g6 38.♞b2 ♔g7 39.♞d4 or 39.♞d5.



**32... $\mathbb{Q}f8?$**

Wasting a move. Black could have saved this ending by exploiting Botvinnik's error on the previous move. 32... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  (or 32... $h5!$ ) was correct:

- A) 33. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  b5! 34. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (the same position arises after 34. $\mathbb{Q}h7$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  h5 37. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  h4 38. $\mathbb{Q}h7$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  b4 40.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ) 34...h5 35. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  h4 36. $\mathbb{Q}h7$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  b4 38.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  (40... $\mathbb{Q}f6?$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ) 41. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (42. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6+)$  42... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g8$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  46. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and White can make no progress;
- B) 33.a4 b5 34. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}e1+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a1!$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  37. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  h5 38. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  h4 39. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}a2+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , reaching the same position as before: 42. $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8+$  48. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , and again White can make no progress.

**33. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

The best defence was 36... $h5!$ , after which the only way to win is first to transfer the white king to h2, followed by h3-h4 and g2-g3, and then manoeuvre the rook with the idea of exchanging the  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  for the  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , while preventing the black king from becoming active, and with the ultimate aim of winning the  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ : 37. $\mathbb{Q}f2!!$   $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h2!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  40.h4!  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  41.g3  $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  42. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  43. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  44. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ .

**37.g3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

Or 38... $\mathbb{Q}c4+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ .

**39.♔f5 ♔c5+ 40.♔g6 ♔c6+ 41.♔h5 ♔g8**

Black resigned, since there is no defence against the following plan: place the pawns on a4, g4 and h4 and then play ♕b7-a7-a6, with the unstoppable threat of a4-a5.

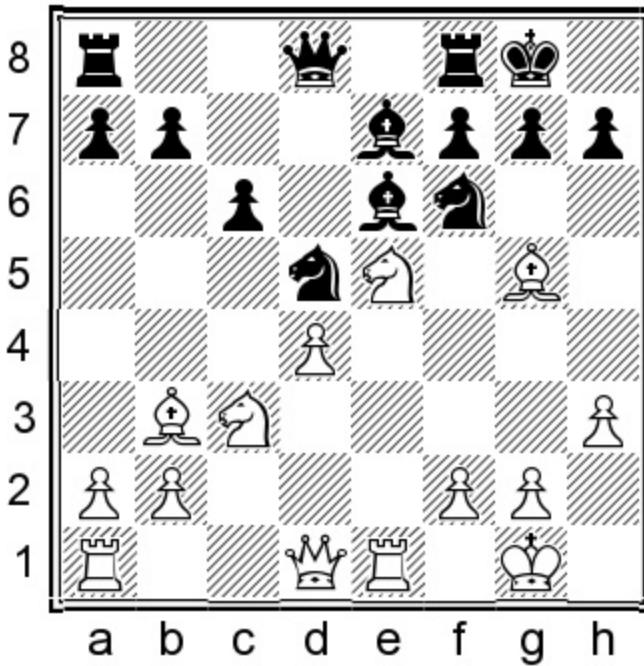
Game 8  
Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Yury Razuvaev**  
**Vladimir Bagirov**  
Yaroslavl ch-URS sf 1982

With great pleasure I should like to present the following game, played by my old friend, the late GM Yury Razuvaev, a famous trainer and in my opinion a great chess thinker.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3!? e5 4.♘xc4 exd4 5.exd4 ♘f6 6.♘f3 ♘e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.h3 ♘bd7**

Another possibility, and a favourite of Karpov, is 8...♘c6 9.♘c3 ♘a5 10.♘d3 ♘e6.

**9.♘c3 ♘b6 10.♘b3 ♘bd5 11.♗e1 c6 12.♗g5 ♘e6 13.♗e5**



**13...♝c7**

Yury was a connoisseur of both the classical legacy and modern theory. So it is not surprising that he knew this position from the games of the De la Bourdonnais-McDonnell match, as well as from other important games played prior to this one.

Let's look at two alternatives mentioned by Razuvaev:

A) 13...♗e8!? 14.♗f3 (14.♗a4?! h6 15.♗h4 ♘b4 16.♗f1 ♘f4 led to a slight advantage to Black in

Tkachiev-Carlsen, Moscow 2009; 14.♘c1!?) 14...♝c7 15.♗ad1 ♜xb3 16.axb3 ♜cd5, with approximate equality;

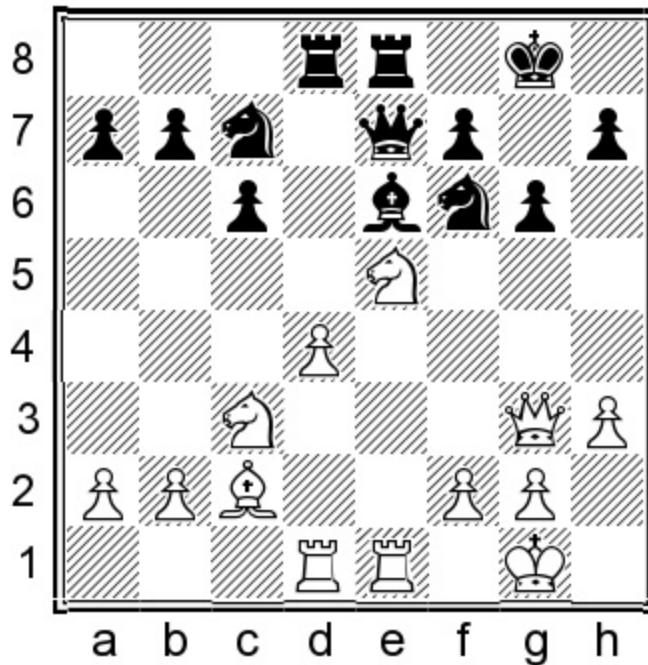
B) 13...♝a5?! 14.♗d2, with the threat of 15.♗xd5 (Razuvayev gave the sacrifice 14.♗xf7? as the refutation of 13...♝a5 but the zwischenzug 14...♞xc3! wins material for Black, e.g. 15.♗h6+ ♔h8 16.bxc3 ♜xb3 17.♗xb3 ♜xg5 18.♗f7+ ♜xf7 19.♗xf7 ♜d5!, with the idea of 20.c4 (or 20.♗e5 ♜f6) 20...♗f8 21.♗e6 ♜f4); the engine confirms that the text move is good, adding that the balance can also be maintained with 13...h6 14.♗h4 ♜e8 15.♗c1 a5!? 16.♗f3 ♜c7 17.♗e4 a4 18.♗xe6 ♜xe6 19.♗cd1 ♜a5.

#### **14.♗c2 ♜e8 15.♗d3 g6 16.♗f3 ♜fd5 17.♗xe7**

In the event of 17.♗h6 ♜f8 (17...♝g5?! 18.♗xg5 ♜xg5 19.♗e4) 18.♗xf8 ♜xf8 19.♗g3 f6 20.♗g4 ♜g7, the black position remains solid.

#### **17...♝xe7 18.♗g3 ♜ad8 19.♗ad1 ♜f6?**

The correct way was to drive off the ♜e5, the vanguard of the white army: 19...f6! 20.♗d3 (20.♗xg6? hxg6 21.♗xg6 ♜g7) 20...♝d6 21.♗xd6 (21.♗f3 ♜xc3 22.bxc3 ♜xa2 23.♗c5 ♜d5) 21...♜xd6 22.♗c5 b6 23.♗e4 ♜dd8 24.♗xd5 ♜xd5 25.♗a4 b5 26.♗b3 ♜g7 27.♗c5 ♜f7, with equality.



#### **20.f4!**

First White advances the ♘f2, as in the two Botvinnik games analysed earlier.

#### **20...♞h5 21.♗f2 f5?**

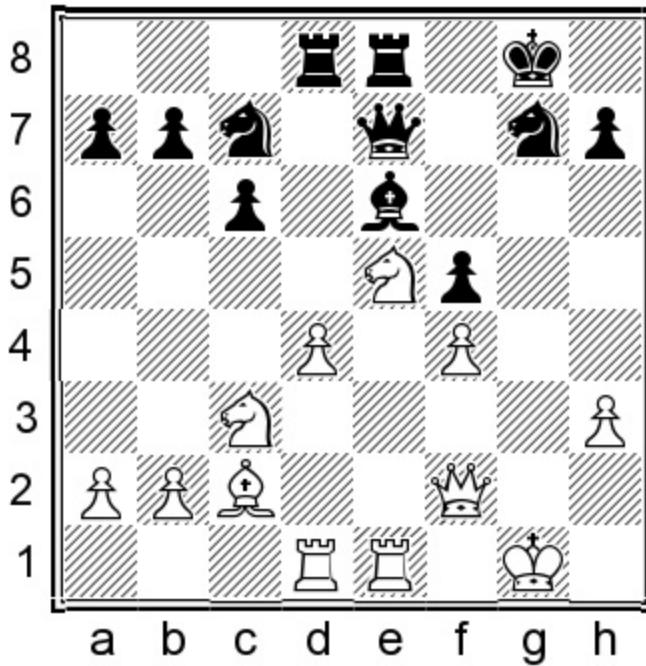
21... $\mathbb{W}f6$  was correct: 22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (23.g4?!  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  25.f5 gxf5 26. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  27. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ , with equality) 23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  24.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  25.fxg6 hxg6 26. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  g5!? 27. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  bxc6 30. $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  and, according to the engine, White's advantage is only 0.44.

## 22.g4!

Now it is the turn of another kingside pawn!

## 22... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 23.gxf5 gxf5?!

It was slightly better to play 23... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  gxf5 25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27.d5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  29. $\mathbb{W}h4!$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}de1$ , although in this case too White's advantage is clear.



The g-file leading to the black king is now open and there is no good defence against the attack of the white rooks, supported by the  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

## 24. $\mathbb{Q}h2!$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ cxd5 27. $\mathbb{Q}g6!$

This elegant move decides the game.

## 27... $\mathbb{Q}ce6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}e8$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$ 1-0

### 1.3. Plan B: opening the game by advancing the isolated pawn

This plan seems the most frequent in positions of this type and clearly shows the advantages of the side with the IQP. The following game clearly demonstrates the calculating ability and positional sense of the future World Champion, who was only twelve years old at the time.

Game 9  
Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Boris Spassky**  
**Sergei Avtonomov**  
Leningrad 1949

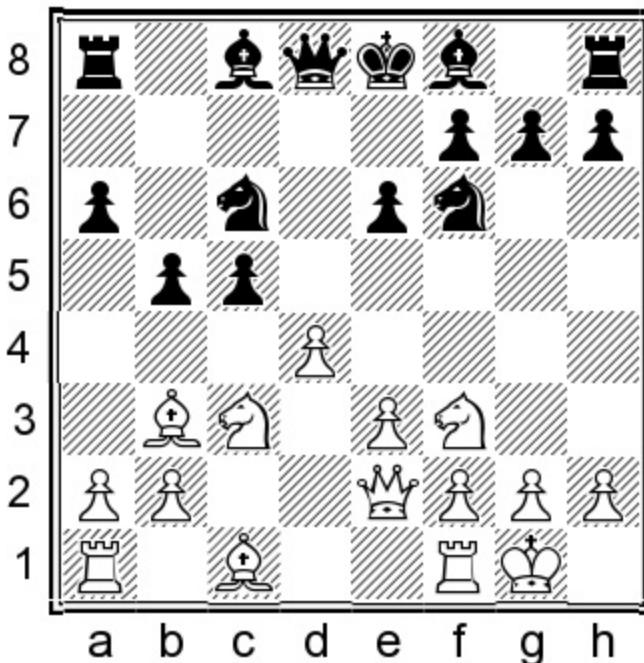
**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.0-0 a6 7.♗e2 b5 8.♗b3**

This is still the main line, although the alternative retreat of the bishop to d3 also has its supporters, e.g. 8.♗d3 cxd4 9.♗d1 ♘e7 10.a4! bxa4 11.♗xa4 (11.♗xd4!?) 11...dxe3 12.♗xe3 ♘bd7 13.♗c3, and White's initiative at the very least compensates for the pawn, Mamedyarov-Navara, Heraklion 2017.

**8...♗c6**

Modern theory considers it more accurate to play 8...♗b7! 9.♗d1 ♘bd7 10.♗c3 (10.e4!? cxd4 11.♗xd4 ♗c7 12.♗c3 ♘c5 13.♗e3 0-0 14.♗ac1 ♗b6 15.f3 ♗ac8, with a comfortable position for Black, Lenderman-Anton Guijarro, Douglas 2019) 10...♗b8 11.h3 ♘e7 12.d5 c4 13.dxe6 fxe6, with chances for both sides, Firouzja-Aronian, chess.com 2019; Stockfish considers that Black also equalizes with 8...♗e7!? 9.dxc5 ♘b7 10.♗c2 0-0 11.b4 a5 12.♗d1 ♗c7 13.bxa5 ♗xc5 14.♗b2 b4.

**9.♗c3**



## 9...cxd4?

This obvious move, as we already know from the previous examples, entails some risks and in this concrete case is a serious mistake. The modern main line is 9... $\mathbb{Q}b7!$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  (10.dxc5!?) 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  11.d5 (11.dxc5  $\mathbb{W}c7$ ) 11...exd5 12. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (12. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}c8!$ ) 13.e4 0-0 14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , and Black has no problems, Ju Wenjun-Krush, St Louis 2020) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  with equality, Zhao Jun-Xu Xiangyu, Tianjin 2018.

Stockfish also recommends 9... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ ? 10.dxc5 (10. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  11.d5 exd5 12. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  0-0 14.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  16.e4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , with equality, Harika-Guramishvili, Teheran 2017) 10... $\mathbb{W}c7$  11.e4 0-0 12.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ? 13. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , with chances for both sides.

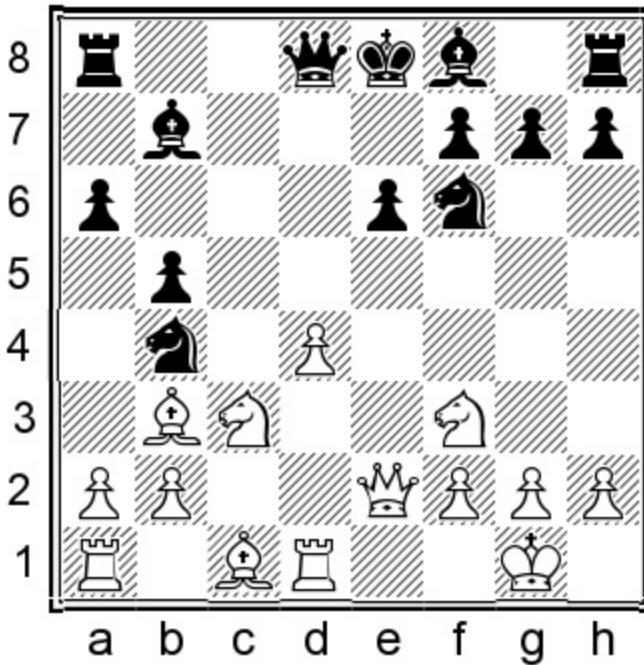
## 10. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$ $\mathbb{Q}b7?$

It was essential to play 10... $\mathbb{Q}a5!$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  12.e4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  14.axb3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0, when Black's pair of bishops provides some compensation for the pawn.

## 11.exd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4?$

This looks logical but is in fact the losing move.

The lesser of the evils would have been 11... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  12.d5!  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  13.dxe6  $\mathbb{W}c8$ !? (13... $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  14.exf7+  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  17. $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18.g4 1-0, Del Rio de Angelis-Berzinsh, Riga 2012) 14.exf7+  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  15.axb3.



## 12.d5!!

Black is covering the d5-square with five pieces; nevertheless this pawn break is very effective! The

engine already gives 3.09.

**12...Qbxd5**

12...Qfxd5? loses a piece after 13.a3.

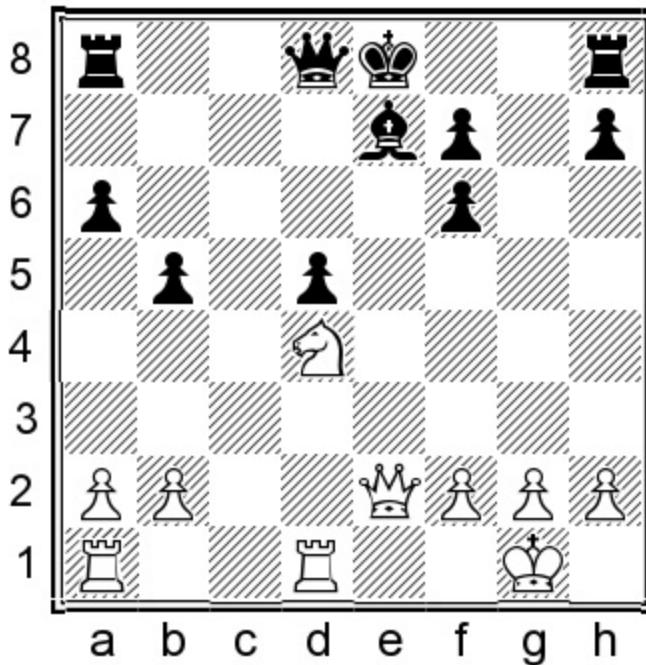
**13.Qg5!**

The key move!

**13...Qe7 14.Qxf6 gxf6 15.Qxd5 Qxd5**

Slightly more tenacious was 15...exd5 16.Qd4 Qd7 17.Qe1 Qf8 18.Qf5 Qc5 19.Qh5 h6 20.Qac1 Qc8.

**16.Qxd5 exd5 17.Qd4**



As a result of the positional sacrifice of the isolated pawn, its place has been taken by the Qd4, which is the key piece in White's attack.

**17...Qf8 18.Qf5 h5 19.Qxd5! Qxd5 20.Qxe7+ Qg8 21.Qxf6 1-0**

Game 10  
Tarrasch Defence  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
**Yury Balashov**  
Soviet Union 1974

This victory by the 9th World Champion, twenty-five years after the previous game by his successor,

is an example of the modern treatment of the typical IQP structure.

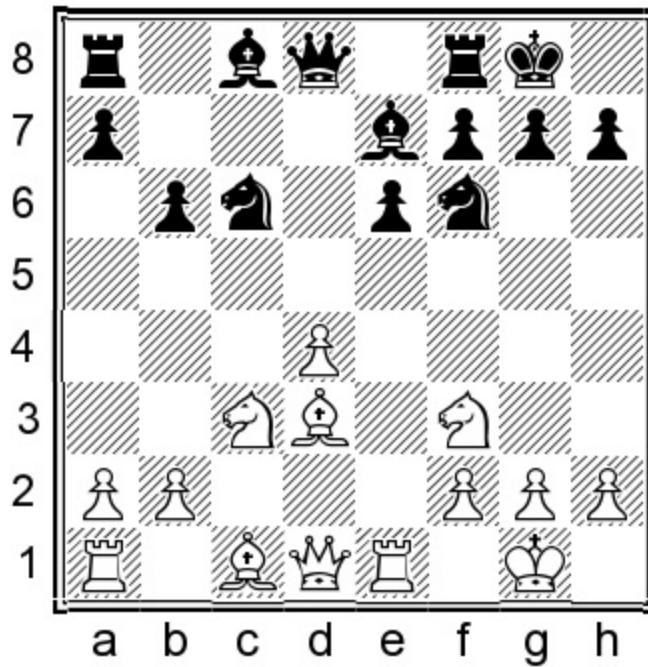
**1.c4 ♜f6 2.♗c3 e6 3.d4 ♜b4 4.e3 c5 5.♗d3 d5 6.♗f3 0-0 7.0-0 dxc4 8.♗xc4 ♜c6 9.♗d3**

Nowadays the main line is 9.a3 ♜a5 or 9...♜xc3.

**9...cxsd4 10.exd4 ♜e7 11.♗e1**

11.a3 b6 12.♗c2 (12.♗e1 leads to the game continuation) 12...♜a6 13.♗e1 ♜c8 14.♗g5 ♜d5 15.♗xe7 ♜cxe7 16.♗e4 ♜f5 17.♗c1 h6 18.♗d2 ♜b7, and the black position seems more promising, Antoli Royo-Rakhmanov, Barcelona 2012.

**11...b6**



**12.a3!**

The problem is that White has lost three tempi with his king's bishop compared to Black's two. For this reason the stereotyped plan of 12.♗g5 ♜b7 13.♗e2 does not work here, due to the capture on d4. According to Stockfish, after 12.♗e5 ♜b7 13.♗a6!? ♜xa6 14.♗xc6 ♜e8 15.♗xe7+ (15.d5 ♜d6!) 15...♜xe7 16.d5! White has a slight advantage.

**12...♜b7 13.♗c2**

The other retreat of the bishop retains the option of redeploying it on a2: 13.♗b1!? ♜c8 (Stockfish gives 13...h6 14.♗d3 ♜d7 15.b4 ♜fd8 16.d5 exd5 17.♗b2, with compensation for the pawn) 14.♗d3 ♜e8 15.♗g5 g6 16.♗a2!? ♜d5 17.♗h6 ♜xc3 18.bxc3 ♜f6 19.♗ad1, with chances for both sides, Gligoric-Furman, Portoroz/Ljubljana 1975.

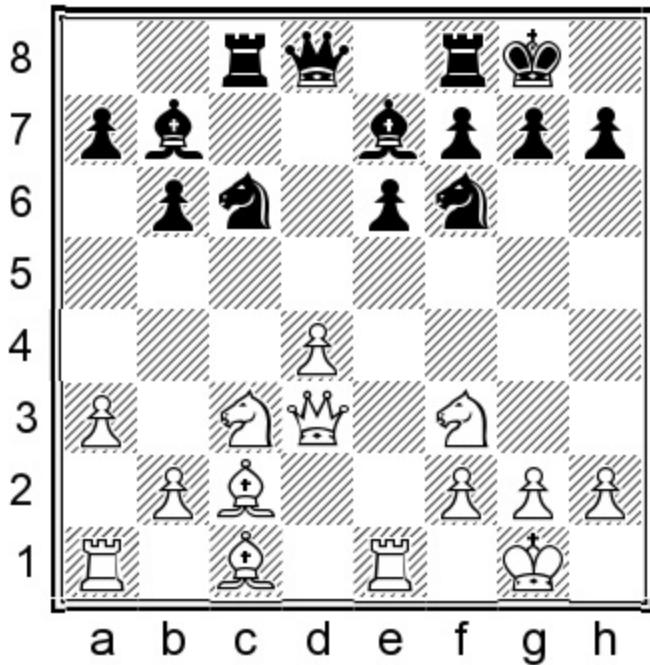
### 13... $\mathbb{E}c8$

This is still the main line, although Stockfish prefers 13... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (16... $\mathbb{E}c8$  17. $\mathbb{E}c1$  (17.d5!?) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , with chances for both sides, Timman-Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998) 17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18.dxe5  $\mathbb{W}xd1$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , awarding a tiny advantage to Black.

In the event of 13... $\mathbb{E}e8$  14. $\mathbb{W}d3$  g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  16. $\mathbb{E}ad1$ , White regains a tempo, since instead of the traditional route  $\mathbb{Q}c1-g5-h6$  his bishop has reached h6 in one move; nevertheless this was the correct way, e.g. 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ !? 17. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  (17. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  21.a4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , with the better game for Black, Korobov-Karjakin, Bucharest 2019) 17... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18. $\mathbb{W}d2$ !? (18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  is correct according to Stockfish) 18... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , with an equal position, Gaponenko-Charkhalashvili, Rijeka 2010.

The engine confirms that 13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  14. $\mathbb{W}d3$  g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  17. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  18. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  also leads to equality.

### 14. $\mathbb{W}d3$



### 14... $\mathbb{E}e8$ ?

Here the right move was 14...g6!, which leads to the line given in the previous note to 13... $\mathbb{E}e8$ . The engine adds a further branch: 15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  16. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 18. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  20.h3  $\mathbb{E}d7$  21. $\mathbb{W}e3$  g5 22. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , with a sharp but equal game.

There are several other moves which also maintain the balance, e.g. 14... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ !? 15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  16. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  (17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  achieves nothing after 17... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18.dxe5  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  19. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{E}xd1$  20. $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ) 17... $\mathbb{E}fd8$  18.d5  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{E}xd3$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$

$\mathbb{W}xe7$  23.  $\mathbb{B}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ; also interesting is this variation, featuring a positional exchange sacrifice: 14...  $\mathbb{B}c7$ !? 15.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  g6 16.  $\mathbb{B}ad1$  a6 17.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  18. d5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ! 20.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}xd1$  21.  $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$ .

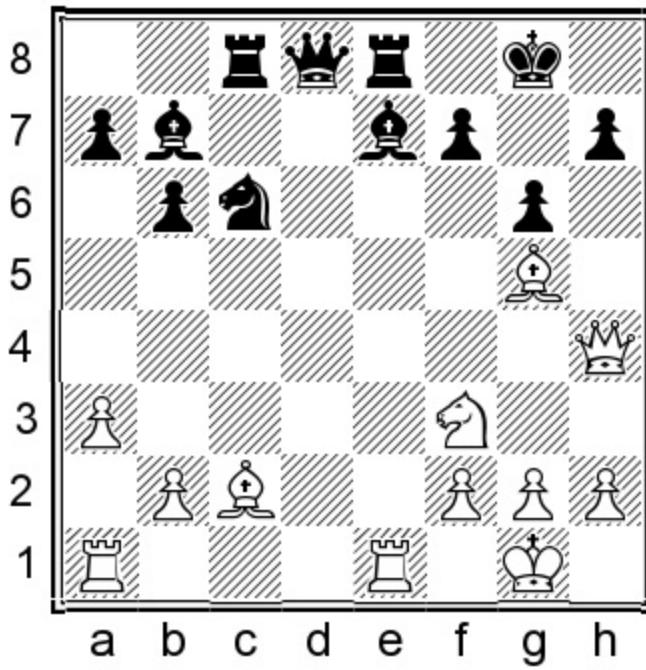
## 15.d5!! exd5

After the text move White has a score of 90%. The lesser of the evils was the positional exchange sacrifice 15...  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ !? 16.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !? (16.  $dxe6$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  17.  $exf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ !?) 19.  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ! and Black has compensation for the pawn) 16...  $\mathbb{B}xc3$ ! 17.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  18.  $\mathbb{B}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  19.  $\mathbb{W}d3$  h6 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  22. b4  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  23.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , and White's doubled pawns and the strong black knight on d4 make it hard for White to realize his small material advantage, Skytte-Nyzhnyk, Cappelle-la-Grande 2012.

## 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Here 16...g6? loses to 17.  $\mathbb{B}xe7$ !  $\mathbb{W}xe7$  (17...  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ) 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ .

## 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $dxe4$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xe4$ g6 19. $\mathbb{W}h4$

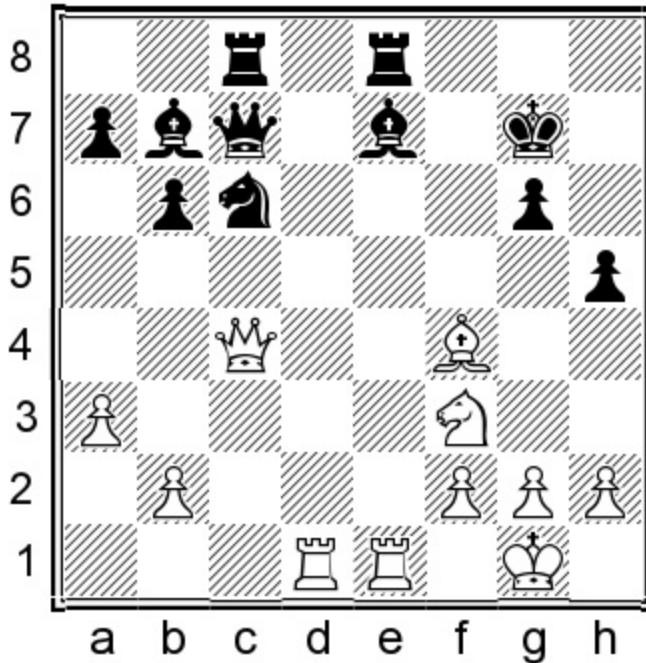


## 19... $\mathbb{W}c7$ ?

This loses by force. Stockfish gives the following evaluations to the three main alternatives: 19...  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  3.24, 19... h5 2.09 and 19...  $\mathbb{W}d7$  1.47. Despite such a long history, the advance d4-d5 continues to gain fresh victims, even among GMs rated 2600+: 19...  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ ? 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  h5 21.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  23.  $\mathbb{B}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  25.  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ +  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28.  $\mathbb{W}g3$ , with a decisive advantage to White, Del Rio de Angelis-Perez Candelario, Linares 2018.

It is curious that one year later the recently crowned 12th World Champion Anatoly Karpov fell into

the same trap as Balashov, who was one of his seconds! 19...h5?! 20.♗ad1?!! (20.♗b3! ♖c7? (the lesser evil was 20...♗xg5! 21.♗xg5 ♖xe1+ (21...♖c7 22.♗f4) 22.♗xe1 ♔g7 23.♗f4 ♖c7 24.♗xf7+ ♖xf7 25.♗xf7 ♗a5 26.♗d6 ♖c6) 21.♗e4! ♔g7 22.♗xf7 ♔xf7 23.♔h6!, winning) 20...♖c7 21.♗xg6!. Portisch thought that this sacrifice won, but... 21...fxg6 22.♗c4+?! (22.♗e6! ♖ed8! 23.♗de1 ♖d6 24.♗xe7 ♖xe6 25.♗xe6 ♗xe7 26.♗xe7 ♖d6 27.♗g5 would keep the advantage) 22...♔g7 23.♗f4.



*analysis diagram*

Karpov's next move came as a surprise for Portisch and saved the game: 23...♗a6!! (23...b5? 24.♗c1!) 24.♗c3+ (24.♗c1? ♖b7) 24...♔f6 25.♔xc7 ♔xc3 26.♗xe8 ♖xe8 27.bxc3 ♔e2! 28.♗e1 ♖c8! 29.♗xe2 ♖xc7 and the game ended in a draw, Portisch-Karpov, Milan 1975.

The following engine suggestion is the lesser evil: 19...♗d7! 20.♗b3! ♔f8 21.♗f4 ♖xe1+ 22.♗xe1 ♖e8 23.♗xe8 ♖xe8 24.♔d2! ♗d8 25.♗g5 h6 26.♗xf7 ♗xf7 27.♗f6 ♔h7 28.♔c3 ♗e7 29.♗xe7 ♔xe7 30.♗xf7, with an extra pawn for White.

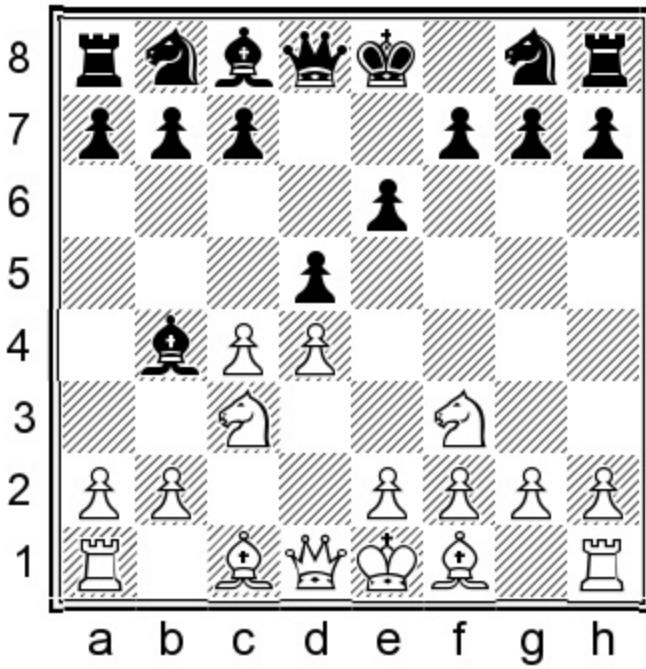
**20.♗b3 h5 21.♗e4! ♔g7 22.♗xf7! ♔xf7 23.♔h6! ♗d6 24.♗g5+ ♔f6 25.♗h7+ 1-0**

Mate is forced.

The advance of the IQP occurs most frequently with the white pieces but its effect can be equally explosive with black.

**Game 11**  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Erwin l'Ami** 2565  
**Ivan Sokolov** 2676  
 Hilversum ch-NED 2006 (4)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Qc3 Bb4 4.Qf3



4...c5

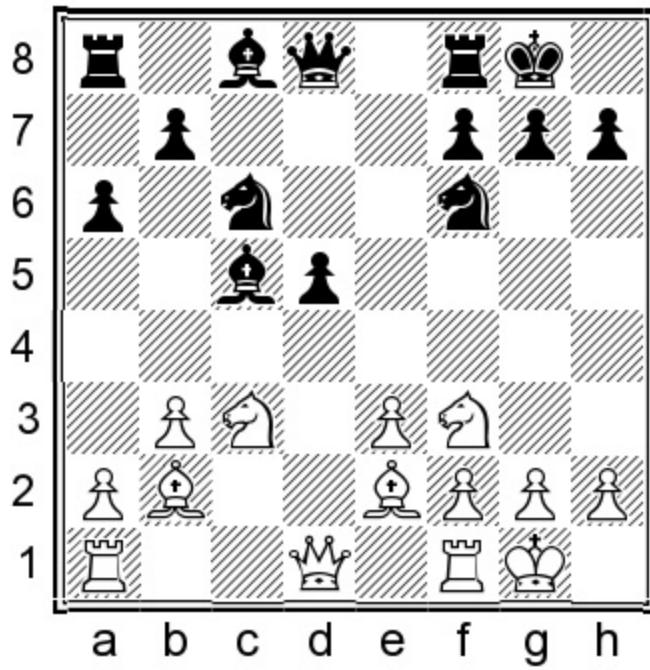
The text move is a hybrid of the Queen's Gambit and the Nimzo-Indian Defence. The main line is 4...Qf6, after which the currently most popular continuation is 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Qf4!? e.g. 6...0-0 (6...Qe4!?) 7.e3 Qf5!? 8.Bb3 Qc6 9.Qg5 a5 10.Qxf6 (10.Qb5!?) 10...Bxf6 11.a3 a4 12.Bxd5 Qxc3+ 13.bxc3 Qa5, with a sharp position, Caruana-Anand, Wijk aan Zee 2020.

Instead, 4...dxc4!? can lead to complications reminiscent of the Noteboom Variation, e.g. 5.Qg5 f6 (5...Qe7!?) 6.Qd2 a6 7.e3 b5 8.a4 Qxc3 9.Qxc3 Bd5 (9...Qb7!?) 10.Qd2 Qb7 11.axb5 axb5 12.Qxa8 Qxa8 13.b3, and White's initiative provides more than enough compensation for the pawn, Moroni-Riazantsev, Moscow 2020.

5.cxd5 exd5 6.dxc5 Qc6 7.e3 Qf6 8.Qe2

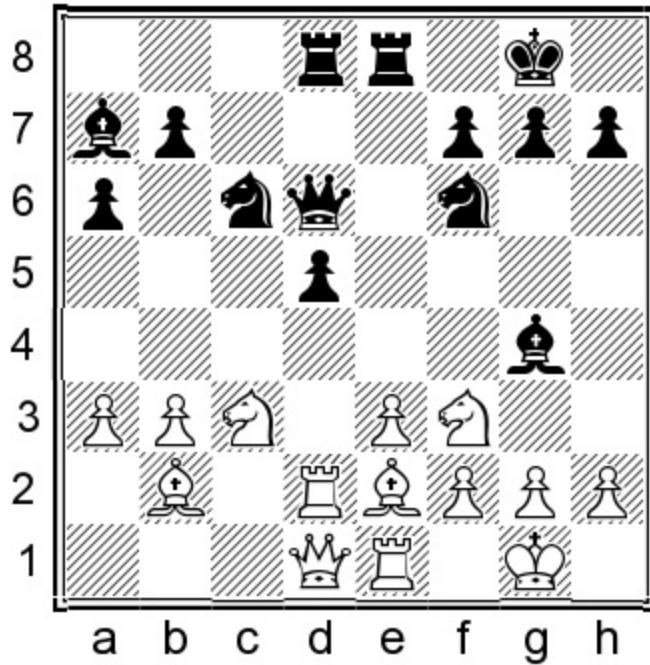
The engine recommends 8.Qb5!? 0-0 9.0-0 Qxc5 10.b3 Be8 11.Qb2.

8...0-0 9.0-0 Qxc5 10.b3 a6 11.Qb2



**11...Qa7**

Nowadays this is the main line, with a good score for Black. Twenty-four years earlier, Mikhail Tal won the following attractive game, using the same advance of the IQP: 11...Wd6 12.Ec1 (the engine recommends 12.Qa4 Qa7 13.Ec1 Ed8 14.Qd4 Qe5 15.Wc2) 12...Qa7 13.Ee1?! (13.Qb1!? Ed8 14.Qd4) 13...Ee8 14.a3?! (14.h3!) 14...Qg4 15.Ec2? (15.h3!) 15...Ead8 16.Ed2

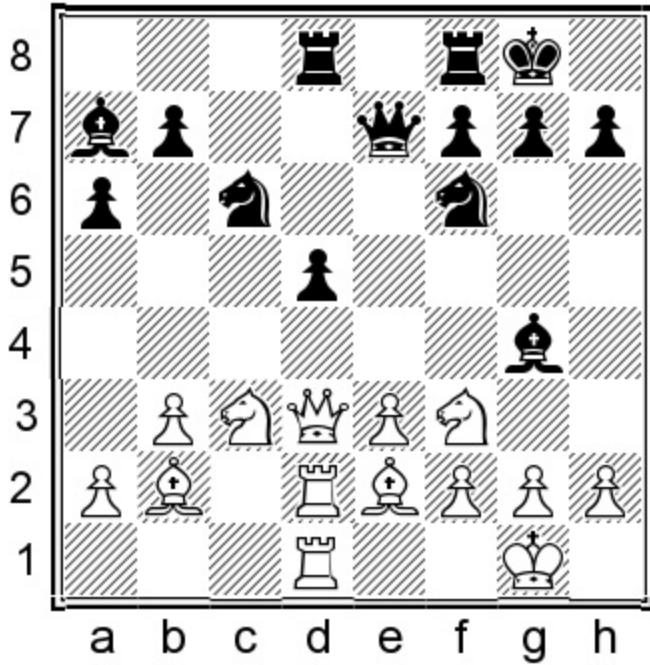


*analysis diagram*

16...d4! 17.Qxd4 Qxd4 18.exd4 Qxd4 19.Qxg4 (slightly more tenacious was 19.Qf3!? Exe1+

20.  $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  21.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d1!$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 19...  $\mathbb{E}xe1+$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ , with a decisive advantage to Black, continuing 21.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xg2$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}f3+$  25.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  26.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f3+$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xb3+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-1, Wirthensohn-Tal, Lucerne ol 1982.

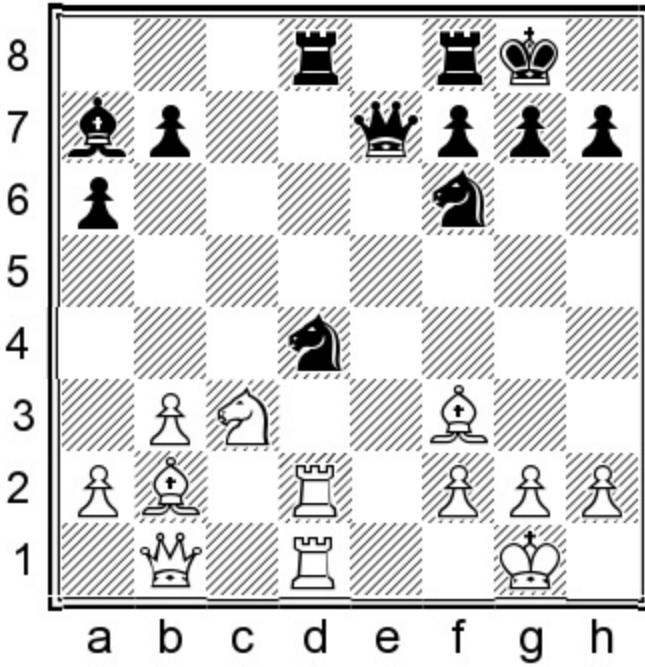
**12.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  14.  $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  15.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$**



**16.  $\mathbb{W}b1?!$**

White's plan of directly attacking the isolated pawn, instead of blockading it, is perfectly playable. However, his last move is an error which allows the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  to advance. Instead, 16.  $h3$  was better, e.g. 16...  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (16...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3?!$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $d4$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $bcx6$  (18...  $dxc3??$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xd8$ ) 19.  $exd4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  20.  $\mathbb{W}e2$ , with a slight advantage to White) 17.  $\mathbb{W}f5!$  (17.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  18.  $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  20.  $\mathbb{W}f1$ ) 17...  $\mathbb{W}e6$  18.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $h6$  19.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ , with a complicated position which is slightly better for White.

**16...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $d4!$  18.  $exd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$**



**19.  $\mathbb{Q}e4?$**

Black is more active but White could maintain equality by not fearing the doubled pawns: 19.  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  20.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  22.  $\mathbb{W}f5$ ; it seems that in his calculations Erwin overlooked his opponent's 22nd move.

**19...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  20.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}g5+$  22.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2+!$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f1?$**

23.  $\mathbb{Q}g2!$  was correct. In contrast to the text move, in the coming endgame White could keep his king more active than in the game: 23...  $\mathbb{W}xg4+$  (23...  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $h5$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $f6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  29.  $f4$   $h4+$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , with good practical chances of saving this endgame, although Stockfish gives -0.91) 24.  $fxg4$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $h6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , and Black cannot realize his extra pawn, because the enemy king controls the centre, e.g. 29...  $g6$  (29...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  (preventing 30...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , which would lead to a decisive advantage for Black) 30...  $g6+$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $f6$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  etc.) 30.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $f6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $h5$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  etc.

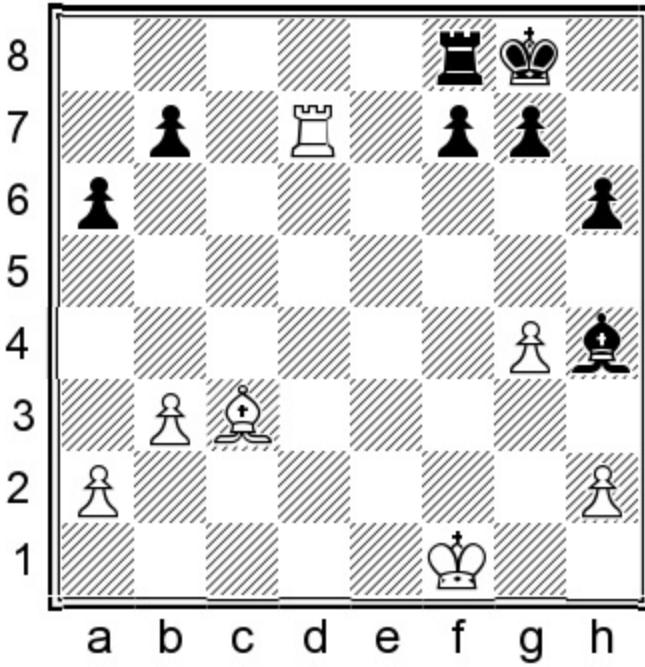
**23...  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  24.  $fxg4$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $h6$**

Black has won a pawn, although realizing it is still not easy with the white rook on the seventh rank.

**26.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$**

Here too it was better to move the king towards the centre with 26.  $\mathbb{Q}e2!?$ .

**26...  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$**



**27...♜c8!**

By threatening to evict the white rook from the seventh rank with this and the next move, Black is able to force a transition to a rook ending, increasing his advantage.

**28.♚e5 ♜e8! 29.♚g3**

29.♚d6?? fails to 29...♜e1+ 30.♝g2 ♜d1. In the event of 29.♚c3 ♜e7 (29...♜c8!?) 30.♜xe7 ♜xe7 31.♝e2 ♜h7 32.♝f3 ♜g6 33.♝e4 ♜f6 34.♝d2 h5 35.h3 ♜g5 36.♝b4, Black's winning plan is as follows: exchange pawns on g4, play ...f7-f6 and then ...♝g6-g5, forcing ♜e4-f3, then, with his bishop on c1 or d2, play ...g7-g6 and ...f6-f5, before finally centralizing the king, after which Black can win the pawn-up bishop ending in typical fashion. The key is that with the black king on g6 the position is winning, unlike the earlier variation with 24.♝g2!.

**29...♝xg3 30.hxg3 b5 31.♜a7 ♜e6 32.♝f2 ♜c6 33.a4**

33.a3!? deserved attention, since the text move loses by force.

**33...♜c2+ 34.♝f3 ♜c3+ 35.♝f2 bxa4 36.bxa4 ♜c4 37.♜xa6 ♜xg4**

Sokolov has conducted this ending with great skill, achieving a decisive theoretical advantage on the kingside, where he now has a 3-1 pawn majority.

**38.♝f3 h5 39.♜a5 g6 40.♜a7 ♜g7 41.a5**

Equally hopeless was 41.♜a6 g5 42.♝f2 f6 43.♝f3 ♜g6 44.♜a5 ♜b4 45.♝e3 ♜c4 46.♝f3 ♜c2! 47.♝e3 g4 48.♜b5 (48.♜d5) 48...♜g2 49.♝f4 ♜f2+ 50.♝e4 ♜f3.

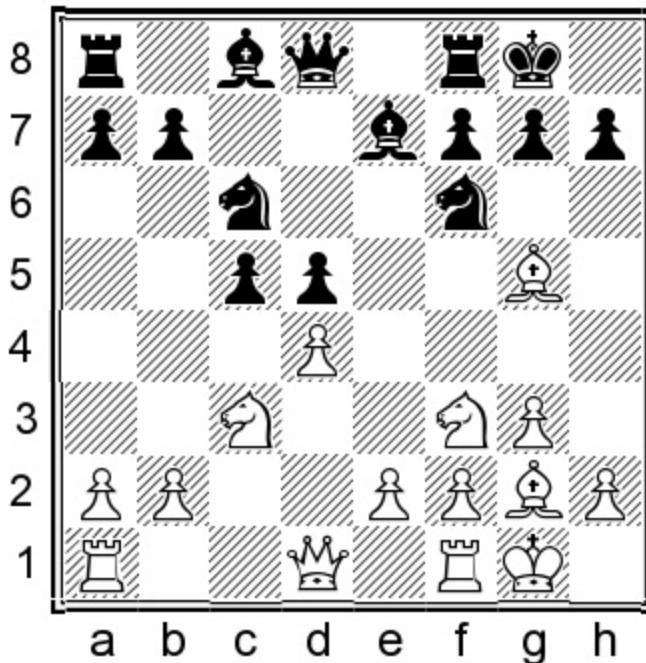
41... $\mathbb{E}a4$  42.a6  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g5 44. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  f6 0-1

#### 1.4. Plan C: advancing the isolated pawn in order to fix an enemy pawn on an adjacent file

This plan occurs most frequently in structures with a black IQP arising from the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit. However, there are also cases with a white IQP.

Game 12  
Tarrasch Defence  
**Nikolay Novotelnov**  
**Igor Bondarevsky**  
Moscow ch-URS 1951 (1)

1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f3 ♘c6 6.g3 ♘f6 7.♗g2 ♗e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♗g5



9...♗e6

In the past, the text move was a favourite of several classical players, including the 3rd World Champion Capablanca. However, as indicated in the commentary below, White can bring about a somewhat advantageous endgame by force. For this reason the players of today usually prefer 9...cxd4 10.♗xd4 h6.

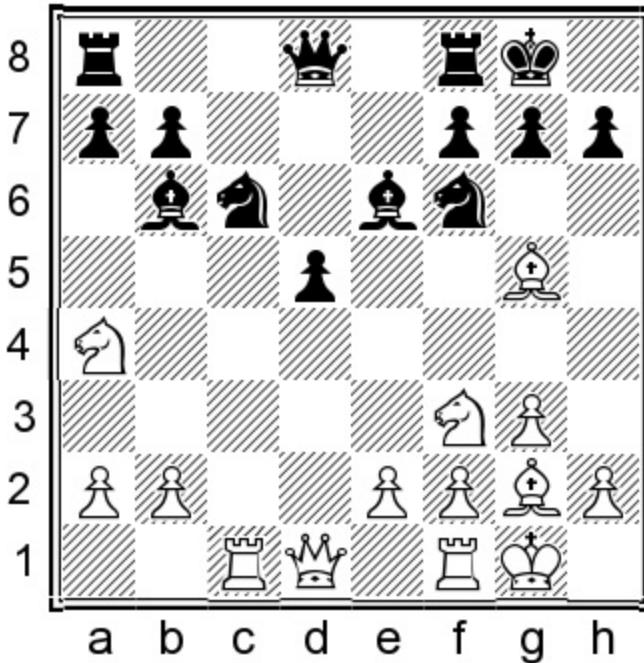
**10.dxc5 ♘xc5 11.♗c1!?**

This is still the main line. After 11.♗xf6!? ♘xf6 12.♗xd5 ♘xb2 13.♗c7 ♘ad8 14.♗c1 ♘xc1 15.♗axc1 ♘b6 (15...b6!?) 16.♗xe6 fxe6 17.♗c4 Black is condemned to a defensive struggle in a somewhat inferior position, Smirin-Kiewra, Rockville 2016. It is curious that Stockfish awards 0.88 to the text move and 0.68 to the capture on f6, although the overall score of each of these moves, both quite favourable to White, is practically the same.

**11...♝b6**

Preparing the following original move.

**12.♞a4**



**12...d4!**

Bondarevsky's idea is not very obvious and thus will surely remain in the reader's memory. It is curious that fifteen years later his favourite pupil played in a similar manner: 12...h6 13.♝xf6 ♜xf6 14.♞xb6 axb6 15.♝b3 ♜d8 16.a3 d4! Chernikov-Spassky, Moscow 1966. Stockfish evaluates both move-orders positively!

**13.♞xb6**

The opinion of the engine is interesting here: instead of the immediate capture on b6 it prefers 13.♞e1!? h6 14.♝xf6 ♜xf6 15.♞d3 ♜e7 16.♞xb6 axb6 17.a3 ♜ad8 18.♞f4 ♜d6 19.♞xe6 ♜xe6 20.♜c2 ♜e8 21.♞f3, and White's position is more promising than in the game.

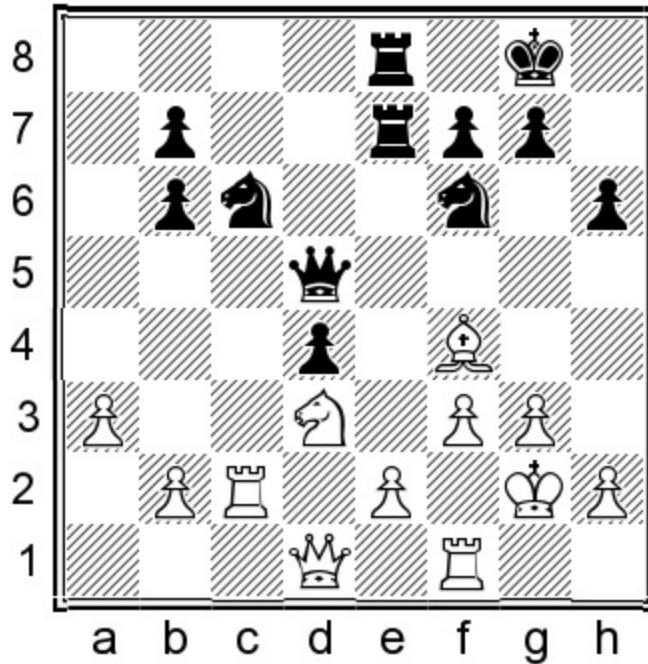
**13...axb6 14.a3 h6 15.♞f4**

This move does not create any problems for Black. However, White's other responses also fail to disturb the balance, e.g. 15.♝xf6 ♜xf6 16.♝d3 (16.♞e1!?) 16...♜fe8 17.h3 ♜f5 18.♝b5 ♜e4 19.♞d2 (19.♝xb6? d3) 19...♝xg2 20.♝xg2 ♜a5 21.♝xb6 ♜xe2; or 15.♞d2!? ♜d5 16.♞e1 ♜e8 17.e4 dxe3 18.♞xe3 ♜xe3 19.♞xe3 ♜xd1+ 20.♝xd1 ♜ed8.

**15...♞d5! 16.♞e1?**

Although Stockfish awards the same valuation of 0.00 to other moves, such as 16... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and 16.h4, retreating the bishop to d2 is the most human move – ‘it takes a wise man to recognize that he was wrong’.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  18. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}d5+$  19.f3  $\mathbb{E}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}ae8$**



Following the exchange of the  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ , White’s position has deteriorated with every move and now Black’s pressure along the e-file is the decisive factor.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b3$  22. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3+?!$**

Exchanging his powerful knight for the passive bishop. Instead, 23... $\mathbb{E}e6!$  24. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  was better.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  25. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f2?$**

Optically the white position seems unattractive, but after 27. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$  there is no clear way for Black to increase his advantage, e.g. 27... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (27... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  28. $\mathbb{E}d3$  g5 (28... $\mathbb{E}e5$  29. $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  32.h4 g6 33. $\mathbb{Q}f4) 29.\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  b5 32. $\mathbb{Q}c2) 28.\mathbb{Q}g1$  g6 29. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}b3$  (29... $\mathbb{E}3e5?!$  30.b4!) 30. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}be3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ .

**27... $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

An interesting alternative here was 27... $\mathbb{Q}b3?!$  28. $\mathbb{E}c2$  g5.

**28. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{E}3e7$  29. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  30. $\mathbb{E}c8$   $\mathbb{W}h5?!$**

30...g5!..

31.♔g1 ♘h3 32.♕xe8+ ♘xe8 33.♗f4 ♘d7 34.♘d2

Probably it was better to exchange the annoying ♔e3 with 34.♔g2!?, e.g. 34...♖c8 35.♘d2 ♖c2 36.♘d3 ♔xg2 37.♔xg2 ♖xb2 38.♖d1 b5 39.♔e4.

34...g5 35.♔g2 ♗c4 36.♘c2 ♘e6 37.♔f2 b5 38.♖d1?

It is not easy to endure an inferior position for long. It was more tenacious to play 38.b3!, e.g. 38...♔e5 39.♔e4 ♖xb3 40.♘xd4 ♖xa3 41.♔e3.

38...♘h3 39.♔g1 ♘xg2+! 0-1

Game 13

King's Indian Defence

Vasily Smyslov

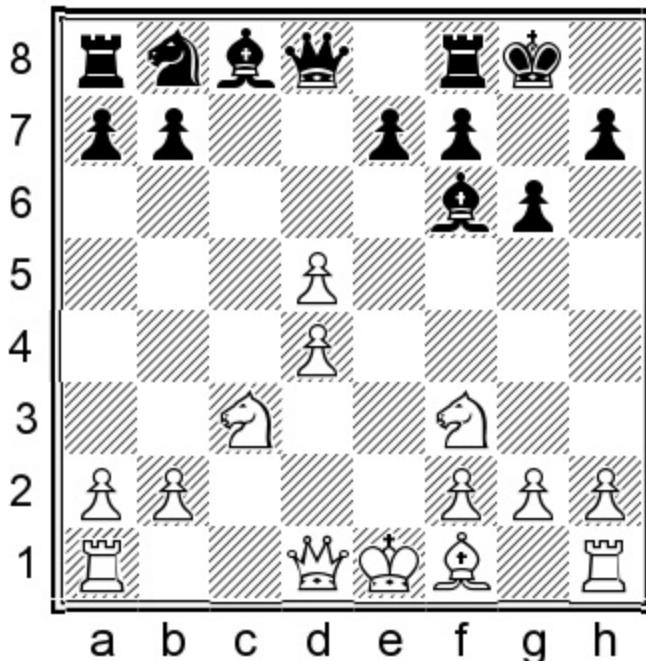
Vladimir Liberzon

Moscow ch-URS 1969 (12)

I think that this game is a good illustration of a saying of the 7th World Champion: 'I shall make forty good moves, and if you can match them, then fine, I'll offer a draw'. As a reminder to young players, in the last century, games were adjourned after move 40.

1.c4 g6 2.♘c3 ♘g7 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘g5 c5 5.e3 cxd4 6.exd4 d5 7.♘xf6 ♘xf6 8.cxd5 0-0 9.♘f3

9.♘c4!? is more ambitious, although it does not seem to pose Black too many problems, e.g. 9...♗b6 10.♗ge2 ♖xb2 11.♗b1 ♖a3 12.0-0 ♘d7 13.♗b3 ♘b6 14.♘d2 ♖a5 15.♗g3 ♘d7, with chances for both sides, Aronian-Carlsen, Moscow 2009.



**9...♝d7**

Thirty-eight years later this position occurred in the game of another ex-World Champion: 9...♝g4 10.♝c4 ♝xf3 11.♛xf3 ♝xd4 12.♝d1 ♝xc3+ (12...♝e5!? 13.h4 h5 14.g4 ♛c8) 13.♛xc3 ♛d6 14.0-0 ♜d7 15.♝fe1 ♞ac8 16.♛d4 ♜b6 17.♝b3, with an equal game that White steered to victory, Karpov-Kasimdzhanov, Bastia 2007.

Stockfish considers the following gambit, which has never appeared in games between humans, to be sound: 9...♝g7 10.♛b3 e6!? 11.dxe6 ♝xe6 12.♛xb7 ♛e8 13.♝e2 ♜c6 14.0-0 ♜b8 15.♛a6 ♜xd4 16.♜xd4 ♝xd4 17.♝ad1 ♛g7.

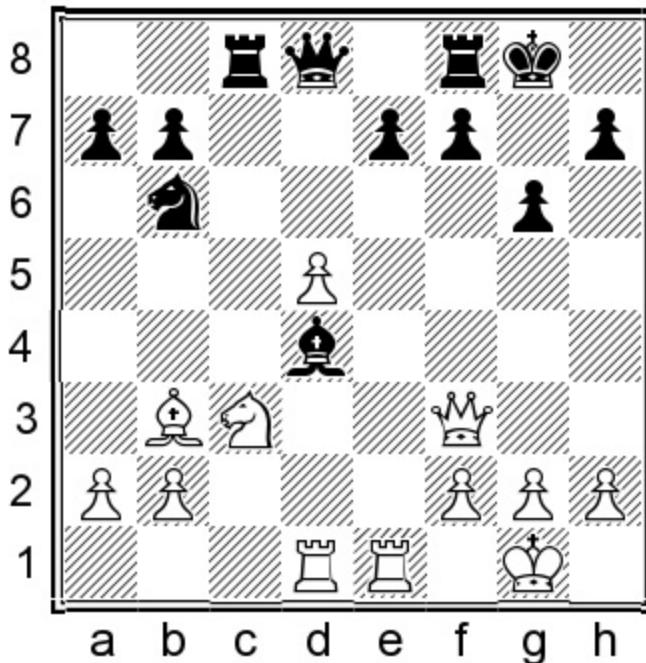
**10.♝c4 ♜b6 11.♝b3 ♛g4 12.0-0 ♜c8**

Another typical plan is to blockade the passed pawn: 12...♝c8!? 13.h3 ♝xf3 14.♛xf3 ♝xd4 15.♝ad1 ♛g7 16.d6 ♜xd6 17.♝e4 ♛c7 18.♜xd6 exd6 19.♝c1, and White's initiative compensates for the sacrificed pawn, but nothing more, Hayrapetyan-Konguvel, Hyderabad 2013.

**13.♝e1**

Here 13.♝b1!? deserves attention, e.g. 13...♛d7 (13...♝c4!?) 14.♝e1 ♝xf3 15.♛xf3 ♝xd4 16.♝e4 ♛g7 17.♝bd1 ♜c4 18.♝xc4 ♜xc4 19.d6 exd6 20.♜xd6 ♜d4 21.♝xb7 ♜xd1 22.♝xd1 ♛a4 23.b3 ♛xa2 24.g3, and the white position is slightly better, since the ♛g7 is shooting in the air, Korobov-Sunilduth, Dubai 2017.

**13...♝xf3 14.♛xf3 ♝xd4 15.♝ad1**



**15...♝xc3**

It seems to make more sense for Black to abstain from the exchange on c3 and preserve the bishop, which is protecting his king as well as the ♜e7: 15...♝g7?!? 16.d6 exd6 17.♝xb7 a5, with equality. It is interesting to compare this human evaluation, made thirty-five years ago, with the opinion of Stockfish, which assesses both the text move and the retreat of this bishop, to g7 or c5, as completely equal (0.00); the engine supplies a rather different variation: 15...♝g7 16.h4 ♜c4 17.♝xc4 ♜xc4 18.♝e3 ♜b4 19.♝e2 ♜b6 20.♝xb6 ♜xb6 21.♝xe7 ♜xb2 22.♝e4 ♜xa2 23.♝xb7 ♜d8 24.d6, which looks somewhat risky to human eyes.

### **16.bxc3 ♜d6 17.h4 h5?!**

17...♝g7? leads to a clear advantage for White after 18.h5 ♜f6 19.h6+ (19.♝e3!?) 19...♝xh6 20.♝xf6 exf6 21.♝e7 Kuzmicz-Heberla, Porto 2015.

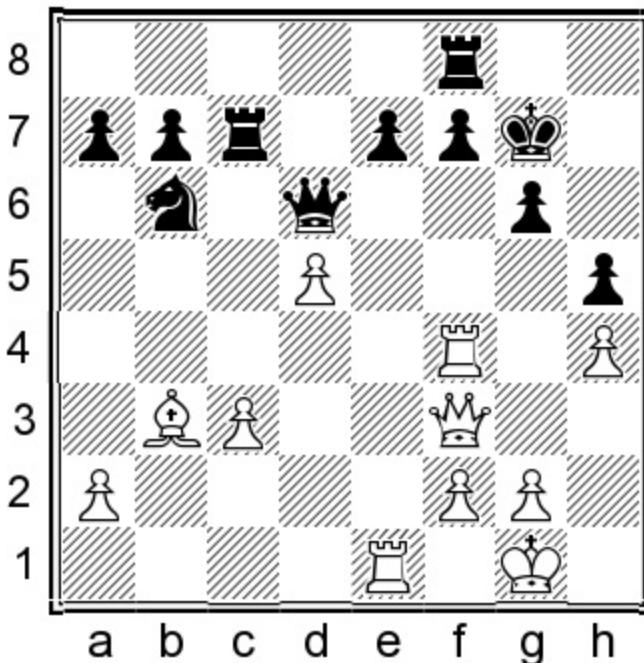
The right idea was first to undermine the position of the ♜b3 with 17...a5! 18.a4 (Black has sufficient counterplay in the event of 18.♝e4 ♜c7 19.h5 ♜fc8 or 18.h5 a4 19.♝c2 ♜c5) 18...h5, and the advance 19.g4 leads to perpetual check after 19...hxg4 20.♝xg4 ♜xc3 21.♝e6 fxe6 22.♝xg6+ ♔h8 23.♝h6+.

### **18.♝d4?!**

Here White could have gained a strong initiative by sacrificing a pawn with 18.g4! hxg4 19.♝xg4 ♜xc3 20.h5. The engine confirms this with an evaluation of 0.90.

### **18...♝g7 19.♝f4 ♜c7?**

The correct way was 19...a5! 20.a4 ♜d7, e.g. 21.g3 ♜f6 22.c4 ♜c7 23.♝c3 b6, with equality.



### **20.♝e6!**

This attractive move signals the start of an attack on the black king.

**20... $\mathbb{W}d8$  21. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  22. $\mathbb{E}fe4?!$**

22.g4! was better: 22...hxg4 23. $\mathbb{E}xg4$  f5 (or 23... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24. $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  25. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  26.h5!) 24. $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  25.h5!.

**22...a5! 23.a4  $\mathbb{W}f6?$**

Black could still have resisted with 23... $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$  24. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  25. $\mathbb{E}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  26. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{W}e1+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28.d6  $\mathbb{W}e5+$  29.g3 b5!.

**24. $\mathbb{E}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  25. $\mathbb{E}e6!$**

The rook revisits the same place but this time the effect is devastating.

**25... $\mathbb{W}c5$  26. $\mathbb{E}xg6+!$  fxg6 27. $\mathbb{E}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  28. $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  29. $\mathbb{W}f4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30. $\mathbb{E}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  31.d6  $\mathbb{W}xb3$  32. $\mathbb{E}f8+$  1-0**

## 1.5. Plan D: developing activity on the queenside

Usually this plan is employed when two conditions are present:

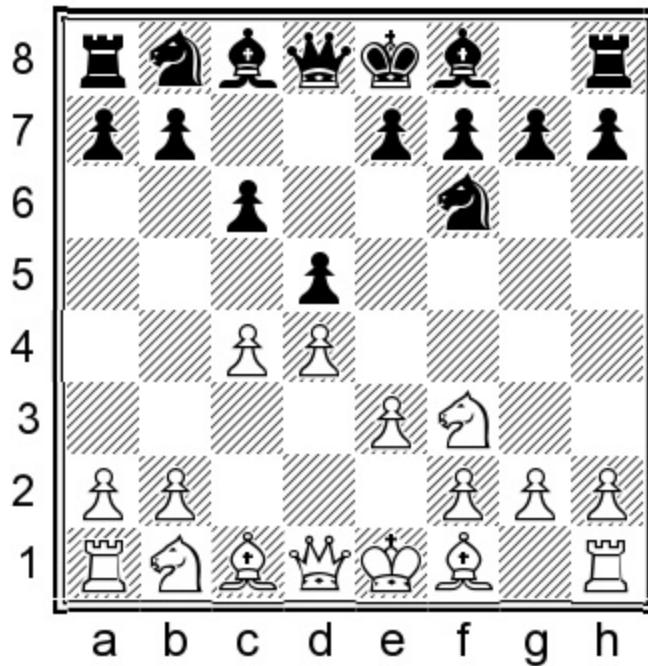
- i) when the side with IQP controls the c-file and has possible invasion points there;
- ii) when there are targets in this sector of the board.

The realization of this plan is often connected with an exchange of pieces on the square in front of the IQP and if the opponent is forced to recapture with a pawn. Such an exchange brings about a symmetrical structure in which both sides have an isolated pawn and the usual disadvantages of the IQP disappear.

Game 14  
Slav Defence  
**José Raúl Capablanca**  
**Alexander Alekhine**  
St Petersburg 1913 (2)

This game between two future World Champions is a good demonstration of the advantages of Plan D.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 ♜f6 4.♗f3**



**4...e6**

The text move is still the main line, although bringing out the ♜c8 to f5 or g4 seems more logical and has a slightly better score in practice.

## **5.♘bd2 ♘bd7**

Again the main line, although several contemporary players prefer to fianchetto the ♜c8, e.g. 5...b6 6.♗d3 ♜b7 7.0-0 ♜e7 8.e4 dxe4 9.♘xe4 ♘bd7 10.♗e2 ♘xe4 11.♗xe4 ♘f6 12.♗c2 0-0 13.♗d1 ♜c7 14.♗e5 c5 15.♗f4 ♜d6 16.dxc5 ♜xc5 17.♗g3 (17.♗g6? ♜c6) 17...♗fd8 18.♗d7 ♜c6, with equality, Ganguly-Fedoseev, Khanty-Mansiysk 2019.

There are also supporters of the idea of trying to exploit the position of the white knight on d2 with 5...c5!?, not fearing the tempo loss, e.g. 6.dxc5 ♜xc5 7.a3 a5 8.♗c2 0-0 9.b3 b6 10.♗b2 ♜b7 11.♗d3 ♘bd7, with chances for both sides, Duda-Navara, Prague 2019.

## **6.♗d3 ♜e7**

The fashionable continuation now is 6...♗d6 7.0-0 0-0 8.e4 e5!?.

### **7.0-0 0-0 8.♗c2 dxc4**

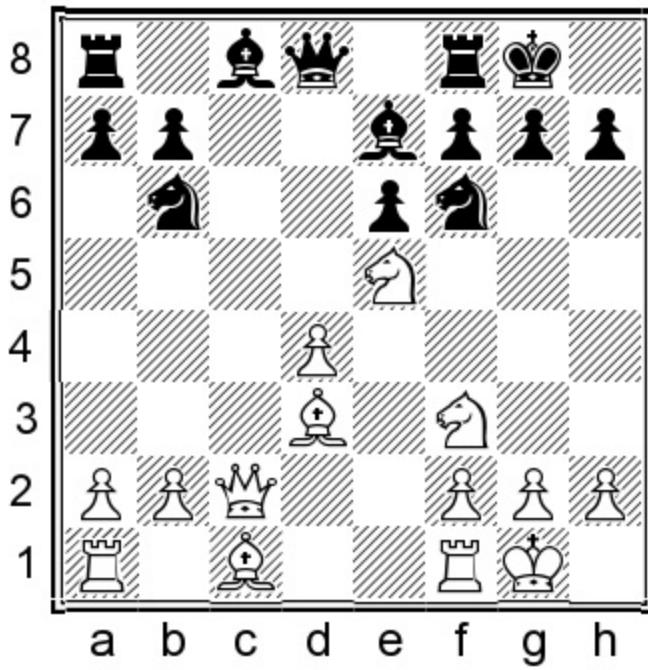
A currently popular line is 8...b6 9.e4 (Stockfish gives the same evaluation of equality both to this move and the main alternative: 9.b3 ♜b7 10.♗d1 h6 11.♗b2 ♜c8 12.e4 dxe4 13.♘xe4 ♘xe4 14.♘xe4 ♜c7) 9...dxe4 10.♘xe4 ♜b7 11.♗d1 ♘xe4 12.♘xe4 ♘f6 13.♗d3 ♜c7, e.g. 14.c5 bxc5 15.dxc5 a5 16.♗g5 ♜a6, with chances for both sides, Vardanian-Sveshnikov, Erevan 2012.

### **9.♘xc4 c5 10.♘ce5 cxd4**

As is often the case in this type of position, the premature capture on d4 can cause problems for Black. The solution suggested by Stockfish is quite original and can serve as an excellent exercise in positional play: 10...h6!? 11.♗d1 cxd4 12.exd4 b6!! 13.♘c6 ♜e8 14.♘xe7+ ♜xe7 15.♗c7 a5 16.♗g3 ♘h5 17.♗g4 ♘hf6.

### **11.exd4 ♘b6?**

A serious error. It was better to prevent White's next move with 11...h6.



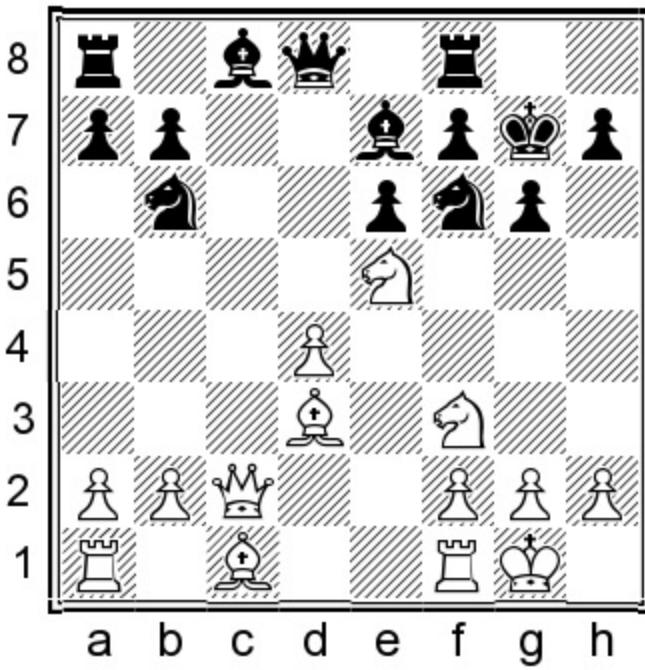
**12.♘g5!**

The computer confirms that this and the following move by Capablanca are the best. Another interesting possibility would be the plan of attacking with pawns, e.g. 12.g4!? ♘bd5 13.a3 ♙d7 (13...g6? 14.♗h6 ♜e8 15.♗xf7! ♖xf7 16.♗xg6+ hxg6 17.♗e5+, winning) 14.g5 ♜c8 15.♗b1 ♘h5 16.♗xh7+, and White has the initiative.

**12...g6 13.♗gf3!**

13.♗d2!? would have been less clear, e.g. 13...♗d7! (13...♗xd4? 14.♗gxf7!).

**13...♗g7**



**14.Bg5?!**

Developing the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  prematurely can sometimes lead to exchanges, which are exactly what Black seeks. It was more accurate to play 14.h4!  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $bxc6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ , with the better game for White in view of his bishop pair and attacking possibilities on the kingside.

A standard plan was also quite good here: 14. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  16.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**14...Qbd5**

It seems that 14... $\mathbb{Q}fd5!?$ , with the idea of exchanging bishops, was more accurate, e.g. 15. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (the following beautiful variation indicated by the engine holds the balance: 15.h4!? f6 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  17. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $fxg5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  21.g4  $\mathbb{W}h6$  22. $hxg5$   $\mathbb{W}h3$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  24. $\mathbb{W}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  26. $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}xg4+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5+$  29. $dxe5$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}g4+$ , with perpetual check) 15... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  17.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  18. $\mathbb{W}d2$  f6, and Black has no problems.

**15.Qac1 Qd7 16.Wd2 Qg8 17.Qxe7 Wxe7**

It was more natural to play 17... $\mathbb{Q}gxe7!?$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  f6, but curiously the engine confirms that all three captures on e7 are sufficient to maintain the balance.

**18.Qe4!?**

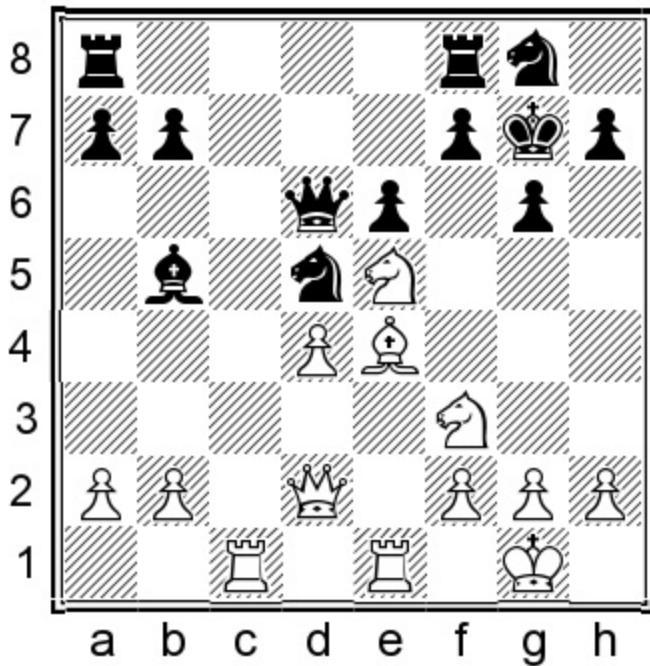
The start of an interesting plan; White is able to implement it in the game, but only with some help from the opponent. Objectively stronger was 18. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}gf6$  20.h4  $\mathbb{W}d6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

**18...♝b5?!**

Here 18...♝gf6 was correct, e.g. 19.♝c2 (or 19.♝xd5 ♜xd5 20.♝g4 f6 21.♛h6+ ♔h8 22.♝e3 ♜c6) 19...♜ac8 20.♝b3 ♜d6 21.♝g5 ♜xc1 22.♜xc1 ♜e7 23.♛f4 ♜f5!, underlining the weakness of the ♜d4.

**19.♜fe1 ♜d6?**

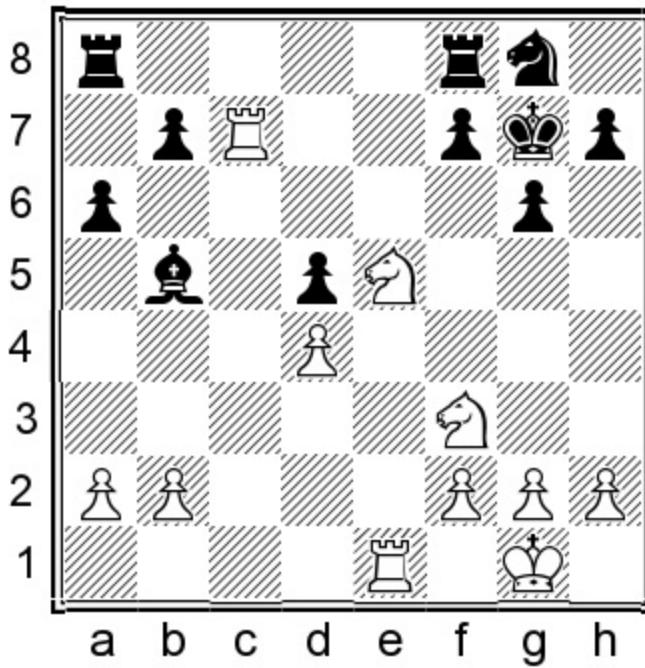
White's advantage would be decisive after 19...♝gf6? 20.♝xd5! ♜xd5 21.♜c5 ♜d7 22.♜xd5! exd5 23.♝xg6!; however, Black could maintain a defensible position with 19...♝df6!, e.g. 20.♜c5 (probably Alekhine was afraid of the sharp variation 20.♝g5!? h6 21.♝xg6! hxg5 22.♝xf7, but Black's defence is adequate: 22...♝d5! 23.♜c5 ♜c6 24.♝xe6 ♜xe6 25.♝xc6 ♜f5 26.♝b4 ♜f4 27.♛xf4 ♜xf4 28.♜xg5+ ♔h6 29.h4 ♜ad8, with only a very slight advantage to White) 20...♝xe4 21.♜xe4 a6 22.♝c3 ♜f6 23.♜e1 ♜d8 24.♝g5 ♔g8! (24...h6? 25.♝exf7!) 25.♜e3 ♔e8!.



**20.♝xd5! exd5 21.♛a5 a6?!**

21...♜c6!? 22.♝xc6 bxc6 23.♝e5 ♜e7 was more tenacious, although White would have a clear advantage, in view of his superior piece activity and the weakness of the ♜c6.

**22.♛c7 ♜xc7 23.♜xc7**



**23...h6**

Thanks to the greater activity of his pieces, in particular the rook on the seventh rank, White has a winning position, e.g. 23...b6 24.♕g5 ♜ae8 25.♕gxf7.

**24.♖xb7 ♜ac8 25.b3 ♜c2 26.a4 ♜e2 27.♘h4 h5 28.♘hxg6 ♜e8 29.♖xf7+ ♔h6 30.f4 a5 31.♘h4 ♜xe5 32.fxe5 ♔g5 33.g3 ♔g4 34.♖g7+ ♔h3 35.♘g2 1-0**

Sometimes, as a consequence of the advance ...b7-b5, the white pieces, especially a knight, can invade on c5, which together with the ♜e5 creates strong pressure on the black position.

Game 15  
Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Anatoly Karpov** 2780  
**Nigel Short** 2655  
Linares 1995 (5)

This game of Karpov's confirms an opinion expressed by Razuvayev, who was one of Karpov's trainers in the 1970s: 'Karpov prefers to manoeuvre, avoiding positions where a concrete move is decisive'.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 a6 4.e3 ♜f6 5.♗xc4 e6 6.0-0 c5 7.♗d3**

White can avoid an IQP by means of a modest retreat: 7.♗e2!? ♜bd7 (7...cxsd4 8.♗xd4) 8.♗c3 b6 9.e4 cxsd4 10.♗xd4 Carlsen-Caruana, London 2017.

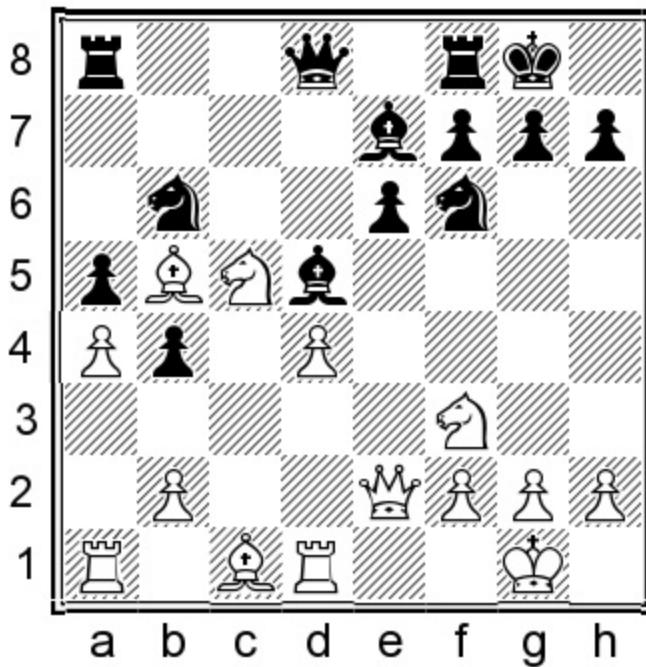
**7...cxsd4 8.♗xd4 ♜e7 9.♗c3 b5 10.a4 b4**

In the event of 10...bxa4!? 11.♗xa4+ (11.♗e5!?) 11...♝d7 12.♗d1!?, Black has problems due to the vulnerability of the ♜a6.

**11.♗e4 ♜b7 12.♗e2 0-0 13.♗d1 ♜bd7 14.♗ed2!**

Avoiding exchanges and directing this knight towards the queenside.

**14...a5 15.♗b5 ♜b6 16.♗b3 ♜d5 17.♗c5**



As a consequence of the advance of Black's queenside pawns, two white pieces are now inside the enemy camp.

**17...♜bd7 18.♗e3 ♜a7**

It would have been better to prevent the move ♜f3-e5 by means of 18...♝c8 19.♝ac1 ♜d6 20.♗d2 ♜b6.

**19.♗e5**

Demonstrating one of the advantages of the IQP, which acts as a support point for the white pieces to invade the enemy camp.

**19...♝b8?!**

It was better to play 19...♝b6! 20.♝ac1 ♜a8 21.f3 ♜c7.

**20.♕f4 ♜e8 21.♗d3**

Exploiting his space advantage, which is another benefit of the IQP, Karpov executes the manoeuvre  $\mathbb{H}d1-d3-h3$ , with which we are already familiar, in order to weaken the black position on the kingside before switching back later to play on the c-file.

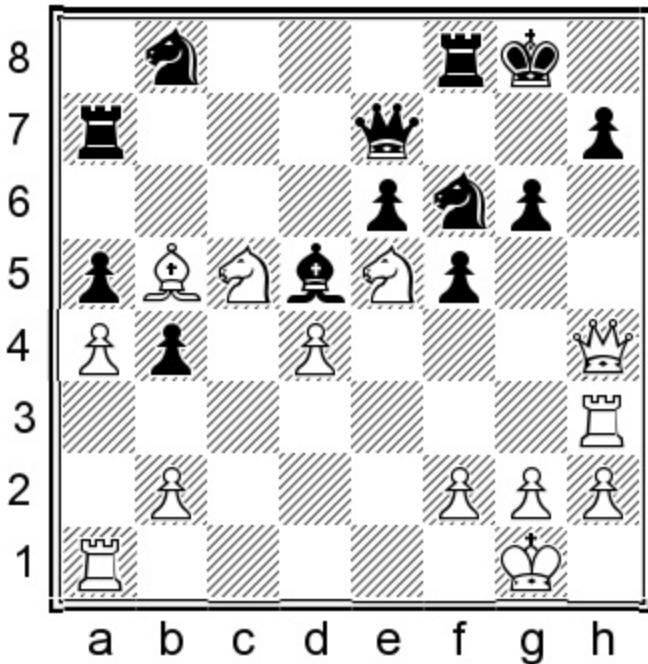
The plan of exploiting this file immediately, e.g. with 21.  $\mathbb{H}ac1 \mathbb{Q}g5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5 \mathbb{W}xg5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{W}e7$  24.  $\mathbb{H}c8 \mathbb{Q}c7$ , would be less effective.

It is possible that the most accurate move was the engine's recommendation of 21.  $\mathbb{W}g4$ , to prevent Black's following simplifying move.

**21...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5 \mathbb{W}xg5$  23.  $\mathbb{H}g3 \mathbb{W}e7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}h5 f5??!$**

Defending the king, but weakening the  $\mathbb{A}e6$ . It was better to play 24...  $\mathbb{H}c7!$  25.  $\mathbb{H}e1 \mathbb{Q}c6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{Q}xc6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}a6 \mathbb{H}c8$ .

**25.  $\mathbb{H}h3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}h4 g6$**



Black has safeguarded his king but weakened the  $e6$ -square, which frequently occurs following the defensive advance ... $f7-f5$ . For this reason Karpov tries to exert pressure on this pawn, but without losing sight of the  $c$ -file.

**27.  $\mathbb{H}e3 \mathbb{H}d8?$**

After 27...  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xe7 \mathbb{H}xe7$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4 fxg4$  30.  $\mathbb{H}ae1 \mathbb{H}f6$ , Black would have had more weaknesses but paradoxically also more possibilities of counterplay, by exploiting the  $f$ -file.

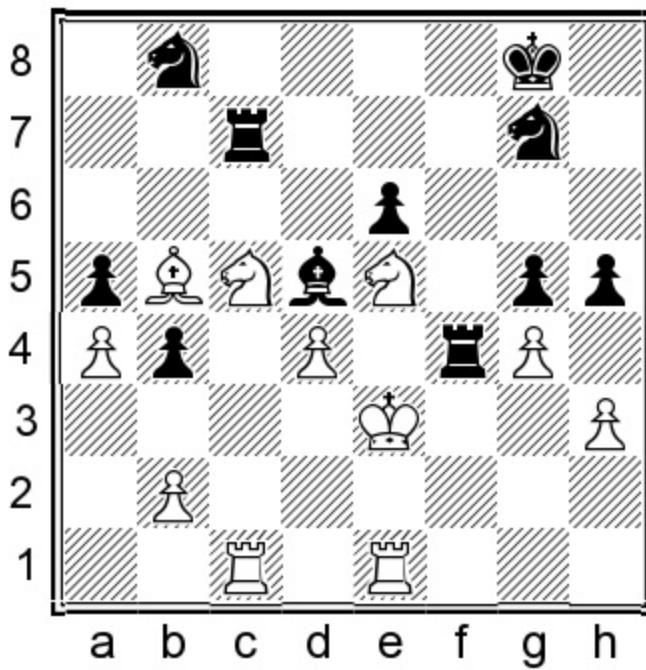
**28.  $f3! \mathbb{H}c7$  29.  $\mathbb{H}ae1 \mathbb{Q}h5$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xe7 \mathbb{H}xe7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{Q}g7$  32.  $g4!$**

Restricting the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ .

32... $\mathbb{E}c7$  33. $\mathbb{E}c1$  g5 34. $\mathbb{E}ee1$  h5 35.h3

There was an immediate win with 35. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$   $\mathbb{E}dc8$  (35... $\mathbb{E}xc1$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f6+!$ ) 36. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}xc7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  38.gxh5.

35...fxg4 36.fxg4  $\mathbb{E}f8+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}f4$



38. $\mathbb{E}f1$

In accordance with his style, Karpov prefers to continue in positional fashion, although an immediate invasion along the c-file was winning by force: 38. $\mathbb{Q}cd3!$   $\mathbb{E}xc1$  39. $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{E}f3+$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}xh3$  42. $\mathbb{E}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}de5$ , with unavoidable mate on h8.

38... $\mathbb{E}xf1$

Equally futile was 38...hxg4 39.hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}xf1$  41. $\mathbb{E}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  42. $\mathbb{E}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  43. $\mathbb{E}g6$ , with a decisive advantage to White.

39. $\mathbb{E}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  41. $\mathbb{E}f6$  hxg4 42.hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  43. $\mathbb{E}g6$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  44. $\mathbb{E}xg5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}cd3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  46. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  48. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  49. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  50. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  51. $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  52. $\mathbb{E}a7$  1-0

The following game is an example of Black's queenside activity in the Tarrasch Variation of the French Defence.

Game 16  
French Defence  
**Alexander Bitman**

I had some doubts about including this game in the book. However, Stockfish confirmed that the level of play, especially by Black, was more than acceptable. My opponent was not only a Soviet master but also a mathematician and programmer, who participated in the initial project of the Kaissa chess program in the USSR. It should be said that in 1974 Kaissa won the first World Championship for chess programs.

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 c5 4.♗gf3 ♗f6 5.exd5 exd5 6.♗b5+ ♗d7 7.♗xd7+**

This move is the main line and also scores well (55%). The main alternative is 7.♗e2+.

**7...♗bx<sub>d</sub>7 8.dxc5**

Any modern player would know that capturing on c5 when Black's king's bishop is able to recapture in one move from f8 is generally a sign that Black will have comfortable play. However, Stockfish does not see any difference between the text move and the main line: 8.0-0!? ♗e7 9.dxc5 ♗xc5 10.♗b3 ♗ce4 11.♗fd4 ♘d7 12.f3 ♗d6 13.♗c5 ♘c7 14.♗d3 0-0, Antal-Short, Gibraltar 2018.

**8...♗xc5 9.0-0 0-0 10.♗b3 ♗b6 11.♗e1?!**

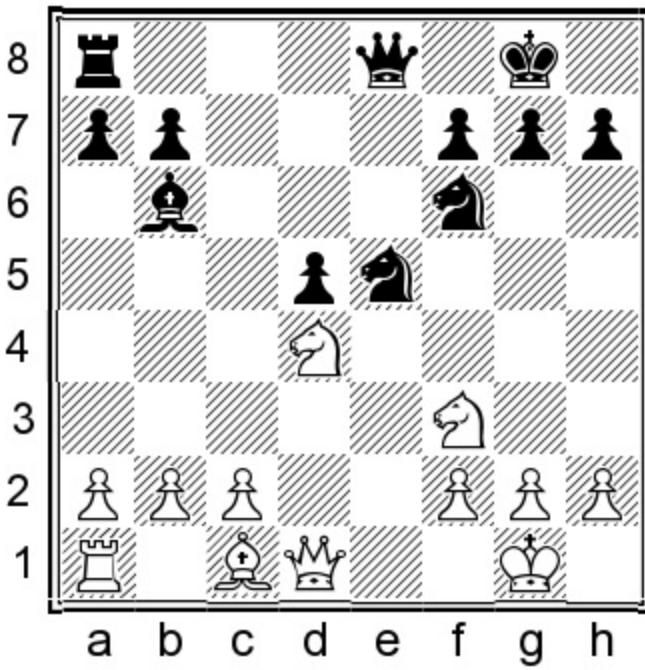
Curiously this obvious move is an inaccuracy which allows Black to gain a tempo for activating his pieces. For this reason it is better to play 11.♗bd4!? ♘e8 12.c3, although in this case too Black has no problems, e.g. 12...♗e5 13.♗xe5 ♘xe5 14.♗e3 ♘d7.

**11...♘e8!**

Preventing 12.♗e3.

**12.♗xe8+ ♘xe8 13.♗bd4 ♗e5**

Perhaps 13...♘e4!? would have been better, preventing possible exchanges next move.



**14...Bg5?!**

It seems that Bitman considered this position better for White, due to the isolated  $\Delta d5$ . Starting with the text move, he makes a series of four, at first sight innocent, moves, which lead to the loss of a pawn and the game. This is a further example that chess is a very concrete and dynamic game and a single weakness means nothing without taking account of the position as a whole! White could have maintained equality with 14.  $\Delta xe5!$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  15.  $\Delta e3$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  16.  $c3$   $h5$  17.  $h3$ .

**14...Qe4**

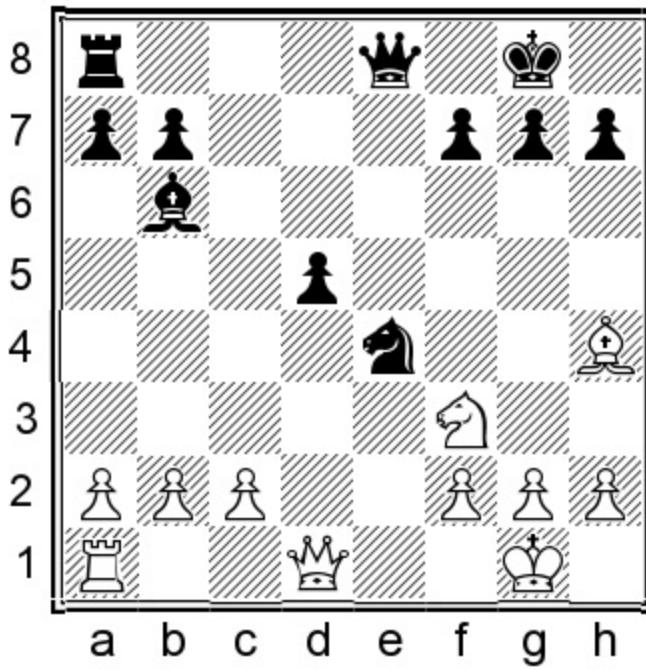
14...  $\Delta xf3+!?$  leads to a similar position to the game after 15.  $\Delta xf3$   $\Delta e4$  16.  $\Delta h4?!$  (16.  $\Delta e3?!$   $\Delta xe3$  17.  $fxe3$   $\mathbb{W}b5$ ) 16...  $\mathbb{W}b5$  17.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  18.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$ .

**15.  $\Delta h4?!$**

Black also maintains some advantage in the event of 15.  $\Delta e3?!$   $\Delta c4$  16.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$ ; the engine prefers 15.  $\Delta f4?!$   $\Delta g4?!$  (after 15...  $\Delta xf3+!$  16.  $gxf3!$   $\Delta c5$  17.  $\Delta g2$   $\Delta e6$  18.  $\Delta xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  19.  $a4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  20.  $\Delta g3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  (20...  $\mathbb{W}xb2?$  21.  $a5$   $\Delta c5$  22.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\Delta xd4$  24.  $\mathbb{E}xb7$  and the rook on the seventh gives White the better game) 21.  $h4$   $\Delta c5$  22.  $a5$   $\Delta e7$  23.  $c3$ , the position is equal according to the engine, which is not at all easy to agree with, given the damaged state of White's kingside structure) 16.  $\Delta g3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  17.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $h5$  18.  $c3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  19.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{W}a4$ , with the better game for Black.

**15...  $\Delta xf3+$  16.  $\Delta xf3?!$**

The creative 16.  $gxf3!$  was slightly better, e.g. 16...  $\Delta d6$  17.  $\Delta g3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  18.  $\Delta e2$   $\Delta f5$  19.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  20.  $\Delta f4$   $d4$  21.  $a4$   $g6$  22.  $c4!$ , and the resulting white position is better than in the game.



The more active deployment of the black pieces, together with the pressure on the f2-square, is the basis of Black's initiative. To maintain this, Black needs to seek out new targets. His next move underlines the weakness of the b2-pawn, which is the consequence of the bad placement of the ♜h4.

**16...♝b5! 17.♝b1 ♞e8 18.a3?**

This move looks natural, but is probably a decisive error. It was better to play either 18.♝d3 immediately or else 18.c3, with the idea of ♛d4. Black's next move creates the threat of 19...g5 20.♗g3 f5 and forces the exchange of queens in an inferior situation for White.

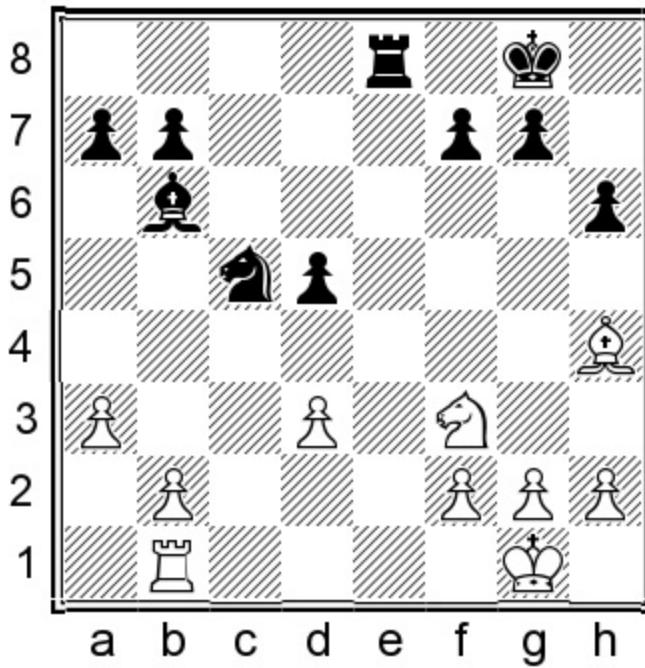
**18...h6**

Here the most precise continuation was 18...♝c5! 19.b4 (19.♗e2? h6 20.c3 g5 21.♗g3 ♜e7 22.♝c2 h5) 19...♝c6 20.♝d3 h6.

**19.♝d3 ♜xd3**

I went in for this forcing line which I had previously calculated, although the engine again prefers 19...♝c5!?.

**20.cxd3 ♛c5**



Now the loss of a pawn is inevitable.

**21.♕e1**

If 21.d4 then 21...♝b3 wins the ♘d4, due to the back-rank weakness.

**21...♚xe1+**

Slightly more accurate was 21...♚e6!?, e.g. 22.g4 ♝xd3 23.♕d1 ♝xb2 24.♕xd5 f6 25.♕d7 ♚e4 26.h3 ♜a4, with a technically winning position.

**22.♝xe1 ♝b3 23.♝c2 ♝c1 24.♝b4**

Or 24.d4 ♝b3.

**24...♜d4!**

Or 24...f5! 25.♚e7 ♜f7 26.♝xd5 ♜d4 27.♝b4 ♜xb2 etc.

**25.b3 ♜c5!**

A crucial finesse, gaining material.

**26.♝xd5 ♜xa3 27.b4 a6 28.♚e7 f6!**

Opening a route for the king.

**29.d4 ♜e2+ 30.♚f1 ♜xd4**

The rest needs no further comment.

**31.g4 ♜c6 32.♕c5 ♜f7 33.f4 a5 34.♔e2 g6 35.h4 f5 36.gxf5 gxf5 37.h5 ♜xb4 38.♗xb4 ♜xb4  
39.♗d6 ♜d5 40.♗d3 ♜e6 41.♔e5 ♜f6 42.♗c4 ♜xh5 43.♗b5 ♜g3 0-1**

Let us now turn our attention to the methods of play for the side playing against an IQP. As we indicated above, there are two main plans:

- A) simplification of the position, aiming for an endgame;
- B) transformation from an IQP structure to a structure with hanging pawns.

## 1.6. Plan A for the defending side: simplification of the position

Simplification is a very frequent method which aims to take play into an ending, where the reduction in material does not allow the advantages of the IQP to be utilized and at the same time highlights its weakness.

Curiously the following game demonstrates both these features: the benefits of simplification and the reduction in opportunities for the side with the IQP.

Game 17  
French Defence  
**Vladimir Malakhov 2668**  
**Salvador Del Rio de Angelis 2498**  
Kallithea tt 2002 (1)

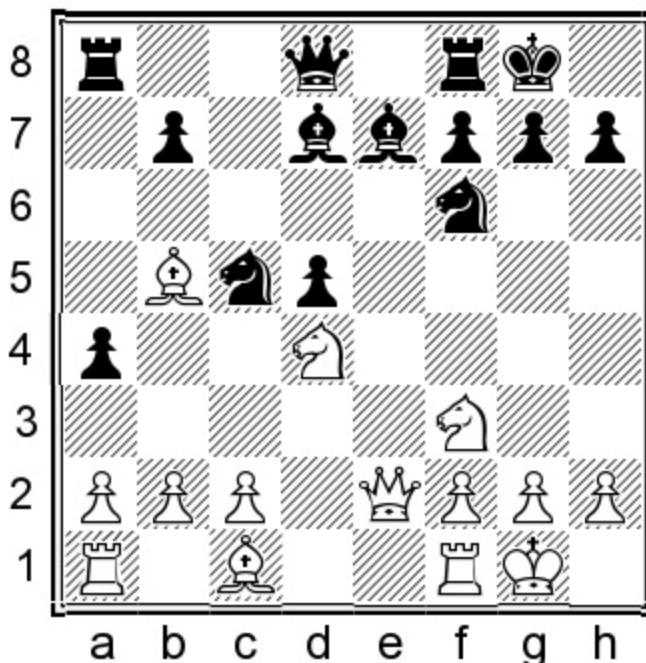
**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 ♜e7 4.♗d3 c5 5.dxc5 ♗f6 6.♘e2 0-0 7.♗gf3 a5 8.0-0 ♗a6 9.exd5**

9.e5!?, avoiding an IQP structure, has more supporters.

**9...exd5 10.♗b3 a4 11.♗bd4 ♗xc5 12.♗b5 ♗d7**

By keeping all the pieces on the board, which obviously favours the side with the IQP, Black would even have the better game, e.g. 12...♗ce4!? 13.a3 ♗g4 14.♗e3 ♗c5 15.c3 ♗b6, with an edge to Black, Shryam-Das, India 2018.

Another good option is 12...a3!? 13.c4 axb2 14.♗xb2 ♗a4 15.♗fd1 ♗xb2 and with the pair of bishops Black has no problems.



**13.♕f4 ♜e8 14.♕xd7 ♜xd7 15.♗b5**

White continues his policy of exchanges, but this seems too direct and should give Black a comfortable game.

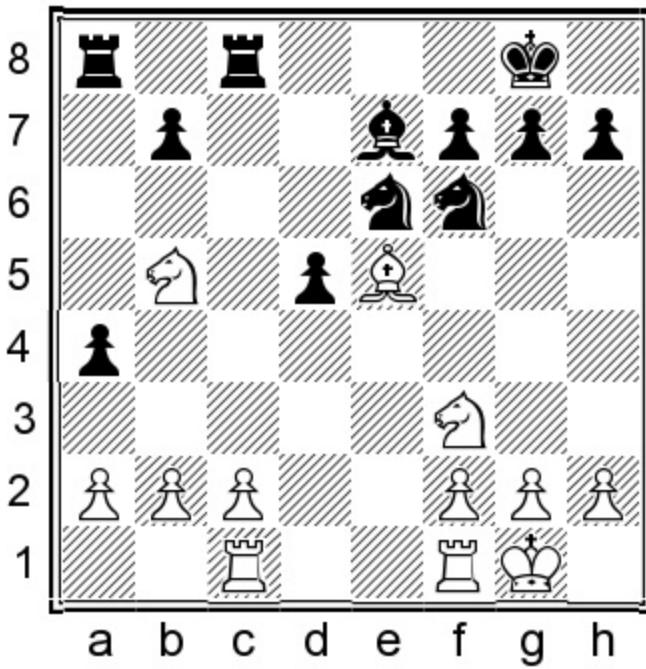
**15...♝xb5**

Here, 15...a3!? deserved attention, unbalancing the position so that the IQP is not the only weakness, e.g. 16.♗xd7 ♜cxd7 17.b3 ♜c5 18.♗ac1 ♜fe4 19.♗b5 ♜e6 20.♗e3 ♜f6 21.c3 ♜a5, and the black position seems slightly better.

**16.♗xb5 ♜e6**

A good alternative was 16...♜ec8!? 17.♗d6 (17.♗c7 ♜a5 18.b4 axb3 19.axb3 ♜xa1 20.♗xa1 ♜ce4 21.♗a7 ♜d6 also leads to equality) 17...♜xd6 18.♗xd6 ♜c6 19.♗f5 ♜b6 20.b3 g6 21.♗e3 ♜ce4, and the weakness of the c3-square at the very least compensates for the weakness of the ♜d5.

**17.♗e5 ♜ec8 18.♗ac1**



**18...♜a5?!**

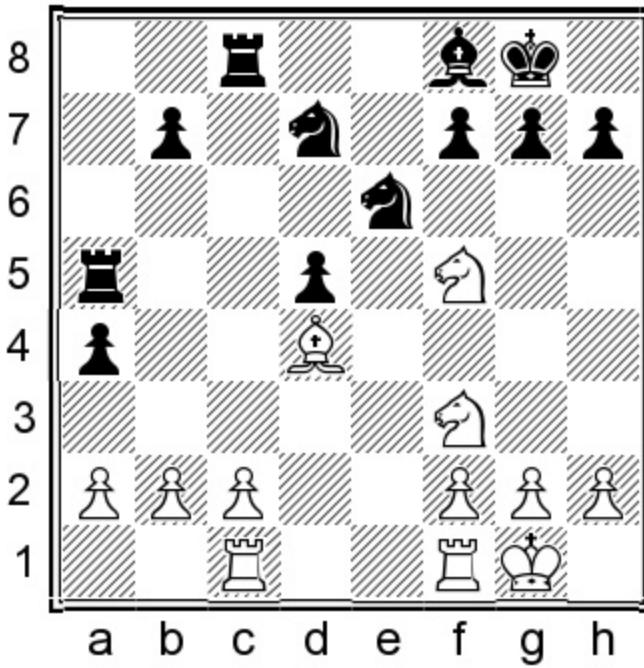
This is a loss of tempo, since the ♜b5 wants to go to d4 anyway. After the more usual continuation in positions of this type, 18...♝e4!, Black is better, e.g. 19.♝bd4 (19.a3?! f6 20.♗g3 ♜a6) 19...a3 20.bxa3 ♜xa3 21.♗b1 ♜d8! 22.♝f5 f6 23.♗d4 ♜xc2.

**19.♝bd4 ♜d7?!**

Again, 19... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ! was better.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

A curious variation starting with 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ !? would lead to perpetual check after 21... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (21... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ ? 22. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$ ) 22. $\mathbb{Q}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ .



**21... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ??!**

Despite the exchange of the queens and a pair of minor pieces, Black is slightly better, e.g. 21... $g6$ !? 22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  a3 24.b3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26.g3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

**22.b3 g6 23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ??!**

Black makes another small inaccuracy. It was better to play 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ !? 24. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  25.g3 axb3 26.axb3  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  or 23... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ !? 24. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}bc5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  27.h3  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  28.a3 (28.b4?!  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ) 28... $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , with Black having the initiative in both cases.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}cd1$  axb3 25.cxb3  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ??!**

Black could have maintained equality with 26... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  27.a4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ! 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  29.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  30.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$ .

**27. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$**

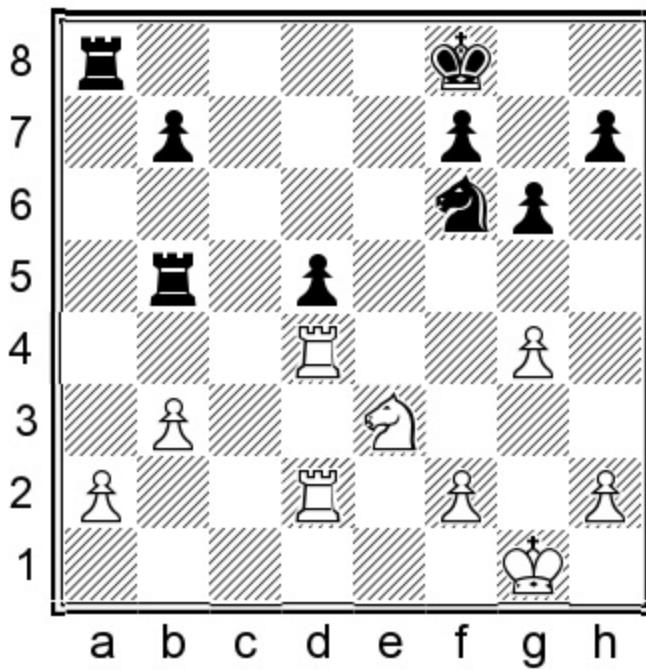
More accurate was 28.b4?!  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  30.a3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}ba6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  h5 33.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ,

and Black is condemned to passive defence.

**28...♜a8 29.♝1d2 ♜f8**

Black can hold the rook ending after 29...♜ba5!? 30.♝xd5 (30.a4 b5!) 30...♝xd5 31.♝xd5 ♜xa2 32.♝xa2 ♜xa2 33.g4 ♜a6 34.♝b5 b6 35.♝g2 f6.

**30.g4**



**30...♜aa5?**

This is the last moment where Black could maintain equality by exploiting the concrete features of the position: 30...♝e4! 31.♝c2 (or 31.♝xd5 ♜xd5 32.♝xd5 ♜xa2) 31...♜ba5 32.a4 b5! 33.axb5 ♜xb5 34.♝g2 (34.b4? ♜g5! 35.♝g2 ♜e6 36.♝dd2 d4, winning the ♜b4) 34...♜xb3 35.♝xd5 ♜g5.

**31.f3! h6 32.h4 g5?**

32...♜a7!? was more tenacious, e.g. 33.g5 (33.♝d1!?) 33...hxg5 34.hxg5 ♜h7 35.f4 ♜ba5 36.a4 (or 36.♝xd5 ♜xa2 37.♝xa2 ♜xa2 38.♝b4 ♜a5) 36...b5 37.b4 ♜xa4 38.♝xd5 f6! 39.gxf6 ♜f7, with good drawing possibilities.

**33.h5!**

Creating the famous second weakness on h6.

**33...♜a6 34.♝f2 ♜ba5 35.a4 b5**

It is already too late...

**36.♘a2! bxa4 37.♗dxa4**

The game is decided.

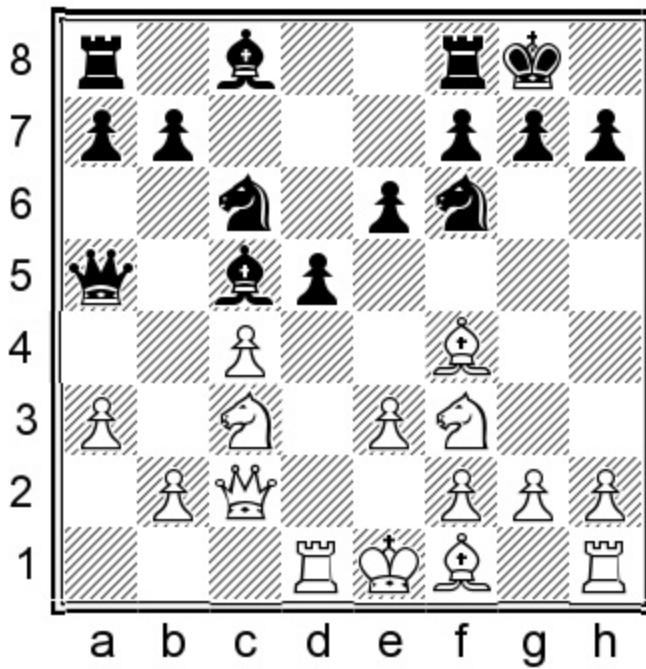
**37...♗xa4 38.♗xa4 ♜b6 39.♗a8+ ♔e7 40.♗f5+ ♔d7 41.♗a7+ ♔e8 42.♗d4 ♗d7 43.♗a5 ♗f6 44.♔e3 ♔d7 45.♗a7+ ♔e8 46.♗d2 ♗d7 47.♗a5 ♜d6?**

A clear mistake due to the coming fork on f5. However, there was no salvation in 47...f5 48.♗a8+ ♔f7 49.♗a7 ♔e8 50.♗xf5 ♜xb3 51.♔e2.

**48.♗a8+ 1-0**

Game 18  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Anatoly Karpov** 2705  
**Boris Spassky** 2640  
Montreal 1979 (4)

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♘e7 5.♘f4 0-0 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5 ♘c6 8.♗c2 ♜a5 9.a3 ♘xc5 10.♗d1**



**10...♗e7**

Although this remains the main line, players of today prefer other ways. The following game is the latest word of theory, although only for the first half (!) of 2019. The winner knew everything right up to move 36(!), which was of course all home analysis on the computer... 10...♗d8!? 11.♗d2! (after 11.♗e2 ♘e4 12.cxd5 ♘xc3 13.bxc3 exd5 14.0-0 h6 15.a4 ♘d6 16.♗xd6 ♜xd6 17.c4 ♘e6 Black

equalized in Carlsen-Anand, Shamkir 2019) 11...d4!? 12.♗b3 ♘b6 13.♗a4 ♘b4+ 14.axb4 ♘xb4+ 15.♗d2 e5 16.♗g5 ♘a5 17.♗b3 ♘b4 18.♗xf6 gxf6 19.♗e2 ♘d7 20.♗a1 dxe3 21.fxe3 b5 22.0-0 (22.cxb5? was bad, due to 22...♗e6 23.♗d1 ♘ac8 24.0-0 ♘c2, and Black wins the exchange) 22...bxa4 23.♗c3, with a slight edge for White but with much more time left on the clock, which proved decisive in Karjakin-Anand, Shamkir 2019.

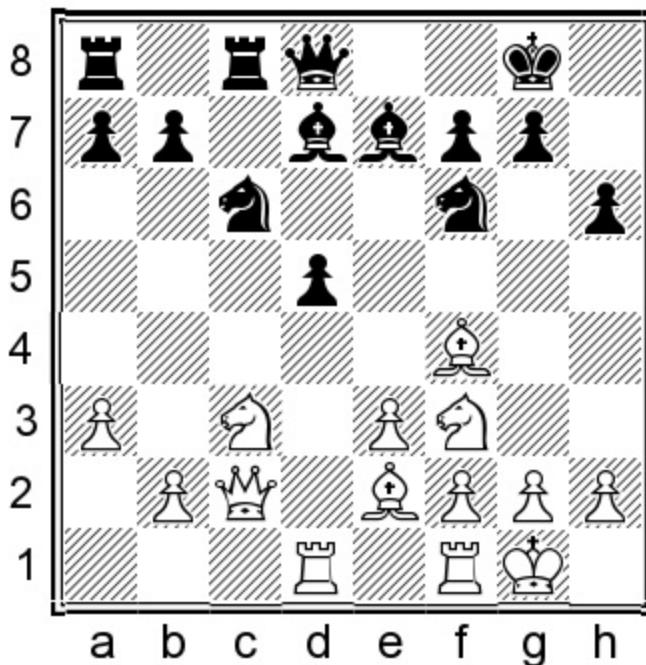
### 11.♗d2 ♘d7?

Later it was discovered that the correct way here is 11...e5! 12.♗g5 d4 13.♗b3 ♘d8 (13...♘b6!?) 14.♗e2 a5, with chances for both sides, Alterman-Kasparov, Tel Aviv 1998.

### 12.♗e2 ♘fc8?!

Again, better was 12...e5!? 13.♗g5 d4 14.♗b3 ♘b6 (14...♘d8? 15.exd4) 15.♗xf6 ♘xf6 16.♗d5 ♘d8, with only a slight advantage to White.

### 13.0-0 ♘d8 14.cxd5 exd5 15.♗f3 h6



The following note by Karpov explains his plan very well: ‘The exchange of at least one pair of knights favours White, as it makes it easier to control the d4-square. Furthermore, the f3-square is now available for the ♘e2, exerting direct pressure on the ♘d5.’

### 16.♗e5 ♘e6 17.♗xc6 ♘xc6

17...bxc6? 18.♗a6 loses the exchange.

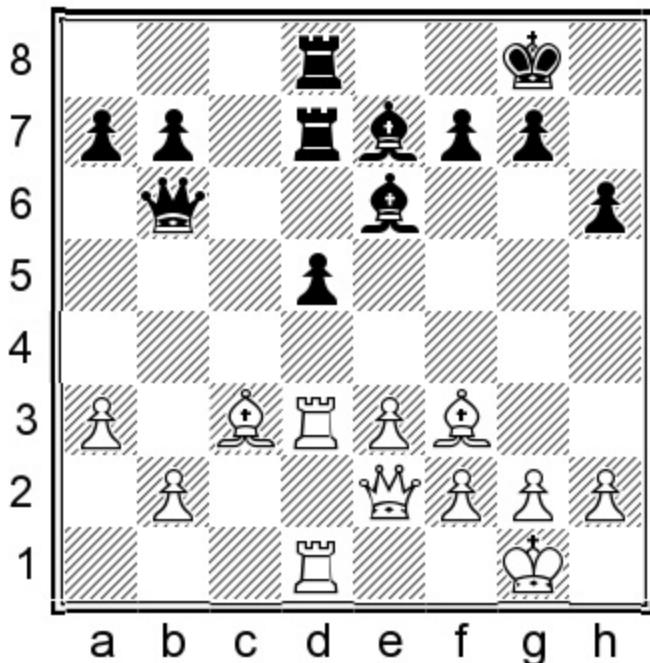
### 18.♗f3 ♘b6 19.♗e5!

Threatening to win the ♜d5, which brings about the exchange of the second pair of knights.

**19...♝e4 20.♛e2 ♝xc3 21.♝xc3 ♞d8**

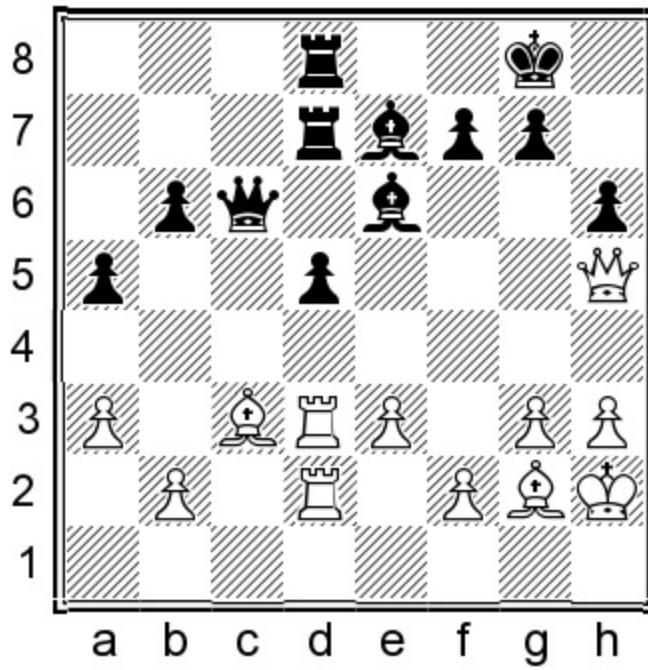
The engine recommends 21...♞xa3!? as the most tenacious defence, not fearing 22.♝xg7! ♔xg7 23.bxa3, e.g. 23...♝b3! 24.e4 (24.♝d2!? ♛xa3) 24...♝c2 25.♝e1 d4 26.e5 (26.♝a5!?) 26...d3 27.♝e4 d2 28.♝f4 ♛c4 29.♝e4 ♜b2, with an equal position. However, for a human player, the choice of this variation, leading to a weakened kingside without any material compensation, is hardly attractive; instead, Karpov's recommendation of 21...♝xc3(?) leads, after 22.bxc3 ♛a5 23.♝d3 ♜f6 24.♝fd1 ♜d8 (24...♝xa3 25.c4!) 25.♝b2 b6 26.♝b4, to a winning position for White.

**22.♝d3! ♜cd6 23.♝fd1 ♜6d7**



It should be said that in the 1960s a myth was current among Soviet players that the weakness of an isolated pawn is not apparent when all the knights have left the board, leaving just the bishops. And it is true that in this position Black can tolerate the direct pressure against his IQP. However, Karpov's play refutes this myth; by advancing his pawns on the kingside he is able to create the necessary second weakness in the enemy camp. As usual in the play of the 12th World Champion, he executes this plan in unhurried fashion and includes various prophylactic moves.

**24.♝d2 ♛b5 25.♝d1 b6 26.g3 ♜f8 27.♝g2 ♜e7 28.♝h5 a6 29.h3 ♛c6 30.♝h2 a5**



### 31.f4

Another way to exploit White's advantage deserved consideration – doubling rooks on the c-file:  
 31.♖d4!? ♜b7 (31...♜b7!?) 32.♜c3 f6 (32...♜c7?? 33.♝e5) 33.♜dc2.

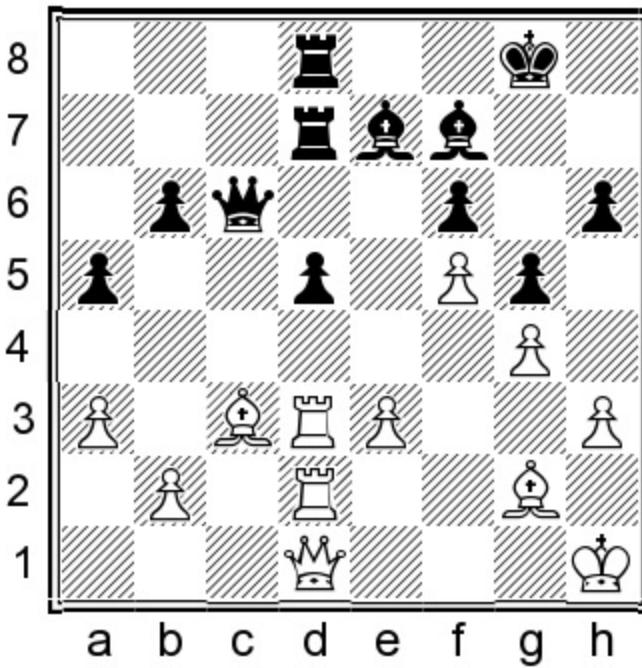
### 31...f6

This weakening move is forced, since 31...f5? 32.♝g6 ♜f8 33.♝e5 leads to a position where the unstoppable threat of g3-g4 decides the game.

### 32.♝d1 ♜b5 33.g4 g5?

Here 33...♜f7!? 34.h4 ♜c6 was correct, although after 35.♖d4 ♜c5 36.♜c3 White keeps the advantage.

### 34.♔h1 ♜c6 35.f5 ♜f7



**36.e4!**

Finally a decisive strike against the weak point in the black position.

**36...♝g7 37.exd5 ♜c7 38.♝e2 b5?**

Slightly more tenacious was 38...♝d6!? 39.h4 ♜c7 (39...gxh4 40.♝d2) 40.♝e4 ♜c5 41.♝e2 ♜f8 42.hxg5 hxg5 43.♝d2 ♜g8, although with a healthy extra pawn White should win.

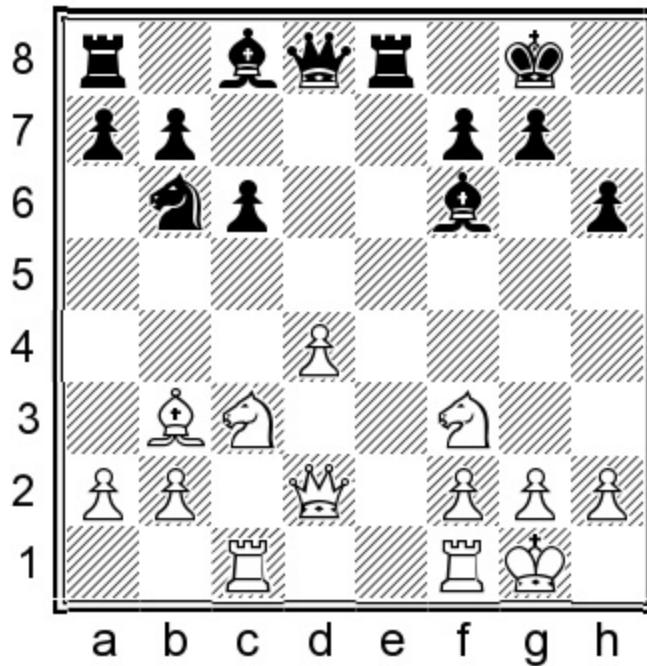
**39.♝xe7! ♜xe7 40.d6 ♜c4 41.b3 1-0**

Chess is a game where for every rule or norm there are numerous exceptions. Thus occasionally we find that the piece exchanges favour the side with the IQP.

Game 19  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Ulf Andersson** 2635  
**Mikhail Tal** 2620  
Malmö ct m 1983 (6)

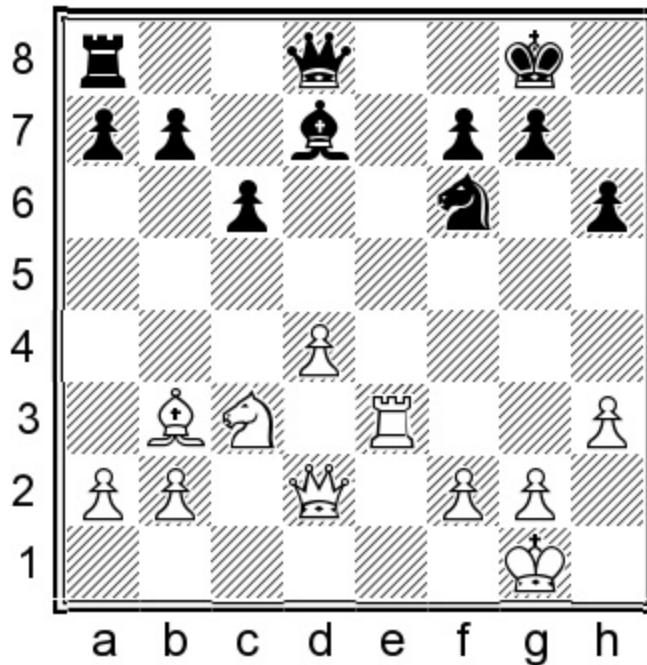
**1.♗f3 d5 2.d4 ♗f6 3.c4 e6 4.♗g5 ♜e7 5.♗c3 h6 6.♗xf6 ♜xf6 7.e3 0-0 8.♗c1 c6 9.♗d3 ♗d7 10.0-0 dxс4 11.♗xc4 e5 12.♗b3 exd4 13.exd4 ♜e8 14.♗d2 ♗b6**

The most common move is 14...♝f8!?.



With the following move, the Swedish grandmaster, renowned for his endgame mastery, begins to exchange pieces.

**15.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}xe1+$  16.  $\mathbb{E}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**



**21.  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$**

The exchanges continue. It is symptomatic that the engine considers this the best move.

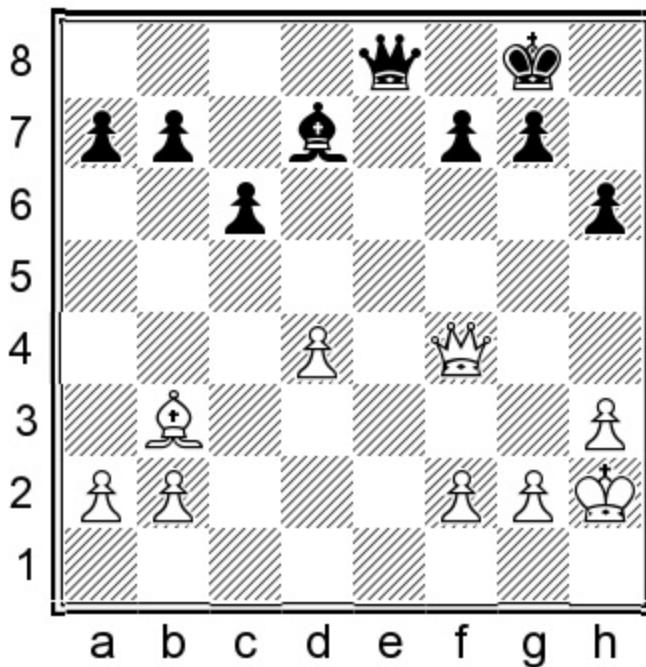
**21...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  22.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}f8$**

White retains some advantage also in the event of 22... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  24. $f4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  25. $\mathbb{W}e3$ .

## 23. $\mathbb{W}f4$

It was stronger to attack on the kingside: 23. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  24. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $a5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $g6$  26. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $f5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $a4$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}xb3?$ ! 29. $\mathbb{W}xb3+$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  30. $\mathbb{W}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}a6?$  (30... $a4!$  31. $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ ) 31. $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  32. $\mathbb{W}c7$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  33. $\mathbb{W}b8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , with the deadly threat of 35. $\mathbb{W}d8$  and 36. $\mathbb{Q}e7)$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  30. $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  31. $\mathbb{W}d3$ , with a clear advantage to White.

## 23... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{W}xe8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



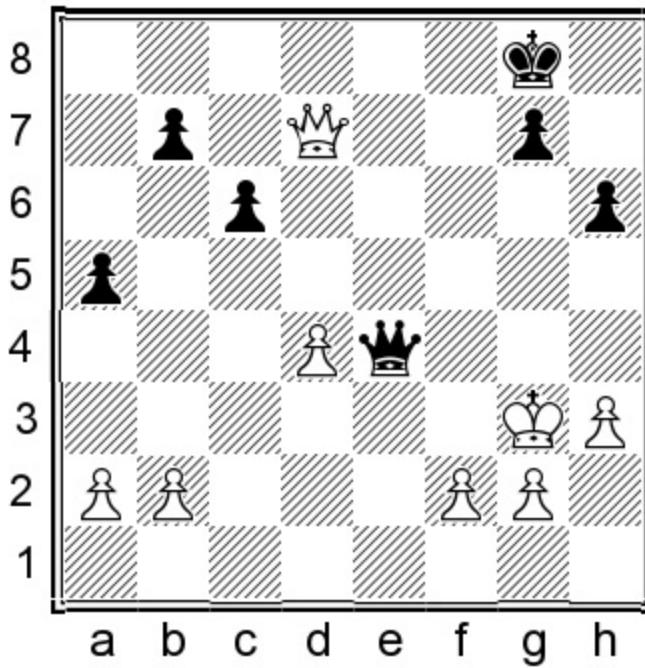
## 25... $a5$

As Tal indicated, despite the reduced material left on the board, Black's defence is far from easy, e.g. 25... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  26. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (26... $\mathbb{Q}h7?$ ! 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  (27... $fxe6!$ ) 28. $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $fxe6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , and the engine confirms Tal's evaluation of a clear white advantage) 27. $\mathbb{W}c7$  (Stockfish analyses 27. $f4$   $b5$  28. $a4$   $a5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30. $f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  32. $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{W}g5+$  33. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $bxa4$  34. $f6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , evaluating the final position as equal) 27... $\mathbb{W}c8$  28. $\mathbb{W}d6$ ; however, the engine is more optimistic, continuing this variation 28... $\mathbb{W}e8$  29. $g4$  (29. $a3!$ ?) 29... $\mathbb{W}e2$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  31. $\mathbb{W}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  32. $\mathbb{W}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  33. $\mathbb{W}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8!$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}g8?$  34. $d5!$ , with advantage to White) 34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$ , with an evaluation of equality.

## 26. $\mathbb{W}c7!$

Winning a pawn.

## 26... $\mathbb{W}e4$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xd7+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



**29... $\mathbb{W}d3+?$**

The decisive error. It is far from clear whether after 29... $\mathbb{W}g6+!$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}e4$  White can realize his extra pawn; for example 29... $\mathbb{W}g6+!$  30. $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{W}d6+ 31.\mathbb{W}f4 \mathbb{W}g6+ 32.\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}c2 33.\mathbb{W}b8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 34.\mathbb{W}xb7 \mathbb{W}xf2 35.\mathbb{W}xc6 \mathbb{W}f4+ 36.g3 \mathbb{W}f2+ 37.\mathbb{W}g2 \mathbb{W}xd4 38.\mathbb{W}c2+ g6 39.b3 h5$  and White is unable to convert his extra pawn in this queen ending.

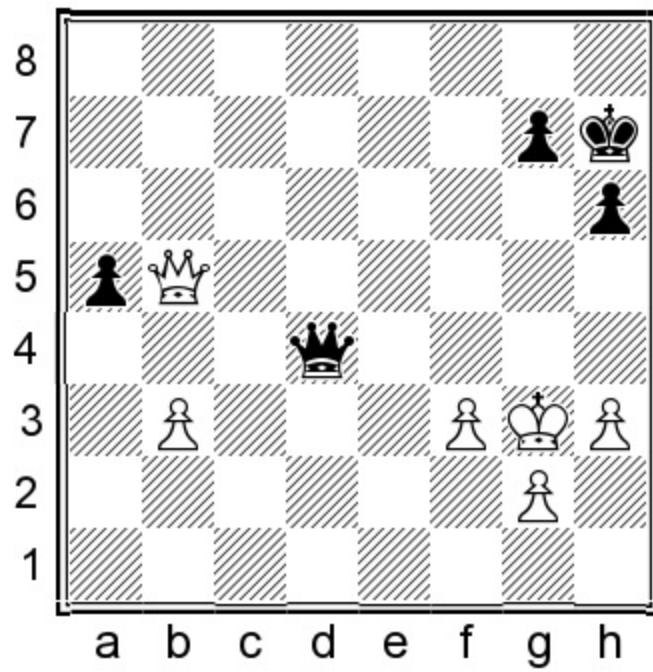
**30.f3  $\mathbb{W}d2$**

It is too late for 30... $\mathbb{W}g6+$ , due to 31. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}g5 32.\mathbb{W}e8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 33.\mathbb{W}e4+ \mathbb{Q}g8 34.b3$ , when White can realize his extra pawn in a similar manner to the game.

**31.b3 b5 32. $\mathbb{W}e6+ \mathbb{Q}h8 33.\mathbb{W}e8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 34.\mathbb{W}e4+ \mathbb{Q}h8 35.\mathbb{W}e8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 36.\mathbb{W}e4+ \mathbb{Q}h8 37.a4$**

White could already win by force with 37. $\mathbb{W}xc6! \mathbb{W}g5+ 38.\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}f4+ 39.\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{W}xd4$  (or 39... $\mathbb{W}d2 40.\mathbb{W}a8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 41.\mathbb{W}e4+ \mathbb{Q}h8 42.d5) 40.\mathbb{W}a8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 41.\mathbb{W}e4+.$

**37... $\mathbb{W}c3 38.\mathbb{W}e8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 39.\mathbb{W}e4+ \mathbb{Q}h8 40.axb5 cxb5 41.\mathbb{W}e8+ \mathbb{Q}h7 42.\mathbb{W}xb5 \mathbb{W}xd4$**



Finally Black has won the ‘weak’ IQP, but at a very high price: his position is losing.

**43.  $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}d6+$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d4+$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b2+$  46.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xb3$  47.  $\mathbb{W}d3+$   $\mathbb{W}xd3+$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  50.  $f4$   $h5$  51.  $f5$**

Black resigned.

## 1.7. Plan B for the defending side: transformation from an IQP structure to a structure with hanging pawns

This method was already mentioned by Nimzowitsch in his famous book *My System* (1925) and we saw it in the game Zukertort-Steinitz at the beginning of this chapter. Tournament practice has now accumulated a large number of games which allow us to distinguish various features of this method, as I shall demonstrate in the following examples. First among these is the blockade of this pawn pair. This is a very frequent method, although according to Kortchnoi: ‘... it is much more difficult to blockade hanging pawns than a single isolated centre pawn...’

Game 20  
Nimzo-Indian Defence  
**Martyn Kravtsiv** 2665  
**Ding Liren** 2777  
Tbilisi 2017 (2)

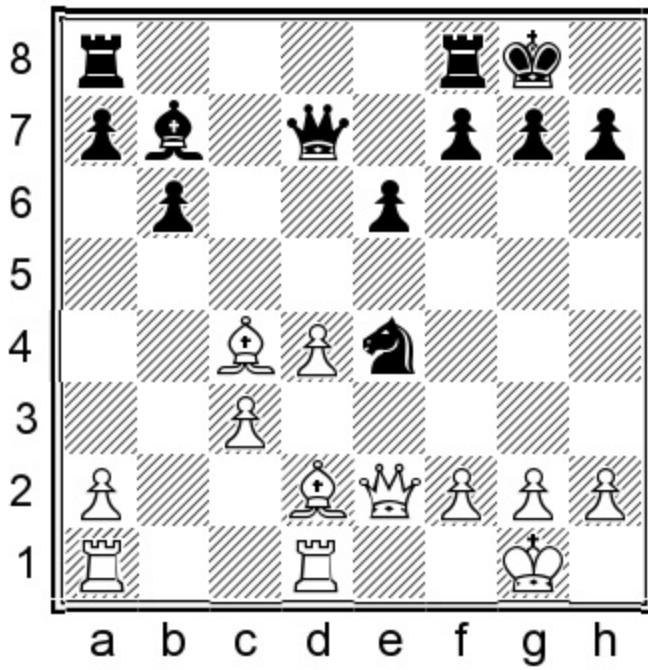
**1.c4 ♜f6 2.♘c3 e6 3.d4 ♜b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♗d3 d5 6.♗f3 dxc4 7.♗xc4 c5 8.0-0 cxd4 9.exd4 b6 10.♗e2 ♜b7 11.♗d1 ♜xc3 12.bxc3 ♜c7 13.♗e5**

The main line is 13.♗d3!? ♜bd7 (after 13...♜xc3?! 14.♗b2 ♜c7 15.d5! ♜xd5 16.♗xf6 gxf6 17.♗e3 ♜g7 18.♗ac1 White’s initiative led to victory in Beliavsky-Kasparov, Moscow m 1983) 14.c4 ♜fe8 15.♗b2, with chances for both sides.

**13...♗bd7 14.♗xd7 ♜xd7 15.♗d2**

It was better to preserve the bishop pair with 15.f3!? ♜c7 16.♗d2 ♜ac8 17.♗d3 ♜d5 18.♗e1 ♜c4 19.♗c2, or 15.♗b5!? ♜c7 16.♗b2 ♜fc8 17.♗ac1 a6 18.♗d3.

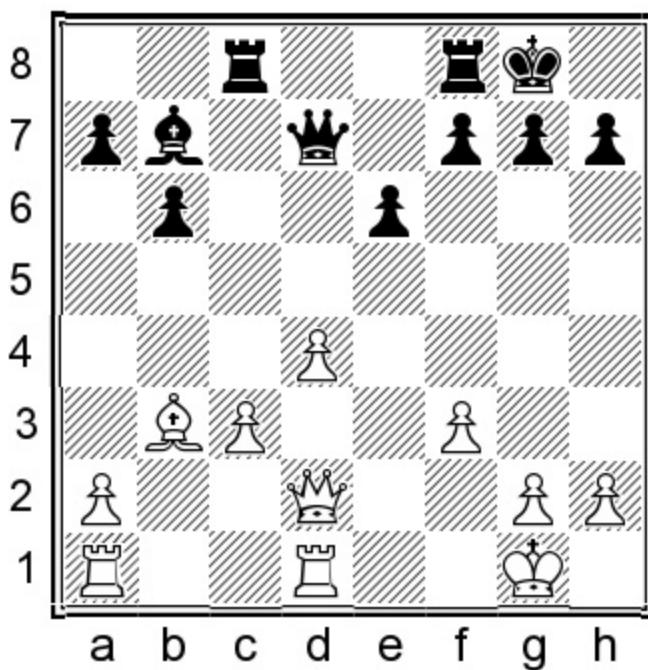
**15...♗e4**



**16.f3?!**

What was good with the pair of bishops is not so good with only a single bishop. It was already too late to retain the bishop pair with 16.Qe1? due to 16...Bac8 17.Bac1 Wc6 18.Qd3 Qc5!, but a good alternative was 16.Qd3! Qxd2 17.Wxd2 Wc6 18.Qf1 Bfd8 19.c4 Bd6 20.We3 Bad8 21.Bd2 We4 22.Bad1, with equality.

**16...Qxd2 17.Wxd2 Bac8 18.Qb3**



An instructive position in which the exchange of three pairs of minor pieces obviously favours Black,

as White's attacking chances are now very limited, which condemns him to an unpleasant defence. Black's plan includes the following:

- 1) prevent the advance of the ♜c3;
- 2) try to exchange the bishops;
- 3) place his major pieces on the squares c4 and d5;
- 4) break up the pawn duo c3+d4 with the advances ...b6-b5-b4 or ...e6-e5.

**18...♝d5! 19.♗d3 ♝c6 20.♕ac1 ♜c4 21.♝xc4**

21.♗e4 ♝b5 22.♗b1 ♜c7 would not change much.

**21...♝xc4 22.♗c2 ♞fd8 23.♔f2 h5!?**

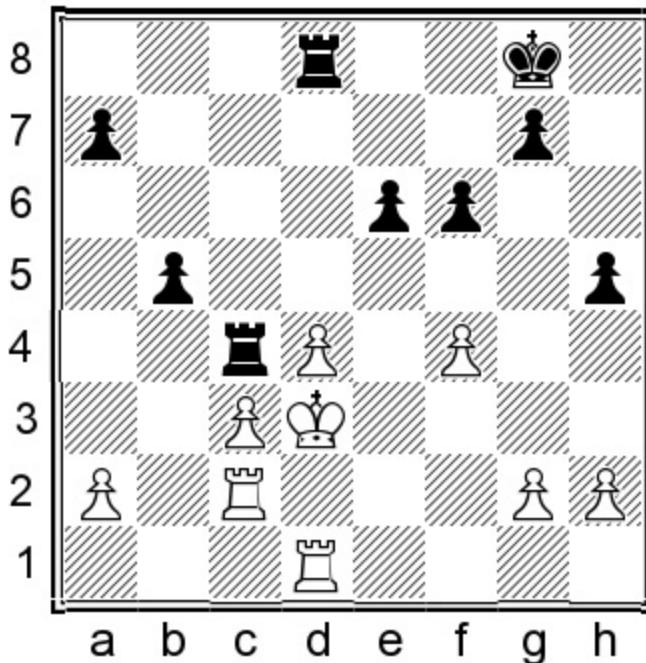
One of those rook's pawn moves which AlphaZero likes so much. However, the 'standard' Stockfish engine recommends blocking the ♜c3 immediately with 23...b5!?.

**24.♝xc4 ♞xc4 25.♔e2 b5 26.f4**

White needs to prevent the advance ...e6-e5.

**26...f6 27.♔d3?!**

It was better to play 27.a3 a6 (27...e5? 28.dxe5 ♞xd1 29.♔xd1 ♞xf4 30.exf6, with equality) 28.♗d3 ♔f7, when Black needs time to prepare the pawn break ...e6-e5.



The time has come for the final stage of Black's plan.

**27...e5! 28.fxe5 fxe5 29.♗b1?**

Here 29.♗b2! was more tenacious and offered practical chances of survival, e.g. 29...exd4 (29...a6 30.♔e4! ♜e8 31.♔f5!) 30.♗xb5 ♜xc3+ 31.♔e2 ♜e8+ 32.♔f1 ♜c2 33.♗xh5 ♜xa2 34.♗xd4 ♜f8+ 35.♔e1 ♜xg2 36.♗d2.

**29...a6 30.♗bb2 exd4 31.cxd4 ♜dxd4+**

Winning the ♘d4, with a decisive advantage in the rook ending, which the Chinese grandmaster failed to handle in the best way although he won in the end.

Game 21

Nimzo-Indian Defence

**Evgeny Vladimirov 2612**

**Garry Kasparov 2838**

Batum 2001 (8)

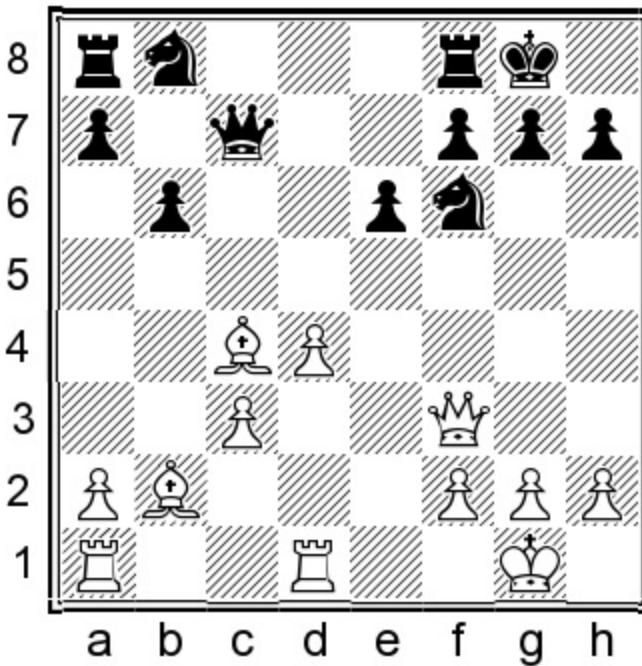
In this game the blockade of the isolated pawn couple has a tactical tinge to it.

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♜b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♘d3 d5 6.♘f3 c5 7.0-0 cxd4 8.exd4 dxc4 9.♘xc4 b6 10.♗e2 ♜b7 11.♗d1 ♜xc3 12.bxc3 ♜c7 13.♗b2?!**

Exhibiting a lack of self-confidence when playing against such a strong opponent. The moves 13.♗e5 and 13.♘d3 were explained in the notes to the previous game; in the event of 13.♗d2, the same idea as in the game offers no more than equality after 13...♗xf3 14.♗xf3 ♜xc4 15.♗xa8 ♘c6 16.♗b7 ♘d5 17.♗ab1 h6 (17...♗b8 18.♗d7 ♜d8 19.♗b7 ♘a5? 20.♗xa7 ♜c6 (20...♜c8 21.♗xb6!) 21.♗a6) 18.♗e1 ♜b8 19.♗d7.

**13...♗xf3 14.♗xf3?**

The lesser of the evils would have been 14.gxf3 ♘c6 15.♘b3 ♘h5 16.c4 ♘f4 17.♗e3.



With his following move Kasparov blockades the white pawns, calculating that the sacrifice of the exchange leads to a position where the white queen is difficult to extricate.

**14... $\mathbb{W}xc4!$  15. $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathcal{Q}c6$  16. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathcal{Q}d5$  17. $\mathbb{E}e1$**

No better was 17. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  18. $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  (the roles would be reversed after 18... $\mathcal{Q}xc3?$  19. $d5!!$   $exd5$  20. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $h6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  22. $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  23. $\mathbb{W}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  24. $\mathbb{W}xf7$ , with a clear advantage to White) 19. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathcal{Q}a5$  20. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  21. $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathcal{Q}c4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathcal{Q}f4$  23. $f3$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a7$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  26. $g4$  (26. $g3??$   $\mathcal{Q}h3+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathcal{Q}f2+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathcal{Q}xd1)$  26... $\mathbb{W}d5$  27. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $g5$  28. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{W}a5$ , which Stockfish evaluates as -1.55.

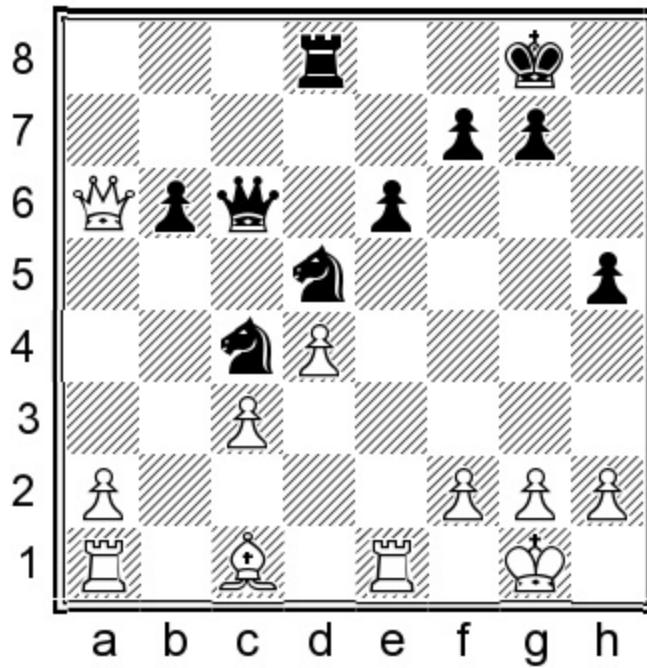
**17... $\mathbb{B}b8$  18. $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  19. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $h5?!$**

After 19... $\mathcal{Q}a5!$  20. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  21. $c4$   $\mathcal{Q}xc4$  22. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathcal{Q}f4$  23. $f3$   $\mathcal{Q}d3$  24. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  25. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  Black's advantage is overwhelming.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}c1?$**

The best option was 20. $\mathbb{E}ac1!$   $\mathcal{Q}f4$  (20... $a6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathcal{Q}a5$  22. $\mathbb{W}a7$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  23. $c4!$   $\mathcal{Q}xc4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d6!$   $b5$  (24... $\mathbb{E}xd6$  25. $\mathbb{E}xc4!)$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ ) 21. $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathcal{Q}d5$  22. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $a6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathcal{Q}a5$  24. $\mathbb{W}a7$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  (or 24... $\mathbb{W}c6$  25. $\mathbb{W}xa6$   $\mathcal{Q}f4$  (25... $\mathcal{Q}c4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c5!)$  26. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathcal{Q}c4$  27. $\mathbb{E}ed1$   $\mathcal{Q}xa3$  28. $g3$   $\mathcal{Q}g6$  29. $c4)$  25. $c4$   $\mathcal{Q}c6$  (25... $\mathcal{Q}xc4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e7!)$  26. $cxd5$   $\mathcal{Q}xa7$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  28. $dxe6$ , and White still can resist.

**20... $\mathcal{Q}a5$  21. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  22. $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathcal{Q}c4$**



Black establishes the ideal blockade of the white pawns, at the same time trapping the enemy queen.

**23.♗b1 ♜c7**

And White resigned, in view of 24.♔a7 ♗a8.

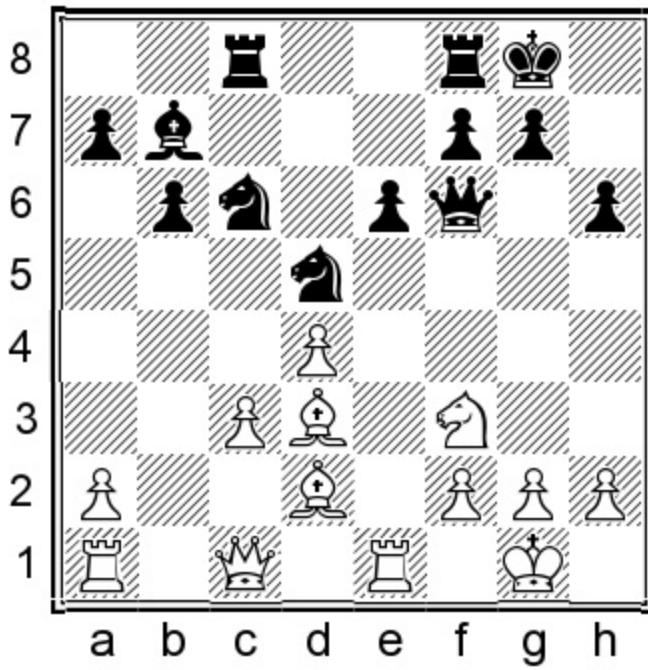
A direct blow against the hanging pawns is rarely possible but can be very effective.

Game 22

**Tigran Petrosian**

**Vasily Smyslov**

Moscow 1961 (3)



*White to move*

**17. Kg1?**

At the beginning of the same year, and against the same opponent, Petrosian had won a very good game which marked the birth of his famous variation against the Queen's Indian Defence (1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}$ f6 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}$ f3 b6 4.a3!?) and perhaps his next move is an attempt to beat the 7th World Champion once more...

There were several ways to maintain the dynamic balance, such as 17. $\mathbb{W}$ a3!?  $\mathbb{Q}$ a5 (17... $\mathbb{Q}$ f4 18. $\mathbb{Q}$ e4) 18. $\mathbb{Q}$ e5  $\mathbb{Q}$ f4 19. $\mathbb{Q}$ xf4  $\mathbb{W}$ xf4 20. $\mathbb{Q}$ e3.

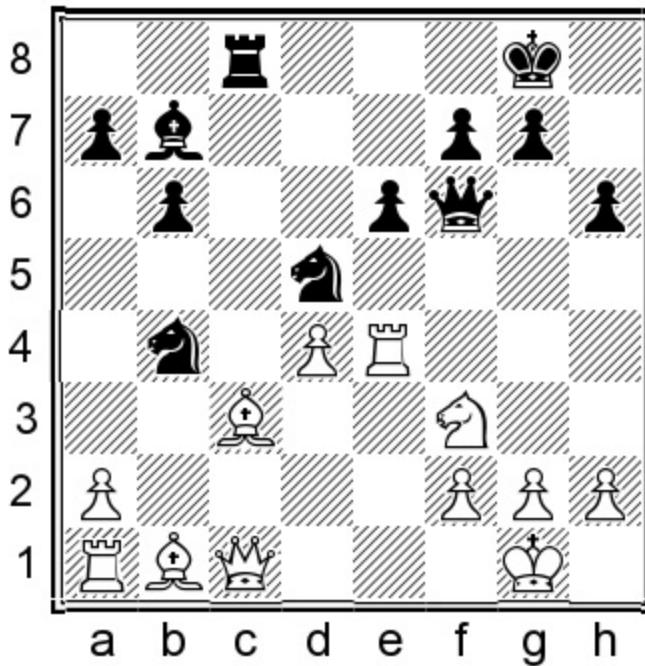
**17. Kg1?  $\mathbb{Q}$ cb4!**

The engine confirms that both this and Black's next move constitute the only way to refute Petrosian's idea.

**18.  $\mathbb{Q}$ b1  $\mathbb{Q}$ xc3!**

A strong blow that transforms the  $\mathbb{Q}$ d4 back into an IQP.

**19.  $\mathbb{Q}$ xc3  $\mathbb{Q}$ c8**



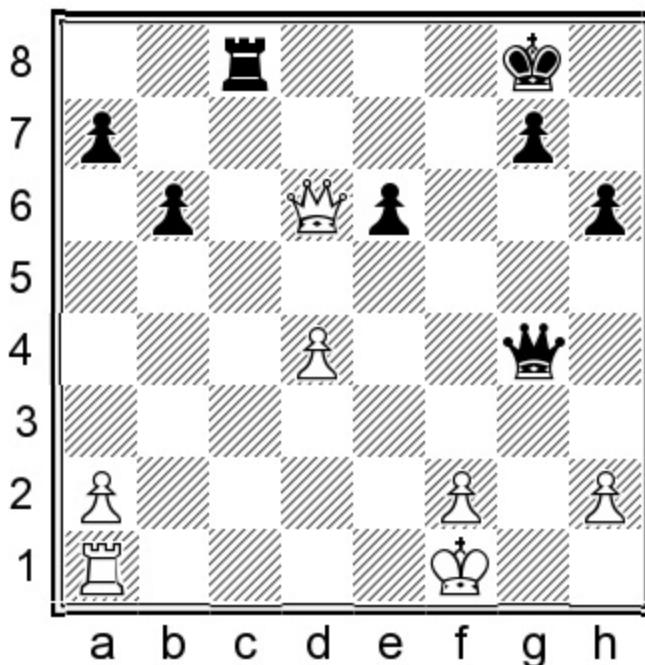
**20.  $\mathbb{W}e1?$**

More tenacious was 20.  $\mathbb{W}d2!$   $\mathcal{Q}xc3$  21.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathcal{Q}bd5$  22.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathcal{Q}xe4$  23.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  24.  $\mathbb{E}ae1$   $\mathcal{Q}f6$  25.  $\mathbb{E}4e3$   $\mathbb{E}c2$  26.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  27.  $\mathbb{E}xd3$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$  28.  $\mathbb{E}d2$ .

**20...  $\mathcal{Q}xc3$  21.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathcal{Q}bd5$  22.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathcal{Q}xe4$  23.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathcal{Q}b4$**

23...  $\mathcal{Q}f4!$  was even slightly stronger.

**24.  $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $fxe6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  26.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  27.  $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{W}g4+$  28.  $\mathcal{Q}f1$**



**28...♝c4**

As is well known, in positions with only major pieces left on the board the most important factor is king safety. And in this respect Black's advantage is clear.

A good alternative was 28...♛e4!? 29.♚e1 ♜h1+ 30.♔e2 ♜c2+ 31.♔d3 ♜xe1 32.♔xc2 ♜xf2+.

**29.♚e1 ♜xd4 30.♜xe6+ ♜xe6 31.♜xe6 ♜a4!**

On the board we now have a rook ending which is very similar to the one we saw in the game Kravtsiv-Ding Liren. But in contrast to the Chinese player, Smyslov, the co-author (with G.Levenfish) of a classic book *The Theory of Rook Endings*, conducts this ending in masterly fashion, not allowing his opponent the slightest chance.

**32.♜e2 ♔f7 33.f3 b5 34.♔f2 ♔f6 35.♔g3 g5 36.h3 h5 37.♔g2 h4 38.♔f2 ♜a3 39.♔g2 b4 40.♔f2 a5 41.♔g2 ♜c3 0-1**

The threat is 42...a4, followed by 43...b3; if 42.♚b2 then 42...♔e5 wins.

Game 23  
Tarrasch Defence  
**Eivind Poulsson 2415**  
**Ivan Farago 2420**  
Gausdal 1976 (5)

**1.d4 e6 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.c4 d5 4.♘c3 c5 5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.e3 ♘c6 7.♘c4**

Threatening 8.♘xd5 exd5 9. dx5, which provokes the creation of an IQP on d4. The main line 7.♘d3 is more popular, e.g. 7...♝e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.a3 cxd4 10.exd4 ♘f6 11.♔e4 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘d7 13.♗d3 Ponomariov-Naiditsch, Linares 2019.

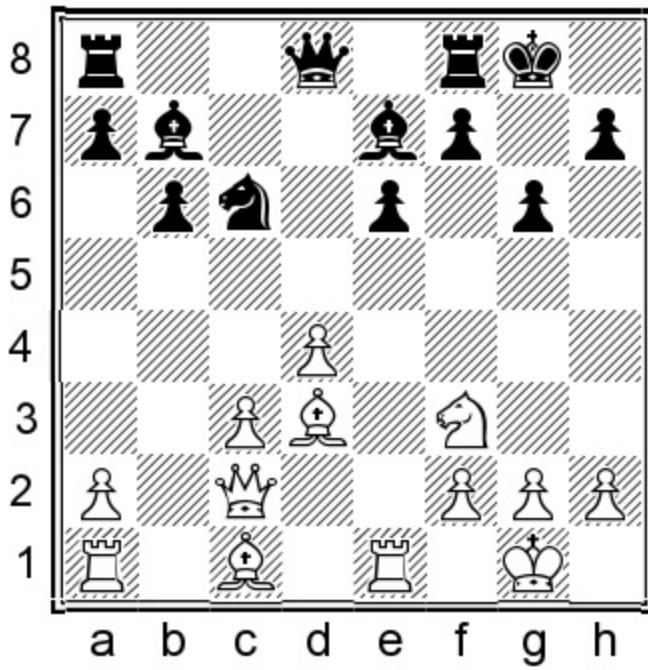
**7...cxd4 8.exd4 ♘e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♚e1 ♘xc3**

Nowadays the main line is 10...♝f6!?, e.g. 11.♘e4 b6 12.a3 (Stockfish recommends the rather dry continuation 12.♘xd5 exd5 13.♘xf6+ ♜xf6 14.♘e5, which was played in the game Burg-Howell, PRO League 2017) 12...♝b7 13.♗d3 ♘ce7 14.♗d2 ♜c8 15.♗ac1 ♘g6, with chances for both sides, Aronian-Giri, Stavanger 2014.

**11.bxc3 b6 12.♗d3 ♘b7 13.♗c2**

We shall see the main line 13.h4!? in the next game. It is curious that the engine does not see any difference between the two moves.

**13...g6**



**14. Wh6!?**

Here the line 14. Wh6!? He8 15. Wd2 has a good score, e.g. 15... Hc8 16. h4 Da5 17. Dg5 (17. Db5!?) 17... Df8 18. Dxh8 Hxh8 19. h5, with chances for both sides, Najdorf-Tal, Belgrade 1970.

**14... Df6**

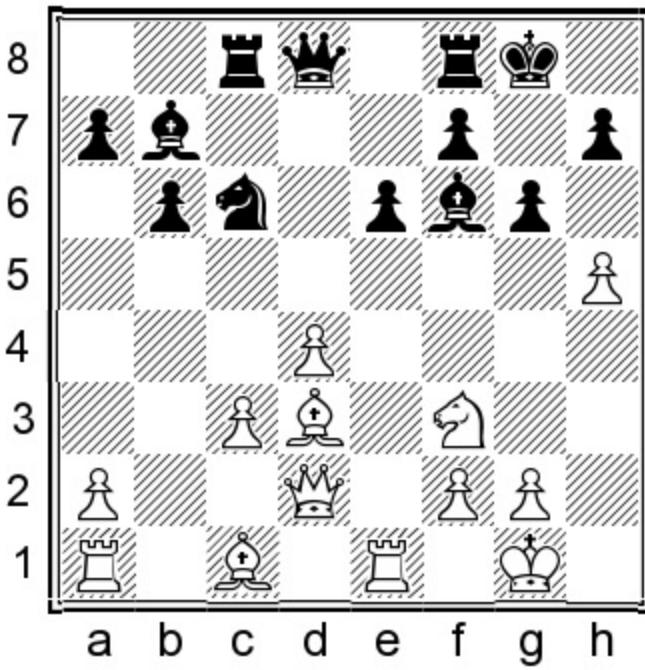
The engine prefers the typical manoeuvre 14... Da5 15. De5 Hc8.

**15. h4!?**

The continuation 15. Wh6!? Dg7 16. Wh3 e5 17. De4 Hc8 (17... exd4?! 18. Dg5 h6 19. De6!) 18. Hxc8 Hfxc8 19. Dxh8 Hxh8 20. Dxe5 Dxe5 21. Da5 22. Dg5! Hxc3 23. Dd1 leads to an ending which is better for White.

**15... Hc8 16. h5**

White could prevent the following spectacular sacrifice, for instance by means of 16. De4!? Da5 17. Dxb7 Dxb7 18. h5; another and perhaps more interesting way was 16. Wf4!? Da5 17. Dd2 Dc4 18. Dxc4 Hxc4 19. h5 gxh5 20. De5, with adequate compensation for the pawn.



**16...Qxd4!!**

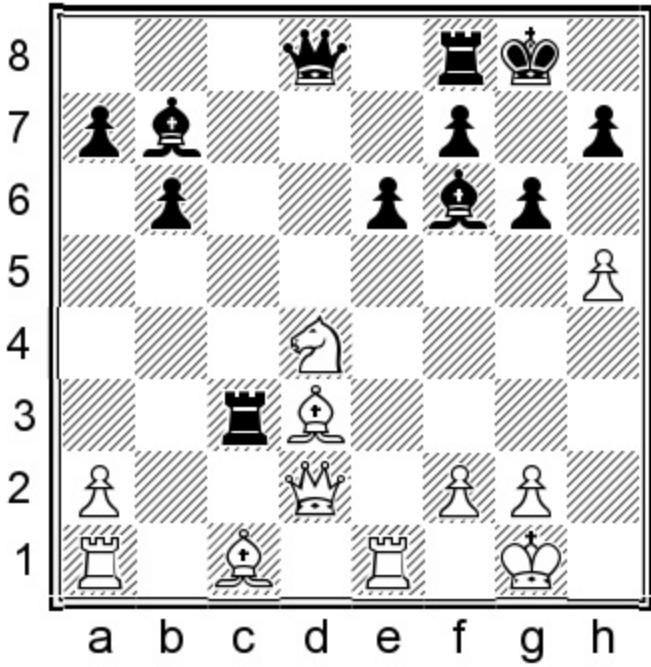
Before this game it was considered normal to play 16...Qa5 17.Qe5 Qxe5 18.Qxe5 Qc4 19.Qxc4 Qxc4, with a better game for White, Larsen-Unzicker, Lugano 1968.

**17.Qxd4**

Neither the text move nor the alternative capture on d4 upset the balance: 17.cxd4 Qxf3 18.hxg6 Qxd4 19.gxh7+ Kh8 20.Qb1 Qg4 21.Qf1 Qg7 22.Qb3 Qfd8 23.Qd3 Qg4 24.Qxd8+ Qxd8 25.Qf4 Qf5 26.Qc7 Qxh7 27.Qxa7 Qd5 (or 27...Qd6 28.Qe3) 28.Qc7 Qe5 29.Qxe5 Qxe5 30.Qxf7+, with sufficient compensation for the exchange.

**17...Qxc3!**

Another spectacular move, which eliminates the second hanging pawn, although the engine says that the position remains equal. However, for a human player it is not at all easy to stay calm after two such unexpected blows...



## 18. ♔xc3??!

Stockfish gives 18.♗e4! ♖xd4 19.♖xd4 ♕xd4 20.♗b2 ♜c4 21.♗xd4 ♕xe4 22.♗xe4 f5 (after 22...e5!? 23.♗xe5 ♖xd4 24.♗e7 ♜a4 25.h6!? as equal, although Black's extra pawn makes the draw less obvious, particularly in a competitive game) 23.♗xe6 ♖xd4 24.hxg6 hxg6 25.♗xg6+, with a rook ending that should be drawn.

18... $\mathbb{Q}$ xd4 19. $\mathbb{W}$ c2  $\mathbb{Q}$ xa1 20. $\mathbb{Q}$ a3?

White could have resisted with 20.  $\mathbb{A}h6!$   $\mathbb{A}g7$  21.  $\mathbb{A}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22.  $\mathbb{W}c3+$  f6 23.  $\mathbb{A}xe6$ , with some initiative for the pawn.

20... $\mathbb{W}g5!$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{H}c8$  22. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Black regains all the sacrificed material with a bonus of two extra pawns, which decides the game.

23.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  25.  $hxg6$   $hxg6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}d2$  27.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}h5+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  30.  $g3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  31.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  32.  $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  0-1

The following example demonstrates the application to chess of Newton's third law: **for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.** Here a brilliant idea for Black by Farago constitutes the action, while the equal and opposite reaction is supplied by an aggressive and effective plan for White, which could well be named the Razuvaev Gambit.

## Game 24

## Tarrasch Defence

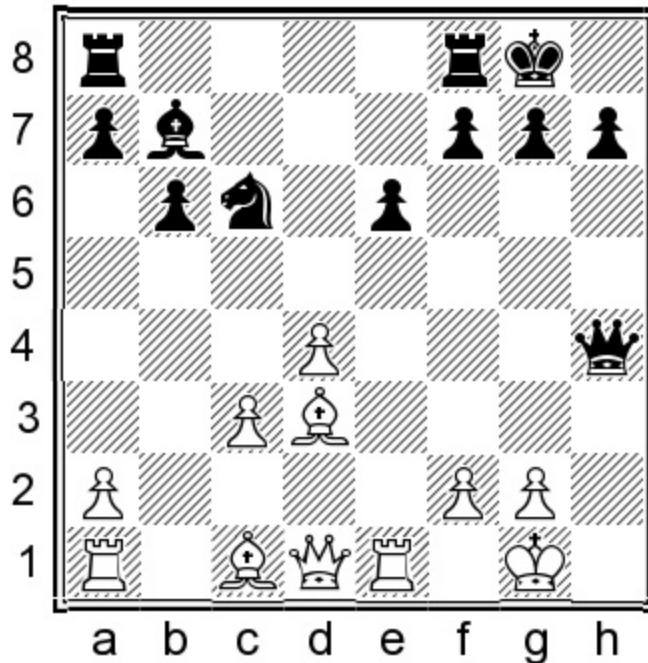
**Yury Razuvayev 2470**

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 c5 5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.e3 ♘c6 7.♘c4 cxd4 8.exd4 ♘e7 9.0-0 0-0  
10.♗d3 ♘xc3 11.bxc3 b6 12.♗e1 ♘b7

As we see, the first twelve moves are the same as in the previous game.

**13.h4! ♘a5?!**

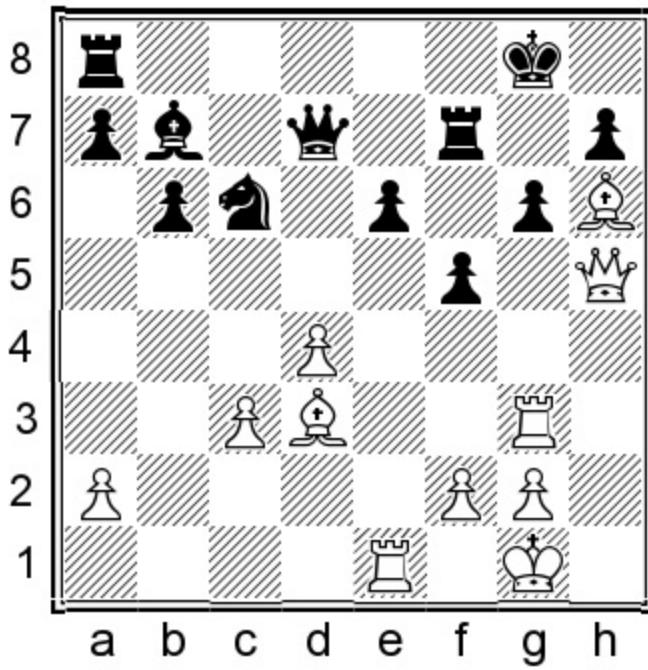
Or 13...♘f6?! 14.♗g5 g6 15.♗g4 (15.♗e4!?) 15...h5 16.♗g3 ♘e7 17.♗a3 ♘e8?? (White would have the advantage even in the event of the better defence 17...♗d7 18.♗ad1 ♘fc8 19.d5! ♘xd5 20.c4) 18.♗xe6! 1-0, Razuvayev-Meduna, Frunze 1979; so it seems that accepting the pawn sacrifice is Black's best option, as otherwise White has practically the same attack but with equal material: 13...♗xh4 14.♗xh4 ♗xh4



*analysis diagram*

15.♗e3 (Razuvayev regarded the following move as a serious alternative: 15.♗e4!? ♗d8 (or 15...♗e7 16.d5 ♘a5 17.c4) 16.♗h5, with an initiative) 15...g6 and now:

A) 16.♗g3!? ♗e7 17.♗g5 f6 18.♗h6 ♘f7 19.♗h5 f5 20.♗e1 ♗d7 (20...♗c7? 21.♗h4 ♘e8 22.d5!, winning, Matamoros-Mecking, Rio de Janeiro 2003)



*analysis diagram*

21.d5! (Razuvaev analysed 21. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , which is not as strong, although White's attack compensates for the sacrificed pawn) 21...exd5 22. $\mathbb{Q}xg6+$  hxg6 23. $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (or 23... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  24. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  25. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ , winning;  
B) 16. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (17. $\mathbb{W}g4!?$ ) 17... $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  18. $\mathbb{W}d2?!$  (18. $\mathbb{W}g4!$ ) 18...e5, and White converted his initiative into victory in the game Illescas-Volkov, Barcelona 2018.

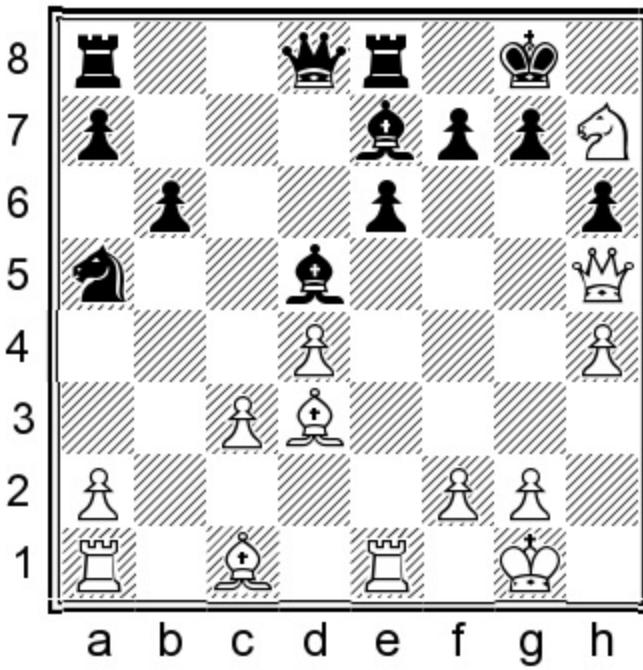
#### 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 15. $\mathbb{W}h5$

Even stronger was 15. $\mathbb{Q}h7!$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$  gxh6 17. $\mathbb{W}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  19.f3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

#### 15... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$

It seems that even the best defence 15... $\mathbb{W}e8!$  leads after 16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (16. $\mathbb{Q}h7??$  f5 17. $\mathbb{W}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}fxe8$ ) 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  f5 18. $\mathbb{W}xe8$  (18. $\mathbb{W}e2!?$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}fxe8$  19.c4 to a position where the weakness of the  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  means that White still has a slight advantage.

#### 16. $\mathbb{Q}h7$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$



**17.♕xh6! gxh6 18.♗xh6**

Already with a decisive advantage.

**18...f5 19.♗e3 ♕xh4 20.♗g3+ ♕xg3 21.♗g6+ ♔h8 22.♗f6 ♔h2+ 23.♔h1 ♗xf6 24.♗xf6+ ♔g8  
25.♔xh2 ♘ac8 26.♔h1 ♘c7 27.♗g6+ ♔f8 28.♔g1 ♘f7 29.♗g5 ♘g7 30.♔h8+ ♔f7 31.♔h5+ 1-0**

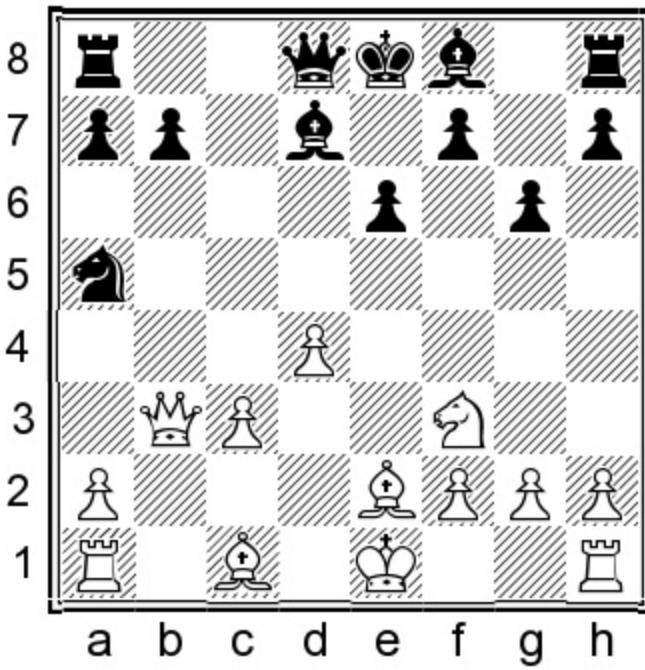
Hanging pawns can also show their positive side in positional play. particularly when they are able to advance, gaining space.

Game 25  
English Opening  
**Vladimir Potkin 2574**  
**Boris Gelfand 2695**  
Russia tt 2018 (2)

**1.♘f3 c5 2.c4 ♘c6 3.♘c3 g6 4.e3 ♘f6 5.d4 cxd4 6.exd4 d5 7.cxd5 ♘xd5 8.♗b3 ♘xc3 9.♘c4 e6**

The main line is 9...♘d5 10.♘xd5 e6 11.♘xc6+ bxc6 12.0-0 ♗d5.

**10.bxc3 ♘d7 11.♘e2 ♘a5**



**12.♗b1!**

The text move is a novelty; the point becomes apparent at move 14. Instead, the game Aronian-So, Berlin 2018, ended in a draw after 12.♗c2 ♜g7 13.♔a3 ♜f8 14.♗b2 ♜g7 15.♔a3 ♜f8 16.♗b2 ♜g7 17.♔a3.

**12...♝g7 13.♔a3 ♜f8**

An interesting alternative would be 13...f6!? 14.0-0 ♔f7.

**14.♗b4!?**

The key idea. Instead, Stockfish prefers 14.♗b2!? ♜xa3 15.♗xa3 b6 16.h4 h5 17.0-0 ♜e7 18.♗c1, with a slight advantage to White.

**14...♜xb4 15.♗xb4!**

Black has no problems after 15.cxb4 ♜c6 16.0-0 0-0 17.b5 ♜e7 18.♗e5 a6 19.a4 axb5 20.axb5 ♜xa1 21.♗xa1 ♜f5 22.♗c1 f6.

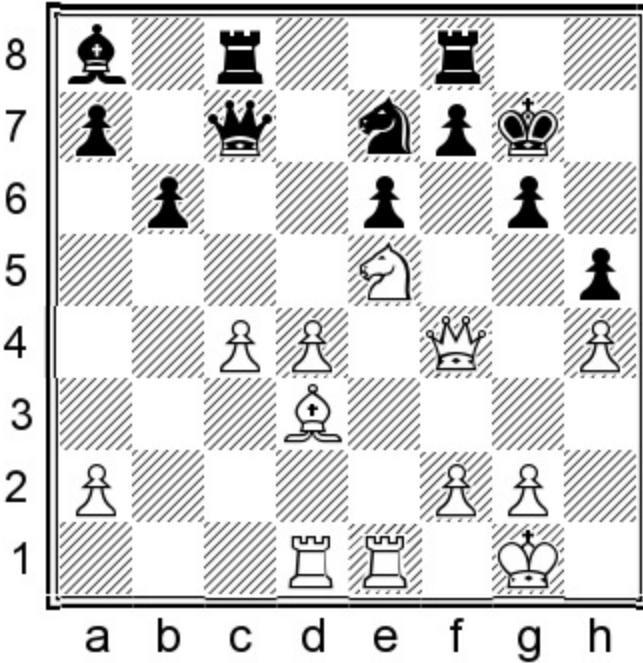
**15...b6 16.h4**

A fashionable move among several young stars, notably Magnus Carlsen and AlphaZero! As Potkin explains, this advance forces Black to prevent h4-h5 with his next move, after which he will find it more difficult to play ...f7-f6 to expel the white knight from the squares e5 and g5; this is the point of White's new move-order.

16...h5 17.0-0 ♜c6 18.♗d6 ♜e7 19.♗f4 0-0 20.c4!

Mobilizing the hanging pawns.

20...♜c6 21.♝ad1 ♜c8 22.♝e5 ♜a8 23.♝d3 ♜g7 24.♝fe1 ♜c7



25.d5!

The position was crying out for this further advance of the hanging pawns, although calculating the consequences was far from easy, as Potkin acknowledged.

25...exd5 26.cxd5!?

This move provokes a mistake from his opponent but objectively it was more accurate to play 26.♝b1!? ♜c6 27.cxd5 ♜xe5 28.d6 ♜c3 29.♝xe5+ ♜xe5 30.♝fd8 31.♝e7, although it is unlikely that White can convert his slight advantage in this simplified position.

26...♝xd5?

An error which loses the game. Instead, after 26...♝xd5! 27.♝g5 ♜e7! 28.♝g3 ♜d6 29.♝e2 the play would be unclear.

27.♝a6! ♜xa2

The following variation explains the idea of White's previous move: 27...♝cd8 28.♝xg6! ♜xf4 29.♝xf4 ♜e6 30.♝xh5+ ♜g8 31.♝xd8 ♜xd8 32.♝f4 ♜c8 33.♝xe7 ♜xa6 34.♝xa7, winning.

28.♝xc8 ♜xc8 29.♝d7 ♜c3 30.♝e3 ♜a1+ 31.♝h2 ♜f5 32.♝g5!

32.  $\mathbb{E}g3$  and 32.  $\mathbb{E}a3$  were also winning.

**32...  $\mathcal{Q}xe3$  33.  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34.  $\mathbb{W}xh5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35.  $f xe3$   $\mathbb{W}f1$  36.  $\mathbb{W}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  37.  $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38.  $\mathcal{Q}g6$  1-0**

## 1.8. Three more games

It is clear that the material in this chapter does not cover all the typical plans and ideas in IQP structures; for this, a sizeable monograph would be required. So I decided to conclude this chapter with three further examples which in their time struck me as being rather special.

### Game 26

Tarrasch Defence

**Vasily Smyslov** 2595

**Zoltan Ribli** 2595

London ct m 1983 (7)

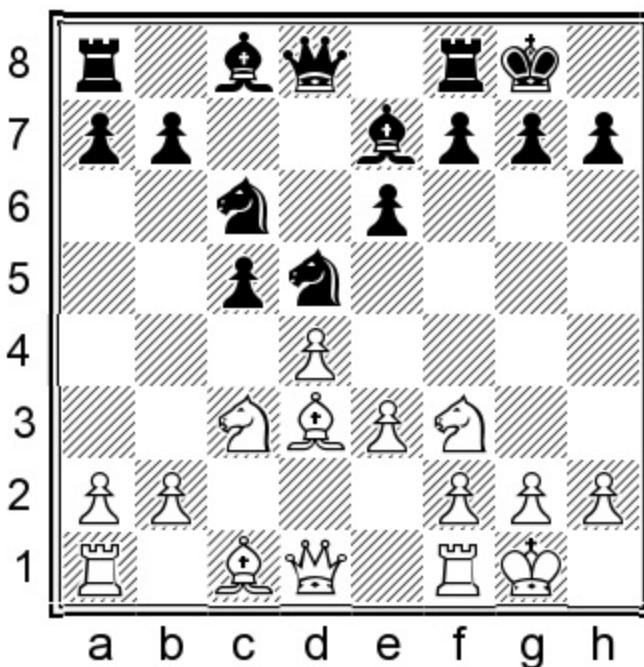
It must be acknowledged that Smyslov's vitality was impressive. It should not be forgotten that at the age of 63 he achieved the status of world number three, after losing only in the final of the Candidates to the twenty-year-old Garry Kasparov. As one of the teachers in Smyslov's chess school, I can testify that Smyslov's vitality was above all spiritual in nature, that is to say in total contrast to Botvinnik, who was known for his excellent physical shape.

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3.c4 d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 5.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6.e3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

An eternal dilemma: 7. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  or 7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ . Statistically both moves give very similar results of around 60%, which is rather higher than usual. However, the supporters of the text move are in the majority.

**7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.0-0 0-0**

The most common move in this position remains...



**9.a3**

Carlsen prefers a different way, as in the following game: 9.  $\mathbb{W}e2!?$  cxd4 10. exd4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  11.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  b6 12. a3  $\mathbb{B}b7$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  14. h4, Carlsen-Harikrishna, Kolkata 2019.

**9...cxd4 10.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}ce7$**

So far the game is following today's main line.

**12.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

Another possibility is 12.  $\mathbb{W}d3!?$  g6 13.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$  b6 15. h4  $\mathbb{B}b7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  17. hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18.  $\mathbb{W}d2$ , with a slight advantage to White, Gordievsky-Liu Qingnan, China tt 2017.

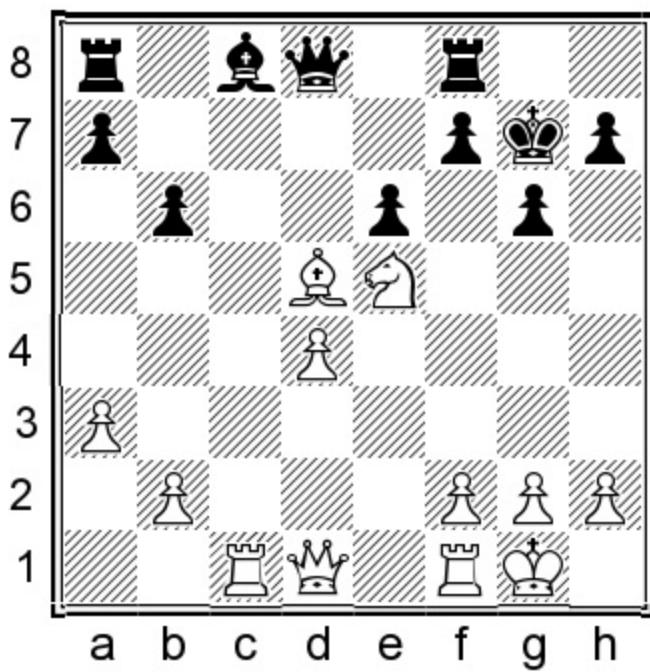
**12...g6**

The idea of attacking the  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  instead of blockading it deserves attention: 12...  $\mathbb{Q}f5!?$  13.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}de7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  15. fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  16. dx $e5$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  (16...  $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$ ) 17.  $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , Artemiev-Svidler, Sochi 2018.

**13.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  15.  $\mathbb{E}c1!?$**

Perhaps already foreseeing what occurs three moves later.

**15...b6 16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**



**17...  $\mathbb{W}xd5?$**

This obvious move is in fact a serious positional error, since the  $\mathbb{W}d5+\mathbb{Q}b7$  battery can be neutralized with the move 19.  $\mathbb{W}g4$ , while the white rook on the seventh rank grants White a clear advantage.

Instead, 17...exd5 was correct, acquiescing to a slightly worse position, e.g. 18.♗e1 (18.♗f3!?) 18...♝e6 19.♗e3 (19.♗d2 ♜e8) 19...♝e7!? 20.♗d2 ♜ac8 21.♗ec3 (21.♗ce1 ♜g5) 21...♜xc3 22.♗xc3 f6.

## 18.♗c7!

White's advantage is now clear.

### 18...♝b7 19.♗g4 ♜ad8

The black position is already rather worse than it appears and even the objectively best continuation leads to the loss of a pawn: 19...♜ac8 20.♗d7 ♜e4 21.♗xe4 ♜xe4 22.♗xa7.

### 20.♗d1 a5 21.h4

Slightly better was 21.♗g5! ♜c8 22.♗d7 ♜e4 23.f3 ♜c2 24.♗e1.

### 21...♜c8 22.♗d7 ♜e4 23.♗g5 ♜c6

23...h6? loses a pawn to 24.♗xg6+!.

### 24.f3?

A mistake which could have lost White the advantage. The correct continuation was 24.♗a7! ♜a8 25.♗xc6 ♜xc6 26.h5 ♜c2 27.h6+ ♜g8 28.♗c1 ♜f5 29.♗xf5 gxf5 30.♗b7 ♜fb8 31.♗cc7, with a big advantage in the rook ending.

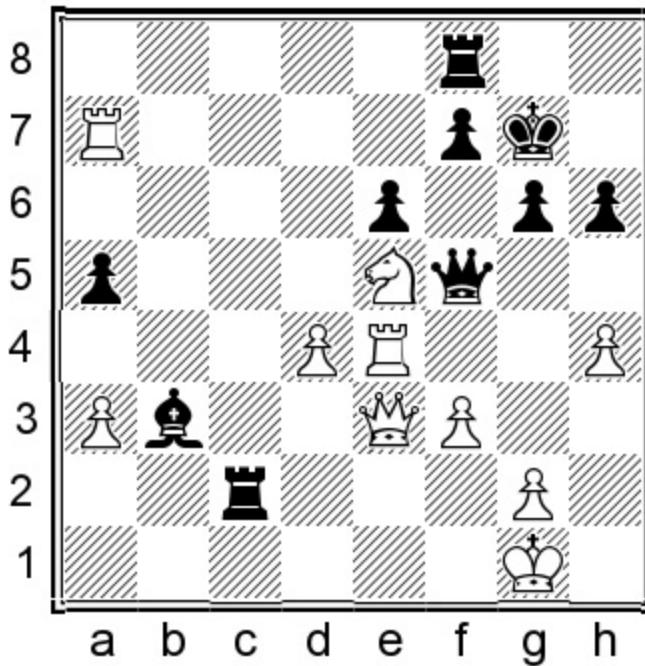
### 24...♝f5?

The players exchange errors. After 24...h6! 25.fxe4 hxg5 26.♗xc6 ♜xc6 27.hxg5 ♜c2 28.b3 (or 28.♗b1 ♜e2 29.e5 ♜g8! 30.b4 ♜c8 31.♗b3 ♜cc2 32.♗g3 ♜cd2) 28...♜c3 29.♗b1 ♜g3, White's advantage is minimal in view of the activity of the ♜g3.

### 25.♗a7 ♜a4 26.♗e1 ♜c2 27.b4!

Another good move here was 27.♗e4!?.

### 27...♝b3 28.bxa5 bxa5 29.♗e4 h6 30.♗e3



Thanks to his threats against the black king, White has a winning advantage.

**30...♝b2 31.♝g4 g5 32.hxg5 h5 33.♝g3 h4 34.♝g4 h3 35.g6! h2+**

35...♝xg2+ 36.♝xg2 hxg2 37.♔xg2 would change nothing.

**36.♔xh2 ♜h8+ 37.♔g3 ♜xg2+ 38.♔xg2 ♜c2+ 39.♚f2 ♜h2+ 40.♔xh2 ♜xf2+ 41.♔h3 ♜f1+ 42.♚g2 ♜h1+ 1-0**

### Game 27

Queen's Indian Defence

Vladimir Epishin 2570

Viktor Kortchnoi 2610

Hamburg 1997 (8)

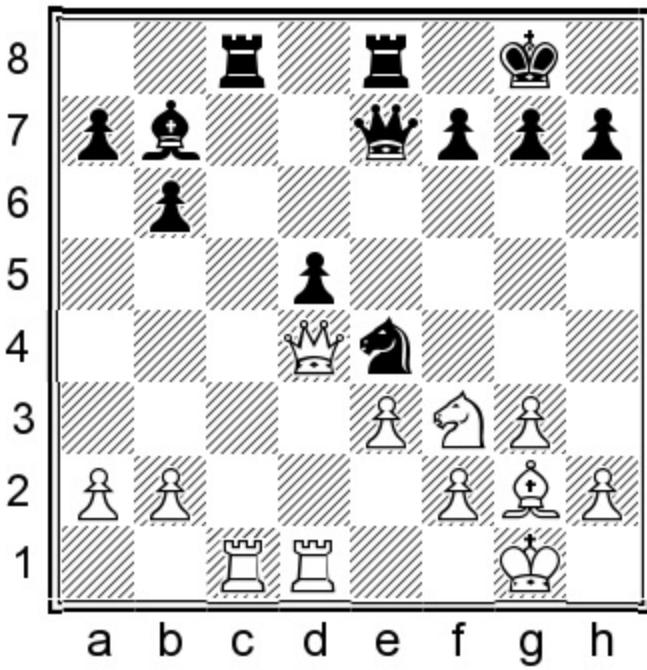
**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3 ♜b7 5.♗g2 ♜e7 6.♗c3 ♜e4 7.♗d2 d5 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♗f4 0-0 10.0-0  
♗d7 11.♗b3 ♜df6 12.♗fd1 c5 13.dxc5 ♜xc5**

Another option is 13...♗xc3!? 14.bxc3 ♜xc5 15.e3 h6 16.♗e5 ♜c8.

**14.♗xe4 ♜xe4 15.♗e3 ♜f6**

Black equalized after 15...♜e8 16.♗d4 (16.♗xc5!? ♜xc5 17.♗c2) 16...♜a6 17.e3 ♜e2 18.♗e1 ♜xf3 19.♗xf3 ♜xd4 in the game Artemiev-Bologan, Poikovsky 2018.

**16.♗xc5 ♜xc5 17.♗b4 ♜fe8 18.e3 ♜ac8 19.♗d4 ♜e7 20.♗ac1 ♜e4**



'At one time, in the early and mid-twentieth century, this position would have been considered lost for Black. Then he learned how to hold this slightly inferior position. (...) White stands better, but it will not be easy to breach the opponent's defences. Now his primary objective is to move his knight from f3 to another square – say, f4 or d4. Then in due time White will be threatening to take with his bishop on e4 followed by the exchange on c8 and then  $\mathbb{W}d7$ . In evaluating the position, one drawback to White's position must also be mentioned. The queen is a poor blockader, and at d4 it is not very well placed' – Kortchnoi.

**21.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  h6 22.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

Another plan was 22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ ? dx $e$  23.  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  24.  $\mathbb{R}c4$   $\mathbb{R}ed8$  25.  $\mathbb{R}xd8+$   $\mathbb{R}xd8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}c2$ , exchanging the pressure on the isolated  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  for control of the c-file.

**22...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23. a3  $\mathbb{Q}c5?$**

23...  $\mathbb{R}xc1$  24.  $\mathbb{R}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  25.  $\mathbb{W}b4+$   $\mathbb{R}e7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  27.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$  dx $e$  was correct, with an inferior but defensible ending.

**24.  $\mathbb{R}c2?$**

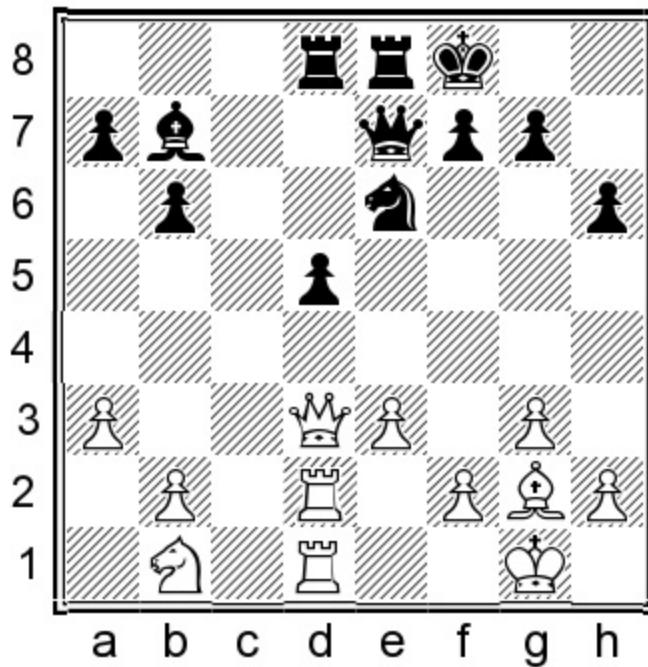
Kortchnoi did not mention the fact that here White could simply capture the centre pawn, for which Black's compensation would be inadequate: 24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$   $\mathbb{R}ed8$  (24...  $\mathbb{R}cd8$  25.  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}c2$ ) 25.  $\mathbb{W}g4!$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  26.  $\mathbb{R}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28.  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  29.  $\mathbb{R}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

**24...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}d3?$**

The continuation 25.  $\mathbb{W}d2!$   $\mathbb{R}xc2$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{R}d8$  (26... d4? 27. exd4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  28. d5) 27.  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{R}xd7$  29. f4 leads to a slightly better ending for White.

**25...♝cd8 26.♝cd2?!**

Apparently Epishin overestimates his position. Instead, 26.♔h7 f6! 27.h4 d4 28.e4 ♔f7 (28...♝c5 29.♝d2) 29.b4 ♐a6 30.a4 d3 31.♝cc1 ♘d4 32.e5 ♘g8 33.♝g6 ♘f7 would have resulted in an equal position.



**26...d4!**

As we already know, this advance is a sign that the side with the IQP is fine.

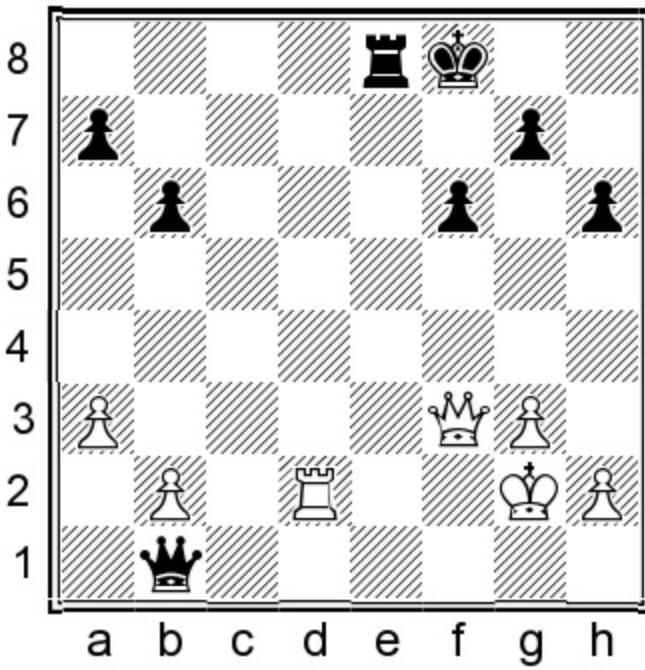
**27.♔h7?**

The lesser of the evils was 27.♕e2!?, or 27.h4!?, preventing the move ...♝e6-g5.

**27...f6**

Safeguarding his king and preparing 28...♝g5, which puts White in a desperate situation.

**28.exd4 ♐g5 29.♔d3 ♘xd4 30.♔f1 ♘xg2 31.♔xg2 ♕e4+ 32.f3 ♘xd2+ 33.♔xd2 ♐xf3 34.♔xf3 ♘xb1**



‘... Black has won a pawn. But the game is not yet over: in this position neither the queen ending nor the rook ending is easy to win’ – Kortchnoi.

**35.♕d5 ♔e1 36.♕d3 ♔f7 37.♕d5+ ♔e6 38.♕f3 ♔f8 39.♖c2 ♔e4 40.♕xe4 ♖xe4 41.♔f3 ♖e7 42.h4 ♔e8 43.♔f4 ♖d7 44.b4 h5 45.♔e4 ♖e7+ 46.♔f4??**

Here 46.♔f5 was more tenacious, e.g. 46...♔f7 47.a4 ♖e5+ 48.♔f4 a6 49.♖c7+ ♖e7 50.♖c6 ♖e6 51.♖c7+ ♖g6 52.♔f3 ♖d6 53.♔b7.

**46...♔d7 47.a4?!**

After 47.♖d2+! ♔c6 48.a4 ♖e5 49.b5+ ♔c7 50.♖d4 ♖c5 51.g4!? g5+ 52.♔g3 ♖c3+ 53.♔f2 hxg4 54.♖xg4 ♖c5 55.hxg5, converting Black’s extra pawn would have been much more difficult.

**47...♖e5 48.♖c3 g6 49.b5?**

The losing advance, in a position where passive defence still offered some practical chances of survival.

**49...♖c5**

Forcing the transition to a king and pawn ending with an extra pawn.

**50.♖xc5 bxc5 51.a5 ♔d6 52.♔e3 c4 53.♔d4 c3 54.♔xc3 ♔c5 55.b6 axb6 56.axb6 ♔xb6 57.♔d4 ♔c6 58.♔c4 ♔d6 59.♔d4 f5!**

Making use of his reserve tempo.

60.♔d3 ♔d5 61.♔e3 ♔e5 62.♔f3 f4 0-1

Game 28  
Caro-Kann Defence  
**Gata Kamsky** 2735  
**Anatoly Karpov** 2770  
Elista ct m 1996 (4)

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘f3 ♜b4

The main alternative is 6...♜e7.

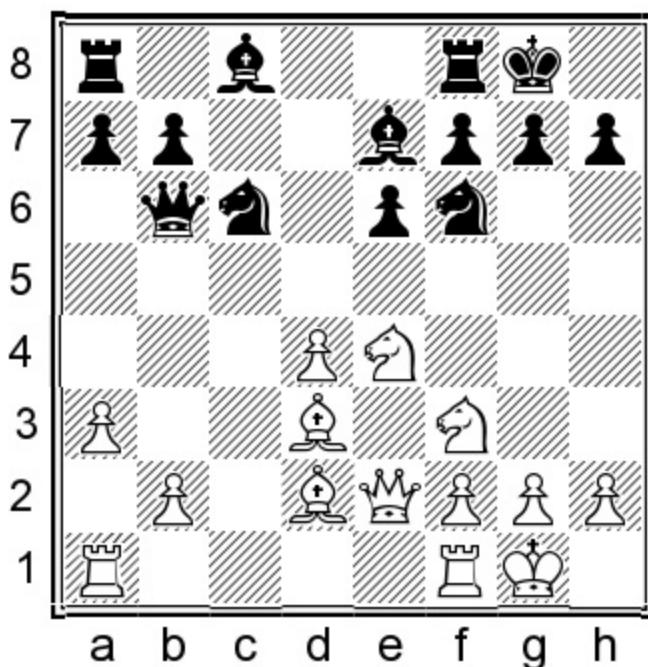
7.cxd5 ♜xd5 8.♕d2 ♜c6 9.♕d3 ♜e7 10.0-0 0-0 11.♗e2

The most common move here is 11.a3, e.g. 11...♞f6 12.♗c2 h6 (12...♝xd4? 13.♝xd4 ♜xd4 14.♝xh7+ ♜h8 15.♝e4 ♜f6 16.♖ad1) 13.♖ad1 ♜d7 14.♝xd5 exd5 15.h3 ♜b6 16.♕c3 ♜fe8 17.♗d2 ♜ac8 18.♕b1, with a slight advantage which White steered to victory in the game Artemiev-Malakhov, Sochi 2018.

11...♝f6 12.♝e4 ♜b6

This is still the main line today. It is dangerous to capture the centre pawn, e.g. 12...♝xd4? 13.♝xd4 ♜xd4 14.♕c3 ♜d8 (14...♝d5!?) 15.♝xf6+ ♜xf6 (15...gxf6?? 16.♗g4+ ♜h8 17.♗e4) 16.♖ad1 ♜e7 17.♗e4 g6 18.♕b4, winning the exchange.

13.a3



**13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

This is the clearest way to equality. Both ways to win the pawn were bad: 13... $\mathbb{W}xb2??$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  15. $\mathbb{W}e4$  g6 16. $\mathbb{Q}fb1$ , and the black queen is trapped; or 13... $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  18.f4  $\mathbb{W}c5+$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  f5 20. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , and Black has difficulty bringing the  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  into play.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$**

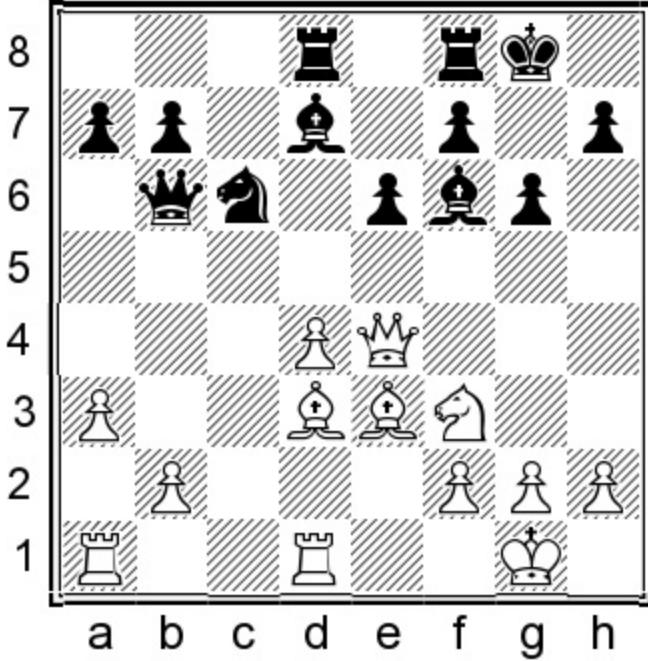
Capturing on d4 or b2 was still bad.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+??$**

This exchange, followed by  $\mathbb{W}e4$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , is the start of a misguided plan, which was definitely overlooked by commentators of this game. Instead, 15.b4! was better, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  (16...a5!?) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ , with a decisive advantage to White, Ghaem Maghami-Adianto, Beijing 2008.

**15... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{W}e4$  g6 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3?$**

This is an error leading to an advantage for Black. The game would have remained unclear after 17. $\mathbb{Q}h6!$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (18...f6 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h5 21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , with chances for both sides.



**17... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$**

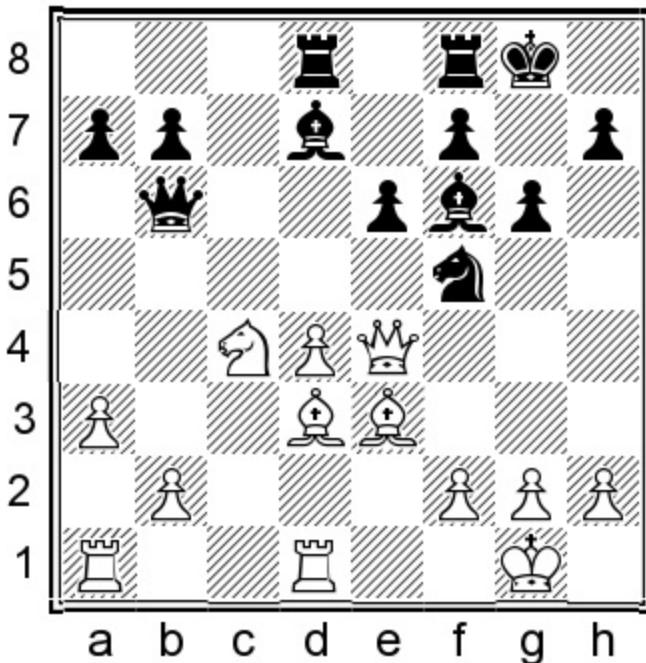
This splendid move by Karpov reveals the secrets of the position: the  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  heads for f5, at the same

time freeing the c6-square for the ♜d7, after which all the black pieces will be very well coordinated.

## 18.♗e5

The engine's evaluation after this move is -0.69. Considering the black position to be better, Stockfish recommends a variation that would be impossible for a human player to adopt: 18.♗d2 ♜b5 19.♗xb5 ♜xb5 20.♗c1 ♜d5 21.♗xd5 ♜xd5 22.g4 ♜c6 23.g5 ♜g7 24.♗c5, with an evaluation of -0.14. It is understandable that Kamsky tries to fight, instead of seeking equality in such a miserable manner.

## 18...♗f5 19.♗c4



## 19...♝a6!

Probably this move, which allows the threat of a discovery by moving the ♜c4, was overlooked by Kamsky. It is curious to compare several moves analysed by Stockfish: 19...♝b3 20.♗a5 ♜b6 21.♗c4 ♜a6 22.♗e5 ♜b5, reaching the same position as in the game!; 19...♝a6 20.♗e5 ♜b5 21.♗c2 ♜g7 etc.; 19...♝c6 20.♗ab1 ♜a6 21.♗e5 ♜b5, and again it is the same position as in the game, but with an extra tempo for White!

## 20.a4

In the event of 20.♗e5 ♜b5 21.♗c2 ♜c4 22.♗xc4 ♜xc4 23.♗d3 (23.♗d2?! ♜xd4 24.♗ad1 e5, with an extra pawn) 23...♜b3, the pawns on d4 and b2 are both under attack.

## 20...♜c6 21.♝f4 ♜d5

21...♜xd4? 22.♝xf5 ♜xe3 23.♝xe3 exf5 24.♝xf5! led to equality.

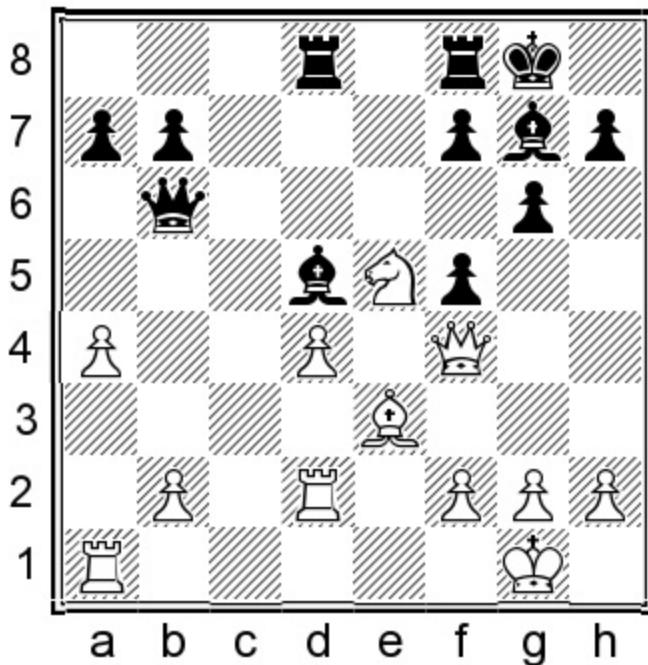
**22.♗e5**

The engine's evaluation at this moment is -0.82. As Karpov indicated, 22.g4? fails to 22...g5!, but simply 22...♝xc4 was also good, winning a pawn. Instead, 22.b3 ♜c6 23.♝ac1 h5 24.h4 ♜d7 etc. would have been somewhat inferior to the move in the game.

**22...♛b6 23.♝xf5 exf5!**

The alternative capture on f5 loses at the very least the exchange, e.g. 23...gxf5? 24.a5! (24.♛g3+? ♔h8 25.♝h6 ♜xe5 26.dxe5 ♜g8 27.♝g5 ♜g6) 24...♜xb2 25.♛g3+ ♔h8 26.♝h6 ♜b4 (26...♜xe5? 27.♜xe5+ f6 28.♜c7, winning) 27.♝xf8.

**24.♝d2 ♜g7**



I remember that at the time Black's plan of allowing doubled pawns and recapturing away from the centre with 23...exf5 seemed innovative. Nowadays when we see variations such as 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♝c3 dxe4 4.♝xe4 ♜f6 5.♝xf6 exf6!? in fashion, Karpov's plan is much more understandable. It is clear that Black is much better, due to his pair of bishops and the various weaknesses in the enemy camp. From now on the 12th World Champion, in his usual style, gradually improves his position without allowing his opponent any counterplay.

**25.h4 ♜fe8 26.♛g3 ♜c8**

As Karpov pointed out, 26...h6!? was more accurate, followed by ...♔h7.

**27.♝d7**

Here 27.h5!? f6 28.h6 ♜f8 29.♝d7 ♜d8 30.♝xf8 ♔xf8 31.♝dd1 seems a slight improvement.

27... $\mathbb{W}c6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  b6 29. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  30.a5  $\mathbb{E}e4!$

With the threat of 31... $\mathbb{E}g4$ .

31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  b5 32. $\mathbb{E}dd1$

Here the most tenacious move was 32.h5!? e.g. 32... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ?! 33.d5!?) 34. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}ce8$  35.g3 g5 36. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  h6 37. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ ) 33.a6  $\mathbb{W}d8$  34. $\mathbb{W}f3$  b4 35. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

32... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  33. $\mathbb{E}ac1$  h6!

A prophylactic move, typical of Karpov's style of play. The idea is to respond to the advance h4-h5 with ...g6-g5.

34. $\mathbb{E}c3$  b4 35. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  36. $\mathbb{E}dc1$

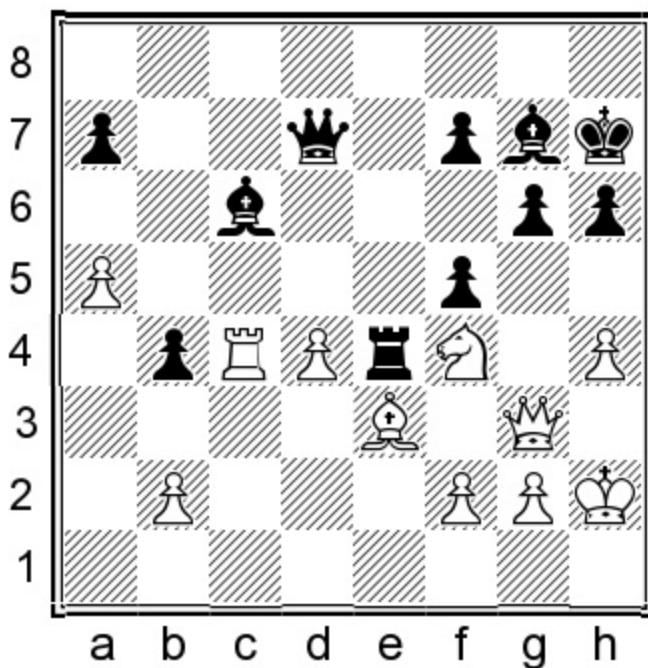
36.d5!? would have offered somewhat more resistance, e.g. 36... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  37. $\mathbb{E}d4$ !? (37. $\mathbb{E}dd2$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  38. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}xa5$ ) 37... $\mathbb{E}c8$  38. $\mathbb{E}xe4$  fxe4 39. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b3 40. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}f5$ ! (40... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ ? 41. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  42. $\mathbb{W}xb3$ ) 41. $\mathbb{W}e3$ .

36... $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Exchanging a pair of rooks, which reduces the opponent's active possibilities.

37. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  39. $\mathbb{E}c4$

Karpov's suggestion 39.d5 was no better, as after 39... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ! 40. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (or 40. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  41. $\mathbb{E}c1$  b3) 40... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  Black wins a pawn, without losing any of his positional advantage.



Karpov's next move is a good exercise on the theme of improving the position of the pieces. By

transferring the ♜g7 to d6 Black creates threats that are soon decisive:

**39...♜f8! 40.♝d3 ♜e6**

As usual, Karpov is in no hurry, although 40...♝d5! was already winning, due to the twin threats against c4 and h4.

**41.d5**

Sacrificing the isolated pawn, in order to give his pieces some air.

**41...♜xd5 42.♝xe4 ♜xe4 43.♝xa7?**

Here 43.♝c5 ♜d5 44.♝xe4 fxe4 45.a6 ♜e6! 46.♝g1 would have offered more resistance, although after 46...♝xa6 47.♝c7 ♜a1+ 48.♝h2 ♜g7 49.♝xf7 ♜xb2 50.♝xa7 h5 the passed ♘b4 should decide the game.

**43...♜d6 44.♝f4**

Black would also have won in the event of 44.f4 ♜d7! 45.♝d4 ♜xd3 46.♝xd3 ♜xf4+ 47.g3 ♜e5.

**44...♝e5 45.♝h3**

Equally hopeless was 45.♝e3 ♜xb2 46.a6 ♜a1.

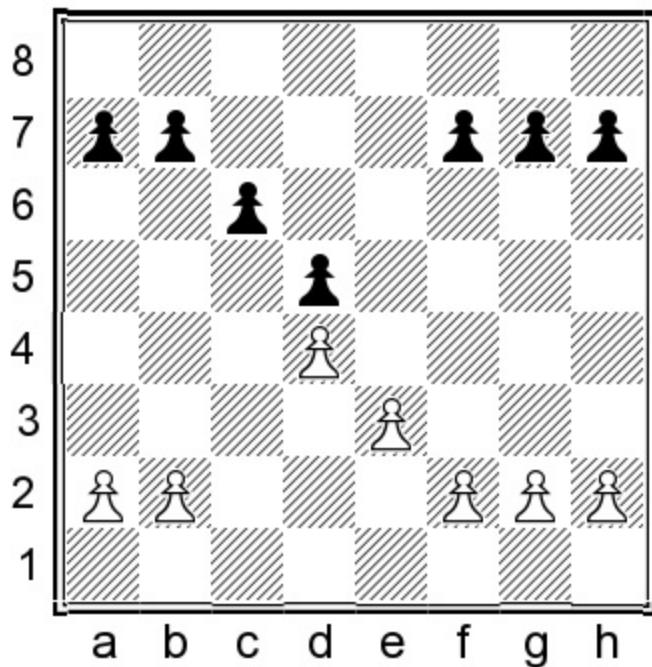
**45...♝e7 0-1**

## Chapter 2

# The Carlsbad structure

### 2.1. Introduction

'The American (Reshevsky, ed.) liked this Carlsbad-type position, giving White the option of varying his plans, first contemplating an attack on the queenside, then opening the centre by e3-e4, then preparing a pawn offensive against the king after f2-f3 and g2-g4' – Garry Kasparov.



When the pawn structure is fixed, each side has various concrete plans, which we shall examine below.

The pawn structure shown in the diagram can arise from several variations of the Queen's Gambit Declined, e.g. 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5 c6,

the Nimzo-Indian Defence, e.g. 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♕b4 4.♕c2 d5 5.cxd5 exd5,

and the Grünfeld Indian Defence, e.g. 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.♗g5 ♘e4 6.cxd5 ♘xg5 7.♘xg5 e6 8.♘f3 exd5, as well as from other openings. The same formation can also occur with reversed colours,

for instance in the Exchange Variation of the Caro-Kann Defence 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.♘d3 ♘c6 5.c3.

Historically, the main early source of this particular pawn formation, which is now generally known as the Carlsbad structure, was the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit. At the end of the 19th century, the famous American player Pillsbury gave an exemplary demonstration of one of the typical plans in this structure, as we shall see below. Then in the first decade of the twentieth century the Exchange Variation was played by various strong players, especially Marshall, who wrote that he

often used it to avoid the Cambridge Springs Defence 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♘bd7 5.e3 c6 6.♗f3 ♖a5; instead, after 6.cxd5 exd5, the structure under discussion arises. At the present time, the exchange of pawns in the centre usually occurs slightly earlier, using the move-order 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5; in this way, White also avoids certain variations of the Queen's Gambit and the Semi-Slav Defence, in particular the sharp Botvinnik System 4.♗g5 c6 5.♗f3 dxc4 6.e4 b5 7.e5 h6 8.♗h4 g5 or the modern line 5...h6 6.♗h4 dxc4.

However, the big rise in the popularity of this pawn formation, and hence the name, began with the great Carlsbad (now Karlovy Vary) tournament of 1923, where the exchange on d5 was used specifically as a way for White to avoid the so-called Swiss Defence, then in fashion, which was based on an early ...a7-a6, intending the manoeuvre ...dxc4, ...b7-b5, ...♗b7, ...c7-c5, in the style of the Queen's Gambit Accepted or the Meran Semi-Slav.

Let us now return to the first diagram of this chapter. White has the following plans at his disposal:

- 2.2. Plan A: minority attack with b4-b5xc6;
- 2.3. Plan B: attack in the centre with e3-e4;
- 2.4. Plan C: kingside attack with both sides castled on the kingside;
- 2.5. Plan D: kingside attack with the kings castled on opposite sides;
- 2.6. Plan E: play in positions with both sides castled on the queenside.

Black in turn has the following methods of defence available:

- i) Kingside counterattack with pawns;
- ii) Kingside counterattack with pieces;
- iii) Positional methods of defence, e.g. erecting a barrier with ...b7-b5 or controlling the squares c4 and b5 with pieces;
- iv) The central break ...c6-c5;
- v) Counterattack against White's queenside castled position.

Black's choice of defensive method depends on which plan White adopts. For instance, defence method v) can only occur in the case of Plan D or E. Let us examine each of these methods in order.

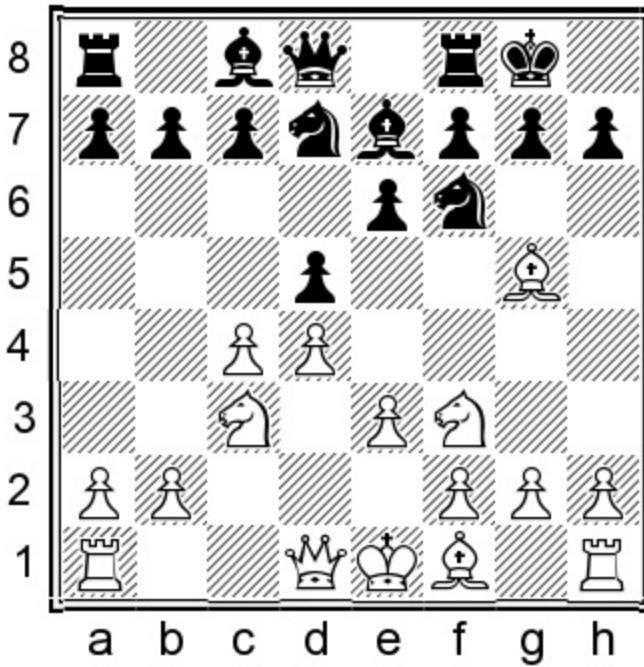
## 2.2. Plan A: the minority attack

This plan is very frequently adopted in practice and we shall therefore study it in more detail. The minority attack is a typical strategic method, which has the aim of creating a weak pawn in the opponent's ranks, precisely where he has a pawn majority. The same procedure is applicable to a large number and variety of middlegame positions.

Let us now examine one of the earliest games featuring the Carlsbad structure.

Game 29  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Harry Nelson Pillsbury**  
**Jackson Showalter**  
New York ch-USA m 1898 (5)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♘e7 5.e3 ♘bd7 6.♗f3 0-0**



**7.cxd5!?**

Pillsbury's favourite strategic scheme, based on the idea of centralizing a knight, would arise after 7.♗c1 b6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♘d3 ♘b7 10.0-0 c5 11.♗e2 c4 12.♗b1 a6 13.♘e5 b5 14.f4, as in Pillsbury-Janowski, Vienna 1898. However, in this game the American player takes another path.

**7...exd5 8.♘d3 c6 9.♗c2 ♘e8 10.0-0 ♘f8 11.♘e5**

Two more common moves in this position are 11.♗ab1 and 11.h3, which score respectively 58,7% and 62,8%, based on more than 3,000 games in each case.

**11...Qg4!?**

This remains the main response.

**12.Qxe7 Wxe7 13.Qxg4 Qxg4 14.Qae1 Wf6?!**

An inaccuracy which White failed to exploit. Among various options, 14...Qad8!? looks the most obvious, e.g. 15.f4 Qc8! 16.f5 Qd7 17.a3 Qf6 18.Wf2 a6 19.Wf4 c5! 20.Qe2 b5 21.dxc5 Wxc5 22.Wd4 We7, with a draw in the game Vaisser-Pigusov, Novosibirsk 1993; Stockfish considers that the best way to maintain equality is 14...Qh5! 15.Qb1 (15.f4 f6 16.Wf2 Qg6 17.f5 Qf7) 15...Wg5 16.Qh1 Qg6 17.b4 a6 18.Qa4 Qxd3 19.Wxd3 Qg6.

**15.a4?!**

Here 15.f4!? Wd6 16.h3 Qc8 17.g4 was better, following Plan C.

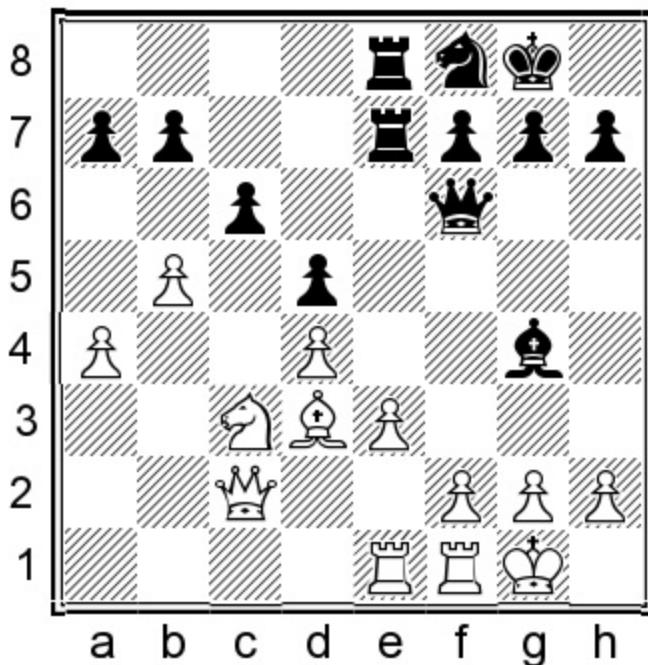
**15...Qe7**

The engine confirms the human evaluation of 15...a5!? as the obvious response, giving the line 16.Qb1 Qg6 17.Qe2 Qh4 18.Qfc1 Qxg2 19.Qxg2 Wf3+ 20.Qg1 Qh3 21.Qf4 Wg4+ 22.Qh1 Wf3+, with perpetual check.

**16.b4!**

The start of Plan A.

**16...Qae8 17.b5**



The minority attack is in full swing.

**17... $\mathbb{W}g5$  18.f4?!**

With 18.bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  19.g3 bxc6 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  21. $\mathbb{W}d1$  White could attain the objective of the minority attack – the creation of a weak pawn on c6; Stockfish prefers 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2!?$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  19.bxc6 bxc6 20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}h6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ .

**18... $\mathbb{W}f6$  19. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  20.a5  $\mathbb{W}g6$**

Black could have maintained equality with 20... $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  22.bxc6 bxc6 23. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ .

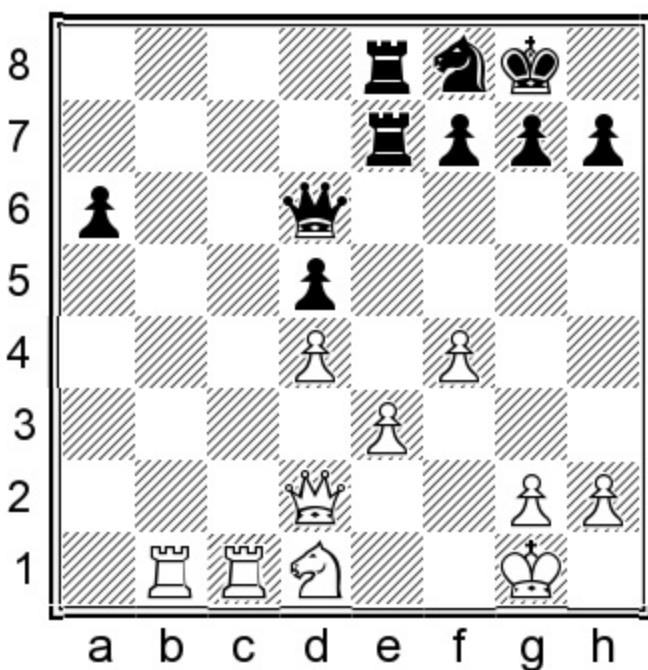
**21. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  22.a6 cxb5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  24.axb7! a6**

If 24... $\mathbb{W}xb5?$  then 25. $\mathbb{E}b1$ .

**25. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  26. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  27. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$**

27... $\mathbb{E}xe3?$  loses the exchange after 28. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  29. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  30. $\mathbb{W}a3!$ , with a big advantage to White.

**28. $\mathbb{Q}d1$**



White's queenside pawn attack has borne fruit: there are now two weak pawns on a6 and d5 and two open files on the queenside. However, objectively Black has sufficient counterplay, due to the weak  $\mathbb{E}e3$ .

**28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !? 29. $\mathbb{W}a5$  h5 30. $\mathbb{B}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  32. $\mathbb{W}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  was also sufficient for equality, since the greater activity of the black pieces compensates for the sacrificed pawn, as the engine confirms after analysing at a sufficient depth.

**29.g3 h5 30. $\mathbb{W}e2$  h4 31. $\mathbb{W}h5$  hxg3 32.hxg3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}d8$**

In return for the d5-pawn Black could have obtained active piece play: 33... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !? 34. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  35. $\mathbb{B}g5$  g6 36. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  with mutual chances.

**34. $\mathbb{B}bc1$  g6?!**

Here several moves kept the balance, e.g. 34... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ! 35. $\mathbb{B}1c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  36. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  37. $\mathbb{B}c6$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  38. $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ .

**35. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  36. $\mathbb{B}c8$ ?!**

Here White could have gained the better game with 36. $\mathbb{B}c6$ !  $\mathbb{W}a3$  37. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  38.f5 gxf5 39. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ .

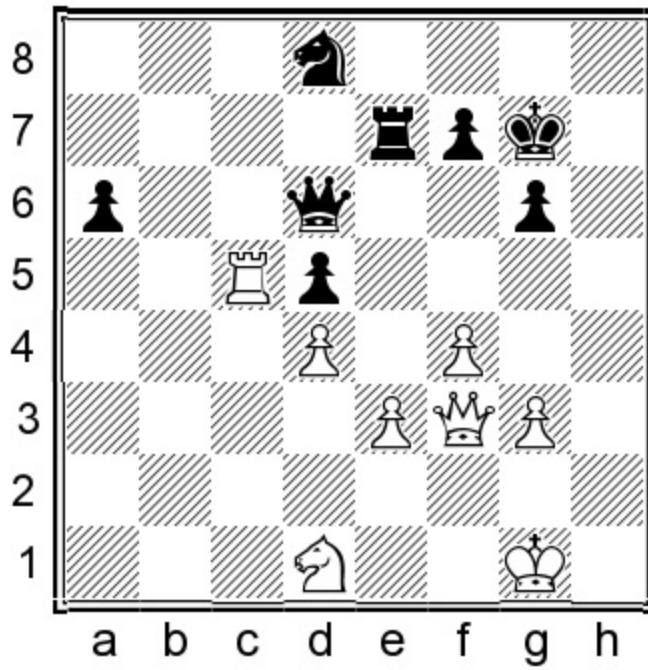
**36... $\mathbb{B}g7$ ??**

Black could have equalized here with 36... $\mathbb{B}xc8$ ! 37. $\mathbb{B}xc8+$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  38. $\mathbb{W}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  39. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  (39... $\mathbb{B}e4$ ?) 40. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  41. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{B}c7$ ; and 36... $\mathbb{B}c7$ ! 37. $\mathbb{B}8xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  38.f5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  39.fxg6  $\mathbb{W}xg6$ .

**37. $\mathbb{B}xd8$ ??**

Now 37. $\mathbb{B}8c6$ ! was best, e.g. 37... $\mathbb{W}a3$  38. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  39.f5! gxf5 40. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  (40...a5? loses: 41. $\mathbb{W}e5+$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  42. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  (42... $\mathbb{W}e7$  43. $\mathbb{B}h1$ !) 43. $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{B}b2+$  44. $\mathbb{B}f3$ ) 41. $\mathbb{B}xa6$ , winning a pawn.

**37... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  38. $\mathbb{B}c5$**



**38...♝e6?!**

It was better to sacrifice a pawn in another way: 38...♝d7! 39.♝c3 ♝e6 40.♝xd5 ♜c6 41.♔f2 (41.♕e4 ♜b7!) 41...♝xd5 42.♝xd5 ♜c2+ 43.♕e2 ♜b3, and with his passed pawn on a6 Black is in no danger of losing.

**39.♝xd5 ♜b6 40.♝c1 ♜b4**

As Stockfish indicates, there was a way for Black to maintain equality, but it would have been very difficult for a human player to see: 40...♝c7! 41.♕e5+ (41.♝xc7 ♜xc7 42.♕e5+ ♔f8 43.♔f2 (43.f5 ♜b1!) 43...f6 44.♕e4 ♜b3 45.♝f3 f5 46.e4 ♜a4) 41...♔f8 42.♝a1 ♜c2 43.d5 ♜c5 44.♕h8+ ♔e7 45.♕d4 ♜f6 46.♕xf6+ ♔xf6 47.♝f2 ♔e7 48.♝g4 ♔d6.

**41.♝f2 ♜d2?**

Here 41...♜a3! was better, e.g. 42.♝e1 ♜c7 43.♝c5 (43.♝c6 ♜b5) 43...♜xc5 44.dxc5 a5, with possibilities of resistance; another good option was 41...♝f8!? 42.♝c5 (42.♝g4 f5! 43.♝e5 ♜d2) 42...a5 43.♜xb4 axb4 44.e4 f5 45.d5 fxe4 46.d6 ♜d7 47.♝xe4 ♜e6 48.♝f2 ♜b7, when Black retains some defensive chances.

**42.♕e5+ f6 43.♕xf6+! ♔xf6 44.♝e4+ ♔f5 45.♝xd2 g5 46.d5 gxf4 47.gxf4 ♜xf4 48.exf4 ♔xf4 49.♝c5?**

Here there was an easy win with 49.♝f1+ ♔g4 50.d6 ♜d7 51.♝e4 ♜d8 52.d7 a5 53.♝c5.

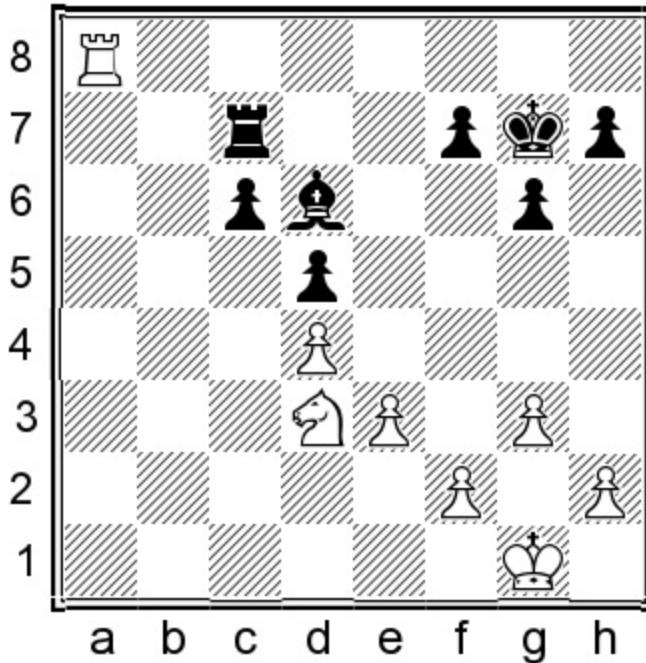
**49...♝d7?**

After 49... $\hat{Q}e5$ ! 50. $\hat{Q}f3+$  (50. $\hat{Q}a5 \hat{Q}d7$  51. $\hat{Q}c4+$   $\hat{Q}d4$ ) 50... $\hat{Q}d6$  51. $\hat{Q}a5 \hat{Q}c7$  52. $\hat{Q}d2 \hat{Q}c2$  53. $\hat{Q}e4+$   $\hat{Q}e5$ , despite the extra knight, White cannot win.

**50. $\hat{Q}c4$   $\hat{Q}e4$  51.d6  $\hat{Q}d4$  52. $\hat{Q}c7$   $\hat{Q}d8$  53.d7  $\hat{Q}d5$  54. $\hat{Q}c8$  1-0**

Let us now examine two endings which are characteristic of the Carlsbad structure, following a minority attack brought to a successful conclusion.

Game 30  
Alexander Kotov  
Ludek Pachman  
Venice 1950 (4)



*Black to move*

**42... $\hat{Q}f6$ ??!**

White's advantage is not very great as yet and therefore every detail is important. It was better to play 42...h5! to prevent White's next move.

**42... $\hat{Q}f6$ ??! 43.g4!**

In this way White fixes the  $\hat{Q}h7$ , creating a second weakness in the enemy camp. Through not being able to defend both weak points satisfactorily, Black loses the game.

**43... $\hat{Q}e6$ ??!**

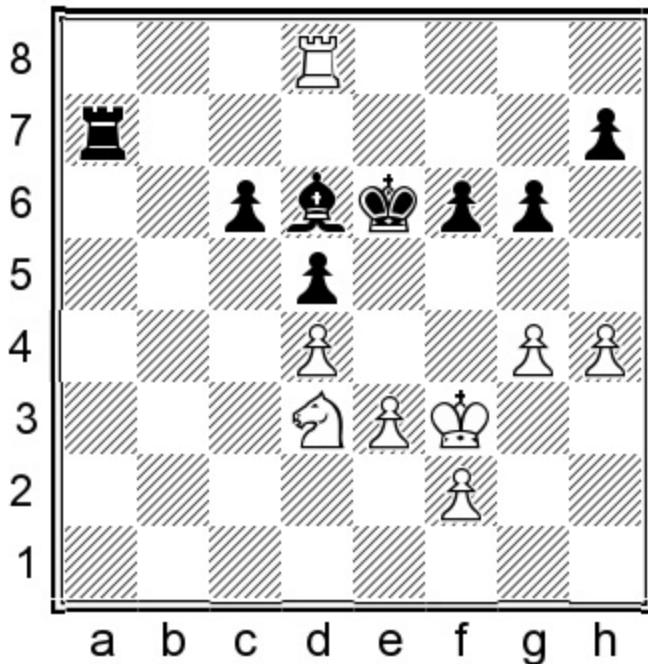
It was better to play 43... $\hat{Q}g5$ ! 44.h3 f5 45.gxf5 (45.f4+?!  $\hat{Q}h4$ ! 46.gxf5  $\hat{Q}g3$ !! 47.fxg6 hxg6 48. $\hat{Q}e8$

$\mathbb{E}e7$  49.  $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xe7$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  c5 51.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  cxd4 52.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  dxe3 53.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  leads to a draw) 45...  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

#### 44. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{E}b7$

The continuation 44...c5?! 45. dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  46.  $\mathbb{E}a6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47.  $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  48. g5! is a good demonstration of the drawbacks of 42...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ . Best play would have been 44...g5 45. h3 f6 46.  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  47.  $\mathbb{E}c8$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  49.  $\mathbb{E}h8$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f5 51.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , but the character of the resulting position is similar to the game.

45.  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  46.  $\mathbb{E}h8$  f6 47. h4!  $\mathbb{E}b7$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  49.  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  50.  $\mathbb{E}d8$   $\mathbb{E}a7$

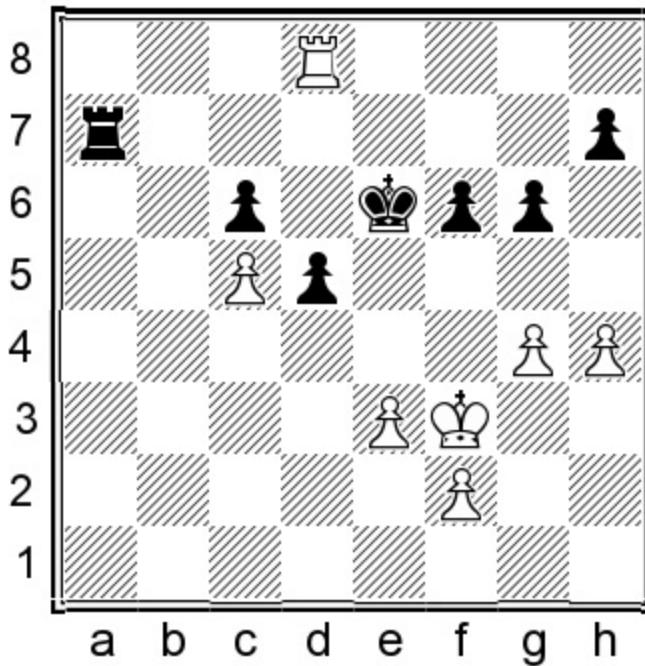


With his next move White offers Black the choice of simplifying into a rook ending, although it seems better to keep improving his position for a while longer.

#### 51. $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ??

Here the pawn sacrifice 51...  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ ! 52. dxc5  $\mathbb{E}a4$  53.  $\mathbb{E}d6+$  (53.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ !?) 53...  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  54.  $\mathbb{E}d7$  (or 54.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$  d4! 55. exd4+  $\mathbb{E}xd4$  56.  $\mathbb{E}c7$  f5! with a draw) 54... f5 55. g5 d4 56. exd4+  $\mathbb{E}xd4$  57.  $\mathbb{E}xh7$   $\mathbb{E}f4+$  58.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}e4+$  offered good defensive chances.

52.  $\mathbb{E}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  53. dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  54.  $\mathbb{E}h8$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  55.  $\mathbb{E}d8$



**55... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$**

The decisive error. Again it was better to seek counterplay by keeping his king active: 55... $\mathbb{R}a4!$  56. $\mathbb{R}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  57. $\mathbb{R}d7!$  (57. $\mathbb{R}xc6?!$  d4 58. $\mathbb{R}c7$  dx $e$ 3 59.fxe3 h5 with equality) 57...f5 58.g5 d4 59.exd4+ (59. $\mathbb{R}xh7$  d3 60. $\mathbb{R}d7$   $\mathbb{R}xh4$  61. $\mathbb{R}xd3$   $\mathbb{R}h5$  62. $\mathbb{R}d6$   $\mathbb{R}xg5$  63. $\mathbb{R}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  64. $\mathbb{R}c8$   $\mathbb{R}g1$  and the activity of Black's pieces compensates for the pawn) 59... $\mathbb{R}xd4$  60. $\mathbb{R}xh7$   $\mathbb{R}f4+$  61. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{R}a4$  62. $\mathbb{R}g7$   $\mathbb{R}e4+$  63. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{R}xh4$  64. $\mathbb{R}xg6$   $\mathbb{R}h3+$  65. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{R}h5$  66. $\mathbb{R}xc6$   $\mathbb{R}xg5$ , and White is unable to realize his extra pawn.

**56. $\mathbb{R}d6$   $\mathbb{R}a6$  57.g5 fx $g$ 5 58.hx $g$ 5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  59. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

After 59... $\mathbb{R}a3$  60. $\mathbb{R}xc6$  d4 61. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  d3 62.e4 d2 63. $\mathbb{R}d6$   $\mathbb{R}c3$  64. $\mathbb{R}xd2$   $\mathbb{R}xc5$  65. $\mathbb{R}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  66.e5  $\mathbb{R}c4+$  67. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  the rook ending is winning for White.

**60.f3  $\mathbb{R}a3$  61. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{R}a4+$  62. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{R}a3$  63. $\mathbb{R}xc6$   $\mathbb{R}xe3+$  64. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{R}d3+$  65. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{R}c3$  66.f4  $\mathbb{R}c1$  67. $\mathbb{R}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

Or 67... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  68. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{R}d1+$  69. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{R}f1$  70. $\mathbb{R}c6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  71. $\mathbb{R}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  72. $\mathbb{R}f6$ , with a decisive advantage.

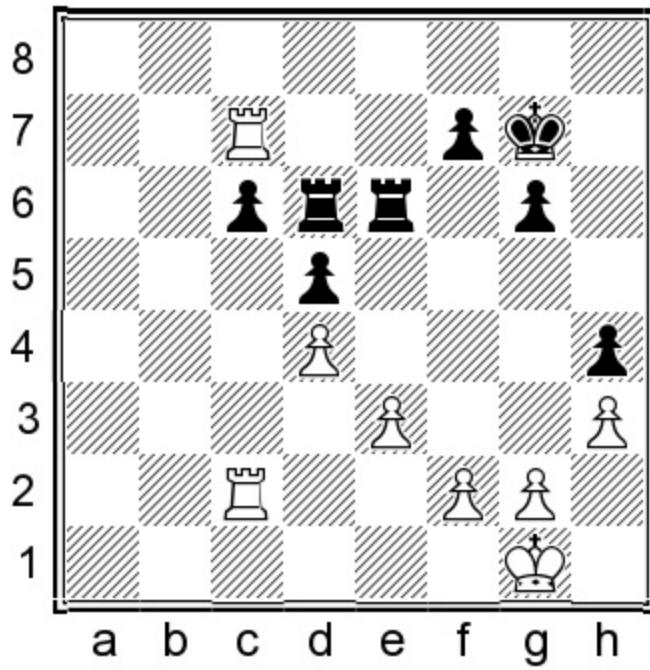
**68. $\mathbb{R}xh7$   $\mathbb{R}xc5$  69. $\mathbb{R}f7$  1-0**

Game 31

Mark Hebden 2556

Peter Shaw 2161

Leeds rapid 2013 (1)

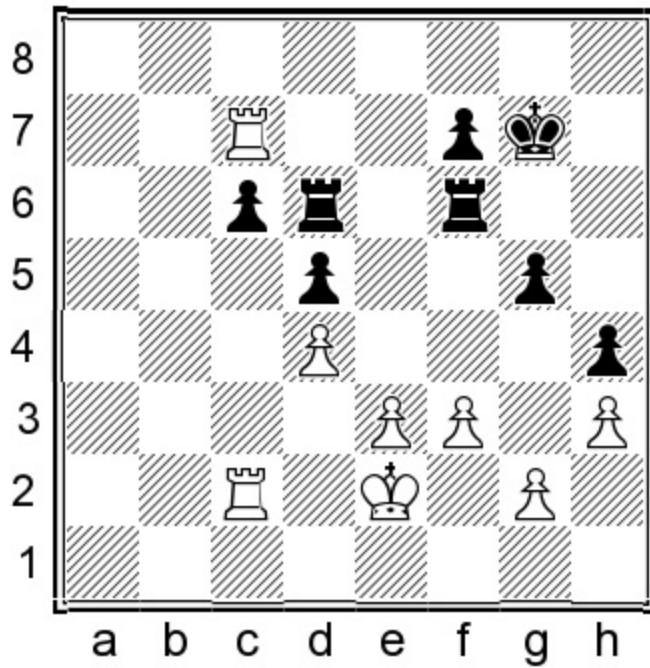


*White to move*

**34.♔f1**

White's rooks are more active than the opponent's, but to increase his advantage he needs to advance in the centre with f2-f3 and e3-e4, which Hebden prepares with his next few moves.

**34...♜f6 35.♔e2 g5 36.f3**



**36...♕g6?**

The following variation demonstrates a correct defensive method: 36... $\mathbb{B}de6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  39. $\mathbb{B}b6!$ ? (39.e4 dxe4+ 40.fxe4  $\mathbb{F}f4$  41. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  42.e5 f6! 43. $\mathbb{A}a2$  fxe5 44. $\mathbb{A}a8+$   $\mathbb{F}f8$  45. $\mathbb{A}aa7$   $\mathbb{F}f4$ , and Black is out of danger) 39... $\mathbb{E}ee6$  40. $\mathbb{B}b8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  41. $\mathbb{B}bc8$  g4!? (Stockfish's recommendation; passive defence probably also suffices, e.g. 41... $\mathbb{B}g6$  42.e4 dxe4+ 43.fxe4 g4, leading to equality) 42.fxg4  $\mathbb{F}f2$  43. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$  44. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xg2$  45. $\mathbb{B}d6$   $\mathbb{H}h2$  46. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  47. $\mathbb{B}h5$   $\mathbb{B}xh3$  48.d5  $\mathbb{B}h1$  49. $\mathbb{B}d4$  h3 50. $\mathbb{B}e5$  f5! 51. $\mathbb{B}xf5$   $\mathbb{B}e1$  52. $\mathbb{B}h5$   $\mathbb{B}xe3+$  53. $\mathbb{B}f4$   $\mathbb{B}d3$  54. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{B}g3$ , with an obvious draw.

### 37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{B}fe6$

Or 37... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  39. $\mathbb{B}b6$ .

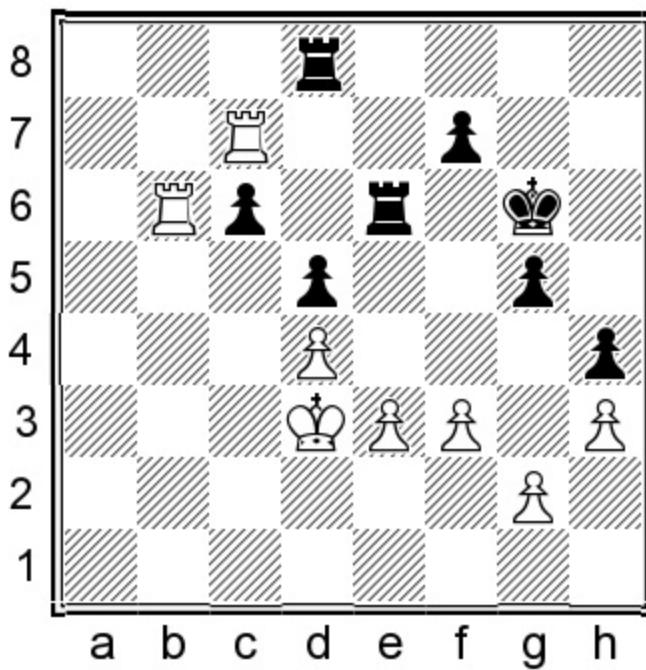
### 38. $\mathbb{B}b2$

Instead, 38.e4? would have been premature, due to 38...dxe4+ 39.fxe4 f5 40.e5  $\mathbb{B}xe5$  41. $\mathbb{B}2xc6$   $\mathbb{B}ed5$ , with equality.

### 38... $\mathbb{B}d8$

38... $\mathbb{B}e8$ .

### 39. $\mathbb{B}b6$



### 39... $\mathbb{B}dd6?$

Here it was necessary to sacrifice the 'ailing'  $\mathbb{A}c6$  with 39... $\mathbb{B}a8!$  40. $\mathbb{B}bxc6$   $\mathbb{B}a3+$  41. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{B}a2$  42. $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{B}a3+$  43. $\mathbb{B}7c3$   $\mathbb{B}a1$ , and it is not clear whether White can realize his extra pawn. However, psychologically it is difficult to let the pawn go when it is still possible to maintain the material

balance. The problem is that the danger is greater than it seems.

**40.e4! dxe4+**

Equally hopeless was 40...c5 41.♗xd6 ♗xd6 42.♗xc5.

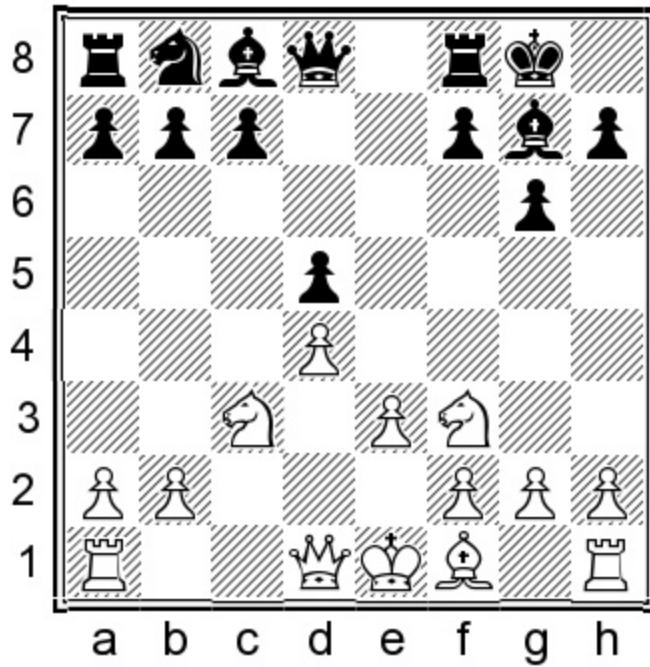
**41.fxe4 f6 42.♗bb7!**

The threat of mate is the final straw for Black; his position is now untenable.

**42...f5 43.♗g7+ ♖h5 44.exf5 ♘f6 45.♗e4 ♘d5 46.♗h7+ ♖h6 47.♗xh6+ ♖xh6 48.♗e7 ♘a5 49.♗e6+ ♖g7 50.♗xc6 ♘a2 51.♗g6+ 1-0**

Game 32  
Grünfeld Indian Defence  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
**Nikolai Krogius**  
Tbilisi ch-URS 1959 (9)

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.c4 ♘g7 4.♗c3 d5 5.♗g5 ♘e4 6.cxd5 ♘xg5 7.♗xg5 e6 8.♗f3 exd5 9.e3 0-0**



**10.♗d3**

The most common move in this position is 10.♗e2, e.g. 10...a5 11.0-0 c6 12.♗e1 (Stockfish suggests 12.♗c1 ♘d7 13.♗d2 ♘b6 14.♗d3 ♘e8 15.a3 ♘d7 16.♗e1 ♘c8 17.♗a4 ♘d6 18.♗b3, with equality) 12...♘e8 13.a3 ♘d6 14.♗a4 ♘d7 15.♗d3 b6 16.♗c2 (16.♗c1!?) 16...♘a6, with chances for both sides, Borsuk-Thybo, Sitges Sunway online 2020.

The engine indicates that several other moves also lead to equality: 10.♗d3, 10.b4, 10.♗b3, etc.

**10...♝c6**

The more usual move-order is 10...c6 11.0-0 ♘d6 12.♗b1 a5.

**11.0-0 ♜e7**

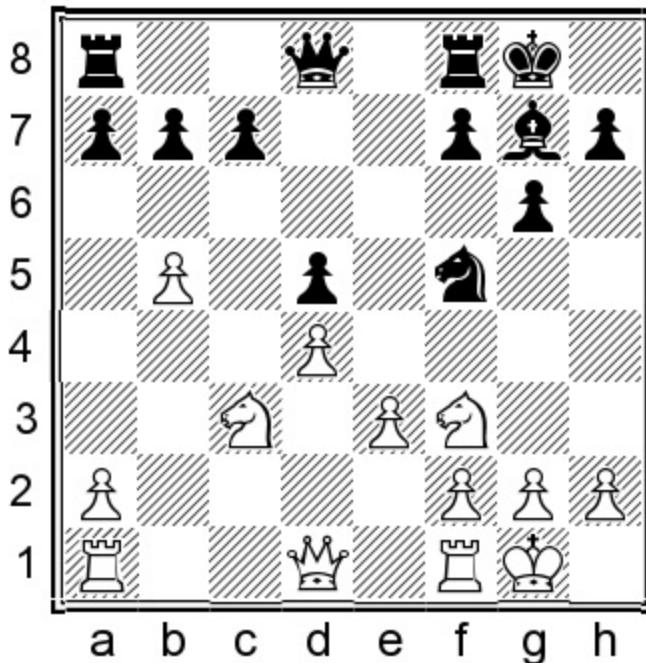
Stockfish considers the move-order 11...a5!? 12.♗b3 (twenty years later another Petrosian game ended in a quick draw: 12.a3 ♜e7 13.b4 ♜g4 14.b5 ♘d6 15.♗e2 ½-½, Petrosian-Vaganian, Moscow 1979) 12...♜e7 13.♗ac1 c6 14.h3 ♜a7!? to be somewhat advantageous for Black.

**12.b4 ♜f5?**

This exchange of bishops is a positional error, which in a way takes the game closer to the ending of Kotov-Pachman. The engine confirms this human judgement from the last century, giving an evaluation of 0.73 following White's next move. There were several better moves, e.g. 12...c6 13.♗c1 (13.b5? c5!) 13...a6!? 14.a4 ♘d6 15.♗b1 ♜e6 16.h3 ♜c8, when human judgement and machine intelligence coincide in assessing the position as equal.

**13.♗xf5 ♜xf5 14.b5**

Here 14.♗b3! c6 15.b5 was more accurate.



**14...♘d6?!**

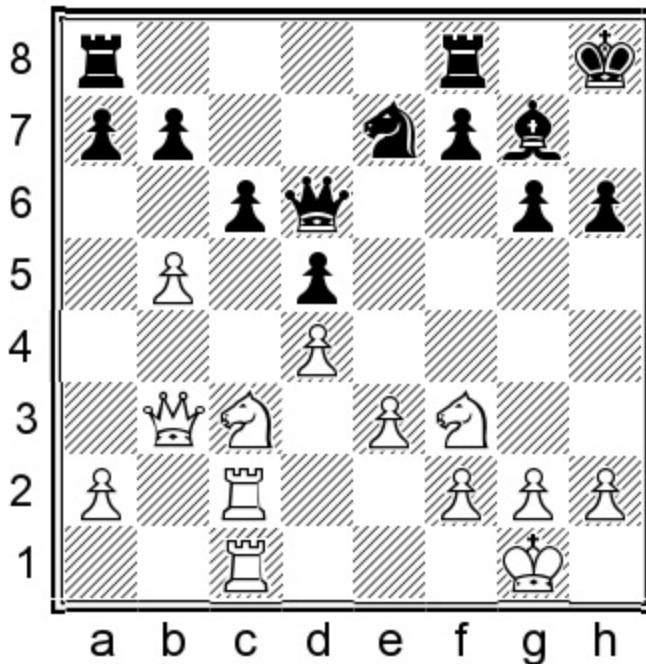
Occupying the ideal square for the ♜f5. Stockfish gives equality after 14...a6?!, although the variations given by the engine are not totally convincing to a human eye, e.g. 15.bxa6 (or 15.a4 axb5

16.axb5 c5 (16... $\mathbb{Q}d6!?$ ) 17.bxc6 bxc6 18. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  21. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , and an endgame similar to Kotov-Pachman is very likely) 15... $\mathbb{E}xa6$  16. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{A}a5!$  17. $\mathbb{E}ac1$  (17. $\mathbb{W}xb7$  c5!) 17...c5 18.dxc5  $\mathbb{E}xc5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  20. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  21. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  22.a4  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  23.h3 h5 24.e4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , and White's initiative is clear.

### 15. $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16. $\mathbb{E}fc1$ $\mathbb{W}h8?$

An incomprehensible waste of time. It would have been better to play 16... $\mathbb{E}fc8$ , for instance, which Stockfish evaluates as 0.61.

### 17. $\mathbb{E}c2$ h6 18. $\mathbb{E}ac1$ c6



It is unlikely that Black would play 19...cxb5 here, leaving the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  isolated and opening the c-file for the enemy rooks. On the other hand, if Black does not play this then White will exchange pawns on c6 and leave Black with a weak pawn on the half-open c-file. So the only satisfactory possibility for Black is to play 19...c5 immediately, or after appropriate preparation. Petrosian's play in this game constitutes a classic example of how to treat such positions.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

It would be imprecise to capture on c6 immediately, as after 19.bxc6 bxc6 20. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}fb8$  Black gains some counterplay along the b-file.

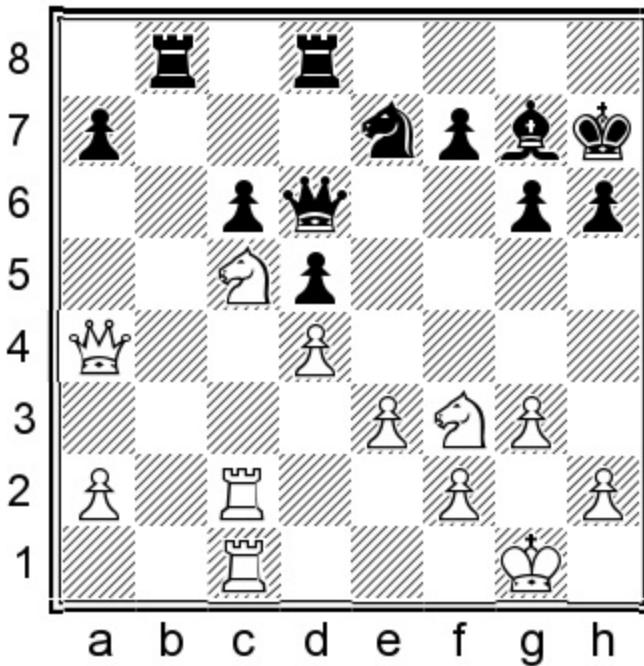
### 19... $\mathbb{E}ab8$ 20.g3!?

Typical prophylaxis from Petrosian. White defends in advance against eventual enemy counterplay based on ...f5-f4. The engine approves of this move, although insisting that 20. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  immediately was slightly more accurate, with an evaluation of 1.74 and 2.04 respectively.

**20...†h7 21.‡c5 ♕fd8**

This loses the ‡c6. Only slightly better was 21...b6 22.‡a6!? (22.‡d3 ♕bc8) 22...♕bc8 23.†g2 ♕fd8 24.bxc6 ♕xc6 25.♕xc6 ♕xc6 26.♔a4 ♕c8 27.‡b4, and White maintains the initiative.

**22.bxc6 bxc6 23.♔a4**



Underlining the vulnerability not only of the ‡c6 but also of the ‡a7. This is a consequence of Black's earlier failure to hinder the advance b4-b5 by means of ...a7-a6.

**23...♔f6 24.†g2**

As ever, Petrosian prefers to make progress in unhurried fashion, although 24.‡e5! ♕a8 25.‡b7 ♕dc8 26.‡xc6 would have won the ‡c6.

**24...♕a8**

No better was 24...♔d6 25.♔xa7 ♕a8 26.♔b7 ♕db8 27.♔d7 ♔xd7 28.♔xd7 ♕b5 29.♔de5 ♔xe5 30.♔xe5 ♔g7 31.g4!?, when White has a healthy extra pawn and is threatening the ‡c6.

**25.‡b7 ♕e8 26.‡a5 g5 27.h3 ♔f5 28.‡xc6**

With the fall of the ‡c6 the game is effectively over.

**28...♔e4 29.♕c5 f5 30.♕c2 ♔xc6 31.♔xc6 f4 32.exf4 gxf4 33.g4 ♕xd4 34.♔d2 ♕g7 35.♔e1 ♔a4 36.♔xd5 ♕xe1 37.♔xe1 ♕f8 38.♔f3 ♔h8 39.♔c7 a6 40.♔b7 ♕g8 41.♔h4 1-0**

From this example we can appreciate several important strategic features:

1. It is essential for White to carry out the b4-b5 advance in circumstances that do not allow Black to reply with ...c6-c5, which means that White needs to control the c-file and in particular the c5-square.
2. It is useful for White to exchange his own dark-squared bishop for the enemy knight, since this gains several tempi (the black bishop is badly placed on f6) and he can attack the  $\mathbb{N}c6$  with his knight after the usual minority attack.
3. The move g2-g3 is also good for White, forming a ‘saw’ (Nimzowitsch’s term) against the possible advance of the enemy f-pawn.
4. It is appropriate for Black to play ...a7-a6, since, after White advances with a2-a4 and b4-b5, Black is able to exchange his a6-pawn, leaving him with just one weakness (the c6-pawn), instead of two.
5. In anticipation of White’s b4-b5 advance, Black should prepare either kingside counterplay or the advance ...c6-c5.

Game 33  
Queen’s Gambit Declined  
**Vasily Smyslov**  
**Paul Keres**  
The Hague/Moscow Wch 1948 (17)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  6.cxd5 exd5 7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

This is the main line in Megabase, though there are other possibilities.

### **11. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$**

Everything is ready for launching the minority attack. We shall consider other possible plans later.

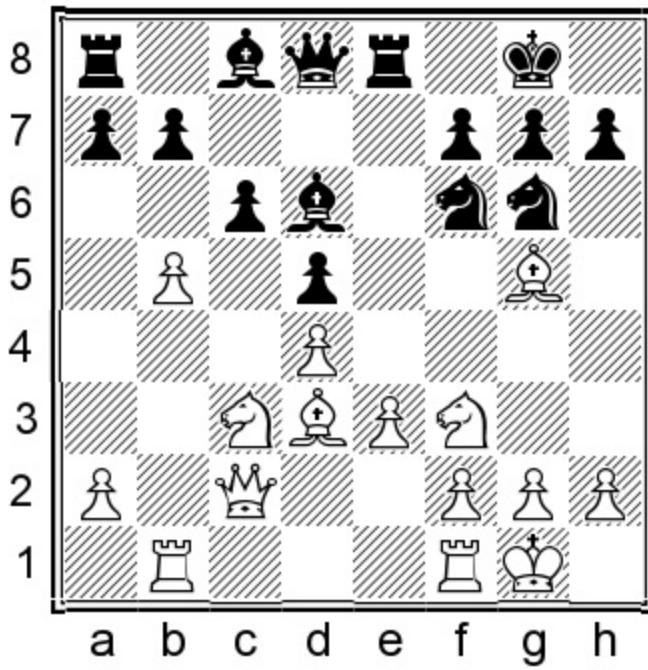
### **11... $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

The main line is 11...a5!?, e.g. 12.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  17. $\mathbb{W}xd3$ , with equality, Ivanchuk-Bruzon, Havana 2005.

### **12.b4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$**

As indicated above, it is most accurate to play 12...a6 (see point 4 above) and only after 13.a4 continue with 13... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ . It should be said though that Stockfish does not see any difference between these two move-orders, giving both moves an evaluation of 0.00.

### **13.b5**



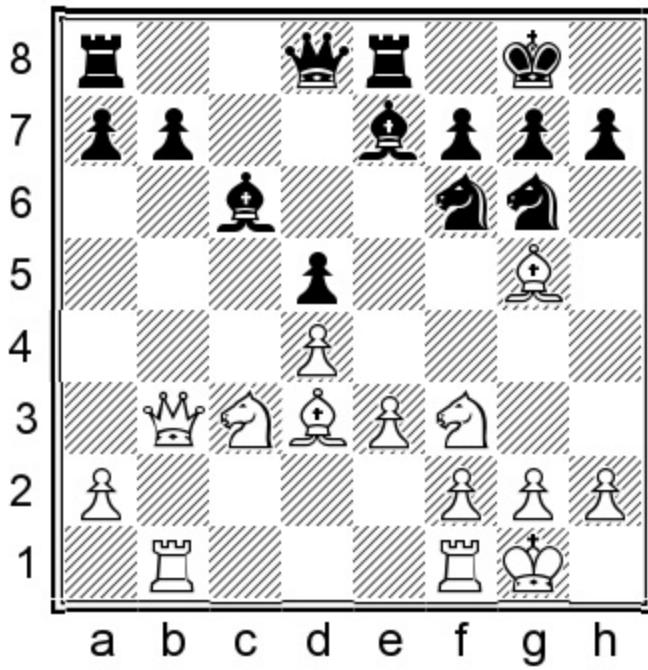
**13...Qd7?**

In this case the human evaluation matches the engine's. The assessment of Black's plan beginning with 11...Qg6 depends on the variation 13...h6! 14.Qxf6 Qxf6 15.bxc6 bxc6 16.e4 Qf4 17.e5 Qe6 18.Qe2 (18.exd6? Qg4 19.Qe1 Qxe1!) 18...Qxd3 19.Qxd3 Qf8 20.Qfc1 Qf5!, with equality, Savchenko-Saeed, Abu Dhabi 2009.

**14.bxc6 Qxc6**

White also maintains the advantage in the event of 14...bxc6, e.g. 15.Qb3!? (15.Qa4!?) 15...Qg4 (15...h6? 16.Qxh6!) 16.Qh4 Qe6 17.Qxf6 Qxf6 18.Qf5 Qxf5 19.Qxf5 Qh4 20.Qh3, and the Qc6 is vulnerable.

**15.Qb3 Qe7**



**16.♝xf6!**

An important exchange (cf. point 2). However, Stockfish prefers 16.♝fc1!? ♜g4 (16...♝d7) 17.♝xe7 ♜xe7 18.♝a3 ♜f6 19.h3 a6 20.♝d2 ♜c8 21.♝b3, with advantage to White.

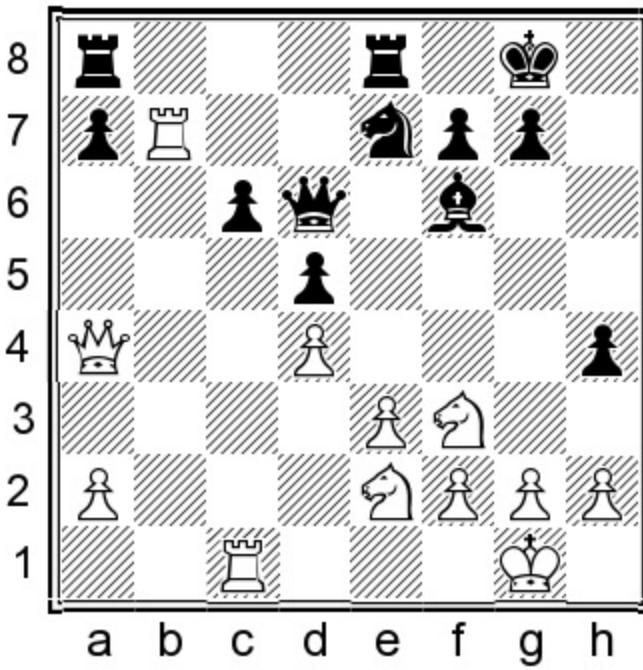
**16...♝xf6 17.♝b5!**

In theory White's bishop is better than Black's, but the ♜c6 protects two weak pawns and its exchange will allow White to penetrate the black camp.

**17...♛d6 18.♝fc1 h5??**

It is understandable that Black seeks counterplay, but this advance just creates another weakness. It was better to play 18...♜ec8!? 19.♝e1 (19.g3!? followed by ♜f1) 19...♝e7 20.♝d3 g6.

**19.♝e2 h4 20.♝xc6 bxc6 21.♝a4 ♜e7 22.♝b7!**



White has achieved an ideal attacking position and the capture of a black pawn is only a question of time.

**22...a5 23.h3 ♜eb8 24.♗cb1?**

Here 24.♗xb8+! ♜xb8 25.♘f4 was correct, e.g. 25...♗b4 26.♗c2 g6 27.♘d3 ♗d6 28.♘fe5 ♜c8 29.♗a4 ♗c7 30.♗c5, with a clear advantage to White.

The advantage could also be maintained with 24.♗b3!? ♜xb3 25.axb3 g6 26.♗c5 ♗d8 27.♘f4 ♔g7 28.♘d3.

**24...♜xb7 25.♜xb7 c5!**

Eliminating his main weakness, after which White's advantage is minimal (see point 5 above).

**26.♗b5 cxd4 27.♘exd4 ♜c8?**

After this move White is able to regain the advantage. Much stronger was 27...♗c7 28.♗b3 ♗c6, with counterplay.

**28.♘b3 ♜c3??**

More tenacious was 28...♜c2 29.♗xa5 (29.♗xa5 g6) 29...♜b2.

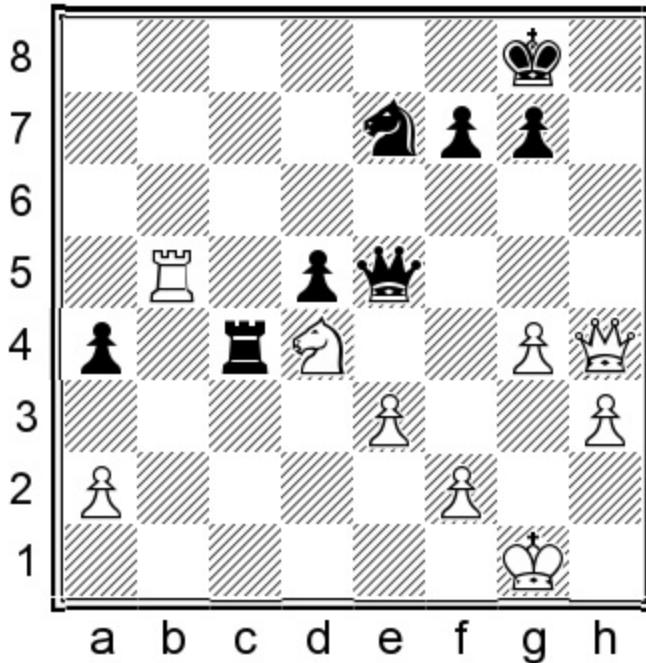
**29.♗xh4 ♜c4 30.g4! a4 31.♘bd4 ♜xd4**

Equally hopeless was 31...♜b4 32.♘g5 ♗h6 33.♗xh6 gxh6 34.♗xb4 ♜xb4 35.♘gf3.

**32.♘xd4**

It would have been a serious error to play 32.exd4? in view of 32... $\mathbb{E}c1+$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  34. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}c3$  36. $\mathbb{E}c5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  37.dxc5  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  38. $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}f1+$ , with perpetual check.

**32... $\mathbb{W}e5$**



It seems that Black has counterplay due to the weakness of White's kingside and the fact that the white queen is decentralized, but Smyslov plays very accurately, denying his opponent any chances:

**33. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  34. $\mathbb{E}a5!$   $\mathbb{E}c8$**

Equally hopeless was 34...a3 35. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  37. $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ .

**35. $\mathbb{E}xa4$**

Winning a second pawn.

**35... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  36. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  37. $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  38. $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  39. $\mathbb{E}d7$  d4 40. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  41.a4**

Black resigned.

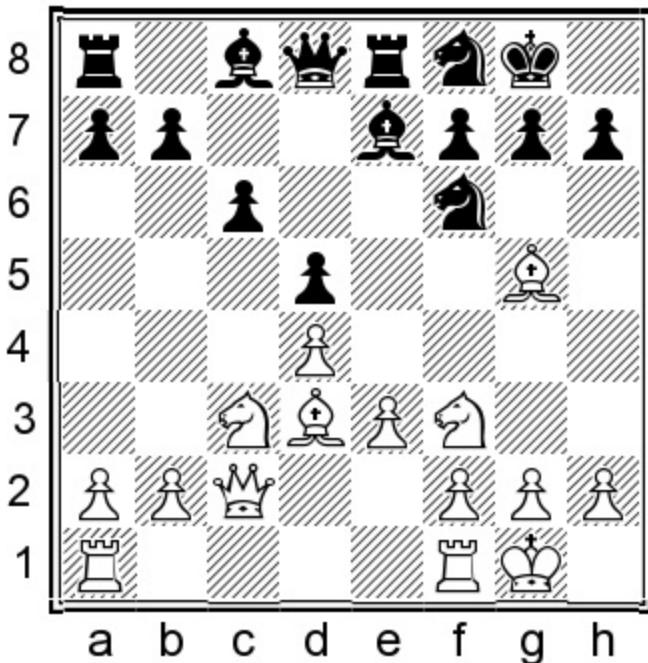
This game exhibited all the elements enumerated above, apart from point 3. This omission can be explained firstly because Black's f-pawn remained blocked for most of the game by the bishop on f6, so there was no need to impede its advance, and secondly at no moment in the game was there ever any threat by Black against the h2-square.

Another of the typical features of the minority attack was seen in this game: the exchange of the light-squared bishops.

The minority attack is quite frequently accompanied by the advance e3-e4, as in the following game. In addition, this game features a modification to the usual plan: a4-a5, instead of the usual b4-b5.

Game 34  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Viktor Kortchnoi** 2665  
**Anatoly Karpov** 2725  
 Baguio City Wch m 1978 (31)

**1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♘f6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5 ♘e7 6.e3 0-0 7.♗d3 ♘bd7 8.♗f3 ♕e8 9.♗c2 c6 10.0-0 ♘f8**



The idea of White's next move is to be able to advance with b2-b4 without having to lose any time preparing it with ♕a1-b1:

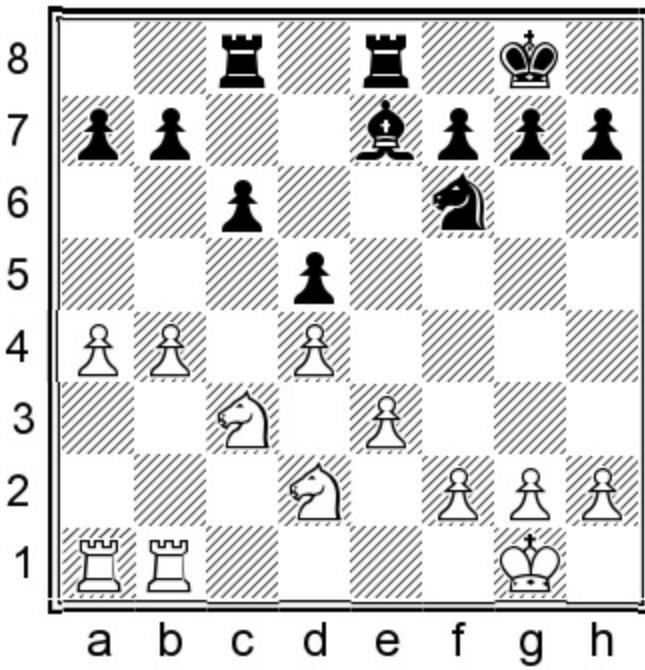
**11.♗xf6 ♘xf6 12.b4 ♘g4 13.♗d2 ♕c8 14.♗f5**

The idea of the exchange of these bishops is the same as in the previous game.

**14...♗xf5 15.♕xf5 ♕d7?!**

The exchange of queens leads to an ending which is better for White. It was better to play either 15...g6!? 16.♗d3 ♘e6 17.♗ab1 (17.a3 a5!? 18.♗c2 ♘e7) 17...a5!? 18.bxa5 c5 19.♗b5 ♘g7 20.♗f3 cxd4 21.♗xd4 (21.♗xd5?! ♕e7!) 21...♗xd4 22.exd4 ♘f4 23.♗f3 ♕g5, and Black has various tactical chances in return for the sacrificed pawn, or 15...♗e7!? 16.♗ab1 (16.b5 ♘b4!) 16...b5!? 17.♗fc1 (17.a4?! a5!) 17...♗d6.

**16.♕xd7 ♘xd7 17.a4 ♘e7 18.♗fb1 ♘f6**



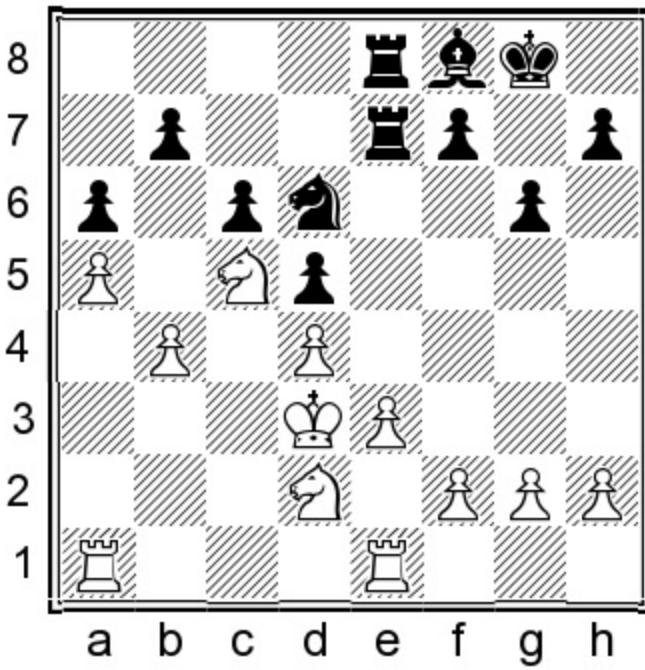
**19.a5!**

The start of an interesting plan, with the idea of provoking the black response that occurred in the game, after which the ♜c3 goes to c5, which constitutes the first part of Kortchnoi's plan. Instead, persisting with the stereotyped plan of advancing the b-pawn would allow the black rook to invade White's second rank: 19.b5? cxb5 20.♖xb5 ♜c2. It is curious that Stockfish awards only 0.39 to Kortchnoi's move, preferring instead the manoeuvre ♜c3-e2-f4 in order to prepare the advance b4-b5: 19.♗e2 g6 20.♗f4 ♜g7 21.g3 ♜c7 22.♗g2 a6 23.h4 h5 24.♗d3 ♜d6 25.♗a2 ♜a8 26.♗c2 ♜g4 27.♗b3 ♜e7 28.♗d2 ♜h6 29.b5, with an evaluation of 0.59.

**19...a6 20.♗a4 ♜f8 21.♗c5 ♜e7 22.♗f1!**

The second part of White's plan: the transfer of his king to the centre.

**22...♗e8 23.♗e2 ♜d6 24.♗d3 ♜ce8 25.♗e1 g6**



**26.¤e2!**

The start of the third part of the plan: preparation for the advance e3-e4. Curiously, at first Stockfish does not even list this move among its top-five options; only at a considerable depth of analysis does the engine consider it.

**26...f6**

Another and seemingly better defensive idea was to fianchetto the ¤f8: 26...¤g7!? 27.h4 h5 28.¤f3 ¤f5, hindering the advance e3-e4.

**27.¤ae1 ¤h6 28.¤db3 ¤f8 29.¤d2 ¤h6 30.h3 ¤f7 31.g4!**

The e3-e4 advance does not work immediately, e.g. 31.f3?! ¤f5 32.e4? ¤g3 33.¤f2 ¤g5 34.e5 ¤h4, and White loses material.

**31...¤f8 32.f3 ¤d8 33.¤db3 ¤b5 34.¤f1**

Here 34.e4?! leads only to equality after 34...dxe4+ 35.fxe4 ¤c7 36.e5 ¤xc5 37.bxc5 fxe5 38.¤xe5 ¤cd7, but better was 34.h4! ¤de8 (34...¤h6 35.e4 dxe4+ 36.¤xe4 (36.fxe4? ¤f4!) 36...¤f8 37.g5!) 35.e4 dxe4+ 36.fxe4 ¤g7 37.¤f1.

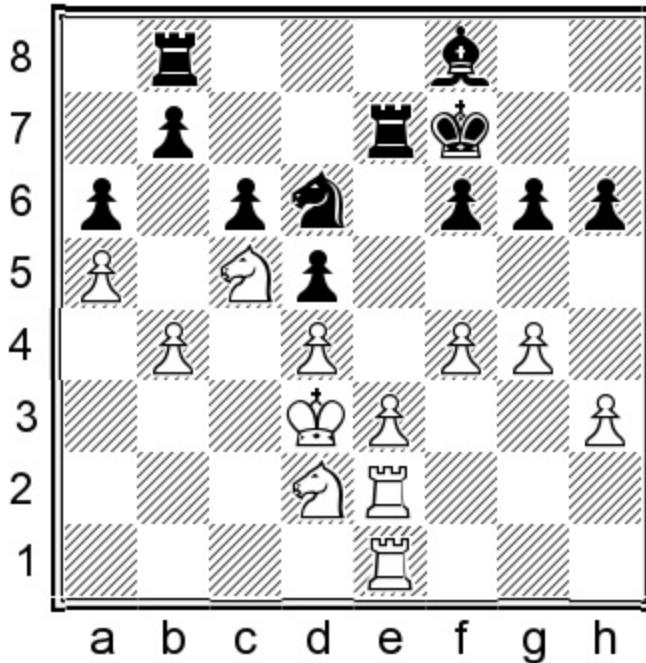
**34...¤h6 35.f4**

Avoiding 35.e4?! ¤f4!.

**35...¤f8 36.¤d2 ¤d6 37.¤fe1 h6**

There were several other moves which maintained approximate equality, e.g. 37... $\mathbb{Q}de8!?$  38.g5 fxg5 39.fxg5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40.e4 dxe4+ 41. $\mathbb{Q}dxe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ .

**38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}a1?!$   $\mathbb{Q}be8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$**



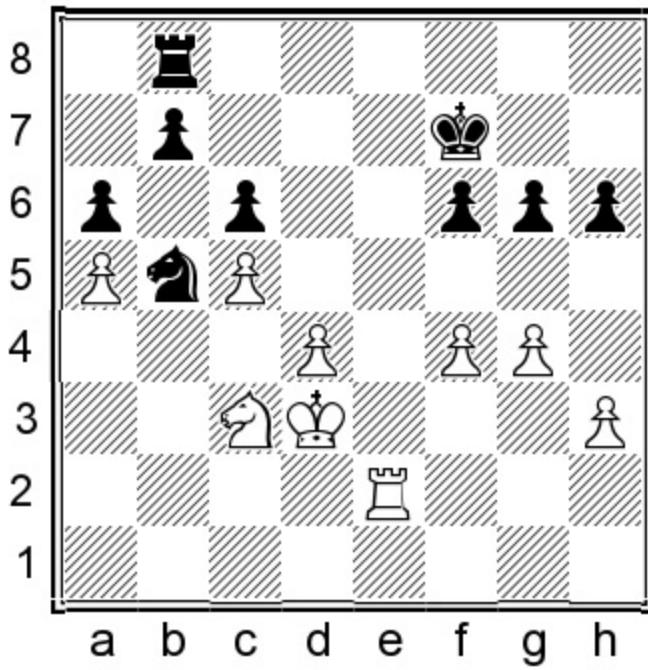
**41.e4**

Finally, although now it is less effective.

**41...dxe4+ 42. $\mathbb{Q}dxe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  43. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

Several other moves were sufficient to hold the position, e.g. 44... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  45.d5 (45. $\mathbb{Q}3e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ) 45...cxsd5 46. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  f5, with equality.

**45.bxc5**



A significant transformation of the Carlsbad structure: the  $\mathbb{R}a5$  holds two black pawns, so that after the exchange of knights on b5 White will have two possible pawn breaks available: a5-a6 and d4-d5.

**45... $\mathbb{E}d8$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  axb5 47.f5 gxf5 48.gxf5  $\mathbb{E}g8??!$**

Here 48... $\mathbb{E}a8!$  was correct, e.g. 49. $\mathbb{E}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  50. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  51. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  52.d5 (52. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  53. $\mathbb{E}e7+$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  54. $\mathbb{E}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ ) 52...cxsd5 53. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  54. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}d7$ , with equality.

**49. $\mathbb{Q}c3$**

Black could have held the position, although he would have had more problems to solve, in the event of 49. $\mathbb{E}e6!?$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  50. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  (50... $\mathbb{E}xa5?$  51. $\mathbb{E}d7+$ ) 51.d5  $\mathbb{E}xa5$  52.dxc6 (52. $\mathbb{E}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (52... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ) 53. $\mathbb{E}xf6$  b4 54. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  b3) 52...bxc6 53. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}a4$ . Black's task is easier after 49.d5  $\mathbb{E}d8$  50.d6  $\mathbb{E}e8$  51. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e5$ .

**49... $\mathbb{E}e8$**

49... $\mathbb{E}g5!?$  looks simpler, e.g. 50. $\mathbb{E}a2$   $\mathbb{E}g3+$  51. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{E}d3$  52.a6 bxa6 53. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  54. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  b4.

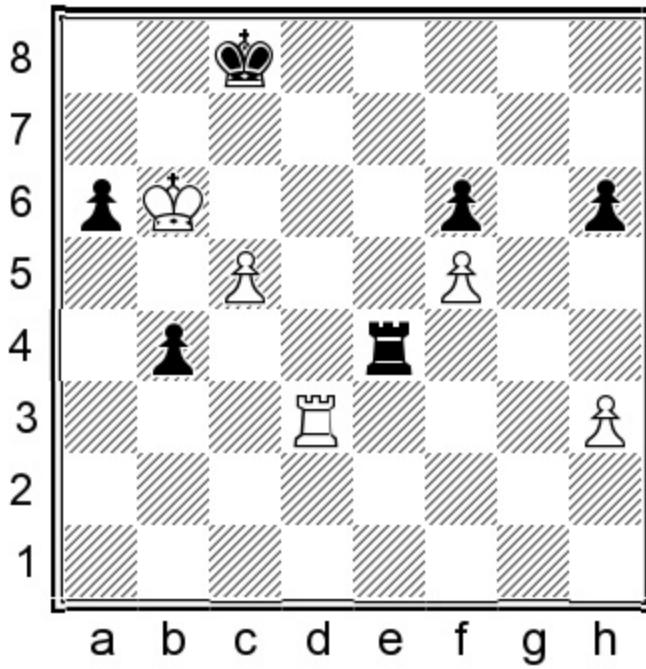
**50. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  51. $\mathbb{Q}b4$**

51.a6!? bxa6 52. $\mathbb{E}a2$  would have failed to upset the balance: 52... $\mathbb{E}e3+$  53. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}xh3$  (53... $\mathbb{E}e4!?$ ) 54. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{E}h2+$  55. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}h3+$  56. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{E}d3$ .

**51... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  52.a6!?**

This is now the only possibility of making progress.

52...bxa6 53.♔a5 ♔d7 54.♔b6 b4 55.d5 cxd5 56.♕xd5+ ♔c8 57.♕d3



57...a5

Although the text move does not lose, I think that the clearest way to draw was to deploy the rook behind the passed pawn, as usual: 57...♖c4! 58.c6 ♖c3 59.♖d1 b3 60.♖g1 ♔d8 (60...♖d3!?) 61.♖d1+ (61.♖g8+?? ♔e7 62.♖g7+ ♔d6 63.♖d7+ ♔e5 64.♖d1 a5, and Black wins) 61...♔c8.

58.♖g3 b3?

The decisive error. There still were good drawing chances with 58...♖d4!!, e.g. 59.♔xa5 (59.♔c6 ♔d8) 59...♔c7 60.♔b5 ♕d7 61.♔c4!? (61.♔xb4?! ♔c6) 61...♔e7 62.♔g6 b3 63.♔xf6 ♔e5!.

59.♔c6 ♔b8

Here 59...♖d4!? was more tenacious, although it would not have saved the game: 60.♔xb3 a4 61.♔b6 ♕f4 62.♔a6 ♔b8 63.♔d6 ♔b7 64.♔a5.

60.♔xb3+ ♔a7 61.♔b7+ ♔a6 62.♔b6+ ♔a7 63.♔b5 a4 64.♔xf6 ♕f4 65.♔xh6 a3 66.♔a6+ ♔b8 67.♔xa3 ♕xf5 68.♔g3 ♕f6 69.♔g8+ ♔c7 70.♔g7+ ♔c8 71.♔h7

Black resigned.

### Methods of defence against the minority attack

#### i) Kingside counterattack with pawns

In the early days of the Carlsbad structure, i.e. when it began to be employed regularly in tournament

play, it was thought that Black's only effective counterplay when faced with the minority attack was to launch an offensive on the kingside. Here is an example of this type of strategy from that period.

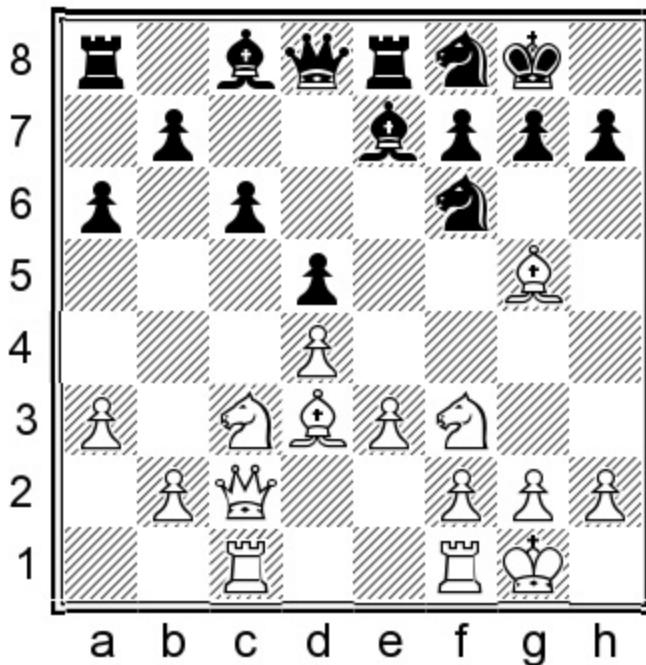
Game 35  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Efim Bogoljubow**  
**Akiba Rubinstein**  
San Remo 1930 (3)

**1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.c4 e6 4.♗g5 ♘bd7 5.e3 ♘e7 6.♘c3 0-0 7.♖c1 ♘e8 8.a3 a6 9.cxd5**

Inviting the Carlsbad structure. It is worth noting, however, that for the purposes of the minority attack the white rook would be better placed on b1. On the other hand, the inclusion of the moves 8.a3 and 8...a6 is more helpful to Black in the coming struggle.

Stockfish prefers 9.c5!? although in Megabase there are only four games with this move, and in one of these the player with black is a graduate of my department in Moscow, the Uzbeko-German GM Alexander Graf (formerly Nenashev): 9...c6 10.b4 a5 (10...e5!? 11.dxe5 ♘g4 12.♗f4 ♘f8 13.♗d4 ♗e7 14.♗d3 ♘dxe5 15.♗xe5 ♘xe5 16.♗xe5 ♗xe5 17.♗xe5 ♗xe5 18.0-0 (18.♗a4!?) 18...a5, with a slight advantage to Black, Gausel-Graf, Jakarta 1997) 11.♗e2 axb4 12.axb4 b6 13.0-0 bxc5 14.bxc5 ♘a6 15.h3, with an engine evaluation of 0.71, which seems somewhat exaggerated.

**9...exd5 10.♗d3 c6 11.0-0 ♘f8 12.♗c2**



**12...♗h5?!**

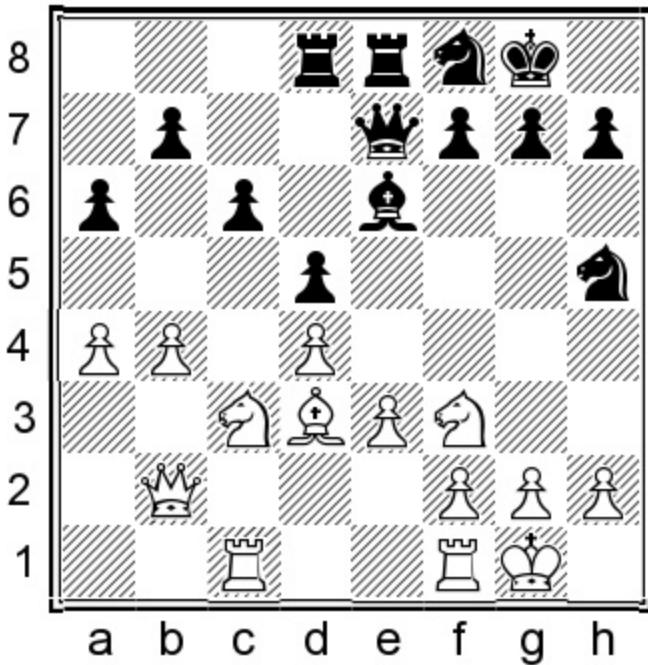
A popular continuation at that time. As subsequent practice has shown, better prospects are offered by

12...g6 and 12... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , e.g. 12... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (the engine gives equality after a somewhat unusual line: 13. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  15.a4 a5 16.h3 etc.) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  14.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  (15.h3!?) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}axc8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , with a very slight advantage to White, which Magnus Carlsen's mentor was able to convert in the game Agdestein-Ostenstad, Sandefjord 2012; or 12...g6 13. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  16.b4  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dxe4 21. $\mathbb{W}b3$ , with equality, although again White won in Agdestein-C.Hansen, Espoo 1989) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  20. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , and Stockfish awards 0.00.

### **13. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 14.b4 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 15. $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$**

This move is part of Black's preparation for the advance of the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ . However, it was better to attack with pieces: 15... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ !? 16. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (16.a4!?  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ) 16... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ! 17.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  18.f4  $\mathbb{Q}h3$ , with chances for both sides.

### **16.a4**



### **16...g5?!**

Following Black's last move, the struggle intensifies and now rages on both flanks. All the same, White's attack proves more effective. Instead Black could have prepared to respond to the b4-b5 advance with ...c6-c5, e.g. 16... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17.h3  $\mathbb{Q}8d7$  18.b5 axb5 19.axb5 c5 20.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}ce4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , and White's advantage is minimal.

### **17.b5 axb5 18.axb5 g4 19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$**

It is interesting that instead of this normal move, both here and earlier Stockfish recommends

19.  $\mathbb{Q}e1!?$ , e.g. 19...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20.  $bxc6$   $bxc6$  21.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $h5$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  25.  $\mathbb{E}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , reaching the ideal square for the  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

### 19... $\mathbb{E}c8!?$

19...  $c5!$  would have led to more lively play, e.g. 20.  $dxc5$   $d4!$  21.  $exd4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}de4$   $\mathbb{W}b4$ , and Black has counterchances, although objectively the white position is slightly better.

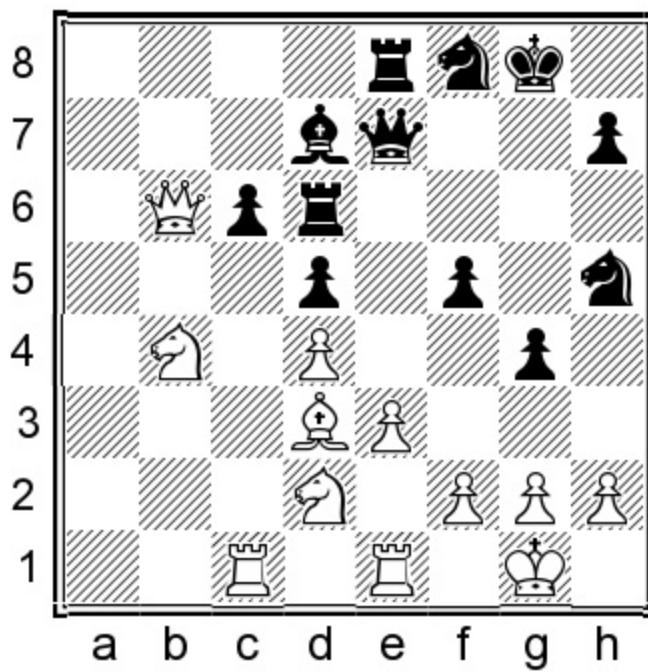
### 20. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ $f5!?$

Mobilizing another kingside pawn. Instead, the immediate 20...  $\mathbb{E}d6$  was better, but on the other hand Stockfish prefers to prepare the advance of the  $\mathbb{A}h7$ : 20...  $\mathbb{Q}g7!?$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  23.  $\mathbb{E}ed1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  24.  $bxc6$   $bxc6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $h5$ .

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{E}d6$ 22. $bxc6$ $bxc6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}b6?$

This move removes the queen from the centre, which could benefit Rubinstein. Instead it was correct to play 23.  $\mathbb{Q}b4!$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (23...  $f4?$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ ) 24.  $g3$ , with a clear advantage to White.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}b4$



### 24... $\mathbb{Q}f6?$

Black could have obtained sufficient counterplay with 24...  $f4!$ , and now:

A) 25.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6?$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  (25...  $\mathbb{W}e6!?$ ) 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ ;

B) 25.  $exf4?$   $\mathbb{W}xe1+$  26.  $\mathbb{E}xe1$   $\mathbb{E}xe1+$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ ;

C) 25.g3 fxg3 26.fxg3 ♕g5 27.♕c5 ♘h6 28.♘e4 ♔d8 29.♘d2 ♘g7, with chances for both sides.

**25.♘c2?**

Again allowing 25...f4!; now 25.♘b3! was correct, e.g. 25...♘e4 (25...f4? 26.exf4) 26.♖xe4 fxe4 27.♘c5 h5 28.♗c2 h4 29.♗ec1 ♘c8 30.♗b7 h3 31.♗xd7 ♗xd7 32.♗xd7 ♘xd7 33.♗xc6, winning a pawn.

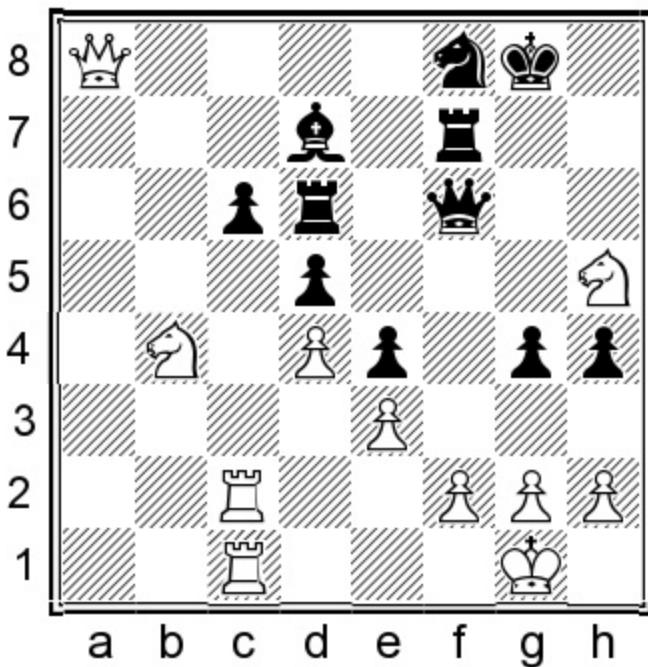
**25...♘e4?**

Black could equalize now with 25...f4! 26.e4 dxe4 27.♘xe4 ♘xe4 28.♘xe4 ♖f6 29.♘ce2 ♘xe4 30.♘xe4 ♘g6.

**26.♖xe4**

After this exchange, which stabilizes the position, the ♘d2 can defend its kingside and the weakness of the ♘c6 becomes the determining factor.

**26...fxe4 27.♗ec1 ♖f6 28.♗b7 ♘e7 29.♗a8 ♘f7 30.♗f1 h5 31.♗g3! h4 32.♗h5**



**32...♔g5?**

The outcome would have been uncertain after 32...♔h8! 33.♗b8 ♔h6 34.♗f4 g3!?, with unclear play, as Stockfish confirms, giving 0.13; also 32...♔h6!? can be considered.

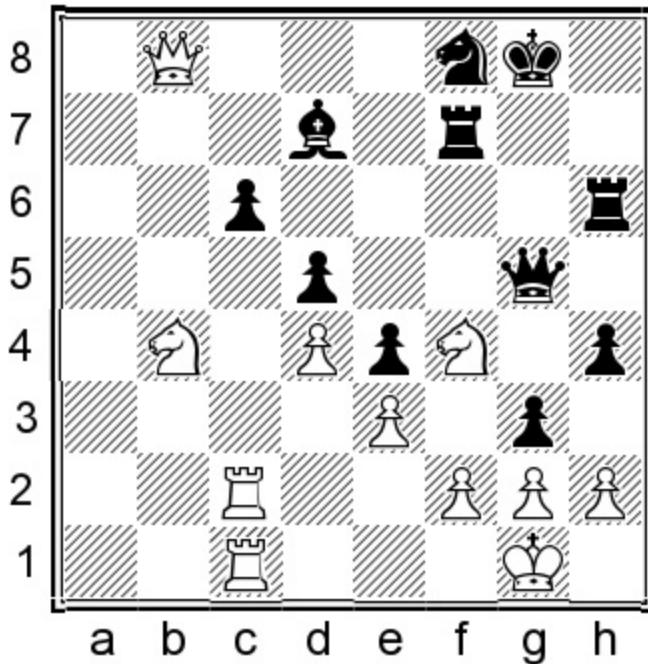
**33.♗b8?**

Here 33.♘f4! leads to a clear white advantage, e.g. 33...♝xf4 (33...g3 34.fxg3 hxg3 35.♘xc6) 34.exf4 ♝xf4 35.♔a3 ♝f6 36.♘a6, and Black's compensation for the exchange is inadequate.

### 33...♝h6

Just as on the previous move, Black could practically equalize here with 33...♝h6!, e.g. 34.♘a6 g3! 35.♘f4 gxh2+ 36.♔xh2 ♞xf4 37.exf4 ♝xf4+.

### 34.♘f4 g3



### 35.♘xc6!

Well calculated! Nevertheless, restraining Black's attack with 35.fxg3 hxg3 36.h3 also deserved attention.

### 35...gxh2+ 36.♔xf2?

White is winning after 36.♔f1 ♘xc6 37.♗xc6 ♘xc6 38.♗xc6 h3 39.g3.

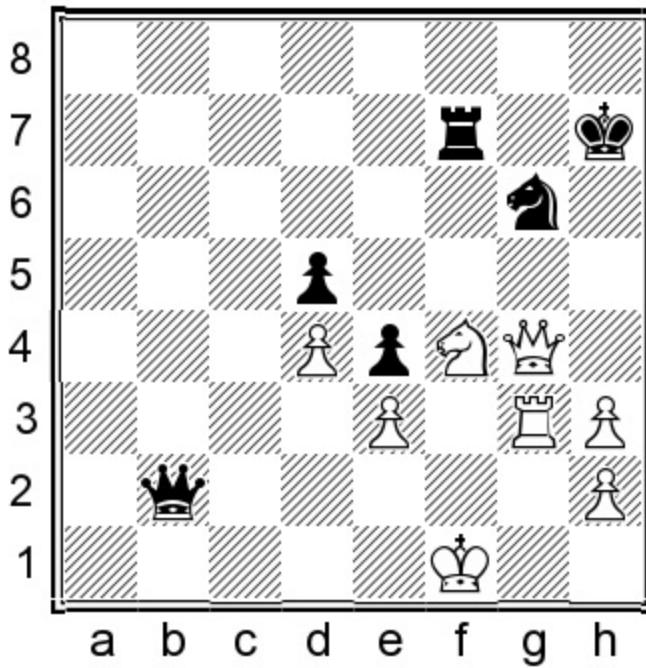
### 36...♗xc6

Here there was a very beautiful variation leading to equality, although it would be very difficult to work it out over the board: 36...h3! 37.g3 ♘xc6 38.♗xc6 ♘xc6 39.♗xc6 ♘g4 40.♔e1 ♘f3 41.♔d2 ♘g2+!! (41...♘f2+? 42.♔e2 ♘f3 43.♗c3 ♘xh2 44.♗d8 ♘f2 45.♗g5+ ♔h8 46.♗c6, winning) 42.♗xg2 hxg2 43.♗c1 ♘f2+ 44.♔c3 ♘f1 45.♗b1 g1=♘ 46.♗xf1 ♘xe3+ 47.♔b2 ♘xd4+ 48.♔c1 e3 49.♗a2 ♘g6.

37.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  38.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$  h3!

Black displays his ingenuity; now if 39.g3? then 39...  $\mathbb{W}g4$ .

39.  $gxh3!$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  40.  $\mathbb{K}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f3$  41.  $\mathbb{E}g6+$   $\mathbb{K}h7$  42.  $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  43.  $\mathbb{K}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a1!$  44.  $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{W}a2+$  45.  $\mathbb{K}e1$   $\mathbb{W}a1+$  46.  $\mathbb{K}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b2+$  47.  $\mathbb{K}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  48.  $\mathbb{W}g4$



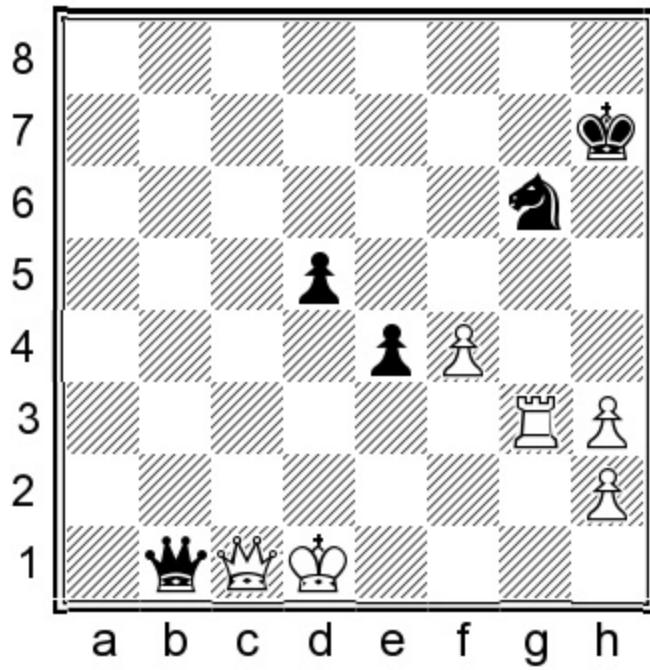
48...  $\mathbb{E}xf4+$ !

Another interesting decision by Rubinstein and in fact the only way to complicate the game. The problem is that tactics, no matter how good, cannot always repair the damage caused by a faulty strategy.

49.  $exf4$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$  50.  $\mathbb{K}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d2+$  51.  $\mathbb{K}g1$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$  52.  $\mathbb{K}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d2+$  53.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  54.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}b2+$  55.  $\mathbb{K}f1$   $\mathbb{W}a1+$

Black could still have made it difficult for White to realize his advantage with 55...  $\mathbb{Q}h4!?$  56.  $\mathbb{W}a7+$  (56.  $\mathbb{W}c5!?$ ) 56...  $\mathbb{K}h6$  57.  $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  58.  $\mathbb{K}e2$   $\mathbb{W}a2+$  59.  $\mathbb{K}d1$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  60.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  61.  $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{W}g1+$  62.  $\mathbb{K}c2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$ , although after 63.  $\mathbb{K}b3$  White should win.

56.  $\mathbb{K}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b2+$  57.  $\mathbb{K}d1$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  58.  $\mathbb{W}c1$



**58... $\mathbb{W}xc1+$**

Now the ending is lost but it still requires precision from White. 58... $\mathbb{W}b5$  was more tenacious, although Black still loses after 59. $\mathbb{W}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  60.f5  $\mathbb{W}f1+$  61. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  62. $\mathbb{W}b6$ .

**59. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  60. $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  61. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  62. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  63. $\mathbb{B}g8$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  64. $\mathbb{B}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  65. $\mathbb{B}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  66. $\mathbb{B}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  67. $\mathbb{B}d8$   $\mathbb{Q}c4+$  68. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  69. $\mathbb{B}xd5$  e3 70. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  71. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d2+$  72. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}f1+$  73. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  74. $\mathbb{B}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}h1+$  75. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  76. $\mathbb{B}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  77. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  1-0**

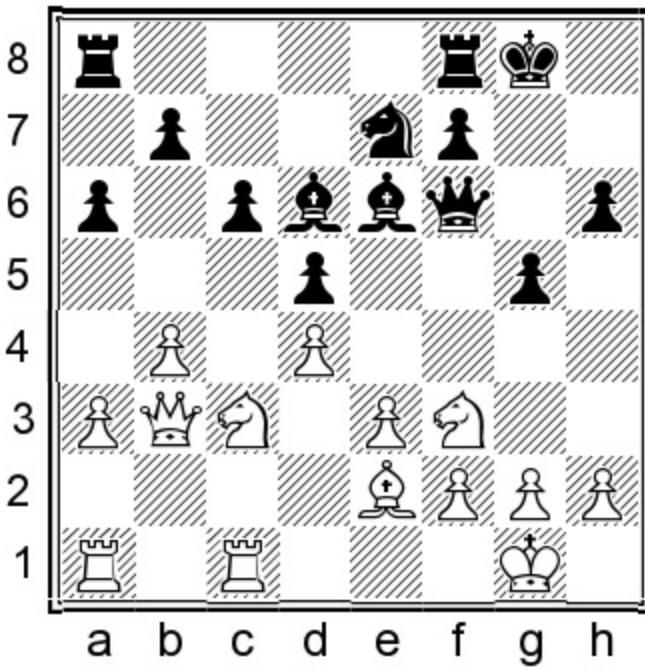
This plan has more chance of success if Black has the pair of bishops, as in the next game.

Game 36  
Nimzo-Indian Defence  
**Levon Aronian 2777**  
**Viswanathan Anand 2797**  
Baden-Baden 2015 (5)

**1.c4 e6 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 4.d4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  5.cxd5 exd5 6. $\mathbb{W}a4+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 8. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  9.e3 0-0  
10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a6 11.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. $\mathbb{B}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  13.a3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  14.b4 c6**

Another opening – the Ragozin – in which the Carlsbad structure can appear.

**15. $\mathbb{W}b3$  g5!**



With this advance Black, who has the bishop pair, seizes the initiative. It should be said that Stockfish prefers the black position. After this game, the supporters of this continuation for White had to re-examine the previous moves.

**16.♗b2 ♗g7**

Clearing a path for the ♘f7 to advance and also defending against the threat of 17.e4.

**17.♘a4 ♕ae8 18.♘c5 ♕c8 19.g3?!**

Although it seems risky, 19.a4! was correct, e.g. 19...f5 20.b5 (20.♘d3?! f4 21.exf4 ♘g6 22.♕e1 ♘xf4 23.♘fe5) 20...axb5 21.axb5 f4 22.♘d3 fxe3 23.fxe3 ♘f5 24.bxc6 ♘xe3 25.cxb7 ♘xb7 26.♕a7 ♘e7 27.♘fe5, and the position is equal.

**19...♘f5?!**

19...f5!? deserved attention, e.g. 20.♔h1 ♘g6 21.♘d3 ♔e7 22.♕e1 ♔e4 23.♔g1 f4, and Black has a dangerous initiative. Another possibility was a different pawn advance: 19...h5!? e.g. 20.♘e5 (20.♕d2 h4) 20...♘xe5 21.dxe5 ♘g6 22.a4 (22.♔xh5? ♘xe5) 22...♘xe5 23.♘d3 ♘xd3, with an extra pawn.

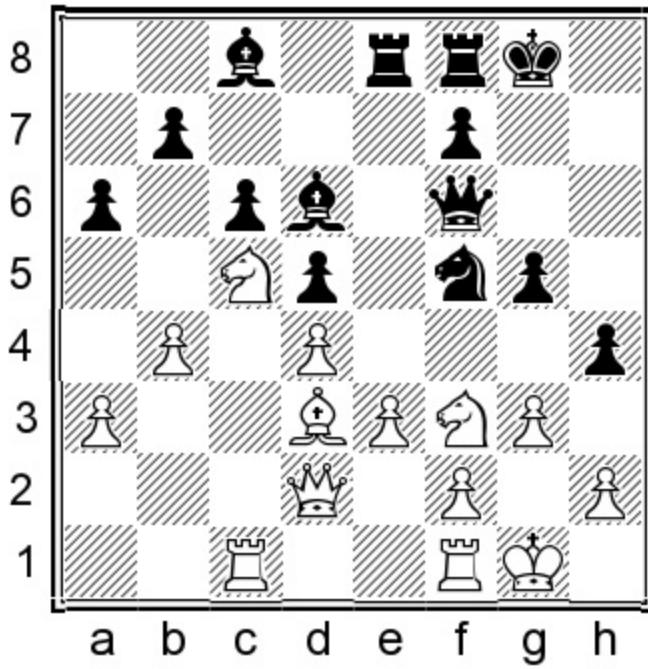
**20.♘d3 ♔f6 21.♕f1**

According to Stockfish, this is the best defence.

**21...h5 22.♕ac1**

Hardly any better was 22.♕ad1 ♘h4?!? (22...h4 23.e4!?; 22...♘g7!?) 23.♘e1 (23.gxh4?? ♔xf3) 23...♘g6 24.♕d2 h4.

22...h4 23.♗d2



23...♝h6?

Irresolute play, which will cost Anand dearly. Correct was 23...hxg3! 24.hxg3 (24.fxg3 ♝xe3 25.♗f2 ♞g4 (25...♛g7!?) 26.♗ff1 ♜e3 27.♘e5 ♛e7) 24...♝g7, and in the event of 25.e4? ♝xd4! 26.♘xd4 ♜h8!! 27.♘xb7 ♜h6 the black attack is very strong; also good was 23...♝g7! 24.♘e5 (24.e4?? ♜xc5) 24...♜xe5 25.dxe5 ♜xe5, with an extra pawn.

24.e4!

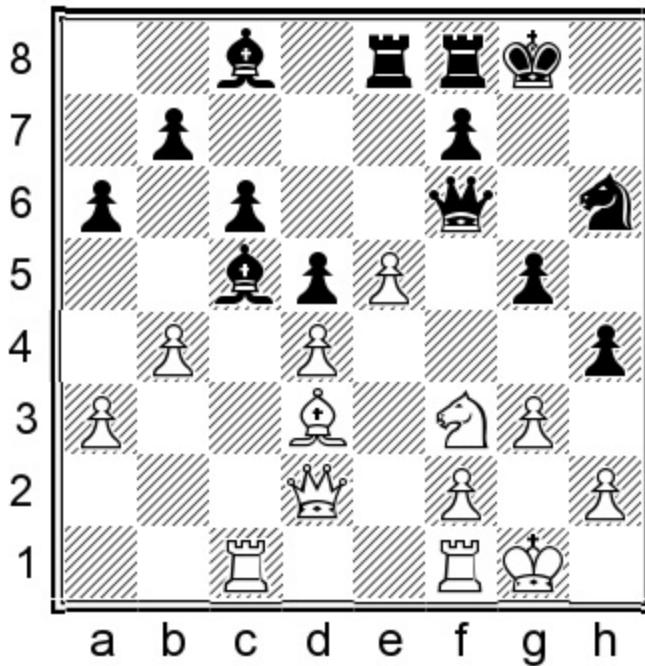
White seizes his chance!

24...♜xc5

Now 24...♛xf3? fails to 25.♛xg5+ ♔h7 26.e5+ ♜f5 27.♜xf5+ ♜xf5 (27...♛xf5 28.♛xf5+ ♜xf5 29.exd6 ♜xd6 30.♘d7!, winning the exchange) 28.♖c3!! ♜xd4!? (28...♛xc3? 29.♛xf5+ ♔h6 30.♛f6+, with a decisive advantage) 29.♛xh4+ ♔g7 30.♛xd4 ♜xc5 31.♛xc5 ♛f5 32.f4 f6 33.g4, and White has an extra pawn and a strong attack.

Instead, 24...♝e7! 25.♝e5 dxe4 26.♝xe4 ♜d8 27.♝c3 ♜f5 was best, with an equal game.

25.e5



**25...Bg7?**

25...Bxb4! was forced, and after 26.axb4 Bg7 27.Qxg5 Qf5 28.Qf3 hxg3 29.fxg3 Bh3 White's advantage is minimal.

**26.bxc5 f6 27.exf6 Bxf6 28.Qxg5**

The game is now decided.

**28...Qf5 29.Bce1 Bff8**

29...Bxe1 30.Bxe1 Bxd3 loses to 31.Be8+ Bf8 32.Qe6!.

**30.Bxe8 Bxe8 31.Qf3 Bxd3 32.Bxd3 Be4 33.Be1 hxg3 34.hxg3 1-0**

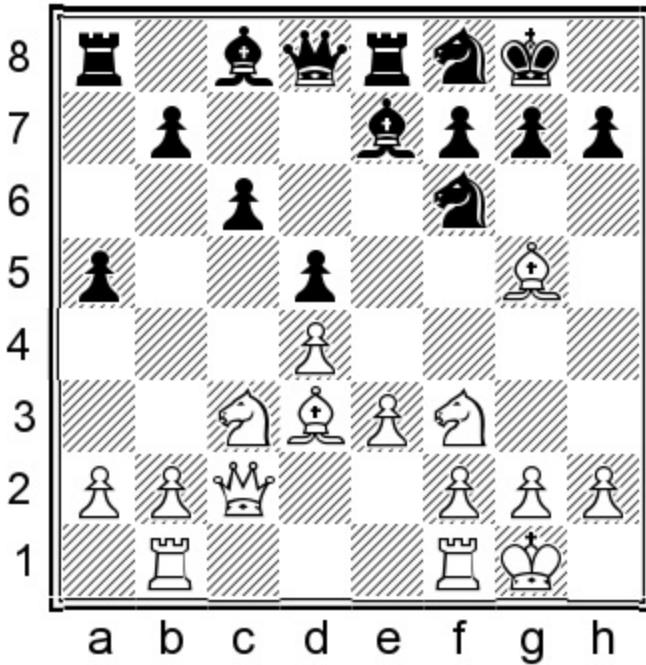
Even though White won the last two games, it does not mean that Black's plan is incorrect, since at least in the second game the result could perfectly well have gone the other way.

## ii) Kingside attack with pieces

The following example is a good illustration of the dangers to which White is exposed if he underestimates the opponent's counterplay.

Game 37  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Mark Taimanov**  
**Rashid Nezhmetdinov**  
 Kiev ch-URS 1954 (5)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Qf3 e6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Qc3 Qf6 6.Qg5 Qe7 7.Qc2 Qbd7 8.e3 0-0 9.Qd3 Qe8 10.0-0 Qf8 11.Qab1 a5



A small finesse; in comparison with 11...a6, Black is able to control the a-file sooner, which can be important tactically.

**12.a3 Qe4**

Here Stockfish's main line is 12...Qg6!? 13.Qfe1 Qe4 14.Qxe7 Qxe7 15.h3 Qd7 16.Qbc1 Qxc3 17.Qxc3 a4, with equality.

**13.Qxe7 Qxe7 14.b4**

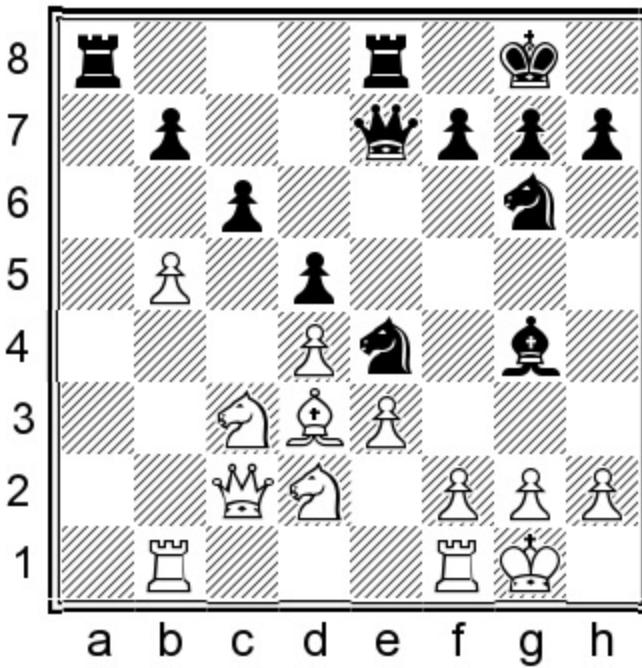
It seems better to postpone the minority attack, with the idea of exploiting the weakness on b6, e.g. 14.Qxe4!? dxе4 15.Qe5 Qf5 16.Qfc1 Qe6 17.Qc4 Qc7 18.Qb6 Qa6 19.Qba4.

**14...axb4 15.axb4 Qg6**

The engine prefers 15...Qf5!? 16.Qxe4 dxе4 17.Qd2 Qe6 18.Qe2 h5.

**16.b5 Qg4 17.Qd2?**

After this game it has become known that the text move is a serious error, but nevertheless in Megabase there are more than forty games with this move and a further thirty minus the interpolation of 11...a5 and 12.a3. White should play 17.Qxe4! dxе4 18.Qd2, with a sharp struggle which the engine considers favourable to White.



**17...Qxd2 18.Qxd2 Qh4!**

Suddenly it is obvious that due to the threats of 19...Qf3+ and 19...Qh3, White's position is very difficult.

**19.f3!?**

Taimanov takes a decision that is practically forced: he immediately gives up a pawn in order to exchange queens and ward off the enemy attack. In the event of 19.Qe2 Qh3! 20.g3 (20.gxh3?? Qg5+ 21.Qg4 Qf3+) 20...Qxf1 (20...Qf6!?) Black wins the exchange.

**19...Qxe3+ 20.Qxe3 Qxe3 21.fxg4 Qxd3 22.bxc6 bxc6 23.Qe2 Qd2 24.Qf2 h6 25.Qbf1 Qg6!?**

After 25...Qaa2 26.Qf4 Qxf2 27.Qxf2 Qa1+ 28.Qf1 Qxf1+ 29.Qxf1 Qg6 30.Qd3 Black would have had difficulties in the realization of his extra pawn, since the Qd4 holds two black pawns.

**26.h3 f6 27.Qg3 Qxd4**

Winning a second pawn. The rest of the game is irrelevant to our topic. As a curious side-note though, the brilliant attacking player Rashid Nezhmetdinov failed to convert his two-pawns advantage and the game ended in a draw (½-½, 65).

### Game 38

Queen's Gambit Declined

**Predrag Nikolic** 2635

**Vladimir Kramnik** 2790

Monte Carlo blindfold 1998 (3)

## 1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♗c3 c6 5.cxd5

This move prevents the Semi-Slav Defence but on the other hand it opens the diagonal for the ♜c8, so it is considered rather unambitious. It is important that, via a different move-order, 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5 c6 6.e3, the move 6....♜f5 can be answered with 7.♗f3 and after 7....♜g6 8.♗xf6 ♜xf6 9.♗xf6 gxf6 Black is left with doubled and isolated pawns on f6 and f7, although there are quite a few strong supporters of this variation nevertheless.

### 5...exd5 6.♗g5

6.♗f4 is played less often, e.g. 6....♝d6 (6....♝f5!?) 7.♗xd6 (7.♗g3!?) 7....♝xd6 8.e3 ♜f5 9.♗h4 ♜g6 10.h3 (10.♗b3!?) 10....♝bd7 11.♗xg6 hxg6 12.♗d3 0-0 13.0-0, with equality, Carlsen-So, chess.com 2017.

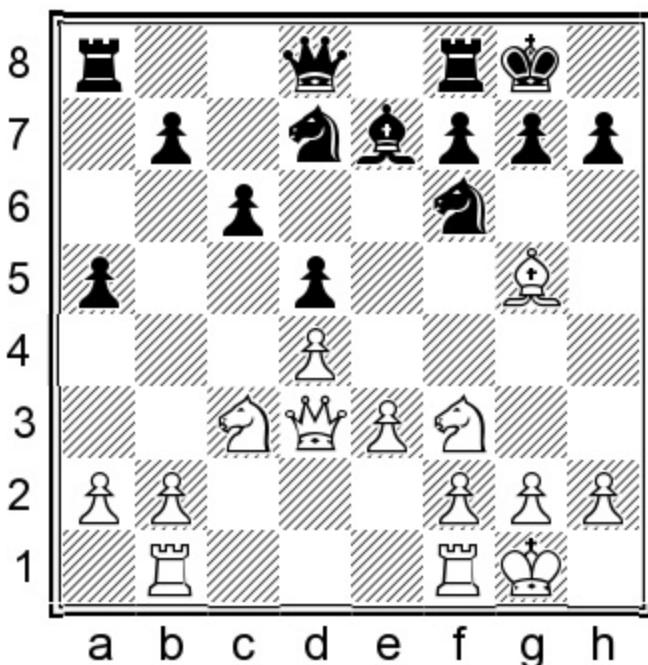
### 6....♝e7 7.e3

Another possibility is 7.♗c2!?, which we saw in the previous game.

### 7....♝f5 8.♗d3 ♜xd3 9.♝xd3

Here 9.♗xf6!? ♜xf6 10.♝xd3 seems more accurate, so that Black has to consume more time bringing the ♜b8 to its usual place on f6.

### 9....♝bd7 10.0-0 0-0 11.♗ab1 a5



### 12.a3

In this situation, without the light-squared bishops, the minority attack makes less sense, since the black knights gain a strong square on c4. It seems that the black position is very solid and White's best policy is to continue to manoeuvre, while avoiding the creation of any weaknesses. In this respect the engine's evaluation agrees with human judgement; Stockfish gives equality after 12.h3!? ♜d6 13.♗d2 h6 14.♗h4 ♜e8 15.f3 ♜b6 16.♗f2 ♜a6 17.♗xa6 ♜xa6; similarly 12.♗c2!? ♜e8 13.♗xf6 ♜xf6 14.a3 ♜d6 15.♗e2 ♜c7 16.♗c1 a4 17.♗e2 ♜e4 18.♗bc1 ♜e6 19.♗c3, with a quick draw, Kamsky-Shankland, St Louis 2015.

### **12...♝e4 13.♗xe7**

In the event of 13.♗f4 f5 (13...g5!? 14.♗g3 f5) 14.♗e5 ♜d6 15.f3 ♜xe5 16.♗xe5 ♜xe5 17.dxe5 ♜c5 18.♗c2 ♜b6 19.f4 a4 the position is equal, Tan Zhongyi-A.Muzychuk, St Petersburg 2018.

### **13...♞xe7 14.b4?**

A typical mistake, which allows Black first to block the advance of the enemy pawn and then to install his knight on c4. As mentioned earlier, it was better to manoeuvre and advance with b2-b4 only at a suitable moment, e.g. 14.♗c2 f5 (14...♝xc3 15.bxc3 ♜fb8 16.a4 b5 17.h3 ♜f6 18.♗e5, with chances for both sides) 15.b4!? axb4 16.axb4 ♜a3 17.♗b3, with equality, Basgonul-Vajda, Antalya tt 2017.

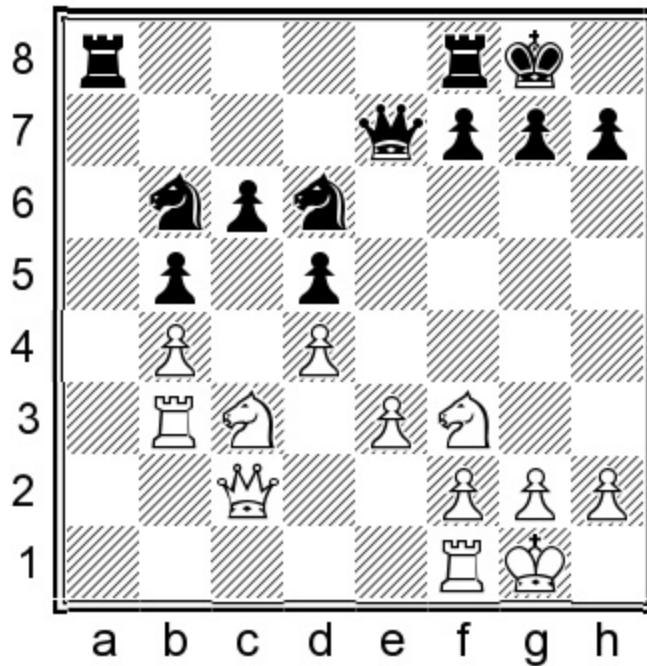
### **14...b5! 15.♗c2**

15.bxa5 ♜xa3 16.♗fc1 ♜xa5 loses a pawn, although Stockfish judges that after 17.♗e1! ♜ef6 18.♗e2 White has sufficient compensation.

### **15...axb4 16.axb4 ♜d6 17.♗b3?!**

Slightly better was either 17.♗a1!? ♜c4 18.♗b3 ♜db6 19.♗fc1, or 17.♗b3!? ♜a6 18.♗a1 ♜fa8 19.♗xa6 ♜xa6 20.♗c1 ♜c4 21.♗b1 ♜f6 22.♗e1 ♜a3 23.♗d3.

### **17...♝b6!**



‘The position has clarified. The knight goes to c4, blocking all White’s play on the queenside, after which the main events transfer to the kingside, where Black has more resources. Although in general the play seems nothing spectacular, in reality it is a classic game for the Carlsbad structure. Without false modesty, I believe that Black’s plan can appear in the books as an example to illustrate some positional errors which can lead to defeat in a quite solid position’ – Vladimir Kramnik. I heartily endorse these words of the only player to win a match against the legendary Garry Kasparov.

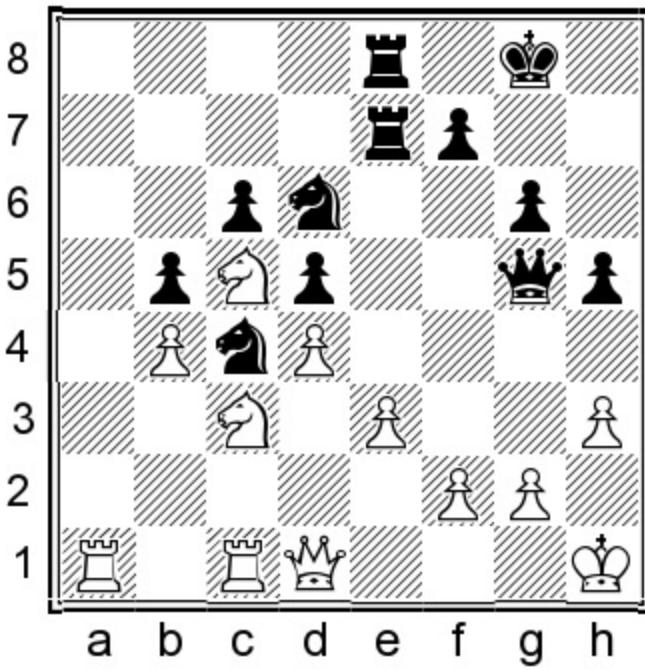
**18.♗e5 ♜fc8 19.♗d3 ♜bc4!**

Reserving the more active ♜d6 for a more aggressive task.

**20.♗c5 ♜e8 21.h3 g6 22.♗c1 ♜a7**

Here and on the following moves it was even better to play 22...♗f5!?, e.g. 23.♔h2 (23.♗d3?? ♜cxe3!) 23...♝h4 24.♗d3 ♜cxe3 25.fxe3 ♜xe3 26.♗e2 ♜e4 27.♗c5 ♜xe2 28.♗xe4 ♜xc2 29.♗xc2 ♜xd4!, with a decisive advantage to Black.

**23.♝d1 h5 24.♔h1 ♜g5 25.♗bb1 ♜ae7 26.♗a1**



**26...Qf5!?**

Everything is prepared for the decisive blow. In fact, though, Black could even sacrifice on e3 at this point: 26...Qxe3!? 27.fxe3 Qxe3 28.Qa2 Qf5 29.Qf2 Qg3 30.Qe2 Qxe2 31.Qxe2 Qf2 32.Qd3 Qxe2.

**27.Qa2 Qcxe3!**

Although this sacrifice is a positional one, the fact that the white pieces are all away from the kingside makes it very dangerous.

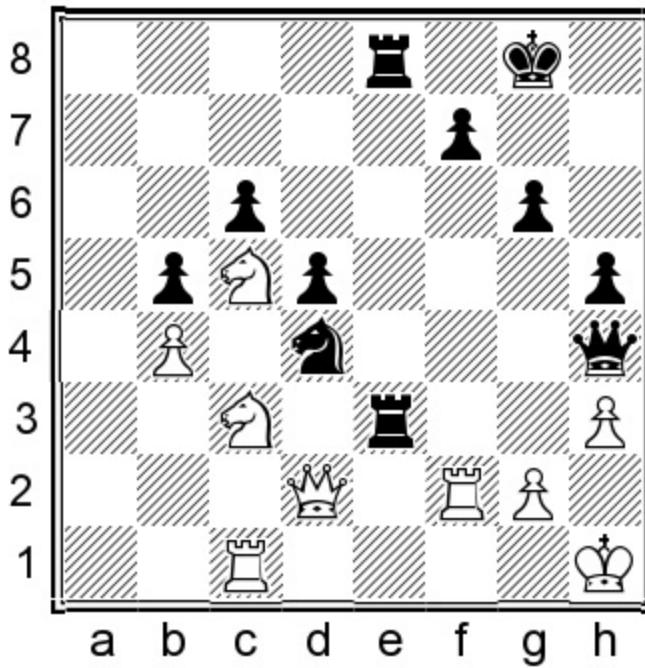
**28.fxe3 Qxe3 29.Qf2 Wh4?**

29...Qg3! was correct, e.g. 30.Qd2 Qh4! 31.Qd7 Qxg2! 32.Qf6+ Qf8 33.Qxe8 Qxh3+ 34.Qg1 Qf4 35.Qxf4 Qg3+ 36.Qf2 Wh2+, winning.

**30.Qd2!?**

Here White could have saved the game with 30.Qg1!?, e.g. 30...Qxh3 (or 30...Qxd4 31.Qd2) 31.gxh3 Qe3 32.Qf3 Qxf3 33.Qxf3 Qg5+ 34.Qf2 Qxc1 35.Qe2 Qd2 36.Qf4.

**30...Qxd4**



**31.♕cf1?**

The decisive error; instead, 31.♔g1! led to equality, e.g. 31...♝f5 32.♝e2 ♛f6 (32...d4 33.♕cf1) 33.♕cf1 h4 34.♕xf5 gxf5 35.♗d4 f4 36.♔h1 ♜e7 37.♕d1 ♛g6 38.♗f3.

**31...♝f5 32.♕xf5?!**

Equally hopeless, but more tenacious, was 32.♔g1!? ♛xb4 33.♗xd5 ♛xc5 34.♗f6+ ♔g7 35.♗xe8+ ♜xe8 36.♕b2+.

**32...gxf5 33.♗d1 ♜e1 34.♔g1 ♜e8e2 35.♕c3 ♜xd1 0-1**

### iii) Positional methods of defence

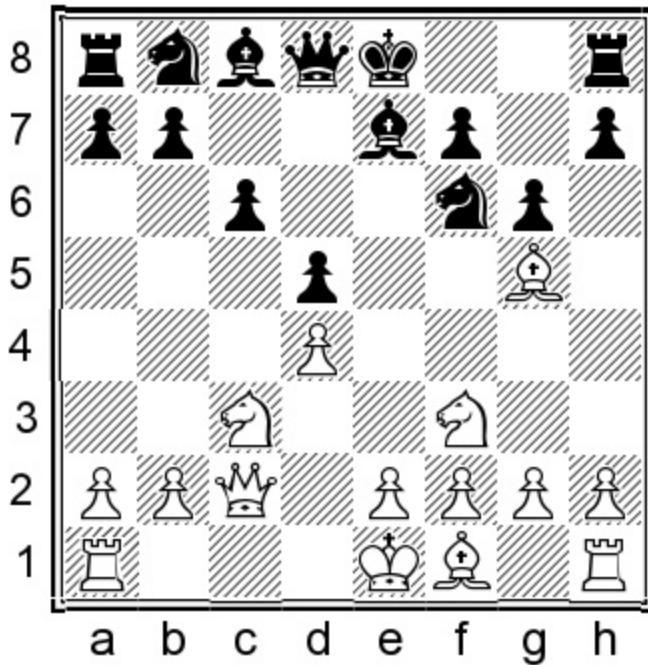
One of these, forming a barrier with ...b7-b5 to control the c4-square, was well illustrated in the game Nikolic-Kramnik. Another method can be seen in the next game.

Game 39  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Ventzislav Inkiov 2450**  
**Artur Jussupow 2555**  
Dubai ol 1986 (11)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 c6 4.♗c3 ♛f6 5.cxd5**

As we already know from the previous game, this capture creates no problems for Black, who is now able to develop his ♜c8 to f5.

5...exd5 6.♗c2 ♗e7 7.♗g5 g6!

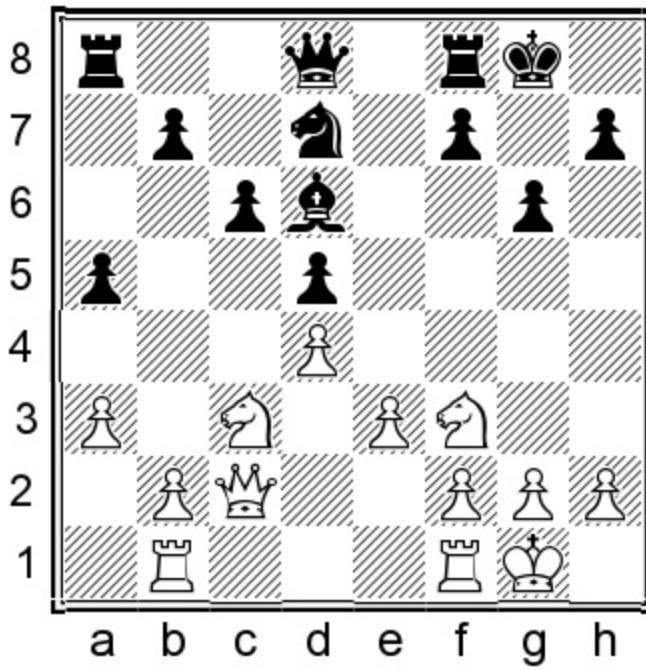


This move, preparing ...♗c8-f5, remains the main line, moreover with an excellent score (only 46% for White).

8.♗xf6?!

Presenting Black with the bishop pair advantage hardly seems logical. Two more common moves in this position are 8.e3 ♗f5 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♗xd3 ♗bd7 11.0-0 0-0 12.♗ab1 a5 13.h3 ♗e8, with the ideas that we saw in the game Nikolic-Kramnik, and 8.e4!? dxе4 (8...0-0 9.e5) 9.♗xf6 ♗xf6 10.♗xe4+ ♔f8!? (10...♗e7) 11.♗c4 ♔g7 12.0-0 ♗e8 13.♗f4 ♗e6 14.♗xe6 ♗xe6 15.♗fe1 ♗d6 16.♗d2 ♗a6, with equal play, Novikov-Kaidanov, St Louis 2019.

8...♗xf6 9.e3 ♗f5 10.♗d3 ♗xd3 11.♗xd3 ♗d7 12.0-0 ♗e7 13.♗ab1 a5 14.a3 0-0 15.♗c2 ♗d6



**16.b4?!**

In positions of this type this advance is inappropriate. It seems that White should look for another plan, based on the advance e3-e4, e.g. 16.e4 dxe4 17.Qxe4 Qf6 18.Qc5 Qc7 19.Qfe1. At the end of this chapter the game Vazquez Igarza-Alsina Leal also shows a way to handle this type of position; and there are other, less ambitious, options that also maintain the balance, e.g. 16.Qd2 Qe8 17.Qf3 Qf6 18.h3 Qg7 19.Qbc1 Qc8 20.Qfd1.

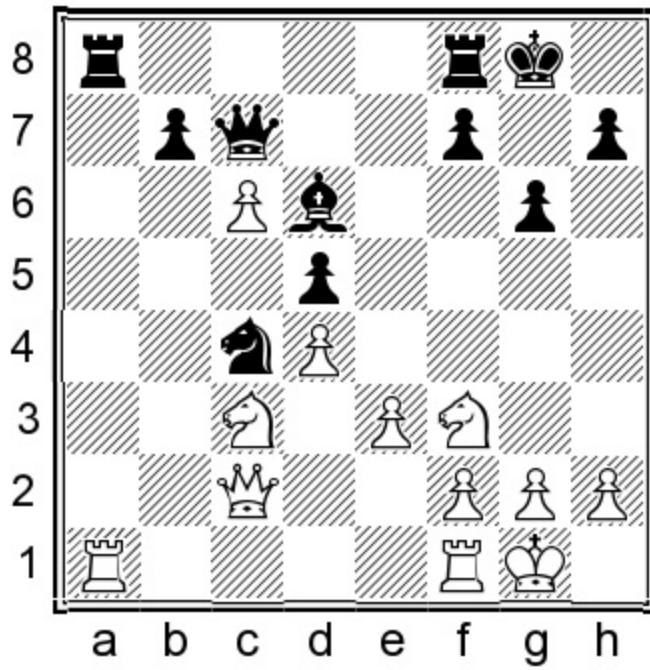
**16...axb4**

Another idea would be 16...Qe7!? 17.bxa5 Qf6 18.a4 Qxa5 19.Qb3 Qa7 20.Qfb1 Qb8 and the Qa4 is a weakness. Stockfish gives a slight advantage to Black with yet another plan: 16...b5!? 17.e4 Qb6 18.exd5 Qc4 19.Qa1 axb4 20.axb4 cxd5 21.Qxa8 Qxa8 22.Qxb5 Qxb4 23.Qb1 Qa5.

**17.axb4 Qb6!**

**17...b5?! 18.e4!.**

**18.b5 Qc4 19.Qa1 Qc7 20.bxc6**



It is precisely Black's next move that makes this game valuable:

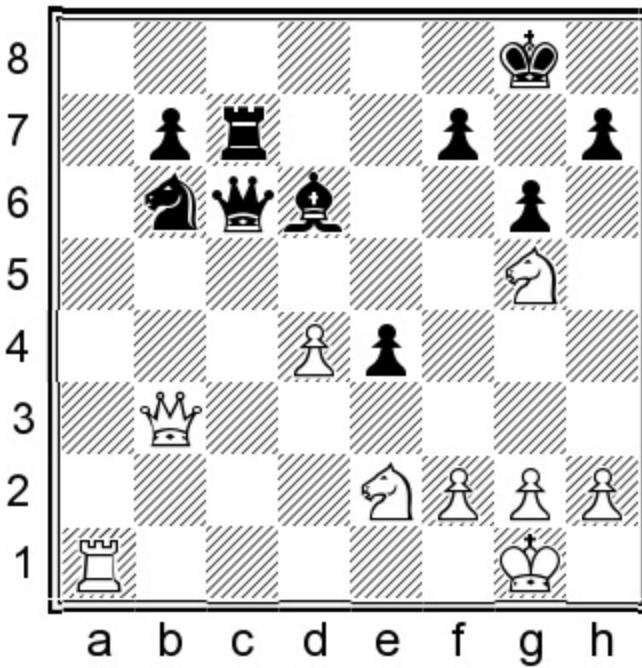
**20... $\mathbb{W}xc6!$**

Making the  $\mathbb{A}b7$  a passed pawn. The routine pawn recapture led to equality: 20... $bxc6$  21. $g3$  (21. $e4!?$ ) 21... $\mathbb{E}xa1$  22. $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  23. $\mathbb{E}a2$ .

**21. $e4$   $\mathbb{E}xa1$  22. $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6!$  23. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e2??$**

Instead of this pawn sacrifice it was better to play 24. $e5!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5!?$  (24... $\mathbb{W}xc3$  25. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  26. $exd6$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  28. $\mathbb{E}b1$ , and Black has difficulty making progress) 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  26. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  27. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  29. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  30. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}c1+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c2+$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$ , and the greater activity of White's pieces practically compensates for the missing pawn.

**24... $dxe4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}c7$**



**26.h4?**

26... $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$  was correct, e.g. 26... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}d6+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  (29... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30. $\mathbb{W}e3$ ) 30. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , and White's pieces are active.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  27. $\mathbb{W}h3?$**

Although the white position is already very difficult, 27. $\mathbb{W}a4!$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  28. $\mathbb{W}a2$  e3 29.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  30. $\mathbb{W}a4$  would have been more tenacious.

**27...h6! 28.h5  $\mathbb{W}d5!$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30.hxg6  $\mathbb{W}xg5$  31.gxf7  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  32.d5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  34. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  35. $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  0-1**

Another defensive method, studied by my old friend and famous trainer Mark Dvoretsky, is based on the advance ...c6-c5-c4.

Game 40  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Veselin Topalov** 2740  
**Vladimir Kramnik** 2790  
 Linares 1998 (2)

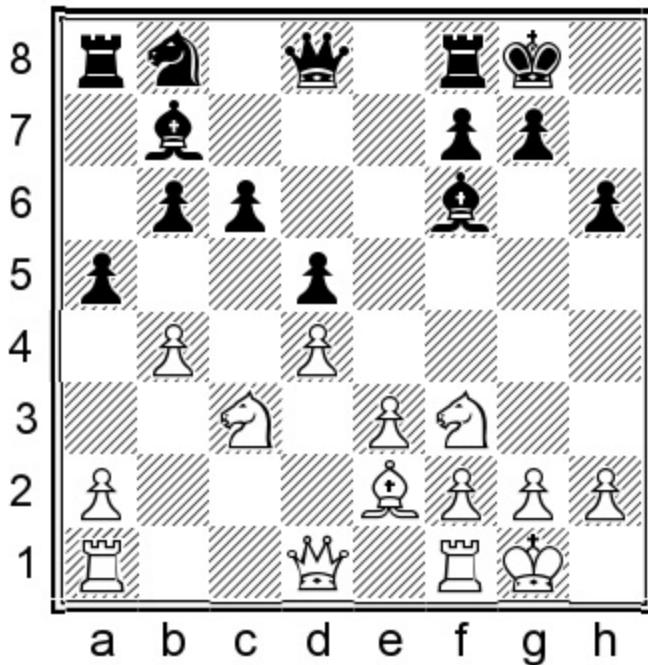
**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 6. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  0-0 7.e3 b6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$**

White prepares the advance b2-b4, as the Carlsbad structure is about to appear.

**9... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  10.cxd5 exd5 11.b4**

Just as in the game Aronian-Anand, Black has the pair of bishops, but the ♘b7 is worse than Anand's ♘e6.

**11...c6 12.0-0 a5**



**13.b5**

The most common move, which has a better score than the two main alternatives, although the engine gives the same evaluation to all three: 13.a3 axb4 (Stockfish prefers 13...♝d7 14.bxa5 ♜xa5 15.a4 c5) 14.axb4 ♜d6 15.♜xa8 ♘xa8 16.♝b3 ♛d7 17.♝a1 ♘b7, with equality, Andersson-C.Hansen, Skellefteå 2001; 13.bxa5 ♜xa5 (13...b5!?) 14.a4 c5 (14...♝c8!?) 15.♝b3 ♛a6 16.♝fb1 ♛b4 17.♛a2 ♛xa2 18.♜xa2 ♘a6 19.♝xa6 ♜xa6 20.♝b5 ♜a8, and Black has sufficient counterplay, Lautier-Kramnik, Belgrade 1997.

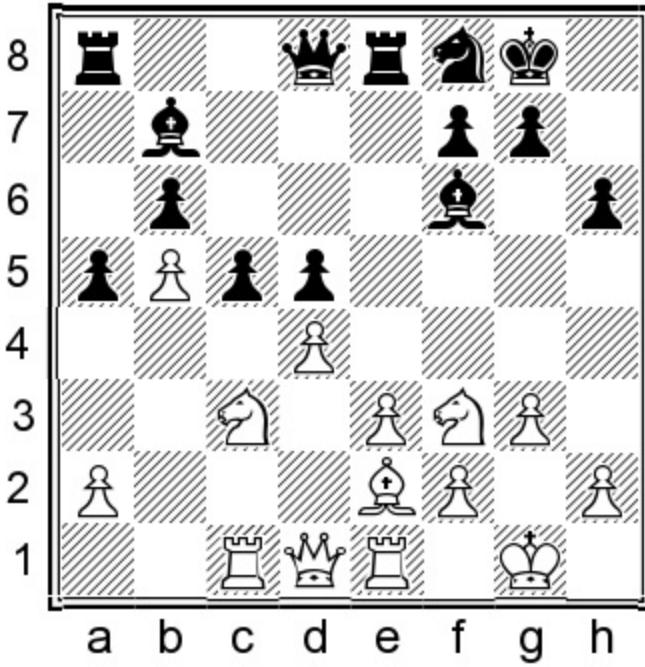
**13...c5 14.♝e1**

The main line is 14.♝e5!?, e.g. 14...cxsd4!? (14...♝c7 15.♝g4 ♛d7 16.♝f3 with a slight advantage to White, Aronian-Adams, Paris/St Petersburg 2013) 15.exd4 ♘xe5 16.dxe5 d4 (16...♝d7!?) 17.♛a4 ♜g5 18.♝g4 ♜xe5 19.♝xb6 ♜a7, and White is slightly better, Van Wely-Shimanov, Leon 2012.

**14...♝e8 15.♝c1 ♛d7 16.g3**

With the idea of transferring the ♘e2 to g2, in order to exert pressure on the ♘d5. The idea of isolating the ♘d5 offers no advantage here: 16.dxc5 ♘xc5 17.♝d4 ♘xd4 (17...♝d6!? leads to more complex play) 18.exd4 ♘e4, with equality.

**16...♝f8**



**17. ♜a4!?**

Kramnik gives this move an exclamation mark, saying that if White prefaced this move with an exchange on c5 Black would have no problems, and offering the variation 17.dxc5 bxc5 18. ♜a4 c4 19. ♜c5 ♜b6 (19... ♜c8!?) 20. ♜xb7 ♜xb7 21.a4 ♜e6, with equality – an evaluation with which we concur. However, it seems that the game continuation gives Black another type of counterplay which is no worse. It is curious that Stockfish gives the same evaluation, not only to these two moves, but to six others as well! However, from the human viewpoint Kramnik is right: we think in terms of plans and schemes, whereas the engines just consider moves.

**17...c4!**

The passed and protected ♜c4 guarantees Black a lasting initiative, as it is far from easy for White to implement the pawn break e3-e4.

**18. ♜f1 ♜d6**

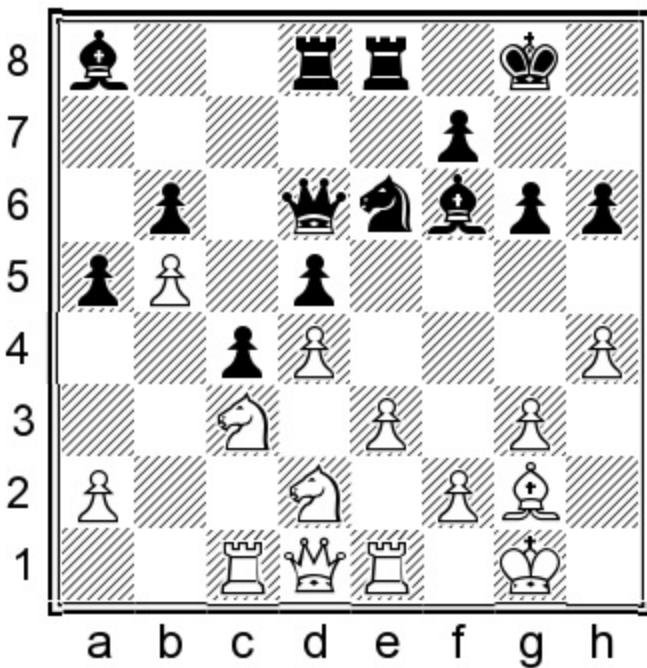
A good alternative was 18... ♜c7!? 19. ♜g2 ♜ad8 20. ♜d2 (20. ♜c3 ♜e7) 20... ♜e7 21.e4 ♜b4.

**19. ♜g2 ♜ad8 20.h4 ♜e6**

It seems that again it was slightly better to transfer the ♜f6 to the a3-f8 diagonal, starting with 20... ♜c7, e.g. 21. ♜c3 (21. ♜d2!) 21... ♜e7!? 22. ♜e5 ♜a3 23. ♜c2 ♜b4 24. ♜h5 ♜h7!; Stockfish gives -0.50.

**21. ♜c3 g6 22. ♜d2 ♜a8**

Defending against White's threat to capture on c4; if 22... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$  then 23. $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$ . Stockfish evaluates the position as slightly better for Black and also recommends 22... $\mathbb{W}c7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  h5.



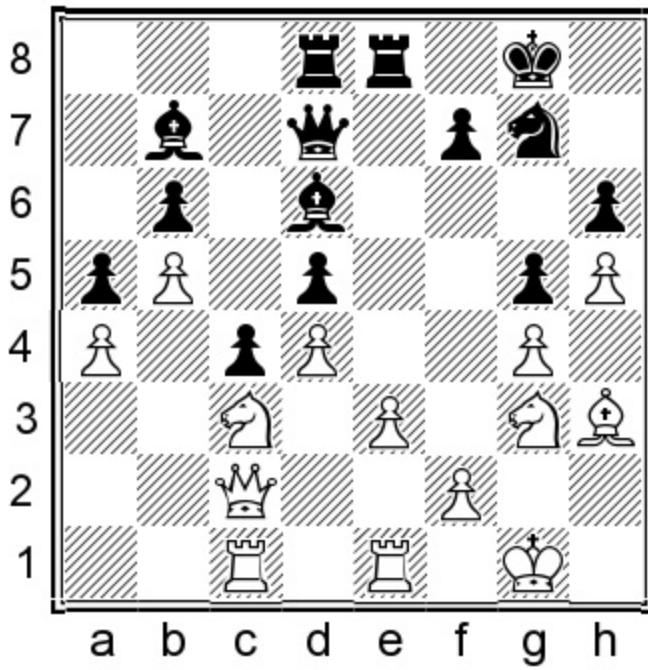
### 23.h5!?

Kramnik considered the correct continuation to be 23.f4; however, after 23... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$  Black would have a slight advantage, e.g. 24. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  (24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ ) 24... $\mathbb{W}c7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$ .

### 23...g5 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 25.g4?

This weakens the diagonal b8-h2. It seems White could still keep the balance with 25. $\mathbb{Q}h2!?$ , e.g. 25...f5 (25... $\mathbb{Q}g7?!$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  f5 27. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 26.g4 f4 (26... $\mathbb{Q}g7?!$ ) 27.e4! dx $e$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  32. $\mathbb{W}xf3$ , and the strong  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  compensates for the sacrificed pawn, e.g. 32... $\mathbb{W}xb5??$  would be bad due to 33. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{W}xe8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ , with a winning attack for White. The engine gives a few other moves that would also maintain equality, such as 25.e4 and 25. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

### 25... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 27.a4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 29. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6!$



Black now has a clear advantage after 30.  $\mathbb{Q}ce2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , in view of the plan indicated by Kramnik: ... $\mathbb{W}d6$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ , ... $\mathbb{E}f8$  and ...f7-f5, so White is forced to weaken his structure.

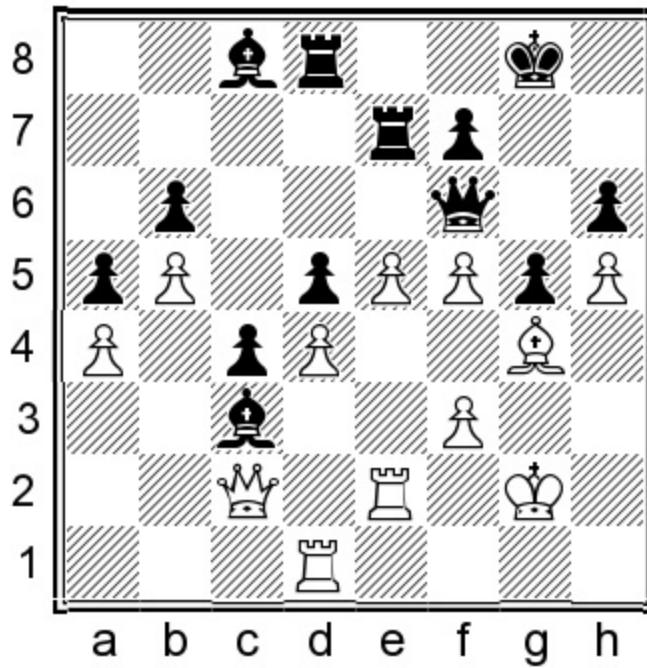
**30.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  31.  $gxf5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$**

Even better would have been 31... $\mathbb{Q}a3$ !? 32.  $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  34.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  35.  $\mathbb{E}de1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$ .

**32.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  33.  $f3$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  34.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}de8$  35.  $\mathbb{E}ce1$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  37.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  38.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  39.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  40.  $e4$ ?**

This makes Black's task easier, although it seems that there is no satisfactory defence in any case; for instance, after 40.  $\mathbb{E}de1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  41.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  White loses a pawn without compensation. 40.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$ !? was more tenacious, e.g. 40...  $\mathbb{E}de8$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  42.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  43.  $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  44.  $\mathbb{W}a1$ , although even then Black's advantage is clear, in particular due to the passed  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

**40...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  41.  $e5$**



**41...♝xe5!**

A neat solution, based on the total passivity of the ♜g4!

**42.dxe5**

In the event of 42.♝xe5 ♜xd4! 43.♝e2 ♜c3 the advance ...d5-d4-d3 decides the game.

**42...♝xe5 43.♝de1 ♜c7 44.♝e8+ ♜g7 45.♝xd8 ♜xd8 46.♝d1 ♜b7 47.f4 d4+ 48.♝f3 d3 0-1**

### 2.3. Plan B: attack in the centre with e3-e4

This plan for White appears in two different forms, depending on whether the  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  is developed to e2 or to f3. The first one is based on creating a pawn centre by means of f2-f3 followed by e3-e4, which usually occurs with the king's knight on e2. The second way consists of effecting the e3-e4 advance without the preparatory pawn move f2-f3 and with the king's knight usually on f3; it usually leads to an open game with an isolated pawn on d4. We shall examine the first possibility in the next two examples.

Game 41  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Paul Keres**  
Moscow ch-URS 1952 (8)

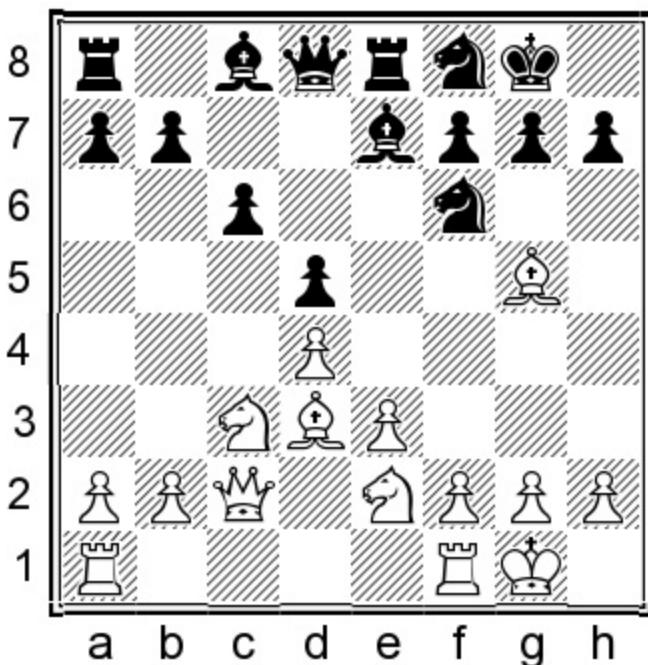
**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6.e3 0-0 7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  9. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$**

The first step in White's plan.

**9... $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

This is still the main line even today.

**10.0-0 c6**



**11. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$**

It is curious that Stockfish agrees with Botvinnik that this is the best move. However, players nowadays prefer the immediate 11.f3, e.g. 11...g6 (the engine recommends a similar line but starting with 11...h6, e.g. 12.♗h4 ♗e6 13.♗ad1 b5 14.♗f2 ♗d7 15.♗g3 b4 16.♗a4 ♗a5 17.♗c1 ♗ac8 18.♗c5 ♗xc5 19.dxc5 ♗e6 20.b3 ♗d7 21.e4 ♗g5, with equality) 12.♗h4 ♗e6 13.♗h1 b5 14.♗ad1 ♗b7 15.♗c1 (15.♗f2!?) 15...♗c8 16.e4 (16.♗f4!?) 16...b4 17.♗a4 ♗a5 18.b3 c5, with good play for Black, Mamedyarov-Radjabov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2019.

### 11...♗d6?!

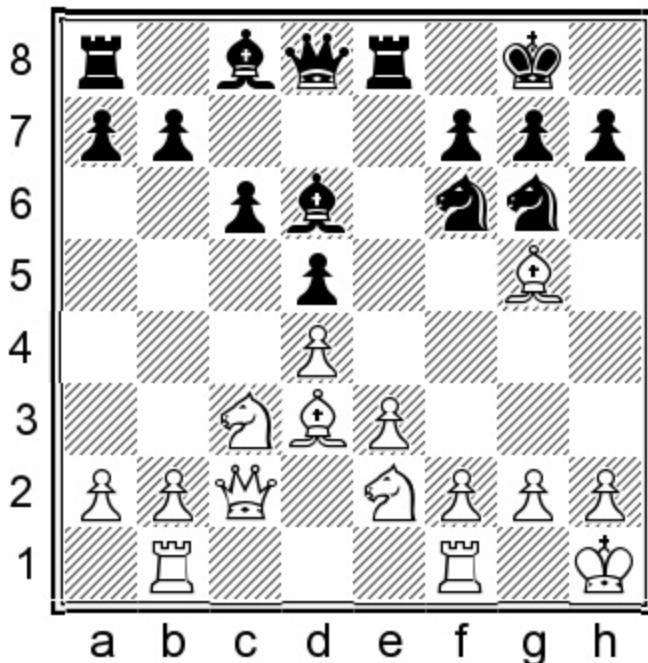
The text move loses time. The main line is 11...a5!?.

### 12.♗h1

Defending against the threat of 12...♗xh2+ 13.♔xh2 ♗g4+. A good alternative is 12.f3!?, e.g. 12...h6 (12...♗c7!? 13.e4?! (13.♗h1!? ♗b6) 13...♗e6 14.♗xf6 ♗xf6 15.e5 ♗h6 16.f4 f6!) 13.♗xf6 ♗xf6 14.e4.

### 12...♗g6?!

The text move is the logical follow-up to Black's previous move; Black plans to force White to exchange on f6 after ...h7-h6 next move. However, Botvinnik's strong response puts this idea in doubt. It was preferable therefore to play 12...h6!? immediately, e.g. 13.♗h4 a5 14.♗be1 ♗d7, when 15.f3? loses to 15...♗xe3.



### 13.f3!

The second step, which already prepares e3-e4.

### **13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

Recognizing his error on move 11. The move Black had planned, 13...h6?, fails to 14. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  15.e4!  $\mathbb{W}h4$  16.e5.

### **14. $\mathbb{Q}be1$**

14.e4 dxe4 15.fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  c5 17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  cxd4! leads to unclear complications.

### **14... $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$**

It would have been better to play 14... $\mathbb{Q}e6!?$ , with the idea of 15.e4?! (15. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$ ) 15...dxe4 16.fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ .

The engine prefers 14...h6!? 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  (16. $\mathbb{Q}xg6?!$  fxe4) 16... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  18.e4 g6 and gives equality.

### **15. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17. $\mathbb{W}f2!$**

Defending the  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  in order to prepare the advance e3-e4 and also placing the queen in a more active position in the event of the opening of the f-file.

### **17... $\mathbb{Q}e6?$**

Here 17...b6 was better, e.g. 18. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  (18.e4?!  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (18...a5!?) 19. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21.e4 (21. $\mathbb{Q}fe1!?$ ) 21... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  dxe4 23.fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  24. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}h4$ , with some counterplay for Black.

### **18. $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

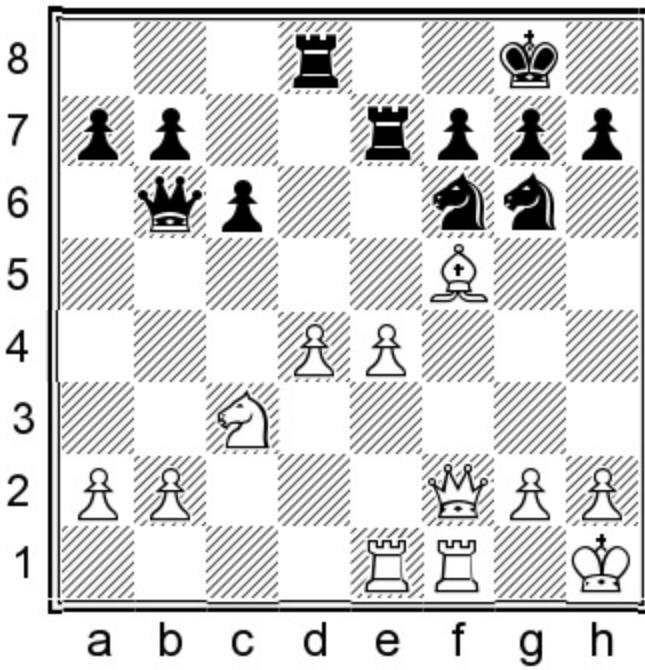
White could have well changed his plan now with 18.f4!  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  (18... $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$ ) 19.f5  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  20.e4, with a strong attack. However, Botvinnik, in chess as in life, never liked to change his mind.

### **18... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 20.e4!**

The third step.

### **20...dxe4 21.fxe4 $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

And the fourth step:



**22.e5!**

This advance creates the basis for various tactical ideas and in addition prepares the manoeuvre ♜c3-e4-d6.

**22...♝d5**

22...♝e8 23.♜d1 ♜c7 24.♝e4 would have changed nothing.

**23.♝e4 ♝f8 24.♝d6 ♜c7 25.♝e4!**

This is Stockfish's main line, although 25.♝g3!? f6 26.♝e4! ♜e6 27.♝xd5 cxd5 28.h4 was also good.

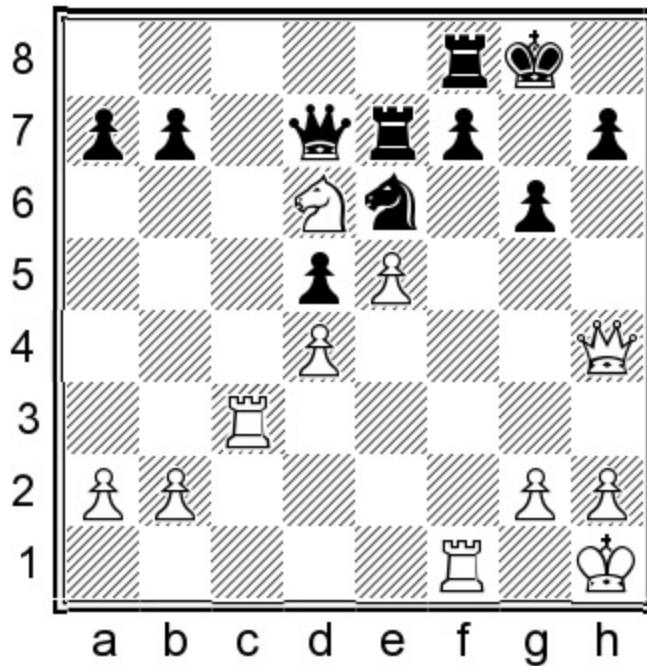
**25...♝e6**

The exchange sacrifice 25...♜xd6!? 26.exd6 ♜xd6 was more tenacious, but would not save the game, e.g. 27.♝xd5 cxd5 28.♝xe7 ♜xe7 29.♝f5.

**26.♝h4 g6 27.♝xd5!**

Beginning the final assault.

**27...cxd5 28.♜c1 ♜d7 29.♜c3 ♜f8**



**30.♗f5!**

An elegant decision!

**30...♝fe8**

If 30...gxsf5 then 31.♕g3+ ♔g7 32.♕f6, with mate next move.

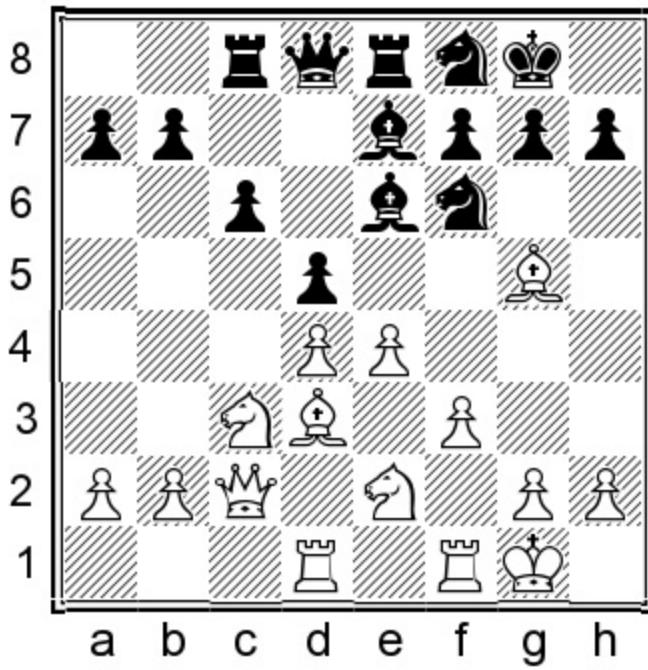
**31.♗h6+**

31.♕f6!? h5 32.g4 ♜d8 33.♗h6+ ♔h7 34.♗xf7 was also winning.

**31...♔f8 32.♕f6 ♔g7 33.♜cf3 ♜c8 34.♗xf7 ♜e6 35.♕g5 ♗f5 36.♗h6 ♜g7 37.g4 1-0**

Game 42  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Sanan Sjugirov** 2673  
**Artur Jussupow** 2581  
 Doha 2014 (3)

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5 ♜e7 6.e3 ♘bd7 7.♗d3 0-0 8.♗ge2 ♜e8 9.0-0 c6  
 10.♕c2 ♘f8 11.f3 ♜e6 12.♖ad1 ♜c8 13.e4**



Here we see a modern treatment of this plan and we can observe the differences with the previous classic game: White places his queen's rook on d1 instead of e1 and spends no time on the move ♕h1; Black for his part plays ...♝e6 and ...♝c8, preparing the advance ...c6-c5, instead of ...♝d6 and ...♝g6.

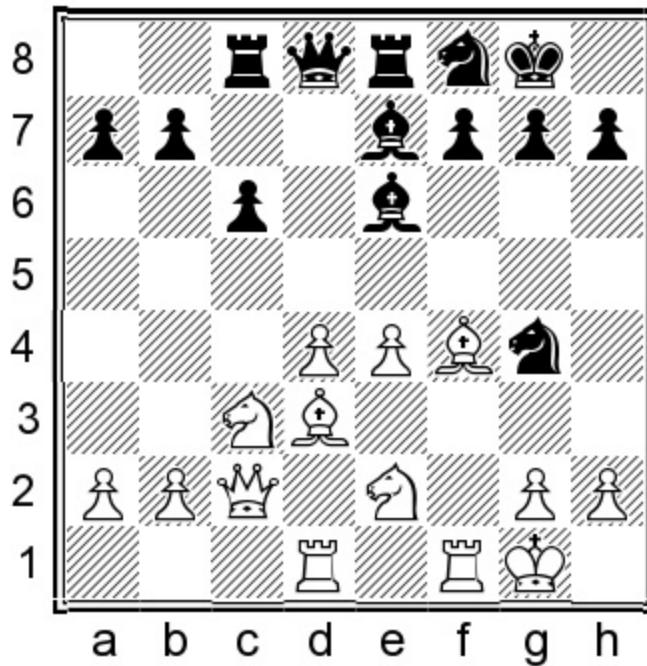
The most common move here is 13.♔h1!?, e.g. 13...a6 (Stockfish analyses 13...b5 14.h3 ♐g6 15.a3 ♘h5 16.♗xe7 ♗xe7 17.♗d2 f5 18.♔h2, and the white position is slightly better) 14.a3 ♘d7 15.♗xe7 ♗xe7 16.♗f4 h6 17.♗f2 ♘b6 18.e4, with a clear advantage to White, Navara-Malinovsky, Ostrava 2017.

### 13...dxe4

13...c5? leads to a clear advantage for White after 14.e5 cxd4 (14...c4 15.♗f5) 15.♗xd4 ♘c5 16.♗b5 ♗b6 17.♗f2 ♘d7 18.♔e3.

### 14.fxe4 ♘g4 15.♔f4!

Worse were both 15.♔d2? c5! 16.d5 c4 17.dxe6 (17.♔xc4!? ♗c7!) 17...♘c5+ 18.♔h1 cxd3 19.exf7+ ♔h8 20.fxe8=♗ dxc2! 21.♗a4 ♘f2+ 22.♗xf2 cxd1=♗+ 23.♗xd1 ♘xf2, when Black wins, and 15.♔xe7 ♗xe7 16.♗d2 c5 17.d5 ♘d7, when Black's control of the e5-square gives him a comfortable game.

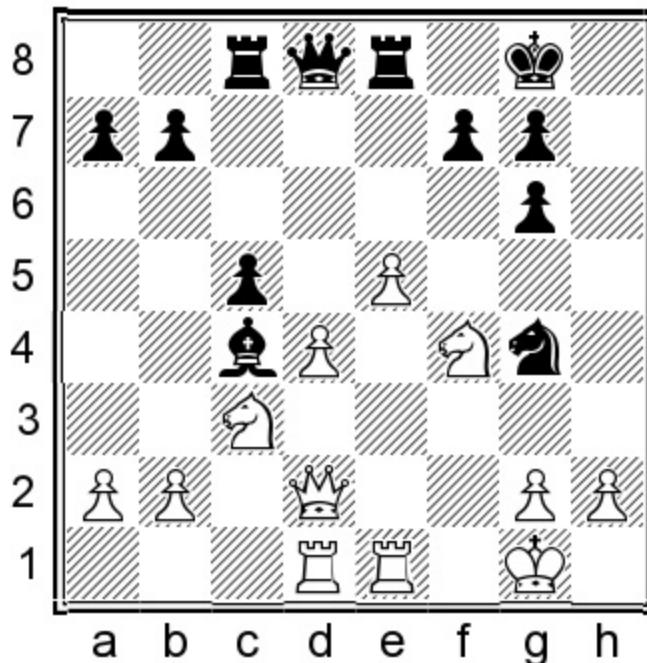


**15...Bg6**

15...c5!? leads to sharp complications: 16.Bb5 cxd4! (16...Bd7? 17.Bxd7 Bxd7 18.h3 cxd4 19.Bxd4 Bgf6 20.Bh1. with the better game for White, Peralta-Roa Alonso, Roquetas de Mar 2010) 17.Bxe8 g5!! 18.h3 (18.Bc1? Bc7) 18...Bxe8 19.hxg4 gxf4 20.Bxd4 Bc5 21.Bxf4 Bg6 22.Bf5 Bxf5 23.gxf5 Be5 24.Bf1, with chances for both sides.

**16.e5 Bg5 17.Bxg6 hxg6 18.Bd2 Bxf4 19.Bxf4 Bc4 20.Bfe1 c5**

Black makes the pawn break that Keres never achieved.



## 21.d5!

Sjugirov's prepared novelty, varying from a game Jussupow had played almost twenty years before:  
21.♘e4 cxd4 22.♗d6 d3! 23.♗h3 (23.♗xd3 leads to equality after 23...♗xd3 24.♗xd3 ♕xe5 25.♗xe5 ♖b6+ 26.♗e3!! ♖xe3+ (26...♗xe3?? 27.♗xc8 ♖c7 28.♗e7+ ♔h7 29.♗xe3, winning) 27.♗xe3 ♖xe3 28.♗e1 ♖c6 29.♗xf7 ♗xg2 30.♗e7) 23...♗xe5 24.♗xc8 ♖xc8 25.♗xe5 ♖xe5, with equality, Timman-Jussupow, Riga 1995.

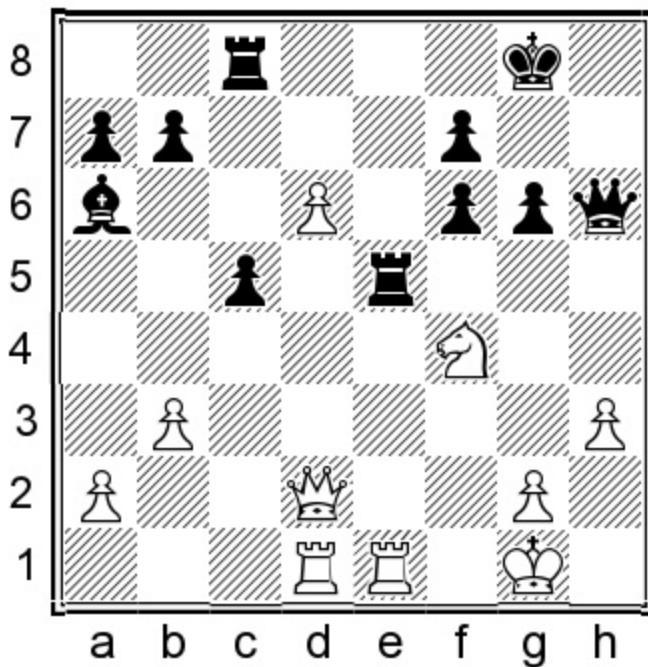
## 21...♗xe5 22.b3 ♖a6 23.d6 ♖g5?

Here the correct way was 23...♗h4!! 24.g3 (24.h3 ♖xe1+ 25.♗xe1 ♘f6 26.♗fd5 ♖d8, with equality) 24...♖f6 25.♗e4 ♖f5 26.♗d5 (26.h3 ♘f6 27.♗xf6+ (27.g4?? ♗xe4!) 27...gxsf6 28.g4 ♖g5, with equal play) 26...♗xe4 27.♗xe4 ♖xe4 28.♗e7+ ♔h7 29.♗e1 (29.♗xc8? ♗e5! – the key idea! This is exactly why it was necessary to provoke g2-g3) 29...♖f3 30.♗xc8 b6! 31.♖f4 ♖xf4 32.gxf4 ♖xc8 33.♗e7 ♘f6 34.♗xf7 ♔g8 35.♗xa7, with equality.

## 24.♗e4 ♖h6

24...♖f5? loses immediately to 25.♗d5 ♖xe4 26.♗xe4 ♖xe4 27.♗e7+.

## 25.h3 ♘f6 26.♗xf6+ gxsf6



## 27.♖f2!

Creating the deadly threat 28.♗d5.

## 27...♖g5 28.♗xe5 fxe5 29.♗d5 ♔g7 30.d7 ♖d8 31.♗c7!

Although after this move White's advantage is clear, Sjugirov still needed to make several precise moves to win the game.

**31... $\mathbb{W}e7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  33.a4! e4 34. $\mathbb{Q}d6!$  e3 35. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{W}e5$**

36... $\mathbb{W}xd6$  also loses to 37. $\mathbb{Q}e8+!$ ; and 36...e2 to 37. $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  38. $\mathbb{W}h8#$ .

**37. $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  38. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}a1+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  42. $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  44.d8= $\mathbb{W}$  1-0**

Experience has shown that Botvinnik's plan poses problems for Black, so it is common to avoid this by adopting a move-order that makes it difficult for White to develop his king's knight to e2: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7?$ . This idea, attributed to GM Vladimir Alatortsev, is designed to induce White to play 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ . However, in this case White can still create active play with 4.cxd5 exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  c6 6.e3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  7.g4!?.

Let us move on now to consider the second form of central attack. In this case the e3-e4 advance, forcing open the e-file, takes place with White's knight on f3. This plan can be effective when Black is behind in development and is unable to put sufficient pressure on the d4-pawn. Then White can successfully organize a direct attack on the enemy king.

It is also possible to combine the e3-e4 break with the minority attack, especially when Black has played ...b7-b5.

Game 43  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Anatoly Karpov**  
**Boris Spassky**  
Leningrad ct m 1974 (11)

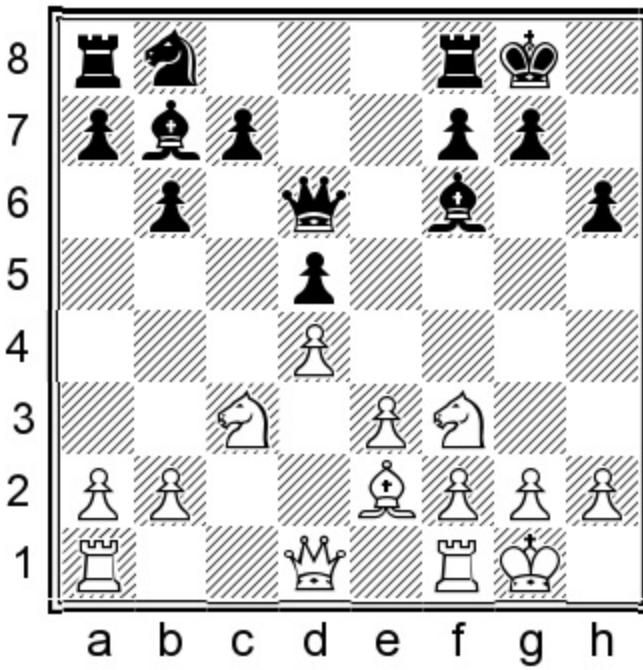
**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 6. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  0-0 7.e3 b6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$**

Both players were supporters of the Tartakower-Makogonov-Bondarevsky Variation, which we saw earlier in the game Topalov-Kramnik. We have also seen the idea of White's next move before: it is understandable for White to exchange on f6 in anticipation of a Carlsbad structure, which will at the same time restrict the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , at least temporarily.

**9. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  10.cxd5 exd5 11.0-0**

11.b4!?, as Topalov played, is the main line.

**11... $\mathbb{W}d6$**



Why is this logical move, preventing the advance 12.b4, regarded as a sideline nowadays? It is not easy to explain this to a player who has never played this type of position. So let us begin with a comparison. In the Grünfeld Defence, after 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  6.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  7. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  e6 8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  exd5 9.e3 0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  the move 10... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  is the main line, preferred by Kasparov, for example. The differences are: Black has practically an extra tempo, since the white king is still in the centre; the  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  is better placed than the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , since after putting it on e6, followed by ...c7-c6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , Black can quickly launch an attack with ...f7-f5, which underlines a further detail, i.e. that the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  does not impede the advance of the  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ , in contrast to the  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ . One more thing, demonstrated in the game itself: in the event of the advance e3-e4, the position of the black queen is vulnerable.

**12. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  a6 13.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.b4 b5 15. $\mathbb{Q}e1$**

As Botvinnik has pointed out, it is more accurate to play 15. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ , followed by 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ , in order to prevent the advance ...a6-a5.

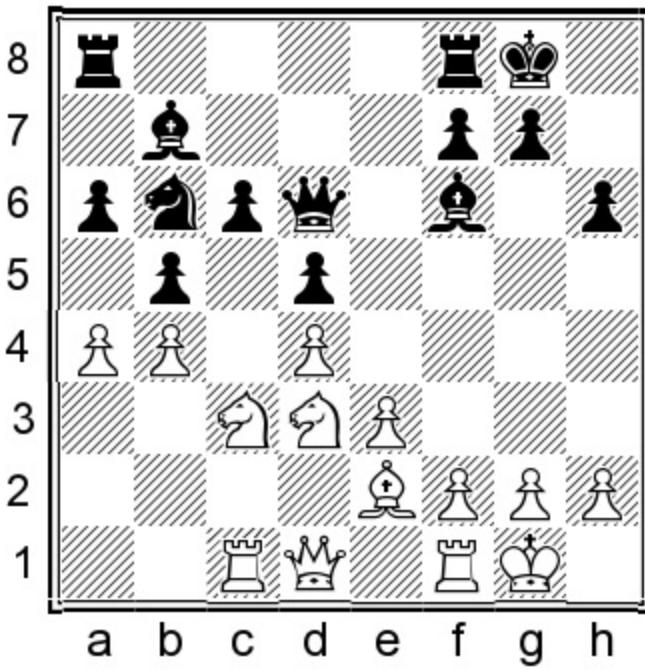
**15...c6 16. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

The immediate advance in the centre offers White some advantage: 16.e4!?,  $dxe4$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}d8!?$ ) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

**16... $\mathbb{Q}b6!?$**

It was better to play 16...a5!, e.g. 17.bxa5  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  (17... $\mathbb{W}xa3!?$ ) 18.a4 bxa4 19. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}fa8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}ac5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$ , and White's advantage is minimal.

**17.a4**



**17...Qd8?**

Here 17...Qc4! 18.Qc5 Wc7 19.e4 Qad8! was better, with the idea of 20.exd5 cxd5 21.axb5 axb5 22.Qxb5 Wb6 23.Qxb7 Wxb7 24.Qc3 Wxb4 25.Qf3 Qb6, with equality. Following the move in the game, after minimal preparation White will be able to open the centre, exploiting the circumstance that the enemy bishop is not yet attacking the Qd4.

**18.Qc5 Qc8 19.a5 Qc7 20.g3 Qc4 21.e4! Qh3 22.Qe1 dxе4 23.Q3xe4 Wg6**

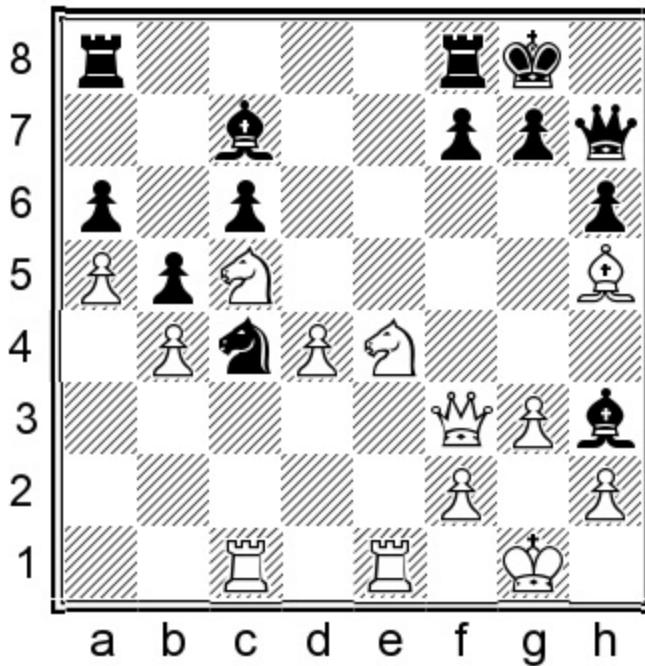
Here 23...Wd5!? 24.Qf3 Wf5 would have been slightly better.

**24.Qh5! Wh7**

This is forced, since if 24...Wf5?, 25.Qc3! threatens to trap the Qh3 with 26.g4.

**25.Wf3**

A good alternative was 25.Qc3! Qf5 26.Qd2 Qxd2 27.Wxd2 Qd6 28.Qf3, and the Qc6 falls, since defending it with 28...Qfc8 is even worse in view of 29.d5!.



**25...f5?**

Winning a piece but at too high a price. It was more tenacious to play 25... $\mathbb{W}f5$  26. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}a7$ ! 29. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ .

**26. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6 27. $\mathbb{W}xc6$  gxh5 28. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  f4**

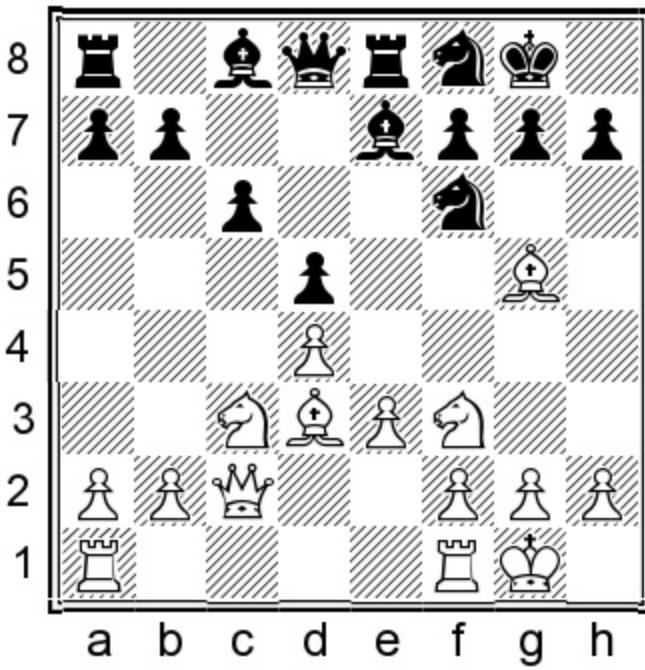
Or 28... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  29. $\mathbb{E}xc4$  bxc4 30. $\mathbb{W}xd6$ , winning.

**29. $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  30. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}ae8$  31. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  32. $\mathbb{E}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  33. $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $\mathbb{E}e2$  34. $\mathbb{W}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  1-0**

Next we shall examine the plan of the central pawn break that was introduced in tournament practice by the American GM Frank Marshall; it arises in the Queen's Gambit with the early exchange on d5.

**Game 44**  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Artur Jussupow** 2665  
**Vladimir Kramnik** 2765  
 Vienna 1996 (7)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  6.cxd5 exd5 7.e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f8$**



### **11.Qae1**

This move marks the start of the plan first played in the game Marshall-Rubinstein, Moscow 1925. In modern practice the alternative 11.h3 is often seen, with the idea of preventing the exchange of the ♜g5, e.g. 11.h3!? ♜e4 12.♗f4 f5 13.♗e5 ♜g5 (13...♝g6 14.♗xg6 hxg6 15.f3 ♜f6 16.♗e2 ♜h5 17.♗e5, with a better game for White) 14.♗xg5 ♜xg5 15.f4 ♜e7 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.♗fd1 (17.♗ad1!) 17...♜e6 18.d5 cxd5 19.♗xd5, with a clear advantage to White, Kramnik-Nikolic, Wijk aan Zee 2000.

### **11...♝e4**

The main alternative is 11...♜e6, after which the advance e3-e4 usually takes place later and in somewhat different circumstances, e.g. 12.♗e5 ♜d7 13.♗xe7 ♜xe7 14.f4 f6 15.♗f3 ♜b6 16.f5 ♜f7 17.g4 h6 18.h4 ♜d6 19.♗g2 ♜ae8 20.e4!, with sharp play, Mamedyarov-Gurevich, Heraklion 2007.

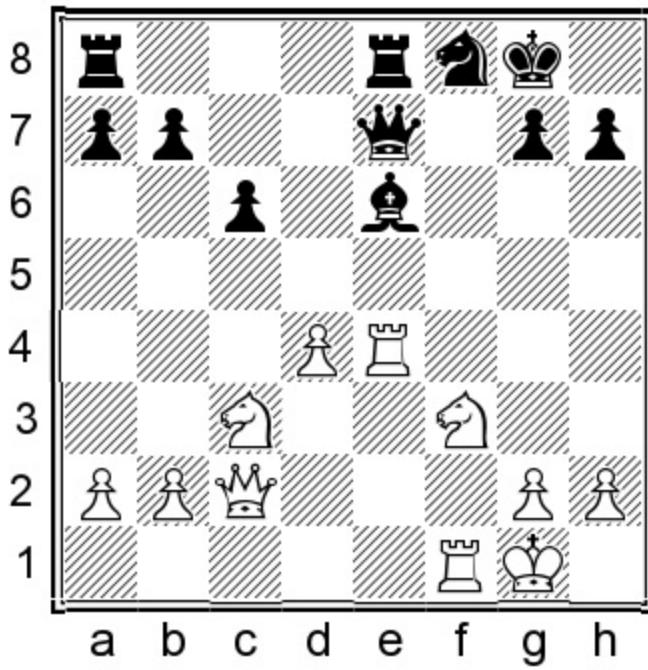
### **12.♗xe7 ♜xe7 13.♗xe4 dxe4 14.♗d2**

Now we can appreciate the idea of White's plan: to force the weakening advance 14...f5 (since 14...♗f5 fails to 15.f3) and then open the centre, thus achieving active play.

### **14...f5**

In the event of 14...b6 15.♗a4 b5 16.♗c2 (16.♗a5!? f5 17.a4) 16...b4 17.♗e2 ♜a6 18.♗b3 ♜d3 19.♗d2 ♜e6 20.♗c1, the weakness of the ♜c6 ensures White the better game, Chekhov-Geller, Moscow 1982.

### **15.f3 exf3 16.♗xf3 ♜e6 17.e4 fxe4 18.♗xe4**



### **18...h6**

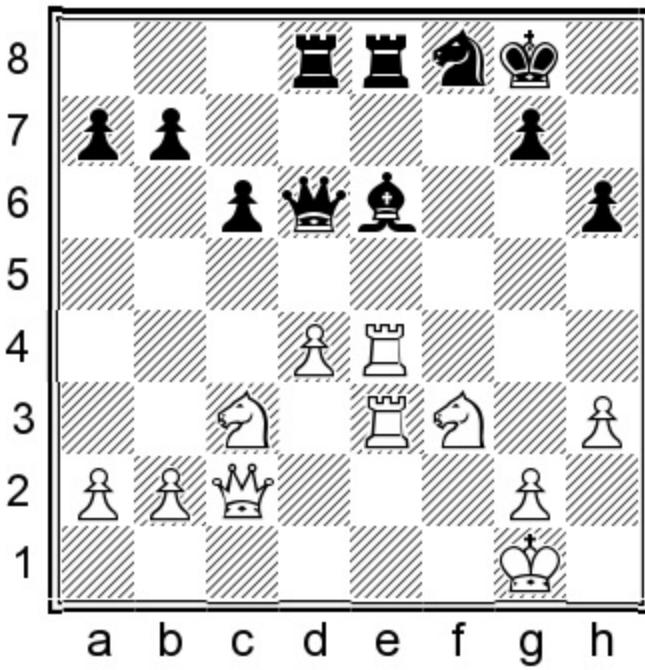
The main alternative is 18... $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19. $\mathbb{E}e5$  h6 20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}b4$ ?! (20... $\mathbb{W}c7$ !) 21.a3  $\mathbb{W}c4$  22. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ?? (22...b6! 23. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  leads to equality) 23.b3!  $\mathbb{W}xb3$ ? (consuming the ‘poisoned’ pawn; resistance was still possible with 23... $\mathbb{W}d3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}c3$ , although 25. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  wins a pawn) 24. $\mathbb{Q}fd2$   $\mathbb{W}a2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  1-0 Marshall-Rubinstein, Moscow 1925.

The fact that this position is absolutely equal is confirmed by Stockfish, which indicates that in addition to the two moves given above, including the move in the game, there are at least six (!) other moves leading to equality, i.e. all the moves that make any sense.

### **19. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$ 20.h3**

Among several options, Jussupow chooses this waiting move. White gained an advantage in the game Prohaszka-Baumegger, Hungary tt 2015, after 20. $\mathbb{E}1e3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  22.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ?! (22... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ! maintained equality, as 23. $\mathbb{E}xe6$ ?? fails to 23... $\mathbb{E}xe6$  24. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ) 23. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  cxd5 25. $\mathbb{E}g4$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  26. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  27. $\mathbb{W}f2$ .

### **20... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 21. $\mathbb{E}1e3$**



**21...♝f7!?**

Kramnik decides to sacrifice a pawn for the sake of exchanging some pieces, reckoning that he will gain sufficient counterplay in view of the weak ♘d4. Among various options, 21...♝e7!? deserved attention, e.g. 22.♛e2 ♜de8 23.♝h4 ♜f7 24.♛e1 b6 25.♝f3 ♜fe7, with the idea of exchanging rooks after ...♝f8-g6 and ...♜e6-f7, which practically leads to a repetition of moves with 26.♝h4 ♜f7.

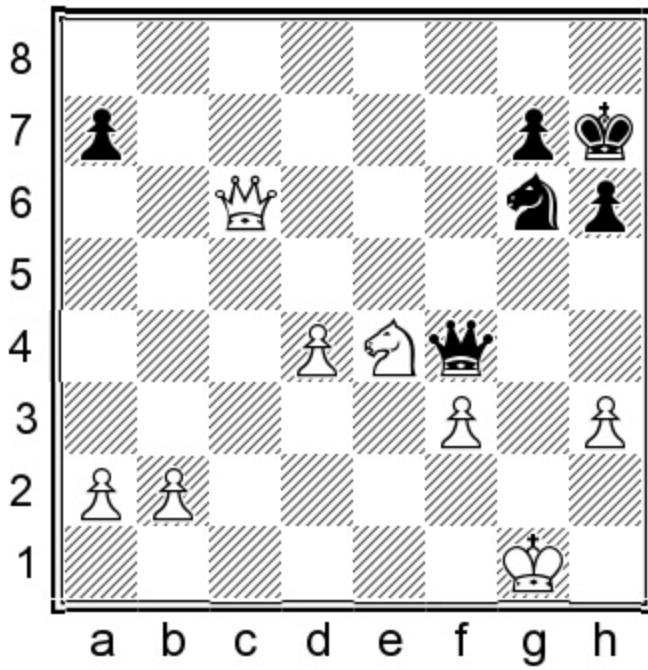
**22.♜xe8 ♜xe8 23.♜xe8 ♜xe8 24.♝b3+ ♛h7**

24...♝e6? would be misguided, in view of 25.♝xb7 ♜e3+ 26.♔h1 and White has a healthy extra pawn; however Black could keep the balance with 24...♝e6!? 25.♝e4 ♜d5 26.♝xd5 cxd5 27.♝d6 ♜c6 28.♝f2 a5 29.♝e3 ♜f8.

**25.♝xb7 ♜h5 26.♝e4! ♜f4 27.♝xc6??**

After this Black has sufficient compensation for the pawn. His task would have been more complicated in the event of 27.♝ed2! ♜e6! (27...♝xf3?! 28.♝xf3 ♜c1+ 29.♔h2 ♜e6 30.♝f7, with a clear advantage to White) 28.♝d7 ♜xf3 29.♝xf3 ♜g5 30.♝xc6 ♜xf3+ 31.♝xf3 ♜xd4+, with an extra pawn; Stockfish considers that Black can hold this queen ending, although to a human player that seems far from clear.

**27...♝xf3 28.gxf3 ♜g6**



Despite being two pawns down, Black has very good drawing chances, due to the weakened defences of the enemy king. Engine analysis at a deep level confirms this human evaluation and gives 0.00.

**29.♕f2**

Black also maintains equality after 29.♕f2 ♜h2+ 30.♔e3 ♜xb2.

**29...♝xd4 30.♝c2 ♜d5 31.f4 ♜f3!**

The simplest; Kramnik enters a forced line leading to an inevitable draw.

**32.f5 ♜f4 33.f6+ ♜g8 34.♝c4+**

The exchange of queens leads to a slightly better ending for Black: 34.♝b3+?! ♜xb3 35.axb3 gxf6.

**34...♜h7 35.♝c2+ ♜g8 36.♝c4+ ♜h7 ½-½**

Now we shall see the plan of central advance via a different move-order.

Game 45  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Magnus Carlsen** 2772  
**Dmitry Jakovenko** 2742  
Nanjing 2009 (10)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♜e7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f4 c6 6.♝c2**

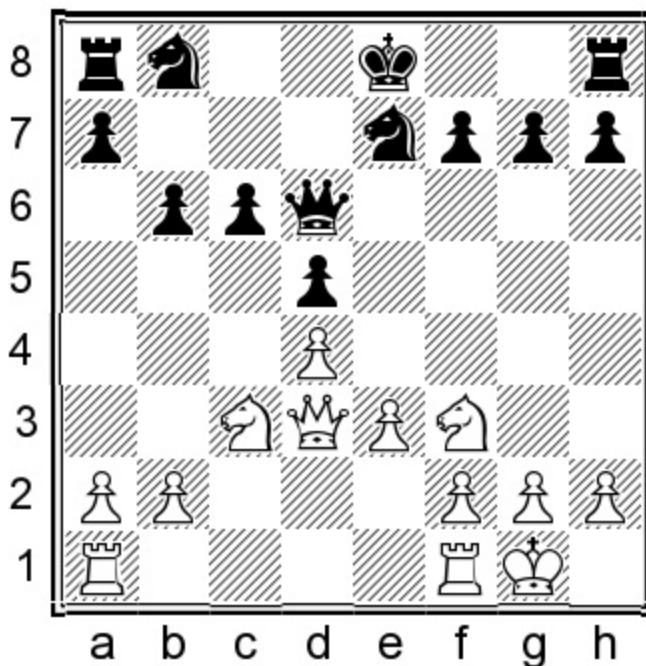
The most popular continuation here is 6.e3 ♜f5 7.g4!?, the plan of attack introduced by Botvinnik in

his match against Petrosian, Moscow 1963; we shall analyse this continuation further on.

**6... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  8.e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6**

Since it is difficult to develop the  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  along the c8-h3 diagonal, Black wants to exchange the  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  in another way. After 9...g6 10.f3!?  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  0-0 12.0-0 c5 13. $\mathbb{W}d2$  a6 14. $\mathbb{E}ad1$  cxd4 15.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16.g4, White had prevented this exchange, gaining a slight advantage, in Kasparov-Karpov, Valencia 2009.

**10. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  11.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  12. $\mathbb{W}xd3$**



**12... $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$**

An error which allows Carlsen to exploit the fact that the black king is still in the centre. It was better to play 12...0-0, e.g. 13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (a good alternative is 13.e4!? dxе4 14. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  16. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ ) 13... $\mathbb{W}g6$  14. $\mathbb{W}xg6$  hxg6 15. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f6, with chances for both sides.

**13.e4! 0-0**

13...dxе4? leads to a big advantage for White after 14. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  (14... $\mathbb{W}e6?$  15. $\mathbb{W}a3!$  0-0 16. $\mathbb{Q}fg5$ , winning) 15. $\mathbb{W}a3!$ .

**14.e5**

Gaining a space advantage. The next step now is to mobilize the  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ .

**14... $\mathbb{W}e6$  15. $\mathbb{E}ae1$   $\mathbb{E}fe8?!$**

Although it seems risky, in reality 15...f6! was the best option, e.g. 16.exf6  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  (18... $\mathbb{Q}f7!?$ ) 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}af8$ , with good possibilities of stifling White's initiative.

## 16. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$

Making way for the  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ .

## 16... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

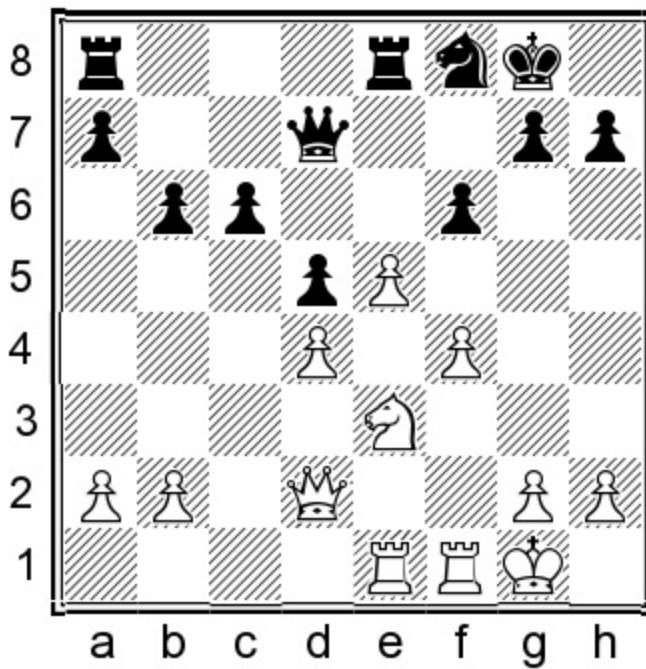
In the event of 16...f5 17.f4 a6 (17...c5? 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ) 18. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  c5 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  g6 20. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  (20...h6 21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ , followed by 23.g4) 21.g4! White breaks the blockade.

Once again, 16...f6!? deserved attention, e.g. 17. $\mathbb{W}g3$  (17.f4  $\mathbb{W}g4!$ ) 17...fxe5 18.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  20.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

## 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$ $\mathbb{W}xg6$ 18. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 19.f4 $\mathbb{W}f5?$

This obvious move is in reality a practically decisive error. Instead, 19...f5 20.h3  $\mathbb{W}f7$  21.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  was correct, with a somewhat inferior but defensible position.

## 20. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$



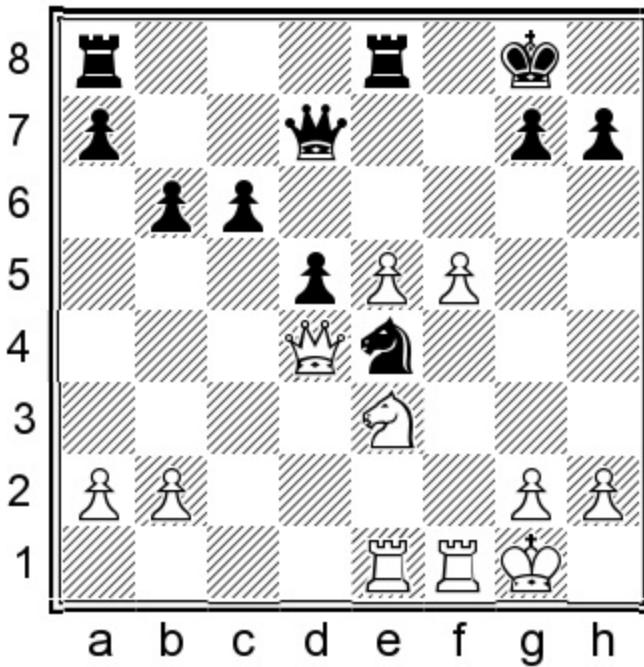
## 22. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

Threatening  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ -f5-d6. 'A small advantage in the opening kept gradually growing and growing' – Carlsen. It is symptomatic that the engine already gives White an advantage of almost 2 points.

**22...fxe5 23.dxe5!**

Better than 23.fxe5?! ♜e6 24.♗f5 ♜f8.

**23...♜e6 24.♗f5 ♜c5 25.♝d4 ♜e4**



**26.♗xd5!**

Winning a pawn, although even stronger was 26.f6! ♜e6 27.♗f5 (27.♗g4!?) 27...c5 28.♝d3 ♜xe5 29.♜xe4 ♜xe4 30.f7+! ♔h8 31.♗g3, with a decisive advantage.

**26...♝xd5**

Here 26...♝c5!? would have required much greater effort from Carlsen, e.g. 27.f6! (27.b4?! ♜xd5) 27...♜ed8 28.f7+ ♔f8 29.e6 ♜xe6 30.♝b4+ c5 31.♝h4 ♜xd5 32.♝xh7 ♔e7 33.♝f5 ♜d4+ 34.♝f2 ♜d6 35.♝e4 ♜d1+ 36.♝f1 ♜d3 37.f8=♝+, winning.

**27.♝xe4 ♜ad8 28.e6 ♜xe4 29.♝xe4 ♜d6**

Equally hopeless was 29...♜d2 30.g4 ♜xb2 31.g5 ♜b5 32.♔h1 ♔f8 33.♔h4! ♔g8 34.f6.

**30.g4 ♔f8 31.g5 ♔e7 32.♔g2 ♜d5 33.♔g3 ♔d6 34.h4 c5 35.f6 gxf6 36.gxf6 ♜d3+ 37.♔h2 ♜d2+ 38.♔h1 1-0**

## 2.4. Plan C: kingside attack with both sides castled on the kingside

This plan for White can take two forms. The first is based on the advance f2-f4 and is sometimes accompanied with the e3-e4 break. The second is characterized by the advances g2-g4 and h2-h4.

Game 46  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Nikolay Riumin**  
**Ilya Kan**  
Moscow 1936 (8)

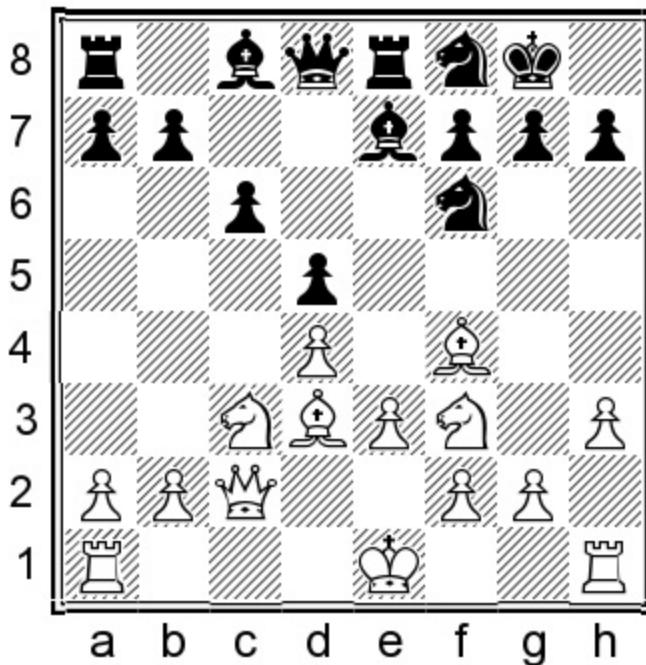
**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$**

After this move the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  often goes to f4.

**5.cxd5 exd5 6. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ ? c6 7.e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

The main alternative is 7... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ , e.g. 8. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (8. $\mathbb{Q}d3!?$ ) 8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  10. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  11.h3 g6 12. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (12.g4!?) 12... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  13. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , with chances for both sides, Wojtaszek-Y.Vovk, Poland tt 2017; Stockfish also recommends several lines involving the fianchetto of the  $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , e.g. 7... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  g6 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  10.h3 0-0 11.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ .

**8. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  10.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$**



**11. $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

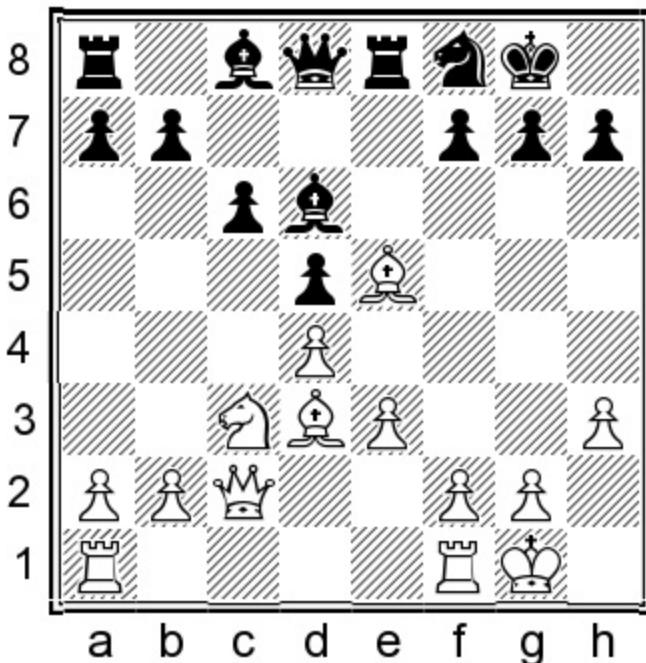
This move indicates that White has renounced the minority attack. Here both kingside and queenside

castling for White have their supporters, although the most common is 11.0-0, e.g. 11... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (the engine analyses 11...g6 12. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  15.b4 a5 16.bxa5  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  17.a4, giving White a clear advantage) 12. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15.b4, and White's position is the more promising, Carlsen-Mamedyarov, Moscow 2019.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}6d7$

In the event of 11... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  12.0-0-0-0!? (12.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ) 12... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (12...c5?! 13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ !) 13. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  h $x$ g6 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ , the white position offers the better prospects; the best way to equalize seems to be 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  c5! 13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  14.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  15.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}fe4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ .

### 12.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$



### 14.f4

'Black perhaps underestimated this move, which gives his opponent excellent chances of attack. The backward  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  constitutes, of course, a vulnerable point in White's position, but this weakness is not easy for Black to exploit, whereas the impending white pawn storm on the kingside is a real threat' – Rumin. The engine considers that the classical plan of the minority attack leads to the better game for White, e.g. 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  15.a3 (15. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  16.f4  $\mathbb{W}d6$  17. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ? (17...f5!) 18.e4!, with a clear advantage, Botvinnik-Byvshev, Moscow 1952) 15... $\mathbb{W}h6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17.b4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  19.a4.

### 14...f6

A good alternative was 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ !? 15.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17.g4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  18.bxc3 b6 19. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  c5 20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  c4.

**15.♕xd6 ♕xd6 16.♖f3 ♕e6 17.♔h1 ♕e7**

Doubling rooks on the e-file is an obvious plan, but perhaps not the best. Instead, 17...♖ac8 deserved consideration, e.g. 18.♗f2 b5 19.♗g1 b4 20.♗a4 ♗d7, with counterplay on the queenside.

**18.♗g1 ♕ae8 19.g4 ♗f7?!**

Here 19...♗d7! was better, e.g. 20.♗gg3?!? (20.♗f2 f5! (20...♗e6!?) 21.♗fg3 (21.gxf5?! ♗f6 22.♗g5 h6) 21...fxg4 22.hxg4 c5 23.g5 cxd4 24.exd4 g6, with chances for both sides) 20...♔h8 21.f5 c5 22.♗f2 c4 23.♗f1 b5, with equal chances.

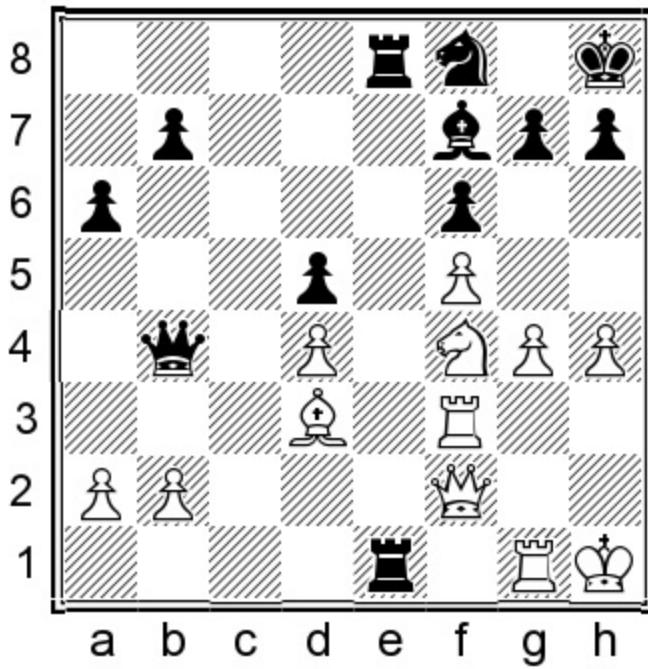
**20.♗f2 ♔h8 21.h4 a6 22.f5 c5**

Too late; White can now ignore the enemy counterplay.

**23.♗e2 cxd4 24.exd4 ♗b4 25.♗f4**

White's threats are serious, so Black seeks simplification:

**25...♖e1**



**26.♗fg3?!**

The secret of this position is that the exchange of queens will give White an overwhelming advantage. However, Rumin reaches this conclusion later.

Here 26.g5! was correct and after 26...♗xg1+ 27.♔xg1 ♗e1+ (27...♗d7!?) 28.♗xe1 ♗xe1+ 29.♔f2 ♗a1 30.g6 ♗e8 31.♗e3 ♗c6 32.♗e7! ♗xa2 33.♗f7, Black's position is desperate.

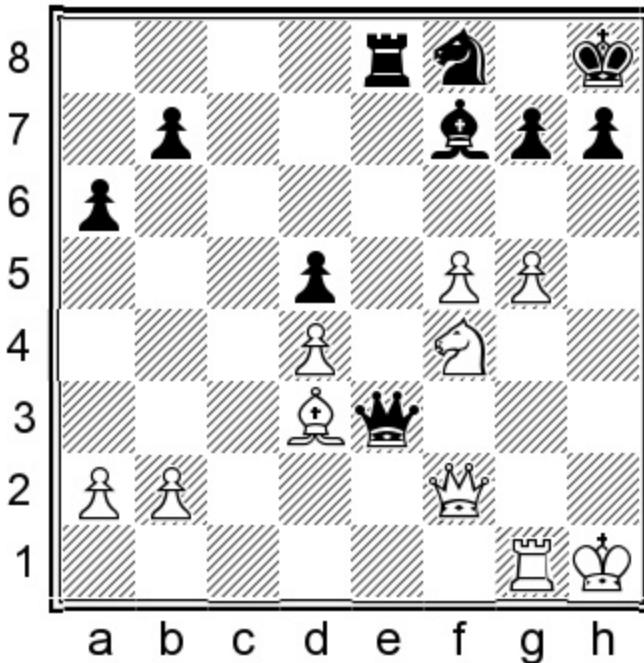
**26...♝xg1+ 27.♝xg1?!**

27.♔xg1! was better.

**27...♛e7?!**

27...h6! 28.♝c1 ♔g8 29.♔g2 ♛d6 would have led to a defensible position for Black.

**28.g5! fxg5 29.hxg5 ♛e3**



Black has achieved his aim, but...

**30.♛xe3!**

The most practical decision, because in the ensuing endgame Black is left without any counterplay. Instead, 30.♛h4!? would have led to more complicated play, although it would still have been in White's favour, e.g. 30...♜e4 31.♝xe4 ♛xe4+ 32.♔h2 ♛xf5 33.g6 ♔g8 34.gxh7 ♔xh7 35.♛g5.

**30...♜xe3 31.♝g2 ♜e8 32.♝f2 ♜e7 33.♝c1**

There was an easier win with 33.♝xd5! ♜d7 34.♝c1 ♜xd5 35.♝c8 ♔g8 36.♝xe8 ♔f7 37.♝b8.

**33...♜c6 34.♝f3!**

Stronger than 34.♝xa6?! ♜e4 35.♝e2 ♜g4 36.♝d3 ♜xg5.

**34...♝f7 35.♝g4 ♜c7 36.♝e6 ♜xe6**

Equally hopeless was 36...♜c8 37.♝f4 ♔g8 38.b4 ♔f7 39.a4! ♜e8 (39...♜xe6+ 40.fxe6+ ♔e7

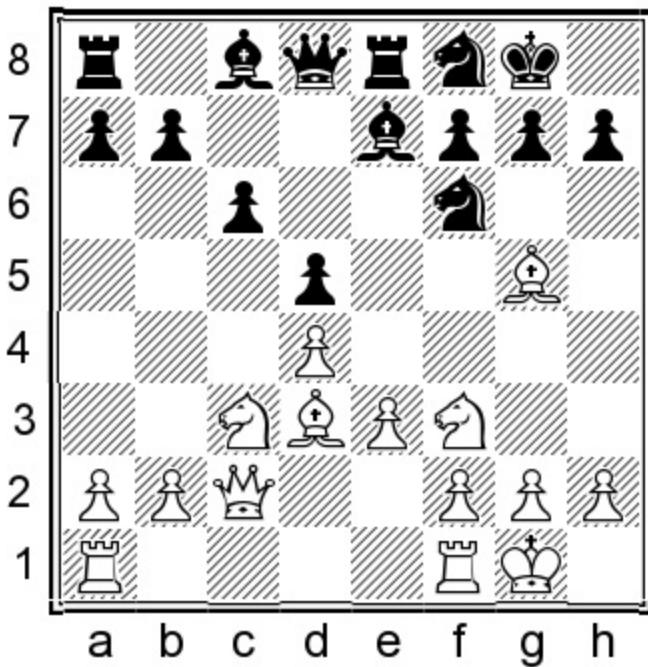
(40... $\mathbb{Q}xe6??$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$ ) 41. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 40.b5.

**37.fxe6  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  g6 40. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  1-0**

In the following model game, the white plan with f2-f4 accompanies the central advance e3-e4.

Game 47  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Tigran Petrosian 2605**  
**Alexander Beliavsky 2570**  
Moscow ch-URS 1983 (8)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.cxd5 exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6.e3 0-0 7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  9.0-0 c6  
10. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$**



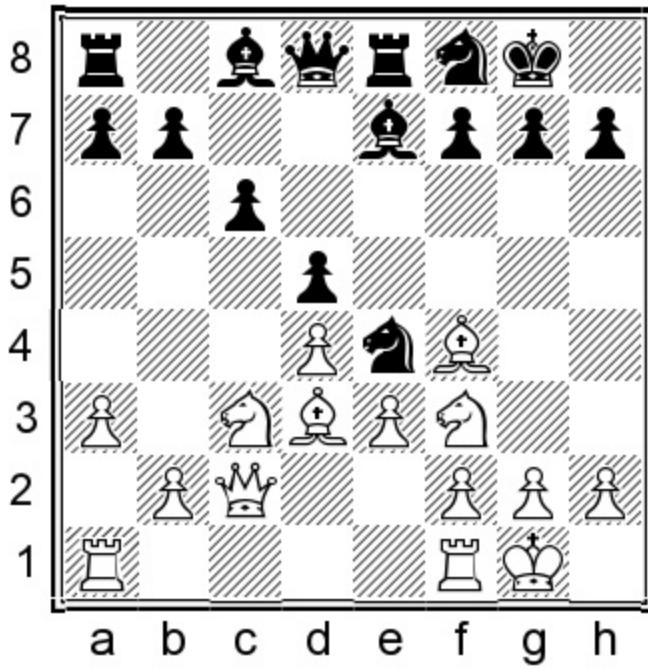
**11.a3!?**

This is only the sixth most popular move in the position, although one not without venom, as this game demonstrates. The most common move at the present time is 11.h3!?, e.g. 11... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (Stockfish analyses 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  14. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}8d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  and considers that White is better) 12. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xe7$  13.b4  $\mathbb{W}d6$  14.b5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15.bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  16. $\mathbb{E}fc1$ , with the better game for White, Anton Guijarro-Henriquez Villagra, Linares 2019.

**11... $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

A very common response, although of course there are several alternatives, e.g. 11... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  13.b4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  hxg6.

**12.♕f4**



**12...♝g5!?**

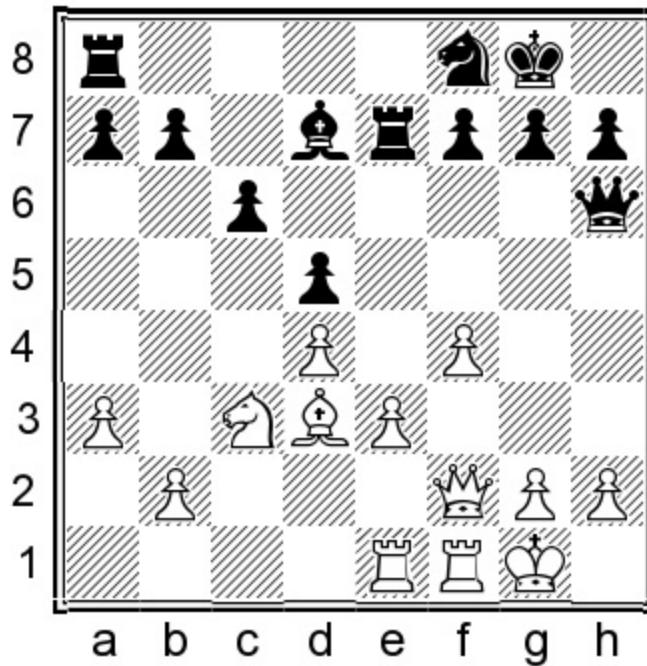
An interesting move, which the engine considers one of the best. Instead, 12...f5 is more usual, e.g. 13.♗e5 ♘g6 (13...♝e6!? 14.♗g3 ♕f6) 14.♗xg6 hxg6 15.f3 ♘g5 16.♗h1 ♘d6 17.♗xd6 ♗xd6, with equal play, Gulko-Filippov, Elista 1998. I can recommend a line of which there are no examples in Megabase: 12...♝f5!? 13.♗xe4 (13.♗xe4!? dx4 14.♗d2 ♘g6 15.♗dxe4 ♘e6 16.♗ad1 ♘xf4 17.exf4 ♗c7 18.g3 ♗ad8, and Black appears to have good compensation for the pawn) 13...dx4 14.♗xe4 ♘xe4 15.♗xe4 ♘xa3, and White's advantage is minimal.

**13.♗xg5**

A good alternative is 13.♗e5!? e.g. 13...g6 14.♗ae1 ♘ge6 15.♗g3 ♘g7 16.f3 ♘f5 17.♗f2 ♘e6 18.♗h1 ♘d6 19.e4, with a space advantage for White.

**13...♞xg5 14.♞xg5 ♗xg5 15.♗ae1 ♘d7 16.f4 ♗h6 17.♗f2 ♘e7?**

It was necessary to block the ♘f4, although in that case too it seems that White would have slightly the better prospects by transferring his knight to f3, in order to exploit the weakness on e5: 17...f5 18.♗b1! b6! (18...♘e6?! 19.♗d2 ♘d7 20.♗f3 ♗f6 21.♗e5) 19.♗d2 c5 20.♗f3 c4, seeking counterplay on the queenside.

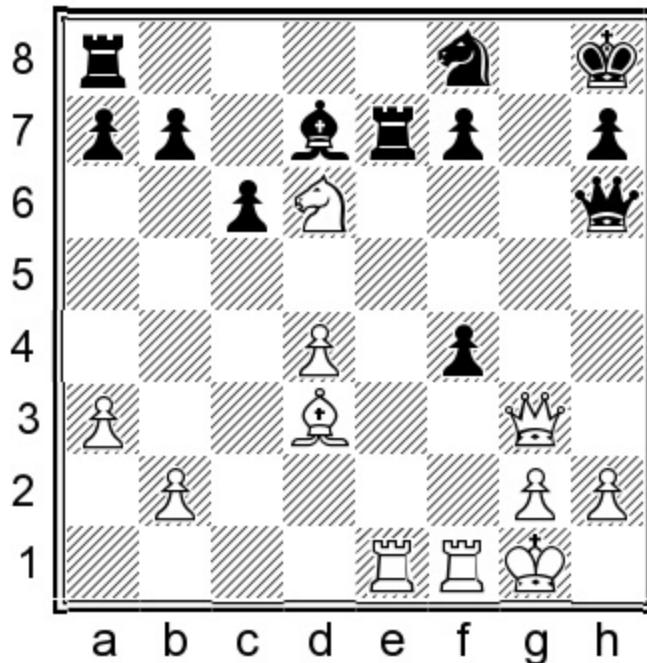


**18.f5! g6 19.e4! dxe4 20.♘xe4**

Even stronger was 20.♗g3! ♖xf5 (20...e3 21.♘e4) 21.♖xf5 ♗g7 22.♖f2 ♗xd4 23.♖xe4 ♗xe4 24.♘xe4, and Black has insufficient compensation for the piece.

**20...gxf5 21.♗g3+ ♔h8 22.♘d6 f4**

Beliavsky tries put out the fire by tactical means, but it is already too late.



**23.♖xe7! ♗xd6**

23...fxg3?? loses on the spot to 24.♕xf7+ ♔g7 25.♕xh6+.

**24.♖xd7!**

White could also retain the advantage with 24.♗h4!? ♗xd4+ 25.♘f2 ♔e6 26.♗c2 ♗xb2 27.h3.

**24...♗xd7 25.♗xf4 ♕d8**

One should not be deceived by the fact that material is equal and White has an isolated pawn; the most important factor here is the weakness of the black king's defences.

**26.♗f6+ ♔g8 27.♔h1 ♗xd4 28.♗xf7+ ♔h8 29.♗e7! ♔g6 30.♗xg6 hxg6 31.h3 b5 32.♗f6! ♕g8 33.♗xc6**

More accurate would have been 33.♗d6! ♗g7 34.♗h4+ ♗h7 35.♗g5 c5 36.♗e6 b4 37.♗e7 ♕g7 38.♗e4.

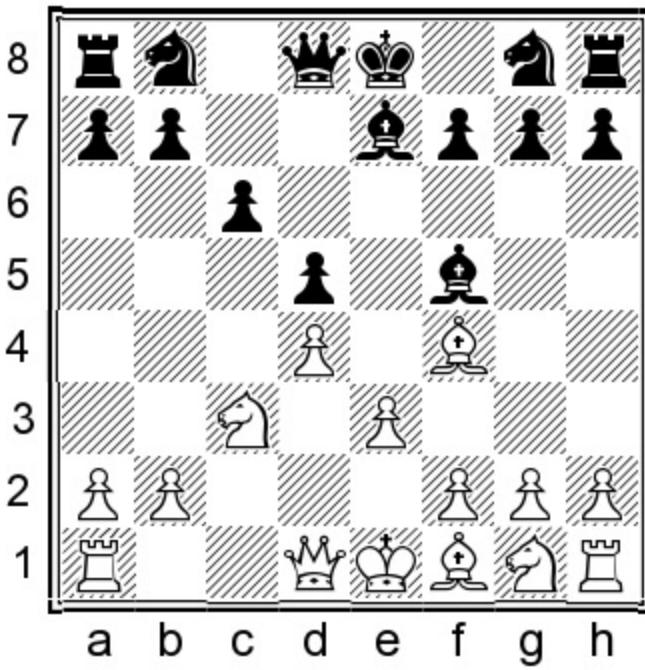
**33...♗g7 34.♗g5 ♔h7 35.♔h2 b4 36.♗f6 bxa3 37.bxa3 ♗c4 38.♗f4 ♗c7 39.♗h4+ ♔g8 40.♗g3 a5 41.a4 ♗b6 1-0**

It is understandable that Beliavsky did not relish testing the famous technique of the 9th World Champion. On seeing this game, handled so energetically by Petrosian, it is hard to believe that he had only one more year left to live...

The next game shows White's second method of kingside attack, involving the advance g2-g4.

Game 48  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Aleksandr Lenderman** 2618  
**Fabiano Caruana** 2795  
St Louis ch-USA 2016 (9)

**1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♔e7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f4 c6 6.e3 ♘f5**



**7.g4!?**

The plan introduced into master practice in the Botvinnik-Petrosian match, Moscow 1963. The main alternative is 7.♗ge2!?, e.g. 7...♝d7 8.♗g3 ♛g6 9.h4 h5 10.♗d3 ♜xd3 11.♘xd3 g6 12.e4 ♗gf6 (12...dxe4 13.♗gxe4 ♗gf6 14.♗d6+, with the better game for White, Vitiugov-Tan Zhongyi, Gibraltar 2019) 13.e5 ♗h7?! (13...♝g8! 14.e6 ♗f8) 14.e6 ♗df8 15.exf7+ ♔xf7 16.♗e5, with advantage to White, Duda-Harikrishna, chess.com 2020.

**7...♛e6 8.h4**

Botvinnik himself favoured 8.h3!?: the stem game of the whole variation continued 8...♝f6 (a modern example is 8...♝d7 9.♗d3 h5 10.gxh5 ♗df6 11.h6 ♗xh6 12.♘c2 ♘d7 13.♗f3 ♛f5 14.♗e5, with chances for both sides, Radjabov-Giri, Wijk aan Zee 2019) 9.♗d3 c5 10.♗f3 ♗c6 11.♗f1 0-0 12.♗g2 cxd4 13.♗xd4 ♗xd4 14.exd4 ♗d7 15.♘c2 ♗f6 16.f3, with a slight advantage to White, Botvinnik-Petrosian, Moscow 1963.

**8...♝d7 9.g5**

Here the advance of another pawn, 9.h5!?, has more supporters and better statistics, e.g. 9...♝h6 10.♗e2 ♗b6 11.b3 ♛b4 12.♗c1 f6 13.f3 ♗f7 14.♗d3 ♗g5 15.♗f2, and White is slightly better, Ivanchuk-Bruzon, Varadero 2016.

**9...h6!?**

This aggressive move seems better than the moves of the ♗d7 to b6 and f8.

**10.g6 f5!?**

10...fxg6 11.♗d3 ♗f8 12.♗f3 ♗g4! (12...♗f5?! 13.♗e5 ♗f6 14.♗g1, with good compensation for the pawn, Caruana-Melkumyan, Moscow 2012) 13.♗g1 ♗f6 14.♗g3? (14.♘c2 ♘xf3 15.♗xg6+ leads to equality) 14...g5! with advantage to Black, So-Akopian, St Louis 2017.

### 11.♗g3

Stockfish recommends 11.♘b3!? ♗b6 12.h5 ♗f6 13.♗f3 ♗e4 14.♗g2 a5 15.♘c2 ♗xc3 16.bxc3 ♗c4 17.♗f1 a4 18.♗d3 0-0 19.♗h3 ♘d6 20.♗f1, considering White to be better. In the following game a young Russian talent carried out an interesting plan: 11.h5!? ♗gf6 12.f3 0-0 13.♗ge2 ♗b6 14.b3 a5 15.a4 ♘b4 16.♗f2 with advantage to White, Triapishko-Keinanen, St Petersburg 2019.

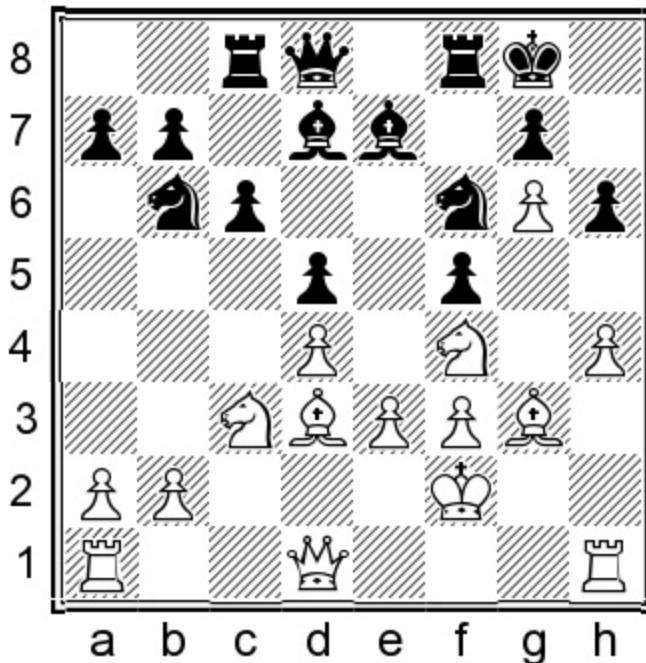
### 11...♗gf6 12.♗h3 ♗b6 13.♗f4

Here White could continue in a similar manner to Triapishko's plan: 13.h5 0-0 14.♗f4 ♘d7 15.♗d3 ♗e4 16.♗f4 ♗c4 17.♗c1 ♘g5 18.b3, with the better game for White.

### 13...♘d7 14.f3??!

It was better to play 14.♗g2! 0-0 15.h5, e.g. 15...♗c4 (or 15...c5 16.♗e2 cxd4 17.♘xd4 ♗e4 18.♗h4 ♘xh4 19.♗xh4) 16.♘xc4 dxc4 17.♗e5 ♗g4 18.♗f4 b5 19.f3, with a slight advantage to White.

### 14...0-0 15.♗f2 ♘c8 16.♗d3



### 16...c5!

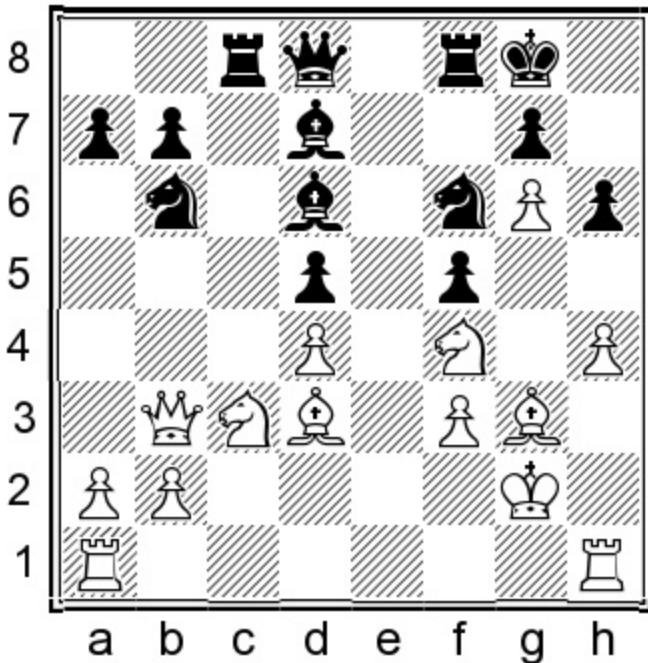
Increasing the tension, which probably induced an error from the opponent.

**17.♘g2?**

It was necessary to play 17.♘ce2!, with the idea of capturing on d4 with the knight, e.g. 17...♞c4 (17...♝e8 18.♝c1 ♞h8 19.♝e1 cxd4 20.♝xd4 ♘c4 21.b3 ♘b2 22.♝e2 ♘xd3+ 23.♝xd3) 18.♝xc4 dxc4 19.d5 ♘d6 20.a4! ♝e7 21.♝d2, with equal play.

**17...cxd4 18.exd4 ♘d6 19.♝b3?**

The lesser of the evils would have been 19.♝d2 ♘c4! (in the event of 19...♞xf4 20.♞xf4 ♝e8 21.h5 ♘xh5! 22.♞e5 ♜c6 23.♝f2, White has enough compensation for the pawn) 20.♞xc4 dxc4 21.♝he1 b5 22.a3 a5 23.d5 b4 24.axb4 axb4 25.♘ce2 ♜e8 26.♝e6 ♜b6 27.♝d4, and White can still resist.



**19...♝h8!?**

An understandable precaution, although Black could already win with 19...♝e4! 20.fxe4 (or 20.♜ae1 ♘xg3 21.♝xg3 ♜e8 22.♝d1 ♜f6) 20...♞xf4 21.♞xf4 fxe4 22.♞xe4 ♜xf4.

**20.♞b5?!**

The text move loses by force. Equally hopeless, but more tenacious, was 20.♜af1!? ♜xf4 21.♞xf4 ♘h5 22.♞e5 f4 23.♜e1 ♜c6 24.♝f2.

**20...♞xf4! 21.♞xf4 ♘h5 22.♞e5 ♜xb5 23.♝xb5 ♘c4 24.♜ae1 ♘xe5 25.♜xe5 ♜f6 26.♝f2 ♜xg6**

The game is decided.

**27.♜g1 ♜f6 28.♜h1 ♘f4 29.♝e3 ♘g6 30.♜xd5 ♘xh4 31.♜d7 ♜g5+ 32.♝d3 ♘xf3 33.♜d1 ♜g2**

34.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}ed8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4+$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g1+$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Mate.

## 2.5. Plan D: kingside attack with opposite-side castling

Under this heading we usually think of positions where White has castled on the queenside and Black on the kingside. As we know, often in such positions a very sharp struggle ensues, demanding accurate calculation and rich imagination from both players.

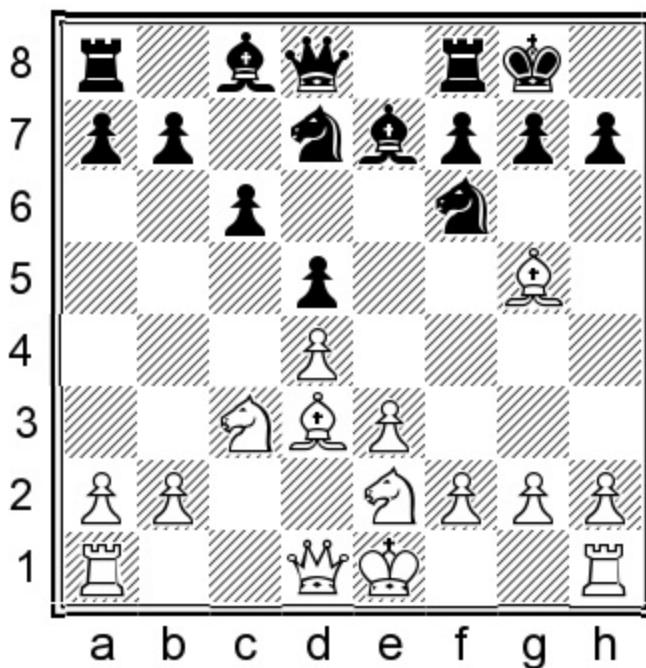
I want to introduce this theme with a game by my old friend GM Boris Gulko, the only player to gain the titles of champion both of the former USSR and the USA. Furthermore, Gulko has an outstanding score against the legendary Garry Kasparov: 3-1 (!). I think that Gulko's view of chess and style of play are very similar to Mikhail Tal's, and Boris confirms this:

'When you create complications it is unnecessary to try to see all possible variations, because it is impossible to see all the subtleties anyway. It is enough to see a little more than your opponent. Great players like Tal used this technique a lot. He created messy, complicated positions, which in the final analysis were sometimes favourable to his opponent, but he saw much more in the position'.

The following game falls exactly into this category.

Game 49  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Boris Gulko** 2590  
**Paul van der Sterren** 2475  
Amsterdam 1988

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6.e3 0-0 7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c6 8. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$



9. $\mathbb{Q}g3!?$

Gulko studied a lot of classical games and in particular the matches for the World Championship. His

last move was played by Alekhine in the 32nd game of his match against Capablanca. It should be said that this move has one obvious drawback: the ♜g3 blocks the ♜g2, which usually plays an active part in the attack. Furthermore, the move in the game is connected with the offer of a piece, which cannot be captured immediately, but later this is possible. However, Boris is seeking complications, unafraid of the risks.

## 9...h6

In the above-mentioned game between the ruling World Champion and his successor, Black continued with 9...♜e8 10.h4!? ♜df6 11.♝c2 ♜e6 12.♝f5 ♜xf5 13.♝xf5 ♜d6 14.♝d3 h6 15.♝f4 (15.0-0-0!) 15...♝c8 16.g4!? ♜fe4? (16...♝xg4) 17.g5 h5 18.♝xe4 ♜xe4 19.♝xe4 dxe4 20.♝xe4, and White converted his extra pawn in Alekhine-Capablanca, Buenos Aires Wch 1927.

## 10.h4! ♜b6!

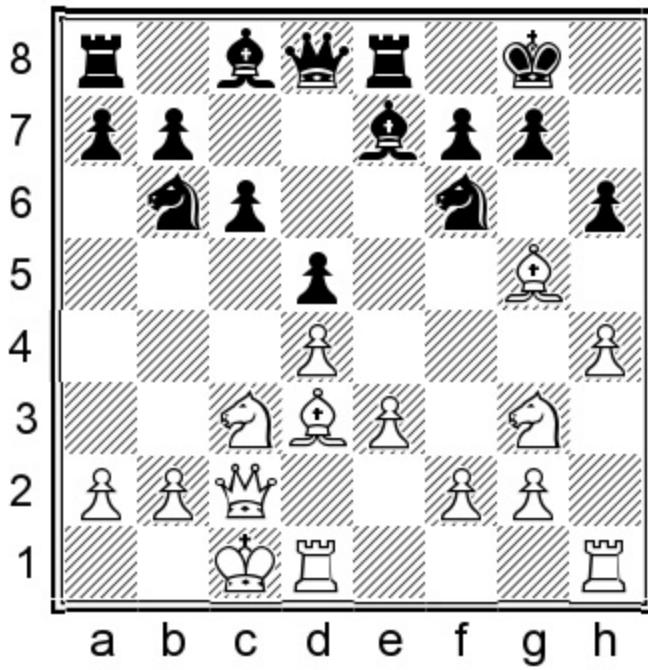
If the ♜g5 is captured, White obtains an attack for free: 10...hxg5?! 11.hxg5 g6 12.gxf6 ♜xf6 13.♝d2 ♜e8 14.0-0-0.

10...♝e8!? leads to a continuation similar to the game after 11.♝c2!? (another, quieter option is 11.♝c2 ♜f8 (11...b5!?) 12.♝f4 a5 13.♝f5 ♜b4 14.♝g3) 11...hxg5 12.hxg5 ♜e4 13.♝xe4 dxe4 14.♝xe4 ♜f8 15.♝h4 f5 16.♝h8+ ♜f7 17.♝h5.

## 11.♝c2

The following variation, involving the sacrifice of two pieces, leads to perpetual check: 11.♝h5!? ♜bd7 (11...♝c4 12.♝xf6+; 11...♝g4 12.♝xe7) 12.♝f3 ♜e8 13.♝xg7! ♜xg7 14.♝xh6+ ♜xh6 15.♝f4+ ♜g7 16.♝g5+ ♜f8 17.♝h6+ ♜g8 18.♝g5+ ♜h8 19.♝h6+.

## 11...♝e8 12.0-0-0



**12...hxg5!**

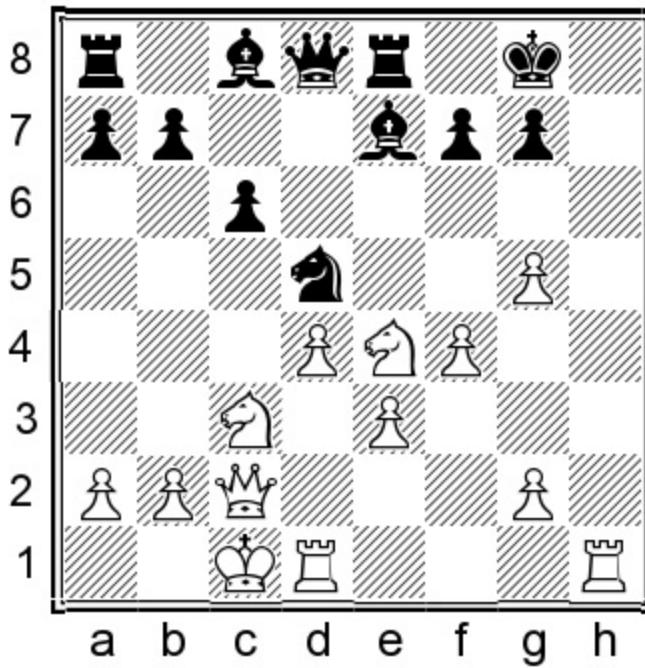
Capturing the piece is an understandable human decision. It should be said that Stockfish considers it to be the best move, although it gives a similar evaluation to 12... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  and 12... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ .

**13.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dx $e4$  15.f4!?**

Increasing the uncertainty. It was less promising to give the opponent a clear way forward with 15. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  16. $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$ . Stockfish indicates this line, which leads practically to equality: 15. $\mathbb{Q}cxe4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}dh1$  f5 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  gxf6 21. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  22. $\mathbb{W}xc4+$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}gxf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f7+$ .

**15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}gxe4$**

With the idea of transferring the queen to the kingside. Instead, 16. $\mathbb{Q}h2!?$  deserved attention, when only 16...f5! casts doubt on White's attack: (16... $\mathbb{Q}b4?$  17. $\mathbb{Q}dh1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe4+$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{W}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h7$ , with equality; 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe3??$  17. $\mathbb{Q}dh1!$  f5 18. $\mathbb{W}b3+$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  19.g6, winning) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  18.g6  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xg6$  21.g4  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ .



**16...Qxe3?!**

According to the engine, two more prudent moves, 16...f5 or 16...Bb4, were better. However, Black's move is very understandable; capturing material when you cannot see any concrete refutation is the human way. Furthermore, as we shall see, this move preserves equality.

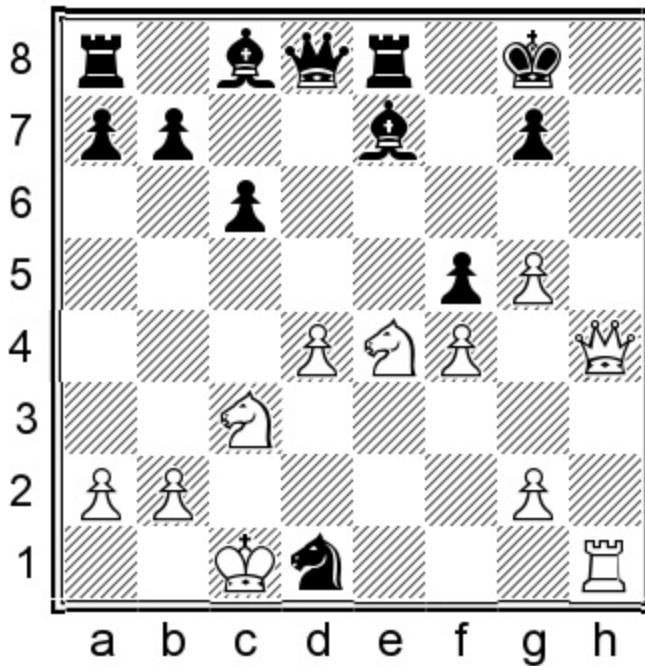
**17.Qf2 Qxd1?**

17...f5! 18.Qxe3 fxe4 keeps the balance, although it would be very difficult to calculate a mass of variations, of which this is only a sample:

A) 19.Qxe4!? Qd6 20.d5!? (20.Qh4 Qe6 21.Qh7+ Qf7 22.d5 Qg6 23.Qxg6+ Qxg6 24.d6 Qxg5 25.fxg5 Qd7, with equality) 20...Qg4 21.Qd2 cxd5 22.Qxd5 Qc6! 23.Qh7+ Qf7 24.Qh6 Qc4 25.Qg6+ Qg8 26.Qh7+, with perpetual check;

B) 19.Qh4!? Qe6 20.Qxe4! Qd7 21.g4! Qd6 22.g6!! – a spectacular move in Gulko's style – 22...Qd5 23.Qdh1 Qxf4+ 24.Qxf4 Qxh1 25.Qh2 Qf8 26.Qf4+ Qg8 (26...Qe7?? 27.Qg5+ Qd6 28.Qb5+ cxb5 29.Qc5+ Qe6 30.Qe5#) 27.Qh2 Qf8 28.Qf4+, with a repetition of moves.

**18.Qh4 f5**



**19.  $\mathbb{W}h5??!$**

White could win with 19.d5!! fxe4 20. $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  21.g6+  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22. $\mathbb{W}h5$  cxd5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  24. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  25. $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26. $\mathbb{W}xe8$ .

**19...  $\mathbb{Q}f8?$**

Black could have gained a slightly better position with 19...fxe4! 20.g6  $\mathbb{Q}h4!$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  22. $\mathbb{W}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  23.bxc3 e3 24. $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  e2 27.g4  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  28. $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  29. $\mathbb{W}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30. $\mathbb{W}xg4$ .

**20.  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}h7$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  22.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{W}e3+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  1-0**

‘After the game I analysed the position with Van der Sterren for two hours, until he stopped and said: “If I remain under attack any longer I will have a heart attack!”’ – Gulko.

It goes without saying that in opposite-side castling positions you must not only take into account your own possibilities of attack but also consider how to defend against the opponent’s threats, which is something even the best players sometimes neglect. The following game is an example of this.

Game 50  
Queen’s Gambit Declined  
**Fabiano Caruana** 2799  
**Vladimir Kramnik** 2803  
Douglas 2017 (1)

**1.c4 e6 2.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 3.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.cxd5 exd5 5.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 6.  $\mathbb{W}c2$**

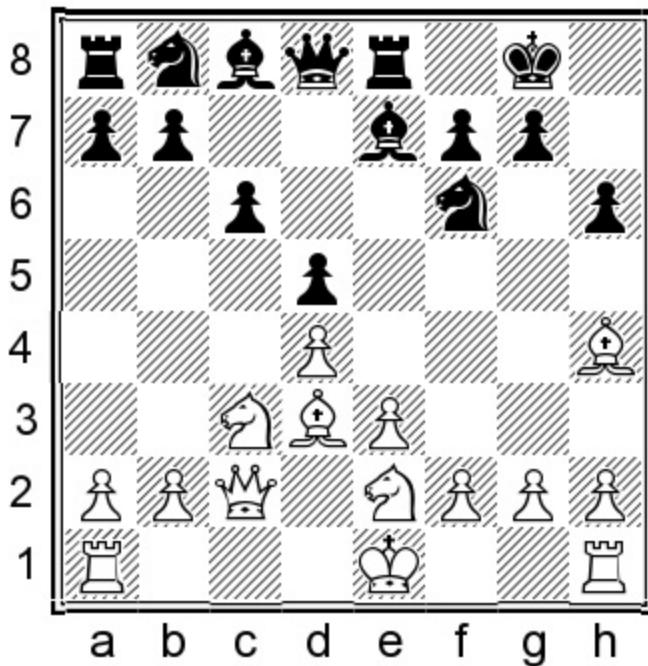
Probably to avoid the variation 6.e3 ♜f5!? (6...♜d6!?) 7.♝f3 ♜g6 8.♝xf6 ♛xf6 9.♝xf6 gxf6, which Kramnik has played more than once.

### 6...h6

Instead of the usual 6...♜e7, the text move is a small finesse on Kramnik's part.

**7.♝h4 ♜e7 8.e3 0-0 9.♝d3 ♜e8 10.♝ge2!**

Recently this move has overtaken 10.♝f3 in popularity; the main reason is that after 10...♝e4!  
11.♝xe7 ♛xe7 12.♝xe4 dxe4 13.♝d2 ♜f5 (13...f5!? 14.0-0 ♜e6 15.f3 exf3 16.♝xf3 ♜d7 17.♝ael  
♝ad8, and Stockfish gives 0.00) 14.0-0 ♜d7 15.f3 ♜f6 Black has defended the ♜e4 and all his pieces stand well.



**10...♝h5!?**

The text move explains the idea of 6...h6, without which the ♜h7 would be lost. Here 10...♝e4 is not as good as after 10.♝f3, e.g. 11.♝xe7 ♛xe7 12.♝xe4 dxe4 13.♝g3 f5 14.0-0 ♜a6 15.f3 ♜b4 16.♝d2 exf3 17.♝xf3 ♛g5 18.a3 ♜d5 19.♝xd5 cxd5 20.♝f2, and the ♜g3 is clearly better than the ♜c8, which is restricted by its own pawns, Zviagintsev-Sichinava, St Petersburg 2011.

The engine considers several alternatives to be sufficient for equality: 10...♝bd7, 10...a5, 10...♝d6 and 10...a6. However, Kramnik's move seems the most concrete, which therefore allows deeper preparation.

**11.♝xe7 ♛xe7 12.h3!?**

White delays committing his king, retaining the possibility of castling on either side, depending on

how the opponent plays. Tournament practice, confirmed by engine analysis, shows that the typical plans of the minority attack and the f2-f3 advance were also quite good, e.g. 12.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}ab1!$ ? (13.  $\mathbb{Q}ae1!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16. f3 a5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}bc5$ , with chances for both sides, Nepomniachtchi-Kramnik, Zürich 2017) 13...a5 14. a3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  15. b4 axb4 16. axb4, and the b4-b5 advance is on the agenda, Nezad-Burmakin, Dubai 2013.

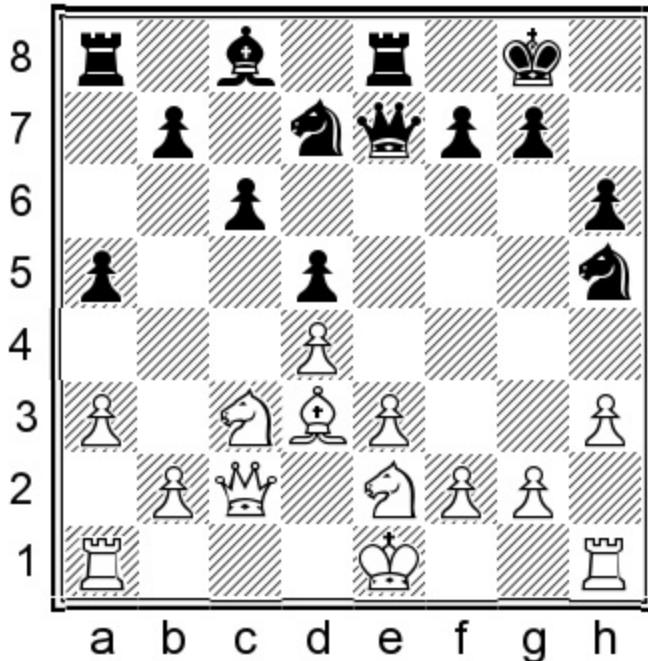
12...a5!?

Kramnik agrees to play the game of cat and mouse and makes a move that will be useful no matter where the white king is located. After 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ?! 13.g4  $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  14.0-0-0?!?  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $dxe4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ , White's prospects seem better.

13.a3

13.0-0 was perfectly playable, but Caruana has more aggressive intentions.

13...d7



14.  $\text{Qa}4!?$

White continues to play cat and mouse, since in the event of 14.0-0-0? b5! Black would be clearly ahead in the attack on ‘his’ wing.

14... ♔h4!?

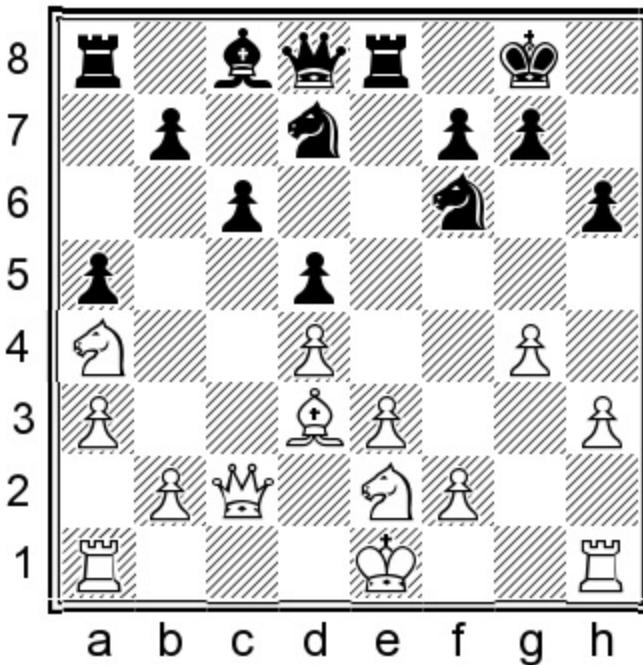
To clarify the destination of the white monarch. Perhaps 14... $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  deserved attention, so that the g2-g4 advance does not come with gain of time. Stockfish considers that several other moves also

maintain equality, but in all these lines the engine considers only kingside castling for White, e.g. 14... $\mathbb{W}g5$  15.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}df6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  17. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4+$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ .

### 15.g3

Here 15.g4!? was also good, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  (15...b5 16. $\mathbb{W}xc6!$ ? (16. $\mathbb{Q}ac3!$ ?) 16... $\mathbb{E}a6$  17. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  18.0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}xf2$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ , with some advantage to White) 16. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (16...g6 17. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ ? (17. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ ?; 17.0-0-0!?) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dx $e4$  18.0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  20. $\mathbb{E}c1$ , and White is better.

### 15... $\mathbb{W}d8$ 16.g4 $\mathbb{Q}hf6$



### 17.Qg3

Here the engine indicates that White has two other plans available: 17.Qf4!?  $\mathbb{E}b8$  18.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19. $\mathbb{E}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  21.f3 b6 22. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}be7$  24. $\mathbb{E}e2$ , preparing e3-e4, or h3-h4 and g4-g5; and 17. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g5 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , with chances for both sides.

### 17...Qf8 18.0-0-0

Finally! As Caruana himself said, his plan here was  $\mathbb{E}d1-g1$ , followed by  $\mathbb{Q}g3-f5$  and h3-h4.

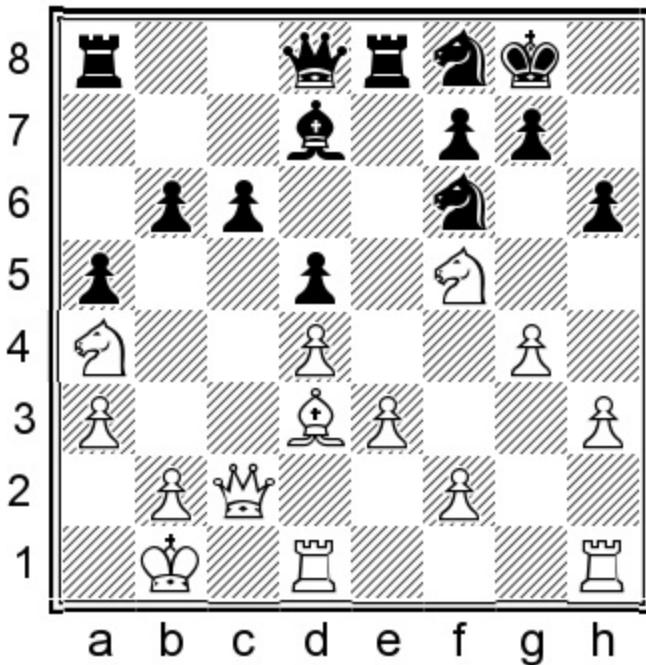
### 18...b6

Preparing the thematic break ...c6-c5. However, another plan based on the advance ...b7-b5 deserved attention: 18... $\mathbb{E}b8$  19. $\mathbb{E}hg1$   $\mathbb{Q}6d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  b5 21. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  22. $\mathbb{W}xc5$  b4, and Black is slightly better.

### 19.Qb1

Again Caruana is in no hurry, as the immediate advance yields no benefits: 19.g5? hxg5 20.h4 g4 21.h5 ♖d7 22.h6 g6??.

**19...♖d7 20.♘f5**



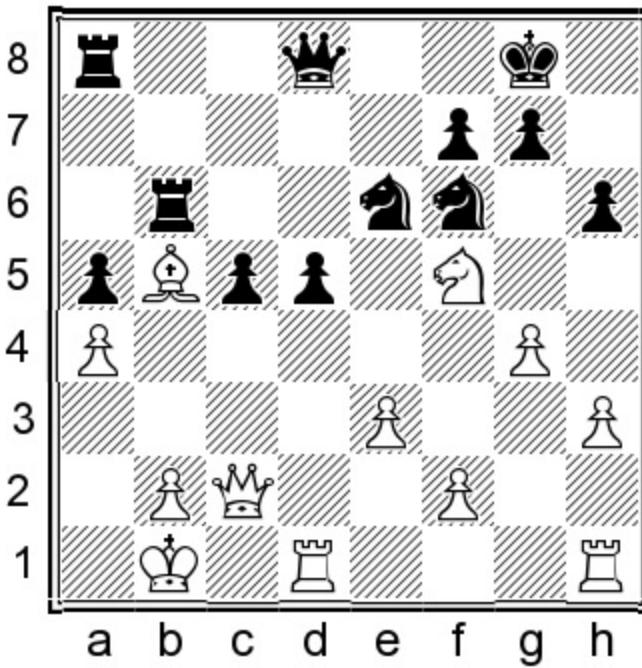
**20...c5?**

It seems that Kramnik is losing patience, overestimating his offensive against the enemy king. Here it was correct to make one more preparatory move: 20...♗b8!, e.g. 21.♗hg1 (21.h4? ♖xg4 22.♗dg1 ♖xf5 23.♖xf5 ♘f6, and the capture 24.♗xc6?? fails to 24...b5 25.♘c3 (or 25.♘c5 ♗b6) 25...♗b6 26.♗c5 ♘e6 27.♗xe6 ♗exe6, with the threat of 28...♗ec6, trapping the white queen) 21...c5 22.dxc5 (22.g5? hxg5 23.♗xg5 ♘e6 24.♗g2 c4, with advantage to Black) 22...♗xa4 23.♗xa4 bxc5, and now the move in the game, 24.♗b5??, fails to 24...♗b6.

**21.dxc5 ♗xa4 22.♗xa4 bxc5 23.♗b5!**

Blocking the enemy's line of attack. It is curious that the engine gives priority to this move only at a considerable depth of analysis.

**23...♗e6 24.♗c2 ♗b6 25.a4 ♘e6**



After safeguarding his king, White begins his attack on the enemy king:

**26.h4! ♜c7**

26...♜xg4? 27.♝xd5!.

**27.♛xc5 ♜xb5 28.axb5 ♛b8**

If 28...♝ab8?! 29.♝e7+ ♔h8 30.♝c6 ♛c8 31.♛c2 (31.♛d4!?) 31...♝b7 32.♝d4, White is slightly better.

**29.g5 ♘xb5 30.♛c2 ♜e4 31.♝e7+ ♔h8**

The human move, although the engine considers that 31...♔f8!? was more accurate.

**32.♝xd5 ♘xd5 33.♝xd5 ♛e5 34.♝d1**

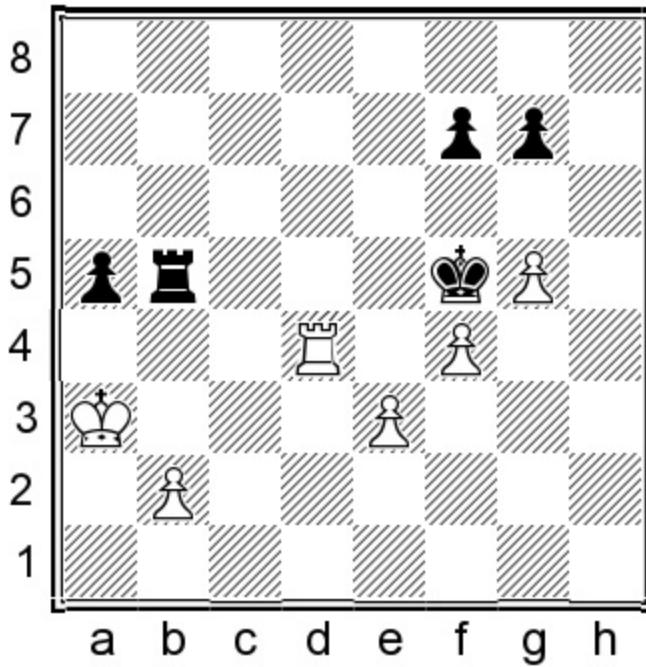
White has a healthy extra pawn and the more active pieces, so Kramnik has no alternative to seeking a draw in the rook ending.

**34...♝d8 35.♝d4 ♘xd5 36.♝xe4 ♘d1+ 37.♚a2 ♛d5+ 38.♛c4 hxg5??**

This move is an automatic reaction, made in accordance with a well-known maxim: the side that stands worse should exchange pawns. However, as the engine indicates, it would be practically impossible to realize White's extra pawn after 38...♔h7! 39.♛xd5 ♘xd5 40.gxh6 ♔xh6 41.♝d4 ♘c5 42.♚b3 ♔h5.

**39.hxg5 ♔h7 40.♛xd5 ♘xd5 41.f4 ♔g6 42.♝d4 ♘b5 43.♚a3 ♔f5?**

As Stockfish indicates, Black could draw by moving his rook to b7 or b8. Here I give just one of its main variations: 43... $\mathbb{B}b8!$  44. $\mathbb{B}d6+$  (44. $\mathbb{B}d5$  a4!; 44.e4  $\mathbb{B}b7!$ ; 44.b3  $\mathbb{B}e8!$ ; 44. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{B}b4$ ) 44... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  45. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{B}b4$  46. $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{B}e4$  47. $\mathbb{B}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}xe3+$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  g6 49.b3  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , and White can make no progress.



#### 44.b3??

The only way to win was 44. $\mathbb{B}d7!$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  45.b3  $\mathbb{B}b8$  (or 45...f6 46.gxf6 gxf6 47. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  49. $\mathbb{B}d6$   $\mathbb{B}c3$  50.e4+!  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  51. $\mathbb{B}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  52. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  53. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{B}c1$  54. $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  55. $\mathbb{B}h5$ , winning) 46. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  47. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  48. $\mathbb{B}c3$  f6 49.gxf6 gxf6 50. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ , etc.

#### 44...f6?

The only saving move was 44... $\mathbb{B}b7!!$  45. $\mathbb{B}d5+$  (45. $\mathbb{Q}a4!?$   $\mathbb{B}b5$ ; 45. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4!)$  45... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  46. $\mathbb{B}e5+$   $\mathbb{B}d3$  47. $\mathbb{B}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  49. $\mathbb{B}g8$  f6 50.gxf6 gxf6 51. $\mathbb{B}e8$   $\mathbb{B}b4+$  52. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  53. $\mathbb{B}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  54. $\mathbb{B}c6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  55. $\mathbb{B}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  56. $\mathbb{B}f7$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  57. $\mathbb{B}f8$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  58.f5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , with an obvious draw.

#### 45. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

The white king attacks the  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ , which cannot be saved.

#### 45... $\mathbb{B}b7$

45... $\mathbb{B}c5?$  46. $\mathbb{B}c4$  leads to the immediate loss of the  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ .

#### 46. $\mathbb{B}c4$ $\mathbb{B}a7$

With the rook passive on a7 the ending cannot be saved. The problem is that there is nothing better: 46...fxg5 47. $\mathbb{B}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (47... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  48. $\mathbb{B}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  49.fxg5) 48.fxg5  $\mathbb{B}b4+$  49. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{B}e4$  50. $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{B}xe3$

51.  $\mathbb{Q}a6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  52.  $g6$   $\mathbb{Q}e1$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ; or 46...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (48...  $fxg5$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}c5+!$ ) 49.  $gx\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}c6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  51.  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ .

**47.  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  49.  $gx\mathbb{Q}f6$   $gxf6$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

Equally hopeless was 50...  $f5$  51.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}e5+!$ .

**51.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}a7+$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7+$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7+$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  55.  $e4+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  56.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  57.  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  58.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  59.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  60.  $e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  61.  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  62.  $b5$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  63.  $b6$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  64.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  65.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  66.  $e6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  67.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  1-0**

## 2.6. Plan E: play in positions with both sides castled on the queenside

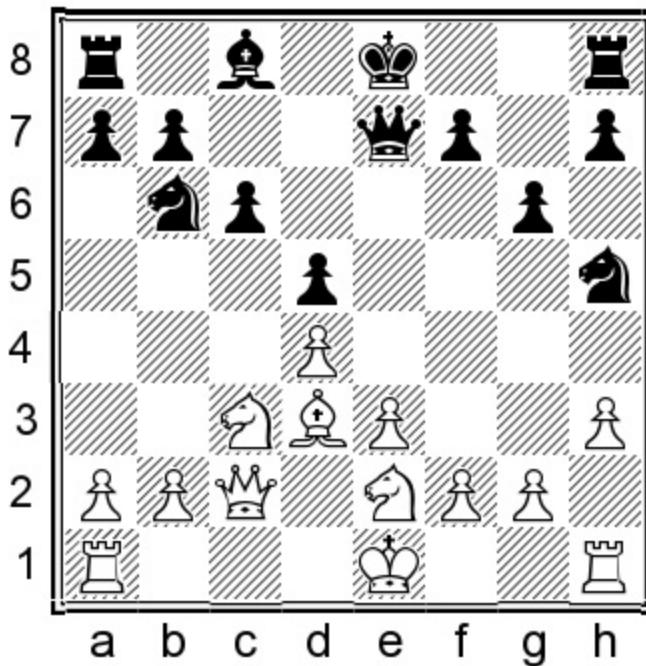
Nowadays positions with both sides castled on the queenside are quite common, although previously they were an exception. It should be said that in this type of position practically all the ideas in the Carlsbad structure that we have seen so far are still valid. However, the minority attack in this case is in fact an attack against the black king. Let's begin this theme with a recent game.

Game 51  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Abhijeet Gupta** 2609  
**Anton Korobov** 2679  
Khanty-Mansiysk 2019 (1)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5 c6 6.♗c2 ♘e7 7.e3 ♘bd7 8.♗d3 ♘h5**

8...h6 9.♗h4 ♘h5 leads to the previous game, but here Black has another idea.

**9.♘xe7 ♗xe7 10.♗ge2 g6 11.h3 ♘b6**



The ♘b6 is well placed, opening a path for the ♘c8 and preventing the manoeuvre ♘c3-a4-c5.

**12.0-0-0 ♘d7 13.♗b1**

The main alternative is 13.g4 ♘g7 14.♗f4 (Stockfish gives equality after 14.♗b3 0-0-0 15.a4 ♘b8 16.a5 ♘c8 17.♗g1 h5 18.a6 ♘b6 19.g5 c5) 14...g5 15.♗fe2 h5 16.e4 ♘e6 17.exd5 ♘xd5 18.♗e4 ♘b4 19.♗a4, with chances for both sides, Malaniuk-Vaganian, Moscow 1988.

**13...0-0-0 14.♗a4**

To exchange the main defender of the enemy king. Instead, 14.g4 ♜f6 (14...♝g7!?) 15.a4 ♕b8 16.a5 ♜c4 17.♕xc4 dxc4 18.e4 h5 19.f3 leads to an unbalanced position with chances for both sides.

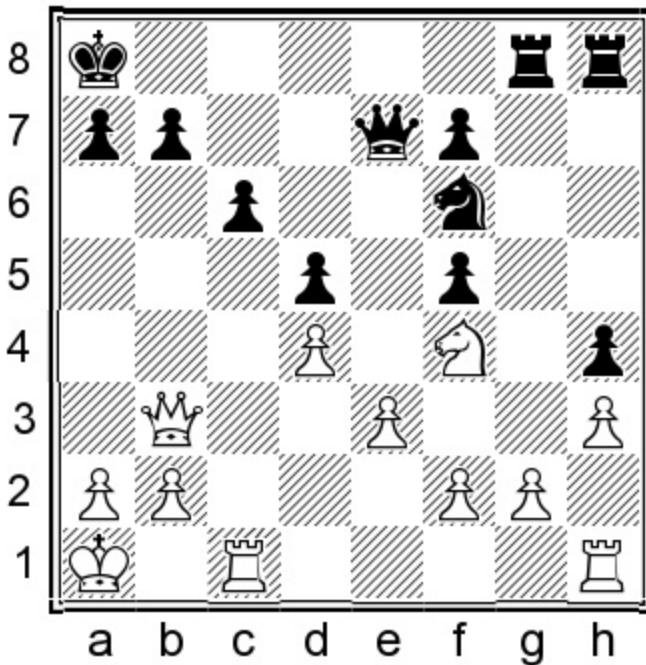
**14...♝xa4 15.♛xa4 ♕b8 16.♝c1 ♜f6**

A good alternative was 16...♝f6!?, e.g. 17.♝h1 (17.♝b3!? leads to perpetual check after 17...♝xf2 18.♚a6 ♜f5+ (18...b6 19.♛a3!) 19.♚a1 ♜d7 20.♝xc6 ♛xg2 21.♝hc1 ♛e4 22.♝c3 bxc6 23.♝xc6 ♜e7 24.♝b5+ ♜a8 25.♝c6+) 17...c5 (17...♜f5!?) 18.♝a5 c4.

**17.♝c3 h5 18.♚a1 h4 19.♝b3 ♜f5!?**

An interesting decision: pressure along the g-file will compensate for the doubling of the black pawns. Black could also have continued in a more routine manner with 19...♝e4 20.♝c2 ♜f5 21.♝a4 ♜a8 22.♝g1 ♜d6.

**20.♜xf5 gxf5 21.♝e2 ♜a8 22.♝f4 ♜dg8**



The World Cup is a series of very short matches where the colours have a special value and in this case the usual formula of ‘draw with black and win with white’ seems to have pressured the Indian player into choosing the following move:

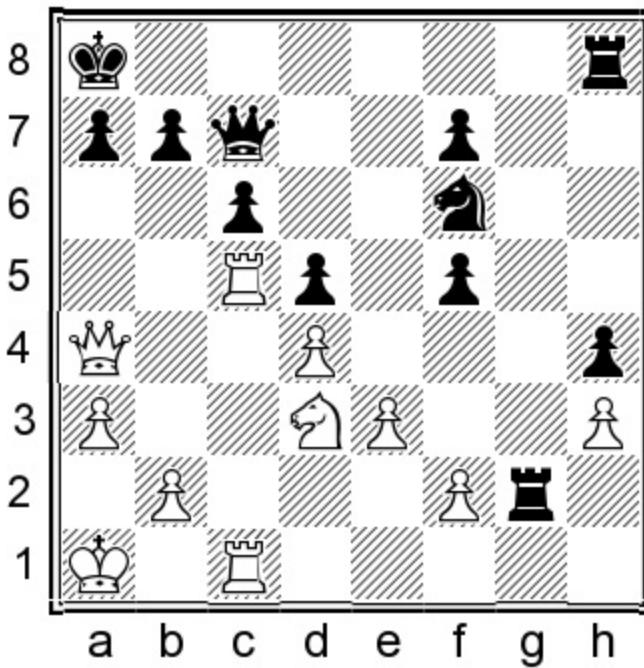
**23.♝c5!? ♜h5!?**

Apparently Korobov is also seeking to win and he accepts the challenge, since a win with black practically guarantees victory in a match of only two games. Here is one of the variations that probably passed through the heads of both players: 23...♝e4!? 24.♝a5 ♜xf2 25.♝f1 ♜e4 26.♝b6 a6 27.♝xd5 cxd5 (27...♝g3 28.♝e5 ♛d8 29.♝xd8+ ♜xd8, with an equal endgame) 28.♝xd5 ♛d6

29.  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6+$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  (30...  $\mathbb{Q}c8??$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}c1+$ ) 31.  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ , with a draw by perpetual check.

**24.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}xg2$  25.  $\mathbb{E}hc1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  27. a3**

Black also has sufficient resources in the event of the minority attack, e.g. 27. b4  $\mathbb{E}hg8$  28. b5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29.  $\mathbb{E}5c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{E}g1$ .

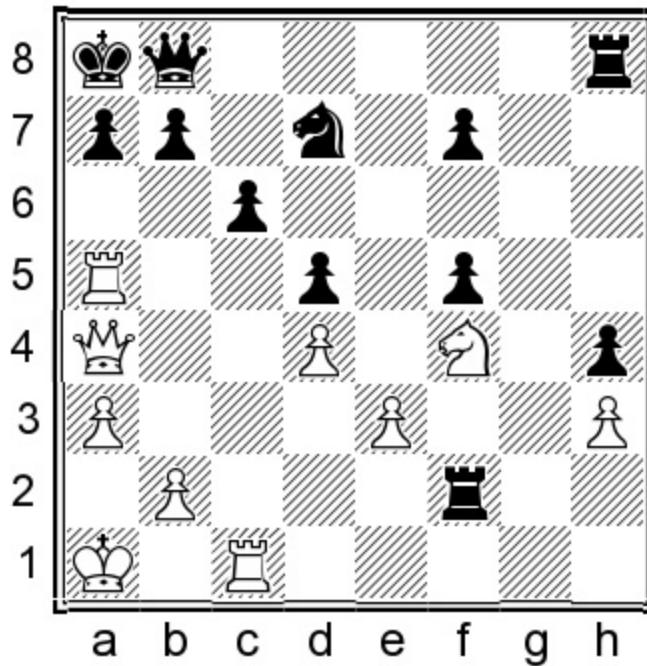


**27...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

The sharper move 27... f4 apparently fails to upset the balance, e.g. 28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$  29.  $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  31.  $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  32.  $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (33.  $\mathbb{E}xb6??$   $\mathbb{E}g1+$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3+$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ ) 33...  $\mathbb{W}xb3$  34.  $\mathbb{W}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}g1$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{E}dd1$  36.  $\mathbb{W}b6$   $\mathbb{E}xc1+$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  a6 38.  $\mathbb{E}xa6+$  bxa6 39.  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  40.  $\mathbb{W}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  41.  $\mathbb{W}d8+$ , and Black cannot escape perpetual check.

**28.  $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$**

After 29...  $\mathbb{E}g7!?$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  b5 31.  $\mathbb{W}b3$  cxd5 32.  $\mathbb{W}xd5+$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  33.  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  34.  $\mathbb{E}xb5+$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  35.  $\mathbb{E}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}h6$ , the three white pawns compensate for the enemy knight.

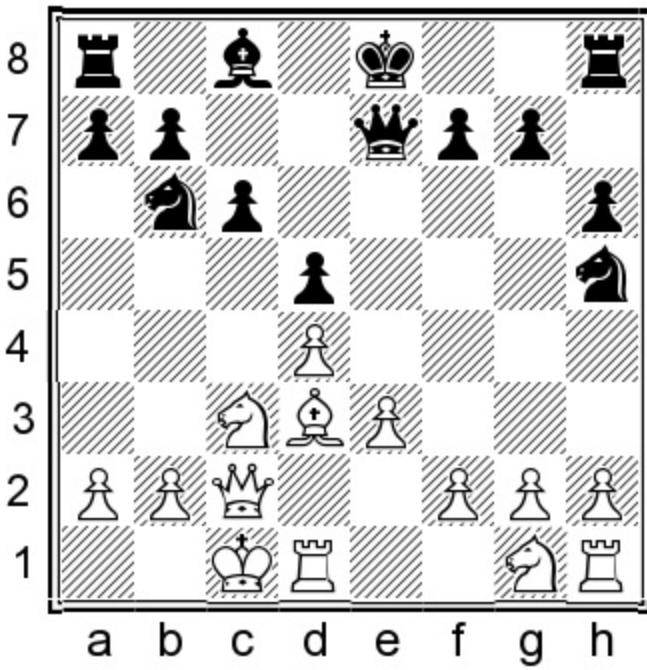


Black has two extra pawns, but with his following moves the Indian grandmaster provides a good example of an attack with pieces against an enemy king, located this time on the queenside:

30.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  b5 31.  $\mathbb{R}xb5!$  cxb5 32.  $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{K}b8$  34.  $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{K}a8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{K}b8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{K}a8$   $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 52  
 Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Ian Nepomniachtchi** 2757  
**Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu** 2672  
 Dortmund 2018 (3)

1.c4 e6 2.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 3.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.cxd5 exd5 5.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 6.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  h6 9.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$   
 10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  11. 0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b6$



**12.♘f3!?**

With the move-order in the game, Nepomniachtchi wants to save time by omitting h2-h3, probably reckoning that an eventual ...♗g4xf3 capture increases his mass of pawns in the centre and opens the g-file. This opinion is not shared by the majority of players, who prefer 12.h3 ♘e6 13.♘f3 0-0-0 14.♔b1 (14.♗e5!?).

**12...♗f6**

After 12...♗g4 13.♔b1 (it is curious that Stockfish awards White with a slight advantage even after provoking the capture on f3: 13.h3!?) 13...♗f6 14.♕c1 ♗xf3 (14...♗fd7!? 15.♔a1 0-0-0 16.♘d2 ♔b8 17.♘a4 ♘xa4 18.♗xa4 ♘h4 19.♕c1 ♘f6, with a slight advantage to White, Aronian-Carlsen, Baden-Baden 2015) 15.gxf3 0-0-0 16.♗b3 ♔b8 17.a4, White is slightly better, Rodshtein-Mamedyarov, Skopje 2015.

The engine recommends 12...♔e6 13.♔b1 ♗f6 14.♗e5 ♗g4 15.♗xg4 ♗xg4 16.♕de1 0-0-0, with equality.

**13.♔b1 ♘e6 14.♔a1**

Preparing the minority attack. Another plan is 14.♕c1 ♗fd7 (14...0-0-0 15.♔a4!? ♔b8 16.♘c5 ♕c8 17.♔a1 ♔a8 18.♗e5 ♗fd7 19.♗exd7 ♗xd7 20.b4, with a slight advantage to White) 15.h3 0-0-0 16.♘a4 ♘xa4 17.♗xa4 ♔b8 18.♕c3 ♘b6 19.♕a5 ♘c7 20.♕a3 ♘c8 21.♕a4, and White is more active, Howell-Andersen, Germany Bundesliga 2019/20.

**14...0-0-0 15.♘a4**

Before playing b2-b4 White wants to prevent the move ... $\mathbb{Q}b6-c4$ .

**15... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ ??!**

As GM Krasenkov indicates, here and on the next move it was better to exchange knights, since on c5 a white knight will exert considerable pressure on the black position: so 15... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ ! 16. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$ .

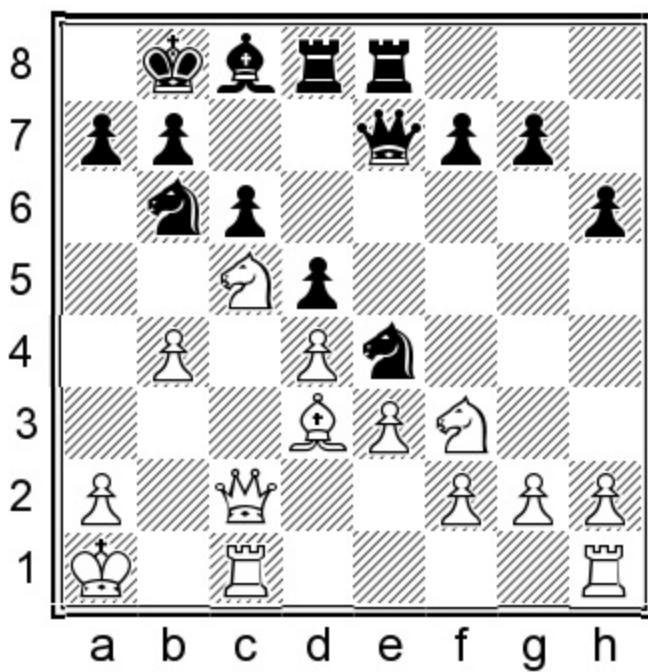
**16. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}he8$**

Again it was better to play 16... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ ! 17. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  18. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{E}he8$  19. $\mathbb{E}hc1$  f6 20. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , with a very slight advantage to White.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  18.b4**

18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ !? was preferable, to prevent Black's next move, e.g. 18... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  19.b4  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  20. $\mathbb{E}b1$  b6 21. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ , with the better game for White.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}e4$**



**19.a4**

The minority attack is in full swing but, just as when the kings are castled on the kingside, Black is trying to control c4. So it was more accurate to play 19.b5! cxb5 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  21. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ .

**19... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ! 20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}f6$**

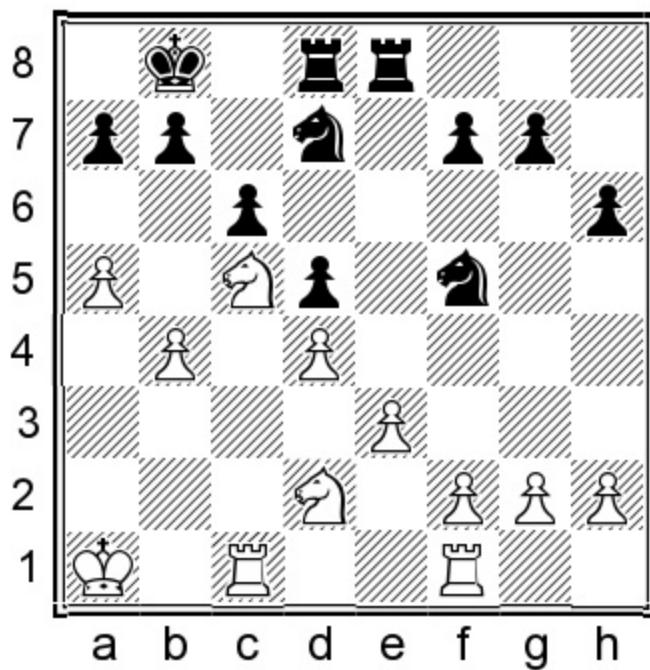
There are several other moves that maintain equality, e.g. 20...h5!? 21. $\mathbb{E}hd1$  g6 22.a5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  a6.

**21.♗hf1 ♗f5??**

A typical move in the Carlsbad structure. However, here it is a mistake, as White can weaken the black pawn structure. With the black bishop on c8 several moves maintain equality, e.g. 21...g6 22.a5 ♜d7 23.a6 (23.♗f3 a6) 23...b6! 24.♗cb3 ♜b5 25.♘xc6 ♘xc6 26.♘xc6 ♗xa6.

**22.♗xf5 ♘xf5 23.♘xf5 ♜xf5 24.a5 ♜d7?**

Here 24...♗a8! was correct, e.g. 25.a6 (25.g4!?) 25...b6 26.♗d3 ♗e7 27.♗e5 f6 28.♗xc6+ ♗xc6 29.♘xc6 ♗c7 and White's advantage is minimal.



**25.a6!**

The support of the ♜c6 is collapsing, which determines White's advantage.

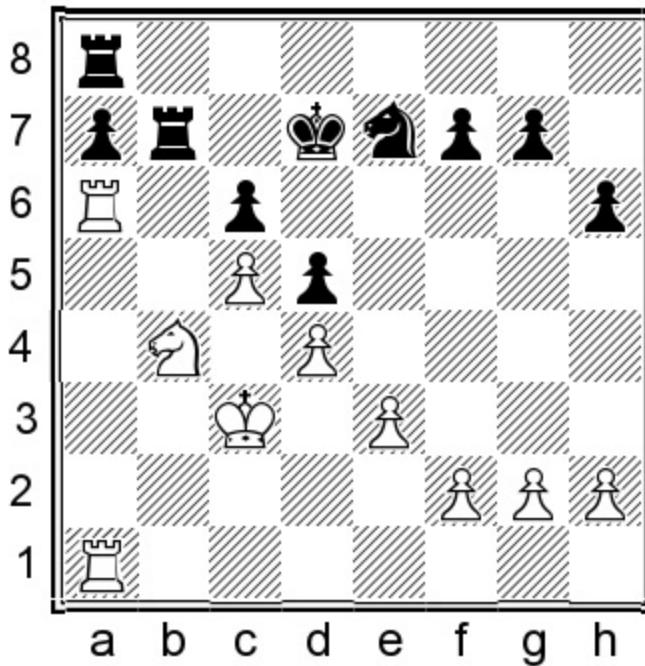
**25...♗xc5 26.bxc5!**

26.♘xc5 was less accurate, e.g. 26...♗d6 27.axb7 ♗xb7 28.♗fc1 f5!? (28...♗c8) 29.♘xc6 (29.♗b3 ♗c4; 29.g3 g5) 29...f4! 30.♗b3 (30.exf4? ♗c4) 30...fxe3, and White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

**26...♗c7 27.axb7 ♗b8 28.♗b2 ♗xb7+ 29.♗c3 ♗b5 30.♗a1 ♗b7 31.♗a2 ♗e7 32.♗fa1 ♗a8 33.♗b1!**

Recycling the knight, with the idea of deploying it on b4, to menace the ♜c6. The route ♗f3-e5/e1-d3 would be just as strong.

**33...♗b8 34.♗a6 ♗b7 35.♗6a4 ♗b8 36.♗a3 ♗b7 37.♗a6 ♗c7 38.♗c2 ♗d7 39.♗b4**



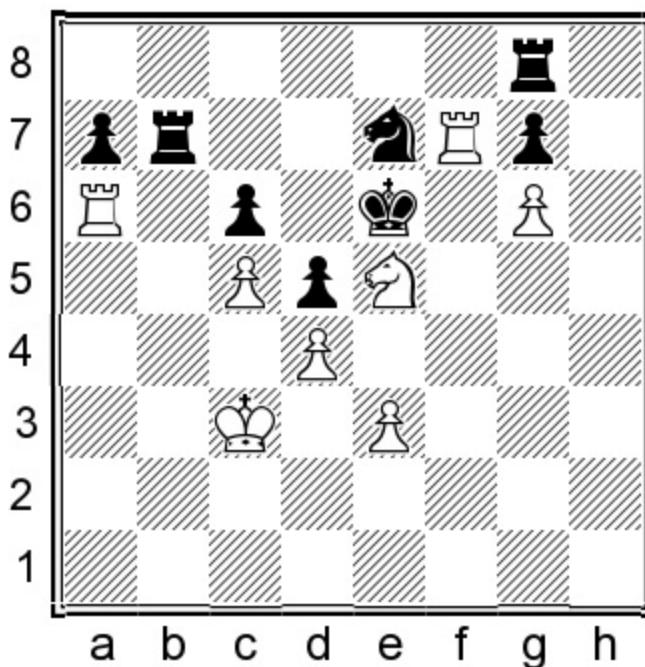
As we know, the presence of two weaknesses, in this case a7 and c6, is a sign of a difficult position. However, in order to increase his advantage, White needs to organize the advance e3-e4.

**39...f6 40.f3 f5 41.Qd3 Qe6 42.Qe5 Qc7**

Black has impeded the central pawn break but at a high price, since now he is in zugzwang.

**43.g4 fxg4 44.fxg4 h5 45.h3 hxg4 46.hxg4 Qf6 47.Qf1+ Qe6 48.Qf7 Qg8 49.g5 Qb7 50.g6**

The final position represents the triumph of White's strategy.



Black resigned, in view of the variation 50...Qc7 (50...Qgb8 51.Qxe7+ Qxe7 52.Qxc6) 51.Qd3, and

now every move loses material.

## 2.7. Two more games

As in the chapter on the IQP I want to provide two further examples, including a game by AlphaZero.

### Game 53

Queen's Gambit Declined

**Reinier Vazquez Igarza** 2557

**Daniel Alsina Leal** 2552

San Sebastian 2013 (7)

The player with white has been my pupil for several years. I think that this game is a good example of how in the Carlsbad structure, simplification, which frequently transforms the position into one with an IQP, is a method of struggle which is in no way inferior to seeking complications. Unfortunately an error prevented Reinier from winning this game.

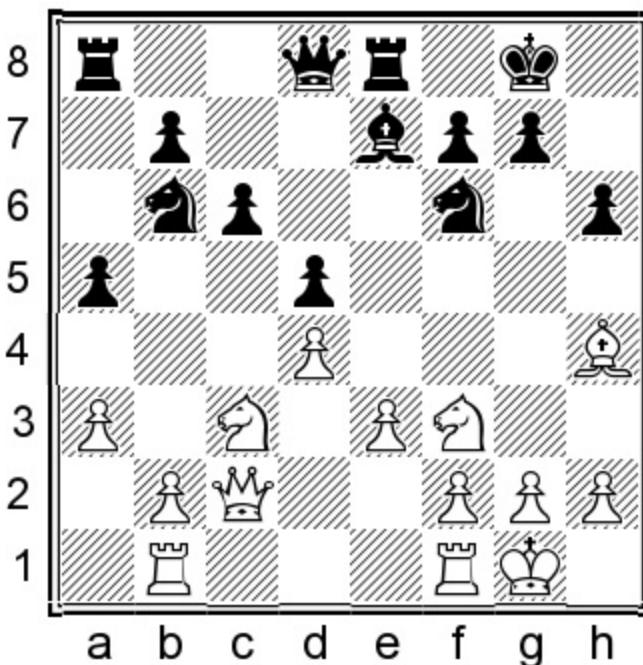
**1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 2. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. c4 c6 4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 5. cxd5 exd5 6.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  8. e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

This move-order is considered to be very dry and totally harmless, which the statistics confirm: White scores only about 35% of the points. However things are not as simple as they appear...

**9... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  10.  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

Instead, 10... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  11.0-0-0!? (11.0-0) 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  0-0 13.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15. f3 leads to sharp play, with the opposite-side castling where White tries to exploit 6...h6 as a ‘hook’ for his kingside attack, Illescas-Bareev, Ubeda 1997.

**11.0-0 0-0 12.  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$  a5 13. a3  $\mathbb{E}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$**



It is interesting to see how, in this apparently dry position, Vazquez manages little by little to outplay

his opponent.

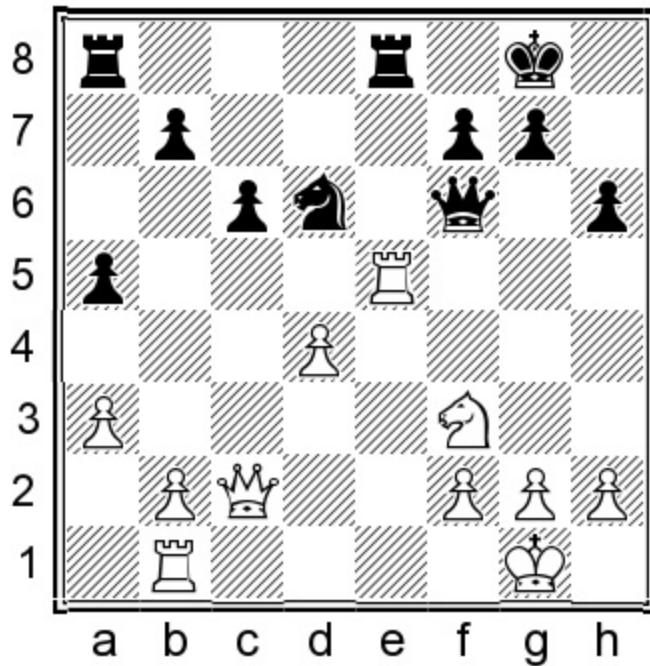
### 15. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Something similar to the game could occur in the event of 15...a4, e.g. 16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17. e4 dxe4 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  20.  $\mathbb{E}bd1$ .

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$

This trade is the start of the plan with the advance e3-e4, after which the  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  is left isolated. On the other hand, this is White's only possibility to fight for the initiative. The engine considers that the balance isn't disturbed, but again human judgment is different.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 17. e4 dxe4 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 20. $\mathbb{E}e5$



### 20... $\mathbb{E}xe5?$ !

This move is the start of Black's problems. The simplest was to exchange the queens, without fearing the doubling of the pawns: 20...  $\mathbb{W}g6$ ! 21.  $\mathbb{W}xg6$  fxg6, e.g. 22. h4  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (or 23. dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  24. a4  $\mathbb{E}e8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ) 23...  $\mathbb{E}d8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ !? (24...  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  25.  $\mathbb{E}e1$ !) 25. d5!?  $\mathbb{E}xd5$  26. g4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ! 27. gxf5  $\mathbb{E}xf5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}h8+$  (28. h5??  $\mathbb{E}g5$ ! 29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}xh5$ ) 28...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$ , with a draw by repetition of moves. However, Black probably thought that in such a simple position there was no need to make any concession.

### 21. dxe5 $\mathbb{W}f5$ 22. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 23. $\mathbb{E}d1$

The white rook controls the d-file and will invade the seventh rank next move. However, at first sight

it looks as though the black king will be able to expel it.

**23...†f8 24.¤d7 ¤b8 25.e6!?**

An interesting pawn sacrifice, which is necessary if White wants to prevent the expulsion of the ¤d7 from the 7th rank. Here Stockfish already gives an advantage of about 0.80 and, in addition, recommends first centralizing the white king, e.g. 25.†f1! b5 26.†e2 a4 27.g3 c5 28.†d3 †e8 29.¤d5 ¤c8 30.†e4.

**25...fxe6 26.¤e5 ¤e7 27.f4 †e8**

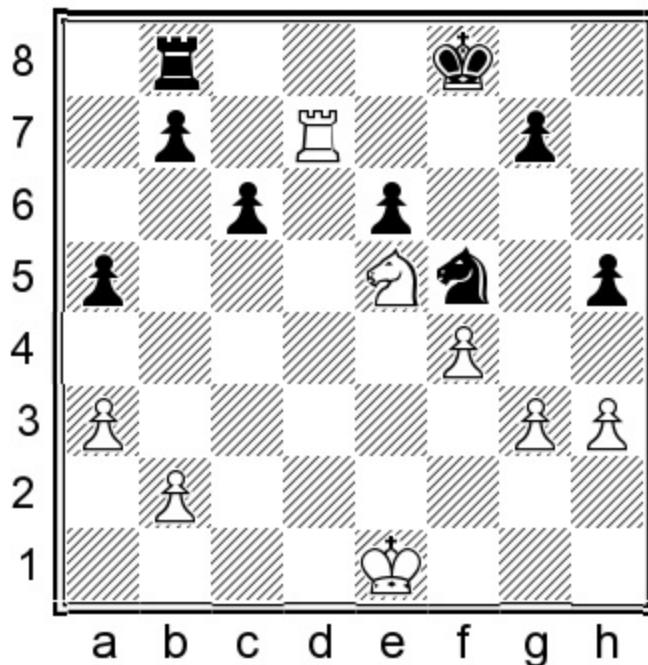
More accurate was 27...a4!? 28.†f2 ¤d5 29.g3 h5 30.†f3 †g8 31.¤d6 ¤e8.

**28.†f2 h5 29.g3 ¤f5 30.†e1**

Here it was better to play 30.¤c7! ¤d8 31.†e1 ¤b8 (or 31...¤d5 32.¤xb7 g5 33.¤b8+) 32.h3 c5 33.g4 hxg4 34.hxg4 ¤e7 35.†f2!, and Black loses one of his pawns.

**30...†f8 31.h3??**

For the sake of a cheap trap White squanders his winning chances. Here 31.¤c7! was correct, e.g. 31...†e8 32.h3 ¤e7 33.†e2 ¤d8 34.¤d7+ ¤e8 35.†f3 †f8 36.g4 hxg4+ 37.hxg4 c5 38.†e4, with a clear advantage to White.



**31...†g8**

31...¤xg3?? loses to 32.¤d3.

**32.♔f2 c5 33.♕f3?**

It was not too late to return to the plan indicated in the previous note: 33.g4! hxg4 34.hxg4 ♔d4 35.♕c7 b6 36.♔e3 ♕d8 37.♕b7 (or 37.♕d7!? ♕c8 38.♕c4 ♕b8 39.♕d6 b5 40.♕xa5, recovering the pawn without losing his positional advantage) 37...b5 38.♕d7 ♕c8 39.♔e4, and the greater activity of his pieces more than compensates for Black's extra pawn.

**33...b5 34.g4**

By now there is nothing better, e.g. 34.♕g5 ♔d4 (34...b4!?) 35.g4 (35.♔e3 ♕f5+) 35...hxg4 36.hxg4 ♕c8 37.♕a7 b4.

**34...hxg4 35.hxg4 ♔d4 36.♕xd4 ½-½**

Game 54  
Queen's Gambit Declined  
**Stockfish 8**  
**AlphaZero**  
London 2018

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗g5 ♖e7 6.e3 0-0 7.♘d3 h6 8.♗h4 c6 9.♗c2**

This is the main move, although there are players who prefer 9.♗ge2, without determining the position of the queen yet. However, frequently the same position is reached by a transposition of moves, e.g. 9.♗ge2 ♘h5 10.♗xe7 ♗xe7 11.0-0 ♕e8 12.♗c2.

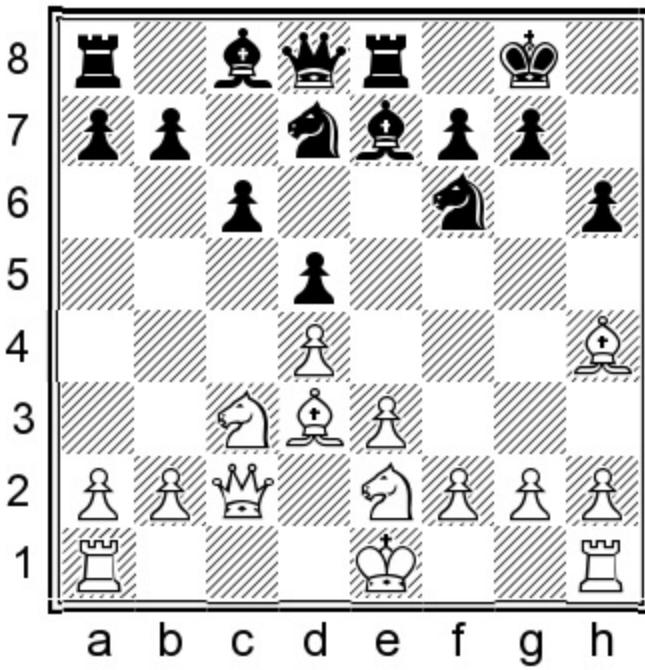
**9...♝e8**

At a sufficient depth, Stockfish 11 prefers the text move to 9...♝h5 e.g. 10.♗xe7 ♗xe7 11.♗ge2 ♕e8 12.♗b1 ♗g4 13.b4; it should be said that this preference is matched by Megabase, where the text move is by far the most common and has slightly better statistics.

**10.♗ge2**

Black equalizes more easily after 10.♗f3 ♘e4 11.♗xe7 ♗xe7 12.0-0 ♗f5!, Schmelz-Savoca, cr 2018.

**10...♝bd7**



## 11.0-0

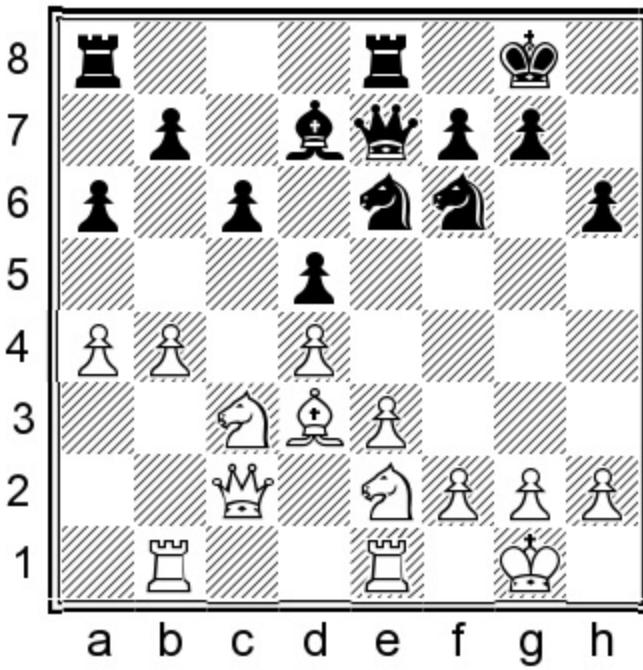
Another plan is 11.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (Stockfish 11 recommends an original plan: 11...b5!? 12.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  13.b3 a5 14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b4 15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  a4 16. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}c4!$  18.bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , with move repetition) 12.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  b6 (Stockfish 11 again suggests the same plan: 13...b5!? 14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  a5 15. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$ ) 14. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  15.h3  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  16. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ , with chances for both sides, Baron-Salgado Lopez, Skopje 2019.

**11... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$**

13. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ ! is the most popular move here, and is perhaps more accurate, as White's 16th move confirms.

**13... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  14.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15.b4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17.a4 a6 18. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$**

One of the plans that the more modern Stockfish 11 likes is the manoeuvre 18.a5!? h5 19. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , which we saw in the game Kortchnoi-Karpov and which seems to make even more sense following the exchange of the dark-squared bishops. However, at a greater depth the engine prefers the text move.



**18...h5!?**

The start of a pawn storm, which will develop over the course of many moves as a long-term strategy.

**19.h3 g6 20.♗a1?!**

It seems that Stockfish 8 loses the thread here, which is usually something that human players suffer from. 20.♗f4!? and now:

- A) 20...♗xf4 21.exf4 ♗d6 22.♗e5!? (22.f5 is the engine's choice);
- B) 20...♗g7 21.b5 axb5 22.axb5; White would have the better game in these two lines.
- C) 20...♗g5 21.b5 axb5 22.axb5 ♗ge4 23.bxc6 bxc6 24.♗xe4 ♗xe4 25.♗xe4 ♗xe4 26.♗xe4 27.♗b7 leads to a much better ending than e.g. Kotov-Pachman. However, Stockfish 11 prefers 20.♗ec1 ♗ac8 21.♗a1 h4 22.b5 axb5 23.axb5 c5 24.dxc5 ♗xc5 25.♗d4 ♗xd3 26.♗xd3, with an evaluation of 0.50 at the end of a long variation.

**20...♗g5 21.♗f4 ♗ge4 22.♗xe4 dxe4 23.♗c4 ♗g7 24.♗ec1**

After 24.♗b2!? b5 (after 24...g5 25.♗e2 h4 (25...b5?! 26.♗b3 ♗xb4 27.♗a2 ♗e7 28.♗ec1 bxa4 29.♗xa4 ♗d5 30.♗c5 with very good compensation for the sacrificed pawn) 26.♗ac1 a5 27.bxa5 ♗xa5 28.♗xb7 ♗xa4 29.♗b3 White's position seems better but the engine gives 0.00) 25.axb5 axb5 26.♗e2 ♗h6 (or 26...♗a4 27.♗xa4 bxa4 28.♗a1 ♗a8 (28...♗d5!?) 29.d5 cxd5 (29...♗h7) 30.♗xd5 ♗d6) 27.h4 ♗e6 28.♗xe6 ♗xe6 29.♗a5 ♗d5 30.♗c1, the position is equal.

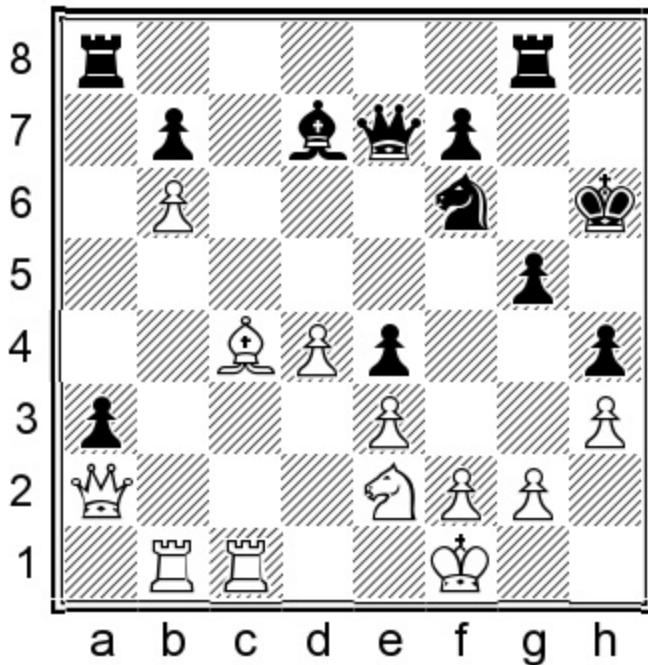
**24...h4 25.♗ab1 g5 26.♗e2 ♗h6**

The safest square for the king, clearing the g-file in preparation for the advance ...g5-g4.

**27.♔f1 ♜g8 28.b5!**

After other moves the balance tips in favour of Black.

**28...cxb5 29.axb5 a5 30.b6 a4 31.♕a2 a3**



As can be seen in several games by AlphaZero, advancing the rook's pawn serves to distract attention from the decisive sector of the battle.

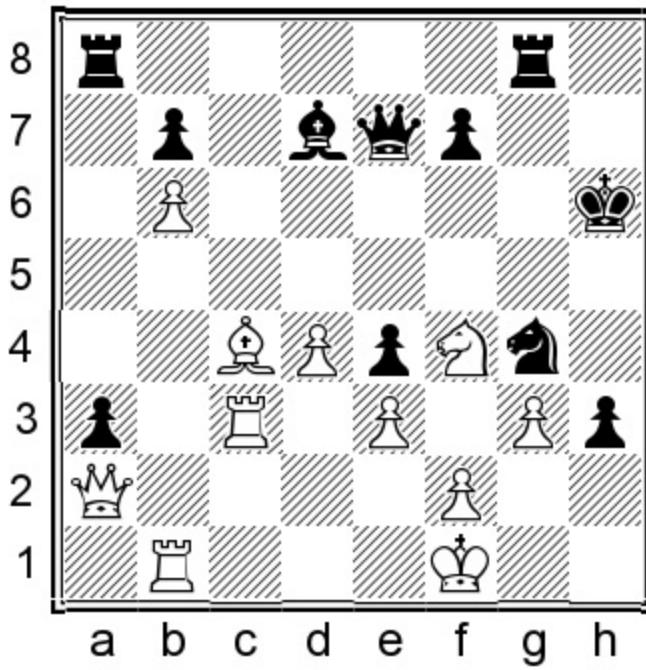
**32.♖c3?**

White has a draw in a very complex variation, of which I shall give just the main line: 32.♕xf7! ♜g7 33.♖c4 (33.♖d5? ♜xd5! 34.♗xd5 ♜f8!) 33...♜f8 (33...g4 34.hxg4 ♜xg4 35.♗f4! ♜f8! 36.♖b5! ♜xf4 37.exf4 e3 38.♖xd7 ♜xd7 39.♖c7, and White can hold) 34.♖c3 g4 35.♗f4 gxh3 36.gxh3 ♜h5 37.♖xa3 ♜f6 38.♗e2 ♜xf4+ 39.exf4 ♜g2 40.♖f1 ♜xf4 41.♖c1 ♜h2 42.♖xf4+ ♜xf4 43.♖cc1 ♜f5 (43...♜xh3 44.♔e3! ♜f3+ 45.♔xe4 ♜f8 46.♖fe1) 44.♔d2 ♜xh3 45.♖c3 ♜h2 46.♖cc1 ♜hxf2+ 47.♖xf2 ♜xf2+ 48.♔c3 ♜g4 49.♔d5 ♜f6 50.♔xb7 ♜f3 51.♔g1 ♜xb6 52.♔xe4 ♜xe4 53.♔g4 ♜d5 54.♔xh4+, with a theoretically drawn ending.

**32...g4**

The game is already decided.

**33.hxg4 ♜xg4 34.♗f4 h3 35.g3**



**35...Bg8!**

To the human eye this change of direction comes as a surprise.

**36.Qg1 h2+ 37.Qg2 Qg7 38.Qcc1 Qa5! 39.Qe2**

Black's idea can be seen in the following variation: 39.Qh1 Qf5! 40.Qe2 Qxf4 41.exf4 e3 42.f3 Qf5 43.fxg4 (43.Qbe1 Qc2 44.Qd5 Qd3 45.Qf1 a2) 43...Qe4+ 44.Qf3 Qc2+, winning.

**39...Qxc1 40.Qxc1 Qb4 41.Qb1 Qd6 42.Qc4 Qh6 43.Qh1 Qf5 44.Qd5 Qxf4! 45.exf4 Qf5 46.Qc1 Qxb6 47.Qxa3 Qxf2+ 48.Qxh2 Qg4+ 49.Qg2 Qxd4 0-1**

## *Chapter 3*

# Symmetrical pawn structures

### 3.1. Introduction

‘Symmetrical positions do not in themselves indicate that the players are shying away from the struggle; what they generally indicate is that they are postponing the struggle to a later stage of the game’ – David Bronstein.

Symmetrical pawn structures usually involve the accumulation of small advantages, as we shall see in many of the examples that follow.

It should be said that this type of position also has a psychological aspect; its apparent harmlessness sometimes causes the opponent to relax prematurely or, conversely, annoy the opponent and affect his judgement. Two wins by Boris Spassky, in the first game of his matches against Larsen (1968) and Fischer (1972), are good examples.

In modern chess, a tiny advantage, evaluated by the engine at 0.20, is already sufficient reason for the player with white to analyse the corresponding continuation in depth.

As is well known, the starting position of a game of chess is symmetrical. The number of symmetrical positions that can arise in the course of the game remains considerable, which naturally raises the question: ‘What happens if Black seeks symmetry from the start and just copies White’s moves?’ The following three examples will provide us with the answer.

In the middle of the 1930s, great interest was aroused among chess fans in the USSR by the following game, in which the editorial team of a well-known Moscow newspaper played against their readers.

Game 55  
Four Knights Opening  
**‘Vechernaya Moskva’**  
**Readers**  
Moscow 1935

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘c3 ♘c6 4.♗b5 ♗b4 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d6 7.♗g5 ♗g4?**

Black plays riskily, but apparently the curiosity of the chess-playing readers to see what would happen outweighed their caution. Theory’s main line is 7...♗xc3 8.bxc3 ♖e7 9.♖e1 ♘d8 10.d4 ♘e6 11.♘c1.

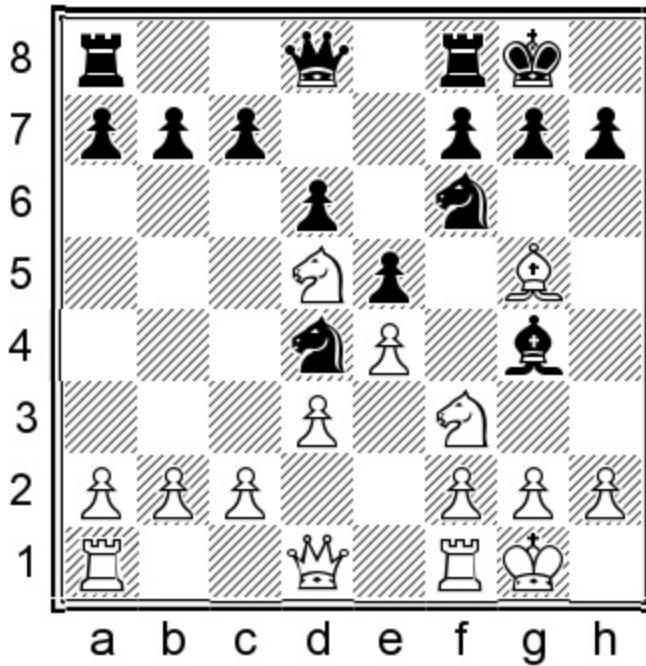
**8.♘d5**

After 8.♗xf6 gxf6 9.♗xc6 bxc6 10.h3 ♖e6 11.♗h4 White has a slight advantage.

**8...♗d4 9.♗xb4**

9.c3!?  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  gxf6 11. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  c6 12. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  leads to a clear positional advantage for White.

9... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$

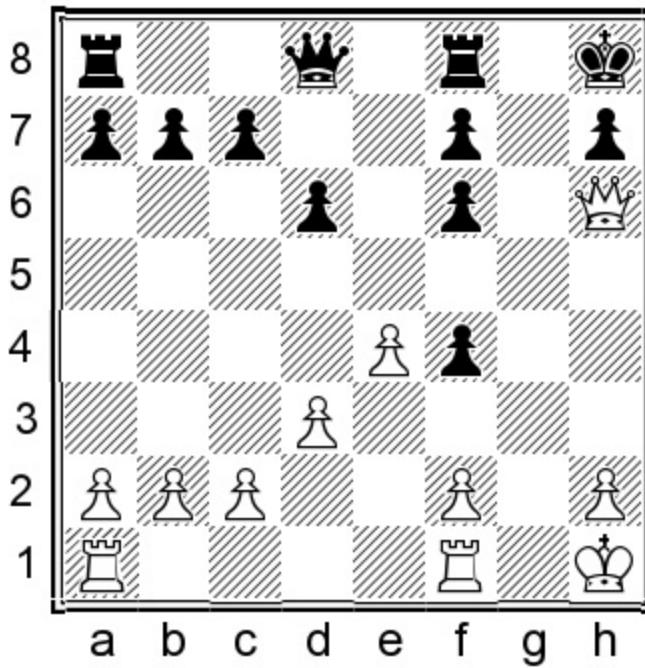


11. $\mathbb{W}d2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3?$

As always, the engine reveals the truth: the black position is not as bad as various analysts, such as the great Paul Keres, have thought. Instead, 11... $\mathbb{W}d7??$  loses immediately after 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$  (or 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+!$  gxf6 13. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14. $\mathbb{W}h6$ ) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  15. $\mathbb{W}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  16. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ , Capablanca-NN, New York simul 1918; as we shall see, the game continuation is not satisfactory either.

The best continuation is 11... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+!$  12.gxf3  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  13.h3! (13. $\mathbb{Q}xf6?!$  gxf6 14. $\mathbb{W}e3$  (14. $\mathbb{W}h6??$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8+$  and Black wins) 14...c6 15. $\mathbb{W}xf3$  cxd5 16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , with only a minimal advantage to White) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  – the key move! – 14.dxe4 f6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  16.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , and with three pawns for a piece Black can still resist; it is curious that Stockfish, analysing at sufficient depth, even gives equality.

12. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  gxf6 13. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  14. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  exf4 17. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$



The position is once again almost symmetrical, but now the fact that it is White's move proves decisive.

**18.♕g1 ♕g8 19.♕xg8+ ♕xg8 20.♕g1 1-0**

Sometimes the desire to make a draw by keeping the symmetry is apparent even among the very strongest players.

Game 56

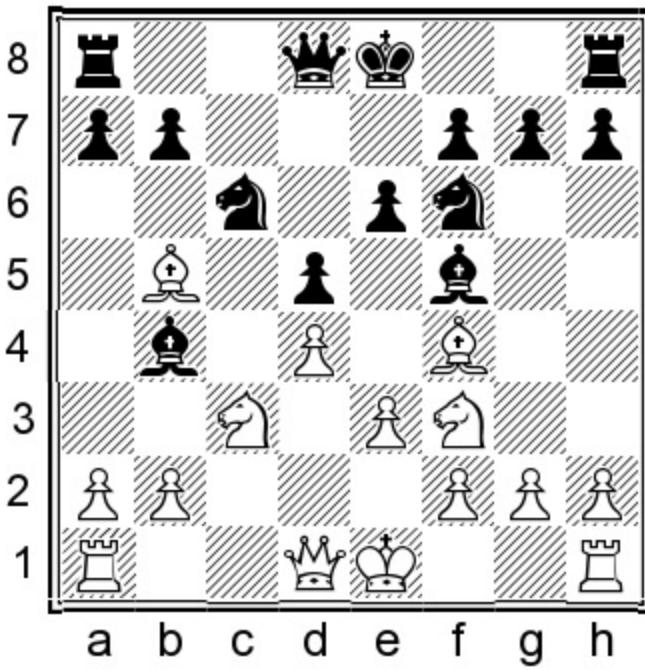
Slav Defence

**Mikhail Botvinnik**

**Mikhail Tal**

Moscow Wch m 1961 (11)

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 c6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.♗f3 ♜c6 6.♗f4 ♜f5 7.e3 e6 8.♗b5 ♜b4?!**



For about fifty years it has been known that it is best to break the symmetry here with 8... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ .

**9. $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mathbb{W}a5$**

Now the symmetry can no longer be maintained: 9... $\mathbb{Q}e4?$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6 bxc6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xc6+ \mathbb{Q}e7$  12. $\mathbb{W}b3$ .

**10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6+ bxc6$  11.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  12.bxc3  $\mathbb{W}xc3?$**

The lesser of the evils was 12... $\mathbb{W}a6!?$  13.g4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  14.f3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , Portisch-Zhu Chen, Marbella 1999.

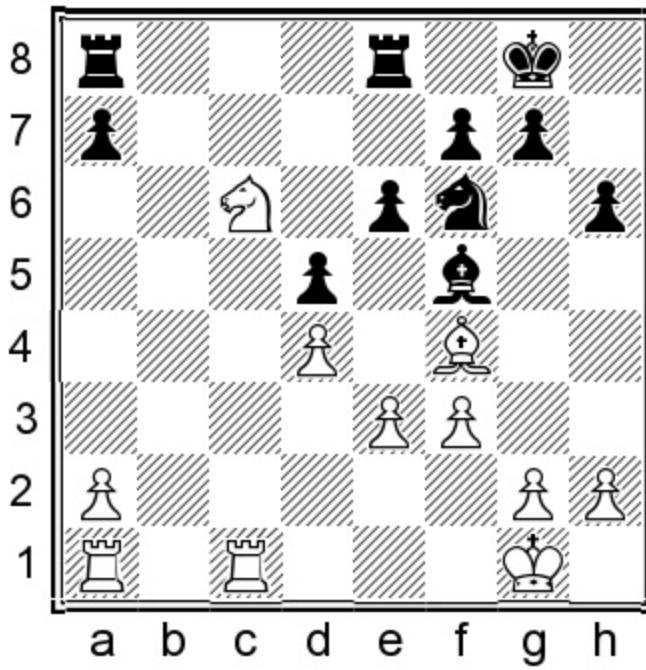
**13. $\mathbb{W}c1!?$**

Kasparov awards this move an exclamation mark. Nevertheless it was stronger to preserve the queens with 13. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$ , e.g. 13... $\mathbb{W}a3$  (13... $\mathbb{W}b2$  14.g4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  15.h4 h6 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg6 fxe6$  17.g5 hxg5 18.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  19. $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{Q}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ , winning) 14.g4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  15.f3  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  16.h4 h5 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc6 hxg4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xg6 fxe6$  19. $\mathbb{W}b1$ , with a decisive advantage.

**13... $\mathbb{W}xc1$  14. $\mathbb{Q}fxc1$  0-0?**

Better were both the human recommendation 14... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  (Botvinnik), and the engine's preference, 14... $\mathbb{Q}h5!$  15.g4 (15. $\mathbb{Q}xc6!?$ ) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  16.exf4 f6! 17.gxf5 fxe5.

**15.f3 h6 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{Q}fe8$**



Despite the exchanges, Black's position remains difficult, since almost all the enemy pieces are better placed.

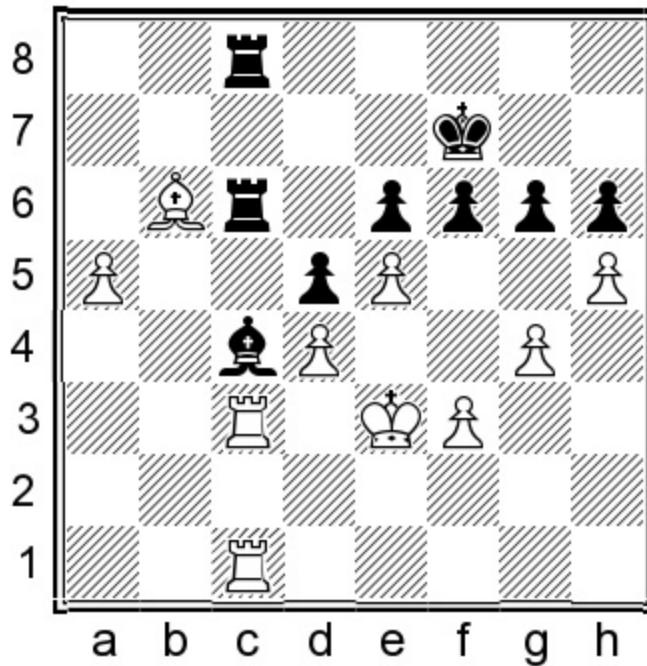
**17.a4! ♜d7 18.♗d6 ♜b6 19.♗c5 ♜d3**

Tal sacrifices a pawn, hoping to hold the position with the help of the bishops of opposite colour. However, the presence of two pairs of rooks greatly complicates Black's task.

**20.♗xa7 ♕xa7 21.♗xb6 ♕a6 22.a5 ♕c4 23.♕a3 f6**

23...f5!?

**24.e4 ♔f7 25.♔f2 ♕aa8 26.♔e3 ♕eb8 27.♕ac3 ♕c8 28.g4 ♕ab8 29.h4 ♕c6 30.h5 ♕bc8 31.e5 g6?!**



Although the opening of the file was inevitable, Black should have refrained from forcing matters with this move.

**32.hxg6+ ♔xg6 33.♗3c2**

Even stronger was 33.exf6!? ♔xf6 34.♗3c2.

**33...fxe5 34.dxe5 ♘h8 35.♗h2 ♘cc8 36.♗d2 ♘b3?**

36...♗h7 was more tenacious.

**37.a6 ♘c4 38.a7 ♘h7 39.♗a1 ♘a8 40.♗e3 ♘b7?**

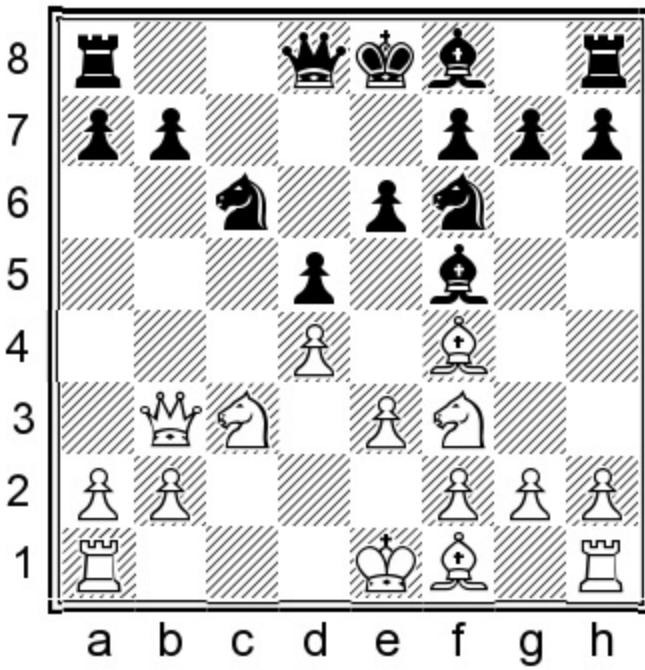
A time-trouble error, caused by rushing to make the time control, but Black's game was already untenable in any case.

**41.♗xh6+ ♔g7 42.♗ah1 ♘b2+**

And Black resigned.

Game 57  
Slav Defence  
**Vladimir Malakhov 2670**  
**Vasili Ivanchuk 2711**  
Hyderabad 2002 (5)

**1.c4 c6 2.♘f3 d5 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.d4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♘f6 6.♗f4 ♘f5 7.e3 e6 8.♗b3**



**8...♝b4**

Breaking the symmetry, as 8...♝b6 9.♝xb6 axb6 appears to lead to an endgame that favours White; however, Stockfish considers it to be fine for Black, e.g. 10.♞h4 (10.a3 ♜b4 11.♝c1 ♜xc3+ 12.♝xc3 ♜c8 13.♝e2 ♜e4 14.♝b3 ♜a5 15.♝xb6 ♜c1+ 16.♝d1 ♜xd1+ 17.♝xd1 ♜xf2+, with equality) 10...♜g6 11.♝xg6 hxg6 12.♝c1 ♜d7 13.♝e2 ♜h5 14.♝g3 ♜xg3 15.fxg3 f5 16.♝f2 g5 17.h3 ♜e7, with equality.

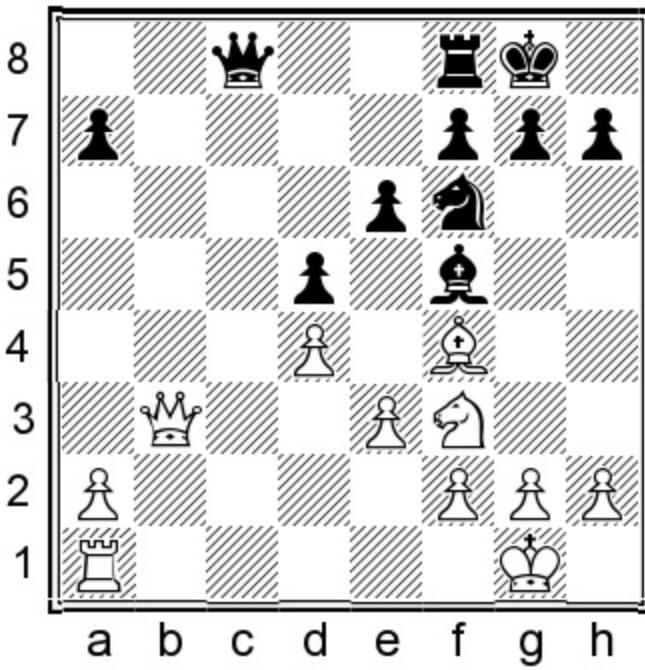
**9.♝b5 0-0 10.0-0**

If 10.♜xc6 ♜xc3+ 11.♝xc3 ♜c8 12.♝e5 ♜g4!? (12...bxcc6 13.♝a3) 13.♝xg4 ♜xg4 14.♝b4 ♜xc6 15.♝xb7 White wins a pawn but Black's control of the c-file provides compensation, e.g. 15...♝c8!? 16.♝xc8 ♜fxcc8 17.0-0 a5 18.b3 f6 19.f3 ♜f5 20.♝fe1 ♜g6 21.e4 dxex4 22.fxe4 ♜d8 23.♝ad1 ♜c2, with a quick draw in So-Giri, Wijk aan Zee 2020.

**10...♜xc3 11.♝xc6 ♜xb2 12.♝xb7 ♜xa1 13.♝xa1 ♜c8**

White also keeps a slight advantage after 13...♝b6 14.♝xa8 ♜xa8 15.♝c1.

**14.♝xc8 ♜xc8**



At first sight a draw seems inevitable, but the young Muscovite GM demonstrates that things are not as simple as they seem.

### 15. $\mathbb{W}a3!$

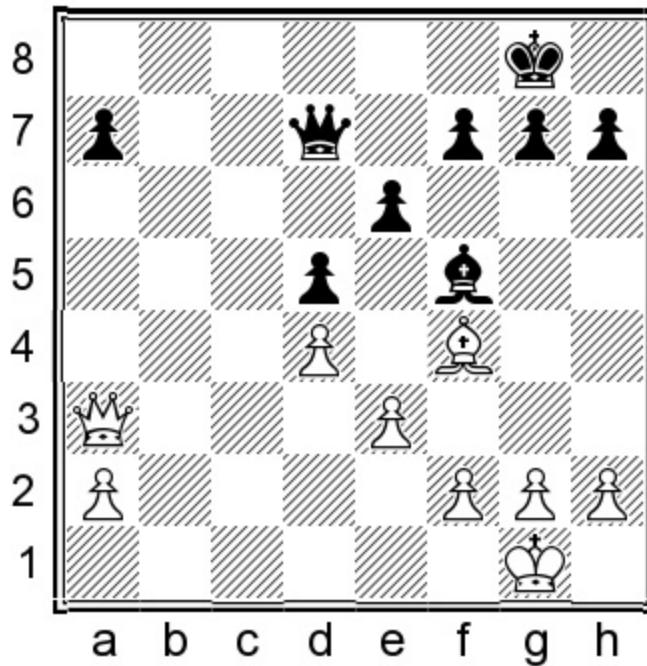
Stockfish confirms that Black can maintain equality now; nevertheless, moves such as this one, and the ideas connected with it, are the sort that really stick in the human memory. The next few moves, and in particular White's twentieth, will explain the purpose of this move.

**15...  $\mathbb{W}b7$  16.  $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  17.  $\mathbb{B}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$**

There were better moves, but Ivanchuk probably thought that this was a simpler way to achieve the draw. After e.g. 18...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  19.  $h4$   $f6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $h6$  21.  $\mathbb{W}e7$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$  (22.  $\mathbb{W}xa7?!$   $\mathbb{W}c2!$  and White must sacrifice on  $h6$  to force the draw) 22...  $\mathbb{W}b5$  23.  $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f1+$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}e2$ , the variation concludes with perpetual check eight moves later.

18...  $h6$  was also fine, e.g. 19.  $f3$   $\mathbb{W}c2$  20.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  21.  $gxh3$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d2+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$ , again with perpetual check.

**19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$**



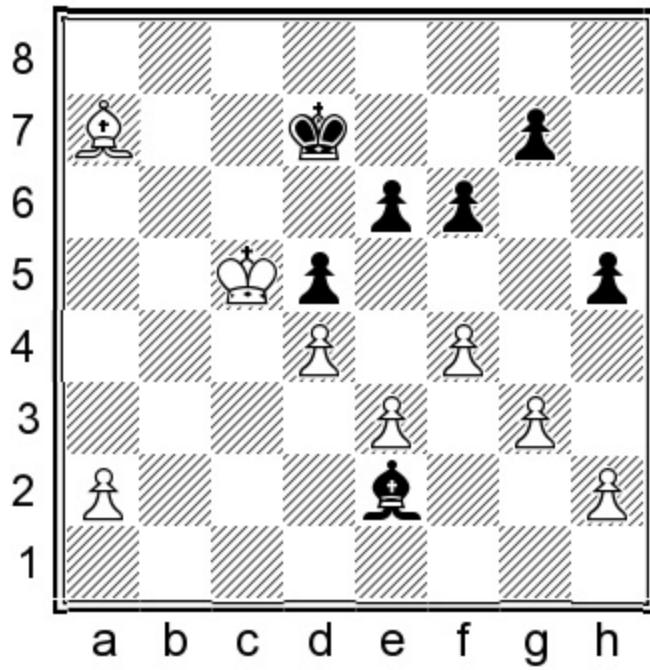
**20.  $\mathbb{W}a6!$**

An incredible position! Despite the fact that the only difference between the sides is the position of the queens, Black has problems, because the  $\mathbb{B}a7$  is going to be lost.

**20...  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  h5 22.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$**

In spite of the bishops of opposite colour, Black's defence is difficult. At least, one of the best players in the world was unable to save it.

**24. f3 f6 25.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  30. g3  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  31. f4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$**



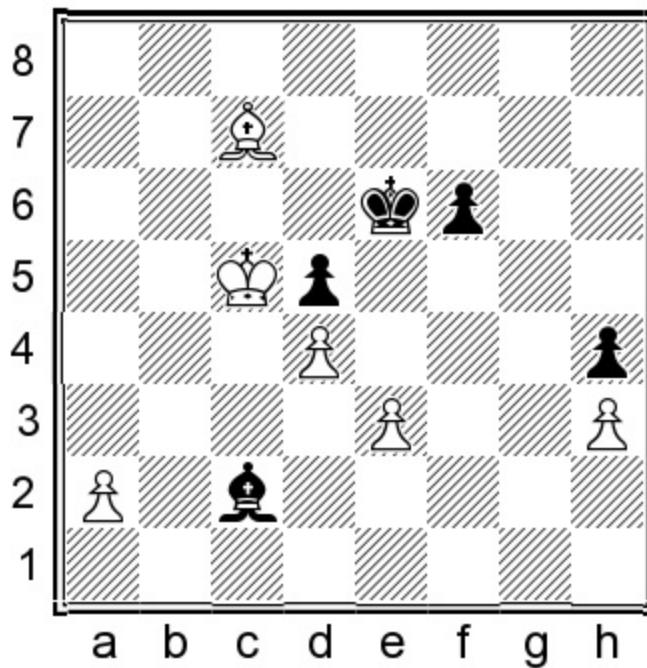
**32...Qd1?**

On the human level, this is perhaps a decisive error... Stockfish indicates two ways to hold the draw; one is 32...f5! (the other 32...g6!) 32...f5! 33.a4 Qc7 34.a5 g6! 35.Qb6+ Qd7! 36.Qd8!? (36.Qa7 Qc7) 36...Qxd8 37.Qd6 Qf3 38.Qxe6 (38.a6 Qc8) 38...Qc7!! 39.Qf6 h4 40.gxh4 Qh5 41.Qe5 Qc6 42.a6 Qf3 43.h5 Qxh5 44.a7 Qb7 45.Qxd5 Qxa7 46.Qd6 Qb7 47.d5 (47.Qd7 Qf3 48.h4 Qb6) 47...Qc8 48.Qe7 Qd1 49.d6 Qa4 50.Qf7 Qd7 51.Qxg6 Qxd6 52.Qxf5 Qd7+ 53.Qf6 Qd5 54.h4 Qe8 55.Qe7 Qg6 and White cannot win, e.g. 56.Qf6 Qh7 57.h5 Qe4.

**33.f5!**

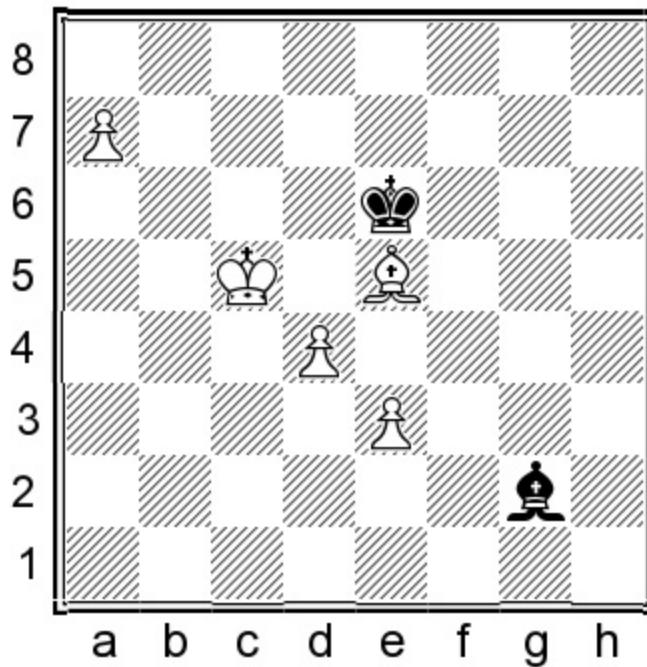
A good idea by Malakhov, posing difficult problems for the opponent.

**33...Qc2 34.fxe6+ Qxe6 35.Qb8 g5 36.Qc7 h4 37.gxh4 gxh4 38.h3!**



**38... ♕f5??**

This is the losing move. Black could still draw with 38... ♕d7!! 39. ♕h2 ♕c8! (39... ♕e6? 40. ♕g1! ♕d7 41. ♕f2 ♕e4 42. ♕b6 ♕c2 43. ♕xh4 ♕c8 44. ♕c6 ♕e4 45. ♕xf6 etc.) 40. ♕xd5 ♕d7 41. ♕g1 ♕f5 42. ♕c5 ♕xh3 43. ♕f2 ♕g2 44. ♕xh4 ♕e6 45. ♕xf6 ♕d5! (45... ♕xf6? loses to 46. ♕d6!! ♕f7 47. d5 ♕e8 48. a4 ♕d8 49. a5 ♕f1 50. e4 ♕c4 51. e5 ♕a6 52. e6 ♕c4 53. ♕c6 ♕d3 54. d6 ♕e4+ 55. ♕b6 ♕d5 56. e7+ ♕d7 57. e8=♕+ ♕xe8 58. ♕c7) 46. a4 ♕h1 47. a5 ♕g2 48. a6 ♕h1 49. ♕e5 ♕g2 50. a7 (or 50. ♕b6 ♕d7 51. ♕a7 ♕c8)



*analysis diagram*

50... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

This, and any other move of the bishop along the diagonal a8-h1 (except of course 50... $\mathbb{Q}c6??$ ), leads to a draw. That is to say, despite being three pawns up (!), White cannot win, due to a well-known theme in endings of this type: the pawns cannot safely be advanced, since they are all on the same diagonal, which is controlled by the defender's bishop, e.g. 51. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  52. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  53. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

**39.a4  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  40.a5  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  41. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  1-0**

Of course opting for symmetry does not always lead to such lamentable results. There are some positions in which symmetry completely justifies its drawish reputation.

### **3.2. Advantages for the side to move**

Let us now consider under what conditions symmetry can prove advantageous for the player whose move it is. Experience indicates the following:

- 3.2.1. Control of an open file;
- 3.2.2. Establishment of an outpost;
- 3.2.3. Active deployment of the pieces.

#### **3.2.1. Control of an open file**

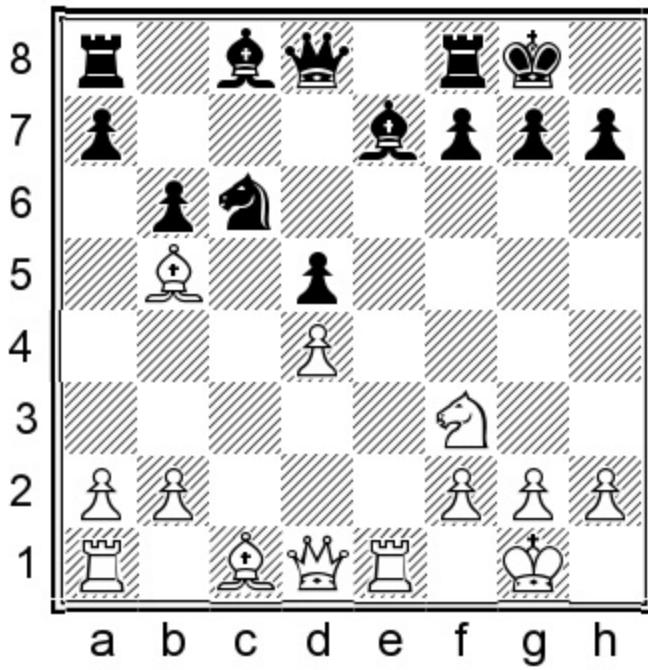
As is well known, control of an open file is a fundamental element of strategy and such an important factor that this alone can be enough to win. The historic game that we are about to see is a good example of this.

Game 58  
Tarrasch Defence  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Alexander Alekhine**  
AVRO Netherlands 1938 (7)

**1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 2.  $d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. c4 e6 4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 5.  $cxd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6. e3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $cxd4$  8.  $exd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. 0-0 0-0  
10.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  b6?**

After this game it became apparent that this move is a serious mistake. It is only playable after exchanging on c3. However, in that case, as we saw in the section devoted to IQP, play can lead to Razuvayev's gambit: 10...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  11.  $bxc3$  b6 12.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13. h4!  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , with a strong attack for the sacrificed pawn. Nowadays the main line is 10...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ .

**11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$   $exd5$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$**



The statistics for this position are very striking: White scores 75%. This symmetrical structure is very favourable to White, who can seize control of the c-file.

**12...♝d7?!**

12...♝b7!? was better, although in that case too White has the better position, e.g. after 13.♝f4!? ♜d6 14.♞e5 (14.♝g3!?) 14...♝e7?! (14...♝c8!?) 15.♝d3 ♜c8 16.♛h5, with advantage to White in the game Korneev-Burmakin, Nova Gorica 2002.

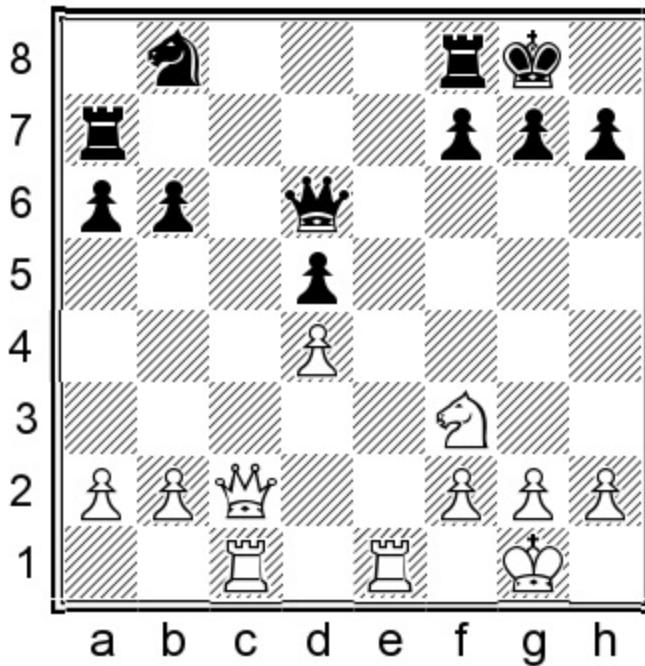
Stockfish recommends 13.a3 ♜c8 14.h3 a6 15.♝d3 ♜f6 16.b4 ♜e8 17.♝e3 g6 18.♜c1 ♜d7 19.♛d2.

**13.♛a4 ♜b8**

13...♜c8 is no improvement, e.g. 14.♝f4 ♜f6 15.♜ac1 ♜e8 16.♜xc6 ♜xe1+ 17.♝xe1 ♜xc6 18.♜xc6 ♜e8 19.♝e5! ♜xc6 20.♛xa7 ♜xe5 21.dxe5 ♜xe5 22.♞f3, with a clear positional advantage to White.

**14.♝f4 ♜xb5 15.♛xb5 a6 16.♛a4 ♜d6 17.♝xd6 ♜xd6 18.♜ac1 ♜a7 19.♛c2!**

Black can do nothing against White's occupation of the c-file and his eventual domination of the critical square c6.



The following exchanges, which remove the queens and a pair of rooks, fail to relieve the situation.

**19...♜e7 20.♜xe7 ♜xe7 21.♝c7 ♜xc7 22.♜xc7**

The white rook invades the seventh rank, although on its own it cannot win the game.

**22...f6 23.♚f1**

Here 23.♜b7 ♜c8! would lose control of the c-file, although according to Stockfish White's advantage after 24.♚f1 b5 25.♜b6 ♜c6 26.♚e2 ♜e7 27.♚d2 is as large as in the game.

**23...♜f7 24.♜c8+ ♜f8 25.♜c3 g5!?**

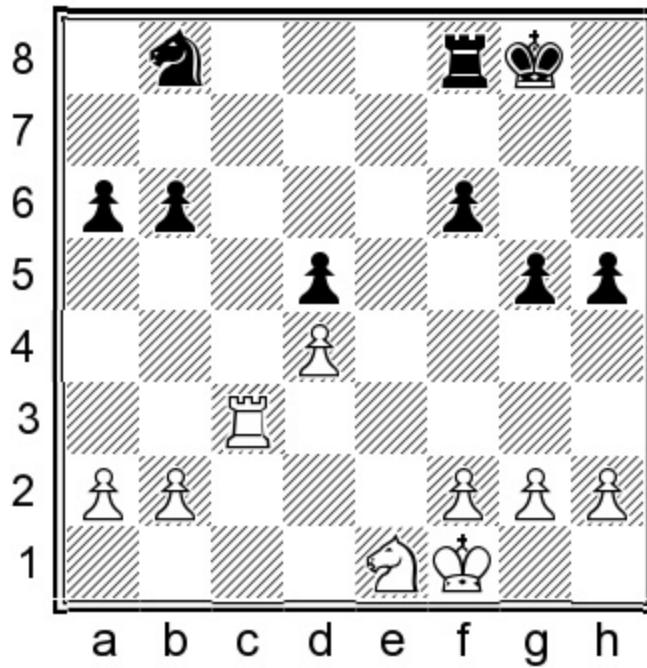
This active move was forced, since there was nothing better, e.g. 25...♚d7 26.♜c7 ♜d8 27.♚h4; or 25...♚f7 26.♜c7+ ♜g8 27.♚h4 ♜f7 28.♜c8+ ♜f8 29.♜c3 g6 30.g4 ♜d8 31.♚g2.

**26.♚e1**

Even stronger was 26.h4! h6 (26...g4 27.♚e1; 26...gxh4 27.♚xh4) 27.h5 a5 28.♜b3 ♜d7 29.♜b5 f5 30.♜xd5 ♜f6 31.♜d6 ♜g7 32.d5, winning a pawn and preparing ♜f3-d4.

**26...h5**

26...h6 27.♜c2 ♜f7 28.♚e3 ♜e6 29.g4 would have given the white knight the strong square f5.



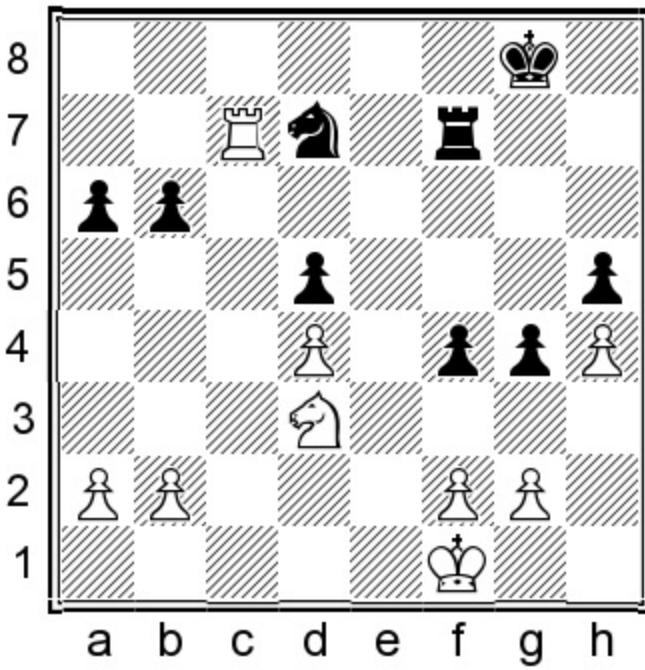
**27.h4!!**

The point of this move is to create a weakness in Black's kingside pawn structure, so that White's knight can begin to collaborate with his rook.

**27...♝d7**

Other continuations are hardly more promising for Black: 27...gxh4 28.♞d3! ♔f7 29.♞f4 ♕e8 30.f3; or 27...♔f7!? – Kasparov – 28.♞f3 gxh4 29.♞xh4 ♕e8 30.♞f5.

**28.♕c7 ♔f7 29.♞f3! g4 30.♞e1 f5 31.♞d3 f4**



**32.f3!**

32.Qb4 wins a pawn, but Botvinnik wants to deny his opponent any counterplay: 32...Qf6 (32...f3 33.Qxd5) 33.Qxa6 Rxc7 34.Qxc7 Qf7.

**32...gxf3 33.gxf3 a5 34.a4 Qf8 35.Qc6 Qe7 36.Qf2 Qf5 37.b3 Qd8 38.Qe2 Qb8 39.Qg6!**

Much stronger than 39.Qxb6? Qc7, followed by 40...Qc6, when Black would have some counterplay.

**39...Qc7 40.Qe5 Qa6 41.Qg7+**

This was the sealed move and it is understandable that Botvinnik did not want to make a committal decision before being able to analyse the position during the adjournment. White could win rather more quickly with 41.Qg5!? Qxg5? (41...Qf6 42.Qxh5) 42.hxg5 Qd6 43.g6 Qe7 44.g7.

**41...Qc8 42.Qc6 Qf6 43.Qe7+ Qb8 44.Qxd5 Qd6 45.Qg5 Qb4 46.Qxb4 axb4 47.Qxh5 Qc6**

Or 47...Qxd4 48.Qf5 Qc7 49.h5 Qd6 50.Qxf4.

**48.Qb5 Qc7 49.Qxb4 Qh6 50.Qb5 Qxh4 51.Qd3 1-0**

In the following game, between two great players who were also renowned chess teachers, we can see some of the features of modern chess, where the realization of a microscopic advantage is a very common method. There is another subtle point: although each side controlled an open file, in practice only one of these had any real value: the file that was further away from the kings.

Game 59

English Opening  
**Aron Nimzowitsch**  
**Siegbert Tarrasch**  
 Breslau 1925 (9)

**1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.d4**

This move is still very effective, scoring 60% from almost 2000 games.

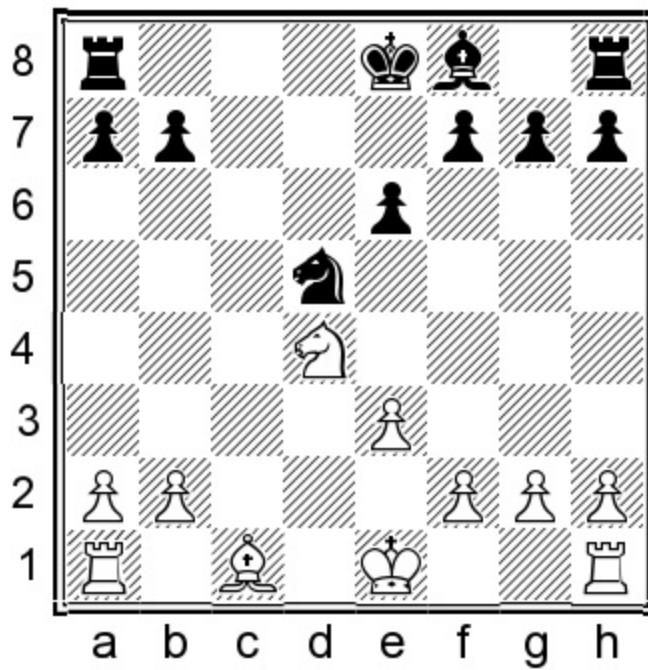
**5...cxd4**

The main continuation today is 5...♘xc3!? 6.bxc3 g6, with a transposition to the Grünfeld Defence.

**6.♗xd4 e6 7.e3**

Here 7.e4!? is more ambitious, e.g. 7...♘xc3 (another option is 7...♘c6 8.♗b5 ♘xc3 9.♗xc3) 8.♗xc3! ♘c6 9.♗b5 ♗b6 (9...♗d7!?) 10.a4 a6 11.♗e3, with advantage to White, Carlsen-Naiditsch, Sarajevo 2006.

**7...♘c6 8.♗b5 ♗d7 9.♗xc6 ♗xc6 10.♗e5 ♘xc3 11.♗xc6 ♗xd4 12.♗xd4 ♘d5**



**13.♗d2**

After the opening skirmishes we have reached a symmetrical position. It is worth mentioning that this game shows that a symmetrical position does not necessarily arise from one side deliberately copying the opponent's moves. Here is what Nimzowitsch wrote about the position in the diagram: 'This position, for all its apparent harmlessness, is full of venom. White is threatening to seize the c-file;

moreover he has a comfortable square available for his king (e2), whereas it is hard to say the same for Black. In such positions the defender has to play with extreme care.'

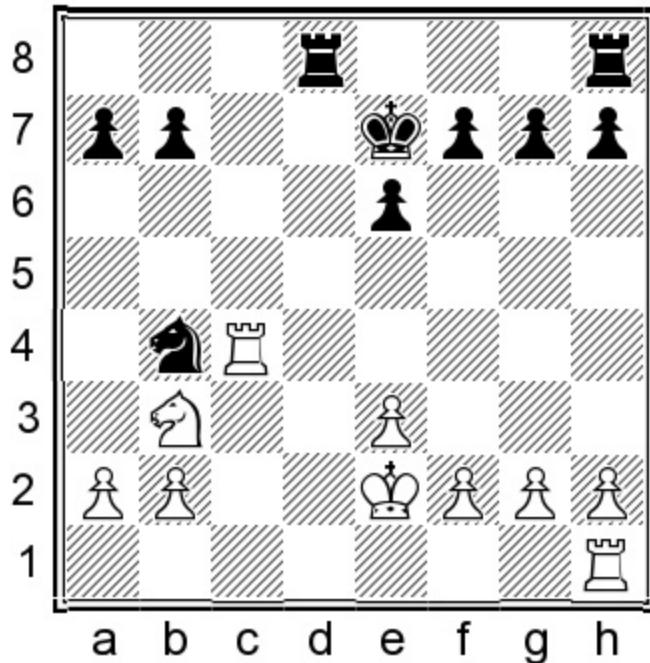
### 13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Black has several alternatives which also maintain equality, e.g. 13...e5!? 14. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  (14. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ !?)  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  14...a6 15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ .

### 14. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Although it would not change the character of the position, it might have been slightly better to play 14... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ !? 15.e4 (15. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  f5) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ; and 14... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ !? 15.e4 (15. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (16.g3) 16... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ .

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

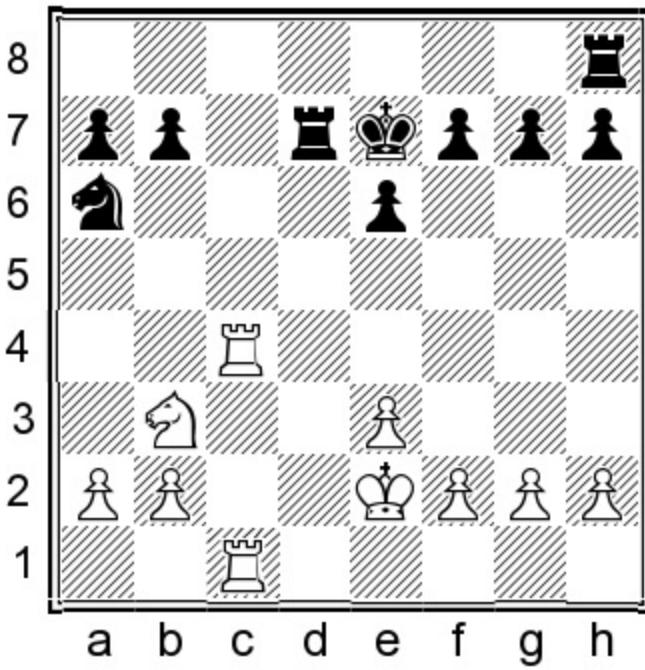


White's advantage is minimal, so it is interesting to see how Nimzowitsch exploits his space advantage with so few pieces on the board.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ?

From this square the knight has difficulty entering play. White's advantage would be only slight in the event of other knight moves: 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ !? 19. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (19. $\mathbb{Q}hc1$ !?) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ !?) 20. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  b6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  f5 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ; or 18... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ !? 19. $\mathbb{Q}hc1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (19...f5!?) 20. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ .

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}hc1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$



Black's position is already difficult, since he can hardly exploit the open d-file as a result of White's next two moves. White's control of the c-file, on the other hand, is much more important, as the continuation of the game demonstrates.

## 20.f4

It was more accurate to prepare the same plan as in the game by first playing 20. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  21.b4  $\mathbb{Q}hd8$  22.f4.

## 20... $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ !?

20...b5! would have reduced White's advantage, e.g. 21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (21. $\mathbb{Q}4c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ ) 21... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ .

## 21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ f6 22.a4!?

This prophylactic move is typical of Nimzowitsch's style but it was not strictly necessary, in view of the variation 22.b4! b5? (but even after the better response 22... $\mathbb{Q}b8!$ , 23.a4! a6 24.h4 g6 25.g4, would have maintained the pressure) 23. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d2+$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , with an overwhelming advantage to White.

## 22...e5!?

Trying to bring the stranded  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  into play with 22... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23.b4 b6 would have weakened the vital c6-square. Tarrasch therefore decides to 'die with his boots on'.

## 23.fxe5 fxe5 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 25.b4 b6 26. $\mathbb{Q}1c2$ !?

Prophylaxis, as on move 22, although objectively stronger would have been 26.  $\mathbb{E}e4!?$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  27.  $g4$   $h6$  28.  $\mathbb{E}c6+$   $\mathbb{E}8d6$  29.  $\mathbb{E}c8$ .

**26...h6 27.h4!  $\mathbb{E}d6!?$**

It was more tenacious to play 27...  $\mathbb{E}e8$  28.  $h5$   $\mathbb{E}ee7$  29.  $\mathbb{E}g4$   $\mathbb{E}c7$ , although after 30.  $\mathbb{E}d2!$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  31.  $\mathbb{E}d5$  White's advantage is clear.

**28.h5**

Fixing Black's weakness on g7.

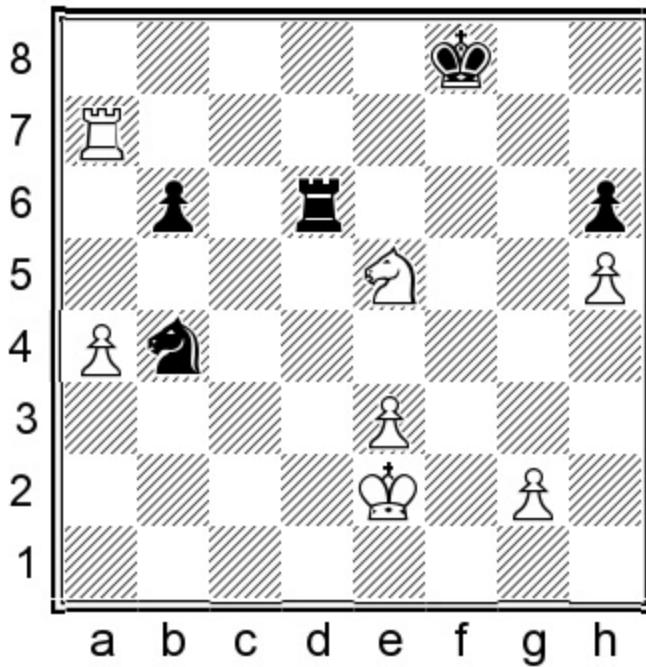
**28... $\mathbb{E}d5$  29.  $\mathbb{E}g4$   $\mathbb{E}5d7$  30.  $\mathbb{E}c6+$   $\mathbb{E}d6$**

30...  $\mathbb{Q}f5?$  loses immediately to 31.  $\mathbb{E}cg6!.$

**31.  $\mathbb{E}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

In the event of 31...  $\mathbb{Q}d5?$  32.  $\mathbb{E}cxsd6+$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  33.  $e4+!$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  34.  $b5+$ , White wins the  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ .

**32.  $\mathbb{E}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33.  $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  34.  $\mathbb{E}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**



Thanks to his two extra pawns, White now wins without difficulty.

**35... $\mathbb{E}e6$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  39.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  41.  $\mathbb{E}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  42.  $\mathbb{E}h8$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  43.  $\mathbb{E}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  44.  $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}xh6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  47.  $h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  48.  $g5$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  51.  $g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  52.  $h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  1-0**

This method of occupying an open file in symmetrical structures is often seen in modern tournaments.

Game 60  
Tarrasch Defence  
**Vladimir Kramnik** 2780  
**Roberto Cifuentes** 2505  
Villarobledo rapid 1998 (9)

**1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 d5 4.d4 c5 5.cxd5 exd5 6.♗xd4 exd5 7.e4 ♘c6 8.♗b5 ♘d7**

The main continuation is 8...dxe4!?, e.g. 9.♗xd8+ ♔xd8 10.♗g5 ♘e6 11.♗xe6+ fxe6 12.♗xc6 bxc6 13.♔e2 ♘b4 14.♗a4 ♘e7 15.♗d1 ♘hd8 16.♗xd8 ♘xd8 17.♗e3, with a slight advantage to White, Grischuk-So, Moscow 2019.

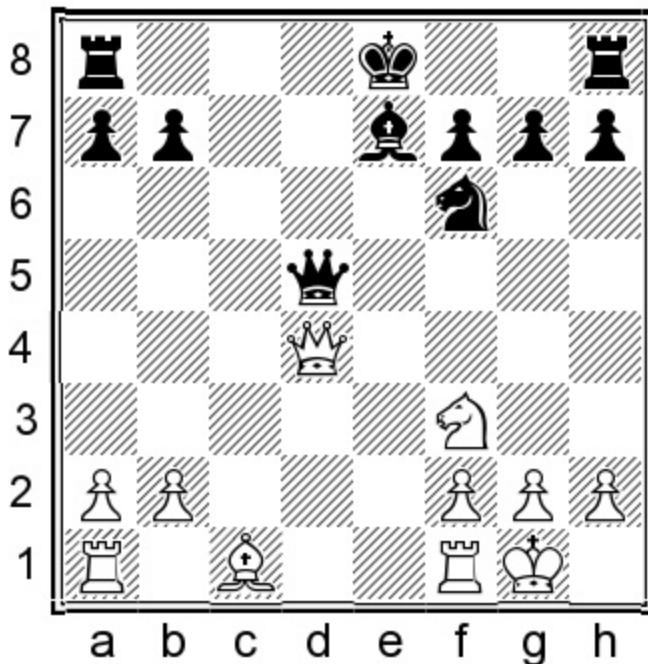
**9.♗xc6 ♘xc6 10.exd5 ♘xd5**

10...♗xd5?! 11.0-0 ♘c7 12.♗g4 ♘e6 13.♗g5! gives Black more problems.

**11.0-0 ♘e7**

Alternatives fail to equalize: 11...♗xf3 12.♗e3+! ♘e7 13.♗xf3 ♘d7 14.♗d1; 11...♗c6 12.♗e1+ ♘e7 13.♗e5; 11...♗e6 12.♗a4+ ♘d7 13.♗e1+ ♘e7 14.♗b4.

**12.♗xd5 ♘xd5**



The pawn structures are completely identical, but the black king is still in the centre, which gives White the better prospects.

**13.♗e1! ♖xd4 14.♘xd4 0-0-0!**

The best defence, though Stockfish's evaluation is already about 0.80.

**15.♖xe7**

15.♘f5? would be misguided due to 15...♗b4, with an equal position.

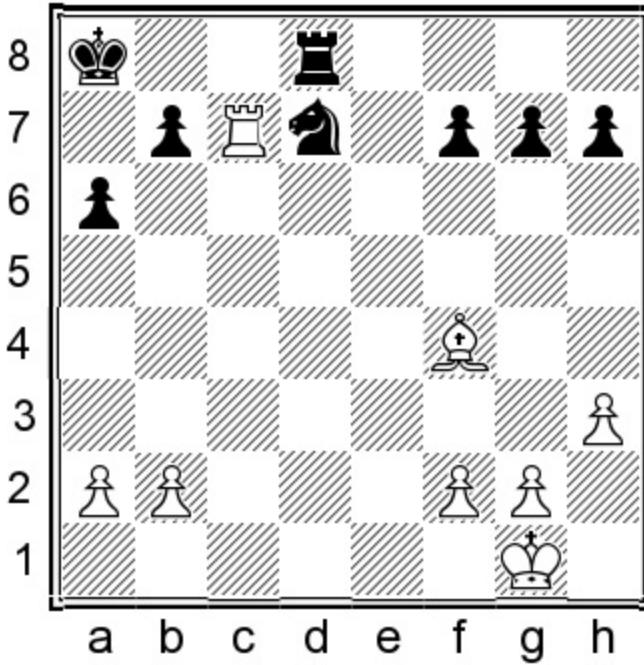
**15...♖xd4 16.♕e3 ♖d7 17.♖xd7!**

After 17.♖c1+ ♔d8 18.♖xd7+ ♔xd7 19.♔d4!? (19.♔xa7?! ♕a8) 19...♕g8! 20.♕xf6 gxf6 21.♖c4 ♕g5 22.♖h4 ♕b5 23.b3 h5 24.g3, the rook ending is better for White, although not easy to win.

**17...♘xd7 18.♖c1+ ♔b8?**

As Kramnik indicates, 18...♔d8 was more tenacious, although Black's position is still much worse: 19.♔xa7 b6 20.a3 h5! (20...♔e7?! 21.♖c6 ♕d8 (21...♕a8? 22.♘xb6) 22.♘f1, with a decisive advantage) 21.h4 ♕h6 22.g3 ♕e6 23.♔g2 f6 24.♖c4 ♕e7 25.b4, and Black's compensation for the pawn is inadequate.

**19.♘f4+ ♕a8 20.♖c7 ♕d8 21.h3 a6**



Black has preserved the material balance but his position is desperate, since he can hardly move. With his next move Kramnik begins a plan to gain space.

**22.b4!**

A little more accurate was 22.g4!? g6 23.b4 f6 24.h4.

**22...f6**

22...h5!.

**23.g4 g5 24.Qd6**

Now that the  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is weak, this move wins material.

**24...Qb6 25.Qc5 Qd5 26.Qxh7 b6 27.Qd4 Qd6 28.Qf7 Qf4 29.Qxf6 Qxh3+ 30.Qg2 Qf4+ 31.Qf3 Qh3 32.Qg3 Qd3+ 33.f3 Qg1 34.Qxg5 Qe2+ 35.Qf2 Qc3 36.Qf6**

Black resigned.

As a curious fact I can add that I also needed to win in this final round in order to draw level with Kramnik and a few other players on the same number of points. And on the way back to Madrid we travelled in the same train carriage with him and the winner of this tournament, Vishy Anand. It was not at all easy to foresee that two years later Vladimir Kramnik would convincingly win a match against Garry Kasparov...

### **3.2.2. Establishment of an outpost**

Sometimes it happens that control of an open file is not in itself enough to ensure immediate superiority, In that case the best measure is usually to establish an outpost on that file.

Game 61

Réti Opening

**Mikhail Botvinnik**

**Tigran Petrosian**

Moscow tt 1964 (2)

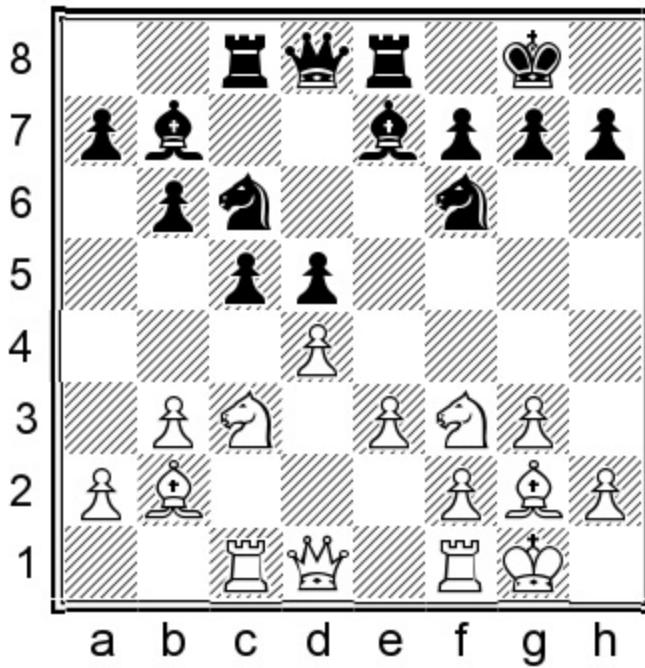
**1.c4 c5 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.Qc3 e6 4.g3 b6 5.Qg2 Qb7 6.0-0 Qe7 7.b3**

In Megabase there are more than 1700 games with this move, although 7.d4 and 7.Qe1 are respectively first and second in popularity.

**7...d5 8.e3 0-0 9.Qb2 Qc6 10.cxd5 exd5**

Riskier is 10...Qxd5 11.Qxd5 Qxd5 12.d4 Qad8 (12...Qf5!? 13.Qe5 Qxe5 14.Qxb7 Qad8) 13.Qe5 Qd6 14.dxc5 Qxc5 15.Qd7 Qf5 16.e4 Qg5 17.h4 Qh6 18.Qc1, and White has the better game, Malakhov-B.Savchenko, Turkey tt 2012.

**11.d4 Qe8 12.Qc1 Qc8**



**13.Qh3!?**

Taking advantage of the fact that there is not yet total symmetry, White forces the enemy rook to leave the potentially open file; it will take no further active part in the game.

Stockfish prefers 13.Qe1!? Qf8 14.Qe2 Qe4 15.Qf4 Qb4 (15...cxd4 16.Qxd4 Qe5 17.Qxc8 Qxc8 18.h3 (18.Qe2!) 18...Qd7 19.Qa1, with a slight advantage to White, Erigaisi-Aditya, Biel 2019) 16.a3 Qc6 17.Qe5!, with the better game for White.

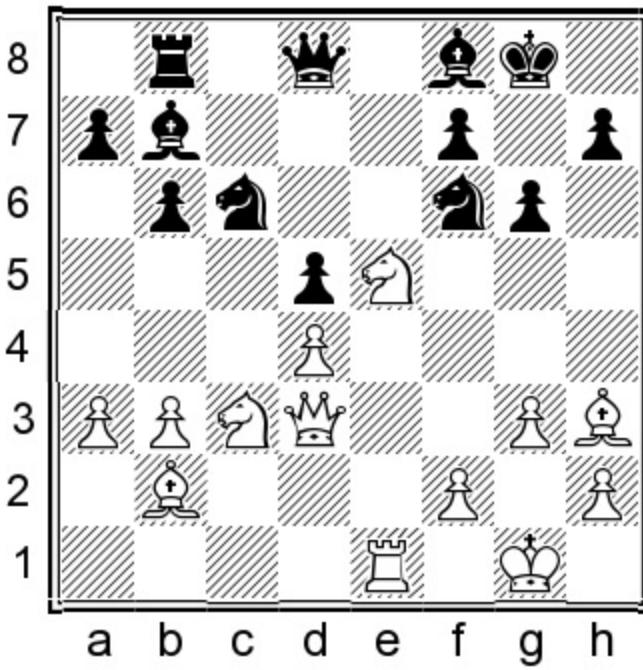
**13...Qb8 14.Qe1 cxd4 15.exd4**

Finally we have symmetry.

**15...Qb4 16.Qxe8+ Qxe8 17.a3 Qf8?!**

Now White establishes a outpost on e5 and thus gains some advantage. Better was 17...Qxc3! 18.Qxc3 Qe4 19.Qb2 Qc8 20.Qg2 Qf5.

**18.Qd3 g6 19.Qe1 Qd8 20.Qe5**



**20...Bg7**

Black cannot play symmetrically with 20...Bc4? due to 21.Bxf7! Qxf7 22.Bxe4 dxе4 23.Wc4+ Qg7 24.d5+, and White wins. With his move in the game Black prepares 21...Bc4, but his opponent disrupts this plan by advancing the Bf2 a step:

**21.f3 Ba5 22.Wd1**

After 22.b4?! Bc4! 23.Qc1 (23.Bxc4? dxс4) 23...b5, the Bc4 is at the very least not worse than the enemy Be5.

**22...a6 23.Ba2 Bc6 24.Qc3 Wc7 25.Wd2 a5**

The position is in dynamic equilibrium and apart from the text move there were other ways to keep the balance, e.g. 25...Be8!? 26.Qb2 Ba5 27.Wd3 Bd6 28.Qc1 We7 29.Qb4 Ee8 30.Qd7 (30.Qxa6? Bc4) 30...Ea8.

**26.Qb2 Wd6 27.Qc1**

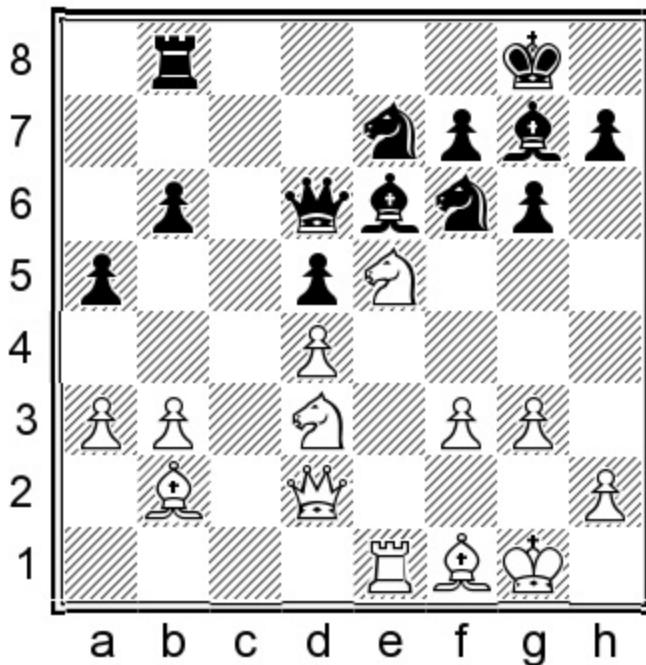
Here 27.Qc3!? Ba6 28.Qa4 Be7 29.Wf4 seems a slight improvement.

**27...Bc8 28.Qf1!?**

White avoids exchanges, since he has a space advantage. Stockfish gives the same evaluation of equality to this move as to the capture on c8. This is yet another case of discrepancy between human thought and the engine's opinion. For this reason I shall retain the comment I first made in the last century, merely changing the exclamation mark from '!' to '!?'.

**28...♝e6 29.♗cd3 ♜e7?!**

The start of a mistaken regrouping; 29...♝d7!? was better, e.g. 30.b4 axb4 31.♗xc6 (or 31.axb4 ♞dxe5 32.dxe5 ♜d7) 31...♜xc6 32.♘c1 (32.♗xb4 ♜a8) 32...♜a8 33.♗xb4 ♜f8 34.♗b5 ♜d7, with equality.



**30.b4!**

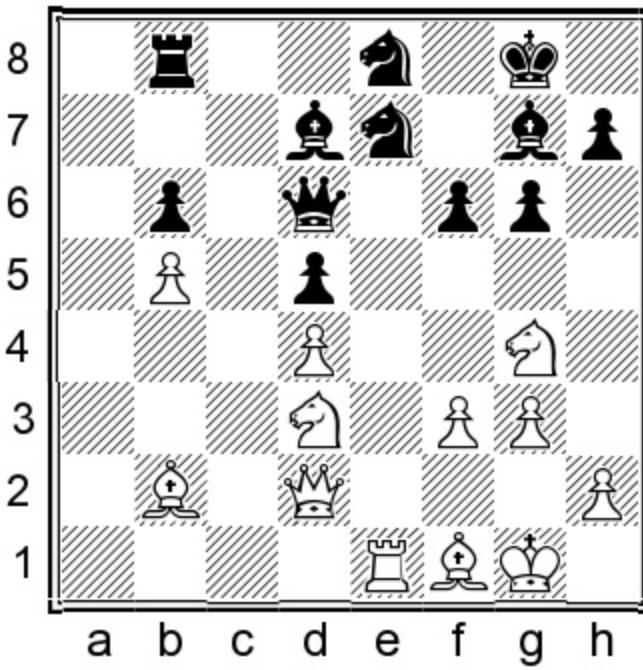
Embarking on a plan designed to control the c6-square.

**30...axb4 31.axb4 ♜e8 32.b5 f6**

Black prevents 33.♗b4 followed by 34.♗c6 and dislodges the proud ♜e5 from its dominating position. At the same time, though, Black weakens his position; now the e-file acquires greater importance and there the white rook will hold sway.

**33.♗g4 ♜d7?**

An error which allows Botvinnik to take his revenge, if only in a single game, for the match he lost the year before. Stockfish considers that there are a total of six (!) moves that maintain equality here, e.g. 33...♝f5!? 34.♗e3 (34.♗b4 ♜a8 35.♗c6 h5!?) 34...♝xe3 35.♜xe3 ♜f7 36.♘c1 ♜f8 37.♘c6 ♜d8 38.♗f4 ♜d6.



**34.  $\mathbb{Q}c3!$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}f8$**

Although the loss of a pawn cannot be avoided, more tenacious would have been 35...  $\mathbb{W}a3!?$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}b3$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}ge3!$  (37.  $\mathbb{Q}de3?!$   $\mathbb{Q}fd6$ ) 37...  $\mathbb{Q}ed6$ .

**36.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$   $\mathbb{Q}ed6$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  40.  $d5$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  41.  $\mathbb{E}e4$**

Even better would have been 41.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  42.  $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  43.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  44.  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $h6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  46.  $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  47.  $b6$ .

**41...  $h5$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$**

Slightly stronger was 42...  $\mathbb{Q}h6!?$  43.  $\mathbb{W}b2$  (43.  $\mathbb{W}d3?!$   $\mathbb{Q}e3!)$  43...  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$ .

**43.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  44.  $d6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  45.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$**

A miscalculation, but in any case the black position could hardly be saved.

**47.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

48...  $\mathbb{W}xd6??$  loses immediately to 49.  $\mathbb{E}e8+!$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  50.  $\mathbb{E}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}c5+$  51.  $\mathbb{W}d4$ .

**49.  $\mathbb{E}d4$**

Here 49.  $\mathbb{E}e6!$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  50.  $\mathbb{W}f4$  was even stronger, as Botvinnik pointed out.

**49...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  51.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

The two bishops against the enemy rook promise White an easy victory.

52...g5 53.♗a3 ♜d1 54.♗f2 ♗g7 55.♗b4 h4 56.gxh4 ♜d4 57.♗e1 ♜xh4 58.♗g3 ♜d4 59.♗f2 ♜d1  
60.♗c4 ♜d6 61.f4 ♗g6 62.fxg5 fxg5

And Black resigned, since he has no defence against the transfer of the ♜c4 to c6.

Game 62

Queen's Indian Defence

Igor Khenkin 2594

Gerlef Meins 2426

Bad Wiessee 2015 (6)

The winner of this game is a graduate of my chess department in Moscow. Right from the start, Igor preferred to play in a classical manner, including IQP structures, the Carlsbad structure and symmetrical structures, as in this case.

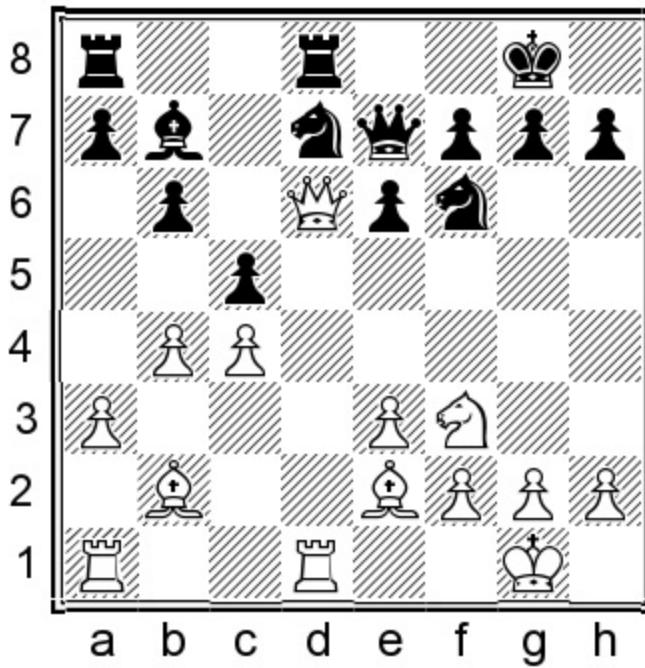
1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 ♜b4+ 4.♗bd2 0-0 5.a3 ♜xd2+

In 2006, when preparing this position with the young Fabiano Caruana, we decided that it is perfectly playable for Black. Nevertheless, nowadays Black generally prefers to preserve this bishop and the following game of Fabiano's is an example: 5...♝e7!? 6.e4 d6 7.♝e2 c5 8.d5 ♜bd7 9.♘c2 ♜e8 10.0-0 ♜f8 11.♗b1 ♜g6 12.♗c3 e5 13.♗e1 h6 14.♗d3 ♜h7 15.♘d1 ♜g5, with a position in the style of the Old Indian Defence, with chances for both sides, Grischuk-Caruana, Paris blitz 2019.

6.♘xd2 b6 7.e3 ♜b7 8.♗e2 d6 9.0-0 c5

Here 9...♗bd7 10.b4 ♜e4!? leads to more lively play. The following miniature game demonstrates Black's tactical chances: 11.♘c2 f5 12.♗b2 ♜f6 13.d5 ♜g6 14.♗ad1 e5 15.♗d3 c6 16.♗xe4 fxe4 17.♗xe4 cxd5 18.cxd5 ♜f6 19.♘c4 ♜c8 20.♗b3 ♜d7 21.♗e1?? (21.♗xe5! dxe5 22.♗xe5 ♜xd5!, with unclear play) 21...♝a6 22.f3 ♜c4! 0-1, Ivanchuk-Nisipeanu, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007.

10.b4 ♜bd7 11.♗b2 ♜e7 12.dxc5 dxc5 13.♗fd1 ♜fd8 14.♘d6

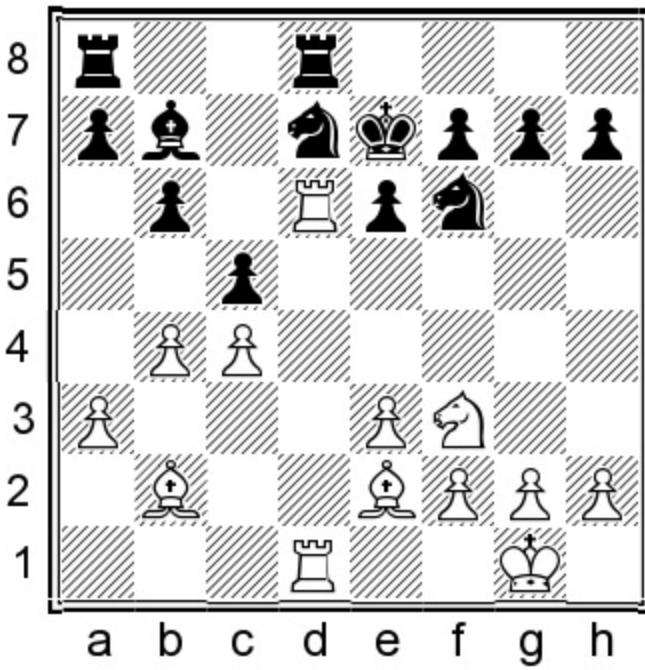


First the queen fulfils the role of outpost, but after the forced exchange of queens the rook takes its place.

**14... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  15. $\mathbb{R}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8?$**

This obvious move, bringing the king closer to the centre, is an error which makes the black position untenable within a few moves. Black could have maintained the balance with 15... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  16. $\mathbb{R}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17. $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{R}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{R}xd3$  f6, exchanging a pair of rooks and preparing ... $\mathbb{Q}g8-f7-e7$  without allowing the  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  to jump to e5 or g5. Another way to equalize was 15... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  16. $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{R}xd6$  17. $\mathbb{R}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  18. $\mathbb{R}d1$  f6.

**16. $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**



**17.Qg5!**

The obvious 17.Qe5?! is less strong due to 17...Qxe5 18.Qxe5 Qe8! (it is important to maintain the Qc5, since after 18...cxb4? 19.axb4 Qe8 20.Qxd8 Qxd8 21.Qa1 White's advantage is clear, Sivuk-Sai Agni, Heusenstamm 2017) 19.Qxd8 Qxd8 20.Qxd8 Qxd8 21.bxc5 bxc5, and Black can hold this slightly worse ending. In the Russian magazine 64, 2016/3, the editor Max Notkin commented that Igor had devised this move over the board in 2006, without knowing that it had already been played much earlier by GM Walter Browne. Both these games are given below.

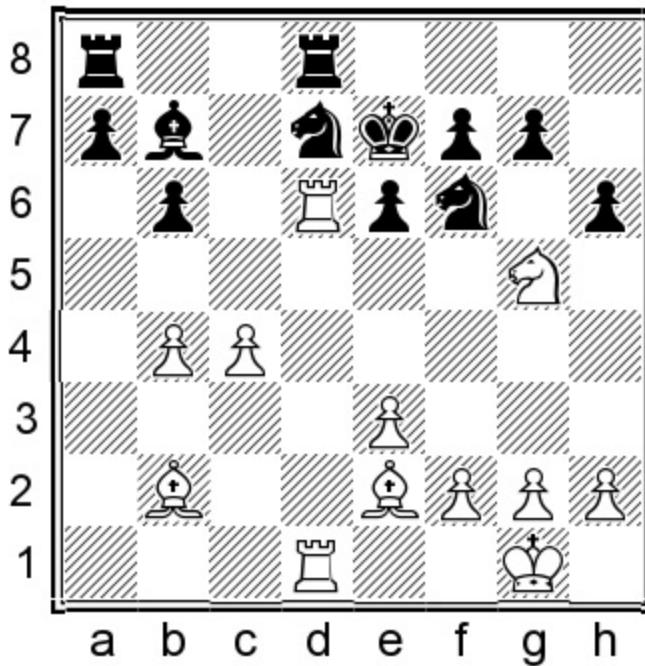
**17...cxb4**

Hardly better were 17...e5 18.f4! Qe4 (18...h6 19.Qxf7!) 19.Qxe4 Qxe4 20.fxe5, with an extra pawn that White converted without any problems, Browne-Tangborn, Reykjavik 1990, or 17...Qe8 18.Q6d2 Qef6 (18...f6 19.Qf7!) 19.Qxf7! Qxf7 20.Qxf6 Qxf6 21.Qxd7 Qxd7 22.Qxd7, with a decisive advantage to White, thanks to his extra pawn and rook on the seventh rank, as in the game Khenkin-Brunner, Belgium tt 2006.

The lesser of the evils would have been 17...Qe4 18.bxc5 Qg6 19.cxb6 axb6 20.Qc3 Qc5 21.Qxd8 Qxd8 22.Qxd8 Qxd8 23.f3 Qe8, although in this case too White's extra pawn and bishop pair would have left Black with few chances to survive.

**18.axb4 h6**

The invasion on f7 was inevitable, e.g. 18...Qe8 19.Q6d2 f6 20.Qf7!, winning.



**19. ♜xf7 ♜xf7 20. ♜xf6 ♜xf6 21. ♜xd7 ♜xd7 22. ♜xd7 ♜b8 23. f3 a5 24. b5 ♜c8**

24...a4 25. ♜d1 a3 26. ♜b3 would have changed nothing.

**25. ♜a7 ♜b7 26. ♜a8 ♜c7 27. ♜f2 ♜e7 28. ♜e1 ♜d6 29. ♜d2 e5 30. ♜c3**

The game is decided, since in addition to the extra pawn White's pieces are more active.

**30... ♜c5 31. ♜d3 ♜c7 32. h4 ♜e6 33. f4 exf4 34. exf4 ♜f7 35. g3 ♜e7 36. ♜d4 ♜d7 37. f5 ♜f7 38. g4 ♜c7+ 39. ♜c3 ♜e7 40. g5 hxg5 41. hxg5 ♜h5 42. g6 ♜f3 43. ♜f8 1-0**

Sometimes the most powerful piece can occupy the outpost, despite the presence of all the pieces on the board. It is curious that by using this method a master of only modest strength was able to beat the 9th World Champion, at the same time creating a miniature.

Game 63  
Pirc Defence  
**Rudolf Maric**  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
Vinkovci 1970

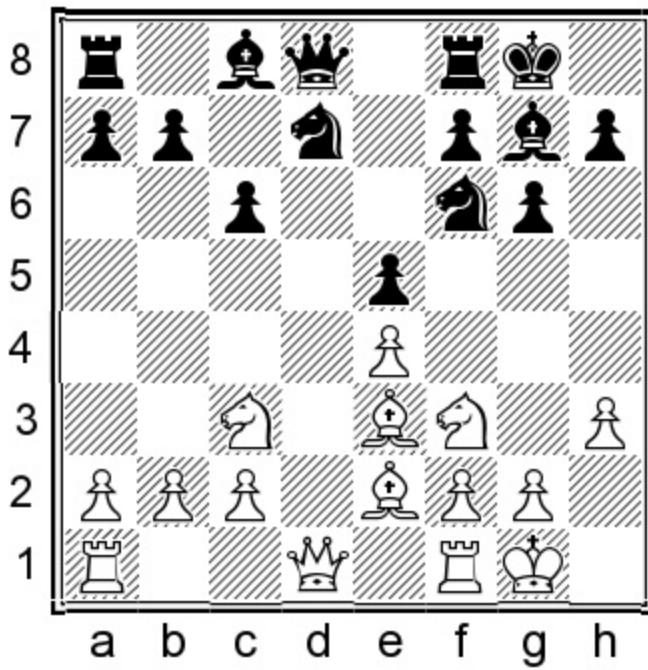
**1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♜f6 3. ♜c3 g6 4. ♜f3 ♜g7 5. ♜e2 0-0 6.0-0 c6**

This is still the most common move in this position.

**7.h3 ♜bd7 8. ♜e3 e5**

Curiously this is the main line, with statistics favourable to Black...

## 9.dxe5 dxe5



## 10.♕d6!

At first sight the ♕d6 can be easily expelled from its outpost, but things are not so simple. Stockfish prefers the white position and gives almost 0.70.

## 10...♝e8

White has some advantage in the event of 10...♝e8!? 11.♕d2 ♜e7 12.a4 (12.♗fd1 ♜ef6 13.a4 ♜c5 14.♗g5 ♜e6 (14...h6 15.♕d6!) 15.♗c4 ♜d8 16.♗e1) 12...♝c5 13.♗fd1! (13.b4?! ♜e6 14.♗ab1 ♜8c7 15.♗fd1 ♜d8 16.♗c1 ♜d4, with a comfortable game for Black, due to his knight outpost on the open file, Grandelius-Karthikeyan, Dubai 2015) 13...♝e6 14.♗c4.

Another possibility is 10...♝h5 11.♗c4 ♜f4 12.♗ad1 ♜e8 13.♗xf4 exf4 14.♗xf4 ♜e7 15.a4 ♜e5 16.♗xe5 ♜xe5, when Black has some compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

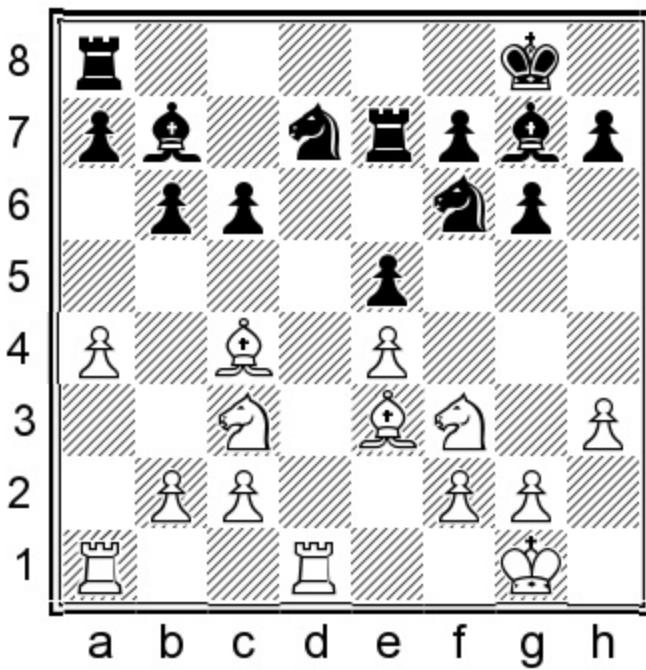
## 11.♗c4 ♜e7

It is understandable that Petrosian prefers to exchange the queens, since if he tries to evict the white queen with 11...♝f8 then after 12.♕d2 b5 (12...♝b6? 13.♗xd8 ♜xd8 14.♗xe5) 13.♗b3 b4 14.♗g5 bxc3 15.♗xf7+ ♛h8 16.♗xc3 ♛a6 17.♗fd1 White has very good compensation for the sacrificed piece, Kubicki-Brinkman, cr 2008; and if he postpones the queen exchange, first making the prophylactic move 11...h6, then White retains the better game after 12.a4 a5 13.♗fd1 ♜e7 14.♗xe7 ♜xe7 15.♗d2 ♜e8 16.♗a2.

**12.♗xe7 ♗xe7 13.a4 b6?!**

It was better to play 13...♝f8 14.a5 ♕e6 15.♕d3 ♐h5 16.♗fd1 h6 17.♔a4, although in this case too White maintains some advantage, Plenca-Medak, Mali Losinj 2019.

**14.♗fd1 ♜b7**



**15.♖d6**

Now this rook replaces the queen. A good alternative was 15.a5!?, e.g. 15...♜c8 16.axb6 axb6 17.♖a7.

**15...a6 16.♖ad1 b5 17.♗b3 h6**

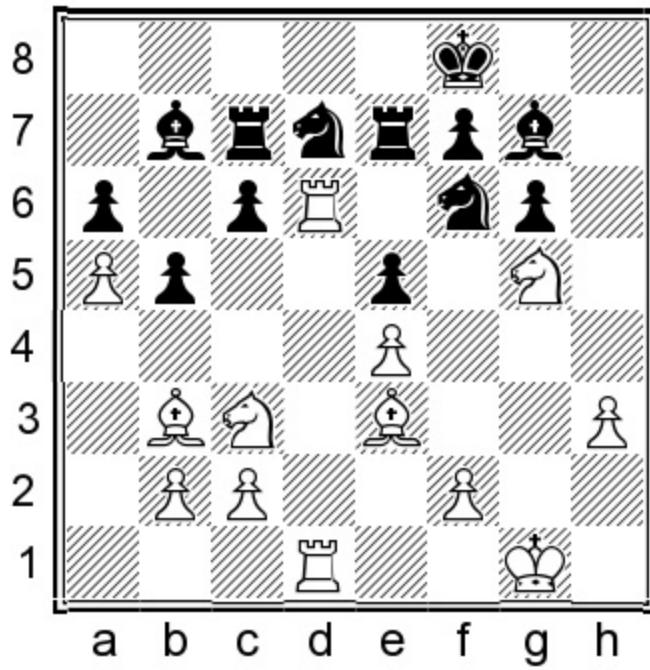
Defending against 18.♗g5, but White renews this threat:

**18.g4!**

Stockfish considers 18.♗h2!? to be even stronger, e.g. 18...c5 19.axb5 axb5 20.♗xb5 ♜xe4 21.♗g4 c4 22.♗xc4 ♜xc2 23.♖c1 ♜f5 24.♗xh6+.

**18...♜c8 19.g5 hxg5 20.♗xg5 ♜c7 21.a5 ♛f8?**

Here 21...♜h6 was more tenacious, e.g. 22.h4 ♛g7 23.♗xf7 b4 24.♗e2 ♜xg5 25.hxg5 ♛xf7 26.gxf6 ♛xf6.



**22... $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$**

After this blow the black position collapses like a house of cards.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  1-0**

### 3.2.3. Active deployment of the pieces

The following game by the 4th World Champion constitutes a classical example of the exploitation of this type of advantage.

Game 64

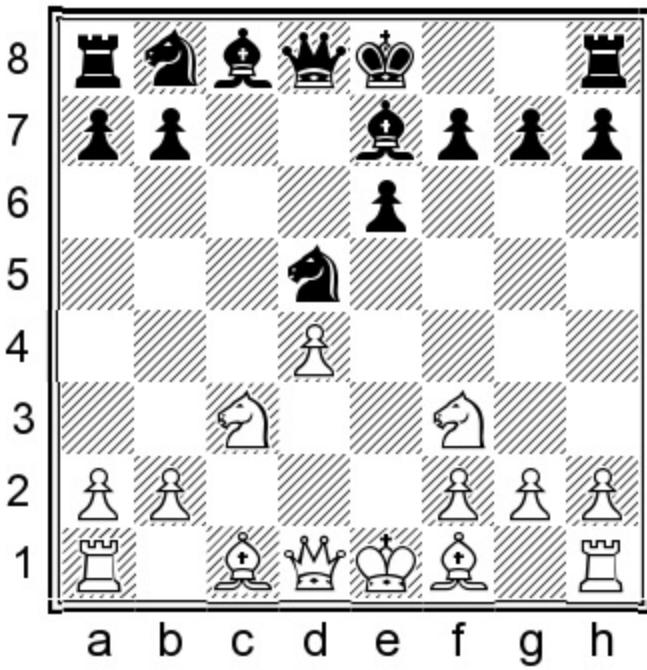
Tarrasch Defence

**Alexander Alekhine**

**Erich Eliskases**

Buenos Aires ol 1939 (5)

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**



**8.Qb5+**

The text move is not considered very promising; this is confirmed by the statistics, which show a positive score for Black. As we already know from the chapter on the IQP, the two main moves here are 8.Qd3 and 8.Qc4, in that order.

**8...Qd7**

A good alternative is 8...Qc6!?, e.g. 9.0-0 (9.Qe5 Qd7 10.Qxd7 Wxd7 11.0-0 0-0 with equality, Sai Agni-Turov, Budapest 2018) 9...0-0 10.We2 Qd7 11.Qd1 Qc8 12.Qxd5 exd5 13.Qe5 Qxe5, and Black has no problems, Iturriaga-Steinberg, Gibraltar 2018.

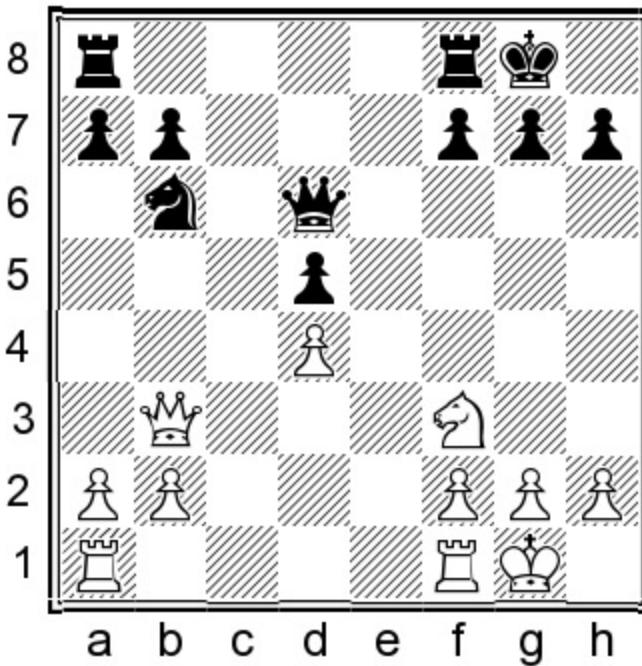
**9.Qxd7+ Qxd7**

According to Alekhine, Black has more possibilities after 9...Wxd7!?, e.g. 10.Qe5 Qxc3 11.bxc3 Wd5 12.0-0 Qc6; however, the engine gives the same evaluation of 0.00 to both moves.

**10.Qxd5 exd5 11.Wb3 Qb6 12.0-0 0-0 13.Qf4 Qd6**

Perhaps the simplest way would be to prevent the move Qf3-e5, at the cost of weakening the e6-square, with 13...f6!?, e.g. 14.Qfc1!? (14.Qac1 Qc8) 14...Qc8 15.Qxc8 Wxc8 16.Qe1 We8 17.Qc1 Wd7 18.Qd3 Qc4, when the square e6 is under control and Black appears to have no problems, e.g. 19.Qc5? Qxc5 20.dxc5 We2.

**14.Qxd6 Wxd6**



In the present position, White's queen and knight occupy more active positions than their black counterparts, which are tied to the defence of the  $\mathbb{d}5$ . It is far from easy to exploit such a small advantage, which makes Alekhine's handling of this game even more interesting.

### **15. $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{E}ac8$ 16. $\mathbb{E}ac1$ $h6$**

With this move Black makes it more difficult for him to play ...f7-f6, since then the g6-square would be left weak. The main challenge for the defender in such a position is the need to remain alert to the opponent's manoeuvres; it is also important not to be afraid to change the pawn structure, even though at present it seems so solid.

Apart from the text move there are four other moves that maintain equality. The simplest seems to be 16... $\mathbb{E}c4$ !?, e.g. 17.  $\mathbb{W}e3$  (17.  $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $dxc4$  18.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  (18.  $\mathbb{W}b5$ ?!  $a6$ !) 18... $\mathbb{E}c8$ , with balanced play) 17... $\mathbb{E}xc1$  18.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  19.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  20.  $b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  21.  $a4$   $h6$ , with equal chances; another possibility, also involving a change to the symmetrical structure, is the following line: 16... $f6$ !? e.g. 17.  $h4$   $\mathbb{E}xc1$  18.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19.  $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20.  $\mathbb{E}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  21.  $\mathbb{E}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  23.  $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$ , with sufficient counterplay for Black.

### **17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{E}c7$ 18. $g3$ $\mathbb{E}fc8$ 19. $\mathbb{E}xc7$ $\mathbb{E}xc7$ 20. $\mathbb{W}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

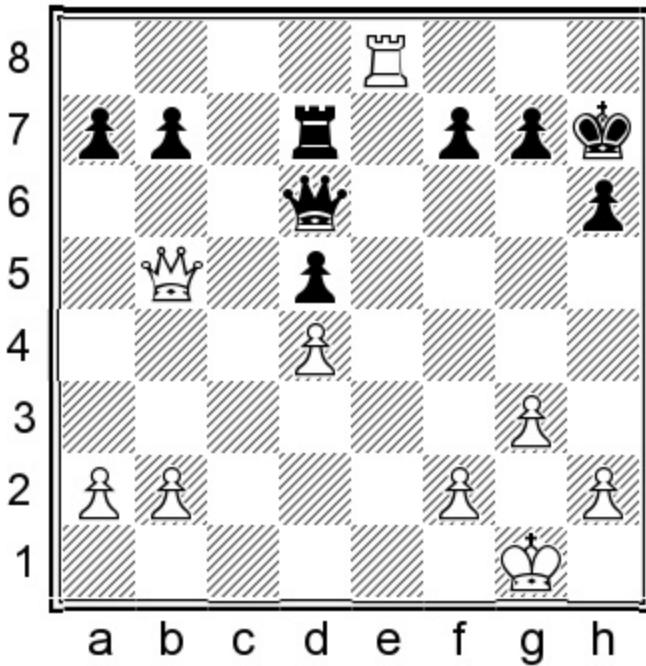
Exchanging knights but losing a tempo, which gives White a very slight advantage. Stockfish considers it more accurate to play 20... $g6$ !? 21.  $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  24.  $h5$   $gxh5$ ! 25.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $h4$  26.  $gxh4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $f6$ , with complete equality.

### **21. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{E}xd7$**

Here 21... $\mathbb{W}xd7$ ! looks risky, due to 22.  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  23.  $\mathbb{W}d3+$   $g6$  24.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  25.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  27.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}g1+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}f1+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$ , but then Black can maintain equality with 29... $g5$ ! 30.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$

$\mathbb{Q}g6!$ .

22.  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$



We find ourselves in a position with only major pieces left for both sides and which contains both endgame and middlegame features. White's control of the e-file and more active queen position tip the balance in his favour.

23.  $h4$   $a6??!$

This move increases White's advantage up to 0.70 according to Stockfish, analysing at great depth. It was better to seek counterplay with 23... $g6!?$ , unafraid of the weakening of the kingside, e.g. 24.  $h5$  (24.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $h5$ ) 24...  $gxh5$  25.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}e5$   $f6$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  29.  $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  30.  $\mathbb{E}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  31.  $\mathbb{W}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  32.  $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $\mathbb{W}e4+$ , with equality.

24.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  25.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $g6!?$

This advance is more or less forced now, since the alternatives seem inadequate, e.g. 26...  $\mathbb{W}g6?$  27.  $h5$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2?$  (28...  $\mathbb{E}d8$  29.  $a4$ ) 29.  $\mathbb{W}c2+$   $g6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}c8$ , winning; or 26...  $\mathbb{W}b4$  27.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  28.  $\mathbb{W}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29.  $b3$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  30.  $\mathbb{E}e7$ , with the better game for White.

27.  $h5$   $\mathbb{W}f6!?$

Now 27...  $g5!$  would have been better, changing the structure but giving the king more air.

28.  $\mathbb{W}e3$

If 28.  $hxg6+!$   $fxg6$  (28...  $\mathbb{W}xg6$  29.  $\mathbb{W}f3$ ) 29.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30.  $\mathbb{E}e6$  (or 30.  $b3!?$ , maintaining the tension)

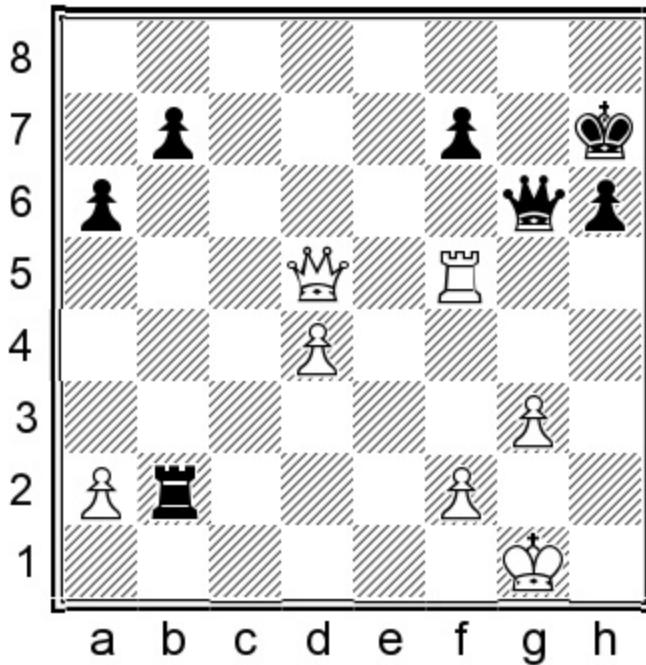
30... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  (30... $\mathbb{W}f5!$ ) 31. $\mathbb{E}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  32. $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  33. $\mathbb{W}g4+$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  34. $\mathbb{W}xd7$ , White wins a pawn.

**28... $\mathbb{E}d6$  29. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}b6!?$**

A good alternative was 29... $gxh5!?$  30. $\mathbb{E}xd5$  (30. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $h4!$ ) 30... $\mathbb{E}b6$  31. $\mathbb{W}c2+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32. $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  33. $\mathbb{E}h4$   $\mathbb{E}c6$ , with equality.

**30. $hxg6+$   $\mathbb{W}xg6$  31. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xb2$  32. $\mathbb{E}f5!$**

According to the engine this is the best move but objectively White's advantage is minimal; for instance, 32. $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33. $\mathbb{W}e5+$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  34.a4  $\mathbb{E}xf2$  35. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  36.dxe5  $\mathbb{E}a2$  leads to equality.



**32... $\mathbb{E}b5!?$**

A blunder, leading to a lost rook ending. It was essential to play 32... $\mathbb{Q}g8!$  with good possibilities of saving the game, e.g. 33.a3!? (33. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{E}e2!$ ; 33.a4  $\mathbb{E}b4!$ ; 33. $\mathbb{E}f4$   $\mathbb{E}b1+!?$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}b5$  35. $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  36. $\mathbb{E}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ) 33... $\mathbb{W}e6$  34. $\mathbb{W}f3$  (or 34. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  fxe6 35. $\mathbb{E}f6$   $\mathbb{E}e2$  36. $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  37. $\mathbb{E}h5$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  38. $\mathbb{E}h4$   $\mathbb{E}a2$ ) 34... $\mathbb{E}b1+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}e1$  36.a4  $\mathbb{W}g1+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  38. $\mathbb{W}xh1$   $\mathbb{E}xh1+$  with a drawish rook ending.

**33. $\mathbb{E}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  34. $\mathbb{E}f6+$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$  35. $\mathbb{E}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  36. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  37. $\mathbb{E}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{E}a4$  39. $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g2$**

With two connected passed pawns against one on the opposite wing, White has an easy win.

**40...a5 41. $\mathbb{E}a6$  a4 42. $\mathbb{E}a7$  a3 43.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  44.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}a1$  46. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{E}g1+$  47. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}g2$  48.f4 a2 49. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  1-0**

The next two games are examples with more pieces and are therefore more complex.

Game 65  
Ruy Lopez  
**Fabiano Caruana** 2774  
**Vasily Ivanchuk** 2755  
Thessaloniki 2013 (2)

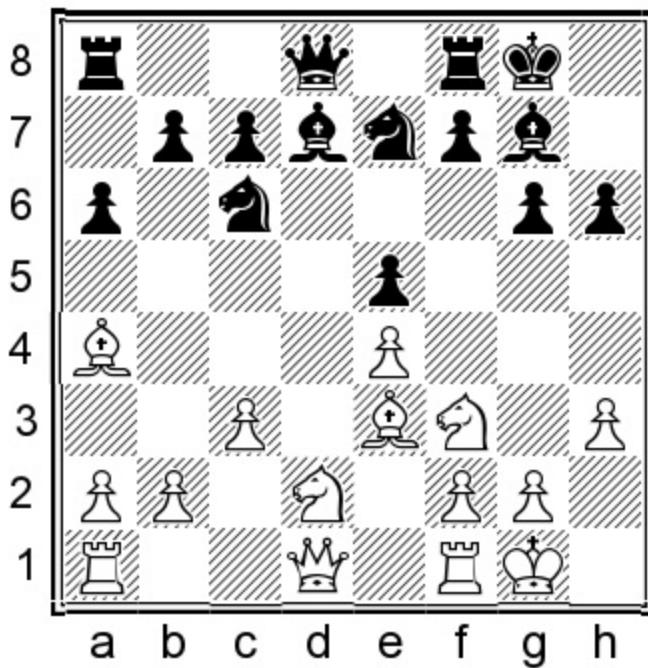
**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 d6 5.c3 g6**

Another common continuation here is 5...♗d7 6.d4 ♗ge7 7.♗b3 h6 8.♗bd2 ♗g6. However, in this game Ivanchuk chooses the variation with the fianchetto of the ♗f8, which was frequently played by the first Russian World Champion, Alexander Alekhine.

**6.d4 ♗d7 7.0-0 ♗g7 8.h3 h6**

More frequently seen and seemingly more accurate is 8...♗f6!? 9.♔e1 0-0, as in Caruana-Andreikin, Moscow 2013.

**9.♗e3 ♗ge7 10.♗bd2 0-0 11.dxe5 dxe5**



**12.♗c5**

The white bishops and the ♗f3 are somewhat more active than their black counterparts. Stockfish prefers 12.♗b3!? ♔c8 13.a4 b6 14.♗c4.

**12...♔e8 13.♔e1 b6 14.♗a3 ♗a7**

Black equalized after 14... $\mathbb{W}c8$ !? 15. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  b5 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  18.axb3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  in Gopal-Krzyzanowski, Budapest 2019; 14...b5!? 15. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  16. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}ec6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  also deserved attention.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}e6$**

16... $\mathbb{W}xd1$ !? 17. $\mathbb{Q}axd1$   $\mathbb{Q}ec6$  18.b3  $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  leads to equality.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$ !?**

It was better to block the  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ , at the cost of increasing White's control of the d5-square; in this way Black can keep the game in approximate balance, e.g. 17... $c5$ ! and now:

A) 18. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}xb3$  19.axb3 a5 20. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (20.b4?! cxb4 21.cxb4 a4 22. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}ec8$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}ec8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}ed1$   $\mathbb{Q}8e7$ ;

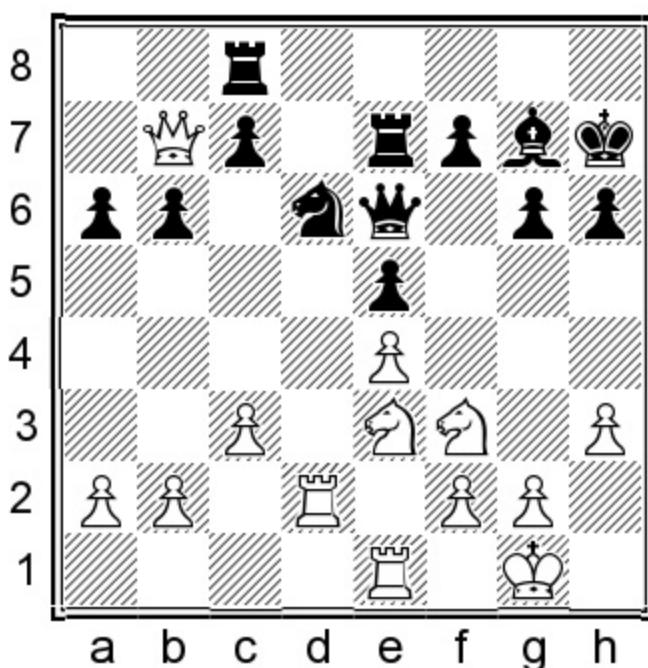
B) 18.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ;

C) 18.c4!?  $\mathbb{Q}ed8$  (18...a5!?) 19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}ac6$  21.b3  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 24. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25.exd5  $\mathbb{W}d7$ , with equality.

**18. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  19. $\mathbb{W}a4$**

White could have maintained some advantage with 19. $\mathbb{W}d5$ !? $\mathbb{W}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ? 23. $\mathbb{Q}ed1$ ) 23. $\mathbb{Q}ed1$ , but the position would be simplified, thus probably reducing White's winning chances.

**19... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  20. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  23. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$**



**24.♗xd6!**

It is possible that a more experienced player would play 24.♘c6!? here, maintaining the pressure. However, the twenty-one-year-old Caruana prefers a positional sacrifice, radically changing the course of the game. Stockfish, comparing both possibilities, confirms that the move in the game is slightly better.

**24...cxsd6 25.♘xa6 ♜cc7?!**

It was worth considering an idea in the style of the Sveshnikov Variation of the Sicilian Defence, sacrificing his queenside for an attack on the kingside: 25...f5!?:

A) 26.exf5? gxf5 27.♘xb6? (27.♗h4 ♜f8, with chances for both sides) 27...f4 28.♗f1 d5, with a big advantage to Black;

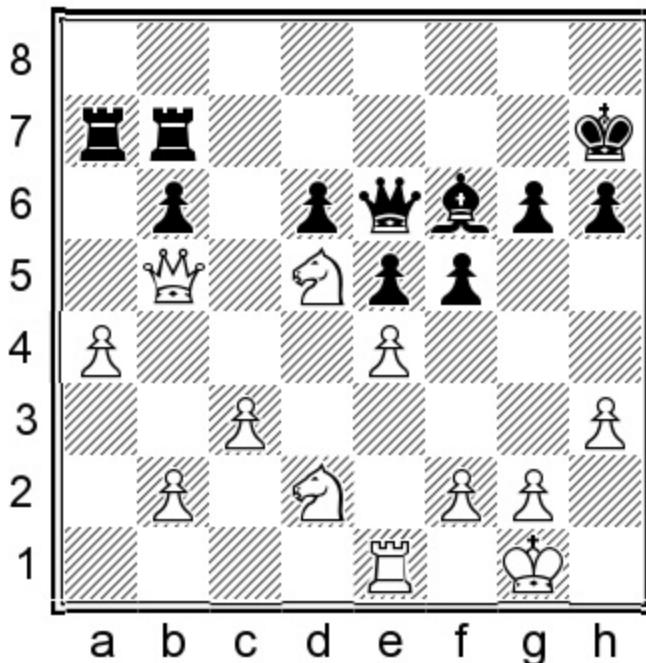
B) 26.♗d2 ♜f7 (26...♜b8) 27.a4 ♜b8 28.♘b5 ♜f6 29.♗d5 ♜h4;

C) 26.♘xb6! ♜a8 27.a3 ♜ee8 28.♗d5 ♜eb8 29.♘e3 fxe4 30.♘xe4 ♜f5 31.♗b4 ♜xe4 32.♗xe4 d5, with counterplay for Black. It should be said that Ivanchuk employed this idea later, but under worse conditions.

Another possibility, without sacrificing the ♜b6, was also better than the text move: 25...♜b8!?  
26.♗d5 ♜eb7 27.a4 f5 28.♗d2 ♜f6.

**26.♗d5 ♜a7 27.♘b5 ♜eb7 28.a4 f5 29.♗d2 ♜f6**

Scarcely any better was 29...♜a5 30.♘c6 ♜b8 31.b4 ♜c8 32.♘b7 ♜xd5 33.exd5.



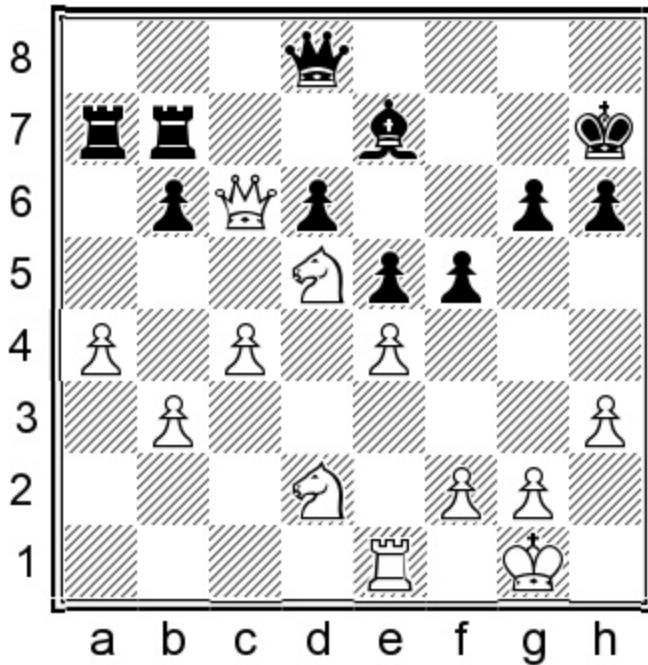
**30.♘e8!**

This move reminds me vividly how, even at a very young age, Fabiano could immediately perceive the tactical resources available in the position.

**30...♝e7**

30...♝f7 was no better, e.g. 31.♗c4!? (31.♗c6!?) 31...fxe4 32.♗xf7+ ♜xf7 33.b3 ♜h4 34.g3, with a clear advantage to White.

**31.c4 ♜g8 32.♗c6 ♜d8 33.b3**



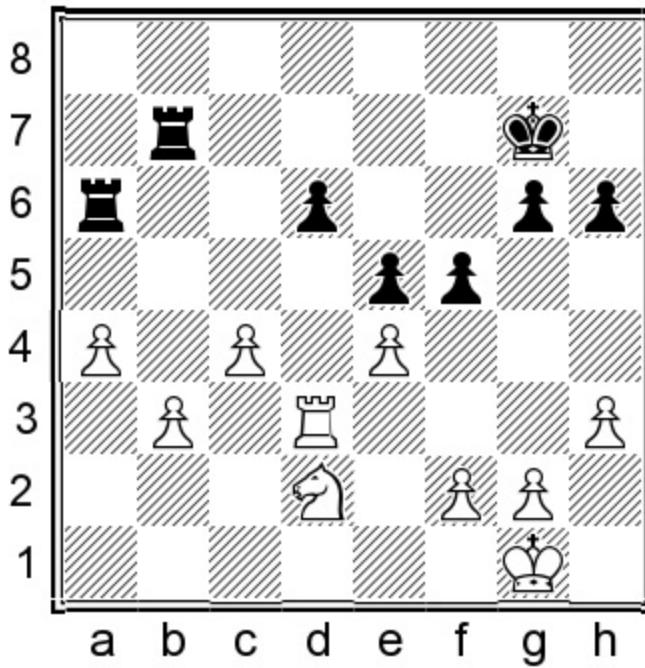
**33...♜d7**

It seems that Ivanchuk is tired of this thankless defence and so forces the exchange of queens, but at the cost of losing the ♜b6. It was more tenacious to play 33...♜b8!? 34.♜d1 ♜f8 35.g3 f4 36.g4 ♔g7 37.♗f3 ♜c8.

**34.♜xd7 ♜xd7 35.♗xb6 ♜db7 36.♗c8 ♜a6**

The black position is difficult but 36...♜a5 was a slight improvement.

**37.♗xe7 ♜xe7 38.♜e3 ♔g7 39.♜d3 ♜b7**



**40.♔f1!**

With this move Caruana starts to transfer his king to c3, which will allow the queenside pawns to begin their advance.

**40...♜ab6 41.♕e2 ♔f6?**

It was necessary to play 41...fxe4! 42.♖d5 ♔f8 43.♕e3 ♔e7 44.♕xe4 ♕e6, and Black can still resist.

**42.♕d1 ♕e6 43.♕c2 h5 44.f3 ♕f6 45.♕c3 ♜a6 46.♖d5 ♕g5**

Ivanchuk tries to attack the white pawns on the kingside, in order to divert White's attention, but Caruana simply ignores him.

**47.a5 ♕f4 48.b4 ♕g3 49.♗b3 ♕xg2 50.b5 ♜a8 51.♖xd6 ♕xf3 52.a6 ♜g7 53.♗c5 fxe4 54.b6 e3 55.♖f6+ 1-0**

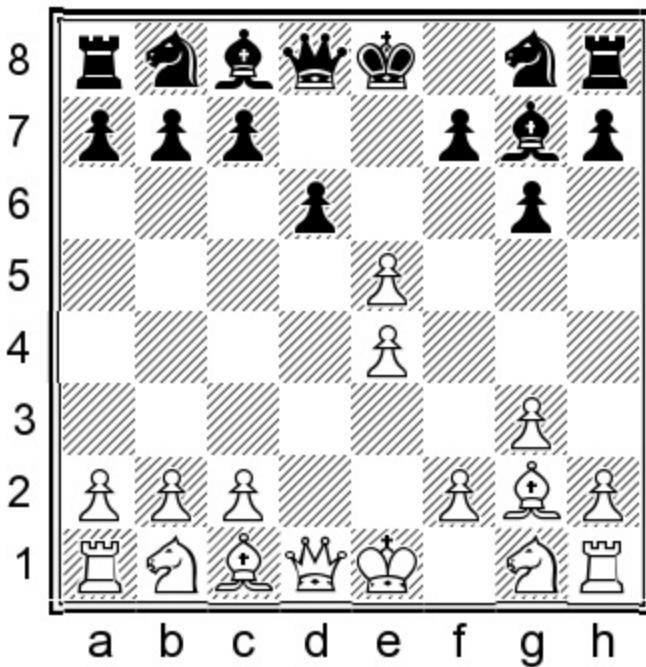
Game 66  
 King's Fianchetto  
**Boris Gulko** 2606  
**Teimour Radjabov** 2533  
 Malmö 2001 (2)

**1.g3 g6 2.♗g2 ♜g7 3.d4 d6 4.e4 e5?!**

The main line here is 4...♗f6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.0-0 e5 7.♗bc3 ♜c6 8.dxe5 dxe5, which also leads to a symmetrical structure, in which the statistics clearly favour White (over 65%; in contrast, 8...♗xe5!?

makes an even score).

## 5.dxe5!?



‘Usually experienced players are better in positions without queens, whereas younger players are better in positions that require calculations’ – Gulko.

## 5...dxe5

In the event of 5...dxe5 the bishop will soon have to return to g7, losing time.

## 6.Qxd8+ Nxd8 7.b3

Another plan is 7.f4!? Nf6 (7...exf4!? 8.gxf4 Ng6) 8.Nc3 Ng6 9.Nf3 Ne6 10.Qd2 h6 11.0-0-0 Nc8 12.Bhf1 Be8 13.b3 (13.f5!?) 13...Nb8 14.Bde1 a6 15.Bh4 Nd4 16.f5!, with a strong initiative to White, Khenkin-Hickl, Lucerne 1994.

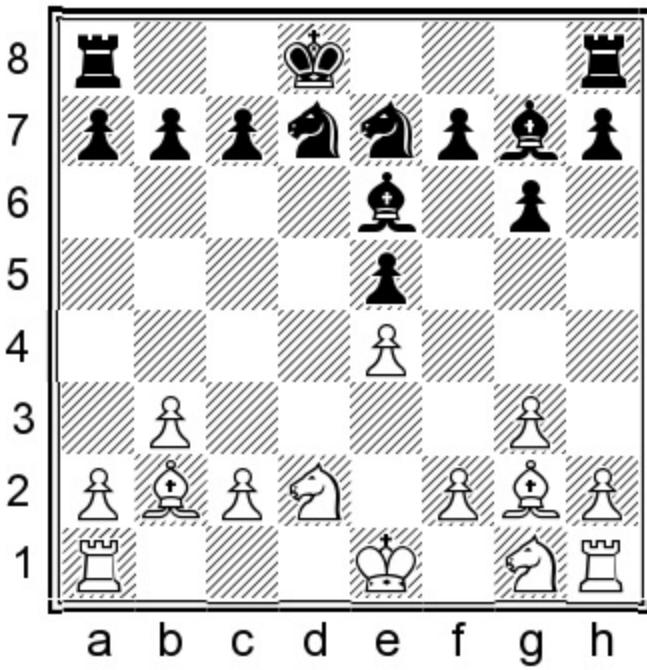
## 7...Ne6

Possibly more accurate was 7...c6!?, with the common idea of placing the king on c7, e.g. 8.Bb2 Nc7 9.f4 Bd7 10.Nf3 Ngf6 11.fxe5 Ng4, with chances for both sides.

## 8.Qb2 Nd7

Again 8...c6!? deserved attention, e.g. 9.Qh3 Nxh3 10.Qxh3 f6 11.f4 Nd7 12.Qf2 Nh6 13.Qd2 Be8 14.0-0-0 Qf7 15.h4 Nc7 16.Qd3 Bb8, and Black defends the vulnerable point on d6.

## 9.Qd2 Ne7



**10.Qh3!?**

Exchanging his passive bishop for his opponent's good one, and at the same time making the c4-square available for his knight. From my own experience in rapid chess I know that the exchange of these bishops is favourable to White. However, Stockfish prioritizes the advance f2-f4 and gives a higher evaluation to other moves, e.g. 10.Qh3 f6 11.f4 Qc6 12.Qf3 Re8 13.Qd1 Qc8 14.0-0 Qh6 15.fxe5 Qe3+ 16.Qh1 Qcxe5 17.Qf4 Qxf4 18.gxf4 Qxf3 19.Qxf3 f5 20.exf5 Qxf5 21.Qfe1, 0.78.

**10...Qxh3**

In the event of 10...f5? 11.Qgf3 h6 12.0-0-0 White's advantage is clear.

**11.Qxh3 f6**

Here a good alternative is 11...Qc6!? 12.f4 Qc8 13.0-0-0 b6 14.Qf2 Rg8 15.f5 Qb7, placing the king in a secure location.

**12.0-0-0 Qe8??**

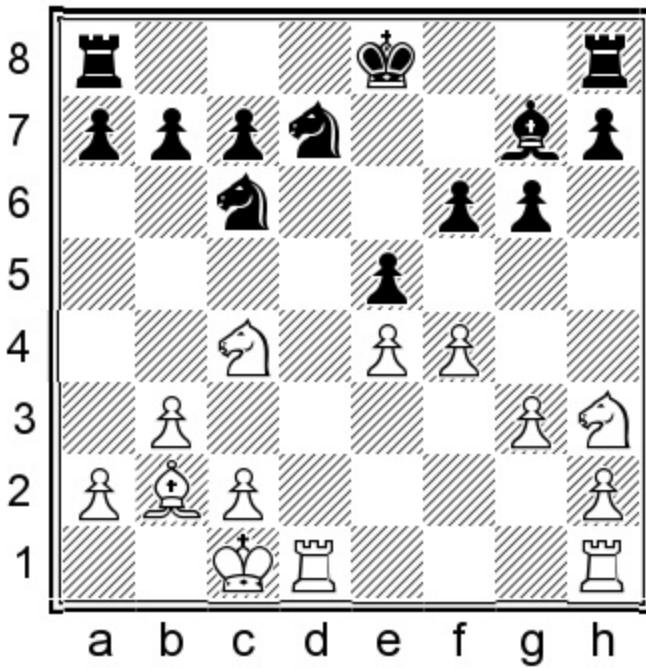
With this move Radjabov wants to connect his rooks after playing ...Qf7. By now it was no better to move the king to its usual spot on c7, e.g. 12...c6? 13.f4! Qc7 14.fxe5 Qxe5 15.Qh1 Qg4 16.Qf4 Qh6 17.Qb1! Qe3 18.Qe6+ Qc8 19.Qc4 Qxf1 20.Rxf1 b5 21.Qxf6, with a clear advantage to White.

It would have been best put the king on b7, although this would require more preparation: 12...Qc8! 13.f4 Qc6 14.Qf2 exf4 15.gxf4 Qh6 16.Qd3 b6! 17.Qdf1 Qb7 18.Qb1 Rae8, with chances for both sides.

**13.f4! ♜c6**

Radjabov tries to keep the position closed. This is better than playing 13...exf4?! 14.♘xf4 ♔f7 15.♖hf1 ♕ad8 16.g4 ♕he8 17.g5, when the black king comes under fire from the enemy pieces.

**14.♘c4**



**14...♝b6?!**

The white pieces are more active, so it is understandable that Radjabov wants to exchange some pieces to reduce White's pressure. Nevertheless, 14...♜d8! was better, e.g. 15.♘e3 ♜c5 16.♘d5 ♜d7 (16...♞xe4? 17.♘xc7+ ♔f7 18.♖de1) 17.♖he1!? (or 17.♘f2 ♜d8 18.♖hf1 ♜c8) 17...♔d8 18.♖a3 ♜e6 19.c3 ♜c8 20.f5 gxf5 21.exf5 ♜ed4!, and White's advantage is only small.

**15.♘e3!**

Of course; White prevents the exchange of knights, which would weaken White's initiative: so not 15.♘xb6?! axb6 16.a4 ♜d8.

**15...♜d8 16.♘d5 ♜xd5?!**

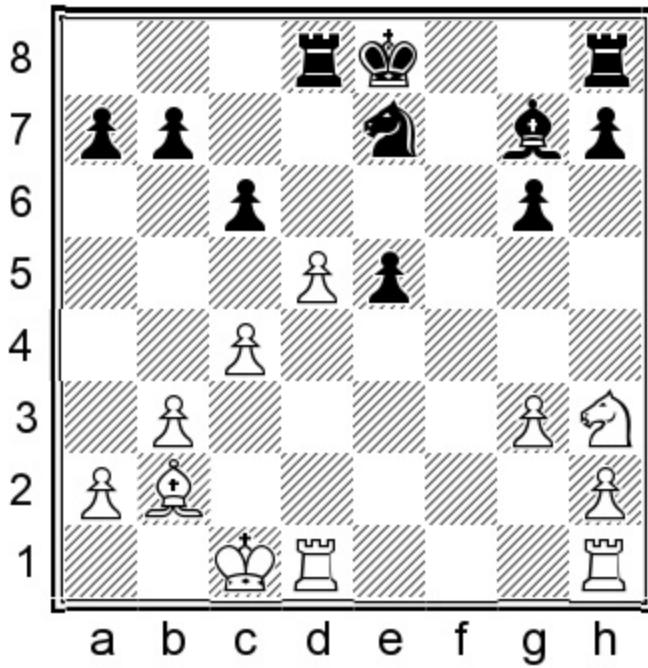
Here 16...♜d7! was stronger, e.g. 17.♖hf1 (17.a4 ♜d8!?) 17...♝d4! 18.♗b1 ♜e6 19.a4 c6 20.♘xb6 ♜xd1+ 21.♖xd1 axb6 22.f5 ♜c7 23.♘f2 ♜f8, and Black has defensive resources.

**17.exd5 ♜e7**

In the event of 17...♝b4? 18.fxe5 fxe5 19.c4! ♜xa2+ 20.♗b1 ♜b4 21.♗g5, White's advantage is

decisive.

**18.c4 c6 19.fxe5 fxe5**



**20.♘f4**

Gulko, like most strong players, prefers forcing lines, such as this one. However, a better alternative was 20.d6! ♘f5 21.c5 ♔d7, when the blockade of the ♘d6 is not secure, e.g. 22.♖de1 b6 23.g4 ♘h6 24.♘g5! bxc5 25.♘e4 ♘xg4 26.h3 ♘h6 27.♖d1, and the ♘d6 should ensure victory for White.

**20...exf4**

In the event of 20...cxd5!? 21.♘e6 d4!? (21...♔h6+ 22.♔c2) 22.♘xd8!? (22.♘xg7+!? ♔f7 23.♕xd4 ♕xd4 24.♕xd4 exd4 25.♕e1 ♘c6 26.♘e6 ♘f6 27.♘c5 b6 28.♘d3, with the better ending for White) 22...♔xd8 23.♕df1 ♔e8 24.♕f2 ♘f5 25.♕e1 h5 26.♘c2 Black would not really have sufficient compensation for the exchange, but this seems somewhat better than the game continuation.

**21.♕xg7 ♕g8 22.♘f6 ♕f8**

Or 22...♔f7 23.♕g5! (23.♕xe7!? ♔xe7 24.♕he1+ ♔f6 25.gxf4) 23...cxd5 24.♕hf1 ♕d7 25.♕xf4+, with a clear advantage to White.

**23.♕xe7**

It was far from easy for Gulko to decide over the board whether there were better winning chances with the move in the game or with 23.♕g5! ♕f5 24.h4 h6 25.♕xf4 cxd5 26.♕xh6 dxc4 27.♕xd8+ ♕xd8 28.bxc4 ♕f2; however, Stockfish indicates that with 29.♕d1+ ♔e8 30.♕d2 ♕f3 31.♕g5! ♘c6

32.  $\hat{B}f4$   $\hat{B}c3+$  33.  $\hat{B}c2$   $\hat{B}f3$  34.  $\hat{B}b2$  White is able to consolidate his position, obtaining an extra pawn without having to exchange his bishop for the black knight.

**23...  $\hat{B}xe7$  24.  $\hat{B}he1+$   $\hat{B}f6?$**

Better was 24...  $\hat{B}d7!$  25.  $dxc6+$  (25.  $gxf4$   $\hat{B}c7$  26.  $d6+$   $\hat{B}c8$  27.  $\hat{B}e7$   $\hat{B}d7$ , and the weakness of the  $\hat{B}f4$  gives Black good chances of salvation) 25...  $\hat{B}xc6$  26.  $\hat{B}e6+$   $\hat{B}c7$  27.  $\hat{B}e7+$   $\hat{B}c6$  28.  $\hat{B}xd8$   $\hat{B}xd8$  29.  $gxf4$   $\hat{B}f8$  30.  $\hat{B}xh7$   $\hat{B}xf4$  31.  $\hat{B}b2$   $a5$  32.  $\hat{B}a3$   $b5!$ , and White can't convert his extra pawn.

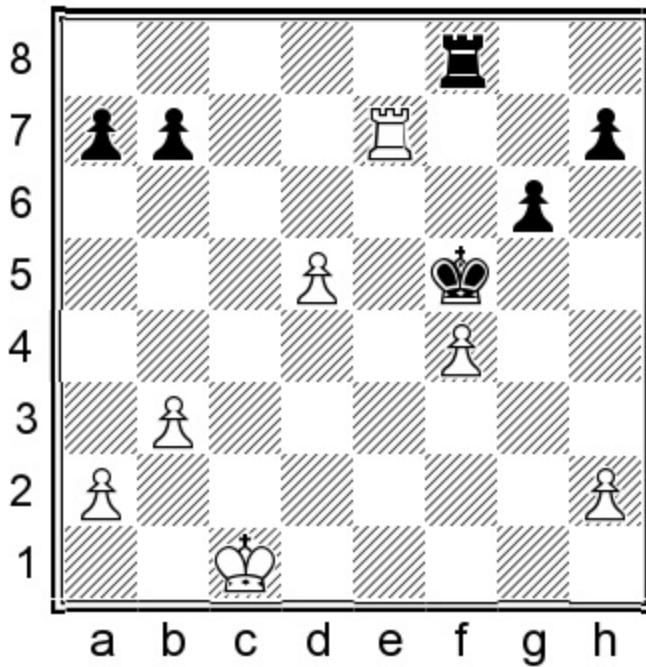
**25.  $gxf4$   $cxd5$  26.  $\hat{B}xd5!$**

Not 26.  $cxd5?!$   $\hat{B}d7$  27.  $\hat{B}e5$   $\hat{B}fd8$ .

**26...  $\hat{B}xd5$  27.  $cxd5$   $\hat{B}f5!$**

Seeking counterplay; in the event of 27...  $\hat{B}d8?$  28.  $\hat{B}e5$   $h6$  29.  $h4$  the advance of the white king to the centre would decide the game.

**28.  $\hat{B}e7$**



Thus a symmetrical structure has been transformed into this rook ending, which should be winning for White.

**28...  $h5!$**

The best defence. Instead, 28...  $\hat{B}d8?$  fails to 29.  $\hat{B}xb7$   $\hat{B}xd5$  30.  $\hat{B}xa7$ , while 28...  $\hat{B}xf4?$  loses after 29.  $\hat{B}c2$   $\hat{B}d8$  30.  $\hat{B}xb7$   $a6$  31.  $\hat{B}xh7$   $\hat{B}xd5$  32.  $\hat{B}c3$   $a5$  33.  $a3$   $\hat{B}d8$  34.  $b4$   $axb4+$  35.  $axb4$   $\hat{B}e5$  36.  $b5$   $\hat{B}d6$  37.  $\hat{B}b4$   $\hat{B}a8$  38.  $h4$   $\hat{B}a1$  39.  $\hat{B}g7$   $\hat{B}h1$  40.  $\hat{B}xg6+$ .

**29.♗xb7 ♔xf4 30.d6**

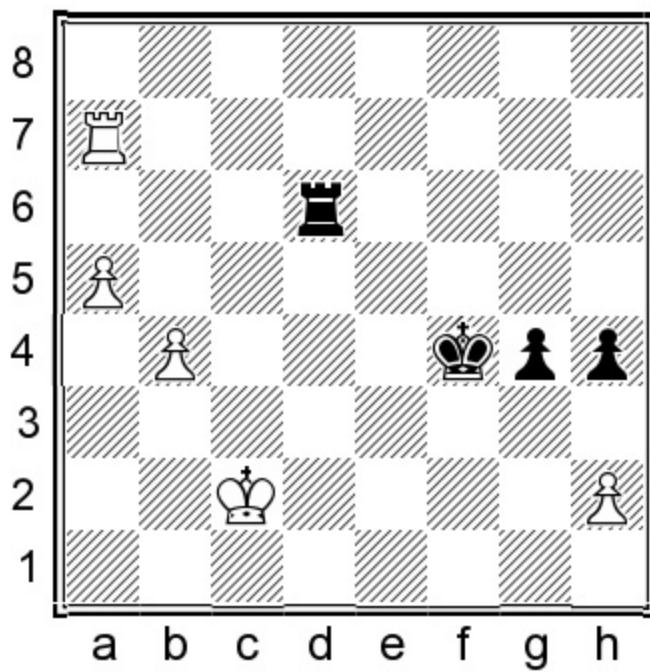
30.♗xa7!? ♔e5 31.a4.

**30...♗d8!**

30...a5? 31.♗b5 ♗d8 32.♗d5 would have been worse.

**31.♗xa7 ♗xd6 32.a4 h4 33.a5 g5 34.♔c2 g4 35.b4?**

This obvious move could have led to a draw. The way to win was 35.♗h7! ♗c6+ 36.♔d3 h3 37.b4 ♔f3 38.♗g7.



**35...♔e4?**

Miraculously Black could still save the game with 35...g3! 36.hxg3+ hxg3 37.♗f7+ ♔e3 38.♗g7 ♔f3 39.♔b3 ♕e6!! 40.b5 ♕e3+ 41.♔c4 ♕e4+ 42.♔d5 ♕g4 43.♗xg4 ♔xg4 44.b6 g2 45.b7 g1=♕ 46.b8=♕ ♘h1+, with a drawish queen ending, according to the Nalimov tablebases.

**36.♗g7 ♔f5 37.♔c3 ♕c6+ 38.♔b3 ♕c1 39.a6 h3 40.b5 ♘b1+ 41.♔c4 ♘a1 42.♔c5 ♔f4 43.a7 1-0**

### 3.3. Breaking the symmetry as a method of defence

Symmetry offers Black (usually – White only rarely) just one specific advantage. In symmetrical positions it is not unknown for White to end up in a strange sort of zugzwang, because he is the side with the initiative and on each move therefore he is the one forced to take a decision, which might not always be the most appropriate one.

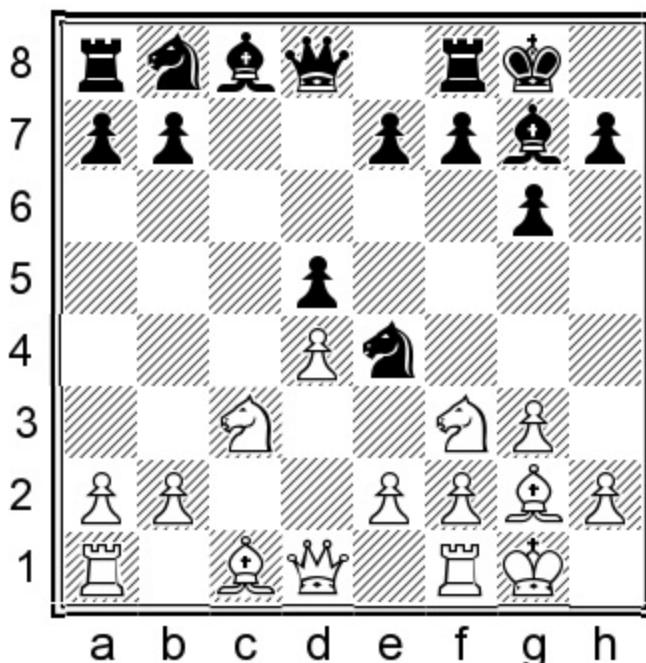
So, what advice can we offer Black in such cases? The answer is self-evident: Black should choose a good moment to break the symmetry. This is the main defensive method in symmetrical positions. Let's examine.

Game 67  
Grünfeld Indian Defence  
**Robert Byrne**  
**Robert James Fischer**  
New York ch-USA 1963 (3)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7.e3**

The opponent allows the ever-combative Fischer to break the symmetry at this point. A previous game of Fischer's continued 7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 (there are fans of already breaking the symmetry here with 7... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ !?, e.g. 8. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  9.bxc3 0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  e6 11.e4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ !?, Caruana-So, Paris blitz 2017) 8.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ .

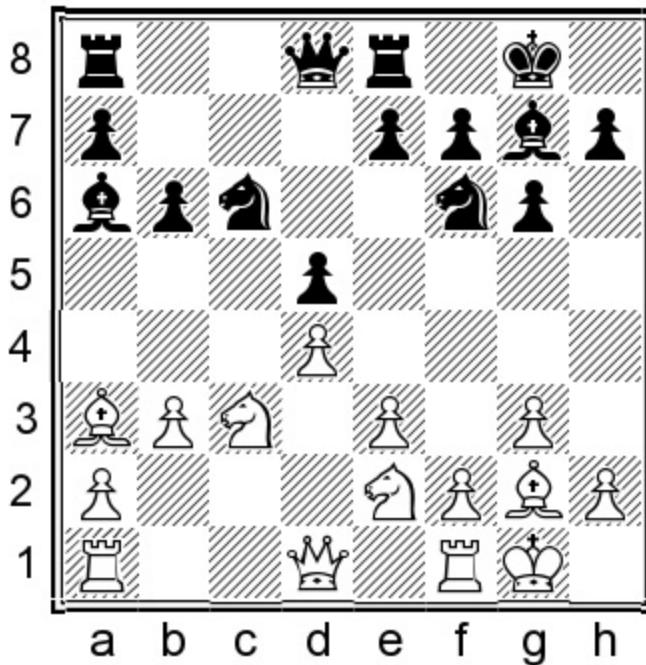
The following note to this move by Fischer at age nineteen is very curious: ‘Black, breaking the symmetry at the proper time, gets the advantage’(!?). It should be said that this comment is typical of very talented young players, who believe they are already better even in the starting position, if they are playing against a weaker player.



*analysis diagram*

The continuation was 9.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (9.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!?$ ) 9...  $dxe4$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  11.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , and despite all Bobby's efforts the game ended in a draw, Filip-Fischer, Varna ol 1962.

7...0-0 8.  $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.0-0 b6 10.b3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$



12.  $\mathbb{W}d2??!$

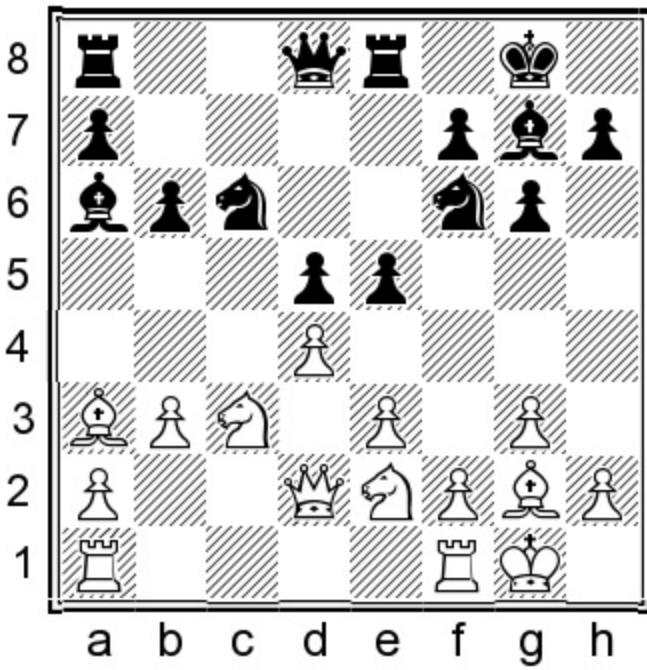
Here Kasparov recommended removing the rooks from the diagonals of the black bishops with 12.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  (12...e5? 13.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 13.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  (13.  $\mathbb{W}c2!?$ ); however, Black could continue exactly as in the game: 13...e5!? and if 14.  $dxe5$  (14.  $\mathbb{Q}h3!?$ ) 14...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ , with a dangerous initiative for Black.

Stockfish 11 64 analyses: 12.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  e5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  exd4 16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  d3 17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  18.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d2+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$ , 0.00/50.

Stockfish recommends 12.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ , e.g. 12...e5 13.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}cxd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ , with equality, here and also in the event of the following very complicated continuation;

12.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  e5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  exd4!? 16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  d3! 17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  18.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d2+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$ , with a repetition of moves.

12...e5!?



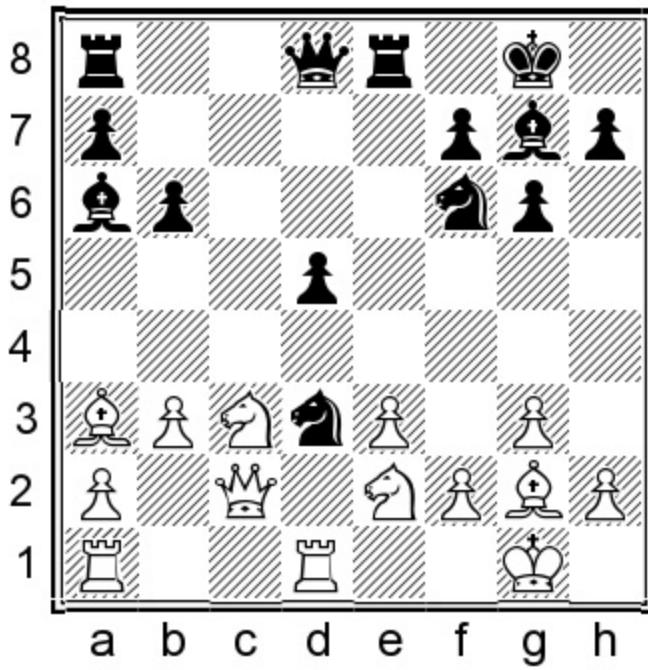
Of course, Fischer does not miss the opportunity to break the symmetry, starting a sharp struggle. After the following exchange of pawns there is a transformation to an IQP structure, in which Black's space advantage, greater piece activity and slight lead in development more than compensate for White's better structure.

### **13.dxe5 ♕xe5 14.♕fd1?**

Moving the other rook was correct: 14.♕ad1, although in this case too Black can keep the initiative with 14...♗d7!? (14...♗c8!? 15.♗d6 (15.♗xd5 ♔xd5 16.♗xd5 ♘d8 17.f4 ♘xd5 18.♗xd5 ♗b7 19.♗d2 ♗c6 20.♗d5 ♘xd5 21.♗xd5 ♔xd5 22.fxe5 ♔xe5, and the pair of bishops and the weakness of the ♘e3 gives Black the better ending) 15...♗d3 16.♗xd5 ♔xd5 17.♗xd5 ♘d8 18.♗xa8 ♘xa8 19.♗a3 ♘f6, with very good compensation for the exchange) 15.♗c2 ♘ac8 16.♗b2 (16.♗b1 ♘f5!?) 16...♗g4 17.h3 ♘f3+ 18.♗h1 ♘e4!, with the better game for Black, e.g. 19.♗c1 ♘xc2 20.♗xc2 ♔e5 and Black maintains the pressure.

### **14...♗d3! 15.♗c2?**

This loses, but Black's advantage is also clear after 15.♗d4 ♔e4 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.♗b2 ♘c8 or 15.♗f4 ♔e4 16.♗xe4 dxe4.



**15...♝xf2!**

The start of one of the most famous combinations in the history of chess!

**16.♚xf2 ♛g4+ 17.♚g1 ♛xe3 18.♛d2 ♛xg2!**

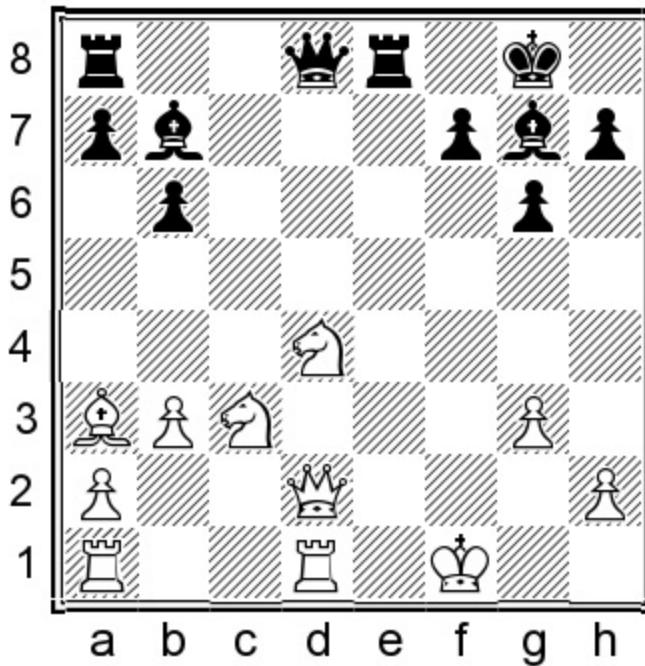
After 18...♛xd1? 19.♜xd1 White would have had no problems.

**19.♛xg2 d4!**

The key to the combination.

**20.♛xd4 ♜b7+ 21.♚f1**

21.♚g1 was equally hopeless due to 21...♜xd4+ 22.♛xd4 ♜e1+! 23.♚f2 ♜xd4+ 24.♜xd4 ♜xa1; or 21.♚f2 ♜d7! 22.♜ac1 ♜h3 23.♚f3 ♜h6 24.♛d3 ♜e3+ 25.♛xe3 ♜xe3 26.♚xe3 ♜e8+ 27.♚f2 ♜f5, as indicated by Fischer.



**21... $\mathbb{W}d7!$**

According to witnesses, even the grandmasters watching the game failed to understand what was happening here. Byrne resigned, in view of the variations 22. $\mathbb{W}f2 \mathbb{W}h3+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{E}e1+!!$  24. $\mathbb{E}xe1 \mathbb{Q}xd4$  or 22. $\mathbb{Q}db5 \mathbb{W}h3+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{Q}h6$  or 22. $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{W}f5$  23. $\mathbb{W}f2 \mathbb{Q}xc3$ .

Game 68  
 Slav Defence  
**Jeffery Xiong 2712**  
**Vladimir Artemiev 2731**  
 Wijk aan Zee 2020 (10)

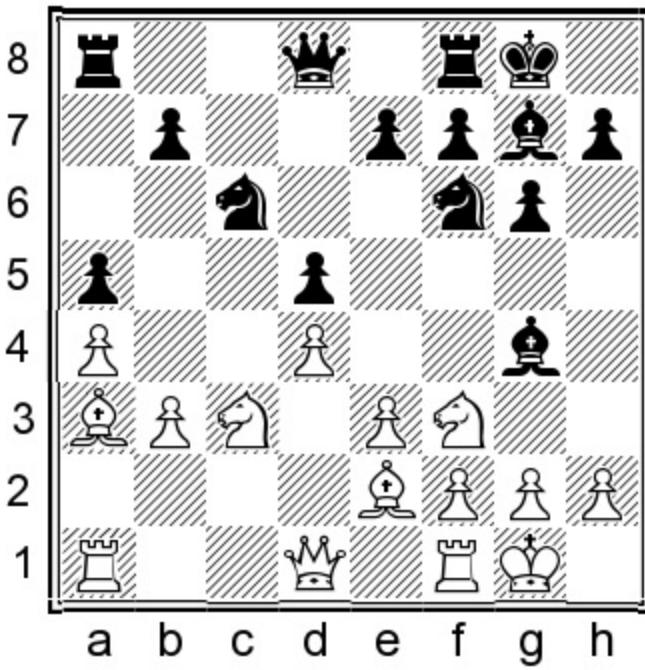
**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6 5.e3 g6**

Black has many alternatives here. This move is the sixth in popularity; 5...b5 is the most common.

**6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7.0-0 0-0 8.a4 a5 9.cxd5 cxd5**

The pawn structure is already almost symmetrical, but White has an extra tempo, since Black has advanced the a-pawn in two moves. However, White will need to spend a tempo to bring the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  into play.

**10.b3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$**



**12.♕e5!**

This move leads to a break in the symmetry. An interesting alternative was 12.♕e1 ♜xe2 (12...♗f5!?) 13.♗xe2 ♜e8 14.♗c1 e6 15.♗d3 ♜f8 16.♗xf8 ♜xf8 17.♗b5 ♜e4 18.♗c2, with a slight advantage to White.

**12...♜xe2 13.♝xe2 ♜xe5 14.dxe5 ♜e4 15.♝xe4 dxe4**

A bizarre symmetry has been restored!

**16.♝c4 ♜d3??**

After 16...♜xe5 17.♗ad1 ♜c8 (17...♝b8 18.♝xe7 ♜e8 19.♔a3 ♜xh2+ 20.♔h1 ♜e5 21.♗d7 ♜e6 22.♗c1 ♜f6 and the white pieces are more active) 18.♝xe4 ♜f6 19.♗d5 b6 20.♗b5, White maintains the initiative. Instead, Stockfish recommends a variation leading to an exchange of bishops: 16...♝b8! 17.♝xe7 ♜c8! 18.♝xe4 ♜e8 19.♝h4 ♜xe5 20.♗ac1 ♜xh2+ 21.♝xh2 ♜xe7, with equality.

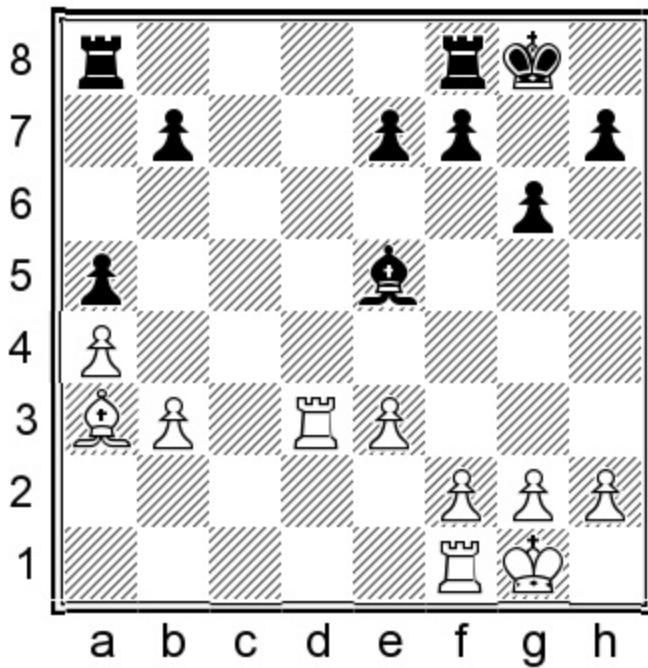
**17.♝xd3 exd3 18.♗ad1 ♜xe5**

A human decision. It is very hard to accept the engine's recommendation here: 18...♗fd8!? 19.♝xe7 (19.f4?! leads to equality after 19...♗d7 20.♗d2 (or 20.♗f2 ♜a6 21.♗d2 ♜b6 22.♗b1 f6) 20...♝c8 21.♗b2 f6 22.♗fd1 fxe5 23.fxe5 ♜cd8 24.♗d4 b5!) 19...♗d7 and now:

- A) 20.♗f6?! ♜xf6 (20...♝c8!?) 21.exf6 ♜c8 22.g4 ♜c3;
- B) 20.♗d6?! f6 21.f4 ♜e8;
- C) 20.♗c5 ♜xe5 21.♗d4! ♜xd4 22.♗xd3 ♜a6 23.exd4 ♜ad6 24.♗fd1 ♜d5, and it will not be easy for

White to realize his extra pawn.

**19.♗xd3**



Despite the many exchanges, White controls the d-file and retains the initiative. Black's next move defends the ♘e7 indirectly, with the idea of exchanging a pair of rooks and then occupying the other open file with his remaining rook.

**19...♝fd8 20.♝fd1 ♞xd3 21.♞xd3 ♜c8 22.g4!**

Threatening to capture on e7 by giving his king some air and, in addition, gaining space on the kingside. Perhaps no more could be asked of a single move!

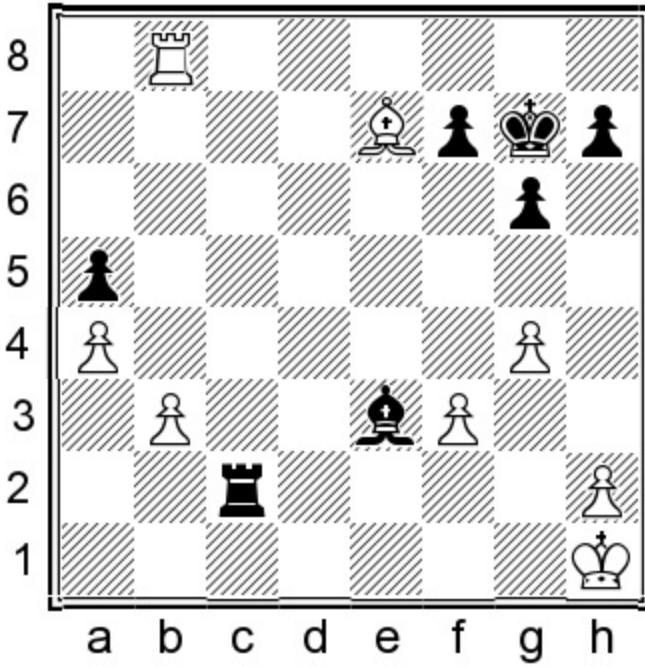
**22...♝f6 23.♝d5!**

Another masterly move, with which Xiong not only transfers his rook to a more active position but also threatens 24.g5, winning the ♘e7.

**23...b6 24.♝b5 ♜h4**

The loss of a pawn is unavoidable and the text move is the only possibility of seeking counterplay.

**25.♝xb6 ♜c2 26.f3 ♜f2+ 27.♔h1 ♜xe3 28.♝b8+ ♜g7 29.♝xe7**



**29...f5?!**

More tenacious was 29...h5! 30.gxh5 gxh5! (30... $\mathbb{Q}f4?$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  32.hxg6+  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  33. $\mathbb{R}b6+$  f6 34. $\mathbb{Q}e7!$   $\mathbb{R}xh2+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ , and White has good prospects of realizing his extra pawn) 31. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  32. $\mathbb{R}xa5$  f6 33.h4  $\mathbb{R}f2$  34. $\mathbb{R}a6$   $\mathbb{R}xf3$  35. $\mathbb{R}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  f5 37. $\mathbb{R}c3$  f4 38. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{R}xf4$  39. $\mathbb{R}xe3$   $\mathbb{R}xh4+$ , and Black seems to be able to hold this rook ending.

**30. $\mathbb{R}b7$**

A good alternative here would have been 30.gxf5!? gxf5 31. $\mathbb{R}b5$ .

**30... $\mathbb{Q}g8?!$**

Black could have sought salvation in a rook ending and this seems to be the lesser of the evils: 30... $\mathbb{R}c1+!?$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{R}g1+$  32. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{R}f1$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}f6??$  34.g5+  $\mathbb{R}xg5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$ ) 34. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{R}xf3+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{R}xe3$  36.gxf5 gxf5 37. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{R}h3$ .

**31.gxf5 gxf5 32. $\mathbb{R}b5$  f4 33. $\mathbb{R}xa5$**

As is usually the case in endings of this type, two connected passed pawns are a factor which decides the battle. The presence of the bishops also favours White.

**33... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  34. $\mathbb{R}e5$  h5 35. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{R}b2$  37. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  38.a5  $\mathbb{R}a2$  39.b4**

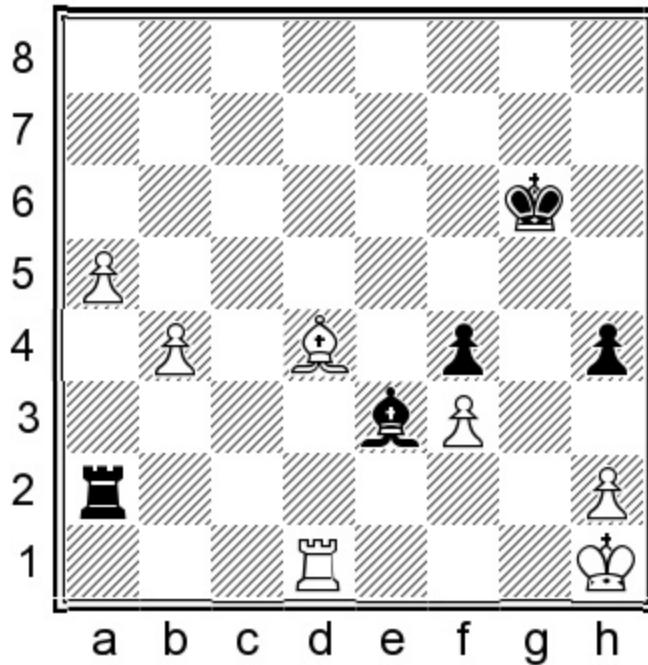
The white passed pawns start to advance, which soon makes the black position untenable.

**39... $\mathbb{Q}e3$  40. $\mathbb{R}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  41. $\mathbb{R}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{R}f2$  43. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{R}a2$  44. $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{R}f2$  45. $\mathbb{R}d1$   $\mathbb{R}b2$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{R}a2$**

47.♖c5??

Although there are several winning moves here, it seems that the clearest was the classical placement of the rook behind the passed pawn: 47.♖b1!, e.g. 47...♔f7 48.♖d8 ♔e8 49.♖f6 ♕a3 (49...♔f7 50.♖c3!) 50.b5 ♕xa5 51.b6, winning.

47...h4 48.♖d4



48...♕a4?!

Falling into a trap. Black could have resisted more strongly with 48...♖xd4!? 49.♖xd4 h3, although after 50.♗g1 ♕a1+ 51.♗f2 ♕a2+ 52.♗f1 ♔f5 (or 52...♕xh2 53.♕xf4) 53.♕d5+ ♔e6 54.♕h5 ♕a4 55.a6 ♕xb4 56.♕xh3 ♕a4 57.♕h7!, White's advantage would have been decisive.

49.♖a1! ♕xb4 50.♕xe3 fxe3 51.♗g1! ♕d4 52.♗f1 ♕d2 53.a6 ♕xh2 54.♗g1 ♕d2 55.a7 e2 56.a8=♕ ♕d1+ 57.♗g2 e1=♕

At this moment there is material equality on the board, but the fact that it is White's move is conclusive.

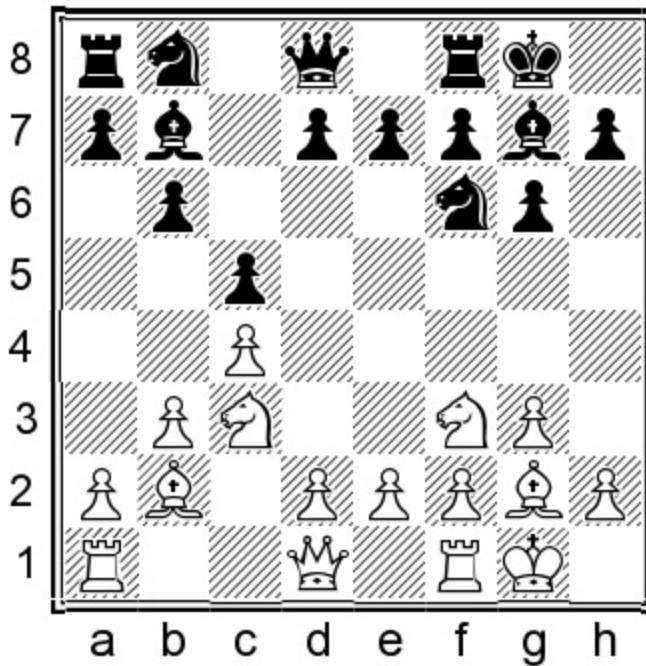
58.♕c6+ ♔h5 59.♕c5+ ♔h6 60.♕a6+ ♔g7 61.♕c7+ 1-0

The following black victory is another example of how studying the legacy of the great players can be useful in providing models for one's own play.

Game 69  
English Opening

Marko Tratar 2480  
 Renier Vazquez Igarza 2591  
 San Sebastian 2014 (6)

**1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 b6 3.g3 ♜b7 4.♗g2 c5 5.0-0 g6 6.b3 ♜g7 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘c3**



**8...♘a6!?**

‘A move which breaks the symmetry and which I knew from a game of Kasparov’s’ – Vazquez.

Of course there are other playable moves, for instance 8...d6 9.d4 cxd4 10.♗xd4 ♘bd7 11.♗d2 ♘c5 12.♗fd1 ♘c8, with chances for both sides, Sanal-Mamedov, Moscow 2020.

**9.♗c1**

The above-mentioned Kasparov game continued 9.d4 d5 10.cxd5 ♘xd5 11.♗xd5 ♘xd5 (11...♘xd5!? 12.e3 ♘c7 13.♗e1 ♘b7, Artemiev-Wei Yi, Turkey tt 2014) 12.♗h4 ♘d7 13.dxc5 ♘xd1 14.♗fxd1 ♘xb2 15.♗xb7 ♘xc5 16.♗xa8 ♘xa1, with complete equality, Andersson-Kasparov, Belgrade 1985.

The line 9.e3 d5 10.♗e5!? e6 11.f4 ♘e7 12.♗e2 also deserves attention.

**9...e6 10.d4 d5 11.cxd5 ♘xd5 12.dxc5**

12.♗d2 ♘xc3 (12...♘f6!? 13.♗fd1) 13.♗xc3 ♘c8 14.dxc5 ♘xd2 maintains equality.

12.♗a4!? was more ambitious, e.g. 12...cxd4 13.♗xd4 ♘e7 14.♗xg7 ♘xg7 15.e4 ♘db4 16.♗e2 ♘fd8 17.a3, with a slight advantage to White.

**12...♘xc5 13.♗d2?**

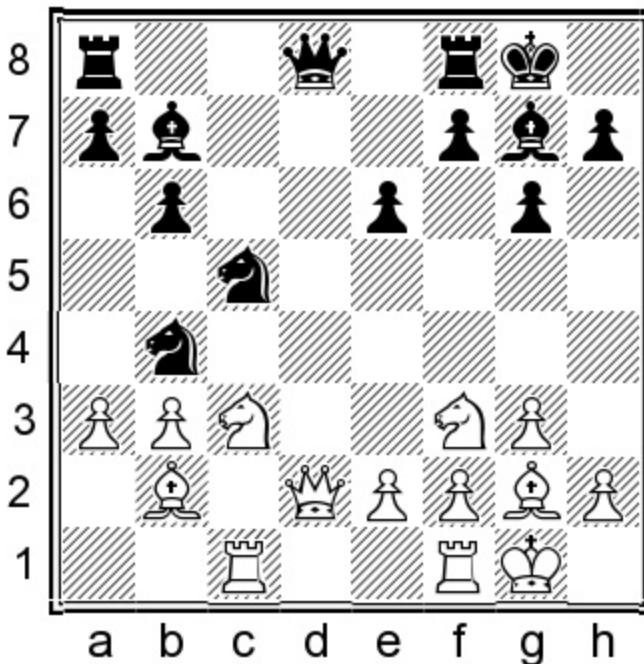
An error which tips the balance in Black's favour. White could have maintained equality with e.g. 13.  $\mathbb{W}c2!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  14.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  15.  $\mathbb{E}cd1$  a5 16. h4.

### 13... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$

The attractive capture on c3 gives Black nothing special: if 13...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3??$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (14...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3??$  15.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$ ) 15.  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}dxc3$  16.  $\mathbb{E}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (16...  $\mathbb{W}e7!!$ ) 17.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}d5+$  20. f3  $\mathbb{W}xg5!!$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xg5$ , only White can try to win.

### 14.a3?

14.  $\mathbb{Q}a3!$  was correct, e.g. 14... a5 15.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  16. h4  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  18. f4 and Black's advantage is minimal.



Calculation of the following line is not difficult, but it seems that White did not evaluate the resulting position correctly.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}xb3!$ 15. $\mathbb{W}xd8$ $\mathbb{E}fxd8$ 16. $\mathbb{axb4}$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 17. $\mathbb{E}xc1$ $\mathbb{E}ac8$

The material equality is deceptive: in fact Black is much better, due to the pressure of his rooks and the fragile position of the  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{E}d2!$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}a1?$

More tenacious was 20.  $\mathbb{Q}b1!$   $\mathbb{E}xc1$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{E}xe2$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ .

### 20... $\mathbb{E}d7!$ 0-1

After 21...  $\mathbb{E}dc7$  White loses the  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

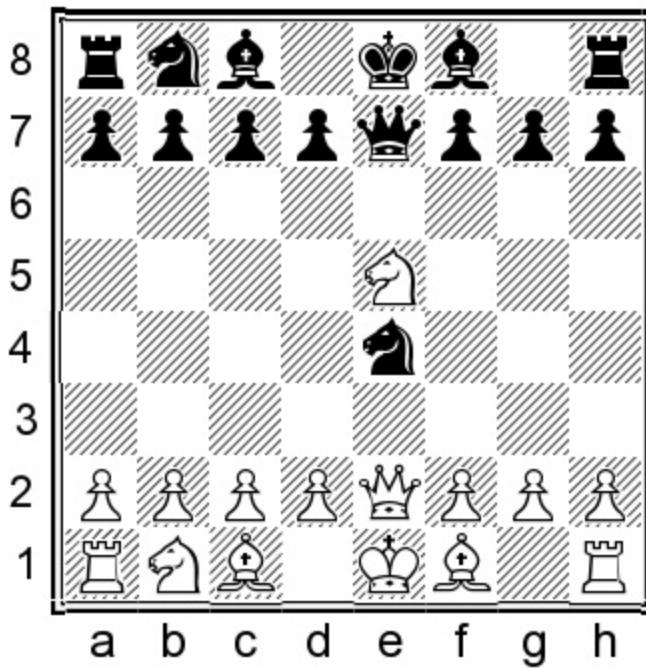
### 3.4. A clash of pawns

Curiosity to find out what will happen if Black copies White's moves is not confined to the games of amateur players, as we saw in the first game of this chapter; it can even affect the games of grandmasters.

Game 70  
Petroff Defence  
**Leonid Stein**  
**David Bronstein**  
Tbilisi ch-URS 1967 (16)

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.d4**

Another symmetrical position has some popularity: 3.♘xe5 ♘xe4 4.♗e2 ♗e7.



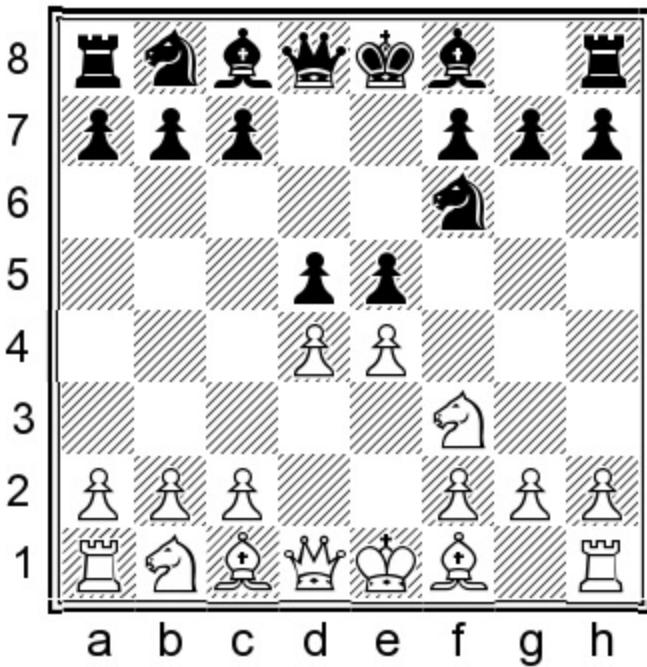
*analysis diagram*

However, after 5.♗xe4 d6 6.d4 dxе5 7.dxe5 ♘c6 the simplest for White is to give back the pawn in return for a positional advantage, e.g. 8.♘c3 (8.f4?! ♗g4 9.♘d3 0-0-0 10.0-0 g6 11.♗e3 f6! – 11...♗f5? 12.♗xf5+ gxf5 13.♘c3, Zhao Zong Yuan-Solomon, Ballarat 2017) 8...♗xe5 9.♗xe5+ ♘xe5 10.♗f4 ♘d6 11.♗g3 ♘d7 12.♗e4 0-0-0 13.♗xd6+ cxd6 14.0-0-0, and the pair of bishops and the weakness of the ♘d6 guarantee White a lasting initiative, Yu Yangyi-Ipatov, Dubai 2014.

**3...d5?!**

It is curious that Bronstein usually tried to surprise Stein in the opening. In a game with black (Amsterdam izt 1964) he played 1.e4 1...c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxе4 4.♗xe4 ♘f6 5.♗xf6 exf6?.

Nowadays this is a fashionable variation, but earlier it was considered dubious.



#### **4.exd5!**

This is the only move to try to refute Black's idea. In the event of 4.Qxe5 Qxe4, or 4.dxe5 Qxe4, play transposes to normal positions of the Petroff Defence.

#### **4...exd4**

It seems risky to play 4...e4?!, as after 5.Qe5 Qxd5 6.Qc4 Qe6 7.Qd2! e3 (7...f6?? 8.Wh5+ g6 9.Qxg6 Qf7 10.Qxe4 c6 11.Qxf6+ Wxf6 12.We2+ Qd8 13.Qxh8, with a big advantage to White; 7...Qd7!?) 8.fxe3 Qxe3 (the lesser of the evils is 8...Qd7!?, although Black's compensation for the pawn is insufficient) 9.Qxe6!! Qxd1 10.Qxf7+ Qe7 11.Qb3 Qd6 12.0-0, White's attack is decisive.

#### **5.Qb5+!**

Best, although White would also have the better game in a symmetrical structure after 5.Wxd4!?

Wxd5 6.Wxd5 Qxd5 7.Qc4 Qb6 8.Qb3 a5 9.a3 Qc5 10.Qc3 0-0 11.Qf4 Qe8+ 12.Qe5 Qe6 13.Qxe6 Qxe6 14.0-0-0.

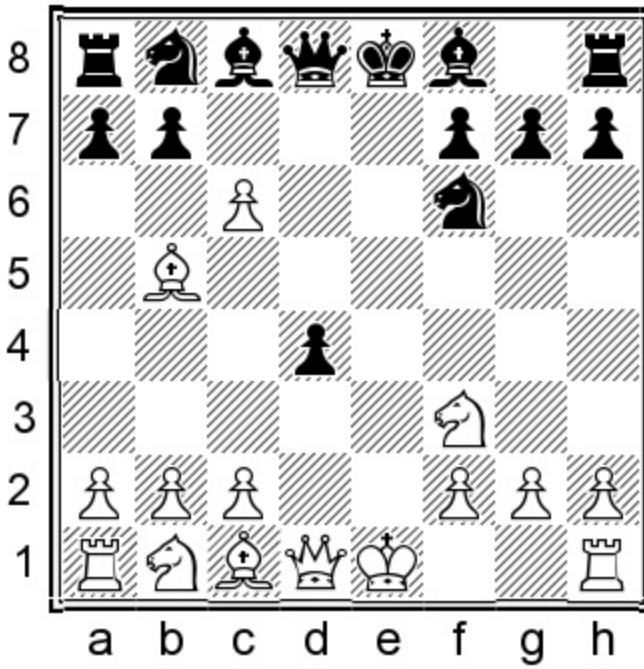
#### **5...c6**

This is better than 5...Qd7 6.Qxd4 (6.Qc4?! We7+!) 6...Qxb5 (6...Qxd5?! 7.0-0) 7.Qxb5 a6 8.Qc3 and Black does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

#### **6.dxc6!**

It is possible that Bronstein's choice of variation was influenced by the following game: 6.We2+?!

$\mathbb{Q}e7$  7.dxc6 bxc6 (7... $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$ ? 8.0-0 0-0 9. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  10. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , with equality) 8. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0 9.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  10.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  11.g4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  hxg6 13. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  14. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$ , and Black has an initiative for the pawn, Karpinski-Marshall, Buffalo 1901.



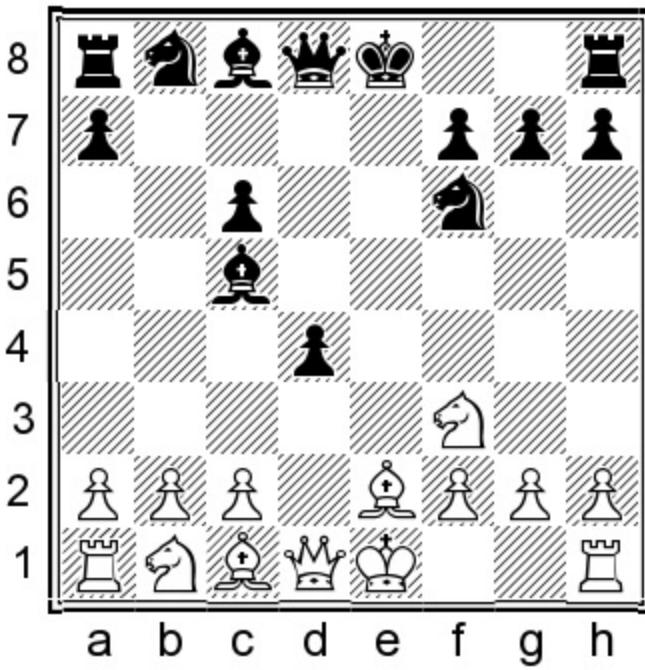
### 6...bxc6

Here 6... $\mathbb{W}a5+!?$  was tried in a training game with my students and led to much sharper play after 7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  bxc6 8. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  cxb5 9. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c7!$  (9...b4? 10. $\mathbb{W}xa8$  (10. $\mathbb{Q}cb5!?$ ) 10...bxc3 11.0-0  $\mathbb{W}c7$  12. $\mathbb{E}e1+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  14.a4, with advantage to White) 10. $\mathbb{Q}cxb5$  (10. $\mathbb{Q}dxb5!?$   $\mathbb{W}b7!$ ) 10... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  11.c3  $\mathbb{W}e7+$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13. $\mathbb{W}e2$  0-0 14.cxb4  $\mathbb{W}xb4+$  15. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2+$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ , with some compensation for the pawn.

### 7. $\mathbb{Q}e2!?$

Bronstein was relying on the following variation, given in an openings book: 7. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  8.c3 (8. $\mathbb{Q}bd2!$ ) 8... $\mathbb{W}e7+$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (9. $\mathbb{W}e2!?$ ) 9...dxc3 10. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  11.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  and Black has good chances to equalize the position.

### 7... $\mathbb{Q}c5$



**8.c3!**

The simplest: after the exchange on c3 the black king loses the right to castle and the  $\mathbb{R}c6$  is weak, which leads to a clear positional advantage for White.

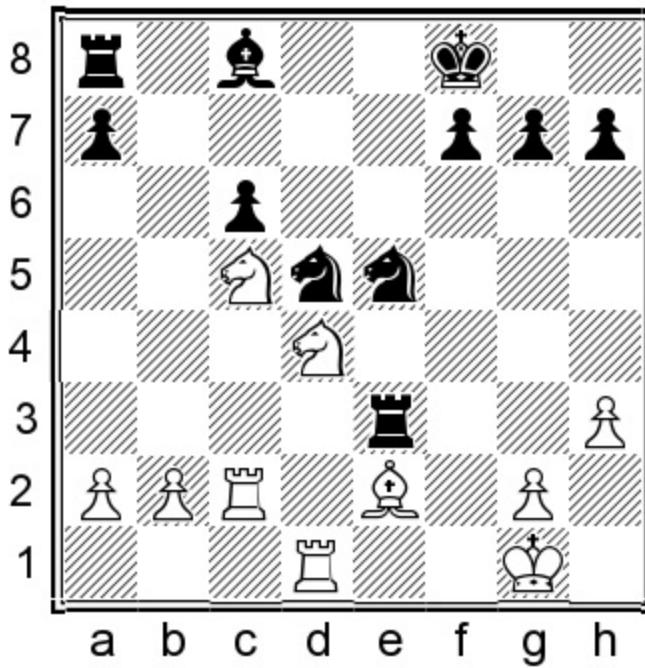
**8...dxc3 9. $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11.0-0  $\mathbb{E}d8$  12. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  15. $\mathbb{E}ec1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d4?$**

This move loses all of White's advantage. There were several ways to maintain it, e.g. 16. $\mathbb{Q}c4!?$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  17.h3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  h6 19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ; another good possibility was 16. $\mathbb{Q}f1!?$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

**16... $\mathbb{E}e4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  18. $\mathbb{E}c2$**

Forced, since if 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd2??$  then 18... $\mathbb{E}xd4$ , with a double attack.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  19.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  20.h3  $\mathbb{E}xe3$  21. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c5$**



**22...Qxh3?**

A serious error, after defending well in an inferior position. Instead, after 22...Rg3 the following variation demonstrates that White's initiative compensates for the sacrificed pawn, but nothing more: 23.Qf2 (23.Qh2 leads to the same thing) 23...Rg6 24.Qxc6 Rxg2+! 25.Qxg2 Qe3+ 26.Qg3 Qxc6 27.Qf3 Qxc2 28.Qxc6 Rb8.

**23.gxh3 Rxh3?**

It was more tenacious to play 23...Qf4!? 24.Qf1 Qxh3+ 25.Qxh3 Rxh3 26.Re2 Qf3+ 27.Qxf3 Rxf3 28.Qd7+ Qg8.

**24.Qxc6! Qxc6**

Equally hopeless was 24...Qe3 25.Qxe5 Qxc2 26.Rd7 Re3 27.Rxf7+ Qg8 28.Qc4.

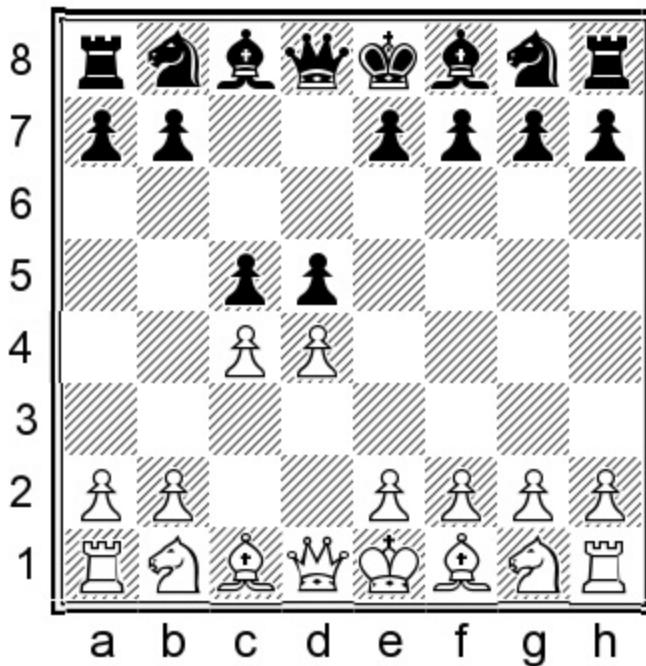
**25.Qd7+ Qg8 26.Rxc6 Qb4**

26...Qf4 was no better, in view of 27.Qc4 Rg3+ 28.Qf2 Rg5 29.Qe3 Qe6 30.Qxe6 fxe6 31.Rxe6. Also 26...Qe3 27.Rd3 Re8 28.Rc5 f5 29.Re5 Qf7 30.Ra3 leads to a decisive advantage to White.

**27.Rc7 Qxa2 28.Qc4 Qb4 29.Qe5 h6 30.Qxf7+ Qh8 31.Rdc1 Rg3+ 32.Qh2 1-0**

Game 71  
Austrian Defence  
**Alexei Shirov 2664**  
**Jonathan Westerberg 2546**

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c5



This move-order has supporters even among the elite; Mamedyarov is the best-known of these.

**3.cxd5!**

This is the most common response, with a score of almost 70% for White. The symmetry would last for more moves in the event of 3.e3 e6 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6.a3 a6 7.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  8.b4  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  dxc4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  b5, Yu Yangyi-Mamedov, Hengshui 2019, in the style of the game Marshall-Wolf, analysed in the next section.

**3... $\mathbb{W}xd5$**

More popular than 3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , e.g. 4.dxc5 (4.e4!?  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  5.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ; 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !?) 4... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  5. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6.e4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  7. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  e5 8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f6 9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ , with an edge for White, Kortchnoi-Je.Piket, Antwerp 1993.

**4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

The main alternative is 4.e3, e.g. 4...e6 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  a6 8.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.dxc5 and White has an extra tempo compared to the usual move-order, Rapport-Mamedyarov, St Louis 2019.

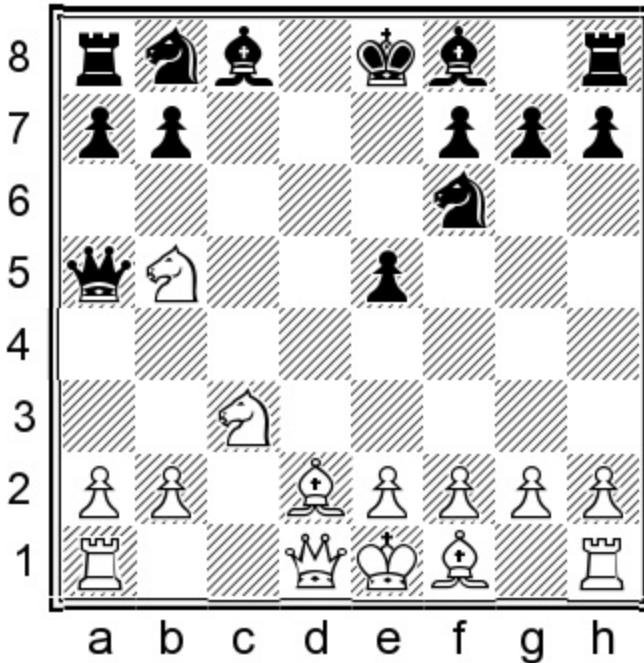
**4...cxd4 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  6. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$**

After 7.g3 e5! 8. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  (8. $\mathbb{Q}db5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ) 8... $\mathbb{W}c7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  0-0 11.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  15.e3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  the position is equal, Tomashevsky-Mamedyarov, Wijk aan Zee 2016.

7...e5

Here 7... $\mathbb{W}d8!$ ? was better, e.g. 8. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  e5 9.g3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11.0-0 0-0 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$ .

8. $\mathbb{Q}db5$



8... $\mathbb{Q}b4?$

A serious error. 8... $\mathbb{W}d8!$  was correct, e.g. 9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (9. $\mathbb{Q}c1?$ !  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  12. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6=$ ) 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  11. $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  13. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  15.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  b6 17.c4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18.f4  $\mathbb{Q}ab8$ , and White has a slight edge but no more than that.

Another possibility was 8... $\mathbb{W}b6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  11.b4! (11. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  0-0!) 11... $\mathbb{W}b6$  (11... $\mathbb{W}xb4??$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13. $\mathbb{W}d2!$ ) 12.e3  $\mathbb{W}d8$  13.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  14. $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  15.0-0-0+  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}7d5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , and White is slightly better.

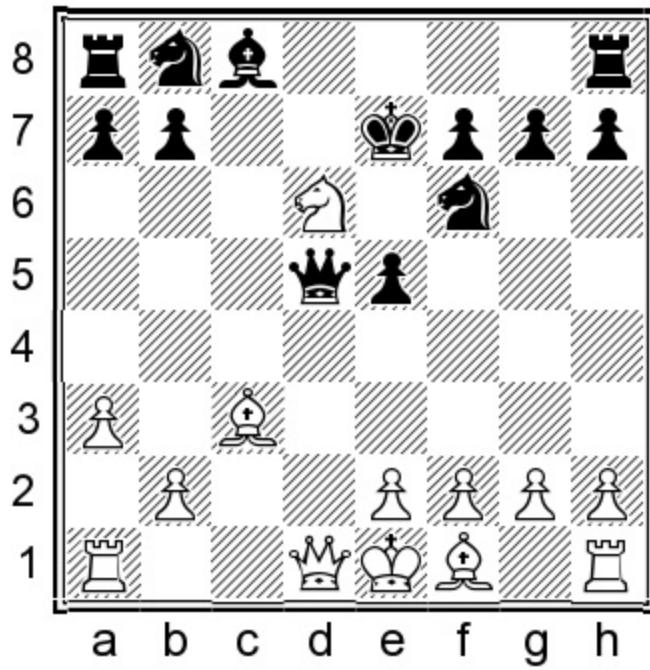
9.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d6+!$

Apparently Westerberg overlooked this intermediate check.

10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

10... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  was hardly an improvement; White's advantage is clear, due to the extra pawn and the bishop pair; furthermore the black king is unable to castle.

11. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}d5$



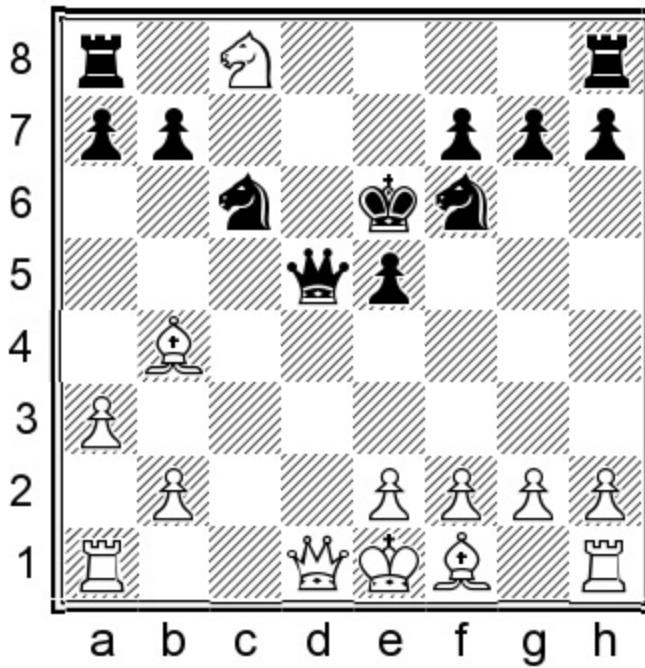
**12. ♜b4!**

Of course, the clear win of a pawn with 12. ♜xd5 ♜xd5 13. ♜xe5 was unattractive to the ever-creative Shirov. From as early as the ninth move and then right up to the end of the game, Alexei's moves all match the main line of the engine.

**12... ♜c6!?**

Trying to regain the piece.

**13. ♜xc8+ ♔e6**



**14.g3!!**

Instead of the dull line 14.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  15.  $\mathbb{R}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c2+$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ , Shirov makes a very beautiful move, sacrificing the  $\mathbb{R}h1$ .

**14... $\mathbb{W}xh1$  15. $\mathbb{W}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  16. $\mathbb{W}d3+!$**

16.0-0-0? would have been misguided, due to 16... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}e4$ , when Black's material advantage is decisive.

**16...e4**

16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ? loses immediately to 17.0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}xh2$  (17... $\mathbb{W}xf1$  18.  $\mathbb{W}c4+!$ ) 18.  $\mathbb{W}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ ) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}d2+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$   $g6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xf6$ .

**17. $\mathbb{Q}d6+$**

17.  $g4+?$  would have been mistaken, in view of 17... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  18.  $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}ge5$  20.  $\mathbb{W}d5$   $\mathbb{R}af8$ , and White's attack is over.

**17... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  18.  $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

18... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  was no better: 19.  $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{R}ad8$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}c2+$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $e3+$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ ) 20.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{R}d7$  22.  $\mathbb{W}c5$ .

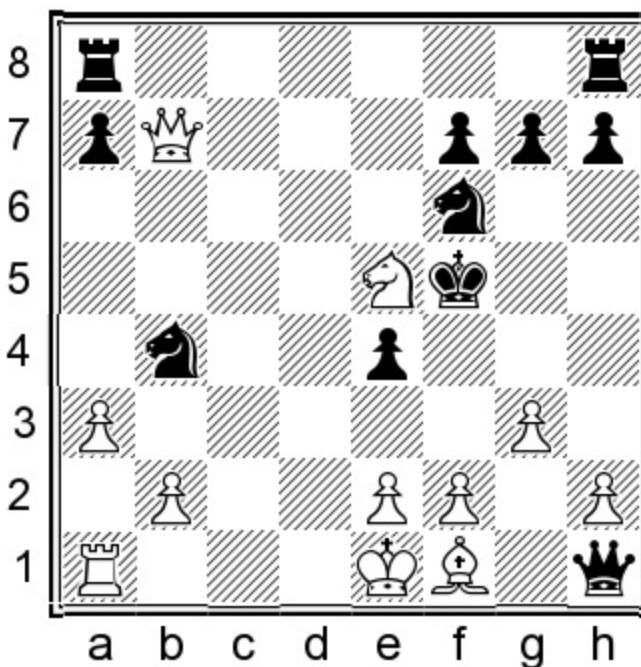
**19.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

Here 19... $\mathbb{W}xb7$ ! was somewhat more accurate, e.g. 19... $\mathbb{Q}fd5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  h6 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  22. $\mathbb{W}xe7$ , recovering the sacrificed material with interest, and with no letup in the attack.

**19... $\mathbb{Q}c6$**

Here 19... $\mathbb{Q}ed5$ !? was somewhat more resilient but should ultimately fail after 20. $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  (or 22... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d2+$  e3 24.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}he8$  25.e4+ g5 26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ) 23.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}ac8+$  24. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  25.f4+ exf3 26.e4!.

**20. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$**



**22.axb4!**

Threatening 23. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ .

**22...a5**

Or 22... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ .

**23. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}hf8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  h6 25. $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  27.f3!  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  28. $\mathbb{W}xe4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29. $\mathbb{W}d5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  30. $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  32. $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}aa6$  33.h4 a4 1-0**

Sometimes a (nearly) symmetrical position can arise from an asymmetrical opening.

Game 72  
Dutch Defence  
Arturo Pomar

**1.d4 f5 2.♘c3**

With the idea of e2-e4, which Black's next move prevents.

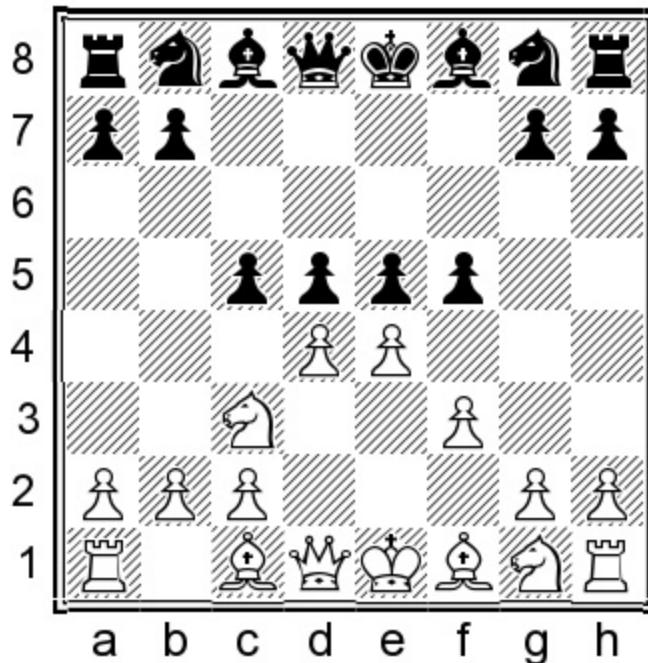
**2...d5 3.f3**

Pomar insists on the e2-e4 advance, although the most practical continuation here was to exploit the weakness of the e5-square, e.g. 3.♗f4 a6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3 ♘f6 6.♘d3 c5 7.dxc5 ♘xc5 8.0-0 ♘c6 9.♘e2 ♘e7 10.♘ed4 ♘d7 11.c4 0-0 12.♗c1 ♘ac8 13.cxd5 ♘xd5 14.♘xf5! exf5 (14...♗xf5?? 15.♘xf5 ♘xf4 16.exf4 exf5 17.♗d5+) 15.♘c4, with advantage to White, Shimanov-Carlsen, chess.com 2018.

**3...c5!?**

From the very first moves Larsen seeks a sharp game. However, objectively 3...♗f6 is better, e.g. 4.e4 (4.♗g5!?) 4...fxe4 5.fxe4 dxe4 6.♗g5 ♘f5 (6...♘c6!? 7.♘ge2 ♘d6 8.♗d2 ♘e6 9.0-0-0 0-0-0) 7.♘c4 ♘c6 8.♘ge2 e6 9.0-0 ♘a5 10.♘d5 (10.♗xf5!?) 10...♗d7 11.♗xf5 exf5 12.♗xf6 gxf6 13.♗f4 h5 14.♗e6 ♘d6 15.g3 ♘d8 16.♘cd5 (16.♘b5!?) 16...c6 17.♗xh5+ ♘xh5 18.♘xf6+ ♘e7 19.♘g8+, with a draw by repetition, Predojevic-Sedlak, Nova Gorica 2008.

**4.e4 e5**



The former Spanish champion Fernando Visier once recounted: 'After the game, the Danish grandmaster, happy and talkative, gave us a detailed explanation: "I remembered Tartakower," he said, "1.f4 – Bird's Opening; 1...e5 From's Gambit; 2.e4 King's Gambit; 2...d5 Falkbeer Counter-gambit and now Tartakower played 3.d4."

A sort of French Defence would arise after 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.e5 (5. $\mathbb{Q}ge2!?$ ) 5... $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  (5...cxd4? 6. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ) 6.f4 (6. $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$ ) 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ .

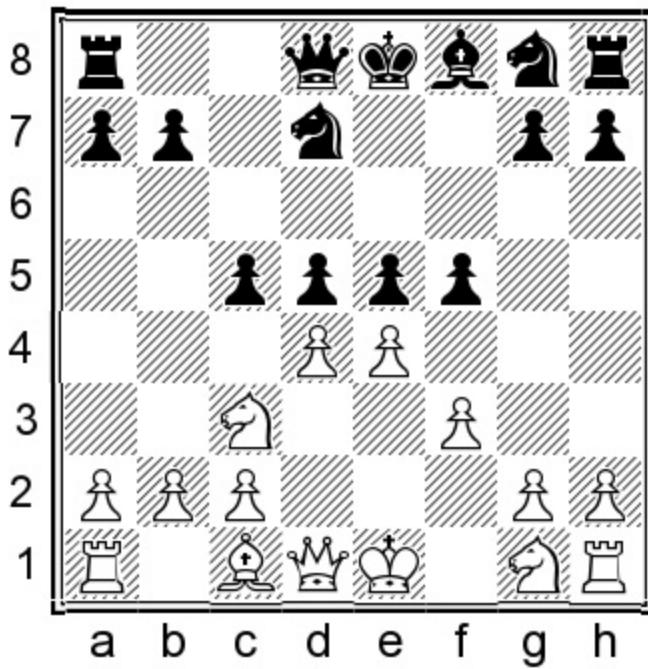
### 5. $\mathbb{Q}b5+!?$

Of course there were other options here, e.g. 5.dxe5!? d4 6. $\mathbb{Q}ce2$  (6. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  fxe4 (6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}hf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  10.exf5 is no better) 7.fxe4  $\mathbb{W}h4+$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}g5+$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  10.c3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , and White is better in this unusual position) 6... $\mathbb{W}h4+$  7.g3  $\mathbb{W}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ , with the better game for White.

### 5... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}xd7+!?$

On this and the following move Pomar avoids entering a tactical struggle, but this only leads to him first losing the advantage and then ending up worse. Instead, after 6.dxe5! d4 (or 6... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  7.exd5, with very good compensation for the piece) 7. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (or 7... $\mathbb{W}a5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ ) 8.e6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  (8... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ) 9. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  dx $c$ 3 10. $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  11.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  12. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  c4 13. $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ , White is better.

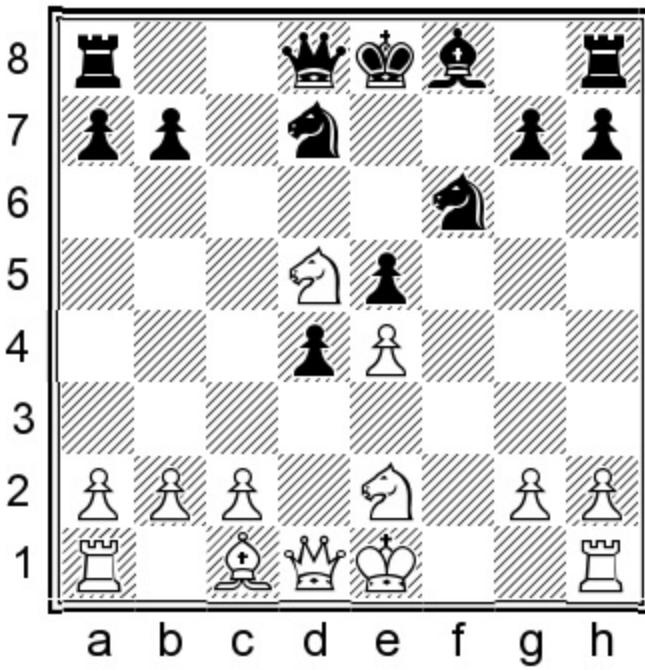
### 6... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$



### 7. $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$

According to Stockfish, the correct continuation was 7.dxe5 d4 8. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  9. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$  (10. $\mathbb{Q}f2!?$  0-0-0) 10...fxe4 11. $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  exf3 13. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  fxg2+ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}e4+$  16. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3+$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ag1$ , with the better game for White.

### 7...cxd4 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ fxe4 9.fxe4 $\mathbb{Q}gf6$



**10.Bg5?**

An important error. 10.0-0! kept the balance, e.g. 10...Bc5 (10...Bxe4!? 11.Wd3 Bdf6! (11...Bdc5? 12.Wb5+ Wd7 13.Bc7+ Bd8 14.Wxd7+ Bxd7 15.Bxa8 Be7 16.Be1 Bxa8 17.b4 Ba4 18.Bxd4!, with advantage to White) 12.Wb5+ Wd7 13.Bc7+ Bd8 14.Wxd7+ Bxd7 15.Bxa8 Bc5, and Black has full compensation for the exchange) 11.Wd3 Bxd5 12.exd5 Wb6 13.Bg3 0-0-0 14.Be4.

**10...Wa5+! 11.Bd2**

After 11.Wd2?! Wxd2+ 12.Bxd2 Bc8 13.c3 Bxd5 14.exd5 Bc5, Black's avantage would have been somewhat greater than in the game.

**11...Bc5 12.Bxf6+ Bxf6 13.Bg3 h5! 14.Wf3?**

Another error, this time decisive; he had to try 14.0-0!? h4 (14...d3+?! 15.Bh1 h4 16.Bf5 dxc2 (16...Bxe4? 17.cxd3 Bf2+ 18.Bxf2 Wxf2 19.Wa4+, and the black king is in danger) 17.We2 is unclear) 15.Bf5 h3 16.Wf3 hxg2 17.Bf2, and the game goes on.

**14...h4 15.Be2 Wxc2 16.Wf5 Wxe4**

With two extra pawns for Black the outcome is decided.

**17.We6+ Be7 18.Bb4?!**

18.0-0!? d3 19.Bc3 Wd4+ 20.Bh1 h3 21.gxh3 was more tenacious.

**18...Bd5 19.Bxe7 Bf4 20.Wc4 Bxe7 0-1**

### 3.5. Symmetrical structures from various openings

Although symmetrical structures can occur in practically any opening, there are some openings in which they arise more frequently. Among these we shall select the Queen's Gambit Accepted, the English Opening and the Petroff Defence. Let us begin with the Queen's Gambit Accepted, in which such structures already appeared at the start of the last century.

Game 73  
Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Frank Marshall**  
**Heinrich Wolf**  
Nürnberg 1906 (14)

In this game Marshall revealed his stratagem to the chess world for the first time.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 5.e3**

The most common continuation here is 5.e4!? b5 6.e5 ♘d5 7.a4 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 and the statistics are clearly in White's favour after both of Black's main responses: 8...♗d5 9.♗e2 (9.g3!?) or 8...♗b7 9.e6!.

**5...e6 6.♗xc4 c5 7.0-0 ♘c6**

The main line is 7...b5!? 8.♗b3 ♗b7 9.♗e2 ♘bd7 10.♗d1 ♗b8.

**8.a3!?**

In this position White has numerous options, several of which lead to positions with an isolated ♘d4. However, the text move aims at a symmetrical structure.

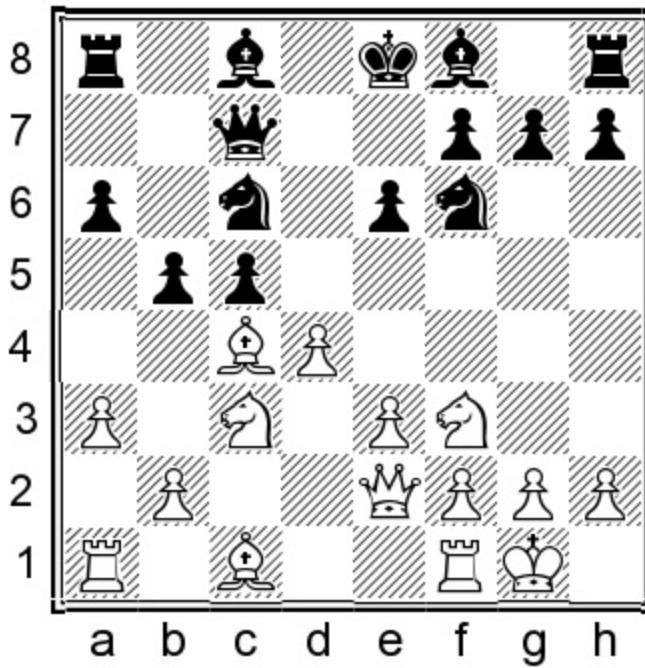
**8...♗c7**

A good alternative is 8...b5!?, e.g. 9.♗a2 ♗b7 10.♗e2 cxd4 11.♗d1 b4 12.exd4!? bxc3 13.d5 ♘xd5 14.♗xd5 (14.♗xd5?! ♗c7) 14...♘d4 15.♗xd4 ♘xd5 16.bxc3 ♗c5 17.♗g4 ♗f6, with equal play, Gelfand-Leko, Batumi ol 2018.

**9.♗e2**

Among several options, Stockfish gives the highest evaluation to the line 9.♗d3!? cxd4 10.exd4 ♗e7 11.♗e3 0-0 12.♗c1 ♗d8 13.♗e1 ♗d7 14.♗b1 ♗a5 15.♗d3 ♗h5 16.♗g5.

**9...b5**

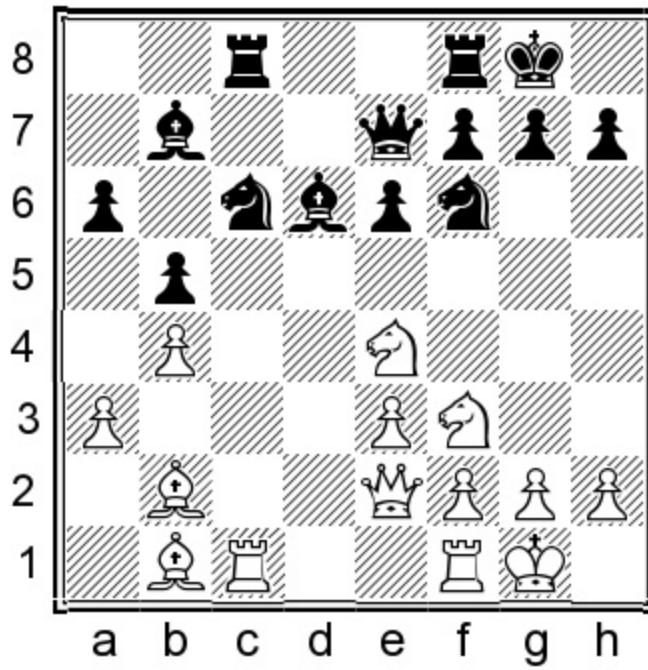


**10.Qa2!**

This is the engine's main line.

**10...Qb7 11.dxc5 Qxc5 12.b4 Qd6 13.Qb2 0-0 14.Qac1 Qad8**

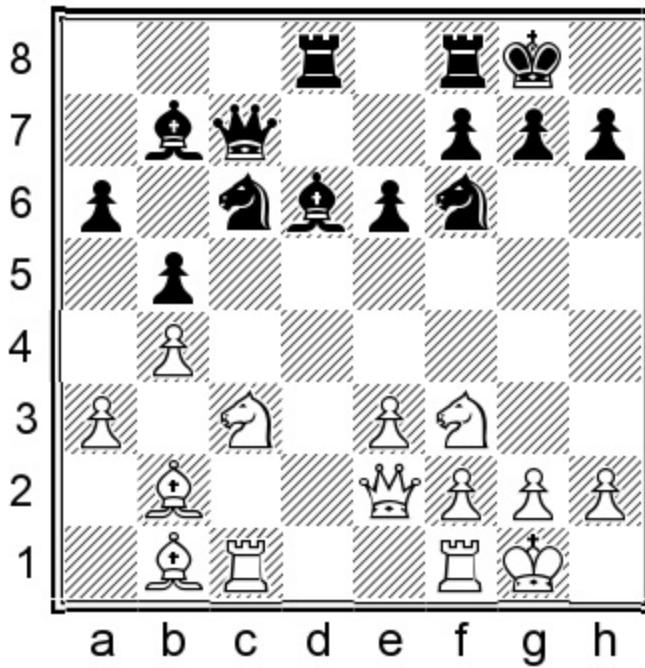
The following year, in a similar position Marshall carried out the same manoeuvre as on move 16: 14...We7 15.Qb1 Qac8?! (as Tarrasch indicated, and Stockfish confirms (!), 15...Qe5! was correct, e.g. 16.Qxe5 Qxe5 17.Qxb5?! (17.Qa4!?; the engine gives equality after 17.f4 Qxc3 18.Qxc3 Qe4 19.Qd4) 17...Qxb2 18.Qc7 We8 19.Qd6 Wb8 20.Qxb7 Wxd6 21.Qxb2 Wc6 22.Qe7 Qfc8, when the Qe7 is trapped, and to rescue it White needs to return the pawn with 23.e4 Qf8 24.b5 Wxb5 25.Wxb5 axb5 26.Qb7 Qc5, when the loss of the Qa3 is inevitable) 16.Qe4!.



*analysis diagram*

Revealing the secret of these positions: the advantage goes to whoever is first to play  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  or ... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  respectively. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  f5 18. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  e5 19. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  e4 20. $\mathbb{Q}a2+$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  26. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}h2+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xg2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}f3+$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2+-$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  (or 21... $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (23. $\mathbb{Q}d6!?$ ) 23... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}cc7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ ) 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  23.h4  $\mathbb{W}g4$  24. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  25. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  26. $\mathbb{W}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  f4 28. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{W}e7$  1-0, Marshall-Schlechter, Ostend 1907.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$**



**15...Qa8?**

'Now that Marshall has shown us how to exploit Black's last move, we can call it an error. But who, on seeing the position, could have predicted the catastrophe that befell Black?' – Chigorin. 15...Wb8! 16.h3 Qe5 (16...Qe7 17.Qg5) 17.Qxe5 Qxe5 18.f4 Qd6 19.Qd1 Wd7 20.Qf2 Qe7 was correct, with equality.

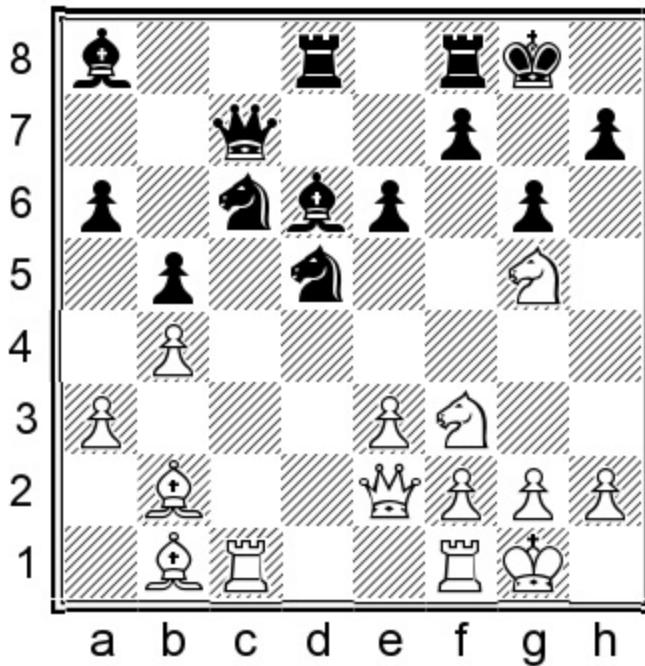
**16.Qe4!**

From now on, almost all Marshall's moves match Stockfish's main lines.

**16...Qd5?**

The lesser evil was 16...Qxe4 17.Qxe4 h6 (17...Wb6? 18.Wc2 Qe7 19.Qxh7+) 18.Qxc6 Qxc6 19.Qd4 Qxh2+ 20.Qh1 Wxd4 21.Qxd4 Qd6 22.Wg4 (22.Wfd1!?) 22...e5 23.Qb2 Wb7, although the compensation for the exchange would not be sufficient after, for instance, 24.f4.

**17.Qeg5 g6**



Nowadays the spectacular combination that follows is well known, but in those days it was most unusual:

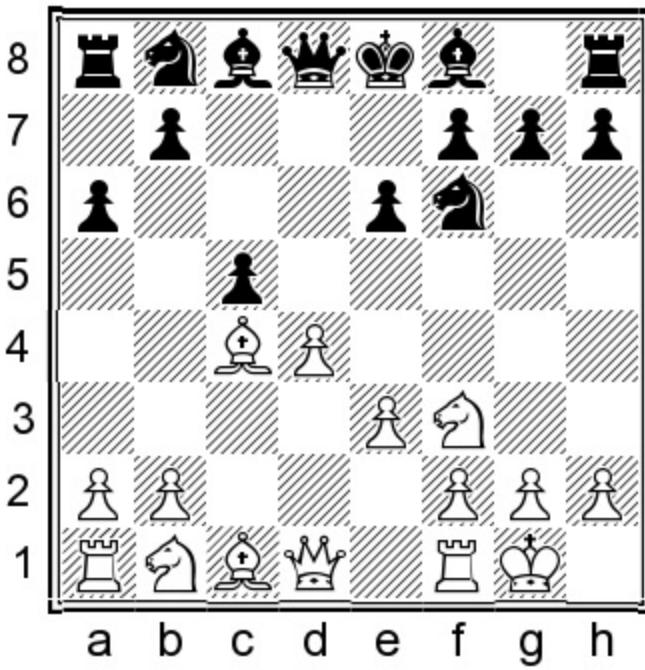
**18.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

19...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  20.  $\mathbb{W}g4!$ .

**20.  $\mathbb{W}h5!$  f6 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}h7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{W}xh7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  26.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}ce7$  27. e4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  28.  $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  30.  $\mathbb{E}d8$  1-0**

Game 74  
 Queen's Gambit Accepted  
**Magnus Carlsen 2815**  
**Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu 2659**  
 Medias 2011 (5)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  e6 5.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 6.0-0 a6**



## 7.dxc5!?

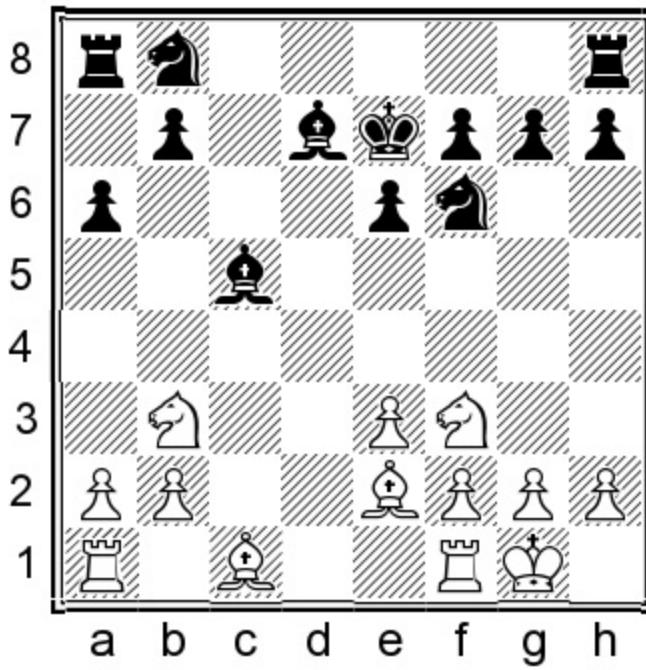
It is symptomatic that the text move, which was formerly considered harmless, has been played very frequently in the tournaments of this century, which reflects the present trend of exploiting White's advantage in symmetrical structures. A classical line from the past is 7.a4 ♜c6 8.♗e2 cxd4 9.♘d1 ♜e7 10.exd4.

## 7...♜xc5

After this move the black king remains in the centre, which, following the exchange of queens, can be considered normal, and in some cases even favourable. It is significant that the statistics for this move are better than for the main alternative 7...♝xd1 8.♞xd1 ♜xc5, after which Black can castle, e.g. 9.♝e2 (9.♝bd2 0-0 10.♝e2 ♜d8 11.♝e5 ♜e7 12.b3 ♜d5 13.♝b2 f6 14.♝d3 ♜c6 15.e4 ♜b6 16.e5 f5 17.♞ac1 ♜d7 18.♝f3 ½-½ Kramnik-Kasparov, Moscow 2001) 9...♝bd7 10.♝fd2!?, with the idea of playing f2-f3 + e3-e4, in order to restrict the ♜b7 (10.♝bd2 b6) 10...b6 11.♝b3 ♜e7 12.f3 ♜c5 13.♝d4 ♜b7 14.e4 0-0 15.♝e3 b5 16.♝c3, with equality, Grischuk-Navara, Tbilisi 2017.

## 8.♝xd8+ ♜xd8 9.♝e2 ♜e7 10.♝bd2 ♜d7 11.♝b3

After 11.b3 ♜b5 12.♝c4 ♜bd7 13.♝b2 ♜hc8 14.♝d4 ♜b6 15.♝xb5 axb5 16.♝e5 (16.♝xb6!?) 16...♛a3 17.♝d4 ♜c5 18.♝b2 ♛a3 19.♝d4 ♜c5, White had achieved nothing from the opening in Martirosyan-Ponomariov, Batumi ol 2018.



**11...Qd6?!**

This move allows the  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  to jump to a5 and as a consequence gain the bishop pair. Instead, 11... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  is better, e.g. 12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}hc8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}fd2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}fd2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$  Buhmann-Nisipeanu, Dresden 2017.

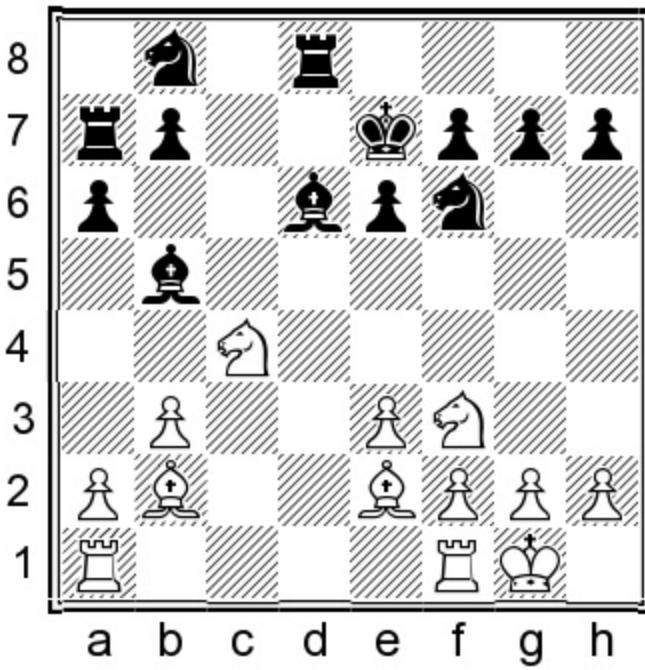
**12. $\mathbb{Q}a5!$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$**

It seems White can also maintain a small advantage after other options, e.g. 12... $b5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  (13. $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$ ) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  14. $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  15. $axb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ; or 12... $b6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ .

**13. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$**

In the event of 13... $\mathbb{Q}c7?$  14. $b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a3+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  White has a clear advantage.

**14. $b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}b2$**



**15...♝xc4!?**

Although this exchange was not 100% forced, it seems the best way to enable Black to complete development. After 15...♝c6 16.♝fc1!? ♜xc4 (16...♝c7 17.♝ab1!?, with the idea of recapturing on c4 with the ♘b3; 17...♜aa8 18.g3 ♔f8 19.a4 ♜xc4 20.bxc4 ♜ab8 21.♔g2 e5 22.h4, and Stockfish gives White an advantage of more than one point) 17.♝xc4 ♜aa8 18.♝d1 ♜ac8 19.h4, and White's advantage, according to the engine, is about 0.80, which is not trivial.

**16.♝xc4 ♜c6**

It appears the most accurate here was 16...b5! 17.♝e2 ♜c7, e.g. 18.a4 b4 19.♝d4 ♜c6 20.♝fc1 ♜dc8 21.♝xc6 ♜xc6 22.♝c4 (22.♝e5? ♜xe5 23.♝xe5 ♜bd7 24.♝b2 a5, with a slight advantage to Black due to the weakness of the ♘b3) 22...g6 23.a5 ♜e4, and Black has good chances of extinguishing White's initiative.

**17.♝fd1 ♜aa8 18.h3!**

The present World Champion, more than anyone else, is supreme in the realization of small, often microscopic, advantages. With this modest pawn advance, Carlsen begins a plan of kingside expansion, aimed at opening the position and giving his pair of bishops more scope.

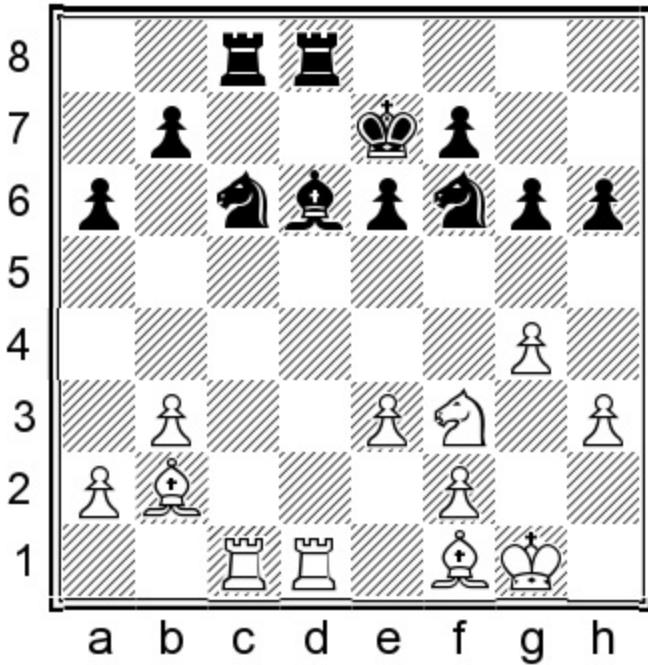
**18...g6**

Here 18...h5!?, to restrain the g2-g4 advance, was recommended by various commentators and was slightly better, e.g. 19.♝e2 ♜ac8. Even more accurate was 18...♜ac8!?, e.g. 19.g4 ♔f8 20.♔g2 ♔e7 21.♝xd8+ ♜xd8 22.♝c1 ♜a5 23.♝d3 ♜xc1 24.♝xc1 ♜c6 25.♝b2 h6.

**19.g4 h6 20.♔f1 ♔ac8!?**

A good idea, which Black failed to follow up.

**21.♕ac1**



**21...♝d5?!**

Here it was correct to play 21...♝e4! 22.a3 (22.h4?! ♐b4 23.a3 ♐d5 24.b4 f5 25.g5 hxg5 26.hxg5 ♐e8 27.♖xc8 ♖xc8 28.♗d3 ♐e7 29.♗xe4 fxe4 30.♗d2 ♖c2, with equality) 22...♝g5! 23.♗g2 ♐xf3+ 24.♗xf3 ♐a5, and White's advantage is minimal.

**22.h4 ♐e8**

Perfectly playable, but it was slightly better to seek counterplay with 22...♝cb4!?, e.g. 23.a3 (23.e4 ♐b6) 23...♝a2 24.♖xc8 (24.♔a1 ♐ac3) 24...♖xc8 25.♗d3 (25.♔a1?! ♐ac3 26.♔c1 f5!?, when the black pieces are well placed) 25...b5 26.g5 ♐ac3.

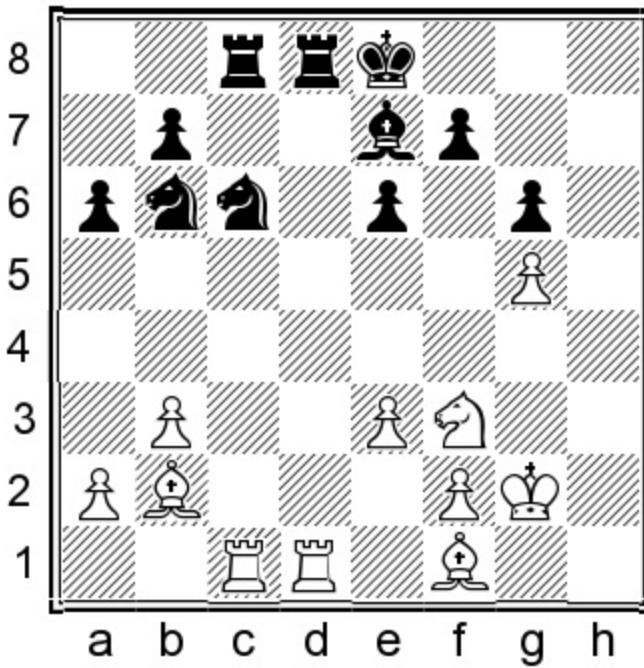
**23.g5 hxg5**

23...h5!? avoided the opening of the h-file, although it would not solve all Black's problems, e.g. 24.♗d2 (24.a3!? with the idea of b3-b4) 24...♝e5 25.♗e2 ♖xc1 26.♖xc1 ♐d7 27.a3 ♐e5 28.♗xe5 ♐xe5 29.♗e4, and White maintains the initiative.

**24.hxg5 ♐e7 25.♗g2 ♐b6?**

Black's first serious mistake. Here 25...♝cb4! was correct, e.g. 26.a4 ♖xc1 27.♖xc1 ♐b6 28.♗e5

$\mathbb{Q}4d5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  (30.  $f4?$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , and White's advantage is insignificant.



**26.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$**

Preparing to transfer a rook to the h-file.

**26...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2?$**

This move loses. Instead, after 27...  $\mathbb{Q}6d5!$  28.  $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  30.  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $b5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}h7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  Black retains defensive resources; another possibility of equal worth is 27...  $\mathbb{Q}xd1!$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}6d5$  29.  $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  (it is important that in the ending after 30.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8!$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  Black has good chances of salvation) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  31.  $b4$   $b5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}ce7$ , and it is not easy to breach Black's defences.

**28.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

Black's extra pawn is insignificant, as all the enemy pieces are ideally deployed.

**30...  $f5$**

Or 30...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}ac3$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ .

**31.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**

Black resigned, in view of the variation 31...  $exd5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}h7$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ .

In the English Opening, symmetrical structures arise mainly after 1.c4 c5.

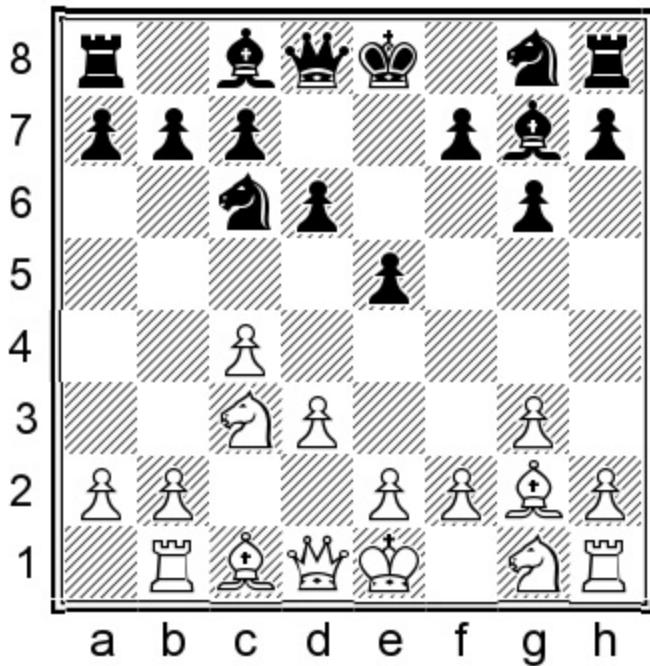
However, structures with pawns on the same files can also appear after 1.c4 e5. The following game, won by a player famous for his spectacular endgame technique, was rated very highly by his opponent.

Game 75  
English Opening  
**Ulf Andersson** 2585  
**Boris Gulko** 2530  
Biel 1976 (15)

I was supposed to go to this tournament as Gulko's second, but the Soviet authorities barred me, on the sort of stupid pretext that was typical of those times: 'Your passport with the visa is still not ready.'

Commenting on this game, Boris told me that, for the first time ever, he had been beaten in a game in which not a single one of the opponent's pieces had invaded his camp.

**1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.g3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.d3 d6 6.♗b1**



**6...a5**

Whether or not to make this move, which is designed to exploit the a-file after White's b2-b4 advance, seems to be a matter of taste. Nevertheless, it is the most popular line in Megabase, which means that the majority of players consider it to be good.

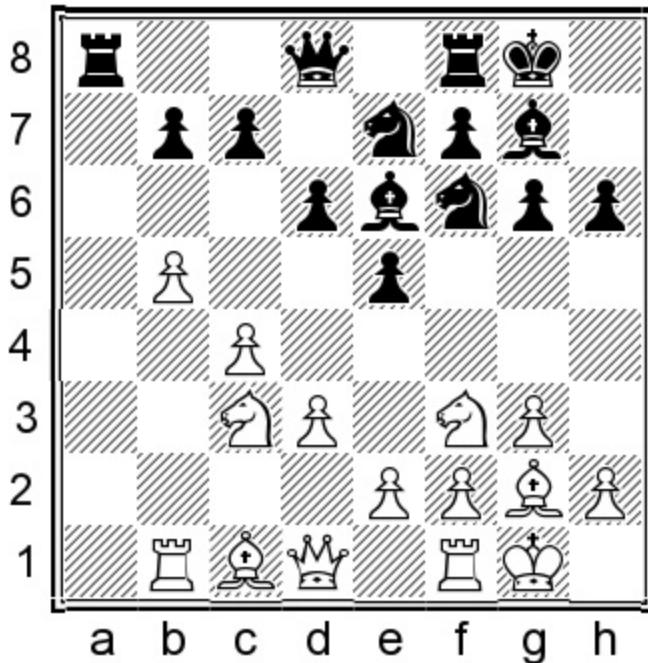
**7.a3 ♘f6**

The main alternative is 7...f5, e.g. 8.e3 ♜f6 9.♗ge2 0-0 10.0-0 ♜e7 (10...g5?! 11.f4 exf4 12.exf4 g4 13.♗e3 ♜e6 14.♗b3 ♜b8 15.♗f2 ♜f7 16.♗fe1, with the better game for White, Kamsky-Shirov, Sochi 2015) 11.e4 (11.b4!?) 11...c6 12.b4 axb4 13.axb4 ♜e6, with chances for both sides, Gulko-Kortchnoi, San Francisco 1995.

### **8.♗f3 0-0 9.0-0 h6**

To prevent 10.♗g5, followed by ♜xf6, with control of the d5- and e4-squares, which is a typical idea in such positions. Although the text is the main line, Black has several alternatives, e.g. 9...♜e8 or 9...♝d4.

### **10.b4 axb4 11.axb4 ♜e6 12.b5 ♜e7**



More than 1,300 games have reached this position, with a score of about 51% for White, which is less than usual, and means that in theory at least Black has no problems in this line, but of course in practice anything can happen.

In addition to all the pawns being on the same files, a sort of diagonal symmetry is apparent in the pawn chains, with three white pawns at d3, c4 and b5, and on the other side three black pawns at e5, d6 and c7.

### **13.♗b2**

This is still the main line, with the main alternative being 13.♗b3.

### **13...♝d7**

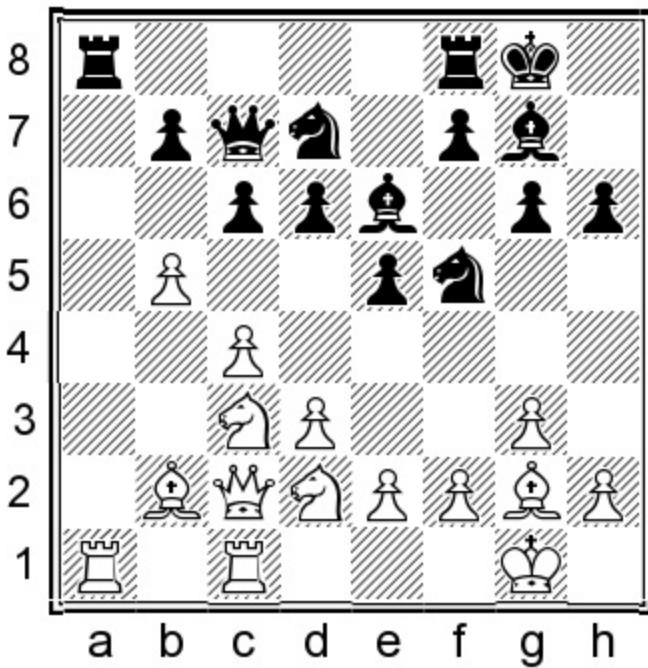
The most common move here is 13...♝d7, e.g. 14.♗c2 (14.♗d2 c6 15.♗a4 ♜c7 16.d4 exd4 17.♗xd4

c5 18.♗b2 d5! 19.cxd5 ♗exd5 20.♗c4 ♖fd8, with chances for both sides, Damljanovic-Najer, Rijeka 2010) 14...♗h3 15.♖a1 ♗xg2 16.♗xg2 ♗e6 17.♖xa8 ♖xa8 18.♖a1 ♖xa1, with equality, Karjakin-Nakamura, Abidjan 2019.

#### 14.♗d2 c6 15.♖a1 ♗c7 16.♗c2 ♗f5!?

This is one of the six (!) moves that Stockfish considers sufficient to keep the balance. Black could also gain equal play by exploiting the ‘X-ray’ pressure along the c-file with 16...d5!?, e.g. 17.♔a3 ♖fe8 18.bxc6 (the engine analyses 18.♗xe7 ♖xa1 19.♖xa1 ♖xe7 20.♖a7 e4 21.bxc6 ♗xc6 22.dxe4 dxc4 23.♗d5) 18...bxc6 19.♗xe7 (19.♗fc1 e4!?) 19...♖xa1 20.♖xa1 ♖xe7 21.cxd5?! (21.♗c1) 21...cxd5, with a slight advantage to Black, Yakovich-Najer, Moscow 2006.

#### 17.♗fc1



#### 17...♗f6

There is a notable difference between the bishops on g2 and g7: the former attacks the ♘c6 along an open diagonal, whereas the second is restricted by its own ♘e5. Nevertheless, the position is still close to equality, e.g. 17...♖xa1!? 18.♖xa1 ♗d4 19.♗d1 cxb5 20.cxb5 ♗c5 (20...♗b6!?) 21.♗d5 (21.♗c4 e4!?) 21...♗xd5 22.♗xd5 ♗xb5 23.♗e4 b6, and White’s bishop pair provides compensation for the pawn, but nothing more.

#### 18.♗d1

A good alternative was 18.♗b1!? ♖xa1 19.♖xa1.

#### 18...♗d7?!

Here 18... $\mathbb{E}xa1$  19. $\mathbb{E}xa1$  (19. $\mathbb{Q}xa1 \mathbb{E}a8!?$ ) 19...d5 20.bxc6 (20. $\mathbb{E}c1 \mathbb{W}d6$ ) 20...bxc6 21. $\mathbb{Q}a4 \mathbb{Q}d7$  was better, with a balanced position.

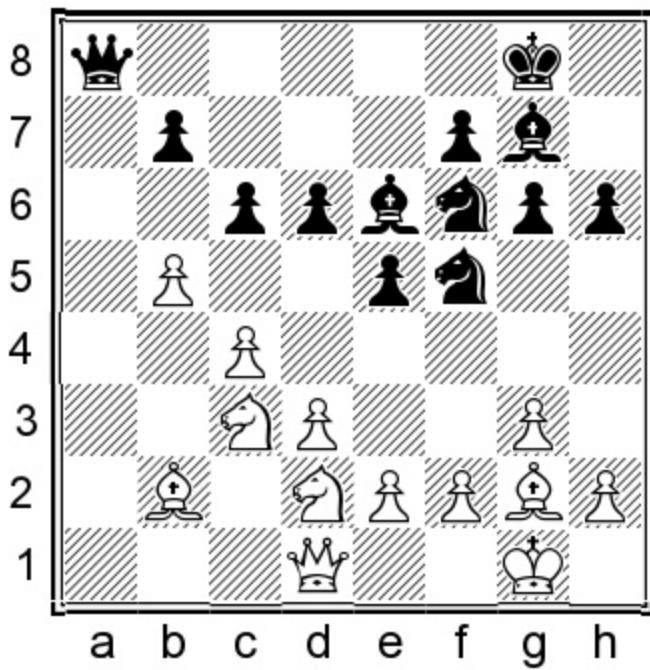
## 19. $\mathbb{E}xa8$

White could have obtained the better game with 19. $\mathbb{Q}a4!?$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  20.e3  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ .

## 19... $\mathbb{E}xa8$ 20. $\mathbb{E}a1$ $\mathbb{W}c8?$

Black is contesting the a-file, not realizing that the exchange of all the major pieces favours White. Instead, 20... $\mathbb{E}b8!$  21. $\mathbb{E}a7$  (or 21. $\mathbb{E}b1 \mathbb{E}a8$  22.e3  $\mathbb{W}c8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}e7$ ) 21... $\mathbb{W}d8$  22. $\mathbb{W}a1$  (22. $\mathbb{W}a4 d5!$ ) 22...d5! would have restricted White to only a slight advantage.

## 21. $\mathbb{E}xa8$ $\mathbb{W}xa8$



## 22. $\mathbb{W}a4!$

It is precisely this moment in the game that corresponds to the comment by Gulko, mentioned in the note before the first move: despite the deceptive appearance of tranquility, the black position is already very difficult.

## 22... $\mathbb{W}xa4$

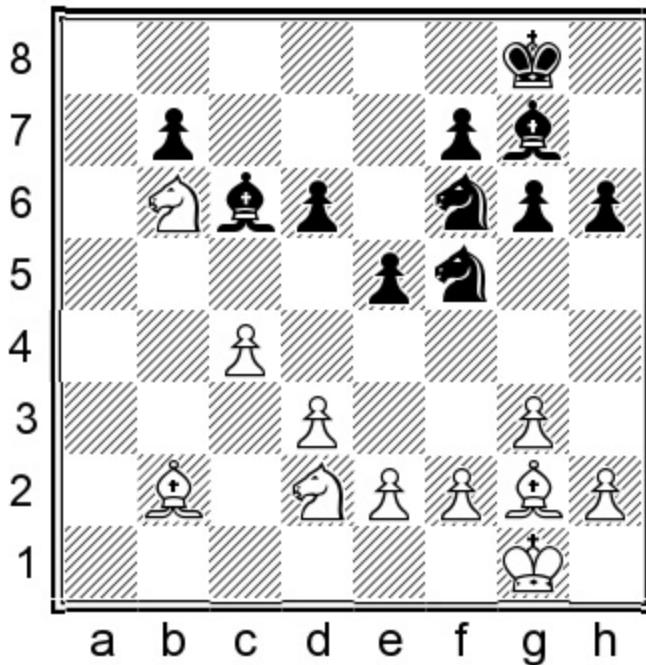
22... $\mathbb{W}b8$  would only have delayed the exchange of queens, e.g. 23. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  d5 24.bxc6 bxc6 25. $\mathbb{W}xc6$  dxc4 26.dxc4  $\mathbb{W}d8$  27. $\mathbb{W}a8$  (27. $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$ ), and White achieves his objective, winning a pawn in addition.

## 23. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Suddenly the black position is in danger, due to the pressure against the ♜c6 and the threat of the pawn break c4-c5. 23...♝e7 was no better, e.g. 24.bxc6 bxc6 (24...♝xc6 25.♝b6!?) 25.c5! ♝e8 26.cxd6 ♞xd6 27.♛a3 ♞dc8 28.♞c5, with various weak points in the black camp.

#### 24.♝b6 ♝e8 25.bxc6 ♞xc6

No better was 25...bxc6 26.c5! dxc5 27.♝xe5 ♜d7 28.♝xg7 ♛xg7 29.♝bc4.



#### 26.♝b3!

Threatening 27.♝a5, followed by the capture of the ♜b7.

#### 26...e4 27.♝xf6 ♜xf6 28.♝xe4 ♜d4?!

Here 28...♝e7!? was more tenacious, although it would probably not have changed the result of the game, e.g. 29.♝xc6 bxc6 30.c5 dxc5 (30...d5 31.d4 ♜f5 32.e3 ♜d8 33.♞c8 ♜f8 34.g4 ♜e7 35.♝xe7 ♜xe7 36.♞c1 and the extra pawn is decisive) 31.♝d7 ♜c3 32.♝bxc5 f5.

#### 29.♝xc6 bxc6 30.♝xd4 ♜xd4 31.♝c8 ♜c5 32.♝e7+ 1-0

Recently White has been seeking an advantage in positions with the king in the centre following an early exchange of queens on d1. And precisely one of the positions of this type occurs in the English.

Game 76  
English Opening  
**Teimour Radjabov 2724**  
**Peter Svidler 2749**  
Geneva 2017 (7)

**1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 c5**

White's move-order has been called the Anti-Grünfeld; if Black wants to play this defence, it is preferable to play 2...g6!? 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5.

**3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5**

Svidler is a recognized expert in the Grünfeld and therefore wants to play a position in this style. Another option with the same objective is 3...g6 4. d4 cxd4 5.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  d5.

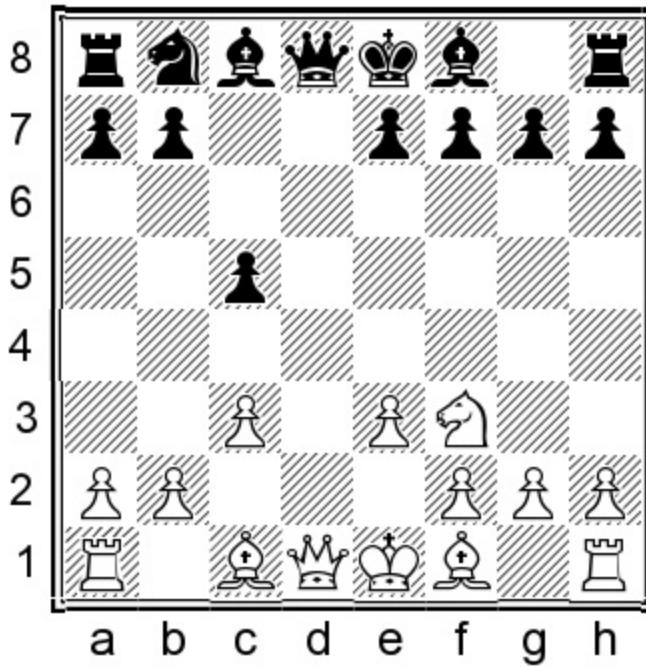
**4. cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  5. e3**

This move seems quite modest; the most popular three moves in Megabase are 5.g3, 5.d4, and 5.e4.

**5...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$**

The main move, although after this game there was a growth of interest in the alternatives, for instance entering IQP territory with 5...e6 6. d4 cxd4 7. exd4 and now 7... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ ! is the fashionable move nowadays (although more common overall are 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and 7... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ): 8. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 11.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , with chances for both sides, Radjabov-Ding Liren, Khanty-Mansiysk 2019.

**6. dxc3!?**



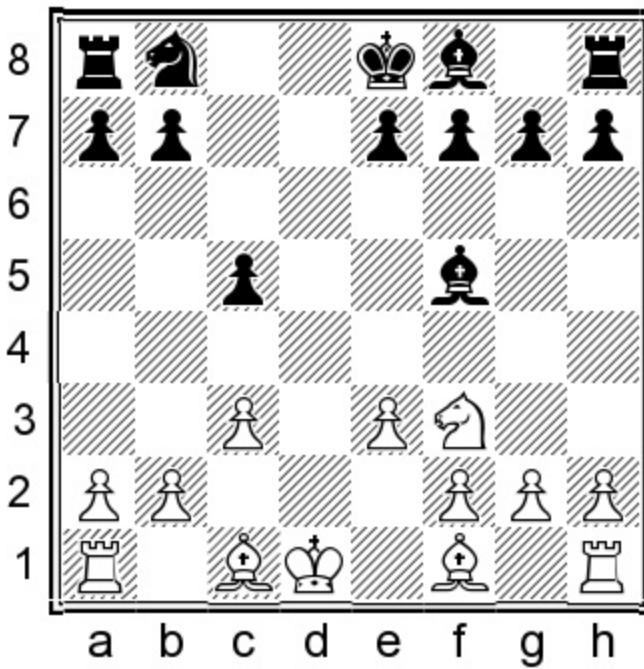
According to Radjabov, at this moment smiles could be seen on the faces of Giri and Nepomniachtchi, as well as Svidler himself, all of them great experts in the Grünfeld. That is to say, all three Grünfeld experts considered such an early exchange of queens to be totally harmless. However, as we shall see later, Svidler assessed his position as losing a mere thirteen moves later.

6... $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$

Obviously Black is not forced to exchange queens, although this seems the clearest continuation. The main alternative is 6... $\mathbb{W}c7$ , e.g. 7.e4 e6 (7... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ ? b6 9. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  e6 10. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , with a slight advantage to White) 8. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  0-0 10. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  11. $\mathbb{W}g3!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (11...e5 12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 12.f4 and the white position seems more promising, So-Vachier-Lagrave, Stavanger 2019.

7. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$

It was perhaps better to develop this bishop on the long diagonal or on d7: 7... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8.e4 b6!? (8... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ? 9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  e6 10. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11.f4 0-0-0 12. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  h6 13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  e5 14.g3 exf4 15.gxf4 g5 16. $\mathbb{Q}af1$  gxf4 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$ , with equality, Deac-Aryan, Moscow 2020) 9. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  f6 11. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  e5 12. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (12. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ ?) 12... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}he1$  a6 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}hb8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ , with equal play, Vidit-Nepomniachtchi, Baku 2016.



8. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

Preparing the following move.

8... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.e4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

A mistake, according to Radjabov, since after this move there is no choice but to play ...g7-g6 in order to develop the  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  on g7, which is not good, because its action will be restricted by the white pawn barrier b2+c3. After 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  0-0-0 11. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (11.a4!? e6 (11...e5?! 12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 11...f5 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  e5 13.g3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (15. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ ?) 15...fxe4 (15...b5!?) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ , White had the better game in Margvelashvili-Georgescu, Kazan 2013; but in the month following our main game, another high-level clash saw 9... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ !? 10. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  11.h4 h5 12. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  e6

13.a4 ♜e7 14.g3 0-0 15.a5 ♜fd8 16.a6 b6 17.♗c2 ♜e5, with equality, Carlsen-Vachier-Lagrange, St Louis 2017.

### 10.♗c2 g6 11.♗c4

According to Radjabov, there were two alternatives: 11.f4 ♜h6 12.♗f3 f5!?, and 11.♗f3!? ♜g7 12.♗e3 b6 13.♗b5 ♜c8 14.♗hd1 0-0 15.♗f4.

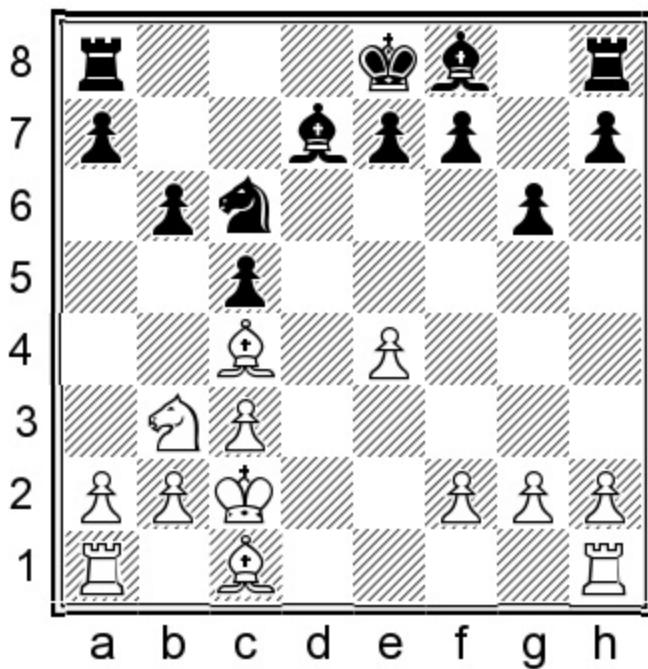
### 11...♝d7

In the event of 11...♝xc4 12.♝xc4 b5 13.♝e3 ♜g7 14.a4 White would have the better game; Stockfish considers Black's best option to be to exchange the ♜f8 for its white counterpart, not fearing the doubling of Black's pawns: 11...♜h6!? 12.♝xe6 fxe6 13.h4 ♜f8 14.f3 0-0-0 15.h5 ♜g8 16.♗c4 (16.hxg6?! ♜xg6 17.g4 ♜f8 18.♗h3 ♜e5) 16...♝xc1 17.♝axc1 g5 18.a4 b6, and White's advantage is minimal.

### 12.♗b3!

Black's task would have been easier after 12.♗f3?! ♜a5 13.♝e2 ♜c6 14.♝d2 e6 15.f3 ♜e7.

### 12...b6



### 13.a4!

A good idea, although 13.♗f4!? ♜g7 14.a4 also deserves attention and could well transpose to the game.

**13... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ??!**

As Radjabov admitted, he had overlooked 13...f5!, e.g. 14.a5  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  16.axb6 axb6 17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  (17.f4?!  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  18.e5 e6 19. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ) 19... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , with equality) 17... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ , but in fact here White can continue 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20.g3 (20.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ?) 20...fxe4 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ , and White is slightly better.

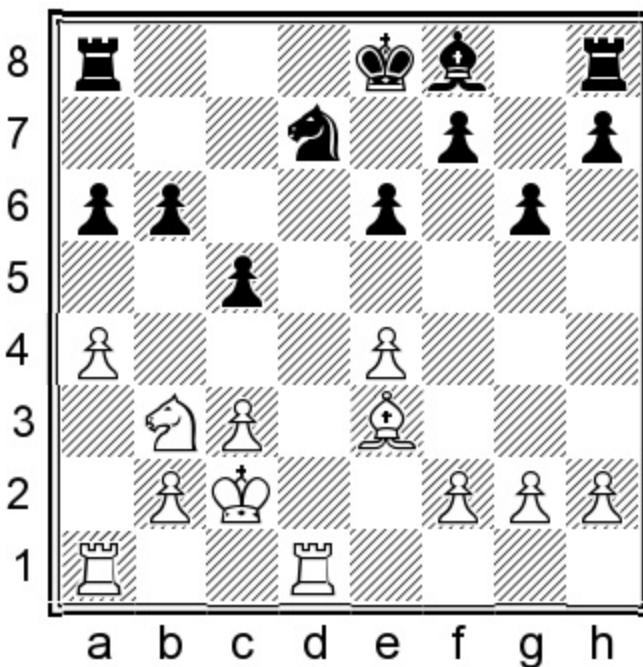
**14. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6?**

After 14...0-0-0?! 15. $\mathbb{Q}a6+$  (15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ?) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Radjabov gives a clear advantage to White, but this is somewhat exaggerated, e.g. 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ! 18. $\mathbb{Q}hd1$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ?) 18... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ! 19.f3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$  f5 21.b4 c4!? and Black can defend. According to Stockfish, the best defence is 14...f6! 15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  e5 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20.f3 0-0-0, and after several exchanges White's advantage is only small.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  e6?!**

Slightly better was 16...h5!?, e.g. 17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (17.a5 c4 18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  b5) 17... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

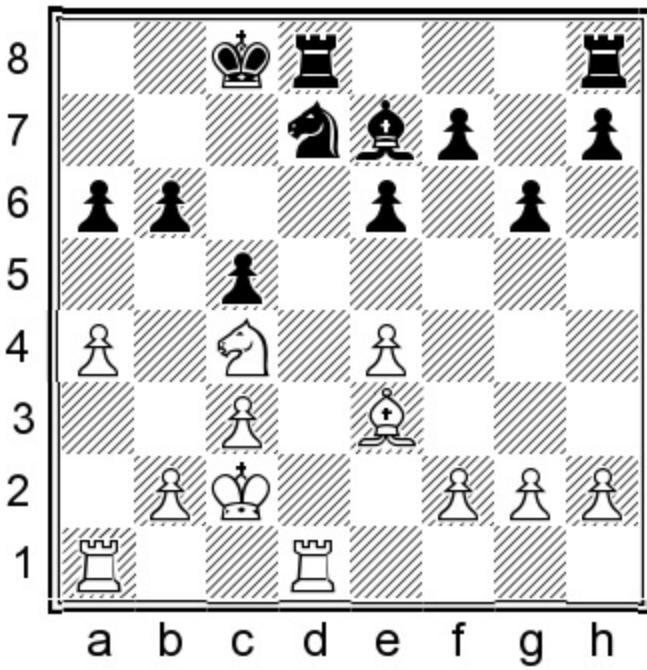
**17. $\mathbb{Q}hd1$**



**17...0-0-0?!**

As the game demonstrates, it is not a good idea to place the king on the queenside; it would have been better to keep it in the centre for a while, e.g. 17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

**18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$**



In the post-mortem Svidler said that he was considering resigning here! The position is much better for White, despite its apparent tranquility. The main threat is the advance a4-a5, combined with  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ .

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}b7$

The lesser of the evils would have been 19... $\mathbb{Q}hg8$ !? 20.a5 b5 21. $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}df8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24.h3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  and although Black is a pawn down he can still put up resistance.

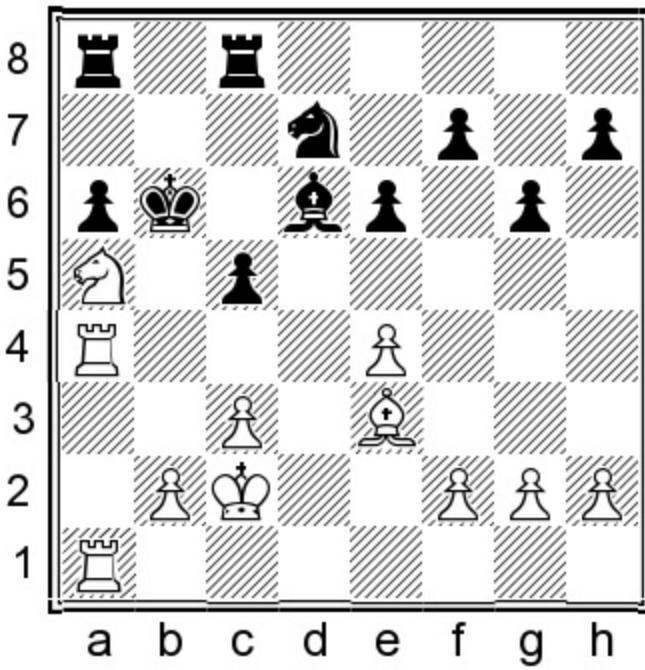
### 20.a5! $\mathbb{Q}hf8$

A sad necessity, given that 20...b5? loses to 21. $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  24.b3!  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ .

### 21.axb6 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}a5+$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ !?

Much more practical than entering complications with 24. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  (or 25. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  27.b3 f6 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ ) 25...c4 26. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xa6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  (28. $\mathbb{Q}b4+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ .

### 24... $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}da1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}5a4!$ $\mathbb{Q}ec8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}a5$



**30... $\mathbb{Q}e7??!$**

Black's only achievement so far is to retain material equality. However, material losses will soon be unavoidable and Black's last move only hastens the defeat. If instead Black plays 30... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , then after 31. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  White emerges with an extra pawn as well as a positional advantage.

**31. $\mathbb{Q}b4+!$**

Black resigned in view of 31... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c6+$ .

In the Petroff Defence, symmetrical structures can arise very quickly; sometimes the structure is the same as in the French Exchange Variation 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5.

Game 77  
Petroff Defence  
**Ian Nepomniachtchi**  
**Wang Hao**  
Ekaterinburg ct 2020 (5)

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  d6 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  5.d4 d5 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

The main line here is 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ . The text move has been played twenty times less frequently, although it has been very popular recently, especially with some Chinese grandmasters. Marshall's 6... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  is another option, often played by Fabiano Caruana in recent years.

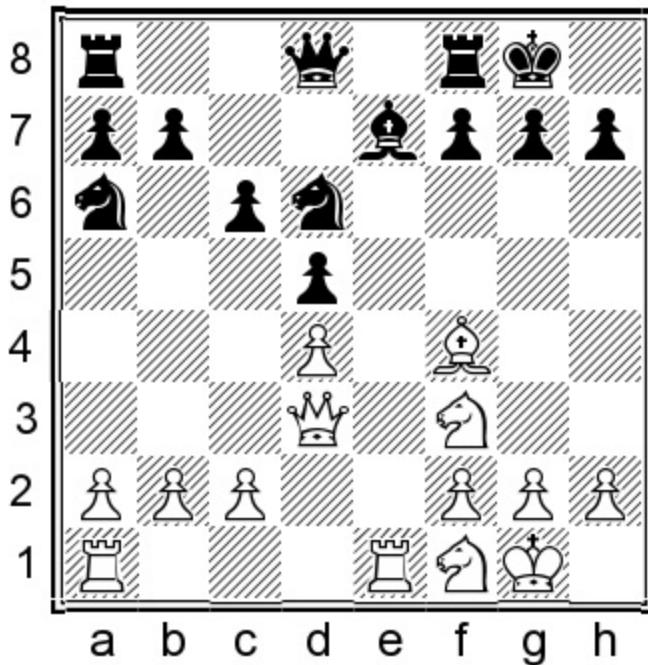
**7.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$**

9.c4!? is the most common move here and has a better score than Ian's move.

### 9... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

In an earlier game Ian played in accordance with an opinion expressed by Mark Dvoretsky: in the French Exchange Variation structure, which is what we have on the board, knights are stronger than bishops: 10. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  c6 11. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  12. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  13. $\mathbb{H}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  14. $\mathbb{H}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17.c3, with a slight advantage to White, Nepomniachtchi-Duda, Wijk aan Zee 2019. But it appears that when preparing for this later game he came to different conclusions.

### 10... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 11. $\mathbb{W}xd3$ c6 12. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$



### 13.h4!?

It appears that this move is aimed at gaining a tempo, in comparison with the following game, played by the other Chinese representative in this tournament: 13. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  14. $\mathbb{H}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  16.g3  $\mathbb{W}d7$  17. $\mathbb{H}ae1$   $\mathbb{H}fe8$  18.h4, with a slight advantage to White, Yu Yangyi-Jinshi Bai, China tt 2019.

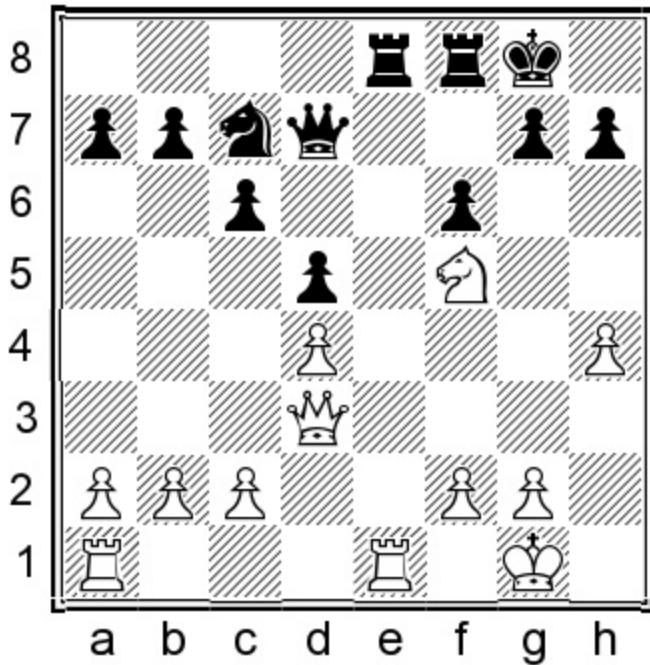
### 13... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ f6

A typical move in these structures: the weakness of the e6-square is unimportant, since it can easily be covered by all the black pieces.

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{H}ae8$

17...g6!? 18.h5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  was the most obvious continuation.

**18.♕xd6 ♕xd6 19.♗f5 ♕d7**



**20.♘h3**

Threatening 21.♗h6+.

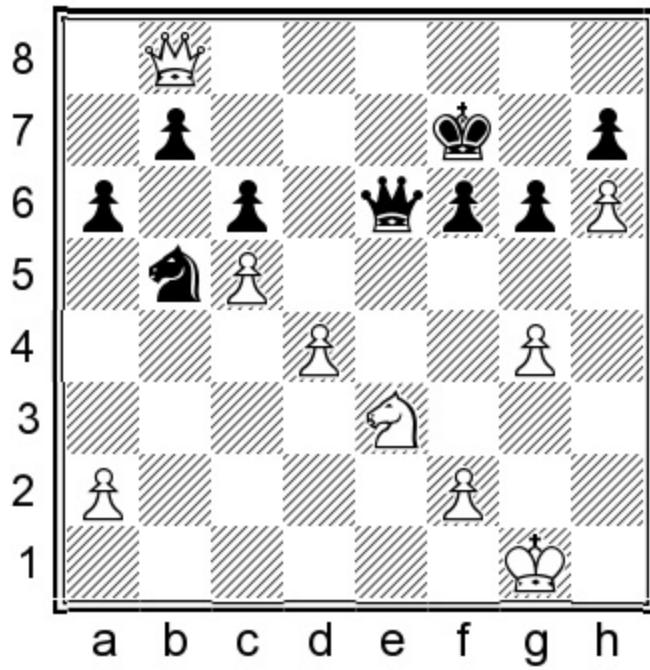
**20...♝h8 21.h5 ♜xe1+ 22.♜xe1 ♜e8 23.♜e8+ ♔xe8 24.g4!? a6 25.b3 ♜e6 26.♗e3 ♛d6 27.h6!**

Creating a danger zone next to the black king.

**27...g6 28.c4 dxc4 29.bxc4 ♜g8**

It is hard to see how White could have made progress in the event of 29...♗f7!? 30.c5 (30.♘h2 ♜d6) 30...♜e7 (30...♜xa2!?) 31.♘h2 ♜d8, followed by bringing the king to f8.

**30.♘h2 ♜f7 31.c5 ♛b5 32.♘b8**



**32... $\mathbb{W}d7?$**

The Chinese grandmaster cracks under the pressure and commits a losing error. Probably he overlooked the opponent's 34th move. Black could have maintained equality in two different ways: the obvious 32... $\mathbb{W}e7!$  33. $\mathbb{W}h8 \mathbb{Q}e6$  and the more complicated 32... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$  33. $\mathbb{W}xb7+ \mathbb{W}e7$  34. $\mathbb{W}xa6 \mathbb{W}e4!$  35.a4 (or 35. $\mathbb{W}b7+ \mathbb{Q}e8$  36. $\mathbb{W}xh7 \mathbb{Q}f3+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f1 \mathbb{Q}d4$ ) 35...f5.

**33. $\mathbb{W}h8 \mathbb{Q}e6$  34.f4!**

And thanks to the threat of 35.f5+ White wins a piece.

**34... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$**

34... $\mathbb{W}xd4??$  35. $\mathbb{W}e8\#.$

**35. $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  36. $\mathbb{W}c8+!$**

36.f5+? gxf5 37.gxf5+  $\mathbb{Q}e7.$

**36... $\mathbb{W}d7$  37. $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  38. $\mathbb{W}d8!$**

The key move!

**38... $\mathbb{W}d7$**

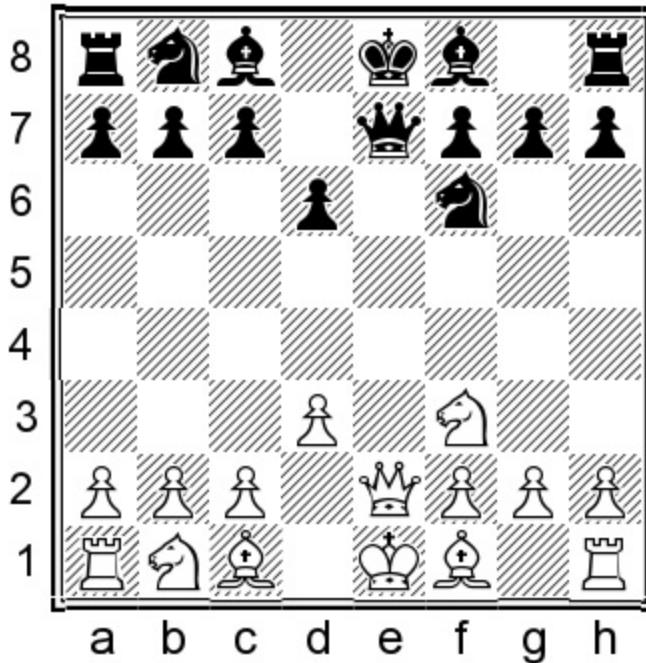
38... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  39.a4!.

**39.f5+ gxf5 40.gxf5+  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  41. $\mathbb{W}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xf5 \mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  1-0**

Very often a lower-rated player will try to draw against a stronger opponent by trying to exchange as many pieces as possible in a symmetrical structure. In the following game, Vasily Ivanchuk provides an example of how the stronger player should handle such a situation.

Game 78  
 Petroff Defence  
**Carlos Albornoz Cabrera 2566**  
**Vasily Ivanchuk 2677**  
 Havana 2019 (3)

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♗xe5 d6 4.♗f3 ♘xe4 5.♗e2 ♗e7 6.d3 ♘f6**



**7.♗g5**

For many years this symmetrical position was considered drawish, and with good reason. Recently, however, White has been trying to gain some advantage, although apparently without much success, e.g. 7.♗c3!? ♗xe2+ 8.♗xe2 g6 (8...♗e7 and 8...c6 are more common) 9.♗d4 a6 10.♗f4 ♗g7 11.h3 ♗d7 12.♗f3 ♗c6 13.♗xc6 ♗xc6 14.♗xc6+ bxc6 15.0-0-0 ♔d7, with equality, Carlsen-Caruana, Wijk aan Zee 2018.

**7...♗xe2+ 8.♗xe2 ♗e7 9.♗c3 h6 10.♗h4**

Although this is the most common move, it seems more promising to retreat the bishop along the c1-h6 diagonal, e.g. 10.♗d2 c6 (after 10...♗c6 11.h3 White has a slight advantage) 11.0-0-0 0-0 12.h3 ♗bd7 13.g4 ♗e8 14.♗dg1, with a white initiative on the kingside, Demchenko-Kobalia, Batumi ol 2018.

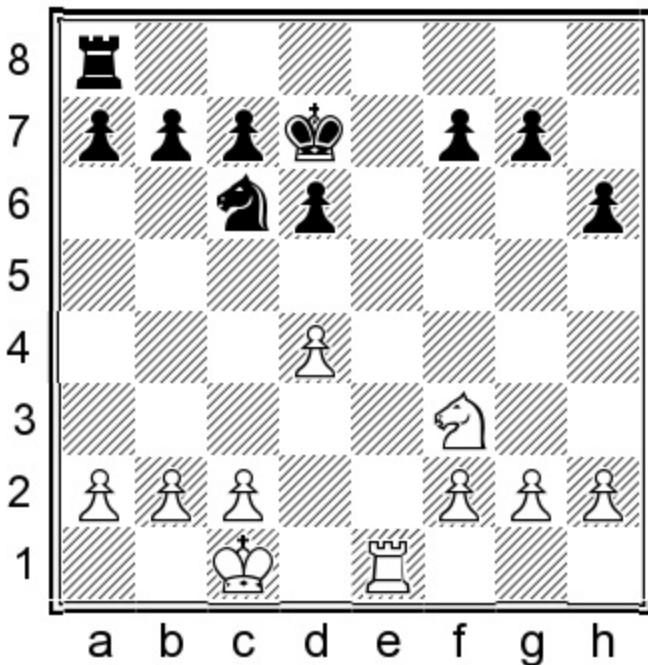
**10... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11.0-0-0**

Black has no problems either after 11. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  12.0-0-0  $\mathbb{E}e8$ .

**11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. $d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h4?!$**

White's desire to exchange pieces prevents him from seeking the best moves; he has a slight advantage after 15. $\mathbb{E}he1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $dxe5$  17. $dxe5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}hd8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

**15... $\mathbb{E}he8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{E}he1$   $\mathbb{E}xe1$  19. $\mathbb{E}xe1$**



Now the most interesting phase of the game begins: by advancing his pawns on both wings, Ivanchuk keeps tension in the game.

**19... $b5!$  20. $c3$   $a5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $a4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

The young Cuban GM does not want to change anything in the position, thinking that this will be the simplest way to draw, although breaking the symmetry with 22. $d5!?$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (23. $\mathbb{E}d1!?$ ) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (23... $\mathbb{E}b8??$  24. $\mathbb{E}xe7+$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  deserved attention.

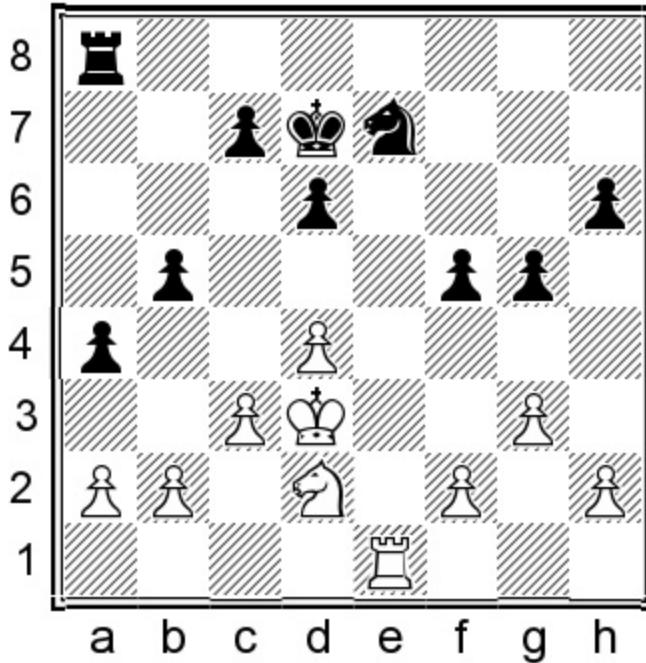
**22... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $g5!?$**

Advancing on the kingside as well. The engine prefers to start the advance with a different pawn, i.e. 23... $f5!?$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $g5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , although the difference seems minimal.

**24.g3**

A good alternative was 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1!?$   $f5!$  (24... $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  26.b3.

24...f5



25.♘f3?!

Here it was better to play 25.♘b1!? ♜b8 26.♘a3 b4 27.♘c4 bxc3 28.bxc3 h5 29.♔c2.

25...♘d5 26.♘d2 f4 27.♘e4

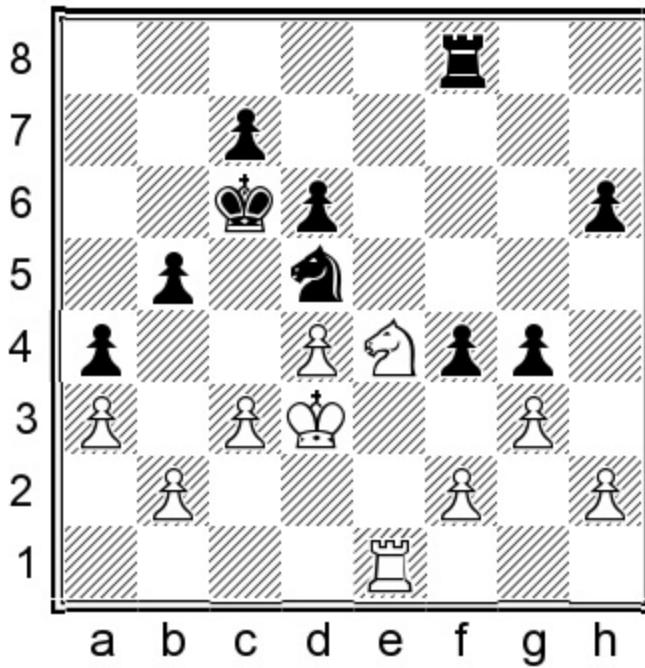
White's problems are evident in the line 27.f3?! a3! 28.b3 h5 29.♘e4 g4, with advantage to Black.

27...♜f8 28.♝h1

After 28.h3 c6 29.b3 a3 30.♗d2 ♔c7 31.c4 ♘b4 32.♘c3 fxg3 33.fxg3 ♜f2+ 34.♝e2 ♜f1 35.♝e1 ♜xe1 36.♔xe1 bxc4 37.bxc4 ♘c2+ Black wins a pawn, although Stockfish considers that White can draw this knight ending. Clearly though it is far from easy to opt for such a variation when as yet there is no necessity to give up material.

28...♔c6 29.♝e1 g4 30.a3?!

30.♗d2 was better, to answer 30...♘b6 (30...h5 31.a3) with 31.b3!.



**30...h5?!**

Black has obviously made progress. The engine thinks 30... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ! 31. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  was best here, with an overwhelming advantage.

**31. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e4??$**

The Cuban GM continues with his passive policy, but it was better to seek activity, for instance with 34.h3! fxg3 35.fxg3 gxh3 36. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ , and after recapturing on h3 White will have counterplay against the  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ .

**34... $\mathbb{Q}g6??$**

34... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ !, e.g. 35. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  c6 37. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  38.c4 bxc4+ 39. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , with the better game for Black.

**35. $\mathbb{Q}d2??$**

Once again, White misses an opportunity for counterplay with 35.c4! fxg3 36.hxg3 bxc4+ 37. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ !?

35.h3! also deserved attention, e.g. 35...gxh3 36. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  fxg3 37.fxg3 h4 38. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

**35...d5**

A slip, after which White could have equalized. Instead, Black could have maintained the pressure with 35... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ! 36. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ! 39. $\mathbb{Q}d2+$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

### 36.♘f1?

36.b3!! ♘f8 (36...axb3 37.♗xb3 ♜e7 38.♗c5+ ♔e8 39.♗xe7+ ♔xe7 40.a4) 37.bxa4 bxa4 38.c4! c6 39.cxd5 cxd5 40.♗b1! ♗e7 41.♗c3 was a nice save.

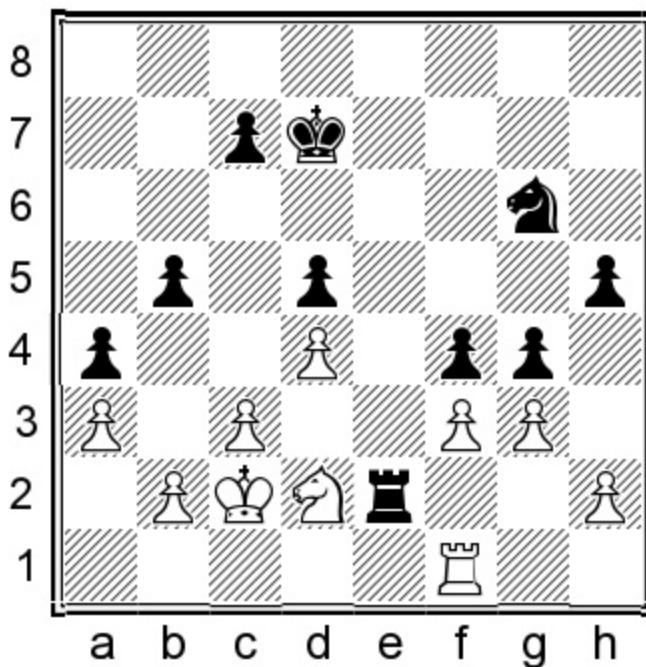
### 36...♜e7?!

Here 36...h4! was stronger, e.g. 37.♗e1 c6 38.b3 h3 39.bxa4 bxa4 40.♗f1 ♘f8 41.♗e1 ♘f6 42.♗f1 ♘e6.

### 37.f3?

It was better to break on the other wing with 37.b3!, e.g. 37...axb3 (or 37...c5 38.dxc5 f3 39.bxa4 ♗e5+ (39...bxa4 40.c4 ♗e5+ 41.♗c3) 40.♗d4 ♗c6+ 41.♗d3 bxa4 42.c4=) 38.♗xb3 ♗d6 39.♗c1 ♗e6 40.♗d2 ♗f5 41.♗d3 f3 42.♗e1 and White can hold.

37...♜e3+ 38.♔c2 ♜e2 0-1



Some sample continuations:

A) 39.♖h1 h4 40.gxh4 g3 41.hxg3 fxg3 42.♗d1 g2 43.♖g1 ♗f4 44.b3 axb3 45.♗xb3 ♜a2;

B) 39.fxg4 hxg4 and now:

B1) 40.♖h1 ♔e6 41.♗d1 ♜g2 42.b3 fxg3 43.hxg3 ♜xg3, and the ♜g4 constitutes a decisive advantage;

B2) 40.gxf4 ♜xh2 41.f5 (41.♗c1 ♗h4 42.♗d1 g3 43.♗f1 ♜h3 44.♗e3 g2; or similarly 41.♗g1 ♗h4) 41...♗h4! 42.f6 ♔e8! (but not 42...♗f3? 43.f7 ♔e7 44.f8=+ ♔xf8 45.♗c1) 43.♗d3 g3 44.♗e3 ♜h3 45.♗f4 g2.

## *Part II*

# Typical methods of play

### *Chapter 4*

## Restricted mobility in the King's Indian Defence

### 4.1. Introduction

'The King's Indian is the defence of the brave' – Garry Kasparov.

The main aim of this chapter is to demonstrate, through model games, the typical methods of play, particularly for White but also for Black, in the King's Indian Defence when the centre is closed, i.e. with the pawn structure: White: c4-d5-e4 vs Black e5-d6-c5/c7.

As an introduction to this topic we shall review two games that illustrate how dangerous Black's attack can be in this structure. The first game was played by GM Leonid Stein, who was one of the best players in the world between 1963 and his premature death in 1973. It is worth noting that Stein was one of the best exponents of the King's Indian and a representative of the second generation of Ukrainian King's Indian players, following the pioneers Boleslavsky, Bronstein and Geller, who showed the chess world the richness of this defence.

The second game is between two contemporary grandmasters who are among the best in the world at the present time.

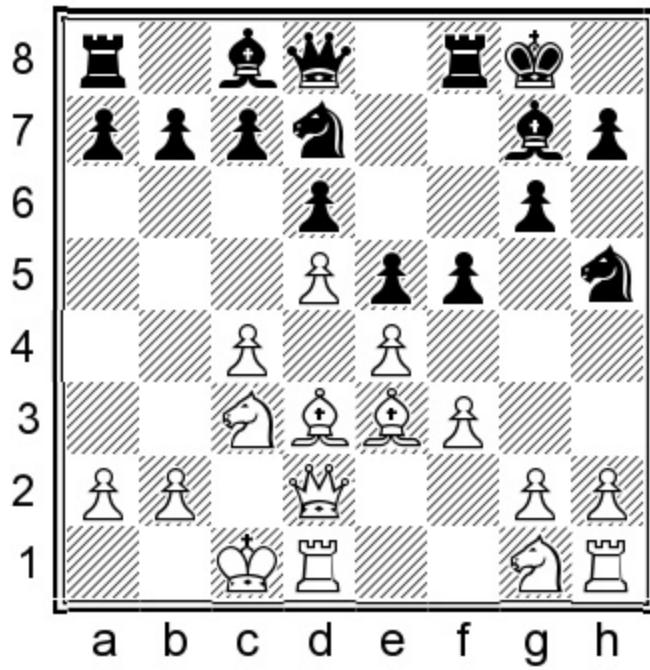
Game 79  
King's Indian Defence  
**Viktor Kortchnoi**  
**Leonid Stein**  
Tallinn ch-URS 1965 (9)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  e5 7.d5  $\mathbb{Q}h5$**

7...c6 shares first place in popularity with the text move, with practically the same statistics; furthermore both moves were played by the legendary Kasparov.

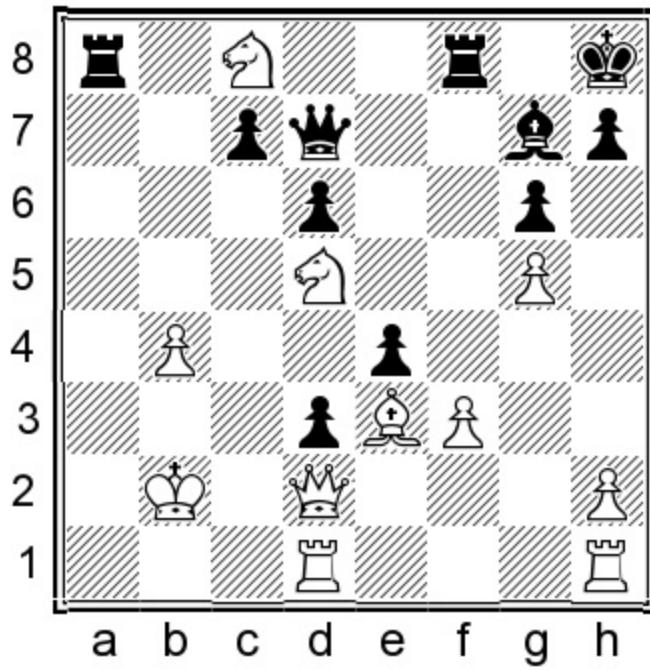
**8. $\mathbb{W}d2$  f5 9.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

This is the main line, although in second place the move 10.exf5 has a slightly better score.



**10...fxe4**

In the following game by Kasparov, which I was able to watch live, since I was the second of GM Miguel Illescas at this tournament, the influence of Stein's play in this game is apparent: 10... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  a6 12. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  b5!? 13.b4?! (13.exf5!  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dx $c5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ ) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.cxb5 (14.exf5 gxf5 15.cxb5 (15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !?)  $\mathbb{W}e8$  16.c5 dx $c5$  17.d6) 15...axb5 14...axb5 15. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  (15.exf5!? gxf5 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  16. $\mathbb{Q}ec3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}df6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}a7$  fxe4 19. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20.g4? (20.fxe4) 20... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  21.g5  $\mathbb{Q}6xd5$ ! 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ !?) 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}ce7$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  c6 and Black's activity compensates for the sacrificed piece) 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ ? (correct was 23. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ !!  $\mathbb{W}xc6$ ! 24.fxe4 (24. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ??  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}a3+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b2+$ ) 24... $\mathbb{W}a4+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}c6+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}a4+$ , with perpetual check) 23...exd3 24. $\mathbb{Q}ce7$ +  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  e4+.



*analysis diagram*

The final position demonstrates the value of the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ , Black's pride and joy in the King's Indian Defence: 0-1 Timman-Kasparov, Linares 1992; if 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  then 26...  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$  wins.

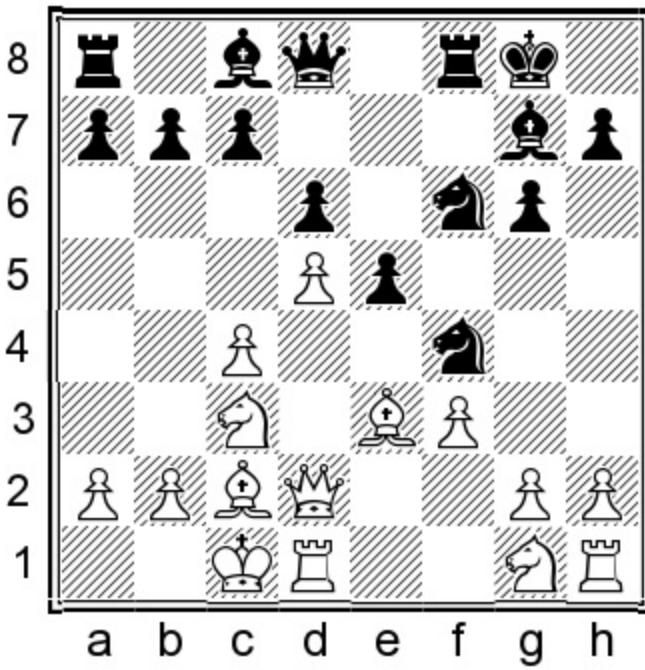
**11.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{Q}f4$**

According to the engine, 11...b6 12.  $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}c5$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}g5 \mathbb{W}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}c2 \mathbb{Q}xe4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{Q}f5$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  was better, but in that case Black would lack active play.

**12.  $\mathbb{Q}c2 \mathbb{Q}f6$**

Black could already consider 12...b5!? 13.cxb5 a6 here.

**13.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$**



**13...b5!?**

A courageous move! Preparing ...b7-b5 with 13...a6 would allow White, after 14.g3 ♜4h5 15.g4 ♜f4 16.h4 b5, to ignore it and instead play 17.h5!, gaining a clear positional advantage.

**14.♗xb5**

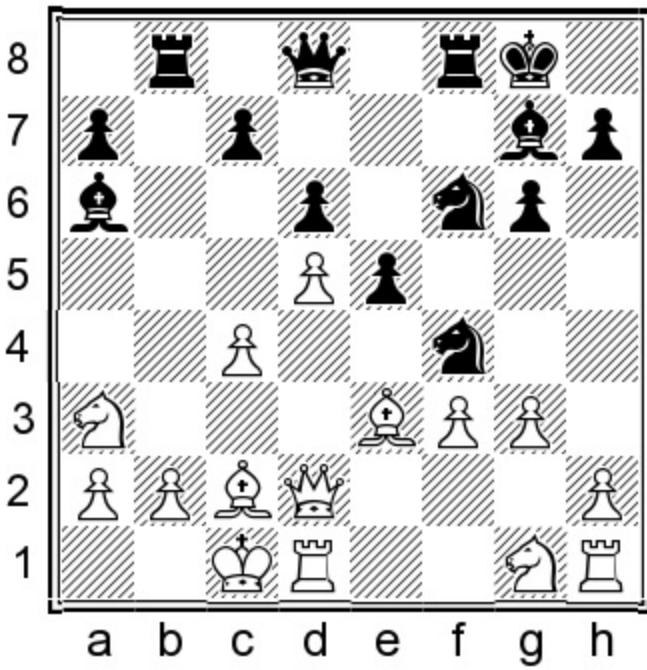
Two other possibilities also lead to extremely complicated play in which Black would have his share of the chances: 14.cxb5?! a6 15.bxa6 (15.b6?! cbx6 16.g3 ♜4h5 17.♗ge2 b5) 15...♝xa6 (15...♝xa6 16.♔b1 ♛b7 17.♔b3 ♛c8!?) 16.g3 ♜4h5 17.♗h3 ♜d7 18.♗g5 ♜b8 19.♗he1 ♜b6 20.b3 ♜a7; or 14.g3?!? ♜4h5 15.♗xb5 ♜a6 16.♗e2 ♜xb5 17.cxb5 a6.

**14...♝a6 15.♗a3 ♜b8!**

Aiming towards the square b2, after which White has to be on constant alert for the move ...e5-e4, opening the diagonal of the ♜g7.

**16.g3**

Black would also have had excellent counterplay in the event of 16.♝xa7? ♜b7! 17.♔e3 ♜a8! 18.♗e2 ♜xg2 19.♗c3 ♜xe3 20.♗xe3 e4!; as we shall see in the next note, after the text Black could complicate the play to the maximum and therefore it was both more prudent and also stronger (!) to play 16.♔b1!?, e.g. 16...♝d7 17.♔e4 ♜f6 18.g3 ♜4h5 19.♗h3 ♜d7 20.♗g5.



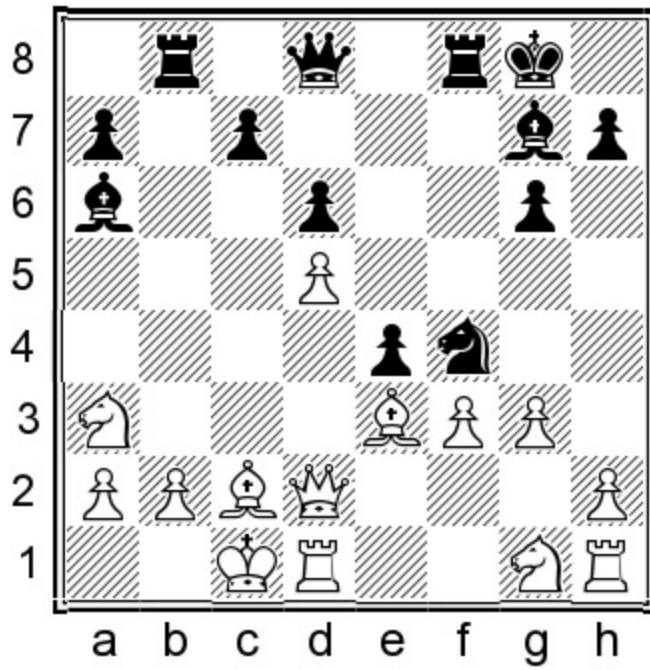
**16...♝d4h5**

Any chess fan should be able to enjoy the following variations, presented by the analysis engine after several hours of investigation. In most of these lines Black is playing with less material but has the initiative in return, and the engine shows only a small advantage to White. In addition to the beauty of the unexpected and the paradoxical, these variations are a good illustration of the dynamic possibilities of the King's Indian: 16...♝d6xd5!! and now:

A) 17.♜xf4 ♜b4! 18.♜g5 e4!! 19.♜b3 (19.♜xd8?? ♜xa2+ 20.♝b1 ♜xb2+ 21.♝a1 ♜xc2+ (21...♝b4!?) 22.♝b1 (22.♝d4 ♜xd4+ 23.♝xd4 ♜b4! 24.♝xc7 ♜a2+ 25.♝b1 ♜xa3 26.♝xd6 ♜b3+ also loses) 22...♜xd2 23.♜xd2 ♜c3+ 24.♝c1 ♜xd8 25.♝e2 ♜xe2+ 26.♝xe2 exf3, with a decisive advantage to Black) 19...♝d7 20.♝b1 exf3 21.♝h6 f2 22.♝e2 ♜xh6 23.♝xh6 ♜b7 24.c5+ ♜h8 25.♝hf1 ♜g2, with an engine evaluation of 0.09 at the end of a 47-move variation;

B) 17.gxf4? ♜xe3 18.♝xe3 exf4 19.♝e6+ ♜h8 20.♝b3 ♜e8 21.♝d5 ♜f6, with a clear advantage to Black;

C) 17.cxd5 e4!



*analysis diagram*

18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (18.  $b3?!$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+!$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $exd3$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $c5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  23.  $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $c4$ , with full compensation for the piece; 18.  $\mathbb{Q}d4?!$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+!$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2+$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{W}b8+=)$  18...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2+$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}b8+$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}b5$ , with a reasonable evaluation of 0.54.

### 17.b3

The text move is a very human choice, although it was slightly better to take the second pawn with 17.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7!$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ .

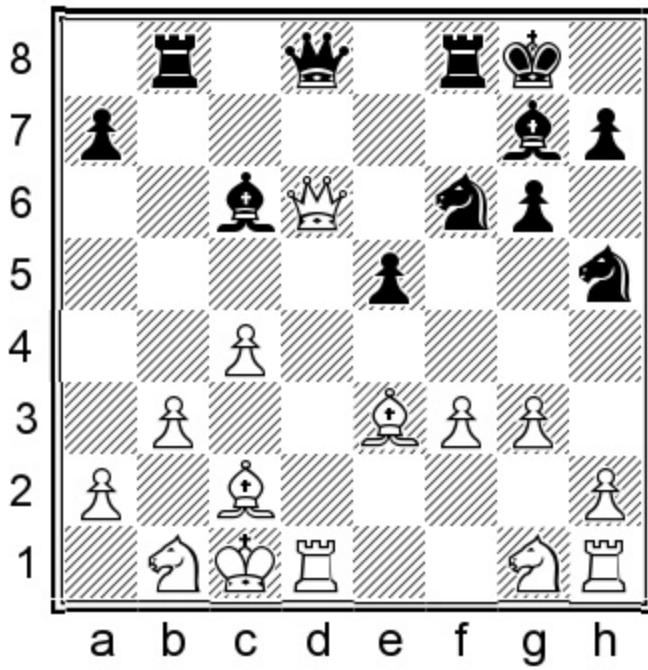
### 17... $\mathbb{Q}b7!$

To prepare the ...c7-c6 break.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}b1?!$

Kortchnoi probably considered Black's plan to be a bluff. Better moves were 18.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  and especially 18.  $h4$ , followed by  $h2-h4-h5$ .

### 18... $c6$ 19. $dxc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xd6$



White now has two extra pawns, but after Stein's next few moves it is clear that Black's position has numerous resources.

**20... $\mathbb{W}e8$**

Here and especially on the following move it would have been better to move the queen to c8.

**21. $\mathbb{B}e1?!$**

It seems that this move could have lost the advantage; 21. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  and 21. $\mathbb{W}d2$  were both better.

**21... $\mathbb{B}f7$**

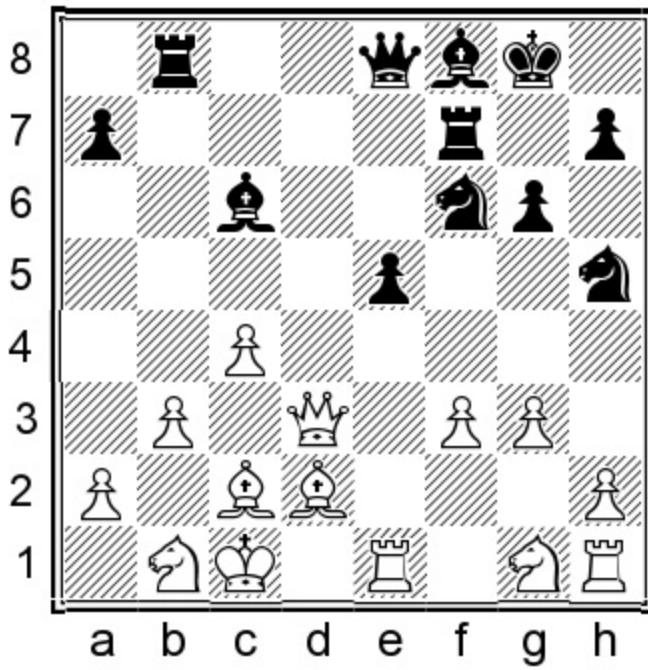
Preparing to activate the  $\mathbb{B}g7$  via f8 and giving the deceptive signal that the bishop is abandoning the diagonal a1-h8, which probably provokes Kortchnoi's error on move 23. The engine insists that the best move here is 21... $\mathbb{W}c8!$ , e.g. 22. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a5 23. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  24. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}xd1+$  25. $\mathbb{B}xd1$  a4 26. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  27. $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}g7$ , evaluating the position as equal.

**22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}f8$**

It was better to play 22...e4 first.

**23. $\mathbb{W}d3?$**

It was better to capture the third pawn, although after 23. $\mathbb{W}xe5!$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  24. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{B}xe1+$  25. $\mathbb{B}xe1$  Stein would have retained various tactical possibilities, e.g. 25... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{B}xf3$  27. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}c6$ .



**23...e4!?**

It was probably more accurate to prepare this advance with the manoeuvre ... $\mathbb{Q}h5-g7-e6$ , e.g. 23... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$ ? 24. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{W}e3$  e4! 26. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  28. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  30. $\mathbb{W}d5+$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  32.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$  33.gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ ; but we can assume that the exchange of queens was not part of Stein's plans at this point.

**24. $\mathbb{W}c3$ ?**

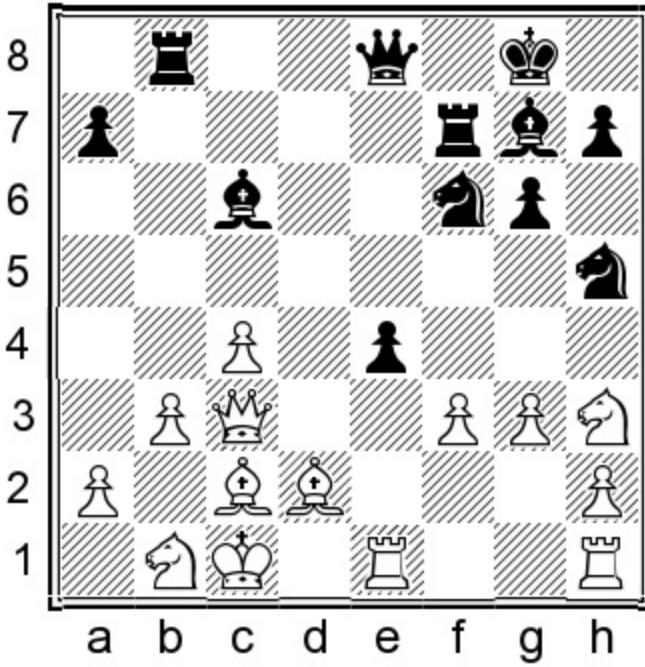
Faced with Stein's fierce attack, Kortchnoi seems to lose his emotional balance and plays below his usual level. The correct way was to return some of the extra material and fight for the initiative: 24.fxe4!  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  25. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  26. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  27. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh1$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xh1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}e3+$  32. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}f2$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , and Black's initiative is evaporating.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

The bishop returns to its usual attacking diagonal.

**25. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ?**

It was essential to play 25. $\mathbb{W}a5!$ , preventing Black's next move.



**25...Qg4! 26.fxg4**

Giving up the queen is White's best option, but Black's attack loses nothing of its force. Instead, 26.Qa5? was worse, e.g. 26...Rxf3 27.Qg5 (27.Qc3 Qh6+ 28.Qb2 Qe3 29.Rxe3 Qxe3, with both a material and a positional advantage to Black) 27...Rf5 28.Qxa7 Ra8! (28...Rg5? 29.Qxe4! Rxg4 30.Qxe4) 29.Qb6 Re5 30.Rxe4 Qxe4 31.Qxe4 Rxe4 32.Qxe4 Rxe4 33.Re1 Rf5 and, with an extra piece and a continuing attack, Black has a winning position.

**26...Qxc3 27.Qxc3 Qf6 28.g5 Qd7??**

It was better to attack the unprotected Qh3, e.g. 28...Rd8 29.gxf6 Qd7! 30.Qf4 Rxh3 31.Qxe4 Qxe4 32.Qxe4 Rxf6 33.Qd5+ Rxd5 34.cxd5 g5!.

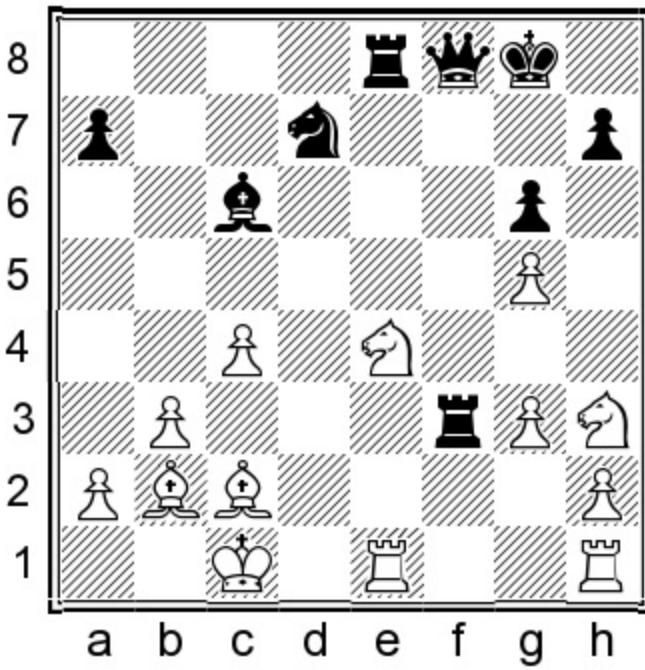
**29.Qxe4**

29.Qxe4!? was an alternative of equal worth, e.g. 29...Qe5 30.Qf4 Rc8 31.Qxc6 Qd3+ 32.Qd2 Rxc6 33.Qxd3 Rg2 34.Qe4 Rxh3 35.Qc2 Rg2+ 36.Qb1, and with White having two minor pieces and three pawns for the queen, as well as a safe king, the position can be evaluated as equal.

**29...Rf8 30.Qc3?**

It was necessary to prevent the black rook from invading White's camp with 30.Qf4!, which would give White good chances to hold, e.g. 30...Qc5 31.Qxc5 Rxc5 32.Rhf1 Rd4 (32...Ra3+ 33.Qb1 a5 34.Qc1) 33.Qb1 Rd7 34.Qa5! Rf7 35.Re2 Re8 36.Rd1 Rc5 37.Rxe8+ Qxe8 38.Qc3 Rg5 39.Qb2 and White's defensive resources are far from exhausted.

**30...Rf3 31.Qb2 Re8**



**32.♔b1?**

This innocuous-looking move provokes another wave of attack, and this time it will be decisive.

32.♕f6+? ♔xf6 33.gxf6 ♕xf6 34.♕xf6 ♕xh1 was also bad; however, it was more tenacious to play 32.♗d4 a5 33.♗hf2 ♕xf2 34.♕xf2 ♖a3+ 35.♔b1 a4 36.♗d2 ♖a8 37.♗hf1, and the game is not over yet.

**32...♕xe4 33.♕xe4 ♕xe4! 34.♕xe4 ♕f1+ 35.♕e1 ♕f5+**

Winning the ♘h3, which concludes the game.

**36.♔a1 ♕xh1 37.♕xh1 ♕xh3 38.♗d4 ♕g2 39.♕g1 ♕d2 40.♗xa7 ♘e5 41.♗c5 ♘d3 42.♗a3 ♘b4 43.♗xb4 ♕d4+ 44.♔b1 ♕xg1+ 0-1**

It should be said that the influence of the analysis engines has shown that Black's kingside attack, and in particular the advance ...f5-f4, which was previously considered very dangerous to White, as it is hard for him to keep the position under control, is evaluated somewhat differently nowadays, now that a player's home preparation has such a powerful assistant. Nevertheless, in today's master play it is still not difficult to find examples of this type of devastating attack. Let us look at one.

Game 80  
 King's Indian Defence  
**Wesley So 2779**  
**Hikaru Nakamura 2814**  
 St Louis 2015 (6)

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗f3 0-0 6.♕e2 e5 7.0-0 ♜c6 8.d5 ♜e7**

This is the main line of the Classical System. Although it had been played earlier, it became popular following Gligoric's success with it as Black in Mar del Plata 1953, hence it is often known as the Mar del Plata Variation.

**9.♗e1**

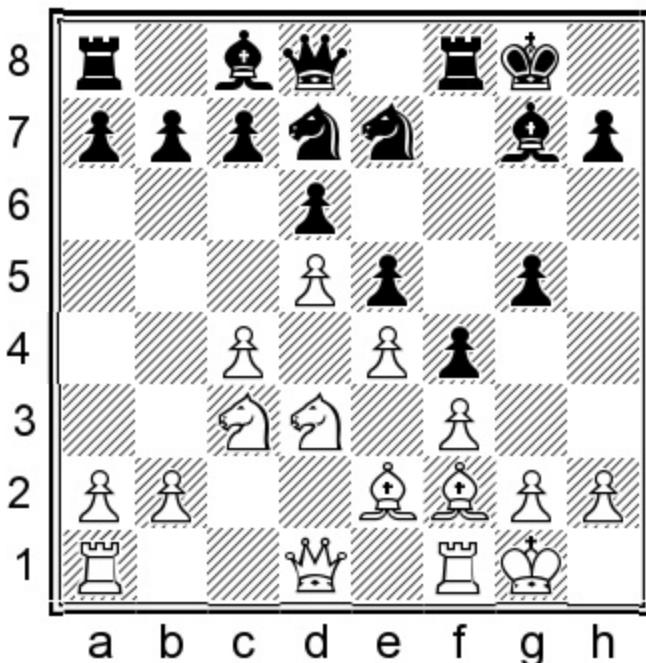
This is still the main line, although there are several others, in particular 9.b4 and 9.♗d2, which are respectively second and third in popularity.

**9...♗d7**

The main alternative is 9...♗e8.

**10.f3 f5 11.♗e3 f4 12.♗f2 g5 13.♗d3**

The main move in this position today is 13.a4, but the character of the position remains the same.



The objectives of each side are clear: Black has already started his attack on the enemy king, while White wants to break through the enemy's defences on the queenside. It should be said that GM Wesley So is a supporter of the text move and has several wins with it to his credit, although on the other hand GM Hikaru Nakamura has won some good games on the black side.

**13...♗g6 14.c5 ♜f6 15.♖c1 ♜f7 16.♗h1!?**

This prophylactic move is preferred by the top players. Slower plans were unsuccessful in two of the first master games with this position: 16.♗b3?! g4 17.fxg4 ♜xg4 18.♗xg4? ♜xg4 19.♗xb7 f3! 20.♗e3 ♜f4 21.♗xf4 exf4?! (21...fxg2! 22.♗xg2 exf4, winning) 22.gxf3 ♜h3 23.♗h1! ♜xf1 24.♖xf1

$\mathbb{Q}d4$ , with better play for Black, Eliskases-Gligoric, Mar del Plata 1953; 16.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17.  $cxd6$   $cxd6$  18.  $\mathbb{W}d2?!$  (18.  $\mathbb{Q}b5!)$  18...  $g4$  19.  $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $g3?$  (19...  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  20.  $fxg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  (20...  $\mathbb{Q}xg4!?$ ) 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ , with chances for both sides) 20.  $hgx3$   $fxg3$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}h2?$  (22.  $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ ) 22...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  with good play for the sacrificed pawn, Taimanov-Najdorf, Zürich 1953.

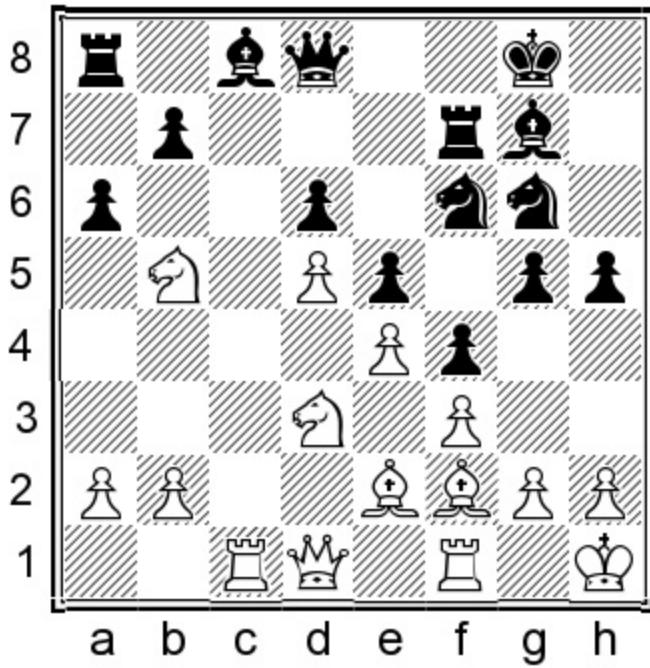
## 16...h5

Another continuation is 16...  $\mathbb{Q}f8?!$  17.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  18.  $b4$   $h5$  19.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $g4$  20.  $g3$   $fxg3$  21.  $\mathbb{E}xg3$   $a5!?$ , with good play for Black, Lenderman-Nakamura, St Louis 2018.

## 17. $cxd6$ $cxd6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5!$

It seems less accurate to play 18.  $\mathbb{W}b3?!$   $g4$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $g3!$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , and Black's threats more than compensate for the sacrificed pawn.

## 18...a6



## 19. $\mathbb{Q}a3?$

It seems that this novelty from So is the cause of his problems in this game. The engine prefers the white position after 19.  $\mathbb{Q}c3!$   $g4$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $g3$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  (22.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8!)$  22...  $gxh2$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ .

## 19...b5! 20. $\mathbb{E}c6$

Black also maintains a strong kingside initiative in the event of 20.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $g4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}cb4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

**20...g4 21.♗c2 ♗f8**

It is possible that 21...g3!? was stronger, e.g. 22.♕b6 ♗f8 23.♗b1 ♕d7 24.a4!? ♜b8 and Black is proceeding with the attack on ‘his’ wing, at the same time restraining White’s initiative on the queenside.

The idea of playing in the style of the above-mentioned game Taimanov-Najdorf also deserved attention: 21...♕f8!?, e.g. 22.♗b1 ♕d7 23.a4! bxa4 24.♗c3 g3 25.hxg3 fxg3 26.♕xg3 h4 27.♕f2 ♔h5, with dangerous threats on the kingside.

**22.♗c1 ♕d7 23.♗c7?!**

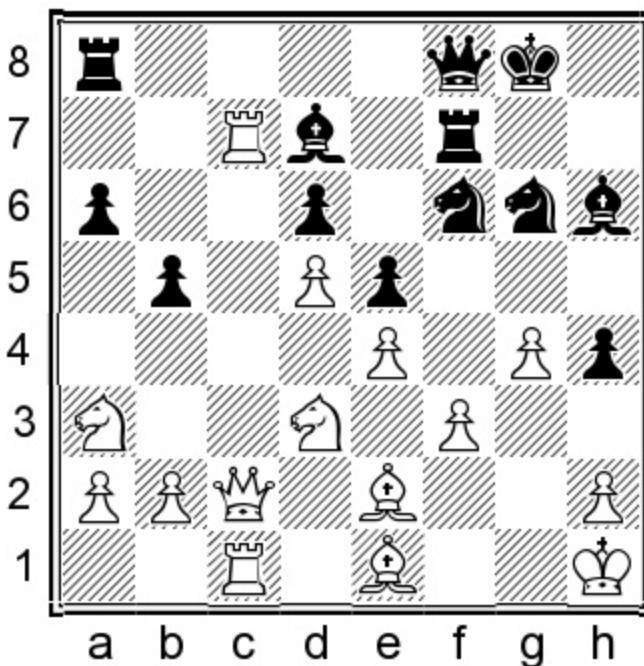
GM Krisztian Szabo suggests that 23.♗b4 was best here. However, after 23...h4 24.♗xa6 (or 24.h3 gxh3 25.gxh3 ♔xe4! 26.fxe4 f3 27.♔f1 ♔h6 28.♗d1 ♔f4) 24...g3 Black’s attack loses none of its force.

According to the engine, the lesser of the evils was 23.♗b1!? g3 24.♕b6 ♗e7 25.♗c7.

**23...♔h6 24.♔e1 h4! 25.fxg4**

It already seems that there is no adequate defence, e.g. 25.♕b4 h3 26.gxh3 g3! 27.♗g1 (27.hxg3?! fxg3) 27...♔h5 and Black’s attack is very dangerous.

**25...f3! 26.gxf3**



**26...♗xe4!**

Beginning the final assault!

## 27. $\mathbb{E}d1?$

The following variations, given by GM Szabo, demonstrate the dangers of White's position: 27.fxe4?  $\mathbb{E}f1+$ ! 28.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3!$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  h3+! and Black wins; 27.  $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xf3!$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3+$  29.  $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  30.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d2!!$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4!$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f2+!$ , with a decisive advantage to Black; 27.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  dxc5 28.  $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  also loses; the lesser of the evils would be 27.  $\mathbb{Q}f2?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  30.  $\mathbb{W}e4$  (30.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4!$ ) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , although in that case too, after 31...  $\mathbb{E}c8$  32.  $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , Black's advantage is decisive.

## 27... $\mathbb{E}xf3!$ 28. $\mathbb{E}xd7$

There was no salvation in 28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3+$  29.  $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  either.

## 28... $\mathbb{E}f1+!$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

A human decision. Stockfish prefers 29...h3+! 30.  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{E}f2!!$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}xf2!!$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ .

30.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  h $x$ g3 31.  $\mathbb{E}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}h4+$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}h6!$  33. g5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}hf3$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}f8+$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{E}f6+!$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}e4+$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{W}g5\#$

For any club player who prefers to play using his own brain, rather than having to memorize numerous long variations, and who would like to prevent Black's typically violent kingside play in the King's Indian, I believe it is useful to know what methods White can employ to restrict Black's kingside expansion, and in particular how to react to Black's ...f7-f5 push.

Abundant experience of this type of position has been accumulated and various methods have been developed. In this section we shall examine the following four methods:

1. The manoeuvre  $\mathbb{Q}f3-h4$  (4.2)
2. Pinning the  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  with  $\mathbb{Q}c1-g5$  (4.3)
3. Playing an early g2-g4 (4.4)
4. Exchanging pawns with exf5 gxf5, followed by advancing f2-f4/f3 (4.5).

We shall deal with these in order.

## 4.2. The manoeuvre $\mathbb{Q}f3-h4$

Game 81  
King's Indian Defence  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
**Vlastimil Hort**  
Wijk aan Zee 1971 (8)

### 1.c4 g6 2.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3.d5!?

An interesting move, with the idea of preventing the Grünfeld Indian Defence. However, theory regards it as dubious, in view of Black's possible pawn breaks ...c7-c6 or/and ...e7-e6.

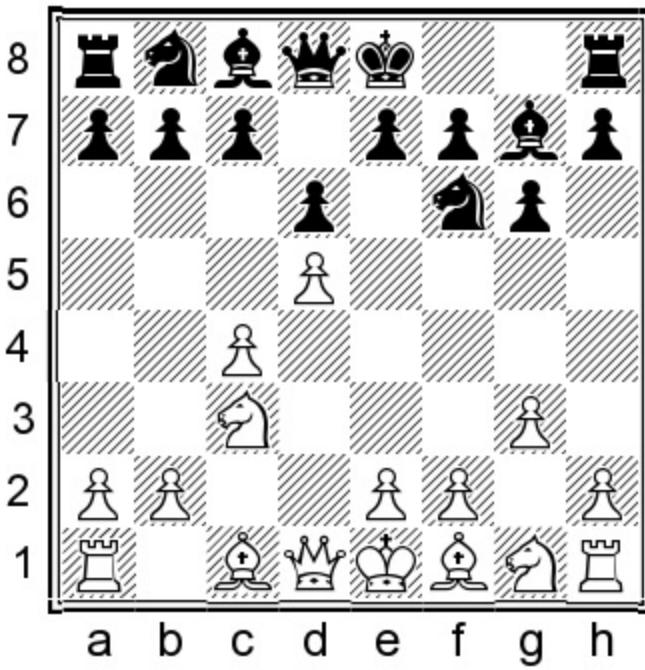
### 3... $\mathbb{Q}g7$

3...c6!? was already possible, e.g. 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  7. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  (7. $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$ ) 7...cxsd5 8.cxd5 d6 9.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , with chances for both sides, Jobava-Nepomniachtchi, Leuven rapid 2017) 4...cxsd5 5.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  6.g3 (6.e4!?) 6...d6 7. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{W}b3!$  (9.e4!) 9... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  10.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  12. $\mathbb{W}a2$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  with a better game for Black, Cicak-Gharamian, Germany Bundesliga B 2013/14.

### 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6

Black implemented the ...e7-e6 break in Milanovic-Salgado Lopez, Skopje 2018: 4...0-0 5.e4 d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  e6!? 7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  exd5 8.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  11. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12. $\mathbb{E}b1$  a5 13.a4 c6!?, with a comfortable position for Black.

### 5.g3



**5...e5?!**

To exploit White's move-order it would be more logical to keep the diagonal of the ♜g7 open.

**6.♗g2 0-0 7.♗f3 c5**

Another possibility here was to reserve the c5-square for the ♘b8, e.g. 7...a5!? 8.e4 ♘a6 9.0-0 ♘c5.

**8.0-0 ♘bd7?!**

The plan of breaking with ...b7-b5 was better, e.g. 8...♘e8!? 9.e4 ♘a6 10.♗e1 ♘d7!? 11.a3 ♘ac7 12.♗d3?! (12.b4! b6 13.♗b1) 12...b5! 13.cxb5 ♘xb5, with the better game for Black, Maiorov-Grigoryan, Figueira da Foz 2019.

**9.e4 h6**

Another possibility was 9...♘e8!?, e.g. 10.♗e1 f5 11.♗d3 ♘ef6.

**10.♗d2 ♘e8**

After this, the ♘f7 never moves for the rest of the game. Instead, 10...♔h7, followed by 11...♗g8 and 12...f5, deserved attention.

**11.♗e2 ♔h7**

In the event of 11...f5? 12.♗h4! ♗f6 13.exf5 gxf5 14.♗h3 White has a clear advantage; Stockfish recommends 11...♘c7 12.a3 a6 13.a4 a5 14.♗h3 ♘f6, with an evaluation +0,79 at the end of a long

variation.

## 12.a4 b6

For good or ill, from the human viewpoint it was necessary to close the queenside with 12...a5. The engine recommends ... $\mathbb{Q}b8-a6-b4$ , a typical manoeuvre in such positions, followed by a pawn sacrifice: 12... $\mathbb{Q}b8!?$  13.a5  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $cxb4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6.

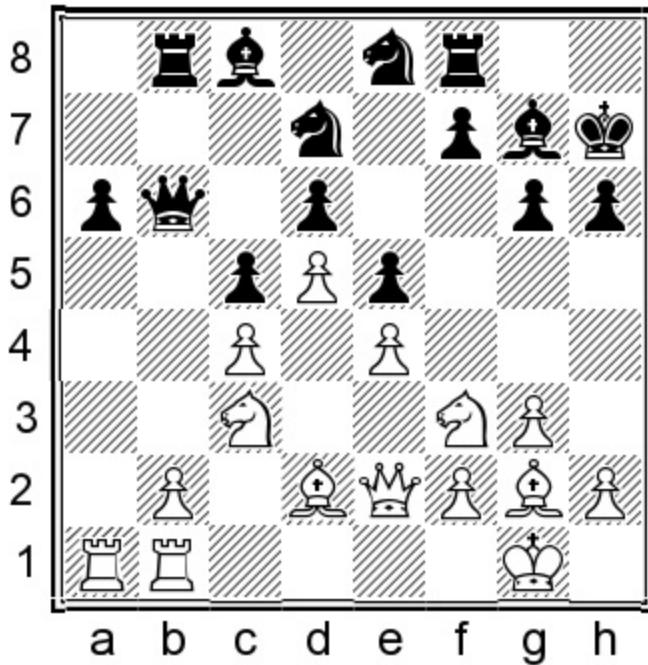
## 13.a5 $\mathbb{Q}b8$

After 13...bxa5 14. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  White regains the pawn and increases the pressure on the queenside.

## 14.axb6 $\mathbb{W}xb6$

After 14...axb6 15. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16. $\mathbb{R}a7$  White's rook invades the 7th rank.

## 15. $\mathbb{R}fb1$ a6



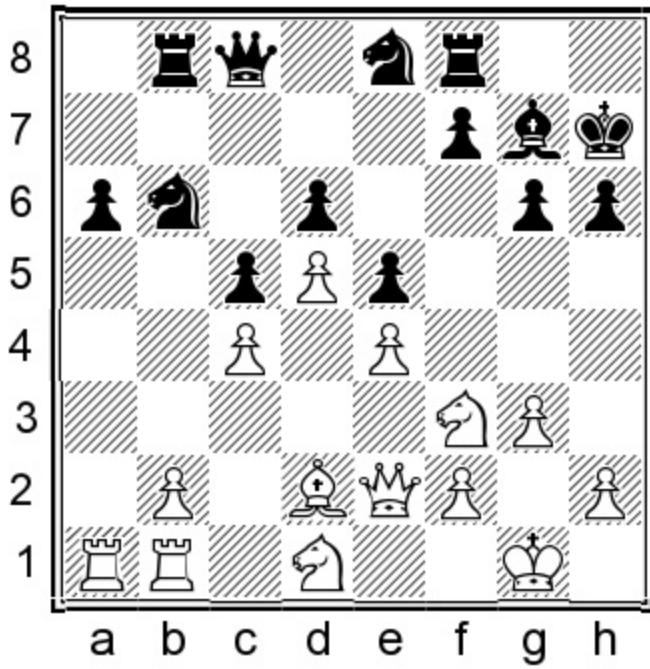
## 16. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$

It is clear that White is better: he has been able to connect his rooks quickly on the queenside and the placement of the black queen facilitates the b2-b4 advance. White's last move hinders the freeing advance ...f7-f5.

## 16... $\mathbb{W}b7$

After 16...f5? 17.exf5 gxf5 18. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$  White's advantage is decisive.

**17.♘d1! ♘b6 18.♗xc8 ♗xc8**



**19.♘h4! ♘c7**

Once again Black is unable to mobilize the ♘f7: if 19...f5? then 20.exf5 gxf5 21.♘e3, with the threat of 22.♘xf5! ♖xf5 21.♗e4.

**20.♘e3 ♗h3**

20...f5? would still have been bad: 21.exf5 gxf5 22.♘exf5! ♖xf5 23.♗e4.

**21.b4!**

Destroying Black's queenside.

**21...♘d7**

Even worse was 21...cxb4? 22.♖xb4 ♘c8 (or 22...♗fd8 23.♗xd6! ♖xd6 24.c5) 23.♗a5 ♖xb1+ 24.♖xb1 ♘e8 25.♗b7, with a big advantage to White.

**22.b5! axb5 23.♗a7 ♖fc8**

The result of the game would be no different after 23...♗a8 24.♗xb5 ♖xb5 25.cxb5 ♘ab6 26.f3 ♖a8 27.♗xa8 ♘xa8 28.♗c4 ♗f8 29.♗a5.

**24.♗a5 ♘b6 25.cxb5 ♗d7 26.♗g2! c4**

This loses by force, although it is hard to see anything better, in view of the threat of 26...-- 27.♗xb6

$\mathbb{E}xb6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}xb5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .

27.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}xb6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xb5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}xb6$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32.  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  1-0

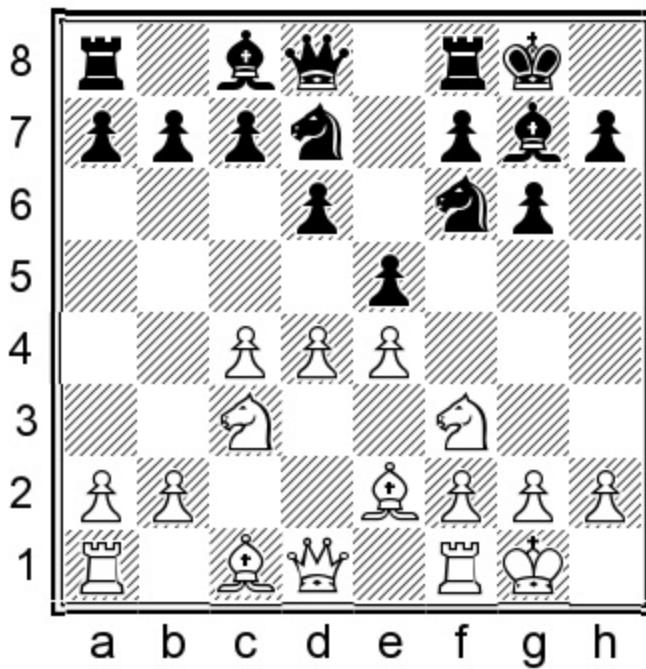
The following modern game exhibits the same motifs.

Game 82  
King's Indian Defence  
**Grzegorz Gajewski** 2605  
**Gawain Jones** 2650  
Warsaw 2016 (7)

1. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 3. c4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 5. e4 0-0 6.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$

This is a precaution against the variation with the early exchange of queens: 6...e5 7. dx $e$ 5 dx $e$ 5 8.  $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$ , which leads to a symmetrical structure where naturally White has some initiative.

7. 0-0 e5



8.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$

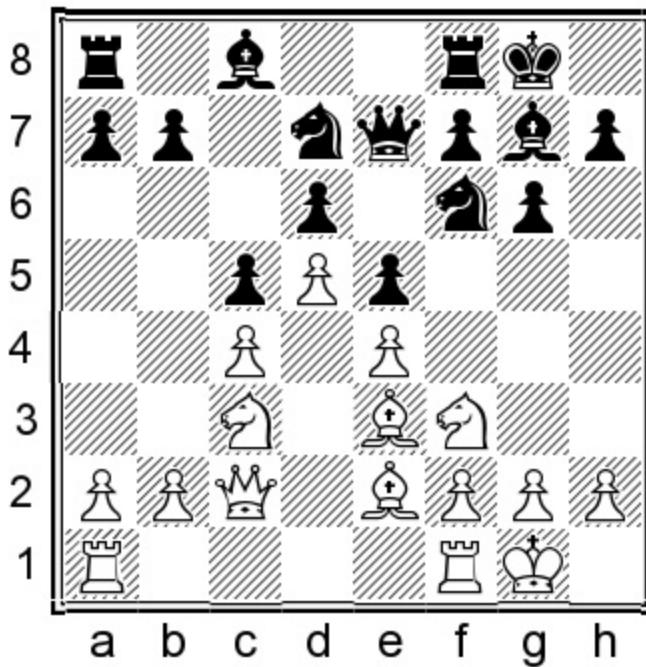
8. d5  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  9.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  a5 10.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  leads to a branch of the Petrosian System, which we shall study later.

8...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  9.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  c6 10. d5

The continuation 10.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$  exd4!? 11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  12. f3 a6!? 13.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  14.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  b5 leads to open play

with much more tension, Wojtaszek-Baklan, Chartres 2017.

**10...c5**



**11.g3!?**

On the board we have the same closed centre structure as in the previous game and the Polish GM now starts to execute a very similar plan. It should be said that this plan was first encountered in the game Borisenko-Petrosian, Kiev 1954, and Tigran learnt it from his more experienced opponent.

A good alternative is 11.♗g5!? ♔h8 12.a3 ♕g8 13.b4 ♖f8 14.♖ab1 ♗e8 15.♗c1 ♔h6 (15...f5?! 16.♗g5 ♘xg5 17.♗xg5 f5 18.f4!), with a clear advantage to White, Yilmaz-Jones, St Petersburg 2018.

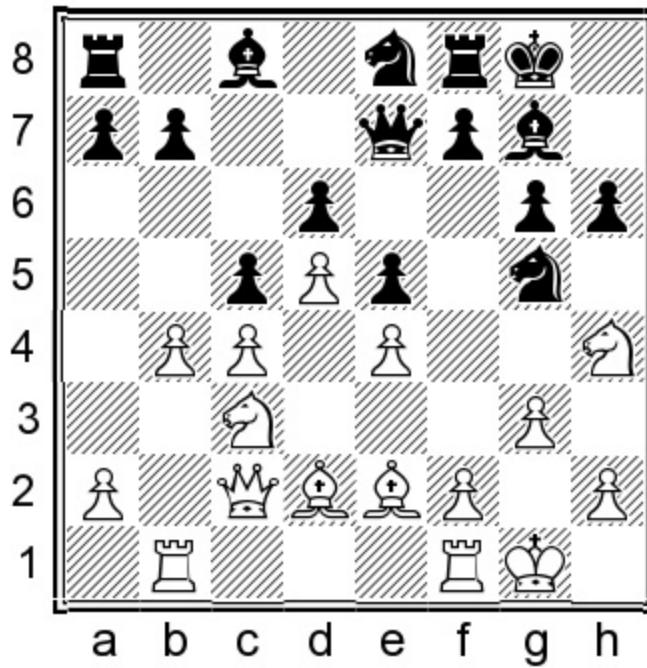
**11...♗e8**

In the event of 11...♗g4? 12.♔d2 f5 13.exf5 gxf5 14.♗h4 ♗b6 (14...e4? 15.♗xf5 ♖xf5 16.♗xg4), White has several options, but the most obvious continuation 15.♗xg4!? fxg4 16.♗e4 leads to a clear positional advantage, due to White's control of the e4-square and the poor position of the ♗b6.

**12.♗h4 ♗df6 13.♗g5!?**

As we already know, the objective of this move is to provoke Black's next.

**13...h6 14.♔d2 ♗h7 15.♖ab1 ♗g5 16.b4**



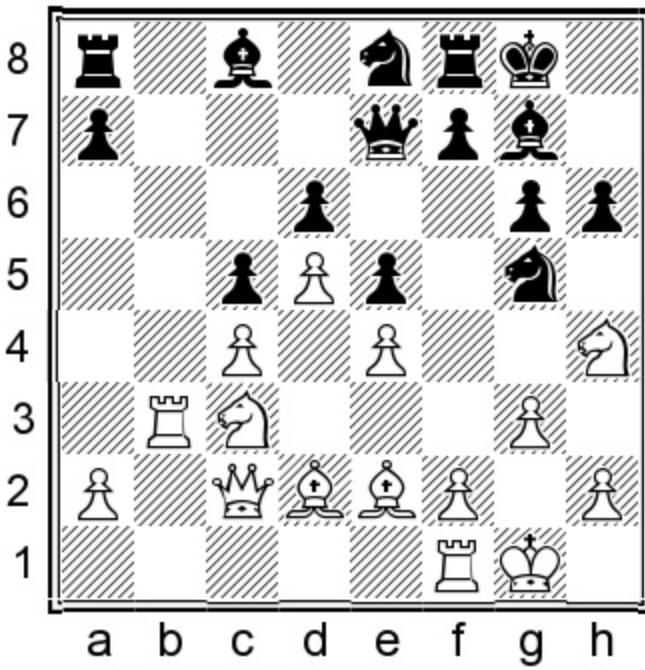
**16...b6?!**

Here it was better to play 16...cxb4! 17.♘xb4 b6 18.a4 ♜c7 19.a5 ♜a6.

**17.bxc5 bxc5**

This allows White to execute a standard plan, occupying the b-file. The other capture on c5 deserved attention, leading to less typical play, e.g. 17...dxc5!? 18.a4 (18.♗b5!? ♘b8 (18...♝d6? ♘xd6 19.♝xd6 ♘xd6 20.f4)) 18...♝d6 19.a5 ♜a6!?.

**18.♕b3**



**18...Wd8?!**

There is an expression ‘dying with your boots on’, which is relevant to various situations in chess, and this is one of them: 18...Qh3+! 19.Qh1 (19.Qg2 Qf4+ 20.gxf4 Qxh4 21.f5 gxf5 22.exf5 Qh8 23.Qh1 Qg8) 19...Qf6!? (Stockfish prefers another idea based on the move ...Qg7-h6, a reminder that in the King’s Indian the ...f7-f5 break is not Black’s only resource: 19...h5!? 20.Qf3 Qf6 21.Qg1 Qh7 22.Qg2 Qxg1 23.Qxg1 Qh6) 20.Qf3 (if White wins the exchange, Black gains full compensation after 20.Qxh6?! Qxh4 21.Qxf8 Qxf8 22.gxh4 Qxh4) 20...Qg5, with a sharp struggle.

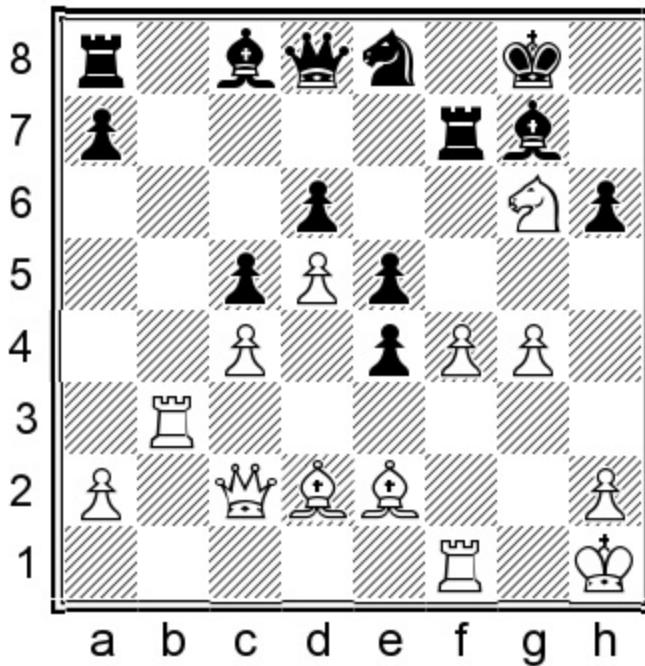
**19.Qh1 f5?**

Again it was better to select one of the possibilities indicated in the previous note. However, it appears that the English GM was obsessed with executing this normal King’s Indian move, although in this position the pawn sacrifice is unsound.

**20.Qxg6 Qf7 21.f4!**

The most direct refutation; 21.Qh4 f4 22.Qh5 was also good.

**21...Qxe4 22.Qxe4 fxe4 23.g4!**



The game is already decided, despite Black's desperate resistance.

**23...exf4 24.Qxe4 Qd7 25.Qxf4 Qb8 26.h3**

26.Qe3!?.

**26...Bxb3 27.axb3 Qf6 28.Qe3 Be8 29.Qxe8+ Qxe8 30.Qd3 Qd4 31.Qg2 h5 32.gxh5 Qg7 33.Qxd6 Bxf1 34.Qxf1 Qf5 35.Qe2 Qe4+ 36.Qf3 Qc2 37.b4 cxb4 38.Qxb4 Qb3 39.Qe7+ Qh7 40.Qe4+ Qh6 41.Qd2+ Qxh5 42.Qf3+ Qh4 43.Qg6#**

In addition to b2-b4, developing White's initiative on the queenside, the  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  stratagem also allows other plans, in particular an attack on the kingside, as the following game demonstrates.

Game 83  
King's Indian Defence  
**Evgeny Gleizerov 2553**  
**Branko Damljanovic 2544**  
Paracin 2013 (8)

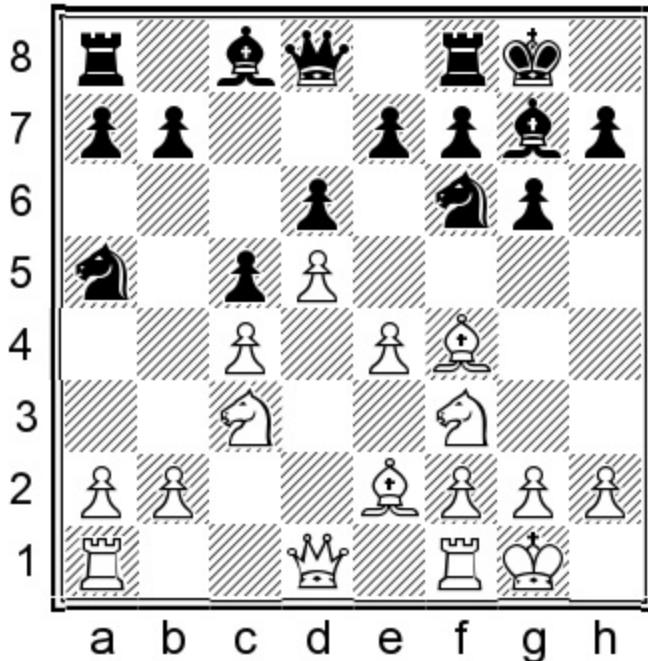
**1.d4 d6 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.c4 g6 4.Qc3 Qg7 5.e4 0-0 6.Qe2 c5!?**

This move enjoys some popularity, although previously it was considered somewhat dubious due to the continuation in the game, as after 8...Qa5 the  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  is protected here, unlike in the popular variation with the white king's bishop developed on g2. However, practice has shown that the text move is perfectly playable.

**7.0-0 Qc6**

Here Black could transpose to the Accelerated Dragon by playing 7...cxd4 8.Qxd4 Qc6, with a Maroczy structure.

**8.d5 Qa5 9.Qf4!?**



With this move, which certainly has the best statistics, White tries to hinder 9...e6/e5. So in order to execute this advance, Black makes the following move, which facilitates the placement of the Qf3 on h4.

**9...Qh5 10.Qd2**

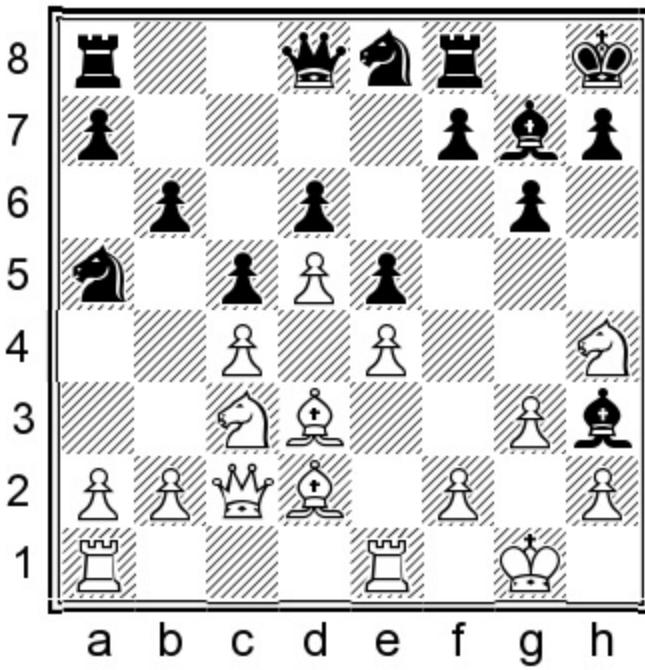
The idea of provoking the advance ...h7-h6 has a negative side here: 10.Qg5 h6 11.Qd2 e5 12.g3 Qh3 13.Qe1 Qh7 14.Qh4?! (14.a3!? b6 15.Qc2) 14...Qf4!.

**10...e5 11.g3 Qf6**

Now 11...Qh3 makes less sense, due to 12.Qe1, threatening 13.Qg5.

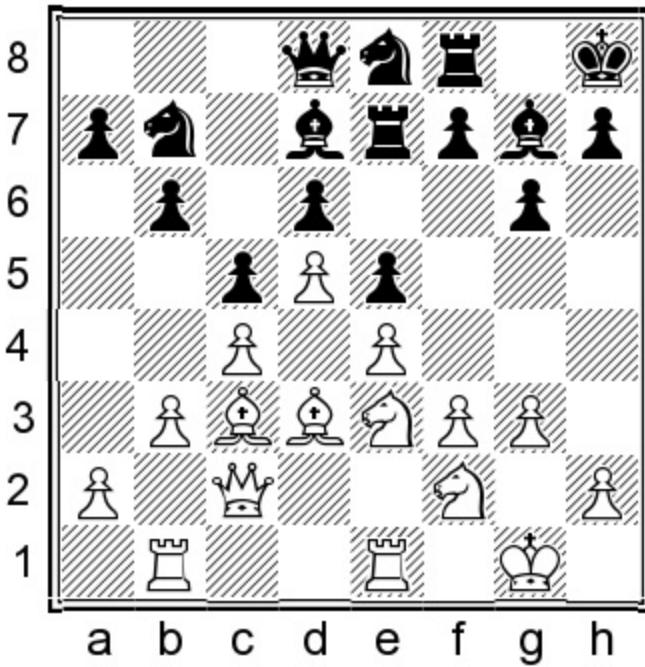
**12.Qh4 Qe8 13.Qc2 b6 14.Qd3 Qh3 15.Qfe1 Qh8**

Here a different plan deserved attention, based on starting action on the queenside: 15...Qb8!? 16.f3 a6 17.Qd1 b5 18.b3 Qd7.



White has deployed his pieces to hinder ...f7-f5. However, if White now employs the stereotyped plan of b2-b4, the  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  will retreat to b7, when Black's queenside will be better defended than in the previous games. Therefore GM Gleizerov chooses another plan, which he prepares slowly but surely.

**16.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17.f3  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}ae8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**



**24.f4!**

Attacking the mainstay of Black's defence and exploiting the fact that the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , which was intended

to defend the queenside, is a long way from the focus of the battle.

Stockfish recommends various ways to prepare this advance a little more and then execute it in a somewhat different manner, e.g. 24.  $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25.  $f4!$   $exf4$  (25...  $\mathbb{E}e8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  27.  $f5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  28.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $a6$  29.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , with a clear advantage to White) 26.  $gxf4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xc3+$   $f6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (30.  $\mathbb{Q}be1$ ) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $f5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $fxe4$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ , with various threats.

**24...exf4 25.gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xc3+$   $f6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

To prepare the e4-e5 advance White frees the d3-square for the  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ .

**27...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}ee8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8?!$**

Here it was worth considering the transfer of the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  to f7 in order to restrain the advance e4-e5, starting with 30...  $\mathbb{W}e7!?$ .

**31.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $b5?$**

It is understandable that Black feels under pressure and looks for counterplay. However, this pawn sacrifice fails to solve his problems. Once again it was better to transfer the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  to f7.

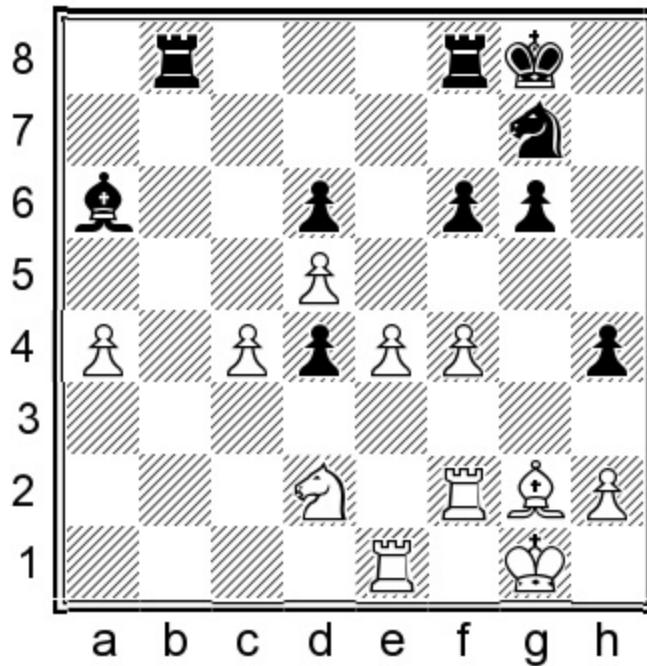
**33.cxb5  $\mathbb{W}b6$  34.a4 h5**

34... $c4+$  was useless, due to 35.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $cxb3$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ .

**35.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  h4 36.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  a6 37.  $bxa6$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}bc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  41.  $bxc4$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  42.  $\mathbb{W}c2?!$**

This leads to a queen exchange, which gives Black breathing space. To implement White's strategic idea it was better to play 42.  $\mathbb{W}d3!$   $\mathbb{W}xa4$  43.  $e5!$ , with a winning attack.

**42...  $\mathbb{W}b2$  43.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  44.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $cxd4$**



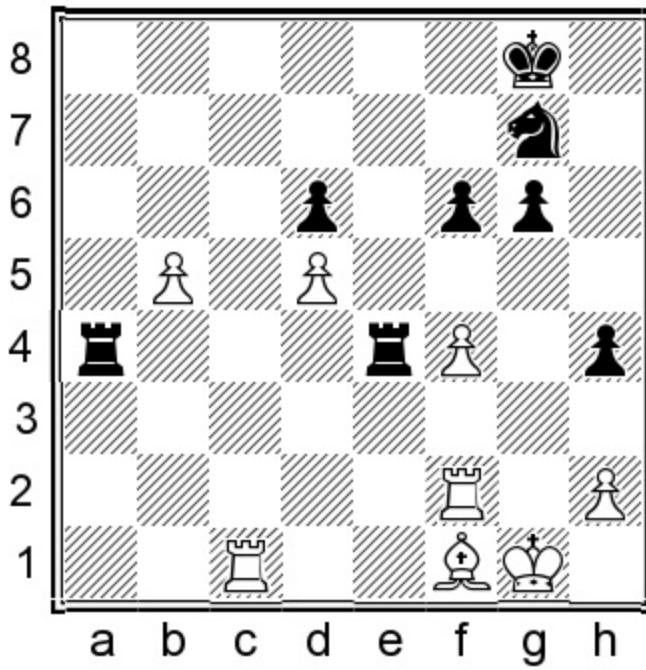
**45.♕f1**

Again, both here and especially on the following move it was better to advance in the centre with 45.e5! ♜b4 46.exd6 ♜xc4 47.d7, with an overwhelming advantage.

**45...♝b4 46.♝c1? ♜xa4 47.♝f3 ♜e8 48.♝xd4?**

For the third time in a row White fails to make the move which would maintain his advantage: 48.e5! fxe5 49.fxe5 dxe5 50.d6 e4 51.♝xd4.

**48...♜xe4 49.♝b5 ♜xb5 50.cxb5**



**50... $\mathbb{Q}e7??$**

This move loses the game. Here, by following Tarrasch's old maxim concerning the placement of the rook behind the passed pawn, whether one's own or the opponent's, Black could have reached a practically equal position. We can suppose that by this point, or even slightly earlier, the opponents were having to play just using the increment. The correct move was 50... $\mathbb{Q}eb4!$  51. $\mathbb{Q}fc2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  52. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$ , and White can make no progress, e.g. 53. $\mathbb{Q}7c6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  54. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ .

**51. $\mathbb{Q}b2!$**

And unlike his opponent, GM Gleizerov follows Tarrasch's advice.

**51... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  52.b6  $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

Black loses a piece after 52... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  53.b7  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  54. $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}bx b7$  55. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  56. $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$ .

**53. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}ee8$  54.b7  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  55. $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  56. $\mathbb{Q}bc2$  1-0**

It should not be thought that the  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ -h4 manoeuvre can only be employed with the pawn on c5.

Game 84  
 King's Indian Defence  
**Nebojsa Nikcevic 2416**  
**Nikola Djukic 2546**  
 Cetinje 2016 (5)

**1. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 d6 5.d4 0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5 7.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

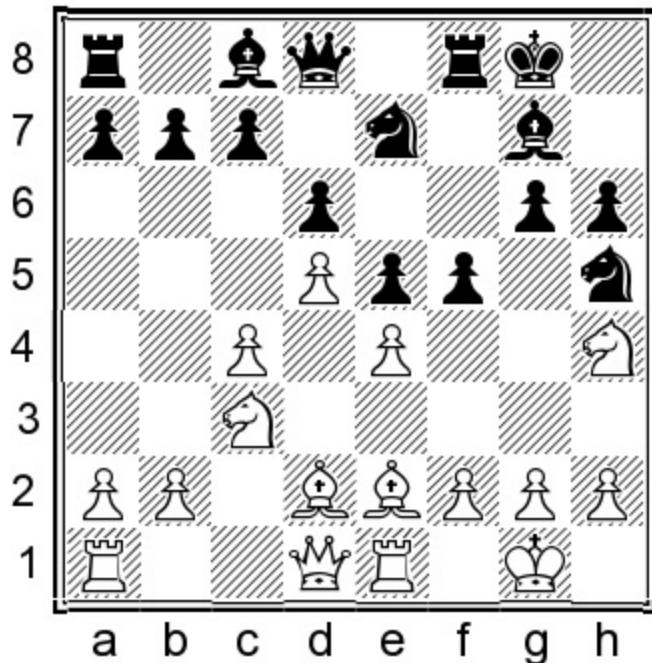
This was the favourite move of Tigran Petrosian in positions where the ♜b8 comes to d7 or a6, but curiously it also makes sense when the knight is on e7.

### 9...♞h5

If 9...♞d7 10.♞d2 f5 we can see one of the ideas behind 9.♝g5: 11.exf5! gxf5 12.f4, employing a typical method against the ...f7-f5 advance, which we shall study further on.

### 10.g3

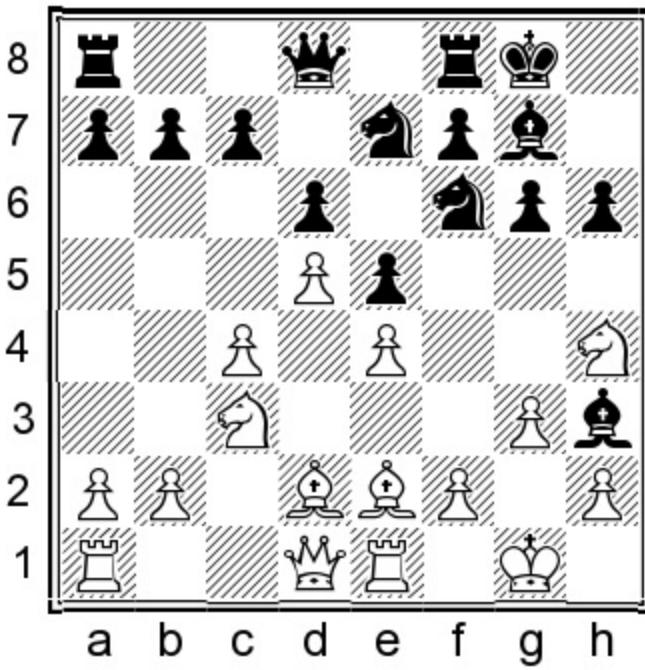
Another possibility here is 10.♗e1, e.g. 10...h6 (10...♞f4 11.♝xf4 exf4 12.♘d2) 11.♘d2 f5 12.♞h4!.



*analysis diagram*

‘An old maxim says that one shouldn’t play on the side where one is weaker. However, one has to be flexible and here White is hitting the weakened g6-square’ (Gelfand): 12...♞f4 13.♝xf4 exf4 14.exf5 g5 15.♞g6 ♘xf5 16.♞h5 with a slight advantage to White, Gelfand-Smirin, Netanya 2019.

**10...h6 11.♘d2 ♘h3 12.♗e1 ♜f6 13.♞h4!?**



**13...Qd7**

After this White follows the same plan as in the positions with the  $\mathbb{B}c5$ . However, unlike in the previous games, Black could benefit from his pawn being on c7 and seek counterplay on the queenside based on the ...c7-c6 break, e.g. 13...c6!? 14. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  15. $\mathbb{B}e3$  a6.

**14. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}xf1$  15. $\mathbb{B}xf1$  f5 16.f3?!**

16.exf5! was correct, e.g. 16...gxf5 (16...g5 also fails to equalize: 17. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{B}xf5$  18. $\mathbb{W}c2$ , with complete control of the vital e4-square) 17. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  19. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  20.f3, with a slight advantage to White.

**16...c6?!**

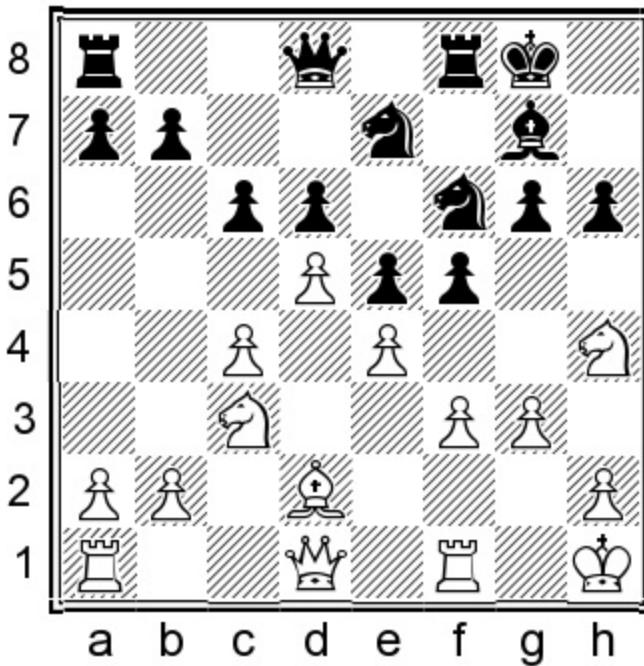
The secret to this position is as follows: the ...c7-c6 break is stronger after playing the move ...f5-f4, not fearing that the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  will remain blocked in. Thus Black could maintain dynamic equality with the continuation 16...f4! 17. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g5 18. $\mathbb{W}e2$  c6!? 19.b3  $\mathbb{B}c8$  20. $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{B}c1$  b5?.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}h1$**

Apparently the White player also fails to understand the essence of this position, as explained in the previous note, as he allows the advance ...f5-f4. 17.exf5! was correct, e.g. 17...gxf5 (17... $\mathbb{W}b6+?$ ! 18. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  gxf5 19. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  20.g4! fxg4 21. $\mathbb{B}g1!$ ) 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !? (or 18. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ !?) cxd5 19.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20.g4! – the theme in Section 4.4) 18... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (18...f4?! 19.dxc6?! bxc6 20. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ ) 19. $\mathbb{W}b3$  cxd5 20.cxd5, with the better game for White.

**17...Qf6?**

A serious error. Black would have sufficient counterplay after 17...f4! 18.♗e2 ♜f7 19.b3 ♜c8 20.♕ac1 a6 21.♖fd1 ♜f8 22.♗g2 cxd5 23.cxd5 g5.



**18.g4!?**

Instead of exchanging on f5, White has decided to employ another method, f2-f3/h2-h3 + g3-g4, which we shall study further on. It seems that 18.exf5!? was still more promising, e.g. 18...g5!? (or 18...gxf5 19.dxc6 bxc6 20.♗e2) 19.♗g6 ♜xg6 20.fxg6 cxd5 21.cxd5 ♗e8 22.♗c2, and Black does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

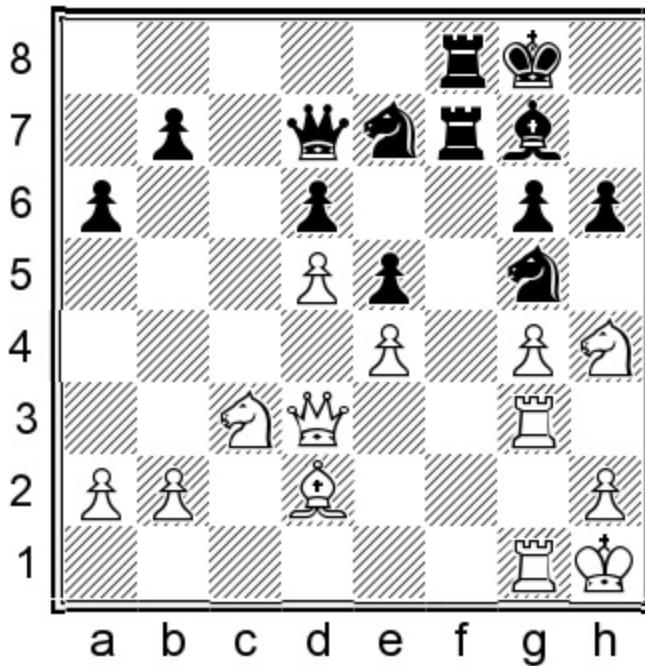
**18...fxg4 19.fxg4 ♗d7??!**

Here 19...g5! was better, e.g. 20.♗f5 (Black has good counterplay in the event of 20.♗g2?! cxd5 21.exd5 (21.cxd5?! b5!) 21...♗d7 22.♗e3 ♜g6 23.♗f5 ♜f4) 20...♗xf5 21.♖xf5 cxd5 22.exd5 ♗d7 23.h3 ♜ac8 24.♗e2 ♜h5!, with chances for both sides.

**20.♗g1?!**

White could have tipped the balance in his favour with 20.g5! hxg5 (20...♗h5?! 21.♖xf8+ ♜xf8 22.♗xg6 ♜g3+ 23.♔g2) 21.♗xg5.

**20...cxd5 21.cxd5 ♜h7 22.♗e1 ♜f7 23.♗e3 a6 24.♗g3 ♜af8 25.♗ag1 ♜g5 26.♗d3**



Apparently, mental relaxation and the inertia of our human thinking process (White's dark-squared bishop is usually a valuable piece in the King's Indian and to exchange it for a knight is quite exceptional) caused Black to make a mistake:

**26...♝f2?**

Black could have maintained equality with 26...♝f6! 27.♗g2 ♕g7!? 28.h4 ♗h7 29.♗d1 (29.g5?? hxg5 30.hxg5 ♜xg5! 31.♗xg5 ♜xg5 32.♗xg5 ♜h8+) 29...♝g8 30.g5 ♜d8.

**27.♜xg5! hxg5 28.♗f3 ♜xb2 29.♗xg5 ♜h6**

By now there was nothing better, e.g. 29...♝f4 30.♜3g2 ♜xg2 (30...♝b4? 31.♝h3) 31.♜xg2 ♜c8 32.♗e6 ♜f7 33.h4.

**30.♗e6 ♜ff2**

Usually doubled rooks on the seventh rank are very strong, but here White can neutralize them and the knight, which has travelled from h4 to e6, gives him a decisive advantage.

**31.♜3g2 ♜f4 32.♜xf2 ♜xf2 33.♜g2 ♜xg2 34.♗xg2 g5 35.♝h3 ♜g6 36.♝h6 ♜h7 37.♝xh7+ ♜xh7 38.♗d8**

Even in the endgame this knight plays a decisive role.

**38...b5 39.♗f7 ♜d2 40.♗b1 ♜c1 41.♗xd6 ♜f4+**

Here 41...♝f8 42.♝e8 b4 43.♝d6 ♜d7 44.♝b7 ♜e3 was more tenacious but would not have changed the result of the game.

42.♔f3 ♔d3 43.♔b7 ♔e1+ 44.♔e2 ♔g2 45.d6 ♔f4+ 46.♔f3 1-0

### 4.3. Pinning the ♜f6 with ♜c1-g5

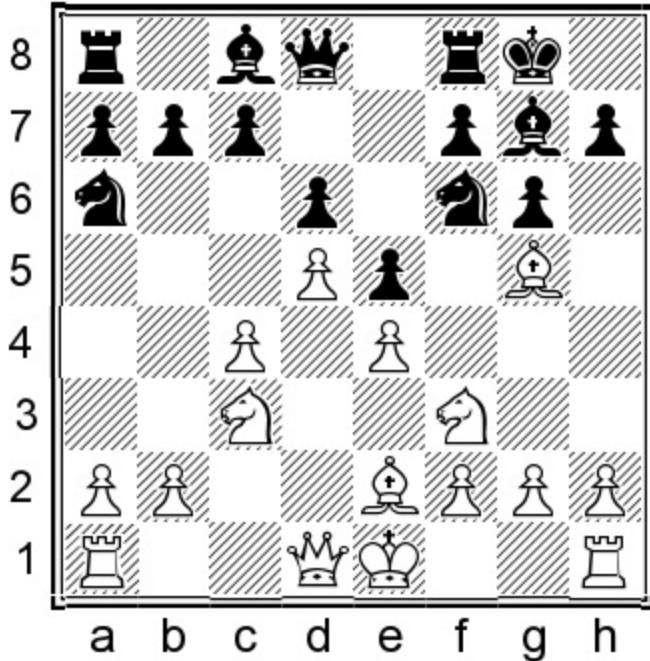
Strictly speaking, the concept of this pin appeared for the first time in the Averbakh System: 1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗g5. However, it was in the Petrosian System: 6.♗f3 e5 7.d5, followed by ♜c1-g5, that the idea really took off.

Game 85  
King's Indian Defence  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
**Jacob Yukhtman**  
Tbilisi ch-URS 1959 (3)

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗f3 e5 7.d5 ♜a6**

Instead, the two most popular moves in this position are 7...a5 and 7...♗bd7.

**8.♗g5**



Petrosian himself explained that the idea of White's last move came about for two reasons. The first was that when he was a young player the move ♜c1-g5 helped him avoid main lines; the young Armenian master very often began his games with the moves 1.d4 ♜f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.♗g5 or 1.d4 ♜f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.♗g5. The second influence was the game Stahlberg-Petrosian, Zürich 1953, in which after 1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♜g7 4.♗g2 0-0 5.♘c3 d6 6.♗f3 ♜bd7 7.0-0 e5 8.e4 ♜e8 9.d5 a5 10.♗e1 ♜c5 White played 11.♗g5?!, but after 11...h6 12.♗xf6 ♜xf6 13.a3?!, a4 Black had the better game. It was by reflecting on this game that Petrosian came to an understanding of how best to implement the pin on the ♜f6. At the end of the 1950s and the start of the 1960s the system with 8.♗g5 (named after Petrosian) was regarded as a dangerous weapon against the King's Indian Defence. The present game

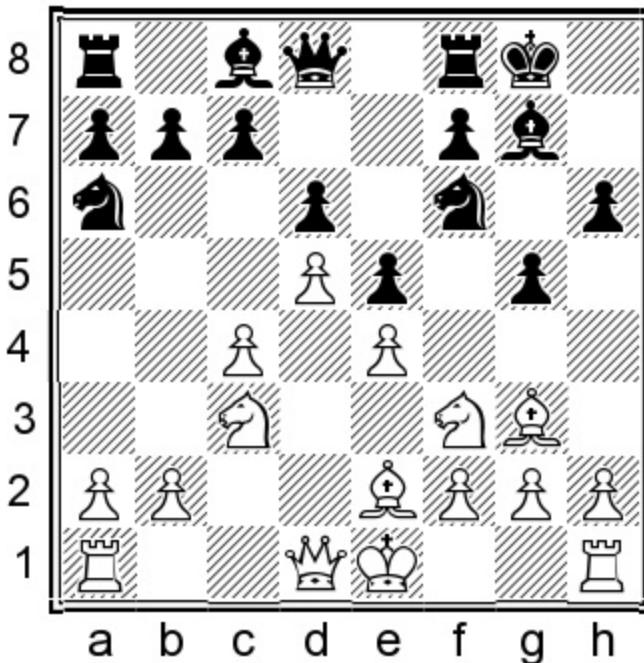
was one of the first models of successful white strategy in this line.

### 8...h6 9.Qh4 g5!?

One of the possible moves in this position, but it weakens the f5-square and has some negative consequences for Black in this game. Even so, I can recall that, about sixty years ago, like every other fan of the King's Indian, I was trying to find an antidote to the Petrosian System and I reached the conclusion that the text move is a good possibility. Curiously, even nowadays this is the main line. However, the Geller-Stein Variation in the following game is even better.

Stockfish claims 9...Qc5 10.Qd2 (10.b4 g5 (10...Qcd7!?) 11.bxc5 gxh4 12.cxd6 cxd6 13.g3!? Petrosian) 10...a5 (10...g5) 11.f3 Qd7 12.Wc2 We8 13.Qf2 a4 14.0-0 Qh5 15.b4 axb3 16.axb3 Qf4 is equal.

### 10.Qg3



### 10...Qh5

The temporary sacrifice 10...Qxe4!? 11.Qxe4 f5 seems perfectly playable here, e.g. 12.Qc3 (12.Qfd2!?) 12...f4 (12...e4!? 13.Qd2 Qxc3 14.bxc3 f4 15.Qxe4 We7) 13.Qd2 Qc5 14.Qde4 Qxe4 15.Qxe4 fxg3 16.hxg3 Qf5 17.Qd3 g4 18.Wd2 We8 19.0-0 Wg6 20.Qfe1 Qf7, with equality, Rowson-Jones, London 2015 (20...h5!?).

### 11.Qd2

11.h4!?, the fruit of some joint analysis by Petrosian and Keres in 1963, is the main line nowadays, for example: 11...Qxg3 (11...Qf4?! 12.hxg5 hxg5 13.Qf1 f5 14.Qxf4! exf4 15.Qd4 Wf6 16.Qxf5

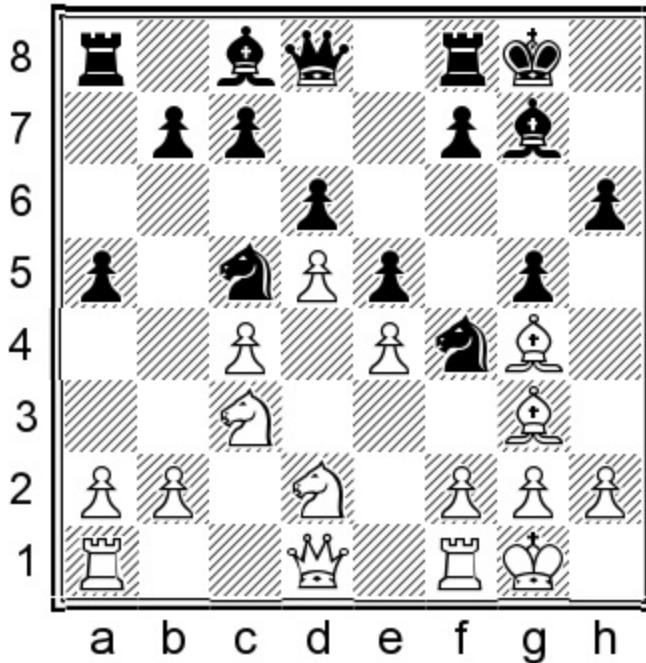
$\mathbb{Q}xf5$  17. $exf5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$  with a clear advantage to White, Khenkin-Yurtaev, Podolsk 1989) 12. $fxg3$   $gxh4$  (another possibility is 12... $g4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $h5$  14.0-0) 13. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  14. $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2+$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5+$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ , with equality, Demidov-Kokarev, Izhevsk 2013.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 12.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c5$

After 12... $f5$  13. $exf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}de4$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  17. $b4$   $h5$  18. $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $a5$  20. $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd3$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  22. $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}af8$  a draw was agreed in the game Petrosian-Geller, Stockholm 1962, although the final position is better for White; at least, Stockfish awards White a clear advantage following 23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ .

### 13. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $a5??!$

As Petrosian has pointed out, Black does not have time for this move. And he added that instead Black has two good ways to equalize that were discovered later: 13... $\mathbb{Q}xg4!$  14. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $h5!$  15. $\mathbb{W}f5$   $h4$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}fd3$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $exf4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f6!$  and 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  14. $\mathbb{Q}dxe4$   $f5$ , while 13... $c6$  also deserved attention.



White's positional advantage is clear, especially in view of the weakness of the f5-square. White's strategic plan includes the transfer of the  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  to the square e3 and the advance g2-g3 to eject the  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ . With his following moves Black prevents the transfer of the  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , but his counterplay is insufficient.

### 14. $f3!$ $\mathbb{Q}cd3$

14... $c6!$  was better.

### 15. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $c6$

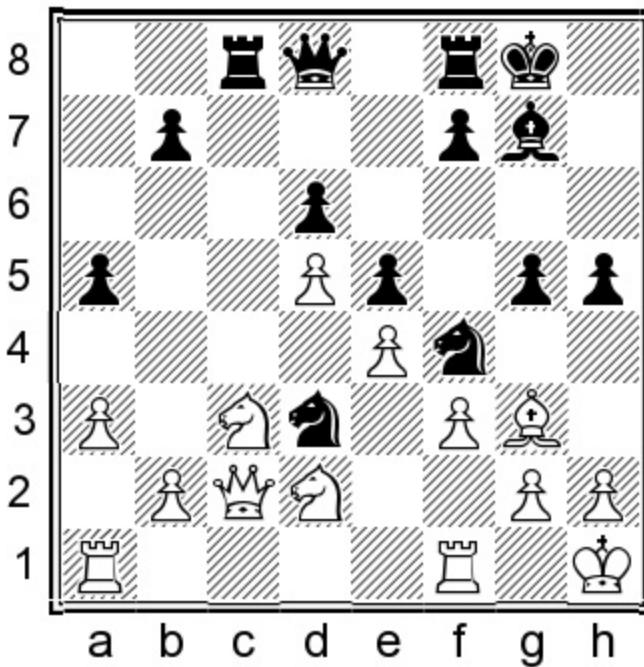
Now this comes a bit late.

## 16.♔h1 h5 17.♕xc8 ♕xc8 18.a3?!

In accordance with his style of play, Petrosian was reluctant to enter the variation 18.♕xf4! ♔b4 (18...♔xf4? 19.g3 ♔g6) 19.♕xg5 ♕xc2 (19...♕xg5? 20.♕d1) 20.♕xd8 ♕xa1 21.♕e7 ♕fe8 22.♕xd6 ♕c2 23.c5, even though he knew that White was better.

## 18...cxd5 19.cxd5

Petrosian thought that 19.♕xd5 ♕xd5 20.exd5 ♔f4 21.♕f5 was good, followed by ♔e4. However the engine indicates that after 21...♕f6 22.♕xf6 ♕xf6 23.♔e4 ♕e7 24.c5 ♕fd8 the position is equal.



## 19...♘c5?

By playing actively Black could keep the balance: 19...b5! 20.♕xf4 ♔xf4 21.♕b3 ♕b8 22.♕d1 ♕b6 23.g3 a4 24.♕e3 ♕xe3 25.♔xe3 ♘d3 26.♔f5 ♕b7!! 27.♔xd6 ♕c7 28.♔xb5 ♕c2 29.♔b1 ♕f2+ 30.♔g1 ♕h3+ 31.♔h1 ♕f2+.

19...♕b6!? 20.♕xf4 ♔xf4 21.a4 ♔e2 22.♕d3 ♘d4 23.♔ab1 ♕b4 etc. was also playable, although somewhat inferior to the previous variation.

## 20.♗f2 g4?

It is a conceptual error to open the f-file and it leads to a quick defeat. ‘It takes a wise man to recognize he was wrong’; it was better to move the knight back, as after 20...♘cd3! 21.♔e3 ♕c7 22.♕b3 a4 23.♔xa4 ♕c2 24.♔b6 ♕xb3 25.♔xb3 ♕c2, the ♘d3 and the ♕c2 give Black good practical saving chances.

21.g3 ♜g6 22.fxg4 hxg4 23.♕e3 b5

The black position is lost; this pawn sacrifice changes nothing.

24.♗xb5 ♜b6 25.a4 ♜a6 26.♗c4 f5 27.♗xf5 ♜xf5 28.exf5 ♜b7 29.♗g2 ♜b3 30.♗cxd6 ♜d7 31.♗f1  
1-0

However, with time, Black discovered several antidotes to the Petrosian System, the most important of which can be seen in the following game.

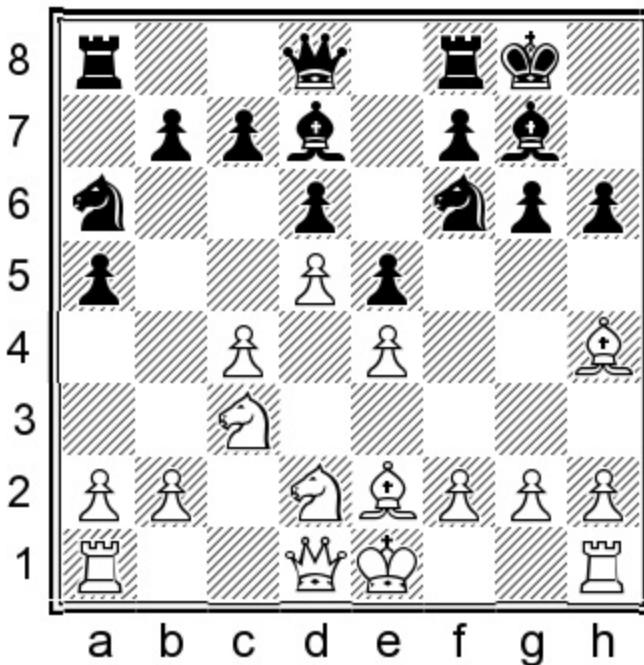
Game 86  
King's Indian Defence  
**Boris Gulko** 2595  
**Garry Kasparov** 2805  
Novgorod 1995 (1)

1.c4 g6 2.e4 ♜g7 3.d4 d6 4.♗c3 ♜f6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗f3 e5 7.d5 a5

This move introduces the Geller-Stein System; 7...a5, followed by ...♗b8-a6, hinders the advance b2-b4. After that, instead of quickly preparing the advance ...f7-f5, Black first develops his pieces, usually placing his ♜g7 on h6 and only later, at an opportune moment, advancing his f-pawn.

8.♗g5 h6 9.♗h4 ♜a6 10.♗d2 ♜d7

Here 10...♜e8 is three times more common, although it almost always transposes to the same position.



11.0-0

In a more recent game between two young talents, White chose a rather unusual plan with queenside castling: 11.a3  $\mathbb{W}e8$  12.g4!? a4 13.f3 h5?! (13... $\mathcal{Q}c5$ !?) 14. $\mathbb{W}c2$  c6 15.0-0-0 cxd5 16.exd5 b5!?, with sharp play) 14. $\mathbb{E}g1$  hxg4 (14...c6!?) 15.fxg4  $\mathcal{Q}h7$  16. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathcal{Q}c5$  17.0-0-0!  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  18.g5  $\mathbb{W}e7$  19. $\mathcal{Q}f3$   $\mathcal{Q}b3+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathcal{Q}d4$  22. $\mathbb{W}d2$ , with advantage to White, Anton-Firouzja, Prague 2020.

### 11... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ ?

This and the following move is an idea of Kramnik's. This king move is a measure directed against the exchange sacrifice 12.b3  $\mathcal{Q}h7$  13.a3 f5!? (13...h5!?) 14.exf5 gxf5 15. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{W}xe8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  e4 (Jussupow-Kasparov, Barcelona 1989), as now the  $\mathcal{Q}c3$  is still protected by the  $\mathcal{Q}b2$ .

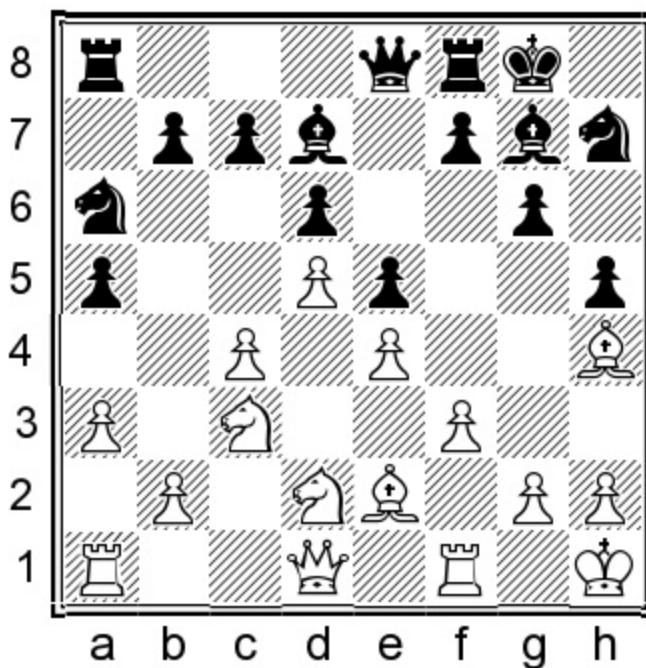
### 12... $\mathcal{Q}h7$ 13.a3!?

And this move by Kramnik is designed to play b2-b4 in one move, instead of b2-b3 first, not fearing Black's blockading move ...a5-a4.

### 13...h5

In a game played with white by my ex-pupil and Kramnik's second, Black played 13...a4 and White continued 14. $\mathcal{Q}b5$ !? $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  15.cxb5  $\mathcal{Q}c5$  16.f3 f5 17. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b6 18. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ ! bxc5 20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathcal{Q}g5$  21.b4, and White was better in Illescas-Frolov, Biel 1993. We can assume that this was what Kramnik had prepared in the event of 13...a4.

### 14.f3



### 14... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ?

Deviating from the traditional continuation 14... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , e.g. 15.b3  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  16. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ ? (16...f5 17.exf5 gxf5 18.b4 axb4 19.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  21. $\mathbb{W}e2$ , with a slight advantage to White in view of the stranded  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , Topalov-Mamedyarov, Wijk aan Zee 2008) 17. $\mathbb{W}c1$  f5 18.exf5 gxf5 19. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  (19.f4!?) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  21. $\mathbb{B}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , with good play for Black, Postny-Libiszewski, Rockville 2017.

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6?$ !

This helps Black carry out his positional idea: to exchange White's good bishop for its black counterpart. As later games demonstrated, it is more precise for White to avoid this exchange with 15. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ .

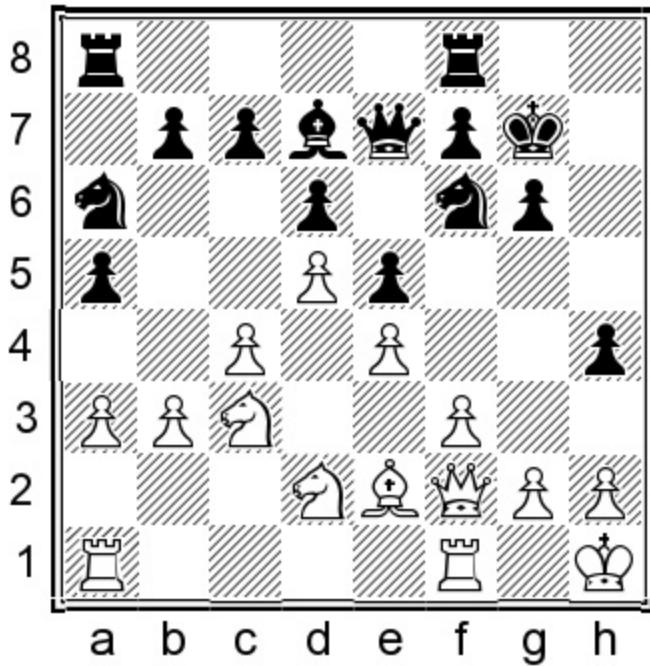
### 15... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 16.b3 $\mathbb{W}e7$

Here 16...h4!? deserved attention, with the idea of 17. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  18. $\mathbb{W}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  19. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ , with a better endgame for Black.

### 17. $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18. $\mathbb{W}f2$

According to Kasparov, it was more precise to play 18. $\mathbb{B}b1$  or even 18.h4. However, the engine does not see anything wrong with the text move.

### 18...h4!



### 19.f4?

It is only after this advance that the white position deteriorates. Instead, 19. $\mathbb{W}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  would lead to a slightly better (but defensible) ending for Black, while Stockfish sees

no advantage for Black after the variation which it considers best: 19.♕fb1! ♔h5 20.b4 ♕h8 (20...♕g5 21.♔f1) 21.♕a2! axb4 22.axb4 c5 23.dxc6 bxc6 24.♕ba1 ♔c7 25.♕xa8.

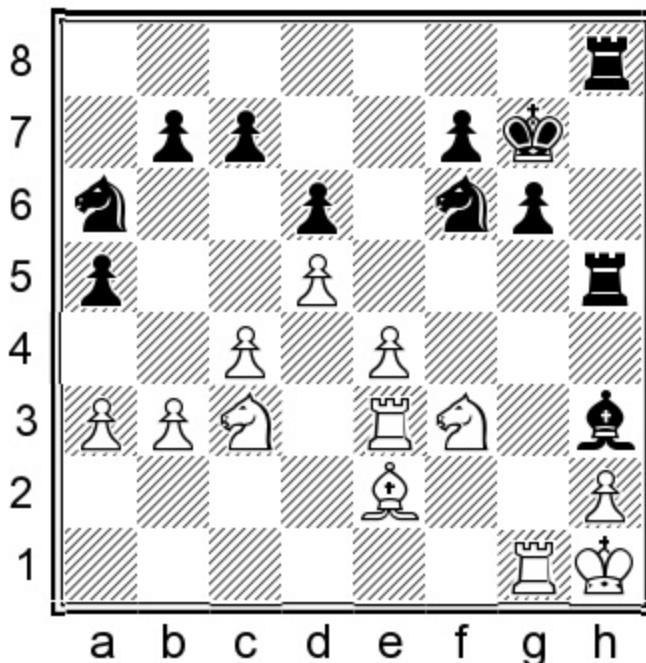
**19...exf4 20.♕xf4 h3 21.gxh3?!**

21.g3 and 21.♕f2 were both better.

**21...♔xh3 22.♕f3 ♕h8 23.♕e3 ♕ae8**

More accurate was 23...♔d7! 24.♔f3 ♔e5 25.♕g1 ♔xf3 26.♔xf3 ♕h4.

**24.♕g1 ♕e5 25.♕xe5 ♕xe5 26.♔f3 ♕eh5**



Black's advantage is obvious now, due to the greater activity of his pieces and the weakness of White's pawns on b3 and e4.

**27.♔d4 ♕h4 28.♔f3**

28.♔f3 fails to 28...♔g4!.

**28...♔c5 29.♕g3 ♔d7 30.♕g2 ♕h3 31.♕ge2 ♔g4 32.♕xg4 ♔xg4 33.♕xh3 ♕xh3 34.♕c2 ♕d3 35.♔db5 ♕h3 36.♔g1**

36.♔xc7? loses a piece after 36...♕f3 37.♕c1 ♔xb3.

**36...c6 37.b4**

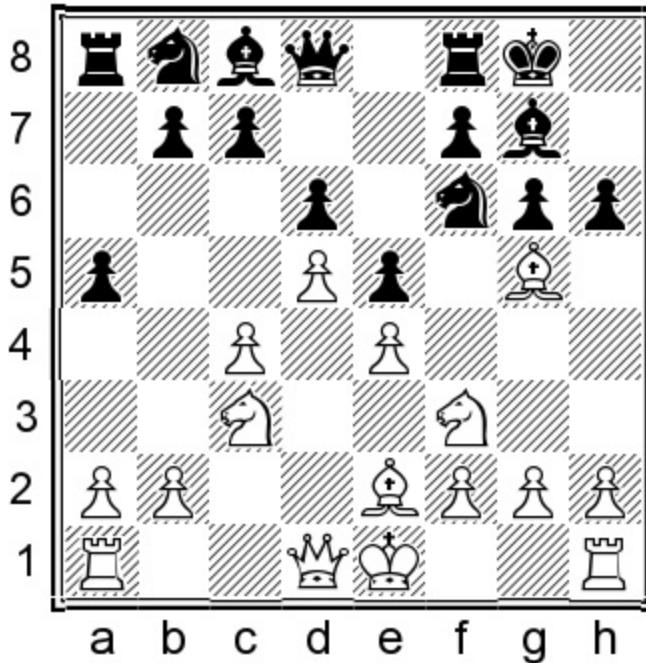
The capture on d6 still loses a piece in the same way: 37.♔xd6? ♕f3 38.♕c1 ♔xb3.

37...axb4 38.axb4 cxb5 39.bxc5 b4 40.Qe2 f3 41.Qg3 dxc5 42.d6 f8 43.e5 e8 44.Qe2 b3 0-1

The crisis in the Petrosian System in its original form (in Megabase 2020 it is only fifth in popularity) set off a search for new ideas; one of these appears in the following game.

Game 87  
King's Indian Defence  
**Vladimir Kramnik** 2769  
**Hikaru Nakamura** 2775  
London 2014 (2)

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♘f3 e5 7.d5 a5 8.♗g5 h6



## 9. ♕e3!?

Instead of the usual 9...h4, Kramnik chooses a move which was promoted in the 1990s by the Muscovite GM Vadim Zviagintsev. However, this was the first time that the retreat of the bishop along its original diagonal was played at such a high level.

9...♞g4 10.♕d2

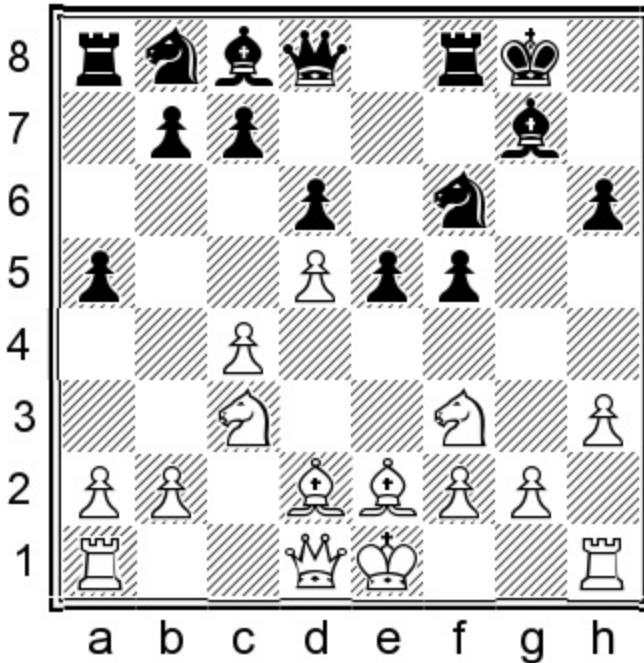
Zviagintsev himself favoured 10.♗c1, e.g. 10...♝a6 (10...f5 11.exf5 gxf5 12.g3 ♜a6 13.♗h4, with a slight advantage to White, Zviagintsev-Cvitani, Vienna 1996) 11.h3 ♜f6 12.♕e3 ♜c5 13.♗d2 ♜d7 14.0-0 (14.g4!? c6 15.h4 a4 16.g5 hxg5 17.hxg5, with a double-edged position, although with a very favourable score for White, Belous-Villanueva, chess.com 2018) 14...♝h7 15.♗b3 b6 16.♗d2 ♜h4, with chances for both sides, Zviagintsev-Illescas, Pamplona 1996.

**10...f5 11.h3 ♜f6**

As Kramnik indicates, the sacrifice on f2 is unsound: 11...♜xf2? 12.♝xf2 fxe4 13.♝xe4 ♜h4+ 14.♝e3 ♜f4+ 15.♝d3 ♜xe4+ 16.♝xe4 ♜f5+ 17.♝e3.

**12.exf5 gxf5**

It is usually best to recapture on f5 with the pawn, preventing the white pieces from using the e4-square, and that is the case here as well: 12...♟xf5? 13.g4! ♜d7 (13...♜e4 14.g5) 14.g5!.



**13.♛c1!?**

The key to Kramnik's idea, which initiates concrete play. According to the engine, White has three other moves with the same evaluation as the text move: 13.g4!?, and with the same idea 13.♝g1!? ♜a6 14.g4!?; as well as the more positional 13.g3!? ♜a6 14.♝h4. Still, the move in the game seems to me to be the most human option, although the whole variation was no doubt prepared at home with the computer.

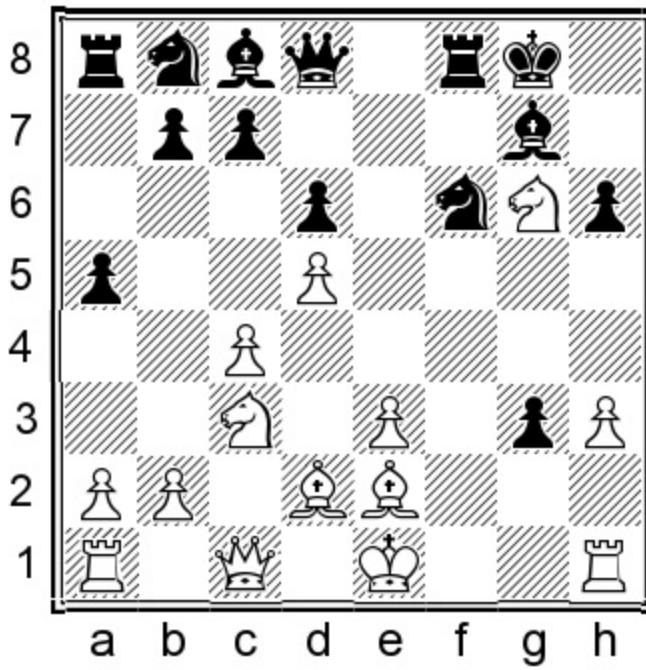
**13...f4**

Kramnik points out that 13...♝h7?! 14.g4! and 13...h5?! 14.♝g5!, followed by g2-g4, were worse.

**14.g3 e4 15.♝h4 e3**

Better than 15...f3? 16.♝d1 ♜h7 17.♝c2.

**16.fxe3 fxe3 17.♝g6**



**17...♝f7?!**

Until this point Kramnik had played very quickly, showing that he was still in his home analysis. This probably explains why Nakamura decided not to make the more obvious rook move 17...♜e8, although later games showed that in fact this was more accurate, e.g. 18.♝f4 ♜f5 (18...♜e5!? 19.♝f3 ♜a6) 19.0-0 ♜a6 20.♝f3 ♜c5 21.♝h5 ♜e4?! (21...♜g6!) 22.♝xe4 ♜fxe4 23.♝xg7 ♜xg7?! (23...♝h4!) 24.♝c3+ ♜xc3 25.♝xc3+, with advantage to White, Kryakvin-Amin, Hoogeveen 2018.

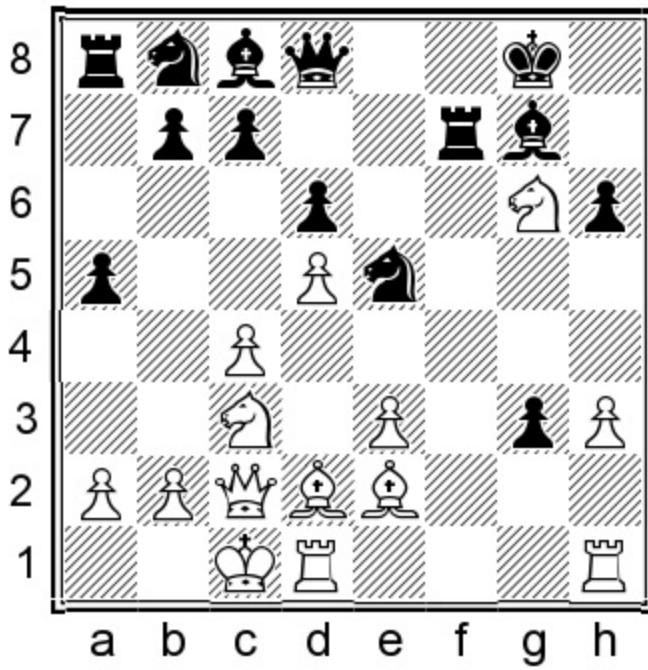
It would be risky to play 17...g2?! 18.♜g1 ♜xh3 19.♝c2, with a strong initiative to White.

**18.♝c2 ♜fd7?**

According to Kramnik, 18...♝a6 was better, although after 19.0-0-0 ♜h7? (19...b5!?) 20.♝f4 ♜b4 21.♝b1 ♜f5 22.e4 ♜d7 23.♝dg1 ♜e5 24.♝xg3+ ♜g5 25.h4 White also gained a clear advantage in the game Yuffa-McShane, Khanty-Mansiysk 2019.

**19.0-0-0 ♜e5**

White also maintains the advantage after 19...♝c5 20.♝hf1! (20.e4) 20...♝xf1 (20...♝f2!? 21.♝xf2 gxg2 22.♝f1 ♜f6 23.♝f4 ♜f5 24.e4 ♜h7) 21.♝xf1 ♜xh3 (or 21...♝e8 22.♝f3 g2 23.♝g3) 22.♝g1 ♜g5 23.♝f4 ♜f5 24.e4.



**20.♕hf1!**

A brilliant move, with the idea of exchanging the vital defender – the ♜f7. It should be said that the more obvious idea 20.♘f4!? ♜a6 21.♕hg1 ♘h4 22.♖e1 ♜f5 23.♗d2 also gives White the advantage.

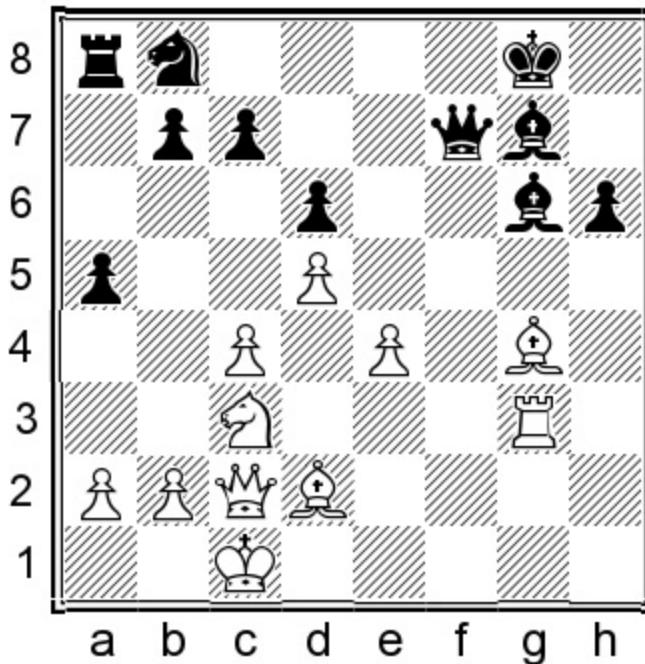
**20...♝xf1 21.♝xf1 ♜xh3 22.♝g1 ♘f6**

The idea of preserving the extra pawn with 22...g2 fails to 23.♘xe5 dxe5 24.♗g6 ♜a6 25.♗g3 ♜f5 26.e4 ♜g6 27.♗h2 ♜g4 28.♗xg2 h5 29.♗xg4 ♜xg4 30.♗xg4 hxg4 31.♗g3.

**23.♝xg3 ♜xg6**

After 23...♗f2 24.♗xh3 ♘g1+ 25.♗d1 ♘xg6 26.♗xg6 ♜xg6 27.♗b5 ♜a6 28.♗xa5 White would be a pawn up in the ending.

**24.♝xg6 ♘f7 25.♝g3 ♜f5 26.e4 ♜g6 27.♝g4**



This position demonstrates the triumph of Kramnik's strategy. Black has no satisfactory defence now.

**27... $\mathbb{W}f1+$**

There was no salvation in 27... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ .

**28. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  30. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  32. $\mathbb{exf5}$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  33. $\mathbb{B}g6$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  34. $\mathbb{B}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{B}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$**

White has an extra pawn and the attack, which decides the game.

**36... $b5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{bxc4}$  38. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  39. $\mathbb{B}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  41. $\mathbb{W}e2+$**

Black resigned.

After the Petrosian System had shown the value of the move  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , it began to gain popularity in other variations of the King's Indian Defence. The following game is illustrative.

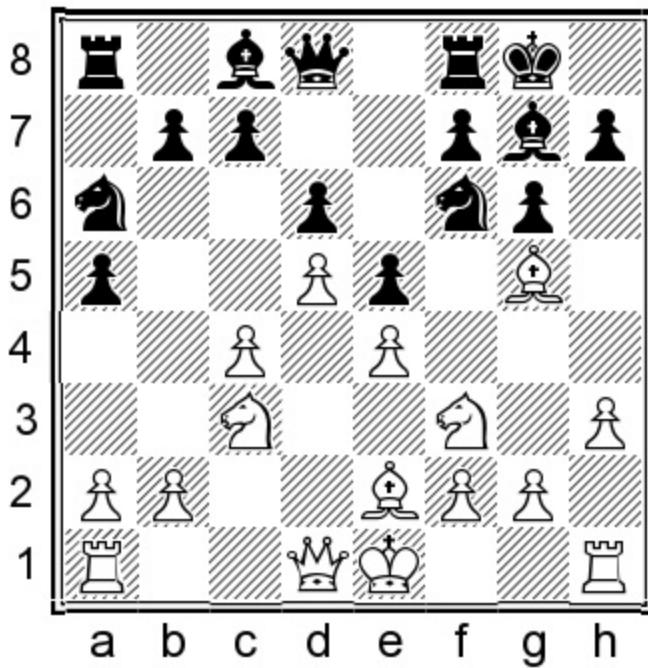
**Game 88**  
 King's Indian Defence  
**Wei Yi 2743**  
**Gawain Jones 2640**  
 Wijk aan Zee 2018 (4)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 d6 5.h3**

This variation is named after the Soviet master Vladimir Makogonov. The idea is similar to the Sämisch Variation 5.f3: to advance g2-g4 at an opportune moment, but to leave the natural square f3

free for the ♜g1.

5...0-0 6.♗f3 e5 7.d5 a5 8.♕g5 ♜a6 9.♕e2



9...♝e8

The point of this move-order can be seen in the variation 9...h6 10.♕e3, when Black does not have the move ...♝f6-g4, as in the previous game.

10.g4 ♘h8

The main alternative is 10...♝d7, e.g. 11.♗g1 ♜dc5 12.h4 ♜d7 13.h5 c6 14.♗d2 ♜b4 15.♗b1 cxd5 16.cxd5 b5 17.a3 ♜ba6 18.b4 with an advantage for White, Bacrot-Harika, Cap d'Agde 2016.

11.♗d2

Another, probably more promising, option, is to blockade the black kingside with 11.♕e3!? ♜g8 12.g5 f5 13.h4 ♜e7 14.h5 ♜g8 15.h6 ♜h8 16.♗h4, with a space advantage to White, Korobov-Smirin, Eilat 2012.

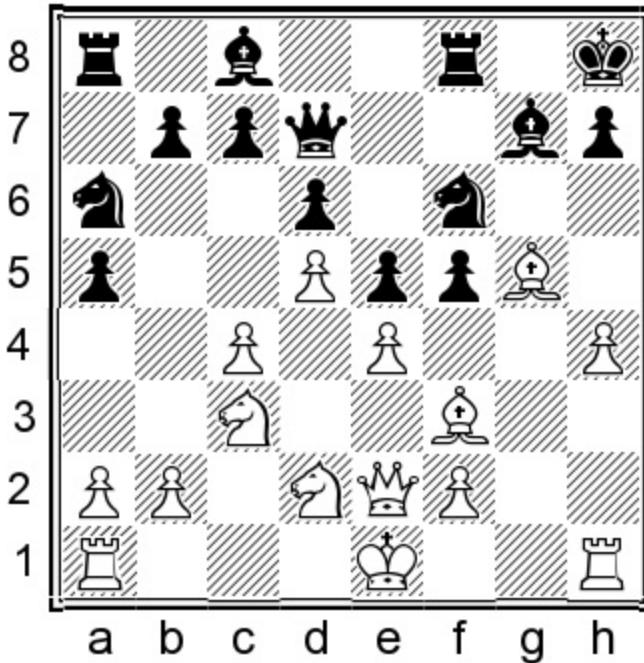
11...♝g8! 12.h4

Here Stockfish recommends the plan of 12.f3 f5 13.♕e3 ♜h6 14.♗xh6 ♜xh6 15.♗c2 ♜g8 16.0-0-0 ♜d7 17.♗b1 f4 18.g5, preferring White's space advantage.

12...f5 13.gxf5

With the white bishop on g5, there is no point to the advance 13.h5, as White is threatening neither 14.hxg6?, due to 14... $\mathbb{W}xg6$ , nor 14.h6?!, due to 14... $\mathbb{B}f6$ .

**13...gxf5 14. $\mathbb{B}h5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  15. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  16. $\mathbb{B}f3$**



**16...fxe4?!**

This move helps White occupy the vital e4-square. There were better options, e.g. 16... $\mathbb{B}c5$  would be a normal continuation, as would 16...a4; the engine also suggests the line 16... $\mathbb{W}f7$  17.0-0-0 a4 18. $\mathbb{B}dg1$  a3 19.b3  $\mathbb{B}b4$  20. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  21. $\mathbb{B}hg1$  f4 22. $\mathbb{B}3g2$   $\mathbb{B}h3$  23. $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  24. $\mathbb{B}hg2$   $\mathbb{B}h3$ , with a repetition of moves.

**17. $\mathbb{B}dxe4$   $\mathbb{B}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{B}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}b4$**

After 18...b6 19. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  20.0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}f5$  21. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{B}xe4$  22. $\mathbb{B}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xf2$  23. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{B}xf2$  24. $\mathbb{B}dg1$  White's initiative is worth more than the sacrificed pawn.

**19. $\mathbb{B}g2$**

Defending against 19... $\mathbb{B}c2+$ .

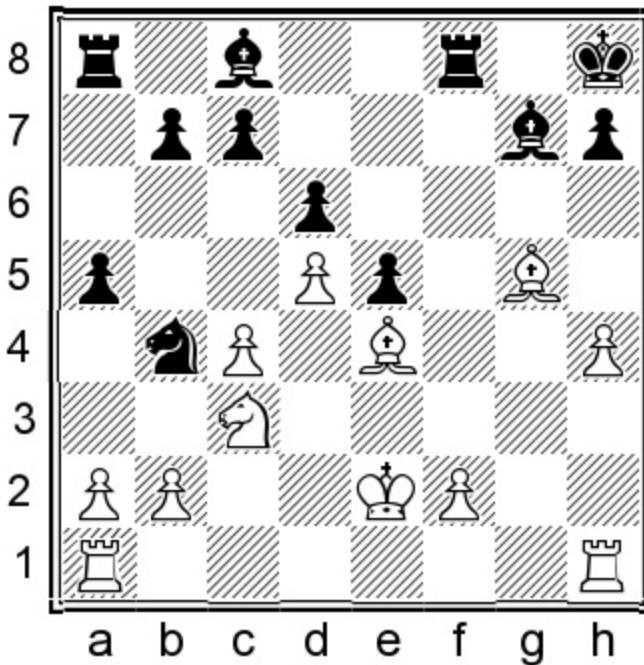
**19... $\mathbb{W}a4?!$**

It was better to break in the centre with 19...c6!, e.g. 20.a3 cxd5 21.axb4 dxe4 22. $\mathbb{B}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  23.bxa5  $\mathbb{B}g4!$  24.f3 (24. $\mathbb{W}xg4??$   $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  25. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  26. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{W}d4+$  27. $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}f4!)$  24... $\mathbb{B}xf3$  25. $\mathbb{B}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$ , with equality; another good option was 19... $\mathbb{W}g4!?$  20. $\mathbb{B}h3$   $\mathbb{W}xe2+$  21. $\mathbb{B}xe2$   $\mathbb{B}xh3$  22. $\mathbb{B}xh3$  b5 23.cxb5  $\mathbb{B}xd5$ , and White's advantage is minimal.

**20.♕c3 ♜c2 21.♔e4!**

Forcing the exchange of queens, in order to enter the better endgame.

**21...♛xe2+ 22.♚xe2**



White has a typical advantage against the King's Indian, based on control of the e4-square and the relative passivity of the ♜g7.

**22...♜g4+ 23.f3 ♜h5 24.♝ag1 ♜f7?**

Blocking the retreat of the ♜h5. Better was 24...b6 25.♝e3 ♜f6 26.♝g5 ♜f7, when Black can resist.

**25.♝e3! ♜f6?!**

Here 25...♝af8!? was more tenacious, e.g. 26.♝h3 ♜d7 27.c5 c6 28.dxc6 ♜xc6 29.cxd6 ♜d4+, sacrificing a pawn but activating his pieces.

**26.♝g5?!**

An eye-catching move, although it was slightly more accurate first to eliminate the possibility of ♜c2, gaining a decisive advantage with 26.a3! ♜a6 27.♝g5! ♜g6 28.♝xg6 hxg6 29.♝xg6.

**26...♜g6**

In the event of 26...♝xg5?? 27.hxg5 White wins a piece.

**27.♝xg6 hxg6 28.♝xg6 ♜c2 29.♝e4 ♜e7 30.♝g5!**

The ♜e4 seeks an even better square.

**30...♜f6**

30...♜xg5 leads to a lost ending after 31.hxg5+ ♜h7 32.♜xh7+ ♔xh7 33.♜f6 ♔g7 34.♜d2 ♜d4+ 35.♔d3 a4 36.f4 ♜h8 37.fxe5 dxe5 38.♜h6.

**31.♜xf6 ♜xf6 32.∜e6**

White's extra pawn and greater piece activity decide the game.

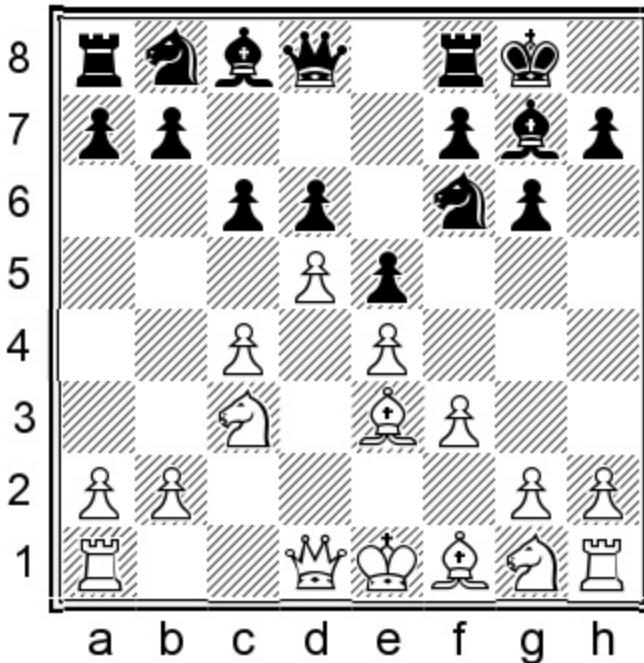
32...∜xe3 33.∜xe3 ♜g8 34.∜e4 c6 35.∜f5 ♜e7 36.∜g5 ♜e8 37.∜e4 ♜g7 38.∜e6 ♜f8+ 39.∜d7 ♜e7+ 40.∜xd6 ♜f7 41.∜g1 cxd5 42.cxd5 ♜e8 43.∜f6+ ♜d8 44.∜g8 ♜e8+ 45.∜xf8 ♜xf8 46.∜e6 ♜h8 47.h5 b5 48.d6 1-0

#### 4.4. Playing an early g2-g4

The g2-g4 advance usually has two objectives. The first is to fight for control of the e4-square; the second is to close the kingside against Black's attack. In the previous games we saw several examples of the first case and so here we shall limit ourselves to recalling the game between two future World Champions in which this plan was carried out for the first time.

Game 89  
King's Indian Defence  
**Alexander Alekhine**  
**Max Euwe**  
Amsterdam m 1926 (3)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 0-0 5. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d6 6.f3 e5 7.d5 c6**



There is nothing new under the sun!! It's incredible but true: this move, which is the main line in Megabase, was known almost a hundred years ago.

**8. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  cxd5 9.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

According to modern theory, 9...a6 or 9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  are more promising.

**10.0-0-0 f5 11. $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

The text is a useful prophylactic move, although White could prevent 11...f4 by playing in the same way as occurred a few moves later in the game: 11.exf5!? gxf5 12. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  13.g4!? fxe4 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

Black could have sought counterplay with 11... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  12.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  (14.g4?  $\mathbb{Q}xd3+$  15. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  e4) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd3+$  15. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  e4! 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17.fxe4  $\mathbb{W}e7$ , sacrificing a pawn but keeping the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  active.

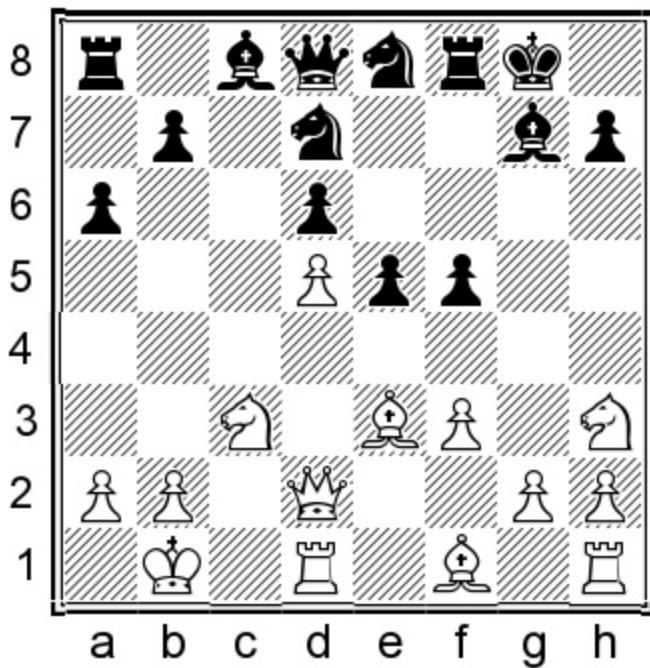
## 12. $\mathbb{Q}h3$

12.exf5!? gxf5 13.g4 was more precise.

## 12...a6?

It was better to prevent the game from being opened up by blocking the kingside with 12...f4!?, e.g. 13. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  a6 (13... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ !? 14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 14.g3 b5!?, with double-edged play.

## 13.exf5 gxf5



## 14.g4!

After this game, this method of fighting for the e4-square gained popularity and it can be often seen in games of contemporary players.

## 14...fxg4

14...f4 was less attractive now, in view of White's control of the e4-square, although the engine regards it as the lesser of the evils.

## 15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

15.fxg4! was slightly better, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  b5 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 18. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  19.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$

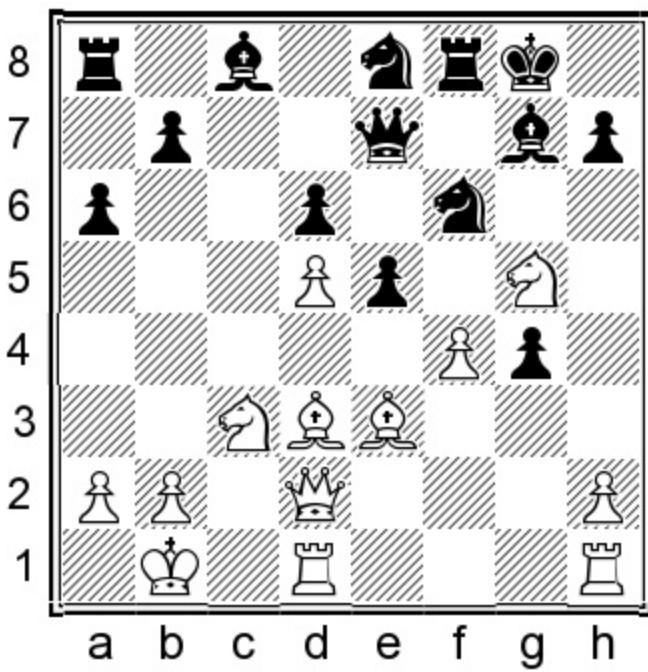
20.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ , winning a pawn.

**15...  $\mathbb{Q}df6?!$**

Although White keeps the advantage after 15...  $\mathbb{Q}c5!?$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $dxc5$  17.  $f\mathbb{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!?$  (18.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ) 18...  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , this would have offered Euwe greater possibilities of resistance.

**16.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  17.  $f4$**

It seems that here the most accurate move was 17.  $\mathbb{Q}hg1!?$ , e.g. 17...  $gxf3$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}df1$   $b5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $b4$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}ce4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  24.  $\mathbb{W}e1$ , with the decisive threat of 25.  $\mathbb{W}h4$ .



**17...  $e4$**

Black returns the sacrificed pawn, with the aim of restraining the white attack and activating the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ . It is also important to note that piece exchanges tend to reduce the value of the e4-square. Nevertheless, White's advantage here is practically decisive and Black has nothing better.

**18.  $\mathbb{Q}gxe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3+$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  23.  $h3!$**

To attack the  $\mathbb{Q}h7$ , next to the black king.

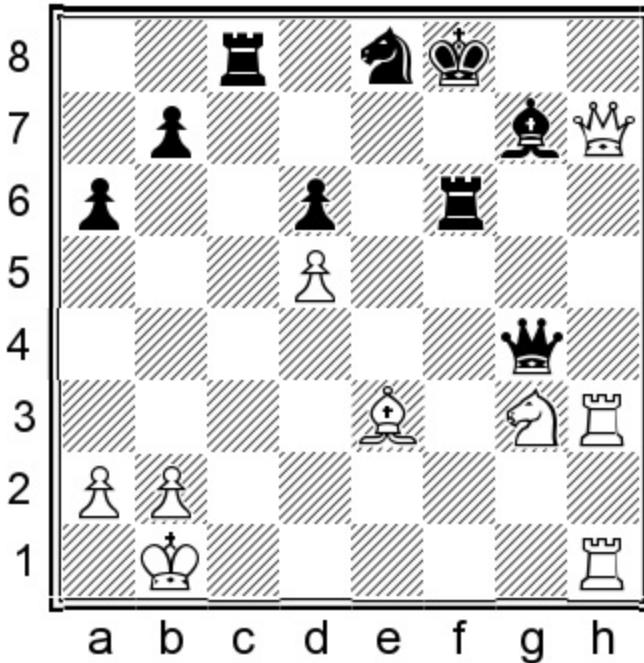
**23...  $g\mathbb{x}h3$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  25.  $f5?!$**

As Alekhine indicated, it was better to play 25.  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  and after 25...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd3+$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  Black has no compensation for the lost pawn.

25... $\mathbb{W}g4$  26. $\mathbb{B}dh2$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  27.f6?

This advance should have been prepared with 27.a3, giving the white king some air.

27... $\mathbb{B}xf6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{B}h1$



29... $\mathbb{W}g6+?$

The future fifth World Champion commits an error which is typical for the defending side: exchanging the queens. As we know, in chess there are no rules without exceptions, and in this particular case the exchange of queens makes the white attack irresistible. Curiously, as the engine indicates, Black could have held the position by keeping the queens on the board with 29... $\mathbb{B}f3!!$  30. $\mathbb{B}h6$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  (30... $\mathbb{B}xh6!?$  31. $\mathbb{B}xh6$   $\mathbb{B}xg3$  32. $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}f3$  33. $\mathbb{W}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ ) 31. $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  32. $\mathbb{B}xg7$   $\mathbb{B}xg7$  33. $\mathbb{W}d8$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  34.a3  $\mathbb{W}c2+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  (35. $\mathbb{Q}a1??$  loses to 35... $\mathbb{B}xa3+!$  36.bxa3  $\mathbb{W}c3+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}d2+$  38. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d3+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{W}xa3+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}b4+$  41. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{W}d4+$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}b6+$  43. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{B}c1+$  44. $\mathbb{B}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$ ) 35... $\mathbb{W}c4+$  with a draw by perpetual check.

29... $\mathbb{B}c7!?$  was also better than the move in the game, although White can maintain some advantage by exchanging the queens with 30. $\mathbb{W}e4!$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

30. $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{B}xg6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Here it was more tenacious to play 31... $\mathbb{Q}f6!?$  32. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ .

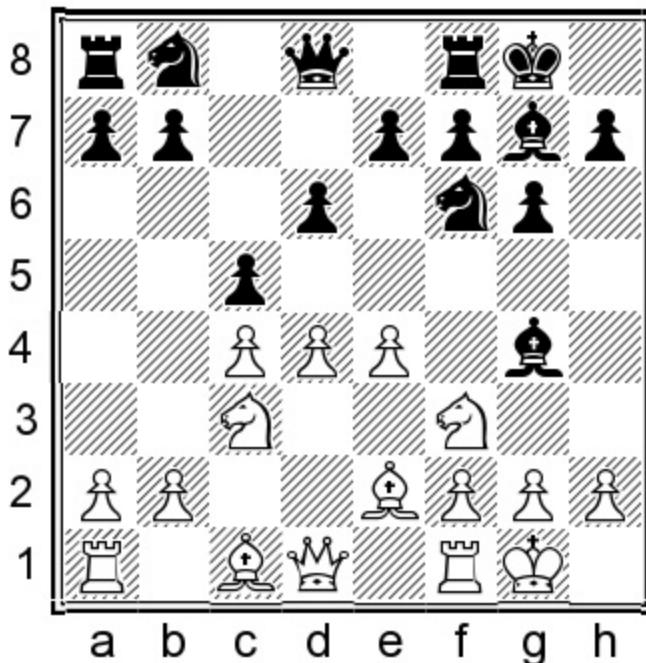
32. $\mathbb{B}f3!$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  33. $\mathbb{B}h8+$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  34. $\mathbb{B}xg8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$  1-0

In the following game, in which the g2-g4 advance restricts Black's activity on the kingside, the

young Karpov defeats the experienced 10th World Champion.

Game 90  
King's Indian Defence  
**Anatoly Karpov**  
**Boris Spassky**  
Leningrad ct m 1974 (3)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 d6 5. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  c5 7.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g4$**



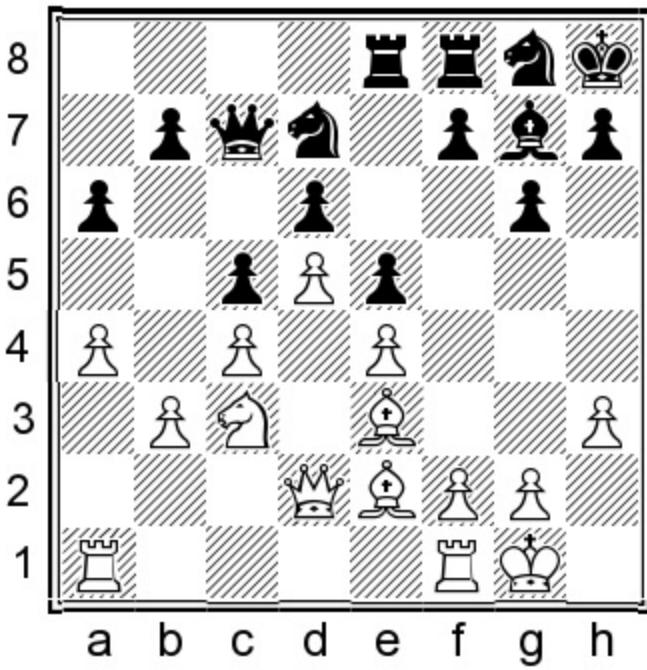
Before this game Karpov had only rarely played 1.d4, and never against strong players. We can suppose, therefore, that Spassky's choice of defence, and his last two moves in particular, were an attempt to surprise his opponent and exploit his lack of experience in the closed openings.

**8.d5  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  a6 10.a4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  11. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ae8$  12.h3  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  e6 14.b3  $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

An interesting alternative was 14...exd5!? 15.exd5 (15.cxd5!?) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  (17.f4?!  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ! 18. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4+$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}e3$ ) 17...f5.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5?**

A positional error, which Karpov exploits in masterly fashion. The correct continuation was 16... $\mathbb{W}a5$  17. $\mathbb{E}fc1$  exd5 18.cxd5 f5 19.exf5 gxf5, with all Black's pieces active.



**17.g4!**

Creating a barrier on the kingside. White wants to execute a typical plan, based on the pawn break b3-b4 after first playing a4-a5. The engine recommends carrying out this plan right away, but there is no doubt that the human memory retains best those decisions that have something special about them, such as this move by Karpov.

**17...♝d8 18.♗g2 ♝h4??**

Spassky wants to exchange the bishops with ...♝g7-h6 but, as the game will show, White can prevent this. Better was 18...f5! 19.f3 ♘f6 20.exf5 (20.gxf5 ♜e7!?) 20...gxf5 21.gxf5 ♜e7 22.♗d3 ♘h4 23.♗h2 ♜xf5 24.♗xf5 ♜xf5, although thanks to his control of the e4-square, White has the better position.

**19.f3 ♘h6?**

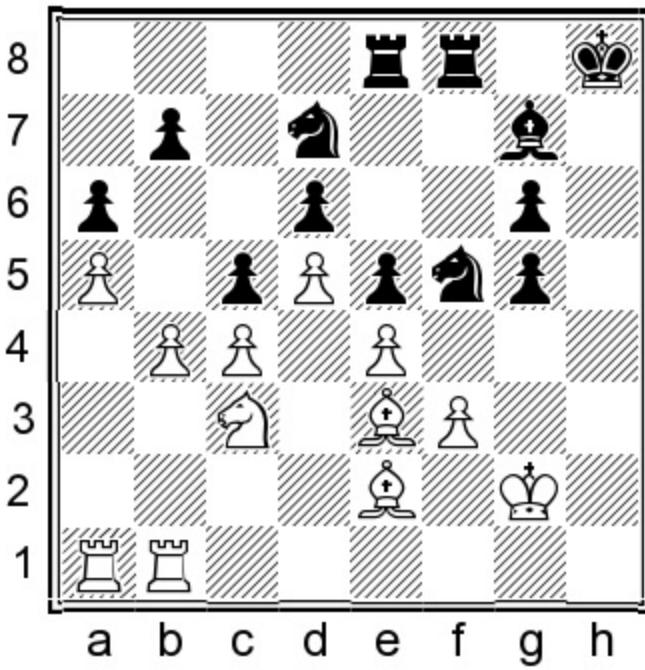
This error is now decisive. Instead, 19...f5! was better, for example:

A) 20.♗g5? ♘h6!;

B) 20.a5?! ♘h6 21.♗xh6 (21.g5? f4!) 21...♗xh6;

C) 20.♗e1 ♜xe1 (20...♜e7 also fails to equalize after 21.h4 ♜df6 (21...f4) 22.♗g1) 21.♗axe1 ♘h6 22.♗xh6 ♜xh6 23.exf5 gxf5 24.h4 and White retains the better chances, but this was the lesser of the evils for Black.

**20.g5 ♘g7 21.♗f2 ♜f4 22.♗e3 ♜h4 23.♗e1! ♜xe1 24.♗fxe1 h6 25.h4 hxg5 26.hxg5 ♜e7 27.a5! f6 28.♗eb1 fxg5 29.b4 ♜f5?!**



The black pieces are as if in a cage and so Black's move is understandable. In reality, this knight sacrifice is a typical stratagem on the part of Spassky: he would often sacrifice a piece when in a difficult position and he often managed to save games in this way. Perhaps the most impressive example of this is his game against Averbakh in 1956, when in a position with the pawn structure c4/d5/e4 for White and c5/d6/e5 for Black, he made the move ... $\mathbb{Q}b8-c6!??$ , sacrificing a piece for just one pawn. However, Karpov can see very clearly how to increase his positional advantage and therefore he is not interested in entering any complications.

### **30. $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$**

Stockfish gives, among several variations, the following: 30.exf5 e4 31. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  exf3+ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  33.f6!  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ , and Black's two pawns are doubled and do not compensate for the piece.

### **30... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 31.bxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}h1+$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

If 33... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xg6+$  White wins two pawns.

### **34. $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

Black's continued resistance is completely dependent on the blockading knights at c5 and d4. With his next few moves therefore Karpov tries to exchange of one of them. It is important that 39... $\mathbb{Q}xa5?$  fails to 40. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xb7+$ .

### **40. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ g5 42. $\mathbb{Q}c8!$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 45.exf5**

Following the exchange of knights the rest is easy.

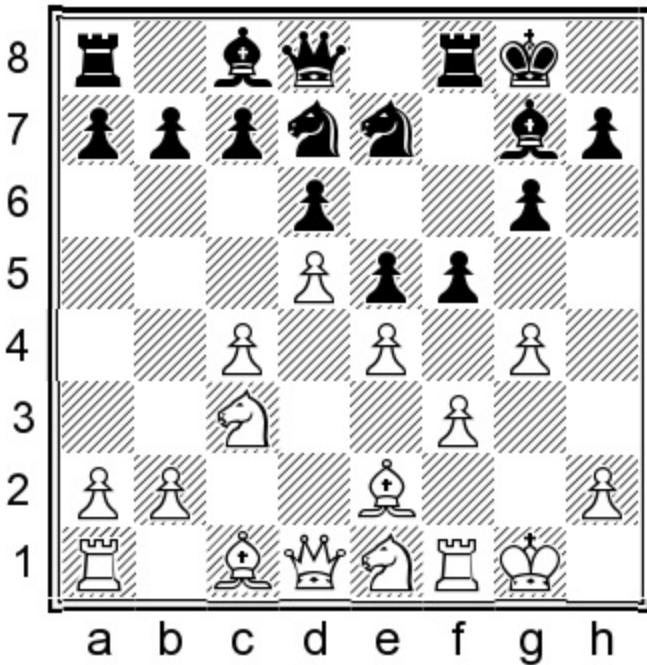
### **45...e4 46.fxe4 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 47. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 48. $\mathbb{Q}be1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 50. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 51. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 52.d6 $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

53.♕b1 ♔e5 54.♕d1 ♔f4 55.♕e1 1-0

The game that we have just seen is a rather exceptional case, which had little connection to the opening variation. However, in the Classical Variation of the King's Indian there is a line in which the g2-g4 advance is intended to close the kingside after Black has already played ...f7-f5.

Game 91  
King's Indian Defence  
**Pavel Eljanov** 2716  
**Ivan Cheparinov** 2678  
Jermuk 2009 (11)

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.♘f3 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.0-0 ♜c6 8.d5 ♜e7 9.♗e1 ♜d7 10.f3 f5 11.g4!?



A variation that was very popular in the 1960-70s. In this position the idea is defensive in character; White intends to respond to 11...f4 with 12.h4 h5 13.g5, locking up the kingside completely. Then, with the kingside closed, White will try to organize an attack in the other sector of the board.

11...♔h8

This is the main line in Megabase and has a better than usual score. The main alternative is 11...♜f6, e.g. 12.♘d3 c6 13.♗e3 ♔h8 (13...b5? leads to a clear advantage for White after 14.♗b4! bxc4 15.♘xc6 ♜xc6 16.dxc6 ♜e6 17.♗a4 fxg4 18.♗xc4 ♜xc4 19.♗xc4+, Belov-Valdes Romero, Berlin rapid 2015) 14.♗h1 ♜d7 15.♗g1 ♜e8 (15...cxd5!? 16.cxd5 b5) 16.♗d2 fxe4 17.fxe4 b5 18.b3, with a slight advantage to White, Alekseev-Inarkiev, Jermuk 2009.

## **12.♗d3**

In the event of 12.h4 c6 13.♕e3 ♗f6 14.♗d3 Black can advance with 14...b5 under better conditions: 15.♗b4 cxd5 16.cxd5 ♘d7.

## **12...f4**

12...♗g8 13.♔e3!? ♘h6 14.♗f2 ♘g5 15.♗e1 fxe4 16.fxe4 b6 17.h4 ♖xf2!? 18.♗xf2 ♘xh4 was interesting, with good compensation for the exchange.

## **13.♗f2**

As Eljanov indicates, on 13.h4 Black can play 13...♗f6 (the engine prefers a positional sacrifice: 13...♗g8 14.g5 ♗df6! 15.gxf6 ♘xf6 16.♗f2 ♘xh4 17.♗g2 ♗f6, with full compensation for the piece) 14.g5 ♘xg5! 15.hxg5 ♗xd5! 16.cxd5 (after 16.♗f2 ♗xc3 17.bxc3 ♗xg5+ 18.♗g2 ♗e7 Black has no problems) 16...♗xg5+, with at least perpetual check.

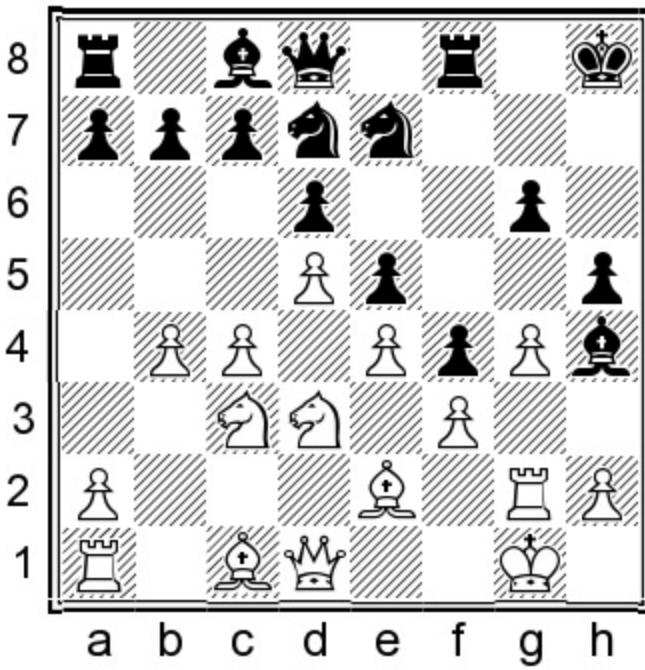
Among other options, 13.♔h1!? deserves attention, e.g. 13...g5 14.♗d2 ♖f7 15.b4 (15.♗g1!? ♗g6 16.♗f1 ♗f6 17.♗f2) 15...♗f6 16.♗g1 ♗g6 17.c5 h5 18.gxh5 ♗xh5, with chances for both sides, Le Quang Liem-Dominguez Perez, Havana 2011; White can also start his attack on the queenside immediately with 13.b4 g5 14.c5 h5 15.h3 ♗f6 16.♗a3 ♖f7 17.♗c1 ♗g6 18.b5 hxg4 19.hxg4 dxc5 20.♗xc5 (20.♗xc5!? b6 21.♗f2) 20...♗f8 21.♗e6 ♘xe6 22.dxe6 ♖h7 23.♗xd8 ♖xd8 24.♗xf8 ♗xf8, with equality, Wang Hao-Radjabov, Ningbo 2011.

## **13...♗f6**

13...♗f6?! 14.h4!.

## **14.♗g2 ♘h4 15.b4 h5**

15...♗f6!? 16.c5 h5 seems better.



**16.g5!**

The sacrifice of this pawn, which requires several tempi for its capture, is typical for this variation. In a similar position Larsen defeated Tal with this sacrifice in the first game of their Candidates Match in Bled 1965.

**16...♝g8 17.♛h1 ♜f7**

It was risky to capture the ♜g5: 17...♜xg5 18.c5!? a6 (preventing ♜c3-b5xc7) 19.♝g1 ♜f6 20.♜xg6, and White regains the sacrificed pawn and advances on the queenside: 20...♝h7 21.♝g2.

According to Stockfish, the best defence is 17...a5! 18.♝a4!? (18.bxa5?! ♜xa5) 18...♝h7 (18...♝b6?! 19.♝b3 axb4 20.♝xb4 ♜d7 21.c5) 19.c5 ♜xg5 20.♝b2 ♜e7 21.♝ag1 ♜f6 22.♝b5 ♜h6, with complex play.

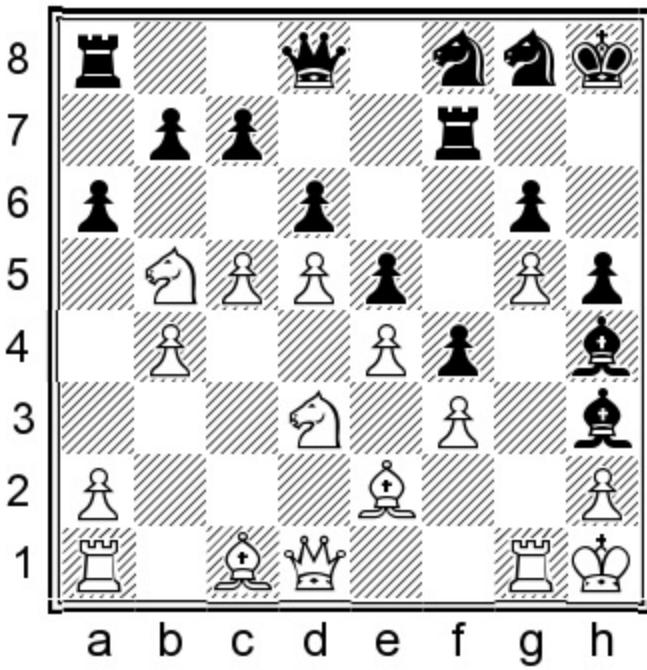
**18.c5 ♜f8**

In the event of 18...♜xg5? 19.♜xg5! ♜xg5 20.♝b5 ♜d8 21.cxd6 cxd6 22.♝xd6 ♜f6 23.♝c4 White's initiative is very dangerous.

**19.♝b5 ♜h3!**

After 19...a6? 20.♝xc7! ♜xc7 21.♝b2 ♜d7 22.♝d2 ♜h7 23.♝c1 White's initiative more than compensates for the sacrificed piece.

**20.♜g1 a6**



**21.♘a3??**

Here too the sacrifice on c7 would have been good: 21.♘xc7! ♜xc7 (21...♜xc7?! 22.cxd6 ♜xd6 23.♗b2 ♜e8 24.♗xf4 ♜c8 25.♗d3 ♜h7 26.♗c1!, with a great advantage to White) 22.♗b2 ♜e8 23.♗c1 ♜h7 24.♗f1! ♜xf1 25.♗xf1 ♜d8 26.♗g2, and White is better due to the threat of 27.cxd6 ♜xd6 28.♗h3, winning the ♜h4.

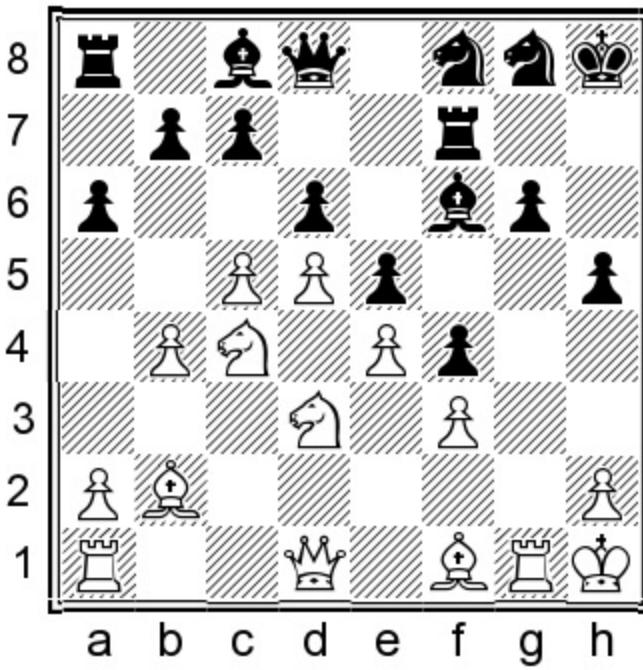
**21...♜xg5 22.♗c4 ♜f6 23.♗f1**

Obviously, during the game itself it was not at all easy to foresee that it was better to make this good positional move after first seizing space on the queenside, e.g. 23.♗b2 ♜g7 24.a4 b6 25.cxb6 cxb6 26.b5 a5 27.♗a3 ♜e7 28.♗f1!.

**23...♝c8**

Although the exchange of bishops would have given White good positional compensation, Black would then be able to advance his ♜g6, e.g. 23...♝xf1 24.♗xf1 ♜g7 25.a4 b5!? 26.axb5 axb5 27.♗xa8 ♜xa8 28.♗a3 g5 29.♗xb5 ♜b8, with chances for both sides.

**24.♗b2**



**24...g5?**

This move, made under the mistaken impression that Black is better, is in reality a serious error, as Eljanov brilliantly demonstrates. It was necessary to prepare this advance with 24... $\mathbb{E}g7$  or 24... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , although in that case, as the engine indicates, White has enough compensation for the pawn. Instead, 24... $\mathbb{E}g7!$  25.a4 b6 26.cxd6 cxd6 27.b5 a5 28. $\mathbb{W}c2$  g5 leads to a game with chances for both sides.

**25.cxd6 cxd6 26. $\mathbb{E}xg5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}cxe5!?$**

An eye-catching move, although even stronger was another sacrifice: 27. $\mathbb{Q}xd6!.$

**27...dxe5 28. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

28... $\mathbb{W}e7?$  loses immediately to 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  31. $\mathbb{W}d4.$

**29. $\mathbb{Q}c6+$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  31.e5 bxc6 32.exf6+  $\mathbb{Q}xf6?!$**

Much stronger was 32... $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$  and although the variation given by the engine leads to a clear advantage to White, converting this advantage would not be at all easy: 33.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  34.b5 axb5 35. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}aa6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}ad6$  42.a4.

**33.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}aa7$  35.a4  $\mathbb{Q}ae7$  36.b5 axb5 37.axb5**

With a winning advantage, thanks to the pair of connected passed pawns.

**37... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  43.bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  46.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  47.h3  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  48. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}cxc6$  50. $\mathbb{Q}xh5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  51. $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

52.♗g2 ♗xf5 53.♗h7+ 1-0

In the following game, White plays g2-g4-g5 with Black's pawn still on f7, which means that Black has the pawn break ...f7-f6 available.

Game 92

King's Indian Defence

**Maxim Rodshtein** 2699

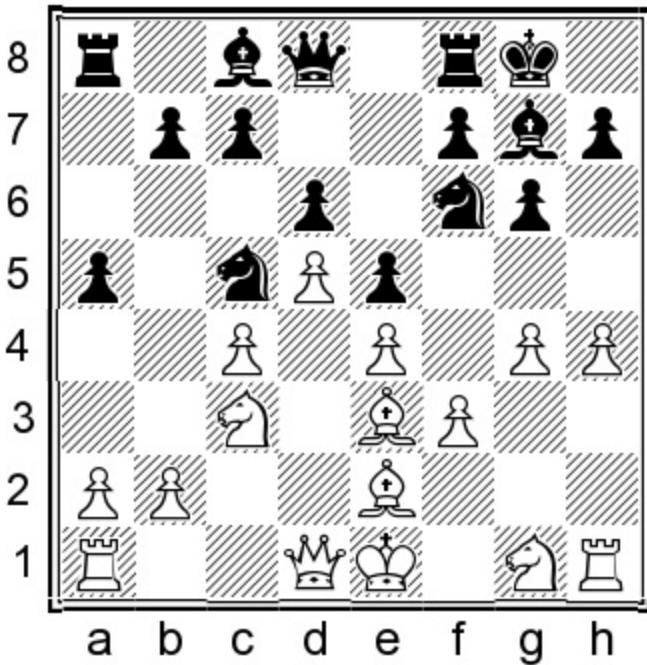
**Vladislav Kovalev** 2636

Heraklion Ech-tt 2017 (9)

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗e3 e5

6...c5 is the main alternative: 7.dxc5!? (7.d5 is the main line) 7...♔a5 (7...dxc5 8.♗xd8 (8.e5!?) 8...♗xd8 9.♗xc5, with a similar position to the Sämisch Variation but with the useful move ♘f1-e2 instead of f2-f3) 8.♗d2 ♗xc5 9.♗f3 ♗g4 10.♗e3 ♗a5 11.0-0 ♗c6 12.a3 ♗fc8 13.b4 ♗d8 14.♗b3, with a slight advantage to White, Can-Amin, Dubai 2018.

7.d5 ♗a6 8.g4 ♗c5 9.f3 a5 10.h4



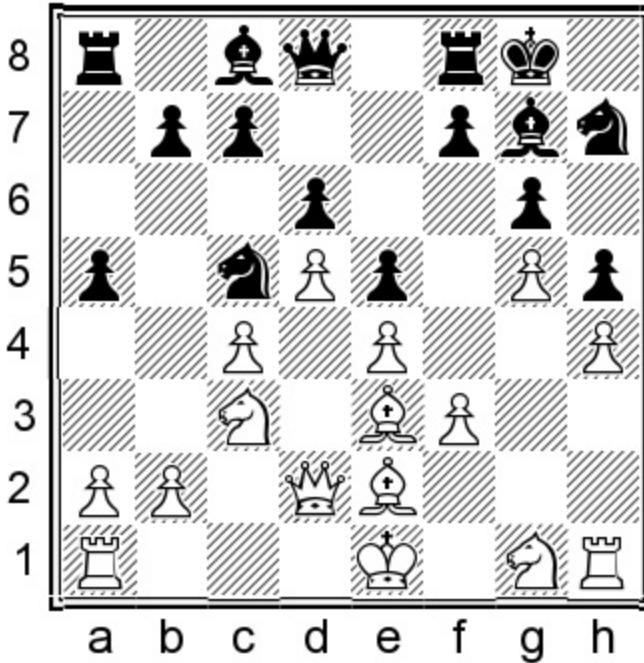
10...h5!

The text move is essential to hinder White's expansion on the kingside, e.g. 10...c6?! 11.h5 cxd5 12.cxd5 a4 13.♗d2 ♗a5 14.♗b1, Goryachkina-Kashlinskaya, Skolkovo 2019 (or 14.h6! ♘h8 15.♗b5, with advantage to White).

11.g5 ♗h7?!

It seems that the plan based on this and the next move is not satisfactory for Black. A more promising alternative is 11... $\mathbb{Q}fd7!?$ , e.g. 12. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  13. $\mathbb{W}d2$  a4 14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15.0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}e7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  c6, creating counterplay in a different way and dispensing with the ...f7-f6 break, Riazantsev-Smirin, Moscow 2020.

## 12. $\mathbb{W}d2$



White has gained space on the kingside and Black's response is very understandable, as otherwise there is no way to justify the position of the  $\mathbb{Q}h7$ .

## 12...f6 13.gxf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6?!$

Another option is 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ , e.g. 14.0-0-0!? (not wasting any time on the defence of the  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  by means of 14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ ) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  16. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$  h4 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  with a clear advantage to White, Vorobiov-Iniyian, Teplice 2018.

The engine prefers 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf6!?$  14.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}h7$ , followed by the manoeuvre ... $\mathbb{Q}f6-g8-h6-f7$ .

## 14.0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d7$

14... $\mathbb{W}f8$  is also insufficient for equality, e.g. 15. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  a4 16. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ , with a clear advantage to White, Peralta-Forcen Esteban, Linares 2017.

## 15. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$ $\mathbb{Q}af8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}e8$

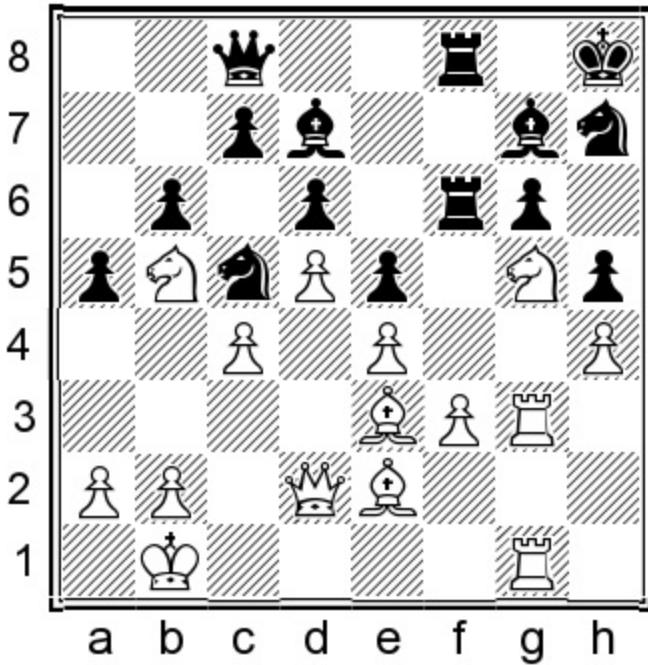
The exchange sacrifice 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  does not provide enough compensation, e.g. 19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dxc5 21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 22. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}1f2$ , and the  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  is driven back into its own camp.

**18.♗g3 b6 19.♗hg1 ♔h8 20.♘b5 ♕c8**

GM Michael Roiz indicated that exchanging on b5 fails to solve Black's problems, illustrating this with the following variation: 20...♝xb5 21.cxb5 ♜g8 22.b3 ♜f8 23.♗c3, followed by a2-a3 and b3-b4 with a decisive advantage to White.

21.  $\text{Qg5}$

In the event of 21.♘f2 Black could prepare the move ...♗f6-f4.



21...♞a6

The engine recommends sacrificing the exchange, which is typical for such positions, although after 21... $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$ ? 22. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ! 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  it evaluates the resulting position as very favourable to White. Nevertheless, from the practical viewpoint this sacrifice makes a lot of sense and here I want to reveal a little secret: when the side that sacrifices the exchange is left with a pair of active bishops, this can be counted as equivalent to having an extra pawn.

22.a3 a4?

An important slip. Once again it was better and perhaps necessary to sacrifice the exchange in the same way as in the previous note.

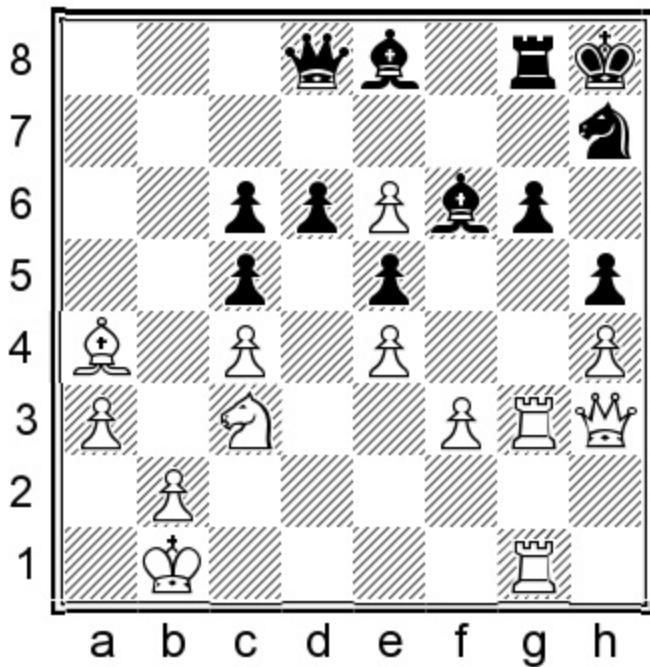
23.  d1!

Rodshtein, exploiting his opponent's error, executes a sequence of forced moves, after which his ♔g5 invades on e6, which decides the game.

23... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $bxc5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$

This exchange sacrifice has no similarity to the one recommended earlier: after the inevitable loss of the  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  White will have a way in to the enemy camp. Instead, 26... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  was slightly more tenacious, e.g. 27. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}bxc7$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

27. $dxe6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $c6$



31. $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$

An elegant finish.

31... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  36. $f4$   $exf4$

36... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  was no better, e.g. 37. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $exf4$  38. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  39. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ , winning.

37. $\mathbb{W}c3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38. $e7$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  39. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  40. $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  42. $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  43. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4+$  44. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  45. $e8=\mathbb{W}$

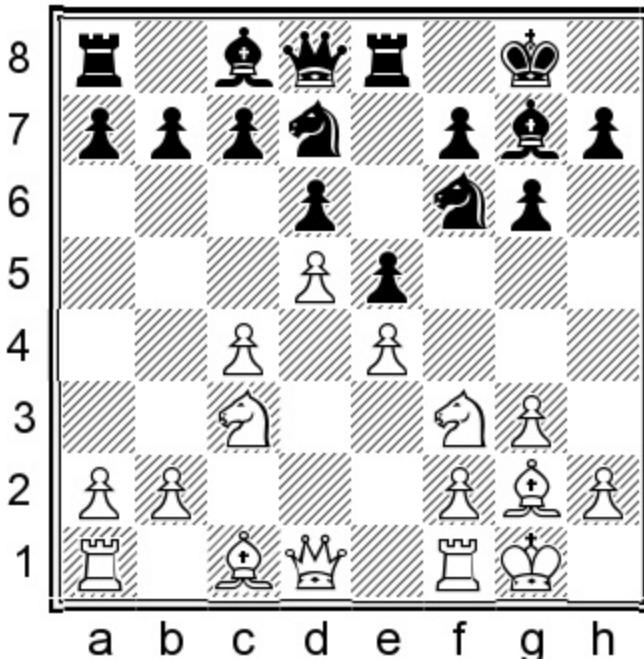
Black resigned.

#### 4.5. Exchanging pawns with exf5 gxf5, followed by f2-f4/f3

The following classical game by Botvinnik is a good illustration of the main ideas of this method.

Game 93  
King's Indian Defence  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Isaak Boleslavsky**  
Moscow ch-URS 1940 (2)

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 d6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5.g3 g6 6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7.0-0 0-0 8.e4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  9.d5



It is clear that the opening has been played in an old-fashioned manner, although in Megabase there are more than 460 games with this position. Today it is considered more flexible for Black to play 8...c6 or 8...exd4 and for White, 9.h3 or 9. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ .

**9... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  a5 11.h3**

After the immediate 11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  there can follow 11... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dx $c5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 14.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  f6 (15...f5!? 16.exf5 gxf5 17.d6 e4 18.dxc7  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ) 16.a3?! (16.f4!  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  17.fxe5 fxe5 18. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ ) 16...a4 17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  with the better game for Black, Teske-Kristiansen, Bugibba 2011.

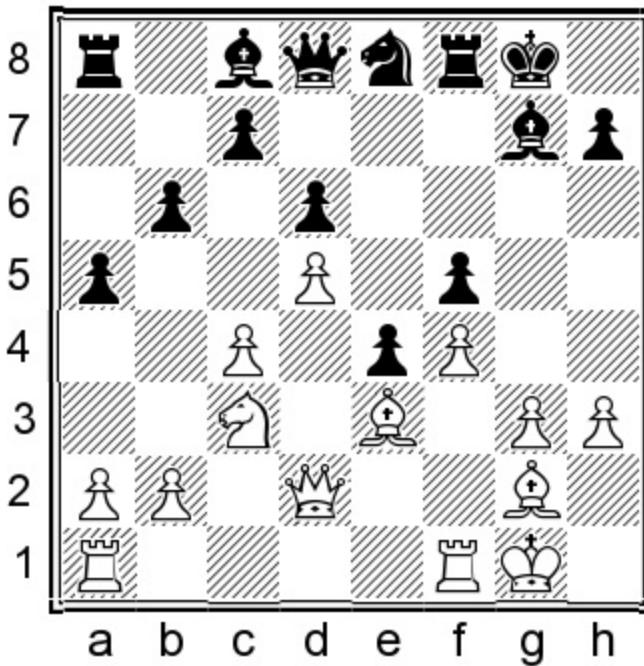
**11... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

After 12...b6 13.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.b4 axb4 15.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (18...c6!?) 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4, the position is equal, Areshchenko-Perske, Germany Bundesliga 2018/19.

**13.♘d3 b6 14.♗d2 f5 15.exf5**

15.♘xc5 bxc5 16.exf5 (16.f4!?) 16...gxf5 17.f4 e4 leads to a position where, in contrast to the game, Black controls the d4-square.

**15...gxf5 16.f4 ♘xd3 17.♗xd3 e4 18.♗d2**



The strategy employed by White was new and unusual at the time and in this respect Botvinnik wrote: ‘All the commentators estimated this position as in Black’s favour; in my view this was due to a misapprehension. On the queenside, where White can initiate a pawn advance with a2-a3, b2-b4-b5, his superiority is obvious. Black’s passed pawn at e4 brings Black no advantage whatever while so many minor pieces are left on the board’.

We can add that the engine also evaluates this position as equal.

**18...♗f6 19.♕f2!**

The start of a deep strategic plan, typical of Botvinnik: he regroups his pieces in such a way that the ♘e3 is transferred to d4 and the queen to e3; the ♗g2 goes to e2, the king to h1/h2 and the rooks to g1 and g2, in preparation for the g3-g4 break.

**19...♖d7 20.♖d1 ♖g6 21.♗e2 ♘f6 22.♖d4 ♖ae8**

Black could have sought counterplay on the queenside with 22...b5!?.

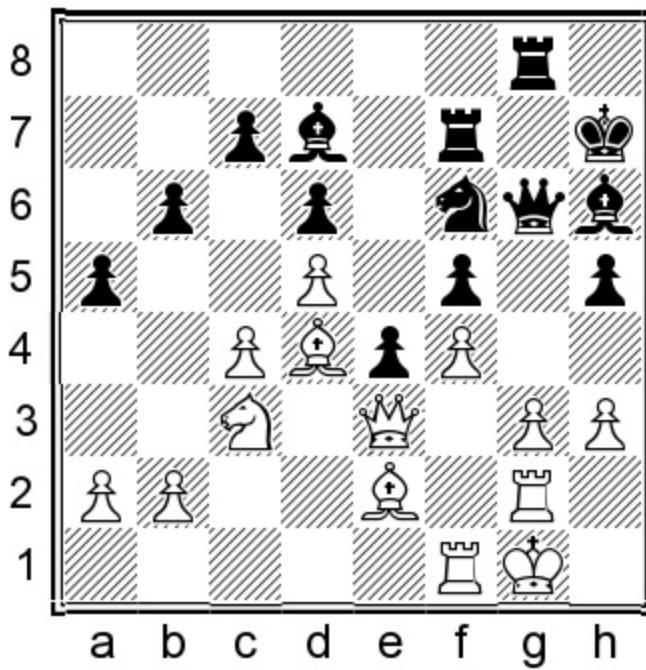
**23.♗e3 h6**

It was better to play 23...h5 immediately, saving a tempo compared with the game. Stockfish suggests the plan of transferring the black king to e8: 23...♔e7 24.♖f1 ♔f7 25.♗c3 h5 26.♖g2 h4 27.♖dd2 ♔e8.

**24.♗c3 ♜f7 25.♗f1 ♔h7 26.♗e2**

White has placed his bishops on the most appropriate squares and with his next moves he will deploy his rooks in accordance with his strategic plan.

**26...h5 27.♖g2 ♔h6 28.♖f1 ♜g8**



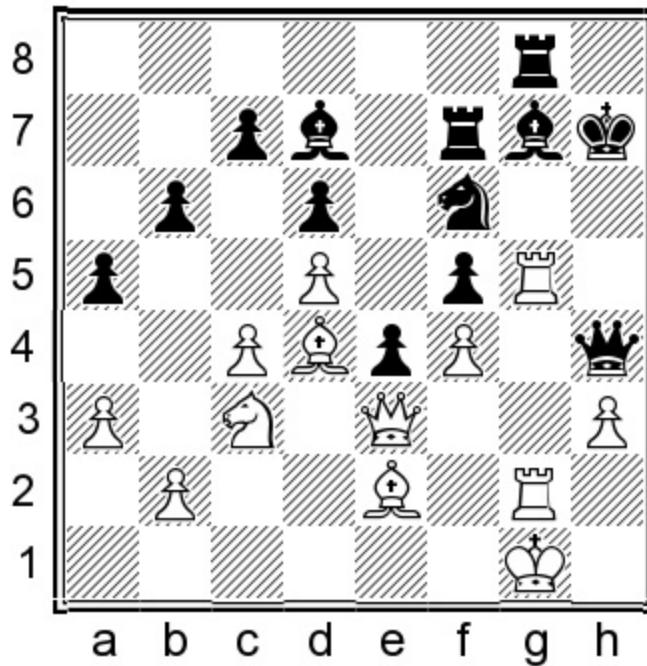
**29.♖ff2**

Here White could have started concrete play in order to execute the g3-g4 advance with 29.♗xf6!? ♜xf6 30.g4 hxg4 31.hxg4 fxg4 32.♗xe4 ♜f7 33.♗g3; however Botvinnik disliked changing his plans and therefore continues on the path he has already mapped out.

**29...♗g7 30.a3 h4?**

Boleslavsky is unable to stand the tension and commits this error, after which his position collapses. 30...♗f8? was also bad, due to 31.♗xf6! ♜xf6 (31...♝xf6? 32.♗xh5) 32.g4!. To prevent the g3-g4 break Black could have played, for instance, 30...♗h8, when, among several available plans, the idea of transferring the white king to the queenside deserves attention, in order subsequently to execute the g3-g4 break, e.g. 31.♗f1 ♜e7 32.♗e1 ♜h6 33.♗d1 h4!? 34.g4 fxg4 35.♗xf6 ♜xf6 36.hxg4 ♜d4+ 37.♜xd4 ♜xd4 38.♗f1, with a more or less equal position.

**31.gxh4 ♜h6 32.♗g5 ♜xh4 33.♗fg2**



Thanks to Boleslavsky's error, the point of Botvinnik's whole strategy can now be seen: the  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  and the rooks on the open g-file are perfectly coordinated. In view of the threat of 34... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  and 35... $\mathbb{Q}h5+$ , Black is now lost.

**33...Qe8 34.Qxf5 Qh6 35.Qg5!**

An attractive finesse.

**35...Qxg5 36.fxg5 Qh5 37.Qxh5 Qxh5 38.Qxe4+ Qg6 39.Qxe8 Qxg5 40.Qh8+ Qg6 41.Qg8+ Qf5 42.Qc8+ Qf4**

Or 42...Qg6 43.Qg4!.

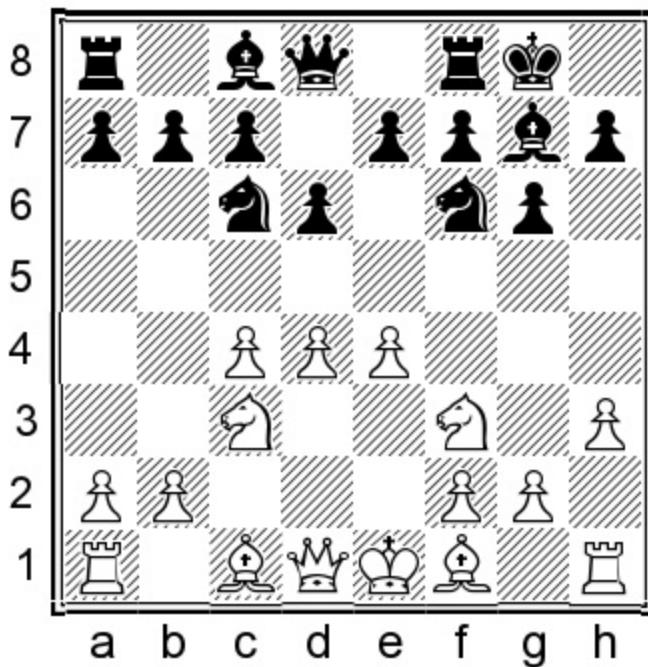
**43.Qe6 Qxg2+ 44.Qxg2 Qf3+ 45.Qg1 Qg3+ 46.Qf1 Qf3+ 47.Qf2 Qh5 48.Qe2+ Qg5 49.h4+ 1-0**

At present, as a general rule it is considered that, in response to the exchange of pawns on f5 and the blockading move f2-f4, it is not appropriate for Black to advance his king's pawn to e4. For this reason, nowadays Black usually captures on f4 instead, accepting an isolated pawn on f5, which, as practice has shown, has its advantages.

Game 94  
 King's Indian Defence  
**Levon Aronian** 2802  
**Magnus Carlsen** 2861  
 Wijk aan Zee 2013 (2)

**1.d4 Qf6 2.c4 g6 3.Qc3 Qg7 4.e4 d6 5.Qf3 0-0 6.h3 Qc6!?**

Carlsen chooses a sideline, challenging his opponent to fight on largely unfamiliar terrain. The two main moves here are 6...e5 and 6...c5.



## 7.d5

The following line is a good illustration of Carlsen's idea: 7.♗e3 e5 8.d5 ♗d4! 9.♗xd4 exd4 10.♗xd4 (or 10.♘xd4 ♗g4 11.♗d2 ♗xe3 12.♗xe3 f5, with active play for the pawn) 10...♗xe4! 11.♗xe4 ♘h4 12.g4 (or 12.♗xg7 ♘xe4+ 13.♗e2 ♘xe2+ 14.♗xe2 ♗xg7, with a drawish endgame) 12...♗e8 13.♗g2 ♘f5! 14.0-0 ♘xe4 15.♗xg7 ♘xg2 16.♗xg2 ♗xg7, with equality, Schoppen-Beerdsen, Dieren 2019.

## 7...♗b4 8.♗e2 e6!

Taking advantage of the unusual move-order, Black is able to attack the ♘d5 with his king's pawn.

## 9.♗e3 ♘e8 10.♗d2 a5 11.0-0 ♘d7 12.♗e1 b6

It seems that a second pawn break against the ♘d5 was possible with 12...c6!?, e.g. 13.dxc6 ♘xc6 14.a3 ♗a6 15.♘c2 ♗d7 16.♗ad1 ♗dc5.

## 13.♗c1 ♗h8

Carlsen makes a waiting move, in order to be able to determine his set-up in the centre according to his opponent's play; at the same time he frees the g8-square for the ♗f6. The engine prefers 13...♗a6!? 14.a3 exd5 15.cxd5 ♗c5 16.♘c2 a4.

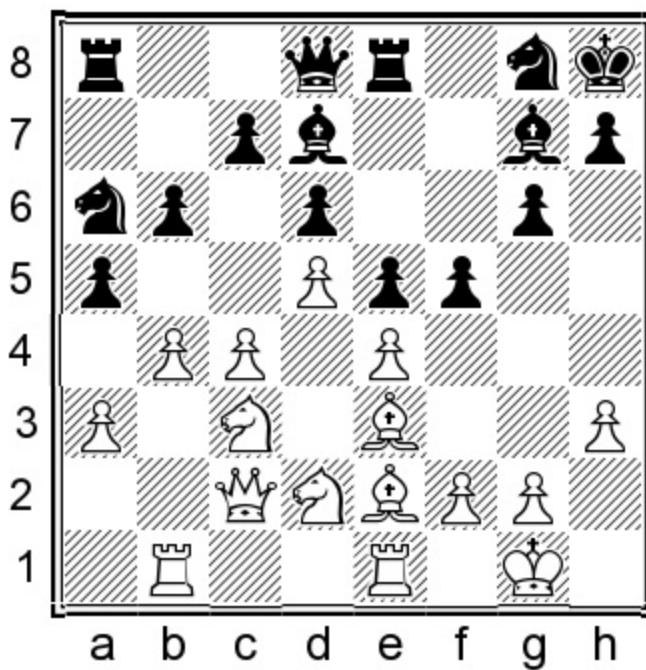
## 14.a3 ♗a6 15.♘c2 e5

Decision taken!

**16.♗b1 ♗g8 17.b4!**

The move 17.♔g4?! would have been a positional error here, as with 17...♗xg4 18.hxg4 ♔h6! 19.b4 ♕xe3 20.♕xe3 ♖f6 Black could also exchange his less active ♗g7 for its white counterpart, gaining sufficient counterplay.

**17...f5**



In view of the ♖a6 stranded on the edge of the board, Black's position is strategically inferior.

**18.♗b5!?**

An interesting decision, with the idea of a piece sacrifice. But perhaps 18.f3!? was more promising, e.g. 18...♗f8 (to prevent 19.c5; 18...♔h6? 19.♔xh6 ♗xh6 20.c5! bxc5 21.♔xa6 axb4 22.axb4 ♕xa6 23.bxc5 dxc5 24.♗b3 ♜e7 25.♗f2 with advantage to White) 19.♗f2 ♜g5 20.♗d3 f4 21.♗h1 ♜ec8 22.♗e2, preparing the typical advance c4-c5.

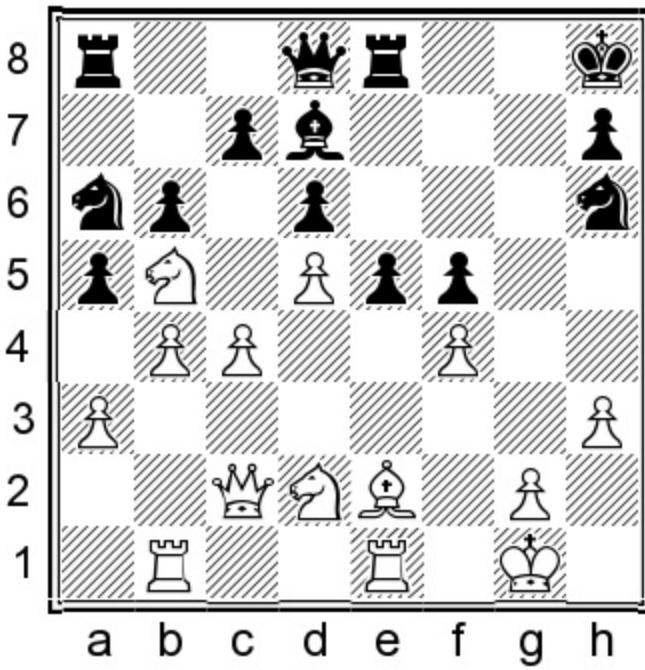
**18...♔h6**

If Black accepts the sacrifice with 18...f4, then after 19.♔xb6! cxb6 20.♗xd6 ♜f8 21.c5 White would have a strong initiative.

**19.♔xh6 ♗xh6 20.exf5!**

A typical and good move, as otherwise the advancing black pawns would seriously threaten the white king.

**20...gxf5 21.f4!?**



**21...exf4**

A forced decision, as 21...e4? 22.♘c3+ ♔g8 23.♗f1 would lead to a clear advantage to White; however, the engine recommends maintaining the e5-f4 tension, although its suggested follow-up seems to go against human nature, being based on a variation that was seemingly beyond the grasp even of the world's best player: 21...axb4 22.axb4 ♘f6 23.fxe5 dxe5 24.c5 f4 (presenting White with the e4-square!) 25.♘c3 bxc5 26.bxc5 ♘g8 27.♗f3 ♘xh3 28.♗xe5 ♘xc5 29.d6 ♘xg2 30.♗xg2 cxd6 31.♗xc5 ♘xc3 32.♗xc3 ♘a2 33.♗d3 f3! 34.♗xf3 ♘xd2 35.♗f2, although even here White is a piece up for two pawns.

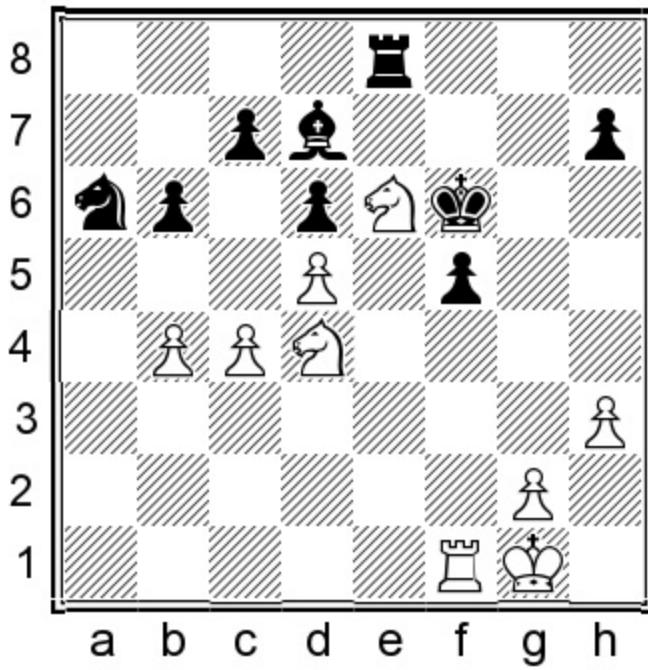
**22.♘c3+ ♔g8 23.♗h5 ♗f7 24.♗xe8+ ♘xe8 25.♗f6**

If 25.♔h1 ♘e5 26.♗xf7+ ♘xf7 27.♗d4 ♘e8 28.♗f3 ♘f6 29.bxa5 ♘c5, the ♘a6 could enter the play.

**25...♘f8 26.♗xf7+ ♘xf7 27.♗g5+ ♘g7 28.♗xf4 axb4 29.axb4 ♘e8 30.♗d4?!**

30.♗b3! posed Black more problems, e.g. 30...♘e5 31.♗g5+ (31.♗g3+? ♔h8) 31...♘g7! (31...♔f7? 32.♗a3) 32.♗h4 ♘e7 33.♗g3+ ♔h8 (33...♘g7 34.♗f2) 34.♗f3 ♘g7 35.♗f2 ♘xb5 36.cxb5 ♘b8 37.♗d4, with the inevitable capture of the ♘f5.

**30...♘e5 31.♗g5+ ♘g7 32.♗2f3 ♘xg5 33.♗xg5 ♔g7 34.♗ge6+ ♔f6 35.♗f1**



It might seem as though Black has some problems here, but with accurate play the position is practically equal.

**35...Qxe6! 36.Qxe6 h5**

Here 36...Qg6! was better.

**37.g4!?**

In the knight ending with an extra pawn after 37.b5!? Qc5 38.Qxf5+! Qxf5 39.Qg7+ Qf4 40.Qxe8 Qd3 41.Qxc7 Qe5 42.Qf2 Qxc4 43.g3+ Qe4 the greater activity of the black king leaves White with no real winning chances.

**37...hxg4 38.hxg4 Qxb4 39.Qxf5+ Qg6 40.Qf4+ Qg7 41.g5 c6 42.Qf2**

Or 42.Qf6 cxd5 43.cxd5 Qxd5! 44.Qxd5 Qe5 45.Qxd6 Qxg5+, with a theoretically drawn ending.

**42...cxd5 43.cxd5 Qe5 44.Qe6+ Qg6 45.Qf6+ Qh5 46.Qf3 Qe3+!**

Draw agreed, in view of 47.Qxe3 Qxd5+ 48.Qe4 Qxf6 49.gxf6 Qg6, eliminating White's last pawn.

Sometimes it is best for Black to refrain from both the ...e5-e4 advance and the capture on f4 and instead keep the e5-f4 tension.

### Game 95

King's Indian Defence  
**Valentina Gunina** 2501  
**Ivan Cheparinov** 2691

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.♗f3 0-0 5.e4 d6 6.♗e2 e5 7.0-0 ♜c6 8.♗e3 ♜g4**

The main alternative is 8...♝e8 9.dxe5!? (9.d5 ♜d4 10.♗xd4 exd4 11.♗xd4 ♜xe4 12.♗xe4 ♜xe4 13.♗xg7 ♜xg7 14.♗d3 ♜e8 leads to complete equality, Savchenko-Kornev, Sochi 2006) 9...dxe5 10.h3 ♜e6 11.♗e1 ♜h5 12.♗xd8 ♜exd8 13.♗d5, with a slight advantage to White in this symmetrical structure, Lysyj-Firouzja, Moscow 2017.

**9.♗g5 f6 10.♗h4**

The main line is 10.♗c1!?.

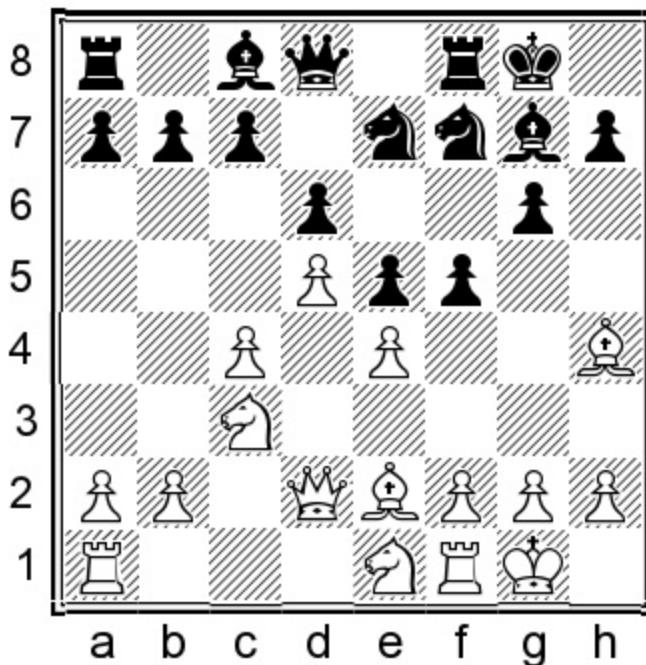
**10...♝h6**

10...g5!? 11.♗g3 ♜h6 12.dxe5 fxe5 is played more frequently.

**11.♗d2**

It seems better to close the centre immediately: 11.d5!? ♜e7 (11...♝d4!? 12.♗xd4 exd4 13.♗b5 g5 14.♗g3 f5) 12.♗d2 g5 13.♗g3 f5 14.exf5 ♜hxf5 15.♗de4 ♜g6 16.♗g4 ♜f4 17.h3, Illingworth-Dale, Ballarat 2016, with a similar position to the game Petrosian-Yukhtman.

**11...♝f7 12.d5 ♜e7 13.♗e1 f5**



**14.exf5**

Black has good play after 14.f3 h5!? (14... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  15. $\mathbb{W}d3$ ) 15. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (15.exf5!  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  16. $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  17. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  g5 18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  h4 21. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  with a slight advantage to White) 15... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  16. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  f4 19.b4 g5.

#### 14...gxf5 15.f4 $\mathbb{W}e8$

The advance 15...e4? gives White a somewhat better version of the Botvinnik-Boleslavsky game, e.g. 16. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  c5 17.dxc6 bxc6 18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}b6+$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  19.g3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  and White's pieces are better placed.

#### 16. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

It was better to apply pressure to the  $\mathbb{A}e5$  with 16. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ , trying to provoke its advance or its exchange on f4.

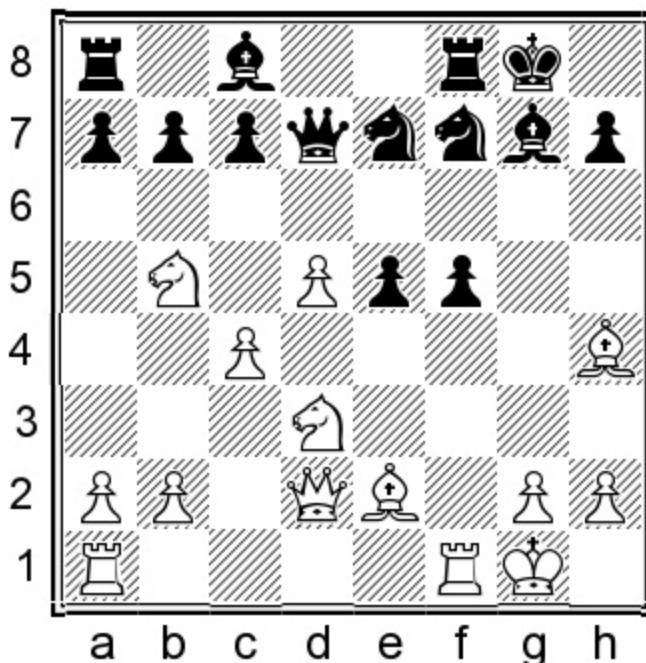
#### 16... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 17.fxe5?!

This move gives Black more room to manoeuvre. It was better to keep the position semi-closed by applying pressure to the e5- and f5-pawns, with the same idea as in the previous note, e.g. 17. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ ? c5 18.g3 a6 19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ .

#### 17...dxe5 18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ??

Gunina, a talented player with a sharp style, is less adept at a manoeuvring game. The text move is eventually going to lose a tempo when Black plays ...e5-e4.

Instead, White could have kept the balance with 18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b6 19. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20.c5 bxc5 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .



**18...b6!**

After this last defensive move, Black goes over to the attack by mobilizing his pawn centre.

**19.¤ae1?**

It was necessary to play 19.¤f2 followed by ¤ad1.

**19...¤g6 20.¤f2 a6 21.¤c3 ¤h6 22.¤c2 e4 23.¤b4 e3 24.¤g3 f4**

Black simply wins a piece and the game is only prolonged due to some inaccuracies by Cheparinov and the fierce resistance of the Russian player.

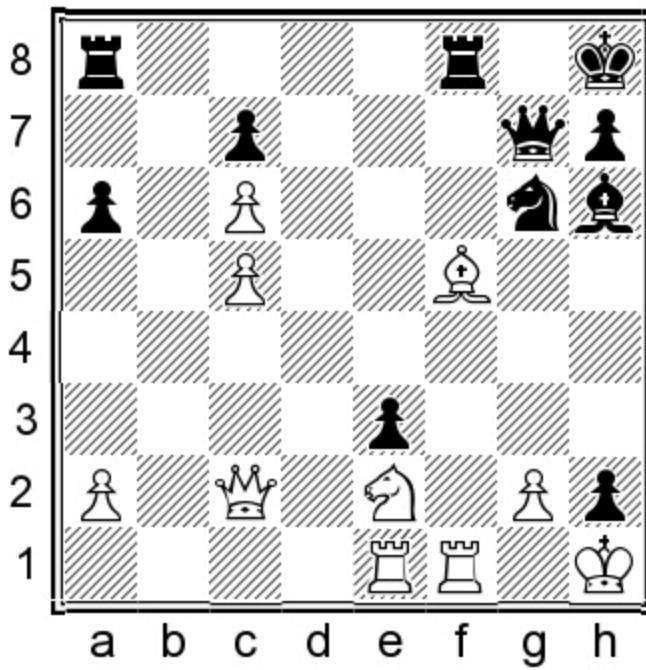
**25.¤c6 ¤d6 26.¤d3 ¤g7 27.b4 ¤d7 28.c5 bxc5 29.bxc5 ¤f5**

29...fxg3!.

**30.¤e2 fxg3?**

There was an elegant win here with 30...¤fh4! 31.¤e4 ¤ae8 32.¤cd4 fxg3 33.hxg3 ¤f2!.

**31.¤xf5! gxh2+ 32.¤h1 ¤xc6 33.dxc6 ¤h8**



**34.¤c4?!**

Gunina is well known for her incredible ability to save desperate positions, but here she overlooked 34.¤xg6!, which offered good possibilities of resistance: 34...¤xg6 (34...hxg6 35.¤d1 (35.¤xf8+!? ¤xf8 36.¤d1 ¤e8 37.¤d3) 35...¤f2 36.¤xf2 exf2 37.¤g3 ¤f6 38.¤e2 ¤f8 39.¤f1 ¤xc6 40.¤e7, and

White has both a more active queen and a safer king) 35.  $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $hxg6$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{E}f2$  37.  $\mathbb{E}xf2$   $exf2$  38.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  39.  $g3$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  42.  $\mathbb{E}xf2$ , with good practical chances of survival in this ending.

**34...  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  35.  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{E}de8$  36.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  37.  $\mathbb{W}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}g3??!$**

It was more tenacious to play 38.  $\mathbb{Q}xh2!$ , e.g. 38...  $a5$  39.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  43.  $\mathbb{E}xf8+$   $\mathbb{E}xf8$  44.  $\mathbb{E}f1$ , with good drawing chances, due to the presence of bishops of opposite colour.

**38...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}e2?$**

Here 40.  $\mathbb{Q}h3!$  was necessary, e.g. 40...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}xf1$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $a5$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}d4$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , and the game is not over yet.

**40...  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  41.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  44.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45.  $c6$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  46.  $\mathbb{E}h2$   $h6$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  48.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  49.  $\mathbb{E}hh1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  50.  $\mathbb{E}hf1$   $\mathbb{E}f4+$  51.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}df2$  52.  $\mathbb{E}xf2$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$  0-1**

#### 4.6. The exchange ... $\mathbb{Q}g7 \times \mathbb{Q}c3$

Sometimes, in positions of the type we are studying, particular situations can arise in which Black tries to restrict the mobility of the white pieces, especially the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ . The following game is the example par excellence of this method.

Game 96

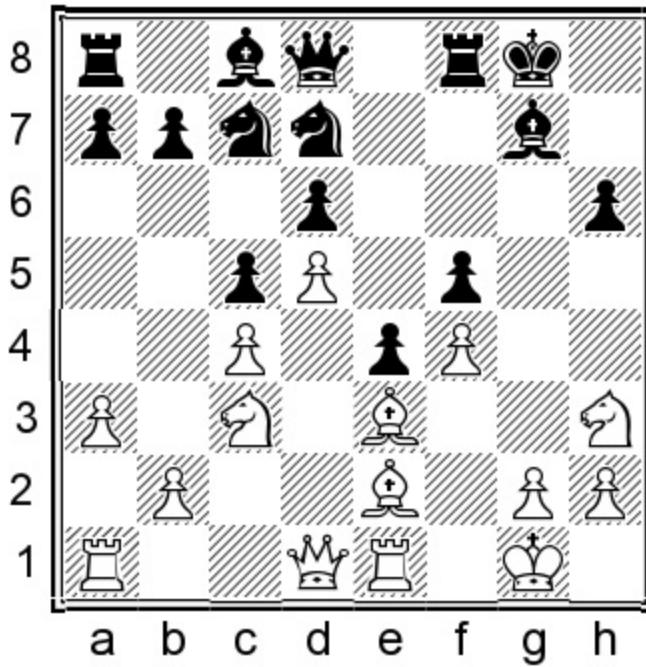
King's Indian Defence

**David Bronstein**

**Tigran Petrosian**

Amsterdam/Leeuwarden ct 1956 (11)

1.c4 g6 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 4.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.e4 0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5 7.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  c6 9.d5 c5 10.a3  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  f6 12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  f5 13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  14.exf5 gxf5 15.f4 e4 16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  h6 17. $\mathbb{Q}h3$



17... $\mathbb{Q}xc3!$

'A very shrewd and courageous decision. The positive consequences are: firstly, the blocked pawn structure restricts the scope of the white bishops; secondly, Black eliminates the knight, which could have helped White execute the g2-g4 break; and, last but not least, the white pawn on c3 and the black pawn on c5 prevent White's dark-squared bishop from occupying the diagonal a1-h8' – Aronin.

I should like to add to this intelligent evaluation that the position arising after this original move is reminiscent of the Nimzo-Indian Defence, and specifically the 'Blockade' or 'Hübner' Variation:

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4.e3 c5 5. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  7.bxc3 d6 8.0-0 e5 9.e4 0-0 10.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 13.f4 exf4 14. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ , and here the best move, discovered in chess's pre-computer age, is 14...b5!.

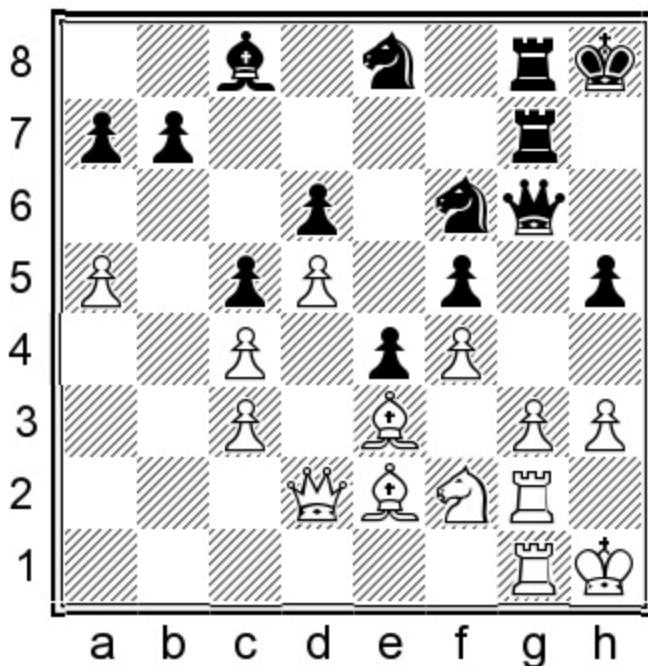
**18.bxc3 ♜f6 19.a4**

A move that will be necessary sooner or later, to prevent ...b7-b5.

**19...♚h8 20.♗f2 ♞g8 21.♗h1 ♜e8 22.♗g1 ♜g6 23.♗d2 ♜d7 24.g3 ♜ae8 25.a5 ♜e7 26.♗ab1 ♜c8**

All the pieces are focussed on the key square g4, but now Black is reminded that he has a weak point on b7. Petrosian has the initiative, but the ♜e2, ♜f2, ♜g1 and the pawns on g3 and h2 create a secure barrier around the white king.

**27.♗g2 ♜eg7 28.♗bg1 ♜ce8 29.h3 h5**



Black could only make progress by advancing his h-pawn. However, in that case White could execute the g3-g4 advance and probably Petrosian considered it too risky. The players agreed a draw.

Sixty-three years later the current World Champion employed Petrosian's idea. This game demonstrates the difficulties Black has in playing for a win in this structure.

Game 97

King's Indian Defence

**Vincent Keymer 2516**

**Magnus Carlsen 2845**

Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden 2019 (1)

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 g6 4.♗c3 d6 5.e4 ♜g7 6.♗f3 0-0 7.♗e2 e5**

Determining the pawn structure so early in the game limits Black's possibilities. Obviously Carlsen understands this perfectly well but he wants to create a strategically complex position, in which his

young and inexperienced opponent has to solve particularly difficult problems. Instead, 7...e6 is the most frequently played move here.

## 8.0-0

Here Petrosian's pin 8.♗g5!? has an impressive score: about 60%!

### 8...♝e8 9.♝e1 f5 10.exf5

White can employ the g2-g4 method, e.g. 10.♗d3 ♜f6 (ten years later Petrosian was able to repeat the same idea as in the previous game: 10...♝d7 11.f4 ♜e7 12.exf5 gxf5 13.g4? (13.♝e1!?) 13...e4 14.♗f2 ♜xc3! 15.bxc3 fxg4 16.♗xg4 ♜h8 17.♗h1 ♜g7, with advantage to Black, Donner-Petrosian, Santa Monica 1966) 11.f3 f4 12.g4 h5 13.h3 ♜h7 14.♗g2, with chances for both sides, Postny-Mamedov, Ningbo 2011.

### 10...gxf5 11.f4

The engine recommends another plan: 11.f3 ♜a6 12.g4!?, with the idea of restricting the ♜g7.

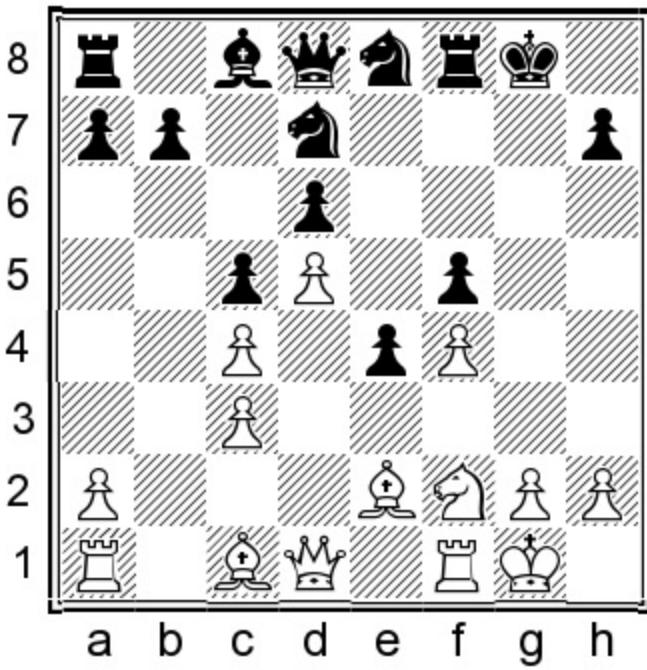
### 11...♝d7 12.♝d3??

This move loses time. It was better to play 12.g3!? e4 13.♗g2 or 12.♗h1!? ♜e7 13.g3 e4 14.♗d2 ♜df6 15.♗c2.

### 12...e4 13.♗f2 ♜xc3!?

Once again, as in Bronstein-Petrosian, Stockfish is keen to play in the style of the Benko (or Volga) Gambit with ...b7-b5, or, if White prevents this, to place the ♜g7 on d4: 13...a6!? 14.a4 ♜d4 15.♗e1 ♜df6 16.♗h1 b6 17.♗fd1 ♜a7 18.♗e3 h5 19.♗f2 ♜g7, with a complicated game but with the same evaluation of equality as the text move.

### 14.bxc3



The difference with the previous game is minimal.

**14...Qdf6 15.Qe3**

The manoeuvre  $\mathbb{Q}f2-d1-e3$  is an obvious idea and it seems best to execute it immediately, starting with 15. $\mathbb{W}e1!?$ , e.g. 15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ .

**15...Qg7 16.We1 Qd7 17.Qd1 Qa4**

To prevent the transfer of the  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  to  $e3$ .

**18.h3 Qxd1**

This exchange has its negative side, as the game shows, but White's bishop pair hinders any activity by Black, at the same time as providing good support for the advance  $g2-g4$ . It is curious that here the engine prefers other moves but captures on  $d1$  later, e.g. 18... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $b6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}ge8$  25. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}gf8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ , with an evaluation of equality.

**19.Wxd1 We8 20.Qf2 Wg6 21.Qg1 Qh8 22.a4**

The following variation explains the young German player's move, which hinders the advance ... $b7-b5$ : 22. $g4$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $b5!$  24. $cxb5?$  (24. $\mathbb{Q}g2!$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  (25. $cxb5?$   $fxg4$  26. $hxg4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$ ) 25... $\mathbb{W}h6$ , with equality) 24... $\mathbb{W}h4+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}gh5!$  26. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}xe1$  27. $\mathbb{Q}axe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ .

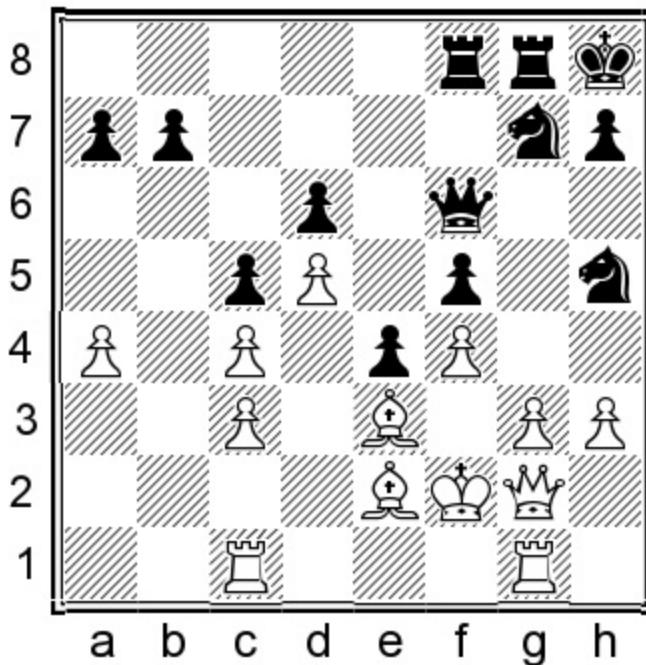
**22...Qg8 23.Wf1 Qfh5**

23...h5!? would have been more common, but Carlsen usually seeks a complicated game and here he was probably provoking the 24.g4 push.

## 24.g3

If 24.g4!? fxg4 25.hxg4 ♜xf4 26.♕xf4 ♜af8 27.♔e3! ♜f6 28.♔d2! ♜xf4+ 29.♕xf4 ♜xf4 30.♔e3 ♜f6 31.♔xe4 the position is, according the engine, slightly better for White.

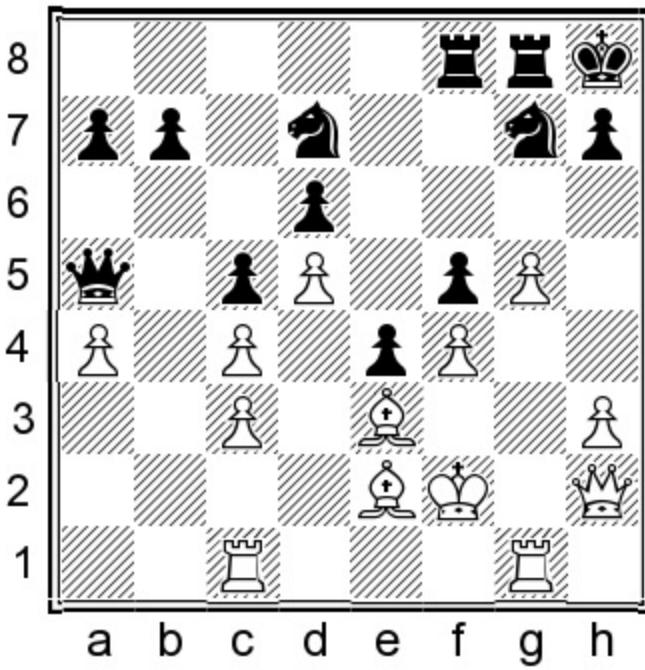
## 24...♜af8 25.♕g2 ♜f6 26.♖ac1



## 26...♛d8

Presumably the idea of 23...♝fh5 was to sacrifice this piece. However, after 26...♝xg3!? 27.♛xg3 ♚h5 28.♛h2 ♛h4+ 29.♚f1 ♜xg1+ 30.♚xg1 ♛g8+ 31.♚f1, despite the exposed position of the white king there seems to be no way for Black to exploit this, e.g. 31...♜g3 (31...♜g3+? 32.♚e1) 32.♚f2 ♜xh3 33.♜xh4 ♜xh2 34.♜xh5 ♜xh4 35.♜d1, and the position is equal. And therefore once again the World Champion has to take a risk.

## 27.♛h2 ♜f6 28.g4 ♜d7 29.g5 ♛a5



Here White could have increased his space advantage with 30.h4!, after which Black's position would have been very difficult. However, Keymer, who was short of time, advances the other pawn and loses all his advantage.

**30.g6? h6?!**

It was better to play 30... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ! 31.gxh7  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  32.h4  $\mathbb{W}xa4$  33. $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  34. $\mathbb{B}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , when the weaknesses in White's pawn structure are noticeable.

**31. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  32. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$ !**

To prevent 33. $\mathbb{W}h4$ .

**33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ?**

This leads to the loss of the  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , which could have been easily protected with 34.h4 and 35.h5.

**34... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$**

35... $\mathbb{Q}xg6??$  loses to 36. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37. $\mathbb{W}h4$ , while if 35... $\mathbb{B}xg6?!$  36. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ , the bishop pair compensates for the lost pawn.

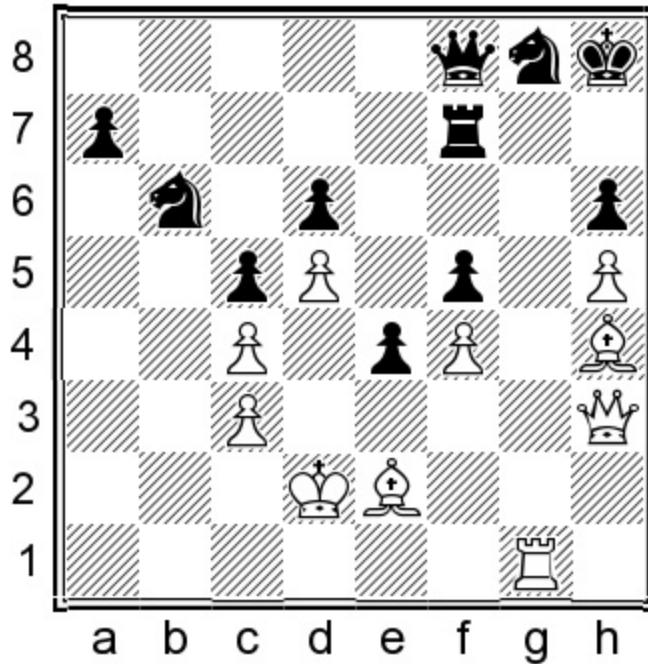
**36. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f6?!$**

More accurate was 36... $\mathbb{B}xg6$  37. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , and White has no compensation for the pawn.

**37. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  38.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  39. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{B}xg1$  40. $\mathbb{B}xg1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  41.h5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  b6 43. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  44. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$**

Despite the extra pawn, it is not at all easy for Black to win, owing to the closed character of the position.

**45.♗b1 ♗g7 46.♗g1 ♗f8 47.♔c2 ♛fg8 48.♔d2 ♗f7 49.♔c2 ♕f8 50.♔d2 ♗e8 51.♔a1 ♕f7 52.a5 bxa5 53.♗xa5 ♛c8 54.♔a1 ♗f8 55.♗b1 ♛b6 56.♗g1**



**56...♗g7?**

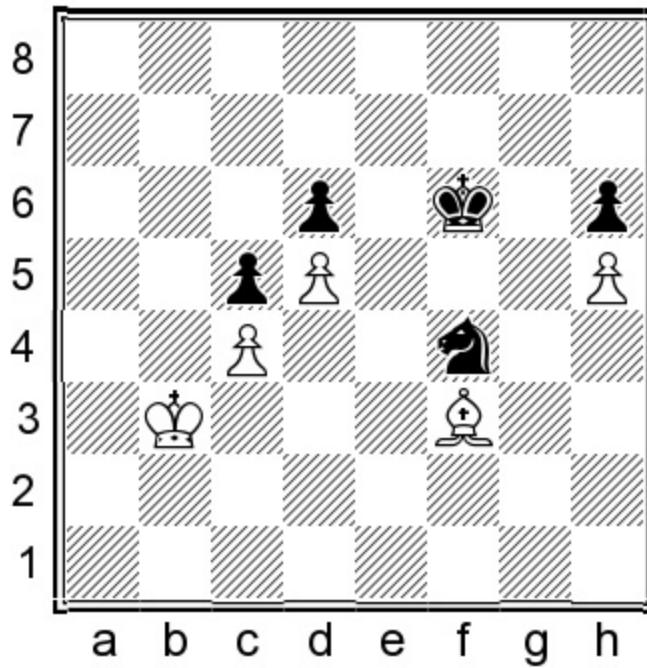
An error which greatly complicates Black's task. Magnus admitted that he had overlooked White's 59th move. After 56...a5 Black should be able to convert his extra pawn.

**57.♗xg7 ♛xg7 58.♗g3+ ♔h8 59.♗g6!**

Now the position is equal again.

**59...a5 60.♔f1 a4 61.♔c2 a3 62.♔b3 ♛a4 63.♔h3 ♗g7! 64.♗xg7+ ♛xg7 65.♔xf5 ♛f6 66.♔xa3 ♛xc3 67.♔f2?**

As Stockfish indicates, White could have drawn here with 67.♔b3! ♛e2 68.♔xf6+ ♛xf6 69.♔xe4 ♛xf4 70.♔f3.



*analysis diagram*

This position is known from the analysis of the Spanish grandmaster Jesús de la Villa, an acknowledged endgame expert: 70... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (70... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  changes nothing, e.g. 71. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  72. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  73. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  74. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (74... $\mathbb{Q}xc4+$  75. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  76. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  77. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  etc.) 75. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ) 71. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  72. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  73. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  74. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  75. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  76. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .

**67... $\mathbb{Q}e2$  68. $\mathbb{Q}a4$**

More tenacious was 68. $\mathbb{Q}b2!?$ , e.g. 68... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  69. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}6xh5$  70. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  71. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  72. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  h5, and after being left to analyse to a considerable depth, the engine reaches a position in which the white bishop is left fighting alone against the opponent's two knights and a pawn.

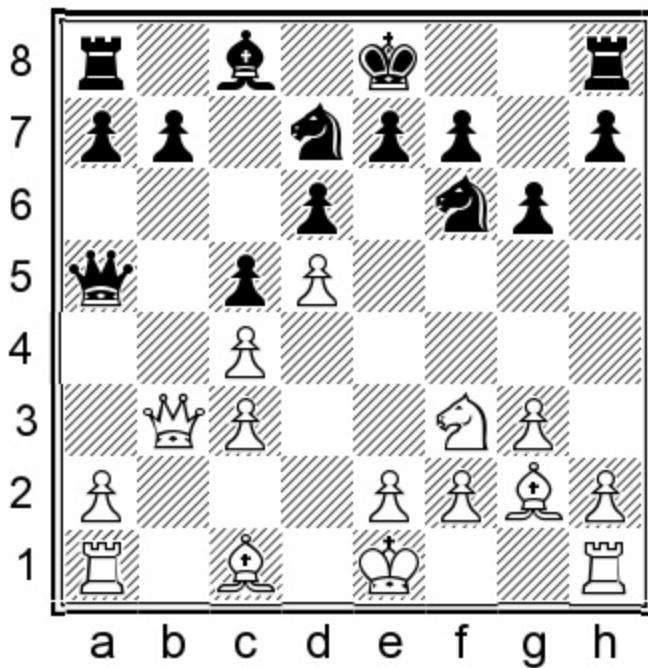
**68... $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  69. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  70. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  71. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  72. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  73. $\mathbb{Q}g6$  h5 74. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  75. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  76. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  e3 77. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  78. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  79. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  h4 80. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  81. $\mathbb{Q}c8$  e2 0-1**

Petrosian's idea soon attracted followers. As early as the year 1967, one of the more original Soviet masters of the 1950s-60s invented the move-order which is now named after the Georgian-American Dzindzichashvili. We shall examine this variation in the game below.

Game 98  
 Dzindzichashvili Opening  
**Stepan Zilka 2514**  
**Zbynek Hracek 2617**  
 Havlickuv Brod ch-CZE 2015 (3)

**1.d4 g6 2.c4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 4.d5  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$**

It should be noted that the stem game of the Dzindzichashvili Variation was this one: 4...d6 5.g3 ♖d7 6.♗g2 ♗xc3+!? 7.bxc3 ♕a5 8.♗b3 ♗gf6 9.♗f3



*analysis diagram*

9...♗b6! (the engine prefers the text move, although it also considers it playable to continue in the style of the Benko/Volga Gambit, as mentioned in the two previous games, e.g. 9...b5!? 10.cxb5 a6) 10.0-0 ♗g4 (10...♗e4!?) 11.♗e1 h5 12.e4 ♗fd7 13.♗e3 h4 (13...♗xf3! 14.♗xf3 ♕a4) 14.♗xh4 ♗e5, with a complicated position which ended in a victory for Black in the game Borisenko-Nezhmetdinov, Krasnodar 1957.

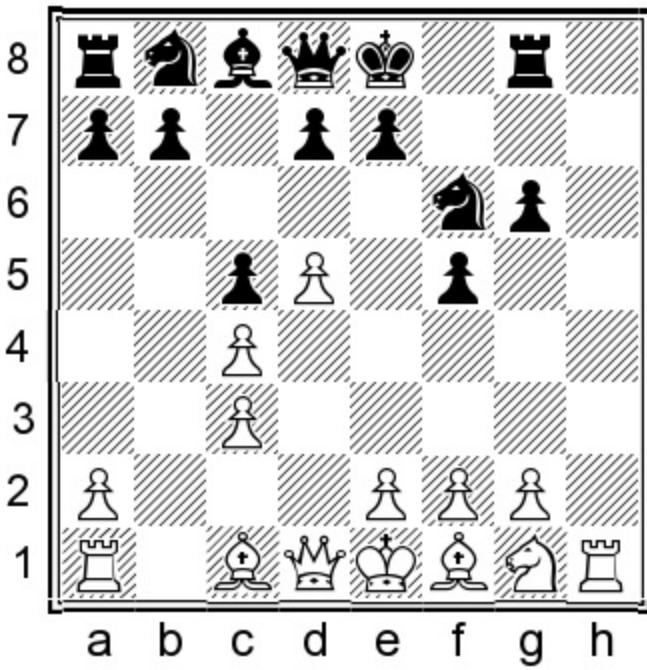
### 5.bxc3 f5

The advance ...f7-f5 constitutes the starting position of this variation.

### 6.h4!?

The most popular move in this position. The earliest-known game of this variation continued 6.g4!? fxg4 7.h3 g3 (7...d6!?) 8.fxg3 d6 (8...♕a5 9.♗d3 d6 10.e4 ♗f6 11.♗d2 ♗bd7 12.♗f3 ♕a4, with a complicated position, Iturriaga-Maiwald, Dresden 2016) 9.♕a4+ ♖d7 10.♗b3 ♕a5 11.♗d2 ♗f6 12.♗g2 ♕a6 13.a4 ♗f5 14.♗f3 ♗bd7 15.♗h6 0-0-0, Gurevich-Dzindzichashvili, Berkeley 1984.

### 6...♗f6 7.h5 ♗g8 8.hxg6 hxg6



**9.♘c2**

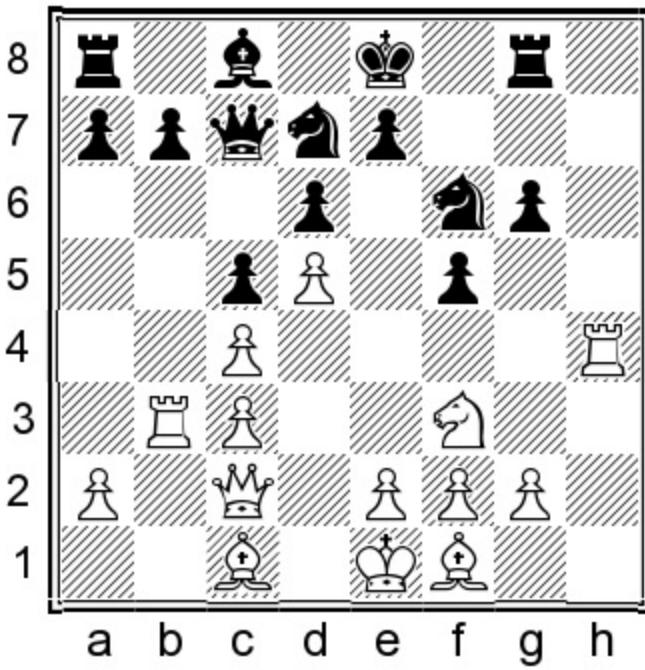
9.♗f3, which leads to the game continuation, and 9.♗a4 are the two main moves in this position; the latter move tries to prevent Black's natural development with ...♗a5 and ...d7-d6, e.g. 9.♗a4!? ♗b6 10.♗f3 ♗a6 11.♗xa6 ♗xa6 12.♗g5 d6!? 13.♗d2 ♔f7 14.e4, with a slight advantage to White, Volkov-Eliseev, St Petersburg 2010.

White can open the position by sacrificing a pawn with 9.e4!? ♗xe4 (9...d6!?) 10.♗d3; the engine also analyses 9.d6!?, with the idea of making it difficult to develop the ♗c8, e.g. 9...♗c6 (9...♗e4 10.♗h7 ♗c6 11.dxe7 ♗a5 12.♗c2 ♗f6 13.♗h4 ♗d4 14.♗d3 g5 15.♗h6, with advantage to White) 10.♗f3 exd6 11.♗g5 ♗e7 12.♗f4 ♗e5 13.g3 b6 14.♗g2 ♗b8 15.♗a4 a5 (15...♗d3+ 16.♗f1) 16.0-0-0 ♗b7 17.♗xb7 ♗xb7 18.♗b5, with a strong initiative for the sacrificed pawn.

**9...d6 10.♗f3 ♗bd7 11.♗b1**

Play in the style of Benko/Volga occurred in the following game: 11.♗f4 ♗a5 12.♗g5 ♗b6 13.e3 ♗a4 14.♗c1 b5!? 15.♗d2?! (15.cxb5 ♗xd5 16.♗c4 ♗ab6) 15...bxc4, with the better game for Black, Bacrot-Speelman, Elista 1998.

**11...♗a5 12.♗b3 ♗c7 13.♗h4**



**13...Qe5!**

Demonstrating one of the secrets of this variation: the exchange on e5 leads to a closed position, which limits the activity of White's bishops.

**14.Qb1?!**

14.Qxe5! dx5 15.Qg5 b6!? (15...Qe4 16.Qxe4 fxe4 17.Qxe4 Qf5 18.Qe3, with good compensation for the exchange) 16.Qa3 Qd6 and although objectively the position is more or less equal, it is easier to play with black, thanks to the better pawn structure.

**14...b6 15.a4?!**

It was better to refrain from this advance, e.g. with 15.Qxe5 dx5 16.Qg5.

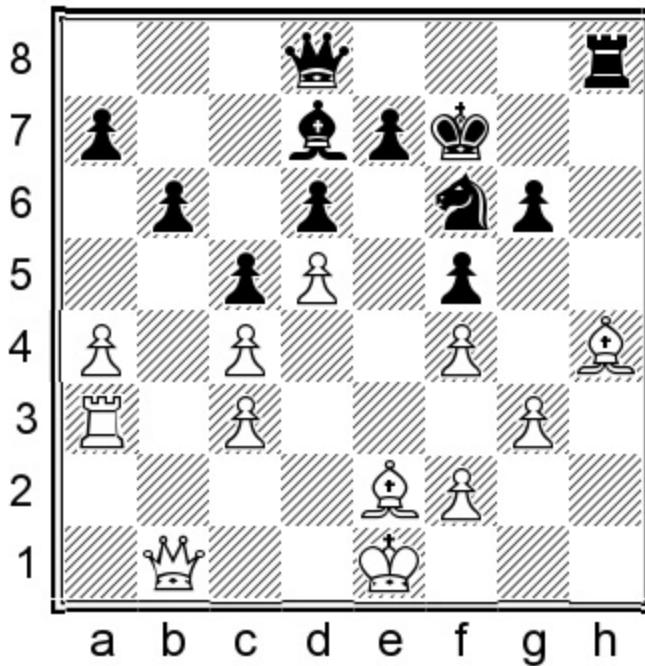
**15...Qxf3+?!**

More accurate was 15...Qd7! 16.a5 bxa5 17.Qb7 Qxf3+ 18.exf3 Qc8.

**16.exf3 Qf7 17.Qg5 Qd7 18.Qa3 Qh8 19.g3 Qxh4**

Now and two moves later, advancing the Qe7 was worth considering, e.g. 19...e5!? 20.dxe6+ (20.Qc1!?) 20...Qxe6 and the weakness of the Qc4 is noticeable.

**20.Qxh4 Qh8 21.f4 Qd8 22.Qe2**



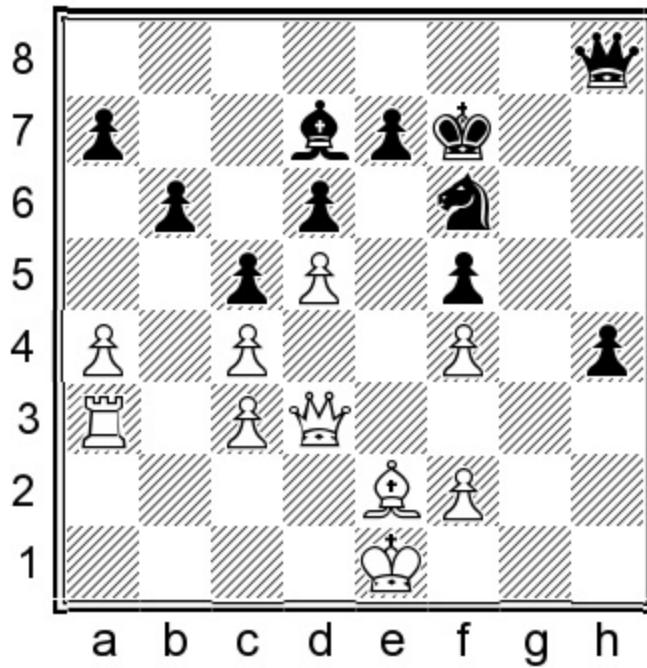
**22...gxh4!?**

This exchange sacrifice is the only possibility of unbalancing the position, in order to play for a win against the lower-rated opponent.

**23.gxh4 Wh8 24.h5**

A good alternative was 24.a5 Wh4 25.axb6 axb6 26.Wc1 Wh1+ 27.Qf1 We4+ 28.Qe2 Qh5 29.We3 Whb1+ 30.Qd1 Qf6 31.Qb3 Wa1 32.Wd3 Wc1 33.Wd2, with equality.

**24...gxh5 25.Wd3 h4**



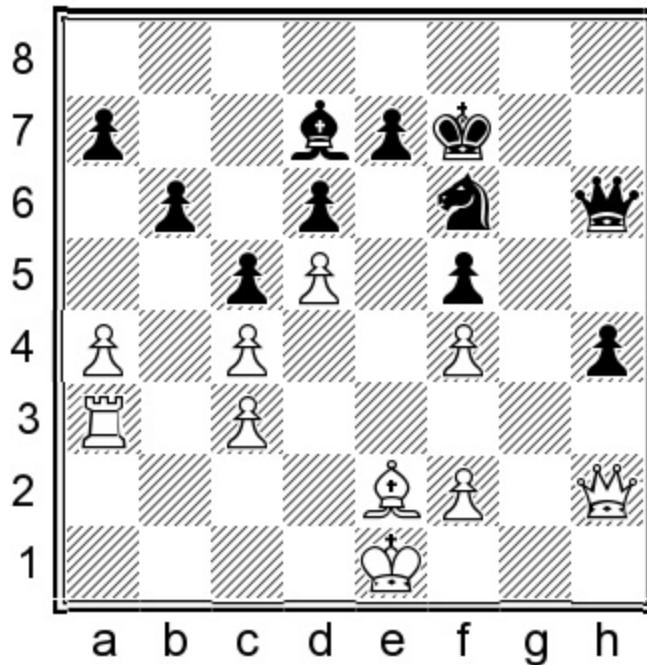
**26. Wh3?**

In the event of 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (27...  $\mathbb{Q}h5?!$  28. a5  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  29. axb6 axb6 30.  $\mathbb{R}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ) 28.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h2$  29.  $\mathbb{W}e3$ , there is no clear way for Black to make progress.

White could also have maintained equality with 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ , e.g. 26...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  27.  $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  29.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  30. fxe3 a5 31.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ .

**26... Wh6 27. Wh2??!**

It was more tenacious to play 27.  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  28.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  (28...  $\mathbb{W}h2$  29.  $\mathbb{W}h3$ ) 29. f4.



27... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

A very good move, which decides the game.

28. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  fxg4 29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}h7$  30. $\mathbb{B}a1$  h3 31. $\mathbb{W}h1$  h2 32.a5 bxa5 33. $\mathbb{B}e1$  a4 34. $\mathbb{B}g1$  a3 35. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  36.f5  $\mathbb{W}xf5$  37. $\mathbb{B}xh2$  a2 38. $\mathbb{B}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  39. $\mathbb{B}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  40. $\mathbb{B}a8$   $\mathbb{W}c2+$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xc3+$

0-1

## *Chapter 5*

# Should we exchange the fianchettoed bishop (EFB)?

### 5.1. Introduction

When I was a young player, gradually starting to discover some of the secrets of positional play, some moves surprised me, for example flank pawn advances such as h2-h4 or ...h7-h5, which recently, and with much greater profundity than ever before, were explained in the book *Game Changer* by Matthew Sadler and Natasha Regan, based on analysis of the games of AlphaZero. Among the other secrets that I had to learn was the theme of the exchange of fianchettoed bishop, especially the ♜g7. My attention was drawn to the fact that White often exchanged this bishop to gain an attack on the kingside, where the black king was located, and this was an exchange I could understand. However, on other occasions it was Black himself who tried to exchange the bishop, even with his king on that wing. In this section of the book we are going to study this theme in King's Indian positions and lines of the Dragon and Accelerated Dragon variations of the Sicilian Defence. To save space, we shall use an abbreviation for this strategic theme: EFB.

## 5.2. EFB in the King's Indian Defence

The next two games, played between the same opponents and in the same year, are a good illustration of the two faces of the exchange of the fianchettoed bishop.

Game 99  
King's Indian Defence  
**Yury Averbakh**  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
Moscow ch-URS 1961 (12)

This Soviet Championship was the first that I was able to watch live.

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3**

The Sämisch System is a dangerous weapon against the King's Indian Defence: White's last move prepares an attack against the enemy king based on the pawn advances g2-g4 and h2-h4 and including the exchange of the ♜g7 with ♜e3/g5, ♜d2 and ♜h6, in some order or other.

**5...0-0 6.♗e3 c6**

In modern chess the main response here is 6...c5!? since, as practice has shown, Black gains good compensation if White accepts the sacrificed pawn, e.g. 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.♘xd8 ♘xd8 9.♗xc5 ♜c6 10.♗e3 ♜e6 11.♗c1 ♘ac8 12.b3 ♜b4 13.♗h3 ♜xh3 14.gxh3 ♜h5 15.♗d5 ♜c6 16.♗f2 e6, and the passivity of the ♜f1 and the damage to White's pawn structure at least compensate for the sacrificed pawn, Ma Qun-Yu Yangyi, Hangzhou 2018.

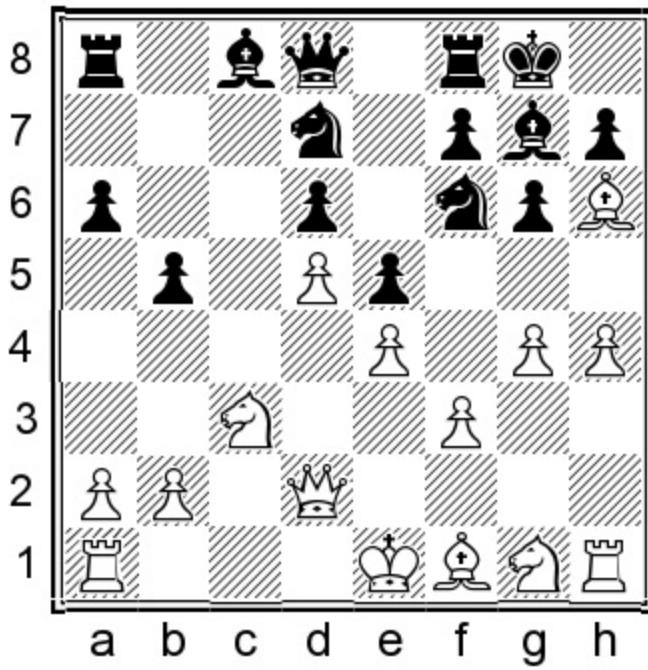
**7.♘d2 a6 8.♗h6**

We are already in the EFB theme. With the white pieces, Petrosian himself continued in another way: 8.g4 b5 9.g5 ♜h5 10.♗ge2 e5 11.0-0-0 ♜d7 12.c5?! (12.d5) 12...dxc5 (12...♘a5!?) 13.dxc5 ♘a5, with chances for both sides, Petrosian-Taimanov, Moscow 1957.

**8...b5 9.h4 e5 10.d5**

10.♗xg7 ♜xg7 11.h5 leads to equality after 11...♗xh5 12.g4 ♜f4 13.♗ce2 ♘g5 14.♗xf4 ♘xf4 15.♘xf4 exf4 16.♗h3 d5!; but 10.♗ge2!? deserved attention, e.g. 10...♗xh6 (the engine prefers 10...b4!?) 11.♗d1 ♘xh6 12.♘xh6 exd4 13.♗xd4 ♘b6, although this also gives some advantage to White) 11.♘xh6 ♜bd7 12.h5 ♘e7 13.d5 cxd5 14.♗xd5 ♜xd5 15.cxd5 ♜f6 16.g4, and the white attack is dangerous.

**10...cxd5 11.cxd5 ♜bd7 12.g4**



**12...Qxh6!**

This and especially the following move by Black reveal the secret of this position: it is not possible for White to open the h-file!

**13.Qxh6 ♜h8!**

This manoeuvre became engraved on my memory for ever and has been of assistance not only to me in my own practical play but also to my students. It is curious that the engine sees no danger to the black king and prefers to exploit Black's advantage in development to attack with 13...♝a5! 14.h5 ♜c5 15.♜e2 ♜a7! 16.♜f1 ♜b4 17.♝d2 ♜c7, and Black's position is preferable.

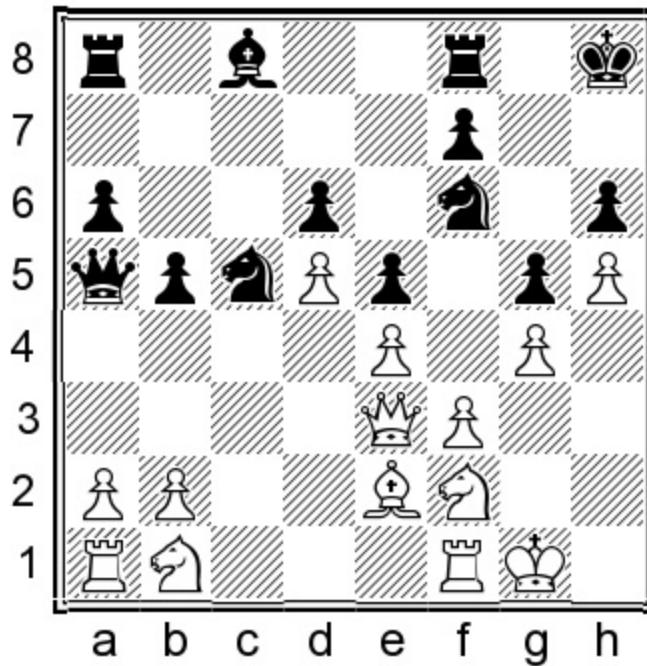
**14.h5 ♜g8 15.♝e3 g5**

Petrosian opts for safety, although he could have played more actively, e.g. 15...♝a5!? 16.g5 ♜e7 17.♜ge2 ♜c5 18.♜g3 ♜d7 19.♜e2 ♜ac8 20.♜f2 ♜b4 21.♜ab1 f5?.

**16.♜h3**

Black would have had no problems either after 16.♜ge2 h6 17.♜g3 ♜a5 18.a3 ♜df6 19.♜d3 ♜d7.

**16...h6 17.♜e2 ♜gf6 18.♜f2 ♜a5 19.0-0 ♜c5 20.♜b1**

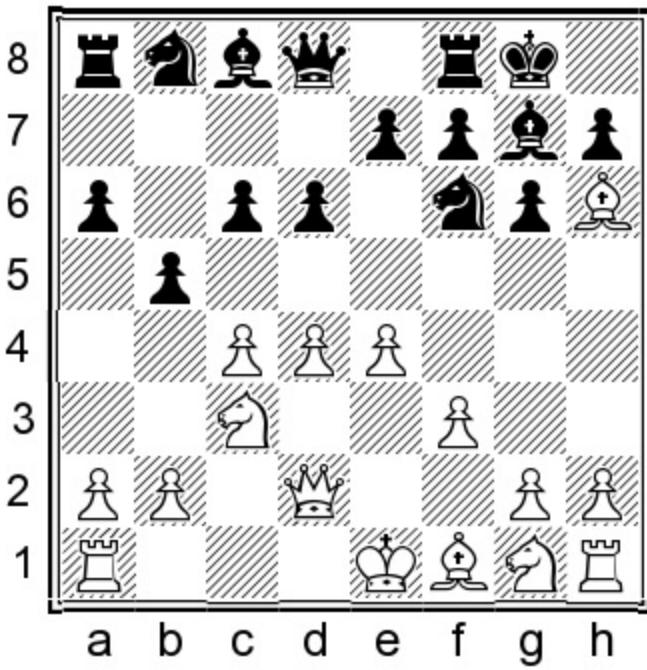


$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

A few months later, Averbakh improved the variation and won the game in typical fashion by means of the move  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , gaining a strong attack. This game is not in Megabase but can be found in the magnificent book *The King's Indian According to Tigran Petrosian* by a former student in my chess department in Moscow, IM Igor Yanvarjov.

Game 100  
King's Indian Defence  
**Yury Averbakh**  
**Tigran Petrosian**  
Moscow tt 1961

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  c6 7. $\mathbb{W}d2$  a6 8. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  b5



## 9.0-0-0!?

This novelty improves White's game and seems to have come as a surprise to Petrosian, as his next move is a serious error. Here 9.h4!? has been played more often and seems a good alternative, e.g. 9...Qxh6 10.Qxh6 e5 11.Qge2 Qbd7 12.h5 Ra7 13.Qg5!? Qe7 14.0-0-0.

## 9...Qe6?!

9...Ra5! was correct, e.g. 10.Qxg7 Qxg7 11.e5 dx5 12.dxe5 Qg8 13.a3 Qe6 14.Qe4 Qxd2+ 15.Qxd2 Qd7 and the vulnerable pawns on c4 and e5 are a problem for White, Portisch-Ivkov, Wijk aan Zee 1968.

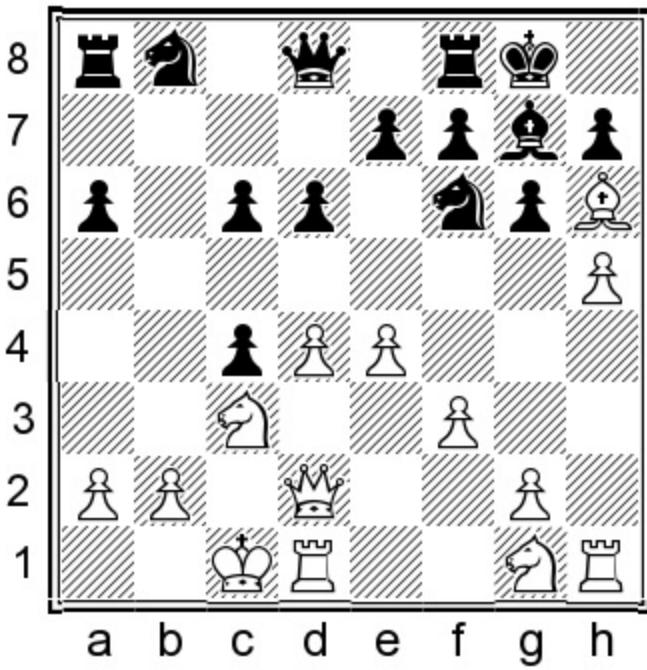
## 10.h4

Here White could have got the better game by advancing in the centre with gain of time: 10.d5! cxd5 11.cxd5 Qc8 12.Qb1 Qbd7 13.Qxg7 Qxg7 14.Qge2 h5 (14...b4 15.Qa4 Ra5 16.b3 Qe5 17.Qd4) 15.Qd4 Qc5 16.Qc6 Qc7 17.b4 Qe6 18.Qc1.

## 10...Qxc4?

A serious error; 10...Ra5! was correct, e.g. 11.Qxg7 Qxg7 12.h5 b4 13.hxg6 (or 13.e5 bxc3 (13...dxe5? 14.hxg6 fxg6 15.Qh6+ Qf7 16.Qe4) 14.exf6+ Qxf6 15.Qxc3 Qxc3+ 16.bxc3) 13...fxg6 14.e5 bxc3 15.exf6+ Qxf6 16.Qxc3 Qxa2 17.g4 Qg8 18.Qh3 Qd7, with chances for both sides.

## 11.Qxc4 bxc4 12.h5!



A typical move in this type of position, placing Black in a difficult situation.

### **12...Qh8**

Trying to restrain the white attack by sacrificing the exchange. However, Averbakh prefers to keep attacking, although the capture on f8 was good enough. Here 12...Qxh5?? lost immediately to 13.Qxh5 gxh5 14.Qg5.

### **13.hxg6!**

Or 13.Qxf8! Qxf8 14.hxg6 fxg6 15.e5! Qd5 16.Qxd5 cxd5 17.Qa5 Qf7 18.Qc7 and White's advantage is decisive.

### **13...fxg6 14.Qh3??**

The same idea as in the previous note would have won more easily: 14.Qxf8 Qxf8 15.e5! etc.

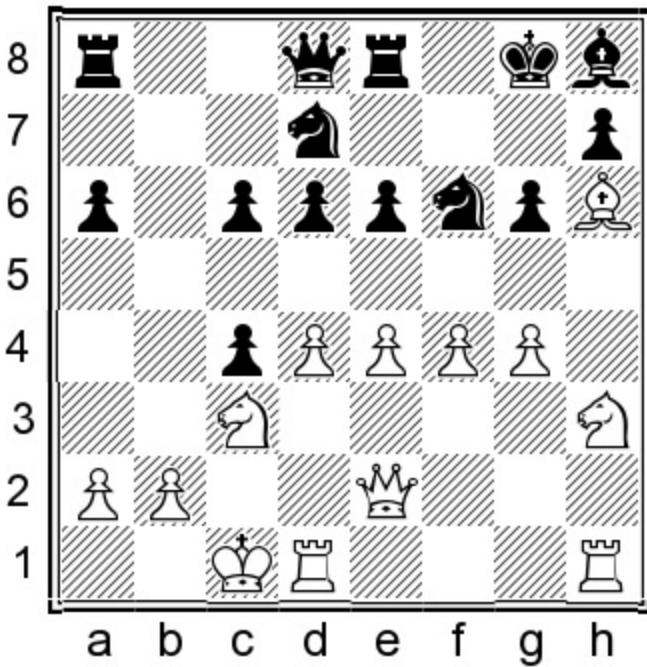
### **14...Qe8 15.Qe2 e6 16.g4??**

Once again White prefers maintaining his attack to recapturing the pawn: 16.Qxc4 Qe7; however, 16.f4! was better, e.g. 16...Qbd7 17.Qg5 Qb6 (or 17...Qe7 18.e5! (18.Qxc4? d5!) 18...Qd5 19.Qce4 dx5 20.fxe5) 18.e5 Qd5 19.Qxd5 exd5 (19...cxd5 20.Qxh7!) 20.Qg4 Qab8 21.Qd2 c3 22.Qc2 Qb7 23.Qxh7! and White's attack is decisive.

### **16...Qbd7 17.f4?**

The continuation 17.Qf4! Qb6 18.g5 Qh5 19.Qxh5 gxh5 20.Qa4! (20.Qg2?! Qxd4 21.g6 Qe3+ 22.Qxe3 Qxe3+ 23.Qb1 h6!) 20...Qa7 (20...Qb4 21.Qc2!) 21.Qd2 c5 22.g6! hxg6 23.Qg5! leads to a

position with a strong attack for White.



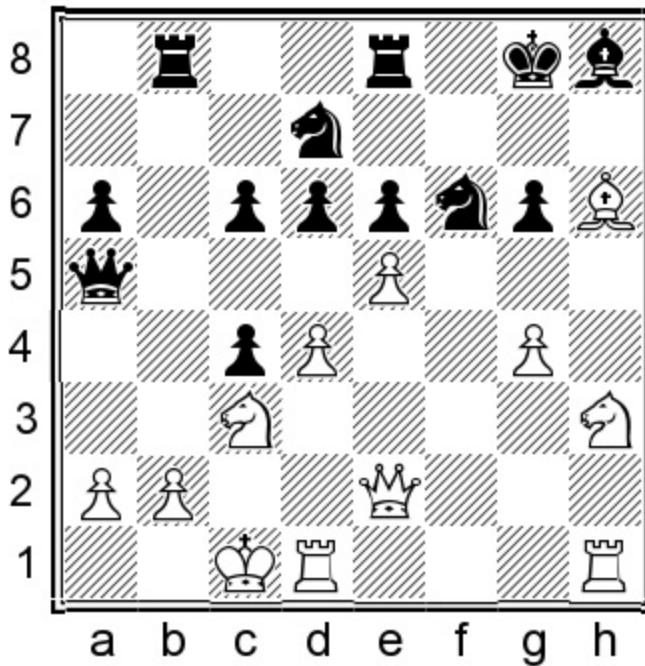
### 17...Wa5?

Another error, and this time it will be fatal; as the engine points out, with 17...c5! Black could have seized the advantage, e.g. 18.Qg5 and now:

- A) 18.dxc5? Qxc5 19.Wxc4? (19.Qf2) 19...Qcxe4!, and Black wins;
- B) 18.d5!? exd5 19.Qxd5! Qxd5 20.Qxd5 Qb6 21.Qxb6 Wxb6 22.Wxc4+ d5 23.Wxd5+ We6 24.Wxe6+ Qxe6 and White does not have enough compensation for the exchange;
- C) 18.Qg5 cxd4 19.Qxd4 Wb6 20.Qhd1 d5 21.e5 Qc5 22.exf6 Qxf6 23.Qf3 Qxd4 24.Qxd4 Qd3+ 25.Qxd3 cxd3 26.Wxd3 Rac8, and in this position Black's two rooks and pawn are stronger than White's three minor pieces.

### 18.f5! Rab8 19.fxg6 hxg6 20.e5?

Here 20.Qf4! was correct, e.g. 20...c5 21.Qxg6 cxd4 22.Qxd4 Qe5 23.Qxh8 Qd3+ 24.Qxd3 cxd3 25.Wxd3, winning.



**20...Bxb2?**

Instead of this desperate rook sacrifice, it was better to try 20...dxe5! 21.Qc2 (21.dxe5?? Qd5) 21...Be7 22.Wxg6+ Kg7, with unclear play.

**21.Qxb2 Bb8+ 22.Qc2 Qd5 23.Wxc4 g5 24.Bd3 Qb4+**

In the event of 24...Q7b6 25.Wb3 Qd7 26.Wa4 Wxa4+ 27.Qxa4 Qb4+ 28.Qd2 Qxd3 29.Qxd3 Bb4 30.Qc3 Black does not have enough compensation for the piece.

**25.Qd1 d5 26.Wb3 c5**

26...Qxd3 also loses after 27.Qc2! Q7xe5 28.dxe5 Qxe5 29.Wxd3 Wxc3 30.Wg6+ Kg7 31.Wxe6+.

**27.Wb1 c4 28.Wc1 1-0**

My study of chess books made me realize that even the best players in the world had not mastered the topic of the EFB, i.e. they were unsure about when to exchange the fianchettoed bishop and when not to. Let us examine some examples.

Game 101  
King's Indian Defence  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Vasily Smyslov**  
Moscow Wch m 1958 (2)

**1.d4 Qf6 2.c4 g6 3.Qc3 Kg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.Qe3 a6 7.Qd3 Qc6**

The main line here is 7...c5!?, sacrificing a pawn for good positional compensation; another very common plan is 7... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  c6 9.0-0 b5!?, Goryachkina-Kashlinskaya, Lausanne 2020.

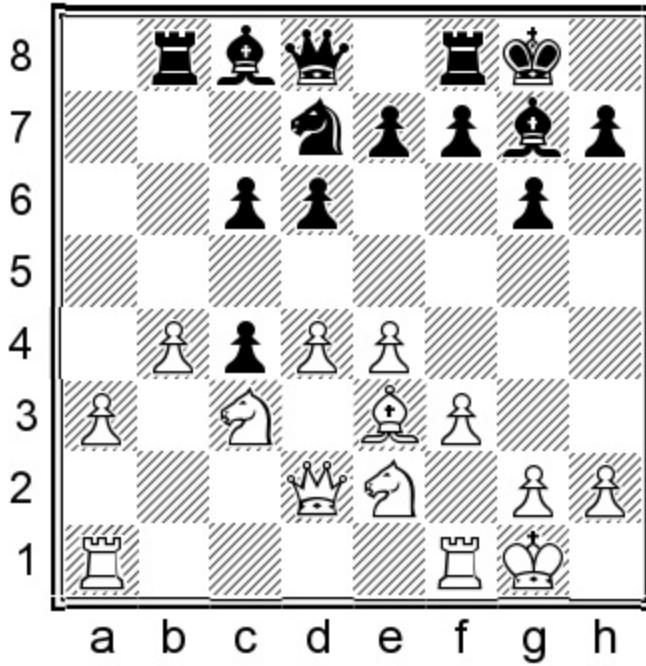
### 8. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 9.a3

9.0-0 would allow Black to execute the main idea of 8... $\mathbb{B}b8$  with 9... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  10. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  (10. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ !? is Stockfish's recommendation) 10...b5!?, although it seems that after 11.cxb5 axb5 12.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13.b4 e5 14.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15. $\mathbb{W}d2$  the white position is slightly better.

### 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ b5?!

It was better to play 11...c5!? 12.b4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , e.g. 13. $\mathbb{B}b1$  b5!? 14.cxb5 axb5 15.bxc5 (15.0-0!?) 15...dxc5 16.dxc5  $\mathbb{W}a5$ , with good play for the sacrificed pawn.

### 12.cxb5 axb5 13.b4 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ bxc4 15.0-0 c6 16. $\mathbb{W}d2$



### 16... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ?

This move is, to a great extent, the cause of Black's defeat; instead, by continuing with 16... $\mathbb{E}e8$  Black could have preserved his important  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  and, along with it, his main trump: the potential strength of his pair of bishops. The engine's view of this position is rather surprising. It recommends two main options:

A) 16...e6 17. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  d5 18. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  19. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  21. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  22.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  23.f4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , reaching a position that from the human viewpoint appears ridiculous: all the black pawns are on squares of the same colour as his bishop, while White dominates the dark squares, with the possibility of an attack on the kingside, not forgetting the passed pawn on a4;

B) 16...f5 17.♗h6 ♗xh6 18.♗xh6 e5 19.♗d2 ♜f6, with a position in the style of the King's Indian but rather worse than usual, in view of: the passed ♘a3; the tension in the centre, favouring White; the doubled ♘c4; and Black's kingside, weakened by the exchange of the ♗g7.

### 17.♗h6! ♗xh6 18.♗xh6 f6?!

A very human move by the World Champion, placing the pawn on a square of opposite colour to his bishop. However, 18...e6 (or perhaps 18...d5 immediately) was slightly better, although after 19.a4 (19.e5 f5) 19...d5 20.♗e3 (20.e5!? f6 21.f4) White would maintain the advantage.

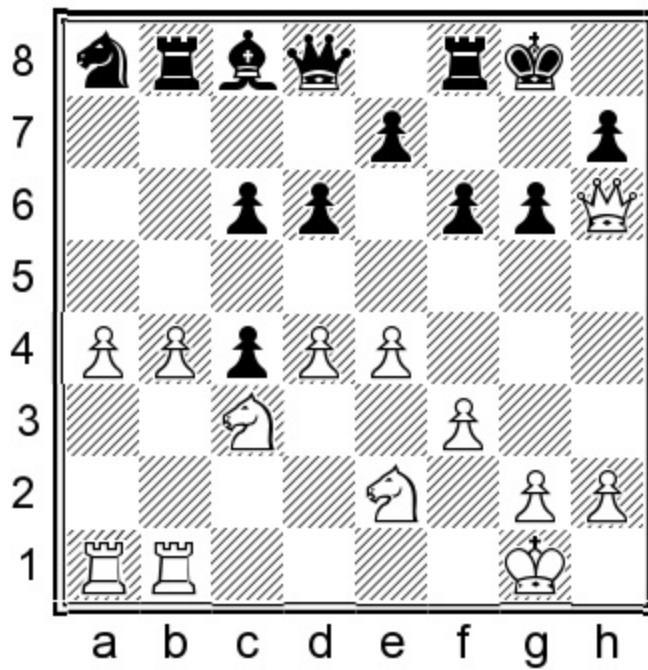
### 19.a4

The best move was 19.d5! cxd5 (19...c5 20.bxc5 dxc5 21.♗fb1) 20.exd5.

### 19...♝a8

19...d5? is bad, due to 20.a5 ♜a8 21.exd5 cxd5 22.b5 and White's two connected passed pawns will decide the game.

### 20.♗fb1



### 20...f5?

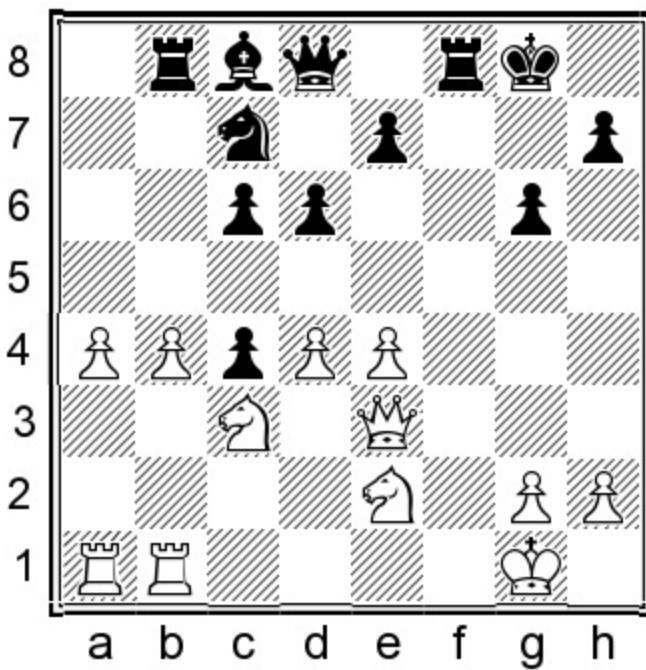
A serious error. The best defence was 20...♝c7!? and after 21.b5 cxb5 22.axb5 e5 23.♗d2 ♜b7 24.dxe5 dxe5 25.♗xd8 ♜fxd8 26.♗b4 ♜e6 27.♗xc4 f5 Black has some counterplay for the pawn minus.

**21.♗e3**

Here 21.d5! fxe4 22.♕xe4 deserved attention, with the threat of 23.♕g5.

**21...fxe4 22.fxe4 ♜c7**

On 22...♝b6, preventing the next move, White could have played 23.♝g5! e5 24.b5! exd4 25.bxc6 ♜c5 26.♝d5+!, and Black is lost.



**23.d5!**

Winning the game, as inevitably White will obtain two connected passed pawns on the queenside.

**23...cxd5 24.exd5 ♜b7 25.♖f1! ♜d7**

The d5-pawn was indirectly protected in view of the check on e6.

**26.♗d4**

26.♗a7! was stronger, preventing 26...e6 due to 27.♖xf8, winning at least a piece.

**26...e6 27.dxe6 ♜xe6 28.♗g4! ♜fe8?!**

28...♝e7! was more tenacious, e.g. 29.♝xc4 ♜xf1+ 30.♜xf1 d5 31.♝xd5 ♜xd5 32.♝xd5 ♜xb4 33.a5 (33.♝f4? ♜c5+!) 33...♜c5+ 34.♝xc5 ♜xc5, with good practical chances of survival.

**29.♝d4 ♜g7 30.♖ad1**

30.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$  was winning, e.g. 30...  $\mathbb{W}xc3$  31.  $\mathbb{W}f4$  g5 (31...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  34.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $dxe5$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{W}ed8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ) 32.  $\mathbb{W}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  35.  $\mathbb{W}xe5+$   $dxe5$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

30...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$

30...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  was slightly better, although 31.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  should win for White.

31.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}c6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  33.  $\mathbb{W}xc6+$   $d5$  34.  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$

34...  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  would fail to 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ .

35.  $\mathbb{W}b6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  36.  $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}de8$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  39.  $b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  40.  $\mathbb{W}a7$   $d4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  1-0

### Game 102

King's Indian Defence

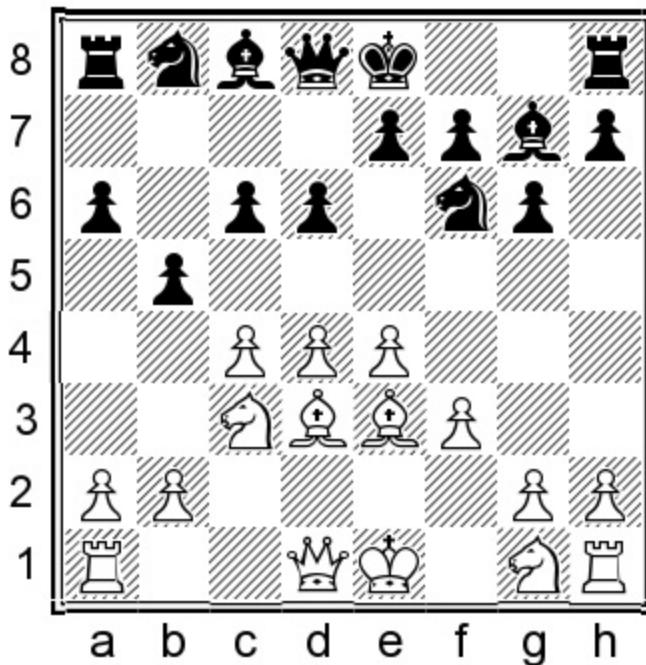
Mikhail Botvinnik

Vasily Smyslov

Moscow Wch m 1958 (6)

Curiously, in the same match Smyslov made the same mistake again.

1. c4 g6 2. e4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  3. d4 d6 4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6 5.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6. f3 c6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b5



8.  $\mathbb{W}d2$

As we now know, the most accurate continuation is 8. e5!  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  9. f4 bxc4 10.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , with the

better game for White, Georgescu-Nevednichy, Skopje 2014. Stockfish agrees with this human evaluation and extends this variation with 11.♗b3 a5 12.♗f3 a4 13.♗xa4 ♗xa4 14.♗xa4 ♕a5+ 15.♗c3, reaching the most recent game with this line in Megabase, Behling-Kazoks, cr 2014 (what a coincidence: it is clear that the players were both using engines!), with a final evaluation of about 0.70.

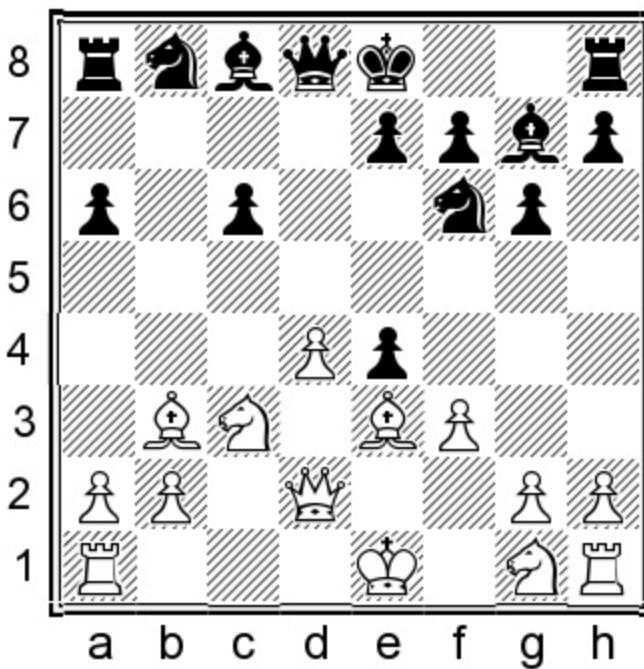
### 8...bxc4

The engine gives the same evaluation of 0.00 both to the text move and the main alternative 8...0-0.

### 9.♕xc4 d5 10.♗b3

The champions of the past did not play so badly; again this is best according to the engine, although it gives the same valuation to the rather artificial move 10.♗e2.

### 10...dxe4



### 11.♗xe4??!

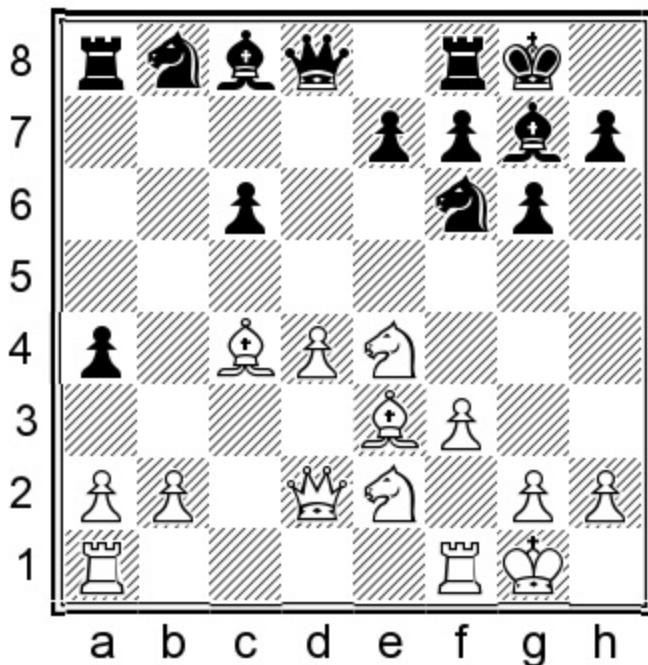
The more obvious recapture 11.fxe4! was better, e.g. 11...♗g4 (11...e5? 12.♗f3!, with a clear advantage to White according to Botvinnik) 12.♗f3 ♗xe3 13.♕xe3 0-0 14.0-0 and White's strong centre, better development and attacking chances along the f-file are features of this position. A recent game continued 14...♗g4 15.e5 ♗xf3 (15...c5) 16.♗xf3 e6 17.♗e4 ♗d7 18.♗af1, with a winning attack for White, Van Reinsburg-De Villiers, Cape Town 2016. Thinking about why Botvinnik did not make the obvious recapture on e4 with the pawn, I cannot see any reason other than he did not want to allow the exchange of his ♗e3 for the black knight. The problem is that in the majority of King's Indian positions, this bishop is usually more valuable than a black knight, but there are exceptions.

And perhaps in his evaluation Botvinnik did not give sufficient weight to the above-mentioned factors, which more than compensate for this exchange. It seems that this error is of the same nature as Smyslov's on move 39.

**11...0-0 12.♘e2 a5 13.0-0**

Here 13.♗c3!? could have led to the same continuation as in the game after 13...♗bd7 14.0-0 ♗b6, but it contains some venom, e.g. 13...♗a6? 14.♗xf6+! ♗xf6 15.h4!, with a dangerous attack for White.

**13...a4 14.♗c4**



**14...♗bd7**

The engine confirms that this is the best move. However, from a human viewpoint a good alternative seems to be 14...♗xe4!? 15.fxe4 c5 16.♗ac1!? (16.♗h6?! cxd4! (16...♗g4?! 17.♗xg7 ♔xg7 18.d5) 17.♗xg7 ♔xg7 18.♗d5 ♘a6 19.♗xd4+ f6, with equality) 16...♗g4, with a similar position to the Grünfeld Defence, which was Smyslov's favourite.

**15.♗ac1 ♘b8**

Here it appears that a variation allowing the exchange of the ♘g7 was not at all bad for Black: 15...♗b6!? 16.♗d3 ♗bd5 17.♗h6 (17.♗xc6? ♗xe3 18.♗xf6+ exf6! 19.♗xe3 ♘b8 20.♗d2 f5; 17.♗f2!?) 17...♗xh6 18.♗xh6 ♘b6, with a balanced position.

**16.♗xf6+**

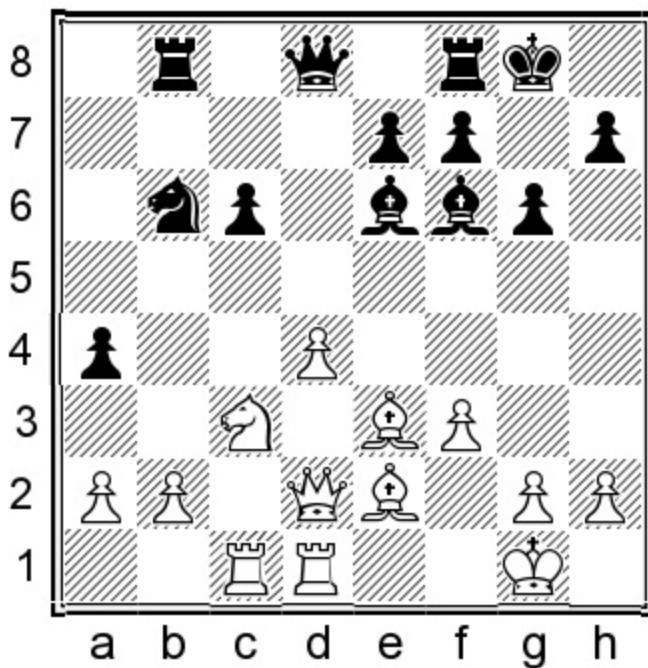
16.  $\mathbb{E}fd1!?$  was more accurate, inviting Black to exchange on e4, e.g. 16...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (16...  $\mathbb{Q}b6!?$ ) 17.  $\mathbb{F}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  18.  $b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (18...  $axb3$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ ) 19.  $e5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  20.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $axb3$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ , with a slight advantage.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

A good alternative, as in the game Kamsky-Karpov in the chapter on the IQP, was 16...  $exf6!?$ , and the engine confirms this opinion, giving the line 17.  $b3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  18.  $bx a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  21.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , and Black has full compensation for the pawn.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 19. $\mathbb{E}fd1$

19.  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  was more accurate.



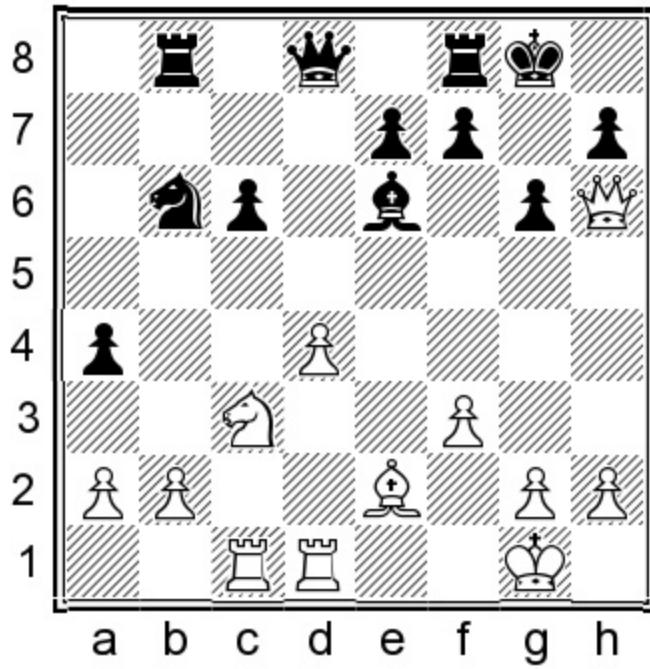
### 19... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$

Smyslov commits the same mistake as in the previous game. As Botvinnik remarked, it was even better to ‘pass’, transferring the move to his opponent, than to allow the exchange of the dark-squared bishop like this. Instead, Black had several ways to retain the slightly better game, confirming Botvinnik’s evaluation, e.g. 19...  $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  21.  $bx c3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  23.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}b5$  26.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $a3$ ; or 19...  $\mathbb{W}d7!?$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22.  $h3$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6!?$

We have a curious case here: we already know that the exchange of these bishops is favourable to White, but here the capture on h6 is nevertheless Black’s best response!

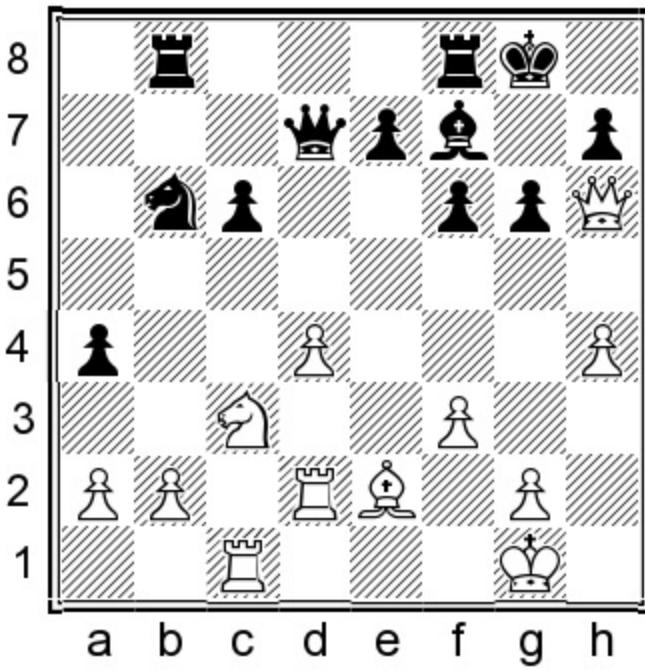
**21.♕xh6**



**21...f6**

Once again Smyslov defends his king and at the same time places his pawns in accordance with the precepts of the classical school. However, Stockfish does not belong to any school and evaluates that here it is better to place another pawn on a square of the same colour as his bishop, rather than relinquish the e4-square to the enemy knight: 21...f5! 22.♗f1 ♕d6 23.♕d2 ♜fd8 24.♕f2 ♜d7 25.♕e1 ♜f7 26.♗e5 ♜bd8.

**22.♕d2 ♜f7 23.h4 ♕d7**



## 24.a3!

This blocking move was necessary to release the ♜c3 from the defence of the ♘a2, after which the weak squares b4, c5 and e6 will be within its reach, which, together with the weakness of the a4, c6 and e7-pawns, gives White a clear advantage. All of this is a consequence of the ill-considered move 19...♝g7.

## 24...♜fd8

Once again it was better to make an ‘antipositional’ move, 24...f5!, to bar the way taken by the ♜c3 in the game, e.g. 25.♗d1 ♖d6 26.♗e3 ♖e6 27.h5 ♜f6 28.hxg6 ♜xg6 29.♖h4 ♜f8, with chances for both sides.

Instead, 24...♝c4? was bad, in view of 25.♗xa4! ♖xe2 26.♗c5 ♖d6 27.♗xe2 ♖xd4+ 28.♔h1, with the unpleasant threat of 29.♗e6.

## 25.♗e4 ♖e8 26.♗f1 ♖d5 27.♗c5 ♖f8 28.♖xf8+

It seems that it was more promising to keep the queens on: 28.♖f4!? ♜d6 29.h5 f5 30.♗e1 ♖f6 31.♗d3! ♖f7 32.♗e5, with the initiative; or 28.♖e3!? ♜d6 29.♗e1 ♖e8 30.f4, dominating the dark squares.

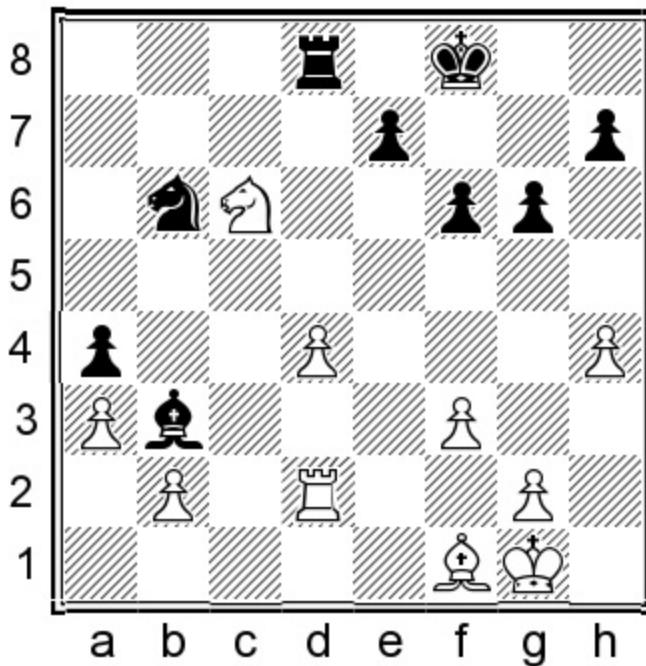
## 28...♔xf8 29.♗a6 ♜bc8

29...♜b7!? was more tenacious, e.g. 30.♗b4 ♜d6 31.♗f2 f5! (31...♗d7?! 32.g4!) 32.♗a6 ♜b8.

## 30.♗b4 ♜b3

It was better to preserve the pawn with 30... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ? 31. $\mathbb{Q}dc2$  f5! 32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

**31.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$**



Although White has won a pawn, the struggle is not yet over, as White's extra pawn on b2 is blocked by the  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

**32...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ?**

32... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ! 33. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  would have hindered the realization of White's advantage.

**33.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$**

Smyslov's move, with the idea of freeing the d5-square for his rook, looks very logical. However 33... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ !? was more tenacious, e.g. 34. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  h6 37.g3 g5 38. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

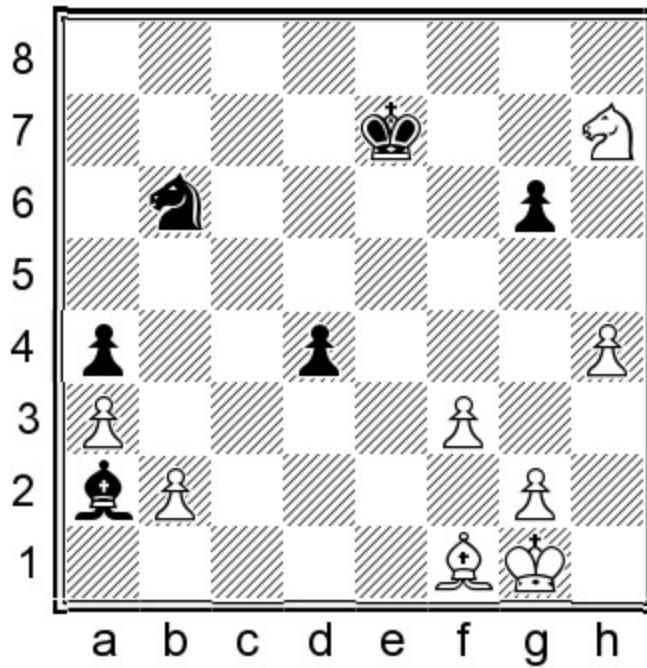
**34.  $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  e5 36.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ !**

This strong move is the only one that leads to a clear white advantage. In the event of 36. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ ?! exd4 37. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  39. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  Black could still resist.

**36...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 38.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

Black would have problems after 38... $\mathbb{Q}b1$  39. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !.

**39.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$**



It seems that Black, two pawns down now, has no hope, but...

### 39... $\mathbb{Q}b1?$

Incredibly Black could draw by seeking salvation in the knight ending, as shown by the engine after several hours of analysis! This is only the main variation: 39... $\mathbb{Q}c4!!$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  and now:

A) 42. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  43. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  45.g3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  46. $\mathbb{Q}b1!$ ? (or 46. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  48. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 46... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  47.g4+  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  48.f4  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  49. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  50. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  51. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  52. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  53. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  54. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  55.g5  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  56. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e1+$  57. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  58. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  59. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  60. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , and White can make no progress;

B) 42. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  44. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{Q}d6!$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xa4!$   $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  47.g3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  48. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  49. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3+$  50. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  51. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , and there is no way to convert White's advantage of an extra pawn.

Obviously all these variations would be impossible to calculate or even imagine during a real game. However, I think that the reason why a great endgame player like Smyslov was unwilling to enter this knight ending can be explained by the way our human thinking works, limited by the need for economy and therefore relying on general concepts: three pawns vs one on the kingside (or sometimes on the queenside) almost always wins in any type of endgame...

40. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  45.fxe4+  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  46.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  47.h5 gxh5 48.gxh5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  49. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  1-0

### 5.3. EFB in the Dragon Variation

After this introduction to the theme of the EFB we can state some considerations of a general character.

First: the side playing against the fianchettoed bishop is hoping that the exchange of bishops will weaken the opposing king's defences and thus help his attack. It follows that this exchange is only justified when there are still many pieces remaining on the board. So, for example, in the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defence or in the Sämisch System of the King's Indian Defence, White tries to exchange the ♜g7 in order subsequently to organize a strong attack against the black king.

Second: another purpose for this exchange is often to try to solve certain positional problems, for example, to reduce pressure along the long diagonal, as illustrated by the examples quoted earlier of the Botvinnik-Smyslov encounters.

For his part, the side with the fianchettoed bishop will often prevent the exchange when there is a clear possibility of suffering an attack against his king, or when the exchange is disadvantageous on other positional grounds. On the other hand, the defender will not be opposed to the exchange if the pawn structure is subsequently advantageous for him, as we shall see later.

In order to study this theme in greater depth we shall limit ourselves to a single variation of a single defence. The examples which we shall analyse now are all taken from the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defence. As we know, this variation has two forms: the Mainline Dragon, starting with 2...d6, and the Accelerated Dragon, which starts with 2...♝c6, with the idea of executing the typical ...d7-d5 advance in one move.

Long gone are the times when players of my generation, inspired by the attacks conducted by our idols Tal and Fischer, thought that the Dragon was a losing proposition, as, according to the legendary American, White has a winning attack by means of the advance h2-h4-h5, after which he can 'pry open the KR file, sac, sac, mate'.

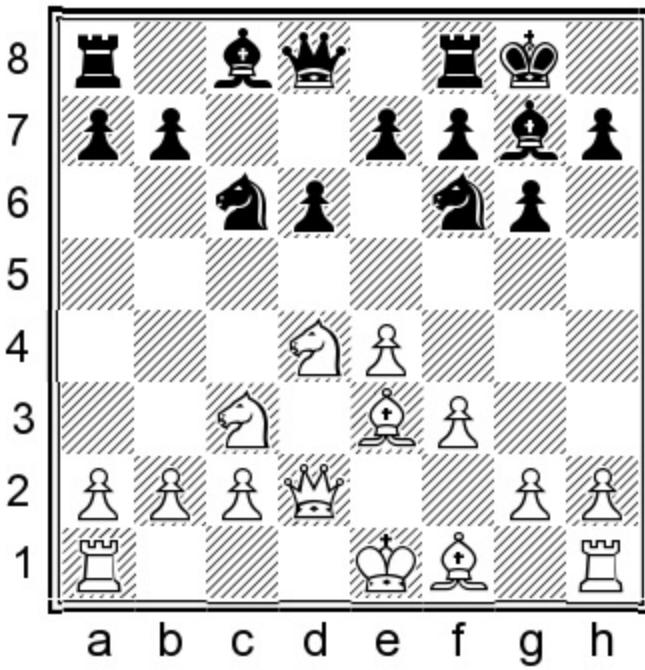
Here is the game that gave rise to that comment from Fischer.

Game 103  
Sicilian Defence  
**Robert James Fischer**  
**Bent Larsen**  
Portoroz 1958 (8)

**1.e4 c5 2.♝f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♝xd4 ♜f6 5.♝c3 g6 6.♝e3 ♜g7**

6...♝g4?? loses to 7.♝b5+.

**7.f3 0-0 8.♗d2 ♜c6**



### **9.Qc4**

The main line, although there have been almost the same number of games featuring the second most popular line, which allows the advance ...d6-d5: 9.0-0-0 and now the main continuation is 9...d5!? 10.exd5 (10.Qe1!?) 10...Qxd5 11.Qxc6 bxc6 12.Qd4 e5 (12...Qxd4!? 13.Qxd4 Qb6) 13.Qc5 Qe6 14.Qe4 (there are hardly any supporters of 14.Qxf8?!, as Black gains more than enough compensation for the exchange) 14...Qe8 15.h4!? and the statistics are very favourable to White.

### **9...Qxd4**

The most common line in modern times is 9...Qd7 10.0-0-0 Qc8 11.Qb3 Qe5 (11...Qxd4!? 12.Qxd4 b5).

### **10.Qxd4 Qe6 11.Qb3 Wa5 12.0-0-0 b5**

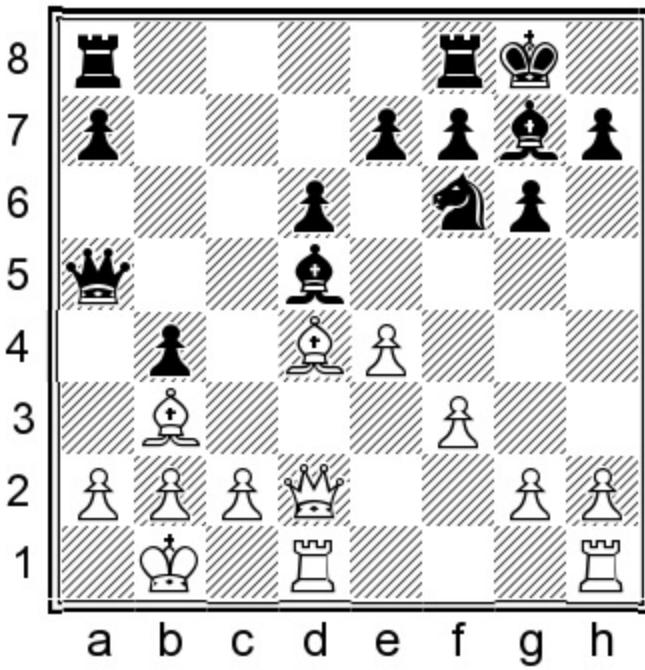
Another possibility is 12...Qxb3 13.cxb3!.

### **13.Qb1 b4 14.Qd5**

Black has no problems after 14.Qe2? Qxb3 15.cxb3 e5! 16.Qf2 Qfd8 17.Qh4 d5 18.Qxf6 Qxf6 19.exd5 Qd7 20.Qg3 Qad8 21.Qe4 Qg7.

### **14...Qxd5**

If 14...Qxd5? then after 15.Qxg7 Qxg7 (15...Qc3+ 16.bxc3 Qxg7 17.cxb4 Qb5 18.a4 Qc6 19.Qd4+, with an extra pawn for White, Kurmann-T.L.Petrosian, Budva 2009) 16.exd5 Qd7 17.h4 h5 18.g4, with a strong attack on the kingside, which has been weakened by the exchange of the Qg7.



**15.Qxd5?!**

Obviously in the middle of the last century opening theory in general and of this position in particular was in its infancy and this inaccuracy from Fischer is very understandable. 15.exd5!  $\mathbb{W}b5$  16. $\mathbb{E}he1$  a5 17. $\mathbb{W}d3$ !? (17. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xe2$  18. $\mathbb{E}xe2$  a4 19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  20.b3  $\mathbb{E}c7$ , with equal play, Drygalov-Paravyan, Russia tt 2018) 17... $\mathbb{W}xd3$  18.cxd3 a4 19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{E}eb8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  22. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  23. $\mathbb{E}a7$  gives a slight advantage to White, Moranda-Klekowski, Poland tt 2018.

Stockfish unveils the secret of this position: the only way for White to gain some advantage is with 16. $\mathbb{W}d3$ !  $\mathbb{W}xd3$  17. $\mathbb{E}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ ! (18. $\mathbb{E}e1$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  19. $\mathbb{E}dd1$  g5 20.c3! bxc3! 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  22. $\mathbb{E}e4$ , with equality, Ivanchuk-Djukic, Batumi 2018) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  19. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20. $\mathbb{E}he1$  g5! (20... $\mathbb{E}fe8$ ? 21. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  22.a3! bxa3 23. $\mathbb{E}xa3$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  25. $\mathbb{E}xa7$ , winning a pawn) 21. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  22. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  23. $\mathbb{E}b7$ , with an evaluation of 0.41 at the end of a 35-move variation.

**15...Eac8?**

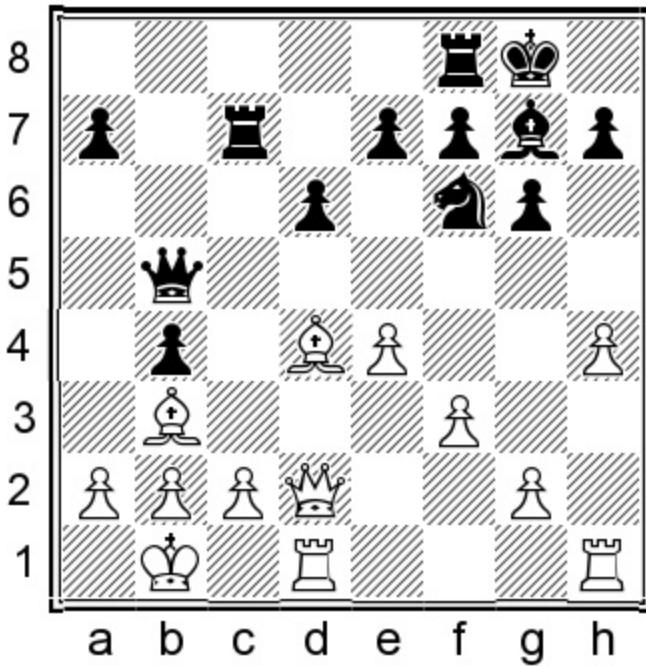
Black can equalize with 15... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (16.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xb4$  a5 18. $\mathbb{W}c3$  e5 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  leads to a double-edged position) 16... $\mathbb{Q}c3$ + 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (17.bxc3?!  $\mathbb{E}ab8$ ! 18.cxb4  $\mathbb{W}xb4+$  19. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{E}xb4+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{E}fb8$ ) 17...bxc3 18. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  19.bxc3  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  20. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  (the engine considers 20... $\mathbb{E}c5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  22. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}8c7$ !?) 21. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  22. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  23. $\mathbb{E}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  and the rook ending is equal, Drozdowski-Gorovets, Brownsville 2016.

**16.Qb3! Ec7?!**

According to Stockfish it was better to play 16... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !? 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  18.h4 h6 19.a3  $\mathbb{E}b8$  20.g4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21.f4 e6 22.a4  $\mathbb{E}b6$ , with an evaluation of 0.55 at the end of a long line, while the text move is 0.92.

## 17.h4 ♜b5

If 17...h5? the white attack is decisive, e.g. 18.g4! hxg4 (18...♜fc8 19.♝dg1 hxg4 20.h5 e5 21.♝e3 ♖xh5 22.♝xg4) 19.h5! gxh5 20.fxg4 ♜xe4 (20...♝xg4 21.♝dg1 ♜xd4 22.♝xg4+ hxg4 23.♝h6) 21.♝e3 ♜f6 22.gxh5 e5 23.h6.



## 18.h5! ♜fc8

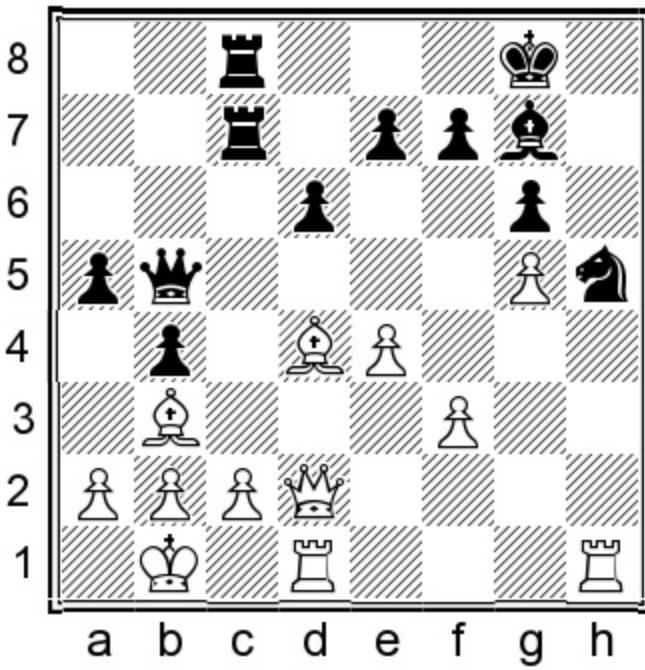
Of course not 18...gxh5? due to 19.g4! hxg4 20.♝dg1 ♜c5!? 21.♝xf6 exf6 22.♝h2, winning.

## 19.hxg6 hxg6 20.g4

20.♝xf6? ♜xf6 21.♝h6 achieves nothing due to 21...e6!, confirming a Russian saying: with a fianchettoed bishop you can't get mated! The engine indicates an unexpected possibility based on a positional exchange sacrifice to remove the fianchettoed bishop: 20.♝h6!! ♜xh6 21.♝xh6 ♜h5 22.♝c1 g5 23.♝h1 ♜g6 24.♝d2 a5 25.♝e2 ♜g7 26.♝a6 ♜c5 27.♝xc5 ♜xc5 28.♝a8 ♜g8 29.♝e8 e6 30.♝d8 ♜f6 31.♝xd6, with an extra pawn.

## 20...a5 21.g5 ♜h5

Better than 21...♝e8? 22.♝xg7 ♜xg7 23.♝h6! e6 (23...a4 24.♝h2 ♜h5 25.♝xg6+) 24.♝h2 ♜h5 25.♝xe6!; or 21...a4? 22.gxf6 axb3 23.fxg7! bxc2+ 24.♝xc2! e5 25.♝h2.



**22.♖xh5!**

This typical sacrifice destroys Black's defence, although matters will be far from easy for White if Black plays in the most tenacious manner.

**22...gxh5?**

This loses by force. The most resilient move was 22...♗xd4!, to which White's best reply is far from obvious: 23.♘h6!! (after 23.♗xd4? gxh5 24.g6 the engine sees no advantage for White after 24...♗c4!! (the alternatives lose, e.g. 24...e6? 25.gxf7+ ♘xf7 26.♗xd6; 24...♗e5? 25.gxf7+ ♘f8 26.♗g1 ♗g7 27.♗e6 ♘xc2 28.♗xg7+ ♘xg7 29.♗g1+ ♘h7 30.f8=♗ ♘xf8 31.♗xc2 ♘xf3 32.♗f5+), which was overlooked by all the commentators, including Fischer himself, and which, by the way, demonstrates one of the hidden resources of the Dragon: 25.gxf7+ ♘xf7 26.♗g1 a4 27.♗g7+ ♘e6 28.♗xc4+ ♘xc4, with equality) 23...♗g7 24.♗f4 e5 (24...♗xh6 25.♗xf7+ ♘h8 26.gxh6 ♗e5 27.♗xg6) 25.♗h4 a4 26.♗xg6 axb3 27.♗xg7+ ♘f8 28.♗h1 ♗c4 29.♗g8+ ♘e7 30.g6+ ♘e6 31.♗g4+ ♘e7 32.♗g5+ ♘d7 33.♗xc8 ♘xc8! 34.cxb3 ♗d3+ 35.♗a1 ♗xf3, and Black retains chances of survival. White wins elegantly in the event of 22...a4 23.♗h7! ♘xh7 24.♗h2+ ♘g8 25.♗xg7 ♘xg7 26.♗h6+ ♘g8 27.♗h1.

**23.g6 e5**

23...e6 also loses, e.g. 24.gxf7+ ♘xf7 (24...♗xf7 25.♗xe6) 25.♗xg7 ♘xg7 26.♗g1+ ♘h7 27.♗xe6 ♘xc2 28.♗xd6.

**24.gxf7+ ♘f8 25.♗e3 d5**

25...a4 26.♗xd6+ ♗e7 27.♗d8+! ♘xd8 28.♗xd8+ and 25...♗d8 26.♗h6 both lost on the spot.

## 26.exd5

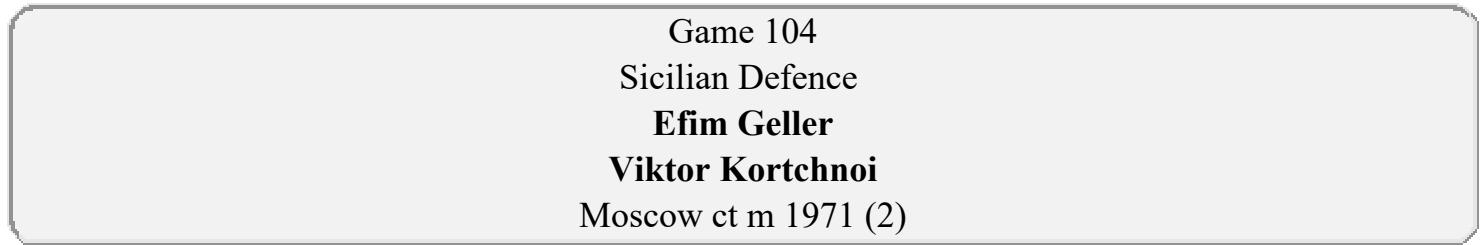
26.♗xd5? ♜xc2! would have given away all the advantage!

## 26...♝xf7

26...a4 27.d6! axb3 28.dxc7 was also losing.

**27.d6 ♜f6 28.♗g5 ♜b7 29.♗xf6 ♜xf6 30.d7 ♜d8 31.♗d6+ 1-0**

The exchange of the ♜g7 is not always bad for Black in the Dragon Variation.



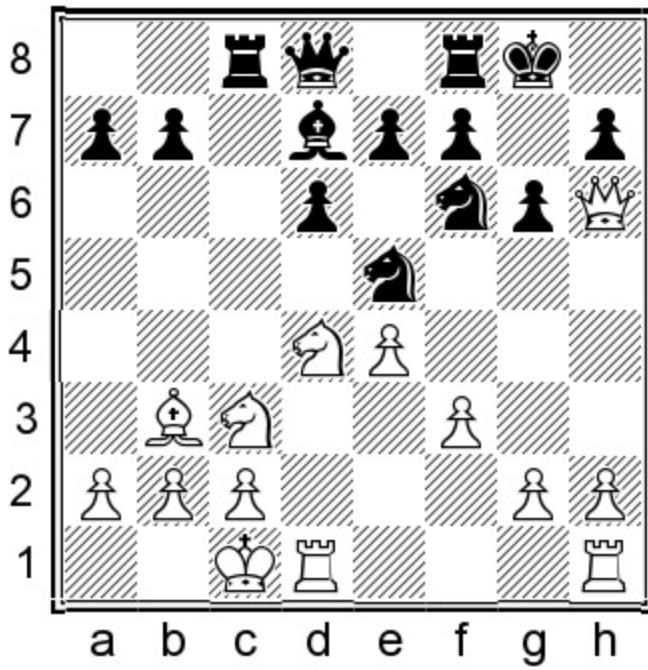
**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♗e3 ♜g7 7.f3 0-0 8.♗d2 ♜c6 9.♗c4 ♜d7 10.♗b3 ♜c8 11.0-0-0 ♜e5 12.♗h6?!**

Only after this high-level game did it become known to every Dragon fan that this attempt to exchange the ♜g7 is erroneous. At the present time the most accurate move-order is considered to be 12.♗b1!? ♜c4 13.♘xc4 ♜xc4 14.g4 b5 15.b3 (Stockfish recommends 15.h4!? b4 16.♗d5 ♜xd5 17.exd5 ♜a8 18.h5 ♜xd5 19.♗f5 ♜xd2 20.♗xe7+ ♜h8 21.♗xd2, awarding an advantage to White) 15...b4 16.bxc4 bxc3 17.♗xc3 ♜c7 18.g5 ♜h5 19.♗a1, and it seems that Black's compensation for the exchange is not sufficient, So-Duda, Moscow 2019.

## 12...♝xh6!

It is curious that just a couple of months previously, Kortchnoi had abstained from this move in a game played in a training match against Karpov, who was to be his future opponent in three matches, in 1974, 1978 and 1981. I know of a few other cases like this, where a player kept a novelty secret from his training partner, his second and even his pupil... 12...♗c4?! 13.♘xc4 ♜xh6 14.♗xh6 ♜xc4 15.h4 ♜a5 16.♗b3 ♜e5 17.♗d5 ♜fc8 18.c3 ♜c6 19.♗xf6+ ♜xf6 20.♗b1, with the better game for White, although Black won in the end, Karpov-Kortchnoi, Leningrad 1971.

## 13.♗xh6



**13...Bxc3!**

The key idea! This exchange sacrifice destroys the defences of the white king, castled on the queenside.

**14.bxc3 a5!?**

The main alternatives are two queen moves and Stockfish gives equality to both of them as well as to the text move: 14...Wc5!? 15.Qb2 Bc8 16.Wd2 Wc7 17.Bh1 a6 18.Qa1 b5 19.h3 Qc4 20.Bxc4 Wxc4 21.g4 Qe8 22.e5 dxe5 23.Bxe5 e6 24.Be2 Wc6 25.g5 Qd5 26.Bxd5 exd5 27.Wxd5 Wxd5 28.Bxd5 h6! 29.gxh6 Qh7, and with such a damaged pawn structure White has no chances of converting his extra pawn; and 14...Wc7!? 15.h4 Wxc3 16.Qb1 a5 17.h5 a4 18.hxg6 Qxg6 19.Bd3 Wb4 20.g4 axb3 21.cxb3 Bc8 22.g5 Qb5 23.Bdd1 Wc3 24.Bxb5 Wc2+ 25.Qa1 Ba8 26.a3 Wxb3 27.gxf6 Bxa3+ 28.Qxa3 Wxa3+, with perpetual check.

**15.a4**

15.a3 is also playable, e.g. 15...Wc7 16.Wd2 Wc5 17.Qb2 Wb6 18.Qa1 Wc5 19.Qb2, with a draw, Meijers-Raud, Bela Crkva 1990.

**15...Wc7 16.We3 Wc5 17.Qd2**

This move has its logic: White plans to transfer the monarch to the kingside, where it will be more secure. 17.Qb2!? maintained equality, although it would have been riskier: 17...Bxa4 18.f4 Qc4+ 19.Qxc4 Wxc4 20.Qb3 Qd7 21.h4 Wb5 22.h5 Qc5 23.e4!? Wb6 24.Bh3.

**17...Bxa4 18.Qa1 Bxb3**

Another possibility was 18... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !? 19. $\mathbb{Q}hb1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. $\mathbb{W}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , keeping the balance.

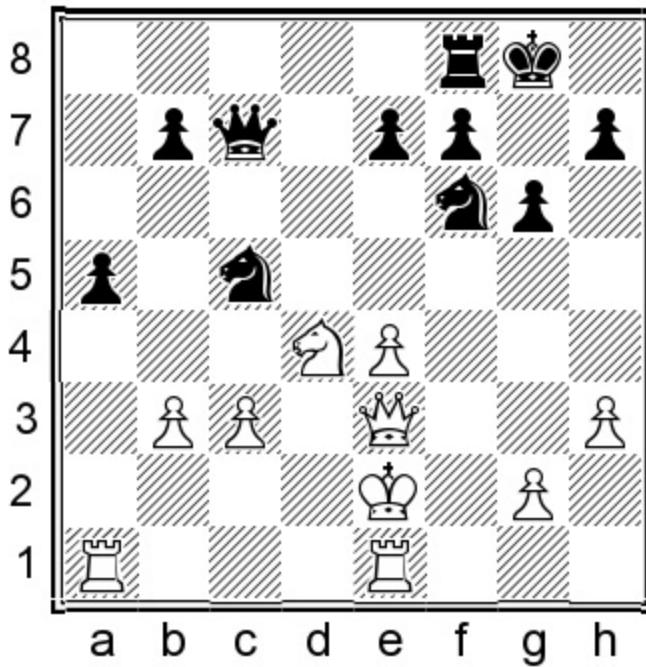
### 19.cxb3 d5! 20.h3

Of course 20.exd5??  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe5$  was bad, due to 21... $\mathbb{W}xc3+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b2+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ , and Black wins.

### 20...dxe4 21.fxe4 $\mathbb{Q}ed7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}he1$

Another possibility of about equal worth was 23. $\mathbb{Q}hd1$ !? $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}cxe4$  25.c4  $\mathbb{W}h2$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ .

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}c5$



### 24.e5?

Up to this point both players have been playing the same moves as in Stockfish's main line. However, from now on Geller, who was surprised by 12... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ !, begins to play badly, perhaps under the pressure of the clock. It was correct to play 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ! and now:

- A) 24... $\mathbb{Q}cxe4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ !?) 25...b6 26. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  27.c4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}xe3+$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ , with equality;
- B) 24... $\mathbb{W}h2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  (25... $\mathbb{W}c7$  26.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  27. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  and Black does not have full compensation for the exchange) 26. $\mathbb{W}g1$   $\mathbb{W}xg1+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xg1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  28. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  29.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  31.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , with a slight advantage to White;
- C) 24...e5 25. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  26.c4  $\mathbb{Q}fxe4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  28. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  b6 29. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ , and Black's two pawns

compensate for the exchange, but nothing more.

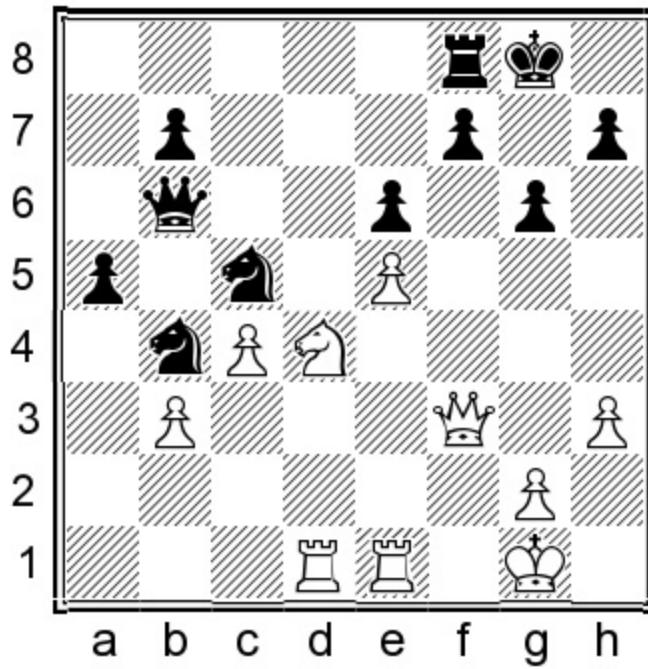
**24... ♜d5 25. ♜f3 e6?**

Probably in time pressure himself, Kortchnoi overlooks a tactic which would practically have won the game: 25... ♜e4! 26.c4 ♜dc3+ 27. ♜d3 f5 28. ♜ec1 (or 28.exf6 ♜xf6 29. ♜e3 ♜d6 30. ♜f1 ♜xf1 31. ♜xf1 e5, with a winning attack) 28... ♜d8 29. ♜xc3 ♜xd4+ 30. ♜xd4 ♜d8+ 31. ♜e3 ♜d2#.

**26. ♜f1 ♜d7?**

26... ♜xb3 leads to equality: 27. ♜xb3 ♜c4+ 28. ♜g1 ♜xb3 29. ♜eb1 ♜c4 30. ♜xb7 ♜xc3 31. ♜xa5 ♜d4+ 32. ♜h1 ♜e4 33. ♜aa7 ♜g5 34. ♜f6 ♜e4. Black has some practical winning chances after 26... ♜b6!? 27. ♜g3 (27. ♜ab1?? f6!) 27... ♜xb3 28. ♜xb3 ♜xg5 29. ♜xa5 ♜c8 30. ♜ea1 ♜xc3 31. ♜h4 ♜b6 32. ♜a8+ ♜g7 33. ♜d8 ♜xd8 34. ♜xd8 ♜e3.

**27.c4 ♜b4 28. ♜ad1 ♜c5 29. ♜g1 ♜b6**



**30. ♜h2**

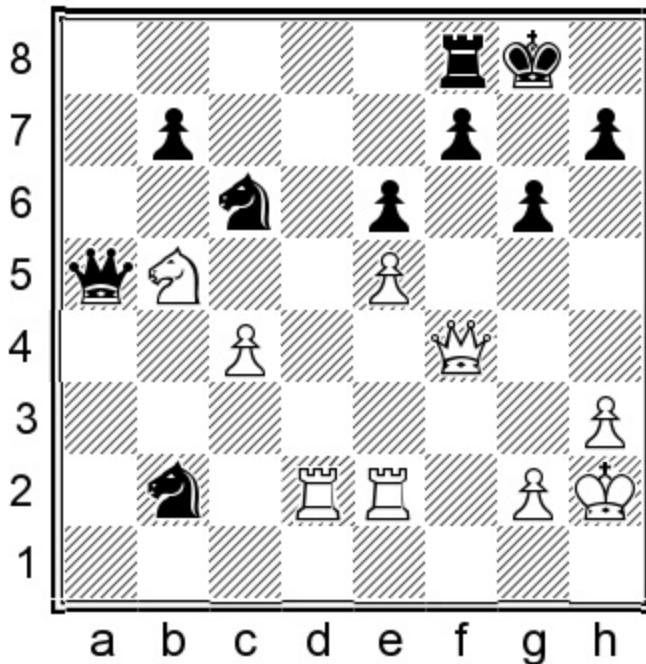
A very understandable human decision. Nevertheless it was stronger to play 30. ♜d2! ♜c6 (the idea of exploiting the pin on the ♜d4 does not work: 30... ♜d8? 31. ♜ed1 ♜cd3? 32. ♜xd3 ♜xd3 33. ♜xd3 ♜xd4 34. ♜e3 ♜d6 35. exd6, winning) 31. ♜xc6 ♜xc6 32. ♜xc6 bxc6 33. ♜a2 ♜xb3 34. ♜b1 ♜d4 35. ♜xa5 h5 36. ♜b7 h4 37. ♜aa7, and White should be able to convert his material advantage.

30. ♜e3!? also kept the advantage, e.g. 30... ♜d8 31. ♜f5 ♜xd1 32. ♜h6+ ♜g7 33. ♜xd1 ♜c2 34. ♜f2 ♜xh6 35. ♜d2! a4 (35... ♜a1 36. ♜d4 ♜axb3 37. ♜h4+ ♜g7 38. ♜f6+ ♜g8 39. ♜d8+) 36.bxa4 ♜b2 37. ♜xc2, and Black's compensation for the exchange is not sufficient.

30... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ !?

30...f5! would have complicated White's task, e.g. 31.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}bd3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  33. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}d6+$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  e5.

31. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a4 32.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  33. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}ee2$  ½-½

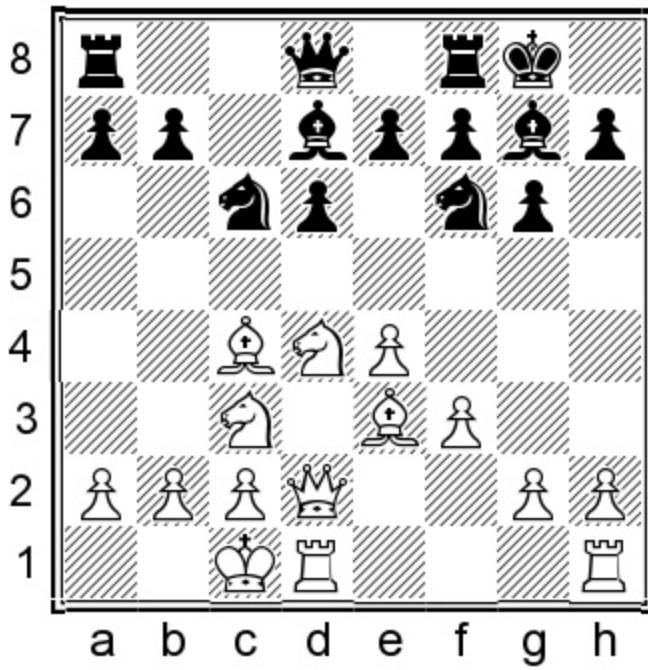


In the final position White has an overwhelming advantage, so it is not easy understand the result...

There are a great many examples of a successful white attack following the exchange of the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ .

Game 105  
Sicilian Defence  
**Veselin Topalov** 2777  
**Magnus Carlsen** 2775  
Bilbao 2008 (8)

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7.f3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8. $\mathbb{W}d2$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10.0-0-0

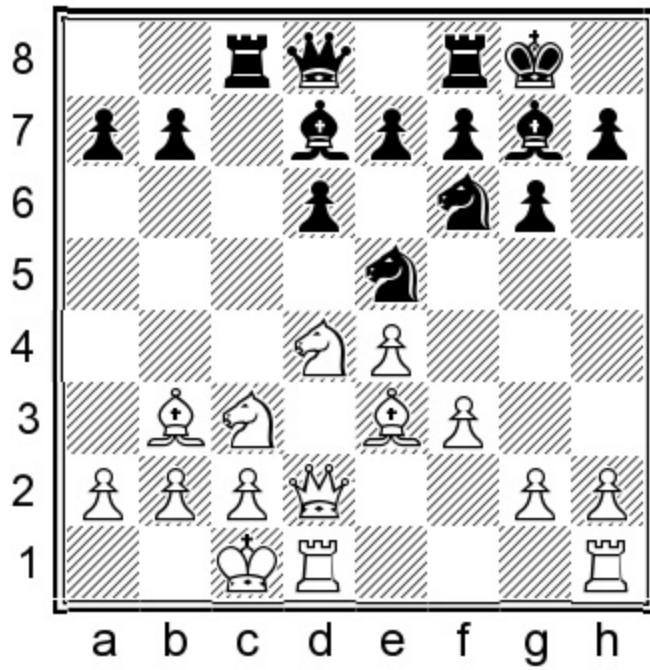


**10...♝c8**

This is the main line, although 10...♝b8!? has a better score; this move is an attempt to carry out the advance ...b7-b5, followed by ...a7-a5, without losing a tempo with ...a7-a6, as played in the game. A more recent example is 11.♚b3 ♛a5 12.♚h6 (12.h4!? b5 13.♔b1 (13.h5!?) 13...♛c4?! (13...h5!) 14.♚xc4 bxc4 15.♔a1 (15.g4! h5 16.gxh5 ♜xh5 17.♔a1) 15...h5 16.♚b1 ♜a5 17.♚h6 ♜xh6 18.♜xh6 ♜b6 19.g4? (19.♝g5!?) 19...hxg4 20.♜e3 ♜fb8 21.h5 g5!, with the better game for Black, Carlsen-Radjabov, Bilbao 2008) 12...♚xh6 13.♜xh6 b5 14.♞d5 (14.h4 e5!) 14...♞xb3+ 15.♞xb3 e5 (15...♞xd5!? 16.exd5 ♜c7 17.h4 ♜bc8 18.♜d2 f6 19.♜e3 a5, with equality, Broniek-Lanc, cr 2017) 16.♞xf6+ ♜xf6 17.h4 ♜b6! with chances for both sides, Robson-Nakamura, St Louis 2019.

It is curious to compare the human continuation with that of Stockfish in the variation played in this game: 10...♝c8 11.♚b3 ♛xd4 12.♚xd4 b5 13.♞d5 ♛xd5 14.♚xg7 ♛xg7 15.exd5 a5 16.a3 b4 (16...♜b6 17.♚he1 h5 18.♜xe7 ♜f5 19.c3 ♜fe8 20.♜xe8 ♜xe8 21.♚c2 ♛xc2 22.♚xc2 a4 23.♜d4+ ♜xd4 24.♜xd4 ♜e2+ 25.♚d2 ♜e3 26.♚d1 h4 27.h3 ♜e5, and at an adequate depth the engine gives only 0.36, which signifies that this rook ending is a draw) 17.axb4 axb4 18.♜xb4 ♜g8 19.♚he1 ♜e8 20.♜e3, and according to both the engine and the statistics Black's compensation for the pawn is not sufficient, Le Quang Liem-Mamedov, Hengshui 2019.

**11.♚b3 ♛e5**



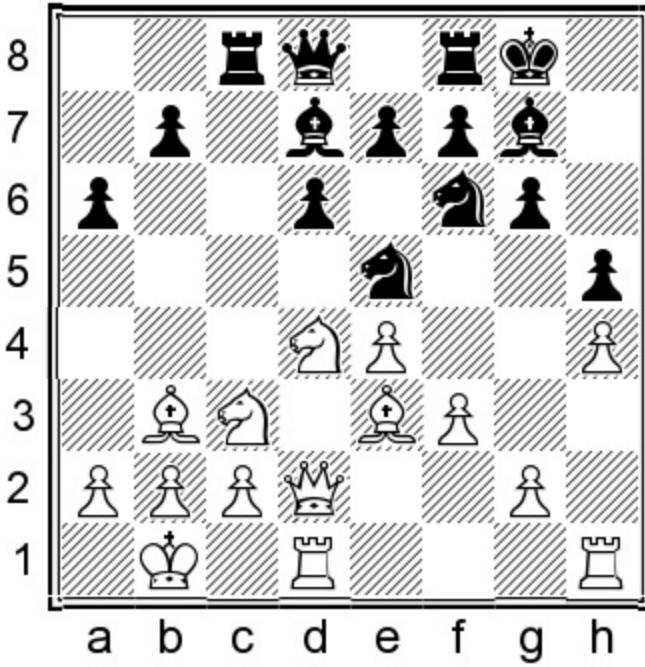
**12.♔b1!**

This useful waiting move is nowadays considered the most precise. Stockfish confirms this, awarding it a higher evaluation than the alternatives. Less accurate are 12.g4?! b5! and 12.♗g5 ♖e8!? 13.♔b1 ♗c4 14.♗xc4 ♖xc4 15.e5 ♗h5.

**12...a6**

In this position Black has several options, starting with the obvious 12...♗c4; 12...♖e8 has the best score among the five main alternatives here. The move in the game prepares the advance ...b7-b5.

**13.h4 h5**



A modern interpretation of the Dragon. In the last century this move was considered dubious, precisely due to White's next three attacking moves. And as we shall see in the next note, that evaluation remains valid in this concrete case.

#### 14.g4!

Judging by the score of 71.1% (!) and the engine's evaluation of 1.28, this is the only plan which gives White a clear advantage.

14.g4! hxg4 15.h5 ♜xh5 16.♖dg1 ♜c5 17.f4 ♜c4 18.♕xc4 ♜xc4 19.f5 ♜b6 (19...e6 20.fxe6 fxe6 21.♖xg4 ♜f6 22.♗de2 ♜f3 23.♖hg1 ♜e8 24.♖h6, and White won in Copar-Lanc, cr 2015) 20.♗de2 ♜c6 21.♖h6 ♜xc3 22.♗xc3 ♜xc3 23.♖xf8 ♜xc2 24.♖xc2 ♜xc2+ 25.♔xc2 etc. 14.♖dg1!? may be not quite as good but is also advantageous for White, e.g. 14...b5 15.g4 e6 16.♗g5 ♜b6 17.♗ce2 hxg4 18.h5 ♜xf3 19.♗xf3 ♜xe4 20.♘f4 gxf3 21.♘xe4 fxe2 22.♘xe2 ♜d4 23.♘c1 ♜c6 24.hxg6.

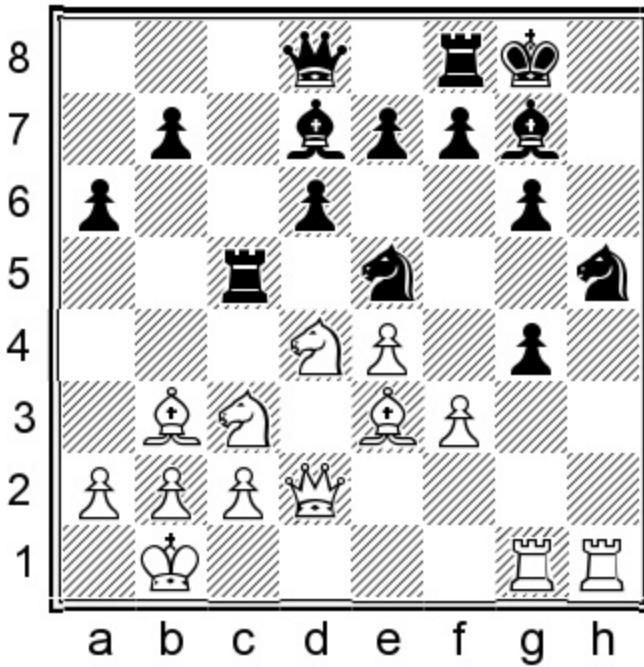
#### 14...hxg4 15.h5!

15.♖dg1?! leads to equality after 15...gxf3 16.h5 ♜xc3! 17.♘xc3 ♜xe4 18.♘e1 e6 19.hxg6 ♜f6 20.gxf7+ ♜xf7 21.♗xe6 ♜xe6 22.♗xe6 ♜xe6, etc.

#### 15...♜xh5 16.♖dg1 ♜c5

After 16...♝a5! 17.♔h6 the typical sacrifice on c3 loses, precisely due to the exchange of the ♔g7: 17...♜xc3? (17...♝f6!?) sacrifices the exchange, rather than allowing the exchange of the ♔g7: 18.fxg4 ♜xg4 19.♝xf8?! (Stockfish recommends 19.♗g5! ♔g7 20.♗xe7 ♜fe8 21.♗xd6 ♜cd8 22.♗xe5 ♜xe5 23.♗xg4 ♜xd4 24.♗g2 ♜f4 25.♗xf7+! ♜xf7 26.♗xf4+ ♜xf4 27.♗f1, with advantage to White) 19...♝xf8, with enough compensation for the exchange, Karjakin-Radjabov, Sochi 2008) 18.♗xg7 ♔xg7 19.♗xh5! and White wins, Anand-Carlsen, Mainz 2008.

Another interesting possibility, albeit not as strong as 16... $\mathbb{W}a5$ , is 16... $\mathbb{E}c4!$ ? 17. $f\text{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$  18. $\mathbb{E}\text{x}g4$   $\mathbb{E}\text{x}d4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$  20. $\mathbb{W}g5$  e6 21. $\mathbb{W}\text{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}d4$  22. $\mathbb{E}\text{x}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  24. $\mathbb{E}\text{x}h8$   $\mathbb{W}\text{x}h8$  25.c3  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , and it is not so easy to realize White's advantage in material.



**17. $\mathbb{Q}h6!$**

A good alternative was 17.f4!? $\mathbb{Q}c4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}c4$   $\mathbb{E}\text{x}c4$  19.f5. However, Topalov prefers first to exchange the principal defender of the black king, the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ .

**17... $\mathbb{Q}h7$**

This time, sacrificing the exchange in order to preserve the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  does not work, in either of its two forms: 17... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f8$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$  seems even stronger, e.g. 18... $\mathbb{E}e8$  19. $f\text{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ ) 20. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f6+$   $\text{ex}f6$  21. $\mathbb{W}f2$  a5 22. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  b5 23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  a4 24. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$ , with a decisive attack for White) 18... $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f8$  19. $f\text{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , with advantage to White; or 17... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  19. $f\text{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  21. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f3$  22. $\mathbb{W}g2$  e6 23. $\mathbb{W}\text{x}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  24. $\mathbb{W}\text{x}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f6$  25. $\mathbb{E}h4$ , and Black does not have enough compensation for the piece.

**18. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g7$**

Exchanging the fianchettoed bishop, to be followed by an attack along the g- and f-files. According to Stockfish, 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}f3$   $\text{gxf3}$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{E}\text{x}d5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}d5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  22.c3 f2 23. $\mathbb{E}g2$  e6 24. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  f5 26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  was slightly better. So it seems that we are in a very curious situation, where exchanging the fianchettoed bishop and not doing so are practically equivalent!

**18... $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}g7$  19.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}\text{x}c4$   $\mathbb{E}\text{x}c4$  21.f5 e5!**

The best defence; 21... $\mathbb{E}h8$ ? was worse, due to 22. $\mathbb{E}xg4$  e5 23.fxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$  fxe6 25. $\mathbb{E}hg1$   $\mathbb{E}h6$  26. $\mathbb{W}d3$ , with a strong attack for White.

## 22. $\mathbb{Q}de2$

Black could resist after 22.fxe6?! fxe6 23.b3 (23. $\mathbb{Q}de2!?$ ) 23... $\mathbb{E}xc3$  24. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  e5 25. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{E}xf5$  26.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  27. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$ , and Black's two pieces and three pawns are a match for White's two rooks.

## 22... $\mathbb{E}h8$ 23.b3

After 23. $\mathbb{W}xd6?$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  24. $\mathbb{W}xe5+$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  25. $\mathbb{W}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  26. $\mathbb{E}xh8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  27.e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  Black gains a clear advantage.

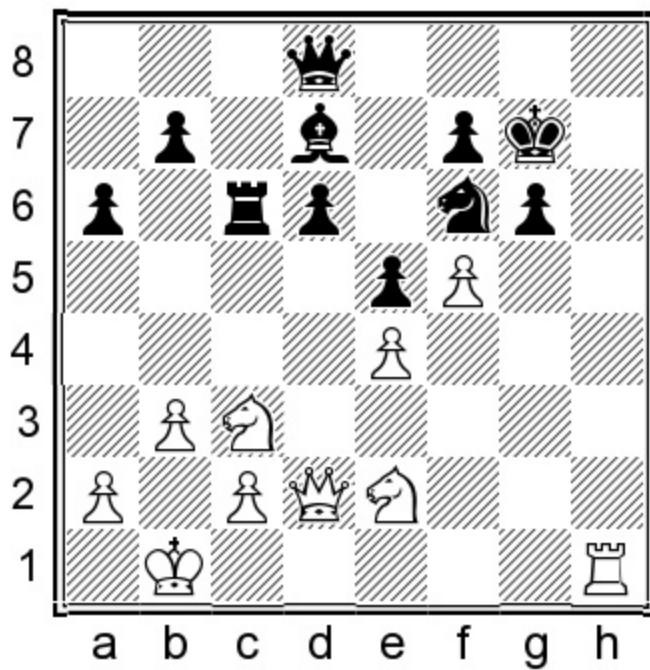
## 23... $\mathbb{E}c6?$

Now Black's position collapses. It was essential to play 23... $\mathbb{E}c8!$ , although after 24. $\mathbb{E}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25. $\mathbb{E}xh8$   $\mathbb{W}xh8$  26. $\mathbb{E}g1$  White has good compensation for the pawn.

## 24. $\mathbb{E}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 25. $\mathbb{E}gg1!$

Avoiding the trap 25. $\mathbb{E}gh4??$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ ; 25. $\mathbb{E}xh8?$  loses the advantage after 25... $\mathbb{W}xh8$  26. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{W}h6$ .

## 25... $\mathbb{E}xh1$ 26. $\mathbb{E}xh1$



## 26... $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Carlsen is doing all he can, defending the critical h6-square, but the ♜g7 is notable for its absence and this makes Black's position untenable. 26...♝h5? loses immediately to 27.♝g3!.

**27.♝g3 ♜g8 28.♝d5 ♜c5 29.♝e3 ♜xe3**

In the event of 29...♝g5? 30.♝xd6 ♜xe3 31.♝xd7, the threat of 32.♝d8/e8+ followed by 33.♝h8 mate is decisive.

**30.♝xe3 ♜f6 31.♝h6**

There was a quicker win with 31.♝h6! ♜g7 32.♝g5 f6 33.♝h4 ♜e8 34.fxg6 ♜xg6 35.♝b2, and the threat of 36.♝f5 is decisive.

**31...♝g7 32.♝g5 f6 33.♝d2 ♜c6 34.♝b2**

Here 34.♝a5! ♜c8 (34...b6 35.♝xa6) 35.♝d5+ ♜f8 36.fxg6 was also winning.

**34...gxsf5**

There was no salvation in 34...♜e8 35.♝h2 (35.fxg6!?) 35...g5 36.♝f1 ♜f7 37.♝e3 ♜f8 38.♝g4 ♜e7 39.♝h6.

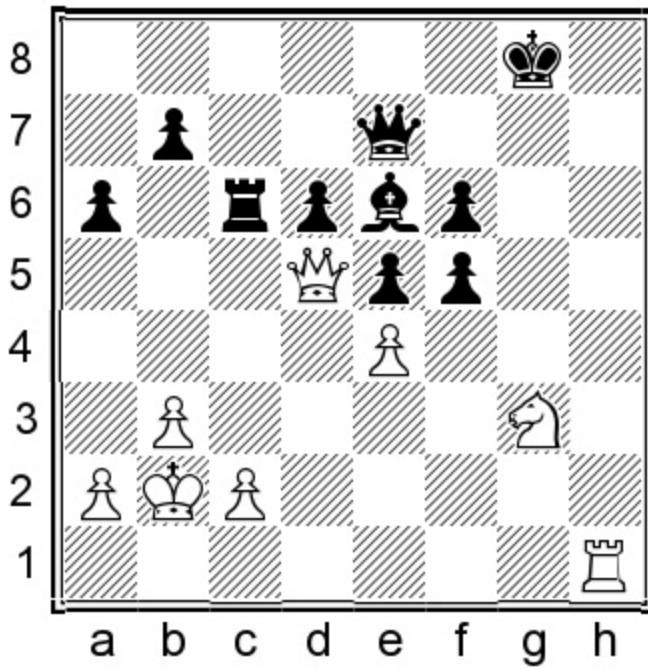
**35.♝a5**

It was more accurate to play 35.♝h2! fxe4 36.♝h5 ♜h8 37.♝xf6+! ♜xf6 38.♝h7+ ♜f8 39.♝xd7 e3 40.♝xb7 e4+ 41.♝a3 d5 42.♝a8+ ♜f7 43.♝h7+.

**35...♝e7**

More tenacious, although ultimately futile, was 35...b6!? 36.♝d5+ ♜f8 37.♝xf5 ♜g8 38.♝xg8+ ♜xg8 39.♝e7+, winning the exchange.

**36.♝d5+ ♜e6**



**37.♘d1!**

Simplest; 37.♗xf5 ♕xc2+! leads to unnecessary complications: 38.♔a1 (38.♔xc2?? ♘c7+ 39.♔b2 ♖xd5) 38...♘d7 39.♗d3 ♖xf5 40.♗xc2 ♖g6, and Black can still resist.

**37...♘g7 38.exf5**

Another possibility was 38.♗xf5!? ♖xf5 39.exf5 ♔f8 40.♗g1 ♘h7 41.♗d5.

**38...♖f7 39.♗e4 ♔f8 40.♗xd6 ♔e7 41.♗xb7**

The game is over.

**41...♘g8 42.♗d2 ♕b6 43.♗d1 ♘c8 44.♗d6**

Instead of the direct attack with 44.♗d8!? ♘c7 45.♗xf7 ♔xf7 46.♗d5+ ♔f8 47.♗g1, Topalov prefers to steer the game into a rook ending, which is winning thanks to his pawn majority on the queenside.

**44...♘d7 45.♗xf7 ♘xd2 46.♗xd2 ♔xf7 47.c4 ♔e7 48.♔c3 1-0**

## 5.4. EFB in the Accelerated Dragon

In the Accelerated Dragon, especially when White plays c2-c4, the theme of the exchange of the ♜g7 usually has a markedly positional tinge.

Game 106  
Sicilian Defence  
**Fridrik Olafsson**  
**Vladimir Simagin**  
Moscow 1959 (8)

It is interesting to recall that in the year this game was played Fridrik Olafsson took part in the Candidates Tournament in Yugoslavia, won by Mikhail Tal. That means that, at least formally, Olafsson was among the ten best players in the world at that time. Nevertheless, in this game he was outplayed, especially in strategic understanding, by a Soviet master, one who had an original style of play but was not even among the top twenty players of his own country.

It should be said that Olafsson's contribution to the chess world was not limited to his playing career: for four years he was the president of FIDE and he also worked as the secretary of the parliament of his country, which has a tiny population but a large number of chess players: in the 1980s, with only about 300,000 inhabitants, Iceland could boast ten strong grandmasters. I recall my surprise around that time when a group of Icelandic chess players who were visiting my chess department in Moscow showed me a chess magazine written specially for Icelandic children. There can be no doubt that all of these achievements, as well as the organization of the famous Spassky-Fischer match in 1972, were connected with the player of the white pieces in this game.

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 g6 5.c4**

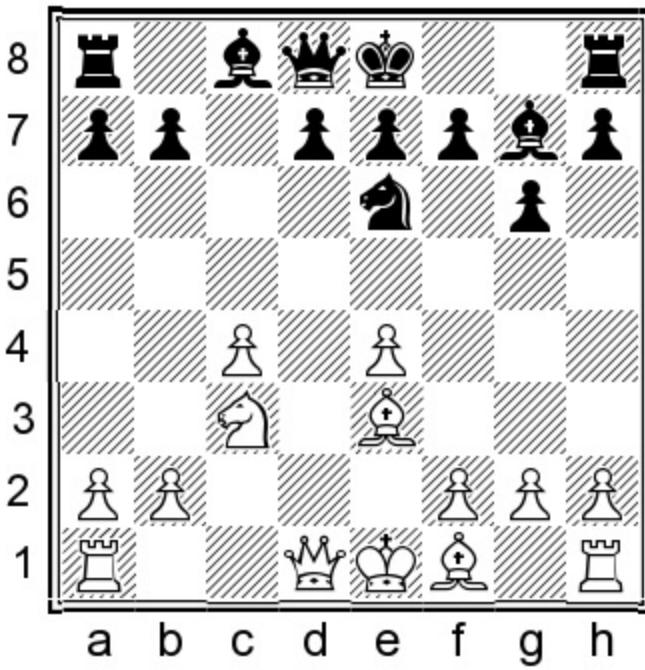
The famous Maroczy structure, which is considered more promising than the main alternative 5.♘c3, as confirmed by the statistics: 57.8% and 51.2% respectively.

**5...♜g7 6.♗e3 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♘g4 8.♗xg4 ♘xd4 9.♗d1**

In the event of 9.0-0-0 Black has no problems, e.g. 9...♘c6 10.♘d5 (10.♗g5!?) 10...e6 11.♘c3 (11.♘f4? ♗a5 12.♗b1 ♗b4 13.a3 ♗e5) 11...♗a5 12.♗e2 ♜xc3 13.bxc3 ♗xc3+ 14.♗c2 ♗g7 15.♗b2, and White has compensation for the pawn but nothing more, Dreisch-Künitz, cr 2015.

**9...♘e6**

This is still the main line; the principal alternative is 9...e5.



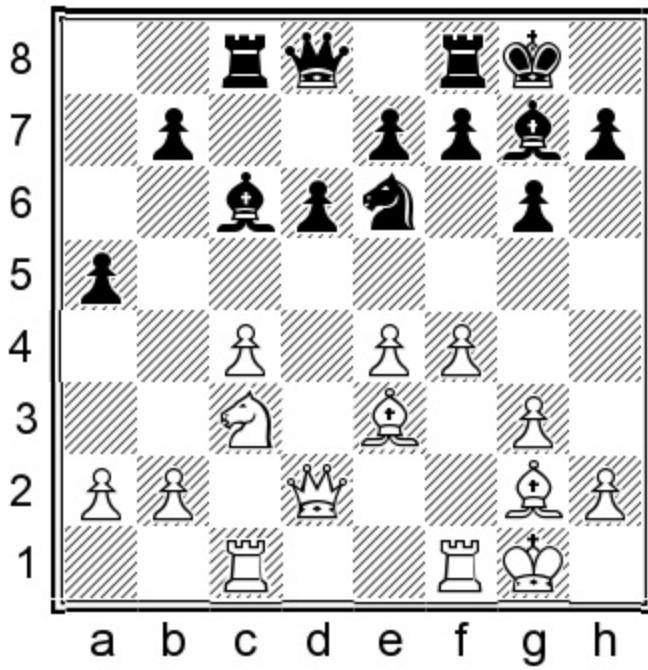
**10.♗d2**

The most common move here is 10.♗c1!?, e.g. 10...♝a5 11.♕d3 b6 12.0-0 ♜b7 13.f4 0-0 14.a3, and now the exchange of the ♜g7, which is one of Black's main strategic ideas, gave White a clear advantage after 14...♝d4?! (14...♝c5!? 15.e5 (15.b4? ♛xa3) 15...♝xd3 16.♗xd3 ♜fd8) 15.♗xd4 ♜xd4 16.♗d5 ♜xd5 17.exd5 in Yermolinsky-Fast, Stillwater 2011.

**10...d6 11.g3**

The usual continuation is 11.♔e2 ♜d7 (11...♝a5!?) 12.0-0 0-0 13.♗fd1 ♜c6 14.f3 ♜c5 (14...a6?! 15.♗d5 b5 16.♗ac1 bxc4 17.♔xc4) 15.♗ac1 a5 16.b3 ♛b6 17.♗d5 ♜xd5 18.cxd5 ♛b4 19.♗c2 ♛xd2 20.♗xd2 h5 21.♔b5, when the pair of bishops gives White a lasting initiative, Khismatullin-Vorobiov, Vladivostok 2014. The engine recommends a similar line: 11.♗d5 ♜c5 12.f3 a5 13.♔g5 f6 14.♔e3 ♔e6 15.♔e2 ♜xd5 16.cxd5 ♛b6 17.0-0 0-0 18.♗ac1 ♛b4 19.♗c2 ♛xd2 20.♗xd2 ♜f7 21.♔e3, giving White around 0.70.

**11...♜d7 12.♗c1 a5 13.♗g2 ♜c6 14.0-0 0-0 15.f4 ♜c8**



## 16.Qfd1

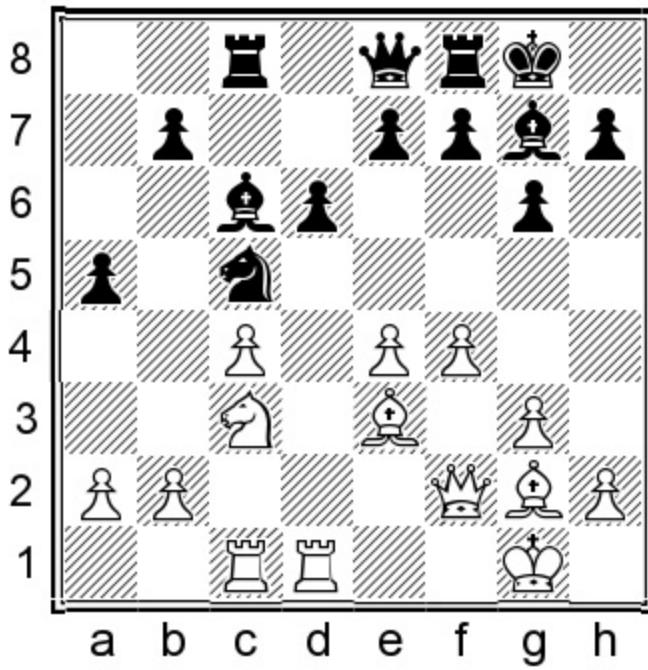
16.Qf2!? deserved attention, e.g. 16...Qxc3 (16...Qc5 17.Qxc5!? dxcc5 18.e5) 17.Qxc3 Qc5 18.Qe1 Qd7 19.Qd2. With a typical continuation in positions of this type, 16.f5 Qc5 17.b3 Qxc3 18.Qxc3 f6 19.Qc2 Qg7 20.Qcd1 Qc7 21.Qd2 Qg8 22.Qde1 Qd7, White gets some threats on the kingside, in return for handing over the e5-square to the black knight.

## 16...Qc5 17.Qf2?!

Black threatens to capture on c3 and e4 and therefore the correct continuation was 17.e5! Qxg2 18.Qxg2 Qe8 19.exd6 exd6 20.Qd5 Qe6 21.Qxc5 Qxc5 (21...dxcc5?? 22.Qe1 Qd6 23.Qe7+) 22.a4 Qcc8! 23.b3 (23.Qe1? Qxc4!) 23...Qce8 24.Qc2 Qf5 25.g4 Qd7 26.h3 f5 27.g5 Qe4 28.Qcd2, with the better game for White, although Black has counterplay.

## 17...Qe8?!

17...Qxc3! practically equalizes, e.g. 18.Qxc5 (18.bxc3? or 18.Qxc3? Qxe4 19.Qxe4 Qxe4) 18...Qb4! 19.Qxb4 axb4 20.c5 Qa5 21.cxd6 exd6 22.b3 Qce8 23.Qc4 Qe6 and Black's counterplay against the e4-pawn compensates for the weaknesses in his pawn structure.

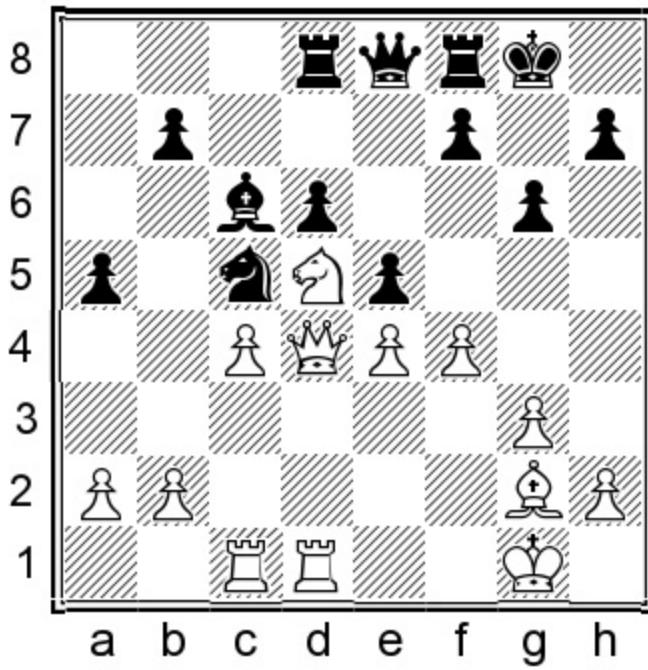


**18.♕d4?!**

'This move is based on a misconception. The supposed attack on the kingside is an illusion, whereas the pawn structure is advantageous to Black. It was necessary to play 18.♘d5, with a small advantage to White.' To this comment of mine written some thirty-five years ago (!), Stockfish 11 adds the concrete variation 18.♘d5! ♕xd5! 19.♖xd5 ♕a4 20.b3 ♕b4 21.e5 a4 22.♗b1 ♕fe8 23.♗d2 ♕xd2 24.♗xd2 axb3 25.axb3 dxe5 26.fxe5 ♕xe5 27.b4 ♕a4 28.c5 ♕c7 29.♗b3 etc., affirming that White has an advantage of 0.84, i.e. not so small. The engine also corrects me in the evaluation of the text move: it is not the best but it still retains some advantage for White. After 18.♕xc5 dxc5 19.e5 f6 20.exf6 ♘xf6 21.♘d5+ ♕xd5 22.♖xd5 ♘b6 23.♗e1 e6 24.♗b5 ♘xb5 25.cxb5 ♘d4 26.♖xd4 cxd4 27.♕xd4 ♘xb5 28.♕e5 ♘b6+, White's advantage is minimal.

**18...♘xd4 19.♖xd4 ♘d8 20.♘d5 e5?!**

Although objectively it was better to play 20...♘xd5! 21.cxd5 (21.exd5 ♕a4!) 21...b5 22.♗d2 f6 23.h4 ♘b8 24.♗h2 b4, with equality, Simagin's notable move is one of those that stays in the memory: the e4-pawn is now fixed and Black has the prospect of a favourable endgame, thanks to his good knight and the white bishop's lack of activity.



**21.♕f6+!?**

The engine gives the same evaluation of about 0.30 both to the text move and the obvious human alternative: 21.♗c3!? f6 (21...♗xd5 22.♗xd5 b6 23.fxe5 dxe5 24.♗xe5 ♗a4) 22.♗xa5 (22.f5 ♗xd5 23.♗xd5 ♗a4 24.a3) 22...exf4 23.gxf4 ♘xe4. The engine gives as best 21.♗e3!?, defending the e4-pawn: 21...♗xd5 (21...f6!?) 22.♗xd5 exf4 23.gxf4 ♗e7 24.♗cd1 ♗fe8 25.f5 b6 26.♗d4 ♗h4 27.e5 ♗xd4+ 28.♗1xd4 gxf5 29.exd6 ♗e6 30.♗h3, although without much analysis time even the engine sees nothing special after 30...♗g6+.

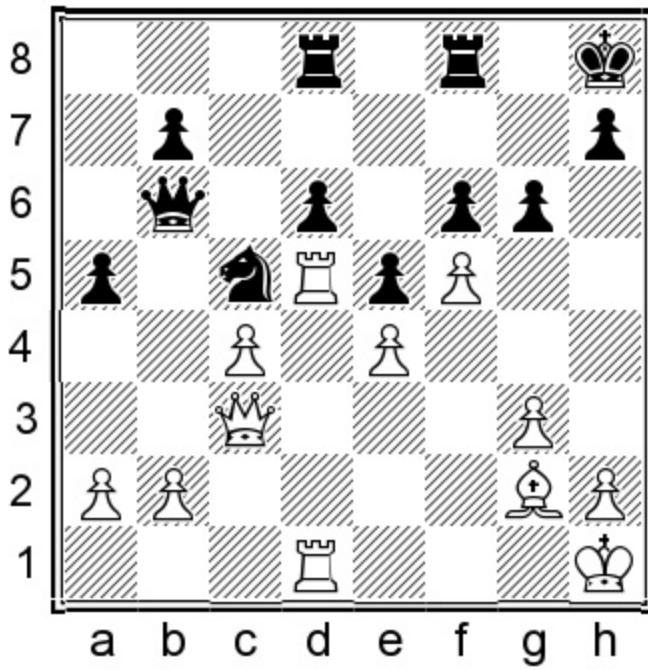
**21...♔h8 22.♗c3!**

22.♗xe8?! exd4 23.♗f6 ♔g7 24.♗d5 d3 leads to equality.

**22...♗e7 23.♗d5 ♗xd5 24.♗xd5 f6 25.f5**

White prevents the manoeuvre ...♗c5-e6-d4, and aims to draw by closing the position. 25.♗xa5 maintains equality, e.g. 25...♗a8 (25...exf4 26.gxf4 ♘xe4 27.♗e1 f5) 26.♗c3 (or 26.♗b6 ♗xa2) 26...♗xa2 27.♗cd1 ♘e6 as 28.♗xd6?! ♘d4!. It should be said that the engine gives the highest evaluation to the text.

**25...♗c7 26.♗cd1 ♗b6 27.♔h1**



**27...g5!**

A positional trap; Black provokes the capture of the d6-pawn, after which the game will open up and the black team of queen and knight will be more effective and mobile than White's queen and bishop.

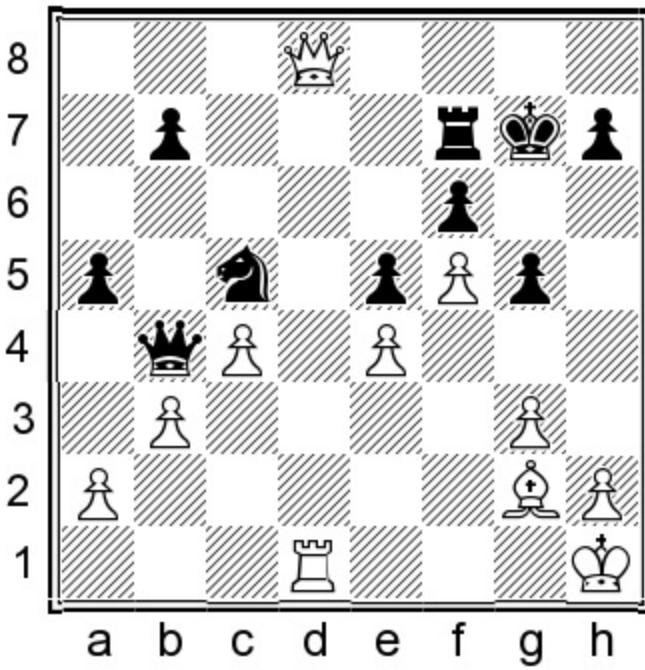
**28.♗d2 ♜f7?!**

A serious error. It was correct to move his king to g8 or g7, keeping the balance, e.g. 28...♔g8! 29.h4 h6 30.♕xd6 ♜xd6 31.♗xd6 ♜xd6 32.♗xd6 ♔f7.

**29.♕xd6 ♜xd6 30.♗xd6 ♜b4 31.b3?**

According to the engine, White could have gained a clear advantage with 31.h4! g4 (or 31...♗xc4?! 32.♗d5 ♜xd5 33.♕xd5 b6 34.hxg5) 32.♗b8+ ♔g7 33.♔h2 ♜d7 (33...♗xb2? 34.♗d8 ♔h6 35.♗h8 ♜g7 36.♗f8 ♜d7 37.♗d6 ♜d4 38.♗d5) 34.♗d8 ♜f8 35.b3 a4 36.♗d6, but I think that from a practical viewpoint this continuation and its evaluation would not be quite so clear during a tournament game, since the ♔g2 appears rather passive and Black has the better structure.

**31...♔g7 32.♗d8**



Both sides have achieved their goals: White has won a pawn, while Black has deployed his pieces perfectly. The  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  remains restricted by its own pawns. With his next move Simagin applies a characteristic method in positions of this kind: undermining the white pawn structure on the queenside.

**32...a4! 33.bxa4?**

White could have kept the balance with 33.h4!, although calculating the possible consequences would be far from easy, e.g. 33...gxh4 (33...g4!?) 34.gxh4  $\mathbb{W}c3$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  axb3 36.axb3  $\mathbb{W}e3$  37. $\mathbb{B}f1$  (37. $\mathbb{B}g1?$   $\mathbb{W}f2$ ) 37... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  39. $\mathbb{B}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  40. $\mathbb{W}d2+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  41. $\mathbb{B}g5+!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  42. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  43. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  44. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$  45. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}f4$ , with a repetition of position. Instead, 33. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  34. $\mathbb{B}xd2$  axb3 35.axb3  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  36. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  would have led to an inferior but playable endgame.

**33... $\mathbb{W}xc4$**

Now Black's advantage is clear.

**34. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{W}c2??$**

After the obvious capture on e4 the  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  would come back to life, but in fact this was the best continuation, as two moves further on White could have practically equalized: 34... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  35. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  36. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  37.a5  $\mathbb{W}b4$  38. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}d4$ . 34...g4!? 35. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  36.a5 h5 37. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{W}f2$  was also better than the text move.

**35. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xa4$  36. $\mathbb{B}c1?$**

The only continuation that could possibly save the game was 36. $\mathbb{W}e2!$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  37. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}e3$  38. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$

39.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  g4 40.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (42...  $\mathbb{E}c2+$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$ ) 43.  $\mathbb{E}d2$  e4 44.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  b5 45. h3  $\mathbb{E}a7$  46.  $\mathbb{E}b2$ , with good drawing chances.

**36...  $\mathbb{E}d7$  37.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}a3!$  38.  $\mathbb{E}b1?!$**

Here 38.  $\mathbb{E}c2$  b6 39.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}d3$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6!$  (40...  $\mathbb{E}e3$  41.  $\mathbb{W}d1$ ) 41.  $\mathbb{W}f1$  was somewhat more tenacious, although it should not affect the result.

**38...  $\mathbb{W}c3$  39.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

39...  $\mathbb{E}xd1+!$  led to a winning queen ending after 40.  $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  41.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (41...  $\mathbb{Q}d3??$  42.  $\mathbb{W}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  43. h3  $\mathbb{W}f2$  44.  $\mathbb{W}d8$   $\mathbb{W}xg3$  45.  $\mathbb{W}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  46.  $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  47.  $\mathbb{W}f8+$ , with perpetual check) 42.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}d4+$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}d5+$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$ ; but perhaps the most practical continuation was 39...  $\mathbb{E}d4!$  40.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  41.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c2$  42. h3  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

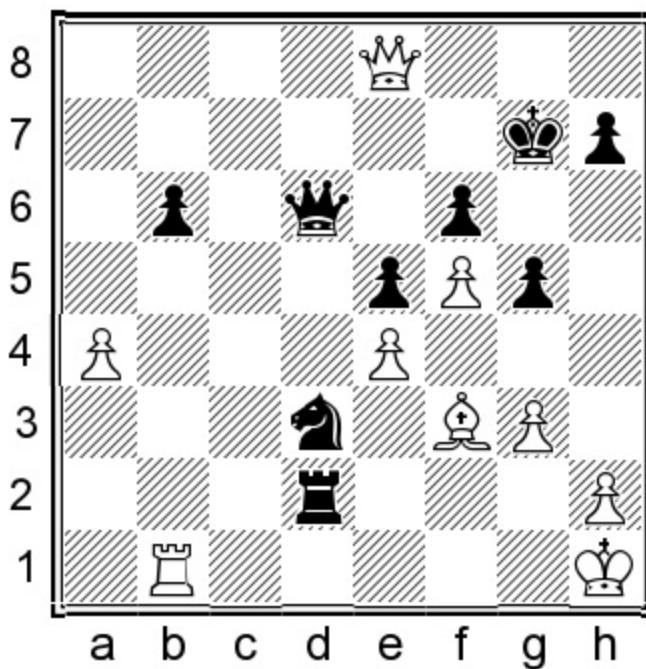
**40.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  41.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{E}d3!$**

Black has regained his sacrificed pawn, while retaining better piece play.

**42.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  43.  $\mathbb{W}e8$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  45. a4**

45.  $\mathbb{E}b1!?$  was more tenacious, e.g. 45...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (45...  $\mathbb{E}xa2?$  46.  $\mathbb{E}b6!!$ ) 46.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  48.  $\mathbb{W}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  49. g4.

**45...  $\mathbb{E}b6$  46.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$**



**47.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$**

In reply to 47.♕xb6, with the idea of giving perpetual check, Simagin had prepared an elegant refutation: 47...♝f2+ 48.♔g1 ♝h3+ 49.♔h1 ♜d1+! 50.♔g2 (or 50.♔xd1 ♜xd1+ 51.♔g2 ♜e2+ 52.♔xh3 ♜f1+ 53.♔g4 h5+ 54.♔xh5 ♜e2+) 50...♝f4+! 51.gxf4 ♜d2+ 52.♔h3 g4+! 53.♔xg4 ♜e3+ 54.♔h4 ♜f2+, winning.

**47...♝f2+ 48.♔g1 ♝g4 49.h4 ♜xg2+ 50.♔xg2 ♜d2+ 0-1**

Mate is unavoidable: 51.♔h3 ♜h2+ 52.♔xg4 ♜e2+ 53.♔h3 g4#.

Analogous strategic methods, in a slightly different position, are applied in the following game.

Game 107  
Sicilian Defence  
**Vladimir Tukmakov**  
**Dragoljub Velimirovic**  
Odessa URS-YUG 1975 (4)

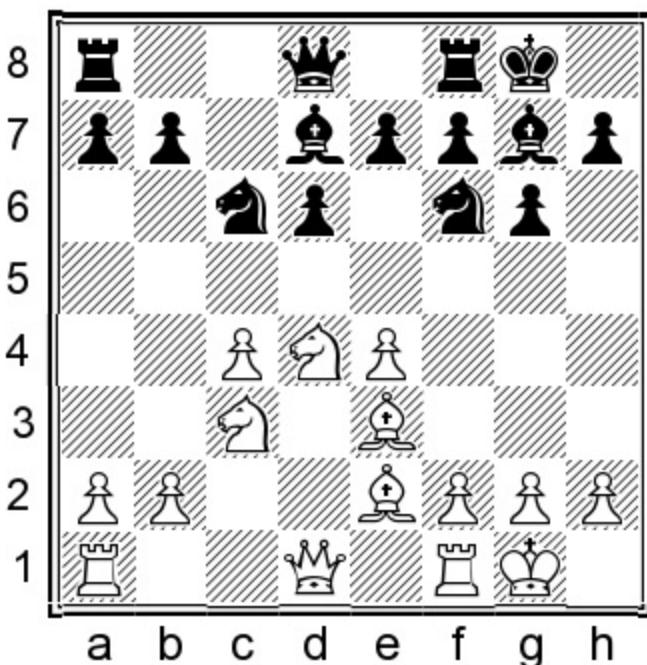
**1.♘f3 c5 2.c4 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♜c6 5.e4 ♜g7**

As we can see, the Maroczy structure in the Accelerated Dragon can also arise by transposition from the English Opening.

**6.♘e3 ♜f6 7.♘c3 0-0**

7...♝g4 8.♗xg4 ♜xd4.

**8.♘e2 d6 9.0-0 ♜d7**

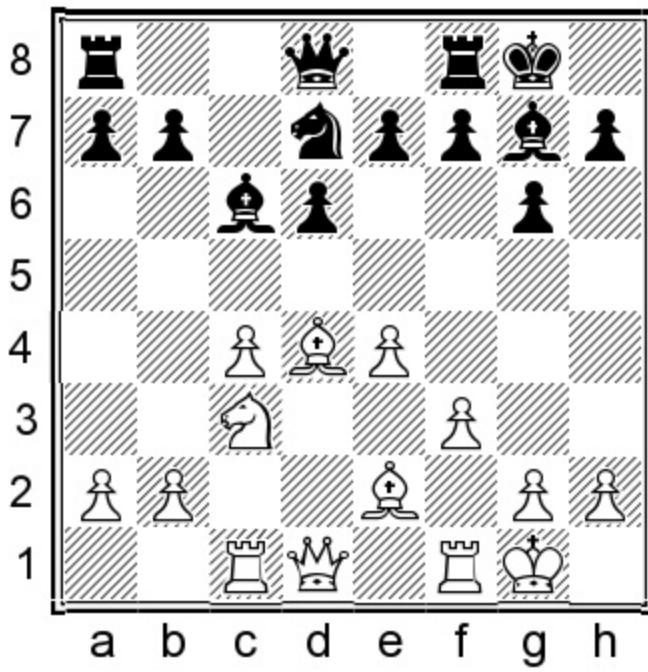


## 10.♕c1

The main line is 10.♗d2 ♗xd4 11.♗xd4 ♜c6 12.f3 (another branch is 12.♗d3 a5 13.♗fe1 ♗g4 14.♗e2 e5 15.♗e3 ♗xe3 16.♗xe3, with a slight advantage to White, Rapport-Ponomariov, Germany Bundesliga 2018/19) 12...a5 13.b3 ♗d7, with similar play to the game, Dominguez Perez-Jones, chess.com 2020.

## 10...♗xd4 11.♗xd4 ♜c6 12.f3 ♗d7

It seems better to prevent the advance b2-b4 first: 12...a5!? 13.b3 ♗d7 (Stockfish prefers the rather unusual continuation 13...♗h6 14.♗c2 e6 15.♗e1 (15.♗xf6? ♗xf6 16.♗xd6 ♜f4 17.♗c5 ♜e5 18.♗b5 ♜ac8) 15...♗e7 16.g3 ♗d7 17.♗f1 ♗g7 18.♗f2 ♗xd4 19.♗xd4 e5 20.♗d2 ♗c5, although it reaches a typical position for this variation) 14.♗f2 ♗c5 15.♗d2 ♜e5 16.♗h4 (16.♗fd1!?) 16...♗b6 17.♗h1 e6 18.♗b1 ♗b4 19.♗fc1?! (19.♗e1) 19...f5!, with the initiative to Black, Kaidanov-Iturriaga, Medellin 2017.



## 13.♗h1?!

It appears that after this move Black has a comfortable game. White has two more ambitious plans here.

In the first plan White gains space on the queenside, while allowing the exchange of the ♗g7: 13.b4!? ♗xd4+ 14.♗xd4 b6 (Stockfish prefers 14...♗f6 15.c5 dxc5 16.♗xc5 b6 17.♗e5 ♗d7 18.♗g3 b5 19.a4 bxa4 20.b5 ♗b6+ 21.♗f2 ♗b7 22.♗xa4 ♗xf2+ 23.♗xf2, with a space advantage for White; or 14...♗b6? 15.♗xb6 ♗xb6 16.e5!! dxe5 17.b5 ♗e8 18.c5 ♗d7 19.♗d5 e6 20.♗e7+ ♗g7 21.c6 bxc6 22.bxc6 ♗b6 23.c7 ♗d7 24.♗fd1 ♗a4 25.♗d6 ♗f6 26.♗xb6! ♗xe7 27.♗b7 ♗f6 28.♗cb1!, with a decisive advantage to White, Razuvaev-Honfi, Cienfuegos 1976) 15.f4 a5 16.a3 axb4 17.axb4 ♗a3

18.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , with better play for White, Bönsch-Hausrath, Germany Bundesliga 2015/16.

The second plan is based on avoiding the exchange of the dark-squared bishop, which is in accordance with one of the maxims of positional play – the side with a space advantage should avoid exchanges: 13.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ ?  $a5$  (the engine analyses another line: 13...  $\mathbb{W}a5$  14.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  15.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  16.  $b3$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , with an evaluation of about 0.75 at the end of a long variation) 14.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $a4$  15.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  16.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  19.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  20.  $b4$ , with a slight advantage to White, Nestorovic-Bogosavljevic, Ruma 2017.

### **13... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 14. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}b6$**

Just as in the previous game, two pairs of minor pieces have been exchanged, which reduces White's possibilities of attack. Despite this, with his next move Tukmakov avoids the exchange of queens (that was the purpose of 13.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$ ), thinking that his space advantage will still allow him to develop active play.

### **15. $\mathbb{W}d2$**

15.  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  16.  $b4$  (16.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $a5$ ) 16...  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  leads to an equal endgame.

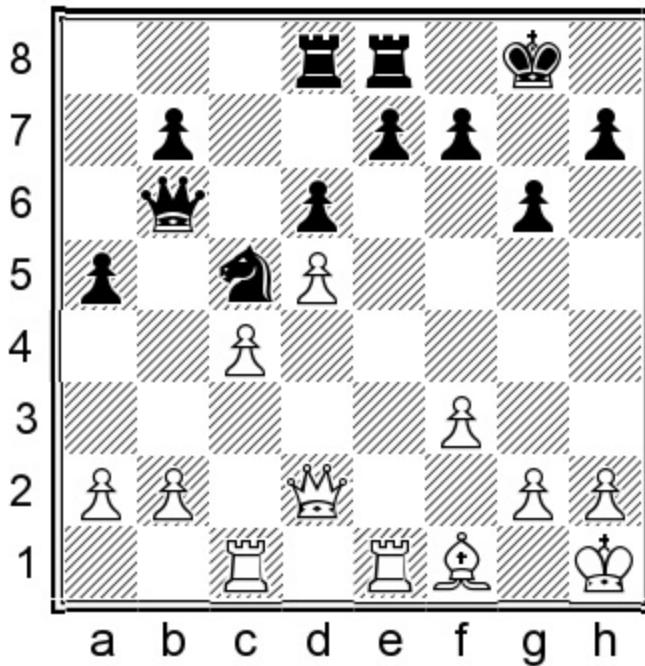
### **15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16. $\mathbb{E}fe1$**

Another possibility, 16.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $a5$  17.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  18.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$ , leads to similar play to the game.

### **16... $\mathbb{E}ad8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 18. $exd5$**

The engine considers the other recapture on d5 to be slightly better: 18.  $cxd5$   $a5$  19.  $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  20.  $f4$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  22.  $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{E}ec1$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  24.  $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  26.  $e5$ , although in that case too Black has counterplay with e.g. 26...  $b5$  (or 26...  $\mathbb{W}f8$ ).

### **18... $a5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{E}fe8$**



This is an important position for understanding all positions of this kind. Which is more important: White's pressure on the e7-pawn and his eventual possibilities of launching an attack on the black king, or Black's pawn structure, in relation to the minor pieces remaining on the board? With his next move White intends to double his rooks on the e-file, but Black's fine reply forces him to go on to the defensive until the end of the game.

**20.¤e3 e5! 21.dxe6 ¤xe6!**

This is the key to Black's plan: just as in the previous game, Black tries to open the game, but to achieve this Simagin sacrificed the d6-pawn, whereas Velimirovic limits himself to leaving it isolated. This is better than 21...fxe6?! 22.b3 e5 23.g3 ♜b4 24.¤b2 ♜d7 25.¤g2 ♜c5 26.¤d3 ♜f6 27.a3 ♜f7 28.b4, with the better game for White.

**22.¤ce1 ♜b4 23.¤f2 ¤de8 24.¤xe6 ¤xe6 25.¤d1**

If the rooks are exchanged, the weakness of the d6-pawn would be insignificant; but the text move leaves Black in control of the e-file. Black's position is superior, but to exploit this advantage it will be necessary to create new weaknesses in the white camp. That is the aim of Black's following moves.

**25...¤a4!?**

Stockfish evaluates that 25...a4!? 26.g3 a3 27.bxa3 (27.b3?! ♜c3) 27...¤xa3 was also good.

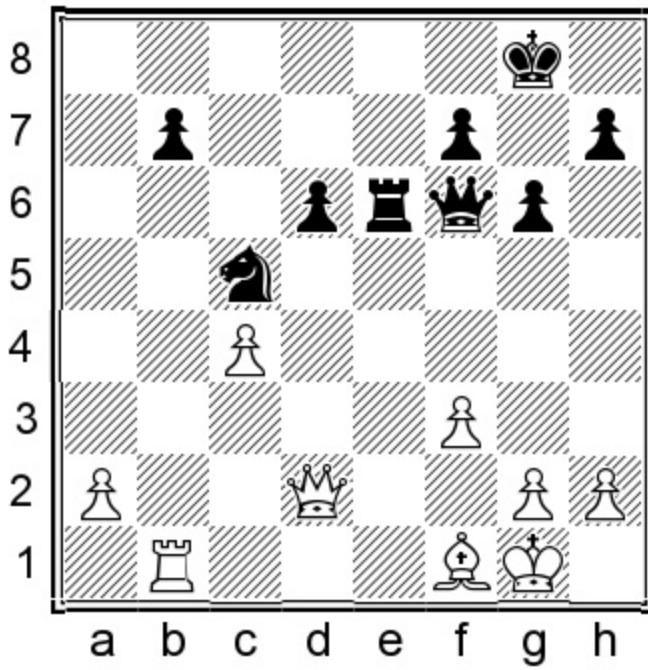
**26.b3 ♜b4 27.¤g1 a4!**

As in the previous game, Black breaks up White's queenside pawn structure.

**28.bxa4 ♜xa4 29.♖d2**

A manoeuvring phase now ensues and before starting an attack on the kingside Velimirovic wants to transfer his queen to f6.

**29...♗b4 30.♖b2 ♗c3 31.♗d2 ♗f6 32.♗b1**



**32...h5!**

Black has succeeded in considerably weakening White's queenside structure, but winning the game just on the basis of this factor is impossible. Therefore, with his last move, Black starts active play on the kingside. After the text move Stockfish evaluates the position as -0.36.

**33.♖e1?!**

It was better to play 33.♖d1!? h4 (33...♔f8!? 34.♗d4 ♗e5) 34.♗d4 ♗e7 35.g3 hxg3 36.hxg3.

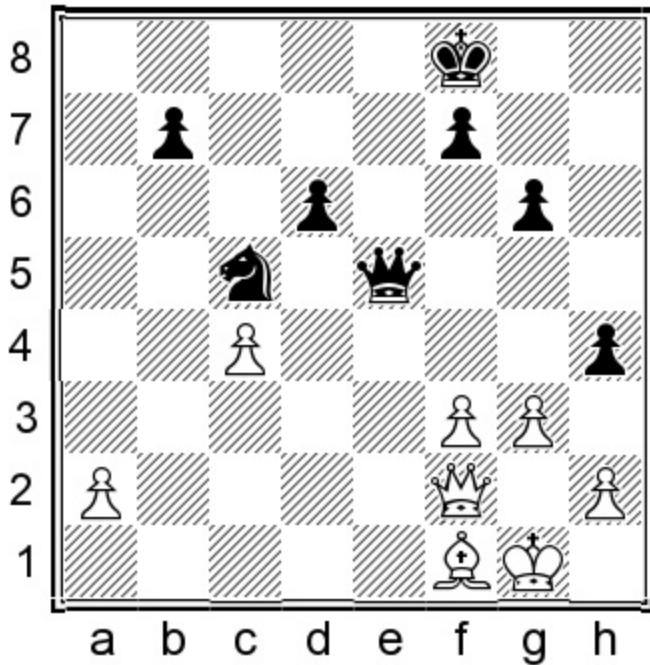
**33...♖xe1 34.♗xe1 ♗e5**

Although the text move could lead to a favourable endgame for Black, it is not clear whether this should win. It was therefore preferable to maintain the tandem ♗+♚ vs. ♗+♝, e.g. 34...♝e6!? 35.♗d2 ♗e5 36.g3 ♞d4 37.♔f2 ♞f5.

**35.♗f2**

In the engine variation 35.♗xe5!? dxе5 36.♔f2 f5 37.g3 ♔g7 38.♔e3 ♞e6 39.♔d3 ♔f6 40.f4 e4 41.♔c2 b6 42.♔d1 ♞c5 White has counterplay, as four of the opponent's pawns are on light squares.

35... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  36.g3 h4



37.gxh4?!

White is unable to stand the tension of a difficult defence and weakens his king unnecessarily. Now Black's queen and knight develop tremendous activity. Instead, the passive move 37. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  retained good possibilities of salvation. Although it is true that Tukmakov's decisive error comes later, from the practical viewpoint Black's play is much easier now, while the probability of a mistake from White increases.

37... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  38. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  40. $\mathbb{W}f2$ ?

It was correct to play 40. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (40... $\mathbb{Q}xh4??$  41. $\mathbb{W}h6+$ ) 41. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  42.a4 b6 43. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  44. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  45.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  46.f5!  $gxh5$  47. $\mathbb{W}g5$ , and Black's advantage is minimal.

40... $\mathbb{W}f4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ?

A good idea, but badly executed. As Stockfish indicates, White had good practical chances of saving the game with 41.h5!?, e.g. 41... $gxh5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (42... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  is stronger, e.g. 43. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  h4 45. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  46. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}g5+$ ) 43. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  44. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xg3+$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  d5 46.f4!, and White can draw this ending.

41... $\mathbb{Q}xh4!$  42. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  43.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  44. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

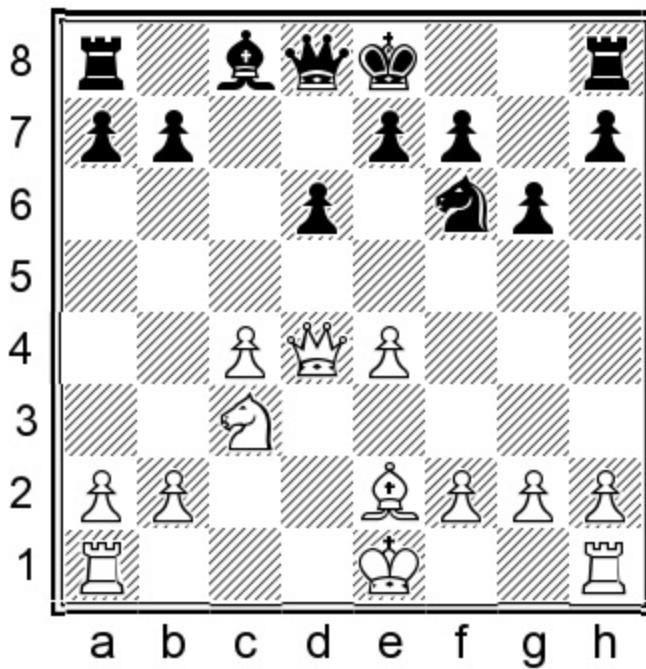
And White resigned, without waiting for Black's reply, as after the capture on f4 the threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  is decisive. The final position is a good example of the collaboration of the  $\mathbb{W}+\mathbb{Q}$  tandem.

Now we shall study an example of a Maroczy endgame without the queens. Once again a black knight confronts a white bishop, but in this case it is the dark-squared one.

Game 108  
Sicilian Defence  
**Efim Geller**  
**Bent Larsen**  
Monaco 1967 (10)

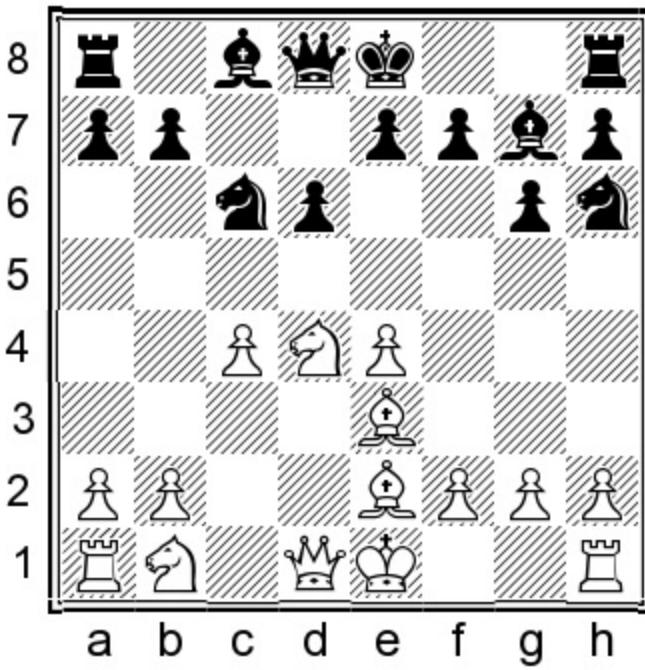
**1.♘f3 c5 2.c4 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗g7 5.e4 ♘c6 6.♗e3 d6 7.♗e2 ♘h6!?**

This move has its supporters, although, as we know, the main line is 7...♗f6 8.♗c3 0-0 9.0-0 ♘d7. Black's usual objective in this variation can be seen in the position of the next diagram after 7...♗xd4 8.♗xd4 ♘xd4 9.♗f6 10.♗c3



*analysis diagram*

10...♗e6 (curiously this rather simplistic idea has even attracted grandmasters: 10...♗b6 11.♗d2 (11.♗xb6!? axb6 12.0-0-0 g5 13.h4 g4 14.b3, and it is difficult to believe that Black has full compensation for the doubled pawns) 11...♗d7 12.0-0 ♘c6 13.♗d5? (13.♗f3!?; 13.♗d3!?) 13...♗xe4 14.♗xb6 ♘xd2 15.♗xa8 ♘xf1 16.♗c7+ ♘d7, and White has no compensation for the pawn, Rotstein-Bönsch, Austria Bundesliga 2008) 11.0-0 0-0 12.♗ad1 ♗a5 13.f4 ♗ac8 14.b3 ♗c5, Cherchem-Owosina, Novi Sad 1990. Black's plan comprises the exchange of the ♗g7 for its white counterpart, followed by the exchange of queens to eliminate the danger of an attack on the kingside. Nevertheless, White's space advantage is an important factor and therefore there are very few supporters of this very direct move-order. The game that we are analysing provides further explanation of Black's ideas.



**8.0-0**

The engine considers it more accurate to play 8.♘c3!? 0-0 9.0-0 ♘d7 10.♗d2; or 8.♗d2!? ♗g4 9.♕xg4 ♕xg4 10.♘c3 0-0 11.b3 ♖a5 12.0-0 a6 13.♘xc6 bxc6 14.♗d4.

**8...0-0**

The main idea of 7...♘h6 is to continue with 8...f5!? 9.♘c3 0-0 (the engine prefers 9...♗g4 10.♕xg4 fxg4 11.♘xc6 bxc6 12.♗d4 0-0 13.b3 ♘xd4 14.♗xd4 ♖b6 15.♗fd1 ♖xd4 16.♗xd4) 10.exf5 ♘xd4!? (or 10...♘xf5 11.♘xf5 ♘xf5 12.♗d2, with the better game for White, Fridman-Heberla, Rabat blitz 2015) 11.♗xh6 ♘xf5 12.♗d2 ♖b6 13.♗d3 ♘f7 14.♗ab1 (14.♗e4!?) 14...a5 15.♗b5 ♘c5, and Black has solved the problems of the opening, Beliavsky-Aronian, Germany Bundesliga 2001/02. 8...♗g4!? 9.♕xg4 ♕xg4 10.♗d2 0-0 11.♘c3 transposes to the game and the engine considers this slightly better than 8...f5.

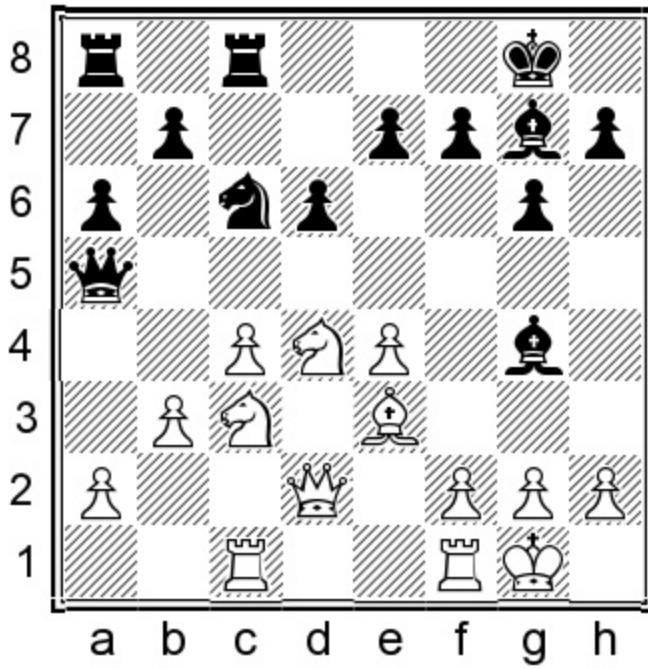
**9.♗d2**

To hinder the advance ...f7-f5.

**9...♗g4 10.♕xg4 ♕xg4 11.♘c3 ♖a5 12.♗ac1**

The white position is quite solid and in the following game for example the player with white drew easily against a grandmaster with an Elo rating over 2600: 12.f3 ♘e6 13.b3 ♘fc8 14.♗ad1 a6 15.♘xc6 bxc6 16.♗a4 ♖xd2 17.♗xd2 ♘d8 18.c5 f5 19.♗fd1 fxe4 20.cxd6 exd6 21.♗xd6 etc., Müller-Gharamian, Cappelle-la-Grande 2012. So for Larsen the task of playing for a win was far from easy. Fortunately for the Danish GM, Geller was not looking to draw either.

12... $\mathbb{E}fc8$  13.b3 a6

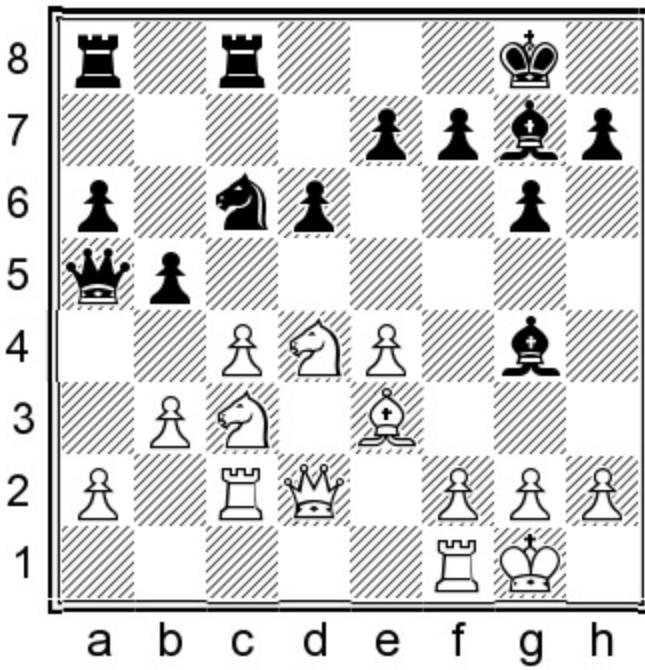


14. $\mathbb{E}c2$

In this position there are various options. The fifteen-year-old Kasparov wanted to create an attacking position and preferred to exchange the  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ , after first exchanging on c6: 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc6!?$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (Stockfish recommends 15. $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  17.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  18. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21.f3, evaluating this ending as somewhat better for White, giving 0.70) 15... $\mathbb{E}ac8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  17.f4 f6 18. $\mathbb{Q}h1!?$  (18.f5!? g5 19. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  22.a4) 18...b5! 19.f5, with a draw in this game, but with an overall victory in his first important tournament by the future World Champion, Kasparov-I.Ivanov, Daugavpils 1978.

14...b5!?

It is interesting that the engine gives equality after 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!?$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.f4 (16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  b5!?) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  f6 18. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  19. $\mathbb{W}d1$  (or 19. $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$ ) 19...b5! 20.f5 gxf5 21.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ .



**15.  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$**

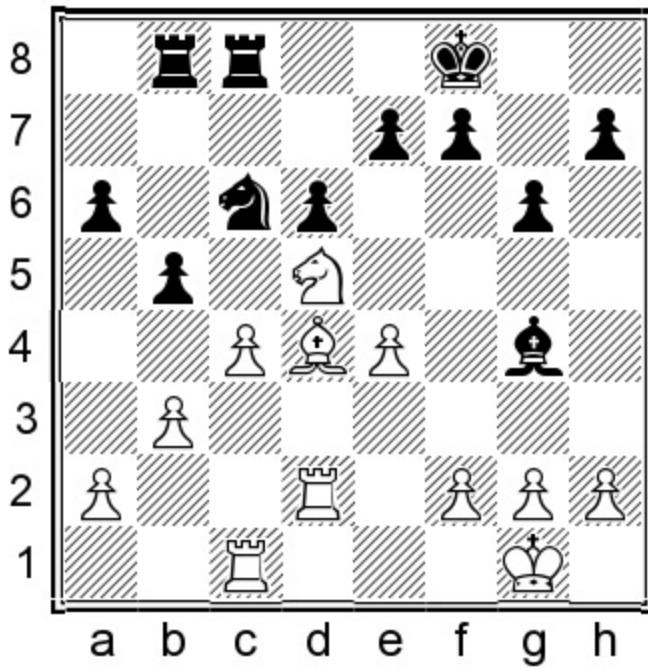
Geller's move ensures some advantage for White in the ending. Unclear complications would arise after 15.cxb5 axb5 (Stockfish gives equality after 15...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4!?$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  axb5 18.h3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19.  $\mathbb{B}fc1$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}xc1+!$ ) 16.  $\mathbb{Q}dxb5$  (16.  $\mathbb{Q}cxb5?!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ ) 16...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17.  $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

**15...  $\mathbb{W}xd2$  16.  $\mathbb{B}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{B}ab8$  18.  $\mathbb{B}c1?!$**

The following two alternatives were better: 18.c5! dxc5 (in his annotations, Larsen indicates that he was planning 18...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd6, but the zwischenzug 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$  wins a pawn after 21...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ ) 19.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  (19...  $\mathbb{B}b7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{B}bc8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ , and 18.cxb5!? axb5 19.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ .

**18...  $\mathbb{Q}f8?!$**

18...  $\mathbb{B}xc4!?$  led to equality: 19.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (19.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4!?$ ) 19...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (19...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ? 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  f6; but Larsen is intent on winning and prefers not to clarify the position, in order to exploit his opponent's time pressure. His idea worked, as Geller failed to find the best reply to punish this move!



**19.♗b2??**

It was correct to place this bishop on a different diagonal: 19.♗e3! bxc4 20.♗b6 ♜d8 21.♗xc4 ♔e5 22.♗a4 with the better game for White.

**19...bxc4 20.♗xc4 ♔e8 21.♗dc2!?**

An interesting example of positional sense: among several moves at first sight of similar strength, the engine gives a slight advantage of 0.29 only to the text move.

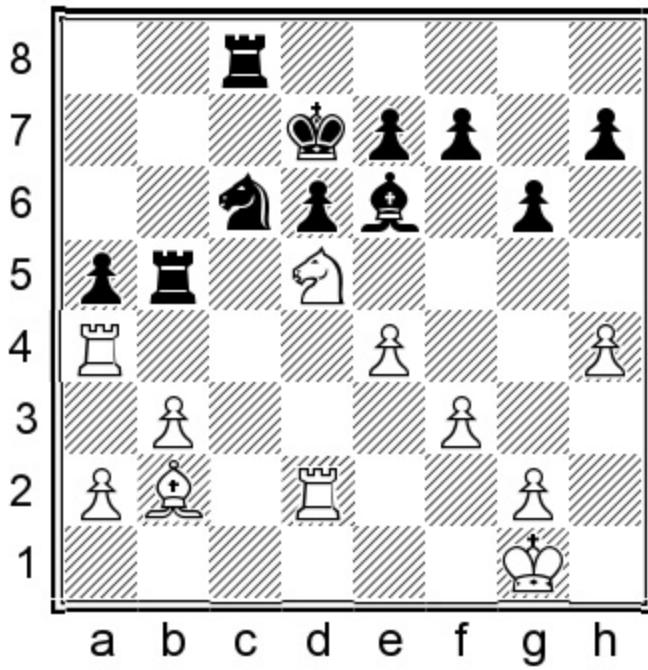
**21...♔d7 22.f3??**

After this move White is already slightly worse, due to the possibility of his knight being exchanged for the enemy bishop. According to Larsen, White could have equalized with 22.♗e3 ♔e6 23.♗a4, avoiding this exchange, and as a player he was right, even though in Stockfish's assessment there are several moves that lead to approximate equality, including the text move.

**22...♔e6 23.♗d2 a5**

With 23....♗xd5!? 24.exd5 ♗b4 25.♗f4 (25.a3? ♜xc4 26.bxc4 ♗d3) 25...f6 26.♗a3 a5 27.♗xb4 ♜xb4 28.♗xb4 axb4, Black could have reached a favourable, although probably drawn, rook ending.

**24.h4 ♜b5 25.♗a4**



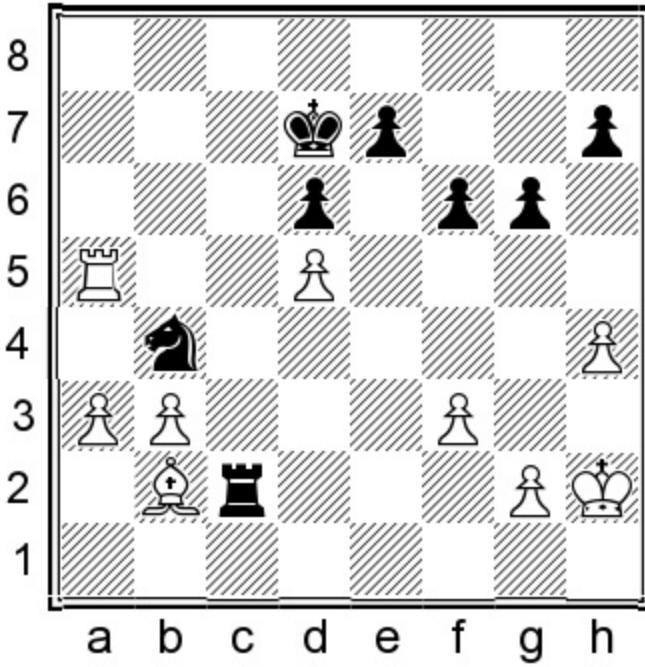
**25...f6!?**

The idea of this move can be seen in the variation 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26. $\mathbb{R}xd5$   $\mathbb{R}xd5$  27. $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  28. $\mathbb{R}xa5$   $\mathbb{R}c2$  29. $\mathbb{R}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  30.a3  $\mathbb{R}xb2$  31. $\mathbb{R}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32. $\mathbb{R}a7+$ , with equality, as the black king has no shelter from checks. However, Stockfish disagrees with this human opinion, giving a -0.42 evaluation to the continuation 30... $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  31. $\mathbb{R}g7$  h5 32.b4  $\mathbb{R}c1+$  33. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{R}b1$  34. $\mathbb{R}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ . But this evaluation is not easy to accept, as White has two connected passed pawns, as well as bishop vs knight (e.g. Capablanca asserted that the presence of passed pawns on opposite wings favours the side with the bishop) and also the white rook restricts Black's king.

**26. $\mathbb{Q}h2?$**

A mistake in time trouble. There were several moves that maintained equality; the simplest was perhaps 26. $\mathbb{Q}c3!?$   $\mathbb{R}bb8$  (or 26... $\mathbb{R}c5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ; or 26... $\mathbb{R}b4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}a3!?$ ) 27. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ .

**26... $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  27. $\mathbb{R}xd5$   $\mathbb{R}xd5$  28. $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  29. $\mathbb{R}xa5$   $\mathbb{R}c2$  30.a3**



**30... $\mathbb{R}xb2?$**

To avoid any risks, Larsen takes the game into a slightly advantageous rook ending, although he rightly suspected that 30... $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ , retaining his knight against the enemy bishop, would have provided better winning chances than the move in the game, e.g. 31. $\mathbb{R}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  32. $\mathbb{R}a7+$  (Stockfish analyses 32. $\mathbb{R}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  33. $\mathbb{R}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  35. $\mathbb{R}a4$   $\mathbb{R}xg2+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{R}a2$  37. $\mathbb{R}xf6$   $exf6$  38. $\mathbb{R}xf4$   $\mathbb{R}xa3$  39. $\mathbb{R}b4$   $d5$ , with an evaluation of -1.91 in this rook ending) 32... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{R}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  (33... $\mathbb{R}xg2+!?$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{R}g3$  35. $\mathbb{R}xf6$   $\mathbb{R}h3+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{R}xf3$ ) 34. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{R}b2$  35. $b4$   $e5$ , and it is far from easy for White to advance his passed pawns, while Black's knight and rook work together very well. We can therefore suppose that the main reason for Larsen's choice is the same as in the note to 25... $f6$ .

Probably for a similar reason, to avoid giving White two connected passed pawns in a rook ending, Larsen abstained from 30... $\mathbb{Q}xd5!?$  31. $\mathbb{R}xd5$   $\mathbb{R}xb2$  32. $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  33. $\mathbb{R}a5$   $d5$  34. $\mathbb{R}a6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , although after 35. $\mathbb{R}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  36. $\mathbb{R}a6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $d4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{R}e2$  Black's advantage is substantial.

**31. $a xb4$   $\mathbb{R}xb3$  32. $\mathbb{R}a7+??$**

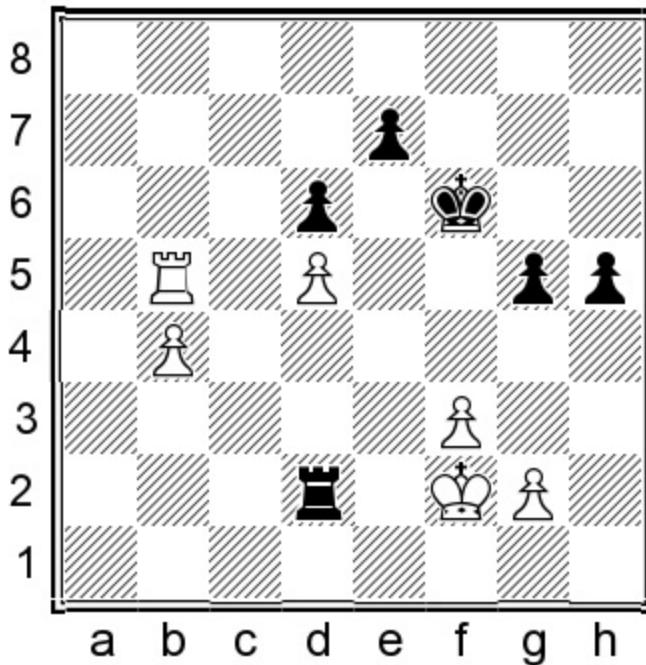
White could have practically equalized with the more precise continuation 32. $b5!$   $h5$  33. $g4!$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (33... $\mathbb{R}xf3?!$  34. $\mathbb{R}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  35. $b6$   $\mathbb{R}b3$  36. $b7$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  (36... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  37. $g5!$   $f5$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ ) 37. $\mathbb{R}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  38. $\mathbb{R}e8$   $\mathbb{R}xb7$  39. $\mathbb{R}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  40. $\mathbb{R}e6$ ) 34. $gxh5$   $gxh5$  35. $f4$   $f5$  36. $\mathbb{R}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  37. $\mathbb{R}h8$   $\mathbb{R}xb5$  38. $\mathbb{R}xh5$   $\mathbb{R}xd5$  39. $\mathbb{R}g5$ , and the  $h4$ -pawn should give White sufficient counterplay.

**32... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{R}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  34. $\mathbb{R}b8$   $\mathbb{R}d3$  35. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{R}d4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}g3??$**

This complicates White's defensive task. Instead, after 36. $g3!$   $\mathbb{R}d2+$  (36... $g5?!$  37. $hxg5$   $fxg5$  38. $g4$ ) 37. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{R}b2$  38. $\mathbb{R}b8$   $\mathbb{R}b1+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{R}d1$  40. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $h5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{R}g1$  42. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{R}h1$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{R}h3$  44. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{R}h2+$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{R}b2$  46. $f4$  we reach a position where the only way for Black to make progress is the advance

...g6-g5, which leads to the exchange of at least one pair of pawns, minimizing Black's winning chances.

36...g5! 37.hxg5 fxg5 38.♔f2 ♔d2+ 39.♔g3 h5 40.♔h3 ♔d3 41.♔g3 ♔f6 42.♔f2 ♔d2+



The game was adjourned in this position and, according to Larsen, his home analysis, without a computer of course, showed that White's position is hopeless. But as we shall see later, the engine has a different opinion.

43.♔g3 ♔d4 44.♔h3 g4+ 45.fxg4 ♔xg4 46.♔b8 ♔d4 47.♔b5?!

Stockfish indicates the following elegant variation which forces a draw: 47.b5! ♔xd5 48.b6 ♔e6 49.♔h4 ♔b5 50.g3 ♔b3 51.b7 ♔b5 52.♔f8 ♔xb7 53.♔xh5 d5 54.g4 d4 55.g5 ♔b2 56.g6 ♔g2 57.♔h6 d3 58.g7 d2 59.♔d8 ♔f6 60.♔f8+ ♔e5 61.♔d8 e6 62.♔h7 ♔f6 63.g8=♕+! (63.♔f8+?? ♔e7 64.♔f1 e5 63...♔g5 64.♔e7 e5 65.♔g6 e4 66.♔e5 ♔f4 67.♔c4 e3 68.♔f8+ ♔e4 69.♔d8 ♔f3 70.♔d3!).

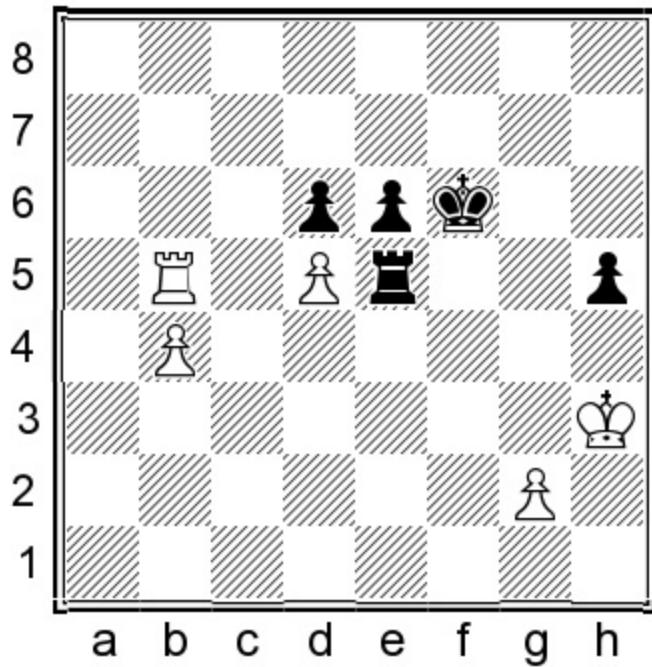
47...♔e4! 48.♔b8 ♔e5 49.♔b5?

As in the previous note, White could draw with 49.b5! ♔xd5 50.b6 ♔b5 51.♔h4 ♔e6 52.g3 ♔b3 53.b7 ♔b5 54.♔f8 ♔xb7 55.♔xh5 etc.

49...e6?

Returning the favour; instead, any rook move along the e-file wins, e.g. 49...♔e3+! 50.g3 ♔e1 51.♔b7 ♔d1 52.♔b5 ♔d4 53.♔g2 h4 54.gxh4 ♔xh4 55.♔f2 ♔e5 56.♔b7 ♔f4+ 57.♔e2 ♔e4+ 58.♔d2 ♔xd5 59.♔c7 e5 60.♔c3 ♔e3+ 61.♔b2 ♔d3 62.b5 ♔e6 63.♔b7 ♔d5 64.♔b3 ♔c5 65.♔b8 ♔c1 66.♔e8+ ♔d5 67.♔b4 ♔a1, and the two centre pawns win against the single white pawn monitored by Black's rook.

Subsequently the same ending arises in the game, although with the white pawn on the other wing.



**50.♕b8?**

The decisive error, which Larsen skips over. White could still draw with both 50.g4! hxg4+ 51.♔xg4 exd5 52.♔f3 ♔e6 53.♕a5 ♕e4 54.b5 ♔e5 55.b6 ♕b4 56.♕a6 ♔d4 57.♕a1 ♕xb6 58.♕d1+ ♔e5 59.♕e1+ and 50.♕a5! exd5 51.g4 hxg4+ 52.♔xg4 ♕e4+ 53.♔f3 ♔e5 54.b5 ♕b4 55.♔e3.

**50...♖xd5 51.b5 ♕d4 52.♖h8 ♕b4 53.♖h6+ ♔f7 54.♖xh5 ♔g6 55.g4 d5 56.♕e5 ♔f7 57.♔h4 ♕xb5 58.♕e1 d4 59.♕a1 ♔f6 60.♕a8 ♕d5 61.♕g3 d3 62.♕a1 ♔e5 63.♕f2 ♔d4 64.♕a7 e5 65.g5 e4 66.♕a4+ ♔e5 0-1**

According to Larsen, Geller analysed the adjourned position until five o'clock in the morning and then had to get up early to resume the game the same day, as in the afternoon he was due to play his last-round game against Fischer, with black. And Geller won a twenty-five-move miniature in the Poisoned Pawn Variation of the Najdorf, Fischer's own favourite line, confirming the famous maxim of the first World Champion, William Steinitz: 'chess is not for weak souls'!

## 5.5. Positional methods of play with white

In this type of position, positional methods can be reduced to two ideas:

- 1) exploit the space advantage to try to force a favourable endgame, and
- 2) prevent the premature exchange of pieces, above all the exchange of the ♕g7.

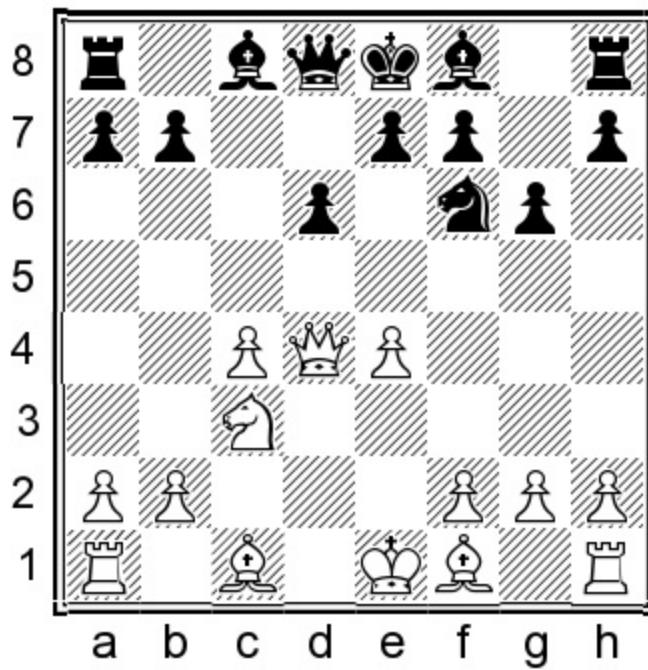
In the following game, following the exchange of queens White gains space on the kingside.

Game 109  
English Opening  
**Alexandr Predke 2603**  
**Nikola Djukic 2556**  
Sarajevo 2018 (8)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 g6 5.c4 ♘f6 6.♘c3 ♘xd4**

The Gurgenidze Variation, in which Black tries to gain a tempo by drawing White's queen to d4 and then forcing it to retreat after developing the ♕f8 to g7.

**7.♕xd4 d6**



**8.♗e3**

The first attempts at refutation of this move-order were based on the move 8.c5!?, but experience over many years has demonstrated the solidity of Black's position, e.g. 8...♗g7 9.♗b5+ (9.cxd6 0-0 10.♗g5 ♖xd6 (10...exd6!? 11.e5 ♖e8 12.♖xd6 ♘g4) 11.♖xd6 exd6 12.0-0-0 ♗e6 13.f3 ♖fd8, with equal play, Nepomniachtchi-Timofeev, Moscow 2016) 9...♗d7 10.♗xd7+ ♖xd7 11.cxd6 0-0 12.0-0 ♗e8

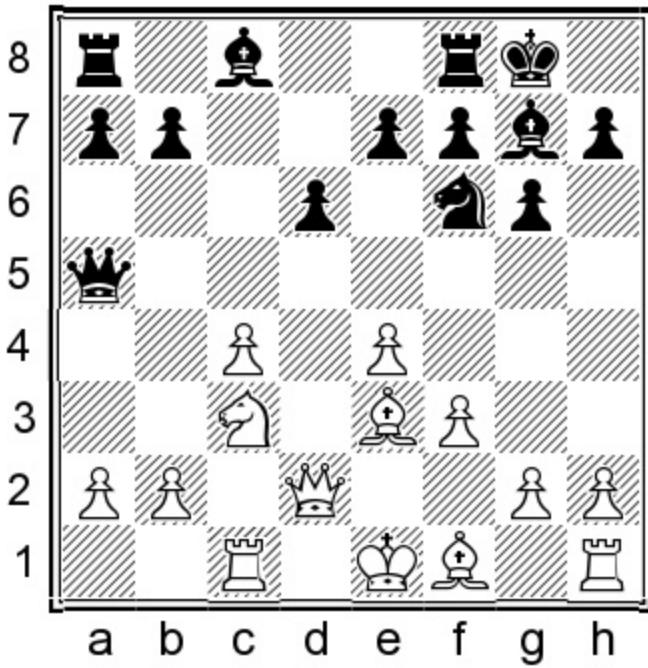
13.  $\mathbb{W}d5$  e6 14.  $\mathbb{W}d3$  (14.  $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  a6 16.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  17.  $dxc7$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  e5 19.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}xc7$ , with a drawish ending, Keres-Gurgenidze, Tbilisi 1959) 14...  $\mathbb{W}xd6$  15.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  16.  $\mathbb{E}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (17.  $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  18.  $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  20.  $\mathbb{E}b1$  f6 fails to disturb the balance) 17...  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  (17...  $\mathbb{E}fc8$ !?) 18.  $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  19.  $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  21.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  22.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$ , with an equal rook ending, Vachier-Lagrave-T.L.Petrosian, Paris 2009.

**8... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  9.f3 0-0 10.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a5$**

Currently the most common continuation is 10...a5 11.b3 (11.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (11...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !?) 12.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  b6) 12.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  13.  $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{W}b4$ , and it seems that the compensation for the pawn is not sufficient, Cheparinov-Vachier-Lagrave, Porto Carras 2011) 11...a4 12.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , with the better game for White, Caruana-Carlsen, St Louis 2014.

10...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  has been played more often, although after 11.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  it just transposes to the game.

**11.  $\mathbb{E}c1$**



**11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$**

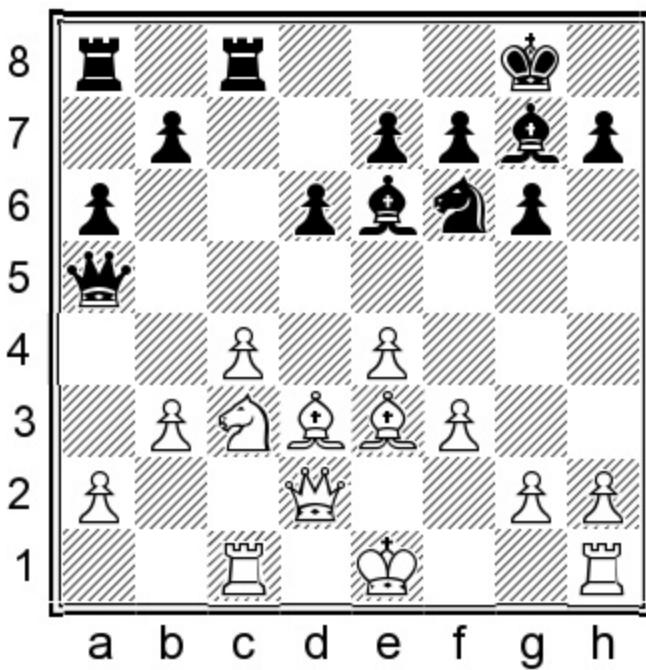
For fans of this variation, it is probably interesting to know that the engine considers the plan of 11...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  a6 13. 0-0  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  to be rather stronger.

**12.b3  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ !**

Another branch, certainly the most common, but which Stockfish evaluates as somewhat inferior to the text move, is 13.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ !? a6 14.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}xd2+$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. g4 f5 17. exf5 (Stockfish prefers 17. gxf5!? gxf5 18.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  fxe4 19. fxe4 b5 20.  $\mathbb{E}hg1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22. exd5, with an evaluation of

0.60) 17...gxf5 18.g5 (18.h3!?  $\mathbb{E}f8$  19.f4  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5! 21.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25. $\mathbb{E}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  bxa6 28. $\mathbb{E}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , and it is unlikely that White can convert his small advantage, Grachev-Timofeev, Sochi 2017) 18...d5! 19. $\mathbb{E}hd1$  dxc4 (19...d4!?) 20.bxc4 b5 21.cxb5 axb5 22. $\mathbb{E}xc8+$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , with equal play, Caruana-Guseinov, chess.com 2020.

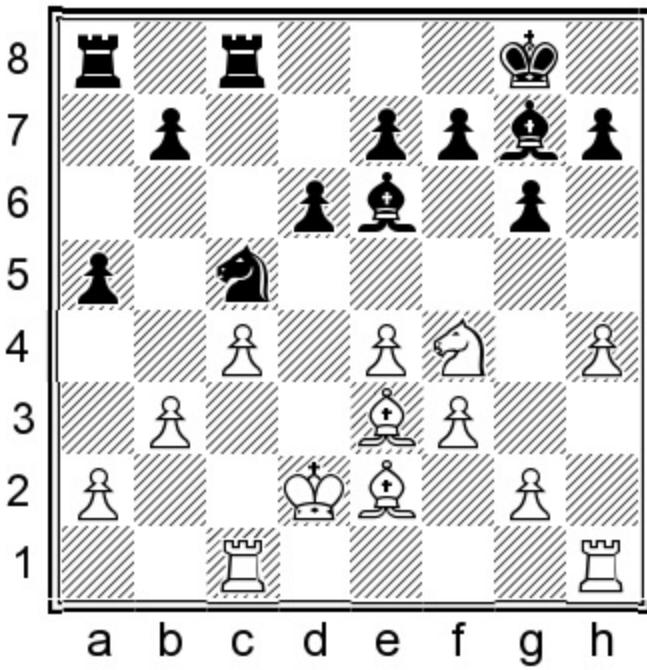
**13...a6**



**14. $\mathbb{Q}e2!?$**

The most frequent choice here, although there are supporters of moving the knight to d5 or a4; as we shall see in a few moves' time, the text move is an important element in a plan of expansion on the kingside. The best move is 14. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$   $\mathbb{W}xd2+$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  (17...e6 18. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ) 18. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  19.h4 (19.b4!!  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , with a clear advantage to White) 19...b5, with a slight advantage to White, Grischuk-Guseinov, chess.com 2020.

**14... $\mathbb{W}xd2+$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a5 18.h4!?**



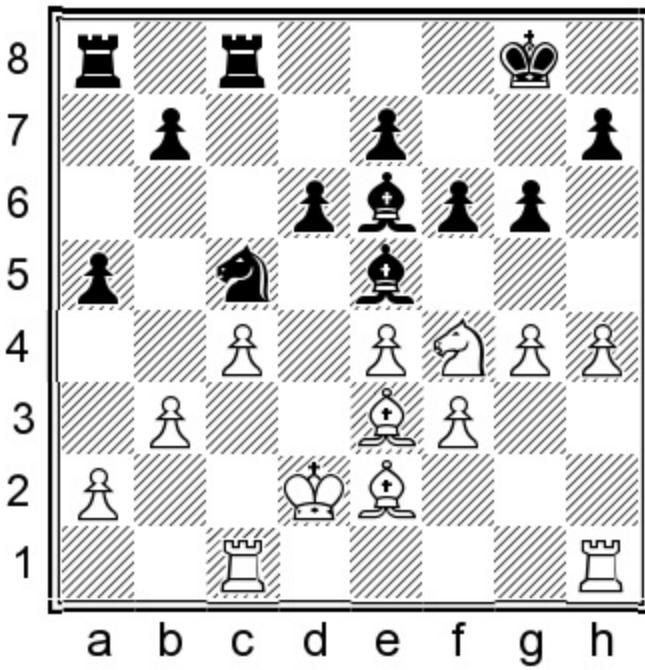
In six games with this position in Megabase, White scored 5½ points. However, this statistic is not reliable, especially as in all these games the white player was higher-rated.

### **18...Qe5?!**

Black also fails to equalize after 18...Qa6?! 19.Qb1 Qb4 20.a3 Qc6 21.Qxe6 fxe6 22.f4, Kasparov-Kasimdzhanov, Batumi 2001. The engine recommends that earlier, and now especially, Black should insert the move ...h7-h5, which is probably essential in positions of this type. The final position of this line is completely equal: 18...h5! 19.Qb1 Qab8 20.g3 b6 21.Qxe6 Qxe6 22.f4 Qd4 23.Qhc1 Qf6 24.Qd3 Qe6 25.Qf3 Qc5+ 26.Qd2 Qg7 27.a4 Qe6 28.Qd3 Qc5+ 29.Qc2 Qe6, 0.00/50.

### **19.g4 f6?!**

It was better to give up the Qe5, which is not an easy move for a human to make, e.g. 19...Qxf4!? 20.Qxf4 a4 21.b4 Qd7 22.a3 Qb6 23.c5 dxc5 24.Qxc5 Qc4+ 25.Qxc4 Qxc4 26.Qc7 b5, with a draw.



**20.g5**

A good alternative was 20.♘d5! ♘xd5 21.exd5! (21.cxd5?! a4! 22.b4 ♘b3+! (a tactical resource known from J.Polgar-Antunes, Erevan 1996; not 22...♘a6? 23.♖xa6 bxa6 24.♗c6!, with a space advantage to White on both wings) 23.axb3 ♘xc1 24.♗xc1 a3) 21...♗b2 22.♗b1 ♘a3 23.♗c2 ♘b4 (23...♘a6?! 24.h5 ♘b4+ 25.♗d2 ♘xa2? 26.♗a1 ♘b4+ 27.♗d3 ♘c3 28.hxg6 hxg6 29.♗f1, and the ♘c3 is in danger) 24.♗b2 ♘d7 25.h5 g5 26.♗d3 ♘c5 27.♗f5 ♘xe3 28.♗xd7, and Stockfish gives 0.96, although given the closed character of the position it is not clear whether White can exploit his advantage.

**20...f5?**

Again it was better to play 20...♘xf4! 21.♘xf4 f5.

**21.♘xe6!**

Adding the bishop pair to the space advantage.

**21...♘xe6 22.exf5 gxf5 23.♗d3 ♘f8 24.c5! f4**

24...dxc5? leads to a clear advantage to White: 25.♗c4 ♘f7 26.f4 ♘ad8+ 27.♗c2 ♘b8 (27...♘g7? 28.♗he1 with a deadly pin on the ♘e6) 28.♗he1 b5 29.♗xe6+ ♘xe6 30.♗xc5+ ♘f7 31.♗xe7+ ♘g8 32.♗e3.

**25.♗f2 ♘xc5 26.♗xc5 dxc5 27.♗xc5**

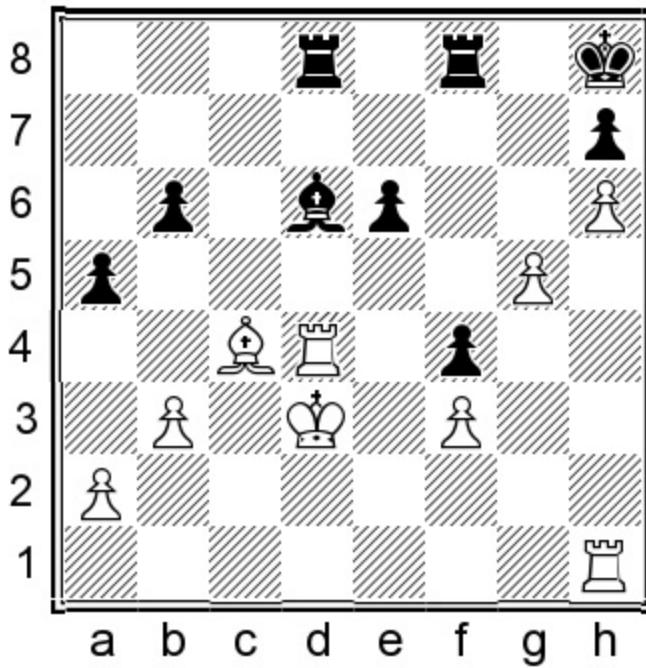
A position type frequently encountered in the Accelerated Dragon. At first sight the bishops of

opposite colour give Black some hope, but, as usual, the presence of rooks complicates the task of defence.

**27... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  28. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{B}ab8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30.h5!**

Gaining more space on the kingside.

**30...b6 31.h6+  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  32. $\mathbb{B}d5$   $\mathbb{B}bd8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  e6 34. $\mathbb{B}d4$**



**34... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$ !**

The engine assesses that the best defence was 34... $\mathbb{B}g8$ !? 35. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  e5 36. $\mathbb{B}xg8$  exd4 37. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  38. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}e3$  39.g6 hxg6 40. $\mathbb{B}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , as on the way to a win White would need to find several moves which are not as obvious as in the game: 41.a3!  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  43. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  46.h7  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  49. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ .

**35. $\mathbb{B}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

The advance of the king decides.

**38... $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{B}d8+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  42. $\mathbb{B}h4$  b5 43. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}e6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  45. $\mathbb{B}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{B}b6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  48. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{B}b7+$  49. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{B}b6+$  50. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  51. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e1$  52. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  53. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $\mathbb{B}xh6$  54. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  1-0**

A good win by the young GM, who became the champion of Russia the following year.

The following two games connect the 6th and the present World Champion respectively. What both

games have in common is White's method of realizing his advantage by recapturing on d5 with the rook, instead of the usual pawn recapture. It should be said that the games were played at very different rates of play: 2½ hours for 40 moves in the first case and 3 minutes + 3 seconds increment for each move in the second. However, this immense difference did not influence the quality of the winner's play in the second game. It is curious that Botvinnik detested blitz games and prohibited his pupils from playing blitz.

Game 110  
Sicilian Defence  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Roman Toran**  
Palma de Mallorca 1967 (2)

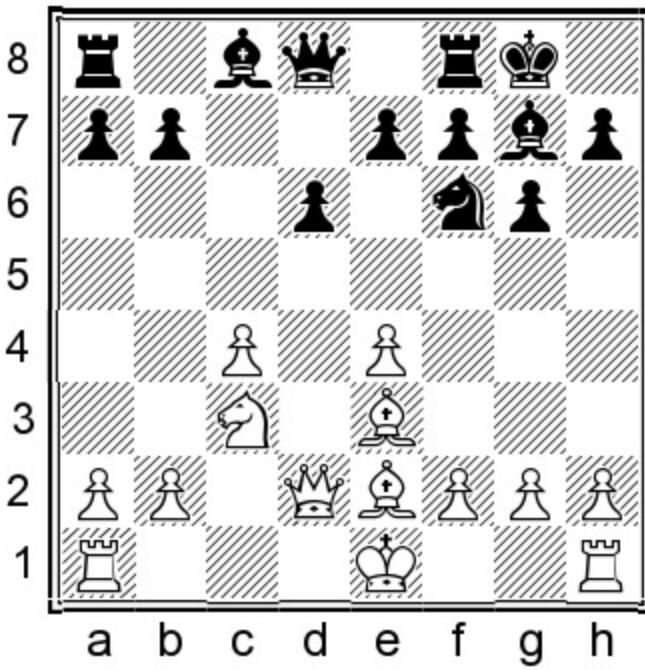
Botvinnik's aeroplane landed on the island only a few hours before the start of this game (his first-round game with Smyslov was played on the rest day and was agreed a draw), so he wanted a quiet positional game, probably also taking into account that if the game became simplified his superiority in the field of the endgame could be a decisive factor.

His opponent was an important figure in Spanish chess life for several decades of the last century; in particular he edited the first chess primer for the mass teaching of chess to children in Spain. As well as being in charge of this project, he was the president of the Spanish Chess Federation for many years and made use of his numerous contacts to promote the game of chess. In this strong tournament Roman Toran finished 8th out of the 16 competitors, which is by no means a bad result, considering that ahead of him were seven GMs of the stature of Larsen, Botvinnik, Smyslov, Portisch, Gligoric, etc.

**1.c4 g6 2.e4 c5 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.d4 exd4 5.♘xd4 ♘f6 6.♘c3 ♘xd4 7.♗xd4 d6 8.♘e3 ♘g7 9.♘e2**

This move is second in popularity after 9.f3, which we saw in the previous game. It is curious that the engine gives about 0.10 points more to the text move.

**9...0-0 10.♗d2**



**10...Bg4**

With this move Black gains the bishop pair, but it seems that the space advantage counts for more, and the statistics confirm this: White's score in this line is almost 65%. Instead, 10...Qe6 11.f3 Wa5 leads to similar play to the previous game, although this time with the bishop on e2.

It seems that with the white queen on d2 the advance ...a7-a5-a4 makes more sense: 10...a5!? 11.f3 a4 12.Qc1 Wa5 (Stockfish considers the move order 12...Qe6!? 13.0-0 Qd7 14.Qfd1 Wa5 15.Qd5 Qxd5 16.Wxa5 Qxa5 17.cxd5 Qc5 more accurate, with an evaluation of 0.13, which is practically equal) 13.0-0 (incidentally, 13.Qf2!? is Stockfish's recommendation here as well as on the previous move, e.g. 13...Qe6 14.Qd5 Qxd5 15.Wxa5 Qxa5 16.cxd5 Qd7 (16...e6!?) 17.Qc7 Qc5 18.Qb1 Qf6 19.g4, with the better game for White, Caruana-Antipov, Gibraltar 2017) 13...Qe6 14.Qd5 Wxd2 15.Qxe7+ Qh8 16.Qxd2 Qfe8 17.Qd5 Qxd5 18.cxd5 Qxd5 19.Qb5 Qe5!, with equality, Lupulescu-Mista, Poland tt 2017.

**11.Qxg4**

The engine gives preference to this move only at a great depth of analysis, although a good alternative is 11.Qg5!?.

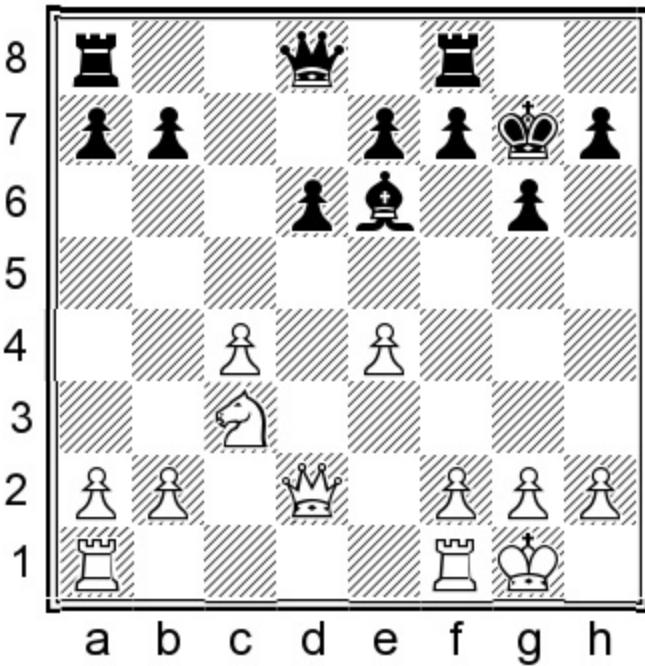
**11...Qxg4 12.Qd4**

In the variation 12.0-0 Qc8 13.b3 b5 14.Qxb5 Qxa1 15.Qxa1 a6 16.Qc3 Qe6 (16...f6 17.f4 Qf7 18.Qf1 Qd7 19.f5 Wa5 20.Wd3 Qc6 21.Qh6 Qh8 22.a4 Qb8 23.Qb1 ½-½ Spassky-Petrosian, Moscow 1967) 17.Qe1 f6 18.Wd3 Qf7 19.h3 Wa5 20.f4, White has more than enough compensation for the sacrificed exchange.

**12... $\mathbb{Q}e6$**

The computer recommends seeking counterplay by means of 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ !? 13. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  a6 14.0-0 (14.e5?!  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15.exd6  $\mathbb{W}xd6$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd6$  exd6 17.b3 b5!) 14...b5 15.cxb5 axb5 16.h3 (16. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ ??  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ) 16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  18.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ , although the resulting position is slightly better for White, thanks to his passed b4-pawn.

**13. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  14.0-0**



**14... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ !?**

The position has simplified and it is interesting to see how White exploits his space advantage. It is worth noting that the black king is better on g7 and therefore 14...f6 15.b3  $\mathbb{W}a5$  was more accurate, saving a tempo in comparison with the game.

**15.b3  $\mathbb{W}a5$  16.f4**

It is interesting to compare the play in this game with Stockfish's recommendation: 16. $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{R}ae8$  17.a4  $\mathbb{W}b4$  18. $\mathbb{W}c2$  a6 19. $\mathbb{R}d2$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  20.h3  $\mathbb{R}fe8$  21. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  22. $\mathbb{R}fd1$  f6 23. $\mathbb{R}d4$   $\mathbb{R}b8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , giving a significantly higher evaluation than the text move. However, I have the feeling that the a2-a4 advance, frequently mentioned by the engine, did not feature in Botvinnik's plans.

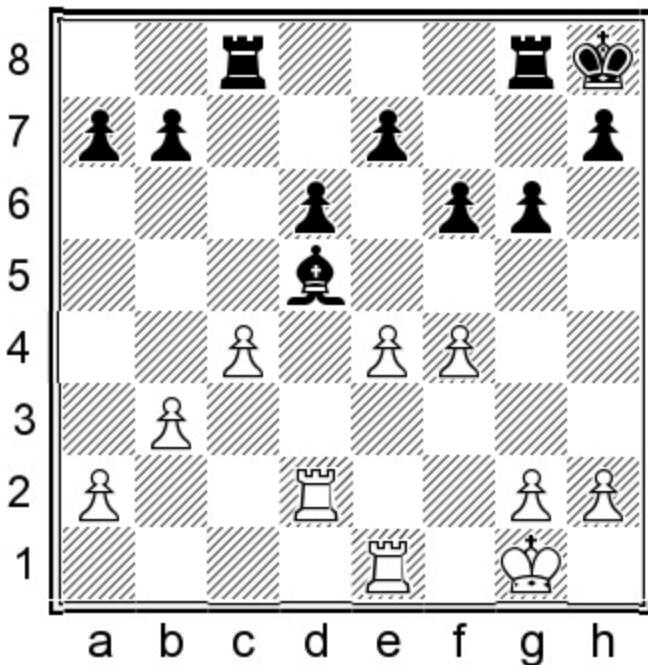
**16...f6 17. $\mathbb{R}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18. $\mathbb{R}e1$   $\mathbb{R}g8$**

As before, Stockfish recommends seeking counterplay by attacking the c4-pawn: 18...a6!? 19. $\mathbb{W}f2$  b5 20.f5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{R}fe8$  22.b4  $\mathbb{W}d8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{R}b8$  24.fxg6  $\mathbb{R}xb6$  25.gxf7  $\mathbb{R}f8$ , although from the human viewpoint this continuation seems rather risky.

**19.♗d3 ♜ac8 20.♗d5**

The engine suggests the more aggressive 20.h4!? a6 21.a4 ♜b4 22.♔h2 ♜g7 23.♗d1 ♜f8 24.♗ee3 ♜c5 25.♗e2 ♜d7 26.e5 fxe5 27.fxe5 ♜c6 28.exd6 exd6 29.♗d5 b5 30.♗f3, giving White a considerable advantage of 1.12. But we already know why Botvinnik wanted to keep things simple in this game.

**20...♜xd2 21.♗xd2 ♜xd5**



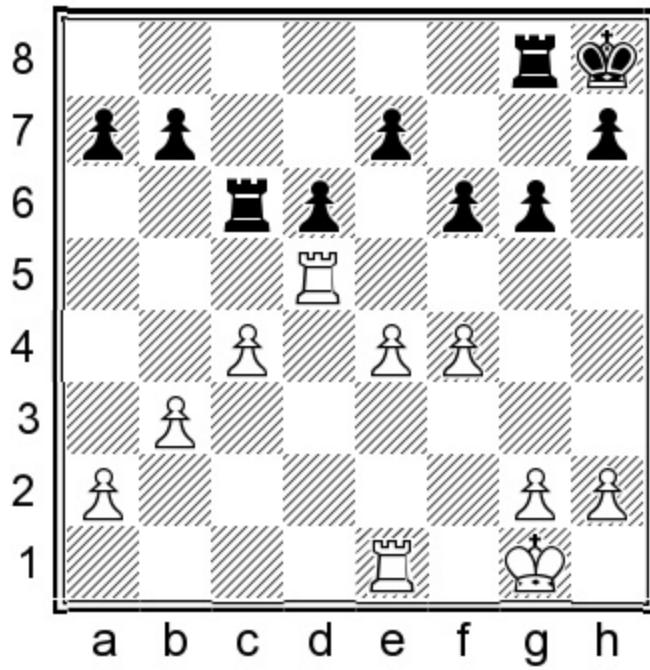
Botvinnik's next move is a new strategic idea: previously White always recaptured on d5 with one of the pawns.

**22.♗xd5!**

It is worth noting that the engine's preference 22.exd5 ♜c7 23.♗de2 ♜g7 24.g4 ♔g8 25.a4 ♔f8 maintains some advantage for White, although the black king has been given time to come to the defence of the vulnerable e7-pawn; on the other hand 22.cxd5? loses all White's advantage after 22...♜gd8 23.e5 dxe5 24.fxe5 ♜d7 25.exf6 exf6 26.g4 ♜c5 27.♗ed1 ♔g7.

**22...♜c6??**

A serious error which allows the ♜d5 to break through to the seventh rank. Correct was 22...♜c7, e.g. 23.♔f2 (23.e5 dxe5 24.fxe5 ♔g7) 23...♔g7 24.♗ed1 ♔f7 25.g4 b6 26.♗1d3 a6 27.a4 ♜c5 28.♗h3 ♔g7 29.♔e3 ♜gc8, and it is still not easy to breach Black's defences.



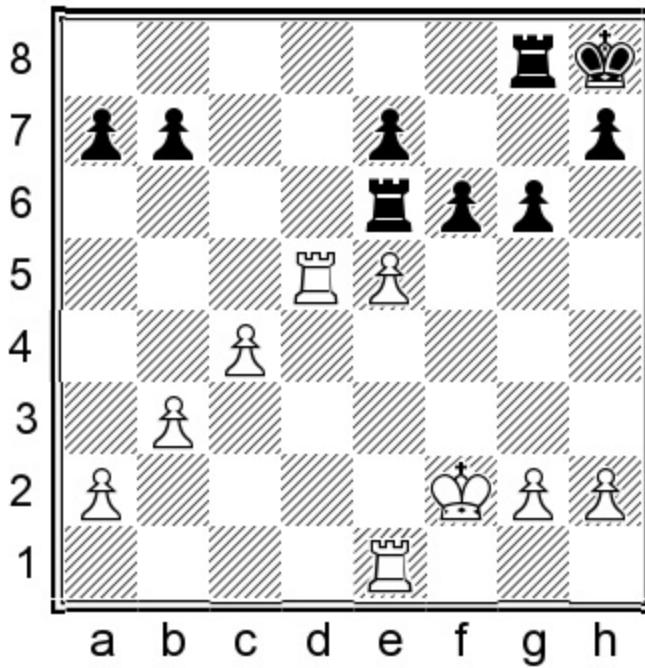
**23.e5!**

To open the file for his rooks.

**23...dxe5 24.fxe5??**

It was better to play 24. $\mathbb{Q}d7!$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\text{exf4}$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $h5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}dd7$   $g5$  (27... $b5!?$ ) 28. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ , and with three pawns to one on the queenside, plus the black king cut off on the back rank, White has a clear advantage.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$**



**25...♝f8?**

The difference in endgame skill is apparent. With 25...♔g7! 26.♗d7 ♜b8 27.exf6+ ♔xf6 Black could have kept good possibilities of salvation.

**26.♗d7 fxe5+ 27.♔e3 ♜b8?**

Black lets slip his last chance to save the game. However, it is notable that even after hours of analysis Stockfish is unable to confirm whether Black can draw after 27...b6!, e.g. 28.♗xa7 (28.♔e4? ♜f2; 28.♗e2? a5) 28...♔g7 (28...♝d8!?) 29.♗c7 ♜d8 30.♗e2 ♜d1 31.c5 bxc5 32.♗xc5 e4 33.♗c4 ♜d3+ 34.♔f2 e3+ 35.♔f3 ♜e5 36.g4 h5 37.h3 hxg4+ 38.hxg4 ♜e6 39.♗e4 ♜f6+ 40.♗f4 ♜e6 41.g5 ♜e5. Still, there is no doubt that this was the only way for Black to resist.

**28.♔e4!**

The activation of the white king decides the game.

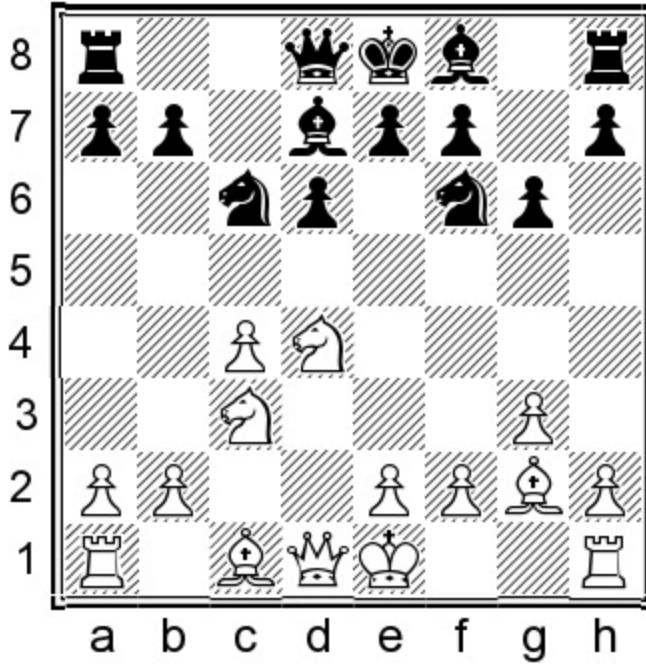
**28...♔g8 29.♔d5 ♔f7 30.♗xe5 ♜d6+ 31.♗xd6 exd6 32.♗xd6 ♜d8+ 33.♔c7 ♜d2 34.♗xb7 ♜xg2 35.c5 ♜xh2 36.c6 ♜c2 37.b4**

Black resigned.

**Game 111**  
 English Opening  
**Magnus Carlsen 2881**  
**Eduardo Iturriaga 2653**  
 Dubai 2014 (4)

Curiously, this blitz game, a playing mode that in Botvinnik's day was not treated seriously, is a model of how to play the type of position that we are studying. It is worth noting that even with only seconds on the clock the World Champion makes several moves which match Stockfish's main line.

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 c5 3.♘f3 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♜c6 5.♘c3 g6 6.g3 d6 7.♗g2 ♜d7**



**8.♘xc6!?**

As played by two other world champions, specifically Kasparov and Kramnik (with both colours!), so this is a good move, even though the majority of players prefer to play the less committal 8.0-0.

**8...♝xc6**

8...bxc6 seems more natural, e.g. 9.c5 d5 10.e4 dxe4 11.♗xe4 ♜xe4 12.♗xe4 ♜g7 (Stockfish considers 12...♝a5+ 13.♗d2 ♜xc5 to be more accurate) 13.0-0 0-0 14.♗a4 ♜b8! (14...♝c8?! 15.♗d1, with a slight advantage to White, Kasparov-Kramnik, Moscow 1998) 15.♗f4 ♜xb2 16.♗ab1 ♜xb1 17.♗xb1 ♜a8 18.♗d1 ♜b7 19.♗b1 ♜a8, with equality, Ding Liren-Wang Yue, Huai'an 2016.

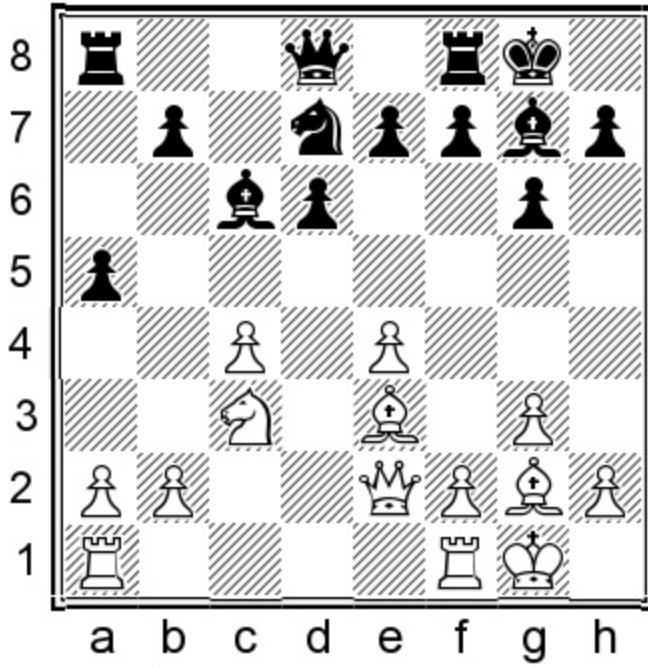
**9.e4**

Once again we see the Maroczy structure with the ♜f1 fianchettoed, as in Olafsson-Simagin.

**9...♝g7 10.0-0 0-0 11.♗e3 a5**

This standard move seems less appropriate in this specific position. It was better to play 11...♝d7!, followed by ...a7-a6 and ...b7-b5, e.g. 12.♗c1 a6 13.♗c2 b5 14.cxb5 axb5 15.♗d5 ♜c8 16.b3 ♜xd5 17.♗xc8 ♜xc8 18.♗xd5 ♜a6, with equality.

12.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathcal{Q}d7$



13.  $\mathbb{E}fd1?!$

It was necessary to defend the  $\mathcal{Q}c3$  with 13.  $\mathbb{E}ac1!.$

13...a4?!

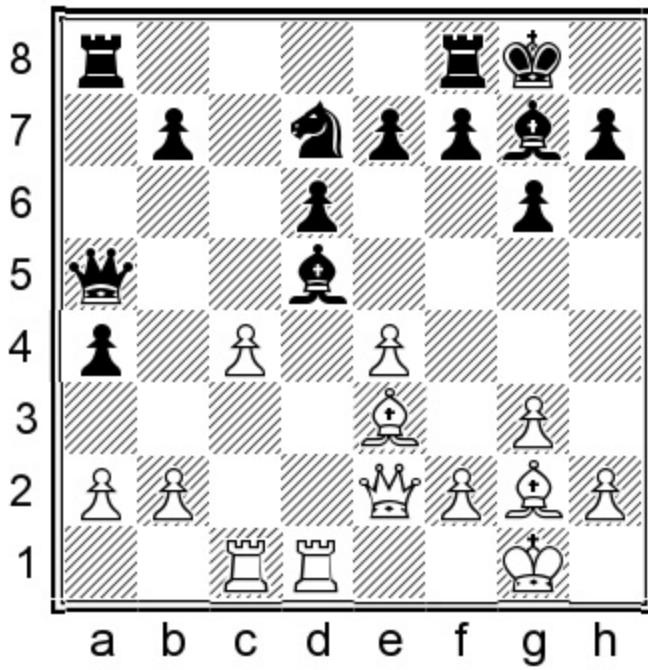
With 13.... $\mathbb{Q}xc3!$  14.  $\mathbb{B}xc3$  b6 15. h4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  16.  $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  17. h5 f6 Black could obtain the better position. I think that Iturriaga, who knows all the subtleties of the Accelerated Dragon perfectly well, would probably play that way against another opponent, but in this case, against the World Champion, he was probably afraid of an attack against his king.

14.  $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$

It is interesting that here too, even without doubling White's pawns, the engine considers the best option to be 14.... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?!$  15.  $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}ae8$  17. f3  $\mathcal{Q}c5$ , though it evaluates the resulting position as slightly better for White, 0.35.

15.  $\mathcal{Q}d5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

An interesting idea was 15.... $\mathbb{E}fe8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathcal{Q}f6?!$  as the double capture on f6 would not achieve much: 17.  $\mathcal{Q}xf6+$  (17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2?!$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  18.  $\mathcal{Q}b4$ ) 17.... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6 19.  $\mathbb{E}xd6$  f5 20.  $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}ad8!$  22.  $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  23.  $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$ , with complete equality.



**16.  $\mathbb{B}xd5!$   $\mathbb{W}a6$**

White also maintains strong pressure in the event of 16... $\mathbb{W}c7$ , e.g. 17.h4 (17. $\mathbb{B}b5!?$ ) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (17...h5!? 18.c5! dx5 19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  e5 20. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  b6 21. $\mathbb{B}cd1$ ) 18.e5!  $\mathbb{B}ae8$  19.h5.

**17.  $h4$   $\mathbb{B}fc8$**

It is very difficult to accept the line that Stockfish recommends here as the lesser of the evils: after 17...h5!? 18. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  19. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  (why not immediately 20. $\mathbb{B}xb7!?$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  21. $\mathbb{B}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}ab8$  22. $\mathbb{B}b5$ , it is not easy to see any realistic compensation for the pawn and the white bishop pair.

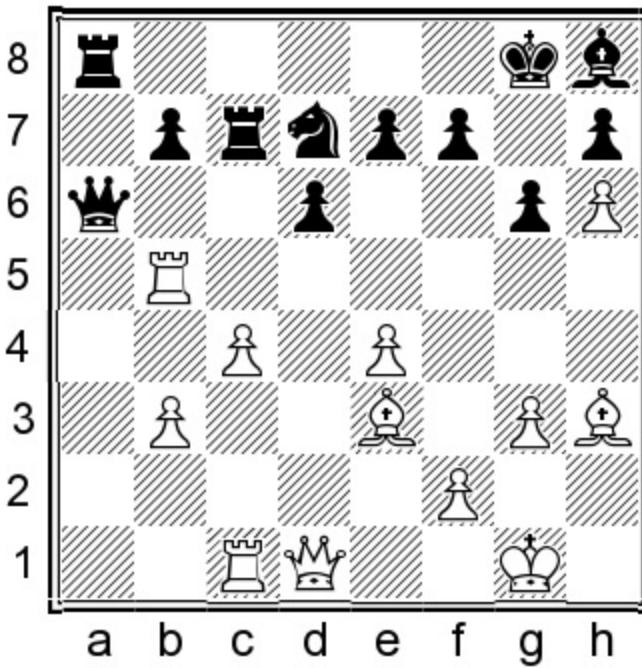
**18.  $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19.  $h5!$   $\mathbb{B}ac8$  20.  $h6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8!?$**

20... $\mathbb{Q}f8!?$  was more tenacious and the reason for this will become clear on move 26. After 21.b3 e6 22. $\mathbb{B}d1$  b6 23.g4 e5 24.g5  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , although White's position is superior, Black retains defensive resources.

**21.  $b4!$   $axb3$  22.  $AXB3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  23.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}h3!?$**

Preparation for the following move. Another good plan is 24.f4!?.

**24...  $\mathbb{B}a8$**



**25.♘xd7!**

This is far from being the only move. However, Carlsen, like all strong players, prefers to play a forcing line and from here on, each of his moves resounds like a shot from a gun! A good alternative was 25.e5!? ♘xe5 (25...♘xe5?? 26.♘xd7 ♘xd7 27.♘xe5) 26.♗b6 ♘c6 27.♗a5 ♘xb6 (27...♗xb6?? 28.♗xa8+) 28.b4 e6 29.c5 dxc5 30.♗g2! ♘f8 31.♗xa6 ♘xa6 32.bxc5, with an overwhelming advantage to White.

**25...♝xd7 26.♞d4!**

By exchanging the fianchettoed bishop, White increases his advantage and creates dangerous threats against the black king. Now we can see the difference with 20...♝f8!?

**26...♝xd4 27.♛xd4 f6 28.e5! fxe5 29.♝xe5! dxe5 30.♛xd7 ♛d6**

The black position is collapsing. Here, 30...♝f8 31.♛d5 ♛c6 32.♛xe5 ♛f6 would not have saved the game but was at least more tenacious.

**31.♛xb7 ♜b8 32.♝f3 ♜d2 33.♝d1! ♜xh6 34.♝d5+ ♜f8 35.c5! ♜h5 36.c6 ♜c8 37.♝c1 ♜g5 38.♝c3 ♜g7 39.c7 ♜f6 40.♝c6 ♜f5 41.b4! ♜b1+ 42.♝g2 ♜xb4 43.♝xe5+ ♜h6 44.♝e3+ ♜g7 45.♝e6 ♜h6 46.♝xc8 ♜e4+ 47.♝h2 ♜xc6 48.♝h3+ 1-0**

The Maroczy structure scores 57.8% for White. The next game, with which we finish this chapter, is a form of revenge for this statistic, on behalf of Black and, in particular, the g7-bishop.

### Game 112 Sicilian Defence

Constantin Lupulescu 2618

Eduardo Iturriaga 2650

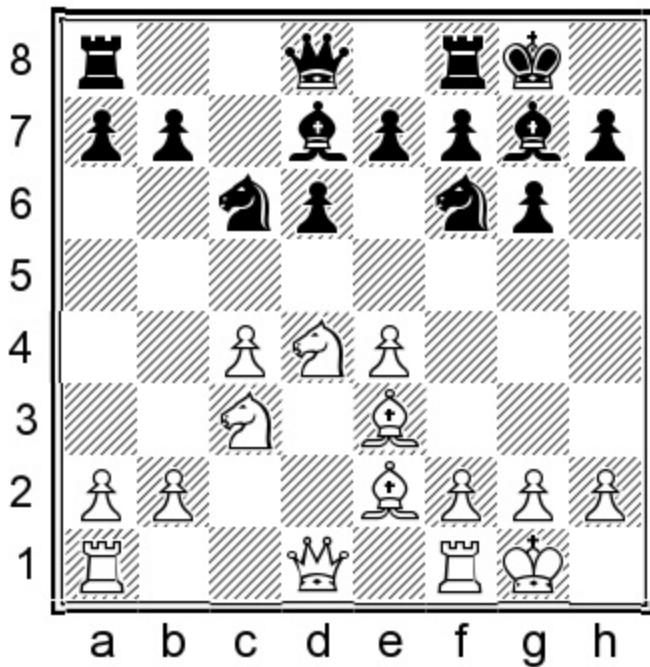
Baku ol 2016 (10)

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 2. c4 g6 3. d4 cxd4 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5. e4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$

White can try to avoid exchanges here by playing 6.  $\mathbb{Q}c2!?$ , although in that case he must reckon with 6...d6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (7.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (7...f5!?) 8. 0-0 0-0 9.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  f5) 7... $\mathbb{Q}xc3+!?$ , which has a very favourable score for Black, e.g. 8. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  9. f3 0-0 (9... $\mathbb{W}a5!?$ ) 10.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$ , with chances for both sides, Pantsulaia-Lorparizangeneh, Baku 2016.

7.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  8. 0-0 0-0 9.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  f5 10. exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  e6 12.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  a6 13.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}fd4$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  is equal.

6...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0 8.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  d6 9. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$



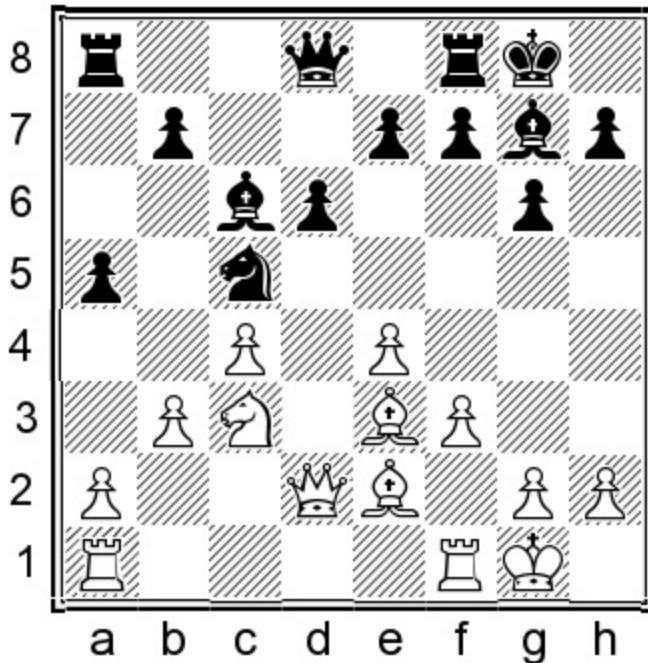
10.  $\mathbb{W}d2$

Saving a tempo in comparison with the move-order 10.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12. f3 a5 13.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  15. b3  $\mathbb{W}b6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  19. a3  $\mathbb{W}d8$  20.  $\mathbb{W}d2$ , Ivanisevic-Sedlak, Cetinje 2009. Recently the most fashionable variation, with a very favourable score for White, is 10. h3!?  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12.  $\mathbb{W}c2!?$  e.g. 12...a5 13.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$  (13...a4!? 14. c5  $\mathbb{W}a5$ ) 14.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (or 15...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  16. e5 f5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ ) 16. c5!  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  18. cxd6  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  19. dx e7  $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}c3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22. exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  23. d6  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , with a clear advantage thanks to his powerful d6-pawn, Cheparinov-Amin, Zagreb 2018.

10...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12. f3 a5 13. b3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

Avoiding exchanges, which usually favours the side with the space advantage. This was my comment on this position in the book I wrote about thirty-five years ago. It is worth noting that Stockfish confirms this human evaluation, giving practically the same evaluation of 1.00 both to the text move and of the alternative retreat of this bishop to f2, but only 0.51 to the capture on g7.

**14...♝c5**



The starting position of the modern interpretation of the Accelerated Dragon. Black has two different plans. The first and more popular plan consists of deploying the pieces as follows: 15...♝b6, followed by ...♝f8-c8, ...♝b6-d8-f8, ...h7-h5, ...♝g8-h7 and then, depending on how White reacts, ...♝g7-h6 or ...♝f8-h8. The second and more aggressive plan, which Black chooses in this game, intends to attack on the kingside with 15...♝e5, followed by ...e7-e6, ...♝d8-e7/h4 and, depending on White's response, ...f7-f5.

**15.♝ac1**

15.♝ab1!? is the most common continuation here and this seems more logical, since the advance b3-b4 forms part of White's plan; after 15...♝b6 (here Black can also switch to the second plan mentioned above: 15...e6!? 16.♝fd1 ♝e5 17.♝d4 (17.♝b5? ♜h4! 18.g3 ♜xg3! 19.hxg3 ♜xg3+ 20.♝f1 ♜xe4! 21.♝d3 f5, with a winning attack, Bharath-Nigmatov, New Delhi 2019) 17...♝e7 18.♝e3 ♜fd8 19.♝f1 h5 20.♝d2 b6 21.♝bd1 ♜f6 22.♝xe5 dx5, with good control of the central squares for Black, Henderson de la Fuente-Sindarov, Moscow 2019) 16.♝fc1 ♜fc8 17.♝c2 ♜d8 18.♝f1 h5 (18...♝f8 19.♝h1 ♜e5 (19...e6!?) 20.♝d5, with a slight advantage to White, Dominguez Perez-Jones, chess.com 2020) 19.a3 ♜h7 20.♝h1 ♜e5 (20...b6!?) 21.b4 axb4 22.axb4 ♜e6 (22...♝a4!?) 23.♝d5 ♜a3 24.f4 ♜g7 25.f5, with the better game for White, Carlsen-Lie, Gjovik 2009).

The engine's assessment is rather different: 15.♝fd1 1.09; 15.♝ab1 0.90; 15.♝ad1 0.87 and 15.♝ae1

0.82. That is to say, the difference is not very significant and perhaps exemplifies one of the eternal themes in chess: where to place the rooks most appropriately.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e5!?$

GM Iturriaga, one of the best connoisseurs of the Accelerated Dragon, prefers the aggressive plan. The most frequent choice here is 15... $\mathbb{W}b6!?$ , e.g. 16. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  (16. $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (16... $\mathbb{W}d8!?$ ) 17.cxd5  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  18. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  19. $\mathbb{E}c2!$ , with a slight advantage to White thanks to the pair of bishops, Khalifman-Petrov, Porto Carras 2018) 16... $\mathbb{E}fc8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{E}fd1$  h5 20. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  23. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}h8$  24. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ , with chances for both sides, Lenic-Le Quang Liem, Moscow 2011.

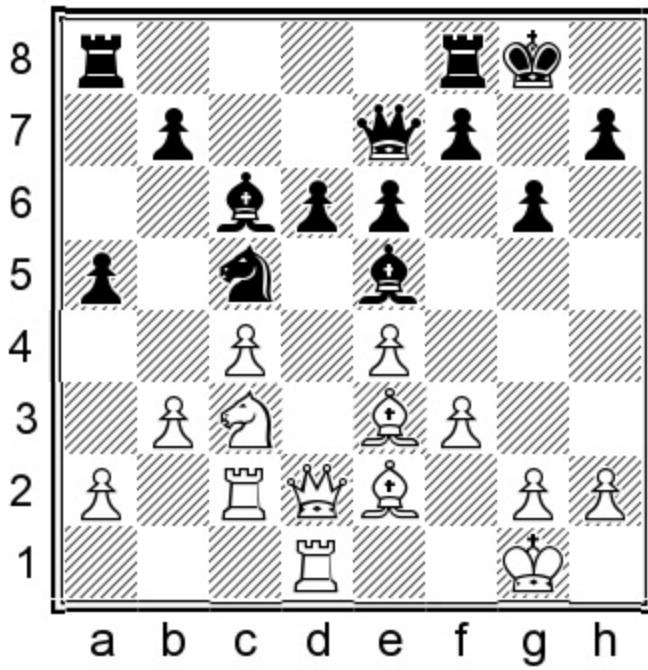
### 16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$

16.f4? loses a pawn after 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ; but the idea of protecting the e4-pawn in order to threaten f3-f4 also failed to give White any advantage in Krush-Iturriaga, Gibraltar 2015, after 16. $\mathbb{Q}d1!?$   $\mathbb{W}b6!$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18.exd5  $\mathbb{W}b4$  19. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  20.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ .

### 16...e6 17. $\mathbb{E}c2$

Another plan, based on transferring the  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  to d4, deserves attention: 17. $\mathbb{Q}f1!?$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  (17...f5!?) 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  (18...b6!?) 19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  20. $\mathbb{W}f2$  f5?! (20... $\mathbb{E}ac8!?$  21.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ) 21.exf5 gxf5 22.g3, and White was better in Wang Hao-Iturriaga, Dubai 2014; Stockfish gives the highest evaluation to 17.g3!?  $\mathbb{W}e7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  b6 20. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  23. $\mathbb{W}e3$  e5 24. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  25. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  27. $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  28.f4, although after 28... $\mathbb{W}e7$  29. $\mathbb{E}f2$  f6 30.h4  $\mathbb{E}f8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  b5 Black has counterplay.

### 17... $\mathbb{W}e7$



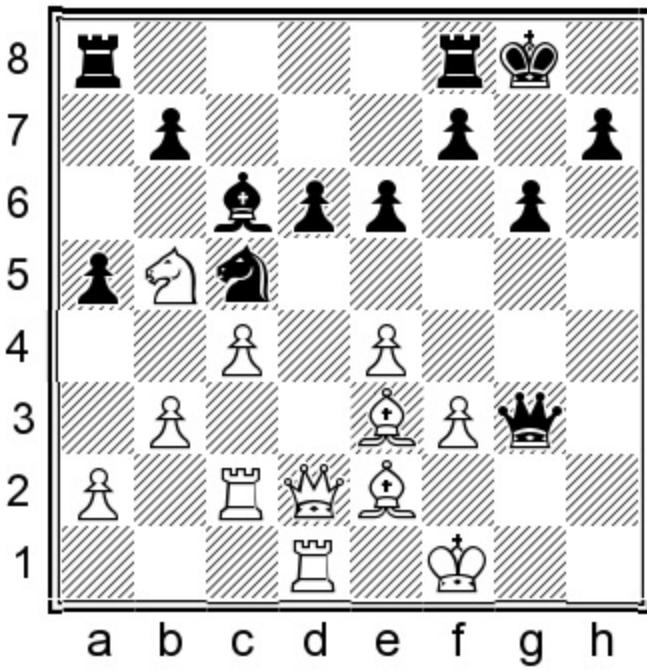
**18.♕b5?!**

Basking in his space advantage and the rather deceptive solidity of his position, White momentarily loses his sense of danger. It seems that Black also has good play in any case after 18.g3 h5!? or 18.♗f1 ♜ad8, but White can retain some advantage with 18.♗g5!? f6 19.♗e3 f5 20.exf5 gxf5 21.♗g5 ♜f7 22.♗f4 ♜ad8 23.♗xe5 dxe5 24.♗e3 ♜xd1+ 25.♗xd1 ♜d7 26.♗b5 ♜f6 27.♗d2.

**18...♛h4! 19.g3!**

The only move to maintain equality, as after 19.f4? ♜xe4 20.♗e1 ♜xe1+ 21.♗xe1 ♜f6 22.♗f3 a4 23.♗a7 axb3! 24.axb3 ♜c5 25.♗xc6 bxc6 26.♗xc6 ♜a3 27.♗xc5 dxc5 28.♗a4 ♜d8 Black has the better ending.

**19...♝xg3! 20.hxg3 ♜xg3+ 21.♔f1**



It seems that in his calculations the Romanian GM incorrectly evaluated the sacrifice of a second piece:

**21...Qxe4! 22.Qd3**

If 22.fxe4? f5! wins.

**22...f5! 23.Qd4?**

A decisive error. As IM Valentin Iotov indicated, the position would have been far from clear after 23.Qxd6!; the main variation of his analysis runs: 23...Rf6!, with the idea of transferring this rook to h6, (23...Rad8!? 24.c5 f4 25.Qd4 Qxd6 26.cxd6 Rxd6 27.Rc5 Wh3+ 28.Qg1 Rfd8 29.Qc3 Rd5 30.Rxd5 Rxd5 31.Qe5 Wg3+ 32.Qf1 Wh3+ 33.Qg1 Wg3+, with perpetual check) 24.c5! Raf8! 25.Rdd2!! (25.Rdc1? g5, with the threat of 26...Rh6. The shortest route to equality is 25.Qg1! g5 26.Qd4 e5 27.Qc4+ Qg7 28.Qd3 Qxd6 29.cxd6 Re4 30.Qc3 Qxc2 31.Qxc2 Wxf3+ 32.Qe1 Wh1 33.Qf1 Wf3+ 34.Qe1 Wh1, with a repetition of position) 25...g5 (25...Wh4 26.Qd4 e5 27.Qc4+) 26.Qd1 Qxd2+ 27.Qxd2 Wh3+ 28.Qg1 Rh6 29.Qg2 Wh1+ 30.Qf2 Rg6 31.Qg1 Wh4+ 32.Qe2 Wxf3+ 33.Qxf3 g4+ 34.Qe2 f4 35.Qe4 fxe4 36.Qd3! Rf2 37.Qxe3 g3 38.Qxf2 gxf2 39.Qf1; however, even in this final position, after 39...b6!? 40.Qe4 (40.cxb6? Rd8) 40...bxc5, Black still has some practical winning chances. It is worth noting that this engine analysis is far removed from real chess play, and therefore finding this variation over the board would be impossible for any human player.

**23...f4 24.Qxc6??**

It was more tenacious to play 24.Qg1 Wh3+ 25.Qe1 Wh1 26.fxe4 Qxe4 27.Qf3 Wxg1+ 28.Qf1 Wxf1+ 29.Qxf1 Qxc2 30.Qxc2, although with such a big material advantage Black should win.

24...fxe3 25.♗xe3 ♜f4 26.♘d4 ♜h4 27.♗g1 ♜h1!

White resigned.

The final position is very neat!

## *Chapter 6*

# The d5-square in the Sicilian

### 6.1. Introduction

‘Why spend so much effort on such a difficult variation?’ – Anatoly Karpov.

As a player progresses, he needs to acquire a deeper and more detailed knowledge of the strategy of the openings. In addition, it is very useful to know the ideas behind the various opening variations, even those that are not in his repertoire. This knowledge widens the player’s horizons and helps him apply concepts that until then seemed to belong to some other opening scheme.

In this paragraph we shall discuss positions based on the advance ...e7-e5, weakening the important central d5-square. This is an important feature of the modern handling of the Sicilian Defence. The inventor of this idea, who understood the position from the point of view of dynamic play, was GM Isaak Boleslavsky. He gave his name to the system 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♗e2 e5!?, which was the prototype of the Najdorf Variation 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e2 e5!?, as well as the Sveshnikov Variation 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5!?. It should be recognized that the Sveshnikov is very original, in the sense that in some lines it leads to the breakup of Black’s kingside pawn structure, with doubled pawns on f7 and f6. I can recall that during the USSR Championship in 1973 several well-known grandmasters, including the former World Champions Tigran Petrosian and Boris Spassky, asked the young master Evgeny Sveshnikov ‘when are you going to give up playing such an ugly line, which obviously has no future?’ And what the future 12th World Champion said to Evgeny provides the epigraph above.

The essence of the strategic idea of the Boleslavsky System is based on the imbalance existing on the board, following the advance ...e7-e5. In return for weakening the d5-square, Black gains a tempo, banishes the ♘d4 from the centre and also gains various dynamic possibilities. One of the most typical methods for White in this structure is the exchange of the ♖c1 for Black’s ♘f6. This exchange creates a situation where White usually has an invulnerable ♘d5, while Black has the pair of bishops.

## 6.2. Boleslavsky's idea

Let us now examine one of the first experiments of the Belarusian grandmaster.

Game 113

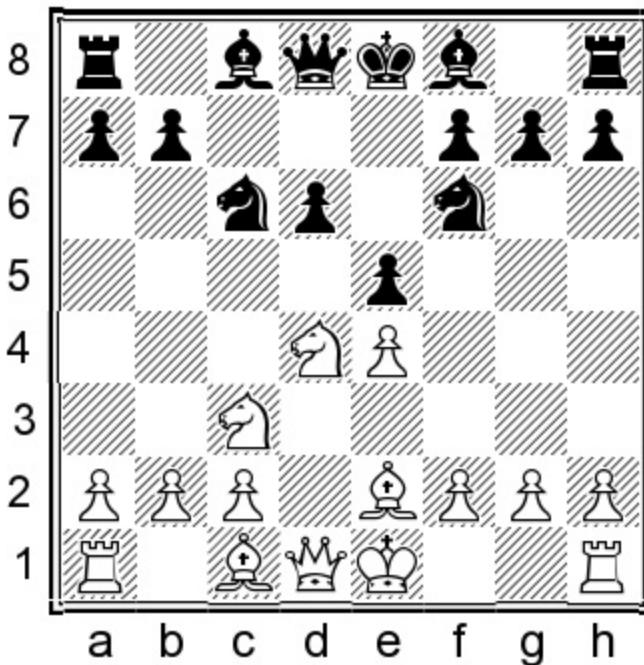
Sicilian Defence

**Emanoil Reicher**

**Isaak Boleslavsky**

Bucharest 1953 (6)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♗e2 e5**



**7.♘b3**

The main alternative is 7.♘f3, e.g. 7...h6 8.0-0 ♗e7 9.♗e1 0-0 10.h3 ♗e6 11.♗f1 ♖c8 (11...♗b8!? 12.a4 ♖bd7 13.a5 a6 14.b3 ♖c7) 12.♗d5 ♗a5 13.♗xe7+ ♖xe7 14.b3 ♖fd8 15.c4, with the better game for White, Luther-Petr, Germany Bundesliga B 2018/19.

**7...♗e7 8.♗g5**

It is curious that the engine evaluates this obvious move negatively. The main line is 8.0-0 0-0 9.♗e3 a5 10.a4 ♖b4 11.f4 ♗e6 12.f5 ♗xb3 (12...♗d7!?) 13.cxb3 d5 14.exd5 ♖bxd5, with equality, A.Sokolov-Renet, Switzerland tt 2019.

**8...0-0**

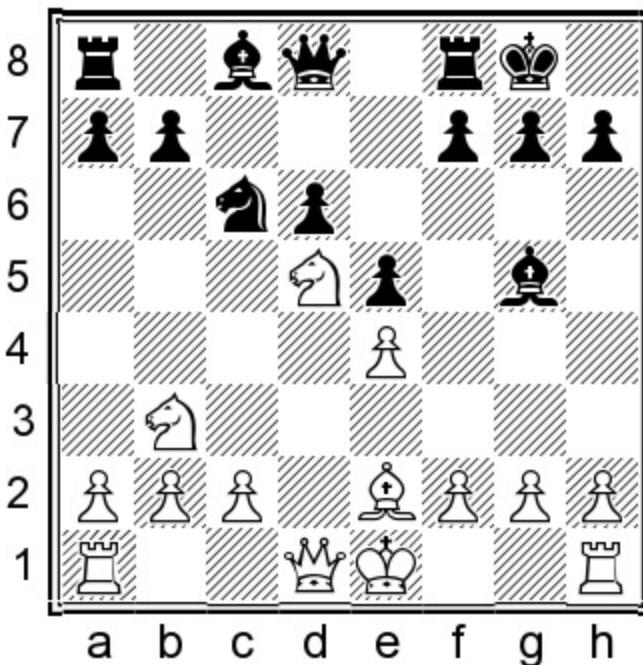
The variation 8...♗xe4 9.♗xe4 ♗xg5 10.♗xd6+ ♗e7 11.♗xc8+ ♖xc8 equalizes, from a human

viewpoint. However, Boleslavsky is seeking a more complicated game. It is worth noting that Stockfish gives a slight advantage to White after 12.c3 g6 13. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  14. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{B}cd8$  15.h4  $\mathbb{B}xd1+$  16. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  17.h5 b6 18. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

### 9. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

An alternative is 9. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  10.a3  $\mathbb{B}c8$  11. $\mathbb{B}d1$  h6 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (it is a mistake to win the  $\mathbb{B}d6$ : 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf6?$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  13. $\mathbb{W}xd6?$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  14. $\mathbb{B}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ) 12...a6 13.0-0, and White has no advantage.

### 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$



Let us compare this position with the one that can arise from the Sveshnikov Variation after 1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 6. $\mathbb{Q}db5$  d6 7. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  a6 8. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  b5 9. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  12.0-0. The main difference between these two positions is the placement of the second white knight. In the Sveshnikov, from the a3-square the knight can enter play in a more natural way than from b3, by means of c2-c3 and  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ -c2-e3/b4.

### 11. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Another plan is 11.0-0, with the idea of deploying this bishop on a different diagonal, e.g. 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  g6 13. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 14. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  15. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{B}ad8$  16. $\mathbb{B}ad1$  a6 17.a3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ , and thanks to his control of the d5-square Black has no problems, although White won in Radjabov-Ding Liren, Khanty-Mansiysk 2019.

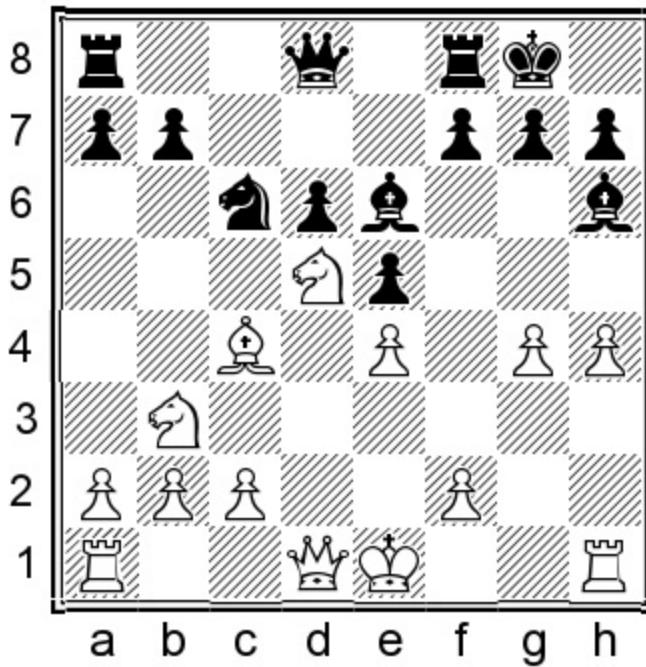
### 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12.h4?!

With this and the following move White is trying to restrict the  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , but it weakens the f4-square. White

could have kept the balance with 12.c3 a6 13.a4  $\mathbb{E}c8$  14. $\mathbb{W}d3$ .

## 12... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 13.g4

Stockfish gives only a very slight advantage to Black after 13.c3!  $\mathbb{E}c8$  14.g4 (14. $\mathbb{W}e2!$ ? a6 15.a4) 14... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  17. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  18.g5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{W}b5$ , although for a human player this evaluation seems rather strange, with the white king still in the centre and all the black pieces in play, which is far from usual in the Sicilian.



## 13... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 14. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{E}c8$ 15.c3

15. $\mathbb{E}d1$ !? was slightly better, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 18. $\mathbb{E}h3$ , followed by  $\mathbb{Q}e1-f1-g2$ ) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  (16.c3!?) 16...exf4 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  f3 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  20. $\mathbb{E}h3$ , although in that case too Black's advantage is clear.

## 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16. $\mathbb{E}d1$ !?

A tactical error, which was not exploited in the game. A lesser evil was 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  (17...fxe6 18. $\mathbb{E}h3$ ) 18. $\mathbb{E}d1$ .

## 16... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ !?

16... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ ! 17. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  (17. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}a4$ , with an extra pawn) 17...gxf6 18. $\mathbb{W}xg4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  would have been better, with a clear advantage to Black.

## 17.h5

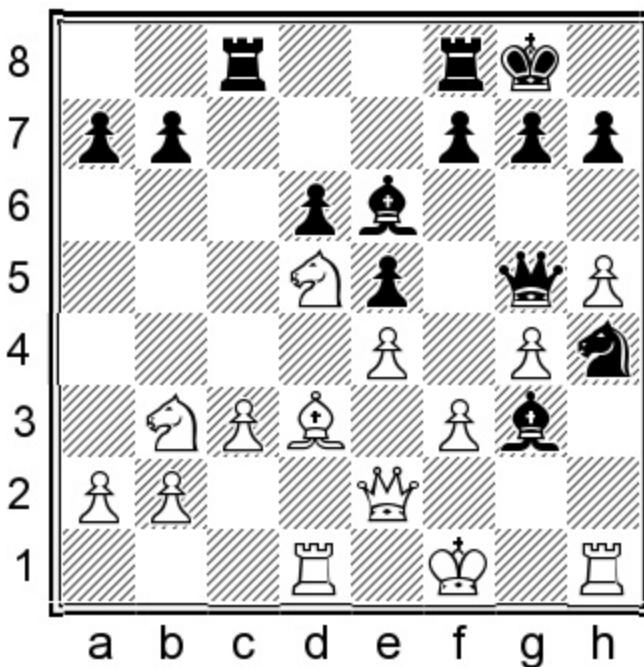
After 17.g5 h5! 18.gxh6 (18. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ ? gxf6 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 20. $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  21. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  22. $\mathbb{E}g1$  f5 23.exf5

$\mathbb{E}xf5$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ , Black has a clear advantage, thanks to the twin threats of 19... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  and 19... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ .

**17... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

The best defence was 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ , e.g. 18... $\mathbb{W}g5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  20. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  21. $\mathbb{E}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  22. $\mathbb{E}g4$   $exf4$  23. $\mathbb{E}xh4$ , with some practical chances of drawing this endgame.

**18... $\mathbb{W}g5$  19.f3  $\mathbb{Q}g3+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f1$**



Now it is clear that White's strategy has been faulty, as the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  is ineffective and merely helps Black achieve the important advance of the  $\mathbb{B}f7$  on the kingside, where Black has a clear advantage.

**20...f5! 21. $\mathbb{E}g1$**

21. $\mathbb{g}xf5$  fails to 21... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22. $\mathbb{e}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}ce8!$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}xf5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ ; 22... $\mathbb{E}xf5?$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  24. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  25. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3+$ ) 23. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  24. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , with a decisive advantage to Black.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$  22. $\mathbb{E}xg3$   $fxe4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $exd3$  24. $\mathbb{E}xd3$**

24. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  also loses after 24... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e1+$  26. $\mathbb{E}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$ .

**24... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}h4!$  26. $\mathbb{E}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xg4+$  0-1**

If 27. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xf3+$  28. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{E}f8$ , winning the queen.

Game 114  
Sicilian Defence  
**Yury Averbakh**

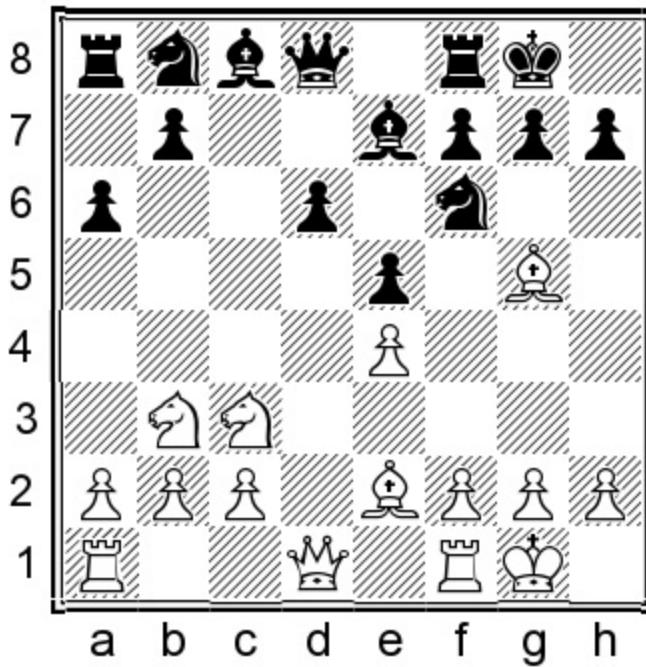
**Tigran Petrosian**  
Tbilisi ch-URS 1959 (11)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e2 e5 7.♗b3**

Just as in the Boleslavsky System, the main alternative is the retreat of the ♘d4 to f3, which, however, is played almost ten times less often. We shall analyse this variation with 7.♘f3 later. It is worth noting that Stockfish gives a higher evaluation to the text move.

**7...♗e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♗g5**

It is symptomatic that this move, which was once considered the most logical, has another evaluation nowadays; in a database of modern games it is only the seventh most common option. The top two choices now are 9.♗e3 and 9.♗h1. It is curious that Stockfish also prefers 9.♗e3 ♗e6 and now 10.♗d3, which can be seen frequently in modern games, e.g. 10...♗bd7 11.♗d5 (not even attempting to exploit the weakness on d5) 11...♗xd5 12.exd5 ♞c8 13.c4 ♘e8 14.♗ac1 g6, Milos-Grischuk, PRO League 2020.



**9...♗e6**

Unlike in the previous game, 9...♗xe4?! does not work due to 10.♗xe7 ♘xc3 11.♗xd8 ♘xd1 12.♗e7 ♜e8 (12...♗xb2?! 13.♗xf8 ♜xf8 14.a4 ♘d7 15.♗f3 ♘xa4 16.♗xb7 ♜a7 17.♗a5, with inadequate compensation for the exchange) 13.♗fxd1! ♜xe7 14.♗xd6 ♜f8 15.♗a5, with the better ending for White.

**10.♗xf6**

The logical follow-up to the previous move. It is worth noting that the engine recommends refraining from the exchange on f6, e.g. 10.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11. a4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  h6 and here it prefers to retreat with 13.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!?$ , instead of exchanging on f6.

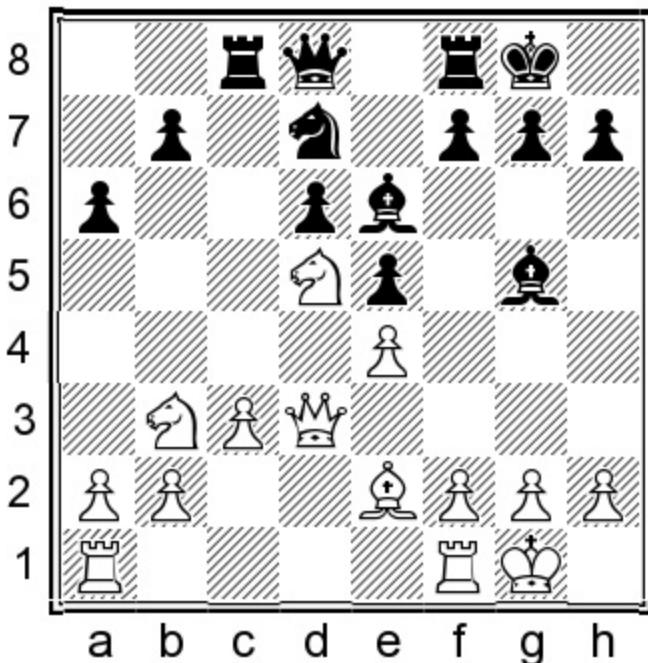
**10... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

This is still the main line, although 11.  $\mathbb{W}d3!?$  has a better score, with the idea of 11...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

**11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

A slightly more active plan was seen in a modern game: 11...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  12. a4!?  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13. a5  $\mathbb{E}c8$  14. c3 g6 15.  $\mathbb{E}a4!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ , with equal play, Felgaer-Wojtaszek, Gibraltar 2013.

**12.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  13. c3  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**



This position is similar to the one that arose in the previous game, except that White has developed his king's bishop to e2 and castled, instead of starting the mistaken plan of advancing with 12.h4 and 13.g4. On Black's part, the difference is in the position of the queen's knight, which is slightly better on d7, as it does not mask the action of the  $\mathbb{E}c8$  on the c-file.

**14.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

The black position seems more flexible, but for now the balance is not disturbed.

**15...g6 16.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!?$**

The first important inaccuracy; 16.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$  would have been better, e.g. 16...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (16... f5? 17.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ) 17. g3 h5 18. h4  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  20.  $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  21.  $\mathbb{W}d2$ , with approximately equal play.

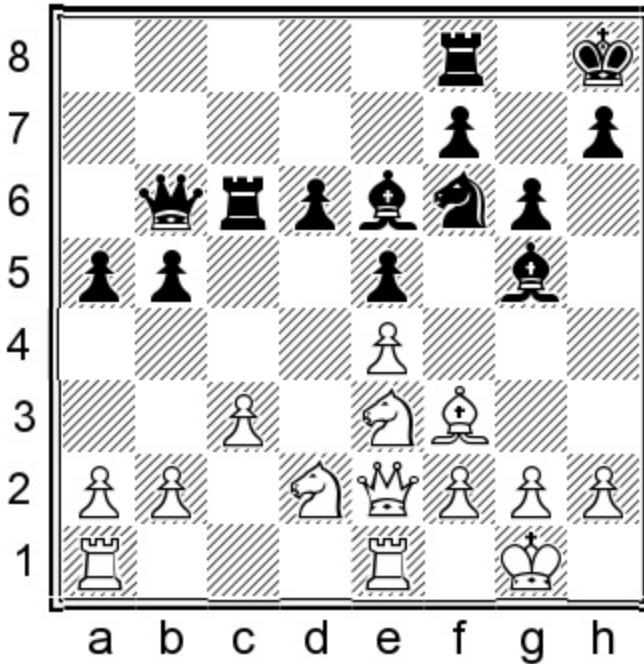
**16...♝c6!**

From this square the ♘c6 defends the ♘d6 and at the same time supports the advance of Black's pawns on the queenside. Another good move was 16...♝b6!?.

**17.♞fe1 ♛f6 18.♛e2 b5 19.♞a1?!**

A further inaccuracy. Black's advantage would have been less than in the game after 19.♝g4! ♛xg4 (19...♝d7 20.♝e3 ♜b6 21.♝d5 ♜xd5 22.♜xd5) 20.♜xg4 f5 (20...♝c4!?) 21.exf5 gxf5 22.♜f3 ♜c7 (22...e4? 23.♝d4) 23.♝d5, and White has his chances.

**19...♛b6 20.♝d2 a5**



White has made it difficult to advance the ♘f7, and so Petrosian switches to the typical plan in the Sicilian: a minority attack on the queenside.

**21.♝df1 ♜fc8 22.a3 b4**

22...♝d7?! 23.♝g4.

**23.cxb4 axb4 24.a4**

At first sight Averbakh's position appears satisfactory, but the ♘a4 is weak and Black is able to attack it.

**24...♛a7! 25.♝ed1 ♜a6 26.♝d3?!**

26.♛d2 b3 27.♛b4 was more resilient.

**26...b3**

26... $\mathbb{E}xa4!$ ? 27. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4$  28. $\mathbb{E}xd6$  b3.

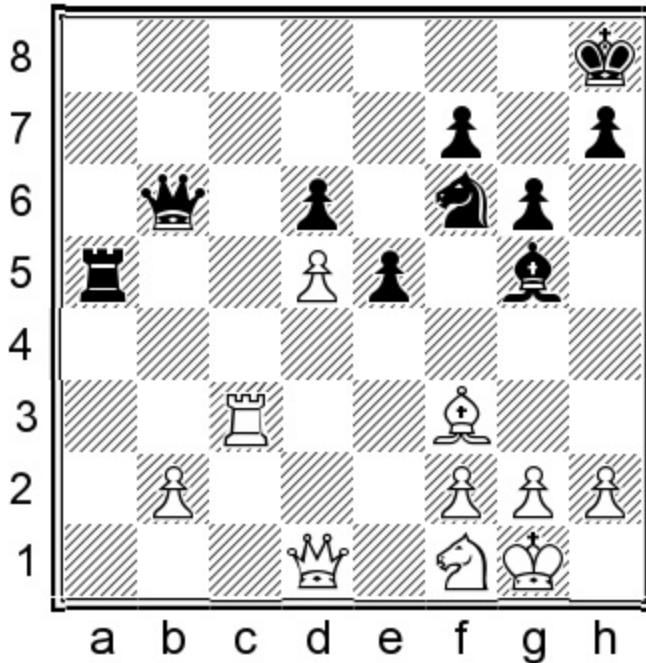
**27.a5  $\mathbb{E}cc6$**

A good alternative was 27... $\mathbb{E}xa5!$ ? 28. $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  29. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}a4$ .

**28. $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

This is forced, and demonstrates the superiority of Petrosian's strategy. After the following exchange the white pieces can no longer make use of the d5-square and thus his weakness disappears.

**29... $\mathbb{E}xd5$  30.exd5  $\mathbb{E}c5$  31. $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}axa5$  32. $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{E}xa5$  33. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$**



After some exchanges a typical position has arisen, with advantage to Black, due to the weakness of the two pawns at b2 and d5 and the eventual possibility of advancing with ...f7-f5, followed by ...e5-e4.

**34. $\mathbb{E}b3$**

34. $\mathbb{E}c6?$  loses material after 34... $\mathbb{W}xb2$  35. $\mathbb{E}xd6$  e4 36. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$ .

**34... $\mathbb{W}a7$  35. $\mathbb{E}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36.h4?!**

As in the previous game, although much later, White commits the same mistake of attacking the  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  with his rook's pawn. Instead, after 36. $\mathbb{W}b3!?$   $\mathbb{E}a1$  37.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (37...e4!? 38. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ ) 38. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  39. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  40. $\mathbb{E}xb5$  there would still have been a struggle.

**36...♝h6 37.b3?**

After 37.g3!? White could still resist.

**37...♝a2 38.♛e1 ♛a5**

Threatening 39...♝d2!..

**39.♛b1 ♜a1 40.♝b5 ♛c3! 0-1**

Trapping the white queen on a half-empty board.

Bobby Fischer also used to employ Boleslavsky's idea when playing his main weapon against 1.e4: the Najdorf Variation. With his dynamic style, the American GM was successful even in a situation where Black did not have the bishop pair to compensate for the weakness of the d5-square.

Game 115

Sicilian Defence

**Wolfgang Unzicker**

**Robert James Fischer**

Varna ol 1962 (7)

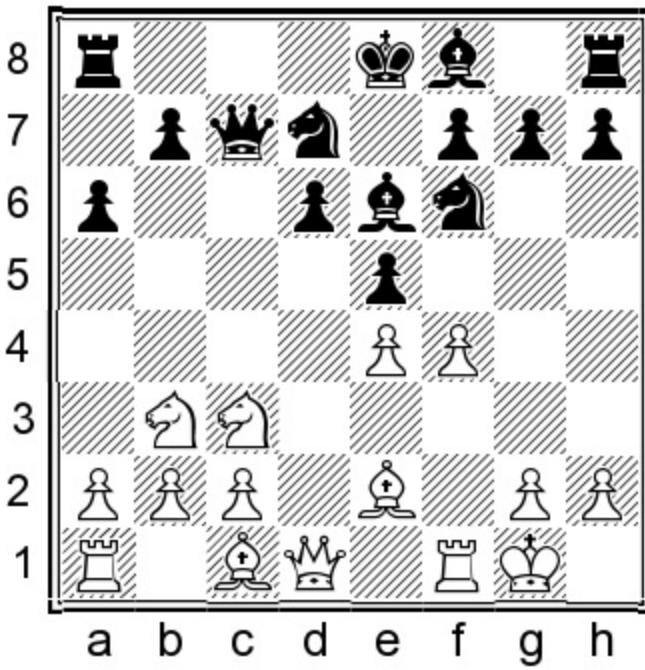
**1.e4 c5 2.♝f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♝xd4 ♜f6 5.♝c3 a6 6.♝e2 e5 7.♝b3 ♜e6**

The text move could be answered with 8.f4 ♛c7 9.g4!?, so later it was concluded that 7...♝e7 is more accurate, when the modern main line continues 8.0-0 0-0 9.♝e3 ♜e6 10.♛d2 ♜bd7 11.a4 ♜c8 12.a5 ♛c7 13.♝fd1 ♜fd8 14.♛e1 ♛c6 15.♝f3 h6 16.♝c1!? ♜c5 17.♝1a2, with the idea of 18.♝b4, to control the d5-square.

**8.0-0**

White has a very good score with the line 8.f4 ♛c7 (although Stockfish fails to see any advantage for White in the event of 8...♝e7!? 9.f5 ♜d7 10.♝g5 ♜c6 11.♝xf6 ♜xf6 12.♛d3 0-0 13.0-0-0 ♜e7 14.♝b1 ♜d7 or 8...b5!? 9.♝e3 ♜e7 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.♝xd8+ ♜xd8 12.♝c5 ♜bd7 13.♝xe6 fxe6) 9.g4!?, e.g. 9...exf4 10.♝xf4 ♜c6 11.♝c5 0-0-0 12.♝xe6 fxe6 13.♛d3 ♜e5 14.♛h3 ♜fd7 15.g5, with better play for White, Smirin-Timerkhanov, St Petersburg 2016.

**8...♝bd7 9.f4 ♛c7**



## 10.f5

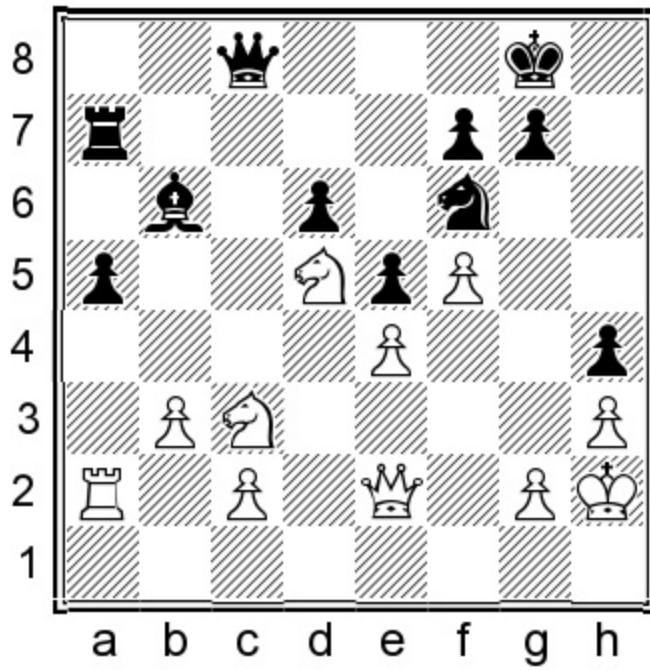
This is still the most common move. An important alternative in the period 1960-80 was 10.a4!? and the following game was important in the development of its theory: 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  (11...0-0 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (12.a5!?) 12...exf4 13. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , Karpov-Polugaevsky, Moscow 1974) 12.f5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  13.a5 0-0 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  17. $\mathbb{W}f3$  h6 (17... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dx $c5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ ) 18. $\mathbb{Q}aa1$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20.exd5  $\mathbb{W}b5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dx $c5$  22. $\mathbb{W}g4$ , with a clear advantage to White, Geller-Ivkov, Hilversum 1973.

## 10... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 11.a4

The engine prefers 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  12. $\mathbb{W}f3$ .

## 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Fischer's idea requires Black to keep his rook on a8. So 11... $\mathbb{R}c8$ ? is inferior and the following game, a classic for this variation, continued 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13.a5 h5 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  16.h3 h4 17. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b5 18.axb6  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  20. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  0-0 22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}fa1$   $\mathbb{Q}fa8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}1a2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  a5 28. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  29.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}ed5$



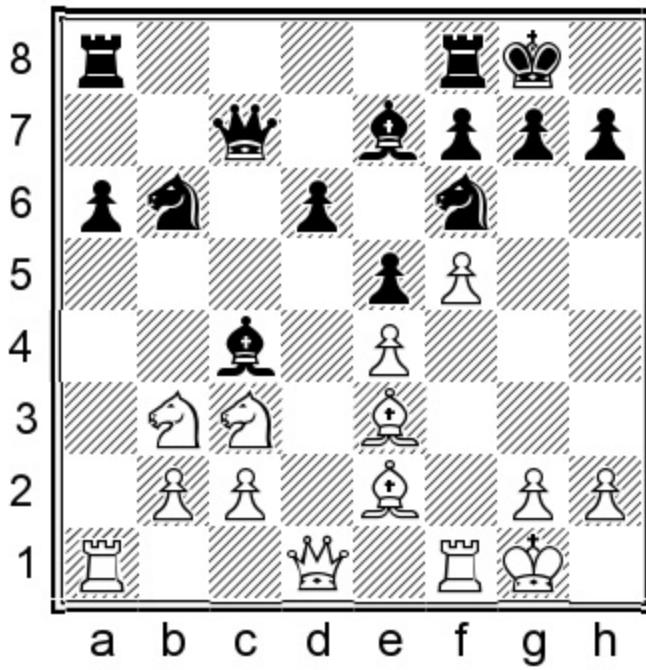
*analysis diagram*

with a dream position for White, Geller-Najdorf, Zürich 1953.

## 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 13. $a5$

13.  $g4$   $d5!$  14.  $exd5$  (14.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5?!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 14...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (14...  $\mathbb{Q}b6!$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6+$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  17.  $cxb3$   $h6$  18.  $a5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  20.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  and Black has enough compensation for the pawn – B.Z.) 15.  $g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  16.  $gxf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  17.  $fxg7$  (but 17.  $d6!$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  (17...  $\mathbb{W}c6?$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}a5!$ ) 18.  $fxg7$  is better – B.Z.) 17...  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  18.  $\mathbb{E}b1$  (once again the zwischenzug 18.  $d6!$  refutes Fischer's variation: 18...  $\mathbb{W}c8$  (18...  $\mathbb{W}c6?$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 19.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  20.  $f6$ , with a clear advantage to White – B.Z.) 18...  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , and 'White's pawns are overextended and his king is exposed' – Fischer.

## 13... $b5!$ 14. $axb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$

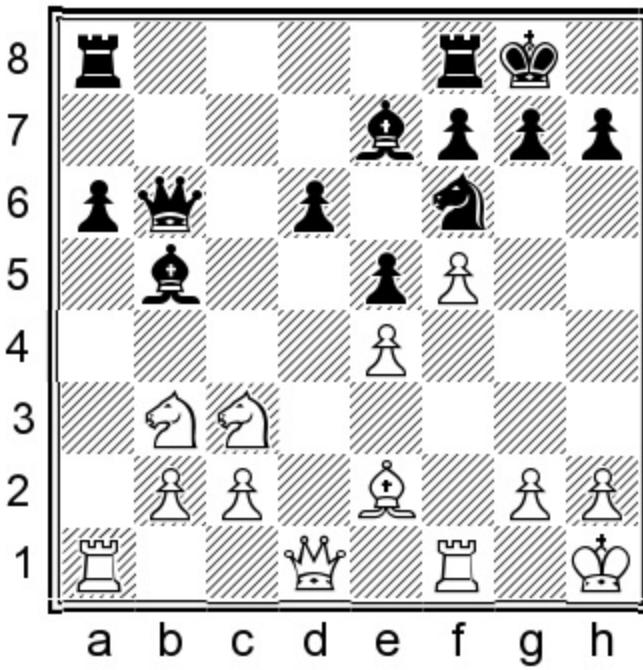


The following move by White is perfectly playable, although Fischer and other analysts have considered it to be an error.

### **15.♘xb6**

The main line is 15.♗h1!? ♘fc8 16.♘xb6 ♗xb6 17.♘xc4 (17.♖a4 ♘b5! 18.♘xb5 axb5 19.♖xa8 ♘xa8 20.♗d3 ♗c6 21.♗d2 ½-½, Anand-Gelfand, Moscow 1989) 17...♘xc4 18.♗e2 ♘b4 (18...♘ac8!?) 19.♖a2! with a slight advantage to White, Geller-Fischer, Curaçao 1962; 19...h6! 20.♖fa1 ♘f8 21.♖a4!? (21.♖xa6 ♘xa6 22.♖xa6 ♗b7 23.♗a5 ♗c7 24.♗b3 ♗b7 with equality – Zuckerman) 21...♘c8? (21...♘xa4! 22.♖xa4 d5! 23.exd5 ♘b4, with sufficient counterplay for Black) 22.♖xb4 ♗xb4 23.♗xa6, with advantage to White, Karpov-Bronstein, Moscow 1971.

### **15...♗xb6+ 16.♗h1 ♘b5!**



The key idea! The plan is  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , followed by ...a6-a5. Another good alternative is 16...d5!? 17.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  18.cxb3  $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ .

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ ??

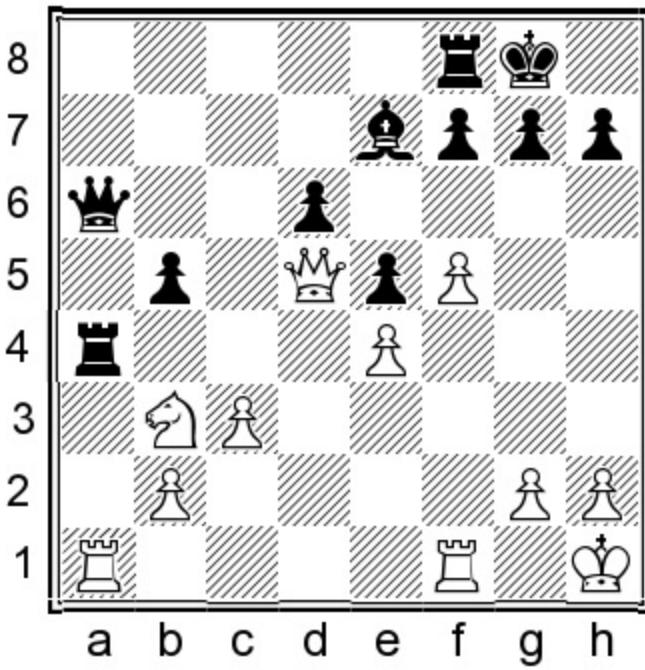
According to Fischer, here White should seek equality with 17. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  axb5 18. $\mathbb{W}d3$ . But until now, no one, not even Kasparov, has indicated the correct way to counter Fischer's idea. The engine recommends 17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ !, to answer 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  with 18. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ , e.g. 17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ! and now:

- A) 17... $\mathbb{Q}fb8$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  20. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  fails to disturb the balance;
- B) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  19. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ? 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  22. $\mathbb{W}d3$ , threatening to trap the queen with 23.  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ ) 21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  23. $\mathbb{Q}ed5$ , and now:
  - B1) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ? 24. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ;
  - B2) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ? 24.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xc3$ ? (24... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ) 25.f6!!  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  26. $\mathbb{W}e4$  g6 27. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ , winning;
  - B3) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  24. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}fa1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ , and in view of the threat of 28. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  there is nothing better than repeating moves with 27... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .
- C) 17... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  19.h3  $\mathbb{W}c6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  22. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  a5 24. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ , with equality.

### 17...axb5 18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 19. $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ !

Although it does not tip the balance in Black's favour, this is a strong move, which requires very accurate play from the opponent.

### 20.c3 $\mathbb{W}a6$



## 21.h3?

A few months earlier that same year, Mikhail Tal also failed to find the best move here: 21. $\mathbb{R}ad1!?$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (22. $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$ ) 22... $b4!$ , with advantage to Black, Tal-Fischer, Curaçao 1962. According to Kasparov, in Volume IV of his magnificent series *My Great Predecessors*, the best move here is 21.g3!, first indicated by GM Robert Hübner, e.g. 21... $\mathbb{W}a8$  22. $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathbb{R}fxa8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ , followed by  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ . After 23... $g6!?$  24.f6!  $\mathbb{R}xa1$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  26. $\mathbb{R}xf6$   $\mathbb{R}xa1$  27. $\mathbb{R}xd6$ , Black's advantage in this rook ending is insignificant.

## 21... $\mathbb{R}c8$ 22. $\mathbb{R}fe1$

The computer recommends 22. $\mathbb{W}d3!?$ , which fulfills three functions at the same time: it controls the d5-square, attacks the  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  and defends White's  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , where later in the game Fischer strikes a winning blow, e.g. 22... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  23. $\mathbb{R}fe1$  (23.g3!?  $h5$  24.h4  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ ) 23... $\mathbb{W}b6$  24. $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{R}a2$  25. $\mathbb{R}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  26. $\mathbb{R}c2$ , and it seems that White can hold the position.

## 22... $h6!$

'A handy luft, as becomes apparent later' – Fischer. However, the engine considers 22... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , followed by ... $h7-h5$ , to be stronger.

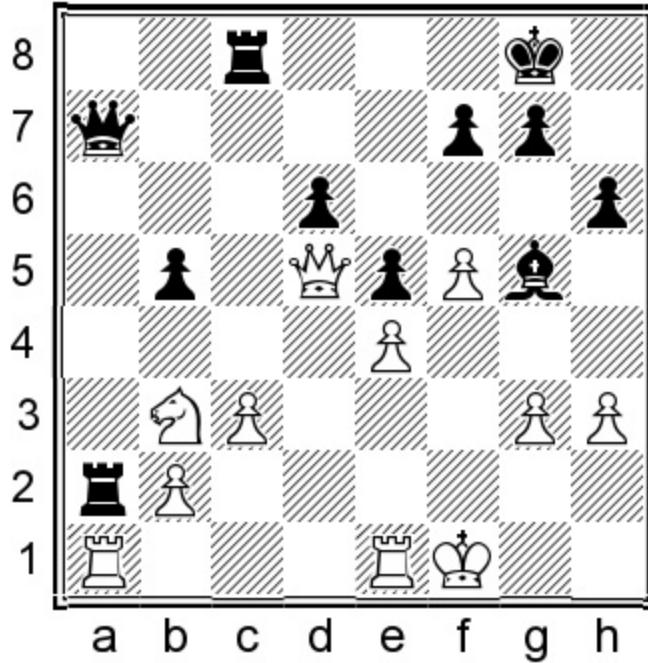
## 23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 24.g3?

24. $\mathbb{R}ad1$  fails to 24... $\mathbb{R}a2!$  (24... $b4!?$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{R}xb2$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{R}d2$ , with great advantage to Black; it appears that the lesser of the evils would have been 24. $\mathbb{W}d3!?$ , e.g. 24... $h5$  (24... $d5$  25. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  26. $\mathbb{R}ab1$   $\mathbb{R}ac4$  27. $\mathbb{R}e2$   $b4$  28. $\mathbb{R}a1$ ; or 24... $\mathbb{W}c6$  25.g3  $h5$  26.h4  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ) 25. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  26. $\mathbb{R}ad1$

$\mathbb{Q}f4+$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}cc4$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}f3$  d5 31.  $\mathbb{W}d3$ , and although Black maintains the initiative in all variations, White can still resist.

24...  $\mathbb{W}a7!$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1?$

This loses on the spot although the white position was bad in any case, e.g. 26.  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3!$ .



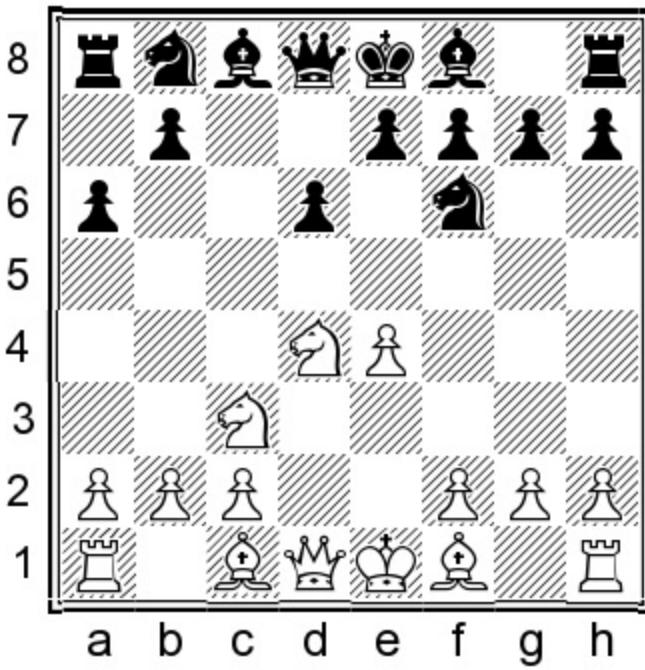
26...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3!$

White resigned, in view of the line 27.  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  (27.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$   $\mathbb{W}f2\#$ ) 27...  $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f2+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$ .

The following game by Fischer demonstrates another method in the struggle for the d5-square.

Game 116  
Sicilian Defence  
**Robert Byrne**  
**Robert James Fischer**  
Sousse 1967 (12)

1.e4 c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3. d4 cxd4 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6

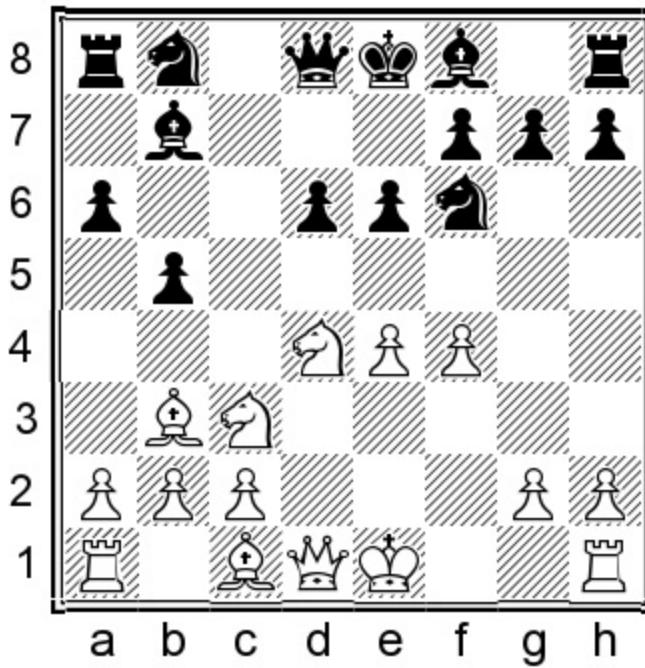


One of the most popular positions in modern chess. It is curious that, in search of an advantage in this position, White has tried eighteen (!) moves, i.e. every reasonable move. I think that on the one hand this is a sign of the richness of the game of chess, while on the other hand it indicates that in the opening stage of the game the concept of ‘best move’ is often a relative one. The move played in the game was a favourite of Fischer himself, together with 6.h3:

#### **6.♗c4 e6 7.♗b3 b5 8.f4**

The modern main line is 8.0-0 ♜e7 9.♘f3 ♜c7 10.♘g3 0-0 11.♘h6 ♜e8 12.♖ad1 ♜d7 13.f4 ♜c6 14.♗xc6 ♜xc6 15.f5 ♔h8 16.f6 gxh6 17.fxe7 ♜xe7 18.♘f2 ♜g7 19.♘b6, when White has an initiative for the sacrificed pawn, Kasimdzhanov-Gelfand, Tashkent 2014. Second in popularity, and also seemingly more promising than the text move, is the line 8.♗g5!? ♜e7 9.♘f3 ♜c7 10.e5 ♜b7 11.exd6 ♜xd6 12.♗e3 ♜c5 13.0-0-0 ♜c6 14.♗xf6 (14.♘xe6+!? fxe6 15.♘xe6 ♜e5 16.♘xg7+, Ivanchuk-Karjakin, Nice 2008) 14...gxf6 15.♗d5, with very sharp play, Radjabov-Topalov, Shamkir 2017.

#### **8...♗b7**



### 9.f5

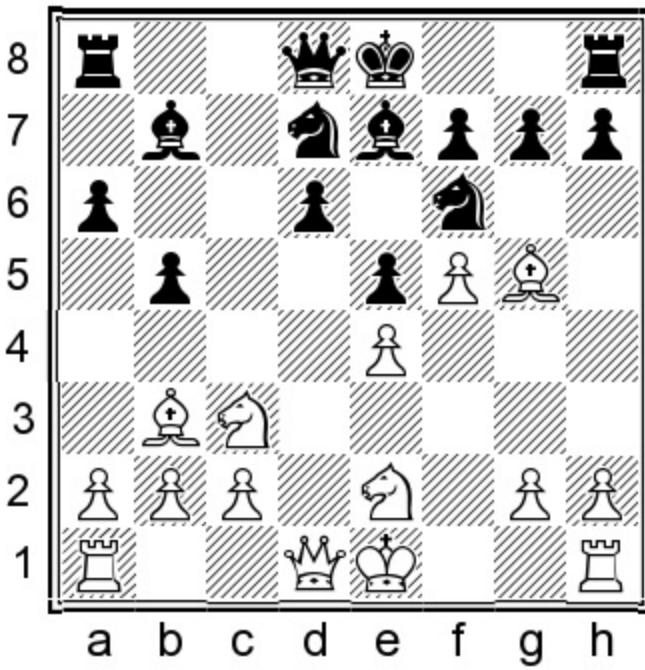
Byrne's plan is to occupy the d5-square, so he provokes the advance of Black's king's pawn. However, as the game shows, this plan is not very fruitful. It is striking that the engine already evaluates this position as -0.42. Black also has no problems after White's other options, as shown by the very advantageous statistics.

It is curious that apart from 9.0-0 the engine recommends a rare sideline as the best option to maintain equality: 9.e5!? dx $e$ 5 10.fx $e$ 5  $\mathbb{Q}$ f $d$ 7 11. $\mathbb{W}$ h5 g6 12. $\mathbb{W}$ h3  $\mathbb{Q}$ c6 (12... $\mathbb{Q}$ g7? 13.0-0 0-0 14. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $f$ 7!  $\mathbb{Q}$ x $f$ 7 15. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $e$ 6, with a winning attack, Mikalsen-Nordquelle, Kragero 2020) 13. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $c$ 6  $\mathbb{Q}$ x $c$ 6 14.0-0  $\mathbb{W}$ e7 15. $\mathbb{Q}$ e2!  $\mathbb{Q}$ x $e$ 5 16. $\mathbb{Q}$ d4  $\mathbb{Q}$ d8 17. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $c$ 6  $\mathbb{Q}$ x $c$ 6 18. $\mathbb{Q}$ h1  $\mathbb{Q}$ d4 19.c3  $\mathbb{Q}$ x $b$ 3 20.ax $b$ 3  $\mathbb{Q}$ g7 21. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $a$ 6, with an equal game.

### 9...e5 10. $\mathbb{Q}$ de2 $\mathbb{Q}$ bd7

In the event of 10... $\mathbb{Q}$ x $e$ 4 11. $\mathbb{Q}$ d5 (11. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $e$ 4!?) 11... $\mathbb{Q}$ xc3 12. $\mathbb{Q}$ xc3  $\mathbb{Q}$ xd5 13. $\mathbb{W}$ xd5  $\mathbb{Q}$ d7 14. $\mathbb{Q}$ g5, White has enough positional compensation for the pawn.

### 11. $\mathbb{Q}$ g5 $\mathbb{Q}$ e7



**12.♘g3**

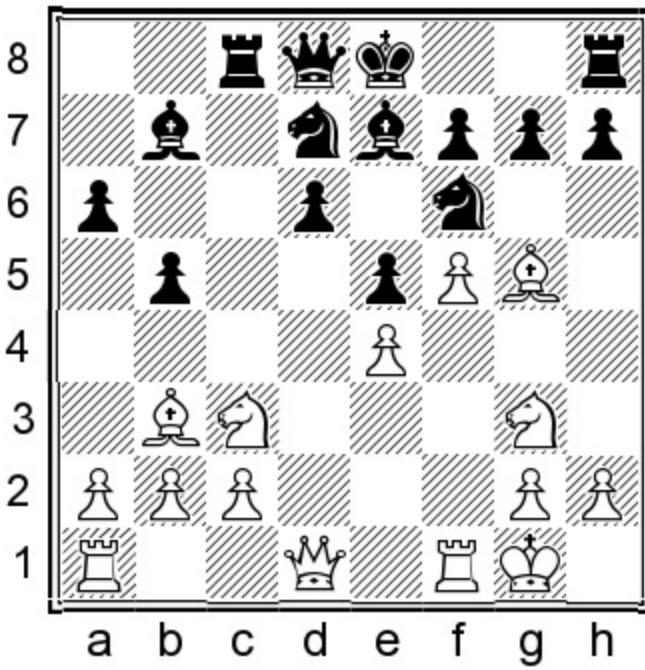
Fischer himself with white played the more accurate 12.♗xf6!? ♘xf6 13.♗d3 ♖c8 (13...♗b6!?) 14.0-0 0-0 15.♘g3 ♖c5?! (15...h5!!) 16.♗d5 ♗xd5 17.exd5 a5 18.a4 b4 (18...bxa4! 19.♗xa4 ♗b6) 19.♗e4 ♗xe4 20.♗xe4 ♗b6, Fischer-Zuckerman, New York 1965, although he gained nothing out of the opening, not to mention that 20...♗c8! was even better. However, the most important point here is that the revolutionary idea played against Byrne on move 13 was perfectly valid on move 15 here and Fischer probably found it when analysing his game against Zuckerman.

**12...♖c8**

There are twelve games in the current database in which Fischer's idea was played a move earlier: 12...h5!! 13.h4 b4 14.♗d5 ♗xd5 15.♗xd5 ♗xg5 16.hxg5 ♗xg5 17.♗xb7 ♗xg3+ 18.♔f1 ♗f4+ with a clear advantage to Black, Sigurjonsson-Tukmakov, Ybbs 1968.

**13.0-0?!**

It seems that the best defence was 13.♗e2?!, e.g. 13...h5! (13...♖xc3?! 14.bxc3 h5 15.h4 ♘c5 16.♗xf6 ♗xf6 17.♗xh5 ♗xh4+ 18.g3 ♗a5 19.♗e3 ♗xh5 20.♗xh4 ♗xh4 21.gxh4 ♗xe4 22.0-0-0 ♘xc3 23.♗g1 ♗a3+ 24.♔d2 ♗e4+ 25.♔e2 ♗c5 26.♗xg7 ♘c3+ 27.♔d2 ♗b1+, and Black has no more than perpetual check) 14.h4 b4!? (14...♗a5?! 15.0-0 b4 16.♗d5 ♗xd5 17.exd5 ♗xg5 18.hxg5 ♘c5 19.♗ad1! (19.♗xh5? ♗xb3 20.axb3 ♗xd5) 19...h4 20.♗e4, with a tenable position) 15.♗d5 ♗xd5 16.exd5 ♗xg5 17.hxg5 ♗xg5 18.♗e4 ♗e7 19.♗d2!, and White can resist.



**13...h5!!**

This position should be inscribed in the memory of every Sicilian player! By advancing this flank pawn Black fights for the central d5-square!

**14.h4**

Blocking the advance of the ♜h5 with 14.♖h4 can be answered with 14...♝g4 15.♝xe7 (15.f6?! ♜b6+! 16.♔h1 ♜xf6) 15...♜b6+ 16.♔h1 ♜xe7 17.♝d5+ ♜xd5 18.♜xd5 ♜cf8 19.♜d2 h4 20.f6+ ♜dxf6 21.♝f5+ ♔d7 22.♜e2 h3, with a clear advantage to Black.

**14...b4! 15.♝xf6**

The ♜e4 is lost after 15.♝a4 ♜xe4 16.♝xe4 ♜xe4.

**15...♝xf6 16.♝d5 ♜xh4 17.♝xh5?**

An error in a difficult position. Slightly more tenacious was 17.♜f3 ♜f6 18.♝xf6+ gxf6! 19.♜e2, although after 19...♜b6+ 20.♔h2 ♔e7 Black's advantage is decisive.

**17...♜g5**

A good alternative was 17...♝xd5!? 18.♝xd5 ♜g5 19.f6 ♜xh5 20.fxg7 ♜h7.

**18.f6 g6**

Now the game is essentially over.

19.  $\mathbb{Q}g7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  20.  $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  21.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h2+$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  23.  $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{E}h4$  24.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  25.  $a xb3$   $\mathbb{E}xh3$   
 26.  $\mathbb{W}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  27.  $e xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xf6+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  0-1

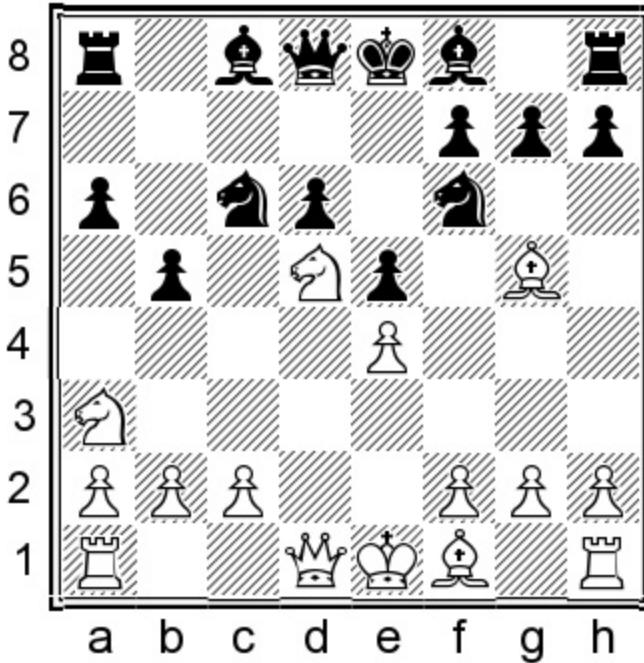
In the next game, this time in the Sveshnikov Variation, Carlsen (then just fifteen years old) enables us to take another step forward in our understanding of this type of position, showing that even in the case of an impregnable white knight on d5 vs a passive black bishop, matters are not so clear.

Game 117  
 Sicilian Defence  
**Jan Smeets** 2550  
**Magnus Carlsen** 2625  
 Wijk aan Zee 2006 (2)

**1.e4 c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. d4 cxd4 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 6.  $\mathbb{Q}db5$  d6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

The text move is the main line, while 7.  $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$ , which occurred several times in the Carlsen-Caruana match, London Wch 2018, is the second in frequency, although with many fewer games.

**7...a6 8.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  b5 9.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$**



The  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  can be brought back into play more easily than the  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  that we saw in the first two games of this chapter. It is curious that the engine gives absolutely the same evaluation of 0.48 both to this move and the alternative line 9.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  gxf6 10.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  f5 11.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ , etc.

**9...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  11. c3**

The engine prefers 11.c4!?, which also has a better score than the text.

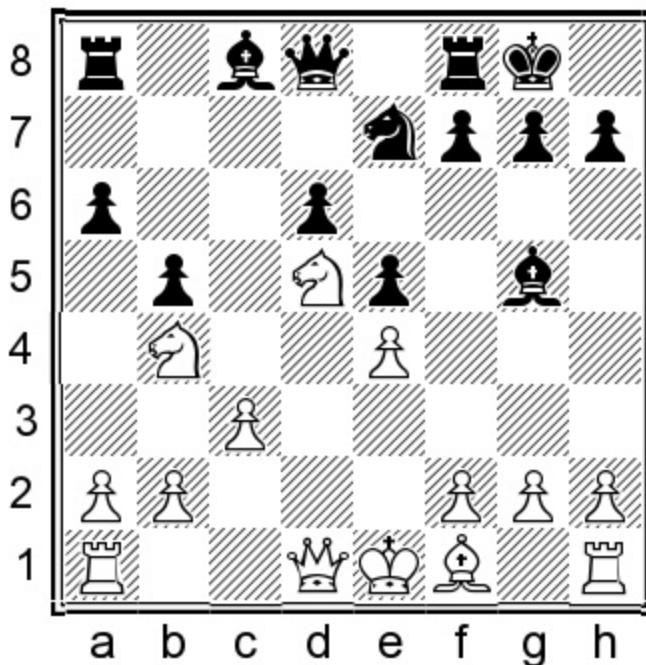
**11...♝g5 12.♗c2 ♜e7**

The main line nowadays is 12...0-0 13.a4 (according to Stockfish White is better in the event of 13.h4 ♜h6 14.g4, although the statistics contradict this) 13...bxa4 14.♕xa4 a5 15.♗c4 ♜b8 16.b3 ♜h8 17.0-0 f5 18.exf5 ♜xf5 19.♗ce3 ♜g6, with a slight advantage to White, but with a favourable score for Black, Kasimdzhanov-Gelfand, Tashkent 2012.

**13.♗cb4**

13.h4 ♜h6 14.a4 bxa4 15.♗cb4 is played more frequently.

**13...0-0**



**14.a4**

After 14.♗xe7+ ♜xe7 15.♗d5 ♜b7 Black has no problems.

**14...bxa4 15.♕xa4**

Two years later Magnus equalized against his future opponent for the world title following the other capture on a4: 15.♕xa4 ♜xd5 16.♗xd5 ♜d7 17.♕a2 (17.♕c2!?) 17...a5 18.♗d3 ♜c6 19.0-0 ♜b8 20.♗c4 ♜h8 21.b3 f5 22.exf5 ½-½ Anand-Carlsen, Morelia/Linares 2008.

**15...a5 16.♗xe7+**

Interesting complications arise after 16.♗b5 ♜h3!? (16...♜d7) 17.♗xe7+ ♜xe7 18.♗c6 ♜ac8 19.♕xa5 ♜xg2 20.♗g1 ♜h3 21.♕h5 ♜h4 22.♕h6 g6, Korneev-Shirov, Pamplona 2006.

**16... $\mathbb{W}xe7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

This seems better than 17... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ?! 18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ! (18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ?) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{E}a2$ , Carlsson-Soltau, cr 1994.

**18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  19. $\mathbb{E}a2$**

Of course 19. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ ?? loses to 19... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  20.b3  $\mathbb{W}c6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$ !.

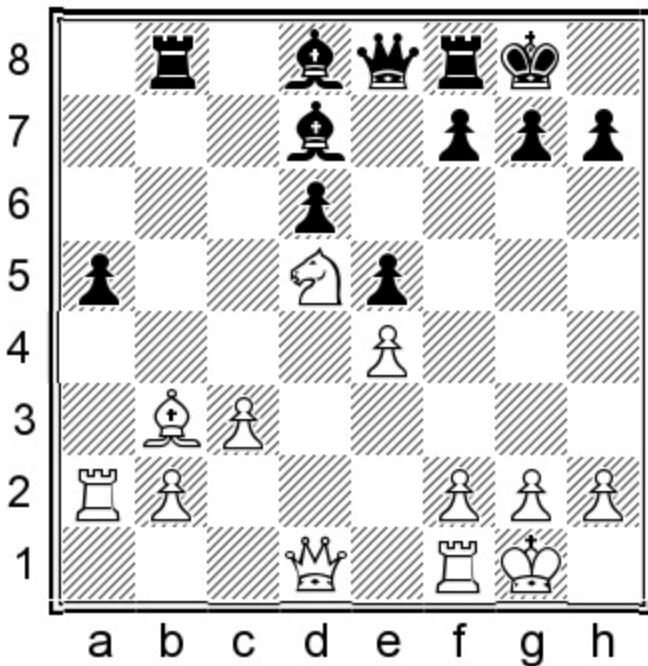
**19... $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

It is curious that from this modest square the bishop controls both wings and forms the basis of the future black attack.

**20.0-0  $\mathbb{E}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}b3$**

21.b3 deserved attention, e.g. 21...a4 22. $\mathbb{E}a3$  axb3 23. $\mathbb{W}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  24. $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{E}fa1$ , and the white position is slightly better.

**21... $\mathbb{E}b8$**



Formally White has several small advantages: the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , supported by the  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ , more space and the potential weakness of the pawns at a5 and d6. However, Black's position also has its resources: the pressure along the b-file, the pair of bishops and the possibility of the ...f7-f5 break.

**22. $\mathbb{W}c2$**

It seems better to deploy the pieces in another way, e.g. 22. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ! a4 23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  26.b4 axb3 27. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ .

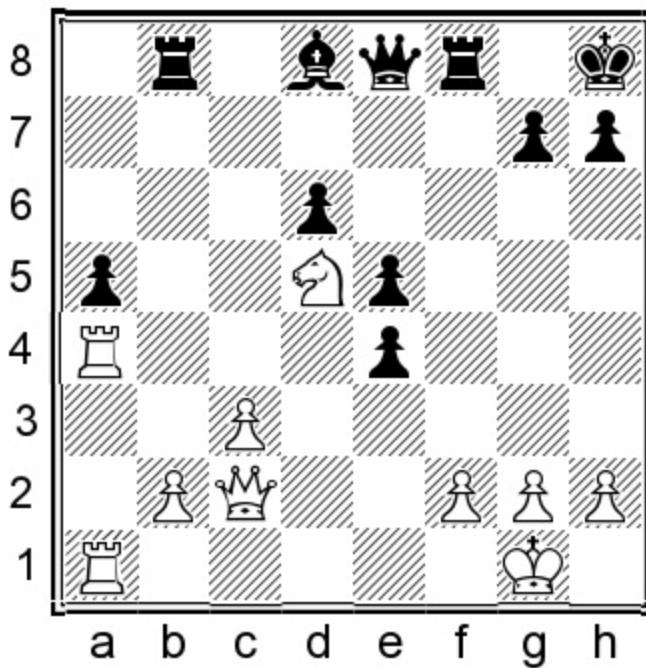
**22...♝h8 23.♜fa1!?**

23.♝c4 was better, e.g. 23...f5 24.exf5 ♜xf5 25.♛e2 ♜g6 26.b3 ♜g4 (26...♜h3 27.f4!?) 27.f3 ♜e6 28.♜d1 and White's pieces are well coordinated.

**23...f5 24.♝a4**

Obsessed with the image of the ♜d5 versus the ♜d8, Smeets exchanges the light-squared bishops without paying attention to the dynamic elements in the position. Once again a good alternative was 24.♝c4!?, e.g. 24...fxe4 25.♛xe4 a4 26.f3 ♜c6 27.♝d3 ♜h4 28.♝d1, with chances for both sides.

**24...♝xa4 25.♜xa4 fxe4**



**26.♜a2??**

The first problems begin to appear, e.g. 26.♜xe4? fails to 26...♛b5, simultaneously attacking the ♜d5 and the ♜b2; however the continuation 26.b4!? ♜c6 27.c4 axb4 28.♜xb4 ♜xb4 29.♜xb4 ♜b6 30.♜d5 ♜d4 31.♜a8 ♜d3 32.♜e3 ♜xc2 33.♜xc2 ♜g8 34.♜a6 would maintain equality.

**26...♛f7 27.c4 ♜b3! 28.♜e1?!**

After 28.♜a3?! ♜d3 29.♜f1 ♜g6 it is hard to see how White is going to regain the pawn; correct was to reduce the pressure by means of 28.h3! ♜d3 29.b4 axb4 30.♜xb4 ♜d4 31.♜d5 ♜g5 32.♜a7 ♜f5 33.♜a8 ♜d2 (33...h6!? 34.♜e3) 34.♛xe4!, and Black's advantage is minimal.

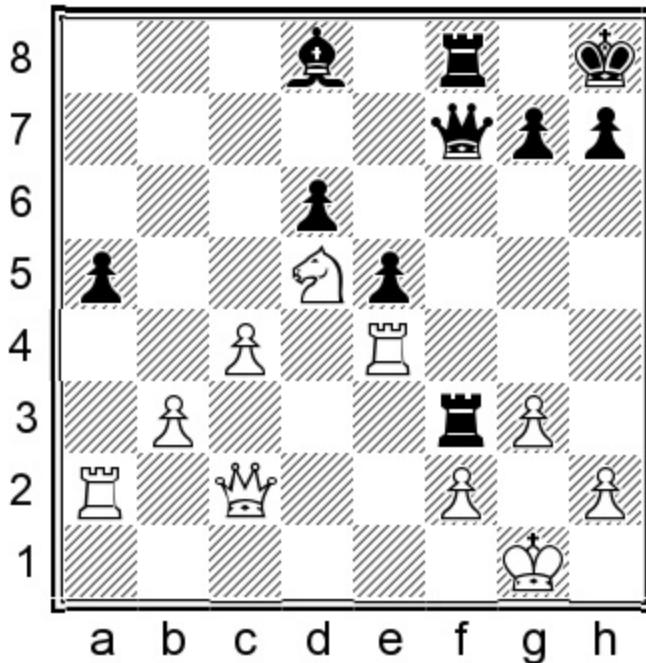
**28...♝h4??**

Here Black could have increased his advantage with 28... $\mathbb{E}d3!$  29. $\mathbb{E}aa1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  30. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}a7!$  31. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d4$ .

## 29.g3!?

A good move, although a few other moves also maintain equality, e.g. 29. $\mathbb{E}f1!?$   $\mathbb{E}d3$  30. $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  g6 32. $\mathbb{E}a3$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$  33.bxa3  $\mathbb{W}a7$  34. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  35. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , with full compensation for the pawn.

## 29... $\mathbb{E}f3!$ 30.b3 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 31. $\mathbb{E}xe4$



White has achieved his objective, with an impregnable  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  versus the apparently passive  $\mathbb{Q}d8$ . However, with his next move the future World Champion shows his claws, starting an unusual plan of attack:

## 31...h5!! 32. $\mathbb{E}e2!?$

32.h4? merely increases Black's initiative after 32...g5! 33.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ , with a strong attack, e.g. 34. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (34. $\mathbb{Q}g2?$  h4 35.gxh4  $\mathbb{W}e6$ , winning) 34...h4!? (34... $\mathbb{E}xb3$ ) 35.gxh4  $\mathbb{W}h5$  36.hxg5  $\mathbb{W}xg5+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}h6$ , with a decisive advantage for Black.

## 32...h4 33. $\mathbb{E}b2$

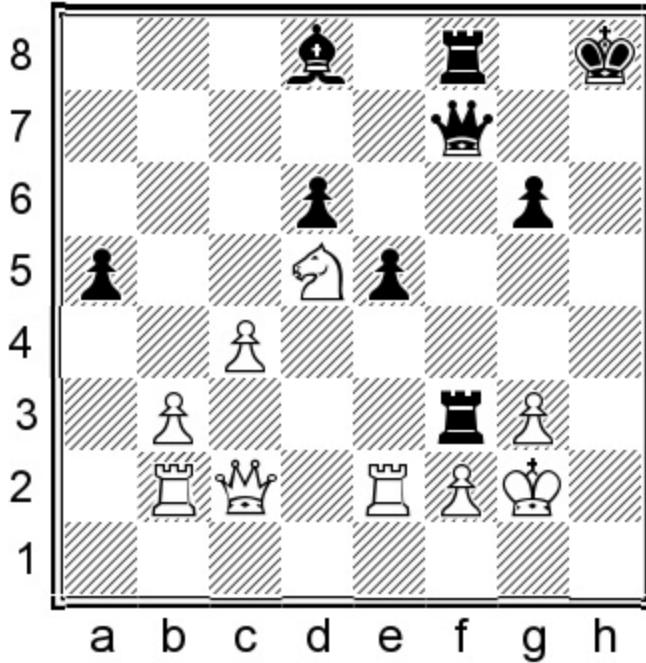
Here 33. $\mathbb{W}e4$  was safer, centralizing the queen, e.g. 33... $\mathbb{E}xb3$  34. $\mathbb{E}xa5$  hxg3 35.hxg3  $\mathbb{E}xg3+$  36.fxg3  $\mathbb{W}f1+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}f2+$  38. $\mathbb{E}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}f1+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , with an inevitable draw.

## 33...g6 34. $\mathbb{Q}g2?$

Smeets cracks under the pressure and commits a decisive error. He could still have kept the game

more or less balanced with 34.  $\mathbb{W}d2!$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  35.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $hxg3$  36.  $hxg3$   $\mathbb{F}f5$  37.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{H}h5$  38.  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{F}h8$  39.  $b4!?$   $axb4$  40.  $\mathbb{E}eb3$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  41.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{H}h1+$  42.  $\mathbb{B}g2$   $gxf5$  43.  $\mathbb{B}b1!$   $\mathbb{H}8h2+$  44.  $\mathbb{B}f3$ .

**34... $hxg3$  35. $hxg3$**



**35... $\mathbb{E}xg3+$ !**

This sacrifice destroys the defences of the white monarch.

**36.  $\mathbb{B}f1$**

The following variations demonstrate that there is no longer any satisfactory defence: 36.  $\mathbb{B}xg3$   $\mathbb{W}f3+$  37.  $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}g7$ , followed by 38...  $\mathbb{H}h8+$  and 39...  $\mathbb{H}h1$  mate; 36.  $fxg3$   $\mathbb{W}f1+$  37.  $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  38.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{H}h8+$  39.  $\mathbb{B}h4$   $\mathbb{B}xh4$  40.  $gxh4$   $\mathbb{B}xh4+$  41.  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{H}h3+$  42.  $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{W}f3+$  43.  $\mathbb{B}g5$   $\mathbb{H}h5\#$ .

**36... $\mathbb{W}f3$  37.  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  38.  $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}g5$**

38...  $\mathbb{B}b6!$ .

**39.  $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}gf3$  40.  $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}c1$**

40...  $\mathbb{B}8f4!?$  41.  $\mathbb{W}a8+$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  42.  $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{B}d4$ .

**41.  $\mathbb{B}a2$   $\mathbb{B}xb3$  42.  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  43.  $\mathbb{W}g4$**

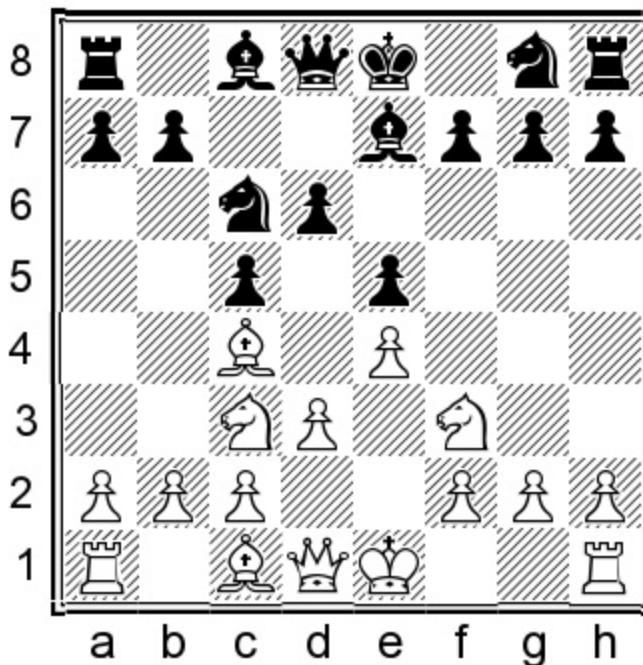
Or 43.  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}f4!$ .

**43... $\mathbb{B}xg3$  44.  $\mathbb{W}xg3$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  0-1**

Several times in 2019 Carlsen had to face a move-order that prevents the Sveshnikov. It is curious that the World Champion left the hole on d5 under even greater white control than in the previous games, but each time he emerged victorious.

Game 118  
Sicilian Defence  
**Peter Svidler** 2735  
**Magnus Carlsen** 2845  
Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden 2019 (8)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 e5 4.♗c4 ♗e7 5.d3 d6**



**6.♘d2**

This move prepares the manoeuvre  $\text{♘d2-f1-e3}$ , taking control of the d5-square without spending a tempo on castling. The most common move 6.0-0 aims to attack as quickly as possible on the kingside, e.g. 6... $\text{♘f6}$  7. $\text{♗g5}!?$  0-0 8.f4 exf4 (8... $\text{♗g4}!?$  9. $\text{♗e1}$  exf4 10. $\text{♗xf4}$   $\text{♘d4}$  11. $\text{♗d2}$   $\text{♗d7}$  12.a4 a6 13.e5 dxе5 14. $\text{♗xe5}$   $\text{♗f5}$ , with an equal position, Robson-Swiercz, St Louis 2019) 9. $\text{♗xf4}$  h6 10. $\text{♗f3}$   $\text{♗e6}$  11. $\text{♗d5}$   $\text{♗d7}$  12.c3  $\text{♗ae8}$  13.a4  $\text{♗d8}$  14. $\text{♗d2}$  a6 15. $\text{♗f2}$   $\text{♗xd5}$  16. $\text{♗xd5}$   $\text{♗xd5}$  17.exd5  $\text{♗e7}$ , with chances for both sides, Navara-Krasenkow, Poland tt 2018.

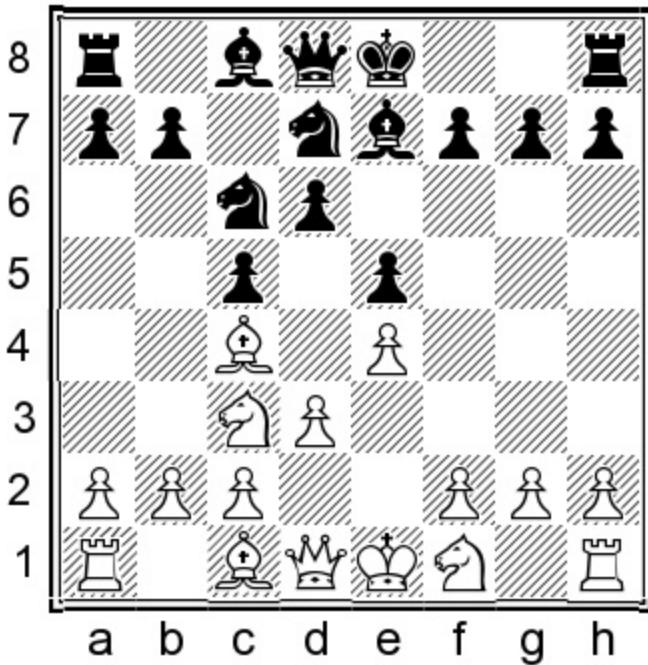
Stockfish suggests the standard plan of exchanging the  $\text{♗c1}$  for the  $\text{♗f6}$ : 6.a4  $\text{♗f6}$  7. $\text{♗g5}$  0-0 8. $\text{♗xf6}$   $\text{♗xf6}$  9. $\text{♗d5}$   $\text{♔h8}$  10.0-0  $\text{♗b8}$  11. $\text{♗e2}$   $\text{♗d7}$  12.c3  $\text{♗h4}$  13. $\text{♗e3}$ , followed by the advance b2-b4, and White is slightly better – about 0.50.

**6...♗f6**

The main alternative is 6... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , e.g. 7. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (7.h4!?) 7... $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  8. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0-0 10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}cd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12.c3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  14.g3  $\mathbb{W}d7$ , with a slight advantage that White converted into a win after a long struggle of 96 moves in the game Vachier-Lagrave-Carlsen, Biel 2011.

## 7. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

The most common line here is 7... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  8.f3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0-0 10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  11.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ed5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  15.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , with equality, Xiong-Giri, Wijk aan Zee 2020.



## 8. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

A few months later, Sergei Karjakin tried to improve on Svidler's plan: 8.a3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}cd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  12.0-0, but Carlsen gained good play by exchanging both his bishops with 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe3!$  13.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  14.c4 f5 15. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ ? 16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17.b4 b6 18. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  21. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22.bxc5 bxc5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$  (23. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ ) 23...e4 24. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , with a strong attack for the sacrificed pawn, which Magnus converted into victory twelve moves later, Karjakin-Carlsen, Abidjan 2019.

The more obvious continuation 8. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  9.0-0 leads after 9... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}ed5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xc1!$ ? 0-0 12.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  13.dxc4 exf4 14. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15.b3  $\mathbb{W}g5$  16. $\mathbb{W}d2$  to a slight advantage for White, Sasikiran-Mamedov, Poikovsky 2019.

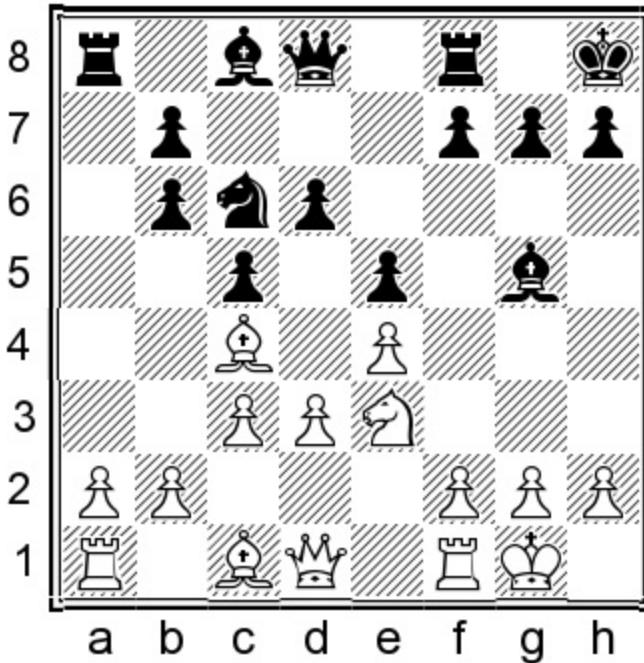
## 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$

Stockfish also likes 9. $\mathbb{Q}fe3!$ ?, e.g. 9... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  10.0-0 0-0 11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  13. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  16. $\mathbb{W}c3$ , assessing this position as slightly better for White.

## 9...axb6 10.c3

10.♘e3 b5 11.♗b3 0-0 12.0-0 ♘e6 13.♘d5 ♘d4 also keeps the balance.

## 10...0-0 11.♘e3 ♘g5 12.0-0 ♔h8



At this point, I was talking to the parents of another player who was vying with Magnus for victory in this tournament. In reply to their question about this position, I said I couldn't really see how Carlsen could win. I suspect Svidler was thinking much the same...

## 13.a3?!

13.♘d5!? was more accurate, e.g. 13...♗xc1 14.♗xc1 and now:

- A) 14...f5 15.f3;
- B) 14...♘a5?! 15.f4 (15.b3 f5 16.exf5 ♘xf5 17.a4);
- C) 14...♘e7 15.♘xe7 ♗xe7 16.♗c2 f5 17.f3 ♗c7 (17...♗f6 18.♘d5 ♗c7 19.a4 ♘d7) 18.a4 ♘d7 19.b3 ♗f6 20.♘d5 and White is at least equal.

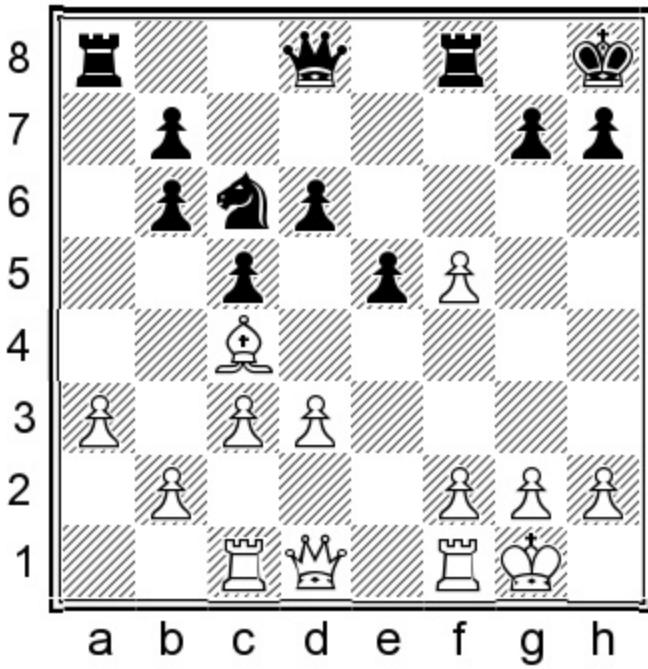
## 13...f5 14.♘xf5

14.♘d5!? ♗xc1 15.♗xc1 f4 16.f3 ♘d7 17.♗f2 would have led to risky but more interesting play.

## 14...♗xc1 15.♗xc1

Slightly better was 15.♗xc1! ♘xf5 16.exf5 d5 (16...♗xf5?! 17.♘d5 ♘d7 18.b4 ♘e7 19.♘e4 ♘ff8 20.g3) 17.♘a2 ♗xf5 18.f4! d4 19.fxe5 ♗xe5 (19...♗xf1+ 20.♗xf1 dxc3 21.bxc3 ♘xe5) 20.♗f4, with equality.

**15...♝xf5 16.exf5**



**16...d5!**

An important intermediate move, which may not disturb the balance but gives Black the easier game, with clear prospects of a kingside attack. The immediate 16...♝xf5?! was worse, due to 17.♝d5.

**17.♝a2**

17.♝b5!? ♞xf5 18.♞xc6!? (18.f3!? ♖d6 19.♗e2 ♖af8 20.♖ce1) 18...bxc6 19.♖b3 ♖b8 20.♖ce1 ♖d6 21.♗e2 is about equal.

**17...♝xf5 18.♗g4**

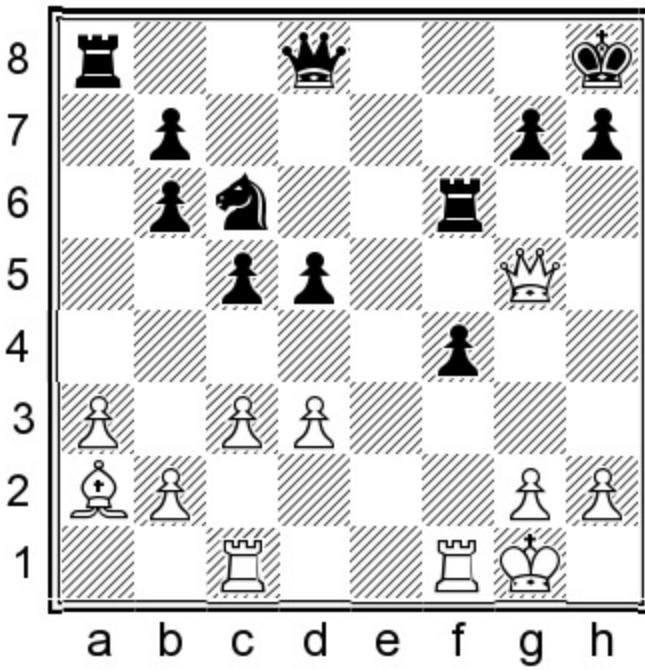
Here 18.g3 deserved attention, e.g. 18..♖d6 19.a4 ♖af8 20.♗e2 g5 21.f3 h6 22.♗b3 ♖5f6 23.♖ce1, and it appears that White is well prepared against the opponent's attack.

**18...♝f6 19.f4?!**

19.♖ce1 ♖d6 20.♖d1 was correct.

**19...exf4 20.♗g5**

20.♗xf4? loses immediately to 20...♝e5 21.♗g5 ♗xf4 22.♗xf4 ♛xd3.



**20... $\mathbb{W}f8!$  21. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  22. $\mathbb{W}f3?$**

White could have kept the balance with 22. $\mathbb{W}h5!$   $\mathbb{B}xd3$  (22... $\mathbb{B}f5!?$  23. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  24. $\mathbb{W}e4$  f3 25.d4) 23. $\mathbb{B}ce1$  g6 24. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  25. $\mathbb{B}e6!$   $\mathbb{B}xe6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  27. $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  28. $\mathbb{B}xf4$   $\mathbb{B}d2$  29. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{B}xf2$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ , with a drawish endgame.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  23. $\mathbb{W}e4$**

23. $\mathbb{W}xb7?$  loses to 23...f3!.

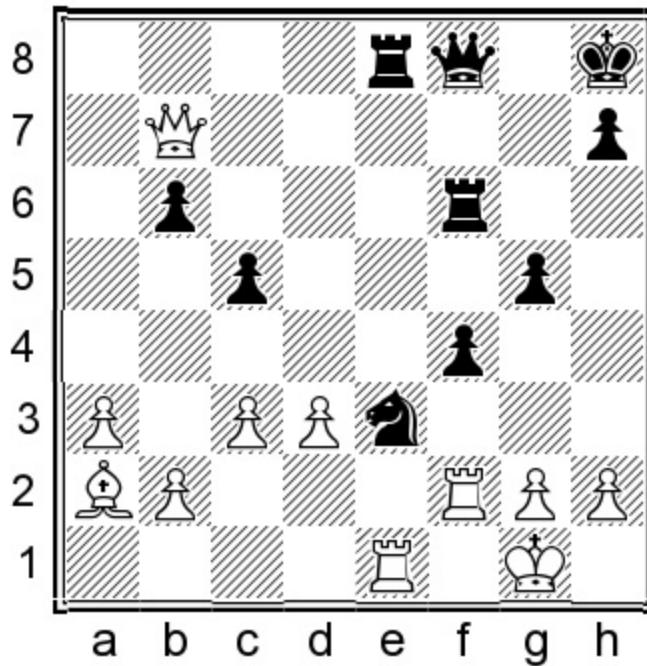
**23... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$**

Carlsen aims his knight towards e3, which will decide the game. Obviously 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd3?$  was inferior, e.g. 24. $\mathbb{B}cd1$   $\mathbb{B}fd6!$  (24... $\mathbb{Q}xb2?$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  g6 26. $\mathbb{B}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  27. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  28. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  29. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  30. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  31. $\mathbb{W}xf6+$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  32. $\mathbb{W}d8+$ , with a clear advantage to White) 25. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  26. $\mathbb{W}a4$ , with enough compensation for the pawn.

**24. $\mathbb{B}ce1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  25. $\mathbb{B}f2$**

Apparently Svidler wants to maintain the material balance, at the cost of a passive position. Although sacrificing the exchange would probably not have saved the game, at least it gives White some active play after 25. $\mathbb{B}xf4!?$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  26. $\mathbb{W}xe3$ .

**25... $\mathbb{B}e8$  26. $\mathbb{W}xb7$  g5!**



The kingside attack develops very quickly and White's extra pawn is unimportant.

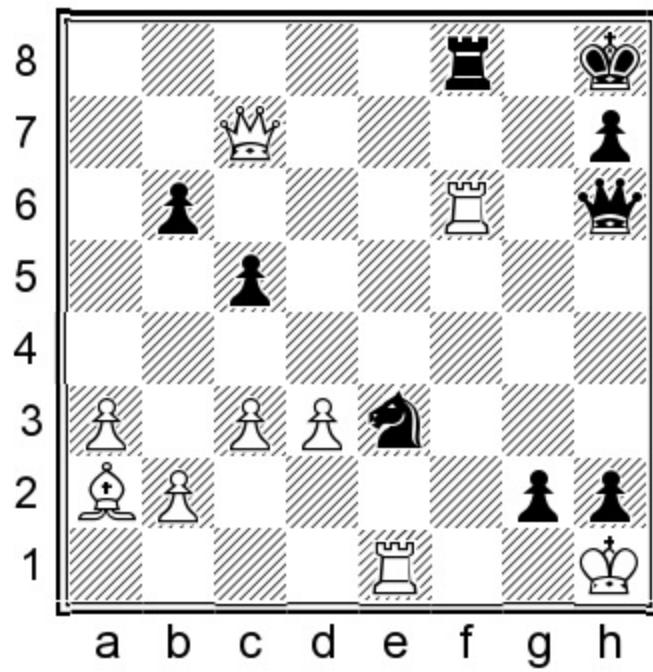
**27.♕f2??!**

The lesser of the evils was 27.♕f3 g4 28.♕e2 f3 29.gxf3 gxf3 30.♕xe3 ♜xe3 31.♕xe3 c4 32.♗xc4 ♜c5 33.♕e8+, with some possibilities of saving the game, although Black's advantage should be sufficient to win.

**27...g4 28.♕f2 ♜h6 29.♕c7 ♜ef8 30.h3**

30.♕e5 was no better, e.g. 30...g3 31.hxg3 ♜g4 32.♕xf6+ ♜xf6 33.♕e8+ ♜f8.

**30...gxh3 31.g3 fxg3 32.♕xf6 h2+ 33.♔h1 g2#**



It is unusual to see a mate at this level.

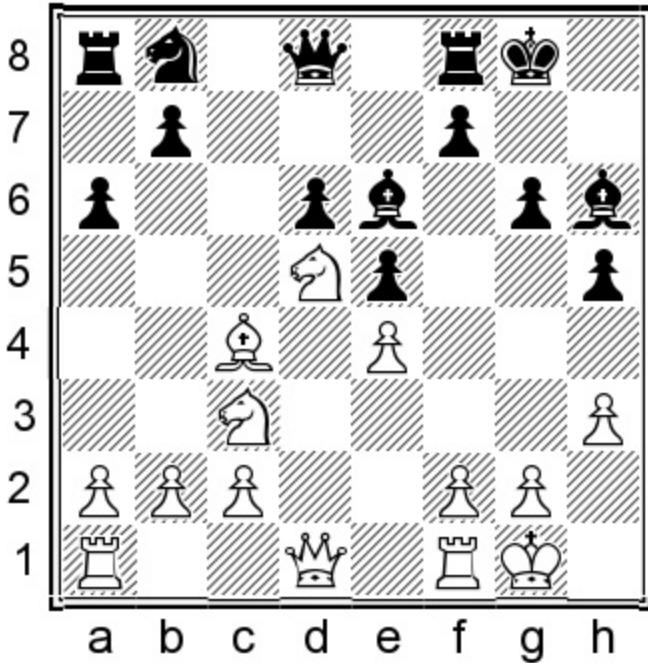
### 6.3. The power of ♜d5

Let us now investigate the theme we are studying from the other side of the board, with white. We shall begin with the most common situation that has arisen in the history of these structures, i.e. where White's ♜d5 is the key to his advantage. A classic example is the following game.

Game 119  
Sicilian Defence  
**Robert James Fischer**  
**Julio Bolbochan**  
Stockholm 1962 (21)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♜f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.h3 ♜c6**

Among various responses for Black, the most common are 6...e5 and 6...e6, while the most extravagant is 6...h5. The modern main line is 6...e5 7.♗de2 h5!? 8.♗g5 ♜e6 9.♗xf6 ♜xf6 10.♗d5 ♜d8 11.♗ec3 g6 12.♗c4 ♜h6 13.0-0 0-0



*analysis diagram*

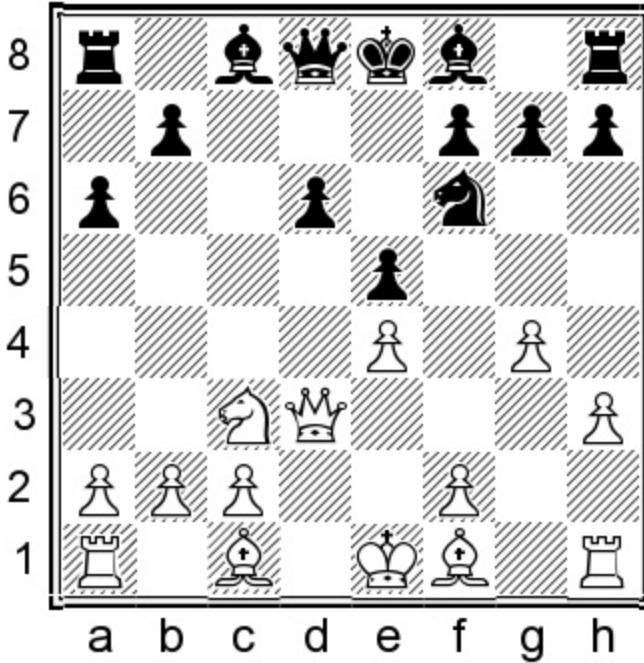
and despite White's ideal domination of the d5-square, the position is equal, Abdusattorov-Banikas, Batumi 2018.

**7.g4 ♜xd4??!**

It is better to play 7...e6 or 7...♝b6 8.♗b3 e6, e.g. 9.♗g2 ♜c7 10.f4 b5 11.♗e3 ♜e7 12.♝d2 ♜d7 13.♝f2 ♜b8, with typical Sicilian play, Li Chao-Korobov, Batumi 2018.

Also interesting is 7...g6 8.♗e3 ♗xd4 9.♗xd4 ♘h6!? 10.♗xf6 exf6 11.♗c4 0-0 12.♗b3 b5 (12...f5) 13.♘f3 ♜b8, with chances for both sides, Henderson de la Fuente-Ter Sahakyan, Montebelluna 2018.

**8.♗xd4 e5 9.♗d3**



**9...♝e7??!**

An important inaccuracy. The most accurate move here is 9...♝e6!, e.g. 10.g5 ♛d7 11.♗e3 (11.f4!? ♖xf4 12.♗xf4 ♘e7 13.0-0-0 ♖xg5 14.♗xd6 ♘xf4+ 15.♗xf4 0-0, with a double-edged position, Kuzubov-Korobov, Plovdiv 2012) 11...h6!? 12.gxh6 g6 13.0-0-0 ♖h4 14.♔b1 ♛c5 15.♗d2 ♛xe4 16.♗xe4 ♖xe4 17.♖g1 ♜c8 18.♗g2 ♖a4 19.b3 ♖d7, with sharp play.

**10.g5! ♛d7**

In the event of 10...♝h5?! 11.h4 ♘e6 12.♗e2 ♛f4 13.♗xf4 exf4 14.♗d4 0-0 15.0-0-0 White's position is better.

**11.♗e3**

The engine considers both Fischer's move and the response to be the best.

**11...♝c5**

Kotov's suggestion of 11...♝xg5?! 12.♗xg5 ♖xg5 13.♗xd6 ♖e7 14.♗xe7+ ♔xe7 15.♗d5+ ♔f8 16.0-0-0 leads to a better ending for White.

**12.♗d2 ♘e6 13.0-0-0?! 0-0?**

Here 13... $\mathbb{W}a5!$  was better, e.g. 14.a3 (14.h4!?) 14...b5 15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{B}b8$ .

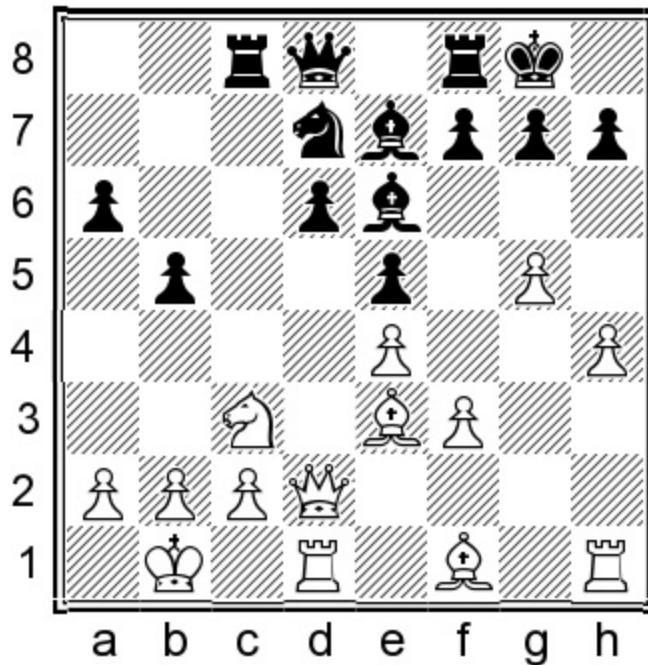
#### 14.f3 $\mathbb{E}c8$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

It was necessary to seek counterplay with 15...f6!, e.g. 16.h4 fxg5 17.hxg5  $\mathbb{E}xf3$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  19. $\mathbb{W}h2$  h6 20.gxh6  $\mathbb{E}cxc3$  21.hxg7  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  22. $\mathbb{W}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  23. $\mathbb{E}xh4$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  24. $\mathbb{E}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}g3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{E}xg4$  27. $\mathbb{E}hxd6$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$ , with good possibilities of holding the rook ending.

#### 16.h4!

This and the following move lead to a strategically winning position for White.

#### 16...b5



Fischer wants to install his knight on d5 and it seems that Black cannot prevent this, as the variations below demonstrate:

#### 17. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3$

17... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ ) 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  21. $\mathbb{W}xd6$ , winning a pawn; or 17... $\mathbb{E}e8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (18... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.h5) 19. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  20.h5, with a very strong attack.

#### 18. $\mathbb{E}xh3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 21.f4!

The strong  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  is not sufficient to win the game on its own and therefore Fischer opens the position, to be able to attack on either wing. Instead, 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+?$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  22. $\mathbb{W}xd6??$  loses to 22... $\mathbb{E}fd8$ .

#### 21...exf4 22. $\mathbb{W}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 23. $\mathbb{W}f5$ $\mathbb{E}cd8$

Of course not 23... $\mathbb{E}fd8?$  24. $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ; 23... $\mathbb{W}xf5?$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$ .

**24. $\mathbb{E}a3!$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  25. $\mathbb{E}c3!?$**

White's position is much better and although there are various possibilities of winning material, e.g. 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+!?$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  26. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  27. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  28. $\mathbb{E}a4$  or 25.h5!  $\mathbb{E}de8$  26.h6 g6 27. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , the move in the game is more practical.

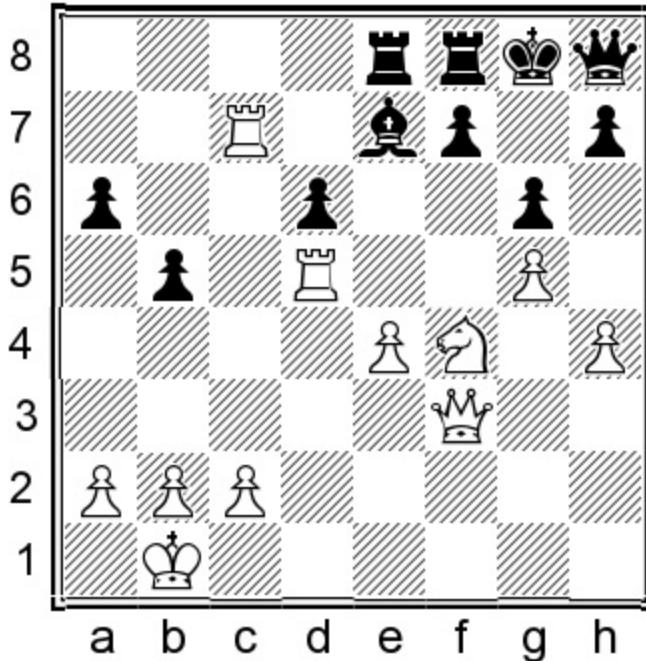
**25...g6 26. $\mathbb{W}g4$**

It was more accurate to play 26. $\mathbb{W}f4!$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  28.h5.

**26... $\mathbb{W}d7$  27. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$**

27... $\mathbb{E}c8?$  28. $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  loses the exchange.

**28. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}de8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  30. $\mathbb{E}d5$   $\mathbb{W}h8$**



This position demonstrates the complete failure of Black's strategy. Fischer secures his king before launching the final assault.

**31.a3 h6**

31...f6? loses to 32. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  33. $\mathbb{E}xd6$ .

**32.gxh6  $\mathbb{W}xh6$  33.h5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  34.hxg6! fxg6**

34... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  35.gxf7+  $\mathbb{E}xf7$  36. $\mathbb{E}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  37. $\mathbb{E}h5!$  also loses.

**35.♕b3! ♜xf4**

35...♔h8 loses to 36.♖xg5! ♜xf4 37.♗g3 ♜f6 38.e5! ♘h1+ 39.♔a2 ♘d5+ 40.b3.

**36.♖e5+ ♔f8 37.♖xe8+ 1-0**

37...♔xe8 38.♘e6+ and 39.♘c8 mate.

Game 120  
Sicilian Defence  
**Magnus Carlsen 2853**  
**Wesley So 2779**  
St Louis 2015 (5)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♘e3**

The so-called English Attack, which can also start with 6.f3.

**6...e5**

This is played twice as frequently as 6...e6.

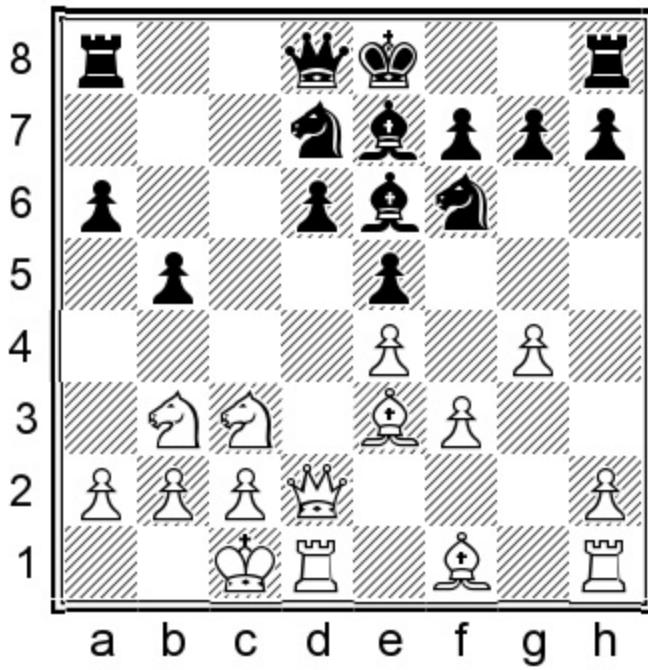
**7.♘b3**

Retreating the ♘d4 to f3 is the main alternative, which Carlsen has also played: 7.♘f3 ♘e7 (7...♘c7??) 8.♘c4 0-0 9.0-0 ♘e6 10.♘b3 ♘c6 11.♗e2 ♘a5 12.♗fd1 ♘xb3 13.cxb3!? ♘d7 14.♘d2 ♘c7 15.♗ac1 ♘fc8 16.♘d5, with a slight advantage to White, Carlsen-Ivanchuk, Morelia/Linares 2008.

**7...♘e6 8.f3 ♘bd7**

Many players prefer to prevent the g2-g4 advance by means of 8...h5!?, e.g. 9.♗d2 ♘bd7 10.♘d5 ♘xd5 11.exd5 g6 12.♗e2 ♘g7 13.0-0 a5?! (13...0-0) 14.a4 0-0 15.♘b5 ♘c7 16.c4, with better play for White, Carlsen-Vachier-Lagrave, Biel 2018.

**9.♗d2 b5 10.0-0-0 ♘e7 11.g4**



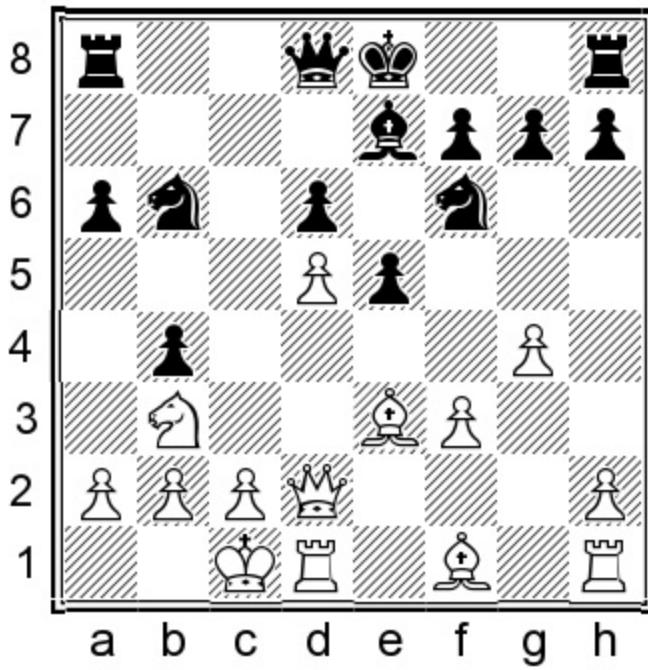
**11...b4**

So's move is the sharpest, while the most common move is 11...0-0, e.g. 12.g5 ♖h5 13.♗d5 ♖xd5 14.exd5 f6 15.gxf6 ♖xf6 16.♗a5 ♖f4 17.♗c6 ♗c7, with chances for both sides, Robson-Bok, Wijk aan Zee 2020.

**12.♗d5**

Black advances dangerously towards the enemy king after 12.♗e2?! a5 13.♔b1 h6 14.♗g3 a4 15.♗c1 d5!, realizing the thematic advance in the centre.

**12...♖xd5 13.exd5 ♖b6**



**14.  $\mathbb{Q}a5!$**

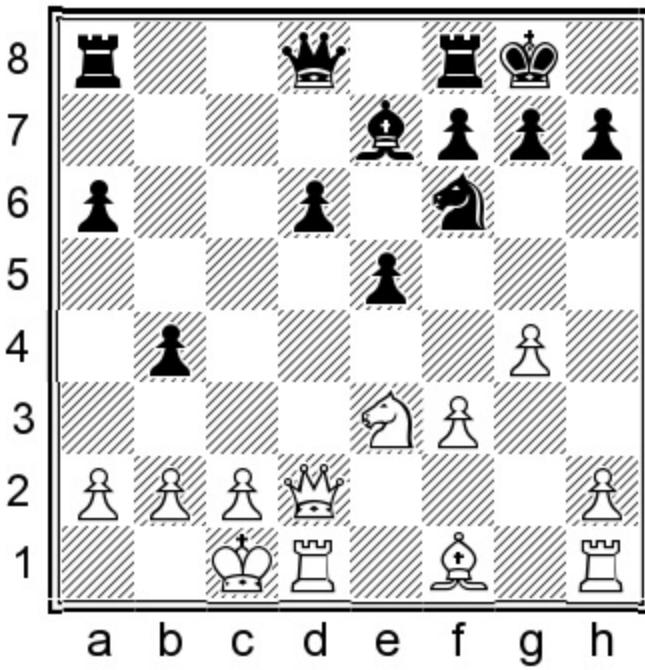
The first critical position of the game.

Obviously it is not good to exchange on b6 in order to defend the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and the text move is one of two ways to sacrifice this pawn; the alternative was 14.  $\mathbb{W}xb4 \mathbb{Q}fxd5$  (14...  $\mathbb{Q}bx d5?$  15.  $\mathbb{W}a4+$ ) 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6 \mathbb{Q}xb6$  (15...  $\mathbb{Q}xb4?$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8 \mathbb{Q}xd8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 16. f4, although in this case by capturing on b4 White is sacrificing nothing and according to the engine the move in the game, which is a positional pawn sacrifice, is best.

**14...  $\mathbb{Q}bx d5$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

In the event of 15.  $\mathbb{Q}c6 \mathbb{W}c7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xb4 \mathbb{Q}xb4$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  0-0 Black would have two open files for attacking the enemy king, although it seems that White is slightly better in that case too.

**15...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  0-0**



**17.♕c4**

The move in the game could be answered with 17...d5!?, returning the pawn to release his bishop. Therefore, as IM Luis Bernal indicates, it was more accurate to play 17.h4!?, e.g. 17...a5 18.g5 (18.♗f5 ♗e8 19.♗c4) 18...♗h5 19.♗d5 ♔h8 20.♗h3 f6 21.♗g4, with the better game for White.

**17...♝d7**

Again, returning the pawn with 17...d5!? deserved attention, e.g. 18.♗xd5 (18.♔e2!? d4 19.♗f5 g6 20.♗h6+ ♔g7 21.♗xf7 ♕xf7 22.♗xf7 ♔xf7 23.♔xe5 ♔d6 24.♔xd6 ♔xd6 25.♔xd4 ♔c5, with equality) 18...♗xd5 19.♔xd5 ♔c7, with chances for both sides.

**18.h4!**

18.♔b1?! a5 19.h4 ♘b6 was less accurate.

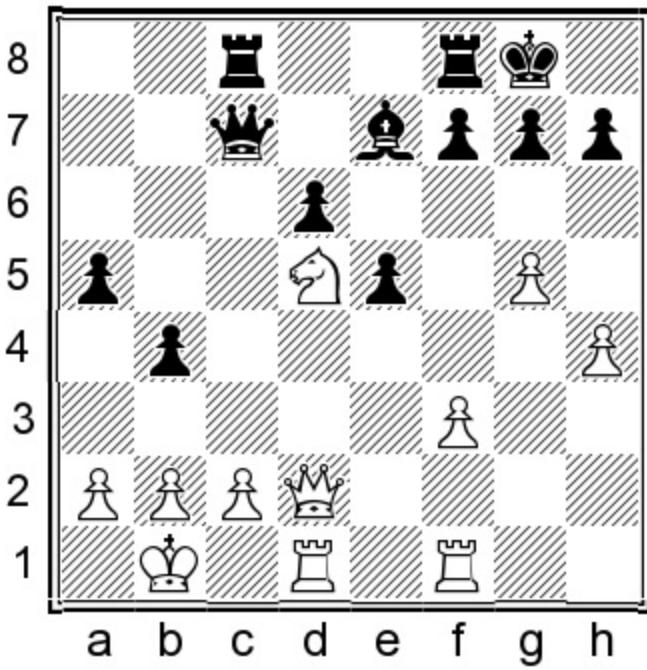
**18...a5**

It would have been suicidal to capture on h4: 18...♔xh4?? 19.♔h2 g5 (19...♔g5 20.♔de1!) 20.♔xd6 ♔c7 21.♔h6, and White wins.

**19.g5 ♕c8 20.♗d5 ♘b6 21.♔b1 ♔c7**

Instead, 21...♔c5!? 22.♔g2 ♔h8, followed by ...f7-f6, deserved attention.

**22.♔hf1 ♘xd5 23.♘xd5**



This position is essentially similar to the one in the previous game after twenty moves. It is symptomatic that with his next move Carlsen executes the same plan of advancing with f2-f4.

**23... $\mathbb{W}b7$  24.f4 f5??!**

After this move White is able to tip the scales in his favour. It was essential to break with 24...f6! 25. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26.b3  $\mathbb{E}a8$  27. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  28.gxf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}xf6$  30.fxe5 dxe5 31. $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}xf1$  32. $\mathbb{E}xf1$  h6 33.h5 a4 34. $\mathbb{W}d6$  axb3 35. $\mathbb{E}f8+$ , with perpetual check.

**25. $\mathbb{W}e3$  e4**

25... $\mathbb{E}ce8?$  leads to a clear advantage to White after 26. $\mathbb{W}b3!$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27.a3  $\mathbb{W}c6$  28.axb4 axb4 29. $\mathbb{W}xb4$ .

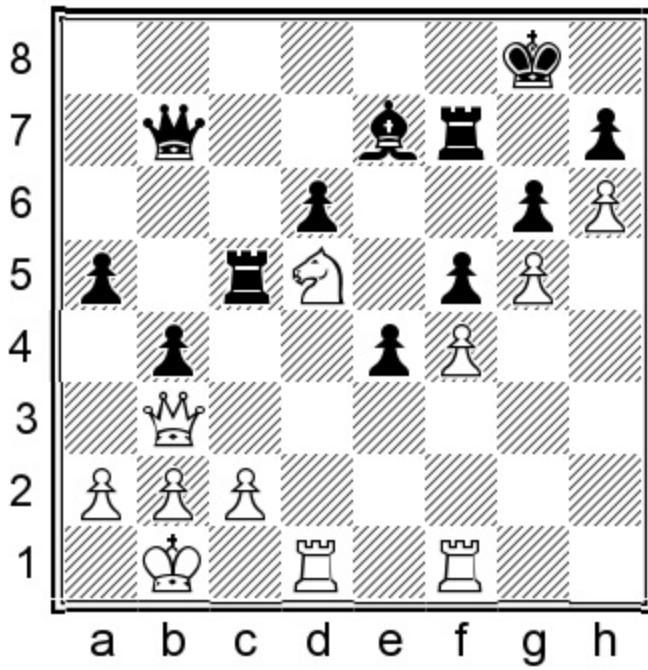
**26.h5  $\mathbb{E}c5$  27.h6**

It was better to prepare this advance, e.g. 27. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  28. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  29.h6 gxh6 30.gxh6  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  31. $\mathbb{W}d4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  33. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  34. $\mathbb{W}a7!$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  35. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  36. $\mathbb{W}a7$ , with the better game for White.

**27...g6??!**

Stockfish suggests a line which is beyond the grasp of any human player: 27...gxh6!! 28.gxh6  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  (29. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{E}g8!$ ) 29... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  30. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  31. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  32. $\mathbb{E}g7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  33. $\mathbb{E}dg1$   $\mathbb{E}cf8$  34. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  35. $\mathbb{W}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  36. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}c4!$  37.a3 bxa3 38. $\mathbb{W}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}c5$ , with equality.

**28. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}f7$**



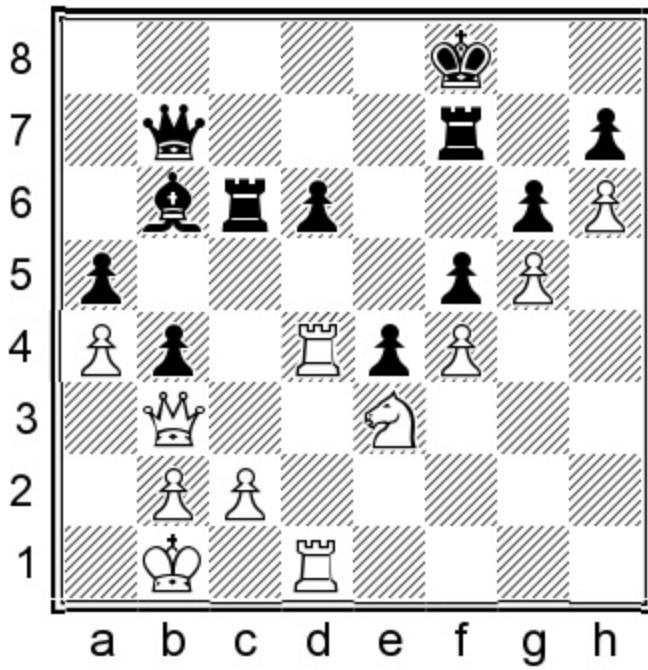
**29.a4**

29.♗d4! was better, as several analysts have pointed out, e.g. 29...♝d8 30.♗fd1 ♛b5 31.a4 bxa3 (31...♛b8? 32.c3!) 32.♗xa3 ♛c6 33.♗e3 ♛c7 34.♗d5 ♛xd5 35.♗xd5, with a big advantage to White.

**29...♝d8 30.♗d4 ♛f8 31.♗fd1 ♛c6?**

31...♗d7! was necessary, e.g. 32.♗e3 ♛e7 33.♗d5 ♛c8 34.♗d2 ♛a7 35.♗a2 ♛d8 36.c4 ♛c6 37.b3 ♛f7 38.♗b2 ♛g8 39.♗a2 ♛b7, and although White has the advantage there is no clear win in sight.

**32.♗e3! ♛b6**

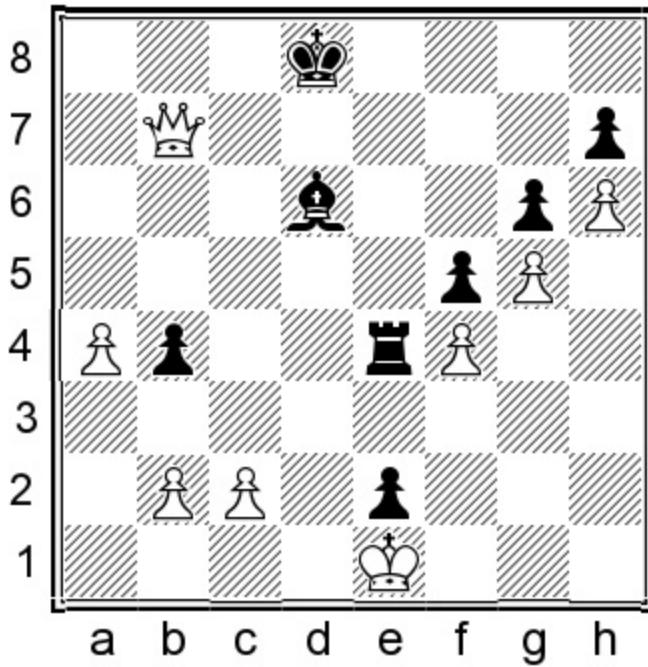


33.  $\mathbb{Q}c4?!$

Here it was correct to play 33.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$ , when 35...  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  fails to 36.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  (36...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3?!$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ ) 37.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xb4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}b8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  f4 41.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , winning.

33...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4?!$

Here Black could have drawn in an incredible way by constructing a fortress: 33...  $\mathbb{Q}c7!!$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  e3 41.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  e2 45.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}b7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$



*analysis diagram*

and White is unable to win.

**34.♘xa5 ♘b6 35.♘xc6 ♜c5**

35...♘xc6 36.♗xd4 also loses.

**36.♗d5 e3 37.a5 ♘b5 38.♘d8!**

Despite a few inaccuracies, Carlsen realized his advantage:

**38...♝a7 39.♘e6+ ♔e8 40.♘d4?!**

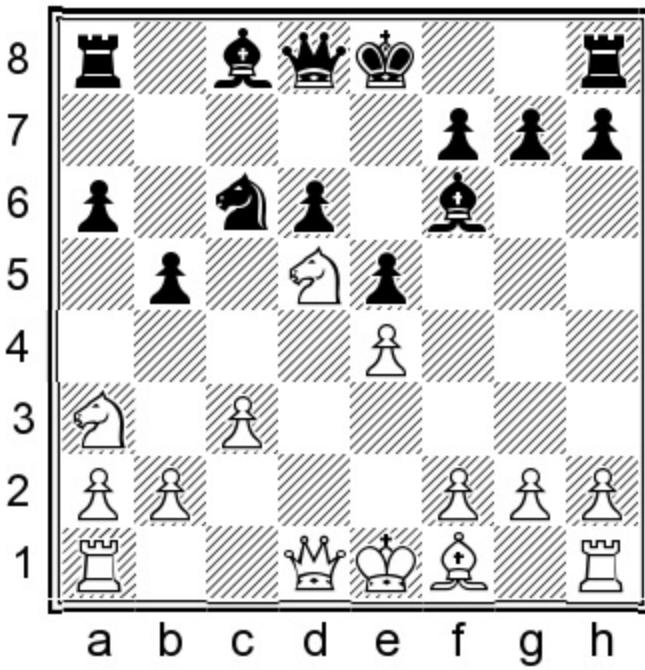
40.♘xc5!.

**40...♘xa5 41.♗g8+ ♔d7 42.♗xh7+ ♔c8 43.♗g8+ ♔b7 44.c3! bxc3 45.♗b3+ ♘b6 46.♗xb6 ♘xb6 47.bxc3 ♜xd4 48.♗xd4! ♜c6 49.♗c2 ♜a2+ 50.♔d1 ♜f2 51.♔e1 ♔d7 52.♔a4 ♔e6 53.♔a8 ♜h2 54.c4!? ♔f7 55.♗b8 ♔e6 56.♗g8 1-0**

In the following game the legendary Garry Kasparov demonstrates that it can be worth sacrificing the exchange in return for an impregnable knight.

Game 121  
Sicilian Defence  
**Garry Kasparov 2805**  
**Alexei Shirov 2740**  
Horgen 1994 (9)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 ♘c6 6.♘db5 d6 7.♘f4 e5 8.♘g5 a6 9.♘a3 b5 10.♘d5 ♜e7 11.♘xf6 ♜xf6 12.c3**



**12...Qb7**

This move has been played fifteen times less often than the most popular move 12...0-0 and it seems that this game is to blame, although objectively it is perfectly playable.

The main continuation is 13.Qc2 Qg5 (Carlsen prefers 13...Bb8) 14.a4 bxa4 15.Qxa4 a5 16.Qc4 Bb8, with some 5,000 games and a score of 56% in White's favour, which is about 3% greater than usual. The third and rarest response is 12...Qe7!? 13.Qxf6+ (13.Qc2!?) 13...gxf6 14.Qc2 Qb7 15.Qd3 d5 16.exd5 Qxd5 17.Qe3 Qe6, which scores 5% better than the main line above, although based on only about 300 games.

**13.Qc2**

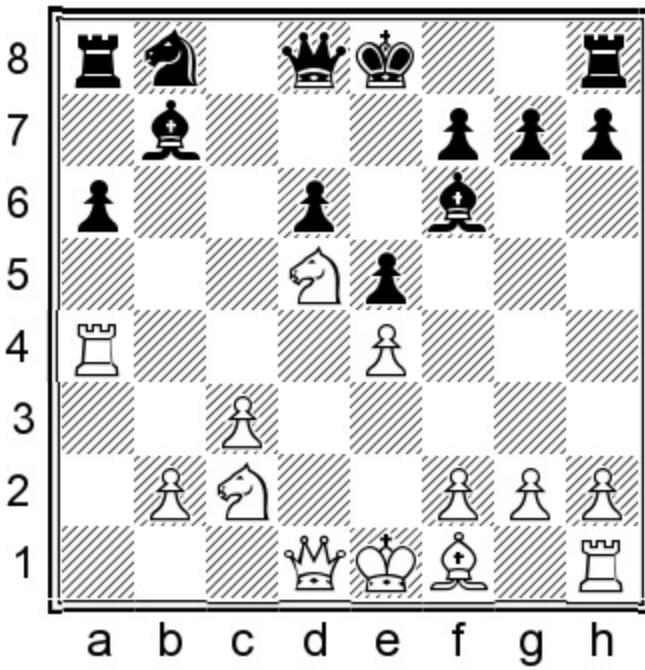
The main line by far. Previously 13.Qd3 was also played, e.g. 13...Qb8!? 14.Qc2 Qd7 15.a4 (15.Qce3!?) 15...bxa4 16.Qxa4 Qg5 17.0-0 0-0 18.Qa2 a5 19.Qc4, with equal chances, Beliavsky-Shirov, Linares 1994.

**13...Qb8**

The manoeuvre ...Qc6-b8-d7 is the main idea of 12...Qb7.

**14.a4 bxa4 15.Qxa4**

Another option is 15.Qce3, e.g. 15...Qd7 16.Qxa4 0-0 17.Qd1 Qg5 18.Qc2 Qc5 (18...Qxe3!? 19.Qxe3 Qc5) 19.Qf5 g6 20.b4! Qxd5 21.Qxd5 Qb7 22.h4, with the better game for White, Zapata-Shirov, Manila 1992.



**15...Qd7**

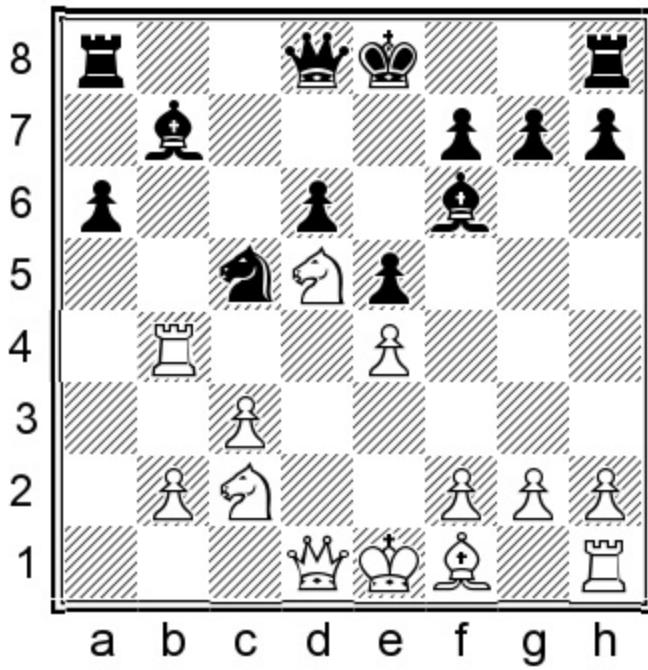
Probably 15...0-0!? was more accurate, as then Kasparov's idea would be less effective than in the game, as shown in the following variation: 16.Qb4 Qc6 17.Qce3 Qd7 18.Qc4 Qb7 19.Qc7 Qb8 20.Qg4 Qb6 21.Qxb6 Qxc7 22.Qd7 Qg5! 23.Qxf8 Qxe3 24.Qd7 h5 25.Qf6+ Qf8 26.Qh7+ Qg8 27.Qf6+, and White has no more than perpetual check.

**16.Qb4!?**

The introduction to a magnificent idea! The engine considers that White has some advantage with other moves, e.g. 16.Qc4 Qg5 17.Qe2 0-0 18.0-0 a5 19.Qfa1 g6 20.Q4a2 Qg7 21.Qa3 Qc5 22.Qb5; or 16.Qce3 0-0 17.h4 Qc5 18.Qa2 Qxe4 19.Qf3 Qc5 20.b4 Qxd5 21.Qxd5 Qe6 22.Qxa6 Qxa6 23.Qxa6.

**16...Qc5**

Curiously, 24 years later Shirov himself won a game using the idea of the thirteenth World Champion, although he gained nothing from the opening: 16...Qa7!? 17.Qce3 (17.Qc4!? 0-0 18.0-0 a5 19.Qa4 Qc5 20.Qa3 Qxe4 21.Qe2, with good compensation for the sacrificed pawn, e.g. 21...Qc5 22.b4 Qe6 23.Qfa1 Qf4 24.Qe4) 17...0-0 18.h4 a5 19.Qc4 Qc5 20.b4 axb4 21.cxb4 Qe6 22.g3 Qd4, with equality, Shirov-Lindh, Sweden tt 2018.



The following positional exchange sacrifice, with the idea of establishing an impregnable knight on d5, can be counted among the greatest creative feats of the player who dominated the chess world for twenty years.

**17.♗xb7!!**

The engine also prefers the white position after other moves, e.g. 17.♘ce3 0-0 18.♗b6 a5 19.f3 ♘xd5 20.♘xd5 ♜b8 21.♗xb8 ♜xb8 22.♗c2 ♜b7 23.♘c4 ♜b8 24.b4 axb4 25.cxb4 ♘d7 26.0-0.

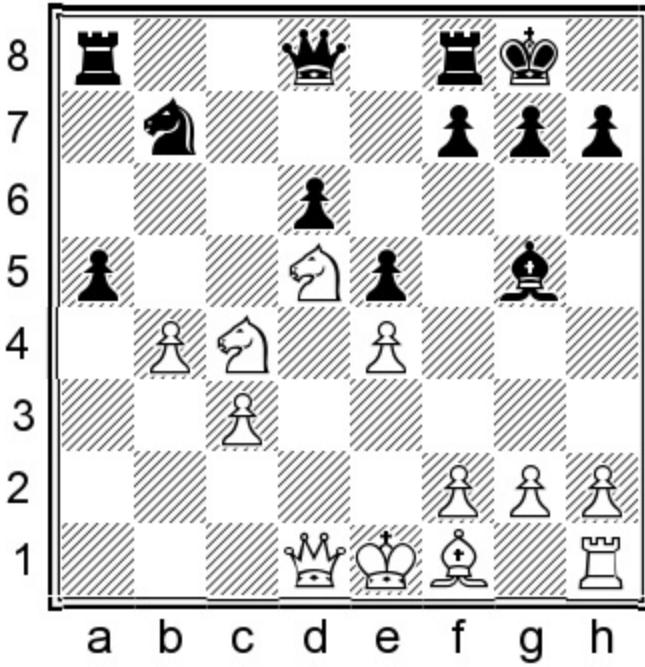
**17...♗xb7 18.b4 ♘g5**

In the event of 18...g6 White also gains some advantage, e.g. 19.♘c4 (19.g3!? a5 20.h4 h5 21.♗f3 ♘e7 22.♘c4) 19...a5 20.♗f3 ♘e7 21.h4 h5 22.g3 0-0 23.♗f1 ♘g7 24.♗g2 ♜b8 25.♗e2 ♘d7 26.♘b5 ♘e6 27.♘ce3, and, as in the game, the ♘b7 is restricted by the ♗b4.

**19.♘a3!**

The knight is heading for the b6-square, to restrict the mobility of the ♜a8.

**19...0-0 20.♘c4 a5**



**21.Qd3**

After 21.Qcb6?! axb4 (21...Ra7!?) 22.Qxa8 bxc3!? 23.Qab6 Qd2+ 24.Qe2 Qc5 25.Qc4 Wa8 the initiative passes to Black; to this human annotation it is worth adding a much deeper variation given by Stockfish, with a similar continuation but including the advance h2-h4 first: 21.h4 Rh6 22.Qcb6 axb4 23.Qxa8 bxc3 24.Qab6 Qd2+ 25.Qe2 Qc5 26.Wb1 f5 27.exf5 e4 28.g4 (or 28.f4!? exf3+ 29.Qxf3 We8 30.Qd3 Qh8 31.g3 We5 32.Qg2 Qxd3 33.Wxd3 Wxf5 34.Wxf5 Qxf5 35.Qa1 g5 36.Qa2 gxh4 37.gxh4, and Black can make no progress) 28...h5 29.Wa2 hxg4 30.Qxc3+ Qh7 31.Qxd2 Wxb6 32.Qd5 Wb7 33.Qc4 Wxf5 34.Qf1 Qd3 35.Wb3 Wxb3 36.Qxb3 Qxf2+ (36...g3 37.Qe3 Qf3+ 38.Qd4) 37.Qxf2 Qxf2 38.Qe3 g3 39.Qf4, and a draw is inevitable.

**21...axb4 22.cxb4 Wb8?**

Only this error tips the scales in White's favour. Black could have maintained equality with several moves, e.g. 22...Ra7!? 23.0-0 Rh8 24.Wg4 f6 25.h4 Rh6 26.Qd1 We8 27.Wh3 Wa4 28.Qf1 Qb8 29.Qb1 Wc6.

**23.h4?!**

It would have been slightly better to regain the exchange with 23.Qcb6! Ra3 24.Qd7 Wa7 25.Qxf8 Ra1 26.Qb1 Qxf8 27.h4 Qe7 28.0-0 Qd8 29.b5 Qe6 30.b6, and the strength of the Qb6 decides the game.

**23...Rh6?!**

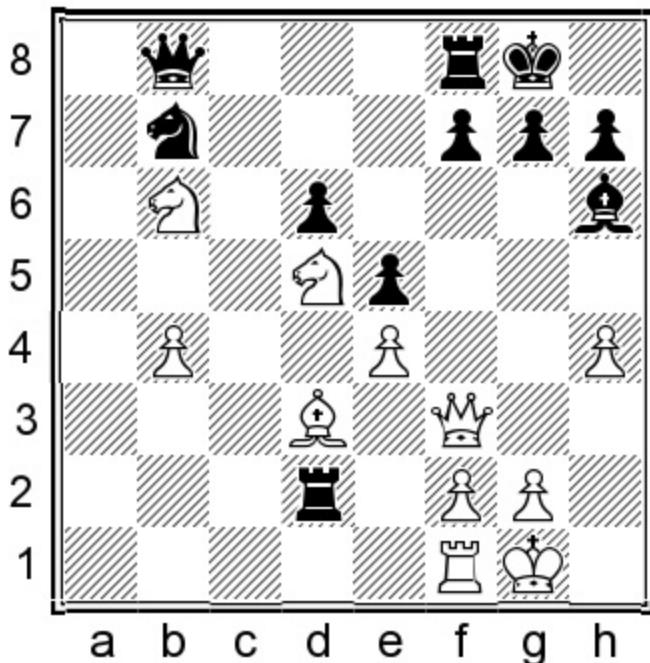
Here 23...Qd8! was correct, e.g. 24.g3 Qc7 25.0-0 Qd8 26.b5 Qe6 27.b6 Qd8 28.Qg2 Wc8 29.Qxd6

$\mathbb{W}c5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  31.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , and although the white position is slightly better Black can still resist.

## 24. $\mathbb{Q}cb6$ $\mathbb{E}a2$ 25.0-0 $\mathbb{E}d2$

Seeking counterplay with 25...  $\mathbb{W}e8$ !? deserved attention, e.g. 26.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}a3$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  f6 31.  $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  32.  $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  34.  $\mathbb{W}c5$  g6 35. b5  $\mathbb{E}d3$  36. b6 f5, and the role of the  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  can be seen in the variation 37. b7?  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  fxe4 with equal chances.

## 26. $\mathbb{W}f3$



The  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  is at least as strong as the  $\mathbb{E}d2$ ; in addition, the  $\mathbb{B}b4$  on the one hand restricts the  $\mathbb{B}b7$  and on the other hand is a force to be reckoned with in its own right, since it is a passed pawn. In other words, White now has a clear advantage.

## 26... $\mathbb{W}a7$

The most tenacious. Instead, 26...  $\mathbb{W}e8$ ? was inferior due to 27.  $\mathbb{E}a1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  30. b5, and White regains the exchange, with a winning position due to the  $\mathbb{B}b5$ .

## 27. $\mathbb{Q}d7$

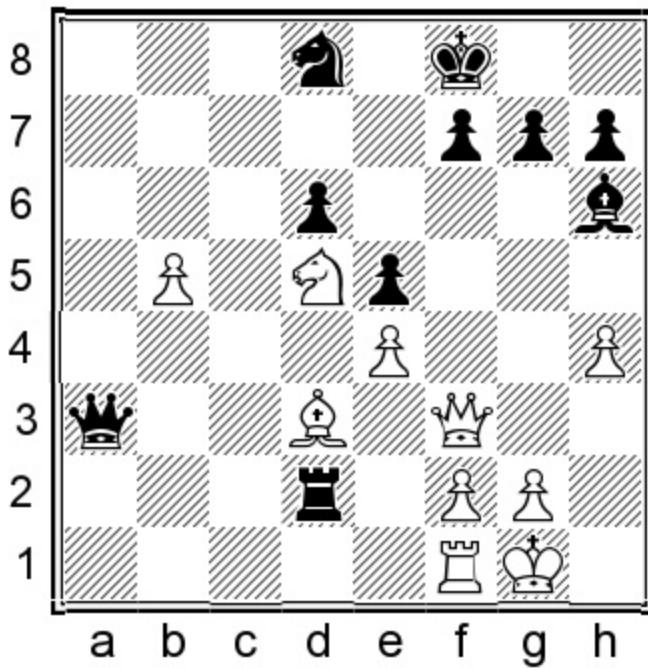
27.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ! was better.

## 27... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ?

Here 27...  $\mathbb{E}a8$ !? was a more stubborn defence, since Kasparov would need to find some more difficult moves: 28.  $\mathbb{Q}7b6$ ! (28.  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{E}xd3$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}f8$   $\mathbb{W}a2$ !, with equality) 28...  $\mathbb{W}a3$ ! 29.  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{E}xd3$  30.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ !  $\mathbb{E}d3$  32.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{E}c3$  33.  $\mathbb{W}d7$  g5 34.  $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35.  $hxg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{E}c1$ ,

and the game is still alive.

28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  29. b5  $\mathbb{W}a3$



White has regained the exchange and his  $\mathbb{B}b5$  is practically an extra pawn, but even more important is that the white pieces are more active, which allows Kasparov to start the final assault.

30.  $\mathbb{W}f5!$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

30...  $\mathbb{B}xd3$  loses to 31.  $\mathbb{W}d7$  g6 (31...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  32.  $\mathbb{W}c8+$ ) 32.  $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33. b6.

31.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}c2$

Or 31...  $\mathbb{W}a4$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  33.  $\mathbb{W}c8!$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  (33...  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{B}xd5$  35.  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  36.  $\mathbb{W}a4$ , with a decisive advantage) 34.  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  35.  $\mathbb{W}c7$ , with unstoppable mate.

32.  $\mathbb{W}xh7!$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  33.  $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  36.  $\mathbb{B}a1!$   $\mathbb{W}d4$

In the event of 36...  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  37.  $\mathbb{B}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  38.  $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}f4+$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  the white king escapes the checks.

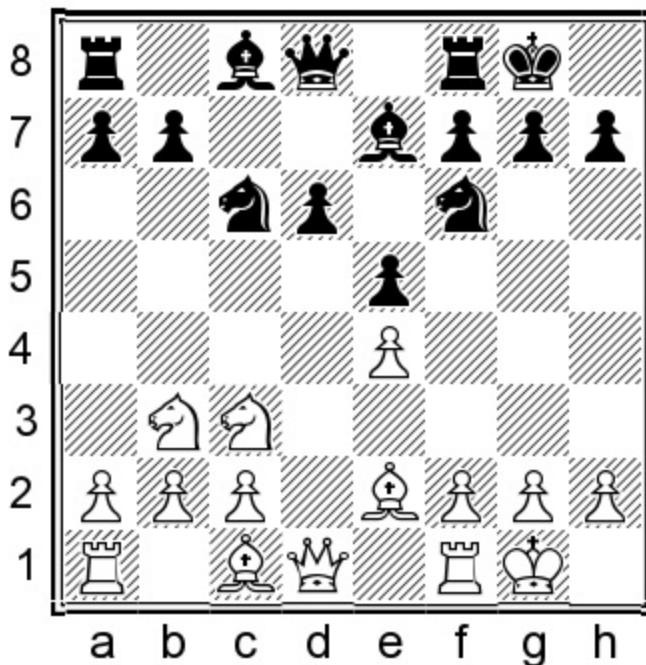
37.  $\mathbb{B}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  1-0

## 6.4. Bishops of opposite colours

A typical middlegame method is to head for a position with bishops of opposite colours. Many years ago Botvinnik demonstrated how effective this can be against Boleslavsky's strategic idea.

Game 122  
Sicilian Defence  
**Mikhail Botvinnik**  
**Ilya Kan**  
Moscow 1953

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5 7. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.0-0 0-0



9. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Botvinnik's attention is not attracted to the stereotyped move 9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , at least not for the moment, as we shall see. His modest move is aimed at preventing the freeing advance ...d6-d5, which is typical in this type of structure. For example, this was the way Black solved his opening problems after 9. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  10.f4 (10. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !?) 10...exf4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  d5 12.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  14. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , with a completely equal game, Nakamura-Goldin, San Diego 2004.

9... $\mathbb{Q}a5$

The most frequently played move is 9...a5!; here is a recent example: 10.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  (11. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ?? 12. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  13.bxc3) 12. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ !?) 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  h6 (12...d5!?) 13. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  14.c3  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  16. $\mathbb{W}xb3$  d5!? 17.exd5 e4, with chances for both sides, Bharat-Gupta, Majitar 2019.

And the following continuation is what Stockfish ‘thinks’ about the second most popular option here:  
 9... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  h6 11.c3  $\mathbb{W}d7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  13. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  15. $\mathbb{E}d1$  b5 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}b7$ , with an evaluation of 0.00.

### 10. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

In Megabase there are no other games with this position, so it is appropriate to consult the engine. It is interesting that here too Stockfish does not want to place the  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  on g5 and, among other moves, it recommends the following continuation: 11. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  12.a4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  13. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  14.a5 a6 15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  16. $\mathbb{W}d2$  h6 17. $\mathbb{E}ed1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  18.h3  $\mathbb{E}f8$  19. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , giving a slight advantage to White.

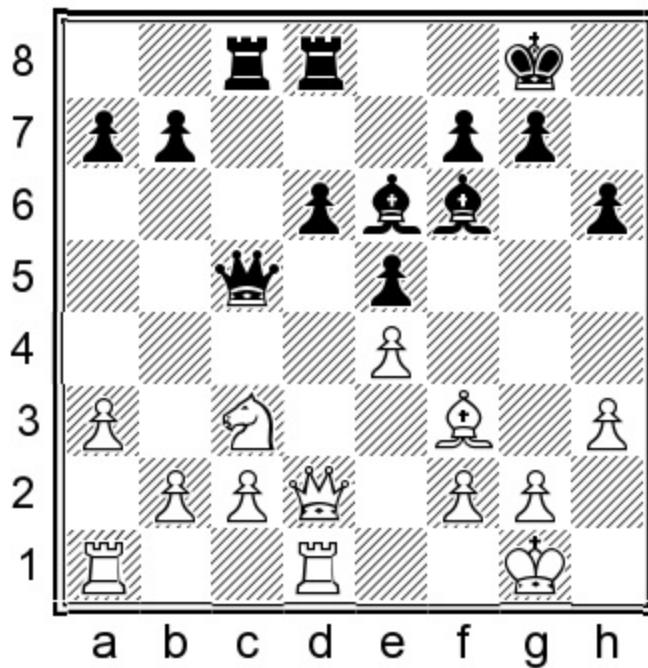
### 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12.a3

Of course, 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  13. $\mathbb{W}xd6?$  is bad, due to 13... $\mathbb{E}fd8$ .

### 12... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 13.h3

White’s plan becomes clearer: exchange on f6, followed by  $\mathbb{Q}f3-g4$  and then play according to how the opponent reacts. The computer again recommends retreating the  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  to e3 and following another plan, e.g. 13.h3 b5 14. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ ?  $\mathbb{W}c6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  16. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17.exd5  $\mathbb{W}b7$  18. $\mathbb{W}d3$  a5 19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20. $\mathbb{E}ad1$ .

### 13... $\mathbb{E}fd8$ 14. $\mathbb{W}d2$ h6 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$ $\mathbb{E}ac8$



### 17. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

With this move Botvinnik begins the plan of installing his knight on d5 in a situation where the

capture ... $\mathbb{Q}e6xd5$  is forced, then recapturing on d5 with his rook. To achieve this he needs first to place the  $\mathbb{R}a1$  on c1. This in turn requires him to prevent the move ... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , and therefore White starts his plan by preparing to advance with g2-g3 and h3-h4.

**17... $\mathbb{Q}f8??$**

Kan was a well-respected Soviet master, although of course not on the same level as his opponent, who had convincingly beaten both Alekhine and Capablanca as long ago as 1938. Black's plan to transfer his king to e7 to defend the  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  is the main cause of his defeat. In this position Black is not at all worse after for instance 17... $\mathbb{R}c6!?$  18.g3 a6 19. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  20. $\mathbb{R}ab1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 22. $\mathbb{R}d3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  23. $\mathbb{R}bd1$  h5, and Black controls the vital d5-square and has pressure along the c-file.

**18. $\mathbb{W}e2$  a6 19. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{R}c6$  20.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

'It takes a wise man to recognize that he was wrong'. Kan persists with his idea, whereas by acknowledging his error he could still have maintained equality, e.g. 20... $\mathbb{Q}g8!$  21.g3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22. $\mathbb{R}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8!$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  g6 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 25. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{R}f6$  26. $\mathbb{R}e1$  (26.h5?  $\mathbb{Q}a5!)$  26...h5 27. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

**21.g3 b5?!**

It was not too late to play in line with the recommendation in the previous note: 21... $\mathbb{W}b6$  22. $\mathbb{R}ab1$   $\mathbb{R}c4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  25. $\mathbb{R}e1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  26. $\mathbb{R}bd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g8!$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  28. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{R}xc2$ , and Black's extra pawn compensates the strong  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

**22. $\mathbb{R}ac1$**

Completing the first part of his plan.

**22... $\mathbb{W}c4$  23. $\mathbb{R}d3!$**

It would have been premature to play 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5+?!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  24.exd5  $\mathbb{R}c7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{W}a2$ , and White has a pawn on d5 instead of a piece.

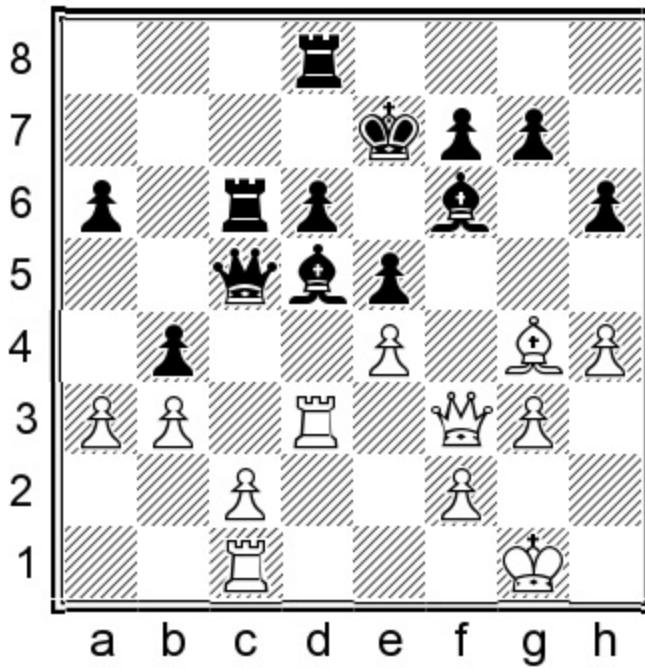
**23...b4?**

It was better to refrain from opening the a-file, e.g. 23... $\mathbb{R}b6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25. $\mathbb{R}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ .

**24.b3  $\mathbb{W}c5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d5+$**

Botvinnik never liked to change his plans. However, White had another way to handle this position, leading to a clear advantage: 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!?$  fxe6 26. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  27.axb4  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  28.c4.

**25... $\mathbb{R}xd5$**



**26.♗xd5!**

Mission accomplished! The next step is to transfer the ♜g4 to c4, to highlight even more the difference in strength between the bishops of opposite colour in this position.

**26...♝b6 27.axb4 ♝xb4 28.♝e2 ♝c3 29.♝d1! ♞b8 30.♝e2 a5 31.♝c4 a4 32.♝a1 ♞b4**

Now Black loses the exchange, but 32...a3 33.♝d3! (33.♝xa3?? ♞xc4) 33...♝b4 34.♝c1 ♞cc8 35.♝xa3 also gave White a decisive advantage, since he would have an extra pawn as well as attacking chances.

**33.♝d3 ♝b2 34.c3**

**34.♝b1!?.**

**34...♝bxc4 35.bxc4 a3**

**35...♝b3** loses to **36.♝xa4!..**

**36.♝b1 ♝a2 37.♝b4 ♞a6 38.c5 dxc5 39.♝d7+ 1-0**

The next game is a model that shows how to make use of the bishops of opposite colour method in the Najdorf Variation.

Game 123  
Sicilian Defence  
**Yury Razuvayev**

## Gudmundur Sigurjonsson

Cienfuegos 1975 (15)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♘c3 a6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♘f6 6.♗e3**

For the plan used by Razuvayev in this game there is an alternative move-order that deserves attention, since it saves a tempo by allowing White to play ♘g5 in one move: 6.a4!? e5 7.♘f3 ♗c7 8.♘g5 ♘bd7 9.♘d2 h6 10.♘h4 g5 11.♘g3 ♘c5 12.h4 (12.a5!? ♘e6 13.♘c4 ♗c6 14.♗e2 and now 14...♘fxe4? fails to 15.♘cxe4 ♘xe4 16.♘xe6 ♘xg3 17.♘xf7+ ♘xf7 18.fxg3 and the black king is very vulnerable) 12...g4 13.♘c4!? (13.h5 ♘e6 14.♘h4 ♘cd7, with chances for both sides, Onischuk-Livaic, Budapest 2018) 13...♘e6 14.0-0 ♘xc4 15.♘xc4 ♘cxe4 16.♘xe4 ♘xe4 17.♗d3 f5 18.♗ad1 0-0-0 (18...♗g7!? 19.♘e3 ♗d7) 19.♘e3 ♗d7 20.♗c4+ (20.♗fe1!?) 20...♗c6 21.♗e6+ ♗d7 22.♗xf5, with a slight advantage to White, Moranda-Sarana, PRO League 2020.

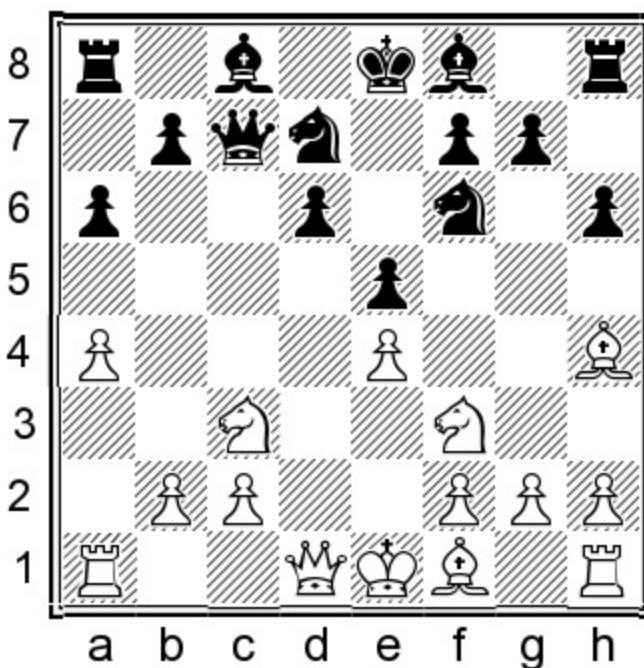
**6...e5 7.♘f3**

Recently this move, which for several years was overshadowed by 7.♘b3, is popular once more.

**7...♗c7 8.♘g5**

Beginning the struggle for the d5-square. Nowadays the main move by far is 8.a4!?, e.g. 8...♗e7 9.♗e2 0-0 10.0-0 ♘e6 11.a5 h6 12.♘d5 ♘xd5 13.exd5 ♘f5 14.c4 ♘d7 15.b4 ♗ac8 16.♗c1 ♗d8 17.♘d2 ♘f6 18.♗b3, with the better game for White, Yu Yangyi-Firouzja, Wijk aan Zee 2020.

**8...♘bd7 9.a4 h6 10.♘h4**



**10...b6?!**

This allows White to carry out his plan, which includes first placing his bishop on c4 and then transferring the ♜f3 to e3, in order to secure firm control of the d5-square. Instead, 10...g5!? is considered stronger, e.g. 11.♗g3 ♜c5 12.♗d2 ♜e6 13.♗e2 0-0-0 14.0-0 d5 (14...h5!?) 15.exd5 ♜xd5 16.♗xd5 ♜xd5 17.b4, with very complex play, although it seems slightly better for Black, Kobalia-Onischuk, Moscow 2009. The same advance can also be achieved in a slightly different way: 10...♝b6!? 11.♝c1 g5 12.♗g3 ♜c5 13.♗d3 ♜e6 14.0-0 ♜c8 15.a5 ♜c6, with a comfortable position for Black, although so far no-one has played 10...♝b6!?.

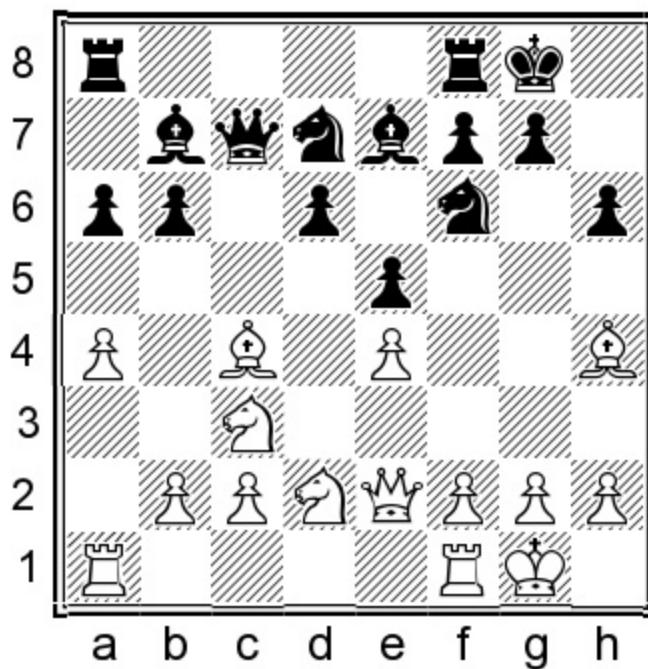
### 11.♗d2!

Preparing the following move, which is an important element of the plan of controlling d5.

### 11...♝b7

11...♝e7 12.♗c4.

**12.♗c4 ♜e7 13.♗e2 0-0-0 14.0-0**



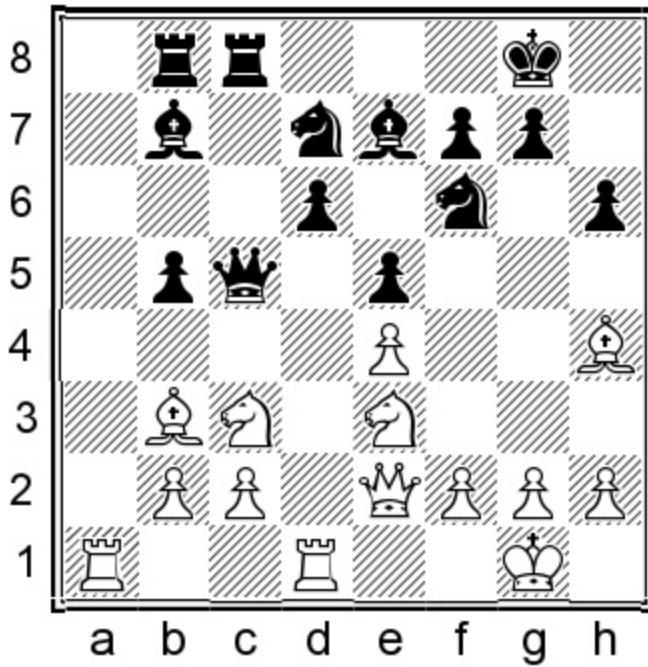
### 14...♜fc8?!

The complications arising after 14...♜xe4?! 15.♗dxe4 (15.♗xe7?! ♜xd2 is less clear) 15...♜xh4 16.♗d5 ♜c5 17.♗fd1 ♜xd5 18.♗xd5 ♜d8 19.g3 ♜e7 20.♗xc5 bxc5 21.♗a3! lead to a position in which White is in firm control of the d5-square; however, it was better to change the course of the game by 14...g5!? 15.♗g3 ♜c5 16.♗fe1 ♜e6, with the idea of continuing with ...♜e6-f4, fighting more actively for the d5-square, e.g. 17.♗f1 ♜fd8 18.♗d3 ♜f4 19.♗c4 d5!?, with chances for both sides.

**15.♗fd1 ♜c5??**

As the game shows, the plan of quickly advancing with ...b7-b5 is incorrect. Once again, now and on the next move it was better to play 15...g5!? 16.♗g3 ♜c5, e.g. 17.f3 ♜e6 18.♔h1 ♜f8 19.♕e1 ♖d8 20.♗f1 ♜d4 21.♖ac1 ♜c6 22.h3 b5!, and Black has counterplay.

**16.♗b3 ♖ab8 17.♗c4 b5 18.axb5 axb5 19.♗e3**



White has established firm control of the d5-square and the next few moves show that Razuvayev has the tactics equally well under control.

**19...b4 20.♗xf6 ♜xf6 21.♗cd5 ♜xd5 22.♗xd5**

22.♗xd5!? would have been equally strong, e.g. 22...♗g5 23.♗xb7 ♖xb7 24.♗f5 ♜xc2 25.♗g4 ♖d8 26.h4; however, Razuvayev, just like his mentor Botvinnik in the previous game (Yury, by the way, taught classes for many years in Botvinnik's famous chess school), has no wish to change his strategy.

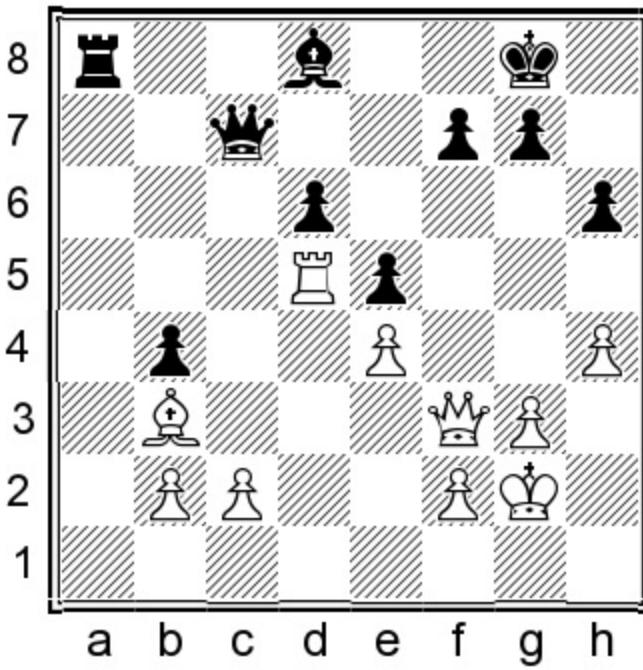
**22...♗g5 23.g3 ♖a8?!**

This leads to a technically winning position for White. More tenacious was 23...♗f8! 24.♗c4 ♜xc4 25.♗xc4 ♖fc8 26.b3 ♗d8 27.♗a7 ♗c6, at least preserving the pair of bishops.

**24.h4 ♗d8 25.♗f3 ♗xd5**

Forced, due to the threat 26.♗xb4.

**26.♗xa8 ♖xa8 27.♗xd5 ♜c7 28.♗g2**



This position can be assessed as strategically winning for White, since he is practically a pawn up on the queenside. In addition, all his pieces are deployed more actively than those of the opponent.

**28...♝b8 29.h5 ♟g5 30.♛d3 ♜b6**

30...♝e7 was more tenacious. However, after 31.♛a6 ♜b7 White would gradually reach the same piece placement as in the game.

**31.♜a5 ♜b8 32.♜a6 ♜e7 33.♛d5 ♜f8 34.♜a4 ♛d7 35.♜a5 ♛b7**

After this Black loses the game, but 35...♛c7 36.♜a6 ♛d7 37.♜a5 would just lead to the same ending.

**36.♛xb7 ♜xb7 37.♜d5 ♜c7 38.♜b5 ♜xc2 39.♜xb4 ♜c7 40.♜b8 ♜a7 41.b4 1-0**

In the Sveshnikov Variation too, reaching a position with opposite-coloured bishops can be very much in White's favour.

Game 124  
 Sicilian Defence  
**Alexei Shirov 2705**  
**Miguel Illescas 2590**  
 Linares 1994 (4)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 e5 5.♘b5 d6 6.♘c3 a6 7.♘a3 b5 8.♘d5 ♘f6 9.♘g5 ♘e7 10.♘xf6 ♘xf6 11.c3**

Although this remains the main line, 11.c4!? has been popular in recent years, e.g. 11...b4 (11...♘d4!?) 12.cxb5 ♘b7 13.♘c4 – if 13.bxa6 ♘xd5 14.exd5 ♛a5+ 15.♗d2 ♛xd5 Black has an initiative for the

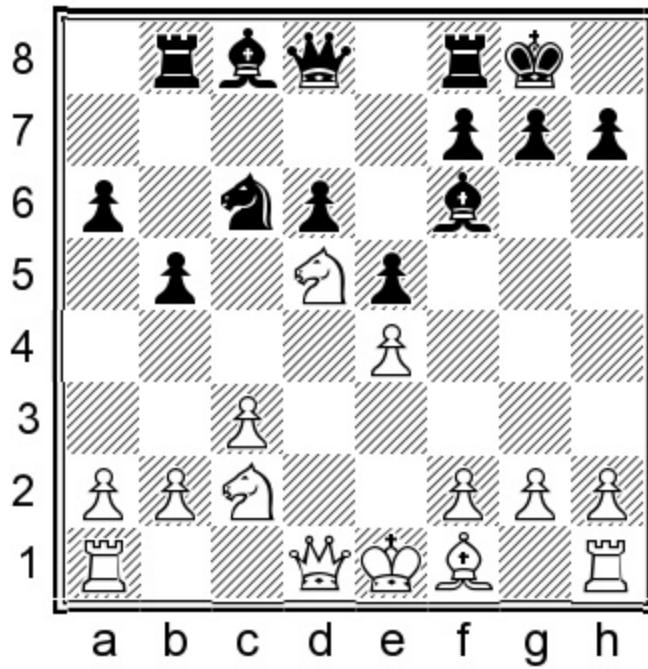
pawn) 12.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $a5$  13.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  15.  $cxd5$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  16.  $g3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0-0 18.  $h4$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , with a slight advantage to White, Nakamura-Caruana, St Louis ch-USA 2019.

## 11...0-0

There are several alternatives here. In the game Kasparov-Shirov, analysed earlier, 11...  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  was played, while the text move, which is the main line, was briefly mentioned there, along with 11...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ . It is worth noting that 11...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  usually transposes to the game continuation, although this time GM Illescas chooses another destination for this bishop. It is curious that Stockfish gives the lowest evaluation to 11...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and the highest to 11...  $\mathbb{Q}b8$ , with the following continuation: 12.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  13.  $a4$   $bxa4$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}cb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}b6$  18.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19. 0-0 0-0 20.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xb2$ , etc.

## 12. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{E}b8$

12...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  is the main line, e.g. 13.  $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  14.  $g4$   $f6$  (we can assume that 14...  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ! is a good alternative, as in the following game, played with help of engines and ending in a draw: 15.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  17.  $g5$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  18.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $exf4$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  20. 0-0-0  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  21.  $\mathbb{E}d2$   $g6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  25.  $b3$ , with a draw, Sikorsky-Schütze, cr 2017) 15.  $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}cb4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  20.  $a4$   $bxa4$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $a5$ , with chances for both sides, Sutovsky-Lenic, Austria Bundesliga 2017.



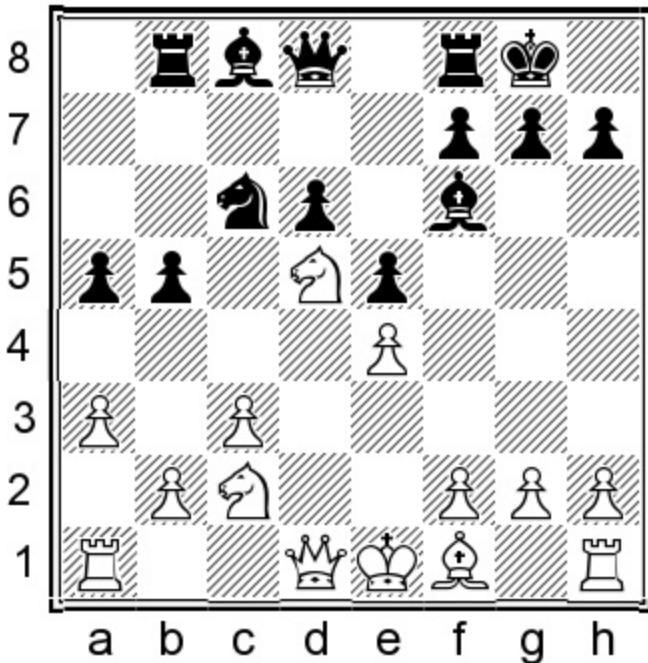
## 13. $a3$ !?

This move appeared in a few earlier games but is named after the Latvian GM Zigurds Laska, who elaborated it in the 1990s. The main idea of this move was seen for the first time in a game played by Laska's pupil Bologan, given below. Instead, 13.  $h4$  has been played more often, e.g. 13...  $g6$

(13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !?) 14. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$  (14. $\mathbb{Q}ce3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 14...gxf6 15. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  d5, with an unbalanced position in which Black has his chances) 14.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  15.h5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}ce3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19. $\mathbb{W}xd5$  b4 20.c4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  21.0-0  $\mathbb{B}b6$ , with a slight advantage to White, So-Carlsen, Stavanger 2019.

### 13...a5

13...g6! may be the most precise: 14. $\mathbb{Q}cb4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  15.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  17.h4  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  f5 22. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  f4 23.gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  24. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  25. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$ , with a drawish position.



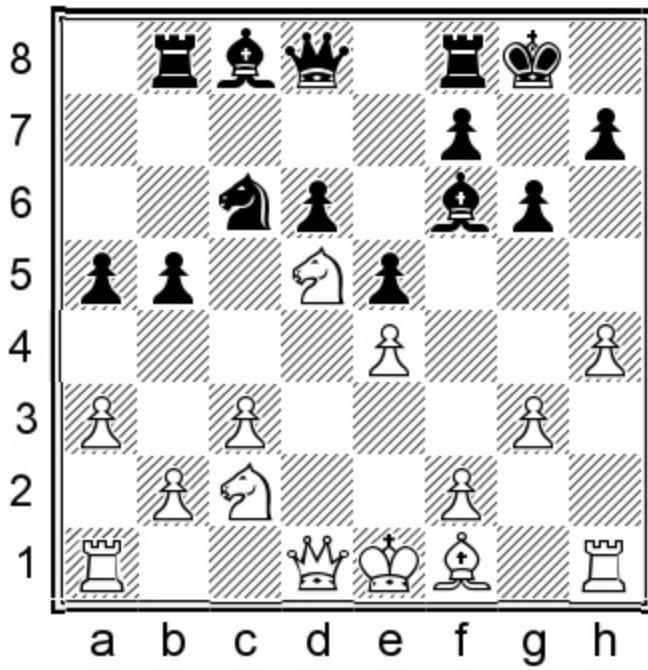
### 14.h4!

14. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17.0-0-0?! (this risky move was Lanka's main idea, but it was soon discovered that White's king is far from secure here, hence there are only three games with this position in Megabase) 17... $\mathbb{W}b6$  (17... $\mathbb{W}d7$ ? 18.h4 g6 19.h5  $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ , with a better position for Black) 18. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  g6 19.h4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ! 20. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ !?) 21.bxc3 b4) 21.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  22. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  and Black is a pawn up with the attack) 20.h5 f5? (20... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ !) 21.hxg6 hxg6 22.g4 e4 23.gxf5! and White won in the game Bologan-Redon, Montpellier 1994.

### 14...g6

The following quick win by the inventor of 13.a3! demonstrates Black's problems if he chooses another placement for the  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ : 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15.g3 (15. $\mathbb{Q}ce3$ !?) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}ce3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  17.a4 bxa4? (17...b4!) 18. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  1-0, Lanka-Jahncke, Kiel 2013.

### 15.g3



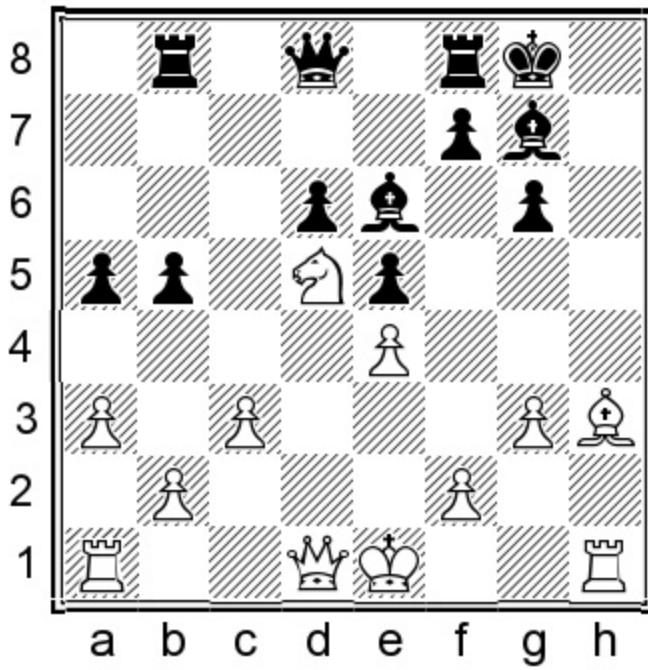
**15...Bg7**

As we shall see, this move is fine. Shirov analysed 15...h5, considering this to be relatively best, but after 16.Qh3 Qe6 (16...Qxh3? 17.Qxh3 Bg7 18.g4!) 17.Qce3 Bg7 (17...Bg7!?) 18.g4! Qxh4 19.gxh5 Qxd5 (19...Qxe4?? 20.Qg2 Wa4 21.b3; 19...Qxh3?? 20.Qf3) 20.Qg2 Qg5 21.Qxd5 Qe7 22.Qd1 White's position is clearly better: the h-file can be opened at any moment and the Qd6 is weak – 0.90.

**16.h5 Qe7 17.hxg6 hxg6??!**

We can assume that neither player gave sufficient attention to the recapture on g6 with the Qf7. Of course, from a human viewpoint this move looks strange, since it weakens the e6-square, which seems to guarantee White indisputable control of the key d5-square. Furthermore it goes against the general rule: pawns should capture towards the centre. Nevertheless, for a better understanding of this topic we should recall the game Smeets-Carlsen, analysed earlier. In that game the black rooks operated along the f-file and the h-pawn participated in Black's attack on the kingside. So let's see: 17...fxg6!! 18.Qh3 Qb7 (Black also has enough counterplay if the light-squared bishops are exchanged: 18...Qxh3 19.Qxh3 Qf6 20.Qxf6+ (20.Qxe7+ Qxe7 21.Qd5+ (21.Qe3 Qg5 22.Qd5 Wa7 23.Qe2 Qb7, followed by 24...Qbf7) 21...Qg7) 20...Qxf6 21.Qh2 Qd7 22.Qd2 Qc6, and Black has the more active position) 19.Qe6+ Qh8 20.Qce3 Qxd5 21.Qxd5 (a position similar to Smeets-Carlsen arises after 21.Qxd5 Qf6 22.Qxb7 Qxb7 23.Qd5 Qg5 24.Qg4 Qbf7 25.0-0 h5 26.Qe6 Qg7 27.Qad1 Qe8 28.Qh3 Qef8 29.Qg2 Wa8, threatening 30...Qc6 and then ...Qc4) 21...Qf6 22.0-0 Qg5 23.Qd3 Qe8, with active play for Black.

**18.Qce3 Qxd5 19.Qxd5 Qe6 20.Qh3**



**20...♝xd5**

Although Shirov gives this move a question mark, it seems that this was the lesser evil. Furthermore, Shirov's recommendation 20...♝d7 leads to a clearly better position for White after 21.♝xe6! fxe6 (21...♝xe6? 22.♝e2 (22.g4!?) 22...f5 23.f3 ♜b7 24.0-0-0 and White's positional advantage is overwhelming, thanks to the strong ♜d5, along with White's domination of the h-file) 22.♝e3 ♜f7 23.0-0! (23.♝e2?! d5!) 23...♜fd8 (23...♜b6? 24.a4! bxa4 25.♝c4) 24.♝e2 d5 25.♜ad1 ♜d6 26.♜fe1 b4 27.exd5 bxc3 (27...exd5?! 28.♝c4!) 28.dxe6 ♜xe6 29.bxc3 e4 30.♝c4, with a healthy extra pawn.

As GM Chekhov pointed out, 20...f5 was hardly an improvement either, due to 21.exf5 gxf5 22.♝g2, threatening 23.♝h5; however, 20...♝f6!? deserved attention, e.g. 21.♝xe6 fxe6 22.♝e3 ♜g7 23.0-0 ♜d7 24.♝g4 ♜c6 25.♝d3 ♜g5 26.♜ad1 ♜e7, with a worse but tenable position.

**21.♝xd5 ♜c7**

It seems that 21...♝b6!? offered better fighting chances, e.g. 22.0-0 ♜f6 23.♜ad1 ♜e7 24.♜d3 ♜b7 25.♝xb7 ♜xb7 26.♜d5 ♜g7 27.♜fd1 ♜a8 28.♜a1 b4 29.axb4 ♜h8! 30.♝g2 axb4, and Black's position is better than in the ending of the Razuvaev-Sigurjonsson game.

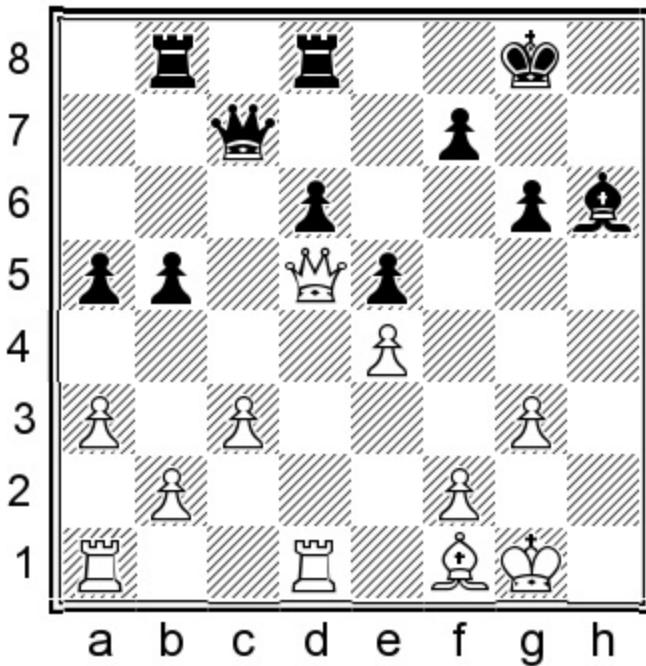
**22.0-0 ♜fd8?!**

Here and on the next move it was better to play 22...♝f6!?, e.g. 23.♜fd1 (23.♝g2?! ♜g7 24.♝g4 ♜c5 25.♜ad1!) 23...♝g7! (23...♝e7?! 24.♝f1 ♜b6 25.b4!) 24.♝xd6 ♜c4 25.♝d3 ♜fd8 26.♝c2 b4, and White's advantage is minimal.

**23.♜fd1 ♜h6**

Again 23... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ! was better, e.g. 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  25.b4 axb4 26.cxb4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  27. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  29. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  30. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  31. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  32. $\mathbb{E}a6$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}c3$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$  35.b5  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  36. $\mathbb{E}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  37.b6  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  38.b7  $\mathbb{Q}a7$ , with good chances of holding this ending.

#### 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$



#### 24... $\mathbb{W}b7$ ?

The exchange of queens leads to a position with bishops of opposite colour where White's bishop is far superior to its black counterpart. Although Black's position is worse anyway, he could have tried another way to bring about this exchange: 24... $\mathbb{W}c5$ !?, e.g. 25. $\mathbb{W}xc5$  (25. $\mathbb{E}d3$ !? $\mathbb{Q}g7$  26.b4  $\mathbb{W}a7$  27. $\mathbb{E}a2$ !; 25. $\mathbb{W}a2$ !?) 25...dxc5 26. $\mathbb{E}xd8+$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  28. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}c2$ , with good drawing possibilities after the exchange of rooks.

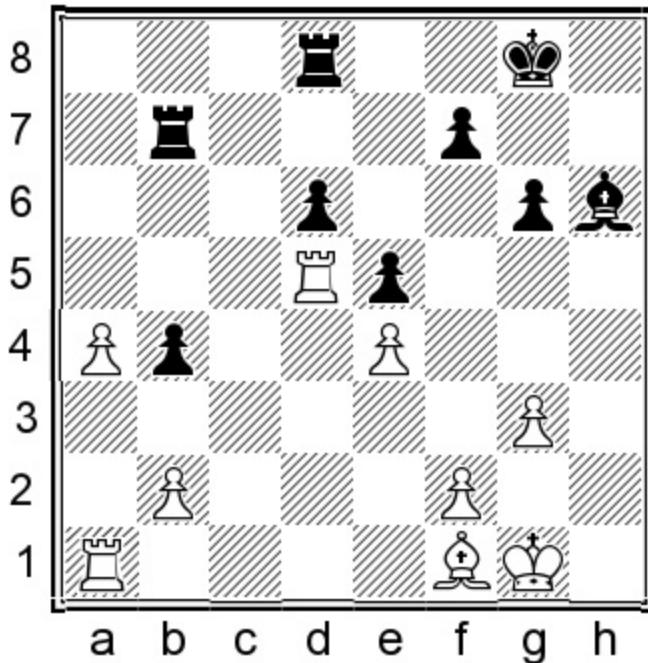
In the event of 24... $\mathbb{W}b6$  Shirov was planning to play 25. $\mathbb{W}b3$ !? (25. $\mathbb{E}ab1$ ! followed by b2-b4 was also good) 25...a4 26. $\mathbb{W}c2$ , followed by 27. $\mathbb{E}d5$ .

According to the engine the most tenacious move was 24... $\mathbb{W}d7$  and in that case Shirov was thinking of playing 25.b4 axb4 26.axb4. Stockfish continues this variation: 26... $\mathbb{E}b6$  27. $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{E}db8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  29. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}6xb7$  30. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  31. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  32. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}xb5$  33. $\mathbb{E}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  35.c4  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  36.c5  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  37.c6  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  38.f4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  39. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ , and it is not clear whether White can win this ending.

#### 25. $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{E}xb7$ 26. $\mathbb{E}d5$ b4

26...f5! would not have saved the game: 27.exf5 gxf5 28. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  f4 (or 28... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  29.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 29. $\mathbb{E}e1$  fxg3 30.fxg3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31. $\mathbb{E}xe5$  dxe5 32. $\mathbb{E}xd8+$ , with two extra pawns.

**27.cxb4 axb4 28.a4**



Black's position is desperate, in view of the enemy passed pawn and the passivity of the  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

**28... $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

28... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  would have led to the same result, e.g. 29.a5  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  f5 31.exf5 gxf5 32. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}db5$   $\mathbb{Q}da8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

**29.a5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

29... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  also lost after 30.a6  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  32. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ .

**30.a6  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  1-0**

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## ***Part III***

### **Exercises and solutions**

In this practical training section there are two types of exercise, related to the theory section of the book. The first type comprises the usual exercises in tactical and positional play. The second type consists of several questions within one game.

Corresponding to each of the first three chapters of the theory section, we present a set of 24 exercises, followed by one game with 6 exercises. For every chapter of Part II there is a set of 18 exercises and also a game with 6 questions.

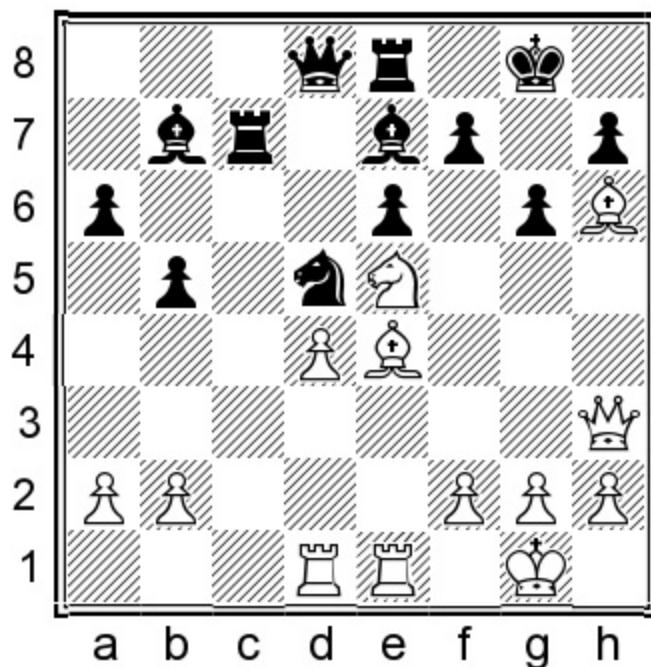
The exercises are numbered consecutively, i.e. the exercises on the theme of the IQP are numbered 1 to 30, the exercises on the Carlsbad structure are 31 to 60, etc. In total there are 162 exercises.

### ***Chapter 7***

#### **Exercises**

##### **The IQP**

###### **Exercise 1**



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 1

21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+?$   $\mathbb{Q}f6-$ -.

23...  $\mathbb{Q}h4?$

23...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e1\pm$ .

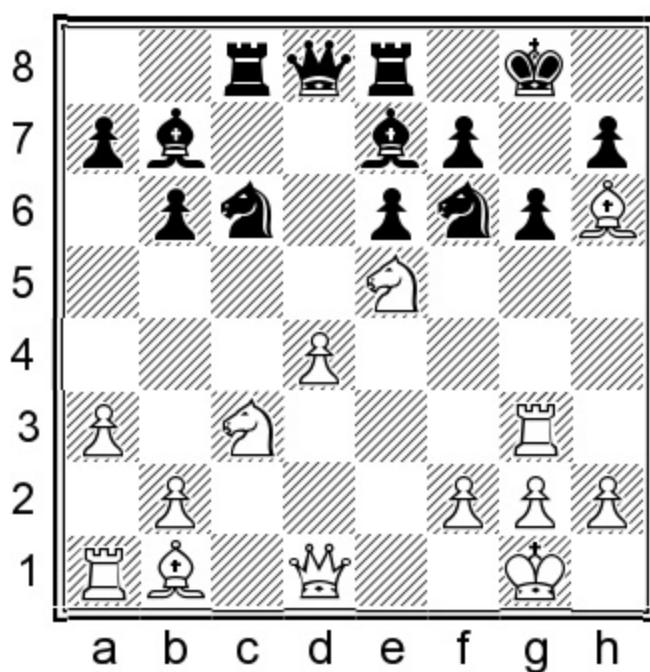
24.  $\mathbb{M}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$

25.  $\mathbb{Q}de1!.$

25...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}g3!$   $\mathbb{Q}c1+$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g5+-$

Sanguineti-Miana, Buenos Aires 1975.

### Exercise 2



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 2

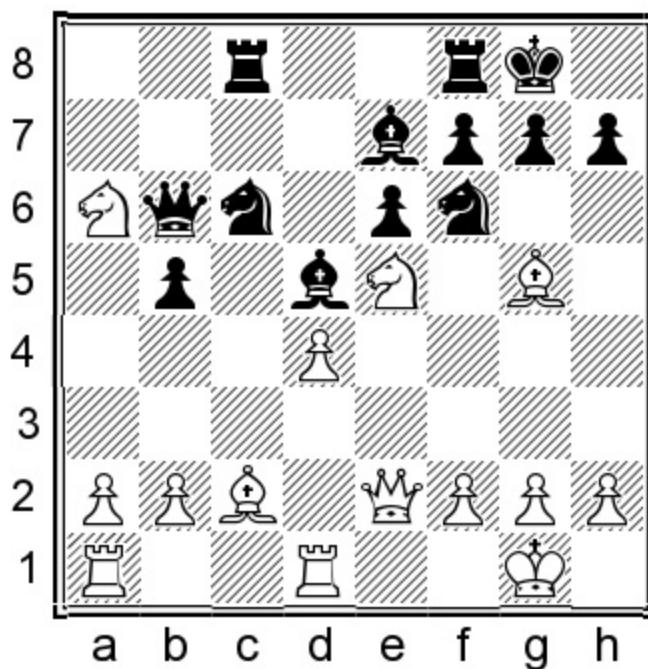
**18.♗xg6! hxg6 19.♗xg6 fxg6**

19...♝d6 20.♝xf7+ ♕xf7 21.♝g7+ ♔f8 22.♝f3! (22.♝xb7+!? ♔g8 23.♝e4).

**20.♝b1! ♗e5 21.dxe5 ♗e4 22.♗xe4+–**

Keene-Miles, Hastings 1976.

### Exercise 3



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 3

**18.♕xf6!**

18.♕c5? ♕xd4 19.♖xd4 ♘xc5.

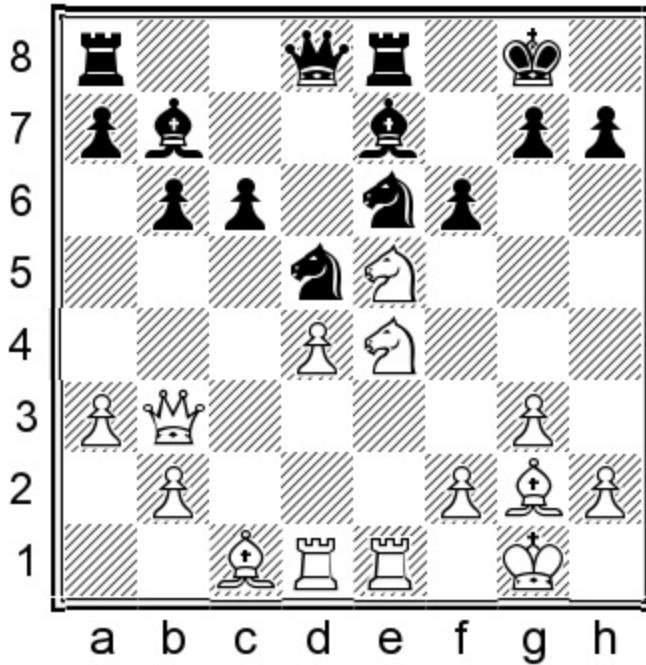
**18.♕xf6! ♕xf6 19.♘d7 ♘xa6**

19...♘d8 20.♘d3 g6 21.♘xf8 ♕xd4!? 22.♘b4 ♘xc2 23.♘xc2 ♘xf8 24.♘e3 ♘xb2 25.♖ab1±.

**20.♘xf6+ gxf6 21.♕xh7+ ♔h8 22.♗h5 ♔g7 23.♗g4+ ♔h8 24.♖d3+-**

Shuvalova-Dordzhieva, Moscow 2018.

#### Exercise 4



White to move

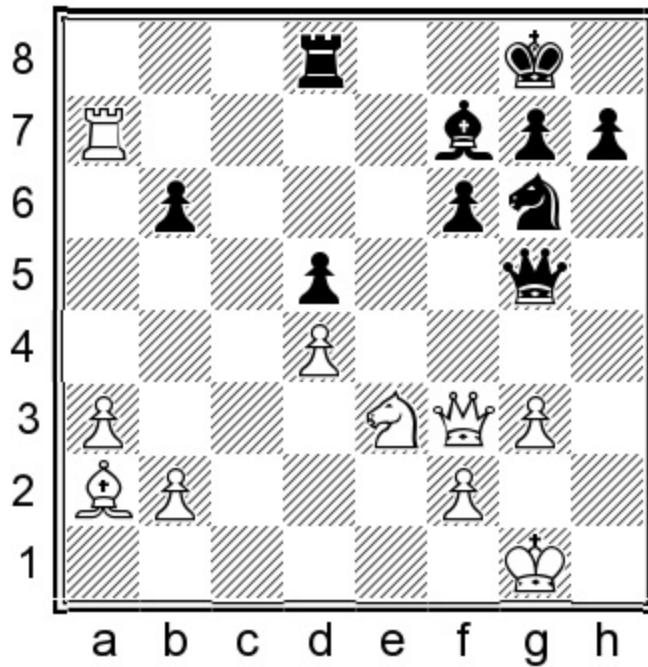
Show/Hide Solution

#### Solution 4

**1.♘xc6! ♘xc6 2.♘c3 ♘ec7 3.♘f4! ♔h8 4.♘xc7+-**

Kasparov-Vladimirov, Tallinn blitz 1981.

## Exercise 5



*White to move  
Find the winning combination played by Tal!*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 5

**33. ♜xd5!!**

The prosaic 33. ♜f5! also wins, e.g. 33... ♜h4 (or 33... ♜xf5 34. ♜xf5 ♔f8 35. ♜b7) 34. ♜xg5 ♜f3+ 35. ♔g2 ♜xg5 36. ♜b7+-.

**33. ♜xd5!! ♜xd5**

33... ♜xd5 34. ♜xf7!.

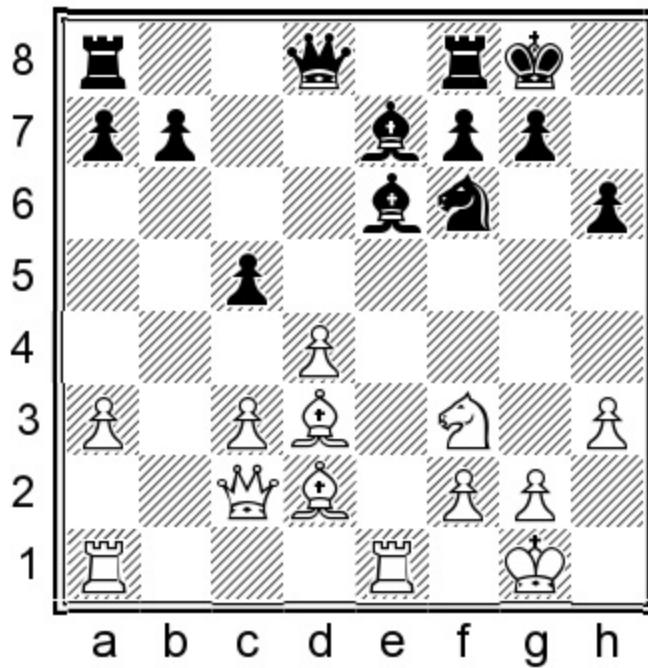
**34. ♜a8! ♜xa2 35. ♜xd8+ ♔f7 36. ♜c6 ♜e7 37. ♜e8+ ♔e6 38. ♜c8 ♜d5**

38... ♜d2 39. ♜c6+ ♔f5 40. ♜h5+ ♜g5 (40...g5? 41. ♜f3+) 41. ♜xh7+.

**39. ♜c3 ♜d7 40. ♜e3+ ♔d6 41. ♜b8++-**

Tal-Brinck Claussen, Havana 1966.

### Exercise 6



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 6

**20.♖xe6! fxe6 21.♖e1**

21.♗c4!?.

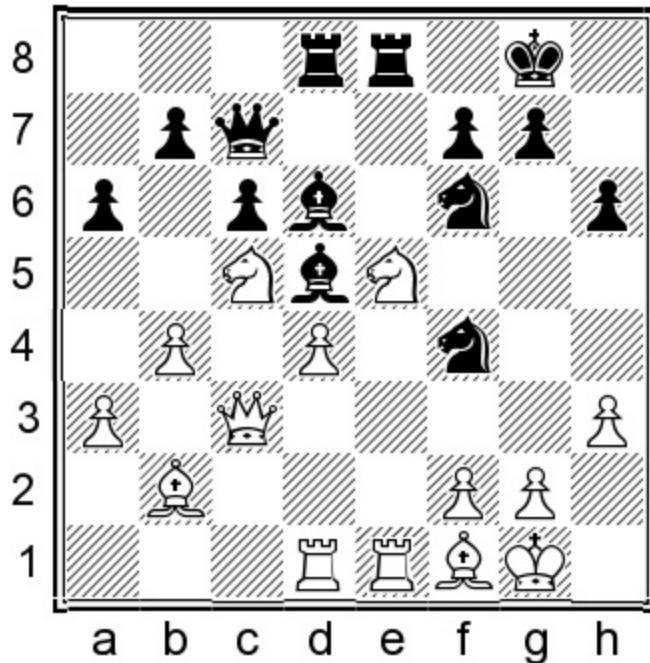
**21...♝d6**

21...cx d4 22.♗xd4.

**22.♗c4 ♗d5 23.♗e4 ♘ad8 24.dxc5±**

Anand-Jussupow, Dortmund 1998.

## Exercise 7



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 7

24... $\mathbb{Q}xg2!$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$

26.dxe5?  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (27. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e2+$ ) 27... $\mathbb{Q}xe1+-+$ .

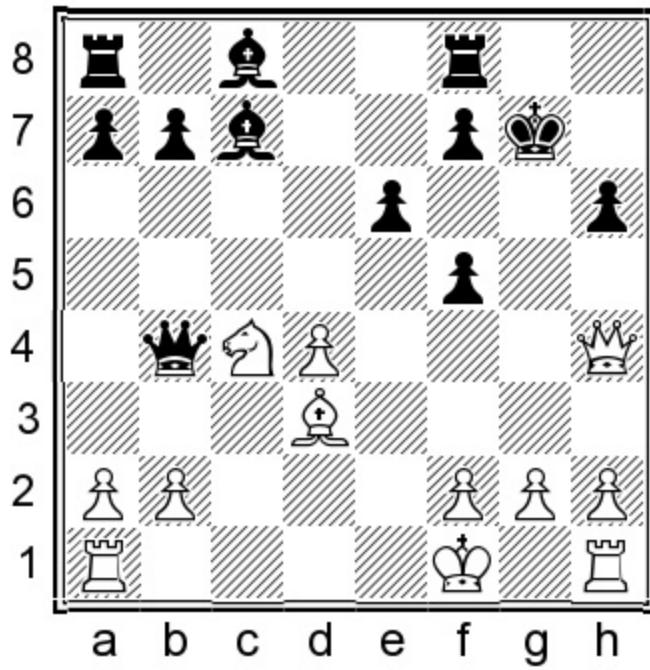
26... $\mathbb{W}xb7$

26... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ .

27. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}f5!$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2-$ -

I.Sokolov-Vukovic, Cetinje 1991.

## Exercise 8



*White to move  
How to continue the attack?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 8

**20.g4! f4**

20...b5 21.gxf5 bxc4 22.f6+–; 20... $\mathbb{Q}$ d8 21. $\mathbb{W}$ h5  $\mathbb{W}$ e7 (21...f4 22. $\mathbb{Q}$ e5  $\mathbb{W}$ xd4 23.g5  $\mathbb{Q}$ xg5 24. $\mathbb{Q}$ e1 f3 25.h4+–) 22.h4!±.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}$ g1  $\mathbb{Q}$ d7**

21...b5 22.g5! h5 23.g6!.

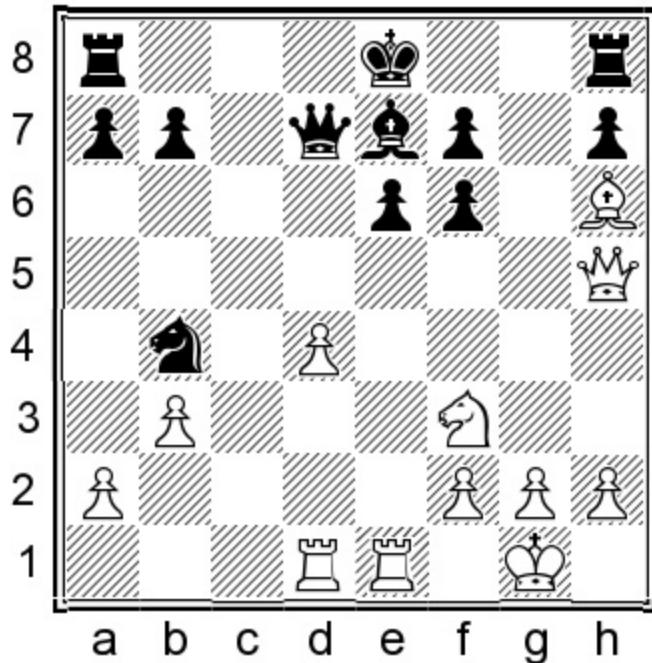
**22. $\mathbb{W}$ h5!**

22.g5? h5.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}$ h8 23.g5+–**

Nepomniachtchi-Meier, Dortmund 2018.

## Exercise 9



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 9

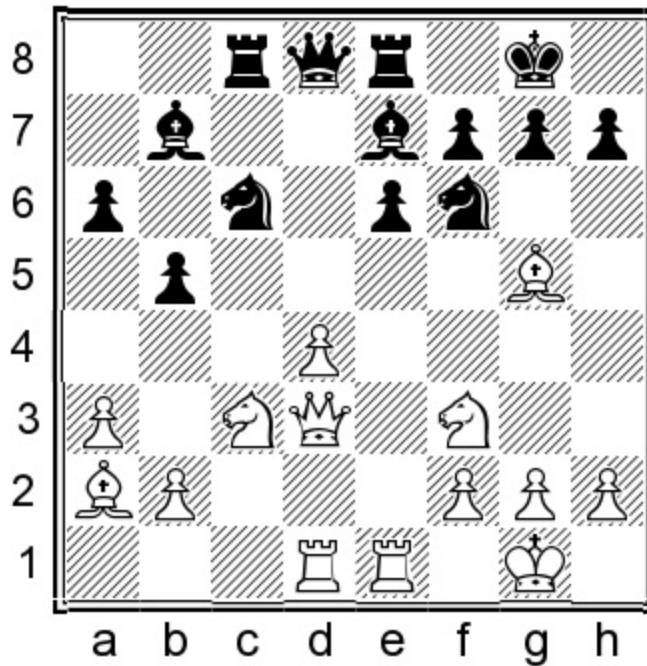
**19.d5! ♜xd5**

19...0-0-0 20.♕xf7.

**20.♗g7 ♜g8 21.♗xd5! ♜xd5 22.♗xd5 exd5 23.♗xf6+–**

Radlovacki-Savic, Belgrade 2016.

## Exercise 10



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 10

16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$

16.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $g6\pm$ .

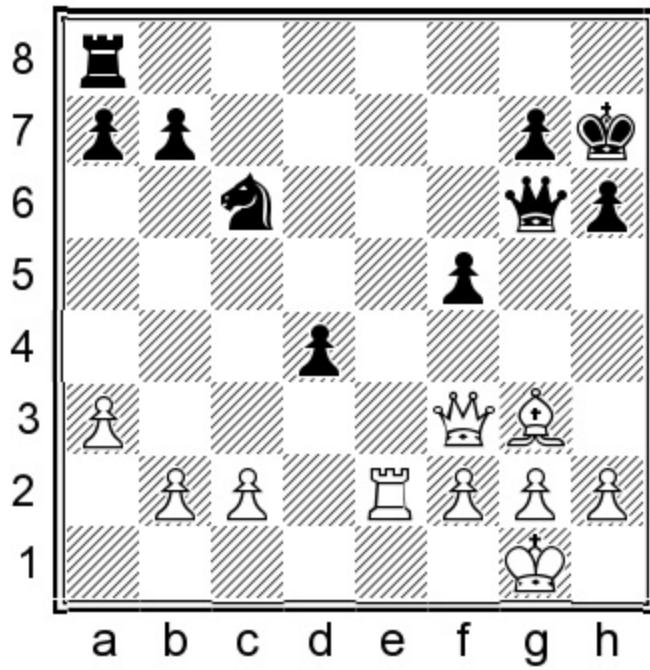
16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17.  $d5!$   $exd5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{W}xe8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8?$

19...  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $gxf6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}e3\pm$ .

20.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}e5+-$   $g6$  23.  $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xc8$  1-0

Portisch-Bilek, Budapest 1975.

### Exercise 11



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 11

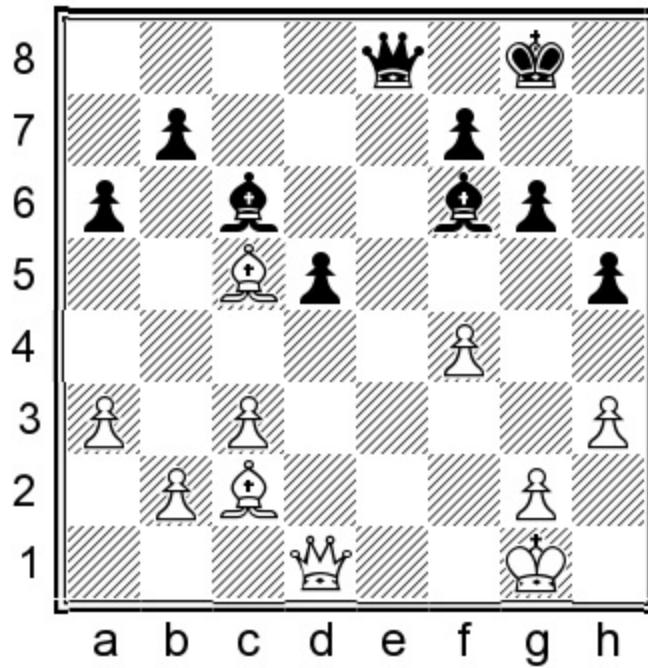
22...d3! 23.♗xd3 ♜d8 24.♗c3 f4! 25.♘xf4 ♗g4

25...♝d1+!? 26.♝e1 ♛d4.

26.♘xh6 ♜d1+ 27.♝e1 ♛d4 28.h3 ♛f3+ 29.♔f1 ♗c4+!! 0-1

Kopaev-Novopashin, Riga 1954.

### Exercise 12



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 12

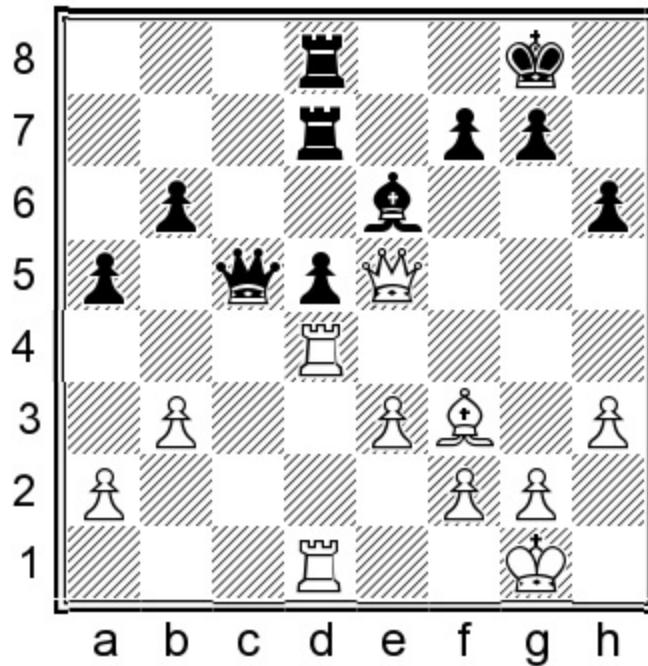
**35...d4! 36.♗d2**

36.cxd4 ♛e3+ 37.♔h2 ♕d5! 38.♗f1 ♔h4 39.♔d6 ♕g3+ 40.♔h1 ♛e6!–+; 36.♔xd4 ♕xd4+ 37.cxd4 (37.♕xd4 ♛e1+ 38.♔h2 ♛e2–+) 37...♛e3+ 38.♔h2 (38.♔h1?? ♛xh3+) 38...♛xf4+ 39.♔h1 ♛g5! 40.♗f1 ♕d5!–.

**36...dxc3 37.bxc3 ♛e6 38.♔d4 ♕xd4+ 39.cxd4 ♛a2±**

Giri-Kovalev, Dortmund 2018.

### Exercise 13



*White to move  
Find the plan for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 13

As in the game Karpov-Spassky in the chapter on the IQP, the plan is to advance the kingside pawns to create a second weakness in the black camp:

**25.g4! ♜c6 26.g5**

26.h4!? f6 27.♗g3.

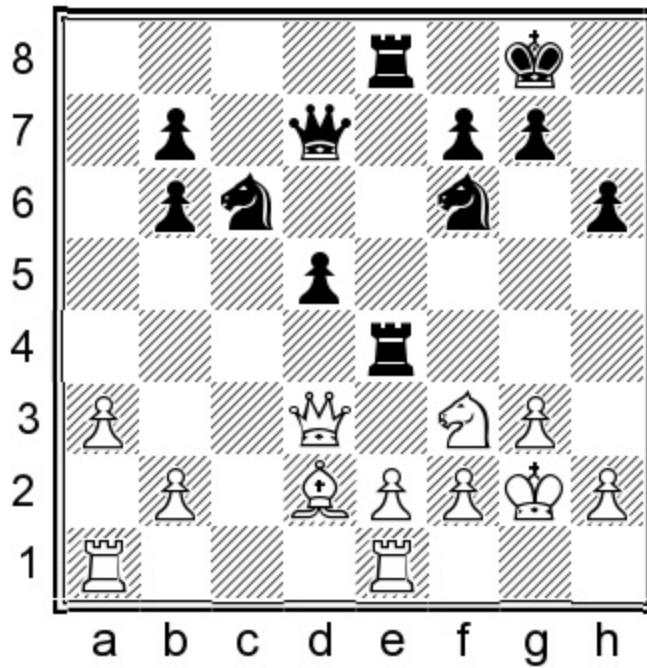
26...hxg5 27.♗xg5 f6 28.♗g6 ♖f7 29.♗g3 f5?!

29...♖e6!? 30.h4.

**30.♗g5 ♜e6 31.♖h1! ♜e5 32.♖g1±**

Botvinnik-Zagoriansky, Sverdlovsk 1943.

### Exercise 14



*Black to move  
What ideas does Black have?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 14

**20...d4!?**

20... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ ? 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}4xe5$  22. $\mathbb{R}c3$   $\mathbb{B}h5$  23. $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4=;$

20... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ ? 21. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}ce5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  23. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  24. $e3$   $\mathbb{B}4e5$  25. $f3$   $\mathbb{B}h5$  26. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h3+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}g1=;$

20... $g5$  21. $h3$   $d4$  22. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5=.$

**20...d4!? 21.e3?**

21. $\mathbb{W}b5!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  23. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{B}d8=.$

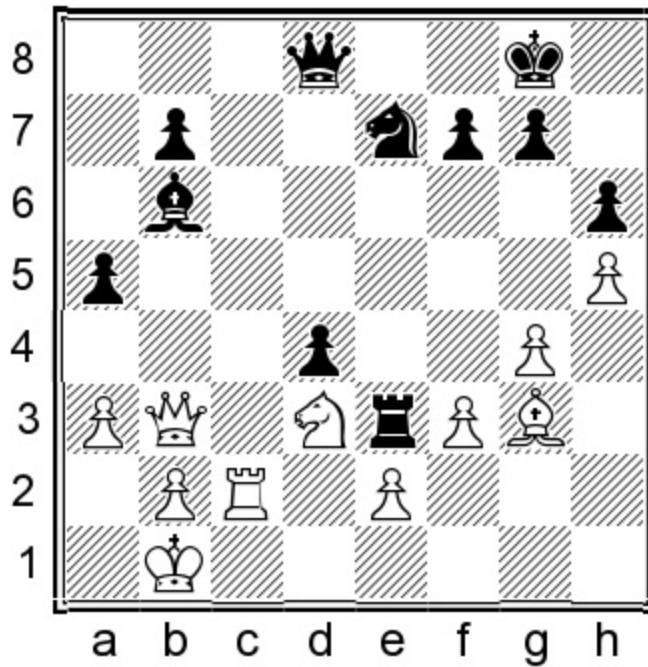
**21... $\mathbb{W}d5$  22. $exd4$   $\mathbb{B}xd4$**

22... $g5!$ ? 23. $h3$   $h5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5.$

**23. $\mathbb{B}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  24. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$**

Tal-Keres, Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade ct 1959.

## Exercise 15



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 15

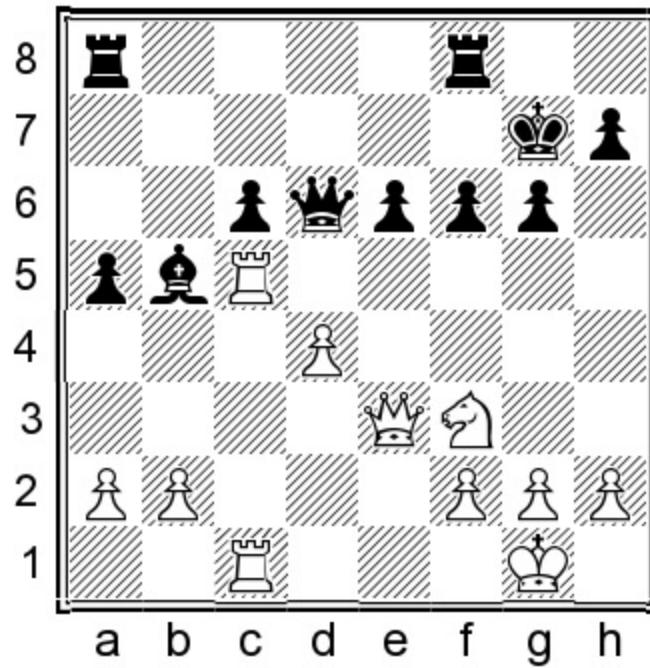
44.  $\mathbb{Q}h4!$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  46.  $\mathbb{W}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  47.  $\mathbb{W}f8$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  48. f4

48. g5!?.

48...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  49.  $\mathbb{W}d5+-$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  50.  $\mathbb{W}xf7$  1-0

Petrosian-Peters, Lone Pine 1976.

## Exercise 16



*White to move*

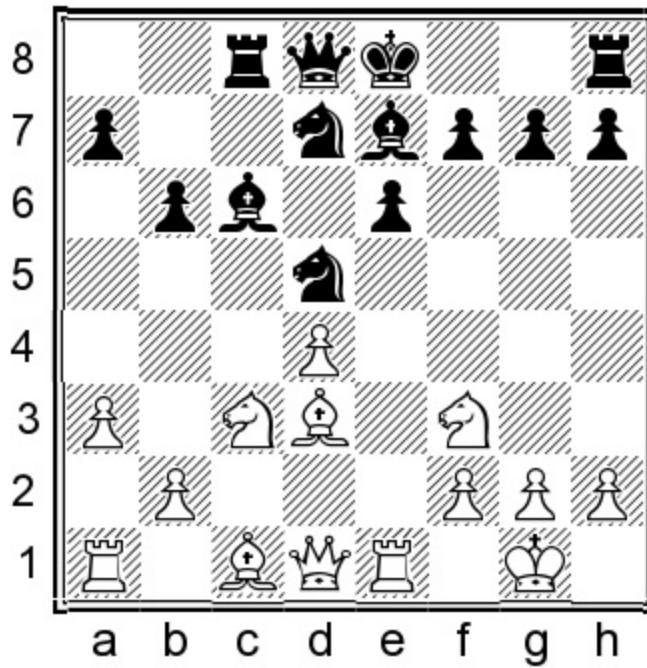
Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 16

1.a4! ♜xa4 2.♕a3 ♜b5 3.♕xb5+–

Miles-Martz, Birmingham 1977.

### Exercise 17



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 17

13.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  0-0 16.  $\mathbb{Q}c1\pm$

Controlling the c-file.

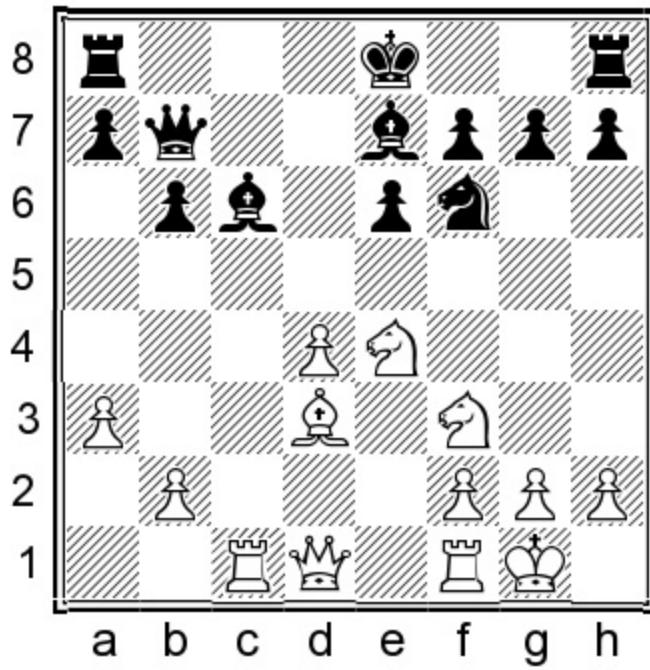
16...  $\mathbb{Q}f6?!$

16...  $\mathbb{Q}f6!.$

17.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d3\pm$

Hernandez Onna-Gurevich, Luzern 1989.

### Exercise 18



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 18

16.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}c8$

17...  $\mathbb{W}d5$  18.  $\mathbb{W}a4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}gxf7+-$ ; 17...  $\mathbb{W}b7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}g5!+-$ .

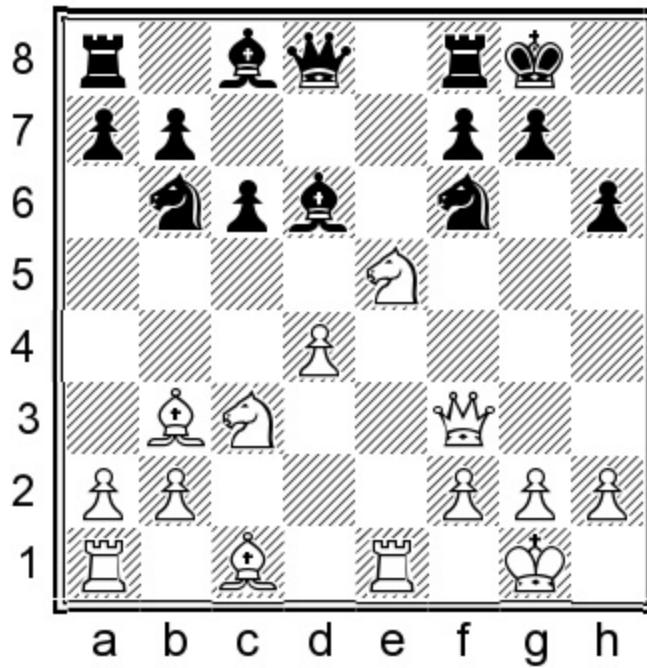
18.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  a6 20.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3$

21.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d7++-$ .

21... g6 22.  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+-$

Rivas Pastor-Psakhis, Minsk 1982.

### Exercise 19



*Black to move  
Evaluate 12...♝xe5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 19

**12...♝xe5?**

This exchange is a mistake.

12...♝bd5!?;

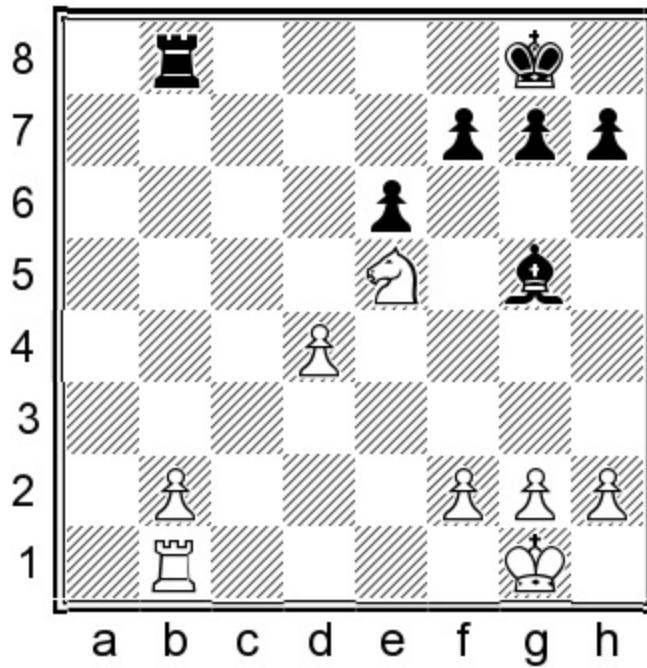
12...♝c7!?;

12...♝b8! 13.h3 ♘e6 14.♝xe6 fxe6 15.♝g6 ♘e8 16.a4 ♘c4 17.♝e5 ♘d6.

**12...♝xe5? 13.dxe5 ♘fd5 14.♝e4 ♗h4 15.♝d6±**

Bologan-Temirbaev, Azov 1991.

### Exercise 20



*Black to move*

23... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  or 23... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 20

23... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ?

23... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ! 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (24. $\mathbb{Q}a1$  h6 25. $\mathbb{Q}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5=$ ) 24... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  g5! (25... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  28.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  29.b5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30.b6  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c1+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c7\pm$ ) 26.g4 h5 27.h3 hxg4 28.hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4=$ .

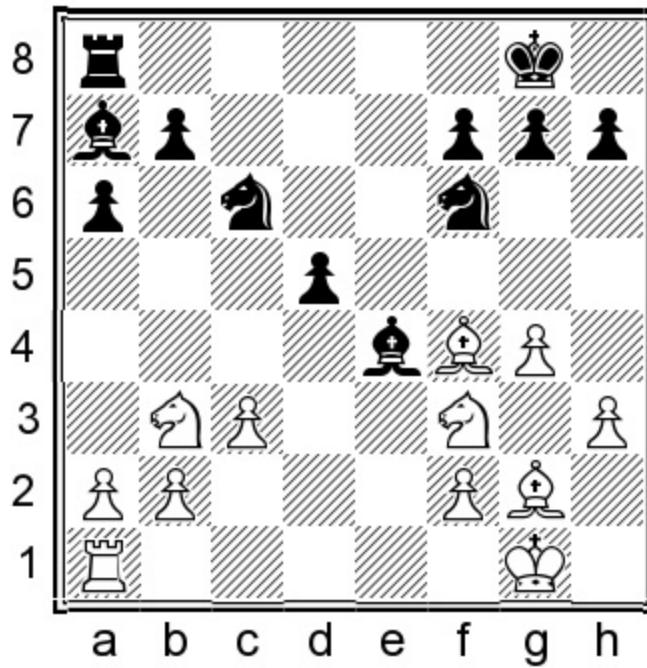
23... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ? 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  h5 25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  h4?

25...g6±; 25... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

26.h3±

Bareev-Ivanchuk, Linares 1994.

### Exercise 21



*Black to move  
Find an active plan for Black.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 21

**19...h5!?**

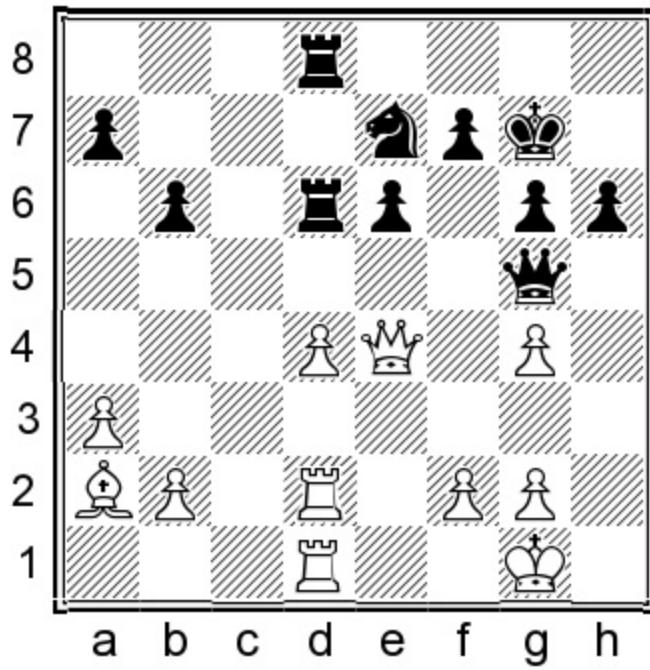
To create weaknesses on White's kingside.

19...h6!? 20.♗d1 g5 21.♕g3 ♕c2 22.♗e1 ♕xb3 23.axb3 ♔e4.

**19...h5!? 20.g5 ♔d7 21.♗d1 ♔f8 22.♔e3 ♕xe3 23.fxe3 ♔e6 24.h4 ♕e8 25.♔f2 ♔e7 26.♔h3 ♕c2=**

Matanovic-Kortchnoi, Wijk aan Zee 1968.

### Exercise 22



*Black to move  
How can Black make progress?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 22

**29...♝g8!**

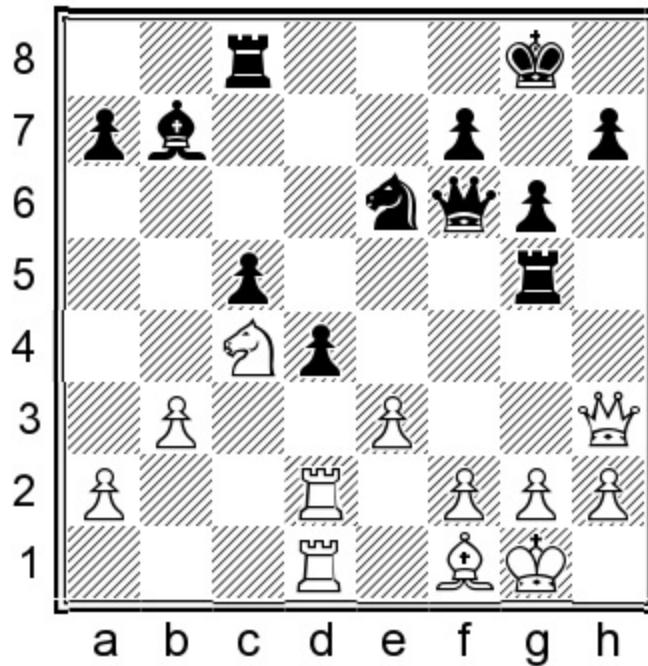
29...♝c6?! 30.♜d3 ♛f6 31.d5.

**29...♝g8! 30.f3 ♝f6 31.♛e2 h5! 32.gxh5 ♝xh5 33.♛e1 ♝g3+**

Kochyev-Eingorn, Minsk 1983.

33...e5! 34.d5 ♜h8!—+.

### Exercise 23



*Black to move  
How to round off Black's attack?*

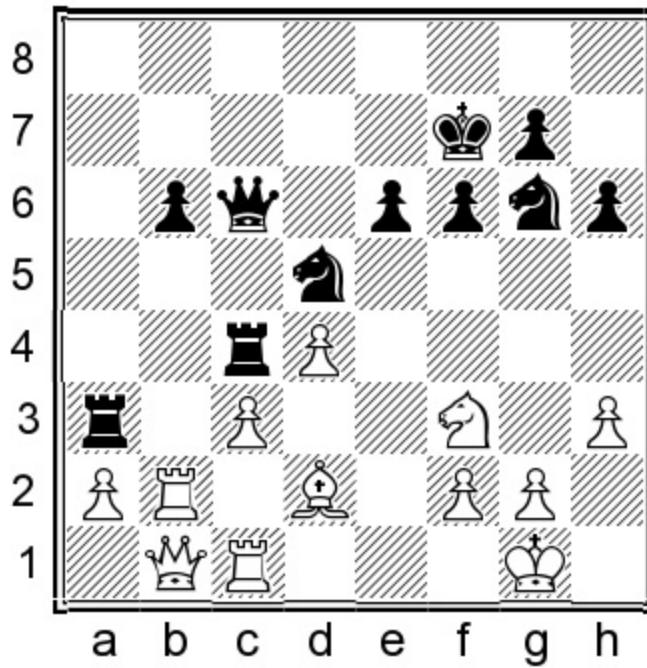
Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 23

28... $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  29. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}g4!$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  31. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4+$

Lein-Kortchnoi, Kiev 1964.

### Exercise 24



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 24

34... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$

34... $\mathbb{B}axc3!$  35. $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  36. $\mathbb{W}d3$  (36. $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$   $\mathbb{B}xc3+$ ) 36... $\mathbb{Q}d5\bar{\mp}$ .

34... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$  35. $\mathbb{W}d3?$

35. $\mathbb{B}xb6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb1$  36. $\mathbb{B}xc6\bar{\mp}$ .

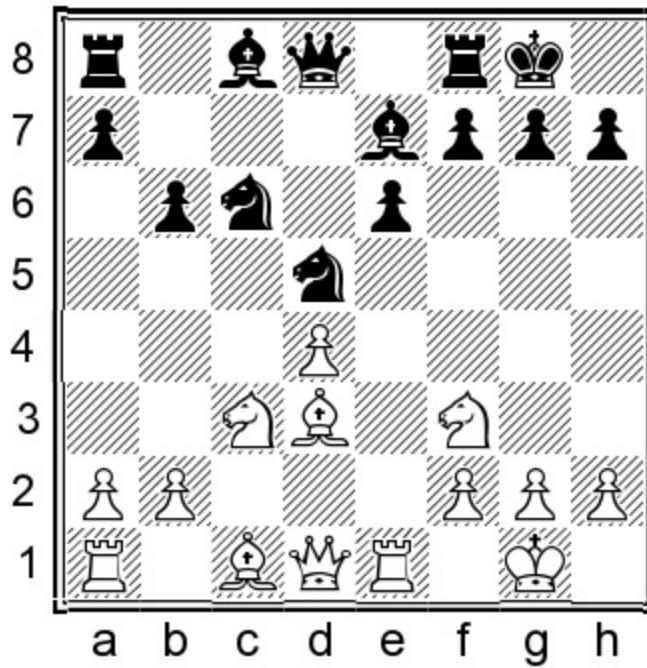
35... $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  36. $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{B}xc1+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}xc1+$  38. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{B}xf3?!$

38... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ; 38... $\mathbb{W}c6$ .

39. $gxf3=\mathbb{Q}h4$  0-1 (time)

Taimanov-Karpov, Moscow 1973.

### Exercise 25



*White to move  
How to gain a clear advantage?*

Show/Hide Solution

**Solution 25**

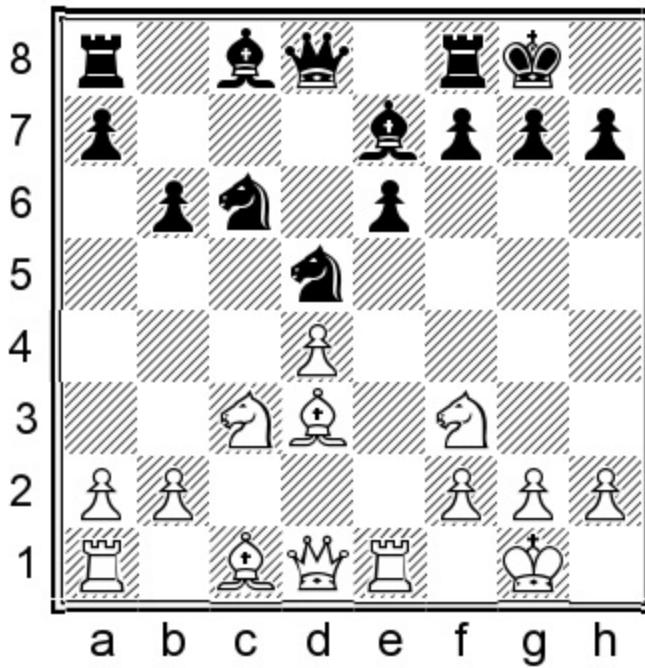
Boris Zlotnik

Sergei Sokolov

Moscow 1976

**1.c4 c6 2.e4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.d4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘f3 ♜e7 7.cxd5 ♜xd5 8.♘d3 0-0 9.0-0 ♜c6 10.♗e1 ♜f6**

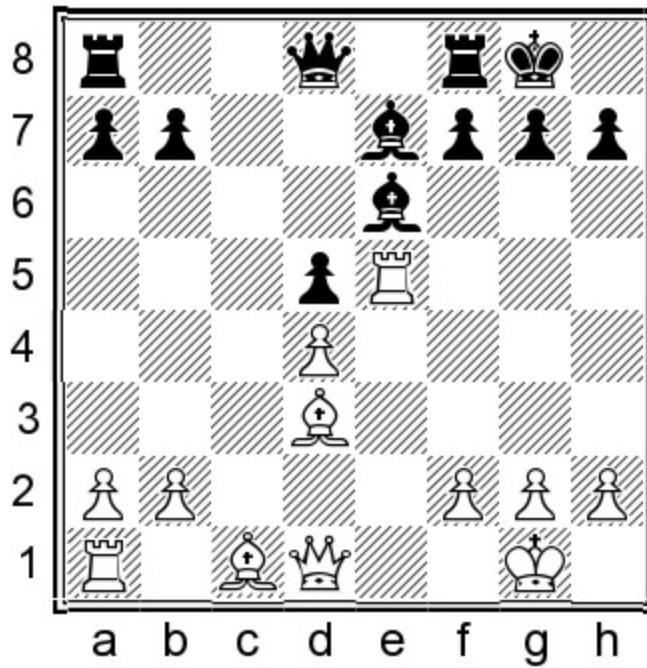
A) 10...b6?



*White to move*

11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  (11... $exd5$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+!$  (12.  $\mathbb{W}c2!?$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  14.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $g6$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $fxg6$  16.  $\mathbb{W}xg6\pm$ ) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  13.  $\mathbb{W}c2+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  14.  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  15.  $\mathbb{W}a4\pm$ ) 12.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  (13.  $\mathbb{W}c2!?$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  16.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d2\pm$ ) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}f4!+-$ ;  
 B) 10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  13.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6?$  (13... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  14.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6\infty$ )

### Exercise 26



*White to move  
How to win?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 26

14.  $\mathbb{W}h5$  g6 15.  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16.  $\mathbb{B}h5!$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$  (18.  $\mathbb{B}h6?$   $\mathbb{Q}e7=$ ) 18...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}g8+!$   $\mathbb{B}xh7$  21.  $\mathbb{B}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (21...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f4+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+-$ ) 22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f4+-$ .

**11.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

11.a3!?.

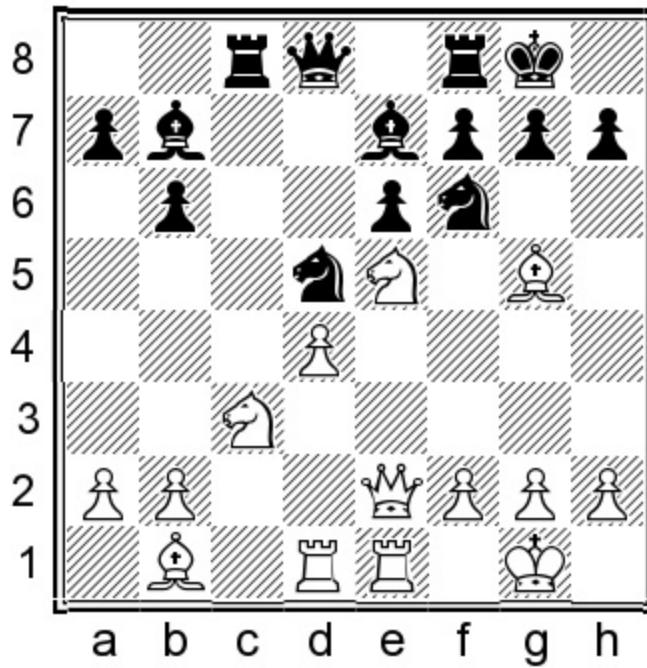
**11...  $b6$  12.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$**

12...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  14.  $\mathbb{B}ad1$  (14.  $\mathbb{Q}b5!?$ ) 14...  $\mathbb{W}b4$  15. a3  $\mathbb{W}a5$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17.  $\mathbb{W}e4+-$ .

**13.  $\mathbb{B}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  16.  $\mathbb{W}d3$**

16.  $\mathbb{B}d3?$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

### Exercise 27



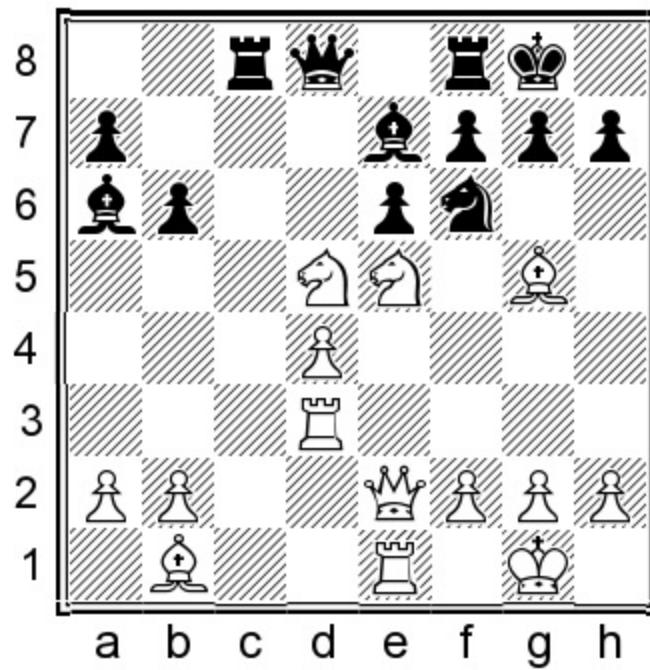
*White to move*

*Bobotsov-Petrosian, Moscow 1967, saw 16.  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  with a draw. What had the 9th World Champion overlooked?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 27

16.  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

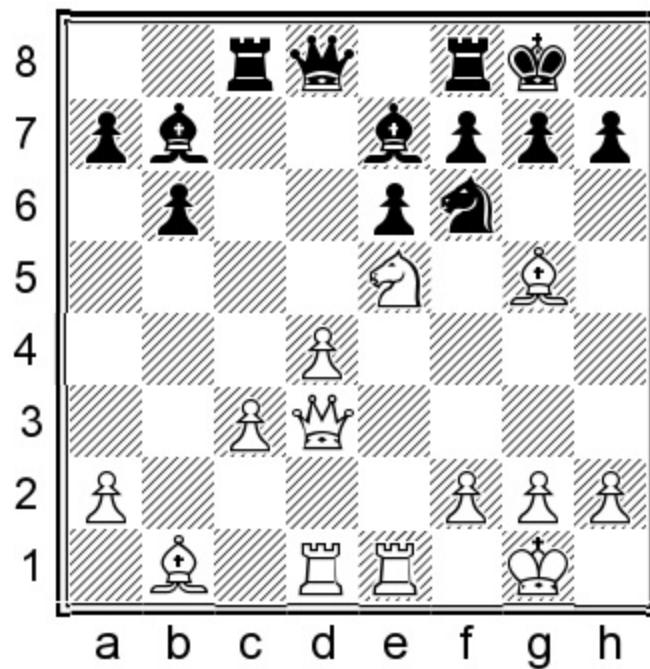


*Black to move*

17...exd5! 18.Qxf6 Qxf6 19.Qh3 Qxe2 20.Qxh7+ Qh8 21.Qf5+ Qh4!—+.

16...Qxc3 17.bxc3

### Exercise 28



*Black to move*

*Why does 17... $\mathbb{W}d5$  18. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  give White the advantage?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 28

17... $\mathbb{W}d5$  18. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  19.f3!

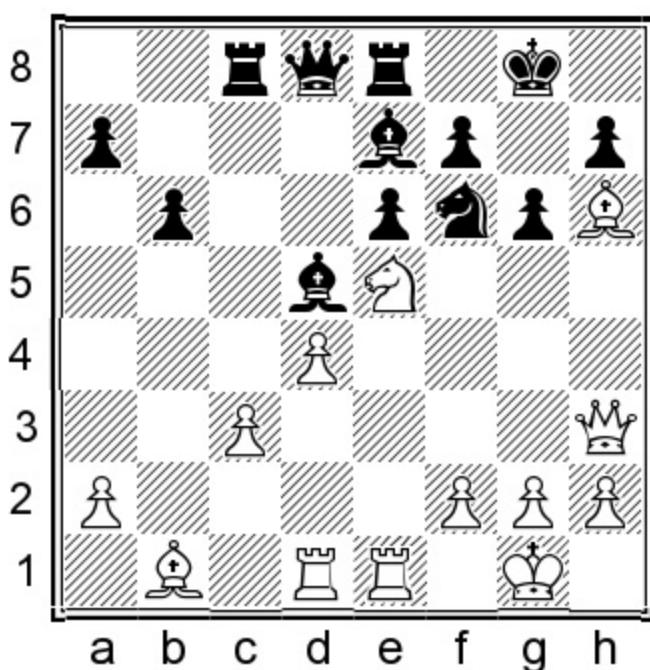
- A) 19...g6? 20. $\mathbb{Q}e4!+/-$ ;  
B) 19...h6? 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!?$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22. $\mathbb{W}g3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{E}3c7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  25. $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h7+/-$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  22. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  (23... $\mathbb{E}fc8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $gxf6$  25. $\mathbb{W}xh6+/-$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $gxf6$  25. $\mathbb{E}c1+/-$  Polugaevsky-Khasin, Moscow 1961;  
C) 19...h5! 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  22. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $gxf6$  25. $\mathbb{E}c1\pm$ .

**17...g6 18. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

19.c4?  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  21. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xd4+/-$ .

**19... $\mathbb{E}e8$**

### Exercise 29



*White to move*  
20.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , 20.  $c4$  or 20.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 29

**20.  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$**

With the idea of 21.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ , to neutralize the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ . It is curious that Stockfish prefers this human move, although with only a modest evaluation of 0.12, to the ten (!) other options, including the other two given in the heading above, evaluated as 0.00.

A) 20.  $c4$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3$ ! (21.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$ -+) 21...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $b5$  23.  $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  25.  $h5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  26.  $hxg6$   $fxg6$  27.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ =;

B) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ! 21.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b5$ =.

**20.  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$   $\mathbb{W}c7$**

20...  $b5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ±.

**21.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

21.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}ed8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ±.

**21...  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$**

21...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ !? 22.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (22.  $f4$ !?) 22...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  24.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  27.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$ ±.

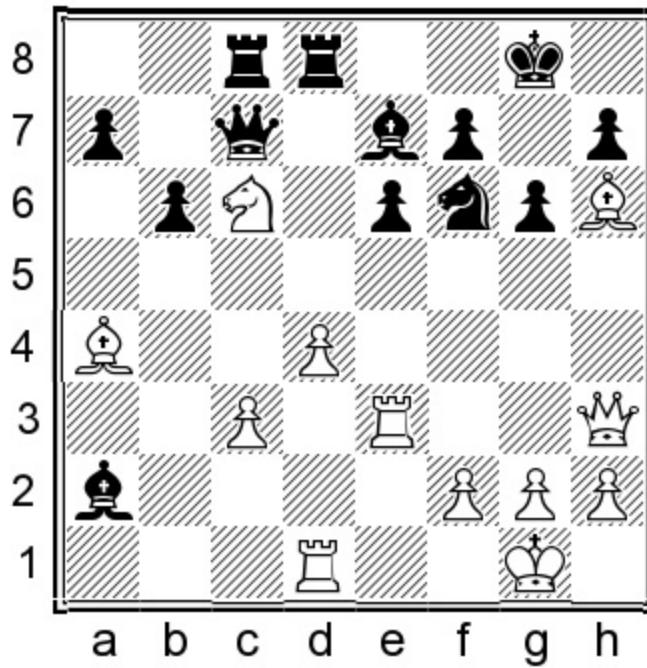
**22.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$**

22.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ !.

**22...  $\mathbb{Q}ed8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ?**

23.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ∞.

### Exercise 30



*Black to move*

23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  or 23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 30

**23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ?**

23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ! 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ =;

23... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ !?.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ? 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ !+–  $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

24...fxe6 25. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ +  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  28. $\mathbb{W}xa2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$ + 29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ +–; 24... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !+–.

**25. $\mathbb{Q}de1$ !?**

25. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ +– 26. $\mathbb{W}xc8$ +; 25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}de1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ +–.

**25...fxe6 26. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ +  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ !**

27. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ??  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  28. $\mathbb{W}f7$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$ +! 29. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$ + 30. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ +–; 27. $\mathbb{W}e8$ +??  $\mathbb{Q}g8$ +–.

**27... $\mathbb{W}xd8?$**

27... $\mathbb{W}xh2+!$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{E}h5+$  29. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{E}xh3+$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g5\pm.$

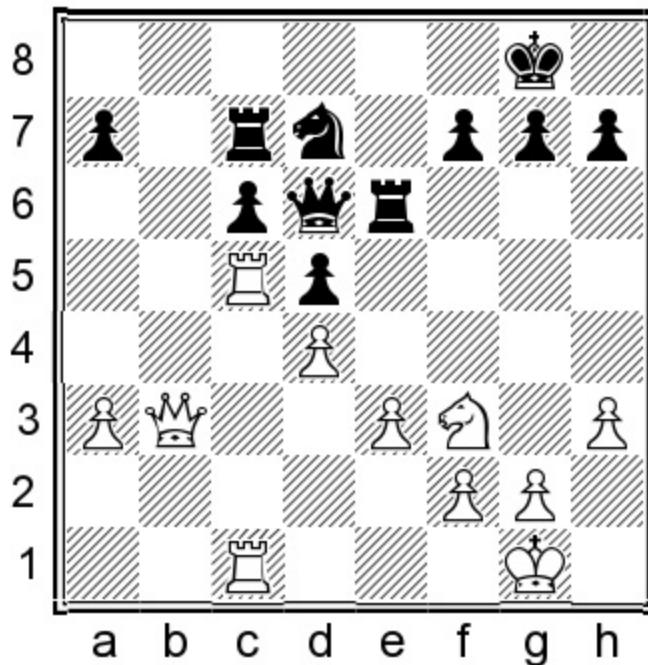
**28. $\mathbb{W}f7$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  29. $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{W}xe8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  31. $\mathbb{W}xa2$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  32.g4**

And here Black's flag fell, although his position is lost in any case, e.g. 32... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  34. $\mathbb{W}b1.$

Show in Text Mode

## The Carlsbad structure

### Exercise 31



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 31

28.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

28...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  29.  $\mathbb{W}b8+$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  31.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  32.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $g6$  33.  $\mathbb{E}c5+--$ .

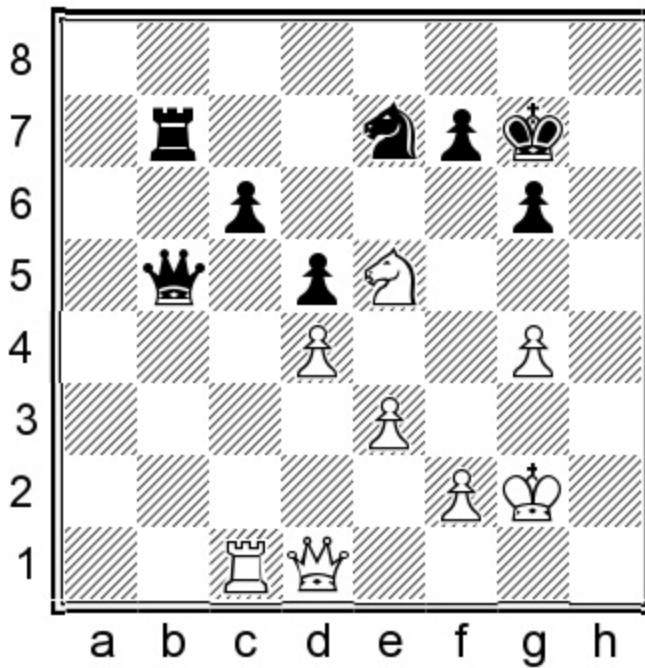
29.  $\mathbb{W}b8+$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xc7$   $f6$

30...  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  31.  $\mathbb{E}b1$ .

31.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6+--$

Beliavsky-Jussupow, Moscow 1983.

### Exercise 32



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 32

Black's  $\Delta c6$  is well defended, but he has moved his pieces away from the kingside, which Petrosian elegantly exploits:

**35.  $\mathbb{W}f3!$  f6**

35...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  (36.  $\mathbb{Q}h1!?$ ) 36...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

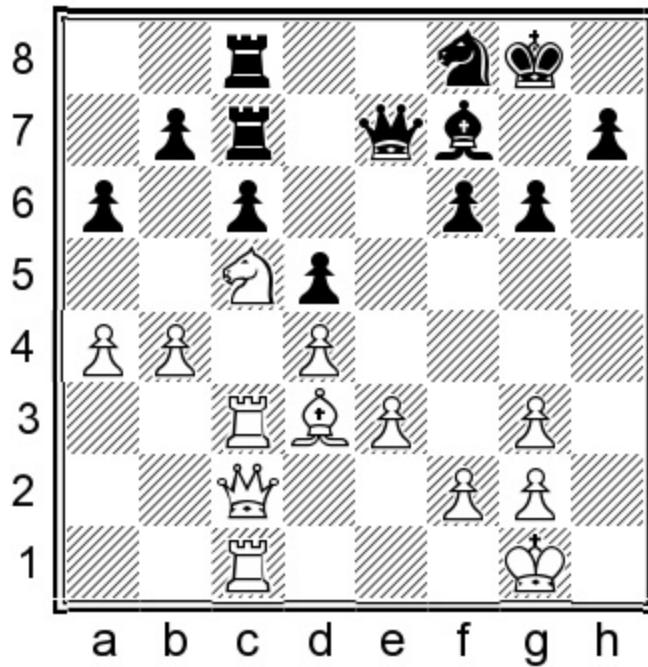
**36. g5!  $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

36... fxe5 37.  $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}h1+-$ ; 36... f5 37.  $\mathbb{W}h3+-$ .

**37. gxf6+  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  39.  $\mathbb{W}f4$  1-0**

Petrosian-Rossetto, Portoroz izt 1958.

### Exercise 33



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 33

Tal's following sacrifice is another way to handle the minority attack:

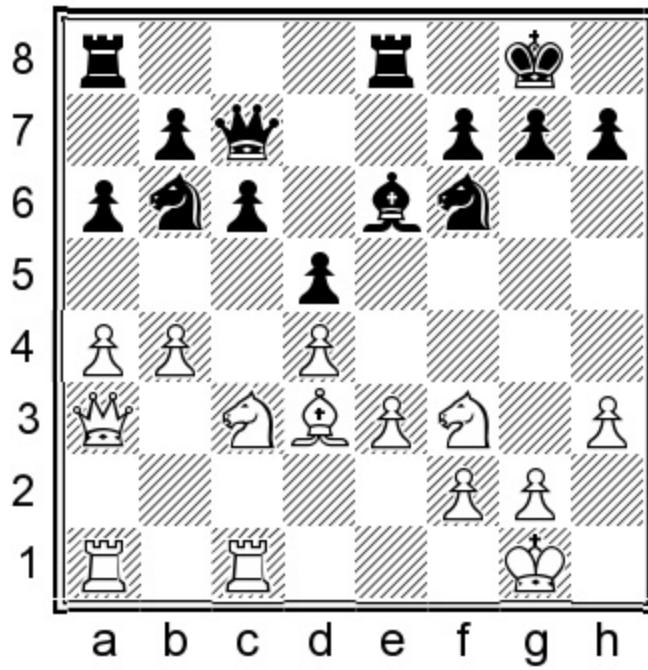
**24.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$**

24.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6!?$  bxa6 25.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6 \mathbb{E}a7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ .

**24.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$   $\mathbb{E}xb7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6 \mathbb{E}a8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7 \mathbb{W}xb7$  27.  $\mathbb{W}b3+-$**

Tal-Savon, Baku 1972.

### Exercise 34



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 34

18.b5? axb5 does not work; so Carlsen changes the move order:

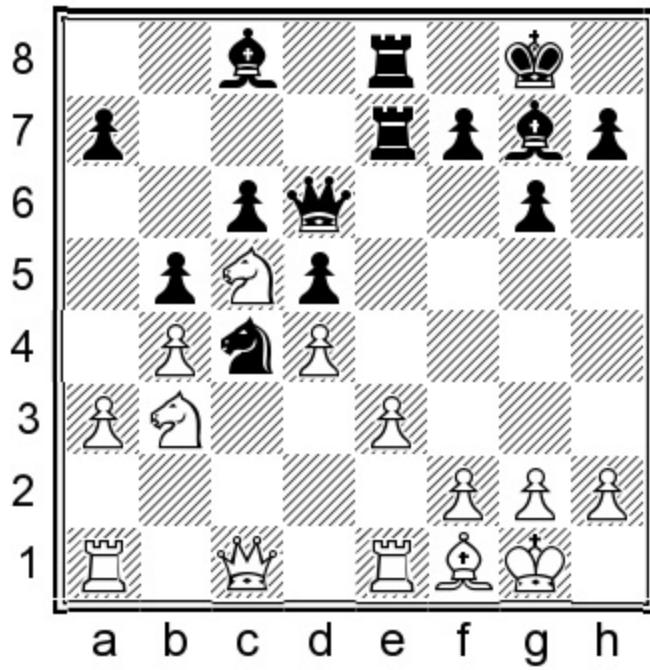
**18.a5! ♜c8**

18...♜c4 19.♝xc4 dxc4 20.♝a4 ♜d7 21.e4 (21.♝d2!?) 21...♝f4 (21...f5!? 22.e5) 22.♝e3 ♜xe3 23.fxe3±.

**19.b5! axb5 20.♝xb5± ♜d8 21.♝c3 ♜d6 22.♝b4 ♜e7 23.a6! bxa6 24.♝xa6 ♜xa6 25.♝xa6 ♜a8 26.♝f1 ♜c8 27.♝b2 ♜d7 28.♝e2 ♜b8 29.♝c3±**

Carlsen-Caruana, Chessable Masters Final 2020.

### Exercise 35



*Black to move  
What is Black's best plan?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 35

Just as in the game Bogoljubow-Rubinstein, and the even more similar Aronian-Anand, due to the bishop pair, Black is able to begin a plan of counterattack on the kingside based on advancing his pawns.

**26...f5!?**

26...h5!? 27.♗c2 ♘h6 28.a4 a6 29.axb5 axb5 30.♕a8 h4.

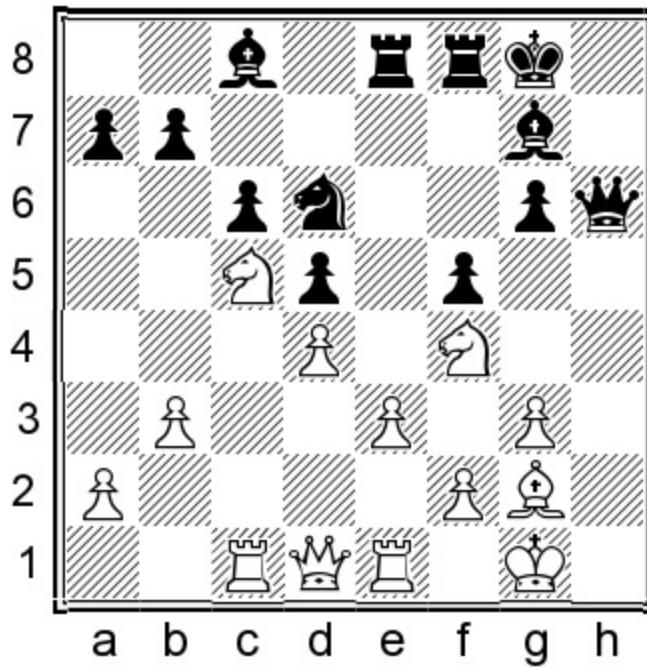
**26...f5!? 27.♗d3 g5! 28.♗c3 f4?!**

28...h5! 29.a4 a6 30.♗bc5 h4! 31.♖ac1 ♘h6±.

**29.exf4 gxf4 30.♕xe7 ♘xe7 31.a4 a6 32.axb5 axb5 33.♕a8=**

Lasker-Botvinnik, Nottingham 1936.

### Exercise 36



*White to move  
Evaluate 26. ♜xd5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 36

Black is threatening to continue with his attack on the kingside.

So 26. ♜xd5 is understandable:

**26. ♜xd5 cxd5**

26...g5!? 27. ♜c3 f4.

**27. ♜xd5+ ♚f7!?**

27...♜f7?! 28. ♜xb7; 27...♚h7!?.

**28.e4?!**

28. ♜f3 g5; 28. ♜g2 b6.

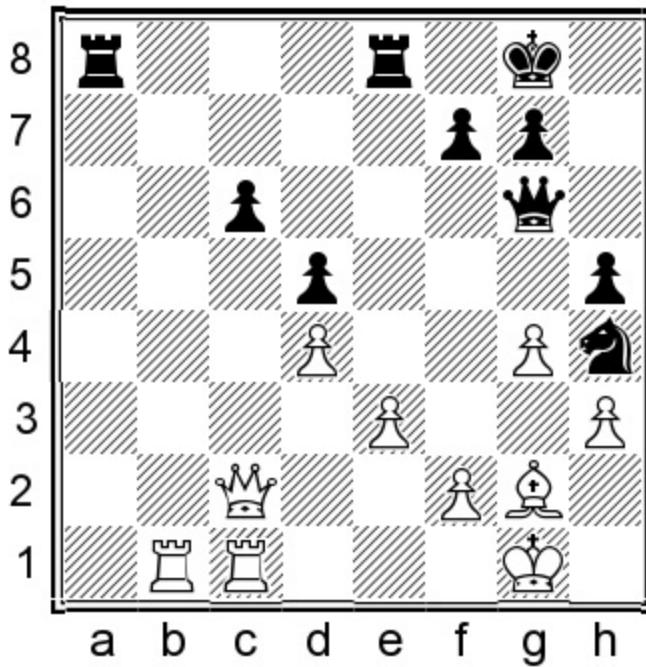
**28...fxe4 29. ♜xe4 ♜e6!+ 30. ♜xd6 ♜xd5 31. ♜xe8+ ♜f8 32. ♜e4?**

32.f3 ♜xe8 33. ♜xe8 ♜e3+ 34. ♜g2 ♜xe8+.

32...g5! 33.♕c7 ♕xd6 34.♕ee7 ♔f6+–

Simagin-Kortchnoi, Moscow 1960.

### Exercise 37



Black to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 37

Black responds to the minority attack with a counterattack on the kingside:

24...♛g5!

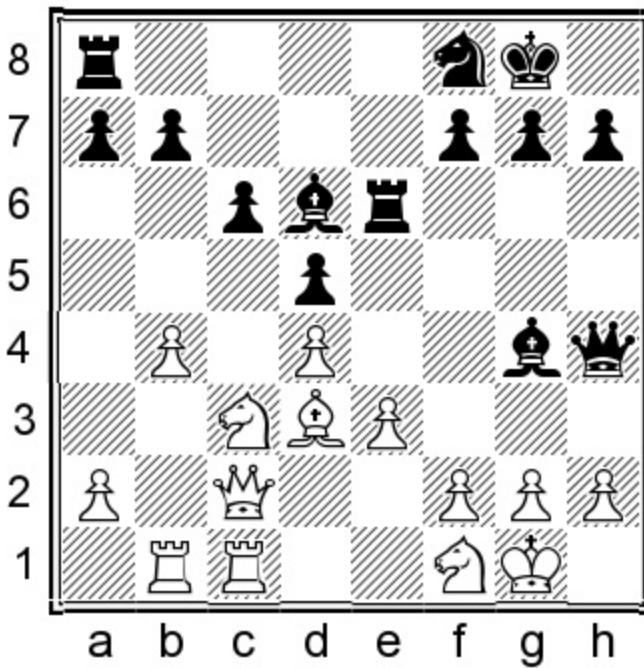
24...♝e6? 25.♝xg6 ♛xg6 26.♝b6 hxg4 (26...♝xg2!=?) 27.♝bxc6 ♛g5=.

24...♛g5! 25.♝xc6?

25.f4!? ♜f6 (25...♛e7?! 26.♝b3 hxg4 27.hxg4 ♜a3!) 26.♝b3 hxg4 27.hxg4 g5! 28.f5 (28.♝xc6?? ♜xc6 29.♝xc6 ♜a1+ 30.♔h2 ♜a2+) 28...♛d6 29.♝f2 ♜a3!–.

25...♝xg2 26.♝xg2 hxg4–

### Exercise 38



*White to move  
17.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  or 17.  $f3$  ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 38

**17.  $\mathbb{Q}f5?$**

17.  $f3!$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  18.  $b5$  (18.  $\mathbb{Q}e2!?$ ) 18...  $\mathbb{Q}ae8$  (18...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  19.  $bxcc6$   $bxcc6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7=$ ) 19.  $\mathbb{Q}f2=$ .

**17.  $\mathbb{Q}f5?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$**

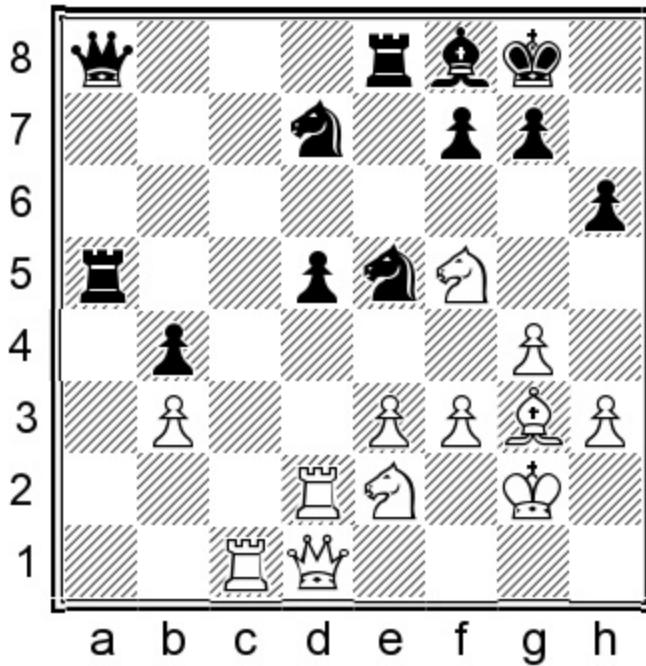
17...  $\mathbb{Q}xh2+??$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f1+-$ .

**18.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c2?$**

19.  $g3!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  21.  $exd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6\mp$ .

19...  $\mathbb{Q}xh2+!$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2-$  22.  $b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23.  $bxcc6$   $bxcc6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6-$

### Exercise 39



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 39

31... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$

31... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!!$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  d4+ 33.e4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  (34. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}fxd4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  37.h4  $\mathbb{Q}a6-$ +) 34...d3 35. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xe2+-$ .

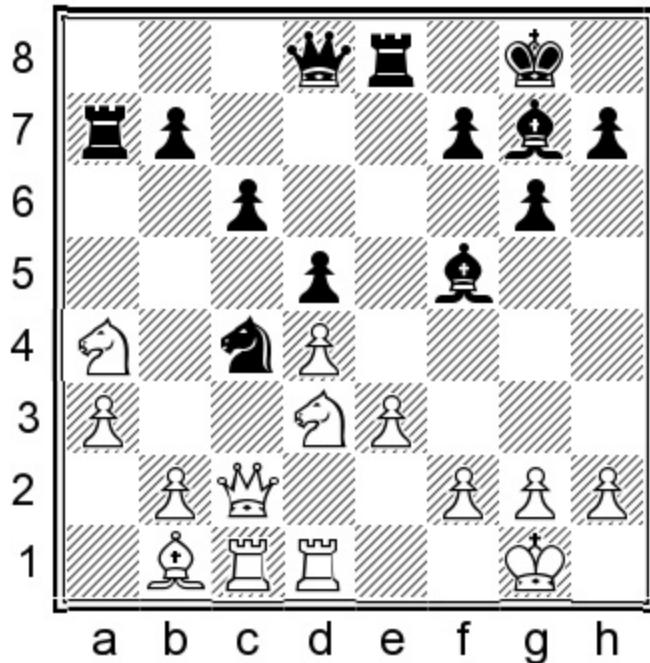
31... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

32. $\mathbb{Q}fd4!?$   $\mathbb{Q}ed7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6=$ .

32... $\mathbb{Q}a2$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}ed3?!$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xa2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c2\pm$

Rodshtein-Eljanov, Netanya 2019.

## Exercise 40



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 40

Sacrifices on e3 are fairly typical, as we saw in Nikolic-Kramnik:

**22...♝xe3!**

22...♝xe3!? 23.fxe3 ♜h6 24.♝c3 ♜xe3+ 25.♔h1 ♜h4†.

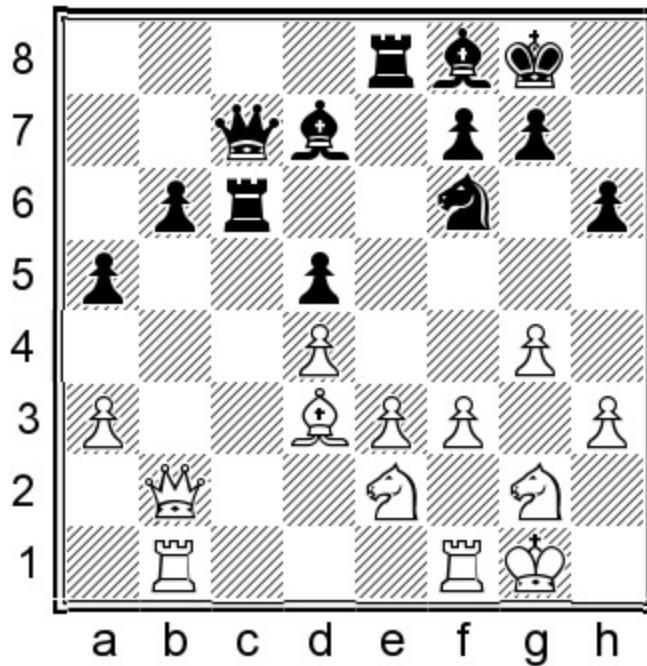
**22...♝xe3! 23.fxe3 ♜xe3 24.♝b3?**

24.♝d2 ♜xd4 25.♝dc5 ♜g5 26.♔h1 ♜xd1 27.♝xd1 ♜xd2 28.♝xd2 ♜xc5 29.♝xf5 ♜e3 30.♝e2 gxf5 31.♝xe3 ♜xa4—.

**24...♜xd4 25.♔h1 ♜h4!—+ 26.♝dc5 ♜f2 27.♝g1 ♜h3! 28.♝xe3 ♜xe3 29.♝d3 ♜h4 0-1**

I.Ivanov-Tseshkovsky, Erevan 1977.

## Exercise 41



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 41

Just as in the game Inkiov-Jussupow, Black can create a passed pawn on the queenside:

**26...b5! 27.♔a2**

27.♕xb5 ♔c2 28.♗b3 a4 29.♗d3 ♕xb5 30.♕xb5 ♔a2†; 27.♕xb5? ♔c3 28.♗a6 ♔e6+.

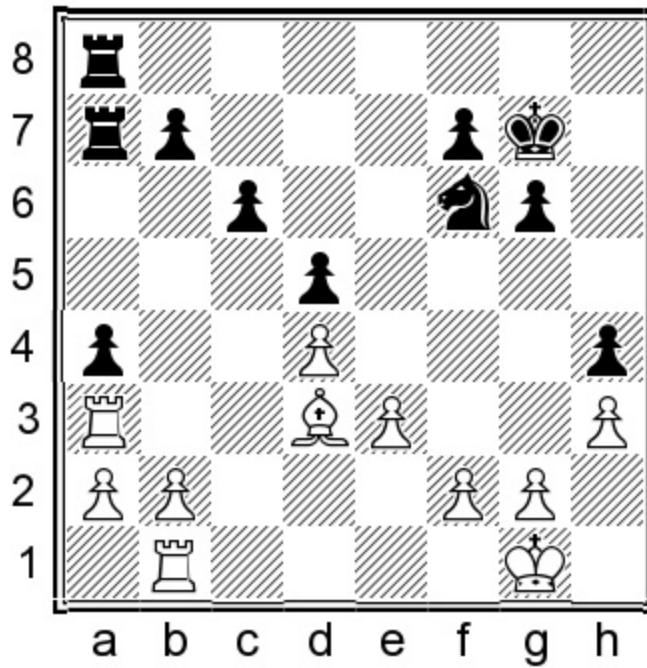
**27...b4† 28.axb4 ♕xb4 29.e4 dxе4??**

29...♗b6!? 30.exd5 ♔d6 31.♔c4 ♕b5†; 29...♔c3!?

**30.fxe4 ♔c3!??**

Kortchnoi-Krogius, Sochi 1966.

### Exercise 42



*Black to move  
Find a way for Black to make progress.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 42

**29...♝e8!**

Planning ...♝e8-d6, ...♜a7-a5, followed by the advance ...c6-c5.

**30.♚f1 f5 31.♚e2 ♜f6 32.♚d2 ♜d6 33.♚c3 ♜a5 34.♚b4 ♜b5!**

White is preventing the advance ...c6-c5, so Black modifies his plan.

**35.♜xb5 ♜xb5+ 36.♚c3 ♜ba5!**

36...♝e6 37.b3!?.

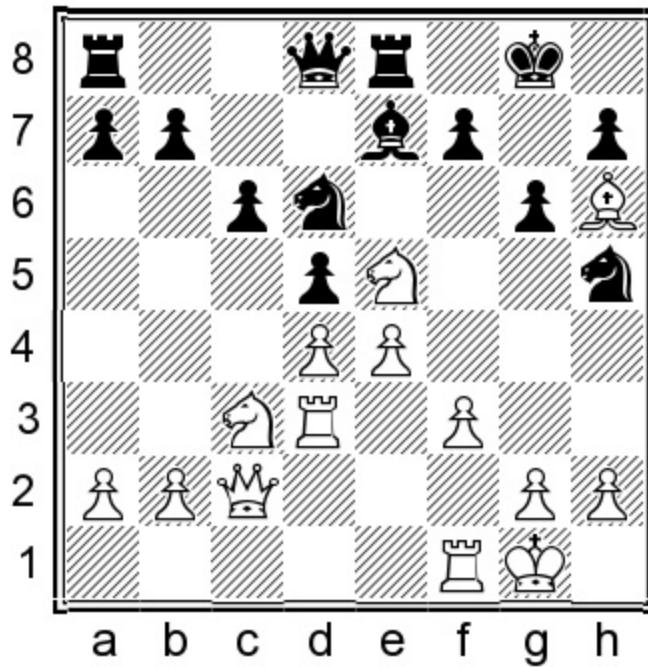
**37.♚d3**

37.b3? axb3 38.♜xa5 bxa2!±.

**37...b6 38.♜c3 c5±**

Navara-Adams, Porto Carras 2011.

### Exercise 43



*Black to move  
Evaluate 17... ♜g5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 43

**17...♜g5?**

17...♜f8! 18.♝xf8 ♕xf8 19.♛d2 f6 20.♝g4 ♜c4=;

17...♝c8!?

**17...♜g5? 18.♝xg5 ♕xg5 19.f4! ♛h6**

19...♝xf4 20.♝g3 ♛h6 21.♝g4 ♛g5 22.e5+–.

**20.exd5**

20.♝h3!..

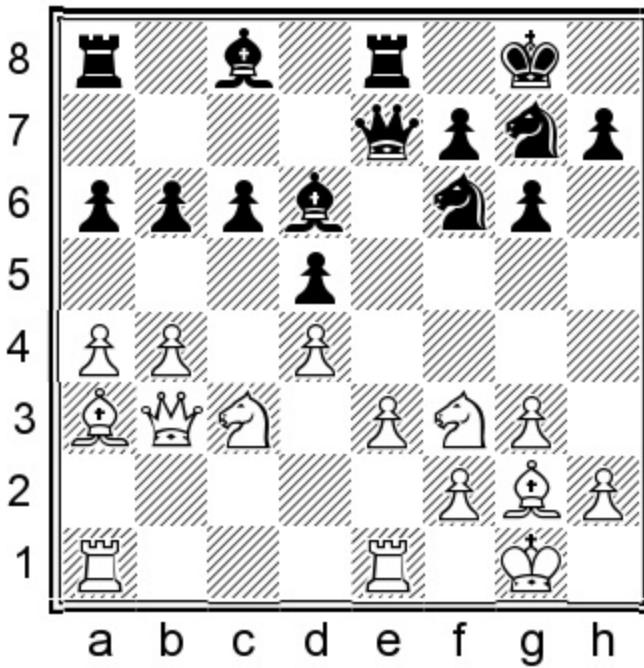
**20...♝f5?**

20... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}df3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  cxd5 23. $\mathbb{Q}g4\pm$ .

**21.g4  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  22.gxf5+-**

Navara-Nabaty, Baku 2015.

### Exercise 44



*White to move  
How to prepare e3-e4 ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 44

The white pieces are ready to attack, so now is the time for action!

**20. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

20... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (21.b5!? axb5 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  23.axb5 c5 24. $\mathbb{Q}c6!?\pm$ ) 21... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22.a5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a4\pm$ .

**21.dxe5  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  24.h3  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  26.e4!?**

26.b5!?.

**26...dxe4**

26...d4 27.♗xd4 ♗e6 28.♗xe6 ♗xe6 29.♔c3+–.

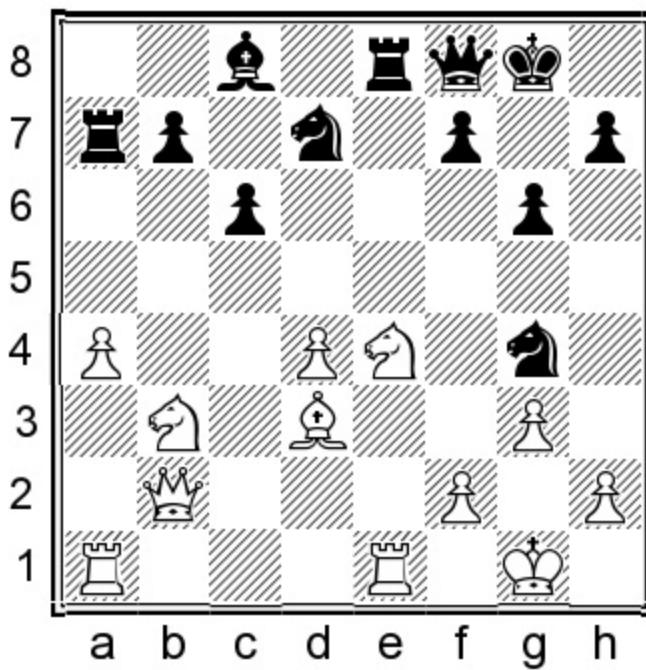
**27.♗xe4+– ♗d7**

Or 27...♝a7 28.h4! ♜f5 29.♝xe5 ♜xe5 30.♔h3.

**28.♝ae1 1-0**

Zlotnik-Del Rio de Angelis, Madrid 2001.

### Exercise 45



*Black to move  
What is the best defence?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 45

**22...b6?**

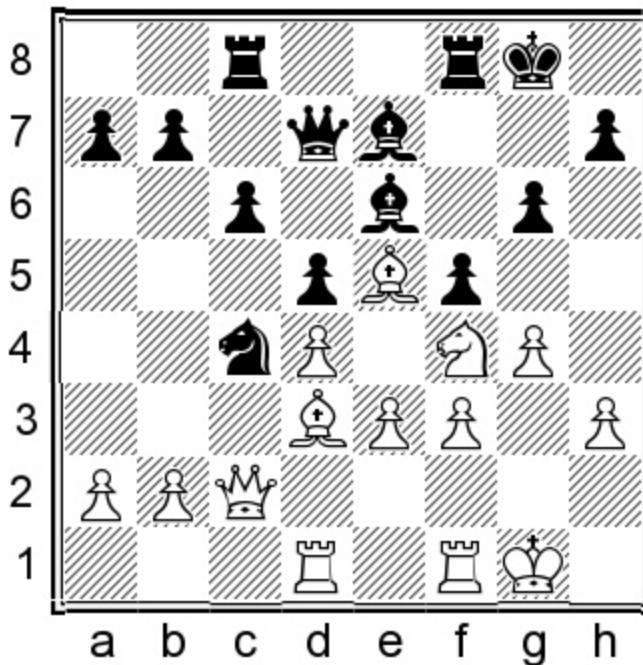
White has carried out the advance e3-e4 and thanks to the better coordination of his pieces his

advantage seems clear. Nevertheless, with 22... $\mathbb{W}b4!!$ , pinning the  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  and at the same time attacking the pawns on a4 and d4, as well as the  $\mathbb{K}e1$ , Black could at least equalize the game: 23.a5  $\mathbb{Q}gf6$  24. $\mathbb{W}c3$  (there is nothing better) 24... $\mathbb{W}xc3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$ .

22... $b6$ ? 23. $\mathbb{Q}bd2!$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c2!$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b3\pm$

And White won quickly, Kramnik-Timman, Belgrade 1995.

### Exercise 46



*White to move  
Find the plan for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 46

22. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$

To be followed by exchanging on f5 and c4, after which the g-file will be opened for the attack.

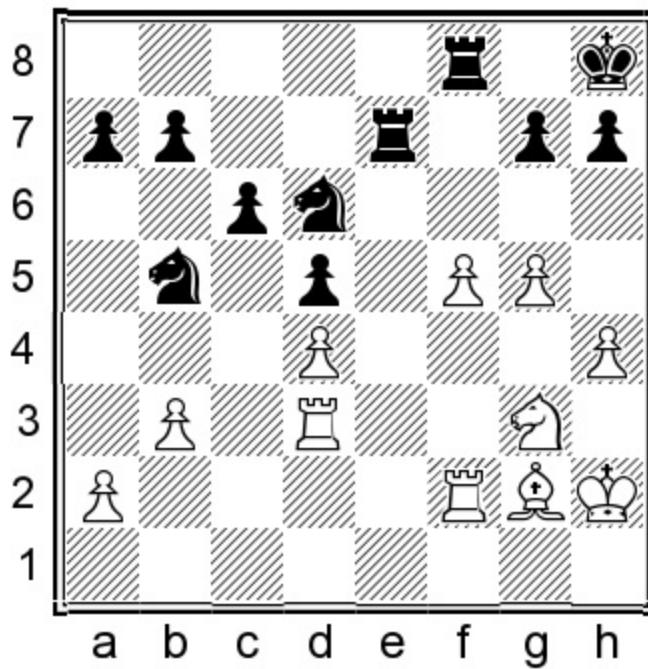
22... $\mathbb{W}xe6$  23. $\mathbb{g}xf5$   $\mathbb{g}xf5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$   $\mathbb{d}xc4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$

25... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26. $f4!$   $\mathbb{E}cd8$  27. $\mathbb{E}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $e4!\pm$ .

**26.e4 ♜e8 27.exf5 ♜xf5 28.f4±**

Sakaev-Zontakh, Novi Sad 2000.

### Exercise 47



*Black to move  
Evaluate 31... ♜e4.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 47

**31... ♜e4?**

Several moves maintain equality, e.g. 31... ♜e1 32.a4 ♜c7 33.♗h3 a5 34.♕df3 ♜e4 35.♕e2 (35.♕xe4 dxе4 36.♕f1 ♜e2+ 37.♕f2 ♜xf2+ 38.♕xf2 e3 39.♕e2 ♜d5=) 35... ♜xe2+ 36.♕xe2 h6.

**31... ♜e4? 32.♕xe4!**

32.♕xe4? dxе4 33.♕e3 ♜d6.

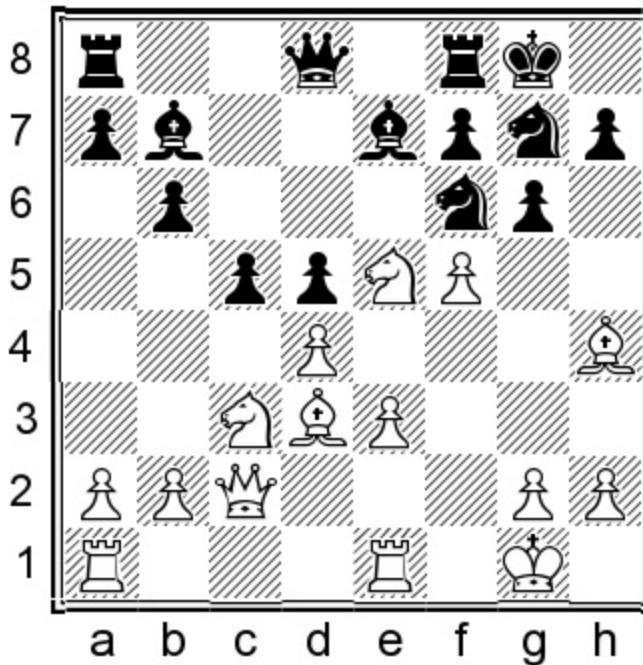
**32...dxе4 33.♕e3 ♜xd4 34.♗h3! ♜e5 35.♗g4± h5+??**

35... $\hat{\square}g8!?$ .

36. $\hat{\square}xh5$   $\hat{\square}xf5$  37. $\hat{\square}xf5$   $\hat{\square}fxf5$  38. $\hat{\square}xf5$   $\hat{\square}xf5$  39. $\hat{\square}xe4$   $\hat{\square}h7$  40. $\hat{\square}e7$  b5 41. $\hat{\square}xa7$  b4 42. $\hat{\square}g4$  1-0

Karpov-Kasparov, Moscow (Wch m/22) 1985.

### Exercise 48



*White to move  
Find a forcing line for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 48

16. $\hat{\square}a6!$

The development of the  $\hat{\square}c8$  to b7 is not very common in the Carlsbad; this has allowed White to advance with f4-f5 and in addition there is a tactical flaw.

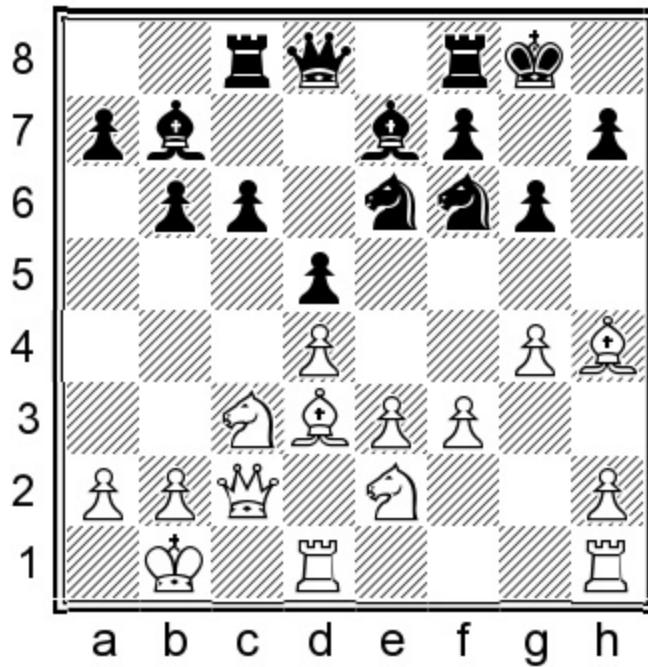
16... $\hat{\square}xa6$

16... $\hat{\square}c8?$  17. $\hat{\square}xf6$   $\hat{\square}xf6$  18. $\hat{\square}xd5+;$  16... $\hat{\square}c7$  17. $\hat{\square}b5$   $\hat{\square}c8$  18. $\hat{\square}xf6$   $\hat{\square}xf6$  19. $\hat{\square}d6\pm;$  16... $\hat{\square}xf5$  17. $\hat{\square}xb7$   $\hat{\square}xh4$  18. $\hat{\square}c6$   $\hat{\square}c7$  19. $\hat{\square}xa8$   $\hat{\square}xa8$  20. $\hat{\square}xe7+$   $\hat{\square}xe7$  21.e4 $\pm$ .

17.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}cxd5$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  21.  $dxc5$   $bxcc5$  22.  $e4+-$

Keymer-Ginsburg, Germany Bundesliga 2018/19.

### Exercise 49



*White to move  
Find the plan for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 49

**15.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$**

Making way for the  $\mathbb{B}h2$  to advance, having in mind the sacrifice  $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$  in the event of ... $c6-c5-c4$ .

**15...  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16.  $h4!$   $c5$**

16...  $\mathbb{Q}xh4?$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  19.  $e4!.$

**17.  $h5!$   $\mathbb{W}e7??$**

17... $c4?$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $fxg6$  19.  $hxg6$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  20.  $f4$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  (20... $hxg6$  21.  $g5$ ) 21.  $gxh7+$  (21.  $g5!?$ ) 21...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  22.  $f5\pm$ ;

17... $\mathbb{W}e8!?$ .

18.f4!  $\mathbb{E}fe8?!$

18...c4?! 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 20.hxg6 hxg6 21. $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  22. $\mathbb{W}c2!+/-$ ; 18...cxd4 19.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  21.hxg6 fxg6 22. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  hxg6 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd4\pm$ .

19.hxg6± fxg6 20. $\mathbb{E}h3?!$

20.g5!.

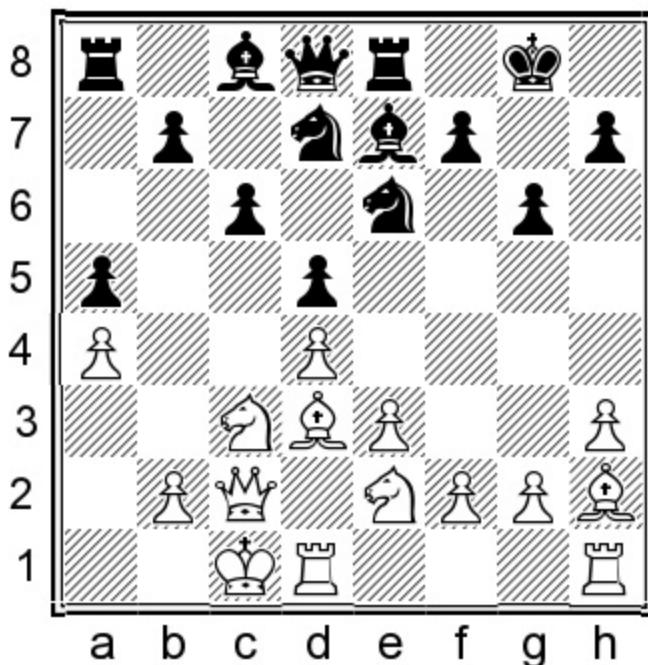
20... $\mathbb{Q}f8?$

20...cxd4!.

21. $\mathbb{W}d2!$  a6 22.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23.f5!+−

Wojtaszek-Yilmaz, Batumi 2016.

### Exercise 50



*Black to move  
Find the plan for Black.*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 50

15... $\mathbb{Q}b8!$

The knight is heading for b4 and if White plays  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  it will be easier for Black to advance ...b7-b5 later.

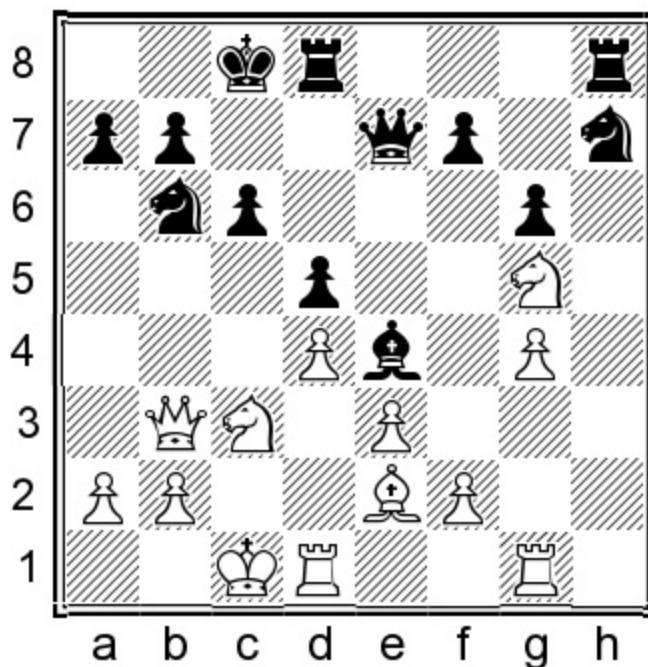
16.g4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}xa6$  18.f4 b5! 19.f5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$

19... $\mathbb{Q}g7!?$ .

20.h4  $\mathbb{Q}f3\mp$

Demidov-Zviagintsev, Skopje 2019.

## Exercise 51



*White to move  
Calculate 19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ .*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 51

19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$

This is good, but White has to see quite far, because Black will be able to regain the pawn.

19...  $\mathbb{W}xf7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}hf8$

20...  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  21. f4  $\mathbb{W}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}c5\pm$ .

21.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}xf2$  22.  $\mathbb{B}de1?!$

22.  $\mathbb{B}ge1!$   $\mathbb{B}de8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!\pm$ .

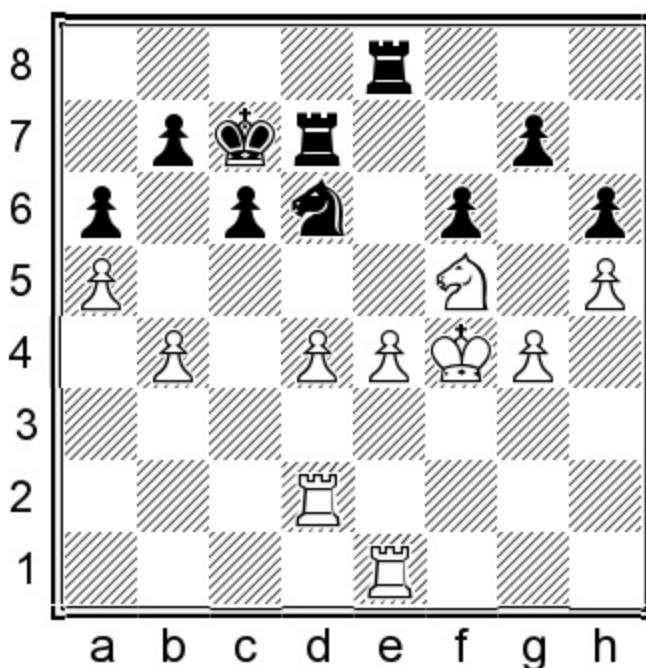
22...  $\mathbb{Q}g5?$

22...  $\mathbb{B}de8!$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  24.  $\mathbb{B}gf1$  (24.  $\mathbb{B}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8=$ ) 24...  $\mathbb{W}g3$  25.  $\mathbb{B}xg6$   $\mathbb{B}xf1$  26.  $\mathbb{B}xf1$   $\mathbb{B}xe3=$ .

23.  $\mathbb{W}a3!$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  25.  $\mathbb{W}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xg5\pm$

Ftacnik-Van der Sterren, Germany Bundesliga 2000/01.

## Exercise 52



Black to move

78... ♗xf5 or 78... ♖c8 ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 52

**78... ♗xf5?**

Following 0-0-0, the white king has already made three journeys (!) from one wing to the other, which is a typical method for an experienced player against a young opponent, tired out by an unpleasant defence. The move in the game is a serious error that leads to a lost rook ending.

78... ♖c8! 79. ♗xd6+ ♕xd6 80. ♖f5 ♖c7 81. ♖g6 ♕e7, and there is no way for White to make progress.

**78... ♗xf5? 79. gxf5 ♕ed8**

79... ♕ee7 80. ♕ee2.

**80. ♕g1 ♕e8 81. ♕g3 ♖c8**

81... ♕de7 82. e5!.

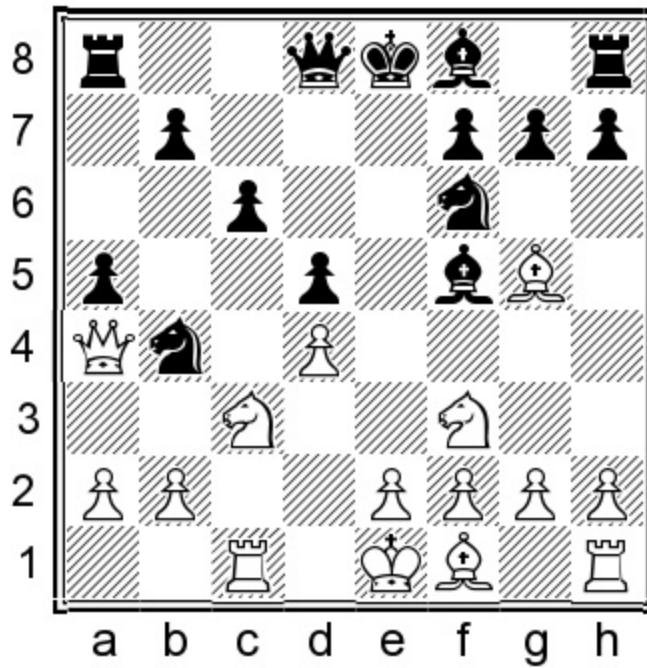
**82. ♕dd3 ♕de7 83. ♕ge3 ♕f8 84. e5 ♕fe8 85. e6+– ♕d8 86. ♕g3**

86. d5!? cxd5 87. ♕d4 ♕c7 88. ♕ed3 ♕c1 89. ♕xd5.

**86... ♕d5 87. ♕g4 ♖d8 88. ♖e4 ♖e8 89. ♕g1 ♖f8 90. ♕c1 ♕c7 91. ♕c5+–**

Graf-Rosner, Magdeburg 2019.

### Exercise 53



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 53

**10.a3! ♜c2+**

10...♜a6 11.♝xf6 gxf6 (11...♝xf6 12.♝xd5) 12.e3±; 10...♝d6 11.♝xf6 gxf6 12.♝b3±; 10...b5 11.♝d1  
♜a6 12.e4! dxе4 13.♝e5+–.

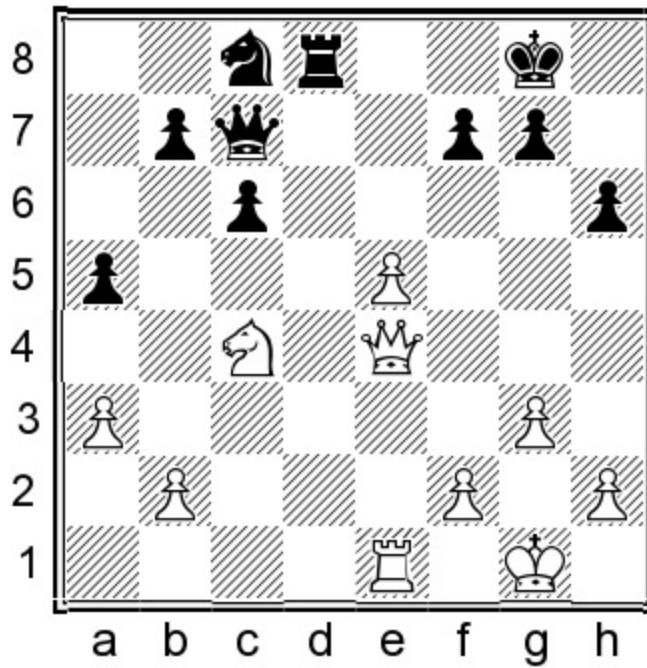
**11.♝xc2 b5 12.♝xb5! ♜xc2**

12...cx b5 13.♝xb5+ ♜d7 14.♝xf6 ♜xb5 15.♝xd8 ♜xd8 16.e3+–.

**13.♝xc2 cxb5 14.♝c6+ ♜e7 15.♝b7+ ♜e8 16.♝e5+– ♜c8 17.♝xf7+ ♜d8 18.♝xd5+ ♜e7 19.e4 1-0**

Vazquez-Alonso Rosell, San Sebastian 2013.

### Exercise 54



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 54

The previous course of the game was very similar to Vazquez Igarza-Alsina Leal, at the end of the Carlsbad chapter: the advance e3-e4, not fearing an isolated  $\Delta$ d4, then  $\mathbb{E}$ e5 with a rook exchange on e5, after which the  $\Delta$ e5 is the advance party of a reduced white army.

**28.e6!**

28.h4!?  $\Delta$ e7 29.e6 f6 30. $\Delta$ e3.

**28.e6! a4**

28...fxe6 29. $\mathbb{W}$ xe6+  $\mathbb{W}$ f7 30. $\Delta$ xa5  $\mathbb{W}$ xe6 31. $\mathbb{E}$ xe6  $\mathbb{Q}$ f7 32. $\mathbb{E}$ e4±.

**29. $\Delta$ e5?!**

29.exf7+!  $\mathbb{W}$ xf7 30. $\Delta$ e5  $\mathbb{W}$ a2 (30... $\mathbb{W}$ b3 31. $\Delta$ g4) 31. $\Delta$ g4!  $\mathbb{W}$ f7 (31... $\mathbb{W}$ xb2?? 32. $\mathbb{W}$ g6  $\mathbb{Q}$ h8 33. $\Delta$ xh6+–) 32. $\mathbb{W}$ xa4±.

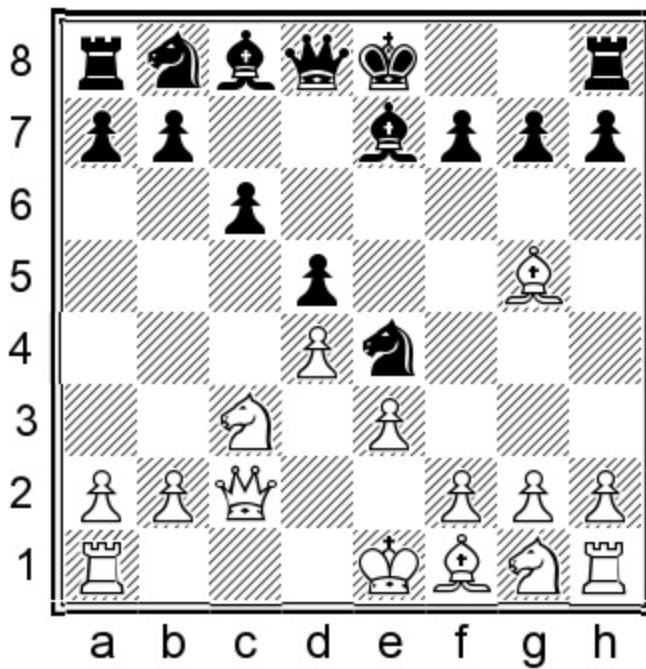
**29...fxe6 30. $\mathbb{W}$ xa4  $\Delta$ d6 31. $\mathbb{W}$ b3  $\mathbb{E}$ e8 32.f4**

32. $\Delta$ d3!?.

32... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f3\pm$

Milos-Vescovi, Sao Paulo 2005.

### Exercise 55



*White to move*

*How to exploit the blunder 7... $\mathbb{Q}e4??$ , committed in more than 170 games, including one by a future World Champion?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 55

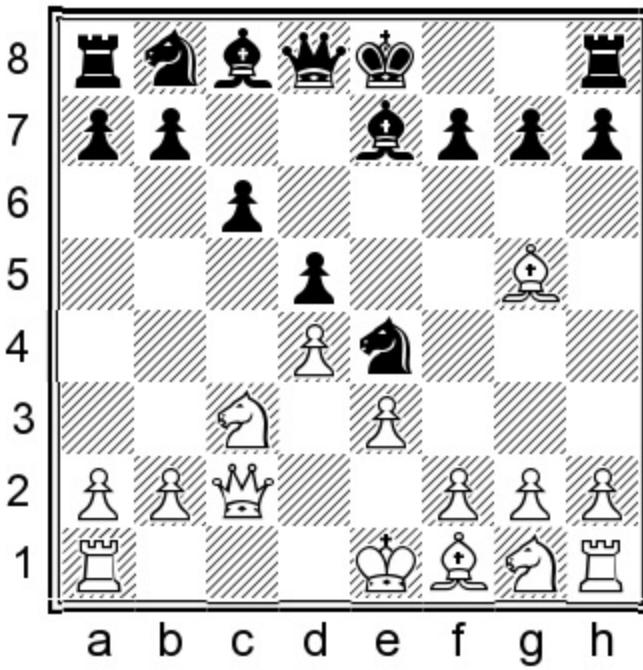
**Wesley So**

**Michael Adams**

Shamkir 2015 (3)

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 6.e3 h6**

**6... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4??$**



*White to move*

8.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  (8...  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ) 9.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$   $cxd5$  10.  $\mathbb{W}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$   $bcx6$  13.  $\mathbb{W}xc6+$  1-0 Kotov-Petrosian, Moscow 1949.

**7.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9.  $f3$**

To prevent the exchange of bishops that could take place after 9.  $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  – So.

**9...0-0 10.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $b5$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  12.  $a3$   $a5$  13.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

14.  $e4$   $dxe4$  15.  $fxe4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  17.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  (17.  $\mathbb{Q}d1?$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8=$ ) 17...  $\mathbb{W}g5!?$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $c5!=$ .

**14...  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$**

18.  $a4!?$   $b4$  (18...  $\mathbb{Q}e8!?$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}ec1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$ ) 19.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $c5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f4\pm$ .

**18...  $\mathbb{W}c7$  19.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  20.  $f4$   $a4!?$**

20...  $f5!?$ .

**21.  $f5!?$**

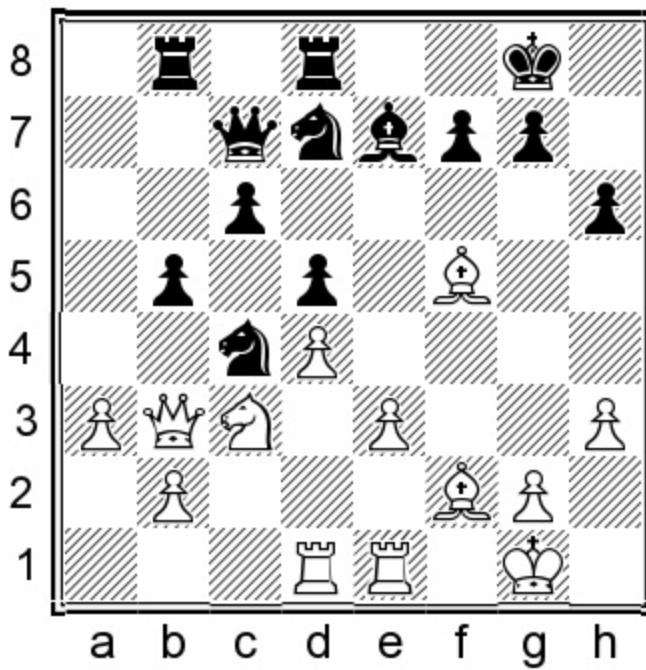
21.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$   $bcx4$  (21...  $dxc4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $f5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f3\pm$ ) 22.  $\mathbb{Q}d2\pm$ .

**21...  $axb3$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$**

22...  $\mathbb{Q}d6!$  23.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  (23.  $fxe6!?$ ) 23...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3\mp$ .

23.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$

### Exercise 56



*White to move*

*Find a stronger move than 24.  $\mathbb{W}c2$ .*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 56

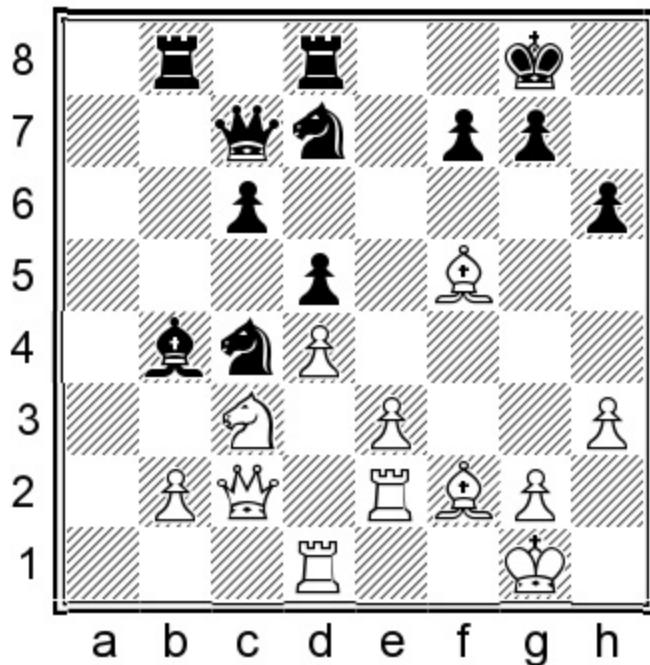
24.  $\mathbb{W}c2?!$

24.e4! and now:

- A) 24...b4? 25.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}db6$  (25...bx $c$ 3?! 26.  $\mathbb{W}xc4\pm$ ) 26.axb4 cx $d$ 5 27.b5 $\pm$ ;
- B) 24...dx $e$ 4?! 25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  26.d5  $\mathbb{Q}de5!$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  b4 28.axb4  $\mathbb{B}ab8$  29.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  30.  $\mathbb{B}xd8+$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  31.  $\mathbb{W}c2\pm$ ;
- C) 24... $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  25.e5  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  g6 27.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28.h4 b4 29.axb4 h5 30.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}b7\pm$ .

24.  $\mathbb{W}c2?!$  b4 25.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$

### Exercise 57



*Black to move*  
26...  $\mathbb{W}a5$  or 26...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 57

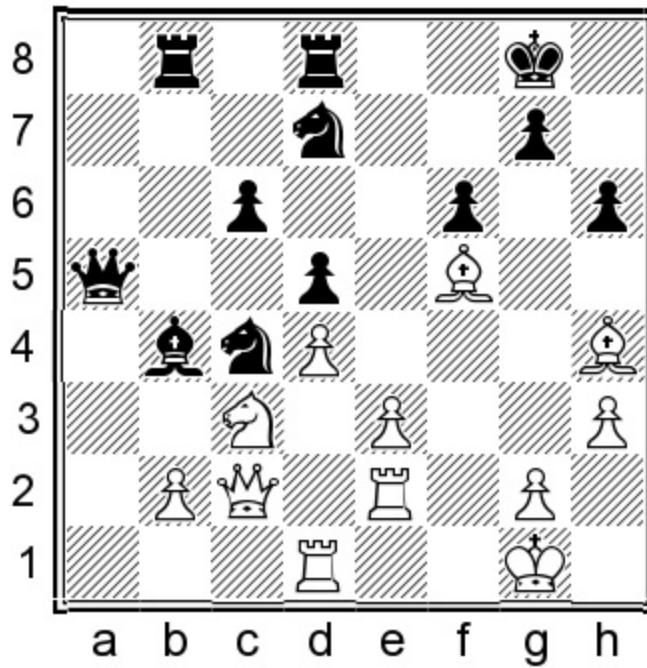
**26...  $\mathbb{W}a5$ ?**

26...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ! 27.  $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3=.$

**26...  $\mathbb{W}a5$ ?** 27.  $\mathbb{Q}h4\pm$  **f6**

27...  $g5$  28.  $\mathbb{B}f1!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (28...  $gxh4$ ? 29.  $\mathbb{Q}e6!+-$ ) 29.  $\mathbb{Q}e1\pm$ .

### Exercise 58



*White to move*

28.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  or 28.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 58

**28.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ??**

28.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ! (28...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ? 29.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $gxf6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}e7\pm$ ) 29.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d3\pm$ .

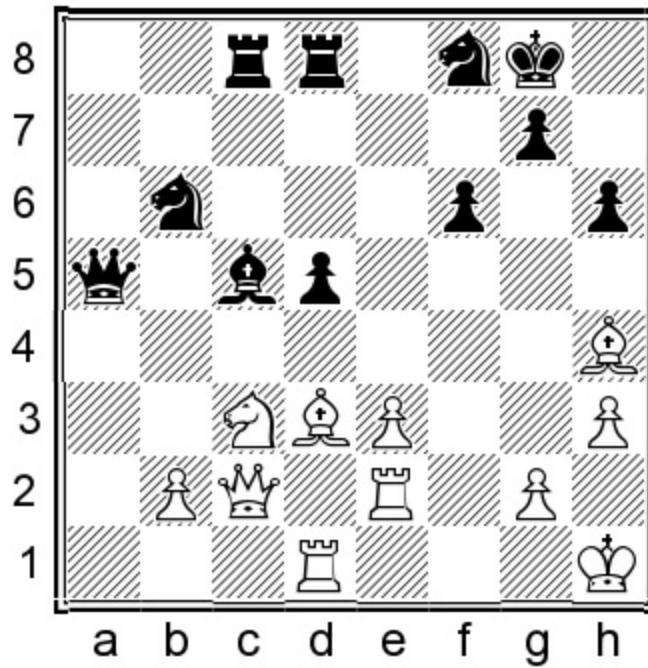
**28.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ??  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5**

30...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ !? 31.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

**31.  $dxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}bc8$ ?**

32...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$ !..

### Exercise 59



*White to move  
How to gain a clear advantage?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 59

**33.♕f5! ♜c6**

33...♜a8 34.♕g3! (34.e4!? d4 35.♗d5 ♜xd5 36.exd5) 34...♜d6 35.♗xd6 ♜xd6 36.e4±.

**34.e4! ♜b4**

34...d4 35.e5.

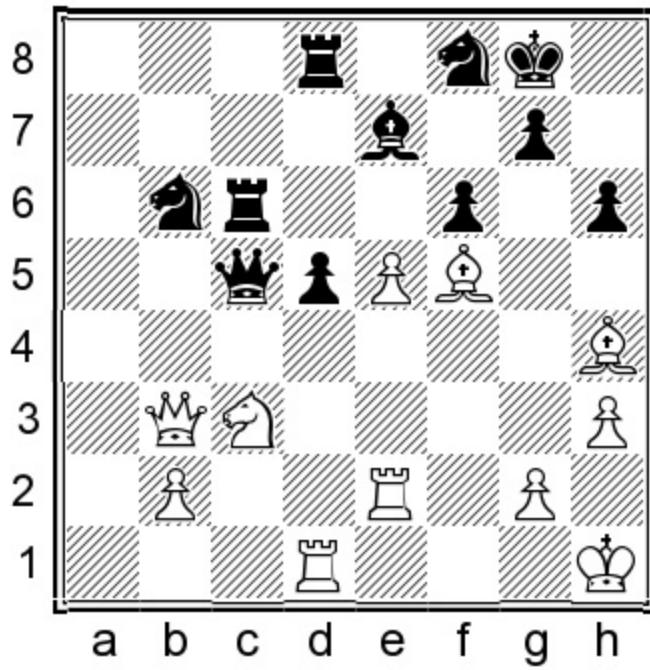
**35.e5 ♜e7**

35...♜xc3 36.bxc3 ♜xc3 37.♗d2 ♜c4 38.♗d4+–.

**36.♗b3 ♜c5?**

36...♔h8 37.♗b5!±.

### Exercise 60



*White to move  
How to win?*

Show/Hide Solution

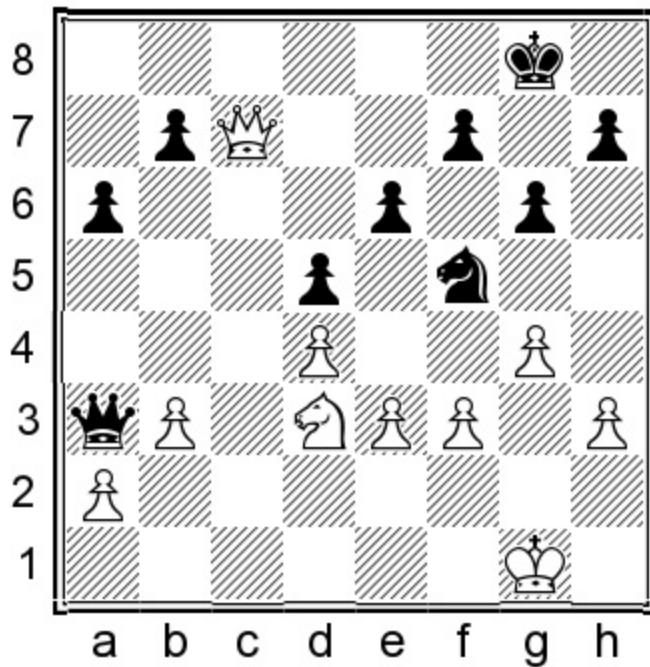
### Solution 60

37.exf6 ♜xf6 38.♗e4!+– ♜c4 39.♗xf6+ gxf6 40.♗g3+ ♔f7 41.♕de1 ♜b4 42.♕e7+ ♜xe7 43.♕xe7+ ♔xe7 44.♗g7+ ♔e8 45.♗g4 1-0

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## Symmetrical pawn structures

### Exercise 61



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 61

It is the first game of the Candidates Match and Spassky has chosen the Exchange Variation of the Slav Defence, which seems to have caused his opponent to relax prematurely, as he has made a few inaccurate moves. Nevertheless, Black could still have maintained equality here:

**29...♝h6?**

29...♝d6! and now:

A) 30.♝e5 h6;

B) 30.♝c5 ♜c1+ 31.♝f2 ♜d2+ 32.♝g3 ♜xe3 33.h4 (33.♝xd6?? ♜g1+ 34.♝h4 ♜e1+ 35.♝g5 h6+

36.†f4 (36.†f6 †h4+ 37.†e5 †g3+) 36...g5#) 33...†g1+ 34.†h3 †h1+=;

C) 30.†d8+ †g7 31.†e7 †g8;

D) 30.‡f4 ‡b5 31.†c2 (31.†xb7 †c1+ 32.†f2 †d2+ 33.‡e2 †xa2=) 31...†d6=;

29...‡e7? 30.†f1! a5 (30...†xa2 31.†xe7 †b1+ 32.‡e1+-) 31.h4 b5 32.‡e5 f6 33.†d8+ †g7 34.‡d7 †c1+ 35.†g2+-.

29...‡h6? 30.‡e5+- †b4 31.‡d7

31.†f1!?

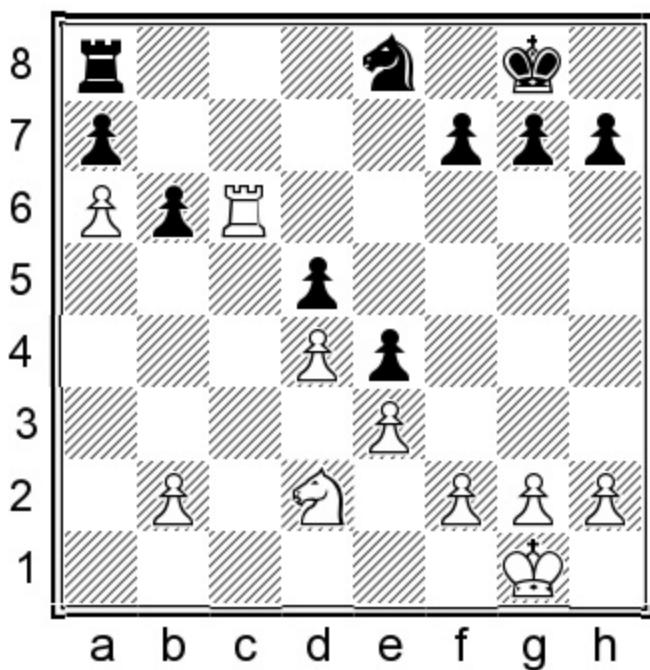
31...†e1+

31...†g7 32.†f1! †e7 33.†xb7 (33.†e5+!? f6 34.†c7 ‡f7 35.‡c5!) 33...†d6 34.†c8 ‡g8 35.‡e5 g5 36.†d7.

32.†g2 †e2+ 33.†g3+- ‡f5+ 34.gxf5 †e1+ 35.†f4 †h4+ 36.†e5 †g3+ 37.f4 †xe3+ 38.†f6 †xd4+ 39.‡e5 1-0

Spassky-Larsen, Malmö 1968.

### Exercise 62



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 62

Just as in the game Botvinnik-Alekhine, the white rook controls the c-file and in the same way the rook requires the collaboration of the knight:

**27.♘b1! ♘f8 28.♘c3 ♕d8 29.♘b5 ♕d7 30.g4**

30.♕c8! ♘e7 31.♘c3! puts Black in zugzwang, e.g. (31.♕a8? ♘c7) 31...h6 32.♕a8 g5 33.g4 f6 34.♗g2 ♘f7 35.♘b5 ♕e7 36.♕c8 ♘e6 37.♕c6+ ♘f7 38.h4 ♕d7 39.♕c8 ♘e7 40.h5 ♘f7 41.♕b8+–.

**30...♘e7 31.♕c8**

It was better to play in the style of Botvinnik: 31.♗g2!? ♘d6 32.♘c3 ♘e8 33.♗g3 ♕d8 34.♘b5 f6 35.h4.

**31...♘d6 32.♘xd6 ♘xd6 33.b4?!**

33.♗g2! ♕c7 34.♕h8 h6 35.♕b8 ♘c6 36.♗g3 g6 37.h4 g5 38.h5 ♕d7 39.f3 exf3 40.♗xf3 ♘e7 41.♕h8 ♘e6 42.♕a8 ♘e7 43.♕b8 ♕d7 (43...♘d6? 44.♕c8 ♘c7 45.♕h8+–) 44.e4 dxe4+ 45.♗xe4 ♘e7+ 46.♗f5+–.

**33...♕c7 34.♕h8?**

34.♕g8! ♘c6 (34...g6? 35.b5!) 35.♕xg7 h6 36.h4±.

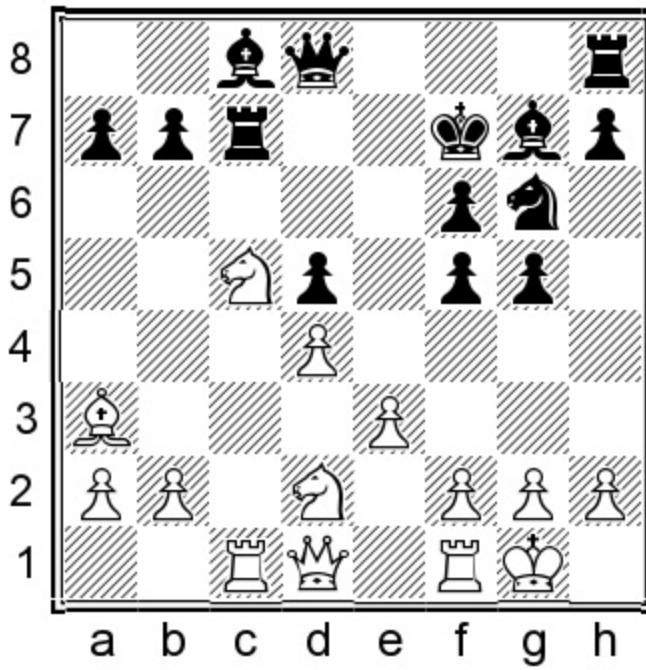
**34...h6?**

34...♘c6! 35.♕b8 g5 36.♗g2 h6 37.♗g3 ♘b5 38.♗b7 ♘c6 39.b5+ ♕d7 40.♕xc7+ ♘xc7=.

**35.b5!+–**

Riumin-Yudovic, Moscow 1931.

## Exercise 63



*White to move  
How to fight for the c-file?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 63

**22. Wa4**

22. Wc2!! and now:

A) 22... b6?? 23. Qe6;

B) 22... Qf8? 23. Qxb7;

C) 22... We8 23. Qce4! Rxc2 24. Qd6+ Ke6 (24... Kg8 25. Rxc2!) 25. Qxe8 Rxc1 26. Qxg7+ Kf7 27. Rxc1 Kxg7 28. Rc7+±;

D) 22... Rc6 23. Wa4 Wb6 (23... a6? 24. Qxb7! Rxb7 25. Rxc6+–) 24. Qb1! (24. Rc3!?) 24... Qf8 (24... a6 25. Qc3 Qe7 (25... Rd8 26. Rb4!) 26. Qd3±) 25. Qc3 Rxc5 26. Rxc5 Wd8 27. Qb5 Wd7 28. Qxa7 Ra6 29. Wb3±.

**22. Wa4 b6 23. Qa6**

23. Qd3! Qd7 24. Wb3 Ke6 25. Wb5±.

**23... Rx a6 24. Wxa6 Wc8**

24... $\mathbb{Q}f8!?$ .

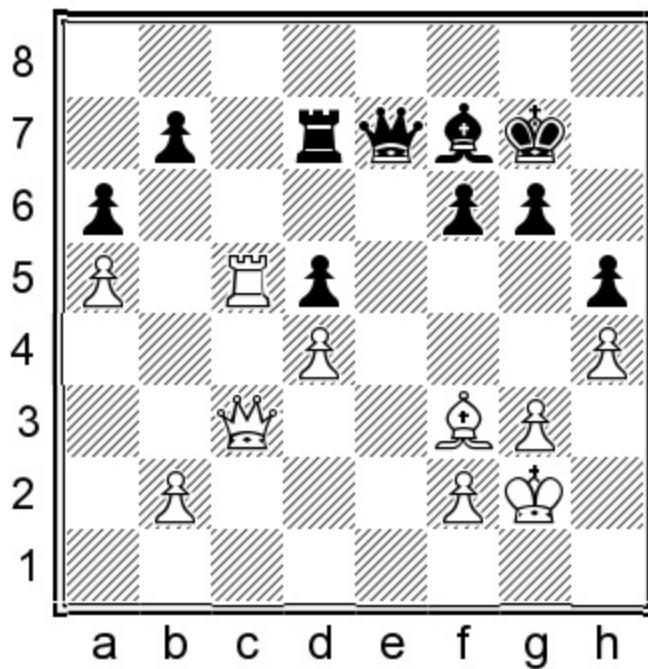
25. $\mathbb{B}xc7+$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  26.b3

26. $\mathbb{Q}b1! \pm$ .

26... $\mathbb{W}d7=$

(analysis)

### Exercise 64



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 64

38...g5!

Going on to the counterattack.

38... $\mathbb{W}d6!?$  39. $\mathbb{B}c8!$  g5 40. $\mathbb{W}c5 \pm$ .

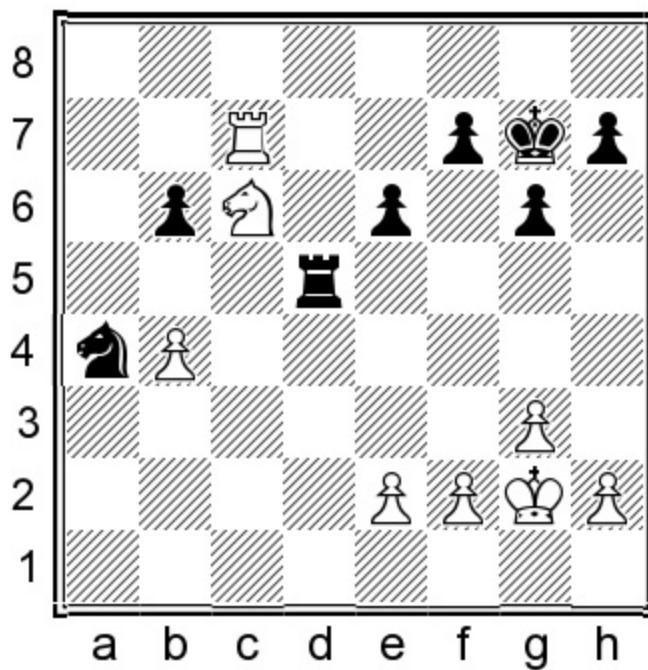
38...g5! 39.♔e3

39.b4 g4 40.♔d1 ♔g6.

39...g4! 40.♔d1 ♔e4+! 41.♔g1

½-½ Kasparov-Karpov, Moscow (Wch m/23) 1985.

### Exercise 65



*Black to move*  
25...♝d2 or 25...♝b2 ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 65

25...♝d2?

25...♝b2! 26.f4 ♜c4 27.♝b8 b5=.

25...♝d2? 26.♞e5 ♘xe2 27.♝xf7 h5

27...♝b2 28.♝g5+ ♔g8 29.♝xe6 ♘xb4 30.♝g7+ ♔h8 31.♝a7 h5 (31...♔g8 32.♝a8+ ♔f7 33.♝g5+

$\mathbb{Q}g7$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+-$ ) 32.  $\mathbb{Q}f4+-$ .

**28.  $\mathbb{Q}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

28...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ .

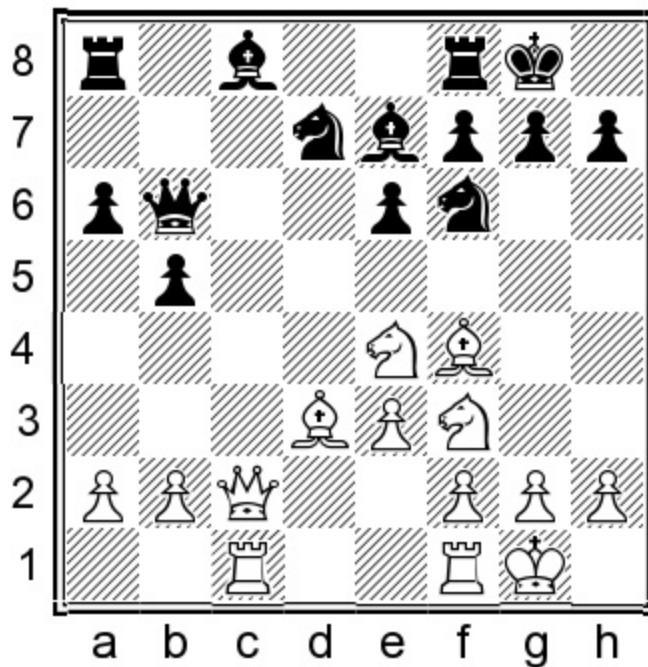
**29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1!+-$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$**

29...  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  30.  $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  31.  $h3$ , and there is no defence against the threat of 32.  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  mate.

**30.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  32.  $b5$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  1-0**

Smyslov-Benko, Monaco 1969.

### Exercise 66



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 66

**14.  $\mathbb{Q}c7!$**

Gaining time by using the bishop as the spearhead of the invasion.

14.  $\mathbb{W}c7?$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  15.  $\mathbb{B}xc7$   $\mathbb{B}b7=$ .

**14.  $\mathbb{B}c7!$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  15.  $\mathbb{B}d6\pm$   $\mathbb{B}xd6$**

15...  $\mathbb{E}e8$  16.  $\mathbb{B}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xe7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d6\pm$ .

**16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}b8$**

16...  $\mathbb{B}b7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  g6 18.  $\mathbb{E}fd1\pm$  (18.  $\mathbb{W}c7?!$   $\mathbb{B}d5$ ).

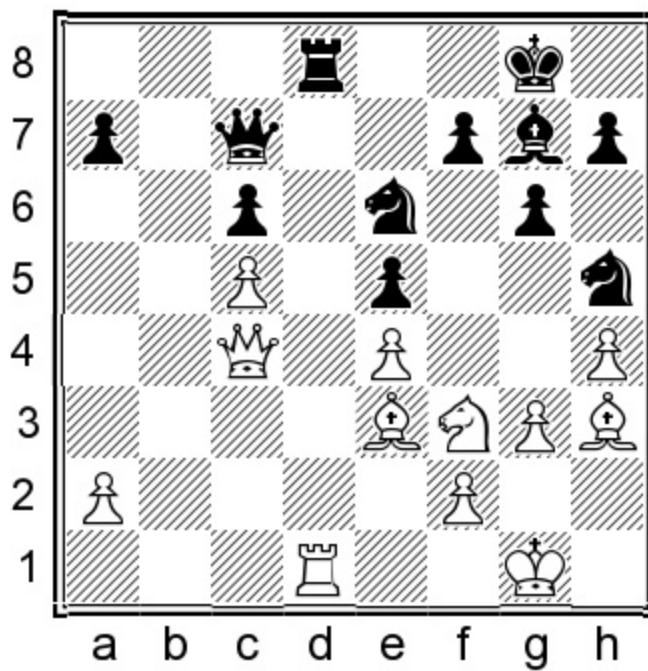
**17.  $\mathbb{E}fd1!$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  g6**

18... h6?? 19.  $\mathbb{B}h7\#\text{--}$ .

**19.  $\mathbb{W}c7!\pm$**

Petrosian-Byrne, Moscow 1975.

### Exercise 67



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 67

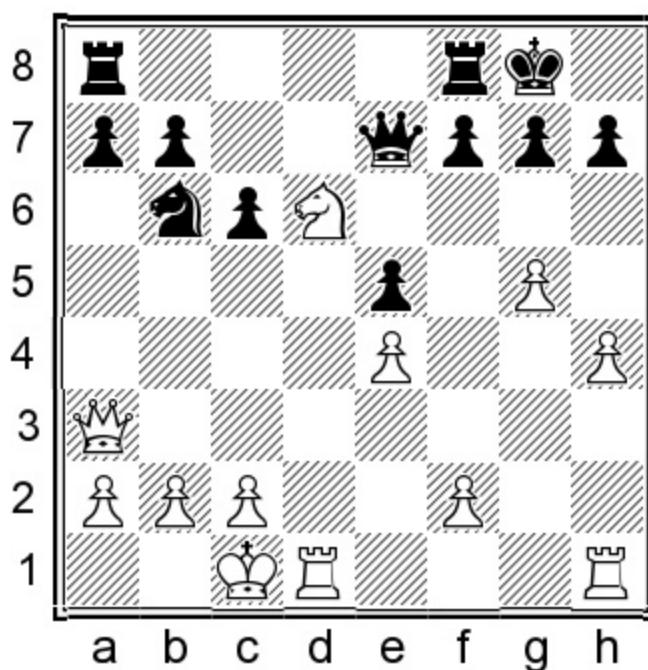
22.  $\mathbb{E}d6!$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  23.  $cxd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$

24...  $fxe6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7+ -.$

25.  $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $fxe6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7+ -$

Salov-Lautier, Wijk aan Zee 1991.

## Exercise 68



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 68

20.  $\mathbb{E}h3!$

20.  $\mathbb{E}d3!?$ .

20.  $\mathbb{E}h3!$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$

20... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  22. $\mathbb{B}xa3$   $\mathbb{B}fxc8$  23. $\mathbb{B}d7+/-$ .

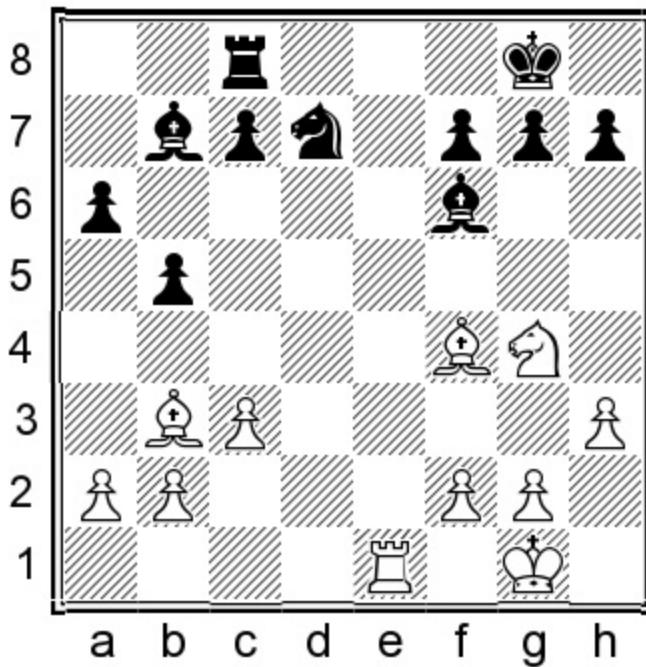
21. $\mathbb{B}hd3$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  22. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{B}ad8$

22... $\mathbb{W}e6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$ .

23. $\mathbb{Q}xb7!+/-$

Mamedov-Abasov, Baku 2015.

### Exercise 69



*White to move*

*It is hard to guess that the game will be over in two moves.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 69

20. $\mathbb{B}c2!!$

Although Stockfish considers that 20. $\mathbb{B}d1$

and even 20.f3 are equally good, for a human player the text move is impressive, since it is both

simple and strong.

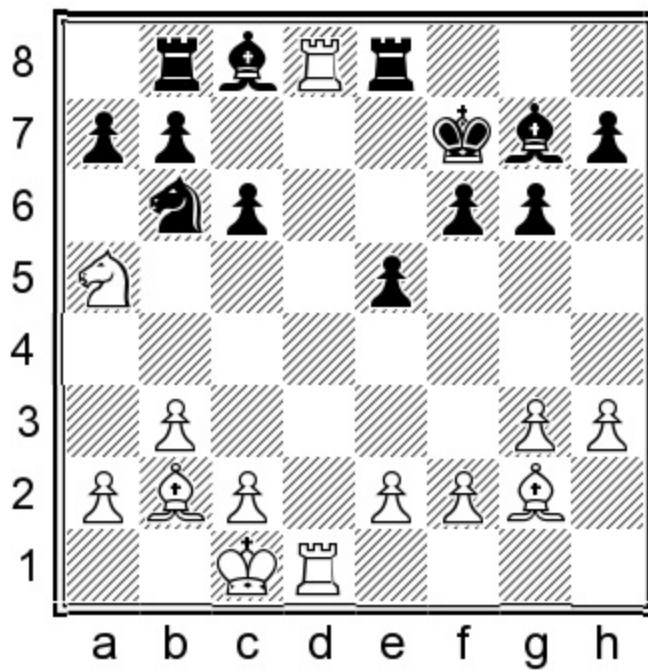
**20.♔c2!! g6?!**

20...h5 21.♔f5 hxg4 22.♔xd7 ♔d8 23.♔xg4; 20...♝c5 21.♔xc7 ♔g5 22.♔f5 ♔a8 23.♔c2 with an extra pawn in either case.

**21.♔d1 1-0**

Keres-Benko, Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade ct 1959.

### Exercise 70



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 70

**18.♕xe8! ♔xe8 19.♔a3! ♜d5**

19...♜f8 20.♜xf8 ♔xf8 21.♜d8+ ♔f7 22.♝c4!?.

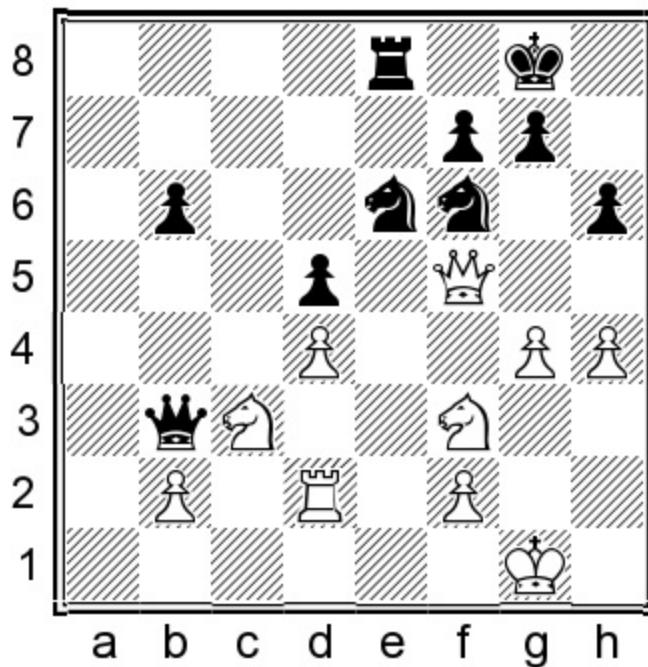
**20.♝d6**

20.  $\mathbb{Q}c4!?$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  22. c4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23. g4±.

20...  $\mathbb{E}a8$  21. c4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}c7\pm$

Smyslov-Polugaevsky, Palma de Mallorca 1970.

### Exercise 71



*Black to move  
Evaluate 33...b5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 71

33...b5!

Stockfish prefers the positional pawn sacrifice 33...  $\mathbb{W}c4!?$  34. g5 hxg5 35. hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dx $e$  37.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$  g6 38.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}d5=$ .

33...b5! 34. g5

34.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}b4$ .

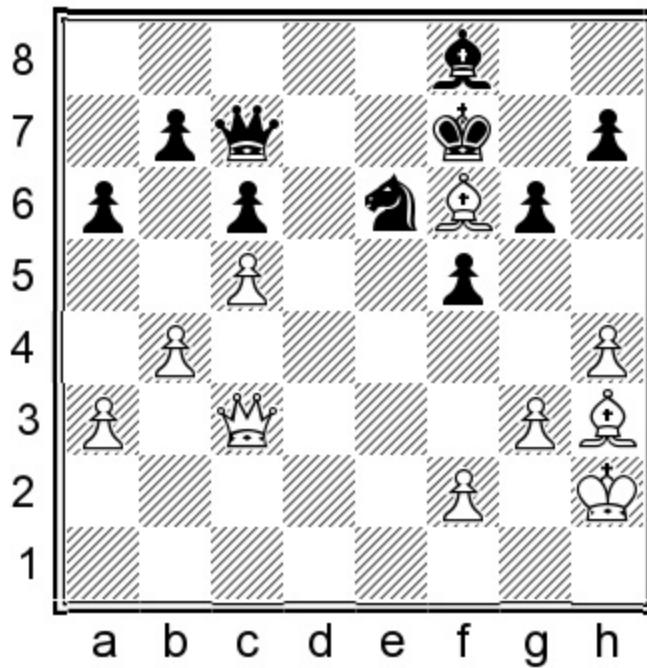
34...hxg5 35.hxg5 ♜h7?

35...b4! 36.gxf6 bxc3 37.bxc3 ♜xc3 38.♕d1 (38.fxg7 ♜c1+ 39.♔g2 ♜xg7=) 38...gxf6 39.♗xf6 ♜c2=.

36.♗xd5 g6 37.♗f6+ ♜xf6 38.♗xf6±

Artemiev-Kovalev, Wijk aan Zee 2020.

### Exercise 72



*Black to move  
Evaluate 43...♜g7.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 72

43...♜g7?

43...♝d7! 44.♝f1 f4 45.♝h8 (45.♝c4 fxg3+ 46.fxg3 ♜d1±) 45...fxg3+ 46.fxg3 ♜c7 47.♝h3 ♜e8 48.♝f6+ ♜g8±.

43...♜g7? 44.♝xg7 ♜xg7 45.♝f1!± f4??

45... $\hat{\square}e8$  46. $\hat{\square}c4$   $\hat{\square}e7$  47. $\hat{\square}d4\pm.$

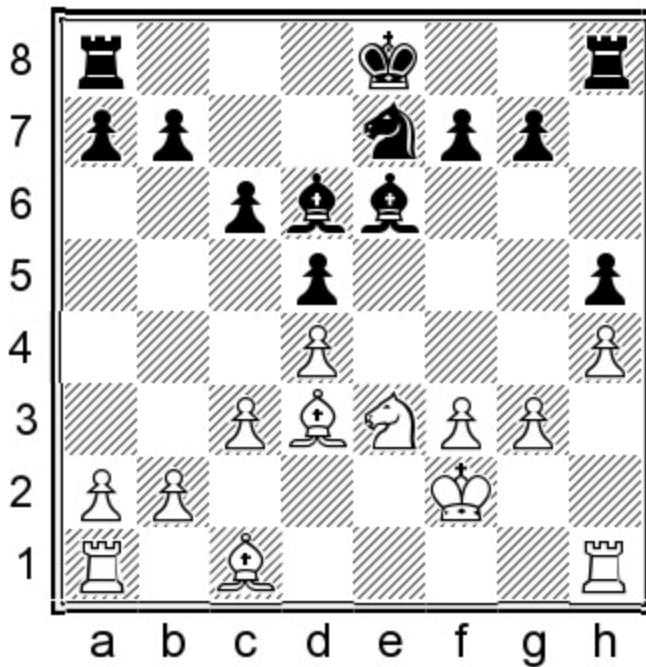
**46. $\hat{\square}c4+$   $\hat{\square}e8$**

46... $\hat{\square}f8$  47. $\hat{\square}f6+$   $\hat{\square}e8$  48.g4+–.

**47.g4+–**

Caruana-Tiviakov, Wijk aan Zee 2010.

### Exercise 73



*Black to move  
Can the symmetry be broken?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 73

**21...c5!**

This pawn break, known from Rubinstein's classic games in the Exchange Variation of the French Defence, gives Black an active game.

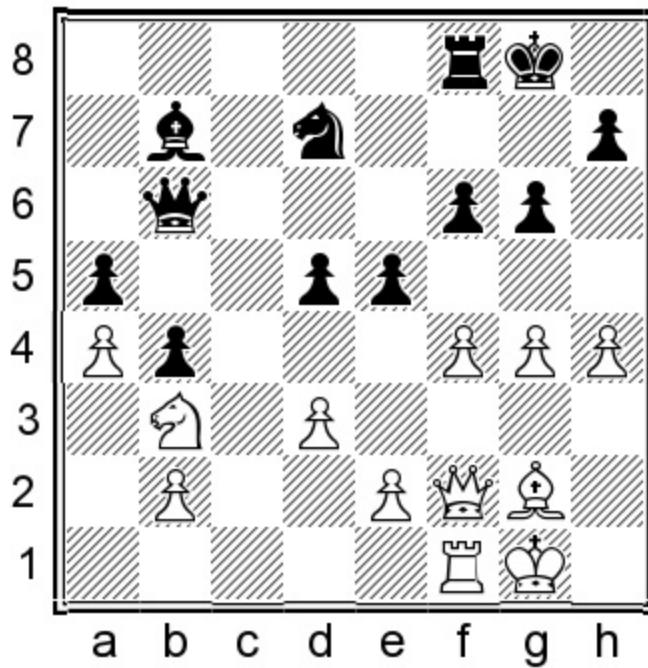
**22.♕c2**

22.dxc5 ♕xc5 23.♔g2 d4 24.cxd4 ♕xd4=; 22.♕b5+ ♔c6 (22...♔d7!?).

**22...0-0 23.♕d1 ♘fd8 24.♗g2 cxd4 25.cxd4 ♘ac8 26.♔b3 ♘c6 27.♔f4 ♘a5 28.♕dc1 ♘b4! 29.♔d1 ♘c4**

and Black has the initiative, Carlsen-Caruana, London Wch m 2018.

### Exercise 74



*Black to move  
26...♝xf2 or 26...♚a8 ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 74

**26...♝xf2+?**

Earlier in the game Carlsen avoided an exchange of rooks on the c-file by playing 23.♕c1-f1!. Nevertheless, he now has a clear advantage. 26...♚a8! 27.♕c1 e4 was a lesser evil.

**26...♝xf2+? 27.♔xf2 exf4 28.♗xa5 ♚a8 29.♕c1 ♗e5 30.♗f3!+– d4**

30...g5 31.d4!.

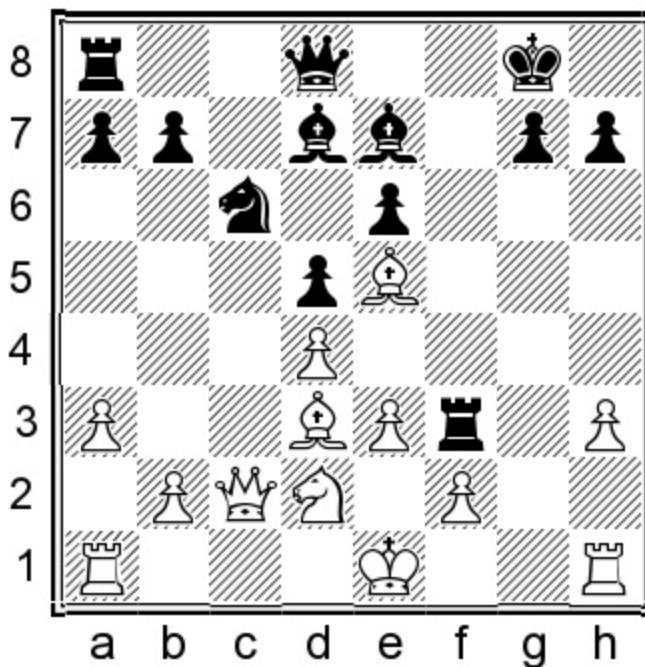
31.♘c4

31.♘c6!?.

31...♗xf3 32.♘xe5 ♗xe2 33.♘d7 ♘f7 34.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 35.♔xe2 ♘e6+ 36.♔f2 ... 1-0 (44)

Carlsen-Kramnik, Leuven rapid 2017.

### Exercise 75



Black to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 75

In the Exchange Slav, Eljanov wanted to break the symmetry and he achieved this with:

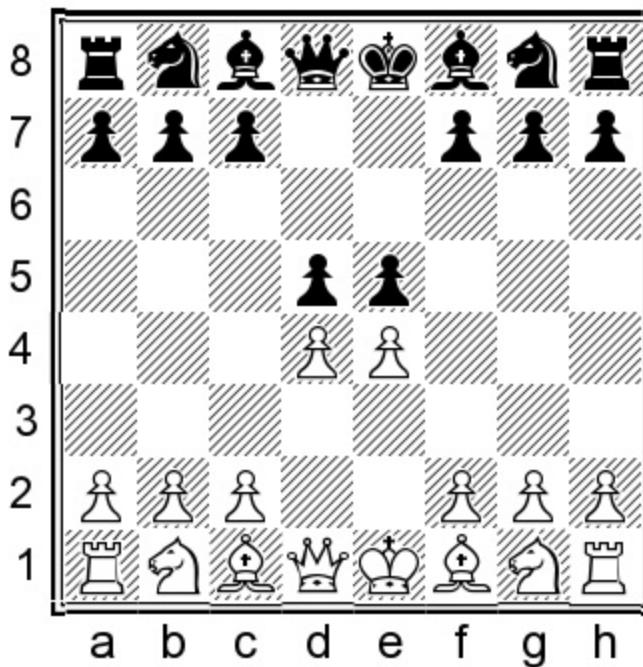
20...♘xe5! 21.dxe5 ♘f8 22.♗xh7+

22.0-0 g6! 23.♗xg6 ♔h8!! 24.♗xh7 ♔h4 25.f4 d4+.

22... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  24. $\mathbb{W}b1$  d4+ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  dx $e$ 3 26.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  29. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$   
0-1

Brunello-Eljanov, Legnica Ech 2013.

### Exercise 76



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 76

3.dxe5! dx $e$ 4 4. $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}g5+$  f6

6... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7.0-0-0+  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}f4\pm$ , winning the  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , Ahmed-Haque, Dhaka 2014.

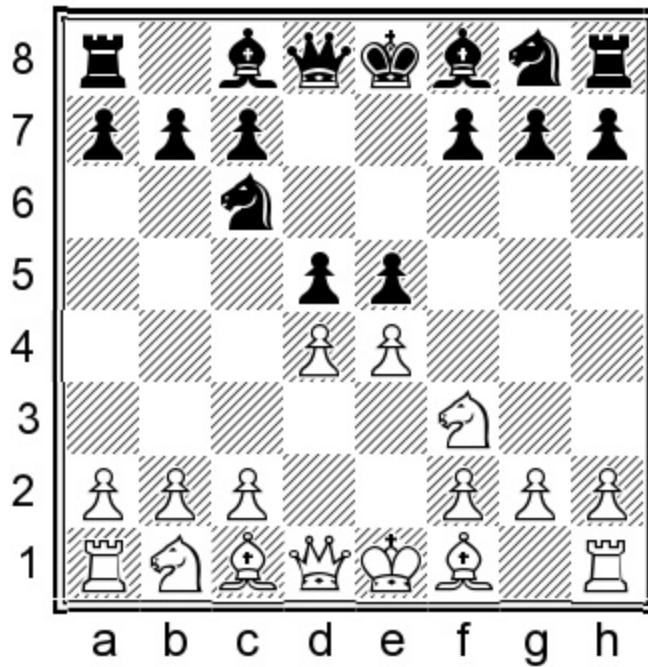
7.0-0-0+  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  8.exf6 gxf6

8... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ .

9. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xe4+-$

Abakoumkin-Grivas, Kallithea 1979.

## Exercise 77



White to move  
4.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  or 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 77

4.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$

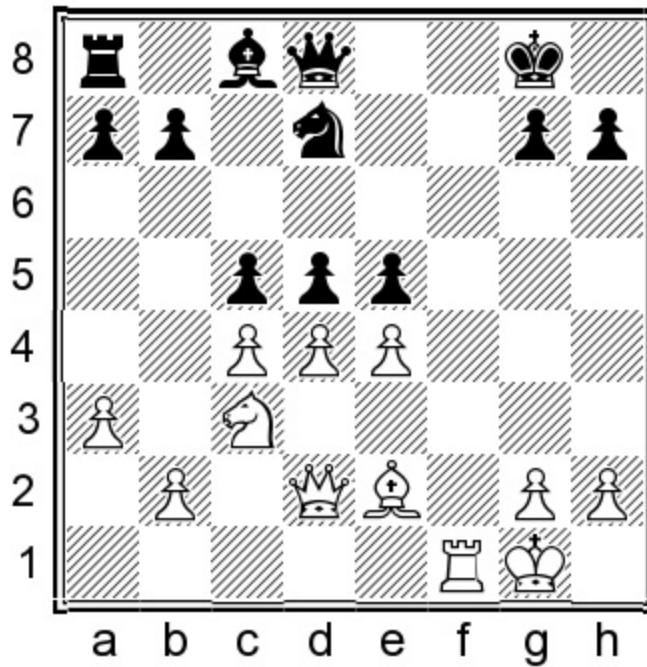
4.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  exd4! (4...dxe4?! 5.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  (7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ !?) 7... bxc6 8. 0-0-0± Gorovets-Prihodko, Minsk 2013) 5.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  dxe4! 6. 0-0 (6.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ ?!  $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  a6 8.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ =) 6...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 9.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  11.  $\mathbb{W}xe4+$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  12.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ !? 13.  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  gxf6 14.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ±.

4.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

4...dxe4 5.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  7. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 9.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  f5 10. f3±.

5. dxe5 dxe4 6.  $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  10. 0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ +  
(analysis)

## Exercise 78



*White to move  
Evaluate 18.dxe5 d4.*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 78

**18.dxe5! d4**

18... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  19.exd5±.

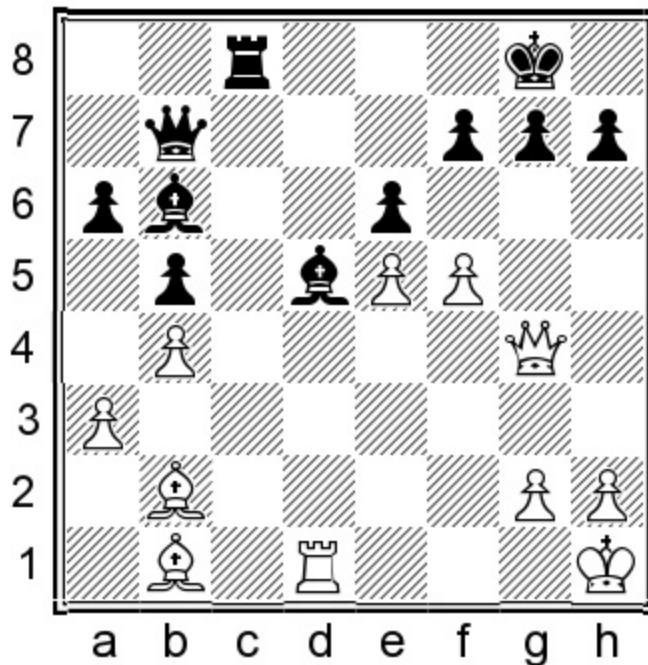
**19. $\mathbb{W}f4!$  dx $c$ 3**

19... $\mathbb{W}e8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d5+-$ ; 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe5$  dx $c$ 3 21.bxc3+–.

**20. $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21.bxc3+–  $\mathbb{W}g8$  22. $\mathbb{W}e7$  h6 23. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  a5 24.e6 g6 25.exd7  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  26. $\mathbb{E}f7$  1-0**

Alekhine-Marshall, New York 1927.

### Exercise 79



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

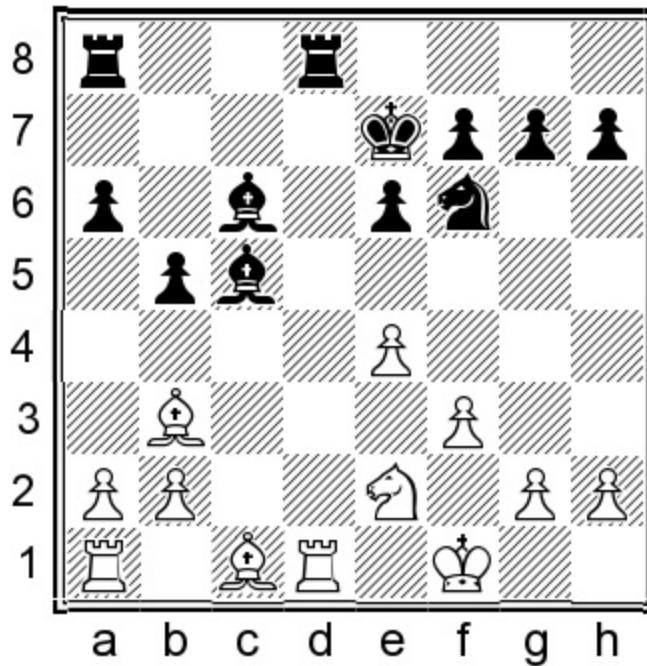
### Solution 79

Another illustration of Black's possibilities after employing the stratagem introduced in the game Marshall-Wolf:

25... $\mathbb{E}c4!$  26. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{E}f4!-$ + 27.f6 g6 28. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{E}f2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  0-1

Teichmann-Dus-Khotimirsky, Prague 1908.

### Exercise 80



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 80

**16.  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{B}xd1+$**

16...h6 17.  $\mathbb{B}dc1!$  (17.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+?$  gxf6 18.  $\mathbb{B}dc1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ) 17...hxg5 18.  $\mathbb{B}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  19.  $\mathbb{B}xg5\pm$ ; 16... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17.  $\mathbb{B}xd6!$ , see game.

**17.  $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$**

17...h6 18.  $\mathbb{B}c1!$  hxg5 19.  $\mathbb{B}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  20.  $\mathbb{B}xg5\pm$ .

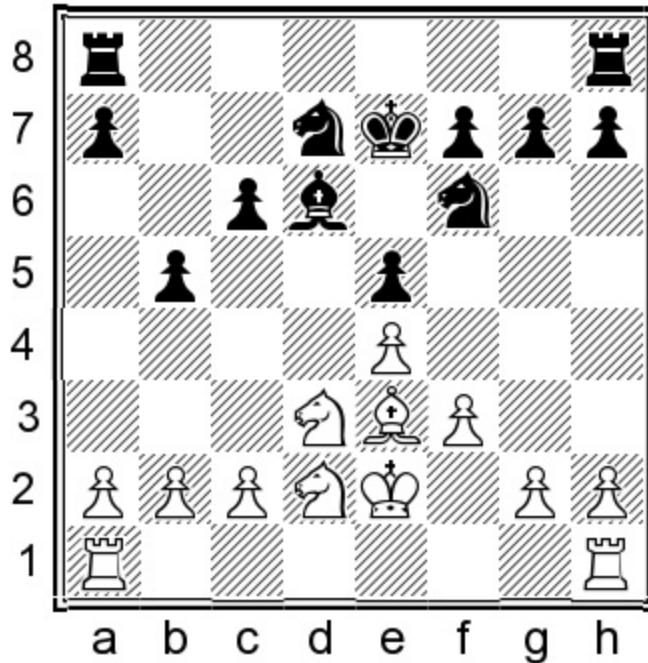
**18.  $\mathbb{B}xd6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  19.  $e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20.  $\mathbb{B}f4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  21.  $\mathbb{B}c2+$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  22.  $fxe4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

22... $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$  23.  $g4+$ .

**23.  $\mathbb{Q}f2+-$**

Artemiev-Izoria, Astana 2019.

### Exercise 81



*White to move  
Find the plan for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 81

Attack the ♜b5, followed by ♜hc1 and ♜d2-b3-a5:

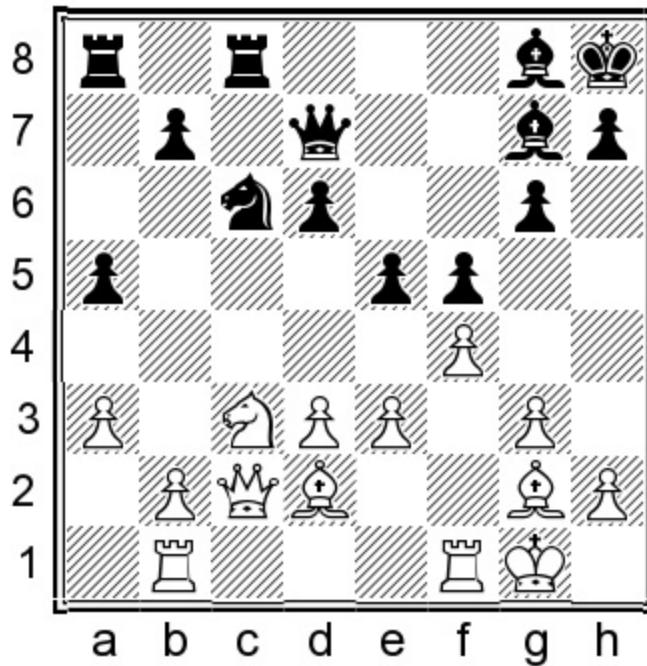
**13.a4! a6 14.c4 ♜hc8 15.♖hc1 ♜e6 16.♘b3 ♜g8 17.♘a5±**

17.cxb5!? cxb5 18.♖xc8 ♜xc8 19.axb5 axb5 20.♖a5 ♜b8 21.♖a6.

17...♘e7 18.♘b7! ♜ab8 19.♘xd6 ♜xd6 20.axb5 axb5 21.♖d1 ♜e6 22.♘c5+ ♜xc5 23.♖xc5+-

Alsina Leal-Pogorelov, Sevilla 2020.

### Exercise 82



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 82

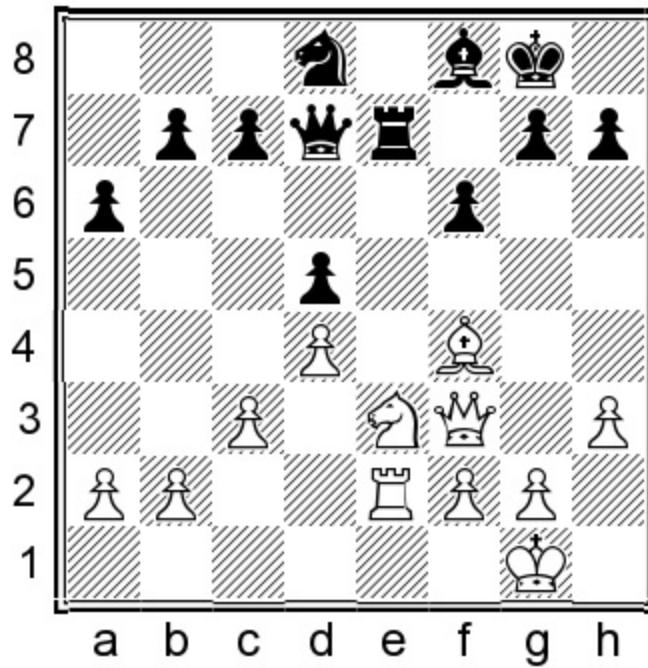
**19.♘a4!**

A fine manoeuvre to exploit the weakness on b5.

**19...♝ab8 20.♝b5! ♕e6 21.♗d5 ♝f7 22.♝bc1 ♝e8 23.♗b6 exf4 24.♝xf4!?**±

Gulko-Smyslov, Leningrad 1977.

### Exercise 83



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 83

**23.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7!$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$**

23...  $\mathbb{E}xe3?$  24.  $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xd5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}e8$ ; 23...  $\mathbb{W}xc7$ .

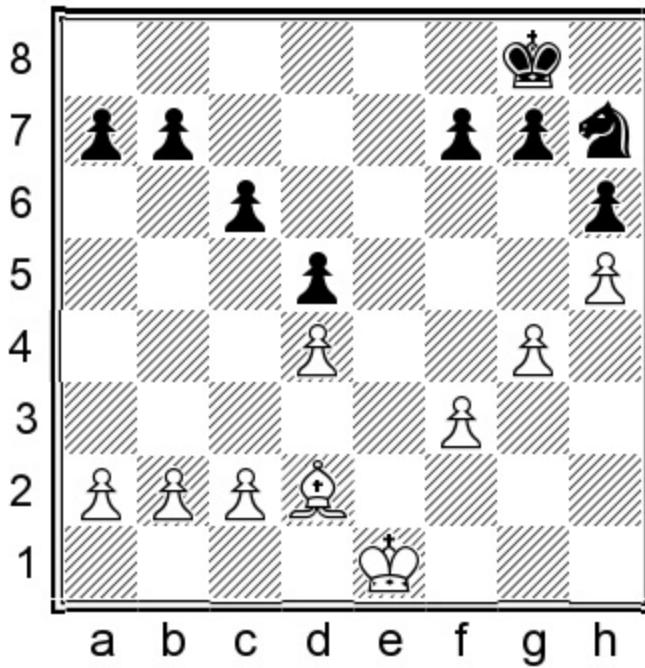
**24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}d6$**

24...  $\mathbb{E}xe2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}e1+$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6+$  27.  $g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  28.  $\mathbb{W}f5\pm$ .

**25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  26.  $\mathbb{W}e4\pm$**

Kasparov-Karpov, Moscow 1981.

### Exercise 84



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 84

As in his game against Albornos, Ivanchuk once again shows how to play if a weaker opponent exchanges pieces in search of a draw:

**28...f5! 29.gxf5**

29.♔f2 ♔f6 30.gxf5 ♔xh5.

**29...♔f7 30.♔f4 ♔f6**

30...♔f6!? 31.♔e5 ♔xh5 32.♔f2 g6 33.fxg6+ ♔xg6 and the outside ♔h6 maintains the tension of the struggle.

**31.♔e5+ ♔xf5 32.♔xg7 ♔g5 33.♔e5 ♔xh5?**

And Ivanchuk was able to exploit his outside passed pawn:

**34.♔b8 a6 35.♔f2 ♔g5 36.♔g3 ♔e6 37.c3 ♔g5 38.♔d6 ♔f5 39.a4 b6 40.b4 h5 41.♔f2 h4 42.♔e7 h3 43.♔d6?**

43.a5 bxa5 44.bxa5 h2 45.♔g2 ♔f4 46.♔d6+ ♔e3 47.♔xh2 ♔d2 48.♔e5 ♔xc3 49.f4 ♔d3 50.f5 ♔g5

51.♔g3 ♔e4 52.♔g4 ♔f7 53.♔g7=.

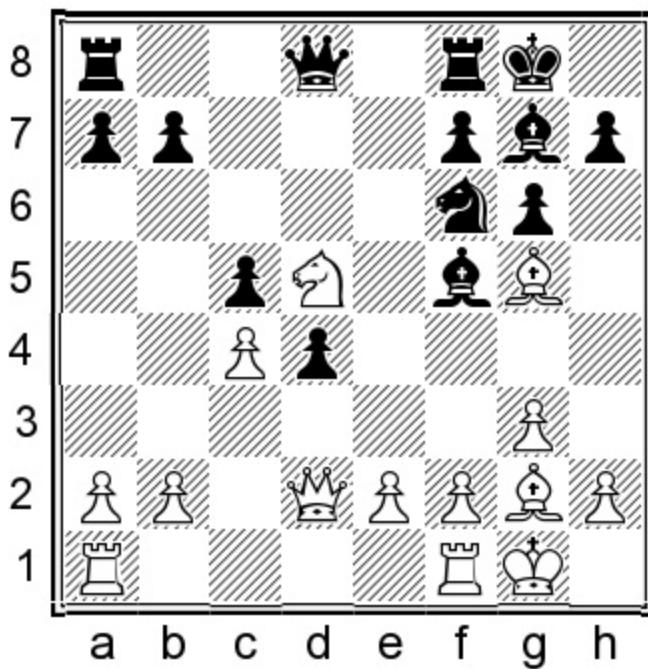
43...♔f4 44.♔g3 ♔e2+ 45.♔xh3 ♔xc3 46.♔g3

46.a5 bxa5 47.bxa5 ♔e2—+.

46...♔xa4 47.♔c7 ♔e6 48.♔f2 ♔d7 49.♔f4 ♔c3 50.♔e3 ♔a2 0-1

Moreno Carnero-Ivanchuk, Calvia ol 2004.

### Exercise 85



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 85

Alireza Firouzja

Daniil Dubov

St Petersburg Wch rapid 2018 (10)

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 g6 3.♗g2 ♗g7 4.c4 0-0 5.♘c3 c5 6.d4 d6 7.0-0 ♘c6 8.dxc5 dxc5 9.♗f4

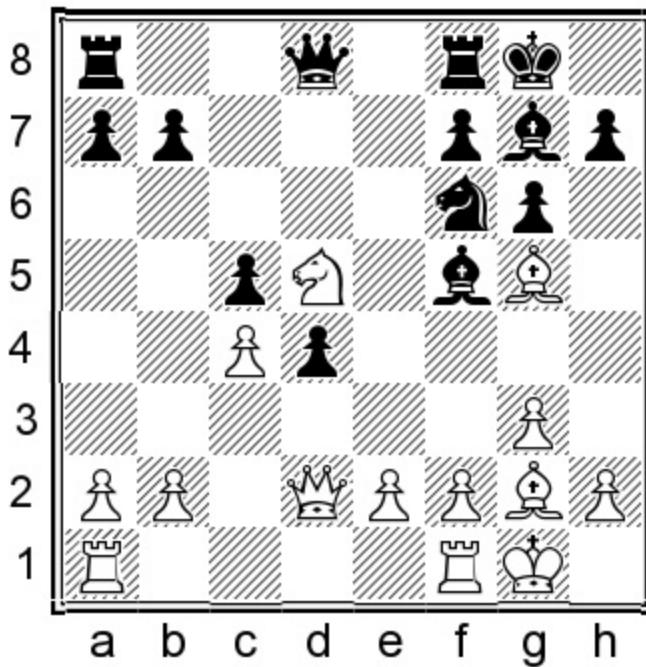
9.♗e3!?

**9...♝h5**

9...♝d4!?.

**10.♝g5**

10.♝e3 ♜d4 11.♛d2 e5 12.♝d5 ♜f6? 13.♝xd4 exd4 14.♝g5 ♜f5?



*White to move*

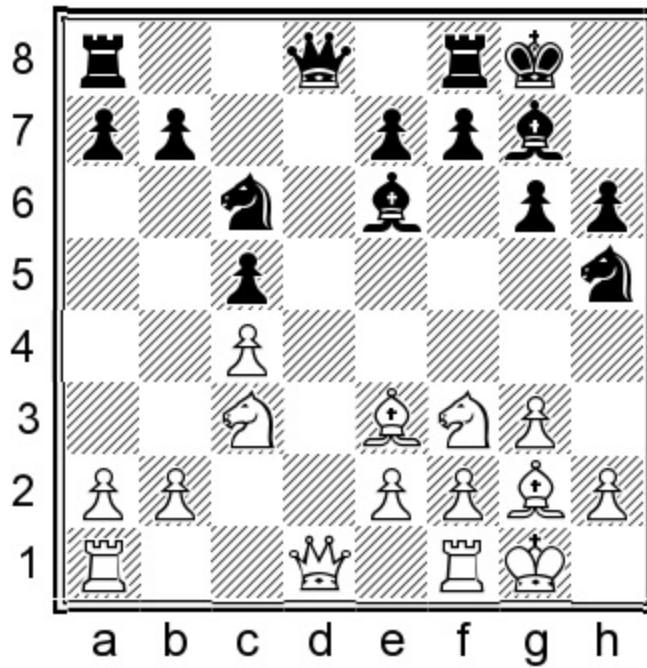
15.e4! (15.a3?! ♜c8?! 16.e4! dxе3 17.fxe3 ♜e4 18.♝xe4 ♜xg5 19.♝xf5 gxg5 20.♝xf5 Drygalov-Jones, St Petersburg 2018) 15...dxе3 16.fxe3 ♜e4 17.♝xe4 ♜xg5 18.♝xf5 gxg5 19.♝xf5+–.

**10...h6**

10...♝e6!? Dubov.

**11.♝e3 ♜e6**

### Exercise 86



*White to move*

12.  $\mathbb{W}a4$  or 12.  $\mathbb{W}c1$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 86

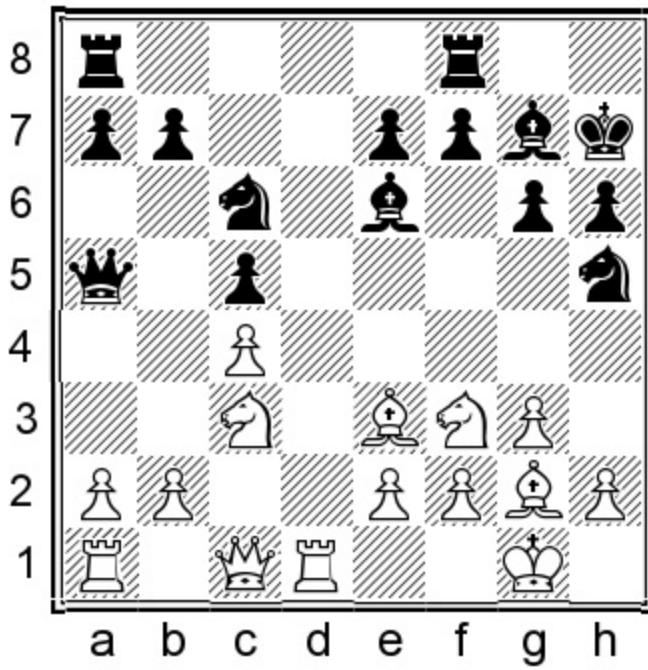
12.  $\mathbb{W}c1! \pm$

12.  $\mathbb{W}a4?!$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  13.  $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  14.  $\mathbb{B}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}fc8$  15.  $\mathbb{B}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  16.  $\mathbb{B}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  17.  $\mathbb{B}d4$   $\mathbb{B}ab8$  18.  $b3$   $\mathbb{B}d6=.$

12.  $\mathbb{W}c1! \pm$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  13.  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$

13...  $\mathbb{W}c8!?$  14.  $\mathbb{B}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  15.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16.  $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  17.  $\mathbb{B}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  18.  $\mathbb{B}d4 \pm$ .

### Exercise 87



*White to move*  
 14.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  or 14.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 87

**14.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ??!**

14.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ !  $\mathbb{B}ad8$  (14...  $\mathbb{W}b4$ ? 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  16. a3!  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  17. axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  (18...fxe6 19. fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d7+-$ ) 19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  fxe6 20. b5+-) 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  16.  $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  20. b4±.

**14.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ??!  $\mathbb{B}ac8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$**

15.  $\mathbb{B}d3$ ?!?  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  cxb4 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  18. a3 b3! 19.  $\mathbb{B}xb3$  b6±.

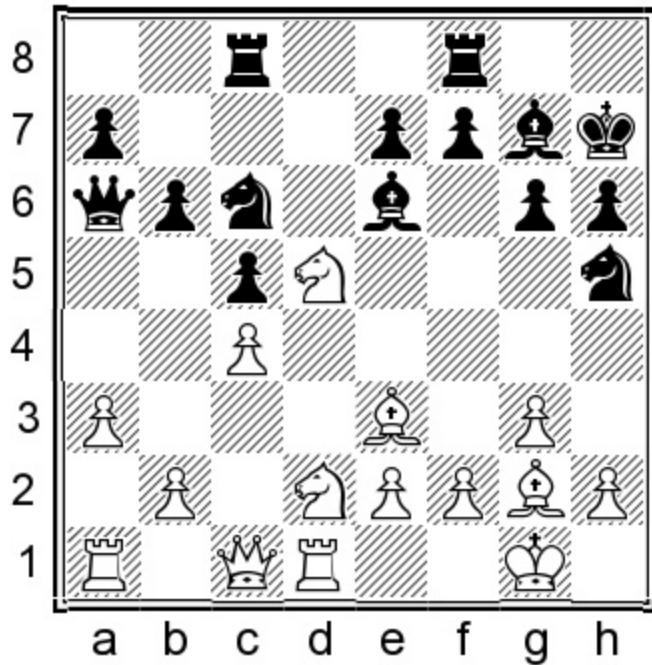
**15...b6= 16.a3??!**

16. a4!?.

**16...  $\mathbb{W}a6$ ?**

16...  $\mathbb{W}a4\mp$ .

## Exercise 88



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 88

**17.h3?**

17.♗b4! cxb4 18.axb4 ♜b7 19.b5 ♜d7 20.♗b3 ♜f6 (20...f5 21.♗d2!?) 21.♕xd7 ♜xd7 22.bxc6 ♜xc6 23.♗xc6 ♜xc6 24.♖xa7±.

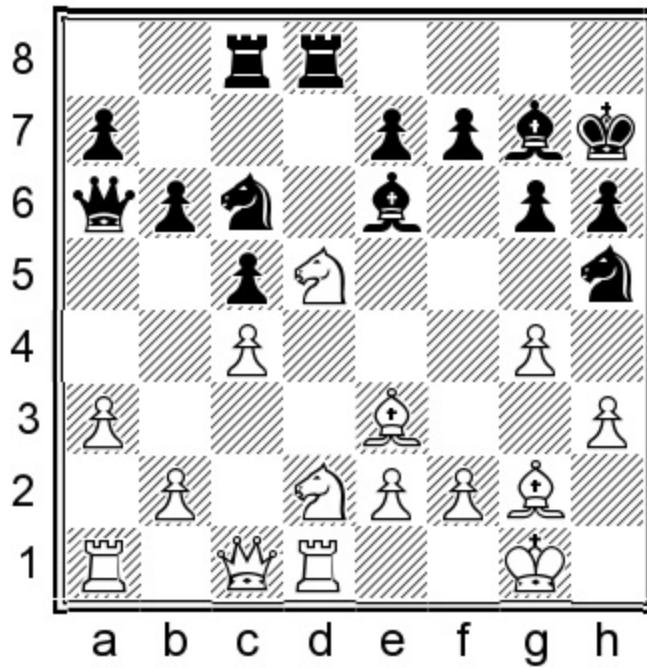
**17.h3? ♜fd8??!**

17...♗xd5! 18.cxd5 ♜d4 19.♗xd4 cxd4 20.♗b1 ♜xe2 21.♗f3 ♜e5 22.♗e1 ♜g5 23.♗d1 (23.♗e4?! ♜f5 24.♗g4 ♜xd5+) 23...♗g8±.

**18.g4?**

18.♗b4!?.

## Exercise 89



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 89

**18...♝xd5!**

18...♝f6? 19.♝b4! cxb4 20.axb4 ♜b7 21.b5 ♜d5! 22.cxd5 ♜d4=.

**18...♝xd5! 19.♝xd5**

19.cxd5 ♜d4†.

**19...♝f6 20.♝g2**

20.♝xf7? ♜e5 21.♝e6 ♜c6 22.♝d5 ♜xd5 23.cxd5 ♜xd5†.

**20...♝d4 21.♝xd4 cxd4† 22.♛c2 ♜c7 23.♝ac1 ♜c8 24.♝e4**

24.♝f3!.

**24...♝d5**

24...♝xe4!?.

25.c5 bxc5 26.Qxc5 Qf4 27.b4 d3!?

27...f5!; 27...e5!?.

28.exd3 Qd4

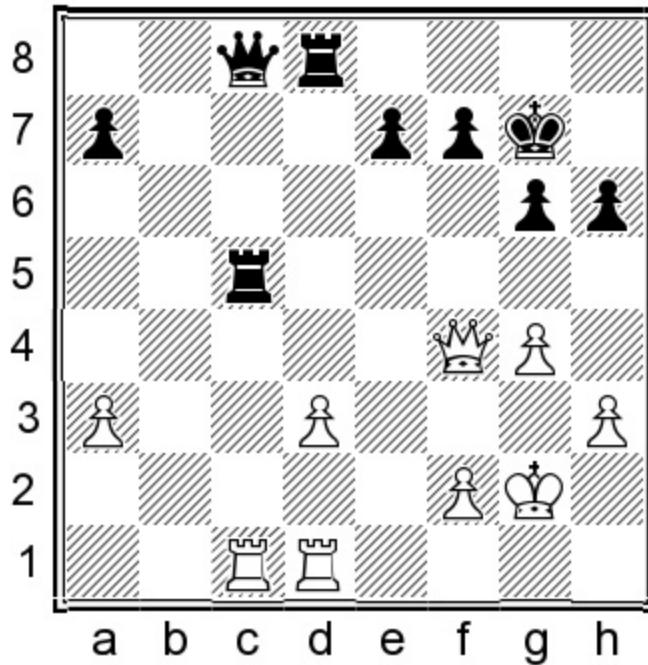
28...h5!?.

29.Qd2 Qxg2

29...e5!?.

30.Qxg2 Qxc5 31.bxc5 Qxc5 32.Qf4 Qg7

### Exercise 90



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 90

33.d4?

According to Stockfish, there were two good survival possibilities: 33. $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  35. $\mathbb{Q}c7$  a6 36. $\mathbb{W}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37.d4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38.d5  $\mathbb{W}d6$  39. $\mathbb{W}xd6$  exd6 40. $\mathbb{Q}a7$  -0.43;

and 33. $\mathbb{Q}e1!$   $\mathbb{W}c6+$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  36.d4  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  38. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a5 39. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  40. $\mathbb{W}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  -0.42.

### 33.d4? $\mathbb{W}b7+$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}cd5!$

Attacking the  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  and preparing the ...e7-e5 break, as well as avoiding an exchange of queens, since in a rook ending White would have greater survival chances. Less precise would have been 34... $\mathbb{Q}b5?$ ! 35. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  36.a4  $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}dc1$   $\mathbb{Q}8d7$  38. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xg3+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  a6 44.h4+.

### 35. $\mathbb{Q}c7$

35. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}8d6$  (35... $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  36. $\mathbb{W}e5+$ ) 36. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  e6+.

### 35... $\mathbb{W}b8!$ 36. $\mathbb{W}g3$

36. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}8d7!$  37. $\mathbb{Q}dc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ .

### 36...e5 37. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}b5$

37... $\mathbb{W}b6!?$ ; 37... $\mathbb{W}b2!?$ .

### 38. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

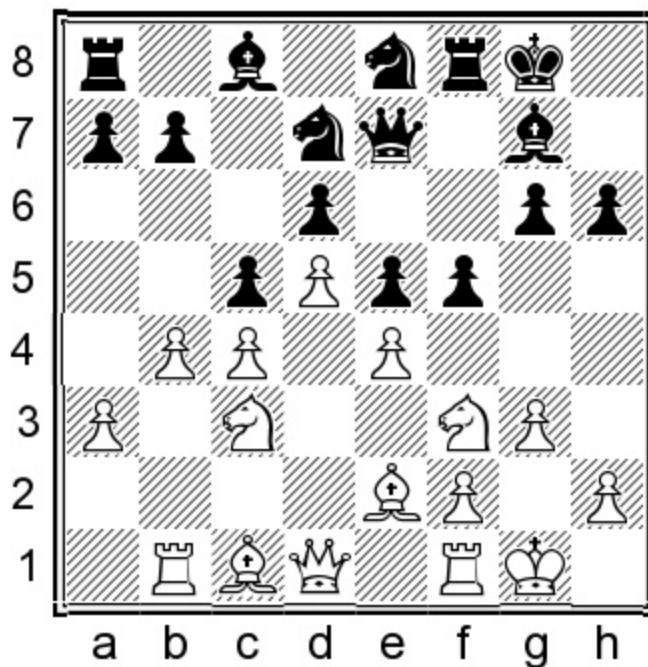
39. $\mathbb{Q}g2!?$  exd4 40. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

39...exd4 40. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}bb7$   $\mathbb{Q}8d7-$ + 42. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  d3 44. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  d2 45. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}e2$  46. $\mathbb{W}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  47.a4  $\mathbb{W}e5+$  48. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}e4+$  49. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$  50. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e2$  0-1

Show in Text Mode

## Restricted mobility in the King's Indian Defence

### Exercise 91



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 91

13.  $\mathbb{Q}h4!$   $\mathbb{W}f6$

13...  $\mathbb{E}f6$  14.  $e$ x $f$ 5  $g$ x $f$ 5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  16.  $f$ 4  $e$ 4 17.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$ +–.

14.  $e$ x $f$ 5  $g$ x $f$ 5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$

15.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ !?

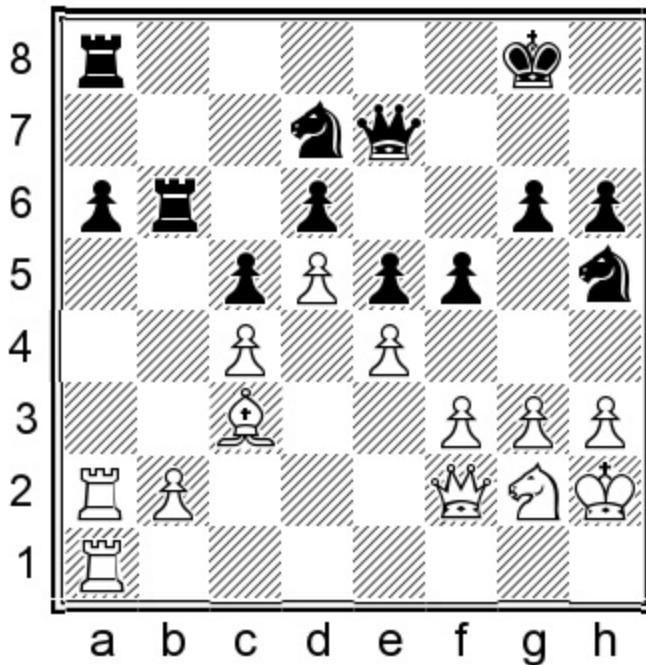
15...  $b$ 6 16.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $e$ 4 17.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$

17... $\mathbb{W}f7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c3+-.$

18. $\mathbb{B}xb2$   $fxe4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe4+-$

Kuzmin-Tal, Leningrad 1973.

### Exercise 92



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 92

34.g4??

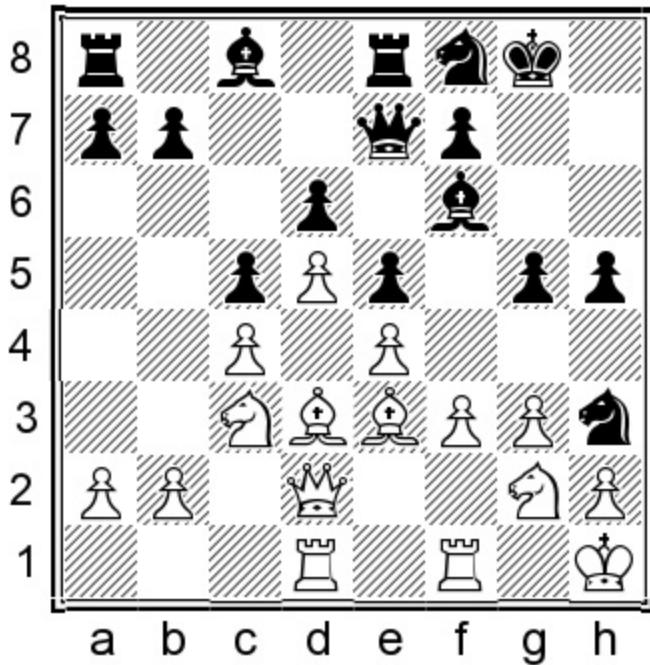
34.exf5 gxf5 35. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  36.f4! e4 37. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  39.g4+-.

34.g4?!  $f\mathbf{x}g4$  35. $f\mathbf{x}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  37. $\mathbb{B}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}xa6$  38. $\mathbb{B}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}xf4=$

Borisenko-Petrosian, Kiev 1954.

38... $e\mathbf{x}f4!?$ .

### Exercise 93



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 93

**19.f4?!**

By driving away the ♜h4 with ...g6-g5, Black weakened the f5-square, which White could now exploit by freeing the e3-square for his ♜g2: 19.♗c2! ♜d7 (or 19...g4 20.fxg4 hxg4 21.♗d2 ♜g5 22.♗xg5 ♜xg5 23.♗h4 ♜fh7 24.♗f5+-) 20.♗d2 ♜h7 21.♗e3 ♜h8 22.♗f5+-.

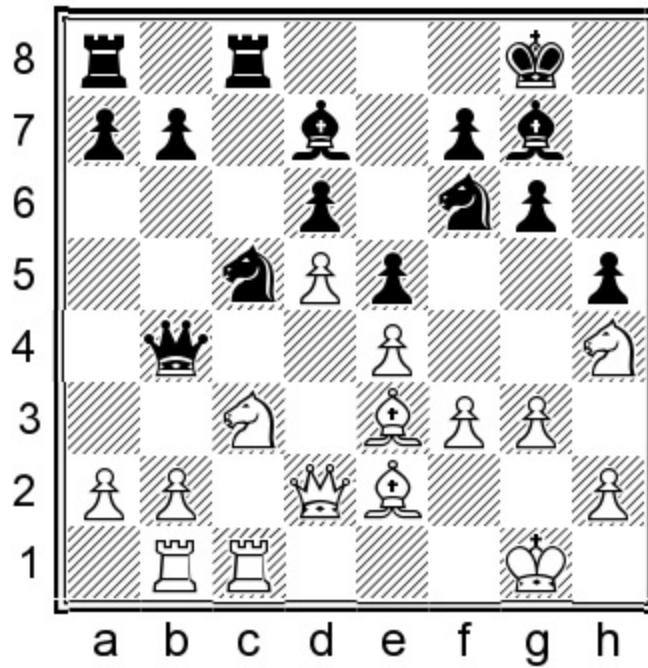
**19.f4?! gxf4 20.gxf4 ♜g4 21.♗de1?**

21.♗e2! ♜g6 22.f5±.

**21...exf4 22.♗xf4 ♜xf4=**

Pelletier-Perez Candelario, Batumi ol 2018.

### Exercise 94



*White to move*

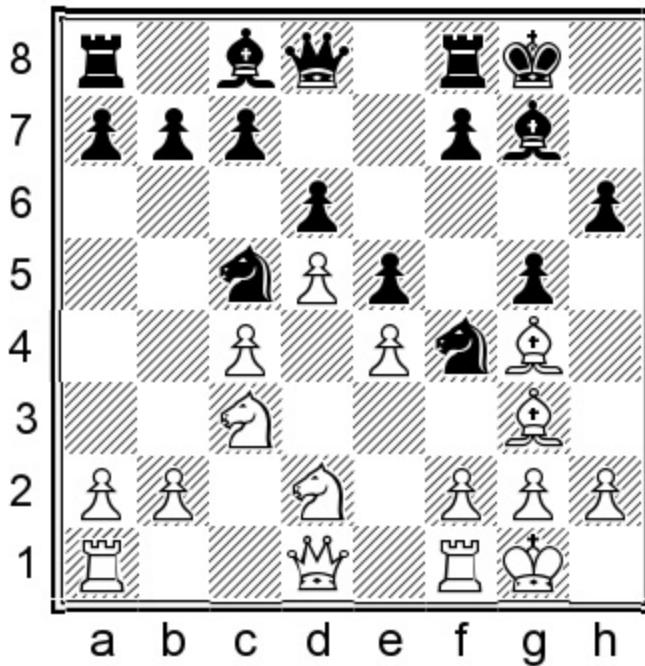
Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 94

18.a3! ♕b3 19.♕d1 ♕c4 20.b4 ♔a6 21.♔a2

Winning the queen, 1-0 Sakaev-Sharif, St Petersburg/Paris 1996.

### Exercise 95



*Black to move*

*Which black move is dubious and which moves are good for Black?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 95

As indicated in the notes to the game Petrosian-Yukhtman, 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  13. $\mathbb{Q}dxe4$  f5 and 12... $\mathbb{Q}xg4!$  13. $\mathbb{W}xg4$  h5! are good continuations, perhaps 12...c6 as well.

**13...a5?! 14.f3!  $\mathbb{Q}cd3$  15. $\mathbb{W}c2$  h5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$**

17.a3 c6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  19.g3  $\mathbb{W}b6+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  21. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e3$  22. $\mathbb{Q}ad1\pm$ .

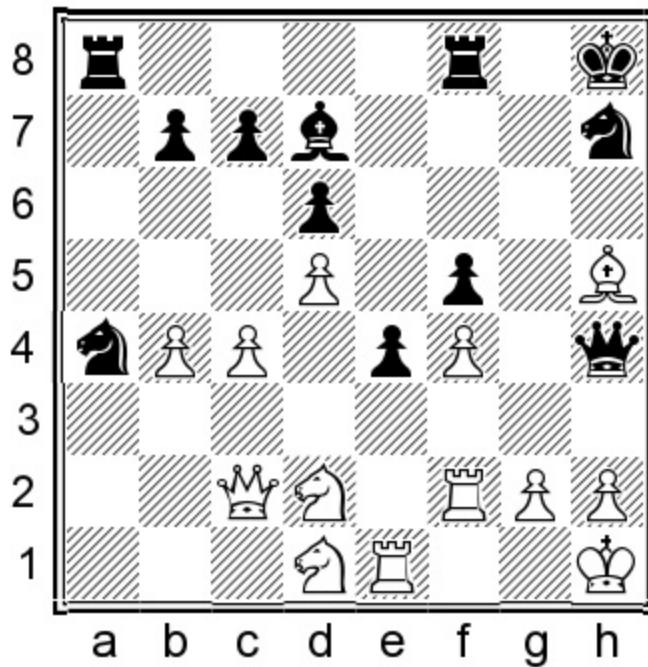
**17...c6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  19.g3  $\mathbb{Q}h3+?$**

19... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f2\pm$ .

**20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g4 21.fxg4 hxg4 22. $\mathbb{Q}f5+-$**

Horvath-Pesztericz, Zalakaros 1994.

## Exercise 96



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 96

**26.♕g6!**

26.♕e2?? e3 27.♗f3 exf2!.

**26.♕g6! ♗f6**

26...♝g8 27.♔f7 ♘g7 28.♔e6.

**27.♔e3 ♔g7 28.♔h3!**

The key idea!

28.♔g3?? ♗g4.

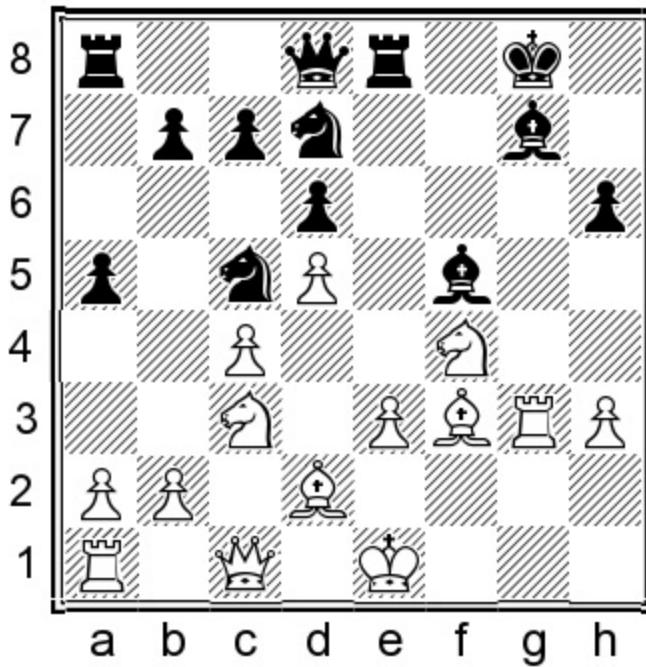
**28...♛xh3**

28...♛g4 29.♔g3 ♛xg3 30.hxg3 ♘h8+ 31.♔g1 ♔xg6 (31...♗g4 32.♔xf5! ♕xf5 33.♔e2+-) 32.♔e3+-.

29.gxh3 ♕xg6 30.♕e3+–

Zlotnik-Candela, Alcala de Henares 2014.

### Exercise 97



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 97

This game was played after Kramnik-Nakamura.

22.♔e2! ♔e5

22...♔h8!? 23.e4 ♔e7 (23...♗xe4 24.♗xe4 ♔xe4 25.♔xe4 ♔xe4+ 26.♔f3±) 24.♔g1 ♔h7 25.♔e3±.

23.♔g1

23.♔h1!? ♔h7 24.♔ag1 ♔h8 25.♔g2 ♔g8 26.e4 ♔xg3 27.♔xg3 ♔d7 28.♗g6+–.

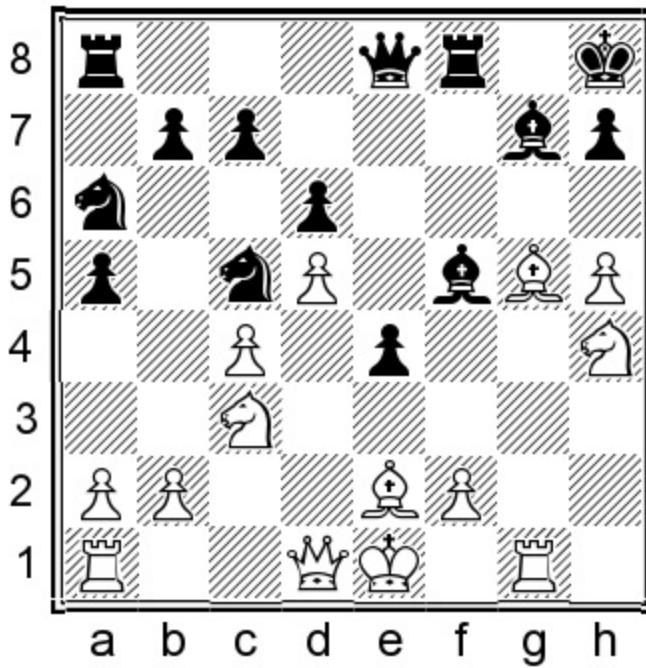
23...♔e7 24.♔g2! ♔h7 25.♔g1 ♔f8 26.♔h5 ♔f6 27.e4 ♔g5 28.♔xg5 hxg5 29.♔xg5 ♔g7

29... $\hat{Q}h8$  30.exf5!  $\hat{Q}f7+$  31. $\hat{Q}d1$   $\hat{Q}xg5$  32. $\hat{Q}g6+$ .

30. $\hat{W}xg7++-$

Vorobiov-Karthik, Zürich 2017.

### Exercise 98



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 98

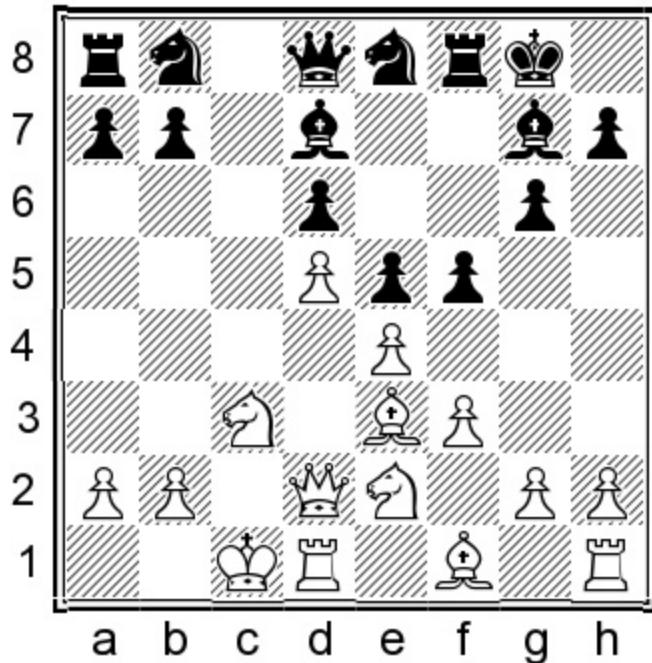
17. $\hat{Q}e3!$   $\hat{Q}b4?$

17... $\hat{Q}e5$  18. $\hat{Q}g5$   $\hat{Q}h3$  19. $\hat{Q}d2\pm$ ; 17... $\hat{W}e7!$  18. $\hat{Q}xg7$   $\hat{W}xg7$  19. $\hat{Q}d2$   $\hat{W}f6$  20. $\hat{W}h1$   $\hat{R}ae8$  21. $\hat{R}g1$   $\hat{R}g8$  22. $\hat{Q}xf5$   $\hat{W}xf5$  23. $\hat{Q}d4+\pm$ .

18. $\hat{Q}xg7!$   $\hat{Q}xg7$  19. $\hat{Q}d4+$   $\hat{Q}g8$  20. $\hat{Q}d2!$  e3+ 21.fxe3  $\hat{Q}e4+$  22. $\hat{Q}xe4$   $\hat{W}xe4$  23. $\hat{Q}xf5$   $\hat{W}xf5$  24.a3+-

Krasenkow-Erdogdu, Turkey tt 2017.

### Exercise 99



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 99

**12.exf5 gxf5 13.g4!**

Taking advantage of the fact that the ♜c8 has already moved.

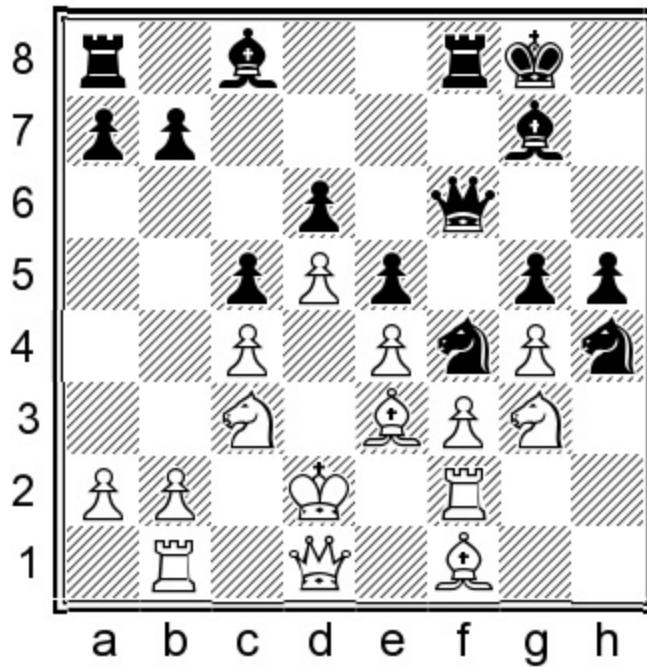
**13...fxg4 14.fxg4 ♜xg4 15.♗g1 ♜h5?!**

15...♝f6 16.h3 ♜h5 17.♗e1 ♜bd7 18.♝g3 ♜g6 19.h4±.

**16.♗g5! ♜g6 17.♗h3±**

Khismatullin-Zhigalko, Aix-les-Bains 2011.

### Exercise 100



*Black to move  
Evaluate 24... ♜xf3.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 100

24... ♜xf3+?

24... ♘h6!?.

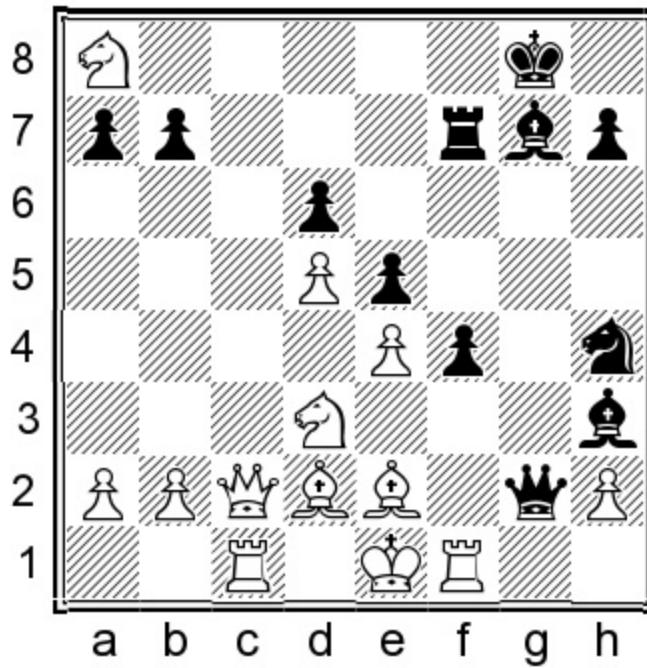
24... ♜xf3+? 25. ♘xf3 ♗xg4 26. ♘h1 h4 27. ♜f5! ♗xf5 28. exf5 ♘xf5

28...g4 29. ♘d3 g3 30. ♜e4! ♘h6 (30... ♘xf5 31. ♜xf4! gxsf2 32. ♜e3+–) 31. ♜f3 ♘h5 32. f6!? ♘xf6 33. ♜xg3 hxg3 34. ♜xf4 ♘xh1 35. ♜g4+–.

29. ♘e2+–

Van Wely-Flores, Istanbul 2012.

### Exercise 101



*White to move*  
**24.♕e3 or 24.♗f2 ?**

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 101

**24.♕e3?**

24.♗f2! ♗f3+ (24...♔d7 25.♗c7 ♔f8 26.♗d8+-) 25.♔d1 ♗xh2 26.♗xh3 ♗xf1 27.♗c8++-.

**24.♕e3? ♘xe4**

24...fxe3?? 25.♗xf7 ♔xf7 26.♔h5+.

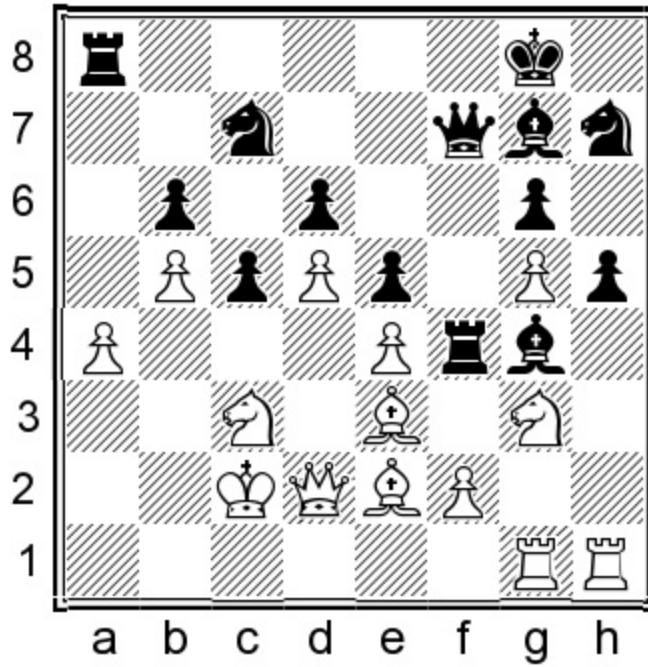
**25.♗f2 f3??**

25...♗g2+!.

**26.♗xh4 ♘xh4+ 27.♗f2 fxe2 28.♘xe2 e4=**

Larsen-Tal, Eersel 1969.

### Exercise 102



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 102

**29.f3!**

29.♕xf4? exf4 30.♗xh5! (30.♗f1?? ♔xc3 31.♔xc3 ♕xa4+) 30...♔xh5 31.♕xh5 gxh5 32.g6 ♘f6 33.gxh7+ ♔xh7± 34.♔xh5 f3!=;

29.♗xh5!? gxh5 30.g6 ♘xg6 31.f3 ♗g5 32.fxg4 h4 33.♘d3 ♗e8±.

**29.f3! ♕xf3**

29...♔xf3 30.♔xf3 ♕xf3 31.♗xh5!+–.

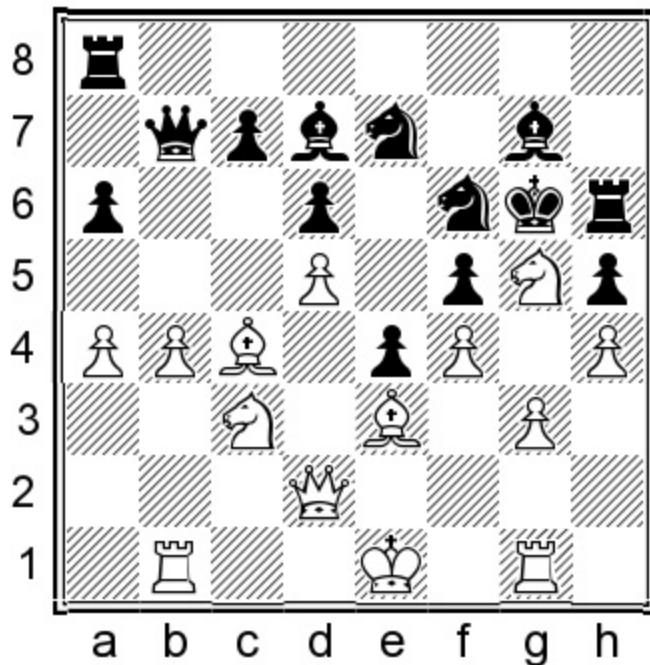
**30.♔xf3 ♘xf3 31.♘h2**

31.♘d3!? ♘f8 32.♗f1.

**31...♘f8 32.♗f2 ♘c8 33.♗f1+–**

Spassky-Petrosian, Moscow Wch m 1969.

### Exercise 103



*Black to move*

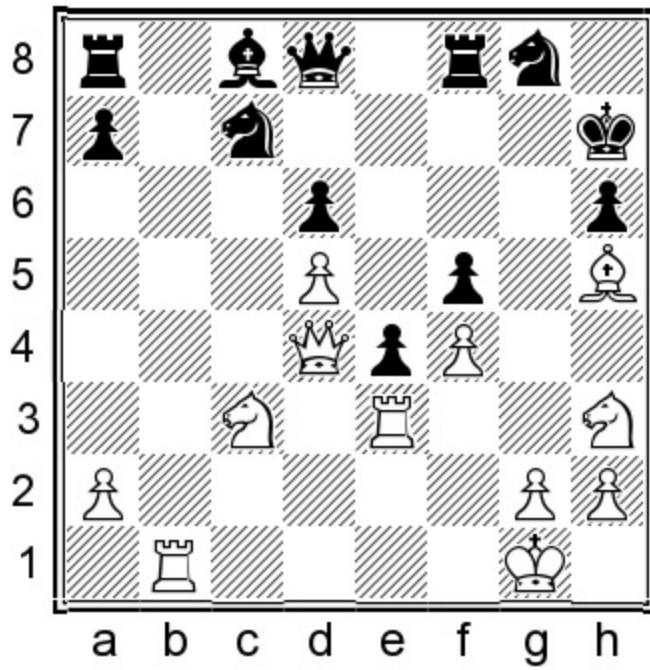
Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 103

28... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  30. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}b6!$  31. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $cxb6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}hh8!$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}hc8\#$  34. $\mathbb{E}gc1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  35. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $a5!$  36. $b5$   $\mathbb{E}c5\#$

Pavlov-Kovalenko, Riga 2018.

### Exercise 104



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 104

**25.♗g6+!**

Or 25.♕xe4! fxe4 26.♗g6+.

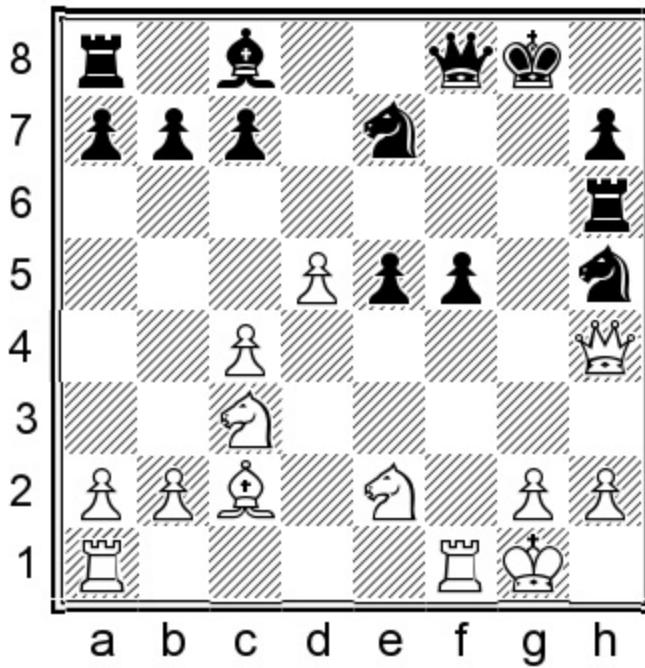
**25.♗g6+! ♔xg6 26.♕g3+ ♔f7 27.♗g7+ ♔e8 28.♗b7??**

28.♕xe4! fxe4 29.♔xe4+ ♔e7 30.♔e1 ♔e6 (30...♔f7?? 31.♔g6) 31.dxe6 ♔a5 32.♔d1+–.

**28...♔e7 29.♔a4+ ♔d7–+**

Vazquez Igarza-Shabalov, Moscow 2010.

### Exercise 105



*White to move  
Find the plan for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 105

First exchange the queens and then put pressure on the pawns at e5 and f5, not forgetting the possibility of  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ :

**17.  $\mathbb{W}g5+$ !**

17.  $\mathbb{Q}b5?$   $\mathbb{W}g7!$  18.  $\mathbb{W}f2$  (18.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7?? \mathbb{Q}f4!-+$ ) 18...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5 \mathbb{Q}xf5$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xf5 \mathbb{Q}gf4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4 \mathbb{Q}xf4$  22.  $g3 \mathbb{Q}e2+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}g2 \mathbb{Q}xh2+=;$

17.  $c5?$   $\mathbb{Q}h8!$  18.  $\mathbb{W}g5 \mathbb{Q}f6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g3 f4$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}ge4 \mathbb{Q}xe4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{Q}f5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}ae1 \mathbb{Q}g6=.$

**17.  $\mathbb{W}g5+! \mathbb{W}g7$  18.  $\mathbb{W}xg7+ \mathbb{Q}xg7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}ae1 \mathbb{Q}g6$**

19...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f4 e4$  21.  $g4!.$

**20.  $\mathbb{Q}b5! c6$  21.  $dxc6 bxc6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d6 \mathbb{Q}e7$**

22...  $f4$  23.  $c5.$

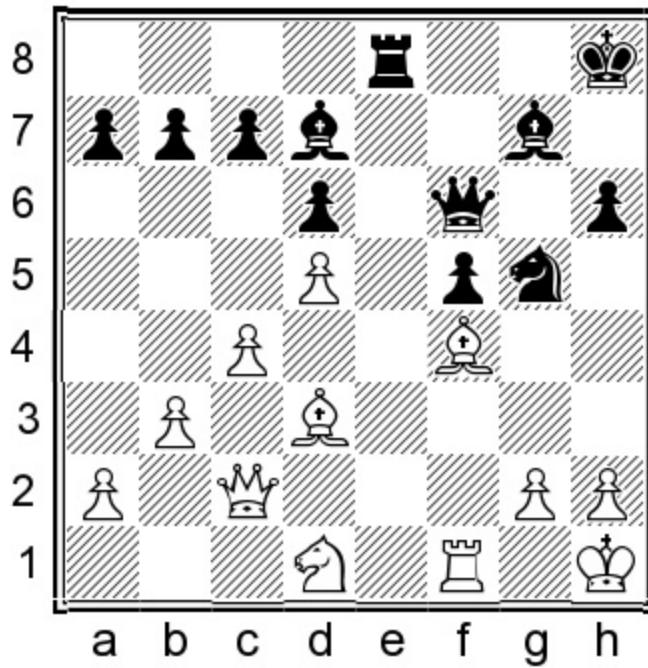
**23.  $c5?!\pm$**

23.  $\mathbb{Q}xc8!$   $\mathbb{B}xc8$  24. c5  $\mathbb{B}b8$  25.  $\mathbb{B}b3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , winning a pawn.

23...  $\mathbb{Q}e6\pm$

Demuth-Llaneza Vega, Andorra 2018.

### Exercise 106



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 106

23.  $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$

23.  $\mathbb{Q}c1!$  a6 24.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  (26...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (27. g4!?)) 27.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  29. g3 b6 30.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4\pm$ .

23.  $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$  c6??

23...  $\mathbb{W}e7!?$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (24.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  28.  $dxe6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5=$ ) 24...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $f xe4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e3\pm$ ; 23...  $\mathbb{W}g6!?$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (24.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ) 24...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  a6 $\pm$ .

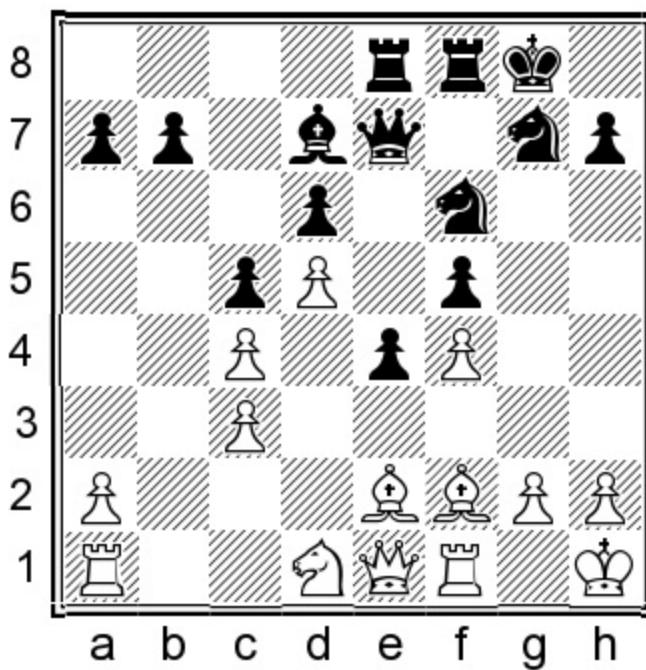
24.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7+?!$

25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  27.  $dxc6$   $bxcc6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  29.  $\mathbb{W}b2+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}f1\pm$ .

25...  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  26.  $dxc6$   $bxcc6$  27.  $\mathbb{W}f2\pm$

Kakageldyev-Karlik, Marianske Lazne 2016.

### Exercise 107



*Black to move  
Evaluate 19...e3.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 107

19...  $e3?$

19...  $\mathbb{Q}a4!?$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4!?$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $fxg4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $e3$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4\pm$ .

19...  $e3?$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}h4!$

20.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3??$   $\mathbb{Q}a4-$ ; 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $fxg4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5\mp$ .

**20...♝a4**

20...♝h8 21.♝f3 ♜f7 22.♝xf6 ♜xf6 23.g3; 20...♜f7 21.♝xf6 ♜xf6 22.♝f3.

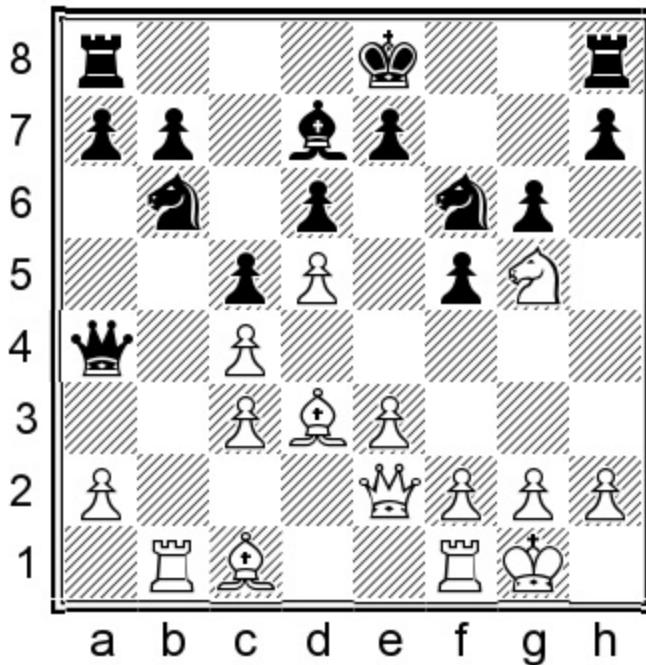
**21.♝f3 ♜xd1 22.♝xd1 ♜d7 23.♝xf6 ♜xf6 24.♝h4**

24.♝h3! ♜g6 25.♝d3 ♜a4 26.♝e2±.

**24...♝g6 25.♝d3 b5 26.♝dxe3±**

Khodos-Kavalek, Krakow 1964.

### Exercise 108



*Black to move  
13...♝e4 or 13...h6 ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 108

**13...♝e4?**

13...h6! 14.♝b3 (14.♝h3 e5!) 14...♝bx d5 (14...e5!? 15.dxe6 (15.♝a3 ♜xa3 16.♝xa3 hxg5≈) 15...hxg5

16.e4 f4 17.e5 ♜xe6 18.♕xg6+ ♔f8 19.exf6 ♜d7=) 15.cxd5 hxg5 16.c4 b5 17.♖a3 ♜b4 18.♖b3 ♜a4=.

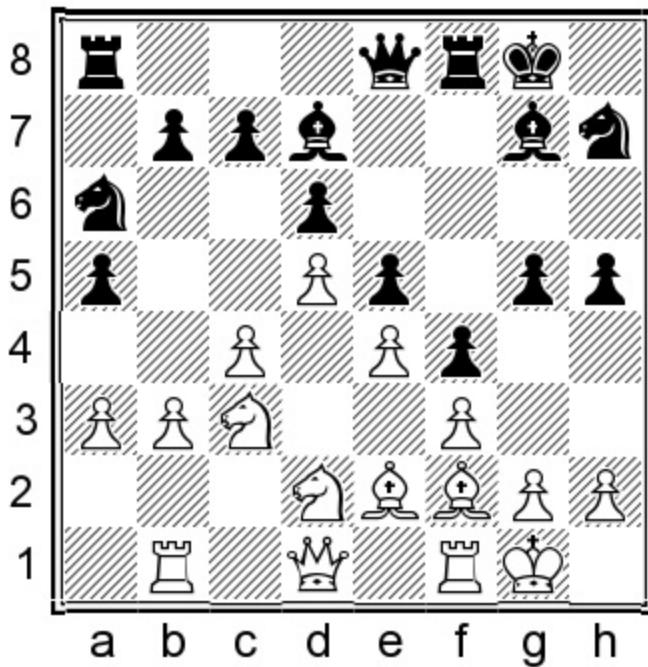
13...♝e4? 14.♖b3 ♜xg5

14...♜c8 15.♖a3 ♜d7 16.♝e6 ♜a4 (16...♝f6 17.e4!) 17.f3+–.

15.♖a3 ♜xa3 16.♜xa3+–

Bove-Okhotnik, Lodi 2007.

### Exercise 109



*White to move*

*Find the continuation that leads to a clear advantage for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 109

Tigran Petrosian

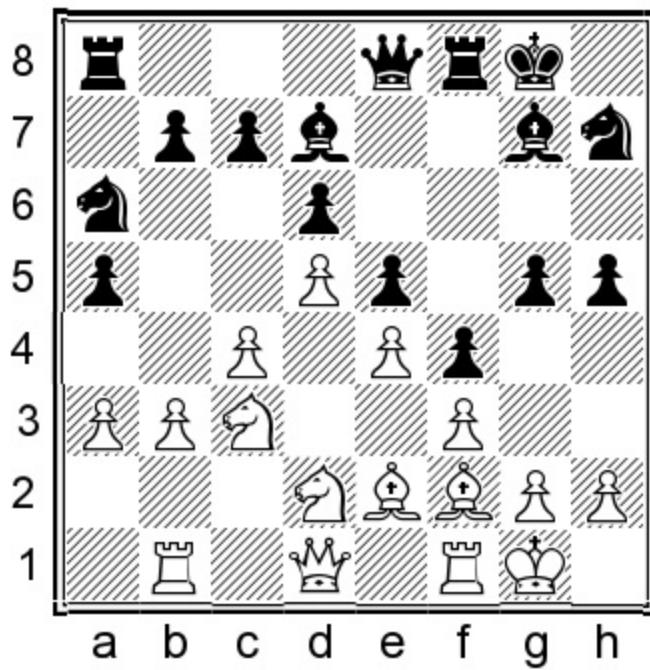
Zdenek Kottnauer

Lugano ol 1968 (6)

1.c4 ♜f6 2.♝f3 g6 3.♝c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0-0 6.♖e2 e5 7.d5 a5 8.♜g5 h6 9.♜h4 ♜a6 10.0-0 ♜e8

11.♘d2 ♘h7 12.a3

12.f3 ♖d7 13.b3 f5?! (13...h5!) 14.a3 f4 15.♖b1 g5 16.♖f2 h5

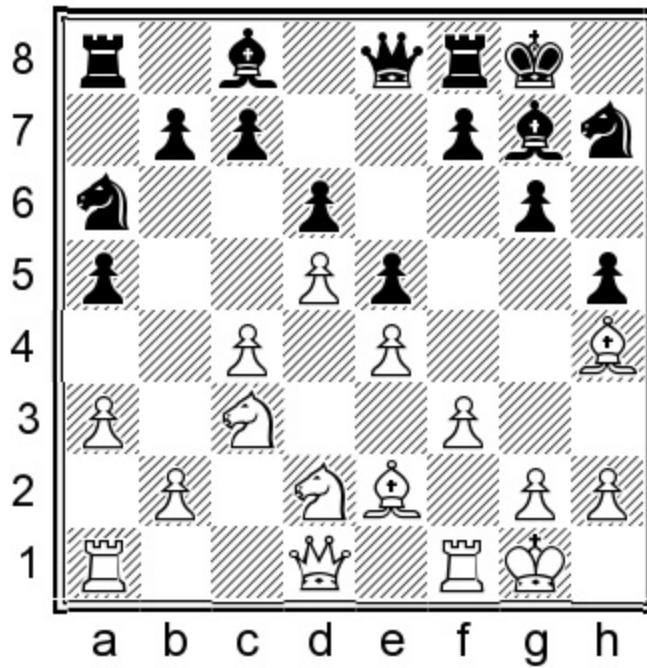


*White to move*

17.b4! axb4 18.axb4 ♗g6 (18...b6 19.♗d3 g4 20.♗e2 ♘g5 (20...♗g6 21.c5!) 21.♗h1 ♗c8 22.♗h4 ♗f6 23.♗xg5 ♗xg5 24.♗b3 ♘b8 25.c5±) 19.c5 g4 20.c6! bxc6 (20...g3 21.cxd7 gxf2+ 22.♗xf2 ♘g5 23.♗h1±; 20...♗c8 21.cxb7 ♗xb7 22.fxg4+– Timman-Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 1998) 21.dxc6 ♗e6 22.b5+– Nakamura-Bacrot, Biel 2012.

12...h5 13.f3

### Exercise 110



*Black to move*

*13...♝d7 or 13...♝h6 ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 110

**13...♝h6?**

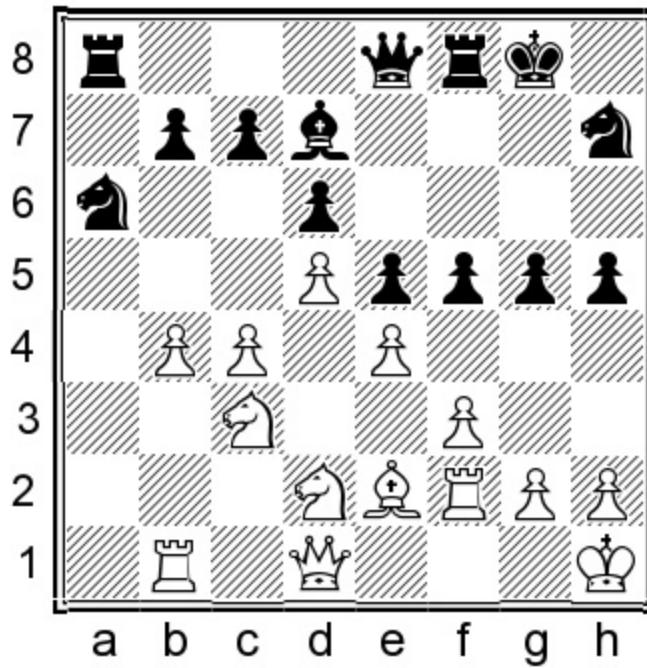
This allows White to play b2-b4 right away.

13...♝d7! 14.b3 (14.♝b1 a4) 14...♝h6 15.♝b1 ♚e3+ (15...♝c5!?) 16.♚h1 ♚c5 (16...f5!?).

**13...♝h6? 14.b4! ♘d7 15.♝b1 ♚e3+ 16.♚h1 f5**

16...axb4 17.axb4 g5 18.♝f2 ♘xf2 19.♝xf2 f5

### Exercise 111



*White to move*

*Find two ideas that lead to a better game for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

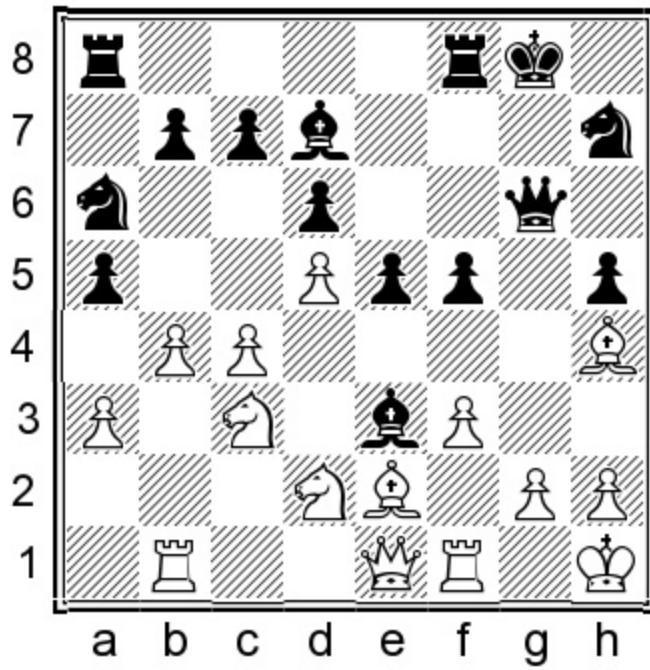
### Solution 111

20.c5! (20.exf5! ♖xf5 21.♗de4 (21.♗ce4!? ♜e7 22.♗d3 ♔h8 23.b5±) 21...♜g6 22.♗d3± Khenkin-Solana Suarez, Las Palmas 1994)

20.c5! dxс5 21.♖xa6 cxb4 22.♖xb7 bxc3 23.♖xa8±.

**17.exf5 gxf5 18.♕e1 ♜g6**

### Exercise 112



*White to move  
Evaluate 19.c5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 112

**19.♘f2??!**

19.c5! axb4 20.axb4 and now:

A) 20...dxc5? 21.♗xa6 ♗xd2 22.♗xd2 bxa6 23.bxc5+–;

B) 20...f4 21.c6± (21.♗c4!?);

C) 20...♗d4 21.c6 bxc6 22.dxc6 ♗xc6 23.♗c4+ ♔h8 24.♗e2 ♗e3 (24...♗b7 25.♗xd4 exd4 26.♗b3+–) 25.b5 f4 26.♗c3 (26.bxa6? ♗c2) 26...♗c2±.

**19.♘f2?? ♗h6 20.♗xe3 ♗xe3 21.♗b5 axb4 22.♗b3 ♗h6**

22...♗c5? 23.f4+–.

**23.axb4 ♗ae8**

23...c6!?.

**24.♗c3 ♗f6 25.c5!? dxc5 26.♗xa6 bxa6?!**

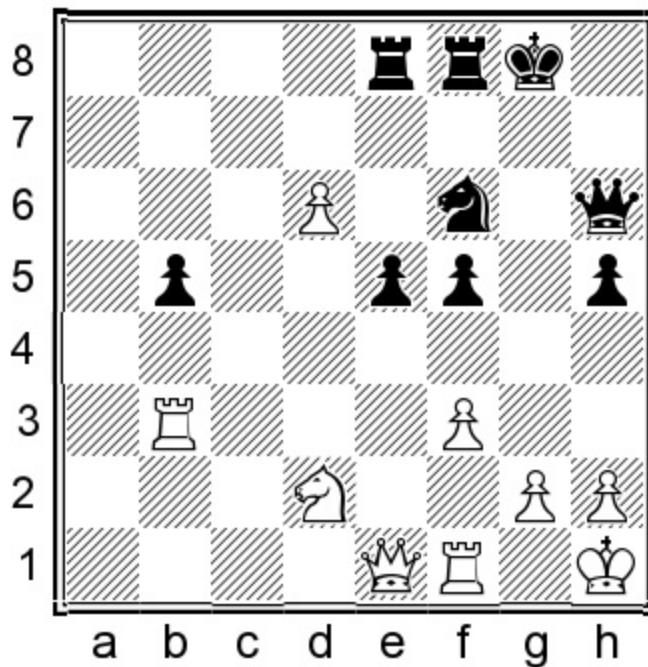
26...cxb4! 27.♗xb7 bxc3 28.♕xc3 ♜f7 29.♕xc7 ♜b5 30.♕xf7 ♔xf7 31.♕g1 e4=.

**27.bxc5 ♜b5?!**

27...e4!?.

**28.♗xb5 axb5 29.d6! cxd6 30.cxd6**

### Exercise 113



*Black to move  
30...♝b8 or 30...♞d5 ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 113

**30...♝b8?**

30...♞d5! 31.♝xb5 ♛xd6 32.♛g3+ ♔h8 33.♝fb1 ♛g8 34.♞c4 ♛f6 35.♛f2 ♞f4 36.g3 ♞g6 37.♝b6 ♜e6 38.♛d2 f4±.

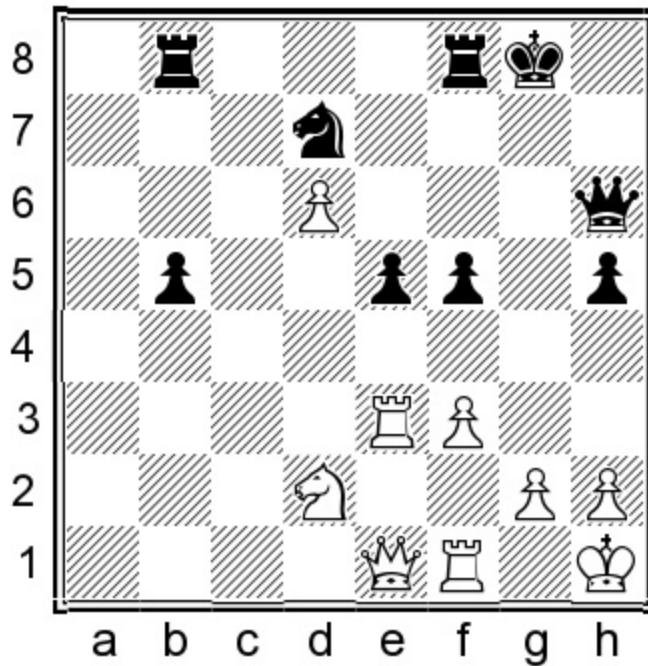
**30...♝b8? 31.♝e3±**

31.  $\mathbb{E}d3!?$ .

31...  $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

31...  $\mathbb{E}b6!?$  32.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}b3\pm.$

### Exercise 114



*White to move  
Find the winning line.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 114

32.  $f4!$   $e4$

32...  $exf4$  33.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  34.  $\mathbb{E}xf4!$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  35.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}bc8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}f3+-$ .

33.  $\mathbb{E}g3+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34.  $\mathbb{E}g5!$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

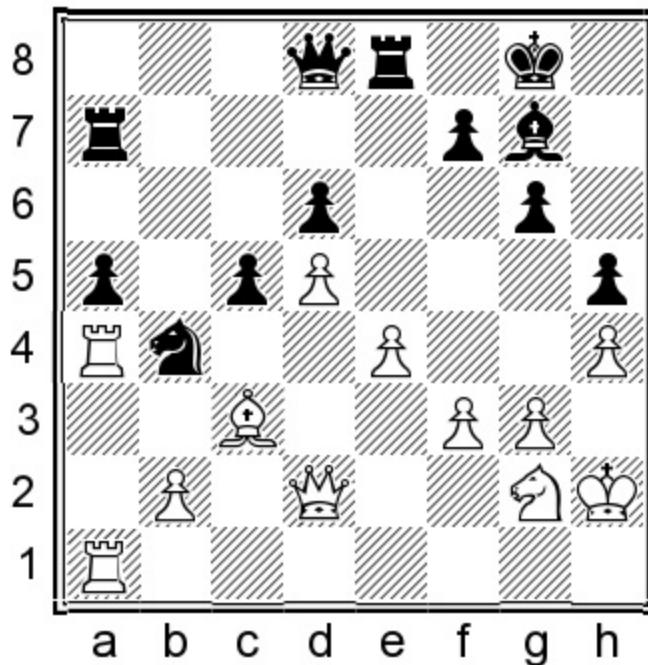
34...  $\mathbb{E}f7$  35.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{E}h7$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xf5+-$ .

35.  $\mathbb{E}xf5+-$   $\mathbb{W}h7$  36.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  37.  $\mathbb{W}a1$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  38.  $fxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  39.  $e6+$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $b4$  41.  $e7$  1-0

Show in Text Mode

Should we EFB?

Exercise 115



White to move

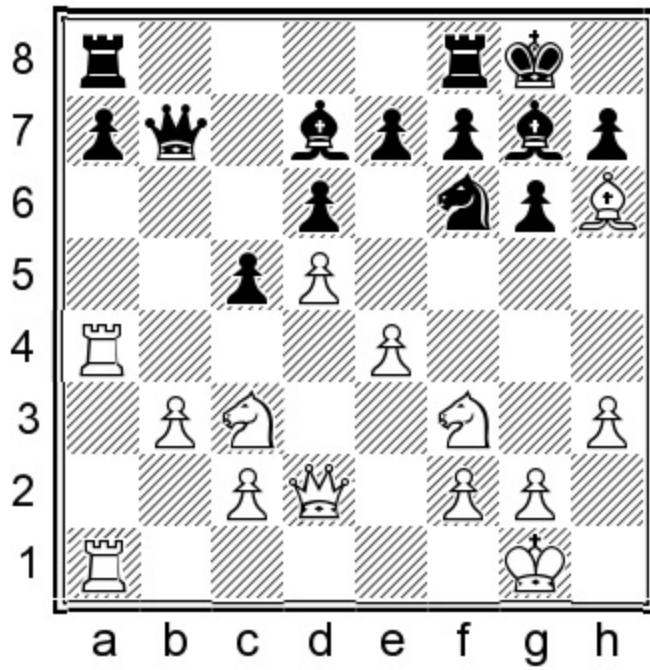
Show/Hide Solution

Solution 115

35.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  36.  $\mathbb{B}xb4!$   $cxb4$  37.  $\mathbb{W}d4+$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  38.  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  39.  $\mathbb{B}xa5+-$

Korobov-Durarbayli, Rhodes 2013.

Exercise 116



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 116

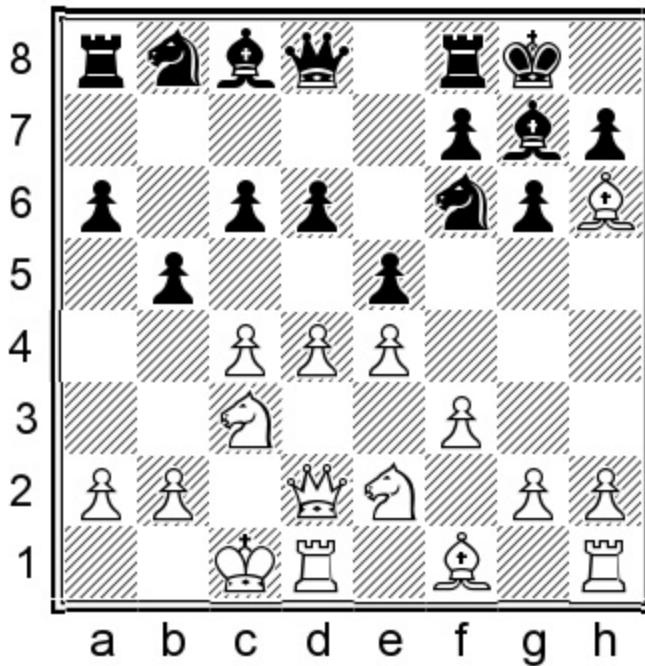
**20.e5! dxе5 21.¤h4 ♜h5?**

21...¤e8 22.¤xg7 ¤xg7 23.¤h6 f6 24.¤e4+–; 21...¤h8 22.¤xf8 ¤xf8 23.¤xe5+–.

**22.¤xh5 1-0**

Zhigalko-Rosenberg, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010.

### Exercise 117



*Black to move  
Find the plan for Black.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 117

First exchange the bishops, then counterattack on the queenside:

**10...♝xh6!?**

10...♛a5!? 11.♝xg7 ♛xg7 12.a3 ♜bd7 13.h4 h5±.

**10...♝xh6!?** **11.♝xh6 ♛a5** **12.g4?**

12.dxe5?! dxe5 13.h4 b4 14.♝b1 ♜bd7 15.♝d2 ♛xa2 16.♝c2 ♜c5±; 12.h4! ♜bd7 13.h5 b4 14.♝b1 ♛xa2 15.♝g3 ♜b6 16.c5 ♜c4 17.♝d2 ♜a5! (17...♜xd2? 18.♝xd2 ♛a1+ 19.♝b1 ♛a2 20.cxd6±) 18.cxd6 ♜b3+ (Stockfish gives 18...exd4 19.hxg6 ♜b3+ 20.♝c2 ♜a1+=) 19.♝c2 ♜a1+ 20.♝c1 ♜b3+ 21.♝c2 ½-½ Beliavsky-Kasparov, Linares 1993.

**12...b4** **13.♝b1 ♛xa2±** **14.♝g3 ♜bd7?**

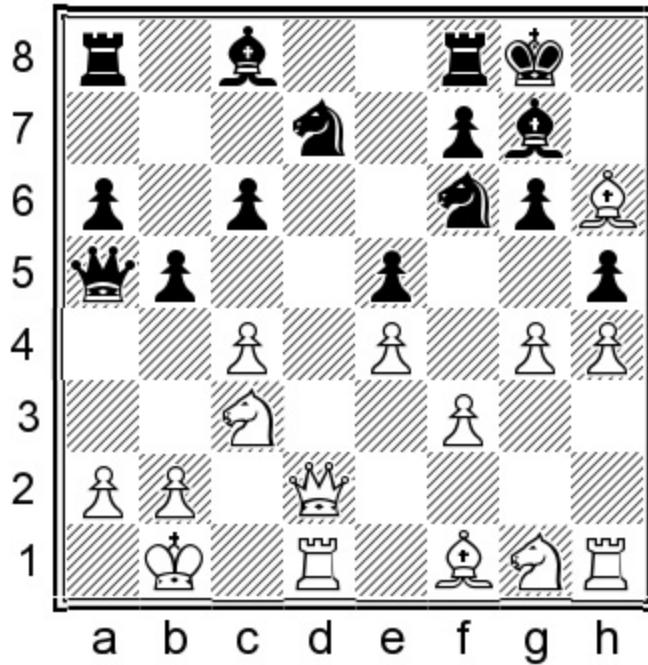
14...exd4! 15.♝xd4 ♛a5 16.♝xd6 ♛e5±; 14...a5!?.

**15.♝f5!** **gxf5** **16.gxf5 ♛h8** **17.dxe5** **dxe5** **18.♝g1=** **♝g8** **19.♝xd7** **♝xd7** **20.♝xg8+** **♛xg8** **21.♛g5+ ½-**

½

I.Sokolov-Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 1997.

### Exercise 118



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 118

14.♗xg7?!

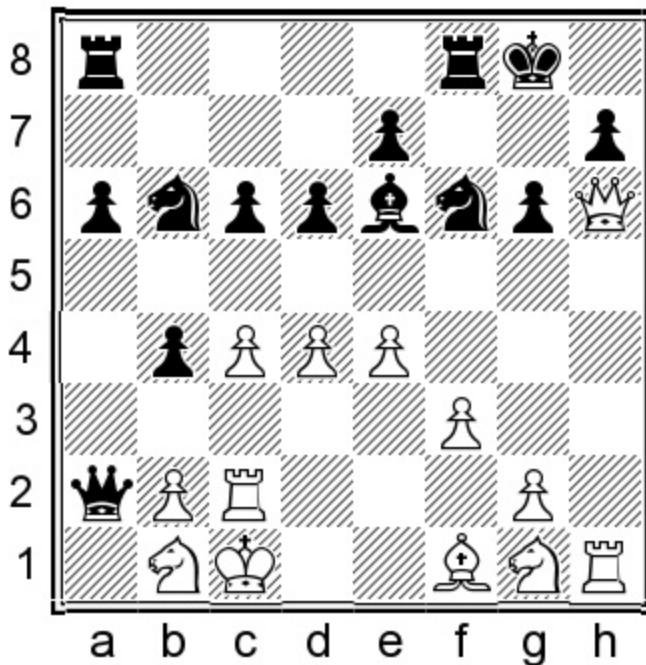
14.♗d5! ♖xd2 15.♗e7+ ♖h8 16.♗xd2 hxg4 (16...♗b7?! 17.g5 ♗h7 18.♗h3) 17.h5 gxh5 18.fxg4 ♕e8 19.♗xc8 ♕axc8 20.gxh5=.

14.♗xg7?!, ♖xg7 15.g5 ♗e8 16.♗h3 ♗b6

16...♕b8! 17.♗f2 (17.b3 ♗c7+) 17...♗c5 18.♗d3 ♗xd3 19.♗xd3 ♗d6+; 16...♗c7! 17.♗d6 bxc4 18.♗xc4 ♕b8+; 16...♗c5!.

17.c5 ♗d7 18.♗e2 ♖xd2 19.♖xd2 ♗c7 20.♗d6 ♗e6 21.♗xc6 ♗b7 22.♗d6 ♗dxc5+

### Exercise 119



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 119

17.e5?

17.♕h3! ♜xc4 18.e5 dxe5 19.♗g5! ♖f7 20.♗xf7±.

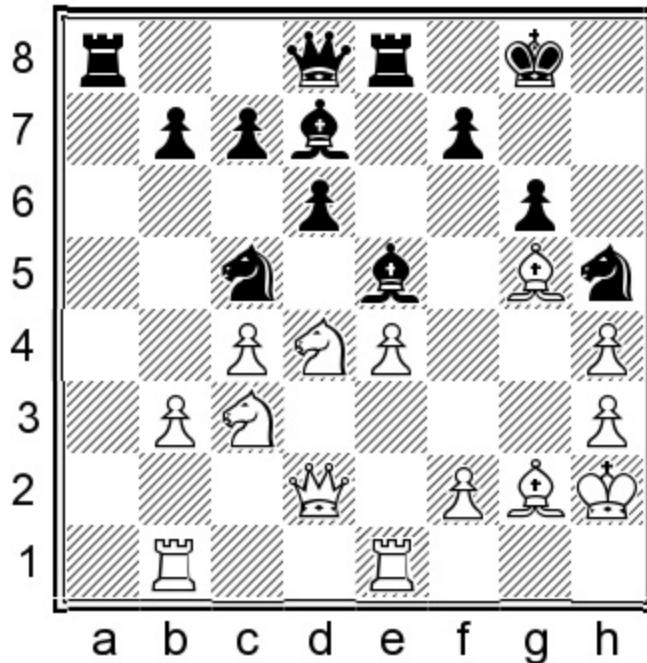
**17.e5? dxe5 18.dxe5 ♜f5 19.exf6 ♖f7+– 20.♘e3**

20.♘d2 b3.

**20...b3 21.fxe7 bxc2 22.♗c3 ♜a1+ 0-1**

Azmaiparashvili-Schmaltz, ICC 2002.

## Exercise 120



*White to move*  
20.f4 or 20.♔g1 ?

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 120

**20.f4?**

20.♔g1 ♕c8 21.♕d5 ♖xh3 22.♕f5!=.

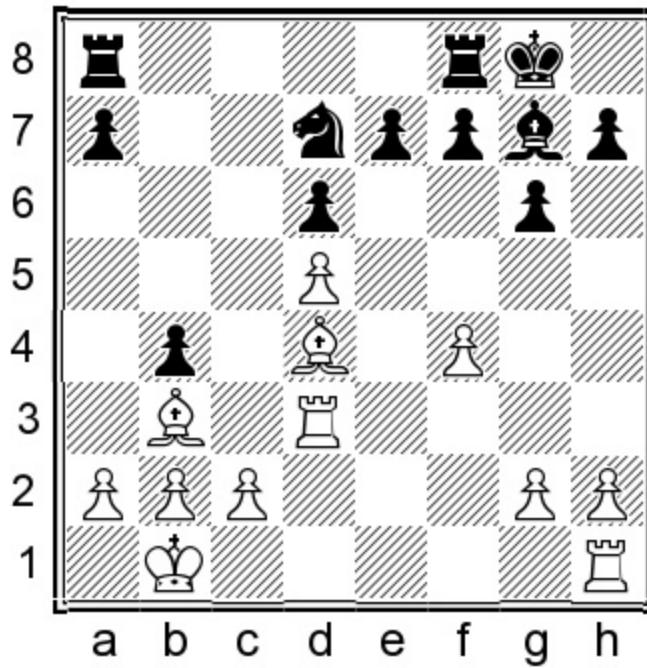
**20.f4? ♕xg5!**

20...f6? 21.fxe5 dxe5! 22.♕f3 fxg5 23.b4±; 20...♔f6? 21.♕f3.

**21.hxg5 ♖xf4+ 22.♕xf4 ♕xf4 23.♕d5 ♖xd5 24.exd5 ♖xe1 25.♖xe1 ♖a2†**

Wang Hao-Radjabov, Istanbul 2012.

## Exercise 121



*Black to move*

18...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  or 18...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 121

18...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ?

18...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ! 19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  a5 20.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ ! 22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (23. c3 bxc3 24. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}e2-$ +) 23...  $\mathbb{Q}e1+$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  25. c3 bxc3 26. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ -) 21...  $\mathbb{Q}a7\bar{\mp}$ .

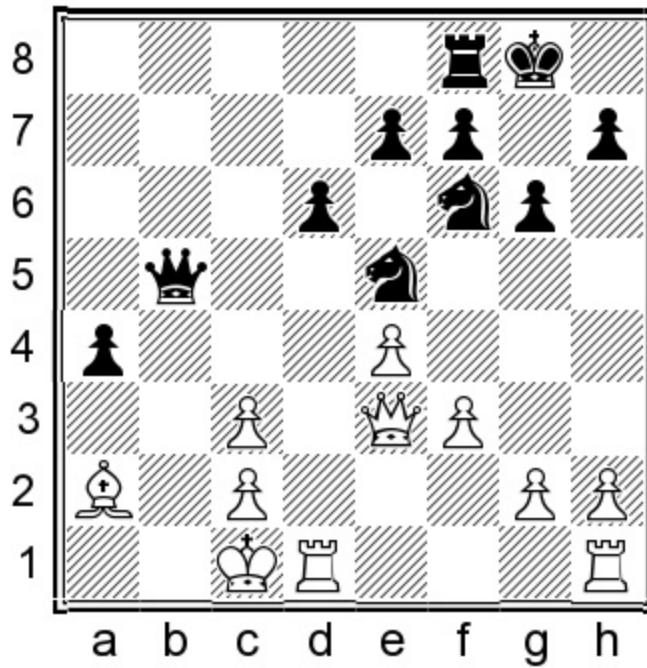
18...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ? 19.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ !  $dxc5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. g4 g5 22. fxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}ae8$

23...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$ !? 24. h4 f5 25. gxf5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e6\pm$ .

24. h4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25. g5 $\pm$

Karthikeyan-Vallejo Pons, Tbilisi 2017.

### Exercise 122



*White to move*

20. ♔d2 or 20. ♕d4 ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 122

**20.♕d4?!**

20.♔d2! ♔c6 (20...♔a5 21.♕b1 ♔fd7 22.f4±; 20...♔b2?! 21.♔a1 ♔b7 22.♔hb1±; 20...♔fd7 21.♔b1 ♔c6 22.♔b4±) 21.h4 ♔c8 22.♔b1 ♔a5 (22...♔e5?! 23.♔g5!) 23.♔b7 d5 24.♔b6 ♔xb6 25.♔xb6 dxе4 26.♔a6±.

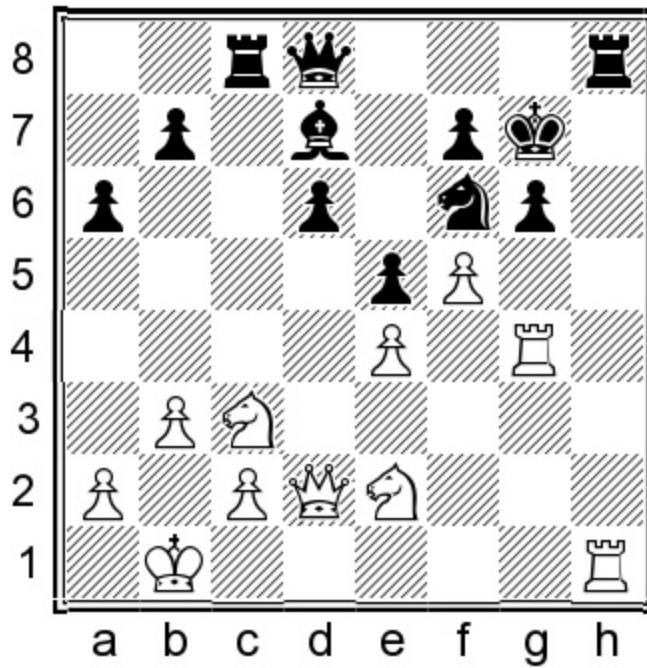
**20.♕d4?!** ♔c6 21.♔c4?!

21.♔dd1!.

21...♔d7±

Dzhumaev-Stocek, Trieste 2006.

### Exercise 123



*White to move*

25.  $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  or 25.  $\mathbb{Q}gg1$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 123

25.  $\mathbb{Q}gg1$ !?

25.  $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$ !? (27.  $f \times g 6$ !?)  $f \times g 6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  27...  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $g5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $b5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  32.  $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ +  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  (34...  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ ? 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ +  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ±) 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  36.  $c \times d 3$ ±.

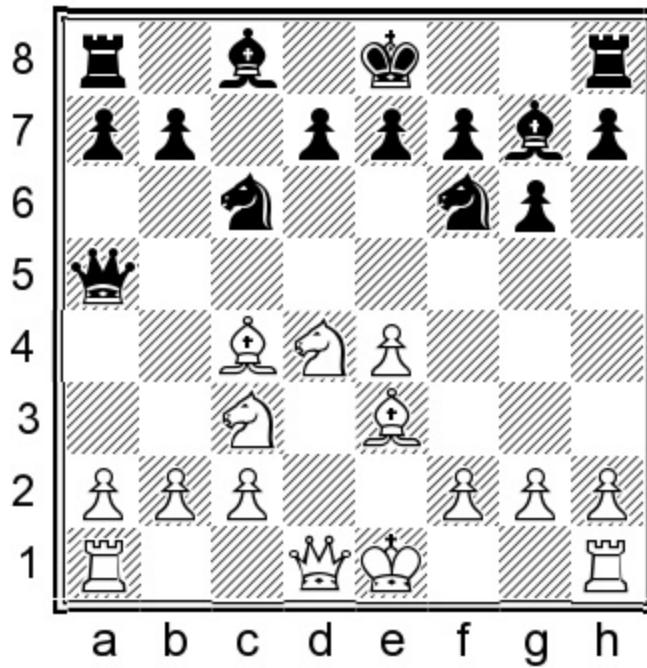
25.  $\mathbb{Q}gg1$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ! 26.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$

26.  $f \times g 6$   $f \times g 6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ ! 28.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ + (28.  $\mathbb{Q}xh1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ) 28...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xh1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ =.

26...  $\mathbb{Q}xh1$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xh1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ =

Haring-Turcan, Liptovsky Mikulas 2019.

### Exercise 124



*White to move  
Evaluate 8.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 124

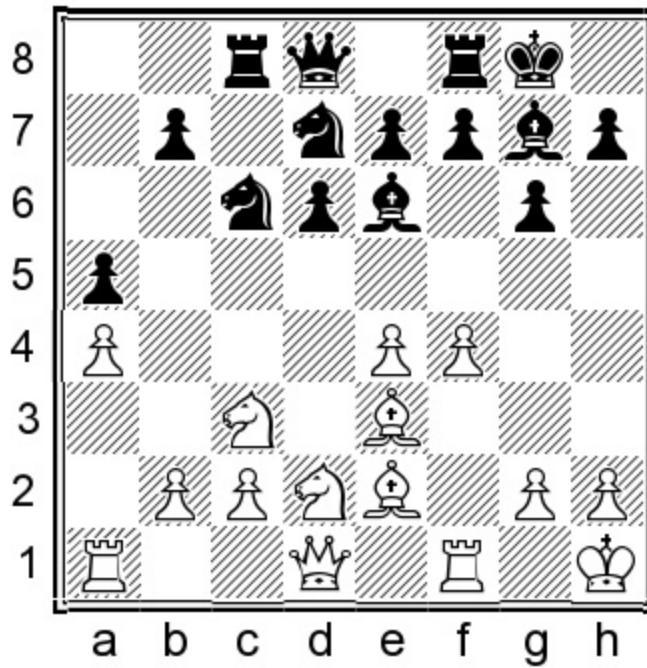
8.  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$

8.0-0.

8.  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$   $\mathbb{W}b4!$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  11.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{W}xe4\#$

Nakamura-Ljubojevic, Amsterdam 2009.

### Exercise 125



*Black to move  
Evaluate 13...Qd4.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 125

**13...Qd4!**

An original move.

There is also another, more complicated, way to reach equality: 13...Qc5!? 14.Qxc5 dxc5 15.Qc4 Qb4 16.Qxe6 fxe6 17.Qc4 Qxd1 18.Qxd1 Qxc2 19.e5 Qh6 20.g3 g5=.

**13...Qd4! 14.Qxd4 Qxd4 15.f5**

15.Qd3 Qc5.

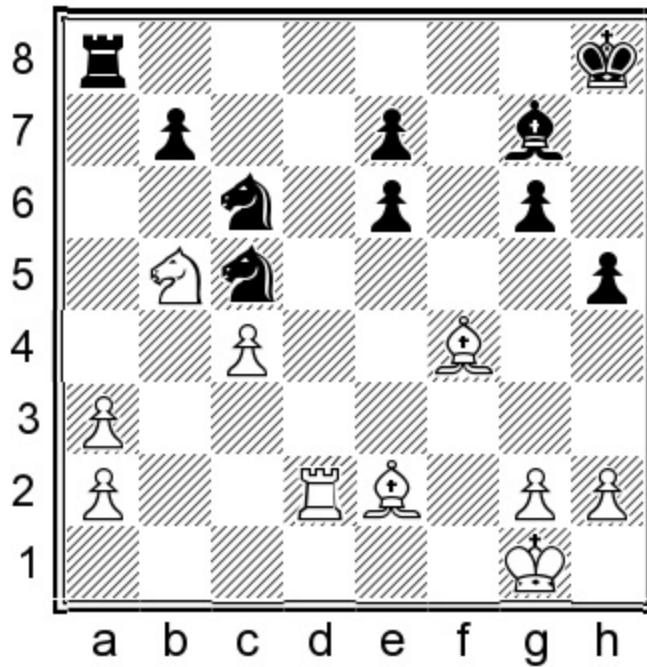
**15...gxf5 16.Qd3 f4!**

16...fxe4? 17.Qdxe4 f6 18.Qh5 Qe8 19.Qh4 Qf5 20.Qxf5 Qxf5 21.Qxd6 exd6 22.Qxf5 Qf7 23.Qb5±.

**17.Qxf4 Qe5 18.Qg1 Qdc6=**

Timman-Browne, Luzern 1982.

## Exercise 126



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 126

**27...♝h7!**

27...♝e5?! 28.♝e3 b6 29.♝xc5 bxc5 30.♝c7 ♜xa3 31.♝xe6=;

27...♝e4?! 28.♜d7=.

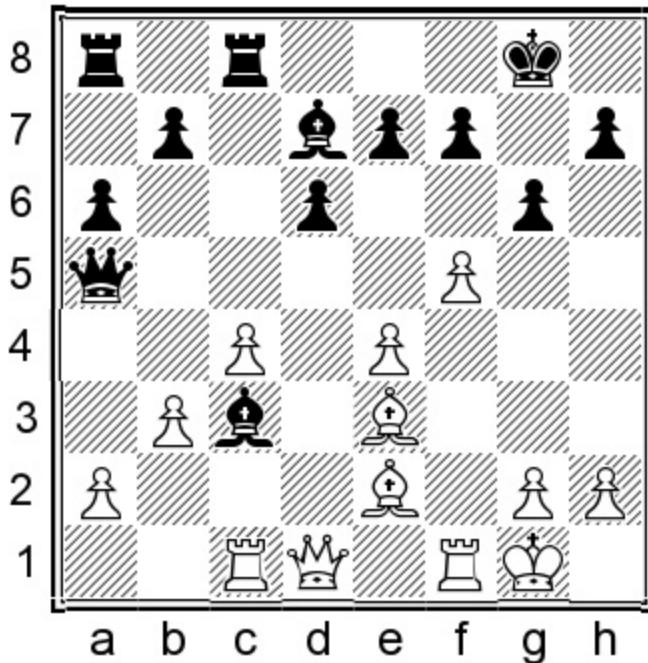
**27...♝h7! 28.♜d1**

28.♝c7 ♜h6 29.♜d1 ♜e3+ 30.♝f1 e5†.

**28...♜h6 29.♝xh6 ♜xh6 30.♝f2 ♜g5†**

Andersson-Alekseev, Bad Wiessee 2015.

## Exercise 127



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 127

**18.c5!**

18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  20. $\mathbb{W}c1$  f6;

18. $\mathbb{Q}g4!?$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  19. $\mathbb{W}f3$ .

**18.c5!  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$**

20... $\mathbb{W}e5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  22.fxg6 hxg6 23. $\mathbb{E}xf7!$ .

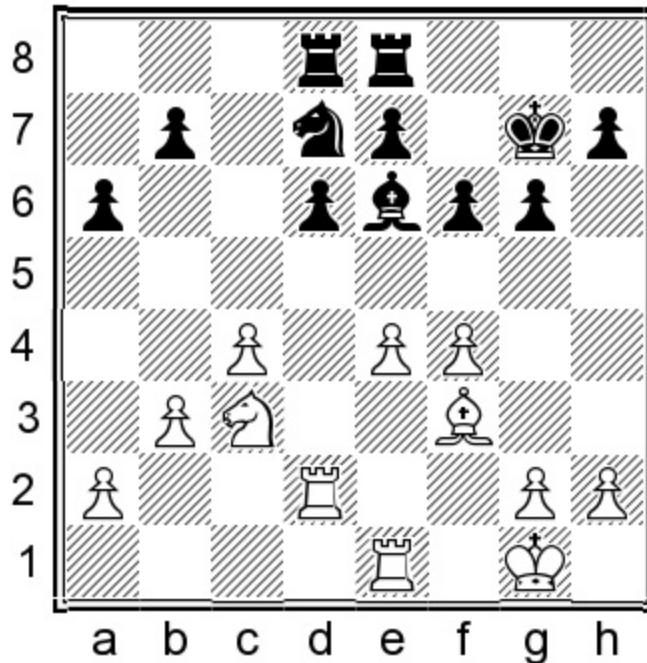
**21. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  22.fxg6 hxg6 23. $\mathbb{W}d5$  b5**

23... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xb7+/-$ ; 23... $\mathbb{Q}c6!?$  24. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d5\pm$ .

**24. $\mathbb{E}xf7!$  bxc4 25. $\mathbb{E}cf1!+/-$**

Tal-Vasiukov, Voroshilovgrad 1955.

## Exercise 128



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 128

**20.e5! dx<sub>e</sub>5**

20...fxe5!? 21.Qxb7 Qc5 22.Qf3 Qf5 (22...exf4? 23.b4) 23.g4! (23.fxe5? Qd3) 23...e4 24.Qd1 Qc8 25.Qxe4±.

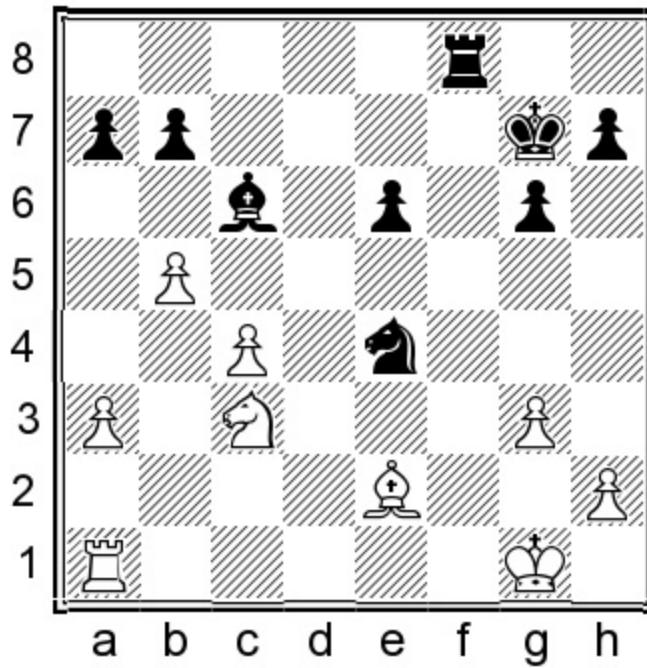
**21.Qed1! b5**

21...exf4 22.Qxb7 a5 23.Qc6+–.

**22.Qc6 bx<sub>c</sub>4 23.Qxd7+–**

Cmilyte-A.Muzychuk, Rijeka 2010.

## Exercise 129



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 129

**25.♘c1!**

25.♗xe4?! ♗xe4 26.♗d1 (26.c5?! ♘c8 27.♘c1 ♔f6) 26...b6 27.a4 ♔f6 28.♔f2 ♔e7+ 29.♔e3 ♗b7±.

**25.♘c1! ♗xc3 26.♗xc3± ♗d7 27.c5 ♘c8**

27...♗f7 28.a4 ♔f8 29.♔f3+-.

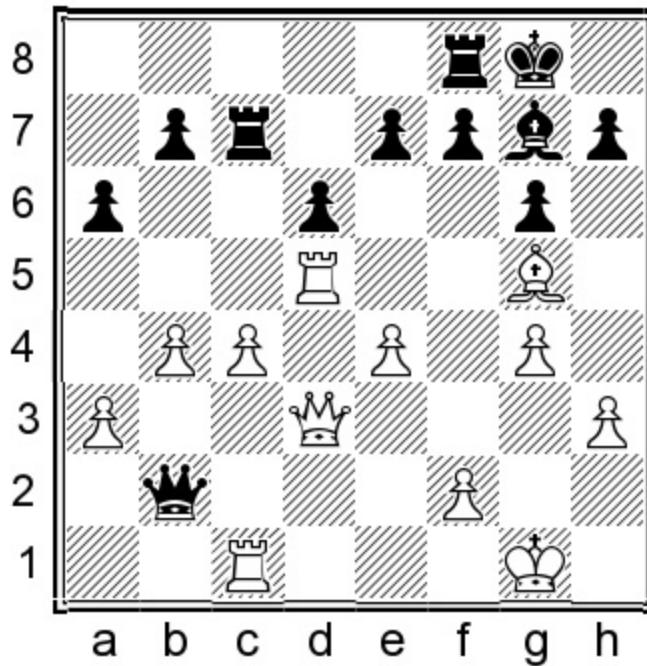
**28.a4 ♔f6**

28...e5 29.♔f2.

**29.♔f2 ♔e5 30.♔e3 ♗e8 31.♔f3 ♘c7 32.♔d3! g5 33.♔c4 h5 34.a5+-**

So-Mamedov, Shamkir 2015.

### Exercise 130



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 130

**26.c5!**

26.♗g2!? b6 27.♕c2 ♖a1 28.c5!.

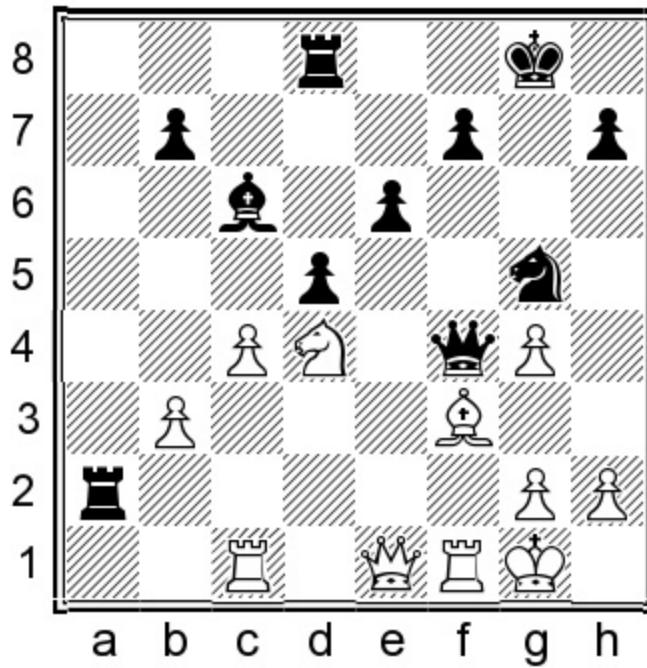
**26.c5! ♖fc8**

26...h6 27.♗e3 b5 28.♗g2±.

27.♗g2! ♖f8 28.cxd6 exd6 29.♖xc7 ♖xc7 30.e5! ♖c2 31.♗d2 dxe5 32.♖d8 ♗g7 33.♖e3 ♗e7  
34.♖h6+ ♗f6 35.♖h4+ ♗e6 36.♖e8+-

Kortchnoi-Hübner, Leningrad 1973.

### Exercise 131



*White to move  
30.♕d1 or 30.♗c2 ?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 131

30.♕d1?

30.♗c2! ♗xf3+ 31.♕xf3 ♘h6 32.♗b4!=;

30.♗xc6!? bxc6 31.♕d1±.

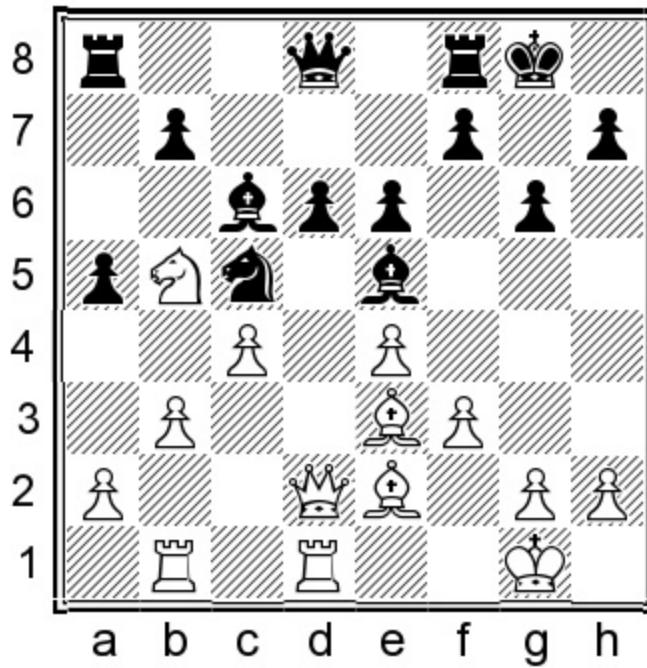
30.♕d1? dxс4!–+ 31.♗xc6 ♗h3+! 32.♔h1 ♗f2+ 33.♕xf2 ♕xd1 34.♘xd1 ♕xf2 35.♗e7+

35.♗a5 c3–+ (35...♘d2!?–+); 35.♗b4 ♘d2! 36.♘g1 cxb3–+.

35...♔f8 36.♘d8+ ♔g7 37.♔g1 ♘e3 38.♘g8+ ♔f6 39.♗d5+ exd5 40.g5+ ♔e7 0-1

Kuzubov-Guseinov, Doha 2014.

### Exercise 132



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 132

**17... $\mathbb{W}h4$  18.g3**

18.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}xe1+$  (19... $\mathbb{W}h6!?$ ) 20. $\mathbb{E}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7\#.$

**18... $\mathbb{Q}xg3!$  19.hxg3?**

19. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5\#.$

**19... $\mathbb{W}xg3+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  21. $\mathbb{W}b2$  f5**

21...e5!?.

**22. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

22...e5!? 23. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 24. $\mathbb{E}dc1$  f4 25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5-$ +

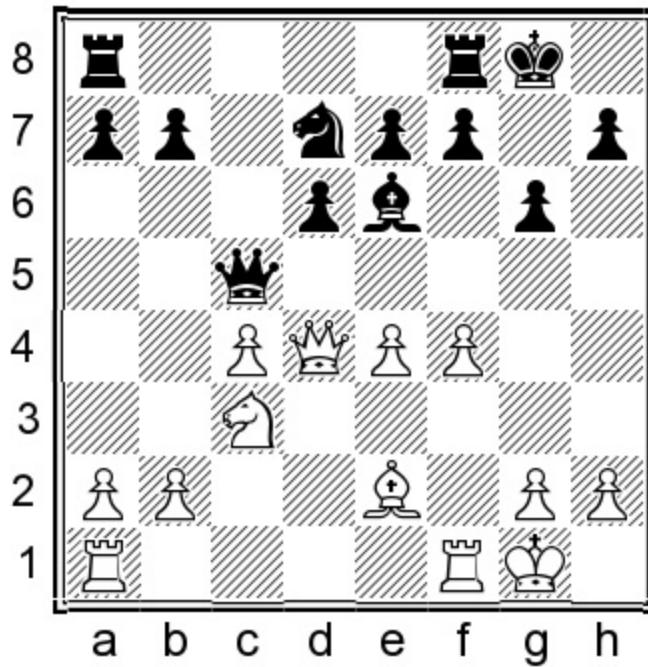
**23. $\mathbb{E}d3$**

23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  e5 24. $\mathbb{W}g2$  exd4 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xg2+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  fxe4 27. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xf3-$ +

23...e5 24.♗b5 f4 0-1

Bogdanovich-Guseinov, Berlin 2015.

### Exercise 133



*White to move  
How to gain the advantage?*

Show/Hide Solution

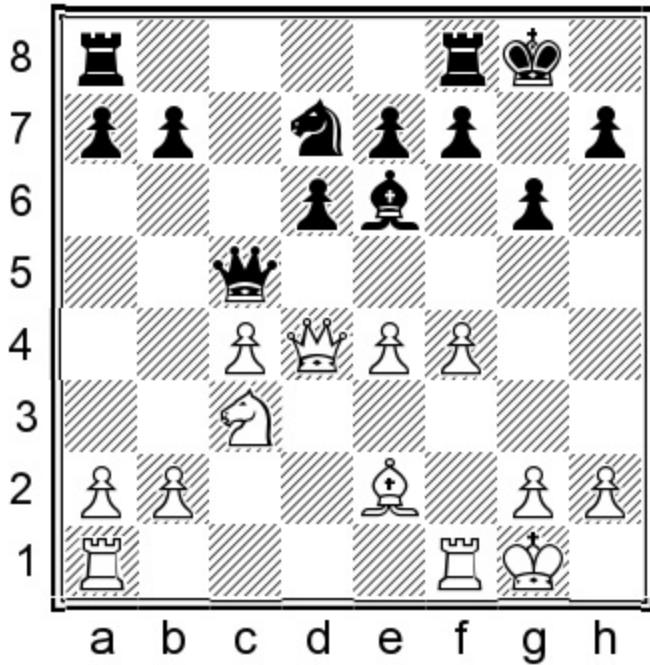
**Solution 133**  
**Fabiano Caruana**  
**Maxim Rodshtein**  
Porto Carras Ech-tt 2011 (5)

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 ♜g7 4.e4 0-0 5.♘c3 d6 6.♘e3 c5 7.♘ge2 ♜a5 8.♘c1

‘White forces the game into a Maroczy structure. Due to the threat of ♘b3 Black is forced to capture d4’ – Caruana.

8...cxsd4 9.♘b3 ♜h5 10.♘xd4 ♜c6 11.♘e2 ♜xd4 12.♘xd4 ♜h4+

12... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4+$  15. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$



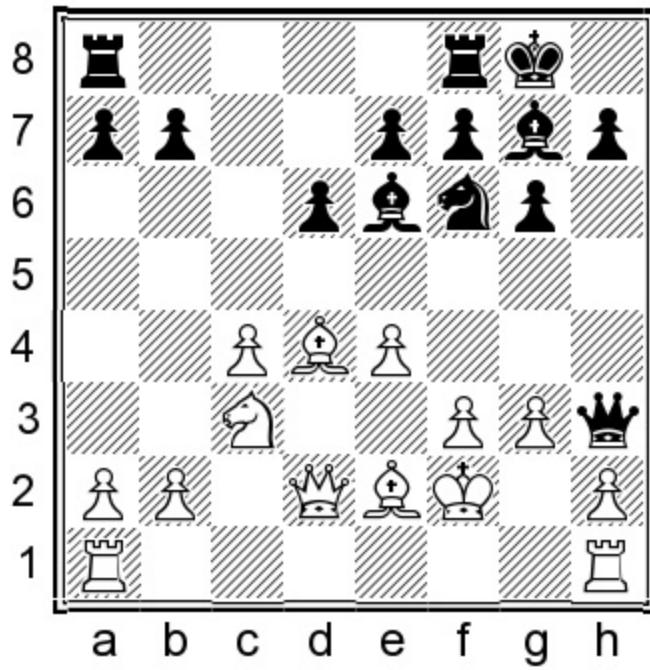
*White to move*

16. $\mathbb{W}xc5!$  (16. $\mathbb{R}ad1?$ !  $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  17. $\mathbb{R}xd4$  f6) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  17.b4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  18.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5\pm$  f6 (19... $\mathbb{R}fe8$  20.f6 (20.c5  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  (21. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ ?) 21... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22.exd5 bxa6 23.c6 $\pm$ ) 20...e6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22.c5 dxcc5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  bxa6 24.bxc5) 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d5\pm$ .

**13.g3  $\mathbb{W}g5$**

13... $\mathbb{W}h3$  14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15. $\mathbb{W}d2$

### Exercise 134



*Black to move  
What ideas does Black have here?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 134

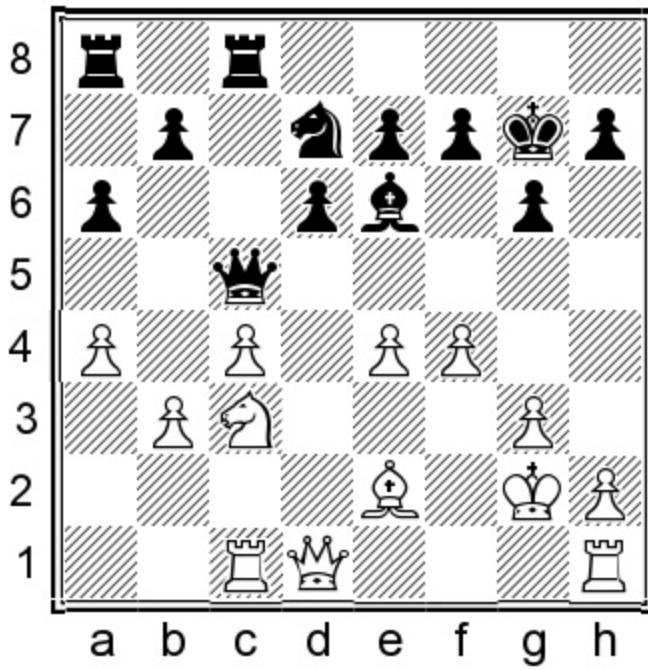
There are two different possibilities to which Stockfish gives a reasonable evaluation:

- A) 15... $\mathbb{Q}h6!?$ , provoking f3-f4, which weakens the  $\mathbb{A}e4$  and leaves Black in control of the g4-square, as recommended by Caruana; 16.f4 (16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  18.b3  $\mathbb{W}h5$ ) 16... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$  0.15;
- B) 15... $\mathbb{E}fc8!?$  attacking the  $\mathbb{A}c4$ , to be followed by transferring the queen back to the queenside: 16.b3 (16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17.exd5 b5) 16...a6 17. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (17. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 17... $\mathbb{W}h5$  18.a4  $\mathbb{W}a5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  h5 0.23.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$**

15... $\mathbb{E}fc8$  16.b3 a6 17.a4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  19.f4  $\mathbb{W}c5+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

### Exercise 135



*Black to move  
Evaluate 20...b5 and 20...Qf6.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 135

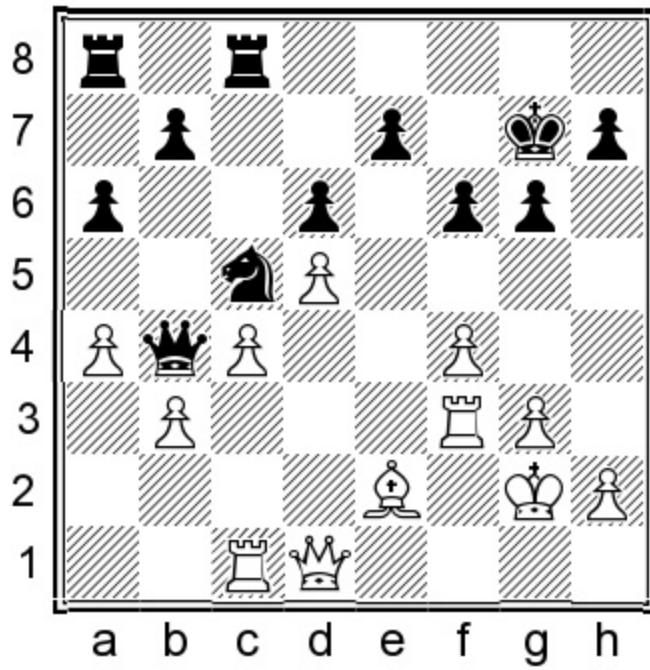
20...b5!? (20...Qf6!? 21.Qf3 b5! 22.e5 dxe5 23.fxe5 Qd7 24.cxb5 Qxe5 25.Qxa8 Qg4 26.Wf3 Qe3+ 27.Qf2 Qc2+ 28.Qg2=)

20...b5!? 21.axb5 (21.cxb5 We3!=) 21...axb5 22.Qxb5 Qf6 23.Wd4 (23.Qf3?? Ra2+ 24.Rc2 Rx<sub>c</sub>2+ 25.Rxc2 Rx<sub>b</sub>5; 23.Wd2 Qxe4 24.Wb2+ Qf6 25.Qf3 Ra<sub>b</sub>8) 23...Wxd4 (23...Ra2!?) 24.Qxd4 Qxe4=.

**16.Qg2 Rfc8 17.b3 a6 18.a4 Qd7 19.Qxg7 Qxg7 20.f4 Qf6?**

20...Qc5 21.Rf1 f6 22.Rf3!? Wb4 23.Qd5 Qxd5 24.exd5±.

### Exercise 136



*Black to move  
Find the plan for Black.*

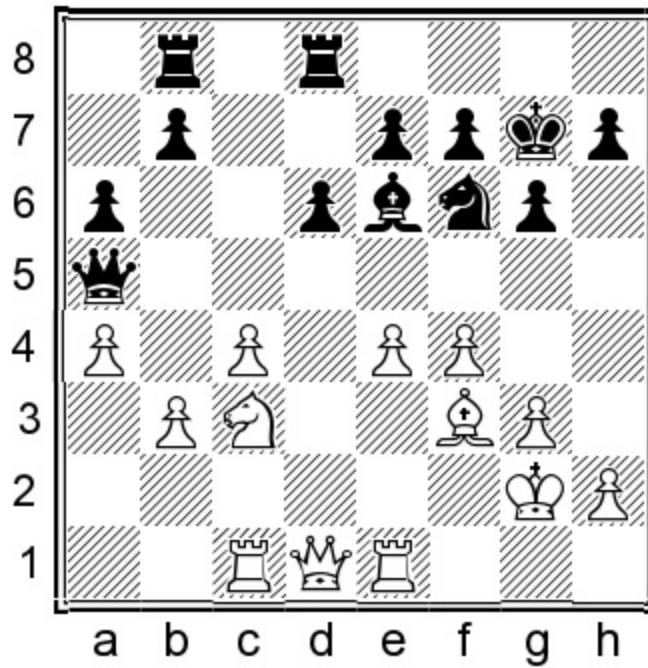
Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 136

Defend the  $\mathbb{A}e7$  and continue with ...e7-e6/e5, as in Velimirovic-Tukmakov: 24... $\mathbb{E}c7$  (or 24... $\mathbb{E}e8$ !?) 25. $\mathbb{E}e3$  e6 26.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  27. $\mathbb{E}cc3$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  28. $\mathbb{E}ed3$  (28. $\mathbb{E}cd3$ ??  $\mathbb{Q}xf4+$ ) 28... $\mathbb{W}b4$ ) 24... $\mathbb{E}c7$  25. $\mathbb{E}e3$  (Stockfish prefers 25. $\mathbb{E}cc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  26. $\mathbb{E}ce3$  f5 27. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  28. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29.h3 h5 30. $\mathbb{A}d3$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  0.22) 25... $\mathbb{E}e8$  26. $\mathbb{A}f3$  (26. $\mathbb{A}g4$  h5 27. $\mathbb{A}f3$  e5! 28.dxe6  $\mathbb{E}xe6$  29. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ ) 26...e5! 27.dxe6  $\mathbb{E}xe6$  28. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ , e.g. 29. $\mathbb{A}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  30. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  31. $\mathbb{W}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , now with similar ideas to the game Olafsson-Simagin.

**21. $\mathbb{A}f3$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  22. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}d8$**

### Exercise 137



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

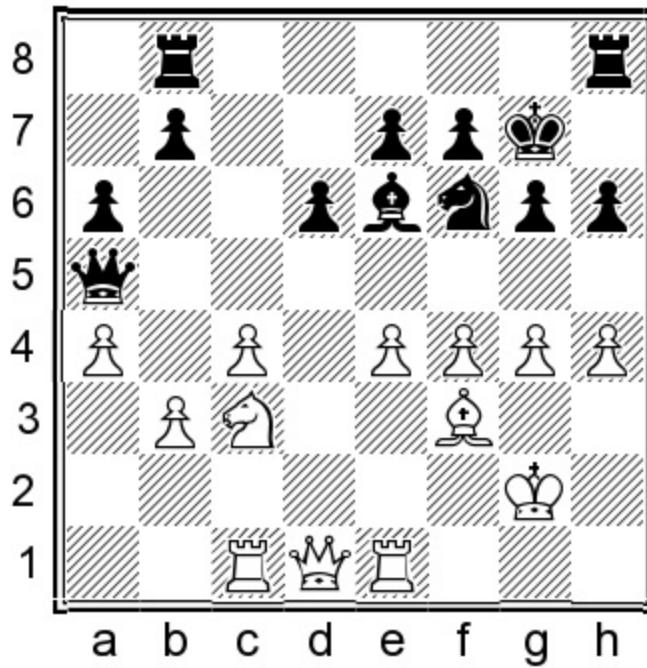
### Solution 137

**23.g4!**

Launching an attack on the kingside.

**23...h6 24.h4 ♜h8**

### Exercise 138



*White to move  
Find three good ideas for White.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 138

**25.  $\mathbb{W}d4!$**

The simplest, as it leads to a winning endgame.

Objectively, 25.f5! is the strongest move: 25... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  27.e5! dx $e$ 5 28. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  29. $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!+-$ ,

but 25. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$  also gives White an overwhelming advantage: 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26.ex $d$ 5  $\mathbb{E}be8$  27. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29. $\mathbb{E}ce3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  30.b4+–.

**25.  $\mathbb{W}d4!$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  dx $c$ 5 27. f5  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  28. e5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  29. fx $g$ 6 fx $g$ 6 30.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$**

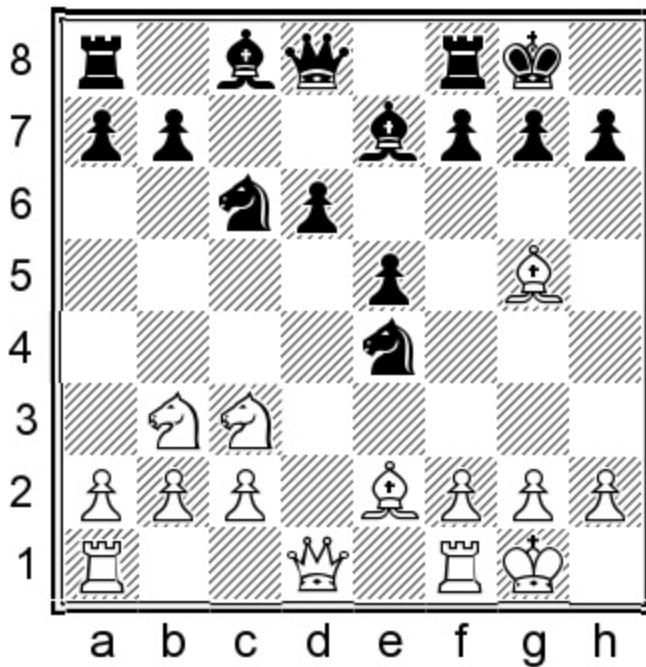
30...e6 31.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  32. a5+–.

**31.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7!+– ... 1-0 (41)$**

Show in Text Mode

## The d5-square in the Sicilian

### Exercise 139



White to move  
Evaluate 10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ .

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 139

10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7?$

10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$  (11.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5?!$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  12.  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5\bar{=}$ ) 11...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{R}d8$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{R}axc8$  14.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  g6 15.  $\mathbb{R}fd1=$ .

10.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7?$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3!$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  13. c4?!

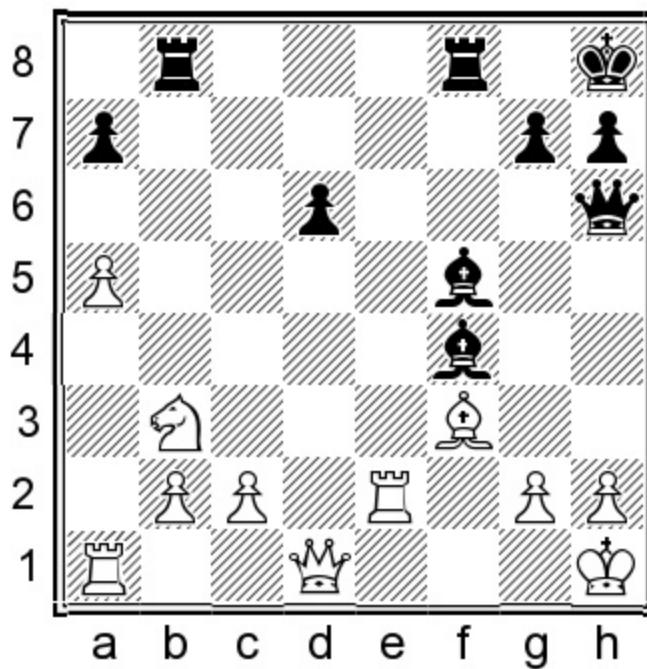
13. a4 d5 $\bar{=}$  (13...  $\mathbb{Q}e6!?$ ); 13.  $\mathbb{Q}b5?!$  d5 14.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}a4\bar{=}$ .

13... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  15.c5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  0-1

Galego-Limp, Rio de Janeiro 1989.

17...f6!?

### Exercise 140



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 140

24.g4?

24.h3??  $\mathbb{Q}xh3-$ +

24. $\mathbb{W}g1!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  26.a6 g6 27. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d5=$ .

24.g4?  $\mathbb{Q}c8!?$

24... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2+$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}h4$ .

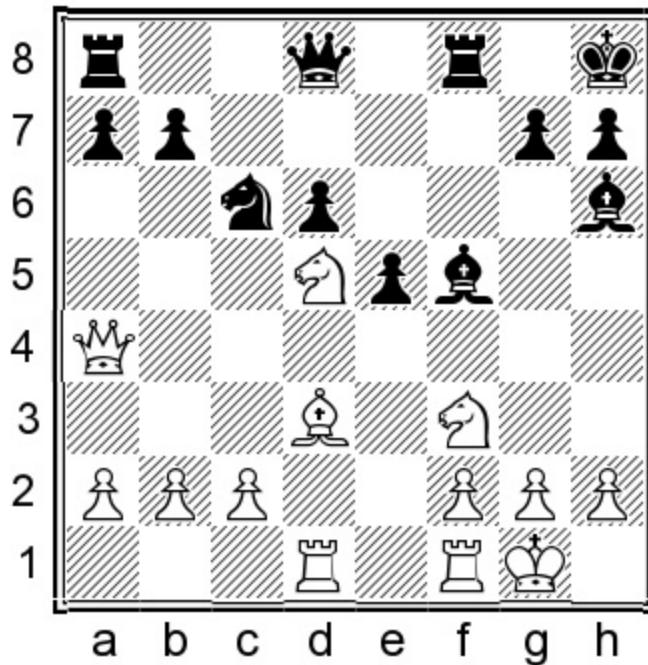
25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

25.  $\mathbb{Q}d4!?$   $\mathbb{B}xb2$  26.  $\mathbb{W}d3\mp$ .

25...  $\mathbb{Q}e5\mp$

Ljubojevic-Shirov, Linares 1993.

### Exercise 141



*Black to move*

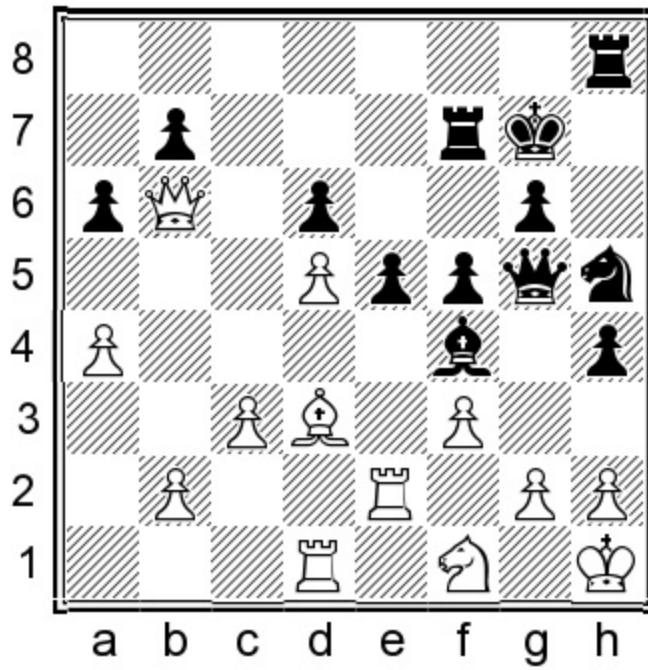
Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 141

16...  $e4!$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $b5!$  18.  $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xf3!-\mp$

Golubov-Maghsoodloo, Voronezh 2018.

### Exercise 142



*Black to move*

*Evaluate 37... ♜g3+ better than Fischer did!*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 142

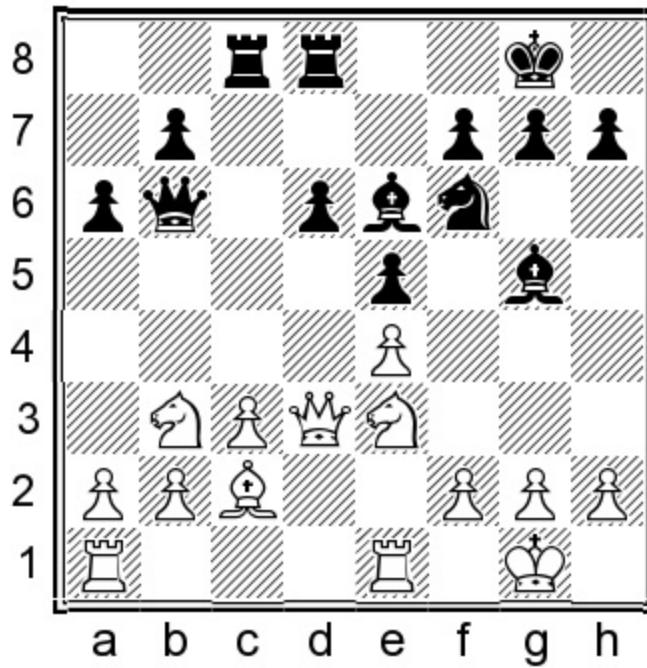
**37... ♜f6**

37... ♜g3+! 38. ♜xg3 hxg3 39. h3 ♜f6, and Black wins simply by advancing the ♜g6, which Fischer seems to have dismissed as too slow: e.g. 40. c4 g5 41. c5 (41. ♜e1 g4 42. ♜f1 ♜g5 43. ♜g1 gxh3 44. gxh3 g2 45. ♜xg2 ♜xh3 46. ♜f1 ♜h2 47. ♜g1 ♜g8 48. ♜d3 ♜g7+) 41... e4! (41... g4!? 42. fxe4 fxe4 43. ♜xe4 (43. ♜xe4 ♜f5 44. ♜xf4 ♜xh3+ 45. ♜g1 ♜xf4+) 43... ♜e3!+.

**37... ♜f6 38. ♜g1 ♜e8 39. ♜c2 ♜h6+**

and after 77 moves the game ended in a draw, Unzicker-Fischer, Santa Monica 1966.

### Exercise 143



*Black to move  
Find the plan for Black.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 143

**17...a5!**

To be followed by ...g7-g6, either provoking piece exchanges on d5 or allowing the advance ...a5-a4-a3:

**18.♘ab1 g6 19.♗e2**

19.♗d5 ♗xd5 20.exd5 ♘d7 21.♗c1 a4!?

**19...a4 20.♗c1 ♗c6**

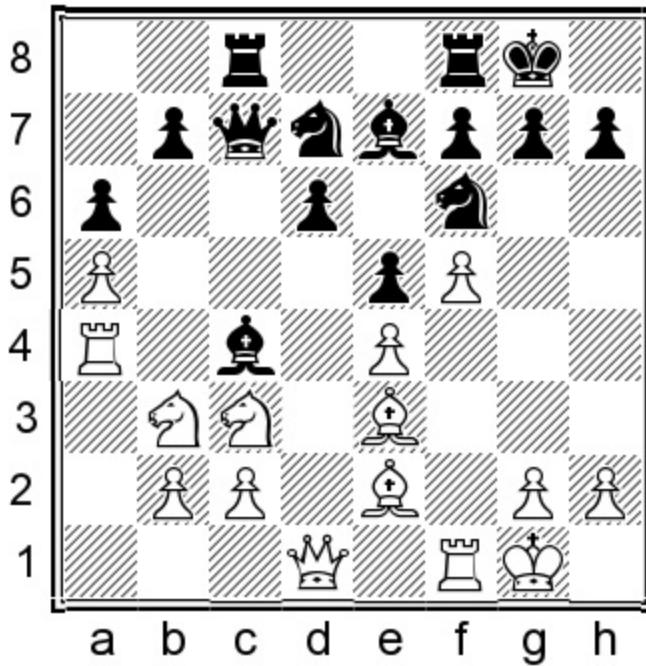
20...a3!?

**21.f3**

21.♗d3 ♗xe4 22.♗c5 ♗c6.

**21...a3!?**

### Exercise 144



*Black to move  
Evaluate 14...Qb5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 144

**14...Qb5?**

14...b5! 15.axb6 Qxb6= 16.Qxb6 Wxb6+ 17.Qh1 Qb5=.

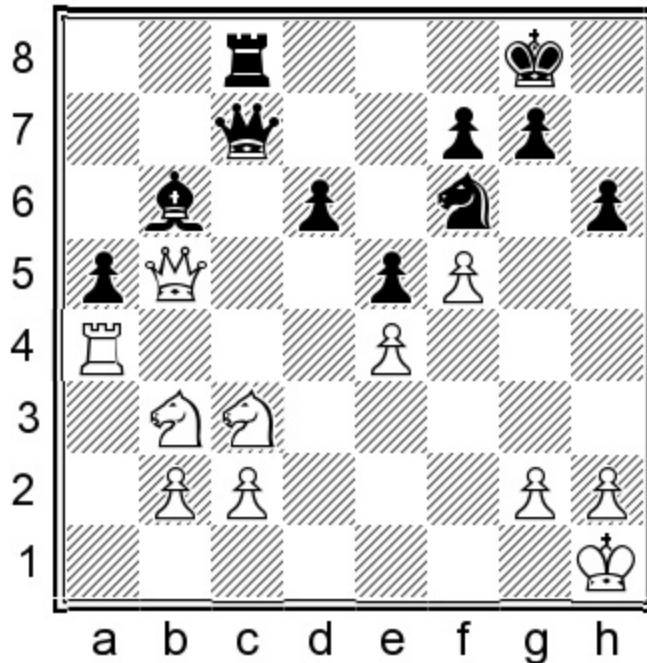
**14...Qb5? 15.Qxb5 axb5 16.Qxb5 Wxc2 17.Qg5?**

17.Wxc2! Wxc2 18.Qxd7 Qxd7 19.Qb4 Qc7 (19...Qb8 20.Qa7 d5 21.Qb5±) 20.Qc1! Wxc1+ 21.Qxc1±.

**17...Qfd8=**

Tronenkovs-Daskevics, Riga 2006.

## Exercise 145



*White to move  
Evaluate 25.  $\mathbb{W}e2$ .*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 145

**26.  $\mathbb{W}e2$ ?**

26.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  27. g3.

**26.  $\mathbb{W}e2$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ !**

26...  $\mathbb{W}d7$ !?? 27.  $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

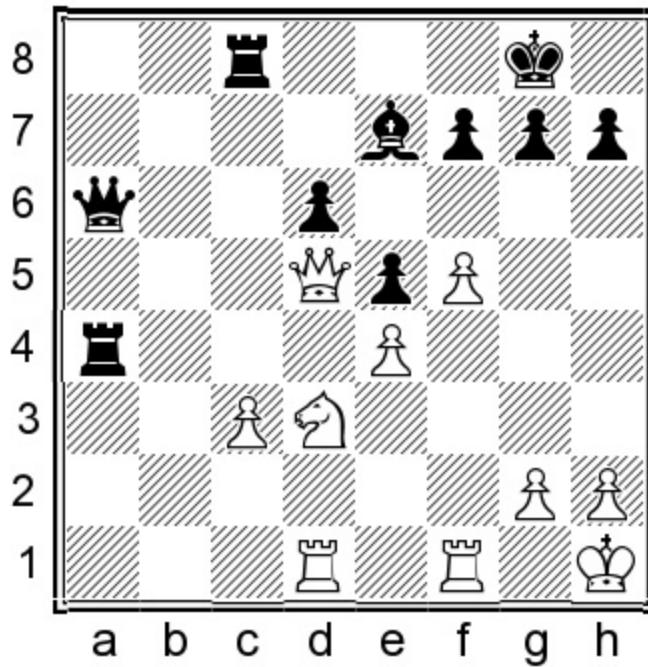
**27. h3**

27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 28.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  29.  $\mathbb{W}d3$  (29.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  (30. c4??  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ ) 30...  $\mathbb{W}xb2$ –+) 29...  $\mathbb{W}xb2$ –.

27...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  28. bxc3  $\mathbb{W}xc3$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ –+

Meribanov-Tihonov, Minsk 2011.

## Exercise 146



*Black to move*

24... $\mathbb{B}xc3$  or 24... $\mathbb{B}a5$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 146

24... $\mathbb{B}a5$ ?

24... $\mathbb{B}xc3$ ! 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $dxe5$  26. $\mathbb{W}xe5$  (26. $\mathbb{W}d8+?? \mathbb{Q}f8$ ) 26... $\mathbb{B}b4$ ! 27. $f6$  (27. $\mathbb{W}d8+ \mathbb{Q}f8$  28. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}c8+$ ) 27... $\mathbb{B}c8$  28. $fxg7$   $\mathbb{Q}c3-$ .

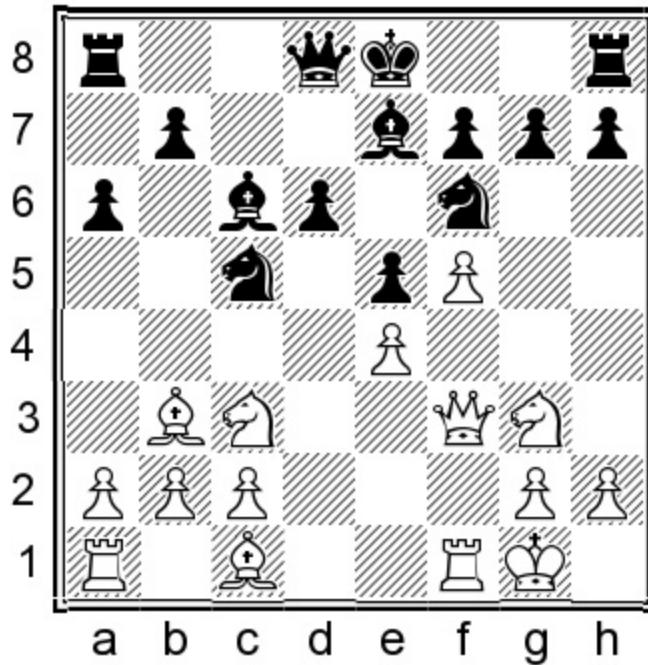
24... $\mathbb{B}a5$ ? 25. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{B}a3$  26. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{B}axc3$ ??

26... $\mathbb{W}c4$ ! 27. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{B}b3\bar{=}$ .

27. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d5=$

Tal-Fischer, Curaçao ct 1962.

### Exercise 147



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 147

**13...h5!**

13... $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ ? 14.axb3 d5! 15. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5+$  16. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  dxе4 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$   $\mathbb{W}h4!$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}e7\mp$ .

**13...h5! 14. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  h4**

14... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ? 15.exd5  $\mathbb{E}c8$ .

**15. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16.exd5 b5 17.a3  $\mathbb{E}c8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ??**

18.h3?  $\mathbb{W}b6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ .

**18... $\mathbb{W}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ?**

20. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !.

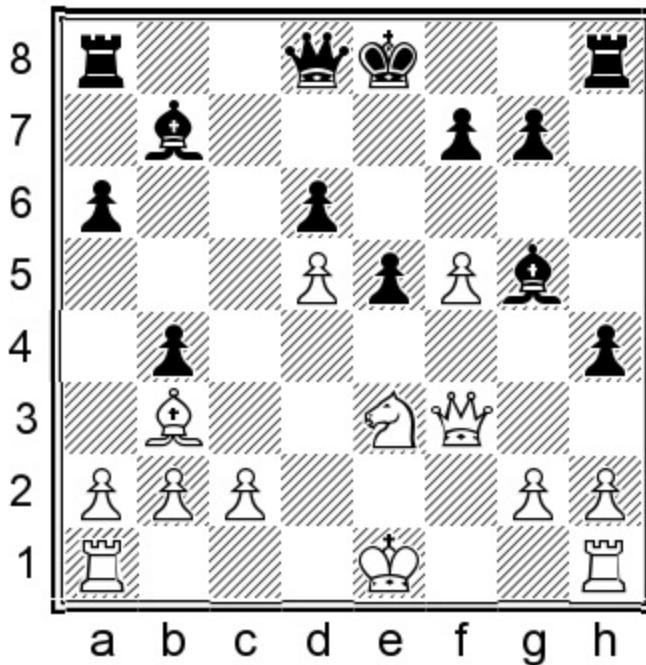
**20... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ! 21. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ ?**

21.  $\mathbb{Q}a2!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g5+$ .

21...  $bxa4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  23.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  h3 0-1

Hendriks-Dvoirys, Dieren 2000.

### Exercise 148



*Black to move  
Find the plan for Black.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 148

18...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$

First play ...h4-h3 and then attack the  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , followed by the advance ...a6-a5-a4:

18...h3! 19.g3 (19.gxh3  $\mathbb{W}b6$  (19...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$ ) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}e3+$ ) 19...0-0 20.0-0-0 (20.  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  a5 22.  $\mathbb{Q}he1$   $\mathbb{W}d4!$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  exd4 24.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  a4 25.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  26. b3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$ ) 20...e4! 21.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  a5 22.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  23.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}he1$   $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ .

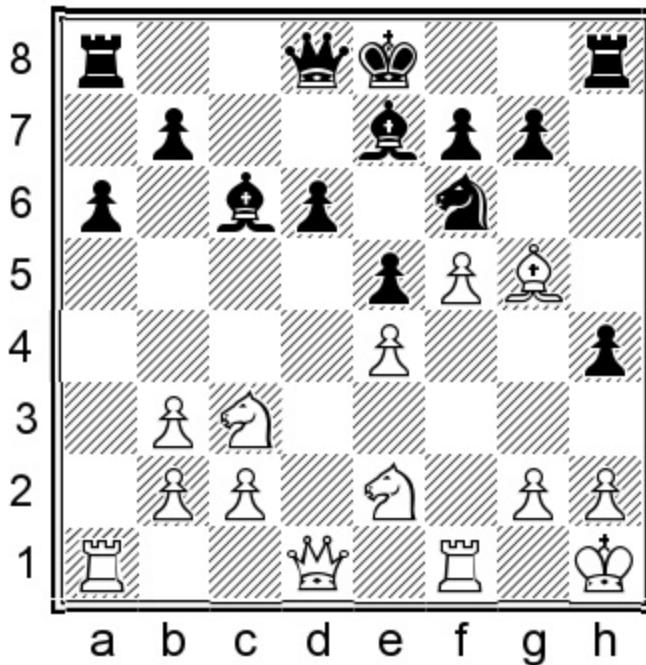
18...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  20.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c8$

20... $\mathbb{W}b5!$ ? 21. $\mathbb{W}e4$  0-0-0 22. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  23.b3??

21. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22.f6 g6 23. $\mathbb{Q}he1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  24. $\mathbb{W}d2\bar{\mp}$   $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Schmenger-Balcerak, Schöneck 1996.

### Exercise 149



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 149

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$

16...h3?! 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  hxg2+ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5\bar{\mp}$ .

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  h3!.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$

17... $\mathbb{Q}g3+!!$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $hxg3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (19. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h2+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h1\#$ ) 18... $\mathbb{W}b6+$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h1!-+$ ; 17... $\mathbb{W}xe7!?$  $\mp$ .

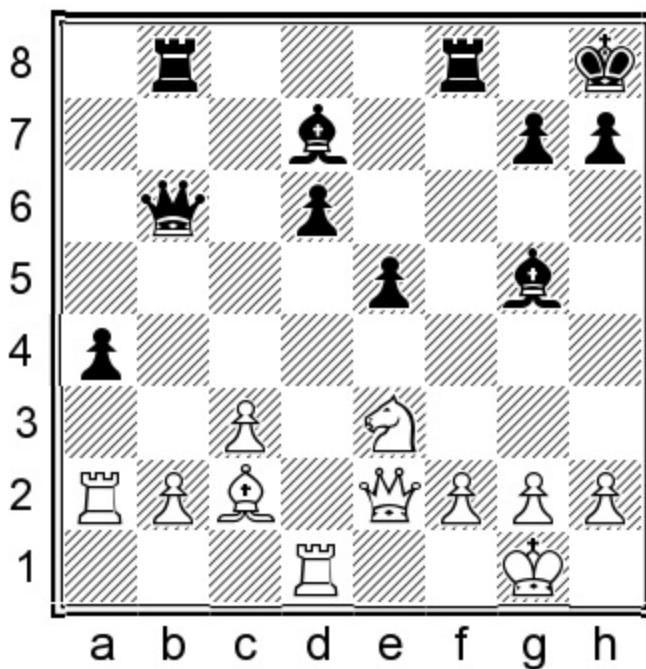
**18. $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$**

18. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  20. $h3$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}g1!?$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xb2\mp$ .

**18... $\mathbb{W}xe7\mp$**

Vadla-Bozinovic, Zagreb 2007.

### Exercise 150



*Black to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 150

24... $\mathbb{Q}xf2!$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

26. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  29. $\mathbb{W}e4$  (29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1-+$ ) 29... $\mathbb{Q}f5-+$ .

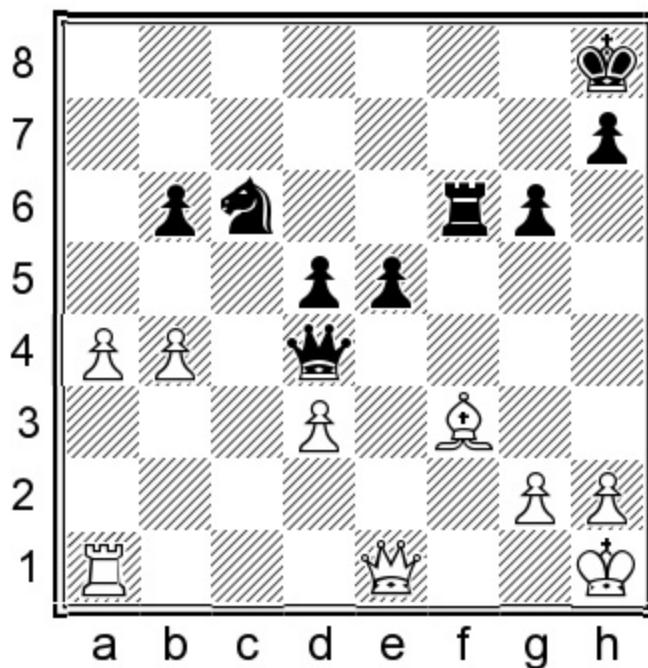
26... $\mathbb{E}f8!$

26...e4!?.

27. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  28. $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{W}g1+$  29. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  d5! 32. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  33. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}xd5+$  0-1

Prizant-Moiseenko, Moscow 2014.

### Exercise 151



*White to move*

Evaluate 34.a5.

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 151

This was the same variation as in the game Svidler-Carlsen.

34.a5?

34. $\mathbb{E}b1!=$ .

34.a5?  $\mathbb{Q}xb4!$  35.a6?

35.  $\mathbb{W}g1!$  bxa5 36.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  exd4 37.  $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{B}d6$  38.  $\mathbb{B}a4$   $\mathbb{B}b6+$ .

35...  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  36.  $\mathbb{W}b1$

36. a7  $\mathbb{Q}f2+$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d1+!$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xa1-$ -.

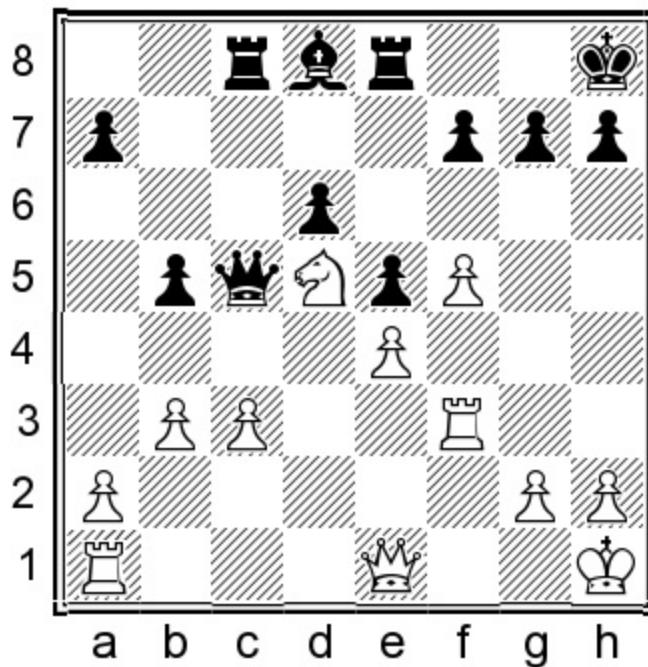
36...  $\mathbb{Q}f2+$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  g5! 38.  $\mathbb{W}a2$

38. a7  $\mathbb{Q}e4+$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3+$  40. hxg3  $\mathbb{B}h6+$ .

38...  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  0-1

Jakovenko-Alekseenko, Izhevsk 2019.

### Exercise 152



*White to move  
White can win by force – how?*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 152

22. f6!

22.  $\mathbb{E}h3!?$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  23. f6.

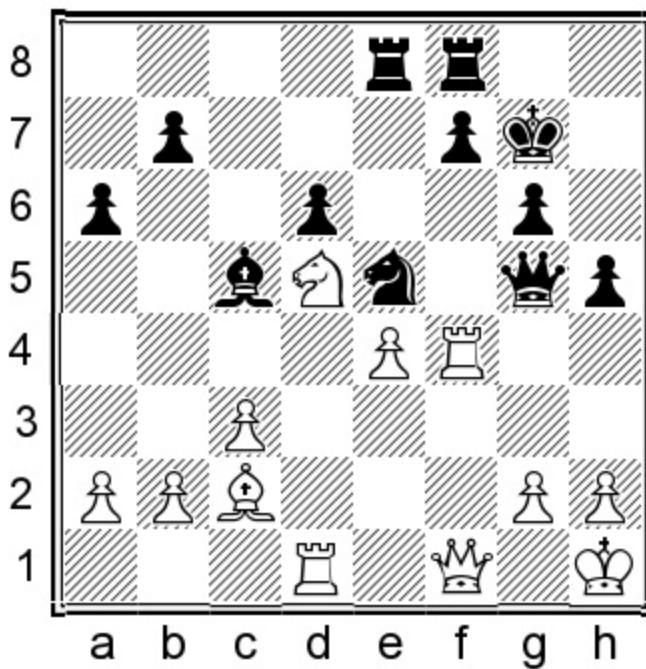
22. f6! gxf6 23.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}g7$

24...  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xf6+$   $\mathbb{E}g7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{E}cg8$  27.  $\mathbb{E}d1+ -$ .

25.  $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}cg8$  27.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  d5 28.  $\mathbb{E}xg7$  1-0

Smyslov-Rudakovsky, Moscow 1945.

### Exercise 153



White to move  
23.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  or 23. g3 ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 153

23.  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$

23. g3  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  24. h3  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  26.  $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  27. b4  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  28.  $\mathbb{E}xd6\pm$ .

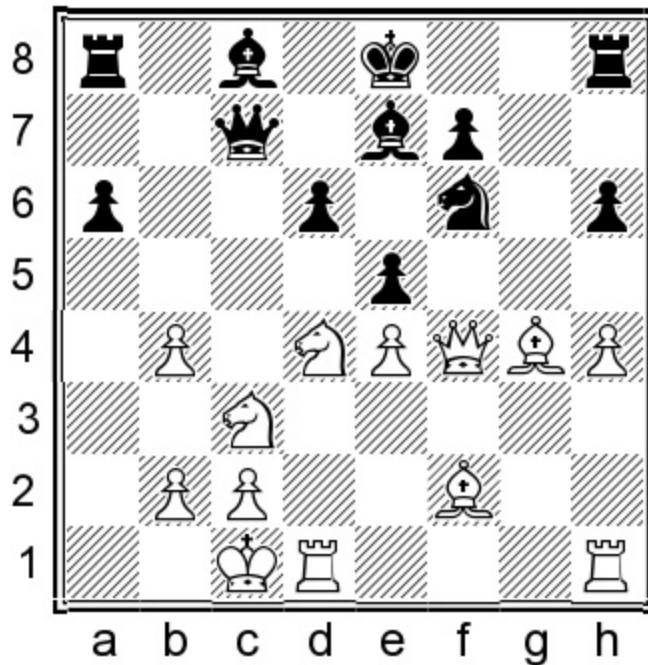
23.  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  24. g3  $\mathbb{E}xe4!$  25.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f2+$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xf2?$

26.♔g2 ♔xe4 27.♕e1 ♕e8 28.♗f4±.

26...♝xf2+

Topalov-Caruana, Wijk aan Zee 2012.

### Exercise 154



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 154

19.♗xf6! ♘xf6 20.♘d5 ♗d8 21.♘f5!!

21.♘c6?! ♘xg4 22.♘xd8 ♘xd8±.

21...♜b8

21...♝xf5!? 22.♝xf5 ♜b8 23.♝d3! (23.c4!?) 23...♝b5 24.c4 ♜xd5 25.♝xd5 ♘e7 26.c5 ♗b8 27.♝hd1 dxс5 28.bxc5 0-0 29.♝e3±.

22.♝xf6+

22.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!?$ .

22...  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6??!$

23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6+!$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  (23...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}f5!!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c5+-$ ; 23...  $\mathbb{W}xd6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6+-$ ) 24.  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{W}f4+$  (24...  $\mathbb{Q}xg4?$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ ) 25.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  (25...  $\mathbb{Q}xg4?$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (26...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}g7\#$ ) 27.  $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ ) 26.  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (26...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}hf1+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g1+-$ ) 27.  $\mathbb{Q}d6++-$ .

23...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}hd1$

24.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ .

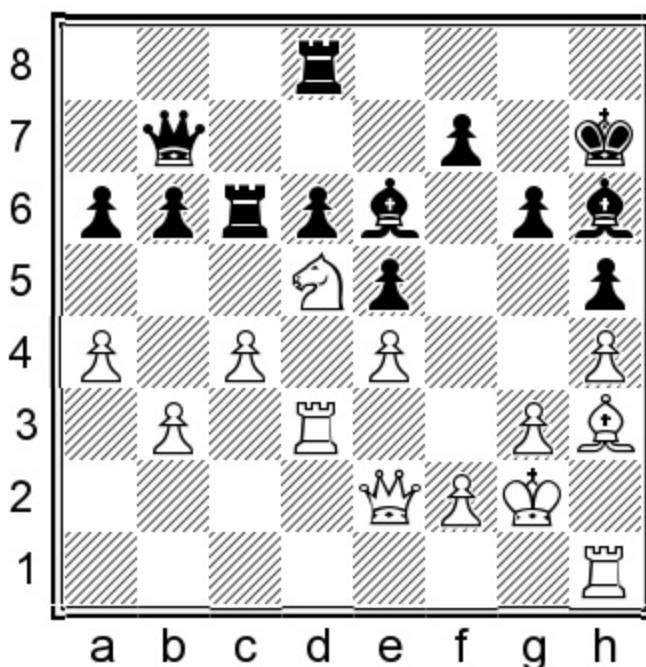
24... 0-0 25.  $h5$   $\mathbb{W}g5+?$

25...  $\mathbb{Q}xb4!$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7\pm$ .

26.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7++-$

Caruana-Nakamura, London 2016.

### Exercise 155



White to move

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 155

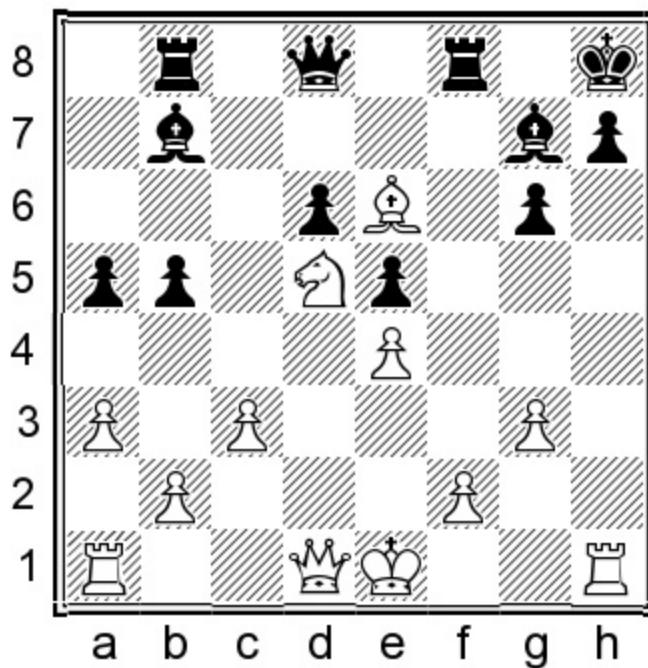
31.g4! hxg4 32.♕xg4± ♕xd5?

32...f5?! 33.♔h3 ♕xd5 34.cxd5 ♜c1 35.♗xc1 ♔xc1 36.h5+–; 32...♔f4!? 33.♕xe6 fxe6 34.♗xf4 exf4 35.♗g4 ♜c5 36.♗xf4±.

33.exd5 ♜c5 34.h5!+– g5 35.♗e4+ ♔g8 36.♗f3 ♔g7 37.♗e6! 1-0

Caruana-Banikas, Tromsø ol 2014.

## Exercise 156



*Black to move  
Find the plan for Black.*

Show/Hide Solution

## Solution 156

This game deviated from Shirov-Illescas with 14...fxg6. Black should first activate the ♔g7 and then

play ...b5-b4.

21... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ! 22. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  b4!?

23... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24.f4!?.

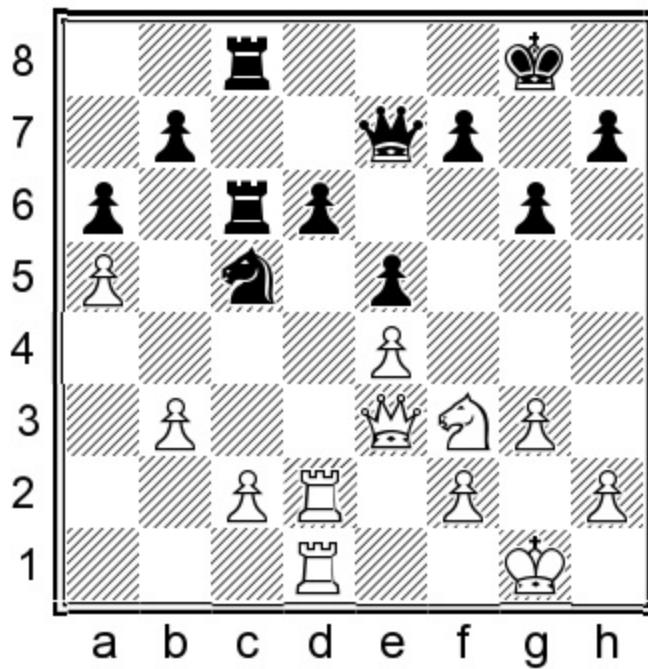
24.axb4 axb4 25.c4

25. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  27. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  28. $\mathbb{W}e2$  h5 29. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$ =.

25... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  26.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  h5

Gornoi-Dutra, cr 2008.

### Exercise 157



*Black to move  
Evaluate 22...b5.*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 157

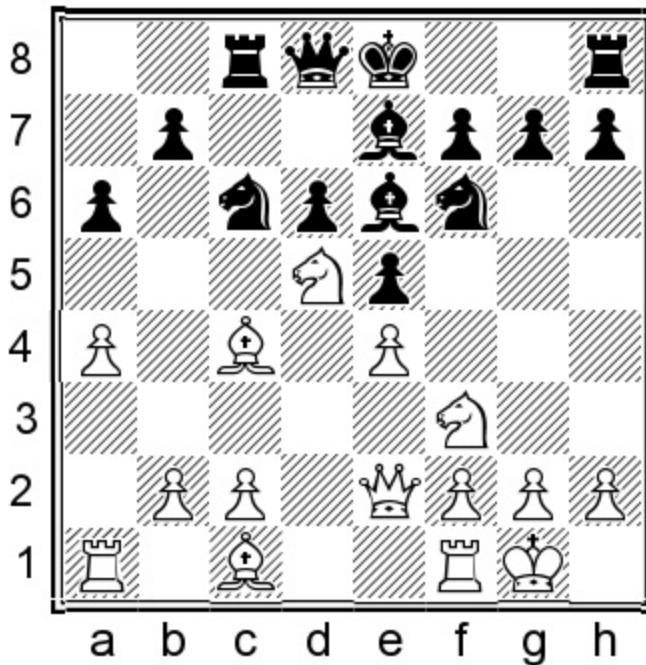
22...b5?

22... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

22... $b5?$  23. $axb6$   $\mathbb{B}xb6$  24. $\mathbb{B}d5$   $\mathbb{B}cc6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  27. $\mathbb{W}a7\pm$

Hou Yifan-Carlsen, Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden 2017.

### Exercise 158



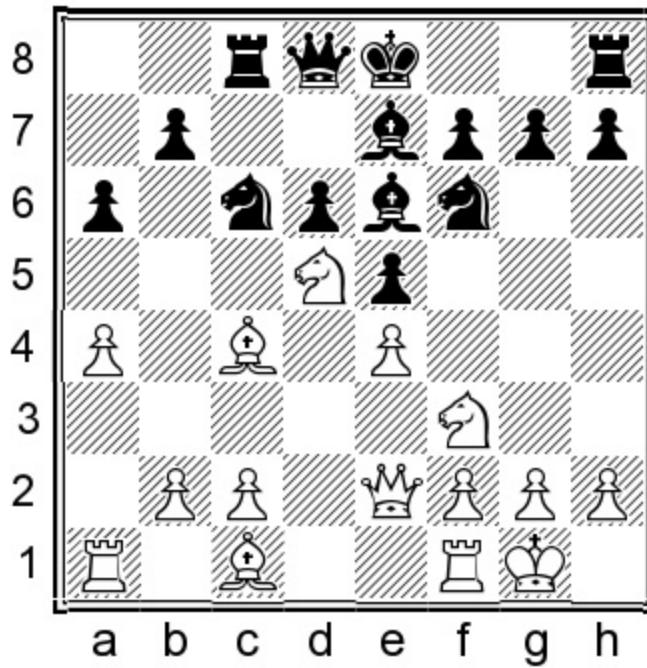
*Black to move  
Evaluate 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ .*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 158

Nikita Vitiugov  
Andrei Volokitin  
Douglas 2019 (1)

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.d4 cxd4 5. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  a6 6.a4 e5 7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  9. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10.0-0  $\mathbb{B}c8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d5$



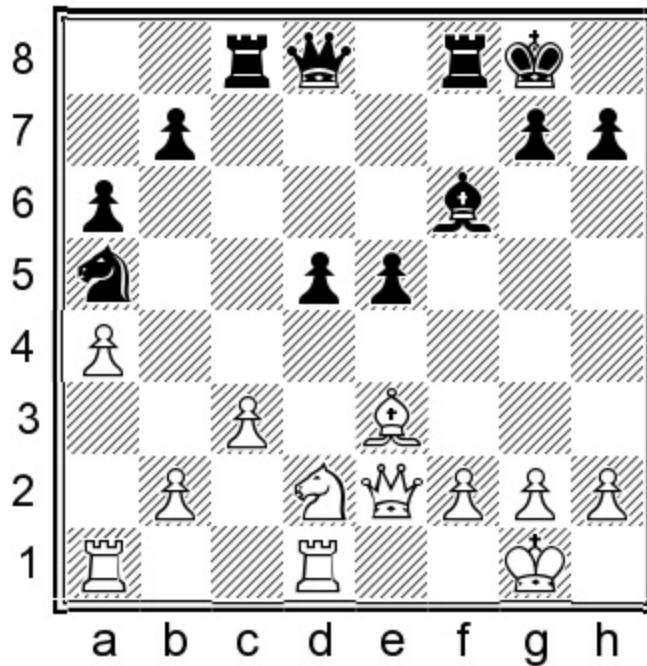
*Black to move*

**11...♝b4?**

11...0-0!=; 11...♝a5!?.

**12.♝xf6+ ♕xf6 13.♕xe6 fxe6 14.c3 ♜c6 15.♖d1 0-0 16.♖e3± ♜a5 17.♖d2 d5 18.exd5 exd5**

### Exercise 159



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

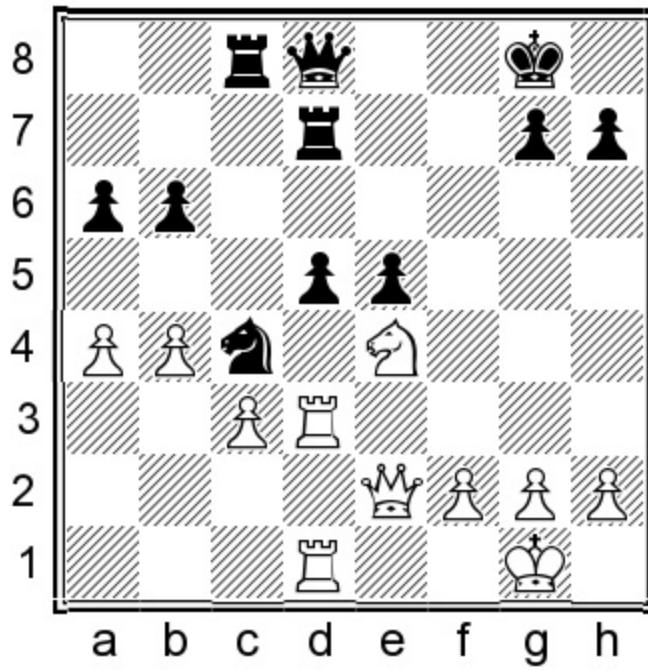
### Solution 159

**19. ♔e4! ♕e7**

19... ♔b3 20. ♔xf6+ ♕xf6 (20...gxf6? 21. ♕a3 ♔a5 22. ♔h6+) 21. ♕a3 ♔a5 22. ♕xd5±; 19... ♔h4!? 20. ♕d3 ♔b3 21. ♕e1 ♔d4 22. cxd4 dxe4 23. ♕dd1 exd4 24. ♕xd4±.

**20. b4 ♔c4 21. ♕c5 ♕f7 22. ♕d3 b6 23. ♕xe7 ♕xe7 24. ♕ad1 ♕d7**

### Exercise 160



*White to move*  
25.  $\mathbb{W}g4$  or 25.  $a5$  ?

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 160

**25.  $\mathbb{W}g4$ ?**

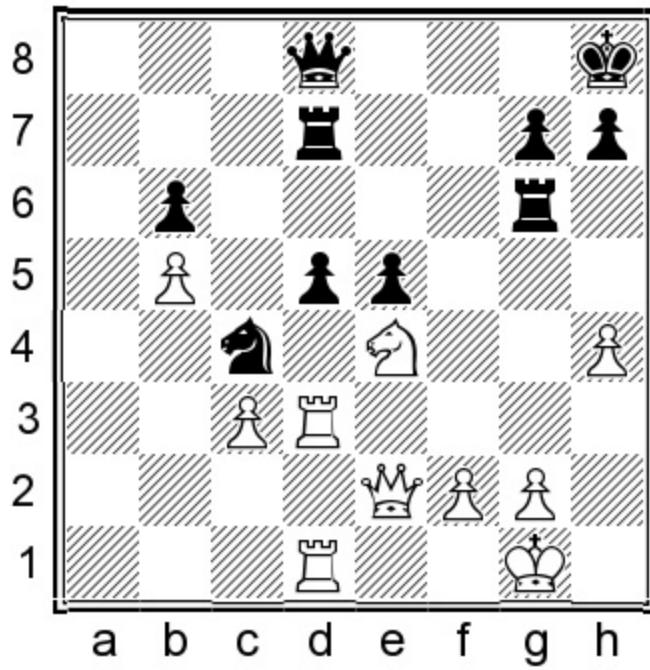
25.  $a5$ !  $h6$ !? (25...  $bxa5$ ? 26.  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ –; 25...  $\mathbb{E}c6$  26.  $axb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c5\pm$ ) 26.  $h3$ !? (26.  $axb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}e7$ ) 26...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27.  $axb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  29.  $\mathbb{E}3d2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  30.  $\mathbb{E}a2$  (30.  $\mathbb{W}xa6$ ?!  $e4$ !) 30...  $d4$ !? $\pm$ .

**25.  $\mathbb{W}g4$ ?  $\mathbb{E}c6$  26.  $b5$**

26.  $a5$ ??  $\mathbb{Q}b2$ .

**26...  $axb5$  27.  $axb5$   $\mathbb{E}g6=$  28.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29.  $h4$**

### Exercise 161



*Black to move  
Evaluate 29...  $\mathbb{W}xh4$ .*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 161

**29...  $\mathbb{W}xh4?$**

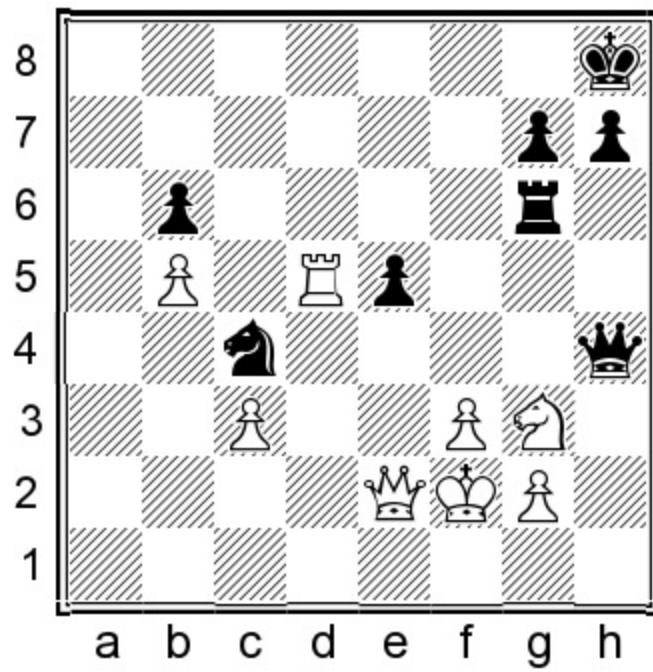
29...h6=.

**29...  $\mathbb{W}xh4?$  30.  $\mathbb{B}xd5 \mathbb{B}h6$**

30...  $\mathbb{B}xd5$  31.  $\mathbb{B}xd5 \mathbb{B}h6$  32. f3  $\mathbb{W}h2+$  33.  $\mathbb{B}f2 \mathbb{W}h4+$  34.  $\mathbb{B}g3$  also leads to the game continuation.

**31. f3  $\mathbb{W}h2+$  32.  $\mathbb{B}f1 \mathbb{W}h1+$  33.  $\mathbb{B}f2 \mathbb{W}h4+$  34.  $\mathbb{B}g1 \mathbb{W}h2+$  35.  $\mathbb{B}f1 \mathbb{W}h1+$  36.  $\mathbb{B}f2 \mathbb{W}h4+$  37.  $\mathbb{B}g3!$   $\mathbb{B}xd5$  38.  $\mathbb{B}xd5 \mathbb{B}g6$**

### Exercise 162



*White to move*

Show/Hide Solution

### Solution 162

39.  $\mathbb{Q}g1!$   $\mathbb{B}xg3$  40.  $\mathbb{B}d4!+$ —  $\mathbb{W}g5$  41.  $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $g6$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $h5$  43.  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $h4$  44.  $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45.  $c4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  46.  $c5$   $bxc5$  47.  $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}g5$  48.  $b6$   $\mathbb{W}d2$  49.  $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{B}xg4$  50.  $\mathbb{W}xe5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  51.  $fxg4$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  52.  $\mathbb{W}c7$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  53.  $\mathbb{W}f4+$   $g5$  54.  $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  55.  $\mathbb{W}f5+$  1-0

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