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GAME**

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PETER WELLS



Batsford Chess Opening Guides

The Scotch Game

Peter Wells



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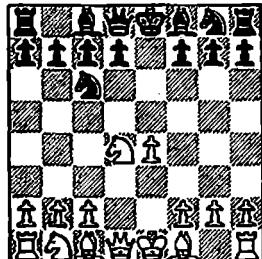
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General Manager: David Cummings
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**1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6
3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4**



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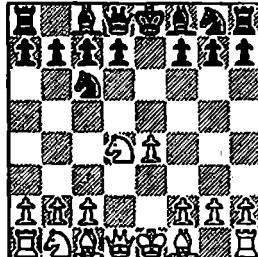
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PREFACE



It seems increasingly inevitable that introductions to opening books will discuss the information explosion in chess, both in terms of the mind-boggling growth in available material, and the much improved quality of analytical aides used by top players.

One of the more positive consequences of these changes, especially in the 'Open Games' (1 e4 e5), has been a greater willingness among the leading players to experiment not just with new ideas, but with those old ideas which that fickle creature 'opening fashion' had ditched prematurely. English players, notably Nunn, Short and Chandler have played a major role here, reviving the Four Knights Game and even the King's Gambit. From the mid 1980s, there was again more to 1 e4 e5 than just the Spanish.

It was the World Champion Garry Kasparov's advocacy of the Scotch which led, via the 'trickle-down effect' of fashion, to its current great popularity at all levels. Indeed he has stated his belief that it is the only serious alternative to the Spanish after 1 e4 e5.

There is much more to this new popularity than mere imitation too. Kasparov's pioneering work has revealed many brand-new areas of research - look at his mammoth analysis in Game 3 for example, or the entire Chapter 5 dedicated to the unlikely but brilliant knight move 8 Qa4 - and this has attracted some very fine young talents, Sergei Rublevsky, and the young Ukrainian, Vladimir Baklan, to name but two whose fine efforts feature heavily in what follows.

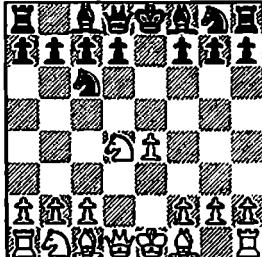
The Scotch is strategically quite a complex opening. I have tried as far as possible to explain what is happening with particular reference to a few important recurring themes. I hope you will find the illustrative games I have chosen instructive and entertaining.

A few words about the scope of this book. I have decided to exclude the so-called Scotch Four Knights (those lines where White answers 4...Qf6 with 5 Qc3) for two reasons. First, the lines with 5 Qxc6 are very complex and popular, and a superficial treatment of 5 Qc3 would have done more harm than good. Second, the lines with 5 Qc3 are neither as dangerous as 5 Qxc6, nor very closely related strategically.

I am confident that the popularity of the Scotch will continue, and certainly hope that it does, since it is fascinating for both sides. I hope that the right balance has been struck between general themes and new analysis to encourage this process at all levels.

Peter Wells, Budapest, May 1998

INTRODUCTION



The Scotch – A case of 'rich strategic imbalance'

To try and understand the wide appeal of the Scotch, we could do worse than to return to Kasparov's claim that, along with the Spanish (Ruy Lopez), it is the only opening after 1 e4 e5 which can set Black lasting strategic problems. I think that this has to do with the fact that in virtually every important variation of the Scotch a certain degree of 'imbalance' is generated within a very few moves.

Authors like to use such terms as 'sharp', 'double-edged' or 'unbalanced' to describe chess positions. What this basically boils down to is that the initial 'equilibrium' has been disturbed. This may take many forms - one side may enjoy an advantage in development or activity of the pieces. Alternatively, there may be longer-term structural factors present such as pawn weaknesses. Then again a simple gain of material is an important source of 'imbalance'.

What makes for fascinating chess is the interplay of these factors. If White simply has two extra pawns then the theoretical interest in the position is limited. If on the other hand Black can claim a huge lead in development and attacking chances as

compensation then suddenly all is still to play for. The great thing about the Scotch, is not only that we find very early conflicts between competing types of advantages enjoyed by White and Black respectively, but that there is great variety in who enjoys which type of plus.

The Pure Scotch Pawn Structure

A certain element of 'imbalance' is injected immediately by the exchange of pawns on d4. The significance of this is not to be underestimated, and the relative scarcity of games featuring this 'pure' structure largely reflects Black's desire, and in most cases his ability, to avoid it.

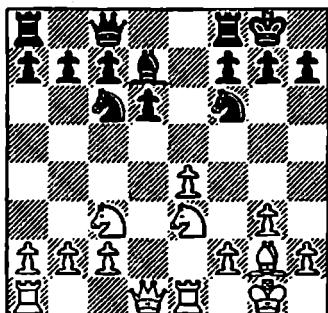
The problem is that if Black takes no special action, his opponent is likely to enjoy a pleasant space advantage and control of the important d5-square, while he himself struggles to find active squares for his pieces and possibilities for counterplay.

Take the following position from a game played between two strong masters.

see following diagram

There is nothing in the black position which can be pointed to as a concrete weakness, nor does White have any immediate plan. Nevertheless, White's last

move 12 $\mathbb{H}e1$ prevented Black's planned exchange of light-squared bishops, preparing to answer 12... $\mathbb{A}h3$ with 13 $\mathbb{A}h1!$, following the rule that the side with a space advantage should avoid exchanges. White can build at his leisure, and always has the d5-square available for occupation, while Black has no equivalent 'strongpoint', since should his knight move to e5 it would be immediately evicted by f2-f4.



We shall see other instances of the 'pure Scotch structure' throughout the book. In general the difficulties which Black faces in these militate against this modest approach involving an early ...d7-d6.

If we pause briefly to take a comparative view we might get an idea of why this space advantage is particularly pernicious. Take for example the analogous central pawn position where White has a pawn on d4 (instead of e4) and Black on e6 (instead of d6).

Here again we can talk of some spatial plus, but this type of position is very popular - just think of the Caro-Kann or several variations of the French. The difference? In essence it is that here Black can, often without great inconvenience, strike back at White's centre with the break ...c7(c6)-c5. In the Scotch, the equivalent strike ...f7(f6)-f5 does occur, but it is a much more complex matter. For starters, the king's knight, unlike its b8-

counterpart, usually has to be developed before any such break can be contemplated, and in the majority of cases this means to f6, blocking the f-pawn. In many cases too, the advance of the f-pawn has implications for the king's position which render it less convenient.

It is broadly for these reasons that *where possible in the Open Games Black bases his defence around maintaining his e5-pawn as a strongpoint in the centre*. This is true of, for example, many lines of the Spanish (Ruy Lopez) and Italian Game. The Scotch has the significant advantage of denying Black that option.

Modifications of the 'Pure Scotch Structure'

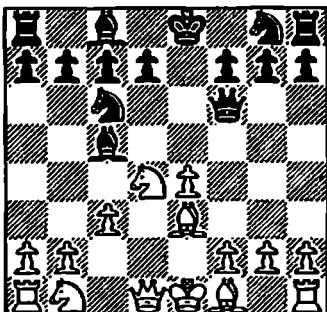
The traditional criticism of the Scotch Game is that it releases the tension too early, and gives Black too many opportunities to strike back either at the e4-pawn (4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ or 4... $\mathbb{W}h4$) or the knight on d4 (4... $\mathbb{A}c5$ or 4... $\mathbb{W}f6$). In one sense, this argument has some justification. If we focus on Black's two most significant moves for a moment, 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (Chapters 1-5) and 4... $\mathbb{A}c5$ (Chapters 6-11), it is true that both of them succeed in interfering with the rosy picture painted of the 'pure structure' above. Where I part company with this argument is that for me many of these changes simply enrich the position, and while they clearly provide Black with more play than in the 'pure' case described above, they also provide White with a wealth of new opportunities.

To take 4... $\mathbb{A}c5$ first, we find that broadly White can react in three ways:

a) 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (Chapter 8) tends to retain the pawn structure most resembling the 'pure Scotch', but the retreat of the knight takes much of the sting out of White's spatial advantage. Thus this line has lost a good deal of popularity in recent years.

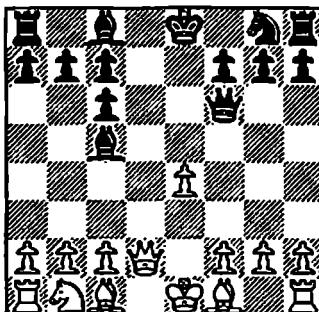
b) 5 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6?$ 6 c3 (see Chapters 9-11)

reveals another interesting modification of the ideal type. The important point here is that White has been forced into the concession of advancing his c-pawn to c3, which interferes quite substantially with his preferred development. *The enticing possibility of developing the queen's knight to c3, eyeing the d5-square, has been lost.*



just that. The fact that White has not yet committed his bishop to e3 affects the issue too, but there is a school of thought which expects its importance to grow very rapidly.

c) 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ entails the most radical change of structure. The most important lines arise from 5... $\mathbb{W}f6!$? 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$.



Of course this is purchased at a price. There is no doubt that the black queen can often find a role in these lines (see Game 61 for example). Equally though, she can form a target for White's operations (as in Games 56 and 59). Moreover, this line contains a larger than normal range of tactical tricks. Whenever the queen wanders off to the kingside the c7-point is weakened, and the possibility $\mathbb{Q}d4-b5$ is in the air. Also the undefended bishop on c5 is a source of tactical riches. Black, hankering after his full share of the centre through the advance ...d7-d5, is often reluctant to push the d-pawn just one square. Hence, the defence of this piece requires either ... $\mathbb{Q}c5-b6$, or ...b7-b6. These are respectable enough, but not to everyone's taste, so still expect to find a number of tactical motifs.

An interesting postscript here is the attempt to reach a structurally similar position without the controversial queen posting. 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 5 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c5?$ found in Chapter 13, is a very recent idea which attempts

This new structure merits careful consideration. It is well known from the Spanish Exchange variation that Black's problem is rather more than just doubled pawns. The point is that the c-pawns fall on his majority wing and hence very simplified endings are bad news (especially pawn endings which are, other things being equal, simply lost). White has the simple plan of creating a passed pawn by the advance of his e- and f-pawns. Black has no such equivalent. Hence Black's case revolves largely upon his ability to generate active piece play. On one level 5... $\mathbb{W}f6!$? is about avoiding the endgame. However, Black is again hoping to *interfere with White's development*.

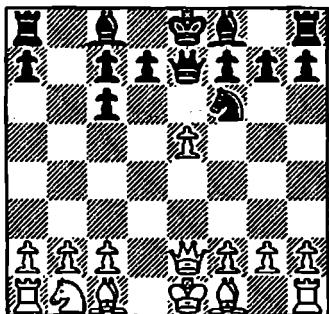
**Development:
Quantity, but Quality too!**

a) **Hindering the opponent's development**

In the Preface, I mentioned that the Scotch is distinguished by 'extremely early

contact between the pieces'. This was not just an attempt to make it all sound interesting! Rather, in the Scotch, in fairly stark contrast with the image of the Open Games, the players tend not merely to concentrate on their own rapid development but to give priority to hindering that of the opponent. This is where the 5... $\mathbb{Q}f6?$ of the previous example was typical. It would be too loosening for White to move the f-pawn in reply. Hence he is left with a choice of moves like 6 $\mathbb{W}e2?$ or 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ (best) which create their own problems for the development of his remaining pieces. Thus Black, who can in addition hope to bring a rook rapidly to the d-file, creates the necessary activity to compensate for his weakened structure by forcing White's queen to impede her own forces.

This is by no means an isolated example. Indeed, there are strong parallels in the basic position of the first four chapters which arises from the moves 1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5, and now 6... $\mathbb{W}e7(l)$ by Black, which virtually forces 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ with the following diagram:



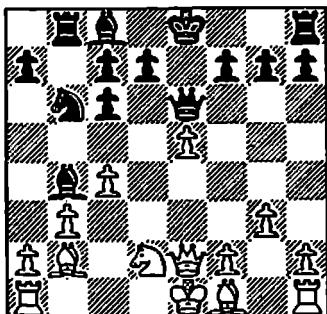
These two queen moves may be seen as a sort of 'exchange of inconveniences'. Black takes the decision that it is to his advantage to cause disruption to the mobilisation of both sides' forces. The strategic

implications are enormous. Questions such as whether to fianchetto the respective king's bishops or, if not, then how to find a secure and effective posting for the queen while 'normal development' is resumed, come to dominate the opening stages. There are at least three logical grounds for Black's decision:

First, he can claim more options for his queen when seeking to 're-release' his king's bishop for the simple reason that whereas he has the luxury of attacking the pawn on e5, White's queen is actually tied to its defence. Second, on similar grounds to those found in the last example, since Black is playing with a structural defect - the doubled c-pawns - he should in general seek compensation in piece play, and this will hardly be facilitated by both sides being able to develop without hindrance. Thirdly, by forcing the white queen to e2, Black is able to add a new dimension to the play - the possibility after 7... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 of keeping the knight in the centre by pinning White's c-pawn with 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$, exploiting the pin against e2. Another example of how development in the Scotch is rarely routine, and highly responsive to the circumstances of the opponent's development. The downside of 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ will be touched upon at the end of this Introduction.

These first two examples of 'interference with development' are of great importance since they influence the play in large chunks of the book, but there are many others. Look at the discussion of 10 a3 from Game 2 for example, and 16 $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ from Game 85, which transformed the assessment of a whole line by keeping one key black piece at home.

One more case which I find rather interesting is worth a mention here. In the next diagram position, from Hjartarson-L.Sokolov, Akureyri 1994, Black has a subtle possibility.



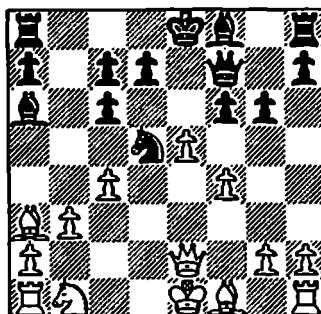
Black's unusual ... $\mathbb{B}b8$ move was an attempt to interfere with White's queenside development (see also the note to Black's tenth move in Game 19) and was to some extent successful, but now leaves that piece in search of a role. The move played, 12... $\mathbb{W}g6$, is very instructive and reveals another potential problem of White's 7 $\mathbb{We}2$ discussed above, namely the fact that the defence of the c2-square has been deserted. Black's idea is simply that in order to prevent a queen invasion on c2 White will have to castle long. Consequently, the otherwise rather clumsy rook on b8 comes into play and Black has various attacking chances against the white king.

b) King position

This leads on nicely to a brief mention of the broad range of destinations available for both sides with regard to king placement. Castling long as well as short appears frequently for both sides throughout the book. It is perhaps more surprising that there are a number of interesting and seemingly paradoxical cases where the king remains in the centre, sometimes as a result of just such a development logjam as we have been considering.

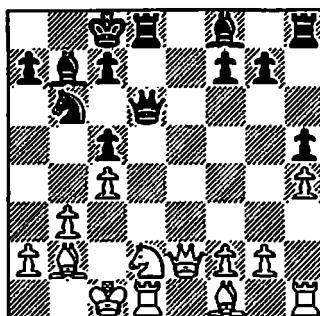
In this position below, from Game 3, Black invites White to capture 12 $\mathbb{Exf6?}$ with check, safe in the knowledge that 12... $\mathbb{Qd8}$, by clearing the e-file, would

spell disaster for White's king. The note to move 11 in Game 30 is also instructive. Black not only plays with his king in the centre, but even opens it up, later finding a haven for his king on b7.



c) Lateral rook development

The possibility of mobilising the rooks 'around the side' is another important consequence of mutual development difficulties. Take the following position.



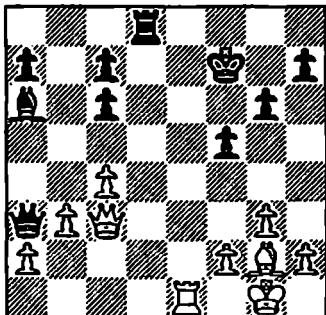
The scenario of queens blocking bishops is nothing new. Neither does Black's need to compensate for a damaged structure by active piece play present any surprises. Two factors here do, however, encourage White to think radically: The completely clear open files give an urgency to the need to bring a rook to the e-file, as well as reducing the number of potential safe havens for White's queen to run to

and 'make way' for the bishop's development. Also, Black dominates the long light-squared diagonal – the fianchetto is not an option, at least with a rook on h1! All this adds up to 15 $\mathbb{B}h3!$ followed by 16 $\mathbb{E}e3!$, only then followed by 17 g3, as White's most efficient development path.

Problem Pieces

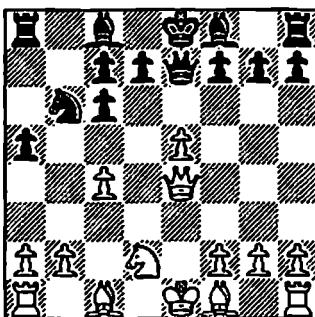
This final important theme has already been touched upon, when we considered the difficulties which Black could have with his queen on f6 in Chapters 10-12. Here I want to mention two more recurring cases – both arising chiefly from the line 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{We}2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4. Black has a choice of 'problems'. After 8... $\mathbb{R}a6$ the fate of this bishop will largely determine his fate, and after 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$, albeit to a lesser degree, Black does well to ensure that this knight can re-enter the play before it is seriously restricted by White's pawns.

After 8... $\mathbb{R}a6$ 9 b3(!) the outlines of the problem are already clear. The bishop may end up targeting a well-secured pawn. Its hopes usually rest on the move ...d7-d5 and a lease of life after ...d5xc4. The following is the nightmare scenario from Magomedov-Hachian, Yerevan Olympiad 1996, where Black has desperate c-pawns that, aside from their own intrinsic difficulties, restrict the hapless bishop.



I could list several games where Black has serious problems with the bishop on a6 – Games 13 and 14 spring to mind – but it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that the role of this piece dominates the first two chapters.

In the case of the knight on b6, I would just like the reader to look out for various examples of its successful re-deployment. Here I offer one from Grosar-I.Sokolov, Portoroz 1993.



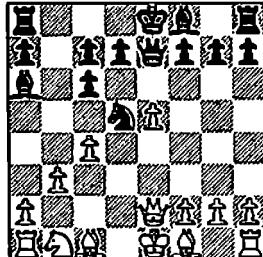
In the diagram position Black exploited the position of the white queen on e4 to win back a tempo with the surprising manoeuvre 10... $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}c5-e6$, aiming for the 'ideal' set-up of ... $\mathbb{R}b7$ and ...c6-c5 when the knight can aspire to serious influence on the centre.

For another optimal resolution of this problem see Game 34, in which Black willingly exchanges his light-squared bishop for the white knight in order to strongly emphasise his control of the d4-square.

We have now looked at many of the key themes which the reader will find cropping up many times in the pages to follow. As other ideas appear, it is worth putting them in the context of this discussion. These will be best illustrated in the concrete examples to which we now turn.

CHAPTER ONE

Main Line with 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6$: 9 b3



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{We}2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3

In this chapter we consider one of the most critical lines in the modern Scotch, the main line with 9 b3 (White's other ninth moves are considered in Chapter 2). Black has four main responses: the straightforward 9...0-0-0 (Game 1), the tricky 9... $\mathbb{W}h4$ (Game 2), the old main line 9...g6 (Games 3-6) and the new main line 9...g5!? (Games 7-9). As we shall see, the latter, which was introduced to top-level practice in sensational fashion by Vishy Anand in his 1995 World Championship match with Garry Kasparov, is the most promising alternative for Black.

Game 1 Rublevsky-Mikhailovski European Cup, Vilnius 1995

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{We}2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 0-0-0

The plan of castling long in conjunction with ...f7-f6 is perhaps the most logical attempt to exploit two central problems of White's position: the potential weakness of the e5-pawn and the fact that

the queen on e2 can impede rapid development. Indeed, Black can come close to winning the e5-pawn by force. The relative unpopularity of this plan compared to those considered later in the chapter lies in the fact that, having won the pawn, the centre is temporarily clarified. Then it is the drawbacks in Black's position which come to the fore, notably the poorly placed bishop on a6 (much featured in the Introduction) and the vulnerable pawns around Black's king.

10 g3

In the game itself, White's ninth and tenth moves were inverted, which in the lines with ...0-0-0 at least, has no real significance.

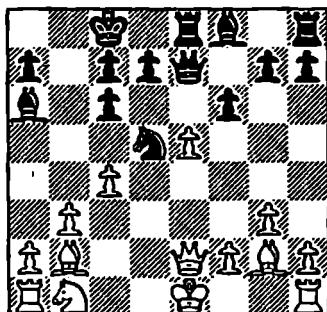
10... $\mathbb{We}8$ 11 $\mathbb{Nb}2$ f6 12 $\mathbb{Q}g2$

This natural move has been almost automatic here, but throughout the 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ complex, particularly when White's queen no longer has primary duties of guarding the e5-pawn, Black should be prepared for the queen to side-step the pin and question the knight. This is exactly what White tried in Socko-Kostyra, Poland 1997, when 12 $\mathbb{W}d2$!?

$\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ fxe5 14 0-0 g5! 15 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 17 a4! h5 18 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 19 a5 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$

resulted in a nightmare scenario for Black

where White's near model minor pieces are completely dominant.



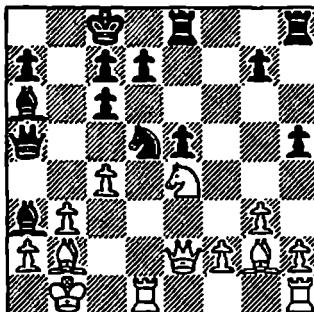
12...fxe5 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$?

Again I prefer this development to the most common move 13 0-0. The point is that the most critical of Black's positional problems, finding a role for his knight and light-squared bishop, is not dependent on the placing of White's king. Castling short, for all White's manifest chances on the queenside, tends to lead to something of a race where Black marches his h-pawn and always develops counter-chances. The classic case was Kasparov-Karpov, World Championship match, Lyon 1990, which became incredibly sharp after 13 0-0 h5 (13... $\mathbb{Q}f6$?) 14 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$! (15... $\mathbb{Q}b7$? 16 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{B}hxf8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ would be very misguided as the a-pawn is of little importance; only the speed of getting to the king counts) 16 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{B}hxf8$ (17... $\mathbb{H}xf8$ also merits attention) 18 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{W}g4$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ h4 and White's kingside is vulnerable too.

13...h5

13...g6 14 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}h6$? 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{B}hf8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$! 17 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{B}xf6$ 19 f4 $\mathbb{B}f7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ again allowed all Black's problems to come to the fore in Thorhallsson-Sigfusson, Icelandic Championship 1991.

14 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$



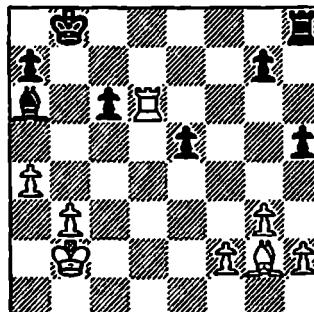
17 $\mathbb{W}d2$!

It is significant that Black is somehow chasing the white king even though it has headed to the other side. Part of the appeal of White's pawn sacrifice is that it is sufficiently positionally grounded that he can happily head for simplification (with the obvious exception of exchanging Black's problem minor pieces).

17... $\mathbb{W}xd2$ 18 $\mathbb{B}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 20 $\mathbb{B}c1$!

A strong dual-purpose move. White prevents ideas of solving the 'minor piece problem' by sacrificing on c4. More subtly, he realises that Black cannot survive indefinitely without...d7-d6, when the c-file may become ripe for opening.

20... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 21 $\mathbb{B}a1$ d6 22 c5 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 23 $\mathbb{C}xd6$ $\mathbb{C}xd6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ 25 $\mathbb{E}cd1$ $\mathbb{B}xd6$ 26 $\mathbb{E}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 27 $\mathbb{B}d6$



27... $\mathbb{E}f8$ 28 $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{E}f6$ 29 $h4$ $\mathbb{B}c7$ 30 $\mathbb{B}c3$

Black has defended well and limited White's advantage, but the position still should hold a few problems.

30... $\mathbb{A}c8$ 31 $\mathbb{B}b4$ $\mathbb{B}b6$ 32 $a5+$ $\mathbb{B}c7$ 33

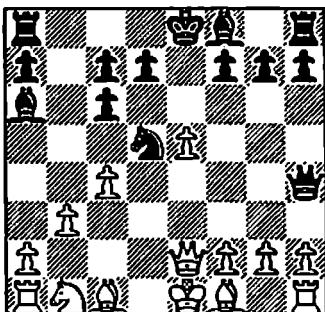
$\mathbb{B}c5$ $\mathbb{A}g4$ 34 $b4$ $\mathbb{A}f3$ 35 $\mathbb{A}f1$ $\mathbb{A}d5$ 36

$\mathbb{B}c2$ $\mathbb{E}f3$ 37 $b5$ $\mathbb{E}a3$ 38 $\mathbb{B}b4$ $\mathbb{E}b3+$ 39

$\mathbb{B}c5$ $\mathbb{E}a3$ 40 $\mathbb{B}b4$ $\mathbb{E}b3+ \frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 2
Kotsur-Frolov
Russian Cup, Tomsk 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{D}f3$ $\mathbb{D}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
8 c4 $\mathbb{A}a6$ 9 b3 $\mathbb{W}h4$



10 a3(!)

Initially it would appear rather surprising that White is well advised to invest a further tempo in this 'non-developing' move. However, the justification lies in the aforementioned distinction between 'quantity' and 'quality' of development. The most important thing for White is to prevent his opponent's last minor piece from emerging to its ideal square. Here the check on b4 is critical to Black's hopes of pursuing his 'strategy of disruption'. If Black's pieces are unable to combine to create immediate mischief, then even a serious deficit in numerical development may be containable, and White can, as so often in this chapter, switch attention to

his longer term pluses. White further hopes that the b3-pawn will not be seriously weakened. Note that if White is forced to advance his b-pawn to b4, this may turn out to be good news for the bishop on a6.

The natural alternative 10 $\mathbb{A}b2$, while out of favour, is not quite dead and buried (though of course 10 $g3?$ $\mathbb{W}d4$ 11 $\mathbb{A}b2$ $\mathbb{A}b4+$ can be expected to remain rather unpopular). Black plays 10... $\mathbb{A}b4+$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d1!$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ is rightly condemned by theory since 11... $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ forces White to part with the bishop pair as 12 $\mathbb{W}f3?$ $\mathbb{A}e4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ d5! 14 exd6 0-0! is even worse; this is a typical example of how Black should open up the position wherever possible to accentuate his quicker mobilisation) 11... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e4!?$ (White prevents ... $\mathbb{A}e6$, which would be a good answer to 12 $\mathbb{W}f3$) 12... $\mathbb{W}xf2$ 13 $\mathbb{A}d4$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 14 c5! $\mathbb{W}h5+$ 15 g4! (White invests a second pawn to keep the knight on f4 pinned, although it is Black's other minor piece which is really the focus of White's ambitions; what happens next is pretty well forced since the poor bishop on b4 is indeed trapped, but Black secures reasonable recompense) 15... $\mathbb{W}xg4+$ 16 $\mathbb{B}c2$ $\mathbb{A}e2!$ (securing an important gain of tempo from...) 17 $\mathbb{A}xe2$ $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ (...this attack on the bishop) 19 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 0-0 20 a3 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 22 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{E}xc5$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xe2$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ and Black has four pawns for the piece, two of them passed, but White's rooks and knight combined well enough to maintain the balance in Izeta-Alvarez, Elgoibar 1991.

10... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 11 $g3!$

For a long time this move was condemned, on the basis, in my view, of a profound misassessment of the consequences of the ensuing tactics. The chess world now seems to be waking up to the reality that this move may simply represent a refutation of Black's strategy.

The alternative 11 $\mathbb{A}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ offers less

after:

- a) 12 $\mathbb{W}d2?$ is certainly ruled out by the shot 12... $\mathbb{Q}h3!$ and if 13 $gxh3$ $\mathbb{W}e4+$.
 b) 12 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 13 g3 $\mathbb{W}h6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0
 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ f6 16 $exf6$ $\mathbb{Exf6}$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Exf3!}$ 18
 $\mathbb{Qxf3}$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{Wd3}$ $\mathbb{Qg5}$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Qxf2+}$ 21
 $\mathbb{Qd1}$ d5 was a fine example of the need for Black to remain active in this line. Here he opened the position and even offered material to retain the initiative, in K.Grosar-Crepan, Portoroz 1996.
 c) 12 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 13 g3 (13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is untried, but avoids the tactical problems of the text) 13... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$ (13... $\mathbb{W}h6?$ and 13... $\mathbb{W}e7?$, intending ...0-0-0, are also both quite playable) 14 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (14 $\mathbb{Wxc6?}$ dx $c6$ 15 $gxh4$
 $\mathbb{Qf3+}$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Qd4+}$ [so the weakness of the b3-pawn does play a role] 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ is pleasant for Black due to the bishop pair) 14... $\mathbb{W}e4$ 15 $\mathbb{Wxe4}$ (15 h4
 $\mathbb{Wxh1}$ 16 $hxg5$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d5! is clearly better for Black according to Blatny) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 16 f4? (16 f3! $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 17 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 18
c5! $\mathbb{Q}d3+!$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ was better, with about equal chances) 16... $\mathbb{Bb8!}$
17 b4 $\mathbb{Q}f2+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3!$ with a clear advantage to Black in Hort-Xie Jun, Women-Veterans, Prague 1995.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$

This is the supposed tactical justification of Black's play, and it does indeed win material. Retreat would needless to say undermine the logic of Black's strategy. The conceptual basis of the ensuing battle is far from complex. Does the black queen get out or not, and if so at what price?

12 $\mathbb{Q}xf2!$

12 $\mathbb{Q}xf2?$ obviously fails to 12... $\mathbb{W}d4+$ and ... $\mathbb{W}xa1$.

12... $\mathbb{W}e4+$

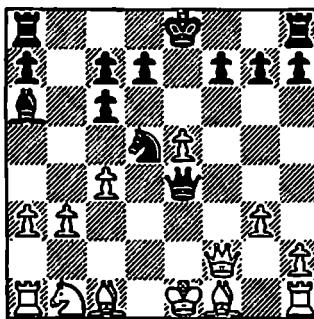
see following diagram

13 $\mathbb{Q}d1!$

White has also experimented with 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ which, by avoiding the pin on the

f1-bishop, ensures that White will pick up the knight on d5 as well in exchange for his rook on h1. For example, 13... $\mathbb{W}xh1$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}xh2$ 15 $cx5$ $cx5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}b2?$) 16... $c6?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0, as in M.Marić-Vojska, Subotica Women's Interzonal 1991. The resulting position is interesting; Black has three pawns and a rook for two pieces – not a bad trade at all. None of Black's pieces give cause for concern – the bishop on a6 is very much a player and the queen has also re-entered the action. The central pawn phalanx is also very stable, particularly as White has no real pawn levers with which to undermine it. Moreover, it is highly effective in holding back White's pieces on the light squares, crucially the e4-square, which is gravely missed in any attempt to exploit the b-file for attack. Any problems, of course, will come on the dark squares, but in general Black's position looks fairly healthy, and indeed Black went on to win the game.

In my opinion, the somewhat materialistic priorities of 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ are flawed. The knight on b1 needs the d2-square, defending the bishop on f1 and heading for f3, where it can play a serious role in trying to snare the black queen.



13... $\mathbb{W}xh1$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c3+$

It is not completely clear whether this knight has to move. For example, after

14...0-0 15 cxd5? $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xf1$, neither 16... $\mathbb{W}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ cxd5 nor 16... $\mathbb{W}xd5?$ really favours White. In the first case we have a good illustration of the relative strength of the rook against two minor pieces in the endgame as opposed to the middlegame. In the latter White's king becomes an issue as the Black queen's transformation from 'vulnerable' to 'commanding' occurs with alarming speed. Of course White should not be so lightly deflected from concentration on the 'problem' black queen. Better is 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2!$, when one illustrative variation runs 15...f5 16 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ f4 17 cxd5! fxe3 18 $\mathbb{Q}xa6!$ $\mathbb{W}xa1$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xg3$ $\mathbb{W}h1$ 20 e6 g6 21 $\mathbb{W}e5!$ and attention has switched to the plight of the other black monarch.

15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{W}h5$

So the black queen has escaped...

19 h4!

...Well, not entirely! This key move threatens simply g3-g4, and forces Black to reveal his apparently solid kingside pawn structure as a sham. After his next move, sadly forced, the white pieces are literally invited in. At the risk of tedious repetition, note again the utter impotence of the bishop on a6 as a defensive piece!

defence of e7 allows Black the possibility 21...g6! 22 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ when he can choose between a draw by 22...gxf5 23 $\mathbb{H}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 24 $\mathbb{H}e7$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 25 $\mathbb{H}g7$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 26 $\mathbb{H}e7$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ (26... $\mathbb{W}g6$ is a repetition) 27 $\mathbb{W}d4$ d6 28 f7 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 29 $\mathbb{W}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xf5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 31 $\mathbb{W}f6+$ etc. or good defensive chances by 22...0-0, as in Novak-Riou, Candas open 1996.

20...0-0

Since with a modicum of care by White, the text move is likely to lead to a rout, Black should probably consider 20...gxf6. However, White then has a (very pleasant) choice between:

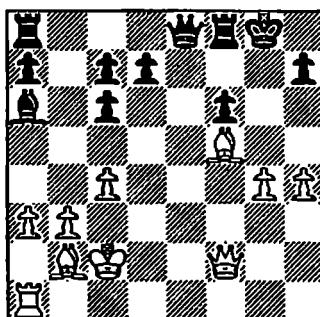
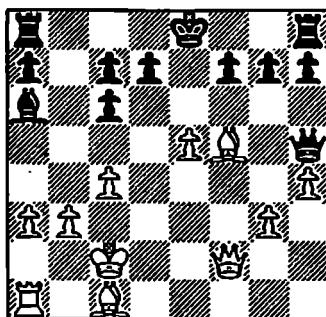
a) 21 $\mathbb{Q}b2!$? 0-0-0? 22 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{H}hf8$ 23 g4 $\mathbb{W}f7$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xa7!$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{H}xd8$ Grabics-Majigsuren, World Junior Girls Championship, Medellin 1996. White should now have stabilised her superbly placed bishop by 26 h5! followed by 27 $\mathbb{H}d1$, when Black has no real prospects of breaking out of the bind.

b) 21 $\mathbb{W}e1+$ (I.-Gutman) 21... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 22 g4 $\mathbb{W}f7$ 23 $\mathbb{W}a5!$ with a strong attack.

21 g4 $\mathbb{W}e8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b2!$

Some accuracy is still required. Thus after the impetuous 22 fxe3? $\mathbb{W}e4+$ (Korchnoi) Black turns the tables.

22...gxf6?!



19...f6 20 exf6!

Much more precise than 20 g4? $\mathbb{W}f7$ 21 exf6, since driving the queen back to the

23 $\mathbb{H}g1!$ h6 24 g5 fxe3 25 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 26 $\mathbb{W}h8+$ 1-0

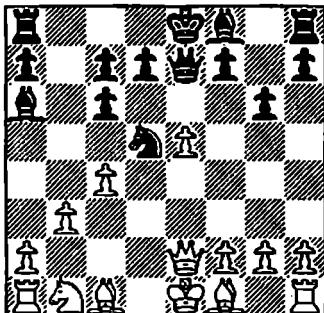
Actually 26 $\mathbb{H}xg5+$ hxe3 27 $\mathbb{W}h8+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$

28 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ etc. leads to an even quicker mate. Still, the text is perfectly adequate to secure the jettison of Black's towel in view of 26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 27 $\mathbb{W}g7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 28 $\mathbb{K}e1$ $\mathbb{W}xe1$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}g6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xf8+$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 31 $\mathbb{W}xe8$ mate. The final phase of the game was really a massacre, but notable for the extremely economical way in which all the white pieces piled into the attack.

Game 3
Kasparov-Karpov
Tilburg 1991

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g6

Along with 9...0-0-0, this is perhaps Black's most natural try - he seeks simply to proceed with normal development, pressuring the white e-pawn by ... $\mathbb{Q}g7$, ...0-0, ... $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ etc. In Chapter 2 we shall see the consequences of White broadly permitting Black to carry out this plan. Here, and in Games 4-6, we look at more ambitious attempts to cut across Black's intentions.



10 f4?

A very critical response. White protects the e-pawn in preparation for the move $\mathbb{W}f2$ which would immediately pose a question to Black's knight, as well as giving an enhanced range of development

options.

10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ is seen in Game 6, while 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ is likely to transpose into the material of Chapter 2, Games 14-16, after 10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 g3 since here 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ is less precise due to 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$

10...f6

A typical case in the Scotch where concrete threats - here the basic positional threat to embarrass the knight on d5 - sharpen the play at a very early stage. Routine development is already insufficient. Thus, 10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$?! 11 $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (11... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ hardly bears thinking about; Black gets the worst of both worlds - the bad bishop on a6 and the sorry knight on b6) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d6 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$! 0-0 14 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ was very unsatisfactory for Black in Van der Wiel-Beliavsky, Groningen 1994. White could have played 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$! $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ when Black is disastrously tied up.

The other attempt to disrupt the smooth flow of White's operation - the queen advance 10... $\mathbb{W}b4+$ - is the subject of Game 5.

11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$?

Here White actually has a choice between the truly extraordinary tactical mess which the text move initiates and the positional 11 exf6 which may also promise some relatively risk-free advantage - see Game 4.

11... $\mathbb{W}f7$?

White is much too well co-ordinated for the flighty 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$? to bring any joy. After 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ fxe5 (the 'standard' 12...c5, aiming at re-deployment of the knight to its optimal c6-square, here fails since the white knight can in turn head for d5 by 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$! fxe5 14 a3! with horrible consequences) 13 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ with a manifest positional advantage.

Kasparov also gives 11...c5 12 g3! fxe5 13 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ c6 14 fxe5 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0 16

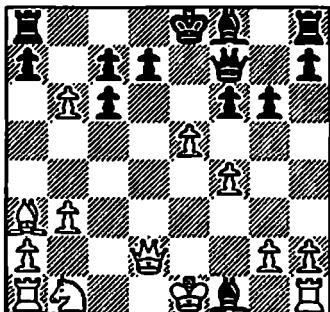
$\mathbb{Q}d2!$ as favourable for White. The knight is headed for $f3$, when Black's bishops (especially our old friend on $a6$) have poor prospects. The move ... $c7-c6$ is very bad for Black's structure since he can no longer aspire to playing ... $d7-d6$ and then capturing back with the pawn on $d6$ after forcing an exchange.

12 $\mathbb{W}d2!$

A multipurpose move. White not only attacks the knight on $d5$ by unpinning – already a familiar theme – but also defends $f4$ and has an eye to sharp tactical possibilities involving the thrust $\mathbb{W}d2-a5$.

As so often in this chapter, White opens the e-file with queens on the board at his peril. The disruptive effect of the check 12 $exf6+?$! is an illusion. Black's forces suddenly gain new energy, and White is fortunate to have an equalising resource after 12... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$! 14 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}e6+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{H}e8!$ 17 0-0-0! $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}xe2$? (there is nothing better as 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$? 19 $\mathbb{W}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}xe2$? 20 $\mathbb{H}he1$ wins for White) 19 $cx d5$ which leads to an equal ending – Kasparov.

12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 $c5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 14 $exb6$



14... $\mathbb{Q}xb6?$

This is clearly the last moment at which Black can seek to rescue this variation, since the inadequacy of the text move, after Kasparov's superb retort, is not in doubt. We are also greatly indebted to the

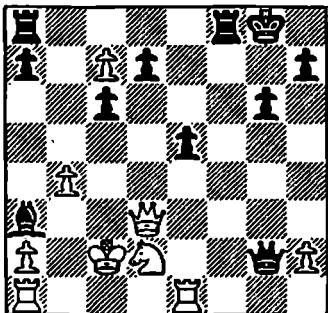
PCA/WCC World Champion for his typically deep analysis of the alternatives:

a) The first of these is relatively easy to dismiss. 14... $\mathbb{Q}xa3?$! 15 $b7!$ $\mathbb{H}b8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 17 0-0-0! $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ (17... $\mathbb{H}xb7$? fails to 18 $c6!$, while 17... $fxe5$ 18 $\mathbb{H}he1$ 0-0 19 $fxe5$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{H}fd8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ [Wells] also highlights the potential gravity of Black's dark-squared weaknesses) 18 $\mathbb{H}he1$ 0-0 19 $\mathbb{W}xd7$ clearly favours White – Kasparov.

b) However, the immediate withdrawal from $f1$ is definitely Black's best chance. Kasparov gives 14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 15 $bxc7$ $fxe5$! (Black has to continue to play his part in generating a big mess. His main trump card is the potential embarrassment of White's king. Hence 15... $\mathbb{Q}xa3?$! 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 0-0 17 0-0-0, which enables White to solve, this problem should be avoided. The more the position is 'normalised', the more salient become the more long-term positional factors which favour White. Here, in addition, the $c7$ -pawn has not yet been rounded up!) 16 $\mathbb{W}a5$ (if 16 $fxe5$, 16... $\mathbb{W}f5$! [Wells] creates enough threats to disrupt the smooth flow of White's game) 16... $\mathbb{W}xf4$! 17 $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}h4+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d11$ (but not 18 $g3?$ $\mathbb{W}e4+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f2?$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$! when, although White has a choice of which black attacking forces to eliminate, those which remain will have a field day – either the rook to $f8$, or the bishop to $c5$; White's king is so weak that even Black's reduced forces can create decisive threats) 18... $\mathbb{W}d4+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ (Kasparov gives this as a sub-variation of 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 20 $c8\mathbb{W}+$ $\mathbb{E}xc8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xc8+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xh8$ $\mathbb{W}xa1+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xh1$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 25 $\mathbb{W}f4+$ with perpetual check. A bad day out for the rooks! In my view the text is stronger) 19... $\mathbb{W}e4+$ 20 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xg2+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$.

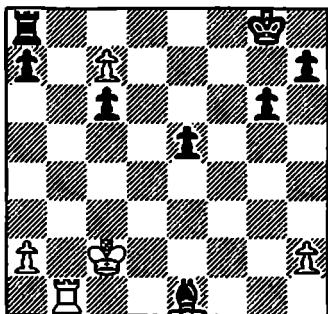
Unclear, according to Kasparov, who points out that 22 $\mathbb{W}a6?$ is well met by 22... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ However, although direct onslaughts on Black's king are inadequate, I

think that White should play 22 $\mathbb{E}h1$! 0-0! 23 b4! when Black gets no joy after either:



b1) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 24 $\mathbb{W}c4+$ d5 25 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ e4 26 $\mathbb{W}d6$ $\mathbb{W}h3$! 27 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}d3+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{E}ac8$ 29 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}f2$ 30 $\mathbb{E}c2$ with a clear plus for White; or

b2) 23... $\mathbb{E}f2$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xd7$! (but not the casual 24 $\mathbb{E}ad1?$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 25 $\mathbb{W}c4+$ $\mathbb{W}d5$! 26 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{W}xa2+$ and White is certainly not better) 24... $\mathbb{E}xd2+$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ 28 $\mathbb{E}b1!!$ [Wells] and the pawn will promote.



This is probably the most complex analysis in the book, and offers some insight into the depth of Garry Kasparov's opening work. It has retained its theoretical significance (although White might be relieved to find a 'quiet' alternative in Game 4!) and I think will repay careful

study if only for the many tactical ideas contained therein. The rest of the game is of mainly historical importance after the beautiful...

15 $\mathbb{e}6!!$

...which is really based on very simple positional ideas – the wish to keep the f-file closed, and to weaken Black's c-pawns by dragging the d-pawn from their side. The routine alternative 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf8?$! $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xg2$ $\mathbb{E}xf8$ 17 0-0 fxe5 18 fxe5 $\mathbb{W}xf1+$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xf1$ $\mathbb{E}xf1$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{E}a5$! 21 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 22 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{E}xe1+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ enables Black to amass a fair number of reasonably healthy pawns for the piece.

15...dxe8

White's tactical idea is also readily comprehensible – after 15... $\mathbb{W}xe6?$! 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ the recapture of the piece by 16... $\mathbb{Q}xa3?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ $\mathbb{E}xa3$ would disastrously activate White's rook and cost Black his queen due to 18 $\mathbb{E}e1$.

16 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

Kasparov also criticises this, preferring 17... $\mathbb{Q}d3?$! 18 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ g5? which would, rather unsurprisingly, afford Black a degree of counterplay in the event of 19 fxe5? $\mathbb{W}h5!$ White should instead eschew such greed, and give priority to addressing the only downside to his position, and develop! Thus after 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ gxf4 20 0-0-0 c5 21 $\mathbb{W}c3$ Black has three pawns for the piece, but his forces will be driven back, and White can start to attack, aided by his own healthy king's position, and indeed by the opposite-coloured bishops.

18 $\mathbb{W}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{E}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}c3!$

For our purposes, the last important moment. White correctly assesses that his king belongs on the queenside. Hence, the queen needs to be here to facilitate 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$, shielding the d-file. The rest is technique, and Kasparov neutralises Black's two pawns and slight activity with customary efficiency.

20... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{E}hd8$ 22 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}e8$ 23

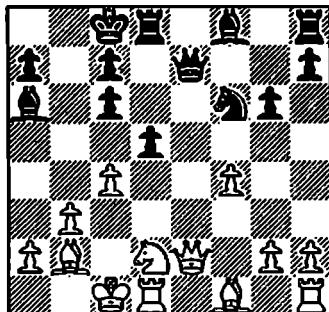
$\mathbb{W}xc7+$ $\mathbb{E}8d7$ 24 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}b8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{E}d5$ 26 $\mathbb{W}f2$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}xf4+$ 28 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 29 $\mathbb{E}dg1$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 30 $\mathbb{E}g3$ $e5$ 31 $\mathbb{E}h3$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 32 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{E}d1+$ 33 $\mathbb{E}xd1$ $\mathbb{W}xd1+$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $h5$ 35 $\mathbb{E}g3$ $\mathbb{W}h1$ 36 $\mathbb{W}f2$ $h4$ 37 $\mathbb{W}g2$ $\mathbb{W}xg2+$ 38 $\mathbb{E}xg2$ $g5$ 39 $a4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 40 $a5$ $e4$ 41 $b4$ $h3$ 42 $\mathbb{E}g3$ $\mathbb{E}h7$ 43 $a6$ 44 $\mathbb{E}a3$ 1-0

Game 4
Beliavsky-Almasi
Yugoslav League 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8.c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g6 10 f4 f6

If White is afraid of the complications of the previous game, instead of 11 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ he can try the safe...

11 exf6? $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d5 14 0-0-0



14...d4

An interesting moment. After this advance Black has a passed pawn, which moreover can be supported by the front c-pawn. However, White becomes stronger on the light squares – particularly the f3-a8 diagonal – and the c-pawns become vulnerable to attack. Positionally, the drawbacks seem to outweigh the advantages. Note, however, that it is very hard for Black to complete his development without this move, and I doubt that he would

have made this decision voluntarily.

15 $\mathbb{E}e1!$

A strong move. White seizes the key file, and all but forces the exchange of queens. This is likely to be in favour of the player trying to convert a long-term 'structural' advantage.

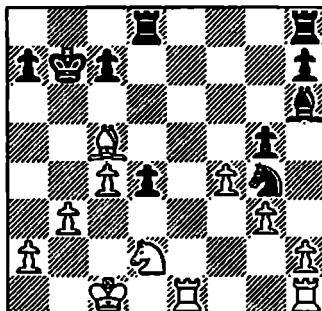
15... $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$

Beliavsky here mentions the more conservative possibility 16... $\mathbb{Q}d6$? Probably Black rejected this as too passive – it is not obvious where he would seek counterplay thereafter. Still, the strategy he adopts with the text move is rather 'all or nothing', since if the intended kingside disruption does not amount to very much, as we might argue occurs in the game, then the flight of the bishop will be noticed when it comes to the mundane job of defending the c5-pawn.

17 g3 g5 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5

Black would prefer to damage the white kingside with the consistent 18...gxf4, but White has 19 $\mathbb{E}e6!$ $\mathbb{E}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{E}xd6$ cxd6 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 22 g4! when the black bishops make a particularly sorry picture. White's play in this game seems to have a fair degree of punch since Black has both weak pawns and dubious pieces to worry about.

19 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xb7+$ $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$



22 fxg5?

At last White makes a decision which is

open to criticism. After the text he retains some positional plus, but only by returning the extra pawn to stem potential counterplay. Instead it was time to really cash in and face the consequences of 22 $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ $\mathbb{A}de8$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 24 $\mathbb{F}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 25 h4 $\mathbb{E}hf8$ 26 $\mathbb{E}h2$ $\mathbb{E}f5$, when it is easier than it looks for White to unravel by 27 $\mathbb{E}he2!$ (threatening 28 $\mathbb{Q}f1$) 27... $\mathbb{E}ef8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ with a clear advantage.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xe7$ $\mathbb{E}de8$ 25 $\mathbb{E}he1$ $\mathbb{E}xe7$ 26 $\mathbb{E}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ h5 28 $\mathbb{Q}c2$

After this Black finds enough counter-chances to draw. White could still have tried 28 b4 $\mathbb{E}d8$ 29 $\mathbb{E}h7$ d3 30 $\mathbb{E}xh5$ $\mathbb{Q}f1$ 31 $\mathbb{E}d5$, when although the ending after 31...d2+! 32 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{E}xd5$ 33 $\mathbb{C}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ promises White the chance to prolong Black's suffering, he has rather slight winning chances.

28...h4 29 $\mathbb{G}xh4$ $\mathbb{E}xh4$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 31 b4 a5 32 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 33 b5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 34 b6 $\mathbb{E}h2+$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ d3 36 $\mathbb{E}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 37 $\mathbb{E}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}c2+$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{E}xa2$ 39 $\mathbb{E}xd3$ $\mathbb{E}xe4$ 40 $\mathbb{E}xf3$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

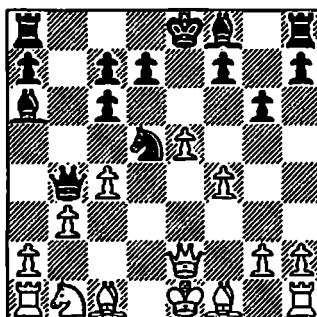
A good example of active defence from Black, but White had definite chances which from the theoretical standpoint pose serious questions to the defence.

Game 5
Z.Vukovic-Blagojevic
Yugoslavia 1993

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g6 10 f4 $\mathbb{W}b4+$

As we have already seen, White's sharp tenth move all but forces Black to change track. The previous games saw one way – to have a crack at the centre. Now we see a new mode of development. We have already seen the queen vacating to h4 to liberate the king's bishop (see Game 2). This time the queen is headed for b6, after

which White will have to pay attention to the d4-square. What then is the role of the move 9...g6 here? Black would I suppose claim that it has encouraged White to create a new target (the f4-pawn) for attack.



11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

If 12 $\mathbb{W}e4$ Black has the very sharp and powerful possibility 12...f5! 13 exf6+ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ (Karpov) by which Black's rook joins the play with tempo, when his lead in development acquires menacing proportions.

12... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d3!$

A very important novelty. White offers the f4-pawn in order to preserve the initiative. The more routine 13 $\mathbb{W}f3$ has two principal drawbacks: it fails to cover the d4-square, and it enables Black to redeploy his problem bishop with tempo. The normally messy business of chess practice here backs up the theory with two neatly classified examples. 13 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ and now:

a) 14... $\mathbb{W}d4$ 15 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$ 16 $\mathbb{E}xc3$ 0-0-0 (16...f6? – Karpov) 17 $\mathbb{W}e3$ c5 18 $\mathbb{E}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 19 $\mathbb{E}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Tolnai-Lukacs, Budapest 1996. The desirability or otherwise of these exchanges rests as usual upon one key criterion. Is the problem of the bishop on a6 solved in the meantime? Here the fact that White had to capture slightly awkwardly with the rook on c3 gave Black ample time to address this question.

b) 14... $\mathbb{A}b7$ 15 0-0 c5 16 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ (it is important not to delay; White threatens 17 $\mathbb{A}b2!$ when the liberation of Black's light-squared bishop would mean the downfall of its comrade) 17 $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 0-0-0 18 h4 $\mathbb{A}he8$ 19 $\mathbb{B}h3$ d6 20 $\mathbb{A}hd3$ (20 exd6 $\mathbb{B}xd6!$) 20...dxe5 21 $\mathbb{W}xe5!$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 22 $\mathbb{A}xd8+$ $\mathbb{B}xd8$ 23 $\mathbb{A}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 24 $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Gelfand-Karpov, Linares 1992. The active black pieces hold the balance. His queen is poised to enter on e4 should White's queen feel tempted to embark on any foolish adventures

13... $\mathbb{A}xc3$

Black takes up the challenge, although White's compensation is unquestionable. He should have considered the more modest 13... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$ 14 $\mathbb{A}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}a5?$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{W}xb4+$ 16 $\mathbb{W}d2$ with a slight plus (Vukovic). White's chances of maintaining a slight bind look better than in the comparable Tolnai-Lukacs game above, e.g. 16... $\mathbb{W}xd2+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ c5 18 g3? $\mathbb{A}b7$ 19 $\mathbb{B}g1$ 0-0-0 20 $\mathbb{A}h3?$

14 $\mathbb{A}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$

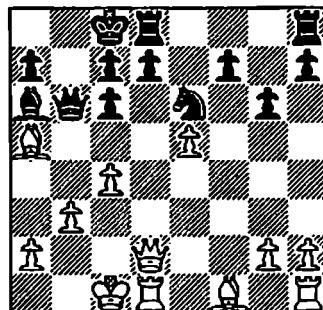
Of course 14...0-0-0? 15 $\mathbb{A}d2$ leaves Black's minor pieces in a sorry state.

However, the refutation of 14... $\mathbb{W}e3+?$ which Vukovic offers is highly instructive and well worth a closer look: 15 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 17 e6! (although this is very strong, White would actually also enjoy some advantage after 17 $\mathbb{A}hx1$, based on the as yet unsolved problem of the bishop on a6, and the cramping effect of the pawn on e5; whether the opposite-coloured bishops would be a sufficient 'drawish factor' to save Black is unclear) 17...f6 18 exd7+ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 19 $\mathbb{A}xf6!$ $\mathbb{B}hf8$ 20 $\mathbb{B}d1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{A}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ 22 $\mathbb{A}xb2$ $\mathbb{B}f7$ 23 g4! when Black has serious cause for concern over his bishop, several of his pawns, and perhaps most urgently, the lack of a safe haven for his king.

It might seem a little late to bail out now, but 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xc3$ c5 is still

probably the safest. However, this idea was much better executed in the previous notes – here Black secures neither the exchange of queens nor any other positional concessions.

15 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 16 0-0-0 0-0-0 17 $\mathbb{A}a5!$



17... $\mathbb{W}b8+?$

Thus the black queen shows a costly solidarity with the bishop on a6 in joining the category 'problem piece'. It is unimaginable that such passivity can be worth a pawn, and indeed the game does not last long. The f7-pawn is simply too weak!

I am convinced that the diagram position is better for White, but it is time for Black to part company with materialism and try 17... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ and now:

a) 18... $\mathbb{W}b6$ is not the answer due to 19 $\mathbb{A}e7$ $\mathbb{B}de8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{B}hg8$ 21 $\mathbb{A}e2?$ (sophisticated maintenance of the tension, or faffing around, depending on your school of thought; my concern was that after 21 $\mathbb{W}xd7+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ both 22 $\mathbb{W}xf7$ $\mathbb{W}e3+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ and 22 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 23 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8!$ offer Black counterplay, which, although inevitably 'rook-free', is not entirely impotent) 22 $\mathbb{A}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 23 h4 h5 24 $\mathbb{B}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25 $\mathbb{A}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 26 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{W}a6$ 27 $\mathbb{W}b4+$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 28 $\mathbb{W}a5$ and White retained a very powerful bind, latter winning with the plan $\mathbb{Q}c1-b2-a1$ and the advance of the b-pawn in Wells-Cela, Aegina open 1995.

b) 18... $\mathbb{W}xe5?$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xg5$

$\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ $\mathbb{B}xh8$ when Black has two pawns for the exchange, but has as yet not consolidated his position. Basically, if he could play ...f7-f5 things would look a lot rosier, and if in addition ...c6-c5 and ... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ then the situation becomes distinctly healthy. Hence Vukovic suggests the very logical 22 g4!, claiming that the weaknesses on a6 and f7 constitute a serious advantage for White. Maybe, but during Cela's long think at move 18 I became exercised by the consequences of 22...h5! 23 gxh5 (23 h4? bxg4!) 23... $\mathbb{B}xh5$ 24 h4 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{B}e5$! which looks rather less clear. Hence 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$? is worth considering since 22...f5 23 b4! $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 24 h5! still opens the h-file and denies Black the time he seeks to reorganise his forces.

18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d5?

This, though understandable, does not help. Black effects a kind of illusory break-out – he succeeds in exchanging one pair of rooks, but his own rook turns out to be sorely missed, while his queen and bishop continue to spectate quite helplessly. Black should probably try 18...c5, although the natural 19 $\mathbb{B}hf1$ $\mathbb{B}hf8$ 20 $\mathbb{B}f6$ clearly favours White.

19 exd6 $\mathbb{B}xd6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{B}hd8$ 21 $\mathbb{B}xd6$ $\mathbb{B}xd6$ 22 $\mathbb{B}f1$!

Very strong. The move is logical, attacking the foundations of Black's best defensive piece, the knight on e6. Once this support is removed combinations begin to flow.

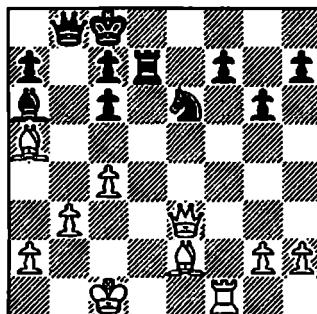
22... $\mathbb{B}d7$

This loses immediately. Black had to try 22...f5 23 c5! $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ and now:

a) The self-pinning 25... $\mathbb{B}e6$ fails to 26 $\mathbb{W}f8+$ (White logically reduces forces so that Black's e-file embarrassment is all that remains) 26... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xb8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}e5$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ winning the bishop.

b) 25... $\mathbb{W}b5$ 26 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}b4$! $\mathbb{W}xb4$ (28... $\mathbb{B}d7$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$

$\mathbb{W}xe2$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xc6+)$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ and now the cleanest is 30 $\mathbb{Q}d2+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}xd6+$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 32 $\mathbb{W}xd6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}d21$ and the outside passed a-pawn will decide the game in White's favour – Vukovic/Wells.

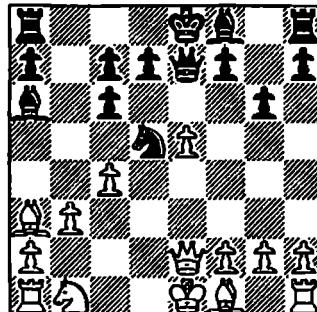


23 $\mathbb{B}xf7!$ 1-0

Black resigned in view of 23 $\mathbb{B}xf7$ $\mathbb{B}xf7$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ when his remaining pieces paint a graphic picture of defensive impotence.

Game 6
Kasparov-Ivanchuk
Amsterdam VSB 1994

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g6 10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$?



A thematic reaction which, however, has not really caught on, perhaps because

10 f4 retains its good reputation.

10... $\mathbb{W}g5$

Two other moves merit attention here:
a) 10... $\mathbb{W}h4?$ was initially praised by Fiacnik, but the game Sziebert-Estrada Nieto below, and Julian Estrada's interesting analysis, seem to pose serious questions. The first point of the move is that the 'consistent' 11 $\mathbb{Q}xf8?$ runs into 11... $\mathbb{W}d4!$

Hence Sziebert's preference for 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2?$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}e4!$ (best; the position bears analogy with the note to White's tenth move in Game 2 above and the next note will expand on this comparison) 13... $\mathbb{W}xf2$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2?$ (15 c5 is also possible as in the above mentioned note [Izeta-Alvarez] to Game 2. The text is an extra possibility which arises from the difference between the two positions – Black's g-pawn is on g6 here which gives White tactical chances based on the advance of the e-pawn to e6) 15... $\mathbb{W}h6$. Thus far Sziebert-Estrada Nieto, Hungary 1997, after which Estrada gives 16 a3! $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 e6 0-0 (17...f6 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ g5 19 exd7+ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ gxsf4 21 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is horrible for Black) 18 exd7 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e5!$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}a5!$ $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{B}b8$.

Until this point, I am in agreement both with the moves and the broad conclusion. A nice safe move like 23 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$, intending 23... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ (Wells), should leave White with good prospects, since once Black's tactical tricks are exhausted he is faced with an unappealing positional task. However, 23 $\mathbb{W}xa6?$ (Estrada) seems unnecessarily bold since after 23... $\mathbb{B}xb3+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}a2$, Black can try 24... $\mathbb{B}xc3!$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ 26 $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ $\mathbb{W}d4!$ with a strong counterattack (Wells).

b) 10...d6? looks logical when White has deserted the long dark-squared diagonal. In conjunction with 9...g5 rather than 9...g6 the move has a great future – see Game 7. Kukssov-Aleksandrov, Smolensk

open 1991, which probably played some initial role in inspiring these developments, continued 11 exd6 $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ cxd6? 16 $\mathbb{H}xc6$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{H}fd8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ with a definite advantage for White. He has two pawns, one of them passed, for the exchange. Although the d-pawn may not look a very terrifying prospect at this stage, the key factor in his favour is the very efficient restriction of Black's rooks. Black has to improve at move 15. It is now clear that 15...0-0-0! is the way forward, with only minor differences from the analysis of Game 7.

11 g3

None of the commentaries to this game mention 11 $\mathbb{Q}xf8?$ which, whatever else, has consistency on its side. After 11... $\mathbb{W}xf8$ (11... $\mathbb{W}c1?$ 12 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}b2$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ is well off the mark) it might appear that the addition of the development ... $\mathbb{R}e8$ to Black's arsenal will tilt the balance in his favour. However, White can cover his potentially vulnerable e5-pawn rather efficiently by 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$, intending to answer either 12... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ or 12... $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ by 13 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ This idea looks worth closer study.

11... $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Kasparov also mentions 11... $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 13 h4!, which indeed does seem to favour White, after for example 13... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ 15 cxd5 $\mathbb{W}xa3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}xa6$ 17 dxcc6 $\mathbb{W}a5+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f1$. Interestingly, even if Black now checks on b5 or a6 in order to capture on c6 while apparently keeping his queenside intact, it is the half-open c-file which will be his downfall. The pawn on c7 does not correspond exactly to any of the 'textbook' categories of weak pawn, but White can pile up on it, secure in the knowledge that if Black is forced into the advance ...c7-c6 then the implications for the d6-square and the pawn on d7 are serious indeed.

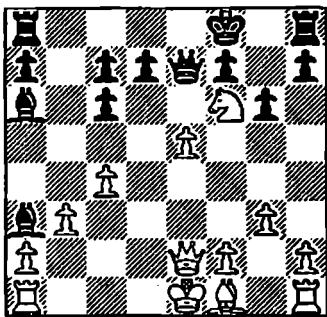
12 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$

The discomfort which the coming check on f6 causes Black's king is not so serious in itself, but without it White could find that he has ceded the bishop pair for nothing. Hence 13 f4?! $\mathbb{W}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 0-0 15 0-0 f6 would be very comfortable for Black.

13... $\mathbb{W}e7$

Of course not 13... $\mathbb{W}xe5??$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ netting big game. This motif plays a role in several variations of the Scotch (see for example Game 30).

14 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$



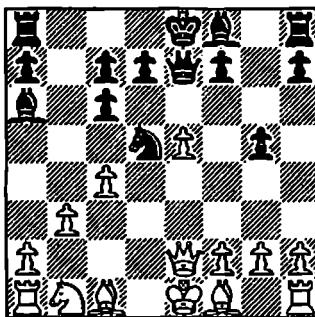
15 $\mathbb{Q}g2$

Ftacnik's suggestion 15 $\mathbb{Q}h3!?$ looks slightly more threatening, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ d5 (16...d6!?) – Wells) 17 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}hd1$ when at least White keeps pressure on the black centre.

15... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ½-½

If White's queen leaves the a1-h8 diagonal then Black can generate some play of his own by ... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ and ...d7-d5.

At their best, World Championship matches are great sources of novelties which are rapidly absorbed into everyday practice. This is a good example of a move whose readily comprehensible logic – Black wants to avoid the move 10 f4, which is the most critical answer to 9...g6, and sometimes to support the possibility ... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ -f4 – has led to considerable popularity. To those acquainted with the games of Jonathan Speelman, a member of Anand's team of seconds for the match, there is no mystery as to why his creative influence here was widely touted, but in fact the idea comes from the Georgian Grandmaster Elizbar Ubilava.



10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$

If we continue the comparison with 9...g6 for a moment, this move has a definite logic. 10 f4 is impossible for White, while after the text, two of Black's three replies to 10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ considered in Game 6 are here ruled out. Still, Kasparov later switched to 10 g3 (see Game 9).

10 h4! is the subject of Game 8, while of course 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ is also possible. After 10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ the usual choice 11 g3 leads back to Game 9, while 11 h4! would lead to Game 8.

10...d6!

Much better than 10...c5? 11 g3 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 0-0 13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b2!$ which would cause great embarrassment to the

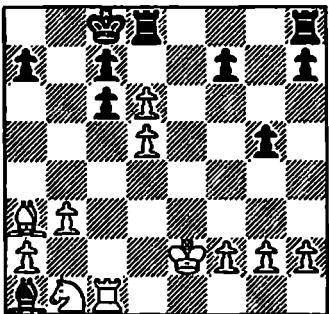
Game 7
Kasparov-Anand
PCA World Ch., New York (8) 1995

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g5?

knight on b4.

11 exd6 $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7!$ 13 cxd6 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Qxa1}$ 15 $\mathbb{Ec1}$ 0-0-0!

Although the 'stem' game occurred with the black pawn on g6 rather than g5, this was in effect a strong 'novelty'. For a discussion of 15...cxd6?! see Game 6, note 'b' to Black's tenth move. The plausible retreat 15... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ is similarly found wanting after 15... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 16 $\mathbb{E}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ cxd6 18 $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ (the immediate 18 $\mathbb{E}xd6$ would allow 18... $\mathbb{E}d8$, whereas the text move is entirely consistent with the central idea of keeping Black's rooks under control) 18... $\mathbb{E}d7$ (18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ would of course be met by 19 $\mathbb{E}c7+$) 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ and White will net a second pawn for the exchange while retaining all positional trumps.



16 $\mathbb{E}xc6$ $\mathbb{E}he8+?$!

This was criticised by Anand, who later preferred the immediate 16... $\mathbb{E}d7?$, intending 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ or 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 18 $\mathbb{E}xc3$ $\mathbb{E}e8+$ which after 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ arrives at a position which Anand was anticipating during the game, and where White has no secure route to a draw. Black wants to answer 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ by 20... $\mathbb{E}e2!$ hoping for a hearty seventh rank breakfast.

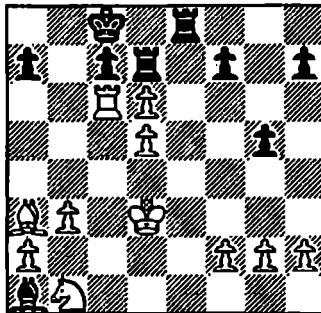
If, however, Sziebert's plan of playing $\mathbb{Q}d2-c4$ turns out to be critical, then the difference is largely academic. After

16... $\mathbb{E}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$! Black should probably play 17... $\mathbb{E}e8+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ anyway, leading to the note to White's 18th move below.

17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

The king has to stay in touch with the d5-pawn. Hence 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3?$! is weaker on account of 17... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

17... $\mathbb{E}d7$



18 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$?

Best according to Anand in his commentary, and indeed in this position the move comes close to securing the draw. Sziebert's analysis challenges that conclusion claiming even an advantage for White after 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ This important claim may be of relevance in any case in the event of the more accurate 16... $\mathbb{E}d7$ (see note above) even if (as I believe to be the case) Sziebert is somewhat too optimistic. Basically Black has two ideas after 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$:

a) 18... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{E}xd5+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{E}d4+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}d1$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 23 $\mathbb{D}xc7$ $\mathbb{E}xc7$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ does indeed appear to give White excellent winning chances.

b) 18... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2?$! (this could well be the critical test; in the game Sziebert-Pereedy, Hungary 1996, Black preferred 19... $\mathbb{Q}b7?$! which gave White time to have his cake and eat it by 20 $\mathbb{g}3$ $f6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ cxd6 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ [the bishop is optimally placed here for targeting the a7-pawn] 22... $g4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}a5+$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 24 $\mathbb{E}a6$, when Black

had little to offer against the advance of the b-pawn, followed by b6-b7+ or b6xa7 and $\mathbb{Q}c4$ -b6 according to circumstance) 20 g3 h5! (strangely Sziebert fails to address this idea, which had already been considered by Joel Benjamin; he mentions instead only the highly co-operative 20... $\mathbb{Q}b7$? 21 $\mathbb{Q}a5+$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 22 $\mathbb{E}c1$ followed by 23 $\mathbb{E}h1$ winning) 21 dxc7 (what else?) 21... $\mathbb{E}xd5+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ h4! 23 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ (23 $\mathbb{E}d6?$ [Wells] 23... $\mathbb{E}f5$ 24 $\mathbb{E}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{E}e5$ also slightly favours Black, although it may be White's best) 23... $\mathbb{E}xd6$ and now neither 24 $\mathbb{E}xd6$ hxg3 nor 24 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ h3! are satisfactory for White. Things are getting complicated, but it does have to be mentioned that in the analogous position with 9...g6 instead of 9...g5, this rush of the kingside pawns is not available to Black, and in this case Sziebert's idea does indeed look promising.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$?

Black could still try for more with 18... $\mathbb{E}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{E}xd5+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}d2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ according to Anand.

19 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$!

The reason for Anand's criticism of his check on move 16 falls into place. With his king still on e2, the less desirable capture with the rook on c3 would have been forced (see note to 16... $\mathbb{E}he8+?$). Keeping the rook on c6 enables White to defend his d-pawn by $\mathbb{Q}c4$, and if necessary his second rank by $\mathbb{Q}c5$, while keeping Black's c-pawn pinned. The draw is effectively secured.

19... $\mathbb{E}e5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}e4+$

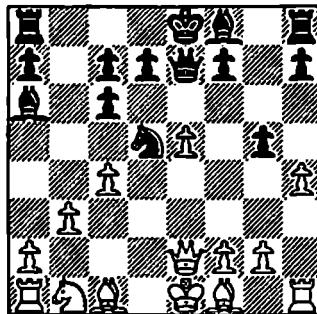
20... $\mathbb{E}e2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}xa2$ 22 b4! $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 23 dxc7 $\mathbb{E}xc7$ 24 $\mathbb{E}f6$ would give White a lot of play, and clearly involved an unacceptable level of risk for Black.

21 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}e5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}e4+$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

A draw in just 22 moves which, unusually for such a short game, contains an immense amount of theoretically important ideas.

Game 8
Palac-G.Georgadze
Pula open 1977

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{E}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g5 10 h4!?



This idea is really unique to the ...g7-g5 positions. Black cannot really afford the kingside weaknesses that would arise from capturing on h4, which would in any case enable White to provide just the support for his e-pawn against which 9...g5 is directed. This game seems to me to open up yet another area for fruitful research.

10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0-0

11... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ looks tempting, but 12 $\mathbb{W}e3$ h6 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$! seems to be good since 14...g4 is strongly met by 15 h5! gxh3 16 hxg6 fxg6 17 gxh3 g5 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ with kingside mayhem which favours White

12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{E}de8$

12... $\mathbb{Q}b4$? is the move that Black would like to play. Palac claims that this can be calmly met by 13 0-0-0! $\mathbb{Q}xa2+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}e1$ c5 16 hxg5 with a clear advantage. The assessment is beyond dispute, since White has f2-f4 and $\mathbb{Q}e4$ coming with force, blotting out the dark-squared bishop, and an open h-file into the bargain. The only question is whether Black can instead offer the a7-pawn for

counterplay. Such a course is risky but interesting, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{W}e6!$? 16 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{W}f5+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ (17 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ gives Black at least a draw) 17... $\mathbb{Q}b7$! (not 17... $\mathbb{W}xe4+??$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 19 $\mathbb{W}a8$ mate) 18 f3 c5! (Wells) and although Black's position hangs together rather precariously, he is not without counter-chances.

13 hxg5 $\mathbb{Q}f4$

13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ leads to an excellent ending for White where he enjoys the better structure - f2-f4 will greet the departure of Black's knight from d5 and both Black's minor pieces are bad.

14 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 0-0-0 f6! 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 18 gxf6 $\mathbb{W}xf6+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}dg8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}h4$

White could perhaps still boast a very slight edge since he has a passed f-pawn, and Black a potentially weak pawn on h7. However, following Black's accurate defence, this is just about impossible to realise. The notorious light-squared bishop is successfully re-deployed to a valuable dual role. Exerting active pressure on the long-diagonal, it will also with 24... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ play a key role in defending the d7-pawn.

21... $\mathbb{W}xh4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ c5! 23 $\mathbb{E}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ 25 $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{E}e8!$ 26 $\mathbb{E}h1$

Of course White would in principle prefer to play g2-g3 rather than f2-f3. However, Black was prepared to meet 26 g3 with 26... $\mathbb{Q}e2$ followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}d4$, when White's knight and rooks begin to look distinctly uncoordinated.

26... $\mathbb{E}e7$ 27 f3 $\mathbb{E}he8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ h5 30 g3 $\mathbb{E}e2$ 31 $\mathbb{E}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{E}g5$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

Now the only question is whether Black might bid for more than the half-point by 34... $\mathbb{Q}xc6?$ The text leads to a clear draw since White can liquidate both the kingside pawns and the minor pieces.

35 g4! hxg4 36 fxg4 $\mathbb{E}xg4$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{E}g2$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{E}xe2+$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ a5 40 a4 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

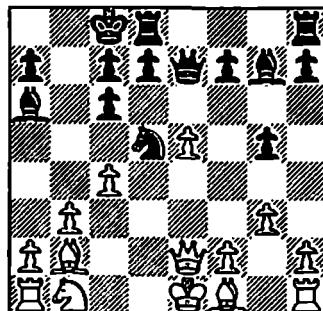
Game 9
Kasparov-Nikolic
Linares 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 b3 g5 10 g3!

White proceeds to develop normally, holding his e5-pawn long enough to put the question to Black's knight on d5 and, as we shall see, to pose a fundamental question regarding the destination of Black's king too.

10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0?

This seems to be simply too risky in conjunction with the weakening of the kingside light squares entailed by 9...g5, although Kasparov's demonstration of this is quite masterful. 11...0-0-0! was therefore the better try when White can choose between three options:



a) 12 $\mathbb{W}e4?$! is an attempt to force Black's knight into a quick decision. It meets with the fierce counter-punch 12...f5!, a sharp reminder that in a situation of fluid tactics control over a square like f5 cannot be assumed! After 13 $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{E}hf8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e4$, as in Sax-Bacrot, Balatonbereny 1996, a second tactical shot 14... $\mathbb{Q}f6!$ 15 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4!!$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}de8$ could have secured a definite positional advantage for

Black. Here the weakness of the pawn on f2, which will come under fire from a rook on f8 and a bishop on d4, counts for more than the, as yet, unaddressed question of our old friend on a6.

b) 12 $\mathbb{A}g2$ $\mathbb{A}de8$ (or 12... $\mathbb{A}he8$) 13 0-0 $\mathbb{A}xe5$! 14 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{A}xe5$ $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 16 cxd5 $\mathbb{A}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{A}xf1$ cxd5 leads to an ending that is very closely related to those considered at some length in the next chapter. The efficacy of Black's king on the queenside is discussed there. As for the pawn on g5, it looks looser (the f5-square could be weak) but represents a clear gain of tempo if Black is able to push his kingside pawns with ...f7-f5, ...h7-h5 etc.

c) 12 $\mathbb{A}d2$!? (I suspect that this was Kasparov's intention) 12... $\mathbb{A}b4$!? (12... $\mathbb{A}de8$ 13 0-0-0 $\mathbb{A}b6$ 14 f4 followed by 15 $\mathbb{A}h3$! looks promising) 13 $\mathbb{A}d1$ (13 $\mathbb{A}f3$ c5! 14 $\mathbb{A}g2$ $\mathbb{A}b7$ gives White nothing) 13...c5! 14 $\mathbb{A}g2$ $\mathbb{A}b7$! 15 f4 is double-edged.

12 $\mathbb{A}d2$! f6?

This looks like a further weakening of the light squares, although Kasparov's analysis reveals that with the right follow-up Black could still have found considerable resources. However, he prefers 12... $\mathbb{A}b4$!?, presumably intending the familiar idea ...c6-c5 and ... $\mathbb{A}c6$.

13 $\mathbb{W}h5$!

Initiating very sharp play which yields high dividends. The positional 13 $\mathbb{A}xf6$ $\mathbb{A}xf6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 15 $\mathbb{A}xf6$ $\mathbb{A}xf6$ 16 $\mathbb{A}b3$ was also quite okay and would have given White a typical small advantage based on Black's weak pawns and the familiar problem of the bishop on a6.

13... $\mathbb{A}b4$ 14 h4!

Much stronger than 14 $\mathbb{A}d1$? $\mathbb{A}xe5$! 15 a3 e4! 16 axb4 $\mathbb{A}xb2$ 17 $\mathbb{A}xa6$ $\mathbb{A}xf2$ with a strong counterattack. The brilliant text is, among many other things, a preparation for a similar scenario.

14...g4

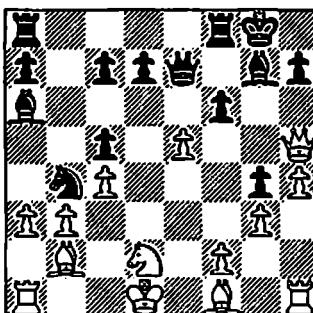
Best according to Kasparov. His notes

do not even mention 14... $\mathbb{A}c2$ + 15 $\mathbb{A}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 16 $\mathbb{H}xg5$, which is presumably too self-evidently dangerous. Indeed after for example 16... $\mathbb{fxe5}$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xh7+$ $\mathbb{A}f7$ 18 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{A}e8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g6+$ $\mathbb{H}f7$ 20 $\mathbb{A}xa1$ the traffic is pretty much one way.

14... $\mathbb{W}e8$! is a much more interesting try. Kasparov gives the surprising 15 $\mathbb{A}xe8$ (15 $\mathbb{H}xg5$! is also playable) 15... $\mathbb{A}xe8$ 16 0-0-0 $\mathbb{A}xa2$ + 17 $\mathbb{A}b1$ $\mathbb{A}b4$ 18 $\mathbb{A}e4$ $\mathbb{fxe5}$ 19 $\mathbb{A}xd7$ $\mathbb{A}c2$ 20 $\mathbb{A}xc7$ $\mathbb{A}f5$ 21 $\mathbb{A}g2$ with advantage.

15 $\mathbb{A}d1$! c5

The vast difference between this and 14 $\mathbb{A}d1$? is revealed in the event of 15... $\mathbb{fxe5}$ 16 a3 e4 17 axb4 $\mathbb{A}xb2$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xa6$ $\mathbb{A}xf2$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g5+$, stopping Black's attack in its tracks. 16 a3



16... $\mathbb{A}c6$?

The crucial, if understandable mistake. In effect the text loses a crucial tempo over the superior 16... $\mathbb{A}b7$! 17 $\mathbb{E}g1$ compared with the game.

17 $\mathbb{A}d3$ f5 18 $\mathbb{A}xf5$ $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 19 $\mathbb{E}e1$ d6 20 $\mathbb{A}e4$!

Bringing home the significance of Black's omission, as indicated in the last note.

20... $\mathbb{A}b7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xg4+$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 22 $\mathbb{A}d5+$ $\mathbb{A}h8$ 23 $\mathbb{A}xe5$! $\mathbb{dx}e5$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xg7+$ $\mathbb{A}xg7$ 25 $\mathbb{A}e4$

A picture of total structural collapse. Black is helpless.

25... $\mathbb{A}ad8$ 26 $\mathbb{A}xc5$ $\mathbb{A}c8$ 27 $\mathbb{E}a2$ 1-0

Summary

In the 'traditional' lines 9...0-0-0, 9...Wh4 and 9...g6, White if anything can claim to have strengthened his resources recently (Games 1 and 4 both provide good examples of this).

9...g5? still looks like Black's most promising line three years after its debut. White's approach in Game 8 deserves close attention, but that apart the critical position to watch for the future is probably the note on 11...0-0-0 12 Qd2? in Game 9.

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4 Qf6 5 Qxc6 bxc6 6 e5 We7 7 We2 Qd5 8 c4
Qa6 9 b3

9...g6

9...0-0-0 – Game 1

9...Wh4 – Game 2

9...g5 (D)

10 Ra3 – Game 7

10 h4 – Game 8

10 g3 – Game 9

10 f4 (D)

10 Ra3 – Game 6

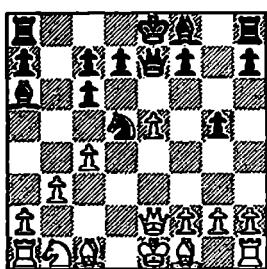
10...f6

10...Wb4+ – Game 5

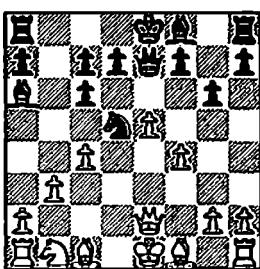
11 Ra3 (D)

11 exf6 – Game 4

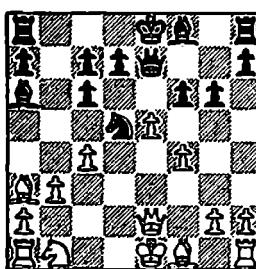
11...Wf7 – Game 3



9...g5



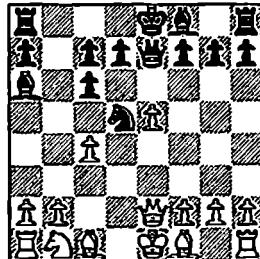
10 f4



11 Ra3

CHAPTER TWO

Main Line with 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6$: White's 9th move alternatives



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$

In this chapter we shall examine White's alternative replies to 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6$. In my view 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (Games 10 and 11) and 9 $\mathbb{W}e4$ (Game 12) are clearly less accurate than either 9 b3 (see the previous chapter) or 9 g3! which will be discussed in detail in Games 13-16.

Game 10 Mk.Tseitlin-Mikhalevski Beersheva 1997

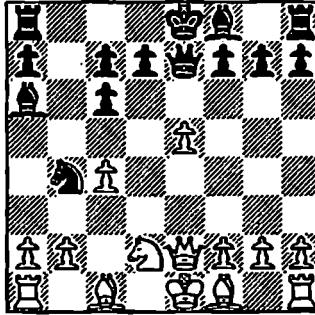
1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$

This highlights one of the main drawbacks of 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$, the weakening, albeit temporary, of the c2-square. In the next game too, this theme comes into play in a rather more subtle form. Still, in comparison with Chapter 1, another move, 9...f6! also gains in force. White has to deal with the threat to capture on e5 and the developing/ignoring approach adopted there is here too slow. So we consider:

a) 10 exf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 11 b3 0-0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{H}e8!$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{H}xe7+$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 14 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}g4$

15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ is unclear) 14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{H}e6$ 15 a3 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{H}he8$ was tried in Makropolou-Zlatanova, Athens 1992, when Black has found plenty of activity to compensate for her structural weaknesses.

b) 10 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 11 exf6 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 14 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ Saks-Ivkov, Novi Sad 1976, where White has been unable to show a plus.

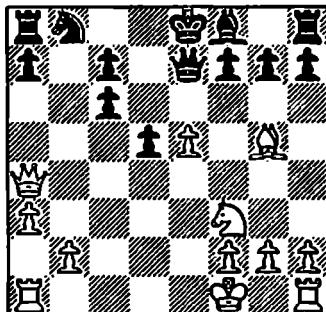


10 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d5?

This leads to a forcing sequence where White gets a good deal of compensation for a pawn, but has not in practice been able to demonstrate anything conclusive. The more positional alternative is 10...c5. Here Black deals fairly comfortably with the question of his two 'problem pieces'

(see the Introduction) but White is able to support his e5-pawn strongly and use it to show a space advantage after 11 a3 ♜c6 12 ♜d2 ♜e6 13 ♜c3 ♜e7 14 0-0 f6 (14...0-0 15 h4 ♜ae8 16 ♜e4 f6 17 ♜d3 also looked promising for White in Har Zvi-Almasi, Altensteig 1994) 15 exf6 ♜xe2 16 f7+ ♜xf7 17 ♜xe2 ♜ad8 18 ♜d3, as in Svidler-Yemelin, Russia 1995. The 'zwischenzug' (in-between move) on move 16 is very instructive. White pre-empts ...g7xf6 which would give Black another isolated pawn, but also a firm grip on the e5-square and the possibility to play ...d5, enlivening his minor pieces.

11 a3! ♜xc4 12 ♜d1 ♜xf1 13 ♜xf1 ♜a6 14 ♜wa4 ♜b8 15 ♜g5



15...♜e6!

Black's knight on b8 is his king's knight! White's imposing looking development advantage should come as no surprise. Nor do the doubled c-pawns on an half-open file look like good news for Black. Still, survival depends upon keeping further lines closed. Hence 15...♜d7? is disastrous in view of 16 e6! fxe6 17 ♜e5 ♜d6 18 ♜f4 and Black has no defence.

16 ♜c1 ♜e7!

Again the only move. 16...h6? is ill-conceived since the exposed bishop on g5 can play a key role in Black's defence. Hence after 17 ♜h4 ♜e7 18 ♜d4! ♜d7 19 e6 fxe6 20 ♜xe6! g5 21 ♜e1 White had

broken through in Tatai-Adorjan, Amsterdam 1977. The white queen is poised to join the attack decisively via g4.

17 ♜d4 ♜d7 18 e6

Opening lines at all costs. 18 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 19 ♜xc6 would suggest that White does not really believe in the gambit; 19...♜d7! is at least comfortable for Black.

18...fxe6 19 ♜xe7

The point is that with the bishop still on g5, 19 ♜xe6 ♜xg5 20 ♜xg5 0-0 is quite okay for Black.

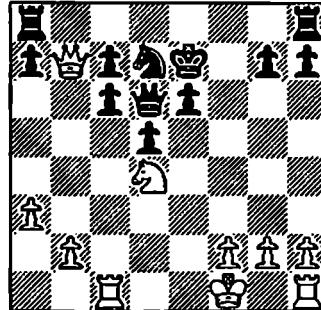
19...♝xe7!

Again the only move. 19...♜xc7? 20 ♜xe6! would be devastating.

20 ♜b4+

20 ♜e1 is met by 20...c5! and the thread on which Black's defence hangs again survives against the odds since 21 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 22 ♜xe6 c4! offers positional counter-chances based around the backward b-pawn, while 21 ♜xe6? ♜xa4 22 ♜c5+ fails to 22...♜e4!

20...♜d6 21 ♜b7 ♜d7



22 ♜xc6

This looks to me like a critical point. After the text White clearly loses the initiative. 22 ♜e1! ♜f7 23 ♜xe6 ♜f4 24 ♜xc6! seems to retain the attacking momentum, as 24...♜hd8 25 ♜xd5 ♜b6! is met by 26 ♜f6+!! ♜xf6 27 ♜e6+ ♜g5 28 h4+ ♜h5 29 g3!! and now 29...♜e8 is forced, since if 29...♜g4? 30 ♜f7+ ♜g6 31 g4+ ♜h6 32

g5+ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 33 $\mathbb{W}f3$ is mate (Wells – with a bit of help from Fritz 5!).

22... $\mathbb{E}hb8!$ 23 $\mathbb{W}a6$ $\mathbb{W}f4!$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

24... $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ only helps Black.

24... $\mathbb{W}d2$ 25 $\mathbb{g}3$ $\mathbb{E}b6$

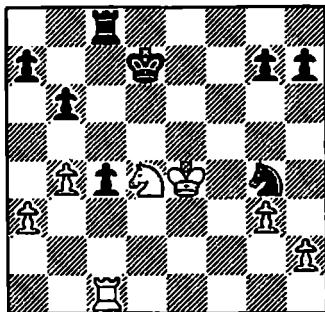
25... $\mathbb{E}xb2?$ 26 $\mathbb{E}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 27 $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{E}e8!$
28 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{E}xe3$ 29 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 30 $\mathbb{fxe}3$ $\mathbb{E}b3$
was also strong.

26 $\mathbb{E}xb6$ $\mathbb{cxb}6$ 27 $b4!$ $\mathbb{W}c2$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}e4+$

29 f3 $\mathbb{W}c4$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{dxc}4$ 31 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}c8$

32 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 34 f4 e5! 35
 $\mathbb{fxe}5$ $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5+$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Black has a clear extra passed c-pawn.



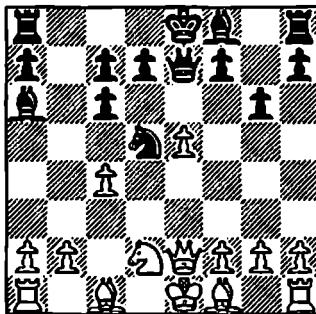
38 $\mathbb{Q}b5?$ a6 39 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ 40 $\mathbb{E}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$
41 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 42 a4 h5 43 $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 44
 $\mathbb{E}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 45 $\mathbb{E}e5+$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 46 $\mathbb{E}e7$ $\mathbb{E}d8+$ 47
 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{E}d7$ 48 $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{E}c7+$ 49 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{E}d7+$
50 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}d6$ 51 b5 a5 52 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ g5 53
 $\mathbb{E}e7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 54 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 55 $\mathbb{E}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 56
 $\mathbb{E}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ 57 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ 58 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 59
 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{E}xa4+$ 60 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 61 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{E}b4+$
62 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4+$ 63 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ 64 $\mathbb{Q}d5$
 $\mathbb{E}xb5$ 65 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{E}b1$ 66 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{E}e1$ 67 $\mathbb{Q}f5$
 $\mathbb{Q}xg3+$ 68 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{E}e5$ 69 $\mathbb{E}c3+$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 70
 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 71 $\mathbb{E}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 72 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 73
 $\mathbb{E}e2$ g4! 74 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{E}e6$ 75 $\mathbb{E}xe4$ $\mathbb{E}xe4$ 76
 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ g3 0-1

Game 11
Svidler-Adams
Tilburg 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{exd}4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

5 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{bxc}6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{g}6!$ 9 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$

I have opted for historical accuracy with regard to move order. For more information on this move order see Chapter 5, Game 34. Here we have reached the equivalent of 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{g}6!$ which, in my opinion, is the best move anyway.



10 b3

10 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ achieves nothing in view of 10... $\mathbb{W}b4+!$, but the familiar attempt to unpin with 10 $\mathbb{W}e4?!$ has been tried. Black has the excellent shot 10...f5! (10... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 12 0-0 0-0 13 f4, Beliavsky-Nikolic, Munich 1994, 13...d6! is also not bad) 11 $\mathbb{W}d4?!$ (11 $\mathbb{exf}6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ is one of several similar positions where Black's rapid development in conjunction with the half-open f-file offers him good chances) 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}c3$ c5! 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 14 f4?!, d6! 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ and the time expended by his opponent's queen has enabled Black to establish a model piece formation and considerable pressure against the e5-pawn into the bargain, as in the game L.B.Hansen-Almarsi, Tilburg 1994.

10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$

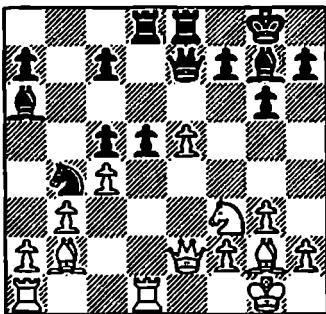
If 11 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ f6 13 $\mathbb{exf}6$ $\mathbb{W}xe2+!$
14 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 15 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ Black dominates the long dark-squared diagonal.

11... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5!

This solution to the 'minor piece prob-

lem' is now familiar, but here Black can still be flexible in how he creates play against White's centre. In the game he chooses to make a virtue of the bishop's placing on a6 to advance his d-pawn.

13 g3 0-0 14 ♘g2 d5 15 0-0 ♕ad8 16 ♕fd1 ♘fe8



17 a3

This looks rather co-operative, but what else can White play? 17 h4 looks attractive but is refuted tactically by 17...d4! 18 ♔e1 ♘xe5! 19 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 20 a3 ♘xe1+ 21 ♘xe1 ♘c2 with a sound and passed extra pawn.

17...♘c6 18 ♘c2 d4!

Often positionally undesirable, here this simply wins the e5-pawn, and the bishop on a6 is able to re-enter the action without too much pain.

19 ♘e1 ♘d7 20 b4 ♘xe5 21 b5 ♘c8 22 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 23 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 24 ♘d2 ♘d6 25 ♘e1 ♘e6 26 ♘d3 ♘e8 27 ♘c1 ♘f5 28 ♘f3 ♘g7 29 ♘d2 ♘e6 30 ♘d1 ♘f6 31 ♘e6 ♘xe6 32 ♘b3 h5 33 ♘e4 ♘e5 34 ♘d3 ♘g4 35 ♘e4 ♘e2 36 ♘c2 ♘f3 37 ♘f1 ♘g5?

An unfortunate slip which costs Black his carefully built-up advantage. White's reply achieves opposite-coloured bishops, which here is enough to secure the draw. The bishop on f3 cannot move because 39 f4 would win a piece.

38 ♘b3! ♘xd2 39 ♘xf3 ♘f5 ½-½

Game 12
Timman-Karpov
London 1984

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘xc6 bxc6 6 e5 ♘e7 7 ♘e2 ♘d5 8 c4 ♘a6 9 ♘e4?

The first thing to note about 9 ♘e4, is that it is, from White's perspective, not much more than an offer of a little repetition, or even a draw. After 9...♘f6 there is no sensible place to transfer the queen, so it is back to 10 ♘e2 ♘d5 and so on. Still, this could be very annoying for the higher-rated player of the black pieces and the availability of alternatives is very welcome.

9...♘b4

For a long time the murky, if fascinating, complications of this line represented Black's principal option for avoiding the repetition. However, the talented young Ukrainian Vladimir Baklan, himself a great devotee of the Scotch for White, recently gave a very convincing demonstration of the essentially tactical problems White faces after 9...♘b4(!) 10 ♘c3 (not 10 a3? d5! [the basic point of Black's idea] 11 ♘e2 [11 cxd5 cxd5 12 ♘xb4? ♘xe5+ wins for Black] 11...♘xc4 as Black wins two pawns for no real compensation) 10...♖d8 (to play ...d7-d5 at all costs) and now:

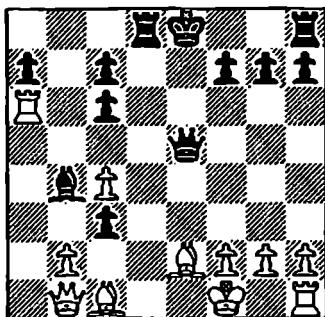
a) 11 a3? is still bad. Baklan and Kucyn give the following lovely variation: 11...d5! 12 ♘b1 ♘xe5+ 13 ♘e2 d4 14 axb4 dxcc3 15 ♘xa6 ♘xb4 16 ♘f1

see following diagram

16...♖d1!! 17 ♘xd1 c2 winning immediately. The real disaster for White is that he cannot seek compensation with 16 0-0 either since after 16...♘xe2 17 bxc3 Black has 17...♖d1 which is also immediately decisive.

b) 11 ♘f4 to defend the e5-pawn did

not help much in view of 11...d5 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}b4+$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ winning a piece in Andreev-Baklan, Alushta 1997.



c) 11 c5? also probably falls short, although it offers White a little more fun. In Hietanen-Filen, correspondence 1992, White could not claim full compensation for a pawn after 11... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{R}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{R}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

For the moment the onus is on White to show that 9 $\mathbb{W}e4$ is not ready for the scrap heap.

10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

This looks passive, but the others moves have drawbacks too. 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3?$ meets with 10... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$! 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ d5! 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ cxd5 – a nice trick again based on White's undefended queen – after which Black has the better of it in terms of both development and pawn structure.

10 $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ has been countered in a variety of ways, but I do not recommend here 10...0-0-0?! since with the knight actively placed on c3, the idea 11 c5! $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 12 cxb6 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 13 bxc7 with $\mathbb{Q}f4$ to follow gains in force. The simplest answer would seem to lie in 10... $\mathbb{W}e6$! 11 b3 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ transposing to Game 29.

10...0-0-0! 11 c5?

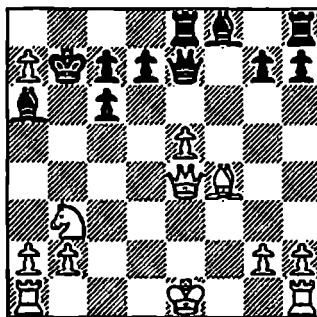
This move was discredited by Karpov's wonderfully crisp attacking display in this

game. The problem is that White's pieces are not sufficiently active to support this pawn, which reaches a7 but then plays no further role. Meanwhile, the famous a6-bishop has a most exceptional day, spearheading Black's total domination of the light squares. In a later encounter Timman preferred the more modest 11 a4 which is a typical attempt to harass Black's minor pieces. The problem is that Black still achieves active play by striking in the centre with 11...d5 12 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 13 d6 (otherwise Black would have no structural problems either) 13... $\mathbb{E}xd6$! 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{E}e6$! 15 f4 g5! 18 g3 $\mathbb{W}b4+$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $gxf4$ 22 $gxf4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ again with a promising position in Timman-Karpov, Amsterdam 1985.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 12 cxb6 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 13 bxa7

With White's knight on d2, the 13 bxc7 idea also loses its force since there is no $\mathbb{Q}f4$. Black effortlessly activated his forces by 13... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 14 f4 $\mathbb{W}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ f6 in Sanz-Fernandez Garcia, Spain 1984.

13... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ f6! 15 f4 fxе5 16 fxе5 $\mathbb{E}e8$! 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$



17... $\mathbb{W}h4+$

Excellent. Black forces a further light-square weakness and ensures that White's king cannot run to the queenside either.

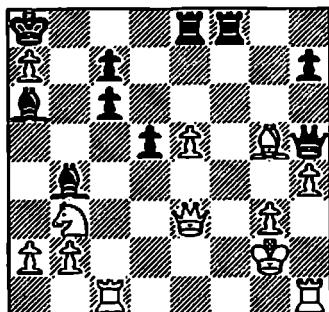
18 g3 $\mathbb{W}h5$! 19 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$!

There is something very elegant about a

retreat of the king which is really an attacking shot. The motivation is not fear of the a7-pawn, but the threat to play ... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$.

20 h4 d5! 21 $\mathbb{W}e3$ g5! 22 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}hf8+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g2$

24 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ would also fail to 24... $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 25 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{B}xf4+!$



24... $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}f3+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}f2+$
0-1

After 27 $\mathbb{Q}h3$, 27... $\mathbb{Q}c8+$ 28 g4 $\mathbb{H}f3+$ concludes an exceptionally vigorous attack.

Game 13
Lalic-Izeta
Ubeda open 1988

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 g3 f6?!

As we shall see, this is an inaccuracy. 9...g6 should be preferred - see Games 14-16. Black's other alternatives are:

a) 9...0-0-0? is not a bad move. Since 10 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{H}e8$ looks good for Black, White should play 10 b3! leading to a position already considered in Chapter 1, Game 1.

b) 9...g5? is here altogether less appropriate than after 10 b3. It is not difficult to work out why. White is not committed to weakening the long dark-squared diagonal and has the extra tempo to defend the e5-

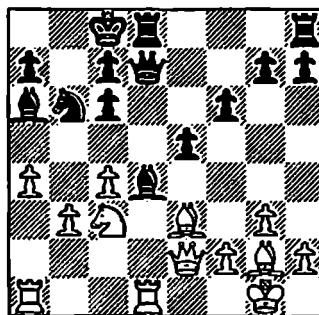
pawn in other ways. 10 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 0-0
0-0 12 $\mathbb{H}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}de8$ 13 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}b6$
14 c5!) 14 $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ was very good for White in Mukhametov-Likov, Omsk 1996.

c) 9...d6? also failed to impress in Rublevsky-Aleksandrov, Polanica Zdroj 1997. The game continuation 10 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ dx5
11 0-0 e4 12 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14
 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ f5 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ g5 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}a5!$
 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{H}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}a4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ looked complicated, but the underlying theme is Black's problems with his minor pieces, which he was never able to solve.

10 e6!

10 exf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 13 0-0 0-0 followed by ...d7-d5 would leave Black with very free and active development, as well as the open f-file. The text, by dragging Black's d-pawn to the e-file, renders the c-pawns disastrously weak (see the Introduction).

10...dx6 11 $\mathbb{Q}g2!$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13
b3 0-0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15 $\mathbb{H}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 16
 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ e5 17 $\mathbb{Q}a1$!



17... $\mathbb{Q}b8?$

Too slow, as Black fails to vacate a satisfactory retreat for his knight. Izeta later suggested 17... $\mathbb{W}f5?$ which, by freeing the d7-square, looks like an improvement. Still, I believe in White's positional trumps here. One interesting idea is the sequence 18 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}f3$ g6 20

$\mathbb{Q}xd4?$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ $\mathbb{C}xb5$ 22 $\mathbb{A}xb5$ $f5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}a8!$ which results in a very powerful attack for White.

18 a5 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 20 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Given the unpalatable mixture of positional problems (the weak c-pawns, poor minor pieces and White's grip on the c5-square) there was perhaps a case for mixing it at any price with 20... $\mathbb{Q}xa1?$ 21 $\mathbb{E}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$, when 22 b5 (22 $\mathbb{W}d1?$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$ is not clear) 22... $\mathbb{C}xb5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 24 $\mathbb{C}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ is better for White but not all over.

21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 23 a6 h5 24 $\mathbb{W}b2$ h4 25 $\mathbb{Q}b7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 26 $\mathbb{A}xb7$ $\mathbb{H}xg3$ 27 $\mathbb{H}xg3$ d3 28 c5!

Black no longer has any means to defend either the a7- or b7-points.

28... $\mathbb{W}d4$ 29 $\mathbb{W}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 30 $\mathbb{W}e6+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 31 b5 1-0

Game 14
Kasparov-I.Sokolov
Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 9 g3 g6?

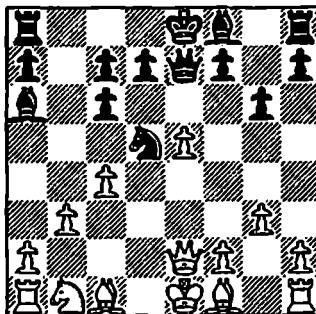
This seems to me the most reliable.

10 b3

After this Black can pretty much enter the ending of Games 15 and 16 by force.

The most interesting attempt to avoid this lies in 10 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 0-0 0-0 12 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{E}ae8!$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3?$, supporting the c4-pawn without blocking in the bishop on c1. This was tested in Van der Wiel-Nikolic, Tilburg 1992. The first point is that 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ can be met with 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ $\mathbb{C}xd5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ winning material, while if 13... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}c2!$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ Van der Wiel gives the nice line 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 18 $\mathbb{W}c3+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 19 b4! when Black has familiar minor piece problems and weaknesses on the dark squares which add up to good compensation for a pawn.

Instead Nikolic chose 13... $f6?$ 14 $\mathbb{W}c2!$ when he should have tried 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{F}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{A}b8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ 18 $\mathbb{C}xd5$ $\mathbb{E}xb5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ with equality. If Black's chances rest on such a tactic, this looks like fruitful territory for White to re-examine.



10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0

11...0-0-0 and its implications are discussed in Game 16.

12 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{R}fe8?$

The dubious marking is Kasparov's, based around his preference for 12... $\mathbb{E}ae8$ in the ending (see Games 15 and 16 below).

13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 14 $\mathbb{E}e1$ d5

Kasparov suggests that 14... $f6$ can be met by 15 e6!, a motif that we have already seen to good effect in Game 13.

15 $\mathbb{W}c2!$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$

If 15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ White can neatly transform the nature of his advantage to a concrete entry into Black's position after the sequence 16 $\mathbb{C}xd5$ $\mathbb{C}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19 $\mathbb{E}ac1$ - Kasparov.

16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 17 $\mathbb{E}ac1$ d4?

From what we have already learned about 8... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ lines, we can anticipate that if White has completed development and successfully defended his e5-pawn his chances will be rather rosy. Still, this advance, which takes the pressure off the c4-pawn and enhances the scope of White's

light-squared bishop, is generally dubious. Ivan Sokolov's reluctance to defend the position of his kingside against Kasparov after 17...dxc4 18 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}b5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f6+!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 21 exf6 is quite understandable.

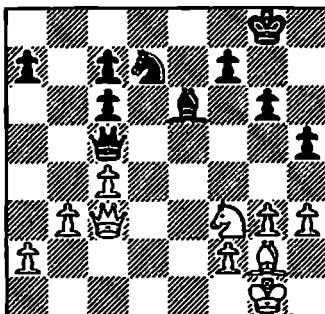
18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d3 19 $\mathbb{W}d2$

19 $\mathbb{W}c1$ was better, rounding up the cheeky d-pawn immediately after 19... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 20 $\mathbb{E}cd1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 21 h3 h5 22 $\mathbb{Q}h4!$

19... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 20 h3 h5 21 $\mathbb{E}cd1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 22 e6!?

$\mathbb{E}xe6$ 23 $\mathbb{E}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 25 $\mathbb{W}c3+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 26 $\mathbb{E}xd3$ $\mathbb{E}xd3$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 28 $\mathbb{W}c3$

Positionally this is depressingly reminiscent of, from the black point of view, the 'ideal type' discussed in the Introduction.



28... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 30 $\mathbb{W}d2$ c5 31 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{W}xf5$ 32 $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 33 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ h4?

Again we have seen the evolution from a positional to a material advantage.

34 $\mathbb{W}a8+$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 35 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 36 $\mathbb{W}xh4$ 1-0

Game 15
Socko-Jakubowski
Poland 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 g3 g6 10 b3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{E}ae8$?

This, by implication (see Game 14) is

Kasparov's recommended route to the ending.

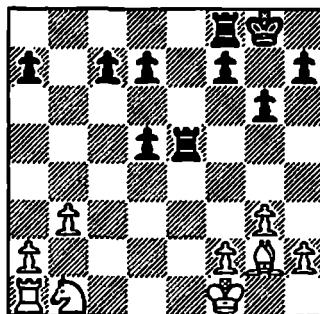
13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$! 14 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{E}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{E}xd5$

This is the 'basic' position of the endgame which we shall study in the next two games, and which seems to be very critical for the theory of 9 g3. At first glance, Black's rook and two pawns, plus his promising phalanx of centre pawns (including two passed d-pawns!) look very good value for two pieces in an endgame setting. In practice, however, White has done rather well. He has broadly adopted one of two plans:

i) Blockade Black's pawns with his knight on c5 and advance the b-pawn.

ii) Leave the minor pieces to contain Black's rooks on the e-file, and go after Black's most vulnerable point - the pawn on a7 - with his rook.

The latter plan (adopted by White in this game) is, for sure, more risky but perhaps more dangerous for Black too.



18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Almost the universal choice. The idea of $\mathbb{Q}d2-f3$ and $\mathbb{E}e1$ is less natural since an exchange of rooks is not in White's favour.

18...c6 19 $\mathbb{E}d1$?

The start of plan 'ii'. We have to jump ahead a little here since 19 $\mathbb{Q}a4$!? bears comparison with Game 16. The question

is whether the position of the rook on f8 rather than on a8, blocking the king's immediate route to the centre, is a problem when faced with this alternative plan. In Rublevsky-Nikolic, Polanica Zdroj 1996, one of the key games to draw attention to the possibilities in this ending, White had definite pressure after 19 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 20 $\mathbb{E}c1$ (20... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$) 20... $\mathbb{B}f8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ (the point is that the positionally desirable 21... $\mathbb{B}e7?$ is tactically embarrassed by 22 $f4!$ $\mathbb{E}e3$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f2$) 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ a5 23 $\mathbb{E}c5$ $\mathbb{E}a8$ 24 h4 h6 25 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{B}g7$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{E}a7$ 27 h5 with some progress on both sides of the board.

However, 19... $\mathbb{B}b8?$ might be the culprit. Black can try 19... $\mathbb{A}ae8?$, answering 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ with 20... $\mathbb{E}e2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{B}g7$ when Black's plan of doubling rooks on the seventh is hard to combat. If 20 $\mathbb{B}f3$ then 20... $\mathbb{B}f8$ followed by 21... $\mathbb{B}e7$ again achieves Black's immediate goal. 19... $\mathbb{A}fe8?$

If this natural move can be too slow, then White's idea is to be reckoned with!

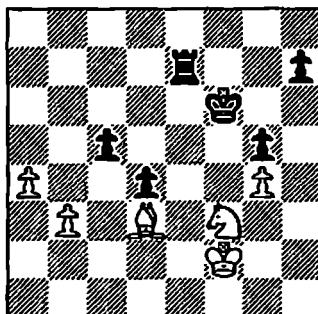
Black's counterplay was more convincing when he got going immediately with 19... $\mathbb{F}5!$ 20 $\mathbb{B}f3$ g5 21 h3 $\mathbb{B}g7$ 22 $\mathbb{E}d4$ $\mathbb{B}g6$ 23 $\mathbb{E}a4$ (the rook on f8 stops any idea White may have of playing g3-g4) 23...h5 24 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{B}h6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 26 $\mathbb{B}e2$ $\mathbb{E}e4$ 27 $\mathbb{E}xa7$ f4 in Berthelot-Marciano, France 1992. Both sides have chances, but Black's plan to create open lines for his rooks is noteworthy.

20 $\mathbb{B}f3$ f5 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{B}g7$ 22 $\mathbb{E}d4$ $\mathbb{E}8e7$ 23 $\mathbb{E}a4$ g5 24 h3 $\mathbb{B}g6$ 25 g4!

A very important moment. White prevents counterplay with ...h7-h5 and effectively blocks his opponent's play on the light squares. He later shows (on move 29) that his minor pieces and king can cope alone with the f-file, while his rook is free to snaffle pawns.

26...fxg4 26 $\mathbb{H}xg4$ $\mathbb{B}f7$ 27 $\mathbb{B}g2$ $\mathbb{E}e6$ 28 $\mathbb{E}xa7$ $\mathbb{E}ef6$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{B}f4$ 30 $\mathbb{B}g3$ d4 31

$\mathbb{A}e2$ $\mathbb{B}xf2$ 32 $\mathbb{E}xd7!$ $\mathbb{B}xd7$ 33 $\mathbb{B}xf2$ $\mathbb{B}f6$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5 35 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ 36 a4!



White's pieces are a model of efficiency in both a blockading role and supporting the a-pawn. This is the nightmare scenario for Black in this ending.

36... $\mathbb{E}e3$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ h5 38 $\mathbb{G}xh5$ g4 39 $\mathbb{L}c4$ g3+ 40 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{B}g5$ 41 a5 $\mathbb{B}xh5$ 42 a6 $\mathbb{E}e7$ 43 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{B}g5$ 44 $\mathbb{B}b7$ g2+ 45 $\mathbb{D}xg2$ d3 46 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{B}f7+$ 47 $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ $\mathbb{B}f4$ 48 a7 1-0

This game provides fine demonstration of the co-operation of bishop and knight.

Game 16
Leko-Almasi
Ubeda 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 g3 g6 10 b3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{B}b2$ 0-0

The ending also occurs after 11...0-0-0!?

12 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{B}he8$ 13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{B}xe5$ 16 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ cxd5 where the only serious difference is that Black's king is on b8 rather than g8. It is difficult to give a categorical judgement concerning where it stands best. Instinctively it would seem that it is useful among the queenside pawns, but it can also come under fire there. After 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ c6 19 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{B}b8!$ it may be that if White adopts the $\mathbb{Q}a4-c5$ plan, Black's king will

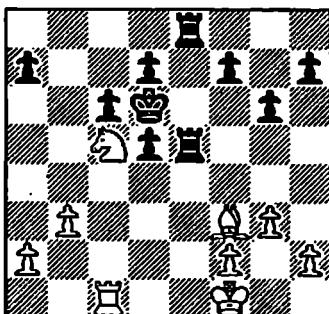
head for d6 anyway. No difference! One warning example: 19... $\mathbb{Q}b7?$ was met with 20 b4 a5? (provocative; White's b-pawn advances, and thrives!) 21 b5 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 22 $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 23 b6! $\mathbb{B}b8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ d4 26 b7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 27 $\mathbb{B}b3+$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ c5 29 $\mathbb{Q}d3+$ $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ with a decisive advantage in Hnydiuk-Stempin, Poland 1997.
 12 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{R}fe8?$ 13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{R}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{R}xe5$ 16 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ cxd5 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

This choice has been just about universal, and Kasparov's criticism of 12... $\mathbb{R}fe8$, based on the possibility which the rook on a8 affords for White to try 18 f4? has not been tested. I must say it looks promising! After 18... $\mathbb{R}e3$ 19 $\mathbb{R}xd5$ $\mathbb{R}ae8$ (19...c6 20 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{R}d3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{R}ae8$ 22 $\mathbb{R}e1$ [Wells] also favours White) 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ $\mathbb{R}d3$ (20... $\mathbb{R}e2$ 21 $\mathbb{R}d1$ $\mathbb{R}xh2$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}g2!$ leaves the rook in trouble) 21 $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (Kasparov) Black is not sufficiently active to compensate for losing the d5-pawn.

In any case the rest of the game is still relevant if only in relation to 12... $\mathbb{R}ae8$.

18...c6 19 $\mathbb{R}c1$ $\mathbb{R}ae8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

The standard spot for the bishop in these lines, preventing any rook invasion.
 20... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

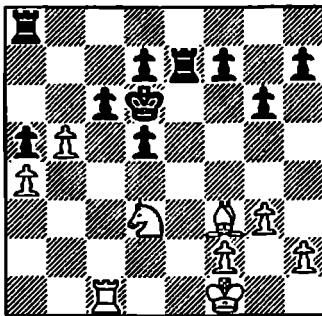


This position seems to be satisfactory for Black. His perspectives are largely defensive, but it is difficult for White to develop play.

23 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{R}5e7$ 24 b4 $\mathbb{R}a8!$

Here it seems appropriate to force the issue. Given time White was able to push Black into passivity after 24... $\mathbb{R}b8$ 25 $\mathbb{R}c3$ $\mathbb{R}ee8$ 26 $\mathbb{R}a3$ $\mathbb{R}b7$ 27 $\mathbb{R}a5$ $\mathbb{R}a8$ 28 a4 $\mathbb{R}e8$ 29 h4 h6 30 $\mathbb{R}a6$ in Kislov-Stempin, Poland 1997.

25 a4 a5 26 b5 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$



I am normally rather sceptical about long and elaborate justifications for draw agreements, but here the following, given by Mikhalevski, is both plausible and instructive: 26... $\mathbb{R}b8$ 27 $\mathbb{R}c5$ $\mathbb{R}e4!$ (the point of Black's play is revealed - he has encouraged the b-pawn forward to force White's rook to a vulnerable square) 28 $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ $dxe4$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$ $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ $cxb5$ 32 $axb5$ a4! (32... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ gives White's king the crucial tempo to approach) 33 b6 a3 34 b7 a2 35 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ a1 \mathbb{W} + 36 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}a5+$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 38 b8 \mathbb{W} + $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 39 $\mathbb{W}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 40 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ and the position has burnt out to a draw.

Summary

9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ fails to really impress. Game 11 shows the 'subtle' way to exploit the weakening of the c2-square, when Black achieves a minor piece harmony rarely seen after the stronger 9 b3 or 9 g3.

9 $\mathbb{W}e4$ is only of historical interest. Game 12 is a masterpiece, but the note on 9... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$? is probably where its real death knell will lie.

9 g3! is therefore the critical part of the chapter. The ending considered in Games 15 and 16 is thoroughly unclear, by no means dull and looks likely to maintain its topicality. Game 14 proves pretty conclusively that Black should not avoid it. As for players of the white pieces, if the ending does not appeal, take a look again at Van der Wiel's idea of developing with 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3$! in the note to move ten of Game 14.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{A}e6$

9 g3

9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (D)

9... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ - Game 10

9...g6 - Game 11

9 $\mathbb{W}e4$ - Game 12

9...g6

9...f6 - Game 13

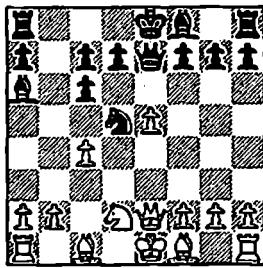
10 b3 $\mathbb{A}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{A}b2$ 0-0 12 $\mathbb{A}g2$ (D) $\mathbb{E}ae8$

12... $\mathbb{E}fe8$ - Game 14

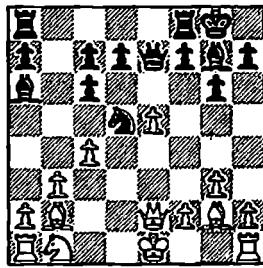
13 0-0 $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{A}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 16 cxd5 $\mathbb{A}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{A}xf1$ cxd5 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ c6
(D) 19 $\mathbb{E}c1$

19 $\mathbb{E}d1$ - Game 15

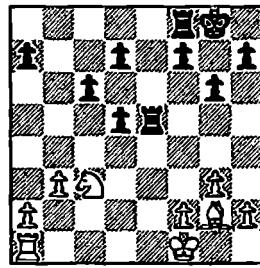
19... $\mathbb{E}fe8$ - Game 16 (by transposition)



9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$



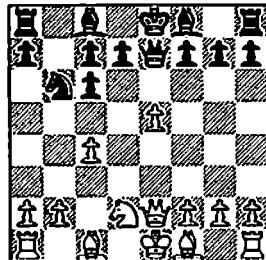
12 $\mathbb{A}g2$



18...c6

CHAPTER THREE

Main Line with 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$: 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Here we consider the critical variations of the main line with 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$. The most important decision here for Black is whether to move the a-pawn forward or not. In Games 17-19 we see the popular 9... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 10 b3 a5, intending to immediately undermine the white pawn chain with ...a5-a4. However, 9... $\mathbb{W}e6$ can also be followed by the simple 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ and 11...0-0, as in Games 20 and 21. The ...a7-a5-a4 advance can also be prefaced by 9... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ (Games 22 and 23) but here too Black has an alternative with queenside castling (Games 24 and 25). Finally, Black can instead choose 9...a5 (Games 26 and 27) or aim for central play with 9...d6 (Game 28).

Game 17 P-H.Nielsen-Dautov Bad Lauterberg 1991

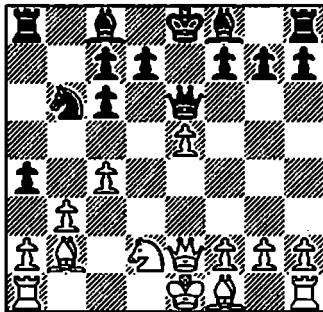
1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 10 b3 a5?

The old move 10... $\mathbb{Q}b4$? is considered in Game 19, along with the unusual

10... $\mathbb{Q}b8$, while 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is the subject of Games 20 and 21.

11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ a4!

Very direct. 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ is seen (by transposition) in the notes to Black's 11th move in Game 19.



12 g3

This move is under something of a cloud due to the present game. The alternative 12 $\mathbb{W}e3$ is considered in Game 18.

12... $\mathbb{Q}b4$!

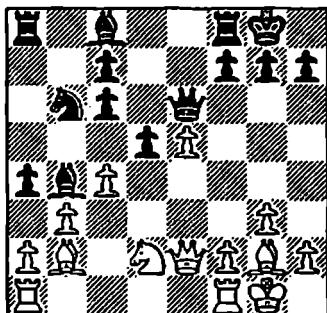
The attractive thing about this ...a7-a5-a4 based variation compared with others which we shall examine later in this chapter, is that here Black is not rushing to open the a-file, but rather using the a-pawn flexibly. So long as the tension is

maintained, White must always reckon with the possibility that his bishop will be hassled by Black pushing this pawn to a3, no idle threat as we shall see.

13 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 0-0

Black's best strategy is to break in the centre. Playing to win the e5-pawn involves too many positional concessions, viz: 13... $\mathbb{B}b8?$! 14 0-0 a3 15 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ c5 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0? (having said a highly committal 'A', Black forgets what comes next; for better or worse 16... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ had to be tried) 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ and White dominates the board, Oll-Sonntag, Eupen open 1995.

14 0-0 d5!



Black makes efficient use of his forces. Queen, knight and bishop all act together to pressure the c4-point, and the bishop may join in too. Moreover, we noted before that the a-pawn is not yet committed, and after White's natural reply this becomes the crucial point.

15 $\mathbb{Q}f3?$

This is criticised by Dautov, although his suggested improvement 15 f4 also has its problems after 15... $\mathbb{W}g6$! 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}h5$! by which fine manoeuvre Black keeps his share of control over the light squares on the kingside and still has the option of ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ to increase the pressure.

15...a3!

Stronger than 15... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 17 $\mathbb{E}c1$ when I prefer White.

16 $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Unfortunately after 16 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 17 $\mathbb{E}b1$ $dxc4$ Black's position, while a little disjointed, holds together effectively enough, for example 18 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$!, 18 $\mathbb{B}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$! or 18 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{W}g6$! in all cases favouring Black.

16...c5 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Again the alternative 17 $cxd5$ falls just short after 17... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ (17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$?! 18 $\mathbb{Q}g5$!) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 20 $\mathbb{E}xf1$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$! 21 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}d3$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ (22 $\mathbb{W}c1$? $\mathbb{Q}d2$!) 22... $\mathbb{E}xd3$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ with some positional compensation for the exchange, but clearly not enough to recommend this from a theoretical point of view.

17... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ $hxg6$ 20 $\mathbb{E}fc1$! $dxc4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$!

This, combined with White's last, form definitely the best chance for White to extract positional concessions in exchange for his impending pawn loss. In fact, Black wisely switches attention to the e-pawn straightaway, since seeking further gains on the queenside first would be counter-productive, e.g. 21... $\mathbb{c}xb3$? 22 $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ c4 23 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ or 21... $\mathbb{Q}a6$? 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ - Dautov. The second variation in particular reminds us that while itself lacking in scope, the dark-squared bishop is absolutely indispensable as a defender of Black's queenside pawns.

21... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$?

22 f4! was a better try, since the objections to Black taking further action on the queenside persist to some extent, while 22...f6 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 24 $\mathbb{B}xc4$ $fxe5$ 25 $\mathbb{E}c2$!, though leaving Black with some advantage, clearly represents a weakening of Black's kingside compared with the game.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$?

A very instructive moment, since the choice of how to exchange bears with great relevance on our basic theme of Black's 'problem' minor pieces. As we

shall see, the knight, though it eventually finds its way to the d3-square, does have a rather long and tortuous route. After 22... $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$ 23 bxc4 $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ on the other hand, there would be no impediment to a most suitable redeployment of the bishop via c8 to f5, where incidentally it would play a key role in a rather serious restriction of White's rooks - again full marks to the bishop on b4 too for preventing, despite its paralysed state, a challenge on the important open e-file.

23 bxc4 $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 24 $\mathbb{E}c2!$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ 26 $\mathbb{E}b1$ $\mathbb{E}ad7$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ 29 h4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 31 $\mathbb{E}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}ed7$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}c1!$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}xd3!$

After the knight has finally worked itself into the heart of White's position, this exchange will secure the draw. Of course, a large part of the problem is that while we were able to note that the bishop on b4 performed certain specific important tasks well on a fairly full board, it is a disastrous piece with which to try and make progress in a simplified position. Black simply has no breakthrough.

34... $\mathbb{E}xd3$ 35 $\mathbb{E}xd3$ $\mathbb{E}xd3$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{E}d1+$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}e1+$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{E}g1$ 41 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 42 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}xc1$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 18
Fogarasi-Varavin
Kobanya open 1992

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 10 b3 a5 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ a4 12 $\mathbb{W}e3?$ $\mathbb{Q}b4!$

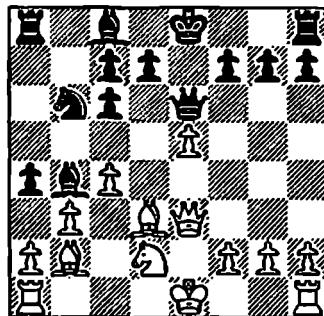
In view of my above comments about keeping the a-pawn's role flexible, I do not really understand what moved Ivan Sokolov to clarify matters by 12...axb3? 13 axb3 $\mathbb{E}xa1+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6 16 0-0 (as we shall see in the main line - note

'a' to White's 14th move - this natural and desirable development is not really on the menu in the analogous position where Black has retained the queenside tension, and hence the possibility to push ...a4-a3) 16...dxe5 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ f6 18 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 0-0 20 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ with a small but certain positional plus for White in Svidler-I.Sokolov, Groningen 1995.

The immediate strike in the centre with 12...d5?! is also illogical, since in the closed centre position that results the role Black intends for his advanced a-pawn is far from clear: 13 c5! $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 b4 $\mathbb{E}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ f6 16 f4 $\mathbb{fxe}5$ 17 $\mathbb{fxe}5$ g6 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 0-0 20 0-0 was much better for White in Fogarasi-Fokin, Kobanya open 1992.

13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

As Black's plan in the game looks like a really serious nuisance, White might have to consider 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2?$ seriously to keep the c3-square defended and hence retain the possibility of $\mathbb{Q}c3$. It is unclear whether, in terms of activity and the prospects of any attack on the kingside, this represents some concession by White. We now have the first test, but Baklan-Kuzmin, Alushta 1997, did not shed too much light since Black's 13... $\mathbb{W}g6?$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 15 0-0 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ was obviously none too critical. Baklan also likes 13...d5 14 0-0 0-0 (14... $\mathbb{Q}xd2?$) 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ for White but this needs tests.



13...d6!

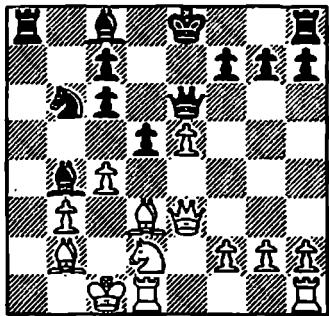
Not just striking at the centre, but also initiating some sneaky ideas to advance the a-pawn to a3, when White's bishop might just be incautious enough to find itself trapped in mid-board.

Thus, the text seems preferable to 13...d5 14 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ dxc4 16 bxc4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ when 17 $\mathbb{W}g5?$ looks promising. Black has had to make some committal decisions in order to round up White's c-pawn. White has to look beyond the dis-service which his e-pawn does to the bishop on b2, and concentrate on ways to exploit his potential advantage on the dark-squares: 17...0-0 (17...g6?) 18 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 20 $\mathbb{E}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 21 $\mathbb{E}ac1$ gives White huge compensation along just the lines outlined above) 18 f4! (18 $\mathbb{Q}f5?$ h6!) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 19 f5 $\mathbb{W}h6$ (otherwise White will get a massive attack through the further advance to f6) 20 $\mathbb{W}xh6$ gxh6 21 $\mathbb{E}f3!$ and White's kingside chances outlast the exchange of queens - Wells.

14 0-0-0

This would not be White's preferred option, and this choice of destination for the king undeniably contains much danger, but neither 14 0-0? a3 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ nor 14 exd6 $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 15 fxe3 cxd6 16 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ are recommendable.

14...axb3 15 axb3 d5



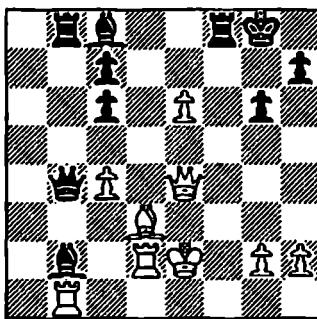
16 f4

The plan of driving Black's queen to e7 seems to do White's defensive efforts around his vulnerable king no favours at all. White's last shot has to be piece rather than pawn play. To this end 16 $\mathbb{W}g5?$ (or 16 $\mathbb{W}g3$, to answer 16... $\mathbb{W}g4$ with 17 e6?) 16... $\mathbb{W}g4?$ (after 16...0-0 17 $\mathbb{W}h4$ h6 18 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ 19 $\mathbb{E}xd2$ cxd5 20 f4 White also gets a share of the attacking chances) 17 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 18 $\mathbb{B}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ when Black is comfortable, but the serious danger has passed for White.

16...dxc4! 17 f5?

17 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ must be a better try, although 17... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ looks promising for Black. 17... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 19 bxc4 $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ 20 $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ 21 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{R}b8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$

Black's attack has assumed decisive proportions. If 22 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ $\mathbb{W}xa3+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ Black can remove the rook on h1 with impunity.

22... $\mathbb{E}xb2$ 23 e6 0-0 24 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ fxe6 25 fxe6 g6 26 $\mathbb{E}b1$ 

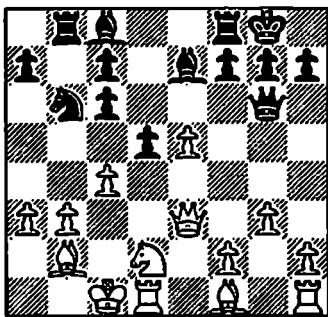
26... $\mathbb{E}12+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}b3$
0-1

Game 19
Morozevich-Arkhipov
Tal Memorial, Moscow 1992

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
4f6 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

8 c4 ♜b6 9 ♛d2 ♜e6 10 b3 ♜b4?

10...♜b8 is another novel strategy, again bearing on our theme of creating counter-chances by disrupting White's development: 11 g3 (11 ♜b2?! rather walks into Black's intended 11...♛a4! 12 ♜d4 c5 13 ♜e3 ♜c3! 14 ♜d3 ♜xe5 15 ♜f3 ♜f6 16 ♜d2 ♜d5!) 11...♝b4 12 ♜b2 ♜g6! (neatly forcing long castling – see my comments in the Introduction) 13 0-0-0 0-0 14 a3 ♜e7 15 ♜e3 d5! was seen in the game Hjartarson-I.Sokolov, Akureyri 1994.



Now White should have played 16 exd6! ♜f6! 17 ♜e4! (Black has certainly generated some dangerous ideas; 17 dxc7?? ♜xb2+ 18 ♜xb2 ♜a4+ 19 ♜c1 ♜f6! is one of the most brutal) 17...♜xb2+ 18 ♜xb2 ♜a4+ when Ivan Sokolov considers only 19 ♜a1 (not 19 ♜a2?? ♜xe4!) 19...♜f5! 20 dxc7 ♜xb3! 21 ♜xb3 ♜xe4 and Black's heroic efforts are rewarded with a perpetual check after 22 ♜xa4 ♜f6+ 23 ♜a2 ♜xf2+ 24 ♜a1 ♜f6+.

The whole concept is very interesting, and admirably original, but I do not see a clear follow-up to 19 ♜c1! (Wells) where the king clearly sits more comfortably than at the end of the long diagonal.

11 ♜b2 0-0?

The alternative is 11...a5 but this would blend well with Black's previous move only in the eventuality that after 12 a3! ♜xd2+ 13 ♜xd2 Black could use the a-

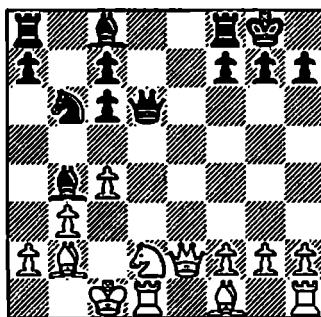
pawn to undermine White's queenside structure on the light squares by 13...a4? However, White then has 14 c5 ♜d5 15 b4 ♜a6 16 ♜xa6 ♜xa6 17 0-0 (Kasparov) when his space advantage counts for more than any controversial claim which Black might put in that his knight is superior to White's bishop. Still, this would have been a better try than 13...d5?! 14 cxd5 cxd5 15 ♜c1!, as in Kasparov-Karpov, World Championship match, Lyon (16) 1990, when the bishop pair combined with the backward c-pawn added up to a large plus for White. •

After the text move Black will concentrate on the centre, and the break ...d7-d5 rather than the a-pawn push. The strategy has some similarity with Game 20, and the advantage of avoiding 12 g3 (Game 21).

12 0-0-0!

12 a3?! obviously costs time and 12...♜xd2+ 13 ♜xd2 f6!, as in Nijboer-Winants, Wijk aan Zee 1992, is good for Black.

12...d5 13 exd6 ♜xd6



14 ♜f3?

It would be tempting first to cover the check on h6, and avoid the e-pawn weakness of the game. However, Black can develop very fast, and Piket's line 14 ♜e3 ♜a3! 15 ♜d3 ♜g4! 16 f3 ♜ae8 17 ♜e4 ♜xb2+ 18 ♜xb2 ♜e5+ 19 ♜c2 f5 seems to offer Black better counterplay than in the

game continuation.

14...Wh6+ 15 We3!

If 15 Qb1? Qf5+ 16 Qa1 Rae8 Black's rapid development spells serious embarrassment for the white queen.

15...Wxe3+ 16 fxe3 Rae8 17 e4

White wants to solve the problem of the e-pawn by advancing it to e5. This was also Kasparov's choice here, although in his analysis he offers the interesting positional sacrifice 17 Qd4! Qg4 18 Qe2 Qxe2 19 Qxe2 Rxe3 20 Qd4, when the exchange of light-squared bishops has cost White a little time but improved the scope of his knight, which is eyeing not only the c6-pawn, but the important f5-square too.

17...Qg4?

17...Rxe4 18 Rd8+ Qf8 19 Qd3 followed by 20 Qxh7+ is obviously bad.

However, the text also goes for too much. White's 20th move crosses Black's plan, and guarantees at least a definite positional plus.

17...Qd7! was better, when Black found the best way to re-organise his minor pieces on the queenside with 18 e5 a5 19 Qd3 Qc5 20 Qc2 a4! 21 Qd4 axb3 22 axb3 Ra6 in Kasparov-Piket, Dortmund 1992. After 23 Rf1! White can lay claim to no more than a slight edge.

18 e5 Qd7 19 h3 Rxf3 20 Rxd7 Re4 21 Qd3 Rxg2?

Black obviously did not fancy the uphill struggle arising from 21...Rxd3 22 Rxd3, when White can boast control of the d-file and the better pawn structure, but the game move is suicide!

22 Rg1 Rxh3 23 e6! Rxg6

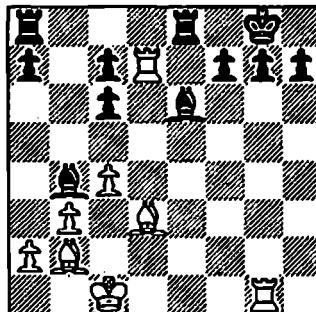
see following diagram

24 Rxg7!

An attractive finish. White has a merciless discovered check which leaves Black's forces utterly tied up.

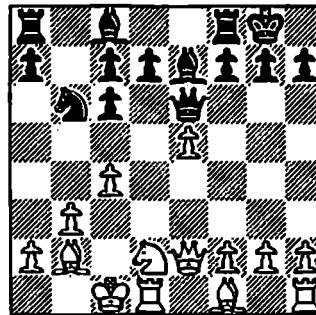
24...Rxd7 25 Qc3+ Qf8 26 Rxb4+ Re7 27 Rxh7 f5 28 Rg8+ Qf7 29 Rxa8 c5 30

Rxc5 1-0



Game 20
Wells-Cladouras
Bad Wörishofen open 1997

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4 Qf6 5 Qxc6 bxc6 6 e5 We7 7 We2 Qd5 8 c4 Qb6 9 Qd2 We6 10 b3 Ae7 11 Ab2 0-0 12 0-0-0?!



Now I know better! 12 g3!, as in Game 21, is the thematic way here.

However, White simply does not have the time for 12 We3?!. Black can strike immediately with 12...d5 13 Qd3 dxc4! 14 Qxc4 (14 bxc4 Rd8 promises d-file trouble for White; G Garcia suggests 14 Qc2? when White will get a bit of compensation - it is best, but hardly a recommendation to play the line!) 14...Qb4+ 15 Qf1 Ra6 16

$\mathbb{A}c1 \mathbb{H}ad8$ 17 $h4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$ 18 $bxc4 \mathbb{Q}a4$ with very active play for Black in Zapata-G.Garcia, Medellin 1992.

12... $a5?!$

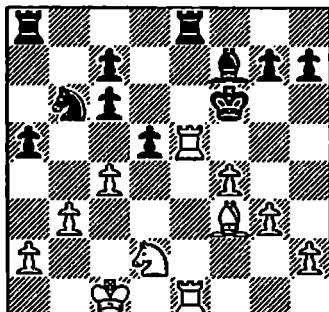
The wrong strategy! White's problem here is quite concretely that after 12... $d5!$ 13 $exd6 cxd6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ (or 14 $\mathbb{W}f3 d5 15 \mathbb{Q}d3 \mathbb{W}h6!$) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3 d5!$ Schmittdiel-G.Garcia, Candas open 1992, Black has a full share of the centre. If 16 $cxd5$ Black has a choice of viable recaptures, since ... $a5-a4$ will secure queenside counter-chances in all cases.

13 $f4 f5?!$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf6 \mathbb{W}xe2$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe2 \mathbb{Q}xf6$ 16 $g3 d5$ 17 $\mathbb{H}he1 \mathbb{Q}e6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

White has a slight but persistent edge. His pieces are rather more active, and Black has not yet solved the problem of his queenside structure. So long as this is not dealt with, his knight on $b6$ is also potentially passive. In the game I had a further advantage: Black's unshakeable belief that he had no problems at all!

18... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf6 \mathbb{Q}xf6$ 20 $\mathbb{H}e5 \mathbb{H}e8$ 21 $\mathbb{H}de1 \mathbb{Q}f7$

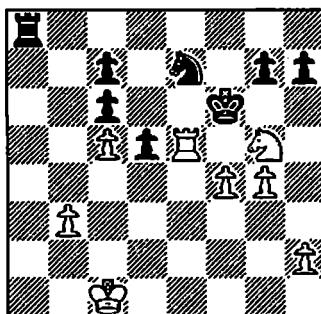
21... $dxc4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e4+$ is of course too dangerous. Gradually White's advantage takes on more threatening proportions. The next move introduces some $\mathbb{Af5+}$ ideas, but is chiefly about restricting Black's knight.



22 $\mathbb{Q}g4! \mathbb{H}xe5$ 23 $\mathbb{H}xe5 a4$ 24 $c5 axb3$ 25 $axb3 \mathbb{Q}c8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d7 \mathbb{Q}e7?!$

He had to try 26... $\mathbb{Q}a7$. This square is needed for the king.

27 $g4! \mathbb{Q}e8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xe8 \mathbb{H}xe8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}f3! \mathbb{H}a8$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}g5! 1-0$



An interesting picture of helplessness. In dealing with the threat of mate, Black must lose at least the knight on $e7$.

Game 21
OII-G.Garcia
New York open 1997

1 $e4 e5 2 \mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}c6 3 d4 exd4 4 \mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{Q}f6 5 \mathbb{Q}xc6 bxc6 6 e5 \mathbb{W}e7 7 \mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{Q}d5 8 c4 \mathbb{Q}b6 9 \mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{W}e6 10 b3 \mathbb{Q}e7 11 \mathbb{Q}b2 0-0 12 g3?!$

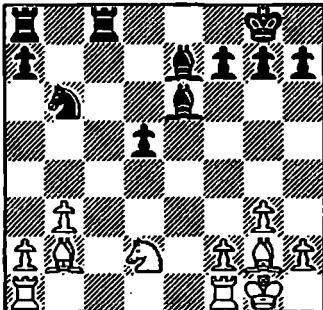
This is clearly White's best approach, anticipating Black's strike in the centre with the thrust ... $d7-d5$ and seeking to place his pieces optimally to deal with the resulting Isolated Queen's Pawn (IQP) position.

12... $d5$

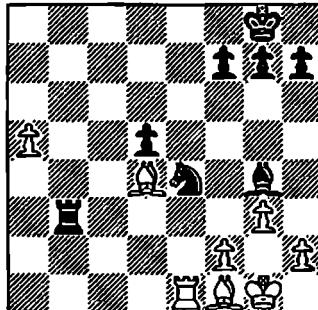
This has been Black's standard response here. Still, at this moment White can exchange on $d6$, reaching his desired pawn structure, secure in the knowledge that if, after 13 $exd6$, Black throws in 13... $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ he will cause no great disruption. Hence I have a slight suspicion that the text somehow is just a little too cooperative. Given this diagnosis Black should seek a useful, semi-waiting move.

Perhaps 12... $\mathbb{A}c8$?

- 13 $\mathbb{Exd6}$ $\mathbb{Cxd6}$ 14 $\mathbb{Wxe6}$ $\mathbb{Axe6}$ 15 $\mathbb{Ag2}$ d5
16 $\mathbb{Cxd5}$ $\mathbb{Cxd5}$ 17 0-0 $\mathbb{Efc8}$



With two beautifully posted bishops urging on the outside passed pawn, Black can put up very little resistance.



18 $\mathbb{Qf3}$!

For me this is easily the most instructive moment in Lembit Oll's characteristically clinical technical display. How many players faced with Black's occupancy of the c-file would rush to neutralise Black's 'initiative', and challenge on the file to prevent the coming seventh rank invasion? In fact a move like 18 $\mathbb{Ha1}$ would risk jettisoning the greater part of White's advantage. After for example 18... $\mathbb{Af5}?$ 19 $\mathbb{Axc8}$ (19 $\mathbb{Qf3} \mathbb{Ae4}?$) 19... $\mathbb{Exc8}$ 20 $\mathbb{Ac1}$ $\mathbb{Axc1+}$ 21 $\mathbb{Axc1}$ Black has a choice of moves such as 21... $\mathbb{Ab4}?$ or 21... $\mathbb{Af6}$ which both hint at White's loss of coordination.

In fact White will blockade on d4 with his bishop, supporting the advance of his queenside pawns and reminding us yet again that the b6-knight may not be too happy either.

- 18... $\mathbb{Ac2}$ 19 $\mathbb{Qd4}$ $\mathbb{Aac8}$ 20 a4 $\mathbb{A8c7}$ 21 $\mathbb{Ae5}$ $\mathbb{Ac8}$ 22 $\mathbb{Qd4}$ $\mathbb{Ag2}$ 23 $\mathbb{Aa1}$ $\mathbb{Ad3}$ 24 $\mathbb{Id1}$ $\mathbb{Exd1}$ 25 $\mathbb{Exd1}$ $\mathbb{Qd7}$ 26 $\mathbb{Af4}$ $\mathbb{Qf6}$ 27 $\mathbb{Qb5}$ $\mathbb{Mc2}$

False activity! 27... $\mathbb{Qc5}?$ looks more resilient.

- 28 $\mathbb{Ae3}$ a6 29 $\mathbb{Qd4}$ $\mathbb{Ec3}$ 30 $\mathbb{Af1}$ $\mathbb{Ag4}$ 31 $\mathbb{Ke1}$ $\mathbb{Qc5}$ 32 $\mathbb{Axa6}$ $\mathbb{Qxd4}$ 33 $\mathbb{Qxd4}$ $\mathbb{Exb3}$
34 a5 $\mathbb{Qe4}$ 35 $\mathbb{Af1}$

35... $\mathbb{Ha3}$ 36 a6 h6 37 a7 $\mathbb{Ag7}$ 38 $\mathbb{Bb1}$ $\mathbb{Qd2}$ 39 $\mathbb{Bb8+}$ $\mathbb{Kh7}$ 40 $\mathbb{Qc5}$ $\mathbb{Qf3+}$ 41 $\mathbb{Kh1}$ $\mathbb{Ha1}$ 42 $\mathbb{e8W}$ $\mathbb{Ed1}?$

An amusing try. Black can have one last crack at a mating attack with ... $\mathbb{Ah3}$. Lembit Oll's excellent technique leaves little room for humour.

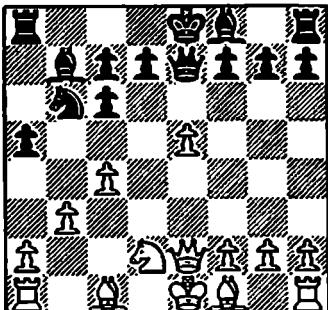
43 $\mathbb{Bh8+}$ $\mathbb{Qg6}$ 44 $\mathbb{Wa6+}$ 1-0

Game 22
Dochev-Kazhgaleyev
Pardubice 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Qf3}$ $\mathbb{Qc6}$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{Exd4}$ 4 $\mathbb{Qxd4}$ $\mathbb{Qf6}$ 5 $\mathbb{Qxc6}$ $\mathbb{Bxc6}$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{We7}$ 7 $\mathbb{We2}$ $\mathbb{Qd5}$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Qb6}$ 9 $\mathbb{Qd2}$ $\mathbb{Ab7}$

This is a useful developing move in terms of the bishop's potential rather than its immediate radiance, and can be linked to two possible strategies. Common to both is Black's virtual prevention of 10 g3 due to 10...c5! This, by further increasing the probability that White will fianchetto on the queenside, will logically increase the power of the lever ...a7-a5-a4. Although this advance is not the only way to handle the position (see Game 24) it has become quite popular. Still, I am a little sceptical of it myself.

10 b3 a5



11 $\mathbb{Q}b2!$?

Although the alternative 11 $a4$ (see the next game) is also looking good at present, my scepticism towards plans which involve the advance of the a -pawn with a view to opening the a -file, leads me to feel sympathetic to this invitation for Black to get on and implement his plan.

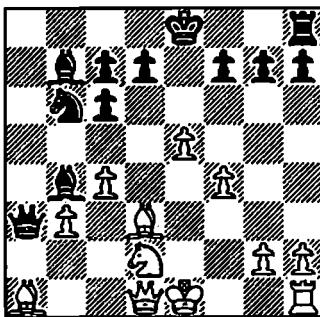
Of course the position that arises is full of tension. Here are the themes of the whole 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ Scotch writ large. Black can create a fair degree of disruption – in order to complete his development White, as we shall see, is forced to put his king rather inconveniently on $e2$. However, Black's play is extremely committal, and his pieces disturbingly 'offside'. If White consolidates, he can look to the future with confidence.

11... $a4$ 12 $f4!$

An important moment. 12 $g3?$ is bad since after 12... $axb3$ 13 $axb3$ $\mathbb{E}xa1+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ $\mathbb{W}a3$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ (15... $c5!?$) 16 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}a2!$ White will have a real job freeing himself. The older try 12 $\mathbb{B}b1$ cedes the a -file without a fight and also leads to trouble after 12... $axb3$ 13 $axb3$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 14 $h4$ $\mathbb{W}h6$ 15 $g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $0-0$, when the pin was unpleasant enough to persuade White to make the major concession 17 $\mathbb{W}e3$ in Schmittdiel-A.Kuzmin, Oberwart open 1995, which after 17... $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 18 $\mathbb{fxe3}$ $d5$ 19 $\mathbb{exd6}$ $\mathbb{cxd6}$ 20 $\mathbb{We2}$ $\mathbb{Ea2}$ led to excellent

play for Black. The text move is useful in that it supports the $e5$ -pawn and also draws our attention to the fact that since the invasion of the black queen on $a3$ is integral to Black's hopes of causing maximum disruption, he is short on useful semi-waiting moves. Hence the immediate release of the tension...

12... $axb3$ 13 $axb3$ $\mathbb{E}xa1+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ $\mathbb{W}a3$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d1!$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$



16... $\mathbb{W}a5$

Thus far all has been rather self-explanatory. Now White was threatening to castle, after which Black's bunching of his forces on the queen's wing would look clumsy to say the least. However, Black does have an alternative way to intensify the pin, namely 16... $\mathbb{W}a2!?$ Hjartarson criticises this on the grounds that after 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ $0-0$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f3$, White will profit from the retreat of his bishop to $c2$ as his queen comes effectively to $d3$ with tempo. I am not sure that matters are so simple. Two thoughts after 16... $\mathbb{W}a2!?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ deserve a mention:

a) First, although the interesting sacrifice 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$, which was a suggestion from my wife Noemi, does not quite work, it requires a very accurate defence. After 18 $\mathbb{bxc4}$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$, not only should White not seek to defend his $f4$ -pawn (19 $g3!?$ $\mathbb{Wd5!}$ 20 $\mathbb{Ag1}$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ and 19 $\mathbb{Ef1}$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ both give Black tremendous play) but he

should in fact give it with check by 19 ♕f2!! ♖xf4+ 20 ♔f3, regaining control of d4 and reviving the concept of developing his pieces! After for example 20...c5 21 ♔f1 0-0 22 ♖d3 g6 23 ♕g1 the three pawns do not provide enough play for the piece.

b) The culprit in Hjartarson's line seems to come later. Following 17...Qa5! 18 ♕e2, better is 18...d5!, the logical way to show that the bishop may be missed from d3. If 19 exd6 cxd6 20 ♔e4 0-0 21 ♖d4 f6, Black's queen has regained access to the centre and the kingside, and White's king position still gives cause for some concern. Chances are about equal.

17 ♕e2!

White goes for the 'Full Monty'. 17 ♕d4? is much less ambitious, since the manoeuvre to e3 clearly costs time which Black can invest in developing and striking back in the centre. In A.Grosar-Hjartarson, European Team Championship, Debrecen 1992, Black quickly seized the initiative after 17...0-0 18 ♕e3 d6! 19 0-0 (19 exd6 ♕e8 20 ♕f2 ♕c5! is fraught with danger) 19...dxe5 20 ♔f3 f5! 21 fxe5 ♖xe5. In this line, Black usually has some cause for celebration when his forces start to return to battle for the centre.

17...d6 18 ♖c2! h6 19 ♔d4?

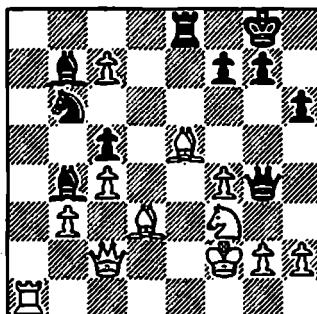
It does not seem entirely necessary to put this piece on a square where it will later be hit with tempo by the freeing ...c6-c5. Thus I would suggest 19 ♕b2? when Black, faced with the threat of 20 ♕a1, seems to have no serious alternative to centralising his queen as in the game. After 19...Qa8 20 exd6 0-0 (20...cxd6 21 ♔xg7 ♕g8 22 ♖b2 looks promising for White) 21 dxc7 White should be better.

19...Qa8! 20 exd6 0-0 21 dxc7 ♕e8+ 22 ♕f2 c5 23 ♕a1?

Far from gaining tempo, this merely pushes Black's queen where it wants to go, and will shortly leave the rook open to a fine combination. 23 ♕e5! looks better,

since strangely 23...Qxd2 (23...f6? 24 ♔a1! ♖c8 25 ♕f5!) 24 ♖xd2 ♕xg2 25 ♕g1 ♖f3+? 26 ♕e1 leaves Black without a good follow-up.

23...Qc8 24 ♕e5 ♖g4 25 ♕f3



25...♕e5!

A fine combination after which Black reaches an endgame where his superior pieces enable him to inflict considerable suffering. As we shall see, queen and opposite-coloured bishop attack well together.

26 fxe5 ♕xf3 27 gxf3 ♖d4+ 28 ♕g2 ♖xa1 29 ♕f5 g6! 30 c8♕+ ♕xc8 31 ♕xc8 ♖xe5 32 ♕b7 ♕c3 33 ♕d5 ♕g5+ 34 ♕f1 ♕d4 35 ♕e4 ♕g1+ 36 ♕e2 ♖xh2+

So long as Black avoids the exchange of queens, the h-pawn will decide the contest.

37 ♕d3 ♕g7 38 ♕e7 ♕f4 39 b4 cxb4 40 ♖xb4 ♕e3+ 41 ♕c2 ♕e2+ 42 ♕d2 ♕e5 43 ♕d3 h5! 44 ♕e4 ♕f6 45 ♕e8 h4 46 ♕d7 ♕c5 47 ♕b3 ♕e7 48 ♕c2 ♕b4 49 ♕b3 ♕c3+ 50 ♕a4 ♕a3+ 51 ♕b5 ♕a5+ 52 ♕c8 ♕a4+ 53 ♕c7 ♕xd7+ 54 ♕xd7 h3 55 14 ♕f8 56 ♕e4 ♕d2 57 ♕d6 ♕xf4+ 58 ♕d5 ♕g5 0-1

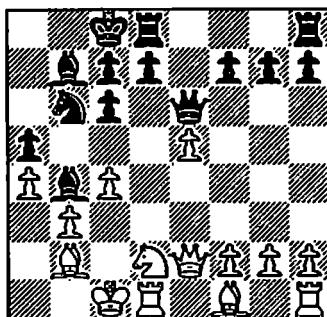
Game 23
Sveshnikov-Malaniuk
Alusta 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♔f3 ♔c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♔xd4

4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{A}b7$ 10 b3 a5 11 a4?

While obviously doing the b3-pawn and the b4-square no favours, White stops Black's queenside efforts in their tracks. Moreover, Black faces an interesting problem. If he plays for ... $\mathbb{A}b4$ (which in fact has been the universal choice in practice) then his bishops find themselves in an unfortunate formation where increasing the scope of one depends upon the entrapment of the other. In the main game, as we shall see, Black overcomes this problem and the end of the game is, ironically, a textbook demonstration of bishop pair co-operation. However, the notes cast doubt upon whether the outcome will always be so congenial. Not all these difficulties are avoidable either. If ... $\mathbb{A}b4$ is omitted, then Black's a5-pawn may become a more vulnerable weak-point than anything on the white side.

11... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 12 $\mathbb{A}b2$ $\mathbb{A}b4$ 13 0-0-0 0-0-0!



14 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

By far the best catalyst to a harmonious development. The queen is headed for c2, the bishop to d3.

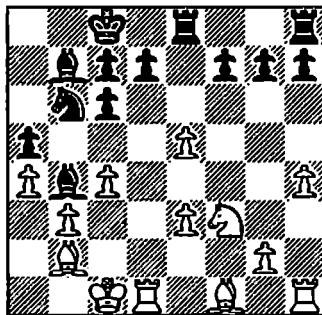
14... $\mathbb{W}h6+$ 15 $\mathbb{W}e3?$

The natural and stronger 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ was originally suggested by Malaniuk himself in his notes. He gave 15...d5 as 'unclear', but in fact after 16 exd6! cxd6 (the comfortable square c2 for the queen, and the

inability of the black forces to hinder the tidy development of the bishop to d3, seems to suggest that Black cannot justify the serious weaknesses which capture with a piece on d6 would create) 17 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{E}he8$ 18 h4 c5 19 $\mathbb{Q}g5?$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}f5+$ $\mathbb{E}dd7$, and now White has only to avoid 21 $\mathbb{W}xh7?$ $\mathbb{A}e4+$ by 21 f3! - preparing to meet 21...f6?! with 22 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ or 21...d5, as in Olenin-V.Ivanov, Russia 1997, by 22 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 23 $\mathbb{A}b5!$ This is impressive, but what if Black should try 17...c5 before White has secured the g5-square for his knight to run to? Well, the truth is that the exchange on f3 does not look like much of a threat to me. After 18 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 19 gxf3 White will put the bishop on e4 and dominate the light squares. For similar reasons I also have a feeling that 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3?$ was a good safe alternative in the game too. This note puts the ball back in Black's court after 11 a4 too.

15... $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 16 fxe3 $\mathbb{A}de8$ 17 h4

In view of Black's excellent plan of line-opening on the kingside, White probably came to regret not having gone for development with 17 $\mathbb{A}d3!$



17...f6! 18 exf6 gxf6 19 $\mathbb{A}xf6$ $\mathbb{E}hg8$ 20 $\mathbb{A}g5$ d5!

Black's superb concept offers a very striking example of playing to the strengths of a position. At a stroke the cramping effect of the e5-pawn has been

removed and the weak e3-pawn exposed to attack. White's dark-squared bishop has been misplaced, which suddenly creates the possibility that Black's bishop on b4 may turn out to be a crucial attacking piece. White's other bishop can develop only at the risk of allowing entry by Black's rook. All this at the cost of just one pawn.

21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

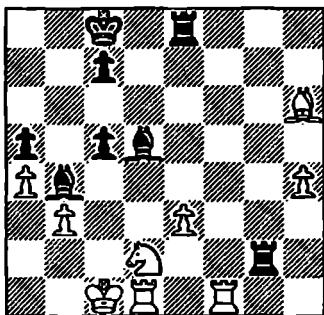
Malaniuk gives the variation 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ h6! 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ d4! – a model for enhancing the power of the bishop pair. However White captures on d4, ... $\mathbb{A}xg2$ in conjunction with ... $\mathbb{Q}a3+$ and maybe ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ will create very powerful threats.

21...c5 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ h6! 24 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{A}xg2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$

25 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ had to be tried. Now the bishops simply go on the rampage.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 26 $\mathbb{E}hf1$

In the event of 26 e4 White would be faced by the rather embarrassing riposte 26... $\mathbb{A}xe4!$



26...c4!

Another instructive example of 'line-opening' for both the bishops and the rooks. If now 27 $\mathbb{B}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ it is White's a-pawn which turned out to be the weakling. The text is even worse, and all the black pieces pile in decisively.

27 $\mathbb{Q}xc4?!$ $\mathbb{A}xc4$ 28 $\mathbb{B}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}a3+$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}b1$

$\mathbb{E}e6$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ $\mathbb{A}b6+$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{A}b2+$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}c3+$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{E}gb2$ 0-1

Game 24
Chandler-Adams
Hastings Premier 1991

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{A}b7$ 10 b3 0-0-0

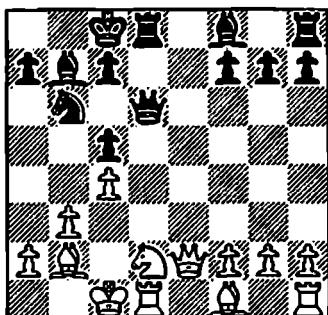
A consistent follow-up to 9... $\mathbb{A}b7$, the text has nevertheless largely fallen out of general use. The problem seems to be that even though Black proceeds logically with development, and can play ...c6-c5 to open a perfectly respectable diagonal for his bishop, he still needs to address the issue of getting the kingside into play. More particularly, White's pawn on e5 is here a positive force for cramping the opponent's game rather than a weakness. Black will normally challenge it with ...d7-d6, but when White exchanges, there is no entirely satisfactory way to proceed. Recapture with the pawn leads to the structure of Game 28 without the corresponding activity, while recapture with a piece leaves the c-pawns very weak. White's problems in mobilising his own kingside do not offer full compensation for this.

11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ c5

Black can also push his d-pawn immediately: 11...d6 12 exd6 $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 13 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}g6$ (or 13... $\mathbb{W}h6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 15 h4! $\mathbb{E}xd2$ 16 $\mathbb{E}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ with some advantage for White) 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6?!$ (maybe he could try 14... $\mathbb{E}xd1+$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5?!$ although I still prefer White) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ $\mathbb{W}h6+$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e3$ was Leko-Janahi, World U-14 Championship, Duisburg 1992, when White stands clearly better since if 16... $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 17 $\mathbb{F}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}hf8$ he has the powerful double attack 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ This is a typical example of where Black has no fully satisfactory recapture. 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ would still leave vulnerable hanging pawns and would offer no tangible

piece activity in compensation.

12 0-0-0 d6 13 exd6 Wxd6



14 Wg4+?

A natural enough move to free the way for White to bring out the rest of his forces, this might well have enjoyed theory's fickle smile but for Mickey Adams's superb display. It is far from obvious that the queen will form a target for Black's own bold and surprising strategy of expansion. Following this game, White found another means to mobilise, particularly to bring the h1-rook with all due haste to the key central files. Black has had problems after 14 h4! (in addition to bringing the rook around the side, the control of g5 is a headache for Black's desire to create play) 14...h5 (14...Wh6 15 Wg4+ b8 16 Wg5! is very good for White since Black's kingside still faces a bind) 15 Kh3 Wh6 (I think that Black should try 15...Wf4? to try to hold up the powerful centralisation of White's rook) 16 He3 Ad6 17 g3! when White has no further obstacles to development, controls the e-file and restricts Black's pieces into the bargain, as in Smagin-Emms, Copenhagen 1992.

14...b8 15 Ae2 h5! 16 Wf5

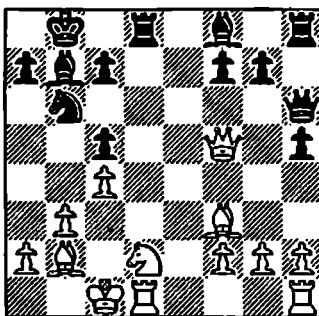
16 Wh3 Wh6 is somewhat awkward for White.

16...Wh6! 17 Af3?

Adams mentions the idea 17 f4 Ad6 18

g3? Axh1 19 Axh1 Wg6, an interesting mirror image of things to come, although I am doubtful that White has quite enough for the exchange.

The simplest route to equality is probably 17 Wxh7 Ad6 18 Wxg7 (18 Axg7? Wh7!) 18...Wxg7 19 Axg7 Ahg8, although Chandler could be forgiven his failure to appreciate the coming difficulties.



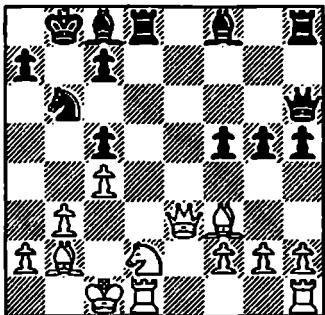
17...Ac8!

A very instructive moment that heralds a really striking idea. Black appreciates that White's grip on the light squares, not so much the squares around his king but particularly e4 and f5, would reach alarming proportions in the event of 17...Qxf3? 18 gxf3! Far from being a retreat, the text involves no risk, since the knight on b6 defends the a8-square and the bishop secures control of both the f5- and g4-squares at a stroke.

18 We4?

Not, I am quite sure, with any illusions of attack on the long light-squared diagonal, but merely with the aim of challenging the black queen. With the historian's greatest weapon - hindsight - we can safely prefer 18 Wc2!, although after 18...f5! Black is still controlling the key squares discussed above and restricting White's minor pieces very efficiently.

18...f5! 19 We3 g5!!



The culmination of Black's highly instructive kingside space-gaining. It is not very surprising that 20 ♖xh8?! ♕xh8 would lead to a very strong attack on the dark squares (Black threatens ...♕f6 and ...g7 immediately). Still, it is worth noting that in the absence of the relevant bishops, Black's queenside, for all its unaesthetic appearance, probably does a better job of defending its own king than White's does.

20 ♕e5 ♖d6 21 ♕f6 g4 22 ♖e2?

White had to try 22 ♕xh6 Exh6 23 ♖d5, although 23...Qxd5 24 cxd5 ♖b7 gives Black a huge plus.

22...♕f4! 23 f3 ♕he8 24 ♖d3 ♕e3 25 ♖c2 ♖f4 26 ♕c3 ♕f2 27 g3 ♕e5 28 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 29 ♕xe5 gxh3 30 ♕hf1 ♕e2 31 ♖f4 f2 0-1

Game 25
Ramesh Kazhgaleyev
Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♕f3 ♕c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♕xd4 ♕f6 5 ♕xc6 bxc6 6 e5 ♕e7 7 ♕e2 ♕d5 8 c4 ♕b8 9 ♕d2 ♖b7 10 h4?

It looks as if White did not like the positions (without good cause in my view) with 10 b3 a5, and was waiting for ...0-0-0 in order to fianchetto. Meanwhile, the development of the rook via h3 may not be out of the question – we shall see simi-

lar ideas from the creative Van der Wiel in Chapter 5. However, this move is not of theoretical importance. I have included the game merely as an entertaining and graphic demonstration of the dangers of neglecting development in those positions where the closed nature of the position cannot be guaranteed.

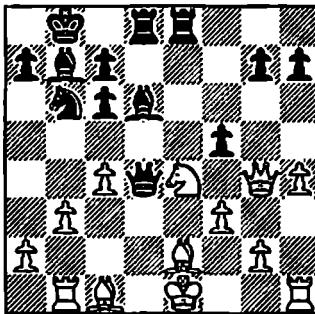
10...0-0-0 11 b3 d6 12 exd6??

A terrible misjudgement for which White is savagely punished by a nice motif. He had to try 12 f4 fxe5 13 dxe5, although by 13...♕e6? and ...♖b4 Black can already put some pretty fundamental questions to White concerning how he intends to get his pieces out. At least he has the pawn at e5 as a shield. White had presumably only reckoned with the exchange of queens, but...

12...♕f6! 13 ♕b1 ♕xd6 14 ♕g4+ ♕b8 15 ♖e2 ♕he8 16 ♕e4

Unfortunately for White 16 0-0 is met by 16...♕e5 winning a piece. This time the clash between Black's superior development and White's better structure lacks the essential closeness of a debate!

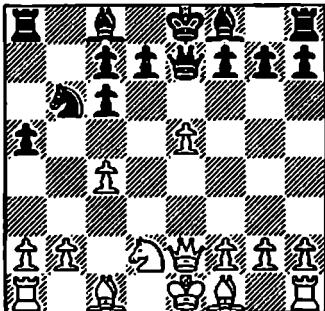
16...♕d4 17 f3 f5! 0-1



White wisely called it a day here, since 18 ♕xf5 ♕xe4! 19 fxe4 (19 ♕xe4 ♖g3+) 19...♖b4+ 20 ♕f1 ♕f8 leads to massive material gain. A nicely executed miniature, which contains a dire warning, not only for opponents of Mr Kazhgaleyev.

Game 26
Fogarasi-Hebden
Cappelle la Grande open 1993

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a5



Why 9...a5 in the absence of b2-b3 by White? I think that the move contains at least three clear ideas:

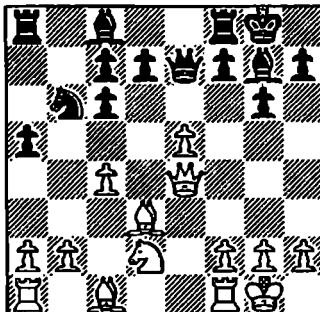
- i) Black 'predicts' White's queenside fianchetto, in the belief that White has no superior alternative development.
- ii) There is the possibility of Black developing the rook laterally by ...a5-a4 and ...Ba5, pressurising the e5-pawn.
- iii) In the event of ...Qa6 by Black, this piece will be defended, and will not block the a-pawn.

Both of our games find White exploring an alternative to the queen's fianchetto. 10 b3 does not look very logical here, but in fact transposes to Game 32 after 10...a4 11 Qb2.

10 $\mathbb{W}e4$ g6 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$

The position of the light-squared bishop on d3 would appear to give encouragement to the idea of 11...Qa4, intending to fork annoyingly on c5. In fact, in Lau-Emms, Copenhagen 1992, White was able to deny the knight access back to the centre, at only slight inconvenience to

his intended pattern of development, after 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3!$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 0-0 0-0 14 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{E}b1$ f5 16 exf6 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ with the better structure and greater activity.
12 0-0 0-0



13 f4?

A very serious positional misjudgement. White wants to offer his e-pawn a 'firm' defence. In fact, it is in any case exchanged soon. Meanwhile, this move seriously reduces the scope of his queen's bishop and costs a critical development tempo, which as we shall see has further implications for the squares d4 and d3. White had to try either 13 $\mathbb{E}e1$ or best of all 13 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ followed by $\mathbb{Q}g5$.

13...d5!

A very alert reaction! Black will pressurise the c4-pawn which will in turn assist the development of play against the e5-pawn, for example by preventing 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$. 14 $\mathbb{W}e2$

Due entirely to his previous move, 14 exd6 $\mathbb{W}xd6!$ is no longer an option. All Black's pieces come into play very fast, and White's bishop on d3 joins the vulnerable camp. Note that 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ can be met with 15...Qg4!

14...f6 15 exf6 $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 16 $\mathbb{A}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 17 cxd5

Another concession, but White cannot both hold the c4-pawn and get his pieces off the back rank!

17...cx d5 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 19 a4 c5 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ c4 21 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

Positionally the game is already decided; Black dominates both the files and diagonals. The best White can do is to accept a weak c3-pawn in exchange for an otherwise doomed b2-pawn.

23 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 24 bxc3 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}h3+$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 0-1

Game 27
Strange-McMahon
Sheffield 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a5 9 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 10 g3

Do not be deceived by move order questions here. Although after 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ I think Black can do better than 8...a5?! (see Chapter 5), this position can be arrived at by the natural 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a5 10 g3.

10...a4?

10... $\mathbb{Q}e6$? also deserves serious consideration. The point is that after 11 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 0-0 0-0! Black answers 13 b3 with 13... $\mathbb{Q}c3$! and any nondescript moves with 13... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ and capturing on c4. Of course 11 b3 is possible, but 11...a4 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ transposes to Game 17, where Black has no serious problems.

11 $\mathbb{Q}g2$?

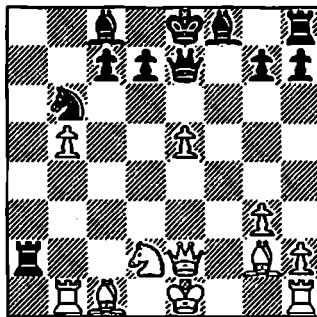
An important if natural attempt to improve upon 11 f4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 12 b3 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$! (a fresh way for Black to organise his development in such positions...) 14 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ d5! 16 exd6 0-0! (... and another fine example of Black all but forcing his opponent's king to head for the territory in which he is well placed to build an attack; see also for example, the note to Black's tenth move in Game 19) 17 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ Zapata-Sisniega, Linares 1992, when

Black has obvious hopes for a queenside attack, although after Sisniega's suggestion 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$! I think that there is still plenty of fight in the position.

11... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 12 f4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$

A notable, if not universally applicable, deployment of Black's forces! The logic is that, in addition to supporting pressure on the e5-pawn with ...f7-f6, the rook's position in front of the bishop has the unusual consequence that White has no immediate b2-b3 move to support the c4-pawn. The threat to this pawn, and the possibility of a check on c5, also prevents White tactically from immediate castling, so the following moves may be not only logical, but virtually forced.

13 $\mathbb{Q}b1$?? f6 14 b4 axb3 15 axb3 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 b4 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 17 b5 cxb5 18 cxb5 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$



After a fairly forcing sequence the most striking aspect of this position is that at move 19 much development still remains to be done on both sides – neither of Black's bishops can move(!) for example. Black's hopes rest on the potential weakness of e5, and of greatest priority, on keeping White's king in the centre. His rook on a2, pinning along the seventh rank, is for the moment clearly an asset. His best plan seems to be 19... $\mathbb{Q}a4$!, exploiting the difficulty of keeping both the c3-square and the e5-pawn well defended.

The point is that after 20 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{W}e6!$ Black prevents castling and prepares to develop his kingside into the bargaining. Following 21 $\mathbb{A}f1(1)$ chances would be about equal.

19... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 20 $\mathbb{H}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 21 $\mathbb{A}xd5!$

Excellent undogmatic chess! White places activity above the bishop pair and trades Black's best piece, albeit for a rather fine bishop of his own. This exchange, together with that of the queens, removes much of Black's ability to irritate, while White's attack is strangely enhanced by the reduction of material.

21... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $g6$ 23 $\mathbb{W}f3$ 24 $\mathbb{L}xf3$ $\mathbb{Ag7?}$

24... $\mathbb{A}b7$ looks better, although 25 $\mathbb{A}c3!$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 26 $b6!$ also activates White's rooks very efficiently.

25 $b6!$ $cxb6$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

An elegant and simple creation of an outpost. White's limited forces attack very powerfully.

26... $\mathbb{A}f8?$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 28 $\mathbb{L}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{L}xh2$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{K}c2$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{L}h2$ 33 $\mathbb{L}b8+$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 34 $\mathbb{A}b2$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 35 $\mathbb{L}b6+$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}d5+$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{K}c2$ 38 $e6!$ $\mathbb{L}xd4$ 39 $\mathbb{L}b8+$ 1-0

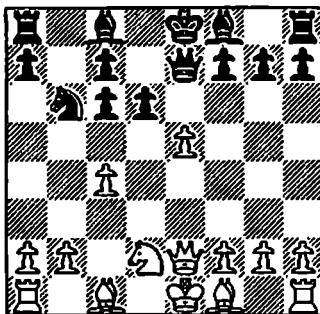
A very original game with a nice blend of tactical and positional ideas.

Game 28
Mat.Müller-Wells
German Bundesliga 1998

1 $e4$ $e5$ 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 $d4$ $exd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 6 $e5$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 $c4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $d6!$?

My prediction is that this hitherto neglected move is due for a significant revival. The idea is by now a familiar one to us - Black has some structural problems, and a potentially poorly placed knight on b6. To compensate for these defects in his position he seeks counterplay through rapid mobilisation. The text is not really

primarily concerned with solving structural problems, since as we shall see, the pawn formation a7, c6 and d6 has its own long-term drawbacks. It is simply the most direct way to develop, and once Black realises that his initiative can withstand the exchange of queens, the move comes into its own.



10 $exd6$

White's problem is that it is very difficult to maintain the pawn on e5, and so he is left really with a choice of this exchange, or some sort of not very convincing pawn sacrifice:

a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}f3?!$ is well met by 10... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ If White now exchanges on d6 he will also be obliged to exchange queens on e7 to avoid sickly f-pawns. Black will then be well ahead in development. That leaves:

a1) 11 $\mathbb{L}f4$ $dxe5$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{L}xf3$ 13 $gxf3$ $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{L}b4+!$ (A.Ivanov) when White's king will have difficulties on the open central files.

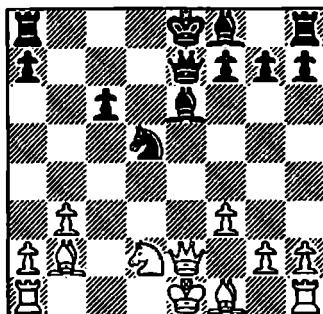
a2) 11 $c5?!$ $dxc5$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{W}d7!$ (12... $\mathbb{L}xf3$ 13 $gxf3$ with $\mathbb{L}h3$ to come is much more promising for White) offers inadequate compensation.

b) 10 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ($10...\mathbb{Q}d5?!$) 11 $b3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 13 $g3$ $\mathbb{A}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{A}g2$ 0-0 15 0-0 offers some obvious structural compensation for the pawn, but Black's knight is good, and his development sound enough. 10... $exd6$ 11 $b3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Aimed at forcing White to take on e7 and/or to severely weaken the e3-square; this move is central to Black's whole strategy.

12 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$

Since active piece play is essentially the core of Black's plan, it looks logical to exchange queens. Nonetheless, 12 f3 is an important alternative: 12... $\mathbb{A}e6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{W}f6!$ 14 $\mathbb{E}c1$ d5 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ does not help) 13...d5 14 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$



Always active piece play! 14...cxd5?! 15 $\mathbb{E}c1$ would favour White but now this knight has an eye on e3, f4 and b4. After 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ White has:

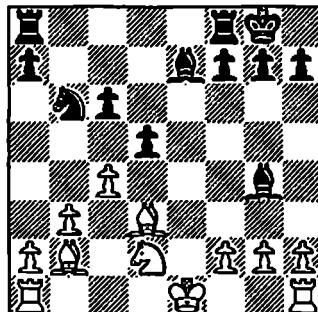
a) 15 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ was tried in L.Gurevich-A.Ivanov, St Martin 1992. Now 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 19 g4 $\mathbb{Q}c2+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 21 $\mathbb{G}f5$ $\mathbb{E}d8!$ is good for Black.

b) White could prefer 15 $\mathbb{A}c1$ but again Black's thoughts are not of passive defence, e.g. 15... $\mathbb{E}d8?$ 16 a3 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ with sufficient counterplay in Akhmilovskaya-Madl, Manila Women's Olympiad 1992.

12... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

The natural try to bring 'positional' factors to the fore is 14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$, but this is again met by 14... $\mathbb{E}fe8!$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 17 $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ when the active bishop on d4 secures at least equal chances.

14...d5!



15 f3?!

This weakening of the e3-square has been rightly criticised. White's problem is that 15 0-0 is strongly countered by 15... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ and 15 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}b4?$ is also embarrassing, e.g. 16 f3 $\mathbb{E}ad8?$ 17 $\mathbb{F}xg4$ $\mathbb{E}fe8+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 19 a3 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ with good play for Black in both cases.

White should try 15 h3? $\mathbb{Q}h5$, but after 16 g4 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ Black should add the f-file to his arsenal by 17... $\mathbb{F}xg6!$ when 18 cxd5 can be met even by 18... $\mathbb{Q}b4?$ Again the overall suspicion is that Black has sufficient counter-chances.

15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 16 0-0 $\mathbb{E}fd8$ 17 $\mathbb{E}fd1$ a5?!

An attempt to play for more than the comfortable but rather drawish 17... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 18 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 20 $\mathbb{E}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 21 $\mathbb{E}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d4+$.

18 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ a4 19 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ cxd5 21 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ d4 23 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{E}ac8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d3?$

24 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ dx e 25 $\mathbb{E}e1!$ gave some drawing chances.

24...f5 25 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\mathbb{E}c2$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}xb2$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{E}c2$ 28 f4 h8 29 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

The prospect of doubled rooks on the seventh rank gives Black a great advantage. 31 $\mathbb{Q}e6?$ $\mathbb{E}xa2!$ 32 $\mathbb{E}b1$ axb3 33 $\mathbb{E}dd1??$ $\mathbb{E}xa6$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}a4$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}b4$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}b5$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{E}c4$ 0-1

Summary

8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ is very much linked with Black pushing his a-pawn up the board. My favourite version of this idea, 9... $\mathbb{W}e6$, enables the king's bishop to develop actively and avoids the 'one-track mind' opening of the a-file. I do not see much future for White in Game 17, but Game 18 looks like the area for research. Although 9... $\mathbb{W}e6$ can also be associated with a central strategy, neither Game 19 nor 21 looks fully satisfactory for Black.

Despite Black's successes with 9... $\mathbb{A}b7$, there seems to be no clear route to equality in this line. In Game 22 it looks as if Black should not be able to generate enough play to counteract his disturbingly offside pieces, but surprisingly, concrete analysis seems to suggest that he can. So the theoretical vote goes reluctantly to 11 a4!? (Game 23).

9... $a5$ is playable, when again the results are a poor basis for judgement. My vote would go to White's play in Game 26, until the awful howler on move 13.

Finally, there is no disguising my special affection for the active 9... $d6$!?. My hunch is that problems will come from 12 f3, but as yet White has not proved an advantage.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

9... $\mathbb{W}e6$

9... $\mathbb{A}b7$ (D)

10 b3

10... $a5$

11 $\mathbb{A}b2$ – Game 22; 11 a4 – Game 23

10...0-0-0 – Game 24

10 h4 – Game 25

9... $a5$

10 $\mathbb{W}e4$ – Game 26; 10 g3 – Game 27

9... $d6$ – Game 28

10 b3 e5

10... $\mathbb{A}b4$ – Game 19

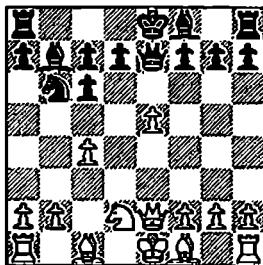
10... $\mathbb{A}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{A}b2$ 0-0 (D)

12 0-0-0 – Game 20; 12 g3 – Game 21

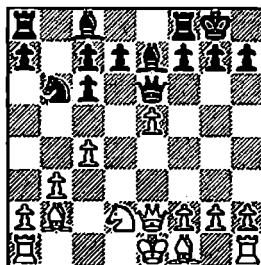
11 $\mathbb{A}b2$ a4 (D) 12 $\mathbb{W}e3$

12 g3 – Game 17

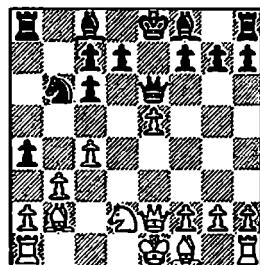
12... $\mathbb{A}b4$ – Game 18



9... $\mathbb{A}b7$



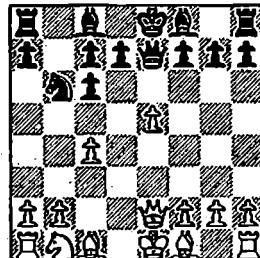
11...0-0



11...a4

CHAPTER FOUR

Main Line with 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$: White's 9th move alternatives



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$

In this chapter we consider White's alternatives to 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ in the 9... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ main line. Two moves are of interest: 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (Games 29 and 30) and 9 g3 (Games 31 and 32).

Game 29 Ljubojevic-Spassky Montreal 1979

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$?

White can react with considerably more venom than here to this inaccurate move (see the next chapter). For our purposes here, the position after White's ninth move is the focus of interest.

7 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$?!

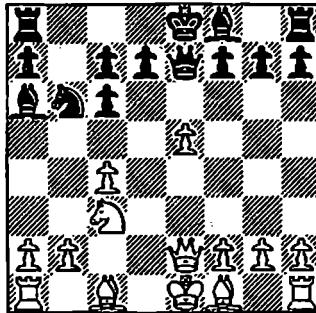
see following diagram

9...g6 is the subject of the next game.

10 $\mathbb{W}e4$

This game has been established theory for a long time, and hence Black's ninth move has looked like a most reliable choice. This begs the question over the recent resurgence of interest in 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$, and

on Black's interest in a range of other moves.



One recent outing for the logical alternative 10 b3? might offer a clue, although it poses at least as many questions as it answers. If we look back to Chapter 1, we will recall that the combination of the moves ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ is regarded, with good reason, as favouring White, since both moves represent something of a concession. However, Black has compensation here. White's knight on c3 looks rather incongruous, because it impedes White's natural support of his e5-pawn by $\mathbb{Q}b2$. It is around the weakness of this pawn, and indeed the possibility of White sacrificing it to emphasise Black's rather

clumsy pieces, on which the assessment of 10 b3 will depend. As yet practice has thrown up only one example: 10...0-0-0 (10...g6?! 11 Qe4!) 11 Bb2 and now:

a) 11...g5! looks logical, preparing ...Bg7 while cutting out f2-f4, a familiar idea from Chapter 1. Still, the weakened squares on f6 and f5 are quite a serious drawback, e.g. 12 Qe4 (12 g3?! Bg7 13 f4 gxg4 14 gxg4 f6 is not a very stable defence of the e5-pawn) 12...Bg7 13 Qf6 (also after 13 Qg3 Bb4+ 14 Bd2 Bxd2+ 15 Bxd2 d6 16 Qf5 Bxe5 17 Bxe5 dxg5+ 18 Bc2 Bb8 19 h4!) White has some compensation based on the weak pieces and pawns bunched on Black's queenside, and his own well-posted knight) 13...Bb4+ 14 Bd2 Bxd2+ 15 Bxd2 d6 (15...d5?! is now well met by 16 c5) 16 Bc2 and White's superior minor pieces offer him some advantage - Wells.

b) 11...Be8! and now:

b1) 12 Qe4?! is worthy of attention, as again there is an argument for White to sacrifice the e-pawn and play to his strengths. Thus after 12...f6?! 13 0-0-0 fxe5 14 Bg4! Be6 15 Be2 I quite like White's chances since Black's task in developing his remaining pieces is by no means straightforward. 12...d5?! therefore seems better when 13 Bg4+ Bd7 14 Bxd7+ Bxd7 15 cxd5 Bb4+ 16 Bd1 Bxf1 17 Bxf1 cxd5 18 Bg5 Bxe5?! 19 Bxe5 f6 looks about equal to me.

b2) 12 f4 f6 13 0-0-0 fxe5 14 Bxe5 Bxe5 15 fxe5 Axe5 16 c5 (bearing in mind the now familiar arguments concerning the status of the bishop on a6, White could also seek compensation in simple development by 16 g3, followed possibly by Bh3; still, my suspicion is that he would be struggling to prove a full pawn's worth) 16...Bxf1 17 cxb6 Bxg2 18 bxa7 Bb7 19 Ba4 (19 Bbg1?! Bh3 20 Bc4 Be2!) 19...Bd5 (19...Be2!) 20 Bhg1 Bxd1+ 21 Bxd1 Bf3+ 22 Bd2 c5 23 Bxg7 (23 Bg3!

Bc6 24 Bxg7 was a much better chance) 23...Bg8 24 Bg3 Bxg7 25 Bxf3 Bd6 26 Bh3 Bxa7 and Black went on to win the ending in Ibraev-Obukhov, Russian Cup, Ekaterinburg 1997.

10...We6! 11 b3 Bb4 12 Bd2 Bxe3!

Black removes the protection from the queen on e4, and thus prepares the way for a freeing break which solves his problems at a stroke.

13 Bxc3 d5! 14 Bf3!

Ljubojevic's keen positional judgement tells him that any (fading) hopes for an initiative must rest upon keeping the abishop on the board, and, even at the expense of a pawn, hoping to prove that Black's pieces are somewhat tangled. In fact, the exchange on d5 favours Black whose knight is much better able to support a constructive plan (the advance of the c- and d-pawns) than White's c3-bishop. Thus 14 cxd5 cxd5 15 Bb4 Bxf1 and now:

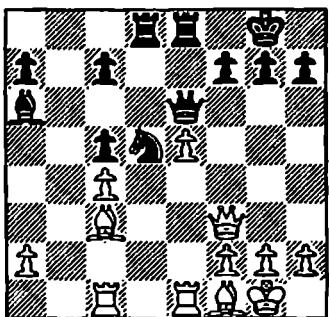
a) 16 Bxf1 does little more than add the king to White's list of problems. Black should of course continue 16...Bd7! A measure of the positional resources at Black's disposal here is the qualified success of my miserable 16...a5? 17 Bc5 Bd7 18 Bxc7, only at which point I realised that my intended 18...Ba6+? 19 Bg1 Bc8 does not win the bishop since the a-pawn hangs! Remarkably after 18...0-0 19 Bd6 Bfc8 20 Bxe6 fxe6 21 Bd4 Bc2 22 g3 Bb8! Black has full compensation anyway, with active rooks, a superior minor piece and quite an aesthetic structure, as in K.Grosar-Wells, Arco open 1996.

b) 16 Bxf1 Bd7! 17 0-0-0 c5 18 Bb7 Bb6! and Black is better.

14...dxc4 15 Be2 0-0 16 0-0 Bxd8 17 Bfe1 Bfe8 18 Bac1 c6 19 Bf1 Bd5 20 Bxc4

see following diagram

20...Bb4!



The last serious chance to go wrong. Black takes advantage of the threat to fork on a2 to tidy up his structure. If 20... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xc3$ $\mathbb{R}d4$ then White has 22 $\mathbb{W}a3!$ (a critical square to which access is denied in the game) and all of Black's queenside pawns start to feel the pinch.

21 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $cxb4$ 22 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

22... $\mathbb{W}b6!$ 23 c5 $\mathbb{W}a5$ would give Black fully adequate play.

Game 30
Van der Wiel-Grabarczyk
European Team Ch., Pula 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ g6?!

A radically different approach from the plan seen in the previous games. If White does not act quickly, Black plans simply ... $\mathbb{Q}g7$, ...O-O and at some stage ...d7-d6, which acquires some potency in conjunction with the attempt to force a weakening of the long diagonal by ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$. This mode of development has, as we shall see, come into its own against 9 b3 too, and it is not quite clear to me why it has as yet been almost completely neglected as an answer to the main line 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$. The possible transposition adds extra importance to this game.

I suspect that John Van der Wiel's ap-

proach was the main reason that Black had previously been reticent. It looks dangerous, but once Black makes the conceptual breakthrough that a check on f6 is not the end of the world, it leads to a fairly unclear tussle.

10 $\mathbb{Q}e4$

The plan outlined above comes into play quite smoothly against a standard development by White, e.g. 10 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 f4 O-O 12 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (if 13 O-O $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$ White will not receive full compensation) 13...f5! 14 exf6 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ and the coming ... $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ will hit White's vulnerable and overworked queen with unpleasant force.

10... $\mathbb{W}e6!$

Much better than 10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ when after 11 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 12 exf6 $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ the f6-pawn will be a constant source of irritation even without the queens on the board.

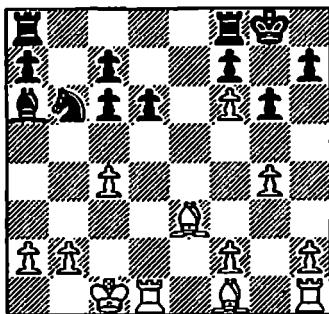
11 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

It is far from obvious that the check on f6 does little but send Black's king towards the relative safety of the queenside. Indeed, Van der Wiel-G.Garcia, Wijk aan Zee B 1996, saw 11 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 13 b3 d5! 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (the problem is that after 14 O-O-O?! $\mathbb{Q}a3+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$ it is suddenly Black who enjoys the role of attacker) 14...dxc4! 15 $\mathbb{W}d2+$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17 O-O h5 18 bxc4 $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ 19 a4 $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ when the weakness of c4 is just as important as any attack White can generate, not least because the exchange of light-squared bishops will be welcome to Black.

11... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 13 exf6 O-O 14 O-O-O $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe6?!$

After this if anything it is White who has some trouble holding the balance, since it is not always so convenient to defend the f6-pawn. Much better is the clever 15 $\mathbb{W}e3!$, threatening $\mathbb{W}h6$ and planning to answer 15... $\mathbb{W}xf6?!$ by 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ when White's attack on the dark squares

will develop almost automatically. The main positional point is that after 15... $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ the pawn on f6 remains an asset, an obstacle to Black developing his king, and maybe also supporting a rook invasion on e7 under the right circumstances. The tactical point is that if 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc4?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}h6$, threatening 18 b3, wins material. Hence Black should play 16...d6 when Mikhalevski offers the excellent idea 17 g4!?, which I would be inclined to mark more generously.



Again there is a positional and a tactical dimension to consider. White's move confers an admirable priority on the battle for the long light-squared diagonal. The weaker alternative, 17 b3?! for example would be simply too slow, since by 17...c5! 18 g4 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ Black would effect a very healthy regrouping. 17 g4! threatens 18 b3 after which Black will yet again be left with the 'problem minor pieces' which have been a running theme in these first few chapters. Of course, the tactical side is important too. Thus from the diagram, Black is well advised to try 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ although after 18 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 20 $\mathbb{R}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 21 $\mathbb{H}e1!$ (Wells) White is definitely for preference, especially as here in reply to 21... $\mathbb{H}e8$?! the aforementioned use of the f6-pawn by 22 $\mathbb{H}e7$ really is in the air.

15...fxe6 16 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ d6 17 c5

There is no longer a way to keep Black with a 'bad' bishop on a6. Thus if 17 b3 c5! (17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$?) would represent quite unnecessary greed, since 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 20 $\mathbb{H}he1$ keeps Black tied up; as so often in this opening, the message, particularly for Black, is first to give priority to finding decent scope for the full army) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 20 $\mathbb{H}he1$ $\mathbb{H}ae8$, when Black has no serious weaknesses and can patiently turn his attention to the f6-pawn.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 18 $\mathbb{H}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 19 $\mathbb{H}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 20 $\mathbb{H}e4$ a5 21 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{H}fb8$ 22 $\mathbb{H}c1$ $\mathbb{H}a6$ 23 a3 ½-½

With the powerful knight on d5, and the need for White's bishop to guard f6, Black could have considered continuing the struggle for a little longer.

Game 31
Socko-Grabarczyk
Polish Ch., Sopot 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 b3 g6!?

9...a5 is seen in the next game.

10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$

White can also put this piece on a3, using the embarrassed position of Black's knight to 'gain' the preparatory a2-a4 for free. 10 a4 a5 (there is no 10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$? because after 11 a5 the knight is trapped, while the rook on a1 can run away from attack) 11 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ c5 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 f4 f6? 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$!, as in Van der Wiel-Piket, Dutch Championship 1992, and Black lost not only pawns, but all the dynamism in his position too. Note that in the event of 14... $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 15 exf6+ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 16 fxg7 $\mathbb{H}e8$? White has 17 $\mathbb{W}e8+$ winning the house. A terrible tactical blunder in a strange and rich position. Instead I like the position after 13... $\mathbb{Q}b7$! 14 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 0-0-0) 14...d6 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ g5! White's pressure on c5

renders this the most thematic way for Black to undermine the white centre. The apparently logical 13...0-0 is less efficient since after 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ d6 15 g3! (Wells) it is difficult for Black to continue chipping away at White's centre. For example, if Black plays 15... $\mathbb{A}b7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{R}ad8$, to remove the pressure from c5, then a subsequent ...d6xe5 can generally be answered by f4-f5! when as so often, White's compensation is to be found in the lack of scope of Black's minor pieces.

10... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d6! 12 f4 0-0 13 g3 dx e5 14 $\mathbb{Q}g2$

Positionally this is beyond reproach, but Black's next reveals an important tactical point.

It is understandable that the alternative 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ did not attract White, since line 'b' below is hardly a resounding triumph for his opening strategy. However, it may have been objectively preferable. I hope the following are instructive:

a) 14... $\mathbb{Q}g4?$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xg4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e2!$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ $\mathbb{R}fe8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xc8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ when Black's apparently more active forces are unable to undertake any action to prevent his positional weaknesses coming to the fore.

b) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 16 fxe5 $\mathbb{R}e8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{R}xe5+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{R}ae8$ 20 $\mathbb{R}xe5$ $\mathbb{R}xe5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ and White's policy of colourless liquidation has led to an end-game where Black's familiar queenside deficiencies provide White with enough compensation. The position is very drawish.

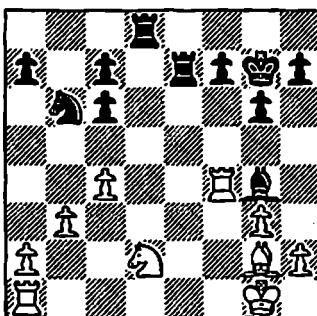
14... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ 15 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{R}ae8$ 16 0-0 exf4

16... $\mathbb{W}d6?$ was worth considering. The exchange of queens helps to clarify the nature of White's entirely positional compensation for the pawn.

17 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ $\mathbb{R}xe7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 19 $\mathbb{R}xf4$ $\mathbb{R}d8?$

A very interesting, and far-sighted,

choice. After the simple retreat 19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ White has 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ with a rather optimal set-up, while Black has both his structural weaknesses and passive pieces. The text is bold. It may be well known that a rook and pawn come into their own against two pieces as the material on the board is reduced. Still, that this should be sufficient here to give him the advantage, the ugly weakness of the c-pawns notwithstanding, shows judgement of a high level. Of course, if White does not go for the game continuation then the text is an unambiguous and significant increase in Black's activity.



20 c5!

Korchnoi marks this '!', but I would have to argue that it is simply necessary.

20... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ 21 $\mathbb{R}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 22 $\mathbb{R}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ f5!

It was an important element of Black's design that White had to recapture on e4 with the knight, and that this piece would then be kicked about, clearing the files for his rooks. If White's knight could reach a tastier outpost, say c4, it could all be a very different story.

24 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h8 25 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{R}e2$ 26 a3

26 $\mathbb{Q}f1?$ looks like a better try. After the text, White is left with little choice but to trade one pair of rooks, and moreover to exchange one of his own healthy queenside pawns for one of Black's less

beautiful c-pawns. The rest is of limited relevance to us, although Black's technique, particularly the strategy of restricting his opponent's minor pieces (see for instance move 34) is instructive.

26... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 27 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{E}xe1+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{E}d1$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{E}b1$ 30 b4 $\mathbb{E}b3$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{E}xa3$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}a2+$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}xh2$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ g5!

Much cleaner than 34... $\mathbb{E}h1$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{E}b1$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}d5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{E}xb4$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ (Hecht) when the c-pawn offers White serious counter-chances.

35 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ h5! 37 c8 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{E}h3$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ h4 41 g4 $\mathbb{Q}xg4!$ 42 $\mathbb{Q}g2$

42 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{E}h2+$ 43 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}a2$ lets the rook out, and is thus no improvement.

42... $\mathbb{E}g3$ 43 b5 $\mathbb{E}xg2+$ 44 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ g3 45 $\mathbb{Q}c4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 46 b6 $\mathbb{E}xb6$ 47 $\mathbb{Q}xb6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 48 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 49 $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 50 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ c5 51 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 52 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ c4 53 $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$

0-1

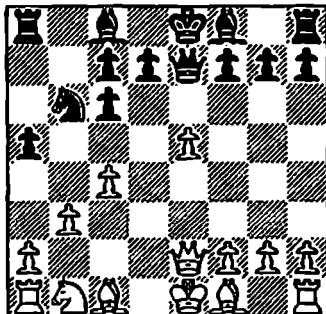
A game full of interesting, often surprising ideas, and of theoretical importance with implications which go beyond 9 b3.

Game 32

Thorhallsson-S.Pedersen

Nordic Grand Prix, Torshavn 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 b3 a5



This move is of course the most logical response to the fianchetto.

10 $\mathbb{Q}b2!$?

In recommending 9...a5?!, Shirov gave the slightly excitable note 10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ c5 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a4 12 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ with a clear advantage for Black. This assessment looks about right. The decentralisation of White's pieces does his position more harm than he can recoup in inconvenience to the black king, and precisely for this reason, the main line here is preferable.

10...a4 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{axb}3$ 12 $\mathbb{axb}3$ $\mathbb{E}xa1+$ 13 $\mathbb{E}xa1$ $\mathbb{W}a3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}a5$

The similarity with Game 22 is uncanny. On the whole the slight differences look favourable for Black. Not so much that White misses the move f2-f4, rather that Black has a wider choice of how best to use his queen's bishop.

16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d5 17 $\mathbb{W}c2$

17 exd6? 0-0! is dangerous for White's king.

17... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

A better square than the b7 of Game 22 for sure, but I would have been tempted to throw in 17... $\mathbb{Q}g4+?$ first, since the pin would be annoying after 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$. Black has 18... $\mathbb{dx}c4$ 19 $\mathbb{bx}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}a4+?$ for example. Also if 18 f3 $\mathbb{Q}e6$, White loses the simple option he uses in the game.

18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{dx}c4$ 19 $\mathbb{bx}c4$ $\mathbb{W}a4+!$

It seems strange that Black should feel that his king is the more vulnerable and hence that he must seek the exchange of queens. However, whilst White's superior structure should count for something, his bishop on a1 is a problem and he never threatens to make real progress.

20 $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ c5 22 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 23 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 24 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 27 $\mathbb{E}xc3$ $\mathbb{E}d4$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ g6 29 f4 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 31 g4 h6 32 h3 f8 33 exf8+ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 34 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 37 $\mathbb{E}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 38 $\mathbb{E}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 39 $\mathbb{E}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ½-½

Summary

This chapter poses no great threat to Black. Against 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ Game 29 remains the classic and adequate route to equality. I hope though that the reader will agree that the rich strategic ideas, not to mention surprises, surrounding the more enterprising 9...g6 (Game 30) justify its inclusion. 9 b3 seems to invite the 9...a5 of Game 32, but 9...g6 also looks quite okay. This is no great surprise. 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ is best answered by 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ (Chapter 3).

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ (D)

9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

9 b3 (D)

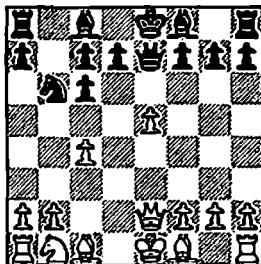
9...g6 – Game 31

9...a5 – Game 32

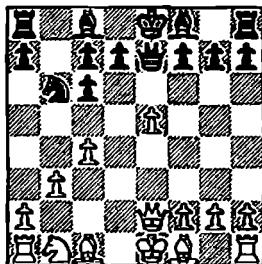
9... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ (D)

9...g6 – Game 30

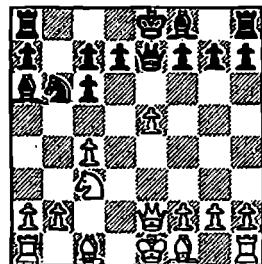
10 $\mathbb{W}e4$ – Game 29



8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$



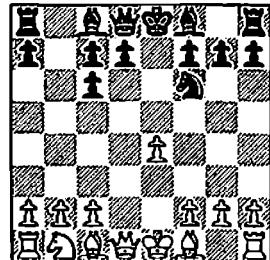
9 b3



9... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

CHAPTER FIVE

4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6: Early deviations for both sides



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6

Until now we have concentrated only on the central debate in the 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ line, the question of whether after 8 c4 Black defends by a pin (Chapters 1-2) or retreats the knight on d5 (Chapters 3-4). Here we shall examine attempts by both sides to side-step this highly theoretical material.

It is worth emphasising that the chapter heading mentions the recapture 5...bxc6 for good reason. Although later in the book, the structure arising from capturing on c6 with d-pawn will come into its own, this can only be recommended in situations where Black has the tactical means to avoid the immediate exchange of queens, and thus use the d-file in the opening struggle. Here 5...dxc6?! is not viable since after 6 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$! $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ any of 7 f3, 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ or even 7 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ will give White a very pleasant endgame. Black has no compensation for the doubled pawns *on his majority side* (see the Introduction) and a rather inconvenient king's position into the bargain.

Eighth move alternatives for Black

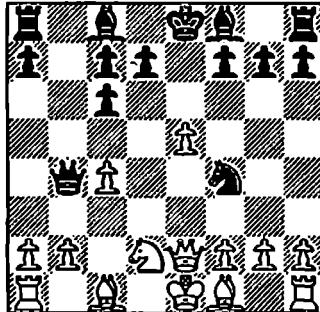
after 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4

Black's options on move eight, needless to say, are greatly curtailed by the threat to

the knight on d5! 8... $\mathbb{Q}b4?$ makes no sense at all, since the knight merely invites White to kick it to a very poor square by 9 a3. This move is only effective when c2 is undefended (see the notes to Black's ninth move in Game 12). Since 8... $\mathbb{W}c5?$ looks clumsy, this leaves the check on b4 which ties in with the 'strategy of disruption' and deserves serious attention.

Game 33 Smagin-Murey Vienna open 1991

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b4+?$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$



This interesting route for the knight, which is heading for e6, is the idea behind the check on b4. This would, incidentally, also be the reply to 9 Qd2.

10 We3?

An interesting and very logical alternative to the more common 10 We4. The basic point is not much more complicated than the belief that d3 is the optimal square for the bishop, and hence the desire to avoid a fork on c5.

After 10 We4 Qe6 White's most promising tries are:

a) 11 Qe2 Kb7 12 0-0 c5 13 We3 Qd4 14 Qd3 Bb6 15 Eb1 Ae7 16 f4 0-0-0 A.Grosar-Gabriel, Portoroz 1993. White has some chances to play for b2-b4, and the possibility of challenging Black on the long diagonal with Ae4 if need be. On the other hand, compared with many variations of the Scotch, Black has been conspicuously successful in finding roles for his minor pieces.

b) 11 g3? has only been played once, as far as I can see, but since development by ...Ab7 and ...c6-c5 figures large in Black's development plans, it looks very logical. Pasman-Shvidler, Beersheva 1984, continued 11...Ab7 12 Ag2 0-0-0 13 a3 Bb6 14 0-0 Qd4?! (this does not feel right; surely he had to try 14...c5 15 Bxb7+ Bxb7 16 Axib7+ Bxb7 17 Ae4 Ac7 18 Ae3, although this too gives White a nice initiative) 15 We2 Aa6 16 Eb1 Ac5 17 b3 Ae8 18 Ab2 Bd3 19 Bd1! (Black's queen is vulnerable, not active and hence should not be exchanged) 19...h5 20 b4 with a crushing advantage.

10...Qe6 11 Qd3 Bb6 12 Wg3 d5?!

Strategically a very strange decision, since Black is in no position to pressurise the c4-pawn to the degree of forcing White to exchange on d5. Thus the text serves largely to give White a free hand on the kingside. This looks like a position where the logical way was to play 12...d6!,

challenging White's e-pawn and showing a willingness to play with doubled isolated c-pawns for the sake of gaining time on White's queen.

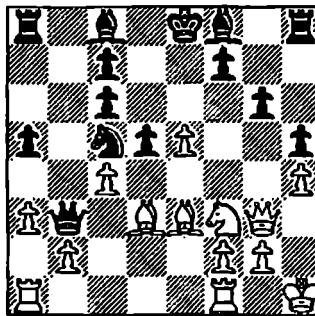
13 0-0 a5 14 Wh1 h5? 15 h4 ge

The needs of pawn play and those of piece play do not always coincide. Black's strategy here is a fine preparation for defending against the advance of White's f-pawn. He plans the effective blockading manoeuvre ...Qg7-f5. Unfortunately, when White switches to attack with the pieces, he finds fruitful territory in his opponent's pawn weaknesses. In particular the sacrifice Qxg6 is very much in the air.

16 Qf3! Qc5

Black needs to be able to answer Qxg6 with ...Bg8, otherwise his kingside is simply smashed. For this reason 16...Qg7? 17 Qxg6! is not possible.

17 Ae3! Bb4 18 a3 Bb3



19 Qxg6!

Now White correctly assesses that he is able to open enough lines against his opponent's king, ...Bg8 or not. White's 21st move is a typical 'clearance' sacrifice, freeing the e5-square for the knight, and is fundamental to his attack.

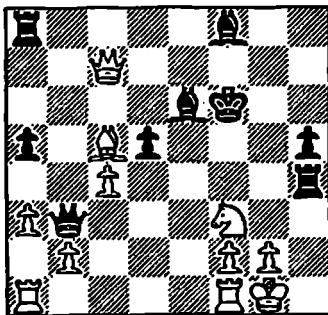
19...Bg8 20 Qxf7+ Bxf7 21 e6+! Qxe6 22 Wxc7+ Bg6 23 Qe5+ Bf5 24 Qxc6 Bg4?!

A resourceful defence against We5+ and

$\mathbb{W}g5$, but the position is too far gone to be rescued.

25 $\mathbb{A}xc5$ $\mathbb{B}xh4+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}f3?$

A careless slip, since 28 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ would have won much more easily. Black's response is spectacular, and White shows common sense in leaving the queen well alone.



28... $\mathbb{W}xf3!$ 29 $\mathbb{A}xf8!$

29 $gxf3?$ is met by 29... $\mathbb{A}xc5$ when the threat of check on g8 guarantees practical chances for Black.

29... $\mathbb{E}g4$ 30 $\mathbb{W}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 31 $\mathbb{W}h7+!$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 32 $\mathbb{A}fe1+$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 33 $\mathbb{E}ad1+$ 1-0

After 33... $\mathbb{A}xc4$ White will mate with 34 $\mathbb{E}c1+$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 35 $\mathbb{W}b7+$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 36 $\mathbb{W}c6+$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 37 $\mathbb{W}c2+$ $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 38 b3 mate.

Eighth move alternatives for White after 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Game 34
Schoellmann-A.Mikhailishin
Bled open 1995

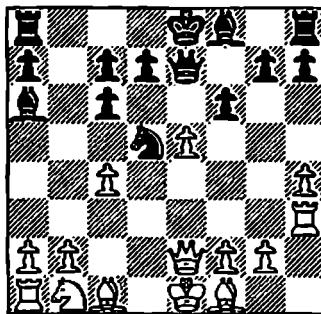
1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{A}xc6$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

This development in conjunction with the standard advance c2-c4 is already familiar from Game 12, where one clear problem was that the lack of cover for the c2-

square afforded Black the chance for an easier organisation of his minor pieces than usual. Here White has a fresh idea.

First a word on 8 h4?, which can lead to some of the most outlandish positions in the whole Scotch Game. The point is that White can bring his rook into play via h3. The ever-creative John Van der Wiel gave this system his best shot for a while, but in the cold light of day, the element of surprise must be its principal asset:

a) 8...f6? 9 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 10 $\mathbb{R}h3?$



Extraordinarily, White's idea is to attack the bishop on a6. 10...fxe5 (10...0-0-0?) looks sensible, when Canda-G.Garcia, Bayamo 1989, was a huge mess after 11 $\mathbb{E}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{E}a5!$ d5 13 a3 $\mathbb{A}xc4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{A}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d3+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ with sufficient compensation) 11 $\mathbb{E}a3!$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}xh4$ 13 g3 $\mathbb{W}d4$ 14 $\mathbb{E}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 16 a3 $\mathbb{W}e7$ was going just a bit too far in Van der Wiel-Timman, Amsterdam 1987, but 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ is thematic and offers compensation.

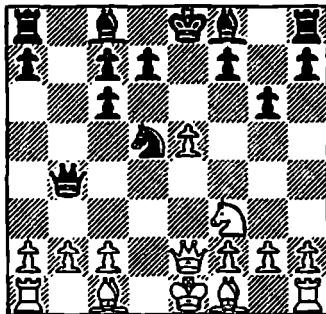
b) 8... $\mathbb{W}e6$ is a recent idea which worked very well in its debut. After 9 g3 $\mathbb{Q}b4?$ 10 a3? (10 c4 had to be tried) 10... $\mathbb{W}d5!$ 11 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 12 c4 $\mathbb{W}a5$ (perhaps 12... $\mathbb{A}xc4?$ was better still since after 13 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}c2+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xal$ 16 b3 $\mathbb{E}b8!$ White can only catch the al-knight at a price, e.g. 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b2$

$\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 20 $\mathbb{B}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ when Black has netted a lot of pawns; of course, rooks come into their own against two minor pieces in the ending in any case, so I definitely prefer Black here) 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0-0 14 $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e4$ f5 17 $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ White's king had the greater cause for anxiety in Diaz-Arencibia, Cuban Championship 1996.

8... $\mathbb{g}6!$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}f3?$

9 c4 $\mathbb{Q}a6!$ was Game 11, which is known to be very satisfactory for Black.

9... $\mathbb{W}b4+!$



A very fine retort. Black exploits the tactic 10 c3 $\mathbb{Q}xc3!$ to interfere with the flow of White's game.

10 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{E}b8!$ 11 c4

Since Black is now able to effect the familiar ... $\mathbb{Q}b4-c6$ manoeuvre, under the favourable circumstances of pressuring White's e-pawn at the end, I would have considered the more modest 11 c3? $\mathbb{W}e4+$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$.

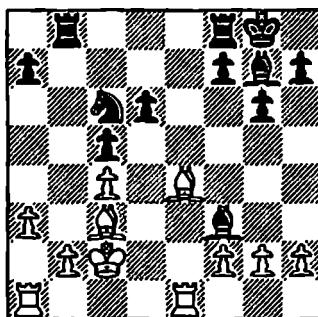
11... $\mathbb{W}xd2+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ c5!

This c6-square needs to be made available without delay. 13... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$ 14 a3 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 15 b4 would utterly change the complexion of the position.

14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 15 a3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6 17 $\mathbb{K}e1$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 19 $\mathbb{exd6}$ $\mathbb{cx d6}$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$

Although White's light-squared bishop

is sitting pretty on e4, it is not hitting anything. Rather, the central dark squares have become the key battleground. Hence this exchange can be characterised as trading a piece which cannot otherwise participate in this struggle, for a key player.



21 gxf3

After the text Black's excellent minor pieces will dominate the show, and White's far from aesthetic f-pawns will add to his misery. Mikhalchishin gives 21 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ as preferable, but still clearly favouring Black after 21... $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 23 $\mathbb{B}ab1$ $\mathbb{E}fe8!$ The resulting position is instructive. White has no pawns which would be formally classifiable as textbook weaknesses. Nonetheless, the defence of both b2 and f2 would be a full-time job, leaving him totally passive.

21... $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}b3$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 24 $\mathbb{E}ad1$ $\mathbb{E}fb8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ h5 27 $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 29 $\mathbb{E}xb3$ $\mathbb{E}xb3$ 30 h4 $\mathbb{E}xb2$ 31 $\mathbb{E}d3$ $\mathbb{E}xf2$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 33 $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e2+$ 0-1

Sixth move alternatives for Black after 6 e5

Game 35
Lautier-Beliavsky
Biel 1992

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{exd4}$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

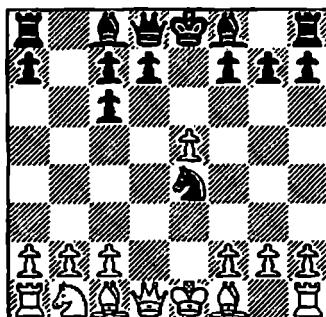
7 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e4?$

This move has enjoyed a small but steady following. At first glance the e4-square looks like a less than stable post for the piece, but in fact Black's knight has convenient ways to return to the fray with tempo, e.g. 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ or 7 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ Hence the motivation for Lautier's unhappy choice, and my preference for 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ (Game 36).

Weaker is 6... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ which structurally may be expected to lead to play similar to those of the first four chapters. The crucial difference here is that both sides have freer development, unhindered by an unnatural queen position. This definitely favours White, e.g.

a) 7 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}h4!$ gives Black a surprising measure of counterplay which can be avoided by...

b) 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ d6 8 exd6 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 9 0-0 $\mathbb{W}h4$ 10 g3 $\mathbb{W}h3$ 11 $\mathbb{E}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ was Arnold-Rausis, Germany 1996, when White repeated with 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3?$, but either 13 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ or 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ look very promising.



7 $\mathbb{W}d4?$!

One of those cases in chess theory where a dubious novelty gets a very short innings by virtue of the extraordinarily active and unrelenting punishment meted out by its first adversary.

In my opinion Game 36 probably deals with White's best possibility, 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$, but

several other moves have been tried here:

a) 7 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ 8 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6? 10 0-0 g6 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ dx5 12 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 $\mathbb{W}e4$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{W}a4$ a6, as in Kamsky-Korchnoi, Buenos Aires 1993, when Black's excellent development and pressure on the long diagonal compensates for the pawn minus. Several similar games have confirmed this assessment.

b) 7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ d5 8 exd6 cxd6 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ was played in Timman-Korchnoi, Sarajevo 1984. Now 9... $\mathbb{W}a5+$ looks best, since after 10 c3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 c4 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{E}b8!$ the plausible development of the queen has been achieved 'for free' compared with the immediate 9... $\mathbb{Q}f6$.

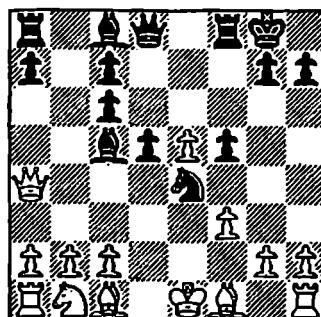
7...f5! 8 f3?

In view of the coming blitz, 8 exf6 would have been safer, although 8... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ gives Black easy play. Of course in this case a different seventh move was indicated.

8... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 9 $\mathbb{W}c4$ d5! 10 $\mathbb{W}a4$

10 exd6 would be neatly met by 10... $\mathbb{Q}f2+$ 11 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ + $\mathbb{Q}d7$. Black gets the chance to cause maximum irritation because everything is done with tempo.

10...0-0!



11 $\mathbb{W}xc6$

Of course 11 fxe4 fxe4 would also be extremely dangerous. Aside from his f-file problems, White's development also has a

very poor perspective.

11...Wh4+ 12 g3 Qxg3 13 hxg3 Wxg3+ 14 Qd2 Wxf3! 15 Wxc5 Whxh1

It is time to take stock, a process that will bring White little pleasure. Materially with a rook and pawn for two pieces Black does not have too much to fear. Positionally he has two clear assets: White's king, although no longer in direct danger, still impedes the mobilisation of his own pieces; and most of all Black's passed kingside pawns, which should race down the board and carry the day.

16 Wf2 Wh6+ 17 Qd1 f4 18 Wf3 c6 19 Qd2 g5 20 Qc3 g4 21 Wg2 Wh4 22 Qe1 Wg5 23 Wh1 g3 24 Qd3 h5 25 Qxd5? g2?

A bit careless. 25...Qg4+ 26 Qc1 f3+ 27 Qb1 Wxe5 was a more balanced advance of the pawns. After the text White comes admirably close to achieving some sort of blockade, and even creates a few threats of his own.

26 Qe7+ Qf7 27 Wg1 Qg4+ 28 Qc1 f3+ 29 Qb1 Wxe7 30 We3 Qe8 31 Qf2 Qf5 32 Qc4 Hd8 33 e3 h4 34 Qa2 Qe6 35 We4 Qxc4+ 36 Wxc4 h3 37 Qh4 Wd7 38 Hd1 g1W 39 Exd7 Qxd7 40 e6+ Qc7 41 e7 Qc8 42 exf8W Qxf8 43 Wb4 Wg8+ 44 b3 Kf7 45 Qf2 Wg6 46 Wc4 Qb7 47 Qg3 a5 48 Qf2 h2 49 Wc5 Qc8 50 Wc4 h1W 0-1

Game 36
Schmittiel-Gostisa
Mitropa Cup, Buk 1995

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4 Qf6 5 Qxc6 bxc6 6 e5 Qe4 7 Qd2? Qc5?

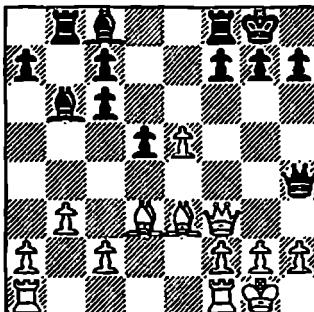
Black can also simply exchange and after 7...Qxd2 8 Qxd2 an important and instructive parting of the ways is reached:

a) 8...d6 9 Qc3! Qe6 10 exd6 is given as somewhat better for White by Miliutin. The implication of these moves is that

White prefers to avoid allowing his opponent the active option of capturing on d6 with the bishop. Hence my preference for 'c' below.

b) 8...Qe7 was understandably met by the tempting looking 9 Wg4 g6 10 Qh6 in Minasian-Kaidanov, Yerevan Olympiad 1996, which continued 10...Bb8 11 0-0 d5 12 Wg3 Qe6 13 h4 Bd4 14 Wc3 c5 15 Qg7 Eg8 16 Qf6 Qxf6 17 exf6 Wd6 18 g3 Qd7 19 Qg2 Egb8 and Black looks the more active. I would prefer the simple 9 Qd3 0-0 10 0-0 d5 11 exd6 cxd6 12 Wh5 g6 13 Wf3 with some initiative.

c) 8...d5? was the original try here, and still looks best to me. 9 Qd3 (9 exd6 Qxd6 10 Qd3 [10 Qe2?] 10...0-0 is probably okay for Black; there is a battle to get the respective queens to the h-file and White's problem is that 11 0-0 would be strongly met by 11...Wh4 when Black seizes the initiative, while if 11 Wh5 He8+ intending 12 Qe3 Qb4+ is sufficiently irritating to secure equal chances) 9...Bb8 10 b3 Wh4? (White's advantage on the dark squares was more tangible after 10...g6 11 0-0 Qg7 12 Wc1 0-0 13 Qg5 f6 14 exf6 Qxf6 15 Qxf6 Wxf6 16 We3 in Rewitz-Friis, Denmark 1992; Black has problems conveniently defending the squares c5 and a7!) 11 0-0 Qc5 12 Wf3 0-0 13 Qe3 Qb6!



Omari-Lokvenc, Varna 1962. Here White tried 14 a4 but after 14...a5 he gets

nowhere fast, as Black is not too aggrieved to recapture with the c-pawn in the event of a subsequent exchange on b6. Moreover, the advance of the a-pawn is very committal, since the potential weakness of a backward pawn on the half-open b-file effectively rules out a later advance of the c-pawn. I would prefer the advance 14 c4! immediately, followed by $\mathbb{A}ac1$, with play against the Black c-pawns and a slight edge.

8 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

The most logical follow-up. The knight protects the e-pawn and in many cases is headed for d4, trying to cramp Black's game. An alternative approach 8 g3 d5 9 exd6 cxd6 10 $\mathbb{W}e2+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ d5 12 0-0 0-0 13 $\mathbb{H}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}B3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{H}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 17 c3 did not give White anything special in Lyell-Kolar, Bled open 1997.

8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Looks rather passive, but 8...d5 9 exd6 cxd6 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 0-0 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ (White's minor piece set-up, knight on d4 and bishop on f3, is optimal for ensuring tangible pressure on Black's centre; 13...d5 14 c4! would be uncomfortable) 14 b3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c7$, as in Miliutin-Bezgodov, Krasnodar 1996, 16 c4! definitely favours White. Perhaps Black could consider 9... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$, but in comparison with the discussion of 9 exd6 in note 'c' to Black's seventh above, the presence of knights on the board looks very good news for White, be it for defending b2 or attacking c6.

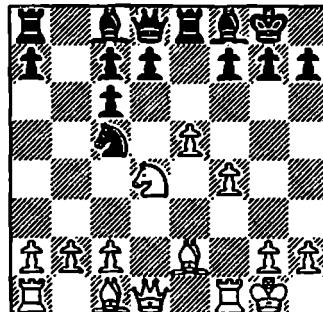
9 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{H}e8$ 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}4$

see following diagram

12... $d6?$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

12... $d6?$ may very well have been necessary to avoid imminent suffocation, but White should have seriously considered 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}B3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d5$ when

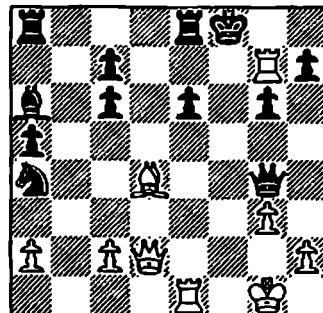
Black's follow-up is not too clear.



13... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 b4 dxe5 15 fxe5 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$

16... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$ looks a much stiffer test of White's rather romantic approach to the middlegame, intending to meet 17 b5 with 17... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

17 $\mathbb{e}6!$ fxe6 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ a5 19 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ g6 22 $\mathbb{H}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 25 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 27 $\mathbb{H}g7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 28 $\mathbb{H}e1$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 29 g3 $\mathbb{W}g4$



30 $\mathbb{H}f6!$

Black has managed to cover a possible knock-out blow on the f-file, but with White's total domination of the dark squares he has nothing to offer against $\mathbb{W}h6$.

30... $e5$ 31 $\mathbb{W}h8$ $\mathbb{W}d4+$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}d5+$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8+$ 34 $\mathbb{H}d7+$ 1-0

White's sixth move alternatives

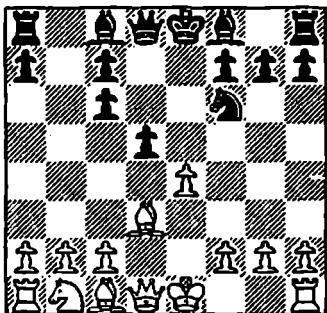
Game 37
L.Webb-Lejic
Lloyds Bank 1994

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 0-0 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Amongst White's quieter weaponry we can also find 6 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$? d5 7 exd5 cxd5 8 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 c4 0-0 12 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$, as in Sveshnikov-Morozevich, St Petersburg 1993. Black's split queenside pawns are not sufficient to cause him any real stress. Compare note 'b' to White's seventh below.

6...d5

6...d6 is the subject of the next game.



7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$?

Leading to a sharp line which still appears from time to time, and which often finds Black unaware of the very strong antidote available. 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ leads us back into the Four Knights Game, which is outside the scope of this book, but here White has other 'positional' alternatives which deserve attention:

a) 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ is most simply met by 7...dxe4 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xe4+$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xc7+$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 0-0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14 c3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$, as in Granda Zuniga-Ivkov, Havana 1985. While it would be danger-

ous to assume that the bishop pair and speedy development would always compensate for such doubled isolated c-pawns in the endgame, here it is hard for White to avoid the move c2-c3, when he is weakened on the light squares too.

b) 7 exd5 cxd5 and now:

b1) After 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 9 c4 0-0? 10 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{B}b1$ c6 Black's activity compensates for the slight weaknesses, as in Totsky-Korneev, Moscow open 1995.

b2) 8 $\mathbb{Q}b5+?$ (this looks paradoxical, but White wants to attack Black's centre with c4; interestingly, if we compare it with the note above to 6 $\mathbb{Q}d2$, it may be that the knight is better left at home!) 8... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 c4 d4 12 $\mathbb{W}d3$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}ab8$ 14 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d5+?$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ was played in Zelcic-Z.Varga, Mitropa Cup 1997. It is hard to believe that Black is seriously worse, but he has some potential weak squares on the c-file.

7... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 9 $\mathbb{W}e2$

White's problem here is that the smoother-looking 9 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ is met by 9...f6!, when the f-file will greatly increase Black's pressure.

9... $\mathbb{W}e7$!

Clearly best! Black recognises that White's bishop will form a further target. 9... $\mathbb{W}h4+?$ 10 h3 h5 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}g3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ h4 13 b4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 14 c4 dxc4 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 e6!, as in Krakops-Slutsker, Latvia 1992, by contrast, finds Black terribly overextended as White takes over the attack.

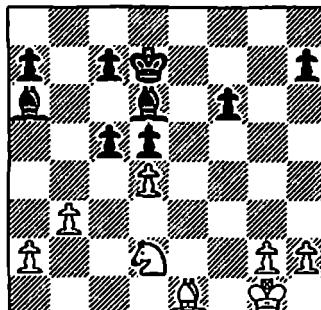
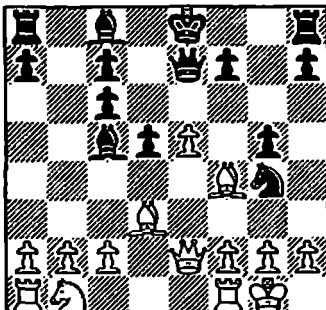
10 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ g5!

see following diagram

11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ h5 12 $\mathbb{Q}a6+?$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}e6+!$ 14 h3 $\mathbb{h}4!$ is no solution either. Black gets a ready-made attack.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6!$



This looks like a good move. It is hard to evaluate the degree of White's compensation after 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $b4!$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}a4!$, but he has glaring weaknesses on both sides of the board (the g5-pawn and c5-square in particular) and White was successful in K.Müller-Almasi, Budapest 1991.

13 f4?

After this Black is able to clarify matters. We reach an ending where White's compensation is rather meagre. 13...f6 I do not really believe White's case.

13...gxsf4 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 17 cxd3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ f6 20 d4

A sad necessity which confirms Black's predominance on the light squares.

20... $\mathbb{H}e8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{H}ab8$ 23 b3 $\mathbb{H}e4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{H}e6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{H}e8$ 26 $\mathbb{H}xe6$ $\mathbb{H}xe6$ 27 $\mathbb{H}e1$ $\mathbb{H}xe1+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ c5!

see following diagram

Once the blockade of c5 is overcome, it should be a question of time.

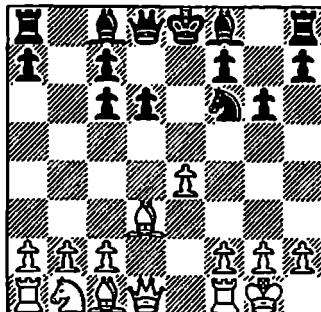
29 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ c4 31 b4 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 33 a4 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 36 g3 f5 37 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 38 h4 a6 39 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 41 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 42 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 43 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c2+$ 44 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ c3!

After this, although White makes a brave dash with the g-pawn, the winner of the race should not be in doubt.
 45 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 46 g4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 47 g5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 48 h5 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 49 g6 $\mathbb{H}xg6$ 50 $\mathbb{H}xg6$ c5 51 g7 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 52 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ cxd4 53 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ a5 54 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ 55 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 56 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 57 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ d4 0-1

Game 38
Oll-Kir.Georgiev
Groningen 1993

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6 7 0-0 g6!?

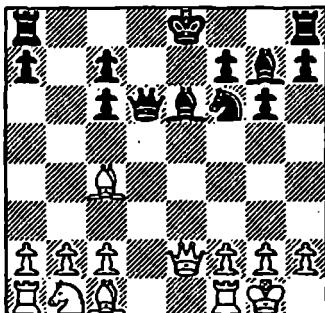
An interesting attempt to reach a rich and more complex position, denying White the chance to simplify that he had in the seventh move notes after 6...d5.



8 $\mathbb{B}e1$

The first tactical justification of Black's play is that the brutally direct 8 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 9 f4 0-0 10 e5 $dxe5$ 11 $fxe5$ fails to 11... $\mathbb{W}d4+$. White aims to play e4-e5, weakening Black's c-pawns, and prefers this square which keeps open options such as 8... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$! 9 $\mathbb{W}c3$!

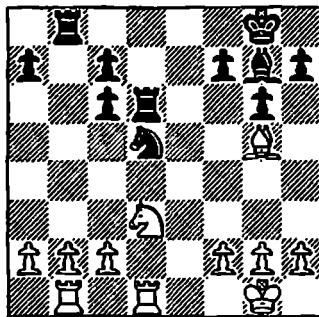
8... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 9 e5 $dxe5$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$

12... $\mathbb{Q}d5$

In general I rather like the compensation which the excellent scope of the bishop on g7 and Black's perceptible lead in development offer for his structural deficiencies. The text is logical, in line with a principle we have already outlined - when you enjoy an initiative based on active pieces, avoid exchanges, other things being equal. However, I am not convinced that they are equal! Oll gives the variation 12...0-0? 13 $\mathbb{A}xe6$ $\mathbb{E}ae8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (the greedy 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf7?$ $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ nurtures Black's activity to the point where it involves serious threats - 17... $\mathbb{E}xf2!$ for starters) 14... $\mathbb{A}xe6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}c4$ which he assesses as slightly better for White. However, the exchange of light-squared bishops has given White the new problem of defending his pawn on c2, and I would continue the analysis with 15... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ fails tactically to 16... $\mathbb{Q}b6!$ 17 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$)

19 $\mathbb{W}xb2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}xc2$) 16... $\mathbb{W}b4!$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}e2$ 19 c3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ when White will have real problems developing.

13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{E}f5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{E}ab8!$ 19 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{E}fd8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{E}d6$ 21 $\mathbb{E}ab1$



21...c5!

The only way to continue active play. The threat of ...c5-c4 forces White to weaken his hitherto impressive knight on d3.

22 c4 $\mathbb{H}6?$!

This complicates Black's task a little. 22... $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ 23 $bxc3$ $\mathbb{E}xb1$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xb1$ $\mathbb{E}xd3$ seems to equalise immediately, since White's back rank is just as weak as his opponent's.

23 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{H}xg5$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xd5$ $\mathbb{E}xd5$ 25 $cxd5$ $\mathbb{E}d8!$ 26 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ $\mathbb{E}e5$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{E}e4$ 31 $\mathbb{E}d4$ $\mathbb{E}xd4$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 34 f3 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g1$ 38 h3 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 39 a4 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 41 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ f5!

After this, White can enjoy pushing his slightly more active minor piece around a bit, but he has no way to make progress.

42 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 43 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 44 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 45 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 46 g3 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 47 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 48 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 49 g4 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 50 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 51 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Summary

Inevitably this is a rather 'bitty' chapter. The 8... $\mathbb{W}b4+$ of Game 33 does not look good enough for full equality. The game was interesting, but the note on 10 $\mathbb{W}e4$ together with the rare but logical 11 g3? may be better still.

6... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ deserves its reputation as a solid if slightly unambitious alternative to 6... $\mathbb{W}e7$. The critical line in my view is 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ d5? where on the basis of my discussion White can count on no more than a very slight edge. This needs high level tests.

6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is also a decent move, but strictly as a quiet positional weapon. The main line of Game 37 should be regarded as closed from White's viewpoint. The compensation simply is not there. However, though unpretentious, 7 exd5 and the paradoxical 8 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ lead to positions where it is no trivial matter to demonstrate complete equality for Black. Players of the black pieces chasing the full point against the peacefully inclined should give serious attention to 6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6? 7 0-0 g6 (Game 38) which seems viable and quite fun.

This concludes our discussion of 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6

6 e5

6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (D)

6...d5 - Game 37

6...d6 - Game 38

6... $\mathbb{W}e7$

6... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (D)

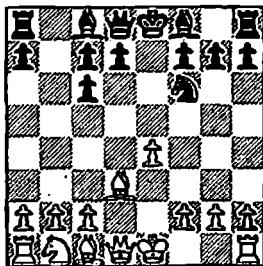
7 $\mathbb{W}d4$ - Game 35

7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ - Game 36

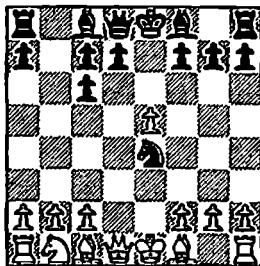
7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (D) 8 c4

8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ - Game 34

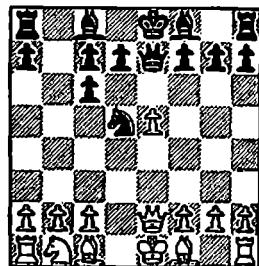
8... $\mathbb{W}b4+$ - Game 33



6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$



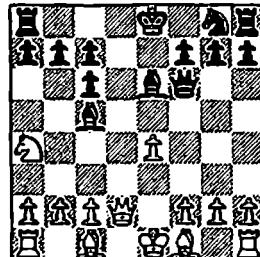
6... $\mathbb{Q}e4$



7... $\mathbb{Q}d5$

CHAPTER SIX

4... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$: Kasparov's 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$!?



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ dxc6 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{R}e8$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$

Here we are in a sense jumping in at the deep end, examining a brilliant and by no means self-explanatory idea, which Garry Kasparov sprung on Nigel Short in the 11th game of their London PCA match in 1993. This fine novelty in an old variation has been responsible for the tremendous new lease of life enjoyed by 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$!?

The question of the pawn structure which follows 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ and a subsequent ...d7xc6 was addressed in the Introduction, especially the need for Black to avoid simplification and to show compensation in terms of active development and use of the d-file. The older theory, which can be found in Chapter 7 (Game 48) generally involved Black advancing both causes by early queenside castling. 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$!, the absolute antithesis of a routine, lackadaisical development, is designed to cross this convenient plan. Black is faced with an immediate choice. Retreat the bishop to a less active diagonal (Game 39) or play 8... $\mathbb{E}d8$ (Games 40-43) by far the most popular choice, which avoids this concession, but forfeits the right to castle long.

The whole strategy of 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ is a fur-

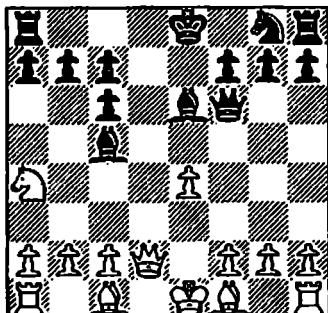
ther example of the priority given to hindering the natural development of the opponent which was identified in the Introduction as characteristic of the Scotch as a whole.

Of course there are some instances where the presence of an undefended knight on a4 is something of a drawback. What is impressive though is the number of cases where either Black is encouraged to weaken the c5-square such as to give the knight an obvious route to a better situation, or where it is able to exchange itself for Black's valuable dark-squared bishop. I do not wish to exaggerate. 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ is by no means a refutation of 7... $\mathbb{Q}e6$, and Black's defensive ideas have also been strengthened, but there is no disputing the growing tendency for Black to examine seventh move alternatives.

Game 39
Zsu.Polgar-Xie Jun
Women's World Ch., Jaen (7) 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ dxc6 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{R}e8$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$

8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is considered (by transposition) in Game 48.



8... $\mathbb{A}d6?$

Played to keep alive the possibility of castling long. The drawback of the move is not only the retreat from a fine diagonal, but the possibility that it will add extra sting to the advance of the white pawns to f4 and e5. Still, as we shall see, this requires an element of finesse on White's part. Moreover, 8... $\mathbb{A}e7$ looks very passive and can also be well met with 9 $\mathbb{W}e3?$, so I suspect that the text is the only serious alternative to 8... $\mathbb{A}d8$ (Games 40-43).

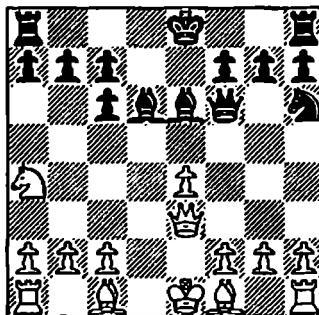
9 $\mathbb{W}e3?$

White in turn again takes Black's intention seriously. The apparently routine development 9 $\mathbb{A}d3$ can also take on a sharper turn if White answers 9...0-0-0 with the aggressive shot 10 $\mathbb{W}a5?$ Vorobjov-Najer, Moscow 1995, continued 10...b5? (not however 10... $\mathbb{W}d4?$ 11 $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{A}e7??$ 12 $\mathbb{A}c3!$ 1-0 Bertholet-Ribreau, Cannes 1995) 11 $\mathbb{W}a6+$ $\mathbb{A}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{A}c3$ $\mathbb{A}h6$ 13 h3 $\mathbb{A}c5$ 14 0-0 $\mathbb{W}e5$ 15 $\mathbb{A}e2$ g5(!) $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ – kind of teasing the crowd a little before deflating them again. Theoretically a little baffling too. I do not understand the reluctance to play the thematic 10... $\mathbb{A}b8?$, intending to answer 11 $\mathbb{A}g5$ with 11... $\mathbb{W}d4!$ or 11 $\mathbb{A}c3$ with 11...b6, when 12 $\mathbb{A}xb6$ cxb6 13 $\mathbb{A}xb6$ $\mathbb{A}d7$ is definitely not sound. This seems to confirm that the continued prevention of Black's ...0-0-0 is

the critical way.

9... $\mathbb{A}h6$

Better than 9... $\mathbb{A}e7?$ 10 f4 $\mathbb{A}g6$ 11 g3! (but not 11 e5? $\mathbb{A}xe5!$ 12 fxe5 $\mathbb{W}h4+$ when White pays for his loose knight on a4) since now White genuinely threatens both e4-e5 and f4-f5.



10 h3!

Another instance where the restriction of Black's counterplay is more urgent than routine development. The prevention of ... $\mathbb{A}h6-g4$ is standard enough that the move's second dimension, the possibility of advancing the g-pawn, not just to contain the knight but on occasion to try and win it, is quite cleverly disguised.

10...0-0

Since the note to move 11 below at least presents a serious challenge to the text, a couple of alternatives are worth a mention:

a) 10... $\mathbb{W}g6?$ (Peredy) 11 g4 0-0-0 12 $\mathbb{A}d3?$ (Wells) appears to give White good chances to consolidate, in which case I believe we can talk of a serious positional plus. Peredy gave instead 12 g5(!?) $\mathbb{A}g8$ 13 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{A}b4+$ (a classic 'disruptive move' of which I fully approve; the safest route back into the game for White's knight is now blocked off) 14 c3 $\mathbb{A}e7$ 15 h4 f5! with good counterplay. It is tempting to drive the knight back to g8, but maintaining a watertight hold on potential counterplay

with ...f7-f5 is much more to the point.

b) 10... $\mathbb{W}e7!?$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ f6 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (this permits Black's cherished long-castling, but 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 13 f4?? would run into 13...b5! and ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$; still, I would prefer not to make life quite so easy, and maybe 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 13 f4 gives an edge) 12... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 13 f4 0-0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ b6 15 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 16 c4 g5!? 17 e5!? $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ was Pavasovic-Mikhailchishin, Bled open 1996, another case of a declaration of peace just as the show starts to get interesting. The move 10... $\mathbb{W}e7$ is an interesting attempt to make a virtue out of ... $\mathbb{Q}h6$, since the following moves have a nice logic in holding back the white centre (see Chapter 7, Game 48, for an example of a similar set-up). The final moves represent a fierce battle for the e5-square. After 16...g5!? White hopes, with 17 e5, to prevent Black's piece from nestling comfortably on that square. 17...fxe5 18 f5! is a familiar enough manoeuvre, as is the antidote 18...e4! 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$, again freeing e5 for operations and guaranteeing Black fair prospects. It is for this reason that I would prefer 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$

11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ would be answered by 11... $\mathbb{Q}e5!?$, but the surprising 11 g4!?, again delaying mobilisation in the interests of targeting Black's 'knight on the rim', has been widely recommended, and is indeed very dangerous. Zsuzsa Polgar mentions 11... $\mathbb{W}h4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ when I would certainly prefer White. The only obvious drawback of 11 g4 is the danger of loosening the position while White, relatively undeveloped, also has king and queen lined up on the e-file. Hence, such a simplification is in her favour, while the knight on h6 remains a major cause for concern.

For this reason I would suggest that 11 g4 $\mathbb{W}e5!?$ (Wells) is a better try for Black. The tactical justification is based on 12 g5 (12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}ae8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ f5! also

fails to prevent Black generating some counterplay) 12... $\mathbb{W}a5+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ can be met by 13... $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ 15 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ and the arrival of a rook on the e-file) 13... $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 14 gxh6 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 15 hxg7 $\mathbb{W}e8$ and Black has retained a fair degree of activity at the cost of just a pawn.

11... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

White would like to simply castle, but after 12 0-0 Black has 12... $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ 13 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ b5!

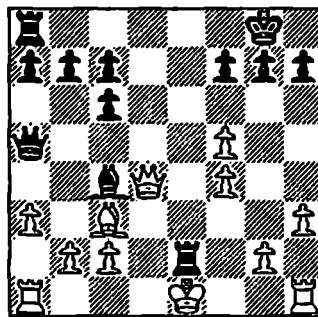
12... $\mathbb{W}e5!?$

The motivation for this queen manoeuvre to a5 is a little opaque. 12... $\mathbb{Q}e5!?$ looks better.

13 f4 $\mathbb{W}a5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 a3! $\mathbb{Q}f5?$

This is based on a clear miscalculation. Xie Jun presumably missed White's 19th move after which White has merely technical difficulties. She should have accepted just a slight positional disadvantage after 15... $\mathbb{R}d8$ 16 $\mathbb{R}d1$.

16 exf5! $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}xe2+$



19 $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

The point! White can walk straight into the discovered check, safe in the knowledge that her own massive double attack will outweigh anything the black rook can come up with. 19 $\mathbb{Q}d1!?$ by contrast would have allowed Black off the hook by 19... $\mathbb{W}d5!$ Black is forced to relinquish the exchange, and although she fights hard,

the result is not in much doubt.

19... $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 20 $bxc3$ $\mathbb{E}e4+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{E}xd4$
22 $cxd4$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 23 $\mathbb{E}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 24 $\mathbb{E}e4$ $g6$ 25
16

After the seventh rank, but 25 $f\text{xx}g6$ $h\text{xx}g6$ 26 $c3$ was probably simpler.

25... $\mathbb{E}d6$ 26 $\mathbb{E}e7$ $\mathbb{E}xf6$ 27 $\mathbb{E}xc7$ $\mathbb{E}xf4+$
28 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}f6$ 29 $\mathbb{E}xb7$ $a6$ 30 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f1$ 31
 $g4$ $g5$

31... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ 32 $g5$ would merely accelerate the end.

32 $\mathbb{E}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 33 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 34 $\mathbb{E}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$
35 $d5$

35 $a4!$ followed by $\mathbb{Q}d2-c3$ was a more scientific way to harry Black's queenside, but in any case the a-pawn will carry the day.

35... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 36 $\mathbb{E}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 37 $\mathbb{E}a7$ $\mathbb{E}f4$ 38
a4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{E}f2+$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 41 $a5$
 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 42 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 43 $\mathbb{E}b7$ $c5$ 44 $\mathbb{E}b6$ 1-0

Game 40
Rublevsky-Anand
PCA Moscow (rapidplay) 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $exd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $dxc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$
 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Best. 9 $\mathbb{W}f4?$ is not a route to a pleasant endgame, but to an unpleasant surprise after 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+1$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ (10 $\mathbb{W}xf2?$ $\mathbb{E}d1+$)
10... $\mathbb{W}d4+$.

9... $\mathbb{Q}d4$

The only logical follow-up to 8... $\mathbb{E}d8$. Black wants to keep his influence on the important g1-a7 diagonal, and the game continuation provides the tactical justification of this.

10 c3

10 0-0 is the more theoretically important move - see Games 41-43.

10... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+1$

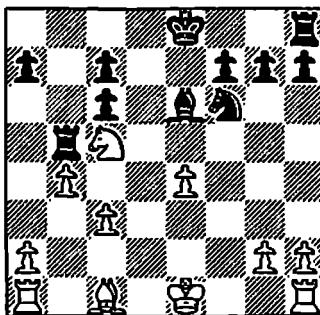
The only good move, but a very clean equaliser. After 10... $b5?$ 11 $cxd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 12
 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $bxa4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{E}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}b4$ 15
 $a3?$ $\mathbb{E}xb2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$, Rublevsky-

Kupreichik, Kurgan 1995, 'structure' does not seem like the right word to describe Black's pawns!

11 $\mathbb{W}xf2$ $\mathbb{E}xd3!$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c5$
 $\mathbb{E}d8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}b5!$

Without this fine solution, a nice blend of tactics (the pin on the e-file) and positional judgement (the realisation that his active pieces and light-square bind will offer full compensation for the exchange), White would enjoy a certain plus based on his superior structure. Now, however, the weakness of the e-pawn is momentarily the chief factor.

16 b4



16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ 17 a4

The only way. 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$ $\mathbb{E}e5$ would leave White clearly in the role of defender.

17... $\mathbb{E}xc5!$ 18 $bxc5$ $\mathbb{Q}c4!$

The point. Black's active minor pieces ensure that castling queenside is White's only way to connect his rooks. To capture either c-pawn would be to fundamentally mis-assess the nature of Black's compensation, which is about maximum activity of the forces rather than picking up odd scraps!

19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 21 0-0-0 $\mathbb{E}e2!$
22 $\mathbb{E}he1!$

Reducing the material further and forcing a situation where the opposite-coloured bishops will secure half a point. This is not to say that against a lesser op-

ponent Black could not have tried to carry on just a little. Note that 22 $\mathbb{E}de1?$? $\mathbb{A}d3!$ would have spelled immediate disaster for White.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 23 $\mathbb{E}xe4$ $\mathbb{A}b3$ 24 $\mathbb{E}g4$ g6
½-½

Game 41
Kasparov-Short
PCA World Ch., London (11) 1993

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$
 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 10 0-0
 $\mathbb{Q}e7?$

Faced with 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ on its debut, Short fails to find the best reply. 10...a6 is seen in the next game and 10...b5 and Black's other moves in Game 43.

11 c3 b5?

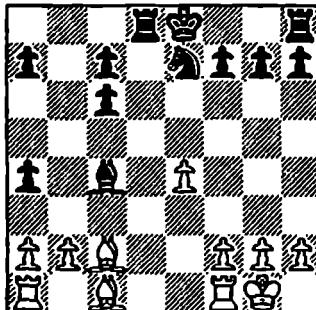
This leads to a most untidy-looking structure, not dissimilar to that seen in note 'b' to Black's tenth move in Game 43, although here his pieces are much better placed to put up a struggle. When watching this game live, I had the feeling that Black was suffering terribly. In fact, although 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is not theoretically satisfactory, it is notable how many obstacles the black minor piece formation – bishop on b5 and knight on c8 – can put in the way of the realisation of White's advantage.

The text looks better than 11...a6 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{A}xd3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{A}d8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$, when the remaining black pawns are even easier to get at; while 11... $\mathbb{A}b6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ hands White the 'minor exchange' without a fight.

12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xe4!$

Again unaesthetic but more resistant than 13... $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{A}xd3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{A}d8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ Black's pawns are manifestly weak, but with one extra as encouragement, he makes a good job of organising a grim defence.

14 $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{B}xa4$ 15 $\mathbb{A}c2$ $\mathbb{A}c4$



16 $\mathbb{A}e1?$

An interesting moment. White should in principle be happy to exchange Black's rook on d8 which both controls an open file, and is a potential defender of the vulnerable c7-pawn. Much less obvious is the fact that the bishop would have stood well on d1. In fact 16 $\mathbb{A}d1!$ is particularly strong since after 16... $\mathbb{R}xd1+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{A}b5$ 18 $\mathbb{A}f4$ White has 19 $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ in reply to 18... $\mathbb{Q}d8$.

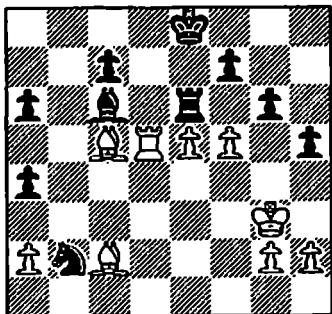
16... $\mathbb{A}b5$ 17 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 19 $\mathbb{H}ad1$ $\mathbb{R}xd1$ 20 $\mathbb{R}xd1$ a6 21 14 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 22 $\mathbb{A}a3$

This looks strong, but Nigel Short reacts to the continued prevention of castling with some equanimity. There was a case for striking with 22 $\mathbb{A}d4?$ f6 23 e5 before Black could proceed with the heroic marshalliong of his forces.

22...h5! 23 $\mathbb{G}f2$ $\mathbb{E}h8$ 24 e5 c5 25 $\mathbb{A}f5$ $\mathbb{E}b6$ 26 $\mathbb{A}d2?$

Black's ability to defend his many weak pawns has been most impressive. However, bringing the king up with 26 $\mathbb{A}g3$ g6 27 $\mathbb{A}h3$, threatening simply $\mathbb{A}h4$ -g5 would have again strained his resources. The text gives Black the time to regroup, and for the first time even aspire to an active role for his knight.

26...g6 27 $\mathbb{A}c2$ $\mathbb{E}a6$ 28 $\mathbb{A}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6!$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{A}c4$ 30 $\mathbb{A}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 31 f5 $\mathbb{A}c6?$



Better was 31... $\mathbb{A}c6!$ The text gives White a fine and instructive possibility actually pointed out by Short, 32 $\mathbb{E}d8+$! $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 33 $\mathbb{F}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 34 $\mathbb{E}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 35 $e6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ and the united passed pawns backed up by the bishop pair give excellent winning chances. White misses his chance, and later it is he who is fighting for the draw. A memorable defensive display from Nigel.

32 $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{G}xf5$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 34 $\mathbb{E}e2$ 18 35 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}d4?$! $\mathbb{A}xe2$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $a3$ 41 $h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 42 $h5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 43 $h6!$ $\mathbb{A}xe2$ 44 $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 45 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}c4?$

After 45... $\mathbb{Q}g6+$ 46 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 47 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ f5 White could still have been tested a little. After the text a small trick forces the draw.

46 $h7$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 47 $\mathbb{Q}f8+!$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 48 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 49 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 50 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 42
Pavasovic-Dos Santos
World Junior Ch., Halle 1995

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{E}xd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{D}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 10 0-0 a6?!

The most direct and logical way to ensure that the dark-squared bishop keeps its diagonal. A possible drawback is that the move is non-developing, while it also rep-

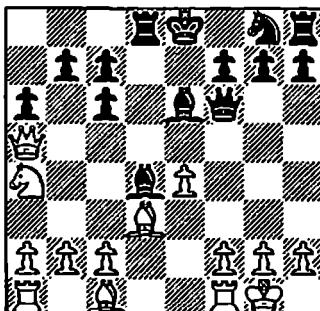
resents a further slight weakening of the queenside. It is the latter on which first Kasparov, and since others have fixed their attention. The resulting theory is a tale of two pawn sacrifices.

11 $\mathbb{W}a5?$

Highly critical, threatening the c7-pawn, as well as $\mathbb{Q}g5$. White's other plan, in keeping with our characterisation of the long-term, strategic nature of his plus, is to exchange queens on f4 by:

a) 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ (the knight has served its function; White does not want it to be caught offside) 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6?$ (as in the next chapter, a further weakness of the f-pawns is preferred to remain active; Short does not like 13... $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ hitting e6) 14 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $gxf6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $h5?$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $h4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ Kasparov-Short, PCA World Championship match, London (17) 1993, when Short thinks that Black is fine after 17...0-0! 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

b) 11 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ a5 13 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ b6 15 f4 $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ is an unpretentious but consistent approach to the position which should be enough for a slight edge despite Black's reasonable activity. White's loss in Wells-Sherzer, Hungary 1995, required some creativity!



11...b6?!

Black is virtually obliged to offer a

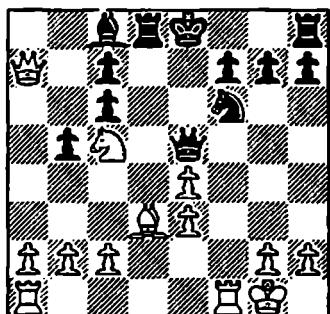
pawn since 11... $\mathbb{W}e7?$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ f6 13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ is unpleasant.

Attention has switched to 11...b6 after White's convincing demonstration of his resources following 11...b5 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ $\mathbb{Q}c8?$ (unfortunately for Black he has little choice but to drive the white queen to a good square; 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$ meets with the 'zwischenzug' 15 $\mathbb{W}xc6+!$) 15 $\mathbb{W}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 16 fxe3 and now:

a) 16... $\mathbb{W}g5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ when suddenly it becomes clear that although material equality is re-established, it is now White who has the attacking chances, based on Black's king stuck in the centre and threats to counter-sacrifice on b5.

b) 16... $\mathbb{W}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ 0-0 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ cxd6 20 $\mathbb{Q}d1!$ when although his extra pawn is not too beautiful, White gradually took over the initiative in Kasparov-Yusupov, Horgen 1994.

12 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 13 $\mathbb{W}a7$ b5 14 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 16 fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$



This position was already considered as unclear by Kasparov in his notes to the Yusupov game. For Black it has the advantages that White's queen will not nestle so annoyingly on a3, but the knight on c5 - the other main difference - offers some interesting possibilities too.

17 $\mathbb{Q}b7$

17 $\mathbb{Q}a1?$ also looks possible since after 17... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 18 g3 h5 19 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ h4 22 $\mathbb{E}f5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 23 h3 Black's attack is driven back.

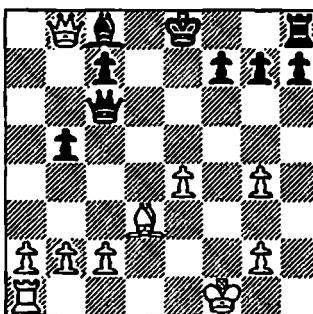
17... $\mathbb{Q}g4$

After 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 0-0 the assessment will resolve around whether White's queen can re-enter the fray successfully. It seems that it can by 19 h3! (19 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ is unclear) 19... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 20 a3!, preparing to answer 20... $\mathbb{Q}a8$ with 21 e5!, or 20... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ with 21 $\mathbb{Q}a7$ and an escape via the a7-g1 diagonal.

18 $\mathbb{E}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 21 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h2+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}d6$

If 22... $\mathbb{W}h1+?$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ wins.

23 hxg4 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 24 $\mathbb{W}b8!$



24...0-0

Since after the inevitable fall of the b5-pawn White's extra pawn will be the potent passed a-pawn, Black's chances of saving his skin rest entirely on the possibility of drumming up something on the kingside. To this end putting the white king on a1 by 24... $\mathbb{W}f6+?$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}d4+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ 0-0 27 $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ was slightly preferable, but White's advantage is clear in any case.

25 $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{W}f6+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 27 $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{W}d4+$ 28 $\mathbb{E}f2$ h5 29 a4 h4 30 $\mathbb{W}g5$ h3 31 gxh3 $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ 32 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 33 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 35 $\mathbb{W}d6$ $\mathbb{W}c1$ 36 $\mathbb{W}e5$ $\mathbb{W}e3$ 37 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 38 $\mathbb{E}xf4$

As implied in the last note, White should welcome the exchange of queens. Still, the rook on f4 is momentarily misplaced, and Black could complicate the technical task by 38... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ threatening to assault the a-pawn, while avoiding the nasty tactical detail he falls prey to in the game.

38... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$ 39 e5 $\mathbb{R}c5$ 40 $\mathbb{R}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8+$ 41 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 42 $\mathbb{R}d8+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 43 $\mathbb{R}c8$ $\mathbb{R}c3!$ 44 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{R}xd3$ 45 cxd3 $\mathbb{R}xe4$ 46 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 18 47 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 48 d4 fx5 49 d5+ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 50 $\mathbb{R}d8+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 51 $\mathbb{R}a8$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 52 $\mathbb{R}b8$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 53 $\mathbb{R}b8+$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 54 $\mathbb{R}a6$ 1-0

Game 43

Relange-Smyslov

Generations match, Cannes 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ dxc6 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{R}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 10 0-0 b5

A very direct attempt to secure the a7-g1 diagonal for the bishop even at the expense of a further weakening of the queen-side pawns. Other things being equal, the additional idea of a2-a4 now appears for White.

Two other recent additions to Black's arsenal are:

a) 10... $\mathbb{W}h4?$ 11 $\mathbb{W}g5?$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6?$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ should in my view be met simply with 13 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 14 $\mathbb{R}ad1$ with a slight but pleasant edge) 13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ b5 was played in Nataf-Korneev, Porto San Georgio 1997, when I think White should try 14 c3? $\mathbb{Q}xf2+?$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{R}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}a8!$) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ bx4! 16 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ a3 17 bx3? with a slight advantage, although Black's idea is interesting.

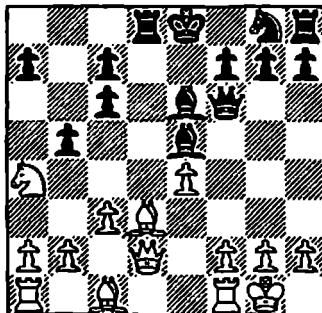
b) 10... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 11 c3 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 12 cxd4 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}c2!$ (a familiar pattern, but here Black is forced to take the bishop and not the knight) 13... $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{R}xd3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{R}d4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 f3 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ was tried in Ochoa-Sharif, Barcelona 1993,

when after 19 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 20 b3! it looks as if White will win back his pawn and cause Black's king discomfort.

11 c3?

A very sharp attempt to reach a similar structure to that in Game 41. Previously, attention was focused on the quieter 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$, when 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 a4? a6 13 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ (14...b4? might be a little more combative) 15 axb5 axb5 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2!$, as in Golubev-A.Maric, Biel open 1995, is a little better for White since 16... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 17 $\mathbb{R}a7!$ threatens both the c7-pawn and also 18 $\mathbb{Q}b1!$

11... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$



12 f4?

This is the only move to have been tested in practice, but even so I do not like it. We are, in any case, headed for a situation where White will be able to capture Black's dark-squared bishop for his knight at the expense of one pawn. The text has two attractions:

i) Forcing Black to capture on a4 leaves him with a still uglier structure than he has at present.

ii) Half-opening the f-file offers the chance to hit the black queen with tempo. On the other hand, the move f2-f4 weakens the e-pawn. In addition, while preparing to attack Black's queen it actually increases her choice of places to run to. Lastly, and most paradoxically, with refer-

ence to Black's queenside pawn formation, 'ugly' may not necessarily mean easier to attack. On the contrary, the current structure, susceptible as it is to the 'lever' a2-a4, which also prepares the entry of White's rook into the fun, presents a more natural target.

For all these reasons I prefer 12 $\mathbb{Q}c5!$? when Black has:

a) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}e5+$ 14 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ when a7 and c7 are both weak, and $\mathbb{Q}c1-e3$ and a2-a4 are coming. This looks excellent compensation.

b) 12... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}e2!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ is just bad) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}e5+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $bxc4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 19 $f3!$ and this time with b2-b3 coming and the e-pawn solidly supported. I again prefer White.

12... $bx a4$ 13 $fxe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (it turns out that here too 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ is no great shakes) 15...0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ was also fine for Black in Kotsur-Arencibia, Lucerne 1997.

15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}c2$ 0-0

White cannot claim any advantage. Black has some significant assets – the d-file, the g4-square and an active queen. The following forcing sequence changes the character of the position, but not the assessment.

17 $\mathbb{W}ae1!?$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xa2$

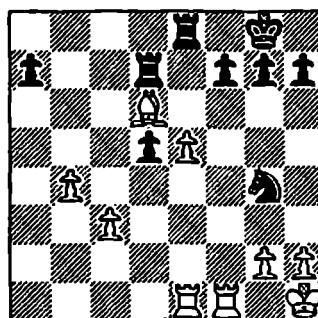
$\mathbb{W}c5+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 22 $e5$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 23 $b4$

White wants to shift the black queen from an optimal square, but also to defend the second rank. 23 $e6?$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xe6?$ $\mathbb{Q}f2+!$ brings home the importance of both of these aims.

23... $\mathbb{W}d5$

Now, however, 23... $\mathbb{W}xc3??$ 24 $e6$ would be devastating. Influence on the light squares is a significant undercurrent throughout this encounter.

24 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $cxd5$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}d6$



25... $f6!$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ 27 $f7+!$

An important trick to save the bishop. The resulting ending is quite okay for Black who can bring his knight immediately to the optimal square e4.

27... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Summary

There is no disputing the fact that Garry Kasparov's 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ (!) has given a whole lease of life to 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$. Its principal idea, as discussed above, is to put a stop to ideas of ...0-0-0. Despite theory's hostile verdict, I do not want to join the general condemnation of Black's play in Game 39. Some hope for Black's cause can be found maybe in the note on 10... $\mathbb{W}e7$?, and I hope in my analysis of 11 $g4$ $\mathbb{W}e5$?

The bulk of the chapter deals with 8... $\mathbb{E}d8$. The good news for Black is that after 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$, Black will receive the 'breather' which 10 0-0 affords him. Anand's excellent tactical/positional solution in Game 40 should put 10 c3 to rest. So, what to do with the tempo? Game 41 is not the answer, but should rather be regarded as the prototype position to be avoided. I am also suspicious of the weakening 10...b5 of Game 43. Its relatively rosy theoretical status seems to derive from White's determination to weaken his position in return. Also 10...a6 11 $\mathbb{W}a5$ (!) (Game 42) is holding up well for White. The note to 10... $\mathbb{W}h4$? may be worth a closer look, but the general conclusion is that 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is currently a promising choice for White.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ dxc6 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$

8... $\mathbb{E}d8$ (D)

8... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ - Game 39

9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (D) 10 0-0

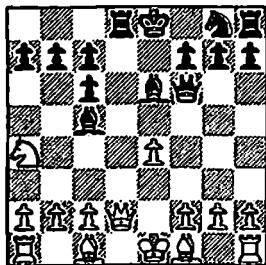
10 c3 - Game 40

10...b5 (D)

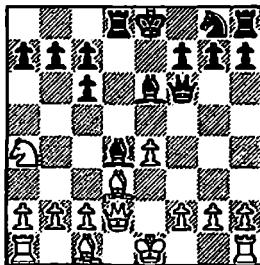
10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ - Game 41

10...a6 - Game 42

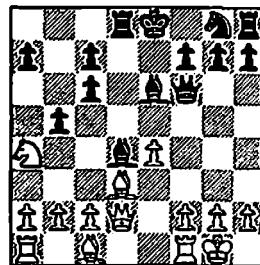
11 c3 - Game 43



8... $\mathbb{E}d8$



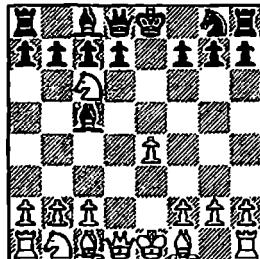
9... $\mathbb{Q}d4$



10...b5

CHAPTER SEVEN

4... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$: Early deviations for both sides



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

In this chapter we shall consider various ways in which both sides can avoid the main line with Kasparov's 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$.

Seventh move alternatives for Black after 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{d}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

In his notes to his game with Anand (Game 45) Alexei Shirov explained his choice of 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ on the grounds that it required less theory than 7... $\mathbb{Q}e6$. But for how long? The line has been extraordinarily popular at the very top level, ever since Topalov appeared to draw with some ease in the following game.

Game 44 Kasparov-Topalov Las Palmas 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{d}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$? 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$

The first point to note about Romanishin's 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$? is that, while the purist might argue that it removes the need for 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ (after all, Black is not threatening to castle long) it certainly succeeds in taking the sting out of it. A quick comparison

with Game 39 reveals the benefits to Black of his bishop not standing on e6 after 8 $\mathbb{Q}a4$? $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 9 f4 0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 11 g3 $\mathbb{B}e8$! (the key; the text deals with the problem of e4-e5, and here there is no question of the f4-f5 advance being a problem either) 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$! (another move consistent with the 'strategy of disruption' to which I have often referred; Black hopes to loosen the bishop on d3 to give a little menace to his earlier arrival on the d-file) 13 c3 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$ and Black's development is freer and more purposeful, as in Gluzman-Romanishin, Moscow Olympiad 1994.

The other point to note at this stage, is that in the event of a 'neutral' developing move from White, say 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$, the reply 8... $\mathbb{Q}g6$! gives Black some influence on the dark squares and arguably the freer development he seeks, since 9 f4 $\mathbb{W}h4$!? 10 g3 $\mathbb{W}h3$ looks appropriately irritating.

Having noted a couple of possible advantages of 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$, it is also fair to say that 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$, White's near-universal choice here, highlights a drawback. Having not yet developed his queen's bishop, Black is not ready either to castle queenside or to comfortably defend his c7-pawn, for example after an exchange on f4.

8... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

This move, and the strategically closely related 8... $\mathbb{Q}e6$, invites a structure which at first glance looks most unfavourable for Black, but has become the focus of heavy attention at the top level.

Here, there are really only two ways to avoid the structure. The pawn sacrifice 8... $\mathbb{W}e6$ is covered in Game 45, while the simple exchange 8... $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6!$? (the only plausible way to defend c7 – see the introductory remarks above to 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$) remains untested. 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ (10 e5?! is rather anti-positional, since 10... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ would hand Black automatic play on the light squares) 10...cxd6 11 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ f6 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 14 h4! looks promising since White has the dual plans of pressure against d6, and the use of the rook along the third rank to provoke further weaknesses.

9 $\mathbb{W}xf8$ gxf8 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$?

A sensible move, waiting to see what set-up Black will adopt, before deciding how to address the central development question of what to do about the threat to f2 in order to castle long. Other ideas:

a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ has considerably less force than in the analogous position with Black's bishop on e6 and knight still on e7 (see Game 42). The reason is simple – control of e5. Here after 10... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ Black can claim his share of the centre with 11...f5 without fear of any tactical consequences from $\mathbb{Q}d4$. In Relange-Onischuk, Halle 1995, Black had no problems after 12 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 13 0-0-0 0-0-0.

b) 10 f4? (Dolmatov) is interesting. He gives 10...f5 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}h4?$ 12 g3 $\mathbb{Q}f3+$. Black's position looks a little loose, but I think he has enough resources after 13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ fxe4 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 b3 (15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}h3?$) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 0-0-0 – Wells. Black is quite active, and his structural weaknesses are not disastrous.

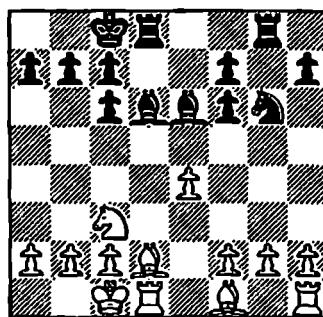
10... $\mathbb{Q}g8?$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}a4?$

One way to deal with the problem of the threat to f2 is to drive away the bishop. Dolmatov again gives attention to the other idea, 11 f4, analysing 11... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ (11...f5 12 0-0-0) 12 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ (actually the only decent way to defend the g2-pawn) 12... $\mathbb{Q}d6?$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ b5 14 g3 bxa4 15 gxf4 $\mathbb{E}b8$ 16 b3 with an edge for White. This is true, but I think that Black can improve with 12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$!, since after 13 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ b5 14 g3 bxa4 15 gxf4 Black can create counterplay by 15...f5! hitting the h-pawn, which looks quite satisfactory.

11... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Since he cannot play b2-b3 in reply, White has to regard ... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ as a threat.

13...0-0-0



14 g3

How else to proceed with development? 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3?$ $\mathbb{Q}h4!$ (Dolmatov) is of course not the answer. Now, however, Black's strategy of active piece play focuses on White's kingside light squares with some success.

14... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Here 14...f5? is inappropriate. After 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h3?$ fxe4 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ fxe6 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ White enjoys the better structure and more active pieces. The e6-pawn and the f6-square are both seriously weak.

15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$

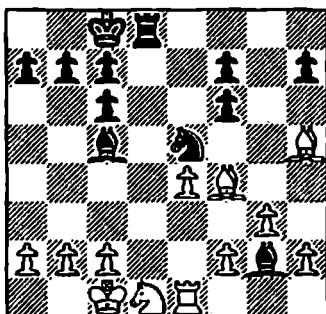
The alternative is 16 f4, but by 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ White is again

forced to react passively. Neither 18 $\mathbb{A}df1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ nor 18 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{A}de8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 20 $\mathbb{h}3$ $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ 21 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4!$, when the e4-pawn can become quite weak, look very promising for White.

16... $\mathbb{Q}h3!$

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ was the safest route to equality, but the text might constitute an interesting try for more.

17 $\mathbb{A}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xd8+$ $\mathbb{A}xd8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 20 $\mathbb{A}e1$



20... $\mathbb{Q}f3?$

White's e4-pawn is a thematic target of Black's play on the light squares, and to this end 20... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$? 21 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (21 $\mathbb{A}e2?$ $\mathbb{Q}f1!$) 21... $\mathbb{A}d4!$ was interesting. Dolmatov gives further 22 $\mathbb{H}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{A}xe4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 25 $\mathbb{A}xf7$ $\mathbb{A}e2$ when Black could press a little.

21 $\mathbb{A}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g11$

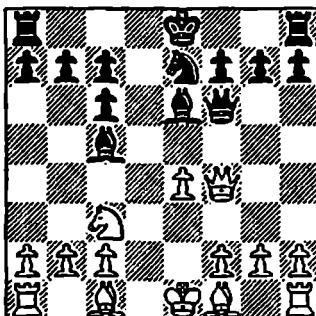
Now it is Black from whom accuracy is required to hold the balance. 21... $\mathbb{Q}xh2?$? 22 $\mathbb{e}5!$ $\mathbb{fxe}5$ 23 $\mathbb{A}xe5!$ suddenly allows White's pieces fresh prospects.

22 $\mathbb{A}g4+$ $\mathbb{A}b8$ 23 $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{A}xd2$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{A}xe4$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{A}g2$ 26 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{A}e7$ 27 $\mathbb{A}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ 28 $\mathbb{A}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g1+ \frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 45
Anand-Shirov
Linares 1997

1 $\mathbb{e}4$ $\mathbb{e}5$ 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 $d4$ $\mathbb{exd}4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

5 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{dx}c6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6?$



In his notes, Alexei Shirov assures us that it was his intention to follow Topalov's example, but he forgot the theory! His 'accidental novelty', which he later claimed might be preferable on the grounds of still more rapid development, has since caught on. On the basis of the most recent practice, however, it seems to me that next time he should remember the old theory!

9 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{gx}f6$ 10 $\mathbb{f}4$

White faces a similar task - that of dealing with the threat to f2 - to the last game. Here, however, I think that 10 $\mathbb{Q}a4(l)$ (see the next game) is more to the point.

It is interesting that prior to this game, commentators tended to reject 8... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ on the grounds that 10 $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ would be strong here. In fact, Black then seems to be able to generate the requisite active counter-chances:

a) 10... $\mathbb{B}g8$ 11 $\mathbb{A}d1$ $f5$ 12 $g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{fxe}4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ 15 $0-0$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 16 $\mathbb{bx}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ looks fine for Black, but investing a tempo in defence of the light squares with 12 $a3!$ is very interesting. It is not clear how Black can keep up his momentum.

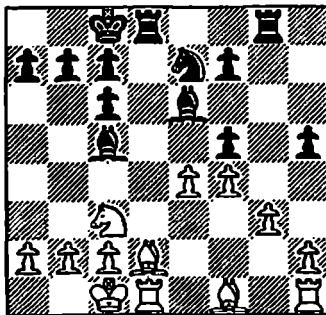
b) 10... $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 12 $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 13 $f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g7!$ (not 14 $\mathbb{A}xb7$? $f5$ 15 $e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ when Black threatens ... $\mathbb{Q}b6$, has better development, and prospects on the

light squares) 14... $\mathbb{E}g8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 0-0-0 16 $f5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ 17 $\mathbb{E}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 18 $\mathbb{E}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 19 $\mathbb{E}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ and in my view Black is not worse. There is easily sufficient mess on the board to blur his initial strategic problems.

10... $f5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

11 $\mathbb{Q}a4?$ no longer hits the mark. In the variation 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 12 $c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 13 $e5$ $b5!$ White needs the move $\mathbb{Q}e3$ instead of $f4$ (see note to White's 11th move in Game 46). Here White would be worse.

11...0-0-0 12 0-0-0 $\mathbb{E}hg8$ 13 $g3$ $h5!$



Without a concrete plan, development advantages have a nasty habit of evaporating. Here it is essential that Black uses this lever to support his rook on the half-open g-file before White can consolidate and start to target his own weaknesses.

14 $\mathbb{Q}h3$

Believe it or not, Shirov says that after this the course of the game is pretty well forced, leading to a draw. The alternative was 14 $\mathbb{Q}e2?$, intending to meet 14... $h4$ with 15 $gxh4$, when Black cannot regain his pawn, as 15... $\mathbb{E}h8?$ 16 $h5!$ is obviously silly. Of course, Black should prefer the active 15... $\mathbb{E}g2!$ with excellent compensation. The key point is that 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}gxd2!$ 17 $\mathbb{E}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 18 $\mathbb{E}hd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$ is very good for Black. Moreover, this tactic crops up in a whole stack of lines. For example, 16 $e5$ (Black threatened 16... $fxe4$) 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}xd2!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c1$

$\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 20 $\mathbb{E}xd1$ $\mathbb{E}d4!$ with an advantage on the dark squares which will render the h-pawn harmless, or 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{E}xe2!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{E}xd2!$ etc. (Wells).

14... $h4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{E}xd1+17$ $\mathbb{E}xd1$ $hxg3$ 18 $hxg3$

Not the capture 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe7??$ when after the reply 18... $gxh2$ the pawn is unstoppable.

18... $b5!$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $bxg4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$

If 20 $exf5$ Black has the reply 20... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ with the further nasty threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}e3+$.

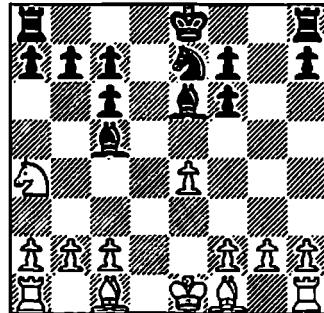
20... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 21 $exf5$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{E}xg3$ 23 $\mathbb{E}d8+$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 24 $a3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 25 $\mathbb{E}f8$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

After 26 $\mathbb{E}xf7$ $\mathbb{E}g1+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{E}g2$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{E}g1+$ White has no choice but to repeat.

Game 46
Palac-Malaniuk
World Team Ch., Lucerne 1997

1 $e4$ $e5$ 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 $d4$ $exd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $dxc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $gxf6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e4?$

In my opinion this is the problem for 8... $\mathbb{Q}e6$.



10... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$

Black wants to provoke $c2-c3$ in order to leave White's knight stranded. However, in view of White's tactical idea in note 'a' to 11 $c3$ below, Moroz has sug-

gested 10... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ to meet 11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ with 11...f5? The point is that now after 12 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{R}g8$ 13 e5, the d4-square is not supported, and Black has the resource 13... $\mathbb{R}g4$.

Certainly this is imaginative, but I do not see this as solving Black's problems. First, at the end of Moroz's line, 14 0-0-0! $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{R}xa4$ 16 a3 looks promising, e.g. 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 18 b3! $\mathbb{R}xa3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{R}a5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{R}c5$ 21 f4! and Black's rook is in trouble. Second, 11 f4? also looks logical since with no pawn on c3, 11...f5? 12 e5! favours White.

11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

While the text move is not bad, the most recent trend 11 c3? looks very tempting on the available evidence. After 11... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ White has the useful dual-purpose 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$! On the one hand, White provides protection for a desirable knight sortie to c5. The other point is a nasty little tactic revealed in 'a'. Black has tried:

a) 12...f5? 13 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{R}g8$ 14 e5 b5 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ was positionally unpleasant for Black in Moroz-G.Timoshenko, Enakievo 1997.

b) 12...b6 13 f4! when Black has no fully satisfactory way forward:

b1) 13...c5 14 c4! 0-0-0 (there is no time for a 'dark-square strategy': 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 16 0-0-0 f5 is met by 17 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b5$!) 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ c6 16 $\mathbb{R}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ f5 18 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ h5 20 b3 h4 21 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ with some advantage for White in Kolev-Korneev, Malaga open 1998.

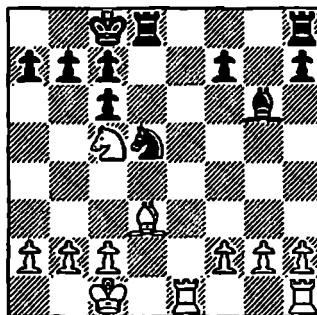
b2) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 0-0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 18 g3 h5 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ h4 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ f5 21 e5 $\mathbb{R}he8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ c5 23 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 24 $\mathbb{R}ad1$ c6 25 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{R}h8$ 26 $\mathbb{R}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 27 $\mathbb{R}d1+$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ and again Black was horribly passive in Lautier-Shirov, Monaco (rapidplay) 1998.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ f5?

Shirov gave 12...0-0-0+(!) 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ b6? as satisfactory for Black, while 13...f5? is also

possible. In any case it looks better to force $\mathbb{Q}d3$ first, rather than allow White the comfortable $\mathbb{Q}e1$ and $\mathbb{Q}c1$ to reorganise his game.

13 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ 0-0-0+ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{R}xe4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$



18...b6?!

Since the text forces White to 'rejoin' Black's isolated h- and f-pawns, it might appear that his troubles are nearing an end. In fact, the possibility of manoeuvring his knight to e5 still gives White a strikingly strong initiative. In view of this 18... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{R}xg6$ 20 g3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$! was a big improvement, when Black's position is probably okay.

19 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{R}xg6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{R}h7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 22 g3? c5?!

22...g5! would give better chances of holding up White's kingside pawns.

23 f4 $\mathbb{R}g7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ f6 25 $\mathbb{R}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 26 a3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 27 $\mathbb{R}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 28 c3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{R}h7$ 30 $\mathbb{R}e2$ a6 31 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{R}d5$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{R}d6$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{R}d5$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{R}d6$ 36 f5!

White's advantage, hitherto based largely upon his opponent's slightly clumsy and passive rooks, now takes on a more permanent structural form. After Black's reply, the f6-pawn looks far from happy, and in the end an elegant tactic picks it off.

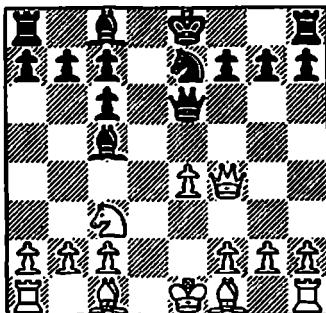
36...g5 37 $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ $\mathbb{R}f7$ 38 $\mathbb{R}e6$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 39

Hes $\mathbb{H}d5$ 40 $\mathbb{H}g8$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 41 $\mathbb{H}g7$ 1-0
Since 41... $\mathbb{H}xg7$ 42 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d6?$ 43 $\mathbb{H}e6$
is mate.

Game 47
Rublevsky-Goldin
Tivat 1995

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{W}e8!$?

Black side-steps the complex pawn structure of the previous three games, offering his c-pawn in exchange for speedy development. I am surprised that Goldin has been fighting a largely lonely battle with this move, as Black's idea stands quite unrefuted.



9 $\mathbb{W}xc7$

Taking up the challenge. If instead White declines the pawn, this may seem to challenge the very *raison d'être* of the move 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$. In reality there are arguments for both sides' moves - 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ does at least prepare to develop the queen's bishop and avoids the scenario of 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ (see introductory notes to Game 44) while Black has ... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ with tempo, and most importantly the coming break ...f7-f5. We examine:

a) 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 0-0 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 12
 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ f5! 13 exf5 $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 14 hxg3 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 15
 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{H}xf5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{H}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18

$\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{axb6}$ and White had no advantage in Nunn-Flear, Hastings 1996.

b) 9 $\mathbb{W}g5!$ was criticised by Mihalevski, but I like the idea of answering the mandatory 9... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ with 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$? 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{R}f6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}g3$ with a fairly harmonious development, and no immediate prospect of Black's ...f7-f5.

9...0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}g3$ f5 12 f4?!

It is unfortunate that White has to open the centre like this with his king still residing there, but 12 0-0? f4! 13 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ is particularly awkward for White's queen.

12...fxe4 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

In principle it is desirable to bring the queen's rook to the e-file, but time is of the essence, and 13... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ was much more to the point, when White has no satisfactory route to more than a draw:

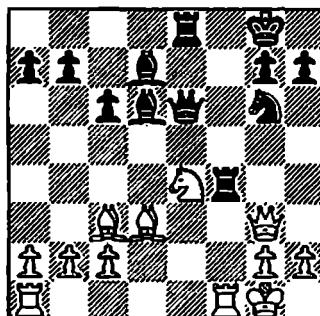
a) If 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3?$! $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{H}xe4$ the minor pieces will dominate White's queen.

b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ was Rublevsky's suggestion, but after 14... $\mathbb{W}g4+$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}h4!$) 15... $\mathbb{W}xg4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 17 c3 (17 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ leads to a draw) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$ 18 $\mathbb{cxb4}$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ with ... $\mathbb{H}ad8+$ to come, Black is better (Wells).

14 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ $\mathbb{H}ae8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

15... $\mathbb{W}xf4$ would be met by 16 0-0-0!

16 0-0 $\mathbb{H}xf4$



We have come a long way in just a few

moves since the last diagram. White has all but completed his development, and his bishop pair bears down threateningly on Black's kingside. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$? would invite a demonstration of his fine tactical resources by 17 $\mathbb{E}xf4$ $\mathbb{E}xf4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{E}g4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe8!$ winning material.

17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 18 $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{W}c5+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{E}ef8$ 20 h3 $\mathbb{E}4f7$ 21 a3? a5 22 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$

In Chapter 9, Game 59, we shall see Rublevsky convert the advantage of the bishop pair into that of opposite-coloured bishops with an attacking dominance on the dark squares. It should be familiar! 22... $\mathbb{h}xg6$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 24 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{W}f2$ 25 $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{W}xc2$ 26 $\mathbb{E}ac1$ $\mathbb{W}d3$ 27 $\mathbb{E}f3$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 28 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}c2$ 29 $\mathbb{E}g3$ g6

After this, virtual capitulation of the dark squares can be forced, tactical possibilities abound. White gets a particularly sweet one at the end.

30 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 31 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}c2$ 32 $\mathbb{E}f3$ $\mathbb{E}h7$ 33 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{E}h5$ 34 $\mathbb{W}xg6+$ 1-0

It is mate in three.

Seventh move alternatives for White after 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{d}xc6$

Game 48
Markovic-Mozetic
Vrnjacka Banja 1992

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{exd}4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{d}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

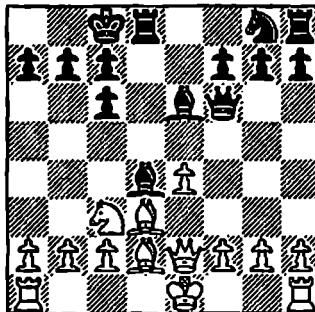
This old move stands guilty of allowing Black to optimise his development by castling long. It has thus fallen out of favour to the 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ of Games 39-47.

7... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Plans involving the exchange of queens also lose some of their force here. One instructive example was Lau-Sherbakov, European Cup 1992, when after 8 0-0 0-0-0 9 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ 13 $\mathbb{E}fb1$ h5! 14 h3 h4 15 $\mathbb{Q}h2$

Black found the excellent 15... $\mathbb{E}h5!$, preventing e4-e5 and preparing to swing the rook to the queenside. 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{A}f6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}c5$ 18 c3 $\mathbb{E}a5$ 19 a3 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ saw Black clarify his advantage, as his domination of the d-file is confirmed.

8...0-0-0 9 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$



10... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$

An interesting fresh alternative to 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$. Black first of all prevents 11 f4 which would be hit with 11... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ when Black is dangerously active. Furthermore, Black envisages various possible futures for the knight. It may come to e5 via g4, or he may settle for playing ...f7-f6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ holding back White's potential 'main weapon': his e- and f-pawns.

11 f3

White must attend to the f2-pawn before he can castle queenside. The text postpones rather than abandons the plan of moving the f-pawn to f4.

11... $\mathbb{E}he8$ 12 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}e5!$

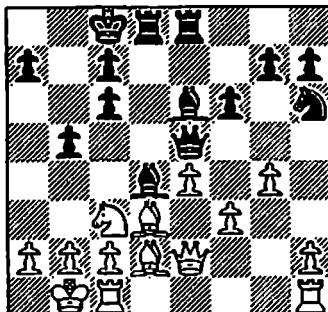
Typical of Black's need for an active strategy. The main idea is to prepare ...f7-f6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$, but the possibility of swinging the queen is also important. 13 f4? would for example be met with 13... $\mathbb{W}a5$ with dual threats of ... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$.

13 g4

13 $\mathbb{Q}c4?$ was worth considering, although after 13...f6! 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 16 $\mathbb{E}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ Black's knight

finds a new active role. Soon Black radically stops the idea of $\mathbb{Q}c4$ for good.

13...f6 14 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ b5! 15 $\mathbb{E}c1!$



Black hopes to show that the bishop on d3 cramps White's operations. White in turn switches to preparing c2-c4, occupying the c-file, and vacating d1 for his knight.

15... $\mathbb{Q}g8!$

A deep idea which introduces a new and surprising element - Black's queenside chances - into the equation. In part though the move is defensive. After White plays c2-c4, he will find the c-pawn in effect pinned.

16 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 17 b3

Given that on his next move White weakens the d3-bishop by moving his c-pawn anyway, it was rather more aggressive to go to c4. Still, after 17 c4? a6! 18 $\mathbb{A}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7!$? I also prefer Black's long-term attacking chances.

17... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 18 c3 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c2?$! $\mathbb{W}d6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f7!$

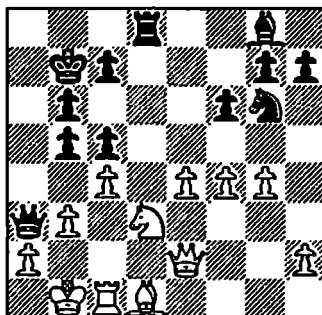
White, understandably keen to kick Black's knight away, returns to his f3-f4 ambitions. However, the need to bolster the c-pawn is more urgent, and 21 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ thus the more solid choice.

21... $\mathbb{W}a3!$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xb6?$

White was fearful of sacrificial ideas such as ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$. However, the a-file will prove to be a decisive addition to Black's

attack. 22 $\mathbb{E}cd1$ was better, preparing the defensive retreat $\mathbb{Q}c1$.

22...axb6 23 $\mathbb{E}hd1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xd8$ $\mathbb{E}xd8$ 25 f4 $\mathbb{E}a8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ c5! 28 c4 $\mathbb{E}d8!$



A nice switch which ensures the breakthrough on c4. White can no longer hold that square by 29 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ since 29... $\mathbb{b}xc4$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 31 $\mathbb{E}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ is decisive.

29 $\mathbb{c}xb5$ c4! 30 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{c}xb3$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 32 $\mathbb{a}xb3$ $\mathbb{W}xb3$ 33 e5 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 34 $\mathbb{W}e4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 35 e6 $\mathbb{Q}b8!$ 36 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xd3+$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7?$

Almost ruining all his fine efforts. 37... $\mathbb{H}e8$ 38 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c3+$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ would have been immediately decisive. Now the critical b4-square passes to his opponent... 38 $\mathbb{Q}f4?$

...or not! 38 $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 40 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ would have created massive obstacles to Black's further progress.

38... $\mathbb{E}d4$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{E}xg4$ 40 $\mathbb{H}d1$ $\mathbb{H}g5$ 41 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{E}xb5+$ 42 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{H}f5$ 0-1

Sixth moves alternatives for Black after 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$

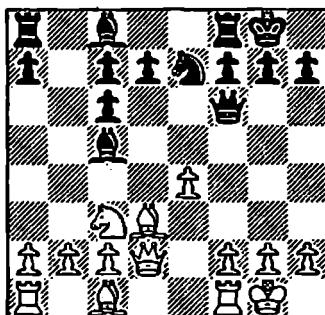
Game 49
Smagin-Gligoric
Yugoslavia 1991

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{b}xc6?$

Not bad, but Black will find it less easy to disrupt the flow of White's development now that the d-file is unavailable.

The other minor choice 6... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ is also playable, but open to the objection that it neither furthers Black's development nor contests the d5-square. After 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}0$ 0-0 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 10 $\mathbb{W}f4!$ d6 (if 10... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 11 $bxc3$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ followed by e5 would be strong) 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ gxf6 17 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18 a4 White's structural advantage was significant in Chandler-Lodhi, London (Lloyds Bank Masters) 1994.

7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 0-0 0-0 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$!



White's plan is clear. He wants to play $\mathbb{Q}h1$ and f2-f4. This looks the right order as the immediate 9... $\mathbb{Q}h1$?! d5?! seems reasonable for Black.

9... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

Black has to tread carefully. 9...d6? would meet with 10 e5!, vacating the e4-square and the e-file so that 10... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 11 $\mathbb{R}e1$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ would be a massacre.

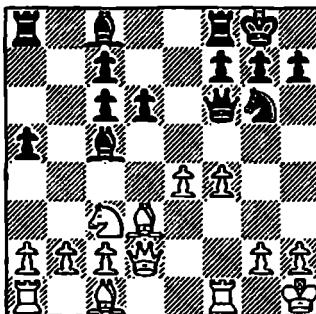
9...d5 is playable, however. 10 $\mathbb{W}g5$? $\mathbb{W}xg5$ (10... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 11 $\mathbb{W}g5$?) 11 $\mathbb{W}xg5$ f6 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ cxd5 15 $\mathbb{R}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 c4! gave White some advantage in Wells-Semenova, Zalakaros 1998.

10 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ a5!

Too ambitious. White enjoys an edge after the more modest 10...d6! 11 f4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$,

but Black would be solid enough.

11 f4 d6



12 e5!

Not quite as devastating as in the note to 9...d6! above, but the text still registers a significant boost to the scope of White's minor pieces. The point is that 12...dxe5 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 14 f5 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 15 f6 would give White a hefty attack.

12... $\mathbb{W}h4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 14 exd6 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}c3$ cxd8 16 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ Rxb8 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}fd8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e1$

Very precise. White is not so much concerned to send the black queen packing as to take the e7-square from Black's knight. After this his queen returns comfortably to the fray, and Black has no compensation for the pawn.

18... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 20 $\mathbb{R}ae1$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}d5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$? 22 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ gxf6 23 $\mathbb{R}xe6$ fxe6 24 $\mathbb{W}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 25 $\mathbb{R}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 26 cxd3 f5 27 d4! 1-0

There is no stopping the advance to d5, smashing Black's fragile defences.

Black's fifth move alternatives

Game 50
Miles-Hebden
London 1994

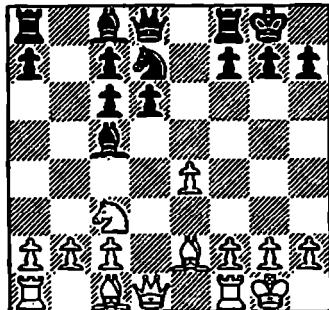
1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$

This is the only time in the book where I have fiddled with history for the sake of clarity. The actual move order was 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6 8 0-0 etc. However, I am not too enthusiastic about the fifth move of either side!

5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$

This move has a rather dubious reputation, and is virtually unknown at the highest level. However, the quite similar position with a white pawn on c3 which arises after 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 5 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ (see Games 83 and 84) is respectable.

6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d6 7 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$
0-0



10 $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

This seizure of the bishop pair forms the core of White's idea. What I find really instructive about this game is the lack of dogmatism in White's play. Rather than following up by quickly opening the position, White first shuts down Black's counterplay, confident that the bishop pair can be activated long-term.

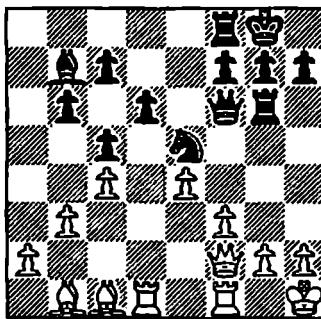
10... $\mathbb{A}b6$ 11 b3 $\mathbb{W}h4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $axb6$ 13 f3 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 14 c4!

Of course, other things being equal, the player combating the bishop pair would be very happy to exchange one of them. White need not worry about blocking in his bishop – he transfers it to the c2-h7 diagonal, when Black has always to watch for the advances f3-f4 and e4-e5.

14...c5 15 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{A}c2$ $\mathbb{E}ae8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{W}h6$

Exchanging queens would merely help White to clarify the fact that his bishop pair is the key factor in the position.

19 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 20 $\mathbb{E}ad1$ $\mathbb{E}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{A}b1$ $\mathbb{E}g6$
22 $\mathbb{W}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}f4?$! 24 $\mathbb{A}c1$ $\mathbb{W}f6$



25 $\mathbb{W}e1?$!

White misses his cue! It was natural not to want the queen hit by 25 f4! $\mathbb{Q}g4$, but after 26 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 27 g3 $\mathbb{W}h3$ 28 f5 Black has no further way to strengthen his attack, and his pieces will be very offside. This delay enables Black to strengthen his readiness for f3-f4 in two ways – the rook on the e-file and his knight headed for d4.

25... $\mathbb{E}e8$! 26 $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$! 27 f4 $\mathbb{E}g4$! 28 $\mathbb{H}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4?$

By 28... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ Black could have maximised his firepower against White's centre.

29 $\mathbb{H}h3$ $\mathbb{W}a1?$! 30 $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{W}b2$ 31 $\mathbb{E}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$
32 $\mathbb{Q}xc2$! $\mathbb{W}xc2$ 33 $\mathbb{E}c3$! $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 34 h3
 $\mathbb{H}h4$ 35 $\mathbb{E}e2$ g5

Of course this is not played for the fun of it, but 32... $\mathbb{H}h6$ would meet with 33 f5. By his timely return of the bishop pair, White ensured that Black's clumsy rook be the central factor in the position.

36 $\mathbb{E}g3$ $\mathbb{H}h5$ 37 e5! $\mathbb{H}h6$ 38 $\mathbb{A}c3$ $\mathbb{W}a8$ 39
f5 dx e5 40 $\mathbb{E}xg5+$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 41 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 42
f6+! $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 43 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ 1-0

If 43... $\mathbb{W}c6$ 44 $\mathbb{E}d2$ will settle the issue immediately.

Summary

7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ has introduced a fascinating new episode in the development of Scotch theory. I hope the notes explain the logic of the move, but it is more difficult to explain chess fashion! Basically the note on 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $gxf6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 11 $c3!$ in Game 46 looks very problematic indeed for Black. Whatever happened to good old 8... $\mathbb{Q}g6$! The notes to Game 44 do not give Black any real cause for despondency.

Also neglected is 8... $\mathbb{W}e6$? since acceptance of the pawn in Game 47 involves definite danger. For White, I am interested in declining the c7-pawn – see the note on 9 $\mathbb{W}g5$? – but this looks like an interesting position rather than a refutation of Black's idea.

Games 49 and 50 look at the structure when Black captures with the b-pawn. This cannot be particularly recommended, but White's play is not automatic. Do not forget the popularity of this structure for Black with the white pawn on c3 (see Chapter 13).

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

6... $\mathbb{W}f6$

5...bx $c6$ – Game 50

6 $\mathbb{W}d2$ dx $c6$

6...bx $c6$ – Game 49

7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (D)

7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ – Game 48

7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$

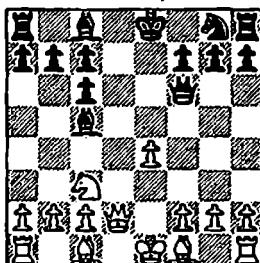
8... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $gxf6$ (D)

10 f4 – Game 45

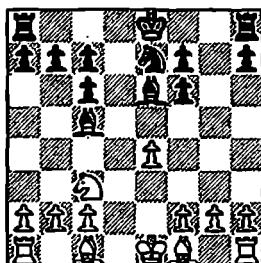
10 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ – Game 46

8... $\mathbb{W}e6$ – Game 47

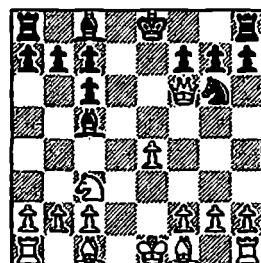
9 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ (D) – Game 44



7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$



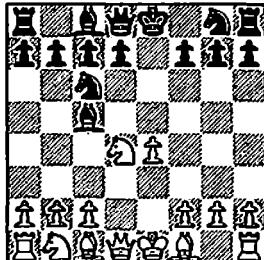
9...gx $f6$



9 $\mathbb{W}xf6$

CHAPTER EIGHT

4... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ and 5 $\mathbb{Q}f5?$!



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$

In this chapter we look at White's other knight moves on move five, 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (Games 51-55) and 5 $\mathbb{Q}f5?!$ (notes to Game 51). 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ is the subject of Chapters 9-11.

Game 51 Van der Wiel-Gulko Amsterdam 1987

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$

5 $\mathbb{Q}f5?!$ seems to be out of favour for good reason. Black gets excellent attacking chances by direct means after 5...d5! 6 $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}h4!$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6!$ (it speaks volumes that six of White's first eight moves are with one piece!) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ dxе4! (this looks the simplest, since Black's rook will occupy the d-file effectively) 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 12 fxе3 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ h5 14 b3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 15 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ h4 with advantage, as in Yakovich-Goldin, Moscow 1994.

5... $\mathbb{Q}b6$

The offbeat 5... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ is seen in Game 55.

6 a4 a5?!

For me there is not much doubt that

lines based around the move ...a7-a6 represent the most sensible response, and that the immediate 6...a6! (Games 52-54) has at the very least, the merit of flexibility. However, other ways to avoid this have been sought, e.g.

a) 6... $\mathbb{Q}h4?!$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 a5 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ (with the queen and bishop both on White's fourth rank, White can squeeze some embarrassment out of the bishop's situation) 10...c5 11 c3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 14 f4 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 0-0 16 f5 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ and Black is evidently very low on compensation, since 18... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ would be well met by 19 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ with g2-g3 to follow in Ehvest-Nenashev, Groningen 1997.

b) 6... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ when 7...a6 is one common route to Game 54, while 7... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 9 c3 $\mathbb{Q}e5?!$ 10 g3 c6 11 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 0-0 looks playable, although I prefer White.

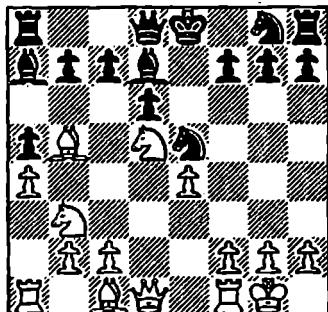
7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6 8 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e5$

see following diagram

11 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

This move, targeting the vulnerable a5-pawn, is a huge improvement over the rather lame exchange on d7 which had

been previously played. The tricky part is the very fine tactical justification. After 11...c6, White has 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ b6 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ f6! (13...cx b 5?!) 14 f4 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ h6 16 f5 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 17 fx g 6 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 18 gx f 7+ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ gives White a devastating attack; to see why, just look at the bishop on a7!!) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$! (an instructive moment; putting a pawn on e5 actually facilitates the opening of files) 14...fx e 5 (14...dx e 5?!) 15 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ cx d 5 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ is still worse; the d-file is just as potent) 15 f4! cx d 5 16 fx e 5 and again White's attack gains greatly from the frankly ridiculous bishop on a7.



11... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 ex d 5 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$
14 ax b 5 0-0 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g5?$

A blunder which shortens the agony. In any case Black has less than nothing for his pawn.

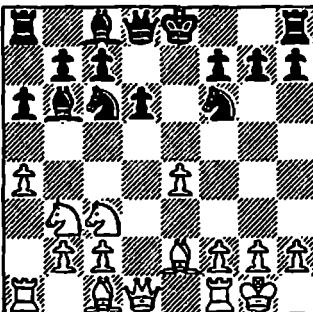
16 $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ 17 f4 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d4?$
 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 19 h3 $\mathbb{Q}aa8$ 20 hx g 4 $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$
 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 1-0

Game 52
Adams-Wells
Dublin Zonal 1993

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

There is nothing theoretically wrong with this move, but I would now prefer the flexible 6...d6. If then 7 a4 a6 we

transpose to Game 53. 7 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ is also not dangerous on account of 7... $\mathbb{Q}h4!$
7 a4 a6 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d6 9 0-0



9... $\mathbb{Q}e6?$

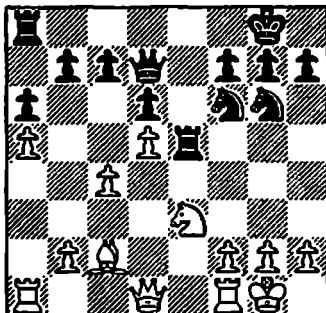
This basically commits Black to relinquishing the bishop pair for no real compensation. At this stage I held fond notions of 'counterplay on the dark squares', but White's very efficient rearrangement of his pieces quickly quashed these. Clearly 9...0-0?!) 10 $\mathbb{Q}g5$! is also unpleasant, but so long as Black is in a position to answer any $\mathbb{Q}d5$ by capturing with the knight, it is not entirely clear what White's back-up plan is. Hence I think 9...h6? is a justified expenditure of a tempo, when Black's position is satisfactory.

10 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 11 ex d 5 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 12 a5 $\mathbb{Q}a7$
13 c4 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16
 $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

Simple and logical. White deals with the threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and exchanges his opponent's most influential piece. His extra space and remaining bishop will be enough to guarantee a nagging plus.
16... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19
 $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

A fine move which at once releases the queen to contest the central dark squares, and raises the unpleasant prospect of $\mathbb{Q}a4$ as an answer to Black's wish to double on the e-file. Still, this is one of those posi-

tions where the complete lack of weak points in the enemy camp dictates a strategy of grinning and bearing the squeeze, which has never been my speciality. Black's acceptance of a weakness is misguided for the simple reason that his 'piece activity' has no targets.



19...c6? 20 dxcc6 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 22 $\mathbb{E}fd1$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 23 $\mathbb{E}xd4$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 24 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 25 $\mathbb{E}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 26 $\mathbb{E}d2$ g6 27 g3 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ d5 29 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d4 30 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{E}f5$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Without the coming exchange sacrifice, Black's chronically weak d-pawn would eventually decide against him.

32 cxd5 $\mathbb{E}fxd5$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{E}xd5$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 35 $\mathbb{E}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}a7?$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 38 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{E}f5$ 39 f4 40 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}d5$ 41 $\mathbb{E}ce2!$

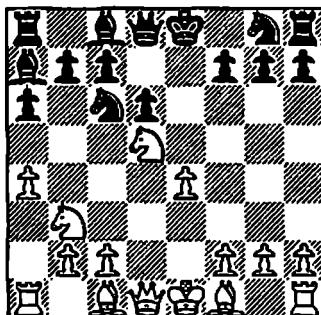
It becomes clear why the b5-square is only very superficially attractive for Black's knight. White's pieces are very efficiently deployed – the king blockading and rooks poised to penetrate. The knight on c6 could have at least challenged the squares e7 and b4. Now there is nothing so...

1-0

Game 53
Hector-B. Kristensen
Vejle 1994

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

$\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 6 a4 a6 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6!? 8 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$



9 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

This line, which has been rather effective in John van der Wiel's creative hands, always makes a slightly strange impression. White is aiming to clamp down his control of d5 with pawns on e4 and c4, but neither the absence of dark-squared bishops, nor the rather passive knight on b3, should really help this strategy. An overview of others:

a) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6!$ 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 11 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ should not hold any terrors for Black. We reach the structure of Adams-Wells above, with Black's bishop pair intact. In a very real sense, Black has tempted White's knight forward in order to challenge it with tempo.

b) 9 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6?$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 11 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 12 0-0-0 0-0 13 f4 $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ was comfortable for Black in Halasz-Lukacs, Budapest 1979.

c) 9 $\mathbb{W}B3?$, directed against ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$, has been a source of much recent fun. After 9... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 10 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6?$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ 16 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ gives White a clear edge, so Black has little choice but to enter massive complications by 10... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ 11 $\mathbb{W}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xg7$ $\mathbb{W}h4!$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}xh1+$ 15 g3 $\mathbb{W}xb2$. In fact Black's attack seems to be the stronger since neither 16 $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f2+!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$, nor the

ingenious 16 $\mathbb{Q}h3+?$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}f2+18$ $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}g2!$ Camacho-L.Valdes, Cuba 1998, solve White's problems, as now 19 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}h4+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xh1$ is met by the very elegant 21... $\mathbb{Q}c1+!$

9... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 0-0 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e8$

There is nothing much wrong with 12... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$ either on the evidence of Van der Wiel-Van der Sterren, Dutch Championship 1996, which continued 13 f4 $\mathbb{Q}fg4!$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{cx}d3$ c5! (restricting the knight and preparing a queenside expansion) 17 a5 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}c3$ f5 19 e5 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ b5 21 $\mathbb{exd}6$ b4 22 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (otherwise Black can simply claim the better minor piece) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ and Black's rooks will double on the seventh, after which it is clearly White struggling for the half a point.

13 f3 $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

13... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ has been the more commonly chosen square, although the text has the familiar advantage that Black can answer a later $\mathbb{Q}d5$ by capturing with his knight. One example of White's possibilities: 14 c4 a5 15 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 f4 f6 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}ef5$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ with an attack in Van der Wiel-Gomez Esteban, Linares Zonal 1995. For all White's strange-looking piece formation, it can be difficult for Black to create counterplay with this structure.

14 c4 $\mathbb{W}b8!$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}a7!$

An excellent and far from obvious way to fight for the critical central dark squares.

16 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{exd}5$

It looks strange to open the e-file, where the gambling man's money has to be on Black's influence. However, if 17 $\mathbb{cx}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}d2$ f5! White's e-pawn forms the target for Black's counter-chances.

17... $\mathbb{Q}b4?$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 19 a5?

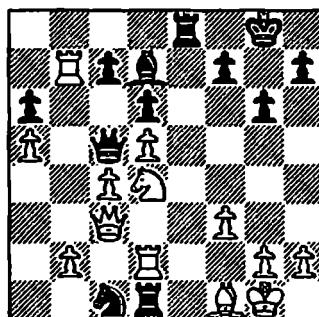
There was nothing better than this rather vague hope that Black's knight might be left stranded. Otherwise Black cements it into place with ...a6-a5.

19... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ g6

Black presumably rejected 20... $\mathbb{H}e1!$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ due to 23 $\mathbb{H}e7$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 24 b3 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25 $\mathbb{H}e4$ when White saves his material. However, as Bjarke Kristensen's indicates in his notes, simply 25... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 26 $\mathbb{bx}a4$ g6! is excellent.

Queen and knight are a notoriously potent force together. When they have pawn weaknesses to target into the bargain, they can run amok.

21 $\mathbb{H}a3$ $\mathbb{H}e1$ 22 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 23 $\mathbb{H}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 25 $\mathbb{W}c3?$ $\mathbb{H}d1$ 26 $\mathbb{H}d2$



26... $\mathbb{Q}e2+1$

An elegant exploitation of various pins, which rests too on Black's excellent 28th move resource.

27 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 28 b4 $\mathbb{H}ee1!$ 29 $\mathbb{W}xe1$ $\mathbb{W}xd4+$ 30 $\mathbb{W}f2$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 31 h3 $\mathbb{Q}b5!$

A decisive win of material.

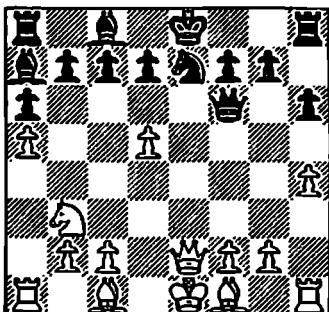
32 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}xf1$ 33 $\mathbb{H}b8+$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 34 $\mathbb{W}b2+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 35 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}g1+$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}e1+$ 37 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}e5+$ 38 g3 $\mathbb{W}d4!$ 0-1

Game 54
Djurovic-Rajic
Novi Sad open 1988

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{exd}4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

$\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 6 $a4$

6 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ can also lead to the game continuation after 8 $a4$ $a6$ etc. However, White also has the option to play without this move by 8 $\mathbb{Q}e3$. The plan of castling queenside is not without risk. In A.Grosar-Liss, Budapest 1994, Black was able to break in the centre and gain counterplay after 8 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 9 0-0 d6 10 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 11 f4 $\mathbb{E}fd8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d5! 13 e5 $\mathbb{W}h6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ d4 16 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 g3 $\mathbb{Q}db4!$ with attacking chances. 6... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ a6 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 10 exd5+ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 a5 $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 12 h4 h6



This rich and complex position has occurred several times in practice. Black's strategy of hindering White's natural development is familiar. Here, though, White's compensation is based on dangerous attacking chances.

13 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$

I like this move, which offers White chances of a dangerous piece attack without irrevocably committing his pawns.

Still, the kingside pawn storm also holds dangers for Black, who should think twice about castling kingside after 13 g4? In K.Arkell-Geenen, Ostend 1987, Black chose 13... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (13...d6 might be better) 14 g5 $\mathbb{W}d6$ 15 gxh6 gxh6 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{E}h3$ d6 18 0-0-0 (a typical Arkell position!) 18... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 20 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 21 $\mathbb{W}e2$

$\mathbb{W}e5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ dx5 23 $\mathbb{E}d3+$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 25 $\mathbb{E}xe5$ $\mathbb{E}g1$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 28 $\mathbb{E}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ and the game miraculously fizzled out to a draw.

13...0-0?

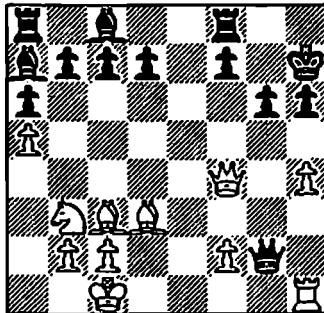
This looks disastrous, although 13... $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 14 $\mathbb{E}h3!$ is also dangerous. In Kucera-Muron, Czech League 1995, Black came under heavy fire after 14... $\mathbb{W}xc2$ 15 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{W}b2$ 16 $\mathbb{E}hc3$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}e5$ d6 18 $\mathbb{W}xg7$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}f6$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ since his queen is unable to play any defensive role.

13...d6? looks safest. After 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}f4$ 15 g3 $\mathbb{W}g4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{E}h7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 19 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ White can claim at most a slight edge, as in Sluka-Haba, Czech Championship 1993.

14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 15 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 16 $\mathbb{E}xd5!$

White deflects his opponent's queen from the possibility of check on f4, and reveals that Black's kingside is utterly helpless. Note that 12...h6 can easily turn out to be a terrible concession.

16... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}g4$ g6 18 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xg2$



20 $\mathbb{W}f6!!$ $\mathbb{W}xh1+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

There is no defence of the g7-square, without giving up the queen. White must simply side-step a few checks to emerge victorious.

21... $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ 22 fxe3 $\mathbb{W}h2+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}h1+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}h2+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}g1+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f1$

$\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 28 $bxc3$ d6 29 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ c5 31 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 1-0

Game 55
Landenbergue-Korchnoi
Ptuj Zonal 1995

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+?$

An interesting sideline which nicely bears on the theme of seeking to hinder the opponent's optimal development, even at the expense of time.

6 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

I prefer this to 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ when Black can point to two 'developmental concessions' from White - retreating one knight and blocking the other.

6...a5!

Black seeks to maintain the tension, an interesting alternative to the simple 6... $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ which offered White fair attacking chances after 7 $\mathbb{W}xd2!$ (as usual, White's knight belongs on c3, participating in the struggle for d5) 7... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6 9 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 10 f3 0-0 11 g4 a5 12 h4 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 g5 in Hjartarson-Malaniuk, Tilburg 1993, although after 13... $\mathbb{R}e8$, making room on f8 for the knight, Black's defensive prospects are not bad. The knight on b3 helps his cause in comparison with similar positions with castling on opposite sides.

7 $\mathbb{Q}xb4?$

A serious mistake. White was no doubt concerned to solve the problem of the further advance of Black's a-pawn, but failed to foresee the consequences of this exchange for his queenside development.

7 c3? $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is also worse for White than in the comparable note to move six above. Black's ...a7-a5 contributes much more to Black's position than the unhelpful 'developing' move $\mathbb{Q}d2$.

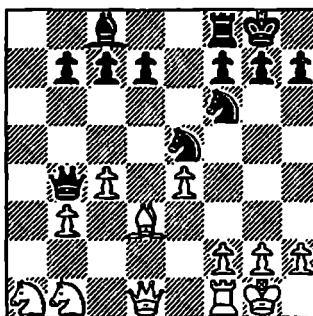
The elegant trick 7 $\mathbb{Q}b5+?$ $\mathbb{W}g5!$ can claim the talented tactician Grandmaster

Kupreichik among its victims, and is a definite argument for 6...a5!?

Hence 7 a3 looks best. Black can claim an improved version of Hjartarson-Malaniuk by exchanging, although in such a position White's seventh move also has a valid defensive role, stopping the a-pawn in its tracks. I find 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$ rather in the spirit of Black's strategy. In Smirin-Khalifman, Leningrad 1990, Black demonstrated surprisingly comfortable equality after 8 a4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ d5! 11 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$.

7... $\mathbb{W}xb4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 0-0 0-0 10 c4

This looks ugly, and by no means enhances the likelihood of a satisfactory challenge to Black's b-pawn. Still, 10 c3 d5! was not very enticing either, when Black will come quickly to dominate the d-file. 10... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 11 a3 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ $\mathbb{W}xb4$ 14 b3



14...b5!

Rather adding insult to injury. If 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$, 15... $\mathbb{W}d4$ is an unusual but devastating fork. The conversion from positional to material advantage will be brisk indeed.

15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{R}e8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 23 h3 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 0-1

Black wins a piece, due to his knight's defence of c8.

Summary

5 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ d5! seems to be more than satisfactory for Black. 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ on the other hand is of course of more durable stuff, but I think there are good grounds for its low popularity.

Games 51 and 52, and to some extent Game 54 exist mainly as warnings to Black. The best counter to a2-a4 is ...a7-ab, and I also feel strongly that ...d7-d6 is the right reply to $\mathbb{Q}c3$. Game 53 is the model, and Black's unusual plan of 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ followed by ... $\mathbb{W}b8-a7$ is well worth noting. One word of warning though - do take a moment to check out the note on 9 $\mathbb{W}f3$! The play, though fine for Black, is very sharp.

As far as I can see, 5... $\mathbb{Q}b4$! might constitute a further mild argument against 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$

5... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ (D)

5... $\mathbb{Q}b4$! - Game 55

6 a4 (D) a6

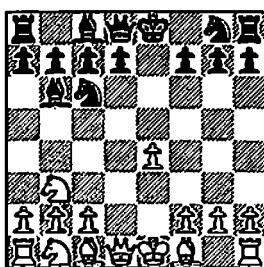
6...a5 - Game 51

6... $\mathbb{W}f6$ - Game 54

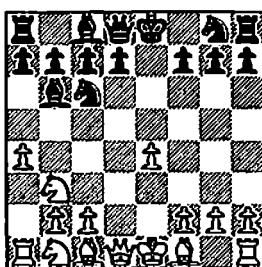
7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (D) d6

7... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ - Game 52

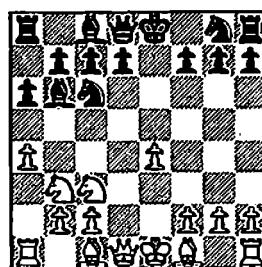
8 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ - Game 53



5... $\mathbb{Q}b6$



6 a4

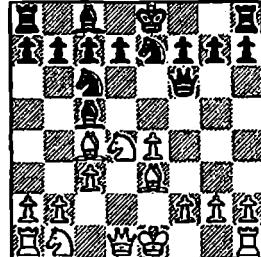


7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

CHAPTER NINE

5 ♜e3 ♛f6 6 c3 ♜ge7

7 ♜c4: Systems with ... ♜e5



1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♛f6 6 c3 ♜ge7 7 ♜c4

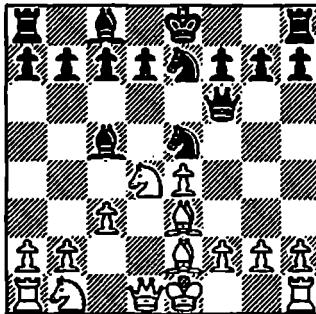
There is not much doubt that 7 ♜c4, hindering Black's desire to free his position by breaking rapidly in the centre with the advance ...d7-d5, is the critical test of Black's set-up in the 5 ♜e3 main line. This has not always been the accepted view. The material of this chapter is thus very interesting, since the initiation of counterplay with ... ♜e5 - often in conjunction with ... ♛g6, hitting e4 and g2 - was for a long time the cause of prevailing scepticism. However, White has found ways to sacrifice the e4-pawn which have led to many an exciting victory, but overall, I am rather optimistic concerning Black's chances if he is well versed in the numerous pitfalls.

Game 56 Ehlvest-Beliavsky Reykjavik 1991

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♛f6 6 c3 ♜ge7 7 ♜c4 ♜e5 8 ♜e2!

Very much the right retreat for this piece. It is not the loss of tempo which it might seem at first sight, since the bishop

has lured Black's knight onto a square where it is in turn vulnerable to attack.



8... ♛g6

The most common move and probably best. However, since 7 ♜c4 was directed against Black's desire to capture a full share of the centre by ...d7-d5, we must first ascertain that 8...d5 is no panacea before we can be satisfied that Black's eighth move is also the most logical. In fact White should in any case coolly reply 9 0-0!, relying on the loosening of the bishop on c5 and Black's uncastled king to provide the requisite tactical possibilities. Black can choose between:

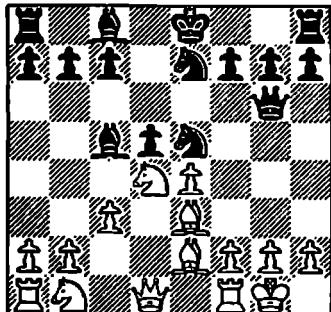
a) 9... ♛g6 transposing back into the main game.

b) 9...0-0 leading to Game 59.
 c) 9...dxe4?!, inviting the fine tactical flurry 10 ♕b5 ♖d6 (10...♕xe3 gets mated in two, while 10...♗b6 11 ♖xc5 ♗xc5 12 ♖d4! is a fine overworking of Black's queen, which is unable to keep both e5 and c7 covered) 11 ♖c5! 0-0 12 ♔xd6 cxd6 13 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 14 ♖xd6 ♕c6 15 ♖d2 with a large positional advantage for White based on his bishop pair, and resulting control of the dark squares, in Steingrimsson-Malaniuk, Kecskemet 1991.

8...0-0? also seems questionable, and is likely to transpose to either of Games 59 and 60; not necessarily an advert for its merits!

It is, however, worth noting that 8...d6? 9 0-0 ♗g6! also seems to be a legitimate route to the critical position covered in Games 61-64. Black has suffered a couple of times in practice at the hands of 9 f4?!, but has not yet found the thematic 9...♗g4! Almost without exception in the 7 ♖c4 lines, White should not try f2-f4 prior to castling.

9 0-0 d5?



Here my sympathy for Black's moves comes to an end. 9...d6(!) leads again to Games 61-64.

10 ♖h5!

Three themes which will play a substantial role in this chapter already come into play here:

i) The need for White to pay attention to the possibility of ...♖h3. Here, for example, 10 ♕b5 is a clear mistake in view of 10...♖h3 11 ♖xc7+ (11 ♖f3 dxe4!) 11...♗f8 12 ♖f3 ♖xe3 13 fxe3 dxe4.

ii) White's refusal to let Black's queen rest in peace. In particular this move ♖h5, often clearing the way for the advance of the f- and e-pawns. Here, of course there is an extra dimension, leading us on to the third...

iii) ...sacrifices of the e-pawn, which occur frequently, White seeking compensation in developing with tempo, again chasing the poor black queen.

In fact, in view of i) there may be less element of choice than usual concerning iii).

10...♗xe4

10...♗g4 is seen in the next game.

11 ♖d2

Logical, but it is always worth checking out another familiar idea, the vulnerability of c7. Lukacs claims that here 11 ♖b5! ♖xe3 12 ♖xc7+ ♖d8 13 ♖xa8 ♖c5 14 ♖d2 ♗f5 15 ♖b3 ♖d6 16 ♖e2 b6 17 a4! gives White the advantage.

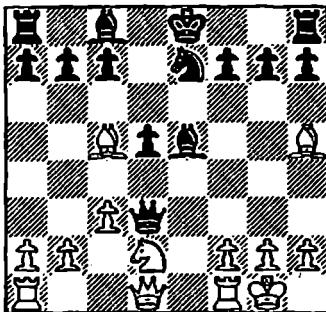
11...♗d3

The loose bishop on c5 continues to be a source of tricks. Thus 11...♗h4?! 12 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 13 ♖f3 ♗f6 14 ♖xc5 is very unpleasant for Black.

12 ♖f3 ♖d6

If 12...♗xe3?!, which has occurred several times in practice, White has 13 ♖xe5 ♗xd2 14 ♗f3! giving a very powerful attack. One typical neat miniature: 14...♖h6 15 ♖xf7+ (for historical accuracy, I should point out that White's 14th and 15th moves have been inverted; I think 14 ♗f3! is the most flexible and precise) 15...♗d8 16 ♗ad1 ♗f4 17 ♖xd5+! ♖xd5 18 ♗xd5+ ♗c7 19 ♗e1 ♗f6 (if 19...♗e6 20 ♖c6+ wins too) 20 ♖d7+ ♖xd7 21 ♗xd7 g5 22 ♖h5! g4 23 ♗e7+ 1-0 Chowaniec-Borowski, correspondence 1993. Mate will

follow 23...♗f5 24 ♘e6+ ♗g5 25 ♜e5+ ♘xe5 26 ♘xe5+ ♘h4 27 ♘f7 etc.
13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 ♘c4!



A key move. White prevents castling and prepares to gang up on the e-file. Note that the standard e-file blocking manoeuvre ...♜e6 will not always be available here due to the pin on Black's f-pawn. 14 ♘e1?! ♘d6! would be weaker.

14...g6

Two alternatives are worth attention for the light they shed on White's possibilities:

a) After 14...♝f5 Sveshnikov offers us the following superb demonstration of White's attacking potential: 15 ♜e1 ♘f6 (15...g6?! 16 ♘xe7!) 16 ♘e2 0-0 17 ♘xe7 ♘e8?!! (17...♞xe7 18 ♘xe7 ♘xh5 19 ♘xc7 restricts White to a positional advantage only) 18 g4! (destroying Black's hopes of mobilising his queenside) 18...♝d7 19 ♘xf6! ♘xe2 20 ♘xe2 gxh5 21 ♘a1 ♘c6 22 ♘e8+ ♘g7 23 ♘e7 ♘xg4 24 ♘xf7 winning back huge material. The bishop on h5 frequently proves itself as a tremendous attacking resource, and Black's attempt in the game to evict it immediately is understandable.

b) 14...♞f6 15 ♜e1 g6 16 ♘e2! ♘f5 17 ♘a4+! (again Sveshnikov's prescription; White uses all his forces to keep the black king in the centre) 17...c6 (17...♝d7 18 ♘f4! is a nice transfer of the queen; a re-

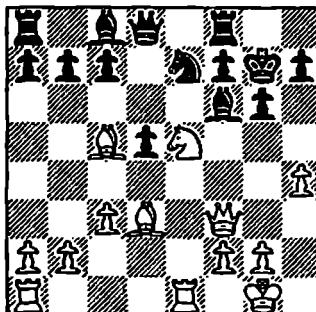
minder of Black's potential weaknesses on the kingside too) 18 ♘a3! ♘e6 19 ♘b3 with tremendous compensation. After the coming ♘d4, it will be difficult for Black to keep a minimal grip on the dark squares.

15 ♘e2 ♘f5 16 ♘f3 ♘f6

16...♜d6?! 17 ♘xd6 cxd6 18 ♘b5+ ♘f8 19 ♘d4! (Ehlvest) can hardly be countenanced from either a tactical or positional standpoint.

17 ♘e1 0-0 18 ♘d3 ♘d7 19 ♘e5! ♘d8 20 ♘f3 ♘g7 21 h4!

A fine picture of activity. White threatens the very attractive 22 ♘d7 ♘xd7 23 ♘xf6+!! and mate on d4. However, Black continues to put up the best defence, and White has to be content with a small material gain.



21...♞h4! 22 ♘f4 ♘f6 23 ♘f3 ♘g8! 24 ♘xf8+ ♘xf8 25 ♘ad1 ♘g7 26 c4 c6?!! 27 cxd5 cxd5 28 ♘c4

The d-pawn forms a new target for White's operations.

28...♛e7 29 ♘b3 a5

Black cannot afford to desert the kingside with 29...♜xb2, since 30 ♘d4! basically prevents its return. Ehlvest gives the further 30...♜xd4 31 ♘xd4+ ♘g8 32 ♘f6 ♘e6 33 ♘xe6! with a crushing attack.

30 ♘g5 ♘a6 31 ♘e4 a4?!! 32 ♘c4 ♘a8 33 ♘d2! ♘c7 34 ♘xf6 ♘xf6 35 ♘xd5?

An unfortunate slip just when White's

fine efforts were just bearing fruit. 35 $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ would have maintained control.

35... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ 36 f3 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 37 fxg4

Of course White would want to recapture the knight, but unfortunately 37 $\mathbb{W}xd5?$ allows 37... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$

37... $\mathbb{W}g3$ 38 g5 $\mathbb{E}f4?$

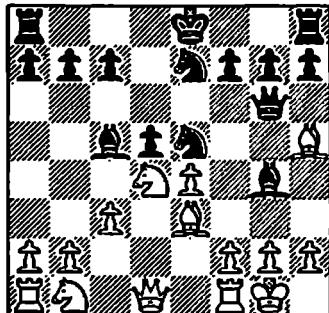
Returning the favour. 38... $\mathbb{H}f5$ 39 $\mathbb{W}d4+$ f6 40 $\mathbb{G}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ is a draw according to Ehlvest. Now White can exchange a pair of rooks, and moreover, the g5-pawn spells bad news for Black's king.

39 $\mathbb{H}f11$ a3 40 $\mathbb{E}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 41 $\mathbb{W}d4+$ 1-0

Game 57
Rublevsky-H.Gretarsson
Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 9 0-0 d5 10 $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ $\mathbb{Q}g4?$

An attempt to improve upon Game 56. Rather than be subjected to an unpleasant attack, Black sacrifices a pawn of his own.



11 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ $\mathbb{W}xf7$ 13 $\mathbb{E}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$

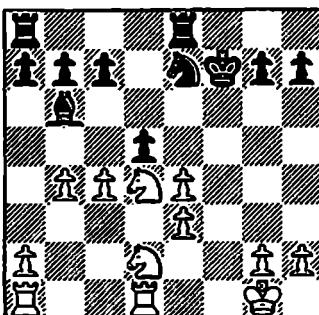
Of course 13...dxe4? 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ would play into White's hands. Now Black offers his opponent a choice: retreat the bishop and return the pawn, or suffer the structural consequences of an exchange on e3.

14 b4!

Very strong. 14 $\mathbb{Q}c1?$ dxe4 15 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$

16 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6!$ with ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and ...e4-e3 to come was very pleasant for White in Hakk-Husari, Syria 1992.

14... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 16 fxe3 $\mathbb{E}he8$ 17 c4!



Another important moment. Black can still claim a degree of positional compensation, based not just on White's e-pawns, but on his easy development and strong bishop on b6. So White addresses this latter question. Note that the e-pawns are not just dead wood. The e3-pawn plays a crucial role in cementing the strongly centralised knight on d4.

17...dxc4

In Konguvel-Barcenilla, Calcutta 1994, Black tried to preserve his bishop by avoiding this capture preferring 17...a5, but the piece anyway becomes pretty much incarcerated after 18 c5 $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ axb4 21 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 22 e4 $\mathbb{E}xe4$ 23 d6 with the better chances for White.

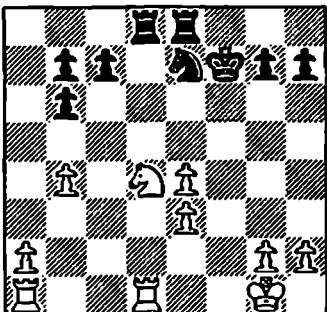
18 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{E}ad8?$

18... $\mathbb{E}ed8$ would prevent White's plan in the game, but it takes the pressure off the e-file and allows White time to build with 19 a4!

19 $\mathbb{Q}xb6!$

Accuracy is all. 19 $\mathbb{Q}b5?$ would be careless since 19...a6! 20 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb5 is embarrassing, while if 20 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}a7!$ the bishop has secured a rather promising lease of life.

19...axb6



20 ♜b5 ♜c6 21 ♜xd8 ♜xd8

21... ♜xd8 22 ♜f1+ (driving away the king, which secures the d5-square for the knight) 22... ♜g6 23 ♜xc7 ♜xe4 24 ♜d5 is no improvement.

22 ♜xc7 ♜d2 23 ♜f1+ ♜g6 24 ♜d5 ♜xa2 25 b5! ♜a7 26 ♜f8 ♜a4

26... ♜xb5? would bring the potential danger to Black's king into sharp focus, viz. 27 ♜f4+ ♜h6 28 ♜f5!

27 e5 1-0

There are now no more complications. The e-pawn runs home by tactical means after 27... ♜e4 28 e6! ♜xb5 29 e7 ♜d6 30 ♜d8.

Game 58
Kasparov-Sorin
Buenos Aires (simultaneous) 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♕f6 6 c3 ♜ge7 7 ♜c4 0-0

There is nothing at all wrong with this move - we shall see plenty more of it in the next chapter! However, I would be willing to stick my neck out and say that I do not think it is the best way to initiate the ... ♜e5 idea. The reasons will, I hope, become clear over the course of the rest of the chapter.

8 0-0 ♜e5 9 ♜e2 ♜g6

Black can also consider 9...d5? when White has an instructive choice between

'routine' development and immediately taking the bull by the horns:

a) 10 ♜d2?! ♜b6! 11 a4 (come back queen on g6, all is forgiven; without the ♜h5 idea, and with 11 f4 comfortably countered by 11... ♜h6, White is rather stuck for a plan!) 11... ♜c6! 12 exd5? (12 ♜c2 looks safer) 12... ♜xd5 13 ♜e4 ♜h4 14 ♜f3 ♜xe3 and Black was somewhat better in Blatny-Malaniuk, Pardubice 1993.

b) 10 f4! (this is the way to *punish* the absence of ... ♜g6) 10... ♜c6 (the point is that supporting the bishop on e3 is no longer a testing task, so 10... ♜h6? 11 ♜d2! favours White; however, 10... ♜c4? 11 ♜xc4 dxc4 12 ♜d2 b5 restricts White to a minimal edge) 11 e5 ♜h4, as in Thorhallsson-Svidler, Gausdal 1991, should favour White. There is no reason to weaken the light squares on the kingside with 12 g3? The undefended bishop on c5 (again!) affords White the opportunity to evict the queen with the more thematic 12 ♜f2! with a definite plus.

10 ♜d2!

Here this natural development is clearly best, and the very fact that the substitution of ...0-0 over the ...d7-d6 of Games 60-64 permits this smooth mobilisation should give Black pause for thought.

It is just worth mentioning that the premature initiation of tactics by 10 ♜f5? is simply bad here since 10... ♜xf5 11 ♜xc5 (11 exf5 ♜b6!) 11... ♜h4! 12 g3 d6 with ... ♜h3 and ... ♜xe4 to follow give Black a ferocious attack.

10...d5

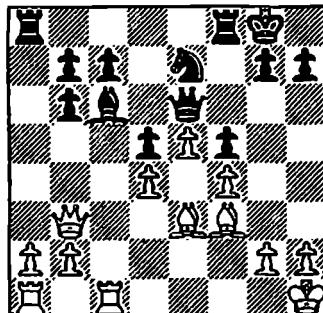
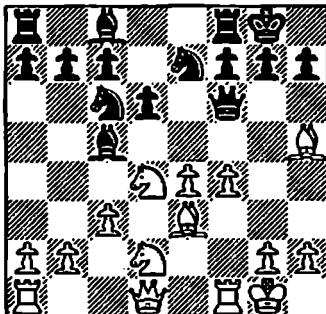
10...d5 will be considered in the next game. Neither of these can, in my view, be regarded as fully adequate for Black. The fault lies in the combination of an early ...0-0 with ... ♜e5.

11 ♜h5!

Another old friend!

11... ♜f6 12 14 ♜c6

19 ♜b3 ♜d7 20 Efc1 ♜c6



13 ♜h1!

The key work with such a move is to establish its 'playability'; its desirability on general grounds cannot be disputed. 13 ♜b3 was played previously, but Kasparov wants to put this piece to the more active square c4.

13...♜xd4 14 cxd4 ♜b6

I have not yet seen any published analysis of 14...♜xd4?!, so the following is a cautious attempt to bring out the main ideas: 15 e5 dxe5 16 fxe5 ♜xe5 17 ♜c4! ♜d5 (hitting c4 and h5 and thus saving the piece) 18 ♜xd4 ♜xc4 19 Eac1 ♜d5 20 Ee5 ♜xd1 21 Efxd1 Ee8 22 ♜xe7 g6! and now I see no more than a small advantage for White after 23 Exc7?!, gxh5 24 Ee5 f5! 25 h3? ♜e6 26 Ee5 ♜xa2 27 Exf5 ♜b1! (this fine switch of diagonals is Fritz's contribution!) 28 Ehx5 when I suspect that Black can defend, although his task is not a pleasant one. It may be that Kasparov has something stronger - I am not surprised that Sorin chose to avoid this.

15 ♜c4 d5 16 e5 ♜e6 17 ♜xb6 axb6 18 ♜f3 f5

Black is afraid of White expanding on the kingside with g2-g4 and f4-f5, and hopes to be able to blockade White's e-pawn. Later he is able to manoeuvre his knight to e6, but this piece is impotent to deal with the decisive opening of lines on the kingside.

21 ♜d2!

An excellent rearrangement of the pieces. The bishop heads for its arena of greatest influence, while the queen is freed to assist the decisive opening of lines on the kingside.

21...♝g6 22 ♜e3 Efe8 23 b3 ♜d7 24 e4 ♜f8 25 ♜b4 ♜e6 26 g4 ♜f7 27 Eg1 ♜h8 28 Eaf1 Ead8 29 Eg3 Ead7 30 ♜g1 g6 31 gxh5 ♜xh5 32 ♜g4 ♜e4 33 ♜xe4 dxe4 34 ♜xe6 Exe6 35 f5 gxh5 36 Ehf5 h6 37 Ehf6 ♜d5 38 ♜f8!

Even with reduced material the opposite-coloured bishops can assist the side mounting a direct attack on the king.

38...Efx6 39 exf6 ♜e6 40 ♜f2 ♜h7 41 ♜e7 h5

41...Exd4 would allow the simple 42 Eg7+ ♜h8 43 f7. Soon White is able to open a 'second front' on the queenside. The game is over.

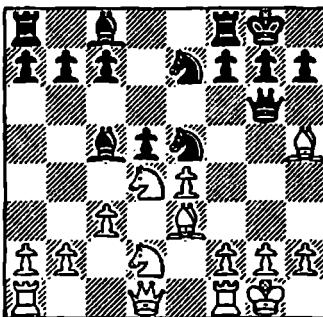
42 b4 Ehd5 43 ♜e3 Ef5 44 Eg7+ ♜h8 45 ♜xe4 c6 46 ♜d8 Ef2 47 ♜e5 Ee2+ 48 ♜d6 ♜b3 49 Ehb7 Ehx2 50 a5 bxa5 51 bxa5 ♜c4 52 Ehb4 ♜f1 53 d5 cxd5 54 Ef4 1-0

Game 59
 Rublevsky-Peng Xiaomin
 Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4

0-0 ♜e5 9 ♜e2 ♕g6 10 ♜d2 d5 11 ♜h5!

Yet again, when a pause in the ebb and flow of events gives White the chance to initiate play, this is the way to do it, expanding his position by attacking first Black's queen and then the knight on e5.



11...♕f6

Neither can Black's queen escape unwelcome attention by 11...♕a6?!, 12 ♜2b3! ♜d6 13 ♜e2 ♜c4 14 ♜c1!, since after this shrewd retreat Black's knight is overextended and his centre under pressure.

12 f4! ♜5c6 13 e5 ♕h6 14 ♜2b3 ♜xd4
15 cxd4

15 ♜xd4 is also not bad, but once it is established that Black cannot capture on d4 (see note to move 16) it must be right to keep the bishop pair. Black's healthy appearance on the light squares will be revealed as something of an illusion.

15...♜f5 16 ♜d2! ♕e8

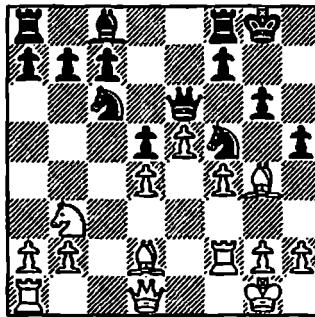
Of course 16...♜cxd4 is critical, but once Black releases his light-square blockade, White's superiority on the dark squares takes on a more concrete form and, moreover, the bishop on h5, as in previous games, leaps into the limelight as a formidable attacking weapon. White has 17 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 18 f5! ♕b6 (18...♕a6 19 f6! also results in problems for the dark squares around Black's king) 19 ♜e3! c5 20 ♜xd4! cxd4 21 ♜d2! with attacking

chances and a positional plus.

17 ♜f2! g6

Now there is a simple tactical refutation of 17...♜cxd4?, in 18 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 19 ♜b4. The text has far-reaching implications. White now decides to give up the bishop pair by capturing on f5. Again it looks very fine for Black's light-square chances, but the effect on the dark squares is devastating. White switches to direct attack and breaks through with some ease.

18 ♜g4 h5



19 ♜xf5! ♕xf5 20 Rc1

Remarkably, this rook is heading for g5!

20...♜e6 21 Hc3! Hac8 22 Hg3

Even now the exposure of Black's queen to direct attack is an important factor. Black's response is hopelessly weakening, but it is hard to suggest anything better.

23 ♜c5 ♜d8 24 exf8 ♜h7 25 Eg5 ♕xf6
26 f5!

This simply wins material as the g-pawn cannot abandon its defence of h5. The rook on g5 was the key to success, itself a tribute to White's dark-square domination.

26...♜xf5 27 Hgxf5 ♕xf5

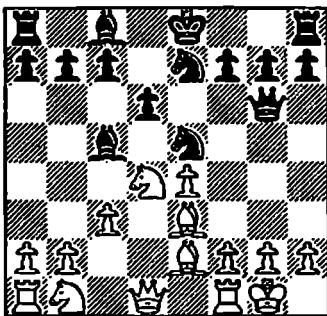
After 27...gx5, the simplest is 28 ♜d7 ♜g7 29 ♜d8+ ♕xf8 30 ♜xh5+

28 Hxf5 Hxf5 29 ♕e1 ♘f7 30 ♕e6 ♜d6
31 ♜d7 ♜e4 32 ♕e7+ ♜g8 33 ♘h6 1-0

Game 60
Svidler-Arkhipov
Russian Ch., Elista 1994

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4
 Wf6 5 Qe3 Qc5 6 c3 Qge7 7 Qc4 Qe5
 8 Qe2 Wg6 9 0-0 d6!

In my opinion this is clearly the best way for Black to approach this line, and indeed the diagram position forms the basis for the remainder of the chapter. Both the alternatives, 9...0-0 and 9...d5, covered above allow White to start dictating events, featuring in both cases the forcing move Ah5! embarrassing the black queen. Here, however, the bishop on c5 is well defended, the square g4 prepared for Black's immediate use, and in addition White has to weigh up the 'dual threat' of ...Wxe4 and ...Ah3.



10 Ah1

The first of a variety of ways in which White can sacrifice the e-pawn for some play, based on the slightly exposed black queen and the uncastled black king - more specifically the tactical possibility of Qb5. Here Black eschews the offer, which, perhaps a little strangely, is the most common choice in practice.

The alternatives 10 f4 and 10 f3 are considered in Game 62 and Games 63/64 respectively, while 10 Qd2?! is definitely

inferior in view of 10...Ah3! 11 Qf3 when Black will at leisure secure a nice edge based on White's lack of any compensation for the bishop pair. In Nikovits-Lukacs, Hungary 1991, Black did not rush, preferring first 11...0-0? 12 Qc2 (if 12 Ah1, 12...Qg4! is quite embarrassing) 12...Mad8! 13 b4 (13 Qxc5 dx5 introduces the terrible threat ...Bxd2 into the equation) 13...Bb6 14 Rxb6 axb6 with a very pleasant position.

10...0-0

For 10...Wxe4? see Game 61.

11 Qd2

11 f3 is likely to transpose to Games 63 and 64, while 11 f4? has not been tested at a very high level, but nonetheless seems to be a very enticing alternative. The first point is that 11...Wxe4?! leads to acute embarrassment for her majesty after 12 Qd2 Wxe3 13 Qc2! - a rather unusual trapping procedure. This is not quite the end of the story, however, as after 13...Qg4 14 Qxe3 (14 Qxg4? Wd3!) 14...Qxe3 15 Wa4 Qxf1 16 Bxf1 Black amassed rook, bishop and pawn for the queen, a virtual material parity, in E.Berg-Acs, European U-16 Championship, Rimavská Sobota 1996. Still, White will put the bishop on f3, and in view of his control of the long light-squared diagonal, combined with the possibility of advancing the queenside pawns, I prefer his position.

The second point is that 11...Qg4 can be met with 12 Qg1. Now K.Grosar-Basagic, Bled 1993, resulted in disaster for White after 12...f5 13 exf5 Qxf5 14 Qxg4 Qg3+! with a strong attack. There is, of course no need to activate the opponent's pieces like this. 13 Qxp4 immediately looks very promising, answering 13...fxg4 with 14 f5! and 13...Wxg4 with 14 Wxg4 fxg4 15 Qb5!

I would certainly regard 11 f4 as the theoretically critical line here, and this is

another good argument for the 10... ♕xe4(!) of Game 61.

11... ♗g4!

Support for this advance is, of course, a major motivation for ... ♕g6.

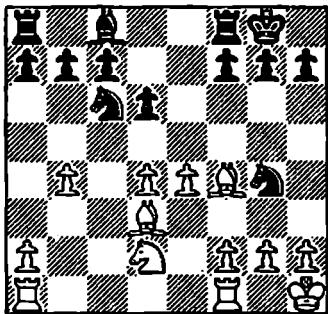
12 ♘f4 ♕f6 13 ♘d3

Black's interesting redeployment of his knight is looking to answer 13 f3? by 13... ♘h5 14 ♘e3 f5! with some counterplay.

13... ♕g4! 14 ♕xg4 ♖xg4 15 b4 ♘xd4

Probably both this and the quieter 15... ♘b6?! result in approximate equality. The main effect of the text move is to render the play much more critical, requiring accuracy from both sides.

16 cxd4 ♘c6



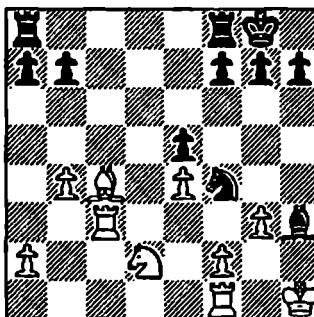
17 ♘ac1

Svidler's annotation here is very curious. He criticises this move, preferring 17 d5(?!) ♖xb4 18 ♘e2 ♘e8 and now 19 ♘fc1(?). Unfortunately this allows 19... ♘xf2+ 20 ♘g1 ♘xe4 which is winning for Black. Worse still, whilst the idea of 17 d5, retaining an important centre pawn and then seeking play on the b- and c-files, is admirable, there seems to be no satisfactory way to organise it. If White throws in 19 f3 ♘e5!, or indeed 19 ♘ab1 ♘xa2! is equally unsatisfactory. Hence I see nothing better than the column move. 17... ♘xd4! 18 h3 ♘e5!

A sensible move. The greedy 18... ♘f6?! 19 ♘e3 ♘e6 20 f4! would leave Black very passive.

19 ♘xe5 dx5 20 ♘xc7 ♘e6 21 ♘c3 ♘f4 22 ♘c4 ♘e8 23 g3? ♘xh3??

A great pity, Black gets his pieces horribly tangled just as he has demonstrated equality. He should have played 23... ♘xc4 24 ♘xc4 ♘xh3! 25 ♘xe5 ♘g5 26 f3 ♘e6 with no problems.



24 ♘g1

An instructive moment. Black was rightly quite happy to give up two pieces for a rook in the case of 24 gxf4?!! ♘xf1 25 ♘xf1 ♘ac8!. White will have to relinquish both the c- and d-files or permit an exchange of his final rook, both unacceptable options. Meanwhile, his kingside lacks solidity and Black has a passed h-pawn. What he has overlooked is this incomparably better way to win two pieces for the rook while keeping control.

24... ♘e6 25 g4 ♘f4 26 ♘h2! ♘ac8 27 ♘xh3 ♘fd8 28 ♘d5 ♘c2 29 ♘d1 ♘xh3 30 ♘xh3 ♘f8 31 ♘g2 f6 32 ♘f1!!

An altogether different situation has arisen from that which Black envisaged on move 23. White's knight has two enticing routes. After ♘e3, he can head either for f5, or, following the pawn sacrifice g4-g5, via g4 to e5. In either case White's two pieces dominate the board, while his opponent's rooks have few points of attack.

In any case, Black's next move is a mistake. Giving up the c-file enables White's rook to join the attack too with decisive consequences.

32... $\mathbb{E}xa27$ 33 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}b2$ 34 $\mathbb{E}c7$ $\mathbb{E}xb4$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ $\mathbb{E}b6$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $g6$ 37 $\mathbb{E}f7+$ 1-0

If 37... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ is mate immediately.

Game 61
Van Wely-Piket
Monaco (2nd matchgame) 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}g6?$

A very interesting moment. After Loek van Wely's reply we transpose back to well-trodden paths. The question is whether the players had found reason to doubt theory's condemnation of 7... $\mathbb{W}g6$, or whether they were both ignorant of it. The latter seems unlikely, on the face of it, in a match between two high-class and well-prepared professionals, but such curiosities do occur occasionally as timely reminders of top-grandmaster fallibility. For the record the theoretical refutation of 7... $\mathbb{W}g6$ since Ivanchuk-Gulko, Reykjavik 1991, runs 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ (if 8... $\mathbb{W}xg2$ 9 $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ simply wins material) 9 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$! $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 10 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}f5+!$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ and whether or not Black captures on g2, his king, stuck pretty permanently in the middle, will be subjected to great discomfort. I have found no reason to doubt this verdict!

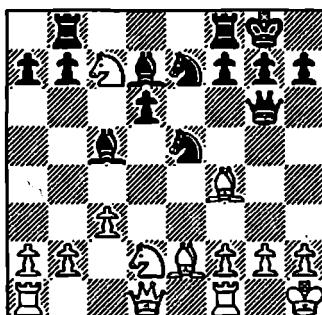
8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d6! 10 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xe4!$

The simplest and most thematic way, even if not the most popular! Both the current game and Game 62 give Black cause for optimism that he can respond to both 10 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ and 10 f4 in the textbook 'anti-gambit' manner, namely, accept the offer, but be willing to return the material in exchange for speedy development.

11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{E}b8$

14 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

Although it has to be said that this improves upon a game where in any case Black's difficulties were not that acute, the move has an elegant logic. The queen on g6 and bishop on c6 combine most effectively. 14... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ had been played in Lautier-Van der Sterren, Amsterdam 1994, which continued 15 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{E}bd8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}fe8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}d2$ d5 when despite Black's isolated queen's pawn, he had no serious problems since his pieces are active and have good squares to head for. It is worth staying with the play for just a few more moves to note how Black acquires a new strongpoint every time White takes steps to deal with the last: 21 $\mathbb{E}ae1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 22 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ 23 f3 (this takes back control of e4 but weakens e3; White could do with two f-pawns!) 23... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ (removing the threat to occupy e3, but at the price of inviting the bishop into d3) 24...dxc4 25 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ and this fine piece will guarantee equal play.



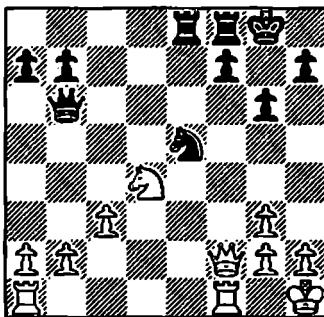
15 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$
18 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3+$ 19 $\mathbb{fxg3}$

White still has aspirations to disturb Black's queen with $\mathbb{Q}h5$ and $\mathbb{Q}f5$. Black's reply puts a stop to these. In general, Black's activity and bishop pair look good value in exchange for the slight weakness of d6.

19...♜e4 20 ♜h5 ♕h6 21 ♜f3 d5?

This has the serious drawback that after the exchange on e4 Black's e-pawn may be vulnerable to attack. 21...♝xf3 22 gxf3 ♜c6 was better according to Van Wely, since after 23 ♜xc6 bxc6 24 ♜xd6 ♜bd8 25 ♜f5 ♜g5! the penetration of his rook to the seventh rank will support dangerous counterplay.

22 ♜xe4 dxe4 23 ♜e2 e3 24 ♜f5 ♜e6
25 ♜bd4 ♜xd4 26 ♜xd4 ♜b6 27 ♜xe3
♜be8 28 ♜f2 g6



29 h3?

This jeopardises the larger part of White's initiative. This weakness of g3 is a more serious concern than the possibility of Black's knight coming to g4. Piket now immediately redeploys his knight to target it.

29...♝d3 30 ♜f3 ♜c5! 31 b3 ♜e4 32 ♜ad1 ♜c7 33 ♜d3 f5 34 ♜f4 ♜b6 35 c4 g5 36 ♜c1

36 ♜f3? f4! would be a harsh punishment for the self-inflicted weakness of g3. 36...♜a5 37 ♜h2! ♜e5 38 ♜ff3 h5?

Black has generated a fair degree of activity to compensate for the pawn minus. This time-trouble induced blunder ruins everything. He should have tried the thematic 38...f4! when Van Wely still claims a slight plus by 39 gxf4 gxf4 40 ♜e1. However, 40...♜d8! forces White into further passivity, and Black should have close to

full play for the pawn.

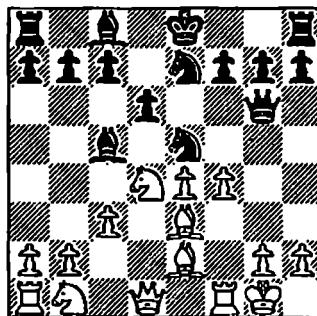
39 ♜xf6! h4

39...♜xf5 loses to 40 ♜d5

40 ♜d5 ♜c7 41 ♜e3 ♜f6 42 ♜g1 hxg3
43 ♜xg3 1-0

Game 62
Morozevich-Balashov
St Petersburg Zonal 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4
♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♜f6 6 c3 ♜ge7 7 ♜c4 ♜e5
8 ♜e2 ♜g6 9 0-0 d6 10 f4?



10...♜xe4!

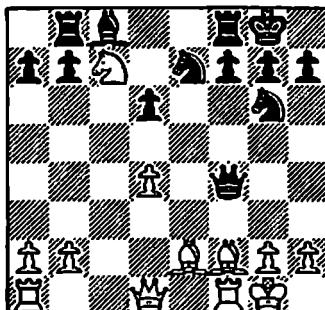
Here the acceptance of the challenge is almost universal. 10...♜g4? 11 ♜xg4! (better than the superficially attractive 11 f5? 12 ♜xe3 12 f5! 13 ♜f7+ ♜f8 14 ♜xd1 ♜c6!) [Wells] when White cannot support f7 and could suffer on the dark squares) 11...♜xg4 12 ♜d3 with ♜d2 and f4-f5 to follow favours White (Lukacs). After the text, the current theoretical verdict is again quite rosy, conditional upon a willingness to return material and a well developed sense of danger!

11 ♜f2 ♜xd4!

This capture is necessary, partly because of a familiar danger (11...♜g6? 12 ♜d2 ♜xf4 is met, for example, by a crushing version of the old 13 ♜b5! idea) and partly because Black's queen herself is in serious peril: 11...♜d7 12 ♜d3 ♜d5 13 c4! ♜xd4

14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4+$ 15 $\mathbb{B}f2!$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 $b3$, Stein-
grimsson-Lukacs, Kecskemet 1991, for
example, is good for White.

12 $cxd4!$ $\mathbb{Q}b5g6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b5$
0-0 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{K}b8$



16 d5

I am increasingly convinced that White has no possible advantage in the diagram. 16 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ can be met with 16... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 18 a4 $\mathbb{Q}f5$. White's problem is that his bishop pair in no way overshadows Black's excellent centralised knights, controlling key squares like f4 and e3. Still, this might be better than the problems arising from...

16...b6!

White sought to open up the diagonal for the 'uncontested' half of his bishop pair; and Black closes it off, using the fact that 17 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}g5!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ will give strong counterplay.

17 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}b7!$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g3$
 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 20 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{W}e7?$

A real shame after his fine opening play. The e-file is sufficiently Black's domain that he could have played the natural 20... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}e8!$ without fearing the pin, and with strong positional pressure.

21 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 23 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{W}e6?$

Presumably disturbed by the sudden turn of events, Black fails to address a simple threat. 23... $h6$ 24 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{R}f8$ was not so terrible. Now we get the once un-

likely scene of White's bishops on the rampage.

24 $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$ $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $g6?$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}g4$
 $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 27 $\mathbb{K}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 1-0

Game 63
Baklan-Smejkal
German Bundesliga 1997

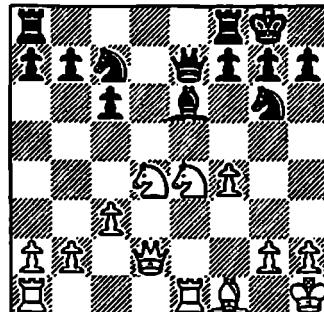
1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$
8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 9 0-0 d6 10 f3?

White's most solid choice, if only because it uniquely deals with both of Black's threats (as 10... $\mathbb{Q}h3$ no longer causes great inconvenience in view of 11 $\mathbb{B}f2$). The drawback of the move is the long-term weakening of the e3-square and the loosening of the bishop on e3. The most interesting structural consequence of the move is that if Black now reverts to the plan of playing ...d7-d5 (and he usually does!), White has the choice of answering a future ...d5xe4 by recapturing with the f-pawn - see Game 64.

10...0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d5 12 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$

Black keeps a foothold in the centre rather than take his chances by isolating White's e-pawn. My feeling is that Black's approach in the next game is preferable.

13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}5g6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ c6 16
 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$
19 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 21 f4!



During the game I was constantly impressed with how much White could make of his small advantage. Basically he has better posted knights and the inability of Black's queen to run from the e-file to work with.

21...♜ad8 22 f5 c5 23 fxe6 fxe6 24 ♜xc5 ♕xc5 25 ♜e3 e5 26 ♜f3 ♕xe3 27 ♜xe3 ♔d5 28 ♜ee1 ♜b6 29 ♜g1 ♜fe8 30 ♜e4 h6 31 ♜ae1 ♜d7 32 ♜e4e3 ♜e7 33 g3!

White is still squeezing the maximum by playing against the scope of Black's knights. Not just Black's e-pawn is weak, but his light squares on the kingside too. 33...♜de8 34 ♜d3 ♜gf8 35 ♜h4!

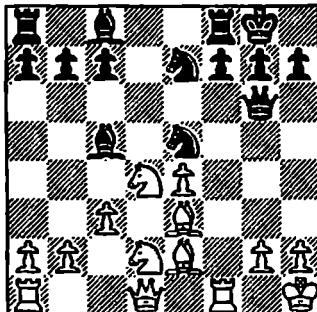
Thus White will win the e5-pawn while crucially maintaining all his positional plusses. Excellent technique.

35...♜f6 36 ♜f5 ♜c7 37 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 38 ♜xe5 ♜d8d7 39 ♜e7 ♜f8 40 ♜xg7 ♜c6 41 ♜g6 ♜d5 42 ♜d4 h5 43 ♜g5 ♜e5 44 ♜e2 1-0

Game 64
Thorhallsson-Pinter
Manila Olympiad 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♕f6 6 c3 ♔ge7 7 ♜c4 ♔e5 8 ♜e2 ♕g6 9 0-0 d6 10 f3 0-0 11 ♜h1 d5 12 ♜d2 dxe4! 13 fxe4

There is nothing new in debates concerning the relative importance of isolated pawns or active pieces. The interesting aspect here is that Black's pieces can in no way be regarded as passive. They are rather a little awkward - in particular the queen on g6, a double-edged sword as we have seen throughout the chapter. 13 ♜xe4 would incidentally be worth considering in the case of 13...♜b6?! 14 ♜f4, but instead Black has the powerful 13...♜d5! which forces White into the rather passive 14 ♜f2.



13...♜g4!

This seems to be Black's most reliable answer to 10 f3. It is worth exchanging the bishop on e2. In Schmittdiel-I.Sokolov, Groningen 1991, Black found this out to his cost after 13...♜d6?! 14 ♜c4! ♜xc4 15 ♜xc4 ♜g6 16 ♜b3 ♜d7 (the point is that 16...♜e5 fails to 17 ♜f4!) 17 ♜e6! fxe6 18 ♜xc5 with a horrible position for Black.

14 ♜f4 ♜d6?!

This is supposed to be a finesse compared with 14...♜xe2 15 ♜xe2 ♜d6 16 ♜b5!. In any case that is not too terrifying either. Black has, for example, 16...♜c6 17 ♜b3 ♜fe8, and now 18 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 19 ♜ad1 ♜e7 20 ♜d4 ♜xd4? 21 cxd4 ♜g6! is nothing for White. White should prefer 18 ♜d3?! with a slight edge.

15 ♜xe2

I do not see how Black intended to respond to 15 ♜b5!, other than with 15...♜xe2, transposing to the above note, since 15...♜h5, for example, fails miserably to 16 ♜xg4 ♜xg4 17 ♜xd6. The text leads to dead equality.

15...♜xe2 16 ♜xe2 ♜xe5 17 ♜c4 ♜xd4! 18 cxd4 c6 19 ♜ad1 ♜e6 20 b3 ♜ad8 21 ♜f3 ♜fe8 22 e5 ♜c8

Black covers d6, and has no more problems. White chose to repeat moves immediately.

23 ♜e3 ♜e7 24 ♜c4 ♜c8 25 ♜e3 ½-½

Summary

Extensive practice with 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ and the systems with ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ examined in this chapter have produced some great chess (look no further than Game 56). I also think some pretty clear guidance has emerged too. I am convinced that 7... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 9 0-0 d6!, the subject of Games 60-64, is the way forward for Black. Gambits are there to be taken and 10 $\mathbb{Q}h1?$ $\mathbb{W}xe4!$ is no exception; Game 61 is fine for Black. Objectively, and perhaps disappointingly for the romantics, the quiet 10 f3 is probably White's best move. Game 64 is pretty much state of the art for both sides, and just fractionally better for White.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

7... $\mathbb{Q}e5$

7...b6 - Chapter 10

7...0-0 8 0-0 (D)

8... $\mathbb{W}g6$ - Chapter 10

8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ - Chapter 10

8... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

10...d5 - Game 58; 10...d6 - Game 59

7... $\mathbb{W}g6$ - Game 61

8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 9 0-0 (D) d6

9...d5 10 $\mathbb{Q}h5!$

10... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ - Game 56; 10... $\mathbb{Q}g4?$ - Game 57

9...0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

10...d6 - Game 58; 10...d5 - Game 59

10 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ (D)

10 f4 - Game 62

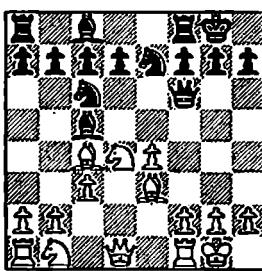
10 f3 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ d5 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ - Game 63; 12...dxe4 - Game 64

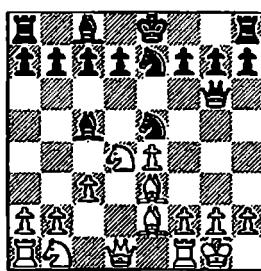
10...0-0

10... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ - Game 61

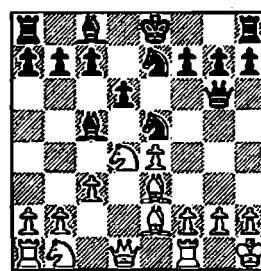
11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ - Game 60



8 0-0



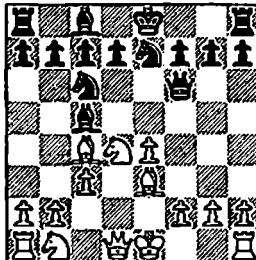
9 0-0



10 $\mathbb{Q}h1$

CHAPTER TEN

5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$: Systems without ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$

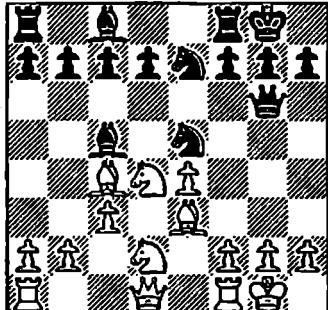


1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

In this chapter we round off our survey of the 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ variation by looking at lines where Black avoids (or delays) playing ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$. Games 65 and 66 deal with the sequence 7...0-0 8 0-0 $\mathbb{W}g6$, while Games 67 and 68 consider 7...0-0 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ and Games 69 and 70 with 7... $b6$.

Game 65
Smyslov-loseliani
Veterans vs. Women, Prague 1995

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 0-0 8
0-0 $\mathbb{W}g6$? 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$!



Black is anticipating 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$, trying to reach a position from the last chapter (Game 60). However, here this move fails to a tactical trick based upon the loose bishop on c5, the implications of which are profoundly positional. 9... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$! is better - see Game 66.

10 $\mathbb{Q}f5$! $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 11 exf5 $\mathbb{W}c6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$
 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$!

In Chapter 9, Game 58, note to White's tenth move, the possibility for White to reach such a pawn structure is dismissed. Here, however, there are key differences. The most basic is that White's bishop, for once, has the possibility of retreating to a more active square than e2. This, in turn, gives White the chance to develop his queen aggressively. With control of the e-file and his opponent's lack of opportunity to generate play in the centre, Smyslov can expand on the kingside too, while the f5-pawn cuts off Black's pieces, particularly the bishop, from the defence. 13...d5 14 $\mathbb{R}e11$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

An idea of the potential of White's forces on the kingside is gleaned from the variation 14... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 15 $\mathbb{R}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 16 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 17 $\mathbb{R}h3$ h6 18 $\mathbb{R}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 19 f6! with a devastating attack.

15 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 g4! $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$

Avoiding the impetuous 17 g5 ♔e4! Smyslov's move prepares the very powerful advance of the g-pawn. We can be sure that the decision to play Black's next move was not taken lightly.

17...g5 18 h4 h6 19 hxg5 hxg5 20 ♕g3 ♖d6

Another move played with a heavy heart, but otherwise 21 ♘f3.

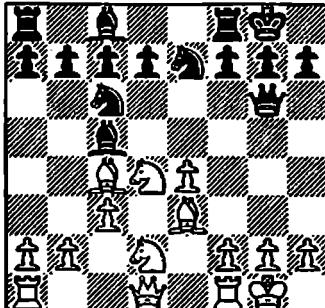
21 ♕xd6 cxd6 22 f3

Of course, necessary to defend g4, but also creating a superb demonstration of how to restrict minor pieces with pawns. With the chronically weak d-pawns in addition, it is really just technique, and who better than Smyslov...?

22...a5 23 ♘b3 b5 24 ♘d4 b4 25 cxb4 axb4 26 ♘d3 ♜fc8 27 ♘f2 ♜c5 28 b3 ♘c8 29 ♘c2 ♜b8 30 ♜e2 ♜c3 31 ♘d1 ♜g7 32 ♘d4 ♘d7 33 ♜e8 ♜a8 34 ♘d2 ♘e5 35 ♘e2 ♘c6 36 ♘b5 d4 37 ♘xd6 ♘b7 38 ♜xa8 ♘xa8 39 ♘b5 ♜c1 40 ♘xd4 ♘e5 41 ♜c2 ♜a1 42 ♜c5 ♘f6 43 ♜a5 ♘b7 44 ♜e4 ♘d5 45 ♜a6+ ♘e7 46 ♘c2 ♘h1 47 ♘xb4 ♜h2+ 48 ♘e3 1-0

Game 66
J.Polgar-Piket
Tilburg 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c5 5 ♘e3 ♜f6 6 c3 ♘ge7 7 ♘c4 0-0 8 0-0 ♜g6!?? 9 ♘d2



9...♖xd4!

The idea of giving up this bishop as a prelude to landing White with an isolated queen's pawn (IQP) is one of Black's basic weapons in this system. Here it seems particularly appropriate, and is an important theoretical advance of Black's cause.

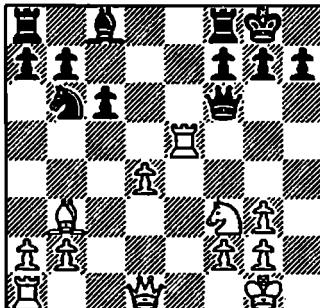
10 exd4

10 ♘xd4 looks unlikely to threaten Black's idea. He must abandon the ...d7-d5 idea in favour of 10...d6! 11 ♘h1 (11 ♘e3?!, ♘e5 threatens 12... ♘h3) 11... ♘e6? with no problems.

10...d5 11 exd5 ♘b4 12 ♘f4!

White decides that she cannot prevent the coming ... ♘bx d5 and so concentrates on the optimal posting of the bishop pair. I sadly have to agree with this conclusion, having found that the ambitious 12 ♜b3?!, ♘h3! 13 g3 ♘xf1 14 ♜xf1 a5 15 a3 ♘a6 gives insufficient compensation despite the rather disorganised impression created by Black's pieces. 16 ♜xb7?? is impossible due to 16... ♘f8, and Black's knight is coming quickly to f5.

12... ♘bx d5 13 ♘g3 c6 14 ♜e1 ♘f5 15 ♘f3 ♘kg3 16 hxg5 ♘b6 17 ♘b3 ♜f6 18 ♜e5!



The nature of White's compensation for her isolated pawn has changed from the bishop pair to a dominance of the e-file, some pressure on f7, and a question mark over where Black should develop his

bishop. This in my view is clearly sufficient. Note that 18 ♜e5?! ♜e6! would throw away the majority of these assets.

18...♜g4 19 ♜d3 ♜xf3 20 gxf3 ♜ad8 21 ♜ae1 ♜d7 22 ♜g2 g6 23 ♜e3 ♜d5 24 ♜h6 ♜c7 25 ♜h1 ♜g7 26 ♜h4 a5 27 ♜he1 a4

White has done well making the most of her 'dynamic' pluses, so Black tries to free himself. Through the following forcing sequence White maintains a definite edge.

28 ♜xa4 ♜e6 29 d5 ♜xd5 30 ♜xd5 cxd5 31 ♜b3 ♜xb2 32 ♜xd5 ♜d2 33 ♜h1 h5 34 ♜xe6 fxe6 35 ♜e4 ♜f6 36 ♜e5 ♜g7 37 ♜b1 ♜d5!

This is a wise decision from Black. The resulting rook endgame is not too dangerous due to White's split pawns on the kingside.

38 ♜xd5 exd5 39 ♜xb7+ ♜h6 40 ♜b4 ♜c6 41 a4 ♜c3 42 ♜d4 ♜a3 43 g4 g5 44 ♜b4 h4 45 ♜d4 ♜g6 46 ♜xd5 ♜xa4 47 ♜f5 ♜f4 48 ♜e5 ♜f6 49 ♜e4 ♜g6 50 ♜xf4 ½-½

Game 67
Kasparov-Kamsky
Tilburg 1991

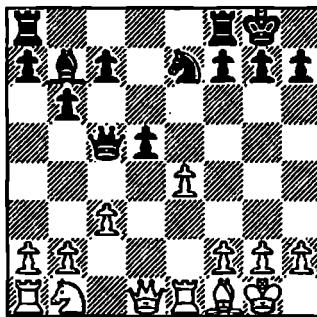
1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♜f6 6 c3 ♔ge7 7 ♜c4 0-0 8 0-0 ♜b6

Black retreats the bishop from its notorious vulnerability on c5. This is a wise prelude to development of the queenside, as 8...d6?! 9 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 10 ♜xc5 dxc5 11 ♜f4 guarantees White a certain small advantage.

An important alternative, however, is 8...b6?! which bears an obvious similarity with Games 69 and 70, but tends towards a rather quieter struggle for various reasons. First, White has effectively lost the option of moving the knight on d4 (compare Game 69, note to White's ninth

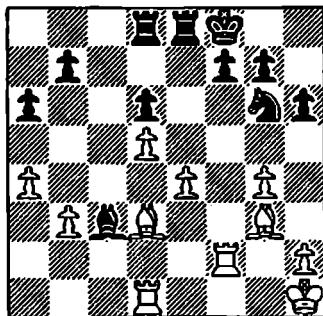
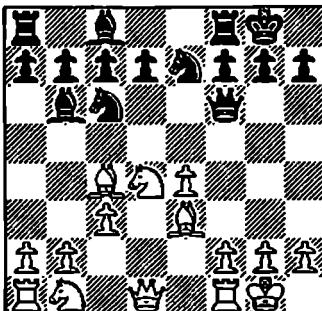
move) since Black's f7-square is defended. Second, the sacrifice 9 b4?! (compare Game 69) would lose much of its force here since White's strategy there is to place pawns on e4 and d5 to play against the bishop on b7. Here, of course, the piece is not yet committed.

9 f4? might be worth a try, since in the analogous section below, Black has invariably chosen to castle long. However, following the game Oll-Hübner, European Team Championship, Pula 1997, a further unashamedly positional approach holds sway. White played 9 ♜e1? ♜b7 10 ♜f1 (only 7...0-0 gives White the tempo necessary to effect this reorganisation; 7...b6 8 0-0 ♜b7 9 ♜e1? would run into 9...♜e5!) 10...d5 11 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 12 ♜xc5 ♜xc5.



Now instead of 13 ♜d2?!, which gave Black the chance to restrict White to the most minimal advantage by exchanging twice on e4, Oll suggests 13 e5!, intending a strategy directed at keeping the bishop on b7 blocked and exploiting Black's inability to break with ...d5-d4. The bishop on f1 fulfills an ideal defensive role covering g2 and hence acting against any tactically-based attempts to open the long light-squared diagonal. It again comes into its own offensively at the end of the line 13...♜g6 14 ♜d2 ♜e7 15 ♜h5 ♜h4?! 16 ♜xh4 ♜xh4 17 g3 ♜g6 18 ♜g2 (Oll)

when White can enjoy hopes of creating play against the d5-pawn, or an advance of his kingside majority.



9 ♜h1?

This fails to take account of Black's easy preparation for the crucial ...d7-d5 advance. The alternatives are dealt with in Game 68.

9...♝d8! 10 ♜h5? h6! 11 ♜d2 d5! 12 exd4 13 cxd4 ♜f5

Of course not the greedy 13...♜xd4? when 14 d6! wins material. The f7-square remains a weak-point demanding great care.

14 ♜f3 ♜g6 15 ♜f4 ♜g4

Black had another route to good play with 15...♝g4!? 16 ♜b3 ♜f5 17 ♜f3 ♜xf3 18 ♜xf3 ♜xd4 when his strong knight and dark-square influence is a good match for the bishop pair.

16 ♜xg4 ♜xg4 17 f3! ♜f6 18 g4 ♜h7 19 d6! cxd6 20 ♜ae1 ♜f8 21 d5 ♜a5 22 ♜d1 ♜ac8 23 b3 a6 24 a4 ♜b4 25 ♜e4 ♜xe4 26 fxe4 ♜g6 27 ♜g3 ♜e8 28 ♜f2 ♜cd8 29 ♜d3 ♜c3?!

White has obviously conducted a pretty good rearguard action and Black should have contented himself with the small edge available from 29...♜e5 30 ♜xe5 ♜xe5. Of course, given the choice, the exchange of dark-squared bishops would be preferable, but it will not be on the cards.

30 ♜c2 ♜e5 31 ♜f2! ♜f4 32 ♜c7 ♜e7 33 ♜c2 ♜e5 34 ♜e2 ♜d7 35 ♜f3 ♜f6 36 ♜d4 ♜de8 37 ♜g2 g5 38 ♜b4 ♜g7 39 ♜d4 ♜g6 40 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 ½-½

Game 68

Oli-Peng Xiaomin
Beijing 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♜f6 6 c3 ♜gs7 7 ♜c4 0-0 8 0-0 ♜b6 9 ♜a3!?

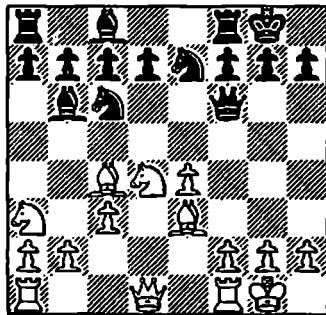
A sensible, sound developing move, which as we shall see, contains a few tricky points. Black is well advised not to assume that his retreat 8...♜b6 completely closes the saga of the weak c7-pawn.

Two other tries are worth a mention here:

a) 9 ♜c2. The offer of the exchange of bishops on e3 with the intention of bringing the knight via e3 to d5 is a recurring theme in this variation (see Game 73 for example). In this position Short's reaction 9...d6 10 ♜xb6 axb6 11 f4 g5!? is largely remembered for provoking one of Garry Kasparov's most famous facial expressions. However, Black can do better. I agree with Gutman that 9...♜e5! (9...♜g6? 10 ♜xb6 axb6 11 ♜d2 ♜e5 12 ♜e2 d5! 13 f4 ♜c6 14 ♜h5 ♜h6 15 e5 f6 16 ♜e2 fxe5 17 fxe5 ♜e6 also looked comfortable in Hracek-Kavalek, Ceska Trebova 1996) 10

↙e2 ♜g6! 11 ♜xb6 axb6 12 ♜e3 ♜f4 should offer good counter-chances on the dark squares.

b) 9 ♜b3? (White uses the breathing space to take steps against Black's irritating ...d7-d5 possibility) 9...♜a5? (as usual, White can look forward to some initiative if Black does not generate active play: 9...d6 10 ♜h1? ♜xd4? 11 cxd4 ♜c6 12 ♜c3! ♜xd4 13 ♜d5 ♜e5 14 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 15 ♜xc7, as in Dolmatov-Yusupov, Wijk aan Zee [match] 1991, was unsatisfactory for Black) 10 ♜c2 ♜c4 11 ♜c1 d5 (or 11...d6? [Gutman] 12 a4? a6 13 ♜h1 ♜e5 14 f4 ♜c6 15 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 16 ♜d2 and White had a 'typical' slight spatial plus in Stefansson-Milos, Oviedo 1993) 12 exd5 ♜xd4 13 cxd4 ♜f5 14 ♜c3 ♜xc2 15 ♜xc2 ♜b6 16 ♜e4 ♜d6 17 ♜f4 ♜d7 18 d6! exd6, as in J.Polgar-Granda Zuniga, Madrid 1992, when after 19 b3! Black again cannot claim full equality, as the bishop vs. knight is pleasant on an open board.



9...♜xd4

In view of Oll's reply, Black should look for alternatives here. It is no trivial matter to find a way through to full equality, however:

- a) 9...d6? loses a pawn to 10 ♜db5!
- b) 9...♜d8 is also met by 10 ♜db5! and indeed with no black rook on the f-file, ...♜xe3 is even less effective. 10...a6? has passed without comment, but makes no

sense in view of 11 ♜d6! The best try is probably 10...♜e5, but then 11 ♜h5! (Wells) with ideas of ♜g5, maintains the initiative since after 11...♜xc4 12 ♜xc4 the prognosis for the c7-pawn is not good.

c) 9...♜g6 10 ♜e1? ♜e5 11 ♜f1 d6 12 ♜ac2 f5 (12...♜g4? seems more logical) 13 f4 ♜g4 14 exd5 ♜xf5 15 ♜xf5 ♜xf5 16 ♜xb6 axb6 17 ♜d5+ ♜h8 18 ♜d4 looks like an edge for White, as in W.Watson-Van der Sterren, Prague 1992.

10 ♜xd4!

Better than 10 cxd4 when Black has the typical break 10...d5 11 exd5 ♜d8 12 ♜h5 h6 13 ♜fe1 ♜f5 14 ♜f3 ♜d7 with about equality Chandler-Short, English Championship 1991. White's cause is better than in the analogous position from Game 67, as ♜a3 plays more of a role than ♜h1, but not enough to claim an advantage.

10...♜xd4 11 cxd4! d5 12 exd5! ♜f5 13 ♜c2 b6?

A mistake which allows White to develop with a pin against the knight and therefore loses time. 13...♜d6! restricts White's advantage to a minimum.

14 ♜f3! ♜g5 15 ♜fe1 ♜d6 16 ♜d3 ♜b7 17 ♜e5 f5 18 ♜ae1 ♜ad8 19 ♜e3 ♜xe3 20 fxe3?

An uncharacteristically short-sighted decision from Oll, who wants to strengthen his d-pawns while relying on the manoeuvre ♜b4-c6 to do the rest. Suffice it to say that the rook on e5 would not have voted for this capture! From here on the game has limited theoretical value. White is committed to a murky exchange sacrifice, and at certain junctures stands clearly worse.

20...a5!

Simple enough. Now, where is plan 'b'? 21 ♜c1 g6 22 ♜a3 ♜f7 23 b3 ♜f8 24 ♜b5 ♜g7 25 ♜c6 ♜a6!

Stopping ♜b5.

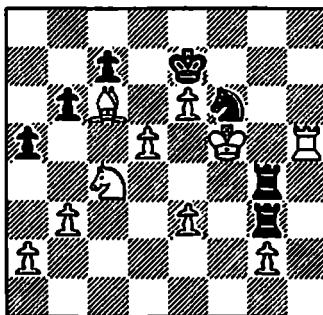
26 h4 ♜f7 27 ♜e6 ♜c8 28 ♜c4 h5? A noteworthy idea. Black wants to

bring his knight to g5, but the immediate 28...g5 would be met by 29 h5! Hence the text move.

29 ♜f2 g5 30 hxg5 ♜xe6 31 dxex6 ♜xg5
32 d5 ♜e4+ 33 ♜f3 ♜g3+ 34 ♜f4 ♜e7
35 ♜h1 ♜dg8?

Black's misses a chance. 35...♜g4+! 36 ♜b3 (36 ♜e5? ♜g3) 36...h4! 37 ♜e5 ♜g3+
38 ♜f4 ♜xg2 39 ♜xh4 ♜f2+ gives him a clear advantage.

36 ♜xh5 ♜g4+? 37 ♜xf5 ♜f6



38 ♜h8?

Now it is White's turn to miss a beautiful chance by 38 d6!! cxd6 39 ♜xb6! when suddenly, having looked rather lame, White's knight is staring its optimal square in the face. After 39...♜xh5! 40 ♜d5+ ♜f8 41 e7+ ♜g7 42 e8♛ ♜g5+ 43 ♜e4 ♜e5+ 44 ♜xe5 dxex5 45 ♜xe5 White is better.

38...♜g5+ 39 ♜f4 ♜g4+ 40 ♜e5 ♜g2?

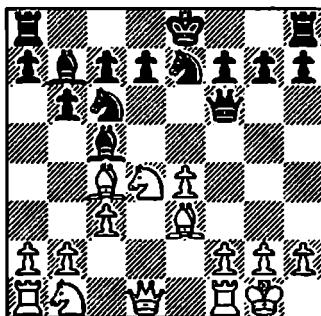
The last key moment of a topsy-turvy but fascinating struggle. 40...♜g5+ 41 ♜f4 ♜g4+ would have given perpetual check. After this it is downhill all the way.

41 d8+ cxd8+ 42 ♜xd8 ♜g5+ 43 ♜f5+ ♜xf5+ 44 ♜xf5 ♜xa2 45 ♜b8 ♜f12+ 46 ♜e5 ♜g4+ 47 ♜e4 ♜xe6 48 ♜xb6+ ♜d7 49 ♜e4+ ♜e7 50 ♜b7+ ♜d8 51 ♜b5 ♜f7 52 ♜d4 ♜f11 53 ♜d5+! ♜e7 54 ♜xa5 ♜d1+ 55 ♜e4 ♜f6+ 56 ♜f3 ♜d6 57 ♜b5 ♜h1 58 ♜c4 ♜h4 59 ♜a6+ ♜e5 60 ♜e8+ ♜f5 61 ♜e7 1-0

Game 69
Schmittdiel-Tischbierek
German Bundesliga 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4
♖c5 5 ♜e3 ♜f6 6 c3 ♜ge7 7 ♜c4 b6 8
0-0

8 ♜d2 is seen in the next game.
8...♜b7



9 b4?

White has other tries, of varying degrees of brutality:

a) The other rather 'violent' attempt to challenge Black's set-up, 9 f4?, shares the double-edged quality of the text. After 9...0-0-0 Lukacs and Hazai give 10 ♜d2 d5 11 e5 ♜h4 12 ♜d3 ♜a5 13 b3 as White's route to an advantage. I do not like 10...d5?, which is inconsistent with Black's light-square piece play. Why not 10...♜g6? 11 f5 (11 ♜d3?) ♜xd4 12 cxd4 f5 13 ♜c3 ♜b4!) 11...♜f6 12 b4 ♜d6 13 ♜g5 ♜e5 14 ♜f4 ♜f6 and White should probably repeat?

b) 9 ♜b5? is the first of the more 'positional' tries: 9...0-0-0 10 ♜xc5 bxc5 and now White should probably prefer the solid 11 ♜d5 d6!, which looks about equal, to 11 ♜a4, which allows Black the remarkable counter 11...d5! when if 12 exd5 ♜xd5 13 ♜xa7+ ♜xa7 14 ♜xa7 ♜f4 and Black is suddenly the one with the

furious attacking chances.

c) 9 ♜b3 ♔e5! 10 ♜xc5 bx_{c5} 11 ♜d5 (Macieja gives 11 ♜e2 ♜xe4 12 ♜xc5 ♘g5 13 g3 0-0 which is clearly not dangerous for Black; 14 f4? fails to 14... ♜f3+) 11... ♜xd5 12 exd5 ♜a6! 13 ♜e1 0-0 14 ♜xc5 ♜d3 15 ♜d4 ♘f5 (Tseshkovsky) is fine for Black.

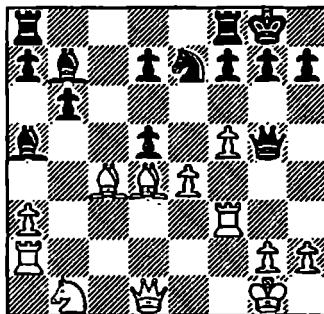
9... ♜xd4 10 cxd4 ♜xb4 11 a3 ♜a5 12 d5 0-0 13 ♜a2

Once it became clear that this move was necessary, much of the enthusiasm for White's gambit waned. The problem is that 13 f4? fails to the elegant tactic 13... b5! (13... ♘xa1?? 14 ♜d4 ♘xd4+ 15 ♘xd4 b5! is another good execution of the same tactical idea) 14 e5 (14 ♜xb5 ♘xa1 15 ♜d4 ♘xd4+) 14... ♘h6 15 ♜b3 ♘f5 which was good for Black in Shirov-Agdestein, Hastings 1991.

13... c6! 14 ♜d4 ♘g6 15 f4!

A brave try which basically forces Black into giving up his queen (albeit for a healthy quantity of pieces). Otherwise, White has nothing really to show for his pawn, as Black frees himself by chipping away at White's centre.

15... cxd5 16 f5 ♘g5 17 ♜f3



17... dxc4! 18 ♜g3 ♘xg3 19 hxg3 f6 20 ♜c3 d5 21 ♜e2 dxe4 22 ♜xe4 ♘xf5 23 ♜xf6?

This looks a bit desperate, but it is worth noting in general, that when play-

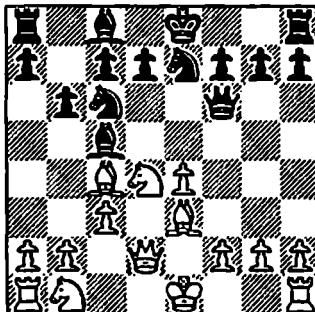
ing with a queen against pieces the ability to attack the opponent's king is of heightened importance, often outweighing material factors. Otherwise, Black has a small material advantage and a strong initiative. 23... gx_{f6} 24 ♜d7 ♜xe4 25 ♜xe4 ♜h6 26 ♜xc4 ♜ad8 27 ♘xa7 ♜f7 28 ♘a6 ♜e7 29 g4 ♜f7

Once Black consolidates, it is matter of time and slow infiltration, which is of limited interest to us.

30 ♘b5 ♘g7 31 ♜c2 ♜d4 32 ♜e2 ♜xe2 33 ♘xe2 h6 34 ♘e6 ♜d6 35 ♘e4 ♜c3 36 ♘h2 ♜d1 37 ♘g3 ♜e5+ 38 ♜f2 ♜d4 39 ♘a8 ♜xg4 40 a4 ♜b4 41 ♘e3 ♜d6 42 ♘a7+ ♘g8 43 ♘a8 ♜b3+ 44 ♘e2 ♜b2+ 45 ♘d3 ♜b3+ 46 ♘e2 ♘f5 47 ♘h8 ♘e4 48 ♘xh6 ♜b2+ 49 ♘d1 ♘f5 50 ♘h7 ♘f4 51 ♘h2+ ♘e3 52 ♘h5 ♘d4 53 ♘h3+ ♘e4 54 g3 ♘e3 55 g4+ ♘f4 56 ♘h5 ♘g2 57 ♘h8+ ♘xg4 58 ♘g7+ ♘h3 59 ♘h6+ ♘g3 60 ♘g7+ ♘f2 61 ♘h6 ♘f3 62 ♘h3+ ♘g3 63 ♘h7 ♘e3 64 ♘c1 f5 65 ♘b1 f4 66 ♘e7 ♘g1+ 67 ♘a2 ♘a1+ 0-1

Game 70
Handoko-Speelman
Moscow Olympiad 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♘f6 6 c3 ♔ge7 7 ♜c4 b6!?



The motivation behind this strange-looking, but actually highly critical, move comes from Game 69. White wants to play b2-b4 without sacrificing a pawn.

8... $\mathbb{W}g6!$

When routine development is ruled out, and a sharp struggle for the initiative is essential, Jon Speelman is a good man for the job!

8... $\mathbb{Q}b7?$ 9 b4! would walk straight into White's plans. The drawback of 7...b6, the loss of the b6-square for the bishop, should not be underestimated.

9 f3

Ftacnik suggests 9 0-0!, intending to answer 9... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ with 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ with a slight advantage. It is an interesting idea, and another reason why 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ should be taken seriously.

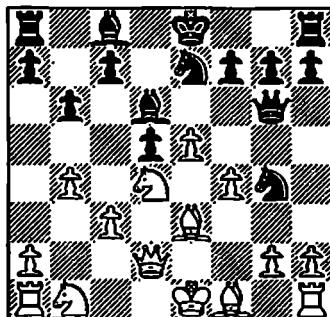
9... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

Forced by the dual requirement to keep both the g2-pawn and the f1-a6 diagonal covered. 10 $\mathbb{Q}b3?$ $\mathbb{Q}a6!$ would be extremely embarrassing for White's king.

10...d5!

Already planning the sacrifice of a piece, which leads to an almighty mess, with the white king at the centre of it. In defence of Handoko's idea, which has not found any followers, it must be said that it is hard for Black to find a satisfactory quiet alternative here.

11 b4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 f4 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 13 e5



13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$

By far the best way to give up the material. The problem with the plausible looking 13... $\mathbb{W}e4$ is that after 14 exd6 cxd6 (if 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$ 15 dxe7 $\mathbb{Q}c2+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ it is White who gets the attack) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ Black has no c-pawn to hassle White's splendid knight on d4.

14 fxe5 $\mathbb{W}e4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}f4+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d4

Speelman and Ftacnik are united in condemning 19... $\mathbb{W}xe5?$ in view of 20 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d4 21 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$. However, Black then has 21... $\mathbb{Q}a6+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (22 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ dxe3 23 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{E}d8$) 22...dxe3 23 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}e8!$ 24 $\mathbb{W}x e5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{E}d5$ 26 c4 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 28 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$. In the game too Black always has compensation, since White's king never finds a fully safe haven, but this might give a clear plus.

20 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}e2$

22 c4?, trying to close lines around the king, was worth considering.

22... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ c6? 24 $\mathbb{W}f3!$ $\mathbb{W}h6+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ dxc3+ 26 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$

Better was 27 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}e6+$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}d8+$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ with no clear continuation of Black's attack.

27... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 28 $\mathbb{W}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2?$

This was the moment to bring the rook into play, exploiting the fact that White's checks evaporate rapidly after 28...a5! 29 $\mathbb{B}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}e3+$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}xa5!$ 31 $\mathbb{W}c8+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 32 $\mathbb{W}c7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6!$

29 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ $\mathbb{B}xg6$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$

This was quite unnecessary and is the decisive mistake since in the endgame the rook is more than a match for White's minor pieces. It was still possible to activate the rook by 31 $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{B}xh2$ 32 $\mathbb{E}d7$ which is unclear.

31... $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ 32 $\mathbb{B}xh1$ $\mathbb{E}h3+$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 34 $\mathbb{B}f1?$ $\mathbb{B}xh2$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ c5 36 bxc5 bxc5 37 $\mathbb{E}f4$ $\mathbb{E}d4$ 38 $\mathbb{E}xd4$ cxd4 39 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ f5 40 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 41 a4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 42 a5 g5 43 a6 g4 44 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ g5 0-1

Summary

Opening tricks come in all shapes and sizes. White's 10 ♜f5! in Game 65 is particularly sophisticated, since fine positional judgement is needed to realise that Black should avoid this line.

Game 66 is interesting, although my initial enthusiasm for Black's idea has been tempered slightly. A close study of the game would seem to suggest that White never quite relinquished the initiative. 12 ♜f4 was in fact rather a clever move.

8... ♜b6? remains a solid option for Black, but both 9 ♜a3 (Game 68) and the deceptively modest 9 ♜b3? (notes to the same game) offer chances for an edge.

7...b6? is also unrefuted, if a victim of fickle chess fashion. Neither of the 'respectable' approaches 8 0-0 ♜b7 9 ♜b3 nor 9 ♜b5 seem terribly threatening. Perhaps the interesting idea of Ftacnik's arising out of the thrilling Game 70, viz. 8 ♜d2? ♜g6 9 0-0 should be taken seriously.

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c5 5 ♜e3 ♕f6 6 c3 ♛ge7 7 ♜c4

7...0-0

7...b6 (D)

8 0-0 – Game 69

8 ♜d2 – Game 70

8 0-0 ♜g6

8... ♜e5 – Chapter 9

8... ♜b6 (D)

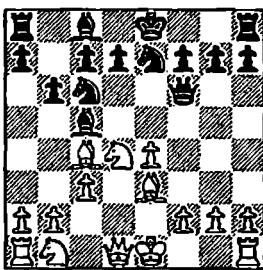
9 ♜h1 – Game 67

9 ♜e3 – Game 68

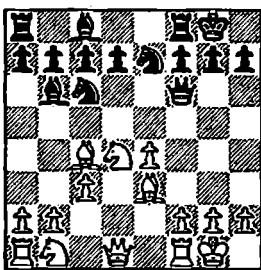
9 ♜d2 (D) ♜e5?!

9... ♜xd4 – Game 65

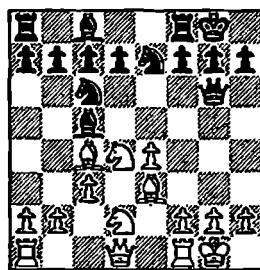
10 cxd4 – Game 66



7...b6



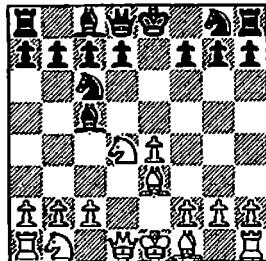
8...b6



9 ♜d2

CHAPTER ELEVEN

4... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$: Early deviations for both sides



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Here we shall consider other possibilities in the 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ variation apart from 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$.

White's alternatives to 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ are manifold. In turn we shall discuss 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (Game 71), 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (Game 72), 7 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (Game 73) and 7 g3 (Games 74-76). However, Black's possibilities to deviate are more limited. Game 77 looks at alternatives to 6... $\mathbb{Q}gc7$ and Game 78 alternatives to 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$.

Seventh move alternatives for White after 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$

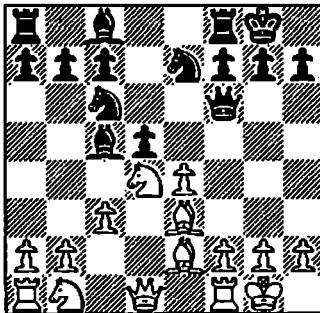
Game 71 Szemzo-Eismont Harkany open 1993

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2?$

7 $\mathbb{Q}e2?$! neither takes steps to prevent Black's intended strike in the centre with ...d7-d5 (as do 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ and 7 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ for example) nor prepares to compete for the centre squares which this advance puts up for grabs (as advocates of 7 g3 and 8 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ could claim it does).

7...0-0 8 0-0 d5!

Not the only approach, but where White has failed to address the possibility, surely the most well motivated. Note that there is no problem with the queen recapturing on c6, and hence no tricks on the 'loose' bishop on c5.



9 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 11 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{M}d8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

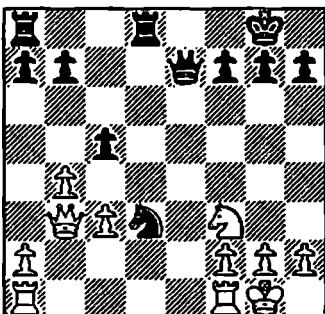
This covers the e1-square, and shields possible exchanges on the d-file, thus offering Black the chance to play for an initiative rather than allowing sterile exchanges.

16 b4?!, $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!$

One key to squeezing the maximum from such quiet positions is to select the right exchanges. This simplification helps

to ensure that the knight on d3 will be harder to dislodge.

18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ c5!



Black's slight initiative starts to take on a more concrete form. White is presented with a none too pleasant choice. Exchange on c5, in which case the c-pawn will become a permanent focus of Black's operations, or allow the pawn to advance, cementing the knight on d3.

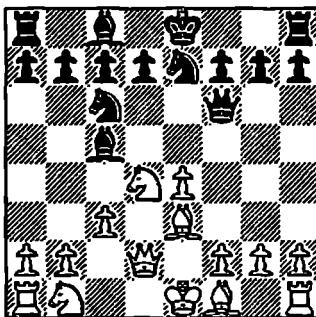
20 a3 $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 21 $\mathbb{R}ad1$ c4 22 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 23 h3 $\mathbb{W}f8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e1$

It would be no joy to play around the knight on d3, but the weakness of the kingside now takes effect quite dramatically.

24... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 25 $\mathbb{R}d2?$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 26 g3 $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}h6$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 29 $\mathbb{R}h1$ $\mathbb{W}c6+$ 30 f3 $\mathbb{R}xe1$ 31 $\mathbb{R}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 0-1

question to White's play.

The secondary idea of 7 $\mathbb{W}d2$ (to prepare the advance f2-f4) invites comparison with 7 f4?, which allows Black good play with 7... $\mathbb{W}g6?$ since White's king's bishop is tied to defence of g2. Neither 8 f5 $\mathbb{W}f6$ nor 8 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ d5! 10 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ is satisfactory for White.



7...0-0-1

If Black takes a tempo to deal with White's intended $\mathbb{Q}b5$ by 7...a6? then it is revealed that White's seventh move constituted a neat preparation for 8 f4! d6 (8... $\mathbb{W}g6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ now makes no sense, while 8... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 9 cxd4 d5 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ also leaves White active) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 10 0-0 and White enjoys a comfortable space advantage.

8 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ d5!

The point. This position can only really be handled in gambit mode, since 9... $\mathbb{W}e5?$ meets with the powerful retort 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (but not 10 f4? $\mathbb{Q}d5!$) 10...d5 11 $\mathbb{W}g3!$ (Sturua) exchanging the defender of c7.

10 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$

Brave man, although Lulu had already played this position once before and believed that Black had at best a draw. It is also possible to decline Black's offer, although not I think to play for an advantage, by 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ dxе4 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c5?$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (a memorable

Game 72
Lulu-Miles
Cappelle la Grande open 1994

1 e4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 2 d4 e5 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 $\mathbb{W}d2$

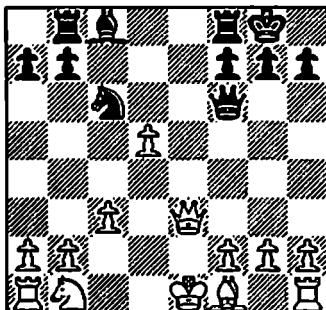
This may look rather awkward, but the idea, to defend the bishop on e3 and hence bring the thematic possibility of $\mathbb{Q}b5$ into play, is a logical one (see the Introduction). Only the characteristically vigorous and imaginative approach which Tony Miles produces here puts a serious tactical

fifth rank occupation by the knights) 14 0-0 c6 15 Qd6 b6 16 Qd3 and Black is comfortable, but not more.

10...Bb8 11 Qxd5

This looks better than also leaving this knight stranded after 11 exd5 Qe5! with excellent compensation.

11...Qxd5 12 exd5



12...Qb4!

Very strong. If 12...Bg4, which also looks tempting, 13 Qd2! is a surprisingly good defence. White can block the e-file with Qe4 and then support this piece with his f-pawn.

13 Wd2

The knight is immune. After 13 cxb4 Wxb2 14 Wc3 Be8+ 15 Qd1 Wxf2 Black has a tremendous attack. If White stops ...Bg4+ then ...Qf5 and ...Bbc8 will in turn prove devastating.

13...Be8+ 14 Qe2 Qg4 15 f3 Qxd5!

Very strong, and in fact Tony Miles's original contribution to the theory of this line. 15...Bxf3 16 gxf3 Wxf3 17 Ag1 Qd3+ 18 Qd1 Qf2+ led to a draw by repetition in Lupo-Solozhenkin, Spain 1993.

16 0-0?

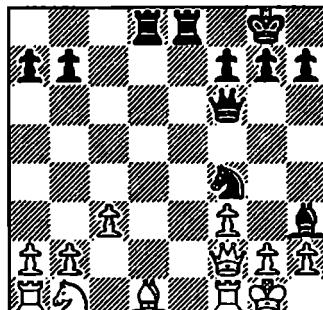
Presumably caught off balance by the turn of events, White loses without a real fight. Of course, 16 fxg4 Bbd8 is equally horrendous, since both the f4- and e3-squares beckon invitingly to Black's knight. Therefore White had to try 16

Wxd5 Bbd8 17 Wxb7 when Tony Miles gives two possibilities:

a) 17...Ra7, which he likes, but I am not convinced that after 18 Wb5! Qd7 19 Wd3 Qde8 20 Qd2! Black can claim a clear advantage.

b) 17...Qa6?!, which he is less impressed by, in view of 18 Wxa7 Qa6 19 0-0 Qxe2?! 20 He1 Bxf3 21 Qd2! Qxg2! 22 Axe8+ Axe8 23 Wf2 and White successfully defends. However, the 19th move seems to be the real culprit. 19...Bxe2! looks very strong when Black has threats of ...Bg5 and in many positions ...Bxg2+ followed by ...Qxf1+ too. 20 Qa3 Wd2! 21 He1 Wg5! 22 g3 Wh5 is, for example, immediately decisive.

16...Qf4! 17 Qd1 Bbd8 18 Wf2 Qh3!
0-1



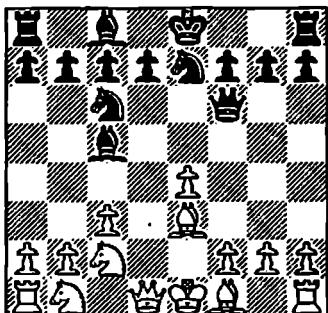
A very energetically executed miniature, and an important reminder that 'forced drawing' lines are not always what they seem!

Game 73
Campora-Rodriguez Talavera
Dos Hermanas 1992

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4 Qc5 5 Ae3 Wf6 6 c3 Qg6 7 Qc2!

This move fulfils the requirement of preventing Black's immediate ...d7-d5 break, and also prepares the manoeuvre of

the knight via e3 towards the control of the d5-square, against which Black's whole strategy of inducing c2-c3 was directed. Still, while sound, such a non-developing move is a little too slow to pose serious difficulties.



7... $\mathbb{Q}b6$?

Black attempts to retain a little tension in the position, ensuring that to advance his planned knight manoeuvre, White must capture on b6, opening the a-file. In fact, though, 'falling in' with White's plans' might be the simplest route to equality viz: 7... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$? 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{W}e5$! (the point is to force White into a slightly clumsy defence of e4; otherwise White really enjoys the slightly more comfortable game) 9 $\mathbb{W}f3$ (9 $\mathbb{W}d3$ 0-0! 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ f5!) should also be equal; whereas after 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d5 10 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$, as in Sveshnikov-Korchnoi, Moscow 1973, Black can even claim an edge) 9...f5! 10 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ 11 $\mathbb{W}e2$! $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 12 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d6 led to a full if slightly sterile equality in Schmittiel-Smejkal, German Bundesliga 1997.

8 g3?

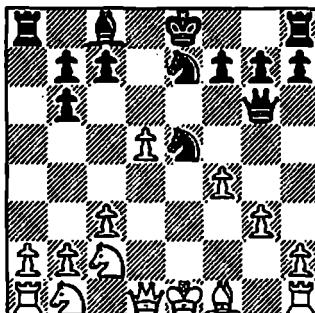
A sensible developing move which is quite consistent with White's strategy of controlling the d5-square. White also achieved a slight edge in Popov-Vebic, Yugoslavia 1991, by 8 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 9 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d6 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}h6$ 12 0-0, but

Black could surely try 9... $\mathbb{W}e5$! with play analogous to Schmittiel-Smejkal above, where the a-file in no way hurts his chances.

8...d5?

Black envisages quick development with ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$, supporting ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$, and his queen coming to g6. On the day, fortune favoured the brave, but in fact Black should have been able to force little more than an adjustment in White's development plans (see move 12). Objectively, normal development was indicated. Horst Matanovic, Oberhausen 1961, for example, continued 8...0-0 9 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ d6 10 0-0 $\mathbb{W}g6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ f5 13 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d5$) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{W}xf5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ and although White looks to have a slight edge, the game was shortly drawn.

9 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 10 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 11 f4! $\mathbb{W}g6$



12 fxe5?

Extraordinarily risky. There seems to be nothing much wrong with 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$, since if 12... $\mathbb{W}e4$ 13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 14 $\mathbb{E}f2$ Black has no follow-up and is likely to be driven back.

12... $\mathbb{W}e4$ + 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ + 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3$?

Even now, after 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 0-0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xh1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ White will have enough development difficulties to provide Black with fair compensation, but it will be still

a tough fight.

15...0-0-0 16 $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{A}f5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{A}xd3$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{W}e4$

It is clear that Black is winning. 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$! is hardly to be contemplated, and once Black has a queen against two rooks, with knights still on the board it will be the plight of White's king that decides. A disaster which White largely brought on himself.

19 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{A}xd3+!$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{W}g2+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{R}d8$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 23 $\mathbb{A}hd1+$ $\mathbb{Q}d5+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 25 $\mathbb{R}d3$ $c5+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}e4+$ 0-1

Game 74
Klovan-Pioch
USSR 1974

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 g3

As discussed above, this does not try to prevent ...d7-d5, but rather to get ready for it. White hopes to fight for the light squares in the centre, and on the long diagonal, which after pawn exchanges in the centre tend to become the key battleground. The move has lost a fair degree of popularity to 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$, but remains clearly White's next most important option.

7...0-0

If Black intends to play as in the game, then the move order here is probably of limited significance. However, 7...d6 8 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ does have some independent value, particularly in conjunction with the ambitious attempt to disrupt White's game by advancing the h-pawn. This interesting idea, closely associated with the Czech Grandmaster Pavel Blatny, demands careful handling from both sides. Two examples will I hope suffice:

a) 8...h5? 9 $\mathbb{Q}c2$? (9 h3!) 9... $\mathbb{A}xe3$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ b4 11 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 14 f4 $\mathbb{hxg3}$ 15 $\mathbb{hxg3}$ $\mathbb{A}h1+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ $\mathbb{Wh}6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 and Black can be quite satisfied with the disruption he has

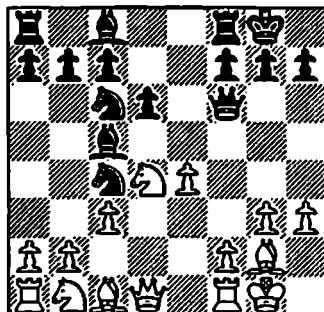
caused and the targets for operation he has created (the g3-pawn and g4-square for his knight) on White's kingside, as in Rasik-Blatny, Brno 1991.

b) 8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$?! (a case of 'over-finessing' which eases White's queenside development, but in any case I think White's approach here with 10 h3! is basically the right one) 9 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ h5 10 h3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 11 f4 $\mathbb{W}g6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}5c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$! $\mathbb{axb6}$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 0-0 0-0 17 $\mathbb{W}d3$! $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 f5 with the bishop pair and a great advantage in space in Riemersma-Blatny, Bad Wörishofen 1991.

7...d5 is the subject of the next two games.

8 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ d6

The moment for the less modest advance of the d-pawn has passed. 8...d5? is simply met by 9 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 10 exd5 $\mathbb{W}b6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ winning a healthy enough pawn. 9 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 10 h3 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$



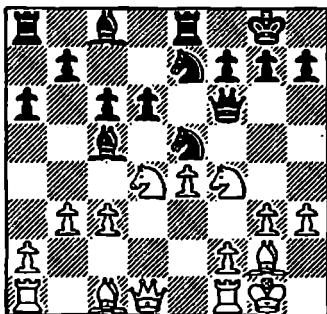
12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$!

A very instructive moment. On the face of it, White's minor pieces are in heavy retreat, but in fact Black's advancing forces have reached something of an impasse. He has no particular plan of attack, and worse still, there is no security or permanence about his pieces' 'pseudo-aggressive' postings. White on the other hand has much to look forward to. The most significant outpost on the board is

still the d5-square, and comparing the two diagrams we can see how Black's pieces are obliged to scurry back to try and deal with the threat of White's knight finding its way there.

12... $\mathbb{A}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $a6$ 14 $b3$ $\mathbb{Q}4e5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $c6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d4$

A very different picture! It is easy to see the superior activity of White's forces. Moreover, as so often in this variation, Black's inability to drum up any real counterplay means that the vulnerability of his queen rears its head. White threatens 18 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 19 f4 with unpleasant threats, while if the e7-knight tries to vacate a route out of trouble then Black will have a new worry, the f5-square. Still ...



17...d5?!

...does not really help!

18 $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 19 f4

Only under very special circumstances, where Black can assert authority over the light squares f5 and g4, is it permissible to allow White to answer ...d7-d5 with f2-f4 and e4-e5. Here would not be such a case, so Black attempts to solve the problem by tactical means. The result is that White's positional pluses suddenly turn into attacking potential (f-file, control of the e5-square).

19...f6 20 fxe5 fxe5 21 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ exd4 22 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f4$!

Now, of course, a bishop on e5 is much

more frightening than a pawn!

23... $\mathbb{W}g6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}f6!+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 28 $\mathbb{E}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 29 $\mathbb{W}f1$ 1-0

A fine example of how the 'status quo' allows the potential of White's set-up and the drawbacks of Black's to dominate the scene. 'Doing nothing' is not an option for Black in this line.

Game 75
Salov-Karpov
Reggio Emilia 1991

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 g3 d5! 8 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$?

In this variation the battle generally comes to revolve around the light squares in the centre. This is most obvious in the next game where Black gives up his dark-squared bishop in order to first isolate White's queen pawn, and then, in a manner of which the textbooks would heartily approve, to blockade it. The strategy here has some similarities, but instead of an isolated d-pawn, White emerges with hanging c-pawns. Their weakness is not so pronounced, but with the key move ...c7-c6, the long light-squared diagonal is blunted, and Black's structure proves super solid.

8...dxe4 is the subject of the next game.

9 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4+!$?

Another quite different approach, 9... $\mathbb{Q}b6?$, is also possible here. Black gives up the d5-pawn to target White's d4 in turn. In Nunn-Smagin, German Bundesliga 1991, White could not show an advantage after 10 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 0-0 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 15 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$. Still, a 'dark-square' strategy seems less thematic here. The pawn on d5 should give White chances to show that the c7-pawn can be a potential target too. For this reason I like Gutman's suggestion of

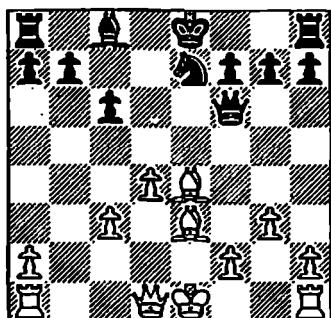
12 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$, intending to answer 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ with 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ with promising play on the c-file.

10 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$

The move order here is of some significance. First of all 10...dxe4? would be a serious slip in view of 11 $\mathbb{W}a4+$? This is not a question of material, since after 11... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ there is no 12 d5? move available. Rather it is a question of grossly misplacing Black's pieces for the blockade. White simply plays 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 13 bxc3 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ and the knight on c6 means that Black has no means to control d5, or to blunt the enormously enhanced power of White's light-squared bishop.

However, the immediate 10...c6 is possible, but after 11 0-0 Black should exchange on c3 and transpose back into the game. 11...dxe4? is not so good. After 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}b3!$ (Black's bishop on b4 is left 'dangling', rather embarrassed at its continued presence on the board) 13... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}a3!$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ gives White a strong attack, while 13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ (a bit too late!) 15 bxc3 0-0 16 c4 (a similar structure to the column game, but with several extra tempi for White) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 17 fxe3! the f-file was added to White's impressive collection of assets in Sax-Blatny, Lazne Bohdanec 1995.

11 bxc3 dxe4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ c6!



An important part of Black's struggle

for the light squares, and restriction of White's fianchettoed bishop. In Campora-Rubinetti, Argentina 1986, Black was distracted by concern over his opponent's bishop pair. After 12... $\mathbb{W}e6?$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ White can look forward to the more pleasant endgame, where again his bishop is a clear asset.

13 0-0 0-0 14 a4

Gutman prefers 14 $\mathbb{W}d2$, claiming a small plus for White after 14...h6 (otherwise 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ would make trouble) 15 $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 16 c4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}fc1$. I agree, but 15... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ looks rather co-operative. Why not 15...b6?, positionally threatening 16... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ with the already quite familiar idea of trying to exchange the light-squared bishops? Black seems fine in this case.

14... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g2!$

Of course White must avoid the exchange of light-squared bishops, which would leave Black with the only minor piece capable of contesting the key squares.

15... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Black is fully developed, has his queen-side pawns safely covered, and can muster more pieces to cover the d5-square than his opponent. The latter point is important, rendering White's task of infusing life into his bishop pair by advancing his d-pawn extremely difficult to execute.

17 c4 $\mathbb{Q}fd8$

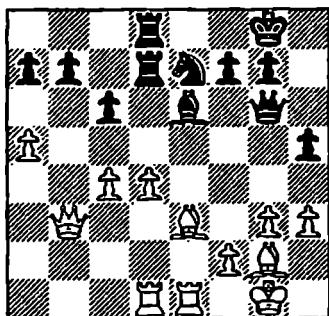
There was a case for 17... $\mathbb{Q}g4$, threatening 18... $\mathbb{Q}f3$ and the beneficial exchange discussed above. Karpov gives 18 d5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ cxd5, which is logical since if White cannot prevent the trade of pieces, he should change the structure. Still, Black has absolutely no problems whatsoever here.

18 h3 h5 19 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 20 a5 $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Very thematic, but White's lack of active play means that a more ambitious

Kingside plan of 20...h4!? 21 g4 $\mathbb{A}e6$, provoking a weakness in order to then challenge it with ...f7-f5, also came into consideration.

21 $\mathbb{H}ad1$



21...b5! 22 axb6 axb6 23 $\mathbb{W}b4!$

White is coming a little close to being in trouble. 23 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ followed by ...d5! would finally secure Black's long-cherished exchange of bishops, and leave him with a typical plus based on a more mobile minor piece, and his opponent's securely blockaded isolated d-pawn.

23...b5 24 cxb5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 25 $\mathbb{W}c5$ cxb5 26 $\mathbb{W}xb5!$

Excellent assessment. For the exchange, White gets not only a pawn, but the chance to spoil Black's kingside pawns. After this there is no realistic possibility of Black ever creating a passed pawn on the kingside, and without this there are no winning chances at all.

26... $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 27 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 28 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ fxg6
29 $\mathbb{A}xd1$ $\mathbb{A}d5$ 30 $\mathbb{A}xd5+$ $\mathbb{A}xd5$ 31 h4
 $\mathbb{A}f7$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 76
Tompa-Lukacs
Budapest 1976

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{A}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7 g3 d5 8
 $\mathbb{A}g2$ dxе4!?

Despite Karpov's fine defensive efforts above, this line perhaps above all others carries the stamp of theoretical approval. Black prepares to saddle White with an isolated queen's pawn (IQP) and then give the blockade on d5 top priority.

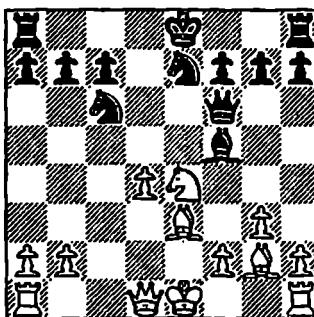
9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{A}xd4!$

It is entirely logical that Black should give his dark-squared bishop for White's knight – the exchange of a piece unable to fight in any other way for d5 for one which otherwise has every chance to do so.

10 cxd4 $\mathbb{A}f5!$

10...0-0 is also quite playable. After 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 12 0-0 Black can use his queen's bishop more directly to contribute to holding the d5-square by 12... $\mathbb{A}e6$? Now 13 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{A}d5$ is okay for Black. If White captures b7, Black will play ... $\mathbb{A}b8$ and take on b2 in the time-honoured manner. 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ is thematic, but 13... $\mathbb{H}ad8$? is sufficient to take the sting out of 14 d5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{A}xd5$ 16 $\mathbb{A}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}f5$! 17 $\mathbb{A}xf7+$ $\mathbb{W}xf7$, as in Szurovsky-Lukacs, Budapest Spring Festival 1992, when Black is quite comfortable. Hence 14 $\mathbb{W}a4$ or 14 $\mathbb{A}c1$ keep more tension in the position, but it is not more than equal, and with the d-pawn a potential problem, not without risk for White too.

11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$



11... $\mathbb{W}g6$?

A critical moment and one which introduces a rather fine paradox. Practice has by now established that Black's most efficient way to confirm his blockade of d5 is to give up his light-squared bishop! The reason is partly tactical. After 11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 0-0-0! the immediate threat to d4 greatly restricts White's choice. 13 $\mathbb{W}b3?$ looks best, but then Black has 13... $\mathbb{W}e6$, forcing 14 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $fxe6$. It is this that explains the paradox, and guarantees the permanence of the blockade. Of course the e6-pawn can be weak too, but it is not so easy to attack, as the bishop on e3 generally has to stay put. After for example 15 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 16 $\mathbb{K}he1$ h6 17 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{A}d6$ 18 $\mathbb{B}d2$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ a5, as in Baum-Krasenkov, Vienna open 1990, I would slightly prefer to be Black.

12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b4$

This also looks questionable, but in fact there is already no holding back the advance of the d-pawn, and the enormous lease of life which this can imply for White's dark-squared bishop. Hence Black's motivation for exchanging on e3.
 14 $\mathbb{W}b3$ a5 15 a3 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 16 $\mathbb{K}ac1$ $\mathbb{K}ab8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe3!$

There are many fine examples in this variation of White capturing on e3 with the f-pawn, strengthening his centre pawn and opening the f-file. This renders White's judgement here all the more admirable, realising that the knight on e7 constitutes Black's main problem and that the e-file represents White's main opportunity.

18... $\mathbb{K}fe8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{K}fe1$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 21 $\mathbb{K}c5!$

Threatening not just the a-pawn, but 22 $\mathbb{B}e5$ as well. Black has got into a rare old pickle on the e-file, and there is no longer any question that White's active forces remove any great relevance from the 'problem' of the IQP.

21... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 22 $\mathbb{W}c3$ c6 23 $\mathbb{K}xa5$ b5 24 $\mathbb{K}c1$

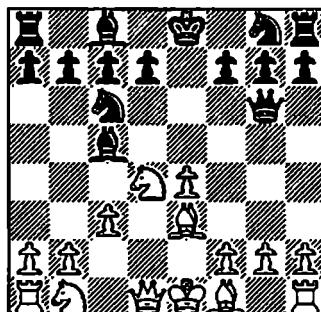
$\mathbb{Q}f5$ 25 $\mathbb{K}a7$ $\mathbb{K}c8$ 26 $\mathbb{W}c5$ $\mathbb{K}e7$ 27 d5!

The worst of all worlds when fighting against the IQP is when either ...c7-c6 or ...e7-e6 have been played to hold the pawn back, but for some reason it is in any case able to advance. Here it is immediately decisive, since 27...cx d5? fails to 28 $\mathbb{K}xd7!$ 27... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 28 dxc6 $\mathbb{W}f8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ $\mathbb{K}e1+$ 30 $\mathbb{K}xe1$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 31 cxd7 1-0

Sixth move alternatives for Black after 5... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3

Game 77
Ivanchuk-Smyslov
Tilburg 1994

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{K}e3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 6 c3 $\mathbb{W}g6?$



Of all the side-lines at Black's disposal, this is the perhaps the most challenging. Again, Black seeks to disturb the flow of White's development by hitting g2. Moreover, he can increase the pressure against e4 with ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$.

7 $\mathbb{W}e2$

A clever move! White defends e4 tactically (7... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$) and by supporting the bishop on e3 renews ideas of $\mathbb{Q}b5$ or even $\mathbb{Q}f5$.

The main alternative 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (7 $\mathbb{Q}b5?$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}f4!$) is risky for White) seems to have been tamed.

Black has 7... $\mathbb{Q}f6$! 8 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ (8 f3 d5 allows Black free and active development) 8... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ and now:

a) 9... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$?! 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$! $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 13 0-0+! $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$, followed by $\mathbb{Q}dc4$ and $\mathbb{Q}d5$, and Black's king will face heavy pressure despite the exchange of queens (Wells).

b) 9...0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ d5! 11 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 12 dxc6 $\mathbb{Q}e8$?! (I like this move, which prevents $\mathbb{Q}c4$; 12...b6 is also possible) 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (14 cxb7 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ gives Black too much light-squared counterplay, while White's king faces some danger in the centre) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ with a very comfortable position for Black in Pavasovic-Ibragimov, Ljubljana open 1996.

7... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$! 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

After 8 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ + 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$! 11 0-0-0 (11 h4?! looks well met by 11... $\mathbb{Q}b6$!, since if White defends both pawns by $\mathbb{Q}f3$ Black has 11...d5! and ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ to come) 11...0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ d5 I think Black is fine.

8... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 9 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 11 0-0-0 c8

11...d5?! 12 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ is a sharp alternative of Romanishin's.

12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ d5 13 f3

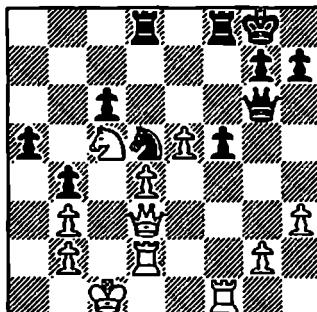
Better than 13 e5 f6! 14 f4 fxe5 15 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ d4 when White will suffer over his weak e3-square.

13...dxe4 14 fxe4 $\mathbb{Q}g4$! 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 16 h3 $\mathbb{Q}c8$?! 17 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Smyslov explains that 16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ would have been met by 17 g4!, but that now 17 g4(!) would be met with 17... $\mathbb{Q}fe8$, for which reason Black kept the e-file clear. However, I do not see what is then wrong with 18 $\mathbb{Q}f4$?! It is surely of overriding importance to hinder the advance ...f7-f5, which enables a build up of pressure with $\mathbb{Q}c4$ and $\mathbb{Q}f1$. I slightly prefer White in this case.

17...b5 18 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ a5 19 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ b4 20 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 22 axb3 f5! 23 e5

$\mathbb{Q}d5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d3$



24... $\mathbb{Q}c7$!

Both sides' knights have good-looking outposts. Black's withdraws from his to challenge the opponent's, since d5 will also be available for a rook. At the end Black has very comfortable equality.

25 $\mathbb{Q}df2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 28 g4 14 29 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ ½-½

Fifth move alternatives for Black

Game 78 Smagin-Unzicker Dortmund open 1992

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

I hope that it has been sufficiently emphasised that inducing White's c-pawn to c3, thus blocking the natural development of his queen's knight and hindering his control of the square d5, is central to Black's strategy here. If so, it should hardly need to be stated that the 'voluntary' 5 c3?! which crops up in a surprising number of games on my database, is not recommended. Black is simply a whole tempo up on Chapter 13, Game 83.

5... $\mathbb{Q}b6$

In addition to the main line 5... $\mathbb{Q}f6$, Black has another alternative in 5... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 6

$\mathbb{Q}xd4$ and now:

a) 6... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 7 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 8 e5 $\mathbb{W}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xb6?$ (9 $\mathbb{W}c3$ is also possible) 9... $\mathbb{a}xb6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ f6 (10... $\mathbb{E}a5?$ is a better way to reach the position from the game while avoiding 11 $\mathbb{Q}d5$) 11 f4! (11 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 12 exf6 should be an edge for White) 11...fxe5 12 fxe5 $\mathbb{E}a5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 14 b4! $\mathbb{E}a4$ 15 a3 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{E}a8$ 18 e6! c6 (18...dx6 19 0-0-0+ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{E}he1$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 21 h3! $\mathbb{E}xd1$ + 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ also favours White) 19 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 20 0-0-0 dx6 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{E}axc8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 23 $\mathbb{E}d7+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 24 $\mathbb{E}e1$ gave White an enduring plus in Krakops-Zhuravliov, Latvian Championship 1993.

b) 6... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 is an attempt to develop at maximum speed and hence gain counterplay against the e4-pawn, since $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is temporarily prevented. After 8 $\mathbb{Q}e3?$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d3?$ d5 10 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ Black gets the kind of active chances he is seeking. However, 9 $\mathbb{Q}c4?$ (Wells) looks better, since the e-pawn is immune (9... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{E}xe4$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 12 $\mathbb{W}f3+$) and also ...d7-d5 is hindered.

6 $\mathbb{Q}f5!$

5... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ is a rather unpretentious system. Black meets the threat of 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ winning a piece, and avoids the drawbacks, witnessed in the last couple of chapters, associated with the position of the queen on f6. However, White's development is also unhampered, and we have a case of the fairly unfettered space advantage which I discussed in the Introduction (indeed one example came straight from this line). Unsurprisingly, there is not much wrong with 6 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ either, but the text seems very strong, since it limits Black's options, and the knight on e3 bolsters White's central predominance.

6... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

It seems a shame to play this after the loss of tempo with 5... $\mathbb{Q}b6$. Still, alternatives offer no great improvement.

a) 6... $\mathbb{g}6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{a}xb6?$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ is similar,

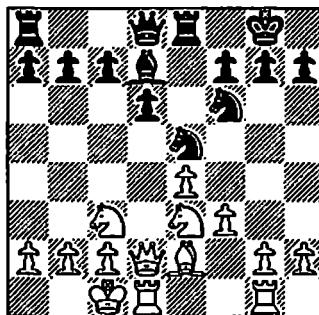
but the a-file might be worth having to take the sting out of White's plan with castling queenside.

b) 6...d5? is a bid for complications, after which 7 $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{a}xb6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ seems the best 'risk-free' route to a positional plus.

7 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 9 $\mathbb{W}d2!$

Not the only plan by many means. 9 $\mathbb{g}3?$ for example is a quite respectable mode of development which retains the space advantage.

9... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 10 f3! d6 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 12 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{E}hg1!$



Care is, as ever, still required. 13 g4 would be premature, offering Black the chance to exploit the undefended f3-pawn and play 13...b5!

13... $\mathbb{Q}c6?$

A strangely planless move. Black has to get on with 13...a6 and ...b7-b5 and hope for the best.

14 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ a6 15 g4 $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 16 g5 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$

Positionally it is often worth playing the knight to h5 to block the advance of the h-pawn in such positions. Here, of course 16... $\mathbb{Q}h5?$ 17 f4! does not come into consideration. Now White's attack plays itself.

17 h4 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 18 h5 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 19 f4 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}dc5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 22 h6 g6 23 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 24 f5 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25 $\mathbb{W}d4+$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 1-0

Summary

The conventional wisdom is that 7 g3! is the most challenging alternative to 7 $\mathbb{A}c4$!.. The early games of the chapter do not challenge this view. Games 71 and 72 are both really contrasting model games, in exploitation of a slight advantage on the one hand, and blasting away tactically with an otherwise positionally well-motivated idea on the other.

7 $\mathbb{A}c2$ (Game 73) should not be underestimated. Only the note on 7... $\mathbb{A}xe3$! (Schmittiel-Smejkal) looks like a cast-iron equaliser.

In fact 7 g3 looks pretty shorn of its terror. Game 75 and the note on 11... $\mathbb{A}xe4$! in Game 76 represent two decent possibilities. I will not be rushing to put them to the test with White.

6... $\mathbb{W}g6$? (Game 77) looks to me one of the best side-lines in the whole of the Scotch. Unlike 5... $\mathbb{A}b6$! (Game 78) it cannot be basically ignored. Ivanchuk may have been able to demonstrate a slight pull with 17 g4?!, but there are alternatives before that too which could be examined.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{A}f3$ $\mathbb{A}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{A}xd4$ $\mathbb{A}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{A}e3$

5... $\mathbb{W}f6$

5... $\mathbb{A}b6$ - Game 78

6 c3 (D) $\mathbb{A}ge7$

6... $\mathbb{W}g6$ - Game 77

7 g3

7 $\mathbb{A}e2$ - Game 71

7 $\mathbb{W}d2$ - Game 72

7 $\mathbb{A}c2$ - Game 73

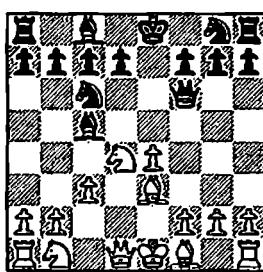
7...d5 (D)

7...0-0 - Game 74

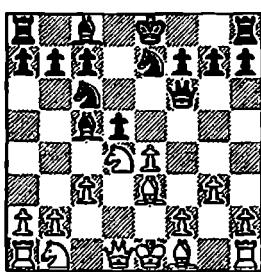
8 $\mathbb{A}g2$ $\mathbb{A}xd4$ (D)

8...dxe4 - Game 75

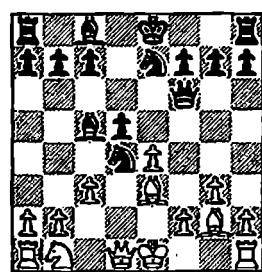
9 cxd4 - Game 76



6 c3



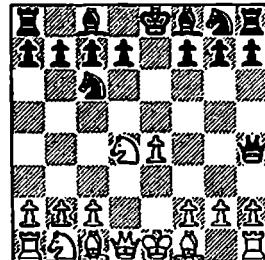
7...d5



8...A xd4

CHAPTER TWELVE

4... $\mathbb{W}h4$



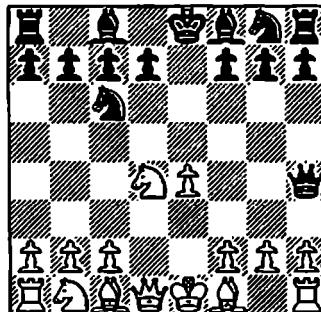
1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 4... $\mathbb{W}h4$

In the Introduction, 4... $\mathbb{W}h4$ was mentioned along with 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ as the other way for Black to attack e4. It does have one advantage over the latter. After 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ the threat was generally dealt with by the advance of the pawn, which in turn gained time for White. Here White does not have that option. Moreover, there are no convenient ways to defend e4, and all such attempts give Black good play. However, the move does have two drawbacks: First, c7 is weakened, the implications of which will be clear throughout the chapter. Second, by breaking one of the most basic rules of opening play, not just developing the queen before other pieces, but exposing her to attack, Black creates the justification for White's best course - to sacrifice the pawn on e4 for rapid development.

White has two good ways to give up the e-pawn: 5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ (Game 79) and 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (Games 80-82).

Game 79
Korneev-Komljenovic
Zaragoza open 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
4... $\mathbb{W}h4$



5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$

For a long time this was the standard reply, though the pendulum is now swinging towards 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (Games 80-82) in the popularity stakes. In my view, both are promising.

Defence of the e-pawn by 5 $\mathbb{W}d3?$, for example, is none too impressive: 5... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (5... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ is less clear) 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ dx $c6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 and Black develops naturally, while White's queen will be embarrassed on the open d-file.

5... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$

This introduces two ideas (three if we include the threat of mate). First, as in so many variations of the Scotch, Black wants to try to impede White's natural

development, in this case virtually forcing the white queen to either e2 or f3. Second, this bishop may be headed for b6, to provide a less disruptive defence of c7 than ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$.

The immediate acceptance of White's gambit is rightly regarded with scepticism. After 5... $\mathbb{W}xe4+$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ Black has no alternative to 6... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (apart from 6... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ [or 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ which is Game 81] considered below). Then White effortlessly develops a formidable initiative, for example with 7 0-0 a6 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ f5 10 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$, as in Lau-Elstner, Bad Wörishofen 1992.

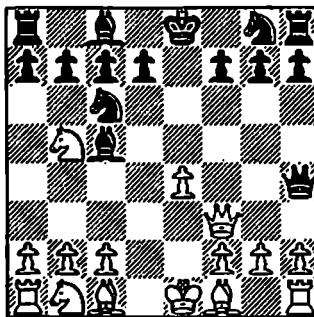
More challenging is 5... $\mathbb{Q}b4+?$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ (logical, as it prevents 6... $\mathbb{Q}a5$; 6 $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ is Game 80, while 6 c3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ fits in a little too comfortably with Black's plans) and now:

a) 6... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ d6? was my own idea. Sadly it is time to put it gently to sleep. After 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$! $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xa8!$ (9 g3 $\mathbb{W}f6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}h6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ leads to a rather amusing draw) 9... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (the point of the check on move five; the queen is denied the square d2) 10 g3 $\mathbb{W}h5$ 11 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ looks dangerous enough, but after 12 h3! $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ 14 hxg4 $\mathbb{W}xh1$ 15 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ Black has no real follow-up, and White's material advantage is too serious.

b) 6... $\mathbb{W}xe4+$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (7... $\mathbb{W}xg2$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{W}h3$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}f3!$ is well known to be unsound) 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 10 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ was Sveshnikov-Sermek, Bled 1994, when White could have played the tricky 13 $\mathbb{W}e2!$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d3$, threatening both $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ and the simple exchange of rooks. For Black his rook is a key resource of the defence, while his opponent on the other hand will find it much easier to mobilise reinforcements. Although it is by no means exhaustive, this analysis gives an idea of White's attacking potential

when Black's king is on d8, and his queen the catalyst for White's rapid development.

6 $\mathbb{W}f3!$

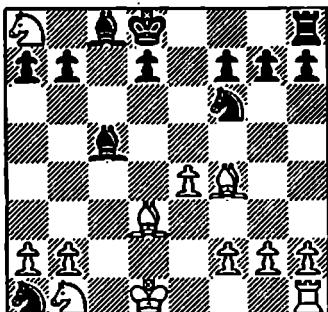


This seems to have a lot more punch here than 6 $\mathbb{W}e2$, when Black has the retreat 6... $\mathbb{Q}d8$. The 'general' claim must be that White has been forced to make sufficient concessions to justify the loss of tempo. In concrete terms after 7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 8 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ a6 9 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}f6!$ Black forces another concession with 10 c3! $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ when he has an easy game. The tactical point is that 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xb2!$ 11 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}c1+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xc2+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ did not give White enough for the pawn in K.Müller-Godena, Mitropa Cup 1995.

6... $\mathbb{Q}d4$

This will be pretty conclusively found wanting. The difficulty is to find a palatable alternative. The first thing to note is that here 6... $\mathbb{W}d8?$ fails to 7 $\mathbb{W}g3!$ Neither does the attempt to generate counterplay against White's king by 6... $\mathbb{Q}f6?$ promise much against the no-nonsense 7 $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 8 $\mathbb{W}f4!$ The thematic 6... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ is more testing. However, 7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a5+$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ is good for White according to Gutman. The knight on b5 will retreat comfortably to d4, and Black's play looks untidy.

7 $\mathbb{Q}xc7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 8 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2+$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d3$



12... $\mathbb{Q}g4$

It begins to become clear that everything comes down to a battle of which knight can get out, and that this is bad news for the black cause. The $c7$ -square is simply too easy for White to access. 12... $b6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ does not help) 14 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ is, for example, winning for White.

13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 14 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $d6$
 16 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $g5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ $dxe5$ 18 $\mathbb{E}xc5$ 15
 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $fxe4+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 21 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}f6$
 22 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{E}b6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{E}xb2$ 24 $\mathbb{E}xa1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$
 25 $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 26 $\mathbb{E}f2$ $\mathbb{E}c2$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}dx4$ $\mathbb{E}c1$
 28 $\mathbb{E}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}h1$ 30 $h3$ $h6$ 31
 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{E}b1$ 33 $\mathbb{E}xb1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb1$
 34 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

All through the game, White's pieces have been poised to cover his weak points with consummate ease. Black could have resigned here.

34... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$
 37 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 38 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 39 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $a5$
 40 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $a4$ 41 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $a3$ 42 $h4$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 43
 $h5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ 44 $h6$ 1-0

Game 80
Schmaltz-Karpatchev
Cappelle la Grande open 1993

1 $e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $e5$ 3 $d4$ $exd4$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}db5?$!

A standard and dangerous idea in an in-

appropriate setting. The problem is simple. Black's bishop covers the threat to $c7$ without undue inconvenience, and then White's knights will be driven back when they rather step on each others' toes. 6 $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ is Games 81 and 82.

6... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $a6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $b5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

If 9... $b4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ is a good reply, renewing the problem of $c7$.

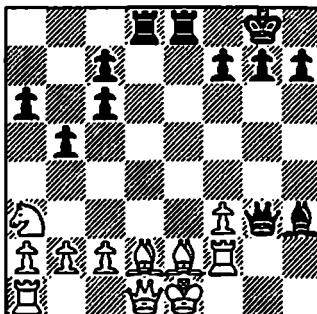
10 $g3?$

Disastrous. White had to play 10 0-0! when he can consider the important reorganising move $\mathbb{Q}d5$, without subjecting his king to the kind of heavy fire it meets in the game.

10... $\mathbb{W}h3$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d5?$!

Now White will be massacred by a fine attacking sequence, but it is hard to suggest anything very satisfactory. Black threatens ... $\mathbb{W}g2$ and ... $b5-b4$, and after for example 11 $\mathbb{Q}f1$, the e-pawn would again be weak.

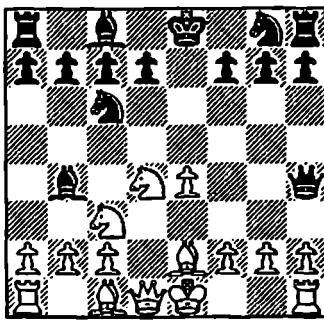
11... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 12 $exd5$ 0-0! 13 $dxcc6$ $\mathbb{W}e8+$
 14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $dxcc6$ 15 $\mathbb{H}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 16 $f3$ $\mathbb{W}xh2!$
 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{H}ad8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xg3+$ 19 $\mathbb{H}f2$
 $\mathbb{H}h3!$ 0-1



An extraordinary picture of paralysis. White has two extra pieces, but almost everything is pinned, and he is quite incapable of dealing with the threat of ... $\mathbb{W}g1$ mating. A clear warning for White not to neglect his development.

Game 81
Azmaiparashvili-Hector
San Sebastian 1991

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4 Wh4 5 Qc3! Qb4 6 Qe2!?



The most recent trend. By no means rejecting ideas of Qdb5, White would rather all but force Black to accept his pawn offer (otherwise Black has made unnatural moves without extracting any such concessions from his opponent) before setting his knight on this committal course.

6... Wh4

The only real alternative, 6...Qf6, is considered in Game 82.

7 Qdb5 Qf6 8 0-0!

There is a very nineteenth century feel to some of these lines and White should beware how quickly the initiative can pass if he places material before attack. Azmaiparashvili gives the instructive line 8 Qxc7?! Qd8 9 Qxa8 Wxg2 10 Qf3 Qe8+ 11 Qe3 Wh3 12 Qxc6 bxc6 13 We2 Qd5 14 0-0-0 Qxe3 15 fxe3 Wxe3+ 16 Wxe3 Qxe3 when the knight is not coming out and the bishop pair stands Black in good stead.

8... Qxc3 9 bxc3

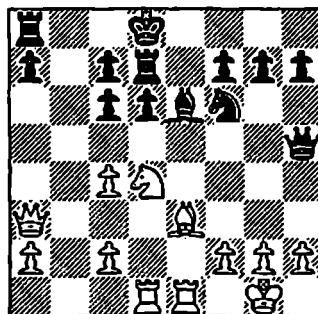
Attack before structure! 9 Qxc3? Wh4! is not so clear.

9... Qd8 10 Qe3 He8 11 He1 Wd5 12

Wc1 Wh5 13 Wa3 d6 14 Ed1 Ae7 15 c4 Qe6 16 Qf3!

The problem for Black in this type of position is that, even in the absence of a quick knockout, it is very difficult for him to fully free himself. Now there is a direct threat - 17 Qxc6 and Qd4.

16... Ed7 17 Qxc6 bxc6 18 Qd4 Wh5



19 Ag5!!

Much stronger than the routine capture on c6, after which Black's king could hope to escape to the kingside. The bishop is immune because the breakthrough on the e-file adds the decisive impetus to the onslaught after 19... Wxg5 20 Exe6! Wc5 21 Wa6!

19... c5 20 Qxf6+ gxf6 21 Qc6+ He8 22 Qb2! Wh4 23 Qb7 Ead8 24 Ed3! 1-0

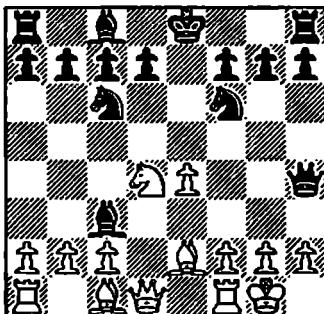
The entry of the rook via g3 finally breaks Black's resistance. To the end White remained immune from the lure of material.

Game 82
Mat.Müller-Schiffer
German Bundesliga 1997

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Qxd4 Wh4 5 Qc3! Qb4 6 Qe2!? Qf6 7 0-0! Qxc3

Consistent, as Black wants to capture on e4 with the knight rather than the queen. The problem is that the queen is

always vulnerable to $\mathbb{Q}f5$ anyway. 7... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xg7+?$ (9 $\mathbb{B}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$) is a nice case in point. After 9... $\mathbb{B}d8$ (9... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 10 $\mathbb{B}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ also gives White a massive attack) 10 $\mathbb{B}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ White saves the rook by the threat of $\mathbb{Q}g5$, and retains a tremendous initiative (Wells).



8 $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 9 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 10 f3 $\mathbb{W}a4$ 11 $\mathbb{B}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

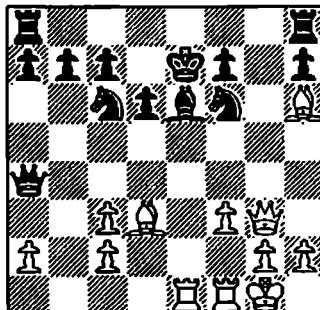
The bishop pair and the excellent knight on f5 obviously give White good compensation. The full extent of Black's problems is not at first evident. The text is maybe necessary since 11...0-0 is splattered by the memorable combination 12 $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}h6+!$ in Vukovic-Mozetic, Banja Vrucica 1991, when 13... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d2+$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}g5+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}g5+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}h6$ or 13... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e1$ are likely to meet a similar fate.

12 $\mathbb{W}e1!$ d6 13 $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$

Anyway, Black is so desperately weak on the dark squares that White can drive

his king around at leisure.

13... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}g3+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 15 $\mathbb{A}h6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$
16 $\mathbb{H}ae1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$



17 $\mathbb{H}xe6+!$

A further fine continuation of the attack. In the bare analysis, we can blame the lack of a dark-squared bishop for the defence, and the desertion of Black's queen from defensive duties.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 18 $\mathbb{H}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19 f4 $\mathbb{W}ag8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}h3+$ $\mathbb{Q}fg4$ 21 $\mathbb{fxe5}$ $\mathbb{dxex5}$
21...d5 22 $\mathbb{Af1!}$ is no solution either.

22 $\mathbb{H}e4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ f5 24 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$
25 $\mathbb{A}c4+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xg8$ $\mathbb{Q}xg8$ 27 $\mathbb{W}h4+$
 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 28 $\mathbb{W}d8$

White's formal material advantage is small, but the black forces still experience difficulties finding the scene of the action.
28...e4 29 $\mathbb{W}d5+$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 30 g4 $\mathbb{fxg4}$ 31
 $\mathbb{W}xe4+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 32 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 33 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ h5
34 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{H}h6$ 35 a4 $\mathbb{H}g6$ 36 a5 h4 37
 $\mathbb{W}c4+$ 1-0

A fine attacking game which pinpoints everything that is wrong with 4... $\mathbb{W}h4?$

Summary

4... $\mathbb{W}h4$?! seems to be rushing full steam ahead towards the status of 'unplayable'. This crisis is two-pronged. Both 5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{W}f3$! (Game 79) and the 'new' gambit approach 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$!? $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$! (Games 81-82) cause very severe problems.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 4... $\mathbb{W}h4$ (*D*)

5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ – Game 79

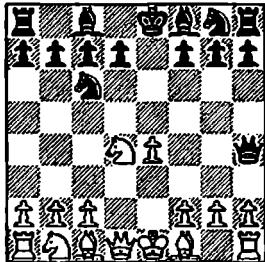
5... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ (*D*) 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

6 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ – Game 80

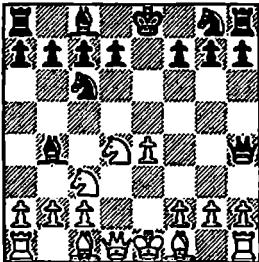
6... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ (*D*)

6... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ – Game 82

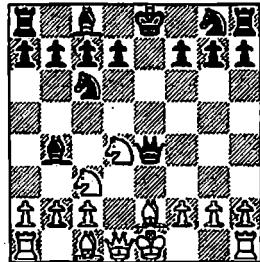
7 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ – Game 81



4... $\mathbb{W}h4$



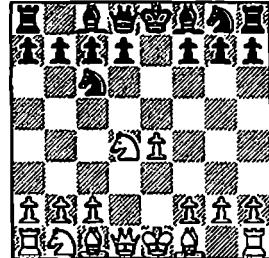
5... $\mathbb{Q}b4$



6... $\mathbb{W}xe4$

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Black's Fourth Move Alternatives



1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

In this chapter we conclude our survey of the Scotch with a look at Black's more unusual fourth moves. The most respectable of these is 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$, which as we shall see in Games 83-85 has been played by Peter Leko and Tony Miles. The chapter is rounded off with 4... $\mathbb{W}f6$ (Game 86), 4... $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ (Game 87) and 4...g6 (Game 88).

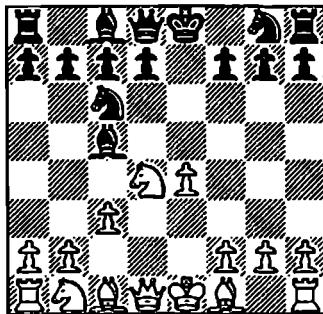
Game 83 Kasparov-Leko Tilburg 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 5 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c5!$?

The passive 5... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is the subject of Game 85.

The interpolation of a check on b4 before this familiar posting of the bishop, represents a stark version of the 'disruption of development' theme which has appeared at many points throughout the book. Supporters of this rather new and interesting system claim (plausibly) that they are seeking positions similar to those of Chapters 9-11 without the obvious drawback of a vulnerable black queen on f6. There is no doubt that we will find positions where White will miss the pos-

sibility of developing his queen's knight to its 'natural square'. The challenge for White is to find uses for the move c2-c3.



6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

The main alternative has been 6 $\mathbb{Q}e3$, although a number of games from Tony Miles look quite promising for Black after 6... $\mathbb{Q}b6!$ (compare Game 78, where White's pawn is still on c2) and now:

a) 7 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 f4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d6 11 0-0 (11 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 12 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 13 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ cxd5 15 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}a5!$ [Wells]) looks promising for Black too) 11...0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 c4 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 14 g3 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ Hadzidakis-Miles, Hania open 1997, was vintage Miles. Active and original piece play,

combined with just enough provocation to secure a real scrap.

b) 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (the interpolation 7 $\mathbb{W}a4$ [threatening $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ and $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ when Black will have to recapture away from the centre on b6] 7... $\mathbb{E}b8!$ is not dangerous for Black) 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$? 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (8 $\mathbb{Q}c4$?! allows the familiar freeing manoeuvre 8... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$! and 9...d5) 8... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ d6 10 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 11 0-0 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ f5 13 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Exf5}$ 15 f4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ gave White no more than a tiny edge in Zahariev-Miles, Hania open 1997.

6... $\mathbb{B}xc6$

The first impact of the addition of 5 c3 over Chapters 9-11. 6... $\mathbb{W}f6$?? 7 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ would not be too clever!

7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}h4$?

This, however, seems to be too ambitious, since Kasparov's precise reaction renders Black's queen a target for White's own kingside ambitions. Tony Miles's 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$! (see Game 84) is certainly an improvement.

7... $\mathbb{Q}f6$! on the other hand does not look right. After 8 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ either 9 0-0 or 9 c4 the position resembles those from Chapter 5 which Black prefers to avoid.

However, what about 7...d6!? preparing ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ here? In the analogous position with the pawn on c2, White's best results have, after all, been achieved by playing the knight to c3.

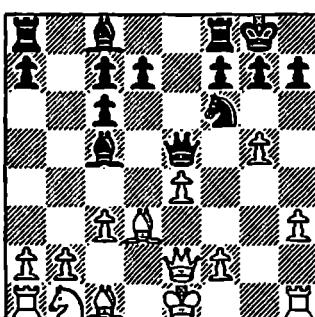
An important idea here is that after 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (if 8... $\mathbb{W}h4$! 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 11 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ White reorganises his forces to advantage) 9 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 10 $\mathbb{Q}h4$! Black will get a strong attack with 10...g5! 11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ h5? and if 12 e5 then 12...h4! is strong.

White probably does best to develop quite slowly; something like 8 $\mathbb{Q}d2$! $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 11 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ which might be worth an edge, but in general this idea looks worth a try for Black.

8 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 h3!

Restricting Black's knight, and preparing to target the advanced black queen. It all looks easy after the event, but Kasparov's judgement that he can push his kingside pawns forward with impunity is very fine. 9 $\mathbb{Q}e3$! $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 12 0-0 d5 would have given Black just the kind of active counterplay he was seeking.

9...0-0 10 g3 $\mathbb{W}h5$ 11 g4! $\mathbb{W}e5$ 12 g5!



12... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$?

Tactically flawed, but 12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 13 f4 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$! f6 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 16 b4! $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (Kasparov) was also none too palatable. White has a ready-made attack on the kingside, while he may even be able to castle long despite the open b-file. The (otherwise quite impressive) bishop on b6 might rather impede his own side's operations on the queenside.

13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$!

Somewhat paradoxically, it is 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$! which Black can meet by 14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$! since 15 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 16 0-0 $\mathbb{E}xe2$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ gives Black a lot of counterplay.

14... $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 16 c4! $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Basically refuting Black's idea. Apart from two pawns, Black can claim little for his piece. White develops without undue difficulty, neutralises the few threats, and sets about exchanging pieces.

17... $\mathbb{R}ab8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 19 b3 f6 20 gxf6

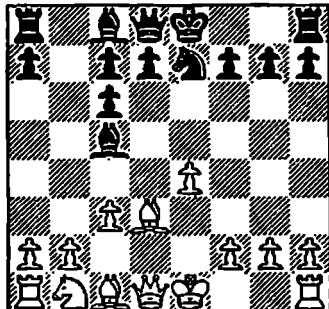
$\mathbb{Q}d4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c5$
 $\mathbb{Kf8}$ 24 $\mathbb{E}h2!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$

This wins a third pawn, but White's 26th move ensures total liquidation in return.

25 $\mathbb{W}g1$ $\mathbb{E}be8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xd7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$ 27 $\mathbb{E}xf2$
 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}c4+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 29 $\mathbb{E}xf8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 30
 $\mathbb{E}f1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 1-0

Game 84
 Sax-Miles
 Szeged 1997

1 e4 $\mathbb{Q}c6?$ 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e5 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$
 $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 5 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$
 $\mathbb{Q}e7?$



8 $\mathbb{W}h5$

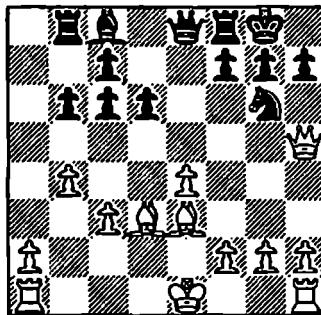
This looks like a prelude to some aggressive idea based on attacking h7 by advancing the e-pawn. It never comes to fruition, and hence a quieter approach looks in order, e.g. 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 9 b4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ or 8...0-0 9 b4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 10 a4 15 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$.
 8...d6 9 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{E}b8!$ 10 b3

It is very pleasant to be able to throw in a useful move like 9... $\mathbb{E}b8!$, safe in the knowledge that 10 b4?! is refuted tactically by 10... $\mathbb{E}xb4!$ 11 cxb4 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}h5$ d5! Hence the text, which represents an unhappy loss of tempo, and a potential weakening of the dark squares.

10...0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

11 e5 looks more like the logical culmination of White's strategy, but even 11...h6? may be possible, since 12 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{G}xh6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xh6$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{W}h4!$ is not sufficient for White. Also 11...g6 12 $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{d}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ is promising for Black.
 11... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 12 b4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ $\mathbb{axb}8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

If 15 0-0 $\mathbb{W}c5!$ Black threatens ... $\mathbb{Q}f4$, and White's pieces are terribly overextended to no obvious end.



15...f5!

This move, albeit here with an extra tactical dimension, forms a basic part of Black's repertoire in this line. The resultant position finds Black enjoying a clear initiative based on his active rooks, more compact pawn position, and chances to embarrass the white king. For White's part, he could reflect that something like this structure with the exchange of knight for bishop on b6, could have been attained with his king in safety and a more solid development of his queen.

16 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$
 $\mathbb{E}xe8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ c5 21 a3
 $\mathbb{E}a8$ 22 $\mathbb{E}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}b2$
 $\mathbb{E}a8$ 25 a4 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 26 g3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 27 a5

Black still has the chances, but in the final position the potential strength of White's b-pawn renders the task of getting his connected pawns rolling difficult.

27...cxb4 28 axb6 bxc3+ 29 ♜xc3 c5 30 ♜e7+ ♜g6 31 ♜b1 ♜b8 32 ♜d7 ♜c6
½-½

Game 85
Pavasovic-Kunte
World Junior Ch., Halle 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜b4+ 5 c3 ♜e7 6 ♜c4!!

Of course Black's slightly passive choice can be countered in several ways, but I like the direct quality of the text. White will also not allow his opponent to develop unhindered.

6...♜f6

The alternative 6...d6?! looks unjustifiably risky. After 7 ♜xc6 bxc6 8 ♜b3! ♜f6 9 ♜xf7+ ♜f8, the simplest antidote appears to be 10 ♜c6? ♜xe4 11 ♜xc8 ♜xc8 12 0-0 d5 13 ♜d2 ♜c5 14 ♜c2 g6 15 b4 ♜e6 16 ♜b2, when Black's king position and the potential disaster of his loose pieces on the e-file should add up to a great advantage for White, as in A.Grosar-Sermek, Portoroz 1993.

7 ♜xc6 bxc6 8 e5 ♜e4

8...♜d5?! is also possible, offering a pawn which White does well to leave alone. After 9 ♜xd5?! cxd5 10 ♜xd5 ♜a6! not only is White's king caught in the centre, but the advance c2-c3 has caused weaknesses on the light squares, complicating the task of combating the powerful piece on a6.

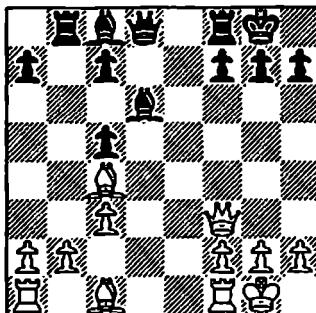
So, White should prefer 9 0-0 ♜b6 10 ♜b3 0-0 11 ♜d2 d5 12 exd6 cxd6 (there is nothing in White's piece position here to justify capture with the bishop on d6) 13 ♜f3?! d5 14 ♜c2 ♜a6 15 ♜e1 ♜f6 16 ♜d4 c5 17 ♜f5 and although Black's pieces are satisfactorily developed, White will have the easier task finding a plan, as in Milov-Shvidler, Israel 1996.

9 ♜f3! d5 10 exd6 ♜xd6 11 0-0!

Again White should avoid the greedy

11 ♜xc6+ ♜d7 12 ♜d5 ♜xc4 13 ♜xc4 ♜b8! for similar reasons to those outlined in the note above.

11...0-0 12 ♜d3 ♜b8 13 ♜d2 c5 14 ♜c4 ♜xc4 15 ♜xc4 ♜d6



16 ♜d5!

Bringing together two of our most persistent themes. Again Black is trying to seek compensation for a weakened pawn structure through active piece play. Here after 16 b3?! ♜b7 17 ♜b5? (17 ♜f5 was relatively better) 17...♜f6 18 ♜e3 ♜be8! he was extremely successful in this endeavour in Vragoteris-Grivas, Iraklio 1994. White in turn, gives priority to preventing Black's intended mobilisation, and finds his opponent, faced with this very strong novelty, lacking in any back-up plan.

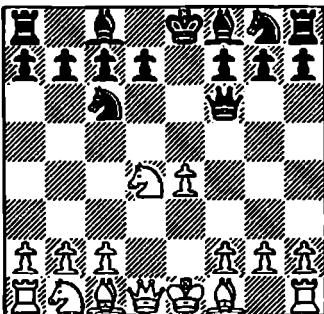
16...c4?!

A rather desperate invitation to avarice which White again passes up, and exploits slowly and positionally.

17 b3 ♜a6 18 ♜e1 ♜c5 19 b4 ♜b6 20 a4 c5 21 b5 ♜c8 22 ♜f4 ♜c7 23 ♜ad1 ♜d7 24 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 25 ♜e7 ♜h8 26 ♜xc4 ♜bd8 27 ♜d5 ♜f4 28 ♜f1 1-0

Game 86
Van der Wiel-Sosonko
Dutch Ch., Hilversum 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6?!



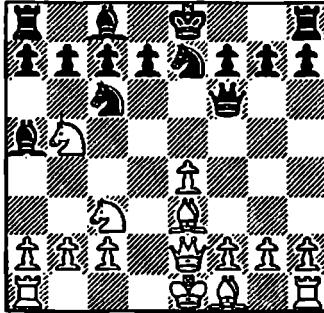
5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$

White's principal attempt to avoid transposition to well-known paths. Thus after $5 \mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{Q}c5 6 c3$ we find ourselves in Chapters 9-11. After $5 \mathbb{Q}xc6$ Black can again return to main lines with $5... \mathbb{Q}c5$ (see Chapters 6 and 7) although $5... dxec6$ is also playable here.

5... $\mathbb{Q}c5 6 \mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{Q}b6!?$

Again the main move here, but in Chapter 12 a case was made for the position reached after $6... \mathbb{W}d8!?$ (see Game 79). The move order here also has the virtue of virtually forcing White's queen to e2 rather than to f3, although of course here Black has to reckon with the transpositional possibilities discussed at move five.

7 $\mathbb{Q}1c3 \mathbb{Q}ge7 8 \mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{Q}a5$



9 0-0-0

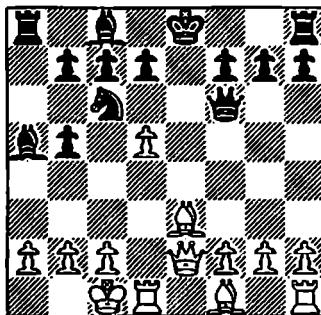
The apparently quieter $9 \mathbb{W}d2!?$, prepar-

ing a simpler retreat for the knight on b5, also gave White a pleasant edge after $9... a6 10 \mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}xd4 11 \mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{W}g6 12 0-0-0 0-0 13 \mathbb{W}f4 d6 14 \mathbb{E}d3 f6 15 \mathbb{E}g3 \mathbb{W}f7 16 \mathbb{Q}d5$ in Bruk-G.Flear, Tel Aviv 1989. It is not so clear to me why Black must be in such a rush to play $9... a6!?$ now that White has prepared a comfortable reply. I would prefer $9... 0-0 10 0-0-0 d6$.

9... a6!

Now, by contrast, White's last move unpinned his c3-knight and Black would be wise to pay attention to White's pivotal positional threat. Thus the casual $9... 0-0!?$ was strongly met by $10 \mathbb{Q}d5! \mathbb{Q}xd5 11 exd5 \mathbb{Q}e7 12 d6! cxd6 13 \mathbb{E}xd6 \mathbb{W}e5 14 \mathbb{Q}xa7 \mathbb{W}f4+ 15 \mathbb{W}e3 (15 \mathbb{Q}e3!?) 15... \mathbb{W}xe3+ 16 \mathbb{Q}xe3 \mathbb{Q}f5 17 \mathbb{E}d3 \mathbb{Q}xe3 18 fxe3 d5 19 a3 and Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn, since the white knight still has a fine outpost available on d4, in Chiburdanidze-Miles, Palma de Mallorca 1989. For those trying to locate this game, it is worth noting that the opening moves were 1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$, which just goes to show that the Scotch can crop up in the least expected places!$

10 $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{Q}xd5 11 exd5 axb5!?$



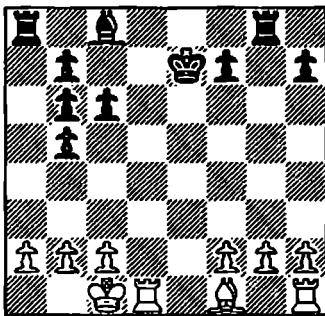
Black realises that the immediate discovered check does no serious damage, and that $11... \mathbb{Q}e7$ definitely gives White more room to manoeuvre after, for example, $12 \mathbb{Q}d4 (12 \mathbb{Q}a3 b5!?) 12... 0-0 13 \mathbb{Q}b3$

$\mathbb{Q}b4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3$, as in Vaidya-Shabtai, Budapest 1992.

12 $\mathbb{Q}d4+?$

Nimzowitsch's dictum, that 'the threat is stronger than the execution' has a surprisingly wide validity. Here White should capture immediately on c6, when 12...dxc6?? is ruled out due to 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5+$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{E}d8$ mate. It is rather less self-evident that 12...bxcc6 13 $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ fxe6 15 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ would represent an improvement for White over the game. The point is that although Black's structure is not so ugly as in the next diagram, neither in terms of piece activity nor pawn breaks can he expect as much counterplay as he enjoys in the game.

12... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 13 dxc6 dxc6 14 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ cxb6



Black's pawn formation is not a pretty sight, and although both his rooks are on half-open files, White will play g2-g3, taking a lot of fun out of the g-file. However, the d5-square is an excellent potential post for his bishop and the a-file the real key to the position. White has the very concrete question of the threat to his a-pawn. The advance b2-b3 hardly comes into consideration since Black can quickly double on the a-file, and even play ...b5-b4 if necessary, fixing the weakness. Hence a2-a3, but

this enables Black to sacrifice a pawn, liquidate his weakness and prove full equality.

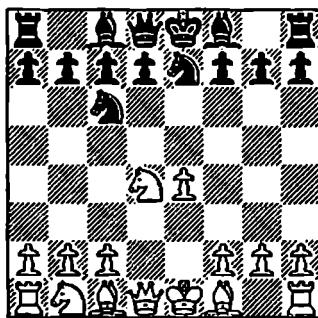
18 a3 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 19 g3 b4! 20 $\mathbb{E}d3$

White did not like the look of 20 axb4, when Black's active pieces ensure enough counterplay, for example 20... $\mathbb{H}a1+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{H}xd1+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 23 $\mathbb{H}g1$ $\mathbb{H}a8$ followed by ... $\mathbb{H}a1$. The rest of the game is very comfortable for Black.

20...bxa3 21 $\mathbb{H}xa3$ $\mathbb{H}xa3$ 22 bxa3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ b5 24 $\mathbb{H}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{H}a8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{H}a4$ 27 $\mathbb{H}e3$ $\mathbb{H}d4$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ h6 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Game 87
Kotsur-Shchekachev
Smolensk 1997

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}ge7$



This move is not without logic. Black will exchange on d4, briefly centralising White's queen in order in turn to evict her. He will be able to compete for the dark squares in the centre, and his king's bishop can develop without hindrance. The drawback is pretty much as discussed in the Introduction - White's space advantage remains largely uncontested, and above all, there is less competition than normal for the d5-square.

5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 6 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 7 $\mathbb{W}e3$

I believe that this is the best square,

preparing $\mathbb{A}d2$ and 0-0-0. Johann Hjartarson won a nice game after 7 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{A}b4$ 8 $a3$ $\mathbb{A}a5(?)$ 9 $b4!$ $\mathbb{A}b6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 12 0-0-0! $d6$ (12... $\mathbb{A}xe4?$ would meet with a most elegant and original refutation 13 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 14 $\mathbb{A}f6!!$ $gxf6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}h6$ with a mating attack) 13 $f3$ $\mathbb{A}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{B}b1$, when in Hjartarson-Keitlinghaus, Copenhagen 1997, White had the typical space advantage of which we have seen many examples, with clear chances for kingside expansion. It is also instructive how, with his poorly placed bishop on $b6$, Black's counterplay is in no way enhanced by White's advanced queenside pawns. However, after 8 $a3$ Black should play 8... $\mathbb{A}xc3!$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xc3$ when interestingly his slight lead in development compensates for White's bishop pair. White comes to rather miss his $c3$ -knight, as his e -pawn becomes a target for Black's operations. Wells-Czebe, Budapest 1997, continued 9...0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}h4!$ 11 $\mathbb{A}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 0-0 $c6$! 13 $\mathbb{A}b3$ $d5$ 14 $exd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 15 $\mathbb{A}xd5$ $cxd5$ 16 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{A}f5$ with full equality.

7... $\mathbb{A}b4$

Boris Spassky recently tried another plausible looking development, 7... $g6?$! 8 $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{A}g7$, but he will need a good reply to the excellent 9 $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ found by the computer Kallisto. The point is that 9... $\mathbb{A}xb2?$ fails to 10 $\mathbb{A}c3!$, and however Black reacts he will be subjected to horrors on the long diagonal. Note that the unusual position of Black's king's knight helped to produce this rare tactical possibility.

8 $\mathbb{A}d2$ 0-0 9 0-0-0 $d6$ 10 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{A}e6$ 11 $f4$ $f5$

11... $f6?$ had already been played with satisfactory results in Sax-Keitlinghaus, Feldbach open 1997, but after 12 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{A}xd2+$ 13 $\mathbb{A}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ White should avoid exchanges with 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3$, keeping a small spatial plus.

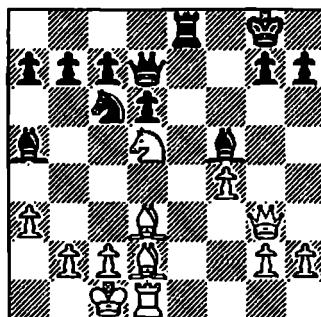
12 $a3$ $\mathbb{A}a5$ 13 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{A}he1$ $\mathbb{A}ae8$

I find White's play in this whole game

rather convincing. After this reasonable looking move, White seems to gain a decisive plus by force. However, after 14... $fxe4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$ (15 $\mathbb{A}xe4$ is fine too, but the threat of $\mathbb{Q}g5$ will provoke another weakness) 15... $\mathbb{A}xd2+$ 16 $\mathbb{A}xd2$ $h6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ Black will in any case come under heavy pressure, as the $g6$ -square is very weak.

15 $ext5!$ $\mathbb{A}xf5$ 16 $\mathbb{A}xe8$ $\mathbb{A}xe8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

Despite allowing exchanges, this move, pivotal to White's whole system, causes Black great difficulties here too. The threat of $\mathbb{Q}f6$ wins a valuable tempo, and with it a pawn!



17... $\mathbb{A}xd2+$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xd2$ $\mathbb{A}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{A}xf5$ $\mathbb{A}xf5$
20 $\mathbb{W}b3!$ $\mathbb{A}f7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $h6$ 22 $g3$ $\mathbb{A}h8$ 23
 $\mathbb{A}d3$ $\mathbb{A}h7$ 24 $b3$ $a5$ 25 $\mathbb{A}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 26 $\mathbb{A}b2!$

White's excellent knight ensures that his opponent has no counter-chances whatsoever. Safety first is the philosophy by which he will maintain that grip. 26 $\mathbb{A}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}f5!$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ was also possible but there is no need to allow Black any activity at all.

26... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 27 $\mathbb{W}c6$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 28 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 29
 $\mathbb{A}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 30 $\mathbb{W}e4+$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $c6$ 32
 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 33 $\mathbb{A}xe4$ $d5$ 34 $\mathbb{A}e8$ $\mathbb{A}d7$ 35
 $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

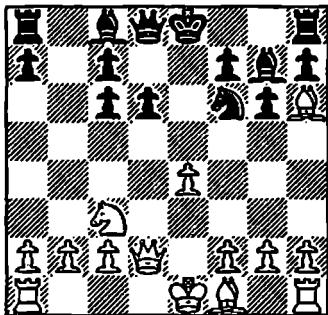
In addition to his extra pawn, White also has the more active pieces. This rapidly secures him a second, and the game.

35... $\mathbb{A}g6$ 36 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{A}d6$ 37 $\mathbb{A}e7$ $d4$ 38
 $\mathbb{A}a7$ $\mathbb{A}d5$ 39 $\mathbb{A}xa5$ 1-0

Game 88
Pavasovic-Z.Basagic
Bled open 1996

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ g6 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ d6 7 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc6?$ bxc6 9 $\mathbb{Q}h6$

White's last two moves represent a very direct and logical approach to the position. He believes that after the exchange of dark-squared bishops, Black's counterplay on the half-open b-file will not amount to very much. Indeed it seems on this evidence to be less potent than that generated when Black is able himself to trade on d4 and then expand with ...c7-c5, ...a7-a6 and ...b7-b5. Moreover, while Black's next move could be open to the familiar charge of 'castling into it', it is clear that given the possibility of White advancing his e-pawn (with or without a supporting f2-f4) neither the centre nor the queenside are very attractive options for Black's king.



9...0-0 10 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 11 h4! $\mathbb{Q}b8$

If Black tries 11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$, he will find that after 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ his knight is sorely missed, and that he is subjected not just to the usual h-file indignities, but to invasion down the e-file too. One illustrative line: 14 $\mathbb{H}e1?$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 15

$\mathbb{W}c3+$ f6 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4?$ $\mathbb{W}xg2$ 17 h5 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 18 $\mathbb{h}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}d2!$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 20 $\mathbb{H}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21.

f4 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ breaking through decisively on h7.

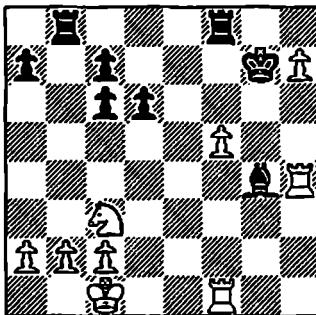
12 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 13 h5 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{H}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 15 f4!

Since Black can always capture on g6 with the f-pawn, the crude attempt to give mate using the h-file alone would be destined for disappointment. This move however, creates havoc. The advance of the pawn to f5 adds crucial weight to the assault on Black's g6-pawn, and incidentally wins back the powerful a2-g8 diagonal for White's bishop. All this induces Black into the opening of the h-file *without* allowing a second rank defence.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 16 f5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 g4! $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 18 $\mathbb{H}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h6!$

Black has removed the potentially dangerous bishop, but at what cost?

19...f6 20 $\mathbb{fxg6}$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 21 $\mathbb{H}h4$ f5 22 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 23 $\mathbb{gxh7+}$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xg7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 25 $\mathbb{exf5}$ 1-0



Black loses a piece, since 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ can be met by 26 $\mathbb{h}8\mathbb{W}+$!, deflecting the f8-rook. A brisk miniature and a further illustration of the potential of castling on opposite sides when Black has failed to make a successful challenge White's space advantage.

Summary

I expect that 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 5 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ (Games 83 and 84) is here to stay. After 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$, both 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ and the untried 7...d6 look reasonable.

4... $\mathbb{W}f6$ seems to have continued validity as a transpositional option, not least due to the interesting and unusual 5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}d8?$ Perhaps its relative lack of popularity arises because it side-steps a line (4... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$) which is none too frightening in any case.

4... $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ is less impressive, and seems rather overrated. White's approach in Game 87 looks promising. Other moves fall prey to the objection discussed in the Introduction. White gets his space advantage without a fight. Game 88 is a rather graphic case in point.

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 d4 exd4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ (*D*)

4... $\mathbb{W}f6$ – Game 86

4... $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ – Game 87

4...g6 – Game 88

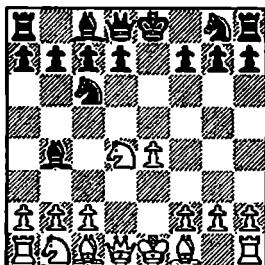
5 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (*D*)

5... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ – Game 85

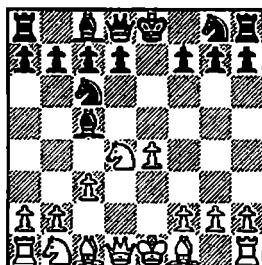
6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (*D*) $\mathbb{Q}e7$

7... $\mathbb{W}h4$ – Game 83

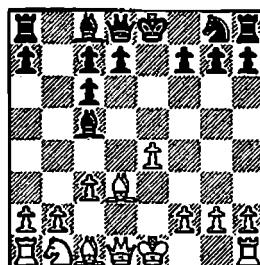
8 $\mathbb{W}h5$ – Game 84



4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$



5... $\mathbb{Q}c5$



7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

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