

GAMBIT

How to Beat 1d4

James Rizzitano

A sound and ambitious repertoire based
on the Queen's Gambit Accepted



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James Rizzitano

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Symbols

+	check	Ech	European championship
++	double check	Echt	European team championship
#	checkmate	ECC	European Clubs Cup
!!	brilliant move	Ct	candidates event
!	good move	IZ	interzonal event
!?	interesting move	Z	zonal event
?!	dubious move	OL	olympiad
?	bad move	jr	junior event
??	blunder	wom	women's event
+-	White is winning	rpd	rapidplay game
±	White is much better	tt	team tournament
±	White is slightly better	sim	game from simultaneous display
=	equal position	corr.	correspondence game
≠	Black is slightly better	qual	qualifying event
+	Black is much better	1-0	the game ends in a win for White
-+	Black is winning	½-½	the game ends in a draw
Ch	championship	0-1	the game ends in a win for Black
Cht	team championship	(n)	<i>n</i> th match game
Wch	world championship	(D)	see next diagram
Wcht	world team championship		

Dedication

To my Dad.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Joe Fang for access to his outstanding chess library. Special thanks to my wife Kim and to our children Jillian and Jay for their enthusiasm and support.

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Introduction

The goal of writing *How to Beat 1 d4* is to provide the reader with a solid, dynamic opening repertoire versus 1 d4. There are no shortcuts or secret variations which enable Black magically to seize the initiative from White during the opening phase of the game – in order to beat 1 d4 we must first neutralize 1 d4.

Here are my criteria for selecting an opening:

- 1) The opening must be played with regularity by strong players.
- 2) The opening must have a healthy theoretical reputation.
- 3) The opening must be solid – the characteristic positions should not require the player to incur excessive risk (time loss, material deficit, or space disadvantage).
- 4) The opening must be dynamic – the major variations should enable the player to develop active counterplay.

If an opening passes the first criterion above, then the other criteria often fall into place – strong players prefer to play openings in which they have a reasonable expectation of achieving success.

The highly-regarded Queen's Gambit Accepted (QGA) is the foundation of our opening repertoire versus 1 d4. The QGA has been played by all of the first 14 World Champions – recent titleholders Kramnik, Kasparov and Karpov have contributed to the development of several critical lines. Fischer and Spassky had some topical QGA battles during their 1992 match. Other modern players including Anand, Ponomariov, Shirov, Ivanchuk, Kariakin, Rublevsky, Sadler, Short, and Seirawan have contributed to the development of QGA opening theory. The QGA is a suitable opening for all players, not just World Champions and world-class grandmasters – one of the advantages for the club and tournament competitor is that the characteristic positions can be understood by players of widely varying ability. Black's opening strategy conforms to classical development principles because he fights for his share of the

centre and he can usually develop his pieces quickly and safeguard his king. Black usually does not have to worry about being overrun by a central pawn steamroller, he does not have to struggle with a bad bishop, and he does not have to embark on any complicated knight tours to complete his development. A classical opening can be a powerful and effective weapon in your opening arsenal, especially in view of today's increasingly faster time-limits. The QGA is difficult for a 1 d4 player to avoid if he wants to fight for an advantage because the opening arises after only two moves – you will be learning lines which you will actually have the opportunity to play! A black repertoire has also been provided to combat Queen's Pawn Games in which White plays without c4 – the result is a complete one-volume repertoire versus 1 d4.

How to Beat 1 d4 is an opening repertoire book written from the perspective of the black player, though white players will benefit from the objective coverage of topical lines and the numerous suggested improvements for both sides. The recommended lines against White's various options have been developed by carefully analysing the games and opening preferences of the world's best players. I have investigated all game sources at my disposal including correspondence and e-mail games. Correspondence chess plays an important role in advancing the theoretical knowledge of many sharp variations, particularly in lines that tournament players may be reluctant to try over the board. I have provided multiple solutions to combat White's main variations and within these lines some alternative options have also been examined. Many players will be content with learning a single variation, but it is useful to have alternatives ready in the event a particular line runs into some difficulty – it doesn't hurt to keep your opponents guessing either!

Let's explore the main line of the QGA and investigate the alternative moves for each player.

We shall also identify the specific variations which form the basis of our opening repertoire:

1 d4

The Queen's Gambit Accepted can also be reached by some other common move-orders:

- 1 ♕f3 d5 2 d4 ♕f6 3 c4 dxc4.
- 1 ♕f3 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e3 (3 ♕a3 is a Réti Opening and is outside the scope of this book) 3...♕f6 4 ♖xc4 e6 5 d4 c5.

1...d5

This move is necessary if Black wishes to play a QGA – after 1...♕f6 2 c4, the opportunity has passed.

2 c4

White has several alternatives at this juncture; some may transpose into a QGA (for example, 2 ♕f3 ♕f6 3 c4 dxc4), and some are truly independent openings if White decides to play without the c4 pawn advance (Part 2 of this book – *ECO* code range D00-D05):

- 2 ♖g5 is covered in Chapter 12: Hodgson Attack.
- 2 ♖c3 ♕f6 3 ♖g5 is covered in Chapter 13: Veresov Opening.
- 2 ♕f3 ♕f6 3 ♖f4 is covered in Chapter 14: London System.
- 2 ♕f3 ♕f6 3 g3 is covered in Chapter 15: King's Fianchetto.
- 2 ♕f3 ♕f6 3 ♖g5 is covered in Chapter 16: Torre Attack.
- 2 ♕f3 ♕f6 3 e3 is covered in Chapter 17: Colle System.
- 2 e3 ♕f6 3 ♖d3 is covered in Chapter 18: Stonewall Attack.
- 2 e4 is covered in Chapter 19: Blackmar-Diemer Gambit.

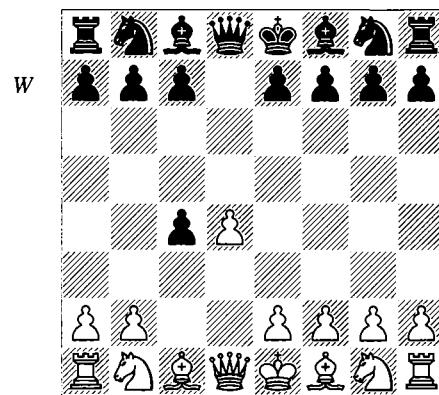
There are a couple of important points to remember about these openings:

- Queen's Pawn Games in which White plays without c4 do not give White a theoretical opening advantage.
- Queen's Pawn Games should be treated with the utmost respect.

Of course this last statement can be made about all openings, but one of the challenges in facing these aggressive attacking lines is that your opponent is likely to be more familiar with the thematic positions than you are – in the hands of an experienced attacking player, they are extremely dangerous. With the exception of the Stonewall Attack and the Blackmar-Diemer

Gambit, these openings have frequently been employed by strong grandmasters with very good results – they can be used as an occasional surprise weapon or as part of an attacking repertoire. Our repertoire includes a solid response to all of these aggressive lines.

2...dxc4 (D)



This is the characteristic move of the Queen's Gambit Accepted (Part 1 of this book – *ECO* code range D20-D21 and D23-D29). Rather than bolster the centre by playing 2...e6 (Queen's Gambit Declined) or 2...c6 (Slav Defence), Black immediately exchanges his d5-pawn for White's c4-pawn. What is the strategy behind this move? Shouldn't Black wait until White has moved his light-squared bishop before capturing the pawn so as to gain a tempo? If only chess were so simple! One of the ideas behind the immediate pawn capture is to retain the possibility of playing the ...e7-e5 pawn-break in a single move (not possible in the Queen's Gambit Declined, although Black frequently plays a later ...e6-e5 advance to free his game) and also to retain the possibility of playing the ...c7-c5 pawn-break in one move (not possible in the Slav Defence, although Black sometimes plays a later ...c6-c5 advance to free his game). The 2...dxc4 capture is flexible – White may lose some time recapturing the c4-pawn, and Black will gauge White's reply before deciding upon a response. Of course we cannot conclude that any one of these openings is superior to another – they are simply different methods of working toward the common goal of developing Black's pieces.

3 ♕f3

This is the most frequently played move here
– White prevents Black from playing ...e5.
White has several alternatives:

- 3 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$, 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$, and 3 e3 are covered in Chapter 1: White's Third Move Alternatives. The move 3 e3 is the most important of these as it is sometimes used as a move-order finesse to bypass the ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ variations.
- 3 e4 is covered in Chapter 2: Central Variation. This is one of White's most popular and ambitious attempts to obtain an opening advantage because he immediately seizes the centre and prepares to recapture the c4-pawn. Our repertoire response is the traditional counterstroke 3...e5, whereby Black immediately stakes his claim to the centre.

3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Black continues his development and prevents White from playing e4. The minor alternative 3...a6 (Alekhine Variation – ECO code D22) is not part of our repertoire.

4 e3

This is the most popular move here; White has a couple of alternatives:

- 4 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ is covered in Chapter 3: Mannheim Variation. Our repertoire reply is the solid 4... $\mathbb{Q}c6$.
- 4 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ is covered in Chapter 4: Two Knights Variation. White continues developing and usually offers to make it a true gambit. Our repertoire reply is the traditional 4...a6 and includes both a solid and a sharp response to White's attacking ambitions. There are several alternatives here:

a) 4...c5 is not part of our repertoire.

b) 4... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ transposes into the Queen's Gambit Chigorin Defence.

c) 4...e6 usually transposes into the Queen's Gambit Vienna Variation after 5 e4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}g5$.

d) 4...c6 transposes into the Slav Defence – see *The Slav* by Graham Burgess for coverage of this opening.

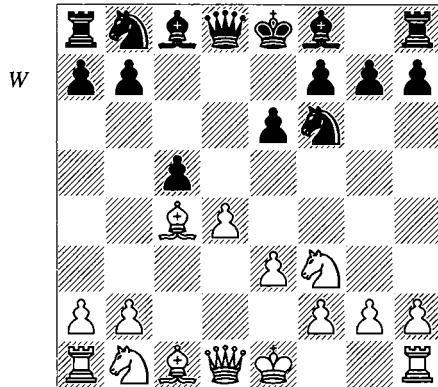
4...e6

Black opens the diagonal for his dark-squared bishop and prepares to challenge White's d4-pawn by playing ...c5. The alternative 4... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ is not part of our repertoire.

5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

White recaptures his pawn.

5...c5 (D)



Black immediately challenges the white d4-pawn – this is the starting position for the Classical Variation.

6 0-0

White continues his development by safeguarding his king. White has a popular alternative here:

- 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ is covered in Chapter 5: Furman Variation. White prepares to play dxc5 followed by a quick e4 pawn advance – the queen move avoids a potential exchange of queens. This attacking variation has been very popular over the past several years.

6...a6

Black prepares to win a tempo by playing ...b5, kicking the white bishop away and clearing the b7-square for his own bishop. Many of the queen's pawn openings revolve around a battle for tempi involving the light-squared bishops. The older 6...cxd4 (Steinitz Variation) is not part of our repertoire.

7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

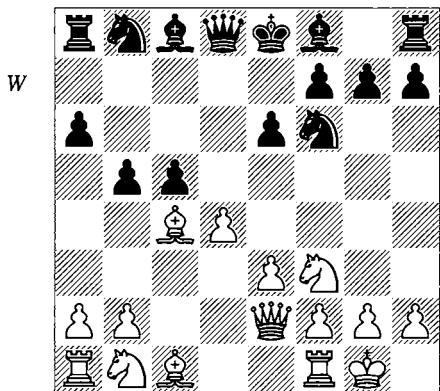
This is the main line of the Classical Variation. White has plenty of alternatives here:

- 7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$, 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$, 7 e4, 7 dxc5, 7 b3, 7 a3, and 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ are all covered in Chapter 6: Classical Variation: White's Seventh Move Alternatives.
- 7 a4 is covered in Chapter 7: Classical Variation: 7 a4.
- 7 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ is covered in Chapter 8: Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{Q}b3$.

7...b5 (D)

Black follows through with the plan of queen-side expansion. The alternative 7... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ is also part of our repertoire and is covered in Chapter 5: Furman Variation – this position is frequently

reached via the move-order 6 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (instead of 6 0-0) 6...a6 7 0-0 $\mathcal{Q}c6$.



8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$

White has another bishop retreat:

- 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is covered in Chapter 9: Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$.

8... $\mathbb{Q}b7$

The light-squared bishop takes up a strong position on the long diagonal.

9 $\mathbb{R}d1$

The rook slides over to control a central file. White has a popular alternative here:

- 9 a4 is covered in Chapter 10: Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 a4. White immediately attacks the b5-pawn.

9... $\mathcal{Q}bd7$

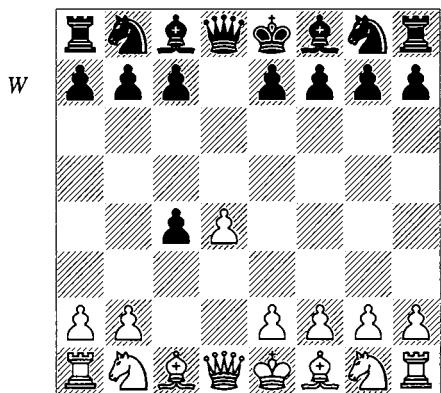
Now White has a choice between 10 e4 and 10 $\mathcal{Q}c3$ – these lines are covered in Chapter 11: Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 $\mathbb{R}d1$.

I have spent the past year writing this book during the evening hours, and I want the reader to know that I have independently analysed every position in the book, and I have not quoted any author's analysis without independently verifying the variations on a board with my own eyes and with various chess engines. I have also concentrated on identifying and extending the theory of critical opening positions because I believe this is the extra value that a good author brings to a book. A detailed bibliography has also been provided to enable both the professional player and the ambitious amateur to keep the material current – as a long-time consumer of chess books, these are the things I look for in an opening book. Finally, I would like to thank the Gambit Publications team of Graham Burgess, Murray Chandler, and John Nunn for their great enthusiasm, helpful suggestions, and tremendous support for this project. I wish the reader luck in his or her own Queen's Gambit Accepted and Queen's Pawn Game adventures!

James Rizzitano
Southborough, Massachusetts 2005

1 White's Third Move Alternatives

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 (D)



In this chapter we shall consider White's third-move alternatives to 3 e4 and 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$, of which the most important is Line B:

- A: 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 10
B: 3 e3 11

3 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ is rarely seen:

a) 4... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 6 exf3 e6 7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ a6 ("! \mp " – Schipkov, but apparently he overlooked White's next move) 9 d5! (stronger than 9 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ = Rey-Baburin, San Francisco 1997) 9...exd5 (9... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 10 0-0-0 b5 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2 \pm$) 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 11 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 0-0-0 =.

b) 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ – 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ transposes into Chapter 3: Mannheim Variation.

c) 4...a6!? (this is the most aggressive try – Black gains time by hounding the white queen) 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ and now 8...c5! gives Black a slight edge. This is more challenging than ECO's 8... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ =.

A)

3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a6

Also sufficient is the central thrust 3...e5 4 e3 (4 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ + 5 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ \mp ; 4 d5 c6 5 e4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ =) 4...exd4 5 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

0-0 8 0-0 – 3 e3 e5 4 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ exd4 5 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 0-0 0-0 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$.

4 e4!?

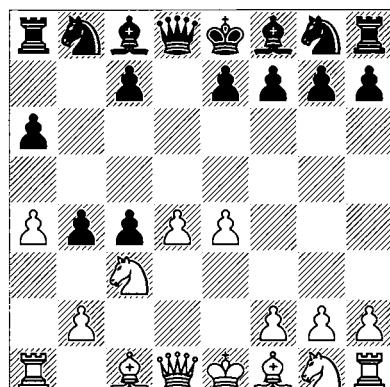
This inaccurate move is frequently seen at club level. Alternatives:

a) 4 a4?! e5 5 d5 (5 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ + 6 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ was slightly better for Black in Capablanca-I.Rabinovich, Moscow 1935) 5... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 6 e3 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c6 8 dxc6 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ + 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ \mp Noble-Sadler, British Ch (Eastbourne) 1990. "The ceding of the b4-square leaves White with an inferior game." – Flear.

b) 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ b5 (4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ – 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a6 transposes into Chapter 4: Two Knights Variation) 5 a4 b4 6 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}ed2$ (7 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ was suggested by Portisch – 7... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ looks like an adequate reply) 7...c3 8 bxc3 bxc3 9 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ e6 = Karpov-Portisch, Tilburg 1983.

c) 4 e3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ e6 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5 7 0-0 – 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 e3 e6 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5 6 0-0 a6 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ transposes into Line B of Chapter 6 ('Classical Variation: White's Seventh Move Alternatives').

4...b5 5 a4 b4 (D)



The white knight has difficulty finding a comfortable square. The key idea for Black is to break up White's pawn-centre as soon as possible. Now:

a) 6 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 7 f3 e5 8 dxe5 (8 d5 c6! \mp Korchnoi-Hübner, TV game 1984) 8... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ +

9 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 0-0-0+ (also strong is 10... $\mathbb{Q}d8+$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ \mp Levacic-Semkov, Cannes 1989) 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ b3 \mp J.Richardson-Baburin, British League (4NCL) 1999/00.

b) 6 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ e6 7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 8 f3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ \mp Polpur-Stiazkhina, St Petersburg wom Ch 2002.

c) 6 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 7 f3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ d5 (8 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ e5 9 d5 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ \mp) 8... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (9 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ e6 \mp Alterman; 9 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ b3 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ c6 11 dxc6 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ \mp) 9... $\mathbb{Q}b3$! (9...e6 10 dx6 fxe6 11 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ + 12 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}h4+$ 13 g3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is slightly better for Black, Alterman-Av.Bykhovsky, Israel 1994) 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ "with compensation" according to Alterman, but I think White's position falls apart after 11...e6! 12 dxe6 f5! 13 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ (13 exf5?? $\mathbb{Q}h4+$ relieves White of a bishop) 13...fxe4 \mp .

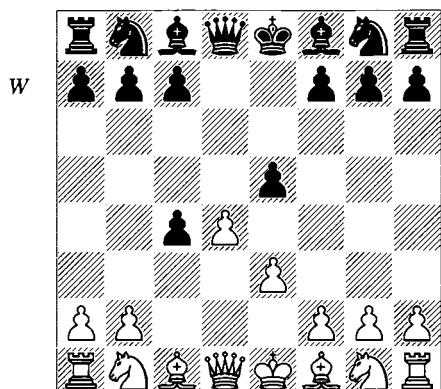
B)

3 e3

This move is sometimes employed as a move-order finesse to avoid the variation 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ a6 4 e3 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ – the choice of 3 e3 is often a matter of taste as some players prefer not to allow the pin on the f3-knight.

3...e5 (D)

The central counterattack is the most challenging reply. The frequently played alternative, 3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ e6 5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5 6 0-0 (6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ is covered in Chapter 5: Furman Variation) 6...a6, transposes into the Classical Variation (Chapters 6-11).



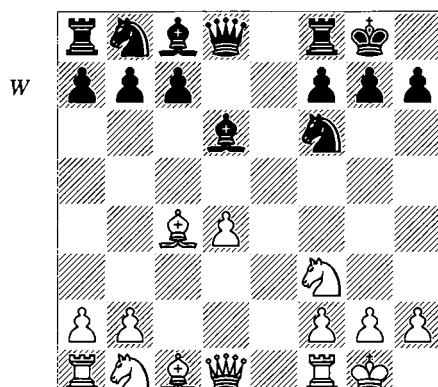
4 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ exd4 5 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$

The immediate development of the bishop is generally considered to be the most precise move-order as the alternative 5... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ gives White the additional option of playing 6 $\mathbb{Q}b3$!? (Black has nothing to fear here – the more frequently played 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ transposes into our repertoire line) 6... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ + 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ (Black can avoid the exchange of queens by playing 7... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$!?) 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}cd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ c6 {13...0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ \pm } 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 15 d5 0-0 16 dxc6 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ bxc6 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ with compensation for the pawn, Granda-P.Nikolic, Zagreb IZ 1987) 8 $\mathbb{Q}bc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ and now:

a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$! (11... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ a6! 13 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ axb5 = Janosevic-Matulovic, Birmingham 1975) 12 axb3 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ \mp Sakaev and Semkov.

b) 10 0-0 a6 (10... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 11 d5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ \pm) 11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}ge4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$??) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ gxf6 15 $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ mates) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$?!) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ cxd6 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 19 f4 \pm) 15 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and now instead of 16 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (Wirthensohn-Miles, Biel 1977) 16... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ =, Miles suggested 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$? $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$, when I think Black can defend with 17... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 19 axb3 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ =.

6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 0-0 0-0 (D)

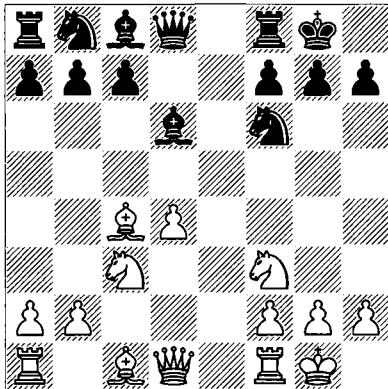


8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (D)

White can also play 8 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 9 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (this position is classified as a Petroff Defence by ECO {code C42} – more about this in the note to Black's 8th move), and now:

- a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 11 h3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$?! $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ is fine for Black) 14... $\mathbb{Q}a8$ (Black has no reasonable way to avoid the repetition; e.g., 14... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$?! 15 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ±; 14... $\mathbb{Q}f5$?! 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ cxd6 18 a4 ±) 15 $\mathbb{W}b7$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}a7$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}b7$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ ½-½ M.Gurevich-Azmaiparashvili, Valle d'Aosta 2003.
- b) 10 h3 g5 11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 12 fxg3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ = Lautier-Anand, Monte Carlo Amber rpd 1999.

B

8... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

The plausible but inaccurate 8... $\mathbb{Q}g4$?! has been played more than 80 times in my database – the tempting pin is premature because of 9 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ (the lesser evil is 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ c6 ±) 10 g4 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ c5 12 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ hxg6 13 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ +!! $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}b3+$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 18 g5 with a strong attack in Ulybin-Erykalov, USSR 1986 and many later games.

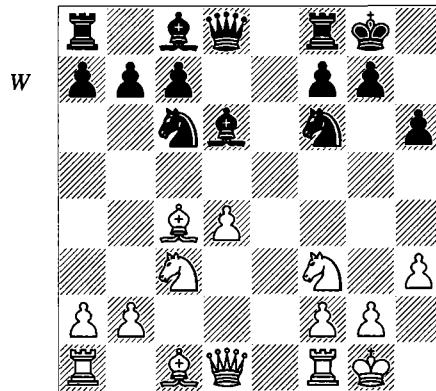
The position after 8... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ is classified as a Petroff Defence by ECO (code C42), based upon the move-order 1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ d6 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 5 d4 d5 6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 7 0-0 0-0 8 c4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ dxc4 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ – note that each side has played two extra moves here. The same position can also be reached from an Exchange French via the move-order 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 5 c4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ dxc4 7 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 0-0 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c6$. Sorry for the extended digression, but I believe it is important for the reader to be aware of this unusual example of opening convergence so as to facilitate his own independent research. I suppose I could take the easy way out and refer the reader to

The Petroff by Lasha Janjgava (page 158) for detailed coverage of this variation, but I am analysing the positions which arise from the Queen's Gambit Accepted move-order here because they are an important part of our repertoire.

9 h3

Or 9 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 10 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ – 8 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 9 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$.

9...h6 (D)



White has two major options here and no clear preference has emerged:

B1: 10 $\mathbb{W}c2$ 13

B2: 10 a3 13

Minor alternatives:

a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ a6 11 $\mathbb{W}d2$ (11 a4 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ = Balashov-Morozhevich, Samara 1998) 11...b5 12 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 14 a3 $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (Thesing-Glek, Netherlands 1999) 17... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ with equal chances according to Glek.

b) 10 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and then:

b1) 12 d5 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (14 $\mathbb{W}b3$! b6 15 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ a6 with equality, Tyomkin-Estrade Nieto, Oakham 2001.

b2) 12 a3 a6 13 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}ed1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ + $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}bc3$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ = Mikac-Ulybin, Bled open 2002) and here:

b21) 15... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ (so far this is Short-Bareev, Pula Echt 1997) 16 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ (= Bareev) 16... $\mathbb{Q}e4$! 17 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 18 gxf5 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ (18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$!?) 19

$\text{bxc3 b5 20 } \mathbb{Q}a2 \mathbb{Q}e7 21 \text{f6 } \mathbb{W}f5$ with equal chances.

b22) $15... \mathbb{Q}f8!?$ 16 $\mathbb{B}ed1 \mathbb{Q}e4$ is unclear – Korotylev-Fominykh, St Petersburg (Petroff mem) 2000.

B1)

10 $\mathbb{W}c2$

Directed against ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$.

10... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 11 $\mathbb{W}b1 \mathbb{Q}e6!$

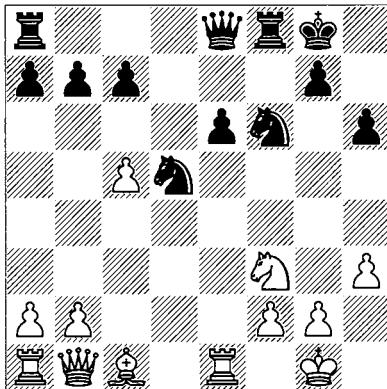
A common motif in such positions – Black accepts an isolated e-pawn in order to relieve the pressure from White's light-squared bishop. In return Black opens the f-file for his rooks and obtains the d5-square for his knights.

12 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $fxe6$ 13 $\mathbb{B}e1$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$

14 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}bd5$ (14... $\mathbb{W}f7!?$) 15 $\mathbb{W}d3 \mathbb{W}f7 =$ Tkachev-Golubović, Pula 2000.

14... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c5 \mathbb{Q}xc5$ 16 $dxc5$ (D)

B



Now Black has:

a) $16... \mathbb{Q}d7?!$ 17 c6! (more incisive than 17

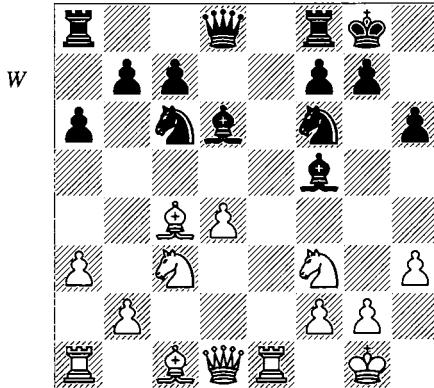
$\mathbb{W}c2$ c6 = Ramirez Alvarez-Morozevich, Bled OL 2002) 17... bxc6 18 $\mathbb{W}e4$ with compensation for the pawn.

b) $16...c6$ 17 a3!?(17 $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{W}f7$ “–” – Sakaev and Semkov, but I think White can hang on with 18 $\mathbb{W}xe6 \mathbb{Q}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2 \mathbb{Q}b4$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{Q}xc5$ 21

$\mathbb{W}e7 \mathbb{W}f6$ {21... $\mathbb{W}d5?$ 22 $\mathbb{W}g4 \pm$ } 22 $\mathbb{W}c4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 23 $\mathbb{W}e2 =$) 17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 18 b4 b6 =.

B2)

10 a3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 $\mathbb{B}e1$ a6 (D)



12 b4

Alternatives:

a) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5?!$ (a dubious but popular move) 12... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 13 dxe5 $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 e6 (15 f4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}a2 \mathbb{Q}d4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{Q}e6$ = Lautier) and now:

a1) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe6?!$ (Kotter-Baumhackel, Dortmund 2000) 16 $\mathbb{B}xe6$ $fxe6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f4 =$ Lautier.

a2) 15... fxe6 16 $\mathbb{B}xe6$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}f4?!$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}a2 \mathbb{Q}d5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 = Liogky-Lautier, French Cht 1996) 16... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 17 $\mathbb{B}e1 \mathbb{Q}a5$ (I think Black can also consider 17... $\mathbb{Q}de5?!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f1 \mathbb{Q}d3 =$) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{B}ae8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2 =$ Lautier.

b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{B}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{B}c1 \mathbb{W}d7 =$ Hauchard-Sadler, Cannes 1996.

12... $\mathbb{B}e8$

12... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 13 d5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mathbb{W}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{B}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 16 $\mathbb{B}e1 \mathbb{B}fe8$ intending ... $\mathbb{Q}e5 =$ Lautier.

13 $\mathbb{Q}b2 \mathbb{W}d7$

The chances are equal, Todorov-Stojanović, Belgrade 2001.

2 Central Variation

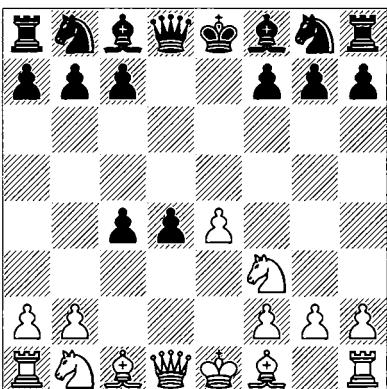
1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e4

The characteristic move of the Central Variation – White immediately establishes a powerful central pawn duo. The traditional 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ was the automatic choice for many years – the widespread opinion was that White's first priority was to prevent Black from playing the freeing ...e5 pawn advance. This opinion was gradually challenged and the number of games played with the Central Variation has steadily increased throughout the past decade – the line is rich in strategic and tactical complexity.

3...e5

This is our repertoire move – the immediate central counterattack is the logical choice to exploit White's omission of 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$. During the last two decades, 3... $\mathbb{Q}c6$, 3...c5, and 3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ have proven themselves to be viable alternatives.

4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ exd4 (D)



5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

White has some minor alternatives here:

a) 5 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and now:

a1) 8 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 0-0 9 0-0 $\mathbb{W}d6$ 10 g3 (Rocius-Mikac, Aschach 1993) 10... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 11 fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ \mp . Black has the bishop-pair and a juicy outpost on the e5-square.

a2) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e6!$ $\mathbb{W}xd1+$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ and then:

a21) 11 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 0-0-0 (11...c5!?) 12 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ {Haus-Neidhardt, Hessen Ch 1991} 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}ge5$ with roughly level chances) 12 f4 f6 with equal chances.

a22) 11 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 0-0-0 12 h3 $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ 13 f4 gave White reasonable compensation for the pawn in Bischof-Huhndorf, Germany tt 2001/2.

b) 5 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ and then:

b1) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and here:

b11) 9 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 10 fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ and now:

b111) 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 0-0 c6 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 bxc6 bxc6 18 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}hd1$ $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ 20 h3 (Cifuentes-Bronstein, Oviedo rpd 1983) 20...a5 \mp .

b112) 12 b4 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 13 b5 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ c6 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 bxc6 bxc6 18 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}hd1$ $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ 20 h3 (Cifuentes-Bronstein, Oviedo rpd 1983) 20...a5 \mp .

b12) 9 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 10 fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ (10... $\mathbb{Q}d8$!) is another idea for Black) 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c6 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ cxd5 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 15 exd4 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Mikhalchishin-Gulko, USSR Ch (Riga) 1985) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 15 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 16 exd4 (Knežević-Garcia Palermo, Havana 1985) 16...f6 =.

b2) 8 $\mathbb{Q}db5$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ c6 10 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ = Beliavsky-Ponomariov, Enghien-les-Bains 1999.

5... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 6 0-0

6 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{W}xb4+$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ c5 11 a3 cxd4 12 axb4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ leads to an equal position, H.Kramer-J.Szabo, Hamburg Echt 1965.

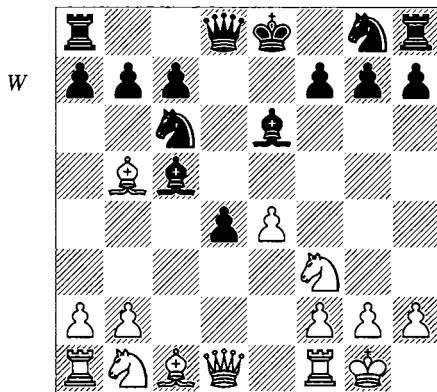
6... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

White has temporarily sacrificed a pawn and now he must decide whether to retain his light-squared bishop for attacking purposes at the cost of losing a tempo (Line A), or exchange light-squared bishops and quickly recover the pawn (Line B):

A: 7 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 15

B: 7 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 19

A)

7 $\mathbb{Q}b5 \mathbb{Q}c5$ (D)

White has several possibilities here:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----|
| A1: 8 $b4$ | 15 |
| A2: 8 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ | 16 |
| A3: 8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ | 16 |

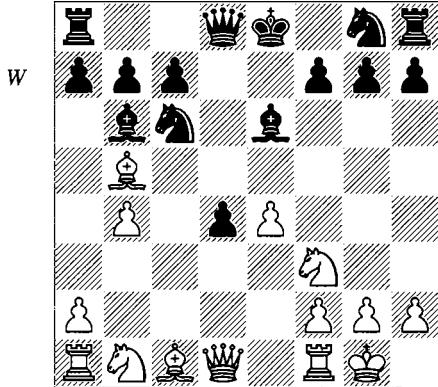
Rarely seen is 8 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ (after 8... $\mathbb{Q}e7??$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $fxe6$ 10 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ White wins the loose bishop; 8... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6 =$ Krush-Bergsson, Reykjavik 2004) 9 $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$ (9 $f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ leaves the g5-knight looking rather foolish) 9... $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 12 $\mathbb{W}c2$ (12 $f4!?$) 12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (also possible is 14...0-0 15 $f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ and Black has a comfortable game) 15 $b4$ $c5!$ (an instructive manoeuvre – Black liquidates his doubled c-pawns and strengthens his passed d-pawn) 16 $b5$ $c6$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $f6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 20 $f4$ 0-0 21 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}de8$ \mp Vyzhmanavin-Rublevsky, Novosibirsk 1995. White has insufficient compensation for his pawn deficit.

A1)**8 $b4$**

This aggressive thrust should appeal to fans of the Evans Gambit.

8... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ (D)**9 $\mathbb{Q}b2$** Or 9 $a4!?$:

a) 9... $a5$ (the drawback of this reflex move is that Black loses the ability to dislodge the b5-bishop) 10 $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$



$\mathbb{Q}ge7$ (Ivanisević-Sakalauskas, Batumi Echt 1999) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ and here:

a1) 13... $fxe6$? is poor:a11) 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4?!$ $\mathbb{W}a8$ and now 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ repeats, while 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ gives White compensation according to Khuzman.a12) 14 $\mathbb{Q}b3!$ (the knight protects the a-rook and enables the a-pawn to advance rapidly) 14... $\mathbb{W}a8$ 15 $a5$ $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 16 $a6$ – Ivanisević, and indeed White has a crushing advantage after 16... $\mathbb{W}xa6$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}d3$ +-.a2) 13... $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}xb5$ (14... $\mathbb{W}a8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ \pm) 15 $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}bc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 17 $\mathbb{W}g4!$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $g6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}c8+$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}a8$ with an attack – Khuzman.b) 9... $a6!$ (Black breaks the pin before it becomes troublesome) 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$ $\mathbb{W}bc6$ 11 $a5$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ is unclear – Khuzman) 11... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ and here:b1) 12 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (12... $c5$ is unclear according to Khuzman) 13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $c5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ with an attack – Khuzman.b2) 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (12... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3!?$) 13 $\mathbb{Q}c2!?$ is worthy of investigation.

The above variations demonstrate the importance of breaking the pin in these types of positions.

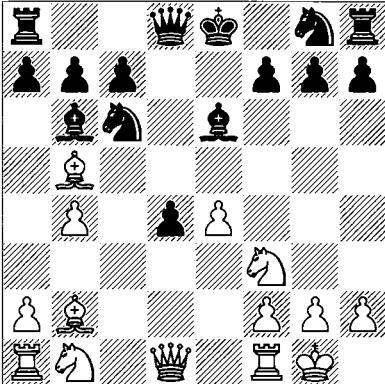
We now return to 9 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ (D):**9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

This is the solid choice.

9... $\mathbb{W}d6!?$ is a provocative alternative. 10 $a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $a5$ $\mathbb{W}xb4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $d3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ and then:

a) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ (\pm Khuzman), Yuferov-Ibragimov, St Petersburg 1996.

B



b) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ "is unclear but at least Black is a pawn up" – Sakaev and Semkov. I think White's attack peters out after 16 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 0-0 (16...a6!?) 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 18 $\mathbb{E}fd1$ a6 and White's compensation appears to be insufficient.

10 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

10 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ axb6 is fine for Black) 11... $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 12 $\mathbb{B}xc5$ a6 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ 15 $\mathbb{E}e1$ (15 $\mathbb{W}xd8$ $\mathbb{E}fxd8$ 16 $\mathbb{E}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$! and Black has the initiative – Scherbakov) 15... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 16 $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ b5 \mp Kanep-Mikhailchishin, Calvia OL 2004.

10...0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

11 $\mathbb{Q}xe6?$ $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 12 $\mathbb{E}xd1$ fxe6 13 $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{E}xf2$!

14 $\mathbb{E}xf2$ $\mathbb{Q}f8 \mp$.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

Now:

a) 12... $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 13 $\mathbb{E}xd1$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a5 (14...c5!?, to eliminate the doubled c-pawns, is worth trying) 15 a3 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Van Wely-Sermek, Bülfurdo Mitropa Cup 1995.

b) 12... $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}c2$ a5 = Rakhmangulov-Svetushkin, Alushta 1999.

A2)

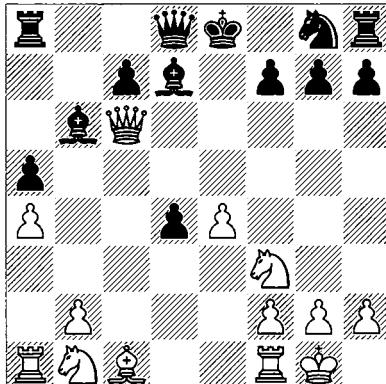
8 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 9 a4

The flank thrust is the most frequently played move here, but it is uncertain which side benefits more from the advance of the opposing a-pawns. Similar positions arise after 9 $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xc6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{W}c4$ (11 $\mathbb{W}c2$ should be compared with 9 a4 a5 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}xc6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{W}c2$ – the advance of both a-pawns does not fundamentally change the position) 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ (Black can avoid the repetition

by playing the double-edged 11...c5!? 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}b5+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ with an unclear position) 12 $\mathbb{W}c6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Korchnoi-Ponomariov, Donetsk (4) 2001.

9...a5 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$ $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}xc6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (D)

W



12 $\mathbb{W}c2$

12 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}b5+$ (13 $\mathbb{W}c6+$ is a repetition) 13... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d3$ (14 $\mathbb{W}g5$ f6 \mp) 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ (Tregubov-Yakovlevich, Novgorod 1995) 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ =.

12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3$

13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}dc4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{C}xb6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{H}xg6$ 18 $\mathbb{E}a3$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Sorin-Sorokin, Salta Clarin 1995.

13...0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$

14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{E}d1$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ is also fine for Black; 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{C}xb6$ =) 15... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}b3$ c5 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{E}xb4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ \mp Van Wely-Anand, Monte Carlo Amber rpd 1997.

14... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

Now:

a) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{H}xg6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 17 $\mathbb{E}d1$ (17 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{C}xb6$ =) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ (17...c5!?) 18 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ = Ward-Lalić, England 1998.

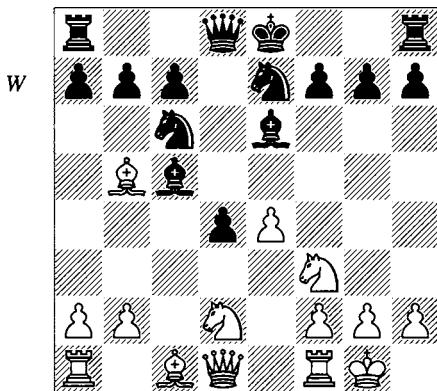
b) 15 $\mathbb{Q}ac4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ (simplifying into an equal major-piece end-game; 17... $\mathbb{Q}c8$! is worth a look to retain the bishop-pair) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{C}xb6$ = Ibragimov-Makarov, Russian Ch (Elista) 1996.

A3)

8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

This is the most popular choice here.

8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D)



Now:

- A31: 9 ♜b3 17
A32: 9 ♜g5 17

A31)

9 ♜b3 ♜xb3

Or 9...♜b6, and then:

- a) 10 ♜fxd4 ♜d7 11 ♜e2 0-0 12 ♜e3 ♜xd4 13 ♜xd4 ♜c6 14 ♜c2 ♜e7 ½-½ Tunik-Zakharov, Tula 2000.

b) 10 ♜bxd4 ♜d7 (10...0-0? carelessly concedes the bishop-pair after 11 ♜xe6 fxe6 12 ♜g5 ± Cavalieri-Uchoa, Brasilia 2002) 11 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 and here:

b1) 12 ♜b3 0-0 13 ♜g5 ♜xb5 14 ♜xb5 ♜e8 15 ♜b3 (15 a4?! ♜xb5 16 axb5 ♜g6 ± Sargsian-Kaidanov, Moscow 2005) 15...♜g6 ½-½ Romanishin-Solak, Athens (Acropolis) 2005.

b2) 12 ♜e2 0-0 13 ♜g5 ♜e8 14 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 = A.Kuzmin-Rublevsky, Moscow PCA qual rpd 1996.

10 ♜xb3 (D)

Now:

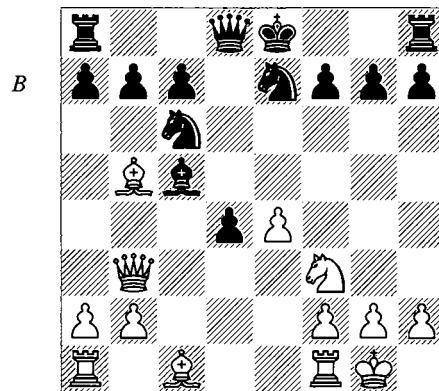
a) 10...a6!? deserves attention. 11 ♜xc6+ ♜xc6 and then:

a1) 12 ♜g5 0-0 13 ♜h3 h6 14 ♜f5 hxg5 15 ♜xc5 g4 ±.

a2) 12 ♜xb7 ♜a5 (12...♜b4?! 13 e5 c6 14 ♜g5 {14 e6? ♜a7 15 exf7+ ♜f8 16 ♜g5 ♜xb7 17 ♜xd8 ♜xf7+} 14...♜b8 15 ♜xb8+ ♜xb8 =) 13 ♜d5 ♜xd5 14 exd5 0-0-0 ±.

b) After 10...0-0 we have:

b1) 11 ♜f4 ♜b6 12 ♜fe1 (12 ♜fd1?! was suggested by Khuzman – 12...a6 is an adequate reply) 12...a6 13 ♜d3 ♜g6 14 ♜g3 ♜e7 and

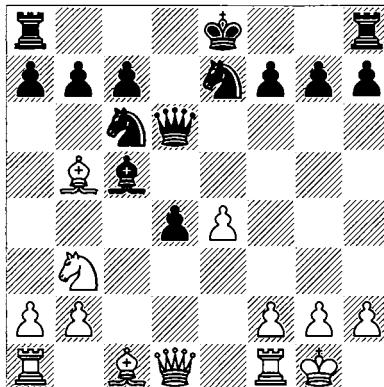


although White has some compensation for the pawn, Black's position is very solid.

b2) 11 ♜xc6!?! ♜xc6 12 ♜xb7 ♜d6 13 ♜f4 ♜xf4 14 ♜xc6 ♜b6 15 ♜ad1 ("±" – Khuzman, but I don't see it) 15...♜ad8 =.

A32)

9 ♜g5 ♜d7 10 ♜xe6 ♜xe6 11 ♜b3 ♜d6 (D)



Another crossroads. White can try:

A321: 12 ♜g4? 17

A322: 12 ♜f4 18

A321)

12 ♜g4? 0-0 13 ♜f4 ♜e5 14 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 15 ♜d3+ 16 ♜h1

½-½ Dreev-Rublevsky, Elista (1) 1998. A premature ending to a very interesting game – I think Black has a clear advantage here. Now Rublevsky analysed:

16... $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 17 $\mathbb{B}ab1$ $\mathbb{W}e2$

17... $\mathbb{W}a3$ 18 e5 $\mathbb{B}b6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ “with compensation” according to Rublevsky, but I think the black queen can continue swallowing pawns with 19... $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ a5 21 $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 22 f5 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 23 f6 $\mathbb{Q}g6\text{?}$.

18 $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{B}b6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 20 e5

Black is two pawns ahead and more importantly, the b6-bishop prevents the b3-knight from joining the attack. Now:

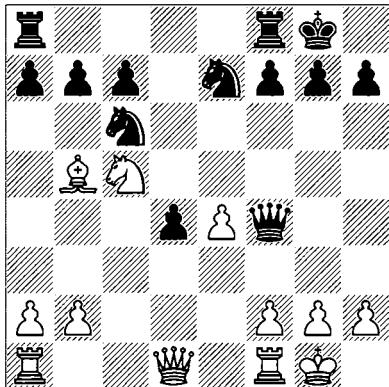
a) 20...g6? 21 f5 gxf5 22 $\mathbb{Q}xf5!$ with an attack according to Rublevsky.

b) 20...h6 (Rublevsky thought this was the only move) 21 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ (21 f5?) 21... $\mathbb{W}b2$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}fb1$ $\mathbb{W}f2$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}b2$ (23... $\mathbb{W}e3??$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ +-) 24 $\mathbb{Q}fb1$ = Rublevsky.

c) 20... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ (“?” Rublevsky) 21 e6 fxe6! (I think this is stronger than Rublevsky’s 21... $\mathbb{W}a4$) 22 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ +(22 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ hgx6 23 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ a5 ?) 22... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 24 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{W}xg6$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$?. Black has a solid extra pawn.

A322)

12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 0-0 (D)



14 $\mathbb{Q}c1$

White can boot the black queen immediately with 14 g3 $\mathbb{W}h6$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ = was proposed by Dreev in 1999 – a possible continuation is 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{B}ab8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 20 b3 c5 =) 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ (Black should play 15...a6 – 14 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ a6! 15 g3 $\mathbb{W}h6$) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}db8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ (Dreev-Svidler, Russian Ch (Elista) 1997) 18... $\mathbb{Q}f3$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$! 20 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}h1$

$\mathbb{Q}f3$ =) 20... $\mathbb{W}f4$! 21 $\mathbb{W}c2$! (21 $\mathbb{Q}fc1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ – Khuzman) 21... $\mathbb{W}g4+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}f3+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}g4+$, with a draw.

14...a6!

The alternatives 14... $\mathbb{Q}fb8$, 14... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ and 14...b6 have all been played, but I prefer this idea of Lithuanian IM Vaidas Sakalauskas.

15 g3

Or:

a) 15 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ b6 and then:

a1) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}xa6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ fxe6 ? Sakalauskas.

a2) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ cxb6 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ d3 ?.

a3) 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}d5$? Magai-Ganguly, Calcutta 2001.

b) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ and here:

b1) 17 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}f4$? Yace-Gandalf, Paderborn 2004.

b2) 17 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ and then:

b21) 18 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}ed1$ (19 $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ +) $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 20 h3 d3 →) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 21 g3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ → Sakalauskas.

b22) 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ d3 21 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d2 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 23 fxe3 $\mathbb{W}d3$ →) 20... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$? Sakalauskas.

b23) 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$! (I think this is the best choice in a difficult situation) 18...a5 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ with just a slight advantage for Black.

15... $\mathbb{W}h6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Or 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$, and here:

a) 17 f4 b6 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 19 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$! (Sakalauskas only considered 19... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ with an evaluation of unclear – his analysis is also quoted in ECO; the knight redeployment is clearly stronger) 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c6 ?) 20... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 22 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$?. Black has a material advantage.

b) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{B}ab8$! 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (18 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{W}h3$ 20 f3 c6 ? Sakalauskas) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (19 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ →) 19... $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$? Sakalauskas.

16... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$

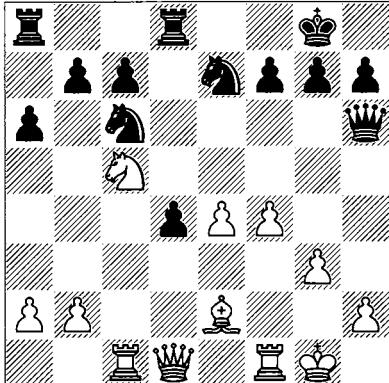
16...a5 (16... $\mathbb{Q}a7$?) 17 f4 b6 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$? Diep-Gandalf, Maastricht 2001.

17 f4 (D)

17 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}db8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ “?” according to Sakalauskas, although White can hang on with 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc2$ a5 21 f4 ?.

Now Black has:

B



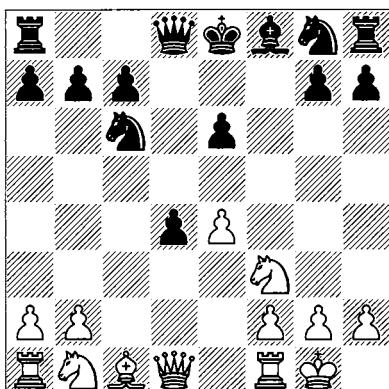
a) 17...b6 ("!?" according to Sakalauskas) 18 Qd3 (18 Qb3 d3 ±) 18...We6 19 e5 (19 f5 Wd6 ±) 19...Qd5 "!" according to Sakalauskas, but I think his assessment is too optimistic in view of 20 Qf3! Qce7 21 f5! Wd7 (not 21...Qxf5? 22 Qxd5 Wxd5 23 Qf4 Wxe5 24 Qe1 Wd6 {24...Qe3 25 Qxd5 Wxd5 26 Qxe3 +} 25 Wf3 c6 26 Wxc6! ±) 22 f6, with good compensation for the pawn.

b) 17...d3! (best) 18 Qxd3 (or 18 Qxd3 {G. Georgadze-Sakalauskas, Istanbul OL 2000}) 18...We6 ± Sakaev and Semkov; indeed, 19 e5 Wxa2 20 Qf3 Qd5 is quite good for Black) 18...b6 19 Qb3 Qb4 20 Wf3 Wd6 ±.

B)

7 Qxe6 fxe6 (D)

W



8 Wb3

White cannot afford the luxury of 8 Qg5?! (8 e5? Wd5 ±) 8...Wd7 9 Wh5+ g6 10 Wh3 0-0-0 11 Wxe6 (11 Qxe6 We8 12 Qxf8 Whxh3 13

gxh3 Qxf8 ±) 11...h6 12 Wxd7+ Wxd7 13 Qe6 Qd6 ± Herndl-Ibragimov, Vienna 1996. The passed d4-pawn is very strong.

8...Wd7 9 Wxb7 Qb8 10 Wa6

White has recovered the sacrificed pawn at the cost of easing Black's defensive task.

10...Qf6 11 Qbd2

Minor alternatives:

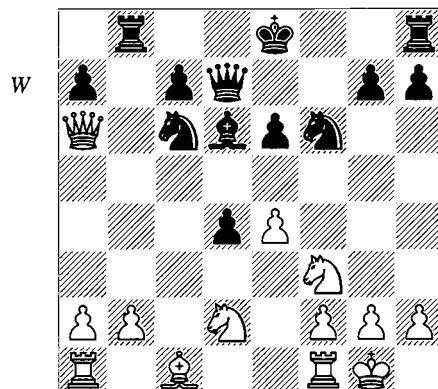
a) 11 e5?! Qg4 12 Qbd2 (Xu Jun-Svidler, Bad Homburg 1995) 12...Wb6 13 Wa4 Wb4 14 Wa6 Qgxe5 15 Qxe5 Qxe5 16 Wxa7 Wc6 ±.

b) 11 Wel Qb4 12 Qd2 0-0 (12...Qxd2? 13 Qbx2 Wxb2 14 Qc4 Wb8 15 Qfe5 Qxe5 16 Qxe5 ±) 13 a3 and now 13...Qe7! was fine for Black in Mikhalevski-Bosch, Hoogeveen 1998. Bosch points out that instead 13...Qxd2 14 Qbx2 Wxb2 15 Qac1 Wb6 16 Wa4 gives White compensation.

c) 11 Wd3 Qd6 12 Qbd2 – 11 Qbd2 Qd6 12 Wd3.

11...Qd6 (D)

This is our repertoire move. 11...Qb4 is a sound alternative.



12 Wd3

The idea behind the queen retreat is to protect the e4-pawn and play Qc4. Alternatives:

a) 12 Wel Qg4 13 h3 Qge5 14 Qxe5 Qxe5 and then:

a1) 15 Qb3 c5 (15...0-0 16 f4 Qg6 17 e5 Qb4 18 Wd1 {18 We4? Wd5 19 Wd3 c5 was good for Black in Zaja-Soppe, Istanbul OL 2000} 18...Wd5 ±) 16 Qf4 Wb6 17 We2 d3! 18 Wd1 (18 Wh5+ g6 19 Wg5 Qf7 20 Wg3 Qxf4 21 Wxf4 c4 ± Khuzman) 18...0-0 19 Qxe5 Qxe5 20 Qxc5 Wb5 21 Qxd3 (the passed d-pawn is too strong) 21...Wd8 22 We3 Wbd6 23

$\mathbb{W}g4$ h5! (stronger than Khuzman's 23... $\mathbb{B}xd3$)
 24 $\mathbb{W}g6$ $\mathbb{B}xd3$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 26 $\mathbb{B}xd3$ $\mathbb{B}xd3$
 and Black is much better.

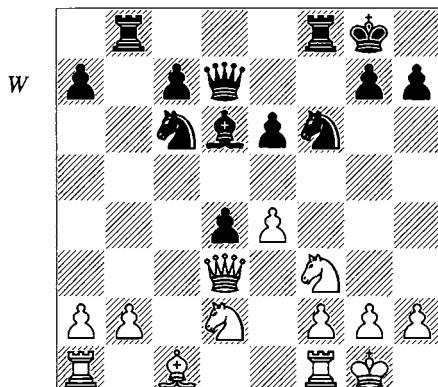
a2) 15 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d3$ c5
 (17... $\mathbb{W}b5$! was also a little better for Black in
 Pelletier-Rublevsky, Lucerne Wcht 1997) 18
 $b3$ $\mathbb{W}b5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{B}xb5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ c4 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Gyimesi-A.Horvath, Hungarian Cht 2002. Black
 could play on; for example, 21 bxc4 $\mathbb{B}b2$ 22
 $\mathbb{B}ed1$ $\mathbb{B}c8$ with a faint edge.

b) 12 e5!? and here:
 b1) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$
 15 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{B}b4$ (15... $\mathbb{B}fe8$! also looks reasonable)
 16 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g5$
 $\mathbb{B}e2$ with good compensation for the pawn,
 Ovseevich-Efimenko, Ukrainian Ch (Ordzhonikidze) 2001.

b2) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{B}e1$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14
 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ 0-0 is slightly better for Black, Khudaverdieva-Muhren, Calvia wom OL 2004; 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ {Komljenović-N.Guliev, Nice 2004} 13... $\mathbb{B}b6$
 14 $\mathbb{B}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ is fine for Black) 13... $\mathbb{B}d6$ 14
 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}b4$! (14...0-0 15 $\mathbb{B}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ was analysed by Khuzman – he didn't give an evaluation, but Black looks comfortable here as the passed d-pawn is strong) 15 $\mathbb{B}xe6+$ (15 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$
 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 16 $\mathbb{B}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{B}e1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$; the passed
 d-pawn is strong) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ with a
 slight advantage for Black.

c) 12 a3 0-0 13 b4 (13 $\mathbb{W}d3$ – 12 $\mathbb{W}d3$ 0-0 13
 a3) 13... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}a4$ a5 15 b5!?(15 bxa5 d3 16
 $\mathbb{B}a2$ $\mathbb{B}a8$ 17 a6 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 19 h3
 $\mathbb{Q}ge5$ = Rogozenko-Ibragimov, Berlin 1995)
 15... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 16 h3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ (not
 17... $\mathbb{B}xf3$? 18 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{B}ff8$ 19 a4 ±) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$
 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ =.

12...0-0 (D)



Now White has:

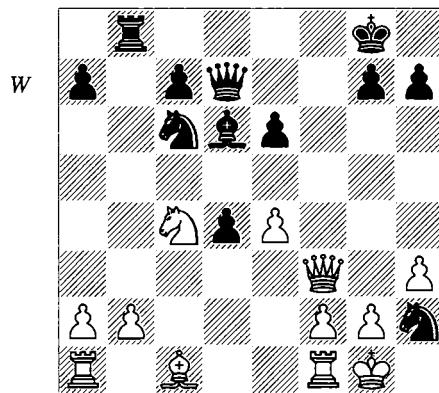
- B1: 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 20
 B2: 13 h3 20
 B3: 13 a3 22

B1)

13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 14 h3 $\mathbb{B}xf3$

14... $\mathbb{Q}ge5$! 15 $\mathbb{Q}fxe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (after
 16 $\mathbb{W}xd4$? $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ Black wins the queen)
 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17 f4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ =.

15 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}h2$ (D)



Now:

a) 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xf1$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$
 19 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 21 $\mathbb{W}c4$ d3 with
 equal chances, Milton-Korchnoi, Krynica rpd
 1998.

b) 16 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 18 $\mathbb{W}b3$
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ = Topalov-Anand, Monte Carlo Amber
 rpd 1997.

B2)

13 h3

The pawn move is directed against the freeing manoeuvre $\mathbb{Q}g4$ -e5.

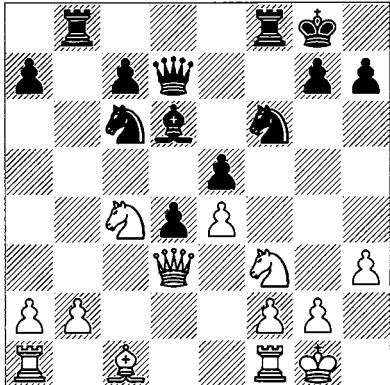
13...e5 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (D)

Black has an interesting choice in this position:

- B21: 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 21
 B22: 14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21

Another idea is 14...h6 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 16 $\mathbb{B}ac1$
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ("unclear" – Khuzman) 17 b3 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 18
 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ cxd6 19 $\mathbb{B}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 20 $\mathbb{B}fc1$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ with
 chances for both sides.

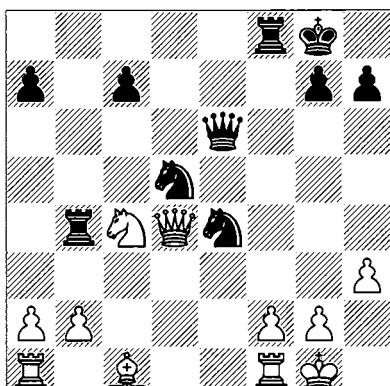
B

**B21)**14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}bd5$

15... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 16 a3 (16 $\mathbb{Q}fxe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ c5 is equal, Gyimesi-A.Horvath, Balatonlelle 2002) 16... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}g8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ h6 20 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}fe1!$?) 21... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ with roughly level chances.

16 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}fxe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (D)

B



Now Black has:

a) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf2$? and then:

a1) 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3+!!$ (this unexpected shot is considerably stronger than 21... $\mathbb{Q}f4$? {"only move" – Khuzman}) 22 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xf2$ $\mathbb{Q}cxh4$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}e3+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ when White is much better) 22 $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ $\mathbb{W}g6+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ (23 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ is equal) 23... $\mathbb{W}d6+!!$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ (24 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f1+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}h6! =)$ 24... $\mathbb{W}g6+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ (25 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ – 23 $\mathbb{Q}h1$

$\mathbb{Q}xf1+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}c6 =)$ 25... $\mathbb{Q}d6+!!$ repeats the position.

- a2) 21 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{W}e1+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}xf2$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xd5+$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 25 b3 +–.
- b) 20... $\mathbb{Q}dc3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}bc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ ±.
- c) 20... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 21 b3 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e1!$ ± Cu.Hansen-Schandorff, Danish Ch (Århus) 1999.
- d) 20... $\mathbb{Q}g3!$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}fxg3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 23 $\mathbb{W}d3$ c5 with compensation for the pawn.

B22)14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$

A sensible move – Black removes his king from any potential danger along the a2-g8 diagonal.

15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$

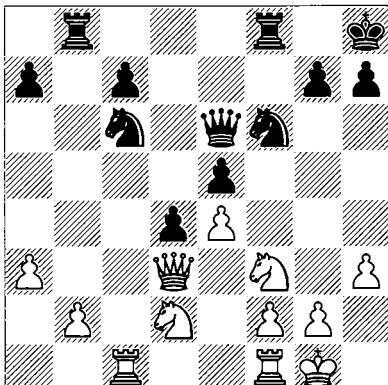
Another idea is 16 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ with equal chances.

16... $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Black's plan is to exchange dark-squared bishops in preparation for placing a knight on the vulnerable f4-square.

17 a3 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}cxd2$ (D)

B

18... $\mathbb{Q}h5!$

Black initiates a kingside attack to exploit the weakness created by 13 h3! – the knight manoeuvre is consistent with the plan initiated by 14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$! and 16... $\mathbb{Q}b4$. Black should avoid the greedy 18... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$? (an instructive mistake as it allows White to generate considerable pressure along the c-file) 19 $\mathbb{W}c4!$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ h6 22 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ (Notkin-Makarov, Russian Clubs Cup (Maikop) 1998) 23 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{Q}bb8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}be8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ with a near-decisive advantage according to Khuzman. I

have spent a considerable amount of time analysing 18... $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ and I believe that it rehabilitates the 14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ line.

19 $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Or 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 20 b4 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ with roughly level chances – the well-placed knight inhibits White's ability to build up along the c-file.

19... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 21 g3

White has no time for 21 $\mathbb{Q}h4?$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ with a crushing attack after:

a) 23 gxh3 $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ –.

b) 23 $\mathbb{Q}hf3$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}h5+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ also wins for Black.

21... $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h2$

22 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6!?$ (23... $\mathbb{Q}h3+$ repeats) maintains the kingside pressure.

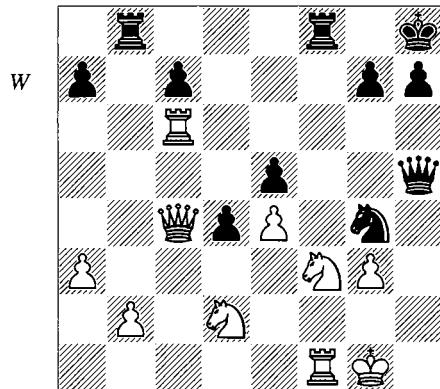
22... $\mathbb{Q}h5$

Black's back rank becomes vulnerable and his king is flushed out after 22... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xg8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xg8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}c8+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}d7+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ ±.

23 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

White may as well continue eating as Black has a perpetual check after 23 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ (24 $\mathbb{Q}e6??$ loses to 24... $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$) 24... $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ with a draw by repetition.

23... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (D)



White has an extra piece for a couple of pawns, but his knights are handcuffed together and Black is able to generate sufficient counterplay. Now:

a) 25 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ and then:

a1) 29 $\mathbb{Q}f1??$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3+!$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ (30 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}h2+)$ 30... $\mathbb{Q}d3+$ and Black wins.

a2) 29 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ with a draw by repetition.

b) 25 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d3 26 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ (26 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$) 26... $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3+$ and here:

b1) 28 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ with an equal endgame.

b2) 28 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}h3+$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}g3+$ with a draw by repetition.

B3)

13 a3 $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Now:

B31: 14 b3 22

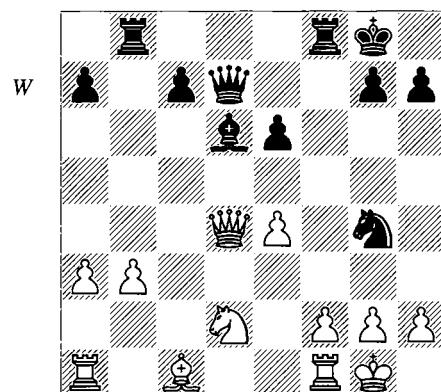
B32: 14 h3 23

B31)

14 b3 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$

Rublevsky had played the weaker 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$ against Dreev earlier in the year – this was his improvement.

16 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (D)



17 e5!

Black has several promising ideas after the weaker 17 g3?:

a) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ was suggested by Kochiev. White can then play:

a1) 18 e5 $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ (stronger than 18... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 20 exd6 cxd6, which is unclear – Kochiev) 19 exd6 $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 22 dxc7 $\mathbb{Q}bc8$ ±.

- a2) 18 $\mathbb{B}el!$ $\mathbb{B}b5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ is a mess.
 b) 17... $\mathbb{W}e7$ (suggested by Dreev) 18 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5 \mp$.

c) 17... $\mathbb{W}b5$ and here:
 c1) 18 $\mathbb{W}c4?$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 19 h4 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ --; 20 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 21 e5 $\mathbb{W}h3+$ and Black mates) 20... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}e2$ 22 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ and Black has a decisive advantage – Rublevsky.

c2) 18 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ --) 21... $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8 \mp$.

d) 17... $\mathbb{W}f7!$ (this is the most accurate move)
 18 h3 (18 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ – 17... $\mathbb{W}b5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}c4?$ $\mathbb{W}h5$)
 18... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mp$.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b5!$

This powerful centralizing manoeuvre demonstrates a fine understanding of the position – the black pieces work together beautifully.

19 $\mathbb{W}e4!?$

Alternatives:

- a) 19 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mp$ Sakai-Bandiera, IECC e-mail 2000.
 b) 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d3 \mp$ Galliamova-Rublevsky, Russian Ch (St Petersburg) 1998.
 19... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 21 $\mathbb{W}a8+$
 21 $\mathbb{W}xd3??$ loses to 21... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$.

21... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 22 $\mathbb{W}e4$

White cannot afford the luxury of 22 $\mathbb{W}xa7?$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 24 h3 $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mp$.

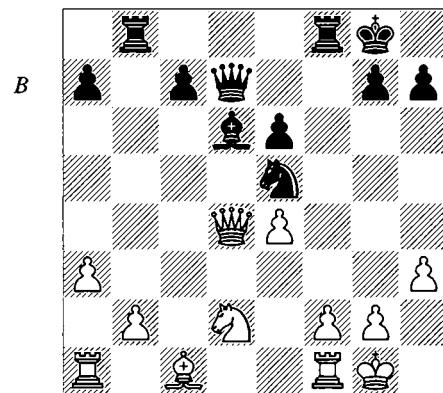
22... $\mathbb{Q}f4$

The chances are equal according to Rublevsky.

B32)

**14 h3 $\mathbb{Q}ge5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ (D)
 16... $\mathbb{W}b5!$**

Black seizes control of some important light squares and disrupts White's development. Black should avoid the tempting 16... $\mathbb{Q}g4?$ (this move has been passed over with no comment by various sources, but it appears to be a serious error) 17 f4! (Black is left searching for



equality after this move; the weaker 17 $\mathbb{Q}h1?$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ was fine for Black in Bacrot-Waitzkin, Bermuda 1999) 17... $\mathbb{W}b5$ 18 b4 and now:

- a) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}bf8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ 22 $\mathbb{W}e3 \pm$.
 b) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e3 \pm$. Black's pawns are weak.

17 $\mathbb{W}c3$

Less effective is 17 b4?! $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 19 g3 (19 f4?!) $\mathbb{W}xa1$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ g5 \mp 19... $\mathbb{W}xa1$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ (Nikolić-Anand, Monte Carlo Amber rpd 1999) 20... $\mathbb{W}f6 \mp$.

17... $\mathbb{W}e2$ 18 $\mathbb{W}e3$

White should avoid 18 b4?! $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}xf3!$ (clearer than 20... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$) 21 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ --; 21 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 22 f4 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ --) 21... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8 \mp$.

18... $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8!$

This is the correct way for Black to recapture – the bishop will be well-placed along the a1-h8 diagonal. Black runs into problems after 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (Gormally-Krush, London 1999) 21... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ (22 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{W}xe3$ gives Black a slight advantage) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}c3 \pm$.

21 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ g6 22 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$

The chances are equal.

3 Mannheim Variation

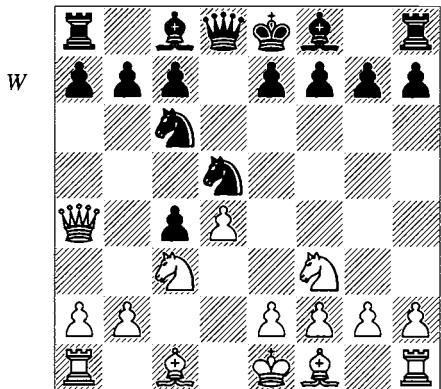
1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$

The characteristic move of the Mannheim Variation. The idea behind the check is to disrupt Black's development and to recapture the c4-pawn with the queen. White will often follow up by playing e4 in one step – Black will counter by harassing the white queen with his minor pieces. The variation derives its name from the game Bogoljubow-Alekhine, Mannheim Wch (6) 1934; however, it was apparently first played in the game F.Brown-A.Mackenzie, London 1904. The line has never been very popular because there are several ways for Black to equalize. Polish GM Michal Krasenkov has played 4 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ several times and the check was a favourite of Swedish GM Ulf Andersson during the 1980s.

4... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

This is our repertoire move – the main alternatives 4... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ and 4...c6 are also satisfactory.

5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (D)



The black knight manoeuvre is attributed to the 9th World Champion Tigran Petrosian. The resulting positions bear some similarity to Alekhine's Defence and to the Smyslov Variation of the Grünfeld Defence. Now White has the option of recapturing the pawn or building a big centre:

A: 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 24
B: 6 e4 26

A)

6 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

Now:

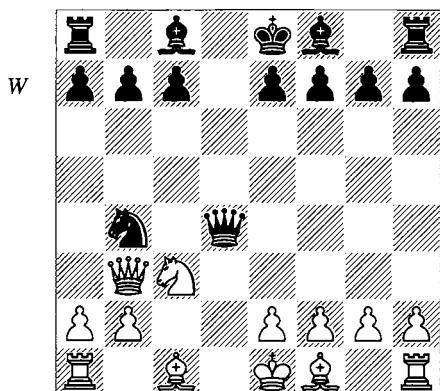
A1: 6... $\mathbb{Q}db4$ 24
A2: 6... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 25

A1)

6... $\mathbb{Q}db4$

This move gives Black a satisfactory game, but the drawback is that White has the option of forcing a draw by repetition.

7 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ (D)



9 a3!?

This is an interesting untried suggestion from Sakaev and Semkov. Many players avoid this line as Black because of 9 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 1/2-1/2 Andersson-Korchnoi, Johannesburg 1981 and many later games.

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

Not 9... $\mathbb{Q}c6$? 10 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ±.

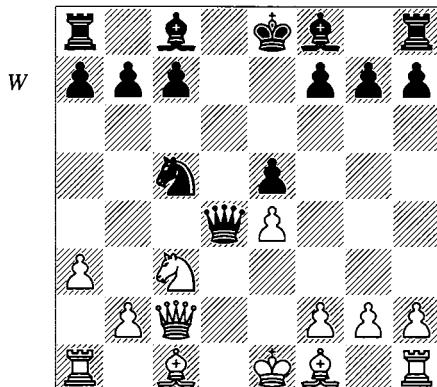
10 e4!?

10 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$! is “unclear” according to Sakaev and Semkov, but I think this is risky for

White after 11 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ e5 12 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ intending 13 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ \mp .

The text-move is my attempt to strengthen this idea.

10... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ e5 (D)



Now White can try:

a) 12 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8!$ repeats the position – note that the careless 13... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$ allows the surprising shot 14 $\mathbb{Q}h6!! \pm$ clearing the white rook's path to the d-file.

b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3?$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ with compensation for the pawn.

A2)

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

This is Black's best chance to create an unbalanced position.

7 $\mathbb{W}b3$

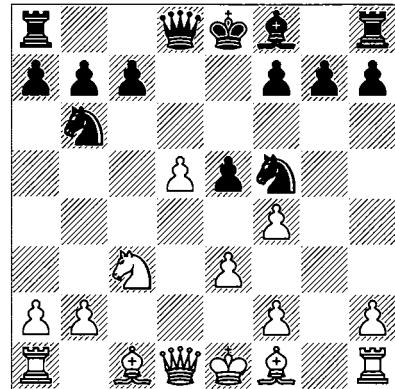
The alternative is 7 $\mathbb{W}d3$ e5! (the thematic freeing move) and then:

a) 8 dx e 5 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 9 ex d 3 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ (10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 11 a3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ {Magula-Kuchyna, corr. 2000}) 12... $\mathbb{Q}d8$) = 10... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ 0-0-0 with compensation for the pawn, Goormachigh-Velikov, Haifa Echt 1989.

b) 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 9 $\mathbb{W}b1$ (9 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c2+$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 12 e3 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ and a draw was agreed here in Davies-P.Stempin, Polanica Zdroj 1989) 9... $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 11 e4 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 12 a3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 13 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ with equality, Conquest-Dlugy, New York Open 1984.

7... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 8 d5 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 9 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 10 $\mathbb{W}d1$ e5 11 e3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 12 f4 (D)

Now Black has a choice:



A21: 12...exf4 25

A22: 12...Qd6 26

12... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ is also possible:

a) 13 fxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (14 $\mathbb{W}b3$ c6 also leads to equality) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 15 bxc3 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ c6 =.

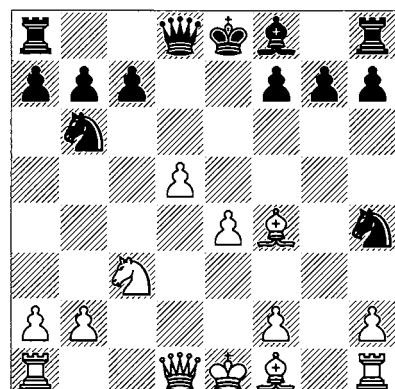
b) 13 e4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ (Bukal jr-L.Hansen, Sitges 1999) 14...f5 15 0-0-0!?

$\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 16 bxc3 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ fxe4 18 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ with sharp play.

c) 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5+!?$ (this disruptive check looks best) 13... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 14 fxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}b3$ c6 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ with equal chances.

A21)

12...exf4 13 e4 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ (D)



14... $\mathbb{W}f6$

The immediate 14... $\mathbb{Q}d6+?$ is a reasonable alternative.

15 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

Another idea is 15...h5?! 16 ♖g3 g5 17 ♖xc7 ♖f3+ with initiative according to Sakaev and Semkov.

16 ♖b5+ ♖e7!?

This is an ambitious move – Black prepares to castle ‘by hand’ with ...♖hd8 and ...♔f8. Sakaev and Semkov analysed 16...♔f8 17 ♖xd6+ cxd6 18 ♖e2 h5 with an unclear position.

17 ♖g5

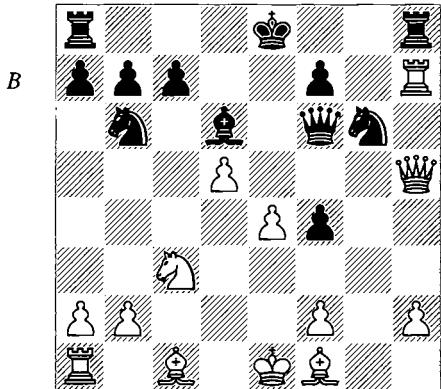
Or 17 ♖e3 ♖f3+ 18 ♖e2 ♖d4+ 19 ♖d1 h6 with sharp play ahead.

17... ♖f3+ 18 ♖xf3 ♖xg5

The position is equal; Black has a firm grip on the e5- and f4-squares.

A22)

12... ♖d6 13 ♖g1 exf4 14 e4 ♖h4 15 ♖xg7 ♖g6 16 ♖h5 ♖f6 17 ♖xh7 (D)



17... ♖e7!

I think this is stronger than 17...0-0-0 18 ♖xh8 ♖xh8 (“with initiative” – Sakaev and Semkov) 19 ♖g4+ ♖b8 20 h3 ♖e5 21 ♖e2 with an unclear position.

18 ♖xh8

Black’s king is safe after the reckless 18 e5? ♖xe5 19 ♖e4 ♖xh7 20 ♖xf6 ♖xh5 21 ♖xh5 ♖xd5 ±.

18... ♖xh8 19 ♖e2 ♖xh2

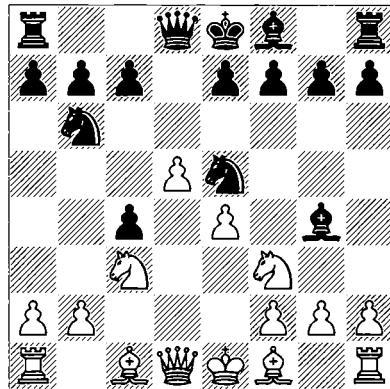
Black is slightly better. The material balance has been restored and Black has a strong outpost on the e5-square.

B)

6 e4 ♖b6 7 ♖d1 ♖g4 8 d5

White should avoid 8 ♖e3?! ♖xf3 9 gxf3 e6 10 ♖e2 ♖h4 ± Cruz-Sanguinetti, Buenos Aires 1963.

8... ♖e5 (D)



Now White has several moves of which Line B2 is the most important:

B1: 9 ♖d4?! 26

B2: 9 ♖f4 27

Rarely seen is 9 ♖e2 ♖xf3 10 gxf3 e6 11 f4 ♖ed7 12 ♖e3 exd5 13 ♖xd5 c6 (13... ♖c5!?) 14 ♖xb6 (so far this is Djurković-Raetsky, Aschach 1995) 14... ♖xb6 ±.

B1)

9 ♖d4?!

This relatively popular but dubious idea was suggested by Rajković – White offers a pawn in order to seize the initiative.

9... ♖xf3+ 10 gxf3 ♖xf3 11 ♖g1

Now:

a) 11...e6?! (Neishtadt considered this move to be dubious, but the real mistake comes later) 12 ♖e3 ♖h5 13 ♖h3 g6 14 dx6 (Crouch-Sadler, Hastings 1992/3) 14... ♖f6! 15 ♖e3 ♖xe6 16 ♖xe6+ fxe6 17 ♖d4 ♖g8 18 ♖xb6 axb6 19 ♖xc4 ♖e7 ±.

b) 11... ♖d6! was Sadler’s later preference, and gives Black a promising position:

b1) 12 ♖e3 ♖h5 13 ♖d2 (13 f4 e6 ± Crouch-C.Duncan, Hampstead 1998) 13...e5 (the greedy 13... ♖xh2?! also favours Black) 14 dx6 fxe6 ± Markus-Mannion, Calvia OL 2004.

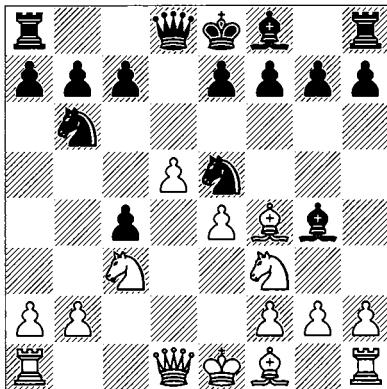
b2) 12 ♖g3 e5 with the idea of ... ♖h5 was suggested by Neishtadt.

b3) 12 a4 a6 13 e5 $\mathbb{W}d7$ ♦ Crouch-Sadler, Cappelle la Grande 1993.

B2)

9 ♖f4 (D)

B



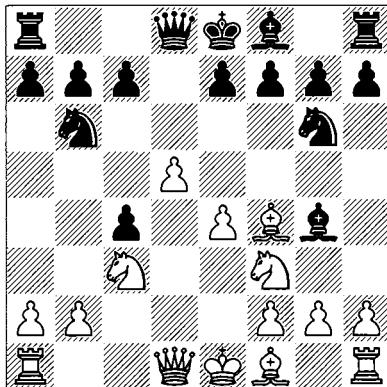
Now Black can retreat his knight or hold his ground in the centre:

B21: 9...♘g6 27
B22: 9...♗xf3?!? 27

B21)

9...♘g6 (D)

W



The solid choice, but it does not offer Black many winning chances.

10 ♖g3

This is more challenging than the stem game of this variation, Botvinnik-Petrosian, Moscow Wch (22) 1963, which saw 10 ♖e3 e6 = ½-½. This was the final game of the match which

Petrosian won by a score of 12½-9½; he played the black side of the Queen's Gambit Accepted seven times and drew every game.

10...e5 11 dxе6 ♗xe6 12 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 13 ♖xc7 ♖d7!

Stronger than the older 13...♖c8.

14 ♖xb6

Relatively unexplored is the probing move 14 ♖b8!?, ♖b4 15 a4 (Zagorskis-Hjelm, Copenhagen 1998) 15...a5! 16 ♖a7 ♖c8 17 ♖e3 ♖d6 18 ♖g5 ♖e5 with equal chances.

14...axb6 15 ♖g5 ♖e5! 16 f4 ♖d3+ 17 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 18 ♖xe6 fxе6 19 ♖d1 ♖xd1+ 20 ♖xd1 ♖d7 21 ♖f1

Another way is 21 ♖c2 ♖c6 = V.Akopian-Brunner, Lucerne Wcht 1993.

21...♖c6

The endgame was balanced in Krasenkov-Kaminski, Polish Cht (Lubniewice) 1995.

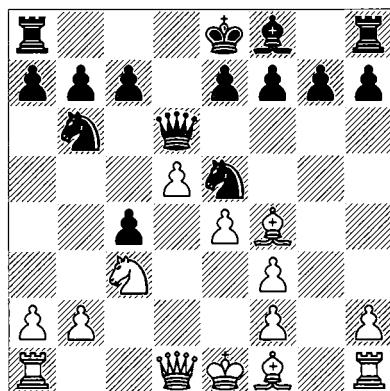
B22)

9...♗xf3!?

The enterprising choice – Black prepares to implement a dark-square blockading strategy.

10 gxf3 ♖d6! (D)

W



Now Black is threatening ...♖d3+, so White must retreat his bishop:

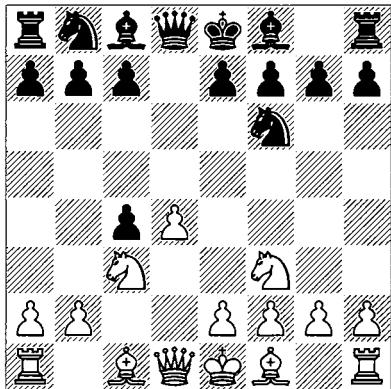
a) 11 ♖e3 g5!? (the consistent move; the more restrained 11...e6 12 f4 ♖ed7 is also possible, with roughly level chances) 12 ♖xg5 ♖b4 13 ♖b1 ♖g7 with sharp play.

b) 11 ♖g3 g5!? (the calm 11...e6 gives Black a comfortable game) 12 h4 ♖g7 (12...gxh4!?) 13 hxg5 ♖b4 14 ♖b1 0-0-0 = Engqvist-Sadler, Isle of Man 1995.

4 Two Knights Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (D)

B



This position is the starting point for one of White's sharpest attempts to refute the Queen's Gambit Accepted. White offers a true pawn sacrifice and Black has the option of either retaining the gambit pawn or returning the booty in order to concentrate on completing his own development. The main lines in which Black attempts to hang onto the pawn (Line B) are among the most tactically rich variations in the entire opening and they require thorough preparation by both players. I have provided an alternative repertoire (Line A) for players who may prefer to avoid the complications. The Two Knights Variation has not been a popular choice during recent years – this may be due to the complexity of the lines or simply a whim of chess fashion. I expect the line to regain its popularity at some point as there are a lot of unanswered questions and interesting ideas waiting to be tried; there is plenty of fertile ground for independent analysis. As we shall see there are several points where White's attack can be strengthened, whereas in other lines Black's defensive resources appear to have been underestimated. Chess is ultimately a game of moves, not opinions, so in positions where I disagree with previously published analysis I have provided specific variations so

that the reader may compare and draw his own conclusions.

4...a6

Black has several alternatives here:

- a) 4...c5 is not part of our repertoire.
- b) 4... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ transposes into the Queen's Gambit Chigorin Defence.

c) 4...e6 usually transposes into the Queen's Gambit Vienna Variation after 5 e4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}g5$.

d) 4...c6 transposes into the Slav Defence. This last choice is popular among players who have both the QGA and the Slav Defence in their opening repertoire.

5 e4

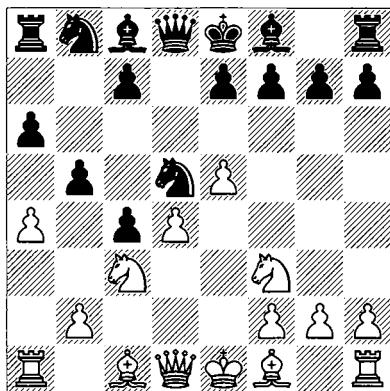
The main alternative is 5 a4 (harmless, but popular at club level) 5... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ and now:

a) 6 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 7 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ exf6 8 e3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 0-0 0-0 \mp I.Sokolov-Kramnik, Khalidhiki 1992.

b) 6 e4 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 7 d5 (7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 8 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ \mp Bajković-Djukić, Bar 2005) 7... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 9 gxf3 e6 10 f4 (10 $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ $\mathbb{Q}fd7!$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ exd5 13 f4 $\mathbb{Q}d3+$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ cxd3 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ c6 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ \mp A.Ho-Adianto, Manila OL 1992) 10... $\mathbb{Q}d3+$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ cxd3 12 dxe6 fxe6 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (Nadera-Ye Rongguang, Jakarta 1993) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ \circ Ye Rongguang.

5...b5 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 7 a4 (D)

B



Now Black has a major decision:

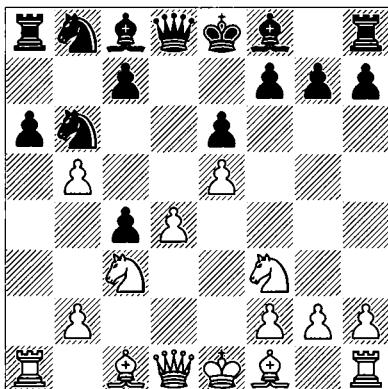
- | | |
|-------------|----|
| A: 7...e6 | 29 |
| B: 7...Qxc3 | 30 |

A)

7...e6

This is a relatively quiet sideline for players who wish to avoid the complications of the main line 7...Qxc3 (Line B). Black returns the gambit pawn and concentrates on completing his development.

8 axb5 Qb6 (D)



W

British GM Tony Miles introduced this paradoxical knight retreat in 1995 – here is an instructive quote from his *NIC Yearbook 38* article in which he describes the birth of the variation: “In the characteristic positions the doubled black pawns are no weaker than d4 and b2. In addition the black pieces – particularly the b7-bishop – are all active and the c4-pawn, by preventing Qd3, restricts White’s kingside chances.” Another idea behind the knight move is to protect both the a8-rook and the c4-pawn in preparation for the opening of the a-file. White has a wide choice here, with Lines A2 and A3 having emerged as the most topical:

- | | |
|------------|----|
| A1: 9 bxa6 | 29 |
| A2: 9 Qe2 | 29 |
| A3: 9 Qe3 | 30 |

Minor alternatives:

- a) 9 Qg5?! h6 and now:
- a1) 10 Wh5?! and then:
 - a11) 10...hxg5? (Miles wrote that he “got [his] lines crossed” here) 11 Wxh8 Wxd4 12

Qe2 with a clear edge in Kramnik-Miles, London rpd 1995 – this was the stem game of the variation.

a12) 10...g6! 11 Wh3 (White’s position collapses after 11 Wh4? Qe7) 11...Wxd4 12 Qf3 Wd8 13 Qg5 Qe7 14 Qd1 Q8d7 15 Qe4 Qxg5 16 Qfxg5 axb5 17 Qh7 Qxh7 (I think Black can also play 17...Qe7!?) 18 Wxh6 Wb4+ 19 Qd2 Qb7 20 Qhf6+ Qe7 21 Wg5 Qf8 ±) 18 Qf6+ Qxf6 19 Qxd8+ Qxd8 20 exf6 Qd5 ± Väisser.

a2) 10 Qge4 Qb4 11 Wg4 Qf8 12 Qe3 Qb7 13 bxa6 h5 14 Wg5 Wxg5 15 Qxg5 Qxa6 16 Qxa6 Qxa6 ± Deak-Schrancz, Hungary tt (Ostrava) 2000.

b) 9 b3?! Qb4 10 Qd2 Qb7 11 bxa6 (11 Qxc4 Qxf3 12 Wxf3 Wxd4 13 We3 Wxe3+ 14 fxe3 a5 15 Qe2 Q8d7 is much better for Black) 11...Qxf3 12 Wxf3 Wxd4 13 Qxc4 0-0 (stronger than 13...Wxe5+ 14 Qe2 Qd5 15 Qc1 0-0 16 0-0 Qd6 17 g3 Qxa6 {Maksimović-Bojković, Split wom 1989}) 18 Qxd5 exd5 19 Qfe1 with some compensation for the pawn) 14 We3 Wxe3+ 15 fxe3 Qxc4 16 bxc4 Qxa6 and Black has a slight edge because of his superior pawn-structure, Ward-Ganguly, British Ch (Torquay) 2002.

A1)

9 bxa6

The immediate exchange of pawns is slightly premature – White should wait for Black to commit his light-squared bishop before capturing.

9...Qxa6 10 Qxa6 Qxa6

This offers a clearer path to equality than 10...Qxa6 11 Qe2 Qb7 – 9 Qe2 Qb7 10 bxa6 Qxa6 11 Qxa6 Qxa6.

11 Qe2 Qe7 12 0-0-0 13 Qe3 Qc6 14 Wa1

14 b3 (14 Wd2!?) 14...Qb4 15 Qxc4 Qxc4 16 bxc4 Qxc4 17 Qf4 c5 ½-½ Ernst-Rötšagov, Stockholm 2002.

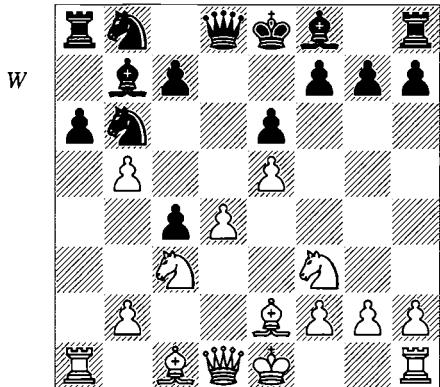
14...Qb7 15 Qd1 Qb4

The game is level, Pecorelli-Zambrana, Havana 2004.

A2)

9 Qe2 Qb7 (D)

10 bxa6



10 0-0 axb5! (this seems clearer than the frequently played alternative 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$) 11 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}c2$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$?) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 15 bxa3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ = P.H.Nielsen-Kumaran, Copenhagen 1996.

10... $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Now:

a) 13 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ cxb6 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ = Van Wely-Miles, Matanzas 1995.
b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}a4+$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ 0-0 with compensation for the pawn, Bacrot-Zilberman, Havana 1998.

c) 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}a8!$ (14... $\mathbb{W}d7$!) was suggested by Miles after he played 14...c5? 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ± in Van Wely-Miles, London rpd 1995) 15 f3 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ and here:

c1) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ cxd4 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ (T.Nielsen-Vidal, IECG e-mail 2002) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ is equal.

c2) 16 $\mathbb{W}c1$ c5 17 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ = Orsag-Jackova, Ostrava 2000.

d) 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$? (this continuation deserves attention) 13... $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 0-0-0! (16... $\mathbb{Q}b4$?) $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Tyomin-Lesiège, Montreal 2000. White should play 17 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ with some advantage.

A3)

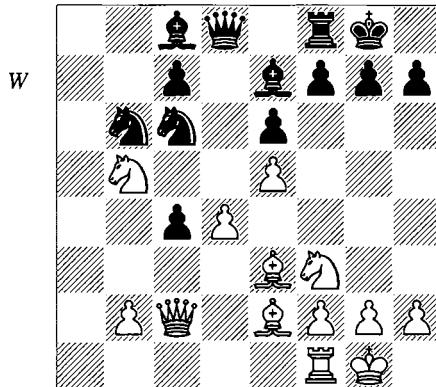
9 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

This is White's most challenging continuation.

9...axb5 10 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Or 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}de4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ = Nemtsev-Fominykh, Novgorod 1998.

12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 0-0 0-0 14 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (D)



Now White has:

a) 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 17 $\mathbb{W}a1$ (17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$?) 17... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ = Campos Moreno-Magem, Spanish Cht (Barcelona) 2000.

b) 15 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ and then:

b1) 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 18 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ = Porper-Mannion, Triesen 2004.

b2) 16 $\mathbb{W}g4$ f5 17 exf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ and here:

b21) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (Khuzman) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c2$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ e5 20 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ = Sakaev and Semkov.
b22) 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}e4$ (Najer-Sulskis, Linares 2001) 19... $\mathbb{W}e7$ (19... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ "with counterplay" according to Khuzman, but I think White can claim some advantage after 21 $\mathbb{W}g4$) 20 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ with equal chances.

B)

7... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

This is the main line and as we shall see it requires thorough preparation by both players.

8 $\mathbb{Q}bc3$ $\mathbb{W}d5$

Back in 1986, American IM John Watson called this move "...the most direct and logical way to contest the light squares." His opinion still holds true today.

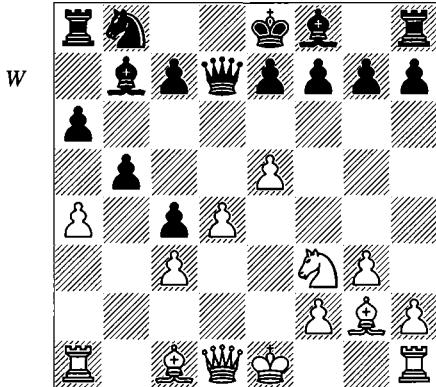
9 $\mathbb{g}3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ (D)

White has several ways to develop his attack:

B1: 11 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 31

B2: 11 $e6$!? 31

B3: 11 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 32



White can also reach the same position as in Line B1 by playing 11 0-0 e6 12 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ b4 – 11 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ b4 13 0-0 e6.

B1)

11 $\mathbb{Q}h4$

The idea behind this move is to exchange Black's only developed piece. Then the knight will usually make its way to the powerful f4-square.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

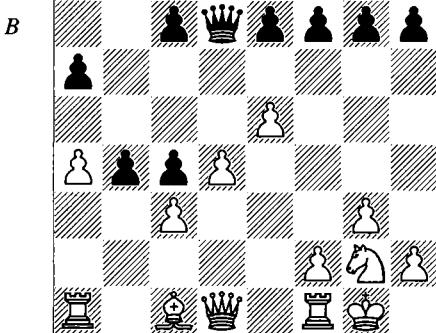
Now White is threatening to open the a-file.

12...b4 13 0-0 (D)

White continues his development. Alternatives:

a) 13 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 0-0 e6 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ ± Bilion-Rantalainen, corr. 1992.

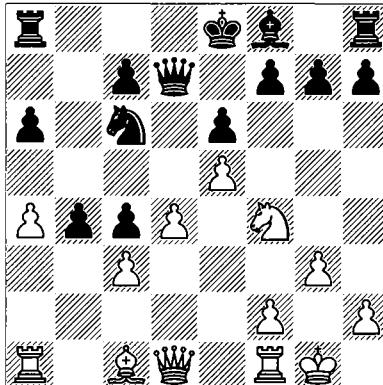
b) 13 cxb4 e6 14 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ is slightly better for Black.



13...e6

13... $\mathbb{B}xc3$! is worthy of attention. After 14 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ e6 16 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 0-0-0 Black will follow up with ... $\mathbb{B}fb8$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}a5$.

14 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (D)



Now:

a) 15 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{B}xc3$! 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 17 $\mathbb{B}ad1$ c6 18 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 0-0-0 20 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ (Zakharevich-Yakovlevich, Russian Ch (Elista) 1995) 20... $\mathbb{Q}c7$? 21 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ ± Nikitin.

b) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ b3 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ± Wendt-Melts, ICCF corr. Wch 1989.

c) 15 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{B}xc3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ (16... $\mathbb{Q}e7$!) with the idea 17 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and then:

c1) 17 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (Kremenetsky-A.Zakharov, Moscow Ch 1998) 17... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ±.

c2) 17 $\mathbb{W}g4$ 0-0-0 18 $\mathbb{W}f3$ and here:

c21) 18... $\mathbb{W}d5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e8+$ (White must allow the repetition as 20 $\mathbb{W}f4?$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ c5! is overwhelming for Black) 20... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ =.

c22) 18...c5! 19 dxc5 (the sucker check 19 $\mathbb{W}a8+$ loses to 19... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}a7+$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ –) 19... $\mathbb{W}b7$ ±.

B2)

11 e6?

This aggressive pawn sacrifice has received very little attention and some of the previously published analysis on it is misleading.

11... $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c8$

Black may wish to consider 12... $\mathbb{Q}d5$! here.

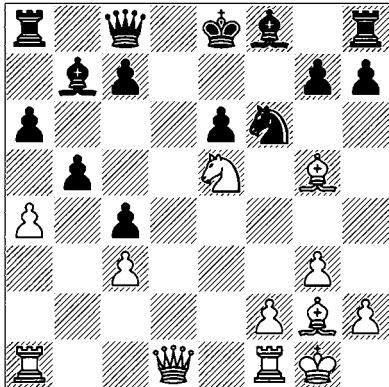
13 d5

White must act quickly to justify his sacrifice – too slow is 13 $\mathbb{W}b1?$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 0-0 c6 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$

(Rajković-Marjanović, Yugoslav Cht (Budva) 2003) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ±.

13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ e6 16 dx e 6 fx e 6 17 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (D)

B



17... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

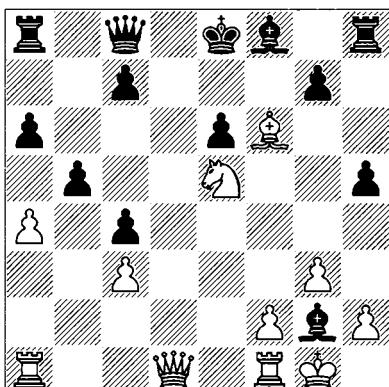
The alternative is 17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ("! only move" according to Sakaev and Semkov in 2003, but they appear to have been unaware of Illescas's 1995 *Informator* notes which had been quoted by Neishtadt in 1997) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 0-0 19 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ and White had a slight edge in Beliavsky-Illescas, Linares 1995.

18 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

White has no time for 18 $\mathbb{Q}xg2?$ $\mathbb{W}b7+ 19$ $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ±.

18...h5 (D)

W



"!!" according to Illescas – his astonishing idea appears to have prematurely extinguished interest in the 11 e6!?! line. Although the h-pawn thrust prevents $\mathbb{Q}h5+$, the drawback is

that it creates a gaping hole on the g6-square. This position has generally been considered advantageous for Black, but I believe White's attacking chances have been underestimated here – Black must play accurately to equalize.

19 $\mathbb{Q}c2$

This move takes aim at the weak g6-square. Two other moves are also quite playable:

a) 19 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ ("±" according to Illescas, but I think White is doing fine here) 22 axb5 (another idea is 22 $\mathbb{W}f3$!?) 22...axb5 23 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ and White has some compensation for the pawns as it is difficult for Black to safeguard his king.

b) 19 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (21... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xh5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 23 $\mathbb{W}f7+$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 24 $\mathbb{W}f3+$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ with compensation for the pawn) 22 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ with an unclear position.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$!

Stronger than 19... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ ("also good" according to Neishtadt, but he offered no analysis) 20 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ (21 $\mathbb{W}e4$!?) 21... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ("±" according to Illescas in *Informator*, but I think White is doing fine here also) 22 $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ and White has a slight edge as the black king has no shelter.

20 $\mathbb{Q}g6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

Illescas suggested this with no evaluation.

22 $\mathbb{W}xf6$!? $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$!

White has a mating attack after 23... $\mathbb{Q}h7$? 24 $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 25 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 26 a5+! $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}a1+$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}c6+$ $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ +-.

24 $\mathbb{W}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 25 axb5 axb5 26 $\mathbb{Q}b1$

White has good compensation for the exchange and Black must defend accurately.

26... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 27 $\mathbb{W}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

Not 27... $\mathbb{Q}b6$? 28 $\mathbb{Q}xc4+$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 30 c4 ±.

28 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 29 $\mathbb{W}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 30 $\mathbb{W}g5$

with a draw by repetition.

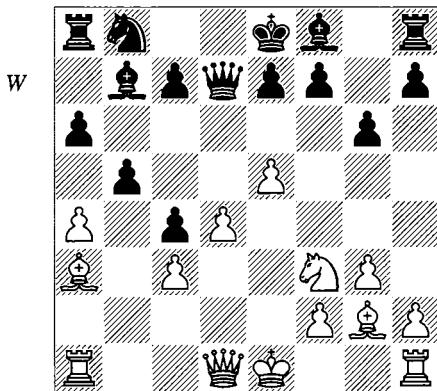
B3)

11 $\mathbb{Q}a3$

This is the most popular continuation – White deploys the bishop to a powerful diagonal and discourages the natural developing move ...e6.

11... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ (D)

This move has replaced the older 11...e6.



The most prominent exponent of this line is GM Ildar Ibragimov. The idea of playing 11...g6 had not yet been discovered at the time of John Watson's 1986 monograph on this variation.

Now White must make a committal decision – play for an all-out attack or complete his own development:

B31: 12 h4	33
B32: 12 0-0	35

B31)

12 h4

Black must decide where to put his king – he can continue his development at the risk of castling into a kingside attack, or he can focus on untangling his queenside pieces.

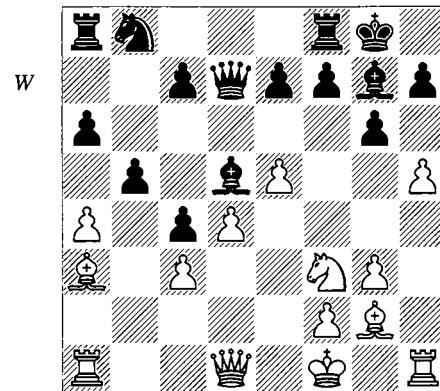
B311: 12... $\mathbb{Q}g7$	33
B312: 12... $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$	34

B311)

12... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 h5 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (D)

15 hxg6

The alternative is 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$ (15...h6 16 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 hxg6 fxg6 – 15 hxg6 fxg6 16 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $h6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ (17 f3 h6 {17... $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$ } 18 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ {18 $\mathbb{Q}xe7?$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 19 hxg6 fxg6 \mp Filippov-Ganguly, Shenyang tt 1999} 18...g5 with sharp play ahead) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ (Black vacates a square for his dark-squared bishop – the alternative is 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 h6 $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5 \pm$ Mchedlishvili-Charboneau, Erevan jr Wch 1999) 19 e6 (another idea is 19 h6 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20 e6!? fxe6 21 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ with compensation for the pawns) 19...fxe6 20 $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 21 hxg6



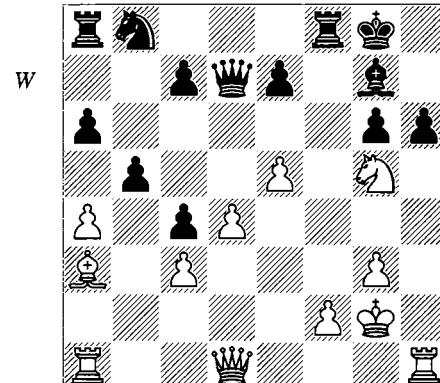
hxg6 22 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 23 g4 (23 $\mathbb{Q}c6!?$ deserves attention – the idea is to answer 23... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ by 24 axb5 axb5 25 $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$ with an unclear position) 23... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 24 g5 $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ (25... $\mathbb{Q}g7!?$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ was unclear in Monacell-Nava, IEBG e-mail 2000) 26 $\mathbb{Q}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ with roughly level chances, Zakharevich-Ibragimov, St Petersburg 1994.

15...fxg6

15...hxg6! looks risky but there is no obvious refutation.

16 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $h6$ (D)

Also possible is 17... $\mathbb{Q}d5+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ (18 f3 h6 19 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ – 17... $h6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5+$ 20 f3) 18... $h6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (19... $\mathbb{Q}f7!?$) 20 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ “±” according to Sakaev and Semkov – now Black should play 20... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ with an unclear position instead of 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf4?$ 21 gxf4 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h4 \pm$ Sakaev-Ibragimov, Kherson 1991.



18 $\mathbb{Q}h3$

Or 18 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ with unclear play.

18...Qc6 19 Qe2

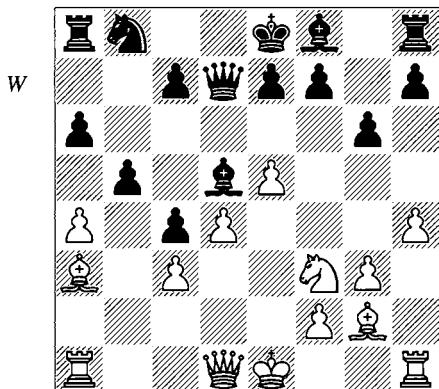
Another idea is 19 Qc2 Qd5+ (Black can play on with the double-edged 19...Qg4!?) 20 Qh2 Qxe5 21 dxе5 ½-½ Simmelman-Cotteggia, IEBG e-mail 2000 – the finish would be 21...Qxe5 22 Qf4 Qf3+ 23 Qh3 Qg5+ 24 Qh2 Qf3+ with perpetual check.

19...Qd5+ 20 f3 b4

This is a useful trick to break up White's pawn-centre.

21 Qxb4 Qxb4 22 cxb4 Qxd4 23 Rad1 Qxe5 24 Qxc4+

So far this is S.Ivanov-Degerman, Swedish Cht 2000. Now 24...Qh7!? 25 Qf4 Qf5 is equal.

B312)**12...Qd5!?** (D)

The bishop overprotects the e6-square and blockades the d4-pawn in readiness for ...Qc6.

13 h5

13 Qf1 Qc6 14 h5 – 13 h5 Qc6 14 Qf1.

13...Qc6

No one has tried the aggressive counterstroke 13...g5!? 14 0-0 g4 15 Qh2 Qxg2 16 Qxg2 Qg8 17 Qc2, when White has good play for the sacrificed pawn.

14 hxg6

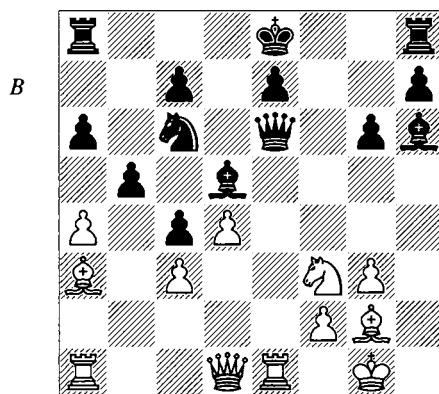
White can maintain the tension for another move by playing 14 Qf1 Qa5 15 hxg6 fxg6 16 Qg5. Then:

a) 16...Qxg2+ 17 Qxg2 Qd5+ 18 Qf3 Qxf3+ 19 Qxf3 Qb3 20 Rad1 h5 (Lomineishvili-Flear, Tunis 2000) 21 Qe6 = Sakaev and Semkov.

b) 16...Qb3! (this looks safer as the white rook is driven to an inferior square) 17 Ra2 Qxg2+ 18 Qxg2 Qd5+ (Van Dijk-Sukhov, IEBG e-mail 2002) 19 Qf3 Qxf3+ 20 Qxf3 h5 =.

14...fxg6 15 0-0 Qh6 16 e6

Stronger than the passive 16 Qh2 Qxg2 17 Qxg2 0-0 = Filippov-Flear, Reykjavik ECC 1999.

16...Qxe6 17 Rae1 (D)

Now:

a) 17...Qc8? 18 Qe5 Qxg2 19 Qxc6 Qxc6 20 Qxe7+ Qd8 21 d5 (+– Sakaev and Semkov) 21...Qe8 22 Qd4 Qf8 23 d6 +–.

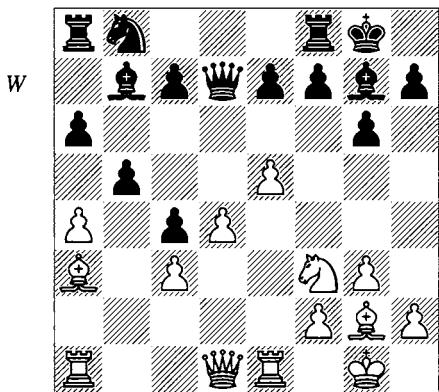
b) 17...Qf6! (Flear) and then:

b1) 18 Qh2 Qxg2 19 Qxg2 (after 19 axb5 axb5 20 Qxe7?? Qxe7 Black defends the a8-rook) 19...Qf5 20 d5 0-0-0 favours Black – White is two pawns down and his attack has evaporated.

b2) 18 Qe5 Qxg2 and here:

b21) 19 Qxc6? Qxc6 20 Qxe7+ Qd8 (suggested by Flear – I don't see an effective follow-up for White) 21 d5 (21 axb5 axb5 22 Qe5 Qd5 wins for Black) 21...Qxd5 22 Qe5 Qxd1+ 23 Qxd1+ Qc8 24 Qxg2 Qg7 and Black is much better.

b22) 19 Qxg2 (this move is White's best try) 19...Qe5 20 Qxe5 0-0! (power castling – Black safeguards his king and launches a counterattack against White's f2-pawn) 21 f4 Qfe8 22 Qf3 Qab8 (22...c6 23 axb5 cxb5 24 Qxe7 Qf7 with roughly level chances) 23 axb5 axb5 24 Qd5+ Qf7 25 Qc6 Qg7 26 Qxb5 Qxb5 27 Qxb5 Qf6 with roughly level chances since Black's extra pawn is of little value.

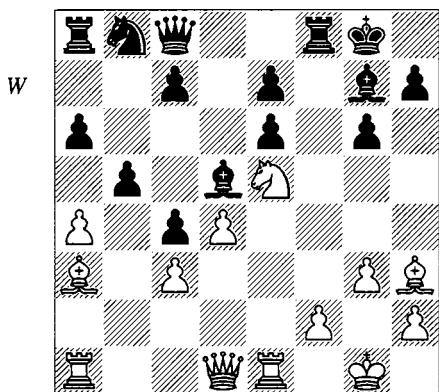
B32)12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 $\mathbb{B}e1$ 0-0 (D)

Now:

B321: 14 $\mathbb{e}6$ 35
 B322: 14 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 36

B321)14 $\mathbb{e}6$ $\mathbb{f}xe6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h3$

White must retain the light-squared bishop for the attack as 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{B}f5$ looks fine for Black.

16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (D)17 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

White recovers one of his pawns. Alternatives:

a) 17 $\mathbb{Q}g4$?! (this knight redeployment is too slow) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ and now:

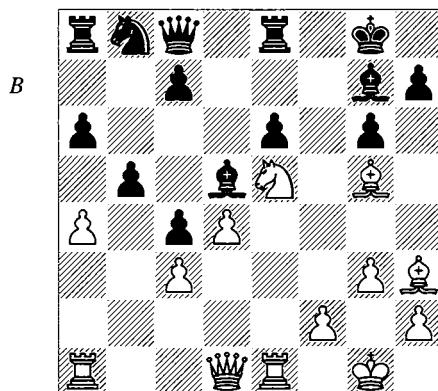
a1) 18... $\mathbb{W}d8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{exd}5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ \mp Repasi-Vass, Fezesabony 2002.

a2) 18... $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ (19... $\mathbb{W}b1$?) 19... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$! (20... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ was played in Lesiègue-Charbonneau, Montreal sim 1999; now White should try 21 $\mathbb{axb}5$ $\mathbb{axb}5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ \mp) 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $c5$ \mp Lugovoi-Ibragimov, St Petersburg 1993 – White's king-side pressure has disappeared and Black still has an extra pawn.

b) 17 $\mathbb{W}d2$! and then:

b1) 17... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (this was suggested by Ibragimov) 18... $c6$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e2$ with sharp play ahead.

b2) 17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$! 18 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (the tempting sacrifice 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$! $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ is considered decisive by some sources, but I have been unable to find anything convincing for White after the bold 19... $\mathbb{Q}f7$! 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ \mp) 18... $c5$ looks fine for Black.

17... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (D)

In this position Black has two playable options:

a) 18... $c5$ 19 $\mathbb{dx}c5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ (19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ with an attack – Ftačnik) 20 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ with sharp play in A.Shneider-Ibragimov, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1991.

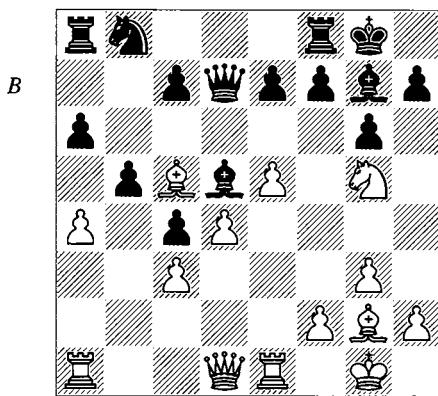
b) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}h6$! and then:

b1) 20... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ with a draw by perpetual check, Kantorik-Jurek, Prerov 2001.

b2) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$! (Black avoids the perpetual check at the risk of incurring some dark-square weaknesses) 21 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $b4$ (21... $c5$!) 22 $\mathbb{cx}b4$ $\mathbb{W}xb4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ (23... $\mathbb{W}a5$!) 24 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}ab8$ (24... $\mathbb{W}a3$!) was unclear in Arbakov-Mchedlishvili, Ohrid 2000.

B322)

14 ♜c5 ♜d5 15 ♜g5 (D)



Black has the choice of either continuing his development or exchanging the light-squared bishops. The latter option is safer as piece exchanges reduce White's attacking possibilities.

B3221: 15...♜c6 36

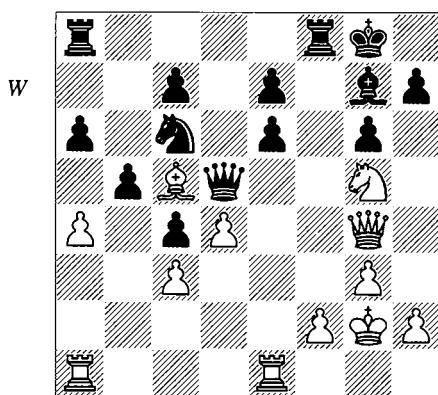
B3222: 15...♝xg2 37

B3221)

15...♜c6 16 e6

ECO suggests 16 ♜h3!? – play might continue 16...♝d8 17 e6 f6 18 ♜f7 ♜e8 with an unbalanced position.

16...fxe6 17 ♜g4 ♜xg2 18 ♜xg2 ♜d5+ (D)



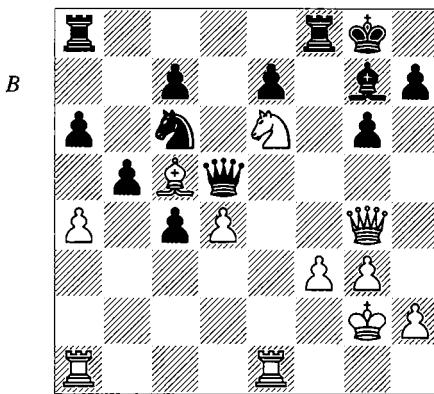
19 f3

Another idea is 19 ♜e4!?, ♜xg5 20 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 21 ♜xc6 ♜d2 22 ♜f1 with an unclear position.

19...e5

ECO ends its analysis here with an evaluation of "unclear".

20 ♜e6 exd4 21 cxd4 (D)



21...♜ac8

Also playable is 21...b4 22 ♜xc7 h5 ("F" according to Sakaev and Semkov, but I think White is at least equal here) 23 ♜xg6!? (23 ♜e6+ ♜xe6 24 ♜xe6 ♜xd4 25 ♜xg6 ♜b3 26 ♜xb4 ♜xa1 {Zakharstov-Ibragimov, Smolensk 1991}) 27 ♜c3! ♜f6 28 ♜xg7+ ♜xg7 29 ♜xa8 ♜c2 30 ♜f2 and White is certainly not worse) 23...♜xf3+ 24 ♜g1 ♜f2+ 25 ♜h1 ♜f3+ 26 ♜g1 ♜f2+ with a draw by repetition.

22 axb5 axb5 23 ♜a6 ♜f5 24 ♜f4

So far this is Bacrot-C.Bauer, French Ch (Haute Vichy) 2000.

24...♜d7!

This move was suggested by Khuzman – Black's position is very resilient.

25 d5!

Khuzman only considered 25 ♜e6 ♜xc5! 26 dx5 ♜e5 27 ♜g5 ♜d2+, leading to a large advantage for Black.

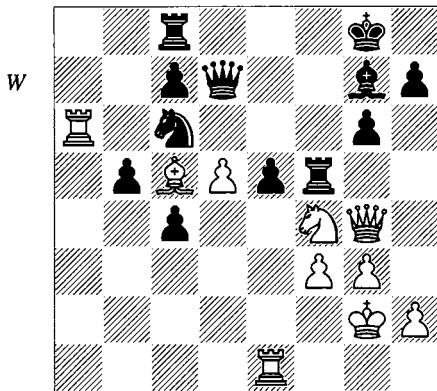
25...e5 (D)

Now:

a) 26 ♜xg6 ♜f7 27 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 28 ♜xc6 hxg6 \mp .

b) 26 dx5 ♜d2+ 27 ♜e2 ♜d1 28 ♜xe5+ ♜xe5 29 ♜xg6 ♜c2+ and then:

b1) 30 ♜h3 hxg6 31 ♜xg6+ ♜g7! (31...♜h8 32 ♜h6+ ♜g8 33 ♜g6+ repeats the position) 32 ♜d4 ♜h5+! 33 ♜xh5 ♜h7 34 ♜xh7+ ♜xh7 with a complex endgame in which White's extra pawn is offset by Black's advanced queen-side pawns.



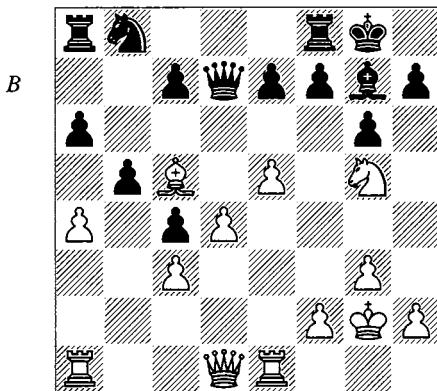
b2) 30 ♖f2 hxg6 (30...h5?? loses to 31 ♖e7++) 31 ♕xg6+ ♖g7 32 ♖e6+ (32 g4?! ♖cf8 33 gxf5 ♖xf5 34 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 #) 32...♖h7 33 ♖xc8 ♖d3 34 f4 ♖d5+ 35 ♖g1 (35 ♖h3?? ♖h5+ 36 ♖g4 ♖d1#, 35 ♖f1? c3 #) 35...♖d1+ 36 ♖g2 ♖d5+ with a draw by repetition.

B3222)

15...♕xg2

This capture is the most conservative choice – White's attacking possibilities are reduced.

16 ♖xg2 (D)



16...♗d5+

To check or not to check – that is the question. Black can also play 16...♗c6 17 ♖f3 b4 18 ♖e4 bxc3 19 e6 fxe6 20 ♖xe6 ♖f5 21 ♖ac1 ♖b8 22 ♖xc3 (so far this is Kogan-Lazarev, Quebec 2000) 22...♖b2!? 23 ♖f3 ♖xf3 24 ♖xf3 ♖f6 with equal chances.

17 ♖e4

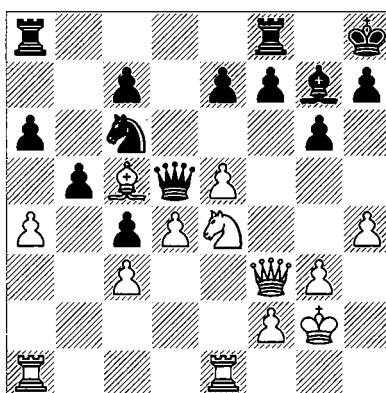
White can consider the queen exchange 17 ♖f3!? ♖xf3+ 18 ♖xf3 ♖d7 19 ♖xe7 ♖fe8 20 ♖b4 ♖b6 with equal chances.

17...♗c6 18 ♖f3 ♖h8

Another idea is 18...♗d7?.

19 h4 (D)

NCO ends its analysis here with an evaluation of "White has enough compensation for the material". 19 ♖g5!? is another possibility for White.



19...b4!

This is safer than 19...f6 20 exf6 ♖xf6 21 ♖xf6 ♖xf3+ 22 ♖xf3 ♖xf6+ 23 ♖g2 with compensation for the material, Cebalo-Ibragimov, Bled 1996.

20 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 21 cxb4 ♖xd4 22 ♖c5 c3 23 ♖e4 ♖d2 24 ♖e2 ♖d4 25 ♖e4 ♖d2
with a draw by repetition.

5 Furman Variation

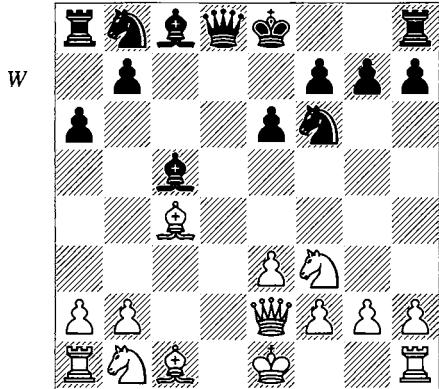
1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5
6 ♜e2

This is the characteristic move of the Furman Variation. White's plan was popularized by the Russian GM Semyon Furman, perhaps best known as the trainer of Anatoly Karpov. The idea behind the queen move is to play $dxc5$ followed by a quick e4 pawn advance.

Less common is 6 ♗c3 a6, and now:

- a) 7 dxc5 ♜xd1+ 8 ♔xd1 ♜xc5 9 ♔d3 ♜bd7 10 b3 b6 (Korchnoi-Karpov, Brussels 1987) 11 ♜e4 = Karpov.
 b) 7 ♜b3 ♜c6 8 0-0-0-6 0-0 a6 7 ♜c3 ♜c6 8 ♜e2 – Chapter 6.

6...a6 7 dxc5 ♕xc5 (D)



Now White has:

- A: 8 e4 38
B: 8 0-0 39

A)

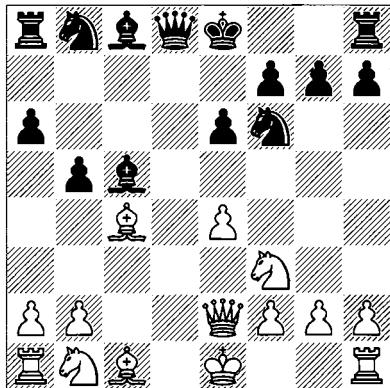
8 e4 b5 (D)

White has a choice of bishop retreats:

- A1: 9 ♠d3 38
A2: 9 ♠b3 39

A1)

9 ♕d3 ♔c6 10 ♔bd2

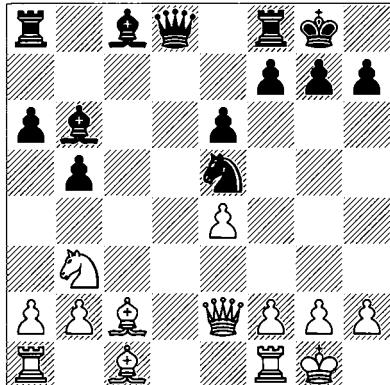


Black has an easy time after 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}ge5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$?) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 0-0-0 Dittmar-F.Levin, Bad Wörishofen 1996.

10... $\text{N}g4$

A recurring theme in this line – a black knight will be well-placed on the e5-square.

11 0-0 ♜ge5 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 13 ♜c2 0-0 14
♜b3 ♜b6 (D)



15 ♕d1

15 ♜f4 ♛g6 16 ♜e3 ♜xe3 17 ♜xe3 ♜f6
 (17...e5!?) 18 ♜ab1 (White doesn't quite have enough for the pawn after 18 e5!? ♜xe5 19 ♜e4 ♜b8 20 f4 ♜d6 ≠) 18...e5 19 ♜fd1 ♛f4 20 ♜d2 ♜e6 ≠ Van der Werf-Skipchenko, Cannes 1997.

15... $\mathbb{W}h4!$

Khuzman's suggestion. Lputian-A.Horvath, Kallitheia ECC 2002 saw the less aggressive 15... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 16 $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{A}xe3$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 19 $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 19 $\mathbb{B}d3 =$.

16 $\mathbb{Q}d4$

16 h3 $\mathbb{B}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{A}e3$ $\mathbb{A}xe3$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mp$ Khuzman.

16... $\mathbb{A}b7$ 17 a4 $\mathbb{B}ac8$

Black has the initiative – Khuzman. White is under a lot of pressure here; for example, 18 axb5 axb5 19 $\mathbb{A}e3$ (19 $\mathbb{W}xb5??$ $\mathbb{B}xc2!$ wins for Black) 19... $\mathbb{A}xe4$ 20 $\mathbb{A}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mp$.

A2)

9 $\mathbb{A}b3$ $\mathbb{A}b7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

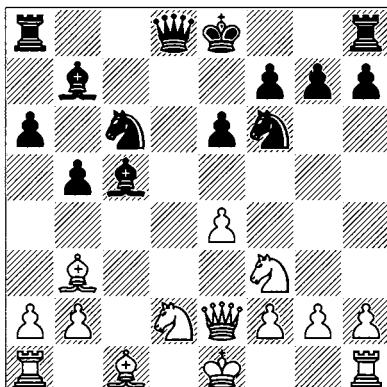
Or:

a) 10 e5 $\mathbb{Q}g4!?$ (10... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d7 =$) 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d7 \mp$ Grosso-Morihamo, CXEB e-mail 1999.

b) 10 $\mathbb{A}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 12 0-0 $\mathbb{B}c8$ is equal, Wells-Maksimenko, Copenhagen (Politiken Cup) 1996.

10... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (D)

W



White must decide whether to advance his e-pawn or continue with straightforward development:

A21: 11 e5?! 39

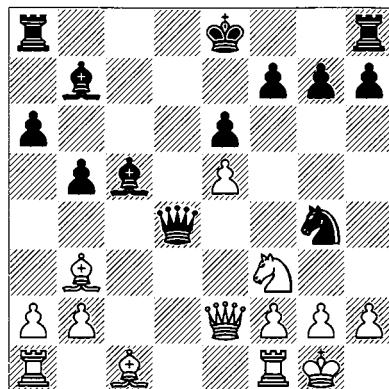
A22: 11 0-0 40

A21)

11 e5?!

This thrust appears to be premature.

11... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ (D)



Now Black has two options:

a) 14... $\mathbb{W}e4$ 15 $\mathbb{A}d1$ (15 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{A}xe4$ 16 $\mathbb{A}f4$ $\mathbb{A}d3 \mp$ Sakaev and Semkov) 15... $\mathbb{A}d8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{A}xe4 \mp$.

b) 14... $\mathbb{A}xf3$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 0-0 16 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2!!$ (the temporary knight sacrifice is much stronger than 16... $\mathbb{A}h8?$ = Rapoport-Mariasin, Beersheba 1998) 17 $\mathbb{A}xf2$ f6! (this gives new meaning to the phrase 'castling into the attack') 18 $\mathbb{A}f1$ (18 $\mathbb{A}xe6+$ $\mathbb{A}h8 \rightarrow$) 18...fxe5 19 $\mathbb{A}f3$ e4 20 $\mathbb{A}f4$ $\mathbb{A}d6$ 21 $\mathbb{A}xe6+$ $\mathbb{A}h8 \rightarrow$. Black wins material.

A22)

11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

This is an interesting untried suggestion from Sakaev and Semkov. 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ is also sufficient: 12 $\mathbb{A}c2$ (Kempinski-Kharlov, Saint Vincent Ech 2000) 12... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{A}b6$ (also worthy of consideration is 13... $\mathbb{A}d6!?$ 14 $\mathbb{A}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}de5 =$) 14 $\mathbb{A}e3$ 0-0 15 $\mathbb{A}ac1$ ("±" Khuzman) 15... $\mathbb{A}ac8$ ("Black is very close to equality" – Sakaev and Semkov) 16 $\mathbb{A}fd1$ $\mathbb{A}xe3$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{A}fd8 =$.

12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 13 $\mathbb{A}c2$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 14 a4 0-0

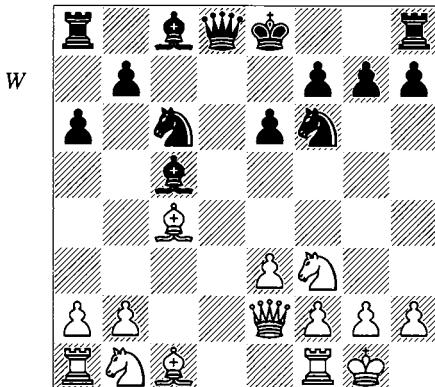
Black has equalized according to Sakaev and Semkov.

15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}h5$

Black has a comfortable position.

B)

8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (D)



This position is often reached via the move-order 6 0-0 (instead of 6 $\mathbb{W}e2$) 6...a6 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (7...b5 is the subject of Chapters 9, 10, and 11) 8 dx5 (White can also play 8 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ or 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ here) 8... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$.

9 e4

Alternatives:

- a) 9 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ b5 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}c2$? g6 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ \mp Topalov) 14...f5 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 16 a4 (16 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ \mp gives Black the initiative according to Topalov) 16... $\mathbb{Q}a5$! (16...bxa4? 17 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ \pm Topalov-Lautier, Amsterdam 1996) 17 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ (17 axb5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ \mp Topalov) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ \mp Topalov.

b) 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (10 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ – 9 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0) 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (another idea is 10... $\mathbb{Q}b4$?! 11 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 13 b3 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 15 a3 $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ =) 11 b3 (11 e4 e5 also leads to an equal position) 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ b5 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 15 a3 $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ = Åström-Sadler, Erevan OL 1996.

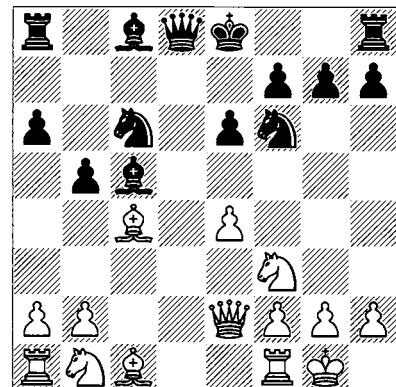
9...b5 (D)

Now White has:

B1: 10 e5!? 40

B2: 10 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 41

Black has no problems after the quiet retreat 10 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ (this is safer than 10... $\mathbb{Q}d4$?! 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 12 a4 \pm as Black's queenside is weak) 11 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ (11... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{W}b6$, as given by Neisadt, also looks fine for Black) 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ = Tella-Dokuchaev, Imatra 1999) 13...gxf6 with equal chances.



B1)

10 e5!?

This aggressive advance has fallen out of favour, but there are several unanswered questions here and the move may be due for a revival.

10...bxcc4

Black can also opt for 10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$!?) 11... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ = Izeta-Granda, Pamplona 1995/6) 13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ with sharp play, Gelfand-Balashov, Minsk 1986.

11 exf6 gxf6 (D)

11... $\mathbb{W}d3$ is worthy of consideration. 12 fxg7 $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ cxd3 14 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ and now:

a) 16... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ (White can win the exchange with 19 $\mathbb{Q}g3$!?, $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d1$! $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d8+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}dxg8$ \pm although Black has some counterplay because of his annoying bishops) 19... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Yakovich-Kallai, Sochi 1989.

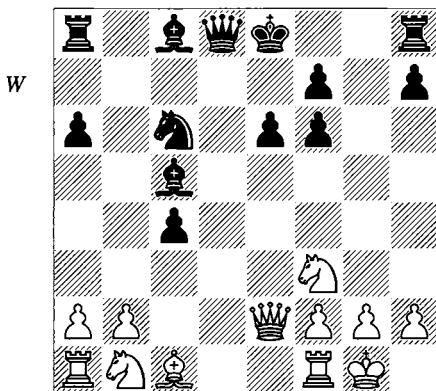
b) 16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ with equal chances, Gilbert-Frostick, corr. 1998.

12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$

Sharper than 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$?! was suggested by Shatskes – 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 14 fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is an adequate reply) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ and here:

a) 14 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d5$?! $\mathbb{Q}d4$! 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ (Riemersma-Jonkman, Wijk aan Zee 1996) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ gives Black a slightly favourable endgame because of his bishop-pair.

b) 14 $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ = Averbakh-Suetin, USSR Ch (Leningrad) 1960.



c) 14 $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $h3 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 16 $a3 \mathbb{W}a5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}g8$ = Furman-Suetin, Tallinn 1960.

12... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}bd2!$

Neishardt suggested this strong move in 1997, but he did not provide any further analysis. The alternative is 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}e7$!? (13... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{W}d8$ {Kachiani Gersinska-Danielian, Pula wom Echt 1997} 15 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ ±) 14 $\mathbb{W}xc4 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{W}b4$ =.

13... $\mathbb{Q}a5$

13... $c3$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$!? looks dangerous for Black.

14 $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}b7$

Black's king is too exposed after 15... $e5$? 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$! $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ (16... $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5 \mathbb{W}e6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ is winning for White) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ and White recovers the piece with a crushing attack.

16 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6 \mathbb{W}c5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$

White has good compensation for the pawn.

B2)

10 $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}d4!$

The familiar knight leap has replaced the older 10... $e5$.

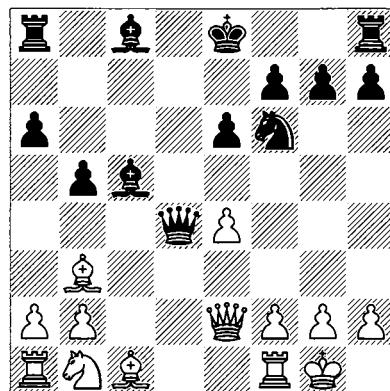
11 $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{W}xd4$ (D)

Many games have demonstrated that the centralized black queen is able to disrupt the smooth development of the white pieces – the position is dynamically balanced. Now:

B21: 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 41

B22: 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 42

The pawn advance 12 $e5$?! is premature. After 12... $\mathbb{W}g4$! 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (Black wins a pawn after 13 $\mathbb{W}xg4$? $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}d4$ ±) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $g5$! 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ (or 16 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$



$\mathbb{Q}g8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}h4 \mathbb{Q}e3$ ±) 16... $h5$ ± Black has the initiative on the kingside.

B21)

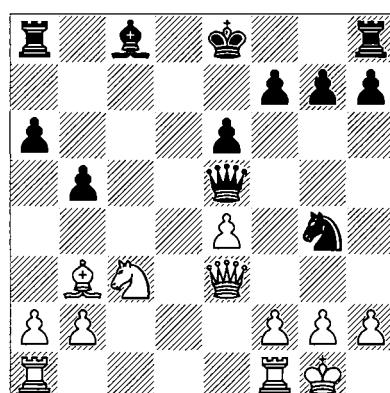
12 $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{W}e5!$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Minor alternatives:

a) 13 $\mathbb{Q}c2 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $b4$ 15 $f4 \mathbb{W}h5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xh5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}a4 \mathbb{Q}d4$ ± Ignacz-Vajda, Hungarian Cht (Budapest) 2005.

b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 14 $f4 \mathbb{W}h5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xh5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xh5$ 16 $f5$ $e5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{Q}b8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xb7 \mathbb{Q}xb7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{Q}d4$ = Korpics-Z.Varga, Hungarian Cht 1996.

13... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe3 \mathbb{Q}g4$ (D)



15 $\mathbb{W}g3$

The exchange of queens can be delayed by playing 15 $\mathbb{W}h3$ $h5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ael$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}g3$ (perhaps the original idea was to play 17 $\mathbb{Q}d5$!?, but 17... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ = is an adequate reply) 17... $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ = I.Sokolov-Van Wely, Groningen 1995.

15... $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xg3$

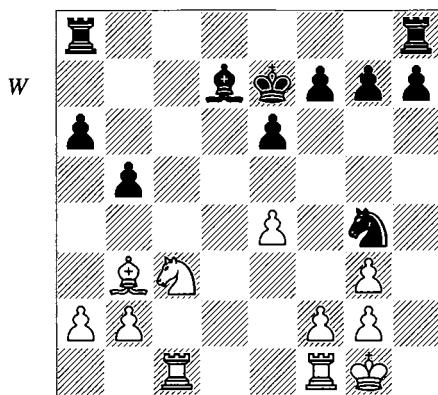
Several games have demonstrated that Black has nothing to fear in this endgame.

16... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Also possible is 16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17 f3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ h5 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ h4 23 gxh4 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ g5 ½-½ Lerner-V.Lazarev, Bad Zwesten 1997.

17 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (D)

Another idea is 17... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ ½-½ E.Cosma-I.Ionescu Brandis, Romanian Ch 2000.



18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Or 18 f3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ = Alterman.

18... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}hd8$

19...a5!? was suggested by Alterman.

20 a3

20 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 21 f3 is slightly better for Black according to Alterman – presumably the idea is 21... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a5 and White is on the defensive despite the symmetrical pawn-structure.

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

½-½ I.Sokolov-Lautier, Wijk aan Zee 1997.

B22)

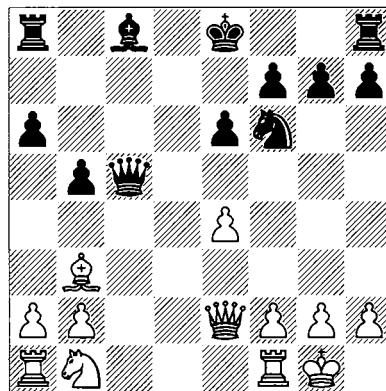
12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

This is the most challenging continuation.

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

The risky 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$?! 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 14 g4! has been played a few times – the complications favour White.

13 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (D)



14 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Alternatives:

a) 14 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}el$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ and now:

a1) 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ b4!? (16...0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ (= 17 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}ec2$ $\mathbb{Q}hc8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$) = Khuzman.

a2) 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ = Khuzman.

b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ (R.Vera-Lesiègue, Montreal 2003) 16...0-0 =.

14... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$

Sharper is 15 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$!? b4 16 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (= Khuzman) 18... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ (= Sakaev and Semkov) 19 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 20 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ =.

15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ 0-0 18 f3

Or 18 e5 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ a5 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ = Khuzman.

18... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ + 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$

The chances are equal, Radjabov-Kasparov, Linares 2003.

6 Classical Variation: White's Seventh Move Alternatives

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 e3 e6 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5 6 0-0 a6

In this chapter we shall consider White's seventh move alternatives to 7 a4 (Chapter 7), 7 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (Chapter 8), and 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (Chapters 9, 10, and 11).

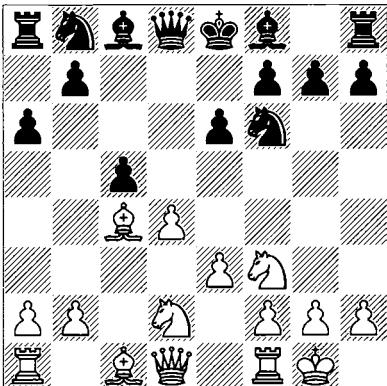
Now:

A: 7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$	43
B: 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$	44
C: 7 a3	45
D: 7 b3	46
E: 7 e4	48
F: 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$	51
G: 7 dxc5	54

A)

7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (D)

B



This modest move started out as a quiet, non-theoretical response to the QGA. As often happens, the idea eventually became popular and developed its own body of theory.

7... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

Black has some flexibility here:

a) 7... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 8 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 9 b3 and now Black can play:

a1) 9...0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ (11 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d2$?? Ibragimov) 11... $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ with equal chances, Atalik-Ibragimov, Ano Liosia 1995.

a2) 9...b5 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 14 a3 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ b4 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ with equal chances, Ibragimov-Prasad, Linares 1996.

b) 7... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 8 b3 b6 9 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ (9 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ =) 9... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 e4 (10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ cxd4 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ =) 10...cxd4 11 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ with equal chances – this is stronger than 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$? $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ dxc3 and Black is much better, D.Gurevich-A.Kaufman, USA Ch (Seattle) 2002.

8 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

8... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ looks fine also.

9 $\mathbb{Q}4f3$ 0-0 10 b3 b5

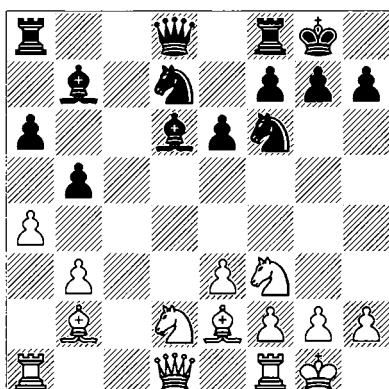
Black can also play the more restrained idea 10...b6 (10... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$!?) was suggested by D.Gurevich) 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$!?) 11... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$!?) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ = Psakhis-Gulko, Mondariz 1997.

11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$

12 a4?.

12... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 a4 (D)

B



13... $\mathbb{W}b8!$?

The idea behind the queen manoeuvre is to maintain the b5-pawn and prevent White from using the c4-square as a minor-piece outpost. Black can also consider 13...bxa4 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$! is an idea of D.Gurevich) 15 bxa4 $\mathbb{Q}d5$? (15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$! was suggested by D.Gurevich – the position looks balanced) 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$! $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a5$! ± D.Gurevich-Gulko, USA Ch (Modesto) 1995.

14 h3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$

The chances are equal.

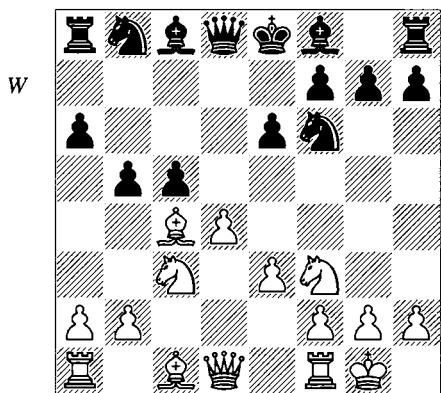
B)

7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

This natural developing move often transposes into other lines of the Classical Variation although there are some independent branches. The position after 7 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ can also be reached via some alternative move-orders. For example:

- Queen's Gambit Declined move-order: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ dxc4 5 e3 (5 e4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ transposes into the Vienna Queen's Gambit) 5...c5 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ a6 7 0-0.
- Semi-Slav and Slav move-orders: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ (or 4 e3 a6 5 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ dxc4 6 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ e6 7 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5) 4...e6 5 e3 a6 (5... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ is more popular here) 6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ dxc4 7 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5 8 0-0 – note that each side has played an extra move here.

7...b5 (D)



8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Minor alternatives:

- a) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (9... $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 11 a3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$

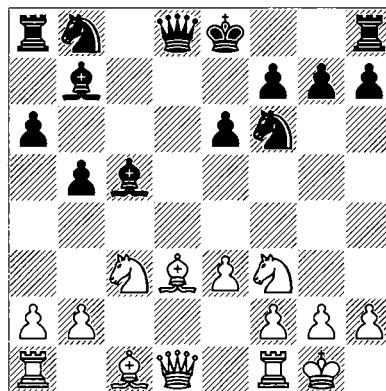
0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 16 h3 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ {Pomar-Spassky, Gothenburg 1971} 17 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ = Polugaevsky) 10 $\mathbb{W}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 11 b3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ 1/2-1/2 Seirawan-Karpov, Bali 2000.

b) 8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ transposes into Chapter 11: Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$.

8... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 dxc5

9 b3 (9 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 e4 cxd4 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ b4 13 e5 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ is fine for Black) 9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 11 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 0-0 with equality, Andersson-Tarjan, Indonesia 1983.

9... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (D)



10 $\mathbb{W}e2$

Alternatives:

a) 10 a4?! b4 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$?! (White runs into trouble after this move, but 11 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ 0-0 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ is also comfortable for Black) 11... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ h5! (Black's play is very energetic) 13 h4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 14 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ is also promising for Black) 14 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 16 fxg3 $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ a5! ♦ Hjartarson-Ehlvest, Reykjavik 1991. This endgame is very favourable for Black because of White's weak pawn-structure.

b) 10 a3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11 e4 $\mathbb{W}b8$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14 h3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ with equality, M.Röder-Palac, Cannes 1998.

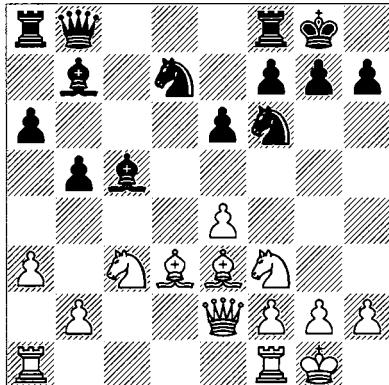
10... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11 e4 $\mathbb{W}b8$ 12 a3

Another idea is 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ = Smyslov-Beliavsky, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1988.

12...0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (D)

13... $\mathbb{Q}d6$

B



Black can also swap bishops with 13...♝xe3 14 ♜xe3 ♜g4 15 ♜e2 (15 ♜g5 f5 16 ♜c2!?) 15...f5 (15...♝f4!?) 16 h3 ♜ge5 = Atalik-Lapshun, Philadelphia 2000.

14 ♜d4 ♜g4 15 h3 ♜ge5 16 ♜xe5 ♜xe5

The chances are equal, Epishin-Kramnik, Budapest ECC 1996.

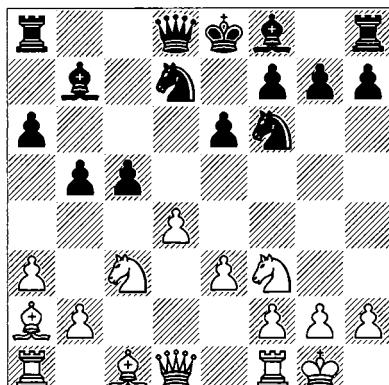
C)

7 a3

White prepares a comfortable retreat for his light-squared bishop along the a2-g8 diagonal. This modest but potent move is a speciality of the Croatian GMs Zdenko Kožul and Miso Cebalo.

7...b5 8 ♜a2 ♜b7 9 ♜c3 ♜bd7 (D)

W



10 ♜e1

Alternatives:

a) 10 d5 exd5 11 ♜xd5 c4!? (11...♜e7 12 ♜e1 ♜xd5 13 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 14 ♜xd5 0-0 = Kraai-Seirawan, USA Ch (Seattle) 2002) 12 e4

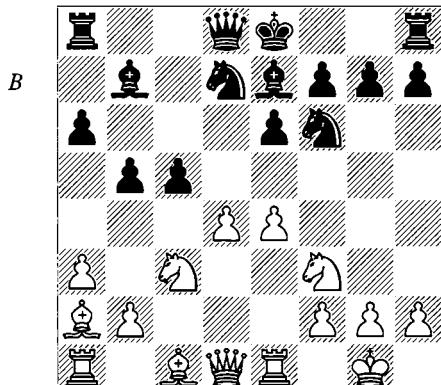
♝xd5 (worthy of consideration is the bold pawn-grab 12...♝xe4!?, when after 13 ♜d1 ♜d6 12 h3 0-0 13 dxc5 ♜xc5 14 b4 {Wedberg-Agrest, Swedish Ch (Linköping) 2001} 14...♜ce4 15 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 16 ♜b2 ♜c8 =) 11...cxd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜c5 13 ♜b3 (13 ♜e3 0-0 14 ♜ad1 ♜d8 = Kožul-Ibragimov, Graz 1994) 13...♜b6 14 ♜e3 ♜xe3 15 ♜xe3 ♜a7 16 ♜xa7 ♜xa7 17 f3 ♜e7 18 ♜ac1 ½-½ Atalik-Lalić, Szeged 1997.

b) 10 ♜e2 ♜b8 11 e4 (11 ♜d1 ♜d6 12 h3 0-0 13 dxc5 ♜xc5 14 b4 {Wedberg-Agrest, Swedish Ch (Linköping) 2001} 14...♜ce4 15 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 16 ♜b2 ♜c8 =) 11...cxd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜c5 13 ♜b3 (13 ♜e3 0-0 14 ♜ad1 ♜d8 = Kožul-Ibragimov, Graz 1994) 13...♜b6 14 ♜e3 ♜xe3 15 ♜xe3 ♜a7 16 ♜xa7 ♜xa7 17 f3 ♜e7 18 ♜ac1 ½-½ Atalik-Lalić, Szeged 1997.

10...♜e7

Kožul was successful in the mid-1990s versus 10...♜b8 with the highly speculative 11 e4 cxd4 12 ♜d5!?; however, we are going to sidestep these complications – interested readers are directed to the *NIC Yearbook 41* Forum.

11 e4 (D)



Black must decide whether to advance on the flank or break up White's centre:

C1: 11...b4 45

C2: 11...cxd4 46

Both options are playable although Line C2 is the safer choice.

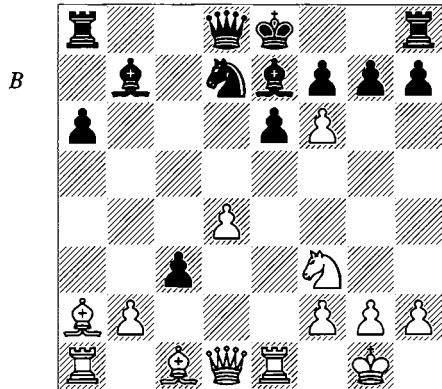
C1)

11...b4 12 axb4 cxb4 13 e5 bxc3 14 exf6 (D)

14...♝xf6

Alternatives:

a) 14...cxb2? (the black king has no shelter after this move) 15 fxg7 ♜g8 (White also has a strong attack in the four queens position arising



after 15...bxal 16 gxh8+ ♜f8 17 ♜b3 ±
16 ♜xb2 ♜b8 17 d5! ±.

b) 14...♜xf6 (the bishop is slightly misplaced after this recapture) 15 bxc3 0-0, and here 16 ♜e3 (Cebalo-Flear, French Ch 1996) 16...♝c7 is about equal, whereas 16 ♜f4!? looks advantageous for White as he can quickly mobilize his central pawn duo.

15 bxc3 0-0 16 ♜e5 ♜c8

16...♝d5 17 ♜d3 ± Kožul-Sermek, Bled 1999.

17 ♜d3

17 c4!? ♜d7 18 ♜f4 ♜xe5 19 ♜xe5 ♜d6 20 ♜g4 ♜xe5 21 ♜xe5 ♜f6 22 ♜b1 (± Khuzman) 22...♜c7 looks about equal.

17...♜c7! 18 c4

18 ♜c4 ♜d5 =.

18...♜d7 19 ♜f4 ♜xe5 20 ♜xe5 ♜d6 21 ♜g3 ♜xe5 22 ♜xe5 ♜d7

The chances are equal, Serper-Kaidanov, USA Ch (Seattle) 2000.

C2)

11...cxsd4

This is clearly the safest choice; it is interesting to note that in his second encounter with Croatian GM Miso Cebalo, British GM Glenn Flear switched to this move – he won both games.

12 ♜xd4 ♜e5 13 ♜f4 ♜g6 14 ♜g3 0-0

14...♝b6!? with the idea of ...♝d8 also looks fine for Black.

15 e5 ♜d5 16 ♜xd5

16 ♜e4 ♜df4 17 ♜d2 ♜h5 18 ♜ad1 ♜xg3 (18...♝b6!?) 19 ♜xg3 ♜b6 = Cebalo-Cvitan, Croatian Ch (Pula) 1998.

16...♜xd5 17 ♜g4 ♜c8 18 ♜ad1 ♜c4

= Cebalo-Flear, Asti 1998.

D)

7 b3

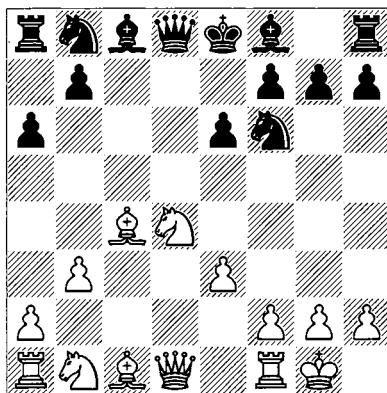
The fianchetto of White's dark-squared bishop appears logical. However, it is rather committal to play this move before the central pawn-structure has been stabilized. Black has a choice of either resolving the central tension with 7...cxsd4 (Line D1), or he can concentrate on quickly mobilizing his forces with 7...♝bd7 (Line D2) – either continuation is sufficient to equalize:

D1: 7...cxsd4 46

D2: 7...♝bd7 47

D1)

7...cxsd4 8 ♜xd4 (D)



8...♜d7

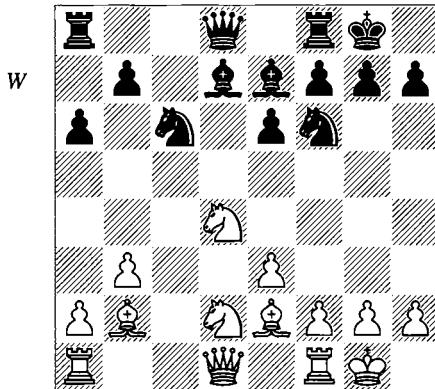
8...♜d6 9 ♜b2 0-0 10 ♜d2 ♜c7 11 ♜c1 ♜d6 12 ♜f3! (12 f4 b5 13 ♜d3 ♜b7 14 ♜c2 ♜b6 15 ♜e4 ♜xe4 16 ♜xe4 ♜a7 17 ♜f3 ♜c7 18 ♜e2 ♜fc8 = Miles-Ivanchuk, Moscow GMA 1999) 12...♝bd7 13 ♜c2 ♜b8 14 ♜d3 ± Hoang Thanh Trang-Krush, Calicut girls Wch 1998 – White has a nice lead in development.

9 ♜b2 ♜c6 10 ♜d2

10 ♜c3 ♜xd4 11 ♜xd4 ♜c6 =.

10...♜e7 11 ♜e2 0-0 (D)

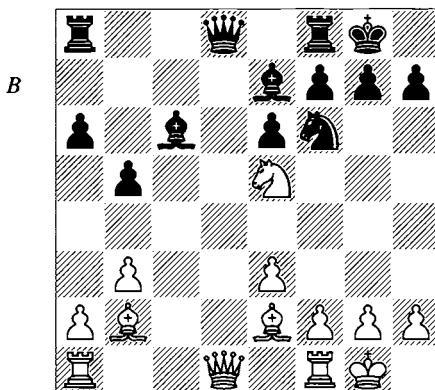
11...♝xd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜c6 13 ♜f3 ♜xf3 (1/2-1/2 Novikov-Ibragimov, Graz 1999) 14 ♜xf3 e5 (14...♝d5 15 ♜xd5 exd5 16 ♜ac1 ±) 15 ♜c3 ♜c8 16 e4 looks a little better for White.



12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (14. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ {Botsari-Krivec, Leon wom Echt 2001})
15. $\mathbb{Q}b1!?$; 14. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ is unclear according to Mikhalkchishin – Black can also try 16... $\mathbb{Q}d6!?$ with a balanced position) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ b5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ and now 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ was Speelman-Mikhalkchishin, Batumi 1999. 17...a5! was suggested by Mikhalkchishin, when 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ looks roughly level. Another idea is 17...e5!? 18. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ with sharp play.

12...b5 13. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (D)



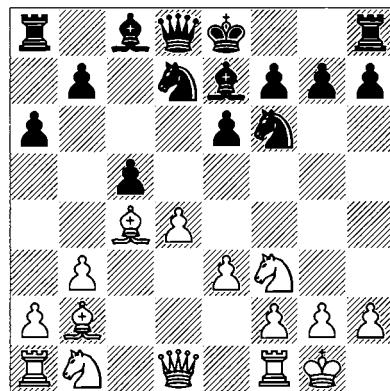
14... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$

14... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ (15. f3 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ also leads to equality) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 16. a4 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ (16...b4!?) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ = P.Cramling-Arencibia, Spanish Ch't (Ponferrada) 1997.

15. $\mathbb{Q}fxd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 16. f3 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$
 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ P.Cramling-Yakovich, Stockholm 2001.

D2)

7... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D)



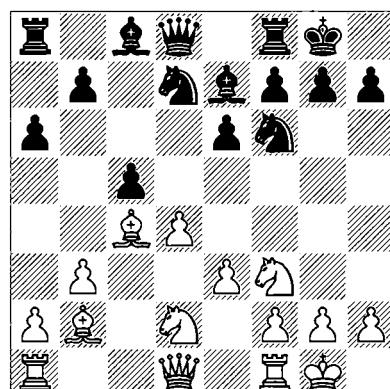
9. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

White can also play 9. $dxc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0 and now:

a) 11. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ b5 12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ (12. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ =) 12... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ h6 15. $\mathbb{Q}ge4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ =.

b) 11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ b6! (11...b5 12. a4 \pm Sadler) 12. a3 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13. b4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ b5 (this was Sadler's suggestion after he played 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$? = Rausis-Sadler, Enghien-les-Bains 1999) 16. $\mathbb{Q}cd2$ (16. $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ also leads to an equal position) 16...e5 17. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ =.

9...0-0 (D)



10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Another idea is 10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$, and now:

a) 10...b6 11. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ (the alternative 12... $\mathbb{Q}c8$?! looks reasonable) 13. $dxc5$

$\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (P.Cramling-Cu.Hansen, Malmö 1998) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}h5 \pm$.

b) 10...b5 11 a4 b4 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ = Gordon-Kariakin, Evpatoria jr 2002.

10...b5 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ cxd4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

White can also play 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$:

a) 13 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ = Al.Hoffman-Gomez Baillo, Argentine Ch 1995.

b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ is equal, Garagulya-Donchenko, Russian Cht (Smolensk) 2000.

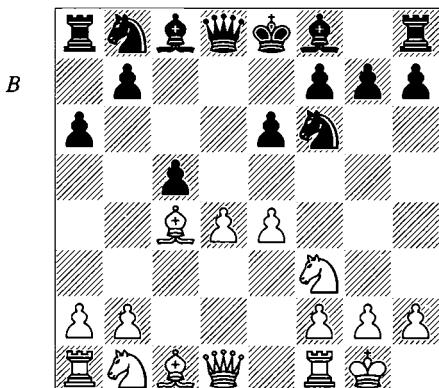
12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$

So far this is Tomashevsky-Sashikiran, Par-dubice 2001. Now 13... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ is equal.

E)

7 e4 (D)

The characteristic move of the Geller Gambit, first played by the Ukrainian GM Efim Geller. He later abandoned his namesake variation and switched to playing 7 a4 here. A famous 1982 Kasparov loss to Gulko left the variation with a somewhat dubious reputation, but during the late 1990s a new generation of aggressive players including GMs Yuri Shulman and Mark Hebden infused the line with some new ideas.



7...b5!

This is our repertoire move; Black immediately gains time by kicking the white bishop. The alternatives 7...cxd4 and 7...Qxe4 8 d5 Qe7 are playable, but 7...b5! has emerged as the modern preference.

8 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

White must protect his e4-pawn as after 8 $\mathbb{Q}b3?$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 9 d5 c4 10 dxe6 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$! (stronger than 10...cxb3? 11 exf7+ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ and White will recover the sacrificed piece with an overwhelming position) 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ Black has won a pawn.

8... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ (D)

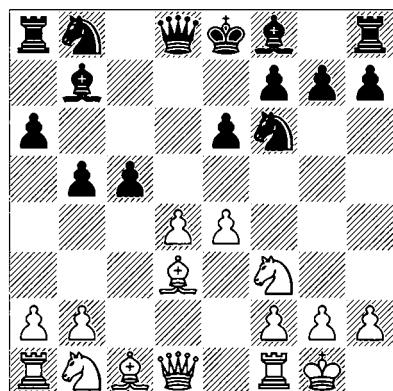
Black can safely bypass the main lines with 8...cxd4, and now:

a) 9 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ = I.Sokolov-Yakovlevich, Leeuwarden 1997.

b) 9 a4 bxa4 10 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xa4+$ and then:

b1) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ (Lengyel-Gunnarsen, Vrnjačka Banja Z 1967) 12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ =.

b2) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$?, Antić-Zontakh, Serbian Cht 2000) 14... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d1??$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$! is unclear) and now 15...h5?? = was played in Shulman-Mirković, Belgrade 1998. Both players had overlooked the surprising 15... $\mathbb{Q}f6!!$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$, when Black wins a rook because of the back-rank mate threat.



White must decide whether to protect, pin, or push:

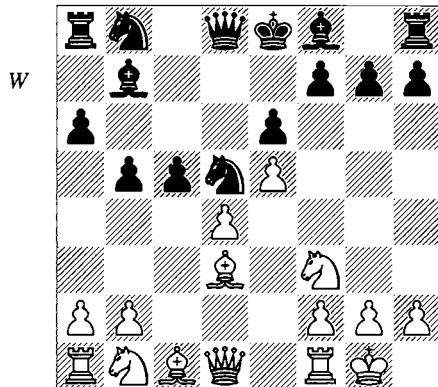
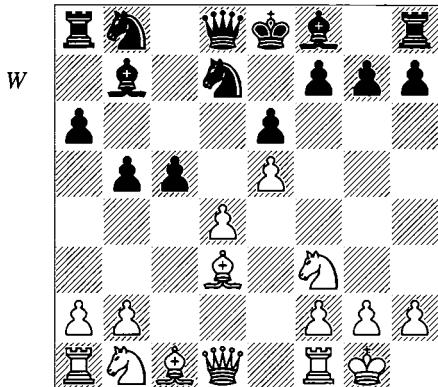
E1: 9 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 49

E2: 9 e5 49

The quiet 9 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ can be met by:

a) 9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ and now:

a1) 10 a4 b4 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (1/2-1/2 Aleksandrov-Ponomariov, Kramatorsk 2001) 11...cxd4 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}bx4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ is comfortable for Black.



Now White has:

a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}g5$?! $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (10...cxd4? 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ \pm NCO, but not 11 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$?? $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 12 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$! \rightarrow) 11 $\mathbb{W}h5$ g6 12 $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}f8$! 13 $\mathbb{W}h3$ cxd4 14 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ was evaluated as unclear by Semkov and Sakaev – White's attack is rapidly losing steam after 15 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ \mp) 13 dx5 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}g7$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (15... $\mathbb{W}e4$?? loses to 16 $\mathbb{W}xf8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ + and then:

a1) 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 17 f3 (Muzychuk-Sarakauskiene, Chisinau wom Ech 2005) 17... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ and Black has good compensation for the exchange.

a2) 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e2$ 17 a4 b4 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h8$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20 f3 0-0-0 and Black had strong pressure to offset his slight material deficit in Lautier-Arencibia, Spanish Cht (Salamanca) 1998.

b) 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ cxd4 11 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ "with active prospects on the kingside" according to Neishtadt, but 11... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ looks like an adequate reply.

c) 10 a4 bxa4 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ cxd4 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (this demonstrates one of the ideas behind 9... $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ – Black is able to challenge White's e4-knight; also possible is 12... $\mathbb{Q}c6$!?) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ was fine for Black in Stefanova-Galliamova, Plovdiv wom Echt 2003.

d) 10 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 11 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Petrosian-Van Scheltinga, Beverwijk 1960.

We now return to the position after 9... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (D):

10 $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Or:

a) 10 a4!? and now:

a1) 10...b4 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ cxd4 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}c6$!?) 13 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ is fine for Black) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $fxe6$ (16... $\mathbb{W}b6$? {Timperley-Owen, corr. 1987}) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 18 $fxe3$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 19 e4 \pm) 17 $fxe3$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 18 e4 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ (Geller-Keres, Bled 1961) 19 $\mathbb{E}f1$ with compensation for the pawn according to Polugaevsky.

a2) 10...c4 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ with equal chances, Summerscale-Reefat, British Ch (Edinburgh) 2003) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 b3 $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 13 axb5 axb5 14 bxc4 bxc4 (Astolfi-Villeneuve, Cannes 1989) 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$!?

$\mathbb{W}a5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ with sharp play ahead.

b) 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ cxd4 11 a4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$!? (or 12... $\mathbb{W}d5$ 13 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ {B.Maksimović-Semkov, Iraklion 1993}) 15... $\mathbb{Q}b4$! 16 $\mathbb{W}d2$ {16 $\mathbb{W}xd4$? loses to 16... $\mathbb{Q}c2$ } 16...d3 and Black has a clear edge) 13 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ and Black is better.

10... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 11 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

White can avoid exchanging a set of knights by playing 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ h6 13 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 0-0 = J.Nilssen-Baburin, Torshavn 2000.

12...h6 13 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 a4 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

This was Baburin's suggestion after he played 14...b4?! 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ \pm Avrukh-Baburin, Groningen 1995. Another idea is 14...0-0-0? 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ ("±" Burgess) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$! 16 bxc3 bxa4 $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 18 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{W}fd8$ with a balanced position.

15 bxc3 0-0

Black should avoid 15... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$? 16 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ($\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Di Pietra-Fourrage, corr. 1999) 17 $\mathbb{W}e2$ \pm , after which White has strong queenside pressure.

16 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$

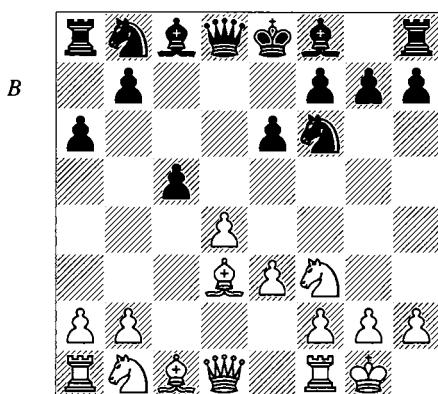
Baburin considered the chances to be equal here.

17 ♜d4 ♜d5 18 axb5 axb5 19 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 20 ♜xb5 ♜a2

Black will recover his pawn with a comfortable position.

F)

7 ♜d3 (D)



The strategy behind this cunning manoeuvre is to position the bishop along the b1-h7 diagonal in anticipation of an eventual ...b5 pawn advance by Black. In some variations, White has the option of responding to ...b5 with an immediate a4 because his light-squared bishop is not under attack. Another idea is to counter Black's natural developing move ...♝e7 with the tempo-gaining dxc5 followed by a quick e4 pawn advance, similar to the Furman Variation (Chapter 5). Although White's bishop is now well-positioned to support the e4 pawn advance, the drawback is that 7 ♜d3 is a committal move – White moves an already-developed piece and loses some influence over the key d5-square. The 14th World Champion Vladimir Kramnik and Russian GM Alexei Dreev are among the prominent exponents of this variation.

7...♝bd7

This is our repertoire move – Black develops his knight to a flexible square and counters one of White's main ideas – a dxc5 pawn capture is now well met by ...♝xc5.

8 ♜e1

The most precise continuation. White has several harmless alternatives here:

a) 8 e4 (this advance is premature) 8...cxd4 9 e5 ♜d5 and now:

a1) 10 ♜g5 ♜b6 11 ♜bd2 ♜c5 12 ♜c4 ♜c7 is comfortable for Black.

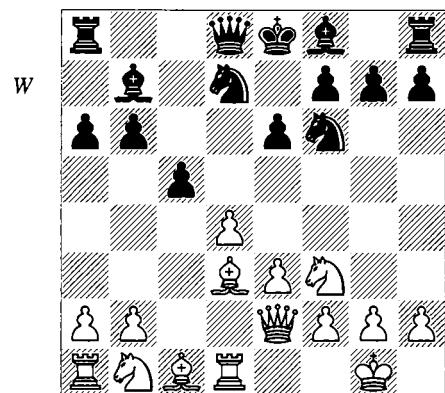
a2) 10 ♜e4 ♜c5 11 ♜xd4 ♜xe4 12 ♜xe4 b5 = Lempert-Zakharevich, Moscow 1991.

a3) 10 ♜c4 ♜b4! and then:

a31) 11 a3? ♜c6 12 ♜e1 (12 ♜f4 b5 13 ♜a2 ♜c5 → Lautier) 12...b5 13 ♜f1 ♜b7 14 ♜bd2 (thus far this is Lautier-Cu.Hansen, Malmö 1998; 14 ♜f4 ♜c5 15 ♜bd2 ♜d5! → Lautier) 14...♜c5! 15 b4 ♜a4 16 ♜b3 ♜d5 17 ♜bx d4 ♜d8 18 ♜e3 ♜xe5 19 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 → Lautier.

a32) 11 ♜e1 d3 12 ♜g5 (12 ♜xd3? ♜c5 13 ♜e2 ♜xd1 14 ♜xd1 {14 ♜xd1 ♜bd3 →} 14...♜c2 15 ♜g5 ♜d7 → Lautier) 12...♜e7 13 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 14 ♜xd3 0-0.

b) 8 ♜e2 b6 9 ♜d1 ♜b7 (D) and here:



b1) 10 ♜bd2 ♜e7 11 ♜c4 b5 12 ♜ce5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xe5 ♜d5 with a balanced position, D.Paunović-de la Villa, Aceimar 1995.

b2) 10 dxc5 ♜xc5 11 a3 ♜b8 12 ♜bd2 0-0 13 b4 ♜d6 14 ♜b2 ♜c8 = L.B.Hansen-P.Nikolić, Wijk aan Zee 1995.

b3) 10 ♜c3 ♜b8 and now:

b31) 11 e4?! cxd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜d6 13 h3 0-0 → Tisdall-L.B.Hansen, Reykjavík Z playoff 1995.

b32) 11 a4 ♜d6 12 h3 0-0 13 ♜d2 ♜e8! → Greenfeld-S.Löffler, Israel 1995.

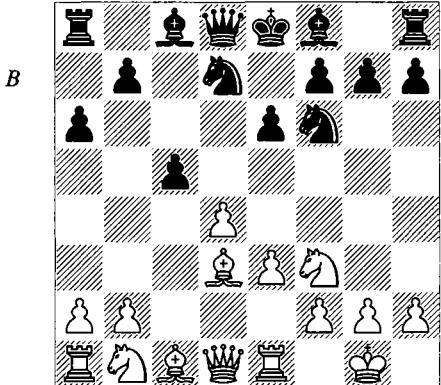
b33) 11 dxc5 ♜xc5 12 b3 = Greenfeld.

b34) 11 h3 ♜e7 12 dxc5 ♜xc5 13 ♜c2 0-0 (13...♝fe4 14 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 15 ♜d4 f5 16 ♜d1 0-0 17 ♜d4 {so far this is Gausel-Schandorff, Reykjavík 1997}) 17...♜d5 = Khuzman) 14 e4 ♜d8 15 ♜g5 h6 16 ♜h4 ♜xd1+ 17 ♜xd1 ♜e8

with equal chances, Dreev-P.Nikolić, Linares 1997.

c) 8 a4 b6 9 ♜c3 ♜b7 10 ♜e2 ♜d6 11 ♜d1 ♜b8 12 h3 0-0 13 ♜d2 ♜e8 14 e4 cxd4 15 ♜xd4 ♜h2+ 16 ♜h1 ♜f4 = Nogueiras-Arencibia, Spanish Cht (Ponferrada) 1997.

We now return to 8 ♜el (D):



Black must choose between taking a baby step or a giant step:

- F1: 8...b6 52
F2: 8...b5 52

F1)

8...b6

The idea behind this move is to fianchetto the bishop without giving White a queenside target. I anticipate further developments in this line because of Garry Kasparov's adoption of it during an important game versus Vladimir Kramnik.

9 e4 cxd4 10 e5 ♜d5 11 ♜xd4 ♜c5

Black must avoid the careless 11...♜b7? (Piket-Lautier, Leiden rpd 1995) 12 ♜xe6! fxe6 13 ♜h5+ ♜e7 14 ♜g5+ ♜f6 15 ♜f5! with a strong attack.

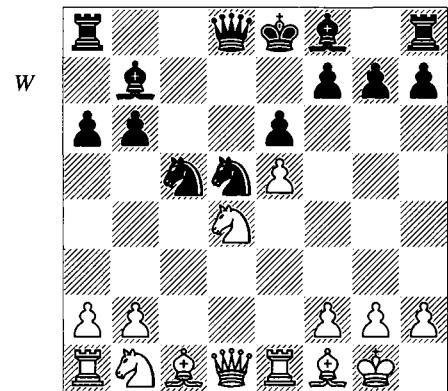
12 ♜f1 ♜b7 (D)

13 ♜d2

13 a3 g6 (13...♜e7 14 b4 ♜d7 15 ♜g4 g6 16 ♜h6 is slightly better for White, Rashkovsky-Nikitin, Tula 1999; 13...♜h4!?) 14 ♜d2 b5 15 ♜f2f3 ♜g7 with equal chances, Y.Zimmerman-Fancsy, Hungarian Cht 1997/8.

13...♜e7 14 ♜g4 0-0

This move was Kasparov's improvement over 14...g6 15 ♜f2f3 ♜b4?! (the safest choice is



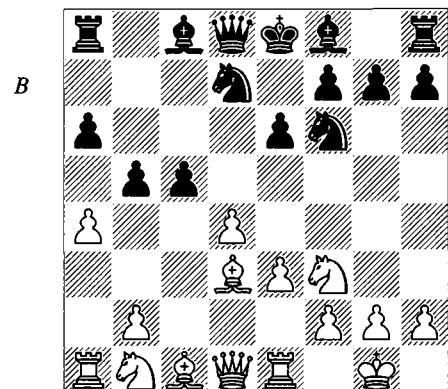
15...h5 16 ♜g3 ♜c8 17 ♜g5 ±) 16 ♜h6 ± Filippov-Donchenko, Smolensk 1997.

15 ♜f2f3 ♜h8 16 ♜g5 h6 17 ♜gf3 a5 18 ♜h5

½-½ Kramnik-Kasparov, Linares 2003. This game was played in the first round and perhaps the two titans were just getting warmed up – a possible continuation is 18...♜g8 19 ♜d2 (19 ♜xh6?! gxh6 20 ♜xh6 ♜e8 defends) 19...♜c8 with roughly level chances.

F2)

8...b5 9 a4 (D)



9...bxa4

Liquidating some of the queenside pawns is safest here – White has good attacking chances after 9...b4 10 e4 cxd4 11 e5 ♜d5 12 ♜xd4 ♜c7 13 ♜g5 (Lautier-Markowski, Rethymnon ECC 2003) 13...♜xe5 14 ♜e4 ♜b7 15 ♜d2 with compensation for the pawn according to Lautier.

10 e4

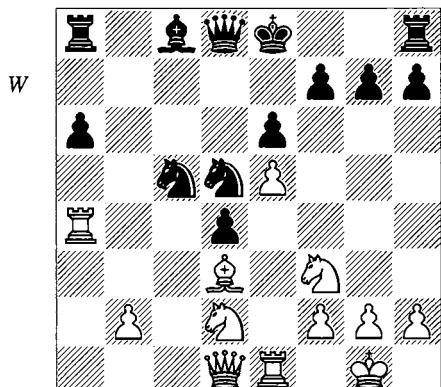
White's harmless alternative is 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (10 $\mathbb{W}xa4 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2 \mathbb{Q}e7$ = Khuzman) 10... $a3!$ (an important idea to remember in such positions – Black conveniently closes the a-file) 11 $bxa3 \mathbb{Q}e7$ = Khuzman.

10... $cxd4$ 11 $e5 \mathbb{Q}d5$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xa4 \mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}xd2$

13... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$ awaits a practical test. The idea is to leave White with a logjam of pieces along the d-file and force him to expend several tempi to recover the d4-pawn. 14 b4 and now:

a) 14... $\mathbb{Q}b6?$ (the wrong retreat, but the refutation is instructive) 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ (15 $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa6 \mathbb{Q}c7$ 17 b5 0-0 =) 15... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}c7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{Q}5b6$ (17... $\mathbb{Q}7b6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ looks good for White) 18 $\mathbb{W}g4!$ (a promising rook sacrifice) 18... $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xg7 \mathbb{Q}f8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g5 \mathbb{Q}f6$ (20... $\mathbb{W}c8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ with a mating attack) 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe6! fxe6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ and White has a decisive attack.

b) 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (the previous note clearly demonstrates the need for Black to defend the king-side) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{W}c7$ with sharp play ahead.

14 $\mathbb{Q}bx d2 \mathbb{Q}c5 (D)$ **15 $\mathbb{W}xd4!$**

Stronger than 15 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ (16... $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{W}b5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 0-0 = Ruck-Zontakh, Koszeg 1999) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}b8$ = Gelfand-Rublevsky, Polanica Zdroj 1997.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

The knight can go the other way with 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}b8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d6 \mathbb{Q}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}c2?$) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe4 h6$ (21... $\mathbb{Q}c7?$) 22 $\mathbb{Q}d6 \mathbb{Q}c6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (23 $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 24 $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{W}b6$

=) 23... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 1/2-1/2 Siegel-Karpachev, 2nd Bundesliga 1999/00.

17... $a5$

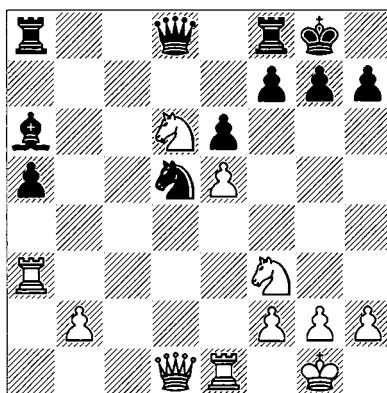
Clearing the a6-square for the bishop – the alternative is 17... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}d2 \mathbb{W}e7$ (18... $f6$ was suggested by Shariyazdanov and Lysenko; another idea is 18... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$) 19 $\mathbb{Q}d6 \pm$ Shariyazdanov-Feletar, Croatia 2000.

18 $\mathbb{Q}a3$

The rampaging rook is back to bear down on the a5-pawn.

18... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d6 (D)$

This was Boris Avrukh's novelty, but it is still not clear which move is best – I think White's chances have been underestimated after 19 $\mathbb{Q}xa5 \mathbb{Q}b4$ 20 $\mathbb{W}a4!$ (20 $\mathbb{W}xd8 \mathbb{Q}fxd8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}ab8!$ = Shariyazdanov-Rublevsky, Russia 2002) 20... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}ea1 \mathbb{Q}b6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (22 $\mathbb{W}h4 \mathbb{Q}ac8$ 23 $b3 \mathbb{Q}c5$ =) 22... $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 24 $b4 \mathbb{Q}c8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}ac6$ (I think White should play 25 $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ with an advantageous end-game) 25... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e7+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xa8 \mathbb{Q}xa8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}a7 g5$ with equal chances according to Khuzman.

**19... $f6!$**

The idea behind this move is to undermine the d6-knight – an alternative strategy is 19... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}d2 \mathbb{Q}b4$ and now:

a) 21 $\mathbb{Q}ea1 \mathbb{Q}b8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ (22 $\mathbb{Q}1a2 \mathbb{Q}c4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xa5 \mathbb{Q}fc8$ 25 $h3 \mathbb{Q}c2$ with equal chances according to Avrukh – a likely continuation is 26 $\mathbb{W}xc2 \mathbb{Q}xc2$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}a8 \mathbb{Q}xb2$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xb8+ \mathbb{Q}xb8$ =) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 23 $\mathbb{W}e1 \mathbb{Q}d3$ = Avrukh.

b) 21 $\mathbb{Q}g5! h6?$ (more tenacious is 21... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c2 g6$ 23 $b3 \pm$) 22 $\mathbb{Q}ge4 \mathbb{W}b6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ and

White had a strong attack in Avrukh-Rublevsky, Rethymnon ECC 2003.

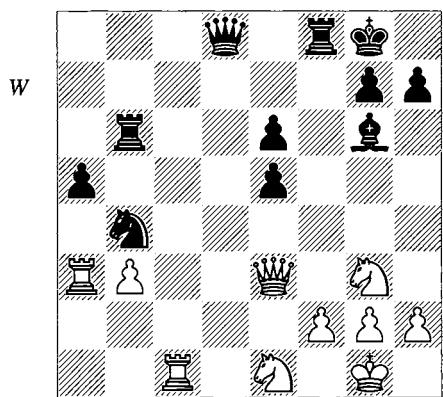
20 $\mathbb{W}d4 \mathbb{B}b8$ 21 b3

White has a slight edge here according to Avrukh, but I think Black's piece activity should enable him to maintain equality.

21... $\mathbb{Q}b4??$ 22 $\mathbb{B}c1$

22 $\mathbb{W}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ is fine for Black.

22... $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e1 \mathbb{B}b6$ 24 $\mathbb{W}e3$ fxe5 25 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{Q}g6$ (D)



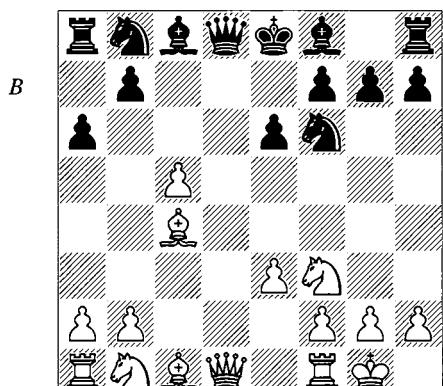
The position is balanced. Now:

a) 27 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ e4 28 $\mathbb{Q}a8$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ (29 $\mathbb{Q}a7$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 30 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ also leads to an equal position) 29... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 31 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (31 $\mathbb{W}d4??$ loses to 31... $\mathbb{W}f4$) 31... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 32 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 33 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xb3$ =.

b) 27 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}d2$ 28 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xe3$ 29 fxe3 $\mathbb{B}b5$ is also equal.

G)

7 dxc5 (D)



This deceptively quiet continuation is often associated with the 10th World Champion Boris Spassky. The following 1992 *NIC Yearbook 25* quote from Australian GM Ian Rogers still holds true today – “The problem with 7 dxc5 is that most players choose it only when they are happy with a draw. In fact the theory of 7 dxc5 is corrupted by many short and probably prearranged draws which add nothing to our knowledge of the line.” The move was given a thorough work-out during the 1992 Fischer-Spassky match – Fischer uncorked the Queen’s Gambit Accepted and Spassky scored one win and three draws from the four games in which they contested this variation. The line gained a powerful advocate several years later – the 14th World Champion Vladimir Kramnik employed it in games versus Kasparov, Karpov, and Anand. Although most of these games were drawn, Kramnik sometimes succeeded in obtaining an opening advantage. Today interest in the 7 dxc5 variation has cooled somewhat as Black’s defences have been improved, but the move demands respect as it is very easy for Black to slip into an inferior end-game.

There are no categorical rules that can be applied to every situation, but here are some typical issues Black should be aware of:

Issue #1: Should Black seize space on the queenside by playing ...b5, or is it better to play the more restrained ...b6? This is the classic giant step/baby step decision – if Black is behind in development, a premature ...b5 tends to leave him vulnerable to a quick a4 pawn advance, particularly when the white a-pawn is supported by a rook on a1. If Black has already moved his queen’s rook away from the a-file, then the a6-pawn is also vulnerable. Another theme to be aware of is that when White develops via $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ followed by $\mathbb{Q}b3$, the a5- and c5-squares can be vulnerable – this is less of a problem if White has fianchettoed his bishop via b3 and $\mathbb{Q}b2$, but even here Black must be wary of the manoeuvre $\mathbb{Q}e1-d3$ taking aim at the c5-square.

Issue #2: If Black has played ...b5 and White counters with a4, should Black advance with ...b4 or exchange pawns with ...bxa4? The problem with the ...b4 advance is that it usually concedes the c4-square to a white knight and leaves a black rook tied down defending the

a6-pawn. Black usually does best to exchange a set of pawns with ...bxa4 as this helps to negate his slight space disadvantage on the queenside and the pawn trade also opens the b-file for a black rook.

Issue #3: If the ...b5 pawn advance is dangerous because of a4, shouldn't Black just play ...b6 instead? Not necessarily – the b6-pawn does not control the c4-square, so White can often play $\mathbb{Q}c4$ attacking the b6-pawn and pressuring the vulnerable d6-square. Another consideration is that the b6-pawn blocks a potential retreat path for the dark-squared bishop, particularly if Black has played ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$.

Issue #4: What should Black's strategy be as far as exchanging pieces? If White has already positioned a rook along the open c- or d-files, Black usually does well to counter by opposing rooks and trying to exchange one or both sets. Black is usually able to defend his weak squares on the queenside with his minor pieces. Exchanging one or both sets of knights also tends to ease Black's defensive task because a white knight on c4 can infiltrate via d6 or a5.

Black's first major decision is primarily a matter of taste and both moves are part of our repertoire. Black can either recapture the c5-pawn or preface this with an exchange of queens:

G1: 7... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 55

G2: 7... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 56

The following minor alternatives avoid the exchange of queens, but they cannot be recommended because Black loses too much time. Let's take a brief look at them so as to understand why it is necessary for Black to allow or initiate a queen exchange:

a) 7... $\mathbb{Q}c7$? 8 b4! b6 (8...a5 9 $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ {9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ is much better for White}) 10 b5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ gives White a large advantage as it is difficult for Black to unravel his queenside) 9 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ bxc5 10 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ (Lhagva-Thorsteinsson, Lugano OL 1968) 12 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ±.

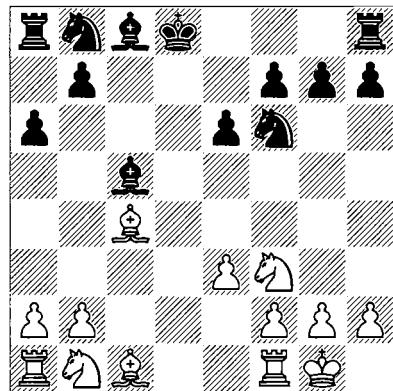
b) 7... $\mathbb{Q}a5$?! 8 a3 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ b5 10 b4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ ± Thuesen-Thorhallsson, Copenhagen 1997. Black has lost several tempi although he did manage to win this game in the end.

G1)

7... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$

White can switch gears and play 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$, transposing to Line B of Chapter 5: Furman Variation – 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ a6 7 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 8 0-0. Some authors recommend that Black play 7... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ (Line G2) instead of 7... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ to sidestep this possibility, but I don't think that Black has anything to fear in this line of the Furman Variation. Another consideration is that if White really wants to play the Furman Variation, he will probably play 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ instead of 6 0-0.

8... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ (D)



9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

White has several alternative plans here:

a) 9 a3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 b4 $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ b5 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 14 a4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (liquidating the queenside pawns) 15 axb5 axb5 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}fb1$ ½-½ Spassky-Portisch, Lucerne Wch’t 1985.

b) 9 b3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ b6 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ b5 14 a4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}df3$ bxa4 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ = P.Nikolić-Ivanchuk, Manila OL 1992.

c) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ – 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$) 10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$?! (a creative way to activate the light-squared bishop) 12 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}ab8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}hc8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ b6 20 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ a5 21 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ is equal, Kožul-Shirov, Sarajevo 2002.

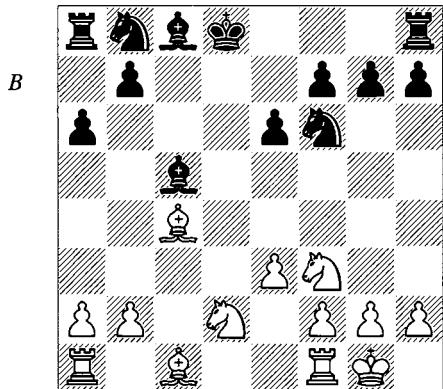
d) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ and now:

d1) 10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}hb8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 16

$\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ½-½ Kramnik-Kasparov, Linares 2004.

d2) 10... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ {Van Wely-Van den Doel, Leeuwarden 2003}) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2 \mathbb{Q}f8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 f3 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ with equal chances according to Sakaev and Semkov) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}c5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}d7$ (two months earlier Shirov had played the less accurate 15... $\mathbb{Q}d8$! 16 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}d5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b2 f6$ {Van Wely-Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 2003}) and here Shirov recommends 19 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$!± 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}b5$ 17 b3 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{Q}a7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b2 b6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}fd1 \mathbb{Q}c8$ 21 g4 g5 (21... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22 g5 f6 23 gxf6+ gxf6 24 $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{Q}ac7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}ac1 \mathbb{Q}b4$ "and Black takes over the initiative" according to Sakaev and Semkov, but I think White has at least equal chances after the rook-lift 26 $\mathbb{Q}d4 b5$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ as Black's kingside pawns are vulnerable) 22 $\mathbb{Q}g2 \mathbb{Q}d7$ (22... $\mathbb{Q}e8$!?) 23 $\mathbb{Q}ac1 \mathbb{Q}d6$ 24 h4 h6 25 hgx5 hgx5 26 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ is unclear) 23 h4 gxh4 24 $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{Q}d6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xh4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ = Van Wely-Shirov, Monte Carlo Amber blindfold 2003.

We now return to the position after 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (D):



9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Black can also complete his development with 9... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 a3 a5 12 b3 b6 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2 \mathbb{Q}d8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fc1 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ gxf6 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}d6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd6 \mathbb{Q}xd6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3 f5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}ac1 \mathbb{Q}f6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e1 \mathbb{Q}e7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f1 \mathbb{Q}ad8$ = Karpov-Shirov, Linares 2001.

10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Another idea is 10 b3 b6 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}fd1 \mathbb{Q}hd8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}ac1 \mathbb{Q}ac8$ = Andeer-Kolcak, corr. 2001) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$

14 $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}hc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}ac1 \mathbb{Q}c7$ = Shamkovich-Keres, USSR Ch (Baku) 1961.

10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Also possible is 10... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ – 9... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}e7$.

11 $\mathbb{Q}b3$

White can vary with 11 b3 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}bd7$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2 \mathbb{Q}hd8$ = Mirzoev-Van den Doel, Brena Baja rpd 2005) 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2 \mathbb{Q}b6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fc1 \mathbb{Q}xc4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{Q}hc8$ = Graf-Kaminski, Cappelle la Grande 1999.

11... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}hg8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fd1 \mathbb{Q}ac8$

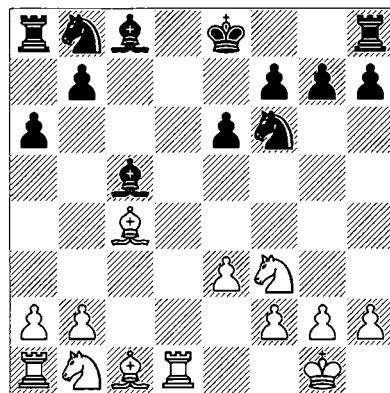
The chances are equal, Kožul-Topalov, Sarajevo 2001.

G2)

7... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$

This is the most popular move here.

8 $\mathbb{Q}xd1 \mathbb{Q}xc5$ (D)



Now White can fianchetto his bishop or continue his development:

G21: 9 b3 57

G22: 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 58

White has some minor alternatives:

a) 9 a3 b6 10 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}fc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}d5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}fe5 \mathbb{Q}c7$ = Kurajica-Rublevsky, Bastia rpd 1999.

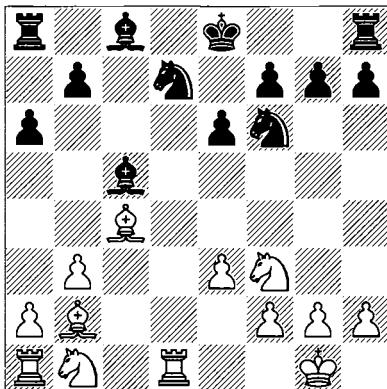
b) 9 $\mathbb{Q}f1$!? (a novelty designed to confuse the computer program) 9...b5?! (9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$) 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2 \mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}f8$? 13 a4 (perhaps the computer was anticipating – do computers anticipate? – a repetition via 13

$\mathbb{Q}bd2?$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$) 13...b4 14 $\mathbb{Q}fd2$ ± Kramnik-Deep Fritz, Manama (2) 2002.

G21)

9 b3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ (D)

B



Now Black faces the classic b-pawn giant step/baby step decision:

G211: 10...b5 57

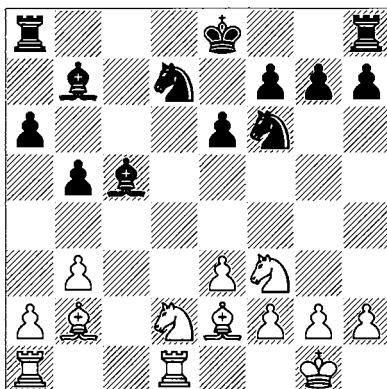
G212: 10...b6 57

Both moves are playable although Line G212 is safer.

G211)

10...b5 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (D)

B



12...0-0

Fischer's later preference – earlier in the match he played 12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 a4 bxa4 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ (14 bxa4 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}dc1$ $\mathbb{Q}hc8$ = Fridman-J.Benjamin, Mermaid Beach 1998) 14... $\mathbb{Q}hb8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$

$\mathbb{Q}d5$ (15...a5!?) 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ± Spassky-Fischer, Sveti Stefan/Belgrade (6) 1992.

13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$

White should consider 13 a4!? bxa4 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}da1$ ±.

13... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 14 h3 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 17 a4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Neishtadt recommends 17...bxa4! 18 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ a5 20 bxa4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ with equal chances.

18 axb5 axb5 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$

The chances are equal, Spassky-Fischer, Sveti Stefan/Belgrade (14) 1992.

G212)

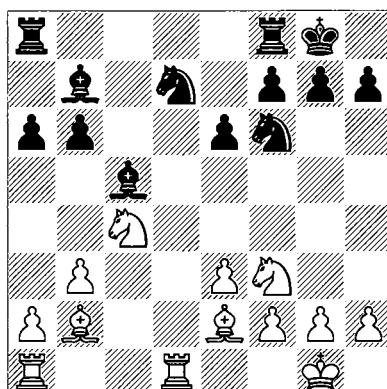
10...b6 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

This is more flexible than 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 14 f3 (14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 16 gxf3 was suggested by Seirawan – 16... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ appears to be an adequate reply) 14...b5 (14... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ = Tarnowiecki-Stigar, corr. 1995-9) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ = Spassky-Fischer, Sveti Stefan/Belgrade (4) 1992. The position is balanced although Fischer later went astray and lost.

11... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (D)

13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ = Tunik-Rublevsky, Russia 1996.

B



13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Alternatives:

a) 13... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ = Bareev-Svidler, Russian Ch (Elista) 1996.

b) 13...b5 14 $\mathbb{Q}a5$?! (14 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ = looks safer) 14... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ e5 ± Kramnik-Anand, Monte Carlo Amber blindfold 1997.

14 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$

Very similar positions arise after 14 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$ b5 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 16 e4 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ bxc4 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ (19 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ would transpose into the main-line game Dautov-Kharlov below) 19... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ½-½ Yermolinsky-Anand, Wijk aan Zee 1999.

14... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$

White cannot make any progress after 15 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ b5 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ = Almeida-Zambrana, Santa Clara 2004.

15...b5 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 17 e4

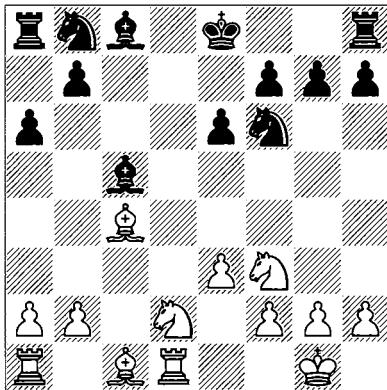
The position is also balanced after 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ = Kramnik-Lautier, Monte Carlo Amber rpd 1997.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ bxc4 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$

The chances are equal, Dautov-Kharlov, Tripoli FIDE KO 2004.

G22)**9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (D)**

B



Now Black has:

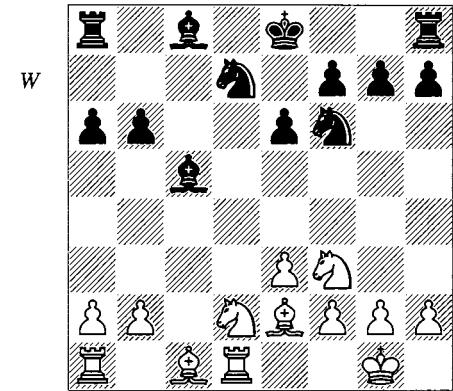
G221: 9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 58

G222: 9...0-0 59

G221)**9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ b6 (D)****11 $\mathbb{Q}b3$**

This knight deployment is more active than the older 11 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$. Then:

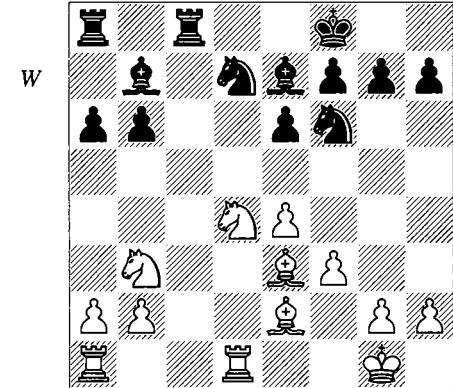
a) 12 b3 0-0 (Black should avoid 12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$?? {an instructive mistake as the king blocks the retreat path for the c5-bishop}) 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e1$! ± Kramnik-Karpov, Frankfurt rpd 1999)



13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ – 9 b3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ b6 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$.

b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$! 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 15 f3 $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ e5 17 e4 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (Kantsler-Lautier, Ohrid 2001) and here Sakaev and Semkov recommend 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ with equal chances.

11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}fd4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 f3 0-0 14 e4 $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ (D)



Now:

a) 16 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}4b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 21 h3 (21 g4 h6 22 h4 g5! 23 hxg5 hxg5 24 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ {24 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$? $\mathbb{Q}fxg4$ + 25 fxg4 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ is good for Black} 24... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 25 a3 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$) = 21... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ f6 25 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ = Bareev-Rublevsky, Russian Ch (Elista) 1996.

b) 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$! (this was an important novelty) and then:

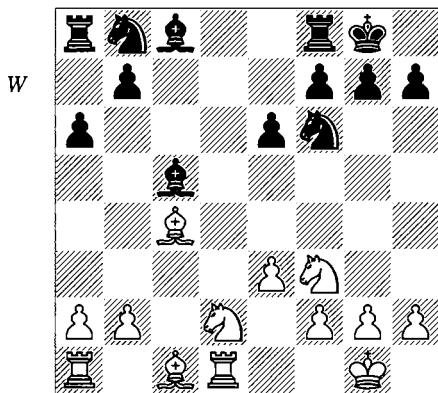
b1) 16... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}4b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (17... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ± Kramnik) 18 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 20 g4! h6 21 h4! ± Kramnik-Kasparov, London Wch

(4) 2000. The subtle point behind Kramnik's 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ is that 21...g5? as in line 'a' simply loses a pawn after 22 hxg5 hxg5 23 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ because White's king is still on the g1-square – Black cannot capture the g4-pawn with check. Kramnik later increased his advantage, but after some inaccurate play the game was eventually drawn.

b2) 16... $\mathbb{B}c7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 18 b3 b5 19 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$ and in his 2000 *Informator* notes, Kramnik suggested 20 $\mathbb{Q}xb5?$ axb5 21 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ but didn't give an evaluation. I think Black should respond with 21... $\mathbb{B}c5$! (21... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{B}c2$ 25 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ looks a little better for White) 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc5+$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{B}c7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}dc4$ and White has a slight edge in this unbalanced endgame.

G222)

9...0-0 (D)



The safest choice – Black removes his king from the centre.

10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

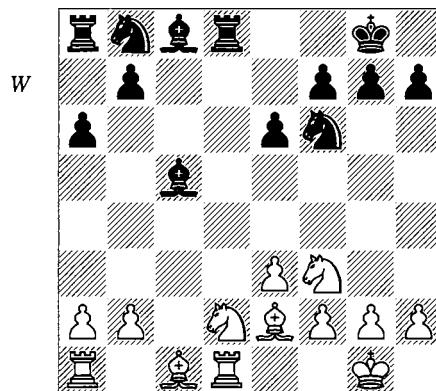
Or:

a) 10 a3 b5 (10... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ b6 13 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ – 9 a3 b6 10 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ 0-0 =) 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12 b4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 14 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{B}xc1$ 16 $\mathbb{B}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}fd4$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}a5$! leads to a

slight advantage for White, Spassky-Fischer, Sveti Stefan/Belgrade (18) 1992. "In spite of the limited material and symmetrical pawns, White's position is preferable." – Neisnadt.

b) 10 $\mathbb{Q}b3$! $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 13 e4 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ = Krush-Baburin, Lindsborg 2003) 11... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ (Berezovsky-Meins, Bundesliga 2001/2) 15...b5!? 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$.

10... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (D)



White has a few alternative plans here:

a) 11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ and now:

a1) 12 $\mathbb{Q}ec4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$?! 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ b6 14 f3 a5 15 e4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 17 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ ± Chuchelov-Rublevsky, Silivri 2003) 13 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}dc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 17 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ f6 21 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ = Van Wely-Kharlov, Silivri 2003.

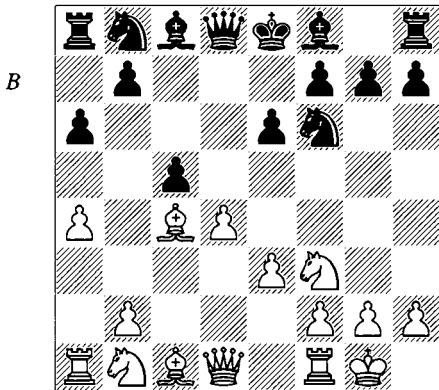
a2) 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 15 b3 b6 with equal chances according to Sakaev and Semkov.

a3) 12 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ f6 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 e4 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 16 e5 f5 17 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ½-½ Kramnik-Kasparov, Moscow rpd (1) 2001.

b) 11 b3 b6 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ b5 18 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ = Karpov-Ivanchuk, Moscow (Russia-The World) rpd 2002.

7 Classical Variation: 7 a4

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5
6 0-0 a6 7 a4 (D)



This is one of the most important lines of the Classical Variation because White prevents Black's plan of expanding on the queenside with ...b5 and $\mathbb{Q}b7$. Another idea is to facilitate a future kingside rook-lift beginning with $\mathbb{R}a3$. The drawback is that a hole is created on the b4-square, but White is gambling that Black will be checkmated before this weakness can be exploited.

7...c6

Black continues developing and eyes the vulnerable b4-square.

8 ♕e2

White clears the d-file for his rook; he can also play 8 ♜c3 ♛e7 (D).

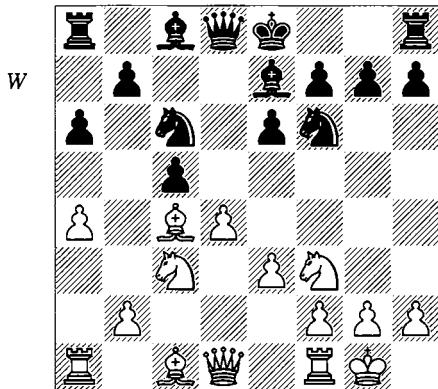
Now:

a) 9 ♕e2 cxd4 10 ♖d1 0-0 11 exd4 - 8 ♕e2 cxd4 9 ♖d1 ♜e7 10 exd4 0-0 11 ♜c3.

b) 90

$\text{Qxe7} \{ 11 \text{ e1 Qe5!; } 11 \text{ b3!} \} 11 \dots \text{xe7}$
 12 b3 $\text{d}8$ 13 $\text{c}2 \text{xf3}$ 14 gxf3 $\text{e}5$ 15 $\text{b}2$
 $\text{g}5+$ 16 $\text{h}1 \text{h}5$ 17 $\text{e}2 \text{b}4$ = Kaem-Lipnitsky, Kiev 1939) 11 $\text{xd}5 \text{b}4$ 12 $\text{b}3$
 $\text{f}6$ = Shushpanov-Ibragimov, St Petersburg
 1995

c) 9 dxc5 ♜xd1 10 ♜xd1 ♜xc5 11 h3 (11 ♜d2 ♜a5 12 ♜a2 b6 13 ♜e2 ♜c6 14 a5 ♜b7



15 \blacksquare dc1 { 15 axb6 \blacksquare xb6 16 \blacksquare c3!? } 15... \blacksquare d7 = Smejkal-Chermin, Moscow GMA 1989) 11...b6 12 e4 \blacksquare a5 and then:

c1) 13 ♘a2 ♘b7 14 ♕e1 (14 e5?! ♖d7 15 ♕e1 {15 ♘f4 ♘xf3 16 gxf3 ♖c6 ♞ Bareev} 15...♘xf3 16 gxf3 ♖c6 ♞ Kolbus-Ganguly, Budapest 1998) 14...♗b4 (14...♖c8!?) with equal chances, Uhlmann-Galliamova, Aruba 1992.

c2) 13 ♠d3 ♦b3 14 ♠b1 ♦xc1 15 ♠bxcl ♠d7 = Bareev-Kasparov, Novgorod 1997.

d) 9 ♜e5 cxd4 (9...♝d7?! 10 ♜xd7 ♕xd7
 11 d5 exd5 12 ♜xd5 ♜d8 = Kluger-Portisch,
 Hungarian Ch (Budapest) 1965) 10 ♜xc6 bxc6
 11 exd4 a5 12 ♜f3 ♜b6 13 ♜d1 0-0 14 b3 ♜d8
 15 ♜f4 (15 ♜e3 ♜d5 = Pinter-Chernin, Bud-
 pest 1997) 15...♝a6 = Zviagintsev-Ibragimov,
 Russian Ch (Elista) 1996.

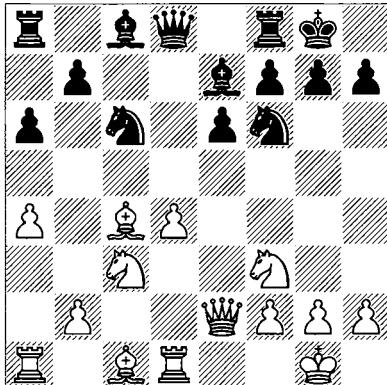
8...cxd4

This is our repertoire move – the major alternatives 8... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ and 8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ are fully playable, but 8...cx d4 is the most direct attempt to exploit the weakness of the b4-square created by 7 a4.

9 ♕d1 ♔e7 10 exd4 0-0 11 ♔c3 (D)

The older 11 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ should be answered by 11... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}cxe7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ b6 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ {14 a5 {Kotov-Petrosian, Moscow 1972}} 14...b5 =) 14... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (so far this is Inkiov-Van der Sterren, Groningen jr Ech 1975/6) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ with equality.

B



Now:

- A: 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 61
B: 11... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 67

A)**11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$**

Black increases his control over the d5-square and also exerts pressure on the d3-square. This is very important because it prevents White's light-squared bishop from occupying the dangerous b1-h7 diagonal and it also stops a white rook from transferring to the kingside via the d3-square. The drawback is that Black loses control over the e5- and a3-squares, and if the white knights vacate the third rank (for example, by moving to the e5- and e4-squares), the attacking ideas $\mathbb{Q}a3-g3$ or $\mathbb{Q}a3-h3$ can be very effective. This is one of the classic Isolated Queen's Pawn (IQP) positions and it is helpful to perform a quick cost/benefit analysis of the IQP. The 'cost' to White is an isolated d4-pawn, whereas one of the 'benefits' is a slight space advantage – White has a pawn on the d4-square as opposed to Black's pawn on the e6-square. White has a little more space to manoeuvre, so if Black is not careful, a well-timed d5 pawn advance can break open the position and benefit White's better-developed pieces. One of the fundamental goals in chess is to transform one type of advantage into another, more significant advantage – here it is important to note that White has no pawns positioned along the third rank, so if White can use this advantage to lift and shift one of his rooks to the kingside, then the slight space advantage may escalate into a kingside attack. Black cannot counter this rook

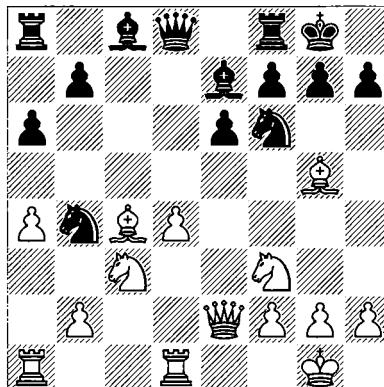
'lift and shift' plan with one of his own rooks, so he must try to prevent it by controlling the possible entry points (for example, the a3- and d3-squares) with his minor pieces.

Now let's examine some specific variations:

- A1:** 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 61
A2: 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 65

A1)**12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (D)**

B



White develops his last minor piece. Now Black has a choice of three reasonable continuations – the selection is a matter of taste:

- A11:** 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 61
A12: 12... $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 64
A13: 12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 65

A11)**12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

White must choose between breaking open the d-file or continuing to build up in the centre:

- A111:** 13 $d5$ 61
A112: 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 62

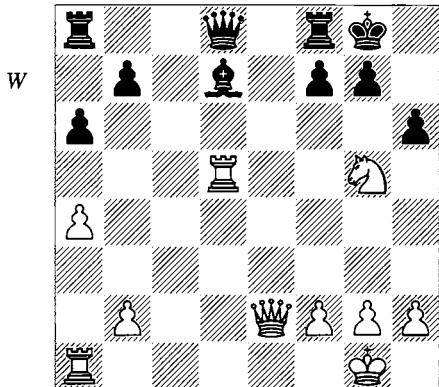
A111)**13 $d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}bxsd5$**

The weaker 14... $\mathbb{Q}fxd5$? allows 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ with a clear advantage.

- 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $h6$
(D)

18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

A relatively new attempt is 18 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $hxg5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}ed8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d7$



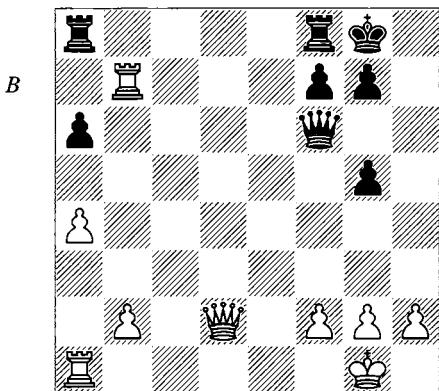
$\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 24 h3 ½-½ Sundararajan-Aronian, Goa jr Wch 2002.

18...hxg5 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Black's g5-pawn is exposed after the careless 19... $\mathbb{Q}b6$? 20 a5 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 23 h3 ± Finegerov-Makarov, Odessa Ch 1999.

20 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ (D)

Another idea is 20 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 24 g3 $\mathbb{Q}b8$ and a draw was agreed here in Speelman-Miles, London 1984.



20... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$

The major-piece endgame has been contested in several high-level games and Black's position has proven to be quite resilient. Black can also consider 20... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$. Then:

a) 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$! (Black should avoid playing 21... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$? 22 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 23 g3 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ g6 25 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$, when White had a solid extra pawn in Lutz-Kraut, Bundesliga 1990/1) 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ maintains the balance.

b) 21 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 25 h3 $\mathbb{Q}cc2$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ½-½ Tella-Hakulinen, Finnish Cht 1996. Black recovers the pawn with 26... $\mathbb{Q}a2$ intending ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$.

21 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

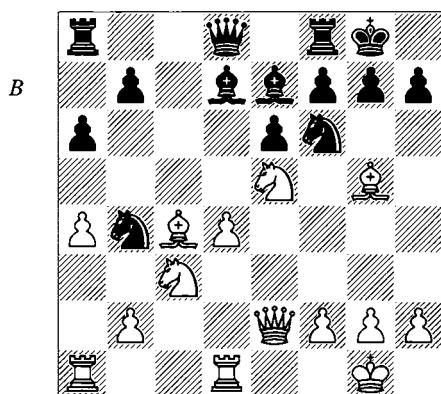
The stem game of this variation, Botvinnik-Petrosian, Moscow Wch (10) 1963, saw 21 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ with compensation for the pawn. The game was eventually drawn.

21... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}bc3$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}a7$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 24 g3 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

½-½ Pinter-Ribli, Budapest ECC 1991. After 28... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ the rook endgame with 3 pawns versus 2 pawns on the same side of the board is a theoretical draw.

A112)

13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (D)



13... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

The alternative is 13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}bc6$ 15 a5! ("±" – Sakaev and Semkov; "It is important to fix the a6-pawn and to prevent ...a5" – Baburin) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c7$! (White has scored well in a dozen or so games featuring 15... $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ± as Black's dark squares are vulnerable) and now:

a) 16 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ (16... $\mathbb{Q}fb8$ 17 g3 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ = Zarubin-Vasilev, Severodonetsk 1982) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ = L.B.Hansen-Komljenović, Copenhagen 1989.

b) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ = Kononenko-Ir.Botvinnik, Izmir wom Ech 2004.

Now White has:

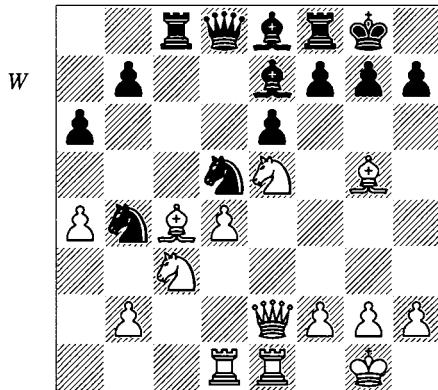
- A1121: 14 ♕e1 63
 A1122: 14 ♕b3 64

A1121)

14 ♕e1 ♜e8

Black should avoid the careless 14...♜c6?! (an instructive error) 15 ♜xf7! ♜xf7 (White wins after 15...♚xf7? 16 ♜xe6+ ♚g6 17 ♜xc8) 16 ♜xe6 ♜e8! (this retreat is stronger than Bareev's 16...♜d5 17 ♜xd5 ♜bx d5 18 ♜xf6 ♜xc4 19 ♜xe7, which is winning for White) 17 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 18 ♜xe7 ♜xc4 19 ♜xf6 ♜xe7 20 ♜xe7 ♜xd4 21 a5 and Black has insufficient compensation for his pawn deficit.

15 ♜ad1 ♜fd5 (D)



16 ♜xd5

16 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 17 ♜xd5 ♜xg5 18 ♜c3 ♜f6! 19 d5 exd5 20 ♜xd5 (20 ♜xd5? ♜xa4! 21 ♜d4 ♜xe5 22 ♜xe5 ♜e8 and Black has a decisive advantage – Bareev) 20...♜c7 = Bareev.

16...♜xd5

Also sufficient for equality is 16...exd5 17 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 18 ♜b3 (= ECO) 18...♜d7 19 ♜d2 ("±" – Khalifman) 19...♜e6 20 a5 ♜d6 = P.Lukacs-Kiss, Hungarian Ch (Budapest) 1996.

17 ♜xd5 ♜xg5

Not 17...exd5?? 18 ♜c6 and White wins.

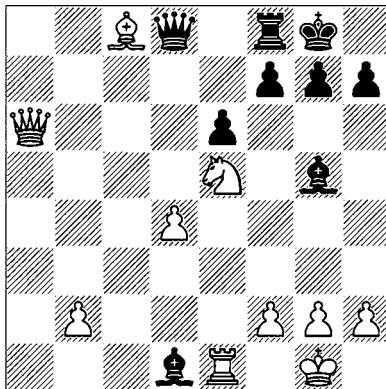
18 ♜xb7 ♜xa4 19 ♜xa6 ♜xd1 20 ♜xc8 (D)

20...♜xc8

Or:

- a) 20...♜b3?! 21 ♜d7 ♜f4 22 ♜b5 ±.
 b) 20...♜xd4! ("?" Bareev) 21 ♜xe6 ♜h5!
 (but not 21...♜d2? {Gershon-Papatheodorou,

B

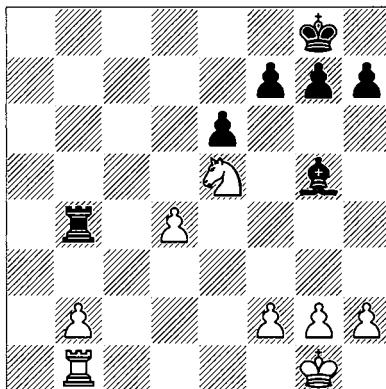


Korinthos 1998} 22 ♜xf7+! ♜h8 {22...♜xf7 23 ♜f3 +–} and now White 'strokes' the f1-a6 diagonal by 23 ♜f1! ♜d4 24 ♜d3 ± 22 ♜xb2 with equal chances.

21 ♜xc8 ♜xc8 22 ♜xd1 ♜b8 23 ♜b1 ♜b4! (D)

This was Bareev's 1994 *Informator* suggestion and his improvement eventually received a practical trial. The stem game, Bareev-Ivanchuk, Linares 1994, continued with the careless 23...♜b3? 24 ♜f1 ±.

W



White has several options here, but Black has been able to maintain the balance:

a) 24 ♜a1 h5 (24...h6 was played in *Comet B11-SOS*, Brussels 2000 – now safest is 25 ♜a8+ ♜h7 26 ♜xf7 ♜f6 27 ♜h8+ ♜g6 28 ♜e5+ ♜f5 =) 25 ♜a8+ ♜h7 26 ♜xf7 ♜f6 = Bareev.

b) 24 ♜f1 ♜f6 25 ♜e2 ♜xd4 = Ravi-Ganguly, Indian Ch (New Delhi) 2001.

c) 24 ♜f3 ♜f6 25 ♜f1 g5! 26 g4 h5 27 h3 hxg4 28 hxg4 ♜f8 29 ♜e2 ♜xd4 = Bareev.

A1122)

14 ♜b3 ♜c6 15 ♜xc6

Alternatives:

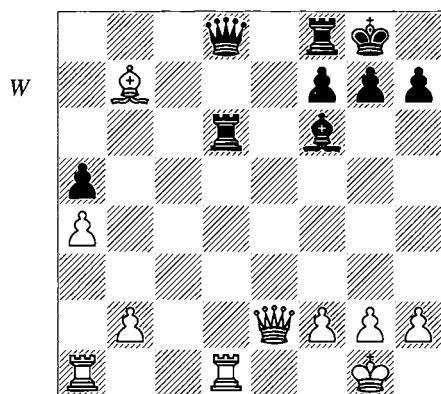
a) 15 ♜xf7?! ♜xf7 16 ♜xe6 is unclear; this speculative sacrifice awaits a practical test.

b) 15 ♜h4 ♜d5 16 ♜xd5 ♜fxd5 is equal, A.Schneider-G.Kallai, Budapest 1995.

15...♜xc6 16 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 17 d5 ♜xd5 18 ♜xd5 exd5 19 ♜xd5 ♜d6 20 ♜xb7

White has a slight edge here according to Khalifman.

20...a5 (D)



Black has compensation for the pawn according to ECO.

21 ♜f3

This is more accurate than 21 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 22 ♜c1 ♜b4 23 ♜b5 ♜d2 24 ♜f1 ½-½ Ivkov-Gheorghiu, Hamburg Echt 1965.

Sakaev and Semkov prefer White's chances after 21 ♜f3 – “The bishops of opposite colour are a premise for an attack against the black king.” I think Black should be able to hold this position despite his pawn deficit – the vulnerable f7-square can be defended by transferring a black rook to the second rank. Let's continue with 21...♜xd1+ 22 ♜xd1 ♜b6 (22...♜b8!?) 23 ♜d5 ♜b4 24 b3 (so far this is A.Smirnov-P.Anisimov, St Petersburg Ch 2002) 24...♜c8 25 g3 g6 26 ♜b5 ♜c3 27 ♜d5 ♜g7 28 ♜b7 ♜c7 29 ♜b5 ♜xb7 30 ♜xb7 ♜e1+ 31 ♜g2 ♜e7 with an equal position.

A12)

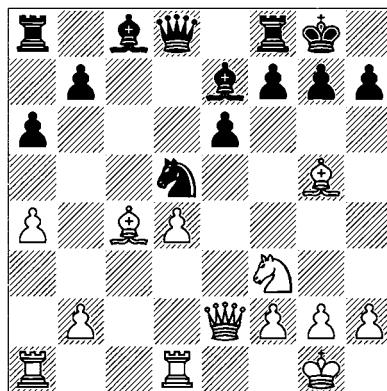
12...♝fd5

This solid variation has recently been out of fashion.

13 ♜xd5

Or 13 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 14 ♜e4 ♜ed5 15 ♜e5 b6 and a draw was agreed here in Tal-Hübner, Skellefteå (World Cup) 1989.

13...♜xd5 (D)



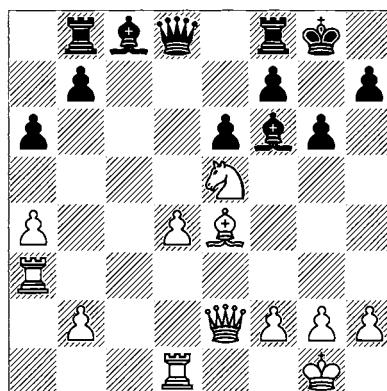
14 ♜xd5

White can also try 14 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 15 ♜e4 ♜d5 (“Black takes measures against ♜d3” – Neishtadt) 16 ♜e5 ♜f6 17 ♜f4 ♜d5 18 ♜e4 ♜f6 19 ♜f3 (19 ♜f4 ♜d5 {Black's ninth consecutive knight move!}) ½-½ Reshevsky-Petrosian, Siegen OL 1970) 19...♜b8 20 ♜ac1 (so far this is Nejmet260-Comet B11, Brussels 2000) 20...♜d6 21 ♜d3 ♜d7 with roughly level chances.

14...♜xg5 15 ♜e4

White obtains no advantage after 15 ♜xg5 ♜xd5 16 ♜e4 ♜d7 = Bannink-Lendwai, Oberwart 2001.

15...♜f6 16 ♜e5 ♜b8 17 ♜a3 g6 (D)



Now White has tried:

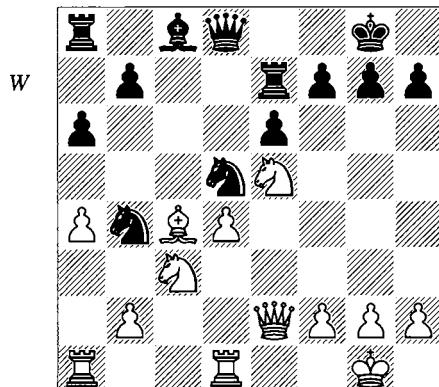
- a) 18 h4?! $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ (so far this is Raetsky-Videki, Kecskemet 1991) 19... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ leaves White with marginal compensation for the pawn.
- b) 18 $\mathbb{W}f3$!?
- c) 18 g3 $\mathbb{W}d6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ ½-½ Tukmakov-Balashov, USSR Ch (Riga) 1985.

A13)

12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

A prophylactic move aimed at inhibiting White's d5 pawn-break.

13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ (D)



The position is balanced. White has tried:

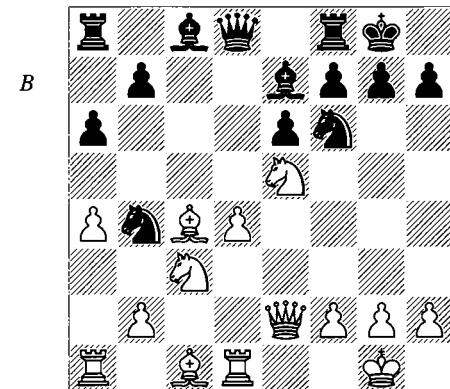
- a) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ = Conquest-Heinbuch, Bundesliga 1986/7.
- b) 15 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ b6 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 17 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ = Kolbus-Raetsky, Biel 2001.
- c) 15 a5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ = Milov-Kariakin, Moscow rpd 2002.

A2)

12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (D)

White centralizes his knight and seeks to exploit the sudden absence of Black's knight from the centre – the move also begins the process of clearing the third rank for a potential rook-lift to the kingside. Now Black must choose between occupying the d5-outpost or developing another piece:

- A21: 12... $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 65
A22: 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 66



Both lines have held up well in practice, but 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ is more solid.

Black should avoid the careless 12... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$! (this move relinquishes control over the critical d3-square) 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$! $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}g3$! $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ with a strong attack in several games including Magerramov-Mirza, Abu Dhabi 2001.

A21)

12... $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Alternatives:

- a) 13 $\mathbb{W}e4$ – 11... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 12 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$.
 - b) 13 a5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (13...b5!?) 14 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ with equal chances, Huss-Raetsky, Lenk 2005.
 - c) 13 $\mathbb{W}g4$!?
- $\mathbb{Q}h8$ (13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$?? loses to 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$) 14 $\mathbb{W}f3$ f6 (14... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 15 a5 \pm Kouatly-S.Marjanović, Marseilles 1986) 15 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$! (Kouatly only analysed the cooperative 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$? 18 $\mathbb{W}h3$ f5 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$! with a crushing advantage for White) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ =.

- d) 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ f6 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ b6 – 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ b6 14 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ f6 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ and now:

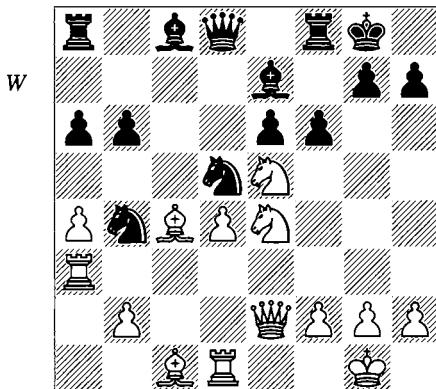
- d1) 16 a5!?
- $\mathbb{Q}h8$ (16... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ also appears reasonable) 17 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (17 $\mathbb{Q}c1$! seems safer) 17... $\mathbb{Q}e8$! 18 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ (so far this is V.Milov-Xu Jun, Istanbul OL 2000) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d6$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 20 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ and Black is much better according to Khuzman.

- d2) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 18 a5 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ = Khuzman.

13...b6 14 $\mathbb{Q}a3$

Also possible is 14 a5 b5 15 ♜b3 ♜b7 16 ♜d2 ♜c8 17 ♜ac1 ♜c6! = Flear-Kupreichik, Hastings 1984/5.

14...f6 (D)



15 ♜h3?

This is a thematic piece sacrifice which needs more practical tests – Black has no worries after the quieter 15 ♜f3 ♜d7 16 ♜c3 ♜c8 = Garrido-Sadler, Cappelle la Grande 1992.

15...fxe5?

Black can decline the sacrifice with 15...♛e8 16 ♜d3 ♜a7 (16...b5!?) 17 ♜c3 ± Raetsky-N.Grigoriev, Cheliabinsk 1991.

16 ♜h5 h6!

Black's king is too exposed after other moves:

a) 16...exd4? 17 ♜xh7+ ♛f7 18 ♜h6 ♛e8 19 ♜xg7 ♜d7 20 ♜xf8 ♜xf8 21 ♜f3 ♜d8 22 ♜xd4 ±.

b) 16...♜f5? 17 ♜xh7+ ♛f7 18 ♜g3 ♜g8 19 ♜g6+ ♛f8 20 ♜h6 ♜f7 21 dxе5 ♜h8 22 ♜g5 ♜c6? (so far this is Toikka-Pukkila, Finnish Cht 2001) 23 ♜xd5! exd5 24 ♜xc6 and White has a decisive advantage.

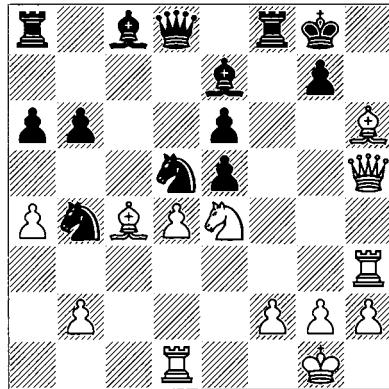
17 ♜xh6 (D)

Now:

a) 17...♛e8 18 ♜g4 ♜f7 19 ♜g6!? (19 ♜h5 ♜f8 repeats) and now both 19...♜xa4 20 ♜e2 and 19...♜d7 20 dxе5 give White a strong attack.

b) 17...♜f5 18 ♜g6 (18 ♜g4 ♜f8 and Black repels the attack) 18...♜f8 (18...♜f6? loses to 19 g4! ♜f4 20 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 21 g5) 19 ♜g5 and then:

b1) 19...exd4? 20 ♜xd4 ♜c5 21 ♜xc5 ♜xc5 22 ♜e2! ♜xg5 (22...♜xd4 23 ♜h7+ ♛f8 24 ♜h8+ ♛f7 25 ♜h5+ g6 26 ♜xg6+ ♛xg6 27



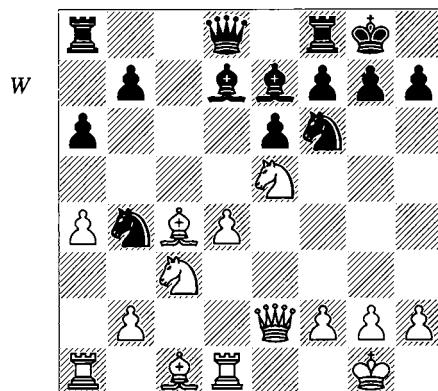
B

♛h7+ ♛xg5 28 ♜h6+ ♛g4 29 ♜h4#) 23 ♜e8+ ♜f8 24 ♜h8+ and White wins.

b2) 19...♜xg5 20 ♜xg5 ♜xg5 (20...♜f6?? 21 ♜h8+ ♛xh8 22 ♜h7#) 21 ♜xg5 e4 22 ♜h4 ♜f6 23 ♜b3 with an unclear position.

A22)

12...♜d7 (D)



W

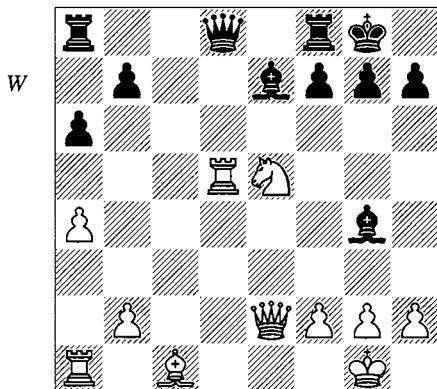
13 d5

This sharp advance initiates a series of forced moves leading to a level endgame.

Alternatives:

a) 13 ♜g5 – 12 ♜g5 ♜d7 13 ♜e5. b) 13 ♜f4 ♜e8 14 ♜ac1 (14 ♜g5 ♜fd5 15 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 16 ♜xd5 ♜xg5 17 ♜c3 ♜c6 18 ♜xc6 bxс6 19 a5 ♜e7 also gives White no advantage, Gligorić-Szabo, Hamburg Echt 1965) 14...♜bd5 15 ♜f3 ♜xf4 16 ♜xf4 ♜c8 17 ♜a2 ♜c6 18 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 19 ♜f3 ♜b8 20 d5 exd5 21 ♜xd5 ♜c7 with an equal position, Lobron-Kallai, Wiesbaden 1990.

13... $\mathbb{Q}fxd5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $exd5$
16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ (D)



17 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

White should avoid 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd8?$! $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ = Khurtsidze-Galliamova, Istanbul wom Echt 2003. The equivalent moves 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ and 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ have also been played several times – both moves transpose into the same position after 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g5$

White wisely eliminates Black's bishop-pair – too risky is 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$! $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 23 a5 (so far this is Väisser-Skipchenko, Paris 2003) 23...f6 =.

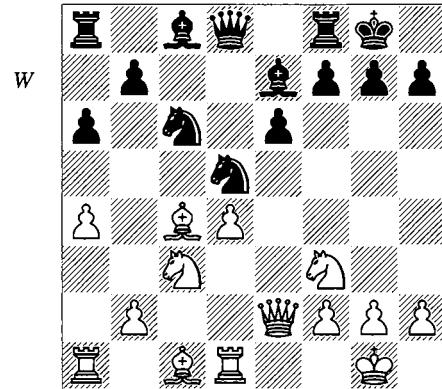
21... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$

1½-½ Epishin-Vakhidov, Tashkent 1987. The endgame is equal although Black can claim the symbolic bishop-versus-knight advantage. Several games have continued beyond this point, but most have been drawn within another dozen moves.

B)

11... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (D)

This variation is closely related to Line A and in fact they can sometimes transpose into each other. Black immediately sets up a blockade on the d5-square and eliminates any possibility of a d5 breakthrough by White. The knight centralization also exerts pressure on the c3-knight, and this introduces the possibility of responding to White playing $\mathbb{Q}e5$ with the simplifying manoeuvre ... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$. This mass exchange of knights typically favours Black



because it relieves the pressure on his kingside. The drawback of the knight move is that Black removes a defender from the kingside.

White now has a wide choice:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----|
| B1: 12 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ | 67 |
| B2: 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ | 68 |
| B3: 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ | 69 |
| B4: 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ | 69 |

Minor alternatives:

a) 12 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ – 12 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b1$.

b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ – 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e4$.

c) 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ and here:

c1) 12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ = Dimitriadi-C.Koch, IECG e-mail 1998.

c2) 12...b6 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $dxe5$ (so far this is Atalik-Slipak, Mar del Plata 2003) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ with equal chances according to Atalik.

c3) 12... $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ b6 (13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 15 b3 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ = Groszpeter-Ricardi, Novi Sad OL 1990) 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ {16...f6!? 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ } 17 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ f6 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}fxe8$ = Kharitonov-Raetsky, Russian Cht (Moscow) 1994) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ = Kruppa-Raetsky, Cappelle la Grande 1997.

B1)

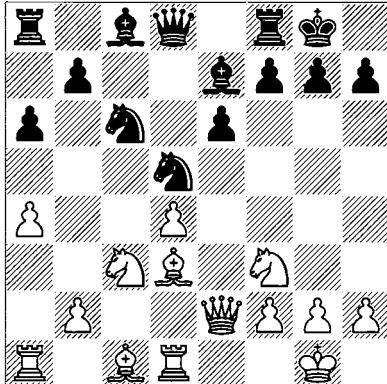
12 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (D)

White immediately shifts his bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal.

12... $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ b6 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$

White can also try 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$:

B



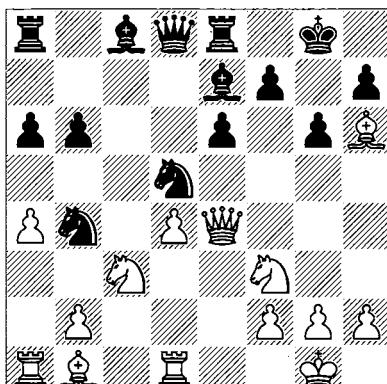
- a) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{B}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{B}a3$ f5 and here:
- 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ (this trap has snared several victims) 18 $\mathbb{B}a2$ (18 $\mathbb{B}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}a1$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ and Black wins, Barlov-Djukić, Yugoslav Ch (Kladovo) 1991) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ 19 $\mathbb{W}e1$ and now 19... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ \mp Ki.Georgiev-Marjanović, Yugoslav Cht (Cetinje) 1991, or 19... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ \mp Husemann-Wosch, ICCF e-mail 2000.

a2) 17 $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{B}xc1$ 18 $\mathbb{B}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c4$ (thus far this is Naumkin-Sadler, London 1991) 19... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ \mp Naumkin.

b) 15 $\mathbb{B}a3 \mathbb{B}c8$ 16 a5 b5 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ f5 18 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{B}xc5$ 19 dxc5 $\mathbb{B}xc5$ 20 $\mathbb{B}g3 \mathbb{B}c7$ 21 $\mathbb{B}g5$ with compensation for the pawn, Gligorić-Portisch, Pula 1971.

14... $\mathbb{g}6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h6 \mathbb{B}e8$ (D)

W



16 $\mathbb{W}e5$

Another way is 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mathbb{B}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}f3$ f5 18 $\mathbb{B}g3$ (18 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$) = Peluso-Søgaard, corr. 1996) 18... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h3 \mathbb{B}c8$ with equal chances, P.Nikolić-Petrosian, Vršac 1981.

16... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf8 \mathbb{B}xf8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g3 \mathbb{Q}ce7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d6$

1/2-1/2 Petrosian-Portisch, Rio de Janeiro IZ 1979.

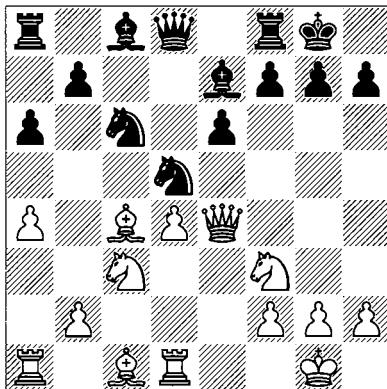
20... $\mathbb{W}c7$

The chances are equal.

B2)

12 $\mathbb{W}e4$ (D)

B



12... $\mathbb{Q}cb4$

Black can try to determine White's intentions by playing 12... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}h4$ (13 $\mathbb{W}e2$ repeats the position) 13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$. Then:

a) 14 $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{Q}f6$ (Black can also try 14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$!) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mathbb{Q}cb4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}h3 \mathbb{W}e8$ with sharp play, Pinter-Chandler, Haninge 1988) 15 $\mathbb{W}g3$ (15 $\mathbb{W}h4$ – 14 $\mathbb{W}h5 \mathbb{Q}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}h4$) 15... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}h3$ (Polugaevsky-Hort, Manila IZ 1976), and now Hort recommends 16... $g6$! with an unclear position.

b) 14 $\mathbb{W}h5 \mathbb{Q}f6$ 15 $\mathbb{W}h4$ (1/2-1/2 Tal-Ehlvest, Reykjavík (World Cup) 1988) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 1/2-a4 Adorjan-Spraggett, Szirák 1986.

13 $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mathbb{W}d6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}g4$

14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ b6 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ f5 17 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 18 $\mathbb{B}e1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 19 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ = Vera-Garcia Palermo, Bayamo 1983.

14... $f5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b3$

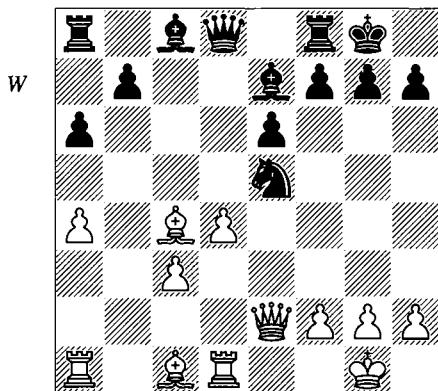
16 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 intending 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ g5 is given by ECO; 16 a5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{B}ae8$ is equal, Llanos-Slipak, Buenos Aires 1992.

16... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{B}ac1 \mathbb{B}ac8$

The chances are equal, S.Trofimov-Kupreichik, Kemerovo 1995.

B3)

12 ♜e5 ♜xc3 13 bxc3 ♜xe5 (D)



14 dxe5!?

This aggressive recapture leaves White with two isolated pawns, but their vulnerability is offset by the cramping effect of the e5-pawn. The position is nearly identical to Line B41 below – the difference is that the moves ♜b3 and ...♜e8 have not been played. White can also play the older recapture 14 ♜xe5 ♜d6 15 ♜h5 ♜c7 16 ♜d3 (White should avoid the catastrophic blunder 16 ♜d3?? ♜xc4 17 ♜h3 f6 18 ♜xh7+ ♜f7 19 ♜h5+ ♜e7 20 ♜h7 ♜f7 –+ Larsen-Spassky, Leiden 1970) 16...g6 17 ♜h4 ♜xc3 18 ♜h6 ♜e8 19 ♜f6 ♜f8 20 ♜xf8 ♜xf8 21 ♜e4 ♜c7 with equality, Rufener-Giertz, Biel open 1998.

14...♜c7 15 a5 b5!

Black must act immediately to liberate his queenside – the passive 15...♜d7? allows White to create a bind with 16 ♜e3 ♜ac8 17 ♜b6 ♜c6 (17...♜xc4 18 ♜xc4 ♜xc4 19 ♜xd7 ♜g5 20 g3 ♜xc3 21 ♜xb7 ±) 18 ♜ab1 ♜e8 19 ♜d3 ± Huss-Gurtner, Geneva 2001.

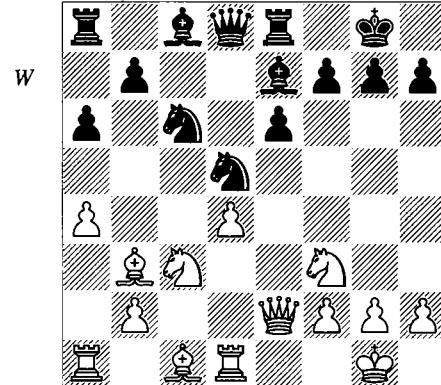
16 axb6 ♜xb6 17 ♜g4 ♜d8 18 ♜h6 ♜xd1+ 19 ♜xd1 ♜f8

The chances are equal, Markus-Arnold, Paks 2001.

B4)

12 ♜b3 ♜e8 (D)

This is our repertoire move – British GM Matthew Sadler helped to popularize this move. Now:



B41: 13 ♜e5 69

B42: 13 h4!? 70

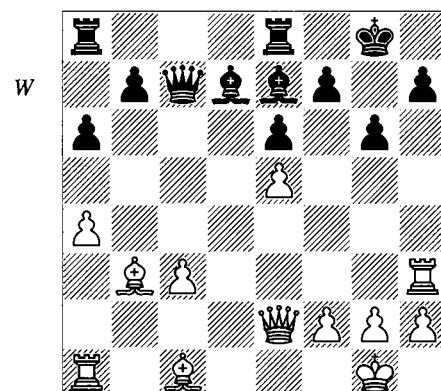
Another plan is 13 ♜d2 ♜f6 14 ♜e4 ♜cb4 15 ♜e5 b6 16 ♜f3 ♜b7 17 ♜e4 ♜e7 18 ♜ac1 ♜ac8 = Gelfand-Ivanchuk, Monte Carlo Amber rpd 2000.

B41)

13 ♜e5 ♜xc3 14 bxc3 ♜xe5 15 dxe5 ♜c7

Black has simplified the position by exchanging both sets of knights – now he must carefully defend his kingside.

16 ♜d3 ♜d7 17 ♜h3 g6 (D)



18 ♜h6

Another idea is 18 ♜e3!? ♜f8 19 ♜a3 ♜xa3 20 ♜xa3 ♜c6 with roughly level chances.

18...♜ed8!

This move prevents White from playing ♜d2. Sadler had lost several months earlier after 18...b5? 19 ♜d2 f5 20 ♜g7! ♜f8 21 ♜xf8 ♜xf8

22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 23 axb5 +- K.Müller-Sadler, Altensteig 1992.

19 $\mathbb{W}e3$

White is hoping to play $\mathbb{Q}g7$ as in the previous note.

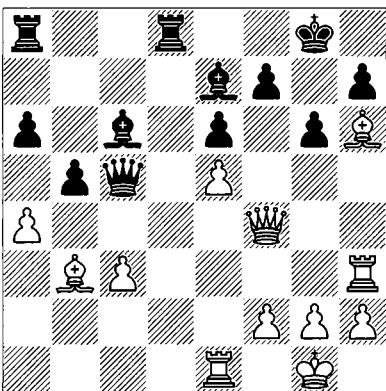
19... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 20 $\mathbb{W}f4$

White could avoid the complications by playing 20 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}dc8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ =.

20... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e1$

21 $\mathbb{Q}g7??$ g5! +- (Flear); 21 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xg5$ b5=.

21...b5 (D)



W

White must decide between continuing the attack or sounding the retreat:

a) 22 $\mathbb{Q}c2?$! $\mathbb{W}c4$ 23 $\mathbb{W}g3$ and now:

a1) 23...bxa4 24 $\mathbb{Q}g5$, when Black must choose carefully:

a11) 24... $\mathbb{W}c5$? and then:

a111) 25 $\mathbb{Q}xh7?$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 26 $\mathbb{W}h4+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ (28 f3 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ -+) 28... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 29 $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ 30 f3 (so far this is Naumkin-Sadler, Ostend 1992) 30... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$! 31 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 32 g3 $\mathbb{W}xg3+$ 33 hxg3 $\mathbb{W}xg3+$ 34 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ (34 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ wins for Black) 34... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 35 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ and Black has a decisive advantage.

a112) 25 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 26 $\mathbb{W}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}f8!$ 27 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ with equal chances according to Flear.

a113) 25 $\mathbb{Q}xg6!!$. This unexpected shot reverses the assessment of this line. Now Black has a choice of recaptures:

a1131) 25...hxg6 26 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 27 $\mathbb{W}h7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}he3!$ (the point is that the black queen cannot maintain control over the h8-square) 28... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (28... $\mathbb{W}g7$? 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$ -+) 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

$\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 31 $\mathbb{W}h6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 32 $\mathbb{W}e3$ +-

a1132) 25...fxg6 26 $\mathbb{W}h4$ h5 (26... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xh7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 28 $\mathbb{W}h8+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}h7#$; 26... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xh7$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 28 $\mathbb{W}xg6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ -+) 27 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 28 f3 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 29 $\mathbb{W}f6$ and White has a decisive advantage.

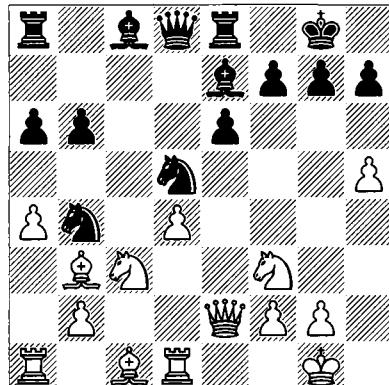
a12) 24... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$! 25 $\mathbb{W}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ h6!? (26... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ repeats) 27 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{W}a2$ is at least equal for Black.

a2) 23... $\mathbb{W}a2$! (as we saw in note 'a113' above, it is important to drive the white bishop away from the b1-h7 diagonal) 24 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (25 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}ad7$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}a1$ is also much better for Black) 25... $\mathbb{Q}ad7$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ b4 27 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ -.

b) 22 $\mathbb{Q}g5$!?, as suggested by Flear, looks like the best move here. Black can defend by continuing 22... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xg5$ bxa4 24 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ f5 (24... $\mathbb{Q}ab8$!?) 25 $\mathbb{W}h4$ (25 exf6?? $\mathbb{W}xg5$ would be unpleasant) 25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}he3$, with equal chances.

B42)

13 h4!? $\mathbb{Q}cb4$ 14 h5 b6 (D)



W

Now:

B421: 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 70

B422: 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 71

Another idea is 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ (15...h6!?) 16 h6 g6 = H.Stefansson-Izoria, Ohrid Ech 2001.

B421)

15 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

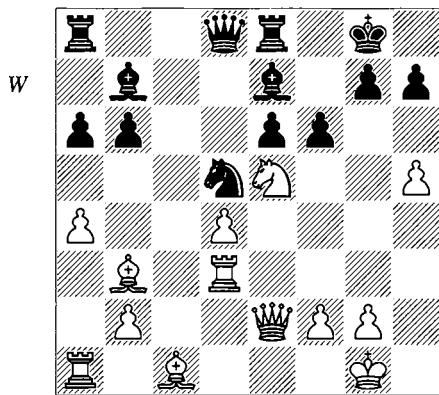
Khalifman credits Russian GM Peter Svidler with this move.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Black can also play 15...exd5 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ f6 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ("+" – Khalifman) 17... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 21 $\mathbb{W}h3$ h6! (opening a bolt hole for Black's light-squared bishop – Khalifman's variation continues with the weakening 21...g5(?) 22 f3, leading to an edge for White) 22 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ with equality.

16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ f6 (D)

Another idea is 17... $\mathbb{Q}c8!$? 18 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ with sharp play ahead.



18 $\mathbb{Q}g4$

White can also try the pseudo-combination 18 $\mathbb{Q}c6$. Then:

a) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ (?) 19 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}g8$ and "Black has a slight advantage" according to Khalifman, but I think White is doing fine here because of his powerful bishops and iron grip along the b1-h7 diagonal – the black queen is tied down defending the h7-square. White should play 25 $\mathbb{W}f5$! $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 27 h6, with good compensation for the exchange.

b) 18... $\mathbb{W}d6$! (Black must retain his powerful light-squared bishop) 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ and Black has a rock-solid position because of his strong knight outpost on the d5-square – White's dark-squared bishop is ineffective.

18... $\mathbb{W}d7$?

I think this is more logical than 18... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ (Black is losing too much time with this bishop manoeuvre) 23 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 26 $\mathbb{Q}de3$ ± Khalifman.

19 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}h8$ 20 h6 g6

The position is balanced.

B422)

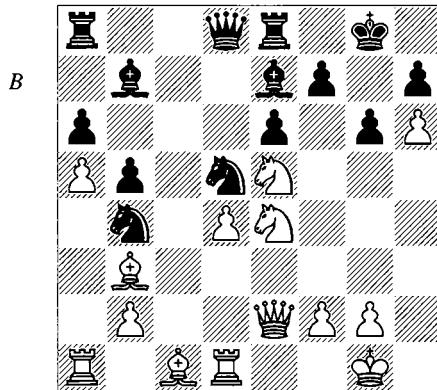
15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 16 a5

16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ f5 (16... $\mathbb{Q}c8$!?) 17 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ with approximate equality, Lautier-Markowski, Ohrid Ech playoff blitz 2001.

16...b5

Khalifman evaluated this position as unclear; 16... $\mathbb{Q}c8$! was suggested by Schipkov.

17 h6 g6 18 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (D)



The critical position. Now:

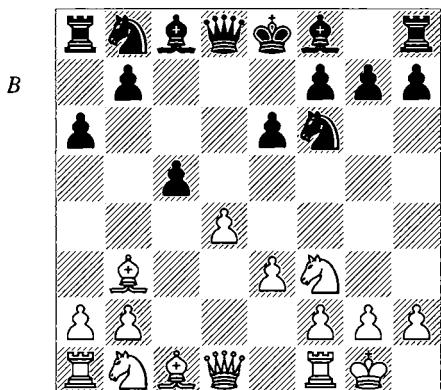
a) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ with an equal position, Kramnik-Kasparov, London Wch (6) 2000.

b) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}f3$ f5! 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ with an unclear position according to Kramnik.

c) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c8$! (I think this is the strongest move) 19 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 20 $dxc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ is "unclear" according to ECO, but after 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$, the onus is upon White to justify his pawn sacrifice.

8 Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{B}b3$

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 e3 e6 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5
6 0-0 a6 7 $\mathbb{B}b3$ (D)



The prophylactic retreat 7 $\mathbb{B}b3$ is currently one of the most popular lines of the Queen's Gambit Accepted. The bishop voluntarily withdraws along the a2-g8 diagonal in anticipation of receiving a kick from Black's b-pawn. One of the ideas behind 7 $\mathbb{B}b3$ is to demonstrate that the ...b5 pawn advance is weakening and does not need to be prevented (for example, by playing 7 a4, covered in Chapter 7). This strategy is somewhat different from 7 $\mathbb{B}d3$ (covered in Chapter 6, Line F) because there White intends to play dxc5 followed by a quick e4 pawn advance without allowing Black to exchange queens. White continues to exert pressure on the d5-square after 7 $\mathbb{B}b3$ – the drawback is that a tempo is expended moving an already-developed piece. Advocates of 7 $\mathbb{B}b3$ are willing to invest this tempo if they can inhibit Black from playing ...b5 and ... $\mathbb{B}b7$, as these are Black's natural developing moves. The 14th World Champion Vladimir Kramnik, the 13th World Champion Garry Kasparov, and Russian GM Vladimir Epishin are among the prominent exponents of this variation.

7...b5

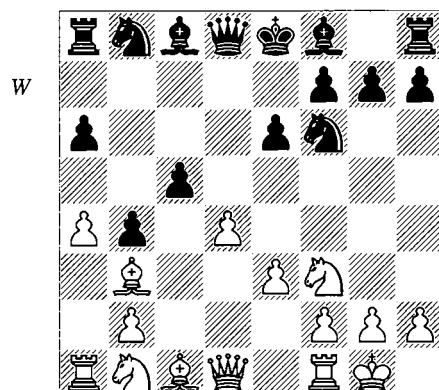
This natural move is our repertoire choice – Black continues the plan of queenside expansion

initiated by 6...a6 and prepares to develop his light-squared bishop on the long diagonal. Russian GM Sergei Rublevsky has played many games as Black in this line.

8 a4

White can transpose into the main line of the Classical Variation (Chapters 10 and 11) by playing 8 $\mathbb{W}e2$ – 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{B}b3$.

8...b4 (D)



The net result of this brief pawn skirmish is that White obtains the use of the c4-square for his pieces (primarily the knights), whereas Black's b4-pawn prevents White's b1-knight from developing to the c3-square. This trade-off may appear to favour White as the b1-knight is bound for the c4-square, but Black also obtains a benefit as the manoeuvre $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ -c4 decreases White's influence over the e4-square.

Now White has two major options:

A: 9 e4!? 73

B: 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 75

Alternatives:

a) 9 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ – 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{B}b3$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 9 a4 b4 (Chapter 10).

b) 9 a5 and then:

b1) 9... $\mathbb{B}b7$ is the most popular move here, but I prefer to avoid 10 $\mathbb{B}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11 e4!?,

when White has attacking chances, Avrukh-Kariakin, Biel 2003.

b2) 9...♝c6 and here:

b21) 10 ♜bd2 and now:

b211) 10...cx d4?! (Kožul-Baburin, Istanbul OL 2000) 11 ♜c4!? (Baburin) 11...♜b7 (not 11...dxe3? 12 ♜xe3 ♜xd1 {12...♜b7 13 ♜a4 +} 13 ♜fx d1 ♜d5 14 ♜a4 ♜d7 15 ♜b6 ♜xb6 16 axb6 +-) 12 ♜a4 ♜c8 13 ♜xd4 ±.

b212) After 10...♜b7 11 ♜a4 ♜e7 12 dx c5 0-0 13 ♜b3 ♜c7 "Black has good prospects to equalize" according to Sakaev and Semkov. A possible continuation is 14 ♜d2 ♜fd8 15 ♜fd4 ♜e4?! with a double-edged position.

b22) 10 ♜a4 ♜d7 11 dx c5 ♜xc5 = Bets-Svetushkin, Bucharest 2002.

b3) 9...♜e7 (this move has only been played a few times and it appears promising – Black prepares to evacuate his king from the dangerous a4-e8 diagonal) 10 ♜a4+ ♜d7 11 dx c5 0-0 12 ♜bd2 ♜xa5 13 ♜b3 (13 c6? ♜xc6 is much better for Black) 13...♜xa4 14 ♜xa5 ♜xd1 15 ♜xd1 ♜c8 = V. Georgiev-Mikhailchishin, Varazdin 2003.

A)

9 e4!? **cx d4** **10 ♜bd2**

White can also try the aggressive 10 e5 ♜e4 11 ♜xd4 ♜c5 (after 11...♜b7?! 12 ♜e3 ♜c5 13 ♜c2 ♜d5 14 ♜f3 ♜bd7 {1/2-1/2 Scherbakov-Skipchenko, Groningen 1998} Black could play on; for example, 15 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 16 ♜bd2 b3 17 ♜b1 ♜e7 ≠) 12 ♜c4 ♜b7 13 a5 (13 ♜e3 {1/2-1/2 Barsov-Volzhin, Dhaka 2001}) 13...♜bd7 14 f4 ♜b6 =) 13...♜c7 14 ♜d2 (Black also has a comfortable position after 14 ♜f4 ♜c6 15 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 16 f3 ♜d8 17 ♜e2 ♜e7 =) 14...♜xe5 15 ♜f3 ♜d6 16 ♜d2 ♜e4 (16...♜e7 17 ♜xb4 ♜c6 18 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 19 ♜c1 ♜c8 20 ♜e2 {Hari-krishna-Krush, Hastings 2001/2}) 20...♜e4 21 ♜c4 ♜d8 =) 17 ♜a4+ ♜c6 ≠ Sakaev and Semkov.

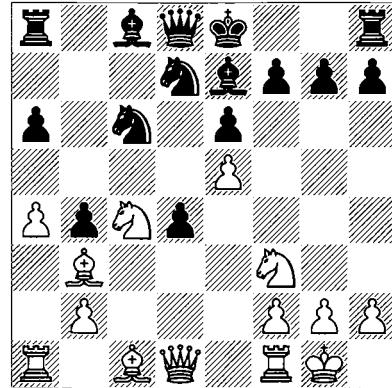
10...♝c6

Black can also transpose into Line B by playing 10...♜b7 – 9 ♜bd2 ♜b7 10 e4 cx d4.

11 e5 ♜d7 **12 ♜c4 ♜e7 (D)**

13 ♜xd4

White sacrifices a pawn in order to try to exploit his slight lead in development. Alternatives:



W

a) 13 a5 ♜c5 14 ♜a4 ♜xa4 15 ♜xa4 ♜d7 16 ♜b3 0-0 17 ♜d1 ♜e8 = ½-½ Prokopchuk-Volzhin, Russian Cht (Tomsk) 2001.

b) 13 ♜g5 0-0 14 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 15 ♜c1 ♜b7 16 ♜c2 ♜ab8 17 ♜xd4 = ½-½ Gleizerov-Skipchenko, Saint Vincent 2001.

c) 13 ♜f4 ♜c5 14 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 15 exd6 ♜xb3 16 ♜xb3 0-0 17 ♜fd1 ♜f6 18 ♜c2 ♜d7 19 ♜g5 ♜g6 20 ♜xg6 hxg6 21 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 22 ♜xd4 f6 23 ♜e3 a5 = Peng Zhaoqin-Skipchenko, Leon wom Echt 2001.

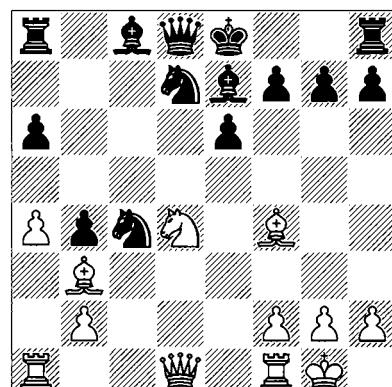
13...♝cxe5 **14 ♜f4**

White can also try:

a) 14 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 15 ♜e3 ♜f6 16 ♜e2 0-0 ≠ Krush-Matveeva, Krasnoturinsk wom 2004. White has inadequate compensation for the pawn.

b) 14 ♜e3 0-0 15 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 16 f4 ♜g6 17 ♜f3 ♜d7 = Bologan-Rublevsky, Poikovsky 2004.

14...♝xc4 (D)



W

15 ♜c6

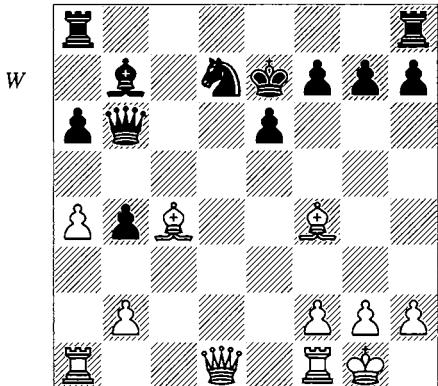
White employs a *zwischenzug* to continue the attack. The alternative is to recapture the piece immediately with 15 ♜xc4 ♜b6 16 ♜b3, and now:

- a) 16...♜f6 17 ♜c6 ♜xd1 18 ♜fxd1 0-0 19 a5 ♜d5 20 ♜xd5 exd5 21 ♜xb4 ♜e6 22 ♜xd5 ♜xb2 23 ♜ab1 (Lautier-Rublevsky, Poikovsky 2003) 23...♜ad8?! 24 ♜d6 (24 ♜e7+ ♜h8 25 ♜d6 ♜b3 26 ♜c6 ♜xd1 27 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 28 ♜xb2 = Khuzman) 24...♜fe8 25 ♜c7 ♜f5 26 ♜xe8 ♜xb1 27 ♜xb1 ♜xe8 = Khuzman.
- b) 16...♜b7 17 a5 ♜d5 18 ♜a4+ ♜f8 19 ♜f3 ♜f6 (19...♜c8 20 ♜c7! ♜xc7 21 ♜xb7 ♜b8 22 ♜a7 ♜a8 23 ♜b7 ♜xd4 24 ♜xc7 ♜d6 25 ♜c6 ♜d8 26 ♜ad1 ♜e5 27 g3 = Khuzman) 20 ♜c6 ♜xd4 21 ♜xb7 ♜a7 22 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 23 ♜xd5 exd5 24 ♜fd1 ♜xb2 25 ♜ab1 ♜c3 26 ♜d6+ ♜e8 27 ♜xb4 ♜xb4 28 ♜xb4 ♜e7 = Khuzman.

15...♝b6

Black should avoid 15...♜xb2?! 16 ♜d2 ♜b6 17 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 18 ♜xb2 ("with compensation" – Khuzman) 18...♜f6 19 a5 ♜b5 20 ♜fc1, when White has a strong attack for the two pawns.

16 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 17 ♜xc4 ♜b7 (D)



18 ♜d2

White prepares to build up along the d-file. Alternatives:

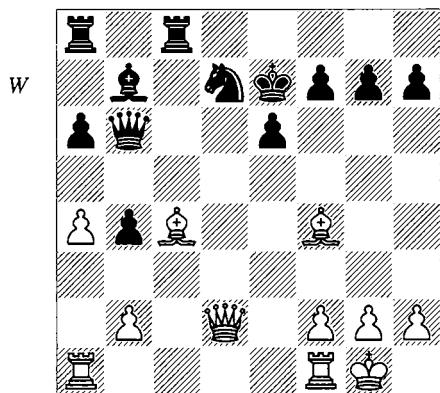
- a) 18 ♜c1 ♜hd8 19 ♜h5 ♜f6 20 ♜h3 (the white queen is offside here) 20...♜ac8 († Khuzman), Chabanon-Skripchenko, French Ch (Aix-les-Bains) 2003.

b) 18 ♜b3 ♜c5 (18...♜ac8?! 19 ♜ac1 gives White compensation for the pawn according to Bologan; another idea is 18...♜hc8!?) 19 ♜g3 and here:

b1) 19...♜c6?! 20 f3 (20 ♜d2 is also advantageous for White) 20...♜hd8? (Grishchuk-Rublevsky, Poikovsky 2005 – this game was played in the fourth round after Rublevsky had already faced 18 ♜d2) 21 ♜xg7 ±.

b2) 19...♜e4! 20 ♜h4+ (20 ♜xg7? ♜ag8 21 ♜h6 ♜f6 attacks the g2-square and wins for Black because of the additional threat of ...♜c6) 20...♜e8 21 ♜e3 ♜d8 with roughly level chances – White's two bishops compensate for the pawn.

18...♜hc8 (D)



19 ♜ac1!

Bologan annotated his second-round encounter with Rublevsky in *New In Chess* and he revealed that this novelty had been prepared more than six months prior to this game. An earlier game saw 19 ♜fd1 (19 b3!?) 19...♜xc4 20 ♜xd7+ ♜f8 21 a5 ♜c6 22 ♜d6+ ♜g8 23 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 24 ♜ac1 = Alexandrov-Rublevsky, Russian Cht (Sochi) 2004.

19...♝e8

Bologan analysed 19...♜f6? (he also suggested 19...♜d8!?) 20 a5! ♜xa5 21 ♜d6+ ♜e8 22 ♜xe6 ♜xc1 23 ♜xc1 ♜d8 24 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 25 ♜c7+ ♜d7 26 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 27 ♜xd7+ ♜f6 28 h4! +-.

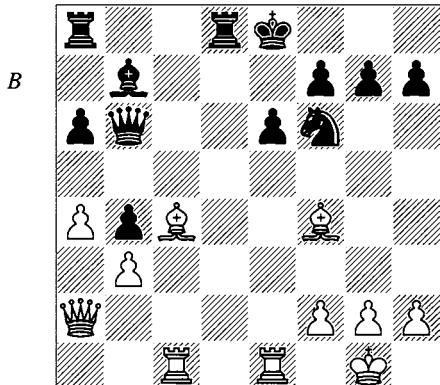
20 ♜fe1 ♜f6! 21 b3 ♜d8 22 ♜a2 (D)

Now:

a) 22...♜ac8 23 a5 ♜c6?! (23...♜d4! is better according to Bologan) 24 ♜f1 ♜d7 25 ♜a1! gives White good compensation for the pawn, Bologan-Rublevsky, Poikovsky 2005.

b) 22...♜d4! 23 ♜e5 and then:

b1) 23...♜d2 24 ♜a1 (24 ♜b1 ♜e4 25 ♜a1 ♜g5 26 ♜f1 ♜d3 leaves White with marginal

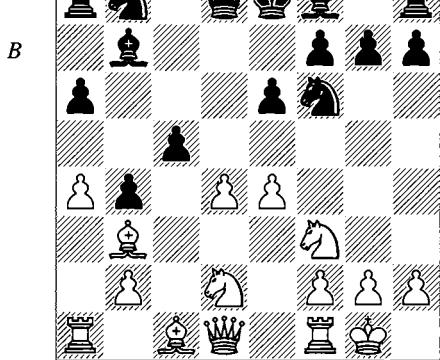


compensation for the pawn) 24...♗g5 25 ♖f1 with an unclear position.

b2) 23...♗g4 24 ♖f1 ♕ac8 25 ♕b2 (I think White should consider 25 ♕xc8 ♕xc8 26 ♕a1 with compensation) 25...♗g6 26 ♕e2 (White has compensation for the pawn according to Bologan) 26...♘d5!?, with good chances for a successful defence. I expect we will continue to see further developments in this dynamic variation.

B)

9 ♘bd2 ♘b7 10 e4 (D)



Now Black can maintain the central tension or exchange a set of pawns:

B1: 10...♘e7 75

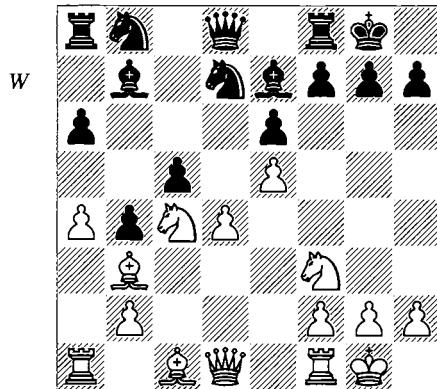
B2: 10...cxnd4 76

B1)

10...♘e7

This is an idea of Ukrainian GM Ruslan Ponomariov.

11 e5 ♘fd7 12 ♘c4 0-0 (D)



13 ♘c2

Another idea is 13 ♘d6 ♘xd6 14 exd6 cxd4 and now:

a) 15 ♕xd4 ♘xf3 16 gxf3 ♘c6 is slightly better for Black.

b) 15 ♘xd4 was suggested by Dautov. 15...♘c5 is an adequate reply.

c) 15 ♖g5 ♘xf3 16 ♕xf3 ♕xg5 17 ♕xa8 ♘c5 18 ♕f3 ♘bd7 19 ♕ad1 ♘e5 († Dautov, Dreev-Ponomariov, Panormo ECC 2001.

13...cxnd4

This capture is more precise than 13...♘c6?! 14 ♕d3 g6 15 ♖h6 ♕e8 (15...cxnd4 16 ♖xf8 ♘xf8 17 ♕ad1 ± Samraoui-Polaczek, IECG e-mail 2001) 16 dxc5! (16 ♘d6 ♘xd6 17 exd6 cxd4 18 ♘xd4 = Rogozenko-Moldovan, Romanian Cht (Tusnad) 2005) 16...♘xc5 (Illescas-Kariakin, Dos Hermanas 2003) 17 ♕e3! ♘a5 18 ♘d6 ♘xd6 19 exd6 ♕xd6 20 ♕ad1 ♕e7 21 ♘e5 and White has a clear advantage according to Kariakin and Borovikov.

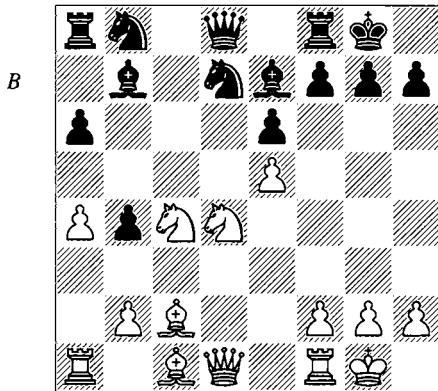
14 ♘xd4 (D)

White can also play 14 ♕xd4 b3!? (an interesting pawn sacrifice to obtain squares for the knights – another idea is 14...♘d5!?, Gunina-Matveeva, Russian wom Ch (Samara) 2005) 15 ♖xb3 ♘xf3 16 gxf3 ♘c6 17 ♕e3 ♕c7 18 f4 ♘c5 (the immediate 18...♖fd8!? is worthy of attention, to leave the a3-f8 diagonal clear) 19 ♖d1 and now:

a) 19...♖ad8?! 20 ♕a3 ♘d4 21 ♘d6 ♘xd6 (21...♘f5? 22 ♘xf5 exf5 23 ♕c3 ± Dreev-Kariakin, Dos Hermanas 2005) 22 ♕xd4 ♕e7

23 $\mathbb{W}c4$ a5 24 $\mathbb{W}c2 \pm$. Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

b) 19... $\mathbb{H}fd8$ (the right rook) 20 $\mathbb{B}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}ab8$ and Black has good compensation for the pawn, Riazantsev-Rublevsky, Russian Cht (Sochi) 2005. I anticipate further developments in this line.



Now Black has two reasonable options:

a) 14... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (15 $\mathbb{W}d3$ g6 16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b3 18 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{H}e8 =$ Galliamova-Matveeva, Russian wom Ch (Samara) 2005) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ exd5 19 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ 21 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ (Black protects the d5-pawn in order to develop his other knight to the d7-square – this is Dautov's improvement over 21... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 22 $\mathbb{B}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ dxc4 24 $\mathbb{B}xc4 \pm$ Dautov-D.Gurevich, Moscow (1) 2001) 22 $\mathbb{B}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 24 $\mathbb{B}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 25 $\mathbb{B}c2$ d4 26 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 27 $\mathbb{B}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ 28 $\mathbb{gxf3}$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 29 $\mathbb{B}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 30 $\mathbb{B}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 31 $\mathbb{B}b7$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ with an equal endgame – Dautov.

b) 14... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d3$ g6 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{B}fd8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ (unclear – ECO), S.Ernst-Krush, Bermuda 2002.

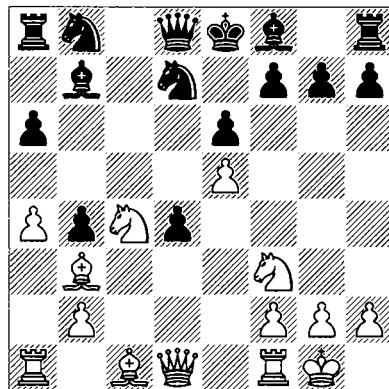
B2)

10... $\mathbb{c}xd4$ 11 $e5$ $\mathbb{Q}fd7$

This is the correct square for the knight because it can move to the c5-square and pressure White's light-squared bishop. Black should avoid the superficially attractive 11... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ (the knight is all dressed up with no place to go here) 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{B}c1!$ h6 15 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}fd2$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g3$

and White has a clear advantage (Kasparov) – this is Kasparov-Piket, Tilburg 1997. White's total domination over the d6-square is frightening and Kasparov won in grand style.

12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (D)



Now Black has:

B21: 12... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 77

B22: 12... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 78

12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is also seen. Then:

a) 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xe7 =$ Sundararajan-Adianto, Doha 2003.

b) 13 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 16 b3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (16... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$) 17 $\mathbb{Q}fd2$ and here:

b1) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{B}hd8$ 19 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ ("±" Khuzman) 19... $\mathbb{Q}b6?$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ is met by 20... $\mathbb{Q}xg2!$) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 22 $\mathbb{B}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7 =$.

b2) 17...f6 18 exf6 (18 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ fxe5 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ "F" Khuzman; White's minor pieces are tied down defending the b3-pawn) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ (Ki.Georgiev-Ibragimov, New York 1998) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{B}ac8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ with an equal position.

c) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 0-0 (13... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$! 14 $\mathbb{W}g4$ g6 15 $\mathbb{Q}h6 \pm$ Tkachev-Sadvakasov, Moscow 2002) 14 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ and now:

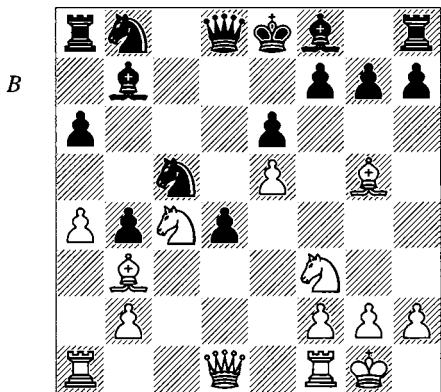
c1) 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ (17... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$) 18 exd6 ("±" Sakaev and Semkov) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xd8$ $\mathbb{B}fxd8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 23 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8 =$.

c2) 15 $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}h3$ ½-½

Evseev-Feoktistov, Hammerfest 1999. White should play on as Black's dark squares are vulnerable after 20...g6 21 ♜c4 ±.

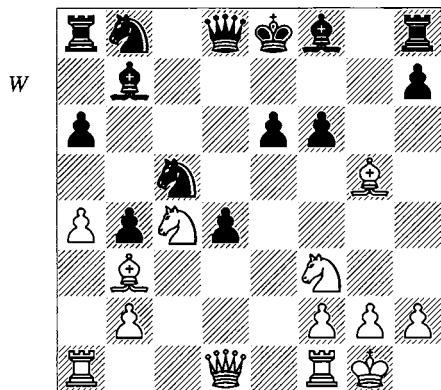
B21)

12...♜c5 13 ♜g5 (D)



13...♝c7!

This move deserves more practical tests. The alternative is 13...f6?, but Black should avoid this move, despite the fact that it has been the overwhelming choice here – the following lines demonstrate why it is dangerous for Black to open lines around his king while he is several tempi behind in development. 14 exf6 gxf6 (D) and now:



a) 15 ♜fe5? h5 and then:

a1) 16 ♜h4 ♜d5! 17 ♜f3 ♜g8 18 ♜h1 (18 ♜g3 ♜xb3 19 ♜xb3 ♜d7 ± Gomez-Vilela, Cuban Ch semi-final 2000) 18...♜bd7! with a clear plus for Black – Spangenberg.

a2) 16 ♜g6 ♜d5 17 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 18 ♜xh8 ♜xb3 (also sufficient is 18...fxg5 19 ♜xh5+ ♜d7 20 ♜c4 ♜c6 21 ♜f7 ♜f4 –+) 19 ♜xh5+ ♜d7 20 ♜xf6 ♜xa1! –+ Slipak-Spangenberg, Buenos Aires 1996.

b) 15 ♜xd4! and here:

b1) 15...♜d5 16 ♜d6+! ♜xd6 17 ♜h5+ ♜d7 18 ♜xf6 ♜xb3 19 ♜xb3 ± Gershon-Svetushkin, Erevan jr Wch 2000.

b2) 15...h5 16 ♜xe6!! ♜xd1 17 ♜axd1. So far this is Goormachtigh-Jonkman, Gent 2001. Now relatively best is 17...♜xb3 18 ♜xf6 ♜g8 19 ♜g5! with the idea of ♜fe1+ ± according to Gershon. I believe this sacrificial idea has eliminated 13...f6? as a viable alternative.

14 ♜xd4

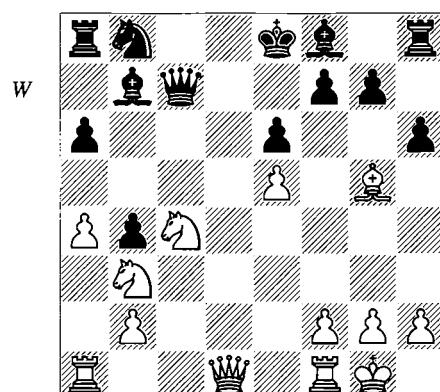
White hastens to recapture the pawn as 14 ♜c1 d3 keeps the d-file closed.

14...♜xb3 15 ♜xb3??

Better is 15 ♜xb3 ♜c6 16 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 17 f3 ♜c7 18 ♜ac1 ♜d5 19 ♜cd3 ♜c5+ 20 ♜h1 0-0-0 21 ♜fd1 ♜a7 =.

15...h6 (D)

½-½ Tregubov-Scherbakov, Russia Cup (Krasnoiarsk) 1998 – this was a team tournament which may explain the premature draw.



Now:

a) 16 ♜d6+? ♜xd6 17 exd6 (17 ♜c1 hxg5 – 16 ♜c1 hxg5 17 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 –+) 17...♜c6 18 ♜g4 hxg5 –+.

b) 16 ♜c1? hxg5 17 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 18 ♜xc7 (18 exd6 ♜d8 –+) 18...♜c7 19 ♜c5 ♜d5 –+. The rook and two bishops are too much for the queen.

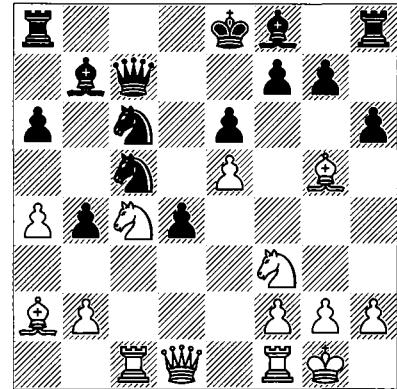
c) 16 ♜h4 g5 17 ♜c1 (17 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 18 ♜c1 ♜d8 –+) 17...gxh4 18 ♜ca5 (18 ♜d6+?

$\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 19 $\mathbb{B}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ +-) and then:

c1) 18... $\mathbb{W}d7$? 19 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 21 $\mathbb{B}c8+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (21... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ +-) 22 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ (22... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 23 $\mathbb{B}xb8$ +-) 23 $\mathbb{W}xh4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 25 $\mathbb{B}d1+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 26 $\mathbb{B}c5$ +-.

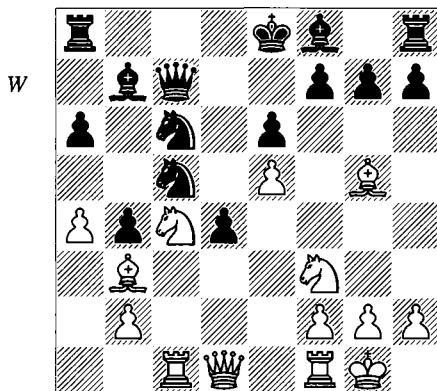
c2) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}c2$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{B}d8$?) 20... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (21 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ + - 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ +) 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$?.

c3) 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ + $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$?.



B22)

12... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{B}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (D)



15 $\mathbb{Q}a2$

Given a "?" by Bareev, but he did not propose an alternative. 15 $\mathbb{B}e1$ was suggested by Sakaev and Semkov – 15... $d3$ looks like an adequate reply. Another possibility is 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$! as suggested by ECO.

15... $h6$ (D)

Black should avoid the following weaker alternatives:

a) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e4$? 16 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $g5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ (17 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ {Tregubov-Brynell, Poland 1999}) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 18 $\mathbb{B}xc3$ $gxh4$ 19 $\mathbb{C}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ± Tregubov) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 0-0-0 (Bareev-Timman, Sarajevo 1999) 19 $\mathbb{W}f3!$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ +- Bareev.

b) 15... $\mathbb{Q}a5$?! (this move loses too much time) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xa4+$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 19 $\mathbb{B}c7$ $h6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 22 $e6$ ±.

In this position White has a choice of bishop retreats:

B221: 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 78

B222: 16 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 79

B221)

16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $g5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$

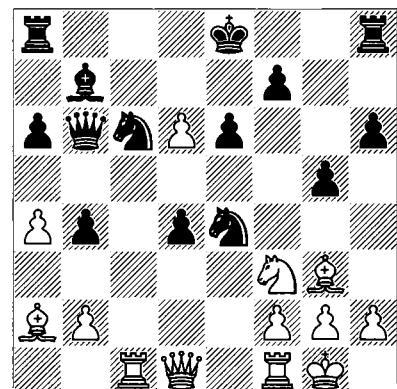
17 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ – 16 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $g5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g3$.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g3$

This is "unclear" according to Bareev.

19... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (D)

19... $b3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ (20 $a5$!? $\mathbb{W}b4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ is another idea) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ (20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 21 $\mathbb{B}c4$!?) 21 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ with compensation for the material.



20 $a5$

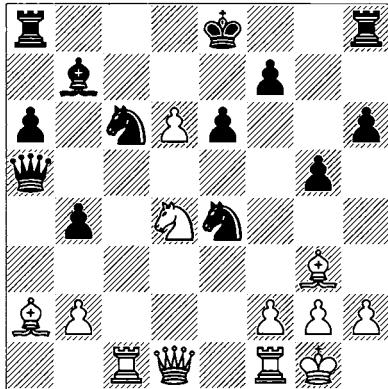
20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ is the alternative:

a) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ (21... $\mathbb{W}c5$? 22 $\mathbb{F}xg3$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ 23 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{B}d7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{G}4$ 25 $\mathbb{W}f6$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ with a crushing advantage) 22 $\mathbb{F}xg3$ 0-0-0 23 $\mathbb{W}d3$ with an edge for White – Black would love to move his g-pawn back two squares!

b) 20...♘xd2! 21 ♘xd2 b3 22 ♖b1 f5!? (a double-edged move – the idea is to make a stand in the centre of the board and frustrate the white bishops) 23 ♘e2 ♘d7 24 ♘fe1 ♘he8 25 ♘xf5 (25 ♘e5 ♘ac8 26 ♘g7 ♘b4 27 ♘xh6 g4 is unclear) 25...exf5 26 ♘c4 f4 27 ♘f7+ ♘xd6 and now both 28 ♘xf4+ gxf4 29 ♘f6+ (29 ♘xe8 ♘xe8 30 ♘xe8 ♘a5 is fine for Black) 29...♔d7 30 ♘f5+ and 28 ♘f6+ ♔d7 29 ♘f5+ ♔d6 30 ♘f6+ end in a draw by perpetual check.

20...♗xa5 21 ♘xd4 (D)

B



Now:

a) 21...♗xa2 22 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 23 ♘xc6 looks as though it should favour White because of his strong d-pawn, but Black's position is surprisingly resilient after 23...♔d5! 24 ♘a4 0-0 25 ♘d1 ♘c5 26 ♘xd5 ♘xa4 27 ♘d2 ♘fc8:

a1) 28 ♘c7 ♘b6 29 d7 ♘d8 30 ♘b7 ♘d5 31 ♘e5 a5=.

a2) 28 ♘xc8+ ♘xc8 29 ♘f1 ♘b6 30 ♘d4 ♘d5 31 ♘c4 ♘d8=.

a3) 28 ♘dc2 ♘xc6 29 ♘xc6 ♘f8 with approximately level chances.

b) 21...♘xg3 22 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 23 hxg3 (23 ♘xc6? ♘xf1 24 d7+ ♘e7 25 ♘d6+ ♘f6 26 ♘xe6 ♘e5 +; 23 fxg3 ♘b6+ 24 ♘h1 0-0 25 ♘h5 ♘g7 =) 23...♗xa2 24 ♘xc6 0-0 =.

B222)

16 ♘h4 g5 17 ♘g3 ♘e4

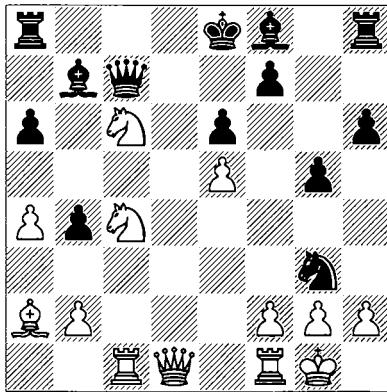
"Unclear" – Bareev.

18 ♘xd4!? ♘xg3!

Black should avoid 18...♖d8? 19 ♘d6+! ♘xd6 20 exd6 ♘xd6 21 ♘h5! ♘xg3 22 ♘xe6 ♘xh2+ 23 ♘h1, when White has a decisive attack.

19 ♘xc6 (D)

B



Now:

a) 19...♘xc6 20 ♘d6+ (20 fxg3!?) 20...♔xd6 21 exd6 0-0-0! (power castling!) and here:

a1) 22 ♘d3 ♘xd6 23 ♘xg3 – 22 ♘g4 ♘xd6 23 ♘xg3.

a2) 22 fxg3 ♘xd6 23 ♘e2 ♘b6+ 24 ♘h1 ♘hd8 ±. Black's d-file pressure and extra pawn more than offset his slightly exposed king.

a3) 22 ♘g4 ♘xd6 23 ♘xg3 ♘hd8 =. Black has an extra pawn, but his king is slightly exposed.

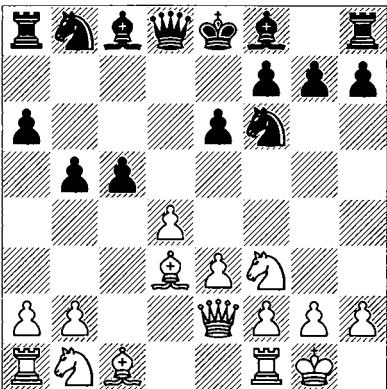
b) 19...♘xf1 20 ♘d6+ ♘xd6 21 exd6 ♘xc6 (White has a strong attack after 21...♔d7? 22 ♘e5 ♘d8 23 ♘c7 0-0 24 ♘xb7 ±) 22 ♘xc6 23 ♘xf1 ♘d7 =. The chances are balanced in this queen versus two rooks middle-game.

9 Classical Variation: 7 ♜e2 b5

8 ♜d3

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5
6 0-0 a6 7 ♜e2 b5 8 ♜d3 (D)

B



White withdraws his bishop from the a2-g8 diagonal and takes aim at Black's kingside – the intent is to develop a rapid kingside attack. The disadvantage of the move is that White gives up control over the central d5-square. The alternative retreat 8 ♜b3 (covered in Chapters 10 and 11) is more than twice as popular as 8 ♜d3. However, even though this variation is out of favour at the moment, as we shall see there are some unexplored ideas in this line.

8...cxd4

Our repertoire move is the most popular choice here – Black exchanges central pawns and saddles White with an isolated d4-pawn.

9 exd4

Black must decide which bishop to develop:

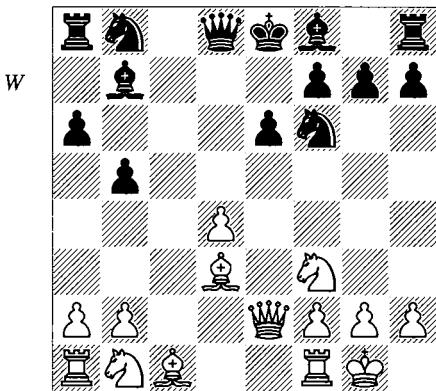
A: 9...♝b7 80

B: 9...♝e7 81

The lines can transpose into each other, but there are some subtle differences to be aware of.

A)

9...♝b7 (D)



This move can transpose into 9...♝e7 (Line B) although there are some unexplored sidelines.

10 a4

White can also play 10 ♜c3 ♜e7, and then:

a) 11 ♜e4 ♜c6 12 ♜d1 ♜d5 13 ♜c5 ♜xc5 14 dxc5 ♜e7 15 ♜e4 ♜d8 ½-½ Goletiani-Skipchenko, Medellin girls Wch 1996.

b) 11 ♜g5 0-0 12 ♜ac1 ♜bd7 13 ♜fd1 b4 14 ♜e4 ♜xe4 15 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 16 ♜xe4 ♜f6 = Socko-Galliamova, Istanbul wom OL 2000.

10...bxa4

Black can also try the relatively unexplored 10...b4. Then:

a) 11 ♜g5 ♜c6 (11...♝e7 12 ♜bd2 ♜bd7 13 ♜fc1 h6 14 ♜f4 ♜d5 15 ♜g3 0-0 = Shumiakina-Mamedova, USSR wom Cht (Azov) 1991) 12 ♜xf6 gxf6 13 ♜d1 ♜e7 14 ♜bd2 ♜d5 15 ♜e4 ♜e7 16 ♜b3 f5 with an unclear position, Khuzman-Lin Ta, Belgrade 1988.

b) 11 ♜bd2 ♜e7 12 a5 (12 ♜c4 a5 = Landau-Reshevsky, Kemer 1937) 12...0-0 13 ♜c4 (R.Bates-Mortazavi, British Ch (Hove) 1997) 13...♜c6 =.

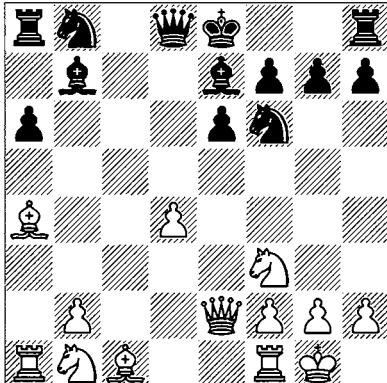
11 ♜c2!?

Neishtadt considered 9...♝b7 inaccurate because of this idea – White tries to exploit

Black's inability to castle out of danger. The most popular move here is 11 ♜xa4 ♜e7 – 9...♜e7 10 a4 bxa4 11 ♜xa4 ♜b7.

11...♜e7 12 ♜xa4+ (D)

B



Now:

a) 12...♝bd7?! 13 ♜e5 ♜c8 14 d5! with a strong attack for White, Endzelins-Szily, corr. 1959.

b) 12...♝fd7 13 ♜c3 ("White stands better" – Neishtadt) 13...0-0 14 ♜e3 ♜f6 with a balanced position.

c) 12...♜c6 13 ♜xc6+ ♜xc6 14 ♜xa6 ♜xd4 15 ♜xd4 ♜xa6 16 ♜xa6 ♜xd4 17 ♜e3 ("Black cannot take the b2-pawn and, with his passed pawn, White has the better chances" according to Neishtadt, but he did not offer any further analysis and it is difficult to mobilize the passed b-pawn) 17...♝d7 (17...♝xb2?? loses to 18 ♜c8+ ♜d8 19 ♜c6+) 18 ♜a8+ (18 ♜c3 0-0 19 ♜d1 ♜c7 =) 18...♝d8 19 ♜c6+ (19 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 =) 19...♝d7 20 ♜a8+ ♜d8 repeats the position.

B)

9...♜e7 (D)

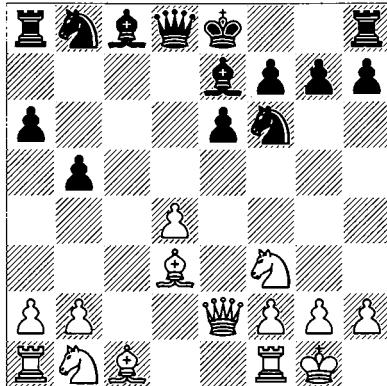
Black prepares to castle kingside.

10 a4

This is the best chance to fight for an opening advantage. The following lines demonstrate that White does not obtain any benefit by avoiding the a4 pawn advance:

a) 10 ♜c3 ♜c6 11 a4 bxa4 12 ♜xa4 ♜b4 13 ♜b1 ♜b7 14 ♜g5 a5 15 ♜d1 0-0 16 ♜e5 ♜fd5 17 ♜d2 f5 was unclear in I.Sokolov-Cifuentes, Dutch Ch (Rotterdam) 1997.

W



b) 10 ♜g5 ♜b7 (Black must avoid 10...0-0?? 11 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 12 ♜e4, spearing a rook) 11 ♜c3 0-0 12 ♜ad1 (12 a4 bxa4 13 ♜xa4 – 10 a4 bxa4 11 ♜xa4 ♜b7 12 ♜c3 0-0 13 ♜g5) 12...♝bd7 and here:

b1) 13 ♜c1?!! (Harmon-Leverett, USA corr. Ch 1984) 13...b4 14 ♜b1 ♜a5 ?.

b2) 13 ♜e5 ♜d5 (13...♝xe5 14 dxe5 ♜d5 15 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 16 ♜e4 ♜f4 17 ♜g4 ♜xd3 18 ♜xd3 ♜xe4 19 ♜xe4 ♜ad8 = Yusupov-Rublevsky, Frankfurt 2000) 14 ♜d2 ♜xc3 15 ♜xc3 (15 bxc3 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 ♜f6 17 ♜h5 g6 18 ♜g4 ♜d5 19 ♜b1 ♜c8 ? Fradkin-Rublevsky, Kurgan 1993) 15...♝f6 16 ♜b1 ♜d5 17 f3 b4 18 ♜e1 a5 19 ♜e3 (19 ♜c4 ♜a6 20 b3 ♜ac8 ? Simantsev-Voroviov, St Petersburg 2000) 19...♜ac8 ? Yusupov-Shirov, Prague rpd 2002.

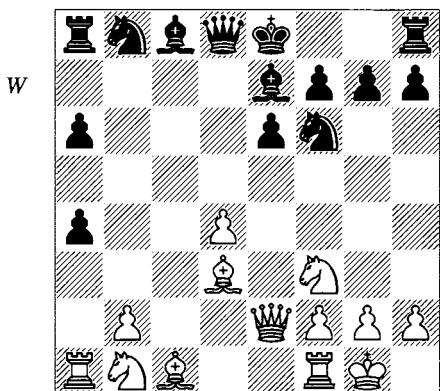
b3) 13 ♜b1 b4 14 ♜e4 (14 ♜a4? ♜a5 ? Cifuentes) 14...♝xe4 15 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 16 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 17 ♜xe4 ♜f6 18 ♜d3 (18 ♜e2 ♜d6 19 ♜c1 ♜fc8 20 ♜c4 ♜xc4 21 ♜xc4 a5 is slightly better for Black, De Sousa-Cifuentes, Linares 1997) 18...♜fc8 19 ♜c1 ♜b7 20 ♜e5 h6 21 g3 ½-½ Gofshtein-Flear, St Affrique 1999. Black could play 21...♝d5 with a slight edge.

b4) 13 ♜fe1 ♜b6 14 ♜e5 (14 ♜b1 ♜bd5 15 ♜e4 ♜c8 16 ♜d3 ♜xe4 17 ♜xe4 g6 18 ♜h4 ♜e8 = Gaprindashvili-Demina, Russian wom Ch (Elista) 1998) 14...♜c8 15 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 16 ♜e4 ♜d5 17 b3 ♜e7 18 ♜h5 f5 19 ♜g3 ♜d7 with equality, I.Sokolov-Baburin, New York 1997.

10...bxa4 (D)

Black can also play 10...b4 11 ♜bd2 (11 ♜g5 ♜c6!?) 11...♜b7 – 9...♜b7 10 a4 b4 11 ♜bd2 ♜e7.

11 ♜xa4



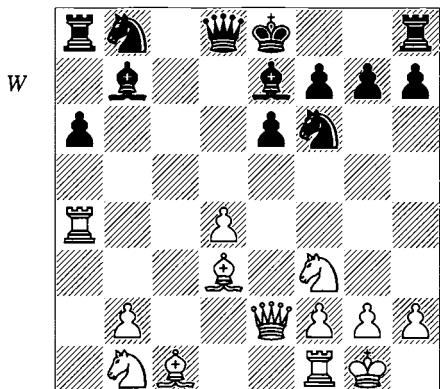
One of the differences between 9... $\mathbb{B}b7$ (Line A) and 9... $\mathbb{K}e7$ (Line B) is that 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$? has no point here as Black can simply castle out of danger.

The alternative is 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0, and now:

- a) 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ – 11 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$.
- b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ – 11 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$.
- c) 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ = Khurtsidze-Skripchenko, Istanbul wom Ech 2003) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ {1/2-1/2 Tal-Zsu.Polgar, San Francisco 1991} 16 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ = Supatashvili-Izoria, Georgian Ch (Tbilisi) 2000) 14... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ = Lputian-Y.Meister, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1991.

11... $\mathbb{B}b7$ (D)

An alternative plan is 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (11...0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ – 11... $\mathbb{B}b7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0) 12 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ a5 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ = Korchnoi-Seirawan, Wijk aan Zee 1992.

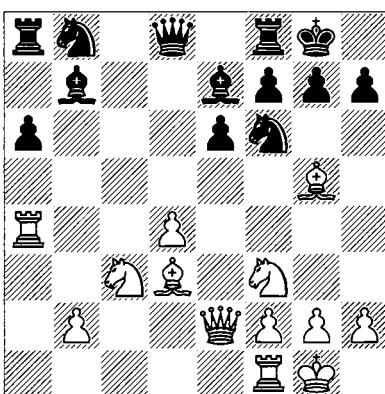


12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Too quiet is 12 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ = Barcz-Keres, Budapest 1952.

12...0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (D)

13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ a5 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ – 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ a5) 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ f5 was unclear in Damljanović-Rublevsky, Moscow OL 1994) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ (17... $\mathbb{Q}b8$! was suggested by Neishardt) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (Nogueiras-Ehlvest, Zagreb IZ 1987) 19 $\mathbb{Q}a3$! (Neishardt suggested this move to transfer the rook to the kingside) 19... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$ =.



13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Black can also play 13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$! (the idea is to drive the white rook away from the fourth rank and avoid any sacrificial ideas based upon the d5 pawn-break followed by a rook-shift to the kingside) 14 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$! $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ {15 d5 exd5 16 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ h6 defends} 15... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ± Edighoffer-Halwick jr, IECG e-mail 1998) 14...a5 15 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ {1/2-1/2 Reshevsky-Portisch, Santa Monica 1966}) 16... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 dx5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ (19 $\mathbb{Q}xh7$?? $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}h5$ + $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ {Szabo-Portisch, Kecskemet 1962}) 21... $\mathbb{W}b6$?? 19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ =.

14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ (D)

White has a couple of alternatives:

- a) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ = Starck-Gotz, East German Ch (Aschersleben) 1963.

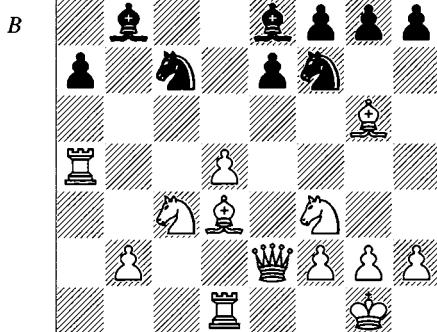
- b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ g6 16 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ and now:

b1) 18 d5?! and then:

b11) 18...♘xd5 (not the best move, but it is an instructive example of White's attacking chances here) 19 ♘f4 ♘xd3 20 ♘xf7! (this leads to a draw by perpetual check) 20...h5 21 ♘xe7 ♘xf7 22 ♘f6+ ♘g8 23 ♘xe6+ ♘g7 (the only move to avoid mate) 24 ♘f6+ (24 ♘f6+? ♘f8 -+) 24...♘g8 (24...♗h6 25 ♘f4+ ♘g7 26 ♘f6+ repeats) 25 ♘e6+ ½-½ Lautier-Ivanchuk, Belgrade 1995.

b12) 18...exd5! 19 ♘f4 (19 ♘aa1 ♘xg5 20 ♘xe8+ ♘xe8 21 ♘xg5 h5 ± Ftačnik) 19...h5 (Ftačnik) 20 h3 ♘d6 leaves White with inadequate compensation for the pawn.

b2) 18 ♘xa6 ♘xa6 19 ♘xe7 (19 ♘xa6 ♘xd4 20 ♘xd4 ♘xg5 21 ♘d6 ♘f6 22 ♘xg5 ♘xg5 =) 19...♘xe7 20 ♘xa6 ♘f5 ("with counterplay" – Ftačnik) 21 ♘e4 ♘b8 22 ♘b1 ♘b4 23 ♘e1 ♘e7 and Black can hold the balance despite being a pawn down.



Black has a choice between blockading the d5-square or moving his a-pawn out of danger – both moves are playable, but Line B2 is more popular:

B1: 14...♘d5 83

B2: 14...a5 84

B1)

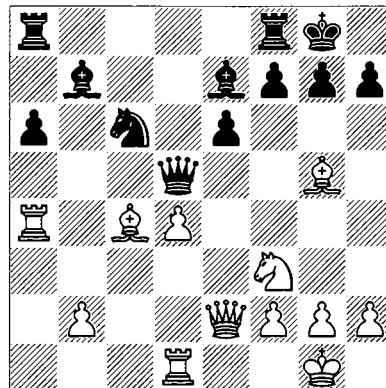
14...♘d5 15 ♘xd5

This is more challenging than 15 ♘e4 ♘xg5 16 ♘exg5 h6 17 ♘e4 ♘f4 (17...♘cb4!? 18 ♘b1 ♘c6 19 ♘a3 ♘b5 20 ♘e1 ♘c8 =) 18 ♘e3 ♘xd3 (18...♘d5 =) 19 ♘xd3 ♘e7 20 ♘c5 ♘c6 21 ♘a3 (21 ♘xa6 ♘xa6 22 ♘xa6 ♘b6 also leads to an equal position) 21...a5 with equal chances,

Szmetan-Gómez Baillo, Argentine Ch (Buenos Aires) 1998.

15...♘xd5 16 ♘c4! (D)

This aggressive idea has not yet been tested in practice. The position becomes too simplified after 16 ♘xe7 ♘xe7 17 ♘da1 ♘f5 18 ♘e5 ♘b3 19 ♘xf5 exf5 20 ♘xf5 ♘xf3 21 ♘xf3 ♘xb2 = Granda-Rublevsky, Oviedo rpd 1992.



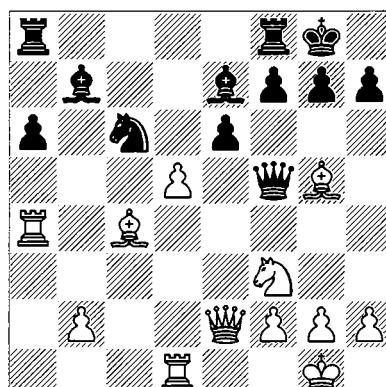
16...♘f5

16...♘d7 is a good alternative. 17 d5 exd5 (17...♘ad8 18 ♘aa1 exd5 19 ♘xd5 ±) 18 ♘xd5 ♘xg5 19 ♘xg5 ♘f5 20 ♘h5 (20 h4!?) 20...h6 21 ♘xf7+ ♘h8 (21...♘xf7 22 ♘xf7+ ♘xf7 23 ♘xf7 ♘xf7 24 ♘d7+ ±) 22 f4 ♘ad8 23 ♘e1 ♘c5+ 24 ♘h1 ♘d2 and then:

a) 25 ♘g6 ♘xg5! 26 fxg5 ♘e5 27 ♘f4 (27 ♘h5 ♘xg2+ 28 ♘g1 ♘f3+ 29 ♘xf3 ♘xf3 ±) 27...♘xg6 28 ♘xg6 ♘fd8 ±.

b) 25 ♘e4 ♘xh5 26 ♘xh5 ♘xb2 =.

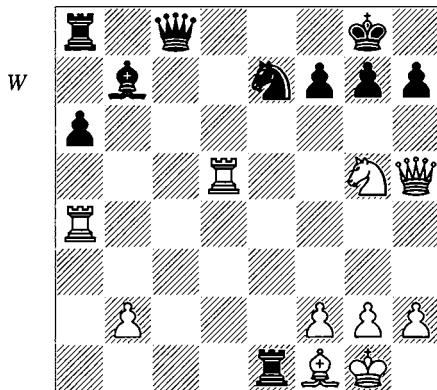
17 d5 (D)



17...exd5

17... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (18... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}e4 \pm$)
 19 $\mathbb{B}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 22
 $\mathbb{dxe6}$ $\mathbb{fxe6}$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ gives White a slight advantage.

18 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ 19 $\mathbb{B}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{B}xe7$
 21 $\mathbb{W}h5$
 21 $\mathbb{W}c2!?$.
 21... $\mathbb{E}e1+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ (D)



Now:

- a) 23 $\mathbb{W}xh7+?$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 24 $\mathbb{B}da5$ $\mathbb{B}xf1+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}c1+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xb2+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}c1+$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}e8 \mp$.
- b) 23 $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{W}c2$ 25 $\mathbb{W}e4!$ ($\mathbb{W}xe4!$ (White wins a pawn after 25... $\mathbb{B}xf1+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{h}6$ 27 $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xd1+$ 28 $\mathbb{B}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \pm$) 26 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ with a balanced queen versus two rooks middlegame).
- c) 23 $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{B}xd1$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xd1$ $\mathbb{h}6 =$.

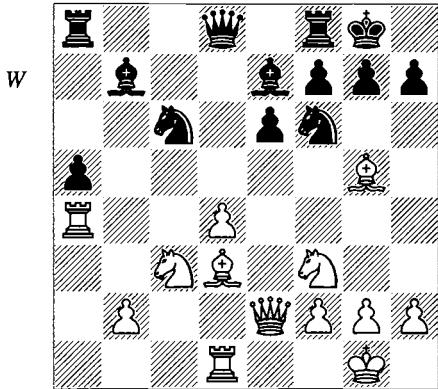
B2)

14...a5 (D)

15 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Alternatives:

- a) 15 $d5!?$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ and then:
 - a1) 16 $\mathbb{B}h4?$ $g6$ (or 16... $\mathbb{Q}xg5!?$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 18 $\mathbb{B}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mp$) 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}f6 \mp$ Lputian-Tal, Erevan 1982.



- a2) 16 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $g6$ 17 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6 \mp$ Fang-Baburin, Las Vegas 2003.
- a3) 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4!?$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ (17 $\mathbb{Q}xd5!?$ $\mathbb{Q}h6! \mp$) 17... $\mathbb{exd5}$ 18 $\mathbb{B}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xe8$ $\mathbb{B}fxe8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{B}ab8 =$.

b) 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ and here:

- b1) 16 $\mathbb{B}xf6$ $\mathbb{B}xf6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7 =$ Nogueiras-Ehlvest, Zagreb IZ 1987.
- b2) 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $f5$ 18 $\mathbb{B}a3$ (18 $\mathbb{B}a1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6 =$ I.Sokolov-Cifuentes, Dutch Ch (Rotterdam) 1997) 18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}b5 =$ Damljanović-Rublevsky, Moscow OL 1994.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 16 $d5$

- 16 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 17 $d5$ $\mathbb{exd5}$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $g6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+ (1/2-1/2)$ Dautov-Rublevsky, Budapest 1996) 19... $\mathbb{W}xf6 =$.

16... $\mathbb{exd5}$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $g6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Or:

- a) 18 $\mathbb{B}f4$ $\mathbb{W}xd5!$ (stronger than 18... $\mathbb{Q}g7$) 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}h8 =$ Donner-Van den Berg, Beverwijk 1966) 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (White's kingside pawn-structure is ruined after 19 $\mathbb{B}xf6?$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 20 $\mathbb{B}d8 \mp$) 19... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 20 $\mathbb{B}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}c6 \mp$.

- b) 18 $\mathbb{Q}c4 (1/2-1/2)$ Neverov-Zontakh, Yugoslav Cht (Novi Sad) 2000) 18... $\mathbb{Q}g7 =$.

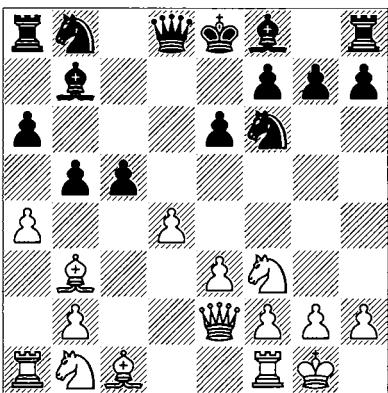
18... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}b5$

- $1/2-1/2$ Ulybin-Rublevsky, Russian Clubs Cup (Maikop) 1998. Another idea is 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 21 $\mathbb{B}d7$ $\mathbb{B}ab8$ with equal chances.

10 Classical Variation: 7 ♔e2 b5 8 ♕b3 ♕b7 9 a4

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♔f3 ♔f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♔xc4 c5
6 0-0 a6 7 ♔e2 b5 8 ♕b3 ♔b7 9 a4 (D)

B



The Classical Variation with 9 a4 and the related move 9 ♕d1 (see Chapter 11) are the traditional main lines of the Queen's Gambit Accepted. One of the ideas behind 9 a4 is to attack the b5-pawn immediately with the aim of forcing Black to make a concession to defend the pawn. Black can respond by temporarily ignoring the attack and continuing his development (Line A), or he can relieve the tension by immediately advancing his b-pawn (Line B):

A: 9... ♔bd7 85
B: 9... b4 90

The difference in strategy often revolves around the placement of White's queen's knight – in Line A Black usually plays ...b4 after the white knight has already been developed on the c3-square and White responds by playing ♔b5, whereas in Line B the ...b4 advance takes away the c3-square from the white knight, so White responds by playing ♔d2-c4. The white knight on the b5-square (Line A) is more of a threat to Black's king because it attacks the c7-square

and leaves the a2-g8 diagonal open for White's light-squared bishop – in combination with the move ♔g5, this sets up various sacrificial possibilities on the e6-square. The risk for White is that the b5-knight can become stranded if a kingside attack fails to materialize.

East German GM Wolfgang Uhlmann was one of the early pioneers of the Classical Variation with 9 a4 during the late 1950s and early 1960s – his name is often associated with the variation. GMs Ivan Sokolov, Artur Yusupov and Robert Hübner (on both sides!) played some important games with the line during the 1990s and at the turn of the millennium Indian GM Krishnan Sashikiran picked up the gauntlet for White. The popularity of the variation has waned in recent years and interest from the white side has shifted to other lines, in particular the Central Variation (Chapter 2), the Furman Variation (Chapter 5), and the Classical Variation with 7 ♕b3 (Chapter 8).

A)

9... ♔bd7

Black continues his development and ignores the attack on the b5-pawn for a few moves. Now:

A1: 10 ♕d1 86
A2: 10 axb5 86

10 e4 cxd4 is rarely seen. Then:

a) 11 e5? ♔xf3 (11... ♔d5 12 axb5 d3! 13 ♕xd3 ♔c5 14 ♕d1 axb5 ± NCO) 12 gxf3 (12 ♕xf3 ♔xe5 13 ♕g3 ♔d6 →) 12...d3 (12... ♔c5 is also very strong) 13 ♕xd3 ♔xe5 14 ♕e2 ♔ed7 ± Piket-Seirawan, Monte Carlo Amber blindfold 1994.

b) 11 ♔xd4 ♔c5 12 ♕d1 ♕b6 13 a5 ♕a7 14 ♕e3 0-0 leads to equality, Guimard-Najdorf, Prague 1946.

A1)**10 $\mathbb{E}d1 \mathbb{W}b8$**

An important alternative is 10...b4 – 9...b4
10 $\mathbb{E}d1 \mathbb{Q}bd7$.

11 axb5 axb5 12 $\mathbb{E}xa8 \mathbb{A}xa8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Black has no problems after 13 $\mathbb{Q}bd2 \mathbb{Q}d6$ =
Berberich-Raetsky, Lenk 1995.

13...b4

Now:

a) 14 $\mathbb{Q}b1 \mathbb{Q}d6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0 16 h3 cxd4 17
exd4 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ \mp Temirbaev-Vaulin, Russia Cup
(Omsk) 1996.

b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}a4 \mathbb{Q}e7$ (14...cxd4 15 $\mathbb{E}xd4 \mathbb{Q}e7$
{15... $\mathbb{Q}d6!$?}) 16 e4 0-0 = Levitt-Baburin, Bun-
ratty 2001) 15 e4 (15 dxc5 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}xc5$ =
Ftačnik) 15...cxd4 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$? (White should
settle for 16 $\mathbb{E}xd4 \mathbb{Q}c6$) = 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 0-0
(17... $\mathbb{Q}d6!$?) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ (18 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ exf5 19 $\mathbb{E}xd7$
 $\mathbb{Q}d6$! \mp Namgilov-Ibragimov, Russian Ch (El-
ista) 1995 – White has lost a pawn and his rook
is trapped behind enemy lines) 18...fxe6 19
 $\mathbb{E}xd7 \mathbb{E}xf2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}g4$!? (20 $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}g4$
 $\mathbb{W}b5$ –+ Ftačnik) 20... $\mathbb{W}f8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{Q}d5$! and
then:

b1) 22 $\mathbb{E}xd5$ exd5 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24 $\mathbb{W}d1$
 $\mathbb{E}d2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd2 \mathbb{Q}c5+$ mates – Ftačnik.

b2) 22 $\mathbb{E}xe7 \mathbb{Q}c2$ 23 $\mathbb{W}d1$ (23 $\mathbb{Q}xd5 \mathbb{E}c1+$ 24
 $\mathbb{Q}xc1 \mathbb{W}f2+$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{W}f1#$ Ftačnik) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$
24 $\mathbb{E}d7 \mathbb{Q}f2$ 25 $\mathbb{W}b1$ (25 $\mathbb{W}xc2 \mathbb{Q}h3+$ mates)
25...b3 –+.

c) 14 $\mathbb{Q}b5 \mathbb{Q}xf3$!? (14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ is unclear –
Ftačnik) 15 gxf3 cxd4 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{Q}d6$ with an
equal position.

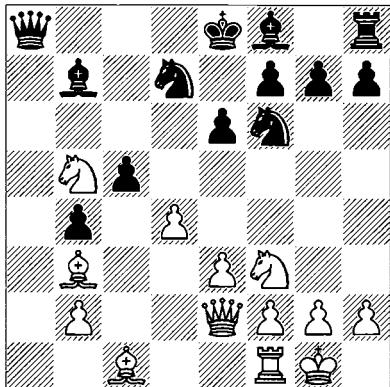
A2)**10 axb5 axb5 11 $\mathbb{E}xa8 \mathbb{W}xa8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ b4 13
 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ (D)**

Black must choose between saddling White
with a set of doubled pawns or continuing his
development:

A21: 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$!? 86**A22: 13... $\mathbb{W}b8$** 88

Line A21 is an alternative variation that has
recently been out of fashion, whereas Line A22
is considered the main line. The older 13... $\mathbb{W}a5$
has been under theoretical pressure lately and I
don't consider it as reliable as the two lines se-
lected for our repertoire.

B

**A21)****13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$!?**

GM Yasser Seirawan introduced 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$!
in 1986 and his idea has been underestimated
and just doesn't get any respect. ECO (2nd ed.)
gave "13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$!" a column, ECO (3rd ed.)
gave "13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ " a footnote, and ECO (4th ed.)
doesn't even mention the move! During the
1990s the move 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$! was played by
some of the world's top grandmasters and the
theoretically recommended method of dealing
with it does not appear to be dangerous.

Let's review some of the main ideas behind
13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$!?: Black eliminates the dangerous
f3-knight and saddles White with a doubled f-
pawn at the cost of conceding the bishop-pair.
Black should concentrate on completing his de-
velopment, even at the cost of a pawn, in order
to avoid being overrun by White's bishops and
central pawn cluster. White must be careful
mobilizing his central pawns as a hasty advance
could result in weak d5-, e5- or f4-squares.

14 gxf3

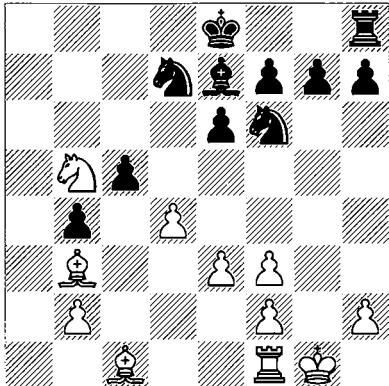
White can also head straight for the endgame
by playing 14 $\mathbb{W}xf3 \mathbb{W}xf3$ 15 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D).

Several games have shown that Black has
nothing to fear in this endgame:

a) 16 $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5 \mathbb{Q}c8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (18
dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c2 \mathbb{Q}d8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}b7$ = Dokh-
oian-Hübner, Bundesliga 1994/5) 18... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 19
dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}d8$ = Klimm-Brunner,
Bundesliga 1993/4.

b) 16 e4 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ cxd4 (17... $\mathbb{Q}b8$!?) 18
 $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}f8$ also leads to an equal position) 18
 $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{Q}a8$ = Kiriakov-Donchenko, Moscow
1996.

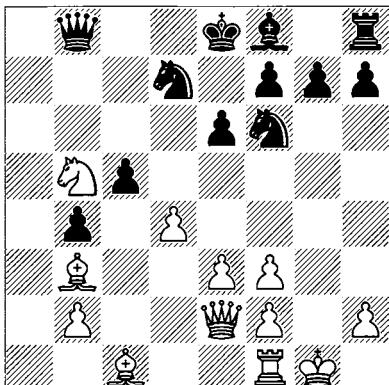
W



c) 16 ♜d2 0-0 17 ♜c1 (17 ♜a1 ♜b8 18 ♜c4 e5 19 dxc5 ♜xc5 = Auger-Tait, corr. 1996) 17...♜a8 18 dxc5 ♜xc5 (18...♝xc5!?) 19 ♜f1 g6 20 ♜e2 ♜d5 21 ♜xd5 (several months earlier, Yusupov played 21 e4 ♜b5b6 22 ♜h6 {22 f4!? ♜a5 23 ♜a3 ♜g7 =} 22...♜a5 23 ♜c7 ♜f8 = ½-½ Yusupov-Hübner, Munich 1994) 21...exd5 22 ♜c7 ♜a2 23 ♜xd5 ♜xb2 24 ♜f6+ ♜xf6 25 ♜xc5 ♜f8 26 ♜b5 b3 = Yusupov-Lautier, Horgen 1994.

14...♜b8 (D)

W



15 ♜d1

Alternatives:

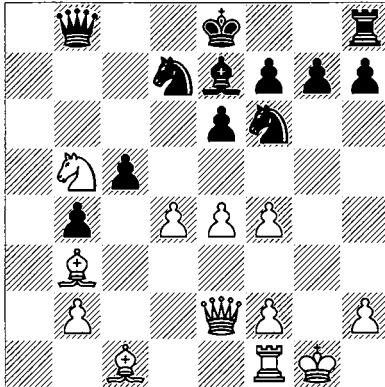
a) 15 e4?! (White should refrain from playing this move until Black has spent a tempo on ...♝e7) 15...cxsd4 16 ♜xd4 ♜d6 = Turner-Baburin, Kilkenny 1999. Black has been able to develop his bishop directly to the d6-square and he is a tempo ahead compared to the main-line position after Black's 17th move.

b) 15 ♜d2 ½-½ Miles-Seirawan, Dubai OL 1986. This was the stem game of the variation,

although it was not much of a test. The early draw strategy worked for England as they defeated the United States 2½-1½.

c) 15 f4 ♜e7 16 e4 (D) and now:

B



c1) 16...♝b6 and then:

c11) 17 d5 c4 18 ♜xc4 exd5 19 exd5 ♜xc4 20 ♜xc4 0-0 21 ♜d4 (Djurhuus-Degerman, Reykjavik Z 1995 – ECO {3rd ed.} evaluated this position as “±”, but White's five isolated pawns do not inspire confidence) 21...♜c8! 22 ♜d3 ♜g4+ 23 ♜h1 ♜d7 24 ♜f5 ♜d8 25 ♜d1 ♜f8 and Black has good play for the pawn.

c12) 17 dxc5 ♜xc5 18 f5 0-0 (18...♜e5!?) 19 fxe6 fxe6 20 ♜xe6 ♜f8 is unclear) 19 fxe6 fxe6 20 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 gives Black compensation for the pawn.

c2) 16...0-0 and here:

c21) 17 d5? exd5 18 e5 c4 ±.

c22) 17 e5 ♜d5 18 f5 ♜h8 with equal chances.

c23) 17 f5 cxsd4 18 ♜xd4 (18 fxe6? d3! ±) 18...e5 19 ♜c6 ♜d6 with a balanced position.

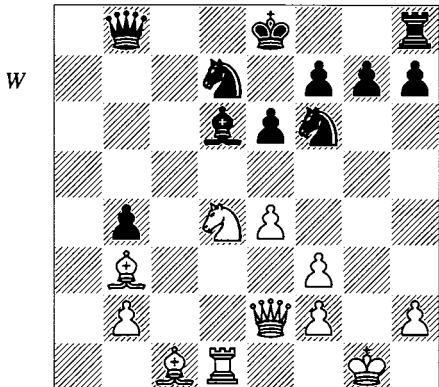
15...♜e7 16 e4 cxsd4

Black can also play 16...0-0 17 e5 ♜d5 18 ♜xd5 exd5 19 dxc5 ♜xe5 20 ♜f4 ♜xf3+ 21 ♜xf3 ♜xb5 = Piket-Lautier, Monte Carlo Amber blindfold 1995.

17 ♜xd4 ♜d6 (D)

18 e5!?

18 h3 0-0 19 ♜b5 (± Anand) 19...♜xb5 (Flear suggested 19...♜c8 “=”, but White can play 20 ♜xb8 ♜xb8 21 ♜d2 ♜c5 {21...♜d6? 22 ♜xe6! fxe6 23 ♜e3 ±} 22 ♜xb4 ♜xb3 23 ♜xb3 ♜e5 24 ♜a5!, preserving the b-pawn as 24...♜xb2? loses to 25 ♜c4 +–) 20 ♜xb5 ♜c5 21 ♜c7!? ♜e5 (21...♜c8? loses to 22 ♜xe6!)

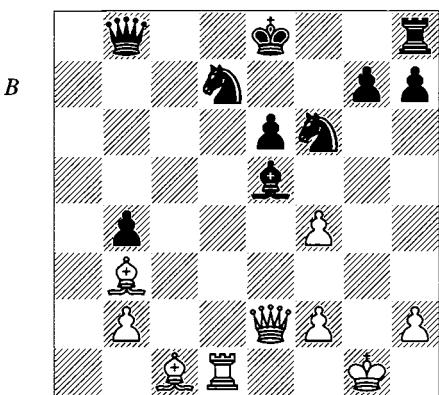


22 ♕g2 ♔e7 (preparing to contest the d-file) 23 f4 ♖g6 24 e5 ♖e4 with a balanced endgame.

18...♔xe5

18...♖xe5? 19 f4 ♖ed7 20 ♖xe6 fxe6 21 ♕xe6+ ♔e7 22 ♕e1 ♖g8 23 ♔a4 ♕d8 (White wins after 23...♔a7 24 ♕c6 ♖gf6 25 ♕c8+ ♔f7 26 ♔b3+) 24 ♔d2 ± Ftačnik – despite his extra piece, Black is getting sliced and diced by the white bishops.

19 ♖xe6 fxe6 20 f4 (D)



Now:

a) 20...♔c7? (Black should not play this – it is helpful to understand why not for comparison with notes 'b' and 'c' below) 21 ♕xe6+ ♕d8 22 ♔a4 ♕c8 23 f5! h6 24 ♕xd7! (24 ♔xh6 ♔xh2+ 25 ♔f1 was implied by Ftačnik to be good for White, but after 25...♔xh6 26 ♔xd7 ♕xd7?? {26...♕c5 27 ♔c6+ ♔c7 28 ♕d7+ ♕xd7 29 ♕xd7+ ♔b6 30 ♕b7+ ♔a5 31 ♕a8+ ♔b6 32 ♕b7+ with a draw by perpetual check} 27 ♕xd7+ ♕xd7 Black has a fistful of pieces for the queen) 24...♕xd7 25 f6 ♕e8 26

♕f5 (+– Ftačnik) 26...g6 27 ♕d5 ♕h8 28 ♔xh6 wins for White.

b) 20...♔f7?! 21 ♕e1 ♕xf4! 22 ♕xe6+ ♔g6 23 ♕e3?! (23 ♔c2+ ♔h6 24 ♕h3+ ♔h5 {unclear – Anand} 25 ♕xd7 ♔xc1 26 ♕xc1 ♕c8=) 23...♔c8 (not 23...♔xe3?? 24 ♔c2+ mating) 24 ♕g3+ (24 ♕f7+ ♔g5 25 ♕xg7+ ♔h4 leads to an unclear position) 24...♔xg3 25 ♕f7+ ♔f5 26 ♕e6+ ♔g6 27 ♕f7+ with a draw by perpetual check.

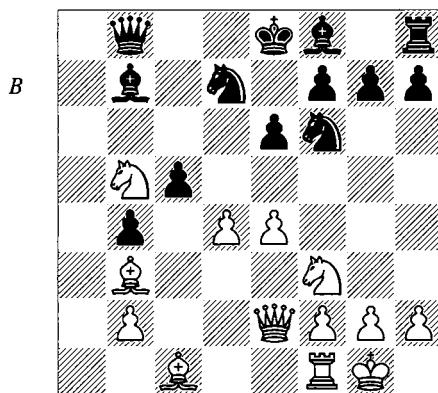
c) 20...♔e7 21 ♕c4 ♖d5! 22 fxe5 ♕xe5 = Yusupov-Anand, Las Palmas 1993.

A22)

13...♕b8

The queen slide-step to the b8-square is one of the characteristic moves of the Classical Variation. Black exerts pressure on the b5-knight and takes control of several key squares along the important h2-b8 diagonal. One of the ideas behind the queen move is to answer White's e4 break with ...cxsd4, followed by ...♔d6 or ...♔c5, aiming all of Black's diagonal pieces at White's kingside.

14 e4 (D)



14...cxsd4

Black should avoid 14...♖xe4? 15 ♖g5 ♔c6 16 ♖xf7!! ♔xf7 17 ♕g4!! (+– NCO) 17...♔d5 (17...♕e8 18 ♖c7 ♖ef6 19 ♕e2 –+) 18 ♕xd5 exd5 19 ♕xd7+ ♔g6 20 f4 h6 21 f5+ ♔h7 22 f6 –+ Fages-Ginther, IECG e-mail 2002.

15 ♖bxsd4

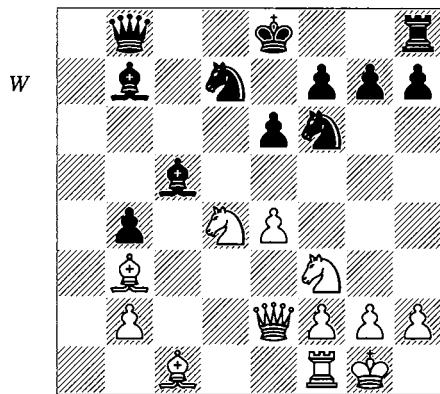
The alternative recapture 15 ♖fxd4 ♔c5 was fine for Black in Chatalbashev-Kozhukharov, Bulgarian Ch (Pleven) 2005.

Now Black must decide where to develop his bishop:

- A221: 15...♗c5 89
A222: 15...♗d6 89

A221)

15...♗c5 (D)



16 ♖d1

Alternatives:

- a) 16 e5 ♖d5 17 ♖d1 0-0 and then:
 - a1) 18 ♖f5?! ♗c8 19 ♗g5 (Uhlmann-Golz, East German Ch (Schkopau) 1958) 19...h6 20 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 =.
 - a2) 18 ♗c2 (Bandza-Labuckas, Lithuanian Ch (Vilnius) 1996) 18...♗c8 =.
 - b1) 16 ♗xe6 0-0 17 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 and now:
 - b1) 18 ♖f5?! ♗e8 19 ♗g5 with sharp play, Golz-Fred, Leipzig OL 1960.
 - b2) 18 ♗b3 ♗e7 19 ♖fd4 ♗e8 20 ♖f5 ♗f8 21 f3 ♗c8 22 ♗f2 ♗a6 23 ♖d1 ♗e5 24 ♗e3 ♗c4 25 ♖fd4 ½-½ Nogueiras-Borges, Matanzas 1995. A possible continuation is 25...♗d3 26 ♗d2 f5 27 exf5 ♗xb2 28 ♗xb2 ♗xe3 and Black's bishop-pair compensates for the pawn.

16...0-0 17 ♖xe6

White might as well grab a pawn as Black has a solid position after 17 e5 ♖d5 =.

17...fxe6 18 ♗xe6+ ♗h8 19 ♖xd7 ♗xe4

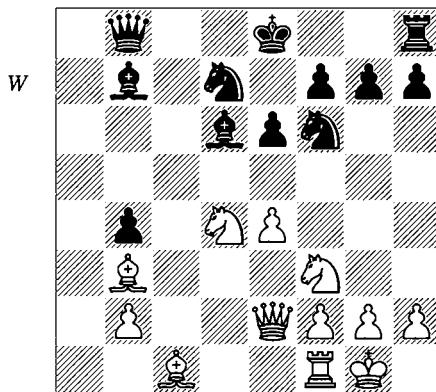
The chances are balanced in this sharp position. Now:

- a) 20 ♗h3 ♗xf3 21 ♗xf3 ♗g8 (21...♗e5!?) 22 ♗c6 ♗xf2+ 23 ♗h1 ♗e5 = Barbero-Howell, Lazne Bohdanec 1995.
- b) 20 ♗e6 ♗xf3 (Sashikiran-Vladimirov, Asian Cht (Shenyang) 1999) 21 ♗xf3 ♗e5 =.

c) 20 ♗g5 ♗g6 21 ♗h3 ♗h5 22 ♗f3 ♗g4 23 ♗xg4 (not 23 ♗f1?? losing to 23...♗xh2) 23...♗xg4 24 ♗e3 ♗xf3 25 gxf3 ♗d6 26 h3 (Sashikiran-Barua, Guntur 2000) 26...♗f6 with equal chances – White's crippled extra pawn is difficult to mobilize.

A222)

15...♗d6 (D)



16 ♗xe6

Alternatives:

- a) 16 ♖d1 0-0 17 ♗xe6? (17 ♗c2 ♗c8 =) 17...fxe6 18 ♗xe6+ ♗h8 19 ♗d3 (19 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 20 ♗d3 ♗f6 →) 19...♗xe4 20 ♗xd7 ♗xh2+ (20...♗d8 is also strong) 21 ♗xh2 ♗xf2 22 ♗d6 ♖xd1 23 ♗xd1 ♗d8 24 ♗g5 ♗xd7! 25 ♗xd7 ♗a7+ 26 ♗e3 ♗xe3+ 0-1 Sutter-Raetsky, Biel 1995.

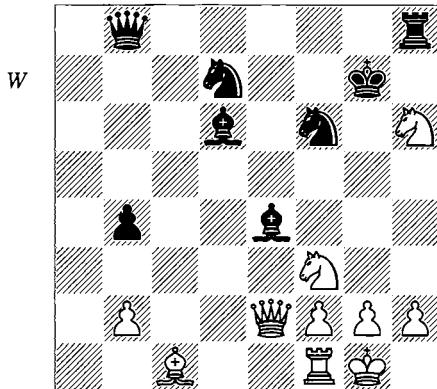
b) 16 ♗e1 ♗xe4! (16...0-0?? 17 e5 costs Black a piece; 16...e5?! {an instructive mistake as the e5-square should be left vacant for Black's pieces – now the pawn-structure favours White's minor pieces} 17 ♗f5 0-0 18 ♗g5 ♗c5 19 ♗c4 gave White a strong attack in Harikrishna-Murali Krishnan, Indian Ch (Nagpur) 2002) 17 ♗xe6 ♗c5 (17...fxe6 18 ♗xe6 ♗xf3 19 ♗xf3 ♗xh2+ {19...♗e5 20 ♗f5 and White has the initiative – Sakaev and Semkov} 20 ♗h1 ♗e5 21 ♗c6 ♗e7 22 ♗g5 ♗e8 23 f4 ♗f8 24 fxe5 ♗xe5 with roughly level chances) 18 ♗f5 0-0 19 ♗g5 ♗xf5 20 ♗xf5 ♗e8 21 ♗f1 ♗xe1 22 ♗xe1 ♗ce4 = Sakaev and Semkov.

16...fxe6 17 ♗xe6 h6!

This was Anand's improvement over the older 17...g6 – the idea of taking the g5-square

away from White's knight is well-known from similar sacrificial lines in the Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation.

18 ♜xg7+ ♛f7 19 ♜f5 ♜xe4 20 ♜xh6+ ♛g7 (D)



Now:

a) 21 h3? ♜xh6 22 ♜xh6+ ♛xh6 \mp Kramnik-Anand, Mainz (5) 2001. Black's three minor pieces are stronger than White's rook and three pawns.

b) 21 ♜d2! ♛f8 22 ♜d1 ♜c7 23 ♜e3! (White's kingside pawn-structure is shattered after 23 ♜g4? ♜xf3 24 gxf3 ♜xh2+ 25 ♛g2 ♜e5 \mp) 23... ♜xf3 24 ♜xf3 ♜xh2+ 25 ♛h1 (25 ♛f1? ♜b5+ 26 ♜e2 ♜c6 \mp) 25... ♜d6 26 ♛g1 and now 26... ♜h2+ repeats the position, whereas 26... ♜h7 27 g4?! gives White reasonable compensation for the piece.

B)

9...b4 (D)

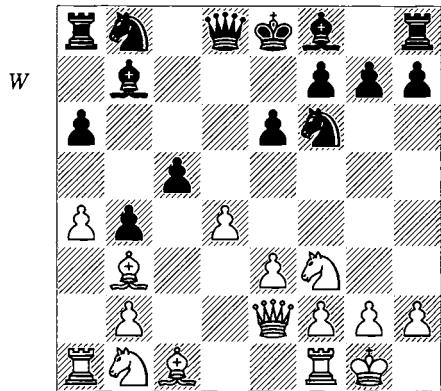
This is the most popular move here – Black concedes the c4-square to a white knight, but he controls the c3-square and prevents White from posting a knight on the b5-square.

White now has two options:

B1: 10 ♜bd2 90

B2: 10 ♜d1 91

These two lines can easily transpose into each other; the lines typically diverge depending upon whether White decides to push his pawn to a5 or refrains from advancing the foot-soldier. The strategy behind an early a5 pawn advance is to control the b6-square and fix the a6-pawn as a potential target; the risk is



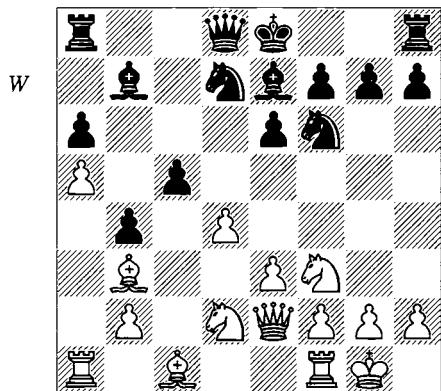
that the a5-pawn can become a defensive liability.

B1)

10 ♜bd2 ♜bd7 11 a5

11 ♜d1 – 10 ♜d1 ♜bd7 11 ♜bd2.

11... ♜e7 (D)



12 ♜c4

White has some minor alternatives here:

a) 12 ♜c4 0-0 13 b3 (Hebden-Flear, Hastings 1996/7) 13...cxtd4 14 exd4 (14 ♜xd4 ♜e5 =) 14... ♜d5 =.

b) 12 ♜e5 0-0 13 f4 ♜c7 14 ♜df3 ♜d5 15 ♜xd5 exd5 = Pelletier-Grishchuk, Biel 2001.

c) 12 e4!? cxtd4 13 e5 ♜d5 14 ♜e4 0-0 and now:

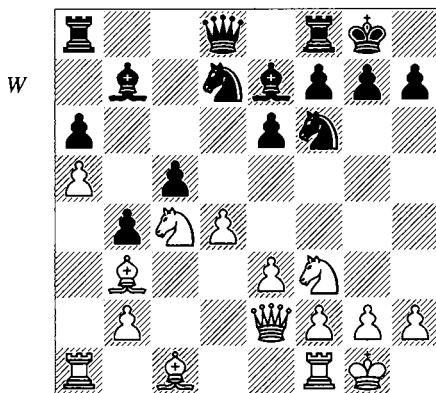
c1) 15 ♜eg5? ♜c5 16 ♜c2 h6 17 ♜e4 d3 18 ♜xd3 ♜b3 \mp (also strong is Korchnoi's idea 18... ♜f4 \mp).

c2) 15 ♜c2?! ♜c8 16 ♜g5? (16 ♜d3 ♜c7 \mp) 16... ♜xe5! (this is an important tactical idea

to be aware of) 17 ♜xe5 ♜xg5 0-1 Merino Garcia-Sulava, Ubeda 1998; White has no compensation for the lost pawns.

c3) 15 ♜d3 ♜c8 16 ♜xd4 (16 ♜eg5!? g6 17 ♜e4 {17 ♜xd4? ♜xc1 +} with compensation – Korchnoi, but I think Black can still play 17...♜xc1?! 18 ♜axc1 ♜f4 19 ♜d2 ♜h3+ 20 gxh3 ♜xe4, with good compensation for the exchange) 16...♜c5 17 ♜xc5 (17 ♜c2 f5! 18 exf6 ♜xf6 +) 17...♜xc5 18 ♜g4 ♜h8 19 ♜g5 (Ioseliani-Korchnoi, Roquebrune (Veterans vs Ladies) 1998) 19...♜c7 20 ♜h5 ♜g8! = Korchnoi (20...♜xg5?! 21 ♜xg5 h6 is also good). This type of pawn-structure is usually favourable for Black if he can exchange a couple of sets of minor pieces as White's e5- and a5-pawns are vulnerable.

12...0-0 (D)



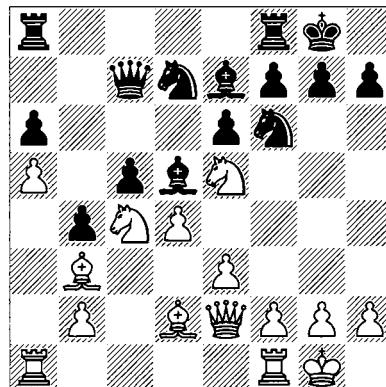
13 ♜fe5

Alternatives:

- a) 13 ♜d1 ♜c7 – 10 ♜d1 ♜bd7 11 ♜bd2 ♜e7 12 ♜c4 ♜c7 13 a5 0-0.
- b) 13 ♜d2 ♜b8 14 ♜fc1 (14 ♜fe5 cxd4 15 exd4 ♜d5 intending ...♜b7 is equal according to Hübner) 14...♜d5 15 ♜a4 ♜b7! (preventing the e4 trick – 15...♜c8? 16 e4! ♜c6 {16...♜xe4 17 ♜fe5 ♜f8 18 ♜b6; 16...♜xc4 17 ♜xc4 +- Hübner}) 17 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 18 ♜fe5 ♜xe5 19 dxe5 is much better for White, Hübner-Rublevsky, Polanica Zdroj 1996) 16 dxc5 (16 ♜fe5!?) 16...♜xc5 17 ♜ce5 ♜xe5 18 ♜xe5 ♜ac8 19 f3 ♜d6 20 ♜c4 ♜xc4 (20...♜xh2+?! 21 ♜xh2 ♜c7+ 22 ♜g1 ♜xc4 23 ♜e1 ♜b7 24 ♜xb4 ♜fd8 =) 21 ♜xc4 ♜xc4 22 ♜xc4 ♜c8 23 ♜e2 ½-½ Ruck-B.Lalić, Bosnian Cht (Neum) 2004.

13...♜c7 14 ♜d2 ♜d5! (D)

This move was Lautier's improvement over 14...cx4?! 15 exd4 ♜d5 16 ♜g5 ± Yusupov-Gonzalez Garcia, Linares 1997 – White's dark-squared bishop has been liberated.



15 ♜xd7

Black is able to force favourable simplifications after 15 ♜a4 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 (16 dxe5? ♜xc4 17 ♜xc4 ♜xe5 + Lautier) 16...cx4 17 ♜d4 ♜b7 18 f3 ♜ac8 + Csiszar-Gonzalez Garcia, Pecs 1997.

15...♜xd7 16 e4 ♜xc4 17 ♜xc4 ♜b7

White has temporarily obtained the bishop-pair, but his centre is somewhat shaky.

18 d5 ♜e5 19 ♜e2 c4! 20 ♜xc4 ♜xc4 21 ♜xc4 exd5 22 exd5

The rook endgame is level after 22 ♜xd5 23 exd5 ♜fd8 24 ♜fe1 ♜xd5 25 ♜xe7 ♜xd2 = Lautier.

22...♜fd8 23 ♜fc1 ♜xd5

The chances are equal, Yusupov-Lautier, Ubeda 1997.

B2)

10 ♜d1 ♜bd7 11 ♜bd2 ♜e7 12 ♜c4 (D)

12...♜c7

The alternative is 12...0-0, and now:

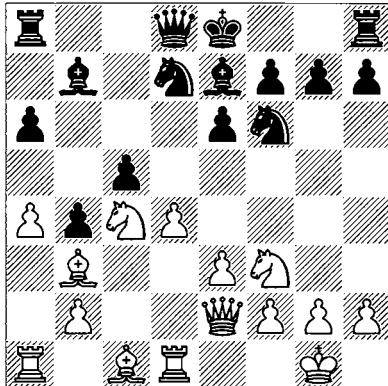
a) 13 ♜d2 and then:

a1) 13...♜c7 – 12...♜c7 13 ♜d2 0-0.

a2) 13...a5!? (an interesting attempt to do without ...♜c7) 14 ♜ac1 ♜b8 and here:

a21) 15 ♜fe5 ♜d5 16 ♜xd7 (16 e4? ♜xc4 17 ♜xc4 ♜xe5 18 dxe5 19 ♜e3 ♜xe4 gives Black a clear advantage, Llanos-Spangenber, La Carlota 1995) 16...♜xd7 17 e4 ♜xc4 18 ♜xc4 cxsd4 19 ♜xd4 ♜c5 =.

B



a22) 15 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{L}d8$ = Brynell-Sadler, Malmö 1995.

b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (White prepares to support the c4-knight with his b-pawn) 13... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$ $\mathbb{L}ac8$ 15 b3 cxd4 (Black hastens to exchange centre pawns before White has played $\mathbb{Q}b2$ – now White must recapture with a pawn) 16 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 dx5 $\mathbb{Q}b6$! = Burmakin-Volzhin, St Petersburg 1998. The timing of Black's pawn and piece exchanges is instructive – White was denied the opportunity to utilize the d6-square for a knight.

13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

White can also play:

a) 13 a5 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ – 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 14 a5.
b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$ 0-0 14 a5 $\mathbb{L}fd8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ cxd4 16 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17 dx5 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ leads to an unclear position, Levin-Maksimenko, Lvov 1995.

13...0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$

Alternatives:

a) 14 $\mathbb{L}ac1$ $\mathbb{L}ac8$ (14...a5 15 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{L}ac8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 1½-½ Kallai-G.Lanc, Tbilisi 1987) 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ cxd4 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 1½-½ Medunárodní Mokry, Czech Ch 1995. Black has a slight edge in the final position.

b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ (another idea is 15... $\mathbb{L}ad8$ 16 $\mathbb{L}ac1$ $\mathbb{W}b8$) = 16 f4 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 18 dx5 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 19 b3 (Filippov-Yakovich, Russian Ch (Elista) 1995) 19... $\mathbb{W}c2$ 20 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ a5 is slightly better for Black.

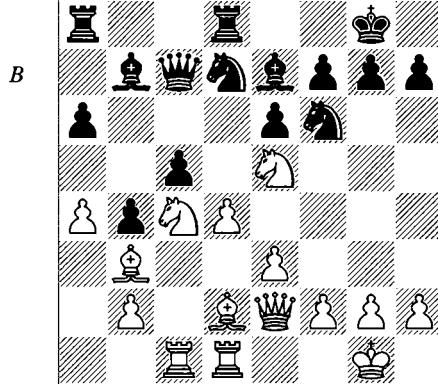
c) 14 a5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15 $\mathbb{L}ac1$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{L}fd8$ (16...cxd4 17 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 19 gxf3 $\mathbb{L}ac8$ is unclear) 17 dx5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (17... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$!?) 18 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}b5$ = 18 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{L}ac8$ and Black's pieces

are more actively deployed, Obukhov-Ibragimov, Ekaterinburg 1997.

14... $\mathbb{L}fd8$

14... $\mathbb{L}ac8$ 15 $\mathbb{L}ac1$ $\mathbb{L}fd8$ – 14... $\mathbb{L}fd8$ 15 $\mathbb{L}ac1$ $\mathbb{L}ac8$.

15 $\mathbb{L}ac1$ (D)



15...a5

Black can also invite the white a-pawn to step forward by playing 15... $\mathbb{L}ac8$ 16 a5 (White clears the a4-square for his light-squared bishop, but the advanced a-pawn can become vulnerable) 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 18 e4 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 20 d5 (20 $\mathbb{L}a1$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ {21 dxc5? a5 is much better for Black, Keres-Reshevsky, Semmering 1937} 21... $\mathbb{L}a8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ = Ftačník) 20...exd5 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\mathbb{L}c7$ 23 $\mathbb{L}a1$ $\mathbb{W}b5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ (Vorobiov-Leontiev, Moscow Ch 1999) 25... $\mathbb{L}cd7$ =.

16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Ftačník suggested 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$! 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{L}xd7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ =.

17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (½-½ Kiriakov-Makarov, Russian Clubs Cup (Maikop) 1998) 17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ = Anand.

17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 18 f4 (D)

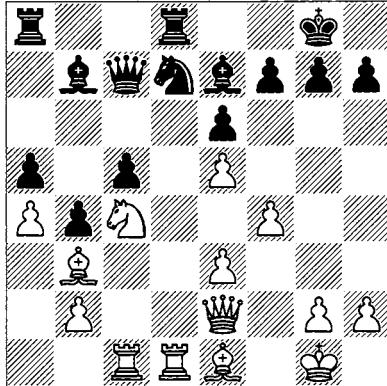
18... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

Or 18... $\mathbb{Q}b6$! 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$ $\mathbb{W}xd8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ = Khuzman) 21... $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 22 f5!? (22 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{L}d8$ looks comfortable for Black) 22... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ (22...exf5? 23 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 24 $\mathbb{W}c4$ +– Anand) 23 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ and then:

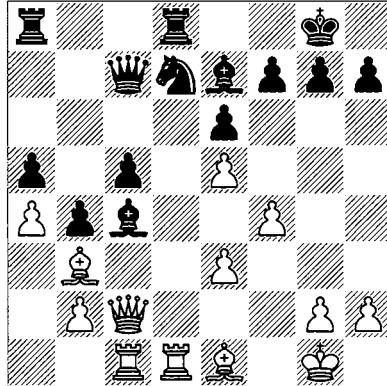
a) 24 f6 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ g6 is slightly better for Black thanks to his extra pawn on the queen-side.

b) 24 fxe6 fxe6 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ and then:

B



W



b1) 26...c4 27 ♘xh7+ ♘xh7 28 ♘h5+ ♘g8 29 ♘e8+ ♘h7 30 ♘h5+ with a draw by perpetual check.

b2) 26...g6!? gives Black a slight pull due to his queenside pawn majority and White's doubled e-pawns.

c) 24 ♘xd8+ ♘xd8 25 f6 ♘b7 26 ♘g3 g6 27 ♘d1 (27 ♘g5 ♘c6) 27...c4 28 ♘f4 ♘c5 29 ♘h6 ♘f8 30 ♘f4 ♘c5 with a draw by repetition.

19 ♘c2 ♘xc4 (D)

Now:

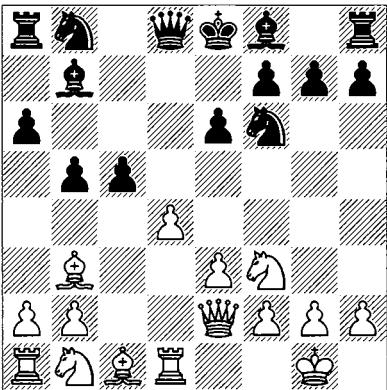
a) 20 ♘xc4?! ♘b6 21 ♘xd8+ ♘xd8 (alternatively, 21...♘xd8 22 ♘b5 ♘d5 23 ♘f2 ♘b6 =) 22 ♘b5 (Yusupov-Anand, Dortmund 1997) 22...c4! 23 ♘xc4 (23 ♘d1 ♘d5! 24 ♘xd5 exd5 ± Anand) 23...♘c8 24 b3 ♘c5 25 ♘a6 ♘c7 ± Anand. Now Khuzman suggested 26 e4 “! ±”, but Black is fine after 26...♘xc4 27 bxc4 (27 ♘xc4? ♘xc4 28 bxc4 b3 ±) 27...♘c6 (27...b3!?) 28 ♘b5 ♘c5+ 29 ♘f2 h6 =.

b) 20 ♘xc4 (this is the safer way to recapture) 20...♘b6 21 b3 ♘xc4 22 ♘xc4 with equal chances according to Anand.

11 Classical Variation: 7 ♔e2 b5 8 ♠b3 ♠b7 9 ♣d1

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♦f3 ♦f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♦xc4 c5
6 0-0 a6 7 ♔e2 b5 8 ♠b3 ♠b7 9 ♣d1 (D)

B



The Classical Variation with 9 ♣d1 is one of the traditional main lines of the Queen's Gambit Accepted. White immediately occupies the d-file and prepares a possible d5 pawn advance.

9... ♦bd7 10 ♦c3

An important alternative is 10 e4 (10 a4 – 9 a4 ♦bd7 10 ♣d1) 10... cxd4 (10... ♦xe4? 11 d5 ±; 10... ♦xe4!?) 11 ♦g5 ♦g6 12 d5 e5 13 ♦e6 ♦b6 14 ♦xf8 ♦xf8 was unclear in F.Adam-Hafner, German corr. Ch 1992) 11 e5 (11 ♦xd4 ♦b8 12 ♦c3 – 10 ♦c3 ♦b8 11 e4 cxd4 12 ♦xd4) and now:

a) 11... ♦d5 12 ♣xd4 ♦c7 13 ♦d2 ♦e7 14 ♦c3 ♦c6 (14... ♦g6!?) Neishtadt) 15 ♣f4 and then:

a1) 15... ♦cxe5 16 ♣xf7 ♦xf7 (16... ♦xf3+ 17 ♣xf3 ♦xf3 18 ♣xf3 with compensation) 17 ♦g5+, intending ♦xe6, with a strong attack.

a2) 15... ♦dxe5 16 ♦xe5 and now both 16... ♣xe5 17 ♣e4 and 16... ♦xe5 17 ♣c1 give White compensation.

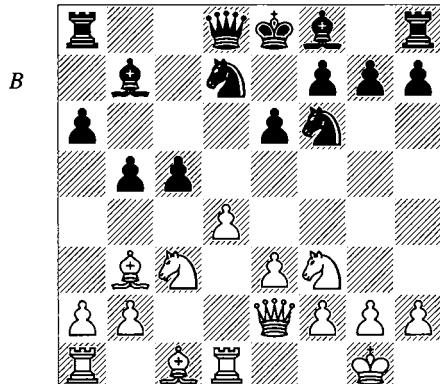
a3) 15... ♦e7 16 ♣e1 ♣d8 (Pared-Vera, Manzanillo 1987) 17 ♣c1 ♦c5 18 ♣c2 b4 is unclear – Vera.

b) 11... ♦xf3 12 gxf3 ♦h5 13 f4 ♦h4 (or 13... g6 14 ♣xd4 ♦b6 {14... ♦c5 15 ♣d1 ♦h4 = Anderton-Hempson, corr. 1986}) 15 ♣d1 ♦d8 16 ♦c3 {Timman-Seirawan, Indonesia 1983} 16... ♦g7! with an unclear position – Timman) 14 ♣xd4 ♦c5 and here:

b1) 15 ♣xd7 ♦xd7 16 ♦f3 and now:
b11) 16... ♦ac8 (the wrong rook) 17 ♦c3 f5 18 ♦xe6+ ♦xe6 19 ♦d5+ ♦e7 20 ♦b7+ = Salov-Kupreichik, USSR Ch (Minsk) 1987.
b12) 16... ♦hc8! (the right rook) 17 ♦c3 f5 (17... ♦c6!?) 18 f5 ♦ac8 19 fxe6+ fxe6 ± Azam-Fedorko, IECC corr. 1998) 18 exf6 (now 18 ♦xe6+? has no point after 18... ♦xe6 19 ♦d5+ ♦e7 20 ♦b7+ ♦f8 –) 18... ♦xf6 19 f5 ("unclear" – Salov, but I don't see it) 19... exf5 20 ♦xf5+ ♦e8 21 ♦e6+ ♦d8 ±.

b2) 15 ♣e4 ♦g3 (15... ♦b6!?) with the idea of ... ♦c5 was suggested by Salov) 16 hxg3 ♦xg3+ 17 ♦f1 ♦h3+ 18 ♦e1 (18 ♦g1 ♦g3+ 19 ♦f1 ♦h3+ ½-½ Ligterink-Ree, Dutch Ch (Hilversum) 1987) 18... ♦h1+ 19 ♦d2 ♦xf2 intending ... ♦c5 with compensation – Salov.

We now return to 10 ♦c3 (D):



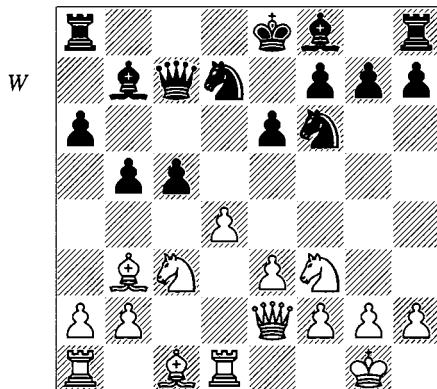
Our repertoire consists of a choice between three black queen moves:

- A: 10...♛c7 95
 B: 10...♛b8 96
 C: 10...♛b6 98

These variations often come to the same thing if White plays an immediate 11 d5 pawn advance (the common lines are considered in Line C), but there are some subtle differences between these moves and a careful study of them will benefit most tournament players. The typical club player may prefer to select Line C if his or her opening study time is limited.

A)

10...♛c7 (D)



White has two major options here:

- A1: 11 e4 95
 A2: 11 d5 96

He also has some more minor moves:

- a) 11 h3 ♜d6 12 a3 0-0 13 dxc5 ♜xc5 14 ♜c2 ♜fe4 with a slight initiative, Anastasian-Wells, Budapest ECC 1996.
 b) 11 ♜d2 ♜d6 12 ♜ac1 ♛b8 13 h3 0-0 = Avrukh-Timoshenko, Erevan ECC 1997.

A1)

11 e4 cxd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜c5 13 ♜g5 (D)

Alternatives:

- a) 13 e5 ♜fd7 14 ♜f4 b4 15 ♜a4 ♜xb3 16 axb3 ♜d5 and then:
 a1) 17 ♜f5?! (Høi-L.B.Hansen, Danish Ch (Randers) 1996) 17...♛b7 18 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 19 exd6 0-0 20 ♛g4 f5! (this is stronger than 20...♜f6 21 ♛h3, which is unclear according to

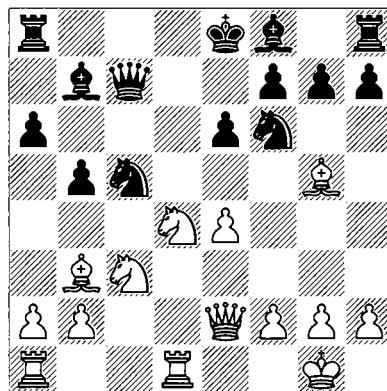
Ftačnik) 21 ♛e2 (21 ♛h3 ♜f6) 21...♜xb3 22 ♜dc1 ♜b5 ±.

a2) 17 ♜ac1 ♛b7 18 h4 ♜e7 19 ♛g4 g6 with an unclear position, Levitt-Chernin, Moscow 1988.

b) 13 f3 ♜e7 14 ♜e3 0-0 15 ♜ac1 ♜ac8 16 ♜c2 and here:

b1) 16...♛b8 17 ♜b3 ♜xb3 18 ♜xb3 ♜fd8 = Andersson-Ribli, Bayern-Lyon ECC 1991.

b2) 16...♜fd8 17 a3 ♛b8 18 ♜b3 ♜xb3 19 ♜xb3 ♜d6 20 g3 ♜e5 = Salov-Chernin, Wijk aan Zee 1991.



13...♜d6

Black should avoid the greedy but fatal capture 13...♜fxe4? 14 ♜xe4, and now:

a) 14...♜xe4? 15 ♜xb5! axb5 (15...♛b6 16 ♜c7+! ♛xc7 17 ♜a4+ ♜c6 18 ♛xe4 +-) 16 ♜xb5+ ♜c6 (16...♛c6 17 ♜xb7 ♜xb7 18 ♜a4+ ♜xa4 19 ♜d8#) 17 ♜a4 ♜xa4 18 ♜xc6+ ♜xc6 19 ♜d8# Anand.

b) 14...♜xe4 15 f3 ± Anand.

14 ♜ac1 ♜xh2+ 15 ♜h1 ♜e5 16 ♜xf6 gxsf6

Now:

a) 17 ♛h5 0-0-0!± Anand. 17...♛e7!? also looks strong.

b) 17 ♜cxb5! ♛e7 18 ♜xc5! (18 ♜c3 f5! ± Anand) 18...♛xc5 19 ♜xe6! fxe6 (19...♛e7? loses to 20 ♜bc7+ ♜xc7 21 ♜a4+; 19...♜xb5? 20 ♛h5 ♛e7 21 ♜c7 ♜xb3 22 axb3 ♜xc7 23 ♜c5+ +- Anand) 20 ♛h5+ ♜e7 (20...♜f8 21 ♜d7 ♜c1+ 22 ♜d1+- Anand) 21 ♜xe6! ♜xe6! (21...♜af8?? 22 ♜d7+ ♜xe6 23 ♛f5#) 22 ♛g4+ ♜f7 23 ♜d7+ ♜e7 24 ♛h5+ ♜f8 25 ♛h6+ ♜f7 26 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7 27 ♛g7+ (White has run out of pieces to sacrifice, but his combination is good enough for a draw as the black king has

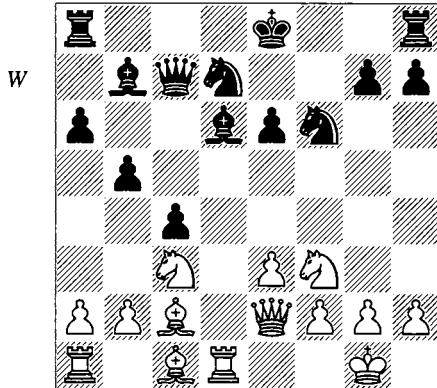
no sanctuary from the checks) 27... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 28 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (28... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 29 $\mathbb{W}d7+$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 30 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 31 $\mathbb{W}h3+$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 32 $\mathbb{W}d7+$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 33 $\mathbb{W}g4+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 34 $\mathbb{W}d7+$ ½-½ Lazović-Feletar, Croatian Cht (Pula) 1999) 29 $\mathbb{W}g7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ axb5 31 $\mathbb{W}d5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 32 $\mathbb{W}b7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 33 $\mathbb{W}d5+$ ½-½ Christiansen-Anand, Las Palmas 1993 – an entertaining and instructive tactical slugfest.

A2)

11 d5 c4!?

This is one of the interesting ideas behind 10... $\mathbb{W}c7$ – Black aims for a favourable Meran pawn-structure in which his queen is already situated on the optimal c7-square. Black can also play the conventional 11... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 14 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ – 10... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 11 d5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 14 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}b7$.

12 dxе6 fxе6 13 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ (D)



White has a wide choice here and no clear preference has emerged:

a) 14 $\mathbb{Q}d4$? (a tempting but ill-advised attempt to refute Black's set-up) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16 f4 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ – Frias-Blocker, New York 1985.

b) 14 $\mathbb{W}d4$ 0-0 15 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ gives Black a slight advantage, Granda-Magem, Pamplona 1991/2.

c) 14 h3 0-0 and now:

c1) 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16 b4 cxb3 17 axb3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}d4$ b4 \mp Grooten-Piket, Dutch Ch (Rotterdam) 2000.

c2) 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ b4 16 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ \mp Sinkovics-Crouch, Krumbach 1991.

c3) 15 e4 $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 17 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ {Kraai-Acosta, Peoria 1991}) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ \mp 16... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ (16...b4!?) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 18 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ \mp Blocker-Shamkovich, New York 1985.

d) 14 e4 0-0 15 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2$ and then:

d1) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ {Fochtler-Raetsky, Schwäbisch Gmünd 1992} 18... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ \mp .

d2) 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$!?

and then:

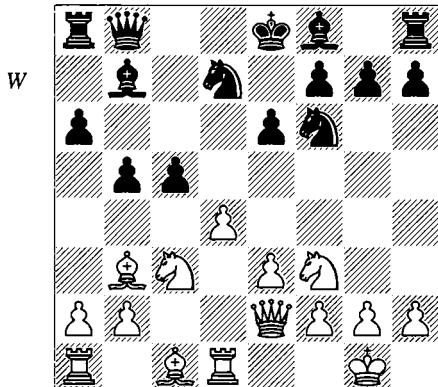
e1) 14... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ (15... $\mathbb{W}c6$ 16 f3 $\mathbb{Q}d5$) = 16 $\mathbb{Q}ce4$ (16 e4?! 0-0 \mp Bechler-Stroemer, corr. 2001) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$.

e2) 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ = Sanfrutus-Hanison, e-mail 2002.

e3) 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$! 15 e4 (Lputian-Vallejo Pons, Moscow tt 2004) 15...b4 16 $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ with an unclear position.

B)

10... $\mathbb{W}b8$ (D)



Black slides his queen away from the danger along the d-file.

11 d5

Or:

a) 11 e4 cxd4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ (12 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$!?) {13...0-0 = Borges-R. Vera, Cuban Ch (Holguin City) 2002} 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}df6$ 15 h3 $\mathbb{h}5$ \mp Kaunas-Pohla, Daugavpils 1979) 12... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ and then:

a1) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$? fxе6 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ and here:

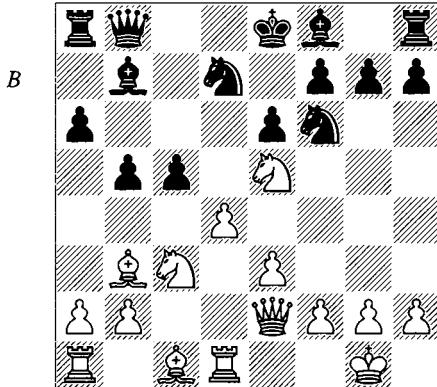
a11) 14...♜xh2+ 15 ♜h1 (Shirazi-Seirawan, New York 1984) 15...♜e5 16 ♜xg7+ ♜f7 17 ♜f5 ♜c5 ±.

a12) 14...♜f7 15 ♜g5+ ♜g8 16 a4 (Beni-Fichtl, East Berlin 1962) 16...♜xh2+ 17 ♜h1 h6 ±.

a2) 13 g3 b4 14 ♜a4 ♜xe4 15 f3 e5 (after 15...♜g6 16 ♜xe6 0-0 the position is also unclear) 16 ♜e6 fxe6 17 fxe4 ♜c5+ is unclear, Majchrak-Fichtl, Stary Smokovec 1972.

a3) 13 h3 0-0 14 a3 ♜d8 15 ♜c2 ♜h2+ 16 ♜h1 ♜f4 = Reshevsky-Portisch, Amsterdam IZ Playoff (1) 1964.

b) 11 ♜e5 (D) and then:



b1) 11...♜xe5 12 dxe5 and here:

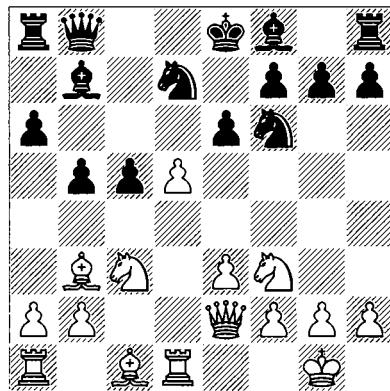
b11) 12...♜xe5?! (this capture is dubious, but the refutation is instructive) 13 ♜xb5 c4 14 ♜xc4 axb5 15 ♜xb5+ ♜e7 16 ♜d2 ♜e4 (16...♜d5 17 e4 ± Bokan-Savić, corr. 1980) 17 ♜e1 (Bokan-Kindjić, Serbian corr. Ch 1980) 17...♜f6 18 f3 ♜d6 19 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 20 fxe4 with a strong attack.

b12) 12...♜d7 13 f4 ♜c6 14 a4 c4 15 ♜c2 ♜b7 16 axb5 axb5 17 ♜xa8+ ♜xa8 18 ♜d2 ♜c5 = Barczay-Brilla Banfalvi, corr. 1981-4.

b2) 11...♜d6 12 f4 (12 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 13 h3 0-0 = Neamtu-Breahna, Romanian Cht (Baile Herculane) 1994) 12...0-0 13 ♜d2 ♜b6 14 ♜ac1 cxd4 15 exd4 ♜e8 16 a3 ♜c8 17 ♜f1 ♜bd5 18 f5 ♜xc3 19 ♜xc3 ♜d5 ½-½ Ubilava-Gulko, Tashkent 1984.

c) 11 ♜c2 ♜d6 12 h3 (12 dxc5 ♜xc5 13 h3 0-0 14 e4 ♜e8 = Burmakin-Rublevsky, St Petersburg 1995) 12...0-0 13 e4 (13 ♜g5 ♜c8 is comfortable for Black) 13...cxd4 14 ♜xd4 ♜c8 15 a3 h6 = Stigard-Flear, Copenhagen 1983.

We now return to 11 d5 (D):



11...exd5

Alternatives:

a) 11...e5 12 e4 ♜d6 13 ♜h4 0-0 14 ♜f5 g6 15 ♜h6+ ♜g7 16 ♜f3 c4 17 ♜c2 ♜c8 18 ♜e2 b4 19 ♜g3 ♜c5 20 ♜g5 ♜e8 ± Gil Capape-Sadler, Benidorm 1991.

b) 11...c4!?!? (the Meran System idea from Line A2 above – this move is a favourite of GM Ildar Ibragimov) 12 dxe6 fxe6 13 ♜c2 ♜d6 14 e4 (14 ♜d2 ♜xf3 15 ♜xd6 ♜xd1 16 ♜xe6+ ♜f8 17 ♜xd1 ♜e5 ±) 14...0-0 15 h3 (15 ♜g5 ♜e5 16 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 17 h3 ♜c7 ± Shwarts-Ibragimov, USSR Cht (Podolsk) 1991; 15 a4 ♜e5 16 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 17 axb5 axb5 18 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 19 h3 ♜c6 ± Sagalchik-Ibragimov, Katowice 1990) 15...♜c7. Black is a tempo down compared to Line A2, but his position is still satisfactory. Now:

b1) 16 ♜h1 ♜ae8 17 ♜g5 h6 18 ♜d2 ♜b4 ± Pakleza-Lipka, Czech Extraliga 2004/5.

b2) 16 ♜e3 ♜ae8 17 ♜ac1 ♜b4 = Postl-Ibragimov, Graz 1995.

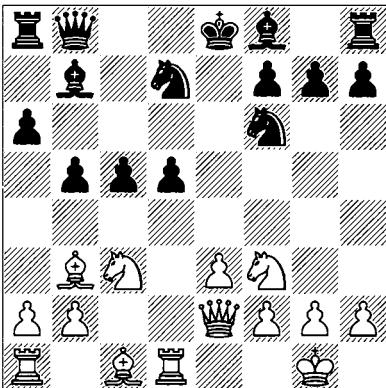
b3) 16 ♜g5 ♜f4 17 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 18 a3 ♜e5 19 ♜d4 ♜ae8 was unclear in Lugovoi-M.Makarov, Russian Ch (Elista) 1997.

b4) 16 a3 ♜ae8 17 ♜e3 (17 ♜d4 ♜c5 18 ♜h1 ♜e5 = Bouaziz-Sashikiran, Dubai 2004) 17...♜e5 18 ♜d4 ♜g6 = Sashikiran-Cu.Hansen, Skanderborg 2003.

c) 11...♜xd5 (this move-order attempts to avoid 11...exd5 12 e4!?, but gives White an alternative, though less explored, e4-based idea) 12 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 13 ♜xd5 exd5 14 e4!? (14 ♜xd5 ♜b7 – 10...♜b6 11 d5 exd5 12 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 13 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 14 ♜xd5 ♜b7) 14...d4 15

b4 ♜e5 16 bxc5 (16 ♜f4?! ♜xf3+ 17 ♜xf3 ♜b6 18 ♜g3 c4 is unclear) 16...♜xf3+ 17 ♜xf3 ♜xc5 18 ♜f5! ♜e7 19 ♜f4 (19 ♜b2?!) 19...♝b6 20 ♜e5 (20 ♜e5 0-0 21 ♜xd4 ♜g6 = Khuzman) 20...♝f6 = M.Pavlović-Draško, Yugoslav Ch (Belgrade) 1998.

We now return to 11...exd5 (D):



12 ♜xd5

White can continue in gambit style with 12 e4?!. Then:

- a) 12...dx4 13 ♜c2 (13 ♜g5 c4 14 ♜cxe4 ♜xe4 15 ♜c2 f5 16 ♜xe4 fxe4 17 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 = Morović-Marjanović, Bor 1985) 13...♜e7 14 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 15 ♜xe4 ♜f6 16 ♜f4 ♜c8 17 ♜xb7 ♜xb7 18 ♜d6 ♜f8 19 a4 with compensation, Ribli-Marjanović, Reggio Emilia 1985/6.
- b) 12...d4 13 e5 ♜xf3 14 ♜xf3 ♜xe5 15 ♜e2 ♜d6 16 ♜d5 ♜xd5 17 ♜xd5 0-0 18 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 19 a4 ♜c6 20 axb5 axb5 21 f4 ♜g6 22 g3 c4 23 ♜g2 ♜b6 24 ♜h1 with an unclear position, Jasnikowski-Meins, Cuxhaven 1993.

12...c4!?

This is one of the interesting ideas behind 10...♝b8 – the move is possible here because the black queen is beyond the range of the white knight. Black aims for a Meran pawn-structure, similar to Line A2. Alternatives:

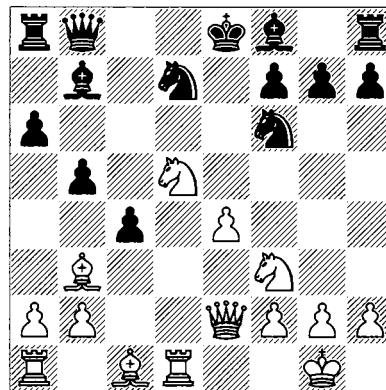
- a) 12...♜d6 13 e4 0-0 14 ♜g5 ♜xd5 15 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 16 ♜xd5 ♜b6 17 ♜dd1 f6 18 ♜e3 ♜c7 = Lalić-S.Mirković, Bela Crkva 1985.
- b) 12...♜xd5 (the standard reply) 13 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 14 ♜xd5 ♜b7 – 10...♝b6 11 d5 exd5 12 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 13 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 14 ♜xd5 ♜b7.

13 e4! (D)

This central thrust is more challenging than 13 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 14 ♜c2 ♜c5 and now:

a) 15 ♜d4 0-0 16 a4 {1½-1½ Velikov-Inkiov, Rijeka 2001} 16...♜d8 17 ♜e3 ♜xe4 and Black has won a pawn 16...♜d6 = Santos Ramos-Medina Cledon, corr. 1986.

b) 15 ♜d2 0-0 16 ♜c3 ♜e4 17 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 = Clarizza-Cataldi, corr. 1978.



13...♜d6

The bishop is immune – 13...cxb3? 14 ♜f4 ♜d6 15 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 16 ♜xd6 gives White a large advantage.

14 ♜c2

14 ♜xf6+ gxsf6 intending ...♝c7 is unclear.

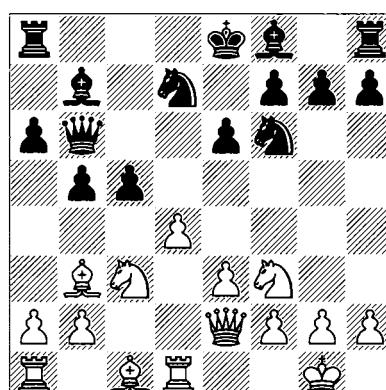
14...0-0 15 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 16 ♜g5 ♜g4 17 h3 ♜e5 18 ♜d4 ♜e8

The chances are equal, A.Gomez-Filipovs, ICCF World Cup corr. 1990.

C)

10...♝b6 (D)

The traditional queen development has been Black's most popular choice in recent years.



C1: 11 a4	99
C2: 11 d5	101

Minor alternatives:

a) 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 a4 c4 13 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ b4 14 a5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 0-0 = V.Popov-V.Filippov, Russian Cht (Tomsk) 2001.

b) 11 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ 12 a4 b4 13 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ cxd4 15 exd4 a5 16 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{B}ac1$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ = Benitah-Fressinet, Paris 2004.

c) 11 e4 cxd4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 14 f3 (14 a4 $\mathbb{Q}eg4$ = Korchnoi-P.Nikolić, Reykjavík (World Cup) 1988) 14... $\mathbb{B}d8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{W}xe3+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ g5!? = Vescovi-Spangenberg, Villa Martelli 1997.

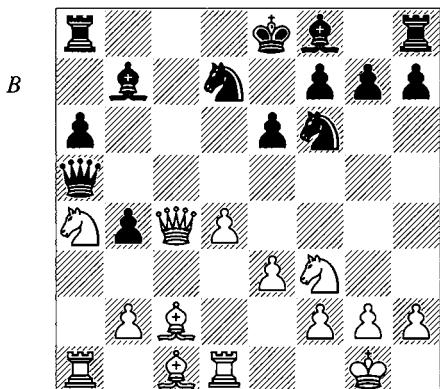
C1)

11 a4

White seeks to exploit the slightly exposed position of the black queen.

11...c4 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ b4 13 a5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{B}c8$

Black can also play 14... $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ (D) and now:



a) 15... $\mathbb{W}h5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 17 h3 (17 e4?? $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ ± Berczes-Galyas, Budapest 2002) 17... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ =.

b) 15... $\mathbb{B}c8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 17 $\mathbb{G}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}g5+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ and then:

b1) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 19 $\mathbb{B}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 20 $\mathbb{B}g2$ 0-0 = Kurtz-Luers, ICCF corr. Wch 1999.

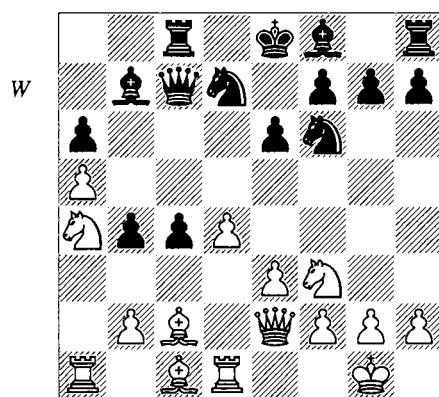
b2) 18... $\mathbb{W}h5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ (19 e4? $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ 20 e5 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 0-0 is much better for Black, Lautier-Van Wely, Bundesliga 1997/8 – White's pawn-structure is

shattered; 19 $\mathbb{B}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ – 18... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 19 $\mathbb{B}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h5$) 19... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 20 f4 and then:

b21) 20... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 21 f3 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ (after 21... $\mathbb{Q}xh2?$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}g1!$ {22 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ g5 23 $\mathbb{B}h1$ g4 24 $\mathbb{F}xg4$ $\mathbb{W}xg4+$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ f5 = P.Kukacs-Wells, Australian Cht 2000}) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}h4+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ ± Black has inadequate compensation for the piece) 22 $\mathbb{B}g1$ 0-0 23 $\mathbb{W}g2$ g6 24 $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ±.

b22) 20... $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{B}c6$ with equal chances.

Now we return to 14... $\mathbb{B}c8$ (D):



This position has been reached in only a handful of top-level games. Now:

C11: 15 e4 99

C12: 15 $\mathbb{Q}b6$!? 100

C11)

15 e4 b3 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 17 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (D)

White has developed some kingside pressure at the cost of a pawn.

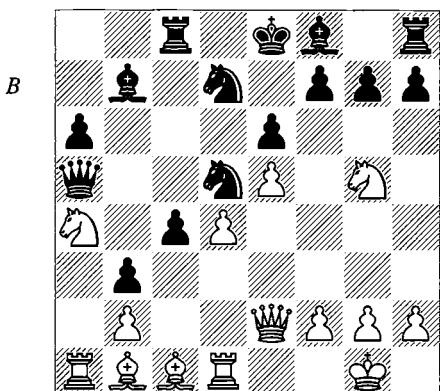
18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$!

Black defends the sensitive g5-square – this is safer than 18... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h5$! (19 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ was unclear in Høi-Sadler, Erevan OL 1996) 19...g6 20 $\mathbb{W}f3$ 0-0 (20... $\mathbb{B}f8$?) 21 $\mathbb{W}h3$ h5 22 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ (22 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ {22...fxe6 23 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ with an attack – Dolmatov}) 23 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 24 e6 is also strong) 22...fxg6 23 $\mathbb{W}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ (23... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xd7+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}e6+$ –) 24 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}7f6$ 25 exf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 26 $\mathbb{W}h6+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e6+$ –.

19 $\mathbb{Q}e4$!?

19 $\mathbb{W}h5$? g6 and then:

a) 20 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$! 21 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ±.



b) 20 $\mathbb{W}h6$ (Agdamus-Pilnik, Buenos Aires 1972) 20...c3! 21 $\mathbb{W}g7 \mathbb{R}f8 \mp$.

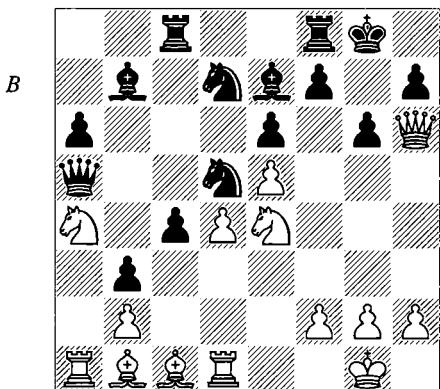
19...0-0

Dolmatov wisely assessed this position as unclear. Black can also continue 19... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 20 $\mathbb{R}d2 \mathbb{Q}b4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}ec5!$? (a temporary sacrifice) 21... $\mathbb{R}xc5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc5 \mathbb{W}xa1$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xb7 \mathbb{Q}d5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d6+ \mathbb{Q}d7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xc8 \mathbb{R}xc8$ = Beck-Degerman, e-mail 1997.

20 $\mathbb{W}h5?$

The safest course is 20 $\mathbb{W}g4!$? g6 21 $\mathbb{R}d2 \mathbb{W}c7$ 22 $\mathbb{R}h6 \mathbb{R}fd8$ with roughly level chances – White has some kingside pressure in exchange for his pawn.

20...g6 21 $\mathbb{W}h6$ (D)



Now:

a) 21... $\mathbb{R}fe8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}ac5!$? $\mathbb{W}b5$ (the sacrifice must be declined – White wins after 22... $\mathbb{W}xa1$? 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd7 \mathbb{Q}h8$ 24 $\mathbb{R}g5 \mathbb{R}g8$ 25 $\mathbb{R}f6+ \mathbb{R}xf6$ {25... $\mathbb{R}xf6$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}g5 +-$ } 26 $\mathbb{exf6}$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}dx6 \mathbb{R}g7$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}g5 +-$) 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd7 \mathbb{W}xd7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g5 \mathbb{R}xg5$ 25 $\mathbb{R}xg5$ f5 26 $\mathbb{exf6}$ $\mathbb{R}f8 \mp$. Black

has weathered the storm and emerged with an extra pawn.

b) 21...c3! 22 $\mathbb{bxc3} \mathbb{Q}xc3$ (22... $\mathbb{R}c4$ is well met by 23 $\mathbb{Q}ac5$) 23 $\mathbb{Q}axc3 \mathbb{W}xa1$ 24 $\mathbb{R}g5 f5$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xe7 \mathbb{R}xe4$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{fxe4}$ 27 $\mathbb{R}xf8 \mathbb{Q}xf8 \mp$.

C12)

15 $\mathbb{Q}b6!$?

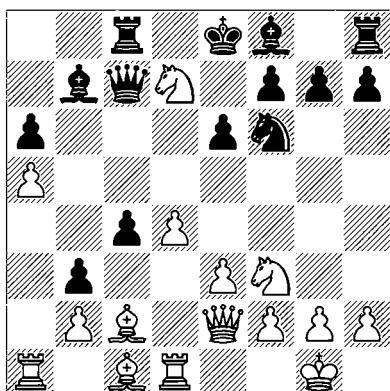
The knight leap vacates the a4-square for White's light-squared bishop.

15...b3

This pawn advance is necessary in order to bottle up White's queenside. 15... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ is too risky, as after 16 $\mathbb{axb6} \mathbb{W}xb6$ 17 $\mathbb{R}a4+ \mathbb{Q}e7$ (after 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ White wins a pawn) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e5 \mathbb{W}c7$ (18... $\mathbb{R}d5$? 19 f3 ± Horak-Manukyan, IECG corr. 2001) 19 f3 White has good compensation for the pawn – Black's king is misplaced.

16 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ (D)

Black's minor pieces are superior to White's rook and pawns after 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc8 \mathbb{bxc2}$ 17 $\mathbb{R}d2 \mathbb{W}xc8$ 18 $\mathbb{R}xc2 \mathbb{R}d6$ 19 $\mathbb{R}xc4 \mathbb{W}b8 \mp$.



Black has several playable options:

a) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 17 $\mathbb{R}b1$ (B.Rasmussen-Brody, Warsaw OL 1935) 17... $\mathbb{R}b4$ 18 e4 $\mathbb{R}xa5$ 19 d5 is unclear.

b) 16... $\mathbb{bxc2}$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+ \mathbb{gxf6}$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xc2$ f5 (18... $\mathbb{R}xf3$ 19 $\mathbb{gxf3} \mathbb{R}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{R}h1 \pm$) 19 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (19 $\mathbb{W}a4+ \mathbb{Q}c6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xc4 \mathbb{R}g8$ with compensation – Dolmatov) 19... $\mathbb{R}d6$ 20 h3 $\mathbb{R}g8$ and Black's powerful bishops compensate for his minus pawn.

c) 16... $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 17 $\mathbb{R}b1 \mathbb{W}d5$ gives Black a comfortable position as White is hemmed in on the queenside.

C2)

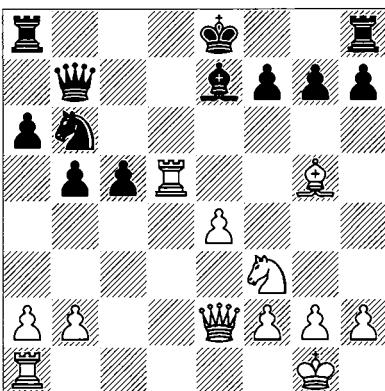
11 d5 ♜xd5 12 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 13 ♜xd5 exd5
14 ♜xd5 ♜b7

Another move-order is 14...♜e7 15 e4 ♜b7 – 14...♝b7 15 e4 ♜e7.

15 e4

White obtains no benefit from the adventurous 15 ♜g5!? g6 16 e4 ♜g7 17 e5 ♜f8 18 a4 ♜b8 19 axb5 axb5 20 e6 ♜xe6 21 ♜xc5 0-0 22 ♜c2 b4 with equal chances, P.Nikolić-Seirawan, Manila OL 1992.

15...♜e7 16 ♜g5 ♜b6 (D)



17 ♜ad1

The most popular choice here, but there are alternatives:

a) 17 ♜f5 f6 18 ♜h4 0-0 19 e5 ♜ae8 20 exf6 ♜xf6 21 ♜c2 ♜xh4 22 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 23 ♜xh4 c4 ♜ Ehlvest-Ivanchuk, Riga 1995.

b) 17 ♜xe7 ♜xd5 18 ♜xc5 ♜f4 19 ♜e3 ♜e6 20 ♜d6 f6 21 e5!? (21 ♜b3 ♜f7 22 e5 ♜he8 23 ♜e1 {23 exf6 gxf6 24 ♜d3 ♜g8 ♜ R.Vogel-G.Jacoby, Bundesliga 1984/5} 23...♜ad8 ♜ Donner-Portisch, Varna OL 1962) 21...♜d8 22 ♜e1 ♜f7 23 ♜d1 (23 b3 ♜hd8 24 ♜d1 ♜c6 ♜) 23...♜xa2 24 exf6 gxf6 25 ♜e4 gave White compensation in Dao-Sadler, Budapest 1993.

c) 17 ♜e1 0-0 18 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 19 ♜e5 ♜c7 20 ♜h5 (20 ♜g5 f6 21 ♜g3 ♜ae8 22 ♜c2 ½-½ Levitt-Murshed, London 1989; 20 ♜c2 c4 is also equal, Meister-Schlemmermeyer, Berlin Ch 2004) 20...♜fe8 21 ♜c2 ♜d7 = Todorović-Perey, Budapest 1995.

17...f6

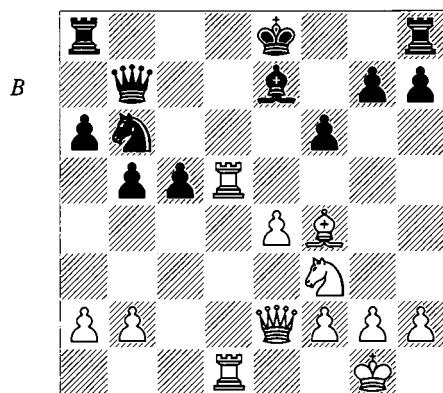
This move has replaced 17...h6 (Black must avoid 17...♜xd5? 18 exd5 f6 19 d6 fxg5 20 ♜e1

♜d8 21 ♜e6 with a decisive attack, Neronsky-Zhuk, corr. 1966; 17...0-0 18 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 19 ♜d6 ± Khuzman-Jonkman, Leeuwarden 1993) 18 ♜xe7 ♜xd5 19 ♜xc5! and now:

a) 19...♜e7? 20 ♜e5 ♜c8 (20...♜c7 21 ♜d7! h5 22 ♜d4! with a strong attack, Dolgitser-Gordeev, corr. 1981) 21 ♜d7! (21 ♜g4? 0-0 22 b4! {22 ♜d4!?) 22...♜fd8 ♜ Botterill-Speelman, British Ch (Brighton) 1984) 21...♜c7 22 ♜d8+!! ♜xd8 23 ♜xf7+ ♜d7 (the lesser evil is 23...♜e8 24 ♜d6+ ♜d8 25 ♜xb7+ ♜xb7 26 ♜d2+ --) 24 ♜g4+ ♜c6 25 ♜e6+ 1-0 Boleslavsky-Dzindzichashvili, Minsk 1967 – mate follows after 25...♜xc5 26 ♜d6+ ♜c4 27 ♜e5#. A brilliant game which had a mesmerizing effect – it took more than a decade for players to realize that Black's position was OK after 17...f6.

b) 19...♜f4! 20 ♜e3 ♜e6 21 ♜d6 (Neihsstadt described Black's game as "positionally hopeless", but matters are not so clear-cut) 21...♜d8 22 ♜e5 (22 h3 f6 23 e5 ♜f7 24 exf6 gxf6 with roughly level chances, Pietrocola-Peddie, ICCF e-mail 1999) 22...h5 (22...♜c7!?) 23 ♜d3 ♜b7) 23 ♜d5 ♜h6 with an unclear position.

18 ♜f4 (D)



18...0-0

White's passed d-pawn is too powerful following 18...♜xd5? 19 exd5 0-0 20 d6 ♜d8 21 d7 ♜c7 22 ♜e6+ ♜f7 23 b4! ± Vaganian-Garcia Palermo, Reggio Emilia 1992/3.

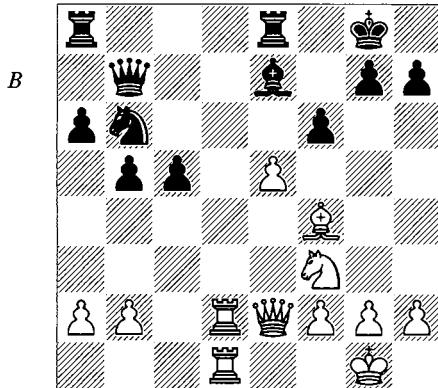
19 ♜5d2

Black completes his development after 19 ♜h5 ♜ad8 =.

19...♜fe8

Black can also play 19... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 20 e5 (20 h4?! $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ {Christiansen-Hübner, Bundesliga 1991/2} 21... $\mathbb{Q}e8 \mp$ Hübner) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ($\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ Yrjölä-Agzamov, Sochi 1984) 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ fxe5 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (24 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f4 =$) 24... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2 =$ Nimzo-8-Gambit Tiger, Cadaques 2001.

20 e5 (D)



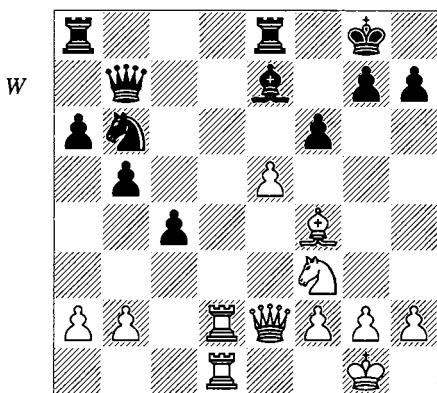
20...c4!

Black immediately mobilizes his queenside pawn-majority. Two other moves are also sufficient to hold the balance:

a) 20...fxe5 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (or 22... $\mathbb{Q}f7!$? 23 b3 c4) 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 24 b3 (Ivanchuk-Seirawan, Tilburg 1990) 24...c4 25 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (25 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}e4 =$) 25... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ with a level game.

b) 20... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ fxe5 (Atalik-Topalov, Sarajevo 2001) 23 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (23 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ c4 25 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7 =$) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}de1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ with equal chances according to Atalik.

Now we return to 20...c4! (D):



a) 21 exf6? $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ gxf6 \mp Mosonyi-Radekker, ICCF corr. 1994.

b) 21 e6? $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (23 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ {24... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ also looks strong}) 25 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6 \mp$ Khuzman) and then:

b1) 23... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 25 h4 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ (25... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ {"with counterplay" - Khuzman} 26 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8 \mp$; 25... $\mathbb{Q}a4!$? 26 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ is also advantageous for Black) 26 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6 \mp$ Danner-A.Horvath, Hungarian Cht 2003.

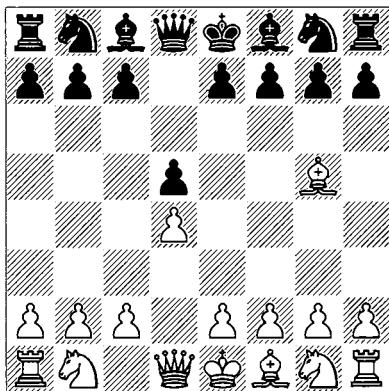
b2) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (24 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ intending ... $\mathbb{Q}d3 \mp$ Khuzman) 24... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ (25 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ {26 $\mathbb{Q}a5?$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6 --$ Khuzman} 26... $\mathbb{Q}g6 \mp$) 25... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 26 a3 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 27 e7 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}dx7$ 29 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6 --$ Leitão-Ponomariov, Lausanne 2001.

c) 21 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (21... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}h4!$? stirs up trouble on the kingside) 22 h3 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ = Jackelen-W.Watson, 2nd Bundesliga 1991/2.

12 Hodgson Attack: 1 d4 d5 2 g5

1 d4 d5 2 g5 (D)

B



British GM Julian Hodgson was not the first player to dangle a bishop (the infamous Preston Ware played it in 1880), but his name is most closely associated with this variation because of his willingness to play it repeatedly against all levels of opposition. Hodgson's successful results with the opening can be attributed to several factors:

- He continually developed the line by introducing new ideas in all of the sub-variations.
- He was well-versed in the typical positions arising from the opening – this enabled him to play the characteristic middlegame positions with confidence.
- He forged ahead regardless of the position on the board and he succeeded in creating imbalance in many objectively equal positions.

These are all desirable attributes to have regardless of which opening you choose to play! Hodgson's fellow British GMs Michael Adams and Tony Miles also played the line with great success.

The main idea behind 2 g5 can be summed up in a single phrase – to **annoy** and **provoke**. White hopes to annoy his opponent and provoke him into weakening his position by overreacting to the probing bishop. The current popularity of 2 g5 can be seen by looking at the number of

games played with it in recent years – my database contains 70 games with 2 g5 prior to the year 1980, but since then more than 4,000 games have been played in this line! The explosive growth can be interpreted as a desire by many players to rebel against mainstream opening theory by playing a move which for years had been completely ignored by traditional theory. The nice thing about 2 g5 is that the move develops a piece and has a clear strategic plan associated with it – in the event of 2... f6, White will create imbalance by capturing the knight with 3 xf6, and then he will play against the resulting doubled pawns. These variations are quite playable for Black, as are the lines arising from moves such as 2...c5, 2...g6, and 2...f6!?, but we are going to follow a steadier course.

2...h6

This is our repertoire move – Black boots the bishop away from the g5-square with tempo. The h7-square has been freed up as a potential safe retreat-square for Black's light-squared bishop after a future ... f5, and some *luft* has been created for the black king in the event of kingside castling.

3 h4

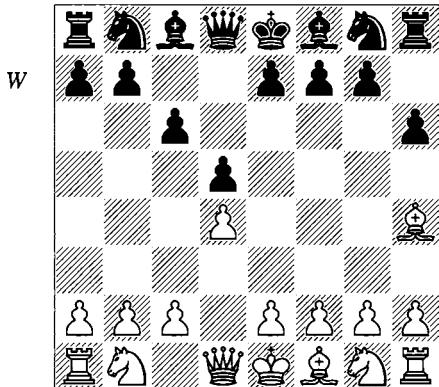
The bishop is slightly vulnerable here – in some lines after Black has played ...c6 and ... b6, there is the possibility of playing the freeing ...e5 pawn-break as a dx5 reply by White would be met by ... b4+, winning the h4-bishop. Also, Black has the option of playing a well-timed ...g5 pawn advance to harass White's dark-squared bishop.

3...c6 (D)

Black bolsters the d5-pawn and prepares ... b6 to exploit the absence of White's dark-squared bishop from the queenside. The 14th World Champion Vladimir Kramnik and the 12th World Champion Anatoly Karpov have both played this solid, reliable line.

Now:

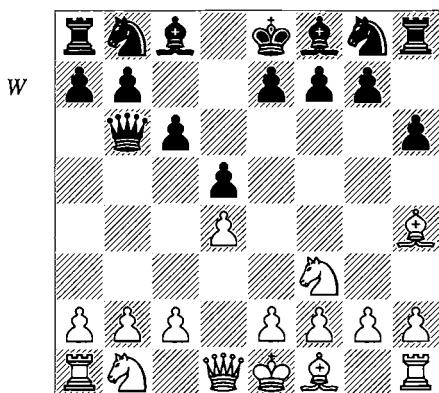
A: 4 f3	104
B: 4 e3	106



These two lines can sometimes transpose into each other – the main difference is that Line A immediately protects the h4-bishop and avoids some ideas involving a quick ...e5 break.

A)

4 ♜f3 ♜b6 (D)



Now:

A1: 5 b3	104
A2: 5 ♜c1	105

Rarely seen is 5 ♜bd2 ♜f6 (5...♜xb2!?) 6 e4 dxе4 7 ♜xe4 ♜f6 8 ♜xf6 exf6 leaves White with inadequate compensation for the pawn) 6 ♜xf6 exf6 7 ♜c1 c5 8 e3 ♜c6 9 c3 ♜f5 10 ♜e2 (10 dxc5 ♜xc5 11 ♜b3 ♜d6 =) 10...cxд4 11 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 12 exd4 ♜d6 = Albut-Hodgson, New York PCA 1995. I suppose it is difficult to avoid playing against your own opening when it arises after only two moves!

A1)

5 b3 a5

Black has some other options here:

- a) 5...♜d7 6 e3 e5 7 ♜g3 (Adams-Lautier, Groningen 1995) 7...e4 8 ♜fd2 ♜e7 is unclear – Adams.

b) 5...♜f5 6 e3 – 4 e3 ♜b6 5 b3 ♜f5 6 ♜f3.

6 a3 ♜f5 7 e3

Or 7 c4 e6, and then:

- a) 8 e3 ♜d7 9 ♜c3 ♜e7 10 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 11 ♜a4 (11 ♜e2 0-0 12 0-0 ♜fd8 =) 11...♜a7 (11...♜c7??) 12 ♜d3 ♜xd3 13 ♜xd3 ♜a6 14 0-0 0-0 = Beecham-Lennox, corr. 2001.

b) 8 ♜c3 ♜d7 9 ♜a4 ♜a7 10 e3 ♜e7 11 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 12 ♜d3 ♜xd3 13 ♜xd3 0-0 14 0-0 ♜a6 15 ♜fc1 ♜fc8 16 ♜f1 b6 = Hodgson-Baburin, Isle of Man 1996.

7...♜d7

Black can also play 7...e6 8 ♜d3 ♜xd3 9 ♜xd3 ♜a6:

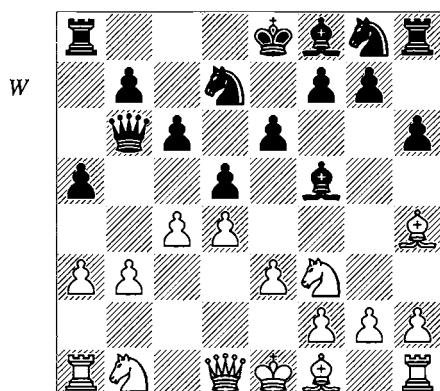
- a) 10 ♜e5 ♜xd3 (10...♜d7??) 11 ♜xd3 ♜d7 12 ♜d2 ♜e7 = Brumen-Begovac, Croatian Cht (Poreč) 1998.

b) 10 ♜xa6 ♜xa6 11 ♜bd2 ♜e7 = Orr-Baburin, Kilkenny 1997.

8 c4

8 ♜d3 ♜xd3 9 ♜xd3 e6 10 0-0 ♜gf6 = Vinitksy-Golichenko, Kiev 2001.

8...e6 (D)



White has several options here:

- a) 9 c5 ♜a7 10 ♜c3 b6 11 cxb6 ♜xb6 12 ♜a4 ♜b7 13 ♜d3 ♜xa3! = Hodgson-Kaidanov, Lucerne Wcht 1997.

b) 9 ♜d3 (= Kaidanov) 9...♜xd3 10 ♜xd3 ♜e7 11 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 12 0-0 0-0 is equal.

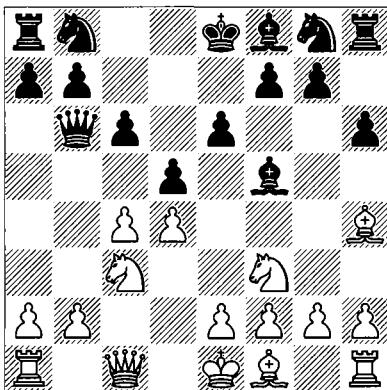
c) 9 ♖c3 ♖gf6 10 c5 ♕a7 11 ♕a2 ♖e4 with equal chances according to Kaidanov.

A2)

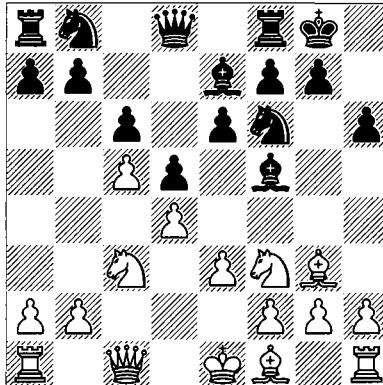
5 ♕c1 ♕f5

I believe the typical club and tournament player should avoid playing the greedy pawn-grab 5...g5?! 6 ♔g3 g4 7 ♖e5 ♕xd4, which leads to messy complications. My database contains more than 30 games in this line and after a fair amount of analysis I have been unable to draw any definitive conclusions on the merits of this position for either side. This is exactly the type of chaotic mess White is aiming for in the Hodgson Attack – it is a good practical decision to avoid it because our repertoire move 5...♔f5 is a solid and proven alternative.

6 c4 e6 7 ♖c3 (D)



B



This move can transpose into the main line, but there are some deviations:

a) 11 b4 ♖bd7 12 ♔e2 ♖h5 13 ♔e5 ♖hf6 14 ♔f4 ♖h5 15 ♖xh6 gxh6 16 g4 ♔h7 17 gxh5 ♖h8 18 ♕d2 a5 19 b5 e5 with a sharp struggle ahead, Hodgson-Grünfeld, Philadelphia 1991.

b) 11 ♔e2 b6 12 b4 a5 13 a3 ♕c8 14 ♖a4 ♖bd7 15 ♖e5 ♕b7 16 ♖xc6?! ♕xc6 17 b5 ♕b7 18 c6 ♕a7 19 cxd7 ♖xd7 20 ♕b2 1/2-1/2 Hodgson-Chernin, Pardubice 1993.

c) 11 h3 and then:

c1) 11...b6 12 b4 a5 13 a3 ♕c8 14 ♔e2 ♖bd7 15 0-0 ♕b7 16 ♕d2 ♕fc8 17 ♕fc1 ♔d8 with an equal position, Hodgson-Bönsch, Bundesliga 2002/3.

c2) 11...a5?! 12 ♔e2 ♖bd7 13 ♖e5 ♖xe5 14 ♖xe5 ♖d7 15 ♔g3 b6 16 cxb6 ♕xb6 17 0-0 ♕fc8 ± Barsov-Hector, York 2000. Black has a favourable Slav-style pawn-structure with pressure along the b-file supported by a strong light-squared bishop.

c3) 11...♖bd7 – 10...♖bd7 11 h3 0-0.

11 h3 0-0 12 b4 ♖e4 13 ♖xe4 ♔xe4 14 ♖d2

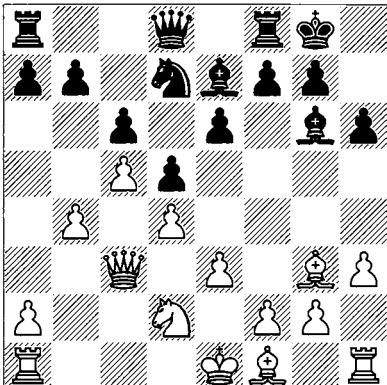
Black has no problems after 14 ♔e2 a5 15 a3 ♕e8 =

14...♔g6 15 ♕c3 (D)

Black has tried several moves to prepare the ...e5 pawn-break:

8 ♔g3 ♖f6 9 c5

B



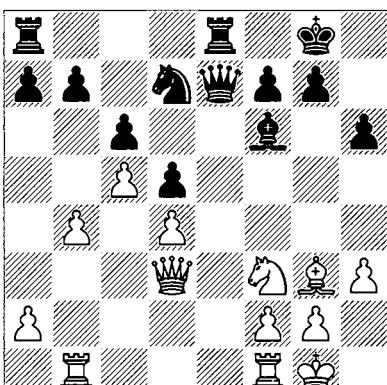
a) 15...Qh4 16 Qd6 Qe8 17 Qd3 Qxd3 18 Qxd3 – 15...Qe8 16 Qd3 Qxd3 17 Qxd3 Qh4 18 Qd6.

b) 15...Qe8 16 Qd3 Qxd3 17 Qxd3 and then:

b1) 17...Qh4 18 Qd6 (18 Qxh4 Qxh4 =) 18...e5 (18...Qe7?! 19 Qh2 b6) 19 0-0 exd4 (this is simpler than 19...a6 20 a4 ± Hodgson-M.Turner, Kilkenny 1999, or 19...Qf6 20 a4 ± Hodgson-Thorhallsson, Istanbul OL 2000) 20 exd4 Qe7 21 Qh2 b6 =.

b2) 17...Qf6 18 0-0 e5 19 Qab1 exd4 (Black can also try 19...Qe7?! 20 exd4 Qe7 21 Qf7 (D) and here:

B



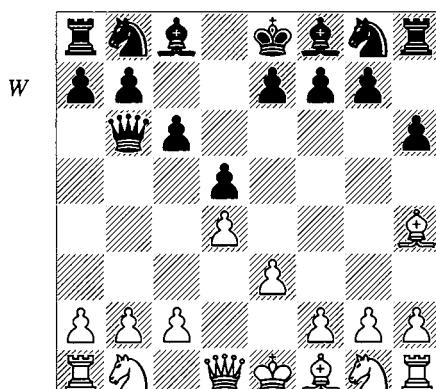
b21) 21...Qe2 22 Qb3!? (the white queen is well-positioned here to support the b5 pawn-break; less accurate is 22 Qf5 Qf8 = Thorfinnsson-Hanley, Budapest 2002) 22...Qf8 (22...b5?! 23 Qbc1 Qe4 24 Qce1 Qf5 25 Qxe8+ Qxe8 26 Wa3, and her majesty infiltrates along the a-file) 23 b5 Qe6 24 bxc6 bxc6 25 Wa4 with a slight advantage for White.

b22) 21...Qe4 22 Qb3 a6 =.

c) 15...Qf6 (the solid choice) 16 Qb3 Qe8 17 Qd3 Qxd3 18 Qxd3 e5 19 0-0 a6 20 a4 Qe7 with equality, Hodgson-Naumann, Bundesliga 2002/3.

B)

4 e3 Qb6 (D)



Now:

B1: 5 Qc1 106

B2: 5 b3 109

Line B1 was the more popular choice during the formative years of the Hodgson Variation, but Line B2 was ultimately preferred by top players because they concluded that supporting the c4 pawn advance was more important than incurring a slight weakening of the dark squares.

5 Qd3?! is rarely played. 5...e5! and now:

a) 6 dx5?? loses the bishop to 6...Qb4+.
b) 6 Qd2 exd4 (also strong is 6...e4 7 Qe2 Qxb2+) 7 exd4 Qxd4 8 Qg3 Qxb2 9 0-0 Qd6 10 Qe1+ Qe7 and White has insufficient compensation for the pawns.

c) 6 c4 Qxb2 7 Qd2 (Brichard-Parmentier, Planoet 2003) 7...exd4 8 Qb1 Qa3 9 Qb3 Qxa2 10 exd4 Qe7 +.

B1)

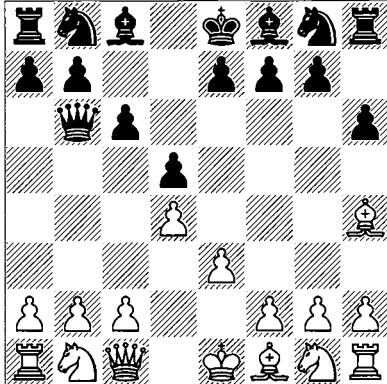
5 Qc1 (D)

Now:

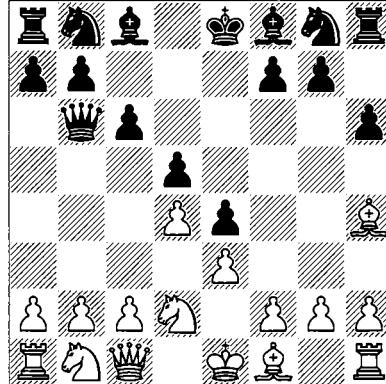
B11: 5...e5 107

B12: 5...Qf5 108

B



B

**B11)**

5...e5

The sharp choice – Black advances in the centre and frees his position.

6 ♔f3

White can also play 6 c3 (6 dx5?? ♕b4+ costs White his bishop) 6...♔d7 7 ♔f3 ♔d6 8 ♔e2 ♔e7 9 ♔xe7 ♔xe7 and now:

a) 10 0-0 ♕e8 11 ♔bd2 (11 c4!? appears sharper so as to open lines against Black's over-developed king) 11...e4 12 ♔e1 ♕c7 and then:

a1) 13 f4? exf3 14 ♔exf3 ♔f8 15 ♕e1 ♔f6 16 ♔d3 ♔g4 17 e4 ♔xh2+ 18 ♔h1 ♔g3 –+ Adams-Rublevsky, Internet rpd 2004.

a2) 13 h3 ♔f8 14 c4 ♕d8 gives Black a slight pull because of his bishop-pair and potential kingside attack.

b) 10 c4 e4 11 ♔fd2 ♔b8 is unclear, Chernin-Kramnik, New York rpd 1995.

c) 10 dx5 ♔xe5 11 ♔bd2 ♔xf3+ 12 ♔xf3 ♕e8 13 0-0 ♔f5 14 ♔d4 ♔g6 = Adams-Speelman, Brussels rpd 1992.

6...e4 7 ♔fd2 (D)

7...♔e7

Alternatives:

a) 7...♔e7 8 c4 ♔f5 9 ♔g3 ♔xg3 10 hxg3 ♕e6 11 ♔c3 ♔d7 and now:

a1) 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 ♔b5 ♔d8! 14 ♕c2 ♕c8 15 ♔c3 ♔f6 16 ♔e2 ♔d6 17 ♕b3 ♕xb3 (½-½ Meduna-Scherbakov, Dečin 1996) 18 ♕xb3 ♔e7 and Black has a slight endgame edge because of his bishop-pair.

a2) 12 ♕c2 ♔e7 (Miladinović-Degerman, Malmö 1998) 13 0-0-0 ± Milov.

b) 7...♔e6 8 c4 ♔d7 9 ♔c3 ♔e7 10 ♔g3 (10 f3 exf3 11 gxf3 g5 12 ♔f2 ♔g7 with an

unclear position in Ovechkin-Lastin, St Petersburg 1998) 10...a6 11 h4 ♔f5 12 ♔f4 h5 13 ♕c2 ♔e7 14 g3 0-0 15 ♔e2 g6 and then:

b1) 16 0-0-0 ♕fc8 17 ♔b1 ♕d8 and here:

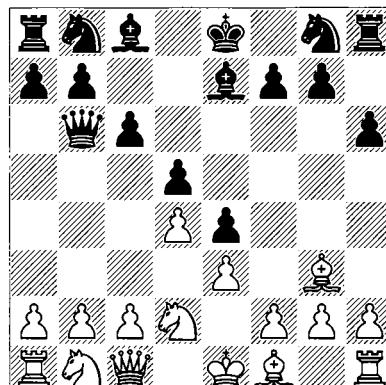
b11) 18 ♕hg1 b5 19 c5 ♔f6 (Miladinović-Rublevsky, Yugoslavia 1995.

b12) 18 ♔dxe4 dxe4 19 d5 cxd5 20 cxd5 ♕xe3 21 ♔xe3 ♔f5 ("?" Rublevsky) 22 g4!? hxg4 23 h5 ♔e5 24 hxg6 ♔xg6 25 ♔d4 ♔f6 (25...e3? 26 ♔d3! ±) 26 ♕c1 with an unclear position.

b2) 16 ♔dxe4 dxe4 17 d5 cxd5 18 cxd5 ♔f6 (18...♔xd5 19 ♔xd5 ♕a5+ 20 ♔c3 ♔f6 21 0-0 ♕xc3 22 bxc3 ♔c5 with equal chances according to Rublevsky) 19 dxe6 ♕xe6 20 0-0 ♕ac8 and Black has a slight edge because of his more active pieces.

8 ♔g3 (D)

B



8...h5!?

This is a very interesting continuation – Black seizes some space on the kingside before completing his queenside development. A sound

and reliable alternative is 8... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 c4 0-0 10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ and now:

- a) 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ (11... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12 c5 $\mathbb{W}d8$ 13 b4 – 11 c5 $\mathbb{W}d8$ 12 b4 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$) 12 0-0 a6 ½-½ B.Knežević-Im.Horvath, Budapest 1994 – not much of a test!
- b) 11 c5 $\mathbb{W}d8$ 12 b4 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe2$ and then:

b1) 15... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 17 b5 \pm Dishman-Law, British League (4NCL) 1996/7.

b2) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (16 0-0!? f5 17 b5 is slightly better for White) 16...f5 17 f3 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ $\mathbb{W}xh4$ + 19 g3 exf3 20 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ ½-½ A.Martin-Burgess, British League (4NCL) 2001/2.

b3) 15...b6!? 16 0-0 a5 17 a3 $\mathbb{W}c8$ with equal chances.

9 c4

9 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ (“ \mp ” according to Milov, but this assessment is too optimistic) 10 c4 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ (11 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 12 fxg3 f5 is unclear) 11... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ with a balanced position.

9...h4 10 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ g5 11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ f6 12 $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ $\mathbb{W}xb8$

Black has obtained the bishop-pair, but his king is slightly exposed – the position is dynamically balanced.

13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}c2$ f5 15 f3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 0-0-0

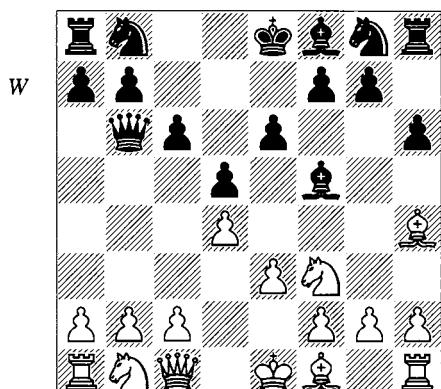
So far this is Milov-Mikhalevski, Biel 1999. Now Black's safest course is 16... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}bf8$ with equal chances.

B12)

5... $\mathbb{Q}f5$

The solid choice – Black develops his light-squared bishop outside the pawn-chain before playing ...e6.

6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6 (D)



7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

The alternative is 7 c4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$, and now:

- a) 8 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 10 c5 $\mathbb{W}d8$ 11 h3 a5 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ b6 16 cxb6 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 17 0-0 $\mathbb{W}fc8$ 18 $\mathbb{W}d2$ a4 \mp Barsov-Hector, New York 2000.

b) 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 11 0-0 and then:

b1) 11... $\mathbb{W}ac8$ 12 b3 c5 = Kosić-Simić, Yugoslavia Ch (Novi Sad) 1995.

b2) 11...dxc4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5 13 e4 cxd4 14 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 15 exf5 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}ac8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d1$ b5 18 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ dxc3 19 $\mathbb{W}xd7$ cxb2 20 $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ $\mathbb{W}fd8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}b7$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ (½-½ Miladinović-Lirindzakis, Ano Liosia 1997) 22 $\mathbb{W}e7$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 23 $\mathbb{W}b7$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ repeats the position.

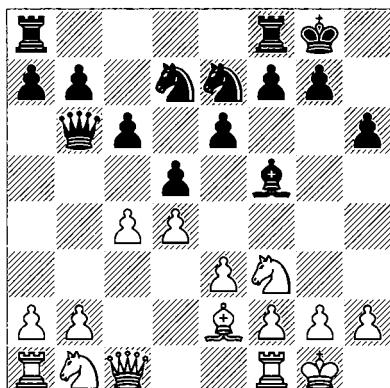
b3) 11... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and here:

b31) 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}ac8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ = Rakhmangulov-Neverov, Nikolaev Z 1995.

b32) 12 h3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ (13 c5 $\mathbb{W}a5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ b6 =) 13...dxc4 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ e5 (14... $\mathbb{W}b4$!? 15 a3 $\mathbb{W}a4$ is unclear) 15 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ exd4 16 exd4 $\mathbb{W}ad8$ = Rotshtein-Borgo, Cannes 1997.

b33) 12 b3 $\mathbb{W}ac8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}a3$ a6 15 $\mathbb{W}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 h3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}fd8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ = Hodgson-Khalifman, Hastings 1995/6.

7... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 10 c4 0-0 (D)



11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

White can also play 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ – 7 c4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 11 0-0.

11...a5 12 b3 $\mathbb{W}fc8$

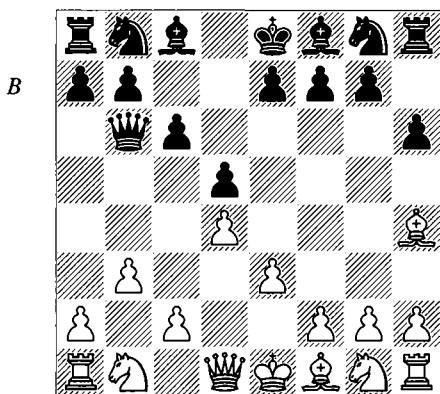
Now:

a) 13 $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 14 a3 (Gorbatov-Lastin, Vladimir 2004) 14...b5 =.

b) 13 ♖a3 ♖d8 14 ♖fc1 ♗g6 15 ♖b2 c5 16 cx5 ♖xd5 17 dxc5 ♖xc5 18 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 19 ♖d4 ♖f6 20 ♖c1 ½-½ Adams-Piket, Wijk aan Zee 1996.

B2)

5 b3 (D)



Now Black has:

- B21: 5...e5 109
B22: 5...♗f5 110

B21)

5...e5

The sharp choice.

6 ♖f3

White must avoid 6 dxe5?? ♖b4+ 0-1 Vinitsky-Nogin, Kiev 2001.

6...♗g4

Black has two sound alternatives:

a) 6...exd4 7 exd4 ♗e7 (Avrukh wrote that this is "...the easiest way for Black to equalize in this variation") 8 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 9 ♖d3 ♗g4 (9...0-0 10 0-0 ½-½ Neiman-Velikov, Evry 2002) 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 0-0 ♖d7 12 c3 ♗f5 13 ♖c2 ♖xd3 14 ♖xd3 ♖c7 with equal chances, Timman-Gelfand, Amsterdam 1996. Black has a comfortable game in this line – similar positions arise from the Exchange French.

b) 6...e4 7 ♖fd2 and now:

b1) 7...♗e7 8 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 9 ♗e2 ♗e6 = Heyden-Fridman, Internet rpd 2005.
b2) 7...♗e7 8 c4 ♖f5 9 ♗g3 ♖xg3 10 hxg3 ♗e6 11 ♗e2 ♖d7 (11...♗d8!?) was suggested by Gelfand) 12 a3 ♗e7 (12...♗d8 13 b4 ♗d6

was another Gelfand idea – a possible continuation is 14 ♖c3 0-0 15 b5 ♖a5 16 ♖b3 ♖f6 with equal chances) 13 ♖c3 ♖f6 14 b4 0-0 15 ♖c1 ♖d8 16 ♖b3 b6 with equal chances, Adams-Gelfand, Belgrade 1995.

7 ♗e2

White does not obtain any benefit from 7 h3 (after 7 dxe5?? ♗xf3 8 ♖xf3 ♖b4+ Black wins the loose bishop) 7...♗xf3 8 ♖xf3 exd4 9 ♗g4 (threatening ♗c8+) 9...♗d7 10 ♖xd4 ♖gf6 (10...♗d6!?) 11 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 12 ♖e5+ ♗e7 with a balanced position, Gervasio-Velikov, Besançon 2003.

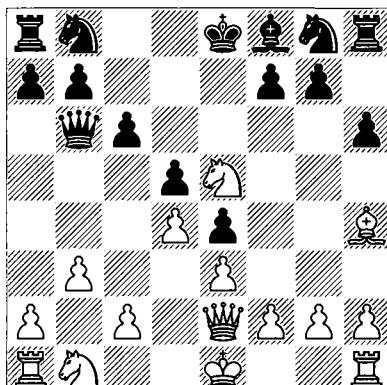
7...e4

Black has no problems after the modest 7...exd4 8 exd4 ♗e7 9 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 10 0-0 0-0 11 c3 ♖d7 12 ♖bd2 ♖g6 with equal chances, Lyrberg-Åkesson, Swedish Cht 2001/2.

8 ♗e5!?

This aggressive move is more in the spirit of the opening than the calm 8 ♖fd2 ♗xe2 9 ♖xe2 ♗e7 10 ♗g3 (10 ♗xe7 ♗xe7=) 10...♗f6 11 0-0 0-0 12 c4 ♖bd7 13 ♖c3 ♖a5 14 ♖fc1 ♖b4 = Dražić-Skembbris, Cesenatico 2000.

8...♗xe2 9 ♖xe2 (D)



Now:

- a) Not 9...♗d6?, which loses to 10 ♗g4.
b) 9...♗f6 and then:
b1) 10 ♖xf6 gxf6 11 ♖h5!? (11 ♗g4 ♖d7 12 f4 c5 13 c3 0-0-0 14 0-0 ♖g8=) 11...♗b4+ 12 ♖d2 ♖e7 13 ♖g4 ♖g8 with roughly level chances.
b2) 10 0-0 ♗d6 11 c4 ♖c7 and here:
b21) 12 ♗g3?! ♖bd7 and now:
b211) 13 c5? ♗xe5 (13...♗xc5 14 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 15 dxc5 ♖xg3! {15...♗e5 16 ♖c3 ♖hf8

\mp Skembbris} 16 hxg3 $\mathbb{W}e7 \mp$) 14 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ is much better for Black.

b212) 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3!$? $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 cxd5 ("with counterplay" according to Skembbris, but White is struggling to equalize here) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 16 hxg3 cxd5 17 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{W}b6 \mp$.

b22) 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$! (the thematic continuation) 12...gxf6 13 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ f5 (Black should settle for 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 f4 \pm) 14 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ and White has a slight edge because of his superior pawn-structure and prospects for attacking the f5-pawn.

c) 9... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}g4$ (11 f4?) 11... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 dxe5 g5 13 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 15 f3 exf3 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ = Karlik-Chernikov, Dečin 1998.

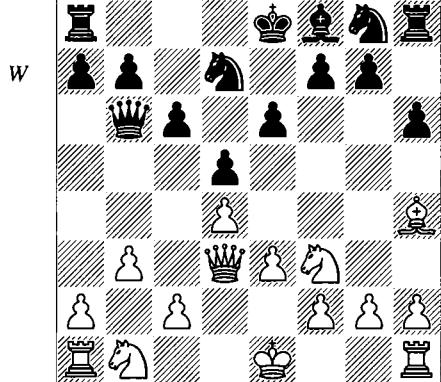
B22)

5... $\mathbb{Q}f5$

The solid choice.

6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

6 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 7 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ e6 8 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ – 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 8 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (D)



9 0-0

White can also play 9 c4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 11 0-0 – 9 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 11 c4) and now:

a) 10 c5? $\mathbb{W}a5+$ and then:

a1) 11 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}bx2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ e5 \mp) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 14 hxg3 b6 15 b4 a5 \mp .

a2) 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ b6! 12 cxb6 (12 b4? $\mathbb{W}xb4$ 13

0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fc1$ bxc5 15 $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ c4 16 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}a5$

\mp Anand-Karpov, Lausanne FIDE Wch rpd (8) 1998) 12...axb6 \mp Karpov.

b) 10 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ (11 0-0 – 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$) 11...dxc4 12 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}b4+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ g5 (Black has the initiative according to Karpov) 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$!? (an attempt to complicate the position) 14... $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ f6 16 g4!? $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ fxe5 (17... $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$ 18 fxe3 fxe5 19 $\mathbb{Q}fxe5$) = 18 gxf5 exf5 19 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ and Black has a slight endgame pull.

c) 10 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and here:

c1) 11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 12 hxg3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (Karpov assessed this position as slightly favourable for Black) 13 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0 and now:

c1) 14 $\mathbb{Q}fc1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}a6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (Ngoc Truongson Nguyen-Muir, Budapest 2004) 16...dxc4 17 bxc4 c5 \mp .

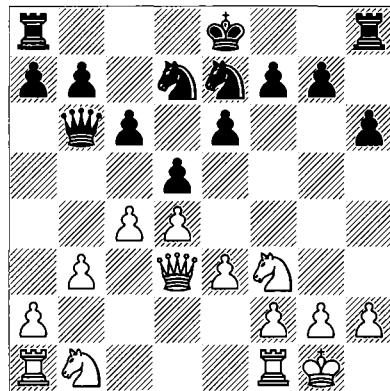
c2) 14 e4 dxe4 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (16...c5!?) 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ is slightly better for Black.

c2) 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (this looks safest for White) 11... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ (14 e4 dxe4 15 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 19 c5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ = Dishman-Rublevsky, Kallitheia ECC 2002) 14... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 15 e4 dxe4 16 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}e3$ b5 18 c5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ = Hernandez Basante-Ganguly, Calvia OL 2004.

9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 c4 – 9 c4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 0-0.

10 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 11 c4 (D)



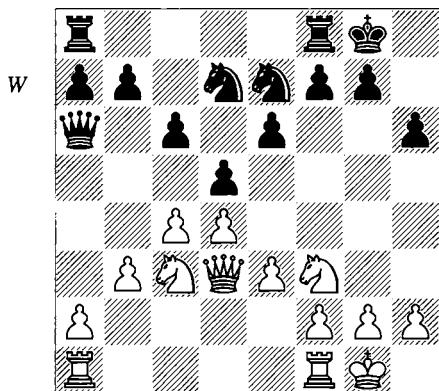
11...0-0

11...c5 12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ cxd4! 13 exd4 $\mathbb{W}a6!$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 15 c5 0-0 16 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (Hodgson-V.Mikhailovski, Las Vegas 2000) 17 a4!? b6 18 $\mathbb{W}c3!$ is unclear – Mikhailovski.

12 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}a6!$ (D)

A common theme in this variation – the black queen exerts pressure on some of the

squares weakened by the exchange of light-squared bishops.



13 ♜fd1

White can also try:

a) 13 ♜fc1 ♜fd8 14 ♜f1 dxc4 15 bxc4 c5 16 a4 ♜c6 17 a5 ♜dc8 18 ♜ab1 a6 19 ♜d1 cxd4 20 ♜xd4 ♜c7 = Hodgson-Akopian, Groningen 1996.

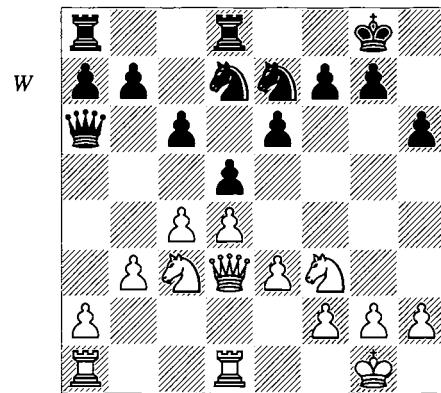
b) 13 a4 ♜fd8 14 ♜fd1 ♜ac8 15 a5 (the advance of the a-pawn is somewhat risky – safer is 15 ♜ac1 b6 16 e4 ♜a5 =) 15...c5 16 ♜b5 (16 cxd5 ♜xd3 17 ♜xd3 cxd4 18 exd4 ♜xd5 19 ♜xd5 exd5 =) 16...♝c6 17 ♜c3 cxd4 18 exd4 ♜f6 19 ♜e1 ♜e4 20 h3 dxc4 21 bxc4 ♜d6 22 d5? (22 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 =) 22...♜xc4 23 dxc6 ♜xd1 24 ♜xd1 ♜xb5 ± Rozentalis-Sulypa, Bad Wiessee 1999.

13...♝fd8 (D)

Black should avoid 13...♝b6?! 14 ♜dc1 (14 ♜c2?! dxc4 15 ♜e4 is worthy of investigation, seeking to exploit the suddenly vulnerable position of the black queen) 14...dxc4 15 ♜f1 ♜d7 (15...cxgb3 16 ♜xa6 bxa6 17 axb3 ± Hodgson – White will pick off Black's weak queen-side pawns in the endgame) 16 bxc4 c5 17 d5 (± Hodgson) 17...♜ad8 18 ♜ab1 exd5?! (18...♝c8 looks like a better try) 19 cxd5 ± Hodgson-Adianto, Amsterdam 1996.

Several top-level games have proved that Black's position after 13...♝fd8 is rock-solid:

- a) 14 a4 ♜ac8 15 ♜ac1 b6 =.
- b) 14 cxd5 ♜xd3 15 ♜xd3 cxd5 = Parrotta-Lacrosse, Cutro 2005.



c) 14 ♜ab1 b6 15 ♜f1 ♜ac8 16 ♜d2 ♜f6 17 ♜e5 dxc4 18 ♜xc4 (White should settle for 18 ♜xc4 ♜b7 =) 18...♝ed5 19 ♜c2? (after 19 ♜xd5 cxd5 20 ♜e5 ♜xf1+ 21 ♜xf1 ♜e4 22 ♜db2 ♜c3 ± the endgame is unpleasant for White, although he does retain some drawing chances) 19...♜xc3 20 ♜xc3 c5 21 dxc5 (Morozhevich may have overlooked Black's reply, but his position is also difficult after 21 ♜d3 cxd4 22 exd4 b5 ±) 21...b5! 22 ♜e5 (22 ♜d6 ♜xd6 23 cxd6 ♜xc3 →) 22...♞e4 (the knight fork wins the exchange) 23 ♜d3 ♜d2 24 ♜xd8+ (relatively best is 24 ♜d1 ♜xd3 25 ♜xd3 ♜xb1 26 ♜xb1 ♜d8 →) 24...♜xd8 25 ♜d1 (White's weak back rank is fatal after 25 ♜e1 ♜xb1 26 ♜xb1 ♜xa2! →) 25...♜xf1 26 ♜xd8+ ♜h7 (one of the benefits of 2...h6 is *luft* for the black king!) 27 c6 ♜a5 0-1 Morozhevich-Kramnik, Astana 2001. Kramnik's play in this game is a model of precision – the great players always make it look easy.

d) 14 ♜ac1 and then:

d1) 14...♝f5?! 15 ♜b1 (15 e4?! dxe4 16 ♜xe4 also gives White a slight advantage) 15...♛e7 16 e4 ± Hodgson-Sergejev, Pula Echt 1997.

d2) 14...♜ac8 15 ♜b1 (15 cxd5 ♜xd3 16 ♜xd3 cxd5 17 ♜dd1 ♜f5 18 ♜c2 ♜c6 19 ♜dc1 ♜dc8 is equal, Gerber-Tukmakov, Geneva 1999) 15...b6 (15...♝g6 16 ♜b2 ♜f6 17 a3 b6 18 ♜a2 ♜c7 19 ♜d2 ♜b7 ½-½ Kudishevich-Av.Bykhovsky, Tel Aviv 2002) 16 e4 ♜f6 17 e5 ♜d7 with equality, V.Mikhalevski-Villamayor, Calcutta 2001.

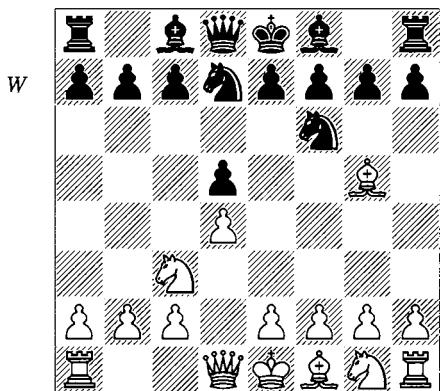
13 Veresov Opening: 1 d4 d5 2 ♞c3 ♞f6 3 ♜g5

1 d4 d5 2 ♞c3 ♞f6 3 ♜g5

The Veresov Opening is an aggressive attacking line in which White aims for rapid piece development, often in combination with an early e4 pawn-break. The set-up is fairly popular at club level because it can lead to unconventional positions rich in tactical complexity. The opening has never been in fashion at the highest levels, although during recent years it has occasionally been employed by a handful of enterprising grandmasters as a surprise weapon.

The distinguishing characteristic of the Veresov Opening is the unusual development of White's queen's knight in front of the c-pawn, rather than behind the c-pawn as in traditional queen's pawn openings. This structure enables White to develop his pieces quickly at the cost of limiting his ability to increase the pressure in the centre with his pawns. The Veresov Opening does not give White many chances to obtain an opening edge against a well-prepared opponent, but the opening is fairly dangerous and it will continue to snare unsuspecting victims.

3... ♜bd7 (D)



This is our repertoire move – Black develops a piece and prevents White from doubling

Black's f-pawns. Now White has three major moves:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| A: 4 e3 | 113 |
| B: 4 f3 | 114 |
| C: 4 ♜f3 | 117 |

Minor alternatives:

a) 4 f4?! (White aims for a Stonewall Attack after developing his dark-squared bishop outside the pawn-chain, but this move is too weakening and Black obtains a good game by exploiting the absence of White's bishop from the queenside) 4...c5 5 e3 e6 and now:

a1) 6 a3 ♜a5 7 ♜f3? (7 ♜d2 is necessary) 7...e4 8 dxc5 ♜xc5 9 ♜d3 ♜xc3 10 ♜d2 ♜b6 (10...f6 11 ♜h4 e5 also does the trick) 11 ♜xc3 f6 → Gueneau-Lane, Parthenay 1992.

a2) 6 ♜f3 ♜a5 7 ♜d2 cxd4 (7...c4!?) 8 exd4 ♜b4 9 ♜d3 (9 ♜xf6 ♜xf6=) 9...e4 10 ♜xe4 dxe4= Berkes-Medvegy, Budapest 1999.

b) 4 e4?! (White plays a delayed Blackmar-Diemer Gambit – the addition of the moves ♜g5 and ... ♜bd7 favours Black) 4... ♜xe4 (a sound alternative is 4...dxe4 5 f3 c6 – 4 f3 c6 5 e4 dxe4) 5 ♜xe4 dxe4 6 f3 h6 7 ♜h4 c5 8 d5 ♜b6 and now:

b1) 9 ♜c1 g5 10 ♜g3 ♜g7 11 c3 ♜f6 12 ♜e5 0-0= Releia-Balais, France 2001.

b2) 9 ♜b1 g5 10 ♜g3 ♜g7 11 c3 ♜g6 = Gomes-Epishin, Las Palmas 1997.

c) 4 ♜d3 h6 5 ♜h4 e6 6 e4 dxe4 7 ♜xe4 ♜e7 and then:

c1) 8 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 9 ♜f3 0-0 is fine for Black.

c2) 8 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 9 ♜f3 0-0 10 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 11 ♜e4 c5 12 0-0-0 cxd4 13 ♜d3 g6 14 h4 ♜g7 = Giannakoulopoulos-Korobov, Patras jr 2001.

c3) 8 0-0-0 ♜xe4 9 ♜xe7 ♜xf2 10 ♜xf2 ♜xe7 11 ♜xf2 0-0= Lalev-Espig, Varna 1983. White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

d) 4 ♖d2 h6 and now:

d1) 5 ♜f4 a6 and then:

d11) 6 e4 ♜xe4 7 ♜xe4 dxe4 8 f3 (8 ♜c3 c6 9 d5 ♜b6 is fine for Black) 8... ♜f6 9 fxe4 ♜xe4 10 ♜e3 ♜f6 ± Kongsted-Nilssen, Copenhagen 2002. White doesn't have enough for the pawn.

d12) 6 0-0-0 e6 7 f3 b5 8 g4 (8 e4 b4 9 ♜ce2 dxe4 10 ♜g3 exf3 11 ♜xf3 ♜e7 ± Kongsted-Husari, Budapest 2002) 8... ♜b6 9 e3 ♜b7 10 h4 ♜c8 11 ♜d3 c5 12 dxc5 ♜xc5 13 ♜ge2 ♜fd7 ± Fomina-Timoshenko, Tallinn 2000. Black's queenside attack is faster than White's kingside attack.

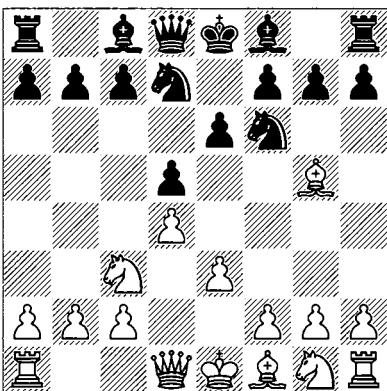
d2) 5 ♜h4 e6 and here:

d21) 6 e4? ♜xe4 7 ♜xd8 ♜xd2 8 ♜xc7 ♜xf1 9 ♜xf1 b6 10 ♜ge2 (10 ♜f4 ♜a6+ 11 ♜ce2 ♜e7 ± Pruess-Roussel, Berkeley 2005) 10... ♜a6 11 ♜f4 ♜c8 ± Buhmann-Brenke, Lippstadt 2004. Black has two powerful bishops.

d22) 6 e3 ♜e7 7 f3 c6 8 0-0-0 (An.Rodriguez-Rosselli, Uruguay Ch (Montevideo) 1992) 8... ♜a5 with equal chances.

A)

4 e3 e6 (D)



5 ♜d3

This is the usual move, although White can also play 5 ♜f3. British GM Nigel Davies recommended this creative move in 2004, but he was apparently unaware that it had first been played 35 years earlier – the curse of the Information Age! The idea is to castle queenside and attack on the kingside with g4, but the plan

appears to be a little slow as White has neglected the development of his kingside pieces. 5...c5 (5... ♜b4 6 ♜e2 h6 7 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 = Wisnewski-Aronian, Bundesliga 2004/5) 6 0-0-0 and now:

a) 6...cxd4 7 exd4 ♜b4 = is one reasonable idea.

b) 6... ♜a5 7 ♜b1 ♜e7 8 g4 a6 9 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 and then:

b1) 10 g5? ♜xg5 11 e4 cxd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜c5 ± Annoni-Quinn, Bergamo 2004.

b2) 10 h4 (Wisnewski-Bischoff, Altenkirchen 2005) 10...b5 11 g5 ♜e7 ±. Black's attack is faster.

c) 6...a6 7 ♜ge2 ♜a5 8 ♜b1 b5 9 e4 ♜b7 and here:

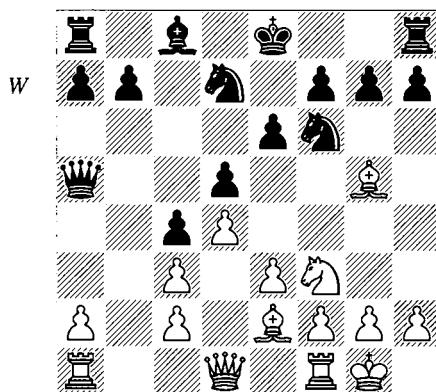
c1) 10 exd5 b4!? (Black can also recapture the pawn with 10... ♜xd5 11 ♜e4 ♜c8 ±) 11 dxc5 ♜xc5 12 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 13 ♜e4 ♜xd5 and Black has a favourable Sicilian-style position.

c2) 10 e5 ♜e4 (Black should play 10... ♜g8! with a solid advantage – White's king is vulnerable to attack and his pieces are poorly placed to support the e5-pawn) 11 ♜xe4 dxe4 12 ♜h5 (12 ♜g3!?) 12... ♜c7 13 ♜f4 cxd4 14 ♜xe6 (14 ♜xd4? g6 15 ♜h4 ♜g7 ± Planinc-Bertok, Yugoslav Ch (Novi Travnik) 1969) 14... ♜xe5 15 ♜xd4 ♜f6 16 ♜h4 ♜e7 with a balanced position.

5...c5 6 ♜f3 c4

This is our repertoire move – Black aims for a favourable French-type position.

7 ♜e2 ♜b4 8 0-0-0 ♜xc3 9 bxc3 ♜a5 (D)



10 ♜xf6

White can easily run into difficulties here because of his weak c3-pawn. Alternatives:

a) 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ and then:

a1) 11 a4 b6 12 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13 a5 b5 14 f3 h6 15 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ ♫ Kotronias-Anand, Dubai OL 1986.

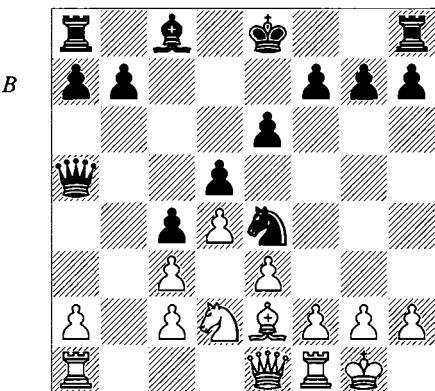
a2) 11 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}a3$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ♫ Speelman-S.Webb, British Ch (Morecambe) 1975.

b) 10 $\mathbb{W}b1$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 11 a4 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ ♫ B.Foster-Wirawan, corr. 2001.

10... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 11 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Black can also continue his development with 11...0-0 12 a4 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ is also good) 13 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ f6 14 $\mathbb{W}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ♫ Sinka-Harding, corr. 1995.

12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (D)



Black has several options here:

a) 12... $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe1$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fx1$ dxe4 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 17 c4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ = Høi-Lein, Copenhagen 1983.

b) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ (White recovers his piece after 13...dxc4 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$) 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ f6 with equal chances, Høi-J.Fries Nielsen, Danish Ch (Tårnby) 1983.

c) 12... $\mathbb{Q}d6$!? (this is the most effective continuation – Black avoids simplification) 13 e4 0-0 14 e5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 15 a4 and then:

c1) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ dxc4 17 $\mathbb{Q}bl$ recovers the piece with a reasonable position for White.

c2) 15... $\mathbb{Q}c7$! ♫. Black has a favourable French Defence style position.

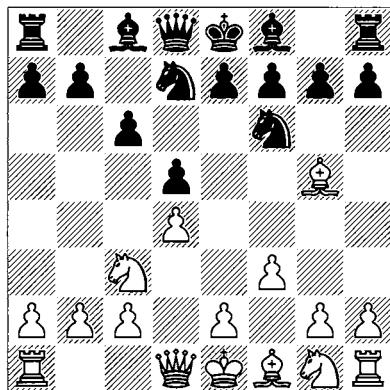
B)

4 f3

White attempts to build a broad centre by preparing the e4 pawn advance. The drawback

is that he weakens his kingside, neglects his development, and deprives his king's knight of a good square. There is no discernible appeal to 4 f3 – despite its popularity, the move has a feeble theoretical reputation and deservedly so.

4... $\mathbb{c}6$ (D)



This is our repertoire move – Black bolsters the centre in anticipation of playing ...e5.

5 e4

White builds a broad centre – he can also defer this advance and continue his development with 5 $\mathbb{W}d2$ h6 and now:

a) 6 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ e5! (Black advances in the centre and frees his position – the vulnerable position of White's queen, bishop and f3-pawn gives Black good chances to obtain an opening edge) 7 dxe5 (7 e3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ gives Black a comfortable game) 7... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ and then:

a1) 8 0-0-0? $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 9 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 11 $\mathbb{W}h4$ (so far this is Aronian-Fressinet, Ver-dun U-14 Ech 1995) 11... $\mathbb{W}b4$ --.

a2) 8 e4? $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 9 fxe4 $\mathbb{W}xh4+$ 10 g3 $\mathbb{W}e7$ (10... $\mathbb{W}g5$ 11 exd5 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xg5$ hxg5 gives Black a slight advantage, Schoellmann-Uhlmann, Dresden 1994) 11 0-0-0 dxe4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ -- Brandics-Adamski, Berlin 1988.

a3) 8 e3 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ ♫ Braakhuys-Mascioni, IEBG e-mail 1999.

a4) 8 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$! 9 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ + (9 fxg4? $\mathbb{W}xh4+$ 10 g3 $\mathbb{W}g5$ 11 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ -- Leder-Post, Germany tt 1995/6) 9... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 11 e4 dxe4 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 13 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 a3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ♫ Vogler-V.Gurevich, Mainz 1995. This endgame favours Black because of his two bishops.

b) 6 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ and here:

b1) 7 e4? ♜xf4 8 ♜xf4 e5 9 dx5 ♜b6! 10 0-0-0 ♜c5 \mp highlights White's dark-square problems.

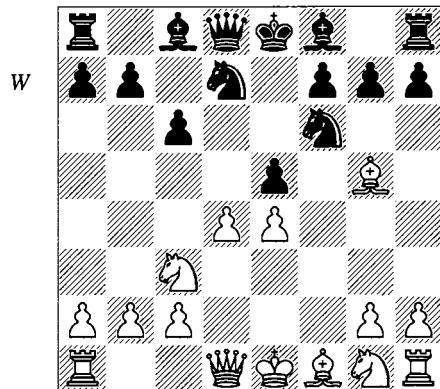
b2) 7 e3 ♜xf4 8 exf4 e6 gave Black a comfortable position in Sibilio-Bellia, Rome 1988.

b3) 7 ♜e5 f6 and now:

b31) 8 ♜d3 ♜xe5 9 dx5 ♜f4 10 ♜e3 ♜e6 11 0-0-0 ♜c7 \mp .

b32) 8 ♜g3 ♜xg3 9 hxg3 ♜c7 {9...e5 10 e4 exd4 11 ♜xd4 ♜c5 12 ♜d2} {Veresov-Sokolsky, Minsk 1971} 12...♜e7 \mp) 10 0-0-0 ♜xg3 11 e4 ♜b6 \mp Manninen-Veingold, Vantaa 1998. White has marginal compensation for the pawn.

5...dxe4 6 fxe4 e5 (D)



7 dxe5

White must also concede some central dark squares after 7 ♜f3 exd4:

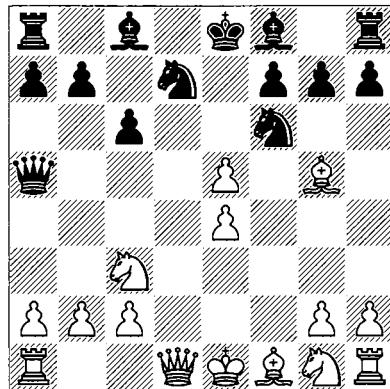
a) 8 ♜xd4?! ♜b4 9 ♜f5 0-0 10 ♜d3 ♜e5 11 ♜xf6 {11 0-0 ♜xf5 12 ♜xf5 ♜d4+ 13 ♜h1 ♜fg4 14 ♜e2 f6 15 ♜d2 ♜ad8 \mp } 11...♜xf6 12 0-0 ♜xf5 13 ♜xf5 ♜e7 \mp Schiller-Ligterink, Reykjavik 1986.

b) 8 ♜xd4 and then:

b1) 8...♜b6 9 ♜d2 ♜xb2 10 ♜b1 ♜a3 11 e5 ♜d5 {11...♜g4 12 h3 f6 13 hxg4 fxg5 14 ♜d3 with attacking chances} 12 ♜xd5 cxd5 {Zhang Pengxiang-Benjamin, Cap d'Agde 2000} 13 ♜xd5 ♜b4+ 14 ♜f2 0-0 with an unclear position.

b2) 8...♜c5 9 ♜d2 h6 10 ♜h4 0-0 11 0-0-0 ♜e8 {Gunoz-Schmidt, corr. 1997} 12 e5!? ♜a5 13 ♜c4 ♜xe5 14 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 15 ♜d8+ ♜f8 {15...♜xd8 16 ♜xd8+ ♜f8 17 ♜f1 b5 18 ♜xf6 gxsf6 19 ♜d3 ♜b7 =} 16 ♜xf6 gxsf6 17 ♜xf6 ♜e6 18 ♜xe6 ♜xe6 19 ♜f3 ♜g7 with equal chances.

7...♜a5 (D)



White has a choice of captures:

B1: 8 exf6 115

B2: 8 ♜xf6 116

White loses more time after 8 ♜f3 ♜xe4 9 ♜d2 ♜xd2 10 ♜xd2, and then:

a) 10...♜b4 11 0-0-0 0-0 12 a3 ♜xc3 13 ♜xc3 ♜xc3 14 bxc3 ♜c5 15 ♜d4 {Šahović-W.Schmidt, Vrnjačka Banja 1981} 15...♜f5 \mp . Black has good chances to exploit White's shattered pawn-structure in the endgame.

b) 10...♜xe5 11 0-0-0 {11 ♜e3 f6 12 0-0-0 ♜e6 \mp } 11...♜xf3 12 gxf3 ♜b4 13 ♜e3+ ♜e6 14 ♜c4 ♜xc3 15 ♜xe6 {15 bxc3 0-0 16 ♜xe6 fxe6 17 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 \mp } 15...0-0 16 ♜b3 ♜f6 \mp . Black has a solid extra pawn.

B1)

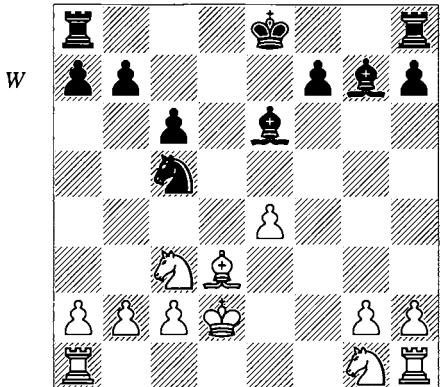
8 exf6 ♜xg5 9 fxe7

White's pawn-structure is compromised after 9 ♜f3 ♜xf6 10 ♜d2 {Sirin-Yagiz, Balatonlelle U-18 Ch 2002} 10...♜b4 \mp . Black will follow up with ...♜xc3 and target White's isolated pawns.

9...♜xg7 10 ♜d2 ♜xd2+ 11 ♜xd2 ♜c5 12 ♜d3 ♜e6 (D)

Now White must decide where to develop his knight:

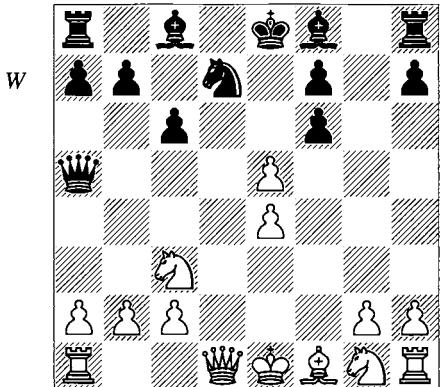
a) 13 ♜f3?! 0-0-0 14 ♜e2 ♜he8! {the best-known game in this line continued 14...b5 15 a3 a5 \mp Albut-Tal, USSR Ch (Baku) 1972} 15 ♜hd1 ♜xc3 {15...♜f5!? 16 ♜f1 ♜g6 \mp } 16 bxc3 ♜xe4 17 ♜xe4 ♜d5 \mp Gieruszynski-Grafka, corr. 1983.



b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}ge2$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ 14 $\mathbb{B}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3!$ (15 $\mathbb{Q}c1?$ $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 17 $cxd3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ 0-0 \mp Juglard-Parmentier, France 1989) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 16 $cxd3$ $\mathbb{B}xd3+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{B}xd1$ 18 $\mathbb{B}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 20 $g3$ $\mathbb{B}g6$ \mp . Black has a slight pull because of his bishop-pair.

B2)

8 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $gxf6$ (D)



9 e6

After 9 exf6 Black has two strong options:

a) 9... $\mathbb{Q}a3$ and then:

a1) 10 $\mathbb{W}b1$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ 11 $bxa3$ $\mathbb{W}xc3+$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ \mp .

a2) 10 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ and here:

a21) 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 13 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $a3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ is much better for Black.

a22) 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 12 $bxa3$ $\mathbb{W}xc3+$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}d4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ \mp Brauer-Crosa, Mendoza 2004.

b) 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 10 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 11 0-0-0 0-0 and now:

b1) 12 $\mathbb{Q}ge2??$ $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ \mp .

b2) 12 $\mathbb{W}a4?$ $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ wins for Black, Philippe-Kennefick, Haifa OL 1976.

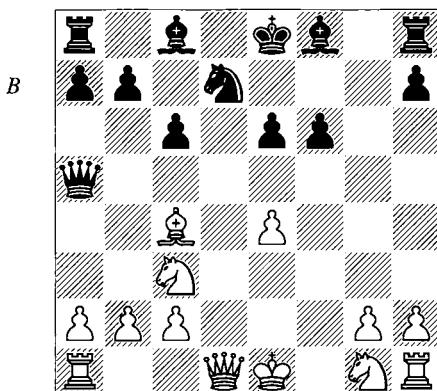
b3) 12 $\mathbb{W}d2$ and then:

b31) 12... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 13 $a3$ $\mathbb{B}ad8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ \mp . Black has strong pressure to compensate for the pawn.

b32) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!?$ (suggested by Gallagher) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}f4$ (14 $c3$ $\mathbb{W}a1+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}a4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ \mp) 14... $\mathbb{W}xb2+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{B}el$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $f5$ \mp) 16... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ \mp . White's king will soon perish in the centre of the board.

The above examples demonstrate the manner in which Black is able to achieve a superior position through the utilization of his bishop-pair and control over the e5-square.

9... $\mathbb{fxe6}$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (D)



10... $\mathbb{Q}a3!$

This bishop shot has flown under the radar of most opening books – the move exposes White's dark-square weaknesses and effectively puts the 8 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ line out of business. The idea was first played in a little-known 1981 correspondence game. Two alternatives are also fine for Black:

a) 10... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ and now:

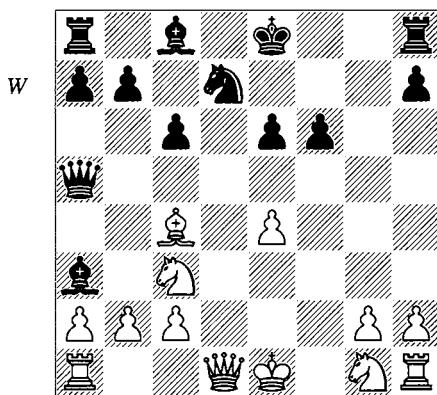
a1) 11 $\mathbb{Q}b3?$ $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ 12 $\mathbb{W}b1$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d1$ (Williamson-A.Lewis, London 2000) 14... $\mathbb{B}xg2!$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{B}g4$ 16 $\mathbb{B}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}a3$ 17 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{W}xc3+$ 18 $bxc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ \mp .

a2) 11 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ (suggested by Davies – an earlier game continued 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 0-0-0 {Foetsch-Jacob, Oberhof jr 1998}) 13... $\mathbb{B}d8$ =) 12 0-0-0+ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

11...♗b4 12 ♖b1 13...♗b4 (13...♗xc4 14 ♖xc4 ♖g5+ 15 ♖b1 ♖xg2 16 ♜ge2 ♖g5 17 ♜d4 ♖e5 18 ♖hf1 with reasonable compensation for the lost pawn) 14...♗b1 (the only move to avoid a crippled pawn-structure) 14...♖g8 15 ♖b3 ♖d7 and Black has a slight pull because of his bishop-pair and strong outpost on the e5-square.

b) 10...♗b4 (this has been the most popular choice by a wide margin) 11 ♜e2 ♜e5 12 ♖b3 ♖d7 13 a3 ♖c5! 14 ♜f4 0-0-0 ♞ Vieujot-Schwicker, corr. 1983.

We now return to 10...♗a3! (D):



11 ♖c1

White can also defend his b-pawn with 11 ♖b1, when Black's only dilemma is deciding among several attractive options:

a) 11...♖g5 (suggested by Davies) 12 ♖f1 ♖b4 13 ♜e2 ♜c5 and Black has a large advantage.

b) 11...♗b4 (this is also tempting now that White's queen has been lured away from the centre) 12 ♖xe6 (12 ♜e2 ♖g5 13 g3 ♜e5 14 ♖d3 ♖e3 ♞) 12...♗xc3+ 13 bxc3 ♜c5 14 ♖xc8 ♖xc3+ 15 ♖f1 ♖xc8 ♞.

c) 11...♜c5 and here:

c1) 12 ♖d3 ♖b4! 13 bxa3 ♖xc3+ 14 ♖f1 e5 15 ♜e2 ♖xa3 --+. White is a pawn down and has a horrible position.

c2) 12 ♖f1 (Dries-De Jong, Dutch corr. Ch 1981) 12...♖b4 13 ♖b3 b6 (Black has a winning attack according to Jeschonnek – not a surprising verdict considering the poor position of White's queen) 14 ♜ge2 ♖a6 15 ♖e1 ♖xe2 16 bxa3 (White's king is fatally exposed after 16 ♖xe2 ♜xe4 --+) 16...♖xc3+ 17 ♖xe2 0-0-0 --+.

d) 11...♜e5 12 ♖b3 ♖g8 13 ♜e2 ♖c5 (White's king is stranded in the centre and he is unable to cope with Black's well-placed pieces – the finish is instructive) 14 ♖c1 ♖xg2 15 ♖f4 ♜g4 16 ♖f3 ♖f2+ 17 ♖d1 ♜e3+ 18 ♖c1 ♖g5 19 ♜f4 e5 20 ♖h5+ ♖xh5 21 ♜xh5 ♖h4 0-1 Pickard-Jabot, corr. 1994.

11...♗b4!

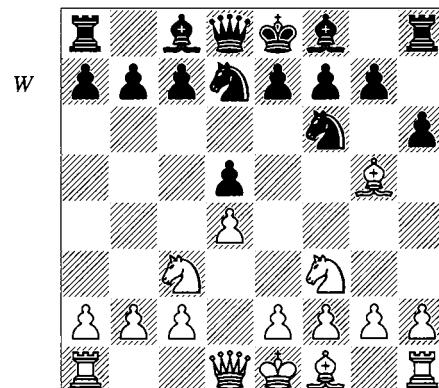
A collinear move to force White's bishop to an inferior square.

12 ♖b3 ♖xc3+ 13 bxc3 ♖xc1 14 ♖xc1 ♜c5 15 e5 ♖g8 16 g3 ♜fxe5

Black has a clear advantage.

C)

4 ♜f3 h6 (D)



5 ♖h4

Minor alternatives:

a) 5 ♖xf6 (White surrenders the bishop-pair to gain time for a central advance) 5...♖xf6 6 ♖d3 c6 7 e4 dxe4 8 ♜xe4 ♖a5+ 9 c3 (Shvidler-Gutman, Netanya 1983) 9...♜xe4 10 ♖xe4 ♖f5 with equal chances – Black has the bishop-pair and no weaknesses.

b) 5 ♖f4 (this is somewhat artificial – after Black parries White's primitive threat of ♜b5, he will have achieved the useful move ...h6 for free) 5...a6 and now:

b1) 6 ♖d3 and then:

b11) 6...c5 7 e4 dxe4 8 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 9 ♖xe4 ♜f6 10 ♖e5 e6 11 dxc5 (11 0-0-0!?) 11...♖a5+ 12 ♖d2 ♖xc5 = B.Schneider-Chandler, Bundesliga 1985/6.

b12) 6...e6 7 e4 dxe4 (7...♗b4!?) 8 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 9 ♖xe4 ♜f6 10 ♖d3 ♖d6 11 ♜e5 ♜d5

12 ♜d2 (Biyiasas-Vranesić, Canadian Ch (Toronto) 1972) 12...c5 with equal chances.

b2) 6 e3 e6 and here:

b21) 7 ♜e2 ♜e7 8 0-0 c5 9 h3 0-0 10 a4 b6

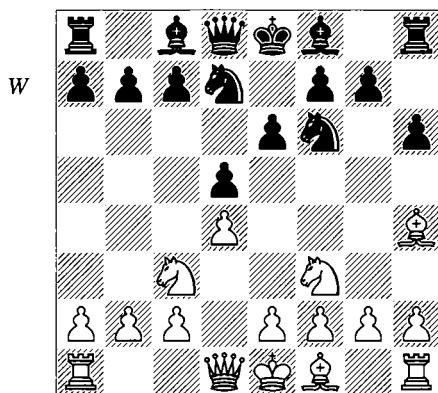
11 ♜b1?! (Black has little to fear in this line if White has to resort to moves like this to complete his development) 11...♜b7 12 ♜d1 ♜c8 and Black is poised to take over the initiative on the queenside, Rossetto-Taimanov, Havana 1967.

b22) 7 h3 c5 8 ♜e2 b5 9 a3 ♜b7 10 0-0 ♜e7

11 ♜e5 0-0 12 ♜f3 ♜c8 and Black has completed his development with a comfortable position, Fomina-Sakaev, Kuopio 1995.

b23) 7 ♜d3 c5 8 0-0 ♜e7 9 ♜e1 b5 (the problem for White is that the c3-knight is misplaced in front of the c-pawn – the horse would be better placed on d2 instead) 10 ♜e5 ♜b7 11 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 (Black can also consider 11...♜xd7 =) 12 dxc5 ♜xc5 13 ♜e5 ♜e7 with a balanced position, Meštrović-Kovačević, Nova Gorica 2004.

5...e6 (D)



6 e4

This aggressive line is the Veresov Gambit; White has a couple of minor alternatives:

a) 6 ♜d3 c5 and now:

a1) 7 e4 c4? (7...cxd4 8 ♜xd4 ♜c5 =) 8 ♜e2 ♜e7 9 e5 ♜g8 10 ♜xe7 (10 ♜g3 ♜b4 =) 10...♜xe7 with roughly level chances, Pryor-Rizzitano, Framingham 1985.

a2) 7 0-0-0 and then:

a21) 7...cxd4 8 ♜xd4 ♜e7 9 ♜f3 0-0 10 e4 ♜xe4 11 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 12 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 13 ♜xe4 ♜c5 is equal, Mestel-Plachetka, Lucerne OL 1982.

a22) 7...c4! 8 ♜d2 ♜a5 9 a3 (White must prevent ...♜b4) 9...b5 10 ♜a2 (10 ♜e4? b4 –+) 10...♜b6 ∞. Black has a ready-made queenside attack.

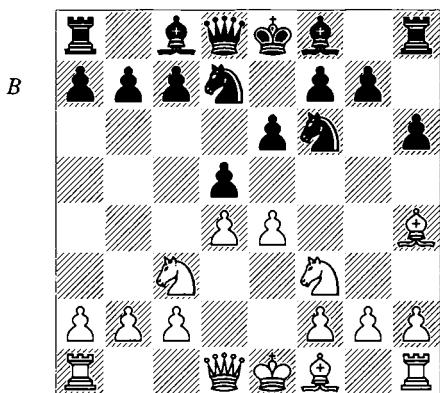
b) 6 e3 ♜b4 7 ♜d3 c5 8 dxc5 (8 a3?! ♜xc3+ 9 bxc3 ♜a5 ∞ Grassner-Rizzitano, Hartford 1982) 8...♜a5 and here:

b1) 9 ♜d2?! ♜xc5 10 ♜xf6 gxf6 11 0-0 ♜d7 ∞ Rizzitano-J.Watson, Philadelphia 1979. The battle was eventually drawn after a wild time-scramble, but this was one of several games that eventually convinced me to abandon 4 ♜f3 – if Black plays solidly, it is difficult for White to generate any initiative.

b2) 9 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 10 ♜d2 ♜xc5 11 a3 ♜xc3 12 ♜xc3 ♜xc3+ 13 bxc3 b6 gives Black a slight advantage.

b3) 9 0-0 ♜xc3 10 bxc3 ♜xc3 11 ♜d4 ♜xc5 12 ♜c1 (Pereira-A.Fernandes, Honra 1994) 12...e5 13 ♜e1 (13 ♜b3 ♜c3 ∞) 13...0-0 14 ♜f5 ♜h8 ∞. White does not have enough for the pawn.

We now return to 6 e4 (D):



6...g5

This is Black's sharpest continuation – there are two calmer alternatives:

a) Black can transpose into a line of the solid French Defence Burn Variation (ECO code C10) with 6...dxe4 7 ♜xe4 ♜e7 8 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 9 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 10 ♜d2 0-0, and now:

a1) 11 0-0-0 e5 12 dxe5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xe5 (13 ♜d4 ♜g4 14 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 15 ♜c4 ♜g4 = Korchnoi) 13...♜xe5 14 ♜c4 ♜f5 = Høi-Larsen, Copenhagen 1985.

a2) 11 ♜e3 (preventing ...e5) 11...♜d8 12 0-0-0 b6 and then:

a21) 13 $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}f4+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ ½-½ Van der Wiel-Nunn, Lugano 1987.

a22) 13 ♜d3 ♜b7 14 ♜e4 ♜xe4 15 ♜xe4 c5 = Hector-Speelman, Roskilde 1998.

b) 6... $\hat{\text{e}}7$ and here:

b1) 7 exd5 exd5 8 ♕d3 0-0 9 0-0 ♕e8 10 ♕e1 c6 11 ♔e5 (11 ♕d2 ♔f8 12 h3 ♔e6 = Saigon-Averbakh, USSR Cht (Moscow) 1963) 11... ♔xe5 12 ♕xe5 ♔e6 = Rizzitano-Curdo, Leominster 1980.

b2) 7 e5 and now:

b21) 7... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$? 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$ (Black should avoid 8... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ {11...0-0 12 a4 strands the knight} 12 c4 ±, when White has a powerful bishop-pair) 9 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $dxe4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ and then:

b211) 10...f5 11 ♕h5+ ♔f7 12 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7
13 c3 ±.

b212) 10...0-0 11 ♕xe4 ♖b4+ 12 c3 ♖xb2
13 ♖c1 ♖xc1+ 14 ♖xc1 b6 15 ♔d3 ♔b7 ±.

b213) 10... $\mathbb{W}b4$ 11 c3 $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 12 $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ (Seul-Schlick, Wittlich 1985) 12...f5! 13 exf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 14 $\mathcal{Q}xf6+$ gxf6 and in this sharp position the chances are balanced.

b22) 7...Bg8 8.Bg3 (8.Bxe7 Bxe7 9.Bd3 c5 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.0-0 0-0 with equal chances) 8...c5 (8...Bb4!? also looks reasonable – the position is a hybrid French Winawer) 9.Be2 a6 10.0-0 b5 11.dxc5 Bxc5 12.Bd3 Be7 13.Be2 Bc6 = Mikhailovsky-L.Vajda, Cala Galdana U-16 Wch 1996.

7 ♕g3 ♘xe4

The acceptance of the pawn sacrifice is the only logical way to justify the weakening ...g5 advance.

8 ♜xe4 dxe4 (D)

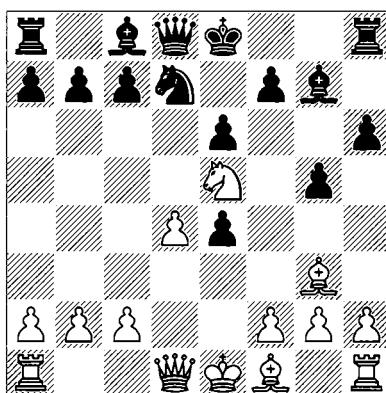
Now:

C1: 9 ♠e5 119
C2: 9 ♠d2 121

c1)

9 ♘e5 ♗g7 (D)

Black must avoid 9... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$? 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ f6 11 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{W}g6!$ fxe5 13 dx5 and White has a decisive advantage according to John Nunn's 1987 *Informator* notes – Black has no defence to parry the threat of $\mathbb{W}f6+$, winning the rook.



10 h4

10 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 11 $dxe5$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}a5+$ 13 $c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 0-0-0 15 $\mathbb{W}b4$ $\mathbb{W}xb4$ 16 $cxb4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ (Black's pressure continues into the end-game as it is difficult for White to unravel his kingside pieces) 17 $h4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d8+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ (Spal-Folk, Czech Cht 1995) 19... $g4$ \mp . Black is threatening to play ... $h5$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}h6+$, followed by a rook invasion.

10... Qxe5 11 Qxe5

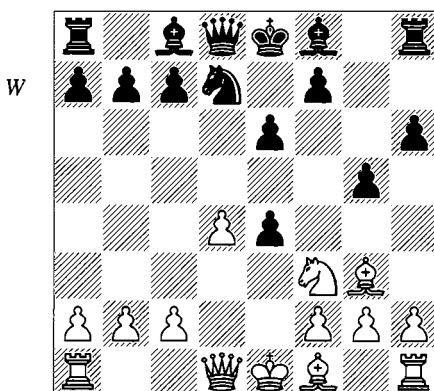
Black has no problems after 11 dxe5 ♕xd1+ 12 ♜xd1 ♖d7 13 hxg5 hxg5 14 ♜xh8+ ♖xh8 ± Scherf-A.Peters, corr. 1992.

11... $\hat{\text{Q}}$ x e5 12 dxe5 $\hat{\text{Q}}$ d7 13 $\hat{\text{W}}$ g4 (D)

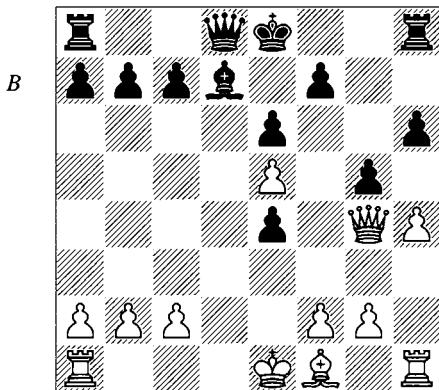
This move was first suggested by British IM Robert Bellin in 1983. Alternatives:

a) 13 $\mathbb{W}d2$?! (this looks too slow) 13...gxh4
 14 $\mathbb{W}b4$ (14 $\mathbb{W}f4$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 15 $\mathbb{L}xh4$ $\mathbb{L}g8$ \mp) 14... $\mathbb{L}c6$
 15 $\mathbb{L}b5$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 16 $\mathbb{L}xc6+$ bxc6 17 $\mathbb{L}xh4$ e3 18
 $\mathbb{L}xe3$ 0-0-0 19 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 20 $\mathbb{L}xc4$ $\mathbb{L}hg8$ \mp
 Meštrović-Bobotsov, Sarajevo 1971.

b) 13 ♕d4 ♜c6 14 ♕xd8+ ♖xd8 15 hxg5 ♖d5 16 ♖xh6 (16 gxh6 ♖xe5 ♦Nunn) 16...♖xh6



17 gxh6 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 $\mathbb{A}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$, and Black has a slight edge according to Nunn. I think White can hold the position by activating his king with 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2!$? $\mathbb{Q}g8$ (19... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ is fine for White) 20 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h5$, and White is able to maintain equality.



Another crossroads – Black has two promising options:

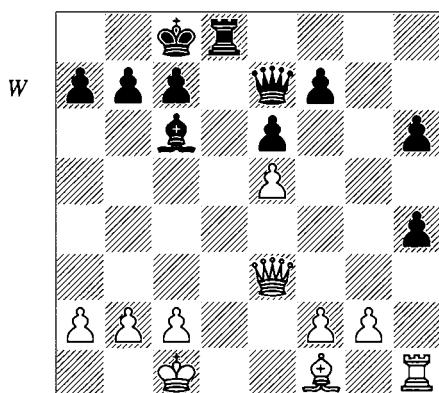
C11: 13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 120
C12: 13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 120

C11)

13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 0-0-0

Or 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $gxh4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ with a slight advantage for Black, Hector-Simon, Næstved 1988.

14...0-0-0 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $gxh4$ (D)



18 f4

Alternatives:

a) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xh6?$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ (19 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ \mp) 19... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ (Nunn suggested 19... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ \mp) 20 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $h3!$ \mp . Black homes in on the vulnerable e1-square.

b) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}g5+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $hxg5$ 21 $f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 22 $f4$ (so far this is the game Reynolds-Nunn, London 1987) 22... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ 23 $fxg5$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $h3!$ \mp .

18...a6!

This is a 2005 suggestion by Nunn. The older move was 18... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 20 $a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$, and now:

a) 21 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 22 $cxd3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ gives White good drawing chances according to Davies.

b) 21 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ (Black has a slight edge according to Nunn's original analysis, although it appears White can hold with careful defence) 22 $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ and then:

b1) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f8+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (25... $\mathbb{Q}c6??$ loses to 26 $\mathbb{Q}e8+$) 26 $\mathbb{Q}f8+$ with a draw by repetition.

b2) 22... $b6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ (suggested by Aagaard and Lund) 23... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ with equal chances.

19 $\mathbb{Q}h3$

19 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ (19 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ is much better for Black) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}xh4?$) $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ \mp Nunn) 20... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ \mp .

19...f6

Black is slightly better, and White must struggle for a draw.

C12)

13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $hxg5$

Black's queen is well-placed after 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$:

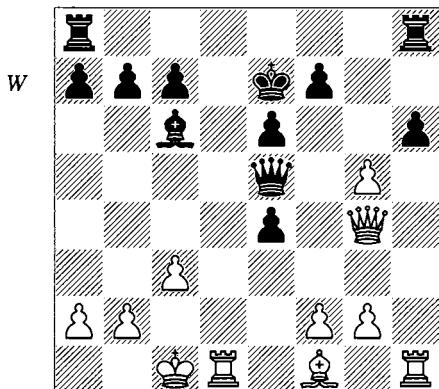
a) 15 $hxg5$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ and then:

a1) 17 $gxh6$ $\mathbb{Q}a1+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}c3+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}a1+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$, and Black has a clear advantage according to Aagaard and Lund; White is a pawn down and half of his pieces are already set up for the next game.

a2) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{Q}a1+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}c3+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $e3!$ 20 $fxe3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ \mp) 21... $\mathbb{Q}g3+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{Q}hg8$ and Black has a clear endgame advantage because of White's five isolated pawns.

b) 15 c3 ♜g8 16 hxg5 ♜xg5 17 ♜xg5 (after 17 ♜h5 e3 18 ♜xg5 exf2+ 19 ♜xf2 ♜xg5 20 ♜xh6 ♜e7 -- White's pawns are too weak) 17...♜xg5 18 ♜xh6 ♜e7 ±.

14...♝d4 15 c3 ♜xe5 16 0-0-0 ♜e7 (D)



White's attack has run out of steam and Black is poised to take over the initiative. Now:

a) 17 gxh6 ♜ag8 18 ♜h4+ ♜g5+ 19 ♜xg5+ ♜xg5, and Black will emerge with an extra pawn after rounding up White's h-pawn.

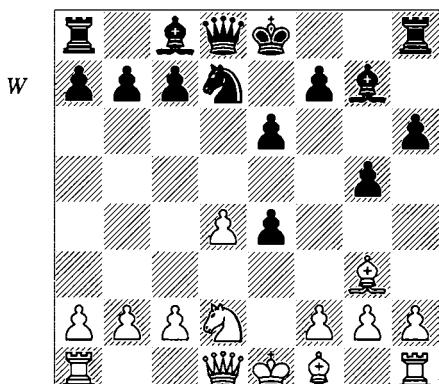
b) 17 ♜xh6 ♜xh6 18 gxh6 ♜h8 19 ♜h4+ ♜f6 20 ♜g3 e5 21 ♜b1 (so far this is Muratov-Kiselev, Moscow 1988) 21...♜f4! 22 ♜g7 ♜xh6 23 g3 ♜f6 ±.

White is clearly in need of some improvements in this line.

C22)

9 ♜d2 ♜g7 (D)

This solid development is our repertoire move – Black can also play the sharp 9...f5 here.



10 h4

White can pause to fortify his d4-pawn by playing 10 c3 f5 11 h4 g4 12 ♜c4 and now:

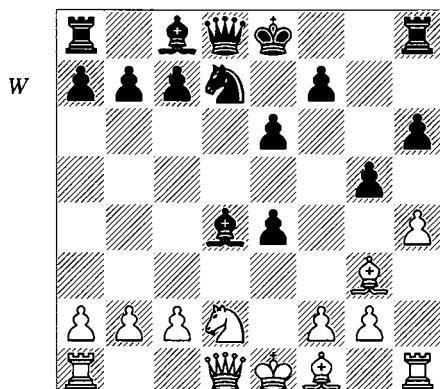
a) 12...♜f6 13 ♜e2 0-0 14 h5 ♜d5 15 0-0-0 c6 16 f3 b5 17 ♜b3 (A.Ignatiev-Rogovoi, Kolontaevo jr 1998) 17...gxh3 18 gxf3 e3 19 ♜f1 f4 20 ♜h4 ♜e8 with a sharp, unbalanced position.

b) 12...♜b6! (I think this is the most precise response – Black protects his e6-pawn with tempo and leaves the f-file unblocked) 13 ♜b3 0-0 14 ♜e2 and then:

b1) 14...a5 15 a3 ♜e7 16 0-0-0 ♜a6 17 ♜c4 (17 ♜xe4? fxe4 18 ♜xe4 ♜d7 19 ♜h1 ♜f6 is much better for Black, Høi-Larsen, Danish Ch Aalborg 1989) 17...♜d7 18 a4, with compensation for the pawn.

b2) 14...f4! (suggested by Davies) 15 ♜xg4 (White is compelled to sacrifice a piece as he is being pushed off the board after 15 ♜h2 e3! 16 fxe3 ♜xh4+ 17 ♜d1 g3 18 ♜f3 ♜h5 --) 15...fxg3 16 ♜xg3 ♜d6 17 ♜xe4 ♜xg3 18 ♜xg3 ♜d7 ±.

10...♜xd4 (D)



11 c3

11 ♜xe4 ♜xb2 and now:

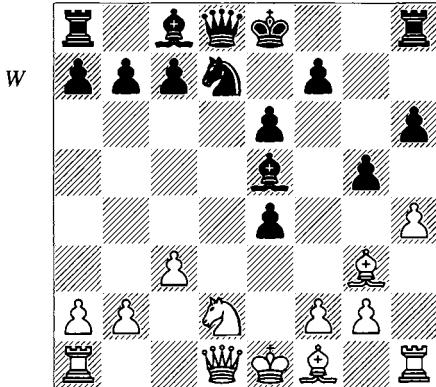
a) 12 hxg5 hxg5 13 ♜xh8+ ♜xh8 and then: a1) 14 c3? ♜g7 15 ♜b3 (15 ♜h5 ♜f6! 16 ♜xg5 ♜xe4 17 ♜xg7 ♜d2#) 15...f5 -- Mes-trović-Vukić, Yugoslav Ch 1974.

a2) 14 ♜b1 ♜g7 15 ♜e2 b6 16 ♜h5 (16 ♜f3 ♜a6 ±) 16...♜e5 17 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 18 ♜xg5 ♜e7 19 f4 (Negri-Giordana, e-mail 1997) 19...♜g6 ±.

b) 12 ♜b1 ♜f6! 13 ♜xd8+ (13 ♜b5+!? ♜e7 ±) 13...♜xd8 ± Neukirch-Uhlmann, East Germany 1972.

11... $\mathbb{A}e5$ (D)

Black must avoid the careless 11...gxh4? 12 $\mathbb{A}xh4!$ $\mathbb{A}f6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}h5!$ ± Veresov-Zheliandinov, Russia 1969.



White has two options here; Line C22 is White's best chance to equalize.

C21: 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 122

C22: 12 $\mathbb{A}xe5$ 123

C21)**12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{A}xg3$**

Black can also play 12...f5 13 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{A}e7$ 14 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}e8$ (White is able to open lines on the kingside after 14...f4?! 15 $\mathbb{A}h2$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 17 g3 ±) and now:

a) 15 $\mathbb{A}xd7+?$ $\mathbb{A}xd7$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xe8+$ $\mathbb{A}ixe8$ 17 $\mathbb{A}xe5$ fxe4 18 hxg5 hxg5 19 $\mathbb{A}h7+$ $\mathbb{A}d8$ 20 $\mathbb{A}f6+$ $\mathbb{A}c8$ 21 $\mathbb{A}xg5$ and White's powerful rook compensates for the loss of the exchange.

b) 15 hgx5 $\mathbb{W}xh5$ 16 $\mathbb{A}xh5$ and then:

b1) 16...hxg5 17 $\mathbb{A}xh8$ (17 $\mathbb{A}xg5$ $\mathbb{A}f6$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xf6$ $\mathbb{A}xf6$ 19 f4 e5 20 $\mathbb{A}e2$ $\mathbb{A}c5$ =) 17... $\mathbb{A}xh8$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xg5$ e5 with equal chances.

b2) 16...fxe4 17 $\mathbb{A}xd7+$ $\mathbb{A}xd7$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xe5$ (so far this is the game Rizzitano-Stopa, Boston 1981) 18... $\mathbb{A}hf8$ 19 $\mathbb{A}f6+$ $\mathbb{A}xf6$ 20 gxf6+ $\mathbb{A}xf6$ 21 $\mathbb{A}xh6+$ $\mathbb{A}g7$ with an equal endgame.

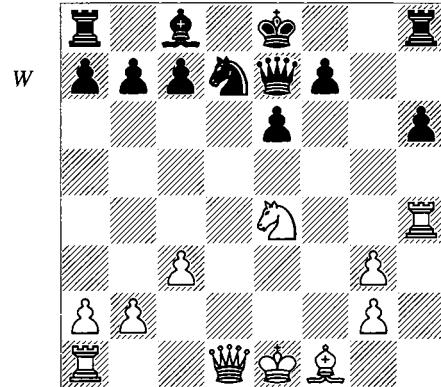
13 fxg3

White can keep his pawn-structure intact at the cost of losing some time after 13 $\mathbb{A}xg3$ gxh4 14 $\mathbb{A}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}f3$ f5 16 $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{A}e5$ 17 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{A}f7$ 18 $\mathbb{A}f3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 19 0-0-0 $\mathbb{A}d7$ ±.

13...gxh4

I think Black should consider 13...f5! and then:

- a) 14 $\mathbb{W}h5+?$ $\mathbb{A}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}g6$ (15 hgx5 fxe4 ±)
15... $\mathbb{W}g8$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xg8$ $\mathbb{A}xg8$ 17 $\mathbb{A}f2$ g4 ±.
- b) 14 $\mathbb{A}f2$ g4 15 $\mathbb{W}a4$ c6 16 0-0-0 e5 ±.
14 $\mathbb{A}xh4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ (D)



A critical position – White has aggressively pursued his attack at the cost of allowing his pawn-structure to become compromised.

15 $\mathbb{W}d2$

Or 15 $\mathbb{W}d4$ e5 16 $\mathbb{W}d2$, and then:

- a) 16... $\mathbb{A}f6?$ ('!?' – Volzhin; "White is driven back" – Davies) 17 $\mathbb{A}b5+!$. I think this move turns the tables – Black is in big trouble:

a1) 17... $\mathbb{A}f8$ 18 $\mathbb{A}xh6$ $\mathbb{A}h7$ 19 $\mathbb{A}f6$ $\mathbb{A}f5$ 20 0-0-0 ±.

a2) 17...c6 18 $\mathbb{A}d6+$ $\mathbb{A}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{A}xh6$ $\mathbb{A}g8$ (or 19... $\mathbb{A}xh6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xh6+$ $\mathbb{A}g8$ 21 0-0-0 $\mathbb{A}g4$ 22 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{A}f2$ 23 $\mathbb{A}c4$ $\mathbb{A}e6$ 24 $\mathbb{A}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 25 $\mathbb{A}d2$ +-) 20 $\mathbb{A}c4$ $\mathbb{A}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{A}xe6$ $\mathbb{A}d8$ 22 $\mathbb{A}f5$ $\mathbb{A}xd2$ 23 $\mathbb{A}xe7$ $\mathbb{A}xe7$ 24 $\mathbb{A}xd2$ ±.

a3) 17... $\mathbb{A}d7$ 18 0-0-0 c6 19 $\mathbb{A}c4$ is also very good for White.

b) 16...f5! ('!?' – Volzhin) 17 $\mathbb{A}f2$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 18 $\mathbb{A}d1$ $\mathbb{A}b6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{A}e6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{A}e7$ ±. White is a pawn down and his doubled g-pawns do not inspire confidence.

15...f5!

Now:

- a) 16 $\mathbb{A}g5$ $\mathbb{A}f6$ 17 0-0-0 $\mathbb{A}d7$ 18 $\mathbb{A}f3$ 0-0-0 (also sufficient is 18... $\mathbb{A}g4$ ±) 19 $\mathbb{A}xh6$ $\mathbb{A}e4$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{A}xh6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xh6$ (White's attack comes up short after 21 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ c5 22 $\mathbb{A}a6$ $\mathbb{A}c6$ +- Volzhin) 21... $\mathbb{A}xg3$ 22 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{A}b8$ ± Galkin-Volzhin, Perm 1997.

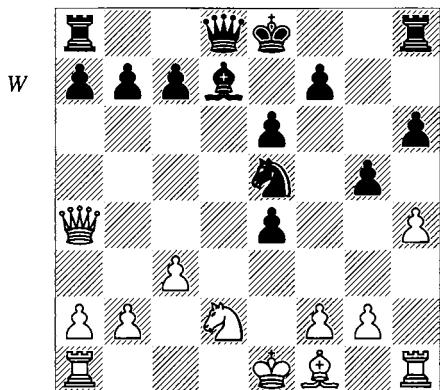
b) 16 $\mathbb{A}f2$ $\mathbb{A}f6$ 17 $\mathbb{A}xh6$ $\mathbb{A}xh6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xh6$ $\mathbb{A}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h8+$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xf8+$ $\mathbb{W}xf8$ 21 0-0-0 $\mathbb{A}e7$ ± Volzhin.

C22)

12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 13 ♜a4+

Black retains his extra pawn and has no problems after 13 ♜xe4 ♜xd1+ 14 ♜xd1 g4 ±.

13...♜d7 (D)



Now:

C221: 14 ♜xe4 123

C222: 14 ♜d4!? 123

C221)

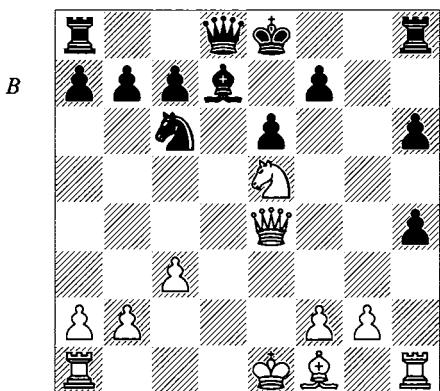
14 ♜xe4 ♜c6 15 ♜f3

White must act quickly to justify his sacrifice. Quieter play allows Black to consolidate his extra pawn:

a) 15 hxg5 ♜xg5 16 ♜f3 (G.Morris-J.Hansen, corr. 1998) 16...♜g7 17 0-0-0 (17 ♜h4 ♜e5) 17...0-0-0 ±.

b) 15 ♜f3 ♜e7 16 hxg5 ♜xg5 17 ♜e4 ♜e5 18 0-0-0 0-0-0 ±.

15...gxh4 16 ♜e5 (D)



16...♜g5!

This unexpected move enables Black to fight for an advantage – less challenging is 16...♜xe5 17 ♜xe5 ♜g8 18 ♜d1 ♜e7 19 ♜xc7 ♜c6 20 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7 (½-½ E.Otero-G.Camacho, Cuba (1) 1997) 21 f3, and White recovers his pawn with equal chances.

17 ♜xd7

Black will emerge with an extra pawn after 17 ♜f3 ♜e7.

17...0-0-0!

Power castling! The white knight is pinned because of the mate threat on the d2-square. Now:

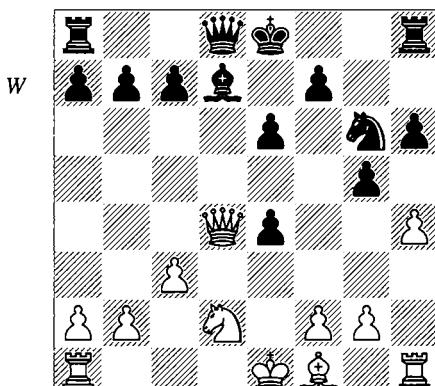
a) 18 ♜d1 ♜xd7 19 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 ±.

b) 18 ♜xh4 ♜xh4 19 ♜xh4 ♜xd7 20 ♜b5 ♜d6 ±. Black has an extra pawn, but White has some drawing chances.

c) 18 ♜a6 ♜xd7 19 ♜xc6 ♜d2+ 20 ♜f1 ♜xb2 21 ♜xb7+ (21 ♜e1 bxa6 22 ♜xa6+ ♜d8 23 ♜xa7 ♜xc3 ±) 21...♜xb7 22 ♜xb7+ ♜xb7 23 ♜b1+ (23 ♜xh4 c5 ±) 23...♜c6 24 ♜xh4 ♜c5 ±. Black is a pawn ahead in the rook endgame, although again White has some drawing chances.

C222)

14 ♜d4!? ♜g6 (D)



15 h5

White has some alternatives:

a) 15 ♜xe4?! ♜c6! ± Camacho.

b) 15 hxg5 ♜xg5 16 ♜xe4 ♜e5 17 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 18 ♜h5 ♜g4 gives Black a slight advantage.

c) 15 ♜g7!? and now:

c1) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$!?? 16 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 17 b3 (after 17 $\mathbb{Q}b3$?? $\mathbb{W}xd1+!!$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ $\mathbb{B}ag8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ – Black recovers the queen and will emerge with a two-pawn advantage) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 19 $\mathbb{W}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ with an unclear position.

c2) 15... $\mathbb{W}e7$! 16 h5 $\mathbb{W}f8$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d4$ and here:

c21) 17... $\mathbb{E}5$!?" (!" according to Camacho in his 1998 *Informator* notes, but White's play can be strengthened) and then:

c211) 18 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ (the alternative 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$!?) $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f5$ was suggested by Davies and looks dangerous for Black) 20...0-0-0 21 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 22 $\mathbb{W}f5+$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 23 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}g7$ = Camacho.

c212) 18 $\mathbb{W}c4$! (this is an easy move to overlook – White declines to capture one pawn in order to attack a more crucial pawn; the idea works because the black knight is still under attack) 18... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ (19... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ±) 20 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 0-0-21 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{B}fd8$ 22 g3 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ±. White has emerged from the complications with an extra pawn, despite the odd statistic that more than one third of his moves have been with his queen!

c22) 17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (the solid choice) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 0-0-0 19 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ = Pommerel-Elburg, Dutch e-mail Ch 2000.

c23) 17... $\mathbb{Q}f4$!?" (the sharp choice) 18 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ f5! and now:

c231) 20 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ – 20 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d7$) 21... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xd6$ cxd6 23 $\mathbb{B}xd6$ $\mathbb{B}hd8$ ±. White's kingside pawns are vulnerable.

c232) 20 $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xd7+$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 23 c4 (23 $\mathbb{W}b5$ c6 24 $\mathbb{W}e5$ $\mathbb{B}hd8$ ±) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$! 24 $\mathbb{W}b5$ c6 25 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ±. The onus is on White to justify his pawn sacrifice.

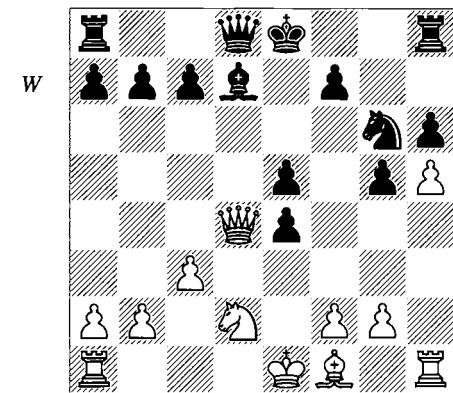
15...e5 (D)

16 $\mathbb{W}d5$

Or 16 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$, and then:

a) 17 $\mathbb{Q}b5$? ('!?' according to Camacho) and here:

a1) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$? 18 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ "is very dangerous for Black" according to Davies.



a2) 17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$? 18 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 0-0-0 19 0-0-0 $\mathbb{W}d5$ = E.Otero-G.Camacho, Cuba (3) 1997.

a3) 17... $\mathbb{W}xd2$!?" (previous analysts have overlooked this tactical idea and some day this pseudo-sacrifice will prove to be a very satisfying novelty for someone!) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 0-0-0+ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ (20 $\mathbb{W}xg6$ $\mathbb{B}xg6$ wins for Black) 20...f5+! (more incisive than 20... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ±) 21 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}h4+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{B}hf8$ 23 g3 (23 $\mathbb{B}xh4$ $\mathbb{W}xh4$ 24 f4 $\mathbb{B}d2$ –+) 23... $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ c6 –+. Black wins a piece because attempts to save the bishop allow a mating attack; for example, 25 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d2+$ 26 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (26 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ #) 26... $\mathbb{B}d5+$ 27 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ $\mathbb{B}dd8$ (threatening ... $\mathbb{B}de8$ #) 29 $\mathbb{Q}h3+$ g4! 30 $\mathbb{Q}xg4+$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ (renewing the threat of ... $\mathbb{B}de8$ #) 31 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 32 f4 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ #.

b) 17 $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 20 f3 $\mathbb{B}ad8$ gives Black a slight pull in the endgame, although White should be able to draw with careful defence.

16...c6 17 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Now:

a) 19... $\mathbb{W}xe5+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{B}d8$ with equal chances.

b) 19... $\mathbb{Q}g4$!?" (the most ambitious move) 20 g3 $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{B}ab8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ and Black has a slight pull because of his more active pieces.

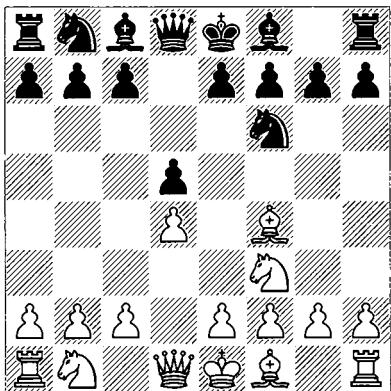
14 London System: 1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗f4

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3

White can also play 2 ♗f4 ♘f6 3 e3 (3 ♘f3 – 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗f4) 3...c5 4 c3 (4 ♘f3 – 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗f4 c5 4 e3) 4...♘c6 5 ♘d2!? (5 ♘f3 – 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗f4 c5 4 e3 ♘c6 5 c3) 5...♗f5 6 ♖b3 ♖d7 7 ♘gf3 c4 8 ♖d1 e6 = S.Kovačević-Moreno Trujillo, Lorca 2003.

2...♗f6 3 ♗f4 (D)

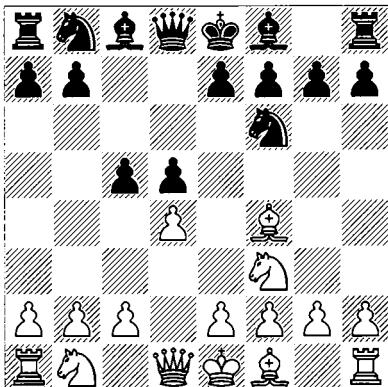
B



Several British players including James Mason (he preferred 2 ♗f4) and World Championship candidate Joseph Blackburne pioneered White's trademark piece set-up during the 19th century, but the opening derives its name from having been played several times during the great tournament of London 1922. The Croatian GM Vlatko Kovačević is the leading modern exponent of the London System – he has employed it successfully in high-level games for many years. Several grandmasters trot out the London System as an occasional change of pace from the mainstream queen's pawn openings. The London System is popular at club level because it is relatively easy to learn, it can be employed against a variety of defences, and White can quickly develop a strong attack if Black defends indifferently.

3...c5 (D)

W



The London System features the early development of White's dark-squared bishop to the f4-square – the strength or weakness of this bishop posting is a key factor in evaluating many of the characteristic positions. White aims for rapid piece development without the c4 pawn advance, but unlike the Veresov Opening, White retains the ability to bolster the centre with his c-pawn and his queen's knight is usually developed via a3 or d2. Black's classical response is to play an early ...c5 pawn advance, followed by ...♗b6 to attack the b2-pawn and exploit the absence of White's dark-squared bishop from the queenside. White usually counters by playing ♖b3, and the rooks typically stare at each other along the b-file for several moves to see who will blink first by exchanging or retreating.

Black immediately frees his position to counter White's grip over the e5-square.

4 e3

White sometimes plays 4 dxc5 e6, and now:

- a) 5 e3 ♘xc5 6 ♘bd2 (6 ♘e2 0-0 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 ♘bd2 h6 9 h3 ♘e7 10 ♘b3 ♘b6 11 ♘e5 ♘d8) 6...0-0 7 ♘d3 ♘c6 8 0-0 ♘e7 9 ♘b3 ♘b6

10 $\mathbb{Q}bd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ = Chepukaitis-Nataf, Internet FIDE Wch qual 2001.

b) 5 b4 a5 6 c3 axb4 and then:

b1) 7 $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ b3! 8 $\mathbb{W}xb3$ (8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ b2 9 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb8$?) 8... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$! Tobak-Sumets, Odessa Ch 2002.

b2) 7 cxb4 b6 8 e3 bxc5 9 bxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ = Czech-Van Damme, ICCF e-mail 2002.

4... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 5 c3

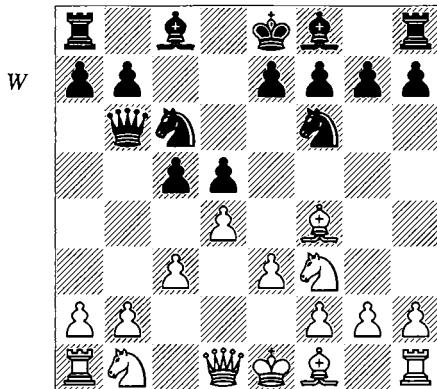
Black has no problems after other moves:

a) 5 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 6 dxc5 $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$?

8 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}c3$ (this is safer than the murky line 8... $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d4$) 9 e4 dxe4 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ (10 $\mathbb{Q}b3$? $\mathbb{W}f6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$?) Gara-P.Horvath, Harkany 2001) 10... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$.

b) 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ cxd4! 6 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ + 7 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2$ + 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ dxe3+ 9 fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$! 10 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ e6 (T.Rakić-Sr.Cvetković, Yugoslav Ch (Kladovo) 1991) 11 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ (11...e5 12 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$! exf4 13 exf4 is unclear) 12 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ = Sr.Cvetković.

5... $\mathbb{W}b6$ (D)



If White meets this move passively, Black can often seize the initiative on the queenside.

6 $\mathbb{W}b3$

Challenging the black queen is White's most popular choice here. Alternatives:

a) 6 $\mathbb{W}c1$ (too passive) 6... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 8 dxc5 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ and now:

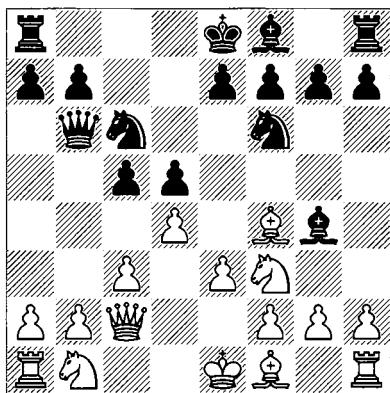
a1) 10 $\mathbb{W}d2$ e6 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ (11... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ is also equal, Capablanca-Maroczy, New York 1924) 12 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 0-0 0-0 = Reichgeld-Grosshans, corr. 1989.

a2) 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd4$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e6 13 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ was comfortable for Black in Steinhagen-Krallmann, Münster 1996) 11...e6 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (13 h3 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$

$\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ = Berntsen-Summerscale, London 1994) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 0-0 15 a4 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 a5 $\mathbb{W}d8$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ a6 = Ghane Gardeh-Arlandi, Bled OL 2002.

b) 6 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (D) (Black should avoid the tactically unsound 6... $\mathbb{Q}f5$? 7 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 8 cxb6 9 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ± Sakri-Marciano, Tarbes 2003) and then:

b1) 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e6 8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ = Gamero Brana Madera Fernandez, Gijon 2000.



b2) 7 dxc5 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ g6 11 $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 15 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$?! (15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ = Wirthensohn-Giertz, Swiss Cht 2001) 16 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (17 $\mathbb{W}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ =) 17... $\mathbb{W}xb2$?! (17... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ is level) 18 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ (20 $\mathbb{Q}b3$? $\mathbb{Q}a5$!?) 20...gxf5 21 $\mathbb{W}xa7$ (21 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}d7$ $\mathbb{W}c2$ is also level) 21... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 22 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ e6 =.

b3) 7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ e6 and here:

b31) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 9 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ a6 = Gonzalez Perez-Koglin, Batumi wom Echt 1999.

b32) 8 h3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 $\mathbb{W}b3$ h6 10 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ c4 11 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ axb6 12 a3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 13 f3 h5 14 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$?! 15 g4 hxg4 16 fxg4 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ f6 18 $\mathbb{Q}ef3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ = Borbjerggård-Hector, Stockholm 2002.

b4) 7 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 8 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 9 c4 d4 10 exd4 cxd4 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ g6 12 $\mathbb{W}b3$ 1½-1½ Miles-Fressinet, Mondariz 2000.

c) 6 b3 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and now:

c1) 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e6 8 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ and then:

c11) 9 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ cxd4 11 exd4 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 13 $\mathbb{W}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ = Schwaninger-Nickl, Austrian Ch (Oberpullendorf) 2002.

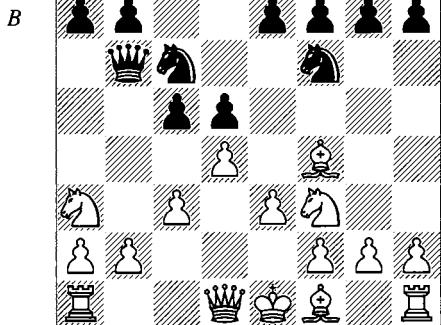
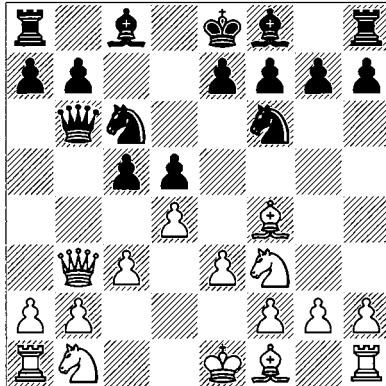
c12) 9 ♜bd2 0-0 10 ♜e5 ♜xe2 11 ♜xe2 ♜fc8 12 ♜g5 ♜d8 = Schlindwein-Portisch, Hockenheim 1997.

c2) 7 ♜d3 and here:

c21) 7...♜h5 8 ♜g3 ♜xg3 9 hxg3 g6 10 ♜bd2 ♜g7 11 ♜c1 0-0 12 0-0 e5 13 dx5 ♜xe5 14 ♜e2 ♜c6 = Bayramov-Zulfugarli, Azerbaijan Ch (Baku) 2001.

c22) 7...e6 8 0-0 ♜e7 9 h3 ♜h5 10 ♜bd2 ♜c8 11 a3 0-0 12 ♜c2 ♜g6 = Sidenko-Sander, IECG e-mail 2002.

d) 6 ♜a3?! (D) is White's most interesting 6th move alternative. Now:



d1) 6...♜xb2 (this move is inappropriate if Black needs to play for a win because White has the option of forcing a draw) 7 ♜b5 ♜e5 8 ♜g3 (C.Perdikis-Melas, Cyprus Ch 1998) 8...♜d8 9 dxc5 (9 ♜b1 ♜xa2 10 ♜a1 =) 9...e6 10 ♜b1 ♜xa2 11 ♜d3 with compensation for the pawn according to Kaidanov.

d2) 6...a6 7 ♜b3 and then:

d21) 7...♜a7 8 dxc5 e6 9 ♜d6 ♜xd6 10 cxd6 0-0 11 ♜e2 ♜d8 12 0-0 ♜xd6 13 c4 ♜a5 14 ♜b4 ♜b6 15 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 16 b3 dxc4 17 ♜xc4 ♜xc4 18 ♜xc4 ♜d7 with equal chances, H.Nielsen-J.Åkesson, Copenhagen 2001.

d22) 7...♜a5 8 dxc5 e6 9 ♜e2 ♜xc5 10 0-0 0-0 11 c4 d4 12 exd4 ♜xd4 13 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 14 ♜c2 ♜e5 15 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 = Miles-Kaidanov, Chicago 2000.

We now return to 6 ♜b3 (D):

6...e6

Black can also continue developing with 6...e6 7 ♜bd2 ♜e7. Now:

a) 8 ♜xb6 axb6 9 ♜c7 ♜d8 (9...♜d7 10 ♜b5 0-0 11 0-0 ± Zanabili Al Sibbali-Garcia

Gonzalez, Asturias Cht 2000) 10 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 11 ♜b5 ♜d7 12 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 13 0-0 ♜e7 = Lee-Teichmann, London 1904.

b) 8 ♜d3 c4 9 ♜xb6 axb6 10 ♜c2 b5 = Midjord-Michel Yunis, Manila OL 1992.

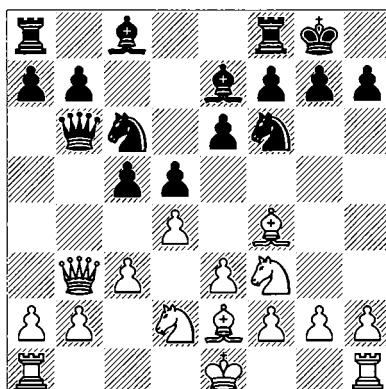
c) 8 h3 0-0 and then:

c1) 9 ♜e5 ♜xe5 10 ♜xe5 (Radnoti-Mi.Tseitlin, Budapest 1990) 10...♜xb3 11 ♜xb3 ♜d7 12 ♜f4 c4 13 ♜d2 b5 and Black has a slight pull on the queenside.

c2) 9 ♜e2 – 8 ♜e2 0-0 9 h3.

c3) 9 g4 ♜d7 10 ♜xb6 axb6 11 ♜c7?!? (this is more challenging than 11 a3 ♜fc8 = Manouck-Flear, Charlton 1983) 11...cx d4 12 exd4 b5 with a balanced game.

d) 8 ♜e2 0-0 (D) and here:



W

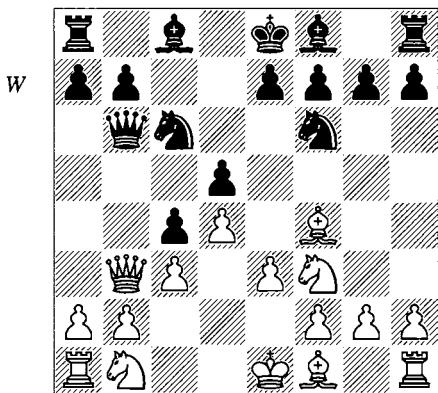
d1) 9 ♜c2 ♜d7 10 ♜cl ♜ac8 11 ♜b1 cxd4 12 exd4 ♜a5 13 ♜g5 h6 14 h4 ♜b5 15 ♜xb5 ♜xb5 16 ♜e5 ♜fd8 is slightly better for Black, Blatny-Plachetka, Czechoslovakia 1990.

d2) 9 h3 ♜d7 10 0-0 ♜fc8 11 ♜xb6 (11 ♜e5 ♜e8 12 ♜g5 {Bohak-Khilchenko, corr.

1993-8} 12... $\mathbb{Q}c7$) 11...axb6 = Jirovsky-Movsesian, Czech Ch 2002/3.

d3) 9 0-0 $\mathbb{W}xb3$ (9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ axb6 11 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ and here a draw was agreed in Meduna-Hübner, Bundesliga 1989/90) 10 axb3 (Wieker-Frugah, Germany tt 1993/4) 10...b6 with equality.

We now return to 6...c4 (D):



White is confronted with an important decision – exchange queens and give Black doubled b-pawns at the cost of opening the a-file for Black's rooks (Line A), or retreat his queen and concede a couple of tempi so as to relieve the pressure on his centre (Line B):

- A: 7 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 128
B: 7 $\mathbb{W}c2$ 129

A)

7 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ axb6 8 $\mathbb{Q}a3$

The knight takes aim at the vulnerable b5-square. White has several less challenging alternatives and the reader should pay close attention to move-order transpositions. Now:

a) 8 a3 (this move is too passive to cause Black any trouble) 8...b5 and then:

a1) 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ b4! 10 cxb4 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ (\mp Ribli) 11 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$!? (11... $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ½-½ Senk-Haag, Eisenberg 1998) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 13 0-0 e6 with equal chances, Hokkanen-Lipisanen, Finnish Ch (Helsinki) 1990.

a2) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ e6! and here:

a21) 10 b4?! $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ (11 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 dx \mathbb{Q} h6 13 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ g5 14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ gxh4 15 $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ \mp Mechkarov-Harding, ICCF corr. 1988)

11... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$! 12 exf4 bxc6 \mp V.Kovačević-Ribli, Bugojno 1984.

a22) 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ b4! (\mp Ribli) and now:

a221) 11 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 12 a4 c5 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ cxd4 14 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ = Shalumov-Oliveros, UECC e-mail 1999.

a222) 11 cxb4 $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ (12 0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ \mp Dupsky-Ciolac, Szeged 1998) 12...bxc6 13 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 14 f3 0-0 gives Black a slight pull.

b) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 0-0 (9 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ – 8 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$) 9...e6 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ h6 11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (11 h3 b5 12 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ = Reuss-Senff, Bundesliga 2004/5) 11...b5 12 a3 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ = Eliet-Gachon, French Ch 1996.

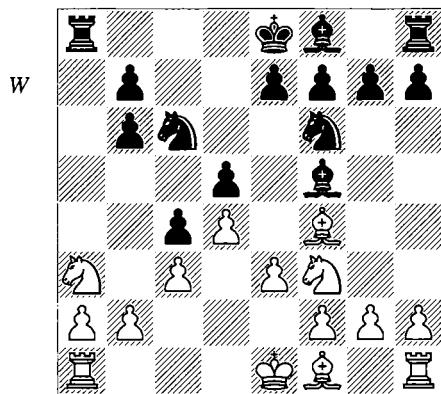
c) 8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ b5 and then:

c1) 9 a3 – 8 a3 b5 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$.

c2) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ e6 10 a3 – 8 a3 b5 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ e6! 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$.

c3) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ b4 10 0-0 bxc3 11 bxc3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ e6 with equal chances, Lange-Wronn, Germany tt 1993/4.

8... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ (D)



9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Or:

a) 9 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 10 a4 (White should settle for 10 $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ = Lueders-Brameyer, Berlin Ch 2000) 10...e6 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$, and then:

a1) 11... $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 17 f3 $\mathbb{Q}b3$!? (17...b5 ½-½ Bohak-Hiltunen, corr. 1993-8) 18 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}ha8$, with just a slight pull for Black.

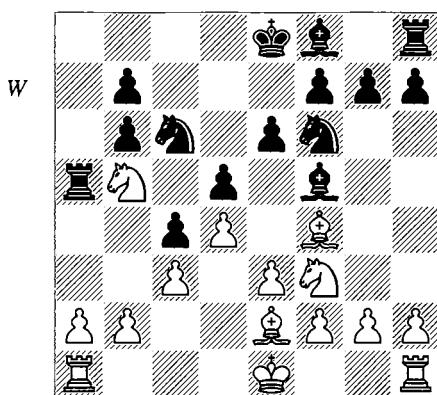
a2) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ (safer is 12 $\mathbb{Q}g5$!?) $\mathbb{Q}g6$ =) 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 dx \mathbb{Q} e5 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ \mp Wilton-L.Hansen, Danish Ch B (Aalborg) 1994.

b) 9 ♜h4 ♛d7 and here:

b1) 10 ♜b5 ♜a5 11 a4 ♜a7 12 ♜c7+ ♛d8
 13 ♜a8!? (Prevenios-Musitani, ICCF e-mail 2000) 13...♜xa4 (13...♝c8 14 ♛c7+ ♜e8 15 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 16 ♛xb6 ♜xa4 17 ♜xa4 ♛xa4 =)
 14 ♜xa4 ♛xa4 15 ♜xb6 ♛c2 =.

b2) 10 ♛e2 ♜e4 11 ♜b5 ♜a5 12 f3 ♜f6 13 a4 (Dunworth-Tischbierek, Copenhagen 1990)
 13...e6 =.

9...e6 10 ♜b5 ♜a5 (D)



11 a4

Or 11 ♜d6+ ♛xd6 12 ♜xd6 ♜d7 13 ♛f4 (this is more accurate than 13 ♛e5 b5 14 ♜h4 ♛g6 15 ♜xg6 hxg6 = Witkowski-I.Farago, Lodz 1979), and now:

a) 13...b5 14 a3 b4? (14...♜ha8 – 13...♜ha8 14 a3 b5) 15 ♜e5+! (15 cxb4 ♜xb4 16 ♜e5+ ♛e7 =) 15...♜xe5 16 cxb4 and White wins a pawn – this tactical idea demonstrates why it was important for White to avoid occupying the e5-square with his bishop.

b) 13...♜ha8 14 a3 and then:

b1) 14...♜b5 15 ♜e5+ ♛e7 16 0-0-0 (16 ♜xc6+? bxc6 17 0-0-0 ♜e4 18 ♜hf1 ♜xc3 19 bxc3 ♜xa3 ≠ Bancel-Palac, Cannes 1990) 16...♜e4 (16...♜a5? 17 b4! ♜e4 18 ♜b2! leaves the black rook stranded on the b5-square) 17 g4 ♛g6 18 ♜xg6+ hxg6 19 ♛g3 ♜xc3 20 bxc3 ♜xa3, and Black has good compensation for the piece.

b2) 14...b5 15 ♜h4 b4! (Black must play actively as after 15...♜g6 16 ♜xg6 hxg6 17 ♜d1 ± White has successfully blockaded the queen-side and Black's rooks are left biting on granite) 16 ♜xf5 exf5 17 cxb4 ♜xb4 18 ♜c1 ♜c6 with equal chances.

11...♛e7

Now:

a) 12 ♜c7+ ♛d7 ≠ Duarte-Goncalves, corr. 1996.

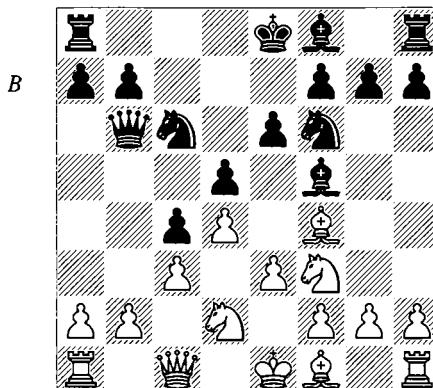
b) 12 ♜d2 ♜c2 (12...♛e4 13 f3 ♜xd2 14 ♜xd2 ♜d7 15 e4 ♛g6 16 ♜he1 ♜ha8 17 ♜c7 ♜c8 18 ♜b5 ♜ca8 repeats) 13 ♜d1 ♜xd1 14 ♜xd1 ♜d7 15 b4 cxb3 16 ♜xb3 ♜a6 with equal chances.

B)

7 ♜c2

White calmly retreats in the hope of demonstrating that Black's ...c4 pawn advance has prematurely released the pressure against White's d4-pawn.

7...♜f5 8 ♜c1 e6 9 ♜bd2 (D)



Black has tried several related moves here – Line B3 is the most direct idea:

B1: 9...h6 129

B2: 9...♜d8 130

B3: 9...♛e7 130

B1)

9...h6

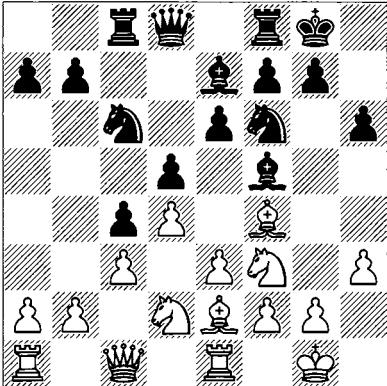
Black pauses to create *luft* for his light-squared bishop.

10 ♛e2 ♛e7 11 h3 ♜c8 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♜e1 ♜d8 (D)

Now:

a) 14 ♜f1 b5 15 ♜e5 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 ♛g6 17 a3 ♜d6 18 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 19 g3 ♛e4 20 ♜d1 a5 21 ♜h2 ♜fe8 = Petrović-Marković, Yugoslav wom Ch (Tivat) 1995.

W



b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ b5 16 f3 a5 17 a3 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ was fine for Black in Petrović-Stoisav-Ijević, Yugoslav wom Cht (Nikšić) 1997.

c) 14 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ and now:

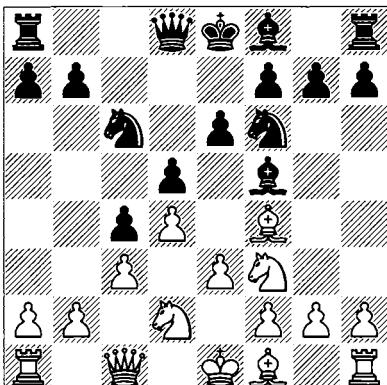
c1) 14... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ = M.Piket-Okkes, Dutch Cht 1993.

c2) 14...b5 15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ f5 (a radical way of preventing White from playing the e4 pawn advance) 18 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 21 b3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ = Hulak-Tischbierek, Novi Sad OL 1990.

B2)

9... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (D)

W



10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

White can try to corral Black's light-squared bishop with 10 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 11 f3. Now:

a) 11... $\mathbb{Q}d3$!? 12 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ cxd3 13 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ with a sharp position – Black's vulnerable d3-pawn is offset by the looseness of White's position.

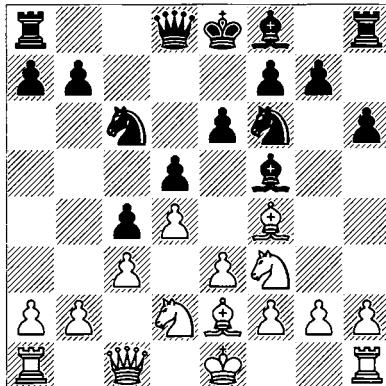
b) 11... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 12 e4 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ and then:
b1) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$!? 14 hgx3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ a6 with roughly level chances.

b2) 13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ hgx6 15 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ was played in the game Schlindwein-Pinter, Bundesliga 1997/8, and now 15...b5 equalizes.

10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D)

10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 0-0 0-0 12 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ b5 14 f3 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 15 g4 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ f6 \mp Blatny-Zso.Polgar, Brno 1991.

W



11 $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Alternatives:

a) 11 b3 b5 12 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 a4 a6 14 axb5 15 bxc4 bxc4 16 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ = Bagheri-Marechal, Belgian Ch (Geel) 2002.

b) 11 0-0 g5 12 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ f6 (or 13... $\mathbb{Q}g8$!?) 14 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ with equality) 14 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ gxh4 (14... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ \pm) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xh5+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16 e4 (16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$!?) $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 17 e4 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ gives White compensation for the exchange) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$? (17 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ =) 17...fxe5 \mp Nalbandian-V.Georgiev, Matinhos jr Wch 1994.

11... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

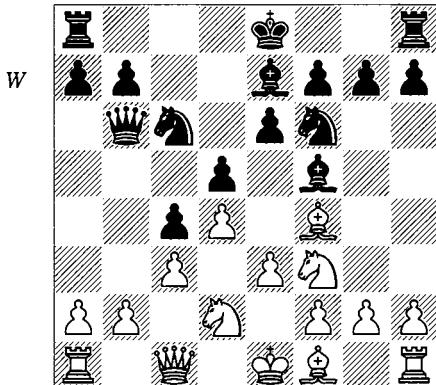
Also sufficient is 11... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ = Riff-Kiss, Basle 2001.

12 0-0 b5 13 b4 a5 14 a3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$

The chances are equal, Meduna-Van Wely, Moscow OL 2004.

B3)

9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D)



Black continues developing and prepares kingside castling. This position is a typical Queen's Pawn Game in which the distinction between White and Black has become blurred – “White is Black and Black is White”. Both sides have made an equal number of moves, the pawn-structure and piece deployments are similar, yet Black has developed an extra piece. Black usually returns the tempo within several moves by relocating his queen in order to clear a path for the advance of the b7-pawn.

10 ♛e2 0-0

Also possible is 10...♝d8 – 9...♝d8 10 ♛e2 ♜e7.

11 0-0 ♜fc8

Black can chase down the white bishop with 11...♝h5 12 ♜e5 ♜xf4 13 exf4 ♜xe5 14 fxe5 f6 (14...♝ac8!?) 15 ♜f3 ♜g4 16 ♜d2 ♜xf3 17 exf6 ♜xf6 18 ♜xf3 ♜d6 19 ♜ae1 ♜af8 20 ♜d1 ♜c7 21 g3 ♜f7 22 ♜g2 b5 23 ♜e2 g5 24 ♜d2 ♜h8 25 f3 ♜g7 26 ♜h1 h5 = Abildlund-Lindestrom, Danish Cht 1993/4.

12 h3

Minor alternatives:

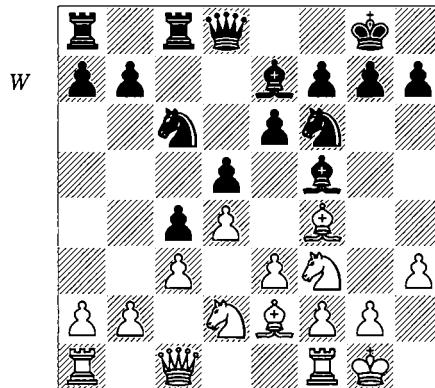
a) 12 ♜e1 ♜d8 13 ♜e5 ♜xe5 14 ♜xe5 b5 15 ♜f3 ♜d3 16 e4 b4 with equal chances, V.Kovačević-Dizdarević, Mravinci 1995.

b) 12 ♜e5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xe5 ♜d8 (13...a5!?) 14 ♜f3 ♜d3 15 ♜e1 ♜e4 16 ♜e2 ♜h4 17 ♜g3

♝xg3 18 hxg3 b5 19 a3 a5 = Wesseln-Chandler, Bundesliga 1999/00.

12...♝d8 (D)

Black prepares a queenside pawn advance. Another reasonable plan is 12...a5!? 13 b3 cxb3 14 axb3 ♜b4!? (14...♝e4 15 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 =) 15 ♜e1 ♜c6 16 c4 b5 17 c5 ♜d7, with sharp play ahead.



Now:

a) 13 ♜h4 ♜e4 14 f3 ♜d3 15 ♜xd3 cxd3 16 g4 ♜b4!? (16...♝xg4 17 fxg4 ♜xh4 18 ♜b1 ♜f6 = Yedidia-Liogky, French Cht 1996) 17 ♜g2 ♜c2 18 ♜b1 ♜a5 =.

b) 13 ♜d1 b5 14 ♜c2 (Mufić-Brumen, Croatian Cht (Opatija) 1995) 14...♜xc2 15 ♜xc2 b4 =. Black has some queenside pressure.

c) 13 g4 ♜g6 14 ♜h4 ♜d6 15 ♜xg6 hxg6 16 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 17 f4 b5 18 ♜f3 ♜e4 19 ♜e5 ♜e7 = Mufić-Mikhailchishin, Slovenian Cht (Bled) 2001.

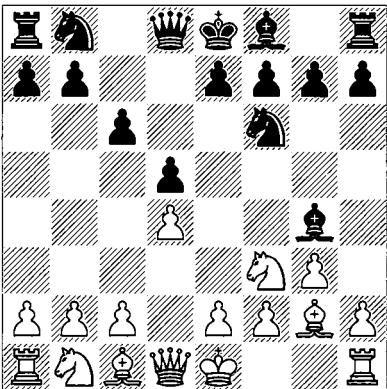
d) 13 ♜e5 h6 (13...b5 14 g4 ♜g6 15 ♜xg6 hxg6 = Kljako-Brumen, Pula 2000) 14 ♜e1 ♜xe5 15 ♜xe5 b5!? (the queenside pawn advance is more ambitious than 15...♝e4 16 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 =) 16 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 17 ♜f3 ♜d3 18 e4 b4 19 exd5 exd5 = Arkhangelsky-Rublevsky, Aalborg 1993. Black eventually won by infiltrating along the b-file.

15 King's Fianchetto: 1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 g3

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 g3

The King's Fianchetto is often chosen by players seeking to steer the game into positions similar to the Catalan Opening.

3...c6 4 ♘g2 ♘g4 (D)



W

This is our repertoire move – Black develops his light-squared bishop outside the pawn-chain before playing ...e6. The triangle defence (pawns on the c6-, d5-, and e6-squares) will blunt the range of White's light-squared bishop.

5 0-0

White has several alternatives here; a couple of them transpose into the main line, but line 'c' tends to remain independent:

a) 5 h3 ♘h5 6 0-0 e6 7 ♘bd2 ♘bd7 – 5 0-0 ♘bd7 6 ♘bd2 e6 7 h3 ♘h5.

b) 5 ♘bd2 ♘bd7 6 c4 e6 7 0-0 – 5 0-0 ♘bd7 6 ♘bd2 e6 7 c4.

c) 5 ♘e5 ♘f5 6 0-0 ♘bd7 7 c4 e6 and then:

c1) 8 ♘c3 ♘e7 9 ♘b3 (9 cxd5 exd5 10 f4 0-0 11 h3 ♘e4 = Sprečić-I.Farago, Tuzla 1981)
9...♗b6 10 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 11 ♘xb6 ♘xb6 = Sofrigin-N.Olsen, Lyngby 1990.

c2) 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♘c3 ♘e7 10 ♘d3 0-0 11 f3 c5 12 e3 ♘e8 = Viladiu Martinez-de la Villa, Sitges 1993.

c3) 8 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 and here:

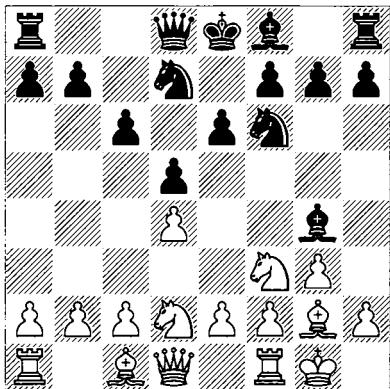
c31) 9 b3 ♘e7 10 ♘b2 0-0 11 ♘d2 a5 12 a3 (12 f3 {And.Müller-Ann.Müller, Bundesliga wom 1997/8} 12...b5 13 e4 ♘g6 is fine for Black) 12...b5!? (12...♗fd8 13 f3?! c5 ♘ Sharevich-Alexandrova, Dresden wom 2004) 13 a4 bxc4 14 bxc4 ♘fb8 with a slight pull for Black.

c32) 9 ♘d2 ♘e7 10 b3 0-0 11 ♘b2 a5 with a balanced middlegame, Schultze-Bagirov, Bern 1995.

5...♘bd7

British GM Jonathan Speelman and Russian GM Valeri Yandemirov are among the white players of this variation – Hungarian GM József Pinter plays the line with the black pieces. All three of these players typically arrive at this position via the Réti Opening move-order: 1 ♘f3 d5 2 g3 ♘f6 3 ♘g2 c6 4 0-0 ♘g4 5 d4 ♘bd7.

6 ♘bd2 e6 (D)



7 ♘e1

This is the most logical idea here – White prepares to open the centre with the e4 pawn-break. Alternative plans allow Black to complete his development with no problems:

a) 7 c3 ♘e7 8 ♘e1 0-0 9 e4 dxe4 10 ♘xe4 – 7 ♘e1 ♘e7 8 e4 dxe4 9 ♘xe4 0-0 10 c3.

b) 7 h3 ♜h5 and now:

b1) 8 b3 ♜e7 (8...a5!?) is also playable, as in line 'c1') 9 ♜b2 0-0 10 c4 b5 = Mozna Hojdarova-G.Finegold, Prague wom 1990.

b2) 8 c4 ♜e7 9 b3 0-0 10 ♜b2 a5 11 a3 (A.Ivanov-Evseev, Russian Cht (St Petersburg) 1999) 11...b5 =.

c) 7 b3 ♜e7 8 ♜b2 and then:

c1) 8...a5!? 9 ♜e1 ♜f5 10 a3 0-0 11 ♜d3 h6 (11...b5!?) was suggested by Polugaevsky and looks fine for Black) 12 c4 b6 13 ♜c1 ♜c8 = Bilek-Polugaevsky, Budapest 1975.

c2) 8...0-0 9 ♜e1 a5!? and here:

c21) 10 c4 b5 (10...a4!?) 11 e4 a4 12 e5 ♜e8 = Cummings-Antunes, Pula Echt 1997.

c22) 10 a4 ♜b6 11 e4 ♜fd8 12 h3 ♜h5 13 e5 ♜e8 = Csom-Dvoretsky, Frunze 1983.

d) 7 c4 ♜e7 8 ♜e1 0-0 9 e4 dxe4 10 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 11 ♜xe4 ♜f6 12 ♜e3 ♜d7 = Miguel Lago-Estremera Panos, Mondariz 1995.

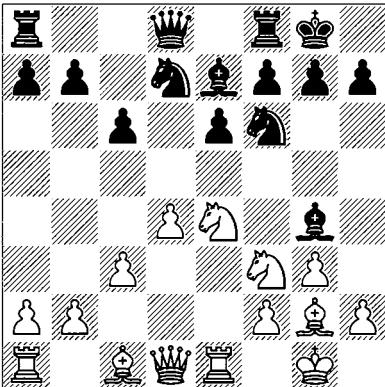
7...♜e7 8 e4

White has some alternatives here:

a) 8 c3 0-0 9 e4 dxe4 10 ♜xe4 - 8 e4 dxe4 9 ♜xe4 0-0 10 c3.

b) 8 c4 - 7 c4 ♜e7 8 ♜e1.

8...dxe4 9 ♜xe4 0-0 10 c3 (D)



Now we consider:

A: 10...♜e8 133

B: 10...♜b6 134

A)

10...♜e8 11 ♜xf6+

11 ♜b3 ♜xe4 12 ♜xe4 ♜f5 13 ♜e1 ♜b6 = Dizdarević-Pal Petran, Lyons 1994.

11...♜xf6

11...♜xf6 12 ♜b3 ♜b6 13 ♜e5 ("±" - Z.Almasi) 13...♜xb3 14 axb3 ♜f5 15 b4 a6 with an equal position.

12 h3

Or 12 ♜b3 ♜b6, and then:

a) 13 ♜xb6 axb6 and here:

a1) 14 ♜e5 ♜xe5 (14...♜xe5 15 dxe5 ♜e7 16 ♜e3 ♜c5 17 ♜xc5 bxc5 ½-½ Fahrbach-Nava, IECG e-mail 2000) 15 dxe5 ♜c5 leads to equality.

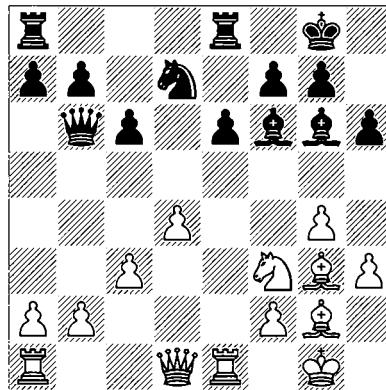
a2) 14 h3 ♜f5 15 ♜g5 ♜xg5 16 ♜xg5 h6 17 ♜f3 (Vagle-Kann, ICCF e-mail 2001) 17...♜ed8 18 a3 ♜f8 =.

b) 13 ♜f4 and now:

b1) 13...♜xb3 14 axb3 ♜xf3 15 ♜xf3 (Maiwald-Brutus, Lippstadt 2003) 15...e5 16 dxe5 ♜xe5 =.

b2) 13...♜xf3 14 ♜xf3 e5 15 dxe5 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 = Hug-Hübner, Garmisch Partenkirchen rpd 1994.

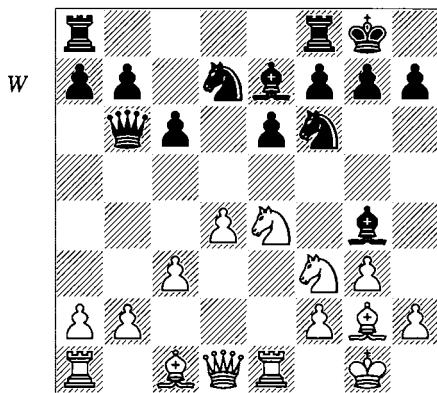
12...♜h5 13 g4 ♜g6 14 ♜f4 h6 15 ♜g3 ♜b6 (D)



Now:

a) 16 ♜e2 c5 17 ♜e5 (or 17 ♜ad1 ♜ad8 {17...cxd4 18 ♜xd4 a6 19 ♜b3 ♜ad8 20 ♜f3! ±} 18 d5 e5 {18...exd5 19 ♜xe8+ ♜xe8 20 ♜xe8+ ♜f8 21 ♜e5 ±}) 19 ♜h4 ♜h7 with equality) 17...♜xe5 18 dxe5 ♜e7 = Striković-Z.Almasi, Čačak 1996.

b) 16 ♜b3 ♜xb3 (16...a5 "!" according to Z.Almasi, but this may be too optimistic after 17 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 18 ♜e5 ♜xe5 19 ♜xe5 ♜c4 20 b3 ♜xe5 21 ♜xe5 a4 22 b4 ±, when Black's advanced a-pawn is vulnerable) 17 axb3 ♜ed8 18 ♜e5 ♜xe5 19 ♜xe5 ♜e7 20 b4 a6 =. Black will follow up with ...♜d7 and ...♜ad8.

B)10... $\mathbb{W}b6$ (D)11 $\mathbb{W}b3$

White challenges Black's well-placed queen.
Alternatives:

a) 11 $\mathbb{W}e2$ (Prudnikova-Stiazhkina, Halle wom Ech 2000) 11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}e2$ h6 14 h3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ =.

b) 11 a4 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 13 a5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ = Motwani-Ledger, British Ch (Scarborough) 2004.

c) 11 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 13 g4 (White seizes space on the kingside and attempts to show that Black's light-squared bishop is misplaced) 13... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 14 h4 (14 g5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $hxg6$ =) 14...h5 15 g5 (15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $hxg4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ =) 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ (16... $\mathbb{W}c7$?! 17 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ c5 18 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ cxd4 19 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ = Sandkamp-Kveinys, Vienna 1994) 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5 18 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (18 $\mathbb{W}a4$?! $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 19 d5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 20 dxe6 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ and Black takes over the initiative) 18...cxd4 19 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ e5 = Sandkamp-Winants, Bundesliga 1996/7.

d) 11 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}b3$ (12 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ – 11 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$) 12...a5 and now:

d1) 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a4 14 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ = Sevostianov-Ponomariov, Ukrainian Cht (Alushta) 1998.

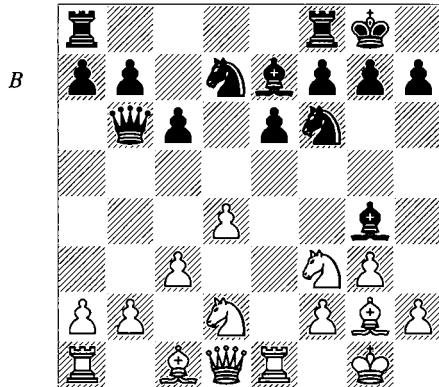
d2) 13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ and then:

d21) 13... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ gives White a slight advantage, Draško-Blagojević, Yugoslav Ch (Podgorica) 1996.

d22) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ a4 15 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ± Burmakin-Pilaj, Graz 2002.

d23) 13...a4 (this is the most consistent move) 14 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ = Yandemirov-Yakovich, Sochi 1997.

e) 11 $\mathbb{Q}ed2$ (D) and here:



e1) 11...c5 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}a6$ 13 $\mathbb{W}b3$ (13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ leaves the chances roughly level as after 14 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ the white knight is forced to retreat) 13...cxd4 and here White has a choice of recaptures:

e11) 14 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}fe5$ b5 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ bxc4 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ = gives Black a solid grip on the d5-square) 16... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ = Scherbakov-Burmakin, Omsk 1996.

e12) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}b5$ $\mathbb{W}xb5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ and now:

e121) 17... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$? ("?" according to Notkin, but I think this is the wrong rook) 18 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ (after 18... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$! $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}dd8$ {22... $\mathbb{Q}d1$? 23 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ +–} 23 $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ ± White has material equality and three dangerous connected passed pawns) 19 b4! $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ ±. White has good compensation for the exchange as Black's a-pawn will fall off shortly.

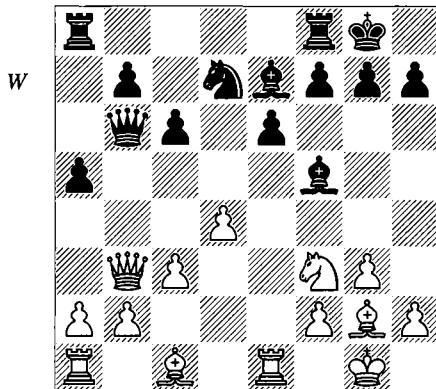
e122) 17... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 18 h3 (18 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}ab8$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 20 b4 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ a6 22 $\mathbb{Q}bd6$ $\mathbb{Q}b2$ with roughly level chances) 18... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ =.

e2) 11... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 13 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ (13...a5?! 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ = Striković-Mokry, Erevan OL 1996).

11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Black exchanges a set of knights in order to ease his defensive task.

12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 13 $\mathbb{W}e1$ a5 (D)

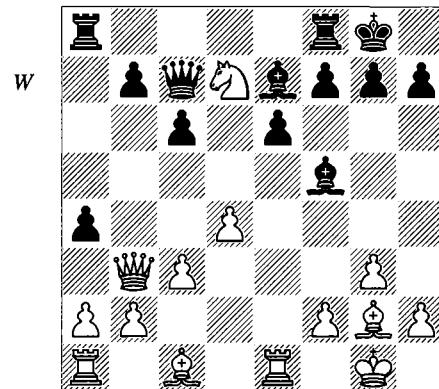


Black expands on the queenside and forces White either to retreat or to exchange queens.

14 ♜e5 a4 15 ♜xd7

White can bypass the middlegame and head straight for the endgame via 15 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 16 g4 ♜g6 17 ♜f4 (17 f4!? ♜fe8 =) 17... ♜d5 18 ♜xg6 hxg6 19 ♜xd5 (19 ♜d2 ♜fd8 =) 19...cxd5 with roughly level chances, Hug-Miles, Biel 1986. Dolmatov assessed this position as slightly better for Black, but White should be able to maintain the balance with careful play.

15...♛c7 (D)



Several games have demonstrated that the chances are balanced here:

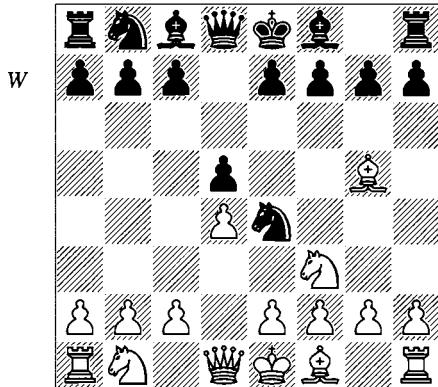
- a) 16 ♜f4 ♛xd7 17 ♜d1 ♜fd8 =.
- b) 16 ♜d1 ♛xd7 17 h4 h6 18 ♜f3 ♜a5 ½-½
Speelman-Hübner, Bundesliga 1996/7.
- c) 16 ♜c4 ♛xd7 17 ♜f4 h6 and then:
 - c1) 18 h4 ♜a5 19 b4 axb3 20 axb3 ♜fa8 21 ♜xa5 ♜xa5 = Konopka-Gyimesi, Balatonlelle 2002.
 - c2) 18 b4 axb3 19 axb3 and here:
 - c21) 19...♜d6 20 ♜xd6 ♛xd6 21 b4 ± Yandemirov-Kolesnikov, Dagomys Cht 2004.
 - c22) 19...♜fc8 20 b4 ♛d8 is equal.

16 Torre Attack: 1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗g5

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗g5

The Torre Attack is named after the Mexican Master Carlos Torre Repetto – he won several games with his namesake opening at the Moscow 1925 tournament, including the famous ‘windmill’ combination versus the 2nd World Champion Emanuel Lasker. The traditional Torre Attack move-order features a pin on Black’s knight after 1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♗g5 – if Black plays without ...d5, the opening can be found under *ECO* codes A46, A47, and A48. The Torre Attack with ...d5 is classified as *ECO* code D03, and this is the line arising from our black repertoire move-order. This particular line is ineffective for White because there is no pin on the knight and Black can gain a tempo by counterattacking the white bishop. GMs Gregory Kaidanov and Grigory Serper have both had good success on the black side of this variation – several of their instructive game fragments are included throughout this chapter.

3...♗e4 (D)



White has a choice of bishop retreats; Line B is the theoretically preferred move:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| A: 4 ♘h4 | 136 |
| B: 4 ♘f4 | 138 |

A)

4 ♘h4

The stubborn dark-squared bishop remains on the h4-d8 diagonal at the cost of neglecting the queenside. Practice has shown that the bishop is ineffective and potentially vulnerable on the h4-square.

4...c5 (D)

A sharp alternative is 4...♗d6!? 5 ♘bd2 ♘h6 6 ♘c1 and now:

a) 6...♗xd2 7 ♘xd2 ♘xd2+ 8 ♘xd2 ♘f5 (8...e6 9 e3 c5 10 c4 cxd4 11 ♘xd4 ± Sakurai-Grynszpan, Argentine jr Ch (Neuquen) 1986) 9 e3 e6 10 ♘e2 and then:

a1) 10...♗e7 11 ♘xe7 ♘xe7 12 ♘h4 ± Yusupov.

a2) 10...♗d6 11 ♘g3 h6 (11...♗xg3 12 hxg3 h6 13 ♘h4 with the idea of g4-g5 gives White a slight edge according to Yusupov) 12 ♘xd6 cxd6 13 a4! with a slight endgame edge for White, Yusupov-Wirthensohn, Hamburg 1991.

a3) 10...c5 11 c4 dxc4 12 ♘xc4 ± Andersson-Hector, Östersund 1994.

b) 6...♗c6 and here:

b1) 7 ♘xe4 ♘xc1+ 8 ♘xc1 dxe4 9 ♘d2 ♘xd4 10 ♘xe4 ♘f5 11 ♘g5 e5 with equal chances in the endgame.

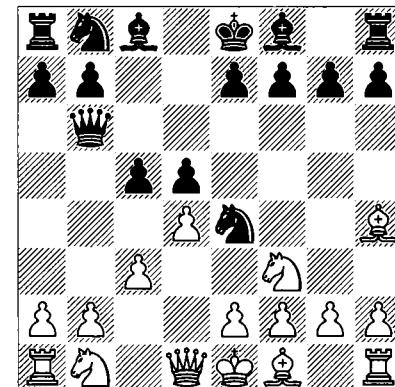
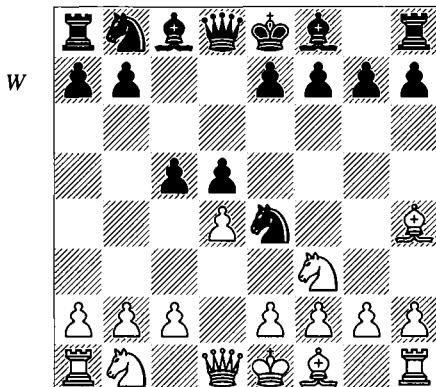
b2) 7 c3 ♘h5 8 h3 (8 ♘xe4?! dxe4 9 ♘g5 ♘xg5 10 ♘xg5 h6! 11 ♘h3 {11 ♘xe4? f5 costs a piece} 11...e5 ♕) 8...h6 9 g4 ♘g6 10 b4 (10 ♘g2!?) 10...a6 11 a4 h5 12 g5 ♘f5 with sharp play, Loginov-Karpeshov, Volgodonsk 1983.

5 e3

This has traditionally been the most popular move here, but both of the alternatives appear to be stronger:

a) 5 dxc5 and now:

a1) 5...♗a5+ 6 ♘bd2 ♘c6 7 c3 (7 e3!? e5!? was suggested by Burgess) 7...♘xc5 8 e3 and then:



a11) 8... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ (9 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 10 b4 $\mathbb{W}d6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ = Rizzitano-Sulman, Atlanta 1980) 9...e5 10 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 12 0-0 $\mathbb{W}c7$ (12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$? {Knežević-Vujosević, Yugoslav Cht (Budva) 1996}) 13 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 0-0 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 15 $\mathbb{W}a6$ ± 13 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ =.

a12) 8... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e5 10 0-0 f6 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4 (11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ =) 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (Berg-Danielsen, Danish Ch (Århus) 1992) 12...h5!?

13 $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ + (13 h3 0-0-0 =) 13...g6 14 g4 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 15

$\mathbb{g}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 0-0-0 17 fxg6 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ with

roughly level chances.

a2) 5... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 8 axb3 g6 9 e3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 10 c3 0-0 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ f6 12 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ e5 13 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 14 b4 (Gulko-Timoshchenko, Volgodonsk 1981) 14...g5!? 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ f5 16 f4 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ gives Black a comfortable game.

b) 5 c3 gives Black a pleasant choice:

b1) 5...cx d4 6 cxd4 $\mathbb{W}a5$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (7 $\mathbb{Q}fd2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 8 e3 e5 ±) 7... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and now:

b11) 8 e3 e5! 9 a3 (not 9 dx e5?? losing to 9... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 10 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$) 9...exd4 10 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ±

b12) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e5$! $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 f3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ with equality.

b2) 5... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 6 e3 and then:

b21) 6... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 7 $\mathbb{W}b3$ c4 8 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ axb6 9 $\mathbb{Q}fd2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 12 e4 e6 13 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (13...b5!?) 14 exd5 exd5 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ =) 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ = Hennig-Jacoby, German U-18 Cht 1989.

b22) 6... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 7 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ cxd4 8 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 10 gxf3 g6 11 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 12 f4 $\mathbb{W}d7$ 13 f5 0-0-0 = Abdul Rahman-Tzekurow, Duisburg U-16 Wch 1992.

b3) 5... $\mathbb{W}b6$ (D) and then:

b31) 6 $\mathbb{W}c1$ cxd4 7 cxd4 (7 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$? e5 8 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ± Baryshpolets-Perun, Kiev

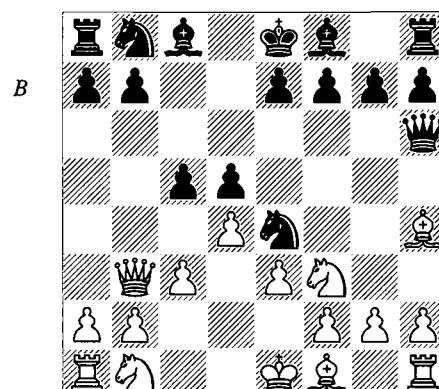
2004) 7... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 8 e3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e6 ± Fant-D.Madsen, Gausdal 1992.

b32) 6 $\mathbb{W}b3$ and here line 'b323' is Black's best chance to create imbalance – to understand why, it is helpful to review the alternatives briefly. Let's examine:

b321) 6...c4 7 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ axb6 8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ (Black should avoid 10... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4 12 e3 ± Khmelnitsky-Waitzkin, USA Ch (Modesto) 1995) 11 e4 e6 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ± Holst-P.H.Nielsen, Lyngby 1991.

b322) 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 7 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ axb6 8 e3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}fd2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$ e5 is equal, Antonov-Volkov, Antalya 2002.

b323) 6... $\mathbb{W}h6$! (the queen shift to the king-side is a very promising idea) 7 e3 (D) (White should avoid 7 $\mathbb{W}xd5$? $\mathbb{W}c1\#$ (0-1) Ellinger-Lentrodt, Bundesliga 1995/6) and here:



b3231) 7...c4 8 $\mathbb{W}b5+$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xc6$ + $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ (10 b3 b5 with roughly level chances, Gelpke-Pieterse, Dutch Cht 1987) 10... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 13 e4 e6 =.

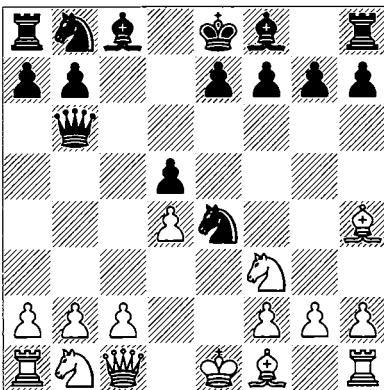
b3232) 7...e6! (Black calmly protects his d5-pawn and prepares to complete his development – the black queen is very effective on the kingside because it exerts pressure on White's kingside pieces; meanwhile, the white queen is not accomplishing anything along the b-file) 8 ♕b5+ ♖c6 9 0-0 (9 ♔bd2?! ♖xd2 10 ♔xd2 ♕d7 is fine for Black) 9...c4 (9...♕d7?! also looks reasonable) 10 ♕c2 ♕d6 11 ♕g3 ♖xg3 12 hxg3 0-0± Wijesundara-Barsov, Dubai 1996. Black's king is safe and he has acquired the bishop-pair.

5...♗b6 6 ♕xb1

White also has problems after 6 ♖c3 ♕xb2!:

- a) 7 ♖xd5 ♖c3 8 ♖xc3 ♕xc3+ 9 ♖d2 cxd4 ± Jagubov-Vaulin, St Petersburg 1999.
- b) 7 ♕b5+ ♕d7 8 ♕xd7+ ♖xd7 9 ♖xd5 ♖c3 10 ♖xc3 ♕xc3+ 11 ♖e2 cxd4 12 exd4 ♕c8 ± Pospelov-Kallai, Kobanya 1992.

6...cxd4 7 exd4 (D)



7...g5!

This aggressive thrust has scored well for Black – the more popular alternative is 7...♖c6 8 c3 ♕g4 9 ♖e2 ♕c8 10 ♖bd2 g6 11 ♕c2 (11 h3 ♕xf3 12 ♖xf3 ♕g7± Toh-Dreev, Moscow OL 1994) 11...♕h6 12 ♕b3 (I.Rogers-Sadvakasov, Bali 2000) 12...♕xb3 13 axb3 ♖xd2 14 ♖xd2 ♕xe2 15 ♕xe2 ♕f4 with a level endgame.

8 ♕xg5

Or:

- a) 8 ♕xg5? ♕h6 9 ♕f4 f6 10 ♖h3 ♕xh3 11 ♕xh6 ♕xh6 12 gxh3 ♕c1 ± R.Phillips-Szabolcsi, Berlin ECC 1996.
- b) 8 ♕g3? g4 9 ♕xb8 ♕xb8 10 ♕f4 ♖d6 11 ♖bd2 gxh3 12 ♕b1 ♕f5 0-1 Mathieu-Skripchenko, French Cht 2002.

8...♖xg5

Now:

a) 9 ♕xg5 ♕xb2 10 ♕xd5 ♕c1+ (Burgess gives 10...♕xa1!? 11 ♕b5+ ♕d7 12 0-0 ♕b2 ±) 11 ♖e2 ♖c6 12 ♕c4 ♕g7± Houriez-Kallai, Dubai 1986.

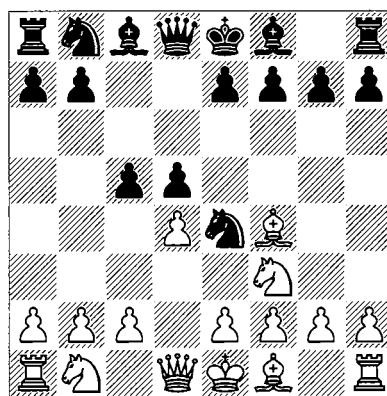
b) 9 ♕xg5 ♕h6 10 f4 (Legall-Prats Rodriguez, Cannes 2000) 10...f6 11 ♖f3 ♕xf4 12 ♖bd2 (12 ♕xf4 ♕xb2 →) 12...♖c6 ±.

B)

4 ♕f4

This is the best choice; White's bishop keeps an eye on some important central squares.

4...c5 (D)



5 e3

White can also bolster his centre from the left with 5 c3 ♕b6 6 ♕b3 cxd4. Now:

a) 7 ♖xd4 and then:

a1) 7...♕d8 and here:

a11) 8 ♕xb8 ♕xb8 9 ♖c6 (White wins material as pointed out by Burgess, but Black has some unexpected resources) 9...♖c5! 10 ♖xd8 (10 ♕b5? ♕d7 11 ♕xc5 bxc6 ±; 10 ♕b4 ♖a6 11 ♖xd8 ♖xb4 12 ♖xf7 ♕xf7 13 cxb4 e5 14 a3 ♕e7 and Black's bishop-pair compensates for the pawn) 10...♖xb3 11 axb3 (11 ♖xf7 ♕xa1 12 ♖xh8 b5 is a total mess) 11...♕xd8 12 ♕xa7 ♕f5 13 ♕a3 ♕c7 and Black's bishop-pair compensates for the pawn.

a12) 8 e3 e6 (8...f6? 9 ♕b5+ ♕f7 10 ♕c7! ± Dizdar-Gelfand, Halle 1987) 9 ♖b5 (9 ♕xb8?! ♕xb8 10 ♖c6 ♕f6 11 ♖xb8 ♕xf2+ 12 ♕d1 ♕d6 with a promising attack) 9...♕a6 10 f3 ♕ec5 11 ♕d1 f6 with equal chances.

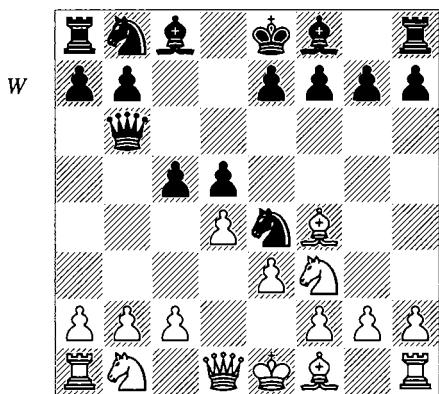
a2) 7...♜f6 and now:

a21) 8 ♜e3 e6 9 ♜b5 ♜a6 10 ♜xa7 ♜xa7!? (10...♜ac5 11 ♜b6 ♜d7 12 ♜b5 ♜d6, with compensation for the pawn) 11 ♜xa7 ♜ac5 12 ♜xc5 ♜xc5 (now that's pressure on the f2-square!) 13 ♜d2 ♜xf2+ 14 ♜d1 ♜xd2 15 ♜xd2 0-0, and Black a promising attack in return for the exchange.

a22) 8 e3 e6 9 ♜b5+ ♜d7 with equal prospects.

b) 7 ♜xb6 axb6 8 ♜xd4 (8 cxd4 ♜c6 9 e3 ♜b4 is fine for Black) 8...f6 9 ♜b5 ♜a6 10 f3 ♜ec5 with sharp play, Kotov-Law, London 1977.

5...♜b6 (D)



6 ♜c1

White quickly runs into trouble after most of the alternatives:

a) 6 ♜xb8? ♜xb2 7 dxc5 ♜xb8 (Tataev-Serper, Kemerovo 1995) 8 ♜bd2 ♜c3 9 ♜c1 ♜xc1+ 10 ♜xc1 e6 ±.

b) 6 dxc5? ♜xb2 7 ♜e5 ♜b4+ 8 ♜bd2 ♜c6 9 ♜b1 ♜a5 10 ♜b5 a6 11 ♜xc6+ bxc6 is much better for Black, Bazan Solera-Llorente Fernandez, Asturias 2000.

c) 6 ♜bd2? ♜xd2 (6...♜xb2 7 ♜b1 ♜xa2 ±) 7 ♜xd2 (White also loses a pawn after 7 ♜xd2 ♜xb2 8 ♜d1 c4 ±) 7...cxd4 8 exd4 ♜xd4 9 ♜xb8 ♜xb8 10 ♜b5+ ♜d8 11 0-0 e6 ± Shtern-Serper, Dallas 1996.

d) 6 ♜c3 ♜a5 7 ♜b5+ ♜c6 8 0-0 ♜xc3 9 ♜xc6+ bxc6 10 bxc3 ♜xc3 ±. White does not have adequate compensation for the pawn.

e) 6 b3 ♜c6 7 c3 cxd4 8 exd4 ♜g4 9 ♜e2 e6 10 0-0 ♜e7 =.

6...cxd4

Black can also continue developing with 6...♜c6 7 c3 ♜f5 8 ♜e2 e6 9 ♜bd2 ♜e7 10 0-0 0-0. Now:

a) 11 h3 ♜ac8 (½-½ Gyorkos-P.Kiss, Budapest 1993) 12 ♜e5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xe5 f6 14 ♜f4 (Agababean-Dražić, Novi Sad 1989) 14...♜c6 with equal chances.

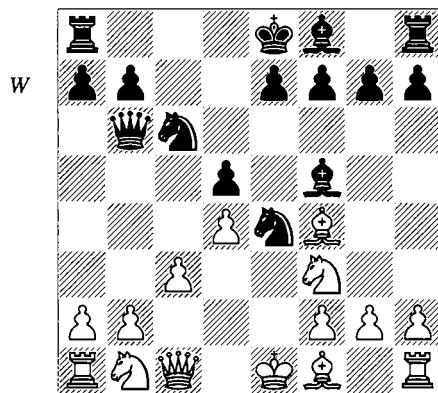
b) 11 ♜e5 ♜fd8 12 ♜e1 ♜ac8 13 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 14 ♜xc6 bxc6 (14...♜xc6 15 ♜d2 b5!?) 15 ♜d2 ♜d7 is equal, Richter-Tischbierek, Biel 1993.

c) 11 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 12 ♜d2 ♜ac8 (½-½ F.Portisch-Hajnal, Harkany 2000) 13 ♜e5 ♜xe5 (13...♜fd8 14 f3 ♜g6 {14...♜f5!?) 15 ♜xg6 hxg6 = Soppe-Tempone, Cordoba 1990) 14 ♜xe5 ♜fd8 = B.Cetković-S.Cvetković, Belgrade 2003.

7 exd4 ♜c6 8 c3

White should avoid 8 ♜c3?! (Høi-Bang, Tåstrup 1994) 8...♜f5 9 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 10 c3 ♜xf3 11 gxf3 e6 ±, when Black has the superior pawn-structure.

8...♜f5 (D)



9 ♜e2

9 ♜bd2 ♜c8 and now:

a) 10 ♜e2 - 9 ♜e2 ♜c8 10 ♜bd2.

b) 10 ♜h4? ♜d7 11 ♜d3 e5! (Black develops a raging initiative after this move) 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xe4 dxe4 14 dxe5 ♜e7 15 ♜xe4 ♜c4! 16 ♜f4 ♜c6 17 f3 g5 ± Mohr-Kaidanov, Balatonbereny 1987.

c) 10 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 11 ♜g5 ♜g6 12 ♜d2 e6 13 ♜e2 ♜e7 14 0-0 0-0 = Kmiecik-De Groot, ICCF e-mail 1998.

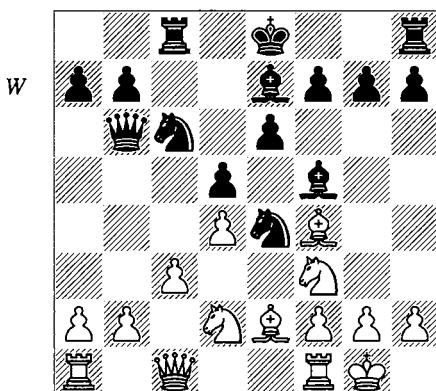
9...♜c8 10 ♜bd2 e6 11 0-0

Alternatives:

a) 11 $\mathbb{Q}h4?$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ → Benz-Kroencke, corr. 1988.

b) 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 12 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 13 0-0 – 11 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d2$.

11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D)



12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

White has some reasonable alternatives here:

a) 12 $\mathbb{W}d1$ and then:

a1) 12... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $dxe4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ = Blandnet-Summerscale, Orange 1993.

a2) 12...0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ = Dzagnidze-Khukhashvili, Georgian wom Ch (Tbilisi) 2002.

b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ and here:

b1) 12... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}e3$ (16 $\mathbb{W}g5$ 0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ = J.McDonald-Nickoloff, Canadian Ch (Hamilton) 1994) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ (16...0-0 17 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ =) 17 $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 0-0 with equal chances, Voloshin-Haba, Czech Ch (Zlin) 1998.

b2) 12... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (an interesting attempt to keep pieces on the board) 13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxcc6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (16 $h3!?$) 16...0-0 = Okrajek-Magerramov, Bad Wörishofen 1993.

b3) 12...0-0 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d2$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ = Molina-Reculat, Vicente Lopez 2004) 14... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ with a balanced game, Cepon-Palac, Nova Gorica 1996.

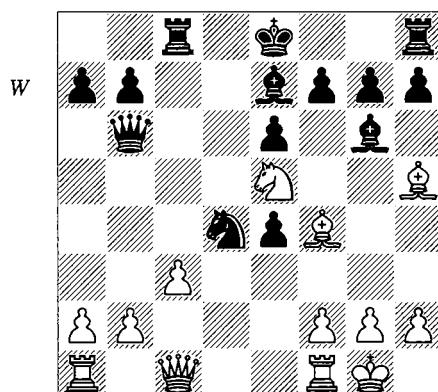
12... $\mathbb{Q}dx4$

The solid choice is 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d2$ 0-0 with equality, J.Rodriguez Gonzalez-L.Perez, Madrid 2003.

13 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$!?

This move initiates some interesting tactical complications. Black can also play the conservative 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 0-0 with equal chances.

14 $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ (D)



Now:

a) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xg6?$ $\mathbb{Q}e2+$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!!$ (= Kaidanov) 20 $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ ♦.

b) 15 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xh5$ $g6$ 17 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $f6$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ ($\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 19 $cxd4$ $fxe5$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 0-0 =) 18... $fxe5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 0-0 20 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 21 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ with equal chances, Murshed-Kaidanov, Calcutta 1988.

17 Colle System: 1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 e3

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 e3 e6 4 ♖d3

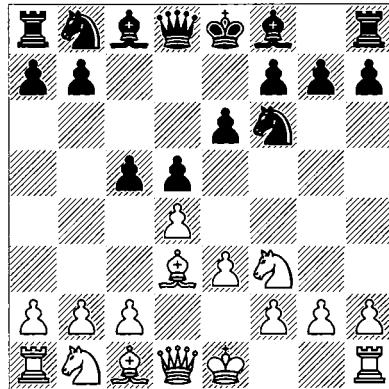
The Colle System is named after the Belgian Master Edgard Colle. Although he was not the first to employ this development scheme, he deserves full credit for crafting the opening into a comprehensive system. Colle won many impressive games with his namesake opening during the 1920s, and a large number of these attacking gems retain their instructive value today. The traditional Colle System strategy for White is to develop his minor pieces quickly while erecting a c3-d4-e3 pawn wedge around the light-squared bishop (the ‘Colle bishop’). After completing his development, White will work to maximize the range and power of the Colle bishop by playing moves such as ♘e5, f4, ♘f3-h3 or g4. If Black defends indifferently, he can quickly be overrun by a devastating kingside attack. An alternative strategy for White is to aim for a central e4 pawn-break to utilize his slight development edge; this is often preceded by the dxc5 pawn capture so as to avoid incurring an isolated d-pawn. Black’s strategy is to neutralize the Colle bishop by quickly developing and aiming for the ...e5 pawn-break. This will enable Black to complete his development and nullify White’s plans for controlling the centre. Black’s goal is to contest the centre before White can initiate a kingside attack.

White can play 4 c4, when 4...dxc4 5 ♖xc4 c5 brings us back to QGA territory. 6 ♖e2 is covered in Chapter 5 (Furman Variation), while 6 0-0 a6 is the Classical Variation (Chapters 6-11).

4...c5 (D)

White must choose between the Queen’s Indian Attack (Line A) or the traditional Colle System (Line B):

A:	5 b3	141
B:	5 c3	143

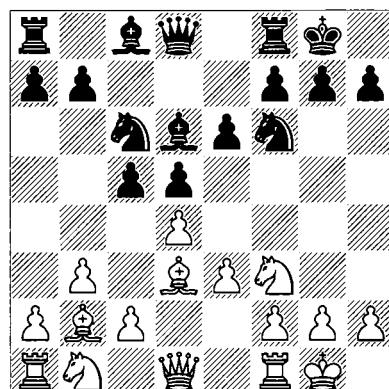


A)

5 b3

This is the characteristic move of the Queen’s Indian Attack. White’s idea is to play a Queen’s Indian Defence with an extra tempo. The Russian Grandmaster Artur Yusupov is the leading exponent of this line and he has contributed many innovative ideas to White’s set-up.

5...♘c6 6 ♖b2 ♖d6 7 0-0 0-0 (D)



8 ♘bd2

Alternatives:

a) 8 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (White occupies the centre in anticipation of developing a kingside attack; however, Black is able to employ a standard equalizing manoeuvre) 8... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 9 f4 cxd4 10 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ (the bishop is unable to retreat because of the pressure against the c2-pawn) 11... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 12 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ = I.Rabinovich-Bogoljubow, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1924.

b) 8 c4 b6 and now:

b1) 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 cxd5 exd5 (10... $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$) 11 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ = Model-Botvinnik, Leningrad Ch 1926.

b2) 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 $\mathbb{W}e2$ a5 11 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ a4 = Pira-Schekachev, Evry 2001.

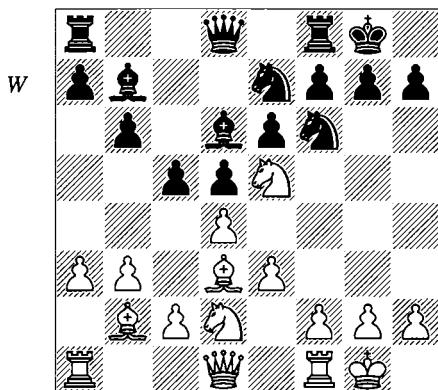
b3) 9 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 cxd5 exd5 11 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (11 dxc5 bxc5 12 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ d4!?) 13 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 14 exd4 a6 with sharp play, Petrosian-Razuvaev, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1983) 11... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 13 a3 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ with equal chances, Dizdar-Kovačević, Croatian Cht (Pula) 1993.

c) 8 a3 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 9 c4 (9 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ gxf6 = Kuijf-Borm, Amsterdam/Arnhem 1984) 9...cxd4 10 exd4 e5 11 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 16 $\mathbb{W}c2$ dxc4 = Kurajica-Razuvaev, Oberwart 1991.

8...b6 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 a3

10 f4 cxd4 11 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 13 c3 (or 13 c4 {Schinzel-Fronczek, Poznan 1965} 13...dxc4 14 bxc4 $\mathbb{W}c7$ =) 13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 15 a4 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ = Yusupov-Chuchelov, French Cht (Evry) 2004.

10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ (D)



Black repositions the knight for kingside defence.

11 f4

Or:

a) 11 $\mathbb{W}f3$ and then:

a1) 11...a5 (the sharp choice, but it is safer for Black to stabilize the centre before beginning queenside operations) 12 $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (safer is 12... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ hxg6 14 dxc5 bxc5 =) 13 dxc5! (13 f4 cxd4 {1/2-1/2 Vezzosi-Draško, Arco 2003}) 14 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ with equality) 13... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ (13...bxc5 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4 15 $\mathbb{Q}dc4$ is advantageous for White) 14 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ with a slight advantage for White.

a2) 11... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ (the solid choice) 12 $\mathbb{W}h3$ cxd4 (12... $\mathbb{W}e7$?; 12...a5 – 11...a5 12 $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$) 13 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ hxg6 14 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 15 g3 a5 (15... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ {Ortwein-Montalta, IECG e-mail 1998}) 16... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ =) 16 a4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ = Bagirov-Kochiev, Leningrad 1989.

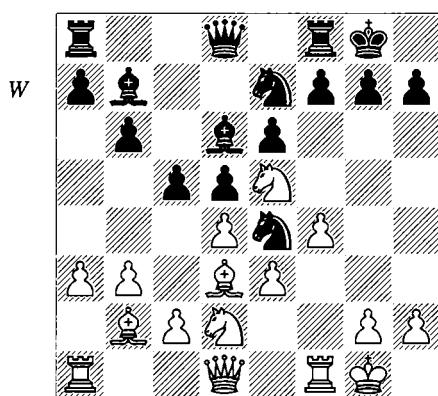
b) 11 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ and here:

b1) 12 h3 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4 14 $\mathbb{Q}ec4$ $\mathbb{Q}h2+$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ b5 16 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$? cxd4 17 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ {17 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 dxe5 $\mathbb{W}xc2$?} 17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 18 exd4 f5 {18... $\mathbb{W}xc2$ is also strong} 19 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}xc2$? Goletiani-Kaidanov, Philadelphia 2000) 16... $\mathbb{W}xa5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ cxd4 18 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ with equal chances.

b2) 12 c4 cxd4 13 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ (13...dxc4!?) 14 f4 $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ = Zsu.Polgar-Psakhis, Amsterdam 1990.

b3) 12 f4 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4 14 $\mathbb{Q}dc4$ (Danner-Anka, Budapest 2004) 14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ with equal chances.

11... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (D)



Now:

a) 12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ f6 13 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 14 $\mathbb{W}h3$ (Balta-zar-Russek, Merida 2003) 14...cxd4 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and Black has a slight edge.

b) 12 c3 f6 13 ♜g4 (Catteau-Vallin, French Cht (Noyon) 2001) 13...♜f5 14 ♜xe4 dx4 15 ♜c4 ♜d5 with equal chances.

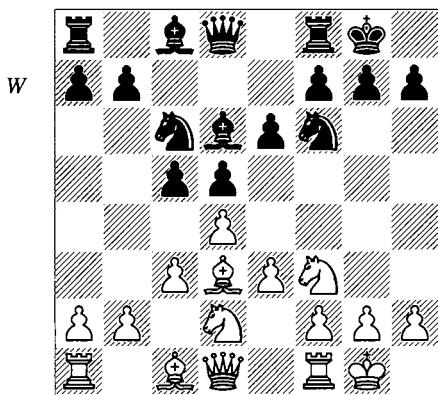
c) 12 ♜e2 f6 13 ♜f3 ♜c8 with equality, Bruzon-Timman, Curaçao rpd (4) 2005.

B)

5 c3

This is the traditional Colle System move – White reinforces his centre and prepares to complete his development. Note that White is actually playing the aggressive Semi-Slav with an extra tempo.

5...♜c6 6 ♜bd2 ♜d6 7 0-0 0-0 (D)



Now White has several options, of which Line B2 is the most important.

B1: 8 ♜e1 144

B2: 8 dxc5 145

White has some minor alternatives:

a) 8 ♜e2 (White's queen tends to become somewhat exposed here) 8...♛c7 and now:

a1) 9 e4 and then:

a11) 9...cxd4 10 cxd4 e5 11 exd5 (11 dxe5 ♜xe5 12 exd5 ♜g4 13 h3 ♜h5 =) 11...♜xd4 12 ♜xd4 exd4 13 ♜e4 ♜xd5 (13...♜h2+ 14 ♜h1 ♜xe4 15 ♜xe4 f5 16 ♜xd4 ♜e5 =) and here:

a111) 14 ♜h5?! f5 15 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 16 ♜h4 (16 ♜e1 ♜e6 =) 16...♜b4 17 ♜f4 ♜d5 = Réti-Spielmann, Vienna (3) 1921. White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

a112) 14 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 15 ♜e4 ♜f6 16 ♜h4 (White has “some compensation for the pawn, but nothing more” according to Bronznik) 16...♜e8 17 b3!? ♜d5 (now the position peters

out into equality) 18 ♜b2 ♜f5 19 ♜xf5 ♜xf5 20 ♜xd4 ♜e4 21 ♜d3 ♜ae8 =.

a12) 9...dxe4 10 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 11 ♜xe4 f5 12 ♜h4 (Mongeau-Leger, Quebec wom Ch 1993) 12...cxd4 13 cxd4 ♜e7 =.

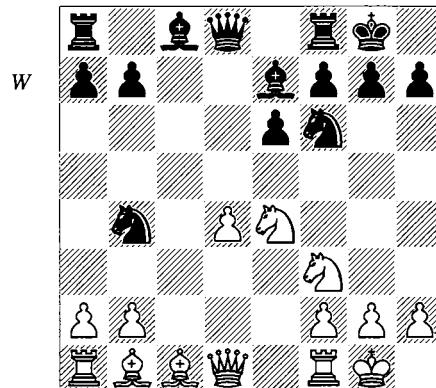
a2) 9 h3 e5 10 dxe5 ♜xe5 11 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 12 ♜f3 c4!?(12...♜d6 13 b3 ♜e6 14 c4 ♜e4=) 13 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 14 ♜c2 ♜f5 and now:

a21) 15 ♜xf5 ♜xf5 16 ♜d1 ♜fe8 is slightly better for Black since White has difficulty developing his dark-squared bishop.

a22) 15 e4 (Dalponte-Khenkin, Arco 1998) 15...♜xe4! 16 f3 ♜h5 17 g4 ♜d3! (Black saves the piece and remains a pawn ahead) 18 ♜xd3 cxd3 19 ♜g2 ♜e5 20 ♜f2 ♜fe8 =.

a3) 9 dxc5 (this is White's safest choice) 9...♜xc5 10 e4 – 8 dxc5 ♜xc5 9 e4 ♜c7 10 ♜e2.

b) 8 e4 (Black is well-prepared for this opening of the centre) 8...cxd4 9 cxd4 ♜b4 10 ♜b1 dxe4 11 ♜xe4 ♜e7 (D) and now:



b1) 12 a3 ♜bd5 13 ♜d3 (13 ♜g3?! b6 14 ♜e2 ♜b7 15 ♜d1 ♜c8 =) Vlatković-Perunović, Sozina 2004) 13...♜xe4 14 ♜xe4 15 ♜f6 15 ♜d3 16 ♜g5 g6 =.

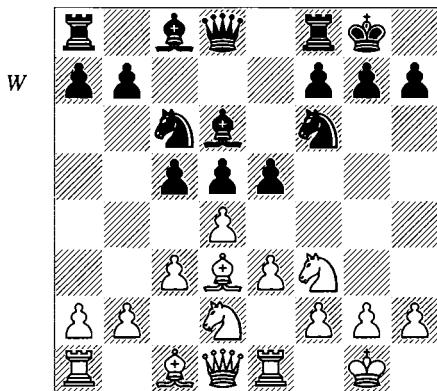
b2) 12 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 13 a3 and then:

b21) 13...♜c6 14 ♜e3 ♜d6 (14...♜d5?! 15 ♜d3 ♜h5 =) 15 ♜e4 ♜d7 (15...♜d8?! 16 ♜c2 h6 17 ♜fd1 ♜e7 18 ♜ac1 ♜d5 =) 16 ♜c2 h6 17 ♜ad1 ♜ac8 with roughly level chances, Khalifman-Yudasin, Tilburg 1994.

b22) 13...♜d5 (this is more consistent with the plan initiated by 9...♜b4) 14 ♜d3 g6 15 ♜h6 ♜g7 16 ♜xg7 (16 ♜g5 ♜d6 17 ♜e1 b6 = Cobb-B.Lalić, British League (4NCL) 1999/00) 16...♜xg7 17 ♜a2 b6 = Borngässer-Beliavsky, Groningen jr Ech 1970/1.

B1)

8 ♜e1 e5 (D)

**9 e4**

Black has no problems after 9 dxe5 ♜xe5 10

♜xe5 ♜xe5:

a) 11 ♜c2 (Lane wrote "This seems to be the forgotten move of the line – and ensures that White is OK"; however, I think White's position is too passive because he has conceded the centre to Black) 11...♜e8 12 e4 c4! (this is an improvement over the cooperative 12...dxe4? 13 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 14 ♜xe4 = Yabra-Ribeiro, Siegen OL 1970) 13 ♜f1 (13 ♜e2 ♜xe4 14 ♜xe4 ♜f5 15 ♜f3 dxe4 16 ♜xe4 ♜xh2+ 17 ♜xh2 ♜h4+ 18 ♜g1 ♜xe4 ±) 13...♜xe4 (13...♜d6 also favours Black) 14 ♜xe4 ♜f5 15 f3 dxe4 16 fxe4 ♜c7 ±. White's kingside pawns are vulnerable.

b) 11 ♜f3 ♜c7 12 c4 and here:

b1) 12...dxc4 13 ♜xc4 ♜e4 14 ♜c2 (14 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 15 b3 ♜a5 16 ♜f1 ♜c3 17 ♜b1 ♜g4 favours Black according to Lane) 14...♜e7 15 ♜d3 ♜f5 16 b3 ♜ad8 17 ♜b2 ♜g6 18 ♜ed1 ♜d5 19 ♜c4 (safer than 19 ♜e2 ♜h5 with attacking chances for Black, Sarana Hungeling-Maksimenko, Münster 1996) 19...♜fd8 20 ♜e2 with equality.

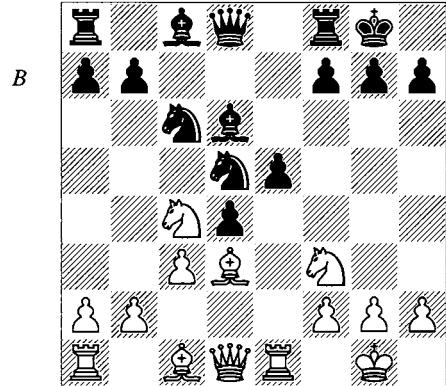
b2) 12...♜e6 13 ♜c2 ♜g4 14 ♜g5!? h6 (14...♜d6!?) 15 ♜h7 ♜xh7 16 ♜xh7+ ♜h8 17 ♜f5 ♜xf5 18 ♜xf5 ♜d6 ± Metrangolo-Inkiov, Montecatini Terme 2001.

9...cxd4 10 exd5 ♜xd5 11 ♜c4 (D)

11...h6

Black can also play the greedy 11...dxc3:

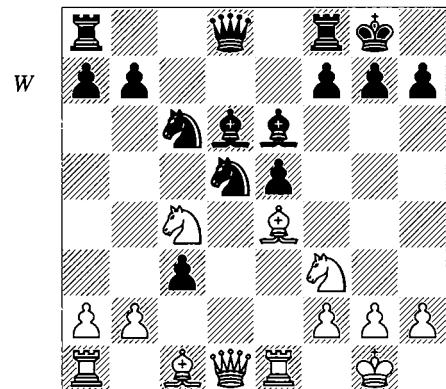
a) 12 ♜xh7+?! ♜h7 13 ♜xd5 and then:



a1) 13...♜b4? 14 ♜g5+ ♜g6! (stronger than Lane's 14...♜g8? 15 ♜e4 g6 16 ♜h4 with a winning attack for White) 15 ♜xe5+ ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 ♜d6 17 ♜xd6+ ♜xd6 18 bxc3 ♜f5 with good drawing chances despite White's extra pawn.

a2) 13...cxb2! (this move turns the tables) 14 ♜xb2 ♜b4 15 ♜xe5 (15 ♜ed1 ♜xd5 16 ♜xd5 f6 →) 15...♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 f6 17 ♜h5+ ♜g8 ±. White has insufficient compensation for the exchange.

b) 12 ♜e4 ♜e6 (D) and here:



b1) 13 ♜xd5? c2 14 ♜xc2 (14 ♜d2 ♜b4 ±) 14...♜xd5 15 ♜cxe5 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 ♜e8 gives Black the better chances according to Lane.

b2) 13 ♜g5! cxb2 14 ♜xh7+ ♜h8 and now:

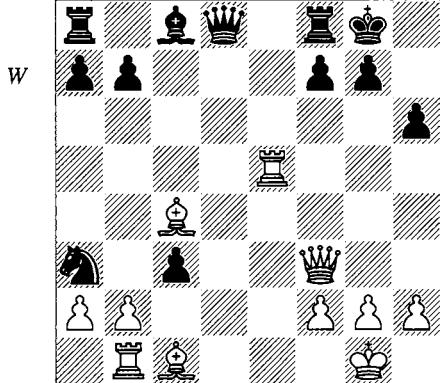
b21) 15 ♜h5 ♜f6 16 ♜h4 bxax1± 17 ♜g6+ ♜g8 18 ♜h7+ with a draw by perpetual check.

b22) 15 ♜xb2?! ♜f6 16 ♜xe6 fxe6 17 ♜g6 with reasonable compensation for the pawn.

12 ♜fxe5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xe5 dxc3 14 ♜f3 ♜b4 15 ♜c4 ♜xe5!?

This move introduces some fascinating complications that are favourable for Black. A safe alternative is 15...♜e6 16 ♜xe6 fxe6 17 ♜xc3 ♜c8 ♜ Berg-de Firmian, Gausdal 1994.

16 ♜xe5 ♜c2 17 ♜b1 ♜a3! (D)



Now:

a) 18 ♜d5 ♜b6 –+.

b) 18 bxa3 c2 19 ♜a1 ♜d1+ 20 ♜f1 ♜d4 21

♜b2 ♜xb2 22 ♜ee1 ♜e6 –+.

c) 18 ♜xh6 and then:

c1) 18...♜xb1 19 ♜g5 and here:
c11) 19...c2 20 ♜xg7+ ♜h8 21 ♜d3 c1+
22 ♜xc1 ♜xg7 23 ♜g3+ ♜h8 24 ♜e5+ ♜g8
25 ♜g3+ with a draw by perpetual check.

c12) 19...♜xg5 20 ♜xg5 cxb2 21 ♜b3 ♜a3
22 ♜d3 b1+ 23 ♜xb1 ♜xb1 24 ♜xb1 ♜e8 is slightly better for Black, since his rooks are stronger than White's queen.

c2) 18...♜xc4 19 ♜g5 ♜h7 20 ♜xc3 f6 also favours Black.

B2)

8 dxc5

The pawn exchange followed by a central advance has been established as White's most promising continuation.

8...♜xc5 9 e4 (D)

Alternatives:

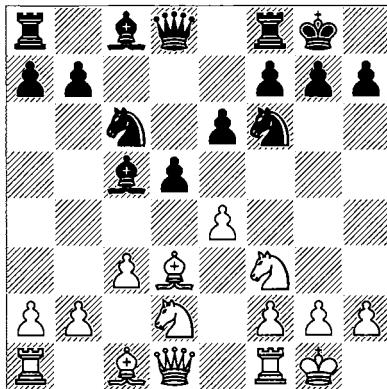
a) 9 b4 ♜d6 10 ♜b2 e5 11 e4 ♜g4 = Sergeev-Sakaev, Tallinn 2001; Black can also consider 11...♜e6!?.

b) 9 ♜e2 ♜c7 10 e4 – 9 e4 ♜c7 10 ♜e2.

9...♜c7

Now White has two options, of which Line B22 is the more critical:

B

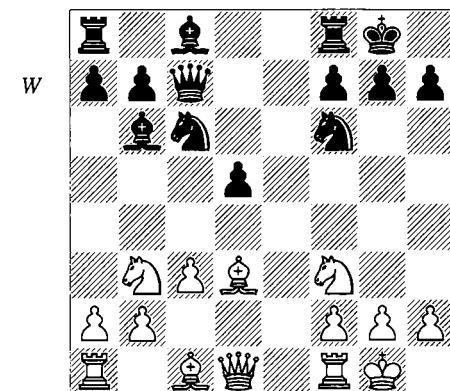


B21: 10 exd5 145

B22: 10 ♜e2 147

B21)

10 exd5 exd5 11 ♜b3 ♜b6 (D)



12 h3

This is a popular choice here, but most players would try something else if they were aware of Black's unexpected reply. White has some solid alternatives which will probably be more appealing to the Colle specialist. Let's examine:

a) 12 ♜c2 ♜g4 13 ♜d3 ♜e5 (13...♜fe8!?)
14 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 15 ♜d4 ♜fe8 = Colle-Janowski, Ghent 1926.

b) 12 ♜e1 ♜g4 13 ♜e3 ♜fe8 14 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 15 ♜xe8+ ♜xe8 16 h3 ♜h5 17 g4 ♜g6 18 ♜xg6 hxg6 with equality, Draško-Eingorn, Tallinn 1989.

c) 12 ♜bd4 ♜g4 13 ♜e2 ♜xd4 14 ♜xd4
♜xe2 15 ♜xe2 ♜xd4 16 cxd4 ♜c4 17 ♜d1

$\mathbb{E}ac8$ with equal chances, Lein-Eingorn, Moscow GMA 1989.

d) 12 $\mathbb{W}c2$ and then:

d1) 12... $\mathbb{E}g4$ 13 $\mathbb{D}h4$ was played in Colle-Tarrasch, Baden-Baden 1925, and now Black can equalize by 13... $\mathbb{E}ac8$.

d2) 12...h6 13 $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{E}g4$ 14 $\mathbb{D}fd4$ (El Gindy-Halkias, Linares open 2003) 14... $\mathbb{D}d7$ =.

d3) 12... $\mathbb{D}e5$? 13 $\mathbb{D}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ gives Black a promising kingside attack.

e) 12 $\mathbb{E}g5$ $\mathbb{D}e4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{E}g4$ 14 $\mathbb{E}f4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ = Rygaard-Lugovoi, Kallithea ECC 2002.

12... $\mathbb{E}xh3$?

This piece sacrifice introduces some fascinating complications. Black has some safer alternatives which may appeal to more conservative players:

a) 12... $\mathbb{D}e4$ and now:

a1) 13 $\mathbb{E}c2$? $\mathbb{E}xh3$! (this is even stronger now) 14 $\mathbb{D}bd4$ (the bishop is immune – Black wins material after 14 $gxh3$ $\mathbb{W}g3+$ 15 $\mathbb{E}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xh3+$ 16 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{D}g3$ 17 $\mathbb{D}h2$ {17 $\mathbb{E}xh7+$ $\mathbb{E}h8$ –+} 17... $\mathbb{E}c7$ 18 f4 $\mathbb{E}b6+$ 19 $\mathbb{D}d4$ $\mathbb{D}xd4$ 20 $cxd4$ $\mathbb{E}xd4+$ \mp) 14... $\mathbb{E}g4$ N.Cooper-J.Myers, Mingara 1999.

a2) 13 $\mathbb{D}bd4$ $\mathbb{D}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{D}xd4$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ – 12... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{D}bd4$ $\mathbb{D}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{D}xd4$ $\mathbb{D}e4$.

b) 12... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 13 $\mathbb{D}bd4$ $\mathbb{D}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{D}xd4$ $\mathbb{D}e4$ (14... $\mathbb{D}xd4$ 15 $cxd4$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 16 b3 $\mathbb{D}d7$ 17 $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{E}b5$ =) 15 $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ with equal chances. Black will follow up with ... $\mathbb{E}c7$.

13 $gxh3$ $\mathbb{W}g3+$ 14 $\mathbb{E}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xh3+$ 15 $\mathbb{D}h2$ $\mathbb{D}e5$

16 $\mathbb{E}e2$ $\mathbb{D}f3$

Black should avoid the weaker alternatives:

a) 16... $\mathbb{D}e4$? (Savova-Wiese Jozwiak, Balatonfüred wom Z 1987) 17 $\mathbb{W}xd5!$ $\mathbb{D}f3$ 18 $\mathbb{E}xf3$ $\mathbb{E}c7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h5$ –+.

b) 16...h5? 17 $\mathbb{D}d4$ (17 $\mathbb{E}f4$? {G.Szabó-Donka, Debrecen 1999}) 17... $\mathbb{D}g6$! is good for Black 17... $\mathbb{D}eg4$ 18 $\mathbb{E}f4$ $\mathbb{E}fe8$ 19 $\mathbb{E}f3$ $\mathbb{D}xh2$ 20 $\mathbb{E}g2$ (20 $\mathbb{E}xh2$? $\mathbb{E}c7$ leads to mate) 20... $\mathbb{W}g4$ 21 $\mathbb{E}xh2$ ±.

17 $\mathbb{E}f4$

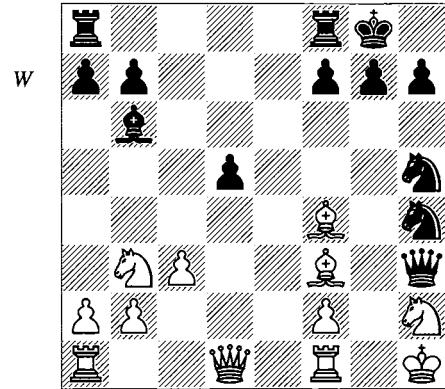
White must avoid 17 $\mathbb{E}xf3$? $\mathbb{E}c7$ 0-1 Woodhead-Down, corr. 1980.

17... $\mathbb{D}h4$ 18 $\mathbb{E}f3$

The only move as 18 $\mathbb{E}g1$? allows the crushing 18... $\mathbb{D}e4$ –+.

18... $\mathbb{D}h5$ (D)

Black has strong kingside threats, but White does have an extra piece. The key defensive



idea for White is to keep his bishop on the h2-b8 diagonal to prevent Black from creating a mating-net involving ... $\mathbb{E}c7$.

19 $\mathbb{E}e5$

This defensive resource was not mentioned by either Bronznik or Lane – I have been unable to find a clear win for Black. Other moves:

a) 19 $\mathbb{E}g3$? gives Black a choice of strong replies:

a1) 19... $\mathbb{D}xg3+$ 20 $fxg3$ $\mathbb{D}f5$ 21 $\mathbb{D}d4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 22 $\mathbb{D}xd4$ $\mathbb{D}xg3+$ 23 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{D}xf1$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ –+. Black's rook and pawns are stronger than White's minor pieces.

a2) 19... $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}f4$ 21 $\mathbb{E}xh5$ $\mathbb{E}c7$ 22 $\mathbb{D}g4$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ f5 (Lane) is crushing for Black.

b) 19 $\mathbb{D}d6$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$ and then:

b1) 20 $\mathbb{E}xd5?$ $\mathbb{D}f6$ 21 $\mathbb{E}xb7$ $\mathbb{E}fe8$ ±.

b2) 20 $\mathbb{W}xd5$? (Lane's analysis ends here with no evaluation, but I suspect this was an unfortunate typesetting issue) 20... $\mathbb{E}xd6$ 21 $\mathbb{E}xh5$ (21 $\mathbb{W}xd6$ $\mathbb{D}xf3$ 22 $\mathbb{E}ad1$ g5 –+) 21... $\mathbb{E}h6$ 22 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{D}xf3$ 23 $\mathbb{W}xh3$ $\mathbb{E}xh3$ 24 $\mathbb{E}g2$ $\mathbb{E}xh2$ + 25 $\mathbb{D}xf3$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ ±. Black has a solid extra pawn.

b3) 20 $\mathbb{E}e5$! – 19 $\mathbb{E}e5$ $\mathbb{E}ae8$ 20 $\mathbb{D}d6$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 21 $\mathbb{E}e5$. Note that each side has played one extra move via this last move-order.

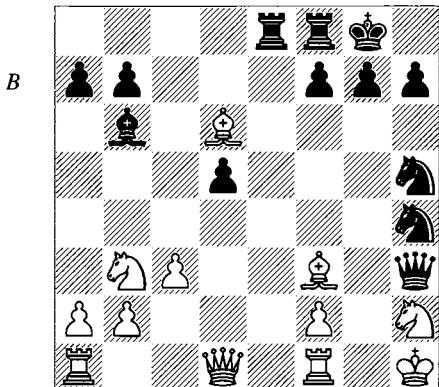
19... $\mathbb{E}ae8$

Not 19... $\mathbb{E}fe8$? 20 $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{E}xf2$ (20... $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 21 $\mathbb{E}g4$ –+) 21 $\mathbb{E}xh5$ $\mathbb{E}xg1$ (21... $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 22 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ 23 $\mathbb{D}xg4$ $\mathbb{E}xh5$ 24 $\mathbb{D}f6+$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 25 $\mathbb{D}xh5$ $\mathbb{E}xg1$ 26 $\mathbb{E}xg1$ $\mathbb{D}f5$ 27 $\mathbb{D}d4$ $\mathbb{D}xd4$ 28 $cxd4$ ±) 22 $\mathbb{E}xf7$! and then:

a) 22... $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 23 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ g6 24 $\mathbb{W}xh7+$ $\mathbb{E}e6$ 25 $\mathbb{E}xg1$ $\mathbb{E}xe5$ 26 $\mathbb{E}g3!$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ (26... $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 27 $\mathbb{W}c7$ + –+) 27 $\mathbb{E}c7+$ $\mathbb{E}f6$ 28 $\mathbb{D}g4+$ $\mathbb{E}g5$ 29 $\mathbb{E}e3$ + –+.

b) 22...♜h8 23 ♛g4 ♛xg4 24 ♜xg4 ♜e7 25 ♜xd8 ♜d8 26 c4 ±.

20 ♜d6 (D)



Now Black has two reasonable options:

a) 20...♜d8 21 ♜e5 (the idea behind this move is to draw Black's king's rook away from the defence of his f-pawn; less effective is 21 ♜xd5? ♜f6 22 ♜xb7 ♜fe8 with a strong attack) and now:

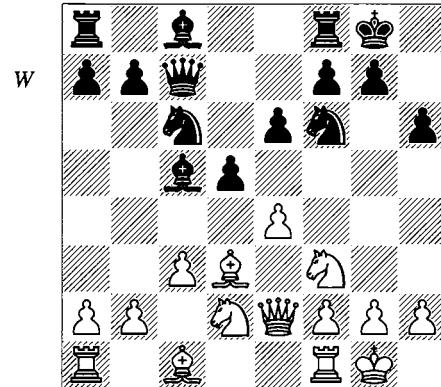
- a1) 21...♜de8 repeats the position.
- a2) 21...♜fe8 22 ♜g1! ♜xf2 and then:
 - a21) 23 ♜xh5?! ♜xg1 24 ♜xf7+ ♜f8 25 ♜xg1 ♜xe5 26 ♜f1 ♜f5 27 ♜c5+ ♜xf7 28 ♜c7+ ♜g6 29 ♜xe5 ♜g3+ 30 ♜g1 ♜xf1 31 ♜xf1 ♜g4+ 32 ♜g3 ♜f8 ±. Black's rook and pawns are more effective than White's knights.
 - a22) 23 ♜f1 ♜xf1 24 ♜gxg1 ♜xf3 25 ♜xf3 ♜g3 26 ♜d4 ♜e2 27 ♜ab1 ♜d6 28 ♜fd1 ♜f4 29 ♜d2 ♜h6+ 30 ♜g1 with roughly level chances in this complex piece versus three pawns end-game.
- b) 20...♜e6 21 ♜xd5 ♜f6 (21...♜xd6?? 22 ♜xh5 +-) 22 ♜xf8 ♜xd5 23 ♜g4 (23 ♜xd5?? ♜c7 24 f4 ♜e2 +-) 23...♜xg4 24 ♜xg4 ♜xf8 25 ♜ad1 ♜f4 26 ♜d4 ♜g6 27 ♜h2 f5 with a balanced position – Black has adequate compensation for his slight material deficit.

B22)

10 ♛e2 h6 (D)

This cunning pawn move has been played by several strong grandmasters – one of the ideas is to eliminate any attacking ideas for White involving e5, ♜xh7+, and ♜g5+.

Now:

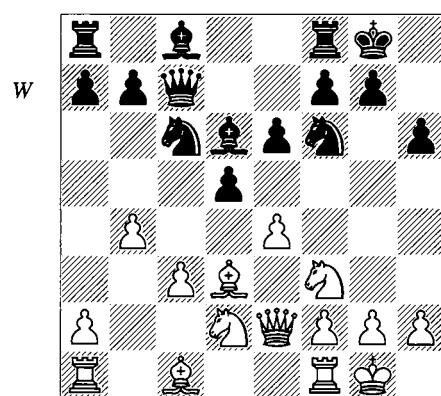


B221: 11 e5 148

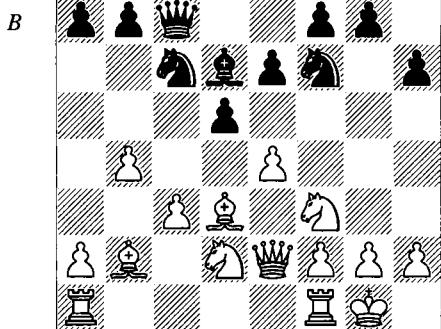
B222: 11 h3 149

White has some less critical alternatives:

- a) 11 ♜c2 ♜b6 and now:
 - a1) 12 exd5 exd5 13 ♜b3 ♜g4 14 ♜d3 ♜fe8 15 ♜bd4 (Srivachirawat-Papaioannou, Calvia OL 2004) 15...♜e4 (15...♜h5!?) 16 ♜d2 ♜ae8 ±.
 - a2) 12 a4 a6 13 g3 (White should avoid 13 a5? ♜xa5 14 e5 ♜d7 15 ♜a4 ♜c6 16 ♜e1 f5 17 exf6 ♜xf6 ± Gomez-Bluvstein, Havana 2004) 13...♜d7 14 ♜g2 ♜ad8 gave Black a comfortable game in Mamedyarov-Volokitin, Calvia OL 2004.
 - a3) 12 h3 ♜h5 13 ♜d1 ♜f4 14 ♜f1 ♜d7 with equality, Roelvaag-Johannessen, Norwegian Cht (Oslo) 2000.
 - a4) 12 ♜h1!? (the idea behind this mysterious king move is to play h3 without worrying about the reply ...♜h5-g3) 12...♜d8 13 h3 dxе4 14 ♜xe4 ♜d5 =.
- b) 11 b4 ♜d6 (D) and now:



- b1) 12 h3 and then:
- b11) 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ f5!? (15... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ dx e 4 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ with equal chances, Okuniewski-S.Ivanov, Polish Ch (Krynica) 1997) 16 exd5 (Black takes over control of the centre after 16 exf5? e5 \mp) 16...exd5 (16... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ =) 17 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ g5!? with sharp play ahead.
- b12) 12... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ dx e 4 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ = Pecot-Bujisho, French Ch 1999.
- b2) 12 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ (D) and here:



b21) 12...e5 13 a3 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 14 c4 d4 15 c5 $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ (16 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 18 g3 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ with a balanced game, Ree-Zso.Polgar, Amsterdam 1995) 16... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ (16...a5!? {Bronznik} 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ =) 17 f3 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ =.

b22) 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ dx e 4 14 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ f5!? 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ was tried in Sosa Macho-Crosa, Uruguay Ch (Montevideo) 2003. Black's powerful bishops compensate for the pawn.

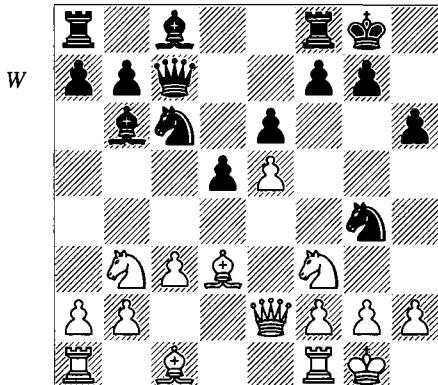
b23) 12... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ and now:

b231) 14 g3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ (15...dx e 4!?) was suggested by Bronznik – one possible continuation is 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ f5 18 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ =) 16 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ (Maki Uuro-Puranen, Tampere 1996) 16...dx e 4 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ with equal chances.

b232) 14 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ dx e 4 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ exd3 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ with an equal position, Markus-Filippov, Bad Wörishofen 2001.

B221)

11 e5 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ (D)



13 $\mathbb{Q}bd4$

White is pinned and spinned after 13 $\mathbb{Q}f4$?

f6:

a) 14 $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ fx e 5! 15 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ (not 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$?? $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0-1 Waagener-Abuchamala, Thessaloniki OL 1988) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ (15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$!?) 16 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ (16... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ {17 $\mathbb{Q}g6$? loses to 17...e4} 17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ looks fine for Black) 17 h3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ e4 20 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ is much better for Black, Danner-Novikov, Graz 1996.

b) 14 $\mathbb{Q}bd4$ $\mathbb{Q}cx e 5 and then:$

b1) 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ (A.Zhuravlev-Snatenkov, Russian U-14 Ch (Nizhny Novgorod) 1999) 15...g5! 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ f5 17 h3 f4 \mp .

b2) 15 h3 g5! 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ 17 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ \mp Callaway-R.Reynolds, corr. 1982.

13... $\mathbb{Q}gx e 5$

Black should avoid 13...f6 14 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ fx e 5:

a) 16 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ \pm . "White's game is very pleasant" – Silman.

b) 16 $\mathbb{Q}g3$!? (Silman) 16... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ \pm . Black's backward e-pawn is weak.

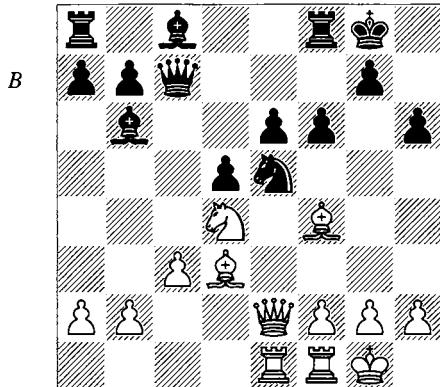
14 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ f6 16 $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ (D)

16... $\mathbb{Q}f7$

This is the sharp choice. Two alternatives deserve serious attention:

a) 16...g5 (the solid choice) 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ fx e 5 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ (the complications have given way to a balanced endgame) 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}af8$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}4f6$ 1/2-1/2 Pecot-Barlow, Argentina 1999.

b) 16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$!? 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ fx e 5 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ (the complications following 18 $\mathbb{Q}b5$!?) $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 19 b4 $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ e4 favour Black) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19



$\mathbb{R}xe5 \mathbb{Q}d6$ 20 $\mathbb{R}h5 \mathbb{Q}d7$ gives Black a comfortable endgame.

17 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{R}xe5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ $\mathbb{W}e7$
20 $\mathbb{W}h5$

Now:

a) 20... $\mathbb{W}f6$! and then:

a1) 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ begins the rook 'lift and shift' manoeuvre. Here Black can try:

a11) 21... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 22 $\mathbb{R}f3$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{R}xf3$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ with equal chances.
a12) 21... $e5$ 22 $\mathbb{R}f3$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 23 $\mathbb{R}xf8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $e4$ 26 $f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}xg6$ 28 $\mathbb{R}xe4$ $dxe4$ 29 $\mathbb{W}f4+$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 30 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 31 $\mathbb{R}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7=$.

a2) 21 $f4$! $\mathbb{Q}b6$ (21... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$! 22 $g3$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ is favourable for White) 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ (so far this is analysis by Silman) 22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (Black's first priority is to activate his light-squared bishop) 23 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ (23 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 25 $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}axe8$ is fine for Black) 23... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ with equal chances.

b) 20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ and then:

b1) 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$! $e5$ 22 $f4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 23 $\mathbb{R}ff2$ $exd4$ 24 $\mathbb{W}xd5+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ (Silman) 26 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{R}fd8$ 27 $\mathbb{R}xf6$ $\mathbb{R}xd7$ 28 $\mathbb{R}xb6$ $axb6$ =. White is struggling for a draw here.

b2) 21 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ (22 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$?? $\mathbb{W}h4+$ 23 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $exd5$ --) 22... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 23 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 24 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $e5$ 25 $\mathbb{W}xd7$ $exd4$ 26 $\mathbb{W}e6+$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 27 $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{R}xf6$ 28 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $dxc3$ 29 $bxc3$ $\mathbb{R}e8$ with an equal endgame.

b3) 21 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 23 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ with equal chances.

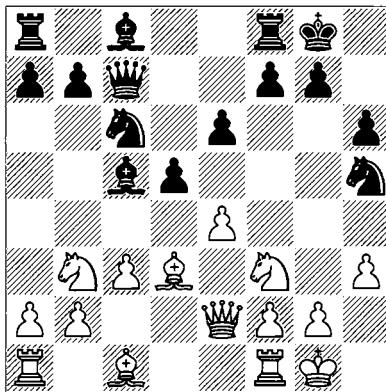
b4) 21 $g3$ $\mathbb{R}f6$ (21... $\mathbb{W}f6$!?) 22 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 23 $f4$ $b5$ 24 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $b4$ ("with mutual chances" according to Silman), Trapl-Orsag, Czech Ch 1997/8.

B222)

11 $\mathbb{h}3$ $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ (D)

White has some inferior alternatives:

- a) 12 $exd5?$ loses material after 12... $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 15 $dxc6$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$ =.
- b) 12 $\mathbb{Q}e1?$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 15 $cxd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $dxe4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ =. Black has a solid extra pawn.
- c) 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 14 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 15 $exd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ = Lisakowski-Grott, Germany e-mail 2001.



12... $\mathbb{Q}g3$

12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ has scored well in a handful of games, but White's play can be improved. Let's examine:

a) 13 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}bxsd2$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ = Stierle-Sermek, Passau 1998.

b) 13 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 14 $\mathbb{W}d2$ (14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ a5 16 $exd5$ $exd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ a4 18 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $g6$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}bd4$ =) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $dxe4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ e5 =) 15 $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $dxe4$ 17 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ b6 18 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ =.

c) 13 $\mathbb{Q}fd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 15 $exd5$ (15 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bcx6$ = Bachmann-Wells, Passau 1998) 15... $exd5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ =.

d) 13 $exd5$! and now:

d1) 13... $\mathbb{Q}g3$ and then:

d11) 14 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (14... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 15 $dxc6$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 16 $c4!$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 17 $c5$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$ and after 18 $\mathbb{W}c4!$ ± White is threatening to play $\mathbb{W}e4$ and Black's pieces are misplaced; 18 $\mathbb{W}e2$ transposing to line 'd12' is also strong) 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ (Black's advanced knight is suddenly vulnerable) 16... $exd5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ±.

d12) 14 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathcal{Q}xf1$ (14... $\mathcal{Q}e5$ 15 $d6$ +-) 15 $\mathcal{Q}xc6!$ (15 $d6$?? $\mathbb{W}d8$ 16 $\mathcal{Q}xf1$ $e5$ \mp Van Laatum-Jonkman, Groningen open 1994) 15... $\mathcal{Q}g3$ 16 $c4!$ $\mathcal{Q}f5$ 17 $c5$ $\mathcal{Q}a5$ 18 $\mathbb{W}e2$ \pm .

d2) 13... $exd5$ 14 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathcal{Q}f4$ 15 $\mathcal{Q}xf4$ (White must avoid 15 $\mathbb{W}d1$?? $\mathcal{Q}xh3+$ 16 $gxh3$ $\mathbb{W}g3+$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xh3+$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathcal{Q}g4$ +; this motif is known from certain variations of the French Defence) 15... $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 17 $\mathcal{Q}bd4$ $\mathcal{Q}d7$ with equal chances.

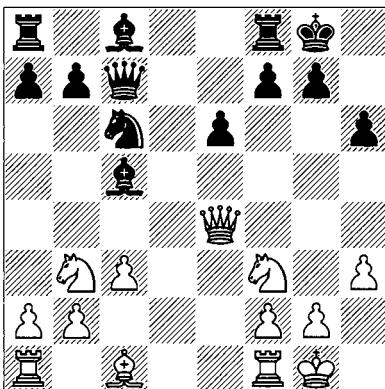
13 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $dxe4$

Black can also play 13... $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ 14 $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ $dxe4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ – 13... $dxe4$ 14 $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe4$.

However, he should avoid 13... $\mathcal{Q}xf1?$ 14 $\mathcal{Q}xc5$ $dxe4$ (14... $\mathcal{Q}e5$? 15 $\mathcal{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 16 $\mathcal{Q}xf1$ +-) 15 $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ 15 $\mathcal{Q}c5$ $\mathcal{Q}e5$ 17 $\mathcal{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 18 $\mathcal{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}h2+$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}h1+$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xg2$ 21 $\mathcal{Q}d4$ \pm .

14 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathcal{Q}xe4$ 15 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ (D)

B



Lane wrote that White “has a space advantage to make up for conceding the bishop-pair”. However, I disagree with his assessment. There is no space advantage to speak of in a position in which neither player’s pawns have advanced beyond the third rank, and any long-term advantage will belong to Black because he can utilize the bishop-pair to mobilize his extra centre pawn – White’s knights have no central anchor points. Black has a large plus-score from this position and in a well-played game the best result White can hope for is a draw with careful defence.

15... $\mathcal{Q}d6$

Black should avoid 15... $\mathcal{Q}b6$?! 16 $\mathcal{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 17 $\mathbb{W}fe1$ \pm .

16 $\mathcal{Q}bd4$

16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ is also possible:

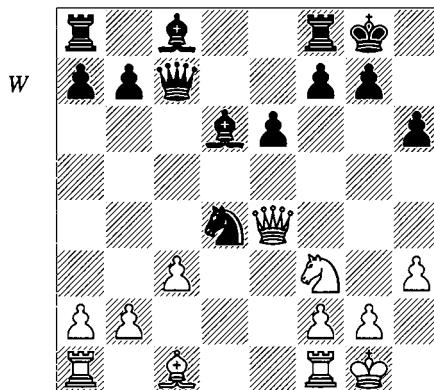
a) 16... $e5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 18 $\mathcal{Q}xc5$ $b6$ 19 $\mathcal{Q}d3$ $\mathcal{Q}b7$ with equal chances, Biaggi-Valerga, Buenos Aires 1995.

b) 16... $b6$ (Black pauses to control the c5-square and prevent White from exchanging dark-squared bishops) and then:

b1) 17 $\mathcal{Q}bd4$ $\mathcal{Q}xd4$ 18 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ (after 18... $\mathcal{Q}xd4$ $\mathcal{Q}b7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $f5$ 20 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $e5$! 21 $\mathcal{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 22 $\mathbb{W}e7$ \mp Black has the bishop-pair and a strong kingside pawn duo) 18... $\mathcal{Q}b7$ 19 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}fe8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}fe1$ $f6$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ \mp Ostrowski-S.Ivanov, Polish Cht (Mikolajki) 1991.

b2) 17 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathcal{Q}b7$ (17... $e5$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 19 $\mathcal{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{W}xf5$ 20 $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathcal{Q}e7$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ =) 18 $\mathbb{W}g4$ $f5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{W}fe8$ gives Black a slight pull because of the bishop-pair.

16... $\mathcal{Q}xd4$ (D)



17 $cx d4$

White can avoid an isolated pawn by playing 17 $\mathcal{Q}xd4$:

a) 17... $\mathcal{Q}d7$ and then:

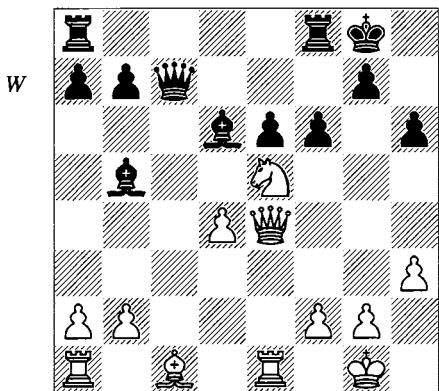
a1) 18 $a4$ $a6$ 19 $a5$ $f5$ \mp Marciniak-Röder, Le Touquet 2001.

a2) 18 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{W}ae8$ (18... $a6$!?) 19 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $a6$ 20 $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 21 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 22 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $f5$ 23 $\mathbb{W}d3$ (½-½ Markus-Muhren, Dieren 2000) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ \mp . White will soon be driven back by a well-timed ... $e5$ pawn advance – then Black’s bishops will flourish.

a3) 18 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $a6$ (18... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$!?) 19 $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ 15 (19... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$!?) 20 $\mathbb{W}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$) 20 $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}ae8$ with roughly level chances, Chemin-Coelho, Brasil 2002.

b) 17... $a6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (18 $\mathbb{Q}d1$!?) $f5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}d3$ 18... $f5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}h4$ $e5$ 20 $\mathcal{Q}b3$ $f4$ 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ \mp Kothe-W.Harris Jr, corr. 1991-3.

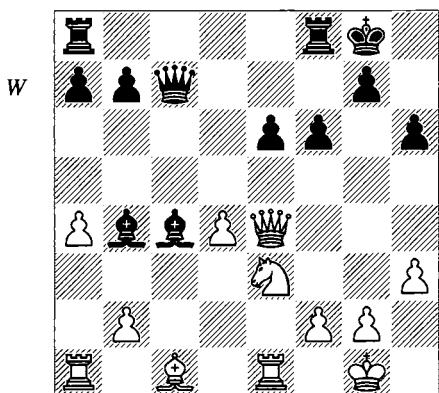
17...♜d7 18 ♜e5 ♜b5 19 ♜e1 f6! (D)



Now:

a) 20 a4?. Lane wrote that this move “disrupts Black’s set-up”, but I think Black’s play can be strengthened. Let’s examine:

a1) 20...♜a6 21 ♜g4 ♜c4 22 ♜e3 ♜b4 (D)
(the position is unclear according to Sergei Ivanov’s 1993 *Informator* notes) and then:

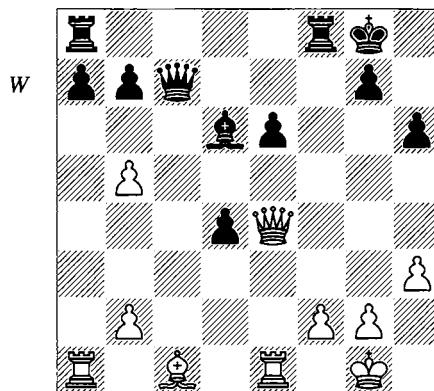


a11) 23 ♜xc4 ♜xe1 24 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 25 ♜e3 ♜fe8 26 ♜d5 ♜b4 27 ♜b5 ♜f8 ±. Black’s rook is stronger than White’s knight and pawn.

a12) 23 ♜d1 f5 24 ♜c2 ♜ac8 25 ♜d2 ♜d6 (25...♜xd2 26 ♜xd2 ♜b3 27 ♜dc1 ♜d6 =) 26 ♜dc1 ♜a6 (26...♜d5 27 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 28 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 29 ♜xd5 exd5 30 ♜a3 ♜f6 31 ♜b3 ♜b6

32 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 33 ♜c3 ♜f7 with an equal end-game) 27 ♜b3 ♜d7 with equal chances.

a2) 20...fxe5! 21 axb5 (21 dxe5? loses to 21...♜c5) 21...exd4 (D) and then:



a21) 22 b6 and here Black has two good options:

a211) 22...♜f7 23 ♜xd4 (23 ♜xe6 a6 24 ♜d2 ♜ad8 ±) 23...♜c5!! 24 ♜xc5 axb6 25 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 26 ♜e3 e5 ±. White’s rook and bishop are no match for Black’s queen.

a212) 22...♜xb6 23 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 24 ♜e4 (24 ♜xh6? ♜f6 --) 24...♜b4 ±. Black has a solid extra pawn.

a22) 22 ♜xh6 gxh6 23 ♜g6+ (23 ♜xe6+ ♜f7 --) 23...♜h8 24 ♜xh6+ ♜h7 25 ♜xe6 ♜b4 ±.

a23) 22 ♜xe6+ ♜f7 23 ♜d2 ♜xe6 24 ♜xe6 ♜c5 25 b4 ♜b6 ±. The endgame is advantageous for Black because of his strong d4-pawn combined with White’s vulnerable b5-pawn.

b) 20 ♜g6 ♜fe8 21 ♜f4 ♜c6 22 ♜e3 ♜ad8 ± D.Muse-S.Ivanov, Berlin 1993. White’s d4-pawn is vulnerable.

c) 20 ♜g4 ♜h8!? 21 ♜g6 ♜e8 22 ♜d3 ♜f7 (so far this is analysis by Sergei Ivanov) 23 ♜b3 h5 24 ♜e3 (after 24 ♜xe6? ♜a4! Black wins material) 24...♜c6 and Black has a slight pull because of the strength of his bishop-pair combined with the weakness of White’s d4-pawn.

18 Stonewall Attack: 1 d4 d5 2 e3 f6 3 d3

1 d4 d5 2 e3 f6 3 d3

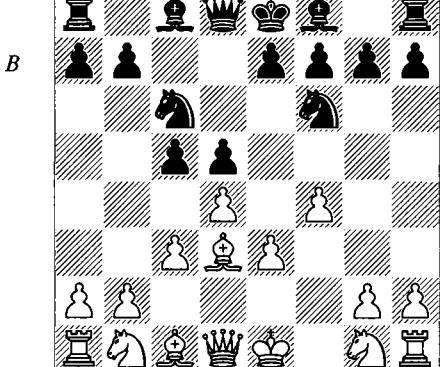
Other moves usually transpose into lines covered in previous chapters:

a) 3 c4 dxc4 4 xc4 c5 5 f3 e6 transposes to the Queen's Gambit Accepted (Chapters 5-11).

b) 3 f3 transposes into Chapter 17: Colle System.

3...c5 4 c3 c6 5 f4 (D)

White can still transpose into the Colle System with 5 f3.



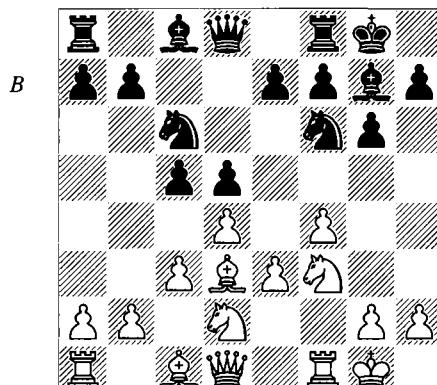
This is the characteristic move of the Stonewall Attack – White's pawn-formation establishes a tight grip over the e5-square at the cost of creating a gaping hole on e4. White's aggressive set-up was fairly popular during the early 20th century – the American champion Frank Marshall won several fine attacking games with this opening. The Stonewall Attack has a poor theoretical reputation because White's rigid pawn-structure restricts the scope of his dark-squared bishop and enables Black to develop his pieces quickly to their optimal squares – the opening rarely makes an appearance in high-level games. Despite these facts, it would be a mistake to ignore this attacking scheme because

White's potent set-up is fairly popular among low- to mid-level club players. The Stonewall Attack scores many points at the club level by inflicting a withering kingside attack upon unprepared victims, but a well-prepared defender has nothing to fear from this opening.

5... g4

This sensible move is the most popular choice here – Black develops his light-squared bishop outside the pawn-chain before reinforcing the centre with ...e6.

Black can also close the dangerous b1-h7 diagonal with 5...g6 6 f3 (6 dxc5?! e5 7 b4 g7 gives Black compensation for the pawn) 6... g7 7 0-0-0-0-8 bd2 (D) (8 dxc5?! d7 9 c2 xc5 gives Black a slight edge as White's f4-pawn is misplaced) and now:



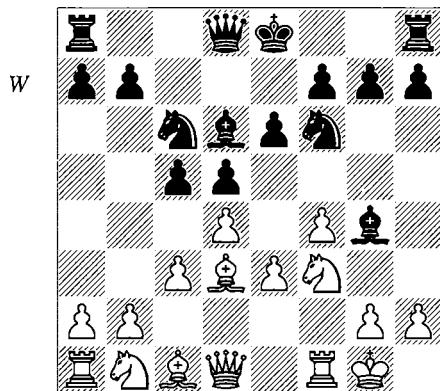
- a) 8... f5?! 9 xf5 gxf5 and then:
- 10 h1?!! (this plan is too mechanical)
10... d6 11 e5 fc8 12 g1 e6 13 g4 fxg4 14 xg4 h8 with equal chances.
 - 10 dxc5! e6 11 d4 e7 12 b4 a5 13 b3 and despite White's light-square weaknesses, Black doesn't quite have enough compensation for the pawn.
- b) 8...b6 9 e5 c7 and here:

b1) 10 ♕f3 ♘b7 11 ♘f2?! (11 g4 ♘e8 12 g5 ♖d6 =) 11...♗ad8 12 g4 (Giancotti-Ketzscher, Arco 2002) 12...♘e8 13 g5 f6 14 ♘xc6 (14 ♘xg6? hxg6 15 ♘xg6 fxg5 →) 14...♘xc6 ♗. White's dark-squared bishop will have difficulty developing.

b2) 10 ♕e1 ♘d7 11 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 12 ♘f3 ♘f6 (12...f6? 13 e4! ♘b7 {Dede-M.Braun, Hungarian Cht 2001/2} 14 f5 gives White a promising kingside attack) 13 ♘e5 ♖d6 14 ♕h4 ♘e4 with equal chances.

6 ♘f3 e6 7 0-0 ♖d6 (D)

This natural developing move also sets a positional trap.



8 ♕e1

White should avoid the careless 8 ♘bd2? cxd4! (this timely capture is an important motif to remember). Now:

a) 9 exd4 (a speculative pawn sacrifice) 9...♗xf4 10 ♘b3 ♘d6 (10...♗xc1? 11 ♕xc1 ♘h5 ♗ gives White inadequate compensation for the pawn; Black will follow up with ...♗g6 in order to neutralize White's light-squared bishop) 11 ♕e1 ♕c7 12 ♕h4 h6 13 ♘g5 (Black has a solid extra pawn, so White is compelled to play aggressively) 13...♗xf3 14 ♘xf6 (14 ♕xf3 ♘xh2+ 15 ♘h1 ♘h7 16 ♘e3 {16 ♘h7 hxg5} 16...♗d6 17 ♘af1 ♘f6 ♗ 14...♗xg2 15 ♘xg2 gxg6 16 ♘xf6 (16 ♕xf6 ♘g8+ 17 ♘f3 ♘xh2 →) 16...0-0-0 ♗.

b) 9 cxd4 (a positionally undesirable recapture) 9...0-0 10 ♕e1?! (relatively best is 10 a3 ♘c8 11 ♕e1 ♘f5 12 ♕e2 ♘b6 ♗ Bogachev-Sitnikov, Novokuznetsk 1999) 10...♗b4 11 ♘b1 (Prystenski-Tener, ICCF corr. 1976) 11...♗c8 12 ♘e5 ♘c2 13 ♘xc2 ♘xc2 ♗. This is the type

of Stonewall Attack position that White should be very careful to avoid because his powerful light-squared bishop has been exchanged and his dark-squared bishop is a miserable piece. Black has a lead in development, a potential e4-outpost, and superior minor pieces.

8...0-0

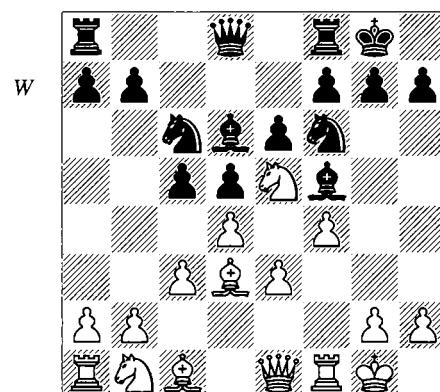
Black can also play the immediate 8...♗f5:

a) 9 ♕e2 0-0 10 ♘h1 (10 ♘e5 – 8...0-0 9 ♘e5 ♘f5 10 ♕e2) 10...♗c7?! 11 ♘e5 ♘xd3 12 ♘xd3 ♘e4 ♗ Gatt-Beliavsky, Groningen jr Ech 1970/1.

b) 9 ♘xf5 exf5 10 ♘e5 0-0 – 8...0-0 9 ♘e5 ♘f5 10 ♘xf5 exf5.

c) 9 ♘e2 ♘e4 10 ♘e5 0-0 – 8...0-0 9 ♘e5 ♘f5 10 ♘e2 ♘e4.

9 ♘e5 ♘f5 (D)



10 ♘e2

One of the important Stonewall Attack themes is the following: if the light-squared bishops are exchanged and White is unable to achieve the central e4 break, then White's dark-squared bishop is a bad piece because its mobility is severely restricted by the stonewall pawn triangle (pawns on e3, f4, and d4). In accordance with this theme, the bishop retreat is relatively best. Alternatives:

a) 10 ♘d2 and now:

a1) 10...♗xd3 11 ♘xd3 (Le Nineze-Delrieu, corr. 1995) 11...♗b6 ♗.

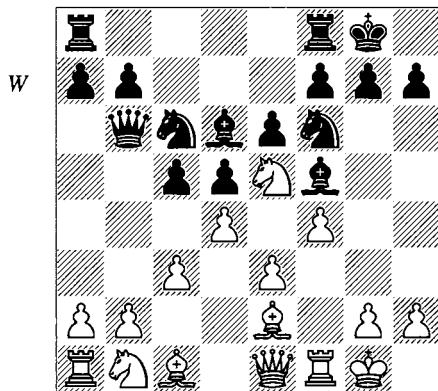
a2) 10...cxd4! 11 ♘xc6 (11 exd4 ♘xe5 12 ♘xf5 ♘xd4+ 13 cxd4 exf5 →) 11...bxcc6 12 ♘xf5 dxcc3 ♗.

b) 10 ♕e2 ♘xd3 11 ♕xd3 (Da Silva-Maia, corr. 1998) 11...♗b6 12 ♘h1 ♘fc8 is slightly better for Black.

c) 10 ♖xf5 exf5 11 ♜h4 (11 ♜d2 ♜e8 ♫ Larrea Poladura-Muniz Rubiera, Norena 2001) 11...♜e4 12 ♜h3 ♜xe5 (12...♜e7 also gives Black a slight advantage) 13 fxe5 f6 ♫ Zichichi-Volzhin, Saint Vincent 2002.

10...♝b6 (D)

Another reasonable idea is 10...♜e4 11 g4 ♜xe5 12 dx5 (12 fxe5 ♜g6 ♫) 12...♜g6 13 h4 f5 14 exf6 ♜xf6 15 h5 ♜e8 ♫ Quizon-Marrero, Calvia OL 2004.

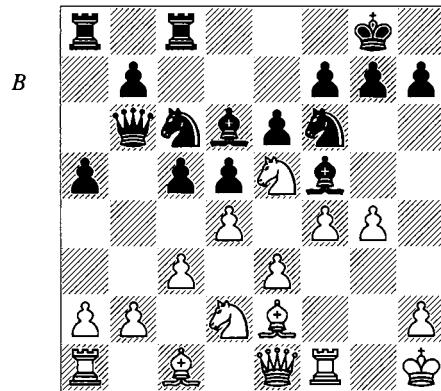


11 ♜h1

White's attack runs out of steam after the reckless 11 g4?! ♜xb1 12 ♜xb1 cxd4 13 exd4 (13 cxd4 ♜fc8 is fine for Black) 13...♜xe5 14

fxe5 ♜xe5 15 ♜g2 ♜g6 16 h4 ♜e4 17 h5 ♜e7 18 ♜d3 f5 ♫. White has inadequate compensation for the pawn.

11...♜fc8 12 ♜d2 a5 13 g4 (D)



This is White's standard method for beginning a kingside attack. Now:

a) 13...♜c2 14 g5 ♜e4 ♫.

b) 13...♜e4+!? (a finesse to nudge White's king to a more vulnerable square) 14 ♜xe4 (14 ♜g1 ♜c2 ♫) 14...♜xe4 15 ♜d3 a4 ♫. Black is developing some pressure on the queenside, whereas White's kingside attack has yet to materialize and his dark-squared bishop will have difficulty finding an active role.

19 Blackmar-Diemer Gambit: 1 d4 d5 2 e4

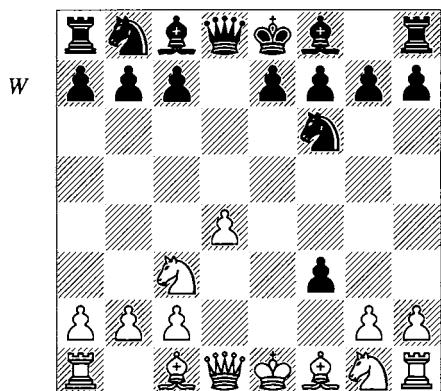
1 d4 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 ♜e3

The immediate 3 f3?! is inaccurate because of 3...e5! 4 dxe5 ♕xd1+ 5 ♔xd1 ♜c6 6 ♛f4 ♜ge7 7 ♜c3 ♛e6 ±.

3...♜f6 4 f3

The Blackmar-Diemer Gambit (BDG) is an opening enigma – Grandmasters and International Masters scoff at it, opening theoreticians ridicule it, and club players worship it. The BDG is supposed to be bad for White, but few players seem to know exactly why. Most of the published BDG games are of low quality because the opening has been played in just a handful of high-level games – the voluminous misinformation surrounding the BDG contributes to the confusion among club players.

4...exf3 (D)



White has a choice of recaptures – Line A is the more important.

A: 5 ♕xf3? 155
B: 5 ♜xf3 156

A)

5 ♕xf3?

The queen recapture is known as the Ryder Gambit and this reckless sacrifice clearly violates the laws of chess physics. A general rule of thumb applicable in many open games is that the attacker needs two or even three development tempi to justify the sacrifice of a pawn. The Ryder Gambit doesn't even come close to meeting this benchmark.

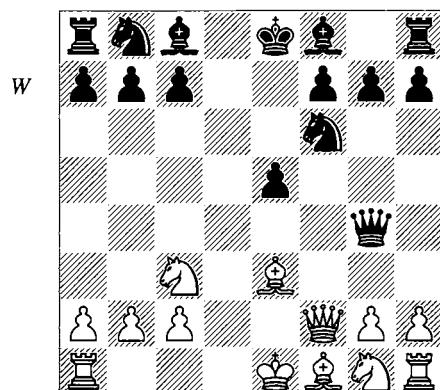
5...♛xd4 6 ♜e3

The alternative bishop development 6 ♜f4 with the idea of ♜b5 was suggested by Bagirov in *ECO* (1st ed.), but this move is refuted by 6...e5! 7 ♜ge2 ♜c5 8 ♜g5 ♜e7 9 0-0-0 ♜c6 –+, when Black has a decisive material advantage.

6...♝g4!

Black must avoid the greedy 6...♝b4? 7 0-0-0 ♜g4? 8 ♜b5! ±. This line is known as the Halosar Trap. Games featuring this sort of elementary tactical blunder are prominently featured and fawned over in BDG-land, but the Ryder Gambit quickly loses its appeal if Black plays a couple of accurate moves.

7 ♜f2 e5! (D)



Black controls the important f4- and d4-squares and prepares ...♝b4. The problem for

White is that he has obtained only a single tempo in return for his double pawn sacrifice. Black's advanced queen appears to be misplaced, but her majesty is often able to challenge White's queen or wreak havoc by shifting over to the queenside. Now:

a) 8 ♜e2 ♛f5 9 ♜g3 ♜b4 10 0-0-0 ♜xc3 11 bxc3 0-0 → A.Lane-T.Sawyer, BDG thematic corr. 1997.

b) 8 ♜d3 ♜b4 9 ♜ge2 e4 10 ♜c4 ♜e6 11 ♜xe6 ♛xe6 12 h3 ♜d5 13 0-0 ♜xc3 14 bxc3 ♜c6 → A.Prins-T.Schneider, corr. 1989.

c) 8 a3 ♜c6 9 ♜f3 ♜d6 10 0-0-0 ♛e6 11 ♜g5 ♛e7 12 ♜c4 (12 ♜h4 ♜f5 13 ♜c4 0-0 14 ♜hf1 ♜g6 →) 12...0-0 13 ♜d5 (13 ♜ce4 ♜xe4 14 ♜xe4 ♜e6 → Vermaas-Palezkis, corr. 1983) 13... ♜xd5 14 ♜xd5 h6 15 ♜e4 (Rebaudo-Sakai, Ryder Gambit e-mail 2001) 15... ♜e6 16 ♛g3 ♜xd5 17 ♜xd5 f5 18 ♜xd6 f4 19 ♛g6 cxd6 →.

d) 8 ♜f3 ♜b4 9 ♜xe5 (9 0-0-0 has been suggested as an improvement, but 9... ♜xc3 10 bxc3 ♛a4 gives Black a decisive advantage) 9... ♛e4 10 ♜c4 ♜xc3+ (10... ♜d5 is also strong) 11 bxc3 ♜e6 ("White has nothing for the pawn" – Gallagher) 12 ♜d3 ♛c6 13 ♛e2 0-0 gives Black a decisive advantage.

The Ryder Gambit is unsound and the reader should be extremely sceptical of any claims to the contrary.

B)

5 ♜xf3 e6

This is our repertoire move – the solid Euwe Defence was analysed by the 5th World Champion and former FIDE President Max Euwe. Black prepares to liquidate the centre with a timely ...c5 pawn advance. British GM Joe Gallagher recommended this line in *Beating the Anti-King's Indians* and he deserves full credit for developing several significant improvements for Black.

6 ♜g5

White also has problems after:

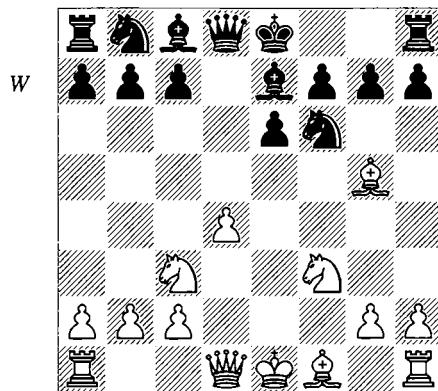
a) 6 ♜d3 c5 (6... ♜e7 7 ♜g5 – 6 ♜g5 ♜e7 7 ♜d3) 7 0-0 cxd4 8 ♜e4 ♜xe4 9 ♜xe4 (Gramlich-Drabke, Internet rpd 2005) 9...f5 →.

b) 6 ♜e5 ♜bd7 7 ♛f3 ♜e7 8 ♜g5 0-0 9 ♜d3 (Decleir-Viaene, Belgium 1988) 9...c5 and now:

b1) 10 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 11 ♛e4 g6 12 ♜xe7 ♛xe7 13 0-0 cxd4 14 ♜xd4 ♛c5 15 ♛xc5 ♜xc5 16 ♜c4 b6 →. White is a pawn down in the endgame.

b2) 10 ♛h3 g6 11 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 12 ♜xe7 (12 ♜h6 ♛e8 →) 12... ♛xe7 13 dxc5 ♜xc5 14 0-0 e5 →. White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

6... ♜e7 (D)



7 ♛d2

White has also tried the immediate 7 ♜d3, when Black has two good options:

a) 7...c5 8 dxc5 ♛a5 (8... ♜xc5 9 ♛e2 ♜bd7 10 0-0-0-0-0 11 ♜e4 gives White compensation for the pawn) 9 0-0 ♛xc5+ 10 ♜h1 ♜bd7 11 ♛e1 (the queen-lift is too ambitious – White should prefer the more restrained 11 ♛e2! 0-0-0 12 ♜e4 ♛c7 13 ♜ad1, with marginal compensation for the pawn) 11...a6 12 ♛h4 ♛b4! (this is an important defensive technique – the lateral queen opposition compels White to sacrifice another pawn) 13 ♜d4 ♛xb2 14 ♜ce2 ♜e5 (14... ♜c5 is also strong) 15 a4 ♛b6 16 ♜xf6 and then:

a1) 16... ♜xd3? 17 ♜ff1 f6 18 ♜e3 ♜e5 (18... ♜c5? 19 ♜b3 ♛c6 {19...e5 20 ♜f2 costs Black a piece}) 20 ♜xc5 ♜xc5 21 ♜h5+ 1-0 Sneiders-Breunig, BDG thematic corr. 1970-1) 19 ♜f5 ♛c7 20 ♜xg7+ ♛f7 21 ♜h5, with a strong attack.

a2) 16...gx f6! 17 ♜xf6 ♛d8 18 ♜f1 ♜xf6 19 ♜xf6 ♜g4 20 ♜xe6 ♛xf6 21 ♜c7+ ♜d8 → Gallagher.

b) 7... ♜bd7 8 0-0 (8 ♛d2 c5 9 0-0-0 cxd4 10 ♜xd4 ♜c5 is advantageous for Black) 8...c5 9 dxc5 ♜xc5 10 ♜b5+ ♜d7 and here:

b1) 11 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 12 ♜e2 (Lane quotes Leisebein's evaluation of equality here, whereas Gallagher points out that "White is completely lost!") 12...♛b6 13 ♜f2 0-0 –+. White does not have any compensation for the pawn.

b2) 11 ♜e2 ♜b6 12 ♜e3 (or 12 ♜xd7+ ♜cxd7+ 13 ♜e3 ♜c5 14 ♜xc5 ♜xc5+ 15 ♜h1 0-0 –+) 12...♜xb5 13 ♜xb5 a6 14 ♜bd4 (Ertel-Schuh, ICCF corr. 1998) 14...♜xb2 15 ♜f5 ♜f8 16 ♜d4 ♜b5 –.

7...0-0 8 ♜d3 c5 9 ♜f4

White's queen continues her journey to the optimal h4-square – the trip comes at the high cost of three tempi.

9...cx d4 10 ♜h4 (D)

Weaker alternatives:

a) 10 ♜xd4 ♜h5 and now:

a1) 11 ♜xe7 ♜xf4 12 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 and Black wins.

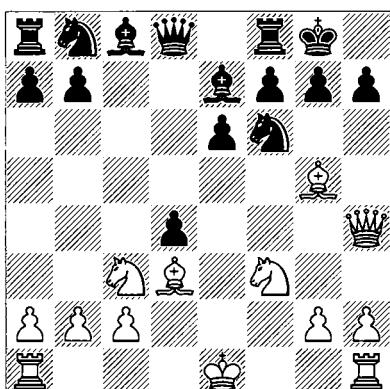
a2) 11 ♜h4 ♜xg5 12 ♜xh5 g6 13 ♜g4 e5 and Black wins – Gallagher.

a3) 11 ♜e4 f5 12 ♜xe7 fxe4 13 ♜xd8 exd3 14 ♜g5 dxc2 15 ♜xc2 ♜c6 – S.Gordon-Cody, corr. 1992. Black has a solid extra pawn.

b) 10 0-0-0 dxc3 11 ♜xh7+ ♜xh7 12 ♜xd8 cxb2+ 13 ♜xb2 ♜xd8 14 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 15 ♜c7 (Brotherton-Barber, corr. 1992) 15...♜f8 is winning for Black as he has too many pieces for the queen.

c) 10 ♜e4 ♜d5! 11 ♜h4 f5 (11...♜xg5 12 ♜exg5 ♜a5+ 13 ♜e2 h6 – Gallagher) 12 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 13 ♜eg5 h6 14 ♜h3 ♜ec6 is winning for Black.

B



Now:

a) 10...h6?! (this is Black's least appealing option, but it is instructive to examine the move in order to gauge White's attacking chances) 11 ♜xh6! and then:

a1) 11...gxh6 12 ♜xh6 ♜a5 13 ♜g5 dxc3 14 0-0 (14 ♜h7+ ♜h8 15 ♜d3+ ♜g8 is a draw) 14...♜bd7 15 ♜f3 cxb2 16 ♜af1 ♜b6+ 17 ♜h1 b1♛ 18 ♜h3! "and mate follows shortly" – Gallagher.

a2) 11...dxc3 12 ♜xg7! ♜xg7 13 ♜g5+ ♜h8 14 ♜h6+ ♜g8 15 0-0-0. "White has at least a perpetual and probably more" – Gallagher.

b) 10...dxc3? ("a little bit of fantasy" – Gallagher) 11 ♜xf6 ♜xd3 12 cxd3 ♜xf6 13 ♜c4 cxb2 and here:

b1) 14 ♜d1 ♜d8 15 0-0 b6 16 ♜e4 ♜d5 17 d4 ♜c6 18 ♜e5 ♜b7 19 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 and Black had a slight edge in Van der Wijk-Sakai, IECC e-mail 2002.

b2) 14 ♜b1 ♜c6 15 0-0 (15 d4 ♜d8 16 ♜xb2 ♜xd4 "is dangerous for White" – Gallagher) 15...♜d8 gives Black compensation according to Gallagher.

c) 10...g6! was recommended by Gallagher. Now White can try:

c1) 11 ♜e4 ♜d5 "when the possibilities of ...f6 and ...f5 should enable [Black] to defend his kingside with ease" – Gallagher.

c2) 11 ♜xd4 (I think this is relatively best) 11...♜d5 (less effective is 11...e5 12 ♜f3 ♜e8 13 0-0-0 ♜bd7 14 ♜he1, with compensation) 12 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 13 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 –. White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

The widespread view among strong players is that any Grandmaster or International Master who even dreams about playing the white side of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit should wake up and apologize. Despite its almost universal condemnation by titled players, the BDG continues to be strongly supported by a thriving community of Internet User Groups, magazine articles and e-mail theme tournaments. I don't know if these passionate gambiteers should be praised or condemned, but I do know they should be left alone.

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Now:

- 9 a4 – Chapter 10
- 9 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ – Chapter 11

1: White's Third Move Alternatives

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 10

A: 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 10

B: 3 e3 11 3...e5 4 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ exd4 5 exd4 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

$\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7 0-0 0-0 8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 9 h3 h6 12

B1: 10 $\mathbb{W}c2$ 13

B2: 10 a3 13

2: Central Variation

- 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e4 14 3...e5 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ exd4 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 6 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14
A: 7 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 15 7... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15
A1: 8 b4 15
A2: 8 $\mathbb{W}c2$ 16
A3: 8 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 16 8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16
A31: 9 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 17
A32: 9 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 17 9... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 17
A321: 12 $\mathbb{W}g4?$ 17
A322: 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 18
B: 7 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 19 7...fxe6 8 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 9 $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 10
 $\mathbb{W}a6$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 $\mathbb{W}d3$ 0-0 20
B1: 13 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 20
B2: 13 h3 20 13...e5 14 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 20
B21: 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 21
B22: 14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21
B3: 13 a3 22 13... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 22
B31: 14 b3 22
B32: 14 h3 23

3: Mannheim Variation

- 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{W}a4+$ 24 4... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 5
 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 24
A: 6 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 24
A1: 6... $\mathbb{Q}db4$ 24
A2: 6... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 25 7 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 8 d5 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 9 gxf3
 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 10 $\mathbb{W}d1$ e5 11 e3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 12 f4 25
A21: 12...exf4 25
A22: 12... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 26
B: 6 e4 26 6... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 7 $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 8 d5 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 26
B1: 9 $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ 26
B2: 9 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 27
B21: 9... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 27
B22: 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf3?$ 27

4: Two Knights Variation

- 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 28 4...a6 5 e4
b5 6 e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 7 a4 28
A: 7...e6 29 8 axb5 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 29
A1: 9 bx a6 29
A2: 9 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 29
A3: 9 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 30
B: 7... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 30 8 bxc3 $\mathbb{W}d5$ 9 g3 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 30
B1: 11 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 31
B2: 11 e6? 31

B3: 11 ♜a3 32 11...g6 32

B31: 12 h4 33

B311: 12...♜g7 33

B312: 12...♝d5?! 34

B32: 12 0-0 35 12...♜g7 13 ♜e1 0-0 35

B321: 14 e6 35

B322: 14 ♜c5 36 14...♝d5 15 ♜g5 36

B3221: 15...♝c6 36

B3222: 15...♜xg2 37

5: Furman Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5 38

6 ♜e2 a6 7 dxc5 ♜xc5 38

A: 8 e4 38...b5 38

A1: 9 ♜d3 38

A2: 9 ♜b3 39 9...♜b7 10 ♜bd2 ♜c6 39

A21: 11 e5?! 39

A22: 11 0-0 40

B: 8 0-0 39 8...♝c6 9 e4 b5 40

B1: 10 e5?! 40

B2: 10 ♜b3 41 10...♝d4! 11 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 41

B21: 12 ♜c3 41

B22: 12 ♜e3 42

6: Classical Variation:

White's Seventh Move Alternatives

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5 6

0-0 a6 43

A: 7 ♜bd2 43

B: 7 ♜c3 44

C: 7 a3 45 7...b5 8 ♜a2 ♜b7 9 ♜c3 ♜bd7 10 ♜el

♚e7 11 e4 45

C1: 11...b4 45

C2: 11...cxsd4 46

D: 7 b3 46

D1: 7...cxsd4 46

D2: 7...♝bd7 47

E: 7 e4 48 7...b5! 8 ♜d3 ♜b7 48

E1: 9 ♜g5 49

E2: 9 e5 49

F: 7 ♜d3 51 7...♝bd7 8 ♜el 51

F1: 8...b6 52

F2: 8...b5 52

G: 7 dxc5 54

G1: 7...♜xc5 55

G2: 7...♜xd1 56 8 ♜xd1 ♜xc5 56

G21: 9 b3 57 9...♝bd7 10 ♜b2 57

G211: 10...b5 57

G212: 10...b6 57

G22: 9 ♜bd2 58

G221: 9...♝bd7 58

G222: 9...0-0 59

7: Classical Variation: 7 a4

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5 6

0-0 a6 7 a4 60 7...♝c6 8 ♜e2 cxsd4 9 ♜d1 ♜e7 10

exd4 0-0 11 ♜c3 60

A: 11...♝b4 61

A1: 12 ♜g5 61

A11: 12...♜d7 61

A111: 13 d5 61

A112: 13 ♜e5 62 13...♜c8 62

A1121: 14 ♜el 63

A1122: 14 ♜b3 64

A12: 12...♝fd5 64

A13: 12...♜e8 65

A2: 12 ♜e5 65

A21: 12...♝fd5 65

A22: 12...♜d7 66

B: 11...♝d5 67

B1: 12 ♜d3 67

B2: 12 ♜e4 68

B3: 12 ♜e5 69

B4: 12 ♜b3 69 12...♜e8 69

B41: 13 ♜e5 69

B42: 13 h4?! 70 13...♝cb4 14 h5 b6 70

B421: 15 ♜xd5 70

B422: 15 ♜e5 71

8: Classical Variation: 7 ♜b3

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5 6

0-0 a6 7 ♜b3 72 7...b5 8 a4 b4 72

A: 9 e4!?! 73

B: 9 ♜bd2 75 9...♜b7 10 e4 75

B1: 10...♝e7 75

B2: 10...cxsd4 76 11 e5 ♜fd7 12 ♜c4 76

B21: 12...♜c5 77

B22: 12...♝c6 78 13 ♜g5 ♜c7 14 ♜cl 15 ♜c5 15

♚a2 h6 78

B221: 16 ♜f4 78

B222: 16 ♜h4 79

9: Classical Variation: 7 ♜e2 b5 8

♝d3

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5 6

0-0 a6 7 ♜e2 b5 8 ♜d3 80 8...cxsd4 9 exd4 80

A: 9...♜b7 80

B: 9...♝e7 81 10 a4 bxa4 11 ♜xa4 ♜b7 12 ♜c3

0-0 13 ♜g5 ♜c6 14 ♜d1 82

B1: 14...♝d5 83

B2: 14...a5 84

10: Classical Variation: 7 ♜e2 b5 8

♜b3 ♜b7 9 a4

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♜xc4 c5 6

0-0 a6 7 ♜e2 b5 8 ♜b3 ♜b7 9 a4 85

A: 9...♝bd7 85

A1: 10 ♜d1 86

A2: 10 axb5 86 10...axb5 11 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 12 ♜c3

b4 13 ♜b5 86

A21: 13...♝xf3?! 86

A22: 13... $\mathbb{W}b8$ 88 14 e4 cxd4 15 $\mathbb{Q}bx d4$ 88

A221: 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 89

A222: 15... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 89.

B: 9...b4 90

B1: 10 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 90

B2: 10 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ 91

11: Classical Variation: 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5

8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d1$

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 e3 e6 5 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ c5 6

0-0 a6 7 $\mathbb{W}e2$ b5 8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}d1$ 94 9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$

10 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 94

A: 10... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 95

A1: 11 e4 95

A2: 11 d5 96

B: 10... $\mathbb{W}b8$ 96

C: 10... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 98

C1: 11 a4 99 11...c4 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ b4 13 a5 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}a4$

$\mathbb{Q}c8$ 99

C11: 15 e4 99

C12: 15 $\mathbb{Q}b6$! 100

C2: 11 d5 101

12: Hodgson Attack: 1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}g5$

1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 103 2...h6 3 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ c6 103

A: 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 104 4... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 104

A1: 5 b3 104

A2: 5 $\mathbb{W}c1$ 105

B: 4 e3 106 4... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 106

B1: 5 $\mathbb{W}c1$ 106

B11: 5...e5 107

B12: 5... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 108

B2: 5 $\mathbb{b}3$ 109

B21: 5...e5 109

B22: 5... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 110

13: Veresov Opening: 1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

$\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$

1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 112 3... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 112

A: 4 e3 113

B: 4 f3 114 4...c6 5 e4 dxe4 6 fxe4 e5 7 dxe5 $\mathbb{W}a5$ 115

B1: 8 exf6 115

B2: 8 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 116

C: 4 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 117 4...h6 5 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ e6 6 e4 g5 7 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4 119

C1: 9 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 119 9... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 10 h4 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{W}g4$ 119

C11: 13... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 120

C12: 13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 120

C2: 9 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 121 9... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 10 h4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 11 c3 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 122

C21: 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 122

C22: 12 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 123 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 13 $\mathbb{W}a4+$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 123

C221: 14 $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 123

C222: 14 $\mathbb{Q}d4$! 123

14: London System: 1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

$\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}f4$

1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ (2 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 125) 2... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 125

3...c5 4 e3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 5 c3 $\mathbb{W}b6$ 6 $\mathbb{W}b3$ c4 127

A: 7 $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 128

B: 7 $\mathbb{W}c2$ 129 7... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 8 $\mathbb{W}c1$ e6 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ 129

B1: 9...h6 129

B2: 9... $\mathbb{W}d8$ 130

B3: 9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 130

15: King's Fianchetto: 1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$

$\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 g3

1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 g3 132 3...c6 4 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 5

0-0 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ e6 7 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 8 e4 dxe4 9

$\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 0-0 10 c3 133

A: 10... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 133

B: 10... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 134

16: Torre Attack: 1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$

1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 136 3... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 136

A: 4 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 136

B: 4 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 138

17: Colle System: 1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

3 e3

1 d4 d5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 e3 141 3...e6 4 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ c5 141

A: 5 b3 141

B: 5 c3 143 5... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 7 0-0 0-0 143

B1: 8 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ 144

B2: 8 dxc5 145 8... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 9 e4 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 145

B21: 10 exd5 145

B22: 10 $\mathbb{W}e2$ 147 10...h6 147

B221: 11 e5 148

B222: 11 h3 149

18: Stonewall Attack: 1 d4 d5 2 e3

$\mathbb{Q}f6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

1 d4 d5 2 e3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 152 3 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 152 3...c5 4 c3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 5

f4 152 5... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6 7 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 153

19: Blackmar-Diemer Gambit: 1 d4 d5

2 e4

1 d4 d5 2 e4 155 2...dxe4 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4 f3 exf3 155

A: 5 $\mathbb{W}xf3$? 155

B: 5 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 156