

Jacob
AAGAARD

Revised & Expanded
Edition

ATTACKING
Manual



QUALITY CHESS

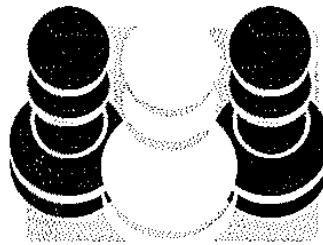


Attacking Manual 1

2nd edition

By

Jacob Aagaard



Quality Chess
www.qualitychess.co.uk

First English edition 2008 by Quality Chess UK LLP,
this 2nd edition 2010.

Copyright © 2008, 2010 Jacob Aagaard

Attacking Manual 1 - 2nd edition

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored
in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic,
electrostatic, magnetic tape, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior
permission of the publisher.

ISBN 978-9197600-40-8

All sales or enquiries should be directed to Quality Chess UK LLP,
20 Balvie Road, Milngavie, Glasgow G62 7TA, United Kingdom
Office phone: (+44) 141 227 6771
e-mail: info@qualitychess.co.uk
website: www.qualitychess.co.uk

Distributed in US and Canada by SCB Distributors, Gardena, California, US
www.scbdistributors.com

Distributed in Rest of the World by Quality Chess UK LLP through
Sunrise Handicrafts, Smyczkowa 4/98, 20-844 Lublin, Poland

Typeset by Jacob Aagaard
Proofreading: Colin McNab and Alan Beardsworth
Edited by John Shaw and Anne Madsen
Cover design by Carole Dunlop
Printed in Estonia by Tallinna Raamatuträükikoja LLC

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Key to Symbols used | 4 |
| Preface to the second edition | 7 |
| Bring it on - an introduction | 9 |
| Chapter 1 – Bring all your Toys to the Nursery Party | 27 |
| Chapter 2 – Don't lose your Breath | 57 |
| Chapter 3 – Add some Colour to your Play | 89 |
| Chapter 4 – Size Matters! | 109 |
| Chapter 5 – Hit 'em where it hurts | 137 |
| Chapter 6 – Chewing on Granite | 157 |
| Chapter 7 – Evolution/Revolution | 173 |
| Chapter 8 – 15 Great Attacking Games | 195 |
| Chapter 9 – Watch Yourself take the Next Step | 273 |
| Possible Solutions | 284 |
| Index | 320 |

Key to symbols used

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| ? | a weak move |
| ?? | a blunder |
| ! | a good move |
| !! | an excellent move |
| !? | a move worth considering |
| ?! | a move of doubtful value |
| # | mate |
| (n) | n th match game |
| ++ | White is slightly better |
| +!! | Black is slightly better |
| ++ | White is better |
| +! | Black is better |
| +— | White has a decisive advantage |
| -+ | Black has a decisive advantage |
| = | equality |
| ?!? | with compensation |
| ↑↓ | with counterplay |
| ? | unclear |

Bibliography

Alexey Dreev: *My 100 Best Games*

Adrian Mikhalchishin & Tomasz Lissowski: *Najdorf: Life and Games*

Mark Dvoretsky & Artur Yusupov: *Attack and Defence*

Igor Stohl: *Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games: v. 1*

John Watson: *Secrets of Modern Chess Strategy: Advances Since Nimzowitsch*

Mikhail Golubev: *Understanding the King's Indian*

David Bronstein: *International Chess Tournament: Zurich 1953*

Amatzia Avni: *Creative Chess*

Amatzia Avni: *Chess Tips for the Improving Player*

Igor Nor & Alik Gershon: *San Luis 2005*

Periodicals

Chess Informant

Chess Today

New In Chess

Chess Monthly

Schach 64

Chessvibes.com

Chessbase.com

Mega Database 2008

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following people for their contribution to this book in big and small ways: Jonny Hector, Krishnan Sasikiran, Anne Madsen, Herman Herboldt, Mihail Marin, Artur Yusupov, Allan Beardsworth, Colin McNab and John Shaw.

Thank you!

Jacob Aagaard
Glasgow, March 2008 and September 2009

Preface to the second edition

Confession: I used to be a serial writer. From 2000 to 2004 I wrote more than twenty books; some of them with other people, some of them alone, some of them with my name on the cover, some of them not. I was doing so without a true goal or direction, simply pleasing people, or helping the publishers to fill a hole in their schedule. I think these books were not too bad in general and some of them even a good deal above average. One of them even picked up an award, while another was nominated for one.

But deep down I knew that my books were not as good as they could be. I felt that the work I was doing was pleasing a lot of people, but not me. It was somewhere during this period, in 2001 to be a bit more exact, that the idea of this book came into being. I was very interested in generalisations in chess (despite this having been unfashionable for a long time) not because I believe that there are any shortcuts to playing good chess, but because I believe that there are recurring strategic themes in chess, and to know them will help you to develop your chess intuition.

I had written a few chapters in 2003, when I decided that I wanted to set up a chess publishing house, and in this way move to a different place in the chain of people creating chess books. I had done so mainly because I had produced 35% of the Everyman Catalogue that year, but felt that I had very little control over the final product. With Everyman still going strong six years later, and Quality Chess not doing too badly either, it seems that it was mainly a matter of taste.

In 2004 I finished all my contracts with Everyman and co-founded Quality Chess. At first I was working as an editor and trying to make a living without writing for other companies, while Quality Chess struggled through the always tricky first years of business. I wanted to finish this book, but it was difficult to find the time and then I got distracted, and wrote *Practical Chess Defence*, which was always meant to be a small quick project, along the lines of what I had done with Everyman. However, it had become clear that once released, it was not possible to cram the beast back into the cage. That book was big, difficult and almost anti-commercial. I still love it dearly.

It was only in 2008 that I finally finished this book. I have to admit that over time I became very emotionally attached to this project, because of what it meant. I had left Everyman and founded Quality Chess because I wanted full control over the look of this book, and because I wanted to publish *Questions of Modern Chess Theory* and *The Berlin Wall*. The latter two were published in the autumn of 2008 to great critical acclaim, while the *Attacking Manual 1* was a bit of a disappointment – not least to the author.

The first edition of this book was written from the heart. It had a lot of interesting ideas, I think. However, the typesetting and the proofreading had gone all wrong and this ruined the experience for many readers, as well as for the author.

I am not sure that this book can justify a second edition, nor if what I feel are valuable insights into chess strategy and dynamics are really so, but because of its history, I was able to talk my editor John Shaw into having it printed.

One of the questions about this book is if it is truly original. To some extent yes, and to some extent, no. Obviously there has been a lot written about dynamics in chess in general. However, the books I have read have all mentioned dynamics as a self-explanatory phenomenon, or even confused tactics with dynamics. I have yet to come across a coherent theory of dynamics, which is why I decided to bring some often-described elements together with some observations of my own. It is very difficult for me to evaluate to what extent this has been a success or not, as no one has challenged this theory. I hope the reader will make up his own mind, but most of all, I hope he will find this book helpful in understanding the great mystery which is chess strategy.

Jacob Aagaard
Glasgow, September 2009

Bring it on – an introduction

My aim with this book and its companion volume is to teach you everything there is to know about attacking chess. Not a small aim and already by its very definition it is clear that failure in this project is guaranteed.

However as a chess player I know there is almost always more to be learned from defeats than victories, especially the spectacular ones. So, though these two books will inevitably fall short of their aim, I hope the reader will agree that at least I fought valiantly to make sure that it was not by much.

In this volume I will present the general rules underlying attacking chess. This statement alone requests scrutiny, so we might as well get specific immediately.

By **rules**, I mean standard replies that can be beneficially used in many situations, not sentences you have to repeat at the board and use to thump your ability to reason. Another word commonly used for having such standard replies in your fingers is “intuition”.

Before we get ahead of ourselves by assuming that we agree on a term commonly used in chess writing, I had better define what I think when I say intuition.

Intuition is the word we use for the quick splurge of automatic interpretation provided by the subconscious part of the brain. This is based on conclusions you have made in the past, sometimes consciously, sometimes not. These could be good interpretations or they could be bad. Mostly they are good, but often they are not good enough. In this book I will offer a number of strategies to add to your intuition regarding the nature of attacking play, by presenting simple effective guidelines.

When I talk about attacking chess I am talking about an attack against the king, although I, in general, am trying to describe how dynamics (also known as short-term factors) can be utilised in the best way. Let me explain:

The rules we know from Tarrasch and Lasker and others mainly relate to static (long-term) factors, such as pawn structure, space and other positional factors. Even though they have elements of dynamic thinking in them, they came out of a worldview that was inherently mechanical.

The only exception I can think of is from possibly the greatest contributor to chess, the first World Champion, Wilhelm Steinitz. Steinitz said: “**if you have an advantage, you must use it immediately, or it will disappear**”. This is incompatible with a more modern rule relating to winning technically won endings, known since the days of Rubinstein and preached by all trainers today, “do not hurry”.

Both rules are correct. The Steinitz rule relates to an advantage in time, while the Rubinstein rule relates to an advantage in structure and/or material.

These two opposing and/or supplementing factors are well known from physics. There they call them *potential* (static) and *kinetic* (dynamic) energy. The rules we will investigate in this book are all related to getting a feeling for general dynamics. The static aspects of chess will have to wait till another day.

The style of this book and how to use it

My experience with chess books is as follows: If you want to use them to improve your playing strength, you need to work with them. But to be able to enjoy them, you need to be able to read them.

So in a Solomonic attempt to please everyone, I have divided this book up as follows:

The first seven chapters discuss various principles of attacking chess. I have tried to design the material in such a way that this part of the book will be as pleasant to read as possible, and it can all be read and understood by decent players. I hope the target audience of this book, players rated between 1700 and 2500, will be able to follow most of the action in the games by reading the text and following the moves in their head between the diagrams. This might sound too pleasant to be able to offer the conditions for improvement you would normally associate with hard work. I am not sure this is so. I want to explain these principles and hopefully I will be successful in doing so without boring the reader.

However, if you are into hard work, deep ideas and complex chess, then Chapter 8 is definitely written for you. There I will illustrate these principles in action in a handful of great games. In that chapter we will go into the analytical details we have sporadically waved at in the previous chapters. I am afraid to say that most readers will need a chessboard and a place you can relax in to get the most out of these games.

Finally, I have collected 50 exercises. I spent a long time selecting them and then pruned my collection more often than I would have liked to get down to this number. I apologise in advance to those who find these exercises hard. They are hard. At the end of the day, effort has to be put in before new abilities can be taken out.

Diagram introduction – a new idea

I have included something I have not seen in other books. Before each chapter I have selected a number of diagrams representing positions from the coming chapter for you to consider, should you feel so inclined. It is my experience as a trainer, as well as someone who has had to work to improve, that “reading and nodding” (Daniel King) can create a false impression of how difficult chess really is. By thinking over these positions for up to 10 minutes each, you will have a first impression of what your intuition has to say about these positions, before I say what I think about them. Though we might never meet, this is a way for us to have a constructive dialogue. I hope you will accept this offer.

A sneak preview

Although the chapters are colourfully named, the principles discussed in this book are very simple.

They are:

- 1) Include all your pieces in the attack
- 2) Momentum
- 3) Colour schemes
- 4) Numbers over Size
- 5) Attack the weakest point in your opponent's position
- 6) Attack the strongest point in your opponent's position
- 7) Evolution and revolution

These principles are what I would call **global principles**, not so much because they are relevant in all positions, but because they are relevant in *all kinds of positions*. A good understanding of them will certainly improve your attacking chess, even without the techniques I will discuss in Volume 2.

Before we go into the details of each of these principles, I would like to show three games where they are in play.

Although I am out to teach a few principles and show their use in a dynamic environment, I have also tried to present games that in themselves are attractive and instructive. I think this is always an obligation for a chess writer, but never more so than in a book that aims to improve your chess intuition.

Wolfgang Nicklich – Ralph Junge

Sokolsky Opening
Correspondence, East Germany 1980

1.b4

The Orang-Utan or Sokolsky Opening. Not a great opening. Actually it is possible to imagine that White's position is worse than if this move had not been played. It should be mentioned in White's defence that the two players also played a game with reversed colours in the same opening, again with Black prevailing. The suspicion is that this was a theme tournament...

1...e5!

The most energetic response.

2.Qb2 Qxb4 3.Qxe5

White's idea is to take this centre pawn and hope for some positional reward later on. Unfortunately it costs a lot of time, which allows Black to build up an attacking position.

3...Qf6 4.Qf3 Qc6 5.Qb2 0-0 6.e3 d5

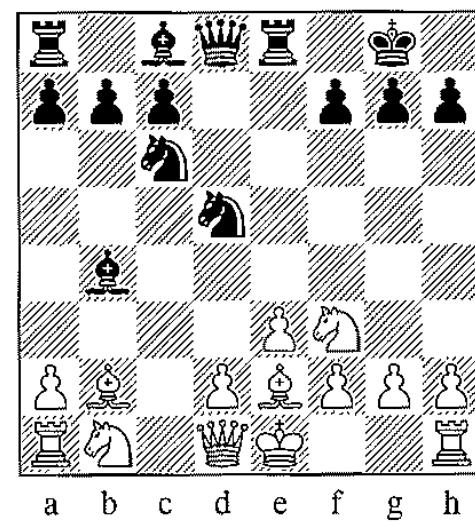
Black's position is pleasant. He has control over the centre and has completed his development.

7.c4

This and the next few moves are theory, but the keen observer will realise that White is continuing to neglect his development, while Black is getting his pieces to more and more attractive squares.

7...Be8 8.cxd5 Qxd5 9.Qe2

This is the first interesting moment of the game.



Black has a solid lead in development and decides to go for an idea that is more fascinating than correct. His argument goes like this: because White can get his king into safety on the next move, Black decides that he has to

seize the moment. However, his rook sacrifice has the drawback of not being supported by all Black's pieces. The queenside is still waiting for completion of its development.

9... $\mathbb{R}xe3?!$

A very tempting sacrifice for any player prone to romantic music. Black gives away a rook, but disturbs White's development. Most often, decisions in attacking consist of such or similar trade-offs. This is what makes dynamic chess so interesting. Both players have a chance to win, as White is winning on points (static feature) and Black is winning on time (dynamic feature). This is also what makes dynamic chess so difficult. Though there are clear rules to follow, which can be translated into techniques, in the end all conclusions at the board will have to be guided by concrete calculation and gut feeling. Without the techniques, rules and so on that I will describe in these two books, you could be choosing the moves and ideas you want to calculate a little at random. After reading this book, hopefully your bias will be strongly towards the kind of decisions that are most commonly right.

The best move in this position is probably 9... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$, but the text move is not directly bad. It is justified by Black's lead in development and the open files down towards the king.

10.fxe3

Nothing else makes any sense.

10... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

White is faced with his first important decision of the game. The queen has two possible squares to go to, and one is likely to be better than the other. To work out which is very hard.

11. $\mathbb{W}b3!$

Looking back at the game without analysis it is easy to think that 11. $\mathbb{W}a4?$ was the best move, based on the very simple idea that when

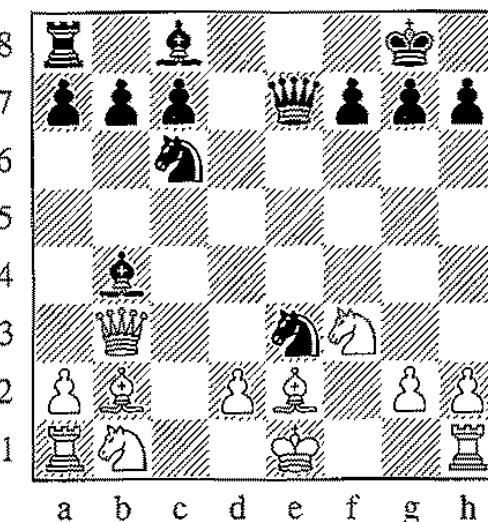
Black develops his queen's bishop, he should not be allowed to do so with gain of tempo.

But the game continuation is both more popular in practice and after analysis. The queen is a bit offside on a4, so maybe the feeling of activity projected by the temporary threat to the knight on e3 appeals to the majority? Either way, no one has played the necessary follow-up.

After 11. $\mathbb{W}a4$ Black would play 11... $\mathbb{W}e7$ with sufficient compensation, though no more. My analysis suggests a draw after a lot of complications, but as promised I have pruned the tree and only cropped the fruits of knowledge, distilled them and turned them into the finest calvados (hopefully).

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

Let's at this point hint at maybe the most important theme in this book, that of Revolution/Evolution (Chapter 7). Black still needs to include all of his pieces in the attack and does so without feeling the pressure of having to justify his sacrifices at present. It is not yet time to change the nature of the position by taking on g2.



12. $\mathbb{N}f2?$

After this time-consuming move Black gains the time he needs to mount a winning

attack. After a normal move such as 12. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ the chances are probably even.

The tempting move was 12. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$, trying to frustrate Black's build-up. In a strict sense this is not improving White's development, but I ask you to take in these "rules" with an open mind. We want to respect our development, but also to neglect it when it is beneficial to do so.

In this particular position White is obstructing Black's development as well. Black does not have time to gain a tempo with ... $\mathbb{E}e6$, which is why the shallow observation on move 11 is incorrect. Meaning, it was correct in the way that the game proceeds, but incorrect in the way it should proceed with best play.

It turns out that Black is not fully prepared to back up his sacrifice with the full force of his army. Only by starting the conflict now will White be able to exploit it. This is an important part of the Evolution/Revolution aspect, and one we will look at when we are talking about Momentum in Chapter 2.

In dynamic chess you will only get one chance to do something. If you do not take it, the tide can change and your dreams can be washed away.

After the critical 12. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ play should probably continue with 12... $\mathbb{Q}xg2\#$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}d1$. The point behind White's play is that after: 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14. $\mathbb{W}g3!$

he has created play against the black king.
The best move appears to be 14...f6.

In this position White is a rook up for three pawns. His king is quite shaky, but Black has exchanged his most prominent attacker and will therefore have to show exceptional play to justify this heavy investment.

12... $\text{N}g4\ddagger$

Suddenly all Black's moves are coming with tempo. This is a typical illustration of momentum as seen in Chapter 2.

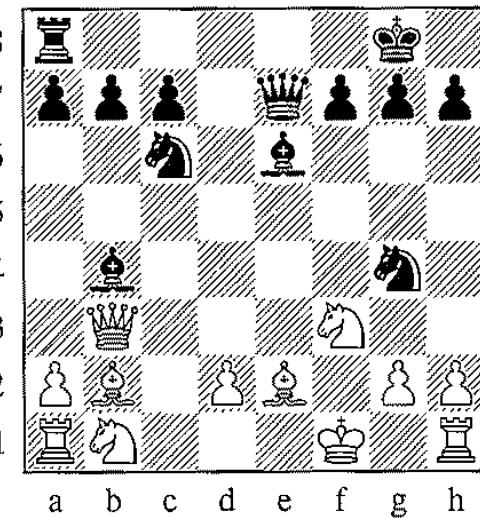
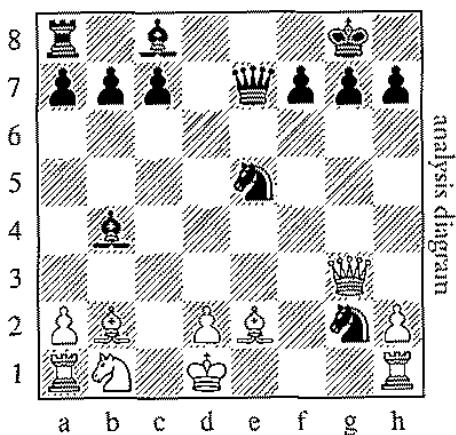
13. f1

13. ♔el ♠e6 is no better.

13...⁸e6

Another tempo move. Black is aware that in order to succeed he will need to get all of his pieces into the attack.

We have reached another critical moment for White. There are three options, but only one of them does not lose.



14. $\mathbb{W}a4?$

It seems that it was absolutely necessary for White to keep the bishop on e2 protected.

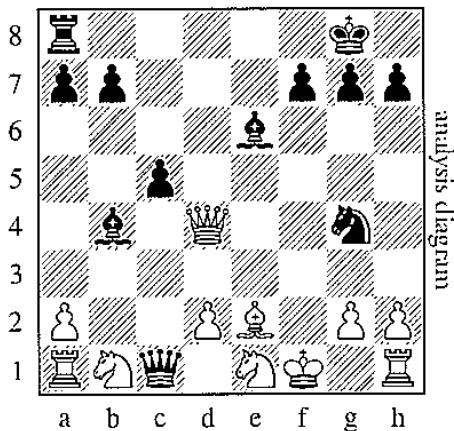
Also insufficient was 14. $\mathbb{W}c2?$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}c5!$ and Black was already winning in

Dopper – Van Loon, Netherlands 1990. The point is that White cannot protect f2 without moving the d-pawn forwards, which would leave a big hole on e3. From there we have the characteristic distance to the king and the queen, which the g4-knight will be happy to exploit after the c6-knight has surrendered itself for the common good.

14. $\mathbb{W}d3!$ was the only move.

It is very tempting to bring in the rook, and a superficial reading of the first chapter, which discusses including all the pieces into the attack, would certainly make you reach for the rook. But if you stop and look at the position more critically, spooked by the obvious nature of the rook move, you will realise that the queen is not only well placed on d3 for defending e2, it is also in the way of the d-pawn.

Realising this, you will see that Black has an option that he should not waste in 14... $\mathbb{W}c5!$, targeting f2. Then 15. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ is forced and so is 15... $\mathbb{W}c1\#$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 17. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ c5.

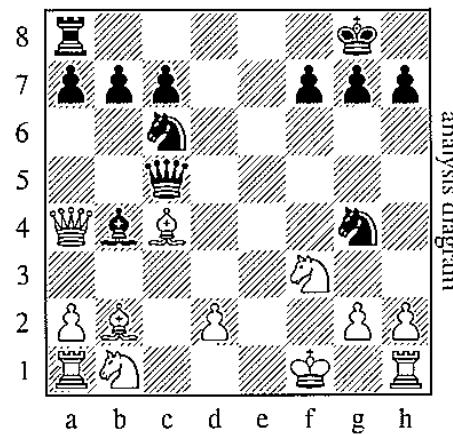


We will stop here. Black has sacrificed a rook, but has arrived at a position where of the white pieces, only the queen has any influence on the course of the game. White's knights are both pinned and his rooks trapped in the corners. I think a modest evaluation would be 'sufficient compensation for the rook', while a more objective evaluation might be 'with a crushing position'.

In the game after 14. $\mathbb{W}a4?$ Black also faces this interesting choice. It is tempting to bring in the rook, but as we have just seen, we should never yield uncritically to the impulse of playing the most natural move without investigating whether or not it is also the best move. Chess is far too complicated to be played with a superficial approach.

14... $\mathbb{B}e8?$

This turns out to be an inaccuracy. Though it does not lose all of Black's advantage, it is not as convincing as the winning shot 14... $\mathbb{Q}c4!$. The point is that after 15. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ Black has 15... $\mathbb{W}c5$.



The double threat is lethal and the defence is playing peek-a-boo.

We could imagine White would want to get as much as possible for his bishop, but after 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ Black is ready to bring in the rook with 17... $\mathbb{E}f8!$, after which he is completely winning.

This line is very instructive in the sense that it shows how we should understand the notion of bringing all our pieces into the attack – intelligently. Black wants to bring the rook into the attack, so it should be a constant factor in his calculation, but he should also be open to other options, such as the stunning bishop sacrifice.

We can also choose to look at this option from another side. Once at c4 the bishop is

attacking e2 and the sequence is based on an attack against the f2-square. These are the squares where Black is likely to find success as they are the least protected in the white position. I, surprisingly, call them the weakest squares. We will discuss them in Chapter 5.

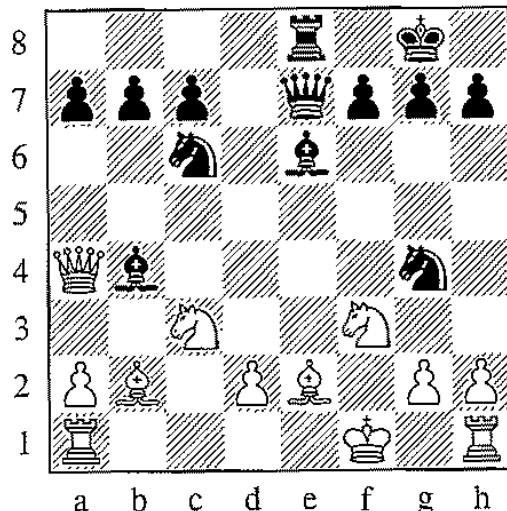
Though objectively 14... $\mathbb{E}e8$ is dubious, it is hard in practice to find White's defence on the next move. But it was certainly possible to find the bishop sacrifice and notice its devastating effect.

15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

White tries to catch up in development, but he needed a non-standard solution to climb out of the hole he is in and over his mountain of problems.

After 15. $\mathbb{Q}a3?$ Black has the blow 15... $\mathbb{Q}xd2!$, based on 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd2?!$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 17. $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}e3!$ with a winning position.

The best move was 15. $h3!$. After Black executes his threat of 15... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ and White replies with the forced 16. $\mathbb{W}b5$ a6 17. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$, he would have to fight with three pieces for the queen after 18. $hxg4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$. Black is better here, maybe even much better. But simply because the position is non-standard it is much harder to win than a position where you have an extra pawn without concessions.



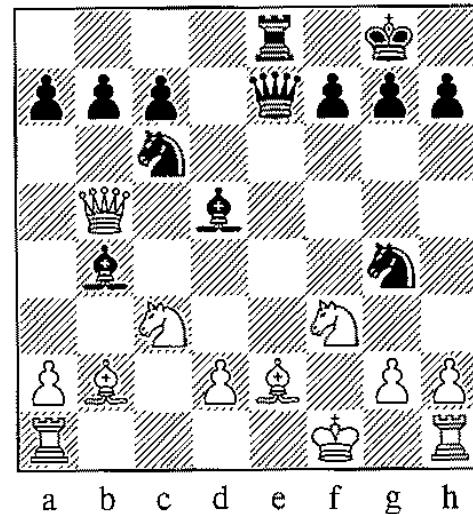
15... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

Creating the double threat of taking on f3 and c3. White's choices are limited.

16. $\mathbb{W}b5$

Black's main point comes out in the following nice variation: 16. $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 17. $gx f3$ $\mathbb{W}h4!$ 18. $fxg4$ $\mathbb{W}h3\#$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ winning.

The best defence was 16. $\mathbb{W}d1$, when Black has a winning endgame after 16... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 17. $d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 19. $dxc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$, but once again White will be grateful to have an exchange for (soon) three pawns, as the imbalance gives him something to fight with.



Black now cannot strengthen his position any further through normal means (Evolution). The build-up is over and he will have to execute his attack (Revolution) or it will lose its sting (Momentum). The main weaknesses in the white position are still e2 and f2, Black therefore focuses his efforts in this direction.

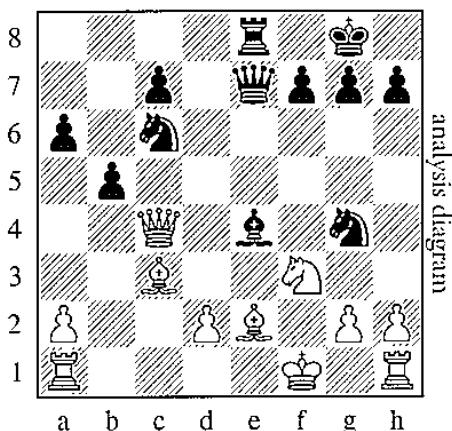
16... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ a6 18. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

The queen is out of squares. We see the power the black pieces have simply because they are in play, as well as the futility of the white rooks. In Chapter 4 we will have a closer look at how material should be viewed in dynamic chess.

19.♕b4!?

An attempt to give the queen somewhere to go. A later game also reached exactly this position.

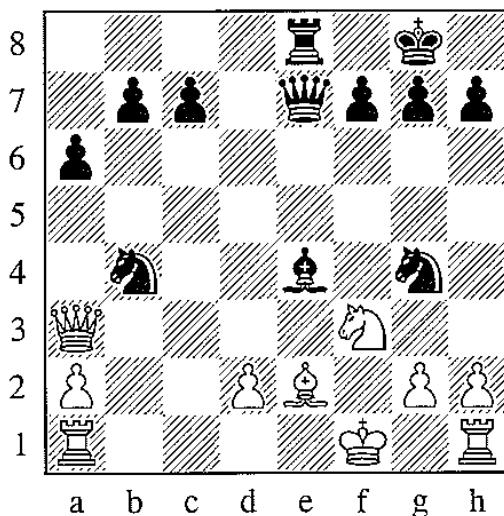
In this game Black won after: 19.♕c4 b5



20.♕f6!? A desperate echo of our main game.
(20.♕b3 loses to 20...♕c2!) 20...♗xf6 21.♕b3 ♕d5 22.♕e3 ♕d6 23.♕f2 ♕g4 24.♕g3 ♕xf3 25.♕xf3 ♕d4 26.♕xg4 ♕f6† 0–1 Jeschke – Rost, Germany 1995.

19...♗xb4 20.♕a3

White has found a square for the queen, but it is far away from the weak squares in need of protection, so the euphoria is very short-lived.

**20...♗d3!**

One of many winning moves. This book will not deal much with combinations, as we will be talking about the build-up. All I can say is that the attack is ripe and the flesh is tasty.

21.♕xd3 ♕c5

The idea behind the previous move was to attack the other weak square, f2. White is beyond salvation.

**22.♕xh7† ♕xh7 23.d4 ♕c2 24.♕g5† ♕g6
25.♕g3 ♕c4†
0–1**

This game illustrates the intelligence we need to apply when we talk about including all the pieces in the attack. It also shows the value of attacking the weakest squares in the opponent's position, the sense of momentum and a few other principles illustrated in this book. This will be a common occurrence, as it is common for most of the global rules to be in play at the same time.

In the next game we shall see the notion of 'attacking the opponent where he is strongest' in action. Especially look out for moves 14 and 17.

Jonny Hector – Erling Mortensen

Sicilian Defence, Keres Attack
Denmark 1990

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6
5.♘c3 d6**

After a lot of bad experiences in the late 80's and early 90's, people decided not to allow the Keres Attack anymore and instead headed for the Scheveningen through the Najdorf. Only in the last few years have players such as Movsesian and Van Wely tried to restore the reputation of this risky line.

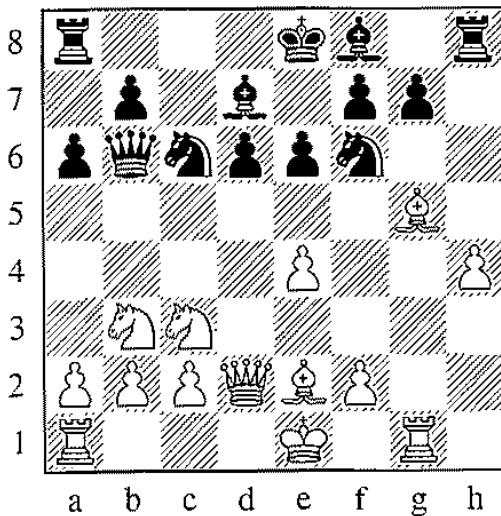
6.g4!

Paul Keres' move.

6...h6 7.h4 ♜c6 8.♗g1 h5

I suspect that 8...d5! is the best move here, but I am no expert.

**9.gxh5 ♜xh5 10.♗g5 ♜f6 11.♘d2 ♜b6
12.♘b3 ♜d7 13.♗e2 a6**



Before we advance let's try to get to grips with the position. If Black had his way he would play ...0–0–0 and ...♝e7, with a decent position. It seems that Black has good control over the h5- and e5-squares, but over the next few moves White will manage to undermine Black's position on exactly these squares, leading to an attack on the weaknesses on d6 and f6. Though this is not objectively fatal for Black, it does leave him with the difficult task of avoiding going under immediately. That he failed to do this in the game illustrates the practical dimension of chess. I keep reminding both my students and myself that chess is a *game* more than anything else. These days with computer programs and online live broadcasts, it is easy to get lulled into the sensation that chess is easy (rather than simple, which is simply something else), that chess should be played perfectly and other such nonsense.

Chess is very difficult and the chief task of the competitive player is to create problems for his opponent. The 'best' problems are those that cannot be solved, but before you can create these, you have to create problems that can. At best, very difficult ones. But which are they? How do you tell? Often by noticing that you do not know how they should be solved either.

14.h5!

This strong pawn sacrifice is also the favourite of Deep Fritz 10. How computers engines have developed! The idea behind the move is to issue Black with a number of constraints. First of all, he has to accept the sacrifice, as he cannot allow the pawn to advance to h6, where it will be a constant thorn in his side.

14...♜xh5

Taking the pawn has not one but two drawbacks. Firstly, the knight is misplaced on h5 and pinned down the h-file. Secondly, it opens up the diagonal from g5 to d8, preventing Black from castling. The primary problem with this is not so much the king's safety, though this is certainly a factor, but that the a8-rook cannot join the battle.

15.♗h1

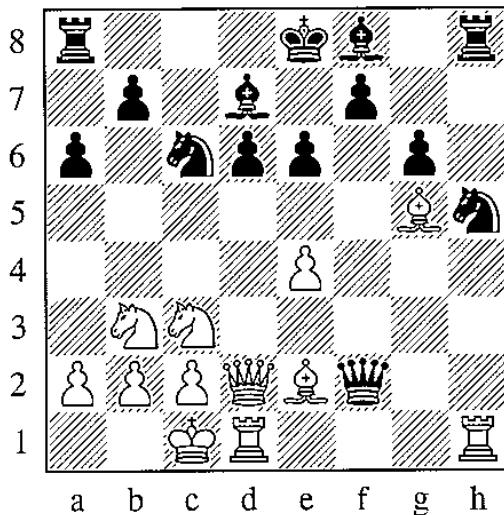
White has compensation according to Kasparov (*Batsford Chess Openings*, 1984). With the help of computers we are today able to give more accurate evaluations. White has the initiative, but Black should be able to keep the balance with accurate play. That is, unless a human spots an idea the computer has not valued highly enough and all the conclusions will have to change once again.

15...g6 16.0–0–0

White does not care about the f-pawn. To him it is simply in the way. This attitude is characteristic of dynamically focused play.

Because White's advantage is in time he cares little for material.

16... $\mathbb{W}xf2!$



But for Black it is often the other way around. He needs to take some material in order to have something to show for his lack of development. Bent Larsen used to take anything offered so he had plenty of material to throw back at his opponent if the attack got really dangerous. Again, and I cannot stress this enough, the truly fascinating thing with positions where one player is better statically and the other dynamically, is that it is so difficult to evaluate these factors correctly.

There is another strategic reason why this move is essential, one we will deal with in Volume 2. In many positions a single avant-garde soldier, here the queen, can disrupt the opponent's forces. Because White cannot move with absolute freedom within his own territory, he will find it more difficult to coordinate his attack.

As we will talk about in Chapter 1, we need to bring all the pieces into the attack, if possible. Once we have done so, we must be careful not to lose the momentum, as discussed in Chapter 2. White has built up his attack in the best possible way (Evolution) and now has to

transform the position not to lose momentum (Revolution). He would love to attack the weaknesses in Black's position, which are mainly d7, d6 and f6 (Chapter 5). To be able to do this, he will have to first strike at the strongest point in the opponent's position, e5 (Chapter 6).

17.e5!

This move puts pressure on the black position, but also frees up the e4-square for the knight. This would be a stepping-stone to d6 and f6, so Black decides to take control of the e4-square.

17... $\mathbb{W}f5$

Note that 17...d5? does not take control of e4, as the d7-bishop is unprotected.

18. $\mathbb{K}b1!$

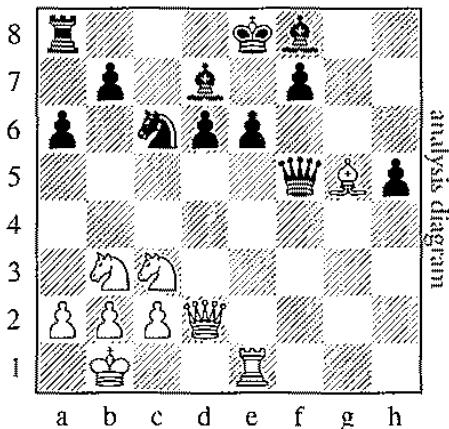
This was Hector's home-cooking. In a previous game Black had managed to equalise after 18.exd6?! with the pseudo-sacrifice 18... $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 19. $\mathbb{W}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$, Am. Rodriguez – Grooten, Dieren 1987.

What is impressive about Hector's move is that it leaves the e-pawn hanging once again. His preparation turns out to have been better in 1990 than it would be for most in 2009, where we could have been disturbed by the computer's instant suggestions and the iron confidence with which it presents them.

18...d5!

Now this is possible and should be played. Not so much because White wants to take on d6, as because it takes further control over e4.

When analysing 18... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ I was amazed by the depth of the Swede's preparation. After 19. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $gxh5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}el$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ the most dangerous move is not the computer move, but Hector's analysis from 1990!



It is tempting to place the knight on e4, from where it attacks both d6 and f6, but actually d6 is now no longer a real weakness, at least not compared to c7!

Note also how all of the weaknesses in the black position are on the dark squares. The only light-squared weakness we would be able to think up is the bishop on d7. This is very logical as it is exactly the presence of this bishop that creates safety for the other light squares in the position (Chapter 3).

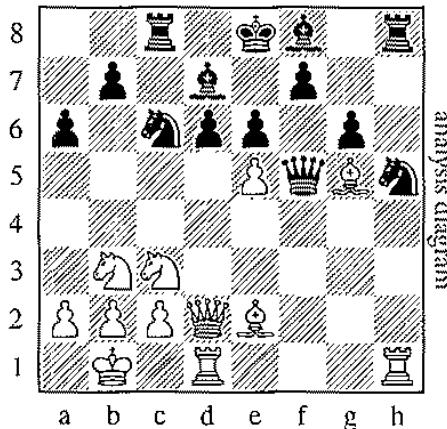
White's winning line comes after 22. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$, though the lines after 22... $\mathbb{E}c8!$ are less clear-cut than Hector had anticipated in his home analysis. (22... $\mathbb{E}e7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 24. $\mathbb{E}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xd6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}g1!$ is an important line. White wins.)

White has to come up with 23. $\mathbb{Q}c5!!$ in order to breach the black defences. After 23... $\mathbb{E}e7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ White has 25. $\mathbb{Q}d5!!$ $\mathbb{W}d4$ 26. $\mathbb{W}g2$ $\mathbb{W}h8$ 27. $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 29. $\mathbb{E}xe5!$ $dxe5$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ with an absolutely winning attack.

A long and complicated line, for which I apologise. I have tried to explain everything in words, so that you will not have to rely on a chessboard to follow the annotations, but in some places I have kept the principal line, even when it is very long. I propose that you try to follow them in your head as far as you can from the diagrams. If you cannot follow them to the end, do not despair. You will most likely not

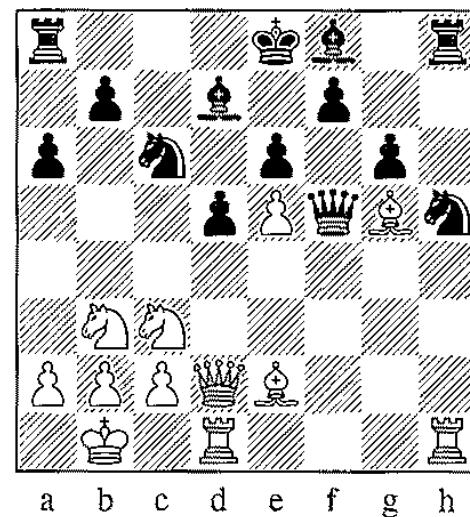
have missed anything essential. If you can, you will be rewarded with some chess aesthetics.

Talking about long lines. The theme of fighting for the e4-square comes to life fully after the attempt to activate the sleeping beauty on a8 with 18... $\mathbb{E}c8$.



White should play 19. $\mathbb{E}h4!$ (with the threat of 20. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$). There now follows a long, complicated, yet relatively forced, winning line. If you can follow it all the way to the end in your head it is surely enjoyable: 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}f2$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}g2$ 22. $\mathbb{E}xh5!$ $gxh5$ Now follow ten checks, the last one being mate. 23. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (23... $\mathbb{E}e7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$) 24. $\mathbb{W}a5\#$ $\mathbb{E}c7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xc7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 27. $\mathbb{W}b8\#$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ $exf5$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xd6$ mate.

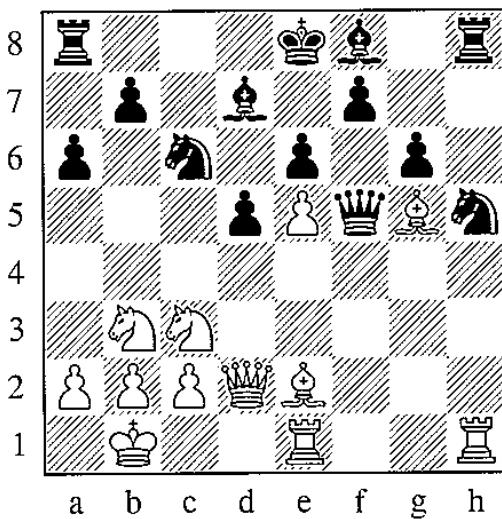
Let's return to the position after 18...d5!.



19.♕d1!

This elegant move is probably the one that most annotators would pass by without noticing, but it is the difficulty of meeting this move that leads to Black losing the game. Instead of forcing the position, White increases the pressure.

In a later game White decided to play more crudely with 19.♕df1 and gained nothing (Lau – Lesiege, Budapest 1992).

**19...d4?**

A horrible mistake. Black should have done something to catch up in development instead of trying to force matters. What he overlooked is not entirely clear, but that he played without a clear strategy is apparent.

The two acceptable options were 19...♗g7?! 20.♕c5! ♗g3! with a complicated position and the somewhat counterintuitive move 19...♗f2!, repeating the queen's disruptive effect. In both cases Black seems to be okay.

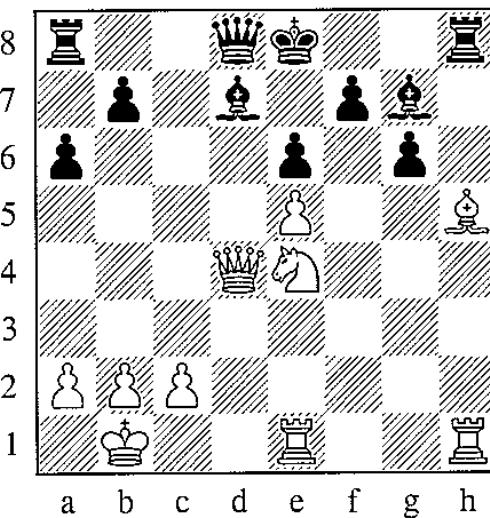
We have arrived at the part that has attacking chess, which has been dealt with extensively in other books. White sacrifices a piece and crashes through the black defences.

20.♕xd4! ♗xd4

There is no choice. 20...♗xe5 21.♕xc6 ♗xc6 22.♕xh5 wins a piece.

21.♗xd4 ♗xg5

21...♗c6 loses to 22.♗hg1 with the threat of 23.♗g4.

22.♘e4 ♗d8 23.♕xh5 ♗g7

24.♗xg6! ♗xh1 25.♗xh1 f×g6 26.♘d6†
1-0

To me the important point about this game is not whether White played a brilliant attacking game or whether Black played badly. What is important is that White had a strategy of increasing the tension rather than trying to calculate everything.

Black tried to solve his problems with concrete measures and missed something in the process. He did not seem to have a clear strategy, to pay attention to such things as the weaknesses of d6 and f6 or his lack in development, and so on.

The same seems to be the case for both players in the following game. At first Black is struggling to find good co-ordination between his pieces. No obvious plan of attack is apparent and his pieces are certainly not running towards the same goal.

White thus gets a superior position and only needs to play according to a strategy of combining attack and defence to win the game. However, a bad decision reveals that White is thinking only about his own options and not about defence. For this reason the position becomes very unclear with highly attractive options at both players' disposal.

Tiger Hillarp-Persson – Herman Grooten

Sicilian Defence, English Attack
Hoogeveen 2007

1.e4

Tiger Hillarp-Persson is a very colourful grandmaster from Sweden and the successful author of the opening book *Tiger's Modern*. In the summer of 2007 he made a radical shift from 1.d4 and strategic chess to 1.e4 and high profile attacking lines. Though the change was reasonably successful, it has not been without problems. In this game he gains a winning position from the opening, but at the crucial moment he makes a bad positional decision and the game becomes a roller coaster where both players have the advantage on and off, until White is eventually brutally mated.

**1...c5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6
5.Qc3 a6 6.Qe3**

The most popular move among the elite. Originally Chandler, Short and Nunn played the English Attack to avoid theory, but these days no variation is more extensively analysed.

6...e6 7.Wd2 Qe7 8.f3 Qc6

Though I have planned to play this line in the past, I must say that I do not fully trust it.

**9.g4 0–0 10.0–0 Qxd4 11.Qxd4 b5 12.g5
Qd7 13.h4 Eb8**

Not the most common move, but the main lines are in crises as well.

14.Qe3!?

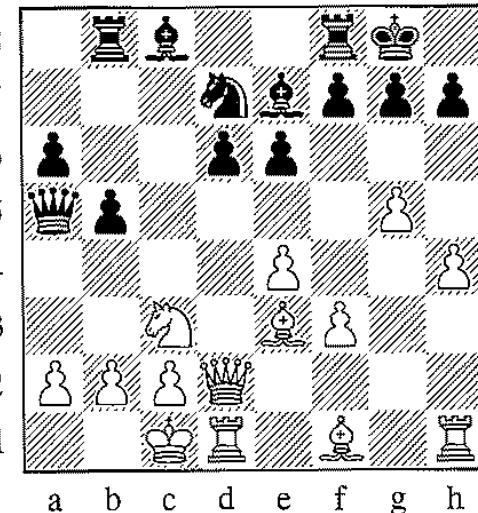
This is a somewhat dubious decision. White wants to protect the g5-pawn so he can advance his h-pawn. But the bishop was well placed on d4 (aiming at g7) and there were other useful moves in the position. Who knows, maybe Black will relieve the pressure on g5?

The best way to play the position might very well be 14.Qb1, with a possible continuation being 14...Qe5 15.Wg2 Qd7 16.f4 Qc6 17.Qe3 b4 18.Qe2 a5 19.h5 a4 20.g6 and White was ahead in the attack by an important tempo in Anand – Ljubojevic, Monte Carlo 2000.

After 14.Qe3 Black has two standard plans. The first is to advance the pawns in the same way White is doing on the kingside. The second is to play ...Qd7-e5-c4 and ...bxc4, opening the b-file. A sound strategy would include the implementation of either of these standard plans, or a third and wholly original plan.

Black went for the fourth option – no plan.

14...Wd5?



This move works out very well in the game, but should not have done so. The queen is active on a5, but then the attack against a2 and b2 passes quickly. It is now difficult for

Black to advance the a-pawn and after the next (forced) move he has to give up the idea of ... $\mathbb{Q}e5-c4$ and ... $bxc4$.

Probably stronger is 14... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$ 15.f4 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $bxc4$ as in De la Villa Garcia – Martinez, Sitges 1993, though White looks better after 17.h5.

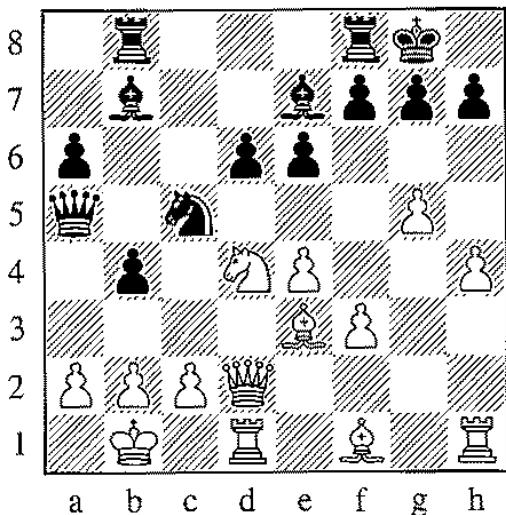
15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$

With the threat of 16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$, more or less forcing Black to advance the b-pawn and thereby block the b-file.

15... $b4$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5?$

Aiming for a4. It is also not easy to see how Black is going to create activity after 16... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$.

17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$



18.h5

White is arriving more than a tempo ahead in the attack.

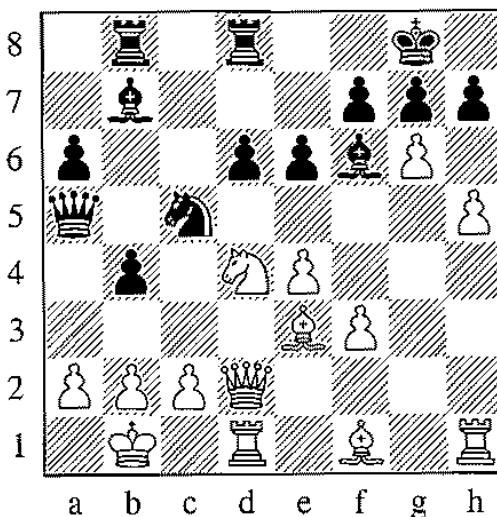
18... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$

Black is defending d6 in anticipation of the next move. This passive reaction in what should have been a race on two fronts illustrates how much Black's lack of strategy has succeeded in failing his position.

19.g6

The standard break, Black cannot keep all the lines in front of his king closed for much longer.

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



20.gxf7†!

There were a number of thematic options available, but this appears to be the strongest. White opens the g-file and weakens e6 with a move that first and foremost draws the black king out into the open.

20... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}g1$

The g7- and e6-squares are the two obvious points to attack in the black position. The rook zooms in on one of them.

21... $\mathbb{Q}a4?$

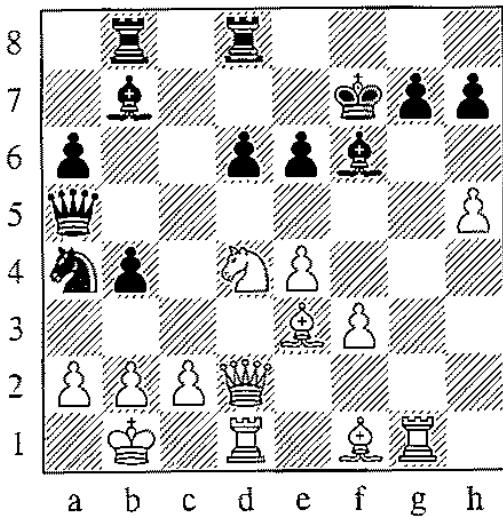
Putting all eggs in one basket.

We have now reached the first critical moment in the game. Often when I play in tournaments where there are live transmissions or when I see my games annotated in newspapers or magazines by people who are not playing at the top level themselves, I meet the 'Fritz-mentality'. In its simplicity it is a kind of apex problem where people cannot understand that chess is very difficult as they understand it easily when they are looking

at the tactical points pointed out by Fritz, Rybka and other silicon monsters. Probably the most extreme example of this was when a journalist I have never seen at a tournament criticised Nick Pert's 12.d5 against me at the 2007 British Championship because of "the obvious answer". Finding this obvious answer took 24 guesses (in a position with 37 legal moves), from the audience in Andrew Martin's commentary room.

I am sure that I, as an annotator, sometimes fall into the trap of thinking that the top players should see more than they actually do (or can), though I hope that my attempts to find the thoughts behind the moves shine through, as well as my general respect for anyone who risks their confidence by playing our difficult game.

It is with this sentiment in mind that I will try to explain what goes wrong for Tiger from this moment onwards. First of all we should state that White is winning, and why.



Black has a lot of weaknesses and only one active idea (... $\mathbb{Q}c3\#$). White's best possible strategy would be to combine an attack on the black weaknesses on g7 and e6 with a prophylactic measure against Black's counterplay. All of this sounds easy in theory and once the position is approached with this

attitude, it is not too difficult to find the best move.

In this connection it is very satisfying that human logic is superior to the computer's brute force even in such a concrete position as this.

Fritz 9 on my rather old laptop suggests 22. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ as the best move, offering White a large advantage. This evaluation is probably correct and the move is certainly not bad. However, it does slow down White's action on the kingside, as all this move does is react against Black's threat.

22. $\mathbb{Q}h3?$

This move fails in the opposite direction of 22. $\mathbb{Q}a1$, by attacking the black weaknesses without taking his counter chances into account.

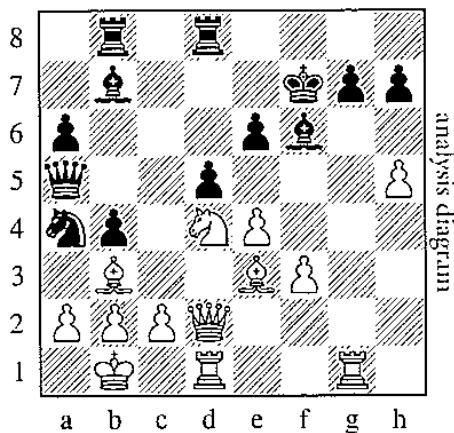
It seems to me that Tiger's mistake in this position was that he relied solely on calculation.

By paying attention to his opponent's threat and attacking the most obvious weakness in the opponent's position, focuses that are second nature for me because of my work on trying to understand chess rather than solve it with brute force, you can find the best moves rather quickly.

With this I do not intend to say that we should not calculate. However, we should not confuse ourselves with computers, which calculate millions of moves per second. We have a very limited scope and should only calculate that which is important. We can reduce the number of variations to calculate by tuning our focus to the most important moments and possibilities. I think so called "rule-thinking" can help to develop this intuition, and at times also assist us at the board.

The best move is 22. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$, preparing to go to b3 to defend the king, and attacking e6 just as

well as it would from h3. Now the check on c3 does not work, so Black is forced to play 22...d5 when we reply with 23.Qb3.



White is simply winning here. He is going to play 24.Qg5, eliminating the only defender in the black camp.

To be able to find this manoeuvre you might only need to calculate a little and have a bit of luck. Certainly there are no tactical problems for White to solve in this line. The difficulty might not even be choosing between the two lines, especially not for a player as gifted as Hillarp-Persson.

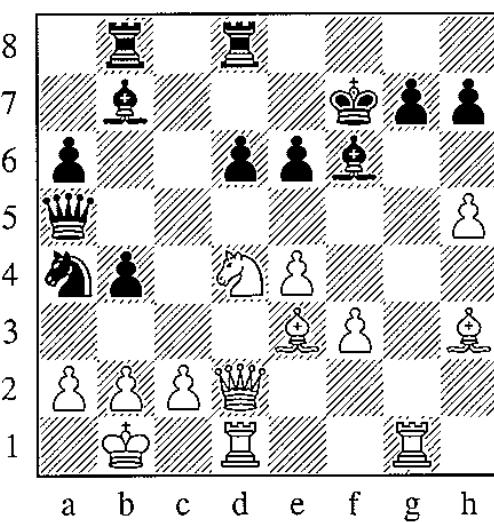
So, why did he not play it? I will hypothesise that he tried to solve the position with ordinary calculation, meaning that he selected some options and tried to work out the consequences. Though this is an important aspect of chess it will not give the best results in every position. Tiger is likely to have predicted the next few moves, but overlooked his opponent's 24th move, or simply evaluated the consequences of it incorrectly.

Had he instead looked at the position through the lens of a strategy, he would surely have played better and picked the fruit of his superior opening play. Many would believe that the mistake here was simply a matter of calculation, maybe even that it is the mistake on move 27 which is to blame for the poor result, as this is clearly a mistake in calculation.

In my opinion the problem is one of perception. The "rules" would have brought Tiger's attention to the essentials in the position. He would then have been able to calculate the position accurately within a minute or two and play the best move.

Some might think the explanation for White's poor play should instead be found in time trouble or simply that he had blundered. Obviously, I could have been wrong about the reasons. Luckily I met up with Hillarp-Persson soon after the first edition was published. As I had criticised a move played by my Swedish GM colleague, I was a bit nervous about what he might say when I handed him a copy of this book.

The first surprise was that he had not even looked at this game for as much as a second after the game had ended, and thus was completely unaware of the big chance he had missed later in the game. Also, he had not considered any move on move 22 other than bringing the bishop to h3. As he read the above comments, he sank into deep thought, muttering at some point that this was very alien to him, before walking away, still reading the book. He did not say anything about the game later on, and I did not find it appropriate to ask, so I am not absolutely sure what his final conclusions were. One thing was clear though, he was not insulted, and at that point, this was enough for me.



22...Qc3†!

Black seizes his chance and would be foolish not to do so. 22...Qd5 23.Qb3 is quite complicated, but does not really work out.

23.bxc3 bxc3 24.Qb3?

A very risky decision. Tiger is counting on keeping the extra piece in the upcoming complications.

Safer was 24.Qxe6† to help with the defence of the kingside. The downside is that ...Qd5† will arise in most lines, winning back the piece. However, White would also have the chance to exchange queens, which would attract some players, though not Tiger.

24.We2? loses in a way reminiscent of the game, so I shall not ruin the moment just yet.

24...Qxe4!

Is it really possible that Tiger had overlooked this punch at move 22 when he played Qh3? Certainly. He might also have seen it and miscalculated it. The move opens the pin down the b-file and therefore attacks the white queen.

25.Wc1!

The only move, as White cannot allow the queen to come to a3. 25.We2? is bad because of 25...Wa3 26.Qc1 Bxb3† with a winning attack.

25...Bxb3†?

A very tempting combination that works wonders in the game. This is one of those instances where the brilliancy of the idea unfortunately does not translate well into moves on the board. However, Tiger is just a normal fabulous grandmaster and not a perfect machine, so it works out well in practice. Tiger "blunders" by overlooking a most remarkable defence and thereby fails to block his opponent's outstandingly creative play.

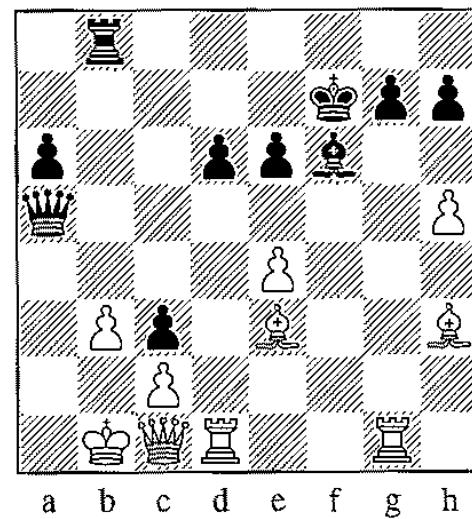
25...Qd5 was probably the objectively best move. Black has lots of play for the piece, probably enough, but White is fully in the game as well.

26.axb3 Bb8

The idea. Seemingly White cannot defend against ...Bxb3†.

27.fxe4?

We shall return to this moment shortly, but first let's enjoy Grooten's fabulous finish.

**27...Bxb3†!**

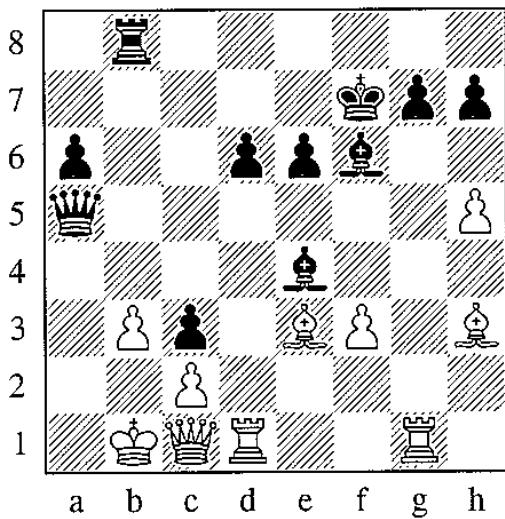
This is simply great, though no longer too difficult.

28.cxb3 c2†!

White resigned. After 29.Qxc2 Wc3† he is mated a bishop and two rooks up.
0-1

A brilliant finish to a not altogether correct game. It is easy to get trapped in the quest for perfection and fail to see that chess is so difficult that we should not aim for the perfection of the computer, but at the brilliancy of the artist. Tiger is doing this by playing 1.e4 and I am sure it will work out for him over time, though this game will have to be put down as a learning experience.

As promised, we are returning to White's 27th move where he could have played better:

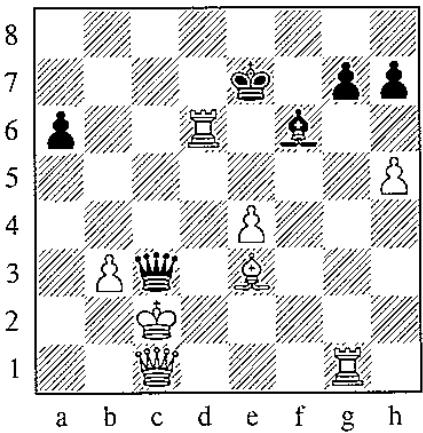


I think Tiger took the bishop out of resignation and envy at his opponent's brilliant play. Had he trained with my book *Practical Chess Defence* he might have found a defence fabulous enough to make it into the sequel to this book, if only there was a market for such a thing...

27... $\mathbb{R}xe6\#$!! was the only move. Black has to take the bishop, as it defends b3. 27... $\mathbb{K}xe6$ 28. $\mathbb{R}xd6\#$!! This might look like utter desperation. However, it is also a great defence. If Black takes the rook, he will be in great difficulty after the bishop check on f4.

But this is his only option, as moving the rook from d1 with tempo has given White enough time to take the hanging black pieces.

After 28... $\mathbb{K}e7?$ 29. $\mathbb{R}xe4$ $\mathbb{R}xb3\#$ 30. $\mathbb{C}xb3$ $c2\#$
31. $\mathbb{K}xc2$ $\mathbb{W}c3\#$



analysis diagram

White has an extra option compared to the game in 32. $\mathbb{Q}d1$, leaving him in a winning position.

Interestingly, after I had annotated this game I saw it as a puzzle in *Chess Today*, where the focus was on White's 27th move. Though I think it is a great puzzle, I also see this as an example of how chess can be made to look easier by chess journalists even if they do not want to.

With this we turn the page to the first rule...

Chapter 1

Bring all your Toys to the Nursery Party

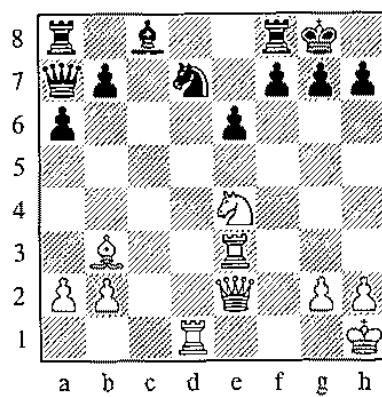


Chess is at times like Ice Hockey where play is going on with one of the chessmen not participating, known as power play. This happens particularly often when one of the players neglects to bring one or more pieces into the game.

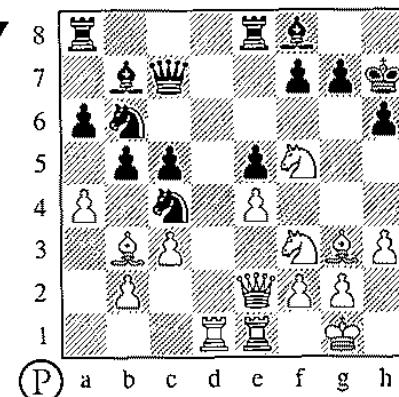
Diagram preview

On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

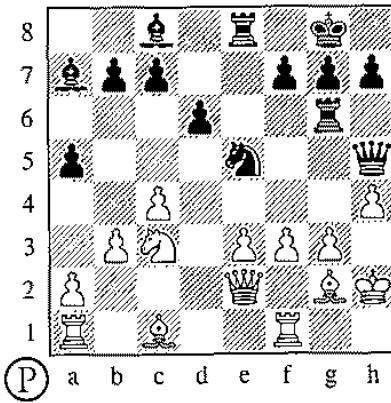
Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



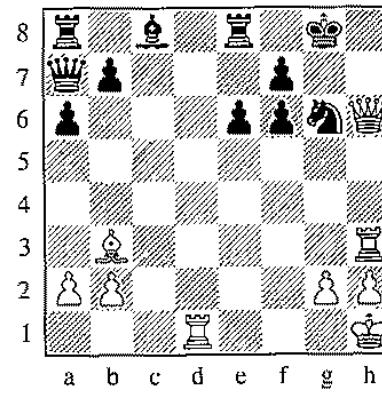
How to establish a defence?
(see page 40)



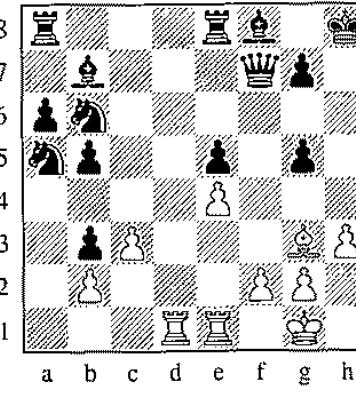
How to initiate an attack?
(see page 48)



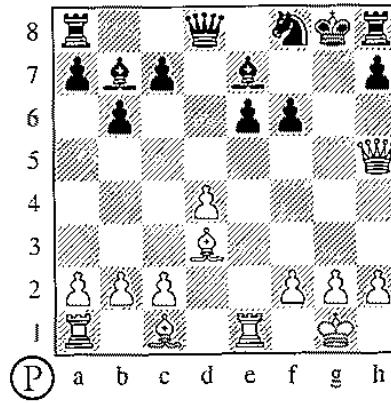
How to strike?
(see page 31)



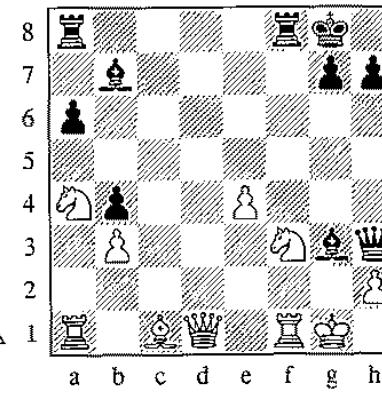
What win did Yusupov miss?
(see page 44)



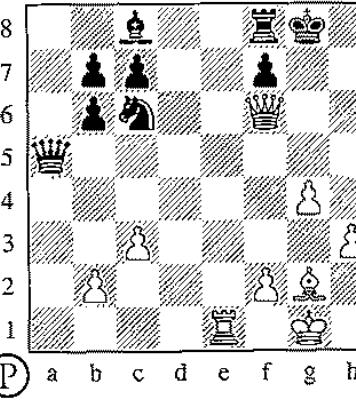
What is the point behind the
winning line?
(see page 49)



How to continue the attack?
(see page 34)



What is the best defence?
(see page 45)



What is the best defence?
(see page 53)

Whenever I lecture on this topic I use a simple metaphor to explain what is happening to us when we forget the most important rule in attacking chess, and maybe in chess altogether: to get all of our pieces to work together towards the goal we have established. (I should say this book is not a book on strategy. We have already established that we are attacking the king.) It goes like this:

Jacob: Do you know why toddlers steal each other's toys?

Student: No.

Jacob: Because when a child plays with a toy it brings it to life. A toy that is alive is more fun.

Student (perplexed): I see.

Jacob: If you think about it, it is exactly the same way with chess players. We want to do something with our active pieces and not waste our time bringing our lifeless toys out of the box.

Student: Box? You mean pieces we have captured?

Jacob: Never mind.

As you can see, this metaphor is not always successful, but I find it illuminating all the same. I have noticed in games by both grandmasters and club players that it is a human trait we never completely shake off. In this chapter you will see Kasparov and Yusupov as two examples of players who at times have failed to emphasise enough the need to include the last piece, and these two distinctive gentlemen were victorious in the two greatest attacking games in chess history.

If the first comparison did not work for you, then think of this one. Chess is at times like Ice Hockey where play is going on with one of the chessmen not participating, known as power play. This happens particularly often when one of the players neglects to bring one or more pieces into the game. If you want a '5 against 4'

situation, where you are able to outplay the opponent because of simple superiority in manpower, bring all your pieces into the attack. But if you want to lose, the easiest way to organise this is probably to leave one of your own pieces at the edge of the rink.

In the first game of this chapter we shall see how powerful it is when you are able to bring in all the pieces, six in this case, to play together in the attack on the white king.

Tibor Karolyi – Jonny Hector

Budapest Gambit
Copenhagen 1985

1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e5

Though this gambit is somewhat dubious, it can still be used occasionally with deadly effect. It was around this time that Hector opened with 1.h4 in some games, so his play in this game must be said to be relatively mainstream.

3.dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

4. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ is probably more promising, but who am I to talk about the theory of the Budapest Gambit?

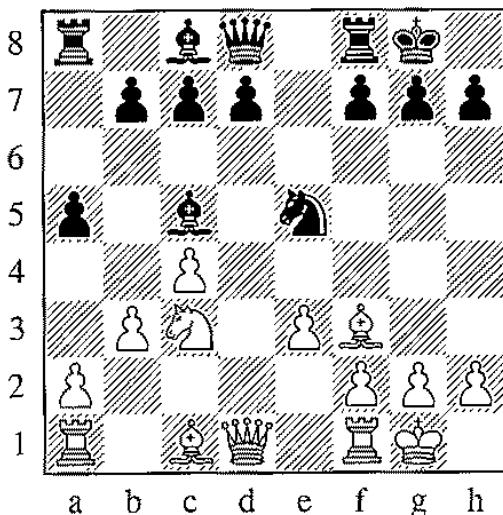
4... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 5.e3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

White is playing cautious developing moves. I do not want to discuss opening theory in this book, so it suffices to say that he does not appear to be on the path to an advantage.

6... $\mathbb{Q}gxe5$ 7.0–0 0–0 8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a5!?

Played with the coming rook manoeuvre in mind. It is usual for Black to only push the a-pawn in this line after White threatens to push b2-b4, but no major drawbacks of doing it unprovoked are apparent.

9.b3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$



11. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

The bishop is rather exposed here, but White is hoping that it will be very well placed on g2.

Another game shows that Black already has good attacking potential in this position: 11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{E}a6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 14. $\mathbb{W}d5$ $\mathbb{E}h6!$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ c6 16. $\mathbb{Q}f6!$ gxf6 17. $\mathbb{W}d3$ with chances both ways, Nyback – Mamedyarov, Antalya 2004. The game was later drawn.

11... $\mathbb{E}a6!?$

Before playing ...d6 to include the bishop in the game, Black transfers the rook to the kingside.

12. $g3?$

This move seriously weakens the light squares of the kingside, but White is hoping that the bishop will be able to defend them. Although this might be true, there is a more serious defect with this move. The dark knight is spreading its great power to all the weak light squares in the white position and it is quite fitting that the last move of the game is performed by this proud stallion.

12. $f4!?$ was a better move for this reason.

12... $\mathbb{E}h6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}a4$

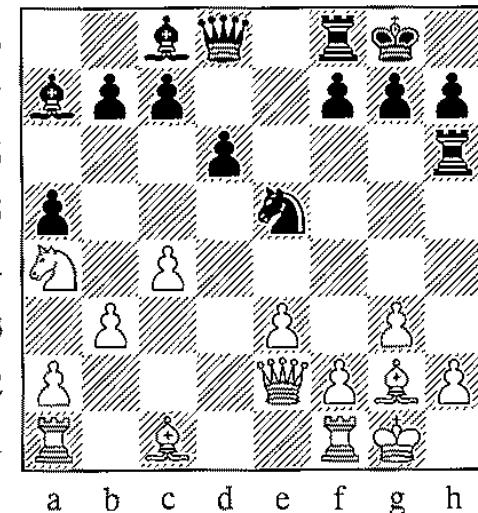
White's position is already getting difficult. After normal moves he will quickly find himself under a strong attack: 13. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ d6 14. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and it is not unlikely that White will lose in a miniature, just as in the game.

13... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

14. $\mathbb{W}d5!?$ $\mathbb{W}g5!$ is good for Black.

14... $d6$ 15. $\mathbb{W}e2$

This move was probably played to be able to meet ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ with a sensible move and to protect h2 indirectly.



The position is already quite attractive for Black. It is easy to get the feeling that all he needs to do is to move the queen to the kingside and White will be unable to withstand the pressure. This is probably too simplistic an approach. As said, it is necessary not to box in your own players and spend the little extra time getting the last of your heavy shooters on to the ice.

15... $\mathbb{E}e8!$

For the reasons stated above this is the star move of the game. There are so many interesting active moves, and Hector takes the time to improve his position even further by including his worst placed piece in the game. It will be no surprise to the experienced

attacker that this rook plays a decisive, though supporting, role.

16.f3

White is running out of good options. Only desperate measures like 16.c5? offered any kind of future prospects.

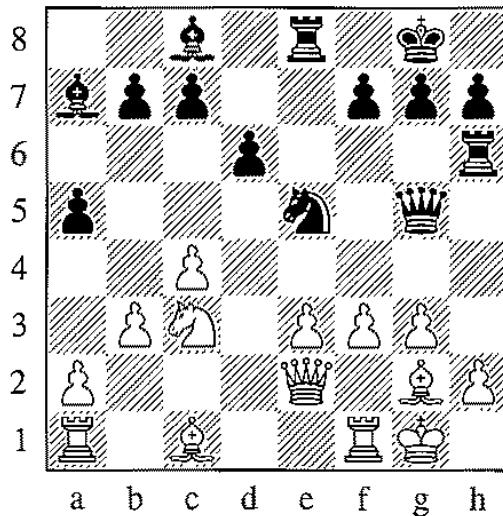
16... $\mathbb{W}g5!$

The queen was the last piece that needed to join the attack.

17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

White is lost. He could have tried other moves, but his circumspect play has been without vision or strategy. Although we are only at move 17, he finds himself facing all of Black's pieces, whilst he has only brought three into the game himself.

17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ did offer more resistance, but after 17... $\mathbb{W}h5$ 18.h4 Black continues to bring his pieces closer, for example with 18...f5? with the possibility of ...f4 and ... $\mathbb{Q}g6xf4/h4$ afterwards, backed up by the rook and the queen.

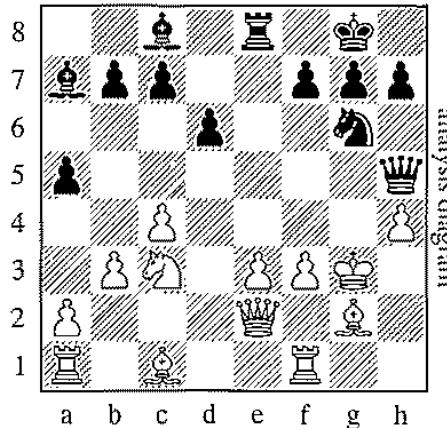


17... $\mathbb{W}h5$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}h1$

This is the last move White made in the game and it allowed a nice finish. It is therefore tempting to criticise this move, but this would

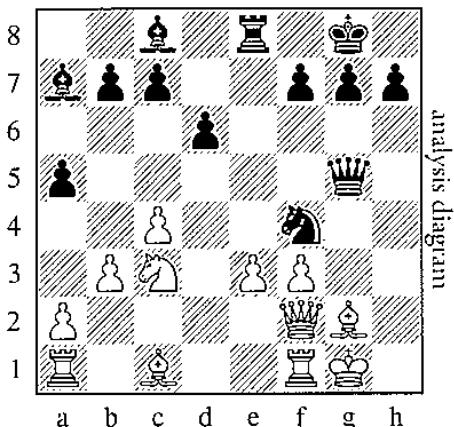
blur the reality that White has already wasted a lot of time with this bishop and thus can no longer defend successfully.

He could have tried 18.h4, when Hector probably would have attacked the newly emerged weakness immediately with 18... $\mathbb{E}g6$. After 19. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ he would have to bring the full flair of his inventive attacking play to the board to find 19... $\mathbb{E}xg3!$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$, which leaves White without a sufficient defence. I am tempted to stop the variation here, but as White is a whole rook up I have the feeling that just a hint of proof would be appropriate.



White can try to defend h4 with 21. $\mathbb{E}h1$, but Black will then play 21... $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$, when White lacks a good defence to ... $\mathbb{Q}f4$. It seems superfluous to point out that Black has compensation for the exchange. All his pieces are skating towards the same goal, to stay within the ice hockey metaphor. Meanwhile White has been making flying tackles in all directions, hoping the opponent would show up for them.

The other option is to try to run with 21. $\mathbb{Q}h2$. Black can then choose among his many options and, for example, select the most natural continuation, 21... $\mathbb{W}xh4\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$, when after a possible move like 23. $\mathbb{W}f2$, Black will play 23... $\mathbb{W}g5$.

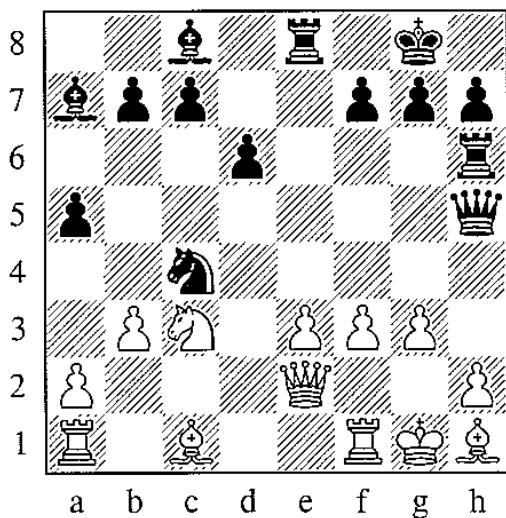


White's best option seems to be giving up the queen for a sizable amount of material. He has lost some pawns and his pieces are all badly placed, which turns out to be the deciding factor. The following line is not fully forced, but gives a fair representation of what would follow. Again I am tempted to leave it out, as it is a bit long, but you can always skip it and take me at my word.

24.exf4 $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{W}c5\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}d4$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ h5! The threat of ...h4# and ...h3 is quite a big pie to swallow. 28. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}d2$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}f2$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $\mathbb{W}e3$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$ Black wins. Many deviations are possible, but I see no hope of salvation along the way.

Back to the game, where Black has a difficult choice to make. He has an ocean of winning possibilities. True to style, Hector finds a very attractive one.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$



White resigned. After 19.bxc4 Black will follow up with 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$, which quickly leads to mate.

0-1

The next game clearly illustrates the principle of bringing in all the pieces. In it a very talented youth, later the highest rated player in the world, if only they had rating back in those days, misplays an attack horribly, allowing his opponent to get away with great carelessness early in the opening. But Black in return commits the same mistake as his opponent and forces a crisis at a moment when he should have thought about neutralising the power of White's light-squared bishop, either with deep tactics, or by just bringing the rook out of the garage where it was collecting dust. As a result White gets the chance to come up with a glorious finish.

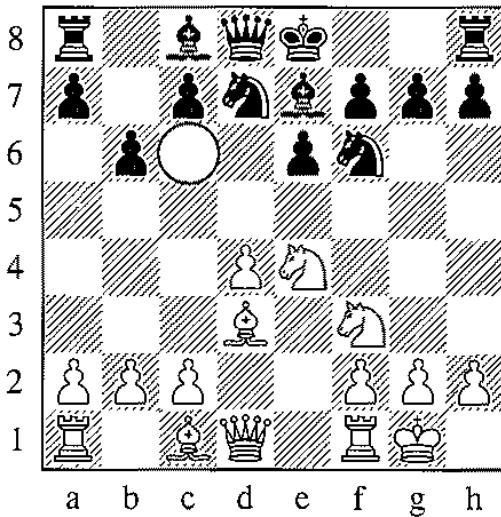
This is a good place to say that these ideas work in dynamic interaction with other ideas. There are of course times when it is stronger not to bring in the remaining piece and instead strike immediately. We shall mainly be dealing with such examples in Chapters 2 and 7. What I wish to convey is that in a great majority of cases we need to bring more pieces into the attack. Though this is evidently correct I have not seen it phrased in the ten books or so on attacking chess I have at home. This could be because it is such a basic layer in the foundation of attacking technique that previous theorists have not found it necessary to talk about. In the books on my shelves the main themes are sacrifices and dragging the king into the open, themes we shall deal with in Volume 2.

Having lectured on and investigated this subject for almost a decade, I have come to the realisation that it is exactly in piece activity that most mistakes are committed in highly dynamic positions. It is very basic, but then even many grandmasters would improve their play with a better command of the basics.

Miguel Najdorf – Gliksberg

French Defence
Lodz 1929

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Qc3 dxе4 4.Qxe4 Qd7
5.Qf3 Qe7 6.Qd3 Qgf6 7.0-0 b6?



This move is a mistake. Black is as yet undeveloped and will soon experience great troubles on the light squares.

Better is 7...c5, which is still debated in modern games.

8.Qe5!

If White placidly develops his pieces with standard moves Black would be able to play ...Qb7 and get away with this early weakening. With this move White exploits the weakness before it is patched up.

8...Qb7 9.Qxf6†

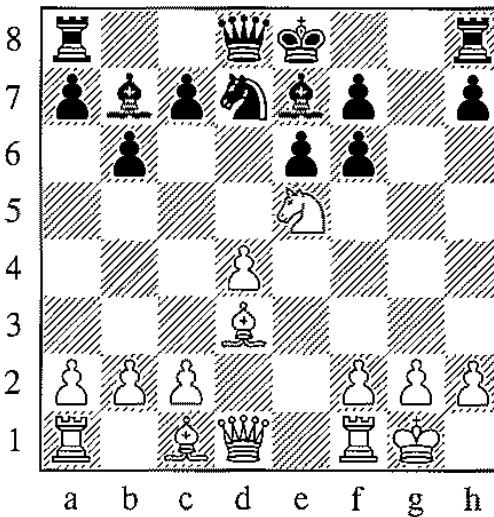
This is a good move, but White could already consider sacrificing a piece with 9.Qxf7?!, when he would get a lot of compensation for his piece – two pawns and a knight firmly positioned on e6.

9...gxsf6?

Black is displaying great optimism. He is expecting an exchange of knights on d7. After

this he would be ready to castle queenside and attack the white king down the g-file. This turns out to be a bit too naïve, as White is not cooperating.

More prudent was 9...Qxf6. White would then play 10.Qe2, with decent control over the centre and attacking chances on the kingside.



10.Qxf7!

A very tempting sacrifice, especially since it comes with the cop-out of giving perpetual check. Though few would seek to draw the game this early on, it is still good to have this insurance policy, especially as it is impossible to see everything from afar and navigation by gut feeling is necessary.

10...Qxf7

10...Qg8 does not work. White has 11.Qxd8 and 13.Qxb7.

11.Qh5† Qg8 12.Qg4† Qf7 13.Qh5† Qg8

White has given a few checks, just to show who is boss and to avoid humiliating the opponent with too quick a win. It is now time to lay down a strategy for how the attack should be carried out, meaning: where a strike is most likely to break through (see Chapter 5) and thus where the pieces are best placed. Only then, when we know what we are trying

to achieve, does it make sense to think about concrete stuff, such as what our next move should be.

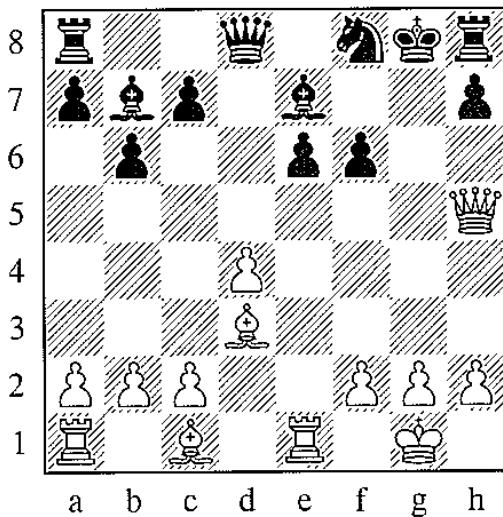
In the game Najdorf was persuaded to follow a tempting idea and forgot to think about where his pieces would be most effective in their attacking ambitions, and where the opponent's pieces would defend their ruler in the best possible way.

14.♗e1

This is not a bad move in itself, but it is a bit careless. White has no strategy for bringing in all his pieces, but is seeking immediate tactical satisfaction. The best move was 14.♗h6, though it is still not too late to play this on the next move. Black immediately took the chance that was given to him and played:

14...♝f8!

This would not be possible if the bishop had come out first, as a queen check on g4 would decide the game immediately. From f8 the knight controls some important squares and enjoys the option of going to g6 later.



15.♕xe6?

This move looks flashy and has therefore been praised by the annotators en masse, though it is actually a rather basic mistake throwing away all of White's advantage. With it White tries

to capitalise on his luck with direct measures, while allowing not one, but two of his men to remain on the bench.

Because of this Black has the chance to organise a defence. That he fails to do so and loses to a sensational finish is in itself not an expression of Najdorf's brilliance.

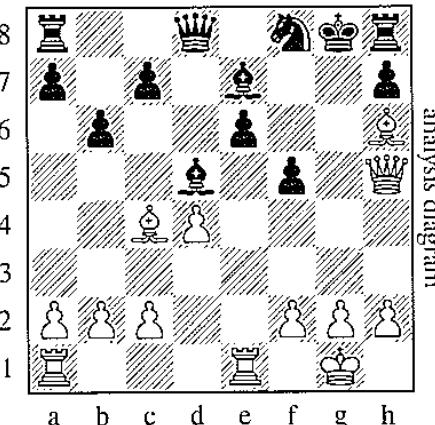
15.♗h6!

This was the correct move. The bishop comes onto the ice and launches straight for the goal. The main difference compared to the game is that this move delays the confrontation until a moment when all the white pieces are in play and in this way leaves Black guessing to the end. For a start it sets up the threat of ♜g4†, with utter devastation, giving White the chance to set up further threats while he is slowly moving his pieces closer.

15...f5

The bishop now has no function on d3 and moves to a new position. In theory we would like to bring in the a1-rook, but at the moment this is not so easy, as e1 is the only relevant square. But it will get its chance soon enough. This is an important distinction to make: **We want to include all the pieces in the attack, but if one of them has no easy route to join in, it is often better to wait until circumstances change before making use of it.**

16.♗c4 ♜d5



17.♗e3!

Rather than dealing with tactical measures, the pieces are moved into striking distance of the enemy monarch.

17...♛e8

17...♝g6 18.♝xe6! is an important point.

18.♝g3† ♛g6 19.♝xd5 exd5 20.♝e1

The last piece finally joins in, and with a threat. Black has no good moves anymore.

For example there is:

20...♚f7 21.♝xc7

It is time to resign.

15...♝xe6 16.♝c4

Also in this line it is not possible to continue the attack without moving the bishop again. Basically h7 is not a target, though it is useful to control the g6-square in some lines.

16...♜d6

Simpler was maybe 16...♜d7!, as the rook would be protected on e8 in various lines, but the text move is sufficient as well.

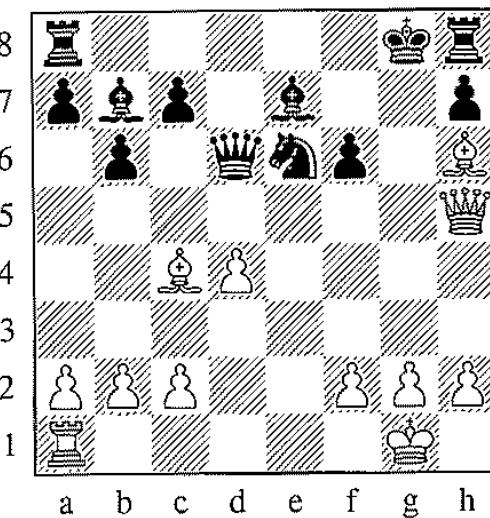
17.♝h6

White is bringing in his pieces at last.

As I said before the game, there are times when it is necessary to sacrifice first and then build up the attack. We will talk about such situations at length in Chapter 7 on the concepts of Evolution and Revolution. Chess rarely offers us a simple journey from A to B that can be followed by a simplistic reading of the principles in this book. In this game White had to act quickly with 8.♝e5, 9.♝xf6† and 10.♝xf7 or the opportunity would have disappeared.

The difference between that and the choice White made on move 15 is that in the first instance the option was created by a temporary weakening that could easily be repaired, while here Black will not be able to repair the damage done to his kingside in the few moves it would take to bring in the remaining pieces. Black now knows where he is being attacked and

could defend if only he brought in his pieces to defend the weak squares. For this reason White had better keep his opponent guessing.

**17...♝f8?**

Black commits the same sin as White. Instead of making use of his rook, he is attempting to solve his problems immediately, by using a defender that was already contributing.

It was necessary to stop the pressure down the c4-g8 diagonal. He had two ways of doing this, both leaving White with nothing better than delivering the perpetual check, one based on common sense and one based on a curious tactic.

The most logical reaction is to bring in the rook with 17...♜d8!, and after 18.♝e1 play 18...♜d5, when Black has defended the weak e6-square and White needs to take the draw.

17...b5 18.♝b3 c5?! is trickier. After the compulsory 19.dxc5 ♜c6, White, faced with a threat to g2 and the potential queen exchange on c5, will likewise have to give perpetual check. (Note how this defence does not work without the two pawn moves, as White has d4-d5 options after a check on g4.)

From these variations we can see how important it was for White to keep his options

open. Had he included his two remaining pieces in the attack earlier, Black would not have had these options to escape unharmed.

18.♗e1!

The last piece finally joins the attack and as the defence is not ready, everything comes together.

18...♜c8

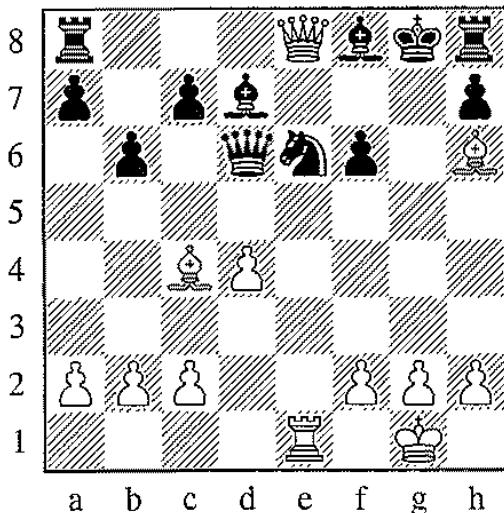
The sad consequence of Black's last move is that instead of bringing the rook into play, he now has to shut it out by putting the other bishop back on its original square. There was no choice as the desperate attempt to shut down the bishop with 18...♝e8!? 19.♕xe8 ♜d5 allows White to finish with a picturesque mate: 20.♕xe6! ♜xe6 21.♕xe6† ♜xe6 22.♕xe6 mate.

19.♕e8!

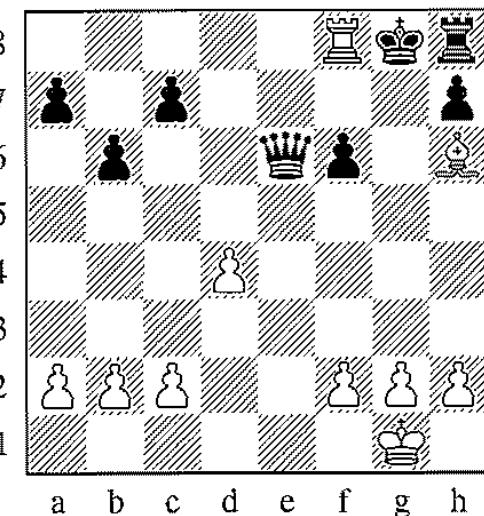
The white queen invades the heart of the black position on what used to be the black king's dwelling place. Black has no defence against the combination carried out in the game.

19...♜d7?!

Trying to return a rook as a peace offering, but the young Najdorf is not about to get distracted.



20.♕xe6!! ♜xe8 21.♕xe8† ♜e6 22.♕xe6† ♜xe6 23.♕xf8



Mate!

1–0

A stunning finish! On the one hand, we should acknowledge that chess is very difficult and that Najdorf played 22 great moves and one inspired, though ultimately inaccurate, move, making it a great game by anyone's standard. On the other hand, we should learn the lesson from Najdorf's mistake by understanding exactly how it came about, as it is so much less painful to learn from mistakes committed by someone else, than it is to have to learn from your own.

To illustrate that this example of a top player forgetting to include the remaining piece in the attack was not just an isolated incident in a game played before the player became great, we will follow up with an example of how an experienced 35-year-old top grandmaster can commit the same sin continuously in the same game.

In the superb book *Attack and Defence* (co-written with Mark Dvoretsky), with lectures taken from one of the five sessions at the Yusupov School (which existed 1990-1992), you can find a lecture by Artur Yusupov called

Missed Brilliances. In this chapter he analyses various games where he had a strong attack, but at some point went wrong with the details. When I first read this chapter I found the simplest way of explaining why Artur missed the wins was to say he failed to get his final piece to join the attack.

When I finally met Artur years later I offered him this possible explanation for the mistakes in these games, to which he said: "I always tell my children: always attack with all your pieces. But then when I am at the board myself I suddenly think: bah, I do not need this stupid piece, I will mate him without it..."

From *Missed Brilliances* the following game was the most fascinating. It was played three years after the original lectures and must have been added to the material when the lectures were rewritten for the book. In it Yusupov builds up a strong attacking position and then misses one win after the other, all of them based on including the bishop on b3 into the game.

Artur Yusupov – Vassily Ivanchuk

Queen's Gambit Accepted
Tal Memorial, Riga 1995

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘xc4 4.e3

True to style, Yusupov is not overly aggressive, unless forced to be so. As two of his best ever games were played against Ivanchuk, one of them an all time favourite among chess fans, it seems that the Ukrainian genius has a talent for bringing the best out of Yusupov, maybe by provoking him too much?

4...a6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.♗b3 ♘f6 7.0-0

This position is a tabiya of modern theory, but at the time when this game was played the theory had yet to be developed.

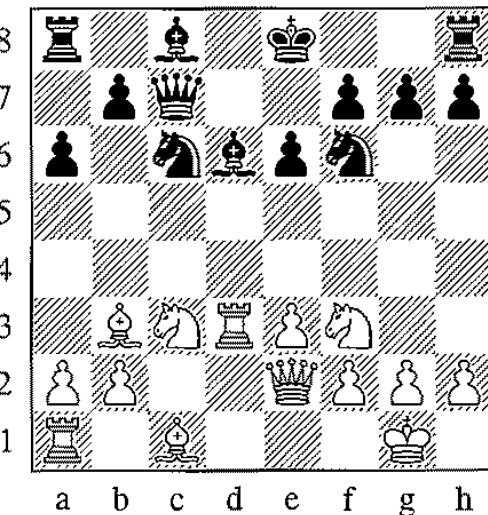
7...♗c6 8.♕e2

Again not the most aggressive option, but White is developing his pieces, so he can still cause Black some problems. These days White strives towards positions with an isolated pawn rather than the close-to-symmetrical position that arises in the game.

8...cx d4 9.♗d1 d3!

I like this move because by keeping the position closed Black manages to restrict White's options to exploit his lead in development.

10.♗xd3 ♖c7 11.♗c3 ♘d6?!



This is the provocation. Ivanchuk wants to take control of the dark squares in the centre, exploiting that the white rook is no longer on f1. This comes at the cost of valuable time (Black has not castled!) and therefore looks quite dangerous. I personally find it hard to imagine that Ivanchuk would have taken the same liberty against Kasparov or another of the top hackers, though he at this point should have been well aware of what Yusupov was capable of once awakened.

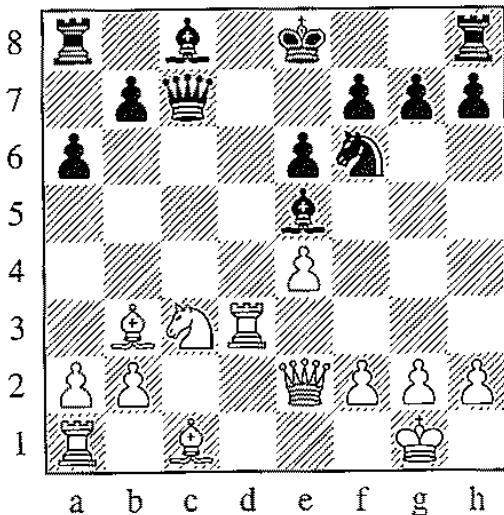
11...♗c5 has later proved to be okay for Black.
12.h3 0-0 13.e4 ♘d7, for example, was fine in Antunes – Van Wely, Linares 1995.

12.e4 ♘e5

This was the point behind Black's last move. After the exchange of knights Black is hoping to have a strong bishop on e5, which restricts the e4-pawn and in general dominates the white position while the pawns on a6 and e6 are limiting the white knight and bishop. If White does not do something quickly he runs the risk of being much worse – a typical example of Black playing for structure and thus forcing White to play for time.

12... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ was played later, but also comes across as quite time-consuming.

13. $\mathbb{Q}xe5 \mathbb{Q}xe5$



14. f4!

This pawn sacrifice is the most active, as well as the most logical, continuation. White has an advantage in time, but could easily be structurally worse. White should therefore invest material and increase his overdraft on his long-term account, rather than risk Black catching up in development and establishing himself firmly on the dark squares.

If only one move is wasted, for example with 14. h3?, Black would win back the time lost without having to give up anything in return.

In the game Black has no time to complete his development, but instead has to take the pawn,

exchanging his best piece for White's worst one on c1, as well as allowing the rook on a1 to come into the game with a gain of tempo.

It was possible to play 14.g3, but most grandmasters would feel uneasy about this move, feeling they have put a heavy responsibility on their own shoulders, with the bishop on b3 and Black on his way to playing ...b5 and ... $\mathbb{Q}b7$, aiming at the long diagonal. Still 14.g3 is possibly good enough to ensure a small plus, as Black is struggling with his development.

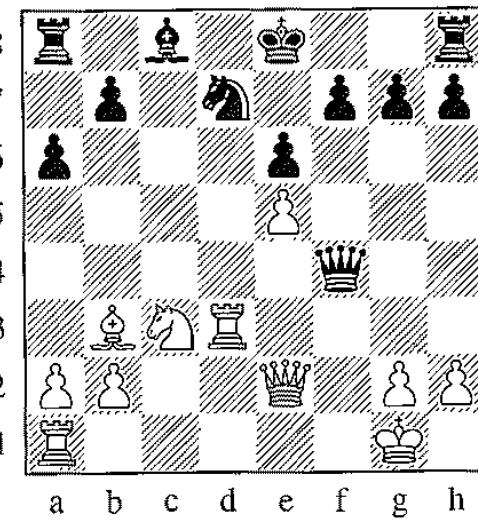
14... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 16. e5

Black cannot be allowed to put the queen on e5, from where she would be out of reach of all the white pieces.

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

The knight cannot jump to g4, which looks like a winner at first sight, because of 17.g3 and subsequent gains of tempo.

We have arrived at the second critical moment. White has a difficult choice between two tempting moves. The first gains more time, but gives up the strong e-pawn. The other costs a bit more time, but holds on to the pawn. The choice is not an easy one.



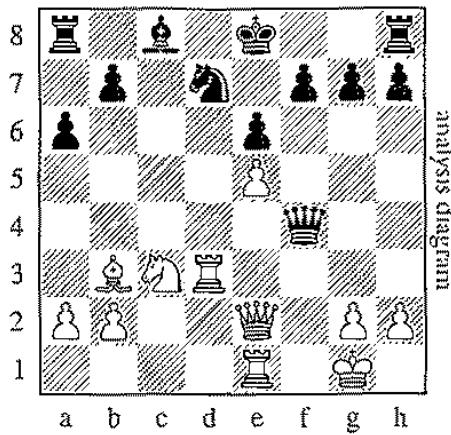
So, what kind of reasoning should we use to make a distinction between these two options?

Certainly calculation would be an important tool in working out which option is preferable, but it cannot be the only tool. It is simply not possible to calculate the position to the end. But if we know what we want to achieve, we will have a map with which to navigate through the calculations.

17. $\mathbb{E}f1!$?

After thinking about this position, knowing how the game went, having consulted an analysis engine and in general speculated for many hours about this game over the last five years, I have come to the conclusion that, though very tempting, this is not the strongest option.

It was better to hold on to the majestic e-pawn with 17. $\mathbb{E}e1!$. There will still be time to chase the queen and make use of the lead in development, but once the pawn is surrendered Black will find it easier to find squares for his minor pieces. Below I have given some short narratives about how the game might have continued in this case.



a) 17... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ is tempting, but not that strong. Black is letting go of the pressure on e5 and thereby giving White freedom to transfer his knight to d6 or f6 via c4. The next move would be 18. $\mathbb{E}f1$ followed by 19. $\mathbb{E}g3$ attacking g7 and suggesting $\mathbb{E}g4$. It is not impossible to imagine White can get in a strong check on

a4, ruining Black's chances of castling. Or that he can triple his heavy artillery on the f-file. With the pawn still on e5 Black could find it impossible to defend f7 and his position could collapse. One of my worries after giving away the e-pawn is that Black can play ...f6 or ...f5 in such variations.

b) After the safer 17...0-0 White could play 18. $\mathbb{E}h3$ with a strong initiative. The black queen looks annoying on f4 (undoubtedly this was one of the reasons Yusupov decided to sacrifice the pawn), but it appears White can play around it. At the same time Black is struggling to defend his kingside.

The pivotal factor to me is that it is hard to see how Black can complete his development. The knight is quite exposed on d7 and has nowhere to go. In many lines White will put his queen on d6, from where it will dominate Black's entire army. In such a scenario the queen would be Black's only piece with any freedom. And all of this for only one pawn!

In the game Yusupov went for an equally interesting move, sharpening the battle by giving up the strong e-pawn for a bit of extra time.

By the way, it is worth noting that 17. $\mathbb{E}ad1$ leads nowhere. Black is doing well structurally and will find it relatively easy to solve his problems with 17...0-0!, allowing White to get two minor pieces for his rook. With the attack relegated to only a faint memory, it would then be time to worry about the structural problems. With no threats to the black king, the e5-pawn will be transformed from a fierce supporter of hostilities to a grave liability in the endgame.

17... $\mathbb{W}xe5$

It is rude to decline such a kind offer.

18. $\mathbb{B}e3$

Gaining time is what it was all about.

18... $\mathbb{W}d4$ 19. $\mathbb{B}d1$

White has many other options in what follows, but as I have found no real improvements, I do not find them too relevant for our discussion.

19... $\mathbb{W}a7!$

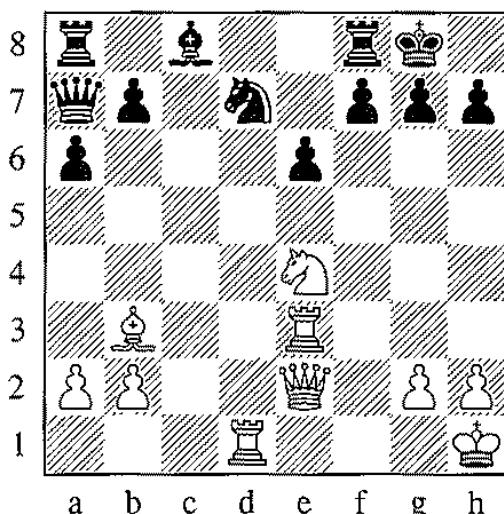
The only move. After 19... $\mathbb{W}b6$ White would have 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ $f xe6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ with a winning attack. Next the queen would give a check on h5, leading the army to victory.

20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

I used to think this was an important little move. My idea went as follows: White will have to play $\mathbb{Q}e4$ and $\mathbb{Q}h1$ anyway and can do so in any order, while he might as well force Black to play ...0–0 immediately, not giving him the chance to play ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$.

However, it turns out that after 20. $\mathbb{Q}h1?$ Black should castle anyway, as White's position is not without venom after 20... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$, when he will start an immediate attack on g7 with $\mathbb{W}e5$ on the next move. The black knight is not as stable on f6 as I had imagined.

20...0–0 21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$



We have probably reached the first position in the game where Black has to find a difficult move. He has played his idea in the opening and has had sensible options on each move since then, with few available alternatives. There have been chances to be inventive, for example 18... $\mathbb{W}c5?$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}b6!$, with interesting complications. But this is the first time where there are obvious problems to solve and no natural moves to choose between.

Ivanchuk did not come close to solving the position in the game and Yusupov apparently did not feel that this was a critical moment either. His notes skate past this moment with the elegance of an Olympic figure skater.

From here on we will scrutinise the options for the two players to a greater degree than previously in the game, as our theme starts playing louder and louder.

The main objective for Black is to bring more pieces to the defence before he is run over by the hostile white pieces. He should have a reasonable chance of a successful defence as White is missing the support often provided in an attack by central pawns. Also, White is not yet attacking any weak squares. It is key to realise that at the moment only the knight is providing some defensive cover for the black king.

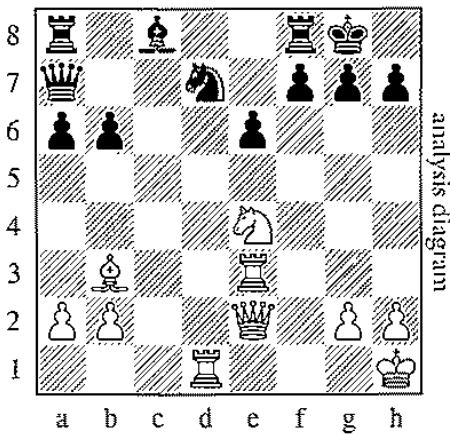
21... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$

A grave error. In his annotations Yusupov writes that this is a natural move, bringing the knight closer to the kingside, which is probably a reflection of his thoughts at the board more than the result of deep analysis. This is a slightly superficial comment that illustrates exactly how difficult chess is and how deep we sometimes have to go to find the best moves.

If we look at the white pieces' attacking potential, they are mainly aimed at the squares e6 and f7, but can quickly be swung towards h7 (as in the game).

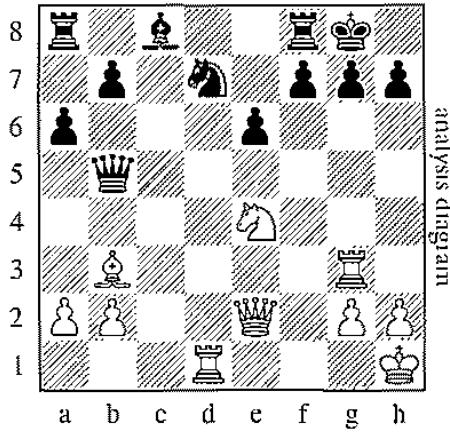
According to our principle it should be Black's main objective to bring other pieces into the defence. For this reason a few moves come to our attention.

The first of these is 21...b6 (a preferable cousin to 21...b5).



The idea is mainly to bring his strongest piece back into play with ... $\mathbb{Q}a7-c7-e5$, but Black also has the option of including the bishop into the game in some lines. After this White has many attacking ideas that fully justify his material investment, but none that promise an advantage.

While this is the most logical option, there is another viable variation. Black can choose to bring his queen to the defence with a gain of tempo: 21... $\mathbb{Q}b6!$? 22. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b5!$



Black should be able to keep the balance here as well. White can win two minor pieces for a

rook, but Black has two pawns for it and should look to the endgame with confidence.

It is also not clear to me that 21... $\mathbb{Q}b8!$? is a bad move. The aim of the move is the same as with the two moves analysed above, but it feels awkward, as White can put his knight on d6 and all the black pieces look passive. Still there is no obvious path to an advantage.

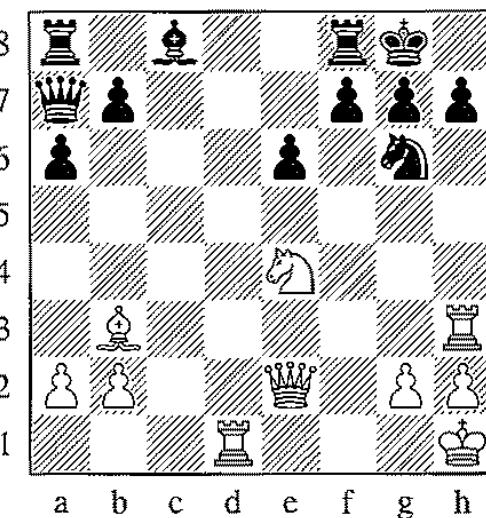
With his move Ivanchuk seems to be defending against the idea of putting the knight on d6, but this is not White's primary aim.

22. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$

Since Black has defended against one of his attacking ideas White switches to his other idea, which proves to be even more dangerous.

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

This was forced as White was threatening to pick up a piece with 23. $\mathbb{Q}h5$. And he wins by force after such continuations as 22... $h6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$ and 22... $f6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $h6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$. In both cases White wins with a strong attack against the black king by tearing up his defences with a sacrificial ram.



After Black has wasted important time manoeuvring the knight to a worse square, White has three forced winning lines, all

characterised by being nearly impossible to calculate till the end. It is positions like these that Yusupov constantly misplayed in *Missed Brilliancies*. For this reason it makes sense for us to have a close look at the white pieces individually and see how he can get the most out of them.

To do this we will do well to recognise that our attack is likely to be successful if it is directed towards h7, though we will also keep a keen eye on f7.

The queen will join the attack on h5, either now or in a moment. The rook on h3 seems well placed to this effect. The knight on e4 is also ready to join the attack on h7 from either f6 or g5 and therefore seems well placed on e4.

It is not easy to bring the rook on d1 to attack h7, but it is well placed on the open file, from where it can quickly join the attack, for example by going to d8.

This leaves us only with the bishop, which is not attacking h7 from b3 in any way, but can quickly join the attack from c2.

It is therefore tempting to say that White should play 23.Qc2 and not take other options into consideration. Though coming across as too simplistic, this conclusion is actually not bad. This move would transpose to the note to the 24th move and win in a convincing and uncomplicated way.

23.♕h5

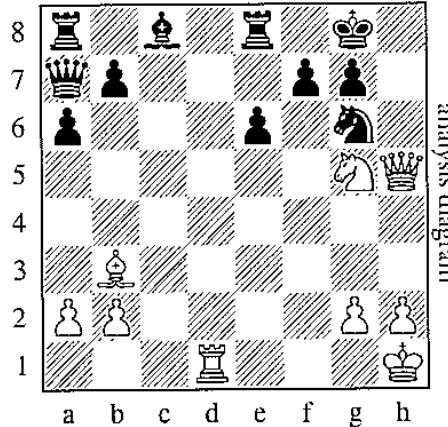
This is also sensible. Black needs to react to the threat of mate in one. What is surprising is that besides these two natural winning moves, White's position is so overwhelming that he could also win with 23.Qf6†, transposing to the game, and Dolmatov's elegant line:

23.♖xh7?

Dolmatov indicated in his annotations that this was the last chance White had to win the game. This would go against everything

I have been saying about bringing in the pieces if it were true. Actually, it is a rather complicated win and can only be carried through if the remaining wood is subsequently thrown on the fire.

23...♚xh7 24.♔h5† ♚g8 25.♕g5 ♜e8



White has a few good options. The most elegant win is:

26.♗f1 ♜e7 27.♔c2!

Black's position is collapsing.

The point of this position is that the strength of the pieces is not a numerical value, as computers and nursery teachers will have us believe, but what they can do in the given position, so is therefore relative. Here I would not offer more than a few pennies for the black pieces in the far corner. Where matters are decided White has an extra queen and bishop. He has not started to reclaim any of his investments yet, but with all the pieces in their ideal positions, the fruit has ripened.

If you like that sort of thing, you will probably also gain pleasure from the way the black knight is unable to help in any other way than preventing an immediate mate on h8. Besides this, it is basically helpless in the battle with the white pieces.

23...h6

After this move we have reached the point in the game where Yusupov believed he threw

away the win. Though his next move is a bit unnatural, just as 23... $\mathbb{E}xh7$ is, in the way that it strikes before all the pieces have been brought into the attack, White's position is so well built-up that he still has one more chance to win the game by including the bishop in the attack.

24. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!!$

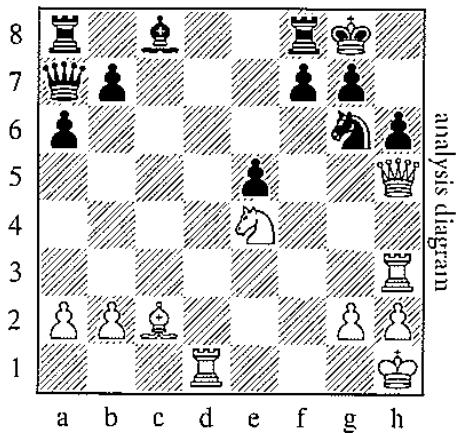
A forced win, but still creating unnecessary complications.

The best move was:

24. $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

This prepares the knight sacrifice, which will then hit much harder. Black's only chance is to try to bring the bishop into the game with:

24...e5!



analysis diagram

Still this does not prevent White from continuing down the prepared path. All his pieces have now been brought to their best positions. It is time to strike.

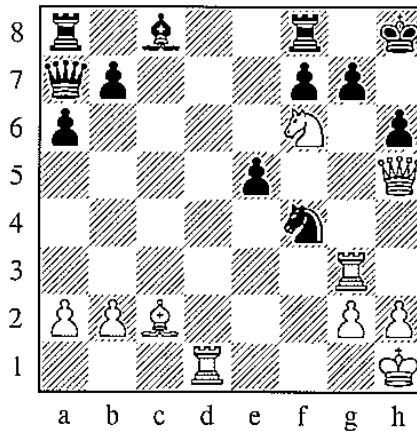
25. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!! \mathbb{Q}h8$

After 25...gxf6 White needs to attack the knight on g6 once more, either with the rook from g3, which is the natural move, or by pinning the f7-pawn with the odd 26. $\mathbb{Q}b3$.

After the knight check the position has slightly changed and White needs to find new targets (more on this in Chapter 7). h7 is out of reach so he changes his focus to g6 and g7.

26. $\mathbb{Q}g3! \mathbb{Q}f4$

26... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ wins for White after a few complications, though the basic idea, that Black cannot recapture, is not hard to spot.



analysis diagram

27. $\mathbb{W}xe5$

This wins in a long and beautiful line found by Artur in his computer-unassisted analysis. 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ is simpler and illustrates the potential the white forces possess.

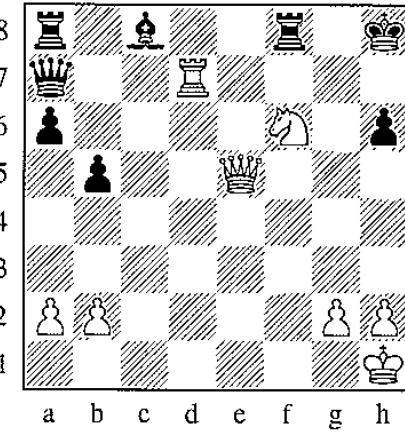
27... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

Otherwise White has such ideas as $\mathbb{Q}e8!$.

28. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ fxg6 29. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ b5

It is time to insert the jewel in the crown.

30. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#!!$ gxh6 31. $\mathbb{Q}d7!$



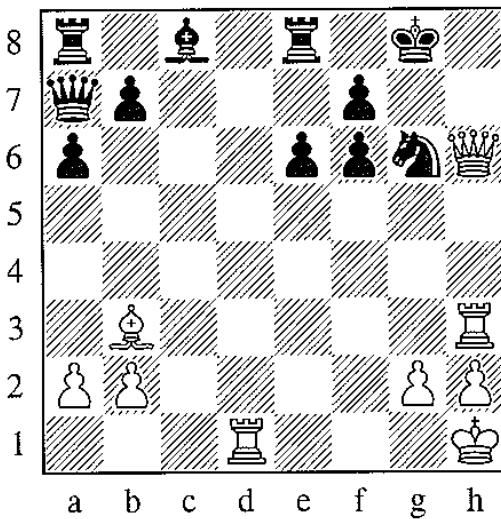
analysis diagram

This great finish would have made this one of the best attacking games in history.

Everything was logical along the way and the lines were definitely not impossible to calculate for a top grandmaster. I would attribute the reason Yusupov did not win to his belief that

the attack was strong enough without the bishop. If he had had a stronger feeling for the necessity of including the bishop in the attack, I am sure he would have worked the rest out quite easily.

24...gxf6 25.♕xh6 ♜e8



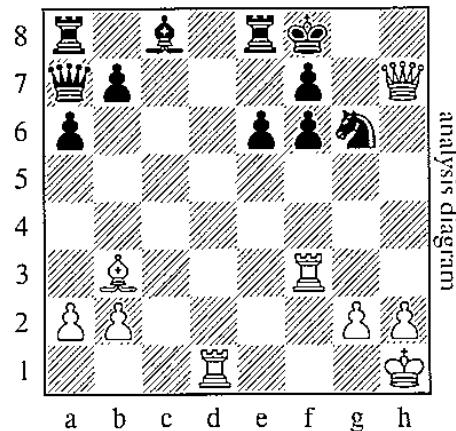
The last big moment of the game. The players realised this at the time and Yusupov made no comments about it in his book.

White has one last chance to include the bishop in the attack, though this time in a slightly artificial way. The black pieces are still so far away in the top left corner that White can shift his attention from h7 and g7 to the f7-square, which the bishop is ideally placed to attack. When I showed my annotations of this game to Yusupov before the final edit he was quite stunned by this extra possibility and remarked that White could achieve his goals, not by bringing the bishop into the attack, but by bringing the attack to the bishop!

26.♗g3?

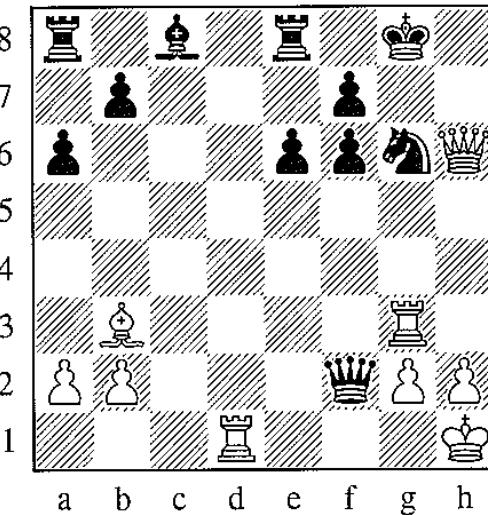
The planned move. White continues to try to break through on the kingside with the rook and queen alone. If Black now does nothing, then White will still have some chances with ideas of h2-h4, but Ivanchuk comes up with an accurate defence.

The win was far more direct. White wins with 26.♕h7† ♔f8 27.♕f3!.



Black is unable to defend his king in any reasonable way. The key point is that 27...f5 is met with 28.♗xf5!, forcing Black to resign.

26...♕f2!



The most accurate defence. White can only squeeze a perpetual out of this position, as the queen is soon attacking on her own.

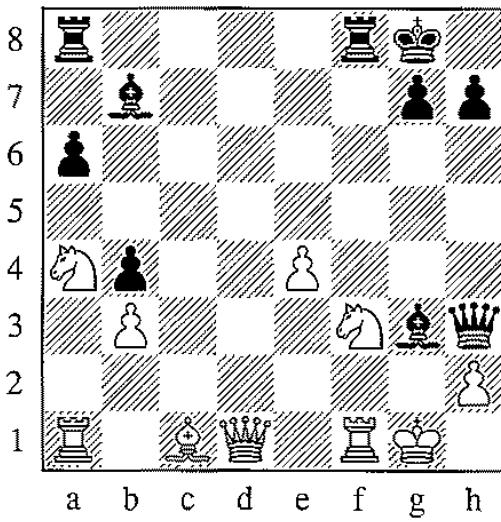
27.♗xg6† fxg6 28.♕xg6† ♔f8 29.♕h6† ♔g8 30.♕g6†
½-½

The next example is of great importance. In a complicated position, Garry Kasparov, the greatest attacker of all time, overlooks a

resource that would allow his opponent to include another piece into the attack. The relevance for this chapter, and its simplistic idea, is that the strongest player of our age can at times forget the importance of including all the pieces in the attack (albeit here seen from the defensive side).

Garry Kasparov – Vladimir Kramnik

Dos Hermanas 1996



24. $\mathbb{Q}c5?$

It is impossible to explain this move without understanding that Kasparov overlooked a very simple manoeuvre, that of the bishop to c6 and b5, from where it turns out to be absolutely lethal. Clearly there is a good deal of calculation involved, but even so it was certainly possible for the greatest player in history to make his way through the lines given below. Remember that before his match with Kramnik in London in 2000, Kasparov was calculating with the same speed and trustworthiness as Deep Junior.

The correct defence was:

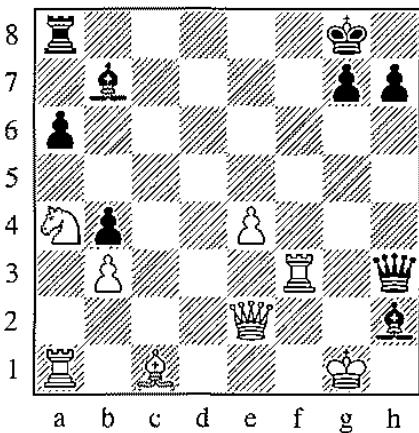
24. $\mathbb{W}e2!$

Defending h2. After the forcing:

24... $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 25. $\mathbb{B}xf3$

White should be okay:

25... $\mathbb{Q}xh2\#$



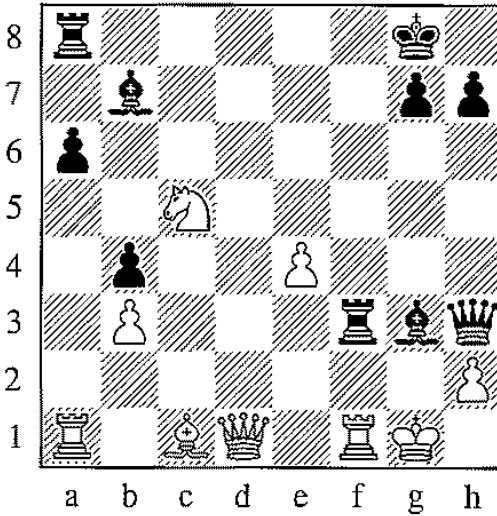
26. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ is the only move according to Kramnik's annotations in *Informant*, but it is more natural for White to play:

26. $\mathbb{W}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 27. $\mathbb{W}g2!$

where the idea of $\mathbb{Q}b2$ and bringing the rook into the game looks to be the easiest way to equalise. I say this with confidence as I found it myself before checking it with Fritz.

Black could try 24... $\mathbb{Q}d6?$ to build his attacking position before striking. I am not sure at all that his attack has run out of steam.

24... $\mathbb{B}xf3!$

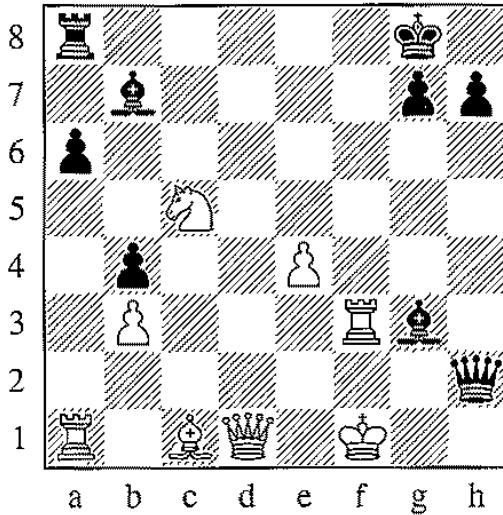


In itself not a surprise for the World Champion, but as said, he had missed the full depth of this move.

25.♕xf3

25.♕a2 would reach an endgame where it would be possible to fight for a draw. But this was not why Kasparov played his 24th move and I would expect that he recaptured quickly.

25...♗xh2† 26.♔f1



26...♗c6!

The move Kasparov missed. The bishop will give a very deadly check on b5. It is hard to see what Kasparov had imagined that his opponent was up to. Checks with the queen only lead to a perpetual, so maybe this is what he was expecting?

27.♗g5

27.♕a5 does not work. Black wins time to bring in the rook with 27...♗e8, after which the attack rages on, or he can coolly play 27...♗c7, asking the rook what it wants to do next.

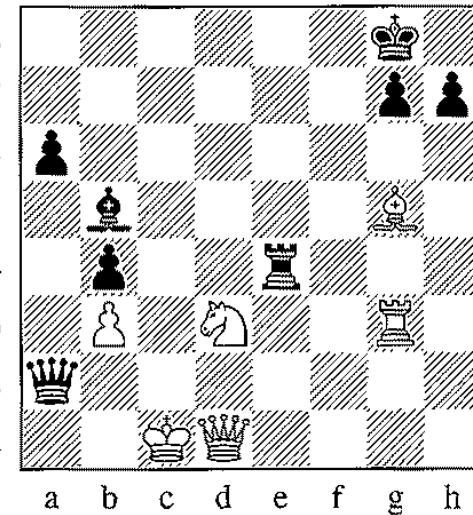
27...♗b5† 28.♕d3 ♗e8!

Bringing in the last bit. Black is ready to strike and there is nothing White can do about it.

29.♕a2 ♗h1†

29...♕xd3†! won faster, but it does not matter much.

30.♕e2 ♗xe4† 31.♕d2 ♗g2† 32.♕c1 ♗xa2
33.♕xg3



33...♗a1† 34.♕c2 ♗c3† 35.♕b1 ♗d4

Kasparov resigned, not wanting to give his opponent the pleasure of meeting 36.♕f6 with 36...♕xd3† 37.♕a2 ♗b1†!.

0-1

The following game is a brilliant illustration of how powerful the technique of always bringing in your remaining pieces is. White makes use of all seven pieces as well as his only active pawn to create a powerful attack.

I have not previously seen this game in chess literature, just as the players ring no bells either.

Pero Klaic – Dusan Lovric

Ruy Lopez, Chigorin variation
Yugoslavia, Correspondence 1967

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6
5.0-0 ♕e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.h3 0-0 9.c3
♗a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♖c7 12.♗bd2 ♗b7
13.♗f1

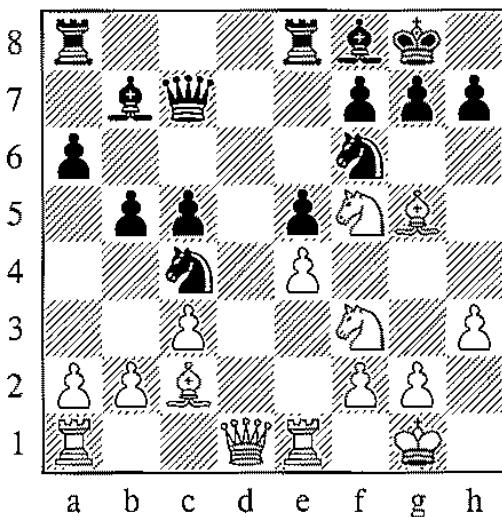
13.d5 is the more principled option here, making the bishop seem a bit odd on b7.

13...♗fe8 14.♗e3 ♗f8 15.dxe5??

Here it is even more obvious that White should play 15.d5!.

15...dxe5 16.Qf5 Qc4 17.Qg5!?

After 17.b3 Black might swing his rook over before transferring the knight to d6 and eliminating the only thing that is good about the white position, the knight on f5. It is avoiding this that must have been White's internal justification for sacrificing the pawn.



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

Playing it safe. 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb2?$ was probably worth a try. Though White would have some compensation for the pawn it is not clear to me that it would be sufficient.

18.♗b1 ♔d7

This manoeuvre makes the knights very dependent on each other and thereby creates problems for the future.

19. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}db6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{E}g6$?

This is where it starts to go really wrong for Black. The rook has no business on g6.

20...h6, with the intention of 21...g6, looks decent. White is hardly any better.

21. $\mathbb{B}d1$ h6 22. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}h7??$

It is hard to see what good this move is doing?

The king is less safe on h7 than it was on g8. I like to refer to such moves as 'aesthetic moves', meaning that they look right, because they fit into our patterns of what is normal, but have no convincing function on their own.

Probably Black was dreaming of moving the rook back to e6 and following up with ...g6, but this is not very realistic.

23. ♔g3 ♕e6?

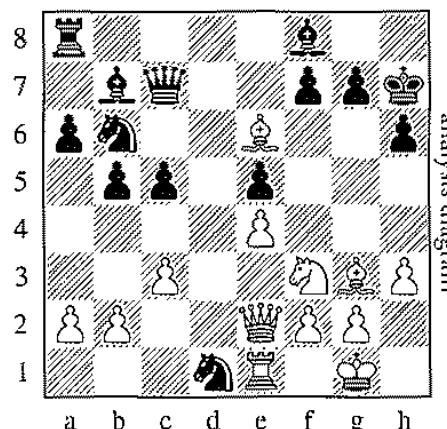
As we shall see, this is a tactical mistake for several reasons. 23... $\mathbb{E}e8$ was better, after which the position is still not completely clear, despite the stupid rook on g6.

For White it is a natural moment to stop and think. The opening is over. He has completed his development and should formulate a strategy for the early middlegame. The most logical way to exploit the dubious position of the rook on e6 is to put pressure on c4.

24.a4!

This move proves to be no worse than 24. $\mathbb{Q}e3$, although it is hard to imagine that we would choose the text move over-the-board in preference to the comfortable win of a pawn and destruction of the black pawns. But this game is a correspondence game and it is not impossible that White managed to analyse the entire continuation to the end before he bought more stamps.

24. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ wins a pawn, because after the forcing line 24... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$:



White should not look for ways to stack material up, but exploit the various weaknesses in the black position. Mainly that f7 is under attack and that he has a big check. The winning continuation is 26.♕g5†! hxg5 27.♗h5† ♔g8 and then involving an extra piece in the attack with the mighty blow 28.♗xe5!. Black has only one option, 28...♝e7, but will have to resign after the restrained 29.♗f5!, attacking the weakest point in the black position.

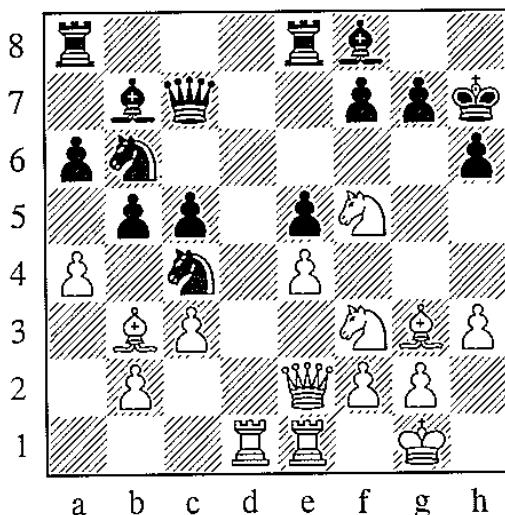
24...♝ee8

Black apparently has nothing better.

After 24...g6, White will play 25.a5!. If Black retracts the knight, White will take on c4 and play ♕f5-e3xc4xe5 ending a pawn up, as well as with a substantial positional advantage.

The position that has arisen now is the one that has our real interest. White can consider capturing on c4 to follow up with b3, with the aim of winning the pawn on b5. This path does lead to an edge, but with the exchange of pawns and opening of files on the queenside, it also gives Black something of what he wants.

Instead White noticed that this was the right moment to play a fantastic combination starting with sacrificing a pawn in order to distract the black knights.



25.a5!!

A common way to make use of your pieces in the attack is by sacrificing them to divert the attention of the defenders. If a piece cannot make it to the scene of the crime in time, this can be a great way for it to assist the attack.

The pawn is sacrificed solely to gain a tempo to open up the bishop. This puts a lot of pressure on White, as given just one move, Black would either close the diagonal again or even take the bishop.

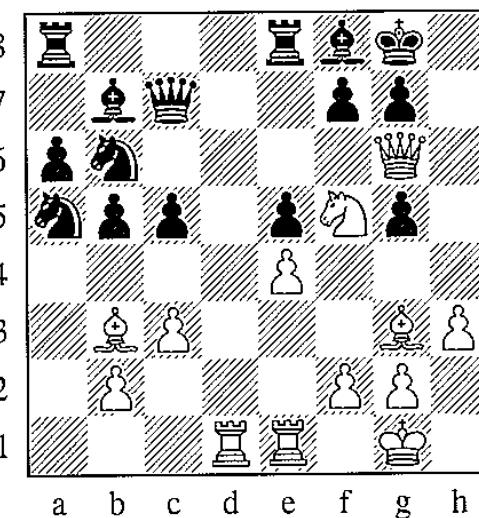
25...♞xa5

As f7 is unprotected, Black cannot seriously consider retracting the knight, so he has to enter the complications.

26.♕g5†

The idea.

26...hxg5 27.♗h5† ♔g8 28.♗g6

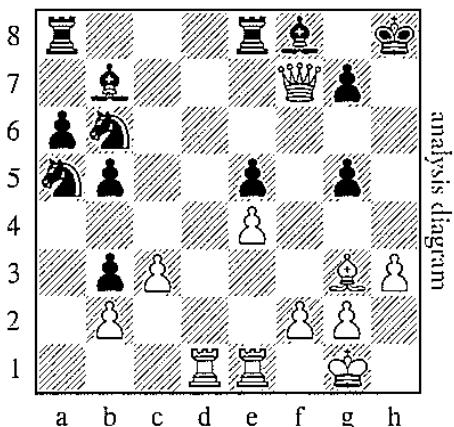


28...♝d5!

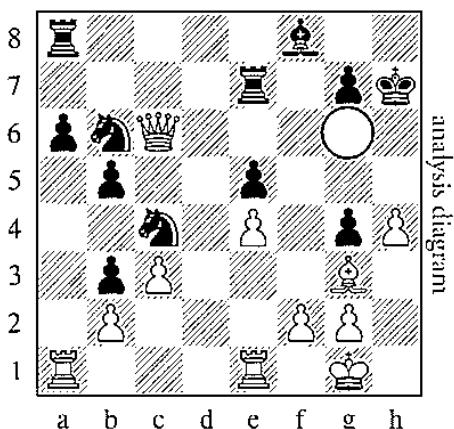
The best defence. Black hopes that the blockade of the diagonal will give him the time needed to reorganise his forces. However, it will also give White the necessary time to bring more fuel to the fire.

28...c4 has a fascinating refutation. The idea behind the move is to give up the queen for a total of three pieces. It fails only by the smallest

of margins and because of the exposed nature of the knight on a5, another benefit from the pawn sacrifice. 29.♕h6† ♕h8 30.♕xf7† ♜xf7 31.♗xf7 cxb3



It is time for White to stop and think. It is tempting to win the piece back, but you should always look for your opponent's ideas. Here this brings the conclusion that the white queen might be in trouble, if you do not play 32.h4!! first, as will soon become clear. Black has no choice but to play 32...g4 (If he takes on h4, a rook will quickly make it to h3 and force resignation, and if he allows White to take on g5, the pawn will become a nail in his coffin on g6.) 33.♖a1 This works better now for a reason soon to be revealed. 33...♕ac4 34.♗xb7 ♔e7 35.♗c6 ♕h7

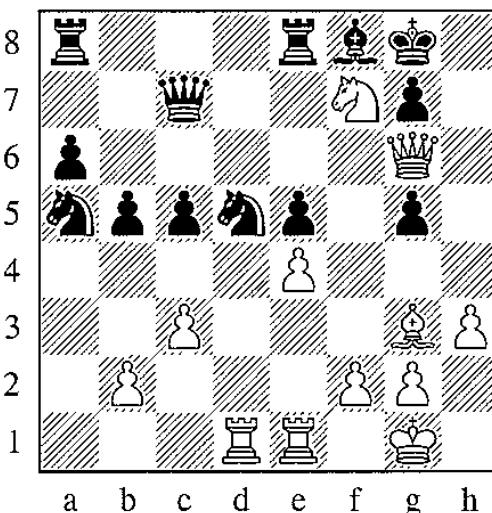


Black is threatening to trap the queen with ...♜c8. If it goes to c5, Black can move the rook to f7 and White can do little better than to

repeat the position. He can consider giving up the rook on a6 and have the queen and three pawns for something resembling the entire non-aligned states. But because of the inserted moves on move 32, White can create an escape route for his queen with 36.h5!, winning.

29.♕xd5 ♜xd5 30.♕h6† ♕h8 31.♕xf7† ♜g8

Black was most likely hoping that White would have no more than a perpetual check in this position, but this is far from the case. If White did not have the option of playing as in the game, he would have a knight check on h6 followed by ♜xe5 with a strong attack as well.



32.♕xg5!

White has created a soft cushion for his queen to rest on, on g6, and therefore has time to bring in the remaining pieces. We could have started here, as our topic is well illustrated by the conclusion of the game.

Although a piece up, Black has no defence against the final attack. The extra piece is the knight on a5 and it is too far away to assist with the damage caused to the light squares by White's aggression.

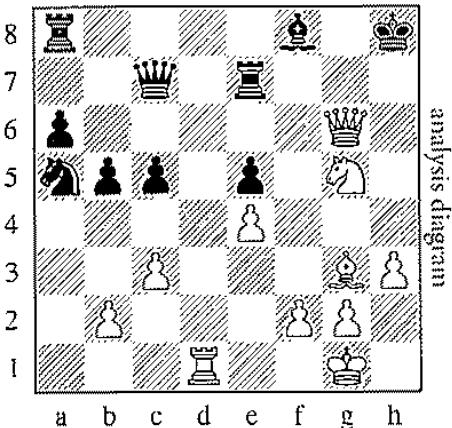
32...♞f6 33.♜e3!

The rook is coming to f3 to eliminate the sole defender.

33...♝d6

There is no defence.

The most illustrative line begins with 33...♝e7 and continues: 34.♝f3 ♜h8, when it is already time to cause further damage with 35.♝xf6! gx f6 36.♛xf6† ♜g7 37.♛g6 ♜f8.



In Chapter 3 we shall look at how attacks are usually carried out primarily on one colour of squares, although here we shall see how the black pieces are on the dark squares, whilst White is primarily attacking the light squares. As sometimes happens, it is by striking the stronghold, here e5, that the defence is toppled.

After 38.♝d5! Black is short of an adequate defence.

34.♝f3

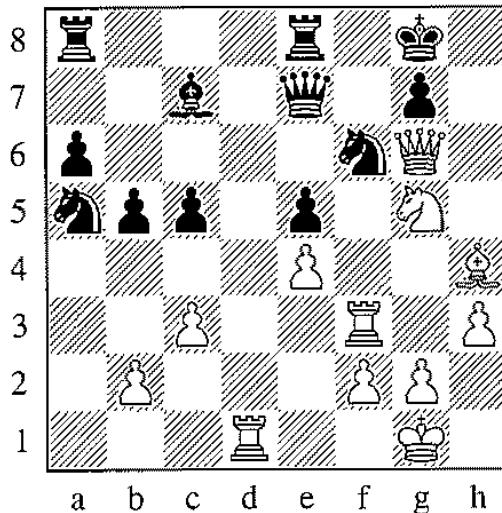
Attacking the Achilles heel.

34...♛e7 35.♝h4

Not the only winning move, but I like the technical purity of bringing in the piece even if it is not necessary. Black must have been a collector of stamps to continue in this position.

35...♝c7

After a move like 35...♛f8 White could consider increasing the pressure with 36.♝dd3, or just take on f6 and get it over with.

**36.♝d7**

Just one of many ways to deliver mate, but certainly not an ugly sight.

1–0

You might have noticed in this game that the pawns not only played a role as cannon fodder, but also supported the attack by harassing the opponent's pieces (25.a5) and by controlling important squares (32.h4 and 36.h5 in the analysis to Black's 28th move). Pawns at times are as strong as pieces, something we will also discuss in Chapter 4. It is important to remember them when we try to bring all our pieces into the attack. In most cases they will not be of any use as attackers, though they might pave the way to success by breaking up the opponent's king's position. But in rare cases they have pure attacking potential, either in a supporting role (think of a white pawn on f6 and a black king on g8) or even by delivering mate!

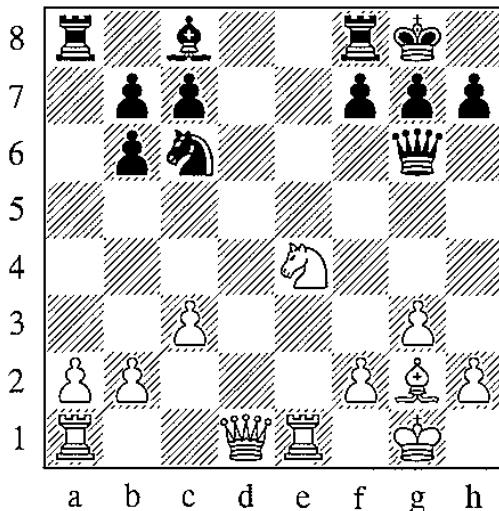
In the next game we shall see the pawns excel in various duties, such as harassing the enemy queen, breaking up the opponent's king's position and in the end advancing with decisive effect. Unfortunately for White, some of these options were mere possibilities that he let pass into the all-consuming fire of his clock, which quickly burned up all of his remaining time.

Vassily Ivanchuk – Peter Leko

Scotch Game
Morelia 2007

Ivanchuk was called to the tournament in Morelia/Linares at the last minute as a reserve after Radjabov withdrew. With his great originality he was able to take the games in a different direction than his opponents were used to. But after missed chances he ended in the middle of the field. Still, this was the starting gun that set Ivanchuk off to win tournament after tournament over the summer and at one point between rating lists he was the highest rated player in the world.

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Qxd4 Qc5
5.Qe3 Wf6 6.c3 Qge7 7.g3 d5 8.Qg2 dxе4
9.0-0 0-0 10.Qd2 Qb6 11.Qe1 Qxd4
12.Qxe4 Wg6 13.Qxd4 Qc6 14.Qxb6 axb6



15.Wd2

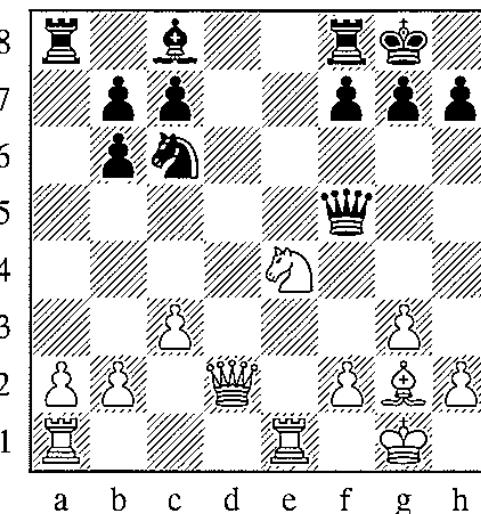
In spite of the almost complete symmetry, Black still faces some problems of development.

15...Wf5?!

A novelty. The placement of the queen in front of the bishop looks a bit awkward. Leko probably wanted to solve his problems

by displaying activity with his queen, but Her Majesty will not enjoy sufficient stability along the 5th rank.

A previous opening catastrophe went 15...Ba5 16.Wf4 Qe5 17.Qad1 f6 18.b4 Ba8 19.Qg5 Qg4 20.Qd2 Qae8 21.Qxe5 and Black resigned in Rublevsky – Sasikiran, Khanty Mansyisk 2005.



16.h3!!

I am certain that this is where most of Ivanchuk's time was spent. The key to the position is the black queen on f5. By pushing the g-pawn, Black is in need of a good square once again.

16...h6

This looks awkward, but after 16...Qe6 17.g4 Wb5 18.b3 Black does not have a great answer to 19.Wf4. White is a little better.

Funnily enough, 16...h5?! makes a lot of sense.

17.g4 Wb5?

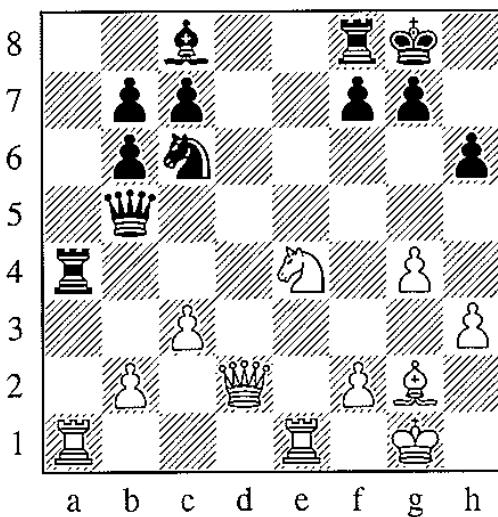
17...We5 18.Qg3 Wb5 was better, though White keeps the initiative. 19.Qc2?! is a reasonable digital suggestion.

18.a4!!

Using the exposed position of the queen to further derail the black pieces. The pawn cannot be taken.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xa4?!$

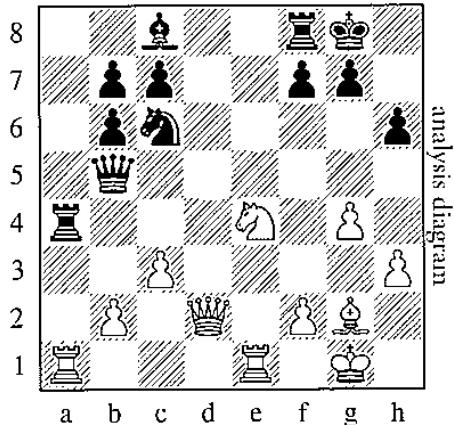
"Hey, wait a minute, did you not just say that..." I did, I did. Black had to seek survival in the uncomfortable settings of 18... $\mathbb{W}e5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ and the queen is struggling to find a safe spot.



19. $\mathbb{Q}f6\text{?}!$

Not the most direct way, but not a mistake as Fritz and other blitz-commentators would like us to believe.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 20. $g5$! was the most direct path.



The main points are 20.. $h5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f6\text{?}$ and

20.. $h5\text{?}$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xg5$ f6 22. $\mathbb{W}d5\text{?}$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}h5\text{?}$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}g5$! followed by $\mathbb{Q}d5\text{?}$ with mate.

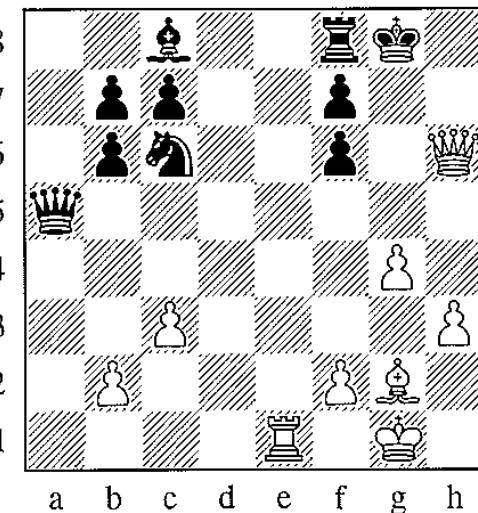
So Black must suffer after 20... $\mathbb{W}a5$ 21. $gxh6$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ in a position that should not hold.

19... $gxf6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xh6$ $\mathbb{W}a5$!

The only move. The queen joins the defence and, importantly, from a defended square.

21... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$! and 21... $f5$ 22. $\mathbb{W}g5\text{?}$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 23. $gxf5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}h5\text{?}$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}a1\text{?}$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}c1$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ are both to be found on the road to disaster.

Earlier we saw how Ivanchuk in a spectacular fashion used his pawns on both flanks to kick the black queen around. But from here on he fails to see the potential in these small everyday heroes, or maybe he missed the little tactics he would have had to throw in to make the best use of them.



22. $\mathbb{W}xf6?$

This is a simple move and a clear sign that the players were running out of time. The threat is a bit simplistic, to take on c6 with the bishop and bring the rook to e5 to give a decisive check on g5.

Ivanchuk certainly saw that 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$? $\mathbb{W}g5$! allows Black to escape into a harmless endgame, but if he had the necessary time to ponder over

the position, he would have seen the possibility of forcing Black to weaken his position with:

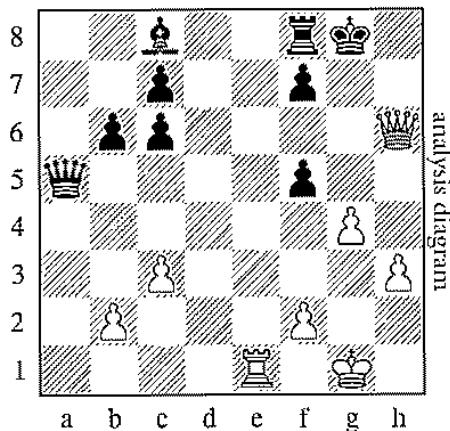
22. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

when

22... $f5$

is forced. White then wins time to get another piece into the game with:

23. $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$ $bxc6$



24. $g5!!$

The pawn is used as a sacrificial ram. On g6 it would assist the queen in making h7 and f7 focal points (squares where mate is delivered) and would therefore have to be removed. With the f7-pawn gone the black king is finally without any kind of support from his troops, so Black has to rush his pieces to the kingside.

24... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

It was because of this move, preventing $\mathbb{Q}e7$, that Ivanchuk decided against this variation, but White still has some resources.

25. $g6$ $fxg6$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 27. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$!

Slightly more accurate than Ivanchuk's idea after the game, 27. $\mathbb{B}e8$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xe8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 29. $\mathbb{W}xc8$, when White wins a pawn, but still has to prove something.

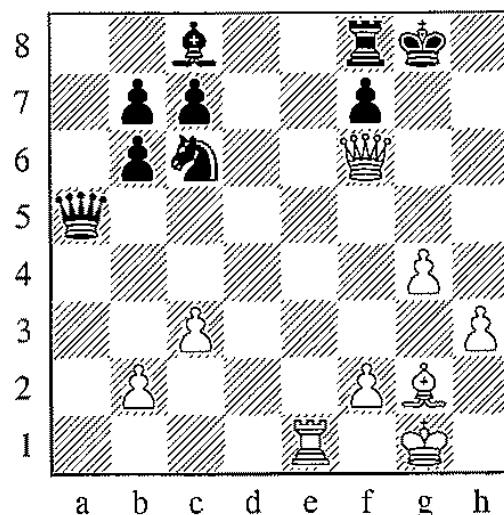
27... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 28. $\mathbb{B}e3!$

"White is winning" (L. Linnemer).

28... $\mathbb{B}f6$ 29. $\mathbb{B}g3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xc8$ $\mathbb{W}d6$

Both rook checks will win a pawn with great winning chances.

Back to the game where only one move is able to save Black. So often we have to go back to the basics and look at our pieces. Both the c8-bishop and the f8-rook play no part in the drama. It would be ideal if Black was able to activate these two pieces while at the same time defending against White's idea of taking on c6 and playing the rook to e5. Already short of time, Peter Leko did not manage to find such a solution, but the question that must remain open is whether or not he was actively looking for it.



22... $\mathbb{W}c5?$

This move is clearly directed against White's threat. If White takes on c6 Black can recapture with the queen. The problem with the move is that it loses time, time that White can use to bring the bishop into the attack, whereas at this point it cannot affect the direction of the game in any other direction than taking on c6.

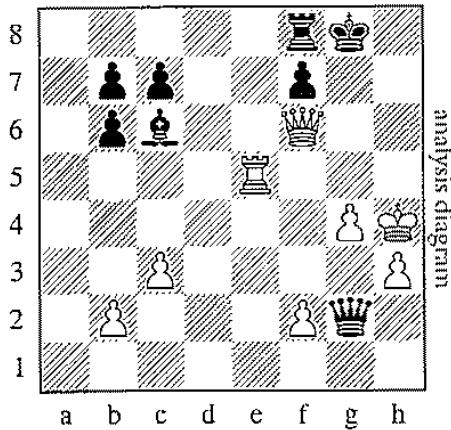
22... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

This was the ideal move and surely Leko considered it. However, he did not sense strongly enough that this was the principled move and then put the necessary energy into making it work. The move prepares ... $\mathbb{Q}e8$, so there is only one dangerous reply.

23. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

Leko must have been frightened by this option, failing to keep his focus in the following variation:

23... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 24. $\mathbb{E}e5$ $\mathbb{W}a1\uparrow$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}h1\uparrow$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$
 $\mathbb{W}g2\uparrow$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}h4$



I have given the position at move 22 as an exercise for about 10 people, from a talented junior, to FMs, to IMs and GMs. Only one person managed to keep his focus at this point and realise that the checks were not designed to deliver mate, but to make it possible to bring another piece into the defence.

Norwegian GM Simen Agdestein actually found the whole exercise simplistic and spotted 27... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$, and White only has a perpetual, after less than two minutes. This underlines one of my sayings about chess, that it is simple, but difficult. Before you know the right way to play the position it seems chaotic and confusing, but once you attach the structure of a strategy or a certain tactical point, the position appears clear and simple. Many are the fools that for this reason think the game is easy and that the top players should all be able to work it out. Few are those that can actually find the right move consistently. From this understanding it will not be a surprise that while Simen excelled in the tactics at the training session, he consistently made mistakes in the more technical exercises. There clearly is a reason why he did not become a household name in the top of chess despite being a sensational

sports man and truly inspirational human being.

23. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

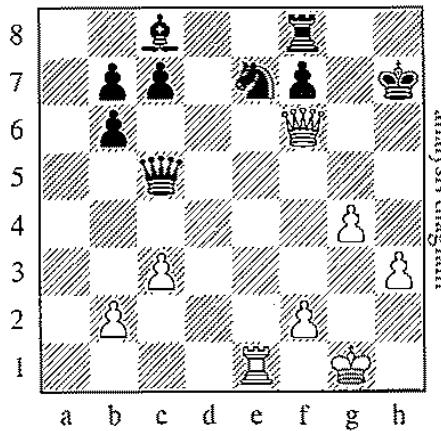
23... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ no longer works. After 24.b4! the queen lacks a good square, and after 24... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ White even has the stunning 25. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$ with too many wins to count on top of more ‘human’ ideas.

We have arrived at the last moment where Ivanchuk could have won the game. Again it is only possible because of the attacking potential of the pawns.

24. $\mathbb{E}d1?!$

From the *ChessVibes* video on the Internet we could see that Ivanchuk completely missed that after:

24. $\mathbb{Q}h7\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$



He could play:

25. $\mathbb{E}c5!$

During the game he only looked at 25. $\mathbb{E}xe7$, when Black can defend successfully with 25... $\mathbb{W}d6!$. I will spare you the details and instead concentrate on the main line.

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

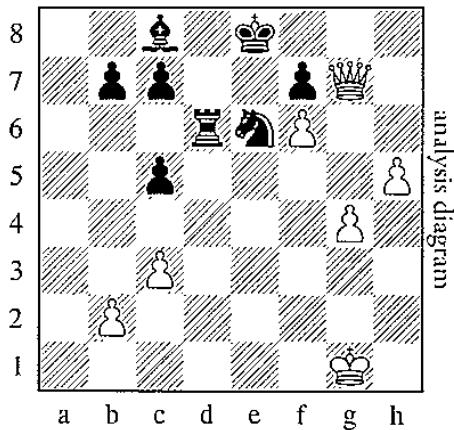
25... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xc7$ leaves White clearly better – Ivanchuk.

26. $\mathbb{E}xc5$ $bxc5$

White is winning in such positions. The pawns dominate the black pieces, which

are not getting into play. The following variation is an illustrative defeat of Fritz 10's first choices for Black.

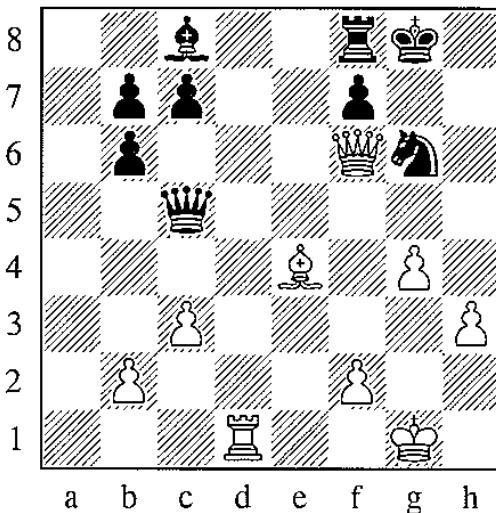
27.f4 ♕g8 28.f5 ♕d8 29.h4 ♕d6 30.♕g5† ♕f8
31.f6 ♕d8 32.♕g7† ♕e8 33.h5 ♕e6



34.h6 ♕f8 35.♕xf8† ♕xf8 36.h7

In this position it becomes clear why Philidor thought of the pawns as the soul of chess. Unlike the other pieces they have the chance to become something more altogether. After the pawn becomes an angel of death, Black will not be able to offer any resistance.

24... ♕g6



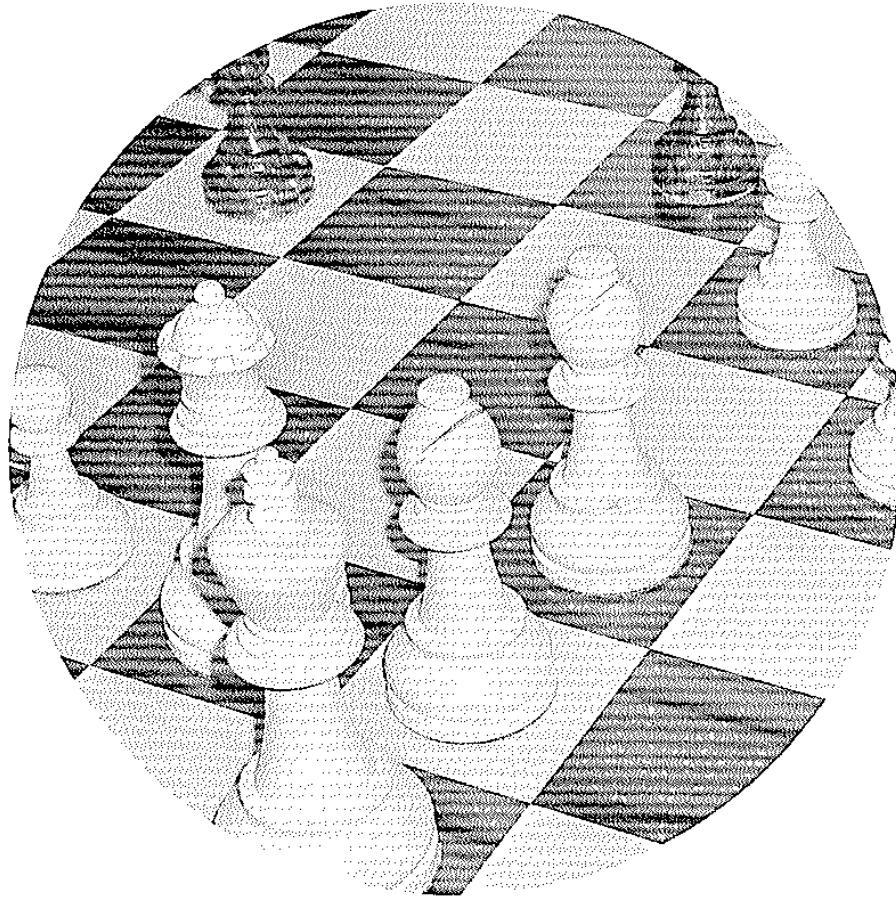
Black made it. White decides to end the game before he runs out of time or misplays his position even further.

25.♕xg6 fxg6 26.♕xg6† ♕h8 27.♕h6†
♕g8
½-½

I hope this chapter has convinced you of the importance of attacking with all of your pieces. I also hope that I have been able to clearly distinguish the ambition of activating the pieces from the naïve thought that chess is an easy game, where decisions are made on the basis of rules without independent thinking. Our ambition is to include all the pieces in the attack, but we cannot allow our opponent to organise his defences. The next chapter will deal with this issue.

Chapter 2

Don't lose your Breath

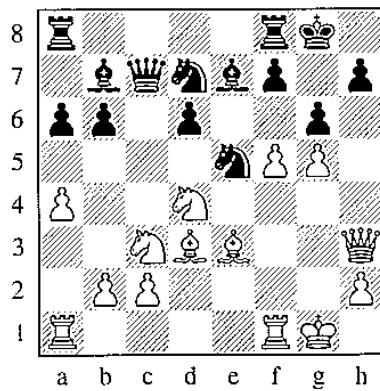


"If you have an advantage, you must use it immediately, or it will disappear." - Wilhelm Steinitz

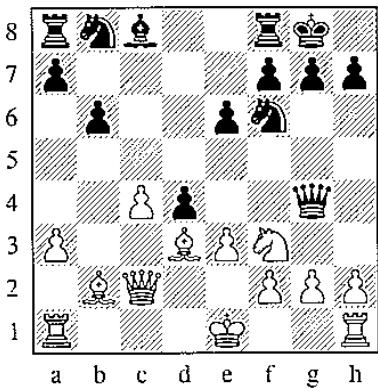
Diagram preview

On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

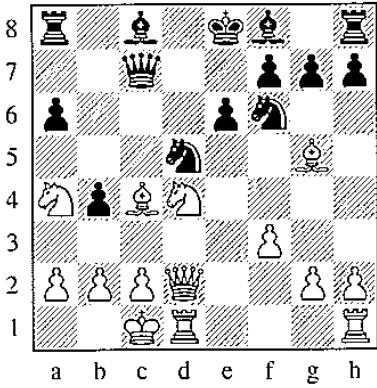
Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



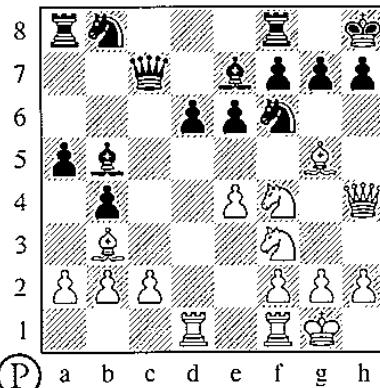
Which deep move would save Black?
(see page 71)



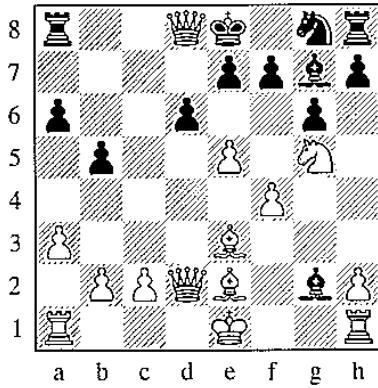
How can White make use of the momentum?
(see page 79-80)



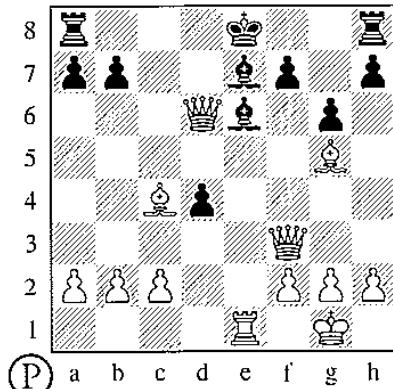
How to make use of the momentum?
(see page 63)



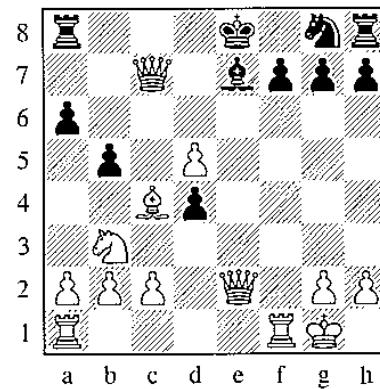
How can White make use of the momentum?
(see page 74-5)



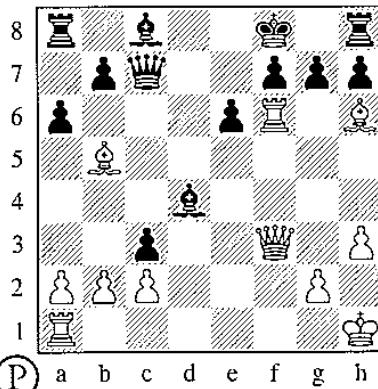
What is the most accurate continuation?
(see page 83)



How to make use of the momentum?
(see page 68)



How can White make use of the momentum?
(see page 77)



White to play and win
(see page 87)

Our second principle of attacking chess goes as follows: **Once you have improved your position to the maximum, you must execute your attack with the greatest possible pace.** In a simplistic reading this means that once you have brought all of your pieces into the attack, you should sacrifice your way through your opponent's defences. First, the pieces in, then concrete measures. Sometimes this fairytale version of events works, though most of the time it does not. None of the games in this chapter follow such a simplistic narrative, though the first one comes close.

My aim with this chapter is not to show Steinitz's old principle as applied in simple settings, but to show how a great feeling for the momentum can be useful in the attack. In the games in this chapter you will see how natural attacking players like Kasparov and Hector display a great feeling for the momentum. Once they get a promising attacking position they keep the pressure and only move backwards when this creates new threats. We shall also see how Peter Leko, the man who was leading a World Championship match with one game to go, fails to increase the pressure against Veselin Topalov in a game that set the course for the 2005 World Championship tournament in Argentina.

I will give some advice, but the key to understanding momentum is to feel it. **When your pieces are becoming more active and you get more active options, things are generally moving in the right direction.** This could be one way of explaining the feeling for the momentum, but again I must warn that this principle is too simple to be followed religiously.

However, I have come up with a principle which I think might just survive closer scrutiny. It says **a lead in development will either increase or decrease.** For this reason,

if you have an advantage in development early in the game, it can be highly beneficial to do whatever you can to increase this advantage in time, even at the cost of material or other static features.

In the first game of this chapter (Game 4 in the first edition of *Chess Informant*) we shall see how White manages to take the initiative right after the opening and dictate events right till the end. Black never manages to bring out his queen's rook and knight, though he does manage to win a piece...

E. Canal – E. Paoli

Bird's Opening
Reggio Emilia 1965

1.f4 d5 2.e3 e6 3.Qf3 c5

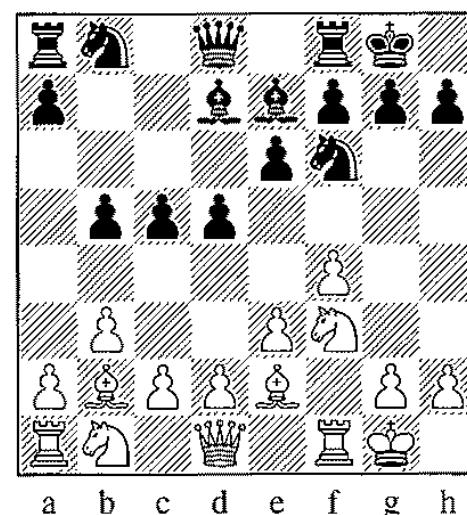
Black is choosing the set-up White would have chosen for him, if he had the prerogative!

4.b3 Qf6 5.Qb2 Qe7 6.Qb5!?

This is not entirely convincing, but not bad either.

6...Qd7 7.Qe2 0–0 8.0–0 b5!?

8...Qc6! with the aim of controlling e5 looks more normal. One idea would be to meet 9.Qe5 with 9...d4!?.



9. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

White poses for an attack on the kingside. He can do this without developing the remaining pieces on the queenside because the centre is relatively closed, which means that Black will also find it hard to get his pieces to the kingside.

9...a5

Probably Black should have looked for options that would allow the b8-knight to challenge White's domination of the centre. For this reason 9...b4? was worth a thought.

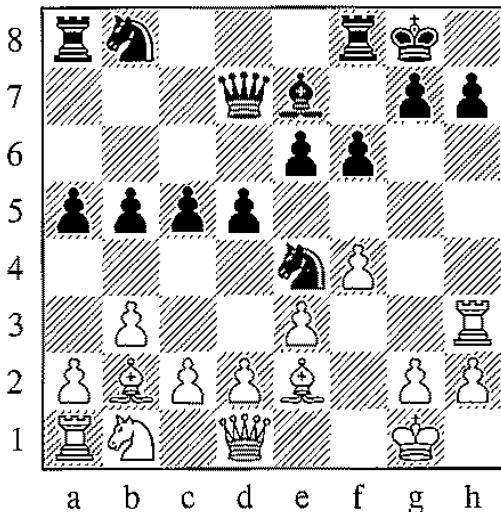
10. $\mathbb{B}f3$

10. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ makes a lot of sense, now or on the next move.

10... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 11. $\mathbb{B}h3$ f6?

This weakening of the light squares fits badly with forcing White to exchange the bishop on d7. It was far better to play 11... $\mathbb{Q}e8$, after which it would be hard for White to establish an attack.

12. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$



After Black has used a lot of time advancing pawns on the queenside and banishing the white knight, he has managed to establish a small space advantage. Regarding negative

long-term factors, he has lost some control over the light squares with the exchange of his bishop for the white knight.

When it comes to development White seems to have a slight edge. His pieces are a bit more active and it is easier to get the b1-knight into the game than the one on b8. In the game White managed to make the most of these beneficial factors with great skill.

13.a4!

I like this move a lot. It combines White's aspirations on the kingside with the positional depth of fighting for the light squares in general.

13...b4?

Black chooses to keep his pawn structure intact, but this comes at the price of not being able to help with the defence of the kingside with ... $\mathbb{W}e8$ and the further price of allowing White to gain a few important tempos. It is this mistake that transforms the white position from one with some potential to a fierce attacking position. This is usually how miniatures are won and lost. A little detail is underestimated and one player wins a tempo or two and the weaknesses around the king that looked insignificant are suddenly decisive.

In order to avoid losing time Black had to play 13... $bxa4$. White would probably have continued 14.d3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 15. $\mathbb{B}xa4$ with a significant advantage. He has two bishops and the pawn structure gives him targets on both wings.

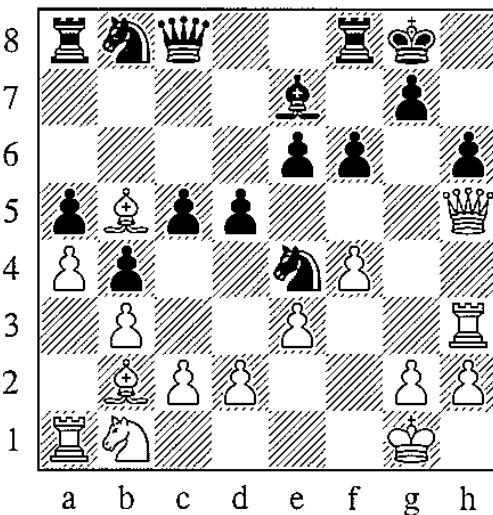
14. $\mathbb{B}b5$!

The primary function of this move is to get out of the way of the queen. The secondary function is to remove the e8-square from Black's possession.

14... $\mathbb{W}c8$

14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ does not change anything. White can play as in the game.

15. $\mathbb{W}h5$ h6



16. $\mathbb{W}g6!$

White has the momentum and does not waste a single moment. With this move he threatens to take the pawn on h6. Note that White is only using the moment to create the circumstance that allows the winning combination in a few moves. He still needs to include his other rook in the attack to make it work. He is including as many pieces as possible in the attack. Only he does not fail to create weaknesses around the king with a gain of tempo, when he has the option. There is a difference between building up an attack and executing it. At this point White would find no more than a draw if he started to change the nature of the position with a rook sacrifice on h6, so he continues to improve his pieces.

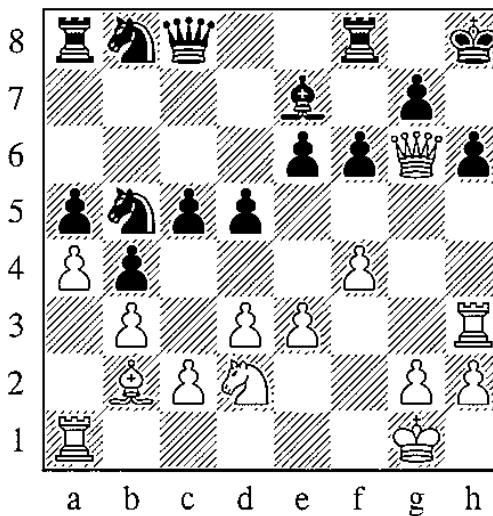
16... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 17. d3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Finally White has a chance to bring the remaining pieces out. It is interesting that though he would have liked to do so before now, it would not have made sense – they were too far away to force Black to make the concessions he has given.

The immediate threat is $\mathbb{Q}d2-f3-g5$, exploiting the pins in full.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

Black has finally managed to get rid of the bishop that so brutally prevented his main defensive idea. He must have expected White to recapture on b5, but this is not forced.



19. $\mathbb{R}f1!$

White was very proud of this decision in his annotations and gave it a double exclamation mark. It is great, but we will have to deduct one of the exclamation marks, as White is also winning if he sacrifices the rook first, takes the pawn, gives a check on g6 and only then brings in the second rook. This more brutal option ruins the artistic impression somewhat, but the game retains its instructive properties.

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

19... $\mathbb{W}e8$ loses in various ways, for example to 20. $\mathbb{R}xh6\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 21. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}f3\#!$

20. $\mathbb{R}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{G}xh6$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 22. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 23. $\mathbb{R}f3$ e5 24. f5?!

An odd end to the game. After this final move Black could offer more resistance, but he had had enough and threw in the towel. Instead mate in three was possible with 24. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$.

1–0

To summarise, White's position was a bit better after he was encouraged to take the bishop on d7 and therefore he was able to exploit the looseness of the light squares in the black camp. But it was only after 13...b4? that White was able to gain the necessary initiative to force Black to agree to further weaknesses in his king's position. It was exactly at this moment that White gained the momentum. The rest of the game sees Black trying to catch up, but being unable to do so. At move 19 White brilliantly chose to follow the momentum by not recapturing on b5 and instead he brought in the needed extra piece for the attack on the kingside.

In the next game we shall see just how difficult it is to keep the momentum even for a world-class player like Peter Leko. In two instances he chooses a move that is closer to a manoeuvre than a punchy attacking move.

On move 14 he makes an excellent decision, which gives him a strong initiative.

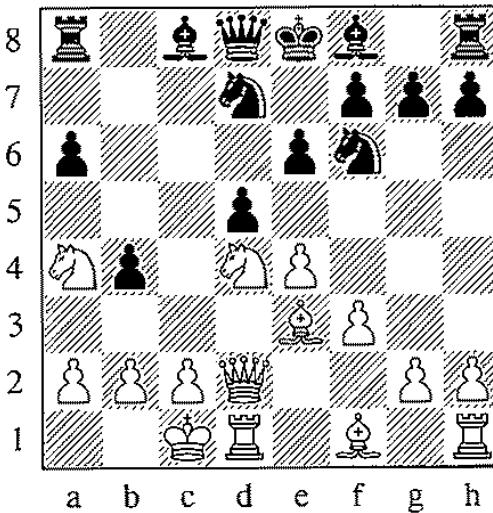
But on move 17 he fails to find the most energetic continuation and on move 20 he misses a sensational combination that would have decided the game quickly.

After this Topalov is able to use the static advantages given to him earlier in the game to win the endgame in good technical style.

Peter Leko – Veselin Topalov

Sicilian, English Attack
World Championship, San Luis 2005

1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6
5.Qc3 a6 6.f3 e6 7.Qe3 b5 8.Qd2 b4 9.Qa4
Qbd7 10.0–0–0 d5



This line has proven to be dubious because of the way Leko managed to gain a substantial lead in development in this game. This is not a great surprise to those who think a bit more abstractly about the position. In the Sicilian Black usually makes a lot of pawn moves early on with the intention of achieving a desirable structure. White on the other hand usually develops quickly. In most cases it is therefore in White's interest to open the position early on. Our position is one of those. White has developed most of his pieces already, while Black has only moved the knights from their back rank origin.

11.exd5!

Leko makes the correct decision faced with this position for the first time. White wants to develop quickly and create threats against the black king before he disappears to the side.

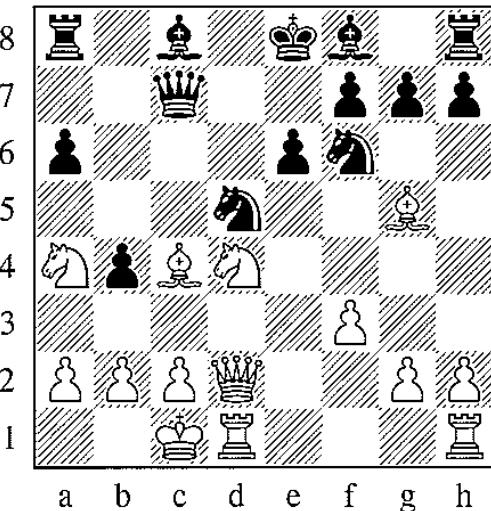
11...Qxd5 12.Qc4 Qf7f6

12...Qb7 was suggested by Shipov, but it turns out that after the natural 13.Qh1! Black needs to be very careful. My short analysis of the most obvious options suggests that Black's position is close to breaking down. A sample line is 13...Qa5 14.Qg5! Qxa4?! 15.Qxe6! and the attack is unstoppable.

13.Qg5 Qc7!

If White is allowed to develop all his pieces in the next few moves, without any irritations, Black will not be able to survive. Therefore this is the only logical move. Still, it should not have been sufficient.

We have come to the second important moment in the game. Black has removed his queen from the pin and is attacking the white bishop on c4. It would be natural for White to withdraw the bishop to b3, but this loses a bit of time. Instead Leko decides to exchange the bishop on c4 for the seemingly impotent knight on f6 solely to win the necessary time to finish his development.



14. $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 15. $\mathbb{B}he1$ $\mathbb{B}b7$

This move is forced as White was threatening to play $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ and $\mathbb{W}xd5$, so d5 has to be protected. This means that Black once more has been prevented from developing the f8-bishop, the necessary prelude to getting the king into safety. At the same time White has managed to get all of his pieces into play. Still nothing concrete exists, so Leko makes a small manoeuvre with his queen.

16. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}d6$

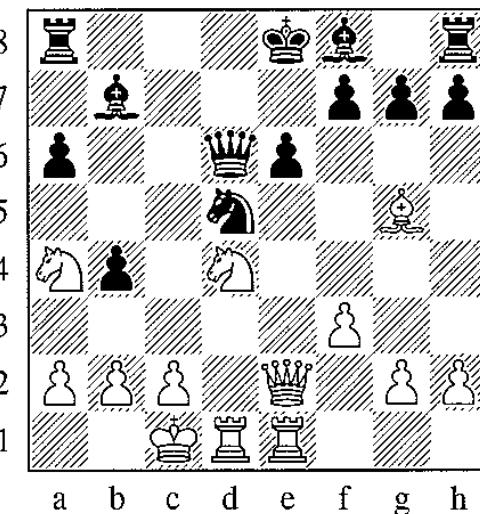
Shipov sees this as a concession for Black because of the lost time, but this is quite conservative. Black has no alternatives, but to

see 16... $\mathbb{W}d6$ as a simple loss of time is narrow minded. White moved his queen to e2 and exchanged his strong light-squared bishop, so there were concessions on both sides.

After the more active 16... $\mathbb{E}c8$ White would be able to execute his threat, the sacrifice 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ $fxe6$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$. I doubt that either player actually analysed the consequences after 18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ in too much detail, thinking that it would be a waste of time to do so. Cleanest is 19. $\mathbb{E}e2!$ planning just to win the piece back on e7. The main reason that it has to be the e-rook is because after 19... $\mathbb{W}c6$ White has 20. $\mathbb{E}d6!$, and wins.

We have arrived at the first moment where Leko shows that excellent opening preparation and endgame technique alone are not enough to become the World Champion. You also need to be able to attack when you have a dynamic advantage.

White is fully developed, but Black has been able to parry the immediate threats, though at the cost of not being able to finish his development himself. So the question is – how can White keep the initiative?

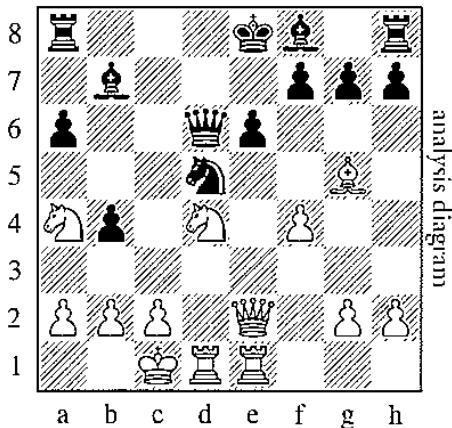


17. $\mathbb{Q}b1\?$

This slow move is far from the requirements of the position. Leko's thinking was probably

that he wanted to avoid a queen check on f4, mainly if Black flicks in ...h6, hitting the bishop. But this kind of reactive thinking is only useful when you have a static advantage, which can probably best be compared to having scored more goals. To have an advantage in development is comparable to having power play, when you need to attack at once, or your opponent will get his players onto the ice.

17.f4! was the best move as it launches a direct attack at the e6-square and brings another piece into the attack, even if it is just a little one. It is hard to see what Black can do against f4-f5:



The digital medicine is supposed to be 17...g6?!. After 18.f5! all sound logic says that Black should hurry on with his development, so 18...g7! (18...gxsf5? 19.Qxe6! will win quickly) 19.fxe6 0-0! is necessary. Black is worse, but White has no clear path to a really great advantage. He could play 20.Qd2?! with ideas such as h6 to fight for the dark squares. Black is worse, but much is uncertain.

After the tepid king move Topalov must have sensed he was not in real danger, and as a result decided to sharpen the struggle even further.

17...h6 18.Qh4 Qf4??

Topalov wants to push the white queen away from the attack on the e6-pawn and defend this

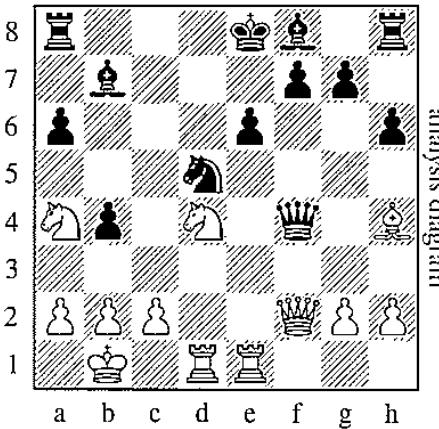
square with the knight at the same time. But the problem with this move is that Black is not getting closer to fulfilling his development.

Better was potentially 18...Qc8; Black is still under pressure, but can maybe find a way to neutralise White's attack. I think White is a bit better, but maybe no more than that.

19.Qf2 Qc7?

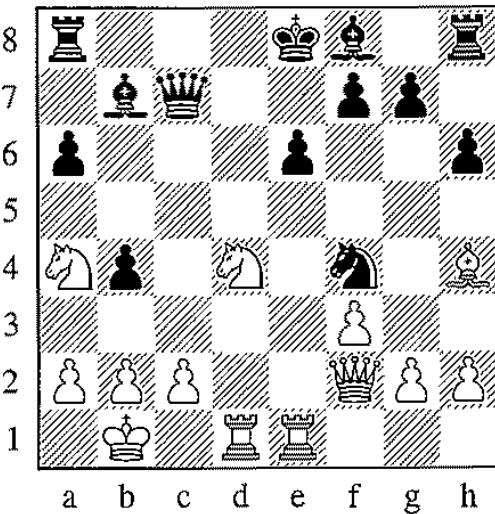
This fails to a fantastic blow, overlooked by Leko in the game.

19...Qd5 was objectively stronger, though White should of course not repeat moves. Instead he should launch an attack with 20.f4!, when the lost tempo is felt. It seems to be best for Black to play into White's idea with 20...Qxf4, when White will sacrifice a knight temporarily.



21.Qxe6! fxe6 22.Qxe6† Qf7 23.Qb6! The point of the combination. The black knight is overloaded and White regains his pieces, but the final evaluation is not as final as one might think. 23...Qb8 24.Qxf4† Qxf4 25.Qd7† Qe8 26.Qdxb7 Qxb7 27.Qxb7 Qxg2 28.Qg3 This endgame is more pleasant for White, the black king is trapped on the 8th rank and the black pieces cannot get into play easily. Still, Black has a fighting chance with 28...h5!, with the intention of nudging the white bishop and developing the rook via h6.

But, instead of returning with the knight, Black has returned his queen to where it was only a few moves back. This gives Leko his second chance in the game.



I think there is no more fitting place to bring up Steinitz's famous rule about the advantage – either you use it, or you lose it! I cannot think of a way for White to be more optimally placed, but still Leko does not look for a direct way of winning the game, he begins to manoeuvre the pieces around.

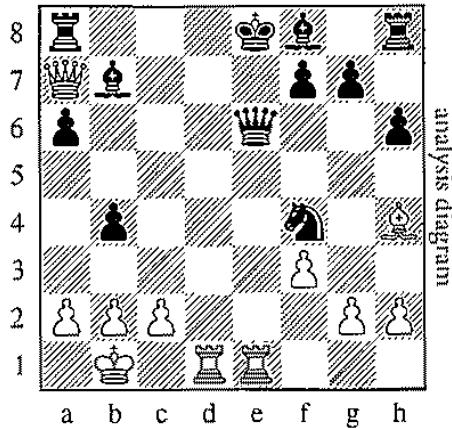
To those who have familiarised themselves with attacking technique it would not be a surprise that White has a winning continuation at exactly this moment, nor that it involves the least well placed of the pieces, the knight on a4!

20. $\mathbb{Q}f5?$

This manoeuvre is sort of normal looking, but it is not the kind of violent move that is needed for such an occasion. It is a common weakness of players with a preference for technical positions that they miss the one moment where they need to strike in order to keep the initiative.

White was winning after the stunning 20. $\mathbb{Q}b6!!$. The main point is that 20... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ is met by 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$, exploiting the black queen's

new status as unprotected. After the forced 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ several moves win, but none more beautifully than 22. $\mathbb{Q}a7!!$.



The many threats of mate bring about the collapse of Black's position.

There are other lines, but none that change the outcome.

20... $\mathbb{g}5!$

After just one slow move Black finally finds the necessary time to shut down the bishop. Soon ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ will follow, with relieving exchanges.

21. $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{R}c8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d4??$

This is a very natural looking move, but as Black does not seem to have anything better than 22... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ against 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2!!$, this doubling of rooks was most likely stronger.

22. $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 23. $c3?$

Another very slow move that allows Black to bring about a few exchanges. As a result White's position is coming unglued.

Necessary was 23. $\mathbb{Q}f2$, when after something like 23... $h5$ all we can say is that the position is a mess, although it is time to accept that Black is out of the woods.

23... $\mathbb{R}d8!$

With the exchange of queens Black gets over his short-term difficulties and is ready to take over the initiative in the endgame, where his bishops will shine.

24.♕xd8† ♕xd8 25.♗xd8† ♔xd8

This endgame with greater coordination, better placed pieces, weaknesses to attack and two bishops, is winning for Black. The following moves could be carefully studied as well, but the main fight is over.

**26.♘e3 ♘c6 27.♘b6 bxc3 28.bxc3 ♘g7
29.♗xf4?!**

Giving up the bishop does not improve White's position.

**29...gxf4 30.♗d1 ♘b5 31.a4 ♘d3† 32.♔c1
♗c7 33.a5 ♘h8 34.♗d2 ♘b5 35.♗g1 ♘c6
36.♗e2 ♘e5
36...♗g6!**

37.c4?!

A blunder, but also after 37.♘c4 Black will have a winning attack against the white king with 37...♗b5 38.♗d3 ♗d8† 39.♗e4 ♘f6!.

**37...♗d4 38.♗f2 ♘c3 39.♗e4 ♘xa5 40.c5
f5**

"One may say that Topalov has a champion's luck", wrote grandmaster Shipov prophetically in his online comments. Having made the time control Leko resigned.

0-1

A gallery of missed chances! Topalov knew very well where Leko's strengths were, having lost badly to him in a Candidates' match in Dortmund 2002. But he also seemed to sense that it would be nearly impossible for Leko to deliver mate in such a complicated scenario. (I should probably say that I have great respect for Leko, though in using a dynamic advantage, he seems no stronger than I).

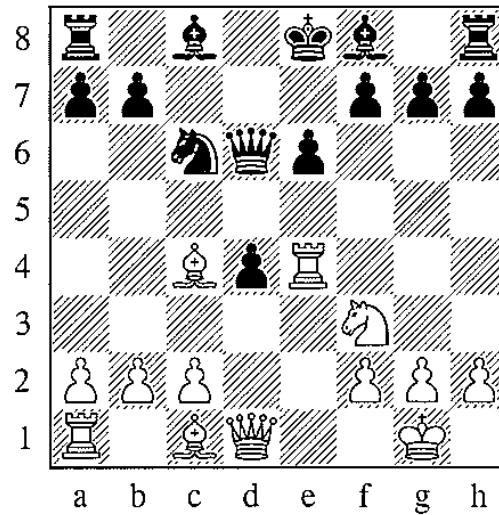
Daniel Mieles Palau – Alberto Santos Flores

French Defence, Tarrasch Variation
South American Zonal, Guayaquil 2005

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.exd5 ♘xd5
5.♘gf3 cxd4 6.♗c4 ♘d6 7.0-0 ♘f6 8.♗e1**

A new way to play this position, but hardly one that should give Black great worries.

8...♘c6 9.♗e4 ♘xe4 10.♗xe4



10...♗d7!

This seems to be the most flexible move.

10...♗e7 11.♗xd4 e5 allows White to take over the initiative with an ingenious exchange sacrifice: 12.♗f4! exf4 13.♗xc6 ♘xd1† 14.♗xd1 bxc6 15.♗de1 ♘f8 16.♗xe7 ♘e6 17.♗1xe6 fxe6 18.♗c7 White had a lot of compensation and went on to win the game in Hracek – Borovikov, Czech Republic 2002.

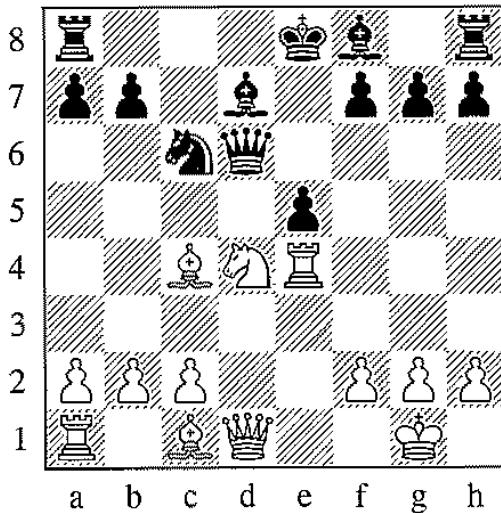
11.♗xd4?!

I cannot see how White can get around this. After something like 11.♗f4 ♘c5 12.♗e2 Black can play ...♗e7-f6 and it is not easy to see how White can regain the d-pawn.

11...e5!

By taking up the challenge Black leaves

White with an even bigger challenge. I do not know if Mieles Palau was prepared for this or not, but his play in what follows is divinely inspired all the way, which suggests that he was simply on form that day.



12.♘g5!

The most active continuation. White is about to lose material and has no choice but to develop as fast as possible. 12.♘f4? 0–0–0! and 12.♗e3 f5! are both in Black's favour.

12...♝xd4?!

This is the most natural move, but after it Black will be fighting for his life. White's position has a lot of potential, but it is only because Black allows him to unfold it that the game goes in the direction it does.

The intermediate move 12...h6! was the right reaction. Future games will have to decide what the correct evaluation is, but it seems to me that Black should look forward to this duel, as his position appears to be at least not worse.

13.♝xd4!

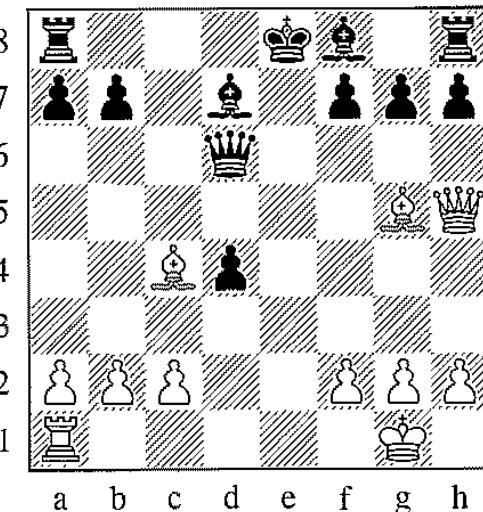
White seizes the momentum and his position folds out in a long line of threats, making it hard for Black to find his way through the maze of variations. The threats only stop at the end, when Black has to resign the game.

At this point Black has to take on d4 with the pawn. As all White needs is to get the rook to e1 to be fully developed, it is obvious that Black is going to be in for a bumpy ride.

Black might have been hoping for 13.♗xd4? ♗xd4 14.♗xd4 f6!, when the game is practically over.

13...exd4 14.♗h5

Only from this square can White prevent Black from playing the two moves that would shut down the attack immediately, ...♗e5 and ...f6.



14...g6?!

A bit risky, although not yet the move that costs Black dearly.

The safest move was:

14...♞e7!

Now, after:

15.♜e1 0–0–0 16.♝xe7

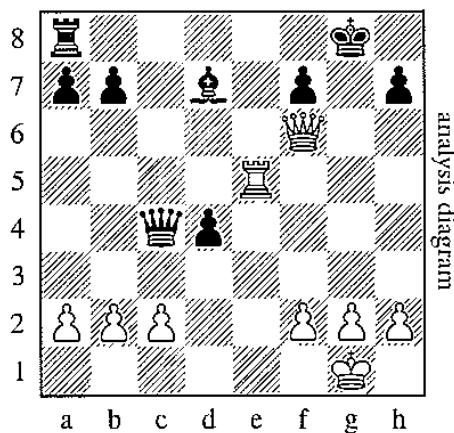
Black has a choice between 16...♗f4 with almost even chances, though not fully so, and the following brilliant (and, I apologise, rather long) seemingly forced line, leading to a drawn pawn ending:

16...♝c7! 17.♝xf8 ♗xc4 18.♝xg7

Without this sacrifice White is simply worse.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 19. $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 20. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$
21. $\mathbb{E}e5$

White's attack looks irresistible. The main threat is the checks on g5 and d6. The secondary threat is to snatch the rook on a8. Black cannot prevent both, but he can prevent one, while preparing for life after the other.



21... $\mathbb{W}c7!!$

The depth of this idea will be revealed in the lines below. As a start White has no $\mathbb{W}f6-d6\#$ leading to mate.

22. $\mathbb{E}g5\#$

White cannot strengthen his attack, as Black is about to play ... $\mathbb{W}b6$.

22... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 24. $\mathbb{W}xa8$ $\mathbb{W}f4!$

White has won the exchange, but Black delivers a double threat of his own.

25.h4 $\mathbb{W}c1\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ 27. $\mathbb{E}g3?!$

The only winning attempt.

27... $\mathbb{W}xh4\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}f4!$

Black returns to his drawing mechanism. White's queen is so desperately out of play that he has to play

29. $\mathbb{W}xb7$

accepting that after

29... $\mathbb{W}c1\#$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ 31. $\mathbb{E}h3$ $\mathbb{W}f4\#$
32.g3 $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$ 33. $\mathbb{W}g2$ $\mathbb{W}xg2\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3\#$
35. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$

any black king move to the 6th is good enough to draw this far from trivial pawn ending.

15. $\mathbb{E}e1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16. $\mathbb{W}f3!$

This gives Black more to worry about, but also puts pressure on White to deliver the proof.

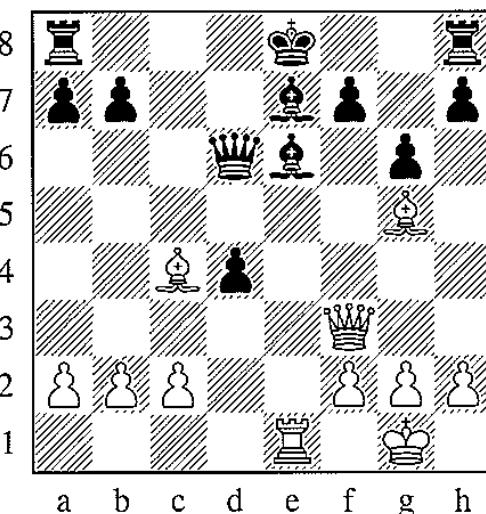
White could try the endgame after 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$, but it seems that Black has no real problems beyond getting coordinated after 16... $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$.

16... $\mathbb{Q}e6?$

Black decides not to believe his opponent – or did he think that White had overlooked something? It is clear that he himself did not see White's 20th move, but also that White had already seen it, and the consequences thereof.

16...0–0–0 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}he8$ looks elegant, but after 18. $\mathbb{W}xf7!$ Black still has some problems to solve.

Better was therefore 16...0–0!, when White can then choose between an equal ending after 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$, or go for more (or less!) with the exchange sacrifice 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7?!$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 18.h4, with compensation – but how much?



17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$

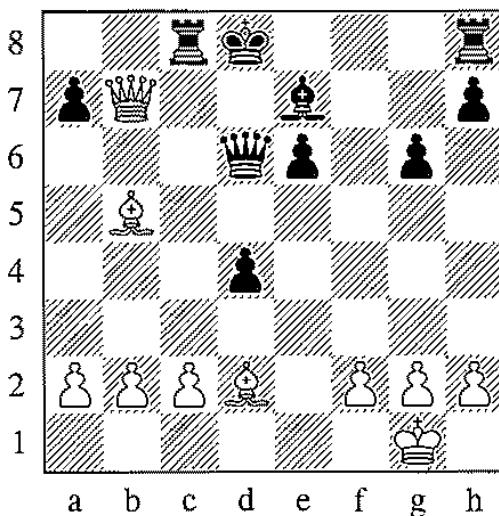
Not in itself so inspiring, as it is impossible to suggest anything else here.

17...fxe6 18.♗b5† ♔d8 19.♕xb7 ♘c8?!

19...♘xg5 was necessary, but White will end a pawn up in the endgame, besides having a structural advantage. For this reason Black chooses to walk the plank instead.

The next move must have come as a big surprise for Black. He is a rook and the exchange up, which is almost the same as a queen, and White has no obvious threats. But White has time on his side. The black rook on h8 has not joined the game yet and the bishop on e7 is of no use but to protect the king from attacks from the kingside. So, White has time to swing the bishop around to the queenside, where he has queen and two bishops against queen and rook, and therefore a momentary advantage. This proves to be enough to win the game.

20.♗d2!!



White is focused on his target. If he was to give a check on a5 now, it would all be over. The trouble for Black is that everything is taking too much time for him. His king is trapped in a mating web and his two extra pieces on the kingside cannot find a way to come to their ruler's aid.

20...♗f6

This is the only move. The idea is to free e7 for the king after a check on a5 and b8 – but White has other plans.

21.♗b4!!

The star move of the game. The black queen is nudged from her strong position on d6 and as she has no back-up plan, Black's position collapses.

21...♕c7 22.♔a5 ♔e5 23.♗xc7† ♕xc7
24.♕e4 ♘c5 25.a4 a5 26.f4 ♗g7 27.♕xe6
♘c7 28.♕d6†

1-0

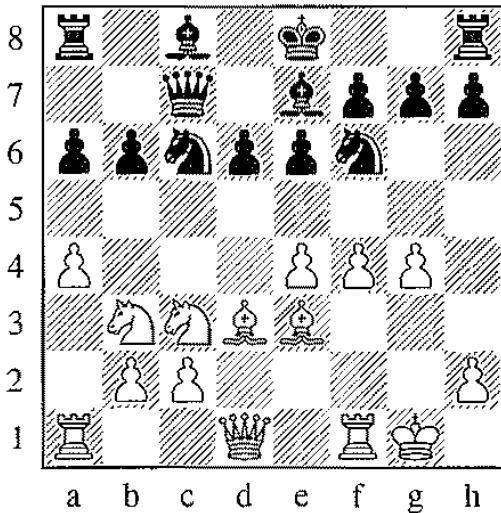
A great game despite the suspicious looking opening. It is worth taking in how White managed to play the move that put his opponent under the most possible pressure on every move right from the beginning. From move 10 and onwards White was playing remarkably active moves, and only with 12...h6! would Black have been able to question the white strategy. This is something that often happens in attacking chess: White sacrifices a pawn and both players have their assets, Black his extra pawn and White his lead in development. In this case it seems that the extra pawn would give Black an excellent game, if he had anticipated the wave of energy that was released from the white pieces once he took on d4 and nudged the bishop to a worse position.

The next game is one of my own. It was played at a time when I was not very strong, though at times I was able to play not too badly. After a risky opening White is able to create some pressure on the kingside with a pawn storm, but a clear way through is not apparent. Instead of wasting time manoeuvring the last few pieces into the centre White takes the momentum with an intuitive, but initially correct, rook sacrifice.

Jacob Aagaard – Søren Bech Hansen

Sicilian, Formandiansk/Grivas Variation
Copenhagen 1994

- 1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Wb6
- 5.Qb3 Qf6 6.Qc3 e6 7.Qd3 Qe7 8.Qe3 Wc7
- 9.0–0 a6 10.a4 b6 11.f4 d6 12.g4!?



This was home preparation for the game. I had found a game with it in the latest issue of *Informant*, claiming to give White a slight edge. At that time I trusted more in authorities than in my own judgement.

I was deeply excited about the possibility of getting this on the board in the afternoon and dispensed with my inner doubts about the correctness of the advance.

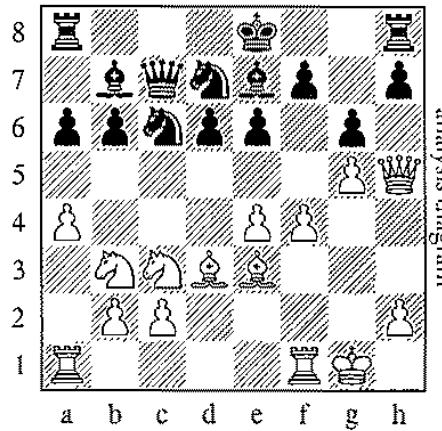
I have later come to believe that this tendency to overlook my own intuitive objections and hope for the best greatly damaged my Chess for many years. You should not expect anything good to come out of an action that is based on your emotions overruling what you believe to be right. This attitude can in my opinion be used for every issue under the sun, but here we are only discussing chess.

12...Qb7 13.g5 Qd7 14.Wh5 0–0?

According to *Informant* this move deserves an exclamation mark. I am not sure if I am too

harsh on the move in giving it a question mark, but I truly believe that *Informant's* exclamation mark was based more upon the brave Black player who dared to castle into White's pawn advance, and got away with it.

To me it seems logical to play: 14...g6!



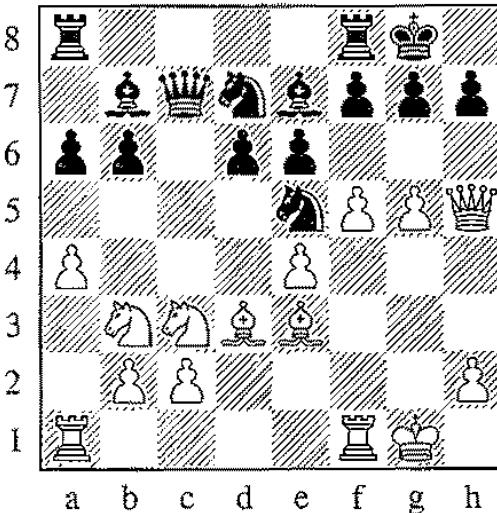
15.Wh3 (15.We2!? is interesting too, but Black can play 15...h6 and it is obvious that he has a good game.) 15...0–0–0 with the idea of ...h7-h6 to break up the kingside. White has compromised his position and will have to spend a good deal of time before he can attack on the queenside. Still, there is no reason to be overly pessimistic about White's chances. The position is unclear and could end in three results.

15.f5 Qce5?!

This move is an inaccuracy, as it allows White to bring the misplaced knight on b3 into the attack via d4-f5, on the way putting pressure on the weakest spot in Black's position, the pawn on e6. Of course it is not so much the pawn that White is after. The light squares can be used as a possible invasion route.

15...Qde5 16.f6 Qd8! was what Danilian played. (As far as I recall it was him. I have not been able to find the game in any database since!) The evaluation in *Informant* was that White has a slight advantage. That sounds

pretty solid to me. I would personally hate to play Black here. The king seems to survive only due to the help of the powerful knight on e5, and counterplay in the centre or the queenside is not immediately apparent.



16. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

This piece is suddenly back in the game and well placed in the centre. At the time of the game I had no concepts about positional theory at all, but as a young man I had a good feeling for dynamics, so my hands and my heart simply decided on this move, rather than my brain, which was useless at the time.

16...g6

This appears to be forced, as after 16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 17.f6 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 18. $\mathbb{R}f4!$ White has a very powerful attack. The threat of $\mathbb{R}h4$ is strong and the other rook is coming to f1 to add some pressure down the f-file, so that a possible $f\text{xe}7$ can come with greater strength.

17. $\mathbb{Q}h3$

The logical square for the queen, as it is putting pressure on all the weak light squares.

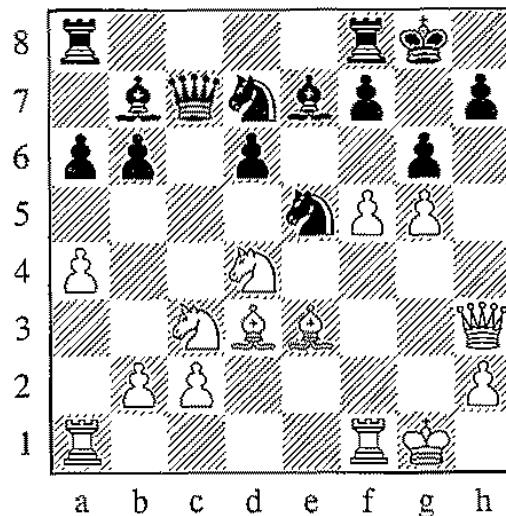
17...exf5

After 17... $gxf5$ 18. $exf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 19. $fxe6!$ $\mathbb{Q}3e5$ 20. $cxd7$ we end in a position with an obvious

advantage to White, due to the weakness of the f5-square, although nothing is decided.

18. $exf5$

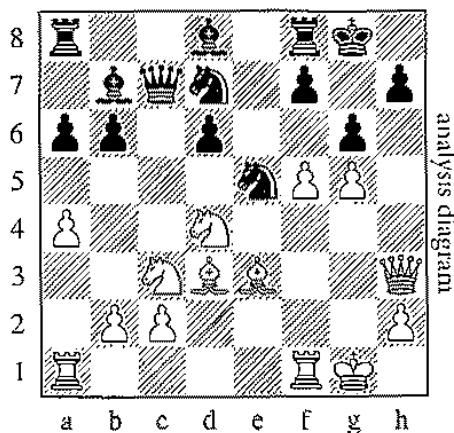
A critical situation for Black, who is faced with serious threats. The simplest one is 19. $f6$ followed by $\mathbb{Wh}3-h6$, to deliver mate on g7. The second is to open the f-file and take advantage of the pressure Black is enduring on the light squares. So what should Black do? In the game he chose a somewhat mechanical move, which exposes the black king to an attack down the f-file.



18... $\mathbb{R}fe8?$

White also has a crushing attack after 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd3?$ 19. $cxd3$ $\mathbb{R}fe8$ 20. $fxg6$ $f\text{xe}7$ 21. $\mathbb{R}f7!$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 22. $\mathbb{R}af1$.

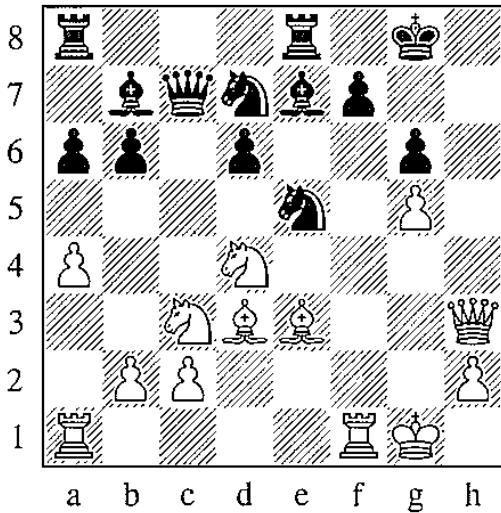
Black had the prophylactic 18... $\mathbb{Q}d8!!$.



This move limits the effect of f5-f6 without further weakening the light squares around the king. White has various interesting options after this, most significantly 19.♗e4?!, taking control of the light squares. The main line seems to be 19...♝e8 20.♗xb7 ♜xb7 21.♗ae1 and White has a good attacking position, where it is difficult for Black to find immediate counterplay. Still, White has somehow compromised his kingside, and could risk paying for this.

After Black's move in the game White has to play energetically to avoid losing the initiative. There is no easy way to bring the a1-rook into the game and 19.f6 ♘f8 is pointless, so it is time to do something with what we have.

19.fxg6 hxg6



20.♗xf7!!

A nice shot that comes with a story. After taking on g6 (when I had no idea what I was going to do next), I took a walk with IM Nikolaj Borge. Nikolaj is two years older than me and a strong attacker. He said that my position looked promising, which I misunderstood completely, thinking that I had received a hint, rather than a random politeness. Looking back I am not sure what I am most surprised by, my dubious moral reaction to this 'hint', or my

own naivety. Anyway, when I returned to the board I constructed the combination based on the certain knowledge that it was time to strike. Sometimes faith helps us and we end up doing the right thing for all the wrong reasons.

20...♝xf7

Forced as 20...♝xf7 21.♔h7† ♔f8 22.♗e6 is mate.

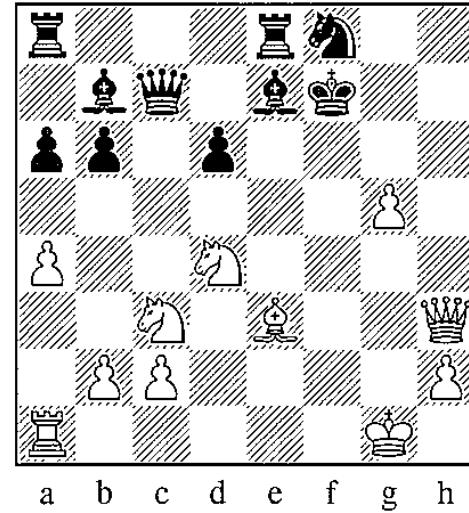
21.♗xg6 ♘f8?!

The obvious defensive move, but it loses on the spot. White would still be winning after the better chance 21...♝xg5 22.♗xg5 ♘f8 23.♗xe8 ♜xg5 24.♗g4 where if nothing else, he has a sound extra pawn.

22.♗xf7†

The king is drawn into the open, and a key defender is removed. Not bad for just one move.

22...♔xf7



23.♗h8?!

This was my idea, and it works out well in a rather elaborate way.

White has simpler wins in 23.♗f1† ♜g8 24.♗f5, and Black will have to lose material to avoid ♘h6† followed by ♘d4†, and the even simpler 23.♗h5†! ♜g8 24.♗f5, where Black

has lost the escape routes based on a counter-sacrifice on g5. We should probably investigate 24... $\mathbb{Q}c4$, but 25. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ with the threat of mate in 3 leaves Black with no way out.

23... $\mathbb{B}ec8$

The only move that defends against $\mathbb{Q}a1-f1\#$.

24.g6!

White continues to do what he can to draw the king out in the open.

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

24... $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ leads to mate in a few moves. The move played in the game allows White to end with the promotion of the g-pawn, which advanced so foolhardily at move 12.

25.g7 $\mathbb{W}c5$ 26.g8= \mathbb{W}

White soon won, but it seems appropriate to stop at exactly the moment when the pawn is crowned.

...1-0

It is impossible to write a book on attacking chess without including a number of games by Garry Kasparov. The former World Champion was more determined to succeed in chess than any before or after him and for this reason dominated chess for almost 25 years, from his titanic battles with Karpov all the way to 2005, where he was equal first with Veselin Topalov in the Linares super-tournament and immediately afterwards announced his retirement.

It is well-known that Kasparov was an expert in the field of opening theory, but his greatest strength was always a great feeling for the initiative. Before Kasparov arrived on the scene in the 1980's, with his Alekhine-inspired play, there was a general consensus that only Karpov's positional style could be fully correct. Even Mikhail Tal did not play like Mikhail Tal anymore, though he still had an active style.

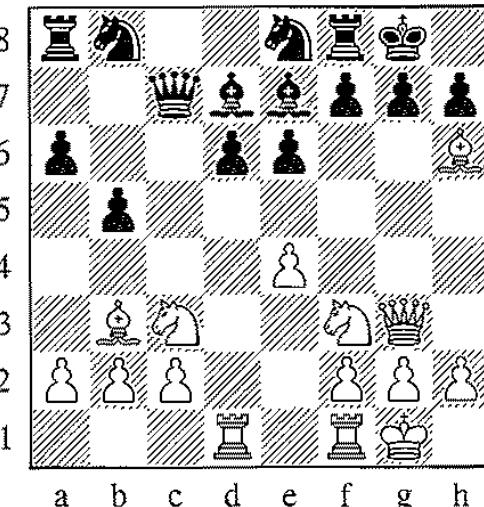
Kasparov's famous victories against Portisch and Andersson (see page 189), just to mention a few, illustrated that there was still hope for those looking for dynamic rather than static advantages.

In the following game we shall see Kasparov at his best. He is able to put pressure on Boris Gelfand's Najdorf variation straight out of the opening, forcing his opponent to play passive moves such as ... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$, both wasting time while White is developing his initiative. But it is only because of two more time-wasting moves by Black, 13... $b4?$! and 17... $\mathbb{Q}b5?$, that White manages to crash through to mate one of the best players in the world in only 25 moves. At the same time it is interesting to see how Gelfand, also a dangerous attacker at times but mainly a strategist, does not sense the danger in time, and once the white pieces are unfolding their pirate flag, there is nothing that can stop them.

Garry Kasparov – Boris Gelfand

Sicilian Sozin
Linares 1993

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$
5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ e6 7. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ b5 8.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$
9. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 0-0 11. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$
12. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$



13...b4?!

This invites the knight, which is not great on c3, to swing to the kingside. Black knows this of course, but he wanted to create weaknesses on the queenside by threatening to trap the white bishop.

Gelfand later tried other moves and achieved good positions. For example: 13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 15. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ b4 16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e5! 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$, with a respectable position in Kasparov – Gelfand, Moscow (ol) 1994.

14. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ a5 15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

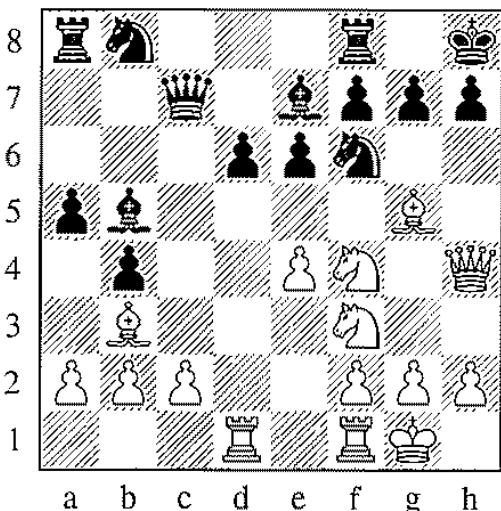
The knight is very well placed here. Already White is threatening to win the game in one move with 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$.

15... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Black cannot win a piece here. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ a4 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ leads to a position where the white rook and two pawns are definitely better than the black knights on the back rank.

17. $\mathbb{W}h4$

Targeting the king directly and putting more pressure down the diagonal to e7. Not 17.e5? $\mathbb{Q}e4!$.

17... $\mathbb{Q}b5?$ 

A bad mistake. A beginner would probably see this as Gelfand moving the bishop before developing his knight, while an experienced player will know that grandmasters do not play moves without ideas. Here Gelfand wants to bring out the bishop before the knight and preferably put the queen's knight on d7. If only he had the time... Kasparov is one of the best attackers in chess history. Surely he would have felt a jolt going through him when Gelfand moved the bishop, and quickly realised that he had a chance that could either be exploited immediately or it would pass.

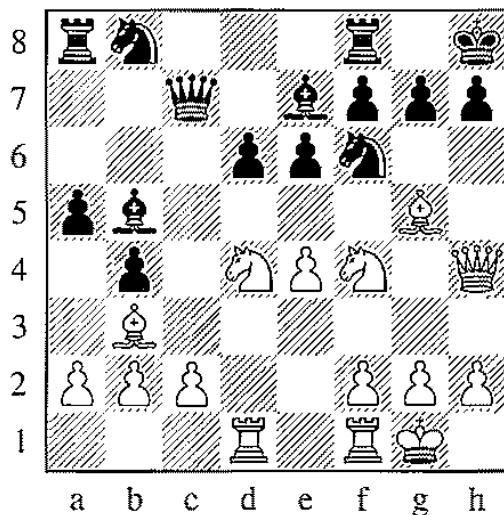
Gelfand is known more for his deep strategic play than for his abilities as an attacker. In this case it seems that his intuition as a defender failed him and that he did not sense the danger before it was too late. The situation is now that White cannot improve any of his pieces significantly. The rook on f1 would be better on e1, but to connect this to an attack on the black king seems a stretch too far. The remaining pieces could maybe be better placed, but they are all ready to strike.

The natural thing to do is therefore to look at how they can strike. In doing this we will notice that the f3-knight is not contributing greatly to the attack, but can win a tempo.

17...a4? would neglect the responsibilities Black has on the queenside. White has 18. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$. The bishop is immune because of 19.e5!, so Black needs to play something like 18... $\mathbb{Q}g8$, and after 19. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ White's attack has grown in strength by the addition of the bishop as a direct attacker.

The correct move was 17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$, when 18. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ can be met with 18... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ and Black still has a viable position, despite being under some pressure.

After a bit of calculation Kasparov played:

18.♘d4!!

Gelfand had surely missed this. He must have been wondering why Kasparov had allowed him to play his previous move, which is meant to prevent any ♘b3-c4 tricks with tempo, as in the 17...a4? line given above.

18...♝e8

A bitter pill to swallow, no doubt. But Black had no choice anymore. After 18...♝xf1, White would play 19.♘dxe6! fxe6 20.♗xe6, when the threat of ♘g6 mate forces Black to make concessions he cannot afford.

19.♘dxe6!

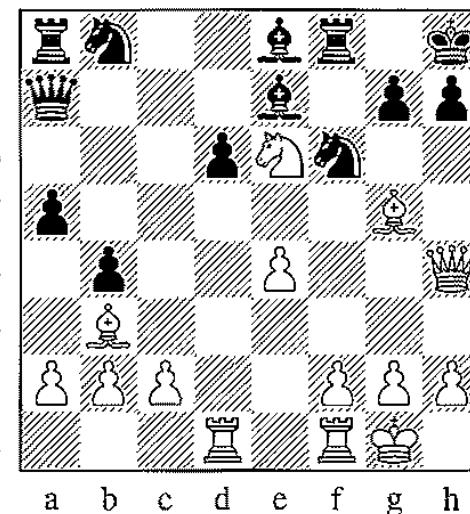
Kasparov does not waste any time. He is very aware of the fact that there will be no second chance and therefore decides to use the momentum, before Black can bring out his last few pieces or somehow cover up his weaknesses.

Note that White's only inactive piece is the rook on f1 and that there is no easy way to bring this into the game.

19...fxe6 20.♘xe6 ♜a7

20...♜c8 loses to a very pretty line: 21.e5! dxе5 22.♘xf8 ♜xf8 23.♘xf6 gxе6 24.♗xf6+ ♜g7 25.♗d8!, and White wins a decisive amount of material. There are other interesting

lines here, but none that are as conclusive as this.

**21.e5!**

White has achieved a lot. He can take on f8 and enjoy a great position in general. However, Black is still not fully developed, so Kasparov uses this fact to end the game quickly, opening a line for the rook to enter the eighth rank.

21...dxe5

Black might as well take all the bits and pieces being thrown at him, as there is a theoretical chance that the attack will be misplayed, but no way to survive an exchange down.

22.♘xf8 ♜xf8 23.♘xf6 gxе6 24.♗d8 ♘d7

24...♜e7 25.♗c4 also wins by force.

25.♗g4

Black resigned. He will have to part with the queen not to be mated instantly.

1–0

Keeping the momentum going is often associated with sacrificing material, but this does not have to be the case. In the following game our Swedish hero, Jonny Hector, succeeds in keeping his opponent under such pressure that he never managed to castle, without sacrificing anything more than a piece

that was immediately won back two moves later. Actually it would not be unfair to call it a mere exchange... What is important is that at every turn Hector managed to play the most aggressive move and not play the 'obvious' but less energetic continuations. Although this is not a game that would traditionally win a best game prize, I rate it very highly.

Once again it is Danish IM Erling Mortensen who fails to stop the Swede. This is a coincidence and has nothing to do with the fact that Erling once mated me in 20 moves with Black...

Jonny Hector – Erling Mortensen

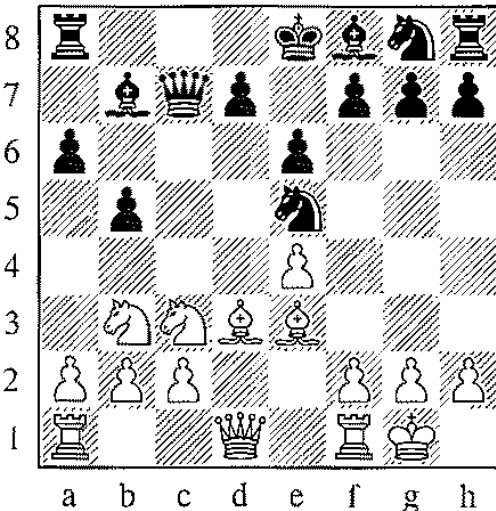
Sicilian Paulsen
Nordic Zonal, Reykjavik 1995

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♜c7 5.♘c3 e6 6.♗e3 a6 7.♗d3 b5 8.0–0 ♜b7 9.♘b3!?

9.♗e2 is the main line, but the move played in the game is not without virtues, though I do not think that White can gain any advantage if Black plays the opening well.

9...♘e5?

9...d6 10.f4 ♘f6 11.♗f3 ♜e7 would bring us to a well-established main line in the Sicilian, where Black is having good results.



The knight move is very concrete, and if it worked it would be unfair to criticise it. But it does not work and for this reason it is a colossal waste of time moving the same piece again and again at a time when Black has taken no steps towards developing his kingside, leaving his king stuck in the centre.

10.f4! ♘c4 11.♗d4!

Apparently this was a novelty.

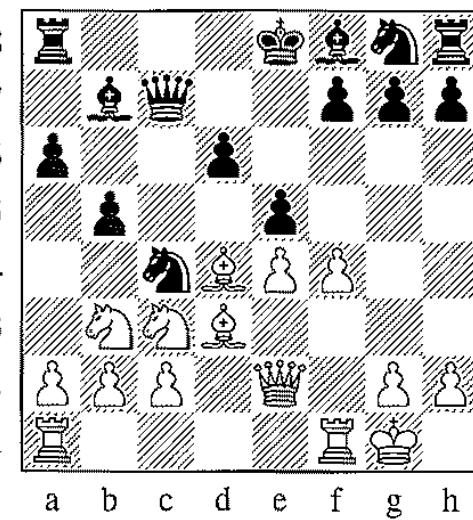
An old game continued with a more regressive approach: 11.♗c1? ♘f6 12.♗e2 ♘b4 13.♗d1 0–0 Not surprisingly Black found his position easier to play in Levy – Portisch, Hastings 1970.

11...d6?!

Black had no choice but to agree to the inferior position after 11...♘xb2 12.♗xb5 axb5 13.♗xb2, where White is leading in development and has quite attractive pieces. Black has a sound structure, so the disadvantage should not be too great.

12.♗e2 e5?!

Black is getting desperate at the prospect of being hit hard with a2-a4 on the next move and decides to seek a confrontation, although he has developed very few pieces. For a 2500 player this is a great sin.



We have reached the second critical moment of the game. Black is guilty of an awful lot of time-wasting, giving White the chance to use the momentum by keeping the attack going with energised moves. What is especially interesting about this game is that the only moves from move 10 to 25 where White is not moving a piece forward are moves 19 and 22. In both cases a heavy piece of artillery is transferred sideways from one side of the board to the other, greatly increasing the pressure.

13. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

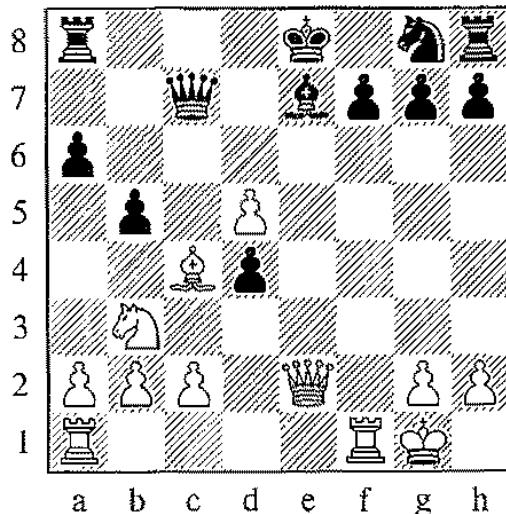
Naturally Black had anticipated this launch, but he had expected that White would soon have to retreat the bishop. But, as said, Hector was not in the mood for retreating that day.

13... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 14. $exd5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15. $fxe5$ $dxe5$

Black has nothing better. 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 16. $a4!$ would cause the queenside to collapse. The next critical moment. It is tempting to believe that White has to move the bishop, but Hector finds a way forward.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$ $exd4$

This is probably the position that Mortensen was heading for. If White retreats the bishop Black can develop freely and get good counterplay against the pawn on d5. The next move must have come as a surprise to him.



White is close to finishing his development. Only the a1-rook is not in the game, and it is not far from joining the battle on e1. White can retreat the bishop and still keep a lot of pressure, but if he senses that this is the moment where he can either strike or else lose out, he will see beyond basic threats to his pieces.

17. $\mathbb{d}6!!$

Technically this is hardly a sacrifice. By advancing the pawn White gives up his bishop, which is close to being a liability at the moment, in return for a pawn on the 6th rank that is assisted by the deadly pin in the e-file.

17... $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 18. $\mathbb{W}f3$

The point. White wins the necessary time to bring in the rook.

18... $\mathbb{R}b8$

Other moves are no better. White wins after both 18... $\mathbb{R}d8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 20. $dxe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 21. $\mathbb{B}ae1$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ and 18... $\mathbb{R}a7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 20. $\mathbb{B}ae1$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 22. $\mathbb{B}e6$. Both lines show how the white pieces are able to enter the game with tempo, and White therefore keeps the momentum. Black might have an extra piece, but at the end of both lines it is very clear that this state of affairs is nothing other than temporary.

19. $\mathbb{B}ae1$

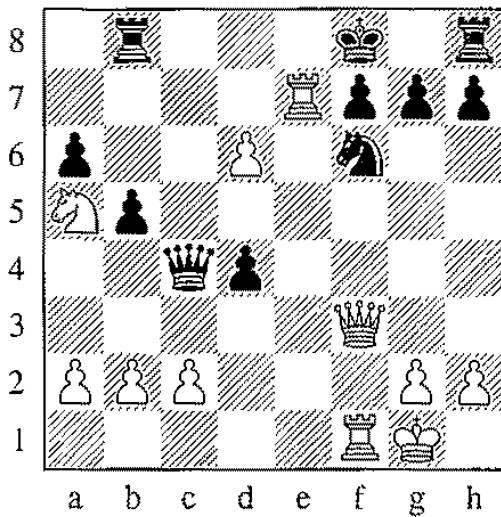
Other moves than this very natural developing move also win.

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

Inviting the rook to the 7th, but there were no tenable alternatives.

20. $\mathbb{B}xe7+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}a5$

White is pushing the queen away, so that the queen can get around the black knight and continue to attack f7. 21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$, with the idea 22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$, was another winner.



21... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Black has nothing resembling a defence anyway. White has multiple wins against every move. One of them is particularly beautiful:

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

Against this move Hector was considering playing:

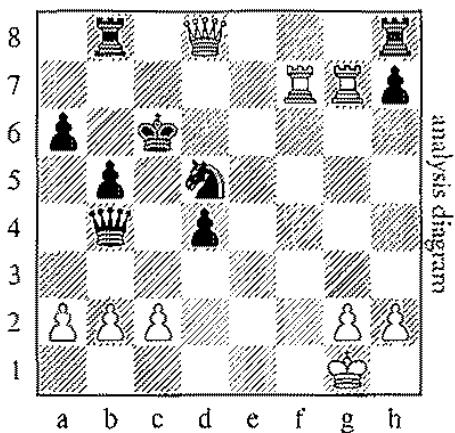
22. $\mathbb{Q}d5!!$

But he only calculated as far as this:

22... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}fxf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

25. $\mathbb{Q}ef7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 26. $d7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}c6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$

28. $d8=\mathbb{Q}\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$



Here he decided that it was not worth going deeper until his opponent had moved. White mates in a few moves.

29. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ mate.

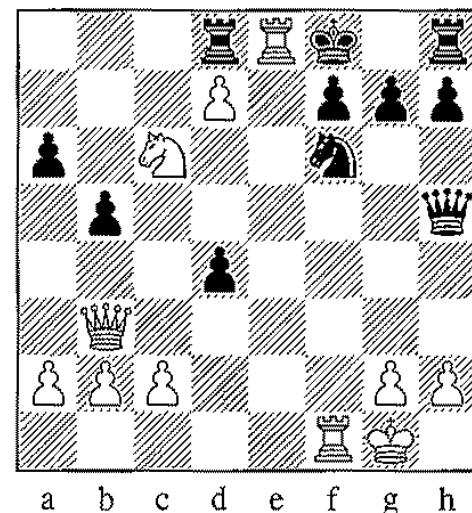
22. $\mathbb{Q}b3!$

White keeps on coming up with annoying threats of mate in one. This one is designed to draw the black queen away from the a3-f8 diagonal and c6.

22... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Black could have resigned here, but was apparently not ready.

23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 24. $d7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#$



Black resigned. The queen check on the diagonal combined with the knight's potential will decide the game in a well-known way.

1-0

It is important to distinguish between having the initiative and launching forward with aggressive moves without any positional justification. We need to have weaknesses to attack and a real lead in development. In both Mieles Palau – Flores and Aagaard – Hansen above, White launched ahead without any clear positional justification. In both cases White could have drifted into a difficult position, and amusingly because of the same idea of ...h6. In the first case because the pin would eventually cost material and in the second because the black king had not yet decided to go to the kingside.

In the next game we shall see how a game can turn violent in a moment when Black, in a position so harmless that it has been shelved by theoreticians long ago, loses a bit of time. Eljanov, one of the young Ukrainians who are currently taking over the world, senses that his moment has arisen and strikes very hard with little respect for material. After a concession from his opponent he changes gear and completes his development, as a justification for a rapid assault has evaporated. However, the concessions Black has given allow White to assault in a second wave of hostilities, this time it is unstoppable.

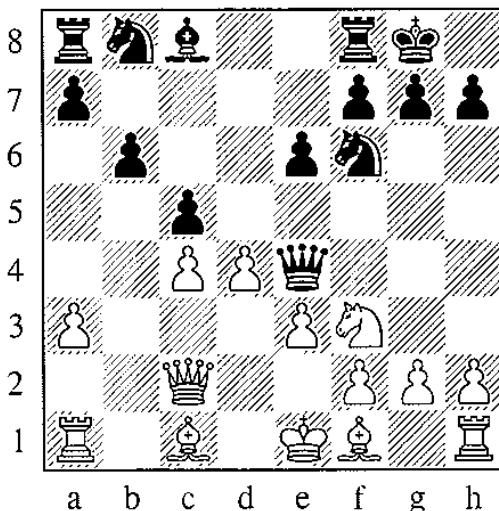
Pavel Eljanov – Alexander Onischuk

Nimzo-Indian Defence
Montreal 2006

1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$ d5
5.cxd5 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 6.e3

Not very ambitious. It is easy to understand that a strong grandmaster who plays all the time does not have the time to find a big novelty in every position for every game.

6...c5 7.a3 $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$ 8.bxc3 0–0 9. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ b6
10.c4 $\mathbb{W}e4?$

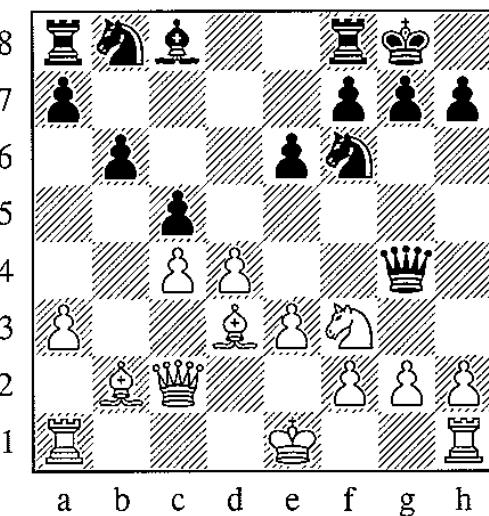


This is the first new move of the game. This

has hardly been prepared for this or any other event. The problem with this move is that Black loses a tempo. As he is already behind in development this accumulates into a real problem.

10... $\mathbb{W}c6$ and 10... $\mathbb{W}d6$ were played in some games 60-70 years ago without giving Black any worries.

11. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}b2!$



Given the chance White blows the whistle for a direct attack and quickly completes his development.

12...cx d4

Already Black has no easy choices. He should investigate the consequences of taking the pawn now that he has bothered threatening it and White has preposterously refused to defend it. Unfortunately it looks rather gloomy.

After 12... $\mathbb{W}xg2$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 14.d5!, it is not surprising that White has an overwhelming attack.

Instead it seems natural for Black to try to catch up in development, but after the immediate 12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ White will reply 13.d5 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 14.0–0–0 with a very promising position.

In both cases there are some nice winning lines, but we will save our breath for later.

With the exchange on d4 Black is hoping to open the centre, seeing that White is going to castle queenside in a lot of variations, but I am not sure that he had seriously considered White's intermediate move, which basically wins the game:

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

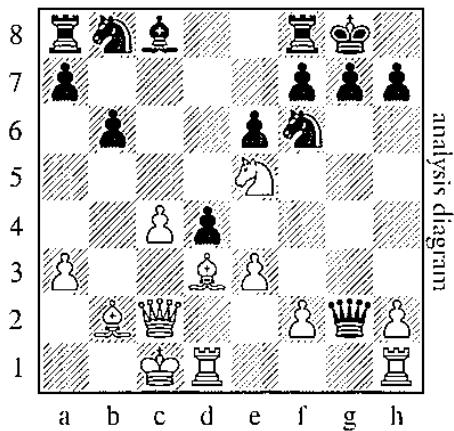
This wins an important tempo, as we shall see later on Black will not be in time to contest the white centre, which is a direct consequence of ignoring his development with 10... $\mathbb{W}e4?$.

13... $\mathbb{W}h5$

Black is opting out of all the fun. 13... $\mathbb{W}xg2$ is of course something we need to discuss, both conceptually and concretely.

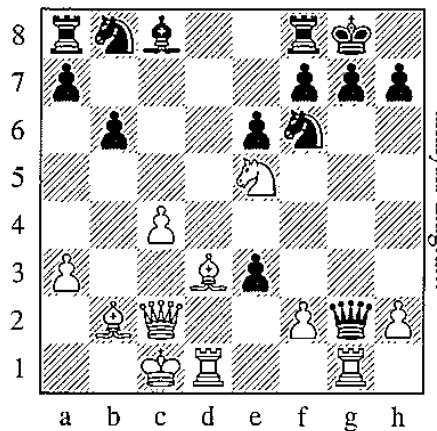
Conceptually White is leading by quite a bit in development and has his two bishops aimed at the black kingside, with the knight on e5 in spitting distance of the black king. In such a scenario it is very dodgy to take a pawn that will give the opponent the chance to put his final piece into the attack with tempo. But on the other hand, in the game Black is left with nothing to compensate for White's many advantages, except the knowledge that the game at least will last a bit longer.

Concretely White has a winning attack if he continues to play energetically with 14.0–0–0!.



It is now necessary for Black to play 14... $\mathbb{Q}b7!$ to try to at least have a little influence on the direction of the game. I do not want to go deeper into this other than to say that 15. $\mathbb{E}hg1$ is close to deadly, as could be expected when all the pieces are working together.

A few spectacular variations occur after 14...dxe3? 15. $\mathbb{E}hg1$, reminiscent of the 19th century's most glorious games:



a) Black loses the queen after 15... $\mathbb{W}xf2$ to the direct double cross 16. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 17. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#!$

b) 15... $\mathbb{W}h3$ is a bit more complicated, but the direct approach is still the best one. 16. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 17. $\mathbb{E}g1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 18.f4 (other moves also win) 18... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 19. $\mathbb{W}c3!$ The threat of $\mathbb{Q}e5-g4$ is very strong, and after 19... $\mathbb{W}xh2$ White has 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#!$ $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{E}xf6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ mate.

The move played by Black in the game avoids any such immediate embarrassment, but on the other hand it leaves Black behind in development in an open position, which favours the two bishops.

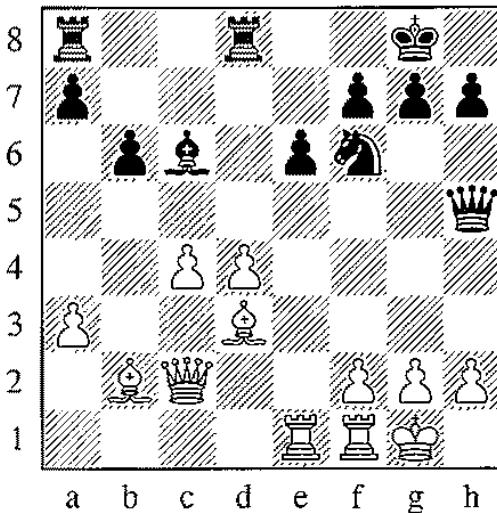
14. $\mathbb{exd4}$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$

As said, it is too late to challenge the white knight on e5. After 14... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ White has the tricky 15. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ forcing Black to play 15... $\mathbb{W}f5$, when the endgame is very pleasant for White.

15.0-0 ♜c6 16.♗ae1 ♞fd8

Black is in deep trouble. For example 16...♛xe5 17.♗xe5 ♜h4 is met with 18.♗e3 ♜f4 19.d5!, blowing holes in the black defences.

17.♗xc6 ♜xc6



Black has finally succeeded in getting rid of the e5-knight, but his queen is still in trouble and his kingside without any defenders.

18.♗e3

The combined threats of ♘h3 and d4-d5 are too much to face.

18...♝ac8

Black is trying to catch up in development, but it is too late.

Note that 18...h6 loses to 19.d5 exd5 20.♗h3 ♜g5 21.f4! ♜g4 22.♗xf6!, but not to 22.♗f5?!, when Black has the intermediate move 22...♝a4!, giving him undeserved extra second chances.

19.♗h3 ♜g4 20.f3 ♜f4 21.♗xh7† ♔f8 22.♔d3

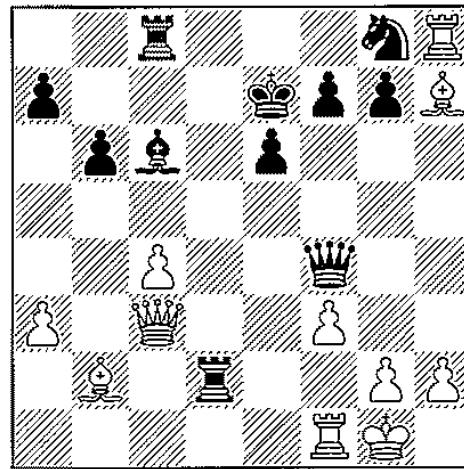
Black could return the king to g8, although White would hardly repeat the position. Or he could take it all like a man and play 22...b5

and dig in for a long fight. Instead he chose tactics.

22...♝xd4??! 23.♗h8†! ♜g8 24.♗h7

Indeed, why not just take a free piece?

24...♝d2 25.♗c3 ♜e7

**26.a4!**

One of several wins. White brings the bishop to a3 and removes all the counterplay associated with ...♜c5.

An example of what White should avoid is 26.♗xg8?? ♜g5!, and suddenly it is Black who wins after 27.g3 ♜c5† 28.♔h1 ♜f2!. But a player like Eljanov does not make such mistakes.

26...♜g5 27.g3! ♜c5† 28.♔h1 ♜f2 29.♗a3!

An important difference to the lines with 26.♗xg8 given above.

29...♝xf3† 30.♗xf3! ♜xf1† 31.♗xf1 ♜xa3
32.♗xg8 ♜xg8 33.♗xg8 f5 34.♗f4 ♜xa4
35.♗g5† ♔d6 36.♗f4† ♔e7 37.♗h4† ♔e8
38.♗h5† ♔e7 39.♗f7† ♔d8 40.♗f8† ♔c7
41.♗xg7† ♔d6 42.♗f8† ♔e5 43.♗b8† ♔f6
44.♗d8†

1-0

A question I get asked from time to time is whether these kind of principles are ever applicable in over the board games, or if they are only useful to build a strong foundation for our intuition. I cannot speak for everyone, but in my own practice I have found them very useful from time to time, and I find comments in game collections by great players which indicate that they have used general principles to make difficult decisions from time to time.

In the next game I actually had to do so on two occasions, on move 14 and move 17. As I was not that strong a player at that time (a soft IM is probably the most appropriate description) I had very little control of what I was doing. But I knew that it was important to keep the initiative and I managed to do so.

There was a clear difference in strength between the two players, but it is interesting that the main difference was my better understanding of the general principles of attack, rather than a blunder or technical superiority. Dimitri wasted a tempo in the opening and was punished for it, but I have seen grandmasters do the same from time to time.

Jacob Aagaard – Dimitri Bogdanov

Modern Defence
Copenhagen 2002

1.e4 g6 2.d4 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6 4. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ c6 5. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 6.f4 b5 7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ a6 8.a3

I played this to be able to play e4-e5 on ... $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ without having to face ...b4!.

8... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ c5?

This move is very natural, but it leads Black into trouble. It was necessary to complete development with 9... $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ 10.e5 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and the opening battle has still not been decided, though White should come out of it with a small edge.

10.dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 11.e5

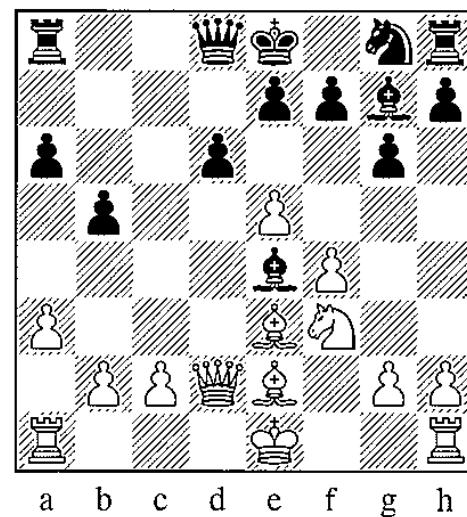
Black has weakened his dark squares and White is putting as much pressure on them as possible, as well as preventing the logical development with ... $\mathbb{Q}gf6$.

11... $\mathbb{Q}e4$?

Again Black refrains from finishing his development, and this time it will cost him dearly. It was necessary to play 11... $\mathbb{Q}h6$, when after 12.0–0–0 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ White needs to be careful not to overestimate his position, as I did in the game. The right path is now 13. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ and White has a space advantage, as well as better-placed pieces.

12. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

This exchange brings us to the first important moment in the game.



Black has lost important time, which makes us return to our primary rule about using a lead in development: **When you have the momentum you have to act with great speed or the momentum will perish.**

White has a chance to increase his lead in development by launching the knight, winning a tempo on the bishop. Such chances are hard to pass up, as White can lose his dynamic advantage any moment. If he hesitates he

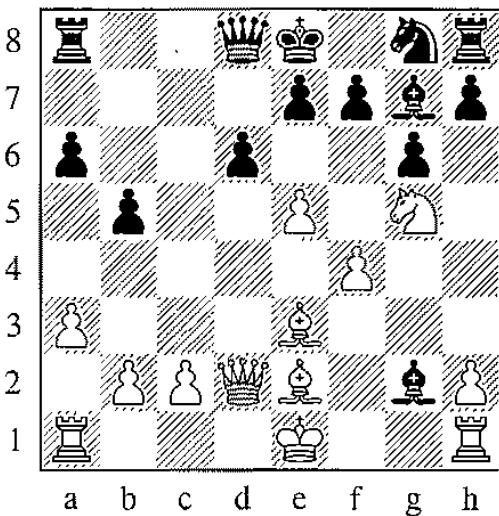
might have to settle for equality. It is time to act before Black catches up in development.

13. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

This is played with the idea of playing $c5-e6$ and is immediately pleasing to the eye, but it turns out that the correctness of the pawn sacrifice balances on a knife-edge. It is easy for White to go astray, should he miss a subtlety.

Black has to take the pawn, as White would be able to develop his initiative anyway. At least Black is winning a bit of time attacking the rook.

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



I should admit that when I had this position in front of me I got confused by all the lines flowing through my mind. 13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ was played on feeling and after a few minutes thinking based on intuition and static observations, as well as a feeling that all other moves would allow Black to get away with his actions.

After 13... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ I realised that I had three possible candidates at my disposal.

The first was the obvious 14. $\mathbb{E}g1$, saving the rook. After 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ I could then follow up with 15. $e6$. Superficially this looks good, but I had the feeling it was too slow.

I also had the option 14. $\mathbb{Q}xb5\#$ followed by 15. $\mathbb{W}xg2$ to regain the pawn and keep a lot of the threats alive. Again I felt that it was wrong. Black is fatally behind in development and the bishop on g2 is hanging, why would I want to exchange it?

Therefore my thoughts started to circle more and more around 14. $e6$. I was completely unable to calculate any variations accurately, still I went along and played it based on the principle of momentum. This is not a good way to choose your move, but luckily here it worked out and it does so more often than not.

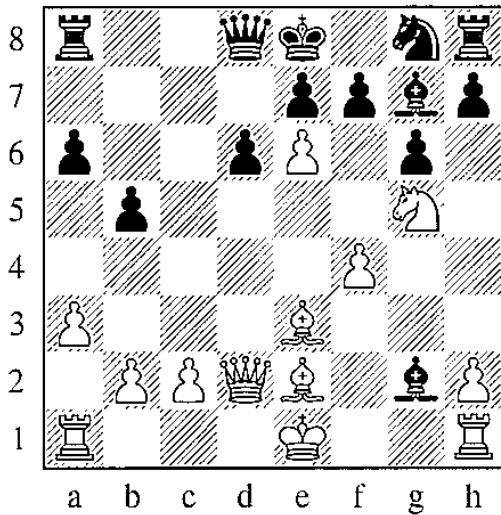
Later analyses showed that Black is fine after 14. $\mathbb{E}g1\?!$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15. $e6$ $f5$! 16. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{W}c8$. The e-pawn is doomed and with two pawns, soon a knight on e4 as well as a better pawn structure, Black is better. When I saw the idea of ... $f5$ I felt that this was all going wrong.

More interesting is 14. $\mathbb{Q}xb5\?!$ $axb5$ 15. $\mathbb{W}xg2$, although after 15... $\mathbb{Q}h6$! 16. $\mathbb{W}c6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ the position is far from clear. Again White has achieved little by exchanging the hanging bishop on g2 for his own.

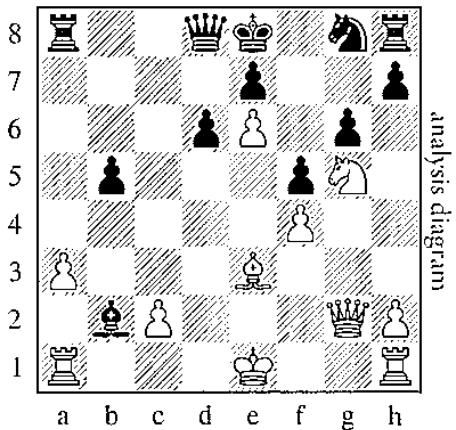
Therefore the only move that tries to exploit that the bishop is loose on g2 is the pawn advance.

14. $e6!!$

By assuming that the position is better for White and eliminating the other moves with ease, I managed to make the correct decision. The danger with such an approach is that it relies on the initial evaluation and this is like putting all your chips on zero. Though the outcome was favourable here, I could show examples from my own practice where it went the other way.



In the game Black now enters a line that loses by force. His best chance was to keep his pawn structure intact and avoid the invasion of the knight on e6 with 14...f5!. White then needs to play 15.Qxb5† when play most likely would continue 15...axb5 16.Qxg2 Qxb2, when we would have another branching.



At the board I had planned to sacrifice the exchange with 17.0–0? Qxa1 18.Qxa1 but later discovered 18...Qc8!, when Black should be okay, although I am not yet ready to give a clear verdict of the position. It is therefore best to accelerate the mess on the board with 17.Qxh7!, forcing Black to play 17...Qa5† 18.Qd2 Qa6. Here White plays 19.Qb1 and all the variations I have analysed lead to a very promising position for White.

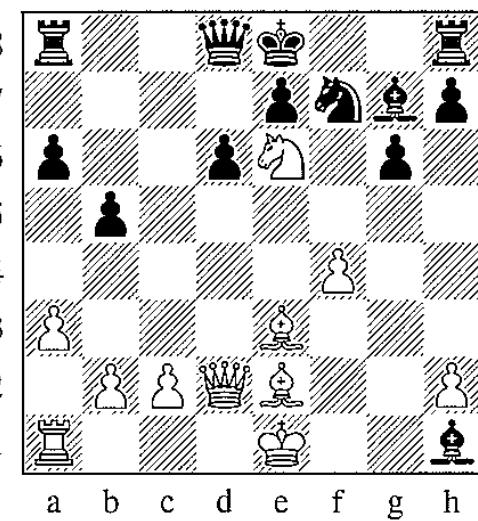
14...Qh6?!

This is played with an interesting idea, but has a serious flaw that my opponent had failed to evaluate correctly.

15.exf7† Qxf7 16.Qe6 Qxh1?!

Black wants to sacrifice the queen for piece, pawn and rook, a beautiful dynamic idea, which is not what is going to happen.

Necessary therefore was 16...Qc8, when after some tactics Black loses the exchange and his pieces are badly co-ordinated, which leads to a clear edge for White. This was of course not the reason why Black played the knight to h6 so he quickly proceeded with his intentions.



This is the next big moment in the game. The most obvious move is 17.Qxd8 and, not surprisingly, what my opponent was expecting. But I actually missed that this was possible at first! My eyes were fixed on the bishop and it was only by bending my will that I was able to look at a few variations after the capture on d8. Taking the bishop would allow me to complete my development and lead to attractive play, so I decided to follow my heart.

17.Qxg7† Qd7 18.Qg4†

The bishop assists the knight in its one-horse-attack, coming in with tempo. Such

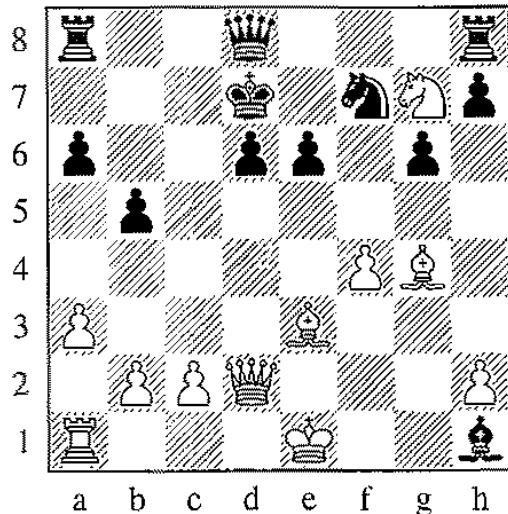
moves should be as natural as walking and talking are to us.

18...e6

The expected reply. I have to admit that I failed to work out all the lines, but still evaluated my position as winning.

The alternative was 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$, when I have some analysis, but do you really need to justify the exchange sacrifice in such a position? I would say no, there are too many problems in the black position. But if your answer is yes you can look at the position after 19.0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{W}b8$. The simplest is probably 21. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ and Black must be medium rare by now.

Back to the game, where White is about to finish his development at a moment when none of the black pieces are well placed.



19.0-0-0!

Played without hesitation though it might also be interesting to take on e6 with the bishop. But I followed the simple principle that it was better to be flexible when you have a choice, and besides, it could not hurt to include the rook in the attack. First we include all the pieces, then we strike.

19... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe6??$

Up to this point White has been successful in feeling his way through the complications, but at this moment this strategy is no longer sufficient. My two inaccuracies in this game were actually played in violation of my intuition. In both cases I worked out the right continuation, but my courage failed me and I decide to play the simplest rather than the strongest continuation.

The strongest continuation was 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 21.f5!, which is a good example of the principle explained in Chapter 3 about the pieces' relative value. All the white pieces are involved in the attack and Black cannot defend his dark squares.

White is still winning in the game, though.

20... $\mathbb{W}h4$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$

This was my idea at move 20. The black king is stripped to his bare bones and cannot escape the strength of White's domination on the dark squares. Black therefore decided to give up a piece to go into an endgame.

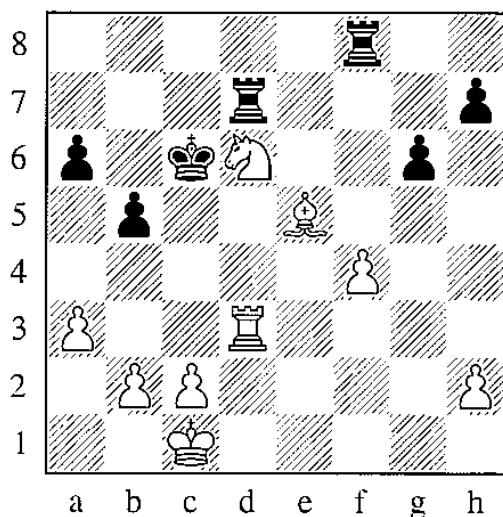
23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 24. $\mathbb{W}xd5??$

Cowardly play! My preferred move was 24. $\mathbb{Q}c5$, when it turns out that Black is unable to escape the strong threats to his king. I took the practical decision to go into the endgame, certain that I would win it, though I had the feeling that it was not the best move. I did win, but I do not play bad moves on purpose.

24... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}ad8??$

A typical slip from a player who has lost his fighting spirit. After 26... $\mathbb{Q}hd8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 28.cxd3 White has a technically won position, but will still have to prove it in practice. Now it is possible for him to improve the position of his bishop and avoid the exchange of rooks, making his task easier.

27.♕d4! ♜hf8 28.♕e5 ♜d7



29.♕d2!

White realises that it is not too late to finish the game with an attack if he brings all the pieces into play.

29...h6 30.♗e3 g5 31.♗e4 gxf4 32.♗c3† ♜b6 33.♗d4† ♜a5 34.♗c6 ♜a8 35.♗c3†

Black resigned due to 35...♜a4 36.♗b4! followed by 37.b3 mate.

1–0

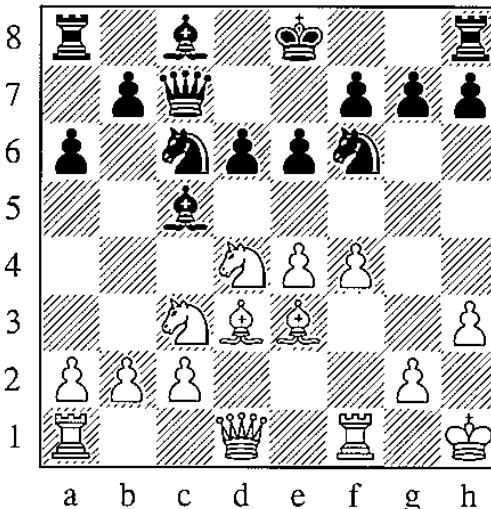
Garry Kasparov – Viswanathan Anand

Sicilian Paulsen
Tilburg 1991

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♜c7 5.♘c3 e6 6.♗e3 a6 7.♗d3 ♜f6 8.0–0 ♜e5 9.h3 ♜c5 10.♗h1 d6 11.f4 ♜c6?

Confronted with a system he did not know, Anand tries to solve the position by himself, but misses a strong punch. An obvious example of how it is harder to defend than attack, as you have to prepare yourself for all of your opponent's possibilities.

Modern theory has a preference for 11...♝g6, when White's attack has found no substantial targets yet, though he has occasionally managed to get a punch in (see more on page 112).



12.e5!

Kasparov took a long think and worked out all the lines. The idea behind the pawn push is to undermine the bishop on c5. This is a good example of a position with only one chance, where you have to seize it or it will disappear.

12...♝xe5

An uncomfortable decision, but no other moves exist. Anand had apparently prepared 12...♜xd4 13.♗xd4 dx5 14.♗xe5 ♜xe5, but missed 15.♗xf6! gxf6 16.♗e4 with a devastating attack.

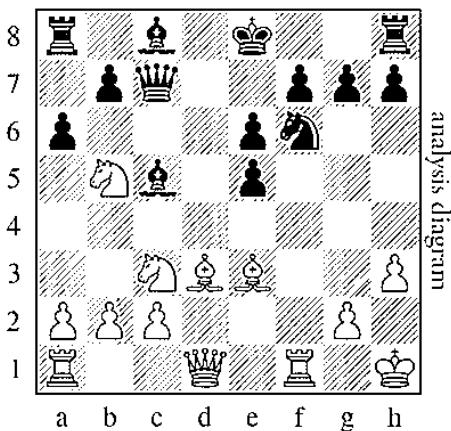
13.♗xe5 dx5

Black has sacrificed a piece, but has realistic hopes of winning it back. However, he is underdeveloped and it is White who will choose how to return the piece. A piece sacrifice on b5 seems to be the most natural, but which piece? Either sacrifice will seize the initiative, but it is still amazing how Kasparov managed to limit Black's choice in the game to the 14th move.

14.♗b5†??

Good enough to win, but as Kasparov in 1991 had no computer to check his analysis he thought it did not lead to more than a great advantage. Today it is easy to check the correctness of this assumption carefully with the help of a computer, of course.

However, the great man was right in thinking that 14. $\mathbb{Q}db5!$ is strong, even though it appears less natural.



The main line goes 14... $axb5$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xb5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $h6$, and White can even improve on Kasparov's analysis with 17. $\mathbb{W}h5$, when Black has no adequate defence to $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ and $\mathbb{Q}c3-e4$.

14... $axb5$

This looks a bit like collaboration, but nothing better was available. Kasparov had the feeling that he might have overstretched his position and gave the following as the only defence:

14... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Actually this is the kind of position where White has no time to lose and will have to play as forcefully as possible on every move to be able to keep the momentum. It was exactly this form of attack that Tal mastered in his youth and where his understanding of the initiative was far superior to anyone at that time, and maybe ever.

15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

He can only take one of them at a time... And not the rook, when White will win the queen with three quick checks. 15... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ leads to a great finish after 16. $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ $gxh6$ 17. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e8!$, when Black's position is falling apart. Therefore the critical test is to take the knight with the pawn.

15... $exd4$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}h6$!

White keeps on targeting the weakest spots in the black position.

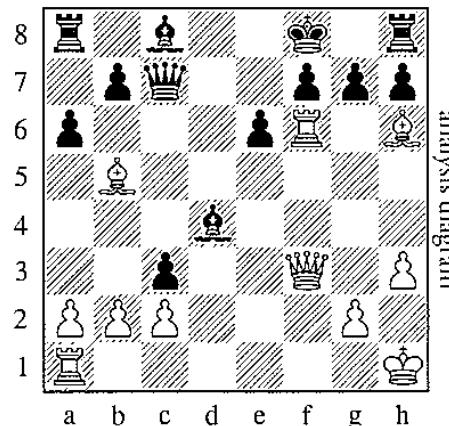
16... $dxc3$ 17. $\mathbb{W}f3$!

In these lines it is important that White is supporting the rook on f6. In his analysis Kasparov rejected this line on account of bringing in the bishop (we should of course remember that computers were of little help at the time this game was annotated).

17... $\mathbb{Q}d4$

But White wins by bringing in the rook in the best possible way after first drawing the king into the open.

Probably Kasparov had only looked at 18. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 19. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$, and Black will hold on.

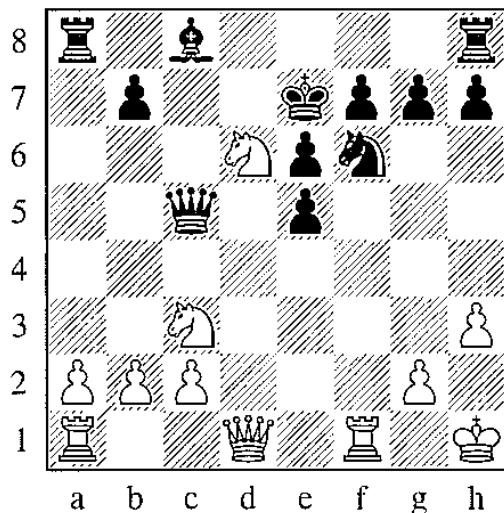


18. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Black is mated in a few moves. It is especially aesthetic how the bishop is able to join the attack.

15. $\mathbb{Q}db5$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Kasparov described how he sat down and calculated this position to the end. White has several paths to a winning position, but only one that is beyond all doubt. It is fascinating how the only point where White's move is not threatening something is his 26th move, where he has to respect a check.



18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$ $gxf6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$ $\mathbb{W}d4$

Black has many options here, but none that satisfy. Another line was 19... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 20. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21. $\mathbb{W}h6$ $f5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d1$, where Black can only make the game last for a few more moves.

20. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d1$!

Obviously White wants to include the rook in the attack. Black's only active piece is now his queen. All the other pieces are placed on the back rank, with the king more exposed in the centre than it looks to be at first sight.

21... $\mathbb{W}e3$ 22. $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{W}f4$ 23. $\mathbb{W}e1!$

The queen swings to the other wing with deadly effect after luring the enemy queen to the kingside, where it will have little influence on the game.

23... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 24. $\mathbb{W}c3$

The queen is headed for c5.

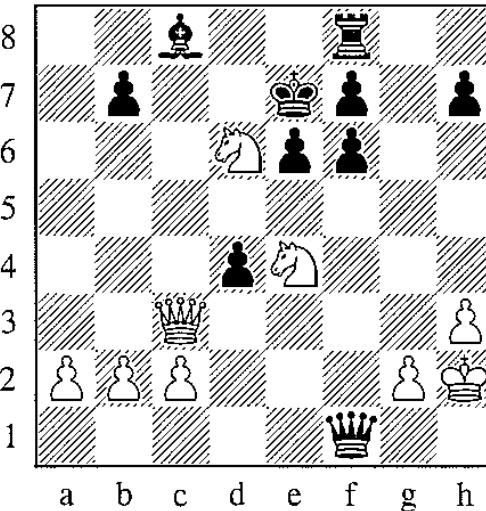
24... $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Black has no choice but to try to limit the size of White's army. However, it is not enough. The white queen supported by the two knights is able to do enough damage on the dark squares.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}f1\#$

A necessary check. 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ loses the queen to 26. $\mathbb{W}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}c8\#$.

26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$



27. $\mathbb{W}c5!$

White has no interest in helping Black to bring out the bishop, so the queen decides not to give a check, but to make sure the aim is perfect for the killer blow.

27... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

The most precise, though the amusing 28. $\mathbb{Q}e8$ also leads to mate.

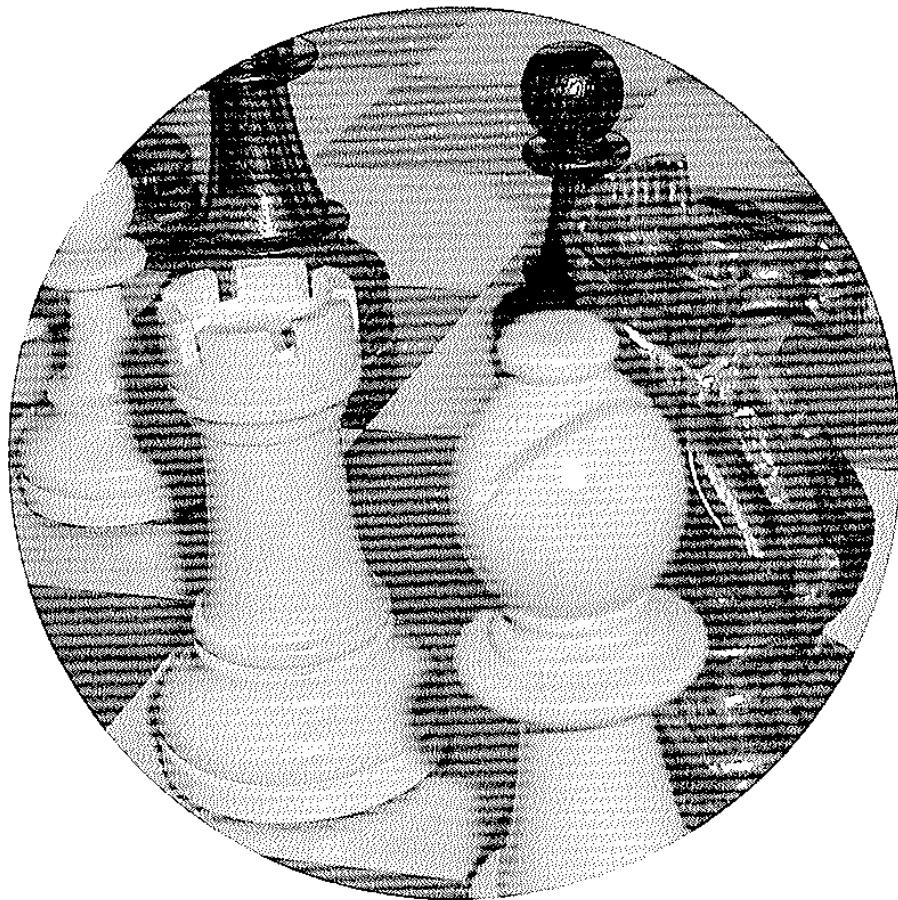
28... $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ 29. $g3$

1–0

I hope I have managed to show what the initiative is and how we have to keep the momentum to sustain it. In the next chapter we shall look at the way attacks in chess have a tendency to leave out half of the board.

Chapter 3

Add some Colour to your Play

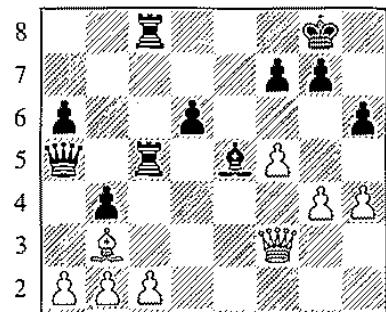
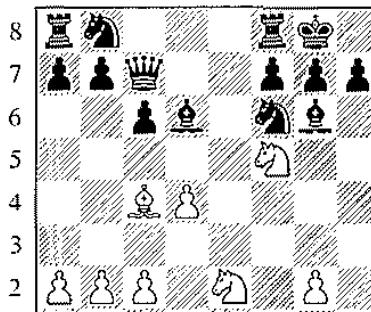


"I have long suspected, whenever the books I read began discussing dark-square weaknesses or an attack on the dark squares, that the subject was not only beyond my understanding, but beyond the author's as well." - David Bronstein

Diagram preview

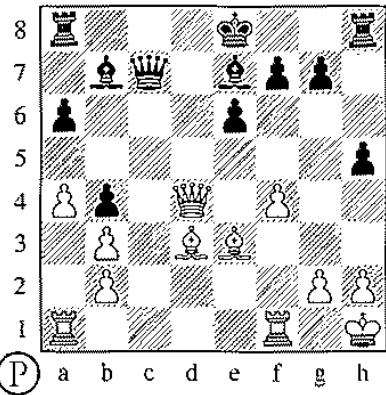
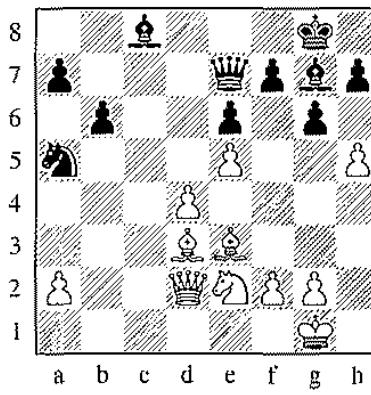
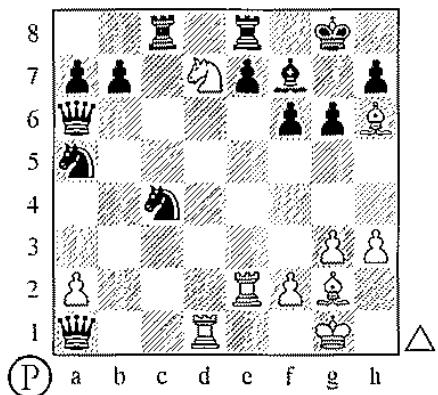
On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



Where to strike?
(see page 95)

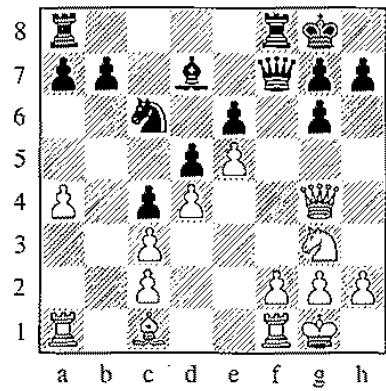
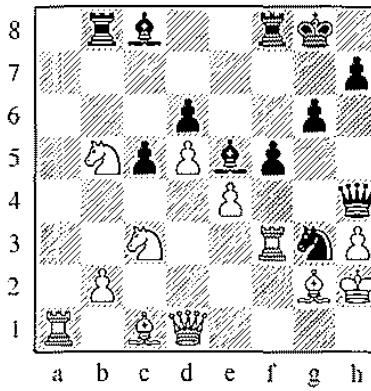
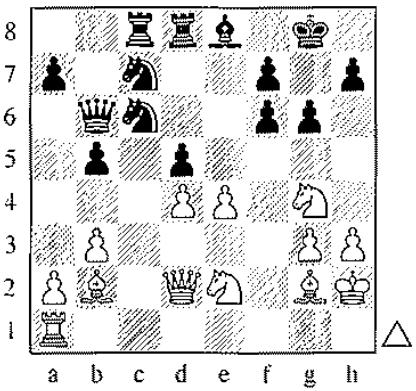
What is the clearest
continuation?
(see page 102)



How to break through?
(see page 92)

How should White improve his
position?
(see page 98)

How to finish the development?
(see page 105)



How to continue the attack?
(see page 93)

What surprising move can save
White?
(see page 100)

How to initiate an attack?
(see page 106-107)

"I have long suspected, whenever the books I read began discussing dark-square weaknesses or an attack on the dark squares, that the subject was not only beyond my understanding, but beyond the author's as well. 'Certainly', I would say to myself, 'it must be true that the enemy dark squares will be weak if his pawns stand on the light squares and he loses his dark-square bishop. But if he then removes all of his pieces from the dark squares, what will be left for me to attack?'"

"Such was my line of reasoning until the day I realized that a weakness of the dark squares is also a weakness of the pieces and pawns on the light squares. Light-square weaknesses are also possible, resulting in a weakening of the enemy pieces and pawns on the dark squares" – David Bronstein

The quote above is one of the most famous in chess literature, found in the introduction to the first game in one of the most influential chess books of all time, David Bronstein's *Zurich International Chess Tournament 1953* (here given in Jim Marfia's translation). I am not sure which of these facts had most to do with its fame, that it was in a classic, or that it was on page one! Either way it describes one of the fundamental ideas in chess, that of playing on only one colour of squares.

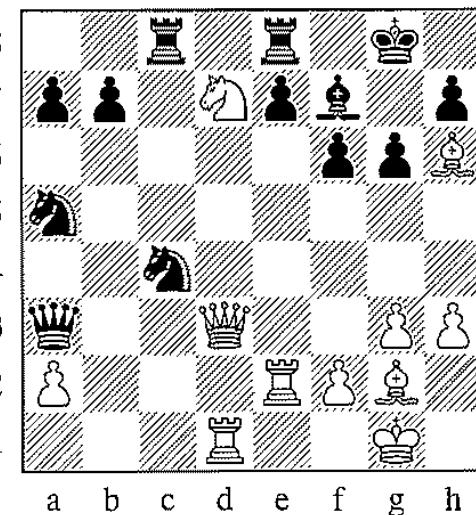
Bronstein's realisation that dominating one half of the board, here the dark squares, will also lead to the domination of the other half of the board, is of course an important one. Still, some people will probably think that although chess is not draughts with the pieces on opposite colours, this is still not that important a realisation. This is because they miss out on an even more basic point: **Most chess pieces are colour blind!** Bishops, knights and pawns can only control squares of one colour at a time, the queen is biased towards the colour of the square it is standing on, the rook will aim at the same colour square first in all four directions, and the king at the edge of the

board (where it often is) is also biased. Though the chess board was probably divided into light and dark squares by an artistic soul, thinking in black and white should not be underestimated as an important tool, both in technical and in dynamic positions.

Before we continue discussing the basic theory of attacking on one colour, it feels right to show a simple illustration of our theme, played by Bronstein 46 years after he almost became world champion...

David Bronstein – Smbat Lputian

Ubeda 1996



Black is weak on the dark squares as a result of having exchanged his dark-squared bishop for a knight. He is hoping to survive this problem by having played ...f6 and thereby block the position with the pawns. But it takes more than a few pawns to stop Bronstein, one of the greatest attackers of the 20th century.

24. $\mathbb{W}d4$

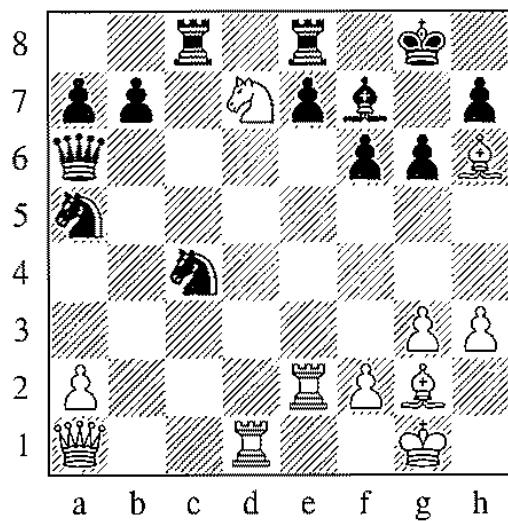
White is threatening to play 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$, demolishing the dark squares and exposing the weaknesses. This forces Black to play:

24... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}a1!$

This move keeps control of the dark squares and attacks the black queen, thus winning the necessary tempo.

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

Black keeps an eye on f6 as well, but the queen has to leave the centre of the board to do so.

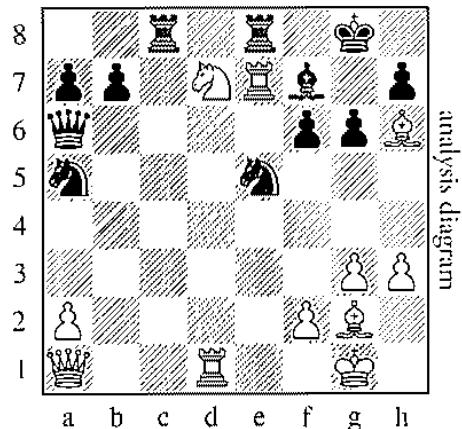


26. $\mathbb{Q}xe7!!$

The tactics are not too difficult to calculate, but what I want to emphasise here is the complete destruction of the dark squares.

26... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

The most tenacious defence was probably 26... $\mathbb{Q}e5$, although this too is not sufficient to save the game.



White wins after 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$ followed by 29. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ with a deadly attack.

27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$

28. $\mathbb{Q}g7\#$ was prettier, but the text move leads straight to mate as well.

28... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}c6$

1–0

White's strategy in this example was so simple that few of us would actually think of it as a strategy, but rather as a variation calculated with precision. However, any good calculation will always build on a strategy, meaning that it will be working towards one or more clear-cut goals, even if not yet clearly defined. One reason for this is that our strategies have a tendency to be quite similar in many instances, like in this example, where the destruction of the black pawn chain on the dark squares was the strategy leading to mate on g7.

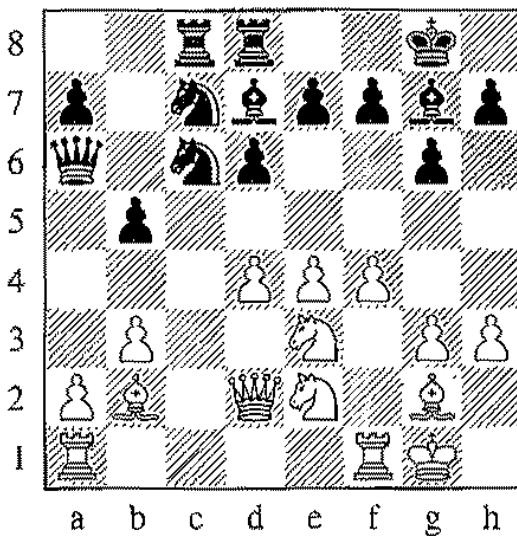
The same strategy is in action in the following game, won by the colourful Ksawery Tartakower, who was born in Russia, but later represented Poland and was known by his French nickname *Saviely*. His greatest legacy is probably the comment that he could see all the same combinations that Alekhine could see, he just could not get the same positions! We shall see that despite this opinion, Tartakower was an excellent attacker, who in the following game managed to use his space advantage to attack Black on the dark squares on the kingside. This is of course only a summary; any serious fight will always include a large amount of details, as is indeed the case here.

Saviely Tartakower – Reginald Broadbent

Sicilian Defence
London 1946

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d6 3.g3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ g6 5.c3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 6.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8.h3 0–0

9.d4 cxd4 10.cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 11.b3 $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}b2$
 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 14.f4 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ b5
16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$



The centre is reasonably stable and White has a large representation on the kingside. Therefore it is natural to start an attack there.

17.f5 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}h2$!

Maybe this is not strictly necessary, but there is no reason not to play this move before the attack is executed. Therefore it is technically the best move. The time it wastes is not easily exploited.

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

It is hard to find a useful black move. This actually comes pretty close in that the bishop at least defends f7.

19.f6!

A quite obvious sacrifice, but attractive none the less.

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

Black is inviting White to sacrifice the exchange.

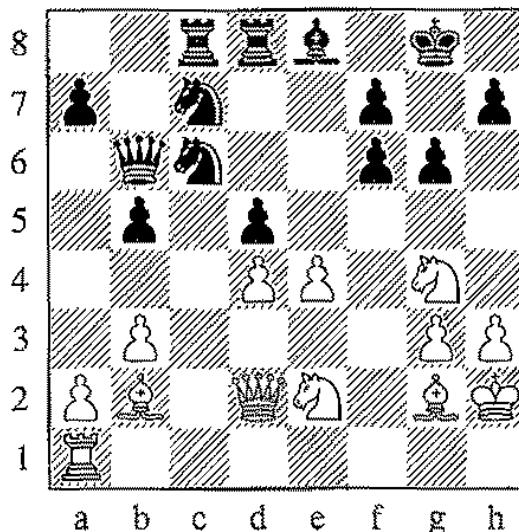
True, Black's position is pretty dire after 19...exf6 20. $\mathbb{Q}g4$, but he will certainly not be better off now there is a knight coming to f6 instead of a rook.

20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$!

This move is pretty obvious. The weaknesses on the dark squares are far more important than some loose change.

20...exf6 21. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ d5

Other moves are possible, but this seems reasonably sensible.



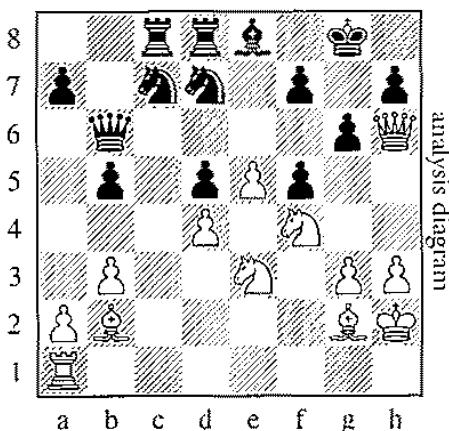
22. $\mathbb{Q}h6$??

This looks a bit artificial, but is actually okay. The weak spot is f6 and everything is about this square.

Why not take the pawn with check, bring in the rook or even play 22.e5 with absolute domination on the dark squares? The answer is that White did not want Black to play ... $\mathbb{Q}g7$, and therefore took this option away from him. This did give Black a chance to fight for the f6-square and set White a few real problems.

22... $\mathbb{Q}e7$??

This loses without any real fight. More resistant was 22... $\mathbb{Q}b8$??, but White can still force a win by combining an attack on the two weaknesses in the black position, created by the exchange sacrifice. 23.e5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f4$! White is creating threats both to d5 and to the black king with $\mathbb{Q}h5$!! looming in the air. 24...f5 25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$!



The main problem with Black's position is that all his pieces are standing in each other's way, and that he is terminally weak on the dark squares. On the next move White will bring the rook into the attack on c1, where it is generally active and also threatens $\mathbb{E}xc7$ in many lines. But as Black cannot do anything active, there are also other options in the air, such as g3-g4 hoping to devastate the kingside even further.

Black's position is indefensible. He has many options, but no solutions.

23. $\mathbb{E}f1$

From here on White plays his attack very accurately. First he brings in the rook and attacks the weakest spot in the black position, then he strikes.

23... $\mathbb{E}d6$

This looks rather artificial, but there is no other way to protect f6.

24. e5!

It is the square and not the pawn that White wants to conquer.

24... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 25. $\mathbb{E}xf5$

Not a very difficult sacrifice.

25... $gxf5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$

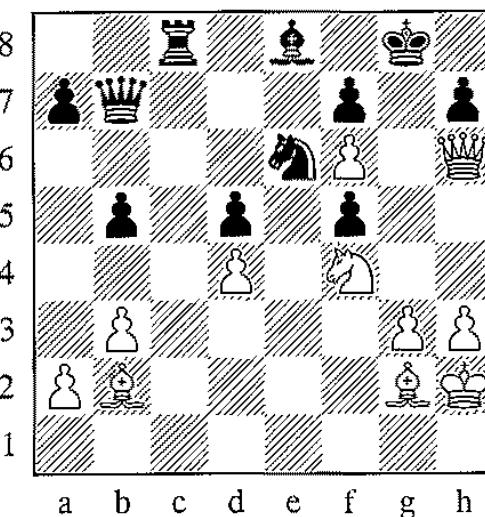
This is quite thematic, but 26. $exd6$ $f\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ followed by $\mathbb{Q}h5$ was a bit simpler.

26... $\mathbb{E}xf6$ 27. $exf6$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Black is hanging on by a thread.

28. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{W}b7$

Indirectly protecting g7. White now has two wins. Both of them involve bringing a bishop into the attack from the edge of the board.



29. $\mathbb{Q}a3!$

Attacking the f8-square and certainly the most natural way to continue the attack.

But we should not be blind to 29. $h4!?$, with the idea of 30. $\mathbb{Q}h3$, which is equally devastating. Black can try a lot of things to avoid mate, but they all have serious flaws.

29... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Mate on g7 is imminent. Black resigned.

1-0

Certainly this performance is not something to be ashamed of and Tartakower's statement should be considered with a good deal of reservation. His wit was legendary and all good comedians mix truth and irony into a sizzling cocktail of verbal fireworks, just to come up with a drink that will burn your throat.

In the following game we shall see a less common way of taking advantage of weaknesses on one colour, here the dark squares. As a

consequence of White's destructive sacrifices in the early middlegame Black finds his king's position almost terminally weak on the dark squares. Black manages to bring in the queen and bishop to defend the f6-square and avoid immediate disaster there. But in the meantime White has been able to undermine the light squares and create additional weaknesses on f7 and especially h7.

Bruno Belotti – Evgeniy Solozhenkin

Caro-Kann

Montecatini Terme 1999

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 dxe4 4.♗xe4 ♖f5
5.♗g3 ♖g6 6.♗c4 e6 7.♗1e2**

This system is not too dangerous for Black. I have played it a few times with White and always find that I am committing crimes against my structure at the cost of rather meagre hopes of tactical chances.

7...♝f6

I personally find 7...♝d6 more flexible. The idea is that once White plays f4, Black can play ...♝e7.

8.0–0 ♖d6 9.f4 ♜c7?

This allows White to open up the position and use his lead in development. These factors are less important than the h2-pawn, which Black will have to spend a bit of time winning.

9...♝f5?! to prevent the advance of the f-pawn is a viable way to play this system.

10.f5!

With this pawn sacrifice White is able to do two things, take the initiative and establish a strong knight on f5. Black can of course decline the offered pawn, or he could exchange the annoying knight, but all avenues turn out

to be dead ends and the road to equality is nowhere to be found.

10...exf5 11.♗xf5 ♜xh2† 12.♗h1 0–0

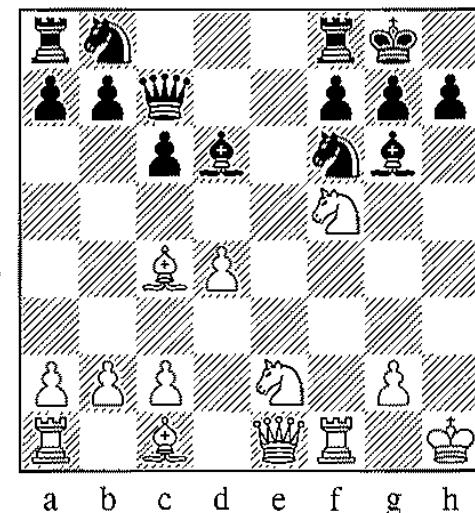
12...♝xf5 13.♗xf5 ♗d6 is not an improvement. Because the bishop has abandoned the kingside for the centre, White can undermine Black's position with an aggressive developing move: 14.♗h6! with the initiative.

13.♗e1!

13.g3?! also leads to an advantage, but the text move is stronger. White is aligning his queen with the dark squares.

13...♝d6

Black could possibly play better moves here, but as our theme does not really become interesting till now, I will rush on.



14.♗xg7!

The key move in the game. White realises that the only piece supporting the dark squares for Black on the kingside is the pawn on g7. All the other pieces are targeting light squares only. White is therefore able to combine the strength of the rook, bishop and queen on the dark squares to wreck Black's defences.

14...♝xg7 15.♗xf6! ♗d7

15...♝xf6 loses by force on the dark squares:

16. $\mathbb{W}h4\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}h6\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 18. $\mathbb{W}f6$ with mate coming.

16. $\mathbb{W}h4!$

If White retracted the rook Black would get the time he needs to consolidate.

16... $b5$

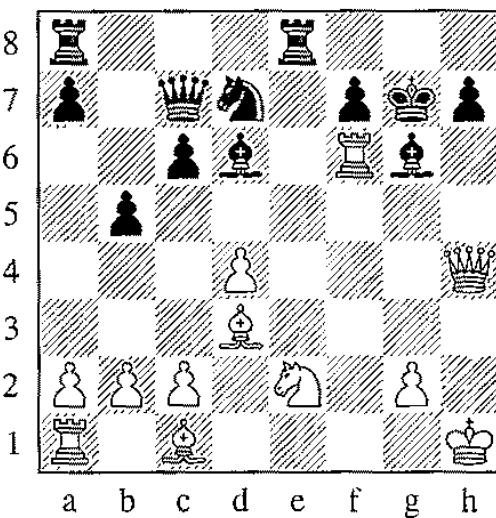
16... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ does not improve things greatly for Black, now or on the next move.

17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

$b3$ was also a decent square, but White wants to exchange Black's strongest defender.

17... $\mathbb{R}fe8$

After this move Black can fight for the $g7$ -square, so the rook is actually hanging on $f6$ and needs to retreat.



18. $\mathbb{R}f3!$

White keeps his options open. He is ready to swing the rook to $h3$ and attack from that side too.

18... $\mathbb{W}d8$

Black could have won the knight on $e2$, but this piece is of little importance, as White had no way to include it into the game. The line goes 18... $\mathbb{R}xd3$ 19. $cxd3$ $\mathbb{R}xe2$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}h6\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21. $\mathbb{R}xf7$ $\mathbb{R}e7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}af1!$, and Black will find

himself brutally mated in just a few moments.

19. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

White brings in the remaining pieces and decides the game easily by exploiting the weakness of the dark squares.

19... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $hxg6$

20... $fxg6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}af1$ and Black will have to resign.

21. $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$

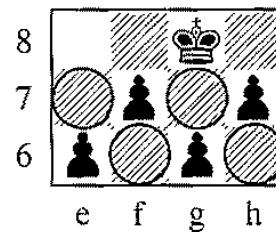
21. $\mathbb{Q}af1$ also wins, but this is simpler.

21... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

Black resigned. He is losing control over the ultimate dark square weakness, $h8$.

1-0

We have looked quite a bit at a situation where the dark squares around the black king are weak. This is not a coincidence for several reasons. First of all, I wanted to use examples that were related to the Bronstein quote, once I made up my mind to include it after all. But it is also quite common that the weaknesses around the black king are on the dark squares, as it is quite common to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop and thus put the pawns on light squares. But once that bishop is gone the weakness of the dark squares can be considerable:



This does not mean that it is bad to have the above pawn structure, of course, but that the benefits of this structure come at the price of looking after the dark squares. This can at times be difficult as we have seen. This is even true if you are the highest rated player in the

world, as we shall see in the next game. Once again we shall follow the Ukrainian number one and last-minute reserve in the Morelia/Linares tournament of 2007. After having lost with White to the 16-year-old Norwegian prodigy, Ivanchuk was certainly aware of the strength behind Carlsen's stable positional play, however once again he proved unable to resist it. The responsibility put on Black after the first 14 moves seems to be quite extensive and even though White's play was without great nuances, he managed to outplay an opponent who was number three in the world before he was born and still occupies a stable top 10 position.

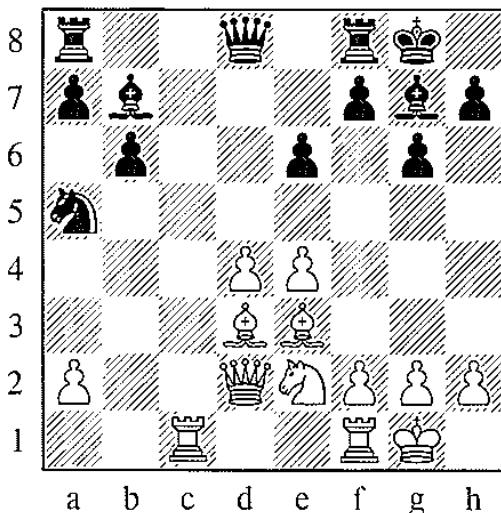
Magnus Carlsen – Vassily Ivanchuk

Grünfeld Defence
Linares 2007

1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d5 4.cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$
5.e4 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 6.bxc3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ c5 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$
9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 10.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}a5$

10... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ is not that popular right now. It seems that Black players are tired of White coming up with strong new ideas (at least in practice) in the line 11.f3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ cxd4 13.cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14.d5!?

11. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ b6 12. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ cxd4 13.cxd4 e6 14. $\mathbb{Q}d2$
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$



15.h4!

It is clear that it will be in the centre and on the kingside that White will have to look for his winning chances. For this reason this is the most logical move.

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

I must admit that I do not have a lot of confidence in Black's position. The knight is not well placed on a5, as the c4-square is too well guarded, and the bishops on b7 and g7 are only seemingly more active than their opposites. In reality they could easily be biting on granite.

15... $\mathbb{W}xh4??$ loses the queen, and one other game went: 15... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ a6 19. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 20.d5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ e5 22.h5 $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 23.h6† $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ The h-pawn was a constant pain for Black in Kasparov – Lutz, Frankfurt 1986. White won.

16.h5 $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ 17.e5!?

Not very flexible. Usually White waits to determine his pawn structure, but here the weaknesses on the dark squares are so outspoken that it makes sense to try to exploit them immediately.

17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ was also strong, as played in another game.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xc1$

17... $\mathbb{W}d8!?$, to put the queen on d5, was probably better, but White can even consider 18.f3!? with wild ideas like $\mathbb{Q}g1-f2$ and $\mathbb{Q}f1-h1$. White looks better, Andrews – Stone, Lansing 1989.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8?$

Black is worse after 18... $\mathbb{W}d8$ (Scherbakov) mirroring the earlier game, but it was possibly worth a try.

19.♕xc8† ♕xc8 20.♗g5 ♜c7?

As far as I can evaluate, this is already the decisive mistake, though I would have a very hard time proving it. After 20...♝d7!? 21.♗f6 ♜c6 22.♗f4 ♜f8! Black is passive and under attack, but at least some of his pieces are involved in the defence.

21.♗f6 ♜c6

21...♝b7 was suggested as better. White has several promising lines, but none are conclusive. I prefer 22.♕xg7 ♜xg7 23.♗g5 with a strong initiative.

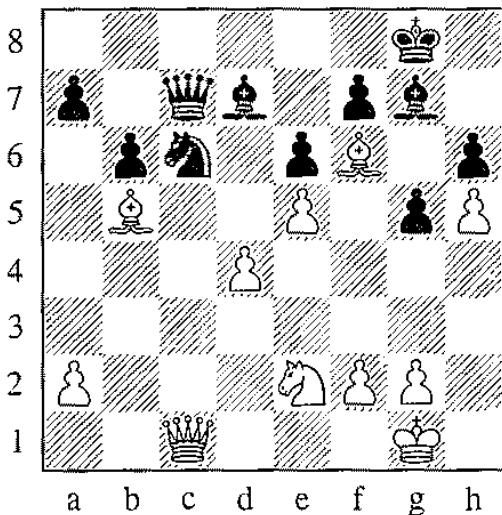
22.♗g5!

Carlsen is threatening to play ♜xg7, h6† and ♜f6, mating, or just plain winning.

22...h6 23.♗cl!

Played with a double threat against g6 and...

23...g5 24.♗b5 ♜d7



25.d5!

...the knight.

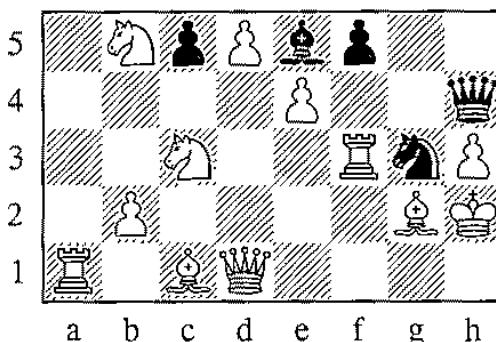
25...exd5 26.♘d4

White wins a piece and the game.

26...♗xf6 27.exf6 ♜d6 28.♗xc6 ♜xf6

**29.♗xd7 ♜xd4 30.g3 ♜c5 31.♗xc5 bxc5
32.♗c6 d4 33.♗b5 ♜f8 34.f4 gxf4 35.gxf4
1-0**

We already saw in Belotti – Solozhenkin how we can use piece sacrifices to weaken the opponent on one colour of squares. The strategy behind this is to create a situation where we are attacking on one colour, for example on the dark squares as in the next example, and the opponent is defending mainly on the other colour, here the light squares. If you look at the position around move 22 you will see how the white men in the centre and on the kingside are all focusing on the light squares:



The pawns on d5, e4 and h3, the bishop on g2, the knight on c3 and the queen on d1 are all light-square freaks, and only the rook on f3 seems to defend the king.

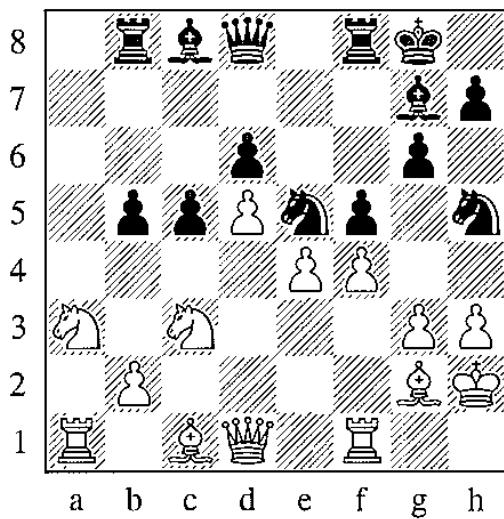
On the other hand Black has a bishop on e5 and the queen on h4, attacking the dark squares, while the knight on g3 simultaneously prevents the king from finding peace on h1 and stands in the way, the great paradox of the black attack, which is brilliantly solved by Timman.

But because Black has sacrificed a piece the attack is only strong enough to fight for equality, though in practice it is very dangerous. After an inaccurate move by White, Black is able to decide the game by sacrificing a knight and a rook, both on light squares, enabling him to mate White on a dark square.

Loek Van Wely – Jan Timman

Modern Benoni
Wijk aan Zee 2002

1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ g6 7. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0–0 9.0–0 a6 10.a4 $\mathbb{B}e8$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12.h3 $\mathbb{B}b8$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 15.e4 $\mathbb{B}f8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ f5 17.f4 b5 18.axb5 axb5



19.fxe5!?

19. $\mathbb{Q}axb5$ fxe4!? led to sharp play in the famous game Korchnoi – Kasparov, Luzern (ol) 1982, when a very young Garry Kasparov took over Board 1 for the USSR (and introduced 17...b5!), as Karpov did not want to play Korchnoi when he did not have to.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$!

19... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ would allow White to run away from the pawn fork on the queenside and support his dark squares on the kingside at the same time.

20. $\mathbb{Q}f3$!?

If White accepts the sacrifice, I am rather dubious if there is anything better than 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$ with a draw by perpetual check. White can of course sidestep it with 22. $\mathbb{Q}e2$, but this looks rather dangerous

to me. The position is just unclear, but in a practical game I would probably prefer to be Black.

20... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}axb5$

Again it was possible for White to take on g3, but the problems with his structure remain. Even after Black gives up his dark-squared bishop it is White who is struggling with the dark squares on the kingside:

21. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$??

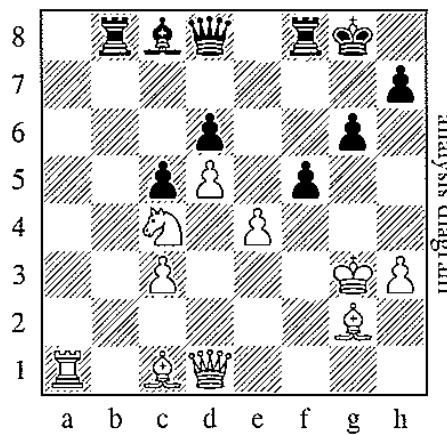
This is a rather risky approach, but it leads to some illustrative lines, so I want to investigate it.

21...h5 is possibly the best move. I reckon the chances are about even, though it is very hard to determine.

22. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ b4 23. $\mathbb{Q}c4$??

23.exf5! might very well be the problem with Black's approach in this line, but as said, I want to illustrate how White's king's position is suffering from the attack of only a single pawn. For exactly this reason it is worth eliminating this pawn immediately!

23...bx c 24.bxc3



If White was able to stabilise this position he would undoubtedly be winning. But it is Black to play and he can retain the initiative with forceful play, exploiting the disappearance of the defence on the dark squares of the kingside.

24...f4#! 25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$

Taking the pawn leads to the king getting drawn further out. The costs to escape from the army of darkness are not worth paying.

25...f3! 26.Qxf3

26.Qf1 might look right, but after 26...Wh4 27.Qxd6 Qxh3! with the intention of pushing the f-pawn and entering with the rook on b2, Black is not worse. My analysis suggests that a draw is the fairest result, though it is not possible to analyse everything to the end.

26...Wh4

Black clearly has a lot of play. It seems that this is only enough for a draw after

27.Qf1 Qg4!

when White can save himself with:

28.Qg5! Wxg5 29.hxg4

Black has several possible continuations, mainly leading to a draw.

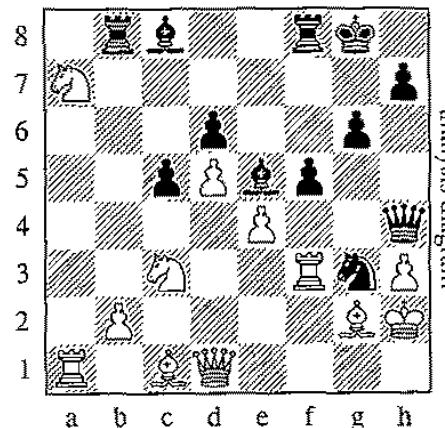
21...Wh4

Another piece joins the attack. This time it is one that can hit hard.

22.exf5?

A very understandable decision, but not one that can be recommended. Van Wely no doubt felt the pressure on e4 from the f-pawn, and saw lines such as 22.Qg1? f4!, where Black is thinking of ...g6-g5-g4 with a strong attack, and 23.Qf2 f3! followed by 24...Qxh3, which would leave White without any defence. Still, his reaction turns out to be incorrect and could have been refuted outright if only Timman had found the best possible relocation of his pieces and understood already at this point in the game that the knight on g3 is simply in the way.

As so often, the best move is based on getting pieces to work that are not currently contributing. In this case the least contributing pieces are the a1-rook and b5-knight. In the game Van Wely brought the rook to the 4th rank to fight against the black pieces, but in this position the best move is 22.Qa7!!,



making use of this knight, which is seemingly offside. However, now it will either claim the light-squared bishop, thereby avoiding the devastating blow ...Qxh3, which we have already encountered twice in our analysis, or once it gets to c6 it would be able to eliminate the e5-bishop and make h2 a safe square for the king. In either case White would have good chances.

Black can of course give a lot of checks, but as his dark-squared bishop can only attack one of the white king's feet at any given time, all Black seems to be able to achieve is a variation of Wild West dancing, where you shoot at the enemy's feet, but where he will always have a leg to stand on.

22...Qxf5!

This natural move is the strongest, but can actually be argued against quite sensibly, and I had originally noted it down as imprecise. What we see in the game is that the knight on g3 looks strong and should have a great discovered check coming up. Well, *should*. It just doesn't. It is simply in the way. This is both a bad and a good thing. A bad thing, because it is obstructing the black pieces' coordination, a good thing because it is also in the way of the white rook's defence of h3.

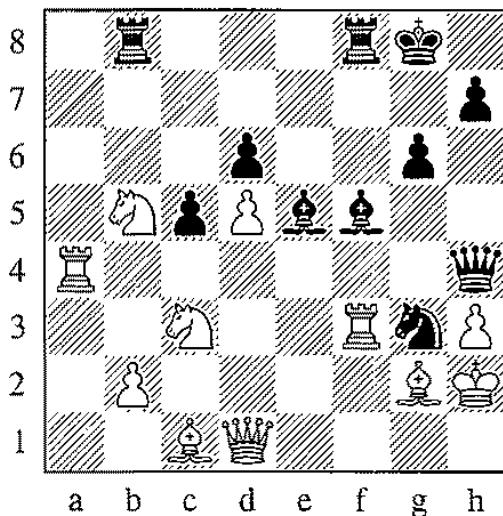
After the bishop takes on f5 this piece is also in the way. Still, Black's attack is strong enough to succeed and, though I like the natural feeling of 22...Qxf5†? 23.Qg1 Qd7! with the idea of

24... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ with a strong attack, I have to admit that time is of the essence and the text move is sound and strong.

As Nimzowitsch would have put it: 'The threat is stronger than the execution.' Or as I would have put it: 'If possible, include all your pieces in the attack before executing it!'

23. $\mathbb{B}a4$

This looks to be the most viable defence, though the position is hard to administrate: e.g. 23. $\mathbb{B}e3$ goes to the grave after 23... $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 24. $\mathbb{B}h1$ $\mathbb{B}g4!$ with many threats on the dark (and increasingly also the light) squares.



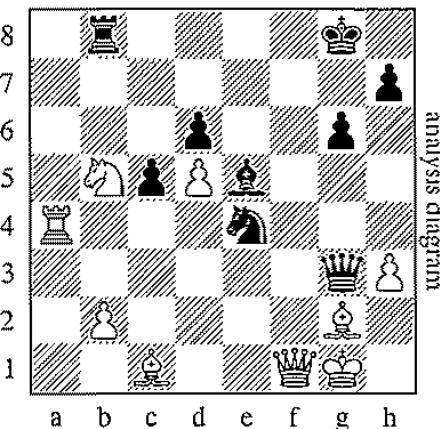
23... $\mathbb{Q}e4?$

This leads to a sensational finish, but should actually have been punished. Black could have played the calm 23...c4!, when the white rook is shut out and the weaknesses on the dark squares persist.

24. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#?$

This position is all about tactics and there is no real way to explain it in positional terms. The build-up to an attack should always be laid down on sound positional grounds, which is what this book is trying to teach, but once you get to the time to strike, calculation cannot be avoided.

At this point Van Wely missed something somewhere, as he could have played: 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4\#$ 25. $\mathbb{B}g1$ $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{W}g3$

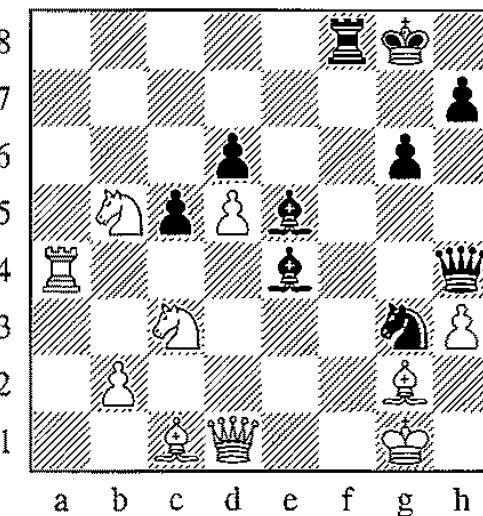


28. $\mathbb{B}xe4!$ Probably this is the move he underestimated? 28... $\mathbb{W}h2\#$ 29. $\mathbb{B}f2$ $\mathbb{B}f8\#$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{B}xf1$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}g3$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ With a rook and two minor pieces, White will hold the position together despite his lack of coordination and king safety.

24... $\mathbb{B}xf8$ 25. $\mathbb{B}g1$

Maybe Van Wely simply thought that he was escaping here. It would not have been unfair to believe that Black was about to play 25... $\mathbb{B}f2$, which looks rather fancy but does not lead to an advantage after 26. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$.

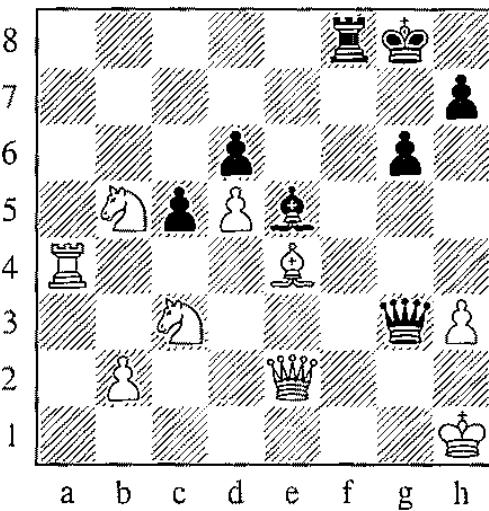
But Timman had a far more powerful exploitation of the weaknesses on the dark squares in mind...



25...Qe2†!!

A beautiful sacrifice that achieves little except allowing Black's strongest piece to enter the weakened dark squares. But this happens with absolutely deadly effect, so this combination crowns a great build-up into a small modern masterpiece, despite the slight mistake on move 23.

**26.Qxe2 Qg3 27.Qf4 Qxf4 28.Qxe4 Qg3†
29.Qh1**



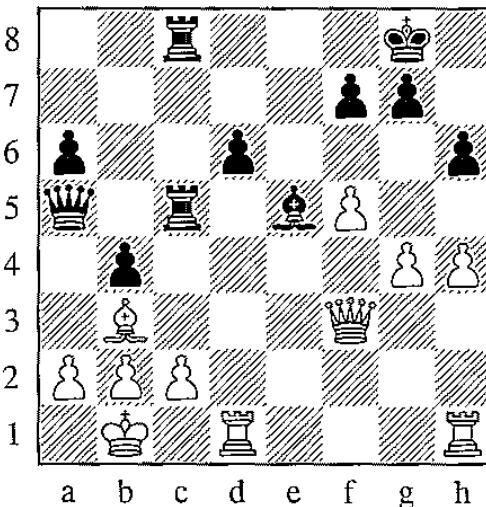
29...Qf1†!

0-1

There is no place where the idea of breaking and entering on one colour of squares predominates more than in positions with opposite-coloured bishops, especially in their pure form. In the following example it is obvious that White will attack on the light squares and Black on the dark squares, but what actually decides the outcome is the weakness Black has on the dark squares, having advanced his h-pawn earlier in the game. Had this pawn still been on h7, I would have fancied Black's chances a good deal better, as the b2-pawn is potentially a more disastrous soft spot than the f7- and h7-pawns. Just imagine the result of a queen check on those squares and you will understand where I am coming from.

Milos Perunovic – Branko Tadic

Serbian Championship 2007



Presumably after some deliberation, White decided to throw caution to the storm and enter complications with the advance of the g-pawn.

24.g5!

This strong move had to be calculated very accurately; White allows a combination that ends up not working.

In the first edition I thought 24.Qg2! was subtle and thus the simplest move, retaining all the advantage without needless calculation. However, 24...Qb5! (as pointed out by GM John Shaw) intending ...a5-a4 looks rather unclear, so 24.g5! is essential to keep the momentum.

24...Qxb2

24...Qc7 25.Qg2! still gives White a decisive attack, although 25.Qd3! is also very strong.

25.Qh5!

A benefit of his previous move. Instead 25.Qxb2? fails to 25...Qa3† 26.Qb1 Qxc2 when Black is exploiting the pin on the third rank, though White could still escape with

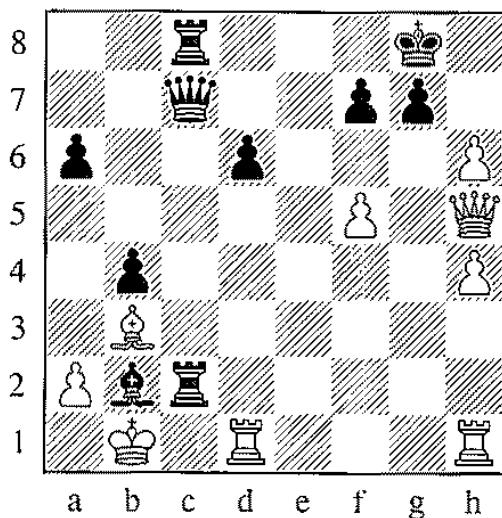
27. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$, leading to a draw by perpetual check.

25... ♔c7

Black has no better moves. After 25... $\mathbb{E}xf5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ White has won a piece, whilst 25... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 27. $gxh6!$ leaves the black king without a defence.

26.gxh6 ♜xc2

26...g6 27.♕xg6† ♜h8 28.♕xf7 ♜xc2 29.f6
and White wins.



This certainly would look hairy to me from afar, but White is apparently in complete control.

27. ♕xf7+!!

The best, although 27.hxg7?? also wins: e.g.
27...Qxg7 28.f6!

27... $\hat{\text{r}}$ f8

27... ~~xf7~~ 28.h7†

28.17!

1-0

This was a somewhat simple example and therefore almost the opposite of the next example. In this game, which could also have been placed in Chapter 5 on attacking the

weakest point in the opponent's position, the main point is that Black wants to attack g2 in the best possible way. With great skill and impressive tactics Cramling manages to create and exploit an advantage on the light squares and forces White into a position where his dark bishop gives him no threats on the dark squares and even less protection on the light squares.

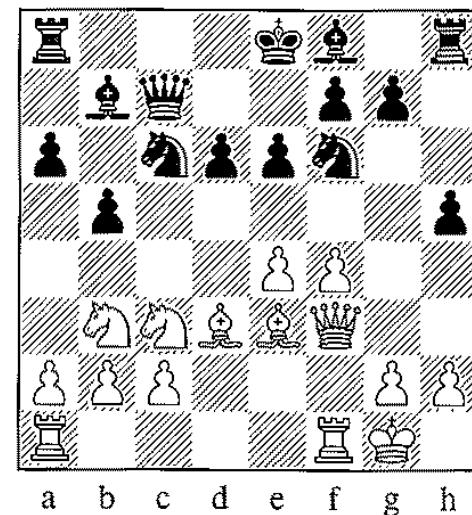
Mikhail Ulibin – Pia Cramling

Taimanov Sicilian
Stockholm 2005

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘c6
5.♗c3 ♗c7 6.f4 a6 7.♗b3

This is hardly the most dangerous way to meet the Taimanov variation. If White plays 5. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ against 4...a6, Black will often play ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ with the idea $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}e7!$ and the white knight is worse on b3 than on d4. Here White goes to b3 just to avoid the exchange on d4, giving Black free rein. Besides returning to these discussed lines with ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ at some point, she can also delay this in favour of other reasonable moves.

7...b5 8.Qd3 d6 9.Qe3 Qf6 10.Wf3 Qb7
11.0-0 h5!!?



All Black's previous moves have been natural. This pawn advance might seem odd to those not familiar with this modern treatment of the Sicilian Defence, which is as much of a defence as an AK-47 'Defence' Rifle. The unprovoked ...h5-move was first played in some positions in the Taimanov to start with, and had by 2005 spread to lines of the Najdorf, Dragon and other Sicilian systems. There are many ideas associated with this – often it is played to prevent the advance g2-g4, though here it is played more aggressively, with ideas of ...Qg4 and at times also ...h5-h4-h3, putting pressure on the white king's position.

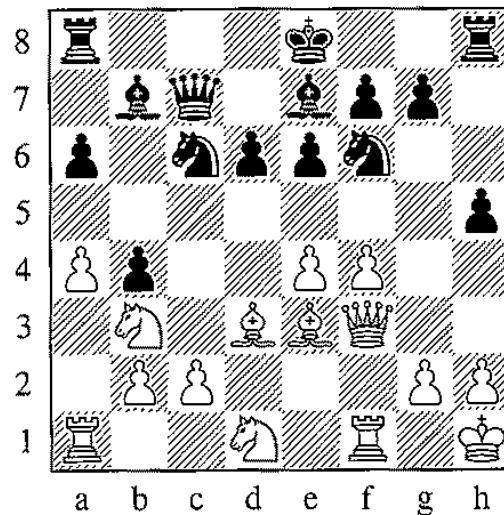
Ulibin's next move is very natural, though new. Previously White had played 12.h3, preventing the knight coming to g4 for good, but not without disadvantages. As White cannot hope for an opening advantage after his slightly unnatural play, Black is already dreaming of winning the game and exercising some breathing room with the adventurous ...h5!?

12.Qh1 Qe7 13.a4?!

This was played by Sax from Hungary without the moves Qh1 and ...Qe7 included. It was not very good then either, though Sax's opponent reacted strangely with ...b4 and then ...e5. Cramling's reaction is more natural and puts pressure on the white position, though it might be too early to talk about an actual advantage.

13...b4 14.Qd1

This looks strange, so we should ask ourselves, why would White want to put his knight here? It turns out that Qe2 does not work, because of another feature of the h-pawn's advance, that the white knight cannot protect e4 from g3 as it would be hunted down as soon as it arrived there.



14...d5!

It is very natural to open the long white diagonal. With the bishop on d3, White is set up to attack h7, but Black is also set up to attack the g2-square.

15.Qf2

This seems to be the only good move, as after 15.e5 Qg4 16.Qg1 g5!, White's centre would fall apart.

15...dxe4 16.Qxe4 Qxe4 17.Qxe4?

But this is a very bad mistake. Ulibin must have thought that the threat to the g7-pawn would save him, but instead it turns out to be entering the dragon's lair.

Simply from the method of elimination we can decide that 17.Qxe4 was better. Black has various options at her disposal, but none that lead to an undisputed advantage: e.g. 17...f5 18.Qd3 Qe5 19.Qe2 Qxd3 20.cxd3 h4 21.h3 and White has things to be happy about too.

17...Qa5!

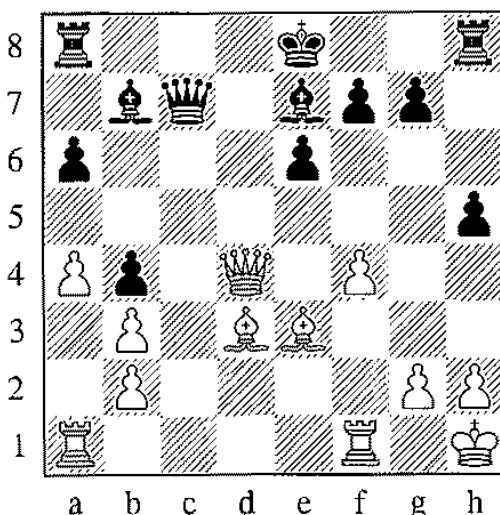
Pia Cramling is a very strong tactician, as is shown by this beautiful sequence.

18.Qd4?!

It was better to play 18.Qe5, when it is clear that White is under pressure. Still, a strong

player like Ulibin could fight on with serious hopes of making a draw.

18...♝xb3 19.cxb3



We have come to the crunch point of the game. The position might look equal at first glance, both players having brought out the queen and bishops, but without active rook play at the moment. Black can win a tempo, but the pawn on g7 is hanging, making it an unattractive option.

19...♝d8!!

That is, unless you go deeper. Cramling could get a good endgame with 19...♝d8, but she should have no regrets after finding this original, as well as stronger, continuation.

20.♛xg7?!

The last chance was 20.♛c4 ♛xc4 21.♝xc4 h4 22.h3, although after 22...♝f6 the slight differences from the previous endgames all add serious problems to White's defence.

It is hard to guess exactly what Ulibin had imagined would happen in the game, as Black has no other sensible moves at her disposal.

20...♝f6!

This is the powerful argument Cramling was preparing. With this Black gains enough time

to coordinate her forces before she regains her piece, leaving g2 terminally weak, giving her a winning attack.

21.♕xf6 ♜g8 22.♕g1

Another line could be 22.♕fc1 ♜xg2† 23.♔g1 ♜b7!.

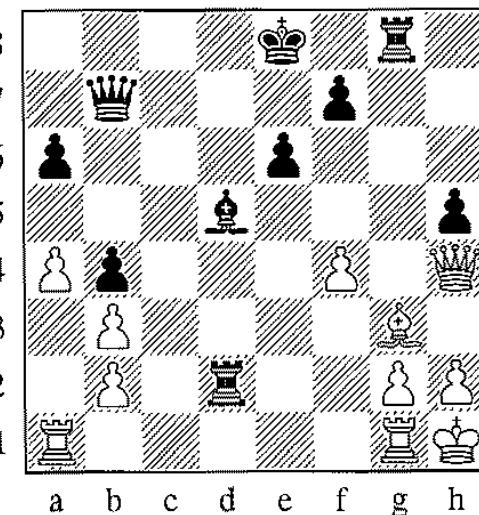
22...♜xd3 23.♕f2 ♜d2!

Putting immediate pressure on the white position so that he does not find time for ♜f2-h4, with a hint of counterplay.

24.♕g3 ♜d5!

Black prepares the deadly ...♝b7.

25.♕h4 ♜b7



26.h3

26.♕h3 h4! would have been a rather elegant finish. Instead White succumbs to the pressure.

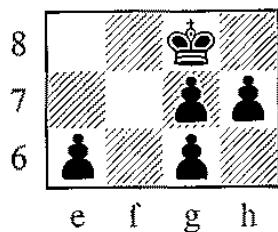
26...♝xg2† 27.♔h2 ♜f1†

0–1

An excellent example of how to exploit a weakness by making the right exchanges.

In the next example we shall briefly look at something that we will deal more with in

Volume 2, the creation of weaknesses, not by force, but by positional means. Black has a seemingly solid pawn structure, only differing from the one we saw in Carlsen – Ivanchuk by the “f7-pawn” being on g7.



The impression is very different and the solidity of this formation is extensive, as long as the pawn on g7 remains, that is.

In our final game of the chapter we shall see how an excellently carried out strategy can achieve such a long-term positional goal as creating weak dark squares around the king, and then White enters with his Greek army comfortably saddled upon his Trojan horse.

Leinier Dominguez – Artur Yusupov

French Winawer
Turin Olympiad 2006

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Qc3 Qb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Qxc3† 6.bxc3 Qe7 7.Wg4 0-0 8.Qd3 Qbc6 9.Qg5!?

The main battle has for a long time been going on after 9.Wh5, where Yusupov in Amsterdam later that year had a big novelty sprung on him by Karjakin and was subsequently completely destroyed. At the time of this game the understanding was that Black had enough counterplay in the most critical lines, so Dominguez tried something less fashionable.

9...Wa5 10.Qe2 Qg6

White's main point is that 10...cxd4 is met with 11.f4!, and the centre is lost but

consolidated at the same time, giving White enough time to castle and play Qf3 with a strong attack.

11.0–0

11.f4? is bad because of 11...Qxd4.

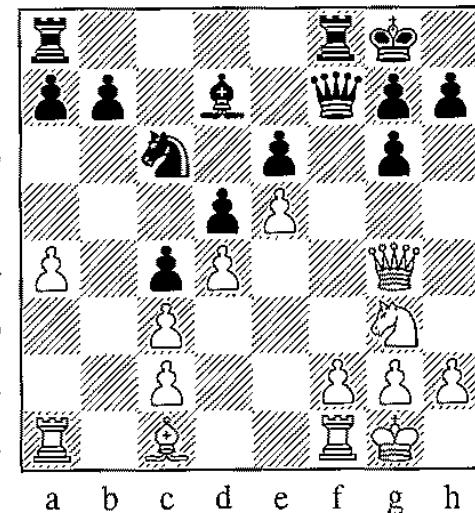
11...c4 12.Qxg6 fxg6 13.a4!

The opening battle has been won by White. He will be able to advance his h-pawn rather easily and allowed to have the queen stand assisting and unbothered on g4. The last move is great because it gives the bishop additional scope and slows down the black advance on the queenside.

13...Wc7 14.Qc1 Wf7 15.Qg3!

White should not allow the exchange of queens. After 15.Qa3 Wf5 it is very doubtful that White has achieved anything, Nataf – Drasko, Vrnjacka Banja 2005.

15...Qd7



We have come to the big moment of the game. Black is seemingly very solid on the kingside and positionally better on the queenside. Black's doubled pawns on the g-file look solid and give him control over the f-file, while White's doubled pawns on the c-file look weak, while neither the b-file nor the possibility

of bringing out the bishop to a3 are tempting. But chess is at times more complicated than such basic positional evaluations will have us believe and Dominguez finds a regrouping of his pieces that will allow him to exploit the weakness of the doubled pawns to open lines towards the black king, while it will take a very long time for Black to do anything about the white weaknesses on the queenside.

16.f3!!

The start of a brilliant manoeuvre. Because Black has lightened the pressure on the centre when he played ...c4, and because the white knight prevents Black from seeking an exchange of queens with ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$, White has time and convenience to play $\mathbb{Q}g1-f2$ and then advance the h-pawn.

16... $\mathbb{B}fc8$ 17.h4 $\mathbb{B}e8$

White has to play h4-h5 if he wants to proceed, so the black bishop is not as bad as it might look right now.

18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

According to the plan. Anything else would be a distraction.

18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19. $\mathbb{B}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$

This might be a very minor inaccuracy. Black could have started action with the rooks on the queenside after 19... $\mathbb{B}c6$! with the idea 20.h5 gxh5 21. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $\mathbb{W}g6$! and Black is not worse. Therefore White might play 20. $\mathbb{B}a2$!, with the idea that a later ... $\mathbb{W}g6$ can be answered with $\mathbb{Q}g5$! avoiding the exchange of queens.

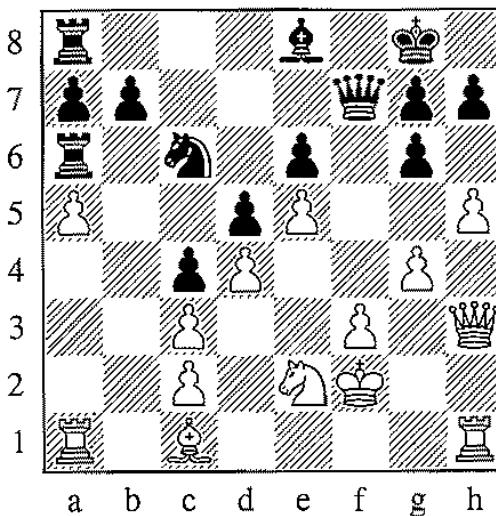
20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{B}c6$ 21. $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{B}a6$

21...h5?! would slow down the avalanche for now, but only so that it builds up behind the fence.

22.g4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 23.a5 $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Also interesting was 23...b6? 24.h5 gxh5 25.gxh5. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ bxa5 27.h6 g6 with a solid position for Black (Notkin).

24.h5



24... $\mathbb{B}xa5$?

It was absolutely necessary to play 24...gxh5, after which White might play 25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ when I am slightly biased towards White's chances, but have very little to back it up with.

25. $\mathbb{B}xa5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 26.h6!

This is the difference. Yusupov had no doubt expected his bishop's resurgence on the light squares would compensate for the craters on the dark ones, but it turns out not to be enough. The white attack seems unstoppable when you first go through the game.

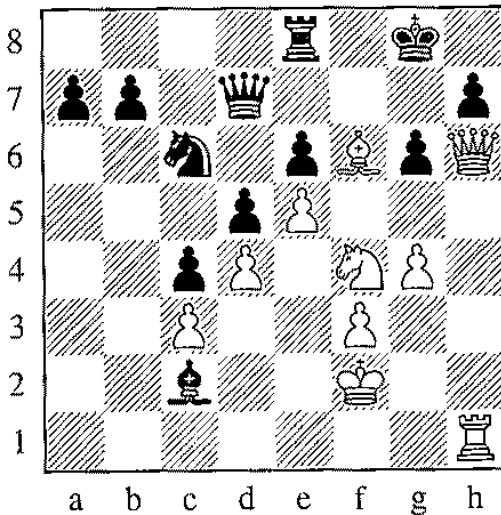
26... $\mathbb{B}a4$ 27.hxg7 $\mathbb{W}xg7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{B}xc2$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{B}e8$

29... $\mathbb{W}f7$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ is just over. White will play $\mathbb{Q}f4$, e5-e6 and $\mathbb{Q}xd5$.

30. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{W}d7$

30... $\mathbb{W}f7$ loses to 31. $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}h3$! and Black will have to make grave concessions to delay the complete collapse.

31. $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$



Black seems solid enough, as $\mathbb{Q}h3$ can be met with ... $\mathbb{E}c8-c7$ and the fingers are stuck in the dykes for now. Instead Dominguez finds a fancier way to make use of his knight.

32. $\mathbb{Q}h5!$

Black can only watch the dance of this elegant Trojan horse. Watch and suffer.

32... $\mathbb{E}f8$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}g7!$

With a double threat against h7 and e6.

33... $g5$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 35. $\mathbb{W}xg5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$

$35...\mathbb{Q}f7$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ also wins. Though the queen sacrifice is nice it would somehow have been nicer if the knight made the last move of the game.

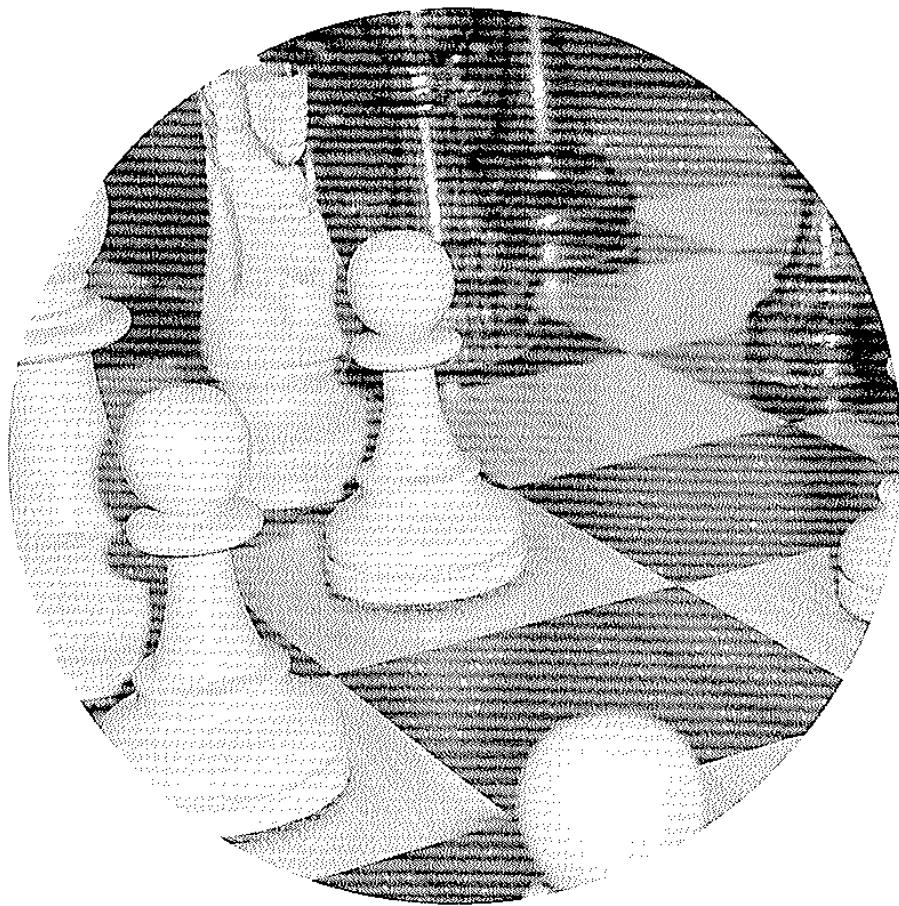
36. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$!

1-0

With this I will end the discussion of the importance of colour in chess and move on to a subject that is a bit sexier.

Chapter 4

Size Matters!

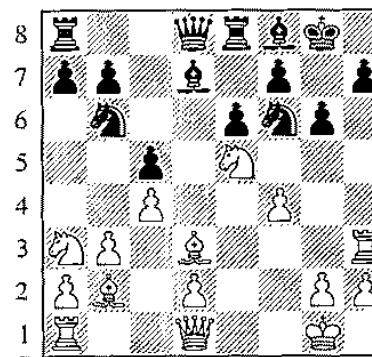


The difference in strength between the pieces changes dramatically when we decrease the period we compare them over, just as it increases if we expand it.

Diagram preview

On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

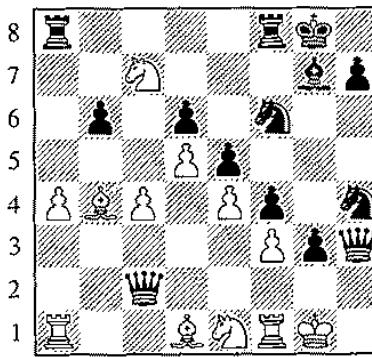
Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



(P) a b c d e f g h

How to attack?

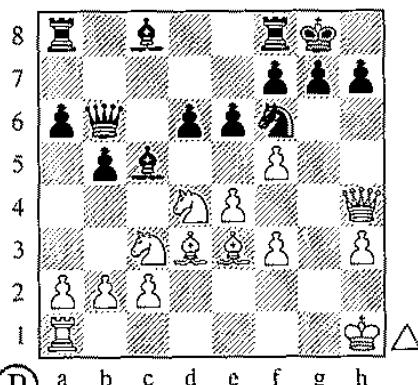
(see page 122)



a b c d e f g h

How to continue?

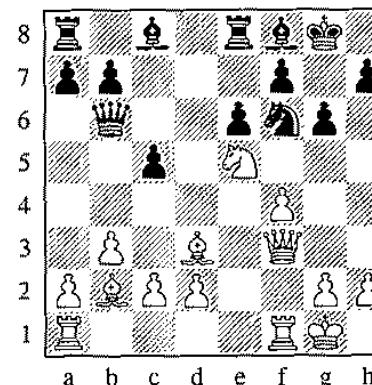
(see page 130)



(P) a b c d e f g h

How to execute the attack?

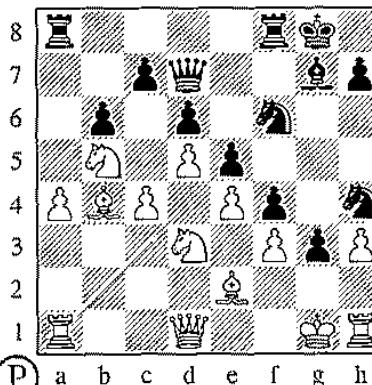
(see page 116)



a b c d e f g h

The best move is?

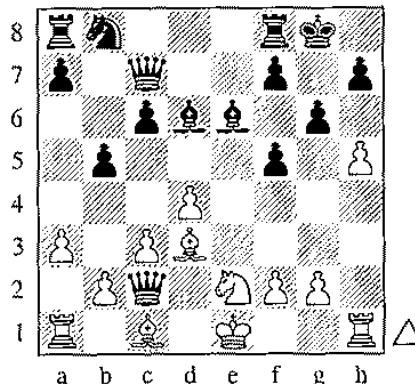
(see page 122)



(P) a b c d e f g h

The best move is?

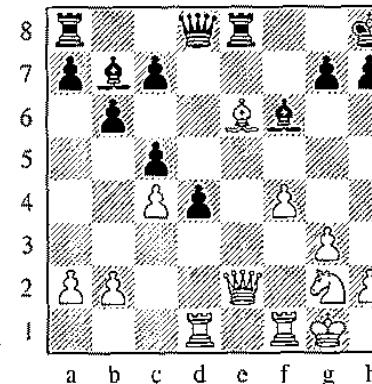
(see page 131)



△

How to use the momentum?

(see page 119)

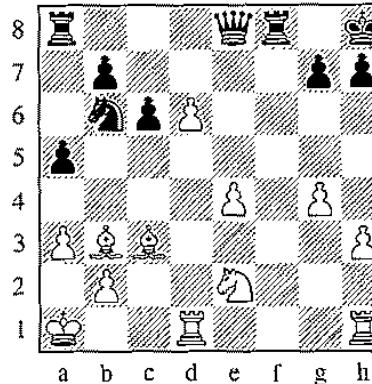


a b c d e f g h

How to get the remaining

pieces out?

(see page 124)



a b c d e f g h

What is the only defensive idea?

(see page 134)

Chess is often seen as primarily an Eastern European game, though also highly respected in the West. The high status chess had in the Soviet Union, and still holds in the former Republics to this day, is significant. For example, the Russian Deputy President, Alexander Zhukov, is also the president of the Russian Chess Federation. The president of FIDE, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, is president of a Russian republic. Gazprom, the biggest Russian and the third biggest company in the world is a keen sponsor of chess, and the former president of the Armenian Chess Federation has recently been elected as president of the country! In the West our organisers are usually normal people who like chess and want to give something back to the game in-between picking up the kids from school and cutting the hedge.

So why is it that if I had to describe chess in political terms I would always go to the American dream as the best metaphor? The idea of chess being a socialist game was raised by Botvinnik, with the idea that all the pieces have to work together for a common goal, which makes a bit of sense when you think of how expendable people are in the Socialist states, but it feels contrived. In chess I see the pieces as working together for the common goal as long as it is in everybody's interest, but with everyone being expendable and all pieces having the same opportunities, meaning that they can all only attack a square once, though they have their individual strengths, which are celebrated ruthlessly in the pursuit of success.

Indeed, the most admirable idea connected with the American dream is that everyone can be a winner. In chess this is the case. Yes, the big girls and boys mate the opponent's king far more often than average clergy and horsemen, and it hardly ever happens for the peasantry, but when it does happen, it is celebrated by all chess players.

When we teach a beginner about chess we try to summarise the value of the chessmen with a numeric value. There is some sense in this, even though the statistics used to program the computer program Rybka suggest that the numbers generally in use are a bit inaccurate. But the difference in strength between the pieces changes dramatically when we decrease the period we compare them over, just as it increases if we expand it. We will thus often see that the chunky guys, the rooks, queens and kings, have a greater influence on long games, while the agile but frail extras, the knights and bishops, statistically have a greater influence on the result in short games.

So, when we talk about dynamics and attacking chess, we will to a greater extent talk about the minor pieces rather than the heavy artillery. There are of course many games where the attack was conducted mainly with the heavy artillery, but there are even more where the role of the minor pieces was more important, even though the queen is the piece that most often delivers the mate.

The reason for this is simple. **A piece is only influential in the attack if it is there.** For the rooks especially, it is difficult to enter the game early on to participate in an attack, as it can be difficult to find a safe route to enter the attack. But as each piece only attacks a square once, no more, no less, it is not of great importance which piece is delivering the check or supporting the piece doing so. For this reason we often see that one player will sacrifice the exchange with the goal of removing a defender, wrecking the pawn structure around the opponent's king (think ... $\mathbb{E}xc3$ in the Sicilian) or just to open files.

We have already talked about the importance of getting as many pieces into the attack as possible in Chapter 1 and the importance of not losing the momentum in Chapter 2. In this chapter we shall look at the extreme cases where material is sacrificed because it is not contributing to the attack or because it will create a situation where we outnumber the opponent on the battlefield

for just a moment. We shall see rooks sacrificed for knights, pieces for pawns, queens for minor pieces and pieces for nothing more than an important tempo. All based on the simple principle that **we only need to win on one square to deliver mate**.

The first game of this chapter is one of my favourite games of all time, and the example from this book I have presented most frequently in lectures and even on an interactive CD for ChessBase. Unfortunately the opening idea has turned out to be unreliable, but the principles it is played according to are still interesting. Thus I have after serious consideration decided to include it here all the same, but have decided also to give a quick tour of the line and its current status.

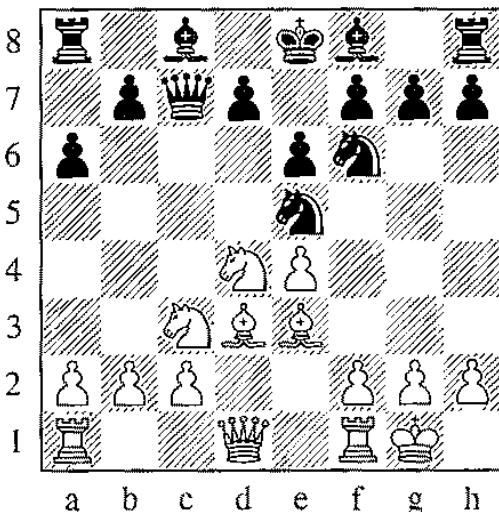
Mikhail Golubev – Vladimir Podinic

Sicilian Paulsen
Bucharest 2001

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.♘c3 ♘c6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♗xd4 ♖c7 6.♕e3 a6 7.♗d3

These days it is believed that 7.♗d2 is more dangerous. But this is probably more a trend than a fact.

7...♗f6 8.0–0 ♗e5



9.h3

The move that is considered more dangerous these days is:

9.♘f3!

Things have happened since Sune Berg Hansen wrote about it in *Experts vs. the Sicilian*, but I have not seen the line met in a sufficient way anywhere. The critical line could very well be:

9...♗fg4 10.♗xe5 ♗xe3 11.♗h5 g6 12.♗f3 ♗xe5 13.fxe3 f6 14.♗xf6 ♗xf6 15.♗xf6 ♗g7 16.♗f2 b5 17.♗af1 ♗a7

Suggested by Delchev.

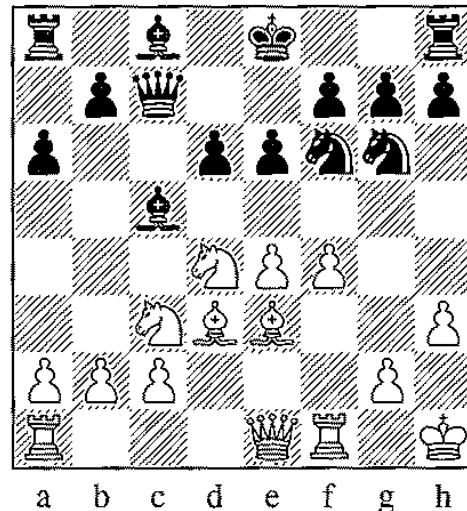
18.e5!

(Hansen)

18...♗xe5 19.♗f7 ♗c7 20.♗xh7 ♗xh7 21.♗xg6† ♗e7 22.♗xh7 ♗xc3 23.bxc3 ♗xc3 24.h4 ♗xe3 25.♗d3 ♗e5 26.g4

Black has a difficult endgame it seems (though I give no guarantees).

9...♗c5 10.♗h1 d6 11.f4 ♗g6 12.♗e1



12...0–0

The flexible 12...♗d7! became popular later, for good reasons.

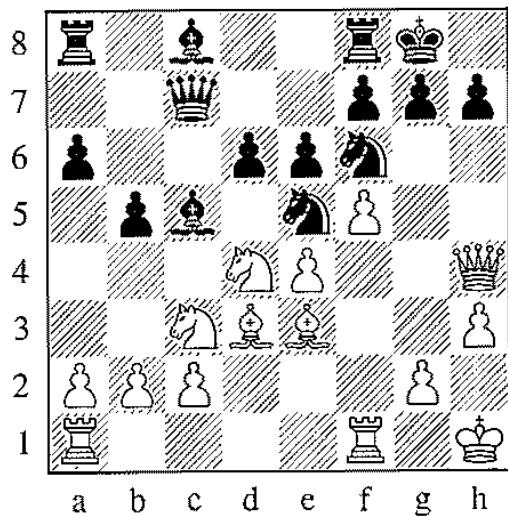
13.f5

This could look like a positional mistake, depending on where you are in your chess development. White allows the knight to come

to e5, from where it blocks the e4-pawn, which again restricts the bishop on d3. But there are trade-offs. White gets the h4-square for the queen and it is not easy for Black to protect g7 – the square that has been weakened by the bishop's absence from the kingside.

13... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 14. $\mathbb{W}h4$ b5

This was a new move at the time, but it is inherently not much different from 14... $\mathbb{Q}d7$, where Golubev had already investigated the idea played in the game.

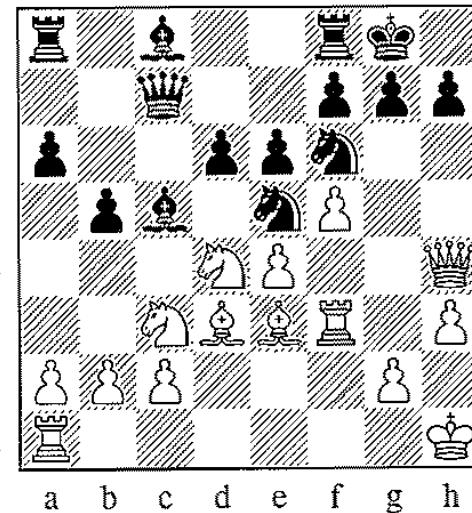


15. $\mathbb{R}f3??$

This is the star idea. It turns out that it is probably no good against decent preparation, but it still makes sense to work out why it was so successful in various games to understand the way it was combated.

The philosophy behind the sacrifice is one of mind over matter, time over money and, maybe, also a little bit of packaging over substance. White offers Black the exchange in order to allow the most inactive piece, the rook on a1, to come to g1 where it will quickly become the most valuable piece. In the course of events Black will have to give up the brilliant knight on e5 and allow White to dream of playing e5 to open up the bishop on d3. In this way White is able to move his pieces to attack the weak dark squares around the black

king, weak because the bishop is out on c5, far from the kingside.



15... $\mathbb{Q}xf3??!$

When I originally saw this game my playing strength was quite a bit weaker than today and my thinking a bit too mechanical. I thought like this: White's move is played to attack g7, so Black should in turn protect g7. Not bad reasoning. 15... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 16. $\mathbb{B}g3$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ was what I thought was best, and what Mark Dvoretsky intuitively thought was best when I showed the game to him. But there is a flaw in the logic: Does it really defend g7 sufficiently? Those who want to go deeper will find that after 17. $\mathbb{B}xg7!$ White will get a pawn for the exchange as well as a very strong initiative on the dark squares. If you are materialistic (as, say, Deep Fritz 10) you could think it leads to a draw by repetition, but it is White's prerogative whether or not to force it, and there are no arguments for White to do so. It is very difficult for Black to get extra forces to his defence.

Once the euphoria of this fabulous exchange sacrifice had died down people started to look into the actual quality of it. It turned out that the logic behind the exchange sacrifice is sound. White does have adequate compensation if he is ready to swing the other rook onto the g-file quickly. The problem is that if Black does not

take the exchange immediately he will gain an important tempo and White will not arrive fast enough at the scene of the action to justify the lack of funds.

The best move is:

15...exf5!

White's best reply is to recapture.

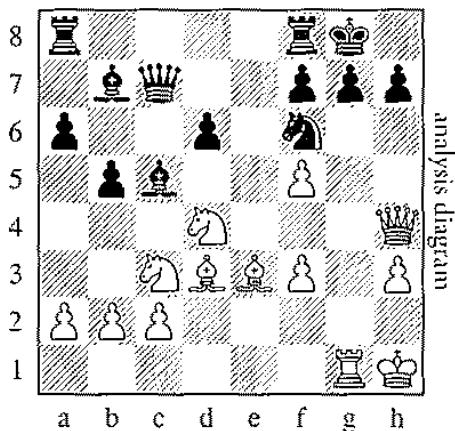
16.exf5

Only now does it make sense to grab the material.

16... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 17.gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}b7$

Not necessarily the only good move, but certainly a good way for Black to use the weakness of the long diagonal.

18. $\mathbb{E}g1$



White's attack is still flowing freely and he would be winning here, had Black not managed to create counter chances of his own.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$!

19. $\mathbb{Q}h2$? is bad. 19... $\mathbb{W}e7$! is the necessary move, based on 20. $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$! and Black was winning in Andreev – Kim, Serpukhov 2003. Instead 19... $\mathbb{Q}h5??$ was played in Gaponenko – Melamed, Kramatorsk 2001. And then White for some reason missed 20. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#$!

19... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xg1$ 21. $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{W}c6$

The favourite of Deep Fritz 10.

21...f6 22. $\mathbb{W}xg1$ $\mathbb{E}fe8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 24. $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$ $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ was Stojanovski – Jovanic, Sarajevo 2006.

22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ f6?

Black should not rush to weaken the e6-square, making the position unclear.

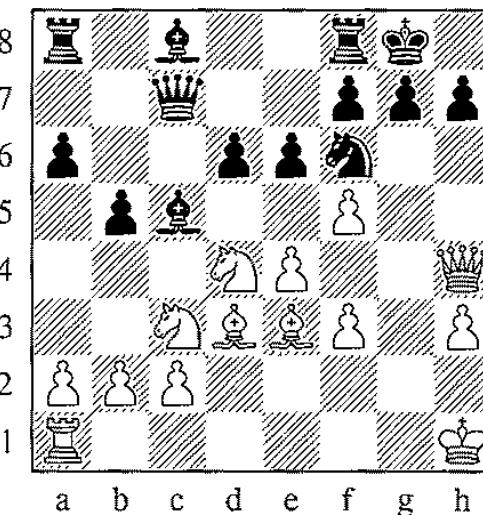
23. $\mathbb{W}xg1$ $\mathbb{E}ae8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}d4$ d5 25. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ g6 27. $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{E}xe6$ 28.fxe6 $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 29.a4 bxa4 30. $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 31.b3 $\mathbb{E}b6$ 32. $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 34.c3 h5 35.h4 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 36.b4 $\mathbb{E}b8$ 37. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}f4$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$!

1–0, Carlsen – Vachier Lagrave, Cap d'Agde 2006.

If White is looking for a future in this line he will have to be well prepared for 22... $\mathbb{Q}e3$! 23. $\mathbb{W}xe3$ d5, when it is less obvious that he has full compensation.

16.gxf3

It is probably worth stopping to evaluate this position, which is substantially changed from just a move ago.



First of all it is valuable to establish that it is all about White's desires and plans. He will play $\mathbb{E}g1$ and attack g7 and f6 at the same time. The queen is well positioned to assist in this, but also to attack h7 in a combined attack with the bishop on d3, which can come to life with the break e4-e5. The knight on c3 will have a plausible route to f6 via e4 after this potential pawn break, but is also sitting in waiting, ready to jump to d5 if Black takes the strong pawn on f5. The bishop on e3 will in

most cases come to h6 or g5 with strong threats on recently destroyed dark squares, but is also protecting the knight on d4 for the moment. Only the knight on d4 seems to be without a route to join the attack. It can retake on f5 in some situations, and it can go to c6 with deadly effect in some variations where the queen goes to d8, but in the greater scheme of things, it is the least valuable of White's pieces.

For this reason it is interesting that Black has chosen to attack this piece both times this position has occurred in a tournament game.

16... $\mathbb{W}b6?$

This is already the decisive mistake, but as we shall see, other moves that do not address the weakness of g7 are no better.

For example there is 16...exf5? and 16...e5?, but both are met by 17. $\mathbb{E}g1!$ with a devastating attack.

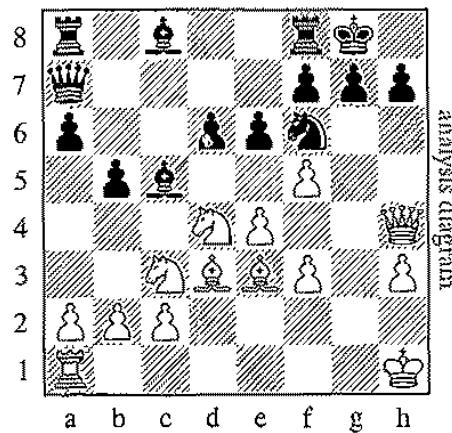
16... $\mathbb{Q}h8?!$ 17. $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ is again a logical plan, but analysis shows how difficult it sometimes is to work out which of the logical plans is the right one. This does not mean that logic and knowledge of the basic building blocks of chess have no value to us, only that we should not mistake their pointing in the right direction, no matter how far they point into the distance, as a directive from the Gods of Chess and Logic. It is just good advice that will help us in our analytical work at the board.

But if we should point out the problem with words, it would be that the king has only managed to move the square on which he is suffering to h7. This weakness would be lethal if it was exposed, as the king is entirely boxed in.

18.fxe6! (18.c5 is weaker: After 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd4?!$ 19.fxe6 Black should take on e3, when the position is in flames. Instead he played 19...dxe5?, when White has 20. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$, which

was winning in Golubev – Laznicka, Internet 2005. It should be noted that 18...dxe5 19.fxe6 $\mathbb{Q}b7!$ should be okay too.) 18...fxe6 19.e5! dxe5 20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ gives White a strong initiative and the advantage.

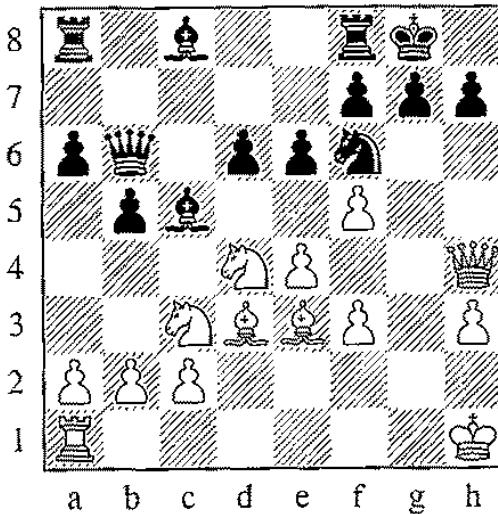
16... $\mathbb{W}a7?$ was actively considered as a main option by IM Pritchett when he faced this position. It has parallels to the game, but there is a trade-off. Where Black in the game cannot defend the 7th rank, the combination in the game would lose to 21...fxe6 (see the note to the 19th move), but there is no protection on the 6th rank, so the other move order works!



17.e5! dxe5 18. $\mathbb{E}g1$ and White wins. For example: 18... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 19. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#!$ with mate.

Every time I have lectured on this position I have tried to emphasise the beauty of this move, the sheer joy of first bringing in the rook, and then striking with everything you have. And the logic is very compelling and true for this case, but we should not make this into a rule that we follow mechanically, as we can see with Pritchett's idea of 16... $\mathbb{W}a7$, where we have to strike and then bring in the rook. The point is of course that it is in its essence the same operation or, if you like, two sides of the same coin. Only, the question of 'heads or tails', which is to be answered at the board, should not be considered trivial.

16... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ 17. $\mathbb{E}g1$ g6 was played in one game by the Icelandic grandmaster Hannes Stefansson. After 18. $\mathbb{E}g4!$ the position is unclear, but as this is not too important for the theory of the line, we will leave it at that.



17. $\mathbb{E}g1!!$

When I have used this as a training position a clear majority of my students have chosen 17.e5?! as their way forward, and only after 17...dxe5 played 18. $\mathbb{E}g1$. As the queen is on b6 in this line and the primary weakness attacked seems to be the f6-knight, it is not surprising that Black has 18...exf5!, when despite various ills in his position, he can still fight.

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

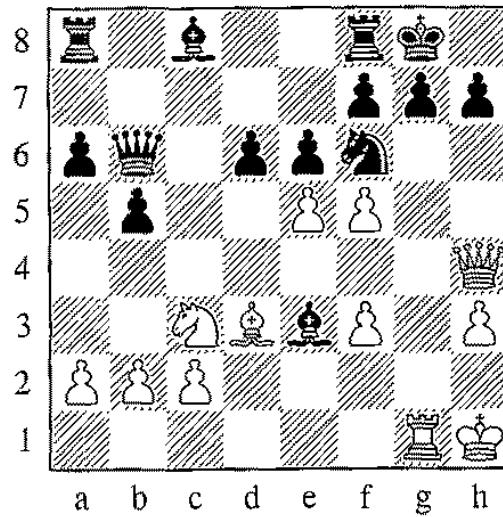
17... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ fares no better, as after 18. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 19.f6 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 20.e5 Black is mated. He is simply not present on the kingside.

18.e5!!

A highly aesthetic point. White sacrifices an extra piece to open a line for another piece, but also to include a pawn in the attack, and thereby increase the number of pieces attacking.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

Black has no choice but to walk the plank.



19. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#!$

This leads straight to mate and is a good illustration of the principle of keeping the momentum.

19.exf6 is good enough to win, but is a good deal slower. After 19...g6 20.fxg6 fxg6 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{E}a7$ I have actually managed to survive as Black in some training games, though 22.f7#! $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 24. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 25. $\mathbb{E}g4$ is mate on the next move. The reason I sometimes escaped is found in the mathematical statistics of things happening in clusters, or just in the old saying 'Misfortune rarely travels alone'.

To properly illustrate the principle that only the pieces that are present matter, I should say that 19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ also wins. The point is that after 19... $\mathbb{Q}h5?$ White wins with 20. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 21. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#!$, which gives the position of the game – only without the knight on c3!!

19... $\mathbb{Q}h8$

It is rare that we get a chance to play our favourite game ourselves, unless you are sensationaly big headed. When I saw this game in 2002, until theory started to pull its limbs off in 2005, it was to me the clearest example of maybe my favourite thing about chess, the relativity of the value of the pieces, and the way that time can overcome matter

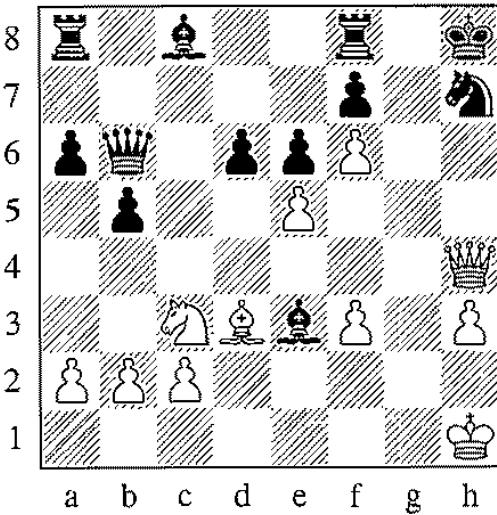
(if you have ever fought excess weight around your waist, you will know exactly why this is such a pleasant idea).

Then in September 2005 I ended up in the game by transposition, after having spent a lot of time in the opening. I knew that 15... $\mathbb{Q}xd3?$ was okay for Black, which had just been played in the Hungarian league by a friend of mine, and thought that maybe this is what my opponent was looking for. However, he had never seen the $\mathbb{E}f3$ -idea before and took the exchange and played 16... $\mathbb{W}b6$. From then on I played all my moves instantly.

After the game my opponent and players playing on neighbouring boards immediately congratulated me on my ingenious play, while a youngster asked in a very low voice: Did you not show us this game at a training day?

19... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 20. $\mathbb{exf6\#}$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 21. $\mathbb{fxe6}$ h6 22. $\mathbb{We4}$
1–0, Aagaard – Pritchett, Grangemouth 2005.

20. $\mathbb{Exh7\#}$ $\mathbb{Qxh7}$ 21.f6



A stunning finish.

1–0

It is not only the principles in Chapters 1 and 2 that we can easily merge with the idea that every piece is, if not equal in the attack, then

at least more equal than at other times. The idea of playing on one colour of squares is just as easily attached to the principle of sacrificing the exchange or using the weakest chess men, the pawns, as important attackers. Often we see exchange sacrifices that pave the way for complete control over one colour of squares.

In the following game we will see weakened dark squares around the black king, but they are not easily exploited. For this reason White decides to break down Black's seemingly solid pawn structure on the light squares. In this tough fight for the light squares he does not waste even a moment to save his rook, but actually welcomes Black's greed.

Jacob Aagaard – Bo Lindberg

Caro-Kann Defence
Stockholm 2004

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ b5?!

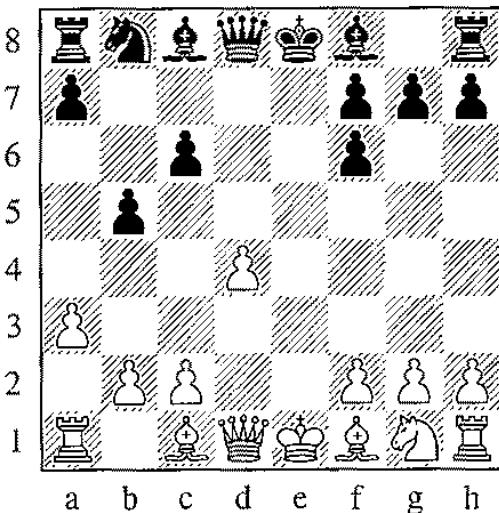
My opponent is a very creative young man, who in our last encounter answered 1.e4 with 1... $\mathbb{Q}c6$. I therefore decided to prepare for the game by reading a rather colourful novel about Lucifer coming to Earth, taking human form, writing a movie-script about man's fall from grace and smoking about 60 cigarettes a day.

Having said all of this, I dislike moves that compromise the pawn structure in such a definite way.

4.a3

I do not believe there is any purpose in knowing the theory of such lines as 3...b5. First of all, it is played so rarely that chances are you will not remember anything you have studied if you ever come across it. Also, it is likely that the recommendations of theory are worse than what you can make up at the board yourself, as it often quotes rather random players' random moves with random conclusions...

4...dxe4 5.Qxe4 Qf6 6.Qxf6† exf6



Here we are, the position Black was aiming for. If including ...b5 and a3 is an advantage or a disadvantage for Black in this line is hard to tell. On the one hand, if I choose to castle queenside he can attack the white king faster with ...a5 and ...b4 (White will probably reply to ...b4 with a3-a4, but that is a rather abstract concern at the moment). On the other hand, White has ideas such as c4 or a4, taking advantage of what might have been a premature pawn push by Black. Finally, the lines with ...Qf6 and ...exf6 are generally considered a bit risky. It is very likely that the reasons why this line is dubious persist after the inclusion of these two pawn moves. At least that is what I was hoping.

7.c3

As said, I decided to continue as if we were in a classically recognised line.

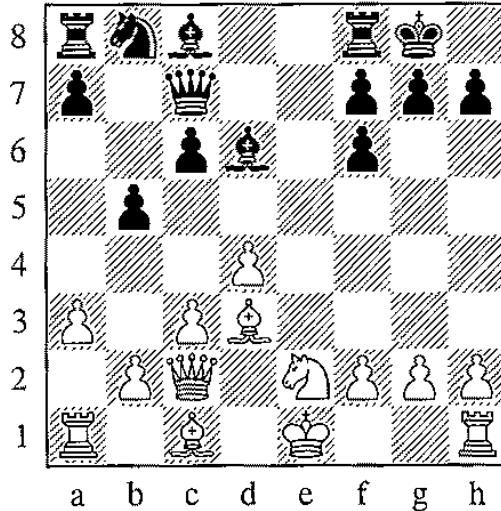
Another option was 7.a4 b4 8.Qc4!, when White should be better.

7...Qd6 8.Qd3 0-0 9.Qe2

The knight is far better placed here than on f3. Once it comes to g3 it is heading for e4, f5 and h5, while on f3 it would only be able to go to the less glamorous d2- and h4-squares.

Besides, the king is a bit safer on e1 when the knight is used as a temporary shelter.

9...Qc7 10.Qc2



10...g6?

I do not like this move. It presents White with a hook to exploit in his attack (we will talk more about this in the next chapter).

During the game I had considered 10...Qh8 as the best move, and still do. (White would not be able to create any activity after sacrificing the bishop, so this is not relevant.)

If Black plays 10...h6, White can manoeuvre his knight to f5 in time, with a clear edge.

11.h4!

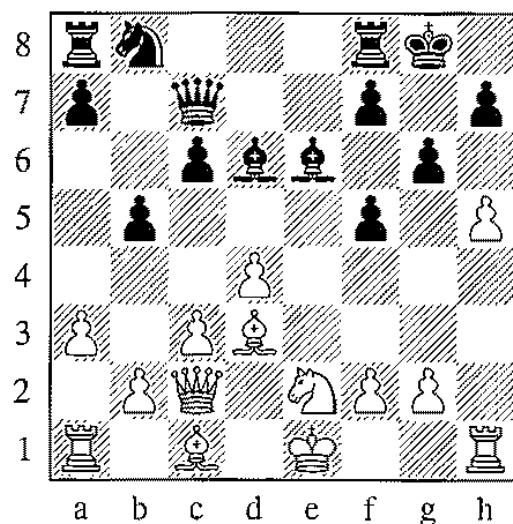
Momentum. It is not clear where White's bishop is best placed, but it is clear where the attack should take place. Rather than wasting time White tries a quick assault, which is founded on positional principles. Black's forces are simply absent from the kingside, but would be able to join the game faster than the remaining white pieces.

11...Qe6

Black tries to bring his pieces into play, but valuable time has already been lost.

12.h5

White is already threatening to win the game with a few quick bishop moves.

12...f5

We have arrived at the most important moment in the game. White has a clear plan of attack and Black has lined up his defensive idea. If White plays 13.g4?!, Black is ready to play 13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$!. I find it obvious that White should be better after more or less any sequence of moves but this, but which one is the most accurate?

I cannot recall how long I thought about this position, but I know that I did not really calculate a lot of variations. What I was thinking was that his best piece was the bishop on e6. This is not hard to establish, as although its defensive responsibilities are not great, it is at least supporting his structure a bit as well as preparing to irritate my plans.

My own worst pieces are the bishop on c1 and the rook on a1. I knew very well that the only pieces relevant for judging the success of an attack are those present on the battlefield when the two armies collide. The remaining forces will only be useful in future clashes (often the endgame). With this notion I had no

concerns about offering my opponent a bit of material.

13. $\mathbb{Q}h6$!

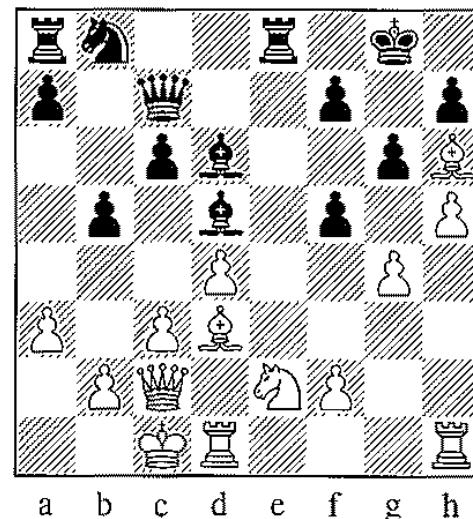
This move is of course nothing special in itself, but as it indicates the beginning of the end for Black I will apportion a large part of the credit to this move.

13... $\mathbb{E}e8$

Black on the other hand is not able to sacrifice anything.

14.g4

Being the most direct, this is a wonderful move. It is a bit of a shame that White is also much better after 14.0–0–0.

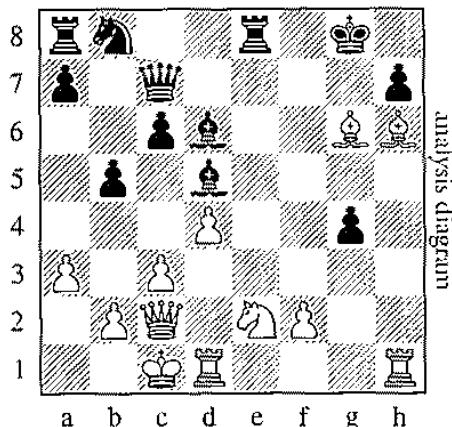
14... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 15.0–0–0

The point. The rook on a1 is certainly worth the bishop when we evaluate the consequences of the attack.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xh1$!?

This gives up all hope. White now governs the light squares and has a sensational superiority on the kingside.

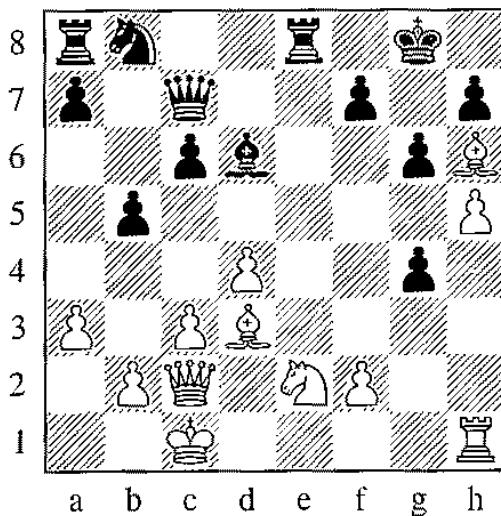
The only move was 15...fxg4, when after 16.hxg6 fxg6 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$



Black can play 17... $\mathbb{E}e6$!, without worrying about $\mathbb{W}b3$, pinning the rook. White still wins after accurate play though. 18. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ At some point Black will have to take the exchange to explain why he has suffered all these injuries to his king's position, or White will win in an attack without sacrifices. 19. $\mathbb{B}xh1$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ (for example) 20. $\mathbb{E}h4$! and White wins in an attack. Notice that because White has played all his moves with more care for the momentum than for static features, he is far better mobilised. Black is still not playing with the pieces in the top left corner.

16. $\mathbb{B}xh1$ $\mathbb{F}xg4$

Black is running out of options. It is too late to bring in the reserves. A good illustration of this is the following variation 16... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17. $\mathbb{H}xg6$ $\mathbb{F}xg6$ 18. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 19. $\mathbb{W}f7$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 20. $\mathbb{F}4$!, when Black cannot prevent $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ and $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ at the same time.



17. $\mathbb{H}xg6$ $\mathbb{F}xg6$ 18. $\mathbb{B}xg6$

Black's king's position has fallen apart. According to a headcount Black is an exchange up. According to a positional evaluation Black is busted. None of his pieces match up to their white counterparts, least of all the rook on a8 to the bishop on g6.

18... $\mathbb{E}d8$ 19. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 20. $\mathbb{B}g5$ $\mathbb{E}f8$

20... $\mathbb{W}g7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ was one of my points.

21. $\mathbb{W}e6$

My thinking behind this move, which in another age could have put me under suspicion of computer-assisted cheating, was that he could not prevent me from taking on h7, so I wanted to bring my queen in first. It was only when I read a Danish newspaper column by Lars Schandorff that I realised that I included $\mathbb{Q}g5-f6\#$ to my long list of threats.

21... $\mathbb{Q}h2$

Well, why not.

22. $\mathbb{B}xh2$

1-0

Not an even match, Bo was not at his best that day and there were several good moves at White's disposal at some of the critical moments.

Even so, the principles that allowed me to win so smoothly were entirely clear to me and playing the game was more a pleasure than a challenge.

In the next game Black plays the early opening passively and quickly ends up in a cramped position where all the white pieces are aiming at the kingside. Though there are ways to solve Black's problems they are not easy to find and in the main game as well as the two embedded games he fails to do so. In all three games White sacrifices material to attack f7, g7 or h7, a different square in every game!

Till Wippermann – Andreas Weiss

Sicilian Defence
Germany 2006

1.e4 c5 2.Ґf3 e6 3.b3 d6 4.Ґb2 Ґf6 5.e5

This line is quite dangerous and one feels that Wippermann is not a peaceful man. 5.Ґb5† is also giving White a good score here.

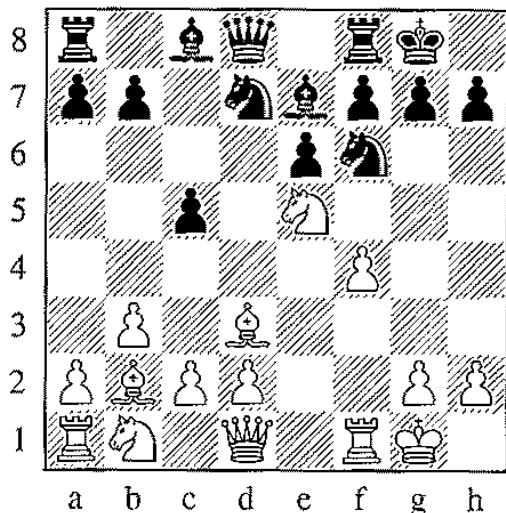
5...dxe5 6.Ґxe5 Ґe7

I would personally try to get rid of such an impostor at the first possibility and not play passive developing moves.

7.Ґd3

Aiming at the kingside already!

7...Ґbd7 8.f4! 0-0 9.0-0



9...Ґe8

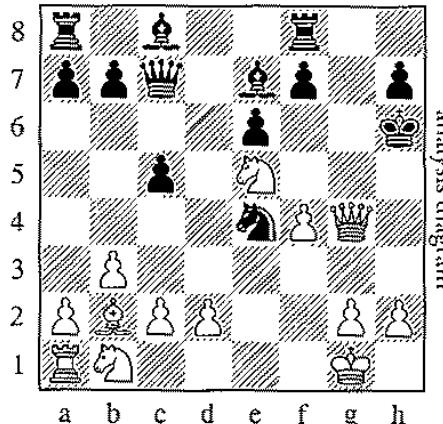
One of the best chess writers in the world, the multitalented grandmaster Mikhail Golubev, recommended in *Chess Today* that Black should play:

9...Ґd5

This is also what Deep Fritz 10 recommends. This has been played in one game, Fette – Fogarasi, Budapest 1991, where White managed to create a huge attack with:

10.Ґh5 Ґ7f6 11.Ґh3 Ґb4 12.Ґf3 Ґxd3?

13.Ґxd3 Ґc7 14.Ґg3 Ґe4? 15.Ґxg7†! Ґxg7 16.Ґg4† Ґh6



White could now have continued his attack with 17.Ґd7, which eventually leads to the gain of a pawn or with the more adventurous:

17.Ґc3!

The default strategy of getting all the pieces into action.

17...Ґxc3

The weird 17...Ґf2 manages to make matters a bit more unclear, but White still brings in the rook with deadly effect.

18.Ґxc3 Ґd8 19.Ґe1 Ґh4?!

Trying to anticipate a rook swing to h3.

20.Ґxf7†! Ґxf7 21.Ґe5

Black is mated.

All of this has little relevance to the game or to opening theory. Fette misplayed the attack quite badly and earlier 12...c4! would have been quite devastating.

10.Ґa3

White already has an edge. He is fully developed and has clear targets on the kingside. At the same time it is not easy for Black to find a way to bring his remaining pieces into play.

10...Ґf8

10...Ґb6

This has been played in other games. One of them went:

11.c4!

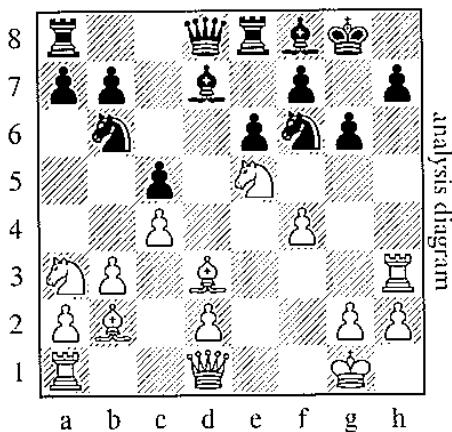
Preventing ... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$.

11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12. $\mathbb{E}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8?$

Already this was the final mistake. White could now either launch the g-pawn immediately or shift the rook over first. He chose the latter approach.

13. $\mathbb{E}h3$ g6

13...h6 14.g4 is no better.



14.g4! $\mathbb{E}e7$

14... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 15.g5 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 16. $\mathbb{E}xh5$ and Black is blown out of the sky.

15.g5 $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 16. $\mathbb{E}xh7$

Not a necessary sacrifice, but certainly a good one. 16. $\mathbb{W}e1$ would also have exposed the weakness of the h7-pawn.

16... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 17. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ fxg6
19. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 20. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ e5

21... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ with mate on the next move.

22. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$

1–0 Oral – Navara, Luhacovice 2003.

11. $\mathbb{W}f3$ g6

I would generally not recommend weakening the kingside in this manner. This move does temporarily stop f4-f5, but on the other hand, when it finally comes, it will hit much harder.

11... $\mathbb{Q}b6?$ was a possible improvement, though looking for a different move on move 3 or 4 or at least move 9 was probably a good

idea. White is ready for such stunts as 12.g4!! with a fierce attack.

12. $\mathbb{Q}ac4$

The least active piece is included in the game.

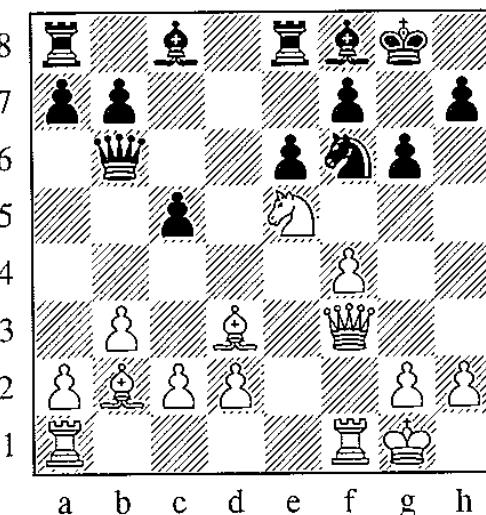
12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$

And swiftly chopped off!

13... $\mathbb{W}xb6$

13...axb6 would lose material to 14. $\mathbb{Q}b5$, based on the idea that after 14... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ White will make use of his sudden extensive lead in development and play 15.f5! exf5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$! $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}c4\#$ with a winning attack.

Note that the paradoxical 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$, with the idea of $\mathbb{W}c3$, is also very strong.



14. $\mathbb{Q}c4!!$

I am really impressed with this move and was not at all certain if this game belonged in this chapter or the next. The point is of course that White is attacking the weakest square in the black position, which happens to be f7. He is not wasting time with king moves or moving his knight away from the real scene of the action.

14... $\mathbb{Q}g7$

The knight on f6 was hanging, so this was really forced.

15.f5!

What White has been dreaming of ever since Black advanced the g-pawn.

15... $\mathbb{E}f8??$

Black did not want to suffer the consequences of 15...gxf5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$, though it is not obvious that these are worse than his fate in the game, unless of course he would be so foolish as to accept the knight. After 16... $\mathbb{E}f8$! White has a clear edge, but the game is still a bit away from a clear verdict.

16.fxg6 hxg6

Knowing how the game evolves it is tempting to suggest that

16...fxg6

is better, but Black's position is simply very bad no matter what. White would now probably line up on e6 and f6 and one could guess that White would win in a manner not too different from the following:

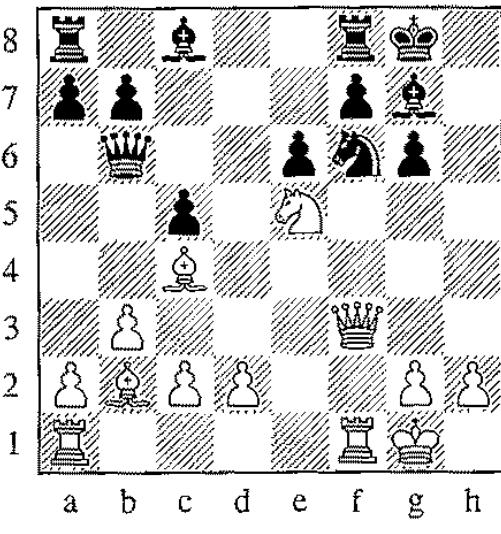
17. $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 18. $\mathbb{E}ae1$ a6

All White's pieces are ready for action and not surprisingly there is a clear way to convert the advantage.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$ hxg6 20. $\mathbb{E}xe6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{E}f7$ 22. $\mathbb{E}xf6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

And White wins.

Back to the game...

**17. $\mathbb{W}xf6!!?$**

This sacrifice is the reason for putting this game in this chapter. White sacrifices the queen for only two minor pieces. However, his attack still turns out to cause Black a lot of problems, as all White's pieces are pointing towards the black king and few of Black's pieces are doing anything to defend it.

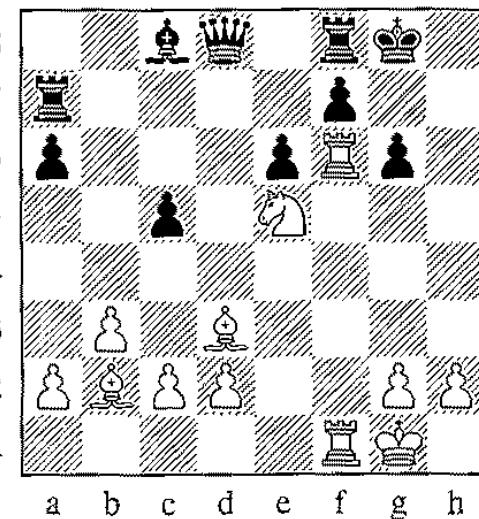
Having said that, it should also be said that the move is rather romantic and unnecessary, if not even slightly inaccurate. Many simple moves, such as 17. $\mathbb{E}f2$ followed by 18. $\mathbb{E}af1$, would quickly make it impossible to defend the black position

17... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 18. $\mathbb{E}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}d8$

Black could have offered more resistance with 18... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 19. $\mathbb{E}af1$ b5 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$, but it seems to me that White still has a winning attack. The clearest path is probably 21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}ad8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{W}xf7$ 25. $\mathbb{E}f6$, when White should win the endgame, though only after a show of decent technique.

19. $\mathbb{E}af1$ b5 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ a6

A rather senseless move, but moves that make sense, such as 20... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$, are no better.

21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}a7$ 

White has placed all his pieces on the best possible squares. Queen or no queen – the most important thing is that the pieces are heading in the right direction and have a greater force where it matters.

22. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$ fxg6

There are a few tactics. The attempt to disrupt the perfect harmony among the white forces with 22...c4? is best met with 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ cxd3 24. $\mathbb{B}h6$ $\mathbb{W}b6\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ f5 26. $\mathbb{B}xf5!$, when Black's best hope is an endgame four pawns down.

23. $\mathbb{B}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 24. $\mathbb{B}xe6\#$

24. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$ also wins.

24... $\mathbb{Q}g8$

24... $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 25. $\mathbb{B}xf8$ and White wins.

25. $\mathbb{B}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 26. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$

A slightly more elegant finish was probably 26. $\mathbb{B}xa6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}c4\#$ $\mathbb{B}af7$ 28. $\mathbb{B}h6!$ and Black will have to give up everything just to cover his bald head.

However, the move in the game is good enough.

26... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 27. $\mathbb{B}xf8$ $\mathbb{W}xf8$ 28. $\mathbb{B}xa7$ $\mathbb{W}f4$
 29. $\mathbb{B}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 30. h4# $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 31. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$
 32. $\mathbb{B}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh4$

32... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 33. $\mathbb{B}g7$ mate.

33.g3#

1-0

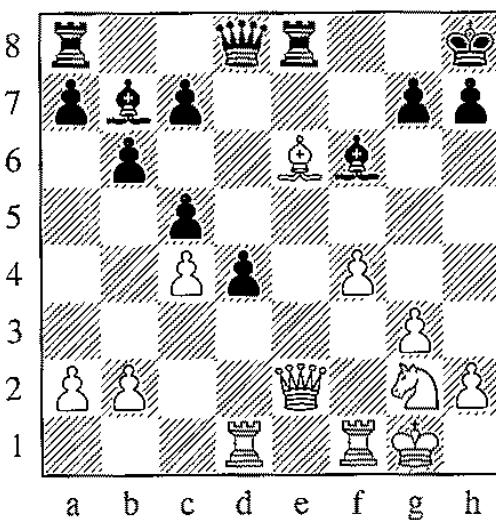
In general, when talking about chess theory, I think it makes most sense to talk about two dimensions only, time and mass, or dynamic and static features, which can be used to clarify the goals of the two players in many positions. In other words, I use the definition that makes most sense to me from an instructive point of view, as my goal is instruction and not theory.

Garry Kasparov likes to add a third dimension, *Quality*. The principle here is that all the pieces have changing values based on how well they are placed compared to their properties. This tendency towards a chess theory of relativity is what this chapter is all about. When we are dealing with dynamics we are less interested in how the pieces are placed long term than how they are placed short term, though there are exceptions where the dynamic superiority of our pieces is long term.

The following famous game is a good example of one side playing to improve the quality of his pieces to the maximum before initiating his attack, rather than trying to win the game immediately. The black bishops' quality will turn out to be especially sensational, even if their numerical value in principle is less so.

Max Euwe – Paul Keres

Netherlands (9) 1940



22...d3!!

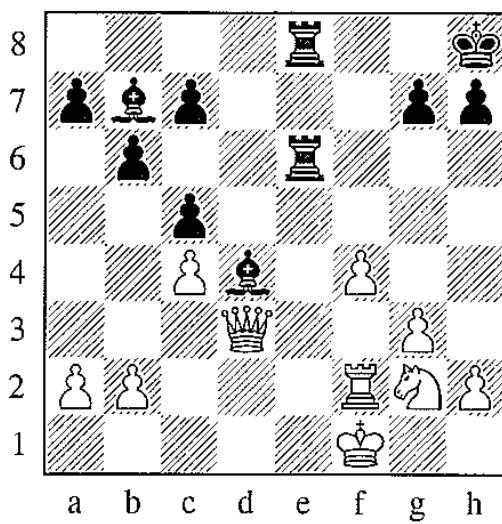
A remarkable sacrifice. 22...g6? in order to trap the bishop is also very strong. Though it will not be entirely successful, it will cause White some inconvenience to protect the piece and give Black excellent winning chances in the process.

23.♗xd3 ♕xd3

The check on d4 is not bad, but this was Keres' exceptional idea.

24.♕xd3 ♜d4† 25.♗f2!

25.♔h1 ♔xe6 and there would be no defence against the invasion with 26..♗ae8 and 27..♗e2. This is of course possible because of the difference in the quality of the pieces.

25...♗xe6 26.♔f1 ♕ae8!

There is no need to take the rook before there is a sensible follow-up. The bishop on d4 is in no way a weaker piece.

Actually, this is a good place to stop and evaluate the pieces. The white rook on f2 is, besides hanging, unable to find a good square. Compared to either of the black rooks it is abysmal. But this is nothing compared to the knight on g2. It has to protect against mate in one on e1, but this is where its glory stops. There are very few examples in chess literature where it is recommended to fianchetto your knights rather than your bishops.

Even the white queen is passive. There is no entry point into the black position, and even if there was, it is not clear that there are any real weaknesses to attack.

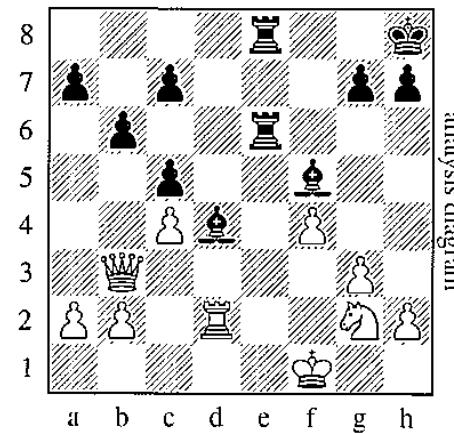
Compared with this low approval rating you have to be impressed by the black collective.

The bishops are absolutely dominating the white pieces and the rooks are like tanks, ready to go anywhere and destroy under the massive air cover.

In positional terms – White is lost. The further course of the game illustrated this well.

27.f5?!

White is looking for counterplay. Though it is hard to blame him, it turns out to be rather impotent. 27.♗d2 looks good according to pocket calculators and similar digital brains, who can only count, but after 27...♗e4 28.♕b3 ♜f5!



Euwe was absolutely right about his prospects. After 29.♕d1 ♜h3 30.♗c2 g5! he estimates his position to be completely lost – and the computer is finally catching up with reality.

27.♗c2?! was the best chance, defending against this idea, with ♕d1 and g4 in mind. Black can take the endgame a pawn up if he so desires, but why should he? His positional advantages are close to permanent. White is not illustrating any way to relieve the pressure.

27...♗e5 28.f6

Continuing with his plan. 28.♗d2 ♗e4 and 28.♗f4 ♗e2 both suffer material blows instantly.

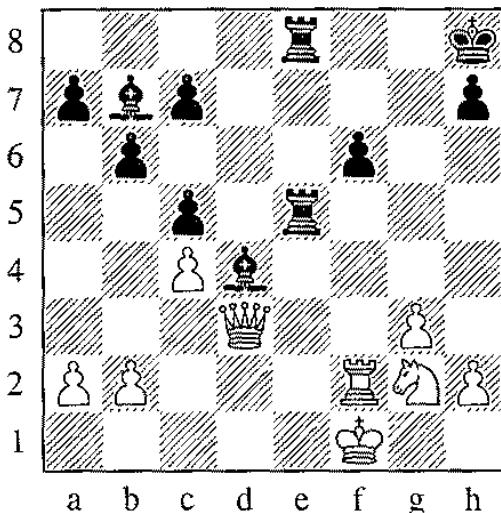
28...gx f6

Simple chess. It is hard to imagine there will be a real weakness on that diagonal.

28... $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ $\mathbb{E}e2\#?$ is too early, as the white f-pawn has to be taken into consideration. It is possible to win it and the ensuing endgame, but it does not hold the guarantees that the black bind does.

29. $\mathbb{B}d2$

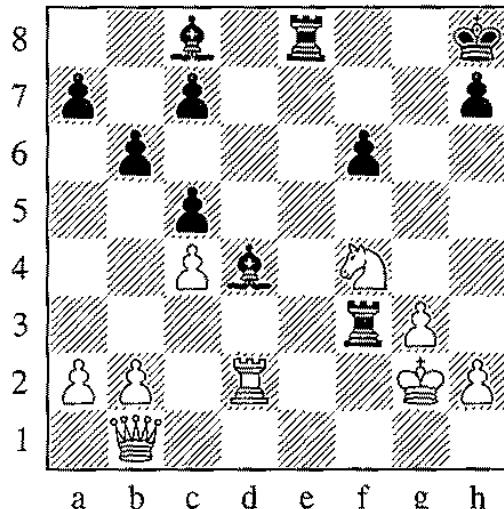
This shows the failure of White's idea. 29. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ would drop a piece.

**29... $\mathbb{Q}c8!$**

After great active service on the long diagonal the bishop decides that it now belongs on h3. There it will increase its domination of the white knight to something close to maximum. It would not have been too soon had White called it quits here, but there is nothing wrong with taking the game to its conclusion either. I am sure that Black was enjoying himself.

30. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{E}e3$

Black has many ways to win the position, but as there is nothing wrong with the one he chose, there is also no reason to give any of the others.

31. $\mathbb{W}b1$ $\mathbb{B}f3\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ **32... $\mathbb{B}xf4!!$**

A fitting end to the game. We experience the full force of two bishops as the structure around the white king is broken up.

33. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{E}g8\#$

Suddenly accuracy is required, but it is not hard to summon.

34. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

The method of elimination should quickly point to this move.

34... $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$

White resigned. After 35. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{E}e8\#$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$ 37. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ mate, we have a picture to remember. The triumph of the two bishops is absolute.

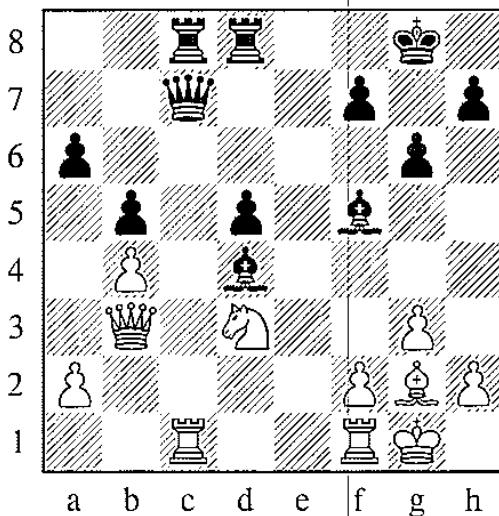
0-1

Just as in the previous game, two pieces turned out to be more than enough for the queen, though it has to be admitted that one of them was a rook. I find it important to repeat that it is the quality of the pieces that matters in such a scenario. I know that this is just one idea and that I am not providing a lot of ideas in this book compared to its size. My concept is that it is more important to clarify the ideas as much as possible and to attach them to actual games so that a strong feeling can be established.

For example, look at the bishops in that game and at the almost similar bishops in a game played more than half a century later by two amateurs, where Black is winning with an extra pawn, but is still unable to resist sacrificing.

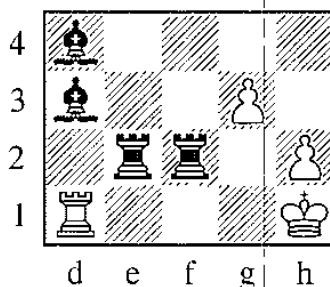
Peter Birk Petersen – Jacob Aagaard

Copenhagen 1991



26... $\mathbb{W}c4!$ 27. $\mathbb{B}xc4$ $dxc4$ 28. $\mathbb{W}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$
 29. $\mathbb{B}e1$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 30. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{E}e2$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{E}ce8$
 32. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{B}xf2$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{E}ee2$ 34. $\mathbb{B}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Let's zoom in on those black pieces!



Their quality could hardly be any higher. The only question is which piece will deliver the mate, so White resigned.

0–1

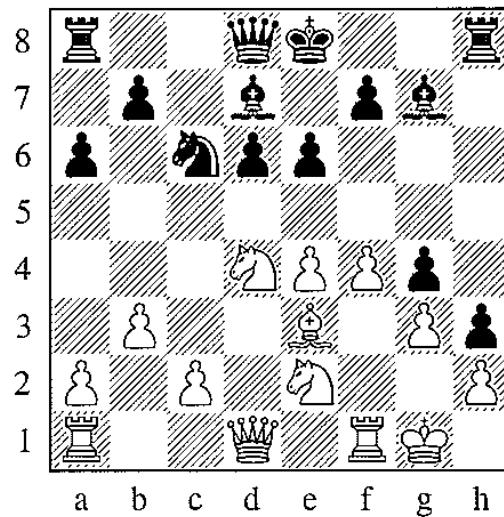
Keres would have been proud, I hope, especially as I had visited the Paul Keres chess club in Tallinn less than a year previously.

One chessman which is often underappreciated is the pawn. He is seen as the soul of chess by the poets, but used partially as an Egyptian slave and partially as an obelisk by the grandmaster building his legacy. But in an attack all the pieces have a chance of obtaining never-ending glory.

Though the pawn, like the turtle, is defenceless if you roll it on its back, and moves at a snail's pace at the best of times, it can control a square just as well as the next man. For this reason there are times when a pawn's quality can be elevated to such a level that it decides the game.

Alexei Shirov – Garry Kasparov

Linares 1997



Kasparov pointed out that in this position the pawn on h3 had almost the same value as an extra piece. Besides creating general insecurity about the safety of the white king, it is also a factor in the endgame, where losing the h2-pawn cannot be compensated by winning another pawn elsewhere, as the h3-pawn would become horrifically strong. In either case the strength of the pawn is felt as the most important positional factor in play. In the game Shirov was unable to diminish the pressure.

20.♕d3 0–0 21.♖ad1 f5?

Kasparov was very happy with this move, but I am not sure, as it does have some drawbacks as well.

22.c4 ♕a5 23.♘c3

23.♕d2! was necessary. Despite everything, the endgame might be held, but the middlegame is very dangerous.

23...♝ae8 24.♗fe1?

24.♘de2! was the only try. Now White is blown apart.

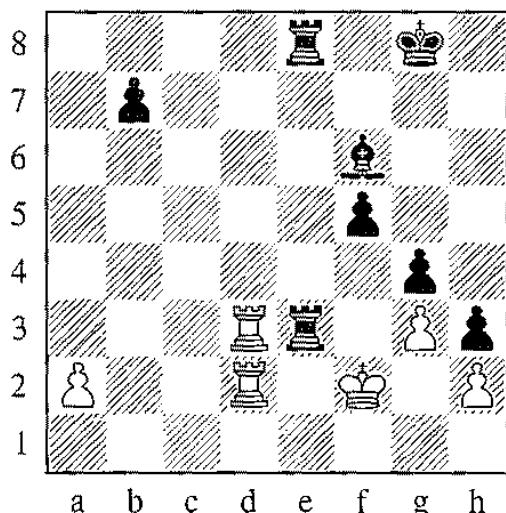
24...e5! 25.♘xc6 ♕xc6 26.b4?!

26.♘d5 was the last chance, based on 26...fxe4?! 27.♕e2!, with counterplay. But Black should probably take on a2 instead.

26...♛a3!

Kasparov senses blood and calculates the position until its culmination.

27.b5 exf4 28.♘xf4 axb5 29.cxb5 ♜c5†
 30.♔e3 ♜xc3 31.bxc6 ♜xc6 32.♘xd6 ♜xe4
 33.♘d5† ♜xd5 34.♘xd5 ♔c3 35.♔e2 ♜e4
 36.♘f2 ♜fe8 37.♘d3 ♔f6 38.♘ed2 ♜xe3!

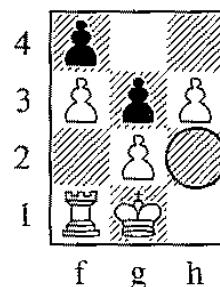


White resigned. Black breaks through on the kingside and promotes the h-pawn.

0–1

The less a piece is worth the more expendable it is, just to state the obvious. This is why attackers have always been happy to separate themselves from their lesser subjects by playing gambits or just using the small guys as cannon fodder. But this inexpensive property is not without quality. When a pawn controls a square deep in the opponent's position the domination of this square is often long term in nature, and thus something to build an attack around.

The following chunk is often seen in the King's Indian Defence and causes certain problems for White.



Black has excellent control over f2 and especially h2, but it is not easy to get to these squares. A piece sacrifice is usually a cornerstone of Black's strategy. If White had no time to expand his position on the other side of the board, this set-up would never be seen in practice. While Black is preparing to sacrifice a piece on the kingside White is opening files on the queenside and preparing to attack the black centre and kingside from the side, an attack it will find hard to resist.

In the next game we shall see how the pawns can at times be stars and not just supporting an attack with the pieces. Though we rarely see a mate delivered by a pawn (one such case can be found on page 243), they should not be underestimated as attacking pieces. They need more time to join the attack, but once they arrive they can be deadly, especially when they travel in pairs.

Ruslan Pogorelov – Carlos Matamoros Franco

King's Indian Defence
Dos Hermanas 2003

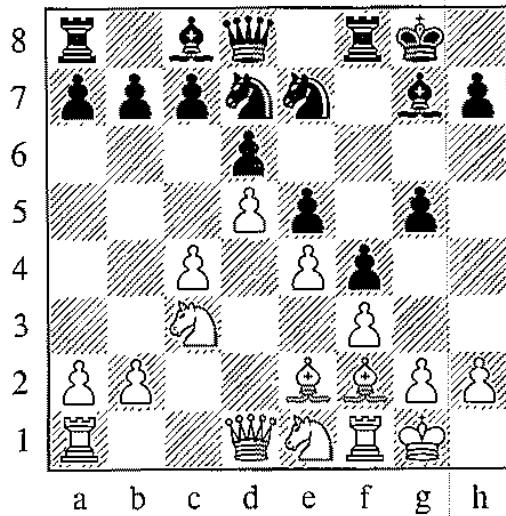
1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}g7$

The King's Indian is one of the sharpest openings there is, but in some ways it seems to be very much the opening of young players. In their youth Kasparov, Gelfand, Shirov, Polgar and others all played the King's Indian, while they later on relied on the Slav and Nimzo/Queen's Indian Defences to get by. The torch of the King's Indian has been taken on by Radjabov and other young players, who have proven that the opening is not only not dead, but far from ill...

4.e4 d6 5. $\mathbb{Q}e2 0-0$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3 e5$ 7. $0-0$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 8.d5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

This main line has always fascinated, with its promise of winning straight from the opening. However, things rarely work out that way.

9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}e3 f5$ 11.f3 f4 12. $\mathbb{Q}f2 g5$



13.a4

This preparation of $\mathbb{Q}b5$ was invented by Korchnoi, after he discovered that 13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ with the idea of 13...a6? 14. $\mathbb{Q}a7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ b6 16.b4 and c4-c5, with a clear edge, is better

met with 13...b6! and 14...a6, when Black wins two tempos on the white knight, but only loses one in playing ...a6 and then ...a5.

Since those days 13.a4 has been the main line. The threat is $\mathbb{Q}b5-a7$.

13...a5

This is the way to play with Black, though it brings the crunch point closer to the white army.

14. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ b6 15.b4 axb4 16. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

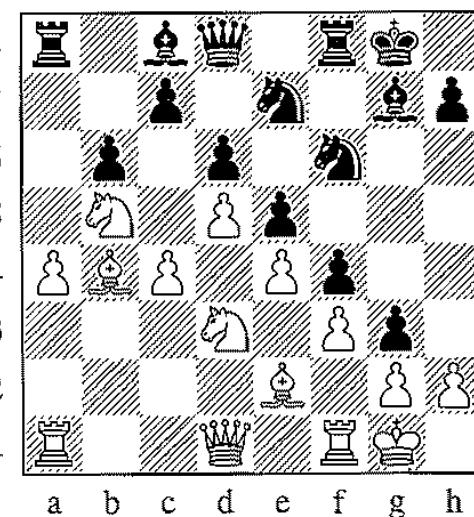
White wants to play a4-a5, so he plans to take on b4 with the bishop.

16... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ g4

With e4 undefended Black has time to play this advance quickly.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ g3

Black is starting his attack against h2.



19.h3

I am tempted to give this move a ?!, but without hours of analysis this would be imprudent. My feeling is that this move is incorrect as it gives Black a clear point of attack and wastes a move. My preference would be to get going on the other side of the board, to at least pretend to be a player rather than just a punch bag.

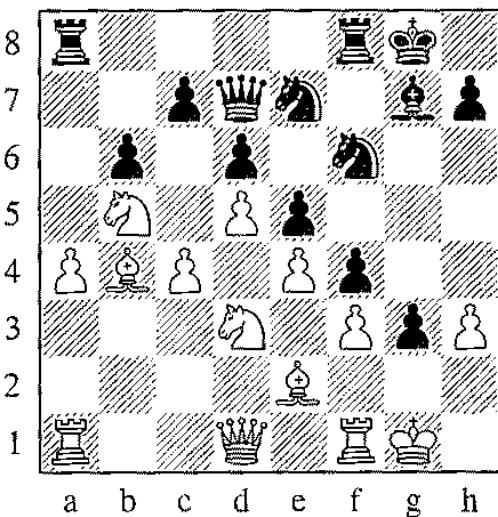
19.a5!? has only been played once, in a junior game that soon went away with the fairies, but might very well be the best move in the position.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xh3!$

Black's idea with this move is to take the pawn with the queen and create mating threats on h2. Not a very deep plan and the standard idea in the position, so if any White players were surprised at this moment, they should maybe look at the exchange variation, where nothing can surprise you.

I should say that though it is hard to argue against success, it is not conclusive that this is the best move in the position. It definitely poses White almost insurmountable problems and in practice it has been quite effective, but whether the sacrifice is better than 19... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$ will take an effort going outside the scope of this book to determine (see the notes to the 21st move).

20.gxh3 $\mathbb{W}d7$



This is the critical moment in the game. Black has given up a piece in order to wreck the structure around the white king and to win some time to build up his attack. This is fully in line with the feeling for momentum

we talked about in Chapter 2. White has only one way to defend the h-pawn. At times this could be an important pawn not to lose. In this case Black gains too much time while White is shuffling his pieces so that he can continue his attack by striking at a different place.

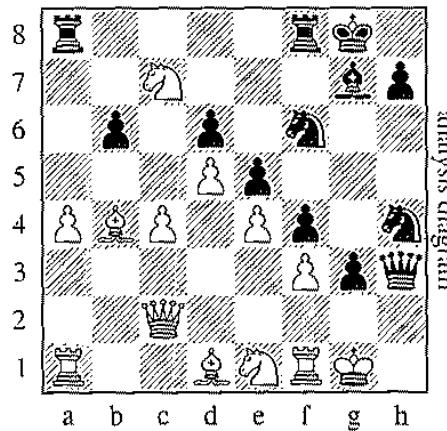
21. $\mathbb{Q}g2?$

As we are still in opening theory I do not want to go too deeply into analysing the position. The correct defence is to play 21. $\mathbb{W}c2$ or 21. $\mathbb{W}d2$, followed by 22. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ and 23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$, in response to 21... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ and 22... $\mathbb{Q}h4$. What the final verdict should be is hard to tell, but it is clear that after 19.h3, this is where the tabiya of this line is at the moment.

White has played the knight to e1 in two games, with the result that only d1 is available for the bishop. The bishop is absolutely worthless on the first rank and is also a bit in the way. Not surprisingly Black was able to create a whirlwind in both cases.

- a) 21. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d1?$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$

There is no defence at this point in the game, but one still wonders if White was expecting Black to care about the rook on a8.



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

Preparing for the decisive strike.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ g2 26. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$

White resigned, 0-1 Dziuba - Czakon,
Koszalin 2005.

Note that with the bishop on d3 instead of d1, White would be winning.

b) 21. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathfrak{Q}g6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$

With the queen on d2 other tactical images emerge.

23. $\text{Nel} \xrightarrow{\text{h8}}$

Maybe Black could attack with just a few pieces, but Xie Jun is a gifted attacker and knows the need to include all the pieces in an attack.

24. $\mathbb{B}a2$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 25. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 26. $\mathbb{B}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$
27. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{B}g5!$

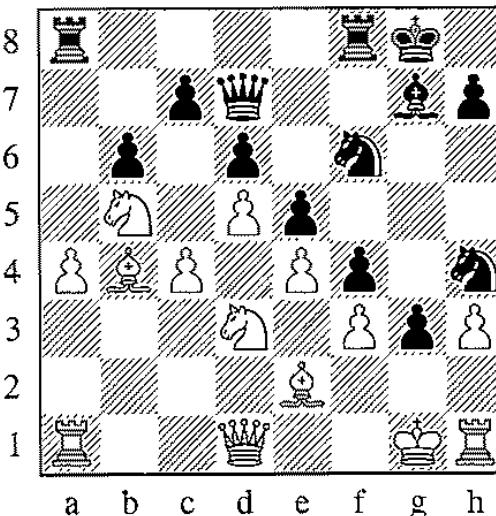
Black had a winning attack in Krivoshey – Xie Jun, Linares 1997. The king is trapped on g1 and the rook is going to h5. My database says that the game was drawn here, but I think a more likely outcome is that White resigned.

21... $\text{Qg}6$ 22. $\text{Kh}1$

Trying to give back the piece with 22. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ does not work. Black plays 22... $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $h5!$, with the idea ... $\mathbb{Q}f6-h7-g5$, with a very strong attack. Note that White has made little progress on the flank where he has enough extra space to use his piece for something constructive.

22... $\text{h}4\ddagger$ 23. $\text{g}1$

On the surface it seems that Black has suffered a setback. His attack on h3 has come to a halt and he sorely misses the sacrificed bishop. The plan of ...h5, ...Qh7 and ...Qg5 seems inherently slow in this position. White is better set up than in the case of 22.Qf2 proposed above. He will be able to bring in his pieces to the defence. Sure, there is a lot of positional compensation. The rook is inactive on h1 and the knight is very strong on h4, but without a big strike, Black will be looking to draw this game.



23... ♜xe4!!

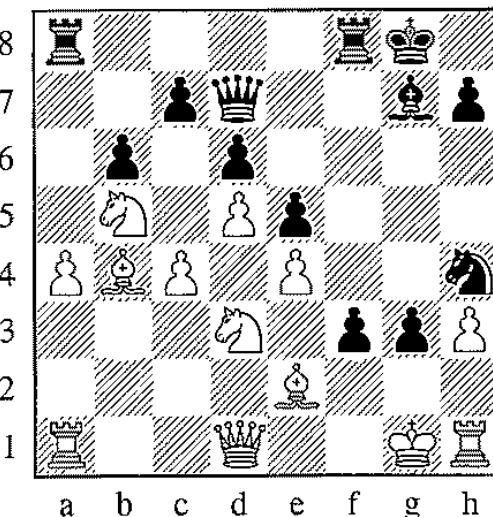
Once you know the title of this chapter you can see this coming from afar.

The knight sacrifices itself for a single pawn in order to pave the way for the f-pawn. We will shortly see that the quality of the knight on h4 and the strength of the connected passed pawns on the third rank are too strong to match.

24.fxe4

White has no choice, really. If Black is allowed to play ... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ and ...e4 White is collapsing anyway.

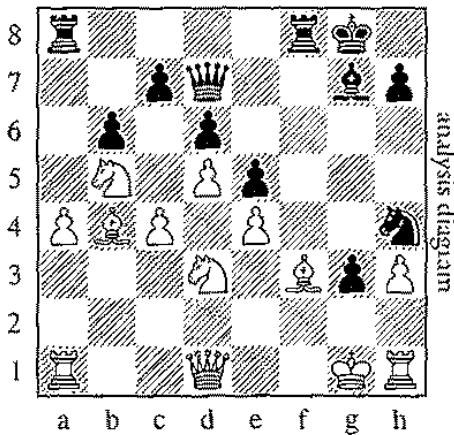
24...f3



25.♕d2

There are a few other options, but basically the strategic battle is over and all that is left is for Black to calculate the winning lines against the various defences:

25.♕d2 loses to 25...♕f7! 26.♕f1 ♕g6 and ...g2 is a strong threat.

25.♕xf3

25...♕xf3! Bringing in the other rook rather than throwing about worthless checks. 26.♕e1 ♕f7! 27.♕xf3 ♕xf3† 0–1 Ghane Gardeh – Krivoshey, Dubai 2006. Clearly Krivoshey learned from his game on the previous page.

25.♕e1 g2? 26.♕f1!! was better for White in G. Andersson – Eriksson, Sweden 2000, the first time the knight sacrifice was played. However, Black won all the same and 25...fxe2 26.♕xe2 g2 would have won simply for Black.

25...f2†

The simplest of many wins.

26.♕xf2 ♕xf2 27.♕h2

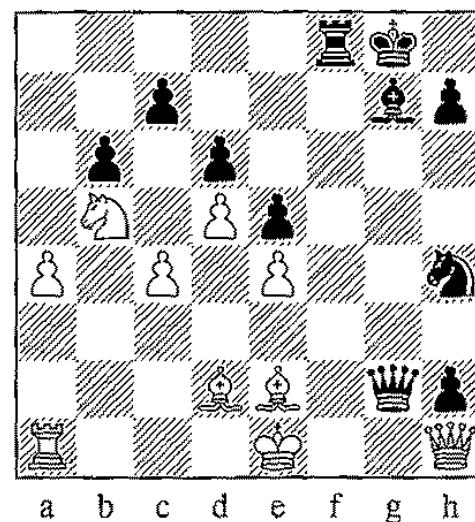
27.♕g4 is maybe answered most easily with 27...♕af8.

27...gxh2†!

The clinical cut. The white king is destined for the grave.

28.♔xf2 ♕xh3

...♕f8† is too strong to counter.

29.♕h1 ♕f8† 30.♕e1 ♕g2!

A beautiful and fitting end. The pawn achieves full stardom. After the exchange of queens nothing can stop the h-pawn from its fairytale social ascent (albeit with a cross dressing twist!).

31.♕f3

A kind of helpmate finish. Why not?

31...♕xf3†

0–1

Black's strategy in this game was to attack the white king, but eventually the pawn proved to have another property – its ability to promote and change its value radically and permanently. Talk about a change in quality!

The last game in this chapter sees White playing primarily on this factor when he sensationally sacrifices the queen for two pieces and a pawn, but has two passed pawns in the centre. The sacrifice leads to wild complications and his opponent is the first to take the wrong step.

Krishnan Sasikiran – Michal Krasenkow

Dutch Stonewall
Mallorca (ol) 2004

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 c6 4.e3 ♘d6

If Black wants to play the Stonewall set-up this is the most precise move order, as 4...f5 allows White to play both 5.f4 and 5.g4!? under the best possible circumstances.

5.♗c2

5.e4!? might look tempting, but it simply transposes to the 4.e4-gambit.

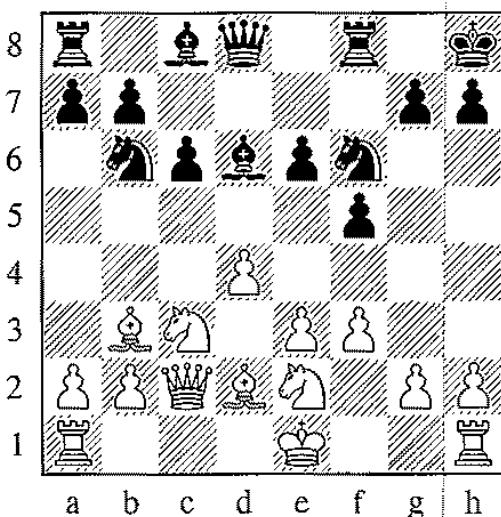
5...f5 6.♗d3 ♘f6 7.♗ge2!?

'Sasi' is a very creative young man and sets out to face the opponent's Stonewall with a set-up reminiscent of a wrecking ball.

7...0-0 8.f3 ♘bd7 9.♗d2 dxс4!?

Black wins a bit of time and takes control over the e5-square. 9...c5! is the strongest move according to Ramirez, which might be right. However, Black has a successful enough opening so there is no reason to look for improvements at this point.

10.♗xc4 ♘b6 11.♗b3 ♘h8



12.a3

This seems a bit slow and should maybe only be played as a reply to ...a5 or ...♝bd5.

12...e5!

Black solves all his problems with this push in the centre.

13.0-0-0

In for a penny, in for a pound.

13...♗e7 14.h3

White is initiating a pawn push on the kingside in the hope of creating open files against the opponent's king. This will prove to be hard as there is no weakness onto which he can attach the attack, but it is still the natural way to play the position.

14...♝d7

A natural developing move. 14...e4!? as suggested by Ramirez is reasonable.

15.♔b1 a5

I am not really sure that Black will play ...♝bd5 and ...b5 to exploit the hook created when White played a3, so 15...e4!? as suggested by Ramirez is reasonable again.

16.g4 ♘fd5

Krasenkow wants to get rid of this knight before White kicks it away. But actually this does not make a lot of sense to me. If White plays g5 he will close lines on the kingside and thereby increase the black king's security. It is possible that Krasenkow was thinking about using the f-file aggressively in some way.

16...e4! as suggested by Ramirez is once again reasonable.

17.e4

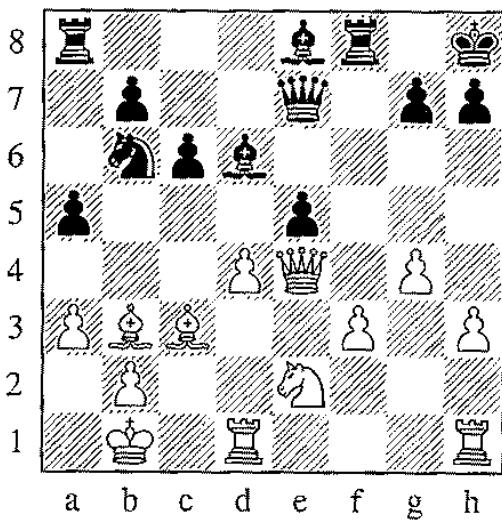
Surely Sasikiran was happy to play this, taking a grip on the centre and getting his pieces to active places.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ fxe4 19. $\mathbb{W}xe4$

White does not want to have an isolated pawn and give Black free access to the f-line.

19... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$

Bringing the bishop to a brilliant square, from where it will both attack and defend. 19... $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ is weaker. After 20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ Black would be forced to accept weaknesses in his king's position.



We have reached the moment that lifts this game above the run of the mill and qualifies it to be included in this chapter.

20.dxe5!!

A brilliant sacrifice by the Indian star. Just as Matamoros did in his game, Sasikiran evaluates that his pawns in the centre and the quality of the minor pieces he will receive in compensation for the queen are truly great. In total his compensation is composed of many factors: the power of the passed pawns, the quality of the two bishops, the time won in the process and the weakness of g7.

On the other hand, Black wins the queen, which should not be underestimated.

I have a feeling that Krasenkow did not take this sacrifice seriously in advance, but once he had arrived here, he had no choice but to threaten, and win, the white queen.

20... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 21.exd6 $\mathbb{Q}xe4\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}a1!$

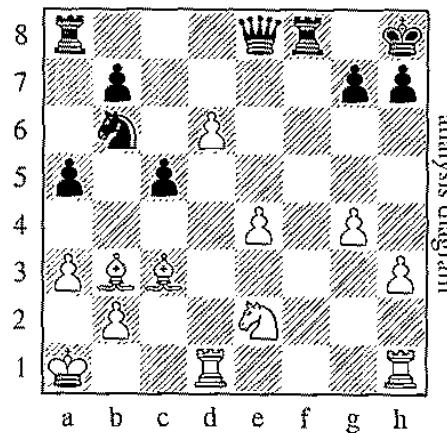
Winning crucial time.

22... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 23.fxe4 a4?

Just as 15...a5 seemed a bit superfluous, it is hard to see exactly what Krasenkow thought he was about to achieve by the further advance of the a-pawn.

23... $\mathbb{W}xe4?$ is no good either. After 24. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ -h5 White will have a very strong attack, which can easily be supported by a rook on the 7th, additionally the black pieces could be distracted by the advance of the d-pawn.

23...c5! was the correct move.



What it achieves is to shut down the b3-bishop and to exploit its current position as undefended.

I would not want to give the impression that I really understand this position. Maybe the correct move is 24. $\mathbb{Q}he1$ with compensation for the queen. But this move allows Black to play ...c4 and ... $\mathbb{Q}b6-d7-e5$, where it would substantially assist the heavy artillery.

For this reason I have analysed the following possible, but by no means forced, line: 24.e5! $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}a2!$ $\mathbb{W}xe2$ (25... $\mathbb{Q}f2?$ might look tempting, but after 26.e6! the pawns are getting outside Black's control.) 26. $\mathbb{Q}he1$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 27.e6 with chances for both sides. I have no definite conclusion to offer, but my analysis suggests

that the chances are about even, with the bigger responsibility lying on Black's shoulders.

24.♗a2

The bishop is no longer hanging loosely on b3 and White can focus on his ambitions rather than worry about decisions made on move 12.

24...♝f3

Toying with the idea of sacrificing on c3, but this is not entirely satisfactory.

25.e5!!?

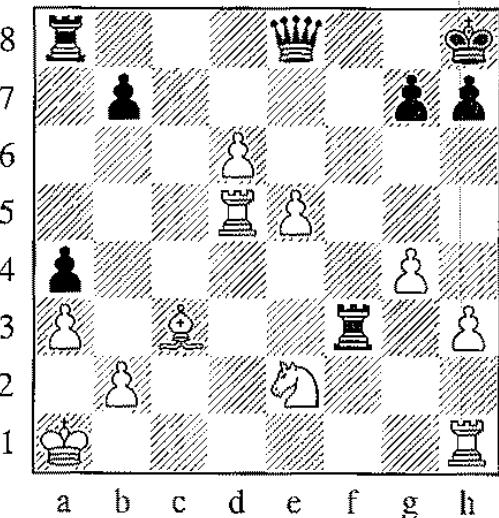
With 25.♗he1! White could defend the e-pawn. It is possible that after 25...♝xc3 26.♕xc3 ♜e5 Sasikiran was uncertain about how to break the blockade. But 27.♗f1! followed by intruding on the 7th rank would decide the game in White's favour.

25...♞d5

The only useful thing Black can make of this knight is to get rid of it at minimal cost. 25...♝xc3!? 26.♕xc3 ♜xe5 was of course possible. But White will put a rook on e7 and have a very pleasant position indeed.

26.♝xd5 cxd5 27.♝xd5

27.♗he1!? was also strong, but it is more natural to take a pawn for free.



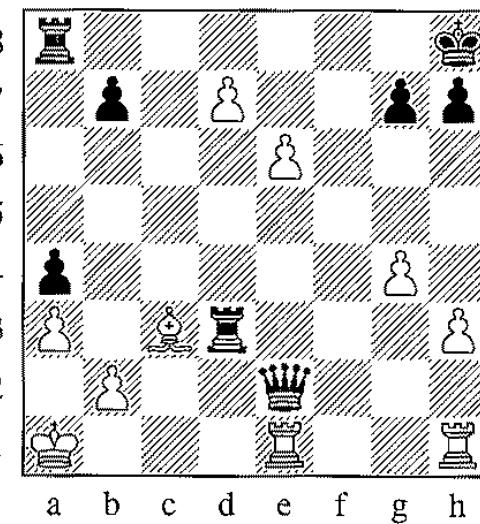
27...♛f7?

Black is probably lost here. One line that I have dreamt up to illustrate this is 27...♝c6 28.♝dd1 ♜d3, which might very well be the best defensive try. After 29.♗he1 ♜xd1† 30.♝xd1 ♜e4 31.♗e1 ♜g8 32.♗d4 ♜d5 33.e6 ♜xd6 34.♗f5 ♜d3 35.♗xg7 ♜xh3 36.e7 ♜xg4 37.e8=♛† ♜xe8 38.♗xe8 White should be winning on points, but because of the ghost of perpetual check Black can still fight. But maybe White has a more convincing way to exploit his advantages?

28.♝dd1! ♜c4 29.e6! ♜xe2

Not a sign of greed, but a losing move among many others.

30.d7 ♜d3 31.♗de1



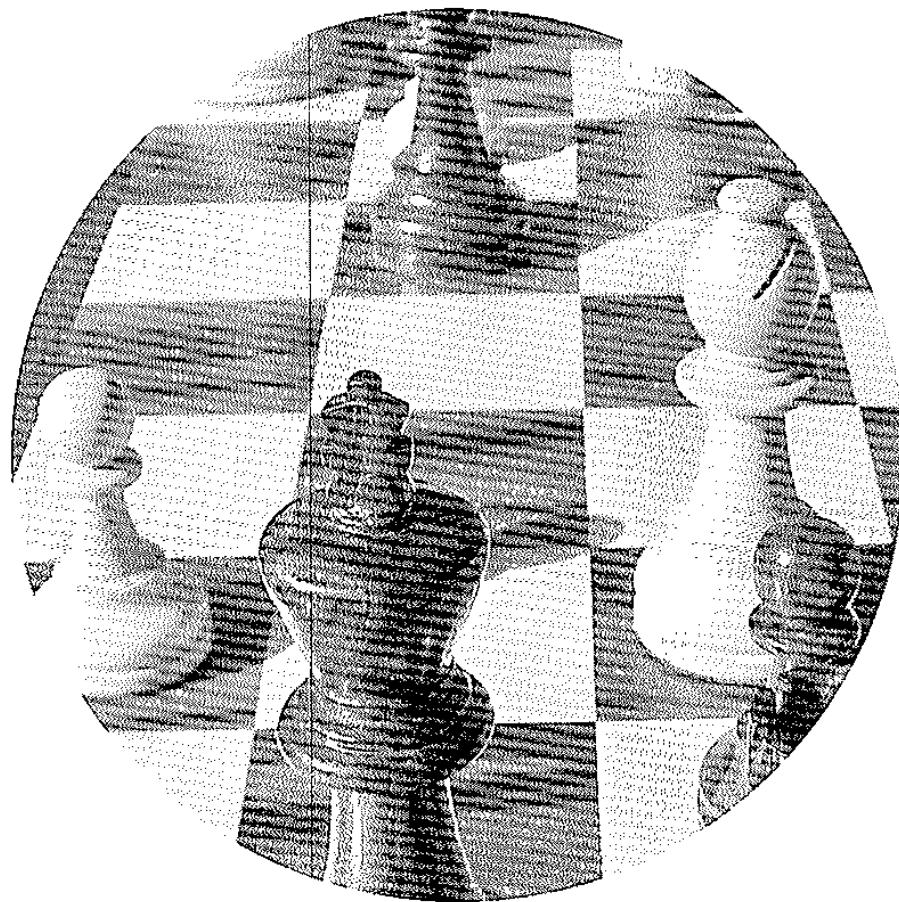
Black resigned. We see that the quality of the bishop and the passed pawns cannot be combated by the black forces in the timeframe he has been offered.

1-0

The final position of this game is the right place to end this chapter. The quality of the bishop on c3 and the pawns on d7 and e6 is very high and the quality of the black queen is very low. So with these words we will shift from quality and size to another important topic – weaknesses.

Chapter 5

Hit 'em where it hurts

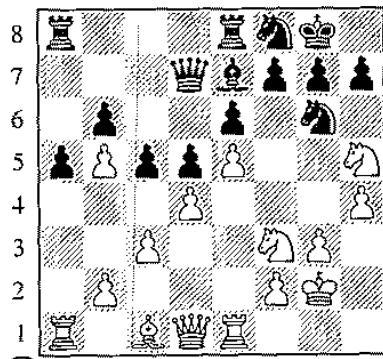


'All the world knows that the weak overcomes the strong and the soft overcomes the hard. But none can practise it.' - Lao Tzu

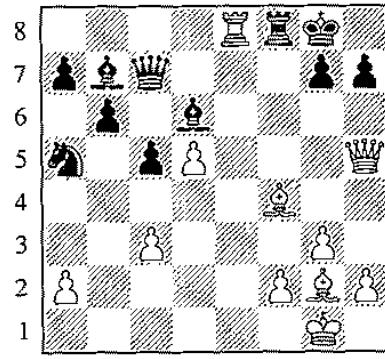
Diagram preview

On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



(P) a b c d e f g h



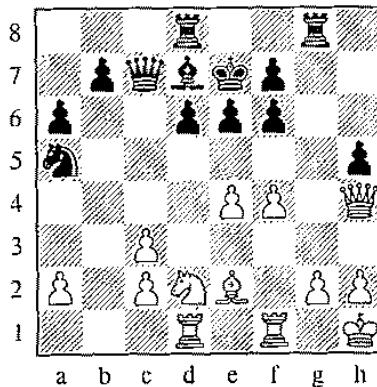
a b c d e f g h

Which is Black's weakest square?

(see page 141)

And the one move killer is?

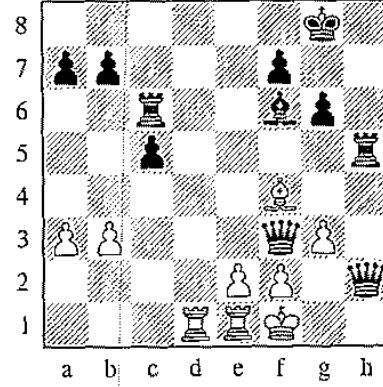
(see page 146)



a b c d e f g h

Time for action!

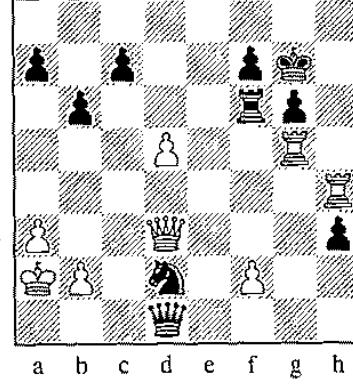
(see page 139)



a b c d e f g h

Which is White's weakest square?

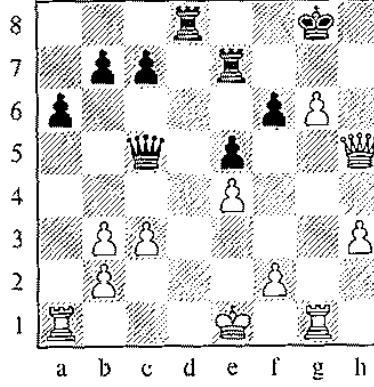
(see page 142)



a b c d e f g h

How to organise the pieces?

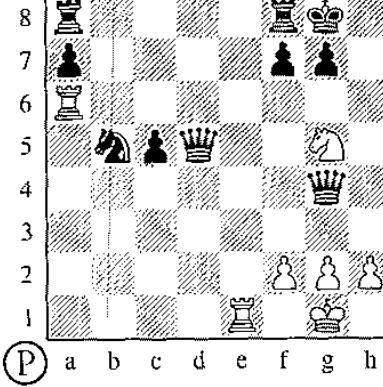
(see page 152)



a b c d e f g h

Which is Black's weakest square?

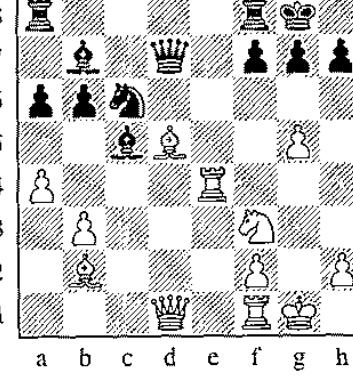
(see page 141)



a b c d e f g h

How to continue the attack?

(see page 144)



a b c d e f g h

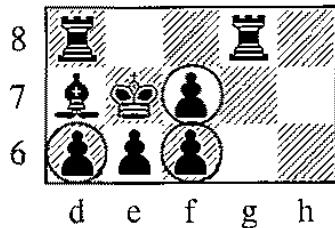
How to continue the attack?

(see page 154)

Possibly the simplest principle in chess and in any kind of combat is that **you should strike at the weakest spot in the opponent's position**. It is so simple that we do not communicate it in our teaching and thus our students never get the feeling that this is important. Grandmasters talk about weaknesses in their writings till they go blue in the pen, but never sense that the average chess fan has problems with defining weaknesses and does not know what to do with them. I know this because I have a long memory and a short talent, meaning that I still remember all the pain I had to go through to get to my current level of chess understanding, which has now been called my talent by some people.

This is not the right place to talk about weaknesses in general. Weaknesses are usually referred to mainly in discussions of technical aspects of chess, such as endgames or pawn structure. Though these issues are always present in positions where dynamics are predominant, it would be excessive to go through all the aspects of chess in this project. When we talk about weaknesses in attacking chess, we are in most cases talking about weak squares around the king.

Let's look at a practical example.

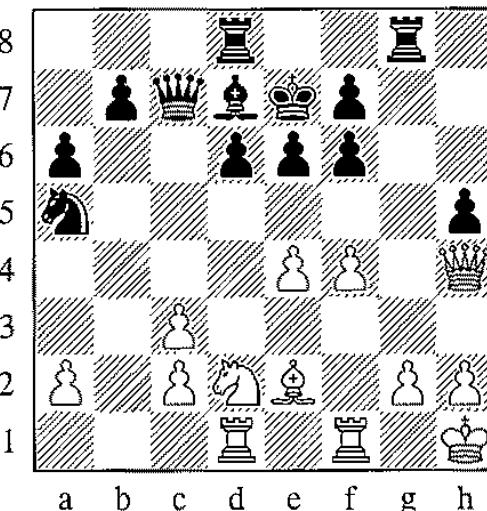


The weakest squares in the black position are d6, f6 and f7, as indicated. These are the weakest squares because they are only defended by the king. It is less realistic that White will have a successful attack against the e6-square than that he will have it against these other three squares. Which one of them will be the weakest square depends on how the white pieces are placed. The principle in technical positions

is that **a weakness is only a weakness if the opponent can take advantage of it**, and this is of course also the case in dynamic positions.

Gilberto Milos – Niaz Murshed

Groningen (1) 1997



As we can see, the weakest point in the black position is f6, as the rook on f1, the knight on d2 and the pawn on e4 are all pointing that way. But the big differences between d6 and f6 are created by the queens. The queen on c7 defends d6 and the queen on h4 is putting uncomfortable pressure on f6.

For these reasons the move in the game is quite logical.

21.e5!

Hitting f6 and opening up for the knight to join the attack. The h-pawn is not attractive in comparison.

21...dxe5 22.Qe4 Eg6 23.Qxh5

White is happy to take the pawn at this point as it comes with the gain of a tempo. The important thing is not the pawn, but the attack on the rook and on f7, but you never know what might happen, it could be useful to have a passed h-pawn later on, even if it is not central to White's current actions.

23... $\mathbb{B}h6$

The other attempt to pin the bishop also loses by force. 23... $\mathbb{B}h8$ 24. $fxe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 25. $\mathbb{B}xf6!$ The correct move order, the h5-bishop needs to stay protected. After 25... $\mathbb{B}xb5$ White now has 26. $\mathbb{B}xf7\#$, and Black is mated in two moves.

24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

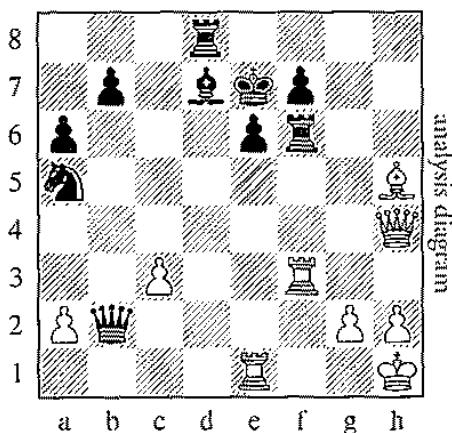
Quite logically White is able to use the pressure against f6 in a tactical solution. But actually it is not strictly necessary. Simple chess such as 24. $fxe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 25. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ followed by 26. $\mathbb{B}f1$ would also leave Black helpless.

24... $\mathbb{B}xf6$ 25. $fxe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 26. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 27. $\mathbb{B}f3$

The point. Black cannot keep control over f6.

27... $\mathbb{W}xe1\#$

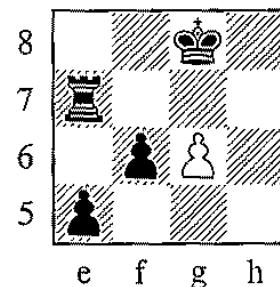
A form of resignation. 27... $\mathbb{B}b2$ 28.c3 has some beauty to it:



**28. $\mathbb{W}xe1$ $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 29. $\mathbb{B}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 30. $\mathbb{W}h4\#$ f6
31. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 32. $\mathbb{W}g7$ f5 33.h4
1-0**

At times it can be hard to establish what the weakest square in the opponent's position is. And at times there are several weak squares. And then again you need to break through on the strongest squares, in order to get to the weakest squares (see the next chapter).

But I have found a good guideline is that the weakest square is the square that receives the least protection. Let's zoom in for a moment at the kingside in the next game.



In this corner f5 and f6 are weak, which would be very relevant if we had a knight. Also weak are h5 and h6, which would be more relevant if the king was not on the back rank, but is still important as White can use these squares for his pieces. Actually, in the game there is a queen on h5, which is quite comfortably placed.

It is easy to get the idea that the weakest squares should be f7 or h7, because of the white pawn, but since we cannot attack the king on these squares, the weakness of h8 is the most relevant. Only the king defends this square and the other black pieces find it hard to get to.

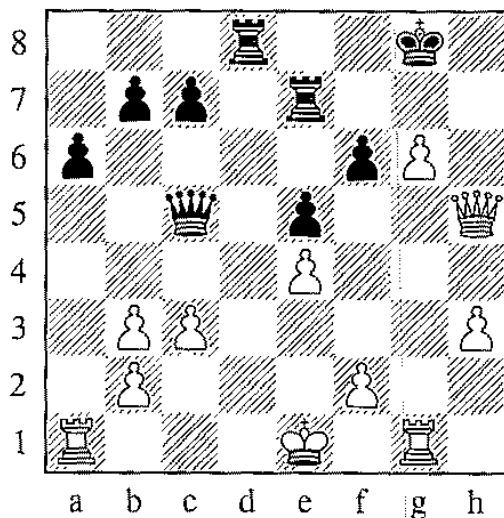
I understand if you find all this very simple, it is meant to be. I normally say that chess is simple but difficult, meaning that it is simple when you know what the right move is, because the chaos on the board is structured in your mind, in the same way that an anagram is. *Way he pit lot* makes no sense, though they are all common English words. If we saw the sentence we would maybe look at rearranging the words to make sense of it, but not the letters unless we knew that it was an anagram, and that it was about chess. Then we would find the words *White to play* quite quickly.

The principles in this book, like the definition of what the weakest square in your opponent's position is, are meant to be very basic, because

this is the moment where they are useful. If we intuitively feel that we need to attack the weakest square in the opponent's position, we will quite easily solve the next position, but if we do not, then we may let a win against the strongest grandmaster in South America escape.

Jose Fernando Cubas – Giovanni Vescovi

Brazil 2006



In the game White played 28.g7? in order to open up the g-file. But though White still has a good attacking position, his attack is too slow to be able to reach the black king in time to create devastating and immediate damage. Black survived his shaky position and drew on move 73.

The best move in this position is therefore targeted at giving a check with the queen on h8.

28.♕g4!

A funny line goes like this:

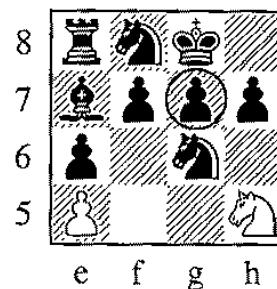
28...♝ed7 29.♝h4 ♛f8 30.♛h8† ♛e7
31.♝h7† ♛e6

Black has managed to escape from the mating net, but at this moment another factor plays a crucial part.

32.g7

White wins.

If you look at the next corner diagram it is not difficult to spot the two weaknesses, nor to decide which one is the primary weakness.

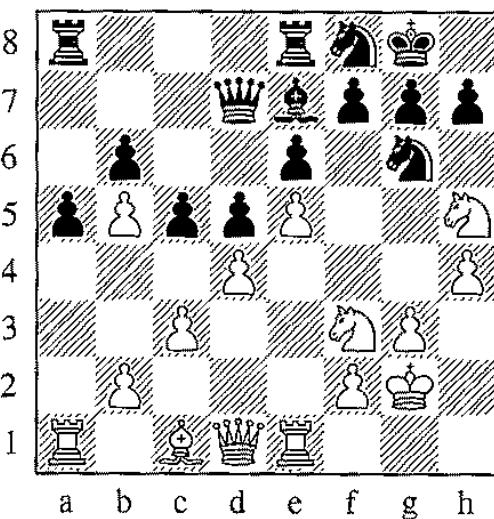


Both f7 and g7 are only defended by the black king. The difference between the two is that g7 is further away from any possible defenders (actually it is not possible to defend g7 on the next move if Black wanted to do so, while f7 can be defended by a bishop move and the comical ...♝h8) and that the white knight is already shooting at g7 from h5. Also the pawn on e5, which is controlling the f6-square (a dark square) is assisting in an attack against g7.

With this clarity it is time to zoom out and see the whole board.

Garry Kasparov – Nigel Short

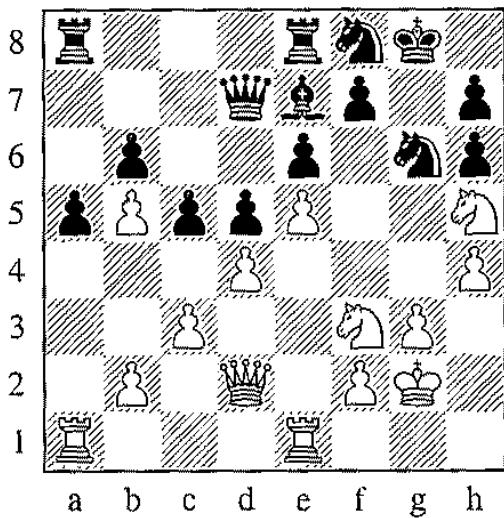
Zurich 2001



We have already heard some of the reasons why g7 is the square to attack, but add to this the colour blindness of the c1-bishop and certainty is ours.

Everything is aiming at an assault on g7 and in the game Kasparov did so successfully without the help of his rooks (which lack the necessary wings).

18.♗h6! gxh6 19.♗d2



Mate seems imminent, but Black can still display a bit of desperation.

19...f5 20.exf6 ♗d8

However, White wins all the same.

21.♗xh6 ♕a7 22.♗g5

Surprise – f7 turned out to be weak anyway! Obviously this was only relevant because our primary target on g7 was so hard to defend.

22...♕xb5 23.f7† ♕xf7 24.♗xf7

1–0

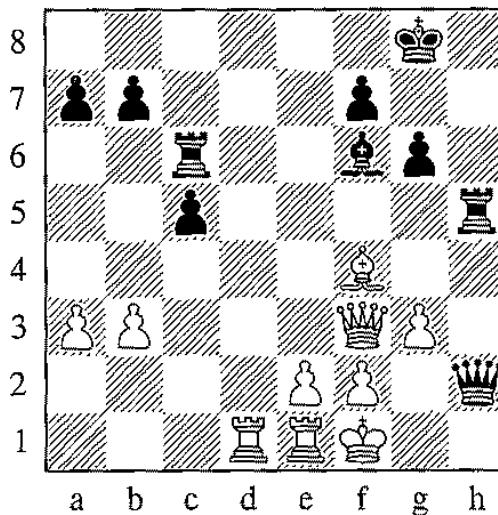
With a simple definition of what a weakness is in attacking terms, we will move on to looking at various examples of weaknesses in play.

One well known endgame principle is the principle of two weaknesses. The basic idea is that it is easy to coordinate your pieces to

defend one weakness, but close to impossible to defend two weaknesses at the same time. The same can be the case in the middlegame as well as the opening.

Joerg Pachow – Georgios Souleidis

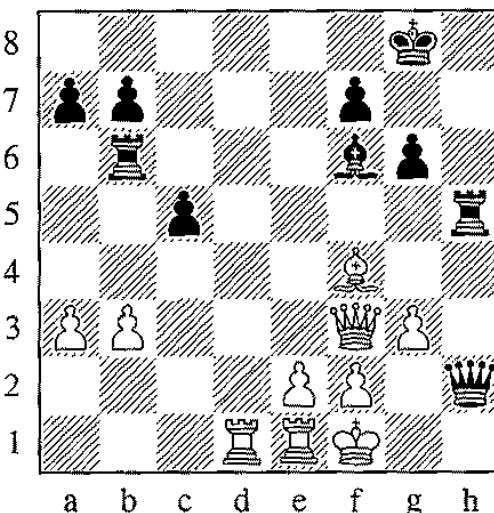
German Bundesliga 2007



Black has been successful in breaking through on the kingside, but White has defended against mate by creating an escape square for the king on f1. It seems that Black's attack has come to a halt.

This is where the weak queenside comes into the picture. With a simple move it is possible for Black to use his least active piece to increase the pressure on his opponent.

32...♗b6!!



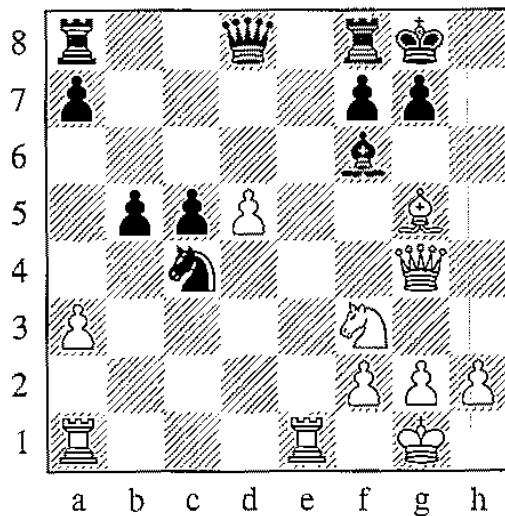
White must have been shocked when he realised that it is impossible to defend the b3-pawn. He fought on bravely, but had to cave in on move 59.

...0-1

In the next example we shall see a lot of weaknesses in play. The most surprising of these are probably that the f6-bishop is a bit unstable and that the a6-square is an important weakness, or that White needs to look out for the first rank!

Alexander Goldin – Igor Efimov

Kislovodsk 1982



Weak squares are not the only form of weaknesses, of course, as, for example, a piece can also be a weakness. In this position the h7-square, and maybe even the h8-square as well, are weak. However, Black also has a few other problems in this position. The knight on c4 is not too stable and the f6-square is suffering from a bit of pressure. White's energetic play in the game takes advantage of all of these factors, leading to a stunning victory. However, in the course of events White's own weakness is also revealed...

23.a4!

White is using the b5-pawn as a hook to latch his attack on to. It is not possible to back up the pawn, as the exchange on b5 and a8 would leave the f6-bishop undefended.

23... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 24.axb5 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ 25. $\mathbb{E}a6!$

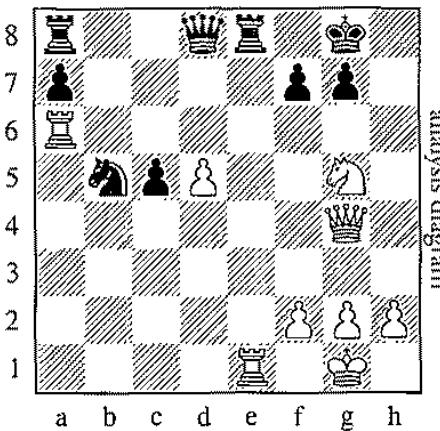
I like this move because of its fascinating concept, though it is not completely clear that it is better than other moves in the position. White is aiming at the weaknesses on the h-file and in the course of events putting pressure on the f6-bishop. The downside of the move is that it weakens the first rank and opens it up to be exploited.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 26. $\mathbb{E}c4$ has a more positional feel to it and would also give White some advantage.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$

The decisive mistake. It is very tempting to take on d5 if possible. Black had no doubt expected to be able to defend himself against mate on h7 with the queen from d3, but little did he know what White had actually intended.

26... $\mathbb{E}e8!$ was a better move.



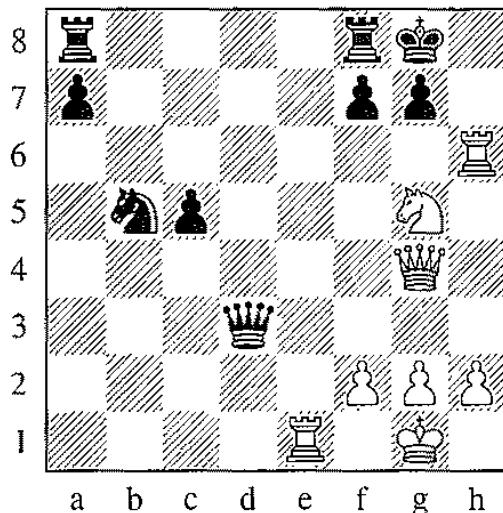
White has to deal with his weak back rank and has several ways of doing so, but he cannot both do this and attack the black king. Even so, after 27. $\mathbb{E}xe8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ White seems to have the better chances.

27.♖h6!!

This rook swing is easy to miss. From its active but somewhat irrelevant position on a6 the rook is suddenly a prime attacker, threatening to sacrifice itself on h8 as a means to deliver mate, forcing the opponent's reply.

27...♗d3

27...gxh6 28.♕e6† wins everything. White has reached the moment we are always looking for. First we build up, then we strike. It is hard to see how the white pieces could be placed more actively, so it is time to turn to concrete stuff. To be able to determine where we want to strike, we need to know where the weaknesses are.

**28.♕h7**

This is a very inventive move and it is therefore tempting to praise it. But the fact is that there is an even more devastating line of attack. It takes a bit of calculation, but it should be within reach. The issue in this position was probably that White had the option of 28.♕h7, leading to a position that should win, so he did not see the purpose of trying to calculate far ahead.

28.♕e4!

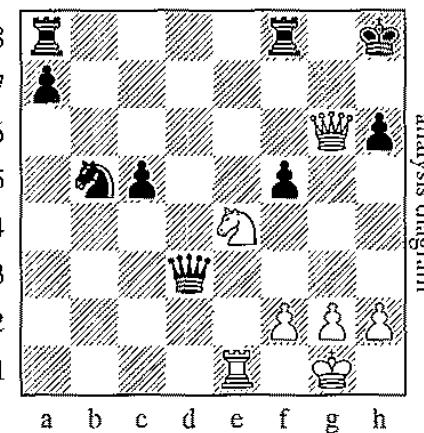
Just like the knight swing to h7 this move plays on the weakness of the f6-square. After

a few moves it is common for the position to change and new weaknesses to arise. In this case a check on f6 would lead straight to mate. The first difference from 28.♕h7 is that Black cannot get rook and knight for his queen.

The second difference must be what concerned Goldin:

28...f5

The obvious concerns put forward by this move could have been put to rest with accurate calculation, had White calculated the following line to the end.

29.♗h5 gxh6 30.♕g6† ♕h8**31.♗xh6† ♕g8 32.♕g6† ♕h8 33.♕g5 ♘d7
34.♗h5† ♕g8 35.♗e6!**

There is no way for Black to defend against the rook check on g6. This might be a lot of moves, but with no branches and many checks, it is hardly difficult.

28...f5?

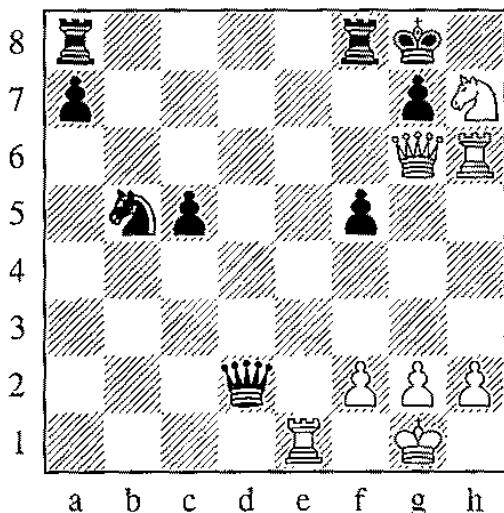
This loses on the spot. Black had no choice but to play 28...♗xh7 29.♗xh7 ♕xh7. After 30.♗e5 White will take the pawn on c5, but there is still a bit of play remaining before he can convert the advantage into a full point.

29.♗g6

29.♗h5! was more clinical, transposing after some tactics to the line given at move 28. But the move played in the game is good enough.

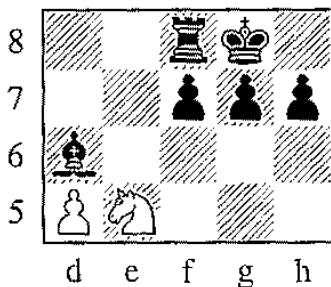
29... $\mathbb{W}d2$

It is not easy to say if Efimov missed the mate or if he had had enough. 29... $\mathbb{W}d6$ would give Black the chance to lose an endgame an exchange down instead of being mated.



30. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$! $\mathbb{B}f7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$
1-0

To be able to understand weaknesses in the best possible way, it is important for us to remember what we discussed in Chapter 3 concerning colour schemes. If we picture the following kingside situation:



From a starting point we would talk about g7 and h7 as more or less equal weaknesses. Both are only defended by the king, but none of them are attacked by any of the white pieces. There is good sense in such an evaluation, but it is a bit limiting and does not take into account three important factors. First of all there are the white pieces, which are

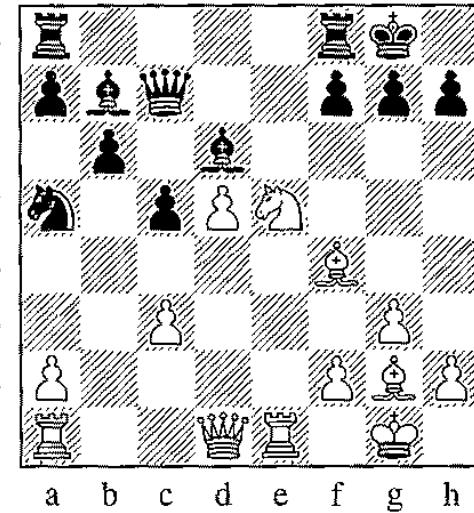
biased towards the light squares. Although f7, g6 and e6 are the only squares they influence, they are still ideally placed to undermine the black structure on the light squares, which because of the way chess pieces are, points to h7 as an easier accessible target than g7. Then there is the bishop on d6. Though it is not in direct contact with g7, it is still inside a certain sphere of influence and should be taken into account. Finally there is the simple fact that h7 is further away from the rook (and other pieces) than g7. It is easier to imagine a ... $\mathbb{B}f7$ defending g7 than h7. True, it is only one extra move, but this is sometimes all it takes.

The following game will illustrate very well how these weaknesses on the light squares are exploited from all angles, both in the game played and in the analysis. For this reason I have included a bit of extra analysis.

Alon Greenfeld – Evgeny Postny

English Opening
Israel 2002

1.c4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ c5 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6 4.g3 b6 5. $\mathbb{R}g2$
 $\mathbb{R}b7$ 6.0-0 $\mathbb{R}e7$ 7. $\mathbb{B}e1$ d5 8.cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 9.e4
 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 10.bxc3 0-0 11.d4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12.d5 $\mathbb{Q}a5$
13. $\mathbb{R}f4$ exd5 14.exd5 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}c7$



16. $\mathbb{W}h5!$

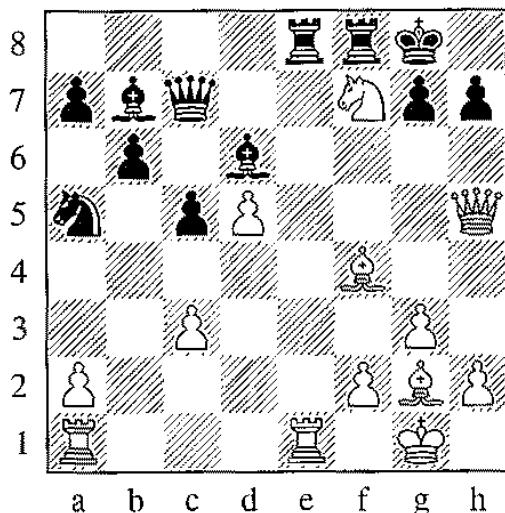
The weaknesses in Black's position are on the kingside. This is where White should play.

16... $\mathbb{R}ae8?$

This might look quite innocent, but it is possible that after this move Black's position is already beyond salvation! 16... $\mathbb{R}ad8?$ was played in Pelletier – Korchnoi, Biel 2002, where White had a slight edge, but in the end was fortunate to draw.

Greenfeld had previously played 17. $\mathbb{R}e3$ in this position, but at home he had realised that there were more adventurous opportunities in the position.

It appears that with his last move Black has weakened his back rank. The white queen and rook have combined forces to put pressure on e8. At the same time Black is also suffering a little bit from having all his pieces placed on the queenside with little influence on the squares around his own king. All of these factors indicate that an attack is likely to be successful.

17. $\mathbb{Q}xf7!!$ 

A great sacrifice that uses the pins, X-rays and superior presence on the kingside in full.

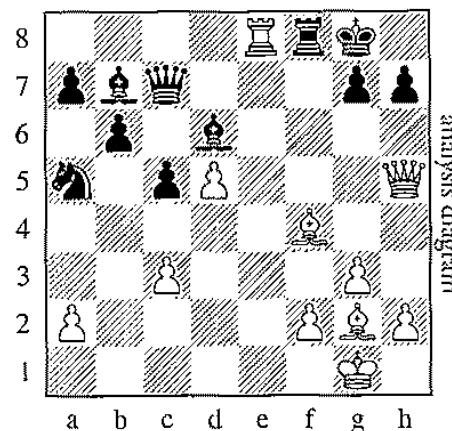
17... $\mathbb{R}xe1\#$

Black has to exchange before considering taking anything, as the e8-rook would be hanging, and as 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf4?$ loses outright to 18. $\mathbb{R}xe8$ $\mathbb{R}xe8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ when White has a winning attack.

18. $\mathbb{R}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$

The method of elimination quickly determines that this is the only move.

18... $\mathbb{R}xf7$ 19. $\mathbb{R}e8\#$ $\mathbb{R}f8$ is a natural position to consider.

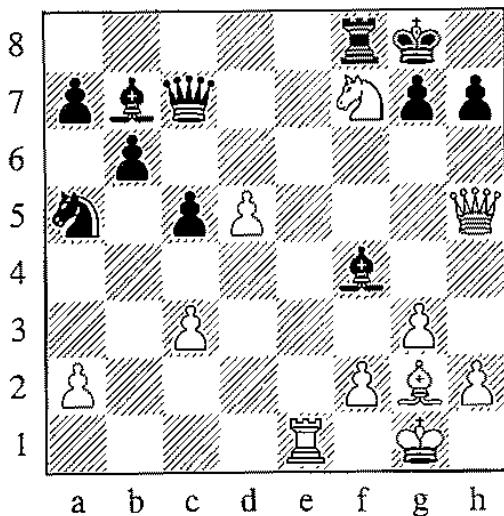


The weaknesses in the black position are f8 and the pressure from f4 to d6 and c7.

This does not mean that we need to immediately cash in with 20. $\mathbb{R}xf8\#$? $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 21. $\mathbb{R}f5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{R}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 23. $\mathbb{R}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$, though this endgame is probably winning for White. In Maletin – Lomako, Nizhniy Tagil 2006, Black actually held the endgame, so it is not that clear-cut.

All of this happened because White had been a better student of opening theory than of middlegame technique, in this case the technique of candidate moves. Or the most important idea in attacking chess, if not in chess altogether: always include all your pieces in the attack. 20. $\mathbb{Q}h3\#$ wins on the spot.

Back to the main game:



The first wave of the attack is over; Black wisely declined the sacrifice and instead tried to exchange a few pieces before digging in. This is wishful thinking, as White has not started a risky attack with material concerns in mind. The truth of the matter is that he needs to find a new weakness to attack now Black has avoided immediate disaster on the e8-square. With a simple look at the pieces on the board we will see that h7 is the weakest square in the black position. Not only is it easy for White to attack it, it is also more difficult for Black to get his pieces to defend it than, for example, g7.

19.Qe4! Qh6

19...g6 20.Qxg6 is obviously wrong and after 20...Bxf7 White has several wins, among them 21.Qc8† Qf8 22.Qxh7†!, winning the queen.

19...Bxf7 is also quite easy to get rid of. After 20.Qxh7† Qf8 21.Qg6 Black has serious problems with the weakest square in his position, the h8-square. White's attack is overwhelming.

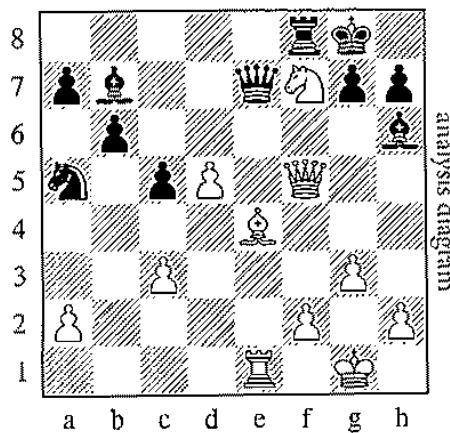
19...h6 is the only other move that offers resistance. It is quite obvious where Black is weak and White should not hesitate to take advantage thereof. 20.Qg6 Bxf7 21.Qh7† Qf8 22.Qg6 Qe5 23.Qxf7! Qxf7 24.Qf5†

Qg8 (24...Qf6 25.Qe6† Qg6 26.Qe4† and wins) 25.Qxe5 White's attack continues. There are further lines, but it is sufficient to include 25...Qf7 26.Qe4 to illustrate the problems Black is facing. His position is beyond salvation.

20.Qf5! Qc8?

This loses to a simple (but not necessarily easy) tactical sequence.

Black had to play 20...Qe7, which seemingly just loses the queen.



But those with a talent for mathematics will see that Black is receiving quite a lot of material for the queen, though the quality of the material is not high.

After 21.Qxh7† and 22.Qg6† White could win the queen and enjoy some advantage, though Black would be able to put up a good deal of resistance. This alone illustrates that White's strategy was successful and is all you need to know to appreciate this example.

But it turns out that White can improve his position before winning the queen by shutting out the bishop on h6 from the game. The following is a small breach of my promise to avoid unnecessary variations, but they are so beautiful and illustrate the principle of quality in such a convincing way that I have decided to get side-tracked a little. If you are sitting in your favourite armchair and reading this

without a board, you can easily jump to the conclusion of the game. But if you have the hunger for it, the following might seem quite astonishing to you.

21.f4! ♗c4

It is hard to recommend any other moves. After 21...♝a8 22.♗xh7† ♛xf7 23.♗g6† ♖f6 24.♗xe7 ♛xe7 White has won the queen, but for bishop, knight and rook. He has several winning moves, but they are all based on advancing the g-pawn, exploiting yet another drawback of the black bishop's odd positioning on h6.

22.♗xh7†

22.g4? is less effective now that the knight has rejoined the game. Black can play 22...g6!, when after 23.♗xh6† ♗g7 24.♗g5 ♖xg5 25.fxg5 ♜e8 26.♗f1! ♜e7 it is not easy for White to prove an advantage, despite the extra pawn. If instead the pawn was on g3 and the knight on a5, White would have ♗g2 and ♘f6 with domination.

22...♛xf7 23.♗f2!

The point behind this move and 21.f4 is to play 24.♗f3, when the threat of the check on h5 forces Black to part with the queen. After this the black king is very exposed and White has great chances of success in the attack. Trying to play against your computer from this position with both colours should show that the initiative and in particular the quality of the pieces is more important than their numerical value.

A way for Black to try to avoid such an endgame is the imaginative

23...♝e5!?

which cannot be taken as the e-file is closed and the king allowed to run away with check!

24.♗f5! ♗d3†!

This might seem inherently strange to the naked eye. Why spend two moves in order to give up the knight for an identical position. To be able to answer this question it is

necessary to go deeper into the wants in the position. White is seeking to get his bishop to h5, which would be deadly, even two pieces down. After the knight sacrifice the bishop has lost its connection to the d-pawn and Black would be able to play ...♝xd5 and at the same time prevent ♘h5† (or at least greatly reduce its quality) and create threats of his own.

24...♝xd5 25.♗xe5 ♖d6 might look like a defence, but after 26.♗g4! the threats of ♘h5† and ♖f5† lead by force to this position. 26...♝d8 27.♖f5† ♘g8 28.♗xd5 The upcoming opposite-coloured bishops endgame is winning for White. He will advance his pawns on the kingside to stand on f4, g5 and h4, when the advance of either the f- or h-pawn will lead to a position with two connected passed pawns that will draw blood.

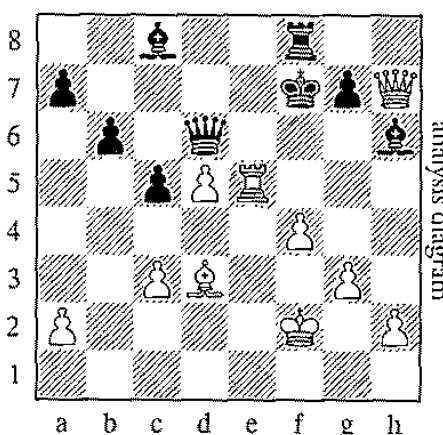
25.♗xd3 ♖d6 26.♗e5!

White therefore has to protect the d-pawn.

26...♝c8

26...♝e8 is met by the strong 27.♗g6† or the also impressive 27.♖e4.

This position is very tricky and illustrates the necessity of taking the opponent's resources into account in full.

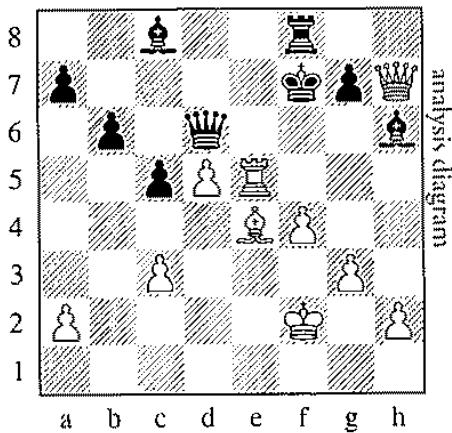


- a) White wants to give a check on h5, so it is easy to mechanically play 27.♗e2? But this will allow Black to use the only problem in the white position, that the queen on h7 is close

to trapped. 27... $\mathbb{Q}xe5!!$ 28.fxe5 $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ The only square. If the king goes to e8 White has $\mathbb{Q}h5$ and $\mathbb{Q}g6$ when needed. 29. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ Black has successfully trapped the white queen. However, the variation ends stunningly in a draw with 30.d6# $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (30... $\mathbb{Q}e6?$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$) 31.e6! $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 32.e7# $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$ and White escapes with perpetual check.

All of this is very spectacular, but as our abilities in chess increase, we start to see beyond the immediate attractive beauty of queen sacrifices and a perpetual check organised by a bishop and two pawns on their own to the deeper understanding of strategy and its implementation. On move 27 White needs to take various concerns into account and can undo the damage incurred by Black when he sacrificed the knight with the only benefit being that White would have to put his bishop on a slightly awkward square, but returning the bishop to its previous route.

b) 27. $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$ is simply stunning.

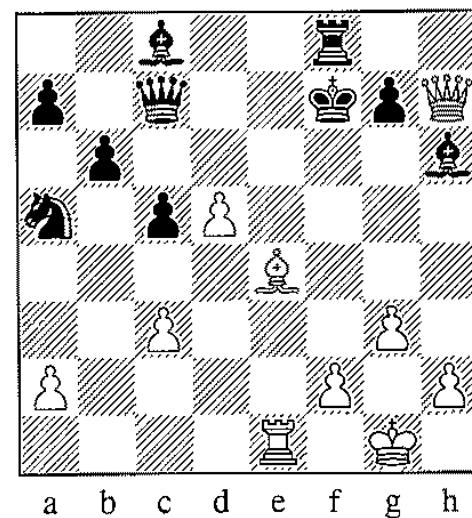


Black is positionally outplayed and cannot defend effectively against the strength of the manoeuvre $\mathbb{Q}B3-h5$, when the weaknesses in the black position become all too apparent. Black might try 27... $\mathbb{Q}g4$, but after 28.h3 Black is left speechless and moveless.

For this very complicated reason it is not advisable to sacrifice the knight on d3 and

23... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ is better. White will win the queen for his rook and have excellent winning chances due to the bad coordination of the black pieces and the weaknesses around the black king.

21. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$



The position above is for some reason not as trivial as it appeared to me when I first read Greenfeld's annotations in *Chess Informant*. I have used this game several times as an exercise and have seen even very strong players misplay the position. The immediate attack with the queen and bishop is in itself not enough to mate the black king. For this reason it is necessary to include the rook and the d-pawn in the attack. Strategically this is our number one rule, but once we have to "do it" in practice, we somehow revert to the toddler's fascination with the toys already in play.

In this position it is not too difficult to increase the potential of the rook once we have developed that desire. It even does not cost us any time.

22. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$! $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

The bishop is equally well placed on d3 and b1. The main point is that it had to vacate the e-file.

23... $\mathbb{Q}f7$

23... $\mathbb{W}f7$ might look like it covers every square, but now we have a new “weakest square” in the position. Only e5 is undefended by the black pieces, so it is no surprise that White wins with 24. $\mathbb{W}e4!$, threatening mate in one, but also a very useful check on f3.

24. $\mathbb{W}g6\# \mathbb{Q}g8$ 25.d6!

This tactical sequence is absolutely devastating. Another way of increasing the pressure is 25. $\mathbb{B}e8$, which is also sufficient to win the game.

25... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 26. $\mathbb{W}h7\# \mathbb{Q}f7$ 27. $\mathbb{B}e7\# \mathbb{W}xe7$
28. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$

The point behind the last few moves.

28... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 29.dxe7

1–0

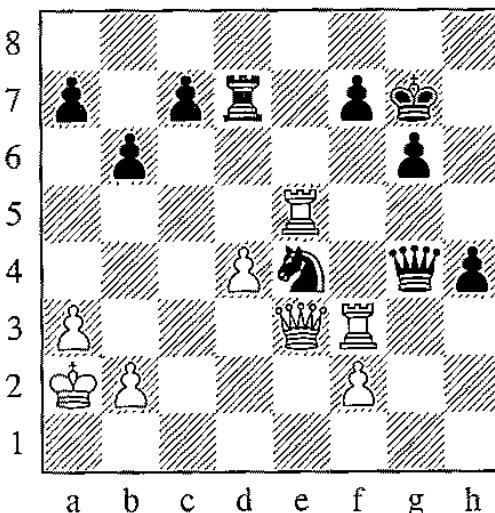
Greenfeld's achievement in this game cannot be underestimated. With good preparation and accurate play he managed to create one of the first masterpieces of the 21st century.

In the next game we are dealing with multiple weaknesses of all kinds, giving us a good chance to discuss our subject in depth. Besides the obvious weaknesses around the white king, there is also the h-pawn, which is a white weakness in traditional thinking, as it would be terribly inconvenient should it reach the first rank unobstructed, as well as weak dark squares around the black king and the somewhat loose nature of the rook on f3. As we shall see, all of these will come in to play over the next ten moves with a surprising outcome, combining everything we have discussed up to this point in the book.

The main challenge for Black will be to include the rook in the attack in a sufficiently subtle way, while White is fighting to stay afloat with the various new threats emerging on every move.

Bjarke Sahl – Nicolai Pedersen

Danish Championship, Aalborg 2007



Black has sacrificed the exchange with his eyes firmly fixed on the two weakest spots in the white position, the b1 and b3-squares. These squares are the natural weaknesses once the white pawns have been placed as they have, but only weak because Black is able to put real pressure on them.

34... $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

A cheap shot at first sight, but the underlying strategic idea is to attack the weak squares.

35. $\mathbb{B}f4 \mathbb{W}d1$

The queen now attacks both squares as well.

36. $\mathbb{W}d3$

The only move that offers support to both squares, but the queen has left her other responsibility in the process.

36...h3!

Black's other trump. The h-pawn is sent forward to divert the white forces from what they would really love to be doing, which is to expel the knight and queen from their active positions.

37. $\mathbb{B}g5!$

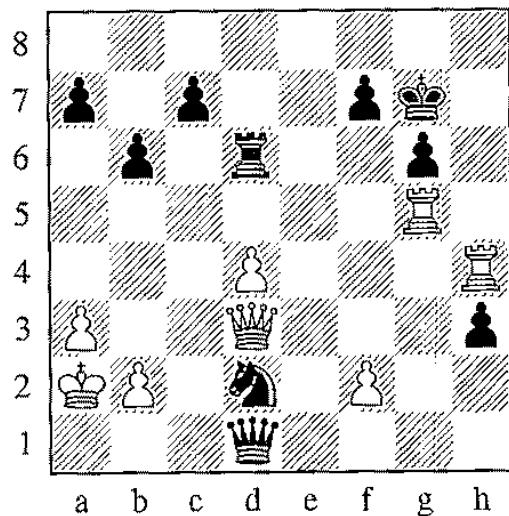
Inventive defensive play. White has realised what Black is up to and decided that there is no way to defend against it. But there is a possibility of creating counter chances against the black king.

37... $\mathbb{E}e2$ was possible, but 37...h2! 38. $\mathbb{E}xd2$ $\mathbb{W}xd2$ should be quite promising for Black.

37... $\mathbb{E}d6!$

The first restriction of Black's play is seen after 37...h2? 38. $\mathbb{E}xf7\#$, when Black is mated.

38. $\mathbb{E}h4!$



On the surface this looks like a defensive move. White wants to wrap up the h-pawn, but he is also dreaming of attacking the black king, which is especially weak on the dark squares.

38... $\mathbb{E}c6??$

This is a bit too mechanical. Black is so engulfed in his own plan that he selfishly forgets about the desires and options of his opponent. This is of course a great limitation for a chess player and probably the reason why Pedersen is still struggling to convert his considerable talent into a grandmaster title.

The other sin in this position is to underestimate the importance of including everything in the attack. The move made in

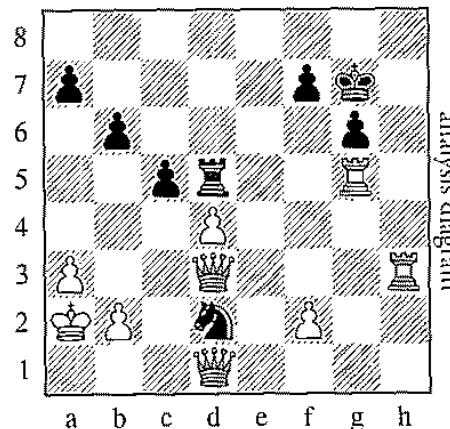
the game is slow and does not actually threaten anything, but this is the nature of the position. The real problem is that the rook was already doing something, but the pawns were not. Black's main targets are still b1 and b3, which are only defended by the white queen, and feebly so. Should she be nudged away by one of the pawns or the rook's emergence on d4, the white position could easily collapse.

The best move was 38...c5! to play ...c4, nudging the queen away from her perfect position. White has several options, but none of them are wholly satisfactory. The most tricky is probably 39. $\mathbb{E}xh3?$, when Black has to go really deep.

The most obvious move is 39... $\mathbb{E}xd4$, but in this case White has the surprising defence 40. $\mathbb{W}f5!!$, when the light squares are protected for the moment, but White's position is clearly unstable. After 40... $\mathbb{E}f4$ (or 40... $\mathbb{E}h4$ or 40... $\mathbb{E}d6$, two other acceptable squares for the rook) White will be able to force a draw with 41. $\mathbb{E}xg6\#$ and perpetual check. A surprising, but no less perfectly legal, escape.

If he plays the other obvious move, 39...c4, then White will have 40. $\mathbb{E}g1!!$, an equally big surprise, though a bit more natural to the human eye, which would allow him to escape into a balanced ending, as after 40... $\mathbb{W}xg1$ 41. $\mathbb{E}xd2$ the black king is exposed and Black will have to show great accuracy in the defence to be able to survive.

For this reason the best move is the surprising 39... $\mathbb{E}d5!!$.



White can either play 40... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ when after 40...c4 he will have to part with his queen and suffer quite a lot in the ending, though it is not totally without chances, or he can play 40... $\mathbb{E}g2$, when after 40...c4 41... $\mathbb{E}g1$ 42... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ we see the difference from the previous line. Black plays 42... $\mathbb{E}g5$, stopping the attack before it has begun, with an extra pawn and winning chances in the rook ending.

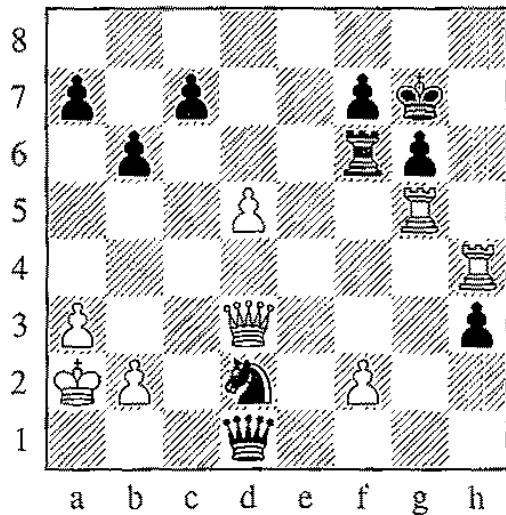
39.d5!

This is what White was hoping for. The advance of the d-pawn opens up the long diagonal and the black king is suddenly terribly exposed.

39... $\mathbb{E}f6$

It is not hard to work out that it was only now Black realised he was going to be mated after 39... $\mathbb{E}c1$ 40... $\mathbb{E}xg6\#$!. For this reason he sets his eyes on the f2-pawn and tries to shelter his king with the rook.

39... $\mathbb{E}c2$ might be a better defence, but it seems clear that White will have very good chances in the upcoming ending.



40. $\mathbb{E}g3!!$

White is brilliantly coordinating his pieces, preparing to double the rooks on the h-file and to start a deadly attack against the black king.

This is stronger than 40... $\mathbb{E}xh3?!$, which should be met with 40...c5!, with the idea of ...c4 and White continues to have problems with his king. However, it is likely that Black would have insisted on using the rook rather than the pawns offensively, and thus fallen for the trick 40... $\mathbb{E}xf2?$ 41... $\mathbb{E}g2!!$, when White is able to divert the black rook and start a deadly attack with $\mathbb{E}c3\#$.

40... $\mathbb{E}c1$

Though this looks a bit cryptic, the idea is to prevent $\mathbb{E}c3\#$ followed by $\mathbb{E}xc7\#$ in other lines. But there is no defence anymore. The white rooks will penetrate with deadly effect.

41. $\mathbb{E}gxh3$ $\mathbb{E}xf2$ 42. $\mathbb{E}d4\#$ $\mathbb{E}f6$

Black is hoping that White will not be able to give checks all the way, but somehow the queen, assisted by the two rooks, is able to do the job.

43. $\mathbb{E}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 44. $\mathbb{E}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 45. $\mathbb{E}e3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$
46. $\mathbb{E}a4\#$ c6 47. $\mathbb{E}xa7\#$

1-0

A brilliant achievement by White. The combination of attack and defence was superb even if the events taking us up to our starting position could be questioned.

Bjarke Sahl is by the way one of the few male players who have played the famous 'database gambit'. When he married he took his wife's name instead of her taking Kristensen. However, he is probably the only player not to benefit from such a change, as he has played every opening under the sun. Any player trying to prepare against Bjarke would quickly get utterly confused and abandon the idea altogether.

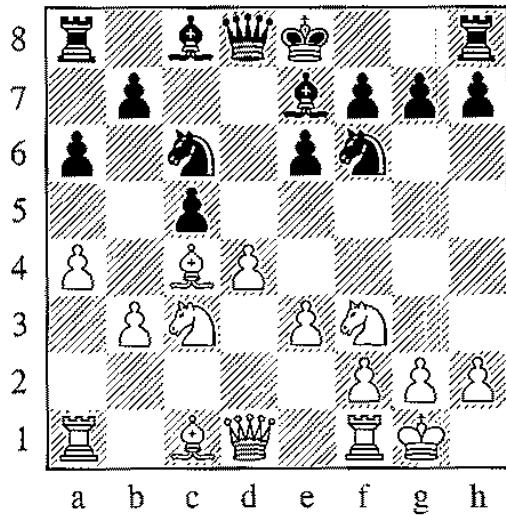
In our last game in this chapter we shall look at the creation of a weakness. Once again we are dealing with the h7-square as the primary

weakness and the g7-square as a supporting actress, in an important variation. I have included this game because I wanted to show what the difference is between two players, where one of them is playing against a clearly defined weakness with a clear strategy, and the other is drifting aimlessly around, playing seemingly natural moves. The difference is mate in less than 30 moves from a truly harmless opening position.

Valeriy Neverov – Zsivko Bratanov

Queen's Gambit Accepted
Istanbul 2006

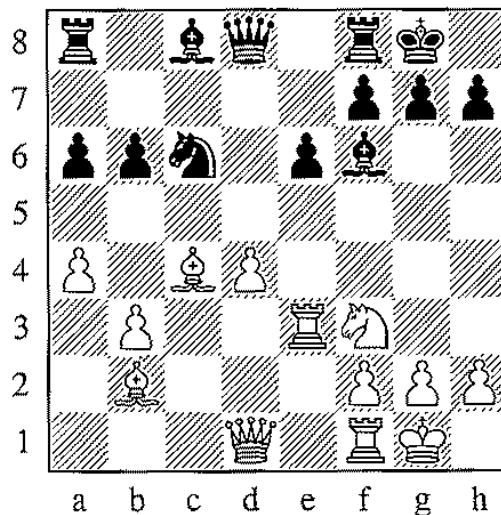
1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ dx $c4$ 5.e3 c5 6. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ a6 7.a4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 8.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 9.b3!?



This line has not been played by many high rated players, but was reasonably popular in the first half of the 20th century. Neverov probably chose it simply to play chess. As he was the rating favourite in this game he did not feel the need to disclose valuable theoretical discoveries, but attempted to use his accredited higher playing strength to outplay his opponent in the middlegame.

9...cx $d4$ 10.ex $d4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 0–0 12. $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 13. $\mathbb{E}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14. $\mathbb{E}e3$ b6

Black has seemingly played all the correct moves, but in just a few moves time he will be lost. Instead 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$! is probably my preferred move here.



15.g4!?

This is a highly surprising move. Clearly Neverov is not willing to rely on technique alone in his quest to overcome his opponent, but is willing to take considerable risks in order to win.

The strategy behind the move is based on White having a lead in development. In order to be able to exploit this he will have to do something pretty quickly. If he fails to do so, he will eventually have to suffer a little bit because of the slight weakness of the isolated pawn. So, Neverov takes a gamble and “sacrifices” his pawn structure on the altar of dynamics. The pawn advances to g5 and cramps the black kingside and pushes the only defender away. In the course of events we shall see how this creates a weakness on h7. It is actually possible that Neverov had already anticipated at this stage that this square would be problematic. It is already possible to see how difficult it is for Black to bring pieces to the kingside, especially h7, which is so far away.

15.d5 was more normal. Maybe White might even have a slight edge?

15...♝b7?!

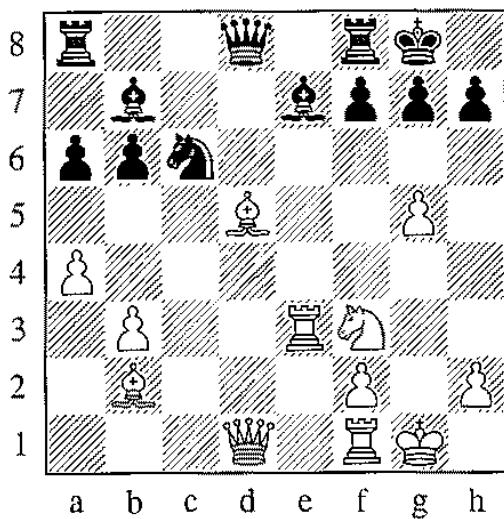
This seems to be a little oblivious to White's ideas. Safer was 15...♝b4! to keep control over the d5-square. 15...g6 16.g5 ♘g7 is also a reasonable opportunity.

16.g5 ♘e7

Accepting the pawn sacrifice would open the g-file for the white pieces that will hurry to the kingside and cause serious damage.

17.d5

White needs to open lines for the attack. In the long run the advance of the g-pawn constitutes an important weakness.

17...exd5 18.♜xd5**18...♝c5?**

This move shows the difference in level between the two players. Black has not realised that White is planning to swing the rook to h4 and thus takes the bishop away from its defensive tasks.

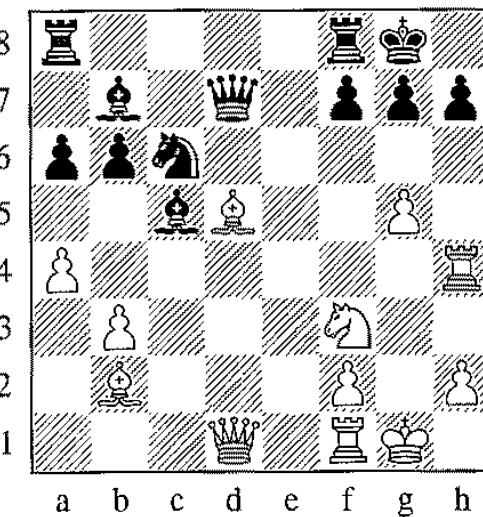
18...♝d6 was a better move. I have not been able to find a direct advantage for White, though I have the feeling that it should still be Black who has problems to solve.

It should be mentioned that 19.♜xe7 wins two pieces for the rook, but that the ensuing

endgame by no means looks promising for White.

19.♝e4 ♜d7?

This loses straight away. Necessary was 19...♝d6 though White has 20.♝h4! ♜ad8 21.♝e4! g6 22.♝a1 when he has the advantage because of the threat of ♜h8 in some shape or form, but the position is still mainly unclear.

20.♝h4!

White's strategy has been crowned. By the reckless advance of the g-pawn White has not weakened his kingside as much as made it impossible for Black to effectively defend h7.

20...♝fd8

As said, it is already too late. 20...g6 21.♝d3 with the threats of ♜xg6†! and ♜c3, both mating.

It is also too late for 20...♝d6 when after 21.♝b1 White has a winning attack. 21...♝g6 22.♝e4 f5 23.♝d5† ♜h8 24.♝h6! ♜e8 25.g6 This is an absolutely beautiful accomplishment by the g-pawn.

21.♝c2

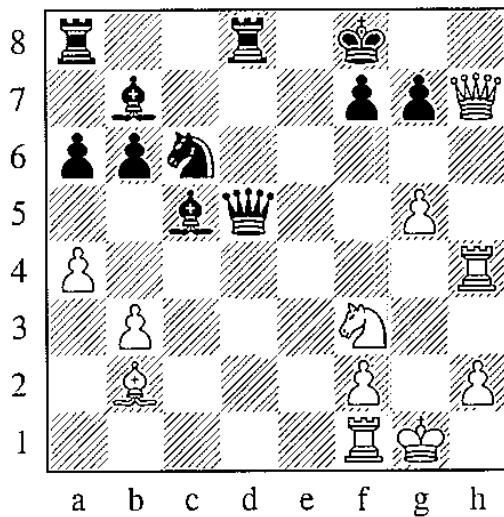
White succeeds with his strategy and Black is lost.

21... $\mathbb{W}xd5$

After 21...h6 White has several ways to win. One of them being 22. $\mathbb{W}g6 \mathbb{A}f8$ 23.gxh6 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 24. $\mathbb{W}h7\#!$, mating.

22. $\mathbb{W}xh7\# \mathbb{A}f8$

Where do you think you are going?

**23. $\mathbb{Q}e1!$**

Please stay!

23... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

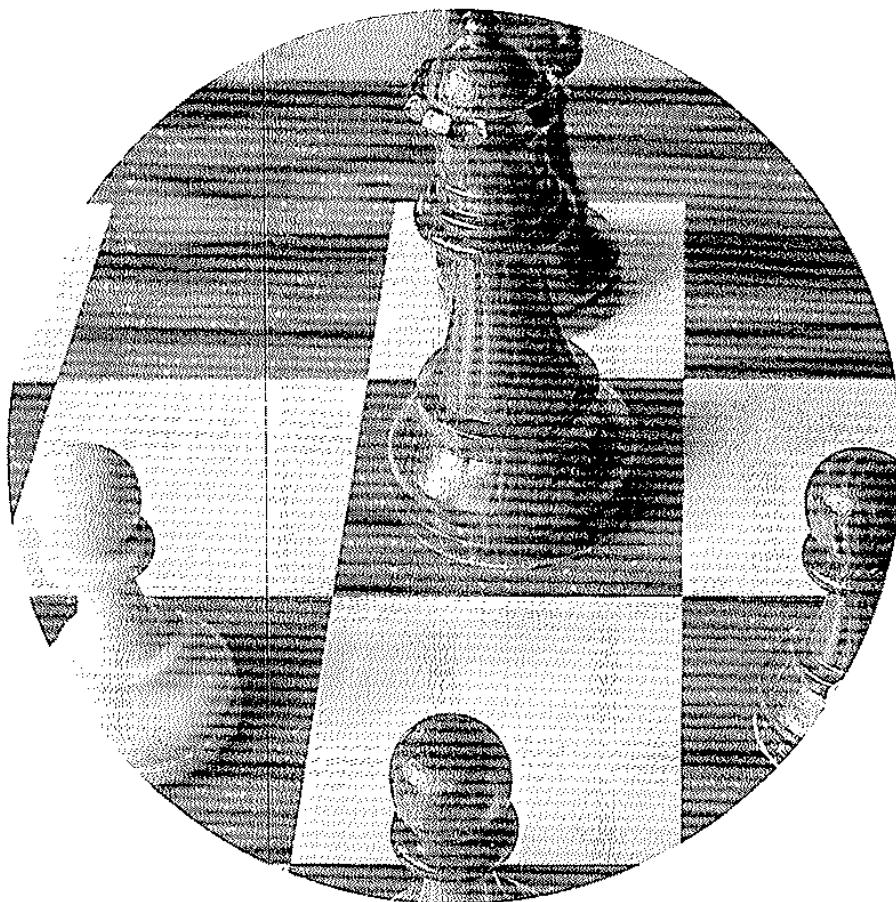
26. $\mathbb{W}xg7\# \mathbb{A}e8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#$

1–0

I hope this chapter has given you a better understanding of what a weak king is, and especially how weaknesses around the king interact with the themes discussed in previous chapters. But just to keep things complex, I will now contradict myself by discussing the strategy of attacking the opponent where he is strongest...

Chapter 6

Chewing on Granite

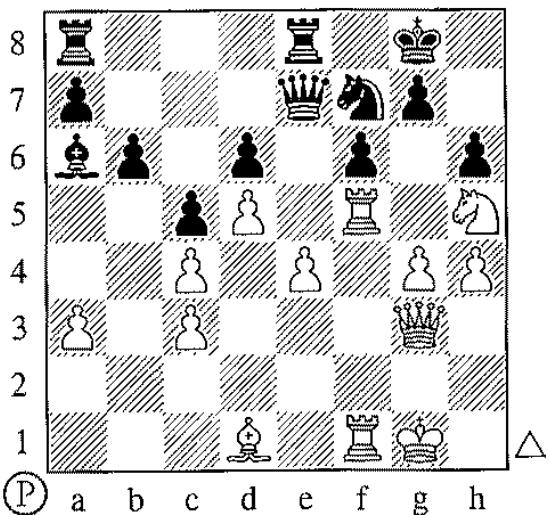


"The thing is, you see, that the strongest man in the world is the man who stands most alone." - Henrik Ibsen, "An enemy of the people"

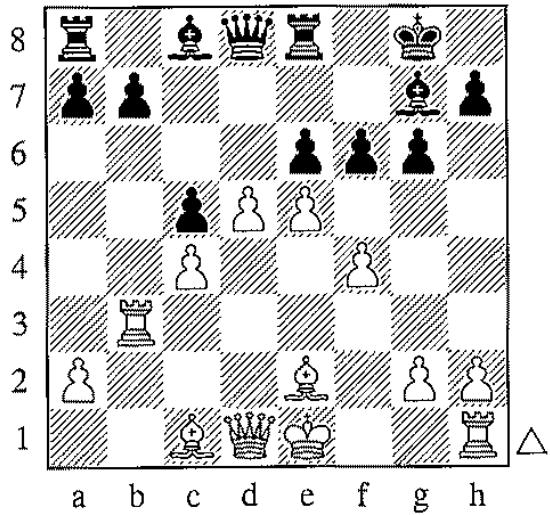
Diagram preview

On this page you find 4 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

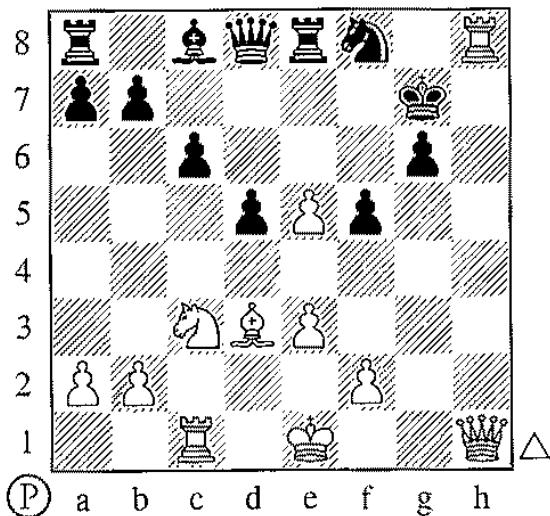
Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



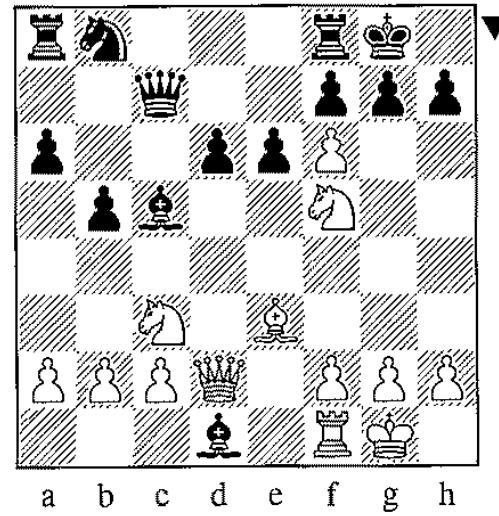
How to break through?
(see page 159)



How to clarify the situation in the centre?
(see page 167-8)



How to get to the black king?
(see page 162)



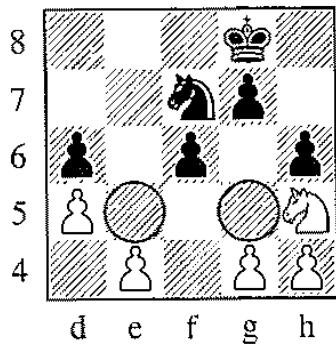
How to keep the balance?
(see page 164)

This chapter is based on an idea of Igor Zaitsev, Karpov's chief analyst for many years, as expressed in a book I have not seen, but only heard about. It should be said that seeing the book would not do me a lot of good, as it has only been published in Russian. I know about the content only because it was presented to the audience of a Mark Dvoretsky seminar in Edinburgh in 2006.

As we know from the previous chapter, our attack is most likely to succeed if we attack our opponent's weaknesses, and most often the weakest of the weak. But there are situations where this is not possible, but where we can still justify an attack.

When Mark was lecturing I noticed that the strike against the strong point in the opponent's position was almost always based on two factors, disruption of the coordination of the opponent's forces, and the intention of attacking the weak squares all the same.

To explain exactly what I mean by this it might be useful to zoom in on the kingside in the starting position of our first fragment with some of the pieces removed. I have kept the knight on h5 because it is less in play than all the other pieces in the position and only aims purposefully at f6 and g7, and also kept the knight on f7 as it is optimally supporting the black pawn structure from that location.



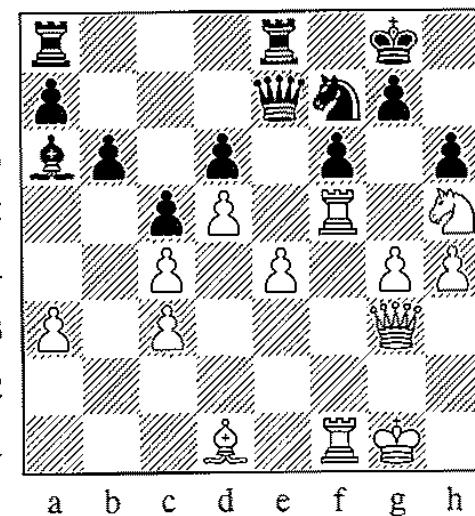
In this structure g7 is traditionally the weakest square, though the black position is littered with weaknesses. The light squares, for

instance. There are only two squares that we would traditionally think of as strong squares, e5 and g5.

White should be on his way to a great attack according to conventional wisdom, but his own pawns are more a hindrance than a help in the attempts to exploit e6, g7 and all the other weaknesses. If White was able to sneak in a queen to g6 life would be sweet, but there is no such luck. For this reason White will have to crash through the black strong points on e5 and g5, which is what he did in the game.

Martin Heider – Manfred Herbold

Germany 2006



White breaks through on the "strong" squares g5 and e5 and with their destruction Black loses control over his entire position. It would not be unfair to talk about overloading as a theme in play here as well, as the black knight and queen both end up with more responsibility than they want.

33.g5!!

Though this advance is unpleasant for Black, it does make it easy for him to choose his answer.

33...hxg5 34.hxg5 ♜xg5

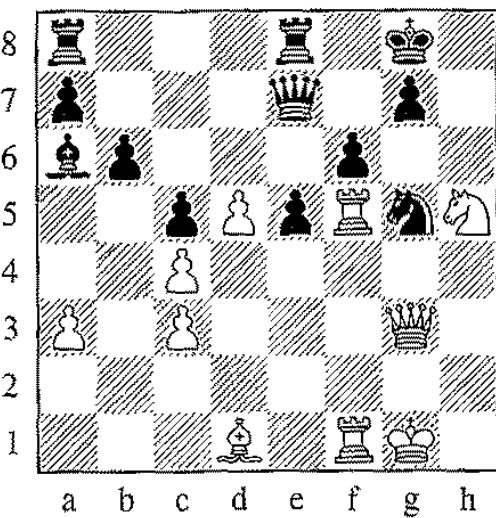
The knight that was meant to be standing triumphant on e5 has been derailed somewhat, but there is still counterplay against the e-pawn.

It is tempting for White to sacrifice the knight on f6, but before he does so, he finds a huge improvement of the circumstances.

35.e5!!

The transformation of the e5-square is instant. From being a great outpost under Black's control, it becomes a pawn blocking all the black pieces in.

35...dxe5



36.d6!!

Once you pop you just can't stop! White is having a clearance sale. Besides opening up for a potential $\mathbb{R}d1-f3-d5$ White is irritating the black queen that finds herself oddly out of squares.

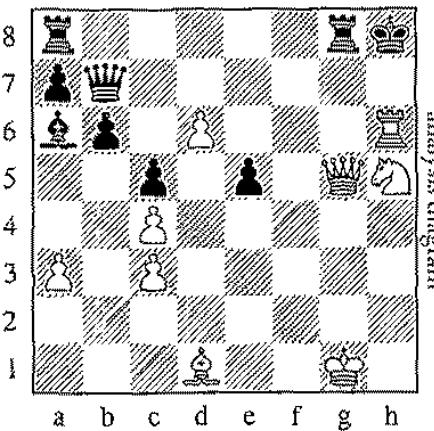
36... $\mathbb{Q}f7$

We have come to the end where White's strategy has borne fruit and Black is choosing between possible ends.

36... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ is probably the most complicated. White wins with a direct attack, bringing the rook to f5 and the bishop to h5-f7

with deadly effect. We will spare ourselves, and especially any impressionable young children, from the gory detail and trust both in our intuition, which says that it is over, and the author who has checked everything carefully.

Also 36... $\mathbb{B}b7$ goes down quickly like a piano crashing down a rocky hill. White plays 37. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $gxf6$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ and prepares to take a lot of stuff. This variation is especially pleasing, as after: 38... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$



White wins in the endgame due to the power of the d-pawn.

37. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

The game has arrived at the end. Black might as well have resigned here, but little has ever been gained that way.

37... $f4xg5$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}b7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ mate.

1-0

The following game illustrates the same principles in more or less the same way, though this time it is an attack with pieces that decides, rather than a breakthrough with pawns. The three big moves are moves 17, 20 and 21, where Black looks to be in control over very little, but at least the h8, d5 and c7-squares. But the price for controlling these squares is

simply too high and White is successful in offsetting Black's balance by harassing him on these squares.

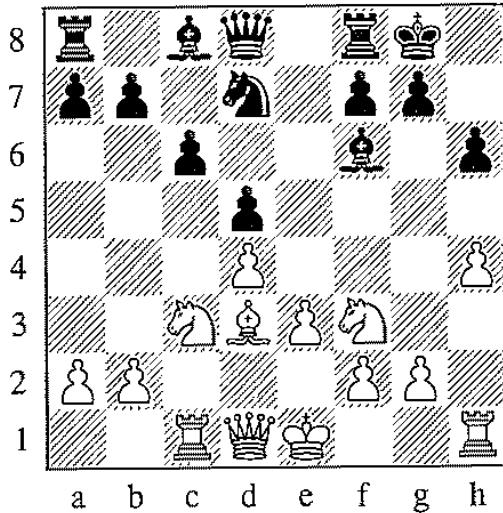
Zoltan Kathona – E. Gulbis

Queen's Gambit Declined
Correspondence 1989/90

1. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2. c4 e6 3. d4 d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$
5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 6. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 7. e3 0–0 8. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ c6
9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10. cxd5

10. 0–0 dx c 4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ e5 12. h3 is the main line, but Black players have worked out how to equalise by now.

10... exd5 11. h4?!



11. b4 is more in line with the position, but White wants to exploit the weakness created when Black advanced his h-pawn. This should not be successful, but it is not without venom. In the game Black did not pay proper respect to this plan and White's attack quickly became very dangerous.

11... $\mathbb{Q}e8$?

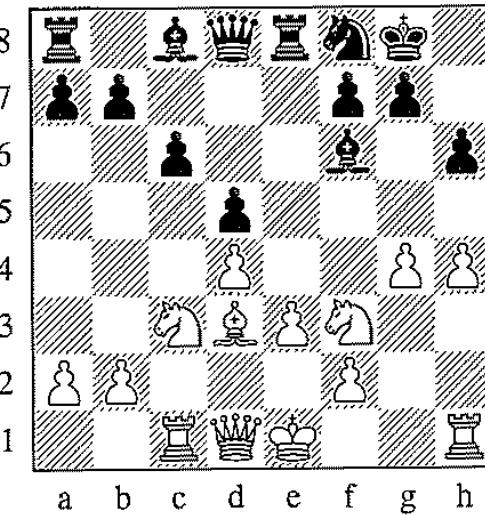
Too standard. I saw this game when I was 16 years old and was greatly impressed. It was my favourite game and, like most juniors, I dreamed of winning exactly the same game one day.

Only two weeks later I got this position in a blitz game. My opponent, rated about 2000, looked at the h-pawn for a few seconds, clearly puzzled. Then he replied 11... $\mathbb{Q}b6$! and it is already clear that the white attack is not happening. At that moment I already regretted advancing my h-pawn...

12. g4

White's attack has already gained in momentum. It is clear that lines will be opened on the kingside and that White's pieces are well placed to exploit this.

12... $\mathbb{Q}f8$



13. g5! hxg5 14. hxg5 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ g6

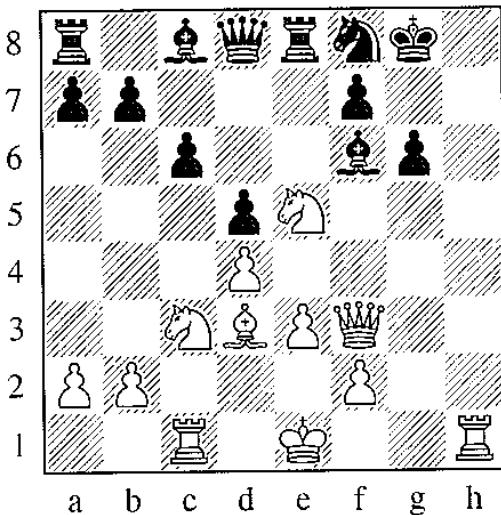
It is difficult for Black to find a good defence. It might look good to play 15... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 16. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$, but it is near impossible for Black to bring in further pieces. After the plausible 17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$?! 18. $\mathbb{E}cg1$ White is winning, as 18... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ is met by manoeuvring the white h-rook to f3 or f4, when Black cannot defend f7.

16. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$?

A simple blunder, but the position is difficult.

Necessary was 16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$, when White might play 17. $\mathbb{W}g3$ with the idea of f4 followed by $\mathbb{E}c1-c2-h2$. White continues to have a very

powerful attack. We have arrived at the first position where White attacks a seemingly well-defended spot in the black position in order to get to the weakness on h7.



17.♖h8†!!

More beautiful than difficult.

17...♕g7

The only move. Black cannot give up the defence of f7.

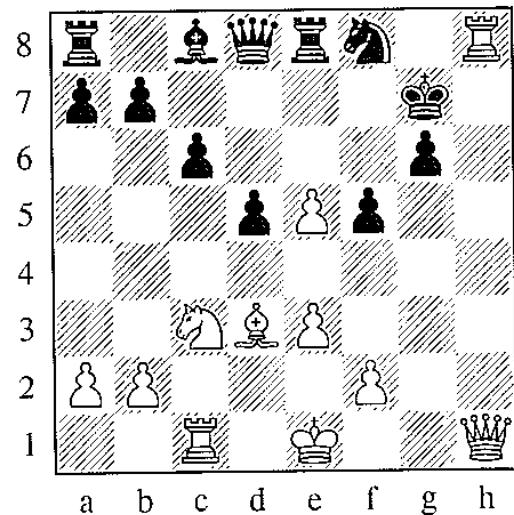
18.♗h1

Attacking the weakest spot in the black position, h6.

18...♝xe5

Forced.

19.dxe5 f5



White has a pleasant position. He has taken over the h-file and all of Black's pieces are trapped on the back rank. Still, he needs to break through. It turns out that the solution once again is to strike at a seemingly well-protected point in the black position, with the idea of activating the least active pieces and creating a new weakness on c7.

20.♕xd5!!

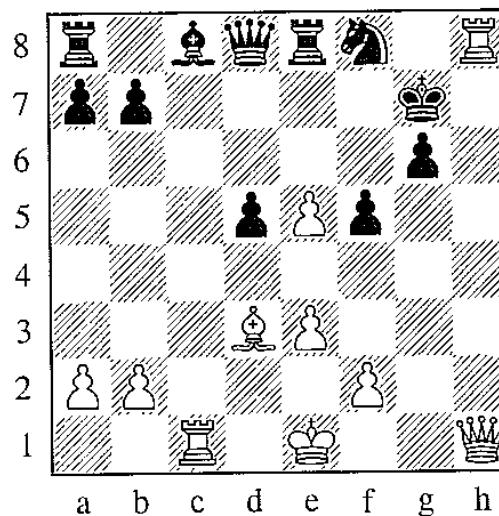
Simply brilliant.

20...cxd5

Black has no better moves. Here is a collection of equally depressing ones.

After both 20...♛xd5 21.♘h6† ♕f7 22.♗c4 and 20...♝e6 21.♘h6† ♕f7 22.♗xf8† White wins the queen.

20...♝xe5 21.♘h6† ♕f7 Here there are several ways to win. The most elegant is 22.♗h7† ♜xh7 23.♘xh7† ♕e6 24.♗xg6† ♕xd5 25.♗e4†!, winning the queen, as after 25...♕xe4 Black is mated by 26.♗g2† ♕d3 27.♗c3.



21.♗c7†!!

I apologise for the triple acclamation to White's combination, but my great level of appreciation for this game has not declined over the years.

21... $\mathbb{W}xc7$

21... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ loses to 22. $\mathbb{B}xd7\#$ (22. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ is a beautiful solution as well, but also quite electronic) 22... $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 23. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ 24. $\mathbb{B}h7\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ 26. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ 27. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 27. $\mathbb{W}f6$ mate.

22. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ 23. $\mathbb{B}f7$

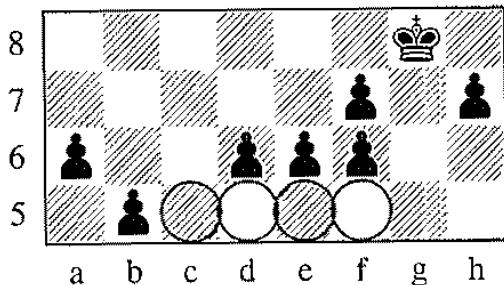
The most precise. White wins the queen.

23... $\mathbb{B}xf8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ 25. $\mathbb{W}e8$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xc7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d7$

1-0

The phenomenon of getting the opponent off balance by hitting him where he is supposed to be strong is, of course, more common than you would think at first. If we look at our own games we will find that this technique is used again and again, only in a less spectacular manner than in the first two examples of this chapter, only it is the nature of a book to try to make the biggest possible impression on the reader by using examples that get our attention and thus have real staying power in our minds. This game made such an impression on me when I was a boy that I have chosen to include it in this book almost twenty years later, as one of very few games in here not played over the last few years. It is my hope that those readers who are new to this game will become just as fascinated by it, and who knows, maybe remember it in twenty years as well?

In the next game we shall see a somewhat different variation of the theme of attacking the opponent where he is strongest.



A look at this pawn structure would indicate that the main weaknesses in the black camp are f6, g7, h6 and h7, and that these are quite weak squares. This is absolutely correct, just as we would look at c5, d5, e5 and f5 as well protected squares, solidly under Black's control, unless White should be successful in challenging them with a pawn.

However, time and again we see in the Sicilian Defence, from where this position clearly originates, that we can sacrifice a knight on d5 with the aim of getting control over f5, or sacrifice on f5 with the aim of getting control over d5, in this way overloading the e6-pawn.

Still it is rare to see a situation where White has managed to occupy c5, d5 and f5 with minor pieces, and Black being unable to take any of them.

Lexy Ortega – Igor Khenkin

Sicilian Defence
Lido Estensi 2003

**1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ a6
5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 7.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

A rare move that did not bring Black a lot of joy in this game. I assume that Igor wanted to answer 8.. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ with 8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$, a well-known trick, when the knight is placed on a less active square on b3 and Black can therefore look forward to a pleasant version of the Scheveningen.

8. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Surely the critical reply.

8...d6 9. $\mathbb{W}d2$ 0-0!

9... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ would be quite problematic for Black. He has real problems with the d6-square.

10. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$

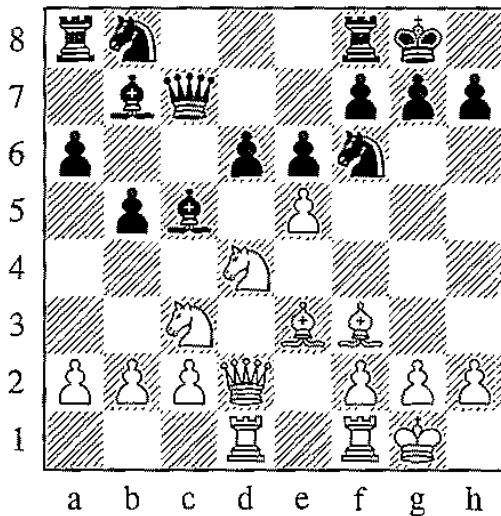
This looks a bit too mechanical to me. I think White would have better chances of gaining an opening advantage with 10.f4!, where a ♘f3 move will be more in line with White's set-up.

10...b5

It seems likely to me that Black has equalised. He is ready to finish his development and has full control over the 5th rank making it impossible for White to make life difficult for him. At least this is the immediate impression, but Lexy Ortega goes far deeper and finds a great idea.

White decided that he had completed his development and that it was worth trying his luck with a tactical idea.

11.♘f3!! ♘b7 12.e5!!



The point. White is attacking d6 by striking with e5. In this way Black is losing control over c5 and feels pressure down the long diagonal.

12...♘xf3!

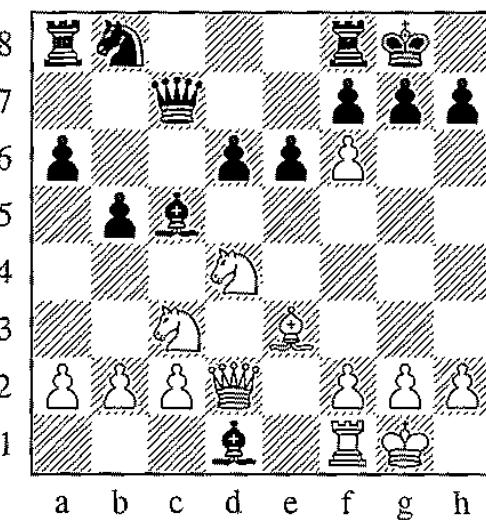
Khenkin might lose this game, but his great strength does not continuously betray him. 12...dxe5 13.♘xe6! leads to a sad position.

13.exf6!

This was White's idea. By sacrificing the exchange he is weakening the squares around the black king. The surprise in this game is that the exploitation of the dark squares is found through an attack on the stronger light squares. 13.exd6 ♘xd6 is not dangerous for Black at all.

13...♘xd1

Black has no say in the matter. Any retreat would be shameful here.



14.♘f5!!

Seemingly this square was in Black's control, but it turns out that the pawn on e6 is overloaded.

14...gxsf6?

It is very difficult for Black to find his way through the labyrinth of variations provided for him here and it feels harsh to criticise Khenkin for failing to do so. But this mistake is the only one he commits in the whole game.

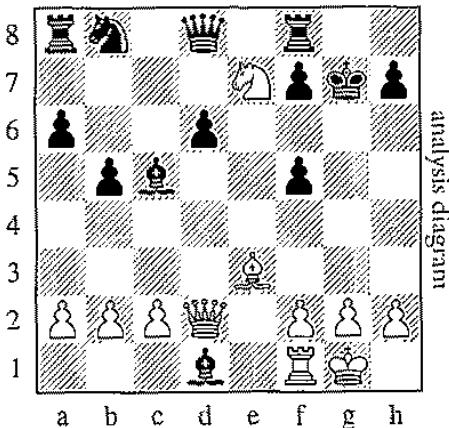
14...exf5?

This would allow White to show his threat in full. He wins with:

15.♘d5 ♘d8 16.♘e7†

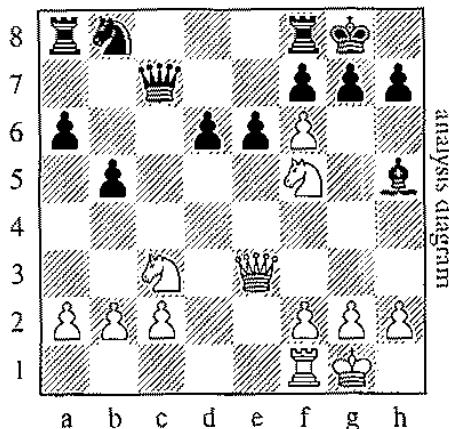
16.♘xc5 is good enough too, but I just cannot resist the main line.

16...♗h8 17.fxg7† ♗xg7



18. $\mathbb{Q}h6\# \mathbb{Q}h8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g7\#!!$

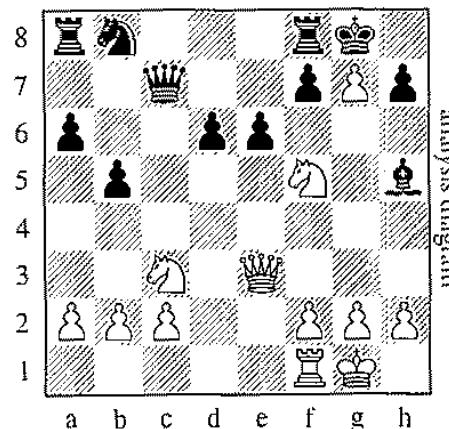
14... $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ leads to an advantage for White after some complications, but Black could play 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe3!$ 15. $\mathbb{W}xe3 \mathbb{Q}h5!$



when it is impossible for White to breach the defences.

Best is now 16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ or similar, leading to a perpetual check.

16. $f \times g7?$ looks tempting, after which Black has a big decision to make.



Deep analysis will reveal many sparkling variations. It turns out that Black needs the d8-square for the queen and that there is insufficient compensation for the attack. The winning line is quite beautiful. It takes advantage of a weakness in the white camp that would be easy to miss at this point – the weak back rank!

16... $\mathbb{E}c8!$ 17. $\mathbb{W}d4$

The best attempt. Against 16... $\mathbb{W}d8$ this is very dangerous indeed.

17... $e \times f5$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{Q}c6!$

A nice little tempo move. 18... $\mathbb{W}d8$ leads to approximate equality.

19. $\mathbb{Q}f6\# \mathbb{Q}xg7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh5\# \mathbb{Q}f8!$

The king looks for refuge on the queenside.

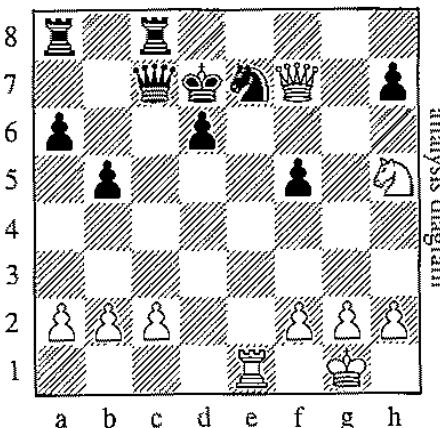
20... $\mathbb{Q}h6?$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!!$ leads to mate.

21. $\mathbb{Q}g7\# \mathbb{Q}e7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$

22. $\mathbb{Q}d1?$ is maybe better, but after 22... $\mathbb{Q}d8!$

Black looks on track to a full point.

22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xf7\# \mathbb{Q}e7$ 24. $\mathbb{E}e1$



It does not seem easy to be Black in this position. The knight on e7 is under attack and the king is in danger in the middle of the board – especially with a knight check on f6 looming.

24... $\mathbb{Q}c6!!$

The surprising reply to this problem. White has nothing else that makes sense other than carrying out his threat and after

25. $\mathbb{E}xe7 \mathbb{W}xe7!$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xe7 \mathbb{E}e8$

Black wins the endgame.

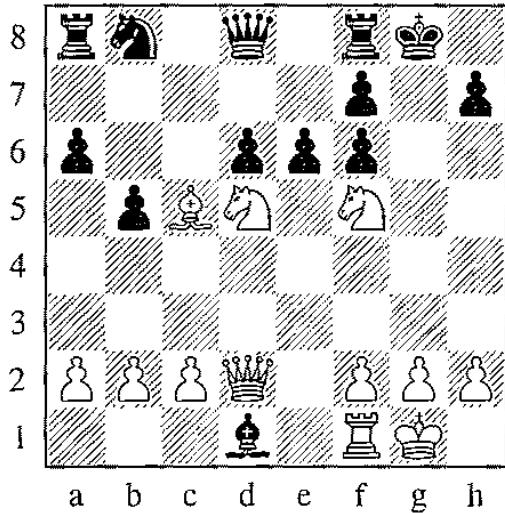
15. $\mathbb{Q}d5!!$

The great moment of the game. The white knight is magnificent on f5, but Black mistakenly thought that White had to do something about its safety. But with this move White wins the necessary time to approach the dark squares on the kingside with deadly intent. Again it is perplexing that the squares on the 5th rank that looked so safely protected are now all under White's influence.

15. $\mathbb{Q}xc5 \mathbb{W}xc5$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ looks dangerous, but only looks so. With the pawn and bishop gone, Black only needs to take on f5 and avoid $\mathbb{Q}xf6$. With 16... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ there is time for everything and White needs to make a perpetual check as quickly as possible.

15... $\mathbb{W}d8$

Only after his last move must Black have realised that 15... $\mathbb{exd}5$ is met with 16. $\mathbb{Q}d4!!$, when the threat from White of putting the queen on h6 has to be prevented. But after the only move 16... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ White has mate with 17. $\mathbb{Wg}5\#$.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 

A brilliant image. Black was in full control over the 5th rank, or so he thought, but in this position he cannot capture any of the white pieces without serious consequences.

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

16... $\mathbb{dx}c5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}de7\#$ and 18. $\mathbb{W}h6$ leads straight to mate, and 16... $\mathbb{exf}5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ or 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ is just over.

17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

One of many winning moves.

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

17... $\mathbb{exf}5$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ is curtains.

18. $\mathbb{Q}de7\#$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$

A bitter admission, but 18... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 19. $\mathbb{Wg}5$ $\mathbb{Eg}8$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ would be reminiscent of the Immortal Game, so Khenkin tries to make the end boring to stay out of the instructional manuals. But even this fails...

19. $\mathbb{Q}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 20. $g4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 21. $g5$ $\mathbb{E}fe8$
22. $gxf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}g5$ $e5$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$
25. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Black resigned. A brilliant performance by Ortega!

1-0

In the final game of this chapter we shall look at a somewhat different variation of this theme. In this game Black seems to be very solid on the light squares and subsequently decides to challenge White on the dark squares. It is exactly at this moment (at move 16) that White launches an attack on the light squares at a seemingly strong square, cracking open the bottle and allowing him to create weaknesses on other light squares. In the course of events he manages to use his pawns as hurdles in a position where all the knights have left the board. Black thus has to dig through these hurdles with his teeth. As he chooses to do so in an imprecise way, he loses control over the squares we would have predicted were the weak squares in his fianchetto king's position all along, the dark squares.

As in the previous game and in many others in this book, the attack is not necessarily decisive at its outset. Just as there is attack in this world, there is defence. At times the attack is stronger, at times the defence is stronger, but if we believe our founding fathers of chess thinking, the correct outcome should be a truce. Therefore there is nothing to be ashamed of when you find out that the opponent had a draw with best play. The nature of the physical reality we live in does not deduct anything from our creative performances.

Sergey Ivanov – Victor Mikhalevski

Grünfeld Defence

St Petersburg 1999

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♜xd5
5.e4 ♜xc3 6.bxc3 ♜g7 7.♘f3 c5 8.♗b1**

This variation had at one point the air of freshness surrounding it. Though it is still one of the most aggressive lines, it has become less central in opening theory over the last few years due to the popularity of the older lines with 7.♘c4 and 8.♘e2.

8...0–0 9.♗e2 ♜c6

9...cx d4 10.cxd4 ♜a5† 11.♘d2 ♜xa2 is the line which is usually thought of as critical, but it does have the minus that White can force a draw at will, as in many sharp openings.

The line played in the game might be slightly less respected by the theoreticians, but it is quite popular even among grandmasters, as it promises Black good chances to play for a win.

10.d5 ♜e5 11.♘xe5 ♜xe5 12.♗b3!?

This rook move might seem terrifying based on this impressive game, but Black has several decent alternatives along the way. The idea is for the rook to roam on the third rank and let

the queen ponder a bit before she decides her destiny.

That said, practice indicates that this is not the most critical move and 12.♗d2 is by far the most popular line here.

12...e6

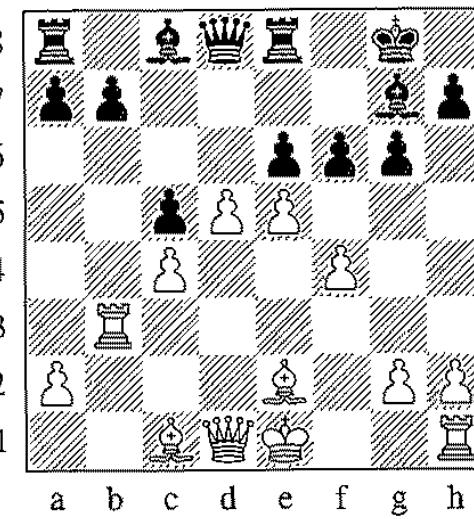
How Black should react to this line is beyond the scope of this book, but in recent games very strong players have played 12...c4 and 12...♝d7. However, there is not necessarily anything wrong with the text move.

13.f4 ♜g7

In the lines where the queen is on d2 it is interesting to bring the bishop back to c7, but with this set-up it makes less sense as White is not prevented from playing 14.c4 as he usually is.

14.c4 ♜e8 15.e5! f6

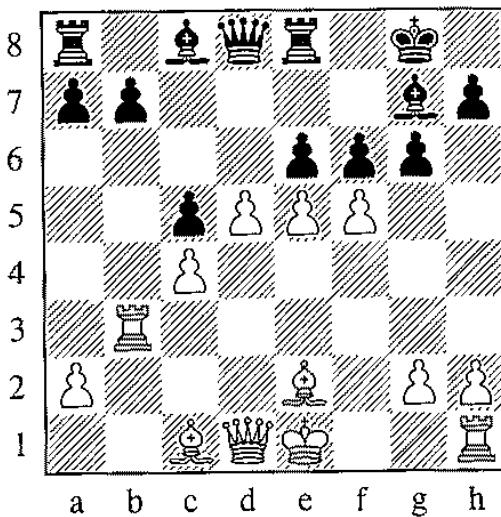
15...exd5 16.cxd5 c4!? was suggested by Ivanov as interesting. It seems that the safest way forward for White is to play 17.♗e3!? reinforcing his centre. Soon the pawns will roll forward and I doubt if Black will be able to create sufficient counterplay with his pawn majority on the queenside.



We have come to the critical moment in the game, the moment where the course of the game changes completely.

White has a big centre, but is likely to see it get blocked or even compromised in a way that could mean that it disintegrates.

16.f5!!



This is the move that lifts this game out of the ordinary and into something truly special. White is trying to breach the black position straight out of the opening in order to use his lead in development, not on the dark squares, which have been weakened in the black position, but on the light squares, which have also been slightly weakened by the pawn push to f6. And here we see what exactly it is that we have to accomplish when we attack the opponent where he is strongest. We use this as an attack to exploit his weaknesses. In this position this is the kingside, which is only protected by the bishop on g7, and the recently weakened e6-square.

16...gx5

This looks very dangerous, but it is not absolutely clear that White has more than a draw here.

16...exf5 17.e6 is on the other hand an obvious catastrophe for Black. The pawn on e6 is very strong and the bishop on g7 simply buried.

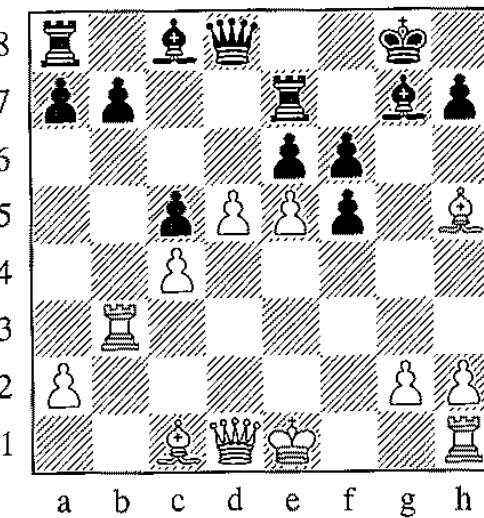
For those wanting to study this line from the point of view of opening theory, it should be said that 16...exd5!? also looks viable. The position is unclear and there are still many subtleties to be discovered here.

17.Qh5

This is what White was hoping for. Black realises that he is potentially weak on the dark squares and decides to defend the bishop, but this does not really strengthen him on the dark squares. Instead he needed to support f6 in order to fight for the dark squares.

17...Bc7?!

After 17...fxe5? 18.Bg3! I cannot see anything better for Black than transposing to the game. But after 17...Bf8 18.Bg3 Qh8 there is no clear way to continue the attack for White. 19.Bh3 Qg8 looks like an invitation to a draw. It is likely that there is nothing better in the position.



White has invested a pawn. In return his opponent is slightly uncoordinated. But how should he continue? The next move begins a further investment by giving up two additional pawns.

18.d6!!

The main idea behind this move is to reduce Black's ability to free himself. White could with some certainty consider castling to be a viable option (it gives full compensation), but Black would be able to play ...exd5 at the moment most convenient to him and quickly bring the queenside to assist with the defence. With the move chosen by Ivanov Black will have to spend considerable time to get his pieces out, as he first has to remove the white pawns. In the meantime it is possible for White to complete his development and put pressure on the dark squares, most notably by using the idea of the sacrifice $\mathbb{B}b3-g3xg7$.

18... $\mathbb{B}d7$ 19. $\mathbb{B}g3$

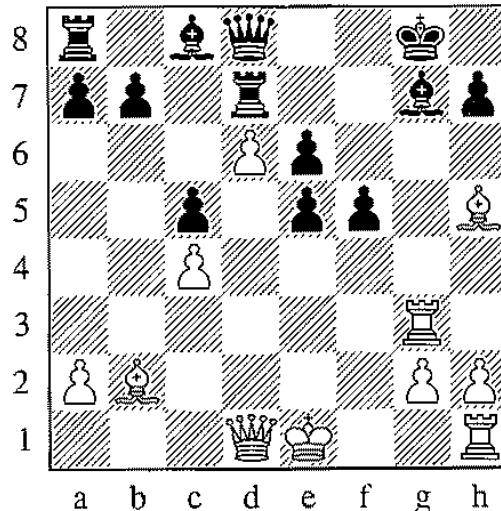
19.exf6?? is the "natural" move according to Deep Fritz 10. This move defies White's strategy and is the normal reason why humans can still find ideas computers cannot. Since the computer compares lines and finds one of them "less bad" than another after something similar to the work of a pocket calculator, we have an advantage in the area of strategy. Computers have very limited strategic reach, as they will only try to achieve short-term strategic goals, which are easy to interpret within their horizon, while humans can still lay out grand strategies, such as in this game, where long-term defects in the opponent's position are exploited.

19...fxe5

There are other moves available for Black, but it seems that he cannot get around this move for long.

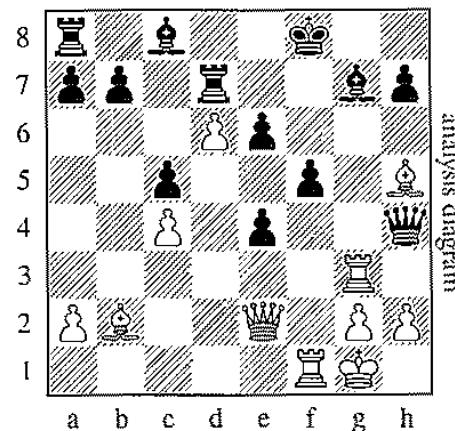
20. $\mathbb{Q}b2$

White is about two moves away from absolute bliss. He will castle and find a good square for the queen, after which Black better be prepared or he will find himself hit hard and fast. Actually I do not think that Black can save this position, though he could have put up more resistance on move 24.



20... $\mathbb{Q}h8$

It looks dangerous to go into the corner, but Black is devoid of alternatives. One of the ways for Black to try to defend is by using the queen to limit White's options with 20... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21.0-0 $\mathbb{W}h4$?. White continues with his plan with 22. $\mathbb{We}2$, bringing the last piece into play (expecting that the rook on f1 will prove itself well placed at the right time). 22...e4 is then forced.



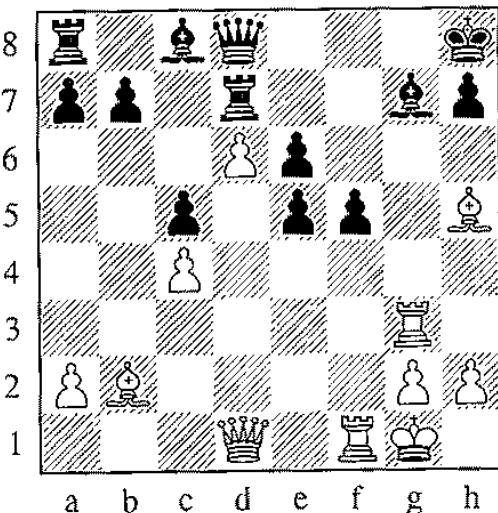
This moment is typical of what I have been trying to teach in this book. First you build up, then you strike. All of White's pieces are well placed, so if he really possesses an attacking position it is time to seriously consider doing something. And not surprisingly he has 23. $\mathbb{Q}e8!!$ reaching a position with opposite-coloured bishops where all of Black's extra pawns are placed on the light squares, standing

in the way of his own bishop and thereby preventing him from quickly finishing his development and at the same time offering no obstruction to the white bishop as well as the queen, which will soon look for a way in. It is hard to imagine that Black can survive such an attack.

Another idea at Black's disposal is 20...f4 with the idea that after 21.Bg4 Wa5† White has to play 22.Qf2, thus giving up the right to castle. But one does not have to ponder long to find out that though the white king is inconveniently placed on f2, the concessions Black has had to make to get him there are considerable. Advancing the f-pawn means that he has lost all flexibility in the centre and will eventually lose the e5-pawn. Giving the check with the queen means that his strongest piece is now far away from the kingside where it is obvious that the game will be decided.

21.0-0

White is slowly completing his development. 21.Bxg7? might look tempting, but White has not yet completed his development, so it is too early to show his hand.



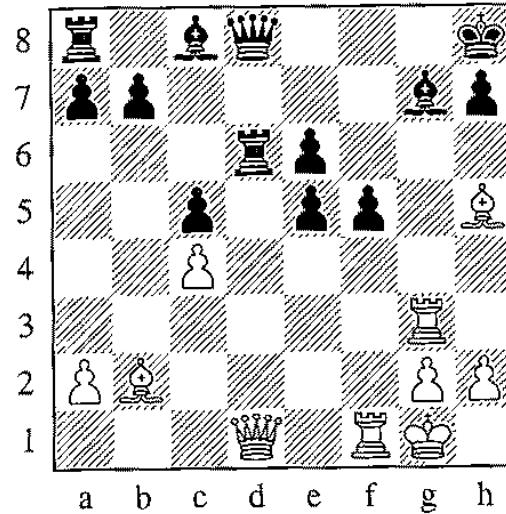
21...Bxd6!

This might look like Black is playing into White's hands, but there are no good

alternatives. Black absolutely has to fight for the dark squares as otherwise his king in the centre will be impossible to protect.

21...Bf6 22.We1Bg7 might look like it is defending the black position. But after White takes on e5 with either bishop or queen, Black will suffer under the pressure down the long diagonal. Both moves lead to the win of a piece when Bh5-e8! comes in as a tactical resource with the idea d7, trapping the c8-bishop.

Black can also choose to complete his development with 21...b6 22.Wa1Bb7, but this will do little to relieve the pressure on the long diagonal. White will play 23.Qxe5 when he has several ways to win the game. One of them is to play Bf1-f4-h4 and illustrate to Black that he has too many weaknesses on the kingside and is not able to bring the remaining pieces to the defence.



22.We2

The last development move. 22.We1 transposes, but White cannot play 22.Bxg7?, when after 22...Bxd1 23.Qxe5 Bxf1† 24.Qxf1 Wd3† Black was at least fine in Medghoul – Gormally, Cappelle la Grande 2005.

22...Bd4!

There is nothing else. Black has to do something to stop the pressure down the long diagonal. If only he could now play one more move he would be winning. But White is fully ready and strikes with a not very surprising sacrifice.

23.♗xg7 ♕xg7

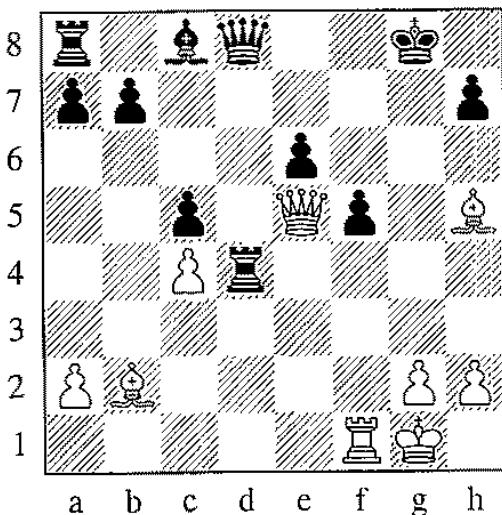
23...♝e4 24.♕xe4! quickly leads to mate.

24.♕xe5† ♔g8?

This must be due to a blunder. Maybe Victor thought that he was escaping?

24...♔h6? is no better. Both 25.♗f7 and 25.♕c1† ♔xh5 26.♗g7! lead to immediate destruction.

It was absolutely necessary for Black to fight for the dark squares and the long diagonal with 24...♗f6 25.♕xc5 e5! when Black has some chances to survive in the coming troubles. White does not have a conclusive win, but he will be able to put Black under constant attack and choose between many promising endgames on the way. Even if Black should lose the game, he would have the satisfaction that White eventually has to give up the dark-squared bishop, though for a rook...



25.♗f4!

I think Black missed this. White brings the rook into the fight for the dark squares. Finally, the black king is completely trapped in the corner.

25.♕xc5 ♘d2! would allow Black to fight for the dark squares by returning the exchange. The point is that White also has to look out for ...♗g5, turning the tables.

25...♗g5 26.♗xd4

26.♗g4?!, winning the queen was a simpler move, but Ivanov is on fire and has calculated everything to the end.

**26...cxsd4 27.♗xd4 ♘f8 28.♗h8† ♔e7
29.♕a3† ♘d7 30.♗d4†**

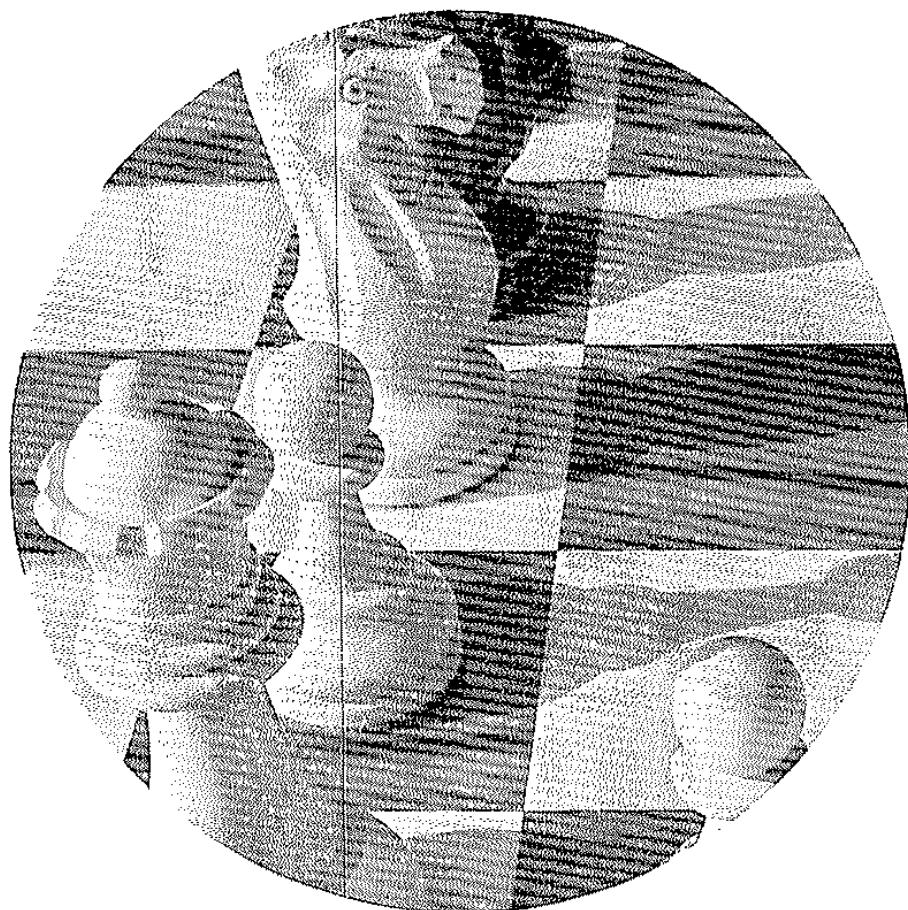
Black resigned. He is mated right on the belly, on the next move.

1-0

With this we have come to the end of this little theme and can move on to the most important theme in this book, as far as I am concerned, but before we do so I should probably clarify if this has been unclear: When I talk about attacking the opponent where he is strongest I am talking about a technique that can be used to disrupt the co-ordination in the opponent's camp and thus make it possible to break through to his weaknesses. Mark Dvoretsky and I would probably not put it in exactly the same manner, and I do not think either of us would talk about this in exactly the same manner as Igor Zaitsev. This is less important as the human brain is able to deal with various ways of explaining the same topic and in the process gain a finer feeling for its properties.

Chapter 7

Evolution/Revolution



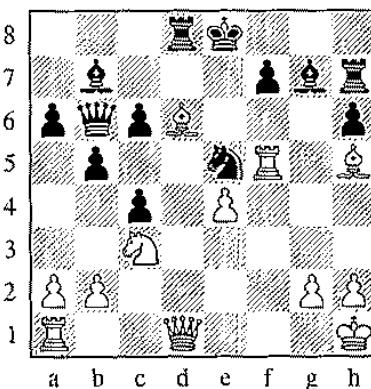
"The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative on the day after the revolution." - Hannah Arendt.

"Revolutions are not made; they come. A revolution is as natural a growth as an oak. It comes out of the past. Its foundations are laid far back." - Wendell Phillips.

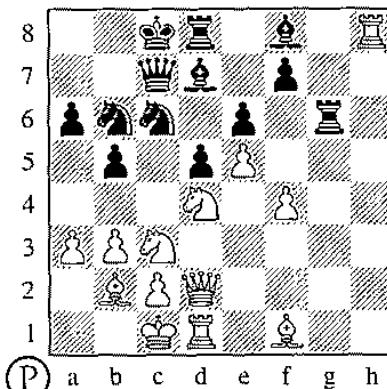
Diagram preview

On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

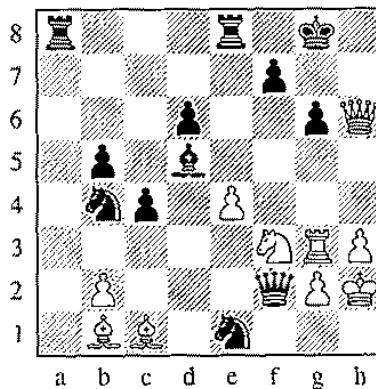
Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



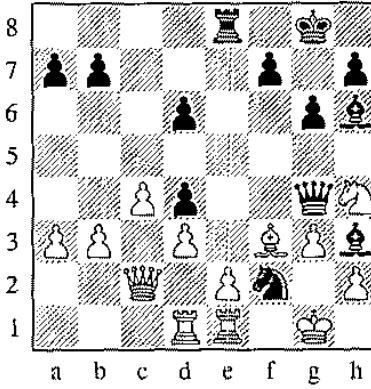
How to continue the attack?
(see page 181)



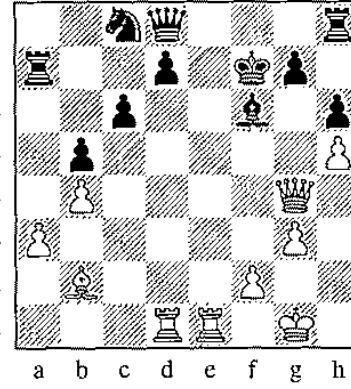
How to initiate an attack?
(see page 187)



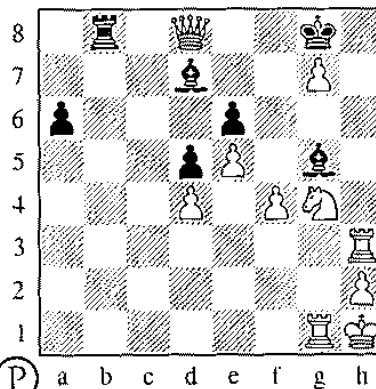
How to break through the defences?
(see page 176)



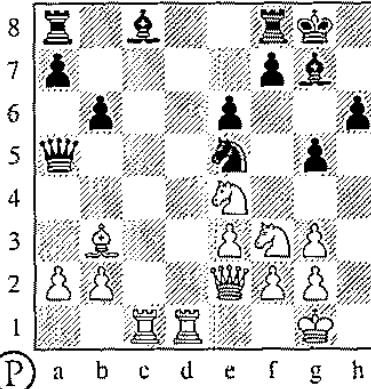
How to use the moment?
(see page 184)



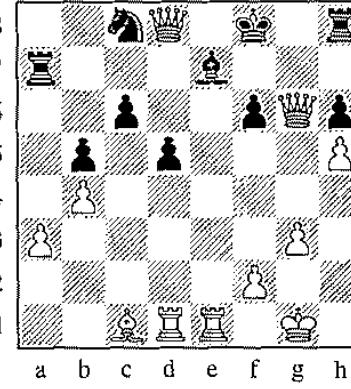
How to carry the attack forward to a win?
(see page 192)



How to continue?
(see page 178)



How to initiate an attack?
(see page 185)



How to continue the attack?
(see page 193)

In this chapter we will discuss what is probably the most important idea in this book, at least if we look at it in the context of chess literature in general. The terminology of *revolution* in chess has been seen in several places (recently I found it in Beim's book *How to Calculate Chess Tactics*, but I am sure it is to be found in many places). I am less sure about *evolution*, but it is likely it has been used, and in connection with the idea of revolution in chess. After all, they are two sides of the same coin, a coin in the currency of progress.

The idea I want to put forward in this chapter is part psychological and part strategic. We have discussed the importance of including all of our pieces in the attack and we have discussed momentum. These two principles are at times working together and at times working against each other. It is easy to imagine that you can bring in the pieces and keep the momentum while doing so, while it is also easy to understand that there are times when the necessity of keeping the momentum comes before the importance of including the remaining pieces in the attack. We have seen examples of both, but have not discussed the principle that governs this flow in detail. It could have seemed natural to do so in Chapter 3, but as there were other basic ideas I wanted to throw in first, I have delayed it until now.

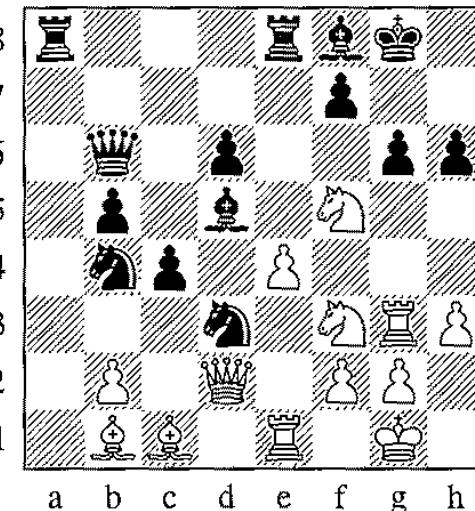
Before we discuss the principle of evolution-revolution-evolution in detail it makes sense to be clear about what I mean with these two words. **Evolution is when we are building up** and **revolution is when we change the nature of the position**. Often revolutions are talked of as sacrifices or similar, but they do not have to be, just as evolutions do not exclude exchanges. The terminology is not meant to be scientific, though it could probably be backed up with a lot of "clear" definitions, making everything a blur.

It makes more sense to give an example, in

this case of revolution-evolution, in a famous game you have most likely seen before.

Viswanathan Anand – Michael Adams

World Championship, San Luis 2005



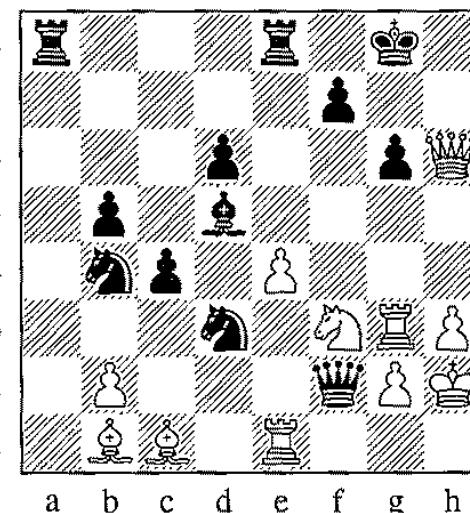
a b c d e f g h

White has just played his big novelty 23... $\mathbb{Q}d1-d2?$, to which it was quickly discovered that Black had to reply 23... $\mathbb{Q}b4xd5!$, leading to a draw. Instead he played 23... $\mathbb{Q}b7xd5?$. White starts his attack with a rook sacrifice.

24. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xh6$ $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$

25... $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$ would develop along the lines of the game, just without getting the queen into the game.

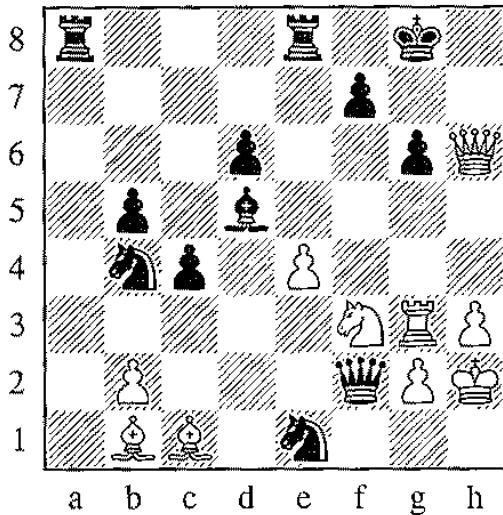
26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



a b c d e f g h

26...Qxe1

Only move. White wins in very nice fashion against 26...Qxc1 27.exd5 Qcd3 which looks reasonable, but after 28.Qe6!! there is no way for Black to keep his light squares together.



This is typical of the moments we are going to be talking about. White has sacrificed and the last few moves were either captures, checks or running away from them. It is thus logical to only look at 27.Qxg6†, at least if you are a human and especially if you are looking at the position from afar. It can be difficult to see that even in the midst of a volatile show of strength from both sides, it is at times necessary to go back to preparation mode and build up the position. This is of course not the case for Anand who coolly played:

27.Qh4!

The knight is used to open the floodgates to the black king.

27...Qed3?!

This loses without a fight. Black could still have defended somewhat with 27...Ra7?!, which would have allowed him to resist more, but his position would still be critical.

28.Qxg6

Curtains.

28...Qxg3† 29.Qxg3 fxg6 30.Qxg6† Qf8
31.Qf6† Qg8 32.Qh6!

1-0

It is natural to look at chess and especially attacking chess as a case of building up your position and then carrying out the attack to see what the result will be. In other words, you follow the natural evolution of the position after the opening until the moment has been reached where it is natural to carry out a revolution and thus show your skill in calculation.

Luckily chess is far more complicated than this, or we would have stopped playing the game a long time ago.

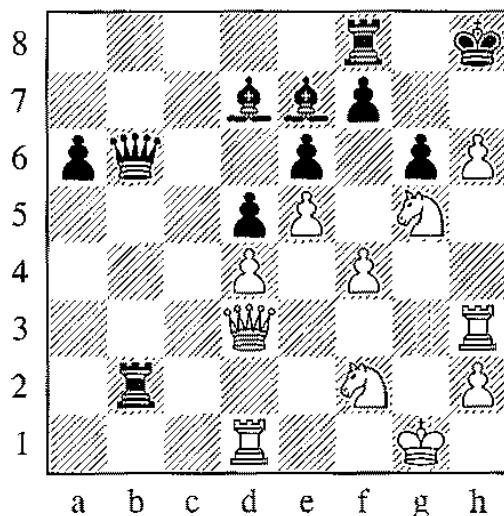
What I have noticed happening in many games where attacking positions were spoiled, was that the attacker thought that once he had started shooting, it was somehow against the rules to run for cover and reload before facing the showdown again. One of these examples was the Yusupov – Ivanchuk game in Chapter 1, where Yusupov stuck to the illusion that he had to attack only with the pieces that were present on the kingside, and thus did not see the possibilities of including the bishop in the attack or of bringing the attack to the bishop.

The idea I want to propose in this chapter is that we should be aware that **as revolution follows evolution, evolution often follows revolution, as often as ebb follows flow**, until the end of the world. Or to put it in layman's terms, we build up, then strike, then build up and strike again.

Psychologically it can be very difficult to restrain yourself in the middle of an attack or combination, especially when you have sacrificed material, and take the time to improve your position. In the following example we shall see how a great attack is ruined by a lack of sensibility to this issue.

Romain Edouard – Ioan Christian Chirila

European U-16 Ch. Herceg Novi 2006



Let's look at this position with an eye on both short-term and long-term expectations. The material is equal, but some plusses indicate that Black should be better. First of all he has a better pawn structure, a passed pawn far away on the a-file and the advantage of the two bishops. On top of this he has a rook on the second rank and pressure against d4, though these advantages are short rather than long term.

White has very little to speak of to his advantage if you look at quantity. All he has is a large presence on the kingside. It is clear that if Black had two moves he would be able to repulse the white pieces and the aforementioned attractions of his position would make it truly beautiful.

But alas, as is well known, we at times have to allow the opponent to move too.

From White's point of view the position is rather simple. It is not possible to easily improve the position of the pieces. The rook on h3 does not look too threatening, but would not be better placed elsewhere. The knight on f2 also looks feeble, but where to go? The g5-knight is well placed and the queen is multitasking. Finally, the rook on d1 is performing what seems to be an important task.

So, when it is not possible to improve the position of your pieces and you are playing for short-term gains there is rarely any alternative to taking some form of action that will change the position – a revolution.

38. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#!$

This beginning to the attack is rather obvious. When I have used this position as an exercise this move always comes up, but most of the time without a lot of confidence, as the continuation can be elusive.

38... $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 39. $\mathbb{W}xg6 \mathbb{E}h7$

This was the revolution. When people suggest $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ they often say that this is what feels right, but after ... $\mathbb{E}h7$ they see nothing. This is because they continue to be in revolution mode.

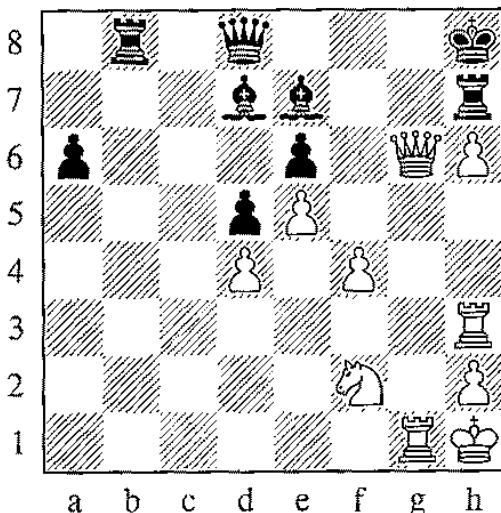
40. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$

Edouard reverts to evolution mode, though I have serious doubts as to whether he has ever thought about it like this. In his mind this was probably a simple move, threatening to play $\mathbb{E}g1$ followed by $\mathbb{W}g7\#$, winning, and indeed this is how most would consider this move. This is obviously not false, I am just explaining what strong attacking play consists of. How a strong move is found is interesting, but how a strong move is missed is also interesting. It is my belief that it is because people get stuck in the revolution mode that they miss such moves as this. They are trying to do something immediately, not sensing that the position has changed and that it is time to improve the position of the pieces before further strikes against the opponent's position are carried out.

40... $\mathbb{W}d8$

Black has to defend the 8th rank or the h-pawn will become a queen on g8 after a check and an exchange.

41.Bg1 Bb8



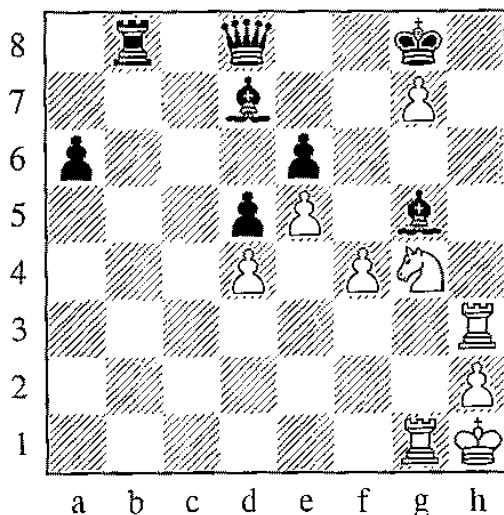
White has brought the rook into the attack and it is time to switch from evolution to revolution, as there is no easy way to activate the knight and thus improve the position of the pieces. Again, had Black but one move, he would for sure repulse the attack, so White strikes in the only way possible.

42.Wg7†! Bxg7 43.hxg7† Kg8 44.Qg4

The knight finally joins the game, threatening mate.

It is possible that Edouard thought he was on the way to crowning a magnificent attack with a few nice checks and was completely blind to Black's only move.

44...Bg5!



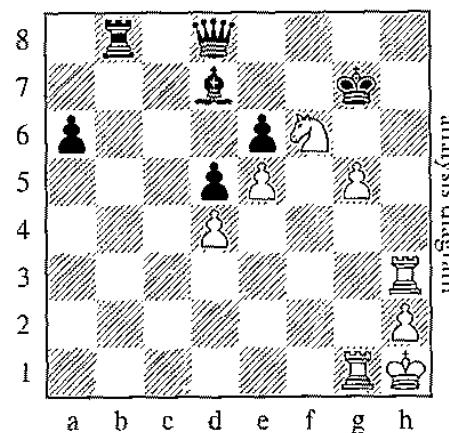
This move is reminiscent of the notorious ...Bg5 from the 2nd game of the Topalov – Kramnik match in Elista 2006, though there it was just a variation while here it is played. The idea of the move is easy to understand. The g-file is closed and we have now reached the critical moment of the game.

45.Qh8†?

Having sacrificed his queen Edouard feels compelled to do something and quickly regains the sacrificed material.

To me this is a case of being unable to revert to evolution. It seems that this act was not difficult for the young French player when he had sacrificed a piece, but it was too much to imagine the moment he had sacrificed the queen.

It is clear that there were no tactical problems in seeing that he could have played 45.fxg5 Qxg7 46.Qf6.



White wins because of the deadly threat of 47.g6 and 48.Bh7†. This would have been a magnificent crowning of the attack. There are a few details that can quickly be worked out. There is even no reason to put an exclamation mark anywhere, the moves are too simple!

The main reason why something like this can be missed is that the player has ignored the possibility entirely, or "on principle", because

he did not have the imagination to believe that it was a viable option.

But if we take a quick look at the black pieces it is clear that there is no quick counterplay coming. Black is hoping that his life savings will gain good interest, but unfortunately his portfolio is about to hit rock bottom. 46... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ is the only thing that can be argued to matter, but after 47. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ White has a winning attack where all the obvious checks decide the game.

It should be said that 45. $\mathbb{Q}h5?$ was weaker, but still good for White. I mention this only to show that it was not the move, but the general idea that was too much for Edouard to see. Now the game concluded without any further events.

45... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 46. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 47. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 48. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$

If I was Black I would have played on in this endgame, but Chirila might have realised how close he had come to oblivion and decided to consider himself lucky with a draw. It should be said that despite the obvious disappointment in this game, Edouard still managed to win the tournament and thereby the title of European Under-16 Champion!

$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

A very interesting game, spoiled by one big mistake near the end, when all the hard work seemed to have been done. The point is that we make mistakes in those areas that are unnatural to us, and that we will gain from investigating the *reasons* for our mistakes just as much as we benefit from analysing our games and finding our mistakes. But that is a different discussion that can wait for another time.

It is often more important to keep up the pressure than to include more pieces, when you are leading in development in a position with many possible revolutions at every move. In such positions we often see that the attacker

will constantly look for the best possible moment to include more pieces, but at the same time know that it is only worth including them if they can be included without slowing down the rest of the army. Games played like this can at times give the same impression as a well-composed symphony. The flow of the game changes smoothly between crescendo and decrescendo in a way that makes the revolutions at the top seem as natural as in the Wendell Philips quote at the beginning of this chapter.

The following masterpiece is such an example. White manages to bring in all of his pieces, all of them at a moment when they have a direct influence on the attack. With fabulous skill he manages to keep his cool, even when he has sacrificed two pieces and has the option of a perpetual check. I have included a bit more analysis than usual, as I think the main lines illustrate our principle in an excellent way.

Evgeny Agrest – Kaido Kulaots

Moscow Gambit
Turin Olympiad 2006

1.c4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d5 4.d4 c6 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6

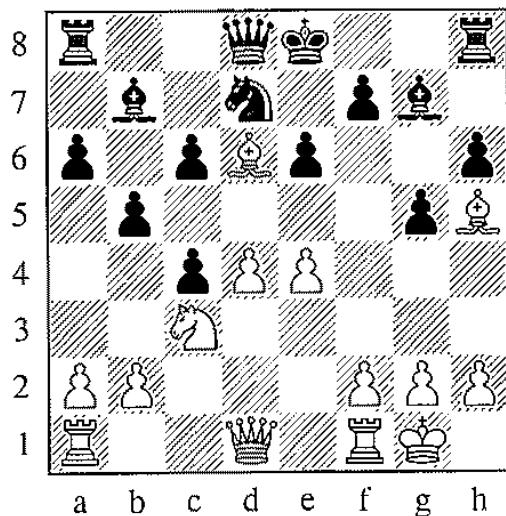
The Moscow Variation, which is very topical at the moment. David Vigorito did good work on it in *Play the Semi-Slav*, though theory does move very quickly in this line.

6. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

The gambit version. It was possible to take on f6, but among the top players only Topalov manages to lose such positions, as he tries to make it more exciting than it probably is.

**6...dxc4 7.e4 g5 8. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ b5 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 10.0-0-0
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ a6 14. $\mathbb{Q}h5$**

This was a novelty at the time of the game. The most recent attempt for White in this line was 14.♗c1 ♖f8 15.♗xf8 ♗xf8 16.b3 cxb3 17.♗xb3 ♔g7 where it is unclear if there is enough compensation for the pawn, Hillarp-Persson – Wang Hao, Gibraltar 2008.



14...e5?!

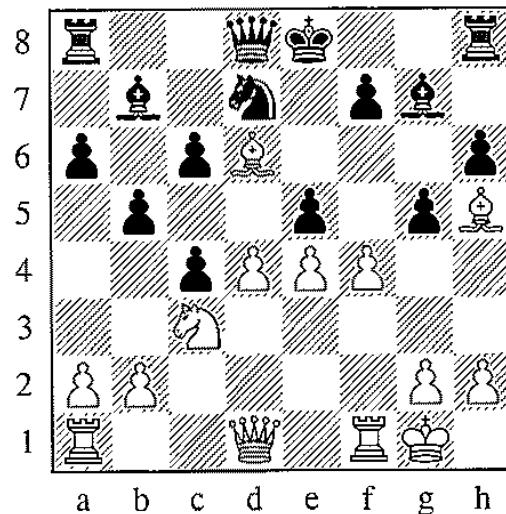
The idea behind this move is quite simple, Black wants to prevent f2-f4, which had become a very strong threat after the last two white moves.

The problem is that Black is playing for long-term advantages such as structure and extra material, while White is playing for attack with the argument of a better development, better coordination and, not least, a better king's position.

For these reasons it is dangerous for Black to open the position and he has to have very concrete arguments for doing so. To me these arguments do not seem to be present here.

In a recent game Black played 14...♝f8, eventually making a draw in Radjabov – Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 2008.

15.f4!



We have heard all of the soft arguments why it is wrong of Black to open the position with 14...e5. But it is well known that talk is cheap. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

With this move White crashes through a supposed strongpoint in the black position. But as we have seen in the previous chapter, we often do so in order to get to the weaknesses, which in this case is the pawn on f7.

15...gxsf4

Though the game looks hair-raising for Black, there is no way around this capture.

A later game went 15...exd4?! and Black already seems to be lost! I have a strong feeling that White did not need to work hard at the board to execute the following moves: 16.♗g4 ♖f8 17.fxg5 ♖xd6 18.♗xf7 ♖d8 19.♗xg7 ♖c8 20.♗h4 ♖d7 21.e5! ♖c5 22.♗e4 ♖xe5 23.g6† 1–0 Pashikian – Deepan Chakravarthy, Yerevan 2006.

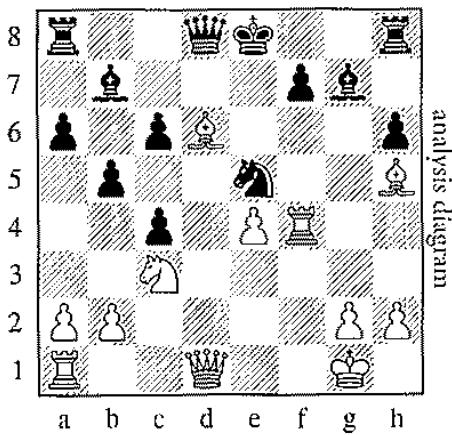
15...exf4? 16.e5 is also out of the question.

16.dxe5 ♖xe5?!

It turns out that this logical move is perhaps not the most tenacious defence. Black is hoping for the exchange of bishops and certainly misses White's 22nd move in the process.

The alternative was to get the knight to the useful square e5 immediately with 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$. Admittedly, it is quite easy to miss that after:

17. $\mathbb{B}xf4$



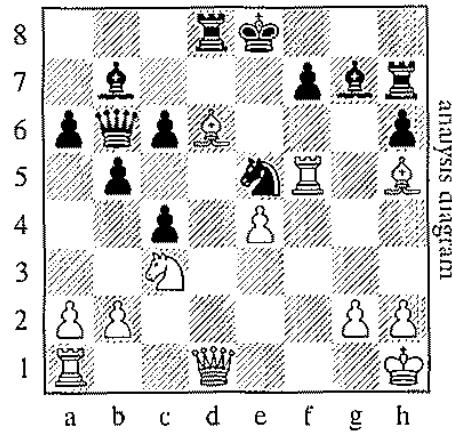
Black has the handsome defensive move

17... $\mathbb{B}h7!$

supporting f7 indirectly in the case of $\mathbb{Q}xe5$. It transpires that though White's attack is very dangerous, it is not easy to develop the rest of the pieces onto useful squares. The rook on a1 is notoriously out of play and the knight on c3 has no obvious route to join the attack. On the other hand we cannot say that Black is fully mobilised. The bishop on b7 is living in hope and the rook on a8 is longing for freedom. Finally the rook on h7 is perhaps performing a necessary function, but it is still oddly placed.

Analysis suggests that the following is a probable line, leading to an advantage for White, though nothing is definite.

18. $\mathbb{B}f5$ $\mathbb{W}b6\#$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{B}d8$



A normal end-of-evolution position. It is not easy to give a way for White to improve his pieces, so it is time to strike.

20. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

But here it is not possible to "do" something convincing, so though we have just sacrificed a piece, it is time to bring in the pieces.

21.e5!

Protecting the bishop and freeing up a square for the knight.

21... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 22. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xf5$

In principle this is a revolution-mode move, but it feels as if White is still in evolution mode, patiently bringing the pieces closer to the black king. First up is the threat of mate and the threat to the rook on h7.

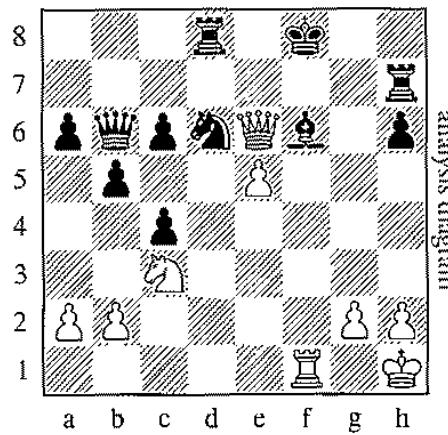
23... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$

White now has to do something. It does not matter to him that Black was the one who initiated the exchange of blows this time, as his own primary concern is always to bring in the pieces before striking, when possible.

24. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25. $\mathbb{B}f1\#$

First the rook enters the game.

25... $\mathbb{B}f6$



26. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

Then the knight joins in, and triumphantly so. This position is not at all clear. White is a rook, a pawn and a bishop down, but Black is not able to save his queen! I do not want to give a final conclusion to this position, but it seems to me that White has the better chances.

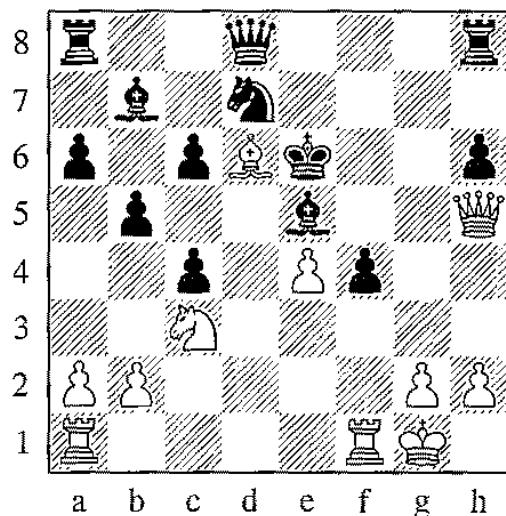
Though winning the queen only restores material equilibrium, he is more active and the black king is exposed. Again we have reached a point where it is not easily possible for White to improve his pieces. For example, if he wanted to include the a1-rook in the game, it would be natural to move the queen. For many obvious reasons this is not desirable, but even if it was, it is best placed on h5 in connection with an attack on the black king.

So, the move to play suggests itself. It is highly likely to be correct and if this is not the case, White's strategy has failed completely.

17.♕xf7† ♜xf7 18.♗h5† ♜e6?

For those only looking at the forced moves this move would look like the natural one. Black retains his extra piece and White cannot mate him with the queen alone. But the king is also rather exposed in the centre and the pieces are not very well placed to defend the light squares. If only White had more pieces in the attack...

For the reasons we shall see, it was better to play 18...♝g7, returning the piece. After 19.♕xe5† ♜xe5 20.♗xe5† ♜f6 21.♗c7† ♜f7 22.♗b6, followed by ♜e2xf4, White will sustain a substantial initiative, but the game does not seem to be wrapped up.



19.♖ad1!!

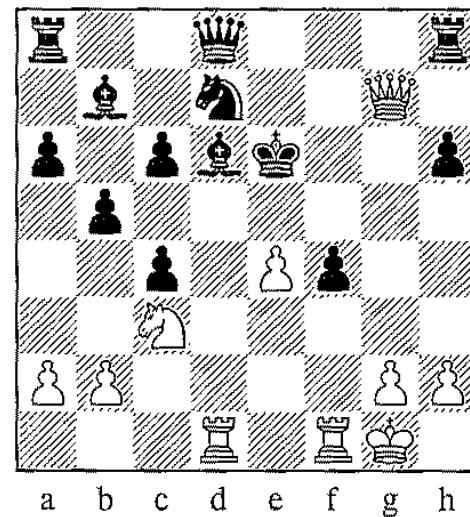
As we know, the revolution mode cannot win this game, but just because we have sacrificed one piece and have another hanging, it does not mean that we have to "do".

Actually we can still improve our pieces. As we know from Chapter 4, it is not the size of your piece but what you can do with it that counts. In the same way, the black rooks are not going to be of short-term importance, but now, the white queen's rook will be.

19...♜xd6 20.♗g4†

White improves the position of his queen. Maybe Black thought that he was making a draw?

20...♜e7 21.♗g7† ♜e6



The big moment of the game. White has managed to get the black king out in the open and open some lines in the centre. But his rook on f1 and knight on c3 are still out of play and the queen and rook on d1 are not able to sort out this business by themselves. White, with his mind in evolution mode, finds a way to bring the knight in with the threat of mate.

22.♘e2!

Mate on d4 is threatened and Black does not have time to play ...♝f6, his main defensive idea. Alas, he never had the chance.

22...c5?!

Though hardly sufficient, Black's only try for a defence was 22... $\mathbb{Q}c5\uparrow$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$, though after 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25.e5! White's attack will guarantee him a serious advantage. As so many times before in this book, we see that pawns can be very useful when we attack, not only to break down walls, but also to cover important squares.

23. $\mathbb{Q}xf4\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$

25... $\mathbb{W}xf8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xd7\uparrow$ is, not surprisingly, no better.

26. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}d1\uparrow$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}d2\uparrow$

29. $\mathbb{Q}g3$

1–0

There are of course many ways to explain what goes on in such a game. The most common one would be that White calculated better than his opponent, and this is definitely a part of the story. The problem is that we do not feel the need to understand the strategy underlying such great games when we spectate, but we need to have a good feeling of the strategic principles underlying such efforts, to be able to reproduce them consistently. This can be either subconsciously or consciously, as long as the feeling is strong enough. My thesis is that we will have a far stronger grounding if our intuition is based on conscious understanding of the principles of chess.

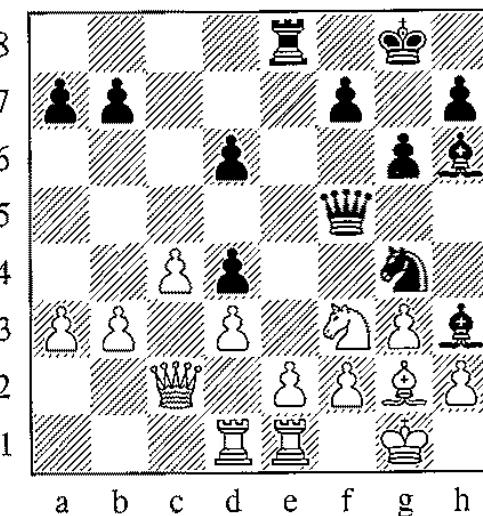
If we think back to the Edouard – Chirila game, we can see that strong intuition and calculation can easily fall prey to counter-intuitive situations. Though I have absolutely no way of telling what he thought, I would expect that Edouard at 16 would find out that he had missed the win when he looked at the game with Fritz and then think that he had overlooked something. Though this is true, it is not a very useful explanation. "See it next time" seems to be the only way to improve, and

maybe also to train with some tactical exercises. Although this will help, it does not assist improvement in the same way as understanding the origin of our mistakes. There are always many ways to solve any situation (outside the chess board) and I therefore want to refrain from talking in absolutes. I am convinced that one of the fastest ways to improve in chess is to spot the deeper recurring themes, principles and techniques of our game. I hope that I am contributing a little bit to this approach by pointing out the tendency, even among strong players, to get stuck in revolution mode. In Edouard's case it took the pressure of being a queen down. When I was 16 all it took was to be a pawn down, so he is far ahead of me!

A common illustration of this principle is when a piece is sacrificed to create weaknesses on squares of one colour, in the following example the dark squares. The following evolution can be compared to the water coming through the hole in the dyke. Subsequent revolutions can be seen as further chunks breaking free under the increasing force of the water coming through the hole. In the following example we shall see this in practice.

Georgy Lisitsin – Genrikh M. Kasparian

USSR Championship 1931



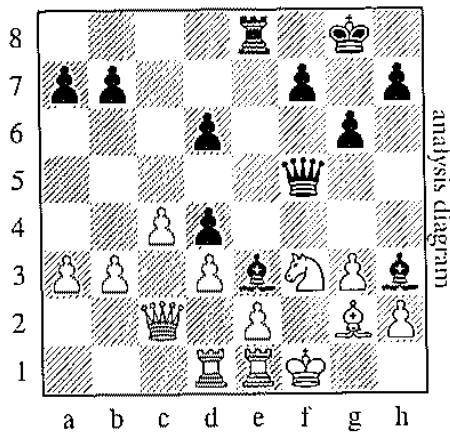
We enter the game at a moment where Black has set up an attacking position at the cost of an exchange and a pawn. This attack was not entirely correct, but White parted with his dark-squared bishop a bit too willingly and suddenly he ended up in this position where Black has a strong attack if he plays his cards right.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xf2!!$

This is really a magnificent sacrifice. Certainly White had checked it in advance and seen that there was no direct way for Black to break through. But the famous study composer was more imaginative. He realised that giving up the knight (making his investment into a full rook) would permanently weaken the dark squares around the white king and allow the agile black pieces to completely dominate the immense white army for long enough to create real threats.

20. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

It is not an easy position to be White in. After 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f1$



it looks as if Black's attack has come to a standstill, but he can bring the rook to f6 and queen to h5, when the f3-spot seems to be under a lot of pressure.

Yet the best move is the unassuming 21...h5!. It is quite surprising, but White has no defence against ...h5-h4xg3, weakening the

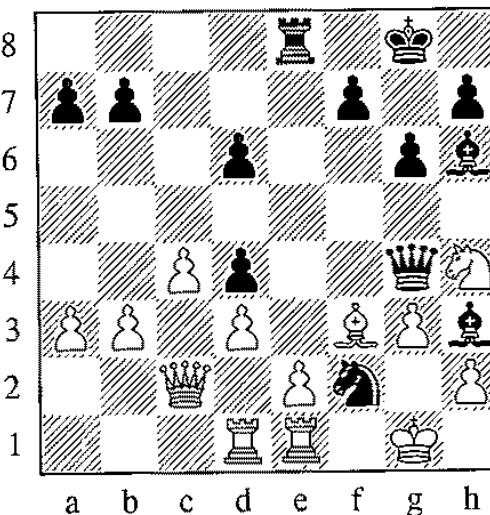
king's position and making it very likely that White will be mated on f2. The bishop on e3 blocks the white position and the rooks are totally in the way, preventing the white king from doing a runner.

20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ was the best option, but after 20... $\mathbb{W}h5$ the black initiative continues to be very strong and the best lines end with White bleeding material just to stay in the game.

20... $\mathbb{W}g4$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f3?!$

After 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mathbb{Q}c3\#$ there is no defence against ... $\mathbb{B}e8-e6-f6xf3$ with mate. But 21.e4!?

would give White a fighting chance.



21... $\mathbb{W}e6?$

Black misses the simple 21... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$, when Black would get a pawn, a bishop and two rooks, as well as a mating attack for the queen.

22. $\mathbb{B}f1?!$

This loses. After 22.e4! the position is at least still a bit messy, but Black is much better.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 23. $\mathbb{B}xd1$ $\mathbb{W}e3\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}f2$
25. $\mathbb{B}g1$ g5 26. $\mathbb{B}c1$ $\mathbb{B}e6$ 27. $\mathbb{B}g2$ g4 28. $\mathbb{B}f1$
0-1

In the next example we shall see a very simple psychological element in play. White sacrifices

a piece and has two ways of following up. The natural way is to take the free pawn first, which feels like a natural part of the tactical sequence, and therefore you could say that it is a revolution. At least, the mindset needed not to take on g5 is the ability to look for the non-forced improvement of the position, another way of saying, evolution. Despite this, it is clear to me that this short game is a good example of what happens when one player (Black) is stuck in revolution mode and thinks everything is forced, but is opposed by a player with a freer mind, who is constantly aware of how his pieces are best placed and is focused on improving them (evolution mode).

Yuri Yakovich – Arkadij Naiditsch

Grünfeld Defence
Aeroflot Open 2007

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♕f4 ♜g7 5.e3 c5 6.dxc5 ♜a5 7.♗c1 dxc4 8.♕xc4 0-0 9.♗f3 ♜xc5 10.♗b3 ♜c6 11.0-0 ♜a5 12.♗e2 ♜h5

13.♗g5 h6

As the bishop is a bit loose on g5, this is not the most logical move. But the text move is of course not bad, though it does come with some responsibilities when you weaken your kingside like this, responsibility Black did not live up to later on.

13...♗g4 14.♗h4 ♜b4 is known as a simple recipe for equality (Yusupov – Leko, Essen 2002).

14.♗h4 g5 15.♗fd1

A nice little trick. Of the two moves included in this forced line, White gets the more attractive one.

15...e6 16.♗g3 ♜xg3 17.hxg3

Black has achieved the goal of having the two bishops, but he is still not fully developed and this turns out to be more important here.

17...b6

A logical novelty. The bishop plans to join the game on a6.

17...♝d8 18.♘e4 ♛d7 19.♘d6 was possibly a little better for White in Yusupov – Anand, Wijk aan Zee 1994.

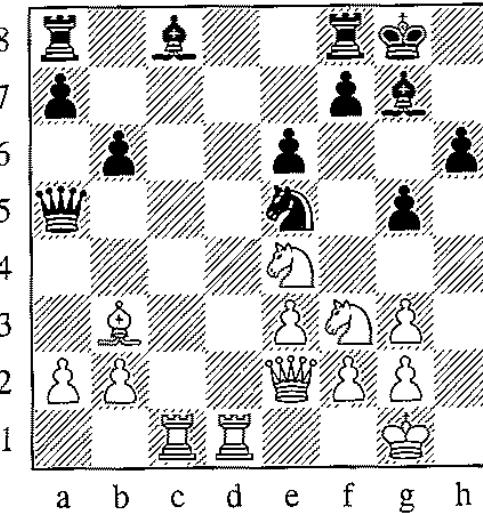
18.♘e4

The knight is moving towards the kingside, but it does not appear that White has a great attack.

18...♞e5?

Taking control over some light squares, but at the cost of falling fatally behind in development.

The position after 18...♞a6 19.♗c4 ♜xc4 20.♗xc4 ♜a6 21.♗c2 is possibly a bit more pleasant for White. Black no longer has the bishop pair and White is quite active in the centre, as well as ahead in development.



19.♗fxg5!

Black is so slow at getting his pieces out that it is natural for White to look for something immediate.

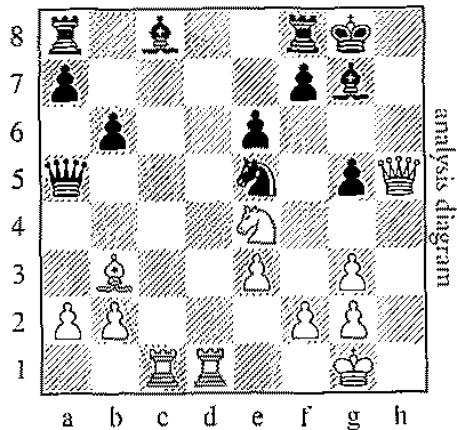
19...hxg5

19... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ was also possible, but White has many resources here: 21. $\mathbb{E}c7!$ $hxg5$ (21... $\mathbb{E}ad8$ is strongly met with 22. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ and the black defences will not hold) 22. $\mathbb{E}xd3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ $fxe6$ 24. $\mathbb{W}g6$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ and White has a winning position. The threat of mate can only be averted with something along the lines of 25... $\mathbb{E}xf2$ and then White can play 26. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 27. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#$, winning.

20. $\mathbb{Q}xg5?$

This looks very logical, but is actually a big mistake due to Black's reply. The sacrifice was a traditional revolution and this move is a revolution, but actually it was time to bring in the queen.

After 20. $\mathbb{W}h5!$, found by Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant and missed by many commentators, yours truly included, White is threatening to take on g5.



Keti's line continues:

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

With ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ on its way the time for preparation is over, and there is really no way the white pieces can greatly improve their positioning for the attack. The rest of the moves in the line are to be played in revolution mode, with either captures or checks.

21. $\mathbb{E}xd7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

The knight takes a pawn with the threat of mate. Very direct, though there is a bit of preparation about the move. The h7-square cannot be defended in a satisfying way, so Black has to give up the f7-pawn.

22... $\mathbb{E}fd8$

Protecting the bishop, but then e6 lacks enough support.

23. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$

White will continue with checks and captures for some time to come. There are many convincing wins and they are all easy to believe, so we will stop here.

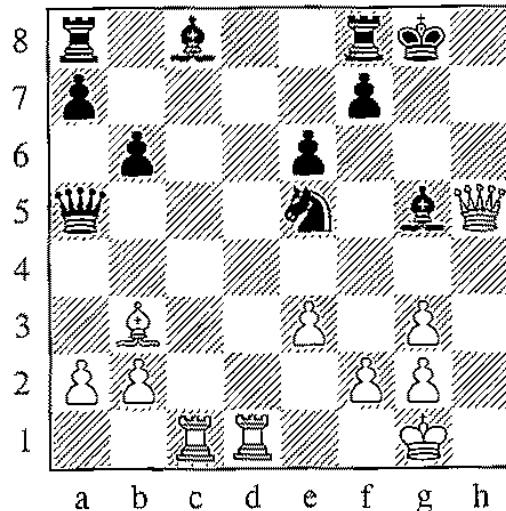
20... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$

The only move. Black has to contest the knight on g5 or he will soon find it impossible to protect the h7-weakness.

21. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5??$

But this is catastrophic. It is not really clear what Naiditsch had anticipated White would play. The problem in the coming lines is that Black does not have ... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ as the king does not support the g6-square.

For this reason he could save the game with 21... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$, when after 22. $\mathbb{E}c7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ Black can draw with both 23... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ and 23... $\mathbb{Q}h6$.



22.♗c2!

There was something about this move or the idea behind it that the winner of Dortmund 2005 missed. Was it the way that White did not stick to the direct approach of taking back the piece on this or at least on the next move? It is hard to guess, but no matter why this mistake occurred, it is clear that White is now winning. Before taking the bishop with check he improves his position.

22...♝g7 23.b4!

Black resigned. Once the black queen is forced off the 5th rank White will be able to take on g6 without having his queen hanging, opening up the henhouse to the wolves.

1-0

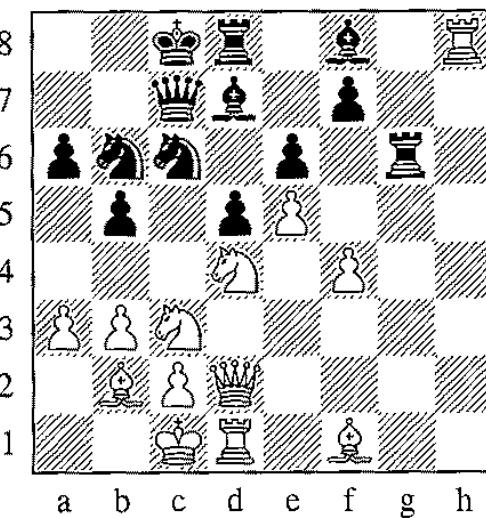
There are two players who signify *attack* to me more than any others. There is, of course, Garry Kasparov, who through his career won some of the best attacking games ever, and against some of the best players ever. Then there is Jonny Hector, as some of you have probably figured out already. Jonny is well known in Scandinavia for his sparkling play as well as for his likeable demeanour. Personally I have always felt it easy to play against him and have a better score against him than against any other grandmaster, but most of the strong players I have grown up competing with in Denmark and Sweden have suffered one terrible loss after another to Jonny. I am not sure why I have always been so successful against Jonny, but maybe he has found out, as he completely destroyed me in our last encounter in 2004. It is quite ironic that we are scheduled to play in the Danish league on the day that I should receive my first copy of the first edition of this book from the printer. (Note to the second edition: Jonny won the game, then thanked me for the kind words in this book, and the point.)

The last two games I want to use to illustrate the idea of evolution following revolution are therefore games by Hector and Kasparov. With these two superb examples imprinted on your mind I am sure you will be able to recognise that fireworks are more impressive when there are moments of silence between them. In the same way, your attacking abilities will improve when you learn to focus just as much on improving your position, as on direct options.

In the following masterpiece we shall see Jonny show how a seasoned attacker can switch effortlessly between revolution and evolution and constantly keep his opponent guessing about where the next strike is going to hit.

Jonny Hector – S. Lundholm

Swedish League 1994

**25.♗xb5**

The first sacrifice. Revolution.

25...axb5 26.♘cxb5 ♜b8

Now it is time to bring the pieces closer:

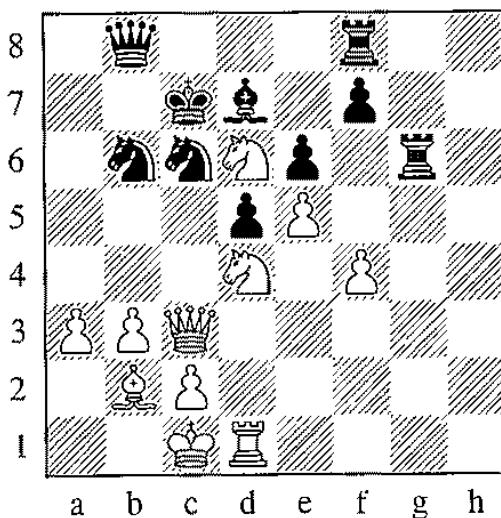
27.♗c3

Attacking the c6-knight, but mainly seeking to improve the pieces.

27...♝b7 28.♗xf8!

Another revolution. The bishop is removed so White can improve the positioning of his pieces on the dark squares.

28... $\mathbb{E}xf8$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$



30. $\mathbb{Q}c5!!$

The key move of the game. The queen is brought closer without really threatening anything, except for the visually slow manoeuvre $\mathbb{Q}b2-c3-a5$, which decides the game.

30... $\mathbb{E}gg8$

Played to protect the rook on f8, which would be hanging in some lines, but this gives White freedom to roam.

But after 30... $\mathbb{E}g3$ White has 31.a4! as a way of strengthening the attack. Besides being a fierce attacker in its own right, the pawn is freeing up the bishop to join the attack via the a3-f8 diagonal.

31. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Nothing can stop this innocuous-looking guy. The threat is $\mathbb{Q}a5$ followed by $\mathbb{Q}4b5\#$, winning the set.

31... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xc6\#$

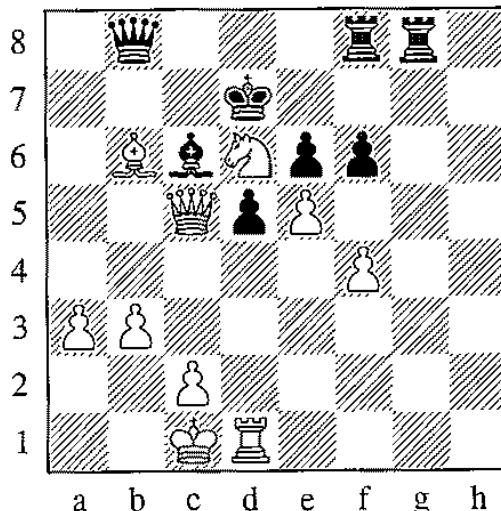
The simplest, but the bishop could also create damage if it went to h4 via e1.

32... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}a5$

Rather than taking a free piece Hector skilfully involves his forces in the best possible way.

33... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ f6

Black lacked any decent moves, though the position in principle is level in material. However, the text move does accelerate matters a little bit by weakening e6.



35. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$

35...exf5 36.e6# leads to mate after a few checks.

36. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

I like the way that this game ends with the white pieces approaching and making it unsustainable for Black to continue.

36... $\mathbb{E}c8$ 37.f5

The exchange of c6 followed by a sacrifice on d5 was winning too, but this leads to an imminent collapse. Black resigned.

1-0

The final game of this chapter is one of my all time favourite attacking games. It shows 18-year-old Garry Kasparov following all the laws of attacking chess to perfection. There are those who, despite the great man's

writing, would put it all down to calculation. I see a strong argument against this in the fact that when he has several equally tempting variations he seems to choose those that can be solved with logic rather than those that can be solved with pure calculation. Besides, the most inspiring part of the game are moves that cannot be calculated, but must be determined by logic.

But most of all, I love this game for Kasparov's adherence to the principle of evolution-revolution-evolution in practice (though he might not have expressed it that way). It is this rather than long variations that we shall focus on here.

Garry Kasparov – Ulf Andersson

Queen's Indian Defence
Tilburg 1981

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.a3

The Petrosian Variation, which Kasparov brought back in the early 1980s with great success.

4...♝b7 5.♗c3 ♜e4?!

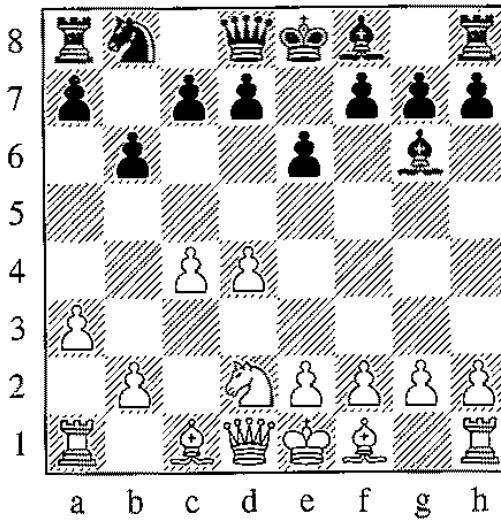
This variation seems a bit dubious to me though it keeps on showing up in the games of decent players. The only good move is 5...d5 with an active fight for equality.

6.♗xe4 ♜xe4 7.♗d2

This is probably the most ambitious. White is going for a big centre. Instead 7.e3 was the choice of Kramnik in this position, and his opponent (Vaganian) also found it hard to equalise.

7...♝g6

After 7...♝b7 8.e4 ♜f6 9.d5 a5 10.♗d3 it was very difficult for Black to get any play in S. Pedersen – Aagaard, Copenhagen 1996.



8.g3!

As the bishop has vacated the long diagonal it is very tempting for White to take it over immediately.

8...♝c6 9.e3 a6?

Ulf Andersson is known to be an exclusively positional player, but those who have analysed with him know this is not an expression of how he thinks. Ulf is very concrete and very tactical, he only looks at the variations with the purpose of avoiding anything he might find risky. Over the years this tendency has become even stronger. There are other players who think this way. Portisch is a classic example. He was very tricky, but the outcomes he was looking for were generally of a long-term character rather than direct attacks.

In this position Andersson is looking to build up a blockade of the light squares in the centre. If successful this would have made his position superior, but as we shall see, Kasparov was able to meet the challenge with forceful means.

10.b4

The bishop on c1 needs a home.

10...b5

Maybe this move should also be criticised, but as it is merely following up on an already established plan, it seems unfair to do so.

11.cxb5

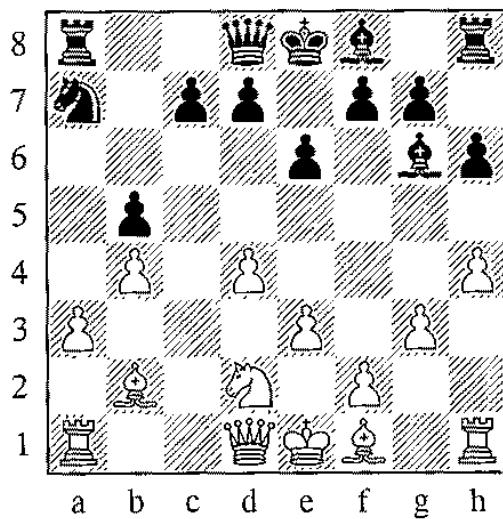
I get the feeling from this move that Kasparov had already anticipated Andersson's plan at this point.

11...axb5 12.Qb2 Qa7 13.h4!

This advance proves to be very beneficial later on. The idea behind it is not to trap the black bishop, though this is obviously threatened, but to provoke Black into weakening his kingside.

13...h6

13...h5 was better, but to work that out, Andersson would have had to anticipate what follows, and if he had done so, he would probably have played differently altogether.



We have reached the first critical moment of the game. It is time for White to look at the consequences of what will happen after his most natural developing move, so let's do that.

After the automatic 14.Qg2 d5 Black would play ...Qa7-c8-b6-c4 and have a great position. The bishops on g2 and b2 would not have any targets on their respective diagonals, the one blocked by the pawn on d4, the other by the pawn on d5. So White has an interest in changing the flow of the position, the natural

steps of evolution, if you like, and changes the position with a revolution.

14.d5!!

This pawn sacrifice is very surprising until you start to apply logic to it. Then it becomes an absolute must.

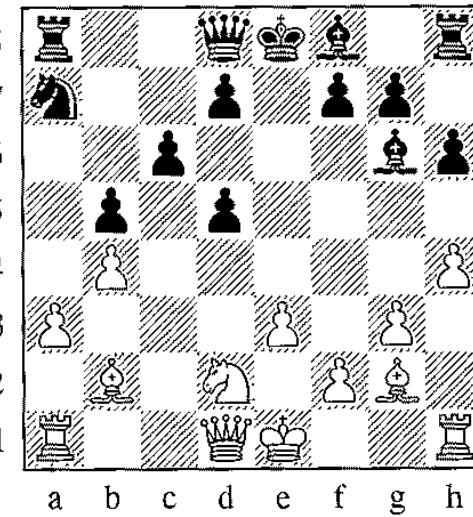
Black still has to develop his kingside, having spent a long time getting the right structure in the centre. It makes sense to make this harder for him to achieve. It also makes sense to open up the bishop on b2 in general and not allow Black to bury it.

Finally, White will win time with his next move and increase his lead in development even further.

All in all, the arguments for a mini-revolution are many and strong.

14...exd5

The pawn is quite strong on d5, so it seems natural to take it, even if it loses time.

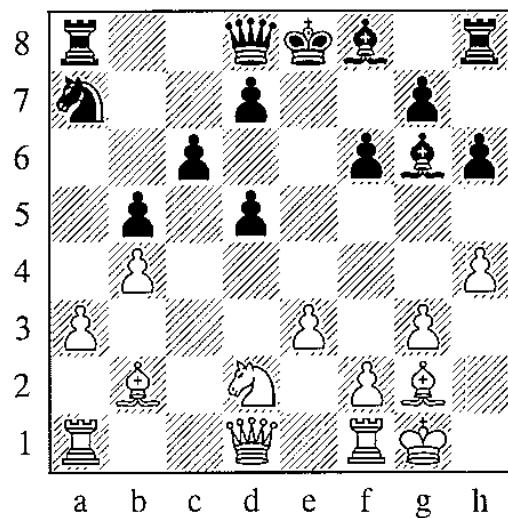
15.Qg2 c6

This is an admission of guilt. Black acknowledges that there is nothing in his position that impresses. He cannot find a way to develop his pieces and he cannot find a way to irritate his opponent's development.

For example: returning the pawn ends in disaster after 15... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ c6 17. $\mathbb{W}b3$, where Black has given away his only decent piece and is left with a broken pawn structure and all the other ills of the position at move 15.

16.0–0 f6

A horrible move to have to play. Black is hoping that in a few moves he will be able to get his king into safety, but Kasparov does not allow this.



In this position White has three tempting "to-do" moves, 17.e4, 17. $\mathbb{W}g4$ and 17.h5, all very active. But as a very clean attacking player Kasparov refrains from any of these and instead brings in the only piece that can easily be included into the attack.

17. $\mathbb{E}e1!$

Objectively this move is not better than 17.e4 $dxe4$ 18. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 19.h5 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$, when, because of the threat 22. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$, Black has to play 21... $\mathbb{Q}e7$. White would then be happy to play 22. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ transposing to the game.

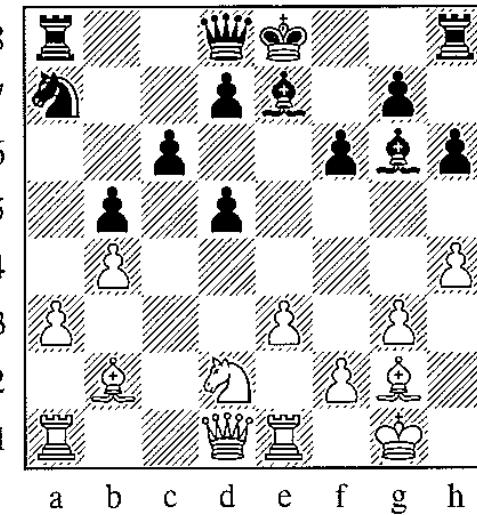
However, it is good practice to play the more rule-obeying move for two reasons. The first one is that we at times overlook something and would in this way be better insured against

accidents. The second is that we create a habit of playing the most principled moves. You can see how such a habit has benefited Karpov, Kasparov and Kramnik, players who will never end up in as much of a mess as players like Gelfand, Anand and Topalov, who at times get positions that look like those of a beginner.

17. $\mathbb{E}e1$ is the most natural move because it follows the pattern of first building up the position to the maximum, then seeking to exploit the potentials in the position. Or, evolution as long as it actually advances the play, and then a revolution.

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

Because of the move order it was possible to play 17... $\mathbb{Q}f7?$, when after 18.e4 Black has 18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19. $exd5$ 0–0. This is what Black had to do in order to castle. But White will play $\mathbb{Q}d2$ -b3-d4 and maybe even $\mathbb{Q}f5$. His positional advantage is very clear and Black has no real hopes of survival.



18. $\mathbb{W}g4$

A revolution begins now that all the pieces are involved ($\mathbb{E}a1$ would take too long to include at the moment). What is worth noticing is that all three moves ($\mathbb{W}g4$, h5 and e4) that were tempting a moment ago are now possible and come more or less with the gain of tempo.

18...♝f7 19.h5 ♜h7 20.e4 dxe4 21.♝xe4!

It is crucial for the white attack to include this bishop in the game and at the same time it is very useful to weaken the light squares around the black king.

21...♝xe4 22.♝xe4 ♜c8

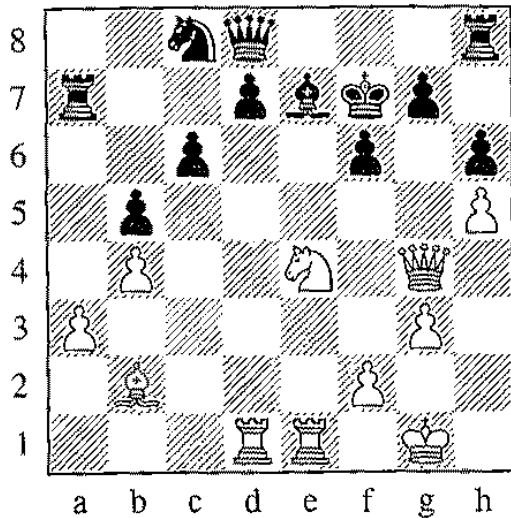
Black surely wanted to play 22...♜e8 to get the rook on the "right" side of the king. But it turns out that because of the weakening of the light squares Black is very vulnerable to an attack on the dark squares. White can win in several ways. The most attractive is probably 23.♝g6† ♜f8 24.♝g5 hxg5 25.h6 gxh6 26.♝e5 and there is no adequate response to ♜xh6† and ♜xg5, with a mating attack. So for this reason Andersson tries to bring the knight to the defence.

22...d5 23.♝c5 was also appalling, by the way.

23.♝ad1

Bringing the last piece into the game. A small evolution after the revolution from moves 18 to 22.

23...♝a7



We have once again reached a point where White has improved his position, if not to the

maximum, then at least to a point where all the pieces are enjoying some sort of activity. It might seem that the rooks are not attacking anything vital, but as we shall see in the coming lines, both of them are close enough to the attack to make a serious impact. In other words, it is time for a revolution.

24.♝xf6!

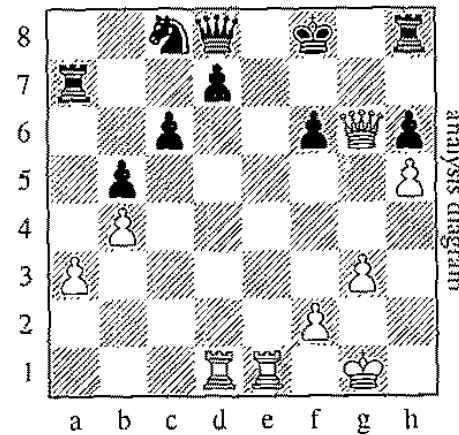
A beautiful sacrifice designed to break up the pawn structure around the black king.

Note that 24.♝g6† ♜f8 25.♝xf6 was equally strong, but Kasparov once again chooses the move that follows classical principles. In this case, the idea of keeping flexibility as long as possible. Or as Nimzowitsch liked to look at it – "The threat is stronger than the execution", which is the case because the threat is hardly ever only one option, but several.

24...gxsf6

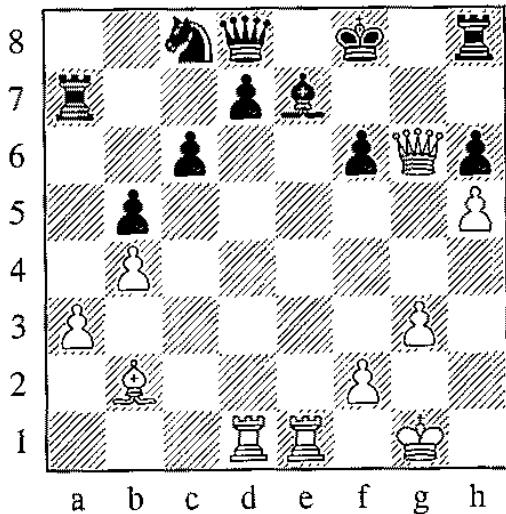
The only capture that works. Black has to take the knight because of the tenderness of g7 and d7.

After 24...gxsf6 White has the stunning 25.♝g6† ♜f8 26.♝xf6 gxsf6



27.♝e6!, leaving Black ready to resign.

25.♝g6† ♜f8

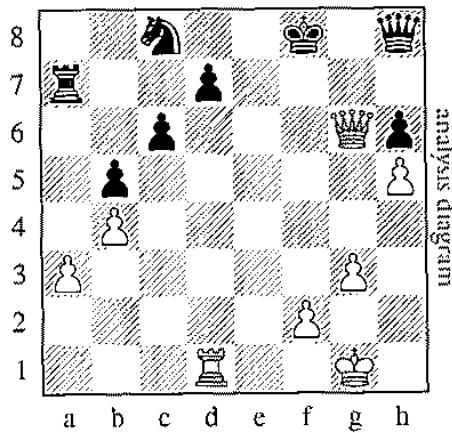


The revolution is over, at least the way that Kasparov plays the position. Though he has sacrificed a piece, his opponent's position is in a spectacular mess with the greatest lack of coordination seen by Andersson in his by now forty years of international chess, and the remaining white pieces all look very aggressively placed, Kasparov thinks that it is possible to improve his position even further.

26. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$?

So, after the revolution once again White returns to evolution mode. The weakest spots are now h6 and g7, so White manoeuvres his pieces so they can attack these squares. First the bishop comes in.

Having said this, there is a surprise available in this position, which has been missed by the pre-computer sources I have seen. 26. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}h7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ $\mathbb{W}xh8$



I have had this position as Black in many training games. No one has found 29. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 30. $\mathbb{W}d6!$, when White wins because of the threat of 31. $\mathbb{W}b8\#$. I feel certain that Kasparov did not see this either. It is well known that a good chess culture is useful, but once tactics take over, there are just tactics. In other words – if you see a win and know it is there, chances are that you should play it without hesitation.

26... $d5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

"This leads to a forced win" is the only comment offered to this move by Igor Stohl in his book on Kasparov's best games. We will clearly have to wait for Kasparov to publish his own annotations to his games to get a good explanation of what the former world champion was thinking.

The way I would explain this move would be to point out that after the position has changed and the weaknesses in the opponent's position are no longer the same, White suddenly has a rook on d1 which is not helping out at all. For this reason it is transferred to g4, from where it will assist the attack on Black's weakest square, the g7-spot. At times when I have been lecturing about this game I have asked players with little experience which of their pieces they like the least. They pick up the d1-rook. Then I ask where they would like it to be. Some have the imagination to put it on g7 or f7, but most suggest g4 as the most appealing square. As we would have to take something on the way to the first two squares, we have to see ourselves limited by the realms of the possible as well, and agree with the latter suggestion.

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

Black is bringing in the knight to defend h6.

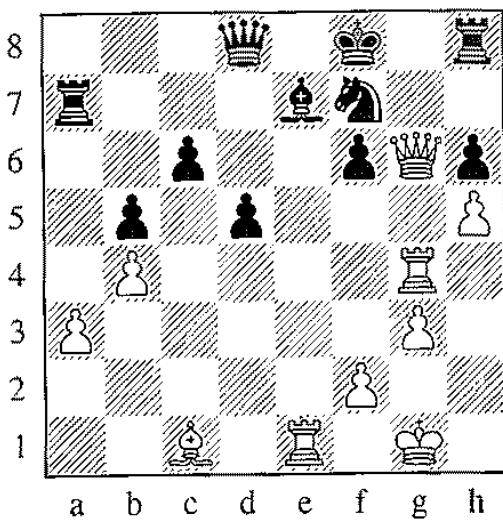
28. $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Kasparov once again shows that he is not a machine. Taking on h6 would have won

immediately, but he follows through with his plan, as it is just as decisive.

28...Qf7

Black is apparently just in time. The white pieces are all as active as we can possibly ask for (we could always ask for more, of course, but should we expect it?), so we are at the end of the evolutionary trail. It is therefore logical to look for a direct solution. Not surprisingly, it is there.



29.Qxh6†!

A nice tactic, as Black cannot take the bishop without facing something worse than a check.

29...Qe8

Actually, the revolution was short again. White now continues with simple moves.

30.Qg7

Black resigned. White will advance the h-pawn and claim at least a rook for it after the only move, 30...Rg8.

1-0

I hope that even if you knew this very famous game already you were able to look at it in a new way, through the framework of evolution-revolution-evolution, and understand exactly why Kasparov was able to become the greatest

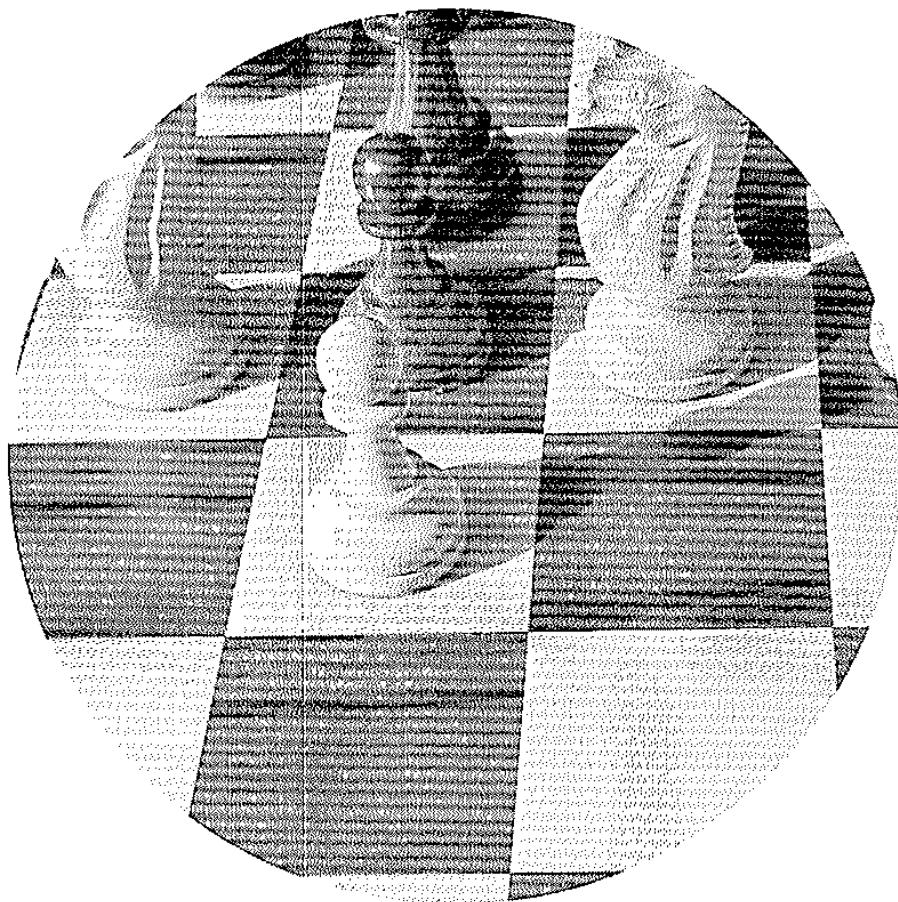
chess player of all time. It was not only his great opening preparation, his high levels of energy at the board, and other qualities often attributed to him, which made him the best player of all time.

The main reason was, in my understanding of his play, how he was able to improve his position with every move he made, be it evolutionary or revolutionary. If you look at his games you will find that his pieces were hardly ever placed on bad squares or even undefended. Opening preparation is useful, but when you feel a deep necessity to put all of your pieces on good squares all the time, as well as sense the flow of the game as well as he did in this game, you have an advantage over your opponent that takes more than a novelty or some accurate calculation to overcome. It is not a coincidence that such skilled tacticians as Short and Anand were unable to threaten Kasparov. Monsters must be tamed, and Karpov and Kramnik did at times succeed in doing so, though not to a degree sufficient to be rated above him in the minds of millions of chess fans.

With this we will finish our discussion of the global principles of attacking chess. In Volume 2 we will discuss various subtleties and techniques which can be useful when we attack. In the rest of this book we will look at some brilliant attacking games you might not know and how they show our principles in action, as well as look at 50 exercises that will give you a chance to work with the ideas we have been discussing.

Chapter 8

15 Great Attacking Games

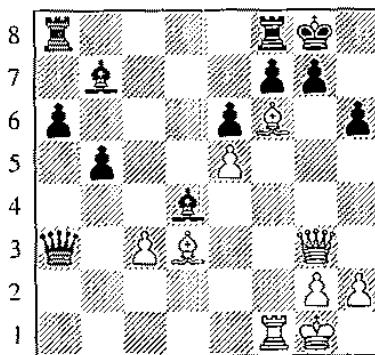


"Modern chess is too much concerned with things like pawn structure. Forget it - checkmate ends the game." - Nigel Short

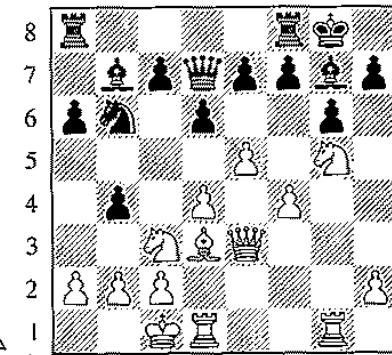
Diagram preview

On this page you find 8 diagrams with critical moments from the coming chapter. I recommend that you take up to 10 minutes to think about each of them. The solutions are found on following pages in the annotations to the games.

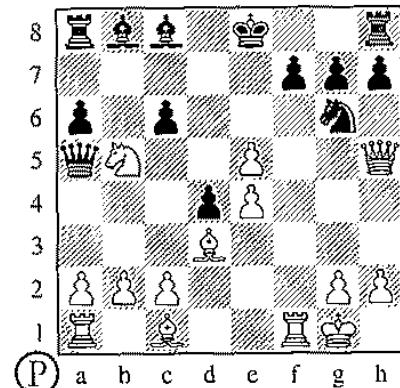
Positions with a circled P can be played against a computer.



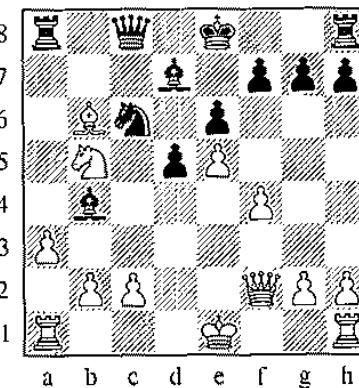
What is the winning move?
(see page 207)



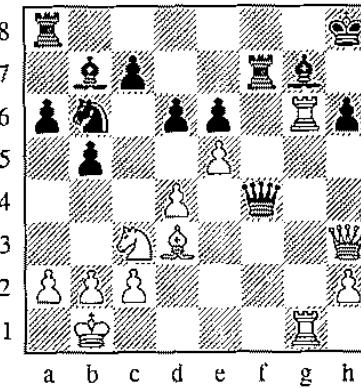
White to play and win!
(see page 249)



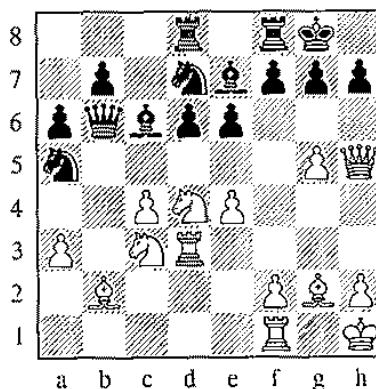
White to attack!
(see page 199)



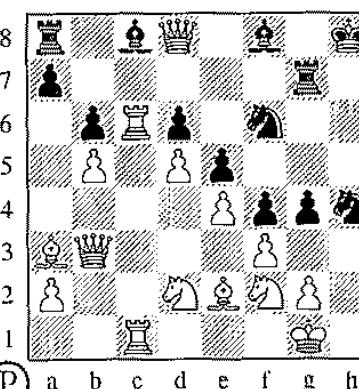
How to react to the check?
(see page 213)



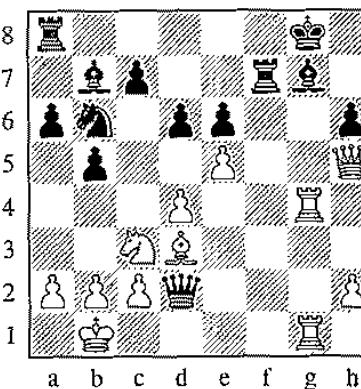
Another White win
(see page 254)



A fabulous combination
(see page 204)



White to win - calculate!
(see page 218)



A most astonishing combination
(see page 255)

In this chapter we will take a closer look at fifteen interesting games. Of the twelve games published in the first edition, most of them are recent, with the three oldest being little known games from 1996, 1999 and 2005. I had originally planned to have only ten games in this chapter, but at the last moment I decided to add two games from probably the four best players in the world at this moment, Anand, Topalov, Kramnik and Carlsen. Some of these games were originally published in *Chess Monthly*, but have been rewritten to some extent for this book.

For the second edition I have added three extra games to the chapter. These were games I originally had intended to include in Volume 2, but eventually decided should be in this book. The joys of second editions!

I have selected the games based on what I found interesting rather than some abstract criteria. Therefore there are two completely misplayed attacks and mistakes can be found in almost all the games. But I hope that all the games are instructive and entertaining and that you have seen very few of them before, if any.

I tried using these games to constantly point out various themes discussed in the previous chapters, but found that it got annoying after a little while, so I took most of that stuff out again. After using complex as well as simple examples to illustrate specific ideas, we will in this chapter have a close look at very interesting games without too much talk of principles or rules, but please do not think that this means that they are not in play.

I am not even sure where I originally found our first game. It has been in my folder from the beginning of my work on this book, although often relocated from chapter to chapter, illustrating first this, then that, theme. It was played in an IM tournament in Sweden

at the end of the last century, and is simply wonderful. White manages to show absolutely excellent attacking play; after obtaining an advantage in the early opening, he takes the initiative to its natural conclusion, in a direct attack on the black king.

Sergey Klimov – Bengt Lindberg

Sicilian Defence
Stockholm 1999

1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qc6 5.Qc3 a6

This is the Taimanov variation's little brother. Because of the continuation in the game most players prefer to play the more flexible 5...Qc7. The reason to avoid this is to have other kinds of flexibility and to save time on this developing move.

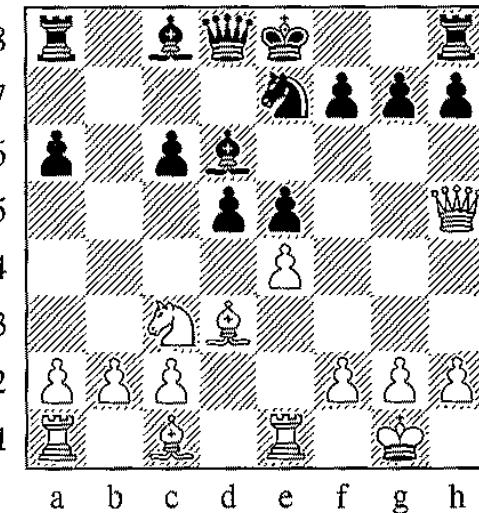
6.Qxc6

The most natural reaction. Black will get no benefit from the move ...a6 now, though he will get the option to play ...d7-d5 instead.

6...bxc6 7.Qd3 d5 8.0–0 Qd6

Black players are very scared of 8...Qf6 9.Qf4 as Danish IM Erling Mortensen once explained to me.

9.Rel Qe7 10.Wh5 e5



11.f4

This is apparently a very attractive move, as it is the only one that has been played in the two games I have found in my database.

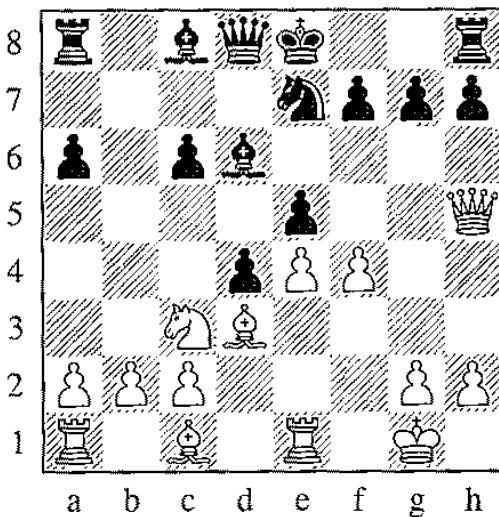
The seasoned attacker would naturally think about including all of the pieces in the attack with 11.exd5!? cxd5 12.Qg5 Qb7 13.Qad1, when the black centre might look impressive, but at the same time it is also very fragile. White is probably a bit better, though the position remains very unbalanced and only extensive testing in games and subsequent analysis would be able to give a stable evaluation.

11...d4!

The only move. Black closes the centre at the first opportunity.

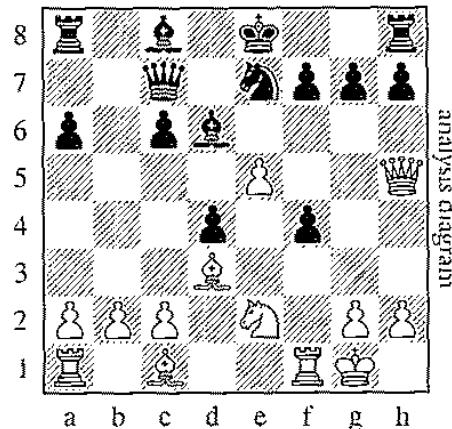
11...exf4 would be a mistake because of 12.exd5!, when Black is in a lot of trouble.

Someone rated 2400 played 11...Qe6, when after 12.exd5 cxd5 13.fxe5 he had lost a pawn.

**12.fxe5??**

This introduction to complications is very interesting and turns out to be a good choice, when we think about the further development of the game. Having said this, White probably had a stronger continuation in the slower 12.Qc2!, when after 12...Qc7 13.Qf1 White

has a slight advantage, but only if he plays for his lead in development. After 13...exf4 he cannot allow Black to blockade the e4-pawn, when the chances would be equal, but has to play for the initiative with 14.e5!.



Here my main line goes 14...Qxe5 15.Qxf4 Qxf4 16.Qxf4 Qe6 17.Qaf1 c5 18.Qxf7! Qxf7 19.Qxf7† Qd8 20.Qxg7 with a lot of compensation for the exchange and possibly some advantage as well, though this cannot be guaranteed. But this was the only way I have found to fight for an advantage.

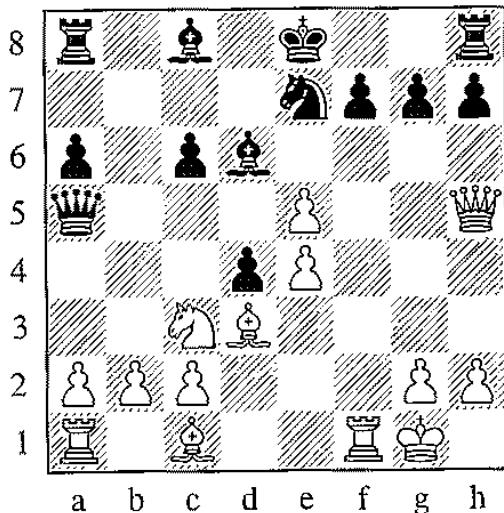
12...Qa5?

This move fails for tactical reasons. Now Black will not get a chance to join in the development of the game, but will see himself thrown around on the board by the not very gentle white puppeteer. Black had probably hoped that the pin on the knight on c3 was useful, but it turns out that both the pieces in the pin are able to disturb Black in such a way that he cannot play the desired ...Qxe5, which would give him full equality.

The best move was the patient 12...Qb8!, when after 13.Qe2 Qg6 Black is on his way to establishing the knight on e5. As White is still leading in development it is desirable for him to open the position for an immediate conflict. After 14.e6! Qxe6 15.e5!, the position remains wildly unclear. The only thing I want to say

with any kind of certainty is that Black should think twice before he takes the pawn on e5.

13.♘f1!



By attacking f7 White gains enough time to step out of the pin, freeing his knight. Black had naturally expected this, but he had hardly expected the follow-up.

13...♗g6

13...0–0 is refuted by 14.♘d5!, based on 14...cx d5 15.ex d6 ♗g6 16.e5 and resignation would not be inappropriate.

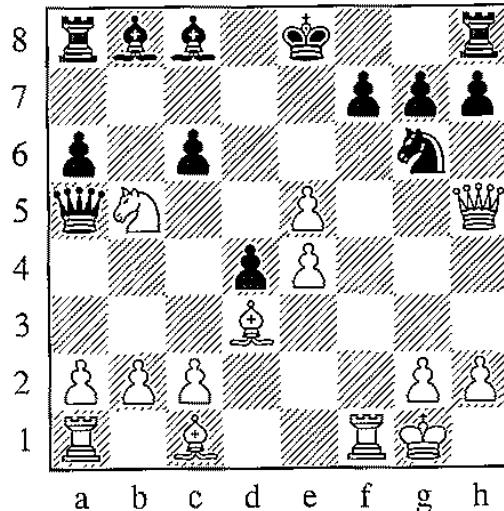
13...♗e6 14.♘d5 ♘b4 is technically best, but after 15.♘f4 White is just a pawn up for very little.

14.♘b5!

Black must have expected the knight to go to e2 or something in that direction. 14.♘d5 is also possible, but Black can defend a bit better with 14...♗b4!.

14...♗b4

14...♗b4 is now met with 15.♘xd4 and White will have to settle for a lovely extra pawn, though the attack of course can be continued at will. It is now tempting to take on d4, when White has a clear edge, but there is more and White wants more.

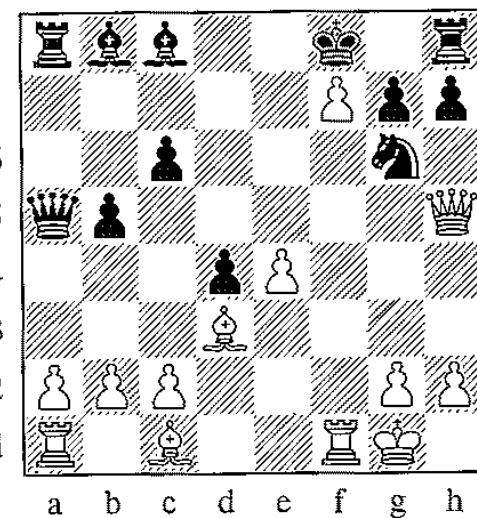


15.e6!!

White already had the chance to win a pawn, but Klimov must have thought that his opponent had gone too far and needed to be punished. The advance of the e-pawn is threatening a check on d6 with the knight, so Black has no choice but to accept the knight sacrifice and endure the abuse.

15...axb5 16.exf7+ ♔f8

16...♔e7 17.f8=♕+ ♕xf8 18.♗g5# gives White a winning attack.



17.e5!!

The second truly great move in the game. The advance of the e-pawn is a direct attack on the knight on g6, but more importantly allows the bishop to join the attack.

After the toddler moves 17.♕c5+ ♔e7 18.♗g5 ♕a7 Black defends.

17...♝xe5

17...b4 was maybe a bit more tenacious, but after 18.♗xg6 ♕xe5 White can either go into a winning ending or continue the attack with 19.♗f5, without giving up any of his attacking chances.

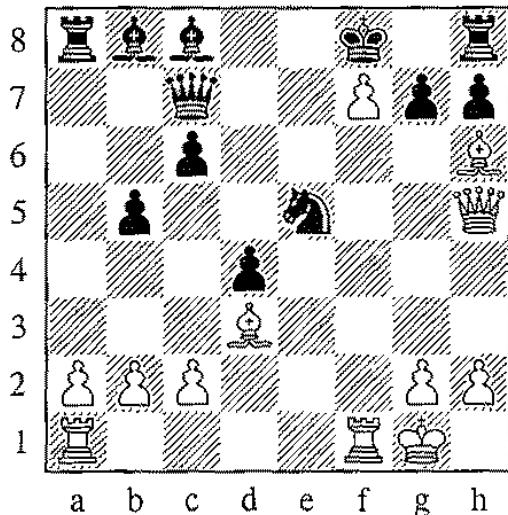
18.♗h6!

This energetic move illustrates the great strength of the pawn on f7, which is acting as a shield for the black king at the moment, but this should not deceive you. Very soon it will cause his downfall.

18.♗f4 was also good enough to win, but would require more accuracy than Klimov's move. Besides, the way White won in the game is simply wonderful.

18...♛c7

The best defence was 18...♛d8, but White is of course still winning. He can either take on g7 immediately, or win quickly in the cleanest possible style with 19.♗ae1!, making use of the rook. And after 19...♛e7 it is time to strike with 20.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 21.♗xe5, when Black is mated. For example: 21...♗xe5 22.f8=♛† ♜xf8 23.♗g5 mate



19.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 20.♗xh7†

Technically the immediate promotion of the pawn led to a quicker mate, but I will be the last one to criticise this elegant finisher. Black resigned.

1-0

The next game is one of the truly great games of 2007. It looks like something taken out of an instructional book on tactics, except that it tries to illustrate every theme in just one game. It makes me wonder what chess authors are up to when they show the same games over and over again, for example games from the Candidates tournament in Zurich 1953. I hope that so far I have managed to show you some games that you did not already know. There are a few examples already known in chess literature in this book, but I hope that I can be forgiven for including those as well.

This game would be a renowned masterpiece, had Black allowed White to show the full force of his idea. The fact that Black avoided this by losing too quickly does not take anything away from Krasenkow's performance, but we have to scrape beneath the surface if we want to understand the game.

Michał Krasenkow – Adam Szieberth

English Opening, Hedgehog system
Isle of Man 2007

1.♘f3 c5 2.c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 ♘c6 4.d4 cxd4
5.♘xd4 e6 6.a3 ♘e7 7.g3 0–0??

This is the first sign that we are dealing with a Grandmaster against an amateur. The theoretical recommendation is 7...♝b6!, when after 8.♗f3 (8.e3 d5 led to a quick draw in Vallejo Pons – Leko, Linares 2005) 8...0–0 9.♗g2 ♘d8 10.0–0 d5 Black had managed to create good counterplay in the centre in Aronian – Volokitin, Germany 2005, a game

that later ended in a draw. At this moment it might actually already be more comfortable to be Black, though the balance has not been seriously disturbed.

8.♗g2 ♗e5

8...♗b6 no longer works. The difference from before is that Black has castled. After 9.♔e3! he no longer has the option of playing 9...♗g4? as White wins a piece with 10.♗xc6.

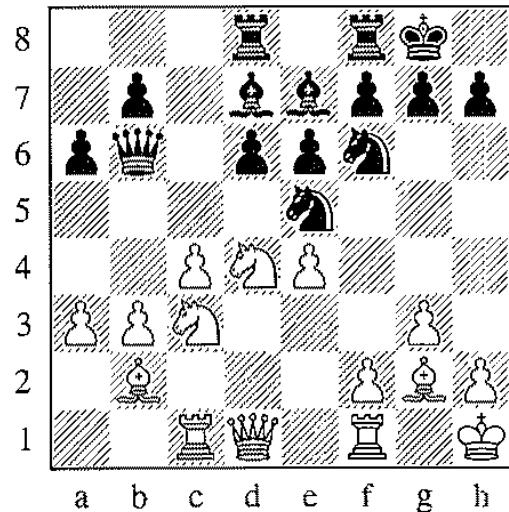
9.b3 a6 10.0-0 ♘c7 11.♗b2 d6 12.e4 ♘d7

We have a standard hedgehog position, but with one important difference. Black is not able to play 12...b6? as is usually the case, as White has 13.f4 when Black will have to perform some acrobatics to avoid losing a piece. For this reason White has a slight advantage.

13.♗c1 ♘ad8

The rook is usually more naturally placed on c8, and amazingly this would have been much better in the game, as in key lines Black would have ...♗d8 saving the kingside.

14.♔h1 ♘b6



Black has limited space and no real play to speak of. The best plan for him would be to finish his development and put both the bishops back to their place of origin, and then

simply wait for something that makes sense to show up.

White on the other hand will probably find his advantage on the queenside, in the centre and on the kingside. It all depends on where Black is going to leave himself most vulnerable to an attack.

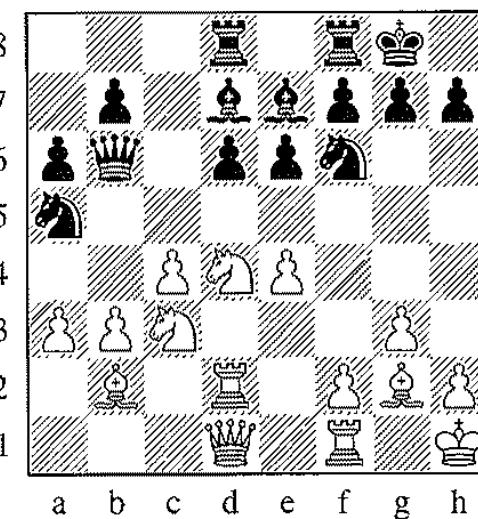
15.♗c2!

A nice little positional move. Besides the fact that the rook is better on d2 than on c1, it also gives the option of doubling the rooks on the f-file or for the rooks to partner up, shooting down two parallel files.

Again it would make sense for Black to complete his development, but for some reason Szieberth is attracted to repositioning his most active piece, the knight on e5, to a less attractive spot on a5, where the only consolation is that it attacks the b3-pawn.

15...♘c6 16.♗d2 ♘a5?!

After 16...♗fe8 Black's position would still be as it has been since move seven – solid but also a bit passive.



After the knight has gone to a5 the position has changed dramatically, if only in the nuances. Black no longer has a real presence on the kingside and it is fully justified for White to launch a vicious attack there. Note that

because Black is so passively placed it is easier for White to take certain liberties, as it is hard to imagine that Black will be able to create a serious counterattack quickly.

17.g4!!

This shows brilliant awareness of the situation. Krasenkow realises that his advantage is on the kingside and that the best way to exploit it is to first nudge the knight away from f6 and then attack the h7-square, which is very hard to defend.

17... \hat{Q} c6?

Too passive. It was necessary for Black to fight back. Here are two options.

17.11.512

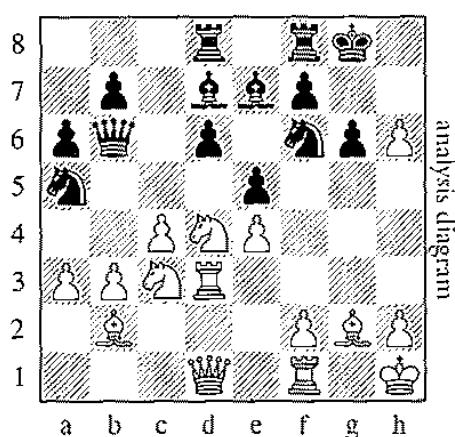
This move is perhaps not completely correct, but as Black will be overrun if he does nothing, it is worth trying something along these lines. It seems to me that White can either play 18.h3 with some advantages and a good deal of complications, or go for a lot of complications with less guarantee. As I do not think Krasenkow was looking for guarantees, I have been analysing the complications after:

18.gxh5 e5

The point. Black could not play 17...e5, as White had 18.g5! gaining control over d5.

My line now goes:

19.h6! g6 20.gd3??



Black should now be very careful and play something along the lines of 20... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ with a dangerous position. After the direct

20..exd4

White has

21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 23. $cxd5$

with a lot of compensation and a lot of problems for Black to solve. Actually I cannot find any defence!

23...E_C8

23... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 24. $\mathbb{K}c3$ $\mathbb{W}b8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ and White wins back the piece with a winning advantage.

24.171

White is making sure that the king cannot hide before he starts a terrifying attack.

24... \mathbb{Q} xh7 25. \mathbb{Q} h3 \mathbb{W} d8

Other moves are hardly any better.

26. Kg1 Kg8 27. Kf5!

17...h6 was possible, but the question is, if White is aggressive enough to play 18.h4!? instead of mechanically moving the f-pawn forward, where will the complications lead? I am not sure. 18...Qh7! looks right, so probably 18.f4 is the way ahead, with some advantage, and 19.h4 as an additional resource.

18.g5 ♘d7 19.♘h5!?

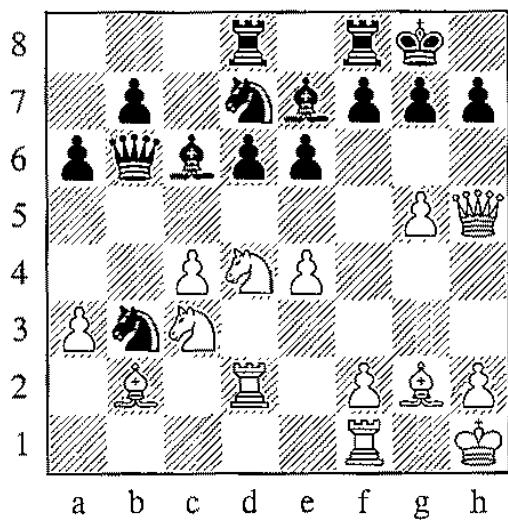
More standard was 19.f4 $\mathbb{E}fe8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}df2$ with a very clear advantage and all the pieces involved in the attack. But Krasenkow has spotted a combination that should have made the history books, but won't because of the lack of resistance Black offered in the game.

19...♞xb3?

Greed is not good. Do not trust that Michael Douglas guy, he was acting! Krasenkow must have known that his opponent could not estimate the consequences of this capture, though to be fair, his position was pretty rotten anyway.

I am not even sure that something like 19... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ was better, as White has a strong attack all the same. 20.f4! is the most obvious move, planning a lot of evil. After the critical 20... $\mathbb{Q}axb3$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ $\mathbb{W}xb3$ 22.f5! there are many variations that I could show, all leading to a win for White, but I am going to ask you to take my word for it.

19... $\mathbb{E}fe8$ with the idea of vacating this square for pieces that can actually defend was probably better, though White is much better after 20. $\mathbb{B}d3!$.



20. $\mathbb{B}d3!!$

Though this was planned, I have not been able to contain my excitement over the attack carried out by Krasenkow in this game. Many people consider chess boring, especially those who do not play it. The main reason for this is of course that they do not understand it. To them there is nothing more boring than staring at some wooden pieces for hours and once in a while moving some of them around. If this was my experience of chess as well, I would be the most bored of all. But luckily I can unlock many of the secret meanings of these wooden pieces on the board and see various possible developments and the intentions, conflicts and tension of the position.

In the same way as we have to understand the basic strategies of the game in order for it to become interesting at all, we can also learn to appreciate the game more and more by looking deeper than a natural surface impression. Take for example this game. I did not see it in any of the reports from the Isle of Man tournament, as neither Krasenkow nor the game ended in the most spectacular way. However, if you look deeper, you will see that Krasenkow performed outstandingly at the Isle of Man, at least in this game, and that his ideas here were comparable to those of Kasparov's games elsewhere in this book.

It is because chess takes so much effort to fully appreciate it that it is not a more popular sport, and because there are still some who want to know more about the game that I have a job.

The rook move is aiming at playing $\mathbb{B}h3$ soon, attacking the weakest square on h7. It allows Black to take on d4, but after careful appreciation he decided to do so with the queen, effectively resigning the game, but also ruining Krasenkow's chance of creating a full-blown masterpiece.

After 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb3?$ $\mathbb{W}xb3$ Black would be better. But there is a moment of opportunity before we get that far, and Krasenkow is able to squeeze a winning attack in there.

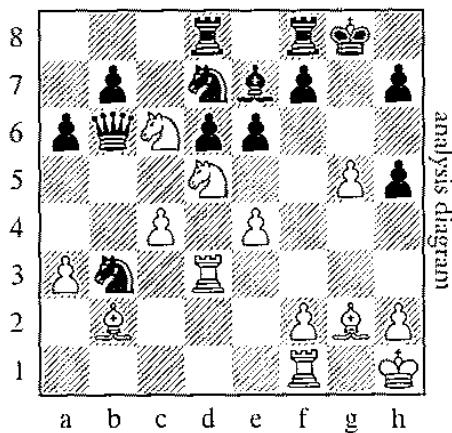
20... $\mathbb{W}xd4$

A bit of a shame, but I am sure that Krasenkow was happy to win the game. There are other lines that need to be mentioned, though I should say that I once again have cut away a lot of details.

The basic idea in most lines is to play $\mathbb{Q}d5$, attacking the queen, $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ when it leads to mate, and $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ to eliminate the pawn's ability to defend the king.

20... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ illustrates the theme.

20...g6 allows us to see the same theme again. White wins with 21.Qd5! with the twist 21...gxh5 22.Qxc6!



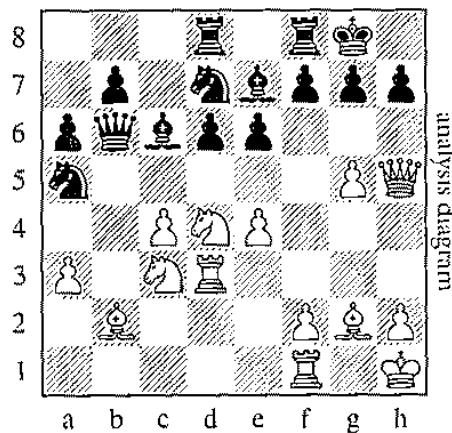
analysis diagram

and he wins material or delivers mate.

The most tenacious defence seems to be retreating with the knight.

20...Qa5!?

White has many good moves, but only one direct win, which can be reached in two different ways.



analysis diagram

21.Qd5!!

21.Qxc6 Qxc6 22.Qh3 h6 23.Qa4 Wa5! is not completely clear. 21.Qf5 however simply transposes.

21...Qxd5

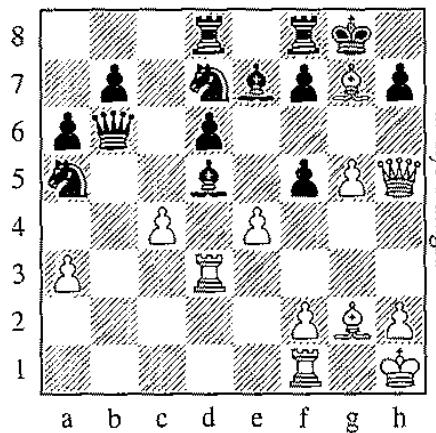
21...exd5 22.Qf5! is just over. Next Qh3. 22.Qf5!!

Black is not given a moment's chance to recover.

22...exf5

And now follows the point of these two sacrifices, to clear the long diagonal for the bishop so that it can sacrifice itself too.

23.Qxg7!!



analysis diagram

Yes, I cannot resist giving this line four !! in a row. It is just that great. And if the game only included one of these moves, !! would not look out of place, which means that the moves really deserve them. 23...Bfe8 is in principle the best defence here, but it is actually no defence at all. And after

23...Qxg7

White follows up with

24.Wh6† Qg8 25.Qh3

with mate to come, illustrating just how ineffective the black pieces are in the centre.

21.Qxd4

White has won the queen and wins the game effortlessly.

21...Qxd4 22.Qd5 exd5 23.exd5 Qe6 24.f4 Qxf4 25.Bxf4 Ra4 26.Qe4 f5 27.gxf6 Qxf6 28.Qxf6 Bxf6 29.Wxh7† Qf8 30.Qg6

1-0

With the continued success of Magnus Carlsen many forget about the other young players reaching for the top these days. Two that require special attention are Teimour Radjabov from Azerbaijan and Sergey Karjakin from Ukraine. Both have proven their worth,

Radjabov by winning Wijk aan Zee 2007 and Karjakin by reaching the semi-final in the 2007 edition of the World Cup. At the moment they have similar playing styles with well-prepared novelties, sharp openings and some limitations when it comes to more technical aspects of the game. Luckily this is not our area of interest here. Radjabov sacrifices two pawns in the opening, reviving a variation that had been out of use for decades and as a result of this game became popular for a short while. Karjakin reacts reasonably, but at the moment his king comes under direct attack he commits a bad mistake and is completely overrun.

Teimour Radjabov – Sergey Karjakin

Sicilian Najdorf
Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2006

1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6
5.Qc3 a6 6.Qg5

Radjabov is one of several GM's who are pushing this ancient line forward. Another is the German champion Thomas Luther, who wrote the chapter on this line in *Experts vs. the Sicilian*.

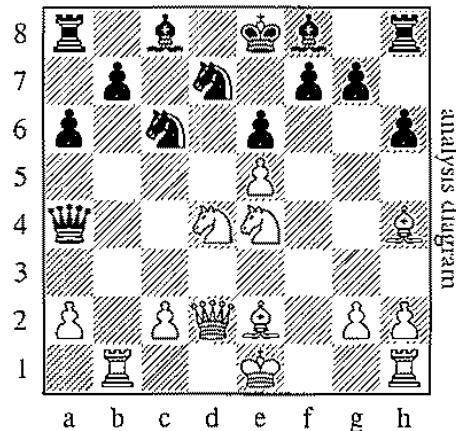
6...e6 7.f4 Qb6 8.Qd2 Qxb2 9.Qb1 Qa3
10.e5!?

The new way to play this line – and the very old way as well.

10.f5 Qc6 11.fxe6 fxe6 12.Qxc6 bxc6 13.e5
dxe5 14.Qxf6 gxf6 15.Qe4 Qxa2 is more or
less fully established as leading to a draw by
force.

10...dxe5 11.fxe5 Qfd7 12.Qe4 h6 13.Qh4
Qxa2

In the Blitz World Championship in Israel in September 2006 the young Azeri won a quick game after 13...Qa4? 14.Qc2 Qc6:



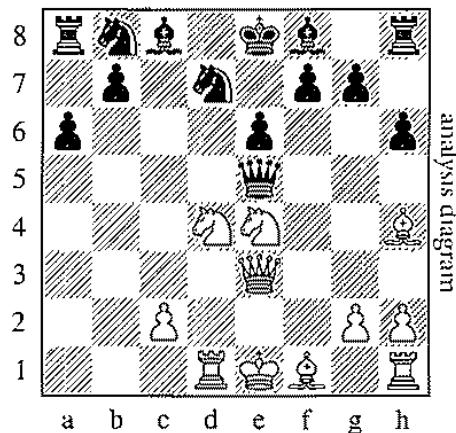
15.Qxe6! g5 16.Qf6# 1-0 Radjabov – Anand, Rishon Le Zion 2006.

14.Qd1

This is the modern way to play this line. White never fully recovered from 14.Qb3 Wa1# 15.Qf2 Wa4 16.Qb5 axb5 17.Qxb5 Qc5# 18.Qxc5 Wxh4# 19.g3 Wd8 in Korchnoi – Tolush, Riga 1958.

14...Qb2

A new move at the time. A game played not long before our main game started with 14...Qd5 15.Qe3 Qxe5 (Docx – Roeder, Belgium 2006).



This was later suggested by Kasparov, but before this I suggested 16.Qe2, when I had first annotated this game for *Chess Monthly*. It later became all the rage, being tested by Motylev, Anand and Shirov, as well as in a computer game.

One of these games went 16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 18. $\mathbb{B}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}a5\uparrow$ 19. $\mathbb{B}d2$ 0-0 20. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 21.0-0 f5 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ b5 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ exf5 26. $\mathbb{B}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 1-0 Shirov – Guliyev, Calatrava 2007.

I do not want to make any half-hearted suggestions or conclusions about this line. What is gospel here at the time of writing will very likely be rubbish at the time of reading.

15. $\mathbb{W}e3$

15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ would favour Black. Without the queens on, White will really miss his pawns.

15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

15... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ is just greedy. Black needs to get some pieces out instead.

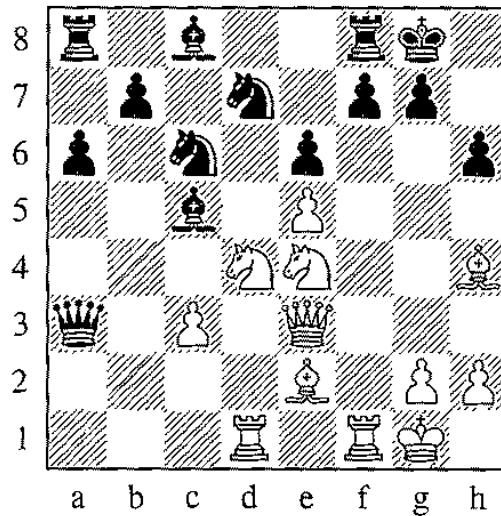
16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 17.c3 $\mathbb{W}a3!$

Fritz 10 wants to play 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 18.cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b4\uparrow$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}a3$, but the attacking position after 20. $\mathbb{B}d3$ $\mathbb{W}a4$ 21. $\mathbb{B}b1$ more than justifies the sacrificed pawns, as the later version of Deep Fritz 10 understands very well.

18.0-0 0-0

Black is showing no fear, or perhaps he sensed the necessity of entering the complications, as otherwise he would find it hard to develop his pieces.

White is faced with a very simple situation. He has sacrificed a pawn and everything to do with his pawn structure or similar positional considerations. He has no easy way to bring more pieces into the attack, so the next move is actually the only move and very easy to decide on. Without the knight check it is impossible for White to continue developing his attack, so whether it is correct or not is actually not so important, if we look at the matter from a practical point of view.



19. $\mathbb{Q}f6\uparrow!$

Black on the other hand has enough to think about. He can easily discount taking the knight with the pawn, as this would leave his king too open. But whether or not he should invite a pawn to f6 is another matter that needs careful consideration.

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

Karjakin must have found that his position would be untenable after 19... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ if White continues with 20. $\mathbb{W}e4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 21.exf6 g6 22. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ when Black can get hurt. White is preparing to play $\mathbb{B}d3-h3$, $\mathbb{W}h4$ and $\mathbb{Q}e3$. It is hard to see an easy way for Black to defend the h6-pawn, which is sitting on what is clearly the weakest square in his position. There is no reason or sense in going deeper than this, if the alternative offers a decent position.

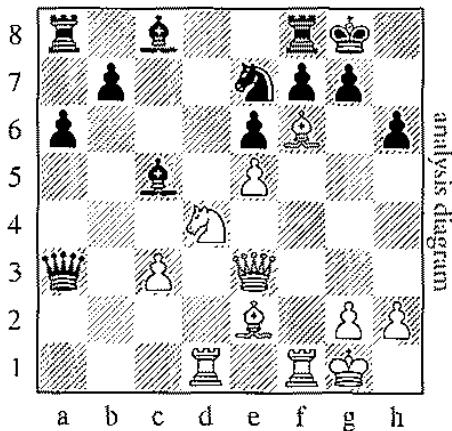
20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Of course. The pawn is not going to do as much damage on f6 and when Radjabov is not counting pawns, why should he be counting pieces?

20... $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$

This knight takes knight capture is wrong. The knight on d4 is not dangerous for Black, but the c6-knight would be very useful on the kingside.

The best move is logically to bring the knight to the kingside with 20... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$



analysis diagram

21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ when there is a lot to analyse. I did my best and came up with the temporary conclusion of equality through a draw by perpetual check. But it would be misleading to give the moves, as this might give the impression that I am in control and that this conclusion can be trusted. Usually I would not be afraid to publish analysis with mistakes, but in this case we are talking about a position of theoretical importance!

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

This leads to a lost position by force. I suspect that Karjakin missed 24.h4!. Tougher resistance was possible, but probably not enough to save the game.

The line I have looked at goes:

21... $b5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

White is slowly building up the attack. The core problem for Black is that the queen is too far away and the majority of the other pieces still in their starting positions. Now there are a number of interesting lines.

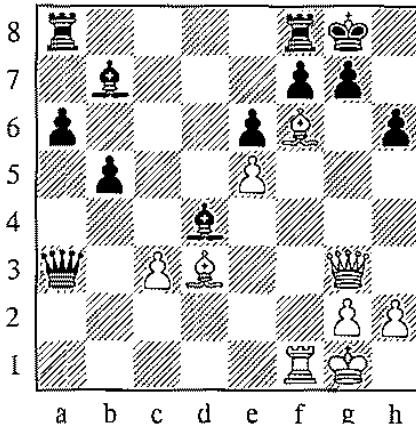
22... $\mathbb{Q}b7$

The most active and therefore also the best line.

22... $\mathbb{E}e8$ also shows the need for some kind of counterplay. Passive defence leads to situations like this: 23. $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4\#$ 24.cxd4 $g6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ when Black has no defence

against 26. $\mathbb{E}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 27. $\mathbb{E}h3$ $h5$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xh5$ $gxh5$ 29. $\mathbb{E}g3\#$.

23. $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4\#$



analysis diagram

24. $\mathbb{W}h1!!$

The star move. 24.cxd4 allows Black to escape with 24... $g6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{W}b2!$ 26. $\mathbb{E}f2$ $\mathbb{W}a1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{W}b2$ and it is not possible for White to continue the attack because of the threat of mate.

24... $g5$

24... $g6$ is met with 25. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$. The third rank is not open!

25.h4!

Here we have two interesting branches.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

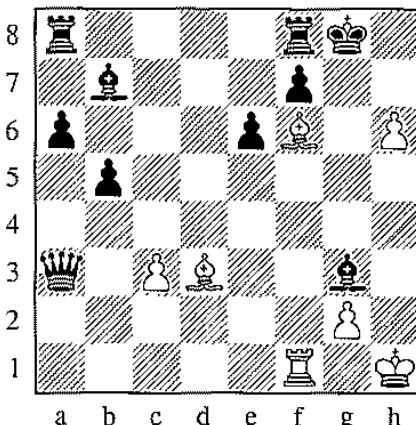
25... $\mathbb{W}b2$ offers more resistance, but White ends up with an extra piece in an ending he should win every time.

Instead after 25... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ White has the cool:

26.hxg5!! $\mathbb{Q}xg3$

26... $h5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ is too much to survive.

27.gxh6



analysis diagram

White wins. A fabulous line that illustrates how deep chess is. How difficult chess is can be illustrated with the fact that 22.♕ff4! h5 23.♕g4! leads directly to mate. It takes my computer a long time to work this out and I did not think of such a direct approach myself.

22.♕xd4 gxh6

Another option was to try to get the pieces out.

22...b5

This loses to a beautiful regrouping.

23.♕d3

Threatening ♕g4.

23...g6 24.♕e4!

24.♕e3 ♔h7 25.♕f3 ♕al† leads nowhere.

The king cannot hide.

24...♕b8

Other moves are possible, but none are sufficient.

25.♕d2 ♔h7 26.♕f3

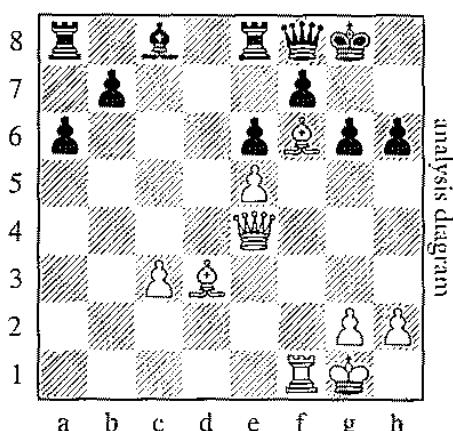
The king is safe on the 2nd rank and the attack decisive.

The best defence was pointed out in *Schach 64*.

22...♕e8!?

Still there is a way for White to win the game.

23.♕d3 ♕f8 24.♕e4 g6



25.♕f3!

Bringing in the last piece is always a good

idea. 25.h4 ♕d7 26.h5 ♕c6! was the idea mentioned as the main line in *Schach 64*.

25...♕e7

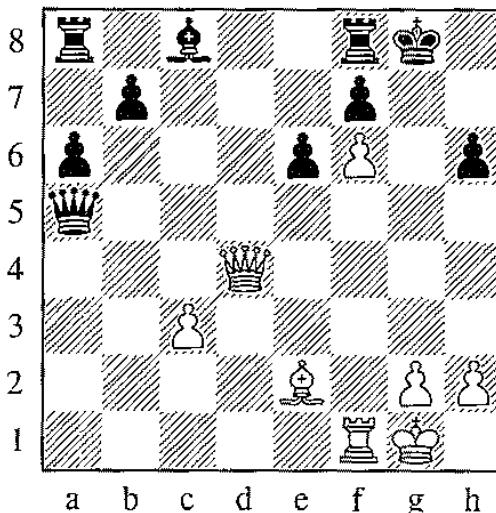
25...♔h7 26.♕g3 ♕g8 27.♕h4 leads to mate.

26.♕h3 ♕d7 27.♕e3 ♔h7 28.g4

White wins. There is no defence against 29.g5.

23.exf6 ♕a5

Or 23...e5 24.♕e3 ♕d8 25.♕xh6 ♕f8 26.♕g5† ♔h8 27.♕h4† ♕g8 28.♕f3 winning.



24.h4!

As said, Black probably overlooked this calm move, which eliminates Black's defensive idea of putting the queen on g5. Despite being a rook up, he does not have an adequate defence.

24...♔h7

This loses the queen, but there were no reasonable alternatives. 24...e5 25.♕e3 leads straight to mate, and 24...♕d8 loses to the following long line: 25.♕g4† ♔f8 26.♕g7† ♔e8 27.♕g8† ♔d7 28.♕xf7† ♕c6 29.♕f3† ♕c5 30.♕h5† ♕d5 31.♕xd5 exd5 32.f7 ♕d7 33.♕xh6 when Black will lose the endgame, which is not necessarily an improvement over the game.

25.♕d3† ♜f5 26.♗e1 ♜g8 27.♔h2 a5 28.g4 ♜xd3 29.♕xd3† ♔h8 30.♗e5 ♜xg4 31.♕h5 ♜g6 32.♕d8† ♔h7 33.♕e7

1–0

The next game could easily never have been seen, other than by the locals at the tournament in Lviv in Ukraine. I only noticed it because I have a friend who is also called Vovk.

The 10 player all-play-all event the game was played in was won by Belarusian GM Tihonov with 7/9. In second place with 5½ came a local 18-year-old IM, Yuri Vovk. Only one and a half years later Vovk is a strong GM, on his way to the 2600 barrier. Vovk's opponent is a Turkish IM and International who at the time lacked a completely sound opening repertoire.

In the game Black takes a lot of risks by bringing his only developed piece back to the eighth rank, with the intention of winning a tempo and putting it on a more active square. Unfortunately this gives White a lead in development and after a few moves it becomes clear that Black is struggling. Then White decides on a risky bishop sacrifice.

Yuri Vovk – Baris Esen

French, Steinitz Variation

Levikov Memorial, Lviv 2006

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘b3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 a6

One of the two main options here. The other, 7...cx d4 8.♘xd4 ♘c5 9.♕d2 0–0 10.0–0–0 a6, is under constant debate. To me Black looks okay, but with only a pair of pawns exchanged there is a broad range of possibilities.

8.♕d2 b5 9.a3!

The modern treatment.

9...cx d4?

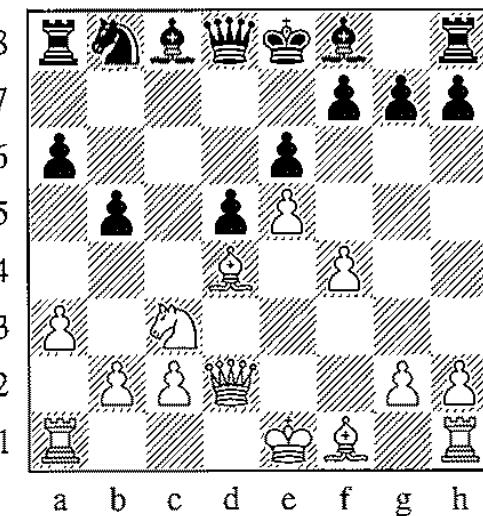
This idea is dubious. Black is relieving White of the problems with the tension in the

centre and giving him a solid grip over a lot of important squares – not to mention the huge loss of time.

More relevant options are: 9...g5!? was Morozevich's idea, but to me it does not look sound. After 10.fxg5 cxd4 11.♘xd4! ♘cxe5 12.♘d3 Black has a lot of central pawns, but not necessarily a sound structure. One game went: 12...♗b7 13.0–0 ♜c7 14.♔h1 ♗g7 15.♗ae1 0–0 16.♘ce2! Going to h5. 16...♘c4 17.♘xc4 dxc4 18.♗g3 c3 19.bxc3 ♜ac8 20.♘h5 ♜xc3 21.♘xc3 ♜xc3 22.♘xg7 And because of 22...♗xg7 23.♘xe6†! Black played 22...♗xe3, but lost all the same, Motylev – Volkov, Moscow 2005.

9...♗b6 10.♘e2! c4 11.g4 h5 12.gxh5 ♜xh5 13.♘g3 ♜h8 This position is probably the tabiya of 7...a6 at the moment. One famous game continued 14.f5 exf5 15.♘xf5 ♘f6 16.♘g3 ♘g4 17.♘f4 ♘e6 and Black was probably doing better than Kasparov wanted to admit in his annotations, infuriated by his opponent receiving the best game prize for something he felt was a simple blunder, Kasparov – Radjabov, Linares 2003.

10.♘xd4 ♘xd4 11.♘xd4 ♘b8



Eleven moves and Black has still not managed to get any pieces away from their starting positions, except that the b8-knight started on g8! This can hardly be healthy.

12. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$

f2 is traditionally a good square for the queen and this move seems to refute the whole line. Having said that, White is also better after more stereotypical moves such as 12. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ with a small plus.

12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$

The first critical moment of the game from White's perspective, as a move such as 12. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ is a reflex-move for a player of this level. What should White's objectives be? Before we can answer this question it makes sense to go through a few considerations.

First of all he has a good pawn structure, which can be exploited positionally with the breaks a3-a4 or f4-f5. And Black is not without chances of creating counterplay with ...b4 and ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ eventually. White is leading on piece activity and development, so it would make sense to exploit this before it disappears. There are two ways of doing this. The first is to finish development, the second is to strike immediately.

I am in favour of always playing the principled move if in doubt between two options. And one of the key rules in chess is to include all your pieces in your plans. For me this would mean developing the pieces before attacking – for the young Ukrainian it means sacrificing them!

15. $\mathbb{Q}xb5?$

Certainly an admirable decision, but despite common perception to the contrary, the rules of chess are not successfully violated on a daily basis. The examples where grandmasters are punished for violating them seem to me to be clearly in the majority compared to those

where they are successful in doing so. This does not mean that chess is a game where we can mechanically follow simple rules of thumb. The reason why modern chess is so much more complex than chess from the classical period is that more players are willing to trade structural deficits for dynamic advantages. It is in the evaluation of these unbalanced trade-offs that calculation has become so much more important.

In this position, however, White would have been better off completing his development before brutally assaulting his opponent (who had already violated the rules of chess by neglecting his development). 15. 0–0! $\mathbb{B}b8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ (16. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{B}xb6$ 17. $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18. b4 $\mathbb{Q}g4$) It is hard to imagine that Black could have a more rigid pawn structure, and as his pieces are all inactive, White's plus is beyond debate.

15. $\mathbb{Q}e2?$ with a more positional approach was also a good move.

15... $\mathbb{B}b8$!

Often the way to refute a sacrifice is to accept it, but then again, sometimes it is not. Here this is a good move, though played with a faulty idea.

However, other ideas did exist:

15... $\mathbb{B}b8?$

Quite logical. The white bishops are badly placed and b2 is certainly White's Achilles' heel, so this move deserves consideration. The minus is that Black does not win a piece – the plus that White does have some problems with his coordination.

16. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

Keeping an eye on his majesty.

16. $\mathbb{Q}d3?$ is mechanical and would allow Black to get into a slightly better position after 16... $\mathbb{B}b7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$

19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ and Black has a slightly better structure.

16... $\mathbb{W}b7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$
19. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

The most testing. It was possible to play 19. $\mathbb{B}b1$, but after 19... $\mathbb{W}xb1\#$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb1\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ I see nothing more than a perpetual for White.

19... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$

White continues to use his lead in development, but it appears that the two bishops are enough counterweight for Black to keep the scales balanced. Here is a possible variation:

21... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ $g5!$ 27. $f\times g5$

27. $g3!?$ is probably better.

27... $h6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}a2!$

Getting the knight into action. 28. $g\times h6$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 29. $h3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 30. $g4$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ and Black is doing well.

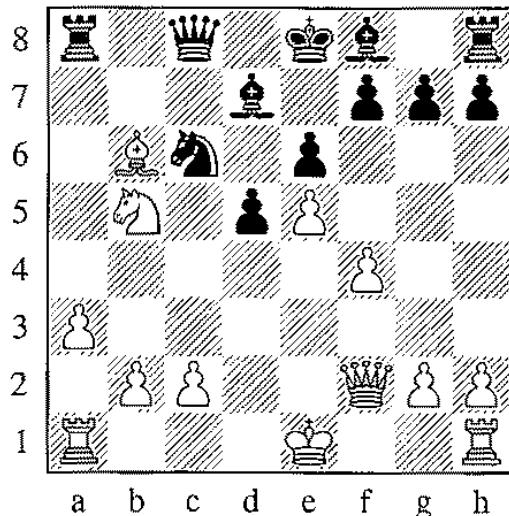
28... $h\times g5$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}xh2!$

Black is not really losing a piece.

30. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2\#$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xc7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$
33. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$
36. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}g3\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ $d4$

And the rook endgame is a draw despite White's extra pawn, because of the black pieces' activity.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$



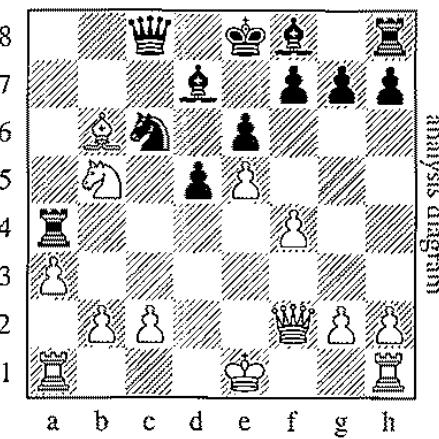
This time it is Black who has a big choice. The first thing we do in such a situation is get an overview of the actual choice. I have a feeling that Black got convinced by the flashy character of one of the options that this was indeed the move he HAD to play. However, a closer look would have revealed that this move is not only questionable, it is also highly impractical.

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

A very bad choice. Black accepts the double rook sacrifice, after which he can only hope that White does not win by force. It would have been much more practical to stay away from this "natural flow" of the position. By the way, this is one of the big differences between the romantic chess occasionally played in the 19th century, where everything was accepted, and the defensive strategies implemented by Steinitz, Lasker and others of the early greats, who accepted most but not all of the offered material.

In this position Black should have seriously considered either one of the pawn moves, 16... $f6$ or 16... $f5$, both leading to similar/identical play, with a kind of equality, or what I consider to be the best move:

16... $\mathbb{Q}a4!$



Suddenly it is White who has to prove something. He has sacrificed a piece and if

given time Black will certainly get his king into safety or create real counterplay.

White now has the same choice as before: strike immediately or prepare the attack by finishing his development. Let's look at them one at a time.

a) 17. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$

This move is very tempting as the king looks stupid on e7. But as Black is probably more likely to play ...f5 and ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ than to attempt castling, the real value of this move is probably to be found in its more direct qualities.

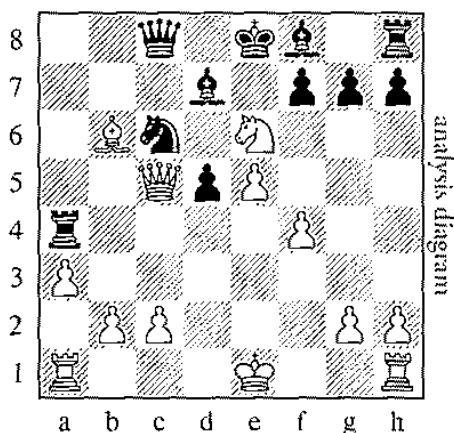
17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$

18.0–0?! makes less sense than on move 17. Having given the check on c7 White has achieved very little, but has lost some of his flexibility (options such as $\mathbb{Q}c3$ in particular). A possible line that allows Black to take over the initiative by returning a piece is 18...f5! 19.b3 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$! 21. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ and Black is better because of his better placed pieces and because of the superiority of the central pawns, though the position remains very unbalanced and therefore hard to evaluate.

18... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$

Ideas such as 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ make little sense. The black king is quite safe and half of the white pieces are still in their starting positions.

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



20. $\mathbb{Q}xf8\#!$

This attractive sacrifice seems forced. 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}e4\#!$ would give Black an extra piece in a messy position where pawns are likely to be less relevant.

20... $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}b6\#$

Now Black can choose between allowing a perpetual check or playing an unclear endgame with:

23... $\mathbb{Q}c7\?!$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xc7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$

The chances are probably somewhere around equal, but I would risk it with Black. To me White looks unlikely to win.

b) 17.0–0!

This appears once again to be the better option, though this time only objectively so. White keeps the threat of $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$, but also the right to return to c3, chasing the rook.

17...f5!

The king needs the f7-square.

After 17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ the king will be in the way on f8; 18. b3! $\mathbb{Q}a5$ (18... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ with decent chances of gaining an advantage. Note 19... $\mathbb{Q}d4\?!$ is flashy, but unsound after 20. $\mathbb{Q}h1\!)$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20. f5! This break is very important. White's plusses are still based on his better coordination and development, so the attack has to happen now. After 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 24. b4 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ White appears to be better.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

18. b3 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and everything is going in the wrong direction.

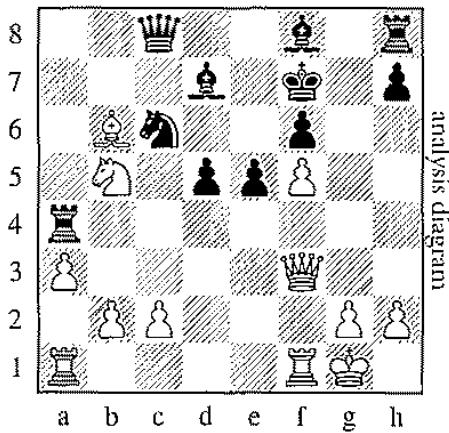
18... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 19. f5!

White should try to use the moment, and this is done by opening the position.

19. b3 $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ looks good for Black. White cannot effectively push the pawns forward, while it is not hard to imagine that Black will be able to bring his pieces to life eventually.

19...e5 20.♗f3 ♖f7

20...♗b7? is worse. After 21.♕c7† ♔d8 22.♖xd5† ♔c8 23.♗c3 White's prospects look genuine.



21.b4!

Shutting out the rook. Once again White keeps flexibility, this time between ♖xd5† and ♘h5†.

21...♘xb4!!?

Very tactical. 21...♗g8 also leads to equality, but let's stick to one variation.

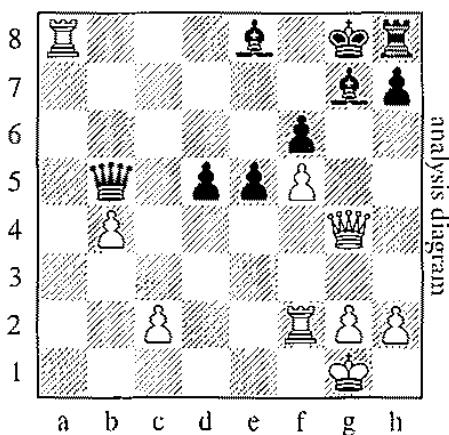
22.axb4 ♖c6 23.♗h5†

23.♗xa4 ♖xb6† 24.♗f2 ♗xb5 25.♗xd5† ♘g7 26.♗a5 ♗e8 might give Black the better chances, if he manages to untangle himself.

23...♗g8 24.♗g4† ♗g7!?

24...♗f7 is a draw immediately.

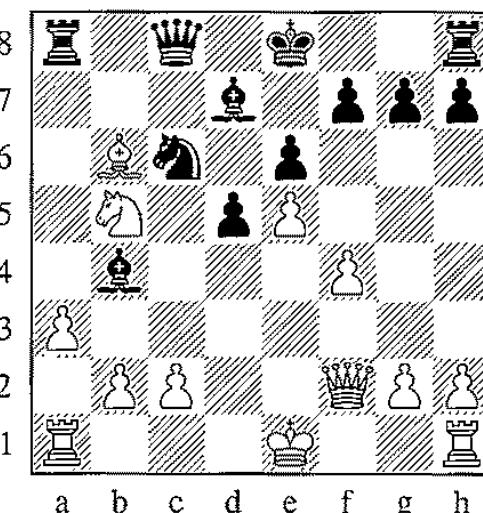
25.♗xa4 ♖xb6† 26.♗f2 ♗xb5 27.♗a8† ♗e8



28.♗a7 ♗d7 29.♗a8†

With a draw by repetition.

It seems both lines lead to a draw, so why do I claim that 17.0–0 is the better move? The difference is that at the end of the line this does not allow Black to go for a win in an equal position, but maybe just as importantly, because it is good attacking technique. White should strive towards keeping his options open and finish his development before making committal decisions, if nothing else then because we tend to repeat our decisions (for that reason I am quite sure that Vovk was planning 17.♗c7†). But at the end of the day, this is of course mainly an opinion on what is good chess culture and not something I have managed to prove in analysis beyond all doubt.



17.axb4!!

The risk taken on move 15 was of course justified by this great moment. Who would not want to play a double rook sacrifice and walk in the footsteps of the giants of the past? Especially when the alternative looks so sullen.

17.c3? is met strongly by a developing move. 17...0–0! (17...♗xe5?! is possible, but though 18.fxe5 ♗xb5 19.cxb4 ♗xa3! looks very flashy, it is probably nothing special after 20.♗b1! ♗a2 21.♗c5 when Black will regret not castling when he had the chance, and the position is

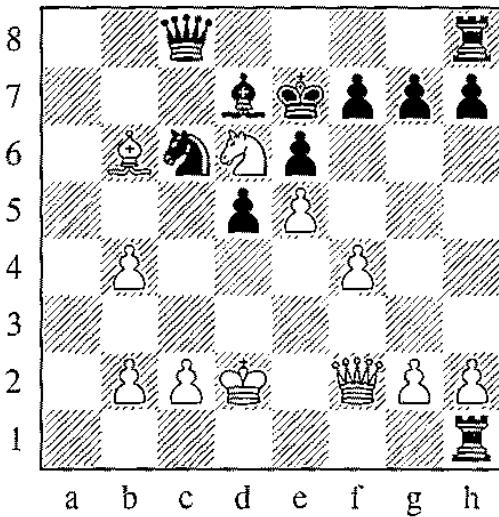
only unclear.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ (18. $\mathbb{Q}xb4?$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4!$ is the stuff nightmares are made of.) 18... $\mathbb{B}xa3!!$ "The decider". 19. $\mathbb{B}xa3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 20. $bxa3$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 21. 0-0 $\mathbb{B}b8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}xc7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ $\mathbb{W}xb8$ Black has some advantage, but if it gives him real winning chances is for a better player than I to decide.

17... $\mathbb{B}xa1\#$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}xh1?$

Walking in the footsteps of the numpties of the past... Black does not seem to want to defend himself in this game. This is often done by realising what the forced variations are, and then sidestepping them when they lead directly to doom.

18... 0-0 was necessary. After 19. $\mathbb{B}xa1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 20. $fxe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ White is a pawn up, but still has real problems converting the advantage due to the opposite-coloured bishops and the exposed king's position.

19. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$



20. $\mathbb{W}c5!!$

Black surely did not overlook this move. Black has been a naughty and greedy boy, so Mum is preparing to discipline him with either $\mathbb{Q}xc8\#$ or $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ and $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ mate.

20... $\mathbb{W}f8$

Maybe this is the path of least resistance? However, as all roads lead to the Coliseum and being torn apart by a wild animal, it is hardly prudent to criticise Black's play anymore.

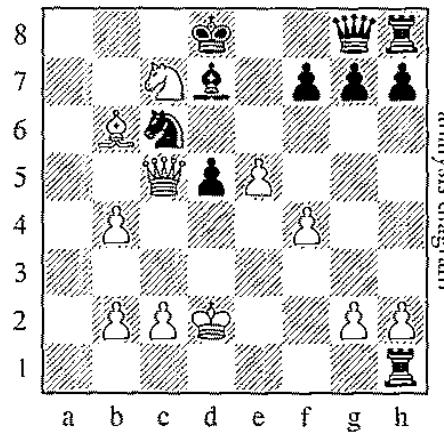
20... $\mathbb{W}g8$

This keeps the queen on the board. Here we actually have a perfect example of the trade-off of static for dynamic values. White has sacrificed two rooks, but in return Black has been forced to place them in the corners far from the scene of the action. Not surprisingly White is in no great hurry and wins after:

21. $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Black can now either choose to be mated elegantly after 23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xd7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 26. $\mathbb{W}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 28. $\mathbb{W}b7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 29. $b3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 30. $c3$ mate or find himself lost for moves after.

24. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$



25. $b5!$

Black is haunted by his inability to come to the king's rescue with his artillery. It would be a shame to add to this picture of perfection.

In the game White won mechanically.

21. $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$
24. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{B}xf8$ 25. $b5$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 26. $\mathbb{W}c7$

The problems on the dark squares persist.

26... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 27. $\mathbb{W}b8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 28. $\mathbb{W}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 29. $f5$

xf1 30.fxe6 fxe6 31.Qc5

Black resigned.

1-0

The next game is an attacking game where the attack should not have succeeded. Black plays the opening dubiously, leaving too many weaknesses in his position and wasting too much time. But chess is difficult and it turns out not to be a trivial matter to punish Black for the liberties he has taken with his position. When White fails to find a difficult but beautiful win, he suddenly has to defend.

The players are:

White: Konstantin Landa, Russian GM with a postal address in Germany for some years now. A polite and educated man and a very strong chess player.

Black: Frederico Manca, Italian IM with a razor-sharp style and quite a lot of talent, but beyond the years where improvement to higher levels are most often seen.

Konstantin Landa – Frederico Manca

King's Indian Defence

Reggio Emilia 2007

1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ g6 3.c4 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 0-0
5.e4 d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e5 7.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 8.d5 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 9.b4

The Bayonet Attack is the most popular line these days. The main idea is that after 9... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}e1!$ (as found by Ivan Sokolov) 10... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ White is better. In our game Manca plays a line that at best can be called risky, but offers a lot of practical winning chances for the risk taken.

9... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$ 10.c5 f5 11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

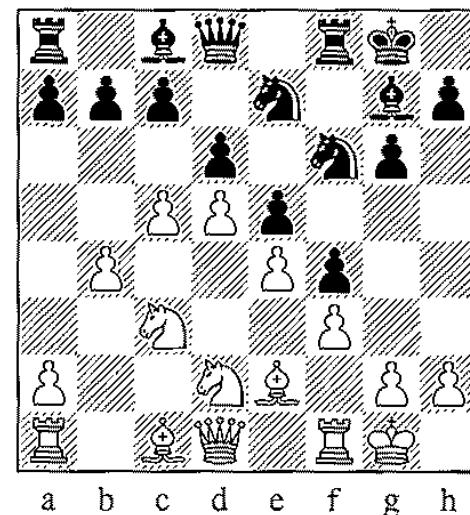
With this move the position transposes to what is usually thought of as 9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ territory.

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

In order to force White to play f3, without

which ...f4 is ill-advised on account of $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ and White will benefit most from the exchange of the bishops.

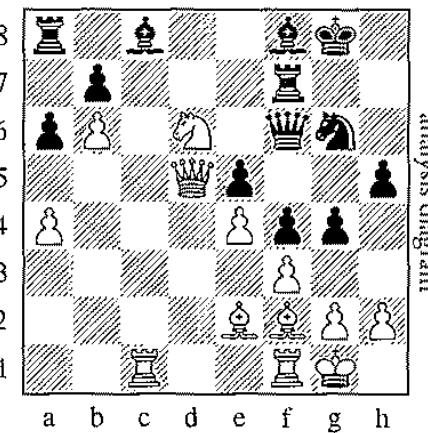
12.f3 f4



13. $\mathbb{Q}a3$

One of the two main options. White does not waste time by advancing the a-pawn but immediately initiates his attack on the d-pawn.

The other main line goes: 13.a4 g5 14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 16.b5 dxc5? (16... $\mathbb{Q}f8$) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ h5 18.d6? (18.a5 g4 19.b6 g3 20. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ has been popular so far. Golubev suggests 20... $\mathbb{Q}f8?$ as a possible improvement for Black.) 18... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ cxd6 20.b6 a6 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ g4 Black already has a good game. 24. $\mathbb{Q}xd6?$



24... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ g3! 27.hxg3 fxg3 28. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{E}c8!$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}xb6\#$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{E}xc5$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}c4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 35.g3 $\mathbb{E}c1!$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xa4$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}c2\#$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{W}d3$

0–1 Bunzmann – Golubev, Bethune 2002.

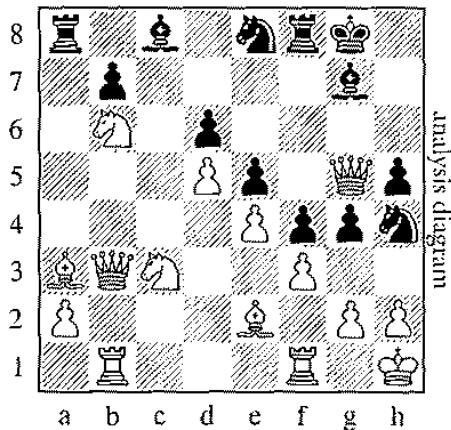
13...g5 14.b5!!?

A very rare option. Usually White plays:

14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 15.b5

But the move in the game should simply transpose. Now the main line goes:

15... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 16.b6 axb6 17.cxb6 cxb6 18. $\mathbb{W}b3$ h5 19. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ g4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$



analysis diagram

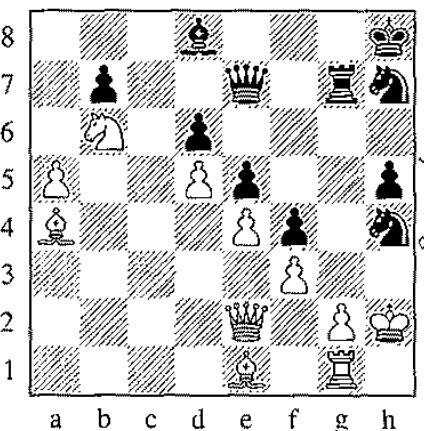
22. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$

22.fxg4?? is possibly the critical option, while 22. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ g3 is very muddy. Golubev gives the following possible line in his book: 23. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 24. $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{W}h4\#$ and Black is winning due to 27.h3 g2?? 28. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{W}g3$ with immediate mate.

22... $\mathbb{E}xc8$ 23. $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{E}f7$ 24. $\mathbb{E}bc1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ did not work any better in this game played 13 years later. 25... $\mathbb{E}xc1$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{E}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 28.a4 $\mathbb{W}g6$ 29. $\mathbb{W}e1$ g3 30.h3 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 31.fxg4 hxg4 32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ (32. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ and Black wins) 32...gxh3 33.gxh3 f3 34. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ g2?? 36. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ f2 38. $\mathbb{W}xf2$ $\mathbb{W}xf2$ and White resigned because of 39. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$

$\mathbb{Q}f3$ mate, 0–1 Pavlov – Svirjov, Alushta 2004.

25... $\mathbb{E}xc1$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{E}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 30. $\mathbb{W}f1$ g3 31. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{E}c7$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 33.a4 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 34.a5 $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 35. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{E}g7$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}e8$ gxh2 38. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}a4$



analysis diagram

39... $\mathbb{E}g3\#$!!

An amazing combination.

40. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 41. $\mathbb{E}c1$

41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ fxg3?? 43. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ mate.

41...fxg3?? 42. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 43. $\mathbb{W}b5$ $\mathbb{W}h2\#$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}h1\#$ 45. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xg2\#$

0–1 Bogdanovski – Golubev, Skopje 1991.

14...b6??

We should not move our pawns on the flank where we are weaker unless there are clear gains to be received from doing so. Here the gains from preventing b5-b6 breaking up the black queenside are not greater than the concession of the c6-square to White's general amusement; which in turn means that d6 will suffer.

Best was 14... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ transposing to the mess in the Golubev game above. As we shall see, White is able to play rather odd moves without giving away his advantage in what follows.

15.cxd6 cxd6 16. $\mathbb{E}c1\#$??

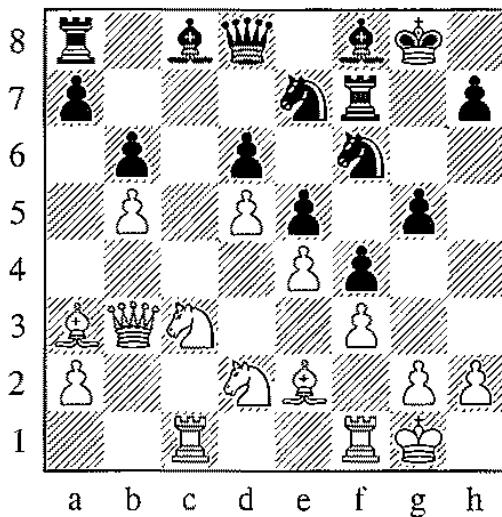
White is in no hurry. Being a very experienced player he knows full well that Black wants to protect d6 with the bishop and not the knight, but he must have gathered that White can take this luxury.

16. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ is the most natural. Black will have to play 16... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ when ...g4 is harder to realise. After 17. $\mathbb{E}c1$ White is destined to be better, though 17... $\mathbb{E}f6!?$ is worth a go.

16... $\mathbb{E}f7$ 17. $\mathbb{W}b3!?$

17. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ was still possible.

17... $\mathbb{Q}f8$



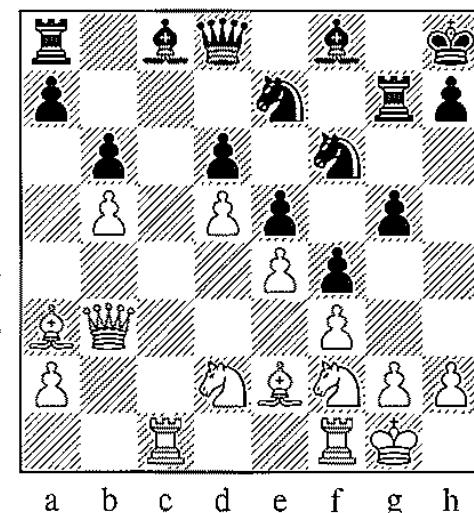
18. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$

Landa decides that the knight is in the way and will be more useful on f2. 18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ makes no sense now. Black can play 18... $\mathbb{Q}g6$.

18... $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Black could play 18...g4! already, though after 19. $\mathbb{E}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 22. $\mathbb{E}xf2$ it is not obvious that he has managed to inflict much damage. For this reason it makes sense to bring in the rook first. On the other hand Black suffers more from the exchange of h-pawns in the game and it is likely that having been given the chance to play his break, he should have done so.

19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}h8?$



I reckon that this is Black's only real mistake in the game. Though the g-file is useful in what follows, the king is not safe on h8, which is of higher importance.

20. $\mathbb{E}fd1$

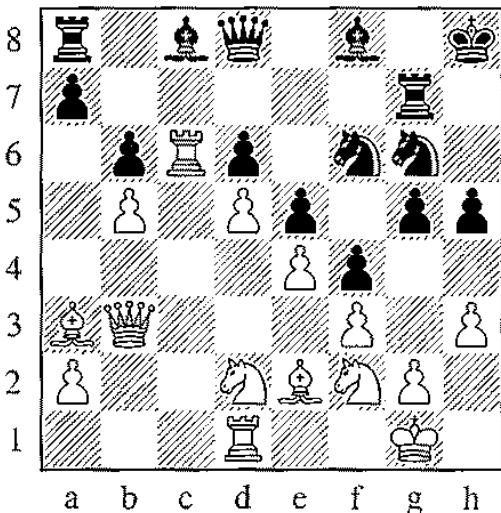
Landa wants Black to show his cards and subtly improves his rook. From a dogmatic standpoint it is hard to believe that this is the best move in the position, though Landa of course did not play this move arbitrarily; he wants to sacrifice the exchange with $\mathbb{E}c6$, recapture with $dxc6$ and dominate on the light squares.

20. $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ was possibly stronger. The idea is to follow up with either a2-a4 or (especially) $\mathbb{W}a3$ to put pressure on d6 with the queen behind and not in front of the bishop, which is obviously handy when staring down the diagonal at the f8-bishop.

20... $h5$ 21. $h3$

Attacking d6 is not so easy with the queen in front of the bishop. The white pieces are not well placed after 21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 22. $\mathbb{W}b4$ $g4!$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd6!?$ $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ 24. $\mathbb{E}c6$ $gxf3$ 25. $\mathbb{E}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ and Black is holding all the trumps.

21... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 22. $\mathbb{E}c6$



We can safely assume that Landa thought things were going as planned around here.

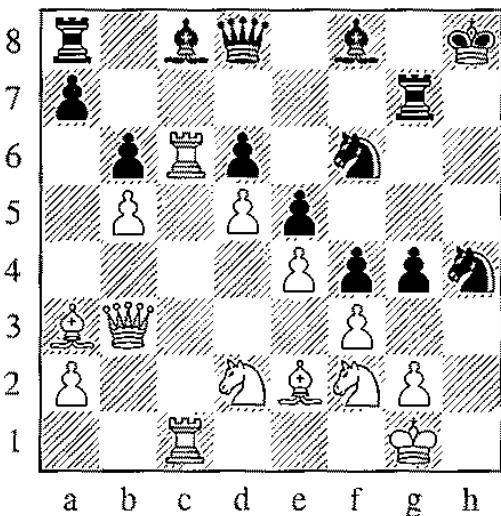
22...Qh4

22...Qd7 would of course not chase the rook away. For instance 23.Qxd6 Qxc6 24.Qxf8 would give White a superior position despite the loss of the exchange. Look at those pawns.

23.Qdc1!

Both players are doing the same thing, manoeuvring the pieces into the best possible position before striking. White can possibly improve his position further, but the only move that would seriously help Black on the kingside is the rather embarrassing 23...Qg8?.

23...g4 24.hxg4 hxg4



25.Qc3?

White misses his great moment. He could have exploited the misplacement of the king on h8 with the standard reaction:

25.fxg4 Qxg4

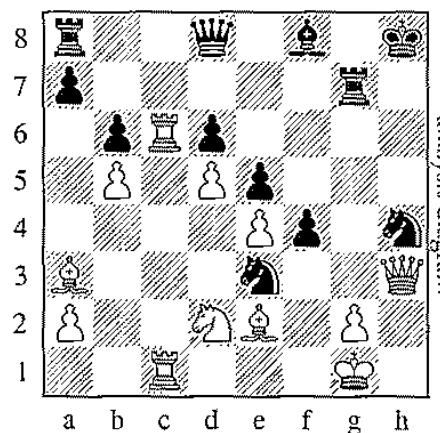
25...Qxg4 26.Qxc8!

26.Qxg4 Qxg4 27.Qh3!

It takes some time for the computer to catch up and realise that Black does not have a great attack, but instead is in great trouble. Even if g2 falls, the white king will be safer on the h-file than the black one.

27...Qe3

Objectively better might be 27...Qf2 28.Qxf2 Qxg2†, but even 29.Qxg2 Qxg2 30.Qxg2 is surely better for White.



28.Qxd6!!

Possibly the move that Landa overlooked.

28.Qc8 Qxc8 29.Qxc8 Qxg2† 30.Qh1 Qg3! is not clear.

28...Qg5

28...Qxd6 29.Qc8 with a clear or winning advantage is the main point of the last move. The black artillery pointing down the g-file looks impressive, but the kamikaze bishop has not played its role yet.

29.Qxe5!! Qxe5 30.Qf3 Qxc4 31.Qxh4 Qg8 32.Qf3

White has consolidated g2 and thereby his king's position, and can now concentrate on collecting his advantages.

25...♝d7!

Black is back in the game.

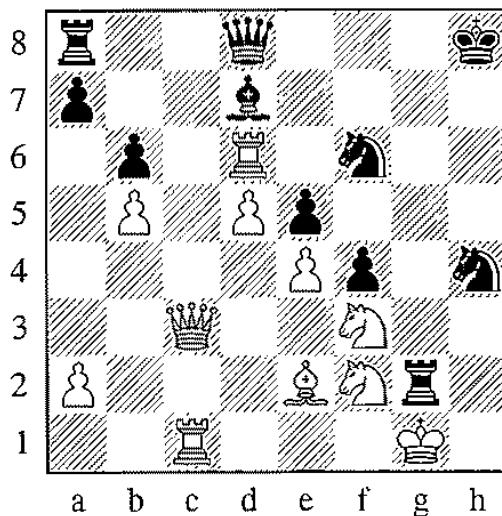
26.♝xd6

This was meant to be the crowning of White's strategy, but with a coming black breakthrough on the kingside the d6-pawn seems less important. On 26.fxg4 Black has 26...♛xg4! now.

26...♝xd6 27.♝xd6 gxf3 28.♝xf3!

An accurate decision. After 28.♝xf3? ♜e7! with the threats ...♝ag8 and/or ...♛xg2 would give White a hard time.

28...♝xg2†

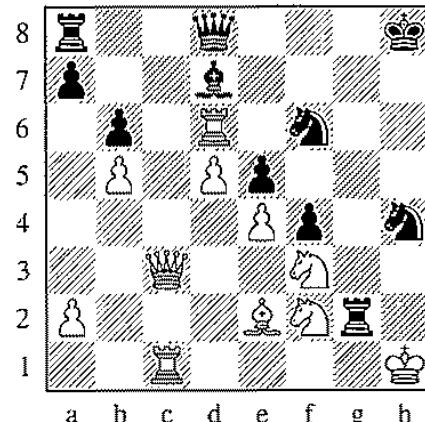


After a fairly eventful game in positional terms we have now come to the most interesting phase, where the shadowboxing comes to an end and real punches are exchanged.

29.♚f1??

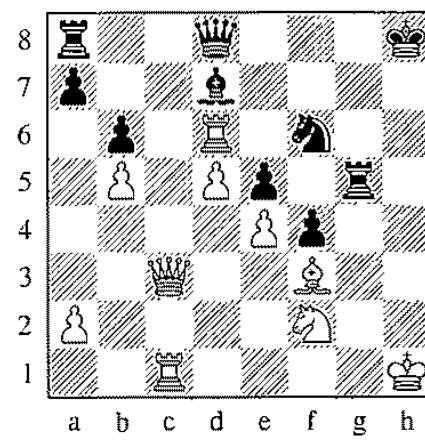
A horrible blunder that indicates time trouble or just simple chess blindness. Black now wins trivially.

29.♚h1 was the only move. Now Black has two equally good options, as 29...♝xf2?? loses to 30.♛xe5, e.g. 30...♛xe4 31.♜g1 with curtain fall.



a) 29...♝xf3 30.♝xf3 ♜g5

30...♝xf2 looks too dangerous, but after 31.♛xe5 ♜xf3 32.♝xf6 Black can draw with 32...♝h3† 33.♝g2 ♜g8†! 34.♝g6† ♛h7 35.♝xg8 ♜xg8† 36.♞f2 ♜h2† 37.♝f3 ♜h3† 38.♞e2?! ♜g2† 39.♞f1 f3 and White has to deliver perpetual check.



White has to be inventive to find the draw.

31.♝g4!

31.♝h3?! ♜g3 32.♛xe5 ♜xh3† 33.♝g1 ♜h6 looks terribly unclear and might favour Black.

31...♛xg4 32.♛h3† ♜g8 33.♝xg4 ♜xg4

34.♝h6

34.♛xg4†?! leads to a slightly worse rook endgame.

34...♛g5

Surprisingly White has enough compensation for the piece to force a draw.

35.♝h8† ♜f7 36.♝h7† ♜f8

36...♛g6?? 37.♝xd7!

37. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$
40. $\mathbb{Q}h7!$

The threat of mate is often as strong as a check!

40... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

41.. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ also leads nowhere.

42. $d6\#$

The safest.

42.. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$
45. $\mathbb{Q}h7$

And Black will have to give perpetual check. There is not enough compensation.

b) 29... $\mathbb{Q}g8!$

The most dangerous move, which forces White to find a sequence of only moves.

First of all there is the threat of mate on g2.

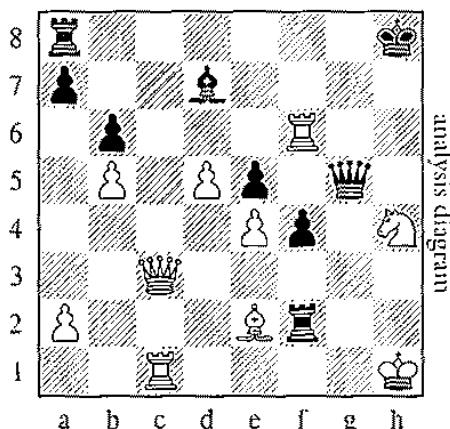
30. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$

31. $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$ loses to the cunning 31.. $\mathbb{Q}h2\#$! and 31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ to 31.. $\mathbb{Q}h7$ and there is no defence for the white king on the h-file.

I am pretty certain that Landa spotted this kind of trouble on move 29 and therefore went the other way without calculating a single move. The method of elimination used rather clumsily, but I guess we have all been there...

31... $\mathbb{Q}g5$

31.. $\mathbb{Q}h7?$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$ is easy to miss.



White now has no fewer than two ways of forcing a draw, both of them rather

imaginative. All other moves lead to suffering in various degrees.

32. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$!

32. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ The acid test. (32.. $\mathbb{Q}xh4\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ leads to a level rook endgame. 32.. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}h5\#$ is a simple perpetual.) 33. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ (33.. $\mathbb{Q}g7??$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$! and Black is mated) 34. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ Black cannot avoid the perpetual as after 34.. $\mathbb{Q}h7?$ White has 35. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$! with a great advantage.

32.. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$

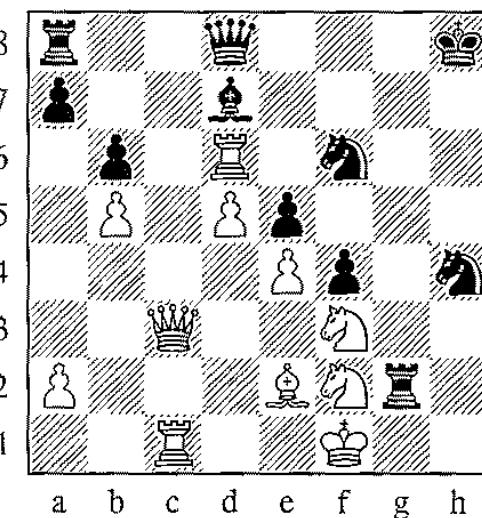
The only winning try, but 33.. $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}g1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ is dangerous for Black.

34. $\mathbb{Q}h5!$

This secures the draw. For example:

34.. $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}c7$

Black must give perpetual check.



29.. $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$!

Immediately decisive. It is hard to see exactly what Landa had anticipated as 29.. $\mathbb{Q}g8$ would also have won the game.

30. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$

30. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ to keep the queen loses just about everything else: 30.. $\mathbb{Q}g2\#$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb5\#$ and so on.

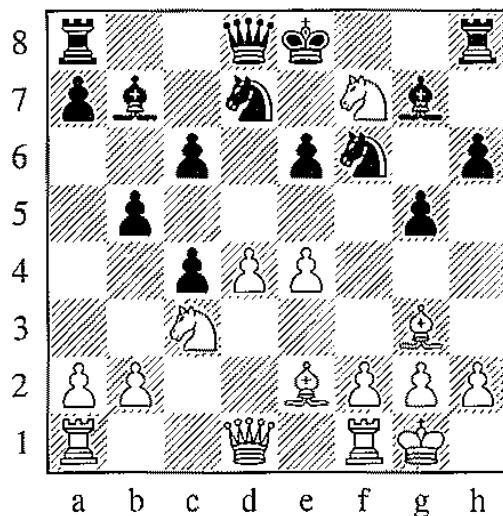
30... $\mathbb{Q}xe4\#$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$
 33. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}h4\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}f2\#$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$
 0-1

The next game is between Topalov and Kramnik. After their “toilet match” this is definitely the “handshake game” as neither player made a move to shake hands. Is it against the rules not to have a handshake or only against the rules to *refuse* to shake hands? Who knows, who cares, let’s see the moves...

Veselin Topalov – Vladimir Kramnik

Moscow Gambit
Wijk aan Zee 2008

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e6 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ h6 6. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ dx c 7.e4 g5 8. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ b5 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$
 10.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf7??$



This move was originally suggested in 2005 by Topalov's second Ivan Cheparinov, who will make his debut in a super-tournament this year, as he is invited to take part in the MTEL event in Sofia. One could imagine that there would be a friendly draw between the two Bulgarians there, but as draw offers are forbidden we will maybe see the second beat the master? (Note to the second edition: Or *maybe* Topalov will beat his second twice.)

Knight sacrifices on f7 are not new in the Moscow Gambit. One game went 10.h4 g4 11. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ h5 12.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 14.f3 and White eventually won in P.H. Nielsen – K.I. Georgiev, Istanbul (ol) 2000. This game can be found in Chapter 5 of Volume 2.

Even in this position 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ has been played, but that was with the follow-up 13.f4!. Topalov has a new plan.

12... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 13.e5

The knight is going to d6. After having changed the position White is pleased to just improve his position. It is not easy for Black to coordinate his forces and get the king into safety.

13... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

14... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ will definitely be tried in practice before too long, I think.

15. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}g4$

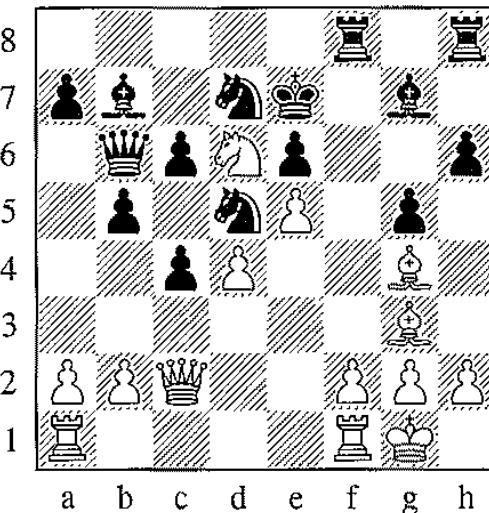
Keeping an eye on the weakness on e6 as a way of increasing the pressure.

16... $\mathbb{Q}af8$

Black is trying to escape with his king to the queenside at some point.

17. $\mathbb{W}c2$

This position is the first of three critical moments of the game.



17... $\mathbb{W}xd4?$

Black returns the piece for seemingly no great reason. White surely has compensation, but it is hard to tell how far-reaching it is. If only the black king was actually safe on the queenside then Kramnik's move might be reasonable, but this is not the case.

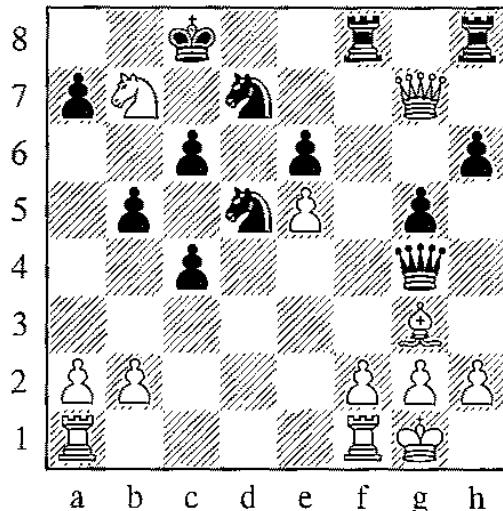
17... $\mathbb{E}hg8$ was suggested online by the Romanian grandmaster Mihail Marin after consulting with Fritz, and soon after this move was tested in the veteran group. However, this game will not be seen as a model game of the variation, as both players played far below their normal standard. 18.a4 $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 19. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 20.d5? (what?) 20...cx d 5 21.ax b 5 Timman – Ljubojevic, Wijk aan Zee 2008. After 21... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ White has no hint of compensation.

18. $\mathbb{W}g6$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ 19. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb7\#$

Losing this bishop is often bad news for Black.

20... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

20... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ is what Black would like to play, but he cannot, as 21. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ just nets a piece.

**21.a4??**

White is hoping to open files on the

queenside and proves to be successful in this in the game.

But maybe 21. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 22. $\mathbb{E}fd1$ was actually stronger. White will have enough time to attack on the queenside, it seems, and also time to play $\mathbb{W}g6-c2$. But who could have predicted this? By the way, 22... $\mathbb{E}fg8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}f7$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ no longer works. After 25. $\mathbb{W}g7\#$ the d7-knight is vulnerable, and 25... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xb5\#$ $\mathbb{E}xb5$ 27. $\mathbb{E}xd5$ is decisive.

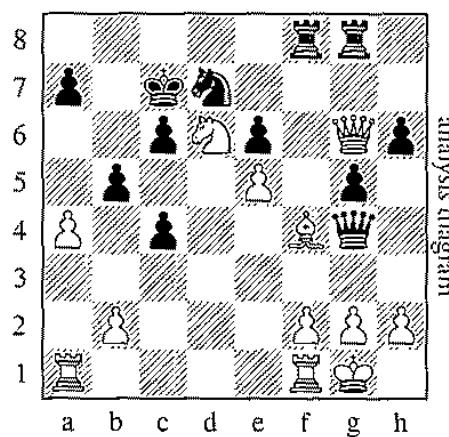
21...b4

The deep point of Topalov's move was that after:

21... $\mathbb{E}fg8$ 22. $\mathbb{W}f7$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 24. $\mathbb{W}g6$

Black does not have his custom trick of 24... $\mathbb{Q}f4\#$??

24...b4 with lines similar to those in the game is necessary.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{E}hg8$ 

White can sacrifice the queen.

26.axb5!!

This sacrifice is winning. The critical line goes:

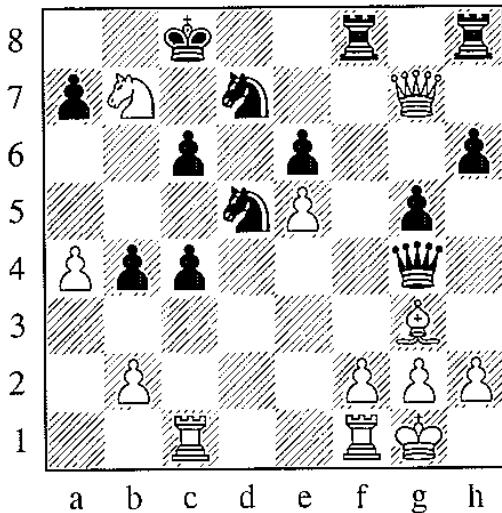
26... $\mathbb{E}xg6$ 27. $\mathbb{E}xa7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$

27... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ c5 29. $\mathbb{E}xd7$ wins easily.

28.bxc6 $\mathbb{E}g7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Black is defenceless despite having a queen against bishop.

22. $\mathbb{E}ac1$



22...c3?

The hope with this move is to close lines on the queenside, but in the process White's new c-pawn advances towards the black pieces with alarming speed. Instead Black should have tried to use the only weakness in the white position, the way his queen is a bit trapped on the kingside.

22...Bg8?! 23.Qh7 would allow the queen to return to c2.

22...Bfg8

This was the better move.

23.Qf7 Bf8 24.Qd6† Qc7 25.Qg6

The queen is escaping, but Black has an extra resource.

25...Qf4! 26.Qxf4 Bhg8!

The point is that after **27.Qc2 gxf4 28.f3**

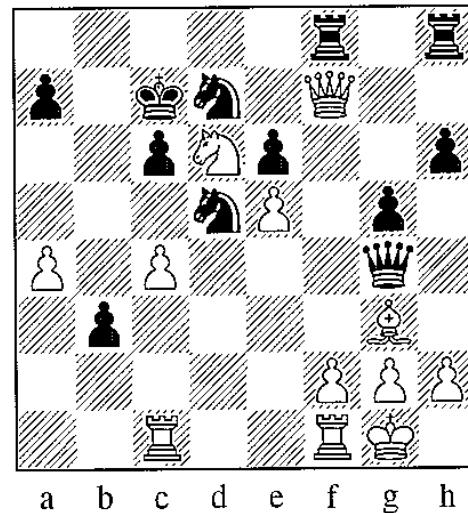
the position has clarified somewhat. Black has a worse structure, but he has managed to activate all of his pieces and it is not absolutely evident that White will be able to prove his advantage.

23.bxc3 b3!

Black has to try to keep those lines closed. **23...Qxc3?** is met with **24.Qe7** with the threat of **Bxc3 bxc3** and **Bb1**, when **Qd6†** stings. The only sort of defence is **24...Bd8**, but even so

the combination works: **25.Bxc3 bxc3 26.Bb1 Qb6 27.Qd6† Bxd6 28.exd6 Qd7** and White just needs to know that he has **29.Qg7**, picking up the c3-pawn.

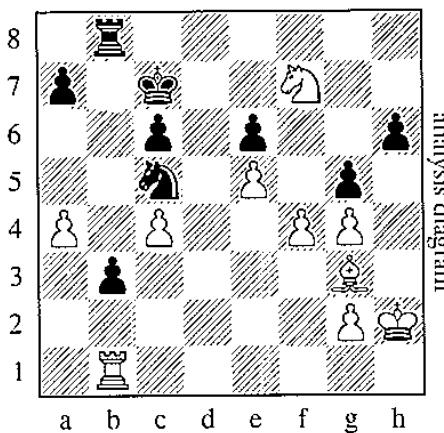
24.c4 Bfg8 25.Qd6† Qc7 26.Wf7 Bf8



27.cxd5?

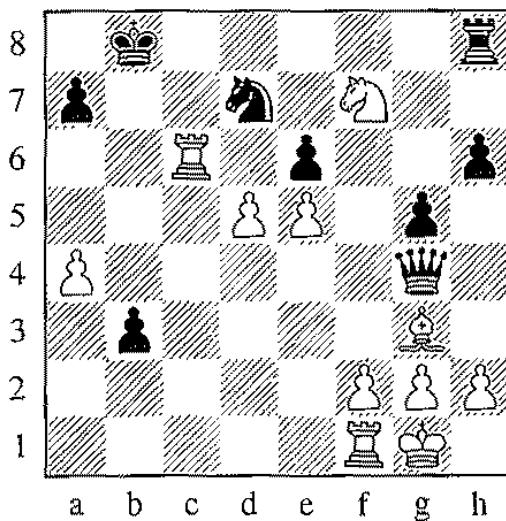
Garry Kasparov was following the game live on a laptop without an analysis engine and was quite perplexed about this move. Though the queen sacrifice is clearly very dangerous for Black it turns out to be very complicated and not necessarily enough for a full point.

Better was the desperado move **27.h3!** pointing out that the black queen is also badly placed. After the more or less obligatory **27...Bxf7 28.hxg4 Qf4 29.Qxf7 Qe2† 30.Qh2 Qxc1 31.Bxc1 Bb8 32.Bb1 Qc5 33.f4**



White has a very convincing advantage in the endgame. The b3-pawn is likely to claim the white rook, but meanwhile a passed pawn will be created on the kingside and White will be able to win there. Alternatively White will be able to bring the knight home to e4-c3 via g5.

27... $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 28. $\mathbb{E}xc6\#$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$



29... $\mathbb{E}e8?$

Again too mechanically played, I assume due to time trouble.

Kasparov suggested 29... $\mathbb{E}e2!$, with the idea of taking on f1 and promoting the b-pawn. White will have to bring the rook home and forget about snatching rooks or creating passed pawns for long enough for Black to create real counterplay. A draw seems the most likely result.

30. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{E}h8$ 31. $\mathbb{E}c4$

After this the position is relatively clear...

31... $\mathbb{E}e2$ 32.dxe6 $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 33. $\mathbb{E}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 34.e7?!

Unnecessary. 34. $\mathbb{E}xb3$ was absolutely fine.

34... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 35. $\mathbb{E}xb3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 36. $\mathbb{E}fb1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$
37.h3

White has a very clear edge, but Black could maybe still resist a little bit. But after his next

move he quickly loses the g-pawn and the game.

37...h5?! 38. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{E}c8$ 39.e6 a6 40. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ h4 41. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 42. $\mathbb{E}3b2$ $\mathbb{W}d3$ 43.e7 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 45. $\mathbb{Q}e6$

1-0

Magnus Carlsen deservedly shared first place in Wijk aan Zee 2008, together with Lev Aronian. After 10 rounds Carlsen was leading with 6½, followed by Aronian on 6 and only then the (so-called) best players of the world, on 5½ or less.

In rounds 11 and 12 he had to play Anand and Kramnik, the two guys who shared the number one ranking in the world, the World Champion, and his predecessor and challenger in one. Would you have gone for two draws in those games? I might have, but then I have a weak character. This is not the case for Magnus, who went out blazing his guns from both barrels in both games, quite unlike the waiting tactics that brought him so much success in Morelia/Linares 2007.

Carlsen is growing up fast. His advance in chess reminds me of how Tal, Fischer, Karpov, Kasparov, Anand and Kramnik all made it to the top in their early years. Only, to me Carlsen's play seems to be more mature, and despite what veterans like to say about youths and their computer-assisted learning, his play also seems to have a deeper understanding of chess than some of the names on that list when they were in their teens.

I really should not have missed that win...

Magnus Carlsen – Viswanathan Anand

Sicilian Defence, Scheveningen

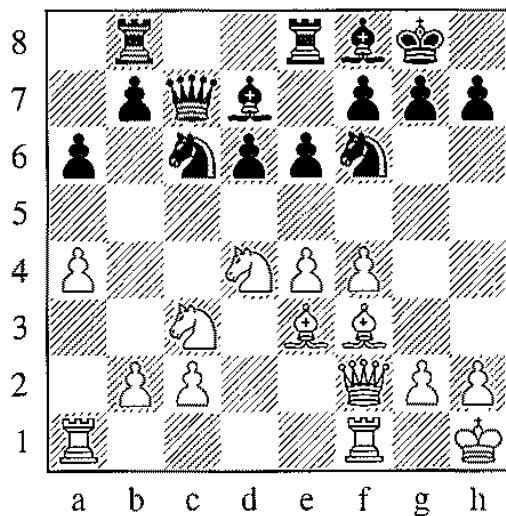
Wijk aan Zee 2008

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$
5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Nothing English today, though I am up for an attack...

6...e6 7.a4 ♜c6 8.0-0 ♜e7 9.♗e3 0-0 10.f4
♘c7 11.♗h1 ♜e8 12.♗f3 ♜b8 13.♗d2 ♜f8
14.♗f2 ♜d7

This is most likely inaccurate. Better is 14...e5 15.♗de2 b5 as in Grischuk–Rublevsky, Elista (5) 2007, which was soon agreed drawn in a complicated position.



15.g4!

Once the knight has lost its favourite retreat square White pushes the g-pawn.

15...e5 16.♗f5 exf4 17.♗xf4 ♜e6 18.♗ad1

I have a feeling that this is inaccurate.

After 18.g5 ♜d7 19.♗d5 White looks very pleasant to me. The point is that after 19...♗xd5 20.exd5 ♜ce5 21.♗g2 ♜bc8 White can reroute the knight with 22.♗d4! hoping to play b3 and c4 with a positional bind. But this was far from the strategy Carlsen had in mind for this game.

18...♗e5 19.♗xe5

Giving up this bishop is certainly anti-positional, but the achievements in rapid advancement up the board might very well balance this out.

19...dxe5 20.g5 ♜d7 21.♗d5

21.♗h5?! had a lot of hidden points to it, but after 21...♗h8! Black seems to be able to hold the balance.

21...♗c6

Apparently Anand did not like 21...♗c5 22.♗g2, where the white queen is protecting everything. White seems a bit better.

22.♗g2

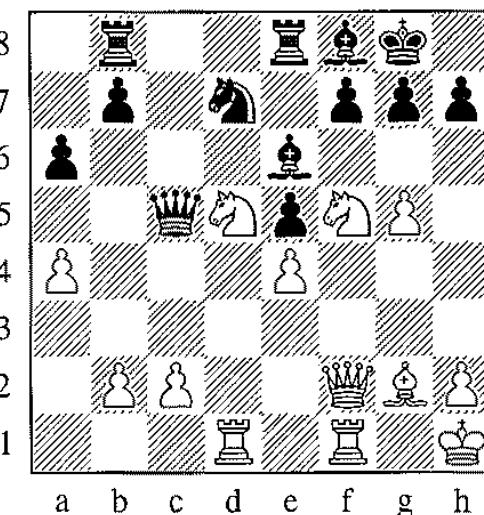
The bishop is in the way of the heavy artillery, so Carlsen removes it.

22...♗c5

As the queen cannot go to g2 the World Champion offers the exchange of queens. However, the queen is also well placed on h4.

However, what Carlsen had planned in the case of 22...♗bc8! 23.c3 ♜xa4 is not clear. Probably he was betting on 24.♗h4 with attacking chances similar to the game.

It should be mentioned that 22...♗xa4 23.♗c7 is not advisable.



This is the first big moment of the game. Carlsen takes a decision to throw caution to the wind and proceed in absolute recklessness with the sacrifice of his entire queenside.

This is positionally justified as h7 is a weakness far from the support of the black pieces and within reach of both White's queen and a rook.

23. $\mathbb{W}h4!$

As said, this is justified. After something like 23. $\mathbb{Q}fe3$ White has a good position, though it is not clear where his targets are going to be.

23... $\mathbb{W}xc2!$

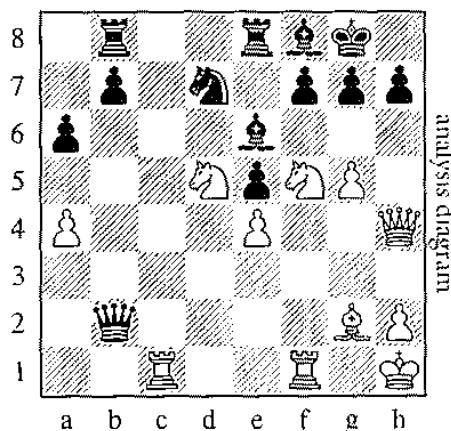
Black has little choice. White wants to play $\mathbb{Q}d1-d3-h3$. This can best be obstructed by taking the offered pawn. Besides, Anand likes to defend dangerous positions.

24. $\mathbb{E}c1?$

24.a5! was also interesting, but Carlsen is aiming to get the rook to h3 quickly. My analysis suggests that White is even better.

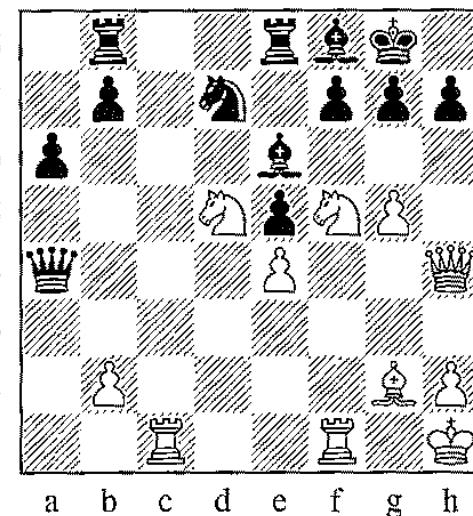
24... $\mathbb{W}xa4$

Black is about to get hit really hard and has to get some payment for this, and why not in advance? 24... $\mathbb{W}xb2$ was the other critical line.



The main line is 25. $\mathbb{E}c3!$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ (25...g6 26. $\mathbb{E}h3$ h5 27. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$ gives White an attack reminiscent of what he could have had later in the game, while 25... $\mathbb{W}h8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}h3$ h6 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$ is absolutely crushing.) 26. $\mathbb{E}h3$ h6 Now it is important for White to keep his options open and play 27. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$. (27. $\mathbb{W}xh6$ g6 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ as

suggested by Marin is weaker.) Black has to find some good moves to stay in the game, and even if he does so, it seems that there is no clear path to equality, despite being two pawns up.



25. $b3?$

This is a fine concept, but it has a simple tactical flaw. 25. $\mathbb{E}c3$ with unclear play was better. Analysis shows that the chances are about equal.

25... $\mathbb{W}a5?$

Anand believes his young opponent. After 25... $\mathbb{W}xb3$ 26. $\mathbb{E}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ White would lack the necessary material to create a successful attack. If Black is winning here or simply much better is hard to say.

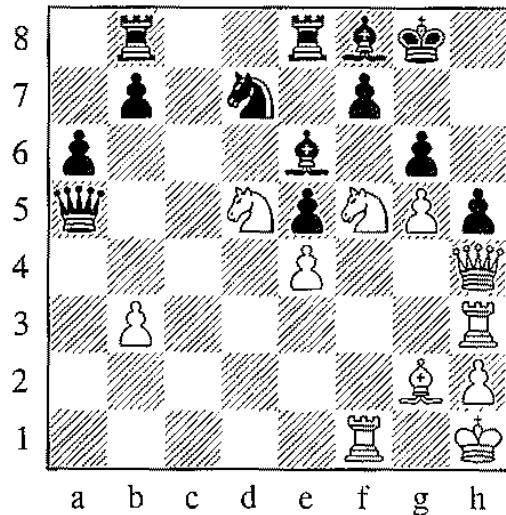
On a5 the queen is less well placed and White has a golden chance to start a fantastic attack.

26. $\mathbb{E}c3$ g6?

This is the standard way of defending, but it could have been met with a non-standard way of breaking through the defences. 26... $\mathbb{W}h8$ was more resilient. Though 27. $\mathbb{E}h3$ h6 28. $\mathbb{W}xh6$ g6 29. $\mathbb{Q}g7!$ looks very dangerous, and indeed this is the case, Black can defend with 29... $\mathbb{W}d8!$ with an endgame on the horizon. (29... $\mathbb{W}xh3?$ is simply too dangerous.) The forced line goes 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2\uparrow$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{W}xd8$ 33. $\mathbb{E}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$. Black has quite good drawing

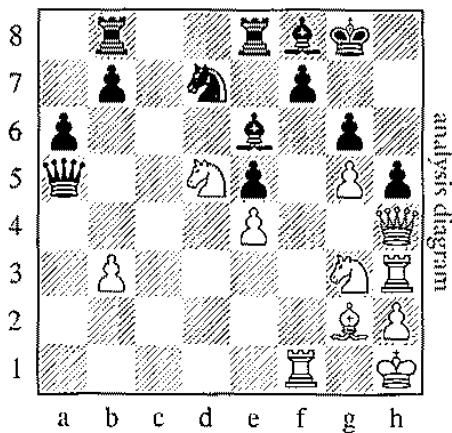
chances in this endgame, though it will be White with his active knights and rook who will dominate. Still, a pawn is a pawn and with only three pawns White will have a problem keeping them all on the board.

27.♕h3 h5



28.♕f3?

Carlsen misses his great chance by playing according to well-known patterns, either missing the non-standard 28.♕g3!! or the strength of it. The idea behind the move can be divided into three. The first is to sacrifice on h5 to get to the king, which is also Carlsen's idea in the game. The second point is that the bishop is needed on g2. From there it binds the white position together. Finally, it turns out that the knight on f5 is not as excellently placed as it looks, but rather is in the way of the attack on the other soft spot in the black position, f7 (h7 being the first).



Black has a lot of options here, but all of them are running into trouble.

a) 28...♗g4 29.♕xh5! followed by ♘f2 leaves f7 undefended. Black will have to play 29...gxh5 30.♘f2 f6, but after 31.gxf6 his prospects are not good. White has too many pieces on the kingside. If he wins or just gets a clear edge at the end of the forced play in this line is hard to say. 31...♗h7 seems like the only move, and here 32.♕h4! with ideas such as h3 and ♘xh5 under better circumstances than the already very strong immediate sacrifice, seems close to crushing.

b) 28...♗xh3 29.♕xh3 loses control of the f6-square and just loses.

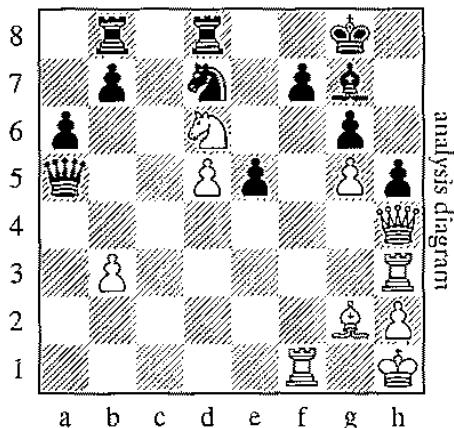
c) 28...♗g7 29.♕xh5 gxh5 30.♘xh5 (30.♕f6†?! is tempting, but it would help Black to run away.) White's attack is most likely decisive, but only if he plays it well. I have analysed 30...♗d2 31.♘hf3! in some detail. It leads to an endgame where White has a queen and Black a rook and a bishop. Though there are possibilities of holding on for the moment, White has too many options and should win both that endgame and the game, in that line or in others.

28...♗xd5!

28...♗b5? is even better, says Deep Fritz 10. After 29.♕de3! this is not the case. The sacrifice on h5 will come soon and Black will not be successful in finding a defence against best play.

29.exd5 ♗g7 30.♕xh5?

Carlsen is determined to mate the World Champion, but he must have sensed that it was just not happening. Actually White is still in the game if he chooses to attack Black's weak spot on f7. After 30.♕d6! ♘ed8 31.♗g2 he has compensation for the pawn.



31... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ $\mathbb{B}be8$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ is a weird repetition of moves, and 31... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 33. $d6!$ allows the bishop to join the game. A draw seems very likely though White will still have to work for it after 33... $\mathbb{W}d4!$.

30...gxh5!

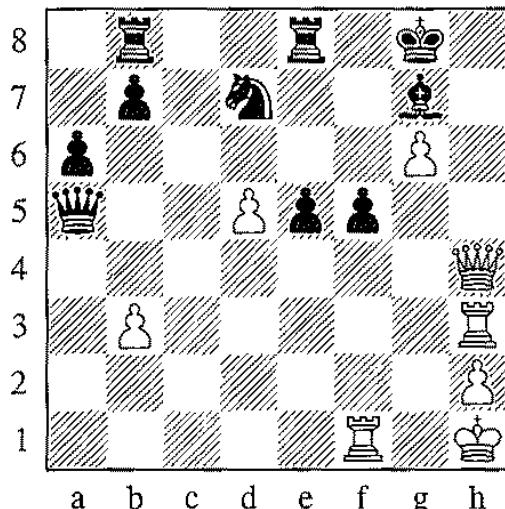
30... $g\text{x}h5$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xh5$ leaves Black with nothing better than perpetual check after 31... $\mathbb{W}xd5\ddagger$.

31. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\ddagger$

31. $\mathbb{Q}xf5\ddagger$ is worse. After 31... $\mathbb{W}xd5\ddagger$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}hf3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ Black is very safe.

31... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 32. $g6\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$

The only move, but quite sufficient.



33. $\mathbb{W}h7\ddagger?$

The final mistake. It is wrong to chase the black king away from all the white pieces.

Instead after 33. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ Black would have to play 33... $\mathbb{W}xd5\ddagger$ and give up the queen for one of the rooks in some way. After this Black will play ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ and avoid mate. Black has a clear material advantage, but his king remains exposed and converting the material would be difficult. Marin thinks that a draw by perpetual is most likely. I do not. Black should win, but it would be difficult.

By the way, 33... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xf8\ddagger$ mates.

33... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xf5\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 35. $\mathbb{W}xg7\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{W}xd5\ddagger$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{B}bd8$

Black is very safe. What Carlsen was expecting to find here is hard to say.

38. $\mathbb{Q}h7$ $\mathbb{W}d4\ddagger$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}g4\ddagger$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$
41. $\mathbb{Q}f6\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ $\mathbb{W}e4\ddagger$
0–1

The next game is between an IM close to the GM-title and the 2607 Elo pre-tournament favourite. It is a classic scenario of a weaker player getting a winning position against a GM, only to lose.

White sacrifices a pawn in the opening and gets a beautiful attack, but the demands put on him to execute it were so high that it would take a Topalov on a good day to follow through. After a bitter mistake the tide turns and White is overrun. I have not seen the game annotated anywhere else, but I think it shows the ideas of long-term compensation really well.

Slavisa Brenjo – Igor Miladinovic

Sicilian Taimanov
Serbian Championship, Vrsac 2007

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3.d4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$

This move order in the Taimanov avoids certain annoying lines, but also allows 3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$.

5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ a6 7. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}b4$

8...d6 would transpose into the Scheveningen, but real Taimanov-devotees play the bishop launch.

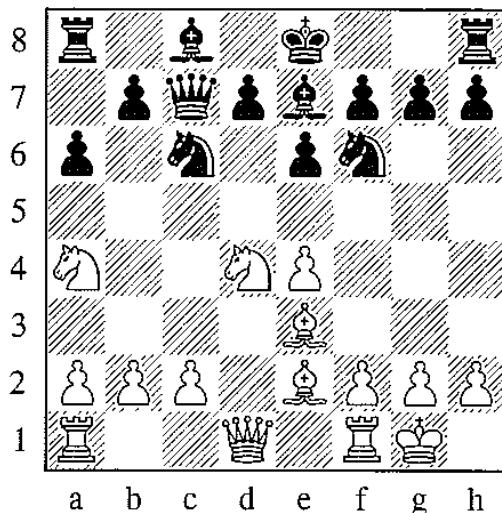
9. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

Leaving the e-pawn to its own devices. White quickly seeks to exploit the weakness of the b6-square.

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

Taking the pawn at once with 9... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ is premature, on account of 10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 11. $\mathbb{W}d4$ dropping a piece. 10...b5 11. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ is not much fun either.

9...b5 also does not work. After 10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ dxc6 11. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ White retains a significant edge.



10.c4!

The modern approach, made popular by Shirov. White is putting his pawn on c5, claiming that Black is awfully cramped and that this alone is worth the invested pawn.

The other option is 10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ bxc6 11. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{W}xc8$, and now 13. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ and 13.e5 are two big options in this position, though last time I looked, neither of them is very dangerous for Black.

10... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 11.c5 0-0 12. $\mathbb{B}c1$

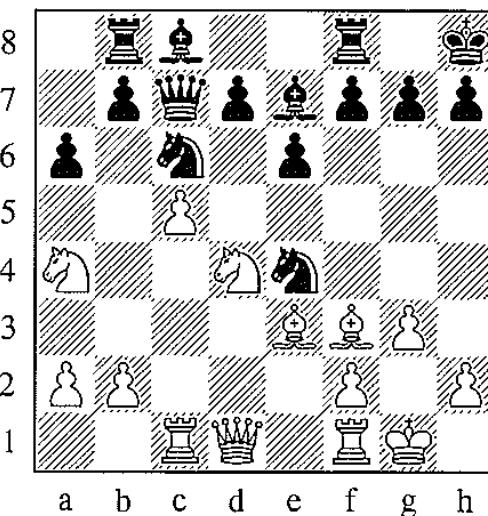
White has little to prove at this point in the game. He is close to fully mobilised and Black still has not managed to get the c8-bishop out. On the other hand there are no really big weaknesses in the black position, although there is an extra pawn.

12... $\mathbb{B}b8$ 13.g3 $\mathbb{Q}h8?$

Black knows that he will have to play ...f5 at some point and prepares by putting the king on a slightly safer square.

13... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ e5 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ d6 17.cxd6 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ was unclear in Brenjo – Krstic, Belgrade 2006, but I have a strong feeling that Brenjo had an improvement ready.

14.Qf3



14... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$

This odd move seems to be the origin of many of Black's difficulties.

After 14...f5 15. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ White has compensation for the pawn, but if it is enough, slightly more or slightly less than the value of the pawn, is not clear at all.

15.Qg2 f5

15...f6? was a possible improvement, though I still favour White's chances.

16. $\mathbb{Q}b6 \mathbb{Q}f6$

16... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ was played in a game between two amateurs, so technically this is the new move. It seems to me that Black has not managed to free his position.

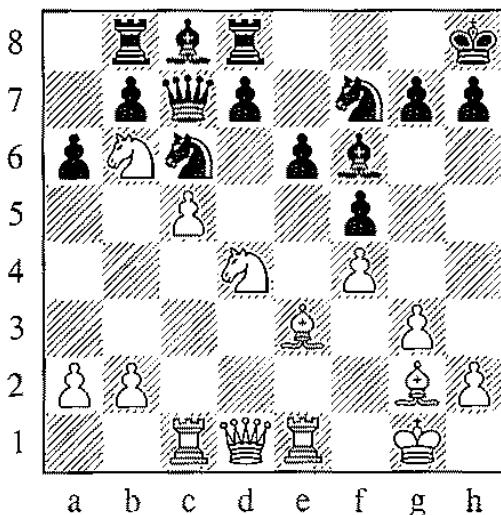
17. $\mathbb{B}e1 \mathbb{Q}f7$ 18. f4!

This strong move takes control over many dark squares and thus limits the black pieces' freedom.

18... $\mathbb{B}d8$

It is easy to criticise this move, as the black position is already beyond salvation at this point. It is however far more difficult to come up with an alternative.

For example, Black is unable to free his position with 18...d6?!, as White has 19. cxd6 $\mathbb{W}xd6$ and now we could look at things like 20. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$! $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ bxc6 23. $\mathbb{B}xc6$, when Black is unable to move and the bishop on d4 dominates the board. White should be winning.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}xf5!!$**

The beginning of a sensational attack. White gives up a piece with the intention of wrecking the black king's position and taking control of some great squares down the d-file. This should have led to victory with best play, but the position is very complicated and hard to play.

19...exf5

It is not serious to look at rejecting the knight sacrifice, but the following line is quite funny all the same, though it is maybe not a fair prediction of what best play would be for either party: 19... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$! $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$?? 22. $\mathbb{B}xe3$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$! $\mathbb{Q}g8$. In this position it is normal to take on d8, but as the rook has no defensive duties, the correct move is 24. $\mathbb{W}h5$!, when there is no sensible defence to the double threat of $\mathbb{Q}g5$ and $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ followed by $\mathbb{W}e8$ mate.

20. $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{W}a5$ 21. b4! $\mathbb{W}a3$

Black is playing the only moves. 21... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}b3$ followed by 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ gives clear domination on the dark squares. And taking on a2 would give White a $\mathbb{Q}d5$ forking the queen and knight.

22. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$?

White is playing for an attack based on strong positional compensation for the piece. This turns out to be justified, though very hard to carry out in practice.

It was therefore possibly better to trap the black queen with 22. $\mathbb{B}b1$ d6 23. $\mathbb{E}e2$ dxc5 24. $\mathbb{Q}c1$, though Black gets some very real compensation for it. White has a clear edge though, and should win the game with good play.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d5$!

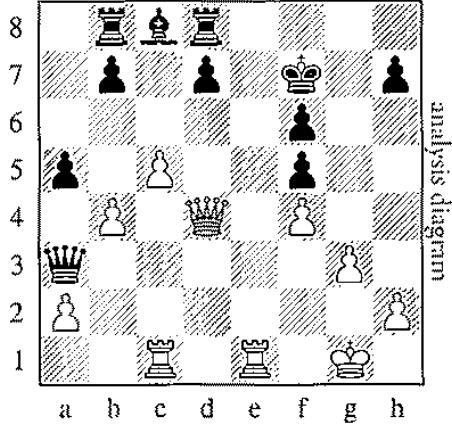
Once again it was possible for White to win the queen, leading to a position with a clear advantage. This time with 24. $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d5$!, when after 25... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$! $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xd5$ d6 28. $\mathbb{B}ce1$ White is better placed, but might find it difficult to dominate the opponent's three minor pieces for long enough. For this reason I prefer the move played in the game, though it is also more demanding.

24...d6

Black is trying to get his pieces into play, which is not a bad strategy by any means.

24...Qxd4 25.Qxd4 a5

This was a very tenacious defence. White has to play very accurately and make all his pieces count in order to break down the black defences. The only winning line goes:
26.Qxf7 Qxf7



27.g4!!

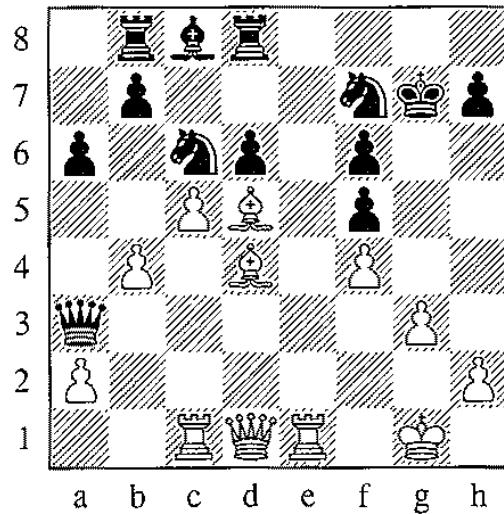
The pawn is used to take the g6-square away from the black king. In too many lines he has ...Qg6, which after ...fxg4 can be answered with f5#. The main line runs:

27...d5 28.g5! Qg8 29.Qxf6 Qf8 30.Qd6 Qd7 31.g6!

With a winning attack.

In all of these lines we see that material is often nothing more than another positional factor. For example, on move 27 White had 27.Qd6?!, where after 27...Qe8! Black is able to restore equality despite going from being one piece up to being an exchange down. The point being that the queen is out of play on b8.

We should maybe also mention 25...Qe8, which looks clever until you come up with 26.Qxe8 Qxc1# 27.Qg2 and realise that those extra pieces on the queenside are out of play.



25.Qxf6??!

This sacrifice seems very tempting once you see all the free moves you are given in return, as well as the fact that Black cannot recapture on f7. But sometimes we need to look closely and see if we have alternatives. In this position all the same positives could have been achieved without the bishop sacrifice, had White only played:

25.Qh5!

Black now cannot defend the knight in the normal way, as after 25...Bf8 26.Qxf7 Qxf7 (on 26...Qxd4 White has 27.Qe7 with immediate mate) White has 27.Qg5# with mate in three moves. For this reason Black has to protect the knight with the artificial
25...Qd7

when the bishop sacrifice is far more convincing.

26.Qxf6#! Qxf6 27.Qxf7 Qg7 28.Qd5

There is obviously no defence. Compare this line to the game and you will see the difference the move order makes.

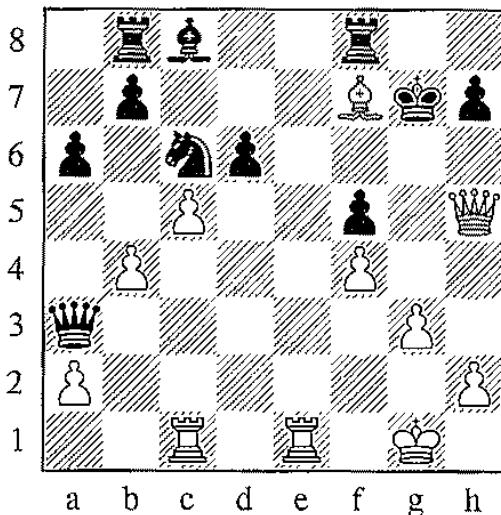
25...Qxf6 26.Qh5 Bf8

The only move, 26...Qh8 27.Qg5 is quite an amusing mate.

27.Qxf7 Qg7!

27...Bxf7 28.Qh6 mate is also amusing, though only if you are White or a friend of his...

The position has changed quite a bit and it was time for White to return to evolution mode, but somehow it was not possible for him to do so twice after sacrificing a piece, and he was looking for something immediately successful.



28.cxd6??

White was still winning in this position, but he had to lay the foundation for the full point all over again with a series of very accurate moves.

28.Qd5! ♖h8

28...♝xb4 29.♝xc6 ♜d4† 30.♝g2 ♜f6 31.♝d5 ♜d7 32.♝g5†! and White will play the endgame with an extra pawn and fewer weaknesses.

29.♝xc6 bxc6 30.♝cd1!

Taking the rook away from the pressure of the queen as well as making it possible to join the attack down the d-line. 30.♝e7 ♜xc1† 31.♝g2 ♜b2† 32.♝h3 ♜g7 and Black escapes.

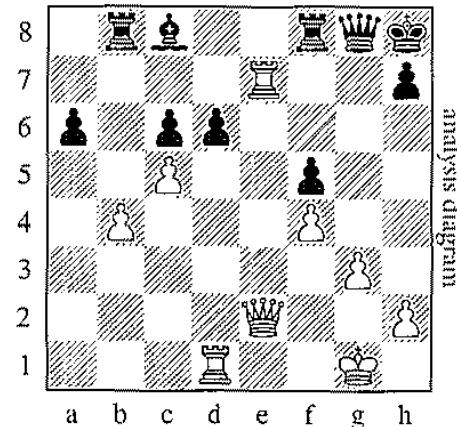
30...♜xa2

30...♝b7 is another possible move, which effectively defends the seventh rank, but exposes the 8th in a fatal way. 31.♝e8! and White has a winning attack.

31.♝e7

Such an invitation is too much to decline.

31...♛g8 32.♛e2!



analysis diagram

There is going to be no mate on h7, but Black is struggling badly with defending the long diagonal from a1 to h8. This will be his downfall.

32...♝xb4

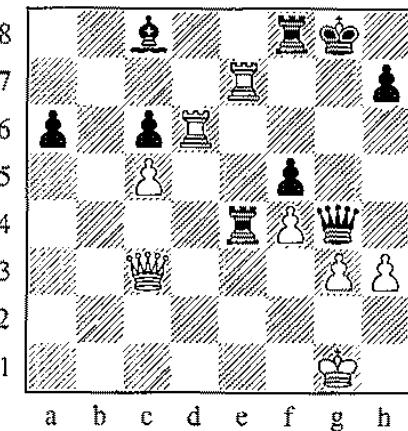
The only move that prevents the check, but White can already win with either capture on d6.

One other line goes 32...♝f6 33.♝xd6 and Black has no moves.

32.♝xd6 ♜g4 34.♛e1 ♜e4 35.♛c3† ♜g8

Now the sensational winning idea is to nudge the queen away from her perfect spot on g4, where she protects everything.

36.h3!



analysis diagram

Black will have to give up the queen and White will also scoop up the c-pawn, leaving him with a winning position.

28...♝xb4!

White no doubt looked forward to the zigzag checking mechanism of 28...♝xf7 29.♛g5†

$\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ $\mathbb{E}g7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ $\mathbb{E}f7$ 32. $\mathbb{W}h8$ mate, but alas, he had no such luck.

29. $\mathbb{B}g5\#$

White is clearly losing control. This move is not very dangerous, but after 29. $\mathbb{E}cd1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{E}f6!$ there also seems to be no tangible compensation for the piece.

29... $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ 30. $\mathbb{E}e7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 32. $\mathbb{B}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 33. $\mathbb{E}c7$ $\mathbb{W}b1\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}xa2\#$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{W}g8$

0-1

Emanuel Berg is on his way to being Sweden's highest rated player, a spot he might hold for a number of years, as there is no Carlsen in Sweden, or in any other Western European country for that sake. In the following game he takes on the former World No. 3 and regular participant in the Russian national team. The Russian plays his favourite French Defence and is quickly put under a strong attack on the light squares.

Emanuel Berg – Evgeny Bareev

French Defence
European Team Ch., Gothenburg 2005

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $dxe4$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Bareev played this line several times in the tournament. It is easy to see why – he was always doing well after the opening. Black's idea is to keep the two bishops and later strike against the centre. And if White takes on f6 while he still has the chance, Black will easily equalise with ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ and ... $c5$.

7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0-0 8. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 10. 0-0-0 b6 11. h4 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 12. $\mathbb{W}e2\#?$

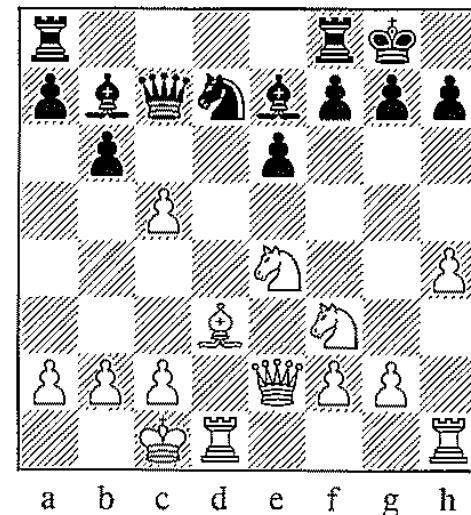
A rare move, which looks more like a loss of time than anything else. 12. $\mathbb{E}h3$ and 12. $\mathbb{W}f4$ both look more threatening.

But it is the direct 12. $\mathbb{Q}eg5$ that Alex Finkel wrote the following about: "The most crucial line for the evaluation of the whole variation." 12... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 13. c3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 14. gxf3? with unclear play in a few games, including Anand – Bareev, Wijk aan Zee 2004.

12... $c5!$

The standard black counter strike.

13. dxc5 $\mathbb{W}c7!$



Black cannot take with the knight, as $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ is looming in the background, winning the queen. But Black can simply play his moves in a different order, as White would face real dangers if he plays $cxb6 \dots axb6$, opening the a-file.

14. $\mathbb{Q}eg5$

Alex Finkel says about this position: "Taking on b6 looks very dangerous, but maybe it was the best way to continue since conventional means promise nothing to White." 14. $cxb6\#?$ $axb6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ is the idea. However, I think that Black could create a really dangerous attack with 15... $\mathbb{E}a5\#?$ 16. a3 $\mathbb{E}fa8$ when a bishop sacrifice on a3 should not be ruled out.

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

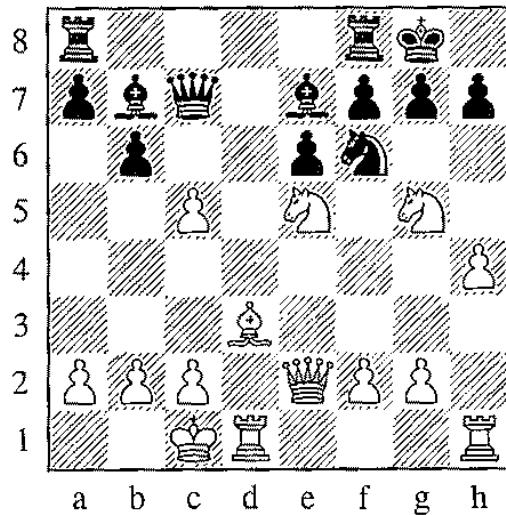
To me this move seems a little counter-intuitive. Usually I would keep control over

the e5-square. Bareev does seem to play a little carelessly in this game, something he is punished hard for.

If Black wants to play ...h7-h6 probably here was the best place to do it. It is hard to find a way for White to prove an advantage with the help of a computer, so probably one has to think for oneself. After 14...h6, 15.Qh7† was played in Ganguly – Dizdar, Dubai 2004. White never had the advantage.

15.Qe5

White of course accepts the invitation.

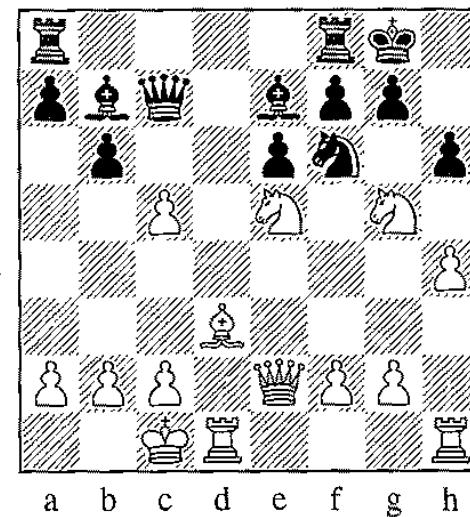


15...h6!?

As we shall see, this innocent-looking move is the key to all Black's future problems. Black might be okay, but the practical problems are so overwhelming that Bareev, formerly ranked 3rd in the world, could not find his way.

15...Qxc5!? looks like a natural move here. Maybe Bareev was afraid that the young Swede would be able to force a draw? Knowing Emanuel, I find it very unlikely that he would have. Probably he would have continued with 16.Qxf7!? or 16.f4, both with complicated play, where it is hard to believe that White is better. 16.Qxh7 leads to a draw

after 16...Qxh7 17.Qxh7† Qxh7 18.Qd7 Qc8 19.Qxf7 and now Black can do whatever he wants, it will be a draw all the same. Here is an example: 19...Qd6 20.Qh5† Qg8 21.Qxg7† with perpetual check.



16.Qg6!!

The weakening of the light squares has created this remarkable opportunity, which Berg does not let go. Black now has an important choice. He can take the knight and in the short run he will win material, but in the long run it is hard for him to coordinate his forces, and eventually he ends up in a nasty endgame. Or he can take the bishop and see his light squares disintegrate.

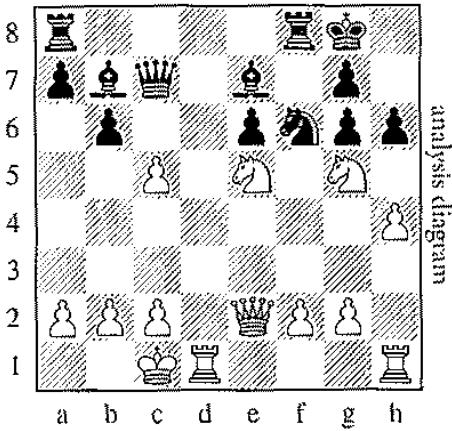
16.Qh7!? is White's other option, but it seems to lead nowhere. 16...Qfc8 17.Qxf6† Qxf6 18.c6 Qxc6 19.Qxc6 Qxc6 leads to more or less equal chances. White can still play on with 20.Qb1 or 20.g4!? with slightly better attacking chances. But 20.Qc4?! Qxb2†! only leads to perpetual check.

16...hxg5!

The best move, even though Bareev now loses his way in a labyrinth of stunning moves. Black could have gone for a much more humble defence with:

16...fxg6?!

I would like to apologise for giving some long lines here, but the variations are so beautiful it would be sad not to include them here. White will now have to choose from:



17. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$

The strongest. 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ is met very strongly with 17... $\mathbb{Q}a6!$. This seems to be the best defence, and very likely to be overlooked by Bareev. (17... $\mathbb{W}c8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 19. $\mathbb{W}c4\#!$ [the difference] is highly unpleasant for Black.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ (18. $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$) Here Black's very active minor pieces will give him a strong initiative, and surely enough counterplay to call the position equal. Maybe more. 18. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 19. $\mathbb{B}h1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 21. $cxb6$ $\mathbb{Q}c8!$ Here the position is fairly balanced. Black will be fine in an endgame, as White's kingside pawns will be sure targets, and the pawn on b6 will be easy to defend, and very useful in blocking the advance of the white pawns.) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 19. $\mathbb{B}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 22. $cxb6$ $axb6$ 23. $f3$ $g5$ 24. $hxg5$ $hxg5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ is better for White, but still the position is very clear. Black's two bishops should not be underestimated.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$

This is the best defence.

White gets an advantage after: 17... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 19. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 20. $cxb6$ $axb6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 22. $f3!$ $\mathbb{Q}af8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{W}xf7$

(After 23... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ I cannot see that it should have been in Black's interest to keep the queens on the board. His king is simply too exposed.) 24. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 25. $h5!$ This endgame is very good for White. It was not until I was the editor of Esben Lund's book *Rook vs. Two Minor Pieces* that I began to understand these kinds of positions. Generally a pawn is just about not enough, and two pawns is a bit more than enough to accompany the rook against knight and bishop. Besides that, positional features are important. Here White has three pawns and b6 seems to be rather weak. White will play $\mathbb{Q}d3$, $g4$, $a3$ and $b4$, after which it is hard to see a good alibi for Black's position.

17... $hxg5$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 19. $hxg5$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 20. $f4$ transposes to the note to move 18 in the game.

17... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ transposes to 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$.

18. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

This leaves us with two variations, both leading to positions where Black is doing all kinds of acrobatics on the edge of disaster.

19... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$

Forced. 19... $hxg5$ allows White to exploit the opening of the h-file once again. 20. $hxg5$ $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ All other moves lose. White's main threats are $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ followed by $\mathbb{Q}h8\#$ and simply advancing the pawn to g6. 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ Living in danger! 21... $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2\#$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{W}xf7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$ Only move. (25... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ loses among others to this glorious variation: 26. $gxf6$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 27. $\mathbb{W}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}c1\#$ 29. $\mathbb{W}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 30. $f7!$ and the pawn queens.) 26. $\mathbb{Q}h1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ Black is probably lost in the long run here, but for now he is keeping his bits together and preparing for a long fight.

20. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}gxf7$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

White is two pawns up, but is very likely to lose one of them in the not too distant future.

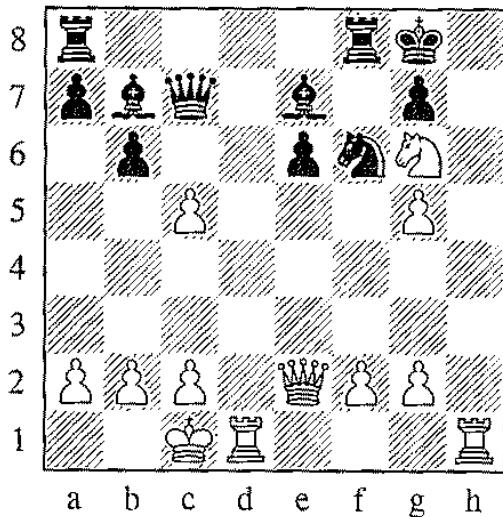
Practically this could be very difficult for White to win. No clear winning plan comes to mind immediately, at least.

17.hxg5 fxg6

The absolutely only move. A familiar friend is 17...Qd5? 18.Qh8†! and White mates.

18.Qxg6

White wants to keep the pressure. This means that in the short term the g5-pawn is just as strong as the knight on f6. As we shall see the control over f6 is more important than anything.



18...Qe4?!

After this White wins the queen by force, admittedly for half an army of foot soldiers, but still with some advantage.

Also after:

18...Qh7?

White will be able to prove a large advantage.

19.Wxe6†

19.Qxh7 Qxg5†! does not work.

19...Qf7 20.f4!!

We will see this move a few times in the variations. To White it is more important to hold on to the g5-pawn than to win any of the black pieces. Short term the pawn is stronger than any minor piece because

it both controls f6 and is thinking about advancing to g6.

20...Qxg5

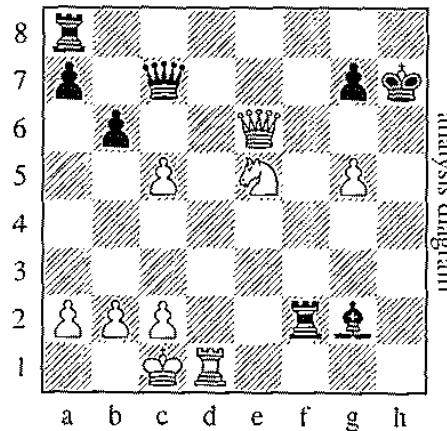
Other moves lose easily.

21.fxg5 Qxg2

21...Qd8 loses to a lot of moves, but is probably strongest met with 22.Qd2! with the idea of 23.Qe7† winning the exchange.

22...Qxd2 23.Qe8† Qf8 24.Qe7† Wxe7
25.Wxe7 and White wins.

22.Qxh7 Qxh7 23.Qe5 Qf2



24.Qd4!!

The threat of Qh4 mate forces the black rook to leave the scene of the action, after which Qd7 with a combined attack on the queen and the king (g7) will decide.

24...Qxc2†

24...Qf1† 25.Qd2 Qf2† 26.Qe1 Qf1†
27.Qe2 is similar.

25.Qd1 Qc1† 26.Qe2 Qh1

26...Qf1† 27.Qf2† Qf8† 28.Qg3 Qc4 29.Qd7
and White wins.

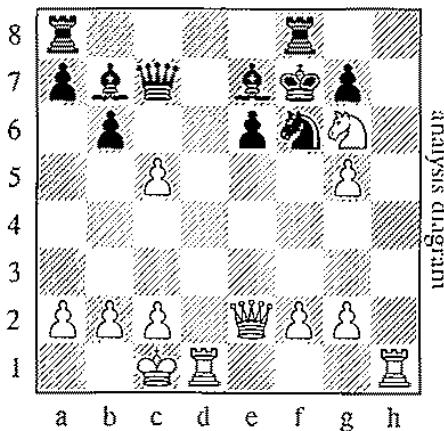
27.Qd7 Wxd7 28.g6† Qh8 29.Wxd7

White has a winning position, based on ideas like

29...bxc5 30.Qf7† Qg8 31.Qd8!

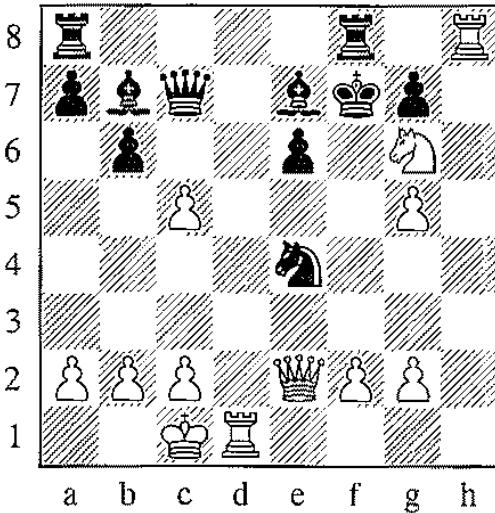
and Black is mated.

For those studying all these lines, it might not come as a surprise that I find the weakness of the light squares to be the main theme here. Therefore logic will suggest a surprising only-move to save the game: 18...Qf7!!



This is the natural way to defend the e6-pawn for any brain-dead boxer (as well as attacking the knight on g6). Personally I cannot see any way to prove an advantage after 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{R}xf8$ 20. $gxf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$. Actually it is likely that White will have to struggle for equality after 21. $\mathbb{R}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}c8!$ when the black king will be reasonably safe on e7, while the two bishops should give Black the initiative. Therefore 19. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ with a repetition of moves is probably all White has. And this was actually also what Bareev later did against Naiditsch, who found nothing better than this draw, agreed on move 21.

19. $\mathbb{R}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$



20. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#!!$

A great combination by the young Swede. The knight is sacrificed just to make way for the queen to come in and give a strong check.

20... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 21. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $g6$ 22. $\mathbb{R}h7\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$

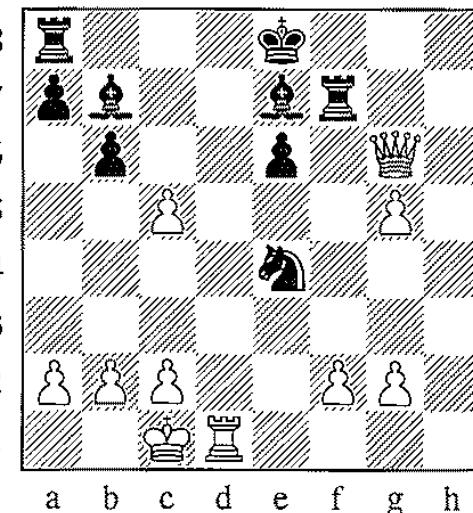
The only move. 22... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ and White wins.

23. $\mathbb{R}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 24. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$

24... $\mathbb{Q}g8??$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 26. $\mathbb{R}h1$ mate.

25. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$

Maybe Bareev thought that White would have no more than a draw in this position, but Berg finds a brilliant way to keep the initiative.



27. $c6!!$

It is all about time. The c-pawn was not going to survive anyway. I think it is interesting to note that since 13. $dxc5$, neither player has had time nor any reason to deal with the c-pawn before now.

27... $\mathbb{Q}xc6?!$

With this move Black allows the annoying g5-pawn to survive well beyond its die-by-date. It is ironic that just as the c5-pawn should not have had a great influence on the game, this pawn ends up winning the game.

Better was: 27... $\mathbb{Q}xg5\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 29. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 31. $f3$ and White has some advantage in this non-standard position because of his passed pawns, though it is more

likely that Black will make a draw than that White will win.

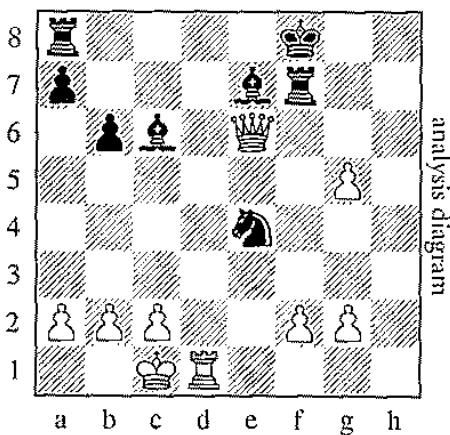
28. $\mathbb{W}xe6$

Weaker is the computer's 28. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ $\mathbb{A}f8$ 29. $g6$ $\mathbb{E}f6$ 30. $g7$ $\mathbb{A}e7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}h7$ $\mathbb{A}xg7$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{A}f7$ 33. $\mathbb{W}e5$ $\mathbb{E}c8$ 34. $f3$ where the attack is over, Black is coordinated, and we have to discuss the realities of the endgame.

28... $\mathbb{A}b7?$

Black saves his piece, which leads to his immediate downfall. Necessary was the hard to find:

28... $\mathbb{A}f8$



White is a little better with normal play, but can also gain a great advantage if he finds the remarkable move:

29. $f4!!$

The key idea is simply to hang on to the g-pawn. And 29. $g6$ $\mathbb{E}f6$ is not desirable, so this clever move does it! The surprising point is that Black cannot save his extra piece anyway.

29... $\mathbb{E}xf4$

Forced. 29... $\mathbb{A}b7$ 30. $\mathbb{E}h1$ is very unpleasant for Black.

30. $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 31. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ $\mathbb{A}g8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ $\mathbb{A}f8$ 33. $\mathbb{W}e5$ $\mathbb{E}xd1\#$ 34. $\mathbb{W}xd1$ $\mathbb{E}g4$ 35. $\mathbb{W}f5\#$ $\mathbb{A}e8$ 36. $\mathbb{W}e6$

Having exchanged Black's better rook and gained a real chance of winning the queenside title...]

pawns, White has excellent chances of winning the game.

29. $g6!$

White has a winning attack and a winning passed pawn.

29... $\mathbb{E}g7$ 30. $\mathbb{E}h1$ $\mathbb{D}f6$ 31. $\mathbb{E}h8\#$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 32. $g7!$

Taking the rook also wins, but this is cleaner and more fitting. Truly a triumph for the g-pawn and for Emanuel Berg.

1-0

The following game is very impressive and would have been in my personal top 5 had it been I who played Black, despite the small slip on move 12. It was played in a junior event on Board 8, but the thing about junior events is that you never really know who will become anything special.

In 1992 I played in the Danish Junior Championship where one player I considered an equal beat one of the foreign invitees in the last round. Fifteen years later Tobias Christensen is a very successful poker player and his opponent, Veselin Topalov, is competing for the Chess Crown.

The player leading the black army into battle in this game could be a great talent to look out for in the future, or he could be on his way into poker. At 16, a year and a half after this game was played, he had only won 28 rating points. This does not take anything away from this fine performance. [I was contacted by Recuero Guerra's trainer after the publication of the first edition. He said that there is indeed a famous Spanish poker player with the same name (!), but that this is not the boy playing here. On the November 2009 list his rating has increased to close to 2500. One suspects it is only a matter of time before he makes the GM title...]

Nazar Yaremko – David Recuero Guerra

Classical Sicilian
European U16 Ch., Herceg Novi 2006

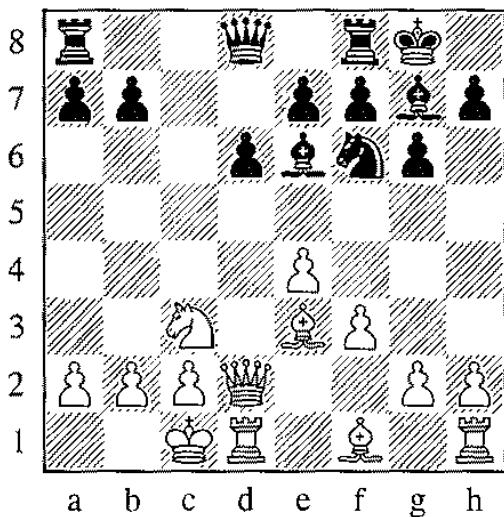
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6
5.♘c3 d6 6.f3

This sideline against the Classical Sicilian can hardly be called critical. Better are the standard 6.♗g5 and 6.♗c4.

6...♘xd4!?

This leads to a position resembling the Dragon variation.

7.♗xd4 g6 8.♗e3 ♗g7 9.0-0-0 0-0 10.♗d2 ♗e6



Compared with a theoretical position in the Dragon the white bishop would already be on d4. This protects the king because of the presence on the long diagonal, but on e3 the bishop also has its advantages, among others the opportunity of going to h6 to exchange the g7-bishop quickly.

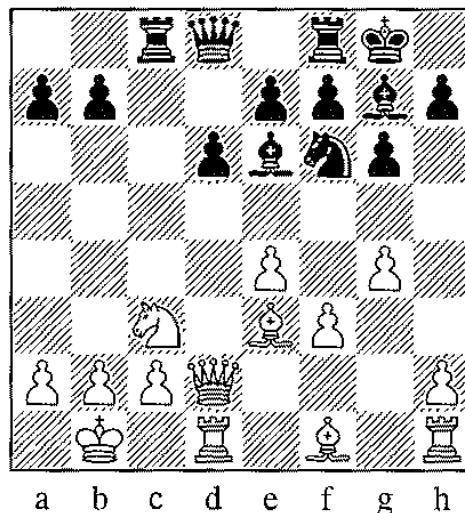
11.g4?!

Carelessly played. There seems to be no apparent plan behind the move.

11...♗c8

Previously only 11...♗a5 had been successfully employed in practice, but getting the rook in quickly is very effective in the game.

12.♔b1



The first critical moment in the game. Black has developed most of his pieces and has a slight lead in development and decides that he needs to exploit this before it vanishes. This is indeed a correct assumption, but the way he goes about it is debatable.

12...♗xc3?!?

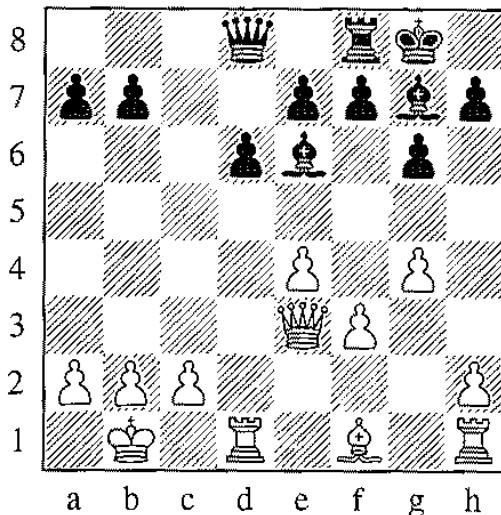
This revolution resembles the strike of a Tomahawk missile! Black evaluates that his g7-bishop is more important than the exchange. He is correct, but he had an even more promising possibility.

12...♘xg4!! was suggested by Leonardo Nunes. Black just wins a pawn. If the knight is captured Black will sac the exchange on c3 and play ...♗a5 with an immediate mating attack. White can give up the queen, but his position is far from enviable.

13.♗xc3 ♘d5

Black is not lead astray. 13...♗xg4? 14.♗d4! and the strong g7-bishop is exchanged.

14.♗a3 ♘xe3 15.♗xe3

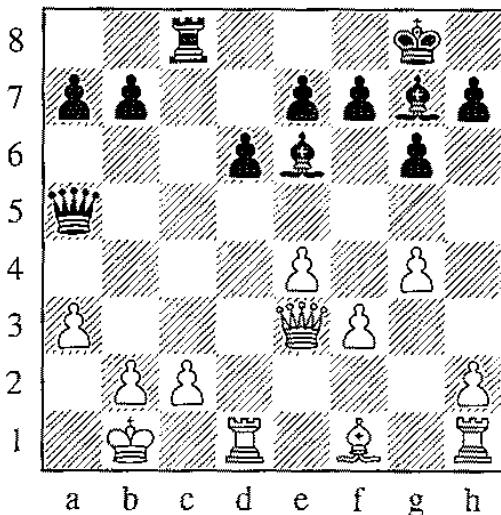


The revolution has ended and Black needs to reap what he has sown, right? No! He needs to bring the remaining pieces in. His exchange sacrifice was meant to support the coming attack, not carry it. It is now easy for Black to bring the pieces into their best attacking positions, the first one with the gain of a tempo.

15... $\mathbb{W}a5$ 16.a3

16. $\mathbb{W}a3$! was an interesting move, but the endgame does not appear as promising for White as would be expected with an extra exchange. Not only is his pawn structure broken on the queenside, but also after the exchange Black would quickly play ...g5! fixing all White's kingside pawns on light squares and solidifying the dark-squared bishop's domination on the dark squares.

16... $\mathbb{E}c8$



All Black's pieces are in play, but he still needs to create actual threats.

17.Qe2?

This innocent-looking move appears to be the decisive mistake. The problem is that White is playing slowly at a point where Black is fully mobilised and ready to strike. White had to take his defensive responsibilities far more seriously.

It seems White had to play 17. $\mathbb{E}d3$! with the idea $\mathbb{W}d2$ and be willing to return the exchange at the first given opportunity. Black would have a continuous attack with good chances of being successful in practice, though objectively the white position should still be tenable.

17... $\mathbb{W}a4$

Black moves in closer with a direct attack on the c2-pawn. At first this might seem a bit slow, but try to find an adequate response and you will start to see the strength of the move.

18. $\mathbb{E}d2$

White has no choice but to put the rook on a square that prevents his queen from going to c1 where it could be a very valuable piece in many lines.

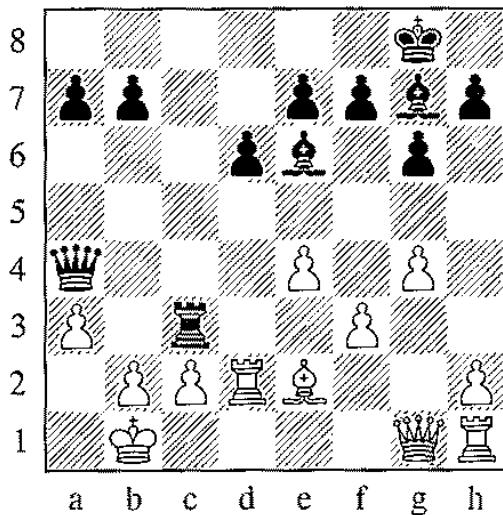
18. $\mathbb{E}c1$ $\mathbb{E}c3$! 19. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{E}c6$ leaves White with very few saving chances. The threat of ... $\mathbb{E}b6$ on its own is hard enough to deal with, but on top of this Black is threatening the immediately decisive ... $\mathbb{E}xb2$.

18. $\mathbb{W}c1$ also does not work. Not because of the flashy 18... $\mathbb{E}h6$! to which White can reply with the even flashier 19. $\mathbb{E}d4$, when the game is still not absolutely clear, though Black has a strong initiative. Instead Black will play the basic 18...b5, when White is without good moves.

18... $\mathbb{E}c3$!

A brilliant thunderbolt. The main point of this move is not that White cannot take it, but to improve the position of the rook with tempo.

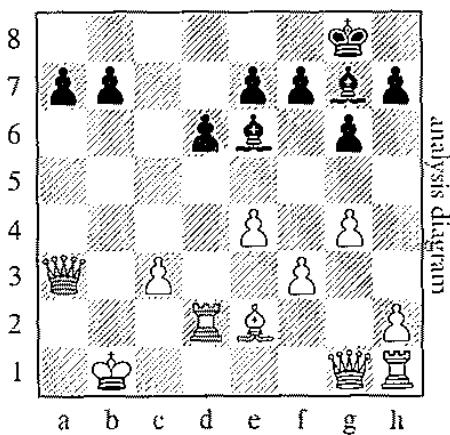
19. $\mathbb{W}g1$



It is hard to look at this position without having the feeling that Black needs to find a win and I am sure that this is what Black did at the board in the tournament. What is surprising is that not only is there no direct way to the goal, but the main hero of the black army has still not entered the attack!

19...b5!!

As we have talked about several times in this book, pawns can be excellent attackers in their own right. Here Black must have calculated and found that despite its obvious attraction 19... $\mathbb{E}xa3$? does not work yet. After 20.bxa3 $\mathbb{W}xa3$ 21.c3!



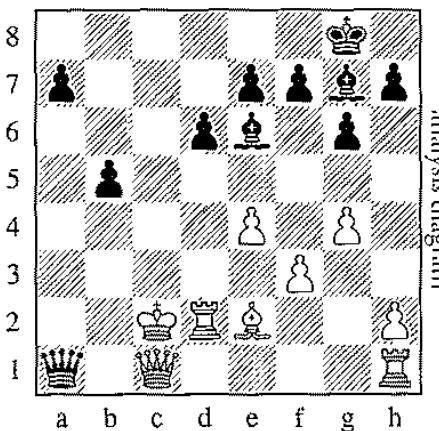
followed by 22. $\mathbb{W}c1$ Black has nothing better than perpetual check.

Therefore Black switches the Revolution-mode off and looks for ways to strengthen the attack. Including the pawn creates the idea of ...b4, but also another point, which we shall see in the next note.

20. $\mathbb{W}c1$

It is a thankless task to choose a move for White. One of the important points about Black's last move is that the sacrificial attack has grown in strength.

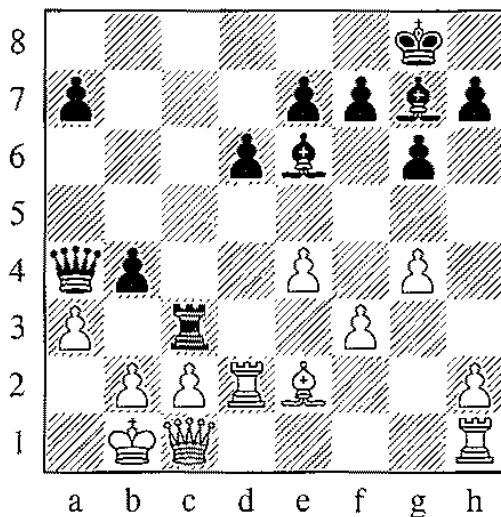
After something like 20. $\mathbb{W}d1$ with the hope of blocking one of the diagonals with the rook, Black will play 20... $\mathbb{E}xa3$ 21. $bxa3$ $\mathbb{W}xa3$ 22. $c3$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 23. $\mathbb{W}c1$, where the difference from before is that after 23... $\mathbb{W}a1\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}c2$



Black has 24... $\mathbb{Q}b3\#$, mating on the next move.

Once again we get the feeling that we have reached a moment where Black needs to strike. His rook is positively hanging on c3 and White has some defence on the dark squares. It would be normal to play 20... $\mathbb{E}c8?$ followed by ...b4, which is very strong. But the aggressive nature of the move played in the game is so attractive.

20...b4!!



Fabulous. Black has no direct way to strike through the white defences so he intensifies the pressure even further. For the first time Black has established a threat that is hard to meet.

21.bxc3

This is something we actually see more often than you might expect in the games of the best attackers. Black has built up his attack to such a strength that White feels compelled to start the Revolution, as the outlook of waiting until Black strikes is even less appealing.

The only alternative leads to a transposition to the note to move 22.

21...bxa3

With the obvious threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ and a less obvious one.

22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

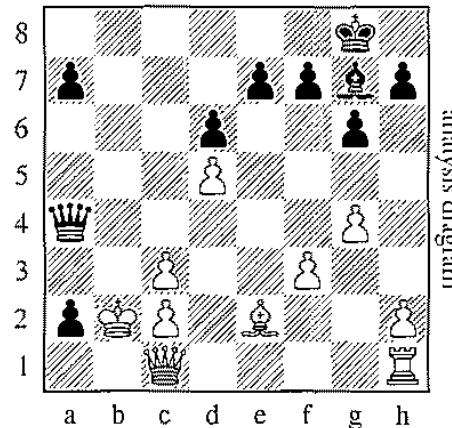
Missing Black's main threat, but there was no possible way to hold the game anymore. The critical line was:

22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 23.cxd5 a2† 24. $\mathbb{Q}b2$

When I originally saw the end of this game as an exercise in *Chess Today* I disregarded 20...b4! because of this position. Either Recuero Guerra saw more than me, or he missed 22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$. [2nd edition addition: Recuero Guerra's trainer confirms that indeed he had seen the line all the way to

move 29 and beyond. Scary.]

But it has to be said that:



24...a1=†!!

is the amazing solution. Black gives up what seems to be his biggest trump without a forcing line leading to a win, simply to take over the dark squares. In the process he gets more than enough compensation for the missing rook.

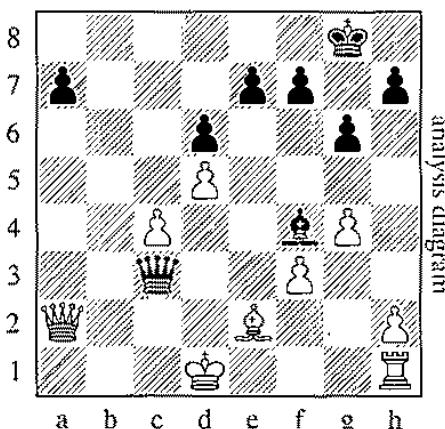
25. $\mathbb{W}xa1$ $\mathbb{W}b4†$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 27. $\mathbb{W}a2$

There are other moves, but no better ones.

27... $\mathbb{Q}d2†!$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$

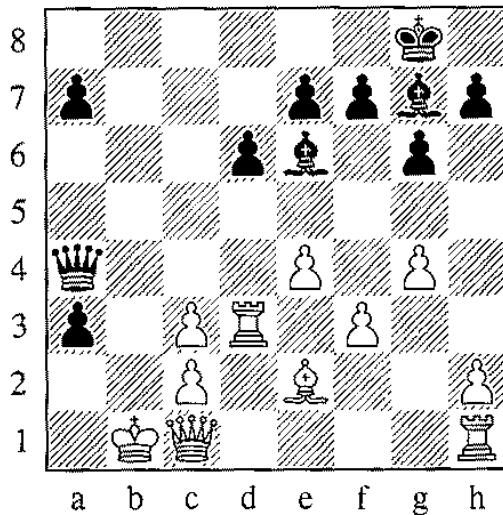
Amazingly Black has such a strong attack on the dark squares that he should take the full point after:

29.c4 $\mathbb{W}c3$



The dark-square domination is total. White has to move the bishop after which f3 falls with check and the extra pawns decide the game.

All that remains now is to finish this poor guy off...



22... $\mathbb{W}b4\#!!$

A fitting end to this masterpiece. White recognised the great effort his opponent had displayed as well as the right of the pawn to make the last move of the game.

23.cxb4 a2 mate

0-1

This next game is also one of our oldest. It was played by a close friend of mine in the 1996 Biel Open and won the prize for the best game of the entire festival, in front of some very prominent top players. The opening was rather cautious from White's point of view, but if you know Alex Wohl, you will know that there is nothing cautious about his approach to chess.

Alex Wohl – Aivars Gipslis

English Opening, Hedgehog variation
Biel Open 1996

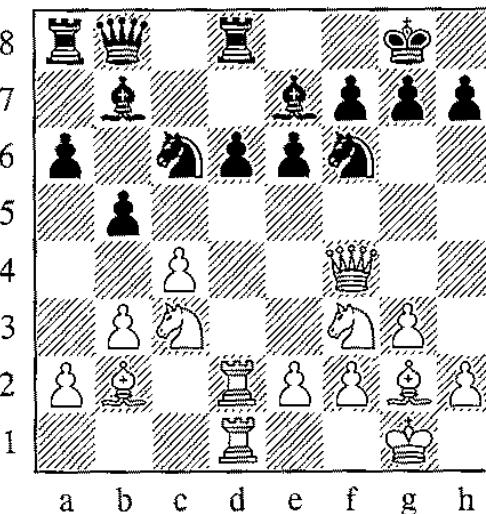
1. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 c5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e6 4.g3 b6 5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 6.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 7.d4 cxd4 8. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 9. $\mathbb{W}f4$ 0-0 10. $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{W}b8$ 11.b3 $\mathbb{E}d8$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ d6 13. $\mathbb{E}d2$

This was the first deviation from known lines and hardly a big move in any way. As a typical dynamic player Wohl decides to complete his development.

13...a6 14. $\mathbb{E}ad1$

This was maybe played a bit fast as Wohl had not fully anticipated the strength of Black's next move.

14...b5!



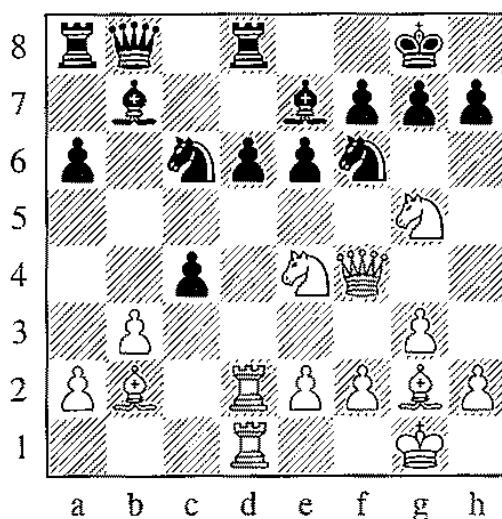
Wohl was a bit displeased with his position here initially, as action on the queenside was leading to a pleasant position for Black in all lines. Then he started to think more generically about the position, deciding that there should be nothing wrong with his position, as he had made no moves that in any way seemed wrong. He began to look deeper at the position, realising that his forces were in the centre and on the kingside, while Black had a larger presence on the queenside. He found an idea and started to calculate, eventually making it as far as move 27 of the game after more than an hour of deliberation. He was not able to come to a clear conclusion, but had seen a perpetual, plus the chance of maybe playing for a win.

15. $\mathbb{Q}g5!!$

White decides to attack on the kingside. Black has nothing better than carrying out his plan. He also has made no odd moves and has no reason to fear the outcome of the ensuing tactics from such a principled point of view. However, we should not forget the difference

between theory and practice. In theory there is no difference, though in practice there always is.

15...bxc4 16.♘ce4!



White is loading up his shotgun, both barrels!

16...d5!

The best move. The only other way to defend f6 was

16...♝e5?!

when White can force an endgame with an extra pawn with a very long line.

17.♞xe5

Gipslis' suggestion 17.♕xf6† fails to 17...gxf6!.

17...dxe5 18.♗h4! ♜xd2?

18...♝xe4 is worse on account of 19.♜xd8† ♜xd8 20.♝xe4 h6 21.♛xe6!, when White will win the exchange and be able to scoop up all the black pawns in the ending.

19.♕xf6† ♜xf6 20.♗h7† ♜f8 21.♜xd2 ♜c7
Black has to defend against an invasion on the 7th rank.

22.♗xb7

22.♗h8†? also leads to an edge.

22...♜xg5 23.♗h8† ♜e7 24.♗xa8 ♜xd2
25.bxc4 ♜xc4 26.♗xa6 ♜xa6 27.♗xa6

It is very likely that this endgame is a draw as long as the a-pawn has not crossed the a5-square. But as Black I would fear that White would be able to create real threats of a second passed pawn on the kingside, or attack the black pawns with his king.

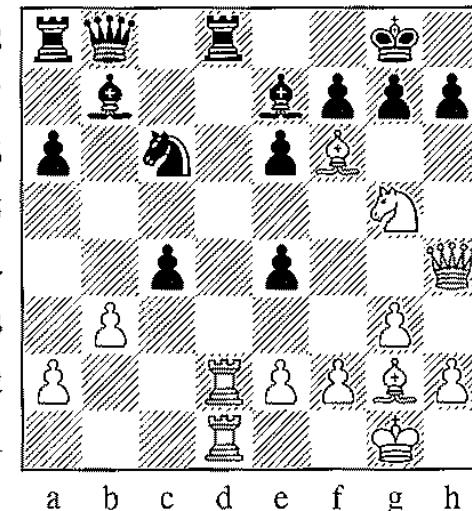
17.♗h4

This was White's idea. He had decided that h7 was the weak spot in the black position and now he is relentlessly attacking it.

17...dxe4

17...h6 is worse. White can first destroy the black king's position with 18.♕xf6† ♜xf6 19.♕xf6 gxf6, then return with the knight with the intention of breaking up the black centre. 20.♘f3! Black's only chance to make things muddy would be 20...c3, but after 21.♗d3 d4 White can turn his attention back to the kingside with 22.♗xf6, attacking the d-pawn. And after 22...e5 he has 23.♗g5!, with serious threats against the black king, as well as the knight on c6.

18.♞xf6



18...♞xf6?

This is the only mistake of the game. Interestingly Gipslis did not notice it, according to his annotations for *Informant*, nor

did Alex know about the alternative Black had here when he demonstrated the game to me. I find the mistake characteristic of our “toddlers want each other’s toys” phenomenon. When something is happening we have a tendency to look at the action, rather than fix our attention on what we want to do in the position in general.

Black could have played:

18...h6!

when the only way of unsettling the balance seems to be

19.♗h5!

19.♗xd8† only leads to the exchange of several pieces, making a draw likely.

The main line goes:

19...hxg5 20.♗xd8† ♗xd8 21.♗d7! ♗xf6

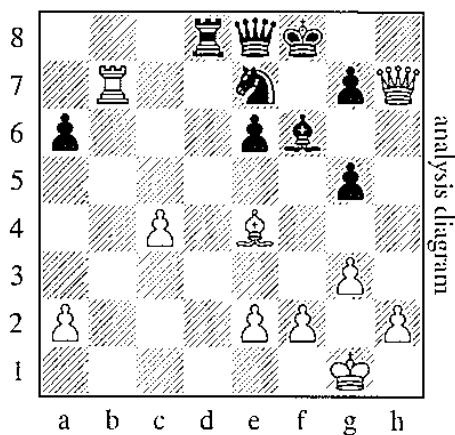
22.♗xf7† ♗h8 23.♗h5† ♗g8

Obviously White has a draw, but does he have more?

24.♕xe4? ♔e7! 25.♗xb7 ♕c8 26.♗h7† ♗f8

At this point the answer to that question probably has to be no. White needs to be careful not to overstretch himself, and after

27.bxc4 ♘d8

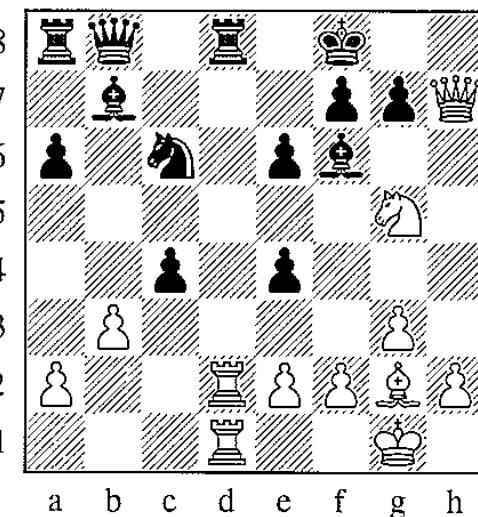


analysis diagram

it is probably time to take the draw by perpetual check unless White is willing to take serious risks. I would evaluate the position as about equal, with a tendency towards White's chances if I had to choose a side. So, basically we have not managed to upset the balance the

position was in at the start, which is natural after good play from both players.

19.♗xh7† ♗f8



20.♗d7!!

Gipslis had overlooked this power-move, which traps the black king on the 8th rank. He had intended to answer

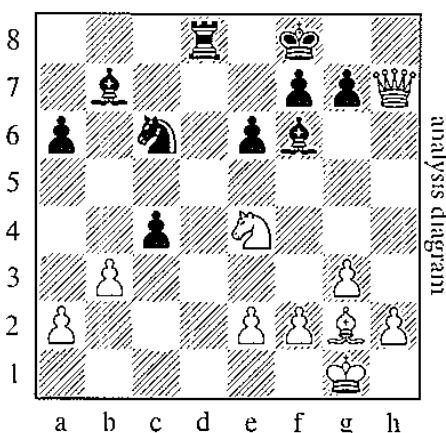
20.♗xd8†

with the creative

20...♗xd8?!

20...♗xd8 is fully playable as well.

21.♗xd8† ♗xd8 22.♕xe4



analysis diagram

Here I think Gipslis' notes need updating. The best move is:

22...c3!

22...♗d1† 23.♗f1 c3 as suggested by Gipslis is bad because of 24.♕xc3! and White wins.

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

with unclear play, based on

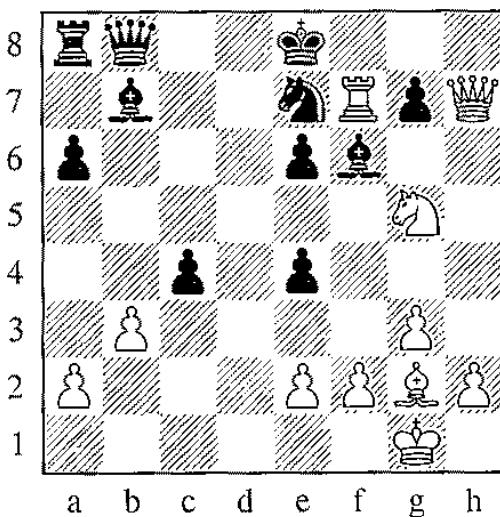
24. $\mathbb{W}c2?$ $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

and Black takes over the initiative.

20... $\mathbb{B}xd7$ 21. $\mathbb{B}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{B}xf7$

The threat of mate lives on.

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



Black has managed to create an escape route for his king and he is still threatening the knight on g5. It would be nice for White to include the g2-bishop in the attack, but he needs to keep the momentum. Alex managed to do this by sacrificing his most active piece.

23. $\mathbb{B}xf6!$ $gxf6$

Black has to recapture, or White will be up on points as well.

24. $\mathbb{W}f7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8?!$

This is not the most tenacious defence. But to be honest, you had to see the strength of White's 27th move to appreciate this.

More resistance was offered by 24... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$, when after 25. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ White's most accurate move is 27. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$ with a continuous attack. Though the position is very unbalanced and a clear win cannot be singled

out, there is no doubt who has the chances. White probably wins with perfect play by both sides, but if not, then Black will at least have to fight very hard for his draw.

In what follows there are alternative wins for White, where he attempts to win back a piece, so that he has many pawns for the exchange, but only one win where he continues the attack to its logical conclusion.

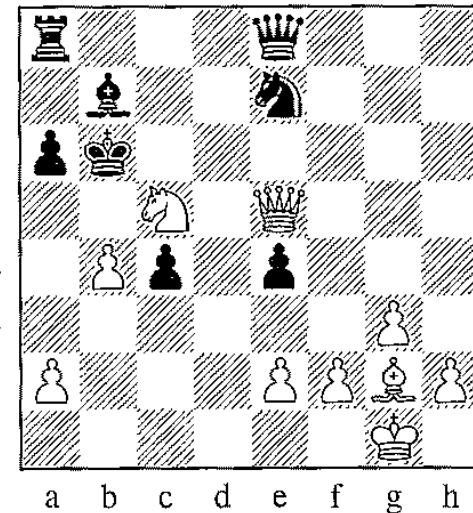
25. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 27. $b4!$

From afar Alex had seen that 27. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ leads to perpetual check, which in itself is very impressive. But once he arrived at this position he was already confident that more was owed to him for his effort.

27... $\mathbb{W}e8$

There are no better moves.

28. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 29. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$



The final moment of the game. Black has almost made it to a shelter on the queenside, but White has been able to keep the momentum all along, even if he has been running out of pieces lately. It turns out that the black king is still not safe and White wins with a stroke of genius, trying to replace the knight with the queen.

30.♗d7†!! ♖c6

30...♗xd7 31.♗c5 mate would have been a more fitting end in my opinion. But, on the other hand, White managed to get the bishop into play in the game. Had Black not resigned it would have emerged triumphant on h3.

31.♗c5†

Black resigned. There is no way to avoid losing everything, except to be mated.

1-0

Thinking of our earlier discussion of Carlsen, Radjabov and Karjakin, I started to think about how chess players are not considered talented anymore the moment they pass twenty. Only juniors are considered when great talents are put forward. I would like to change that.

The most impressive result in 2006 was achieved by a 23-year-old Cuban, Leinier Dominguez, who might no longer be a junior, but who will still come across to most as a great talent. With an astonishing performance of 2946 he managed to outdistance an on-form Vassily Ivanchuk by 1½ points, ending on an unimaginable 8/9 ahead of a strong field. It is very rare for any player under 2700 to score a 2900+ performance; it could be less than 10 times that this has happened (as far as I know, only one of these results was bought). It does seem that the Cuban has a talent for the FIDE time control, as the tournament was played according to this time control.

Our game shows the gutsy determination Dominguez brought to the tournament. Going into the last round with a half point lead, he had to meet his only challenger for first place, the top seed Vassily Ivanchuk. But instead of playing sound logical chess with low risk and a high likelihood of a draw, the Cuban went all-in with first a pawn sacrifice, then a piece sacrifice, both very intuitive and terribly unclear.

Leinier Dominguez – Vassily Ivanchuk

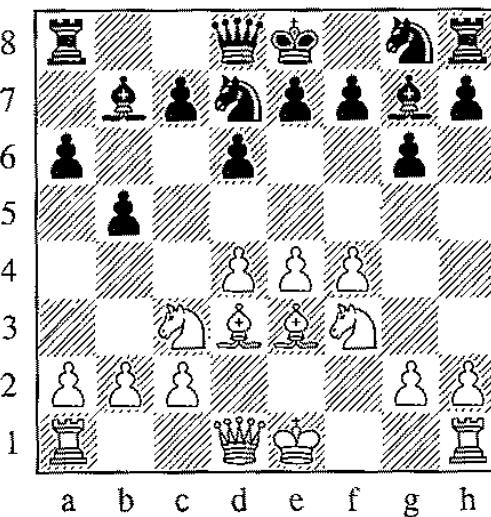
Tiger's Modern
Barcelona 2006

1.e4 g6 2.d4 d6 3.♗c3 ♗g7 4.♗e3 a6

The a6-Modern, called by some (unscrupulous chess book publishers) *Tiger's Modern*, is much better than its reputation in some circles and maybe less good than the most enthusiastic followers believe.

5.f4

Definitely the critical test.

5...b5 6.♗d3 ♗b7 7.♗f3 ♗d7**8.e5!?**

This is the best scoring system, but according to the “guru” White should not be able to claim an advantage here.

Another system is 8.♗e2 with the idea that after 8...c5 9.dxc5 ♗xc5 10.♗xc5 dxc5 11.e5 White takes control over the e4-square. This was what Tiger Hillarp-Persson himself felt was the critical line for Black, but no advantage was found after 11...♗h6 12.a4 b4 13.♗e4 ♗b6! 14.♗ed2 0-0 15.♗c4 ♗c7 16.0-0 ♗f5 17.♗ae1 ♗ad8 in Aagaard – Speck, Turin (ol) 2006. White won the game, but this had little to do with the present position.

8... $\mathbb{Q}h6!!?$

Not the main move. Black should usually strike against the white centre the moment he can with 8...c5. Now there are a lot of different possibilities, so to avoid getting stuck in a deep opening survey I will just give a typical example: 9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ cxd4 10.e6 f5 11. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}df6$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ hxg6 13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ and Black is not worse, San Segundo Carrillo – Hillarp-Persson, Elista (ol) 1998.

9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$

Black is resisting playing ...c5 at all costs, which gives White a chance to stabilise the centre. I am not too confident about this concept, but there is no obvious reason for it to be simply bad.

10.0–0–0!

A strong and obvious novelty. Before starting an attack on the kingside White decides to escort his king to safety and include the a1-rook in the game. Previously only the following had been played: 10.a4 b4 11. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 0–0 12.a5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ c5 14.dxc5 dxe5 15. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 16.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ and Black should have equalised as far as I can see, Carlsson – Hillarp-Persson, Gothenburg 2005, though you can never tell for sure with Tiger's games.

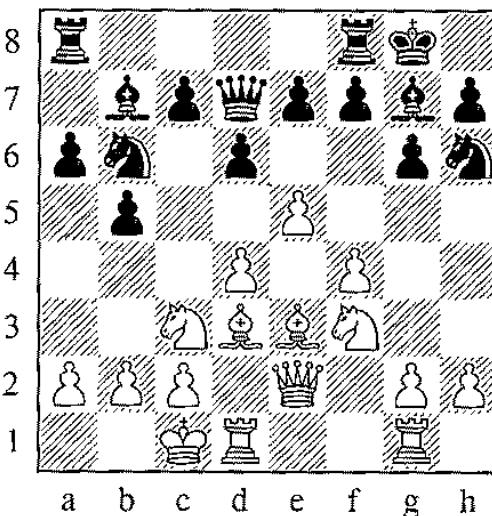
10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

I dislike this move. I guess the idea is to control g4 and f5, which seems reasonable, but the move does not appear to have many active qualities. And if there is a guideline for how Black needs to play this line, it is to be active at all costs. Otherwise White will enjoy too pleasant a game with his extra space and active opportunities on the kingside.

11. $\mathbb{Q}hg1$ 0–0

At first I wanted to criticise this move, but lacking the ability to suggest another has lead me to recognise that this is the right move.

Black has made his bed and now will have to do whatever you have to do in such situations and just take it on the chin...



12.g4!

There is no reason to hesitate. It is not as if the pawn will decide the game.

12... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

White is not expecting the game to be decided on the dark squares (where Black looks quite solid), but on the light squares with the destruction of the pawn structure around the black king. For this reason the exchange of knight for bishop is a logical decision.

13.f5! was also possible, but I do not think too many will want to improve on Dominguez' play at this stage.

13... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

A natural move, but we should never forget that other options exist.

13...f5! is a possible alternative here, though it will take more analysis than I am willing to provide here (there will be plenty later)

to conclude if Black is fine. The first idea to investigate should be 14.exf6 ♜xf6 15.♕xh7?! ♜xh7 16.♗xg6 ♘f7 with chances both ways, but in my opinion most for White. However, many players will appreciate that a draw seems quite unlikely here.

14.♗xe3

14.e6?!

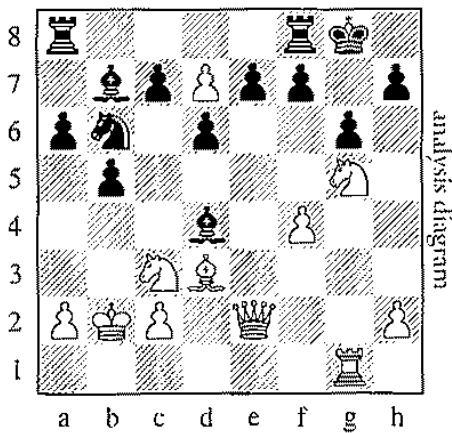
This tempting move fails because of a stunning riposte:

14...♝xd1 15.exd7 ♜xb2!! 16.♕xb2!

16.♘e4 d5 is not an avenue you want to go down. Black is collecting a lot of pieces. Now

16...♝xd4

looks quite dangerous for White, but he can make a quick draw with a double sacrifice, ensuring him a perpetual check.



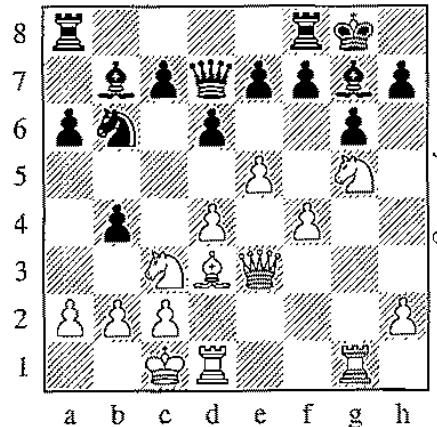
17.♕xh7!! ♜xg1 18.♗xe7 ♜xh7 19.♗xg6†!

With a draw. A stunning line, but still nothing compared to what is yet to come.

14...e6

To my surprise this seems to be the only sensible move. Usually I would be quite concerned making such a move as Black here, but the two logical alternatives meet horrible fates.

14...b4? shows why Ivanchuk felt compelled to advance his e-pawn.



analysis diagram

White wins with 15.e6! fxe6 16.♕xh7!! based on 16...bxcc3 17.♗xg6 ♘f7 18.♗dg1 and there is no defence against 19.♗g3 and finally my computer manages to catch up with the correct conclusion, that White is winning by force.

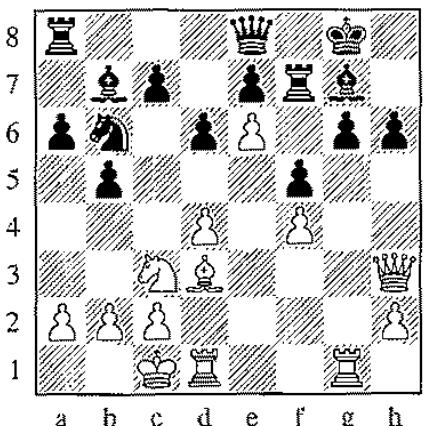
14...f5

This looks a bit eerie, but if White cannot force something directly, Black will play ...h6, expel the knight and gain important time to hit back against the white centre. Though this is still a risky strategy, the position strikes me as quite complicated. However, White wins with a direct attack:

15.♗h3 h6

15...h5 is of course possible, but this is far from what Black was looking for. Simple moves such as 16.♘f3 will do the job. The kingside is simply too weak now.

16.e6 ♜e8 17.♗f7 ♘xf7



analysis diagram

18... $\mathbb{B}xg6!!$

A truly surprising move. Black wanted a position where he had been able to give up the exchange for 1-2 pawns, in return for having the dark-squared bishop and such a superfluous number of good squares for his minor pieces. But instead of taking the rook White takes a pawn, which is effectively a piece sacrifice. It quickly turns out that opening the g-file is more important than any meek material gains.

18... $\mathbb{B}f6$ 19. $\mathbb{B}g3$

The threat of $\mathbb{B}dg1$ is now overpowering. There is nothing better for Black than 19... $\mathbb{W}f8$ allowing this and then giving up the queen. This will not hold, but neither will:

19... $\mathbb{B}g6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xf5!$

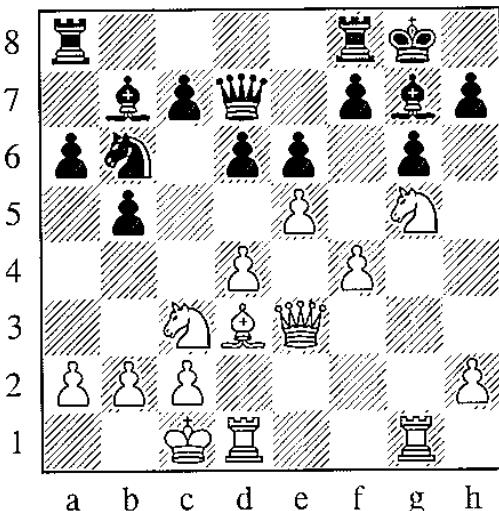
Another great point. The light squares are finally destroyed.

20... $\mathbb{B}xg3$ 21. $hxg3$ $\mathbb{W}c8$

Black is anticipating the threat of $\mathbb{W}h7\#$, $\mathbb{B}g6$ and $\mathbb{Q}f7$, winning, but as the kingside is completely open and the queenside completely closed, White wins easily more or less as he pleases.

For example:

22. $\mathbb{B}d2$ b4 23. $\mathbb{B}h2$ bxc3 24. $\mathbb{W}f7\#$ $\mathbb{B}h8$
25. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 26. $\mathbb{W}h7$ mate!

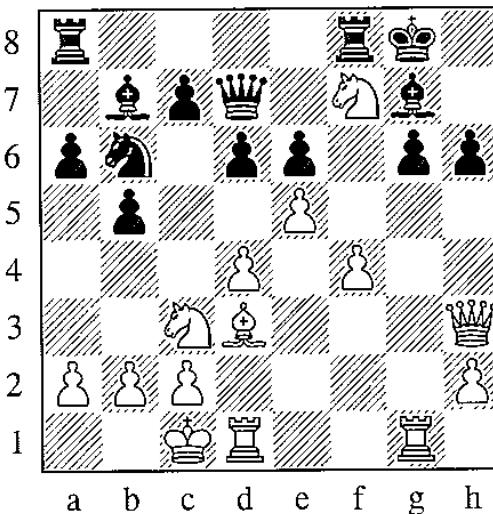


15. $\mathbb{W}h3!$

Dominguez does not stray from the most direct path. Black will have to weaken the light squares, when afterwards a sacrifice will tear the rest of them apart. I am sure that other options existed as well, but probably none which are as consistent with White's strategy so far.

15...h6 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

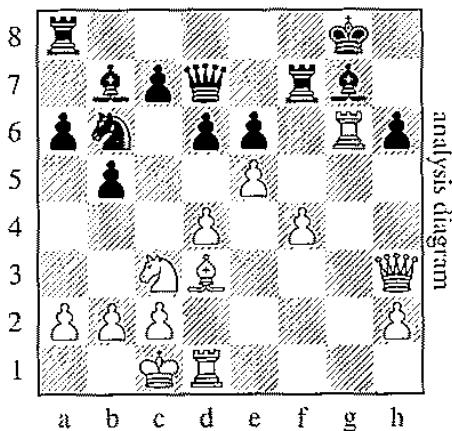
This decision had already been taken. The sacrifice is justified because the attack will take place on the light squares, and the black pieces that can defend the light squares are both gathering dust on the queenside. So for the time being White is actually a piece up on the side of the board that matters.



16... $\mathbb{W}xf7?$

It seems very tempting to bring the queen to f4 before putting the rook on f7 and including the other rook in the defence. There are specific reasons why this move is dubious (we will get to them soon enough), but it should be mentioned that these are all based on tactics and could therefore just as well have been overshadowed by the active position of the queen interfering with White's coordination, when it would have been impossible to organise a strong attack and the extra piece would count more than anything. I would probably favour the capture with the rook.

After 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ we have a critical position, which is close to impossible to work out at the board. It turns out that Black can hold his bits together in one way only, by trying to organise an escape with the king.



Three reasonable options to analyse are:

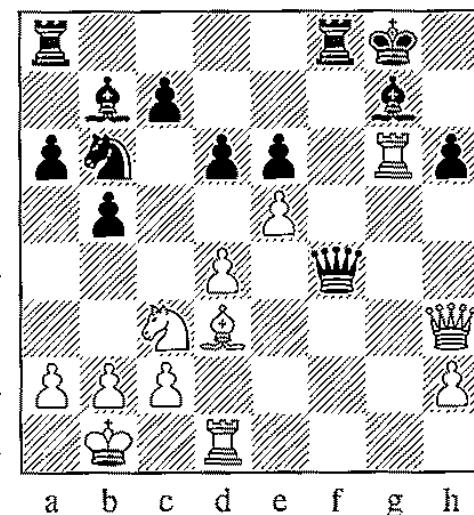
a) 17... $b4?$ is an attack on a piece White is not using for anything and will therefore be duly ignored. 18. $f5!$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ (18... $bxc3$ 19. $fxe6$ $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ and the g-file becomes lethally overloaded with artillery.) 19. $f6$ $bxc3$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$ and Black's position collapses. Besides the obvious capture on $g7$, $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ also looks good...

b) 17... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ is quite typical of the positions that can often occur. Again Black is neutralising the knight on $c3$, which is not contributing much. 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$ The extra tempo is certainly useful. Now both $\mathbb{Q}x$ and $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ are threatened. 19... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ The point. Black cannot get out of the bind and White will give a check on $h6$, take on $f7$ and bring in the rook. Black will lose too much material and the game will come to an end.

c) 17... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ Black should bring in more pieces to the defence of the squares that really matter, not try to disturb an out-of-play piece. 18. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ I cannot think of anything else.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{Q}f7!$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}e7!!$ This ingenious defence allows Black to defend. Though the options are not exhausted here, I still have the feeling that White should go for 22. $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ with a draw by repetition.

17. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4\#$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}b1$



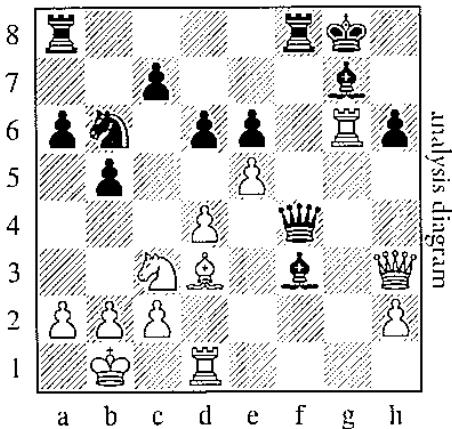
In *Chess Today* Mikhail Golubev gave this move the sign for compensation, which is an understandable reaction for a commentator who has to deliver only hours later. This is where the monthly commentator has a significant advantage and is able to use a full day trying to understand a game.

It turns out that there are a lot of mistakes and oversights, but the level of the mistakes is so high that it is easy to forgive the players for them. Dominguez's play is still awe-inspiring and Ivanchuk certainly no pushover.

As promised, I will try to formulate the downside of having the queen on $f4$: on $f4$ it can be used as a target with which to make a quick shift of placement for one or two pieces, opening alternate avenues to the black king as an element of interference. Also, on $f4$ the queen does not help in the protection of $e6$ and $g7$, squares that turn out to be more important for holding the black position together than $h6$ is.

18...♝f7?

This turns out to be a potentially decisive mistake. When we know the ways White could have exploited this to his advantage it will be possible to understand why 18...♝f3 was absolutely forced. The key idea is to bring the bishop to the kingside to somehow help the defence by simply being in the way. Also, it controls the rather vital squares e2 and g4, as well as giving Black the option of dealing with White's most annoying move:

**19.♝f1!**

Trying to exploit the exposed position of the queen on f4.

I see no advantage for White in the tactical line: 19.♝dg1 ♜f7 20.♛e4 ♜xc4 21.♝xe4 ♜xe4 22.♜xh6 ♜xg6 23.♜xg6 dx5 24.dxe5 ♜e8 and Black seems to have consolidated. Soon will come ...♝b6-c4xe5, bringing the last piece into play.

19...♝ae8!

This is a key move. Black needs to bring the final piece into the game.

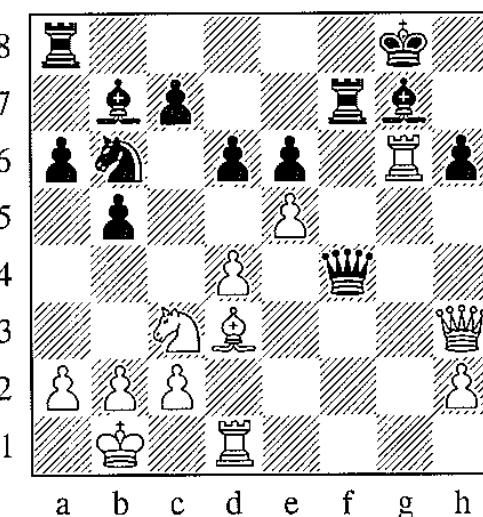
19...h5 meets a nice tactical refutation. 20.♛e2 ♜g4 21.♝g1! ♜f7 22.♝6xg4! and White wins the queen or everything else...

20.♝g3

20.exd6 is not a clear improvement over the main line. After the simple recapture the queen will protect g7 from d4 and Black is therefore free to recapture on f8 with the king.

20...♝c4 21.♝xc4 bxc4 22.♝xf3 ♜xd4
23.♝xf8† ♜xf8
23...♝xf8?? 24.♝f1† and the queen's emergence on f6 will decide the game.
24.♛xe6† ♜h8 25.a3 ♜xe5 26.♝xc4

What conclusion should be made of this position? In general I like Black because of the pressure on the long diagonal. On the other hand the white king might be slightly safer. All in all: unclear/equal is not an unjust evaluation.

**19.♝dg1?**

This is a bit too mechanically played. The attack on g7 has in itself little chance of being successful with the current correlation of the pieces. However, the black queen is very well placed and would not be able to find a better square if she was asked to.

This observation led me to:

19.♝f1!?

which wins in a most amazing line:

19...♝f3

This seems forced. 19...♛d2 loses to 20.♛xe6 ♜af8 21.♝gg1! when ♜g6 and also a simple exchange on f7 followed by ♜g1 decides.

20.♝g3 ♜xd4 21.♜xh6 ♜xe5

Other options exist, but none are sufficient.

22.♜h7† ♜f8 23.♝g6!

White is in no hurry. 23.♝gxf3 ♜xf3 24.♝xf3† ♜e7 is nothing special.

The black king has escaped and the solidity of the dark squares seems to be sufficient to survive.

23... $\mathbb{Q}c4!$

What else. Black cannot move the rook. The sideline with 23... $\mathbb{B}gxf3$ would look different if White has $\mathbb{B}f7\#$ at the end!

24. $\mathbb{B}xf7!$

White needs to calculate everything accurately to play like this, of course.

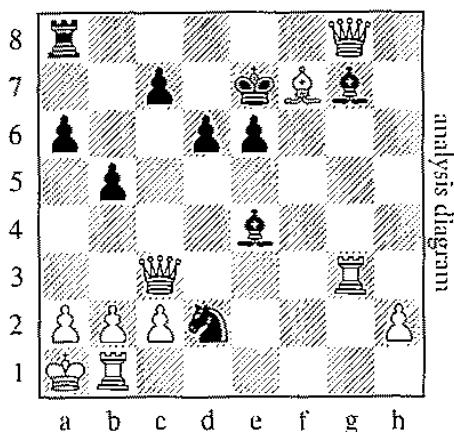
24... $\mathbb{Q}d2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{W}xc3!$

Ouch? 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ and wins.

26. $\mathbb{B}b1!$

Nope!

26... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 27. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$



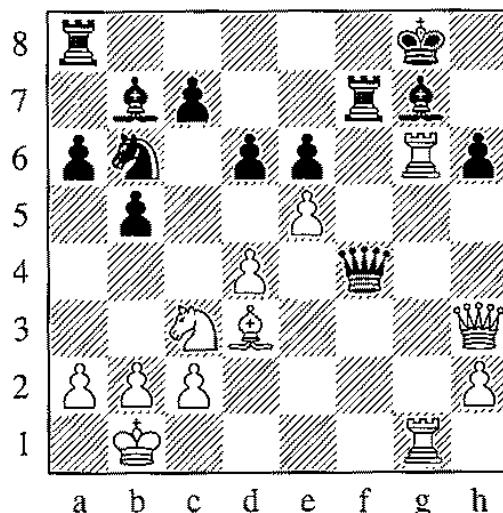
28. $\mathbb{Q}e8!!$

This stunning move is “the decider” (I know, you thought that was Dubya). Black ends up in a lost endgame. The h-pawn decides.

28... $\mathbb{B}xe8$ 29. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 30. $bxc3$ $\mathbb{B}xg8$ 31. $\mathbb{B}xg8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 32. $\mathbb{B}bg1$

And so on.

Having found this line I was simply amazed, but actually the same principles could be used much more simply with 19. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ forcing the queen to find a different spot, after which h6 will hang. For example: 19... $\mathbb{W}f2$ 20. $\mathbb{B}dg1$ and the direct threats are overwhelming. Black is forced to go for something like 20... $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 21. $\mathbb{B}xg7$ $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 22. $\mathbb{B}f1$ when White wins on points.



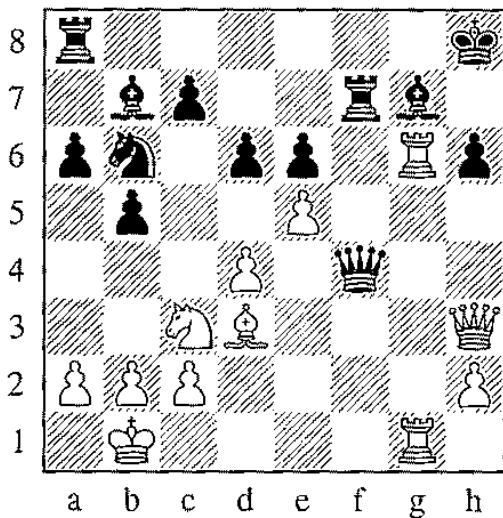
19... $\mathbb{Q}h8?$

This should have lost rather straightforwardly, but neither player was thinking about including the knight on c3 into the game, which is rather surprising. I am sure that Dominguez’s failure to see this was partly based on seeing that $\mathbb{B}6g4$ was a very promising option. But what was Ivanchuk’s reasoning? If he had seen the two ways for White to win the game as a response to this, he would most likely have found the correct solution, right?

19.. $\mathbb{B}af8$ does not work. Strong is 20. $\mathbb{W}h5?$, but even better is 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}d2$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$ with a great number of threats, of which the simplest is $\mathbb{B}xh6$.

But once again Black could have held with 19... $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ when White loses his two most potent options and the black queen is allowed to stand uncontested on f4. Suddenly it is not easy for White to justify the sacrificed piece. Probably he will have to look for equality after 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ (More critical is 20. $\mathbb{Q}e4?$, but Black should not fear 20... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 22. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ because of 22... $\mathbb{W}xg6$! 23. $\mathbb{W}xg6$ $\mathbb{B}af8$ 24.a3 $\mathbb{B}f1\#$ and the position with three pieces for the queen is simply unclear.) 20... $\mathbb{Q}h8$? Black gives up a piece to exchange queens and a pair of rooks. A very sober move. 21. $\mathbb{B}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 22. $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 23. $\mathbb{B}xg7$ $dxe5$ 24.dxe5

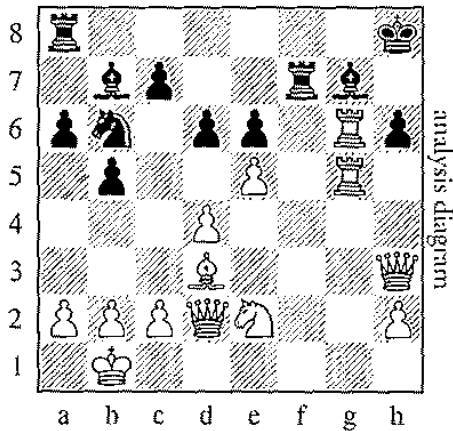
$\mathbb{g}f1\#$ 25. $\mathbb{g}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ and the chances are about equal.



20. $\mathbb{B}6g4?!$

While reading about NLP recently I came across the idea that if you use your body language in the same way as the person you are imitating, you will to some extent be able to read their mind. Maybe this is what sometimes goes on in a chess game, when both players are thinking in the same direction, completely overlooking other avenues and scrambling alternative wavelengths.

Once again bringing in an extra piece with 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ was winning based on 20... $\mathbb{W}d2$ 21. $\mathbb{B}1g5!!$.



The threat of $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$ decides the game. This kind of quiet move is very hard to see, even

when you are having the tournament of your life, it seems.

20... $\mathbb{W}d2!$

20... $\mathbb{W}f3$

This would have offered less resistance.

21. $\mathbb{B}4g3$

21. $\mathbb{B}xg7??$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 22. $\mathbb{B}xf7$ looks tempting, until you find 22... $\mathbb{B}g2!$ when Black is better.

21. $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{W}e3$ 22. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 23. $\mathbb{B}h7\#!$ was however winning as well in a long line I will spare you from.

21... $\mathbb{W}f4$

The queen is back on f4, but g6 is vacant and attracts the white queen immediately.

22. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $dxe5$

What else?

23. $dxe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 24. $\mathbb{B}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$

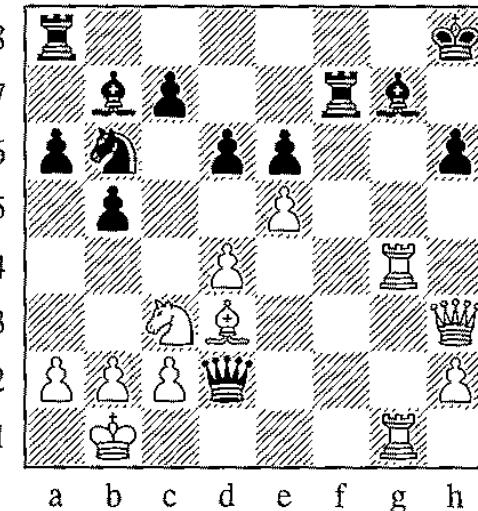
Once again this move decides. Now the endgame after

25... $\mathbb{Q}d5$

25... $\mathbb{W}f2$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xg7$

26. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{B}g8$

wins easily for White. He can either play 28. $a3$, preparing further domination, or win directly with 28. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 29. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 30. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 31. $\mathbb{B}g6$ and the h-pawn will draw Black's forces to the kingside while White ravages the queenside.

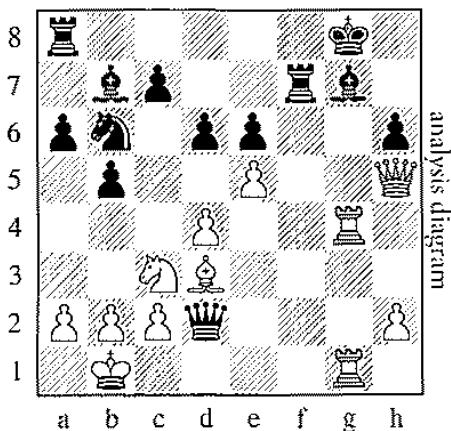


21.王h5!

Looking for an opening in the black armour.

21...象af8

21...王g8 was suggested as an improvement by Golubev in *Chess Today*, but it loses straightaway to one of the most astonishing combinations I have ever seen.



22.象xb5!! axb5 (22...象f8 23.象xc7 象xc7 24.象f1# and so on. 22...象d5 loses in several ways too, most elegantly 23.象xd6 cxd6 24.象h7#! 象f8 25.象xf7# 象xf7 26.象xg7# 象e8 27.象xb7.) 23.象xf7!! 象xf7 24.象xg7# 象e8 25.象xb5# The point; Black loses his escape route. 25...象c6 26.象g8# 象e7 27.象1g7 mate!

22.a3

The trap was 22.象g6?? 象f1# and it is Black who wins.

However, White could have considered 22.象d1#! winning the queen. After 22...象xd3 23.cxd3 象f3 24.象g6 象xg4 25.象xg4 some technical skills will have to be displayed, but then again, Dominguez definitely has those.

22...象e7

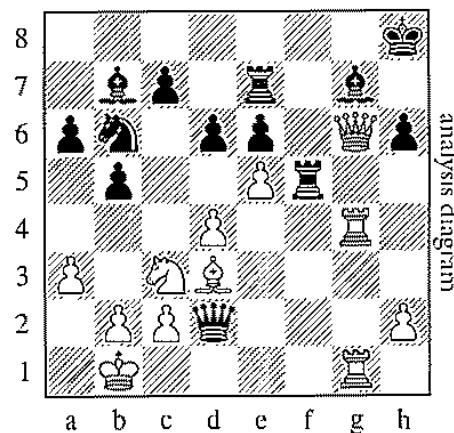
Preparing to defend g7 from the side and to block the bishop's diagonal with the other rook.

22...象f3? 23.象g6 is bad.

23.象xg7#?

A decent combination that eventually wins a pawn and gives excellent winning chances, but an even stronger, almost inhuman, option existed. Black should have been tested with:

23.象g6 象f5



analysis diagram

White has a wonderful move at his disposal:

24.d5!!

The idea behind this move is to undermine the light squares and thereby the rook on f5. Because of various tactics this works in the most astonishing ways:

24...象xd5

24...象xd5 25.象c4 象e3 26.象f6 is not an option.

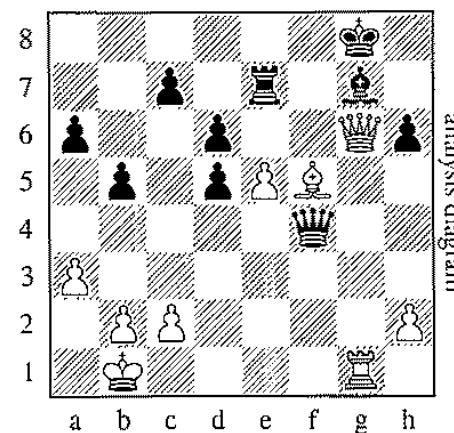
25.象d4!!

Once again the exposed position of the black queen is used by White to gain sufficient momentum for his attack.

25...象g8

25...象xh2 26.象xf5 wins the exchange, but of course Black is not mated immediately.

26.象xd5 象xd5 27.象xd5 象f4 28.象xf5 exd5



analysis diagram

Black has avoided losing material, but will now have to face the full force of White's domination on the light squares.

29. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{B}xg7!$ $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{B}g8$
 31... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ allows Black to make it all the way to a pawn ending, but not a very good one...
 32. $e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 33. $\mathbb{B}f8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 34. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$
 35. $\mathbb{B}f7\#$ and White queens his pawn soon enough.
 32. $\mathbb{B}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 33. $\mathbb{B}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 34. $\mathbb{B}c8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$
 35. $\mathbb{B}d7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 36. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 37. $e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$
 38. $\mathbb{B}e7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 39. $\mathbb{B}h7$ mate!

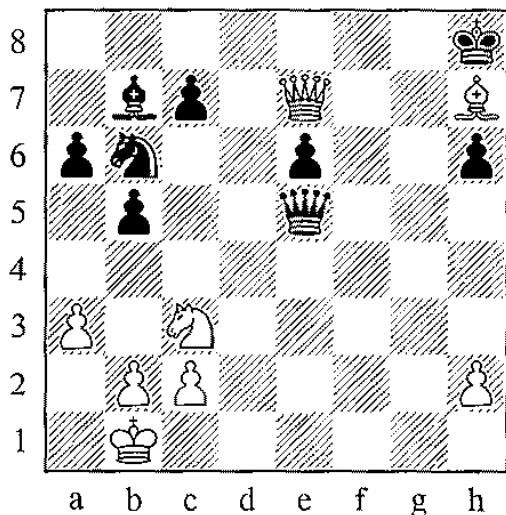
23... $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 24. $\mathbb{B}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}f1\#$!

Of course.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 27. $\mathbb{W}e8!$

The threats are continuing, but now with less firepower. Eventually White manages to win a pawn, but somehow one cannot help but think that this was too cheap a price for him to dismantle the attack.

- 27... $dxe5$ 28. $dxe5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 29. $\mathbb{W}e7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$
 30. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}e7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$



33. $\mathbb{Q}g6$

White has other options, all leading to a clear superiority, but none that force a win.

33... $\mathbb{W}g7$ 34. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ $\mathbb{W}g8$ 35. $\mathbb{B}f6\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$

36. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$

36. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ and Black has managed to not lose any material, which is nice.

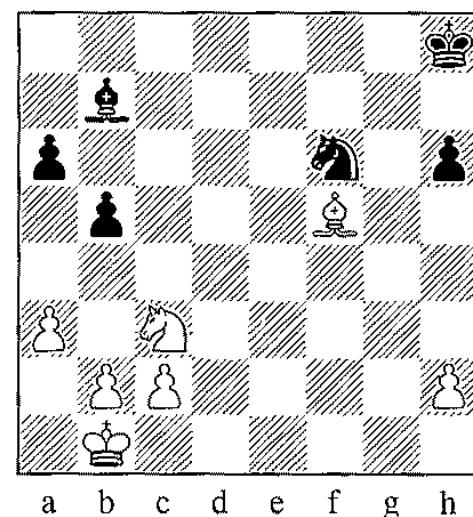
36... $\mathbb{W}g8$ 37. $\mathbb{B}xc7$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

37... $\mathbb{W}xg6!$ 38. $\mathbb{B}xb7$ is another endgame a pawn down, but this time with queens.

38. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 39. $\mathbb{B}b8\#$ $\mathbb{W}g8$ 40. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$
 41. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}f6$

Sadly for Ivanchuk, this happens to be forced. After 41... $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$ 42. $bxc3$ it is hard to suggest a move for Black, and after 41... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ Black looks completely dominated without a decent move.

42. $\mathbb{B}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}f5$



The arising endgame must have pleased Dominguez. Not only does it indeed look winning for White, but even if he should fail to bring home the bacon (much appreciated on Cuba, I have heard) and win the game, he would still claim the first prize.

White is winning for a simple reason – he has a pawn more on the queenside. However, this does not mean that he should immediately push this trump. Rather, he should first get his king into the game (it is the most powerful piece on the board), coordinate his pieces and only then start looking for the best circumstances in

which to advance the queenside majority.

The nightmare way to play this position would be to push the pawns forward quickly, allowing Black to exchange his two queenside pawns (White would rather see him lose them) and maybe even give up the bishop for the last remaining foot soldier on the queenside under advantageous circumstances, so that his king can stay put in the corner and salvage a draw.

Needless to say, Dominguez did not plan to allow this...

43...Bg7 44.Qc1 Qe8 45.Qe4!

The most common theme of the endgame according to my observation is "domination". Here White excluded the black pieces from the game (and threatens Qc5), forcing Black to let go of his bishop.

45...Qxe4 46.Qxe4 Qd6 47.Qd3

Domination again.

47...a5 48.Qd2 Qf6 49.Qe3 Qe5 50.Qf3 b4 51.axb4

White exchanges one and only one pawn.

51...axb4 52.Qg4 Qf6 53.Qf4 Qe6 54.b3 Qf6 55.Qc4!

Placing Black in zugzwang, a phenomenon almost exclusively seen in the endgame. Black will now have to give up his blockade and the white king will be able to go to the queenside to decide the game.

55...Qf5 56.Qe4 h5

56...Qg5 was also possible, but White can win in many ways. One of these is 57.Qd3 Qh4 58.Qd5 Qf3 59.Qc5 Qxh2 60.Qxb4 Qf3 61.c4 h5 62.c5 Qe5 63.Qf1 and the two pawns are simply too strong.

57.Qe2!

Forcing Black even further back.

57...h4 58.Qg4 Qd6† 59.Qf4 Qb7 60.Qf5

Qc5 61.Qg4 h3 62.Qh7 Qe6 63.Qd3 Qe5 64.Qxh3 Qf4† 65.Qg4 Qxd3 66.cxd3 Qd4 67.h4 Qc3 68.h5 Qxb3 69.h6

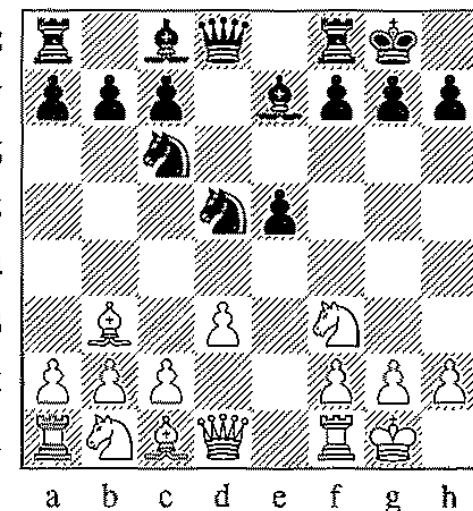
1-0

Alexei Shirov – Dejan Mozetic

Tilburg 1993

I have a lot of affection for this instructive game. It shows the importance of time in the attack clearly. After greedy opening play White finds himself under attack, but his opponent loses the momentum, not only once, but twice. Had he not done so, the game would have been known as a modern masterpiece, I think.

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qc4 Qf6 4.d3 Qe7 5.0-0 0-0 6.Qb3 d5 7.exd5 Qxd5



8.h3

This move looks a bit too slow to fight for an opening advantage as far as I am concerned.

The critical line must start with 8.Qe1, when passive moves are awkward.

After 8...Qg4 9.h3 Qxf3 10.Qxf3 Black has the tricky idea 10...Qd4!?, but I think that the ending after 11.Qxd5 Qxd5 12.Qxd5 Qxc2 13.Qxe5 Qac8 14.Qe2 Qxa1 15.Qxb7

was better for White in Tiviakov – Hector, Helsingør 2008, even though Black drew. I was playing in the same tournament, and the heat in the playing hall was beyond belief that year, maybe this influenced the result?

But the attacking player is more likely to choose 9... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ instead of 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$, offering the e-pawn, but only after weakening White's kingside.

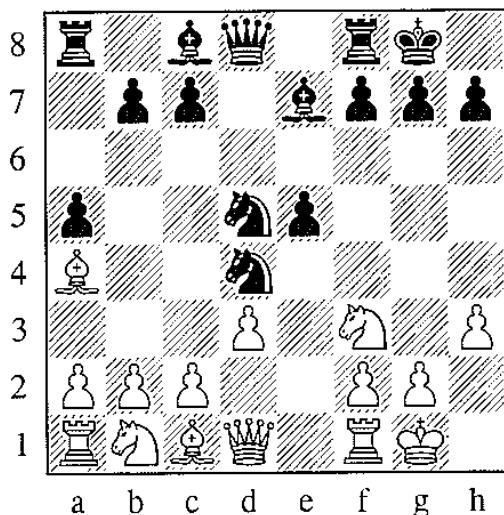
8...a5!

This appears to be the most challenging approach.

9. $\mathbb{Q}a4$

The more ambitious option, but also a risky approach. Safe would be 9.a3, but Black is not really worried. One blitz game continued: 9...a4 10. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 11. $\mathbb{E}e1$ f6 12.d4 exd4 13. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}db4$ 14.axb4 $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 15.c3 $\mathbb{W}xd1$ 16. $\mathbb{E}xd1$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ with equality in Kramnik – Kasparov, New York 1995.

9... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$



Black seems to say that White has been manoeuvring a lot and has not developed his pieces, and that this justifies attempting to take over the initiative.

10. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Shirov continues to take up the challenge, but he is on a slippery path!

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

In one game Black decided to prepare this move with 10... $\mathbb{Q}f6$? 11. $\mathbb{E}e1$, but after 11... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 12.c3 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 13. $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14. $\mathbb{E}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 15.d4 the story had changed – White is simply a pawn up. Black did play very energetically and drew the game, but here his position is dubious, Nevednichy – Yandemirov, Azov 1991.

11.c3?

White continues to play in uncompromising style, but already here I think he should worry.

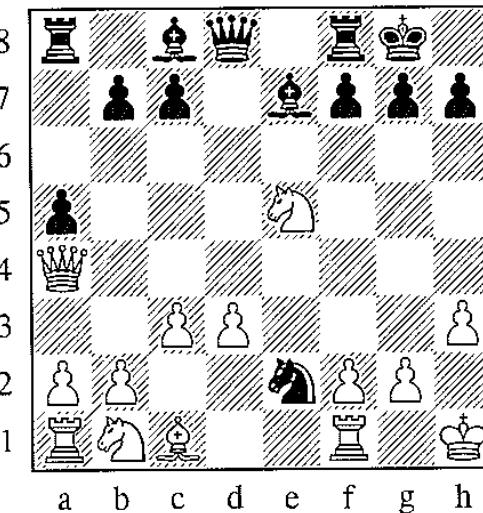
11. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ was highly successful in Krayz – Haimovich, Israel 2003, but for some reason Black did not play 11...a4 12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ (12... $\mathbb{E}a5$?) 13. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ b5 14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ with a strong attacking position.

Also 11. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ offers Black excellent compensation, but White had to play something along these lines.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 12. $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}e2\#!$

The knight will not make it back, but it does not need to.

13. $\mathbb{F}h1$



13...♞f6!

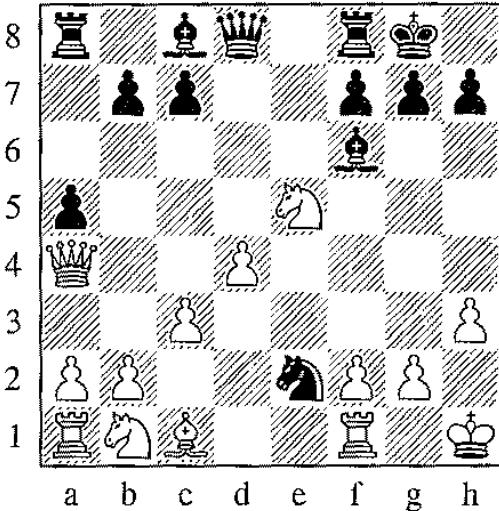
This move works out well in the game, but I think it is a bit artificial. The idea behind it is that White cannot withdraw the knight without losing the d3-pawn.

However, I do not think there was anything wrong with playing the most natural move, 13...♝d6!. I have a lot of analysis, but I am not sure it is too relevant here. The gist of it is that White barely hangs on. He is simply too far behind in development. And after 14.d4 Black might even play 14...♝h4!, which is even stronger than the game.

14.d4?!

The most natural move, but unfortunately that is not always enough.

14.♝e4 is best met with the energetic 14...♞xe5!, when after 15.♝xe2 (15.♝xe5? ♜e8 and ...♝xd3, with a winning attack.) 15...♜e8 16.♞e3 ♜d5!? 17.♝g1 ♜a6 Black has a very strong attack going. But still the outcome is not entirely clear, so White probably needed to try this.

**14...♝xh3!!**

This is a true attacking move. Black sacrifices the bishop to open up the white king, but without having an immediate payback.

15.gxh3 ♜d5† 16.♝h2

16.f3? would be horrible. Black is much better after 16...♝xe5 17.dxe5 ♜g3† 18.♝g2 ♜xf1 19.♝d4 ♜fd8.

16...♝xe5†**16...♝e4?!**

This was a very interesting move as well. The immediate threat is ...♝xe5†. Probably White's best option is to play:

17.♝g4

Still Black is better:

17...♝xc1

For example:

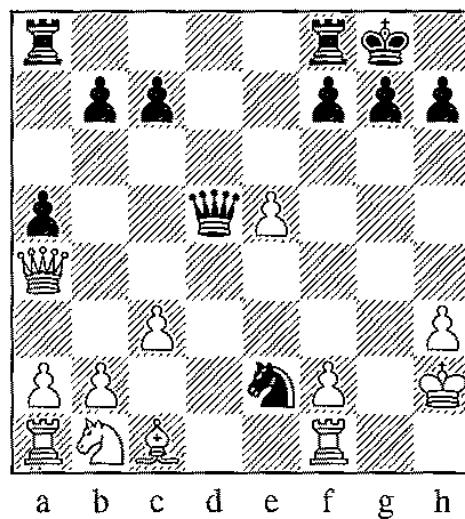
18.♝d2 ♜f4† 19.♝h1 ♜d3 20.♝b5! ♜xd2

21.♝xf6†

21.♝ad1 ♜xf2† 22.♝xf2 ♜c2 must be better for Black.

21...gxh3 22.♝f5 ♜a6 23.♝ad1 ♜xf2† 24.♝xf2 ♜xf2 25.♝xf2

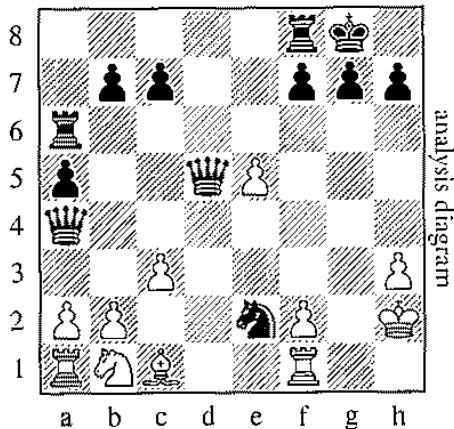
White has some issues in this ending.

17.dxe5**17...♝xe5†?**

This is too soon. Black needed to bring more pieces into the attack to make it work. It is of course difficult to determine exactly when the right time to bring in these extra pieces is, but the fact that White could reply 18.f4 to this check was a good indicator that Black was about to lose momentum.

It was of course possible to take a draw with 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}d5\#$, but not really attractive.

The best move was 17... $\mathbb{R}a6!!$ to bring the rook quickly into the attack.



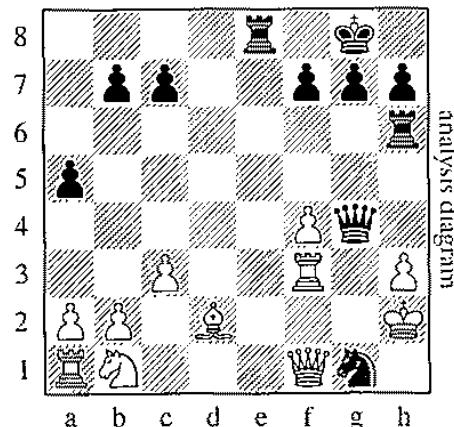
Here White has many possibilities which I think need to be investigated.

a) 18. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$

18... $\mathbb{R}f3$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g5!!$ would lose the momentum and give White the advantage.

19. $f4$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 20. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

20. $\mathbb{B}f2$ $\mathbb{B}h6$ 21. $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}g4!!$ is very good for Black. The main threat is ... $\mathbb{B}xh3\#$. 23. $\mathbb{B}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g1!!$



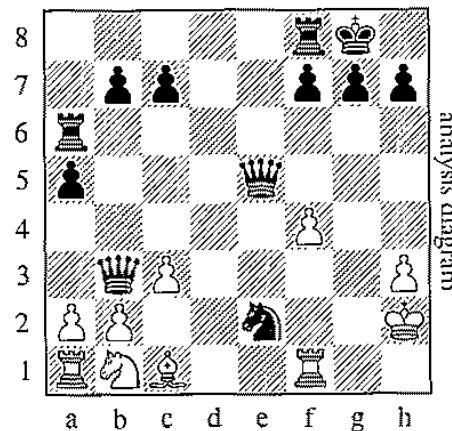
24. $\mathbb{B}g3$ $\mathbb{B}e2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xe2$ $\mathbb{W}xe2\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xg1$ $\mathbb{W}d1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}c2$ and Black wins.

20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ transposes to the position at move 22 in the game.

20... $\mathbb{B}d6!$ 21. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 22. $\mathbb{B}xc1$ $\mathbb{B}e6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{B}e2\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}2e3$
And Black wins.

b) 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ 19. $f4$ also does not work. The bishop is missed. 19... $\mathbb{W}e3$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{B}h6$ 21. $f5$ $g5!$ 22. $fxg6$ $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}d5\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{B}xg6$ and White cannot defend $g2$ effectively.

c) 18. $\mathbb{W}b3$ is met elegantly with 18... $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ 19. $f4$



19... $\mathbb{Q}xf4!!$ with a strong attack. After 20. $\mathbb{B}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}e2\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{B}g6\#$ 22. $\mathbb{B}g4$ $\mathbb{B}d8!$ White has many pieces, but no defence.

d) 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ is an attempt to give the piece back. I think the best move is 18... $\mathbb{B}h6?!$ to improve the position before he does. After 19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ (19. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 20. $h4$ $f5!$ 21. $exf6$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 23. $\mathbb{B}axc1$ $\mathbb{W}xf3$ and Black will also win the h-pawn, giving him excellent winning chances.) 19... $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ 20. $f4$ (20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{B}g6\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $b5$ 22. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{B}e8-$) 20... $\mathbb{W}f5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ Black has the sneaky 21... $\mathbb{W}g4!!$, deciding the game.

e) 18. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ is much much better for Black, as after 19. $\mathbb{B}xc1?$ $\mathbb{B}g6$, he just wins.

f) 18. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ This appears to be the only real defence. 18... $\mathbb{B}g6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ Black however still

has strong threats. After 19... $\mathbb{W}d3!$ 20. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{W}f5!$ White is forced to play 21. $\mathbb{W}d7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 22. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ with the hope of drawing this vastly inferior ending.

18. $\mathbb{Q}h1?$

18.f4!

I think this was the best move. White cannot lose time, which Black can use to bring his pieces in, under better conditions than on move 17.

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

This is probably the best reply.

18... $\mathbb{W}f5?!$ loses the momentum as well. After 19. $\mathbb{W}d1!$ $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xc1$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ 21. $\mathbb{B}f2$! $\mathbb{B}ad8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}d3$ 23. $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{B}ee3$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}xf4\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ Black does not have enough compensation for the piece.

19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}g6!$

19... $\mathbb{B}ad8?$ 20.f5 and there is no real way to avoid 21. $\mathbb{W}g4!$, when the attack has been fully repelled.

20. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Otherwise ... $\mathbb{B}e4$.

21... $\mathbb{W}f5!$

With the idea of ...b5 and ... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$.

22. $\mathbb{W}c4$

22. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ is not necessarily worse, I just don't like the look of it.

22...b5 23. $\mathbb{W}c6!$

This looks to be the safest way to play. The queen belongs on the kingside.

23. $\mathbb{W}xc7$ loses touch with important squares around the king. Black has a very strong attack. The following is a good illustration of where this could take him: 23... $\mathbb{B}e3$ 24. $\mathbb{B}f3$ $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ g5 28. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ g4 and Black wins.

Black's best option is probably:

23... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 24. $\mathbb{W}f3$

24. $\mathbb{B}f3$ $\mathbb{B}e2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{B}xf2\#$ also leads to a draw, this time by repetition.

24... $\mathbb{B}e2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{B}ae8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{B}8e3$

With a draw by repetition:

27. $\mathbb{W}a8\#$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 28. $\mathbb{W}f3$

18... $\mathbb{W}d5\#$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{B}a6!$

This is even stronger than before. The e5-pawn was slowing Black down a little bit, just as it was useful for White in the lines where he gives up a piece to make it to the ending.

20. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}e5\#$!

This provokes a serious weakening in the white position. After 20... $\mathbb{W}h5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ Black also has a strong attack, but it is not entirely clear if White cannot defend in some desperate lines: 21... $\mathbb{B}f6$ 22. $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1\#$ 24. $\mathbb{B}xf1$ with likely equality.

21.f4

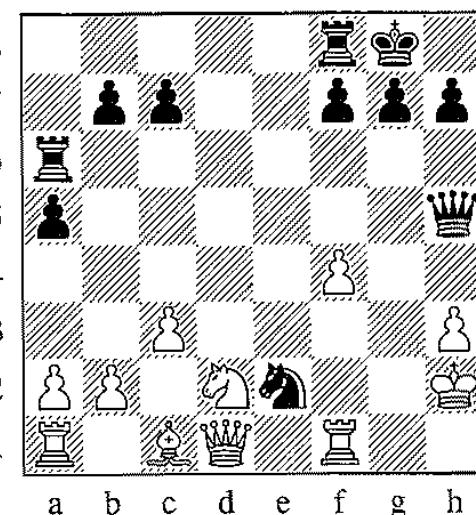
21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}e4\#$ 22.f3 $\mathbb{W}h4!$ and White is lost.

21... $\mathbb{W}h5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

This works out in practice, but in theory there are no good moves...

22. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{B}d6$ also looks very dangerous. 23. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ is an example of just how much.

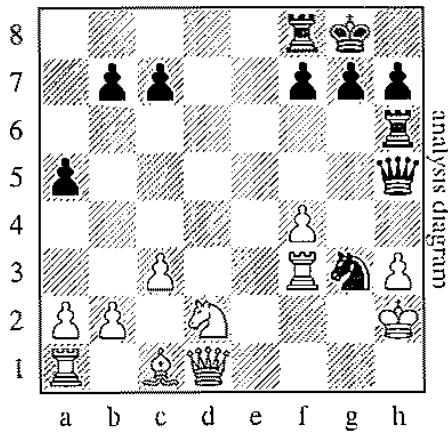
22. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{B}d6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{B}fd8$ also leads to a winning attack.



22...♝d8??

This does bring the last piece into play, but unfortunately it is too far away from the action to make it in time. Black did not have to lose the momentum; the winning combination was:

22...♝h6 23.♝f3 ♜g3!!



The pin on the white rook is devastating.
24.♚xg3 ♜xh3† 25.♚f2 ♜h2† 26.♚e3

And now he wins in any which way:
26...♝d8

The following is just a sample line, but a very potent one:
27.f5 ♜hd6! 28.♛e1 f6 29.♛g3 ♜e8† 30.♚f4 30.♛e4 ♜c2!
30...g5† 31.fxg6 ♜h6† 32.♚f5 ♜d5† 33.♚xf6 ♜g7 mate.

23.♝f2!

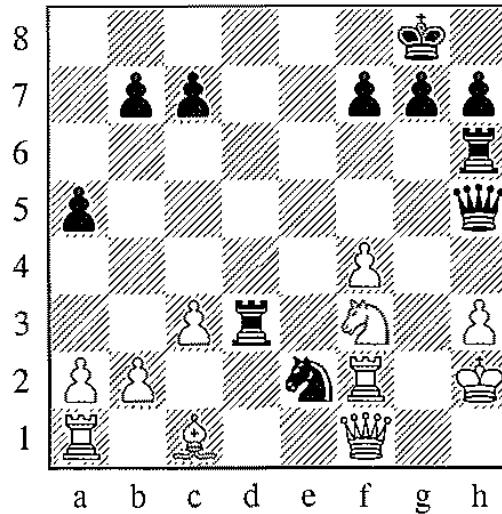
Suddenly White has enough time to get organised.

23...♝d3

23...♛xf4 24.♛xh5 ♛xh5 25.♛b3! gives White a winning ending. The knight conveniently defends the rook on a1.

24.♛f1 ♜h6

24...♝e6 25.♝f3 ♛xc1 26.♝xc1 ♜cc3
27.♝d1! also wins easily.

25.♝f3

Black's attack has effectively been repelled.

25...g6

25...♛xc1 26.♝xc1 ♜f5 27.♝g1 and White wins. The same is the case after **25...♝d1? 26.♝xe2!!**.

26.♛g2 ♜d5 27.♝g5! ♜xg2† 28.♝xg2!

28.♝xg2?? ♛xc1 29.♝xc1 f6 would give the advantage back to Black.

28...f6 29.♝xe2 fxg5 30.fxg5 ♜h6h3 31.♝f4 ♜h4 32.♝e4

1-0

Vasily Malinin – Darius Zagorskis

Correspondence 1988

This is one of my favourite games from my childhood. It is always interesting to go back and look at such games with closer scrutiny than when you were 15 and easily impressed.

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♝c3 d5 4.♛g5 ♜e7 5.♝f3 0-0 6.♛c2 ♜bd7 7.e3 c5 8.0-0-0!!

White is not holding back.

8...♛a5 9.♝b1 dxc4 10.♝xc4 cxd4 11.♝xd4 h6

12.h4?!

White is maybe pulling the bow a bit too far backwards. I think it was more prudent to play 12. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ and 13. $\mathbb{Q}hd1$, which should secure White a slight edge. However, the game is definitely more romantic.

Actually, I should say that when I decided to include this game in this book, I was wondering what Black had done wrong to deserve such violent treatment; and apparently being unable to defend against it. To my relief, I do not have to revise my basic understanding of chess, but only my youthful infatuation with this game. Years have passed, and the youth who could see no wrong with the moves played in this game has been replaced with an ageing man, who can see lots of wrongs, but loves it all the same...

12...a6

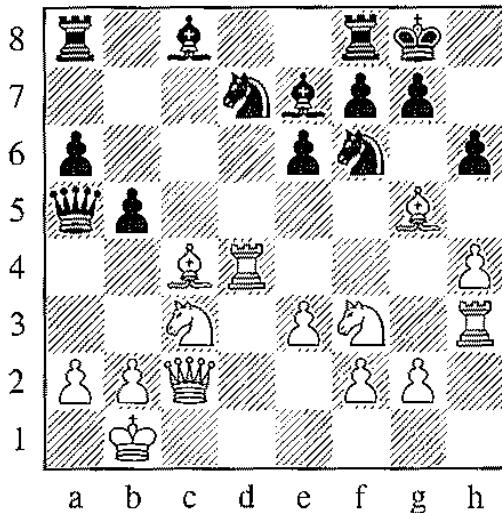
12... $\mathbb{E}d8?$ with an even game was also possible, but Black's play seems to have only provoked White's over-aggression, and can for that reason not be said to be wrong.

13. $\mathbb{Q}h3?!$

I have a lot of sympathy with White's play in this game, but deep analysis shows that it is ultimately flawed.

13...b5

Black is probably already better, so White is reacting in the best possible practical way.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}xe6! fxe6$**

14... $hxg5?$ would fail to 15. $hxg5$ $fxe6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}g6!!$ and there is no defence to the threat of $\mathbb{Q}dh4$.

15. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$

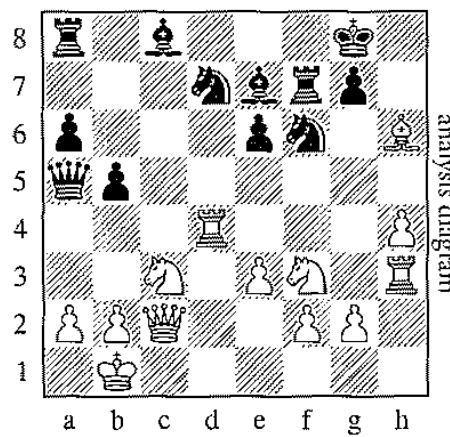
15. $\mathbb{Q}g6 \mathbb{E}f7$ with the idea ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$.

15...b4?

Black is looking for counterplay and to involve the queen, but this leaves him open to a demolition sacrifice.

It was also incorrect to play 15... $gxh6?$, opening up the kingside. White wins rather quickly with 16. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}dg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ and now for example the elegant 21. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$, as suggested by Ivo Timmermans.

The battle is for the g7-square and Black should have joined it without hesitation. After 15... $\mathbb{E}f7!$



16. $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{Q}f8!$ I have tried a lot of desperate things, but the conclusion can actually be made simply by looking at the position. White does not have enough compensation for the piece. Too many of his own pieces have no easy access to the kingside, and the black king seems to be both hiding safely in his current position, and have a great escape route, should White run wild.

16.Bg3?

This is too slow, and once again White loses the momentum. A promising young Danish player, Miriam Olsen, suggested:

16.Bxg7!

This was suggested during a training session and was a complete surprise to me. At the time I did not think there was a defence to the attack, so I was not initially as impressed with this move as I am now.

The main idea is that 16...Bxg7? 17.Bg3† Bh8 18.Bg5!! paralyses Black. White will playBg6 next and have a winning attack.

16...Bf7!

This is therefore the only move.

17.Bh6 Bh5!

The best defensive try.

17...Bxc3 18.Bg6† Bh8 19.Bxf7 Bf5† 20.e4 Bh7 21.Bxh7† Bxh7 22.Bc1 leaves White with a very favourable endgame.

And 17...Bh7 18.Bg3† Bh8 19.Bg5! gives White a very strong attack.

18.Bg3† Bh8 19.Bg5! Bxc3 20.Bxf7† Bxf7 21.Bg7† Bxg7 22.Bxg7 Bxg7

This sort of ending favours White, only because he has the initiative. If we were just counting the pieces, it would be obvious that there are many black ones...

23.h5! Bb8 24.b3 Bxh5

24...Bh8 25.Bxc3 e5 26.Bd1 Bb7 27.Bc7 Be4† 28.Ba1 Bf5 29.f3 Bg8 30.g4 Be6 31.e4 also favours White.

25.Bg4† Bf8 26.Bh7 Bdf6 27.Bh8† Bf7 28.Bc4!

Winning a piece back, securing the advantage.

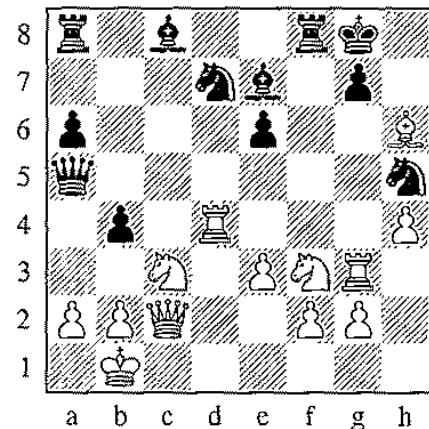
28...Bf8 29.Bc7† Bd7 30.Bxd7† Bxd7 31.Bxh5†

White has excellent winning chances with the extra pawns.

16...Bf7?!

It was once again possible for Black to fight for an advantage. I have analysed the following

complications deeply, and have not found adequate compensation after:

16...Bh5!**17.Bd5!**

17.Bdg4 Bf7 offers nothing, as after 18.Bg5 Bdf6 19.Bxf7 Black has 19...Bxg4!, winning.

17...exd5

Of the many options, this is the only playable one.

18.Bxg7†?!

This is the best try.

18.Bxg7 is met with the strong 18...Bxf3!! (18...Bxg7 19.Bxg7† Bxg7 20.Bg4† Bg5!! leads to equality after a lot of moves. Basically White has enough checks.) 19.gxf3 Bxg7 20.Bdg4 Bf6!! The g7-knight is doomed anyway. (20...Bf6 21.Bxg7† Bxg7 22.Bg6 gives enough counterplay for a draw.) 21.Bxg7† Bf8 22.Bg6 Be6 The white attack has basically been repelled. The only idea I can see for White is to play: 23.Bh6 Be8 24.B3g6 Bf5† 25.e4 Bxg6 26.Bxg6† Bd8 27.Bg8† Bxg8 28.Bxg8† Bd7 29.Bxa8 This ending offers a bit of hope because of the low number of pawns, but essentially Black has all the chances.

18...Bxg7 19.Bg6 Bf7 20.Bf4! Bf6 21.Bg5 Bc6 22.Bxf7 Bf8!!

The accurate move.

22...Bf15 23.Bxg7 Bxg7 24.Bg4 Bf6! 25.Bh6† leads to perpetual check.

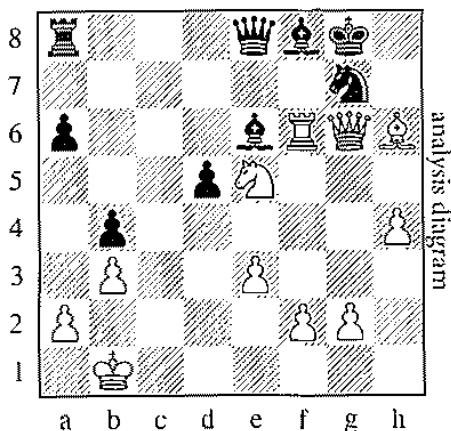
23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

23. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ would give Black a crushing counterattack.

23... $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

The queen is transferred to the defence with gain of tempo.

24. $b3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}c5$



25... $\mathbb{Q}f5!!$

A nice finesse, giving Black something to live for.

26. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xh4$
29. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 30. $f3$

Maybe White can hold this ending, maybe not. The knight is placed awfully on h4 and Black will quickly get his pieces into good positions.

17. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

White immediately takes his chance.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xh6?$

A silly move that opens up the king's position unnecessarily.

17... $\mathbb{Q}f5?$ 18. $e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ would not slow down the white attack. After 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 21. $e5!$ White wins.

The correct way to play was to try to defend the king. This is best done with 17... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ $bxc3!$ (or the other way around). White can force a draw with 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$, or play

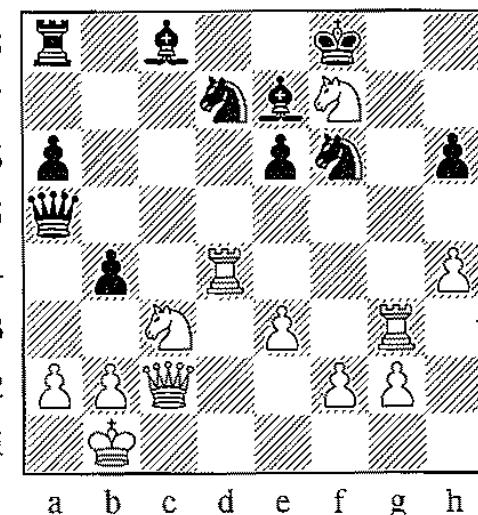
19. $\mathbb{Q}d6?$ when after 19... $\mathbb{Q}b8!$ White can still consider 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ with a draw, but would probably want to play 20. $b3?$ with a deeply unclear position with many possibilities for both players.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$

18. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#?$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ would end the attack at once.

18... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

18... $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#?$ is of course not possible. After 19. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ Black loses everything.



19. $\mathbb{Q}xh6?$

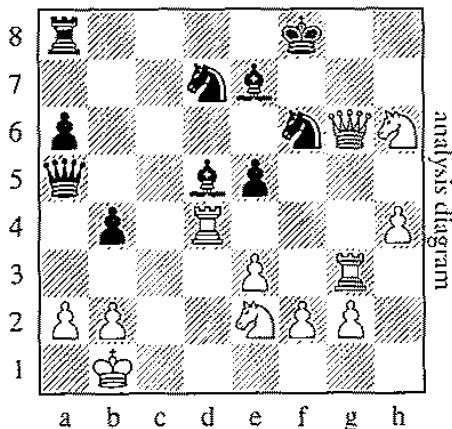
19. $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ and 19. $\mathbb{Q}c4?$ are both interesting alternatives, but neither leads to an edge. The first can be answered with 19... $b3!$, with a perpetual as an option, and the other can be met (only) with 19... $e5!$, when White seems to have nothing:

a) 20. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ with enough counterplay to draw.

b) 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $exd4$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}c6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ 25. $exd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ and Black has enough counterplay for a draw. It is important that Black can reply to 26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ with 26... $\mathbb{Q}b7!$, drawing.

However, the calm 19... $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ looks very decent indeed. Black has many options, but none that fully satisfy. White has two pawns and a rook against two bishops. This is probably equal material, at least in this position. And he is about to play $\mathbb{Q}xh6$, gaining another pawn, as well as other attacking moves. Black can seek an ending with 19... $\mathbb{W}f5$, but it is worse for him.

However, it might be the best option, as lines like 19... $e5?!$ lead to destruction: 20. $\mathbb{W}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$



22. $\mathbb{B}xd5!$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 23. $e4$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ and because of the threat of 25. $\mathbb{W}g7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ and 27. $\mathbb{Q}g7\#$, Black has to play 24... $\mathbb{W}f7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 26. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$, when White wins comfortably.

19... $\mathbb{W}h5$

19... $\mathbb{B}xc3?$ 20. $\mathbb{W}g6$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ fails to 21. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$.

20. $\mathbb{B}g6$

20. $\mathbb{W}h7?$ looks attractive, but after 20... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ Black runs away.

20. $\mathbb{Q}d5?!$ can also be tried, but Black appears to be okay. 20... $\mathbb{B}xd5$ (20... $\mathbb{W}xh6?$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 23. $\mathbb{B}g7$ is very dangerous. White's main idea is g4-g5, which it is not so easy to find a defence against.) 21. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ (21... $\mathbb{B}b7$ 22. $\mathbb{B}g5!$ is inconvenient. 22... $\mathbb{W}h8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}c7$ is not pleasant.) 22. $\mathbb{B}g5$ $\mathbb{W}h8$ 23. $\mathbb{B}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 24. $\mathbb{B}g6$ (24.h5) 24... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{W}h7$

26. $\mathbb{B}g8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 27. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 28. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}xc2\#$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ This ending is very sharp. White has some strong pawns, but I am not at all sure they constitute an advantage. Maybe the best end is 29... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 30. $\mathbb{B}g8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ with a draw?

20... $\mathbb{Q}e5$

This is the move that causes most problems for White, however it was also possible to play the more complicated 20... $\mathbb{B}xc3?!$. The critical line goes like this: 21.g4 $\mathbb{W}b5!$ (21... $\mathbb{W}xh4$ 22.g5 is a bit too dangerous to be recommended, even though it is not obvious that White has an advantage after 22... $\mathbb{W}h5?!$ either.) 22.g5 $\mathbb{B}b8?!$ (22... $\mathbb{W}xb2??$ would be unfortunate. White wins after 23. $\mathbb{W}xb2$ $\mathbb{C}xb2$ 24. $\mathbb{B}xd7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 25. $\mathbb{G}xf6$.) 23. $\mathbb{W}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}f1\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $e5!$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xd7$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 27. $\mathbb{G}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}f1\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}f2\#$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ with a draw by perpetual check.

21. $\mathbb{B}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

22... $\mathbb{W}xh6?$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ would be foolish.

23. $\mathbb{W}c7?!$

This looks a bit risky. White was better off playing 23.f4!, when the chances appear to be rather even. There are many many options, but none of them seems to trouble either player much.

One of these lines go like this: 23... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 24. $\mathbb{F}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{W}xe3!$ 26. $\mathbb{B}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xg2$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xb7?!$ $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 29. $\mathbb{W}h7$ $\mathbb{W}g2!$ and White has nothing better than perpetual check.

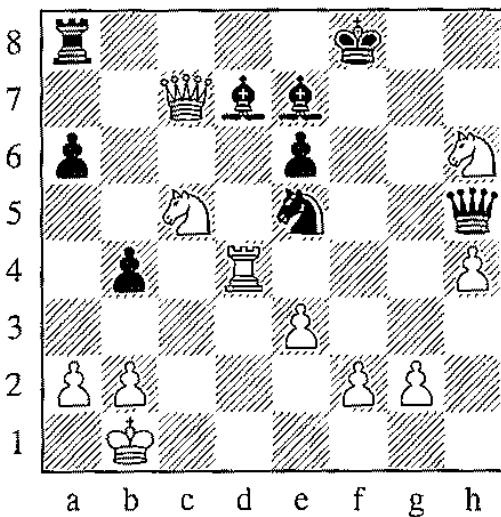
23... $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$

23... $\mathbb{Q}g6?$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ would give White a ferocious attack. One of the main points, as given by Malinin, is that White wins after 25... $\mathbb{W}h7?!$ 26. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$! $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}c1$!

23... $\mathbb{W}xh4?$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{W}h1\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$
 26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xd7$ looks
 very unclear, but is maybe just equal.

The best move seems to be 23... $\mathbb{W}xh6!$, when after 24. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ Black has at least even chances. A plausible continuation would be 25. $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}c7e5$ 27. $\mathbb{W}c6$ exd4 28. $\mathbb{W}xa8$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 29. $\mathbb{W}d3\#$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}f5$. White has four pawns for the piece, but the two bishops are very appealing. I have a feeling that this ending could easily be drawn, because White can eliminate the b-pawn and Black might exchange the light-squared bishop for the knight, leaving us with a technically drawn ending. However, it is White I am worried about.

24. $\mathbb{Q}c5$



24... $\mathbb{Q}xc5??$

A blunder that ends the game prematurely. The correct defence was 24... $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}g6\#$! (25... $\mathbb{Q}xc5?$! 26. $\mathbb{W}xc5\#$ with an attack is what was given originally by Malinin, but the check is more accurate. Without it White has dangerous options with $\mathbb{Q}g4$.) 26. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xc5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ and the game is simply unclear.

25. $\mathbb{W}xc5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

The attack is decisive.

26... $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{W}h7\#$
 29. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{W}xh4$

29... $\mathbb{W}d3$ leads to mate after 30. $\mathbb{Q}f8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$
 31. $h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#$.

30. $\mathbb{Q}f8\#$

1-0

White's play was not exactly as flawless as Malinin's annotations in *Chess Informant* suggested, but the game was still played at a very high level, with many instructive moments.

Vladimir Akopian – Miguel Illescas Cordoba

Ubeda 1997

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6 3.b3 d6 4. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

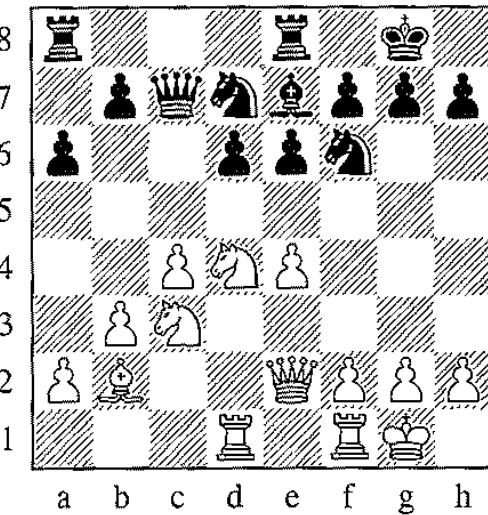
I never understand this move under these circumstances. 5... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 6.e5 dx5 7. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ leads to a main line, but hardly a dangerous one.

6. $\mathbb{Q}xd7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}bxsd7$ 7. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

7...g6? is another idea, but in general I think White is a bit better here.

8.0-0 0-0 9.c4 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 10.d4 cxd4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ a6 12. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$

Many moves have been played here, but opening theory is not really what we are interested in.



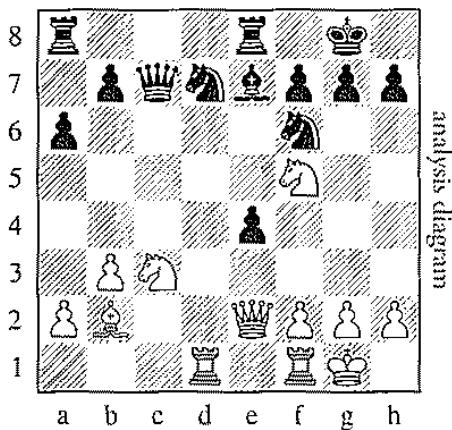
13...Qc5

Black might be a bit worse in this sort of Maroczy position. White has more space and it is not easy for Black to free himself. The operation he makes in the game does not prove to be successful.

Something more prudent such as 13...Bac8 was probably called for.

Another attempt to solve everything too soon went entirely wrong:

13...d5?! 14.cxd5 exd5 15.Qf5! dxe4



16.Qd5!! Qxd5 17.Qg4 g6

17...Qf6 18.Bxd5 Qe5 19.Qh6† Qf8
20.Qf5! with a winning attack.

18.Bxd5 Qad8

18...Qf6 19.Qh6† Qf8 20.Qxf6 Qxf6
21.Qd7 and White wins.

19.Qc1!

The black queen has run out of decent squares.

19...Qc5 20.Qh6† Qf8 21.Qf5! f6 22.Qxf6

1-0 Ulibin – Knoppert, Leeuwarden 1993.

14.Bd3?! Qe5?!

Black takes on White's challenge, but will quickly find himself under a lot of pressure.

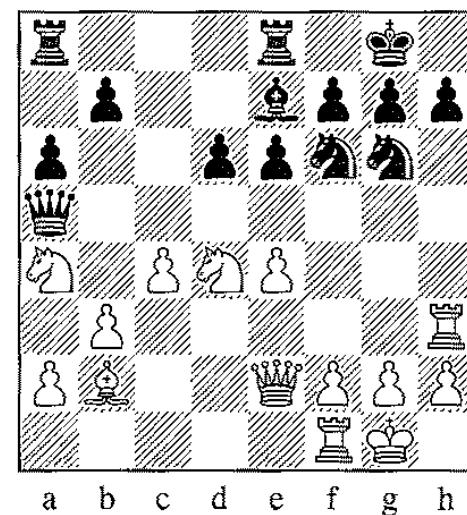
15.Qa4 Wa5

15...Wa7?!

16.Qh3 Qg6!

Black tries to anticipate the push in the centre by tactical means. This is justified, but in the game he becomes too optimistic.

It was interesting to play 16...b5? to divert attention away from the kingside. White might be better after 17.Qc3! b4 18.Qd2 Qg6!, but the bishop is no longer on b2, and this means that Black will not be mated quickly.

**17.f4?!**

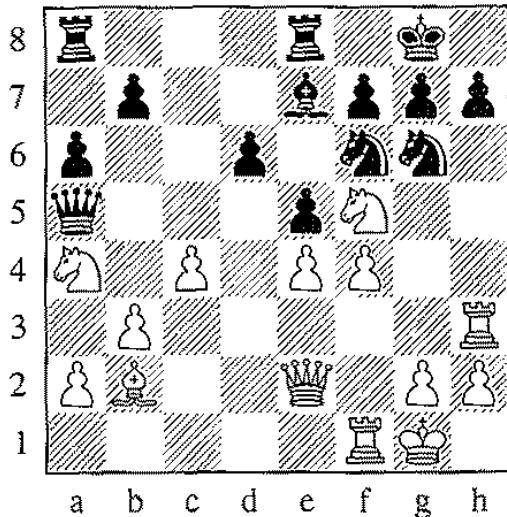
White has a fascinating idea in mind with this move, but the negative factors turn out to be just as important as the positive ones. The fact that the move cannot be immediately refuted does not mean that it is necessarily sound. Long term the white kingside is weakened by this move, and his attacking basis is not strong enough, with the knight away on a4, and with Black having a massive presence on the kingside. But as we shall see, it is good enough to draw, which is always something.

A quiet move like 17.Qe3? was possible, of course, but the question is if White would have any advantage in this case.

17...e5!

Without this Black would be in a bad way, but then, he has this move...

18.Qf5



18...Qxf4?

Illescas just could not resist taking this pawn, as if there was something fatalistic to it. However, doing so opens up the bishop on b2 and White's attack becomes irresistible.

18...exf4? was even worse, as it loses instantly to 19.Qxf6! Qxf6 20.Wh5! with the threat of Qh6†. Black has to play 20...Qf8, when after 21.Wxh7 Qc7 22.Wh8† Qg8 23.Wh7 and 24.Wxg7, White is winning.

The correct move was:

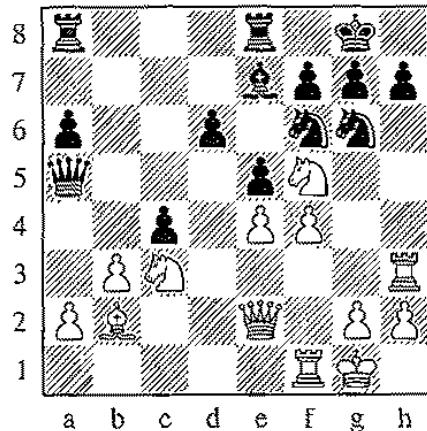
18...b5!

This completely ignores what White is up to and puts his position under pressure from the other side. White does not want to play 19.Qc3 Wc7 20.fxe5 dxe5 21.cxb5 axb5 22.Wxb5, when after 22...Qxe4 23.Qe3 he might not objectively be any worse, but surely his position is not enviable, and the practical implications of having no centre are destined to haunt him for a long time.

For this reason it is necessary for White to try to make the following aggression work:

19.Qc3! bxc4

19...Qxf4 20.Wxf4 exf4 21.Qxg7! is good for White, as always.



20.Qd5!

Eliminating a key kingside defender.

20...Qxd5 21.exd5 cxb3!

The most competitive. 21...Wxd5 22.Wh5 Qf8! looks very dangerous to me, but maybe White has nothing more than 23.Wg4 Qg6 24.Wh5, repeating the position? (22...h6 23.Qxg7 is bad news.)

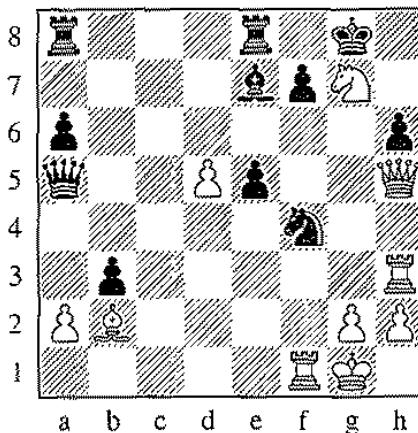
22.fxe5 dxe5 23.Wh5

White has to not overreact and find the balance between attacking and being careful. 23.d6?! Qxd6 24.Qxd6 Wc5† 25.Wf2 Wxd6 26.Wxf7† Qh8 and it has all turned to...

23...h6 24.Qxg7!

Otherwise, what is the point of it all?

24...Qf4!



This time the knight is immune, as there is ...We1† and ...Qc5†, with mate to come.

However, White has enough counterplay to make a draw after:

25. $\mathbb{W}xh6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3\#$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xh3!$

26. $gxh3??$ $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8!$ would be a bad mistake.

26... $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$

26... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ f6 28. $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ is another perpetual check.

27. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 28. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8!$

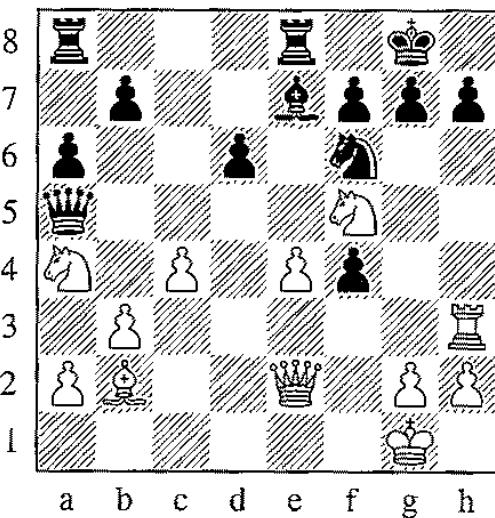
The only move.

30... $bxa2?$ 31. d6! and White wins.

31. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 32. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 33. $\mathbb{W}c6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 34. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$

And the game would end in a draw.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{exf4}$



20. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ $\mathbb{W}d8?!$

Black could try to stay in the game with:

20... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$ d5!

Black must try to play in the centre instead of on the flank. As Black is reasonably active and White a bit weak in the middle, Black has a surprising number of resources. White's best try for an advantage seems to be:

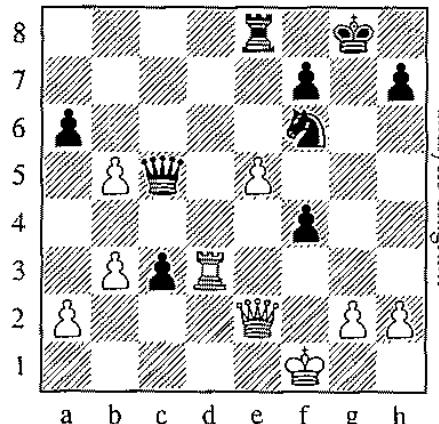
22. e5

22. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ d4! 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 24. $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ f5! gives very unclear play.

22... $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$

There are many very sharp lines all over the place, but White seems to come out on top. For example: 22... b5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 24. $cxb5$

$\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ d4 26. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ with a clear advantage for White. For example: 27... $dxc3?$



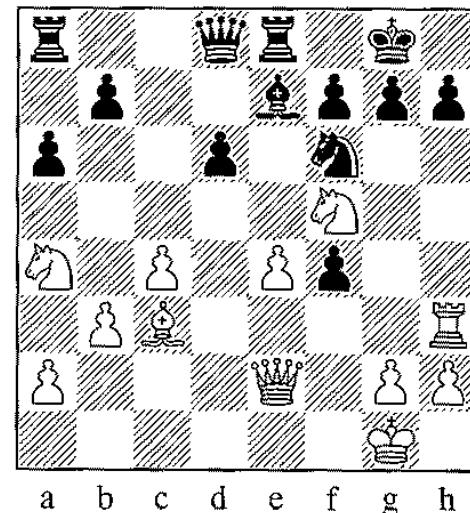
28. $exf6!!$, winning.

23. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ gives Black a draw. The line is rather nice: 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}f2\#$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xf2!$ $\mathbb{W}xf2$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}b4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}h5\#$ and so on.

24... $dxc4$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 26. $bxc4$

White has a clear edge. Black has a weakened king and might have to play ... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ in reply to $\mathbb{Q}d3$ very soon. However, the endgame is still not as clear as one could have hoped.



21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$

I am not sure why Black willingly went for this position. What did he miss? 21... d5 makes no sense now.

22. $\mathbb{W}g4\# \mathbb{Q}h8!$

22... $\mathbb{Q}f8?$ 23. $\mathbb{B}xh7!$ is a nice point.

23. $\mathbb{W}f5 \mathbb{Q}g8$

23... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 24. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$

24. $\mathbb{B}h6$

24. $\mathbb{W}xf4!$ was actually easier, but we cannot play the best move every time, no matter how hard we try.

24... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$

24...d5 25. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ d4 does not work at this point. White plays 26. $\mathbb{B}xf7$, with mate on the next move.

25. $\mathbb{W}g5!$

25. $\mathbb{B}xf6?$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ looks good, but Black has 26... $\mathbb{E}e5!!$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xf4?!$ $\mathbb{Q}a5!$, when the tables are turning, and turning fast.

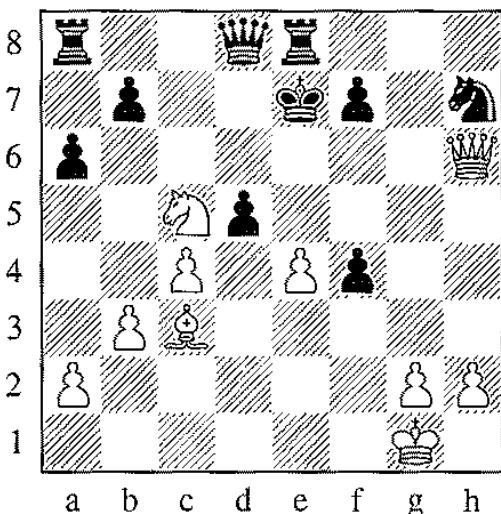
25...d5?!

Black is truly desperate. For example: 25... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xh7!$ with mate in two coming.

26. $\mathbb{B}xh7$

26. $\mathbb{B}xf6?$ d4! would be bad, but 26.exd5? was interesting as well.

26... $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xc5 \mathbb{B}xh7$ 28. $\mathbb{W}h6\# \mathbb{Q}e7$



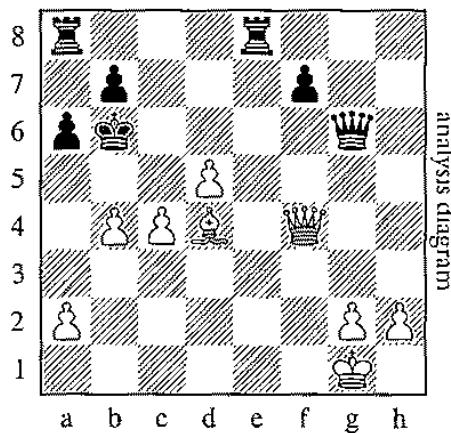
29. $\mathbb{W}h4\#$

This is the most accurate move. 29. $\mathbb{Q}b4?$ is met with 29...a5!, when the bishop cannot retreat, as Black would be able to play ... $\mathbb{W}d6$, without fearing $\mathbb{Q}d3$. White would have to play 30. $\mathbb{Q}xb7\#$, which leads to an advantageous, but by no means clear, ending.

29... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}h6\# \mathbb{Q}e7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}h4\# \mathbb{Q}f8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xh7 \mathbb{B}e6$

Black's material advantage does not help him.

Another line went: 32... $\mathbb{W}b6$ 33. $\mathbb{W}g7\# \mathbb{Q}e7$ 34. $\mathbb{W}g5\#$! $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 35. $\mathbb{W}xf4\# \mathbb{Q}xc5$ (35... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$! and White wins the queen and the ending) 36.exd5!! Black has no defence. 36... $\mathbb{W}g6$ 37.b4# $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ mate.



A pretty picture.

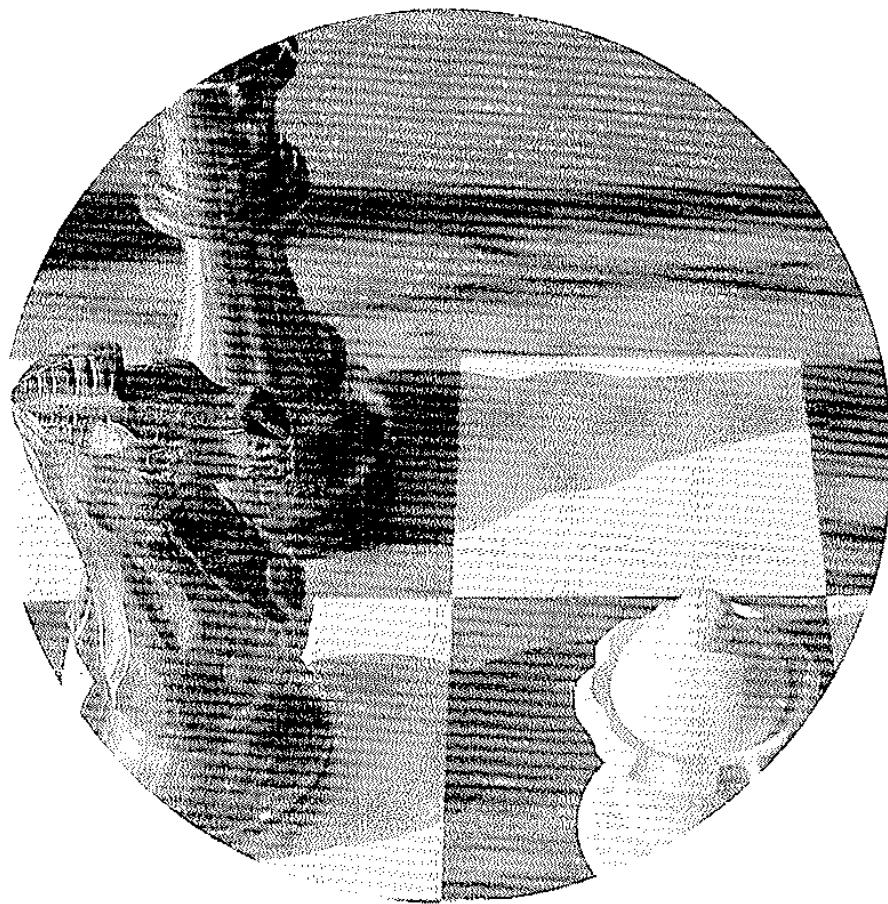
33. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\# fxe6$ 34. $\mathbb{W}g7\# \mathbb{Q}e8$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}f6 \mathbb{W}d6$ 36. $\mathbb{W}g8\# \mathbb{Q}d7$ 37. $\mathbb{W}xa8 \mathbb{W}b6\#$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ dxe4 39. $\mathbb{W}f8$

1-0

A bit seasick from this complicated game, we end the process of reading and nodding, and move on to the moment you have been dreaming of – your first chance to put this into practice.

Chapter 9

Watch Yourself take the Next Step



"My one regret in life is that I am not someone else" - Woody Allen

I apologise for the somewhat odd title of this chapter, which is basically just a collection of 50 exercises I thought might be useful for you in your aspiration to become a better attacking player, an aspiration you must have if you have made it this far! The title comes from a realisation I made years ago while working with a very competitive student. His eagerness to solve everything meant that he spent a good deal of his energy on being emotionally involved in the problem and thus spent less on thinking about thinking about how he should approach the position.

At one point I made the suggestion that instead of trying to solve the exercise, he should follow the steps of clear calculation, meaning selecting his candidate moves, deciding on what methods were relevant to use, have a second look and eventually come up with a solution. Note that nothing in this process is dependent on a certain outcome or needs to be emotional. For some reason this suggestion made me think of a bad joke I once saw in a low quality Danish family comedy (we all have those kind of waking nightmares rerun from our childhood): The little boy of the family is hiding, not wanting to go to school. "Why not?" asks his sister. "I cannot read."

I told you it was bad, but at the same time it is also an important insight into basic human psychology, and I actually think that all human psychology is basic, even if they blend with complex circumstances. When we are babies we learn everything without any kind of self-worth included in the process, and thus without failure. And failure, or more precisely, the fear of it, is probably the thing that has stopped most people reaching their true potential. And the reason for this fear is not that they have too little self-esteem or nonsense like that, but simply that they put too much self-worth into what they were doing.

It is for this reason I suggest that you look at the next 50 exercises with the attitude of simply thinking about them and enjoying the thinking process. Chess is about thinking, and improvement in chess comes from improving the way you think. **Do not test yourself**, as you should not try to reach a certain outcome, but instead **enjoy looking at these hopefully interesting positions**.

In most of the positions the player to play will have a continuation leading to a great, often decisive, advantage. There are a few positions where this is not the case, for that I apologise. I found them interesting and the mindset needed to make a good decision in them is the same one you need to win the winning positions.

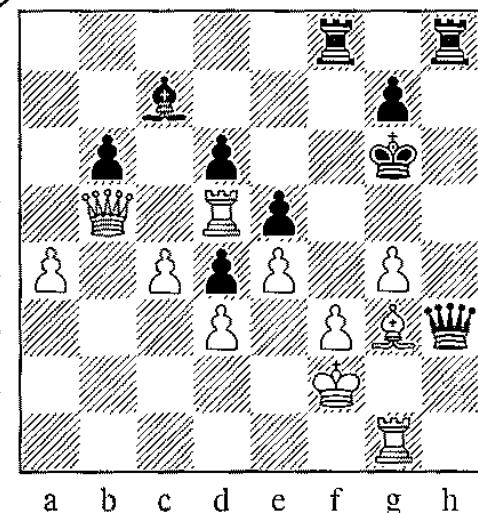
I strongly recommend that you take a limited amount of time to look at the positions and stay within this. If, for example, you are rated 2300, perhaps you should decide on 10 to 15 minutes as a maximum time allowed for each position. After this time make your decision as to what move you want to play and assure yourself of what you consider the main line, meaning the line that illustrates your idea. Only then compare it to the solution. The exercises are ordered by difficulty, though this will always be somewhat subjective. For this reason you are likely to make your decision faster with the earlier positions than the later ones. If you feel yourself continuously pressured on time it might make sense to give yourself more time as you progress, though I would recommend 20 minutes as the upper limit for your thinking.

A few of the positions can be played, preferably against a friend or trainer armed with the solution, although it also makes sense to play them against a computer program, while other positions are not useful for this kind of training, as the interesting moment is on the first move only. I have included a little icon, a circled P, to indicate the moments I think playing the position might be interesting.

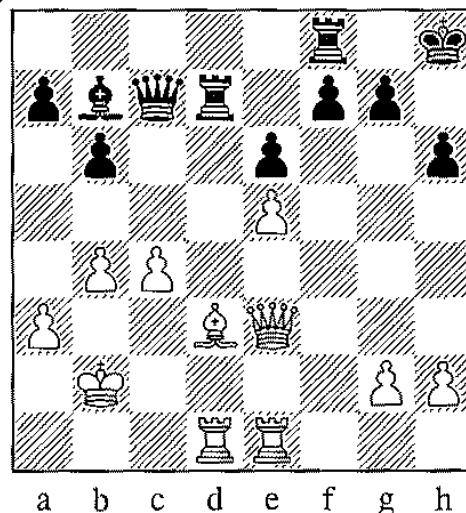
I hope you will find pleasure in thinking about these positions. And should you at times come up with the same ideas as I indicate in the solutions, do not despair. I am sure it is pure coincidence and will not happen again. Do not start to burden yourself with undue expectations.

Enjoy!

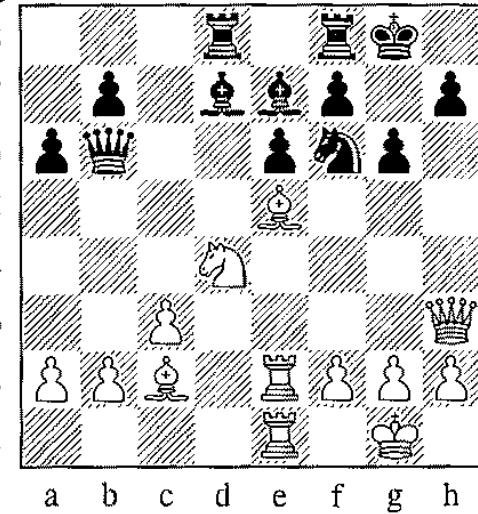
1



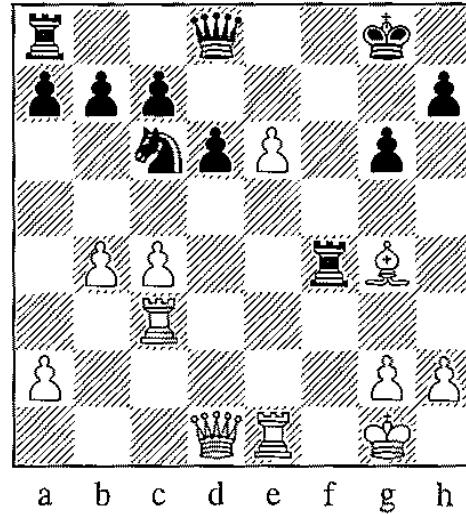
3



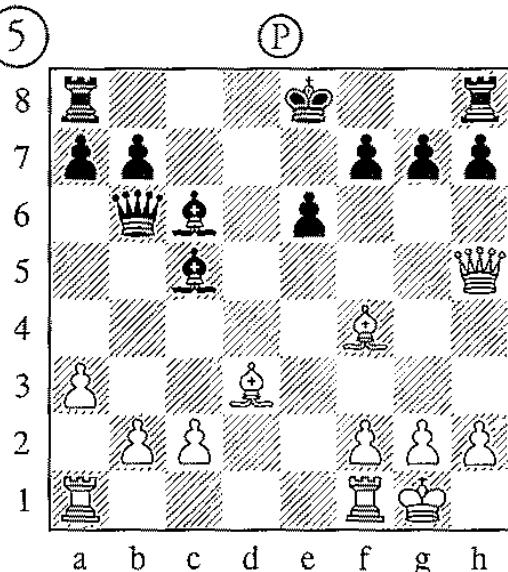
2



4



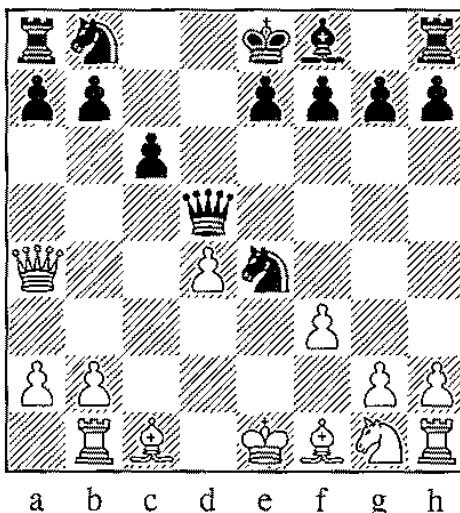
(5)



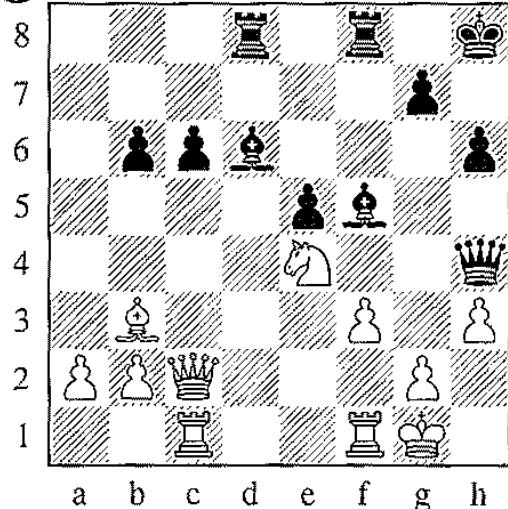
(P)



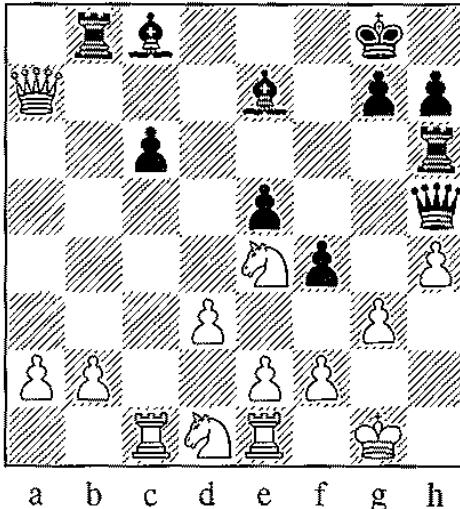
(8)



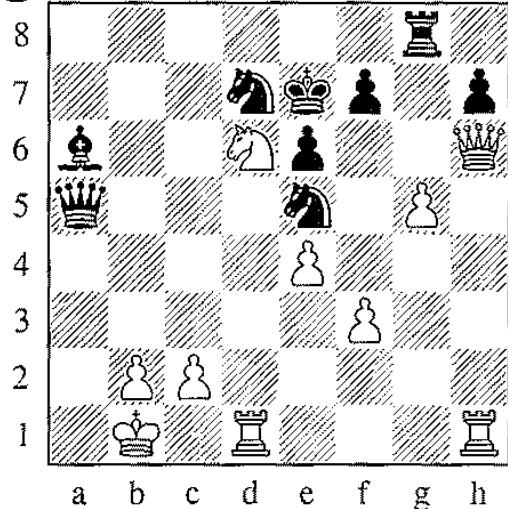
(6)



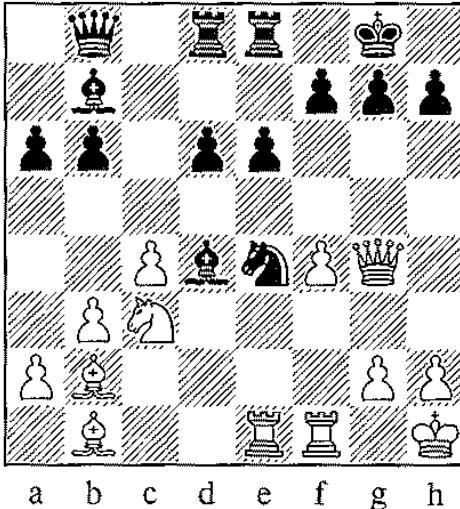
(9)



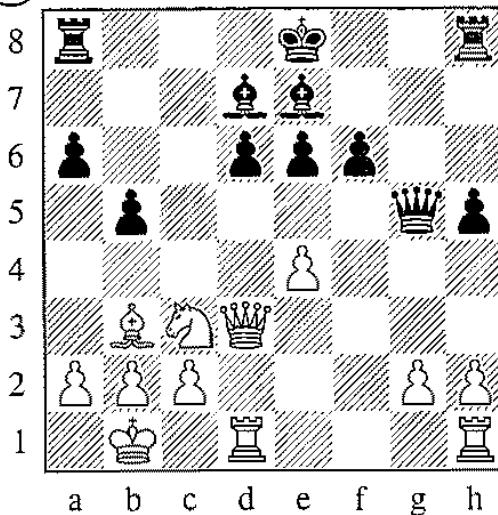
(7)



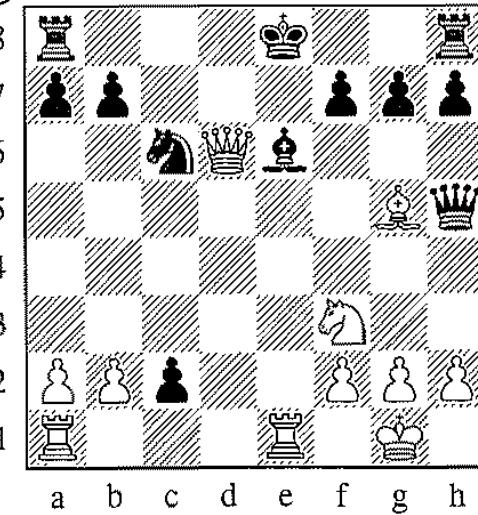
(10)



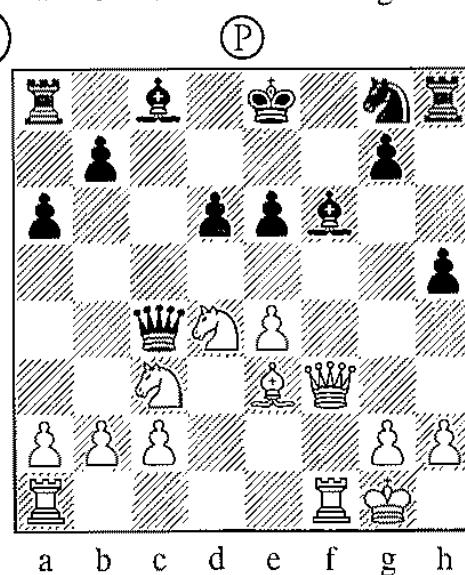
(11)



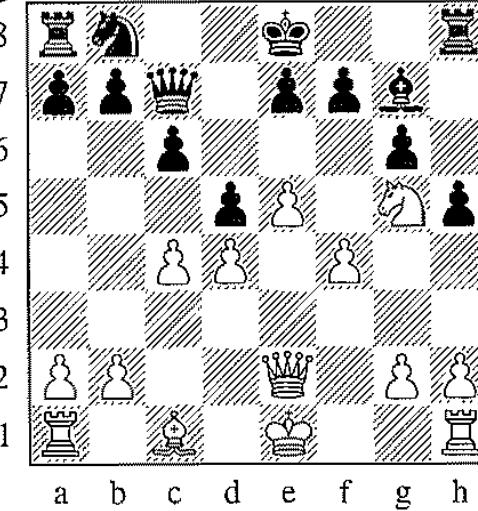
(14)



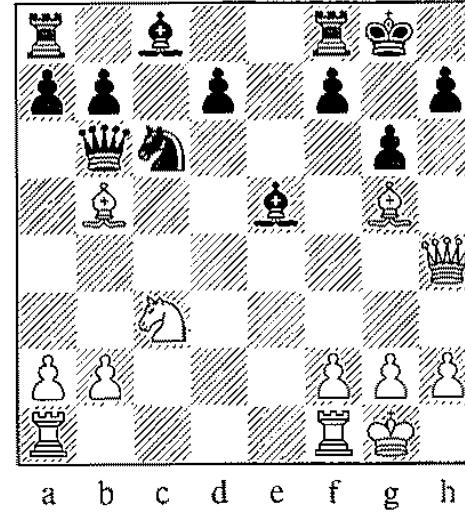
(12)



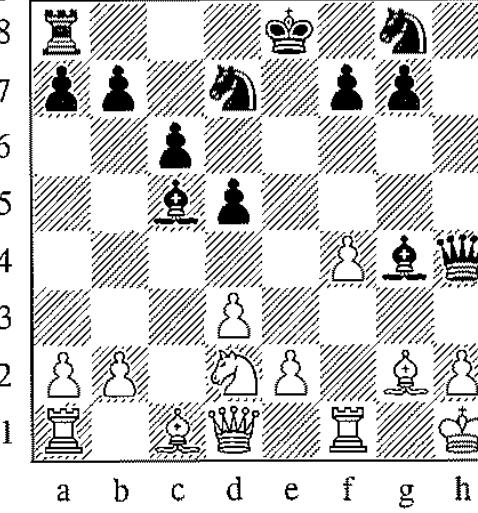
(15)



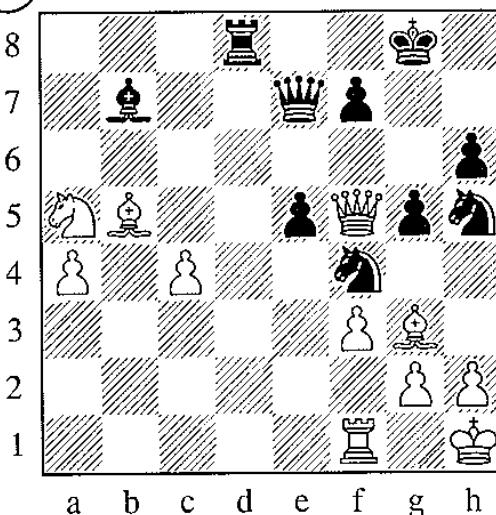
(13)



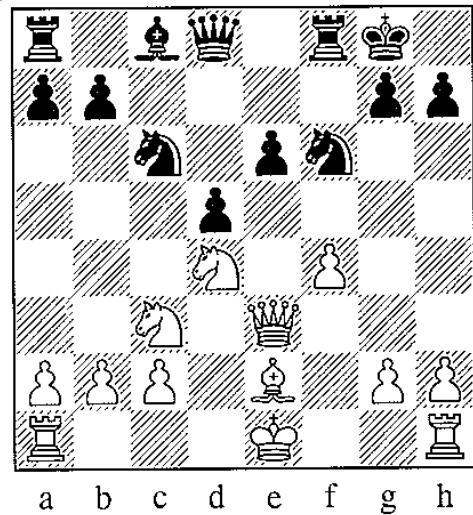
(16)



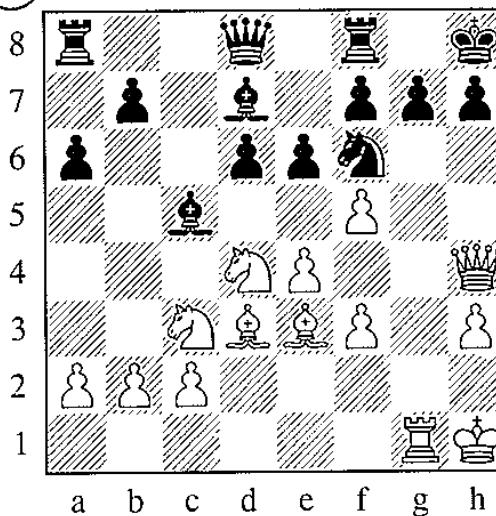
(17)



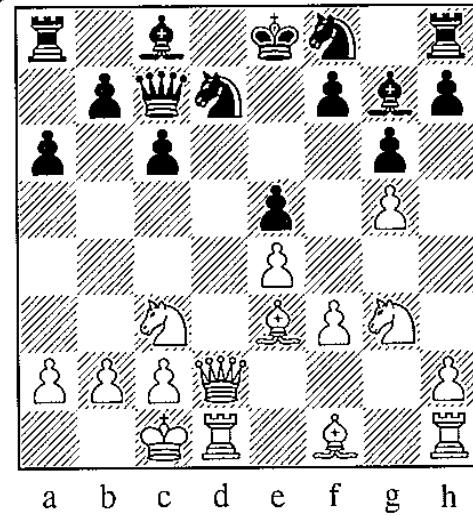
(20)



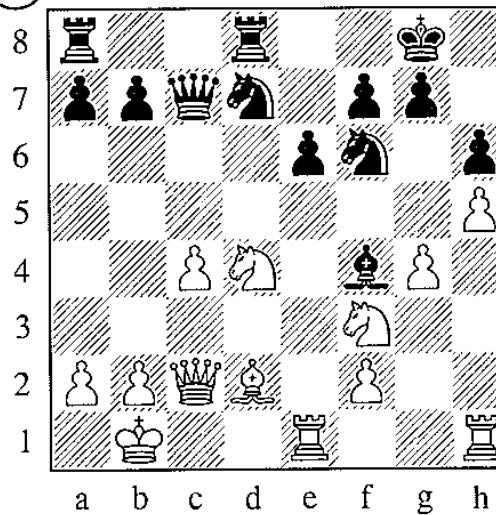
(18)



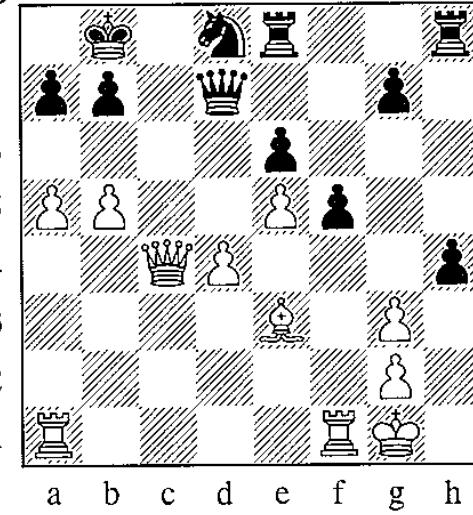
(21)



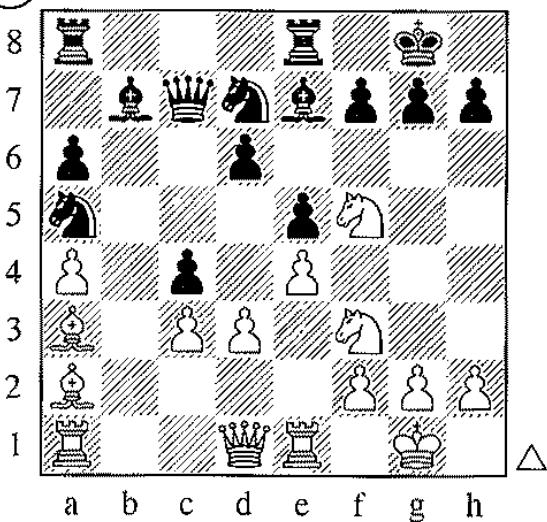
(19)



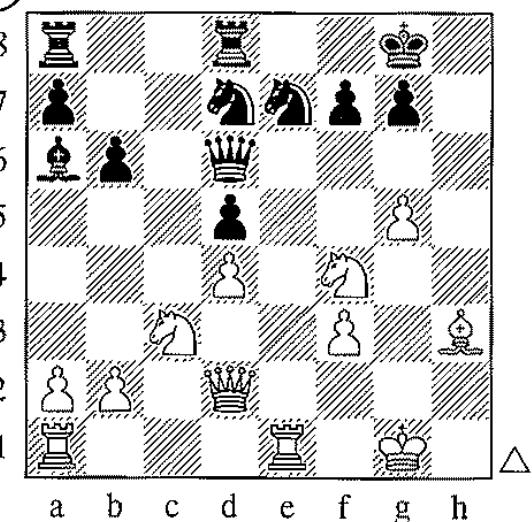
(22)



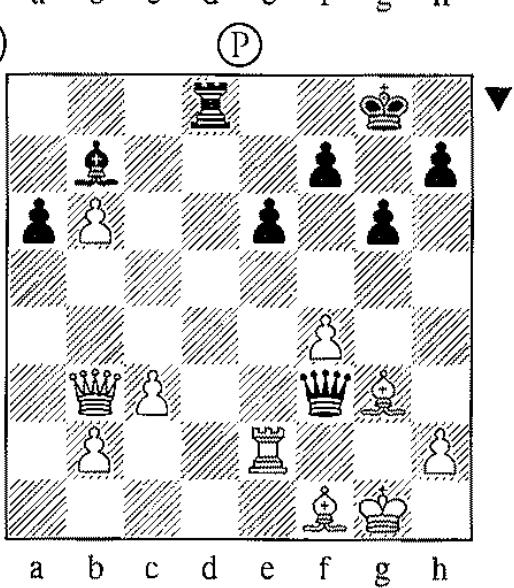
(23)



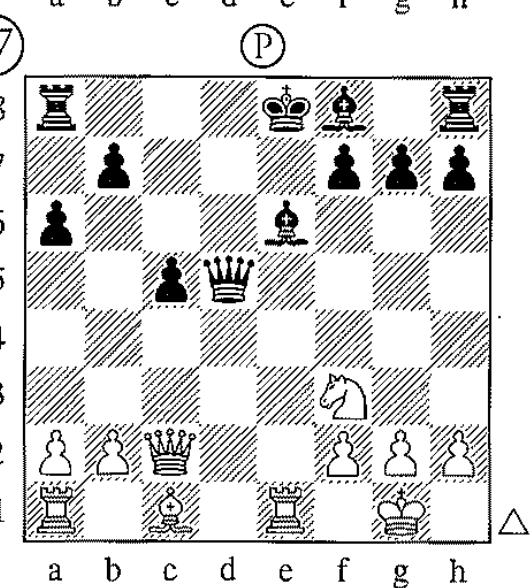
(26)



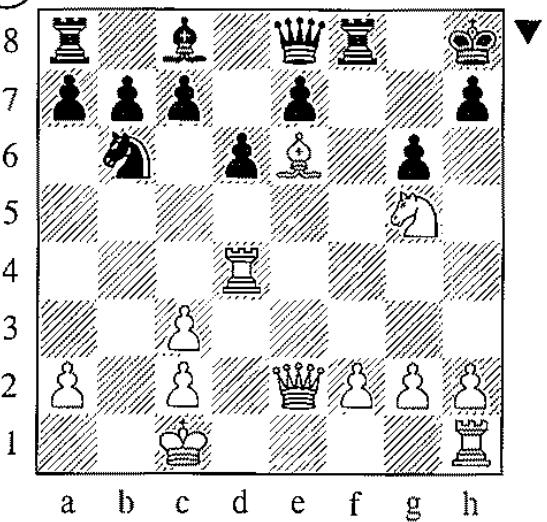
(24)



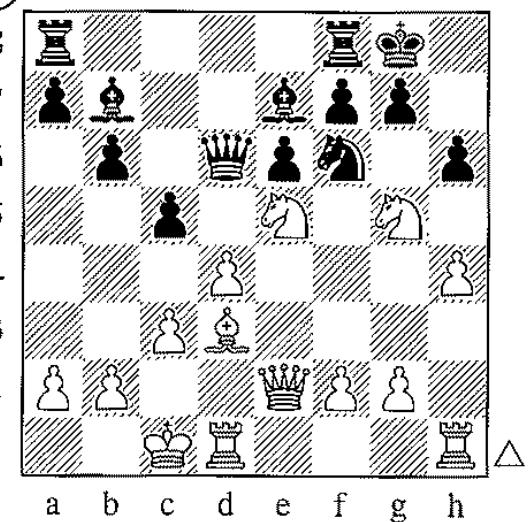
(27)



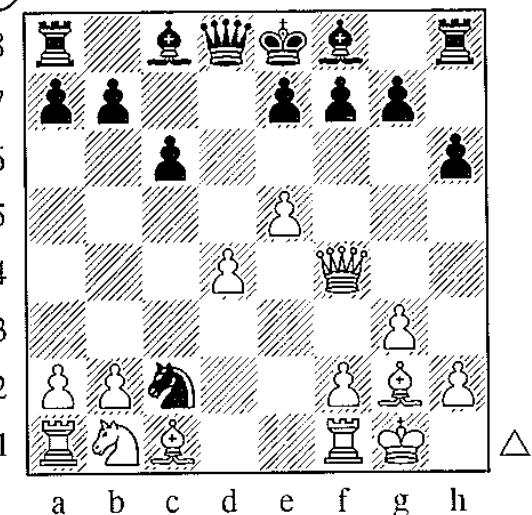
(25)



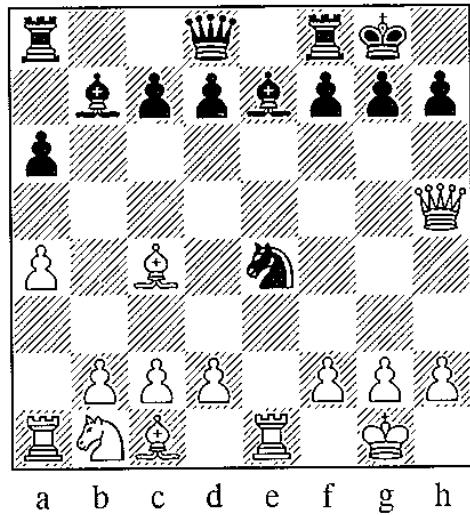
(28)



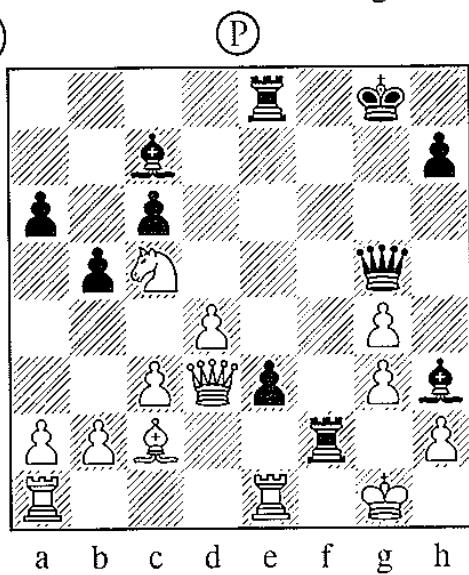
(29)



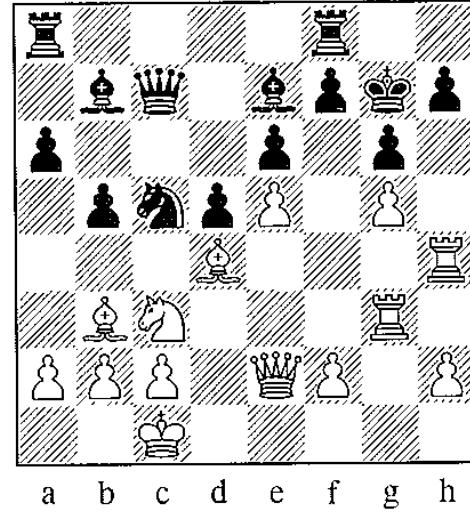
(32)



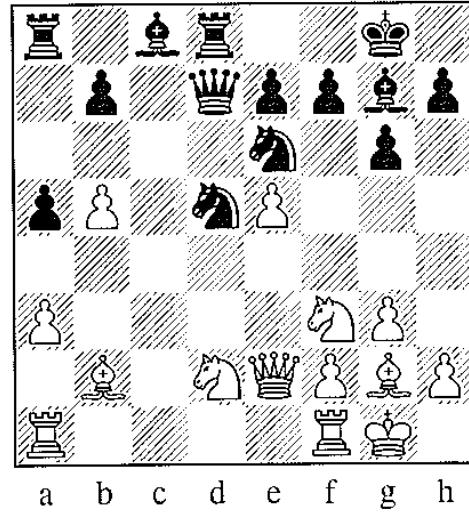
(30)



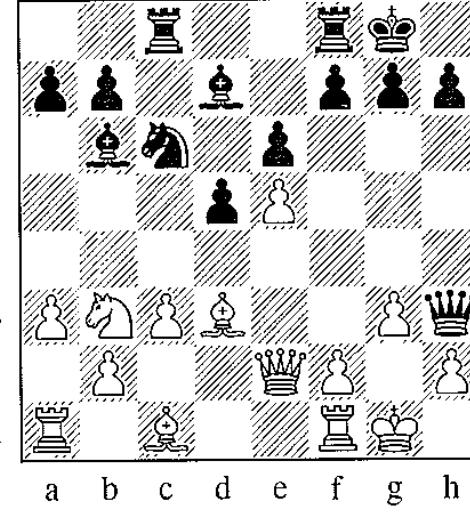
(33)



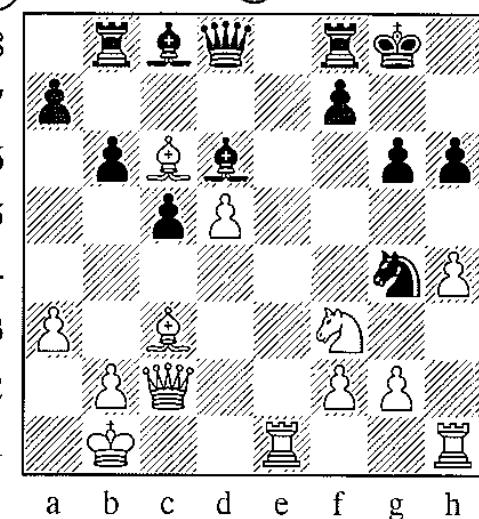
(31)



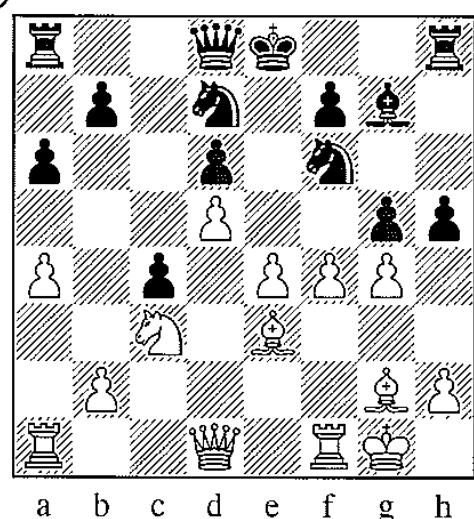
(34)



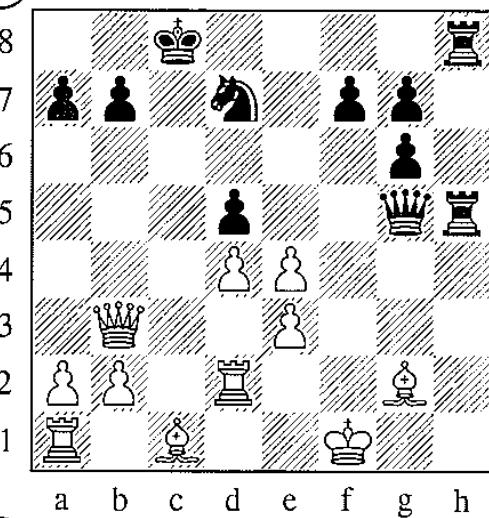
(35)



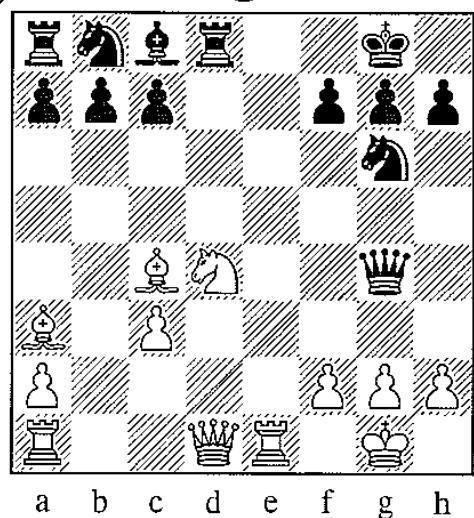
(38)



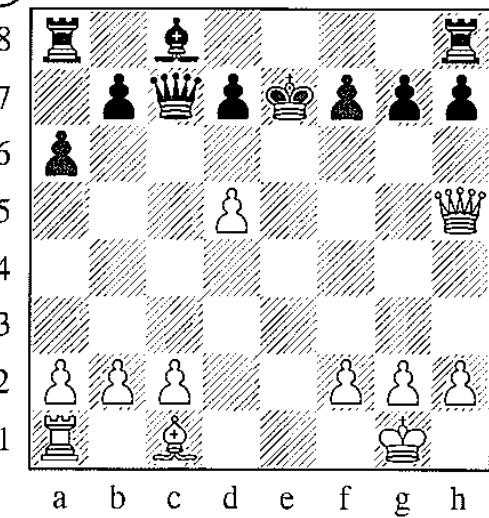
(36)



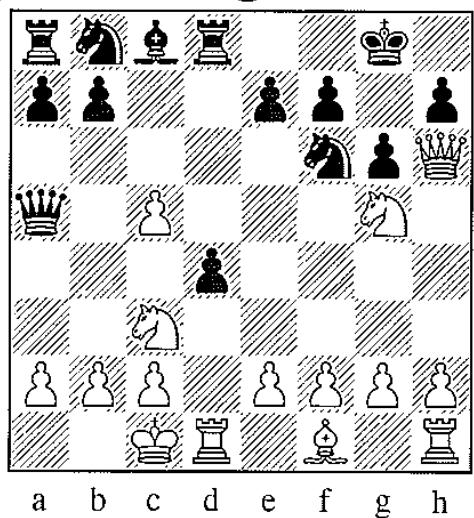
(39)



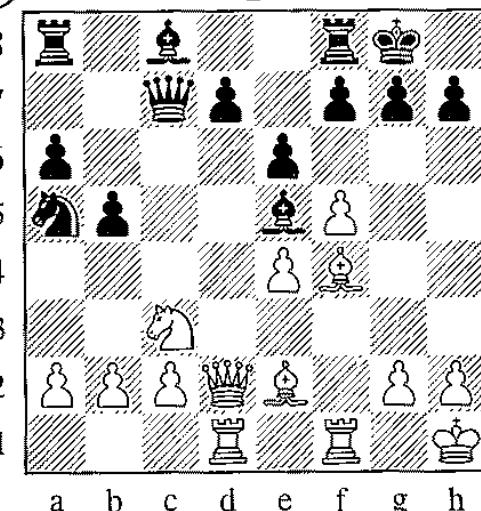
(37)



(40)

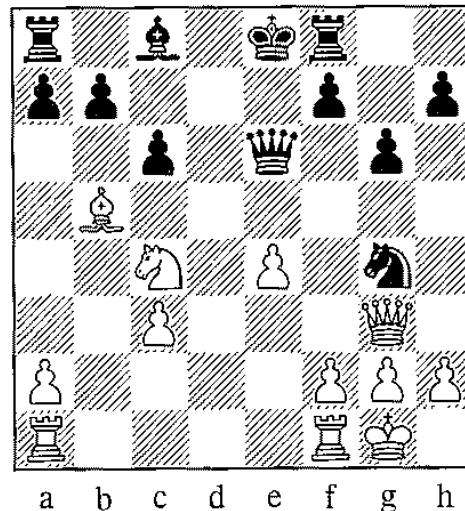


(41)



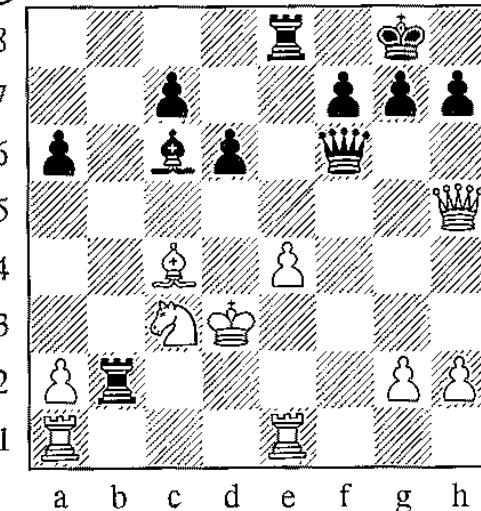
P

(44)



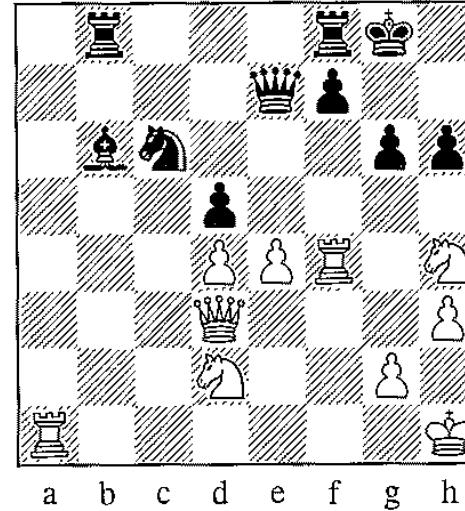
P

(42)



▼

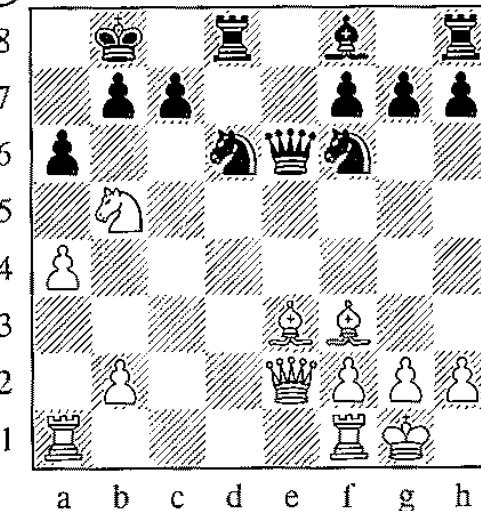
(45)



P

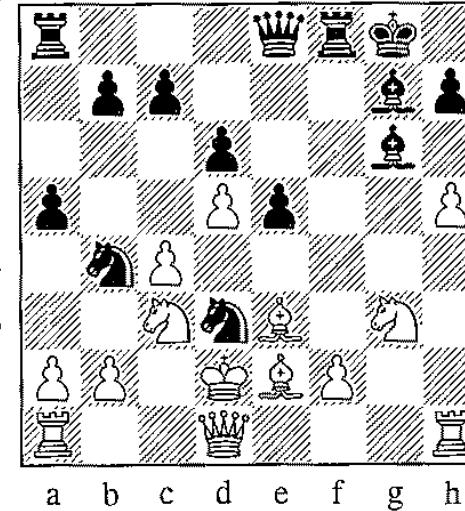
△

(43)



△

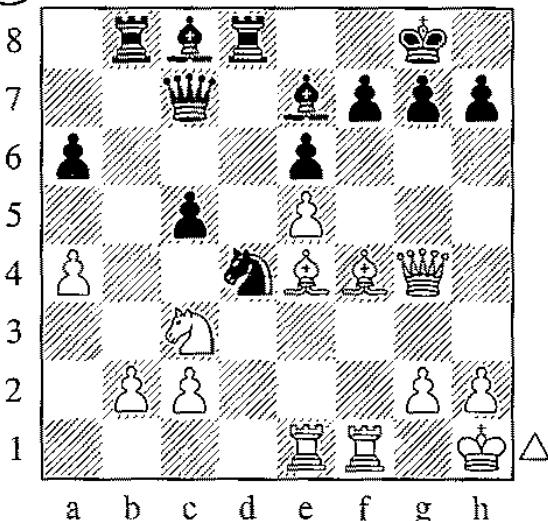
(46)



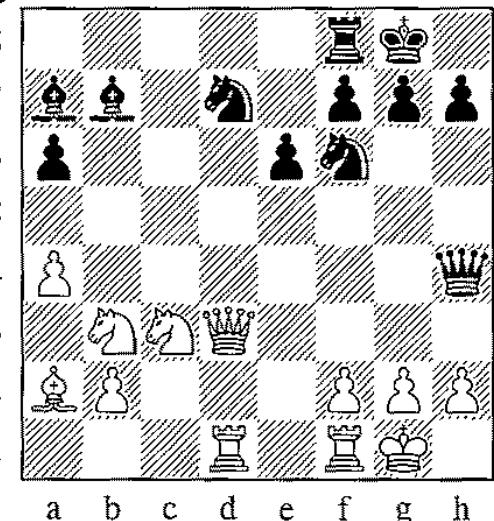
▼

△

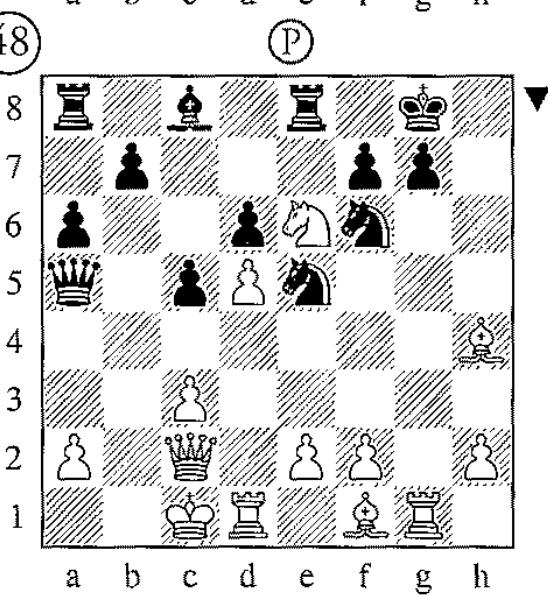
(47)



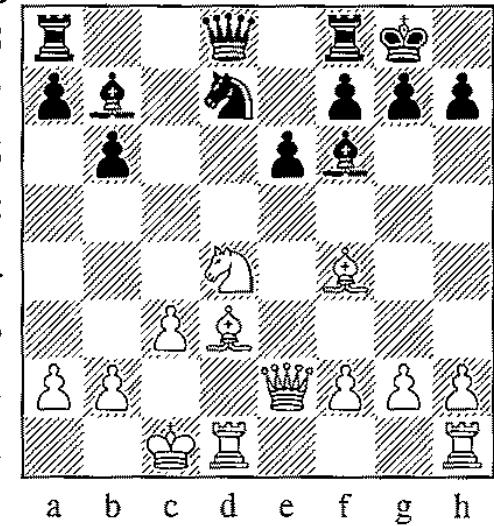
(49)



(48)



(50)



Possible Solutions

I have chosen this odd description as I know that I have not included every good move in every position and because I know that there will always be mistakes in analysis as complicated as some are in this chapter. The main reason for this was that I did not want to stop a promising chess career in its early steps by inflicting the common chess injury of backache when you carry the book home from the bookshop. I have thus included what I thought was important, though this is always a subjective opinion. If I have excluded lines you find meaningful I apologise, but I am sure you will agree with me when I quote Tolstoy, who said: if you want to be boring, you just need to include everything.

1 Vladimir Belov – Yuri Kryvoruchko

Rubinstein Memorial, Polanica Zdroj 2006

White has a few really weak squares, in particular d2, e3 and f3. The piece he could make a bit more of is the queen, which is not going to cause a lot of damage on the kingside. In the game Black played his attack flawlessly.

37... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ 38.g5 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 39.f4 exf4 40. $\mathbb{Q}d7$
 $fxg3\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f3$

41... $\mathbb{Q}h2$ was also strong.

42. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f6!$

0–1

2 Jacob Aagaard – Istvan Almasi

Budapest 1996

White is superior on the kingside, but also needs the rook to take part. Though there are many good moves, there are none as convincing as

22. $\mathbb{R}e3!$

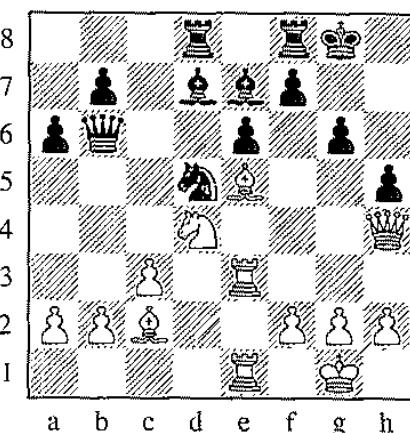
with the idea of putting the rook on f3.

22...h5

Black has no defence. After 22... $\mathbb{R}fe8$ White plays 23. $\mathbb{R}f3!$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$, winning, and after 22... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ he once again has 23. $\mathbb{Q}h4$, winning something.

23. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

Black resigned. 23... $\mathbb{Q}d5$



24. $\mathbb{Q}xh5\#$ was why.

1–0

3 Alexander Morozevich – Yannick Pelletier

Biel 2006

The weakness in the black position is the advanced h-pawn.

23.g4!

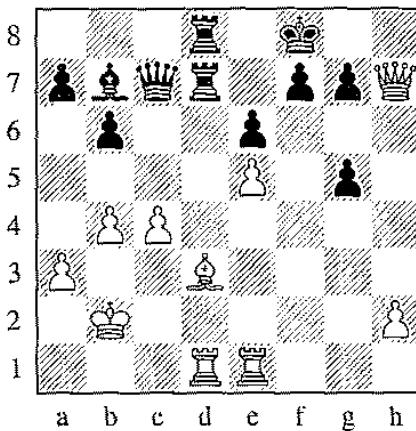
Opening the position on the kingside.

23...♝fd8

23...♝fd8 was probably forced, but after 24.♗c2! Black is suffering. White will take over the d-file and create threats against the black king in the process.

24.g5! hxg5

This looks suicidal, but after 24...h5 25.g6! White is winning anyway. 25...fxg6 26.♗h3 (with the threat of ♘xg6!) 26...♝g2? 27.♗g3 g5 28.♗e3! and Black cannot defend both his bishop and his king.

25.♗h3† ♕g8 26.♗h7† ♕f8**27.♗e3!**

Strong attacking play. Before executing the threat (♗h8†) White defends all bases.

27...g4 28.♗h8† ♕e7 29.♗xg7 ♘f3 30.♗g6 ♘f8 31.♗xd7† ♘xd7 32.♗d3 ♘c8 33.♗f6† ♕e8 34.♗d6!

1-0

4

Fabian Doettling – Henrik Rudolf

German Bundesliga 2007

White has an advantage in development, but once Black establishes a strong knight on e5 he will be pretty solid. So, the correct approach is to give up the pawn to make way for the bishop, which is currently rather limited.

20.e7! ♘xe7

20...♝e8, with the idea of keeping the option of ...♝e5, does not work. After 21.♗f3 ♘xf3 22.♗xf3 ♘e5 White has among others the combination 23.♗d5† ♘f7 24.♗xe5 dxе5 25.♗xb7 ♘e8 26.♗d5, winning the queen.

21.♗e6† ♘g7 22.♗a1

The key move. Black is lost as his pieces are not prepared for the battle.

22...g5

22...♝f6 23.♗f3 ♘f5 24.g4 and White wins a piece. Besides 25.g5 he is also contemplating playing ♘ef1.

23.♗h3†!

A nice piece of accuracy. At the end of the tactics there is a punch at h7.

23...♝f6 24.♗f1 ♘g6 25.♗xf6

1-0

5

Dejan Bojkov – H. Yasim

Istanbul 2006

This exercise is about momentum and attacking on the dark squares.

15.♗ae1

Not the only good move, but the right one. Black has to play something very inconvenient not to lose a pawn quickly. In the game he stood up to the challenge, and was cut down to size.

15...g6 16.♗xg6! fxg6 17.♗xe6† ♘f7 18.♗e5!

The point. Black is without a defence on the dark squares of the kingside despite having a dark-squared bishop. Again we are talking about the principle of the missing bishop, if it is not there, we do not care.

18...♝he8

There are a lot of ways for Black to lose, but 18...♝d8 was the only chance to fight. Still White has the powerful 19.♛xc5! ♜xe6 20.♝g5 ♜f8 21.♝e1† ♜d7 22.♝e7† ♜c8 23.♝e5 and Black has to part with his queen, though a bit of resistance might exist after that.

19.♝f6† ♜g8 20.♝e5 ♜f8 21.♝h8† ♜f7
22.♝f6† ♜e7 23.♝xh7† ♜d8 24.♝d1†
1-0

6**Per Vernersson – Jonny Hector**

Swedish Championship 2000

Black uses the pin on the knight on e4 to activate the bishop and create a winning attack.

23...♞c5† 24.♝h1 ♜e3!

This is the move that might be a bit difficult. 24...♝xh3 makes no sense here.

25.♝cd1

This is forced in order to prevent Black from playing ...♝d2.

25...♝xh3!

Destroying the white king's position on the light squares.

26.g3

26.gxh3 ♜xd1 27.♝xd1 ♜xf3 28.♝e6 ♜xh3† 29.♝xh3 ♜xh3† 30.♝h2 ♜f3† 31.♝g2 ♜xd1† 32.♝h2 ♜f4† and wins.

26...♝xd1!

The most precise.

27.gxh4

After 27.♝xd1 then 27...♝h5 is more deadly than on the last move.

27...♜xf1† 28.♝h2 ♜g8xf3 29.♛c4 ♜f4†
30.♝g3 ♜xg3† 31.♝xh3 ♜e1† 32.♝g2
♜3f2†

0-1

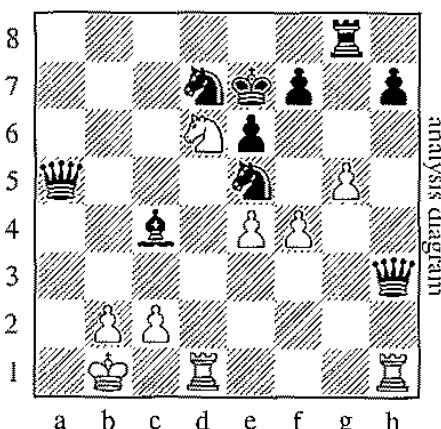
7**Arkadij Naiditsch – Surya Shekhar Ganguly**

Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2006

The weakest square in the black position is d6, therefore it makes little sense to occupy it with the knight.

27.♞f5†!

27.♞f4? looks good, but passes the initiative over to Black: 27...♞c4! 28.♝h3 (28.fxe5 ♜a8 White is probably worse. White needs to draw.)



28...♝b8! 29.♝c1 ♜d3† 30.cxd3 ♜xb2! and the game ends with a perpetual check.

27...exf5 28.♝d6†

28.♝d5?! ♜b4! 29.♝xa6 ♜c4 allows some counterplay.

28...♝e8 29.♝d5 ♜d8

29...♝g6 30.♝xg6!

30.♝hd1

White could also take on a6, but including the last piece creates an aesthetic impression.

1-0

8
Anatoly Bets – Alexander Kobzar

Peterhof 2006

White has “lost” a pawn, but he has control over the light squares and a lead in development. The dream is a double threat against the two weaknesses in the dark camp, b7 and f7. White achieved this with vigilant play.

8.♕c4! ♜f5 9.fxe4!

9.♗d3 ♜c5! is not clear.

9...♜xe4† 10.♕e2 ♜xb1

10...b5 11.♗b3 bxc4 12.♗b7 and White wins.

11.♗b3

White also wins after 11.0–0!? e6 12.♗b3 with the idea of 13.♗d3.

11...♜f5

11...♝d7 12.♗d3 is game over.

12.♗xb7 ♜a5† 13.♗d2 ♜b6 14.♗c8†
1–0

9
Jakub Czakon – Michal Luch

Polish Under-20 Championship, Środa 2005

This could also be used as a combination, as the solution is rather direct.

23...♝xh4! 24.♗xc6

24.♗xb8 ♜d8! is the brilliant point to Black's play.

24...♝f6!

The simplest, though 24...♝xg3?! 25.♗xh6 ♜h2†! also wins.

25.♗xc8† ♜xc8 26.♗g2

26.♗xf6† gxf6 27.♗b7 defends against the mate, but after 27...♜h2† 28.♗f1 ♜h1† White will have to resign instead.

26...f3† 27.exf3 ♜h3†

0–1

10
Manfred Herbold – Iain Gourlay

Olomouc 2005

Black has a pretty good grip on the dark squares, so it is logical for White to use his superiority on the kingside to attack the light squares.

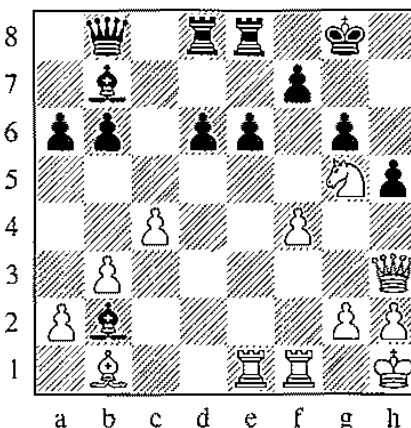
21.♗xe4! ♜xb2 22.♗g5 g6

Black can also play 22...h6, but will in this way give up any pretence of fighting for the light squares. After 23.♗xf7! White's attack is decisive. The main line to prove the correctness of the attack is 23...♝xf7 24.f5 ♜e7 (24...♝g8 25.f6 ♜d7 26.♗g6 and White wins) 25.fxe6 ♜f8 26.♗g6 and either White is allowed to play ♜f7† or he wins after 26...♝f6 27.♜xf6!.

23.♗h3!

Attacking the weakest square, h7, while keeping general pressure on the light squares.

23...h5



24. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!!$

Black has been forced to build up a frail pawn structure on the light squares and will now have to see it demolished.

24... $\mathbb{f}xg6$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

White also wins after 25... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 27. $f5$ with a winning attack.

26. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$

Including the last piece in the attack, but 26. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ was also clear. There is no defence to $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$.

26... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$

1-0

11

Hans Niedermaier – Horst Degenhardt

German Bundesliga 1990

White is leading in development and the black king is exposed in the half-open centre. It is important for White not to lose the momentum and play the most energetic moves.

18. $e5!$

Besides opening the position this great move also prevents Black from having a safe and strong spot for his queen on e5, and creates a path for the knight on c3 to enter the game. Black decides to deal with the last of these issues, but the knight cannot be kept out of the game.

18... $d5$

18... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ does not require much evaluation. Black's position will be absolutely torn apart within very few moves. Not 19... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ because of 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $exf5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$

There are other good moves, but this is the most direct.

19... $exd5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 0-0-0

As 20... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ is a bit unfortunate, this is one of two ways of covering all the bits.

The other fails after 20... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}he1$!. Again, not the only sensible move, but it is the best and the most natural one. 21... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d4$! $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ and White can do whatever he wants on the next move.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}a8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}a7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$
1-0**

12

John Nunn – Andrei Sokolov

Dubai Olympiad 1986

At the time when this game was played Sokolov had just lost his candidate's match to Karpov, which in one way of looking at it made him the third best player in the world. In this game he used considerable time to bring his knight to c4, where it was exchanged by a white bishop. This loss of time gave Black some problems protecting his kingside and he had to make some amusing concessions. However, long term, before we all die, Black would look forward to the advantage of having the bishop pair and possibly even a strong square on e5.

With his next move White manages to keep the initiative and include the knight on c3 in the game.

15. $e5!$

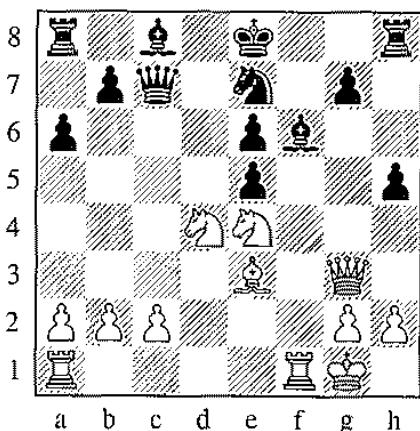
Blocking e5 and attacking the weakest square, d6.

15... $dxe5$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$

This move is a bit too deep for my computer. White is attacking g6, g7 and pinning the e-pawn.

White also has a winning position after 17. $\mathbb{Q}b3?$, but why should he retreat?

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



18. $\mathbb{R}ad1$

Bringing in the last bit. White already had a winning sacrifice in 18. $\mathbb{R}xf6!$, but the text move is just as good.

18... $\mathbb{h}4$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{g}xf6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}g7$ $\mathbb{g}f8$

After 20... $\mathbb{g}g8$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ White has 22. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$, when he wins material in all lines.

21. $\mathbb{R}xf6$

There are many wins around here, but Nunn's seems to be the most convincing.

21... $\mathbb{R}xf6$ 22. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}d6$

22... $\mathbb{exd}4$ 23. $\mathbb{W}h8\#!$ brings the king out in the open where it will find no peace.

23. $\mathbb{R}g5$ $\mathbb{exd}4$ 24. $\mathbb{R}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 25. $\mathbb{R}xd5$

1-0

13 Judit Polgar – Pavlina Chilingirova

Thessaloniki Olympiad (Women) 1988

White's advantage consists mainly of a lead in development. It is therefore important to keep the momentum.

14. $\mathbb{R}ae1!!$

Winning a great tempo.

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

This greed is not working out. We can now add weak dark squares to White's advantages.

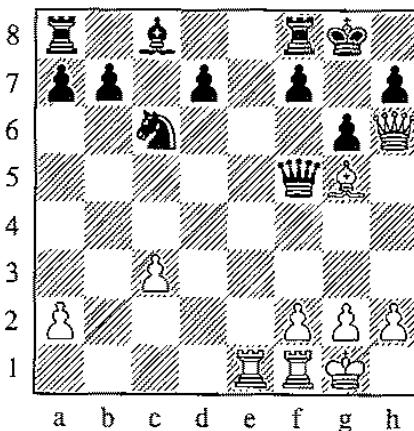
14... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ was the best move, and also the reason why the a1-rook was the right one. After 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ White has a winning attack. It is impossible for Black to defend with all of her pieces on the queenside out of play.

15. $\mathbb{b}xc3$ $\mathbb{W}xb5$

There is nothing that holds at this point.

16. $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{W}f5$

16... $f5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}f6!$ also leads to mate.



17. $\mathbb{W}xf8\#!$

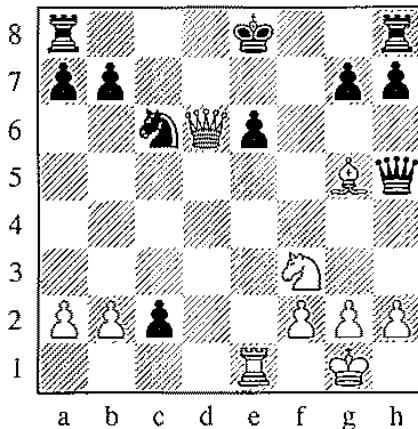
1-0

14 Analysis

I found this position once when I was analysing the Italian Game. The point is revolution-evolution. The rook on a1 is only able to join the game at e1.

14. $\mathbb{R}xe6\#!$ $\mathbb{fxe}6$ 15. $\mathbb{R}e1!$

Black has no defence. 15. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#?$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ is not clear. 16. $\mathbb{R}e1$ allows 16... $\mathbb{W}f7$.



15...h6

Even with the gain of time 15...c1=Q 16.Qxc1, then 16...Qf7 is met with 17.Qe1 and it is time to resign. White only needs to take on e6 with the rook when the queen is on f7. Otherwise queen takes is better.

16.Qxe6! ♕f8 17.Qe5!

White is winning.

15

Tigran V. Petrosian – Edgar De Castro

Lugano Olympiad 1968

White has the advantage no matter what he chooses to play, but there are ways to ensure that the advantage is as large as possible. Black has set up his position based on having all the pawns on the light squares and a dark-squared bishop. If he only had time to play ...e6, his position would be safe, after for example 14.0–0 e6!.

It is tempting for White to play 14.e6, but after 14...f5! it is not so easy to break up the black defences. This is most likely the thought pattern that led to Petrosian's excellent move in the game.

14.f5! gxf5 15.e6

This is far stronger now. White is in complete control over the light squares. In the game

Petrosian won in his trademark style. Quicker wins might exist in this miniature, but the result was nonetheless not in doubt.

15...f6 16.Qf7 ♘h7 17.0–0 dxc4 18.Qxf5 ♘b6 19.Qe3 c5 20.d5 ♘d7 21.Qxh5 ♘xh5 22.Qxh5 ♘xb2 23.Qd6† ♘d8 24.Qe8† 1–0

16
T.R. Hansen – Tiger Hillarp-Persson

Stockholm 2003

This exercise is about how to develop your pieces in the best way.

Black blamed his next move in the game for his defeat more than anything else, and rightfully so. He was convinced that White was planning to play 13.Qf3, and therefore wanted to answer it with ...Qh6, which he had found most precise. The only problem is that White played differently and suddenly Black was not as flexible as he should have been. Therefore it was better to play the move he had to play no matter what first.

a) The most logical move was therefore:

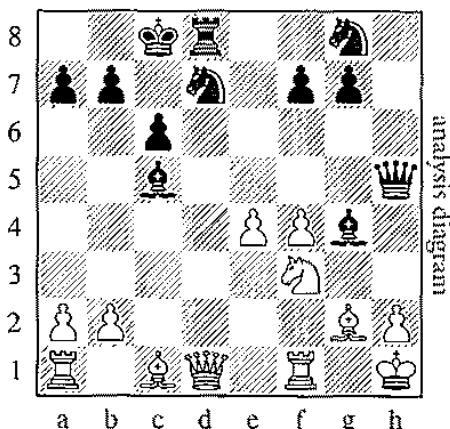
12...0–0–0!

This has to be played soon anyway. Against this White would have to be very careful in order not to get into trouble, and the plan played by White in the game is simply not possible. Long analysis between the players and a few spectators came to that conclusion, but then had to end before other defensive ideas were found.

13.Qf3 ♘h5 14.Qc2!

White needs to defend himself in this way.

14.e4? was analysed to death by the players.
14...dxe4 15.dxe4



15...f5!! A nice move we found after a very long search. Black chooses to play the position positionally. 16.e5 is the only move, but far from good. (16.exf5 Qgf6 17.Qd2 Qh8 18.Qe2 Qe4 19.Qe1 Qf2!! and White loses the queen or is mated) 16...Qxe5 17.Qxd8† (17.Qe2 Qxf3 18.Qxf3 Qf6 and White will be completely mated) 17...Qxd8 18.fxe5 Qe7 19.Qd2 Qd5 Black has a wonderful game with all the winning chances he could ask for.

14...Qgf6 15.e3!

With this move White blocks out the c5-bishop and does not place the defence of the e4-square solely on the queen.

If White played as in the game, with 15.e4? dxе4 16.dxe4 Qh8, then Black wins due to 17.b4 Qxe4 18.bxc5 Qg3† 19.Qg1 Qxf1 and the material situation is fine for him. The following line just gives an idea of the opportunities in the position, and should not be thought of as conclusive analysis.

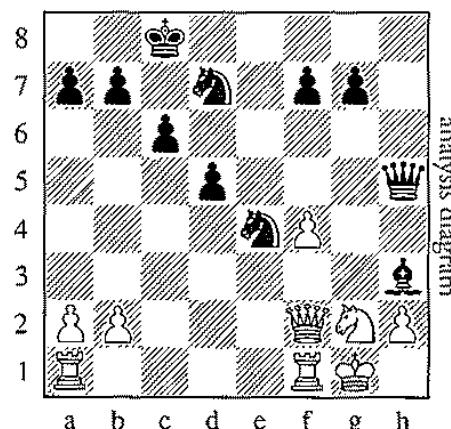
15...Rе8 16.Qg1

16.Qg5!! with an unclear game is also possible.

16...Qxe3† 17.Qxe3 Rxe3 18.Qf2 Qxd3 19.Qe1

This is White's idea. Black should probably try:

19...Rh3!? 20.Qxh3 Qxh3 21.Qg2 Qe4



With a very peculiar position with compensation for the two exchanges.

b) 12...Qf2!?

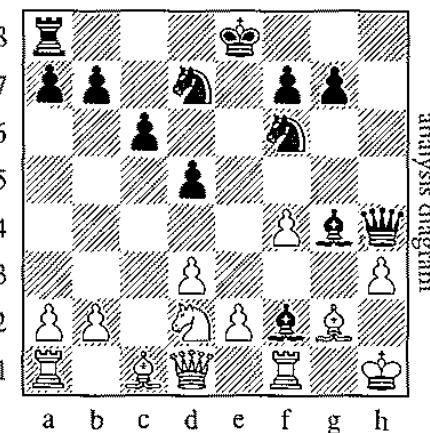
This leads to even chances.

13.h3!

13.Qf3?! Rxf3 14.exf3 0-0-0 15.Qe2 Qg3 16.h3 Qh6 would give Black wonderful positional compensation, as well as an advantage.

13...Qgf6

13...Qxh3? 14.Qxf2! and White is better.



14.Qxf2!

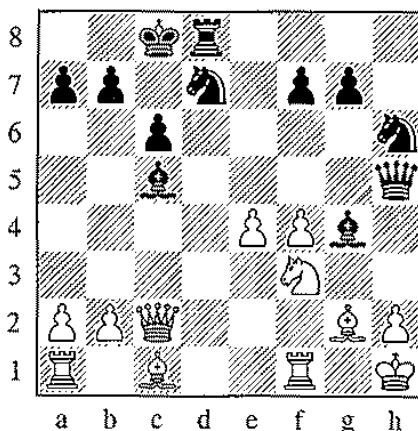
White needs to do something about his kingside before it is too late.

14...Rxf2 15.Qf1 Rh4 16.Qg1

White will be able to keep the balance.

The game actually went:

c) 12... $\mathbb{Q}h6?!$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}h5$ 14.e4 $dxe4$
15. $dxe4$ 0-0-0 16. $\mathbb{W}c2$



16... $\mathbb{Q}f6?!$

This is a little inflexible again. Now the c5-bishop becomes a target. 16... $\mathbb{E}h8!$ was more logical in that respect, offering more fuel to the fire! 17.b4! White needs to create some counterplay, or he will be like any other person in the audience at a one-man show. 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 18. $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 19. $\mathbb{W}b2$ gives an unclear game. 19... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ springs to mind, and Black is no worse in the complications.

17.f5?!

White wants to play 18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$. Also he is hitting at the bishop on c5. Now Tiger loses control completely, as can happen when we have invested material and the opponent finds unexpected defensive ideas.

Still, it is surprising that such a strong player loses the thread completely. The only explanation I have been able to find is that he was still weak from the flu.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$

A desperate sacrifice. The logic is clear: the knight is doing little for the attack anyway, except blocking the h-file. Therefore Tiger rids himself of it before attacking h2. The problem is that his attack is too weak to be worth a rook.

Better was 17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 19.e5! $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 20.exd6 $\mathbb{Q}xg2\#$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xg2$ $\mathbb{R}xd6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ and White appears to be better, though nothing is decided yet.

18.exf5 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g5?$

White returns the favour. Both players had little time at this moment.

The weird-looking 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ $\mathbb{E}h8$ 20.h4! refutes the black attack. I have not found a way to continue that poses real problems for White. The point is of course that the weakness is advanced to h4, where it is for once easier to fight for it.

19... $\mathbb{E}h8?$

19... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ would have given a position with chances for both sides, where it is easy to believe that Black is better, because of the open white king and the opposite-coloured bishops. But in reality the position is just unclear. White also has some attacking ideas against the black king and the black knight has no easy way to get active.

20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{G}xf6$

Black has run out of bullets. Also after 20... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ White has more than one way to win the game. 21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ is the clearest. 21... $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4\#$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}h2\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 26. $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{W}xf5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ and all that remains for Black is to resign.

21.h4!

The attack has been refuted and White has a rook more. Tiger tries some moves in time trouble, but the battle has been decided here.

21... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 22. $\mathbb{W}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 23.a4 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 26.b4 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 29.a5 $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 30. $\mathbb{W}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 31. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g3$ 32. $\mathbb{W}e4$ a6 33.h5 $\mathbb{E}g4$ 34. $\mathbb{W}e3$ $\mathbb{E}xb4$ 35.h6 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 36. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}g8$

17
Sergei Azarov – Li Chao

Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2007

This exercise is all about attacking the weakest square in the white position, the g2-square.

26...e4!!

With the bishop on b5 it is “missing” from the kingside, a term I use to describe such a situation as this, where the light-squared bishop is on the board, but not actively doing anything.

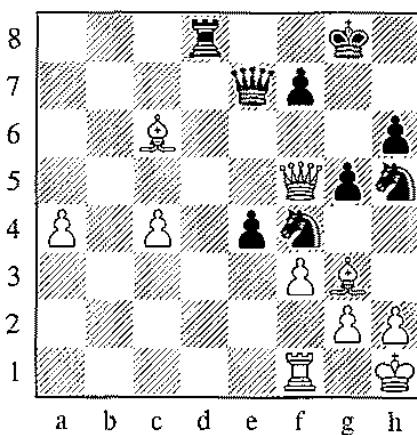
27.Qc6

Technically the best move, but White is lost all the same.

27.Qxb7 exf3 28.gxf3 We2 is just over.

27.Qxf4 offered more resistance, trying to remove one of the intruders, but after **27...exf3! 28.gxf3 We2 29.Wh3 Qxf4 30.c5** Black has the killer **30...Bd3!! 31.Qxd3 Bxd3**, and White cannot defend f1.

27...Qxc6 28.Qxc6



White has taken over control of the light squares and immediately Black “changes colour” like a chameleon.

28...Qxg3†!

A new weakness is created.

29.hxg3 Qe2!

Suddenly the dark squares prove very hard to defend.

30.Qh2 Wc7 31.f4!

The best practical chance, although not good enough.

31.Qxe4 loses to direct measures after **31...Wxg3† 32.Qh1 Wh4† 33.Wh3 Wxh3† 34.gxh3 Qg3† 35.Qg1 Qxf1 36.Qxf1 Ed2**, when the endgame is winning for Black. White cannot advance his pawns here without losing at least one of them and Black therefore has time to bring his king to the queenside and win slowly.

31...Wxc6 32.fxg5 Wg6!

The endgame should be winning, but White should also try to defend it.

33.Wxg6† fxg6 34.a5 Qc3 35.Ee1 Ee8 36.Ee3 Qd1 37.Ee1 Qf2 38.a6 e3 39.Qg1 Qg4 40.c5 Ea8 41.c6 Exa6 42.Ec1 Ea8 43.c7 Ec8 44.Qf1 h5 45.Qe2 Qf7 46.Qc6 Qe8 47.Qe6† Qd7 48.Exg6 Qxc7

0–1

18
Nikola Mitkov – Sergei Rublevsky

European Cup, Neum 2000

This is reminiscent of the Golubev – Podinic game on page 112, and with good reason. Golubev had annotated this game in various places and was clearly inspired by it. White wins in similar fashion.

18.e5! dxе5

18...Qe8 19.Qg5 is not a defence either.

19.Exg7!! Eg8

Black loses in all lines: 19...exf5 20.Qg5, or 19...Qxd4 20.Qxh7†! Qxh7 21.f6, as well as 19...Qxg7 20.Qh6† Qh8 21.Qg5 Qe7 22.fxe6 winning everything.

20.Qxg8† Qxg8

20...Qxg8 21.f6! is well known by now.

21.Qg5 Qe7 22.Qe4! Qd5

22...Qxe4 23.Qxe7

23.f6

More or less everything wins at this stage. For example: 23.Qxe7 Qxe7 24.f6 or 23.fxe6 exposing h7.

23...Wb6 24.Qc5 Wxc5 25.Wxh7†

1–0

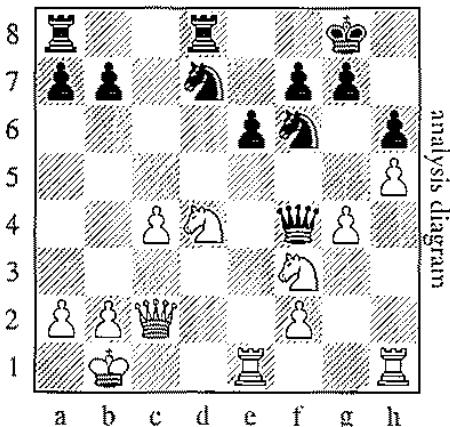
19 Giovanni Vescovi – Anatoly Karpov

Guarulhos, Rapid Match (1) 2006

It is easy for White to miss the great option available to him in this position, where it is all about the g5-square, as this is after all a rapid game.

22.g5?

A standard idea, of course, but White could play much better with 22.Qxf4 Wxf4



23.Qh4!! This strange rook move wins significant time and should win the game. For example: 23...Qc7 24.g5 hxg5 25.Qxg5 Qf8 26.h6 gxh6 (26...g6 would last longer, but is positional bankruptcy) 27.Qg1! hxg5 28.Qxg5† Qg6 29.Qxe6! and Black is busted.

22...hxg5

22...Qxd2 23.Wxd2 hxg5 24.Wxg5 does not improve things for Black.

23.h6 Qf8?

But here Karpov simply collapses. Forced was 23...Qxd2! with the point 24.Wxd2 Qf4 when White might still have a slight advantage, but he is not delivering mate.

24.hxg7 Qxg7 25.Qc3!

White of course wants to keep this bishop. The rest of the game is a complete collapse on the dark squares.

25...g4

25...Qac8 gives White a lot of options. I think Vescovi would have won the game with as little calculation as necessary and therefore played 26.Qeg1! Wxc4 27.Qxg5 Qxg5 28.Qxg5† Qg6 29.Qhg1, and wins. (26.Qf5† is but one of the more tactical wins.)

26.Qeg1 e5 27.Qe2 Wxc4 28.Qxf4 Wxf4 29.Qxe5 Qg6 30.Qxg4

1–0

20 Anton Shomoev – Alexander Riazantsev

Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2007

Black is leading slightly in development, as so far the white king has not found safety. Riazantsev uses this effect to the maximum.

13...e5!

A novelty, but not necessarily a prepared one. Dominguez and Nogueiras agreed a draw here, but maybe this was pre-arranged. Again, opening the position is the way for Black to exploit White's carelessness in the opening.

14.fxe5

14.♘xc6 bxc6 15.fxe5 is not much different.

14...♝g4 15.♞xg4 ♝xg4

The white king is stuck in the centre. All he needed was a moment to castle; this moment will now not come.

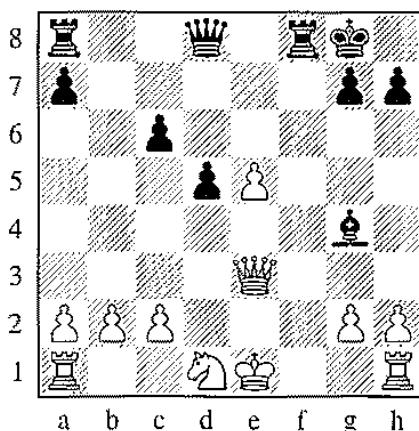
16.♘xc6

White is in a bad place. Here are some other uncomfortable options for him.

16.h3 ♘xd4! 17.♗xd4 ♜h4† 18.♔d2 ♜g5† 19.♔e1 ♜e6 and the white king will die in the centre, and bloodily so. 16.♘cc2 ♜b6! is distinctly unpleasant, and 16.♔d2 ♘xd4 17.♗xd4 ♜g5† is enough to cry.

16...bxc6 17.♘d1

A sad move to play. White wants to put the knight on f2 to assist the king in escaping. The great young Russian commentator Andrei Deviatkin gives 17.♘e2 as the last chance. I am not sure how much of a chance it is after 17...♜a5† 18.c3 d4! 19.♘xd4 ♜ae8 and White is torn apart.



17...d4!

Time is the one luxury White is not allowed.

18.♗g3

18.♗b3† ♜h8 19.♔f2 looks logical, but Black has 19...♜a5†! winning everything.

18...♜a5† 19.c3 ♜ae8

Black has managed to get all the pieces out and White has hardly begun developing. The end is near.

20.♔d2 ♜h5 21.♔e1 ♜d8 22.♔c2 ♜g6†
23.♔c1 ♜a4 24.b3 ♜a3†

White resigned.

0–1

21

Mikhail Golubev – Levente Vajda

Bucharest 2001

White has a clear advantage after the opening, which Black has played in a very passive fashion. But to be able to exploit this advantage to the maximum he has to act before Black plays ...♘e6 and ...0–0 with a playable position. Therefore Golubev sacrificed a piece.

13.♘f5!! gx f5

Black can decline winning the piece with the odd 13...♘e6??, but the knight will be very destructive after 14.♘d6† (14.♘xg7†??) 14...♗f8 15.♘xc8 ♘d4 16.f4! and White has a winning attack.

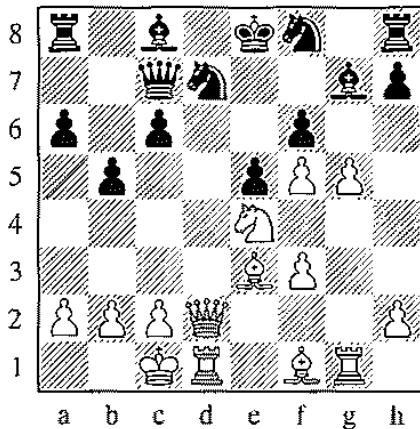
14.exf5

Besides making it possible to transfer the previously useless knight on c3 to the glorious square d6, this also prevents Black from getting the f8-knight into play.

14...f6

14... $\mathbb{Q}g6$! was better, but it is clear that White's position has improved quite a lot.

15. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ b5 16. $\mathbb{Q}g1$



Black resigned. It is hard to suggest a move for him, as for example 16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18.gxf6# $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ wins outright.

1-0

22 Karsten Larsen – Chris Ward

Copenhagen 2003

I was commentating on this game live at the tournament in the commentary room. At this moment not much attention was paid to this board by the spectators. Five minutes later this had changed, and the board became all but invisible. But as so often in chess, the real fight is in the details and can only be truly seen if we analyse the position. Actually the fight is over after the next two moves and the impressive king march is mainly entertainment.

White has two winning moves.

26.d5?

This is the correct idea and wins by force. But at the same time it is bad attacking technique, if nothing else then at least stylistically. Our standard question should be: what is the rook still doing on f1 and how could it be brought into the attack?

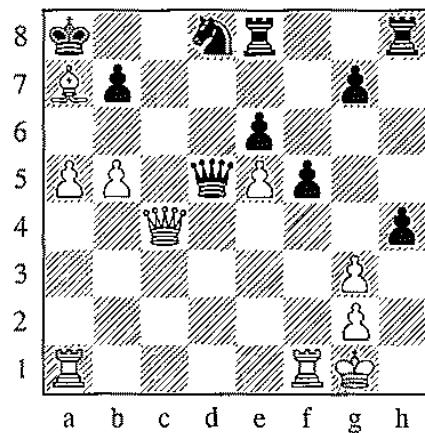
26. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$! is perfect. There are now a lot of ways to win and most importantly, they are easy. For example: 26...hxg3 (26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 27.d5! exd5 28. $\mathbb{W}d4$ and wins) 27.d5! exd5 (27...f4 28. $\mathbb{Q}xa7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ 29.b6# $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 30.a6 and wins) 28. $\mathbb{W}d4$ b6 29.axb6 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 30. $\mathbb{W}b4$ and Black's position is crumbling like a downtrodden cookie.

26... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xa7\#$!

The idea.

27... $\mathbb{Q}a8\#$

Only move. After 27... $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ Black is mated.



28. $\mathbb{W}c8\#$?

White was getting short of time here. Later he came up with a winning move overlooked by all the chess fans in the hour-long analysis of the game in the commentary room.

28. $\mathbb{W}c7!!$ was the correct path. White wins after 28... $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ 29. $\mathbb{W}b6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 31.a6 and the threats have multiplied.

28... $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ 29.b6# $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 30. $\mathbb{W}a8\#$

After 30. $\mathbb{Q}fd1?$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ Black wins.

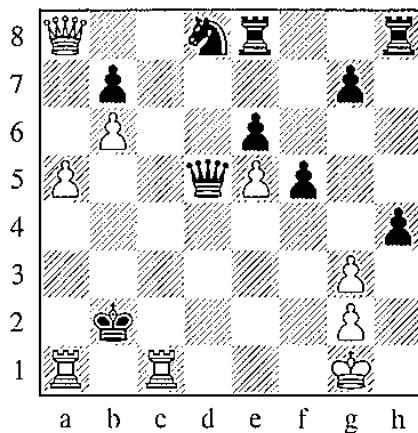
30... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}ab1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$

It appears that White has nothing more than perpetual.

32. $\mathbb{Q}a1\#$

Larsen did not have the nerve for 32.a6!? because of 32... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ 33. $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $hxg3!$, but the game still ends in a draw. 34. $\mathbb{E}a1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 35. $\mathbb{E}fb1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 36. $\mathbb{E}c1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b2$ and White has nothing.

32... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 33. $\mathbb{E}fb1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 34. $\mathbb{E}c1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$
35. $\mathbb{E}ab1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 36. $\mathbb{E}a1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b2$



37. $\mathbb{E}cb1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$

A truly amazing and creative fight that cannot be fully appreciated without the atmosphere of the tournament hall. The mistakes pointed out by commentators and computers can often give a mistaken impression of the level of a game. Do not let yourself be deluded. This was a great game.

½–½

23 Jon Arnason – John Nunn

Novi Sad Olympiad 1990

The kingside is without protection, but if Black had another move he would play ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ and things would be far safer.

18. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$
Momentum.

18... $cxd3$
What else?

19. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $g6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$

The point.

20... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

21... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ is no better. For example: 22. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ with a winning attack.

22. $\mathbb{E}e3$

22. $\mathbb{W}g7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ also gives a winning attack, but there is no reason to chase the black king towards the queenside, where it is relatively safer.

22. $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 23. $\mathbb{E}e3$ was the cleanest win.

22... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

22... $\mathbb{W}xc3$ is best met with 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$ $\mathbb{W}xa1\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ with a mating attack.

23. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$

23... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ is refuted by 24. $\mathbb{W}h3!$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 26. $\mathbb{E}xd3$ $\mathbb{E}ed8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ and Black is suffering one of those very embarrassing defeats.

24. $\mathbb{E}f3$ $gxf5$ 25. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xf5\#$

Black resigned. After 26... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{W}f7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 28. $\mathbb{E}h3\#$ he is mated.

1–0

24 Rainer Tomczak – Piotr Bobras

Polish Championship, Opole 2007

This is a perfect exercise to illustrate the idea of bringing all the pieces into the attack. At present, the rook on d8 could assist more.

30... $\mathbb{E}d3!$

Before giving the check on h1, the rook check on f3 is prepared; basically Black is including the last guy in the attack.

31. $\mathbb{W}a4$

There is no defence. For example 31... $\mathbb{E}g2$ $\mathbb{E}d1$ also wins.

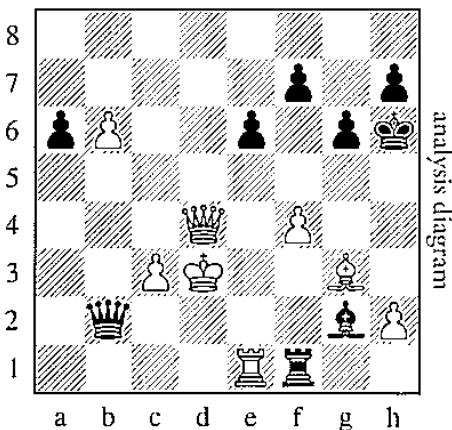
31... $\mathbb{W}h1\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{E}f3\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{E}xf1\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}d5\#?$

Black was probably in time trouble. The simplest human win was 34... $\mathbb{E}a1!$, when White has no defence. One line runs 35. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}d5\#$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}f1$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{E}e1\#$ and White loses more material.

34... $\mathbb{E}b1$ 35. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}d5\#$ was another win.

35. $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}b3$ 36. $\mathbb{W}d8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 37. $\mathbb{W}d4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 38. $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}xb2\#$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}f3\#?$

At this point it is already difficult to find the best move. After the sensational 39... $\mathbb{Q}g2!!$



White cannot exchange the rooks and very soon he will face inconceivable difficulties.

40. $\mathbb{E}e3$ $\mathbb{W}b1\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}b2\#$

After 41... $\mathbb{E}f1$ White is saved by 42.f5! when the counterplay on the dark squares guarantees him excellent drawing chances, mainly through a lot of perpetuals constantly popping up.

42. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

42. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ was simpler, but Black's advantage is almost gone anyway.

42... $\mathbb{W}b1\#$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}b2\#$

Probably filled with self-loathing, Black decided to stop fighting.

½–½

25

Elshad Orujov – Firuza Velikhanli

Baku 2007

If Black has an advantage, it is structural. Not so much the type you win endgames with, but more the kind that cannot protect the king well. In order to exploit this, Velikhanli goes for it and sacrifices a rook.

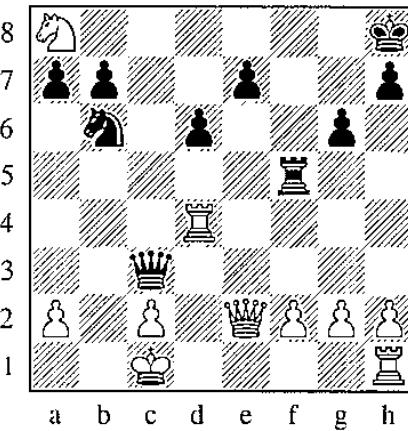
15... $\mathbb{Q}xe6!!$

After the standard 15... $\mathbb{E}f6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ Black is probably a bit better, but the position is far from clear in that respect.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{E}f5!$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$

Otherwise the queen comes to c6 anyway, with a large advantage.

17... $\mathbb{W}c6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ $\mathbb{W}xc3$



19. $\mathbb{W}e3?!$

19. $\mathbb{W}e4!$ was more tenacious. Black will pick up the rook on h1, but Black's subsequent attack with queen and rook is not necessarily decisive, though uncomfortable. But this is a hard move to find when there could be several good-looking moves.

19... $\mathbb{W}a1\#$

Black is cashing in and has a clear edge in a far simpler position.

20.♕d2 ♘xh1 21.♘xb6 axb6 22.♗c3

22.♗c4 would have given some chances in a complicated, long and mainly boring line. We have seen enough to decide that Black is winning. By the way, when I talk like this, I mean that there are lines that are not useful in an instructional context, though they are important to analyse. So, just because I did not include it, it does not mean that I did not analyse it.

22...♝xf2† 23.♔e3 ♘f6!

This fine move decides matters. Black wins.

24.♝xd6 ♗g1† 25.♔e4 ♗xg2† 26.♔e5

0–1

26 Boris Gelfand – Boris Avrukh

Beer-Sheva (rapid) 2007

White has played the opening aggressively and has the chance to end the game in his favour with a strong strike on the light squares.

20.♝e6!!

An astonishing move, which Avrukh must have missed. This is easy to do in a rapid game, of course.

20...fxe6

The sacrifice must be accepted, as after 20...♗b4 21.a3 White wins the knight on e7.

21.♗xe6† ♘f8 22.♗h2

The point behind the sacrifice. White will invade from the side, with a check on h8.

22...♗e8

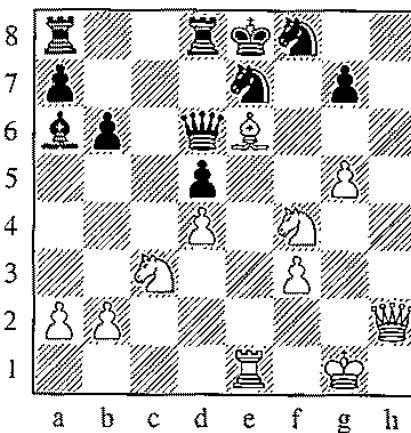
The only move, allowing the knight to go to f8. We have come to the moment when White needs to justify his sacrifice. It is easy to play mechanically at such a point with

23.♗e1??

which is exactly what Gelfand did. With more time on his hands he would definitely have seen the need for immediate action and the strength of 23.♘cxd5!, when Black is immediately without any good moves. One illustration of why the capture on d5 is so strong is 23...♗b7 24.♗h5†! g6 25.♗h8† ♘f8 26.♗f6 mate.

23...♝f8

This is probably the most important moment. The win on the previous move was great, but it is only at this moment that White really should have found the win, rapid game or not.



24.♝xd5?

This is a very strange move, as there is no real follow-up coming. White is threatening to take on a8, but Black sees it.

The logical 24.♘cxd5! was still strong enough to win. Actually this is very logical. White's last move was a bit careless, but in general it would always be useful for White to include the rook in the attack. At this moment it is time to look at the white pieces anew and notice that the knight on c3 is doing very little to assist with the attack, but has a lot of potential to cause damage.

24...♜ac8 25.♗h5† g6

Stronger was 25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 26. $\mathbb{W}f7$ $\mathbb{E}c7!$ and the attack would have been repelled in its essence and Black would win – Avrukh.

26. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{E}xc3$ 27. $bxc3$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 28. $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$

28... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$ with a clear edge – Avrukh.

29. $\mathbb{W}h8$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$

Unable to find a valid way to play for a win, Avrukh settles for a draw.

30. $\mathbb{E}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 32. $\mathbb{W}c6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

33. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$

$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

27 Yuri Shulman – Angelo Young

Chicago 2001

White has sacrificed a pawn in the opening and could quickly end up without compensation, for example after ...0–0–0. For this reason the first two moves should come pretty easily.

15. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

Black has no choice but to get the pieces out.

16. $\mathbb{E}ad1$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 17. $\mathbb{W}d2!$

Exploiting the fact that Black has not managed to find safe spots for all his pieces in order to win a bit more time. The idea is that Black will not be able to take the knight when it comes to e5 because of the mate on d8. Simple, but effective.

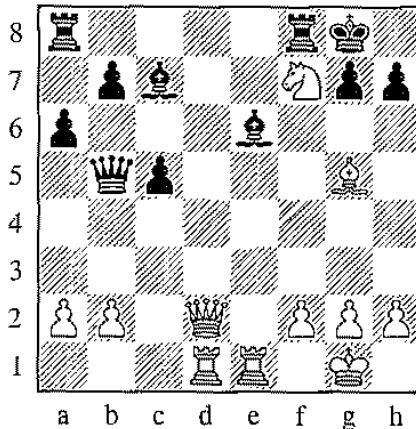
17... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}b5$

18... $\mathbb{W}b6$ is punished with 19. $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}c3!$ and the black position is falling apart on the dark squares. White has to strike, and strike hard.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$

After the optimistic and a bit artificial 19. $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$, Black has time to play 19... $h6!$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ (20. $\mathbb{Q}f4??$ 0–0–0!) 20... $\mathbb{W}b4$ and White is only a bit better.

19...0–0



Black is trying to run from the trap, presumably unaware of what is about to hit him. Maybe it was more tenacious to play 19... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 20. $\mathbb{E}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}he8!$, but White will still be on the road to victory after 21. $\mathbb{W}d5!!$ $\mathbb{E}xe6$ 22. $\mathbb{W}f5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24. $\mathbb{W}e7!$. For example: 24... $c4$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xb7$ and the extra material should decide.

20. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$!!

Without this energetic sacrifice White would only have a slight advantage, whilst now the game appears to be decided. It is inspiring to see with what energy Shulman has exploited what started out as a slight lead in development, but with accurate play has proven to be enough to win the game.

20... $gxh6$ 21. $\mathbb{E}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}c4$

21... $hxg5$ loses to 22. $\mathbb{W}xg5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}e7$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$, but only because White has the resource 24. $\mathbb{E}xh7\#$, mating.

22. $\mathbb{E}xh6$

White is now a pawn up and his position is overwhelming on top of this.

22... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 23. $\mathbb{B}h4$ $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{B}fe8$ 25. $\mathbb{W}d7$
 $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 26. $\mathbb{B}e4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$
1–0

28
Vitaly Tseshkovsky – Vladimir Manelis

Voronezh 2006

White wins by exploiting the weaknesses of the light squares around the black king.

16. $\mathbb{W}c2!!$ $hxg5$

It is hard to see what else Black should play. Actually, this move was also a novelty, though hardly a home-prepared one.

16... $g6$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $hxg5$ 18. $hxg5$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$
 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#!$ was played in Anisimov – Chebotarev, Vladimir 2002. Black loses the queen.

17. $hxg5$ $\mathbb{Q}e4$

The only move. 17... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}h8\#!$ and we once again see that there is an important weakness on a light square.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

18. $f4!$ was simpler. The knight on $e4$ cannot be protected and Black cannot play ... $f5$.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xg5\#$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xe4$

White has a winning attack and could end it in many ways, so we will not go into the details of the way he chose, except for on the very next move.

20... $f5$

20... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ also does not work. Simplest is possibly 21. $\mathbb{B}xh6!$ $gxh6$ 22. $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 23. $\mathbb{B}h1$ and Black will have to resign, as the only attempt at a defence, 23... $\mathbb{Q}g8$, loses to 24. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#!$ and the queen goes once again.

21. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $cxd4$ 23. $\mathbb{B}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$

24. $\mathbb{W}h5$ $\mathbb{B}xh8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xh8\#$
1–0

29
Kjetil Lie – Gregory Pitl

Gausdal 2006

This position could also have arisen in the game Glud – Su.B. Hansen, Denmark 2006, but Black was wise enough to play ... $\mathbb{Q}b4-d5$ instead of taking the bait.

White will of course lose material, but he has a sensational chance to compromise his opponent on the light squares, which is of course far more dangerous since Black has advanced his h-pawn.

15. $d5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$

Black has no serious alternatives. After 15... $\mathbb{W}c7$ White can either just develop or play more directly with 16. $dxc6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 17. $e6!$ $\mathbb{W}xf4$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$, winning plenty of material.

16. $e6!$

16. $dxc6$ $g5$ 17. $\mathbb{W}c4$ $b5$ 18. $c7$ $bxcc4$ 19. $cxd8=\mathbb{B}\#$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd8\pm$ gives a stable positional advantage, but the game appears to be crushing.

16... $fxe6$

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 17. $dxe6$ $fxe6$ 18. $\mathbb{W}e4$ allows White to win both on the light squares and on material.

17. $dxc6$ $bxcc6$

17... $\mathbb{W}b6$ is met with the very strong 18. $\mathbb{Q}a3!+–$ with the idea $\mathbb{Q}a3-c4-e5$, aiming at Black's two weaknesses.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xc6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

The weaknesses on the light squares are getting terribly exposed.

19... $\mathbb{W}c8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

White is keeping the initiative. The bishop is brought into the game with a very strong threat.

20...a5 21.♗c1 ♖b8 22.♗g6† ♔d8
23.♖xb8†
1-0

30 Parimarjan Negi – Alexandra Kosteniuk

Cap d'Agde 2006

In the game Black managed to lose absolutely instantly. But her position was winning if she had targeted the weakest square in White's position, which is h2. Note that though g2 is quite weak too, there is no way to exploit it, while a check on h2 is immediately deadly.

31...♗e7??

31...♖h4 is fancy, but only leads to a draw.

31...♖h6! was the correct move, preventing ♖xh7† in the process. The main threat is ...♗g2† followed by ...♗xh2† and ...♗f1†, but also quiet play, as ...♗ef8! is relevant. For this reason White must look at concrete play. 32.g5 ♖h5 33.♗d1 (33.♗e4 ♗g2† 34.♗h1 ♗xh2† 35.♗xh2 ♗f5† winning) 33...♗g2† There are other ways to win at this point, but this is very direct. 34.♗h1 ♗xh2†! 35.♗xh2 ♗g4† 36.♗g1 ♗xg3 and mate is near.

32.♗e4 ♗g2† 33.♗h1 ♖g6 34.♗xe3+– ♗g7
35.♗ae1 ♖f7 36.♗g5 ♖xc2 37.♖xg6† hxg6
38.♗xf7 ♖xf7 39.♗e7† ♗f6 40.♗xc7 ♗g2†
41.♗g1 ♗d5 42.h4 ♗g2† 43.♗f1 ♗xg3
44.g5† ♗f5 45.♗f2 ♗g2† 46.♗e3 ♖xb2
47.♗g1
1-0

31 Alexander Alekhine – Vladas Mikenas

Kemer 1937

I saw this example in *Chess Monthly* and was deeply impressed.

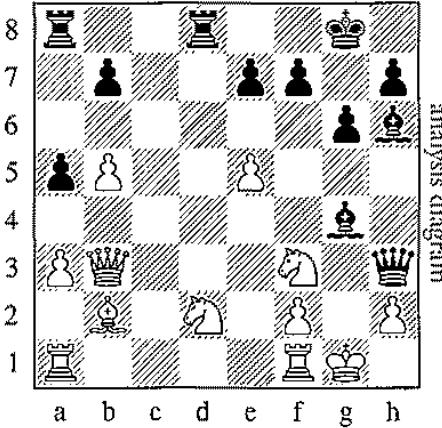
Black takes the option to destroy White's position on the light squares, even at the cost of a piece.

16...♘ef4!!

The other knight could also have gone to f4, but the question is, which one would you leave unmoved if you had to? The e6-knight is a bit in the way, so keep the other one.

17.♗c4

Alekhine decides to fight a non-forcing battle, as the forced lines are bad for him. The main line goes: 17.gxf4 ♘xf4 18.♗d1 (18.♗e4 ♖g4 and wins) 18...♗xg2! (18...♗g4? 19.♗e1! ♖g5! is unclear) 19.♗xg2 ♖h3† 20.♗g1 ♗g4 21.♗b3 ♗h6!



White will either give back the piece in some way, or resign after 22...♗f4!.

17...♗xg2 18.♗xg2 ♖h3†

Black's advantage is evident.

19.♗h1 ♗e6

19...♗g4??

20.♕e4

20.♕g5 ♔e3! and Black wins a pawn.

20...♗f5 21.♕e2 ♗g4?!

This gives a clear advantage and Black eventually won in 64 moves, but he could instead have played 21...♗h5! 22.♗fe1 ♗h6, with the threat of ...♗g4, leaving White in a desperate situation.

...0-1

32 Hans Jonsson – Jonny Hector

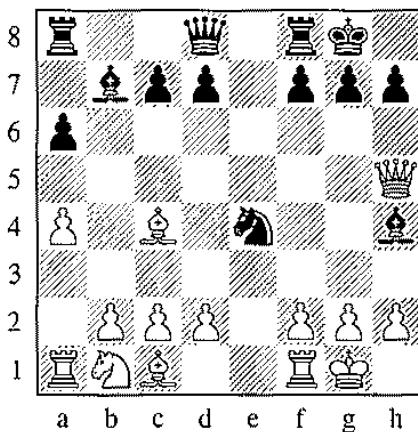
Limhamn 1994

The weakness in the white position is the f2-pawn. Besides this, he has not developed. Therefore it makes sense to initiate a direct attack.

13...♗h4!

Black cannot get the heavy pieces out in a sensible way at the moment, and so to avoid losing the fight for the initiative he strikes immediately.

14.♗f1



This loses by force, but 14.g3 is met with 14...♗g5!, which leads to a very strong attack. The main line is 15.♗a3 (15.♗e3 ♗f6 16.gxh4 ♗c6 and wins, and 15.♗f1 ♗f3 is

also very unpleasant.) 15...♗f6 16.gxh4 ♗c6 17.f3 ♗h3† 18.♔h1 ♗xc4 with a very strong attack.

14...♗xf2† 15.♔xf2

15.♔h1 ♗d4 and White is in a lot of trouble.

15...♗xf2 16.♗xf2 ♗f6† 17.♗g3

17.♗g1 ♗d4†

17...♗ae8 18.d4

18.♗d3 g6 19.♗g4 ♗e5 is also rather conclusive.

18...♗xd4 19.♗d3 ♗e3†! 20.♗xe3 ♗xe3† 21.♗g4 f5† 22.♗xf5 ♗e2† 23.♗h4 ♗f2† 24.g3 ♗xf5

0-1

33 Jorge Szmetan – G. Garcia Gonzales

Malaga 1976

White has a great attacking position where it is hard to see how any of his pieces can easily be improved. For this reason it is necessary to act immediately to avoid some or all of the advantage being lost.

19.♗xd5!! ♗xd5

Black could admit the defeat of his best pawn, but his prospects would not be great in this case.

20.♗xd5 exd5 21.e6† f6

21...♗g8 22.♗xh7

22.♗h5!!

Absolutely brilliant! 22.♗gh3 ♗h8 23.gxf6† ♗xf6 24.♗xf6† ♗xf6 25.♗f3† is also good enough to win, but the text move is of course sensational.

22...Qd3†

Preparing to play ...Qf4 or ...Qe5 in some important lines, but it is not enough.

23.Qb1 gxh5 24.gxf6† Qh8 25.fxe7† Qe5

26.exf8=Q† Qxf8 27.Qxh5 Qxf2 28.Qxf2

1–0

34
Daniel King – Graeme Buckley

British League 2007

Black needs to do something before White gets time to protect his weaknesses. The largest of these is of course f3. If Black could take control over this square he would have a crushing position.

15...f6!

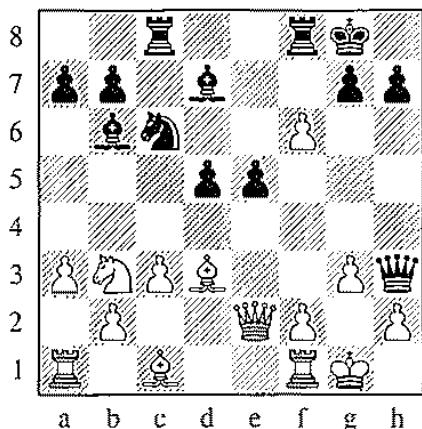
This move is easy. No other moves seem to make sense.

16.exf6

White could of course give up the pawn, but he would be a pawn down!

16...e5!!

But this is the hard one. 16...Qxf6 with a clear edge was also possible, of course, but the text move is decisive.

**17.Qe3**

17.fxg7 is met most simply with 17...Qg4 18.gxf8=Q† Qxf8 and Black wins the queen. 17.Qc2 e4 18.Qe2 Qe5 19.Qd1 Qg4 and wins.

17...e4 18.Qb5

It is difficult to say what King was expecting after this move, but something better, like 18.Qxb6 exd3, does not offer White that much compensation for the piece.

18...Qg4!

The rest is silence (Shakespeare – Hamlet).

19.f3 exf3 20.Qxf3 Qe5 21.Qd2 Qxf3†

22.Qxf3 Qxf6

0–1

35
Alexey Dreev – Sergei Tiviakov

Dos Hermanas 2003

This position is all about destroying the fragile pawn complex around the black king.

20.Qe6!!

This move leads to utter destruction on the light squares.

20...Qxe6

20...Qh7 can be met with 21.Qg5†! hxg5 22.h5 and the attack cannot be resisted.

21.dxe6 f5

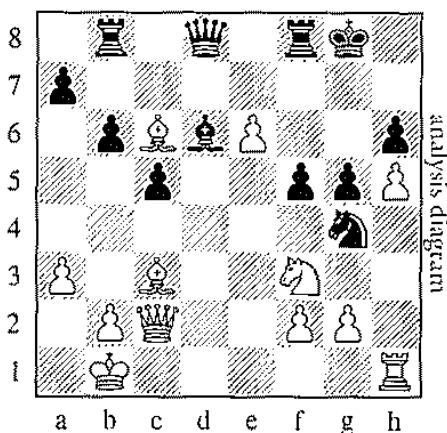
Or 21...Qf6 22.exf7† Qxf7 23.Qg5†! hxg5 24.hxg5 and the black position is resignable.

22.h5!

After this move the extra exchange plays no part compared to the complete collapse of the black structure on the light squares.

22...gxh5

22...g5 is refuted with the brilliant



23.e7!! clearing the light squares for the pieces.
 23... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ (23... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}e6$ and White has won the battle for the light squares, as well as the game.)
 24. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ $\mathbb{B}f7$ 26. $\mathbb{W}e6$ The attack is irresistible.

23. $\mathbb{B}xh5$ $\mathbb{W}e7$

23... $\mathbb{B}c8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ and wins.

24. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$

25... $\mathbb{B}f6$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ and wins.

26. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

1–0

36 Tibor Karolyi – Julian Hodgson

London 1989

The point of this combination is to include the knight into the attack. If you remember this, you will find the solution easily.

1... $\mathbb{B}h1\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh1$

2. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{B}8h2$ is clearly not working.

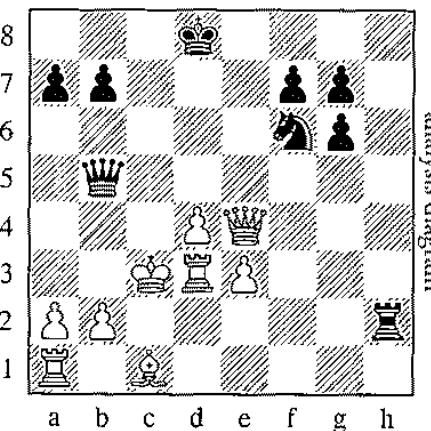
2... $\mathbb{B}xh1\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

3. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}g1\#$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}f1\#$ and wins.

3... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

This is a very useful move, as after 3... $dxe4?$!
 4. $\mathbb{W}c2\#$ White is fighting, although, happily for

Black, not that much. After 4... $\mathbb{Q}d8!$ 5. $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}b5\#$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}h2\#$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}a5\#$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}b5\#$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6!$



Black wins. It is only in this position that you can see the difference between the two king moves (there is no check on e5). You could argue that at move 3 both moves are equal, as both moves win. I would accept this if your name is Herr Doctor von Fritz. But if you are a human who has to calculate 12 moves ahead to spot this finesse, then you are talking nonsense.

4.dxc5 dxe4 5. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ $\mathbb{W}xd8$

0–1

37 Training Position

I found this beautiful position deep down in some analysis by Smirin. I have elaborated greatly upon his work and no longer want to hold Smirin or the players responsible for anything I have to say.

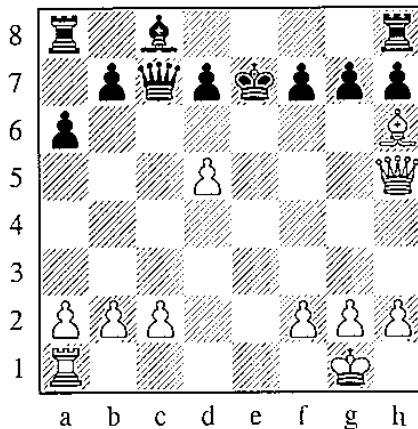
White has sacrificed a rook and needs to act with great pace to secure the full point. He also needs to exploit the advantage of controlling the dark squares, which means that half the board is his, even though he is almost fatally down in material.

The most energetic line goes:

15. $\mathbb{Q}h6!!$

Attacking the weak dark squares and at the same time bringing the rook into play with gain of tempo.

15.d6† $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ might look energetic as well, but after 16... $\mathbb{W}c6!$, vacating the queen from the dangerous dark squares, White does not have enough compensation for the rook. The next move is very likely to be ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ or ...d6, in both cases putting a halt to White's attack. Therefore the best move has to be 17. $\mathbb{W}g5†!$, when after 17... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 18. $\mathbb{W}a5!$ d5! 19. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}b4†$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ White has some play, but it is hard to imagine it ever being enough for more than perpetual check, and even this is somewhat dubious.



15... $\mathbb{Q}g8!$

This is the toughest defence. Black needs to defend his dark squares or they will fall apart as can be seen from the following illustrative lines.

15...d6 16. $\mathbb{W}g5†$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17. $\mathbb{W}g4†$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 18. $\mathbb{W}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}g5†$ and White wins.

15... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg7†$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 17. $\mathbb{W}g5†$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 18. $\mathbb{W}h6†$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ Black is mated.

Also 15...gxh6 16. $\mathbb{Q}e1†$ leads straight to mate.

16. $\mathbb{Q}e1†$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Only move. 16... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 17. $\mathbb{W}xf7$ and wins.

17. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

White needs to keep the intensity.

17...d6 18. $\mathbb{W}e2!$

Attacking the weak e7-square. Black has only one way to defend it.

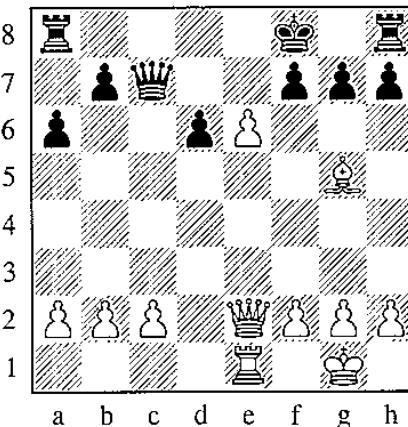
It should be noted that 18. $\mathbb{W}xh7?$ $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ 19. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe8†$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ is probably about even. Black is not well placed, but it is hard to see how White can use his lead in development for anything.

18... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$

After 18... $\mathbb{W}d7?$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e7†$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd6†$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ White has many wins, but by applying the technique of looking for candidate moves, we quickly find 21. $\mathbb{W}e5!$, when Black must resign. For example: 21... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c7†$ $\mathbb{W}xc7$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xe8$ mate.

18... $\mathbb{Q}g4?!$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e7†$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xg4$ leads to what is probably a winning endgame, where Black cannot coordinate his rooks before White has won a number of pawns.

19.dxe6 $\mathbb{Q}h8$



White has a technically winning position, but there is still a fight ahead. One possible line is:

20.e7† ♜e8 21.♕f4 ♜c8 22.♗g4 ♜g8
23.♗xd6

With a clear and stable advantage. But I do not want to be too definite after such a long variation.

38 Alexander Beliavsky – Andrei Volokitin

Copenhagen 2002

Black is trying hard to be active, but the problem is that his king is unsafe and he is therefore destined to lose the fight for the initiative, should White play well, and Beliavsky did.

16.♗d4! 0–0

16...♝g8 was another option, but after 17.e5 dxe5 (17...♝xg4 18.e6) 18.fxe5 ♜xg4 19.e6 Black's position is being torn to pieces. For example: 19...fxe6 20.h3! ♜xd4† 21.♗xd4 e5 22.♗ael with a devastating attack.

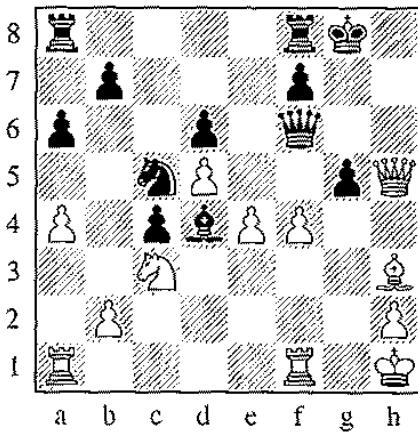
17.gxh5! ♜xh5

17...gxh4 looks a bit better, although not good.

18.♗xh5 ♜xd4† 19.♔h1 ♜f6 20.♔h3

White decides to start a big attack on the kingside, where Black is suddenly very weak.

20...♜c5



21.♗g1!

21.♗f5 also wins, but the rook sacrifice seems to be more energetic.

21...♝xg1

21...♝fe8 loses beautifully to 22.e5! dxe5 23.♗xg5† ♜f8 24.d6! ♜xd6 25.fxe5 ♜xe5 26.♗f1! and Black is unable to defend any of his weaknesses for much longer.

22.♗xg1 ♜fe8 23.e5+– dxe5 24.♗xg5† ♜f8
25.fxe5 ♜xe5 26.♗xe5 ♜d3 27.♗f5 ♜g7
28.♗f1 ♜e8 29.♗e6

1–0

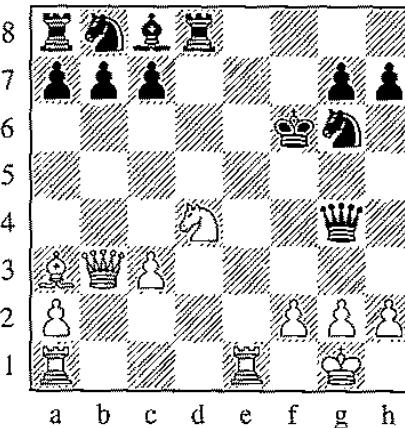
39 Alexey Dreev – Ruslan Sherbakov

Borzhomi 1988

While writing this book I was going through Dreev's book on his 100 best games. Despite the rather low effort from the editors of the English edition I want to recommend the book wholeheartedly. Dreev's games and thinking are crystal clear and very instructive for players of most levels.

In this game Black is under pressure and can easily lose his extra pawn. But the weakened pawns on the queenside mean that he will still retain decent drawing chances in the various endgames. For this reason Dreev decided to draw the king out into the middle.

14.♗xf7†! ♜xf7 15.♗b3† ♜f6



16.h3!!

This is the great point behind the sacrifice. White is banishing the queen from its active position on g4 to have the freedom to slowly build up the attack.

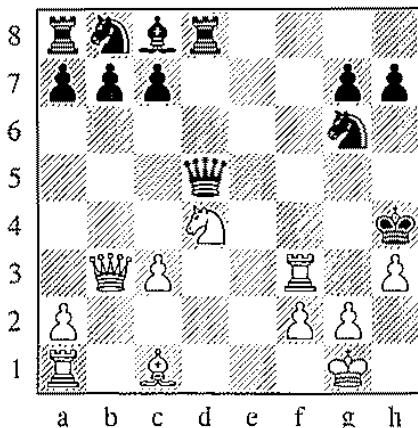
After 16.♗e3 ♗xd4 17.cxd4 ♘f4 18.g3 ♘c6 the position is not very clear, even though the king looks stupid on f6 and White should be better somehow.

16...♝d7

The queen has to stay on the diagonal to prevent White checkmating him with ♔e6† more or less immediately.

17.♗e3 ♜d5

I have not been able to find any moves that even make sense to suggest as defensive ideas.

18.♗f3† ♔g5 19.♔c1† ♔h4

We can say that things have gone wrong for Black without fearing saying too much. Actually, what happens now can be called farcical without being too strong. Out of 16 moves that guarantee a forced win according to Deep Fritz 10, Dreev chooses the weakest – and wins the endgame with opposite-coloured bishops, but also an extra pawn, without any real effort.

20.♗g3?

You really love and trust your technique when you come up with so little in such a position.

One win could be 20.♗f5 ♗xf5 21.c4 when everything is wrong with the black position, including that he is mated by force.

Or what about my personal favourite: 20.♔h2 ♗xb3 21.♗f5 with mate in no more than two moves.

20...♗xb3 21.♔f3† ♔h5 22.♗g5† ♔h6
23.♗f5† ♔f4 24.♗xf4† g5 25.♗xg5† ♔g7
26.axb3 ♗xf5 27.♗xd8 c5 28.♗e7 b6 29.♗d1
♘c6 30.♗g5 ♗e8 31.♗d6 ♘a5 32.♗f6† ♔g8
33.g4 ♗e6 34.♗g5 ♗c8 35.f4 ♗xb3 36.♗e5
♘a5 37.♗e4 ♗f8 38.♗f6† ♔f7 39.♗xh7
♗g8 40.♗g5† ♔e7 41.♗h6 ♘d7 42.f5 ♘c4
43.f6† ♔f8 44.♗f4 ♘e5 45.♗h7† ♔f7
46.♗xe5 ♗xg4 47.hxg4 ♗xg4† 48.♗f2 a5
1-0

40

Mark Hebden – Colm Daly

Irish Championship 2007

What Englishman Mark Hebden was doing in the Irish Championship in July 2007 I do not know. Did I not play him at the British on the last day of that month? Either way, he played his usual anti-theory, harmless 1.d4 opening and quickly got his standard winning attack!

In this position he has a potentially very strong attack against f7 and h7. Though g7 is also under attack and unprotected, it is not easy to see how White is going to make anything out of this at the moment. The knight on g5 is dictating what we call weaknesses, as it is very supportive of the white queen and near impossible to get rid of.

With his next move Mark points out that the important thing is to attack the black

king before those circumstances change, not to defend his own king, which is slightly less vulnerable for the time being.

11.e4!!

This move has several functions. The most important ones are to play e4-e5, indirectly attacking h7, and to make it possible to play ♜c4, to attack f7 and defend a2 at the same time.

11.♕ce4? is mechanical and does not involve all of the white pieces, though it does save the knight. The problem is that the loss of time is more important than the material saved. The position after Black's only reply, 11...♛xa2!, does not seem to promise White any advantage at all. The problem is that the f7-pawn is protected by the black queen.

11...dxc3

This is the only move. 11...♝g4 12.♞c4 and 11...♛xc5 12.f4! e5 13.♞c4!! are both devastating. White will be threatening mate any moment now.

12.♞c4 ♛c6?

This does not work and neither does taking on b2, as it is vital to have the option of exchanging queens with ...♝d2† in the line that offers the best chance of a defence: 12...♝e6??

But White will win with accurate play nonetheless:

13.♝xe6!

13.♝xd8† ♛xd8 14.♝xe6 ♛d2†! is an important point.

13...fxe6 14.♝xd8† ♛xd8 15.bxc3!

This position is winning for White, it seems. Black would love to play 15...♝bd7, but after 16.♝xe6 he has problems defending the g7-square after all. Therefore the most tenacious defence is to attack.

15...♛a5!

15...♛c8 16.e5 ♜bd7 17.exf6 ♜xf6 18.♝e1 winning.

16.e5 ♛xc3 17.exf6 ♛a1†

We see now that White's lead in development at move 11 has persisted and Black is struggling to both defend against immediate mate and to bring his pieces into the game.

18.♝d2 ♛xf6

18...♛d4† 19.♝e2 ♛e5† 20.♝d3 ♛d5† 21.♝e3 only improves White's position, paradoxically.

19.♝e1 ♛h8 20.♝xe6 ♛c6 21.♝e4 ♛f6 22.♝e2

White is a pawn up and has a fabulous knight on e6 as a symptom of his generally better-placed pieces. So, even though there is no forced win for him, we can call his position "winning" with confidence.

13.♝xf7† ♛h8 14.♝b3

This wins rather easily in the game, but White could also have played 14.♝xd8† ♛xd8 15.♝d5! and Black should just consider stopping here.

14...♝e5 15.f4 ♛g4 16.fxe5 ♜xd1† 17.♝xd1 cxb2† 18.♝xb2 ♛xc5 19.exf6 ♛e5† 20.c3 1-0

41

Praveen M. Thipsay – Neeraj Kumar Mishra

Indian Championship, Nagpur 1999

White has the advantage for one reason mainly, a lead in development. Black cannot easily get his knight and bishop on c8 to make sense, while White is ready for an immediate confrontation. What he needs is a weakness to attack. It would be very logical if it was on the kingside, as Black has no pieces there, but first it has to be created. For this reason the best move is the one played in the game.

16.f6!

The strongest move. Black can hardly contemplate not taking the pawn, as fxg7 in this position would be absolutely devastating.

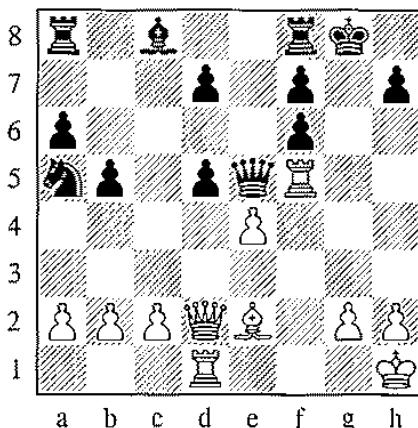
16. Qxe5 Qxe5 17. $f6$ was also possible, but it would lose a bit of momentum as well as allow Black to establish the queen on e5.

16...gxf6 17. Qd5!!

A close to perfect move. White realises that he cannot get more for his knight than a bit of disruption of the black defences. Black has no choice but to take the knight, as it would otherwise land on f6 like a small nuclear-armed Trojan horse.

17...exd5 18. Qxe5 Qe5 19. Qf5

The tempo-gaining move made possible on move 17.



19... Qc6

Resignation, but the game could not be saved. The deep point of the attack becomes apparent after

19... Qxe4

when White has some reasonable ways to continue the attack. For example 20. Qf3?!, which is good enough to win. But the most pleasing is Thipsay's intention during the game:

20. Qf4 Qe5

Not technically the best, but we are beyond such discussions at this point. 20... Qg6 is

my electronic implant's idea of a defence. White will win the queen and win both the middlegame and the endgame, just to make a mockery of such an absurd statement.

21. Qg4† Qh8 22. Wh6 Qg8

Now follows the glorious moment that Mishra should have allowed.

23. Qxd5!!

Winning, with the idea:

23... Wxb2 24. Wh7†!!

19... Wxb2 offers no defence. The queen is too far away from the kingside. White wins with simple moves: 20. Wh6 d6 (20...dxe4 21. Qd6! is simply over, as White is about to play Qdxf6 and either Qg5 or Qh5, winning) 21. Qf3 Qe5 22. Qxd5 and White will win the queen under favourable circumstances.

20. Qxe5 Qxe5 21. Qxd5 Qb8 22. Qd6

Black's position has collapsed.

22... Qb7 23. Qxf6 Qfe8 24. Qd3 Qe6 25. Qf5 Qh8 26. Qe1 Qg8 27. Qe3 Qgg6 28. Qg1 Qg7 29. Qe2 d6 30. Qh5 Qgf6 31. Qg5† Qg6 32. Qf3 Qe5 33. Qg3 d5 34. Qe1 dxe4 35. Qe2 Qef5 36. Qg4 Qg5 37. Qg3 Qe5 38. Qc8 Qxc8 39. Qxg5† Qg6 40. Qxe4 Qe6 41. Qd4

1-0

42

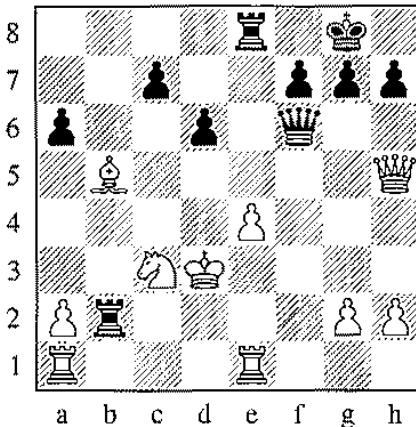
Andrei Volokitin – Eltaj Safarli

Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2008

After 21... Qf2? 22. Qab1 the position was unclear. White won in 49 moves. Black missed his chance to exploit the weakness of the d4-square.

21... Qb5! 22. Qxb5

22. Qxb5 axb5 23. Qd5 c5 and White has nothing better than 24. Qxf7†, leading to a lost endgame.



22...c5!!

Instead of thinking of forced lines, Black is focusing on attacking the weak square.

23.e5

23.Qe2 is objectively better, but after 23...axb5 24.Qe3 White is in big danger and very soon he will no longer be any material up.

23...Qf4

Not the only good move here, but we only need one way to win to prove that Black is doing well.

24.Qe4 d5 25.Qxe8 dxe4† 26.Qc4

26.Qxe4 Qd2† 27.Qc4 Qc2† 28.Qd5 Qd3† 29.Qxc5 Qc2† 30.Qb6 Qd8† and Black has a winning attack.

26...e3† 27.Qd5 Qd4† 28.Qc6 Wa4† 29.Qd6 Qxe8

There are many lines from here on, but basically Black has a winning attack. One possible line goes:

30.Qad1 e2! 31.Qxe2 Qd8†

Black is clearly winning.

43 Julio Becerra Rivero – Justin Sarkar

US Championship, Stillwater 2007

White has sacrificed a pawn to get his lead in development and needs to play very energetically in order to prove full compensation for it.

16.Qfc1!

16.Qd4 with the idea of Qc6† is tempting, but Black has 16...Qc4 when White's advantage is there, but not fully convincing.

16...axb5

Black can try to avoid taking the rook, but after 16...Qde8 White increases the pressure with 17.Qc2 Qd6 (17...axb5 18.axb5 Qc8 19.Qc6! and wins) 18.Qxd6 Qxd6 19.Qf4 with a fantastic attacking position. It is hard to believe that Black will survive in the fight against those powerful bishops.

White has a fabulous attack as well after 16...c5 17.b4!, opening lines towards the king. A sample line goes 17...axb5 18.bxc5 Qc4 19.axb5 Qxe3 20.b6 Qed5 21.Qa2 Qc8 22.Qa8† Qd7 23.Qxb7† Qe8 24.Qe1, winning.

17.axb5 Qde4

17...Qd5 offers less resistance. Among the several attractive winning lines, the following is clear-cut: 18.Qa7† Qc8 19.Qg4 Qf5 20.Qc2 g6 21.Qe1 Qf6 22.Qd4! and White wins as the bishop cannot be taken.

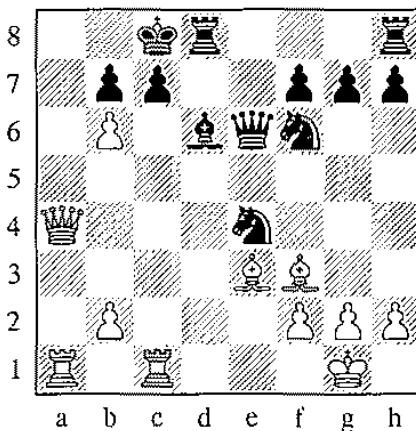
18.Qc2

Putting the queen on a4 and shooting at c7 in the process.

18...Qd6

After something like 18...Qe5 White has 19.b6! Qd6 20.bxc7† Qxc7 21.Qa4 Qc8 22.g3 with a winning initiative. The threats of Qf4, Qa7, Qa8†, Qc4, Qa5 and so on.

19. $\mathbb{W}a4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 20. $b6!$



The pawn is acting like a mighty piece here.

20... $c5$

After 20... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 21. $bxc7$ $\mathbb{E}de8$ White can either face the complications head on, or realise that Black will find it hard to improve his position after 22. $g3!$, leaving Black begging for a move.

21. $\mathbb{W}a8\ddagger$

21. $\mathbb{E}c4!$ could most likely have inspired Black to resign.

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

21... $\mathbb{R}b8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ and the king is all open.

22. $\mathbb{W}xb7\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 23. $\mathbb{E}a8!$

Exchanging one of the key defenders.

23... $\mathbb{W}d5$ 24. $\mathbb{E}xd8\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 25. $\mathbb{W}a7!$

There is no reason to give Black any breathing room, though the endgame offered White an advantage as well.

25... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 27. $b7$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 28. $b8=\mathbb{W}$

The computer has a thing for 28. $\mathbb{W}a8\ddagger!$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$, based on 29... $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 30. $b8=\mathbb{W}$, winning.

28... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ 29. $\mathbb{W}xb8\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe4\ddagger!$

30. $\mathbb{W}a7\ddagger!$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 32. $\mathbb{W}b6$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 33. $g3!$ was simpler.

30... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 31. $\mathbb{W}f8$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xg7$ $\mathbb{W}a4$

The position has become a bit more technical in nature, but with an extra pawn and many positional advantages, White is still winning.

33. $b3?!$

Not necessary, but White was apparently determined to mate his opponent.

33... $\mathbb{W}xb3$ 34. $\mathbb{W}g4\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 35. $g3$ $f5$ 36. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $f4?$

A bit sad. After 36... $\mathbb{E}e6$ and then something along the lines of 37. $\mathbb{E}a1$, White should still win, but will have to prove his case first.

37. $\mathbb{E}xd6!$

1-0

44

Robert James Fischer – O. Celle

Davis (Simultaneous display) 1964

White has some problems with his pieces hanging, but also has the great opportunity of attacking a king stuck in the centre. Though there are several good moves, it is clear that the most energetic is what Fischer played. And we have to remember that this game was played in a simultaneous display.

17. $\mathbb{E}ad1!!$

It has to be this rook, as the other rook needs to give a check on e1. The immediate attack with 17. $\mathbb{W}c7$ is met with 17... $\mathbb{W}d7!$, when it is tempting to play 18. $\mathbb{Q}d6\ddagger?!$ (18. $\mathbb{W}f4!$ is still strong) but after 18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xc8\ddagger$ $\mathbb{E}axc8$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xd7\ddagger$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ White's advantage is minimal.

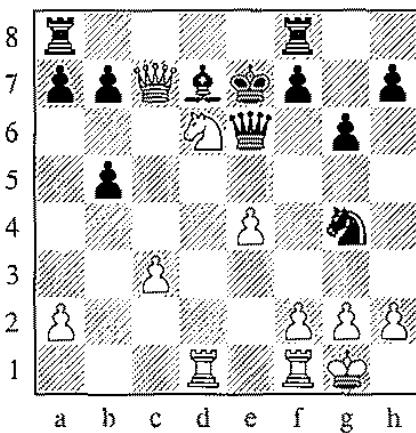
17... $cxb5$

There are no alternatives to taking the bishop, as the check is otherwise quite damaging on d6, for nothing.

18.♕c7!

White penetrates Black's position with gain of tempo. Once you see this move, you will probably not spend time on alternatives.

Still 18.♕d6†? was also possible, although Fischer's solution was cleaner. After 18...♔e7 White wins with 19.♕f5†! gxf5 20.exf5 with the point that Black will have to return both the pieces, without overcoming any of his positional problems. Still there is no clear win in there.

18...♚d7 19.♕d6† ♔e7**20.♕f5†!**

White needs to keep the momentum before the black king gets an escape square on f8 with ...♚fd8.

20...gxf5

20...♔f6 21.♕d6 gxf5 might look like three pieces for a rook, but after 22.♚xd7! it clearly is not.

21.exf5 ♕ac8

The beauty of the attack fully unfolds after 21...♕xf5 22.♕d6† ♔e8 23.♕fe1† ♔e6 24.♕d7! mate, though the game is quite neat.

22.♚xd7†! ♚xd7 23.f6†!

23.♕e1† also wins, but the text is fancier.

23...♕xf6

23...♔e8 24.♕c1† ♕e6 25.♕xc8 mate.

24.♕e1† ♕e4 25.♕xe4† ♔f6 26.♗xd7 ♜fd8**27.♗g4**

1-0

45

Alexander Shabalov - Michael Mulyar

Las Vegas 2006

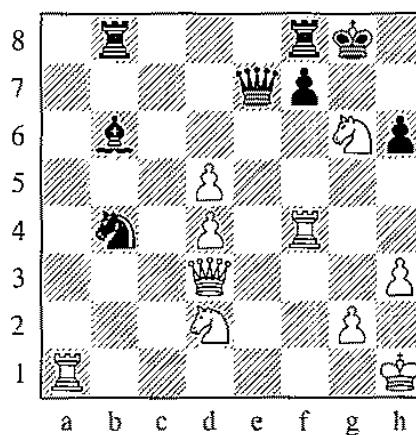
Black has a good position on the queenside and the knight on h4 looks bad, and only makes sense there if it is sacrificed on g6. Shabalov is one of the most gifted attackers of our time, at one time trained by Mikhail Tal together with Alexey Shirov. When he has the initiative he does not let go. Yermolinsky once wrote about him that he had the tendency to burn the bridges before he crosses them.

28.exd5!

The most energetic. White needs to keep the momentum or he will soon be worse. For example, 28.c5?! ♜xd4! and Black takes over the initiative.

28...♝b4

Black could also try 28...♜d6 29.♕xg6!!, which gives him the option of transposing with 29...♝b4 or playing 29...fxg6 when he can fight on a pawn down.

29.♕xg6!!

29... $\mathbb{W}d6$

The only move that tries to fight back. 29...fxg6 30. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 31. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#$ and Black loses a piece no matter how he recaptures.

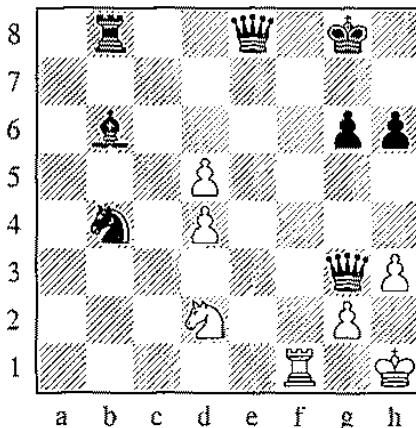
29... $\mathbb{W}g5$ was possibly better, but after 30. $\mathbb{B}b3$ fxg6 31. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#$ $\mathbb{B}xf8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ White's extra pawn is very healthy, though not easy to convert.

30. $\mathbb{W}g3!$

The point. White sacrificed the knight on g6 in order to attack this square and weaken the black king.

30...fxg6 31. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#$ $\mathbb{W}xf8$ 32. $\mathbb{B}f1$

Bringing the rook to the kingside with a gain of time. It does not make sense to take on g6 now, as Black would be allowed to coordinate his forces.

32... $\mathbb{W}e8$ **33.d6!**

It is fabulous that Shabalov had already anticipated the strength of this move five moves ago. White is now threatening to give a devastating check on b3, but also to distract the queen with 34.d7.

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

33... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ is met with 34.d7! devastating the black position. 34... $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 35. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 36. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 37. $\mathbb{B}f6$ and White wins.

34. $\mathbb{B}e1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$

This loses in a fairly straightforward manner. Black could have offered more resistance with 34... $\mathbb{W}f7$, when White wins in the following very long variation. 35. $\mathbb{B}e7$ $\mathbb{W}f6$ (35... $\mathbb{W}f5$ 36. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$) 36. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{W}f1\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 38. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 39. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 40. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 41.d7 $\mathbb{Q}g1\#$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{W}e2\#$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$ $\mathbb{Q}f2\#$ 45.g3 $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$ 46. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 47. $\mathbb{B}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ (47... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 48. $\mathbb{B}b6$) 48. $\mathbb{B}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ with full control.

35. $\mathbb{B}b3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 36. $\mathbb{B}e5$

White is two pawns up. Everything is decided.

36... $\mathbb{W}f7$ 37. $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 38. $\mathbb{B}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 40. $\mathbb{B}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 41.d5! $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 42. $\mathbb{B}c6$ $\mathbb{B}b1\#$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{B}e1$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ g5 45. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 46. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{B}d1$ 47. $\mathbb{B}c5$ $\mathbb{B}g1$ 48. $\mathbb{B}c8$ $\mathbb{B}xg2$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{B}d2$ 50. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{B}xd5$ 51. $\mathbb{Q}f7$

1-0

46 Evgeny Miroshnichenko – Nidat Mamedov

Cappelle la Grande 2007

This exercise is about two themes more than anything, momentum and exploiting the weakness of one colour of squares, here the dark ones. In the game Black's play was too formulaic and he gained very little compensation for his piece, but it did not have to be that way.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xf2?$

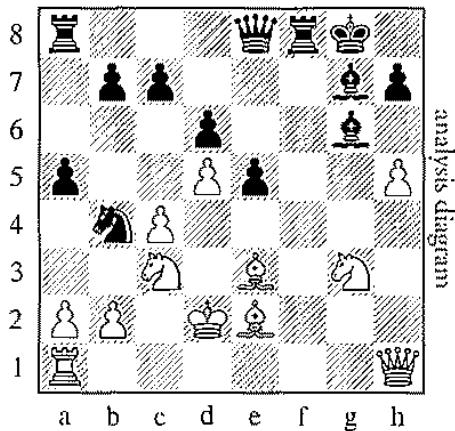
This move is beyond discussion as Black would otherwise lose a piece without any counterplay at all.

20. $\mathbb{Q}xf2?$

Actually this exercise is a bit of a con, as I am imagining that more or less all of the people looking at this exercise will think that this

recapture is forced and therefore will at the most find the brilliant options for Black on the next move. Actually this is far from being the case.

Far stronger is the exchange sacrifice: 20. $\mathbb{W}g1!!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xh1$

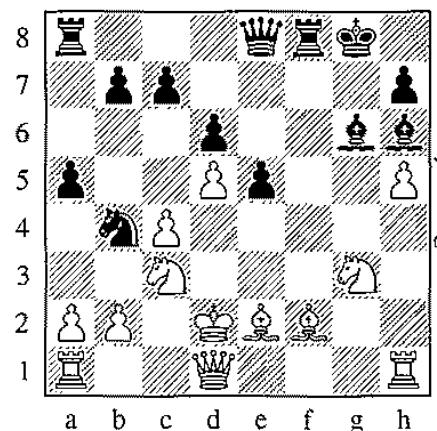


Where the initiative passes to White. He has resources such as a3, h6, $\mathbb{E}g1$, $\mathbb{Q}ge4$ and $\mathbb{Q}f5$. If you want to be certain you can spend a bit of time analysing the position, but to me it is apparent that White has too many options, which is of course primarily because of his main threat, $hxg6$. I am not too concerned with whether the position is winning or just greatly favourable. I am concerned with the underlying strategic reasons for this being the best move. And it is all about momentum. After the exchange sacrifice Black has no more active options and White has quite a number of tempting continuations, as said.

20... $\mathbb{E}xf2?$

This is too automatic and deserves harsh criticism, as it is not only a weak move, it is also a move that clearly cannot work. I assume that both captures were played rather speedily, which is an indication that neither of the players had a great feeling for the momentum. In attacking chess, time is often more important than material, and this is also the case here.

20... $\mathbb{Q}h6!!$



analysis diagram

This was the only alternative that needed to be investigated. There are not really any choices on the next few moves.

21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 23. $\mathbb{E}f1$

Otherwise mate-in-one could be annoying.

23... $\mathbb{W}g7$

Still creating threats. As compensation for the piece Black has managed to get the white king into the wild.

24. $\mathbb{E}f3!$

The only defensive idea that deserves any credit. White is trying to build a shelter for his king on the kingside, as he will not manage to escape to the queenside.

24. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$ obviously stinks, as after 24... $\mathbb{E}xf8$ Black has managed to exchange his inactive rook for White's active rook. The most direct winning line goes 25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c2\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ e4! 27. $\mathbb{Q}cxe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$. Now taking the rook is sufficient, but 28... $\mathbb{W}e5!$ looks even stronger, with a devastating attack.

24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ 25. $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}d3\#$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ decides.

24... $\mathbb{Q}c2\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ e4!

This is a very important and energetic move. White constantly has to be put under a lot of pressure, or he will get the chance to consolidate his position and make something out of his material advantage.

26. $hxg6!$

The best defensive move for tactical reasons. 26. $\mathbb{Q}gxe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ loses on points, based on 27... $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xa1$ $\mathbb{W}d4\#$ and the

extra exchange will be enough to win the game.

26...exf3 27.♕xc2 ♕d4† 28.♔e1

We could stop here. Black will win back his piece and continue to have the initiative in a dynamically complex position, where White's king is far more exposed. As far as our decision on move 20 is concerned, it has been clear for a long time that the game was bad and this line very promising. It is still nice to come to a final conclusion, so I will insert a few more moves, the best ones, I think.

28...♗g1† 29.♔d2 ♗xg3! 30.gxh7† ♔h8
31.♔f1 ♕ae8

I cannot find a satisfactory defence for White and assume that Black will win the game, though I still think the position is complicated enough to utter this with the disclaimer that because the position is so complicated, it is not impossible that improvements can be found over my analysis.

21.hxg6 ♕xg6 22.♕ce4

...1–0 (36 moves)

47

Sune Berg Hansen – Jacob Aagaard

Danish Championship, Aalborg 2006

This position arose in my game against the only grandmaster to participate in my last ever Danish Championship. [Note to the second edition: I thought it would be my last, but I have now reDanishified myself.] It was played under a new system invented by grandmaster Curt Hansen, who however was smart enough not to take part, called the gladiator system. It meant that all draws would lead to immediate play-offs with ever-decreasing time controls. At the end of each day, only full points were counted. As the tiebreak they used the number of games won in the first game of the day. I

lost my first game fair and square and drew my two next games, but lost the play-offs. After 3 rounds I was dead last with 0 points. Then came this game, which was drawn and later I won the rapid game. I won the next four games normally and in the last round could have won the tournament, had I not missed two pawns hanging in the blitz game. After losing this I was sixth instead! For some reason I was the only one who liked the system, maybe because I had 5 games decided without play-offs?

I remember that I showed this game to two fellow IM's, explaining that my last move, 20...♗b7-c8, was a very good move, because it made it impossible for White to get his knight to the kingside. Both Sune and I had of course calculated the sacrifice on h7 for a long time, but neither of us could see any use in it. Later in the evening I ran into a 2300 spectator, who had followed the game online. He said the sacrifice was winning, I said I found it hard to believe. "Fritz," he said, and then started to explain that players like Sune and I should be able to work something like this out... This shows the gap we are working with when we try to explain to people how difficult chess really is and that it does not matter what the computer says, it is not easy. I guess it is a lost cause, when even someone like this guy, who once beat Timman, cannot tell the difference between something he can understand and something he can find.

After 21.♕h3? g6 the game was unclear and eventually drawn after a lot of complications.

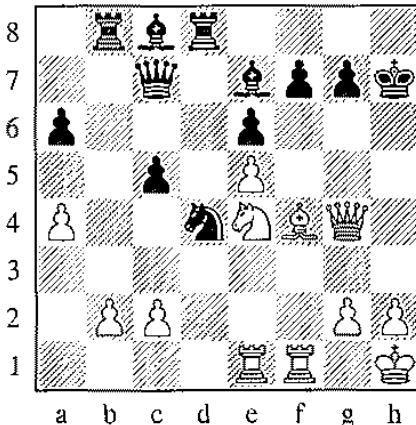
21.♕xh7†!

This is a winning sacrifice, but only because after:

21...♔xh7

White has the beautiful move:

22.♕e4!!



Making full use of the c4-square, and that in a position where the black kingside has been weakened as well! The bishop on c8 is worthless and Black is considering whether he should have studied the principles of revolution-evolution a bit more deeply. For example:

22... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 24. $exf6$ $\mathbb{W}b7$
25. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ $\mathbb{W}xb8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}xf5\#!$

Black is mated, though luckily he wasn't.

48

Li Shilong – Alexander Moiseenko

Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2007

This position is more or less as sharp as you can get them.

16... $\mathbb{Q}h5?$

A feeble attempt to protect g7. It is a very strange mistake from a player of Moiseenko's class. The correct plan was to block the white attack with a piece sacrifice in order to gain time to get the pieces out and create counterplay on the queenside.

16... $\mathbb{Q}fg4!$

This was the only move.

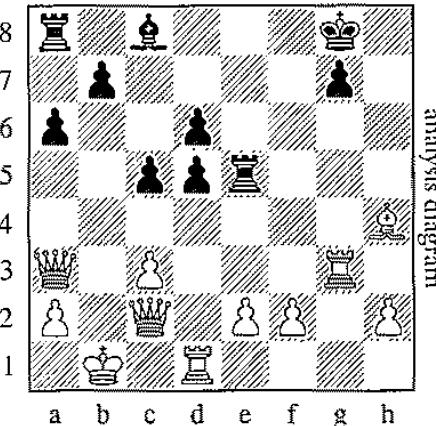
17. $\mathbb{Q}h3$

Black should abandon the knight and play:

17... $\mathbb{Q}d7!!$

Fighting for the initiative. The lines with

17... $fxe6?$ seem to lose by force, but only in one way. 18. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ (18... $b5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ is a positional disaster for Black, even if it does not lose immediately) 19. $\mathbb{E}xg4$ $exd5$ 20. $\mathbb{E}g3$ $\mathbb{W}a3\#$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{E}e5$ The most subtle defence. Black wants to play ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and ... $\mathbb{E}f8-f7$ quickly, so he can defend the kingside. However, White wins by using the momentum and sacrificing the queen!



22. $\mathbb{E}dg1!!$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{E}xf5$ 24. $\mathbb{E}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 25. $\mathbb{E}7g3$ Surprisingly there is nothing Black can do to avoid being mated. The main threat is $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$, but White has several winning moves. It is interesting that Deep Fritz 10 did not solve this problem in the time I allotted to it, but had to have human assistance.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 19. $\mathbb{W}d2$

19. $\mathbb{W}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 20. $\mathbb{W}a1$ is possible. The position after 20... $\mathbb{Q}b3?$ is peculiar. 21. $a4?$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ is very unclear, and 21. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{W}a3\#$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ only gives a perpetual check in light of the threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}d2$ mate!

19... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 20. $\mathbb{W}d3$

It seems that White has managed to defend all bases. Black has to use a move to prepare ... $\mathbb{W}a3\#$, but White then has $\mathbb{E}d2$. However, a surprising solution exists.

20... $\mathbb{Q}b3!$ 21. $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!!$

Black is not out to reduce his material minus, but to attack the king. As the queen is a prime defender it is kindly asked to leave.

22. $\mathbb{W}g3 \mathbb{Q}c4$

Black reinstates his threat of ... $\mathbb{W}a3\#$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}xd2\#$. White only has 23. $\mathbb{W}d3!$ with a repetition of moves.

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe6?!$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf6 \mathbb{Q}f5$ 18. $\mathbb{E}xg7\# \mathbb{Q}f8$ is sort of playable for Black, but not the road you want to go down if you can avoid it. The simple 19. $\mathbb{W}b2$ should give White a clear advantage.

17. $\mathbb{E}g5!$

White has won an important tempo and is now laughing.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xe6$

Black's position is beyond repair.

After 17... $fxe6$ 18. $\mathbb{E}xb5$ b5 19. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $exd5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xc8 \mathbb{Q}axc8$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ they are all there, ready to inflict great damage.

18. $\mathbb{E}xh5$ g6 19. $dxe6!$

Simplest.

19... $\mathbb{E}xe6$

Giving up material while being attacked is usually a bad sign. But after 19... $gxh5$ 20. $exf7\# \mathbb{Q}xf7$ (20... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 21. $\mathbb{W}g6\# \mathbb{Q}f8$ does not work on account of 22. $\mathbb{Q}f6!$, attacking and defending at the same time) 21. $f4!$ White will invade with the queen with deadly effect.

20. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $gxh5$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $fxe6$ 22. $f4$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}e7!$

Keeping the king stuck in the land of uncertainty.

23... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 24. $\mathbb{E}g1\# \mathbb{Q}f7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}h7\# \mathbb{Q}e8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}g8\# \mathbb{Q}d7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d8\#$

1-0

49

Alexander Goldin – Alexander Stripunsky

US Championship, San Diego 2004

Black has given up the exchange in the hope that his very active pieces pointing at the white king will have a devastating effect. To be able to do so he will have to target g2 or h2 very quickly in the most dynamic way.

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

This is the surprising solution to this position. The game continued 24... $\mathbb{Q}e5?!$ 25. $\mathbb{W}g3$ with colossal complications, eventually leading to White capitulating on move 44, though he appears to be out of danger at this point.

25. $\mathbb{W}xd7$

The best defence was 25. $\mathbb{Q}b1 \mathbb{Q}df6$ 26. $\mathbb{W}h3$, when after 26... $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 27. $gxh3$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ White will lose something, as well as have a shattered position. But then he was an exchange up to start with. The drawing chances are slim, but they are nonetheless present.

The immediate 25. $\mathbb{W}h3$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 26. $gxh3$ is met with 26... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ leaving White with as much chance of finding joy as his h2-pawn has of promoting. In other words, it is up to Black to make it happen...

25... $\mathbb{Q}xg2!!$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

This is the only move that accomplishes White's two big defensive needs at once, preventing ... $\mathbb{Q}f3$ and closing the long diagonal from a7 to g1, making it possible to push the f-pawn in a moment or two.

26. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ leads straight to mate.

26... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 27. $f3$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

White has survived the first wave of the attack without even giving up his extra piece, but after the simple move:

28...♝b6

The strongest, though blunter moves are also good. White has no good defence against the idea of ...♝d8. For example:

29.♛b7 ♜h3† 30.♚e1 ♛xd4 31.♝xd4 ♛e3†

32.♝e2 ♛xf1

And Black wins.

50 Sareh Tajik – Tatiane Cristina Coelho

Novokuznetsk 2008

Sometimes in games between unknown and even unrated players, you find extra options that can seem almost like an extra dimension. At times they probably were to the players, who had no idea what rich ideas existed in their position. This is one such example, taken from a game in the 10th Russian University Championship for women.

Let's first take a close look at the game.

13.♝xe6! fxe6 14.♛xe6† ♜h8

14...♝f7? 15.♝c4 and wins.

15.♛h3?

This natural-looking move wins easily in practice. Instead 15.♝b5?? would be a complete blunder. After 15...♝c5! Black wins.

15...h6? 16.♝xh6

16.♛f5 is simpler.

16...♝g8

16...♝h4!!

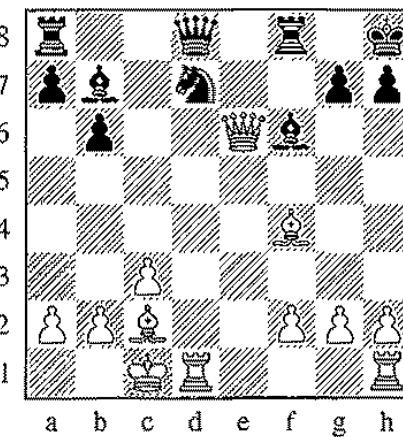
17.♝c4† ♘f7 18.♝xf7† ♜f8 19.♝xd7 ♜g5†
20.♝b1 ♜e4† 21.♝a1 ♛f6 22.♝xg5
1–0

A closer look will reveal that after 15...♝h4!! Black can answer the obvious 16.♝g3 with 16...♛g5† 17.♝b1 ♜e5!: White's advantage

would have been less overwhelming than she would have liked it to be.

The real key to the position was to return to evolution mode.

15.♝c2!!



Black has to deal with two threats, which makes her life far more difficult. After 15...♝c8 White has 16.♛e4!, with a winning argument. Therefore Black has to look for counterplay.

15...♝g5!

Forcing White to look at the following forced line.

16.♝xd7! ♜xf4† 17.♝b1 ♛g5

A very important point is that after 17...♛c8 Black will not be able to defend h7. 18.♛h3 ♜h6 19.♛d3 g6 20.♝xh7†!, mating.

White has to study this position closely to find the winning endgame. It appears after:

**18.♛h3! ♜h6 19.♝xh6 ♜xh6 20.♝xb7 ♜xf2
21.♝e4 ♜d8 22.♝xa7 g6 23.♝a8!**

The black counterplay is an complete illusion. The two pawns will decide after something like ♜f3, ♜e1-e2 and the second rank is under control.

Index of full Games and Fragments

Bring it on – an introduction

- W. Nicklich – R. Junge
J. Hector – E. Mortensen
T. Hillarp-Persson – H. Grooten

Bring all your Toys to the Nursery Party

- T. Karolyi – J. Hector
M. Najdorf – Gliksberg
A. Yusupov – V. Ivanchuk
G. Kasparov – V. Kramnik
P. Klaic – D. Lovric
V. Ivanchuk – P. Leko

Don't lose your Breath

- E. Canal – E. Paoli
P. Leko – V. Topalov
D. Mieles Palau – A. Santos Flores
J. Aagaard – Sø.B. Hansen
G. Kasparov – B. Gelfand
J. Hector – E. Mortensen
P. Eljanov – A. Onischuk
J. Aagaard – D. Bogdanov
G. Kasparov – V. Anand

Add some Colour to your Play

- D. Bronstein – S. Lputian
S. Tartakower – R. Broadbent
B. Belotti – E. Solozhenkin
M. Carlsen – V. Ivanchuk
L. Van Wely – J. Timman
M. Perunovic – B. Tadic
M. Ulibin – P. Cramling
I. Dominguez – A. Yusupov

Size Matters!

- M. Golubev – V. Podinic
J. Aagaard – B. Lindberg
T. Wippermann – A. Weiss
M. Euwe – P. Keres
P.B. Petersen – J. Aagaard
A. Shirov – G. Kasparov
R. Pogorelov – C. Matamoros Franco
K. Sasikiran – M. Krasenkow

Hit 'em where it hurts

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----|
| 11 | G. Milos – N. Murshed | 139 |
| 16 | J.F. Cubas – G. Vescovi | 141 |
| 21 | G. Kasparov – N. Short | 141 |
| | J. Pachow – G. Soulidis | 142 |
| | A. Goldin – I. Efimov | 143 |
| 29 | A. Greenfeld – E. Postny | 145 |
| 33 | B. Sahl – N.V. Pedersen | 150 |
| 37 | V. Neverov – Z. Bratanov | 153 |
| 45 | | |
| 46 | Chewing on Granite | |
| 51 | M. Heider – M. Herbold | 159 |
| | Z. Kathona – E. Gulbis | 161 |
| | L. Ortega – I. Khenkin | 163 |
| 59 | S. Ivanov – V. Mikhalevski | 167 |
| 62 | | |
| 66 | Evolution/Revolution | |
| 70 | V. Anand – M. Adams | 175 |
| 73 | R. Edouard – I.C. Chirila | 177 |
| 76 | E. Agrest – K. Kulaots | 179 |
| 79 | G. Lisitsin – G.M. Kasparian | 183 |
| 82 | Y. Yakovich – A. Naiditsch | 185 |
| 86 | J. Hector – S. Lundholm | 187 |
| | G. Kasparov – U. Andersson | 189 |

15 Great Attacking Games

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----|
| 91 | S. Klimov – B. Lindberg | 197 |
| 92 | M. Krasenkow – A. Szieberth | 200 |
| 95 | T. Radjabov – S. Karjakin | 205 |
| 97 | Y. Vovk – B. Esen | 209 |
| 99 | K. Landa – F. Manca | 215 |
| 102 | V. Topalov – V. Kramnik | 221 |
| 103 | M. Carlsen – V. Anand | 224 |
| 106 | S. Brenjo – I. Miladinovic | 228 |
| | E. Berg – E. Bareev | 233 |
| 112 | N. Yaremko – D. Recuero Guerra | 239 |
| 117 | A. Wohl – A. Gipslis | 243 |
| 121 | L. Dominguez – V. Ivanchuk | 247 |
| 124 | A. Shirov – D. Mozetic | 257 |
| 127 | V. Malinin – D. Zagorskis | 262 |
| 127 | V. Akopian – M. Illescas Cordoba | 267 |
| 133 | | |

ATTACKING Manual 1

British Champion Jacob Aagaard, explains the rules of attack (the exploitation of a dynamic advantage) in an accessible and entertaining style. This groundbreaking work is well balanced between easily understandable examples, exercises and deep analysis. Five years in the making, this book will surely not disappoint. Volume I deals with bringing all the pieces into the action, momentum, colour schemes, strongest and weakest points, evolution/revolution.

This is the first thorough examination of the nature of dynamics in chess, and the principles explained in this book are relevant in every chess game played. In lively no-nonsense language, Aagaard explains how the best players in the world attack.

Jacob Aagaard from Glasgow, Scotland, is one of the foremost chess writers of his generation and a trainer of successful pupils of all ages, from amateurs to grandmasters. In his spare time he won the 2007 British Championship and gained the grandmaster title.

Revised & Expanded Edition



€29.99 \$34.95

ISBN 978-9-197600-40-8



QUALITY CHESS

www.qualitychessbooks.com