Jan Pinski

Italian game and Evans gambit



EVERYMAN CHESS

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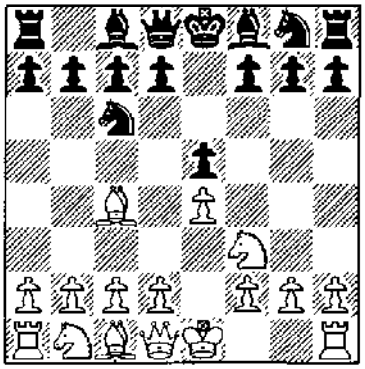
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1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4

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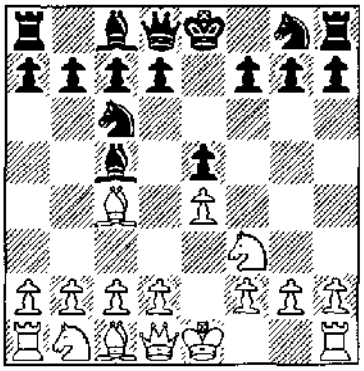
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CHAPTER ONE



Introduction and the Italian Four Knights

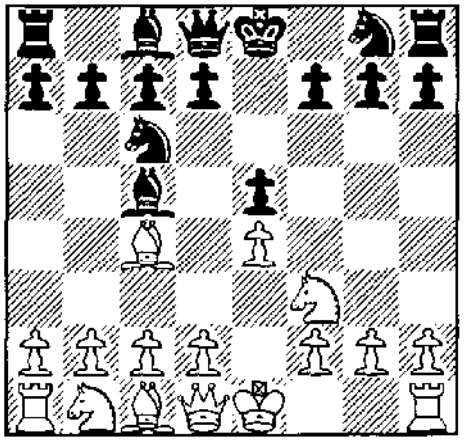
I will assume that the reader has already made up his own mind on two of the most common opening moves in the last 500 years of chess history, and jump straight into the third move with...

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4

Grandmaster Paul Keres wrote about this move: 'too calm to give White advantage.' This can, of course, be discussed, but more importantly we should remember that the opening is not played in order to gain an advantage, but in order build the foundation for a later (or occasionally immediate) victory. A theoretical plus is just one of many ways to gain a practical advantage in a game of chess. Another is familiarity with the different typical positions. Yet another is simply knowing the essential theory, or playing a line with which your opponent is unfamiliar.

Now let us not get lost in talk, and instead allow Black to execute his move. Now what about 3...♗c5 here? Does it not have the same defects as 3 ♗c4 - ? Instead 3...♘f6 looks optically better, as it is attacking the pawn on e4; but surely it is more a matter of taste than of beauty contests at such an early stage in the game. 3...♘f6 would take us into the past and my previous book on the Two Knights Defence, while 3...♗c5 leads to the future and the following pages on the Italian Game, one of the oldest chess openings.

3...♗c5



In the diagram position White has many ideas and possibilities, but only two give interesting play: 4 c3 with all the main lines of the Italian Game, and the

19th century favourite 4 b4, the Evans Gambit.

In this chapter we shall look at White's less ambitious option, the Four Knights Italian Game.

Game 1

N.Short-A.Aleksandrov

Izmir 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 ♘c3

In this position White has also tried some other moves:

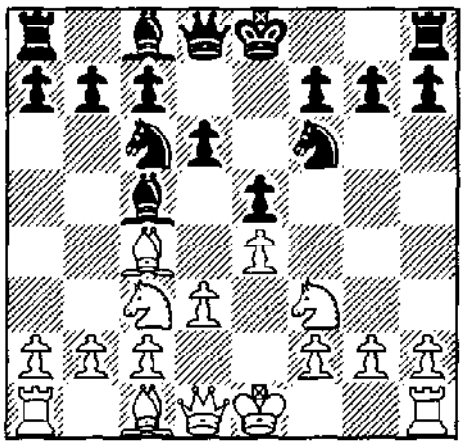
The 4 d4? gambit was refuted a long time ago with 4...♗xd4! 5 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 6 f4 d5 7 exd5 ♕h4+ 8 g3 ♕h3 9 ♗f1 ♕f5 10 ♗d3 e4 and Black was much better, H.Fahrni-R.Spielmann, Baden Baden 1914.

4 0-0 is completely toothless, and Black can do as he pleases. Here we will look at two options:

a) 4...♘f6 can be met with another silly gambit: 5 d4?!, but after this risky move White is likely to have to fight for equality, e.g. 5...♗xd4 6 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 7 f4 d6 8 fxe5 dxe5 9 ♗g5 ♕e7 (if 9...♗e6 10 ♘a3 ♕e7 11 c3 ♗xc4 12 ♘xc4 ♘e6 13 ♗xf6 gxf6 14 ♔h1! with compensation for the pawn) 10 ♘c3 c6 11 ♕d3 ♗e6 12 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 13 ♗xf6 gxf6, and now Black is better because the white knight has difficulties finding its way to f5.

b) 4...d6 5 c3 ♕f6 (5...♗g4 is a sound option given by Paul Keres; play might very well continue 6 d4 exd4 7 ♕b3 ♕d7 8 ♗xf7+ ♕xf7 9 ♕xb7 ♔d7 10 ♕xa8 ♗xf3 11 gxf3 ♘e5 12 ♘d2 ♘xf3+ 13 ♘xf3 ♕xf3 14 ♕d5 ♕g4+ with perpetual check) 6 d3 h6 7 ♗e3 ♘ge7 8 b4 ♗xe3 9 fxe3 0-0 10 ♕e1 ♗e6 11 ♘d4 ♕g6 12 ♘xe6 fxe6 13 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 14 ♕g3 with equality, R.Rabiega-A.Yusupov, German Championship 2001.

4...♘f6 5 d3 d6



In positions like this you can beat even grandmasters. Obviously before this can happen, they will have to die from boredom...

6 ♗g5

6 0-0 is another example of the non-event we have before us, and then:

a) 6...♗g4?! 7 h3 h5? is a distinctively bad line (though 7...♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 and White is slightly better was not the idea) 8 hxg4 hxg4 9 ♘g5 and it is hard for Black to prove compensation for the piece.

b) 6...a6 7 h3 ♘a5 8 a3 ♘xc4 9 dxc4 ♗e6 10 ♕d3 ♘h5 11 ♘d5?! (instead 11 ♖d1 with equality) 11...c6 12 ♘c3 b5 13 cxb5 axb5 14 ♖d1 ♗c4 and Black is slightly better. T.Luther-F.Borkowski, Naleczow 1987.

6...h6 7 ♗xf6

Or 7 ♗h4 ♗g4 8 h3 ♗xf3 9 ♕xf3 ♘d4 10 ♕d1 c6 with equality.

7...♕xf6 8 ♘d5 ♕d8

8...♕g6? is refuted by 9 ♘h4! (this is better then 9 ♕e2 as recommended in

ECO) 9...♕g5 10 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 11 ♘xa8 ♕xh4 12 ♕d2 a6 13 c3 b5 14 ♗d5 ♗b7 15 b4 ♗a7 16 a4 and White wins.

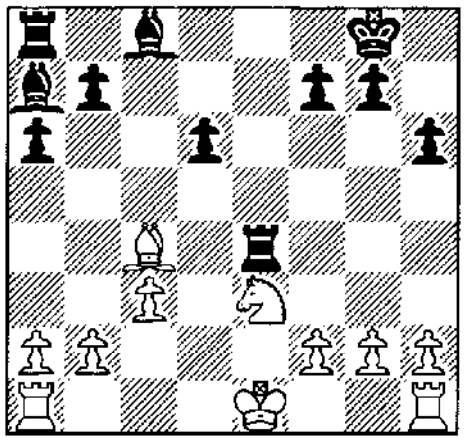
9 c3 a6

Black can easily drift into a worse position here, e.g. 9...♘e7 10 d4 exd4 (or 10...♘xd5 11 dxc5 ♘f4 12 g3 ♘h3 13 cxd6 cxd6 14 ♕a4+ ♔f8 15 ♕b4 and White is slightly better) 11 cxd4 ♗b6 12 ♘xb6 axb6 13 0-0 d5 14 exd5 ♘xd5 15 ♖e1+ ♗e6 16 ♘e5 0-0 17 ♕f3 gives White some plus, A.Horvath-A.Aleksandrov, Izmir 2004.

10 d4 ♗a7

Better perhaps was 10...exd4! 11 cxd4 ♗a7 12 h3 ♘e7 13 0-0 ♘xd5 14 ♗xd5 0-0 15 ♖e1 c6 16 ♗b3 ♖e8 with equality in B.Macieja-M.Adams, Calvia Olympiad 2004.

11 dxe5 ♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 dxe5 13 ♕h5 0-0 14 ♕xe5 ♖e8 15 ♕f4 ♕d6 16 ♕xd6 ♖xe4+ 17 ♘e3 cxd6



According to *ECO* this position is equal.

18 ♗d5!

An unpleasant idea to have to face.

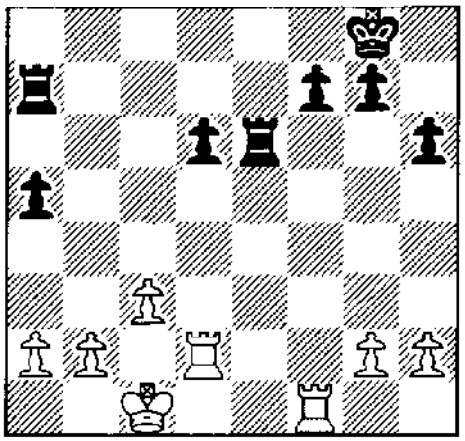
18...♖e5?

Once out of theory Black makes a mistake. Instead 18...♖e7! 19 0-0-0 ♗xe3+ 20 fxe3 ♗g4 21 ♖d4 ♗e6 22 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 would have kept equality.

19 0-0-0!

This is the surprise Black had most likely underestimated. White sacrifices a pawn and now Black has problems completing his development.

19...♗xe3+ 20 fxe3 ♖xe3 21 ♖hf1 ♗e6 22 ♗xb7 ♖a7 23 ♗d5 a5 24 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 25 ♖d2



This ending is probably lost for Black. He has two weaknesses (the d6- and a5-pawns) and no sensible counterplay.

25...a4 26 ♔c2 g5?!

In my opinion this just creates another weakness. The passive 26...♔f8 27 ♖f5 ♔e7 etc. looks slightly better.

27 ♖f5 ♔g7 28 ♖fd5 ♖a6 29 ♔d3!

White's wants to eat the a4-pawn.

29...f6 30 ♔c4 ♖b6 31 ♖a5 ♖e4+ 32 ♔d3 ♖g4 33 ♖f2 ♔g6 34 h3 ♖h4 35 ♖af5 ♖f4 36 ♖5xf4 gxf4 37 ♔e4 ♔g5 38 ♖d2 f5+ 39 ♔f3 ♖c6 40 a3 ♖b6 41 h4+ ♔xh4?

The position is lost and Aleksandrov commits suicide. Basic life functions would have been kept operational with 41...♔g6.

42 ♔xf4 d5 43 ♖d3 1-0

Game 2

B.Larsen-T.Ochsner

Danish Championship, Esbjerg 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 ♘f3 ♘c6 4 ♗c4 ♗c5 5 d3 d6 6 ♗g5

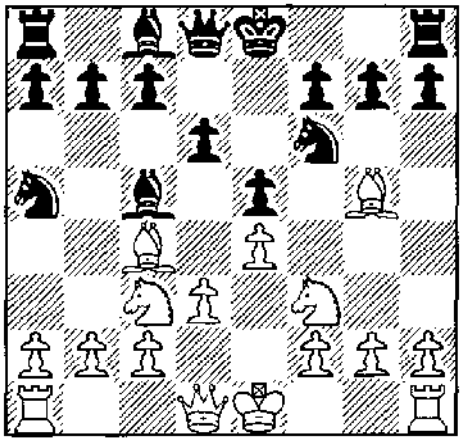
I know, I know, why do we have to look at this boring line once again? Well, although this is all rather harmless and toothless, White still managed to win our main games; and I also want to find space to include a little more theory:

a) 6 ♗e3 ♗b6 (6...♘d4!? gives interesting play, as after 7 ♗xd4 exd4 8 ♘a4 ♗b4+ 9 c3 dxc3 10 bxc3 ♗a5 11 0-0 0-0 Black stands well) 7 ♕d2 ♗e6 8 ♗b5 0-0 9 ♗xc6 bxc6 10 0-0 ♘d7 11 d4 f6 12 h3 ♕e8 with equality.

b) 6 ♘a4 ♗b6 7 c3 ♗e6 8 ♗b5 0-0 9 ♗xc6 bxc6 10 ♗g5 ♕e7 11 0-0 h6 12 ♗h4 ♗c8!. Black shrewdly avoids problems on the h4-e8 diagonal. Now after 13 h3 ♕e6 he had equality in Y.Rantanen-Y.Razuvaev, Helsinki 1984.

c) 6 h3 ♗e6 7 ♘d5 h6 with equality.

6...♘a5



This is also good for Black. And more importantly, it changes the nature of the position, so it becomes a little more interesting.

7 ♗b3

Another practical example: 7 ♘d5 ♘xc4 8 dxc4 c6 9 ♘xf6+ gxf6 10 ♗e3 ♕b6 11 ♕d2 ♗e6 (if 11...♗xe3 12 fxe3 ♕xb2 13 0-0 with compensation) 12 0-0-0 0-0-0 with unclear play, V.Korchnoi-D.Bronstein, USSR Championship 1952.

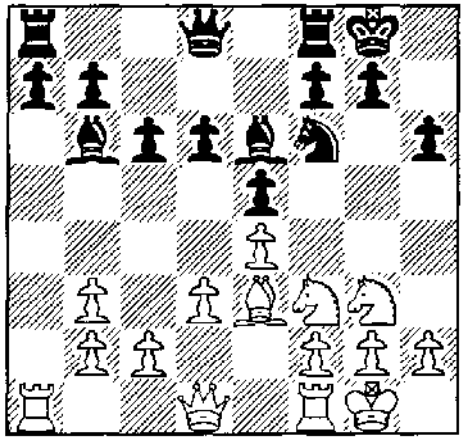
7...c6 8 0-0

White can also strike immediately in the centre with 8 d4. Then after 8...♘xb3 9 axb3 exd4 10 ♘xd4 h6 11 ♗h4 0-0 12 0-0 g5 13 ♗g3 ♖e8 14 ♖e1 d5 15 e5 ♘e4 16 ♕d3, as in A.Morozevich-Kir.Georgiev, Tilburg 1994, Black should play 16...♘xg3! 17 hxg3 ♕c7 with the advantage, instead of 16...♗xd4?! 17 ♕xd4 ♗f5 18 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 19 ♖xa7 ♖xa7 20 ♕xa7 ♗xc2 21 ♕xb7 when it would be White who is better.

8...0-0 9 ♘e2 ♘xb3

Or 9...♗g4 10 ♘g3 h6 11 ♗e3 with equality.

10 axb3 h6 11 ♗e3 ♗b6 12 ♘g3 ♗e6



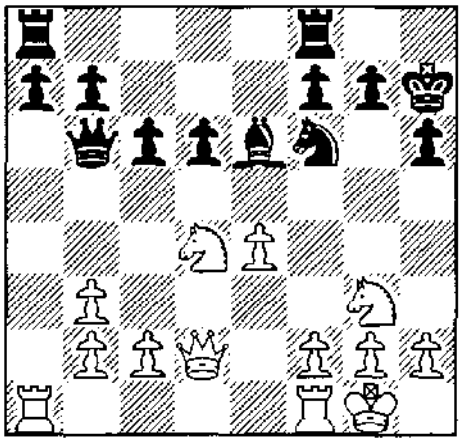
Black is slowly getting into trouble against his legendary opponent. Here

12...♖e8! guaranteed equality, thanks to the pressure against the e4-pawn.

13 ♕d2 ♔h7?!

Black is apparently afraid of a sacrifice on h6, but I cannot see how that would ever work. Black can always play ...♘g4 in the end. Therefore 13...♖e8!? 14 ♗xb6 ♕xb6 15 d4 ♗g4 16 dxe5 dxe5 17 ♕c3 ♗xf3 18 ♕xf3 ♕b4 with equality was better.

14 ♗xb6 ♕xb6 15 d4 exd4 16 ♘xd4



16...♖fe8?!

Black is apparently too complacent, while it was time to do something to stay in the game; e.g. 16...d5!? 17 ♕d3 ♔h8 18 e5 ♘d7 19 f4 f6! with unclear play.

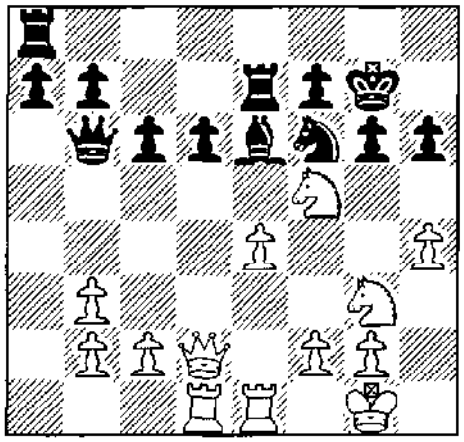
17 ♖fe1 g6?

This completely unnecessarily creates a weakness. 17...d5 was better, when White can reply 18 e5 ♘d7 19 ♕f4 with the initiative.

18 ♖ad1 ♔g7 19 h4!

A typical move, using the g-pawn as a hook.

19...♖e7 20 ♘df5+!



20...♗xf5

The tactical justification for the knight sacrifice was 20...gxf5? 21 exf5 ♕c5 22 b4 ♕c4 23 fxe6 ♖xe6 24 ♘f5+ ♔g8 25 b3 ♕b5 26 ♕f4 and White wins.

21 exf5 ♖ae8 22 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 23 fxg6 fxg6 24 h5! ♘xh5 25 ♕c3+ ♔h7 26 ♘xh5 gxh5 27 ♖xd6 ♕b5 28 ♖xh6+ ♔xh6 29 ♕f6+ ♔h7 30 ♕xe7+ ♔g6 31 ♕e3

In the end material superiority decides.

31...♕a5 32 ♔h2 ♕a1 33 ♕e6+ ♔g7 34 ♕d7+ ♔f8 35 ♕c8+ ♔e7 36 ♕xb7+ ♔d6 37 ♕b4+ ♔d5 38 ♕c4+ ♔d6 39 ♕d4+ ♔c7 40 b4 ♔b7 41 c4 ♕c1 42 b5 cxb5 43 ♕d7+ ♔b6 44 ♕xb5+ ♔c7 45 ♕c5+ ♔b7 46 b4 ♕f4+ 47 g3 ♕g4 48 b5 ♕e2 49 ♕d5+ ♔b8 50 ♔g2 ♕e8 51 ♕d3 ♔c7 52 ♕e3 ♕a8+ 53 f3 a6 54 bxa6 1-0

Summary

We have seen in the notes to the two games above that the Italian Four Knights is theoretically completely harmless. At the same time we have also seen that stronger players can outplay their opponents by simple means, if these opponents have little to show on the day. But then we can lose against the London System as well. To battle these lines it is more important to be in good form, than to know theoretical ideas and moves.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 *(D)* **4 ♘c3** *(D)*

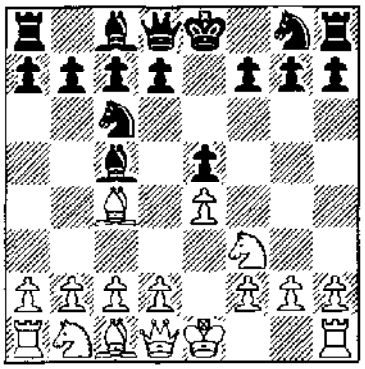
4 d4 – see *Game 1*

4 0-0 – see *Game 1*

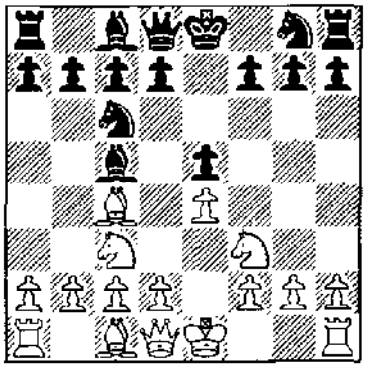
4...♘f6 5 d3 d6 6 ♗g5 *(D)*

6...h6 – *Game 1*

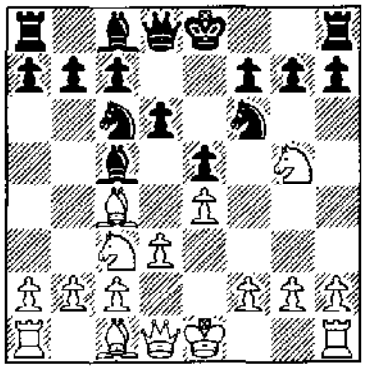
6...♘a5 – *Game 2*



3...♗c5

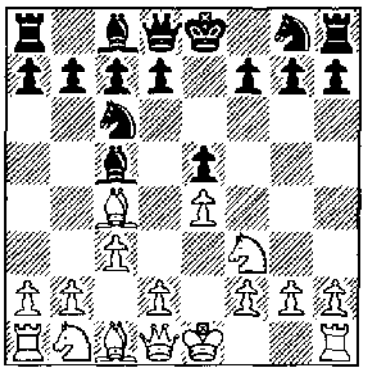


4 ♘c3



6 ♗g5

CHAPTER TWO



First Steps in the Italian Game

In this chapter we will take a first glance at the position after **1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3**

This is the most interesting and strongest move; White is building up to enforce 5 d4, which will give him the superiority in the centre. This is a strategically more aggressive strategy than the symmetry of the previous chapter, and the source from which the need for real opening theory on the Italian Game stems.

Black can meet 4 c3 is a variety of ways, where 4...♘f6 is the strongest. According to current theory Black can also equalise with 4...♕e7, but I think this is less than obviously certain. Actually, in the games below, I will go as far as to claim an advantage for White in all lines.

In this chapter we shall also have a quick look at a line which, in grandmaster play, achieves only equality, but is successful lower down. After 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 e5 many games have continued with moves other than the absolutely essential 6...d5!, which equalises at once.

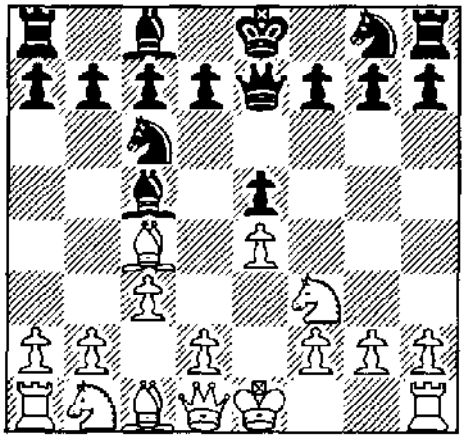
But first let us examine 4...♕e7.

Game 3

A.Alekhine-S.Tarrasch

Mannheim 1914

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♕e7



According to standard theory this move leads to equality. In my opinion White is at least slightly better. Black has also tried some alternative methods of solving his opening problems at this early stage, other than the sane development of his knight. Though they have little theo-

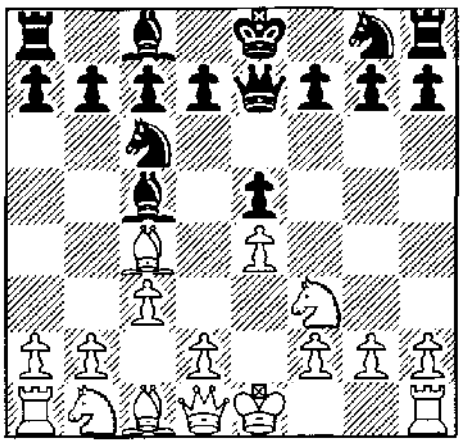
retical importance, it would be wrong not to have a glance at them.

a) 4...♕f6?! was once a frequent visitor to international tournaments, but these days we know that White can more or less refute it brutally with 5 d4! ♗b6 (if 5...exd4?! 6 e5 ♕g6 7 cxd4 ♗b4+ 8 ♘c3 and White is much better as the g2-pawn is untouchable, i.e. 8...♕xg2? 9 ♖g1 ♕h3 10 ♗xf7+! and Black is in real trouble) 6 0-0 h6 7 a4 a6 8 dxe5 ♘xe5 9 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 10 ♕f3 ♘f6 11 a5 ♗a7 12 ♖e1 and White has a clear advantage according to Max Euwe.

b) 4...f5?! looks very dubious. White surely has a lot of sound options here, but instead of looking for an refutation, I will recommend the simple 5 d3, when play can continue 5...♘f6 6 b4 ♗b6 7 a4 a6 (7...fxe4? 8 dxe4 ♘xe4 9 0-0 a5 10 ♕d5 ♘d6 11 ♘xe5 with a terrible attack) 8 0-0 d6 9 ♘bd2 and White is much better, as Black has problems with his king.

c) 4...d6 5 d4 exd4 has been played once in a while as well. Now after 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ 7 ♘c3 ♗g4 8 0-0 ♕d7 9 d5 ♘d8 10 h3 ♗h5 11 ♕d4 ♗xc3 12 ♕xc3 White is slightly better according to *ECO*.

5 d4



5...♗b6

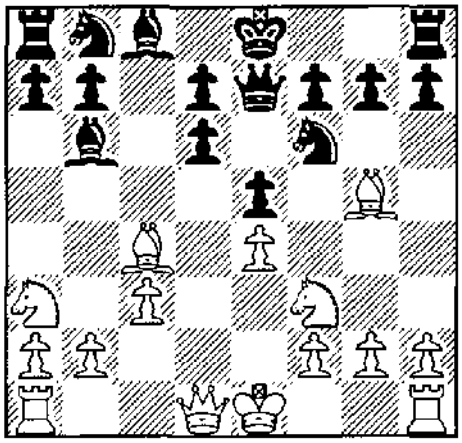
Black cannot give up the centre with 5...exd4?!. Strategically it is a catastrophe, and it does not work out tactically either, after the energetic 6 0-0! when we should look at the following lines:

a) 6...dxc3 7 ♘xc3 d6 8 ♘d5 ♕d8 9 b4! ♗xb4 10 ♘xb4 ♘xb4 11 ♕b3 and White is much better.

b) 6...♘e5 7 cxd4 ♘xc4 (or 7...♘xf3+ 8 gxf3 ♗b6 9 ♘c3 c6 10 ♖e1 with a clear advantage) 8 ♕c2! ♗b6 9 ♕xc4 d6 10 ♘c3 and White is better.

6 0-0

6 ♗g5!? is quite a tricky move, which should probably be met with the anti-structural 6...f6!?. I have doubts about Black's prospects after 6...♘f6, when I would be quite tempted to go for the following pawn sacrifice, in order to get supreme control over the light squares in the centre: 7 d5 ♘d8 8 d6 cxd6 (Black cannot stand the exchange of queens, as his pawn structure is a total ruin after 8...♕xd6?! 9 ♕xd6 cxd6 10 ♗xf6 gxf6, when 11 ♘h4 d5 12 ♗xd5 gives White a clear advantage) 9 ♘a3



and here we should probably look at the two lines separately:

a) 9...a6 10 ♗d5 ♘e6 11 ♘c4 ♗c7 12 ♘e3 and White is just much better.

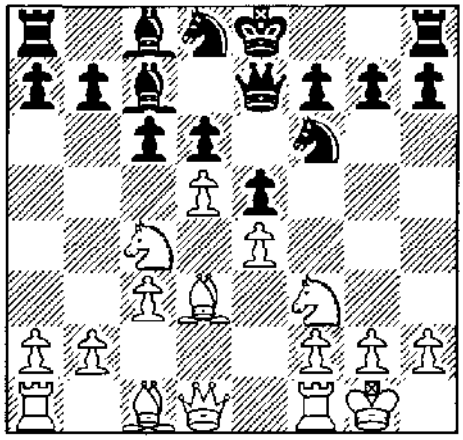
b) 9...♗xf2+ 10 ♔e2! d5 (I think this might be forced; after 10...♗c5 11 ♘h4 ♘c6 12 ♘f5 ♕f8 13 ♗xf6 gxf6 14 b4 ♘f4+ 15 ♔f3 White is much better) 11 ♕xd5 ♘xd5 12 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 13 ♗xd5 ♗c5 14 b4 ♗d6 15 ♘c4 f6 16 ♘e3 and White has very good compensation for the pawn.

6...d6

As I said, I think this position is slightly better for White.

7 a4

This is not too testing of course. Instead I will here risk my neck and dubious reputation on the underestimated 7 d5!, claiming it will guarantee White a small advantage after 7...♘d8 8 ♗d3 ♘f6 9 ♘bd2 c6 (Black should of course avoid 9...♘h5? 10 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 when 11 ♘c4 wins) 10 ♘c4 ♗c7



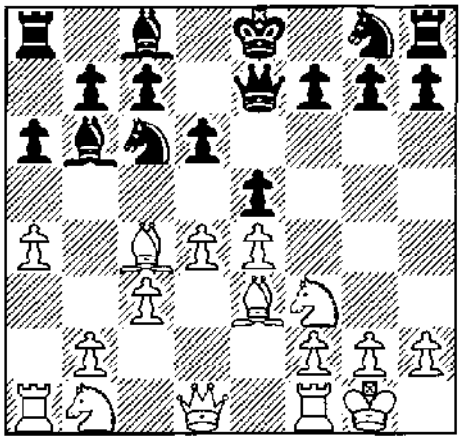
and now White has two interesting possibilities to consider:

a) 11 ♗c2!? h6 12 ♘e3 0-0 13 h3 cxd5 14 exd5 ♘h7 15 ♘f5 ♕f6 16 ♕d3 ♗xf5 17 ♕xf5 ♕xf5 18 ♗xf5 g6 19 ♗c2 ♔g7 20 ♘h2 f5 21 ♖d1 ♘f6 22 ♘f1 ♘f7 23 c4 and White was slightly better in A.Tzermiadianos-M.Lazic, Kavala 1996.

b) 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 b3 ♗e6 13 ♕e2 0-0 14 ♗a3 and White is slightly better, A.Becker-C.Ahues, Munich Olympiad 1936.

So I have some confidence that White is seriously fighting for an advantage here, or let us say that Black is struggling to equalise, and will probably have to come up with something else on move 9, but I am not really aware of what it would be.

7...a6 8 ♗e3



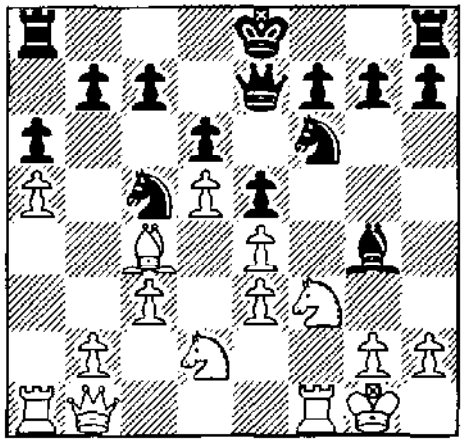
8...♗g4?!

I do not see a great future for the bishop on g4. Instead I would recommend leaving the square vacant for the knight. After 8...♘f6 9 ♘bd2 ♘g4 10 ♕e2 ♘xe3 11 fxe3 0-0 12 ♖f2 the position is more or less equal.

9 d5 ♘b8 10 a5 ♗xe3 11 fxe3 ♘f6 12 ♘bd2 ♘bd7 13 ♕e1 ♘c5 14 ♕b1!

White is not ashamed of regretting the placement of the queen, as Black's knight will shortly be driven back to the stables with a stick. After something stupid like 14 ♕g3?! h5! Black is better because of the weakness of the e4-pawn. One line goes 15 ♘g5 h4 16 ♕f2 h3 17 g3 ♖h5 18

b4 ♖xg5 19 bxc5 dxc5 and Black is clearly better.



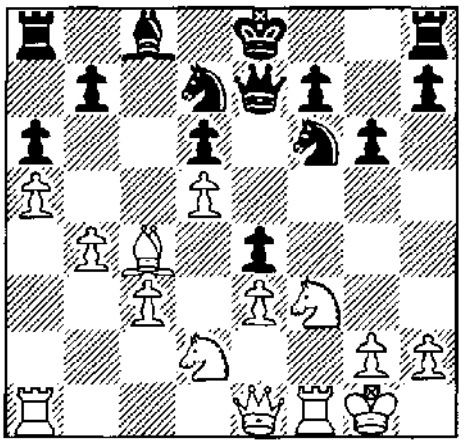
14...♗c8?!

Black obviously has trouble getting something useful out of his bishop. This total retreat, however, is not the best way to deal with the issue. After the more respectful 14...0-0 it is true that 15 b4 ♘cd7 16 ♗d3 ♖fe8 17 c4 gives White better play, but Black can still hold the position.

15 b4 ♘cd7 16 ♘h4! g6

This weakness is hard to avoid. After 16...♘g4 17 ♘f5 ♕g5 18 ♘f3 White is better.

17 ♕e1 c6 18 ♘hf3 cxd5 19 exd5 e4



20 ♘g5!?

The knight begins a long journey, eventually ending up at d4. Though there is nothing wrong with this, it seems quite logical also to consider going there directly. After 20 ♘d4 ♘e5 21 ♖f4! White is much better (but after 21 ♗b3 ♗d7 22 ♕e2 ♖c8 Black would be able to keep the position together), e.g. 21...♔d8 (21...0-0? 22 ♕h4 and White wins) 22 ♕f2 ♘eg4 23 ♕e2 g5 24 ♖ff1 ♕e5 25 g3 etc.

20...h6 21 ♘h3

Here White should not fall for 21 ♕h4?? ♘h7 and Black wins.

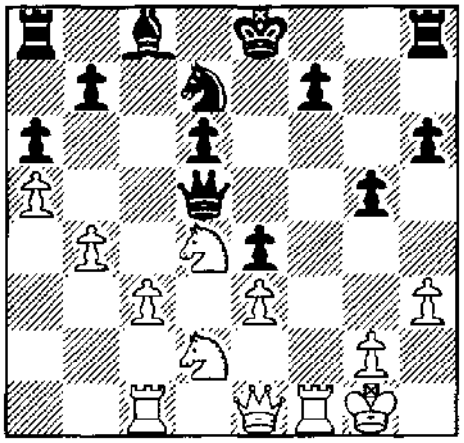
21...♕e5 22 ♖c1 ♘g4 23 ♘f4 g5 24 h3 ♘gf6 25 ♘e2

The white knight is getting to the end of its long journey, and will land on d4 and exploit the recent weakening of the f5-square. Now Black should have utilised the weaknesses he has created on the kingside to obtain counterplay. Instead he fell pray to materialism.

25...♘xd5?

Better was 25...g4, though after 26 ♕g3 ♕e7 27 ♘d4 ♘e5 28 hxg4 ♗xg4 29 ♘f5 ♗xf5 30 ♖xf5 ♖g8 31 ♕f4 White has a clear advantage.

26 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 27 ♘d4

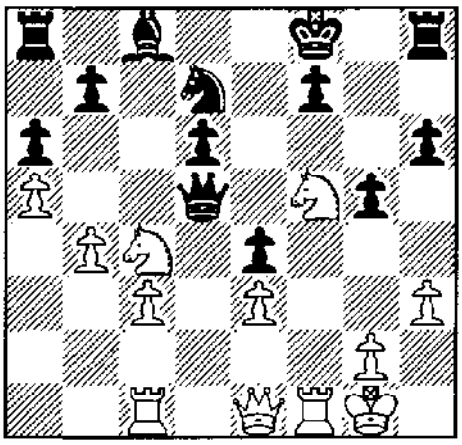


27...♕e5?

This is nothing but a stupid blunder.

Black should have played 27...♘f8 28 ♕f2 ♖h7 29 ♘f5 ♕xf5 30 ♕xf5 ♗xf5 31 ♖xf5 and White is much better.

28 ♘c4 ♕d5 29 ♘f5 ♔f8



30 ♘fxd6

Now White wins.

30...♖h7 31 ♖d1 ♕c6 32 ♖d4 b6 33 axb6 ♗b7 34 ♘a5 1-0

Game 4

D.Tyomkin-I.Zugic

Montreal 2004

The following game shows another way to battle for the advantage against 4...♕e7, and seems very convincing. With simple play White breaks through on the queenside before Black can create any kind of counterplay on the kingside.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 0-0 d6 5 c3 ♕e7 6 d4 ♗b6 7 h3

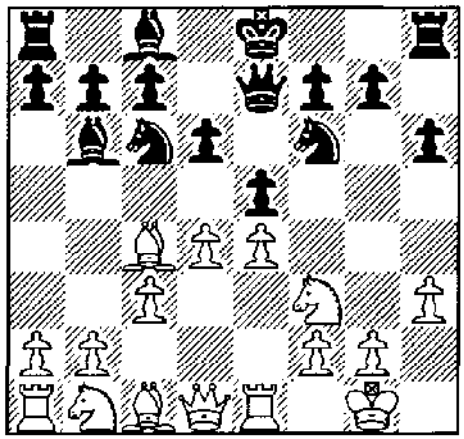
Please note that 4 0-0 is principally harmless, and that 4 c3 ♕e7 5 d4 ♗b6 6 0-0 d6 7 h3 is the more critical move order, with which we would reach this position.

7...♘f6 8 ♖e1 h6

This is the beginning of an overoptimistic plan. Black apparently is in a very aggressive mood, but his taste for violence was probably not meant to end in the way it did. Sounder was something like 8...0-0 9 a4 a6 10 ♘a3, and here we should take a short look at the position with Black and try to be reasonable.

a) 10...♔h8?! 11 ♘c2 ♘g8?! 12 b4 f6 13 ♘e3 left White much better in W.Heidenfeld-M.Euwe, Johannesburg 1955. Black can improve with 11...exd4 12 cxd4 h6, but after 13 e5 White still has the advantage.

b) 10...exd4 11 cxd4 ♕d7 does not look too appetising if we consider it as a position to reach when we chose our 4th move, but here it is appropriate. After simple moves like 12 ♗a2 ♖e8 13 ♗b1 White is slightly better.



9 b4!

White is playing very fast on the queenside and his initiative goes as smoothly as a warm knife through butter. This means that Black will have to defend and does not have time to attack himself with ...g7-g5.

Another option here was 9 a4 a6 10 ♗e3, but then Black has some time on his hands and can continue with 10...g5 11 dxe5 dxe5 12 ♗xb6 cxb6 13 ♘h2 ♗e6 with equality according to Unzicker.

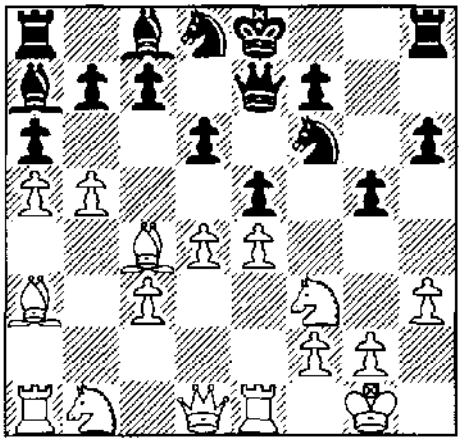
9...a6 10 a4 g5?!

Black is not really attuned into the finer details of the position. His position was still more or less sound if he had played more calmly. After the sounder 10...0-0 11 ♗a3 ♘d7 12 b5 ♘a5 13 ♗a2 ♕f6 14 ♕d3 ♖e8 15 ♘bd2 White was only slightly better in E.Torre-R.Ekstroem, Lugano 1989.

11 a5 ♗a7 12 b5 ♘d8

It was probably around here that Black started to come to his senses; but it is already too late to find a decent position. After the apparently logical 12...axb5 13 ♗xb5 ♗d7, White can break through on the queenside with 14 a6!, and on 14...bxa6 15 ♖xa6 ♘b8 16 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 17 ♖a3 White has a brilliant initiative on the queenside, while Black's attack still has to develop beyond biting his finger at White.

13 ♗a3!



The breakthrough on the queenside in this game is very instructive. White could have gained a good position with simple moves like 13 bxa6!? bxa6 14 ♕d3, but this would give Black time to execute his own plan, and after 14...g4 15 hxg4 ♘xg4 16 ♖e2 ♖g8 17 ♘bd2 White is only somewhat better.

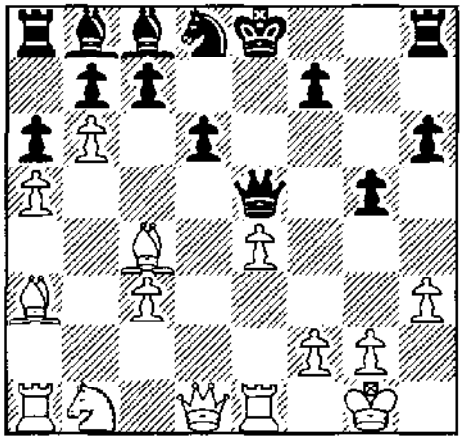
13...♘d7

The idea behind White's last (prophylactic) move is seen when Black tries to carry out his desired 13...g4. Now the initiative explodes with 14 ♘xe5! gxh3 15 bxa6 bxa6 16 ♕a4+ ♘d7 17 ♘c6 ♕h4 18 g3 ♖g8 19 ♔h2 ♕f6 20 ♖a2 and White is much better.

14 dxe5

I really enjoy watching the simple, yet strong exploitation of White's advantage in this game. I find it quite logical that White should open the position for his pieces here, where he is ahead in development. Nevertheless, after something like 14 b6 ♗b8 15 ♕a4 c6 16 ♘bd2 White is also better.

14...♘xe5 15 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 16 b6 ♗b8



White has managed to reduce the black pieces to chickens pushed against a wall, and now only needs to activate his queenside to convert his advantage. With his next six moves White manages to finish his development and target the key weaknesses in the black position. To many amateurs these moves might seem simple, but to replicate these simple moves in practice would be quite difficult, even for

experienced players.

17 bxc7!

This is better then the artistic 17 ♗c1 ♖g8 18 ♗e3 g4 19 h4 ♗e6 20 bxc7 ♗xc7 21 ♗d5 even though this also leaves White with a big advantage.

17...♗xc7 18 ♘d2! 0-0

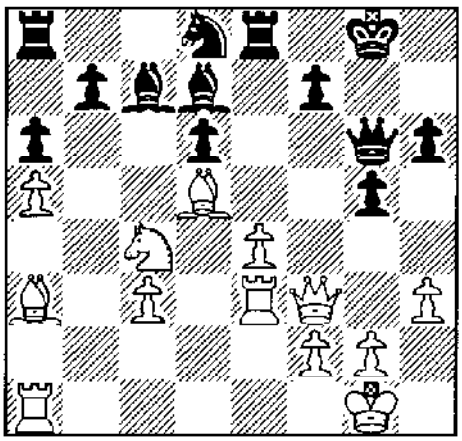
Black finally decides to do something about his king. Although it would not have been out of style to end the game with something silly like 18...♗xa5? 19 ♘f3 ♕xc3 20 ♕xd6 and White wins.

19 ♗d5 ♖e8 20 ♘c4 ♕f6 21 ♖e3! ♗d7 22 ♕f3!

This is stronger than 22 ♕h5, although after the following piece of analysis, 22...♗b5 23 ♘b6 ♖b8 24 ♖f3 ♕g7 25 ♖e1 ♘e6 26 c4 ♗c6 27 ♗b2 ♕g6 28 ♕xg6+ fxg6 29 ♖f6 ♗xd5 30 cxd5 ♘f4 31 ♗d4, we can conclude that White is much better too.

22...♕g6

Also after 22...♕xf3 23 ♖xf3 will Black lose the d6-pawn.



23 ♕g3 ♘c6 24 ♗xd6

And that's all folks!

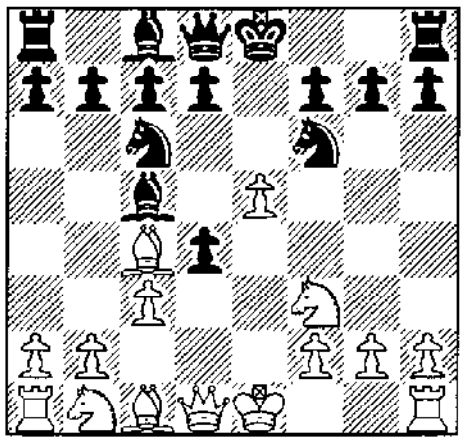
24...♗d8 25 ♘b6 ♗xb6 26 axb6 ♖ac8 27 ♗c7 ♖e6 28 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 29 ♖d1 ♔h7 30 f4 gxf4 31 ♕xf4 ♕g5 32 ♕xg5 hxg5 33 ♖d6 ♘a5 34 ♖ed3 ♗c4 35 ♖g3 ♖g8 36 ♗d8 g4 37 hxg4 ♖g6 38 ♗f6 ♗e6 39 g5 ♖g8 40 ♖gd3 ♘c4 1-0

Game 5

E.Sveshnikov-R.Dautov

Pinsk 1986

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 e5



As mentioned above, this is hardly dangerous for Black if he knows what he's doing. The important point here is that Black is forced to counter-strike in the centre without hesitation.

6...d5! 7 ♗b5 ♘e4 8 cxd4

Now Black has three possibilities. 8...♗b6 and 8...♗e7 are considered here, while 8...♗b4+ is investigated in the next game.

8...♗b6

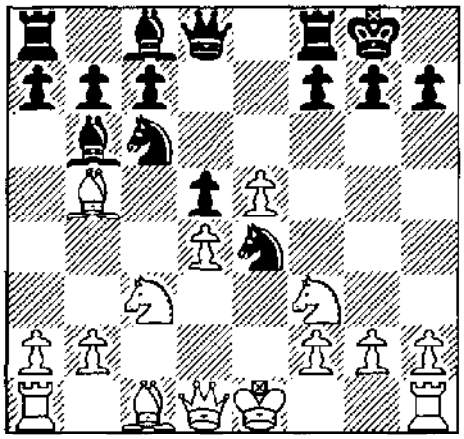
8...♗e7 might look a little passive at first sight, but it is a completely viable possibility. Then 9 ♘c3 0-0 10 ♗e3!? (this appears to be better than 10 ♗d3 f5 11 exf6 ♘xf6 12 ♗e3 ♘b4 13 ♗b1 ♘g4 with counterplay, W.Steinitz-Em.Lasker, New York match 1894) 10...f5 11 exf6

♘xf6 12 ♘e5 was seen in the recent game B.Macieja-C.Garcia Moreno, Spanish League 2004. Now, instead of 12...♘b8 as played, I would suggest 12...♕d6! 13 ♗f4 ♘d8 14 0-0 ♘e6 15 ♗e3 a6 16 ♗e2 c5 with counterplay as an improvement.

9 ♘c3

9 a4?! a5 10 ♗e3 0-0 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 12 0-0 was strategically dubious, and after 12...f5 13 exf6 ♕xf6 Black is at least equal, A.Biro-P.Lukacs, Budapest 1985.

9...0-0



10 ♗xc6

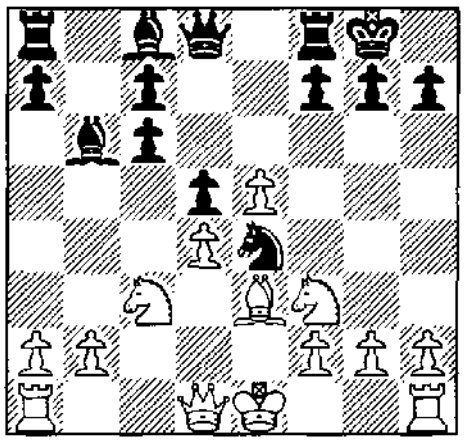
This exchange appears quite risky. It is easy to end in a position where White is under attack from the dynamic duo, aka Black's bishop pair.

There is little need to exchange on c6 immediately. White would be better off playing 10 ♗e3!?, when play is likely to continue 10...♗g4 11 ♕c2 ♗xf3 12 gxf3 ♘g5 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 0-0-0 ♘xf3, and now GM Sveshnikov continues his analysis with 15 ♕f5 ♘h4 16 ♕g4 ♘g6 17 h4 f5 18 exf6 ♕xf6 19 h5 ♘f4 20 ♖h4 where he claims that White has full compensation for the pawn. Actually I fear that White is fighting for a draw, and is not guaranteed to succeed. A possible continuation is 20...♘e6 21 h6 g6 22 ♖h5 ♖ae8 23 ♖e5 ♘d8 24 ♖xc8 ♖xe8 25 ♕d7 ♕f7 etc.

However, White's play can be greatly improved. After 15 ♕e2! ♘h4 16 ♖hg1 White has real threats coming up on the kingside, and Black will not be able to free himself as easily as in the other line. It is hard to make a final conclusion, but 'with compensation' is not an unfair evaluation.

10...bxc6 11 ♗e3?!

White is trying to play against the bishop on b6, but it was better simply to continue 11 0-0 ♗g4 12 ♖e1 with equality.



11...♗g4?

This does not really achieve anything. Here Black had the chance to annoy the bishop on e3, or if White wants to avoid this, he will have to give up a lot of his presence in the centre. After 11...f5! 12 exf6 ♕xf6, Black is just better. Strong grandmasters have tried this out in two recent games:

a) 13 ♕b3 ♕g6 14 ♘e5 ♕xg2 15 0-0-0 ♘xf2 16 ♖hg1 ♘xd1 17 ♖xg2 ♘xe3 18 ♖e2 ♗xd4 19 ♘xc6 ♗b6 20 ♘xd5 ♖f1+

21 ♔d2 ♖d1+ 22 ♔c3 ♖c1+ 23 ♔d2 ♖c2+ 24 ♔e1 ♖xe2+ 25 ♔xe2 ♗a6+ with a dangerous initiative, J.Rowson-I.Sokolov, Selfoss 2003.

b) 13 ♘xe4 dxe4 14 ♘d2 ♗a6! 15 ♘xe4 ♗a5+ 16 ♘c3 ♗xc3+ 17 bxc3 ♕g6 and again Black had a deadly initiative in B.Macieja-G.Vescovi, Bermuda 2004.

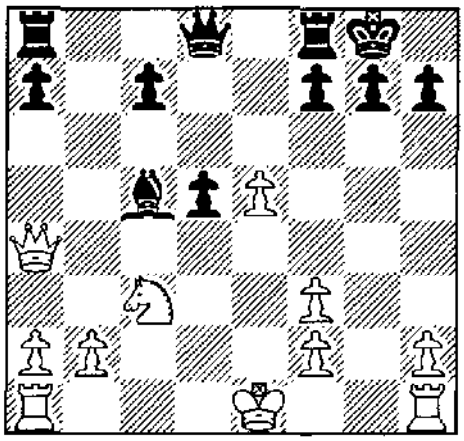
12 ♕a4 c5?!

Black is entering a quagmire of bad tactics. 12...♗xf3 was better, although after 13 gxf3 ♘xc3 14 bxc3 ♕e8 15 f4 ♕c6 16 ♖g1 ♖ae8 17 ♕c2 ♕h3 18 0-0-0! White has some initiative, because of the weak black bishop on b6.

13 dxc5 ♗xf3

If 13...♗xc5?? 14 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 15 ♕xg4 and White wins.

14 gxf3 ♘xc5 15 ♗xc5 ♗xc5



16 0-0-0!

Now Black has some problems with the d-pawn and also, less obviously, with his king, as the open g-file can become an engine for a dangerous white attack.

16...♕e8

Black has an unpleasant choice here. He can play the text move, or 16...d4 17 ♘e4 ♗b6 18 ♖hg1 ♕h4 19 ♖g4 when White has an unpleasant attack, or 16...♕e7 17 ♖xd5 ♖ad8 18 ♖hd1 ♗xf2 19 f4 where White is also better.

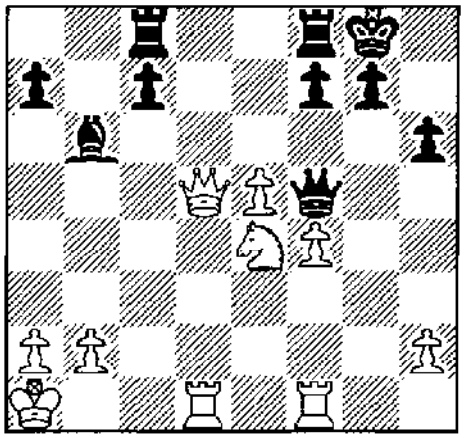
17 ♕a5 ♗xf2 18 ♕xd5 ♕e6 19 ♔b1

White would, of course, not mind entering the endgame. The black pieces have difficulties working together; his bishop especially is lacking a useful diagonal. Maybe Black has more chances in the endgame, but it is understandable that he chooses to avoid it, even though this is probably mistaken.

19...♖ac8 20 ♖hf1 ♗b6 21 f4 ♕f5+

After the better try 21...♕xd5 22 ♘xd5 ♖fe8 23 ♖f3 c6 24 ♘xb6! (24 ♘c3 ♖cd8 25 ♖fd3 ♖xd3 26 ♖xd3 f6 would allow Black to gain counterplay) 24...axb6 25 ♖d6 White still has some winning chances. His advantage is not necessarily that great, but it is a firm and stable superiority, that in practice will cost Black a very tough defence in return for the draw.

22 ♔a1 h6 23 ♘e4



White is just much better here.

23...♔h7 24 ♘g3 ♕g4 25 a3 ♕h3 26 ♕e4+ ♔h8 27 f5 c6 28 f6 g6 29 ♖f4 ♖cd8 30 ♖d6 ♕xh2 31 ♖h4 ♕g1+ 32 ♔a2 ♕e3 33 ♕h1

33 ♖xc6!? is also possible, as after 33...♖fe8 34 ♕h1 ♔h7 35 ♖c2! White

wins. The ideas are 35...♖xe5 36 ♖e2 or 35...♕g5 36 ♖ch2 ♗e3 37 ♘e4. In both cases White wins.

33...♔h7 34 ♘e4 ♖h8 35 ♖xc6?!

Simpler was 35 ♖xd8! ♗xd8 36 e6 fxe6 37 ♕d1 and White wins.

35...h5 36 e6 ♔h6 37 ♖c3 ♕e2 38 e7 ♖d1 39 ♕h2 ♕xh2 40 ♖xh2 ♖e1 41 ♘d6 ♖b8 42 ♘xf7+ ♔h7 43 ♖c6 ♗d4 44 ♘g5+ 1-0

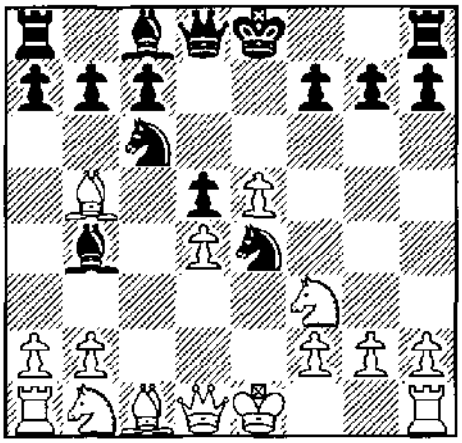
Game 6

E.Sveshnikov-H.Stefansson

Liepaya (rapid) 2004

If you compare the dates of this game with the previous one, you will see that Grandmaster Sveshnikov has had a lasting passion for this rather harmless line.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 e5 d5 7 ♗b5 ♘e4 8 cxd4 ♗b4+!?



This simple move (patzer sees a check, patzer plays a check) gives Black a sound and rather solid game.

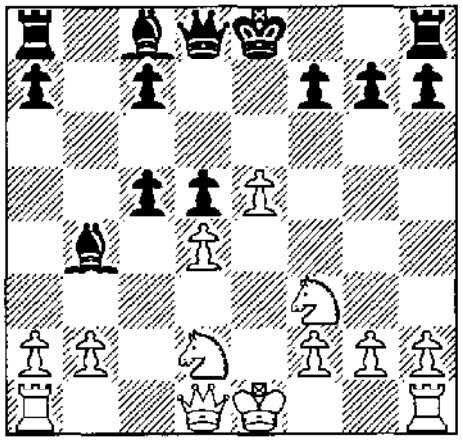
9 ♗d2

White has no road leading to an advantage. Sveshnikov has had to realise this in his practical games, where he also tried 9 ♘bd2 ♗d7 10 0-0 0-0 and now at least two moves in his games:

a) 11 ♘xe4 dxe4 12 ♘g5 ♘xe5 13 ♕a4 ♗xb5 14 ♕xb5 ♘d3 15 ♗e3 ♕e7 16 f3 c6 17 ♕c4 b5! and Black is at least equal, E.Sveshnikov-M.Krasenkow, Vilnius 1997.

b) 11 ♗d3 ♗f5 12 ♕c2 ♗xd2 13 ♗xd2 ♗g6?! 14 ♗c3 ♕e7 15 ♖ae1 gave White a slightly advantage in E.Sveshnikov-S.Azarov, Minsk 2000, but surely he realised that it was easy for Black to improve, as he deviated in the current game. The improvement could be 13...♗g4! 14 ♗xe4 dxe4 15 ♕xe4 ♗xf3 16 ♕xf3 ♕xd4 17 ♗c3 ♕c4 with equality.

9...♘xd2 10 ♗xc6+ bxc6 11 ♘bxd2 c5

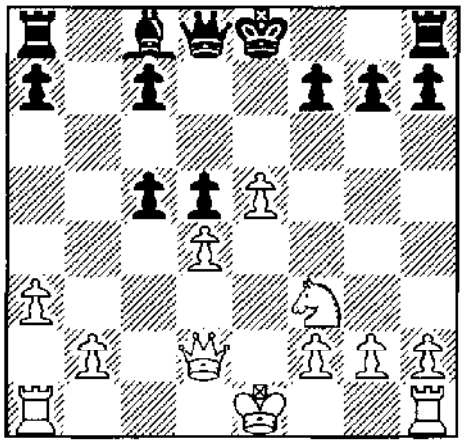


12 a3

12 dxc5 has been played, but I prefer not to go into the games and instead present 12...0-0!, which is a new idea. (Ok, ok, here is some old stuff, but then you have to eat your greens! 12...♗xc5 13 ♕c2 ♗b6 14 ♕c6+ ♕d7 15 ♕xa8 0-0 16 ♖c1 c5 17 ♕b8 ♗a6 18 ♕d6 ♕b5 19 ♔d1 ♕e2+ 20 ♔c2 ♕d3+ with equality according to Macieja, or 14...♗d7 15

♕xd5 0-0 16 0-0 ♗e6 17 ♕c6 ♕d3 with some compensation) 13 ♕a4 ♖b8 14 0-0 ♗xc5 15 ♘b3 ♗b6 16 ♖fd1 c5 and as I see it Black is slightly better.

12...♗xd2+ 13 ♕xd2



13...c4!

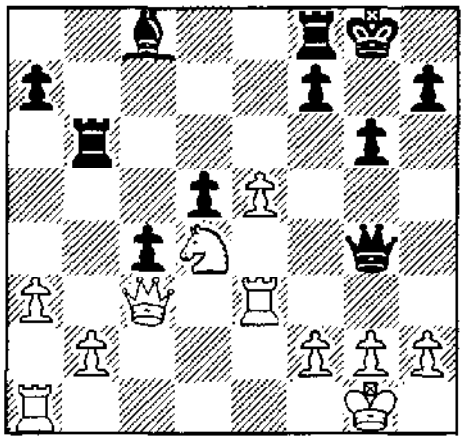
This move might seem surprising, but it gives Black easy equality. Optically it looks as if the pawn is placed on a wrong coloured square, given Black's light-squared bishop, but if we look slightly further than automatic dogmatism, we will see that the pawns will actually support the bishop rather than restrict it. Also, the f3-knight was probably hoping to occupy one of the dark squares in the centre, and this is now nothing but a dream.

One practical example saw the reasonable alternative 13...♗g4 14 dxc5 ♗xf3 15 gxf3 0-0. Here White went wrong with 16 c6?, as after 16...♖e8 17 f4, Black should deviate from B.Macieja-A.Aleksandrov, European Team Championship 2003, with 17...♕d6 18 0-0-0 ♕xc6+ 19 ♔b1 ♖ab8 and be slightly better. If instead 16 0-0-0 ♕e7! 17 ♕d4 ♖ab8 18 ♖d2 ♖b5 and Black has counterplay.

14 0-0 ♖b8!

Black keeps an eye on the b2-pawn, which gives him good counterplay.

15 ♖fe1 0-0 16 ♕c2 g6 17 ♘d2 ♕g5! 18 ♖e3 ♕g4 19 ♕c3 c5 20 ♘f3 cxd4 21 ♘xd4 ♖b6



22 ♖ae1

Or 22 b4 cxb3 23 ♘xb3 ♗e6 24 ♘d4 ♖fb8 with equality.

22...♗e6 23 h3 ♕h4 24 ♖d1 ♖fb8 25 ♖e2 ♖8b7 ½-½

Summary

To conclude quickly on the material in this chapter: after 4 c3 then 4...♕e7 has a good reputation, but probably unjustly. Games 3 and 4 contain some ideas leading to an advantage for White, which should be of practical importance to anyone playing the Italian Game.

In the last two games of the chapter we investigated Sveshnikov's pet line with 6 e5, which is theoretically quite harmless. Obviously the Russian grandmaster plays this because he feels that he gets good practical chances, but against a well-prepared opponent this is probably not the case. But then again, how many people are prepared for every obscure line after 1 e4 e5 - ? Not many I suppose...

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 *(D)* **♘f6**

4...♕e7 5 d4 ♗b6 6 0-0 d6 *(D)*

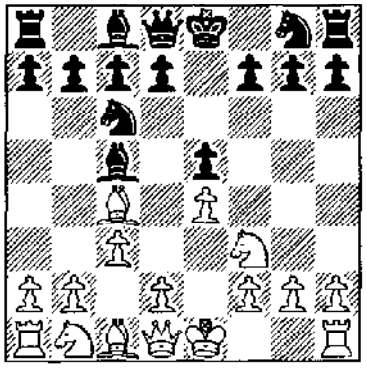
7 a4 – *Game 3*

7 h3 – *Game 4*

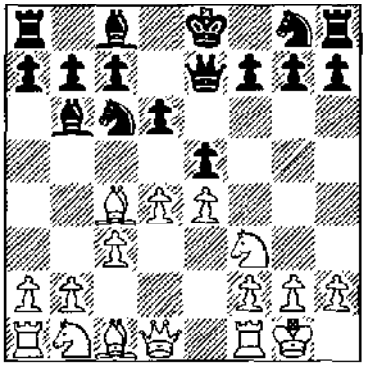
5 d4 exd4 6 e5 d5 7 ♗b5 ♘e4 8 cxd4 *(D)*

8...♗b6 – *Game 5*

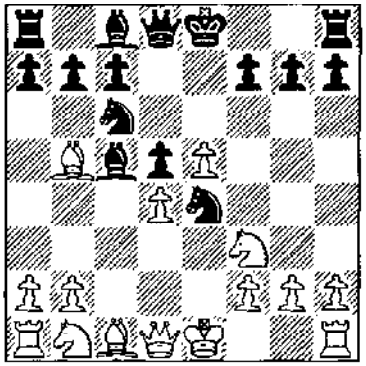
8...♗b4+ – *Game 6*



4 c3

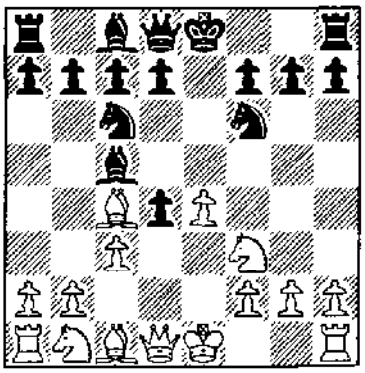


6...d6



8 cxd4

CHAPTER THREE



The Möller Attack and the Classical Italian Game

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4

In this chapter we will look at the positions arising after 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4. In the first two games we examine the Möller Attack 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ 7 ♘c3?!. This gambit is over a hundred years old and is one of those lovely antiques which are fragile and break into pieces if you treat them a little bit harshly. In this chapter we shall see that Black equalises easily in Game 7, where White afterwards fail to prove equality; and in Game 8 we shall see the official refutation 13...h6! (but also 13...0-0, which seems to lead to a draw by force). Surely the Möller Attack is having tough times in this computer age.

In Games 9 and 10 we shall examine 7 ♗d2, which is every bit as harmless as it looks. We will see that Black can force equality, but then will have to allow White the chance of a draw by repetition; or Black can accept a slightly worse position, but play for a win. For tactical reasons such a line can at times prove reasonable for White. Van der Doel's weak play in Game 9 failed to exploit the pay-offs of this tactic, but the idea still works.

In Game 11 we shall look at another dubious gambit, 6 0-0, which can be met either by 6...♘xe4 with simple equality (or a little more), and the greedy 6...dxc3!?, which in many sources is referred to as bad, but actually gives Black reasonable chances.

Game 7

Comp. Fritz 6-V.Anand

Man vs. Machine, Frankfurt (rapid) 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4

This game has a slightly unusual move order. Normally we reach the position at move 5 by 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4. By the way, 5 d4 is the most logical move here, since 5 0-0 leaves White struggling to make sense of his position after the equalising 5...♘xe4. And 5 b4 does not look right either, as it leads to a position from the Evans Gambit, which is not particularly good for White. This leaves

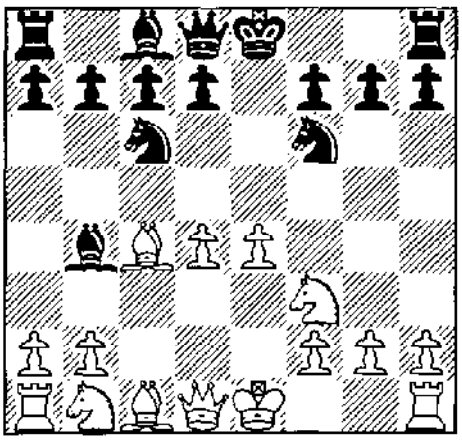
only 5 d3 as a serious alternative, which is of practical value, though not really dangerous for Black. We will examine this move in the next chapter.

3...exd4 4 ♗c4 ♗c5 5 c3 ♘f6

These lines might look very sharp and dangerous, but the reality is that the forcing nature of the position quite often leads them into a draw...

6 cxd4 ♗b4+

This check is highly logical, and other moves are simply bad. For example: 6...♗b6? 7 d5 ♘e7 8 e5 ♘g4 9 d6 cxd6 10 exd6 ♘c6 11 ♗g5 ♘f6 12 0-0 and White is much better.



The main position. White has two sensible moves here.

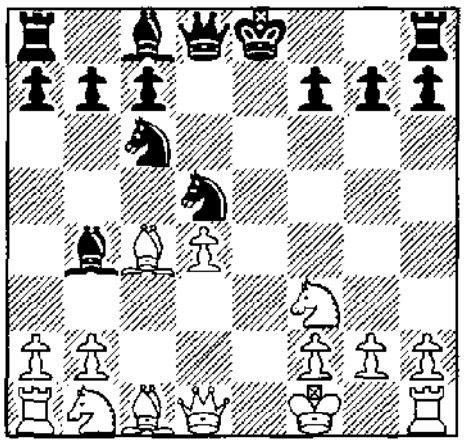
7 ♘c3?!

Objectively speaking, this move is weak; but then objectivity has little to do with the ways of the world, who is elected president in the US, who is selected for junior tournaments, and how an egg should be prepared... 7 ♘c3 is dangerous in practice, if Black is not well prepared for it.

White's third option, 7 ♔f1?!, is known as the Krakow Variation. In 1909, chess players from Krakow played a thematic tournament in this line, investigating White's attacking chances. Now we know that 7 ♔f1 is somewhat dubious, and that with logical play Black should be able to get a good opening. Let's look at two typical options:

a) 7...♘xe4?! might seem tempting, but all White's play is based on this over-optimistic move. Taking the pawn is unnecessarily risky, and probably even plain bad. White can now seize the initiative by simple means: 8 d5 ♘e7 9 ♕d4 ♘f6 10 ♗g5 ♘g6 11 ♘bd2 h6 12 ♖e1+ ♔f8 13 ♗d3 ♗e7? (though 13...♗xd2 14 ♗xd2 with a clear advantage to White was not particularly attractive either) 14 ♗xg6! hxg5 15 ♘e5 and White was winning in F.Marshall-A.Burn, Ostend 1905.

b) The logical reaction so often in these classical positions is to strike in the centre. Here 7...d5! 8 exd5 ♘xd5



is at least slightly better for Black. e.g. 9 ♘c3 ♗e6 10 ♕e2 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♘xc3 12 ♕e1 ♘d5 13 ♗a3 a6 14 ♖c1 ♕d7 and the two bishops are insufficient compensation for the pawn, Bartmansky-Batik, correspondence 1910.

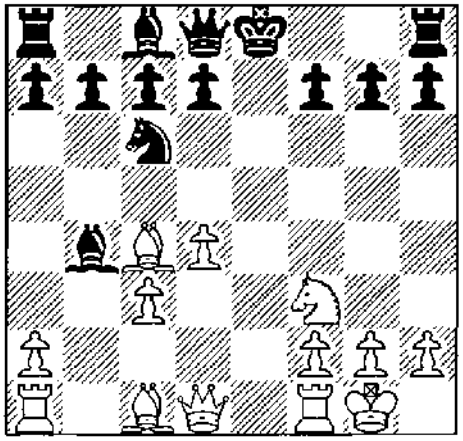
7...♘xe4 8 0-0 ♗xc3

Black needs to go directly for a refuta-

tion of the Möller, or he will quickly end up in trouble.

Here 8...0-0? is weak because of 9 d5 ♗xc3 10 bxc3 ♘e7 11 ♖e1 ♘f6 12 d6! and White is much better.

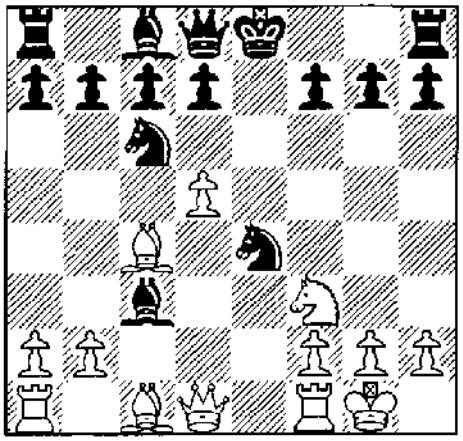
8...♘xc3 is possible though, and then 9 bxc3 leaves us with a branching:



a) 9...♗xc3 10 ♗a3! d5! (but not 10...d6? 11 ♖c1 ♗a5 12 ♕a4 a6 13 ♗d5 ♗b6 14 ♖xc6! ♗d7 15 ♖e1+ ♔f8 16 ♖xd6 and White wins according to Keres; or if 10...♕f6?! 11 ♖c1 ♗b4 12 ♗xb4 ♘xb4 13 ♖e1+ ♔d8 14 ♕d2 and White is just better) 11 ♗b5 ♗xa1 12 ♖e1+ ♗e6 13 ♕a4 ♖c8 14 ♘e5 (White can easily go wrong here, e.g. 14 ♖xc6+? fxe6 15 ♘e5 ♕d6! 16 ♗xc6+ bxc6 17 ♗xd6 cxd6 18 ♘xc6 ♖c7 and Black wins, while after 14 ♖xa1?! f6! White has problems to prove compensation) 14...♕f6 15 ♗xc6+ (if 15 ♖xa1 ♗d7 16 ♖e1 ♔d8 17 ♘xc6+ bxc6 18 ♗e7+ ♕xe7 19 ♖xe7 ♔xe7 20 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 21 ♕xc6 and White must now fight for a draw) 15...bxc6 16 ♘xc6 ♗c3 17 ♘xa7+ ♔d8 18 ♘c6+ with perpetual check.

b) 9...d5! is even simpler. After 10 cxb4 dxc4 11 ♖e1+ ♘e7 12 ♕e2 ♗e6 13 ♗g5 ♕d5 (13...c6 14 ♘e5 ♕d5 15 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 16 ♘xc4 gives White compensation for the pawn) 14 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 15 ♕c2 f6 16 ♘g5! (White must play energetically to keep the balance) 16...fxg5 17 ♖e5 ♕xd4 18 ♖ae1 ♖ae8 19 ♖xe6+ ♔d7 20 ♖d1 ♕xd1+ 21 ♕xd1+ ♔xc6 22 ♕g4+ ♔f6 23 h4 gxh4 24 ♕xh4+ ♔g6 25 ♕g4+ ♔f6 26 ♕f4+ ♔g6 with a draw in O.Gadia J.De Souza Mendes, Brazilian Championship 1961.

9 d5!?



This is Möller's idea; invented in 1898. After the rather pointless 9 bxc3?! d5 Black has a perfect game. Against Lasker, in their 1896 return match, Steinitz tried to play without pieces. He also played without any hint of success or indication that he was a World Champion. Of course he was also in the later part of his life and surely without the energy of his younger years. The game continued 10 ♗a3? dxc4 11 ♖e1 f5 12 ♘d2 ♔f7 13 ♘xe4 fxe4 14 ♖xe4 ♕f6 and White does not have any form of compensation for the piece, W.Steinitz Em.Lasker, Moscow match 1896.

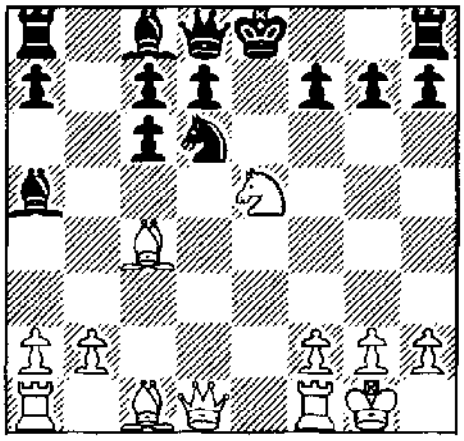
9...♘e5

This variation is not as well known in the West as 9...♗f6 (as seen in the next

game). Nevertheless, it is quite safe and gives Black a very slight edge without any risk at all. For those happy with a superior position as Black within the first ten moves, and who does not necessarily have to refute their opponent's madness, this is a very safe choice.

a) 9...♘e7? looks safe as well, but it only takes a few moves to shatter the illusion. After 10 bxc3 0-0 11 ♖e1 ♘f6 12 d6 cxd6 13 ♗a3 White's attack is very strong.

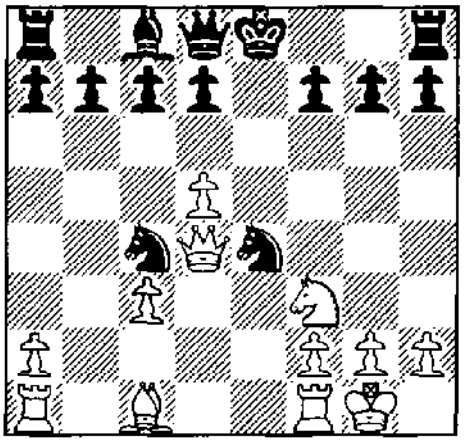
b) 9...♗a5 is also playable, though not as good as the text move. Now 10 dxc6 bxc6 11 ♘e5 ♘d6 gives us two interesting options:



b1) 12 ♕g4!? ♕f6 13 b4 ♗xb4 (13...♘xc4 14 ♘xc4 ♗xb4 15 ♗b2 transposes; not 14...♕xa1?? 15 ♖c1+ ♔f8 16 ♕e2 and White wins) 14 ♗b2 ♘xc4 15 ♘xc4 ♕g6 16 ♖fe1+ and, according to Möller, White has a promising attack. The analysis could continue 16...♔f8 17 ♕h4 f6 18 ♘e5 fxe5 19 ♕xb4+ d6 20 ♖xe5 c5 21 ♕b3 ♕f7 22 ♖e3 ♕xb3 23 axb3 and White has compensation enough for draw, but hardly anything more.

b2) The simple exchange 12 ♘xf7!? ♘xf7 13 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 14 ♕h5+ ♔g8 15 ♕xa5 is more interesting. In my opinion, White has some advantage here. Black has a pawn more, but also problems with his king's position, while the opposite-coloured bishops should help facilitate an attack.

10 bxc3 ♘xc4 11 ♕d4



11...0-0

Anand probably felt little doubt in the practicality of this move. Black is safely developed and White's initiative is already stalling.

After 11...♘cd6? Black would be made suffer for his greed with the surprising sequence 12 ♕xg7 ♕f6 13 ♕xf6! (Black's extra piece is doing little in the defence) 13...♘xf6 14 ♖e1+ ♘fe4 (14...♔f8? 15 ♗h6+ ♔g8 16 ♖e5 ♘fe4 17 ♖e1 and White wins) 15 ♘d2 f5 16 f3 0-0 17 fxe4 ♘xe4 18 ♘xe4 fxe4 19 ♖xe4 and White is at least slightly better here.

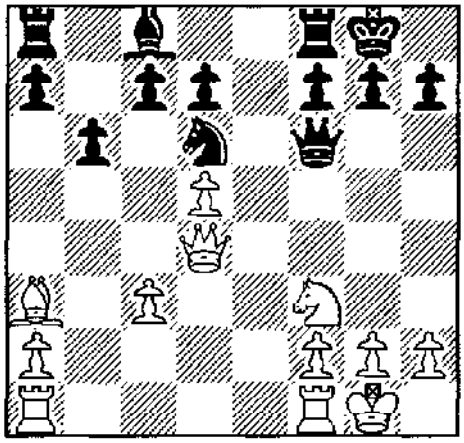
However, Black can choose which knight White can take by protecting the better placed of the two. I firmly believe that 11...f5! is the best way forward. Now play could continue 12 ♕xc4 d6 13 ♘d4 0-0 14 f3 ♘c5 15 ♗a3 b6 16 ♗xc5 bxc5 17 ♘c6 ♕f6 18 ♖fe1 ♗d7 19 ♖e7 ♖f7 20 ♖ae1 ♖xe7 21 ♖xe7 ♖d8! and Black is

for preference.

12 ♕xe4 ♘d6

This is stronger than 12...b5?! when White can play 13 a4 c6 14 dxc6 d5 15 ♕d3 bxa4 16 ♘g5 with the initiative.

13 ♕d3 b6 14 ♗a3 ♕f6 15 ♕d4



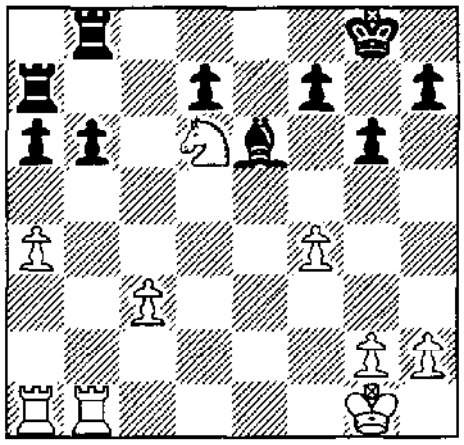
White has probably enough compensation to make a draw, but he (it!) will also have to prove it in practice, something computers can have great difficulties doing in this kind of position.

Instead after 15 ♖fe1 ♗b7 16 ♘e5 ♖ad8 17 ♘g4 ♕f4 18 ♘e5 ♖fe8 19 ♗xd6 cxd6 20 ♘f3 ♖c8 Black is slightly better.

15...♕xd4 16 ♘xd4 ♗b7 17 ♗xd6 cxd6 18 ♘f5 g6 19 ♘xd6 ♗xd5 20 ♖fe1 ♗e6 21 f4 a6 22 a4 ♖a7 23 ♖eb1

White is unable to build a fortress. But even if he was, this is a dark spot for computers, which do not understand the concept of fortresses at all, as their horizon are too short. They cannot understand that no improvements can be made to the position, ever, as they cling to what they can calculate. After 23 ♖ab1?! ♖b8 24 c4 ♖c7 25 ♖e4 ♖c5 26 ♔f2 ♔f8 27 ♖d4 the conquest of the fortress is easy: 27...♔e7 28 ♔e3 ♗d5! 29 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 30 cxd5 ♔xd6 and Black will win this ending with the passed pawn and good position of his rook.

23...♖b8



24 a5?

The computer can see that he will win back his pawn in the short term; but the grandmaster understands that, in the long term, Black will activate his rook, when the white position is beyond salvation. After the stronger 24 c4 ♖c7 25 a5 ♖c6 26 ♖xb6 ♖bxb6 27 axb6 ♖xb6 28 c5 ♖c6 29 ♖a5 White would have kept good drawing chances.

24...b5 25 c4 b4 26 ♖a4 b3 27 ♖a3 ♖c7 28 ♖axb3 ♖xb3 29 ♖xb3 ♖c5 30 ♘b7?!

Now the white pieces will be lost in the far corner of the board. Instead 30 ♔f2 would have offered more resistance. 30...♖xa5 should be enough to win for Black, but only after a hard fight.

30...♖xc4 31 ♖b6 ♖c2 32 ♘d6 ♔f8 33 ♖xa6 ♗d5!

The a-pawn is nothing but a dissident under state control.

34 g3 ♖g2+ 35 ♔f1 ♖xh2 36 ♖a7

36 ♖b6 ♖a2 37 a6 ♔e7 and Black wins

as the a-pawn cannot escape.

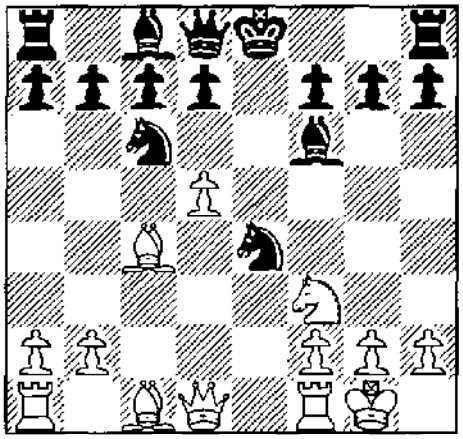
36...♗c6 37 ♘c8 ♖g2 38 ♘b6 ♖xg3 39 ♘xd7+ ♗xd7 40 ♖xd7 ♖a3 41 ♖a7 ♖f3+ 42 ♔g2 ♖xf4 43 a6 ♖a4 44 ♖a8+ ♔g7 45 ♔h2 h5 0-1

Game 8

J.Fang-A.Ivanov

Manchester, USA 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ 7 ♘c3?! ♘xe4 8 0-0 ♗xc3 9 d5 ♗f6



Just as in the previous variation, White has chances for equality. But this is as far as it goes if Black plays correctly. 9...♗f6 has been the main line of the Möller Attack for more than a hundred years, and despite short-lived resurrections of the White initiative, Black has always been able to solve his problems more than satisfactorily.

10 ♖e1 ♘e7

10...0-0?! 11 ♖xe4 ♘e7 12 d6! is a thematic trick, when after 12...cxd6 13 ♗g5 ♘g6 14 ♕d5 White is slightly better according to grandmaster Unzicker.

11 ♖xe4 d6 12 ♗g5

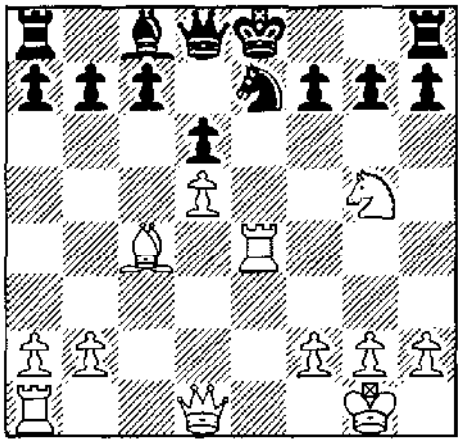
White is trying to 'launch' the knight into the enemy position like an avant-garde soldier, who will clear the way for the remains of the army. This is probably the soundest strategy here.

A little sideline that sometimes is seen at amateur level, and which can lead to inspiring victories, is 12 g4?, but I do not believe in it. This 'bayonet attack' is reminiscent of an infantry assault on a bunker in which everyone has a machine gun... After normal moves for Black like 12...0-0 13 g5 ♗e5 14 ♘xe5 ♗f5 15 ♖e3 dxe5 16 ♖xe5 ♕d7 we can conclude that the white king will have to surrender quite soon.

12...♗xg5

Black has no choice but to go into this forcing line. On 12...♗f5?! White has an annoying check in 13 ♗b5+, and after 13...♔f8 14 ♖e3 ♗xg5 15 ♘xg5 h6 16 ♘f3 the initiative looks truly dangerous.

13 ♘xg5

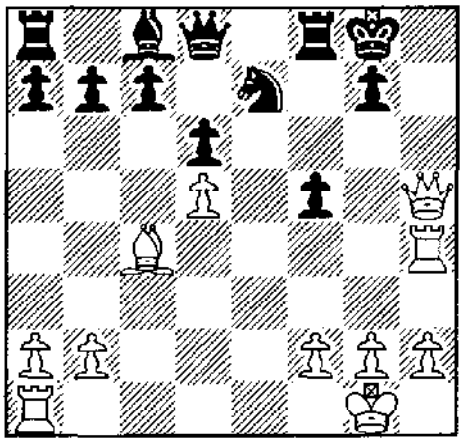


13...h6!

This was the improvement for Black that shifted the variation from 'not too dangerous' to 'downright dubious'.

The other main line starts with 13...0-0, when 14 ♘xh7! is the only chance for a real attack. So far it has been believed to

force a draw, though as we shall see this is not completely clear. 14...♔xh7!? is the sharpest reply and feels best (though 14...♗f5 15 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 16 ♘xf8 ♖xf8 with equality is also possible). Now White continues with 15 ♕h5+ ♔g8 16 ♖h4, and here Black has the choice between 16...f6 17 ♗d3 f5 18 ♗e2 ♖e8 19 ♖e1 ♔f8 20 ♗b5 ♗d7 21 ♖e6 ♗xb5 22 ♖f6+ with equality according to Perez, or to enter a much larger maze with 16...f5!



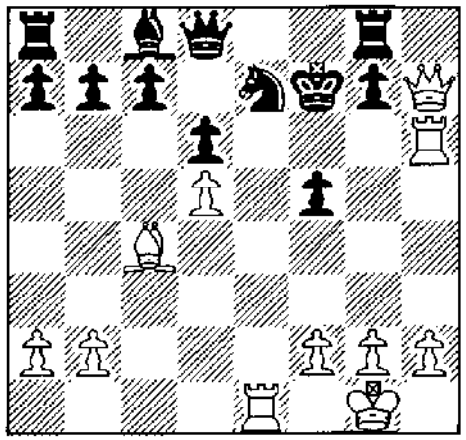
when we have the following options:

a) 17 ♖e1?! has the idea of 17...♖e8? 18 ♖e6! ♔f8 19 ♖f4 ♗d7 20 ♖f3!! ♘g8 (if 20...♔g8 21 ♖g3 wins) 21 ♖xf5+ ♘f6 22 ♖fxf6+ gxf6 (or 22...♕xf6 23 ♖xf6+ gxf6 24 ♕h8+ ♔e7 25 ♕g7+ ♔d8 26 ♕xf6+ ♔c8 27 h4 and White wins) 23 ♕h8+ ♔f7 24 ♕h7+ ♔f8 25 ♗e2! ♗xe6 26 dxe6 ♖xe6 27 ♕h8+ ♔e7 28 ♕g7+ ♔e8 29 ♗h5 mate.

However, Black can play more strongly with 17...♘g6! 18 ♖h3 ♖f6! 19 ♖g3 (if 19 ♕h7+ ♔f7 20 ♖e6 ♘f8 21 ♕h5+ g6 22 ♕h8 ♗xe6 23 dxe6+ ♖xe6 24 ♗xe6+ ♔xe6 and Black wins) 19...♘e5 20 f4 ♘f7 21 ♖e6, and now after 21...♗d7! Black retains his material advantage, instead of 21...♗xe6? 22 dxe6 ♕e7 23 exf7+ ♖xf7 24 ♖h3 ♕e1+ 25 ♗f1 ♖ff8 26 ♕h7+ ♔f7 27 ♕xf5+ ♔g8 ½-½ A.Nogueira-M.Valverde Lopez, correspondence 1977. So this line does not seem to be playable for White.

b) 17 ♖h3? is Paul Keres' idea, but it does not stand the test of our time: computer analysis, e.g. 17...f4 18 ♕h7+ ♔f7 19 ♕h5+ g6! (if 19...♔g8 20 ♕h7+ with equality) 20 ♕h7+ ♔f6 21 ♕h4+ g5 22 ♕h6+ ♘g6 23 ♖h5 ♖h8 24 ♕xg5+ ♔g7 25 ♗d3 ♕xg5 26 ♖xg5 ♖h6 27 ♖c1 ♔f6 28 ♖xg6+ ♖xg6 29 ♗xg6 ♔xg6 and Black should win.

c) The best option by far is 17 ♕h7+ ♔f7 18 ♖h6 ♖g8 19 ♖e1



when Black has:

c1) 19...♗d7?? loses to the fabulous 20 ♖ee6!! ♗xe6 21 dxe6+ ♔e8 22 ♖g6 d5 23 ♖xg7 ♕d6 24 ♖xg8+ ♘xg8 25 ♕f7+ ♔d8 26 ♗b5!? (or 26 ♕xg8+ ♔e7 27 ♕f7+ ♔d8 28 ♗xd5 ♕e7 29 ♕g8+ ♕e8 30 ♕g5+ ♕e7 31 ♕xf5) 26...c6 27 ♕xg8+ ♔e7 28 ♕xa8 cxb5 29 ♕xb7+ ♔xe6 30 ♕xb5 and White wins.

c2) 19...♔f8 is met by 20 ♖h3 ♗d7 21 ♖he3 ♘e8 22 ♗d3 g6 23 h4 ♖g7 24 ♕h8+ ♖g8 with equality according to Sozin.

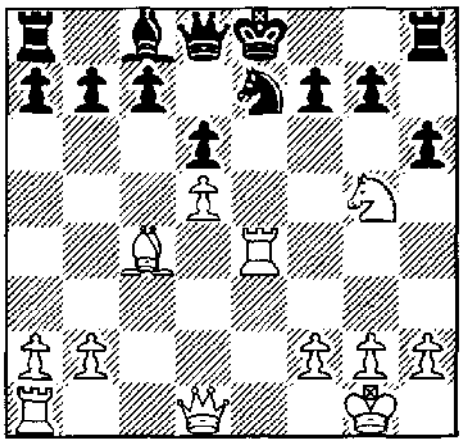
c3) 19...♕f8! is the best chance according to my analysis. Here White can try to reorganise his troops with 20 ♖h3 and then:

c31) 20...♗d7?! (complicated but inferior) 21 ♖he3 ♘g6! (necessary if Black is to play for a win; certainly not 21...♖e8? 22 ♗e2!! when Black has no decent defence against 23 ♗h5) 22 ♖e6! (apparently forced; if 22 ♕h5? ♖h8 23 ♖e7+ ♕xe7 24 ♖xe7+ ♔f6!! and Black wins, or 22 ♖g3 ♘f4 23 ♕h4 g5! 24 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 25 ♕xg5 ♘g6 and Black's advantage is close to decisive) 22...♗xe6 23 dxe6+ ♔e7 24 ♕xg6 ♖h8 25 ♕g3 c6 when White retains some compensation.

c32) 20...♔f6!! is one of those truly stunning moves which a computer can sometimes find. The idea is very simple: White is not allowed a check on e7 in the most forcing lines, e.g. if 21 ♖he3? ♖h8! and Black wins instantly. Instead White can try 21 ♕h4+ g5 22 ♕d4+ ♔g6 23 ♕d1 g4 24 ♖he3 ♖g7 25 ♕e2 ♘g8 26 ♖e8 ♕f7 and here Black will win because of 27...♘f6 and White has no counterplay for the piece. I am not too eager to risk my reputation by giving a clear evaluation of this line, since maybe White has a way to strengthen his attack earlier on? I believe in Black's position, but one unpredictable tactic could turn everything upside down.

And anyway, White can possibly improve earlier with 20 ♗b5! ♖h8 21 ♕xh8 gxh6 22 ♕h7+ ♔f6 23 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 24 ♕xh6+ and equality according to Keres. It looks as if the simple 20...a6!? questions this, but here White can play 21 ♖ee6! axb5 22 ♖hf6+ ♔e8 23 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 24 ♖xe7+! ♔xe7 25 ♕xg7+ ♖f7 26 ♕g5+ ♔f8 27 ♕d8+ ♔g7 28 ♕g5+ ♔h7 29 ♕h5+ ♔g8 30 ♕g5+ ♖g7 31 ♕d8+ ♔h7 32 ♕e8! and there is seemingly no way to escape the perpetual check.

So maybe 13...0-0 does give White a draw after all.



14 ♕e2

Alternatives:

a) 14 ♗b5+?! ♗d7 15 ♕e2 ♗xb5 16 ♕xb5+ ♕d7 17 ♕e2 ♔f8! 18 ♘f3 ♘xd5 and White has no compensation.

b) 14 ♕h5 0-0 15 ♖ae1 ♘f5 (simpler is 15...♘g6! 16 ♘f3 ♕f6 17 ♘d4 ♗d7 when a pawn is a pawn) 16 ♘f3 (or 16 ♘h3!? ♗d7 17 ♘f4 with the initiative, e.g. 17...♕g5 18 ♕xg5 hxg5 19 ♘e6 fxe6 20 dxe6 ♗e8 21 e7+ ♖f7 22 f4 etc.) 16...♕f6? (and here 16...g6! 17 ♕g4 ♗d7, though White has some compensation for the material after 18 ♖4e2 ♕f6 19 ♗d3 ♖ae8 20 ♕b4 ♖xe2 21 ♖xe2) 17 g4 g6 18 ♕h3 ♘g7 19 ♕xh6 ♕xf3 20 ♖f4 ♘f5 21 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 22 ♖xf3 and White wins, J.Majewski-P.Bielak, correspondence 1992.

c) 14 ♘xf7?! ♔xf7 15 ♕f3+ ♘f5 (not 15...♔g8?? 16 ♖ae1 or 15...♔g6?? 16 ♖xe7 and White wins, while if 15...♗f5? 16 ♖ae1 g6 17 g4 with a strong attack) 16

g4 ♖f8! (if 16...♕g5?! 17 ♔h1 ♖f8 18 gxf5 ♗xf5 19 ♖g1 ♕f6 20 ♖f4 g6 21 ♗d3 ♔e7 22 ♗xf5 gxf5 23 ♕b3 b6 24 ♕c2 and White has the initiative) 17 gxf5 ♔g8 and Black is better.

14...hxg5 15 ♖e1 ♗e6 16 dxe6 f6

16...f5? 17 ♖d4 c6 gives equality according to *ECO*, but after the not too difficult 18 ♕d2! d5 19 ♕xg5 ♕d6 20 ♖h4 0-0-0 21 ♗d3 White is better.

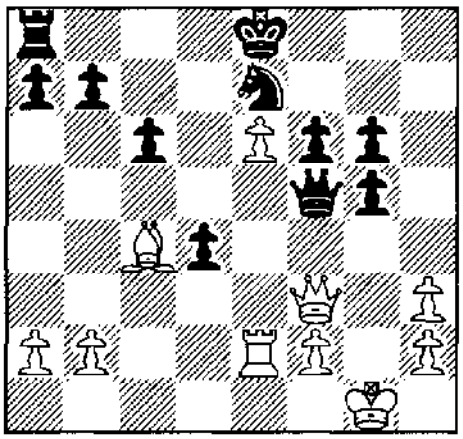
17 ♖e3 c6 18 ♖h3

If 18 ♗d3 ♕c7 19 h3 d5 20 b4 a5 21 b5 c5 and Black is much better.

18...♖xh3 19 gxh3 g6 20 ♕d2

After 20 ♕f3 ♕a5 21 ♖d1 ♕f5 22 ♕b3 b5 23 ♗f1 ♕e5 24 ♖d3 ♖d8 25 ♖e3 ♕c5 Black is close to winning.

20...d5 21 ♕c3 d4 22 ♕f3 ♕a5 23 ♖e2 ♕f5

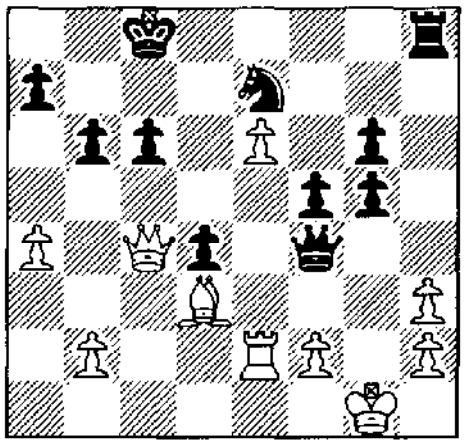


Black is close to winning here too.

24 ♕a3 ♕f4!

Stronger than 24...♕b1+?! which could lead to 25 ♔g2 ♘f5 26 f3 ♘h4+? (here 26...♕c1 with an attack is still OK, though not as good as the game move) 27 ♔f2 ♕h1 28 ♕d6! with sudden counterplay.

25 ♗d3 f5 26 ♕c5 b6 27 ♕c4 0-0-0 28 a4 ♖h8!



Now everything is over and done with.

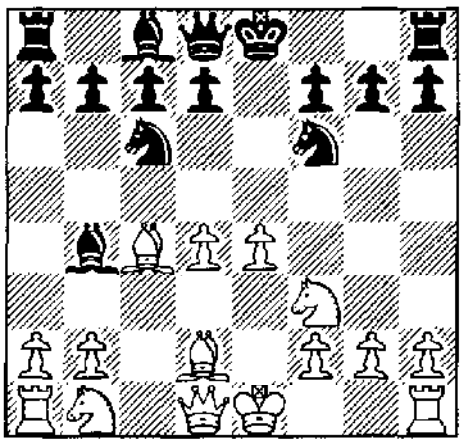
29 a5 ♖xh3 30 ♖e1 b5 31 ♕c2 ♕xh2+ 32 ♔f1 ♕h1+ 33 ♔e2 ♕f3+ 34 ♔d2 ♕xf2+ 35 ♔d1 ♕xc2+ 36 ♔xc2 ♔c7 37 b4 ♔d6 0-1

Game 9

E.Van den Doel-I.Sokolov

Dutch Championship, Leeuwarden 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ 7 ♗d2

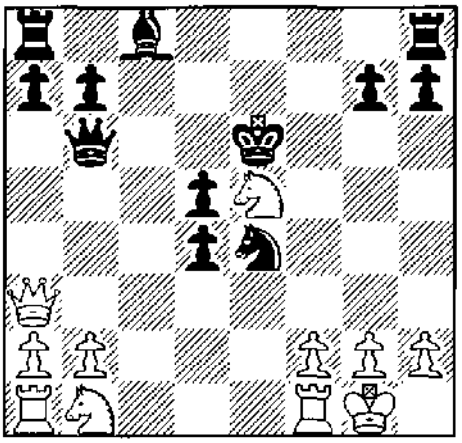


Natural and sound.

7...♗xd2+

Though very logical, this is not Black's only option in this position. He has also tried:

a) 7...♘xe4 8 ♗xb4 ♘xb4 9 ♗xf7+ (otherwise White has nothing, e.g. 9 ♕b3 d5 10 ♕xb4 dxc4 11 0-0 ♕d6 12 ♕xc4 0-0 13 ♘c3 with equality, but even this is not too dangerous) 9...♔xf7 10 ♕b3+ d5 (Black can also try 10...♔f8 11 ♕xb4+ ♕c7 12 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 13 0-0 with equality) 11 ♘e5+ ♔e6! (but not 11...♔f6? 12 f3 ♘d6 13 ♕xb4 ♗f5 14 0-0 and White is better) 12 ♕xb4 c5 13 ♕a3 cxd4 14 ♘f3 ♕b6 15 0-0 ♔f7 16 ♘e5+ (not 16 ♘bd2?! ♖e8 17 ♕b3 ♘xd2 18 ♕xd5+ ♗e6 19 ♕h5+ ♔g8 20 ♘xd2 ♕xb2 21 ♘f3 ♗xa2 and Black is close to winning, G.Lee-G.Flear, British Championship 2002) 16...♔e6 (again 16...♔f6? is strongly met by 17 f3! ♔xe5 18 fxe4 dxe4 19 ♕e7+ ♔d5 20 ♕g5+ ♔d6 21 ♕f4+ ♔d7 22 ♕xe4 and Black has a hard life, while if 18...d3+ 19 ♔h1 dxe4 20 ♕e7+ ♗e6 21 ♘c3 ♖hg8 22 ♖ae1 and White wins)



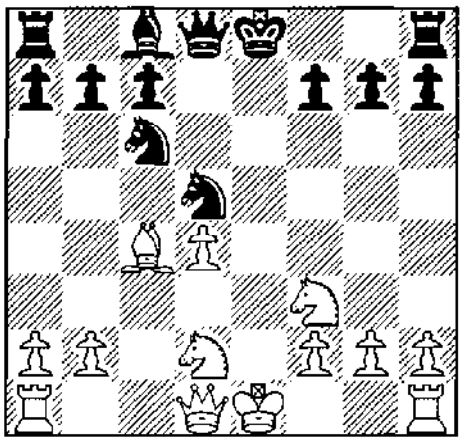
and now White can choose between 17 ♘f3 with equality, and 17 ♘d3, which gives compensation is the following way: 17...♖e8 18 ♖e1 ♔f7 19 f3 ♘d6 20 ♖xe8 ♔xe8 21 ♘d2 ♗f5 22 ♖e1+ ♔f7 23 ♖e5.

b) 7...d5!? is a little known, but decent alternative. After 8 exd5 ♗xd2+ White can vary from the standard 9 ♘bxd2 with 9 ♕xd2, though after 9...♘xd5 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♘c3 ♘ce7 12 ♖fe1 c6 13 ♘e4 h6 14 h3 ♗f5 Black has equality, A.Schwenk I.Krasenkova, Baden Baden 1993.

8 ♘bxd2 d5

8...♘xe4 looks tempting, but White reacts energetically with 9 d5! ♘xd2 10 ♕xd2 ♘e7 11 d6 cxd6 12 ♕xd6 b5 (or 12...♘f5 13 ♕e5+ ♕e7 14 0-0-0 with an attack according to Makarychev) 13 ♗b3 0-0 14 0-0 a5 15 ♖fe1 a4 16 ♗c2 ♘g6 17 ♗xg6 hxg6 18 ♕g3 and White had compensation in A.Tzermiadianos-V.Kotronias, Athens 1998. Also after the even more tempting 18 ♖e7!? ♖a6 19 ♕b4 d5 20 ♖e5 f6 21 ♖e3 ♕a5 22 ♕d4 ♖d8 23 ♖ae1 White has compensation for the pawn.

9 exd5 ♘xd5



10 ♕b3

Some players are afraid of 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♘e5!?, but Black has two sensible ways of ensuring himself an equal game:

a) 11...♘xe5 12 dxe5 ♘f4 13 ♘e4 ♕e7 14 ♕d4 ♖d8 15 ♕c5 ♕xc5 16 ♘xc5 b6 17 ♖ad1 ♗f5 18 ♘a6 c5 19 ♘c7 ♖ab8 with equality, T.Løvholt-R.Monner Sans, correspondence 1995.

b) 11...♘xd4 12 ♘b3 ♘xb3 13 ♗xd5 ♕f6! (13...♘xa1? 14 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 15 ♕h5 is a famous attack that even defeated the great Capablanca) 14 ♗xf7+ (not 14 ♘xf7 ♘xa1! and White has nothing) 14...♖xf7 15 ♕xb3 ♕xe5! and Black had equalised in P.Figueiredo-A.Pereira, Vila Nova de Gaia 2004, because of 16 ♖ae1 ♗e6!.

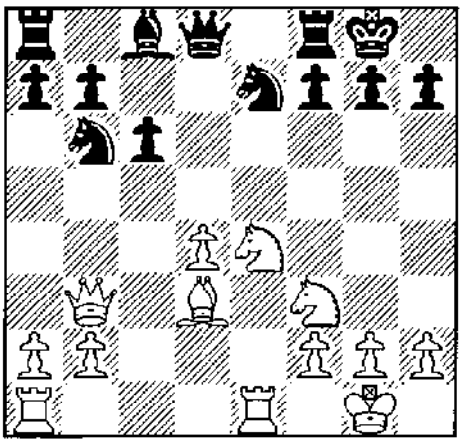
10...♘ce7

This is a little bit passive, after which White manages to organise some small pressure. The stronger 10...♘a5! is investigated in the next game. However, the text move does has the advantage of denying White the possibility of repeating the position, as he can after 10...♘a5.

11 0-0 0-0 12 ♖fe1 c6 13 ♘e4 ♘b6

13...♕b6 is best met by 14 ♘c3 (not 14 ♕a3 ♗g4 15 ♘e5 ♕xd4 16 ♘d6 ♗e6 17 ♘xb7 ♘g6 with equality, E.Sveshnikov V.Chekhov, Sochi 1983) 14...♕xb3 15 ♗xb3 ♗g4 16 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 cxd5 18 ♖c7 and White has a slight advantage according to Makarychev.

14 ♗d3



White is slightly better here as the b6 knight is passive.

14...♘ed5 15 ♘c5 ♖b8 16 ♖ac1?!

This allows Black to become active a bit too easily. I suggest 16 ♕c2!? as an improvement. Then after 16...h6 17 a3 ♘f4 18 ♗h7+ ♔h8 19 ♗e4 ♕f6 20 b4 ♖d8 21 ♖ac1 White keeps some pressure.

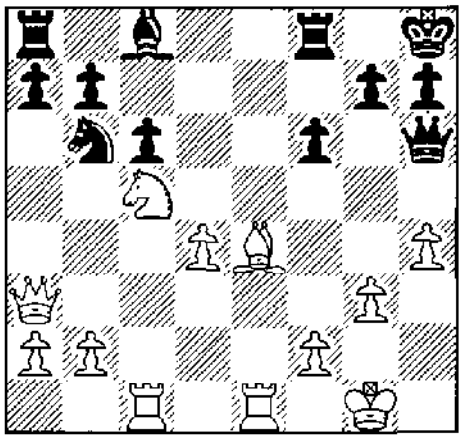
16...♘f4 17 ♗b1

Or 17 ♗c4 ♗g4 18 h3 ♗xf3 19 ♕xf3 ♕g5 20 ♔h2 ♖fd8 21 ♖cd1 with equality.

17...♕f6 18 ♘e5 ♕g5 19 ♕f3 f6

Black is seemingly not completely focused on the need to secure counterplay immediately. Best was 19...♗h3! 20 g3 ♘fd5 and Black equalises. For example, after the aggressive 21 g4 ♘f4 22 ♘e4 ♕h6 23 g5 ♕h4 24 ♕g3 ♕xg3+ 25 hxg3 ♘e6 26 ♖c3 ♗f5 and Black is fine.

20 ♘ed3 ♘bd5 21 ♘xf4 ♘xf4 22 h4 ♕h6 23 g3 ♘d5 24 ♗e4 ♘b6 25 ♕b3+ ♔h8 26 ♕a3 ♖a8



27 ♕e3?

A strange mistake. After 27 ♗f3! White is much better, preparing the invasion of the seventh rank, and keeping all the black pieces tied down.

27...♕xe3 28 ♖xe3 ♖e8 29 ♖ce1 ♘c4 30 ♖3e2 ♘d6 31 ♗d3 ♖xe2 32 ♖xe2 ♔g8 33 ♗c2

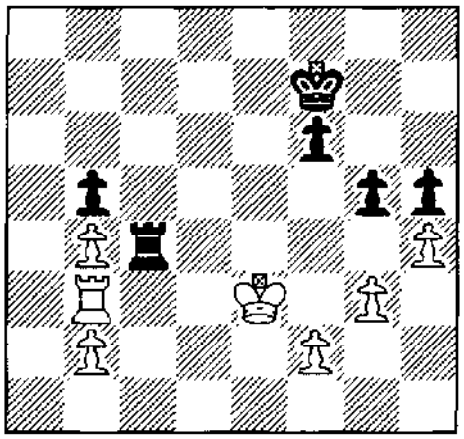
Now White is looking for a draw. Instead after 33 ♔g2 b6 34 ♘e6 ♗b7 Black

has counterplay.

33...b6 34 ♗b3+ ♔f8 35 ♘e6+ ♗xe6 36 ♖xe6 ♘f5 37 ♖xc6 ♘xd4 38 ♖c7 ♘xb3 39 axb3 ♖d8 40 ♖xa7 ♖d3 41 ♖a3 b5 42 b4 ♖d4

You really need to try hard to lose an ending like this. The inactive placement of the rook is a good place to start.

43 ♖b3 h5 44 ♔g2 ♔f7 45 ♔f3 ♖c4 46 ♔e3 g5



47 f4?

This merely creates a lot of weaknesses in his own camp. Instead after 47 hxg5 fxg5 48 ♖c3 ♖xb4 49 ♖c5 ♔f6 50 ♖c6+ ♔f5 51 ♖c5+ ♔g4 52 f3+ ♔xg3 53 ♖xg5+ ♔h4 54 ♖g1 ♖xb2 55 f4 ♖b3+ 56 ♔e4 White is safe.

47...gxh4 48 gxh4 ♔g6 49 ♖c3 ♖xb4 50 ♖c5 ♖b3+ 51 ♔e4 ♖xb2 52 f5+ ♔h6 53 ♖c6?

White could do much better with 53 ♔f3 ♖b4 54 ♔g3 ♖g4+ 55 ♔h3 b4 56 ♖c6 ♔g7 57 ♖c7+ ♔f8 58 ♖b7 ♖c4 59 ♔g3 ♖c3+ 60 ♔f2 b3 61 ♖b6 ♔e7 62 ♖e6+ ♔f7 63 ♖b6 ♖h3 when he can finish up in the endgame with f- and h-pawns, one that offers excellent drawing chances.

53...♖b4+ 54 ♔f3?

This makes it easier, but it was already too late to save the game. If 54 ♔d5 ♖xh4 55 ♖xf6+ ♔g5 56 ♖f8 ♖h2 57 f6 ♔g6 58 ♔e5 ♖c2+ 59 ♔f4 b4 60 ♔f3 ♖c1 61 ♖b8 ♖b1 62 ♖b6 b3 63 ♔g3 h4+ 64 ♔h3 b2 65 ♔h2 h3 66 f7+ ♔xf7 67 ♖b3 ♔f6 and Black wins.

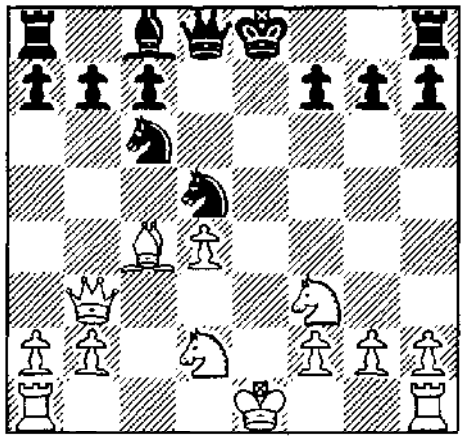
54...♖xh4 55 ♖xf6+ ♔g5 56 ♖g6+ ♔xf5 57 ♖b6 ♖b4 0-1

Game 10

J.Marsden-J.Sutton

Correspondence 2001

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ 7 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 8 ♘bxd2 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♕b3



10...♘a5!

This move secures Black equality, but also allows White to repeat the position.

11 ♕a4+ ♘c6

Forced. After 11...c6?! 12 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 13 ♖c1! Black is in trouble, e.g. 13...♕b5 14 ♕xb5 cxb5 15 d5 ♔e7 16 b4 ♘c4 17 ♘xc4 bxc4 18 ♖xc4 ♔d6 19 0-0 and White has a clear advantage.

12 ♗b5

12 ♕b3!? would repeat the position,

but here White is looking for more.

12...♗d7

After the anti-positional 12...0-0?! 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 0-0 ♘f4 15 ♖fe1 ♗e6 16 ♕xc6 White is much better, J.Bosch-D.Pirrot, German Bundesliga 1997.

13 0-0

White needs to get his king into safety before it is too late. After 13 ♕b3?! ♕e7+ 14 ♔f1 ♗e6! White does not have compensation for the bad position of his king, E.Sveshnikov-E.Mortensen, Leningrad 1984.

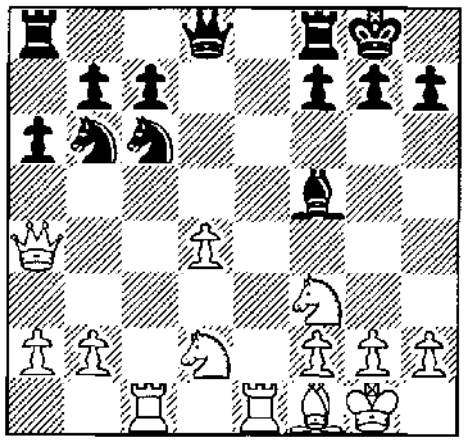
13...0-0 14 ♖fe1 a6 15 ♗f1 ♗f5

This is better than 15...♘cb4 16 ♕b3 ♗f5 17 ♖ac1 a5 18 a3 a4 19 ♕c4 ♘c6 20 ♕b5 ♗c8 21 ♘e4 ♖a5 22 ♕d3 ♗f5 23 ♕d2 and White has a small edge, P.Morssink-E.Van der Bij, correspondence 1990.

16 ♖ac1

Also after 16 ♕b3!? ♖b8 17 ♖ad1 ♕d6 18 a3 there is nothing but equality.

16...♘b6



17 ♕a3!

White tries to sacrifice a pawn to get the initiative.

17...♘xd4 18 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 19 ♘b3

Maybe there was more play in 19 ♘f3!? ♕d6 20 ♕c5 with compensation.

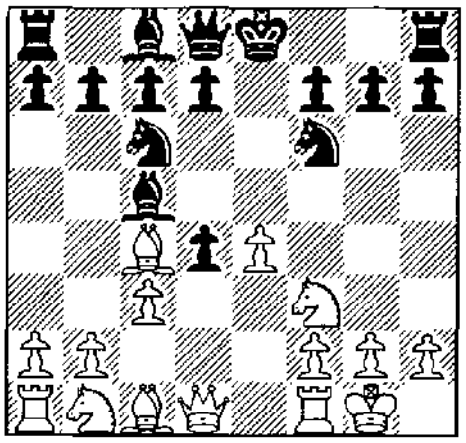
19...♕d6 20 ♕xd6 cxd6 21 ♖cd1 d5 22 ♘c5 ♖fc8 23 ♘xb7 ♖c2 24 ♖e2 ♖c7 25 ♘a5 ♗d7 26 ♘b3 ♗b5 ½-½

Game 11

D.Hergott-G.Garcia

Linares 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 0-0



This romantic gambit does not offer White any chances for an advantage. Actually at times he needs to be careful not to be worse.

6...♘xe4

Others:

a) 6...d5?! is very dangerous. After 7 exd5 ♘xd5 8 ♖e1+ ♗e6 9 ♘g5 White has the advantage, e.g. 9...0-0 10 ♕d3 g6 11 ♖xe6! fxe6 12 ♕h3 ♕e7 13 ♕xe6+ ♕xe6 14 ♘xe6 and White was better in Y.Estrin-S.Letic, correspondence 1967.

b) 6...d3 has been played in some recent games, though mainly by players wanting to avoid main lines they were unfamiliar with. White has a slight plus after almost any move. One line could be 7 e5 d5 8 ♗xd3 ♘g4 9 ♕e2 ♕e7 10 ♗f4

and Black has no easy way of improving his position, as after the possibly best 10...f6 11 cxf6 ♕xe2 12 ♗xe2 ♘xf6 White should secure a clear edge with 13 ♗xc7!.

c) 6...dxc3 looks risky, but after 7 e5!? d5! Black is doing all right. 8 ♗b3 can be met strongly with 8...c2! 9 ♗xc2 ♘e4 10 ♘c3 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 ♗g4 when White's compensation is in doubt, J.Blauert-D.Belotelov, Budapest 1997.

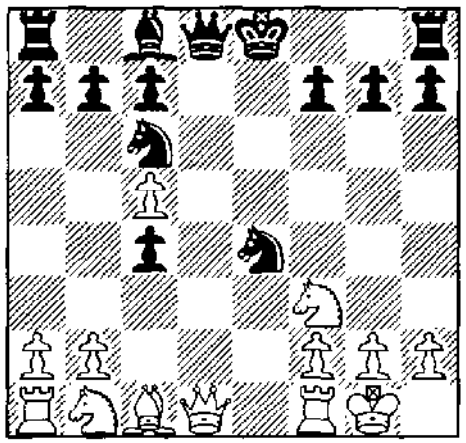
7 cxd4 d5!

The only move. 7...♗e7?! 8 d5 ♘b8 9 ♖e1 ♘d6 (or 9...♘f6? 10 d6 cxd6 11 ♗g5 0-0 12 ♖xe7! ♕xe7 13 ♘c3 gives White a whirlwind initiative) 10 ♗d3 0-0 11 ♘c3 and White has very pleasant compensation for the pawn.

8 dxc5

No choice.

8...dxc4



White has tried several moves in this position, but none that leads to anything better than a struggle (often successful) for equality.

9 ♕xd8+

a) 9 ♕e2 ♕e7!? (more ambitious than the old move 9...♕d3, e.g. 10 ♖e1 f5 11 ♘c3 0-0 12 ♘xe4 fxe4 13 ♕xe4 ♗f5 ½-½ T.L.Petrosian-A.Grischuk, Internet (blitz) 2004; White is certainly not better here, but probably not worse either) 10 ♕xc4 (if 10 ♖e1 ♘xc5 11 ♕xc4 ♗e6! and Black is better – Lukacs) 10...♘xc5 (or 10...f5!? – Lukacs) and now 11 ♗e3!? was suggested by Golod, intending 11...♘e6 12 ♘c3 with compensation, but here 12...♕b4! seems to give White problems proving this. Black is a little better.

b) 9 ♕e1 ♕e7 10 ♘c3 ♘xc3 11 ♕xc3 0-0 12 ♕xc4 ♗e6 was pleasantly equal for Black in A.Pashikian-G.Sargissian, Armenian Championship 2003. And Black can probably create more problems for White with more ambitious play.

9...♔xd8

9...♘xd8? is just wrong. After 10 ♖e1 f5 11 ♘g5 0-0 12 ♘xe4 fxe4 13 ♖xe4 ♗e6 14 ♘c3 ♗f7 15 ♗f4 ♘e6 16 ♗e3 White dominated in L.Barczay-L.Karsa, Hungarian Championship 1980.

10 ♖d1+

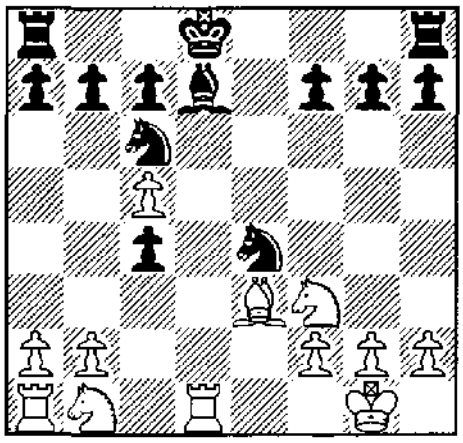
White has also tried 10 ♘g5 ♘xg5 11 ♗xg5+ f6 12 ♖d1+ (after 12 ♗f4 ♘b4 13 ♘a3 ♘d3 14 ♖fd1 ♗d7 15 ♗g3 ♘xb2 16 ♖d4 ♔c8 17 ♘xc4 ♘xc4 18 ♖xc4 a5 19 ♖e1 ♖e8 Black was a pawn up with opposite-coloured bishops in D.Dumitrache-Kr.Georgiev, Athens 1992; with accurate play and help from the opponent, Black managed to gain a full point) 12...♗d7 13 ♗f4 ♘b4! (the way to ensure an advantage) 14 ♘c3 ♘d3 15 ♗g3 ♘xc5 16 ♖d4 ♘e6 17 ♖xc4 was J.Blauert-G.Von Bülow, German Bundesliga 1998, when Black has many ways to try to win with his extra pawn.

10...♗d7

10...♔e8 is met by 11 ♖e1 f5 12 ♘c3 and White is OK.

11 ♗e3

After 11 ♘a3 ♘xc5 Black is just a pawn up, while 11 ♘g5 ♘xg5 12 ♗xg5+ ♔c8 13 ♘a3 ♗e6 14 ♘b5 a6 15 ♘d4 ♘xd4 16 ♖xd4 a5 17 ♖ad1 f6 18 ♗d2 ♖a6 was J.Blauert-M.Hebden, London Lloyds Bank 1991. Again Black managed to convert his extra pawn to a full point despite the opposite-coloured bishops. As in the previous example, this can be attributed to the fact that Black was the stronger player, as well as to the position.



11...♔c8

Black can also play for an advantage with 11...♔e7!? and then after 12 ♘bd2 (if 12 ♘a3 c3! 13 bxc3 ♘xc3 14 ♖d3 ♘e4 15 ♖e1 ♗e6 and Black had a slight edge in K.Honfi-G.Sax, Hungary 1970) 12...♘xd2 13 ♘xd2 ♗e6 14 ♖dc1 (as in F.Ramos Suria-A.Sorin, Seville 1989) 14...♘e5 15 f4 ♘d3 16 ♖c3 b5 17 cxb6 axb6 18 ♘xc4 ♗xc4 19 ♖xc4 c5 allows White to regain his pawn, but his pieces are very badly coordinated and his position full of weaknesses.

12 ♖c1

12 ♘a3 is weaker, when 12...c3 13 b3 ♖e8 14 ♖dc1 ♘b4 15 ♘c1 ♘d5 16 ♗d4 ♘f4 17 ♖c2 ♗f5 18 g3 ♘e6 19 ♗xc3 ♘4xc5 gave Black a very clear edge in P.Tishin-O.Karpeshov, Samara 2002. 18...♖d8 was even stronger, when Black is just winning.

12...♗e6 13 ♘a3 c3 14 bxc3 b6

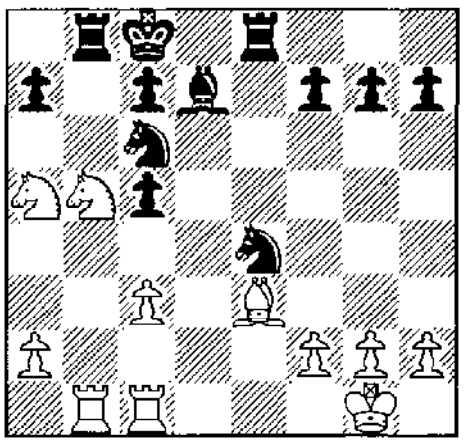
Although natural, this seems a bit too early. Instead 14...♖e8! was a useful waiting move, when White is desperately fighting for equality, and will probably be unsuccessful.

15 ♘d4 ♗d7 16 ♘b3

16 f3 ♘xc5 was a little better for Black in N.Kopylov-M.Govbinder, correspondence 1976.

16...♖e8 17 ♖ab1 ♖b8 18 ♘b5 bxc5 19 ♘a5?

19 ♘xc5! ♘xc5 20 ♗xc5 was necessary, when the game is level after 20...♗f5 21 ♖b3 ♗c2 (21...♖e2!? 22 ♘xa7+ ♘xa7 23 ♗xa7 ♖a8 24 ♗d4 ♖axa2 gives a bit more play, but it is still a dead draw) 22 ♘xa7! ♘xa7 23 ♗xa7 ♗xb3 24 ♗xb8 ♗xa2 25 ♗a7 with a draw.



19...a6

19...♖xb5! was very strong. White has no choice but to enter a ridiculous endgame with 20 ♖xb5 a6 21 ♘xc6 axb5 22 ♘a5 when Black's extra pawn should tell.

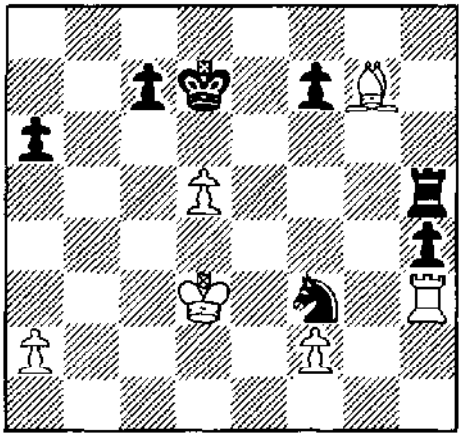
20 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 21 ♘a3?!

White had to play 21 ♘a7+ ♔d7 22 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 23 f3 ♘d6 24 ♗xc5 when Black is better, but not too much.

21...♖xb1 22 ♘xb1 ♘d6 23 c4 ♘f5 24 ♗xc5 ♖e5 25 ♗f8 ♘h4 26 ♗xg7 ♖g5 27 ♗f6 ♖xg2+ 28 ♔f1 ♖xh2 29 ♔e2 ♘f3 30 ♘c3

30 ♗c3 was slightly better, but the position is very bad for White anyway.

30...♖h6! 31 ♗h8 ♖e6+ 32 ♔d3 ♔d7 33 ♘d5 h5 34 ♖h1 h4 35 ♖h3 ♗xd5 36 cxd5 ♖h6 37 ♗g7 ♖h5!



Black has a lot of nice options, e.g. 37...♘g5 38 ♖h2 ♖d6 with a clear extra pawn. After the text White has no choice but to enter a bad rook endgame.

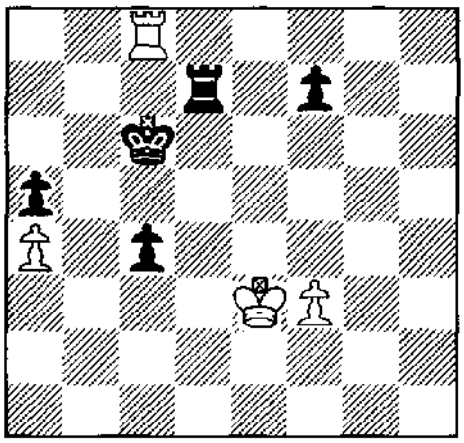
38 ♖xf3 h3 39 ♗e5 ♖xe5 40 ♖xh3 ♖xd5+ 41 ♔c3

White has drawing chances, but in practical terms, it is hard to defend.

41...♖f5 42 ♖d3+ ♔c6 43 f3 ♔b5 44 ♔d2 c5 45 ♖b3+ ♔a4 46 ♖c3 ♖d5+ 47 ♔c2 ♖f5 48 ♔d2 a5 49 ♔e3 ♔b4 50 ♖b3+ ♔c4 51 ♖a3 ♔b5 52 ♖b3+ ♔c6 53 a4 ♖e5+ 54 ♔f4 ♖d5 55 ♖b8 ♖d7

Stronger was 55...♖d4+ 56 ♔e5 ♖xa4 57 ♖f8 ♖d4 58 ♖xf7 ♖d7 59 ♖f6+ ♔b5 and Black should win.

56 ♔e3 c4 57 ♖c8+



57...♔d5

Sacrificing the a-pawn seems a bit unnecessary.

58 ♖a8 ♔c5 59 ♖xa5+ ♔b4 60 ♖a8 c3 61 ♖c8 ♔b3 62 a5 c2 63 a6 ♔b2 64 ♖b8+ ♔c1 65 ♔e2 ♖a7 66 ♖b6 f5 67 ♔e1 f4 68 ♔e2 ♖a8 69 ♔e1 ♖e8+ 70 ♔f2 ♖a8

70...♖d8 71 ♔e1 ♖d3 72 a7 ♖e3+ 73 ♔f2 ♖a3 74 ♖b7 is also a draw.

71 ♔e1 ♖a7 72 ♔e2 ♖e7+ 73 ♔f2 ♖e3 74 a7 ♖a3 75 ♖b7 ♔d2 76 ♖d7+ ♔c3 77 ♖c7+ ♔b2 78 ♖b7+ ♔a1 79 ♖c7 ♔b1 80 ♖b7+ ♔a1 81 ♖c7 ♖a2?!

Why not just accept that the position is now drawn?

82 a8♕ ♖xa8 83 ♖xc2 ♔b1 84 ♖c4 ♖a2+ 85 ♔f1 ♔b2 86 ♖xf4 ♔c3 87 ♖g4 ♔d3 88 ♖g2 ♖a1+ 89 ♔f2 ♔d4?

89...♖a2+ 90 ♔g3 ♖a8 still draws. After the text suddenly White is winning.

90 ♖g5! ♖a8 91 ♔g3 ♖a7 92 ♔g4 ♖a8 93 f4 ♖a1 94 ♖e5 ♖g1+ 95 ♔f5 ♖g8 96 ♖e6 ♖f8+ 97 ♔g5 ♖g8+ 98 ♖g6 ♖f8 99 f5 ♔d5 100 ♖e6 ♖g8+ 101 ♔f6 ♖f8+ 102 ♔g6 ♖g8+ 103 ♔f7 ♖g5 104 f6 1-0

Summary

As we have seen in the five games in this chapter Black has nothing to fear from the classical lines of the Italian Game, short of a short draw that is. The various gambits, the Möller and 6 0-0, are only dangerous for White and belong to the past. The main line is also completely harmless and the only problem Black needs to worry about is how to create winning chances.

For White, the idea of winning seems to be far away. If you want to play for a win in the Italian Game, you need to play 5 d3, as presented in the next chapter.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4

6 0-0 ♘xe4 7 cxd4 d5 – *Game 11*

6...♗b4+ *(D)* **7 ♗d2**

7 ♘c3 ♘xe4 8 0-0 ♗xc3 9 d5 *(D)*

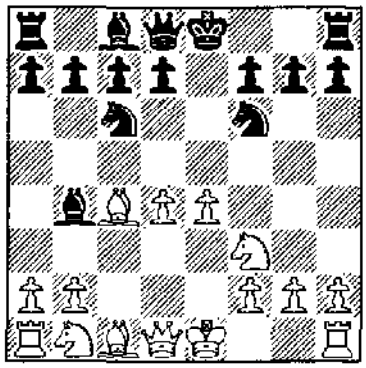
9...♘e5 – *Game 7*

9...♗f6 – *Game 8*

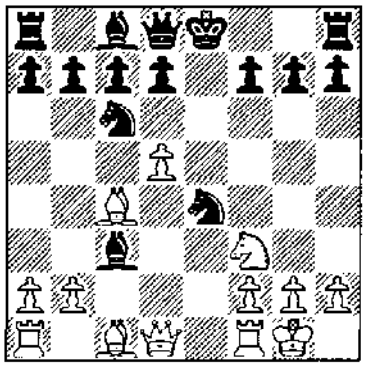
7...♗xd2+ 8 ♘bxd2 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♕b3 *(D)*

10...♘ce7 – *Game 9*

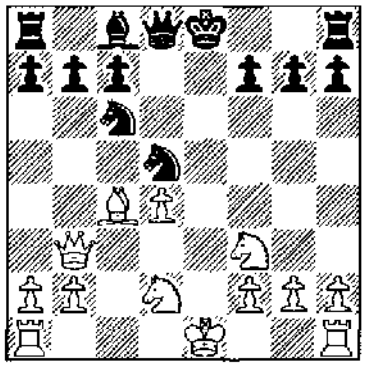
10...♘a5 – *Game 10*



6...♗b4+

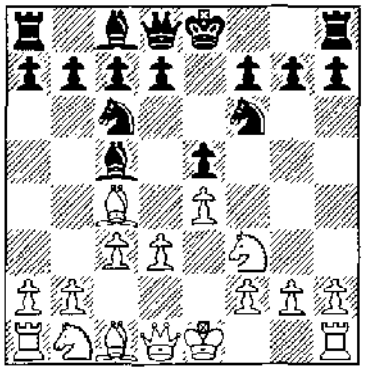


9 d5



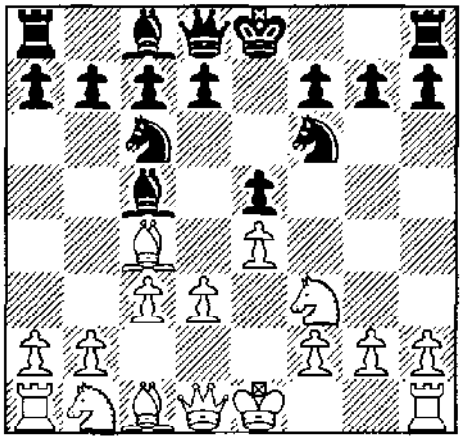
10 ♕b3

CHAPTER FOUR



The Italian Regretted: White Plays 5 d3

As said in the previous chapter I do not believe that there is anything dangerous to White's play after **1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d3**.



Black should always equalise without any real effort. Actually the line reminds me quite a bit of the 4 d3 line in the Ruy Lopez; sometimes there are even transpositions between the two openings.

Having stated once more that the line is harmless, it is important for me to repeat the old Russian distinction between drawn positions and equal positions. There are players far stronger than me who play this line regularly as White and with good results.

In Games 12 and 13 below we shall look at an early 5...a6, where Black retains the idea of playing ...d7-d5 in one move. Black will always want to put his bishop on a7 in these quiet lines, so White sometimes pre-empts this early transposition with a quick 5 b4!?. The resulting positions of this rapid queenside advance can be seen in Games 14 and 15. In the next game White plays a2-a4 without any apparent plan beyond preventing Black from exchanging the white bishop with a quick ...♘a5.

Finally, in Games 17 and 18, we will examine positions not too different from the first two games in the chapter, where we have the Italian with 5 d3 in its purest form.

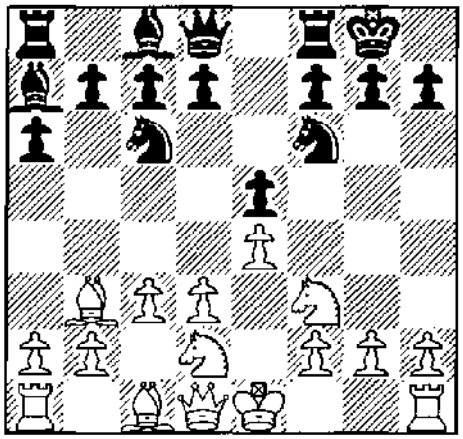
Game 12
S.Vysochin-S.Kapnisis
Corinth 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3

♘f6 5 d3 a6

Black should not overstate the harmlessness of 5 d3 with 5...d5?!, as White can then claim an advantage after 6 exd5 ♘xd5 7 ♕b3! (this is stronger then theoretical 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♖e1 after which 8...♘f6! leads to an unclear game) 7...♘f4 8 ♗xf4 exf4 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 10 0-0 ♕xd3 11 ♖e1 and White is much better.

6 ♗b3 ♗a7 7 ♘bd2 0-0!?



Black's plan is simple. He wants to play ...d7-d5 in one move. Therefore White should forget about his extravagant plans and just castle.

8 h3 d5

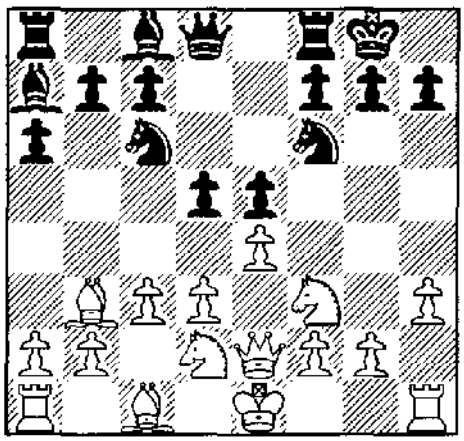
8...d6 transposes to the next game.

9 ♕e2

9 0-0 leaves us with two interesting options to analyse:

a) 9...♖e8?! makes little sense as the ideal square for this rook is d8. Black should focus on getting it there instead of playing this kind of 'wrist-chess'. Now after 10 ♖e1 dxe4 (if 10...h6? 11 exd5 ♘xd5 12 d4 with a clear advantage) 11 ♘g5 ♖e7 12 ♘dxe4 ♘xe4 13 ♘xe4 ♕d7 (not 13...h6? 14 ♕h5! ♕f8 and White wins after 15 ♗g5! ♖e8 16 ♘f6+ gxf6 17 ♗xh6) 14 ♗g5 ♖e8 15 ♕h5 ♖f8 16 d4 and White is much better.

b) 9...dxe4 10 dxe4?! (the knight on d2 is unemployed after this move, and what is more important White has already lost his social insurance; instead 10 ♘xe4 h6 11 a4 ♘xe4 12 dxe4 ♕f6 is just equal) 10...♕e7 11 ♘h2?! (White does not control the centre so the attack on the kingside is condemned to defeat; more sensible was 11 ♕c2 ♗c6 12 ♖d1 with good chances for equality) 11...♖d8 12 ♕f3 ♗e6 13 ♗c2 ♖d6 14 ♖e1 ♕d7 15 ♘df1 ♘e7 16 b3 ♘g6 17 ♗g5 ♘e8! 18 ♖ad1 ♕c6 19 ♘g4 h6 20 ♖xd6 ♘xd6 21 ♗d2 ♘b5 22 ♖c1 ♖d8 and Black is slightly better, V.Bologan-M.Adams, German Bundesliga 1995.



9...dxe4 10 dxe4

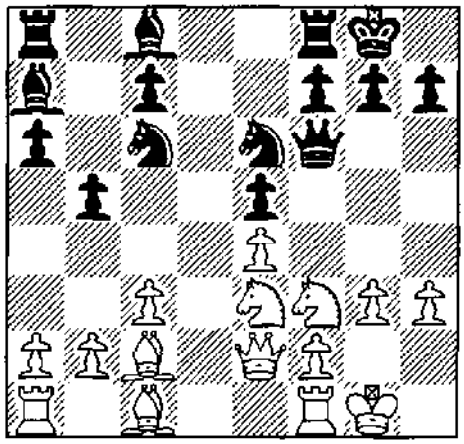
If 10 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 11 dxe4 ♕f6 with equality.

10...♘d7!?

Or 10...♕e7 11 ♘e4 ♗e6 12 ♘g5 ♗d7 13 0-0 ♖ad8 with equality, but not 11...b5?! (the white knight wants to go to e3, so why provoke this?) 12 ♘e3 ♘a5 13 ♗c2 ♘b7 14 g4! (an old idea by Wilhelm Steinitz – White has a stable centre can therefore start a kingside attack) 14...g6 15 ♖g1 ♘d6 16 g5 ♘h5 17 ♘d5 ♕d8 18

♘xe5 with a clear advantage, V.Komliakov-M.Marin, Rumanian Team Championship 1993.

11 0-0 ♘c5 12 ♗c2 ♘e6 13 ♘c4 ♕f6 14 g3 b5 15 ♘e3

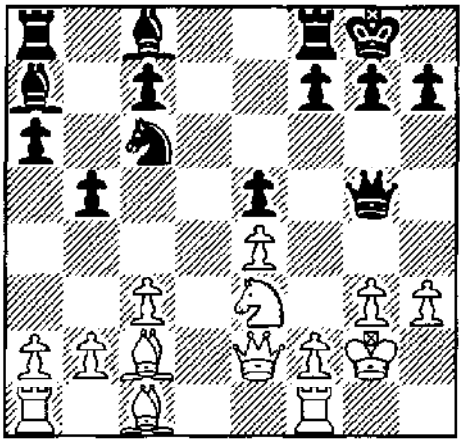


15...♘g5?!

Black does not benefit from this exchange. Better was 15...♕h6 16 h4 ♕h5 17 ♘d5 ♖d8 18 a4 ♗d7 with an unclear game.

16 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 17 ♔g2

Now White is slightly better.



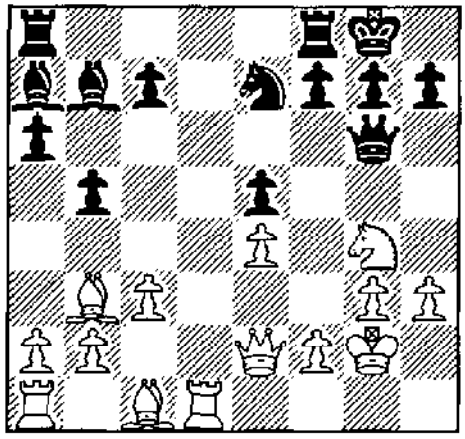
17...♕h6

After 17...♗e6 White puts pressure on the queenside with 18 a4. Unfortunately for Black he cannot simplify the position, since if 18...♗xe3 19 ♗xe3 ♕g6 20 axb5 axb5 21 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 22 ♕xb5! ♖b8 23 ♕d3 ♖xb2? 24 ♗a4! and White wins.

18 ♖h1 ♕d6 19 ♖d1 ♕e6 20 ♘f5 ♘e7 21 ♗b3 ♕f6 22 ♘e3 ♗b7?!

This allows White to simplify the position himself and retain his agile knight. Better was 22...♖b8 23 ♘g4 ♗xg4 24 hxg4 ♖fd8 25 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 26 a4 and White has some plus.

23 ♘g4 ♕g6



24 f3!?

Here White could have played 24 ♘xe5 ♕xe4+ 25 ♕xe4 ♗xe4+ 26 f3 ♗f5 27 a4 and in the endgame Black is under pressure in the centre and on the queenside. White has the advantage in the game as well though.

24...♘c6 25 ♗d5 ♖fe8 26 a4! bxa4

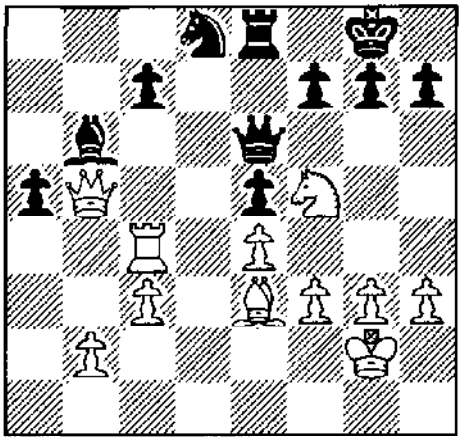
Black has great problems organising his pieces. He could quickly go wrong with 26...h5?! 27 axb5 axb5 28 ♘e3 b4 29 ♘f5 bxc3 30 bxc3 and White is much better because 30...♗b6? does not work, i.e. 31 ♖xa8 ♗xa8 32 ♕a2 ♔f8 33 ♘h4 ♕f6 34 ♗g5 ♕xg5 35 ♗xf7 and White wins.

27 ♖xa4 ♗b6 28 ♘e3 a5 29 ♘f5 ♘d8

29...♗a6 is possible, but then 30 ♕d2 h6 31 b3 ♗b5 32 ♖a2 ♖ad8 33 c4 and

White retains the pressure.

30 ♗xb7 ♘xb7 31 ♕b5 ♕e6 32 ♖c4 ♖ad8 33 ♖xd8 ♘xd8 34 ♗e3



34...g6?

Here Black misses his chance. After 34...c6! 35 ♕a4 ♗xe3 36 ♘xe3 ♕h6 Black has counterplay.

35 ♗xb6 cxb6 36 ♘e3 ♘b7?!

This loses directly. Better was 36...♖e7 37 ♘d5 ♖b7 38 ♖c7 ♖xc7 39 ♘xc7 ♕d6 40 ♘d5 and Black has some illusory chances for a draw.

37 ♖c6 ♕e7 38 ♖xb6 ♘d6 39 ♖xd6 1-0

Game 13

V.Iordachescu-Z.Gyimesi

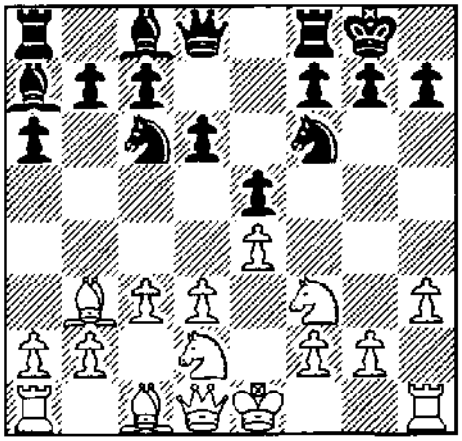
Rumania 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d3 a6!? 6 ♗b3 d6

Black chooses a different strategy based on a solid centre and slow development. In many ways this can be compared to the last two games of this chapter, if it was not for White delaying castling.

7 h3 ♗a7 8 ♘bd2 0-0

Another critical position. White has to choose between the plan executed in the game with ♘f1, or simply transpose to Games 17 and 18 by castling. This is matter of taste as both variations are equal.



9 ♘f1

Against 9 ♕e2 then 9...♘d7!? looks good. Black wants to remove the white bishop from the b3-g8 diagonal and perhaps prepare ...f7-f5. After 10 ♘f1 ♘c5 11 ♗c2 ♘e6 12 g3 b5 13 ♘e3 ♘c7 14 h4 b4 15 ♘g5 f6 16 ♕h5 h6 17 ♗b3 d5 18 ♘xd5 bxc3 19 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 20 bxc3 gave Black equality in Kolar-Straka, Czech Republic 2002. One possible continuation is 20...♘xd5 21 exd5 ♗xd5 22 ♗xh6 ♗xb3 (or 22...gxh6 23 ♕g6+ with equality) 23 ♕g6 ♖f7 24 axb3 ♕d5 25 0-0 ♕xb3 26 ♕e4 ♖d8 27 ♖xa6 ♗b6 28 ♖a8 ♖xa8 29 ♕xa8– ♖f8 30 ♕e4 and it is White who keeps the balance.

9...d5!?

This is not illogical. White has played the time-consuming ♘f1 and Black wants to exploit this.

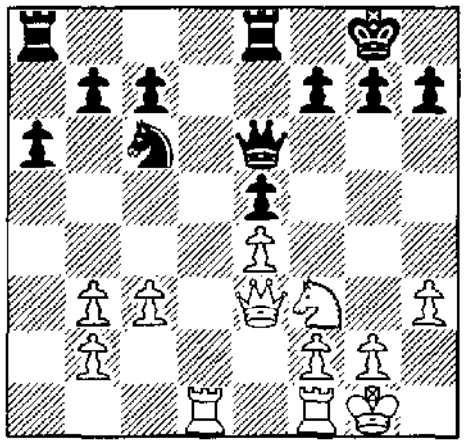
10 ♕e2 ♖e8 11 ♗g5 dxe4 12 dxe4 ♗e6 13 ♖d1 ♕e7 14 ♘e3

Also after 14 ♘g3 ♗xb3 15 axb3 ♕e6 16 0-0 h6 17 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 Black has achieved equality.

14...♗xe3 15 ♕xe3 ♗xb3 16 axb3 ♕e6 17 ♗xf6

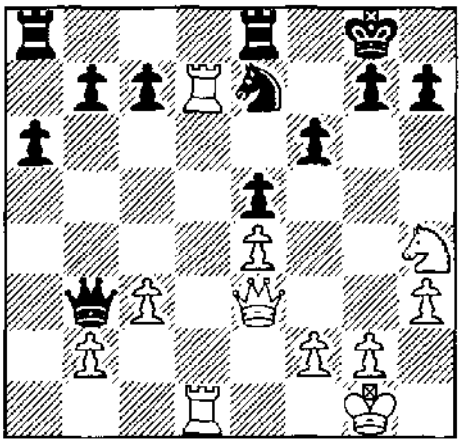
If 17 0-0 ♘h5! 18 ♘d2 h6 19 ♗h4 ♘f4 20 ♗g3 ♘h5 Black has achieved full equality.

17...♕xf6 18 0-0 ♕e6



In a position like this a draw is the natural result.

19 ♖d5 f6 20 ♖fd1 ♘e7 21 ♖d7 ♕xb3 22 ♘h4



22...♖ac8

If Black takes another pawn with 22...♕xb2, White continues 23 ♘f5 ♘xf5 24 exf5 ♕a3 25 ♖xc7 ♖e7 26 ♕b6 ♖xc7 27 ♕xc7 b5 28 ♖d7 and his counterplay is good enough for a draw.

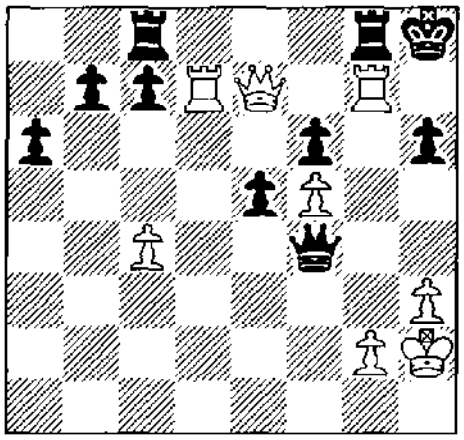
23 ♘f5 ♘xf5 24 exf5 ♖f8 25 ♕c5 h6 26 c4

White could also try 26 ♕c7!?, but after 26...♖f7 27 ♕e6 ♕xe6 28 fxe6 ♖xd7 29 ♖xd7 b6 it is White who needs to draw, which he can manage by 30 e7 ♖c8 31 ♖xc7 ♔f7 32 ♖b7 with equality.

26...♔h8 27 ♖1d3 ♕xb2 28 ♖g3 ♖g8 29 ♔h2

Or 29 ♕c7 ♕c1+ 30 ♔h2 ♕f4 31 ♔g1 ♕c1+ 32 ♔h2 ♕f4 with an equal position.

29...♕b6 30 ♕e7 ♕xf2 31 ♖xg7 ♕f4+



32 ♔h1

White could have set a trap with 32 ♔g1 ♕e3+ 33 ♔f1 ♕c1+ 34 ♔f2 ♕c2+ 35 ♔g3, with the idea of 35...♕xf5?? 36 ♔h4!! and White wins, a fantastic idea mentioned by Gyimesi. Instead, after 35...♕xc4 36 ♔h2 ♕f4+ Black draws.

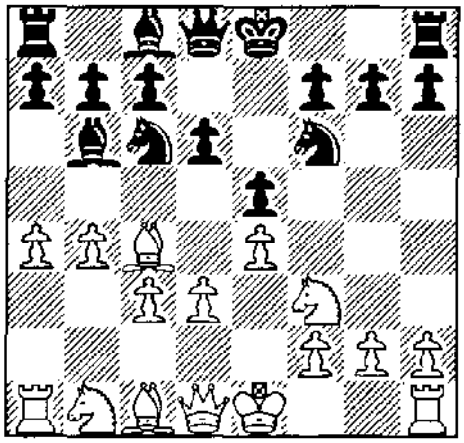
32...♕f1+ 33 ♔h2 ♕f4+ 34 ♔h1 ♕f1+ ½-½

Game 14

L.Yudasin-A.Lenderman

Philadelphia 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 b4 ♗b6 6 d3 d6 7 a4



This assault should not be dangerous for Black. The attack on the a- and b-files is happening in too narrow an area to create serious problems for Black. And what is more important, White does not have full stability and control over his centre, which offers Black good chances for counterplay exactly there.

7...a5

5 d3 d6 6 b4 ♗b6 7 a4 a5 is the usual move order to reach this position. Yudasin chose a slightly different sequence to avoid the possibility of 5...a6, discouraging b2-b4, as the bishop can then retreat to a7 in one go.

8 b5 ♘e7

8...♘b8!? is less popular, though still good, e.g. 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗h4 g5 12 ♗g3 ♗g4 and the position is equal according to Unzicker.

9 0-0

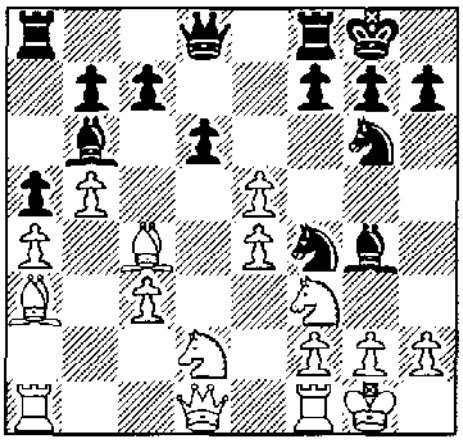
Against 9 ♘bd2, 9...c6! achieves equality directly, based on 10 bxc6 bxc6 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♗a3 ♖b8 13 ♗b3 ♘g6 and Black is alright. The solid 9...0-0 is also fine, e.g. 10 ♗a2 ♘g6 11 ♘c4 ♗c5 12 0-0 ♗e6 13 d4 exd4 14 cxd4 ♗b4 15 d5 ♗d7! (inferior is 15...♗g4 16 h3 ♗xf3 17 ♕xf3 and White was slightly better in L.Psakhis-S.Skembris, Beersheba 1993) 16 ♕d4 ♖e8 17 ♗g5 ♗c5 18 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 19 ♕xf6 gxf6 20 ♖fe1 ♘e5 with equality.

9...0-0 10 ♘bd2

10 ♗g5?! ♘g6 11 ♘h4 ♔h8 12 ♘xg6+ fxg6! is a useful trick to remember. We learn that we should recapture towards the centre in the middlegame, but when you see an attacking chance, you should not hesitate to use it. After 13 ♗e3 c6 14 ♕e2 d5 Black has an initiative.

10...♘g6 11 ♗b3

11 ♗a3?! would be a mistake, as Black can exploit the absence of the bishop from the kingside with 11...♘h5 12 d4 ♘hf4 13 dxe5, and now the aggressive 13...♗g4! is strongest.

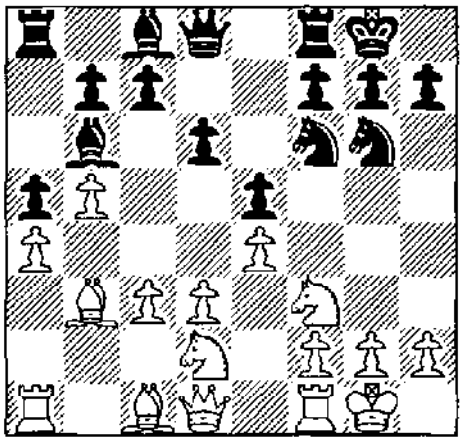


White has the following discouraging opportunities:

a) 14 ♕c2 ♕d7 15 ♔h1 ♗xf3 16 ♘xf3 ♕g4 17 ♘e1 ♘xe5 18 f3 ♕h4 19 g3 ♕h3 and Black had an attack in V.Cordeiro-J.Soberano, correspondence 1996.

b) 14 g3 ♘xe5 15 gxf4 ♗xf3 16 ♘xf3 ♘xc4 17 ♕d5 ♘xa3 18 ♖xa3 ♕f6 19 f5 g6 20 ♕xb7 gxf5 21 e4 ♔h8 22 ♔h1 ♖ae8 23 exf5 ♖g8 and Black was much better in the top level game, C.Lutz-A.Khalifman, Wijk aan Zee 1995.

c) 14 exd6 cxd6 15 ♕b3 is probably White's best option, though after 15...♕f6 Black has perfect compensation for the pawn.



11...♗e6?!

Seemingly a harmless developing move, but in reality the position is sharper than it appears at first sight. White is coming round with his knight, causing Black real concerns, and all Black can think of is this simple automatic move, with no plan or idea behind it. Or at least that's what it looks like. Maybe Black was surprised by the troubles he faced later on, in the middlegame with opposite-coloured bishops.

Instead:

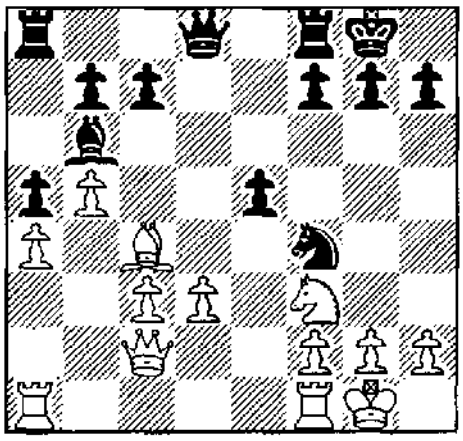
a) 11...d5!? directly could be an alternative. After something like 12 ♗a3 ♖e8 13 exd5 ♘xd5 14 ♘e4 h6 Black is alright, e.g. 15 g3 ♗g4 16 ♘d6 cxd6 17 ♗xd5 ♕d7 etc.

b) 11...c6 is also better, when the position after 12 bxc6 bxc6 13 d4 ♗g4 14 ♕c2 should be equal. Then Black can try 14...♘f4!? 15 dxe5 dxe5 16 ♘xe5 ♗e2 17 ♘df3 ♘6h5 18 ♖e1 ♗xf3 19 ♘xf3 ♕d7 when he has compensation for the pawn according to Greenfeld. I am a little suspicious about this, but maybe it is worth a go?

12 ♘c4 d5 13 exd5 ♘xd5 14 ♕c2

A simple alternative here was 14 ♘xb6!? cxb6 15 ♘g5 ♘gf4 16 ♘xe6 ♘xe6 17 ♗a3 and White is better. But Yudasin was no doubt looking forward to skating around on the light squares.

14...♘df4 15 ♗xf4 ♗xc4 16 ♗xc4 ♘xf4



17 g3?!

This is slightly inaccurate. White is still better after the text move, but more energetic was 17 ♖fe1! ♖e8 18 d4 exd4 19 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 20 ♖e1 and Black is in trouble. After the only move 20...♕f8 (if 20...♘e6 21 cxd4 ♕d7 22 ♕f5 and White is much better) 21 ♕f5 ♘e6 22 ♗xe6 fxe6 23 ♕xe6+ ♕f7 24 ♕e4 ♖d8 (not 24...dxc3? 25 ♘g5!! ♕xf2+ 26 ♔h1 g6 27 ♕e7 and White wins) 25 cxd4 White has a clear advantage.

17...♘g6 18 ♕e2 ♕d6 19 ♕e4 c6 20 ♖ab1 ♖ab8 21 ♕f5 ♕f6?!

21...♗d8! was necessary; after 22 bxc6 bxc6 23 ♖xb8 ♕xb8 24 d4 ♗f6 White is better, but Black can hold the position.

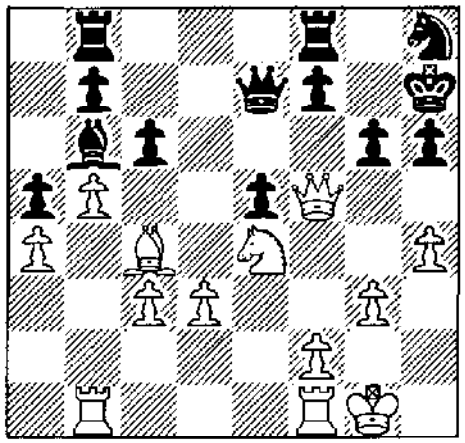
22 ♕h5

Or 22 ♕xf6 gxf6 23 d4 and White is

much better. But White wants to keep the queens and the pressure on.

22...h6 23 ♘d2 ♔h7 24 ♘e4 ♕e7 25 ♕f5 ♕c7 26 ♕h5 ♕e7 27 h4 ♘h8 28 ♕f5+ g6??

A forgivable blunder, but also after 28...♔g8 29 ♔g2 White has a clear advantage.



29 ♕d7! ♗d8

The point is 29...♕xd7 30 ♘f6+ ♔g7 31 ♘xd7 and White wins.

30 bxc6 ♕xd7 31 cxd7 ♔g7 32 ♖b5 1-0

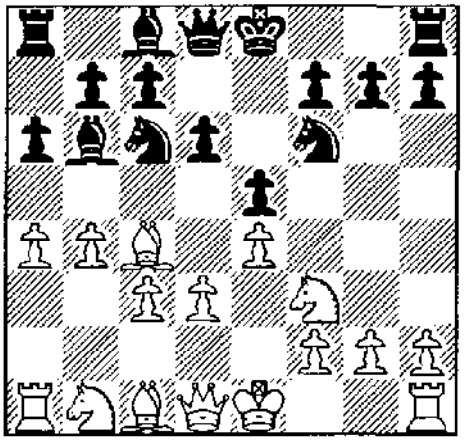
Game 15

V.Nevednichy-Z.Gyimesi

Miskolc 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗b6 5 a4 a6 6 c3 ♘f6 7 d3 d6

This time the Italian Game has taken a short trip through the Evans Gambit Declined. Another move order can be seen in the previous game. By the standard route, 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d3 d6 6 b4 ♗b6 7 a4, the move here would have been 7...a6?!, which in my opinion is weaker than 7..a5. Black should not allow White to occupy all this space on the queenside.



8 ♕b3

I do not like this move too much. It is hard to see what good the queen is doing on b3 this early on, and later it might very well find itself better placed somewhere else. Simpler is 8 0-0 0-0 9 a5 ♗a7, when we have a branching:

a) 10 ♘bd2 ♘e7 11 ♗b3 ♘g6 12 ♘c4 ♖e8 13 ♖e1 h6 was played in C.Lutz-P.Leko, Cap d'Agde 1994, and now 14 ♘e3 ♘f4 15 ♖b1 gives White some advantage.

b) 10 ♖e1 h6 11 ♘bd2! (11 h3 is only required in this structure if you want to play d3-d4; here Black can reply 11...♘h5! 12 d4 ♕f6 13 ♗e3 ♘f4 with unclear play, G.Timoshenko-P.Jaracz, Koszalin 1999) 11...♘e7 12 ♘f1 ♘g6 13 ♘g3 and White is slightly better.

8 ♗g5?! is weaker, as it can be strongly met by 8...h6! 9 ♗h4 g5, where Black exploits the fact that he has not yet castled kingside. After 10 ♗g3 ♘h5 11 h4 g4 12 ♘h2 ♖g8 13 ♘f1 ♕f6 Black was much better in J.Timman-J.Smejkal, Wijk aan Zee 1975.

8...0-0

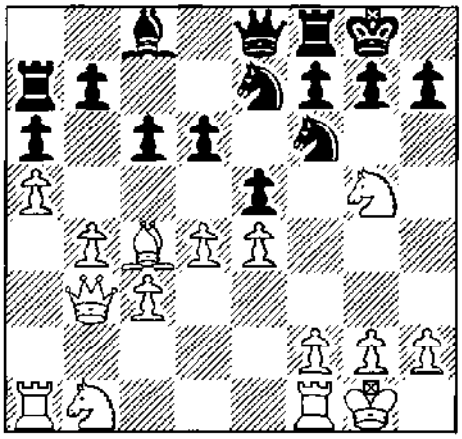
8...♕e7 9 0-0 a5!? is also interesting. This seems reasonable even with a lost

tempo (...a7-a6-a5), as the white queen might not be too well placed on b3 here. After 10 b5 ♘d8 11 ♘bd2 0-0 we have an unclear game, though White can avoid it by flicking in 9 a5!?.

9 a5 ♗a7 10 0-0 ♘e7 11 ♘g5

Also after 11 ♗e3 c6!? 12 ♗xa7 ♖xa7 13 ♕c2 would White have no advantage.

11...♕e8 12 ♗e3 c6 13 ♗xa7 ♖xa7 14 d4



14...exd4

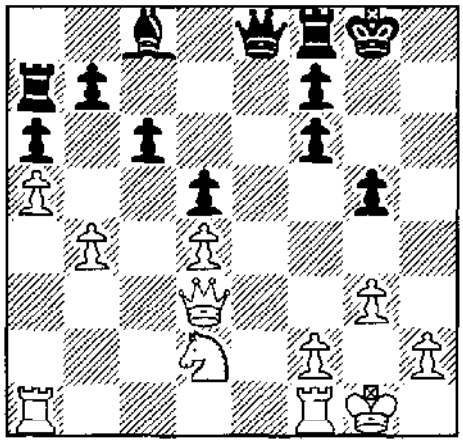
Here Black can sharpen the game with 14...♘g6!? 15 dxe5 ♘xe5 16 f4 ♘xc4 17 ♕xc4 h6 18 ♕d4 ♖a8 19 e5 with an unclear position.

15 cxd4 h6 16 e5 hxg5 17 exf6 gxf6 18 ♘d2 d5 19 ♗d3 ♘g6 20 ♕c2 ♘f4 21 g3?!

White is too optimistic here, hoping his structure will prove superior. The simple 21 ♖fe1 ♕d7 22 ♖e3 was better, when the position is unclear.

21...♘xd3 22 ♕xd3

Here it looks as if White is much better. His main plan is to play a game of hide and seek and end up torturing Black in a gruelling ending. Black is faced with the question of how to defend the b7-pawn and get the ♖a7 into play. He solved this with an imaginative idea...



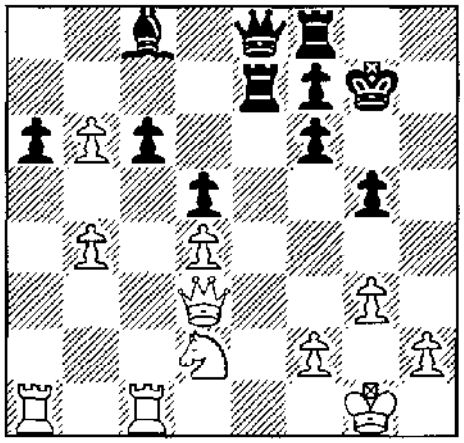
22...b5!! 23 axb6

White needs to test Black's idea. After 23 ♖fc1 ♖e7 24 ♖e3 ♖xe3 25 fxe3 ♕e6 26 ♘b3 ♖e8 27 ♖e1 f5 Black is at least slightly better.

23...♖e7!

White can surely still save the game, but now it is very difficult.

24 ♖fc1 ♔g7



25 ♘f1?

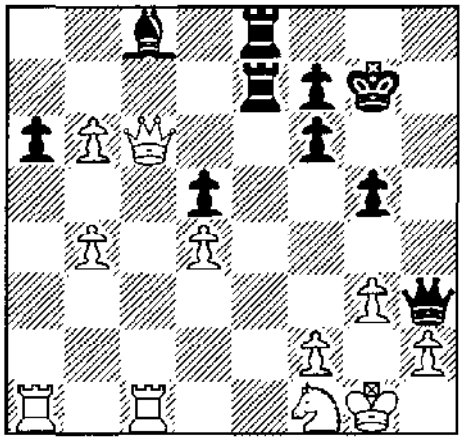
This is too passive. White needs some counterplay, which could be obtained with 25 ♘b3!, even though after 25...♕d7 26 ♘c5 ♕h3 27 ♕f1 ♕h5 28 ♘xa6 (28 f3!?, with the idea of ♕f2, is probably much better and should give White some

chances) 28...♖h8 29 ♕g2 ♗h3 30 g4! ♗xg4 31 ♘c5 ♗f3 32 ♕g3 f5 33 ♘d3 ♗e4 34 ♘f4 ♕h4 Black's attack is very unpleasant.

25...♕d7 26 ♕c3

Also after 26 ♖e1 ♖xe1 27 ♖xe1 ♕b7 28 ♘e3 ♕xb6 29 ♕c3 ♗d7 30 ♖a1 ♖b8 31 ♘c2 ♗f5 32 ♘e3 ♗e4 Black would be much better.

26...♖fe8! 27 ♕xc6 ♕h3



28 ♕c3

White cannot play 28 b5? because of 28...♗f5! 29 b7 (or 29 bxa6 ♗e4) 29...♗e4 30 f3 ♗xf3 31 ♖c2 ♖c2 and Black wins.

28...♗g4 29 b7 ♗e2 30 ♖c2 ♖xb7 31 ♖xe2?

White is falling over, but after 31 f3 ♖be7 Black would also be close to winning.

31...♖xe2 32 ♖xa6 0-1

Since Black wins after both 32...♕f5 and 32...♖c7.

Game 16

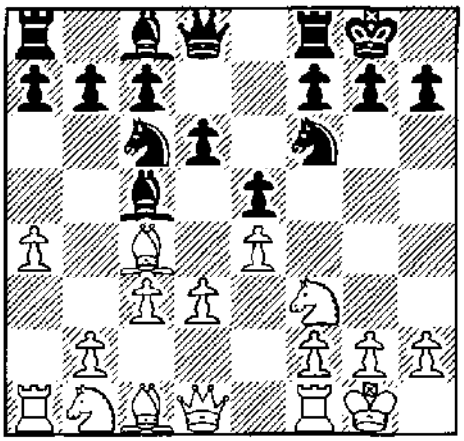
S.Movsesian-A.Morozevich

Prague (rapid) 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 0-0 ♘f6 5 d3 d6 6 c3 0-0

This is main position for the 5 d3 variation. Here Black cannot really refrain from castling. The old idea of 6...a6 7 ♗b3 ♗a7 8 ♘bd2 h6?! intending ...g7 g5 has one major defect: Black will not manage to create an attack, but instead will just weaken his own position, e.g. 9 ♖e1 g5 10 ♘f1 g4 11 ♘3d2 ♘h5 12 ♘e4 ♘f4 13 ♗e3 b5 14 ♘a3 ♕f6 15 ♗d5 ♗d7 16 ♘c2 ♗xe3 17 ♘cxe3 h5 18 a4 and White had the advantage in D.King-V.Hort, Dortmund 1988.

7 a4



This is a harmless sideline which gives Black good chances.

7...a6

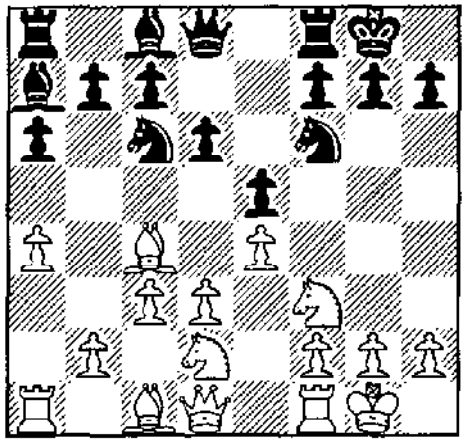
7...a5!? is also fine, e.g. 8 ♘bd2 ♗a7 9 ♗b3 ♘h5 10 ♘c4 ♕f6 11 ♘fxe5 ♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 13 d4 ♕xc4 14 ♕xh5 ♗e6 with equality, J.Speelman-B.Gulko, Novi Sad Olympiad 1990.

8 ♘bd2

White can exchange the strong dark-squared bishop with 8 ♗e3, but after 8...♗xe3 9 fxe3 d5 Black should be OK, e.g. 10 exd5 ♘xd5 11 ♕e2 ♗e6 12 ♘bd2 ♕e7 13 ♗b3 ♖ae8 14 ♕f2 f5 15 ♖ae1 with unclear play in D.Barua-G.Milos,

Moscow Olympiad 1994.

8...♗a7

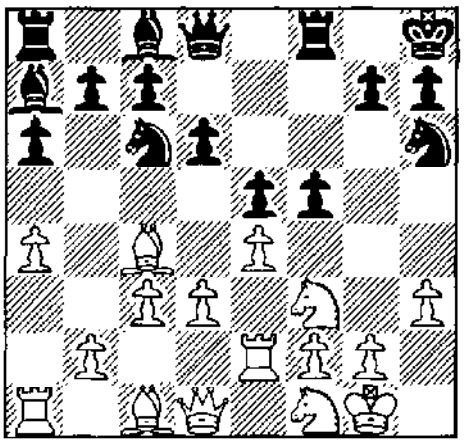


9 ♖e1

9 a5 ♘e7 is a standard plan to remember. It is a very good way to get some attacking chances as Black. Now after 10 ♖e1 ♘g6 11 ♘f1 ♖e8 12 ♗b3 h6 13 ♗e3 ♗e6 the position is equal.

In the game Black finds another way to create attacking chances.

9...♘g4! 10 ♖e2 ♔h8 11 h3 ♘h6 12 ♘f1 f5!



A critical position.

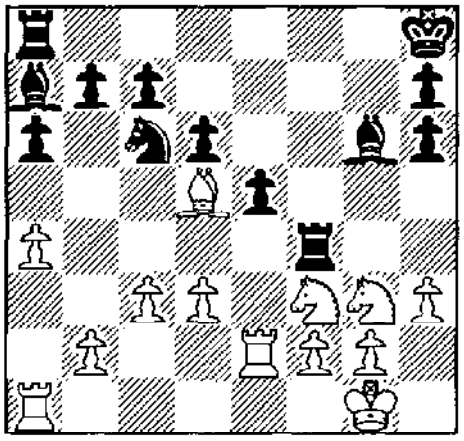
13 ♗xh6

This is probably the soundest decision in this position. White has also tried:

a) 13 exf5?! ♘xf5 14 ♗g5 ♕e8 15 d4 ♕g6 and Black is at least slightly better, D.Barua-M.Adams, Bayswater 1989.

b) 13 d4? fxe4 14 ♖xe4 d5 15 ♗g5 and now L.Psakhis-J.Hector, Palma de Mallorca 1989, continued 15...dxe4? 16 ♗xd8 ♖xd8 17 ♘g5 exd4 18 cxd4 ♖xd4 19 ♕e2 ♗f5 with an unclear game. For some strange reason Black feared taking the pieces. I have checked this position with *Fritz 8* for hours, and even though we are talking about very strong players, I cannot believe that White's compensation is anything but an illusion after 15...♕d7 16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 17 ♖xe5 dxc4 18 ♗xh6 gxh6 19 ♕e2 ♕d6.

13...gxh6 14 exf5 ♗xf5 15 ♗d5 ♗g6 16 ♕d2 ♕f6 17 ♘g3 ♕f4 18 ♕xf4 ♖xf4



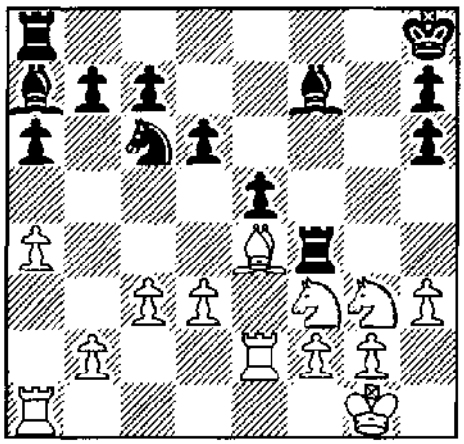
The position is more or less equal. White has a better pawn structure, while Black has the two bishops and control over two half-open files. In positions like this I usually prefer Black for practical reasons, simply because it is easier to play with the initiative than against it.

19 ♗e4?!

White goes wrong straight away! Better was 19 ♘e4!? ♗h5 20 ♘ed2 ♖af8 21 b4 ♘d8 22 b5 c6 23 bxc6 bxc6 24 ♗c4 a5

25 ♖b1 with an unclear game.

19...♗f7



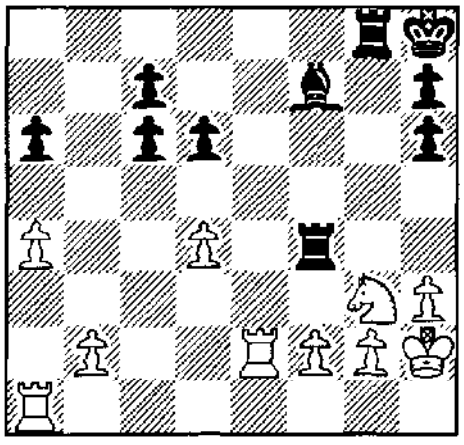
20 ♗xc6

White opens another file for Black, but this was the consequence of the previous move.

20...bxc6 21 d4 ♖g8

Even stronger was 21...exd4 22 cxd4 ♗xd4 23 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 24 ♖e7 ♗d5 25 ♖xc7 ♖f8 with the initiative.

22 ♔h2 exd4 23 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 24 cxd4



24...♗d5?

Black seems to have missed 24...♖xd4 25 ♘f5 ♗d5!, when after 26 g4 ♖f4! he keeps the pressure on.

25 ♖d1 a5 26 f3 ♖b8 27 ♖dd2 ♔g8 28 ♖e3 ♔f8 29 ♘e2 ♖f7 30 ♘c3 ♗c4 31 g4 h5 32 ♔g3

The tables have turned. It is White who has some chances to play for the win.

32...♖b4 33 f4 h4+?!

A very risky idea, which gambles with life and death, and there is no middle ground to be found after it. But Morozevich likes to gamble like this, especially when time trouble is approaching.

After the saner 33...hxg4 34 hxg4 ♗b3 Black has good drawing chances.

34 ♔f3 ♗f1 35 ♖e1! ♗c4

If 35...♗xh3 36 ♖h1 and White wins.

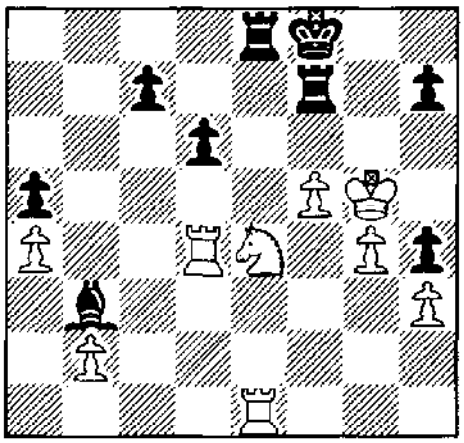
36 f5 ♗b3 37 ♔f4

Here I think 37 ♖e4!? was stronger. After 37...♗xa4 38 ♘xa4 ♖xa4 39 d5 ♖xc4 40 ♔xe4 ♖e7+ 41 ♔f4 cxd5 42 ♖xd5 ♖e2 43 ♖xa5 ♖xb2 44 ♖a7 White has some winning chances. Of course this is a very difficult line to enter if you are short of time, which I think Movsesian probably was.

37...c5 38 ♔g5 cxd4?!

Simpler was 38...♖xd4 39 ♖de2 ♔g7 40 ♖e7 h6+ 41 ♔xh4 ♖d2 42 ♖1e2 ♖xe2 43 ♖xe2 d5 where Black has counterplay.

39 ♘e4 ♖b8 40 ♖xd4 ♖e8



41 ♖e2??

This happens so often. Either White made an extra move because he was unsure if he had made the time control at move 40, or he did not take two minutes rest to let the emotions cool after time trouble. After something like 41 ♖e3 ♗c2 42 ♖e2 c5 43 ♖xc2 cxd4 44 ♘xd6 ♖g7+ 45 ♔xh4 ♖d8 46 ♘e4 ♖e7 47 ♘c5 only White can win, though Black has decent drawing chances as well.

41...♖fe7 42 ♖e3 ♗f7 43 ♖c3 ♖xe4 44 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 45 ♖xc7

A bishop is a bishop. White has to put his head on the block now.

45...♖e7 46 ♖c8+ ♗e8 47 ♔f6 d5 48 g5 d4 49 g6 d3 50 ♖d8 ♖d7 51 g7+ ♖xg7 52 ♖xd3 ♖g3 53 ♖d4 ♖xh3 54 ♔g5 ♖b3 55 ♖xh4 0-1

Game 17

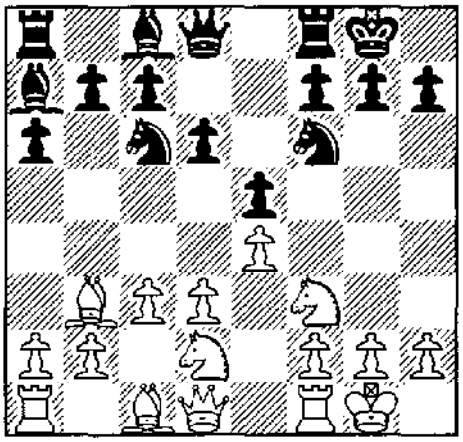
S.Vysochin-J.Klovans

Cappelle la Grande 2005

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 d3 ♗c5 5 c3 a6 6 0-0 d6 7 ♗b3

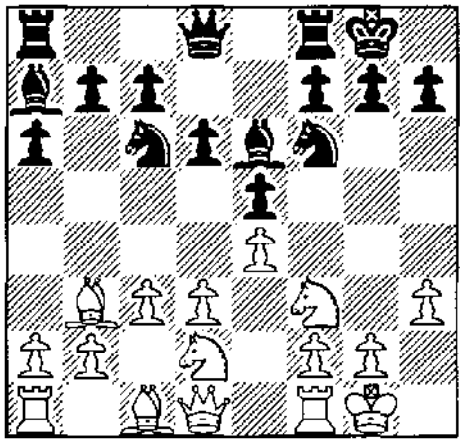
The manoeuvre ♗c4-b3 is standard in this position. Now the game is more or less reminiscent of the Ruy Lopez.

7...♗a7 8 ♘bd2 0-0



Normally we would reach this positions via the move order 3...♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d3 d6 6 0-0 0-0 7 ♗b3 a6 8 ♘bd2 ♗a7.

9 h3 ♗e6



10 ♖e1

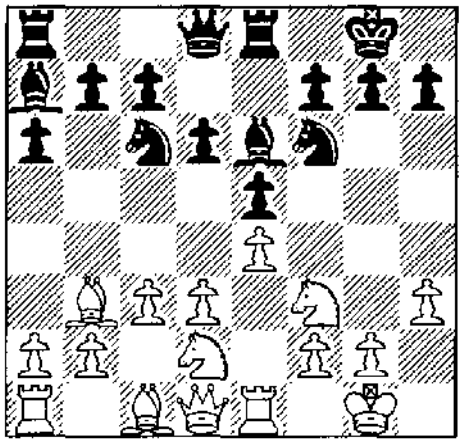
Keeping the bishop with 10 ♗c2!? is the most dangerous idea. Black's light squared bishop has no real scope, and while the white bishop might also seem buried at the moment, it can later prove to be quite strong. Now we have the following practical examples:

a) 10...d5 11 ♖e1 dxe4 12 dxe4 ♘h5 13 ♘f1 ♕xd1 14 ♖xd1 ♖ad8 15 ♗e3 f6 16 ♗xa7 ♘xa7 17 ♘e3 ♘f4 18 h4! and White was slightly better, A.Karpov-V.Korchnoi, Merano match 1981.

b) 10...h6 11 ♖e1 ♘e7 12 d4 ♘g6 13 ♘f1 c6 14 ♘g3 ♖e8!? 15 ♘f5 ♕c7 16 ♗e3 d5! 17 cxd5 (if 17 ♘xe5 dxe4 18 ♘xg6 ♗xf5 19 ♗f4 ♕b6 20 ♘e5 ♕xb2 and Black is a little better, H.Hamdouchi-F.Braga, Mancha Real 2000) 17...♘xd5! (if 17...♗xd5? 18 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 19 ♗f4 and White has a clear advantage) 18 ♗d2 ♗xf5 19 ♗xf5 exd4 20 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 21 cxd4 with an unclear game.

10...♖e8

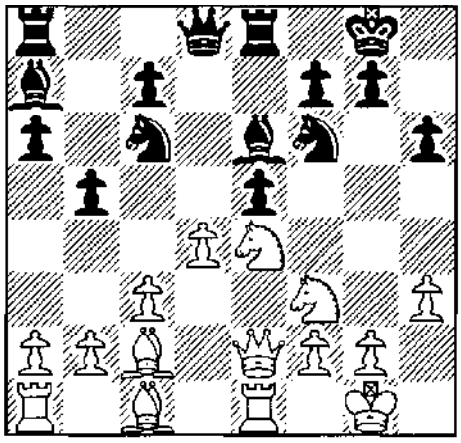
Black can also take the chance to exchange bishops with 10...♗xb3 11 ♕xb3 ♕d7 12 ♘f1 (not 12 ♕xb7?? ♖fb8 13 ♕xa6 ♗xf2+ and wins) 12...h6 13 ♘g3 ♖fe8 14 ♘h4 d5 15 ♘hf5 dxe4 16 dxe4 ♘a5 and Black is at least equal, J.Hjartarson-A.Aleksandrov, Groningen 1997.



11 ♘f1 h6 12 ♘g3 d5 13 ♕e2 ♘a5

Black wants to keep the game complicated, but it is White who turns out to be better off.

14 ♗a4 b5 15 ♗c2 ♘c6 16 d4 dxe4 17 ♘xe4



17...♗f5?!

This just drops a pawn. Instead 17...cxd4! looks good to start with, since if 18 ♕d3 ♔f8 19 ♘xf6 ♕xf6 20 ♗d2 ♗d5 21 ♕h7 g5 and Black is much better, but after 18 ♘xf6+! ♕xf6 19 ♕c4 White has some threats and probably the advantage too; e.g. 19...dxc3 20 bxc3 ♕xc3 21 ♕h7+ ♔f8 22 ♗d2 ♕c5 23 ♗e4! with a very strong initiative for the pawn.

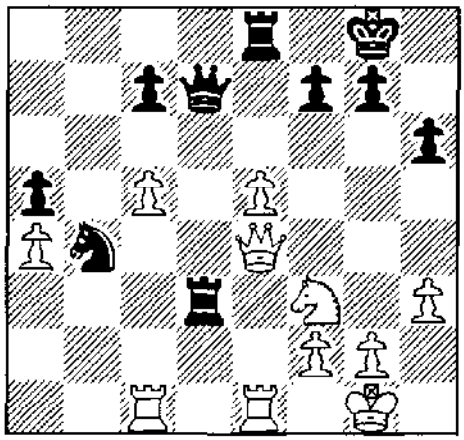
18 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 19 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 20 dxe5 ♖ad8 21 ♗e3 ♗xe3 22 ♕xe3

White retains the pawn and has great winning chances.

22...♖d5 23 a4 b4

Or 23...♘xe5 24 ♘d4 ♕d7 25 axb5 axb5 26 f4 c5 27 ♘b3 and White wins.

24 ♖ac1 bxc3 25 bxc3 ♕d7 26 c4 ♖d3 27 ♕e4 ♘b4 28 c5 a5



29 c6?

A tactical mistake. Here the elegant 29 e6! ♕xe6 30 ♕b7 ♕c8 31 ♕b5 ♖xe1+ 32 ♖xe1 would leave White close to winning.

29...♕d5 30 ♕f5

After 30 ♕xd5 ♖xd5 31 ♖e3 ♖e6 32 ♖ec3 White does not have not real winning chances.

30...♖e6 31 ♕g4 ♖xc6?

Black misses his chance. After 31...♖xf3! 32 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 33 gxf3 ♘d3 34 f4 ♘xe1 35 ♖xe1 ♖xc6 36 ♖e4 ♖b6 37 ♔g2 the draw is certain.

32 ♖xc6 ♕xc6 33 ♕c8+ ♔h7 34 ♕f5+ ♕g6 35 ♕f4?

Stronger was 35 ♕xg6+ fxg6 (if 35...♔xg6? 36 e6 fxe6 37 ♘e5+ ♔f6 38 ♘xd3 ♘xd3 39 ♖d1 and White wins) 36 e6 ♖d8 37 ♘d4 and White has great winning chances.

35...♘d5 36 ♕e4 c6 37 ♘h4 1-0

White probably won on time, since after 37...♕xe4 38 ♖xe4 ♘c3 Black is slightly better.

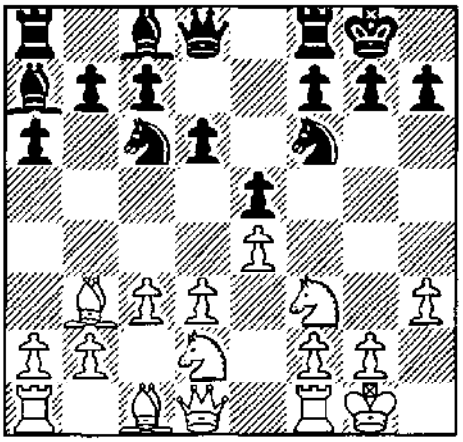
Game 18

R.Felgaer-J.Hector

Copenhagen 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 d3 ♗c5 5 c3 a6 6 0-0 ♗a7 7 ♗b3 d6 8 ♘bd2 0-0 9 h3

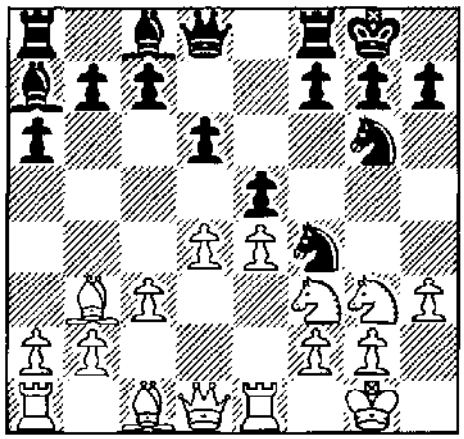
After 9 ♘c4 Black can play similarly to the current game with 9...♘e7 10 ♗g5 ♘g6 11 ♘h4 ♔h8! 12 a4 h6 13 ♘xg6+ fxg6! 14 ♗e3 ♘h5 15 d4 with an unclear position in E.Torre-I.Rausis, Yerevan Olympiad 1996. Here I have analysed 15...♘f4!? with the following idea: 16 ♗xf4 ♖xf4 17 dxe5 ♕g5! 18 ♕d3 ♗e6 19 exd6 ♖af8! when Black has a strong attack because of 20 d7? ♗xd7!.



9...♘e7!?

Black is aiming his knights towards f4, which is a perfectly acceptable plan. Also good here is 9...h6 10 ♖e1 ♗e6 11 ♘f1 ♖e8 12 ♗e3 ♗xb3 (or 12...d5 13 ♗xa7 ♖xa7 14 exd5 ♗xd5 15 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 16 ♘e3 ♕c5 17 d4 exd4 18 cxd4 S.Fedorchuk-L.Vajda, Bar 2005, and now after 18...♕d6 Black keeps the balance) 13 axb3 ♗xe3 14 ♘xe3 ♕d7 15 ♘h4 d5 with equality in G.Kaidanov-V.Malaniuk, Lucerne 1997.

10 ♖e1 ♘g6 11 ♘f1 ♘h5 12 d4 ♘hf4 13 ♘g3



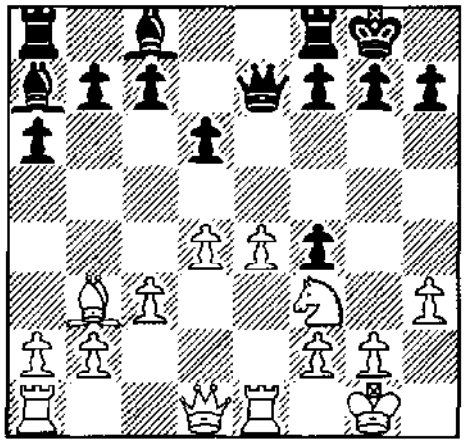
13...♕f6?

This is actually quite a common mistake, but then White's idea is quite tricky...

Black has naturally tried other moves here. One game went 13...♕e7?! 14 ♗e3 ♖d8 15 ♗c2 h6 16 ♘f5 ♕f6 17 g3! ♘e6 18 ♘h2 ♖e8 19 ♕h5 and White had an attack in V.Kramnik-D.Campora, Moscow 1989.

In my opinion the simplest option for Black is safe development with 13...♗d7 14 ♘f5 ♖e8, when I do not see how White can get an advantage. e.g. 15 dxe5 dxe5 16 ♗e3 with equality.

14 ♘h5! ♕e7 15 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 16 ♘xf4 exf4

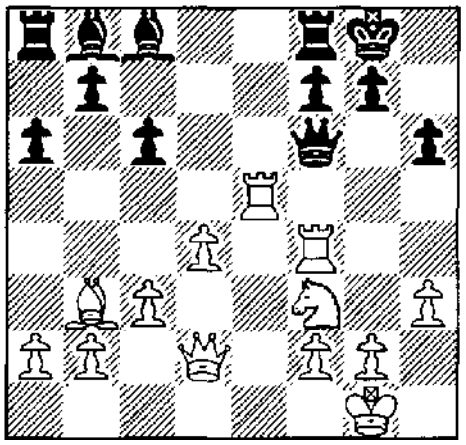


It is easy to compare White's situation here with how a donkey might feel when it has in front of it a tray with oats and another with hay. The main problem is to decide which one will taste better.

17 ♕d2

Also strong is 17 c5!? ♗e6 18 exd6 ♕xd6 19 ♗xe6 fxe6 20 ♕b3 ♕d5 21 ♖xe6 ♕xb3 22 axb3 and White has a technically winning position, E.Alekseev-A.Mikhalevski, Tel Aviv 2001.

17...♕f6 18 e5 dxe5 19 ♖xe5 c6 20 ♖ae1 h6 21 ♖1e4 ♗b8 22 ♖xf4



22...♕g6

After 22...♗xe5 White will not undertake any adventures, but simply continue 23 ♘xe5! ♕g5 24 h4 ♕d8 25 ♘xf7 ♕e7 26 ♘xh6+ ♔h7 27 ♘f7 with a winning position.

23 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 24 ♖e7 ♕b1+ 25 ♘e1 ♗f4 26 ♕e2 ♗f5 27 ♖xf7 ♔h8 28 g4 ♗d3 29 ♕xd3 ♕xe1+ 30 ♔g2 1-0

Summary

As we have seen, Black has two move orders at his disposal, and although neither of them is inferior, 5...a6!? does have the advantage of limiting White's options. For his part, White does not have to use the move order with 5 d3, but can start with 5 b4!?. This queenside expansion does not strike me as dangerous, but as in most positions, it is possible for Black to play badly and lose.

All in all White can play these variations in different ways, but at the end of the day Black has a sound, solid position, and when White does not try to put pressure on it straight away, he fails to utilise the advantage of the first move. (If you only start to apply pressure at move 15, the difference between who moved first will have become so small that in practice it is virtually gone). Black should have a comfortable life in these lines.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d3

5 b4 ♗b6 6 d3 d6 7 a4 *(D)*

7...a5 – *Game 14*

7...a6 – *Game 15*

5...d6

5...a6 6 ♗b3 ♗a7 7 ♘bd2 0-0 8 h3

8...d5 – *Game 12*

8...d6 9 ♘f1 d5 – *Game 13*

6 0-0

6 b4 ♗b6 – 5 b4

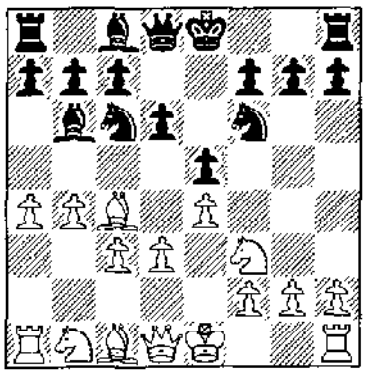
6...0-0 *(D)* **7 ♗b3**

7 a4 – *Game 16*

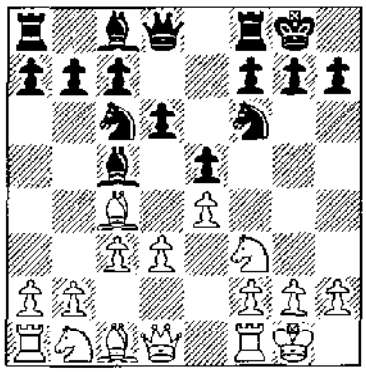
7...a6 8 ♘bd2 ♗a7 9 h3 *(D)*

9...♗e6 – *Game 17*

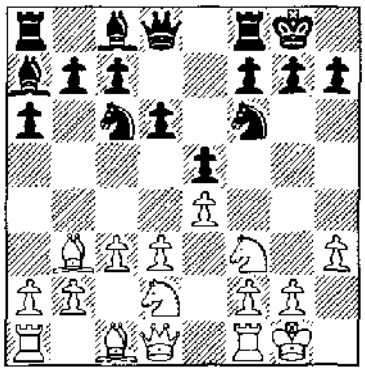
9...♘e7 – *Game 18*



7 a4

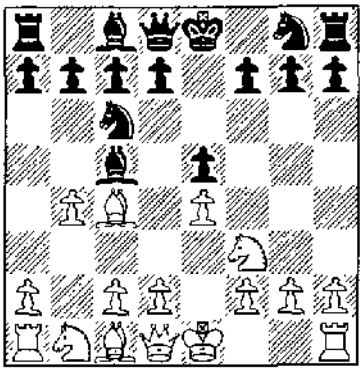


6...0-0



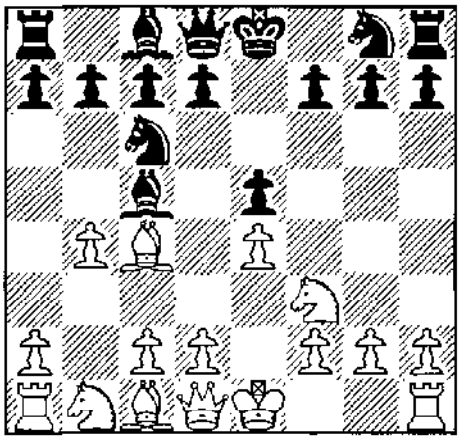
9 h3

CHAPTER FIVE



The Evans Gambit Declined

In the second part of this book we will look at the Evans Gambit, which arises after the moves **1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4!?**



This romantic gambit has proven to be greatly resilient to modern technology, and while it is not generally thought of as a path to advantage in the 21st century, it clearly has not been refuted either. The idea is to gain momentum for opening the centre, even at the cost of a pawn or two. For this reason the line has always attracted aggressive players and will probably continue to do so in the years to come. Even Garry Kasparov found the opening worth playing a few times, and has used to beat none other than Anand. In this chapter we shall see his game against a former Dutch No.1, Jeroen Piket, who at the time of the game was continually improving, with good chances of reaching the world's elite. These days, however, he has left chess for the less demanding business of business.

The main move in this chapter is 4...♗b6, which is seen in the first five games, while in Game 24 we will give a quick glance at the random-looking 4...d5!?.

Game 19
E.Sveshnikov-Kir.Georgiev
Elista 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4

'This brilliant attacking opening was invented to make men understand that chess is a gift from God,' wrote Savielv Tartakower. The inventor of the gambit, William Davies Evans, was born on the

27th January 1790 in Pembrokeshire, South Wales. From 1804 he served in the navy, and in 1819 reached the rank of captain. In 1824 Evans took command of the steamer 'Oakland', which carried letters and passengers between England and Ireland. Evans was introduced to chess in 1818, and very quickly became a strong player. In the 1820s he was one of best in London. He beat Alexander McDonnell, John Cochrane and several others among the strongest players of the day. Evans 'invented' his gambit on a long haul on the sea in 1824, though he did not have a chance to play it in an actual game before 1827 against McDonnell.

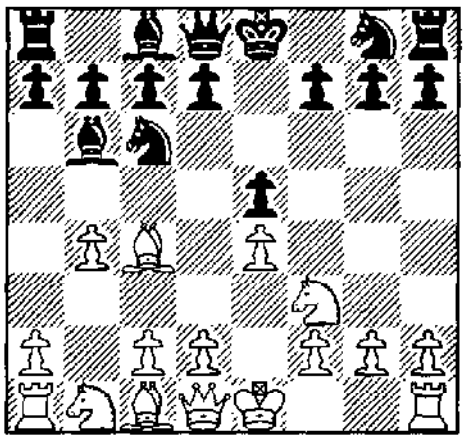
The first mention of the 'Evans Gambit' in print is found in Levison's *Lessons on the Game of Chess* from 1832. It is not unfair to say that the Evans Gambit was the Ruy Lopez of the 19th century. It was simply one of the most popular openings, if not *the* most popular. At the turn of the century, however, the Evans Gambit disappeared from top chess for almost 100 years. First of all, because people became tired of it and wanted to explore new paths. Secondly, because strong defensive players, such as World Champions Wilhelm Steinitz and Emanuel Lasker, found ways for Black to get a good game against 4 b4!?.

Nevertheless, in the 21st century the Evans has proven to be quite resilient to the threats presented to different romantic gambits by the silicon monsters.

4...♗b6!?

Black refuses the challenge and keeps his bishop well placed. Though to some extent a strategy for wimps, it cannot be automatically ignored. As far as I can see White can achieve an opening advantage by transposing to the notes to Game 15 from Chapter 4 (see the notes to move 6 below).

After the more passive 4...♗e7 5 b5 ♘a5 6 ♗e2 ♘f6 7 ♘c3, N.Minev-Atanasov, Bulgaria 1950, White is at least slightly better because of the weak position of the knight on a5.



5 a4

This is the standard move in this position. White expands on the queenside, relying on the fact that 5...♘xb4 does not work, since after 6 a5 ♗c5 7 c3 ♘c6 8 0-0 White is much better; Black has great problems developing and 9 d4 will come with great force.

5...a6

This is the main move. In Game 22 we will look at 5...a5, which also seems to give a slight advantage for White. The safest way to gain an edge now is 6 a5, but it is hard to continue like this when playing a gambit.

6 ♗b2!?

The usual move here, 6 ♘c3, can be seen in the next two games. Besides these White has also tried:

a) 6 0-0 d6 7 a5 ♗a7 8 b5 axb5 9 ♗xb5

♘ge7 10 d4 exd4 11 ♘xd4 0-0 12 ♘xc6 bxc6 13 ♗d3 ♘g6, F.Marshall-R.Teichmann, Hamburg 1910, and now 14 ♔h1 followed by f2-f4 is equal according to Matsukevich. However, 6 0-0 can transpose to the lines below, so it is not at all stupid.

b) 6 a5 ♗a7 when we have two options:

b1) 7 b5 does not inspire awe. After 7...axb5 8 ♗xb5 Black has a wide range of good moves. For instance 8...♘ge7 followed by ...d6 looks sound. However, I have looked a little bit on sharper lines such as 8...♘f6 9 ♗a3?! (White can probably still keep the balance, but obviously he will have greater ambitions around here) 9...♘xe4 10 ♕e2 ♗xf2+! 11 ♔f1 f5 12 c3 (if 12 d3 ♘d4 13 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 14 ♖a2 ♘c3 15 ♘xc3 ♗xc3 16 d4 ♕f6 and Black wins) 12...♖xa5 13 d3 ♖xb5 14 dxe4 ♖xb1+ 15 ♖xb1 ♗b6 16 exf5 d6 and Black is much better.

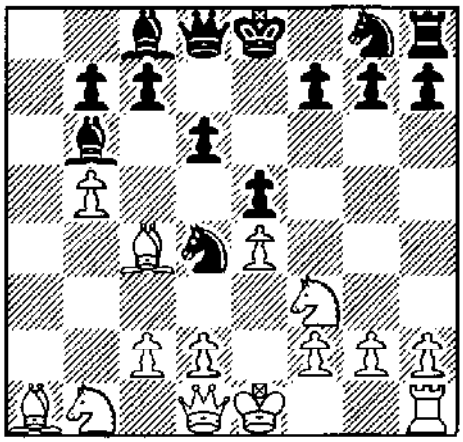
b2) 7 c3! ♘f6 8 d3 is the correct strategy. In this kind of position White has a good chance for achieving a slight edge if he develops normally and keeps the queen away from b3 (see Game 15 in the previous chapter for details). Then 8...d6 9 ♕b3 (Hey, what did I just say?!) 9...0-0 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗h4 ♕e7 12 0-0 ♗e6 13 ♘bd2 g5 14 ♗g3 ♘h5 15 b5 axb5 16 ♕xb5 was played in E.Sveshnikov-Z.Gyimesi, Vienna 1996, and now after 16...♖fb8 Black keeps the balance. As I said, I dislike 9 ♕b3 for White.

6...d6 7 b5 axb5 8 axb5 ♖xa1 9 ♗xa1 ♘a5

Black also has some alternatives here:

a) 9...♘b8 looks passive, e.g. 10 d4 exd4 11 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 12 ♕xd4 ♕f6 is natural, and now White should play 13 e5! dxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♗e6 15 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 16 0-0 ♘f6 17 ♖e1 0-0 18 ♘d3 when White is slightly better according to Tartakower.

b) 9...♘d4! is my preference.



White cannot prove an advantage now:

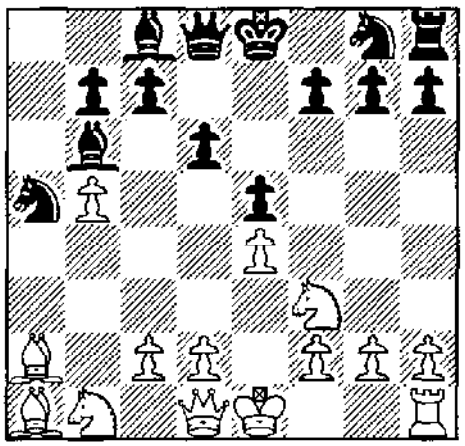
b1) 10 ♗xd4 exd4 11 0-0 (if 11 c3?! ♘f6 12 d3 0-0 13 0-0 d5 14 exd5 ♗g4 and Black is slightly better) 11...♘f6 12 d3 0-0 13 ♘bd2 d5 and Black is at least equal.

b2) 10 ♘xd4 exd4 11 c3 (or 11 0-0 ♘f6 12 d3 0-0 13 ♘d2 d5 with equality in J.Palkovi-P.Lukacs, Budapest 1996) 11...♘f6! 12 0-0 0-0 13 cxd4 (13 d3 d5! 14 exd5 ♘xd5 15 ♕f3 ♘f6 16 cxd4 ♗xd4 is also equal) 13...♘xe4 14 ♘c3 ♘f6 15 ♘a4 ♗a7 16 ♕b3 d5 with equality, R.Nystrom-C.Hartman, Stockholm 1993.

10 ♗a2

This should not give White an advantage. The bishop does not look well placed out here. Instead of trying for dynamics, White could play against the ♘a5. Sveshnikov is the great expert of this line and later he played 10 ♗e2!?, with the game E.Sveshnikov-A.Yashtylov, St. Petersburg 2000, continuing 10...♘f6 11 ♘c3 0-0 12 0-0 ♗g4 13 d3 ♕d7 14 ♕d2

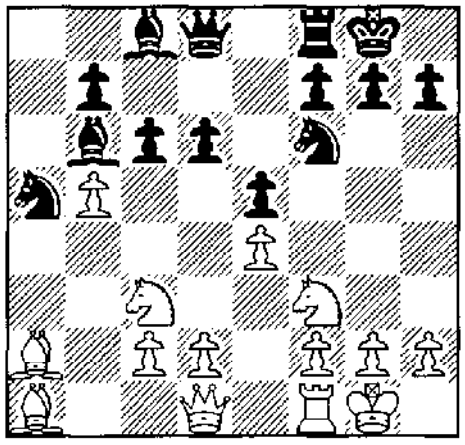
♗c5 15 h3 ♗xf3 16 ♗xf3 b6 17 ♖b1 ♗d4 18 ♘d5 ♘xd5 19 ♗xd4 ♘f6 20 ♗c3 ♘b7 21 ♗e2 and White has a slight enduring advantage which could last until the end of the world.



10...♘f6

Black should probably prefer 10...♗g4, when after 11 d3 ♘f6 12 0-0 0-0 13 h3 ♗e6! or 13...♗h5!? he would be doing just fine. However, he should avoid 13...♗d7?! 14 ♘c3 ♕e8 15 ♕b1 ♔h8?! (instead 15...♗c5, but White still has the advantage) 16 ♘a4! and White was much better, B.Kostic-F.Yates, Rotterdam 1921.

11 ♘c3 0-0 12 0-0 c6



13 d4

White can also play more cautiously with 13 d3 ♗g4 14 h3 ♗xf3 15 ♕xf3 ♗d4 16 ♘e2 ♗xa1 17 ♖xa1 and position is more or less equal.

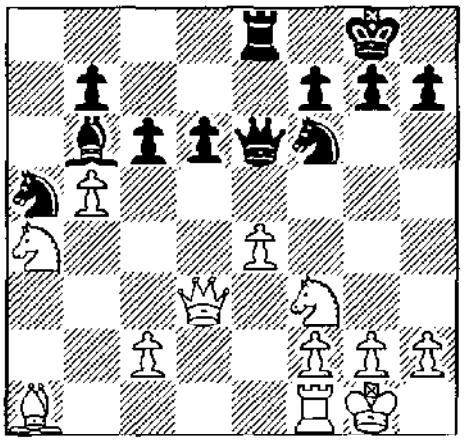
13...exd4 14 ♘xd4 ♖e8 15 ♕d3

White needs to be careful. 15 ♖e1 is met strongly with 15...♘g4! 16 ♘a4 ♕h4! when Black will have a very strong attack for the piece. White might be able to survive it, but it will not be graceful, and Black will eat enough pawns on his way to secure his retirement in an at least even ending.

15...♕e7 16 ♘f3

Winning the two bishops with 16 ♘f5?! ♗xf5 17 exf5 might be tempting, but after 17...d5! Black is slightly better as the white bishop is simply shut out.

16...♗e6 17 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 18 ♘a4!



18...♗d8!

Black could easily get himself into trouble. 18...♗a7? is met strongly by 19 b6 ♗b8 20 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 21 ♘c3 ♕d8 22 ♖b1 and White is much better as Black cannot get his bishop into play without suffering serious structural or material damage.

19 e5 dxe5 20 ♘xe5

Also 20 ♗xe5 cxb5 21 ♕xb5 ♕c6 22 ♖b1 ♘c4 23 ♗d4 ♘a3 24 ♕xc6 bxc6 25

♖b8 ♗e7 26 ♖xe8+ ♘xe8 leads to equality.

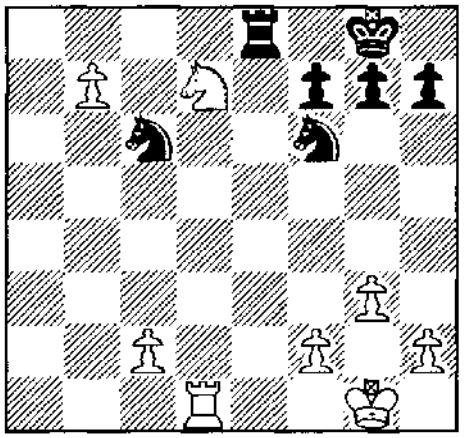
20...♗c7 21 ♘c5?!

This leads to a slightly inferior endgame. After 21 ♘f3 ♘d5 22 ♘c5 ♕g4 23 h3 ♕b4 the position is more or less balanced.

21...♕d5! 22 ♕xd5 ♘xd5 23 bxc6 ♗xe5 24 ♗xe5 ♖xe5

Black accepts the piece, but fails to find any advantage after this. Instead 24...♘xc6!? 25. ♗b2 b5 would give White a few problems. His bishop cannot really find scope and Black can possibly put some pressure on c2.

25 cxb7 ♖e8 26 g3 ♘f6 27 ♖d1 ♘c6 28 ♘d7!



White is desperately trying to assist his b-pawn to come to greatness.

28...♘b8!

Subtle play from Black. After 28...♘xd7 29 ♖xd7 ♔f8 30 ♖c7 ♘b8 31 c4! Black faces a c-pawn racing up the board. Nevertheless, 31...♖e7 32 ♖c8 ♖e8 33 c5 ♔e7 34 c6 ♘xc6 35 ♖xc6 ♔d7 would still make the draw.

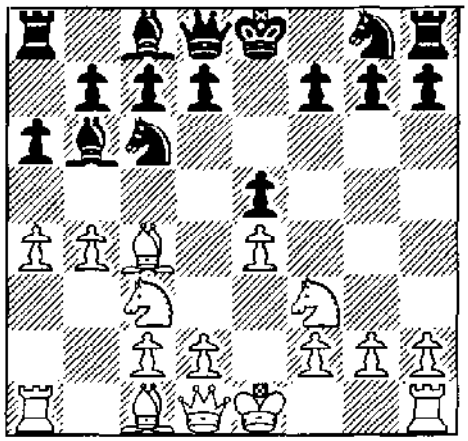
29 ♘xf6+ gxf6 30 c4 ♔g7 31 c5 ♖e7 32 ♖b1 ♖c7 33 ♖b5 f5 34 ♔g2 ♔f6 35 ♔h3 ♔g6 36 ♔h4 f6 37 f4 ♖e7 38 ♖b2 ♖c7 39 ♖b5 ♔h6 40 ♔h3 ♔g7 41 ♔h4 ♔g6 42 ♔h3 ♔g7 ½-½

Game 20

H.Stevic-D.Rogic

Vinkovci 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗b6 5 a4 a6 6 ♘c3



The main move.

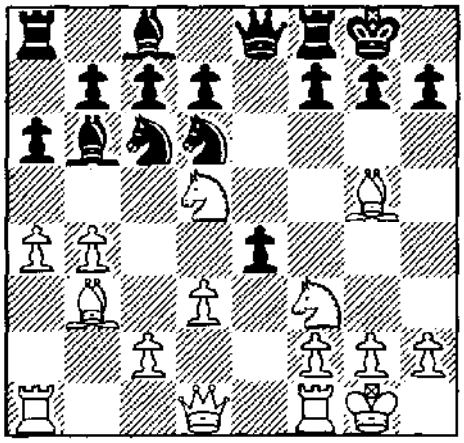
6...♘f6

6...♘xb4 7 ♘xc5 ♕g5 looks tempting, but after 8 ♕f3!? (not 8 ♘xf7? ♕xg2 9 ♖f1 d5! and Black is better) 8...♘xc2+ 9 ♔d1 ♕xc5 10 ♕xf7+ ♔d8 11 ♕f8+ ♕e8 12 ♕xe8+ ♔xe8 13 ♔xc2 ♗xf2 14 ♘d5!? ♗d4 15 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 16 ♘xa8 ♗xa1 17 d3 ♗d4 18 ♗f4, White has a clear advantage.

7 ♘d5 ♘xd5

7...♘xe4 8 0-0 ♘d6?! (but if 8...d6 9 d3 ♘f6 10 ♗g5 and White is slightly better, I.Kan-M.Botvinnik, Odessa 1929) 9 ♗b3 c4? (a standard mistake; Black starts to attack before completing his development and the punishment comes swiftly...) 10 d3! 0-0? (lacking in consistency; this is characteristic of correspondence games,

where you have time to realise when you are on a wrong track; but 10...0-0 only makes matters worse) 11 ♗g5 ♕e8

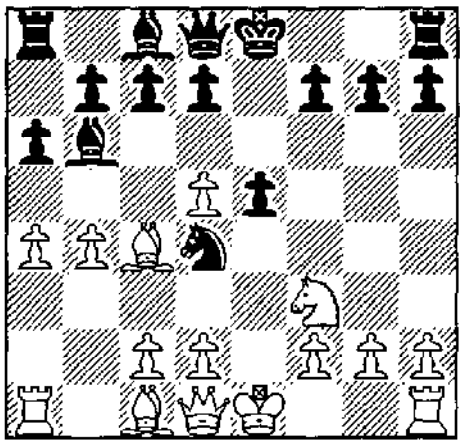


12 ♘f6+! (simple, but still nice) 12...gxf6 13 ♗xf6 h6 14 ♘g5 ♗d4 15 ♕h5 ♘f5 16 ♕g6+ 1-0 T.Harding-P.Feher Polgar, correspondence 1988.

Instead of 10...0-0? Black could have tried 10...exf3 11 ♖e1+ ♔f8 12 ♘xb6 cxb6 13 ♕xf3 h6! (if 13...♕f6? 14 ♕xf6 gxf6 15 ♗h6+ ♔g8 16 ♖e3, or 13...♘d4!? 14 ♕d5 ♘4f5 15 ♗f4 ♕f6 16 g4 ♕g6 17 ♔h1 and White wins) 14 ♗a3! b5 (or 14...♕f6 15 ♕xf6 gxf6 16 b5 and wins) 15 ♗b2 bxa4 16 ♖xa4 and White has a terrific attack, e.g. 16...b5 17 ♕f4 bxa4 18 ♕xd6+ ♘e7 19 ♗d5 ♖b8 20 ♕xb8 ♘xd5 21 ♕d6+ ♘e7 22 ♗d4 and White is close to winning.

8 exd5 ♘d4

Or 8...e4 9 dxc6 exf3 10 ♕xf3 ♕e7+ 11 ♔d1!? (11 ♕e2 dxc6 12 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 13 ♗b2 ♗e6 was equal in Y.Estrin-G.Ravinsky, Moscow 1956) 11...dxc6 12 ♗b2 ♗e6 13 ♗xg7 ♖g8 14 ♗f6 (if 14 ♗xe6 fxe6 15 ♗c3 ♕d7 and Black has definite compensation) 14...♗g4 15 ♗xe7 ♗xf3+ 16 gxf3 ♔xe7 and the position is more or less equal.



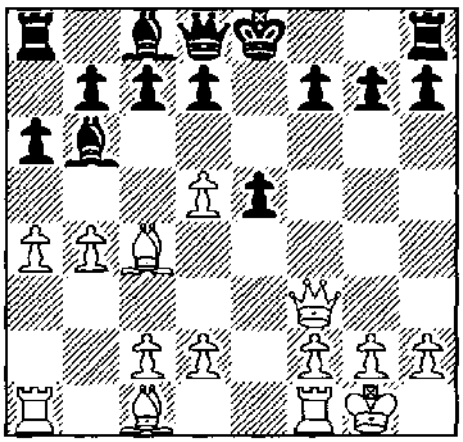
9 0-0

Alternatively:

a) 9 ♘xe5?! 0-0 10 0-0 d6 11 ♘f3 ♗g4 12 ♗e2 ♘xe2+ 13 ♕xe2 ♖e8 14 ♕d3 ♕f6 and Black has the initiative, J.Bednarski-N.Minev, Warsaw 1961.

b) 9 a5 ♗a7 10 d6!? (if 10 0-0 ♘xf3+ 11 ♕xf3 d6 12 d3 0-0 13 ♗e3 ♗xe3 14 ♕xe3 ♖e8 is equal) 10...♕f6 (or 10...cxd6 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 13 c3 ♗a7 14 ♕f3) 11 c3 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 13 gxf3 cxd6 14 ♗d5 and White has full compensation for the pawn.

9...♘xf3+ 10 ♕xf3



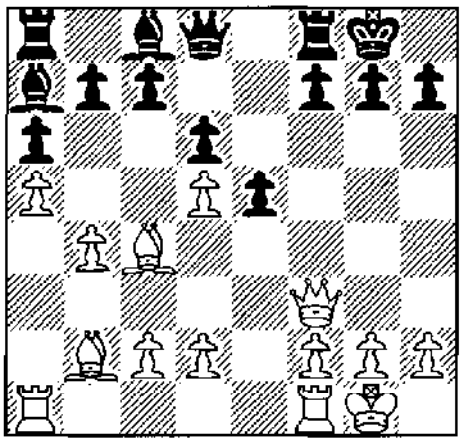
10...d6

After 10...♕h4! Black gets equality by keeping control over d4; e.g. 11 d3 d6 12

h3 0-0 etc.

11 a5 ♗a7 12 ♗b2 0-0?!

It was last chance to stop d2-d4 with 12...♕h4!. Now White takes over.



13 d4! ♕h4

Too late. But if 13...♗xd4 14 ♗xd4 cxd4 15 ♕f4 ♖c8 16 ♖ae1 ♗d7 17 ♕xd4 and White is slightly better.

14 g3 ♕f6?

The last chance was 14...e4!? 15 ♕e3 ♕h3 16 ♕xe4 ♗f5 17 ♕e2 ♖ae8 18 ♕d2 ♕h5 when Black has compensation.

15 ♕xf6 gxf6

Black must go through the rest of the game asking about a draw, which is humiliating, particularly when White does not hear the question.

16 ♖fd1 ♗g4 17 ♖d2 ♖fe8 18 ♗f1 ♖e7 19 c4! ♖ae8 20 c5

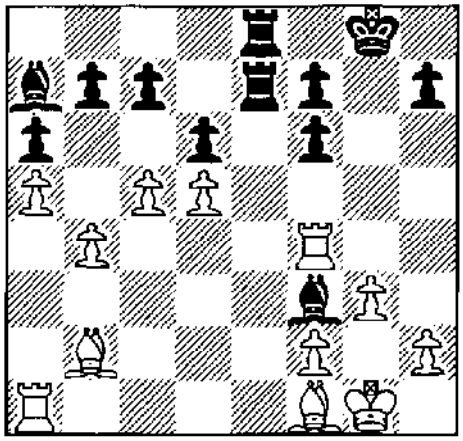
Now Black has to play without the a7-bishop. When it returns to the game, pawn structure will decide.

20...exd4 21 ♖xd4 ♗f3

If 21...f5 22 ♖c4 dxc5 23 bxc5 ♗f3 24 d6 ♖d7 25 ♖c3 ♗e4 26 ♖d1 and White is much better.

22 ♖f4?

Better was 22 ♖a3 dxc5 23 bxc5 ♗e4 24 ♖c3 and White keeps the pressure.



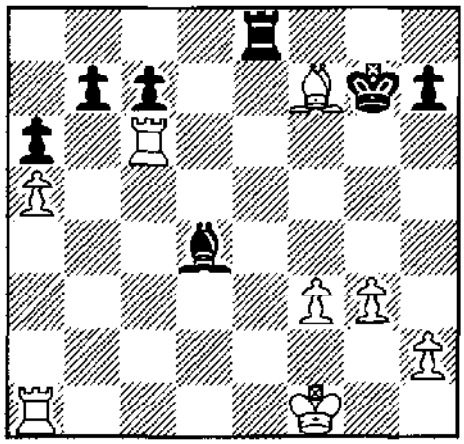
22...♗xd5 23 ♗xf6 ♖e4 24 ♖f5 ♗c6 25 f3 ♖4e6?!

Now Black could have made a draw with 25...♖xb4 26 ♖g5+ ♔f8 27 ♗g7– ♔e7 28 ♖e1+ ♔d7 29 ♗h3+ ♖e6 30 ♗xe6+ fxe6 31 ♗c3 ♗xc5+ 32 ♔g2 ♖b3 33 ♖g7+ ♔c8 34 ♖g8+ ♔d7 35 ♖g7+.

26 ♗c4 dxc5

26...h6? is met strongly by 27 ♖f4! dxc5 28 ♖g4+ ♔f8 29 ♗g7+ ♔e7 30 ♗xc6 h5 31 ♖f4 cxb4+ 32 ♔g2 fxc6 33 ♖d1 ♗d5 34 ♖xb4 and White is better.

27 bxc5 ♗xc5+ 28 ♔f1! ♖xf6! 29 ♖xf6 ♗d4 30 ♗xf7+ ♔g7 31 ♖xc6



31...♗xa1??

Black could still have held with 31...bxc6 32 ♖a4 ♔xf7 33 ♖xd4 ♖e5 34

♖d7+ ♔g8 35 ♖xc7 ♖xa5 36 ♖xc6 ♖a2 37 ♔g1 ♔g7 and game is drawn due to the poor position of the white king.

32 ♖xc7!

Now White wins.

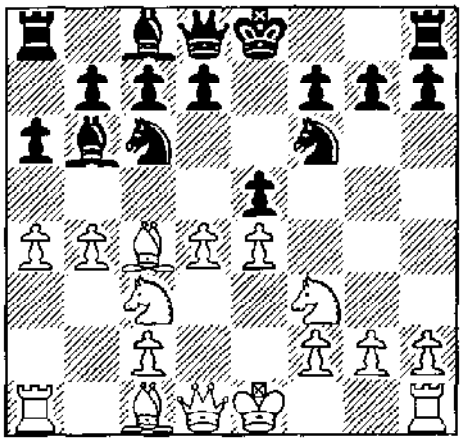
32...♖e5 33 ♗d5+ ♔f6 34 ♗xb7 h6 35 ♖c6+ ♔g7 36 ♖xa6 ♗c3 37 ♗e4 ♖xa5 38 ♖g6+ ♔f7 39 ♖xh6 ♗f6 40 ♔g2 ♖a2+ 1-0

Game 21

R.Ponomariov-G.Giorgadze

Krasnodar 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗b6 5 a4 a6 6 ♘c3 ♘f6 7 d4!?



An interesting gambit which, for no apparent reason, is seldom played in tournaments. Objectively White does not get any advantage here, but the play is interesting and complicated, so there are practical chances.

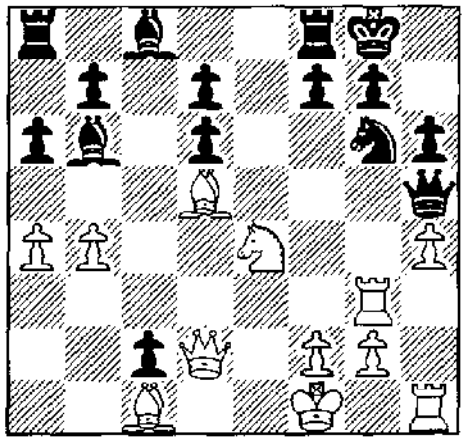
7...♗xd4

Probably the best.

a) 7...exd4 8 ♘d5 ♘xd5 9 exd5 ♕e7+ 10 ♔f1 and White has serious attacking possibilities. Here we should look at two options:

a1) 10...♘xb4!? 11 ♗g5 f6 12 ♕d2! and Black is in trouble because the white rook is heading for e1. Maybe somehow Black can survive; for instance 12...♕c5 13 ♕e2+ ♕e7! is worth a try, as 13...♔d8? 14 ♘e5! ♕f8 15 ♖e1 ♘xc2 leads to 16 d6!! d3 17 ♕e4 cxd6 18 ♘f7+ ♔c7 19 ♗f4 ♘xe1 20 ♕d5 ♔b8 21 ♗xd6+ ♕xd6 22 ♘xd6 and White wins. Whether White can improve his attack after 13...♕e7 is hard to judge. But the pressure is on Black all the same, and I do not recommend it.

a2) 10...♘e5 11 d6 cxd6 12 ♗d5 ♕f6 13 ♘g5 0-0 14 ♖a3 h6 (after 14...d3 15 f4! ♘g6 16 ♕h5 h6 17 ♘e4 ♕d4 18 ♕xg6 dxc2 19 ♔e2 and White wins, while if 15...dxc2 16 ♕xc2 g6 17 ♖h3 with a strong attack) 15 ♘e4 ♕f5 16 ♖g3 ♘g6 17 c4 dxc3 18 h4 c2 19 ♕d2 ♕h5



Now White should continue 20 ♘f6+!! (not 20 ♖xg6? ♕d1+ 21 ♕e1 ♔h8 22 ♖g3 ♕xd5 23 ♗b2 ♗d4 24 ♗xd4 ♕xd4 25 ♖c3 ♖e8 26 f3 d5 0-1 S.Conquest-J.Winants, Amsterdam 1996) 20...gxf6 21 ♗f3 ♕f5 22 h5 ♖e8 23 hxg6 fxg6 24 ♗d5+ ♖e6 25 ♖f3 ♕g5 26 ♗xe6+ dxe6 27 ♕xc2 with a winning position.

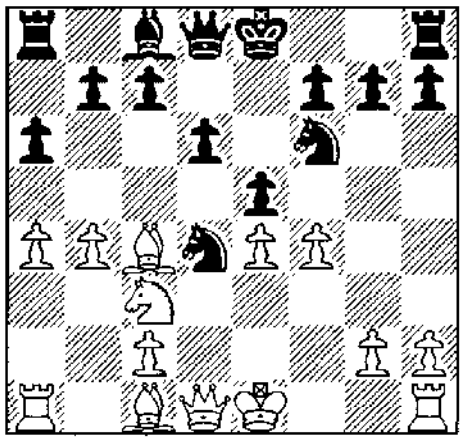
b) 7...♘xd4 is so far untested, but could prove to be playable. Still, White is

able to create real compensation for the pawn after 8 ♗g5! (but not 8 ♘xe5? ♕e7! when Black is much better, e.g. 9 ♘xf7? ♖f8, 9 ♘d3 d5! 10 ♗xd5 c6 11 ♗c4 ♘xe4, or 9 a5 ♗a7 10 ♘d3 d5! 11 ♘xd5 ♕xe4+ 12 ♘e3 ♗g4) 8...d6 9 ♘d5 and now we have:

b1) 9...♗g4 10 c3 ♘xf3+ 11 gxf3 ♗h3 12 ♕b3! and suddenly Black cannot protect himself without returning the pawn in an inferior position.

b2) 9...c6 10 ♗xf6 gxf6 11 ♘xb6 ♕xb6 12 c3 ♘xf3+ 13 ♕xf3 f5 14 0-0!? with decent compensation for the pawn. White is at least not worse.

8 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 9 f4 d6

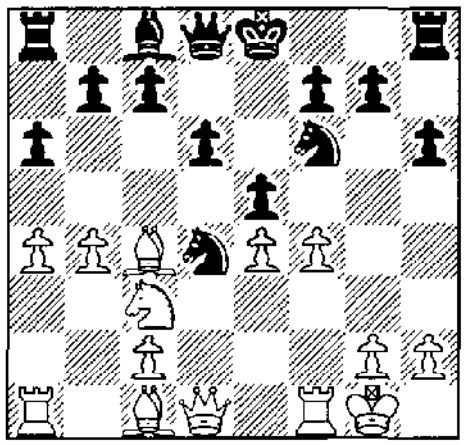


10 0-0

The less ambitious 10 fxe5 dxe5 11 ♗g5 has also been tried: 11...♗c6 12 ♘d5 c6 13 ♘xf6+ gxf6 14 ♗xe6 fxg5 15 ♗c4 ♘e6!, and now instead of the sharp 16 ♕h5? 0-0 17 c3 ♘f4 18 ♕f3 b5 19 ♗b3 ♕d3 where Black is much better, R.Leyva-F.De la Paz, Cienfuegos 1997, White should play the humble 16 ♗xe6 ♕xd1+ 17 ♖xd1 fxe6 with good drawing chances.

10...h6

White is quite ready for 10...♗c6 11 ♗xc6 (weaker is 11 ♘d5?! ♘xe4 12 ♕d3 c6 13 ♘e3 d5 14 fxe5 dxc4 15 ♕xe4 ♘e2+ 16 ♔h1 ♕d4 17 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 18 ♗b2 0-0 0 and Black is better, R.Leyva-J.Olivera, Holguin 1999) 11...fxe6 12 ♗e3 ♘c6 13 b5 axb5 14 axb5 ♖xa1 15 ♕xa1 with the initiative.



11 fxe5

11 ♘d5!? ♘xd5 12 ♗xd5 0-0 13 c3 ♘c6 was tried out in J.Palkovi-P.Acs, Budapest 1997, continuing 14 f5?! ♕f6 15 ♕h5 ♘e7 16 g4?! (instead 16 ♗b3 and Black is only slightly better) 16...♘xd5 17 exd5 e4 18 g5 ♕e5 19 gxh6 g6 20 h7+ ♔h8 21 ♕h4 ♗xf5 and Black had a clear advantage. White should prefer 14 ♗xc6! bxc6 15 fxe5 dxe5 16 ♕h5 ♕e7 17 ♗e3 and White has some initiative here.

11...dxe5 12 ♘d5 ♗e6

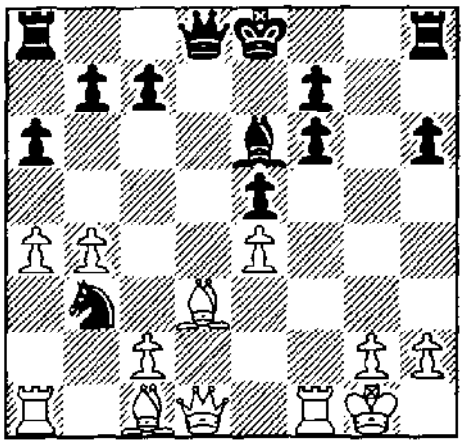
12...♘xd5?! 13 ♗xd5 gives Black some trouble, e.g. 13...♖f8 14 ♕h5 with an attack and 13...0-0?! 14 ♕h5 ♕e7 15 ♗xh6! when White regains the material and still has an attack.

13 ♘xf6+ gxf6 14 ♗d3

White should not force the play yet. After 14 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 15 ♕f3 ♘d4 16 ♕xf6 ♕xf6 17 ♖xf6 ♘xc2 18 ♖b1 ♘d4 19 ♖xh6 ♖xh6 20 ♗xh6 ♔e7 Black is

perhaps slightly better because of the powerful knight on d4.

14...♘b3

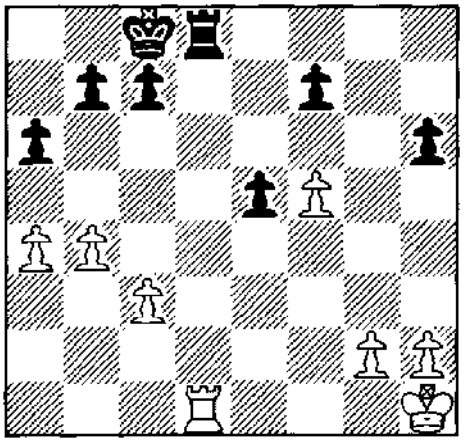


15 ♖b1

15 cxb3? is met by 15...♕d4+ 16 ♗e3 ♕xe3+ 17 ♔h1 0-0-0 18 ♖f3 ♕d4 with a clear advantage.

Black has now escaped from the opening with a pleasant equality, but the game is still going, and the two players are still comparing their abilities.

15...♘xc1 16 ♕xc1 ♕d4+ 17 ♔h1 f5 18 exf5 ♗d5 19 ♗e2 0-0-0 20 c3 ♕e4 21 ♗f3 ♕d3 22 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 23 ♖d1 ♕xd1+ 24 ♕xd1 ♖xd1+ 25 ♖xd1 ♖d8



26 ♖e1?!

The pawn ending looks bad for White, but it is a draw! See for yourself: 26 ♖xd8+! ♔xd8 27 g4 ♔d7 28 ♔g2 ♔d6 29 ♔f3 b5 30 axb5 axb5 31 h4 f6 32 ♔e4 c6 33 ♔f3 ♔d5 34 ♔e3 and Black cannot make progress.

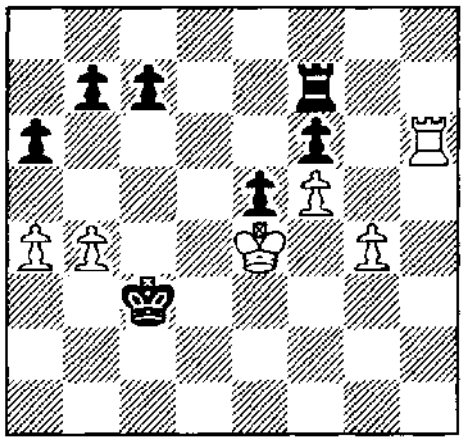
26...f6 27 ♔g1 ♖g8

27...♖d3 would allow 28 ♖e4! (after the passive 28 ♖c1 ♔d7 Black is much better) 28...♖xc3 29 ♖h4 ♖b3 30 ♖xh6 ♖xb4 31 ♖xf6 ♖xa4 32 ♖e6 ♖e4 33 g3 with enough counterplay for a draw.

28 ♖e4 h5 29 h3 ♖g5 30 g4 ♔d7 31 ♔f2 hxg4 32 hxg4 ♔d6 33 ♔f3 ♖g7 34 ♖e1!

If 34 c4 a5! and Black has good winning chances.

34...♔d5 35 ♖h1 ♔c4 36 ♖h6 ♖f7 37 ♔e4 ♔xc3



38 ♖xf6!!

This is the beautiful idea White has planned for some moves. Remember Euwe's rule: when two connected passed pawns have a total of four moves combined to reach the back row, the rook is no longer able to stop them on its own.

38...♖xf6 39 g5 ♖b6

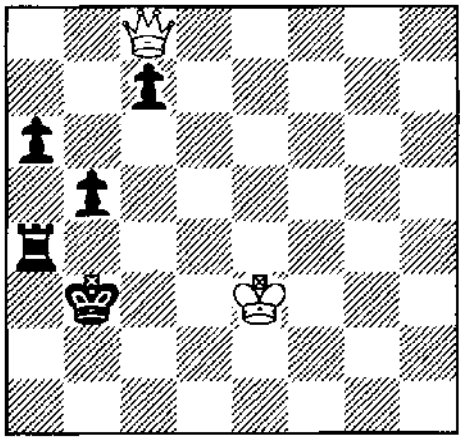
The correct defence. If 39...♖f8? 40 ♔xe5 ♔xb4 41 f6 ♖e8+ 42 ♔f5 ♔xa4 43

g6 and White wins.

40 f6 ♖xb4+ 41 ♔xe5 ♖g4!

Black finds the draw. He is able to set up a simple fortress that cannot be broken. In the remainder of the game he needs to make one accurate move, but it would not have been unfair had White stopped playing for a win around here.

42 f7 ♖xg5+ 43 ♔e4 ♖g4+ 44 ♔e3 ♖xa4 45 f8♕ ♔b3 46 ♕c8 b5



This is the fortress.

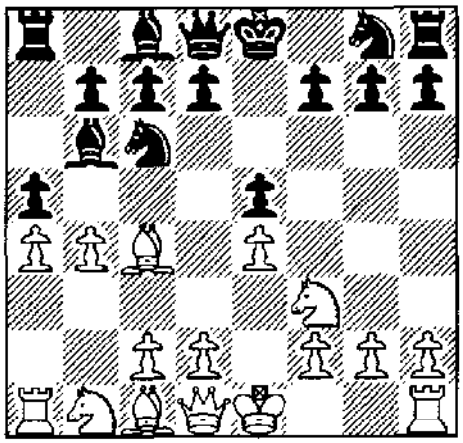
47 ♕xc7 ♖c4 48 ♕b6 ♖c3+ 49 ♔d4 ♖c4+ 50 ♔d5 b4 51 ♕xa6 ♖c3 52 ♕a1 ♖c8 53 ♕f1 ♖c3 54 ♔d4 ♔a3 55 ♕a6+ ♔b3 56 ♕a5 ♖c1 57 ♕d5+ ♔a3 58 ♕a5+ ♔b3 59 ♔d3 ♖c8 60 ♕a6 ♖c7 61 ♕e6+ ♔a3 62 ♔d2 ♖c5 63 ♕d6 ♖c3 64 ♕d5 ♖c8 65 ♔d3 ♖c1 66 ♕a5+ ♔b3 67 ♔d4 ♖c4+ 68 ♔d5 ♖c1 69 ♔d6 ♖c2 70 ♕a1 ♖c3 71 ♔d7 ♖c5 72 ♔d6 ♖c3 73 ♔d5 ♖c7 74 ♕d1+ ♔a3 75 ♕a1+ ♔b3 76 ♔d6 ♖c3 77 ♕e1 ♔a3 ½-½

Game 22

G.Kasparov-J.Piket

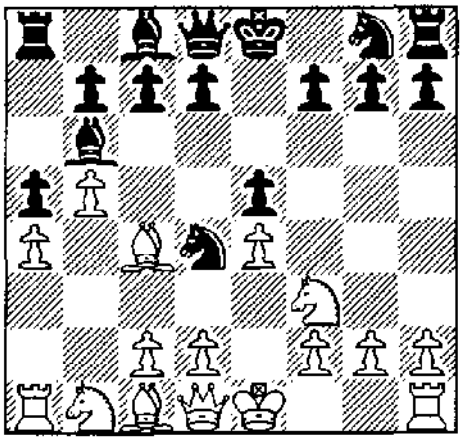
Amsterdam 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗b6 5 a4 a5!?



Though this move prevents the pleasant transposition into the Italian Game, it is still not an easy way to receive equality.

6 b5 ♘d4



7 ♘xd4

White has some interesting alternatives here:

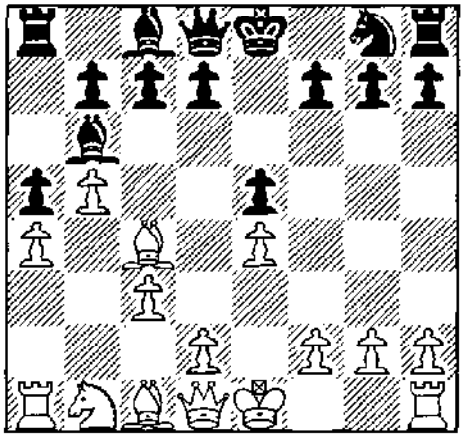
a) 7 ♗xf7+?! ♔xf7 8 ♘xe5+ ♔f8 9 c3 d6 10 ♗a3 ♕e7 11 f4 ♗h3!! 12 cxd4 ♗xg2 13 ♖g1 ♕h4+ 14 ♔e2 ♕xh2 and Black has terrible attack for nothing.

b) 7 c3 ♘xf3+ 8 ♕xf3 ♕f6 9 ♕xf6 ♘xf6 10 d3 with equality.

c) 7 ♘xe5? ♕g5 (7...♕f6 is met by 8 ♘f3 and White is much better according to Unzicker) 8 0-0 (White can die quickly

with 8 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 9 0-0 ♕xe5 or 8 ♘xf7 ♕xg2 9 ♖f1 ♕xe4+ 10 ♗e2 ♘f3 mate!) 8...♕xe5 9 c3 ♘e6 10 ♖e1. According to Anatoly Matsukevich, White has some compensation here, but I think this is only enough for 3 minute blitz games. After 10...♗xf2+ 11 ♔xf2 ♕c5+ 12 d4 ♕xc4 13 ♖e3 ♘f8 14 ♕g4 ♘g6 15 ♘d2 ♕c6 Black wins.

7...♗xd4 8 c3 ♗b6

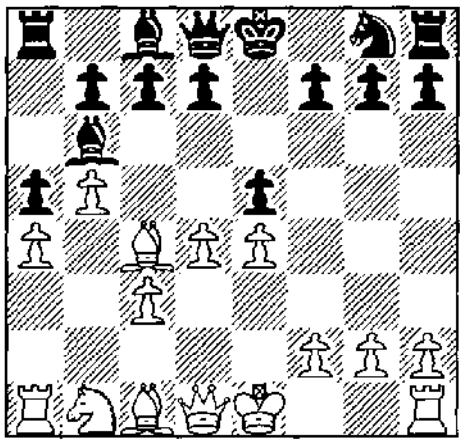


9 d4

9 0-0 has also been tried, which quite naturally continues with 9...d6 10 d4 ♕e7 11 f4 ♗e6 12 ♘a3 exd4 13 cxd4 0-0-0 (if 13...♘f6?! 14 f5 ♗xc4 15 ♘xc4 ♘xe4 16 ♘xb6 cxb6 17 ♕g4 and White has a strong initiative) and now White has two options:

a) 14 ♗e2 ♘f6 15 ♗f3 d5 16 e5 ♘e4 17 ♘c2 h5 and the position is about equal, J.Nunn-H.Hecht, Buenos Aires Olympiad 1978.

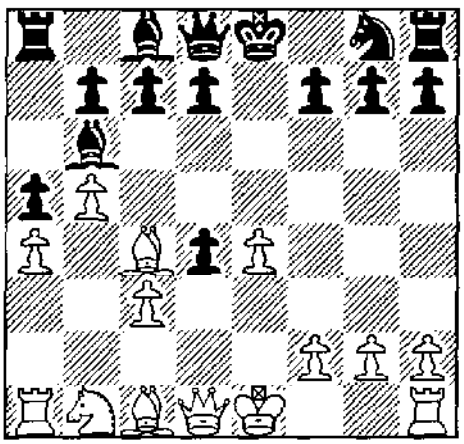
b) 14 f5!? seems to be more challenging: 14...♗xc4 15 ♘xc4 ♕xe4 16 ♖f4 ♕e7 17 ♗d2 and Black has problems keeping the position equal. One example is 17...♘f6 18 ♖c1 ♔b8 19 ♘xa5 ♗xa5 20 ♗xa5 ♕e3+ 21 ♔h1! and White has a strong initiative.



9...exd4?!

Black should not rush to give up the centre. Here he should probably play 9...♕e7 10 0-0 (if 10 ♕g4 ♘f6 11 ♕xg7 ♖g8 12 ♕h6 ♖g6 with unclear play in B.Kantsler-V.Mikhalevsky, Ramat Aviv 1998) 10...d6 11 f4 ♗e6 12 ♘a3 exd4 13 cxd4 ♘f6 with an unclear game ahead.

Less reliable is 9...♕h4 10 0-0 ♘f6 11 ♘d2 d6 12 ♘f3 ♕h5 13 dxe5 ♘xe4 (or 13...dxe5 14 ♘g5 ♕xd1 15 ♖xd1 ♗e6 16 ♗xe6 fxe6 17 c4 h6 18 ♘xe6 ♔f7 19 c5 ♔xe6 20 cxb6 cxb6 21 f3 with a clear advantage) 14 ♕e1 d5 15 ♗xd5 ♘c5 16 ♗e3 ♗e6 17 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 18 ♗xb6 cxb6 19 ♕e3 and White was better, S.Nadyrhanov-I.Komissarov, Smolensk 1997.



10 0-0

White can also try to fight for the centre immediately with 10 cxd4!? d5 11 exd5! (after 11 ♗xd5 ♘c7 Black is probably alright) 11...♘e7 12 ♘c3 0-0 13 0-0 ♘f5 14 ♗a3 ♖e8 15 ♗c5 and White seems to be better.

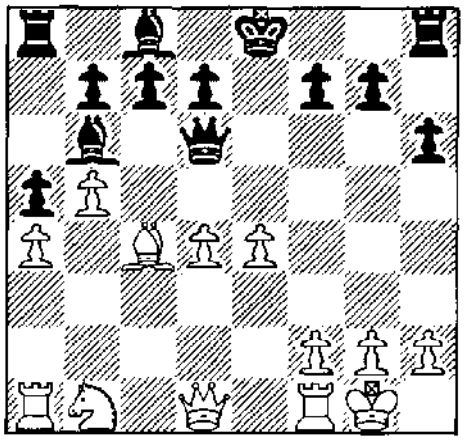
10...♘e7 11 ♗g5 h6 12 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 13 cxd4 ♕d6?

This leads to unwanted tactics. Three alternatives spring to mind:

a) 13...0-0 14 ♘c3 c6 15 ♖b1 ♗c7 16 e5 d6 17 f4 ♗e6 18 ♗xe6 fxe6 19 ♘e4 and White is better.

b) 13...d6 14 ♘c3 ♗e6 15 ♗d5 ♖b8 16 ♕d3 0-0 17 ♖ae1 and White is better.

c) 13...♕b4!? 14 ♘a3 0-0 15 ♕d3 d5 16 exd5 ♗d7 17 ♘c2 ♕d6 18 ♘e3 and White has a slight advantage according to Kasparov.



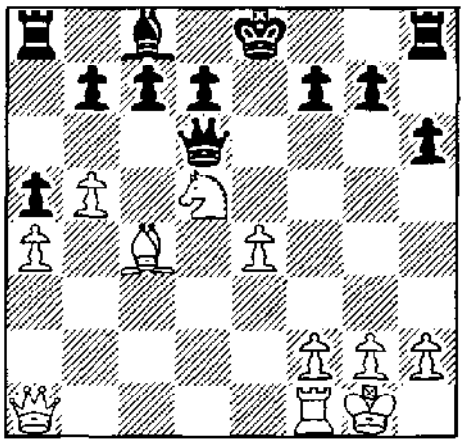
14 ♘c3! ♗xd4

Kasparov gives the following explanation behind Black's last move, i.e. 14...♕xd4 is met with 15 ♘d5!! when Black is faced with a horrible choice:

a) 15...♕e5 16 ♖c1 0-0 17 ♘xb6 cxb6 18 ♗d5 White is much better.

b) 15...♕xc4 16 ♖c1! (not 16 ♘xb6? cxb6 17 ♕d6 ♕e6 18 e5 h5 and the position is unclear) 16...♕a2 17 ♖xc7 ♗xc7 18 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 19 ♘xa8 d6 20 ♕c1 and White wins.

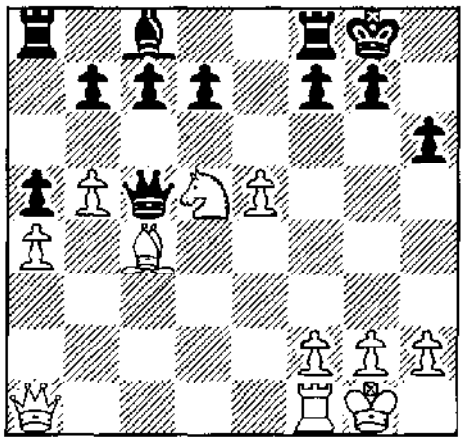
15 ♘d5! ♗xa1 16 ♕xa1



16...0-0?

This only makes things worse. Now the black queen gets trapped quite amusingly. Sadly necessary was 16...f6 17 b6! cxb6 18 e5 fxe5 19 ♖e1 ♔d8 20 ♖xe5 and White is much better according to Kasparov.

17 e5 ♕c5



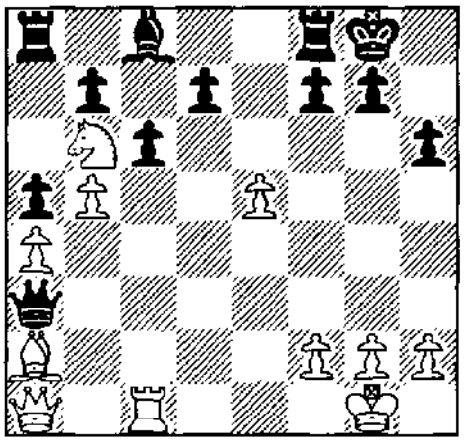
18 ♖c1! c6

Or 18...d6 19 ♗a2 ♕a7 20 ♖xc7 ♗e6 21 b6 ♕b8 22 ♘e7+ ♔h8 23 ♗xe6 fxe6 24 ♘g6+ ♔g8 25 exd6 and White wins.

19 ♗a2 ♕a3

If 19...♕xc1+ 20 ♕xc1 cxd5 21 ♗xd5 d6 22 exd6 ♖d8 23 ♕c5 and White wins, or 19...♕a7 20 b6 ♕b8 21 ♘c7 d5 22 exd6 ♗f5 23 ♕e5 and Black's position is very poor.

20 ♘b6



The threat of 21 ♗xf7+ decides the game.

20...d5 21 ♘xa8 ♔h8 22 ♘b6 ♗e6 23 h3

Or 23 bxc6 bxc6 24 ♖c3 ♕b4 25 ♖xc6 ♖b8 26 ♕b1 ♕d4 27 h3 ♗d7 28 ♖d6 and wins.

23...♖d8 24 bxc6 bxc6 25 ♖c3 ♕b4 26 ♖xc6 ♖b8 27 ♘xd5 ♕xa4 28 ♖c1 ♕a3 29 ♗c4 1-0

Game 23

J.Bademian Orchanian-R.Servat

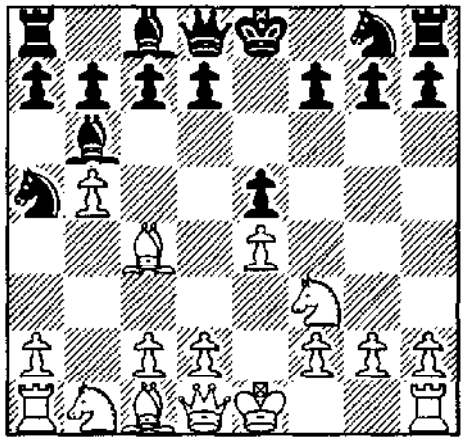
Mar del Plata 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗b6 5 b5?!

White should calm down a bit; it is too early for an attack. This game is a classic example of why you should mobilise your forces before attacking.

5...♘a5!

5...♘d4 6 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 7 c3 ♗b6 with equality is also possible, but Black wants more.



6 ♘xe5

Well, this is why White has played 5 b5. Instead, after 6 ♗e2?! d5! 7 ♘c3 dxe4 8 ♘xe4 f5 9 ♘c3 e4 10 ♘g1 ♘f6 11 ♘h3 ♕d4 12 0-0 ♗e6 13 ♕e1 ♘c4 Black has a clear advantage, R.Spielmann-A.Burn, Carlsbad 1911, while after 6 ♘a3 ♘xc4 7 ♘xc4 d6 8 d4 exd4 9 ♘xd4 ♗e6 10 ♘e3 ♕h4 Black is at least slightly better.

6...♘h6!

The simplest and most definitely the coolest. Of course Black has a high number of likeable alternatives here. However, we will focus on the main move.

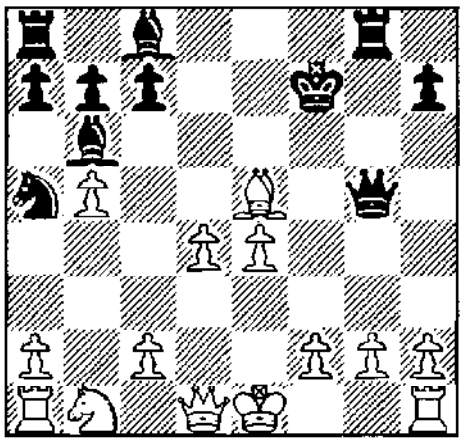
7 d4 d6 8 ♗xh6 dxe5!

8...gxh6?! would allow White to unleash his idea: 9 ♗xf7+! (not 9 ♘xf7? ♕f6 10 ♘xh8 ♘xc4 11 c3 ♗e6 12 0-0 0-0-0 and Black is better, or 10 ♕h5? 0-0 11 ♘xh6+ ♔g7 12 ♘g4 ♕f4! and Black wins) 9...♔e7 10 ♘c3 dxe5 11 ♕f3 ♗g4 12 ♕xg4 ♔xf7 13 dxe5 ♕g5 14 ♕d7+ ♔f8 15 f4 ♖d8 16 ♕h3 ♕g6 17 ♖d1 ♖xd1+ 18 ♔xd1 c6 and the position is pleasantly unclear.

9 ♗xg7 ♖g8

Black could also play 9...♕xd4 10 ♕xd4 ♗xd4 11 ♗xh8 ♗xa1 12 ♗d3 ♔c7 with equality.

10 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 11 ♗xe5 ♕g5

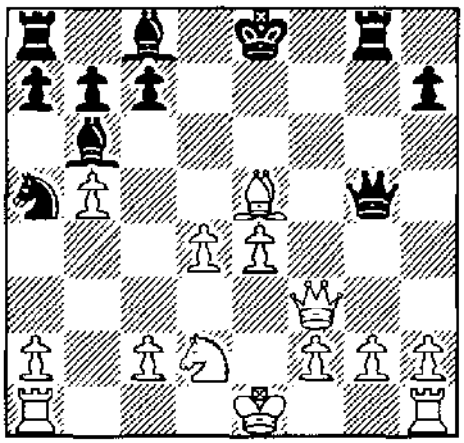


According to some old analysis by D.N.Pavlov, White is almost equal after 12 ♘d2. Four pawns can be more than enough to compensate for the piece. However, the weak coordination of his pieces is the lasting minus of White's position.

12 ♕f3+

If 12 ♘d2 ♕xg2 13 ♕h5+ ♔f8 14 0-0-0 ♕h3 15 ♕xh3 ♗xh3 16 c4 ♖e8 and Black is just better.

12...♔e8 13 ♘d2



13...♗g4

Black needs to play energetically. If instead 13...♕xg2?! 14 ♕xg2 ♖xg2 15 c4 c5 16 d5 and White is better, because of the weak position of the knight on a5.

14 ♕f6 ♕h5

Not 14...♕xf6?! 15 ♗xf6 ♗e6 16 ♖g1 ♘c4 17 ♘xc4 ♗xc4 18 c3 and White is at least equal.

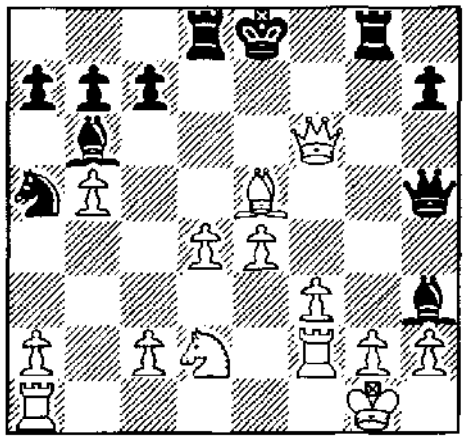
15 0-0??

This plays straight into Black's hands. Better was 15 f3 ♗d7 16 c4 (not 16 g4? ♕h3 17 c4 ♖f8 18 ♕g5 ♘xc4 19 ♘xc4 ♕xf3 and Black wins) 16...c6 17 g4 ♕h3 18 ♗d6 ♗d8 19 ♕e5+ ♔f7 20 ♕f4+ (or 20 0-0-0 cxb5 21 c5 ♖c8 22 ♕g3 ♕h6 23 h4 with an unclear game) 20...♔e8 21 ♕e5+ ♔f7 with equality.

15...♖d8

Or 15...♔d7!? 16 ♗g3 ♖af8 17 ♕h4 ♕xh4 18 ♗xh4 ♗xd4 19 ♖ab1 ♗c3 20 f3 ♗h3 21 ♗g3 ♗xd2 22 gxh3 ♘c4 and Black wins.

16 f3 ♗h3 17 ♖f2



17...♖d7??

Black returns the favour. After 17...♖g6 18 ♕f4 (or 18 ♕h8+ ♔d7) 18...♖xd4! 19 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 20 ♔h1 ♗xf2 21 gxh3 ♕xb5 Black is winning.

18 g4 ♖g6

If 18...♕g6 19 c3 ♕xf6 20 ♗xf6 ♖f7 21 e5 h5 22 ♘e4 hxg4 23 f4 ♘e4 24 f5 and White is much better.

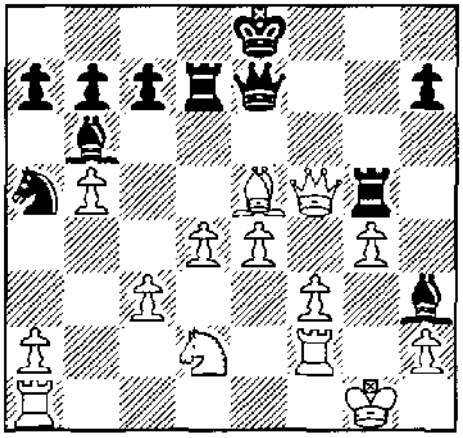
19 ♕f5

19 ♕h8+!? is a cute trap: 19...♔e7? 20 ♗f6+! ♔f7 21 ♖e1 ♖d6 22 e5 and White wins. Black should reply 19...♔f7 20 c3 e5 with unclear play.

19...♕h6 20 ♗f4 ♕g7 21 ♗e5

Or 21 c3 ♖f7 22 ♕e5+ ♕xe5 23 ♗xe5 h5 24 a4 c5 with an unclear game.

21...♕e7 22 c3 ♖g5



23 ♗f6?!

After the exchange of queens by 23 ♕f6 ♕xf6 24 ♗xf6 ♖xb5 25 e5 ♘c6 26 ♘c4, it looks as if White is a little better.

23...♖xf5 24 ♗xe7 ♘xb5 25 ♗f6

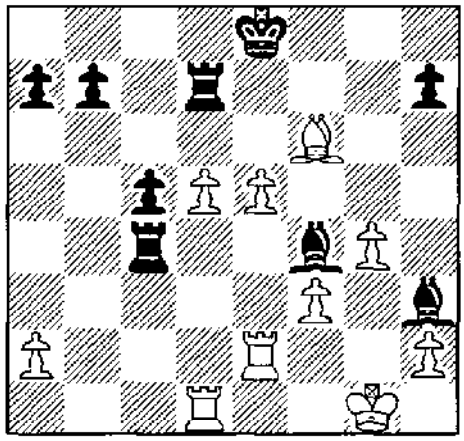
White loses a tempo compared with 23 ♕f6.

25...c5! 26 c4?

Suddenly White is collapsing completely. Instead, after 26 d5 c4 27 ♗d4 ♗xd4 28 cxd4 c3 29 ♘b1 ♖c7 30 ♘a3 ♖b2 31 ♖c1 ♘c4 32 d6 ♖c6 33 d5 ♖c5 34 ♘xc4 ♖xc4 35 ♖fc2 White keeps drawing chances.

26...♖b4 27 d5 ♘xc4 28 ♘xc4 ♖xc4 29 ♘e2 ♗c7 30 ♘d1 ♗f4 31 e5?

After 31 ♔f2 Black is much better, but White is still fighting.



31...♘xd5!

Now everything becomes clear.

32 ♘de1

If 32 ♖xd5 ♖c1+ 33 ♔f2 ♖f1 mate!

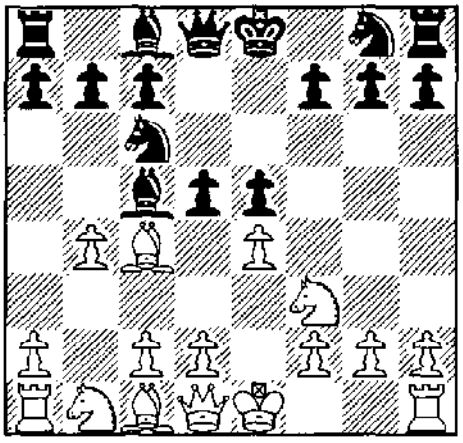
32...♘c3 33 ♖b2 b6 34 ♖b3 ♖c2 0-1

Game 24

S.Asker-K.Miettinen

Correspondence 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 d5!?



This move looks dangerous, but one should not be lead astray by appearances. In my opinion contemporary theory underestimates this move. All the same, it is

probably not strong enough to equalise.

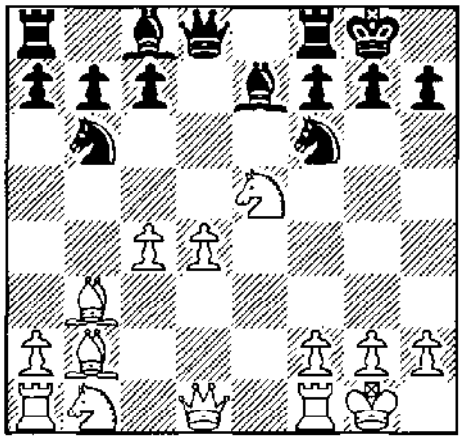
5 exd5

Note that 5 ♗xd5?! ♘xb4 6 ♗b3 ♘f6 7 ♕e2 0-0 8 0-0 ♗g4 gives Black the better chances.

5...♘xb4 6 0-0 ♘f6 7 ♘xe5 0-0 8 d4 ♗e7! 9 ♗b3

The best option is 9 ♘c3! ♘bxd5 10 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 11 ♕f3 ♗c6 12 ♖b1 ♖b8 13 ♖e1 and White has some advantage.

9...♘bxd5 10 c4 ♘b6 11 ♗b2



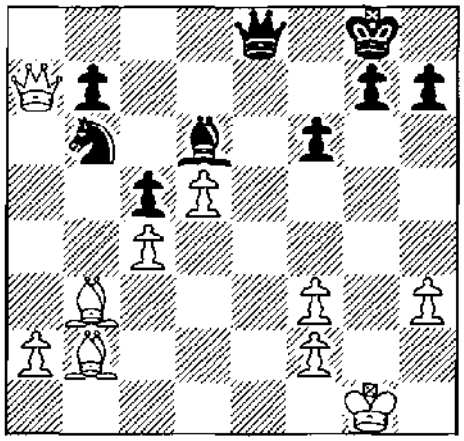
11...c5!

A prepared improvement over 11...c6?! 12 ♘d2 a5 13 a4 ♗b4 14 ♘df3 ♗f5 15 ♕e2 ♖e8 16 ♘g5 ♖e7 17 ♕f3 ♕c8 18 d5! and White was better, R.Felgaer-J.Pierrot, Argentine Championship 2000.

12 d5 ♗d6 13 ♘d2 ♖e8 14 ♘df3 ♕c7

Now White must start to play carefully in order to keep the balance.

15 ♖e1 ♘g4 16 ♘xg4 ♗xg4 17 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 18 h3 ♗h5 19 ♕d3 ♗g6 20 ♕c3 f6 21 ♖e1 ♕d7 22 ♕a5 ♗e4 23 ♕xa7 ♗xf3 24 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 25 gxf3



25...♕g6+

Or 25...♘xc4!? 26 ♗xc4 ♕g6+ 27 ♔f1 ♕b1+ 28 ♔g2 ♕g6+ with equality. Note that 28...♕xb2?! 29 ♕a8+ ♔f7 30 ♗d3 gives White has some attacking chances.

26 ♔f1 ♕d3+ ½-½

Summary

If the Evans Gambit can be challenged, it is not by declining the gambit. After 4...♗b6 5 a4! a6 6 a5! White should be a little better, as demonstrated in Chapter 4. The alternative 5...a5, as in Kasparov-Piket, does not seem to equalise either. Finally, 4...d5!? cannot be completely disregarded, but White should still find a way to keep the pressure there, as seen on move 9 in Game 24.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 *(D)* **♗b6**

4...d5 – *Game 24*

5 a4 *(D)*

5 b5 – *Game 23*

5...a6

5...a5 – *Game 22*

6 ♘c3

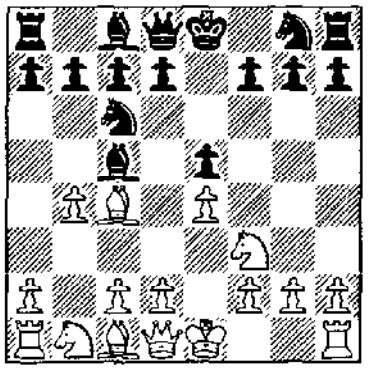
6 ♗b2 – *Game 19*

6 c3 ♘f6 7 d3 d6 – *Game 15*

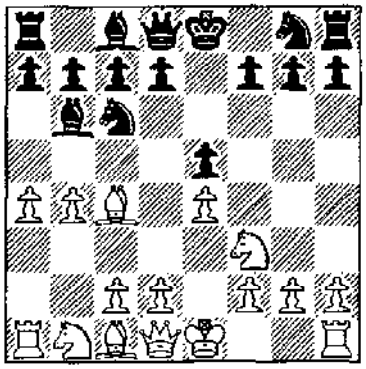
6...♘f6 *(D)*

7 ♘d5 – *Game 20*

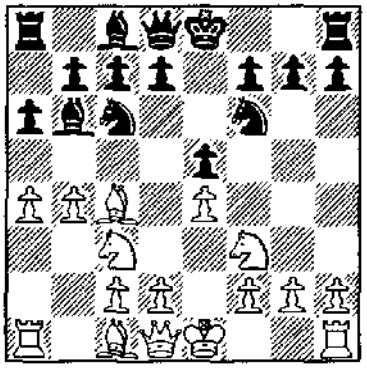
7 d4 – *Game 21*



4 b4

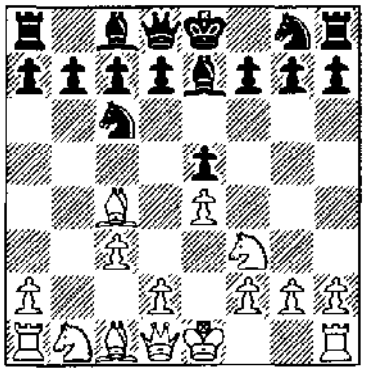


5 a4



6...♘f6

CHAPTER SIX



The Evans Gambit with 5...♗e7

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7

In this chapter we shall examine a slightly passive-looking bishop retreat, which nevertheless holds great prospects for counter-strikes in the centre. The key idea is to answer White's logical follow-up 6 d4 with 6...♘a5, in order to strip White of the two bishops and, more importantly, to gain control over the d5-square and thereby prepare ...d7-d5. This is seen after the logical moves 7 ♗e2 exd4 8 cxd4?! d5! and Black is doing absolutely fine. It is for this reason that Kasparov introduced (at the top level) 8 ♕xd4!, which is the subject of the first three games in this chapter.

In Game 28, we will look at 7 ♘xe5, the move preferred before 1995, which allows Black to obtain the two bishops and strike in the centre. However, White regains his pawn and also has a large central presence. Finally, in Game 29 we will see the ancient idea 6 ♕b3!?, which deserves mentioning, though is hardly critical.

Game 25

G.Kasparov-V.Anand

Riga 1995

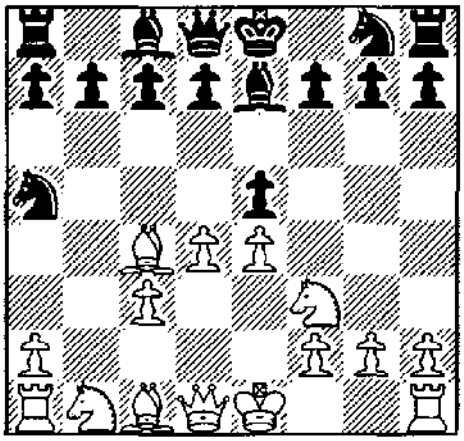
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4

The principled reply.

5 c3 ♗e7

Again a logical response. The bishop tries to get out of harm's way and return to a more modest accommodation, from where it can assist with the protection of the king.

6 d4 ♘a5



This has long been the main idea behind Black's previous move. Instead of trying to cling on to the extra pawn, Black is aiming for the dangerous white bishop. Black has some alternatives, but none that deserves too much attention.

a) 6...exd4 7 cxd4 ♘a5 is just not the same! After 8 ♗d3 d5 9 exd5 ♕xd5 10 0-0 ♘f6 11 ♘c3 ♕h5 12 ♖b1 a6 13 ♗f4 White has enough compensation for the pawn.

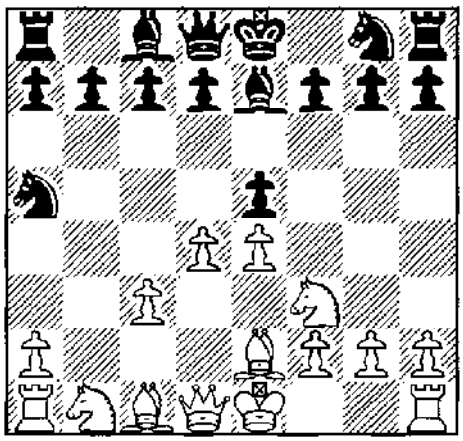
b) 6...d6?! also makes little sense, as White retains the pawn without becoming more peaceful. R.Fischer-O.Celle, Davis (simul) 1964, continued 7 dxe5 ♘xe5 8 ♘xe5 dxe5 9 ♕h5 g6 10 ♕xe5 ♘f6 11 ♗a3 ♖f8 12 0-0 ♘g4 13 ♕g3 ♗xa3 14 ♘xa3 ♕e7 15 ♗b5+ c6 16 ♘c4! and White had a strong attack.

7 ♗e2

The standard alternative 7 ♘xe5 is considered below in Game 28. Apart from the text move, White has also tried:

a) 7 ♗xf7+!? (risky, but interesting) 7...♔xf7 8 ♘xe5+ ♔e8! (the most testing; also safe is 8...♔f8 9 ♕f3+ ♘f6 10 g4 d6 11 g5 dxe5 12 gxf6 ♗xf6 13 dxe5 ♘e4 14 exf6 ♕xf6 15 ♕xf6+ gxf6 with equality) 9 ♕h5+ g6 10 ♘xg6 ♘f6 11 ♕xa5 hxg6 12 e5 ♘e4 13 ♕d5 ♘g5 14 ♘d2 d6 15 f4 c6 16 ♕b3 ♘e6 17 ♘f3 dxe5 18 fxe5 ♕b6 19 ♕c2 and White has some compensation, D.Sakellarakis-J.Carr, correspondence 1998.

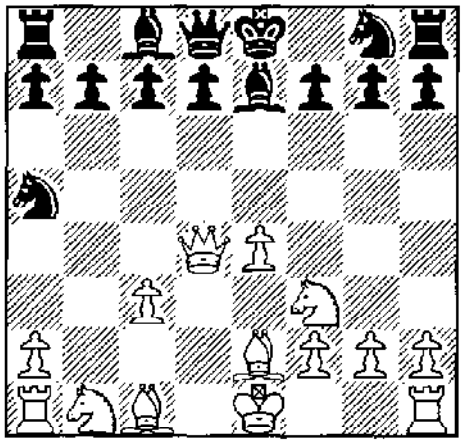
b) 7 ♗d3!? does not appear to have been much tested. Here is one practical example: 7...exd4 8 cxd4 d5 9 e5 c5 10 dxc5 ♘c6 11 0-0 ♗xc5 12 ♘c3 ♗g4 13 ♗e2 ♘ge7 14 ♘a4 ♗xf3 15 ♘xc5 ♗xe2 16 ♕xc2 when White has enough compensation for the pawn, V.Vakulienko V.Smirnov, Minsk 1976, though Black can keep the balance with 16...♕c7 according to Matsukevich. However, a lot of moves from both sides might be discussed, so please do not take this as a recommendation. I will only say that there is nothing definitely wrong with 7 ♗d3.



7...exd4

7...d6 is a less well-known alternative, when after 8 ♕a4+ c6 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♘xe5 ♘f6 11 0-0 b5 12 ♕c2 0-0 13 a4 b4 14 cxb4 ♗xb4 we have an unclear game, T.Bullockus-M.Melts, correspondence 1983.

8 ♕xd4!?



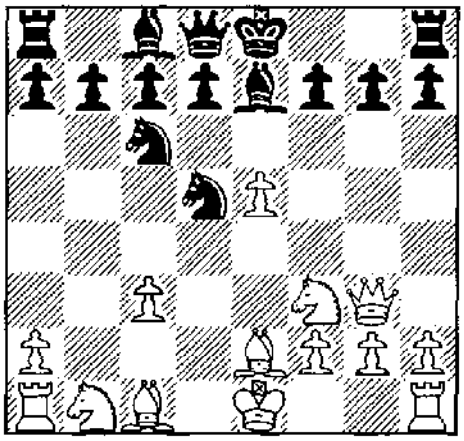
This was Kasparov's way of breathing

new life into this line.

8...♘f6

8...d6 and 8...d5 are investigated in Games 26 and 27 respectively. 8...♔f8 has also been tried, but it looks as if White should have enough compensation for the pawn after most normal moves. The quality of the games has not been high enough to give any practical and conclusive evaluation, so I will leave it with just this brief mention.

9 e5 ♘c6 10 ♕h4 ♘d5 11 ♕g3



11...g6

Black does not have enough compensation for the exchange after 11...0-0 12 ♗h6 g6 13 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 14 0-0 ♗h6 15 ♖d1 ♗f4 16 ♕h3 d6 17 ♕h4 ♕xh4 18 ♘xh4 ♗e6 19 exd6 ♗xd6 20 ♘f3 and White is better.

12 0-0 ♘b6

If 12...0-0 13 ♖d1 ♘b6 14 a4 ♘a5 15 ♗h6 ♖e8 16 e6 ♗f6 17 exf7+ ♔xf7 18 ♗d3 d5 19 ♘g5+ ♗xg5 20 ♗xg5 and White has a powerful attack.

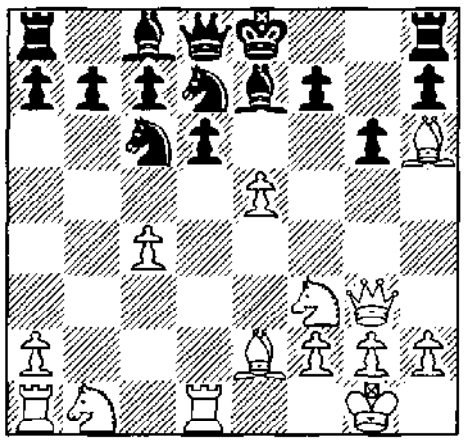
13 c4 d6 14 ♖d1 ♘d7

14...♗d7!? was tried in the same year. White continues with 15 ♗h6 dxe5 (if 15...♘xe5 16 ♘xe5 dxe5 17 ♕xe5 f6 18 ♕e3 and White is much better) 16 ♘c3 f6 17 ♘e4, and here we should look at:

a) 17...♘a4? 18 ♖d5 and now after 18...♘b4? Black was sunk by 19 ♖xe5! with a decisive attack: 19...fxe5 20 ♕xe5 ♖f8 21 ♗xf8 ♘c6 (or 21...♔xf8 22 ♕h8+ ♔f7 23 ♘e5+ ♔e6 24 ♗g4 mate) 22 ♕g7 ♘c3 23 ♗xe7 ♘xe2+ 24 ♔f1 ♕xe7 25 ♘f6+ ♔d8 26 ♕h8+ ♗e8 27 ♖d1+ and White was winning in R.Borngaesser-M.Henk, Düsseldorf 1995. Instead 18...♖g8 is more solid, but even then White can play 19 ♖ad1 with a strong attack.

b) 17...♗f8!? is playable, though after 18 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 19 c5 ♘e8 and now 20 ♖ab1!?, 20 ♖d2!? or 20 h4!?, White has compensation in all cases.

15 ♗h6!



White cannot allow Black to castle. After 15 ♗f4 dxe5 16 ♘xe5 ♗h4! 17 ♕e3 ♘cxe5 18 ♗xe5 0-0 Black is consolidating.

15...♘cxe5

Here Black should have considered 15...dxe5, when White has the following options:

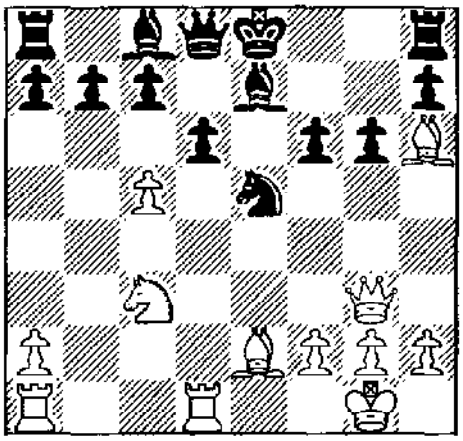
a) 16 ♗g7!? ♖g8 17 ♗xe5 ♘cxe5 18 ♘xe5 ♗d6 19 f4 ♕f6 20 ♘c3 ♗xe5 21 fxe5 ♕xe5 22 ♕f3! (after 22 ♕xe5+

♘xe5 23 ♘d5 ♔f8 24 ♘xc7 ♖b8 25 ♖d5 White has only enough compensation to draw) 22...♕c5+ 23 ♔h1 ♘e5 24 ♕f6 with an attack.

b) 16 ♘c3 ♗f8 17 ♗g5 f6 18 ♗e3 ♗g7 19 c5 0-0 20 ♗c4+ ♔h8 21 ♘h4 ♘e7 22 ♘d5! and White has an attack once again.

These lines shows the potential of White's position, but should not be understood as conclusive in any way; they are more illustrations to the dangers Black is facing. I do not want to come with any binding evaluation after 15...dxe5, as I simply cannot think of a suitable one.

16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 17 ♘c3 f6 18 c5



18...♘f7?

Now it goes wrong. Still, after 18...♗e6 19 ♖ab1 White keeps the pressure.

19 cxd6 cxd6

After 19...♗xd6 20 ♗b5+! Black cannot hold, e.g. 20...♗d7 21 ♖e1+ ♗e5 22 ♗g7 ♖g8 23 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 24 ♕h3+ ♔e7 25 ♖ad1 ♖xg7 26 ♖xd8 ♔xd8 27 ♕e6 and White wins, or 20...c6 21 ♗f4 cxb5 22 ♗xd6 ♘xd6 23 ♖xd6 ♕a5 24 ♖e1+ ♔f7 25 ♖xf6+ ♔xf6 26 ♘d5+ ♔g7 27 ♖e7+ ♔g8 28 ♕e5 and mates.

20 ♕e3 ♘xh6

If 20...♗d7? 21 ♗g7 ♖g8 22 ♗xf6 with a strong attack.

21 ♕xh6 ♗f8 22 ♕e3+ ♔f7

22...♕e7 is answered by 23 ♘e4 ♕e5 24 ♘xf6+ ♔f7 25 ♘e4 ♗e7 26 f4 and Black is in difficulties.

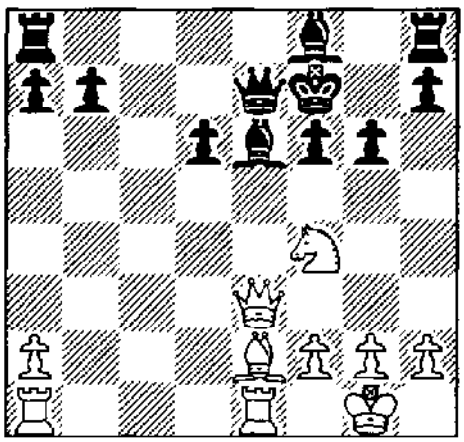
23 ♘d5 ♗e6

23...♗d7!? 24 ♕b3 ♖b8 25 ♖ac1 ♗e6 was perhaps the last chance. Instead, after 23...♗g7 24 ♕b3 ♗e6 25 ♗c4 ♖c8 26 ♘b6 ♖xc4 (if 26...♗xc4 27 ♘xc4 d5 28 ♘d6+ ♕xd6 29 ♖xd5 ♖c3 30 ♖xd6+ wins) 27 ♘xc4 ♔f8 28 ♕b4 White has a big advantage.

24 ♘f4 ♕e7

If 24...♕d7 25 ♗b5! ♕xb5 26 ♕xe6+ ♔g7 27 ♘d5 and White wins.

25 ♖e1 1-0



White wins in all lines, e.g. 25...♗d7 26 ♗c4+ ♔e8 27 ♕d2, or 25...d5 26 ♗f3 ♖e8 27 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 28 ♕xe6+ ♖xe6 29 ♗xd5, as well as 25...♖e8 26 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 27 ♕xe6+ ♔xe6 28 ♗b5+ etc.

Game 26

A.Shirov-J.Timman

Biel 1995

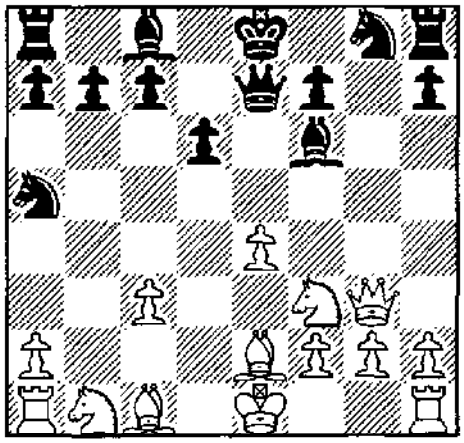
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4

♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7 6 d4 ♘a5 7 ♗e2 exd4 8 ♕xd4 d6

Timman thinks it is more important for Black to have some influence in the centre than to retain the extra pawn.

9 ♕xg7 ♗f6 10 ♕g3 ♕e7

10...♘c7 is answered strongly by 11 ♗g5! ♘ec6 12 ♕f4 with an attack.



11 0-0?!

Recently, an improvement was found on this game. Better here is 11 ♘g5 h6 12 ♘h3 ♕xe4 13 ♘f4 ♗d7 14 0-0 0-0-0 15 ♘d2 ♕a4 16 ♘d5 ♗h4 17 ♕d3 ♘c7 18 ♗f3 ♘ac6 19 ♖b1 with compensation, N.Short-Kir.Georgiev, Warsaw (rapid) 2004.

11...♗d7?!

11...♕xe4! was more testing, when White needs to play precisely: 12 ♖e1! (if 12 ♘d4 ♗e5 13 ♕g5 ♘e7 and Black is better) 12...♔f8 13 ♘d4! (not 13 ♘g5?! ♕g6 14 ♗d3 ♗f5 15 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 16 ♘a3 ♖e8 17 ♗d2 ♖xe1+ 18 ♖xe1 ♘e7 and White has nothing for the pawn) 13...♗e5 14 ♕g5 ♘c7 (if 14...♘f6?! 15 ♕h6+ ♔e7 16 ♕d2 and White has great compensation) 15 ♕h6+ ♗g7 16 ♕d2 and White has compensation for the pawn, e.g. he is threatening ♘b5.

12 ♘d4!?

Or 12 ♘g5 h6 13 ♘h7!? 0-0-0 (not 13...♕xe4?? 14 ♕xg8+ ♖xg8 15 ♘xf6+ and wins) 14 ♘xf6 ♘xf6 15 ♘d2 and White is slightly better.

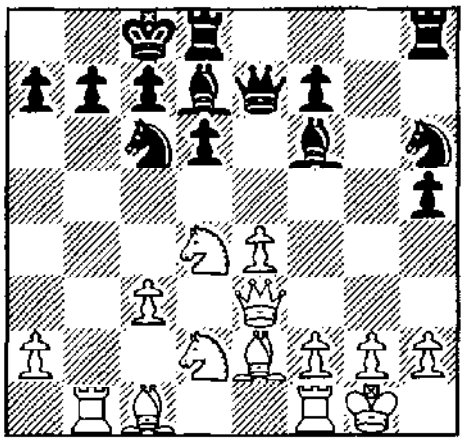
12...0-0-0

Black can also try 12...♕xe4, but after 13 ♘d2 ♕g6 14 ♕e3+ ♘e7 15 ♗d3 ♕g7 16 ♘e4 White has compensation.

13 ♘d2 ♘c6

After 13...h5 14 ♖b1 h4 15 ♕e3 h3 16 g3 White's attack looks much more dangerous.

14 ♕e3 h5 15 ♖b1 ♘h6



16 ♕d3!?

True to his style Shirov is more interested in attacking than in grabbing material. After the long line 16 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 17 ♕xa7 ♕e5 18 ♖b3 ♘g4 19 f4 ♕c5+ 20 ♕xc5 dxc5 21 e5 ♗e7 22 c4 ♖hg8 23 ♗f3 ♗xf3 24 ♘xf3 ♘h6 Black has compensation for the pawn.

16...b6

With this move Black gives White a point to attack, so although it seems 'normal', 16...b6 might be questionable. Instead, 16...♘e5? 17 ♕a6! and White wins is a trick worth remembering, but 16...♖dg8 is a logical move, setting an

elegant trap at the same time: 17 ♖xb7? ♘xd4 18 ♕a6 ♘xe2+ 19 ♔h1 ♕e6! 20 ♖xa7+ ♔d8 Black and wins. Better is 17 ♘2f3 with a continuing struggle.

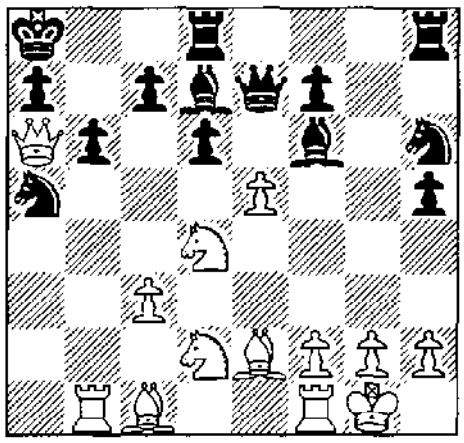
17 a4! ♔b8

Now after 17...♖dg8 White has 18 a5 ♘xa5 19 ♕a6+ ♔d8 20 ♕xa7 ♔e8 21 ♘b5 ♗xb5 22 ♕a8+ ♕d8 23 ♗xb5+ ♔e7 24 ♕xd8+ ♖xd8 and the two bishops gives him the better chances.

18 a5 ♘xa5 19 ♕a6 ♔a8?

This is a fatal error. Black should play 19...♗xd4 20 cxd4 ♔a8 21 ♗b2 ♗c8 22 ♕b5, when White has compensation for the material according to Shirov.

20 e5!



Opening the long diagonal for White's light-squared bishop and starting one of those classical all-destructive Shirov attacks.

20...♕xe5

In this kind of positions words can only tell so much. We need a few variations to understand what is really going on here...

a) 20...dxe5 21 ♗f3+ c6 (if 21...♔b8 22 ♕xa5 exd4 23 ♕xa7+ ♔xa7 24 ♖a1+ and mates) 22 ♗a3 ♗c8 (if 22...♕xa3 23 ♘b5) 23 ♕xa5! ♕b7 24 ♕a4 and wins.

b) 20...♗xe5 21 ♗f3+ c6 22 ♖xb6 ♗xh2+ 23 ♔xh2 ♕h4+ 24 ♔g1 ♘g4 25 ♗xc6+ ♗xc6 26 ♘2f3 wins. Instead 21...d5! might have been Black's best chance, though after 22 ♗xd5+ c6 23 ♘e4 ♘xe4 24 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 25 ♗xe6! ♔b8 26 ♕xe4 White still has a clear advantage.

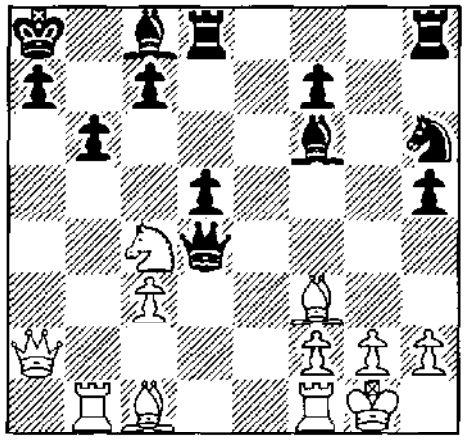
21 ♗f3+ d5 22 ♘c4! ♗c8

22...♘xe4 is strongly met by 23 ♖a1! ♘a5 24 ♖xa5 bxa5 25 ♘c6 ♗xc6 26 ♗e3 ♕xe3 27 ♕xc6+ ♔b8 28 fxe3 ♖d6 29 ♖b1+ ♔c8 30 ♕b7+ ♔d7 31 ♗xd5 and White is much better according to Shirov.

23 ♕xa5! ♕xd4

If 23...bxa5? 24 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 25 ♘c6 wins.

24 ♕a2



24...♕xc3

White wins after 24...♕h4 25 g3 ♕h3 26 ♘xb6+ cxb6 27 ♖xb6, or similarly 24...♕c5 25 ♗e3! ♕c6 26 ♘xb6+ etc. Black's last chance to stay in the game was with 24...♕d3! 25 ♖d1 (here 25 ♗e3 ♔b8! is less clear; White has strong attack, but Black is still alive) 25...♕xd1+ 26 ♗xd1 dxc4, although White maintains a clear advantage after 27 ♗e2 or 27 ♗f4.

25 ♗e3! ♗b7

Or 25...♔b8 26 ♘xb6! cxb6 27 ♗xb6 axb6 28 ♖xb6+ ♗b7 29 ♗xd5 ♖d7 30 ♕a6 and White wins.

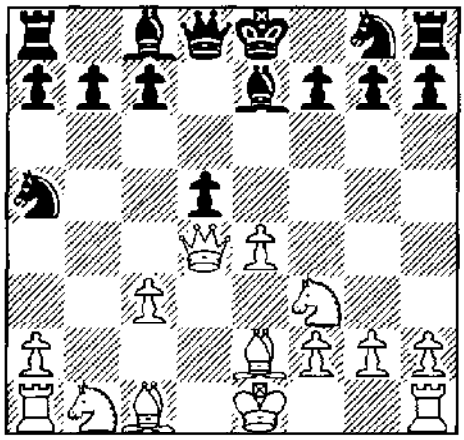
26 ♗xb6! cxb6 27 ♘xb6+ ♔b8 28 ♘xd5 1-0

Game 27

J.Gunnarsson-K.Sasikiran

Elista Olympiad 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7 6 d4 ♘a5 7 ♗e2 exd4 8 ♕xd4 d5!?



This aggressive counter-blow in the centre is very typical of the young Indian's style.

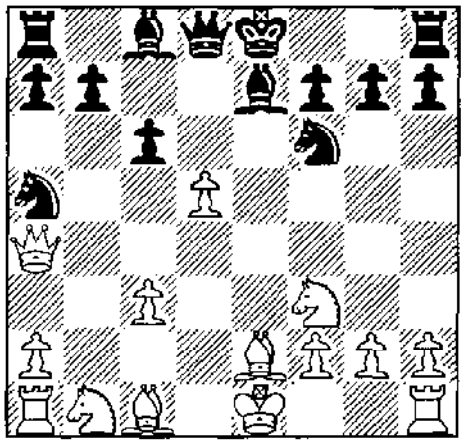
9 exd5 ♘f6 10 ♕a4+?!

This only helps Black. White should go for natural development with 10 c4, when Black has two options:

a) 10...c6 11 ♘c3 0-0 12 0-0 ♖e8 13 ♗b2 ♗f8 14 ♖fd1 and White is slightly better L.Winants-M.Kremer, Amsterdam 1996.

b) 10...0-0 11 0-0 b5!? 12 cxb5 ♘xd5 13 ♘c3 ♗b7 14 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 15 ♕a4 c6 16 ♖d1 ♗f6 17 ♖b1 ♖e8 18 ♗c3 ♕c7 (18...♖e4 was agreed drawn in W.Lumley-J.Soberano, correspondence 1995, though White is better after 19 ♕c2!) 19 ♗f4 ♕b6 20 bxc6 ♗xc6 21 ♕a3 ♖xe2!? 22 ♖xb6 axb6 with sufficient compensation to draw.

10...c6



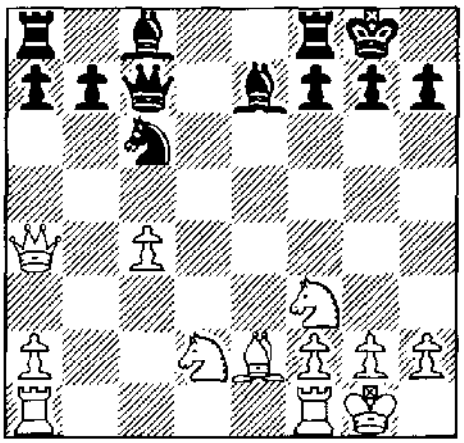
11 c4?!

White has more chances of equalising after 11 dxc6 ♘xc6 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♖d1 ♕b6 14 ♘bd2.

11...♘e4! 12 ♗d2

Or 12 ♗b2 ♗f6 13 ♕b4 ♗xb2 14 ♕xb2 0-0 15 dxc6 ♘xc6 16 0-0 ♖e8 and Black is at least slightly better.

12...♘xd2 13 ♘bxd2 0-0 14 dxc6 ♘xc6 15 0-0 ♕c7



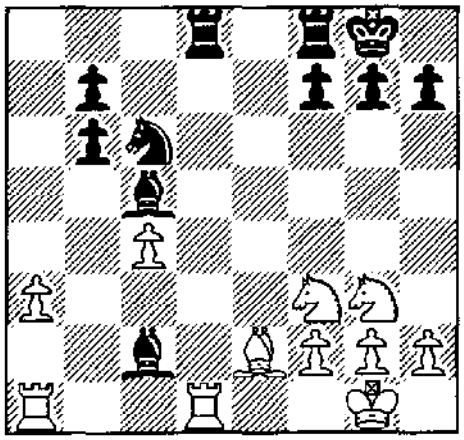
Black has the better pawn structure and the two bishops as well. At grand-

master level White is in a lot of trouble.

16 ♖fe1 ♗f5 17 ♘f1 ♗c5 18 ♘g3 ♗g6 19 a3 ♖ad8 20 ♕b5 ♕b6 21 ♕xb6 axb6!?

This is rather too 'deep' for my taste. I prefer the standard 21...♗xb6 when Black is just better. However, Sasikiran is probably targeting the white a-pawn and certainly has some ideas behind his recapture.

22 ♖ed1 ♗c2



23 ♖dc1?

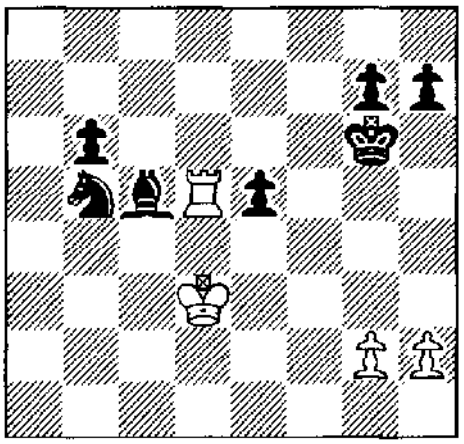
23 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 24 ♖a2 was White's last hope, e.g. 24...♗b1 25 ♖b2 ♗g6 26 ♘h4 with good drawing chances, though 24...♗a4! 25 ♘f5 ♖a8 gives Black good winning chances too.

23...♘d4 24 ♗d1 ♗xd1 25 ♖xd1 ♘c2 26 ♖ac1 ♘xa3 27 ♘e4 ♗b4 28 ♘d4 ♖fe8 29 f3

Or 29 ♘g3 ♗c5 30 ♘df5 ♖xd1+ 31 ♖xd1 ♘xc4 and Black wins.

29...♖xe4 30 fxe4 ♗c5 31 ♔f1 ♖xd4 32 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 33 ♔e2 f6 34 ♖d1 ♗c5 35 ♖d8+ ♔f7 36 ♔d3 b5 37 ♖d7+ ♔g6 38 cxb5 b6 39 e5 fxe5 40 ♖d5 ♘xb5

Now everything is clear. Black is winning.



41 ♖xe5 ♘d6 42 ♖d5 ♘f5 43 g3 ♘e3 44 ♖e5 ♘g4 45 ♖e2 ♔f5 46 ♔c4 h5 47 ♖e1 ♘e3+ 48 ♔d3 ♔g4 49 ♖h1 ♔f3 50 ♖a1 ♘g4 51 ♖a7 g6 52 ♔c4 ♘xh2 53 ♖g7 ♘g4 54 ♔d5 ♔xg3 55 ♖xg6 ♔f4 0-1

Game 28

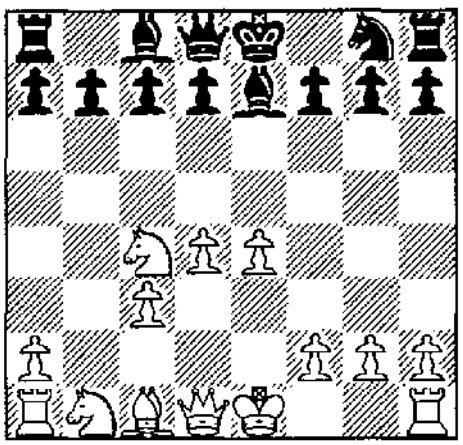
E.Sveshnikov-A.Kharitonov

Russian Ch., Krasnoyarsk 2003

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7 6 d4 ♘a5 7 ♘xe5!?

This was the usual move before Kasparov played 8 ♕xd4!, thereby elevating 7 ♗e2 to main line status.

7...♘xc4 8 ♘xc4



The outcome of the opening is already quite clear. The position is relatively balanced, with White having a strong centre and Black having the two bishops. Now Black needs to strike in the centre before White takes complete control.

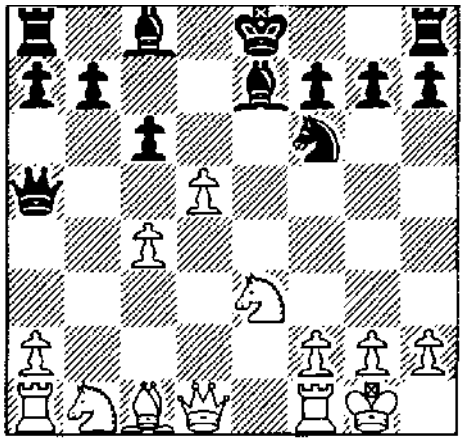
8...d5 9 exd5 ♕xd5 10 ♘e3 ♕a5

Others:

a) 10...♕d8 11 0-0 ♘f6 12 c4 0-0 13 ♘c3 c6 14 ♖b1 ♖e8 15 ♗b2 ♕c7 16 ♕f3 ♗d7 17 ♘e2 ♗d6 (17...♖ad8 18 ♘g3 ♗c8 19 d5! and White has some plus here, G.Kasparov-N.Short, London (rapid) 1993) 18 ♘g3 ♗xg3 19 fxg3 ♖e7 20 d5 ♖ac8 21 ♗xf6 ♖xe3 22 ♗e5 ♖xf3 23 ♗xc7 ♖xf1+ 24 ♔xf1 with equality.

b) 10...♕d7 11 0-0 ♘f6 12 c4 0-0 13 ♘c3 (if 13 ♗b2?! b5! 14 ♘c3 bxc4 15 ♘xc4 ♖b8 and Black is at least slightly better) 13...c6 14 ♕d3 ♘g4 15 h3 ♘xe3 16 fxe3 b6 17 ♗b2 ♗a6 18 ♖ac1 ♖ad8 19 ♖f3 f5 20 ♘e2 ♖f7 21 ♕b3 and game is unclear, S.Ganguly-K.Sundararajan, Indian Championship 2004.

11 0-0 ♘f6 12 c4 c6 13 d5



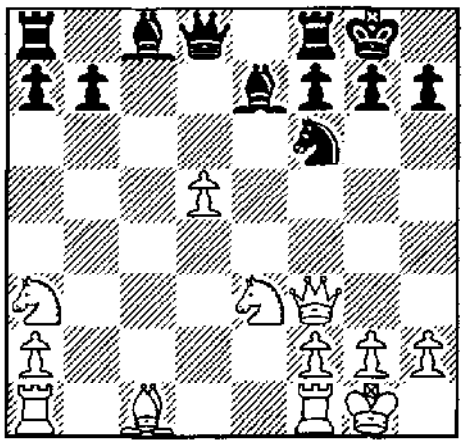
13...♕d8?!

It is not really clear what the queen is supposed to do from d8. Some alternatives needed consideration:

a) 13...cxd5 is quite a risky move: 14 cxd5 0-0 15 d6 ♗d8 16 ♗b2 ♖e8 17 ♘d2 ♗d7 18 ♘dc4 ♕a6 19 ♘c5 ♗e6 20 a4! ♗b6 21 ♘3g4 and White has a strong attack. M.Rybak-Z.Necesany, correspondence 2000, continued 21...♘d5? (instead 21...♘xg4 22 ♘xg4 ♕c4! gives Black chances for a defence, but not 22...♗c5? 23 ♕f3 ♕xd6 24 ♘f6+! gxf6 25 ♕xf6 ♔f8 26 ♕g7+ ♔e7 27 ♕g5+ ♔d7 28 ♖fd1 and wins) 22 ♖a3! ♘f4 (if 22...f6 23 ♘h6+ gxh6 24 ♖g3+ ♔f8 25 ♕h5 wins, or 22...♖ed8 23 ♖g3 f6 24 ♘h6+ ♔f8 25 ♗a3 g6 26 ♘xg6+ hxg6 27 ♖xg6 ♖d7 28 ♕g4!! forces mate) 23 ♖g3 ♘g6 24 d7 ♖ed8 25 ♘h6+!! 1-0. If 25...gxh6 26 ♕h5 ♕xa4 27 ♘xg6 hxg6 28 ♖xg6+ ♔f8 29 ♗f6 and White wins.

b) 13...♕c7! is the simplest. After 14 ♗b2 0-0 15 ♘c3 a6 16 ♕d4 c5 17 ♕d3 ♗d6 18 h3 ♖e8 19 ♘f5 ♗xf5 20 ♕xf5 ♖e5 21 ♕d3 ♖ae8 Black is alright, O.Rajala-R.Pomell, correspondence 1977.

14 ♕f3 cxd5 15 cxd5 0-0 16 ♘a3



16...♘e8?

Black is fighting for control of d6, but he has only two minor pieces that can help to cover, whereas White has three. The coming exchanges only aid White.

Instead:

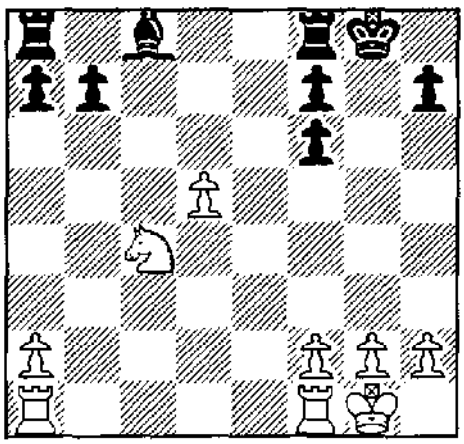
a) 16...♖b8?! 17 ♖d1 b5 has the minus of weakening c6. After 18 ♖b1 a6 19 ♗b2 ♕d6 20 ♘ac2 ♖e8 21 ♘d4 White is much better.

b) 16...♖c8 17 ♘ac4 ♗c5 18 ♗b2 ♘c4 is a better defence, and while the position might appear bad for Black after 19 ♖ad1, he can use tactics to keep the balance: 19...♕g5 20 d6 ♗d7 21 ♖d5 ♕h6 22 ♘e5 ♘g5! 23 ♕d1 ♗xe3 24 ♘xd7 ♘e4 25 fxe3 ♕xe3+ 26 ♔h1 ♘f2+ 27 ♖xf2 ♕xf2 28 ♗c3 ♖e3 29 ♖c5 ♖d8 with counterplay.

17 ♘ac4 ♘d6 18 ♗b2 ♘xc4 19 ♘xc4 ♗f6

This move does not look good, but Black is getting quite desperate in his defensive efforts.

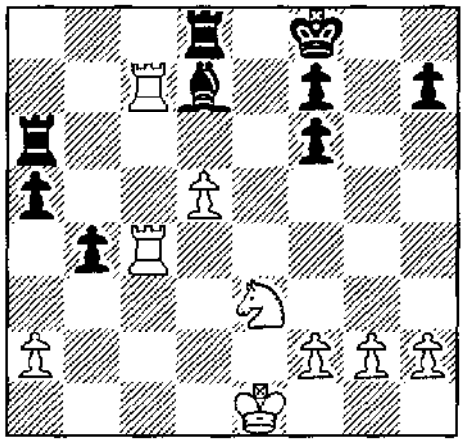
20 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 21 ♕xf6 gxf6



This ending should be more or less lost for Black.

22 ♖fd1 ♖d8 23 ♖d4 b5 24 ♘e3 a5 25 ♔f1 ♖a6 26 ♖c1 ♗d7 27 ♖c7 b4 28 ♔e1 ♔f8 29 ♖dc4?

White fails to control his opponent's only possible counterplay, the advance of the b-pawn. The precise move was 29 ♔d2! when the king comes to the queenside, allowing the rooks to go to the seventh row; while after 29...♖b6 30 ♘c4 and White wins.

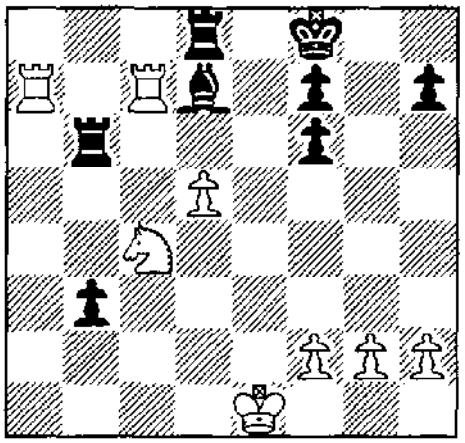


29...♖b6 30 ♖a7 a4 31 ♖cc7

Or 31 ♔d2 b3 32 axb3 axb3 33 ♔c1 b2+ 34 ♔b1 f5 35 ♖cc7 f4 36 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 37 ♖xd7 fxe3 38 fxe3 ♖b3 and Black has good drawing chances.

31...b3 32 axb3 axb3 33 ♘c4

If 33 ♖cb7 ♖b8 34 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 35 ♘c4 ♗b5! and Black is defending without risks.



33...♖b4?

Now Black is starting to drift. Instead, the clever 33...♗e8! would have solved most of his problems. After 34 ♖cb7 ♖xb7 35 ♖xb7 ♖xd5 36 ♖xb3 White has

only a spiritual advantage.

34 ♖ab7 ♖xb7 35 ♖xb7 ♗a4??

35...♗f5 36 ♘c3 ♗c2 was necessary as it's the only way Black stays alive, though after 37 ♔d2 White still has good winning chances.

36 ♖b4 ♗e8 37 ♘e3 ♔e7 38 ♖xb3 ♔d6 39 ♔e2 ♗d7 40 ♖b6+ ♔e5 41 g3 ♖h8 42 ♖b7 ♖d8 43 ♔f3 h5 44 ♖b4 ♗g4+ 45 ♔g2 1-0

Game 29

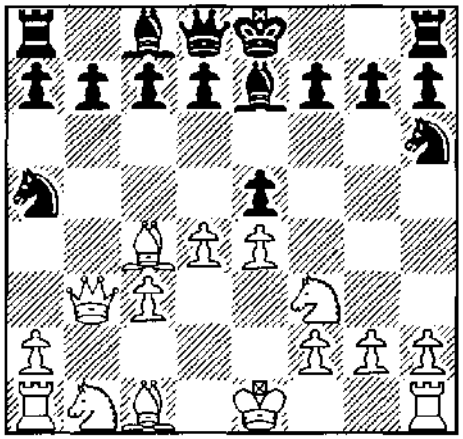
D.Pirrot-F.Jenni

Cappelle la Grande 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7 6 ♕b3!?

This was Labourdonnais' novelty in 1835. It is interesting that it was almost another 100 years before 6 ♕b3 was tried again in a tournament game.

6...♘h6 7 d4 ♘a5



8 ♕b5

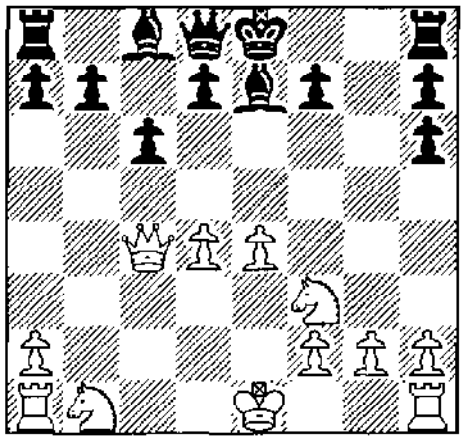
8 ♕a4 is strongly met by 8...♘xc4 9 ♕xc4 d5! not (9...exd4?! 10 ♗xh6 gxh6 11 exd4 d5 12 exd5 ♖g8 13 g3 ♗h3 14 ♘e5 ♗d6 15 ♘c3 ♔f8 16 f4 f6 17 ♘d3 ♕c8+ 18 ♔f2 and White is better) 10 exd5 e4 11 ♘e5 f6 12 ♗xh6 gxh6 13 d6 fxe5 14 dxc7 ♕xe7 15 ♕b5+ c6 16 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 17 dxe5 ♖g8 18 ♘d2 ♗f5 and the game was more or less equal in V.Aronson-M.Umansky, correspondence 1978.

8...♘xc4 9 ♗xh6 gxh6

Or 9...♘d6 10 ♕xe5 ♘xe4 11 ♗xg7 ♖g8 12 ♕xe4 (12 0-0 d5 13 ♘fd2 a5! is good for Black, who threatens the manoeuvre ...♖a6-g6 in some lines: 14 ♘xe4 dxe4 15 ♗h6 ♗h3 16 ♗g7 ♖a6! 17 gxh3 ♖e6 18 ♕xa5 ♖xg7+ and Black was much better, G.Binder-M.Rocius, correspondence 2001) 12...♖xg7 13 0-0 d5 14 ♕e5 ♔f8 15 ♖e1 ♕d6 16 ♕e2 ♗h3 17 g3 f6 18 ♘bd2 ♔g8 19 c4 c6 with a mess in A.Morozevich-E.Bacrot,

9 ♕xc4 exd4 11 cxd4 c6!

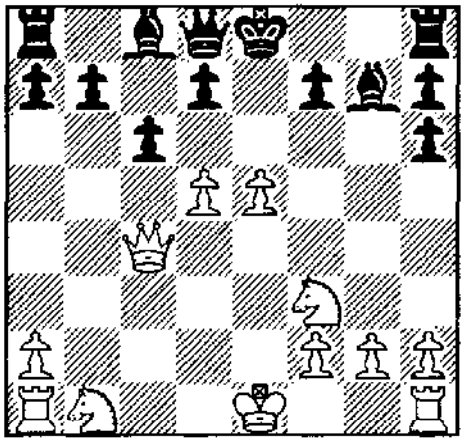
This is much better than 11...d6?! 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♘c3 c6 14 ♖ab1, which gives White the superior game.



12 d6!

White has no choice here. This is chess, and often you have to prevent your opponent's ideas with simple moves. Instead after 12 0-0 d5! 13 exd5 ♕xd5 14 ♕e2 ♗g4 15 ♘bd2 ♗e6 16 ♖fc1 0-0 Black is slightly better, R.Zelcic-D.Sermek, Pula 2001.

12...♗f6 13 e5 ♗g7



14 d6?

White needs to fight for control of the centre and after this move he loses all his flexibility. Probably he was afraid of something like 14 0-0?! d6 15 dxc6 dxe5 16 ♘xe5 0-0 17 c7 ♕d6 18 f4 ♗e6 19 ♕c3 ♕b6+ 20 ♔h1 ♖ac8 and Black has the advantage.

However, White had a stronger option in 14 ♘c3 f6 (if 14...0-0?! 15 0-0 d6 16 dxc6 dxe5 17 c7 ♕f6 18 ♖ac1 or 16...bxc6 17 ♖fd1 ♗e6 18 ♕a4 d5 19 ♖ac1 and White is at least slightly better) 15 ♘e4 ♕a5+ 16 ♔d1 ♕xd5+ (not 16...cxd5? 17 ♘d6+ ♔d8 18 ♕xc8+ ♖xc8 19 ♘xb7+ or 17...♔e7 18 ♕g4! and White wins) 17 ♕xd5 cxd5 18 ♘d6+ ♔e7 (if 18...♔f8 19 ♖e1! and White retains the pressure) 19 ♘f5+ ♔f7 20 ♘xg7 ♔xg7 21 ♖e1 with fine compensation for the two pawns. I do not want to give a more conclusive evaluation than this, though it seems likely to me that White could be a little better.

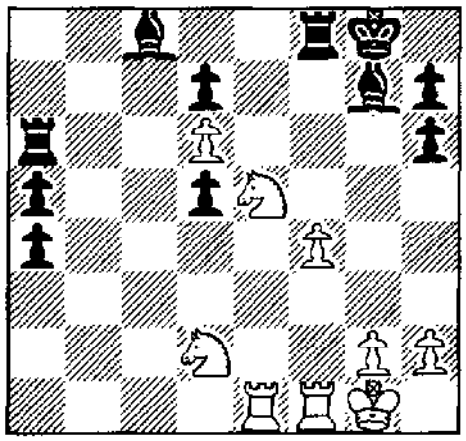
14...b5! 15 ♕g4 0-0 16 ♘bd2

Also after 16 0-0 f6! 17 a4 fxe5 18 axb5 e4 19 ♘d4 ♕f6 20 ♖a4 e3 Black has a clear advantage.

16...f6! 17 0-0 fxe5

White does not have compensation for the material. It is as simple as that.

18 ♖ae1 ♕f6 19 ♕b4 a5 20 ♕c5 ♕e6 21 a4 bxa4 22 ♘xe5 ♕d5 23 ♕xd5+ cxd5 24 f4 ♖a6 25 ♖a1 ♖xd6 26 ♖xa4 ♖a6



Black is winning.

27 ♘b3 d6 28 ♘f3 ♗d7 29 ♖xa5 ♖xa5 30 ♘xa5 ♖xf4 31 ♖d1 d4 32 ♘b3 ♗a4 33 ♖d3 ♗b5 34 ♖d2 d3 35 ♘c1 ♗c3 36 ♖d1 d2 37 ♘xd2 ♗xd2 0-1

Summary

5...♗e7 is a rather solid-looking move, but should not be disregarded for that. Rather it is an attempt to return the pawn and fight for the centre. White can choose between different ways of contesting this strategy, all leading to interesting play, but no clear path to an advantage is apparent. 7 ♗e2 and 8 ♕xd4 is probably the most challenging line, though it all depends on the White player's style and mood on the day.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7 *(D)* **6 d4**

6 ♕b3 – *Game 29*

6...♘a5 *(D)* **7 ♗e2**

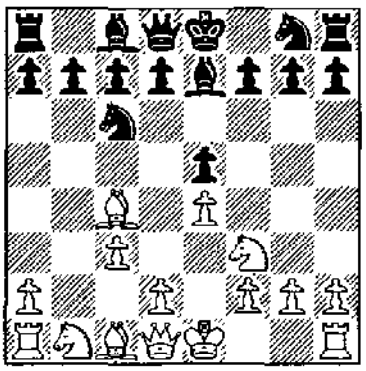
7 ♘xe5 – *Game 28*

7...exd4 8 ♕xd4 *(D)*

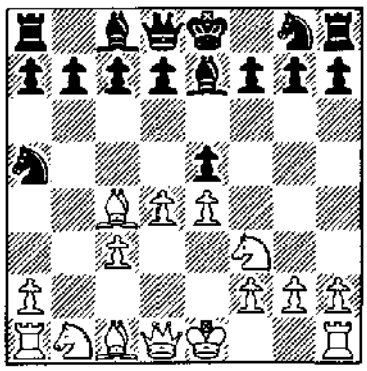
8...♘f6 – *Game 25*

8...d6 – *Game 26*

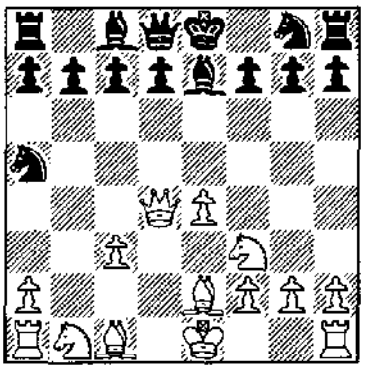
8...d5 – *Game 27*



5...♗e7

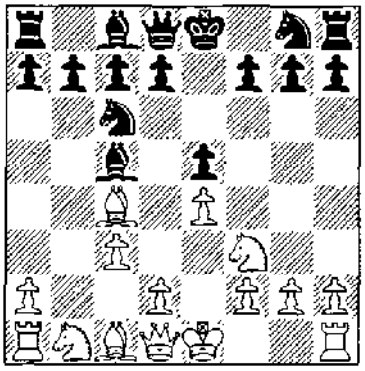


6...♘a5



8 ♕xd4

CHAPTER SEVEN



The Evans Gambit with 5...♗c5

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5

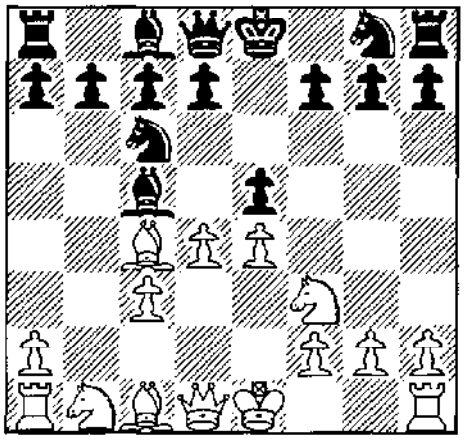
The black bishop returns to its place of origin, which somehow seems counter-intuitive. Now White will be able to advance rapidly in the centre, gaining time for his attack. Black has some ideas of his own, of course; nevertheless, the counterplay against the centre does not seem sufficient to prefer this move to the more flexible 5...♗a5, which is the subject of the next two chapters.

After 5...♗c5 play normally continues 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 d6 8 cxd4 ♗b6, reaching a standard position seen in all the games in this chapter. Deviations from this sequence are covered in the notes to Game 30 below.

Game 30
G.Gielge-E.Poscher
Correspondence 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 d4

This is more accurate than 6 0-0 d6 7 d4, which gives Black the extra option of 7...♗b6, transposing to one of the lines after 5...♗a5 (see Game 41).



6...exd4

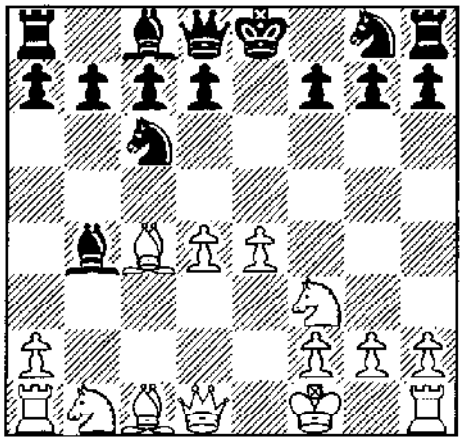
6...♗b6?! is inferior, transposing to 5...♗a5 6 d4 ♗b6?! (see the notes to Game 42).

7 0-0

Instead, 7 ♘g5?! is a violation of just about all existing attacking principles. The following variation is simply good for Black: 7...♘h6 8 ♘xf7 ♘xf7 9 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♕h5+ g6 11 ♕xc5 d5! with the initiative, e.g. 12 exd5 ♖e8+ 13 ♔f1 ♖c5

14 c4 ♕h4 15 ♘d2 ♕h5 and Black wins because of 16 f3 ♗h3!.

However, 7 cxd4!? is possible, and then 7...♗b4+ 8 ♔f1 (better than 8 ♗d2 ♗xd2 9 ♘xd2, since after 8 ♔f1 Black must be careful about the b4-bishop),



when we could imagine play continuing like this:

a) 8...♘f6 9 d5 ♘a5 10 ♕c2 ♘xc4 (if 10...0-0 11 e5 ♘e8 12 ♗d3 and White is much better, due to the threat of ♕a4) 11 ♕xc4 a5 12 e5 b6 13 ♔g1 ♗a6 14 ♕b3 ♘g8 15 ♘c3 and White has compensation for the pawn.

b) 8...♗e7 9 d5 ♗f6 10 dxc6 ♗xa1 11 ♕d5 ♘h6 12 ♗xh6 0-0 was played in N.Doghri-N.Stevanovic, Yerevan Olympiad 1996. Now White can keep the advantage with 13 cxd7 ♗xd7 14 ♗g5 ♕e8 15 ♘bd2 b5 16 ♗d3 c6 17 ♕c5 ♕e6 18 ♘b3.

7...d6

This is the best. Other moves are simply weaker:

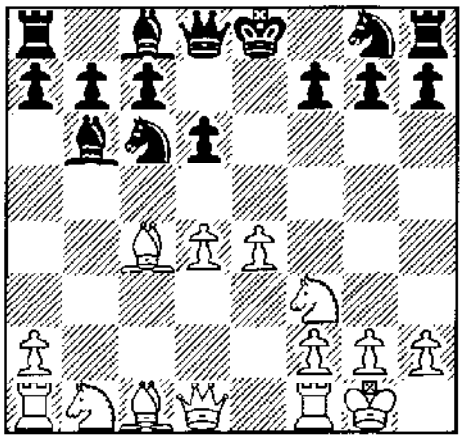
a) 7...♘ge7?! 8 cxd4 ♗b6 9 ♘g5 d5 10 exd5 ♘a5 11 d6 ♘xc4 12 ♕a4+ c6 13 ♕xc4 ♕xd6 14 ♕xf7+ ♔d7 15 ♘c3 and White stands much better.

b) 7...d3?! 8 ♘g5! is a completely different situation from on the previous move. Now Black has an unpleasant choice:

b1) 8...♘c5 9 ♘xf7! ♘xf7 10 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 11 ♕h5+ ♔f8 12 ♕xc5+ d6 13 ♕c4 ♕e7 14 ♗a3 ♗e6 15 ♕xd3 c5 16 ♘d2 ♖e8 17 ♖fe1 ♘h6 18 c4 b6 19 ♗b2 and White was much better in E.Moser-P.Dumancic, Aschach 1999.

b2) 8...♘h6 9 ♘xf7! ♘xf7 10 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 11 ♕h5+ g6 (or 11...♔f8 12 ♕xc5+ d6 13 ♕d5 ♕f6 14 ♕xd3 ♗e6 15 f4 with a clear advantage) 12 ♕xc5 d6 13 ♕e3 (13 ♕d5+ ♗e6 14 ♕xd3 is also good) 13...♕e7 14 ♘d2 ♖e8 15 f4 ♔g8 16 ♕xd3 ♗e6 17 ♗b2 d5 18 c4! and White was better in V.Ragozin-A.Ilyin Zhenevsky, Moscow 1930.

8 cxd4 ♗b6



This could be called the 'standard position' in the Evans Gambit. Standard, that is, for chess games played in the 19th century. In the 20th century it has been limited more to correspondence games, probably because these kind of romantic openings were especially popular in thematic tournaments before the introduction of strong chess-playing programs.

Now White has two main options: 9

d5 and 9 ♘c3. The first we shall look at now, while the second will be covered in Games 33-35.

9 d5

Adolf Anderssen, one of the strongest players in the 19th century, has the copyright of this move. Unfortunately for his family, chess players do not like to pay for intellectual rights...

9...♘a5

Other moves are weaker (see the annotations to move 9 in Game 31).

10 ♗b2 ♘e7

That we are dealing with really old stuff can be seen from the next note:

a) 10...f6 11 ♗d3 ♘e7 12 ♘c3 c5 13 c5 dxe5 14 ♘xe5 0-0 15 ♕h5 f5 16 ♖ad1 and White is better according to Bilguer's *Handbuch*.

More interesting is:

b) 10...♘f6 11 ♗d3 0-0 12 ♘c3 c6 13 ♘e2 ♗g4, when White can try:

b1) 14 ♕d2 cxd5 15 exd5 ♗xf3 16 gxf3 ♘xd5 17 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 18 ♕xd5 ♖c8 19 ♕h5+ ♔g8 20 ♕g4 and White has some compensation for the material.

b2) 14 ♘g3! is probably stronger though, and after 14...cxd5 15 exd5 h6! (if 15...♖c8 16 h3 ♗d7 17 ♘g5! and White is better) 16 h3 ♗d7 17 ♖e1 White has good compensation for the pawn. Basically it is hard to think up a situation where Black's extra b7-pawn will be a real asset before move 40.

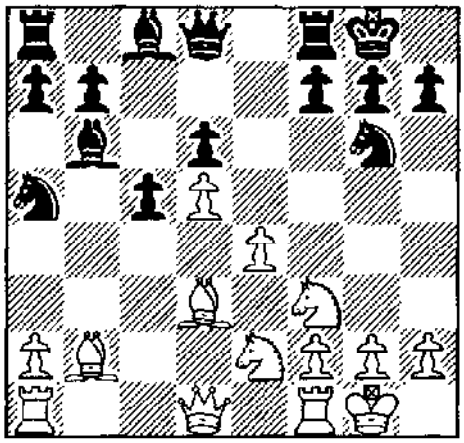
11 ♗d3

Pawn grabbing can be bad for your health: 11 ♗xg7? ♖g8 12 ♗f6 ♘xc4 13 ♕a4+ ♕d7 14 ♕xc4 ♖xg2+!! 15 ♔xg2 ♕h3+ 16 ♔h1 ♕xf3+ 17 ♔g1 ♗h3 and Black wins, as given by Anderssen.

11...0-0 12 ♘c3 ♘g6

Another chess legend, Johannes Zukertort, gave the line 12...c5?! 13 e5! dxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♘g6 15 ♕h5 ♕d6 16 ♖ae1 ♗c7 17 ♘c4 with a deadly attack.

13 ♘e2 c5



After 13...f6 14 ♘fd4 c5 15 ♘f5 ♗xf5 16 exf5 ♘e5 17 ♘f4 White is better according to Matsukevich.

The idea of the text move is simple: Black wants to keep control over the d4-square. Now White has two equally good possibilities: 14 ♖c1 as in the next game, and 14 ♕d2 as below.

14 ♕d2 f6 15 ♔h1 ♗c7 16 ♖ac1 ♖b8 17 ♘g3 b5 18 ♘f5 ♖b7 19 g4!

Typical for this kind of position, White has good play for the pawn, if nothing more.

19...♗b8 20 ♖g1 ♘e5 21 ♗xe5?!

In this structure the dark-squared bishop is very useful. It can attack the g7-pawn and the knight on a5 at the same time. Better therefore was 21 ♘xe5 fxe5 22 f4 c4 23 ♗e2 and White would have had full compensation.

21...fxe5 22 ♘g5 ♖e8 23 ♖g3 h6?!

Violating the old rule of not advancing pawns where you are defending, which seems to give White a helping hand here.

24 ♘f3 ♖f8 25 ♖h3

Black still has problems with his two passive pieces: ♘a5 and ♗b8.

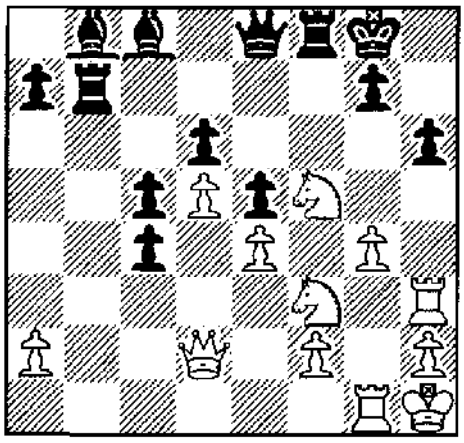
25...♘c4?

25...c4 26 ♗e2 a6! was much stronger, with the obvious plan of getting the bishop back into play after something like 27 ♖g1 ♗a7 28 ♗d1 b4 etc. Generally after 25...c4, Black should be better.

26 ♗xc4 bxc4 27 ♖g1?!

Why not just take the pawn? After the simple 27 ♖xc4 ♖b1+ 28 ♔g2 ♖f7 29 ♖g3 White has the advantage.

27...♕e8



28 ♘xh6+!

White has to time to lose and need to act now. If 28 g5? h5 29 ♘3h4 g6 30 ♘h6+ ♔g7 31 ♖f3 ♖xf3 32 ♘xf3 ♕a4 and Black is close to winning.

28...♔h7??

Black takes his opponent at his word and declines the sacrifice. Actually, acceptance by 28...gxh6 was forced, and then Black can put up an amazing defence to keep the position unclear: 29 ♕xh6 (not 29 ♖xh6? ♖f4! 30 ♘h4 ♕a4 31 ♘f5 c3 and Black wins) 29...♕e7 30 ♕h8+ ♔f7 31 ♖h7+ ♔g6 32 ♘h4+!? (32 ♖h6+ ♔f7 is a draw by repetition) 32...♕xh4 33 ♖xh4 ♖xh8 34 ♖xh8 ♗d7 35 h4 c3 36 ♖c1 ♔g7 37 ♖h5 ♖b4 38 ♖xc3 ♖xe4 39 ♖b3 ♖b4 40 ♖g5+ and Black should probably allow the draw by 40...♔h7 41 ♖g5+ etc., rather than take a lot of chances by running with the king.

29 ♘f5+ ♔g8 30 ♕g5 ♗xf5 31 gxf5 1-0

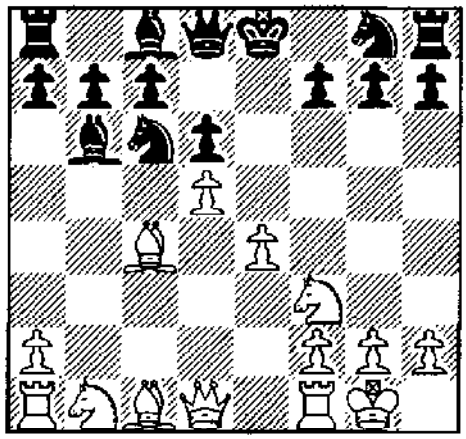
After 31...♕d8 White wins by 32 ♕h5 etc.

Game 31

A.Salygo-Boshoer

Correspondence 1971

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 d6 8 cxd4 ♗b6 9 d5



9...♘a5

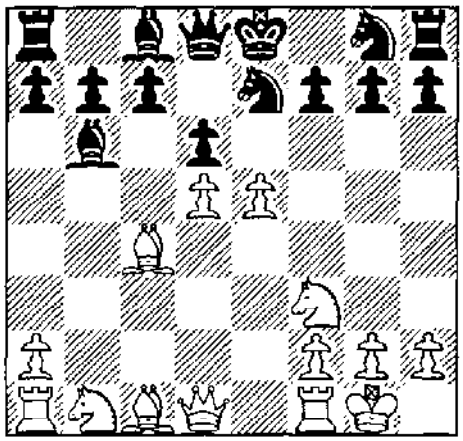
As promised in the previous game, we will give a large number of alternatives here, though none of them seems especially appealing for Black:

a) 9...♘b8 10 ♗b2 ♘f6 11 e5 dxe5 12 ♘xe5 0-0 13 ♘c3 ♘bd7 14 ♘f3! ♖e8 15 ♘e2 ♘c5 16 ♘g3 with good attacking chances, A.Anderssen-C.Mayet, Berlin match 1865.

b) 9...♘e5? 10 ♘xe5 dxe5 11 ♗a3

♗d4 12 ♘d2 ♗xa1 13 ♕xa1 f6 14 f4 gave White a strong attack in Goncharenko-Osipjenko, Kiev 1956, e.g. 14...exf4 15 e5 f5 16 e6 ♘f6 17 ♖xf4 a6 18 ♖xf5 b5 19 e7 ♕d7 20 ♖xf6 and wins.

c) 9...♘ce7 10 e5



Here again Black has a long list of unpleasant alternatives, probably making him wish he had played 9...♘a5 instead:

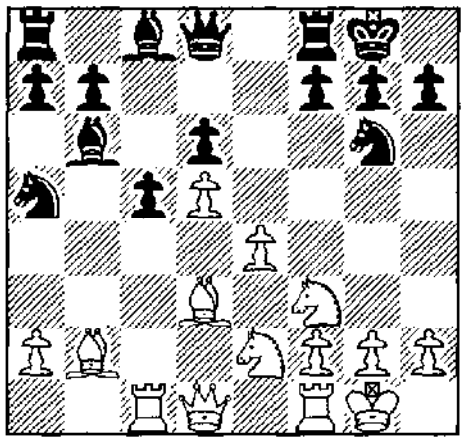
c1) 10...dxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♕d6 12 ♕e2 ♗d4 13 ♗f4 ♗f5 14 ♗b5+ c6 15 dxc6 0-0-0 16 cxb7+ ♔xb7 17 ♘d2 with a decisive attack for White, A.Anderssen-J.Kipping, Manchester match 1857.

c2) 10...♘g6 11 e6 fxe6 12 dxe6 ♘8e7 13 ♘g5 0-0 14 ♘c3 and White has a strong attack according to Matsukevich.

c3) 10...♗g4 11 ♕a4+ ♕d7 12 ♗b5 c6 13 e6! ♗xe6 (or 13...fxe6 14 ♕xg4 cxb5 15 ♕xg7 ♘g6 16 ♗b2) 14 dxe6 fxe6 15 ♗d3 and White is much better.

c4) 10...♘h6 is an old Steinitz idea. In my opinion this gives White excellent chances after 11 ♘c3 0-0 12 ♗xh6 gxh6 13 ♘e4 dxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♘f5 15 ♘g4 ♔h8 16 ♖b1 ♕h4 17 ♖xb6 axb6 18 ♕a1+ f6 19 ♘gxf6 ♘g7 and now, rather than 20 g3?! ♕h3 21 ♖e1 ♕f5 22 ♗e2 h5 23 ♘xh5 ♕g6 24 ♖c1 ♖f7 25 ♘hf6 ♖e7 26 f3 ♗f5 (when Black kept the balance in G.Neumann-W.Steinitz, Paris 1867), White should play 20 ♖e1! (the white rook wants to enter the game as soon as possible!) 20...♕f4 21 ♖e3 with a strong attack.

10 ♗b2 ♘e7 11 ♗d3 0-0 12 ♘c3 ♘g6 13 ♘e2 c5 14 ♖c1



Instead of 14 ♕d2 as in Game 30.

14...♖b8 15 e5

White can always return to the plan seen in the previous game, i.e. 15 ♕d2 f6 16 ♔h1 ♗c7 17 ♘g3 b5 18 ♘f5 b4 19 ♖g1 ♗b6 20 g4 with an attack in A.Anderssen-J.Zukertort, Barmen 1869.

15...♗c7

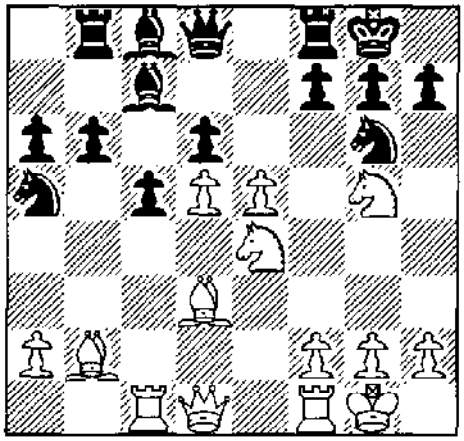
Black has options all over the place, but they will hardly change the general (and possibly slightly vague) evaluation, e.g. 15...dxe5 16 ♗xg6 hxg6 17 ♗xe5 ♖a8 18 h3 and White has compensation.

16 ♘c3 a6 17 ♘e4!

White can also try 17 ♗xg6!? (at some levels seemingly anti-positional, but at others quite attractive) which forces Black into 17...fxg6 (if 17...hxg6?! 18 exd6 ♗xd6 19 ♘e4 and White regains the material while retaining a better position) 18 e6 b5 19 ♖e1 ♕e7 20 ♖c2 ♘c4 21 ♗c1 with an

unclear game. Nevertheless, the text move seems to set Black sufficient problems.

17...b6 18 ♘fg5



18...h6?

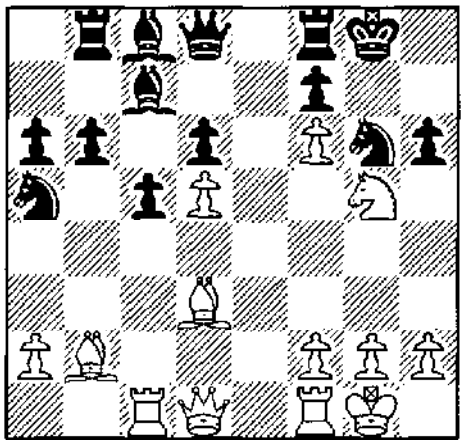
18...dxe5 was necessary, when White can try to develop an initiative in various ways:

a) 19 ♘xh7?! is probably questionable after 19...♖e8 20 ♘hg5 (if 20 ♗b1 ♔xh7 21 d6 ♔g8 22 dxc7 ♕xc7 23 ♖c1 and two pawns could be too big a price for the attack, e.g. 23 ♘d6? ♖d8 24 ♗xg6 ♖xd6 Black even wins) 20...♘f4 21 g3 ♘xd3 22 ♕xd3 ♗f5 23 ♖fd1 c4 24 ♕f3 ♕d7 25 h3 and White has some practical compensation, though Black is for preference.

b) 19 ♕h5 h6 20 d6 ♗xd6 21 ♘xf7 ♘f4! 22 ♘xh6+! (not 22 ♘xd8? ♘xh5 23 ♘xd6 ♘f4 24 ♘xc8 ♘xd3 25 ♘e7+ ♔h7 26 ♘dc6 ♘xc6 27 ♘xc6 ♖bc8 28 ♘xe5 ♘xb2 and Black wins) 22...gxh6 23 ♕xh6 ♖f5 24 ♖fd1 ♗e6 25 ♘xd6 ♕g5 26 ♕xg5+ ♖xg5 27 g3 ♘xd3 28 ♖xd3 ♗xa2 29 ♘e4 ♖f5 30 g4 and White remains better, keeping some initiative.

19 ♘f6+! gxf6 20 exf6!

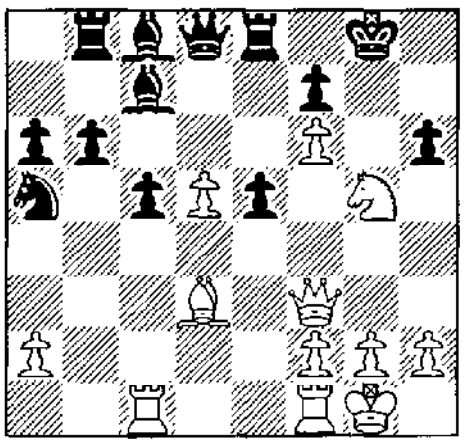
Stronger than 20 ♕h5 fxg5 (or 20...dxe5 21 ♕xh6 fxg5 22 ♗xg6 fxg6 23 ♕xg6+) 21 ♗xg6 dxe5 22 ♕xh6 fxg6 23 ♕xg6+ with equality.



20...♘e5

20...♘f4! was a stronger defence, though White can still go for it with 21 ♘e6!! fxe6 (if 21...♗xe6 22 ♕d2! wins) 22 ♕g4+ ♔f7 23 ♕xf4! (23 ♕g7+ ♔e8 24 ♗g6+ ♘xg6 25 ♕xg6+ ♖f7 26 ♕g8+ goes nowhere) 23...e5 24 ♕e4 ♕xf6 25 f4 with a close to winning attack.

21 ♗xe5 dxe5 22 ♕f3 ♖e8



23 ♘e6?

Here 23 ♗h7+! ♔f8 24 ♘e4 ♕d7 25 h3! wins comfortably. Black is unable to bring any of his extra pieces to the defence of the king. 23 ♕g3 also wins,

though it requires a little technique.

23...♖xe6 24 ♕g4+ ♔f8 25 ♕g7+ ♔e8 26 dxe6 ♗xe6 27 ♖fd1

White is still better here, but Black retains some chances.

27...♗d6 28 ♗xa6 ♘c6 29 ♗b5 ♔d7 30 ♖d2 ♔c7 31 ♗xc6 ♔xc6 32 ♖cd1 c4?

Black had drawing chances after 32...♖a8 33 f4 exf4 34 ♕xh6 ♖xa2 35 ♖xd6+ ♕xd6 36 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 37 ♕xf4+ ♔c6.

33 ♕xh6 c3 34 ♖d3 b5 35 ♖xc3+

Now the smoke has cleared.

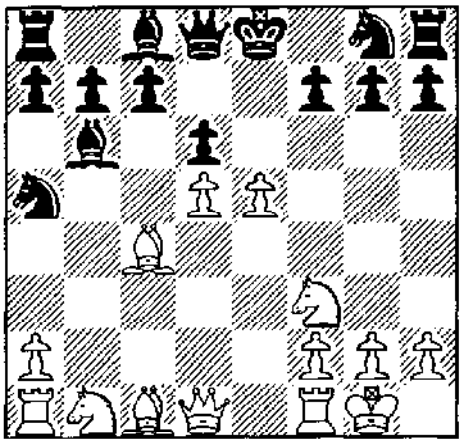
35...♔d7 36 ♕e3 b4 37 ♖xd6+ 1-0

Game 32

G.Coleman-N.Hawkins

Correspondence 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 exd4 8 cxd4 ♗b6 9 d5 ♘a5 10 e5!?



A risky and also somewhat underestimated move. I do not find life easy for Black in these lines.

10...♘xc4

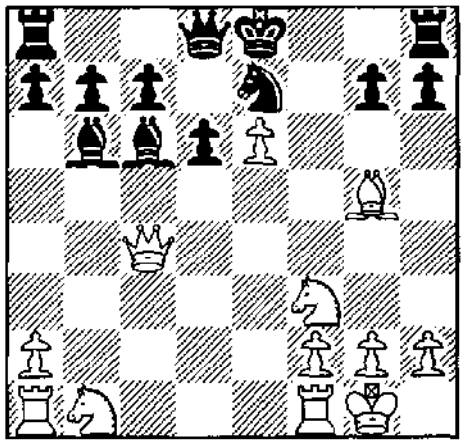
It is hard to resist taking the bishop (what else was the idea behind 9...♘a5). And after 10...♘e7 11 ♖e1 Black took the bishop anyway: 11...♘xc4 12 ♕a4+ ♕d7 13 ♕xc4 0-0 14 ♘c3 (weak is 14 ♗g5?! dxe5 15 ♘xe5 ♕f5 and Black was much better, I.Kolisch-A.Anderssen, Paris match 1860) 14...dxe5 15 ♘xe5 ♕f5 16 ♗e3 ♘g6 17 ♘xg6 ♕xg6 18 ♗xb6 cxb6 19 ♖e7 and White retains some initiative.

11 ♕a4+ ♗d7 12 ♕xc4 ♘e7

12...dxe5?! 13 ♘xe5 ♕f6 14 ♘xd7 ♔xd7 looks awkward, and this appears to be the deeper truth as well, e.g. 15 ♕g4+ ♔e8 16 ♗g5 ♕g6 17 ♘c3 ♘f6 18 ♖ae1+ ♔f8 19 ♕b4+ ♔g8 20 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 21 ♘e4 ♕g6 22 ♔h1 h5 23 f4 and White was much better in P.Morphy-H.Bird, London match 1858.

13 ♖e1

Interesting is 13 e6!? fxe6 14 dxe6 ♗c6 15 ♗g5! (but not 15 ♘g5 0-0 16 ♕c2 ♘g6 17 h4 ♕f6 18 ♗b2 ♕f4 and Black is much better according to Geza Maróczy)



and now we should have a look at:

a) 15...0-0? 16 ♕h4 ♖e8 17 ♘bd2 h6 18 ♖fc1 was played in H.Montgomery-W.Allison, New York 1857. It does not look as if Black can escape from suffering. The game continued 18...hxg5 19 ♘xg5 ♕c8 20 ♕h7+ ♔f8 21 ♕h8+ ♘g8

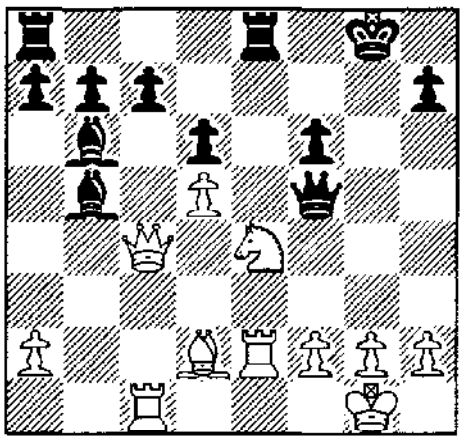
22 e7+ ♖xe7 23 ♖xe7 and White won, while if 18...d5 19 ♗xh6 gxh6 20 ♕xh6 ♖f8 21 ♖e5 ♗e8 22 ♖g5+ ♘g6 23 ♖xg6+ ♗xg6 24 ♕xg6+ White is still much better.

b) 15...♗xf3 16 gxf3 d5 is more sound, e.g. 17 ♕f4 ♖f8 18 ♕h4 ♕d6 19 ♖e1 ♖f5 20 ♘d2 with an unclear position.

13...0-0 14 ♗g5 f6

The most radical defence. Instead 14...dxe5 15 ♘xe5 gives Black problems with the knight on e7, while after 14...♖e8 15 e6 fxe6 16 dxe6 ♗c6 17 ♘bd2 Black has problems with the safety of his king.

15 exf6 gxf6 16 ♗h6 ♖e8 17 ♘c3 ♘g6 18 ♘e4 ♕e7 19 ♖ac1 ♘e5 20 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 21 ♗d2! ♕f5 22 ♖e2 ♗b5



Black is defending quite well. If instead 22...a6 23 a4, then White can follow with 24 ♖c3, swinging the rook across into the attack.

23 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 24 ♕xb5 ♖xe2 25 ♕xe2 ♖f8 26 ♗e3 ♖e8 27 ♕g4+ ♕g6 28 ♕xg6+ hxg6 29 ♗xb6 cxb6 30 ♔f1 ♔f7 31 ♖c7+ ♖e7 32 ♖xe7+ ♔xe7 33 h4 b5 ½-½

A draw cannot be avoided as each king will have to keep watch on the opposing pawns, with no time for aggression.

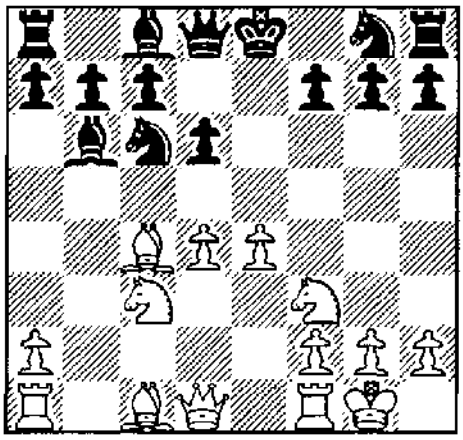
Game 33

Y.Estrin-P.Angelov

Correspondence 1970

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 d6 8 cxd4 ♗b6 9 ♘c3

This more elastic option is probably also the strongest. I must admit that I am quite comfortable sharing this opinion with our great grandfathers Paul Morphy and Mikhail Chigorin.



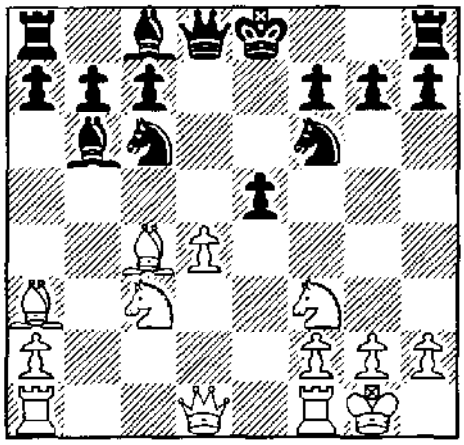
9...♗g4

Besides this move and 9...♘a5 (see the next two games), Black also has the following options:

a) 9...♗d7 is perfectly possible. One could easily imagine play continuing 10 e5 dxe5 11 ♖e1 ♘ge7 12 ♘g5!? (or 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 dxe5 ♗e6 14 ♗xe6 fxe6 15 ♕b3 ♘d5 16 ♗a3 with an unclear position) 12...0-0 13 ♕h5 ♗f5 14 ♗xf7+ (not 14 dxe5? ♗xf2+ 15 ♔xf2 ♕d4+ and Black wins) 14...♔h8 15 d5 ♗xf2+ 16 ♔xf2 ♗g6 17 ♕h4 ♘xd5 18 ♔g1 ♖xf7 19 ♕xh7+ ♗xh7 20 ♘xf7+ ♔g8 21 ♘xd8 ♖xd8 22 ♘xd5 ♖xd5 23 ♗e3 with

an unclear endgame.

b) 9...♘f6?! looks dangerous because of 10 e5 dxe5 11 ♗a3!



when we can imagine the following lines:

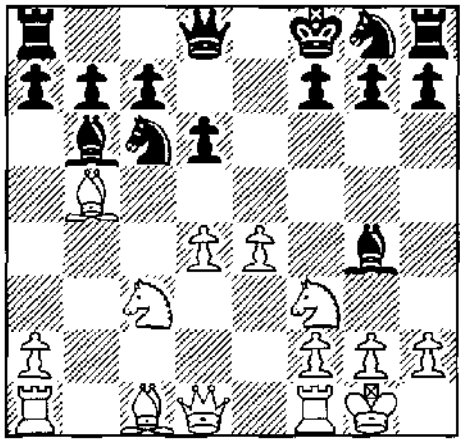
b1) 11...♘a5 (Unzicker's recommendation) 12 ♗b5+ c6 13 dxe5 ♕xd1 14 ♖axd1 ♘d7 15 ♘e4 ♗c5 16 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 17 ♗xc6+ ♘xc6 18 ♘xc5 and White retains some pressure.

b2) 11...♗xd4 12 ♕b3 ♕d7 (not 12...♗e6? 13 ♗xc6 fxe6 14 ♕xc6+ ♘e7 15 ♘xd4 exd4 16 ♖fe1 ♘fg8 17 ♘d5 and White won in the blindfold game, P.Morphy-C.Stanley, New York 1857) 13 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 14 ♕b2 with a strong attack.

10 ♗b5

Weaker is 10 ♕a4?! ♗d7 when White has no really good options. After 11 ♕b3? ♘a5 12 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 13 ♕c2 ♔xf7 White has no compensation for the piece, e.g. 14 e5 ♘h6 15 ♗xh6 gxh6 16 ♖fe1 dxe5 17 dxe5 ♗e6 18 ♖ad1 ♕e8 19 ♘d4 ♘c6 20 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 and Black won step by step, A.Dambacher-M.Bock, correspondence 2000. White should probably retreat again with 11 ♕d1 and then if 11...♘f6 12 e5 dxe5 13 dxe5 ♘g4 14 ♗g5 ♕c8 15 ♘d5 ♗e6 16 ♕a4 with some compensation, though the position is not desirable.

10...♔f8



This is the best way. Instead 10...♗xf3 11 gxf3 ♕f6 12 ♗e3 0-0-0 13 ♘d5 ♕g6+ 14 ♔h1 leaves White much better, while after 10...♗d7 11 e5 ♘ge7 12 ♗g5 dxe5 13 ♘d5 ♕c8 14 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 15 ♘xe7 ♔xe7 16 ♖e1 ♗xb5 17 ♖xe5+ ♔f8 18 ♖xb5 White has good compensation. It is not easy to see how Black is going to get his pieces to work together.

11 ♗e3

White only got equality out of 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 12 ♗a3 ♗xf3 13 gxf3 ♕g5+ 14 ♔h1 ♘e7 15 ♘e2 ♘g6 16 ♖g1 ♕f6 17 ♕d3 ♔g8 18 ♗c1 h6 in J.Blackburne-W.Steinitz, London match 1862.

11...♘ge7

This is the right knight. Black never got his pieces to work after 11...♘ce7?! 12 ♗c4 ♘f6 13 ♕b3 ♗xf3 14 gxf3 ♕e8 15 a4 ♗a5 16 ♘e2 ♖b8 17 ♔h1 c6 18 ♖g1 d5 19 ♗d3 h6 20 ♘g3 g6 21 e5 ♘d7 22 ♕a3 and White had excellent compensation in C.Schlechter-Mainter, Vienna 1898.

12 a4 a5 13 ♗c4 ♕e8?!

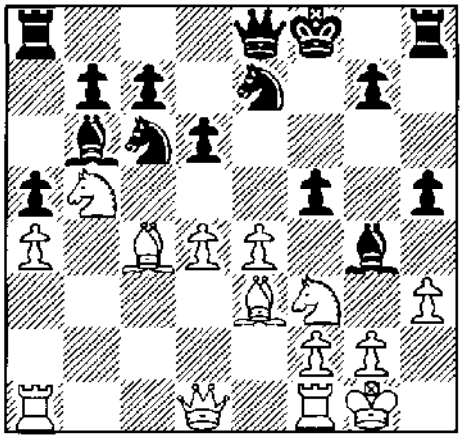
This move contains a deep strategic

idea. Black is attempting to give mate down the h-file. However, in the process he will have to open up in front of his king, which seems rather dubious. Better was 13...♗h5! 14 ♔h1 ♘b4 15 d5 ♘g6 16 ♗xb6 cxb6 17 ♖c1 when the game remains unclear.

14 ♘b5 f5?!

Black is following his plan consistently, but it was still better to play 14...♕d7.

15 h3 h5



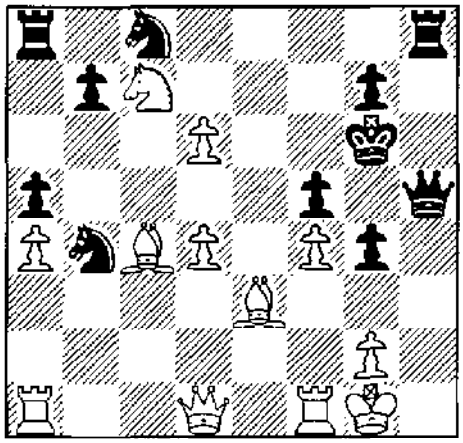
If the Romans had known chess, they would characterise a position like this as 'panta rei' (everything flows). It is not yet too late to play 15...♗h5 16 d5 ♗xf3 17 ♕xf3 ♘e5 18 ♕e2 ♕g6 19 ♗xb6 cxb6 20 exf5 ♘xf5 21 ♗d3 ♘xd3 22 ♕xd3, though White is much better now.

16 hxg4

16 ♖e1! was even stronger, e.g. 16...♘b4 (if 16...♗xf3 17 ♕xf3) 17 hxg4 hxg4 18 ♘g5 d5 19 exd5 ♕h5 20 ♘e6+ ♔g8 21 ♔f1 ♘exd5 22 ♘exc7 ♗xc7 23 ♘xc7 ♖d8 24 ♖b1 and White wins.

Over the following moves White has so many wins available that there is no reason to give them. Until suddenly White suffers from a sensational breakdown.

16...hxg4 17 ♘g5 d5 18 exd5 ♕h5 19 f4 ♘b4 20 ♘xc7 ♗xc7 21 ♘e6+ ♔f7 22 ♘xc7 ♘c8 23 d6+ ♔g6



24 ♘b5?

Here a number of moves would still lead to a full point. The clearest line is 24 ♗f7+! ♔xf7 25 ♕b3+ ♔f8 26 d7 ♘d6 27 ♘xa8 ♔e7 (or 27...♕h2+ 28 ♔f2 ♔e7 29 ♘c7 ♕g3+!? 30 ♔e2 ♕xg2+ 31 ♖f2 ♕e4 32 ♖c1 ♔xd7 33 ♘e6 and wins) 28 d8♕+ ♔xd8 29 ♔f2 g3+ 30 ♔e1 ♖e8 31 ♖c1 ♕f7 32 ♕xf7 ♖xe3+ 33 ♔d2 ♖d3+ 34 ♔e2 ♘xf7 35 ♘c7 ♖a3 36 ♖f3 ♖xa4 37 ♖xg3 with a winning endgame.

24...♘b6 25 ♗b3??

A complete meltdown. Some alternatives need investigation:

a) 25 ♖c1 ♖ac8 leaves White defenceless as well.

b) 25 ♗e2 ♕h2+ 26 ♔f2 ♖h3 is also very bad for White. After 27 ♗xg4 ♕g3+ 28 ♔g1 ♕xe3+ 29 ♖f2 ♘d3 30 ♗xh3 ♕xf2+ 31 ♔h2 ♕xf4+ 32 ♔g1 ♕e3+ 33 ♔h2 ♖h8 Black is close to winning.

c) 25 ♗e6! ♘6d5 26 ♖a3 seems to be the best chance, but Black still takes the initiative. After 26...♖ac8 27 ♘e7 ♘xe7 28 ♗xf5! ♔xf5 29 dxe7 the position is 'equal' according to my computer, but in

reality it continues to be very complicated. At least I have not found a clear win for Black here.

25...♘d3 26 ♕xd3 g3 0-1

Now there was nothing to do but resign.

Game 34

M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz

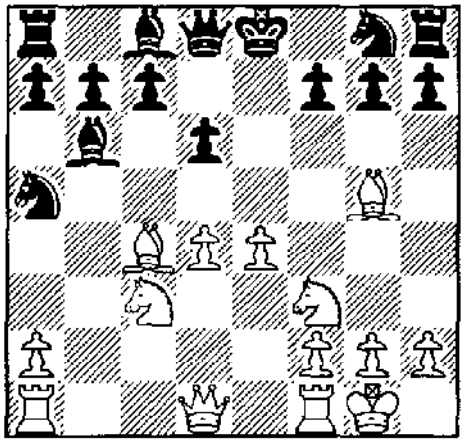
London 1883

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 exd4 8 cxd4 ♗b6 9 ♘c3 ♘a5

The knight attacks the most active white piece, though the price for this is pretty high: White retains an advantage in time.

10 ♗g5

The so-called Göring Attack. Another interesting strategic idea is 10 ♗d3!? ♘e7 11 ♘d5 0-0 12 ♘xb6 axb6 13 d5 in order to dominate the black knight on a5. After 13...♘g6 14 ♕c2 c5 15 ♖b1 ♗g4 16 ♗e2 White had fair compensation for the pawn in H.Bird-M.Chigorin, London 1899.



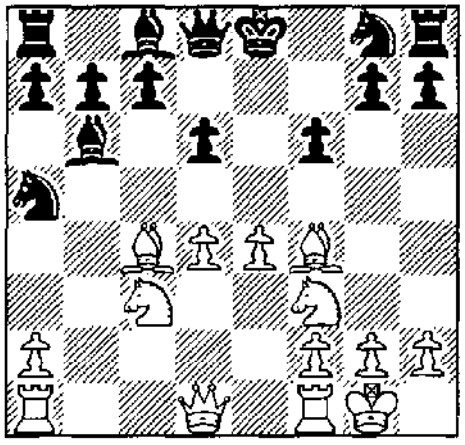
10...f6

As time is an important part of the play in these lines, Black can hardly find a better move than this. Of course, this would not stop people from trying, would it?

a) 10...♕d7 11 ♗d3 h6 (if 11...f6 12 ♗h4 ♘e7 13 e5 fxe5 14 dxe5 0-0 15 e6! with better play for White) 12 ♗h4 ♘e7 13 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 14 ♖e1 c6 15 d5 ♗g4 16 e5 dxe5 17 ♕d2 ♗xf3 18 ♖xe5 ♕xe5 19 ♖e1 ♕xe1+ 20 ♕xe1+ ♔f8 21 gxf3 h5 22 ♕e5 ♖h6 23 ♘e4 cxd5 24 ♘g5 and White maintained the initiative, J.Von Minckwitz-W.Steinitz, Baden Baden 1870.

b) 10...♘e7 leads to very violent play after 11 ♘d5 f6 12 ♗xf6 gxf6 13 ♘xf6+ ♔f8 14 ♘g5 ♘xc4 15 ♕h5 ♔g7 16 ♕f7+ ♔h6. Now White has to choose between a draw with 17 ♕h5+ and different ways to continue the attack. The direct 17 ♘g4+?! ♗xg4 18 ♕f6+ ♔h5 19 ♘f7 ♘g8 20 ♕xh8 ♕f6 21 ♕xh7+ ♘h6 22 ♘xh6 ♕xh6 23 ♕f7+ ♕g6 24 ♕xc4 ♗f3 25 g3 ♗xe4 seems to leave Black better. But White might try 17 ♖ac1! and if 17...♘g6 18 ♖xc4 d5 19 exd5 ♔xg5 20 ♕g7! with a strong attack.

11 ♗f4



11...♘xc4

After this move Black must play very

carefully to keep the balance. 11...♘e7 is seen in the next game.

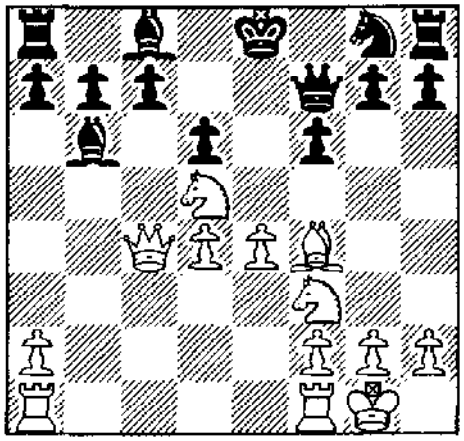
12 ♕a4+ ♕d7 13 ♕xc4 ♕f7?!

Black is losing time with this move, so I have looked a bit at the alternatives:

a) 13...g5!? 14 ♗g3 h5 15 h4 ♕g7 16 ♘d5 ♗g4 17 ♕a4+ ♗d7 18 ♕a3 ♖c8 19 ♖fe1 g4 looked unclear, but these kinds of position usually seem very dangerous for Black. And here White can start a winning attack with 20 e5!.

b) 13...♘e7 is the natural developing move, and is what Black probably should play here. I think unclear is the appropriate evaluation.

14 ♘d5



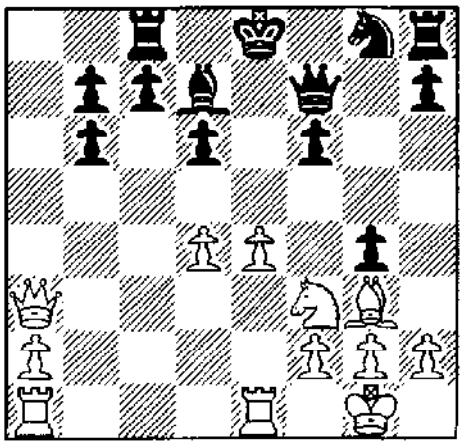
14...g5

14...♗e6 leaves White with two ways to keep up the pressure:

a) 15 ♕a4+ ♗d7 16 ♕c2! ♖c8 17 a4 ♗a5 18 ♖fb1 and White had a strong initiative in the game M.Chigorin-Dorrer, correspondence 1884.

b) 15 ♖fc1 ♗xd5 16 exd5+ ♘e7 17 a4! and White is much better. Black cannot really improve on this. If 16...♔d8 17 ♖e6! g5 18 ♗xd6! with a clear advantage, or 16...♔d7 17 a4 a6 18 a5 ♗a7 19 ♖ab1 wins, while after 16...♔f8 (as in M.Vidmar-Poljanec, Ljubljana 1901) 17 a4 ♗a5 18 ♖eb1 and White is much better.

15 ♗g3 ♗e6 16 ♕a4+ ♗d7 17 ♕a3 ♖c8 18 ♖fe1 g4 19 ♘xb6 axb6

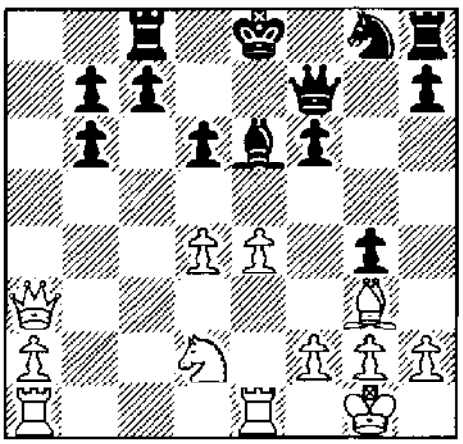


20 ♘d2

Here it was interesting to sacrifice a piece with 20 e5!?. After 20...gxf3 21 exd6+ ♔f8 22 dxc7+ ♔g7 23 ♖e3 (if 23 ♕xf3 ♘e7 24 ♗d6 ♘d5 and Black seems to be out of the woods) 23...fxg2 24 ♖ae1 ♕c4 25 ♗d6 b5 26 ♖g3+! White has a very strong initiative.

20...♗e6?!

20...♘e7 and ...0-0 was stronger, though White continues to have compensation.



21 f4! gxf3 22 ♘xf3 ♘e7 23 e5?!

Stronger was 23 d5 ♗g4 24 ♘d4 0-0 25 ♕a7!? and White is better.

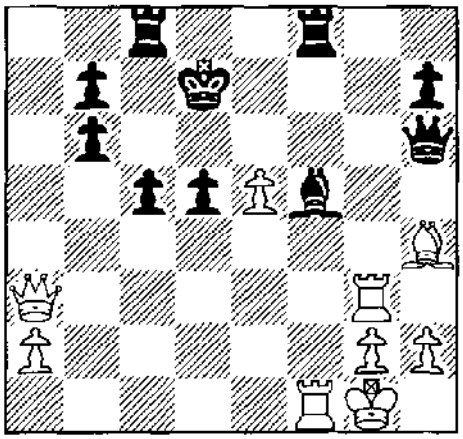
23...fxe5 24 dxe5 d5 25 ♖f1 ♘f5 26 ♘d4 ♕g6 27 ♘xf5 ♗xf5 28 ♗h4 c5 29 ♖f3 ♔d7?

Black is losing precious time here and gives White the chances to recapture the initiative. After 29...♗e4 30 ♖g3 ♕e6 Black should not complain.

30 ♖af1 ♖hf8

30...♖hg8 31 ♕b2! ♗e6 32 ♖g3 ♕h5 33 ♕xb6 ♕xe5 34 ♖xg8 ♖xg8 35 ♖e1 ♕d6 36 ♕xb7+ ♔e8 37 ♕xh7 and wins.

31 ♖g3 ♕h6



32 ♗f6! ♗e6?!

Black could offer more resistance with 32...♗e4, but after 33 ♕a4+ ♔c7 34 c6 ♖xf6 35 ♕d7+ ♔b8 36 ♕d6+ ♖c7 37 ♕d8+ ♖c8 38 ♕xf6 ♕xf6 39 ♖xf6 ♖e8 40 ♖g7 White wins.

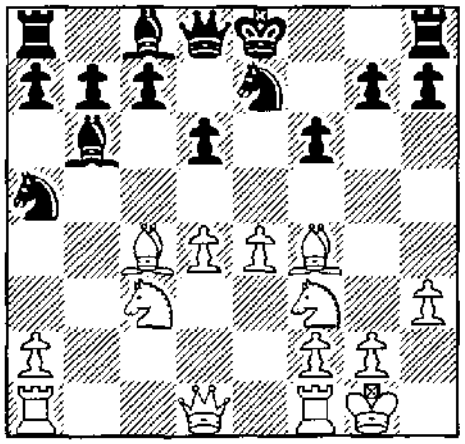
33 ♕a7 ♔c7 34 ♖b3 ♔d7 35 ♕xb6 ♖c6 36 ♕xb7+ ♖c7 37 ♕a6 1-0

Game 35

M.Havulinna-J.Nissi

Correspondence 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 d6 8 cxd4 ♗b6 9 ♘c3 ♘a5 10 ♗g5 f6 11 ♗f4 ♘e7 12 h3



12...c6

Also interesting is 12...♘xc4 13 ♕a4+ c6 14 ♕xc4 d5 15 exd5, when we could imagine lines like:

a) 15...♘xd5 16 ♖fe1+ ♔f7 17 ♘e4 ♗c7 (after 17...♖f8 18 ♖e2 ♔g8 19 ♖ae1 White retains pressure) 18 ♗xc7 ♕xc7 19 ♘cg5+!? fxg5 20 ♘xg5+ ♔f6 21 ♖e5! gives White a strong attack, though the outcome is rather unclear.

b) 15...cxd5 16 ♕b3 0-0 17 ♖fe1 ♗a5 18 ♖e2 ♔h8 19 ♖c1 ♗xc3 20 ♖xc3 b6 21 ♖c7 ♘g6 22 ♗h2 with full compensation in E.Schiffers-N.Kalinsky, correspondence 1890, but even stronger was 21 ♕a3! ♘g6 22 ♗c7 ♕d7 23 ♗xb6 and White retains the positive aspects of his position, while regaining his pawn.

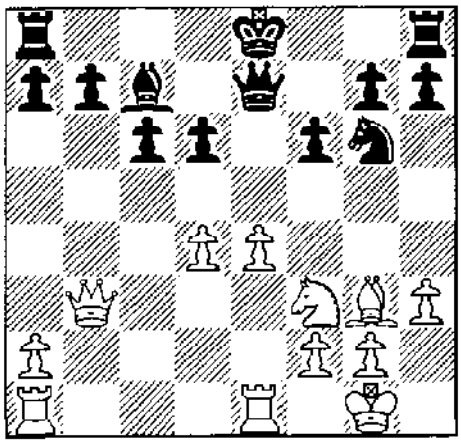
13 ♗b3 ♘g6?!

This is not a good square for the knight, and what is more important, Black cannot find a safe square for his king. Necessary was 13...g5!? 14 ♗g3 g4 15 hxg4 ♗xg4 16 ♖b1 ♘xb3 17 ♖xb3 ♕d7 with an unclear game.

14 ♗g3 ♕e7 15 ♖e1 ♘xb3?!

Here 15...♗e6 16 ♘d5 ♕d7 17 ♘xb6 axb6 18 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 was better, when Black would at least get a chance to castle.

16 ♕xb3 ♗e6 17 ♘d5! ♕d8 18 ♘c7+ ♗xc7 19 ♕xe6+ ♕e7 20 ♕b3



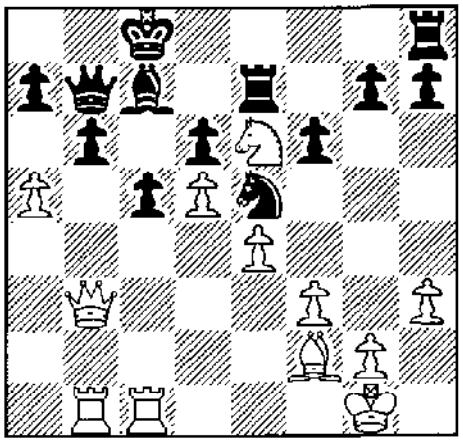
20...0-0-0?

Making things worse. 20...♗b6 was better, though after 21 a4 ♗a5 22 ♖e3 ♖c8 23 ♖b1 ♖c7 24 e5 White has a clear advantage.

21 ♖ab1 ♗b8 22 ♖ec1

This position is winning for White.

22...♕d7 23 d5 c5 24 ♘d4 ♖de8 25 ♘e6 b6 26 f3 ♘e5 27 a4 ♕b7 28 a5 ♗c7 29 ♗f2 ♖e7



30 ♘xc5! dxc5 31 ♗xc5 ♔d8

Or 31...♖d7 32 axb6 axb6 33 ♗xb6 ♘g6 34 ♕a4 and White wins.

32 d6 ♗xd6 33 ♗xd6 ♖d7 34 ♕a3 ♔e8 35 axb6 axb6 36 ♕a4 ♔f7 37 ♕a2+ ♔e8 38 ♕e6+ ♔d8 39 ♗c5! 1-0

Summary

The 'standard position' covered in this chapter after 5...♗c5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 d6 8 cxd4 ♗b6 seems to be rather dangerous for Black. White can generate a real initiative with 9 ♘c3!, while also 9 d5 seems to hold some venom. Eventually the theoretical conclusion might settle with Black being OK, but for the practical player it is more important to know that Black will always have to play very accurately to survive, while White's initiative seems pretty natural. Not surprisingly Black scores a record low 37% with this line, compared to the more average 44% with 5...♗a5 and 45% with 5...♗e7.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 d6 8 cxd4 ♗b6 *(D)* **9 ♘c3**

9 d5 ♘a5

10 e5 – *Game 32*

10 ♗b2 ♘e7 11 ♗d3 0-0 12 ♘c3 ♘g6 13 ♘e2 c5 *(D)*

14 ♕d2 – *Game 30*

14 ♖c1 – *Game 31*

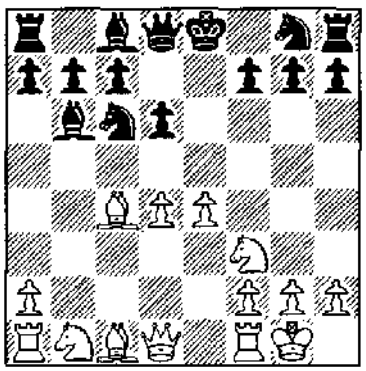
9...♘a5

9...♗g4 – *Game 33*

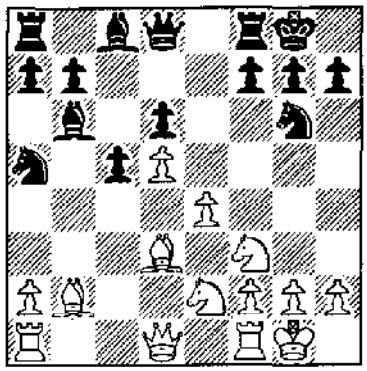
10 ♗g5 f6 11 ♗f4 *(D)*

11...♘xc4 – *Game 34*

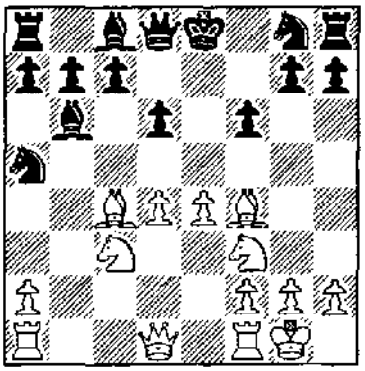
11...♘e7 – *Game 35*



8...♗b6

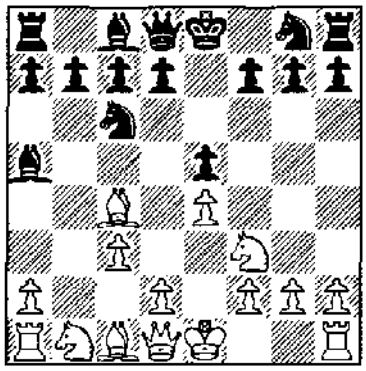


13...c5



11 ♗f4

CHAPTER EIGHT



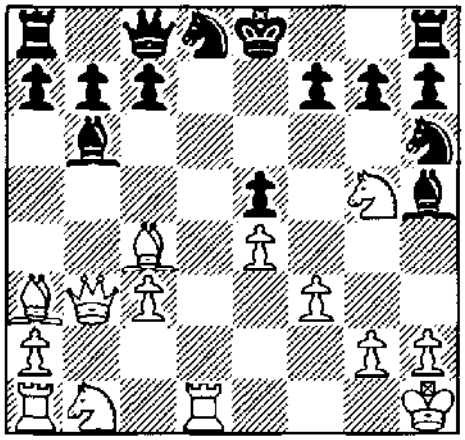
The Evans Gambit: Introducing 5...♗a5

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5

The retreat with 5...♗a5 is perhaps the most natural answer to the Evans Gambit. The bishop remains on the e1-a5 diagonal, pinning the c3 and d2 pawns for the moment and, more importantly, is not in any kind of trouble on a5. On the minus side White will be able to put pressure on the black position with ♗a3 later on. Black is clearly planning to meet this with ...d7-d6. Black will establish a strong point on e5 and try to keep the centre closed for as long as is reasonably possible.

The retreat 5...♗a5 was apparently first played in a not very correct correspondence game back in 1826 between Evans and McDonnell. This entertaining game resulted in a win for White after the following:

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 ♗g4 8 ♕b3 ♕d7 9 ♘g5 ♘d8 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 ♗a3 ♘h6 12 f3 ♗b6+ 13 ♔h1 ♗h5 14 ♖d1 ♕c8



15 ♖xd8+? ♕xd8 16 ♘xf7 ♕h4? 17 ♕b5+ c6 18 ♕xe5+ ♔d7 19 ♕e6+ ♔c7 20 ♗d6 mate.

Instead the alternative 15 ♕b5+ would have won very quickly for White, while after the much better defence 16...♕f6! Black would have survived and been in the game.

In this chapter we shall look at 5...♗a5 lines where White refrains from 6 d4, which is the subject of Chapter 9. Generally this means 6 0-0 which is covered in Games 37-41), or 6 ♕b3!? as in the first game below.

Game 36

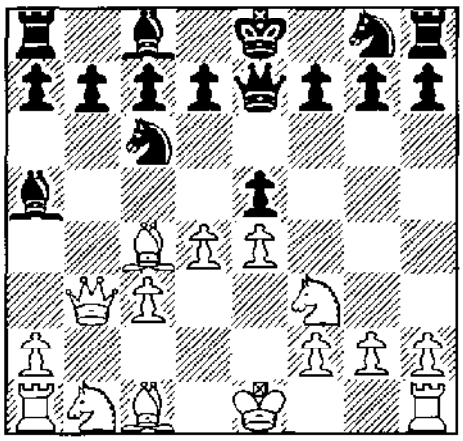
B.Jobava-L.Aronian

European Championship, Antalya 2004

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 ♕b3

A sideline, but an interesting one. The main lines here are 6 0-0 and 6 d4.

6...♕e7 7 d4



7...♘f6

Black has tried a few other moves here:

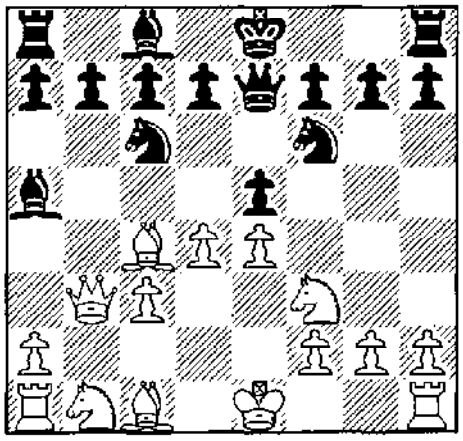
a) 7...exd4 transposes to 6 d4 exd4 7 ♕b3!? ♕e7 (see the notes to Game 42).

b) 7...♘xd4 8 ♘xd4 exd4 9 0-0 ♘f6 (9...dxc3 10 ♗a3 ♕f6 11 e5 ♕f5 12 ♘xc3 gives White an excellent attack) 10 ♗a3 c5 was played in J.Kipping A.Anderssen, Manchester match 1857. Now after 11 cxd4 ♘xe4 12 f3 ♘d6 13 ♗xc5 0-0 14 ♗d5 White would have more than enough compensation for the pawn.

c) 7...♗b6 leaves us with:

c1) 8 dxe5!? ♘a5 9 ♕b5 a6 10 ♕d5 c6 11 ♕d3 ♕e5 12 ♗b3 ♕xf2+ 13 ♔d1 ♕xg2 14 ♖f1 with unclear play, e.g. 14...♕g6 15 ♕d6 ♘xb3 16 axb3 ♕xe4 17 ♗a3 ♕d5+ 18 ♘bd2 ♕xd6 19 ♗xd6 ♘h6 20 ♘g5 ♗e3 21 ♘de4 b5 22 h4 and the position is really not easy to assess.

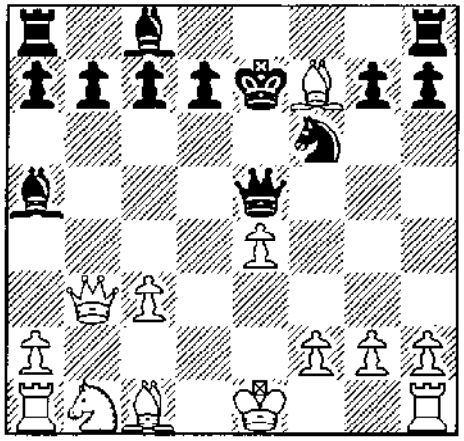
c2) 8 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 9 dxe5 d6! (Black needs to develop) 10 a4! (after 10 0-0?! dxe5 11 ♗a3 ♕f6 12 ♘d2 ♗d7 the white attack is clearly not so dangerous) 10...a6 11 a5 ♗c5 12 0-0 dxe5 13 ♖d1 ♗d6 (13...♘f6 would be met by 14 ♗xf7+! ♔f8 15 ♗c4 ♘xe4 16 ♖a2 with a strong initiative) 14 ♗a3 and White has sufficient compensation for the pawn.



8 dxe5?!

This is heading for a position where White has won the pawn back, but his game lost its momentum. A preferable alternative was 8 ♗a3!? d6 9 d5 ♘d4 10 ♘xd4 (an improvement over 10 ♕a4+? ♗d7 11 ♕xa5 b6 12 ♕a6 ♘c2+ 13 ♔d1 ♘xa1 14 ♘bd2 0-0 15 ♔c1 c6! and Black was much better, B.Lundgren-T.Wastfelt, correspondence 1974) 10...exd4 11 ♕a4+ ♔d8 12 0-0 ♗b6 13 ♗d3 (13 f3 is answered with 13...♘h5! intending ...♘f4 and ...♕g5 with a deadly attack) 13...♘xe4 14 ♖e1 f5 (or 14...♘c5 15 ♖xe7 ♘xa4 16 ♖xf7 g6 17 ♗b5 ♘xc3 18 ♘xc3 dxc3 19 ♗b4 ♗d4 20 ♖c1 with full compensation) 15 c4 ♕h4 16 ♕c2 ♖e8 17 ♖e2 ♖e5 18 ♘d2 and White retains the initiative.

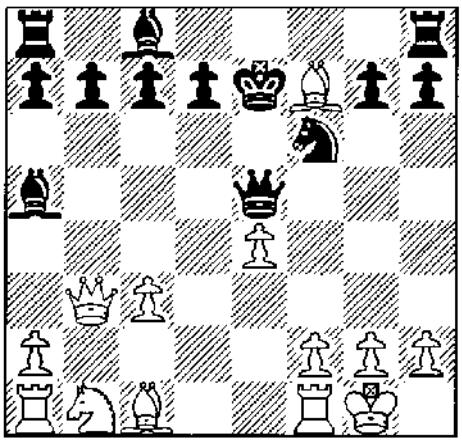
8...♘xe5 9 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 10 ♗xf7+ ♔e7



Here we have a position similar to that of the Traxler in the Two Knights Defence (i.e. 3...♘f6 4 ♘g5 ♗c5!?). There is only one small difference: Black is much better here.

11 0-0?

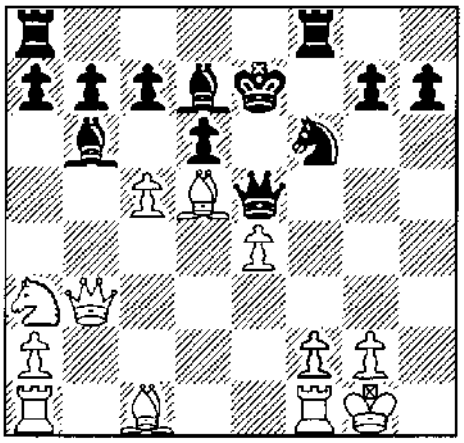
11 f3!? was stronger, but Black can still grab the initiative with 11...d5! (11...♘xe4 12 fxe4 ♕xe4+ 13 ♔d1 ♕g4+ 14 ♔c2 ♕e4+ 15 ♔d1 is a draw) 12 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 13 ♕xd5 ♕xd5 14 exd5 ♔d6 15 ♗d2 ♖e8+ 16 ♔d1 ♗d7 when Black's play is more than enough for the pawn.



11...♖f8 12 ♗d5 ♗b6 13 h3 d6 14 ♘a3 ♗xh3 15 c4

If 15 gxh3 ♕g3+ 16 ♔h1 ♕xh3+ 17 ♔g1 ♘g4 wins.

15...♗d7 16 c5



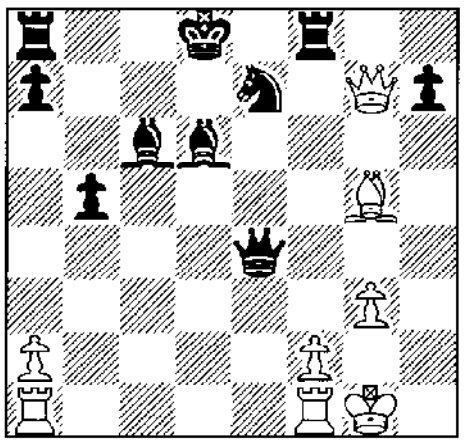
16...♗xc5

Clearer and cleaner was 16...♘g4! 17 ♕h3 (or 17 g3 ♕h5) 17...♖xf2 18 ♖xf2 ♗xc5 19 ♖b1 ♗xf2+ 20 ♔h1 ♗c5 and Black wins.

17 ♘c4 ♕h5

Also possible was 17...♗xf2+!? 18 ♖xf2 ♕xa1 19 ♖f1 b5 20 ♘xd6 cxd6 21 ♗xa8 ♕e5 22 ♗d5 ♘g4 23 ♖xf8 ♕h2+ 24 ♔f1 ♕h1+ 25 ♔e2 ♕xg2+ 26 ♔e1 ♔xf8 and wins.

18 ♕g3 ♕g4 19 ♕d3 c6 20 e5 ♘xd5 21 exd6+ ♔d8 22 ♕b3 b5 23 ♘e5 ♕h4 24 ♕c2 ♗xd6 25 g3 ♕a4 26 ♕b2 ♕b4 27 ♘xc6+ ♗xc6 28 ♕xg7 ♕e4 29 ♗g5+ ♘e7



30 f3

White cannot struggle on for much longer. After 30 ♕xf8+ ♔d7 31 ♕xe7+ ♗xe7 32 ♖ad1+ ♔c7 33 ♗f4+ ♔b6 34 f3 ♗c5+ Black wins.

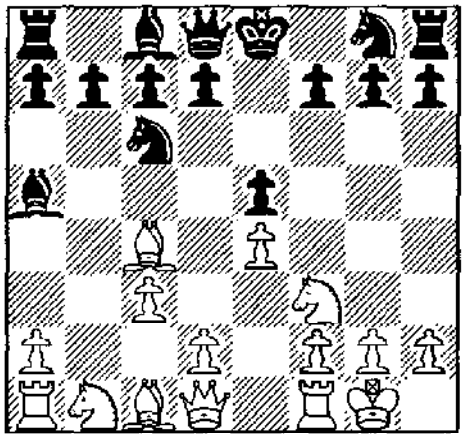
30...♖xf3 31 ♗xe7+ ♕xe7 0-1

Game 37

M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz

Telegraph match 1891

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0



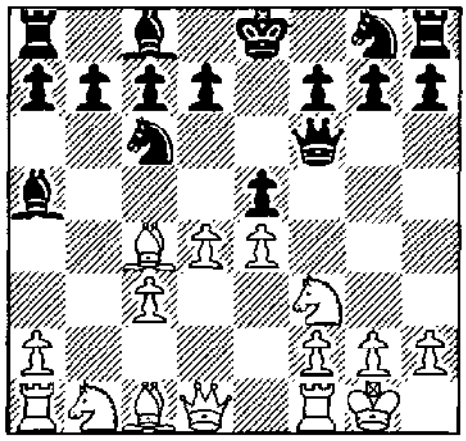
6...♕f6?!

Please do not show moves like this to innocent beginners or those under 16. Especially not when they have been played by our first World Champion. Actually this game is solid proof that the motion picture 'You should not 'walk' the queen in the opening' is based on a true story...

Instead 6...♘f6 is seen in the next game, and the main move 6...d6 in Games 39-41.

Also interesting is 6...♘ge7 when play could develop 7 ♘g5 d5 8 exd5 ♘xd5 9 d4 (after 9 ♕h5?! g6 10 ♕f3 ♕xg5 11 ♗xd5 0-0 12 d4 ♕f5 Black retains the material without repercussions) 9...h6 10 dxe5 (here 10 ♘xf7! ♔xf7 11 ♕f3+ ♔e6 12 ♗a3 looks more dangerous) 10...hxg5 11 ♗xd5 ♗e6 12 ♗xc6 ♕xd1 13 ♖xd1 (risky is 13 ♗xf7+?! ♔xf7 14 ♖xd1 ♖ad8 15 ♖e1 ♖he8 16 ♗xg5 ♖xe5 and Black retains pressure) 13...fxe6 14 ♗xg5 ♘xe5 and the position is more or less equal according to Unzicker.

7 d4



7...♘h6

a) 7...h6 is met strongly with 8 dxe5! ♘xe5 9 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 10 ♕b3 ♕h5 11 e5 ♘e7 12 ♖e1 ♘c6 13 ♗a3 with the initiative.

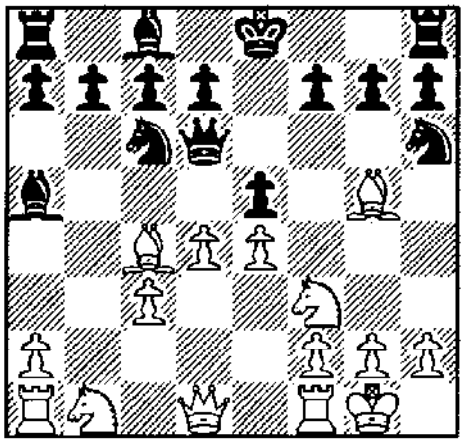
b) 7...♘ge7 8 d5 ♘d8 9 ♕a4 (stronger than 9 ♗g5 ♕d6 10 ♕a4 f6 11 ♗c1 ♗b6 12 ♘a3, though here, too, White has more than enough compensation) 9...♗b6 10 ♗g5 ♕d6 11 ♘a3 c6 12 ♖ad1 ♕b8 13 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 14 d6+ ♔f8 15 ♕b4 f6 16 ♗b3 was M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz, Havana match (game 17) 1889. White is much better here and you sincerely wonder why Steinitz chose to repeat the queen move in our main game.

8 ♗g5

This is the most natural, though 8 d5!? has also been tried: 8...♘e7 9 ♕a4 ♗b6

10 ♘a3 ♘g4 11 h3 h5 12 ♖b1 a6 13 ♖xb6 cxb6 14 ♖d1 with full compensation for the exchange, J.Timman-B.Kurajica, Wijk aan Zee 1977.

8...♕d6?!



Things are only getting worse for Black. What is the queen supposed to do here?! Steinitz is playing as if he is inventing the basic principles of chess as he goes along. Well he is... was, I mean... well, never mind...

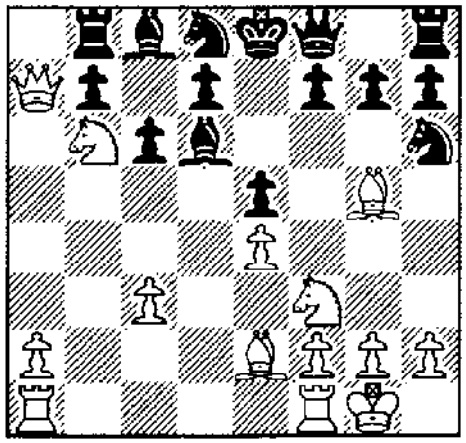
8...♕g6 however also leads to trouble: 9 d5 ♘b8 (or 9...♘d8?! 10 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 11 ♘xe5 ♕xe4 12 ♖e1 ♕h4 13 d6 cxd6 14 ♕xd6 and White is better, E.Schiffers-V.Yurevich, St. Petersburg 1892. e.g. 14...♗b6 15 ♖e2 ♕f6 16 ♕d5! ♖e8 17 ♘d2 ♗xf2+ 18 ♔h1 with a strong attack) 10 ♗xh6 ♕xh6 11 ♘xe5 0-0 12 d6! ♘c6 13 ♘g4 ♕g6 14 ♖e1 and White has the advantage according to Matsukevich.

9 d5 ♘d8 10 ♕a4 ♗b6 11 ♘a3 c6?!

11...♕g6 was better, though after 12 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 13 ♘xe5 ♕xe4 14 ♖ae1 ♕f4 15 d6! White has a strong attack.

12 ♗e2 ♗c7 13 ♘c4 ♕f8 14 d6! ♗xd6 15 ♘b6 ♖b8 16 ♕xa7

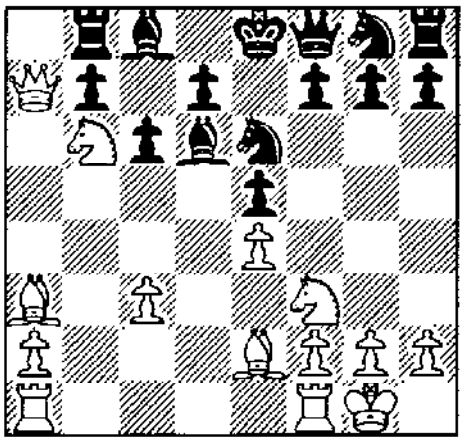
Objectively speaking Black has already lost the game, but we can still enjoy how the first Russian grandmaster puts the first world champion away.



16...♘e6 17 ♗c1! ♘g8

17...f5 is met strongly by 18 ♖d1 ♗c7 19 ♗a3! and Black is on a lot of pain. Slightly weaker is 19 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 20 ♗xh6 gxh6 21 ♕xb7 ♖b8 22 ♕a7 ♕g7 23 ♗c4 where White has the advantage, but such stupid pieces as the c8-bishop have disappeared, giving Black some hope.

18 ♗a3

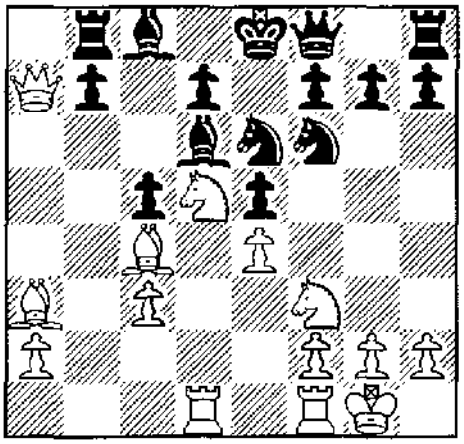


18...c5

If 18...♕e7 19 ♖fd1! (not 19 ♗xd6? ♕xd6 20 ♖fd1 ♕c7 21 ♘a8 ♖xa8 22 ♕xa8 ♘f6 and unexpectedly Black survives) 19...c5 20 ♖xd6 ♕xd6 21 ♖d1 ♕c7

22 ♘d5 and White wins.

19 ♖ad1 ♘f6 20 ♗c4 ♗c7 21 ♘d5 ♗d6



22 ♘h4

In a position like this all road leads to Rome. Here 22 ♘xf6+!? gxf6 23 ♗xe6 fxe6 24 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 25 ♕xb8 ♔f7 26 ♖d3 also wins.

22...♘xd5 23 ♘f5

Or 23 exd5!? ♘f4 24 ♗xc5 b6 25 ♕xb8 ♗xb8 26 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 27 d6 and wins.

23...g6 24 ♘xd6+ ♕xd6 25 ♗xd5 ♕c7 26 ♗xe6 fxe6 27 ♗xc5 ♖a8 28 ♕xa8 ♕xc5 29 ♕a4 ♔d8 30 ♖d2 ♔c7 31 ♖b1 ♖d8 32 ♖b5 ♕c6 33 ♕b4 d6 34 a4 ♕e8 35 ♖b6 ♕f8 36 ♕a5 d5 37 exd5 ♔b8 38 d6 1-0

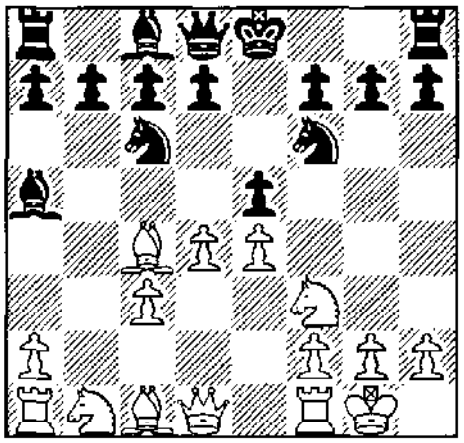
Game 38

M.Chigorin-M.Shabelsky

Correspondence 1884

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0 ♘f6 7 d4

After only six and a half moves in the one of the oldest openings, we have landed in a slightly unusual position. Normally Black plays 6...d6 to reinforce his centre and remain more flexible.



7...♘xe4

a) 7...exd4? is asking for trouble after 8 ♗a3 d6 9 e5 ♘e4 10 exd6 cxd6 (or 10...♘xd6 11 ♖e1+ ♘e7 12 ♘g5 0-0 13 ♕h5 ♗f5 14 ♘xf7 ♘xf7 15 ♗xe7 with a clear advantage) 11 ♖e1 d5 12 ♘bd2 ♗xc3 (if 12...f5 13 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xe4 dxe4 15 ♖xe4+! fxe4 16 ♕h5+ ♔d7 17 ♕d5+ ♔c7 18 ♕e5+ ♔c6 19 ♕c5+ wins) 13 ♘xe4 ♗xe1, as in D.Rybak-J.Svoboda, Plzen 1999, then 14 ♕xe1! ♗e6 15 ♘d6+ ♔d7 16 ♗b5 ♕b6 17 ♖b1 ♖hb8 18 ♘e5+ ♔e7 19 ♗xc6 bxc6 20 ♖xb6 is the easiest way to win.

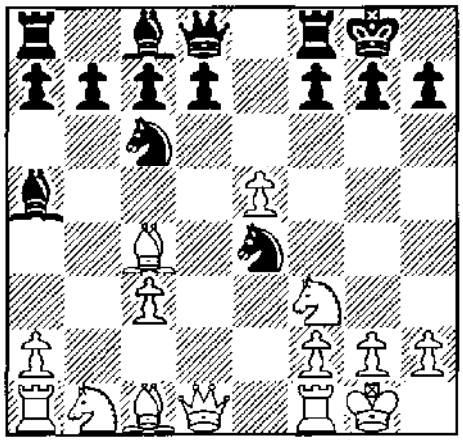
b) 7...0-0 was successful after 8 ♕c2 (or if 8 d5 ♘e7 9 ♘xe5 d6 10 ♘f3 ♘xe4 11 ♕d3 f5 12 ♘g5 ♘xg5 13 ♗xg5 h6 14 ♗d2 ♘g6 with the advantage) 8...♕e7 9 dxe5 ♘xe5 10 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 11 ♗d3 ♘g4 12 g3 ♗b6 13 ♘a3 d5 and Black was better in J.Dufresne-A.Anderssen, Berlin match 1851. But White can play more strongly with 8 ♘xe5! ♘xe5 9 dxe5 ♘xe4 10 ♗a3 transposing to the next note.

8 dxe5?!

This gives White an interesting, but incorrect attack. The critical line runs 8 ♘xe5! 0-0 (not 8...d5? 9 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 10

♕h5+ ♔e7 11 ♗xd5 and White wins) 9 ♗a3 ♘xe5 (or 9...d6 10 ♘xc6 bxc6 11 ♕a4 ♗xc3 12 ♘xc3 ♘xc3 13 ♕xc6 with compensation) 10 dxe5 d6 11 ♕f3 ♕h4 12 ♗d5 ♘g5 13 ♕d3 ♖d8 14 exd6 cxd6 15 ♗c1 ♘c6 16 ♕f3 ♖e8 17 ♘a3 and White has excellent compensation for the pawn.

8...0-0



9 ♗d5

After 9 ♕c2?! Black should seize the day with 9...d5! 10 exd6 (if 10 ♖d1 ♗e6 11 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 12 c4 ♘b4 13 ♕b2 ♗b6 14 ♗e3 ♗xc3 15 fxe3 ♘g5 and Black is better, as after 16 ♘e1 ♘h3+! 17 gxh3 ♕g5+ 18 ♔f2 ♕f5+ 19 ♔g1 ♗xc4 20 ♘d2 ♘d3 Black is completely dominant) 10...♘xd6 11 ♖d1 b6 12 ♗a3 ♕f6 13 ♗d5 ♘e7, Z.Stojanovic-B.Pavlovic, Bor 1983. White is facing a big challenge in order to prove compensation here.

9 ♗a3!? d6 10 ♕c2 is the same idea in a slightly different move order, and now Black must play more carefully: 10...♘c5 11 ♘bd2 (or 11 ♗xc5!? dxc5 12 ♗d3 with compensation) 11...♖e8 12 ♖ad1 ♗b6 13 exd6 cxd6 14 ♗d5 ♗e6 (the alternatives do not work, e.g. 14...♕f6?! 15 ♘e4 ♕f5 16 ♘h4 ♕g4 17 ♘xd6 ♖e7 18 ♘hf5 ♗xf5 19 ♕xf5 ♕xf5 20 ♘xf5 ♖c7 21 ♖fe1 and White is much better, or 14...♘e7? 15 ♘g5 ♘xd5 16 ♕xh7+ ♔f8 17 ♕h8+ ♔e7 18 ♕xg7 with a crushing attack in S.Ratzmann-D.Rosner, correspondence 2001) 15 ♘c4 and White has a decent initiative.

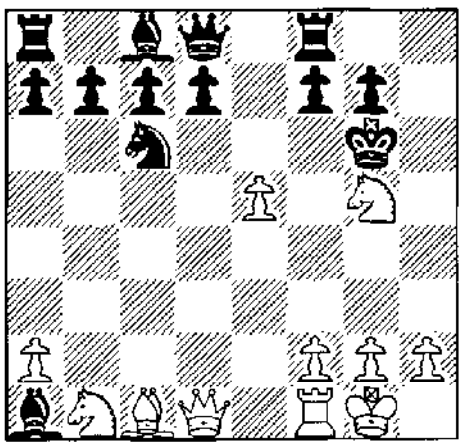
9...♘c5

9...♘xc3? 10 ♘xc3 ♗xc3 is worthless as White has a strong attack after 11 ♘g5 ♗xa1 (or 11...♘xe5 12 ♕e2 ♘g6 13 ♕xc3 and wins) 12 ♕h5 h6 13 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 14 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 15 ♗a3+ d6 16 exd6 cxd6 17 ♗b3 and White wins.

But 9...♗xc3 is a serious alternative. After 10 ♗xe4 ♗xa1 11 ♗xh7+ we have:

a) 11...♔h8? 12 ♘g5 g6 13 ♕g4 ♗xe5 14 ♕h4 ♔g7 15 ♘e6+ dxe6 (15...fxe6? 16 ♕h6+ ♔f7 17 ♗xg6+ ♔e7 18 ♕h4+ ♖f6 19 ♗a3+ d6 20 ♕h7+ ♔f8 21 ♕h8+ ♔e7 22 ♕g7+ ♖f7 23 ♕xf7 mate! was played in M.Chigorin-S.Alapin, St. Petersburg 1883) 16 ♕h6+ ♔f6 17 ♗g5+ ♔f5 18 ♗xd8 ♖xd8 19 h4 with a dangerous attack.

b) 11...♔xh7! 12 ♘g5+ ♔g6 (after 12...♕xg5 13 ♗xg5 ♗xe5 14 ♗e3 White was better in M.Chigorin-V.Manko, correspondence 1900 and 1901)

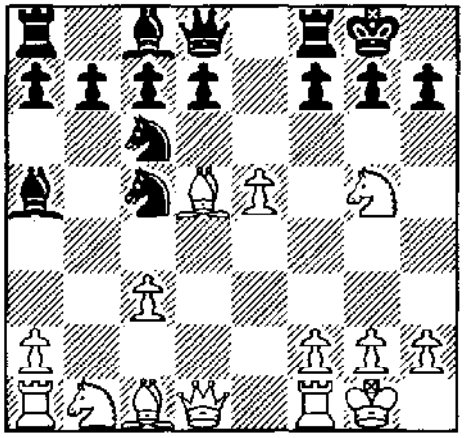


and we have reached a new branching:

b1) 13 ♕d3+ f5 14 exf6+ ♔xf6 15 ♘h7+ ♔f7 16 ♘g5+ ♔e7 (or 16...♔f6 with equality) 17 ♖e1+ ♘e5 18 ♘c3 d6 19 ♖xe5+ dxe5 20 ♘d5+ ♔d6 21 ♘c3+ ♔e7 with a draw.

b2) 13 ♕g4!? ♘xe5 14 ♕g3 ♔f6 15 f4 ♗d4+ 16 ♔h1 ♘c4 17 ♘h7+ ♔e7 18 ♖e1+ ♔d6 19 ♘xf8 c5 (not 19...♕xf8? 20 ♖d1 ♔c6 21 ♖xd4 with an extremely strong attack) 20 ♘h7 with unclear play.

10 ♘g5

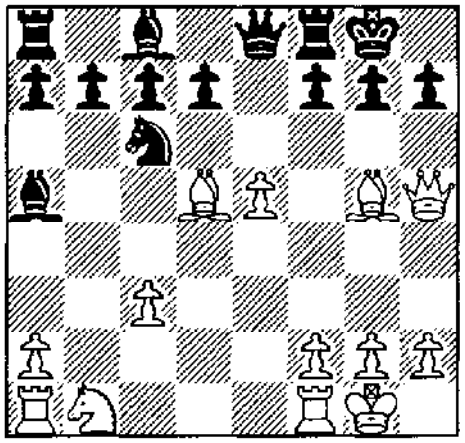


10...♘e6?

Black is wasting precious time, merely to replace one attacking white piece with another.

Better was 10...♕e7! (10...♘xe5 11 f4! looks dangerous for Black) 11 ♕c2 (if 11 ♕h5 h6 12 ♘f3 d6 13 exd6 ♕xd6 14 ♗e3 ♗b6 15 ♖d1 ♗c6 16 ♘a3 ♖ad8 17 ♘c4 ♕e7 and White is fighting for a draw) 11...g6 12 f4 ♗b6 13 ♔h1 d6 14 f5 (or 14 cxd6 cxd6 15 ♕d2 ♗f5 with the advantage) 14...♘xe5 15 f6 ♕d8 16 ♕d2 ♘g4 and Black is much better here. One example is 17 ♘xh7 ♔xh7 18 ♕g5 ♕e8! 19 ♕h4+ ♔g8 20 ♗h6 ♘d3 21 ♘d2 ♘df2+ 22 ♔g1 ♘h3+ 23 ♔h1 ♘gf2+ 24 ♖xf2 ♘xf2+ 25 ♔g1 ♘g4+ 26 ♔h1 ♕e5 and Black is winning, E.Schiffers-A.Romashkevich, correspondence 1894.

11 ♕h5 ♘xg5 12 ♗xg5 ♕e8



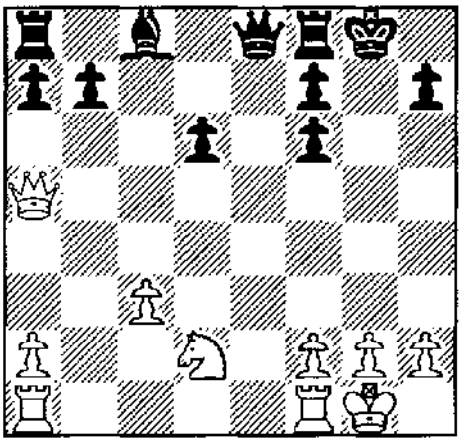
13 ♗f6! ♘e7

If 13...gxf6 14 ♗e4 and White wins.

14 ♘d2 d6

Black is now out of options. If 14...♘xd5? 15 ♕g5 ♘xf6 16 exf6 g6 17 ♕h6 wins, or 14...♗xc3 15 ♘e4 ♗xa1 16 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 17 ♘f6 and White wins again.

15 exd6 ♘xd5 16 ♕xd5 gxf6 17 ♕xa5 cxd6



Black has an extra pawn, but his position is lost.

18 ♖ae1 ♕c6 19 c4 ♕c5 20 ♕c3 ♗f5 21 ♘b3 ♕b6 22 ♘d4!

This is stronger than 22 ♕xf6 ♗g6 23 ♖e7 ♖ac8 24 ♖fc1 when White only has a clear advantage.

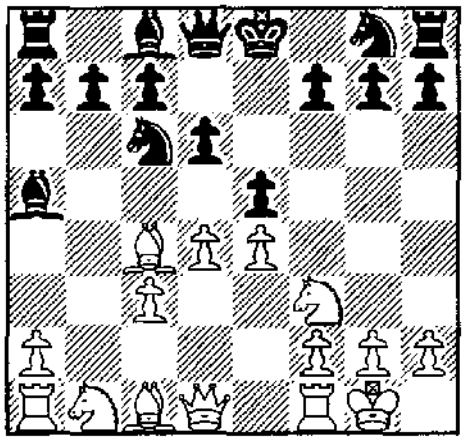
22...♗g6 23 f4 ♖fe8 24 f5 ♖xe1 25 ♖xe1 ♗xf5 26 c5! ♕xc5 27 ♕xc5 dxc5 28 ♘xf5 h5 29 ♖e7 ♖d8 30 ♖xb7 1-0

Game 39

A.Karpatchev-C.Renner

German Bundesliga 2003

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 0-0 d6 5 b4 ♗xb4 6 c3 ♗a5 7 d4



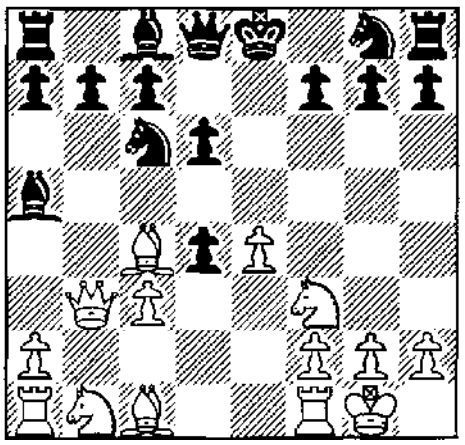
The move order with 4 0-0 d6 5 b4!? was rather unusual, but we have transposed to a more normal position now.

In the current game Black plays 7...♗g4, while 7...♗d7 and 7...♗b6 are seen in Games 40 and 41 respectively. From the diagram position we should also have a look at:

a) 7...exd4 and now:

a1) 8 cxd4 ♘f6?! (8...♗b6! reaches the standard position of Chapter 7) 9 ♕a4 ♗d7 10 d5 ♘e5 11 ♕xa5 ♘xc4 12 ♕b4 ♘b6 13 a4 c5 14 ♕b3 ♕c7 (Pavlov & Levitsky-W.Steinitz, Moscow 1896) and now after 15 a5 ♘c8 16 ♗b2 ♘h5 17 ♘fd2 White is much better according to Chigorin.

a2) 8 ♕b3!? (the Waller Attack)



8...♕f6 9 e5 dxe5 10 ♖e1 ♘ge7 (better than 10...♗b6?! 11.♗g5 ♕f5 12.♘xe5 ♘xe5 13.f4 dxc3+ 14.♔h1 ♗d4 15.♘xc3 with a huge attack in P.Morphy-Kipping, Birmingham 1858; but 10...♗d7!? is also possible, e.g. 11 ♗g5 ♕f5 12 ♕xb7 ♖b8 13 ♖xe5+ ♕xe5 14 ♕xb8+ ♘xb8 15 ♘xe5 ♗e6 or 14 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 15 ♕xb8+ ♘xb8 16 ♘xe5 ♗b6 with an unclear endgame) 11 ♗g5 ♕d6 (not 11...♕g6? 12 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 13 ♘xe5 ♕b6 14 ♗b5+ c6 15 ♕xf7+ ♔d8 16 ♘xc6+ and wins, I.Kolisch-T.Barnes, London 1860) 12 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 is all rather unclear, e.g. 13 ♘bd2 ♗xc3 14 a3!? ♗f5 15 ♖ac1 h6 16 ♘c4 ♗c6 17 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 18 ♗xe7+ ♔xe7 19 ♖e4 ♕d5 20 ♕xb7 ♕xc4 21 ♕xc7+ ♔f6?? (21...♔f8 22 ♘xd4 exd4 23 ♖xc3 ♕xc3 24 ♕d6+ ♔g8 is a draw) 22 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 23 ♕xe5+ ♔f7 24 ♖xc3! and wins, L.Oms Fuentes-F.Farran Martos, Barcelona 2003.

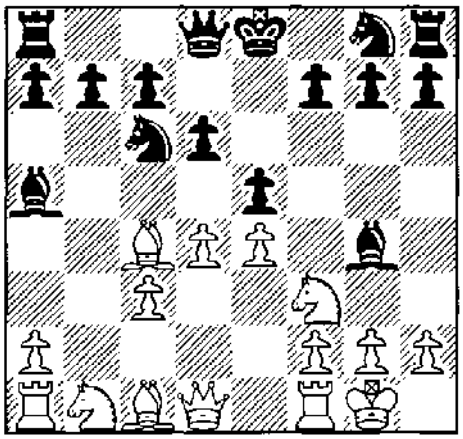
b) 7...♘f6 8 ♕a4!? and now:

b1) 8...♗d7? 9 d5 ♘d4 10 ♕xa5 ♘c2 11 ♗d3 ♘xa1 12 c4 and White is much better.

b2) 8...a6? 9 d5? is naïve after 9...b5 10 ♗xb5 axb5 11 ♕xb5 0-0 12 ♕xc6 ♗a6, J.Blackburne-H.Block, England (simul) 1878, with a good game for Black, e.g. 13 c4 (if 13 ♖e1? ♕b8! 14 a4 ♗d3 and the white queen has landed herself in a trap) 13...♘xe4 14 ♗e3 ♕c8 15 ♕a4 ♗b7 16 ♕c2 f5 with a huge advantage. Instead White should play 9 ♗d5! ♗b6 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 ♗xc6+ bxc6 12 ♖d1 ♘d7 13 ♕xc6 and White is much better.

b3) 8...exd4! is the correct reaction, when after the continuation 9 ♘xd4 (or 9 e5 ♘d7 10 ♗g5 ♘b6!) 9...♗b6 10 ♗b5 0-0 11 ♘xc6 bxc6 12 ♗xc6 ♖b8 Black is at least equal.

7...♗g4



8 ♕a4?!

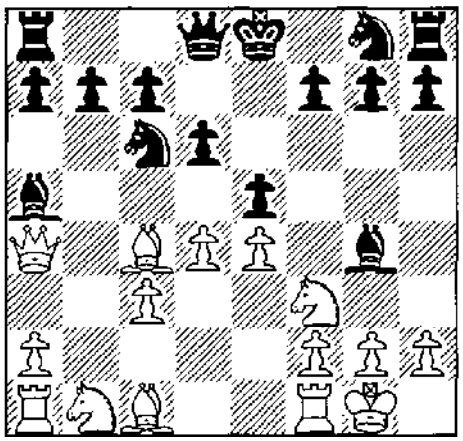
The queenside action does not seem to be too dangerous.

a) 8 ♕b3? is also dubious, when after 8...♗xf3! 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 10 gxf3 ♗b6 11 ♗xg8 ♖xg8 12 d5 ♘e7 13 ♕c2 g5 Black is much better according to Sokolsky.

b) 8 ♗b5!? is objectively the best move. After 8...exd4 9 cxd4 ♗d7 10 ♗b2 Black has two important lines to consider:

b1) 10...♘ce7?! 11 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 12 ♘a3 ♘h6 13 ♘c4 ♗b6 14 a4 c6 15 e5 d5 16 ♘d6+ ♔f8 17 ♗a3 ♔g8 18 ♖b1 and White was much better in M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz, Havana match (game 1) 1892.

b2) 10...♘f6 11 ♘a3 ♘xe4 (11...0-0 led to draws in games 3 and 5 of the match) 12 d5 ♘e7 13 ♕a4? (13 ♗xg7 is better) 13...♗c3! 14 ♖ab1 ♗xb2 15 ♖xb2 ♘c5 16 ♕d4 0-0 and Black was two pawns up in M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz, Havana match (game 13) 1892. As you can see Steinitz gave up upon attacking with the queen later on in his career, which was probably quite wise.



8...a6!

This puts the most pressure on White to perform.

a) 8...exd4 9 cxd4 a6 (9...♗xf3 10 gxf3 is the next note) 10 ♗d5 ♗b6 11 ♗xc6+ bxc6 12 ♕xc6+ ♗d7 13 ♕c3 ♘e7 14 ♘a3 0-0 15 ♘c4 d5 16 exd5 ♘xd5 and Black achieved equality, M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz, Havana match (game 15) 1892. But maybe he wants more?

b) 8...♗xf3 9 gxf3 exd4 10 cxd4 a6?! (more reliable is 10...♕f6 11 ♗b5!? ♕xf3 12 ♗xc6+ bxc6 13 ♕xc6+ ♔e7 14 ♕xa8 ♕g4+ with a draw – Chigorin) 11 ♗d5 ♘ge7 12 ♗xc6+ ♘xc6 13 d5 b5 14 ♕a3 ♘b4 (or 14...♘d4 15 ♕xa5 ♕f6 16 ♕a3

b4 17 ♕d3 ♘xf3+ 18 ♔g2 ♘h4+ 19 ♔h3! ♘g6 20 ♕b3 and White is better according to Chigorin) 15 ♕xa5 ♕f6 16 ♕a3 ♘c2 (or 16...) 17 ♕d3 ♘xa1 18 ♕c2 0-0 19 ♗b2 ♕h6 20 ♗xa1 with advantage to White, M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz, Havana match (game 17) 1892.

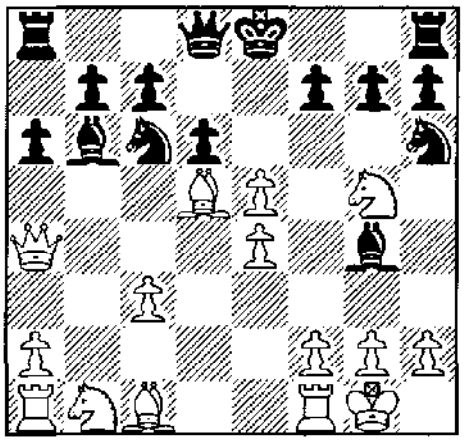
9 ♘g5

Incorrect is 9 d5?! b5 10 ♗xb5 axb5 11 ♕xb5 ♘ge7 12 dxc6 0-0 and Black is just better.

9...♘h6 10 ♗d5

10 d5? is even worse this time around. After 10...b5 11 ♗xb5 axb5 12 ♕xb5 ♕b8 13 ♕xc6+ ♗d7 14 ♕c4 ♗b5 15 ♕b3 ♗xf1 and Black is much better.

10...♗b6 11 dxe5



11...0-0?

An understandable decision, but there was little reason not to recapture immediately. After 11...dxe5! 12 ♗xc6+ (Black is also better after 12 h3 ♗d7 13 ♘f3 ♕f6 or 12 ♘f3?! 0-0 13 ♗xc6 ♗xf3 14 gxf3 bxc6) 12...bxc6 13 ♕xc6+ ♗d7 14 ♕d5 0-0 15 h3! (if 15 ♘f3? ♗b5 16 ♖e1 ♘g4 with a clear advantage) 15...♗b5 16 ♖e1 ♖e8 the two bishops give Black an excellent game.

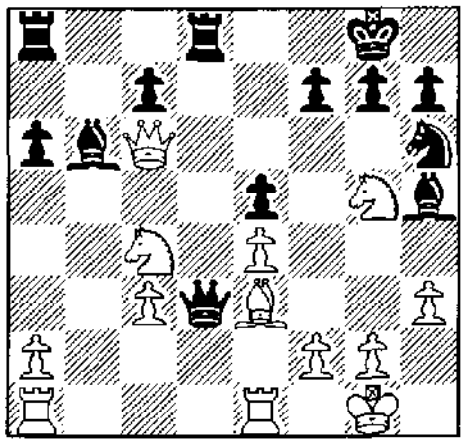
12 ♗xc6 bxc6 13 h3 ♗e2

This also looks a bit strange. Black must have had some fantasy about attacking f2, but surely the rook move is to White's overall advantage?

14 ♖e1 ♗h5 15 ♘a3

15 exd6 ♕f6 16 ♕c2 cxd6 17 e5 ♗g6 18 cxf6 ♗xc2 19 ♘a3 ♗g6 20 ♘c4 ♗c5 21 fxg7 ♔xg7 22 ♗f4 is also good for White.

15...dxe5 16 ♕xc6 ♕d3 17 ♗e3 ♖fd8 18 ♘c4



18...f6?

This is just complete capitulation. White will happily use the e6-square to create mayhem around the black king. Necessary was something like 18...♕xc3 19 ♖ac1 ♕b4 20 ♘xe5 ♗xe3 21 ♖xe3 ♕a5 22 ♕c3 ♕xc3 23 ♖exc3 f6 24 g4 ♗e8 25 ♘e6 fxe5 26 ♘xd8 ♖xd8 27 ♖xc7 ♘f7 and Black still has some drawing chances.

19 ♗xb6 cxb6 20 ♖e3 ♕c2 21 ♘e6 ♖d1+

Or 21...♖dc8 22 ♕d7 ♘f7 23 ♘xb6 and wins.

22 ♖xd1 ♕xd1+ 23 ♔h2 ♖a7

After 23...♖e8 24 ♖g3 is another road kill.

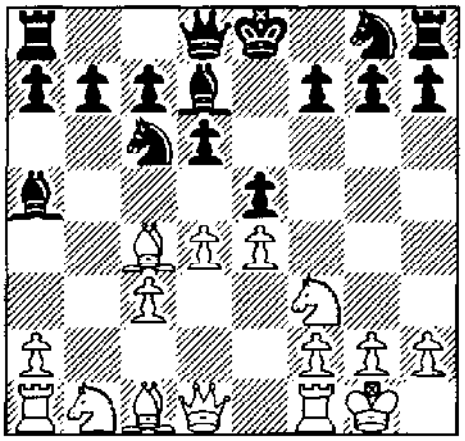
24 ♕c8+ ♔f7 25 ♘d8+ 1-0

Game 40

M.Chigorin-S.Alapin

Vienna 1898

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 ♗d7



This might look a little passive, but at the same time it is quite solid.

8 ♕b3

Instead, too much aggression can land you in trouble...

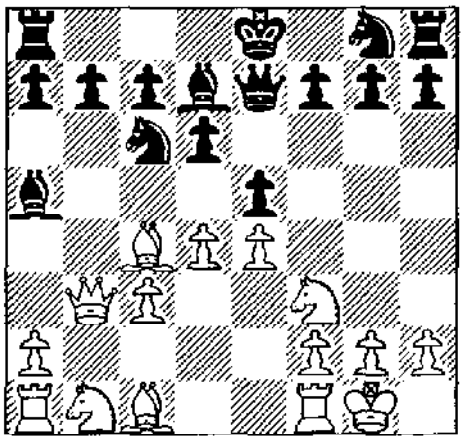
a) 8 ♘g5?! ♘h6 9 f4 exd4 10 e5 0-0 11 e6 fxe6 12 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 13 ♘xe6 ♕f6 14 ♘xf8 ♖xf8 15 ♗b2 ♗b6 and Black is much better.

However, too peaceful play can also lessen your chances of winning...

b) 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 ♘bd2 ♕f6 10 ♗d5 ♘ge7 (after 10...♗xc3 11.♖b1 ♗xd2 12.♕xd2 ♖b8 13.♘g5 ♘h6 14.♗a3 ♕f4?! 15.♕xf4 exf4 16.♖fc1 White was clearly better in A.Lundqvist-S.Kjellander, correspondence 1959) 11 ♕b3 0-0 12 ♘c4 h6 13 a4 ♗b6 14 ♗a3 (or 14 a5 ♗c5 15 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 16 ♕xb7 ♖fc8 17 ♕b5 with equal play) 14...♘a5 15 ♘xa5 ♗xa5 16 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 17 ♕xb7 a6 18 ♖fc1 ♖fb8 19 ♕xa8 ♖xa8 20 ♗xa8 (Levenfish) and Black can hardly be worse here.

8...♕e7

Instead 8...♕f6 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♖d1 h6 11 ♗a3 (here 11 ♗xf7+?! ♕xf7 12 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 13 ♖xd7+ looks tempting, but after 13...♘ge7 14 ♔f1 ♔e6 15 ♖d3 ♖ad8 Black is better) 11...♖d8 12 ♘bd2 ♗b6 13 ♗d5 ♘a5 14 ♕b4 c5 15 ♕b2 ♘e7 16 ♘b3 ♘xb3 17 ♕xb3 0-0 18 ♗xb7 ♘g6 19 c4 ♘f4 20 ♕e3 ♗g4 21 ♗d5 was unclear in M.Chigorin-W.Steinitz, Havana match (game 7) 1892 (another Evans Gambit between the two gentlemen!). Now Black has to play sharply to stay alive: 21...♗h3! 22 g3 ♘xd5 23 exd5 ♗g4 24 ♔g2 ♕f5 25 ♘h4 ♕d7 26 ♖e1 ♗h3+ 27 ♔g1 etc.



9 dxe5

White can also try a queenside offensive with 9 a4!? ♗b6 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 a5 ♘xa5 12 ♖xa5!? ♗xa5 13 ♗a3 c5 14 ♕xb7 ♖c8 15 ♗b5 ♖c7 16 ♕b8+ ♕d8 17 ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 18 ♕xc5+ ♕c7 19 ♕xg7 ♕f6 20 ♕g3 ♗b6 as in S.Winawer-S.Alapin, Warsaw 1890. Now White should play 21 ♘bd2! with compensation for the material investment according to Matsukevich.

9 ♗a3?! is too sketchy, however. After 9...♘h6 10 dxe5 ♘xe5 11 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 12 ♕xb7 ♘g4! Black is better, as 13 f4 ♕h5 14 h3 ♗b6+ 15 ♔h1 0-0 allows him a crushing attack.

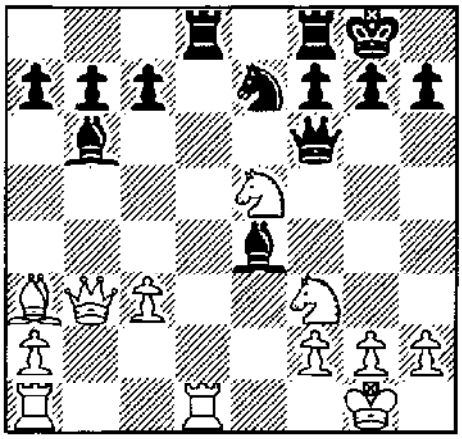
9...dxe5 10 ♖d1

Also interesting is 10 ♗a3!? ♕f6 11 ♘bd2 ♘ge7 (or 11...♗b6 12 ♗b5 a6 13 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♘c4 and White has fine compensation) 12 ♗b5 0-0 13 ♘c4 ♗b6 14 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 15 ♘cxe5 ♖fe8 with an unclear game.

10...♗b6

Here 10..♖d8! can be met in two interesting ways (at least it has in practice):

a) The first is the most controversial: 11 ♗a3 ♕f6 12 ♘bd2 ♘ge7 13 ♗b5 0-0 14 ♘c4 ♗b6 15 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 16 ♘cxe5 ♗xe4

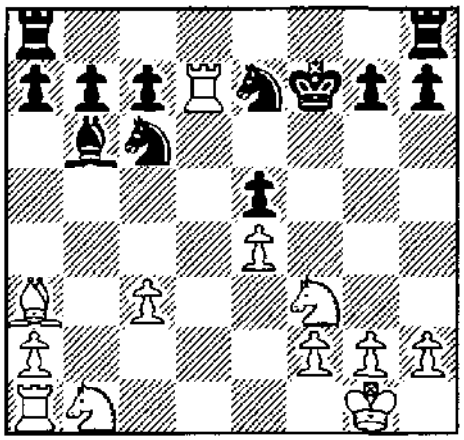


when we have a position that was the starting point of a quarrel between the two Russian greats Alapin and Chigorin. Alapin believed that Black has a better game, while Chigorin thought that White should come out on top. Chigorin was of course the better chess player, but on this occasion Alapin was right. Even in the strongest line 17 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 18 ♕xf7+ ♕xf7 19 ♘xf7 ♖e8! White needs to use all his influence in heaven (or hell) to even make a draw.

b) More sensible is 11 ♖d5!? ♗b6 12 ♗b5 ♕e6 13 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 14 ♘xe5 ♕e6 15 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 16 ♕xe6+ fxe6 17 ♘xd7 ♔xd7 18 ♔f1 ♘f6 19 f3 ♖c8 20 ♘d2 ♗a5 21 ♗b2 with plain equality, St. Petersburg-Paris, telegraph match 1894.

11 ♗a3 ♕f6 12 ♗xf7+ ♕xf7 13 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 14 ♖xd7+ ♘ge7

14...♔g6? 15 ♘bd2 ♘f6 runs into 16 ♘h4+ ♔h5 17 ♖xg7! ♔xh4 18 ♘f3+ ♔h5 19 ♖g5+ ♔h6 20 ♗c1 and White wins.



15 ♔f1?!

Not 15 ♘xe5?! ♘xe5 16 ♖xe7+ ♔f6 when 17...♖ad8 gives Black strong counterplay, but 15 ♗xe7 ♔e6 16 ♖d5 ♔xe7 17 ♘xe5 nets a pawn.

15...♖ad8 16 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 17 ♘bd2

The position is more or less equal. The white c3-pawn and the black e5-pawn balance each other out.

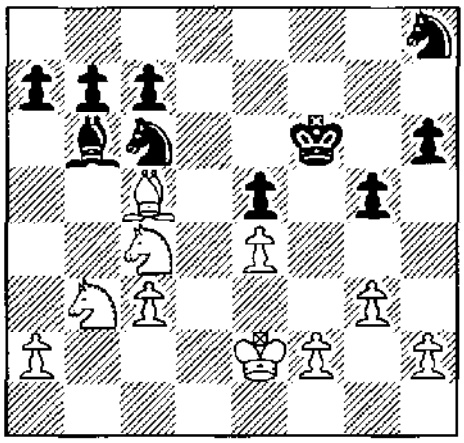
17...♘g6

Not the best position for the knight.

18 g3 ♗a5 19 ♖c1 h6?!

Better was 19...♔f6 20 ♔e2 ♘h8 21 ♖b1 g5!? 22 h3 b6 23 ♗b4 h5 and Black has nice play.

20 ♔e2 ♖d7 21 ♘b3 ♗b6 22 ♗c5 ♔f6 23 ♖c2 ♘h8 24 ♖d2 ♖xd2+ 25 ♘fxd2 g5 26 ♘c4



White has a small edge here, but did not make anything of it in the game.

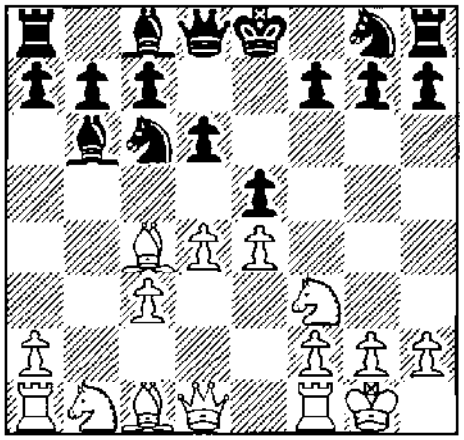
26...♘f7 27 ♘e3 ♔e6 28 ♘d5 ♔d7 29 ♘f6+ ♔e6 30 ♘d5 ♔d7 31 ♔d3 ♘cd8 32 f3 ♗xc5 33 ♘xc5+ ♔d6 34 ♘b3 c6 35 ♘e3 b6 36 ♘f5+ ♔e6 37 ♔e3 ♔f6 ½-½

Game 41

V.Skotorenko-H.Ahman

Correspondence 1976

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 ♗b6!?



This was Emanuel Lasker's idea and is therefore known as the Lasker Defence. Although in that case we should be able to label all kinds of minor lines, which do not deserve names of their own.

8 dxe5

8 a4 is an alternative, though not one that I can recommend. I am not superstitious, but Black has won all the games I have seen from here. For example:

a) 8...♘f6 9 ♗b5 a6 10 ♗xc6+ bxc6 11 a5 ♗a7 12 ♕a4 exd4 13 cxd4 ♗d7 14 e5 ♘d5 15 ♗a3 0-0 16 ♕c4 ♘f4 17 ♔h1 (17 exd6, retaining the pressure, is preferable according to Matsukevich) 17...♗e6 18 ♕c1 ♘xg2! 19 ♔xg2 ♗d5 20 ♔g3 f5 21 ♘bd2 f4+ 22 ♔g2 ♕g5+ 23 ♔h1 ♕h5 24 ♕c3 ♗xd4 and Black won in St. Petersburg-Vienna, telegraph match 1898.

b) 8...exd4 9 cxd4 ♗g4 10 ♗b5 a6 11 ♗xc6+ bxc6 12 a5 ♗a7 13 ♗e3 ♘e7 14 ♘c3 0–0 15 ♕c2 ♗xf3 16 gxf3 f5 and Black was better, M.Chigorin-Em.Lasker, St. Petersburg 1897.

8...dxe5 9 ♕b3

Others:

a) 9 ♗xf7+? would only work in a blitz-game with three minutes or less. It certainly does not work in correspondence chess: 9...♔xf7 10 ♘xe5+ ♔e8! 11 ♕h5+ g6 12 ♘xg6 ♘f6 13 ♕h6 ♖g8 14 ♘h4 ♘e5 15 g3 ♘eg4 16 ♕f4 ♘h5 17 ♕f3 ♕xh4 0-1 Kopel-Grocescu, correspondence 1989.

b) 9 ♕xd8+ leads to an interesting endgame after 9...♘xd8 10 ♘xe5 ♗e6 11 ♘d2 ♘e7 and now we have:

a) 12 ♗a3?! f6 13 ♘d3 ♘g6 14 ♖ab1 ♔f7 15 ♗d5 ♖e8 16 e4 c6 17 ♗xc6+ ♘xe6 and Black is at least slightly better, M.Chigorin-H.Pillsbury, London 1899.

b) 12 a4! (best) 12...♘g6 (not 12...c6?! 13 ♗a3 f6 14 ♘ef3 ♔f7 15 ♘d4 ♗xe4 16 ♘xe4 ♗c7 17 ♖fd1 g6 18 ♘f5! anyway, and White was better in S.Holzner-K.Elison, correspondence 1997) 13 ♘xg6 hxg6 14 ♗a3 ♗d7 15 ♗b3 ♘e6 16 ♖fe1 ♖h5 17 ♗d1 ♖h4 18 ♘c4 ♗c5 19 ♘e5 ♗xa3 20 ♖xa3 ♘c5 21 ♗c2 ♗c6 22 g3 ♖h5 23 ♘f3 0-0-0 with equality, J.Bohak-S.Holzner, correspondence 1998.

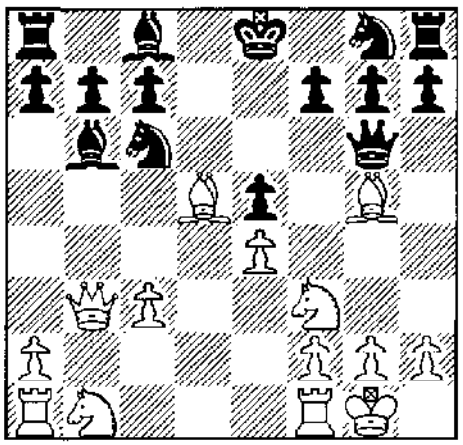
9...♕f6

The normal move, though not the only one. Alternatively:

a) 9...♕d7!? is an unusual transposition to Game 47 in the next chapter.

b) 9...♕e7 is also possible, e.g. 10 ♗a3 ♕f6 11 ♘bd2 (after 11 ♘g5?! ♘h6 12 h4 ♘a5 13 ♕a4+ ♗d7 14 ♗b5 0-0-0 and Black was more-or-less winning in D.Kilgour-S.Mannion, Scottish Championship 1985, or if 11 ♗d5 ♘a5 12 ♕b4 ♘h6 13 ♘bd2 c6 and White's initiative is gone) 11...♘ge7 12 ♗d5 ♗g4 (or 12...♘a5 immediately) 13 c4 ♘a5 14 ♕c3 ♗xf3 15 ♘xf3 c6 16 c5 ♗c7 17 ♗b3 0-0 and Black was just a pawn up, J.Galiana Salom-R.Calvo Minguez, Palma de Mallorca 1991.

10 ♗g5 ♕g6 11 ♗d5



This indirect pressure on e5 is often a very important tool for White in the Evans Gambit.

After the slower 11 ♘bd2?! ♘f6 12 ♕a3 ♘d7 13 ♗c3 ♕d6 14 ♕xd6 cxd6 15 ♗xb6 ♘xb6 16 ♗b3 ♘a5 Black just kept the pawn in V.Ciocaltea-G.Alexandrescu, Bucharest 1954.

11...♘ge7 12 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 13 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 14 ♘xe5 ♕e6 15 ♘c4

If 15 ♕a3+ ♕d6 and Black will keep his position together.

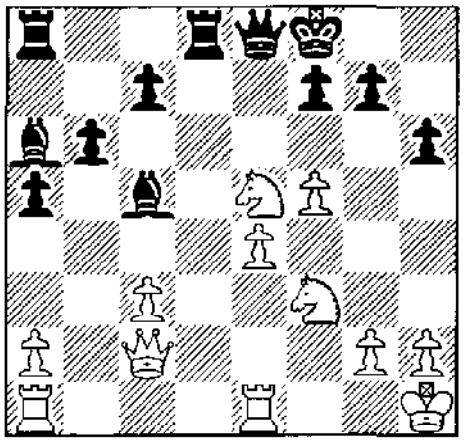
15...♗c5

15...♖d8 16 ♘bd2 ♔f8 17 ♔h1 ♗c5 transposes to the game, while after 16 ♕a3+ ♔e8 17 ♘xb6 cxb6 the position is equal according to Yakov Estrin.

16 ♘bd2 ♖d8 17 ♔h1 ♔f8 18 f4 ♕e8 19 ♘f3 b6

Or 19...a6 20 ♖ae1 b5 21 ♘ce5 ♗e6 22 ♕c2 ♗d6 with an unclear position.

20 f5 h6 21 ♖fe1 a5 22 ♕c2 ♗a6 23 ♘ce5



23...♔g8?

The most important thing in this position is to keep control of the sixth rank. Therefore 23...♖d6! 24 ♖ad1 ♖ad8 was correct, with an unclear game.

24 ♘g4 ♗f8 25 ♕f2 ♕d7?!

25...h5? would be even worse after 26 ♕h4! hxg4 27 ♘g5 ♗c5 28 e5 ♗b7 29 f6 and White wins, but with 25...c5 26 ♕g3 ♔h8 27 e5 ♖d3 Black still has chances of creating counterplay.

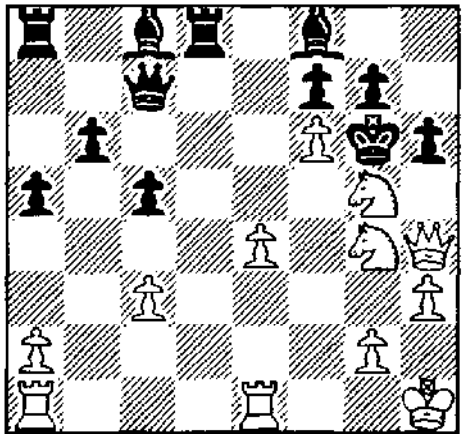
26 ♕g3 ♔h7

If 26...♔h8 27 f6 c5 28 ♕h4 and White is much better.

27 f6 ♗c8 28 h3! c5 29 ♕h4 ♕c7 30 ♘g5+

White is also on top after 30 e5 ♗xg4 31 ♕xg4.

30...♔g6



31 ♘xf7?

A real 'showing off' move, which is quite empty too. In our age the use of computers excludes this kind of mistake from correspondence games. Instead simply 31 ♘f3 ♔h7 32 e5 gives White everything.

31...♔xf7

The point was 31...♗xg4 32 ♘xd8 ♗d7 33 e5 ♖xd8 34 e6 and White wins.

32 fxg7 ♗xg4??

This is very questionable. Here 32...♗xg7 33 ♘xh6+ ♗xh6 34 ♕xh6 may look dangerous, but what about the main game?! In fact, after 34...♔g8 35 ♕g5+ (if 35 ♖e3? ♕g7 36 ♕xb6 ♖d2 and Black is better) 35...♔h7 36 ♕h5+ White only has a draw.

Whereas now White just wins.

33 gxf8♕+ ♖xf8 34 ♕xg4 ♕e5 35 ♖ab1 ♖ab8 36 ♖f1+ ♔e7 37 ♖fd1 ♕e6 38 ♕g3 1-0

Summary

The games presented in this chapter indicate that Black has several sound ways of meeting 6 0-0, one of them being the 'Lasker Defence' with 6...d6 7 d4 ♗b6. I believe that the main reason for this is that the advantages for White of having castled are slightly more long term than those of an immediate attack on the black centre with 6 d4 as in the next chapter). Therefore I do not feel that the lines with 6 0-0 are truly dangerous for Black.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0 *(D)*

6 ♕b3 *(D)* – *Game 36*

6 d4 – Chapter 9

6...d6

6...♕f6 – *Game 37*

6...♘f6 – *Game 38*

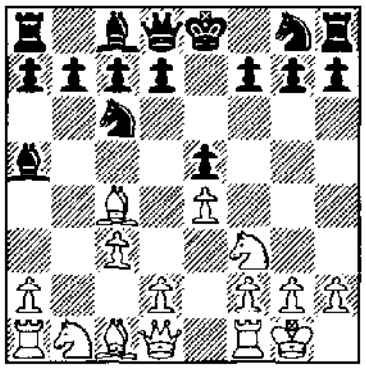
7 d4

7...exd4 8 cxd4 ♗b6 – Chapter 7

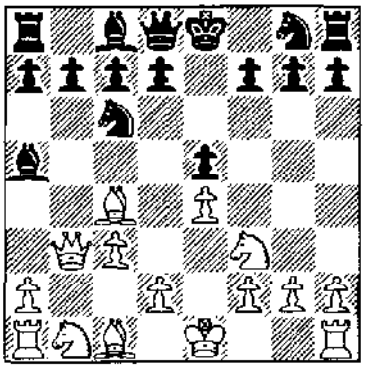
7...♗g4 – *Game 39*

7...♗d7 – *Game 40*

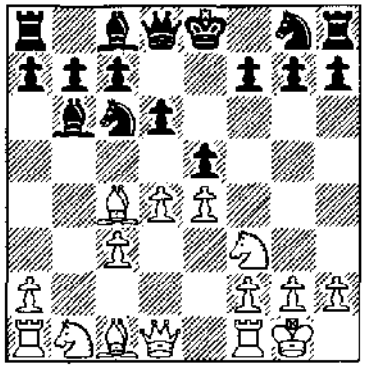
7...♗b6 *(D)* – *Game 41*



6 0-0

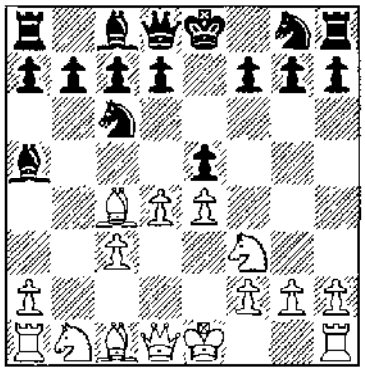


6 ♕b3



7...♗b6

CHAPTER NINE



The Evans Gambit: The Main Line with 5...♗a5

In this chapter we shall examine the positions arising after **1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4**

This is Howard Staunton's idea, which has the advantage that White can avoid Lasker's Defence (as seen in Chapter 8) by answering 6...d6 with something other than 7 0-0. Basically White is putting time over material, which is of course a risky strategy. But as they say... he who risks nothing gains nothing.

Game 42

A.Anderssen-J.Dufresne

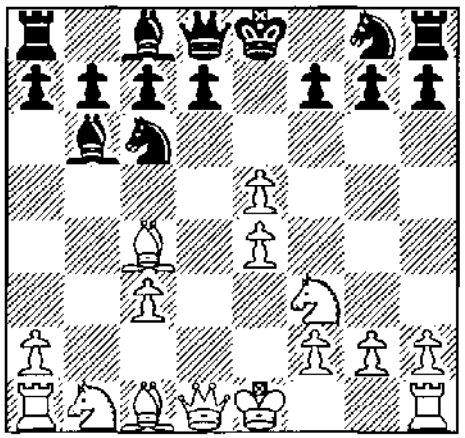
Berlin 1852

This is one of the most famous games in chess history. It is known as the Evergreen Game.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 exd4

The main alternative 6...d6 is seen in Games 46-48. Black has also tried:

a) 6...♗b6, with the idea of 7 0 0 d6 and Black welcomes himself to the lounge of the Lasker Defence, is ineffective as White plays more strongly with ¯ dxe5, and then:



a1) 7...h6?! 8 ♕d5 ♕e7 9 ♗a3 ♕e6 10 ♕d3 ♘xe5 11 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 12 f4 ♕h5 13 ♘d2 d6 14 ♗b5+ ♗d7 15 ♗xd7+ ♔xd¯ 16 e5 ♖e8 17 ♘f3 ♕g4 18 g3 ♔c8 19 0-0-0 and White had a strong initiative in S.Tartakower-O.Chajes, Carlsbad 1923.

a2) 7...♘ge7 8 ♗f4 0-0 9 0-0 ♘g6 10 ♗g3 ♕c7 11 ♕d5 with a bind, e.g. 11...♖e8 12 ♘bd2 ♘cxe5 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 ♗xe5 ♕xe5 15 ♕xf7+ ♔h8 16 ♘f3 ♕c7 17 ♘g5 g6 18 ♕f4 ♖f8 19 ♕h4 c6 20 ♔h1 ♗d8 21 f4 h5 22 ♖ae1 ♔g7 23

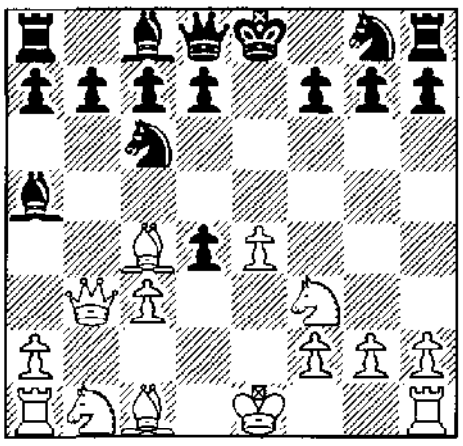
♕f2 ♗c7 24 ♕d4+ 1-0 W.Muir-R.Peeples, correspondence 1983.

b) 6...♕e7?! does not seem to work either. After 7 0-0 ♗b6 8 ♗a3 ♕f6 (or 8...d6 9 ♗b5 ♗d7 10 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 11 ♘xe5 ♗b5 12 ♖e1 ♕e6 13 ♘f3 0-0-0 14 ♗b2 a5 15 ♘bd2 ♕d7 16 c4 and White was much better in E.Sveshnikov-A.Sofieva, Cappelle la Grande 1995) 9 dxe5 ♘xe5 10 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 11 ♕b3 ♘h6 12 ♘d2 ♗e5 13 ♘f3 ♕e7 14 ♗e1 0-0, V.Ragozin-G.Levenfish, USSR Championship 1949, and now 15 ♗xh6 gxh6 16 e5 d6 17 ♖ae1 ♗g4 18 exd6 ♕xd6 19 ♘e5 ♗h5 20 ♕xb7 with the advantage.

c) 6...b5!? is a strange counter-gambit. After 7 ♗xb5 ♘xd4 8 ♘xd4 exd4 9 ♕xd4 ♕f6 (or 9...♘f6 10 ♗a3) 10 e5 White is better according to Matsukevitch – and he really is!

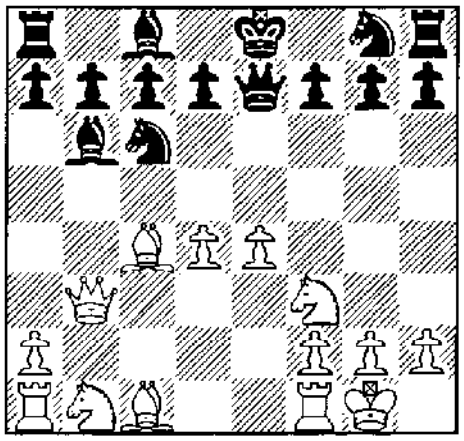
7 0-0

7 ♕b3!? is an interesting alternative, and then:



a) 7...♕f6!? 8 0-0 ♗b6 (8...d3 would be the Evergreen Game again, 8...dxc3 is Game 43, while 8...d6 transposes to the Waller Attack in the notes to Game 39) 9 e5 ♕g6 10 cxd4 ♘a5 (improving on 10...♘xd4?! 11 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 12 ♘c3 ♘h6, H.Bird-M.Chigorin, Hastings 1895, when 13 ♗a3! would give White good compensation for the pawn) 11 ♕a4 ♘xc4 12 ♕xc4 ♘c7 13 ♗a3 ♕e6 14 d5 ♕xd5 (if 14...♘xd5 15 ♘g5! is strong) 15 ♕e2 ♘g6 16 ♘c3 ♘f4 17 ♕b2 ♕d3 18 ♖ac1 ♕g6 19 ♘h4 ♕g4 20 g3 ♘d3 21 ♕c2 ♘xe1 22 ♖xe1 ♔d8 23 ♘d5 ♖e8, N.Short-J.Piket, Zürich 2001, and now after 24 ♗c5! White would have maintained a dangerous initiative according to Lukacs.

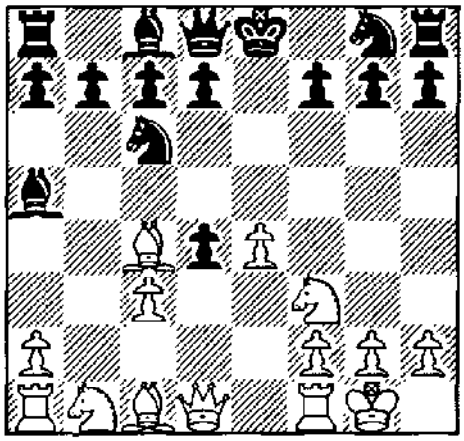
b) 7...♕e7 (the main line, but not necessarily stronger) 8 0-0 ♗b6 9 cxd4 and then:



b1) 9...♘a5 10 ♕a4 ♘xc4 11 ♕xc4 d6 12 a4 c6 13 ♘c3 ♕d8 (or 13...♘f6 14 a5 ♗c7 15 d5 with compensation) 14 a5 ♗xa5 15 ♗g5 f6 16 ♗d2 ♘e7 17 ♖fc1 b5 18 ♕b3 ♗b6 19 e5! d5 20 exf6 gxf6 21 ♘xb5 0-0 (not 21...axb5?? when 22 ♗b4 wins) 22 ♗b4 ♘f5? (unnecessary; 22...♖f7 23 ♘d6 ♖g7 would have been unclear) 23 ♗xf8 ♕xf8 24 ♘c3 and White was clearly much better in E.Sutovsky-S.Smagin, Essen 2001.

b2) 9...♘xd4 10 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 11 ♘c3 (after 11 ♗b2?! d6 12 ♘c3 ♘f6 13 ♖ad1 ♗xc3 14 ♕xc3 ♕e5! and Black has no

problems) 11...♘f6 12 ♘b5! d5 (if 12...♗e5 13 ♗a3 gives White good attacking chances, e.g. 13...d6 14 ♖ac1 c6 15 f4! or 13...c5 14 ♖ac1 a6 15 ♗xc5 d6 16 ♗xd6! ♗xd6 17 ♘xd6+ ♕xd6 17 c5 and White wins – Lukacs) 13 exd5 ♗xa1 14 ♗a3 ♕e5 15 f4 ♗d4+ 16 ♔h1 ♕e3 17 ♘xd4! ♕xb3 18 ♖e1+ ♔d8 19 ♗e7+ ♔d7 20 ♘xb3 (White has excellent compensation even without the queens on) 20...c6 21 d6 b6 22 ♗xf7 c5? (22...♘d5 was necessary) 23 ♘d2 ♔c6 24 ♘c4 ♗f5 25 ♘e5+ ♔b7 26 a4? (overlooking 26 ♖e3! intending ♖g3 and ♖xg7 when Black has hardly any defence) 26...h5 27 ♗xf6 gxf6 28 ♗d5+ ♔a6 29 ♗c4+ ♔b7 30 ♗d5+ ♔a6 with a draw by perpetual check, N.Short-P.H.Nielsen, Skanderborg 2003.



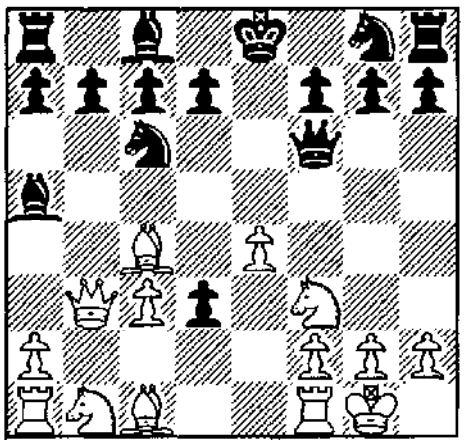
7...d3?!

7...dxc3? 8 ♕b3 ♕f6 9 e5 ♕g6 10 ♘xc3 ♘ge7 11 ♗a3! has been tried numerous times and, according to Garry Kasparov, Black is in trouble (see the next game). The more prudent 7...♘ge7 is considered in Games 44 and 45 below.

8 ♕b3

White should build up his attack. 8 ♖e1 ♗b6 9 e5 h6 10 ♘bd2 ♘ge7 11 ♘e4 was also strong in L.Prins-A.Fuderer, Rogaska Slatina 1948. But 8 ♘g5?! ♘h6 9 e5 ♘xe5! 10 ♖e1 (as in A.Anderssen-C.Mayet, Berlin match 1851) is shown to be too hasty after 10...d6! 11 f4 ♘hg4 12 ♘h3 0 0 13 fxe5 ♘xe5 and Black is at least slightly better here.

8...♕f6



9 e5

Also interesting is 9 ♖e1!? ♘ge7 10 ♗g5 ♕g6 11 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 12 e5 ♔f8?! (better is 12...♖e8 with an unclear position) 13 ♘bd2 ♗b6 14 ♘e4 ♘d8? 15 ♕a3+ ♔e8 16 ♘f6+ gxf6 17 exf6+ 1-0 A.Anderssen-S.Rosenthal, Vienna 1873. Black could have played more strongly with 14...d5, but after 15 ♗xd5 ♗g4 16 ♘eg5 White still enjoys a wonderful attack.

9...♕g6 10 ♖e1

This is better then 10 ♘bd2?! ♘ge7 11 ♖e1 0-0 12 ♘e4 d5 13 exd6 cxd6 14 ♗xd3 d5 15 ♘c5 ♕h5 16 ♗g5 ♘g6 17 ♗d2 ♗b6 18 ♕b5 ♗g4 19 ♘g5 h6 20 h3 hxg5 21 hxg4 ♕xg4 22 ♗e2 ♕f5 23 ♗d3 ♕f6 and Black had a big advantage in S.Conquest-M.Narciso Dublan, Pamplona 2001. Now why would anybody try to improve on one of the greatest games

ever? Well, if you did not look, would you remember the exact moves of this game?

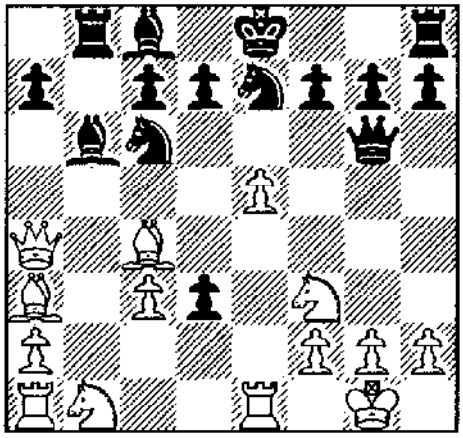
10...♘ge7

After 10...♗b6 White responds 11 ♕d1! ♘h6 12 ♗xd3 ♕h5 13 h3 with an initiative according to Kasparov.

11 ♗a3 b5?

The extra move does little good for Black – in the coming play the white queen seems better placed at a4 anyway. Instead, after 11...0-0 12 ♕d1 White would also have a strong initiative, but 11...d5! is interesting: 12 exd6 cxd6 13 ♖d1 ♗g4 14 ♗xd3 ♕f6 15 ♗e4 with an unclear game ahead.

12 ♕xb5 ♖b8 13 ♕a4 ♗b6



14 ♘bd2 ♗b7 15 ♘e4 ♕f5 16 ♗xd3 ♕h5 17 ♘f6+!??

The beginning of one of the most beautiful combinations in chess history. Nevertheless, it is also entering completely unnecessary complications. White could do much better with simple play: 17 ♘g3 ♕h6 18 ♗c1! ♕e6 19 ♗c4 ♘d5 20 ♘g5 ♘xc3 (or 20...♕g4 21 ♖e4 and wins) 21 ♕b3 ♕e7 22 ♘f5 ♘d4 23 ♘xg7+ ♔f8 24 ♕xc3 ♔xg7 25 ♕g3 ♔f8 26 ♘xf7 and White wins easily.

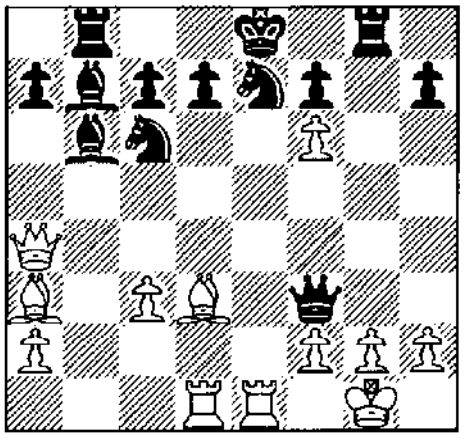
17...gxf6 18 exf6 ♖g8 19 ♖ad1!?

19 ♗e4! was Emanuel Lasker's recommendation, after which the position is rather unclear. Again Anderssen seems to be playing towards his combination, and Black helpfully takes whatever is on offer. Some people do not know that a lot of these famous old games were friendly games, played between the rounds of a tournament, and that the defence was therefore less proactive, more willing to see whatever the sacrificing player was up to on the board, than in advance in the head.

19...♕xf3?

Better was 19...♖g4! (Lipke) 20 ♖e4!? ♖xe4 21 ♕xe4 d6 22 ♖e1 ♕g6 and Black should hold the position according to Kasparov.

Now White plays his famous combination:



20 ♖xe7+! ♘xe7

If 20...♔d8 21 ♖xd7+! ♔c8 22 ♖d8+ ♔xd8 (if 22...♘xd8 23 ♕d7+! leads to mate as in the game) 23 ♗e2+ ♘d4 24 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 25 g3 ♗xd1 26 ♕xd1 and White has a winning endgame.

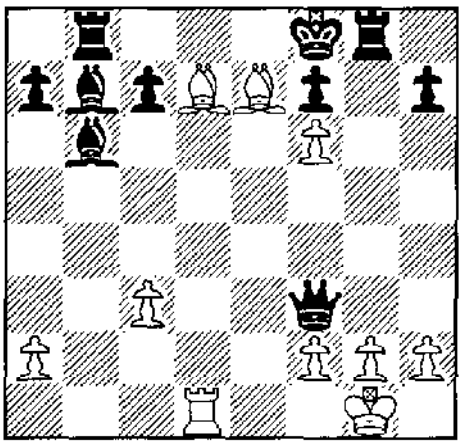
21 ♕xd7+!! ♔xd7 22 ♗f5+ ♔e8

Or 22...♔c6 23 ♗d7 mate.

23 ♗d7+ ♔f8

23...♔d8 24 ♗xe7 mate.

24 ♗xe7 mate

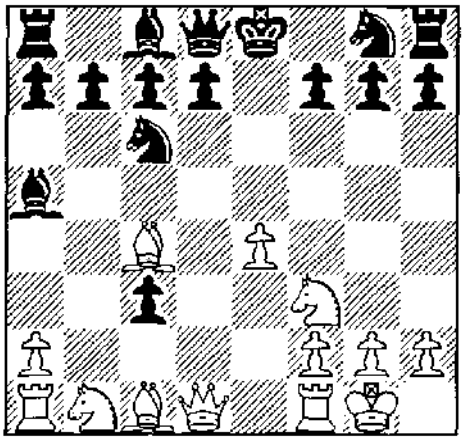


Game 43

W.De Boer-J.Van der Kooij

Correspondence 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 dxc3?



Taking this pawn resembles the sin of gluttony.

8 ♕b3 ♕f6 9 e5 ♕g6 10 ♘xc3 ♘ge7

Black has some other experiences here, but they are not positive:

a) 10...♗b6 11 ♗a3 ♘a5 12 ♕a4 ♘xc4 13 ♕xc4 ♕e6 14 ♕h4 ♘c7 15 ♘g5 ♘f5 16 ♘xe6 ♘xh4 17 ♘xg7+ ♔d8 18 ♘d5 ♘g6 19 ♖ad1 (Honsor-Takacs) and White maintains the pressure.

b) 10...b5 11 ♘xb5 ♖b8 12 ♕e3 ♘ge7 13 ♕e2 ♕h5 14 ♗a3 with a strong attack in I.Kolisch-A.Anderssen, London 1861.

c) 10...♘h6 11 ♘d5 0-0 12 ♗d3 ♕e6 13 ♘g5 ♕xe5 14 ♗f4 ♕e8 15 ♘xh7 and White was much better in F.Lee-J.Blackburne, London 1906.

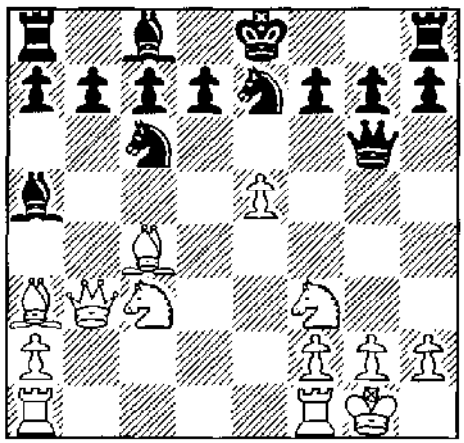
d) 10...♗xc3?! makes things even worse. After 11 ♕xc3 we could look at:

d1) 11...b6 12 ♗d3 ♕g4 13 e6! and White is much better.

d2) 11...♘d8 12 ♗e3 ♘h6 13 ♖fe1 b6 14 ♘h4 ♕g4 15 ♗xh6 ♖g8 16 ♗d3 gxh6 17 ♗xh7 ♖g5 18 ♖e4 with an attack.

d3) 11...♘ge7 12 ♘g5 ♘d8 13 ♖e1 h6 14 ♘e4 0-0 15 ♗a3 ♖e8 16 ♘f6+ gxf6 17 exf6 ♘dc6 18 fxe7 with a clear advantage.

11 ♗a3!



This is a critical position for understanding the Evans Gambit. Black is in serious trouble.

11...0-0 12 ♖ad1 ♖e8

After the sharp 12...b5 13 ♗d3 ♕g4 White has to occupy h3, a great square for the queen, with a pawn. But there are other ways to make life miserable for

Black: 14 h3 ♕e6 15 ♗xh7+ ♔h8 16 ♘d5 f6 (or 16...b4 17 ♗c1 ♘xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♘e7 19 ♗e4 ♗b7 20 ♘d4 ♗xd5 21 ♕g3 ♗xe4 22 ♘xe6 fxe6 23 ♕h4+ ♔g8 24 ♕xe4 and White is better) 17 ♗e4 b4 18 ♘xe7 ♕xb3 19 ♘g6+ ♔g8 20 axb3 bxa3 21 ♗d5+ ♖f7 22 ♗xc6 ♖b8 23 e6 dxe6 24 ♖d8+ ♔h7 25 ♗e4 f5 26 ♘fh4 1-0 N.Urusov-A.Romashkevich, correspondence 1893.

13 ♗d3 ♕h5 14 ♘e4 ♘xe5 15 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 16 ♗b2 ♕e6 17 ♕b5 ♕b6

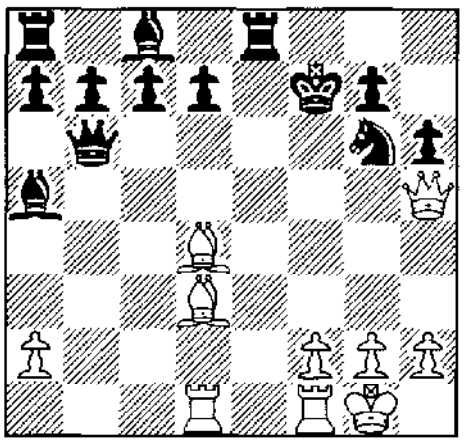
If instead 17...♗b6 18 ♕h5 h6 19 ♘g5 ♕xa2 20 ♗h7+ ♔f8 21 ♗b1 ♕c4 22 ♘h7+ ♔g8 23 ♕e5! wins, or 17...♘c6 18 ♘g5 ♕h6 19 ♗h7+ ♔f8 20 ♗e4 ♗b6 21 ♖fe1 with a very strong attack.

18 ♕h5 ♘g6

Or 18...♕xb2 19 ♘g5 ♘g6 20 ♕xh7+ ♔f8 21 ♗xg6 fxg6 22 ♕xg6 ♕xa2 23 ♖d4 and wins.

19 ♘g5 h6 20 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 21 ♗d4

21 ♕f5+ is less clear after 21...♔e7! 22 ♗xg7 d5.



21...c5

After 21...♕e6 22 ♗f5 ♕c6 23 ♖d3 or 21...♕c6 22 ♕xa5 ♔g8 23 ♖fe1 White is much better.

22 ♗xc5 ♕f6 23 ♗c4+ ♖e6

If 23...d5 24 ♖xd5 ♗c6 25 ♖d7+ ♔g8 26 ♗d4 wins.

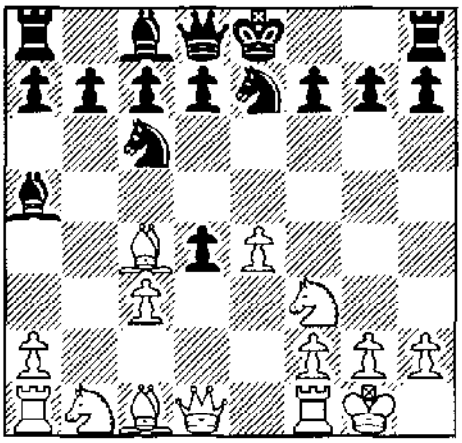
24 ♖d5 ♔g8 25 ♖f5 ♘f4 26 ♕g4 1-0

Game 44

A.Morozevich-M.Adams

Wijk aan Zee 2001

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 ♘ge7



Normally we would expect the knight to be at f6 in the Evans Gambit, but here White is threatening e4-e5 and Black would very much like to castle. So in comes 7...♘ge7!.

8 ♘g5

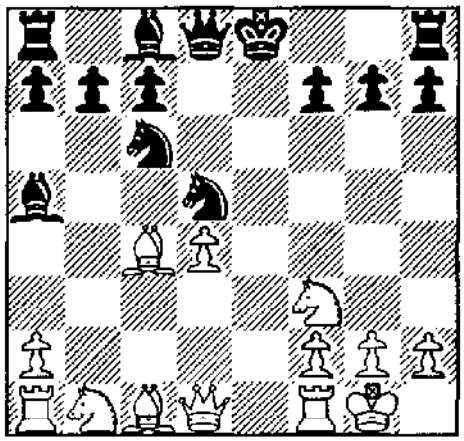
This kind of single horse action seems a little naïve in most positions we have covered, but here it is actually completely prudent. The main point is that 8...0-0 is now out of the question because of the double threat to h7 and f7 after 9 ♕h5!.

Instead:

a) 8 ♕b3?! is weaker: 8...0-0 9 cxd4 ♘g6 10 ♗e3 ♗b6. Here White should play 11 ♕b5!, when he has some compensation for the pawn; in some variations he is threatening ♕b5-h5 and ♘g5

with an attack. Compared with something like 11 ♕d1 d6 12 ♘g5 ♕f6 13 ♘c3 ♘ge7 14 ♗d3 g6 where Black is much better, White should count himself lucky.

b) 8 cxd4 seems unnatural because of the reply 8...d5! 9 cxd5 ♘xd5, and then:



b1) 10 ♕b3 ♗e6 11 ♕xb7 ♘db4 12 ♗b5 ♗d5! 13 ♘e5 ♖b8 14 ♗xc6+ (or 14 ♘xc6 ♖xb7 15 ♘xd8+ ♖xb5 16 ♘c3 ♘c2! 17 ♘xb5 ♘xa1) 14...♘xc6 15 ♕a6 ♖b6 16 ♕d3 0-0 and Black was better in the encounter K.Arakhamia Grant-S.Mannion, Grangemouth 2000.

b2) 10 ♗a3 ♗e6 11 ♗b5 (now if 11 ♕b3 ♕d7! is strong, D.Markosian-V.L.Ivanov, Moscow 1995) 11...♗b4 12 ♗xc6+ bxc6 13 ♗xb4 ♘xb4 14 ♕a4 ♕d6 15 ♘c3 0-0 16 ♘e4 and the position is equal according to Levenfish.

8...d5

Instead:

a) 8...0-0? was bad, as you probably remember, due to 9 ♕h5 h6 10 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 11 ♗xf7+ ♔h7 (or 11...♔f8 12 ♗b3) 12 cxd4 and White is just winning, e.g. 12...♗b6 13 ♗b2 ♘xd4 14 ♘d2 d6 15 ♘f3 ♘e2+ 16.♔h1 ♘f4 17 ♘g5+ ♔h8 18 ♕xh6 mate, M.Jolowicz-Glunz, Hamburg 1971.

b) 8...♘e5!? could be met by 9 ♘xf7!? ♘xf7 10 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 11 ♕h5+ ♘g6 12 ♕d5+ ♔f8 13 ♕xa5 d3 14 ♖d1 d6 15 ♖xd3 ♕e7 with equality. However, after the more dangerous 9 ♗b3, we have some things to ponder over:

b1) 9...0-0? 10 cxd4 ♘5g6 11 ♕h5 h6 12 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 13 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 14 ♕xa5 and White is winning.

b2) 9...f6?! 10 cxd4 fxg5 11 dxe5 ♘c6 (after 11...g6? 12 ♗xg5 h5 13 ♗f6 ♖f8 14 ♗g7 and White was winning in M.Jaros-P.Hubner, Svetla nad Sazavou 1999) 12 ♕h5+ g6 13 ♕xg5 ♕xg5 14 ♗xg5 with a clear advantage.

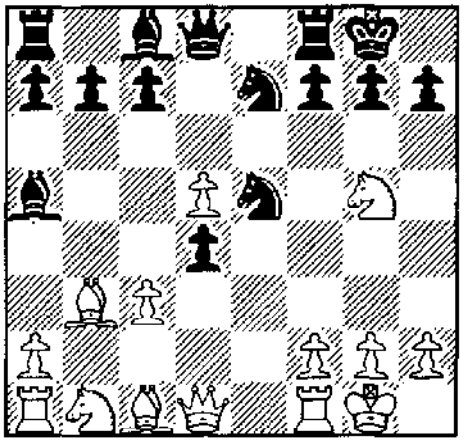
b3) 9...d5! is correct, and if 10 cxd4 ♘g4!? with unclear play.

9 exd5 ♘e5 10 ♗b3

Weak is 10 ♕xd4?! f6 11 ♖c1 ♗b6 12 ♕e4 ♗f5 13 ♕f4 ♕d7 14 ♘e6 ♗xe6 15 dxe6 ♕c6 16 ♖xe5 ♘g6 17 ♗b5 ♘xf4 18 ♗xc6+ bxc6 19 ♖e4 0-0-0 and Black is slightly better, J.Novosak-J.Sosna, Czech Team Championship 1996. White needs to keep some kind of momentum.

10...0-0

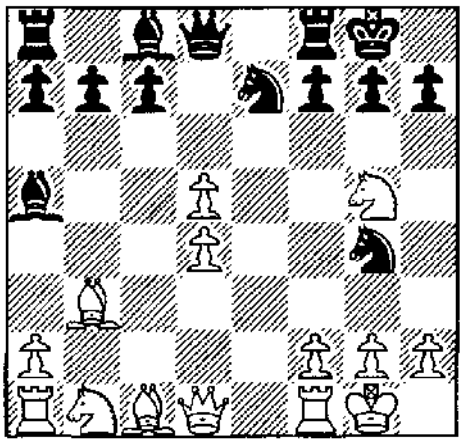
For the greedy 10...dxc3?! see the next game.



11 cxd4

After 11 ♘xh7 ♔xh7 12 ♕h5+ ♔g8 13 ♕xe5 White probably has enough compensation to draw, but no more than that, e.g. 13...♘f5 14 ♗d2 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 16 ♖e1 ♗c7 17 ♕e4 ♕f6 18 ♗f4 ½-½ N.Short-M.Adams, Sarajevo 2000.

11...♘g4



12 ♕f3

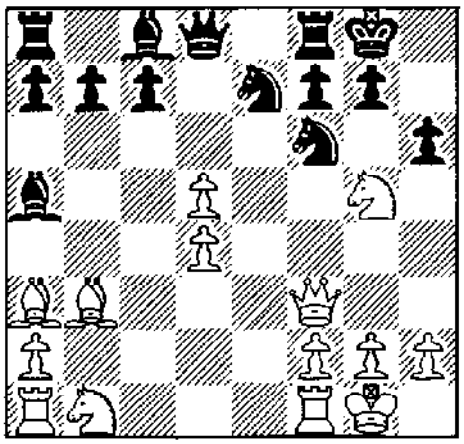
Maybe with 11 cxd4 White has already lost the initiative? At least you should know that 12 ♗a3 can be met by 12...♘xd5! 13 ♗xf8 ♕xg5 14 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 15 ♗a3 ♗d7 16 ♘d2 ♖e8, and with a pawn for the exchange and a fully mobilised army, Black is doing quite well in A.Anderssen-S.Mieses, Breslau match 1867.

12...♘f6!?

In D.Bronstein-A.Ivanov, Maidstone 1994, play continued 12...♕d6 13 ♗f4 ♕f6 14 ♘c3 when White offered a draw – possibly before his opponent had the chance to notice 14...♘xh2! and Black is much better after both 15 ♔xh2 ♗xc3 16 ♖ac1 ♗xd4 and 15 ♕h5 ♗f5. Instead 14 ♘e4! with unclear play was the way to continue for White, though I am uncertain whether there is any real chance for an advantage here.

Anyway, the text move would appear to present White with even more problems.

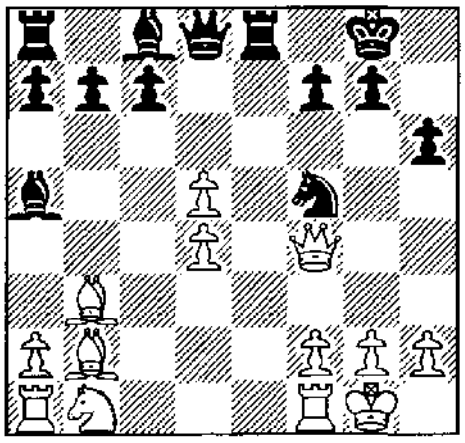
13 ♗a3 h6



14 ♘e4

If 14 ♕e2 ♘fxd5 15 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 16 ♗xf8 ♕xg5 17 ♗c5 ♘f4 18 ♕e8+ ♔h7 19 ♕e4+ ♗f5 20 ♕f3 ♗d3 Black is much better.

14...♘xe4 15 ♕xe4 ♖e8 16 ♗b2 ♘f5 17 ♕f4



17...♗b4 18 ♘a3 ♗d6 19 ♕d2 ♕h4 20 g3 ♕h3 21 ♘c4 b5!

Better than 21...♘h4 22 f4 ♗g4 23 ♘e5 ♗xe5 24 dxe5 ♘f3+ 25 ♖xf3 ♗xf3 26 e6 f6 27 ♖e1 when White would have strong counterplay.

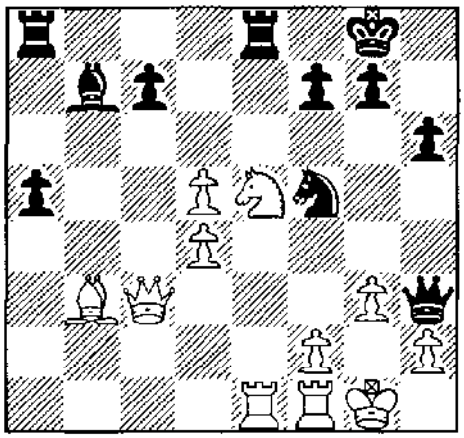
22 ♘\e5?

A bad mistake. After the line 22 ♘xd6 cxd6 23 ♖ac1 ♗b7 24 ♖c7 ♖c7 25 ♖fc1 White should be able to hold the position.

22...♗b7 23 ♖ae1 a5! 24 a3 b4! 25 axb4?

The alternative 25 f3 would have offered more resistance, though Black is still much better after 25...bxa3 26 ♗c3 ♗a6 27 ♖f2 ♖ab8.

25...♗xb4 26 ♗c3 ♗xc3 27 ♕xc3



27...♘h4! 0-1

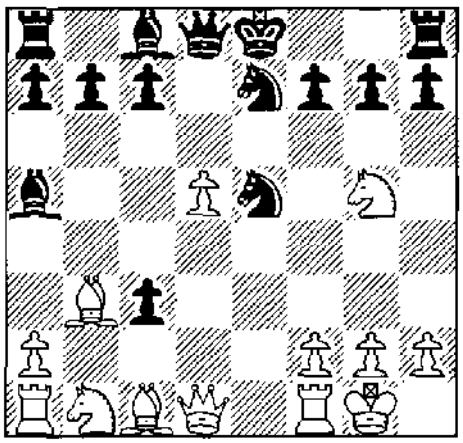
Game 45

D.Bronstein -Comp. Heuristic Alpha

The Hague 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 ♘ge7 8 ♘g5 d5 9 exd5 ♘e5 10 ♗b3 dxc3?!

Taking the pawn is the most principled continuation, but an extremely risky one. It might be compared to dancing through a minefield with your eyes closed. It can be successful, of course, but only in theory. In practice, you can expect to see fireworks erupt all over your position.



11 ♕e2 f6

After 11...h6 12 ♕xe5 (not 12 ♘e6? fxe6 13 ♕xe5 ♕d6 14 ♕xg7 ♖g8 15 ♕xh6 exd5 16 ♕xd6 cxd6 and Black was much better in B.Blankenberg-W.Hort, correspondence 2001) 12...f6 (if 12...hxg5 13 ♕xg7 ♖g8 14 ♕d4 c2 15 ♘c3 ♗f5 16 ♗a3 with a clear advantage) 13 ♕g3 hxg5 14 ♗a3 c2 15 ♘c3 White has a dangerous initiative.

12 ♘e4

12 ♗a3!? is also interesting, when we could imagine:

a) 12...♗g4 13 f3 ♗f5 14 ♘e4 ♗xe4 15 ♕xe4 ♕d7? (15...c2 was a better defence) 16 f4 ♘5g6 17 d6 cxd6 18 ♗a4 b5 19 ♕xa8+ ♔f7 20 ♕f3 bxa4 21 ♘xc3 ♖c8 22 ♘e4 with a clear advantage to White in R.Ovetchkin-A.Lastin, Russian Championship 2003.

b) 12...c2!? 13 ♘d2! ♗xd2 14 ♕xd2 fxg5 15 ♖fe1 ♘7g6 16 ♗b2 ♕f6 17 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 18 ♖xe5+ ♕xe5 19 ♖e1 ♕xe1+ 20 ♕xe1+ ♔d8 21 ♗xc2 ♖e8 22 ♕c3 h6 23 h4 and White has some initiative, though a draw is the most logic result.

12...♘xd5

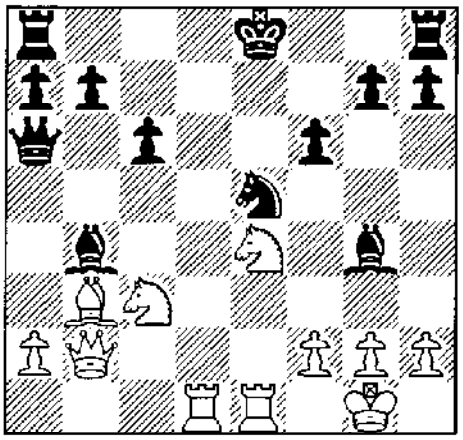
After 12...a6 13 ♖d1 ♗g4 14 f3 ♗f5 15

♘bxc3 ♗xc3 16 ♘xc3 White has excellent play for the pawn.

13 ♗a3 c6

Another game saw 13...c2 14 ♕xc2 ♘b4 15 ♕e2? ♗g4 16 f3 ♕d4+ 17 ♔h1 ♗d7 18 ♘bd2 0-0-0 19 ♖ad1 ♕b6 20 ♘c4 ♘xc4 21 ♗xc4 ♖he8 and Black was much better in B.Boschma-C.Van Wieringen, correspondence 1999.

White should have preferred 15 ♗xb4, when we could imagine play continuing 15...♗xb4 16 ♘bc3 ♕d3 17 ♕b2 c6 18 ♖ad1 ♕a6 19 ♖fe1 ♗g4



and now 20 ♘xf6+! gxf6 21 ♘e4 ♗xd1 22 ♘xf6+ ♔d8 (not 22...♔f8? 23 ♘d7+! ♔e8 24 ♕xe5+ and White wins) 23 ♖xd1+ ♘d3 24 ♕d4+ ♔c7 25 ♖xd3 ♕a3 (not 25...♖ad8? 26 ♕e5+ ♗d6? 27 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 28 ♕e7+ and White wins, or 26...♔b6 27 ♘d7+ ♖xd7 28 ♖xd7 with a deadly attack) 26 ♗g8! ♕c1+ 27 ♖d1 ♕g5 28 h4 ♕f5 29 ♘d5+!? (29 ♗xh7 is also promising) 29...cxd5 30 ♕xh8 ♖f8 31 ♕xh7+ ♕xh7 32 ♗xh7 and White has good winning chances despite the opposite-coloured bishops.

14 ♘d6+?!

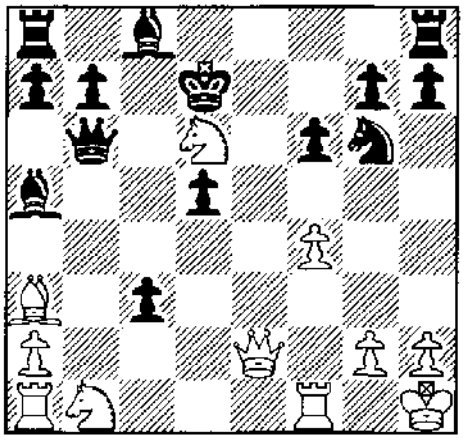
I am ready to bet here that the knight is singing the pop hit 'No Limit' in a very dubious falsetto (just imagine a horse singing!).

Better was 14 f4 ♗g4 (if 14...♗b6+ 15 ♔h1 ♗g4 16 ♕e1 c2 17 fxe5 cxb1♕ 18 ♖xb1 with a clear advantage) 15 ♕e1 c2 16 ♘bd2 ♕b6+ 17 ♔h1 ♘d3 18 ♘d6+ ♔d7 19 ♕g3 and White's attack is pretty strong.

14...♔d7 15 f4 ♘g6 16 ♗xd5! ♕b6+

Not 16...cxd5? 17 ♕b5+ and White wins.

17 ♔h1 cxd5



18 ♘xc3!!

White rightly puts time before material; there are limits to how much you can hesitate when it comes to sacrificing a inactive little pony.

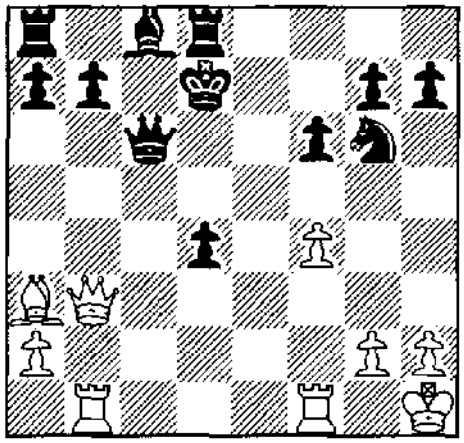
18...♗xc3 19 ♖ab1 ♕c6

After 19...♕a6 20 ♘b5 ♗a5 21 ♖bd1 ♕e6 22 ♕f3 ♘e7 23 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 24 ♕a3+ ♔f7 25 ♘d6+ ♔g8 26 f5 ♕e5 27 ♕xa5 White's superiority is overwhelming.

20 ♕d3 d4

If 20...♘e7 21 ♖fe1 d4 22 ♘b5 ♘d5 23 ♘xd4 and White wins according to Bronstein.

21 ♘b5 ♖d8 22 ♘xc3 ♕xc3 23 ♕b5+ ♕c6 24 ♕b3



24...♖h8??

This is a typical mistake for the older generation of computers. Straight talk would be to say that their circuits melt down from calculating too many variations. The move itself has no real idea (a purely human concept of course) behind it (other than to vacate d8 for the king), and White wins without any problems.

Some further comments on this position are, however, in order.

a) 24...♖e8? loses fairly straightforwardly to 25 ♖bc1 ♕e6 26 ♕a4+ ♔d8 27 ♕xd4+ ♗d7 28 f5 ♕e5 29 ♕xd7+!! ♔xd7 30 ♖fd1+ and White wins.

b) 24...♕e6! was the only move and should give Black a draw. Now White can continue:

b1) 25 ♕a4+ ♔c7 26 f5 ♕d7 27 ♕c4+ ♔b8! (stronger than 27...♕c6?! 28 ♕f7+ ♖d7 29 ♕g8 ♘e7 30 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 31 ♖bc1 h6 32 ♕d5 a5 33 ♖fd1 ♖d7 34 ♕e4 ♖a6 35 ♕f4+ ♖d6 36 ♕g3 ♗xf5 37 ♕xg7+ ♗d7 38 ♕xh6 with advantage to White, although Black still has good counterplay) 28 fxg6 hxg6 29 ♖bc1 (or 29 ♖fe1 ♕c7 30 ♕b3 b6 31 ♖e7 ♖d7 32 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 33 ♖c1 ♕e5, when the white attack is over and Black is clearly better) 29...a5! 30 ♖fe1 ♖a6 31 ♖e7 ♕c6 32 ♕d3 ♕d5 and Black has defended successfully. Now the hunter and the prey will change seats.

b2) 25 ♕b4! is much stronger, e.g. 25...a5 26 ♕a4+ ♕c6 27 ♕b3 (not 27 ♖b5? ♔e8 28 ♖e1+ ♗e6 29 ♖xb7 ♖d6 and White's attack is gone) 27...♕e6 28 ♕b5+ ♕c6 with a draw by repetition. Black cannot sidestep with 28...♔c7? as 29 ♖fc1+ ♔b8 30 ♕c5 wins for White.

25 ♖bc1 ♕e6 26 ♕c2 ♕b6 27 ♗c5 ♕c6 28 ♕b3 ♔d8 29 ♗xd4 ♕e4 30 ♕c3 ♗e6 31 ♖fe1 ♕d5 32 ♖cd1 ♔e8 33 ♗xf6 ♕xd1 34 ♖xd1 gxf6 35 ♕xf6

And White is winning.

35...♗f7 36 f5 ♖g8 37 ♕d6 ♗xa2 38 fxg6 ♖xg6 39 ♕d7+ ♔f8 40 ♕xh7 ♖g7 41 ♕h8+ ♗g8 42 ♖f1+ ♖f7 43 ♕h6+ ♔e8 44 ♖e1+ ♖e7 45 ♕h5+ ♔f8 46 ♕h6+ ♔e8 47 ♖f1 ♖f7 48 ♖d1 ♖h7 49 ♕d6 ♖e7 50 h4 ♗e6 51 ♕e5 1-0

Game 46

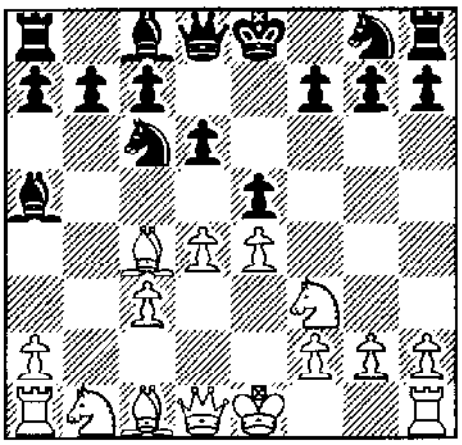
N.Short-R.Hübner

Dortmund 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 d6

The Alapin Variation, named after the famous Russian master, who published his analysis in the German magazine *Schachfreund* in 1898. Alapin was the founder of a fair amount of modern chess theory, including the Alapin Opening 1 e4 e5 2 ♘c2, which has more-or-less vanished from tournament play (even 2 ♕h5!? enjoys grandmaster support in 2005), while 1 e4 c5 2 c3 is usually un-

fairly referred to as the c3-Sicilian, when again it should carry his name.



7 ♕b3

Instead 7 0-0 would transpose to 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 in the previous chapter (see Games 39-41). In particular, 7...♗b6 leads to the Lasker Defence (Game 41), which White's 6 d4 move order was designed to avoid. To that end 7 ♕b3 is the most usual continuation here, though White has tried other moves as well:

a) 7 d5?! ♘ce7 8 ♕a4+ c6 9 dxc6 bxc6 10 ♕b3 is not too impressive after 10...f6! (F.Trumpy-H.Grob, correspondence 1841) 11 ♗f7+ ♔f8 12 ♗a3 d5 13 ♗xg8 ♖xg8 14 0-0 and, according to Matsukevitch, White has no real compensation for the pawn.

b) 7 ♕a4?! exd4 8 ♘xd4 ♘e7 9 ♗g5 ♕d7! 10 ♗b5 (if 10 ♗xe7 ♘xd4 11 ♕xa5 ♘c6 12 ♕g5 ♕xe7 13 ♕xg7 ♕xe4+ 14 ♗e2 ♕e5 with a clear advantage – Maroczy) 10...a6 11 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 12 ♘f5 f6 13 ♗e3 b5 14 ♕d1 ♕f7 15 0-0 ♗xf5 16 exf5 0-0 and Black is much better, G.Breyer-R.Reti, Baden 1914.

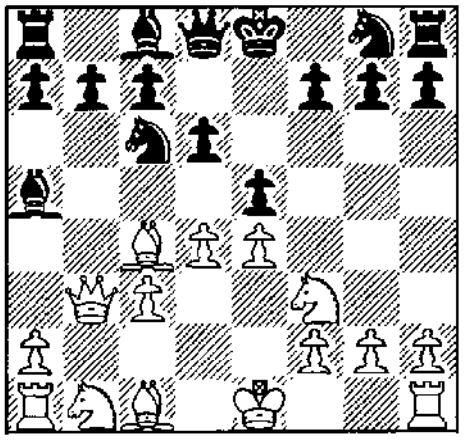
c) 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕b3 (if 8 ♕xd8+ ♘xd8 9 ♘xe5 ♗e6 and Black is at least equal) 8...♕e7 (8...♕d7!? is the main line in Games 47 and 48) 9 ♗g5?! (instead 9 0-0 ♗b6 transposes to 9...♕e7 in the notes to Game 41) 9...f6 10 ♗h4 (if 10 ♗xg8 fxg5 11 ♗xh7 ♕f6 and Black is clearly better) 10...♗b6 11 ♗xg8 ♘a5 12 ♕d5 c6 13 ♕d3 ♖xg8 and Black was close to winning already, Leita-A.Carrettoni, correspondence 1987.

d) 7 ♗g5!? is more interesting, and then:

d1) 7...♘f6 8 ♕a4 exd4 9 ♗d5 ♗xc3+ 10 ♘xc3 dxc3 11 ♗xf6 gxf6 12 ♗xc6+ bxc6 13 ♕xc6+ ♗d7 14 ♕xc3 with compensation for the pawn.

d2) 7...♕d7 8 0-0 h6 9 ♗h4 ♘ge7 10 d5 ♘b8 11 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 with unclear play, e.g. 12 a4 ♕g4 13 ♕c2 f5 14 ♖e1 and if 14...fxe4?! 15 ♘d4!.

d3) 7...f6 8 ♗e3! (not 8 ♕b3?! fxg5! 9 ♗xg8 ♕f6 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 0-0 ♗b6 and Black is better) 8...♘ge7 9 0-0 and White has compensation for the pawn.



7...♕d7

Here Black has many ways to make a fool of himself:

a) 7...♕f6? 8 d5 ♘d4 9 ♘xd4 exd4 10 ♕a4+ and White wins a piece.

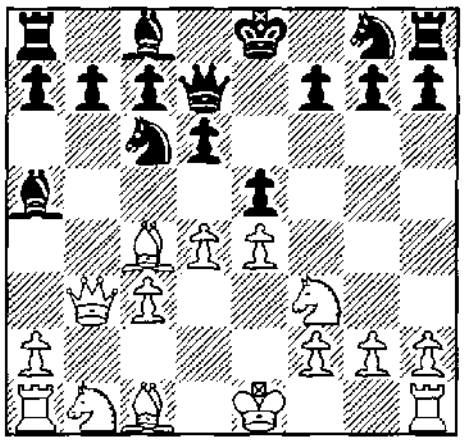
b) 7...♕e7?! 8 d5 ♘d4 9 ♘xd4 (9 ♗b5+!? ♔d8! is not so clear) 9...exd4 10

0-0 (if now 10 ♕a4+ ♔d8 11 ♕xa5 Black has 11...♕xe4+) 10...♗b6 11 ♗b2 with a strong initiative.

c) 7...♘h6?! 8 ♗xh6 gxh6 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 10 dxe5 ♕e7 11 ♗d5 ♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 13 ♕a3 ♗b6 14 ♘d2 and White is better, V.Ragozin-D.Bronstein, USSR Championship 1945.

d) 7...♘xd4?! 8 ♘xd4 exd4 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 10 0-0 ♕e7 11 ♗c4 ♘f6 12 cxd4 ♘xe4 13 ♕f3+ ♘f6 14 ♘c3 with a strong attack, A.R.Thomas-W.Unzicker, Hastings 1950/51.

e) 7...exd4?! 8 ♗xf7+ ♔e7? (8...♔f8!? is not so easily refuted) 9 e5! dxe5 10 0-0 ♗g4 11 ♖e1 with a crushing attack, C.Alexander-F.Yates, Cambridge 1932.



8 dxe5

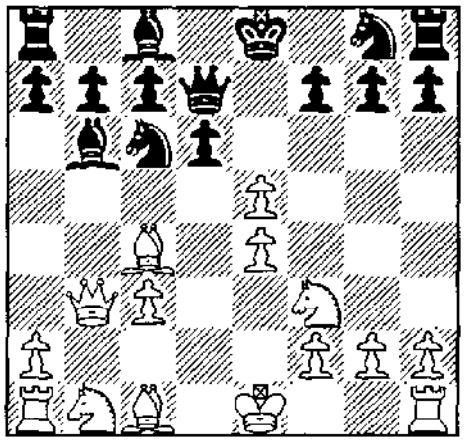
Almost always played, since the alternatives are only dangerous for White:

a) 8 a4 ♗b6 9 a5 ♘xa5 10 ♖xa5 ♗xa5 11 dxe5 ♘h6! and Black is certainly not worse.

b) 8 0-0 ♗b6! 9 ♗b5 (9 dxe5 transposes below) 9...a6 10 ♗a4 (or 10 ♗xc6 ♕xe6 11 dxe5 ♗c6!) 10...♗a7 11 ♘a3 (if 11 d5 b5 12 dxc6 ♕xc6) 11...♖b8! 12 d5 b5 13 ♘xb5 axb5 14 ♗xb5 ♖xb5 15 ♕xb5 ♘ce7 when Black is better, L.Ribeiro-C.Leite, Lisbon 1999.

8...♗b6!

The most testing move, planning ...♘a5 to remove the dangerous light-squared bishop. The alternative, 8...dxe5, is seen in the next two games.



9 ♘bd2

Other moves seem weaker:

a) 9 ♕c2?! (just misplacing the queen) 9...dxe5! 10 ♗a3 ♘ge7 11 ♘bd2 0-0 12 ♗b3 ♔h8 13 0-0 f6 and Black is better, V.Ragozin-V.Mikenas, Leningrad 1956.

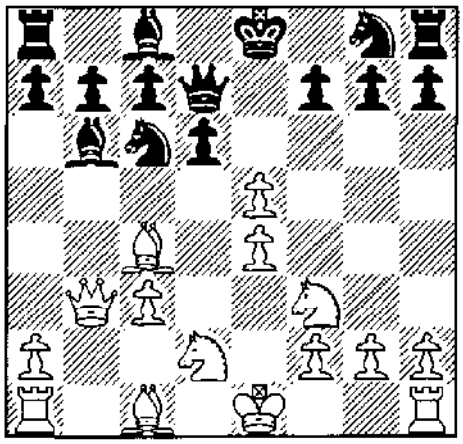
b) 9 0-0?! ♘a5! (9...dxe5 would transpose to Game 47) 10 ♕b4 ♘xc4 11 ♕xe4 dxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♕e6 13 ♕a4+ c6 with a slight advantage to Black, K.Kalashnikov-A.Lunev, St. Petersburg 2000.

c) 9 exd6?! ♘a5 10 ♕b5 ♘xc4 11 ♕xc4 ♕xd6 12 ♗a3 ♗e6 and Black is better again, E.Mnatsakanian-A.Korelov, USSR Championship 1962.

d) 9 ♗b5!? is playable, but rather dull, e.g. 9...a6 10 ♗a4 (or 10 ♕a4 ♖b8) 10...♗c5 11 c4 ♘ge7 12 ♘c3 0-0 13 0-0 dxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♕d6 15 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 with a level position in J.Brenninkmeijer-M.Kuijf, Groningen 1993.

So, after 9 ♘bd2 we have the key to posi-

tion in the 8...♗b6 variation.



9...♘a5

The only consistent move. Instead 9...dxc5 10 ♗a3 transposes to Game 48, while after 9...♘h6?! 10 0-0 0-0 11 exd6 ♕xd6 12 ♗d5 ♕g6 13 ♘c4 ♗h3 14 ♘g5 ♗d7 15 a4 ♖ab8 16 ♘xb6 axb6 17 f4 White was better in E.Sveshnikov-Y.Meister, Russian Championship 2000.

10 ♕b4

10 ♕c2 is the main alternative:

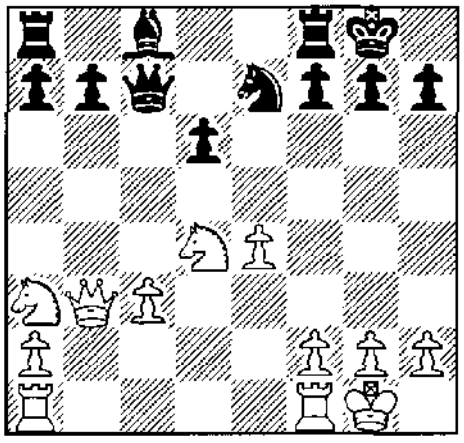
a) 10...♘h6 11 0-0 0-0 12 h3 (12 exd6! cxd6 13 h3 was more accurate) 12...♖e8 13 ♖d1 dxe5 (leading to an interesting drawing variation; if 13...♘c6?! 14 ♗b5! a6 15 ♗a4 ♗a7 16 exd6 cxd6 17 ♘c4 b5 18 ♘xd6 bxa4 19 ♘xe8 ♕xe8 20 ♗xh6 gxh6 21 ♕xa4 and White is much better) 14 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 15 ♘f3 ♘xc4! 16 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 17 ♕d3 ♗e6 18 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 19 ♕g3 ♘hg4! 20 hxg4 ♘xg4 21 ♗e3 ♘xe3 22 fxe3 ♖d8 and the fortress cannot be breached, I.Kurnosov-A.Lastin, Russian Championship 2003.

b) 10...♘xc4 11 ♘xc4 d5! is the standard equaliser; for example, after 12 ♘xb6 (instead 12 exd5 ♕xd5 13 ♕x4+ ♗d7 14 ♘xb6 cxb6 and 12 ♗g5!? h6 13 ♗h4 ♕g4 14 0-0-0 g5 are pretty much level) 12...axb6 13 0-0 dxe4 14 ♕xc4 ♕g4 15 ♕e3 ♘e7 16 ♘d4 0-0 17 h3 ♕g6 18 f4 c5 White is the only one with problems, Y.Estrin-V.Palciauskas, correspondence 1978.

10...♘xc4 11 ♘xc4 ♗c5 12 ♕b3 ♘e7

Or 12...♕c6 13 ♘g5 ♘h6 14 0-0 0-0 15 exd6 cxd6 16 ♘e3 with an unclear game.

13 0-0 0-0 14 exd6 cxd6 15 ♗a3 ♕c7 16 ♘d4 ♗xa3 17 ♘xa3



17...♘c6?!

Better was 17...a6 18 ♖ab1 ♕c5 with equality.

Now White has the chance to create problems for Black by 18 ♘ab5 ♕b6 19 ♕d5. Instead he played...

18 ♖fe1?! ♕e7 19 ♖ab1 ♘e5 20 c4 a6 21 ♘ac2 ♗e6 22 ♘e3 b5 23 ♘d5?

Here 23 ♘xe6 fxe6 24 cxb5 axb5 was necessary, e.g. 25 ♖ed1 ♖a4 26 f3 ♘f7 with equality.

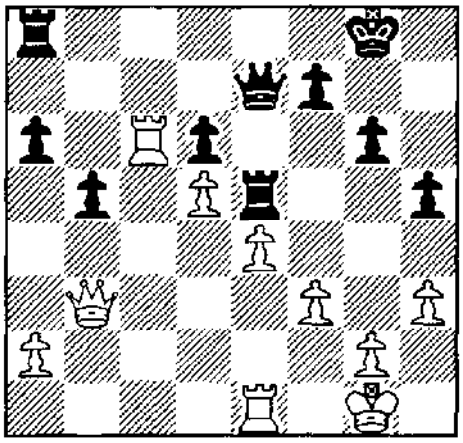
23...♗xd5?

Black plays to White's tune. Instead after 23...♕a7 24 ♘f5 ♗xf5 25 cxf5 bxc4 26 ♕g3 f6 Black is much better.

24 cxd5 ♕f6 25 ♘c6 ♖fe8 26 ♖bc1

Now it is White who is slightly better.

26...g6 27 h3 h5 28 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 29 ♖c6 ♕e7 30 f3



30...g5?!

Black was apparently running short of time. Here 30...f5! was better, and after 31 ♕b4 fxc4 32 fxe4 ♖e8 33 ♕xd6 ♕xd6 34 ♖xd6 ♔g7 35 ♖xa6 ♖xc4 36 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 Black should be able to save the game according to Short.

31 ♕b4 ♖d8 32 ♖xa6 f5 33 ♕a5 fxe4 34 ♖a7 ♖d7 35 ♖xd7 ♕xd7 36 fxe4 g4 37 hxg4 hxg4 38 ♕c3?

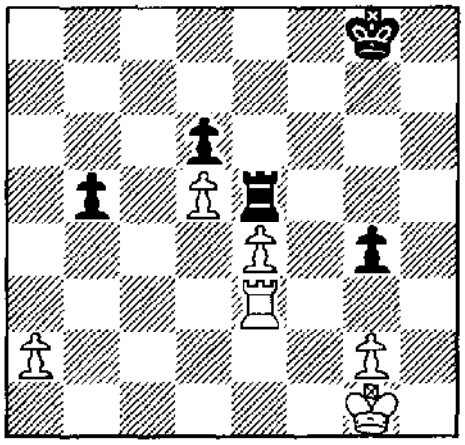
After the strong 38 ♖e2 ♕e7 39 ♔f2! Black is in trouble, e.g. 39...♕g5 (or 39...♕h4+ 40 ♔e3 ♕e7 41 ♔d3) 40 ♔g3 ♖e8 41 e5! ♖xe5 42 ♕xb5 ♖xe2 43 ♕xe2 ♕xd5 44 ♕xg4+ with good winning chances.

38...♕a7+ 39 ♕e3 ♕xe3+?

This is a time trouble mistake for certain. Black could have taken the pawn: 39...♕xa2 since if 40 ♖f1 ♕a8 41 ♕h6 ♕a7+ 42 ♔h2 ♕g7 defends.

40 ♖xe3

The rook endgame is winning for White. The black rook is not very well placed, so White has time to bring his king to the best square f4. Note that Black cannot go to e5 with his king, as ♖f2 with the idea of ♖f5 mate would be decisive.



40...♔f7 41 ♔f2 ♔f6 42 ♖e2 ♖e8 43 ♔e3 g3 44 ♔f4 ♖a8 45 ♖b2 ♖a5 46 a3 ♖xa3 47 ♖xb5 ♖a2 48 ♖b6 ♖xg2 49 ♖xd6+ ♔f7 50 ♔f3 ♖g1 51 ♖e6 1-0

Game 47

S.B.Hansen-H.Stefansson

Copenhagen 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 d6 7 ♕b3 ♕d7 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 0-0

This move is more popular than 9 ♗a3, which we will look at in the next game.

9...♗b6 10 ♖d1

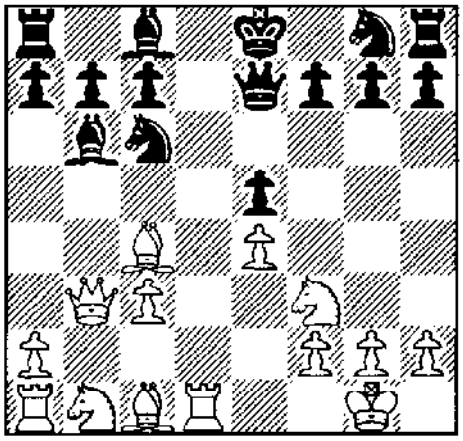
The most obvious and best move. The alternatives are not dangerous:

a) 10 ♗b5 regains the pawn, but nothing more. After 10...♕e6 11 ♕xe6+ ♗xe6 12 ♗xc6+ bxc6 13 ♘xe5 ♘e7 14 ♗a3 c5 15 ♘d2 f6 16 ♘ef3 0-0-0 Black's game was preferable in R.Duhrssen-P.Keres, correspondence 1935.

b) 10 ♗a3 ♘a5 11 ♘xe5!? ♘xb3 12

axb3 ♕e6 (not 12...♕d8?? 13 ♗xf7 mate) 13 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 14 ♘d2 a6 is just equal according to Euwe.

10...♕e7



11 a4?!

Black now has time to bring the dark-squared bishop back into the game. Therefore some alternatives seem to be required:

a) 11 ♖d5?! is no help after 11...♗c6! 12 ♕a4 (if 12 ♗b5?! a6 13 ♗a3 ♕f6 and White's attack has gone; if 14 ♗a4 ♘ge7 15 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 16 ♕c2 f6 17 ♗xc6+ bxc6 18 ♖d1 0-0 and Black is clearly better) 12...♗d7 13 ♕b3 ♘a5 (13...♗c6 repeats) 14 ♖xa5 ♗xa5 15 ♕xb7 ♖d8 16 ♗a3 ♕f6 17 ♕d5 ♗b6 18 ♕xe5+ ♕xe5 19 ♘xe5 ♘h6 and only Black has chances to win, e.g. 20 ♘d2 ♗a4 21 ♗d5 f6 22 ♘c6 ♗xc6 23 ♗xc6+ ♔f7 24 ♗d5+ ♔g6 25 ♘c4 ♘g4 and Black is better.

b) 11 ♗a3! ♕f6 12 ♗b5 seems to be strongest here, e.g. 12...♘ge7 13 ♘bd2 ♗e6 14 ♘c4 0-0 15 ♗xc6 bxc6 16 ♕a4 ♗xc4 17 ♕xc4 ♖fe8 18 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 19 ♖d3 and White has an edge, despite the pawn minus.

11...♗c5!

The bishop cleverly returns to fight for the a3-f8 diagonal. Other moves have been problematic for Black:

a) 11...♘a5?! 12 ♗xf7+ ♕xf7?? (12...♔f8 13 ♕a2 was forced) 13 ♖d8+ ♔e7 14 ♗g5+ ♘f6 15 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 16 ♖xh8 won the exchange in M.Zulfugarli-S.Dovliatov, Minsk 2000.

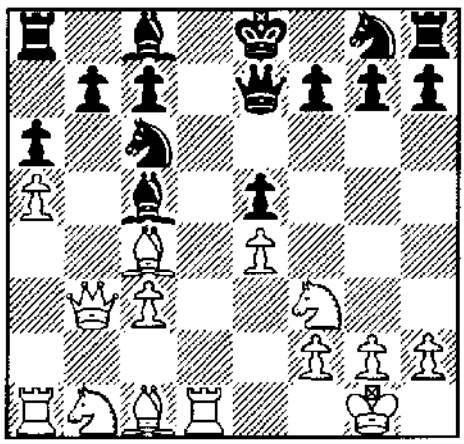
b) 11...♘h6 12 a5 ♗xa5 13 ♗a3 ♕f6 14 ♗b5 ♗d7 15 c4 and White has more than enough compensation for the pawns according to Keres, mainly because of the poor position of the bishop on a5.

c) 11...a5 seems natural, but gives White the tempo back, e.g. 12 ♗d5 ♗g4 13 ♖d3 0-0-0 14 ♗a3 ♕f6 15 ♘bd2 ♘ge7 16 c4 ♘xd5 17 cxd5 ♘d4 18 ♕c4 ♘e2+ 19 ♔f1 ♘f4 20 ♖b3 ♔b8 (G.Tiedt-A.Sickfeld, correspondence 1990) and now after 21 ♖ab1 White has a terrific attack.

d) 11...a6 12 ♗a3 ♕f6 13 a5 (or 13 ♗d5!? ♘ge7 14 ♘bd2 intending ♘c4, keeping up the pressure) 13...♗a7 14 ♗d5 ♘ge7 15 ♖a2 0-0 16 ♗xc6 bxc6 17 ♖ad2 with good compensation for the pawn according to Matsukevitch.

12 a5 a6

If 12...♘f6 13 a6! bxa6 14 ♗d5 with compensation.



13 ♗d5

If 13 ♗a3 ♗xa3 14 ♘xa3 ♘f6 15 ♗d5 0-0 16 ♗xc6 (or 16 ♘c4 ♗d7 17 ♕xb7 ♖fb8 18 ♕xc7 ♘e8 19 ♗xf7+ ♕xf7 20 ♕xd7 ♕xc4) 16...bxc6 17 ♕c4 (or 17 ♘c4 ♗e6) 17...♗g4 18 ♖d3 ♘d7 and Black's position is preferable.

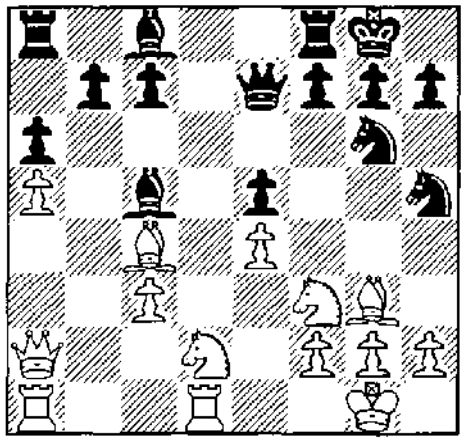
13...♘f6 14 ♗g5?!

Better was the unattractive 14 ♗a3 0-0 15 ♗xc6 bxc6 16 ♕c4 ♗xa3 17 ♘xa3 transposing to the previous note. Now White is quickly getting into deep trouble.

14...0-0 15 ♘bd2?!

Or 15 ♗xc6 bxc6 16 ♘bd2 h6 and Black is at least slightly better. Now Black retains the knight and brings it to the very useful f4-square.

15...♘d8! 16 ♕a2 ♘e6 17 ♗h4 ♘f4 18 ♗c4 ♘g6 19 ♗g3 ♘h5



White's initiative is dead and buried, while the extra black pawn is still alive and kicking.

20 ♖ab1 ♔h8 21 ♖e1 ♘hf4 22 ♘f1 ♕f6 23 ♘e3 b5 24 axb6 cxb6 25 ♕c2 b5 26 ♗a2 ♗d7?!

26...♗xc3 27 ♖xc3 ♗c6 28 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 was simpler, when Black is just technically winning.

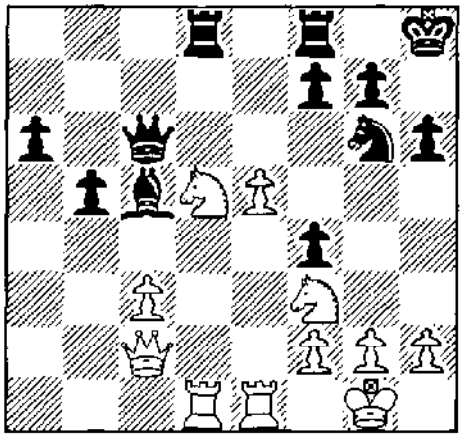
27 ♖bd1 ♗e6 28 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 29 ♘d5 ♖ad8 30 ♘g5 ♕e8 31 ♗xf4 exf4 32 e5?!

Better was 32 ♕e2 h6 33 ♕h5 ♔g8 34 ♘f3 ♕e6 35 ♘d4 and White has serious drawing chances.

32...h6 33 ♘f3

Also after 33 ♘e4 ♕c6 34 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 35 ♕e4 ♖fe8 36 ♘xf4 ♘xe5 Black is close to winning.

33...♕c6



34 ♕e4?

34 ♕a2 was a better try, though after 36...♕e6 35 ♖d2 ♖d7 36 ♘b4 ♖xd2 37 ♕xd2 ♖c8 Black should still win at the end of ends.

34...♘e7

Winning a piece.

35 ♘f6 gxf6 36 ♕xf4 ♘g8 37 ♘h4 ♖xd1 38 ♖xd1 ♕e6 39 exf6 ♖d8 40 ♖a1 ♕xf6 0-1

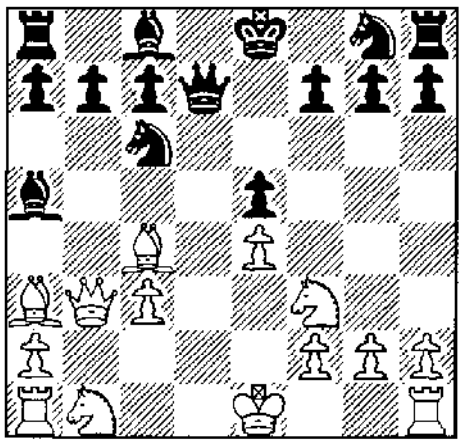
Game 48

A.Grosar-D.Gross

Buekfuerdo 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 d6 7 ♕b3 ♕d7 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 ♗a3!?

An intrusive move.



9...♗b6 10 ♘bd2 ♘a5

The alternative 10...♘h6?! would make Dr. Tarrasch turn in his grave... at least a little bit. Now White can consider:

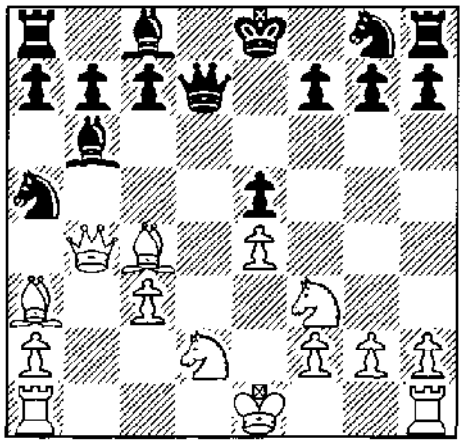
a) 11 ♖d1?! ♘a5 12 ♕b4 c5 13 ♕b1 0-0 14 ♘xe5 ♕e7 15 ♘df3 ♘xc4 16 ♘xc4 ♗g4 and Black is better. H.Hoeksema-J.Brenninkmeijer, Groningen 1993.

b) 11 0-0! ♘a5 12 ♕b4 ♘xc4 13 ♘xc4 f6 14 ♖ad1 ♕e6 (not 14...a5?! 15 ♕b3 ♕c6?! 16 ♘fxe5! fxe5 17 ♘xe5 ♗e6 18 c4 and White wins) 15 ♖d5 c5 (if 15...♗d7 16 ♘g5! or 15...♘f7 16 ♖fd1 and Black's position looks awful) 16.♕a4+ ♗d7 17.♖xd7 ♕xd7 18.♘xb6 ♕xa4 19.♘xa4 b6 20.♖d1 ♖d8 21.♖xd8+ ♔xd8 22.c4 ♘f7 23.♘c3 and White was clearly better, P.Rodriguez-L.Valdes, Cuba 1990.

c) 11 ♗b5!? f6 12 0-0-0!, followed by 13 ♘c4, is also very dangerous for Black.

11 ♕b4

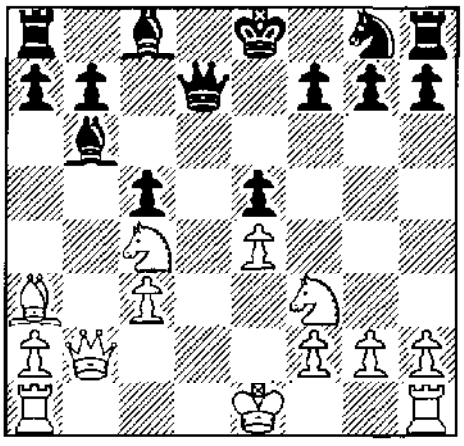
An interesting option is 11 ♘xe5!? ♘xb3 12 axb3! (the black queen is not a hare, she will not run away) 12...♗xf2+ (12...♘f6 is possibly better, but not 12...♕d8?? 13 ♗xf7 mate again) 13 ♔c2 ♗h4 (or 13...♗b6 14 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 15 ♘f3 with compensation) 14 ♘df3 ♗f6 15 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 16 e5 ♗e7 17 ♘d4 ♗xa3 18 ♖xa3 ♔e7 19 b4 with excellent compensation for the pawn in Y.Estrin-M.Skrovina, correspondence 1960)



11...c5!?

Black can defend his colours more easily by 11...♕e7! 12 ♕b5+ (if 12 ♕b2 ♕f6 or 12 ♘xe5 ♘xc4 13 ♘dxc4 ♕xb4 14 cxb4 ♗e6) 12...♗d7 13 ♗xe7 ♗xb5 14 ♗xb5+ ♔xe7 15 ♘xe5 c6 with equality.

12 ♕b2 ♘xc4 13 ♘xc4

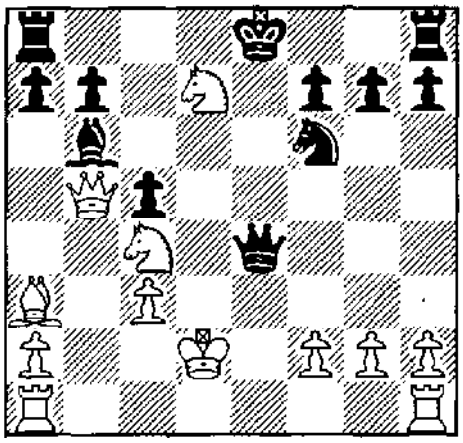


13...♕e6?

The beginning of a truly horrible game for Black. 13...♕d3? would be even worse, due to 14 ♘fxe5 ♕xe4+ 15 ♔f1 ♕d5 16 ♕b3 and Black is in big trouble.

But after simply 13...f6 14 ♖d1 ♕c6 15 ♘d6+ ♔e7 16 0-0 (or 16 c4 ♗e6) 16...♘h6 17 c4 ♘f7 18 ♘xc8+ ♖axc8 19 ♖d5 ♖hd8 White has nothing much to show for the pawn, L.Christiansen-H.Gretarsson, Yerevan Olympiad 1996.

14 ♘fxe5 ♘f6 15 ♕b5+ ♗d7 16 ♘xd7 ♕xe4+ 17 ♔d2



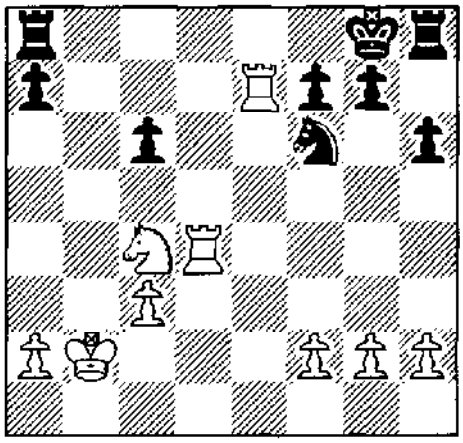
17...♕d5+

17...♕f4+ 18 ♔c2 ♕f5+ (if 18...♕xf2+ 19 ♔b3 ♘xd7 20 ♖he1+ just wins) 19 ♔b3 ♕xd7 20 ♖he1+ ♔f8 21 ♗xc5+ ♗xc5 22 ♕xc5+ ♔g8 23 ♖ad1 is similar to the game, and is much better for White, because of his superior mobilisation. After 23...♕g4 he would just cash in with 24 ♕xa7!.

18 ♔c2 ♕xd7 19 ♖he1+ ♔f8 20 ♗xc5+ ♗xc5 21 ♕xc5+ ♔g8 22 ♖ad1 ♕a4+

Compared with the 17...♕f4+ line above, Black has this extra check available, but it does not really help at all.

23 ♔b2 h6 24 ♖d4 ♕c6 25 ♕xc6 bxc6 26 ♖e7



Material is equal, but the position is just lost for Black.

26...♘d5 27 ♖d7 ♔h7

Or 27...♘b6 28 ♖c7 c5 29 ♘xb6 axb6 30 ♖dd7 and White wins – something for those who like to dominate.

28 ♖xf7 ♖hf8 29 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 30 ♖d2 ♖f7 31 ♘e5 ♖b7+ 32 ♔c2 ♖b6?!

32...♖c7, followed by ...g7-g5 and moving the king to the centre, might have offered a faint prayer of a draw.

33 ♖d4 ♖a6 34 a4 ♘b6 35 ♔b3 c5 36 ♖d6

Black's pieces are tragicomical. It's almost as if White has played the moves for both sides.

36...♖a5 37 ♖c6 h5 38 f4 ♔g8 39 g3 ♔h7 40 h3 ♔g8 41 g4 h4 42 g5 ♔f8 43 c4 ♔e7 44 f5 1-0

Summary

After 5...♗a5, 6 d4 is the most dangerous line for Black, but it does not seem to generate enough pressure to guarantee White an advantage. Black should be able to hold his own with both 6...d6 and the slightly more adventurous 6...cxd4 7 0-0 ♘ge7!.

Nevertheless, I believe that there is plenty of room for improvements on both sides, and that the Evans Gambit will prove a dangerous weapon into the 21st century. Especially when the opponents are not 2700+ super-grandmasters, and have not checked everything with a computer years in advance.

So, although the Spanish gives more promise of a theoretical advantage, the Evans Gambit gives better chances of actually winning the game. It is the opening for those players who hate to compromise.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 exd4

6...d6

7 0-0 – Chapter 8

7 ♕b3 ♕d7 8 dxe5 *(D)*

8...♗b6 – *Game 46*

8...dxe5

9 0-0 – *Game 47*

9 ♗a3 – *Game 48*

7 0-0 *(D)* **♘ge7**

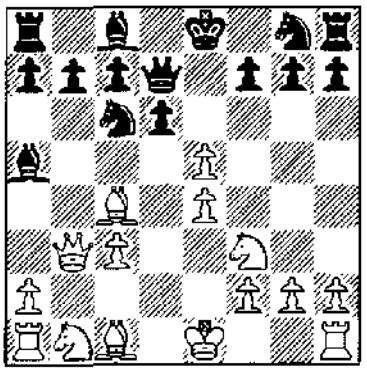
7...d3 – *Game 42*

7...dxc3 – *Game 43*

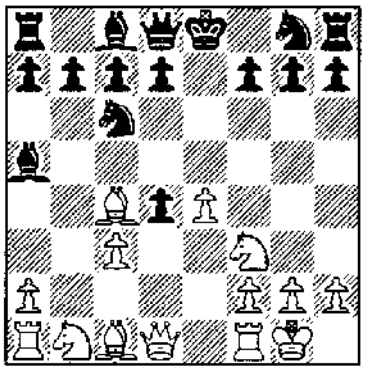
8 ♘g5 d5 9 exd5 ♘e5 10 ♗b3 *(D)*

10...0-0 – *Game 44*

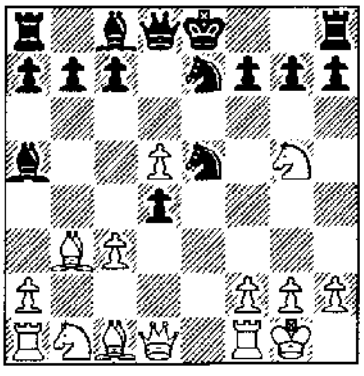
10...dxc3 – *Game 45*



8 dxe5

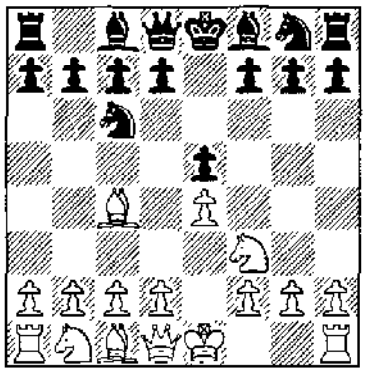


7 0-0



10 ♗b3

CHAPTER TEN



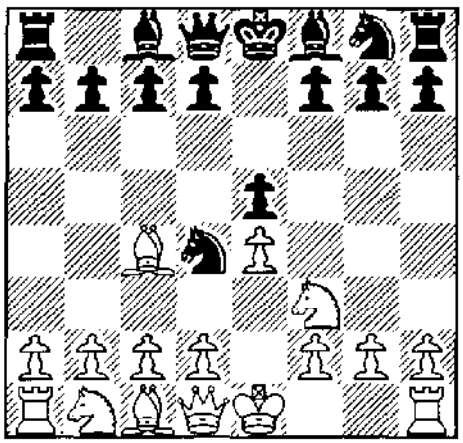
The Hungarian Defence and Other Sidelines

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4

As this is my second book on 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4, I cannot honestly pretend that no other moves than 3...♗e5 and 3...♘f6 exist. Hence this hidden chapter on Black's various third move alternatives, culminating in the respectable Hungarian Defence 3...♗e7.

Game 49
C.Luciani-M.Petrovic
Nova Gorica 2001

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘d4?



This line is nothing but a stupid trap... which has, however, been successful in many junior games.

4 ♘xd4!

The trap consists of 4 ♘xe5??, which loses to 4...♕g5! 5 ♘xf7 (5 ♗xf7+ ♔e7 6 0-0 is the best chance now, though Black is still close to winning after 6...♕xe5) 5...♕xg2 6 ♖f1 ♕xe4+ 7 ♗e2 ♘f3 mate. The number of people who missed the mate is astonishing – and I do not mean on the 4th move, but on the 7th! Still, when people take the queen with 7...♘xc2+, they usually win too.

4...exd4

Now we have a position from a dubious line in the Spanish with an extra move for White. Somehow this is not good news for Black.

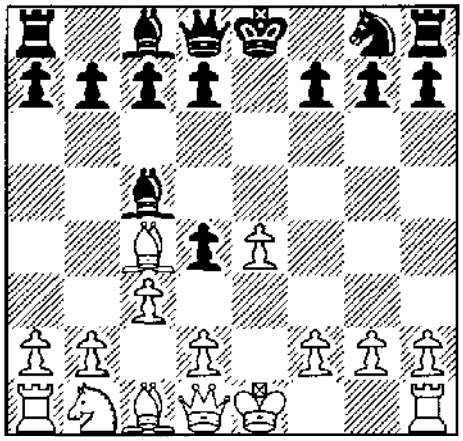
5 c3!

White has a lead in development and for this reason wants immediate confrontation.

5...♗c5?

Another mistake. It is not easy to guess that Black is rated 2210. Strongest was

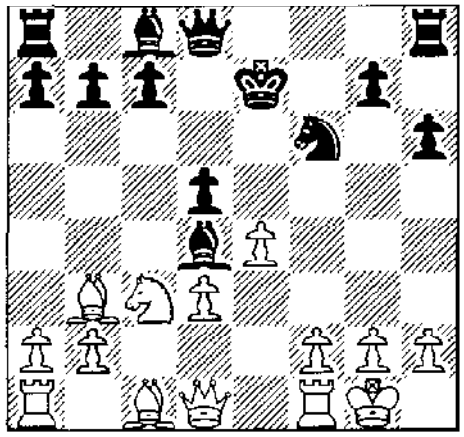
5...dxc3, though after 6 ♘xc3! c6 7 d4 ♘f6 8 ♕f3 White has a clear advantage, in space and development.



6 ♗xf7+! ♔e7

If 6...♔xf7 7 ♕h5+ and 8 ♕xc5 of course.

7 0-0 ♘f6 8 ♗b3 d5 9 d3 h6 10 cxd4 ♗xd4 11 ♘c3



11...♘g4?

Now what is this?

12 ♘xd5+ ♔e8 13 ♗f4 ♖f8?!

Another sacrifice.

14 ♘xc7+ ♔e7 15 ♕d2 ♖xf4

And another one.

16 ♕xf4 ♗e5 17 ♕f7+ ♔d6 18 ♘e8+ ♔c6 1-0

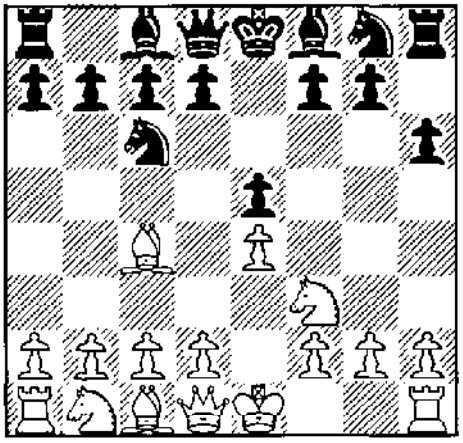
Mate is coming.

Game 50

P.Velicka-P.Blatny

Czech Team Championship 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 h6?!



Of course this is not very strong; at least it is not losing by force.

4 d4!

I will ignore other moves, as they hardly make sense.

4...exd4 5 ♘xd4

Again this move makes most sense. Others:

a) 5 c3 d3 6 0-0 d6 7 ♗xd3 ♗e7 8 c4 ♗f6 9 h3 ♘ge7 was P.Svidler-P.Blatny, Gausdal 1992, and I am not convinced that White is better at all here.

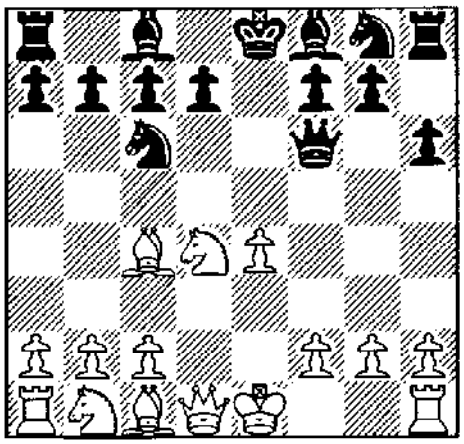
b) 5 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 6 0-0 ½-½ M.Munoz Sanchez-J.Guerrero, Guayaquil 2003, was probably some kind of joke, but I don't get it...

c) 5 0-0 d6 (5...♗e5 6 c3 d3 was also played by Blatny a few times, when White has a slight edge; to have real theory on this seems ridiculous) 6 ♘xd4 ♗e7 7 ♘c3 ♗f6 8 ♗e3 ♘ge7, C.Schlingensiepen-P.Blatny, Austrian Team Championship 1995, was of course worse for Black,

though the grandmaster still made a full point out of his favourite line.

5...♕f6

This is apparently Blatny's idea, but honestly...



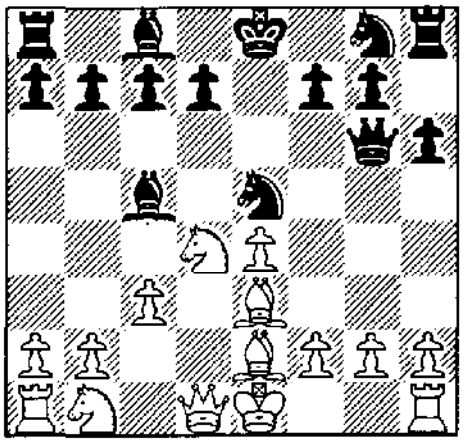
6 ♗e3

Natural, but missing the option to force an advantage. Here 6 ♘b5! looks crushing!

a) 6...♗c5 7 0-0 ♗b6 8 ♗e3 ♘e5 9 ♗b3 ♘e7 10 a4! and Black is suffering.

b) 6...♗b4+ is surprisingly hard to refute, but I will try all the same: 7 ♗d2 ♕e5 8 ♘1c3! (with the plan of 9 ♘d5) 8...♘d4 9 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 10 ♕e2 ♘f6 11 0-0-0 with a clear plus for White.

6...♗c5 7 c3 ♘e5 8 ♗e2 ♕g6?



I do not believe this. Instead 8...d6 is just a bit better for White.

9 0-0?

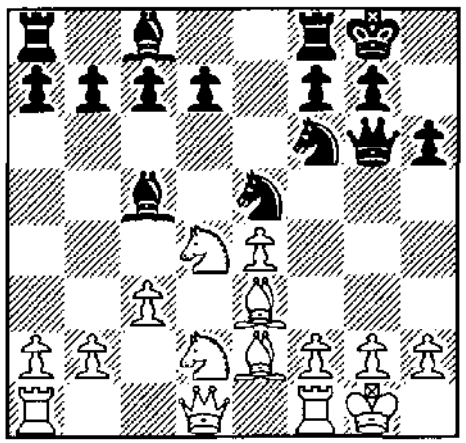
9 ♘b5! again seems critical: 9...♗xe3 (9...♕xg2 10 ♖f1! ♗xe3 11 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 12 ♘xa8 transposes) 10 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 11 ♘xa8 ♕xg2 12 ♖f1 ♗f4 13 ♘d2 ♘f6 14 ♕a4 should favour White, although these things are never entirely simple, e.g. 14...♘fg4 15 ♕a5+ b6 16 ♕xa7 ♘xh2 17 ♕xb6+ ♔e7 18 ♘c7 ♗xd2+ 19 ♔xd2 ♘xf1+ 20 ♖xf1 ♕xe4 21 f4! and White has a winning attack.

9...♘f6 10 ♘d2

10 ♘b5 ♗xe3 11 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 12 ♘xa8 ♗f4 13 ♕a4!? again looks very dubious for Black.

10...0-0?

Instead 10...d5?! 11 ♗f4 ♗d6 12 exd5 was also good for White in M.Senff-P.Blatny, Budapest 1999. But 10...d6! is probably not too bad anymore.



11 ♘f5!

White is already winning.

11...♗d6 12 f4 ♘eg4 13 ♗d4! h5 14 h3 ♘h6 15 ♘xh6+ ♕xh6 16 e5 ♘d5 17 exd6 ♘xf4 18 dxc7 ♕g5 19 ♖xf4

19 ♗f3!? ♘xh3+ 20 ♔h2 was obviously winning too.

19...♕xf4 20 ♗xh5 d5 21 ♕e2 ♕xc7 22 ♕e5 ♕xe5 23 ♗xe5 ♖e8 24 ♗d4 ♗f5 25 ♖f1 ♗g6 26 ♗xg6 fxg6 27 ♘f3 ♖e2 28 ♖f2 ♖e6 29 ♖d2 ♖ae8 30 ♔f1 b6 31 ♗f2 ♖d6 32 c4 ♖ed8 33 ♗g3 ♖6d7 34 ♗h4 1-0

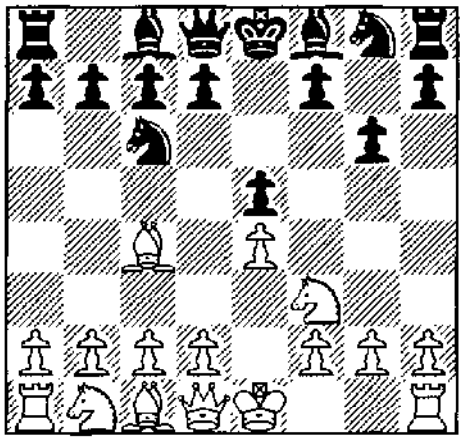
Game 51

J.Van der Wiel-U.Baumgartner

Holzoster am See 1981

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 g6

This semi-Philidor variation can also be reached with 3...d6, though there are some marginal differences, as can be seen from the notes.



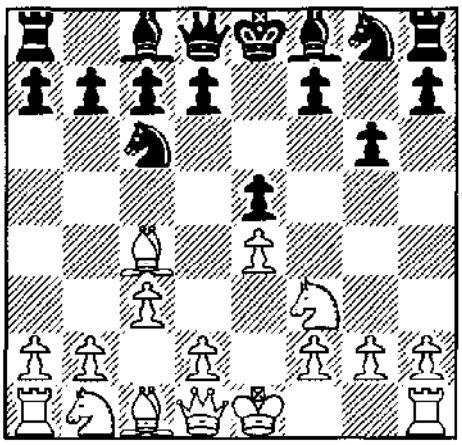
4 d3

In this game we shall look at the more quiet options. It does not seem logical to allow Black to slowly build up his position, as structurally he will be OK. Instead:

a) 4 d4! is considered in the next two games.

b) 4 0-0 seems a bit slow. I firmly believe that White's only chance for an advantage is to put pressure on the black centre immediately. After 4...♗g7 5 ♖e1 d6 6 c3 ♘f6 (the knight belongs here; e7 is for the queen now that no knight can come to d5) 7 h3 0-0 8 ♗b3 ♘a5 9 ♗c2 c5 10 d4 ♕c7 R.Basirov-S.Voitsekhovsky, Kstovo 1994 had reached a Spanish style position with approximately equal chances.

c) 4 c3 leaves us with two main lines:



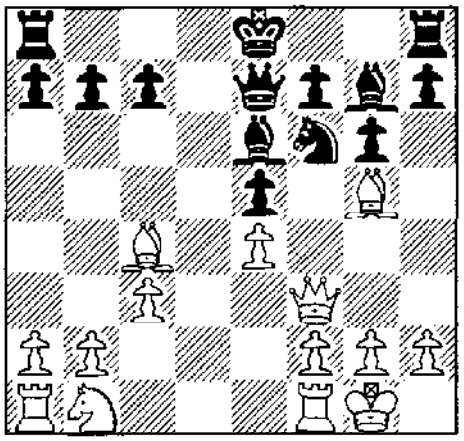
c1) 4...♗g7 5 d4 d6 6 0-0 (after 6 dxe5 dxe5 7 ♕b3 ♕e7 8 ♘g5 ♘d8 9 0-0 h6 10 ♘f3 ♘f6 11 ♖e1 0 0 Black had equalised and later won in A.Shchekachev-Ye Rongguang, Antwerp 1996) and now:

c11) 6...♘f6 (I cannot see any other satisfactory moves here; it is difficult for Black to develop satisfactorily) 7 dxe5 ♘xe5 8 ♘xe5 dxe5 9 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 10 ♗xf7 ♘xe4 11 ♗e3 with a slight White advantage in the endgame. Of course it is possible to play like this as Black. We all know that you need two weaknesses to win a game, and right now Black only has one. But then again it is hardly advisable to enter an endgame that is already 'half lost'.

c12) 6...h6?! does not make it easier for Black: 7 ♗c3 ♘ge7 (after 7...♘f6 8 dxe5! then 8...♘g4 is probably necessary and following 9 exd6 ♘xe3 10 fxe3 ♕xd6 11 ♕xd6 cxd6 12 ♘a3, White's extra pawn

should count for something) 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 ♕e2 ♗e6?! (though if 9...0-0 10 ♖d1 ♕e8 11 ♘bd2 and White is better) 10 ♗xe6 fxe6 11 ♖d1 ♕c8 12 ♘a3 with a clear advantage for White in Wu Xibin-Ye Rongguang, Chinese Team Championship 1987.

c2) 4...d6!? 5 d4 ♕c7! (played like this, the variation seems like a sound version of the Three Knights with 4...h6 and later ...g7-g6; for those wanting to avoid theory, this kind of position must be very attractive) 6 dxe5 (6 d5 ♘d8! should give Black a perfectly playable position; the white pieces are not ideally placed, and the black knight will go to f7 and support ...♗g7-h6 later on) 6...♘xe5 7 ♘xe5 dxe5 8 0-0 ♘f6 9 ♕f3 ♗e6 10 ♗g5 ♗g7



and the question is whether White has any advantage at all here. I doubt it. E.Mednis-V.Korchnoi, Vienna 1986, continued 11 ♘d2 h6 12 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 13 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 14 ♘c4 ♗g5 15 b3 0-0 0 16 ♖ad1 c6 17 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 18 ♖d1 h5 19 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8?? (19...♔xd8 was quite even) 20 ♕xf7! ♕xf7 21 ♘d6+ ♔c7 22 ♘xf7 ♗f6 23 ♔f1 1-0.

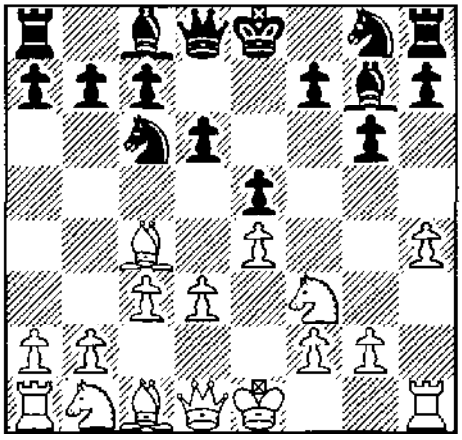
4...d6

Or 4...♗g7 5 ♗g5 (5 ♘g5!? ♘h6 6 a3 is worth trying when White might be a bit better; instead 6 h4 ♘a5! is probably OK for Black, if somewhat unconventional) 5...♘f6 6 ♘c3 h6 7 ♗e3 d6 8 ♕d2 ♘a5 and there is no real argument to counter the claim that Black is absolutely fine, R.Greger-J.Hvenekilde, Danish League 1994.

5 c3

5 ♘g5 ♘h6 6 h4 (again 6 a3!?) 6...♘a5 does not appear to be too dangerous for Black here either.

5...♗g7 6 h4!?



6...h6

6...♘f6 7 ♘g5 0-0 8 h5! would give White a very strong attack, based on 8...♘xh5? 9 ♖xh5! and wins.

7 h5 g5

This is a slight weakening of the kingside pawn structure, of course, but there are more important things in the position.

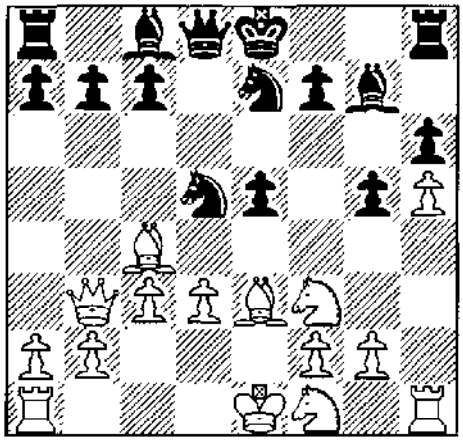
8 ♘bd2 ♘f6

8...♘ge7!? 9 ♘f1 ♘a5 10 ♗b5+ ♗d7 11 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 12 ♘e3 f5 with unclear play was also interesting.

9 ♘f1 d5!? 10 exd5 ♘xd5 11 ♕b3 ♘ce7

11...♘a5 12 ♕a4+ ♘c6 with approximately even chances was interesting too.

12 ♗e3



12...♗e6

12...c6!? was a good alternative, and if 13 0-0-0 b5 14 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 15 c4 bxc4 16 dxc4 ♕a5 with good play for Black. Probably 13 d4!? with unclear chances would be the best way for White to respond.

13 0-0-0 c6?!

Black is playing slowly, and sacrificing a pawn at the same time. White should just take it!

14 ♕xb7! 0-0 15 ♗c5!

Now Black is tied up and White has a clear advantage.

15...♖e8 16 ♕a6 ♕c7 17 ♘g3 ♗c8 18 ♕a3 ♘b6?! 19 ♗d6!

Picking up another little one.

19...♘xc4 20 dxc4 ♕b7 21 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 22 ♘xe5 ♘f5 23 ♘g4 ♔g7 24 ♕c5 ♘xg3 25 ♕d4+ ♔f8 1-0

Black resigned as 26 ♕h8+! is mate in four moves.

Game 52

A.Deev-E.Polihroniade

Kusadasi 1990

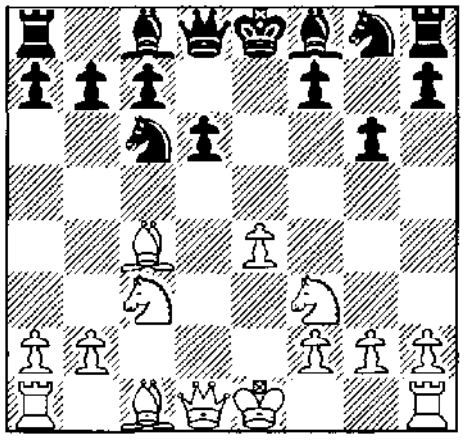
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 g6 4 d4 exd4

This is pretty much forced, as 4...♗g7 5 dxe5 ♘xe5 6 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 is very unfortunate indeed: 7 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 8 ♕d5+ ♔f6? 9 ♗g5+! ♔xg5 10 ♕xe5+ and White wins.

5 ♗g5!?

5 ♘xd4! ♗g7 6 ♘xc6 bxc6 7 0-0 d6 transposes to the next game.

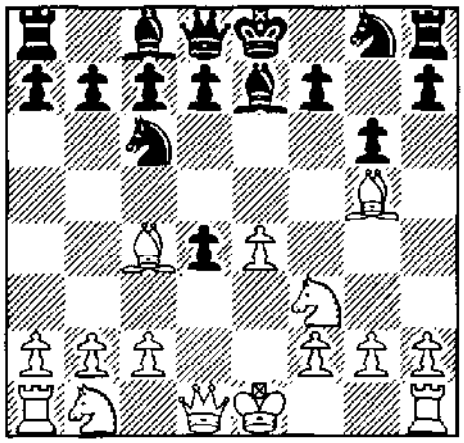
Instead 5 c3!? is the official *ECO* refutation, but matters are actually less clear. 5...dxc3 6 ♘xc3 d6! is probably the only sensible way to continue, as most decent players would see within a few minutes that 6...d6 is an absolutely necessary move (here 6...♗g7? 7 ♕b3 ♕e7 8 ♘d5 ♕xe4+ 9 ♗e2 ♘a5 10 ♕d1 is clearly better for White, but 10 ♕d1 does not deserve the '!' in *ECO*, as 10 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 11 ♕xf7 just wins) and then:



a) 7 ♕b3 is less threatening now. After 7...♕d7! 8 ♘d5 ♗g7 I do not see a path leading to an advantage. 9 ♗d2 and ♗c3 is probably best, to get real compensation for the pawn. The tactical line 9 0-0?! ♘a5 10 ♕b5 ♘xc4 11 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 12 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 13 ♘xa8 b6 is just bad for White, as the two bishops should eventually tell.

b) 7 ♗g5! is the most annoying, when 7...f6 is the logical reply (actually 7...♗e7 and 7...♕d7!? also look playable; White surely has compensation for the pawn, but in these modern times defensive methods have been refined, and a pawn has somehow increased in value...) 8 ♗c3 ♘h6 9 h3 (not the most energetic, but otherwise g4 might prove to be a good stepping stone for the knight to go to e5) 9...♗g7 10 ♘d4 (here 10 ♕d5 ♕d7 11 0-0-0 looks aggressive, but after 11...♘f7 12 h4 h5 13 ♔b1 0-0 Black is in the game and still has the extra pawn; also 12 ♕xf7+? ♕xf7 13 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 14 ♘d5 is not strong: 14...♗d7! 15 ♘xc7 ♖ac8 16 ♘d5 ♘b4+ 17 ♔b1 ♘xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♗c6 and Black is better with the two bishops) 10...♘xd4 11 ♗xd4 c6 12 0-0 ♕e7 13 f4 with an unclear game in M.Reinert-J.Hvenekilde, Allerod 1984.

5...♗e7



6 ♗f4

6 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 7 0-0 ♘f6 8 ♖e1 (8 e5 ♘g4 9 ♖e1 0-0 seems to be OK for Black, e.g. after 10 ♘bd2 d6!) 8...0-0 9 ♗b3 d6 (9...♖e8!? 10 ♘xd4 d5 is also interesting and sound for Black) 10 ♘xd4 was M.Kobalija-I.Polovodin, Novgorod 1999, when Black should probably equalise with 10...♕e5! 11 c3 ♗d7 when the ♘b1 cannot go to the dream square d5.

6...d6

6...♘f6!? seems perfectly playable too:

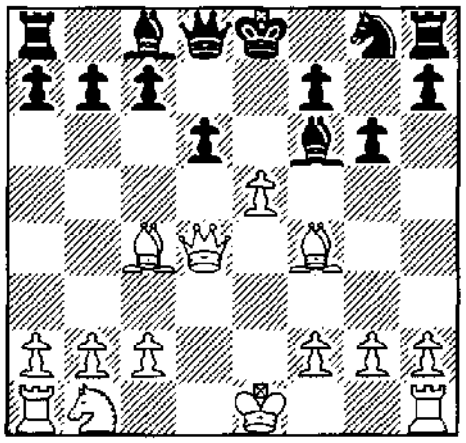
a) 7 ♘xd4 should probably be met by the greedy 7...♘xe4!?. After 8 ♘b5 ♗b4+ 9 c3 (9 ♘1c3 0-0 is fine for Black) 9...♗a5 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♗d5 ♘f6 12 ♗g5 White has compensation for the pawn, of course, but I still believe that the dangers for Black are not too great.

b) 7 e5 ♘h5 8 ♗h6 d6 9 exd6 ♕xd6 10 0-0 ♗e6 11 ♗xe6 fxe6 12 ♖e1 0-0-0 was at least fine for Black in O.Eismont-S.Biro, Eger 1993.

7 ♘xd4

7 0-0 ♗f6 8 c3 with unclear play was also possible.

7...♘xd4 8 ♕xd4 ♗f6 9 e5!



White does not really have an alternative here (if 9 ♕d5 ♗e6 10 ♕b5+ c6 11 ♕xb7 ♗xc4 12 ♕xc6+ ♔f8 and Black is better). Now Black loses this game very quickly, but it is hard to believe that he is at a serious disadvantage at the moment.

9...dxe5

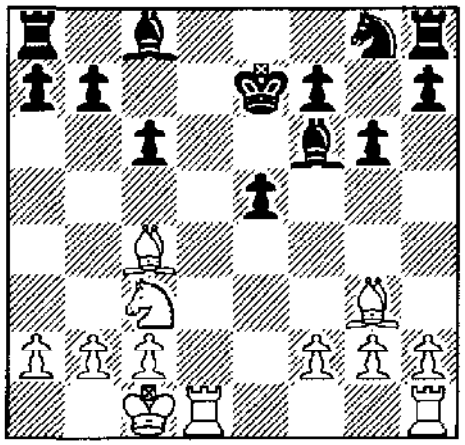
9...♕e7!? was interesting. After 10 ♕e3 ♗xe5 11 ♗xe5 ♕xe5 12 ♕xe5+ dxe5 13

♘c3 c6 the position is very similar to the game.

10 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 11 ♗g3 ♔e7

11...h5!? was another possibility.

12 ♘c3 c6 13 0-0-0



13...♘h6

Alternatively:

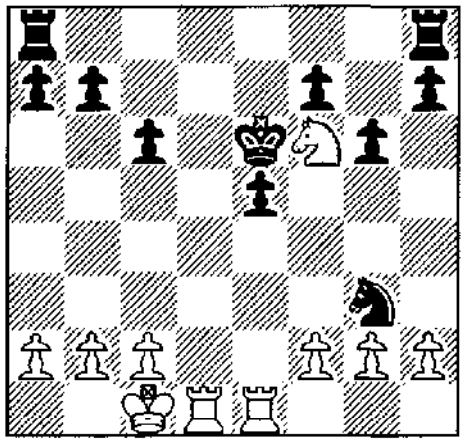
a) 13...b5?! 14 ♗b3 a5 15 a4 b4 is the idea of *Fritz 8*, but after simple moves like 16 ♘e4 ♗g7 17 ♖he1 f6 18 f4 the machine's love for the extra pawn withers away. Maybe one day the computers will understand the difference between static and dynamic features in a position – but not yet.

13...♗e6! was the best try. After 14 ♗xe6 ♔xe6 15 ♖he1 Black's position might look pretty nasty, but maybe he can hold on!? For example: 15...h5!? 16 h4 (now White no longer has damaging checks at h4) 16...♘h6 17 ♘e4 ♖hd8 and although Black is worse, he has reasons to hope for a draw.

14 ♖he1 ♗e6 15 ♗xe6 ♔xe6 16 ♘e4 ♘f5??

Here 16...♖ad8 was called for, with some advantage for White after 17 ♘xf6 ♖xd1+ 18 ♔xd1 ♖d8+ 19 ♔c1 ♔xf6 20 ♗xe5+.

17 ♘xf6 ♘xg3



18 ♘d7! 1-0

Since 18...♘f5 19 ♖xe5 is mate.

Game 53

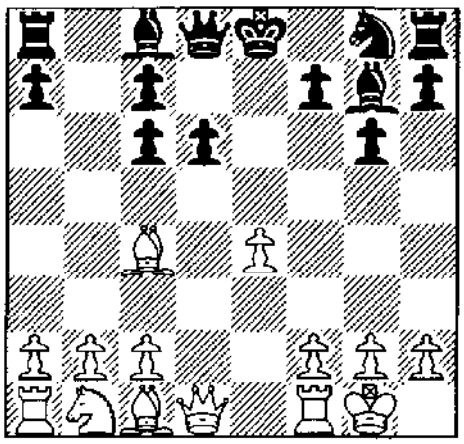
H.Odeev-V.Vorotnikov

Moscow 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 d6!?

This might be the most sensible move order, as Black is not yet committed to ...g7-g6 and might change course to ...♗e7 and ...♘f6, should White decide to sacrifice a pawn with c2-c3. However, White gets the advantage all the same.

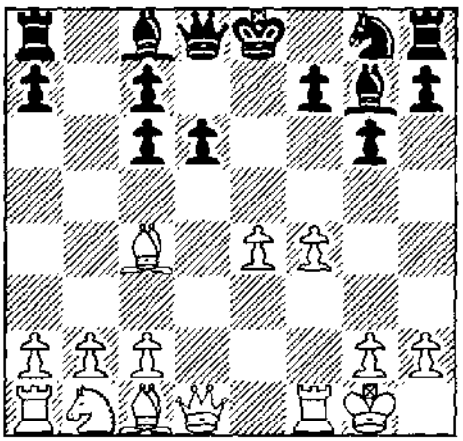
4 d4 exd4 5 ♘xd4 g6 6 ♘xc6 bxc6 7 0-0 ♗g7



8 f4!

Here White's advantage should be based on a quick attack on Black's weakened king's position.

Alternatively: 8 ♘c3 ♘f6 (or 8...♘e7 9 ♗g5 0-0 10 ♕f3 ♗e6 11 ♗b3 ♕d7 12 ♗f6 was better for White in A.Hunt-M.Hlouska, Witley 1999) 9 ♗g5 0-0?! (9...h6!? is the move for the future, though White should be a little better after 10 ♗h4) 10 ♕d2 ♗e6 11 ♗xe6 (11 ♗b3?! ♕b8 12 ♗h6 ♖e8 13 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 14 ♖ae1 ♕b4, M.Tonchev-Z.Jasnikowski, Wroclaw 1980, seems OK for Black) 11...fxe6 12 e5! ('corrupting Black's pawn structure completely' – Lukacs) 12...dxe5 13 ♕xd8 ♖axd8 14 ♖fe1 and White is better.



8...♘f6

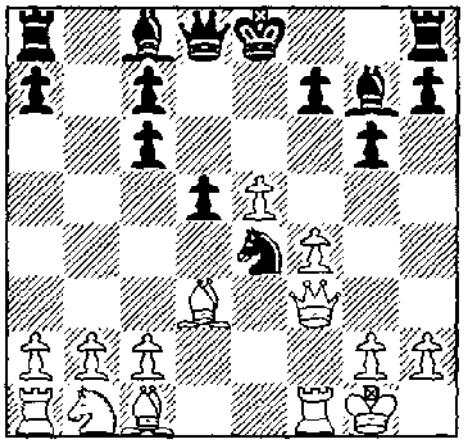
a) 8...♘h6?! 9 f5! is very uncomfortable for Black, as f5-f6 is a huge threat, and after 9...♕h4? (9...exf5 was necessary) 10 g3 ♕f6 11 e5! White was winning in the game J.Mestel-P.Large, London Lloyds Bank 1982.

b) 8...♕h4?! 9 ♘d2 ♘h6 10 ♘f3 ♕h5 was played in Jor.Nielsen-J.Hvenekilde, Copenhagen 1980, and after 11 e5! again White is much better.

9 e5!

Here 9 f5?! 0-0 10 fxg6 hxg6 11 ♗g5 ♕e7 12 ♘c3 ♕e5 was slightly better for Black in F.Darnstaedt-A.Dreev, Berlin 1991.

9...♘e4 10 ♕f3 d5 11 ♗d3



11...♘c5?

11...f5 was forced, when Lukacs suggested 12 exf6 ♕xf6!? 13 ♗xe4 ♕d4+ 14 ♗e3 ♕xe4 15 ♕xe4+ dxe4 16 ♘d2 ♗f5 17 ♘c4 and White is only a little better.

12 ♗e3 ♘xd3

12...♕e7 13 ♕f2! is not nice either; the same goes for 12...♘c6 13 e4!?.

13 cxd3

Now e5 and e6 are real problems for Black.

13...0-0 14 ♗c5 ♖e8 15 d4!?

Here 15 ♘d2, with the idea of ♘b3-d4, was interesting as well, but White rightly decides that he can do without it.

15...h5 16 ♘d2 ♗f5 17 ♖ac1 ♖b8?!

17...a5 with a clear edge for White was probably necessary.

18 b3 ♖e6 19 h3 ♕h4 20 ♖c3 ♗h6 21 ♖f2!

Preparing to reroute the knight to g3, from where it will decide the game.

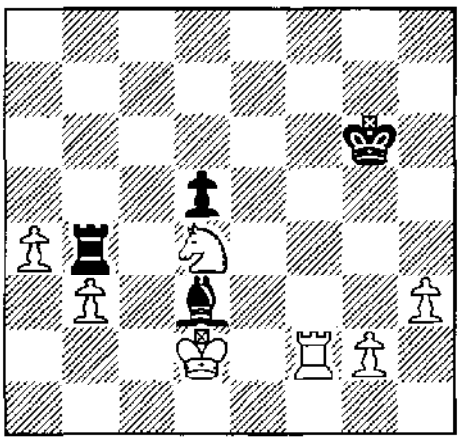
21...♔h7 22 ♘f1! ♗e4 23 ♕g3

The endgame after 23...♕xg3 24 ♘xg3 a6 25 ♘xe4 dxe4 26 ♖e3 just wins of course.

23...♕d8 24 ♗xa7

White has won a pawn for no compensation. The rest of the game is an example of futile resistance.

24...♖a8 25 ♗c5 h4 26 ♕e3 f5 27 a4 g5 28 fxg5 ♗xg5 29 ♕e2 ♕g8 30 ♗a3 ♕g6 31 ♗c1! ♗e7 32 ♘d2 c5 33 ♘f3! ♖c6 34 ♗a3 ♖d8 35 ♕d2! ♕g7 36 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 37 ♖xc5 ♖g6 38 ♕f4 ♖g8 39 ♘xh4 ♖g5 40 e6! ♕xd4 41 ♖xc7+ ♖8g7 42 ♖xg7+ ♕xg7 43 ♘f3 ♖g6 44 ♕h4+ ♔g8 45 ♕d8+ ♔h7 46 ♕d7 ♕xd7 47 exd7 ♖d6 48 ♘d4 ♖xd7 49 ♘xf5 ♔g6 50 ♘d4 ♖b7 51 ♔f1 ♗d3+ 52 ♔e1 ♖b4 53 ♔d2! 1-0



Everybody is a smart alec these days... Black had had enough.

Game 54

F.Pieri-M.Chiburdanidze

Forlì 1990

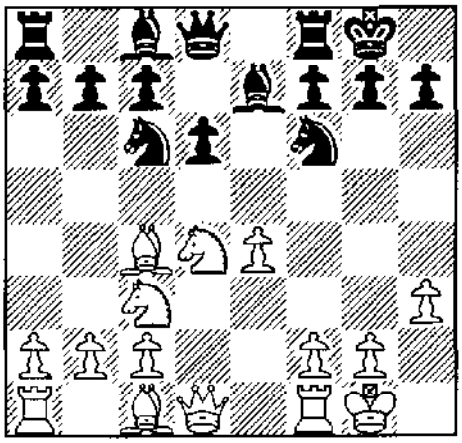
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗e7

This move characterises the Hungarian Defence.

4 d4 exd4

4...d6 is examined in Games 56-58.

5 ♘xd4 d6 6 0-0 ♘f6 7 ♘c3 0-0 8 h3

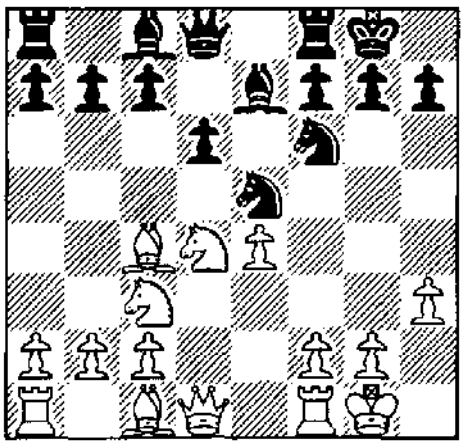


8...♘e5!?

8...♗d7 is covered in the next game. Black has also tried:

a) 8...♘xd4 (slightly passive, but still playable) 9 ♕xd4 c6 (the exchange of White's most active piece by 9...♗e6 gives Black problems on the light squares and therefore cannot be recommended, e.g. 10 ♗e3 ♕d7 11 ♖ad1 ♗xc4 12 ♕xc4 ♕c6 13 ♕d3 ♖ac8 14 ♗d4 ♗d8 15 ♖fe1 ♘d7 16 ♘d5 with a clear edge for White in A.Krutko S.Dzhambulatov, Dagomys 2004) 10 a4 ♘d7 11 ♗e3 b6 12 ♖ad1 ♕c7 13 f4 a6 and it is hard to see any advantage for White, B.Spassky-V.Hort, Reykjavik match 1977. White's play in this game I think was probably too slow.

b) 8...♖e8 9 ♖e1 ♗d7 10 ♗f4 (or 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗h4 ♘xd4 12 ♕xd4 ♗c6 with more or less even chances, A.Zude-Y.Balashov, German Bundesliga 1996) 10...♗f8 11 ♕d2 h6 12 ♖ad1 a6 13 a4 ♘e5 14 ♗f1 ♖b8 and Black had decent counterplay in J.Palkovi-J.Stocek, Czech Team Championship 1997.



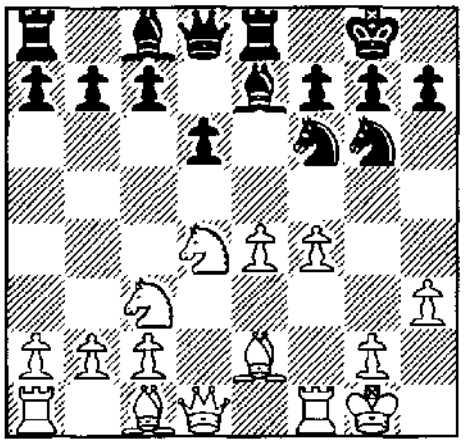
9 ♗e2

After 9 ♗b3 c5! 10 ♘f3 c4 11 ♘xe5 (not 11 ♗a4? a6 and Black wins) 11...cxb3 12 ♘d3 bxc2 13 ♕xc2 Black is at least equal, J.Arni-D.Lima, Imperatriz 2003.

9...♖e8

9...♘g6!? 10 ♖e1 ♖e8 11 ♗f1 ♗f8 12 a4 a5 13 g3 c6 14 ♗g2 gave even chances in P.Kazakov-V.Shinkevich, Tomsk 2001. However, I would be surprised if White can find a more aggressive way to play the position.

10 f4 ♘g6!?



The knight is a teaser here. It does not appear to be very active, it but is nevertheless well prepared to meet most of White's advances. I am not certain that White is really better in these positions, e.g. 10...♘ed7 11 ♗f3 ♗f8 12 ♖e1 c6 13 b3 ♘b6 14 ♗b2 d5 was equal in B.Rogulj-M.Knezevic, Yugoslav Championship 1977.

11 g4!? ♗f8 12 f5 ♘e5 13 g5 ♘fd7 14 ♕e1 c6

14...♘b6!? with chances for both sides was another viable option.

15 ♗e3 b5

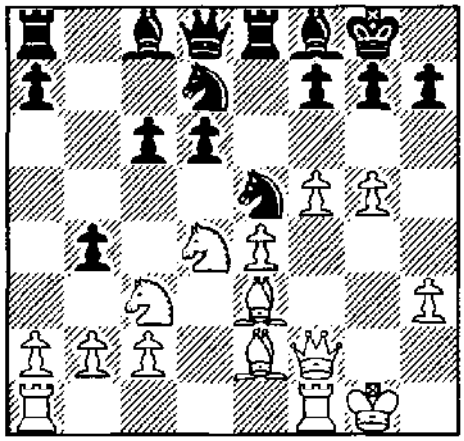
Or 15...♘b6!? again.

16 ♕f2?

Is White manoeuvring or something? Here 16 a3 looks slow, but then Black has to play two more moves to reinstate the threat of ...b5-b4.

16...b4!

When allowed, why not?



17 g6??

Unnecessary desperation. 17 ♘b1 c5 18 ♘f3 ♗b7 19 ♘bd2 ♘xf3+ 20 ♕xf3 d5! with the initiative was something White had to endure. And after 21 ♕g3!? dxe4 22 ♘c4 the position is not that clear.

17...bxc3 18 ♘xc6 ♕c7!?

Black could take the knight as well, since after 18...♘xc6 19 gxf7+ ♔xf7 20

♗c4+ ♔e7! it is hard to see anything for White.

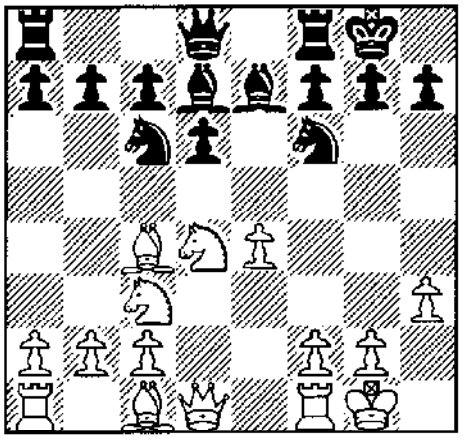
19 gxh7+ ♔h8 20 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 21 bxc3 ♗b7 22 ♗d3 d5 23 f6 dxe4 24 ♗e2 ♘f3+ 25 ♔h1 ♖e6 0-1

Game 55

K.Kalashnikov-J.Grachev

Novosibirsk 2001

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗e7 4 d4 exd4 5 ♘xd4 d6 6 0-0 ♘f6 7 ♘c3 0-0 8 h3 ♗d7



9 f4!?

This makes perfect sense. White needs to utilise his space advantage. Instead:

a) 9 ♗e3 a6 10 a4 ♖e8 11 f4 ♗f8 12 ♕f3 all looks very neat indeed, but then 12...♘b4! 13 ♖f2 (13 ♘d5!? was the sounder option) 13...c5 14 ♘b3 ♗c6 15 ♗d5 ♘bxd5 16 exd5 ♘xd5 17 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 18 ♕xd5 ♖xe3, as in M.Garcia-A.Summerscale, Philadelphia 1999, and White has either lost a pawn, or the plot after 19 ♕xb7 d5 with an initiative for Black.

b) 9 b3 ♘e5 10 ♗c2 c5 11 ♘f3 ♗c6 was fine for Black in V.Malaniuk-K.Bryzgalin, Krasnodar 2002.

c) 9 ♘xc6!? is so far untried. But, in general, White should seriously consider such options in search for a solid opening advantage.

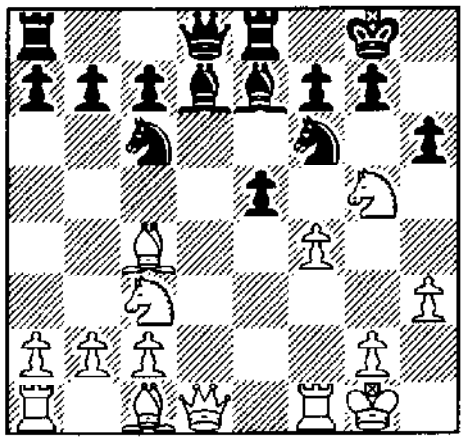
9...♖e8 10 ♘f3 h6

10...♗f8? 11 ♘g5 ♖e7 walks into 12 e5! dxe5 13 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 14 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 15 fxe5 ♘xe5 16 ♕d5+ ♗e6 17 ♕xe5 and White is just winning, A.Wikner-T.Jugelt, Hamburg 1993.

11 e5?

This simply doesn't work. Instead, both 11 ♖e1!? and 11 ♔h2 look natural, but I prefer 11 a3!? followed by normal development. Mainly White will feel blessed that, after 11...♗f8 12 ♕d3, he can finally develop his pieces to sensible squares.

11...dxe5 12 ♘g5



So this was the idea. But, as Black shows, it is not too hard to refute.

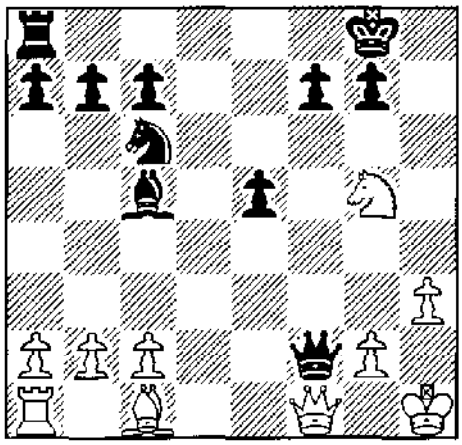
12...hxg5 13 fxg5 ♗e6 14 ♗xe6 ♗c5+ 15 ♔h1 ♖xe6 16 gxf6 ♖xf6 17 ♘e4 ♖xf1+ 18 ♕xf1 ♕d4

And Black is just a pawn up.

19 ♘g5

19 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 20 c3 was the last attempt at resistance.

19...♕f2



The endgame is hopeless for White. The rest is silence.

20 ♗d2 ♕xf1+ 21 ♖xf1 ♗e7 22 ♘e4 ♖d8 23 g4 ♘d4 24 c3 ♘e6 25 ♗e3 ♖d3 26 ♖e1 ♗h4 27 ♖e2 ♘f4 28 ♗xf4 exf4 29 ♔h2 f3 30 ♖d2 ♖e3 31 ♘g3 ♗g5 32 ♖d4 ♗f6 33 ♖e4 ♖d3 34 ♘f1 ♖d1 35 ♔g1 ♖b1 36 b3 ♗xc3 37 ♖f4 ♖b2 38 ♖xf3 ♗d4+ 39 ♔h1 ♖xa2 40 ♘g3 g6 41 ♘e4 ♖e2 42 ♘g5 f6 43 ♖d3 c5 44 ♘f3 ♖e3 45 ♖xe3 ♗xe3 46 ♔g2 ♔f7 47 ♔f1 ♔e6 48 ♔e2 ♗h6 49 ♔d3 b5 50 ♘h4 ♗g5 51 ♘f3 a5 52 h4 ♗f4 53 ♔e4 ♗h6 54 ♔d3 ♔d5 55 h5 gxh5 56 gxh5 f5 57 ♘e1 c4+ 58 bxc4+ bxc4+ 59 ♔c3 ♗g7+ 60 ♔d2 ♔e4 61 ♔e2 a4 62 ♘c2 f4 0-1

Game 56

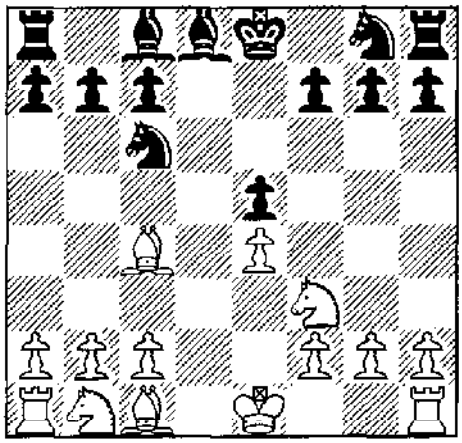
I.Rogers-B.Ivkov

Bor 1984

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗e7 4 d4 d6

This is the other main line of the Hungarian Defence. Usually, books claim that White has an advantage by entering the endgame, but a closer look shows that the strongest players do not find any real advantage there at all, and often soon concede a draw. Therefore we shall look at the more ambitious 5 d5 in the next game, while 5 ♘c3 is seen in Game 58.

5 dxe5 dxe5 6 ♕xd8+ ♗xd8



7 ♗d5

This game is an example of how Black can win with this line, even against a strong opponent. Ian Rogers is a famous attacking player, but clearly less dangerous once the queens comes off. By creating weaknesses in his own position, White slowly makes the position difficult for himself, though he could have probably made a draw all the way to the end.

Other options for White are:

a) 7 ♗b5 ♗d7 8 0-0 ♗f6 9 c3 ♘ge7 10 ♗e3 ♘c8 11 ♘bd2 ½-½ R.Kuczynski-M.Krasenkow, Polish Championship 1996.

b) 7 ♘g5 ♗xg5 8 ♗xg5 ♘d4 9 ♘a3 ♗e6 10 0-0-0 ♗xc4 11 ♘xc4 f6 12 ♗e3 0-0-0 13 c3 ♘c6 14 ♖xd8+ ♘xd8 15 a4 gave White a slight edge in L.Yudasin-Y.Lapshun, New York (rapid) 2004, but the a game ended in a draw. It is very hard to win such a symmetrical position.

c) 7 ♘c3! is clearly the main line, when

Black has tried a lot of different moves:

c1) 7...♘f6 8 ♗e3! 0-0 (8...♘g4 9 ♗d2 0-0 10 h3 ♘f6 11 0-0-0 was better for White in Y.Yakovich-A.Kovalev, Gistrup 1996; Black is not ready to face a ♘d5 jump) 9 ♗c5 ♖e8 10 ♘g5 ♗e6 11 ♘xe6 fxe6 12 ♗b5 ♘d7 13 ♗xe6 bxe6 14 ♗a3 ♘b6 15 b3 White had an enjoyable advantage in E.Vasiukov-F.Gheorghiu, Manila 1974.

c2) 7...f6 8 a3 ♘ge7 (generally I find this way of developing dubious) 9 ♗e3 ♗g4 10 0-0-0 ♘c8 11 ♖d3 ♘d6 12 ♗a2 ♗e7 13 ♘d2 0-0-0 14 f3 and White was better and eventually won in D.Bronstein-V.Kozlov, Daugavpils 1978.

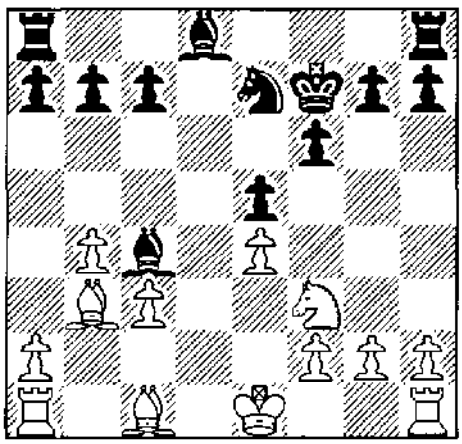
c3) 7...♘ge7 8 ♗e3 ♘g6 9 0-0-0 0-0 10 h3 ♘a5 11 ♗e2 ♗e6 12 ♘g5 ♗c4, was V.Stoica-V.Hort, Porz 1991, and here maybe 13 ♗g4! gives White a real plus.

c4) 7...♗g4!? looks respectable, e.g. 8 ♗e3 ♘f6 9 ♗b5 ♘d7 10 0-0-0 ♘cb8 11 h3 ♗xf3 12 ♗xd7+ ½-½ A.Shirov-D.Campora, Biel 1995.

7...♘ge7 8 ♗b3 f6 9 c3 ♘a5 10 ♗a4+ ♔f7 11 ♘bd2 ♗e6 12 b4!?

This move is rather committal and doesn't really achieve a lot.

12...♘c4 13 ♘xc4 ♗xc4 14 ♗b3



14...♗e6!?

Black does not want to open the a-file for the white rooks. It is clear anyway that Black is not worse.

15 ♗xe6+ ♔xe6 16 a4 ♘c8 17 ♗e3 a5!?

Black does not want White to advance too far. On the minus side Black now has some pawns on dark squares. The chances are still level.

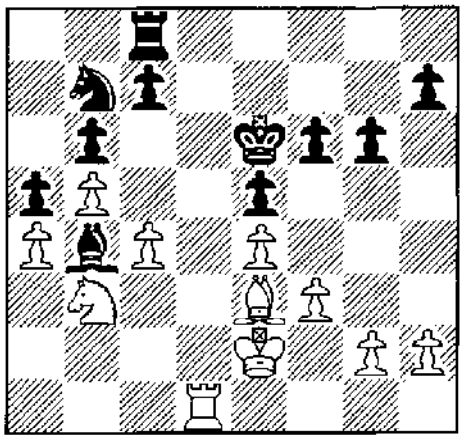
18 ♔e2 ♗e7 19 ♖hb1 ♘d6 20 ♘d2 b6 21 f3 g6 22 b5

Here 22 bxa5 ♖xa5 23 c4 ♖ha8 24 c5 ♘c8 25 cxb6 ♘xb6 26 ♗xb6 cxb6 27 ♖xb6+ ♔f7 is just a draw.

22...♖hd8 23 ♖d1 ♘b7 24 c4 ♖ac8

24...♗c5!? was also possible.

25 ♘b3 ♖xd1 26 ♖xd1 ♗b4



Black is ready to advance the c-pawn, and White will never be able to put a knight on d5. Now White plays for a full point (for the opponent!).

27 c5?! bxc5! 28 ♖c1 c6!

Suddenly White is in trouble.

29 b6 c4 30 ♘d2?!

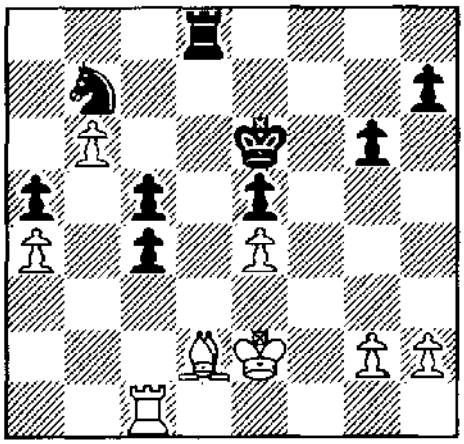
The white bishop is not very good and Black takes this as an invitation to exchange into a promising endgame. Instead 30 ♖xc4 c5 was better for Black,

who will probably try to win the b6-pawn very slowly.

30...♗xd2

30...♘d6!? was also promising.

31 ♗xd2 c5 32 f4 ♖d8 33 fxe5 fxe5



34 ♖f1?

A blunder, probably made in severe time trouble (look at when White resigns). Black was also better after 34 ♗c3 ♖d6 35 ♖b1 ♖d3 36 ♖c1, but White could still offer some resistance.

34...♖d4 35 ♗g5

If 35 ♔e3 ♖d3+ 36 ♔e2 ♖a3 37 ♖f8 c3 and wins.

35...♖xe4+ 36 ♔d1 c3 37 ♖f6+ ♔d5 38 ♖f7 ♘d6 39 ♖xh7 ♖xa4 40 ♗d8 ♖b4 41 ♗c7 0-1

Game 57

J.Mestel-V.Smyslov

Las Palmas Interzonal 1982

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗e7 4 d4 d6 5 d5 ♘b8

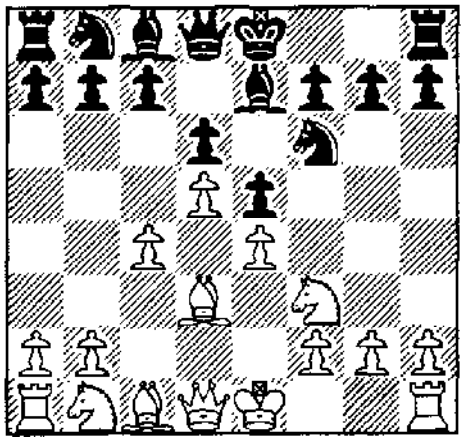
5...♘a5 looks a little suspect. One example: 6 ♗d3 c5 7 c4 g6 8 0-0 h5?! (this also seems a bit far out) 9 ♘c3 ♘h6 10 ♘e1 g5 11 a3 b6 12 b4 ♘b7 13 ♗c2! ♔f8 14 ♘d3 ♔g7 15 ♗a4 f5 16 ♗c6 and White was clearly better in J.Flis-F.Borkowski, Polish Team Championship 1981.

6 ♗d3 ♘f6

Black has a reasonable score from this position as well.

6...♗g4 7 c4 ♘d7 8 ♘c3 ♘gf6 has also been played a few times, though not enough to give a real theoretical evaluation. Generally I feel that White has good chances of getting an advantage from the opening.

7 c4



7...0-0

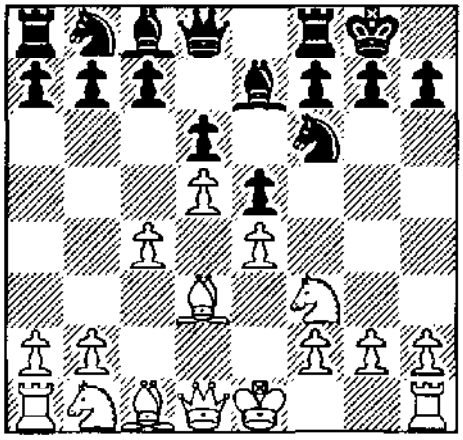
The most natural. The alternatives are a little worse, I think:

a) 7...c5!? 8 ♘c3 ♘bd7 has been played once by Hort. This transposes to the Czech Benoni (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e5!?) and could prove a good idea against players unfamiliar with these closed positions.

b) 7...♘bd7 8 ♘c3 0-0 (or 8...♘c5 9 ♗c2 a5 10 h3 ♘fd7 11 ♗e3 ♗f6 12 a3 ♘b6 13 b4 and White was better in I.Rogers-P.Jagstaidt, Zürich 1994) 9 ♖b1 ♘c5 10 ♗c2 a5 11 a3 c6 12 0-0 cxd5 13 cxd5 ♗g4 14 h3 ♗xf3 15 ♕xf3 a4 16 ♗e3 ♘fd7 17 ♕g4 ♔h8 18 g3 h6 19 h4

♗f6 20 ♔g2 was also somewhat better for White in Zhang Pengxiang-M.Mancini, Cappelle la Grande 2002.

c) 7...♗g4 8 h3 ♗h5 9 ♘c3 ♘bd7 10 ♗e3 0-0 11 0-0 h6 12 g4 ♗g6 13 a3 ♘h7 14 ♔g2 and White had the advantage in Z.Szabo-Z.Horvath, Gyongyos 1994. Black has no easy breaks on the kingside to provide him with counterplay.



8 ♘c3

8 h3 has also been played, though White has no reason to fear ...♗g4. Then Black's options are:

a) 8...a5 9 ♘c3 ♘a6 10 ♗e3 ♔h8 11 a3 ♗d7 12 ♖b1 ♘g8 13 g4 g6 14 ♖g1 ♕c8 15 ♕c2 b6 16 b4 was a little better for White in R.Hübner-P.Herb, Swiss Team Championship 1999.

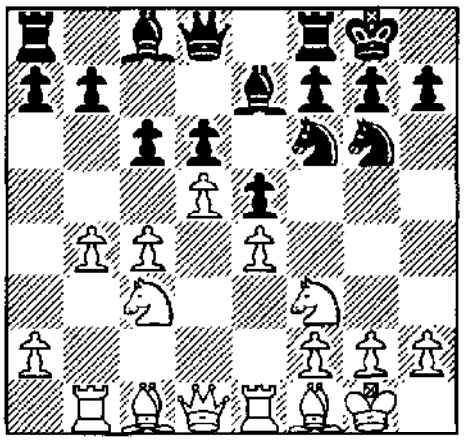
b) 8...♘a6 9 ♘c3 c6 10 ♗e3 ♖e8 11 a3 h6 12 b4 ♘h7 13 ♕d2 ♘g5 14 ♘xg5 ♗xg5 did not quite equalise either in S.Shivaji-R.De Guzman, San Francisco 2002.

c) 8...♘bd7 9 ♘c3 ♘h5 10 ♗c2 g6 11 ♗h6 ♖e8 12 ♕d2 ♗f6 13 0-0-0 a6 14 ♗g5 b5 was quite complicated and probably absolutely fine for Black. W.Mazul-F.Borkowski, Polish Championship 1979.

8...c6 9 0-0 ♘bd7 10 ♖b1!?

Or 10 ♗e3 a6 11 h3 cxd5 12 cxd5 ♘h5 (here 12...b5 13 a4 b4 14 ♘b1 a5 15 ♘bd2 ♗b7 16 ♖c1 ♘b6 17 ♗b5 gave White a clear plus in A.Ivanov-A.Negulescu, Washington 1998; Black's advances on the queenside have only furnished him with weaknesses) 13 ♕d2 g6 14 g4 ♘g7 15 ♘h2 ♘c5 16 ♗c2 a5 17 a3 f5 with a very unclear game, B.Stein-G.Scholz Solis, Hamburg 1986.

10...♖e8 11 b4 ♘f8 12 ♖e1 ♘g6 13 ♗f1 ♖f8



14 ♕b3

14 dxc6!? bxc6 15 b5 should have been inserted somewhere – just as Black should probably should have played ...c6xd5 sooner than he did in the game. Now after 15...♗b7 16 a4!? (or most other moves), White has a nice queenside initiative and the d5-square to comfort himself with.

14...♔h8 15 ♗b2 cxd5

At last.

16 cxd5 ♘g4 17 h3 ♘h6 18 ♖bc1 f5!?

18...♗d7! was probably more exact, when White should play 19 ♖c2!? with chances for both sides.

19 ♘b5

Heading for e6.

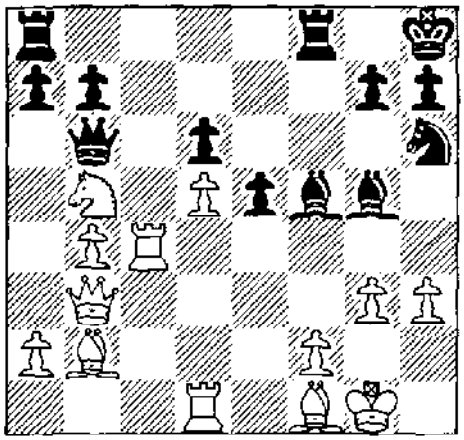
19...fxe4 20 ♖xe4 ♗f5

The immediate 20...♘h4! was much stronger. After 21 ♘xh4?! ♗xh4 22 g3 ♗g5 White would be forced into 23 f4, which is rather uncomfortable for his king.

21 ♖ec4 ♘h4 22 ♘xh4?!

White could have kept some advantage with 22 ♖1c3! ♘xf3+ 23 ♖xf3, when it is not clear how Black should continue.

22...♗xh4 23 g3? ♗g5 24 ♖d1 ♕b6!



25 h4?!

This loses straight away, but White was in deep trouble anyway. If 25 ♗c1 ♗xc1 26 ♖exc1 ♗d7 27 ♕e3 ♕xe3 28 fxe3 ♖xf1+ 29 ♖xf1 ♗xb5, or 25 ♘c7 ♖ac8 26 ♗c1 ♗g6! 27 ♗e3 ♗xe3 28 ♕xe3 ♕xe3 29 fxe3 ♘f5 and Black has a clear advantage.

25...♘g4!

Now White is just lost.

26 ♖dd4 ♗h6

26...exd4 was also fine, of course.

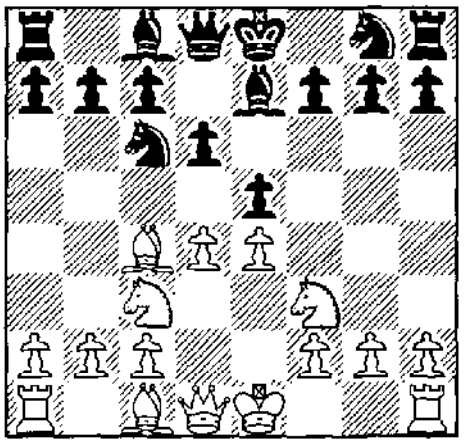
27 ♘c7 ♖ac8 28 ♘e6 ♗xe6 29 dxe6 ♖ce8 30 ♗e2 ♘xf2 31 ♖d5 ♘h3+ 32 ♔g2 ♕g1+ 33 ♔xh3 ♕h1+ 34 ♔g4 ♕xd5 35 ♖f4 ♖xf4+ 0-1

Game 58

E.Sveshnikov-R.Kholmov

Sochi 1974

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗e7 4 d4 d6 5 ♘c3



5...♘f6

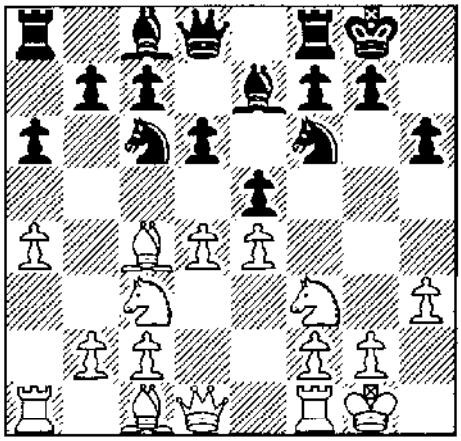
5...exd4 6 ♘xd4 ♘f6 7 0-0 would transpose to 4...exd4 (see Games 54 and 55).

Instead, 5...♗g4 does not seem too reliable: 6 h3 ♗xf3 (6...♗h5 7 d5! ♘d4 8 g4 ♘xf3+ 9 ♕xf3 ♗g6 10 ♗b5+ must be better for White, or if 7...♘b8 8 ♗e3 ♘d7 9 a4 with a slight edge) 7 ♕xf3 ♘f6 8 ♗b5!? (8 d5 is good too) 8...exd4 9 ♘e2 ♘d7 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♘xd4 ♘e5 12 ♕e2 and White had a pleasant advantage in A.Rutman-N.Segal, Ozery 1997.

6 h3 0-0 7 0-0 a6

7...♘xe4 8 ♘xe4 d5 9 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 10 ♘c3 ♕a5 11 d5 ♖d8 seems to gives Black reasonable counterplay, though after 12 ♘d2! (the best test) 12...♘b4 13 a3! ♘xd5 14 ♘b3 ♘xc3 15 ♕xd8+ ♗xd8 16 ♘xa5 ♘e2+ 17 ♔h2 ♘xc1 18 ♖axc1 and White is slightly better in the endgame.

8 a4 h6



9 ♖e1

a) 9 ♗e3 ♖e8 10 ♕e2 ♗f8 11 ♖ad1 ♗d7 12 ♗b3 exd4 13 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 14 ♗xd4 ♗e6 was also close to equality in D.Barua-K.Mokry, Frunze 1983.

However, I believe White can prove an advantage with...

b) 9 d5 ♘a5 10 ♗a2!? (10 ♗d3 c5 11 ♘d2 ♗d7 gives Black good counterplay) 10...c5 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 b4 ♘b7 13 ♗e3 ♕c7 14 ♕d3 and White looks better organised. A future b4-b5 will take control over d5 and hopefully leave some black pawns weakened on the queenside.

9...♖e8 10 b3 exd4

Or 10...♗f8 11 ♗b2 ♗d7 12 ♔h2 exd4 13 ♘xd4 g6 14 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 15 ♕f3 ♗g7 with even chances, M.Corden-J.Mestel, British Championship 1978.

11 ♘xd4 ♗f8 12 ♗b2 ♘xd4

12...♘e5!?, with chances for both sides, looks more appealing.

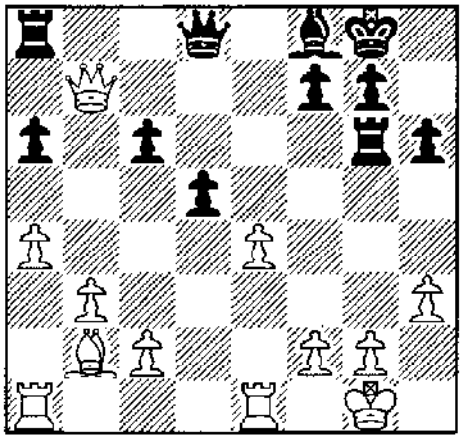
13 ♕xd4 ♗e6 14 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 15 ♘d5 c6

15...♘d7! with a slight disadvantage was necessary.

16 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6

16...♕xf6 17 ♕xf6 gxf6 18 f3 ♖ae8 19 ♔f1 gives White a very promising endgame. But objectively, this was Black's best option.

17 ♕b4! d5 18 ♕xb7 ♖g6



19 ♖e3??

An incredible blunder; only this move loses the tempi required to drop the game. Instead, after something like 19 exd5 ♕xd5 (or 19...♗c5 20 dxc6 ♖a7 21 c7!) 20 g4 ♖d8 21 ♕xa6 h5 22 ♖ad1 White is very close to winning.

19...♗c5 20 ♖f3 ♖a7! 0-1

The white queen is trapped.

Summary

On move three Black has two notable alternatives (to 3...♗c5 and 3...♘f6), which are 3...g6 and 3...♗e7. (3...d6 will transpose to one or other, depending on where Black puts the dark-squared bishop.) Of these, 3...g6 seems frankly dubious because of 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♗g7 6 ♘xc6! and later on 8 f4! with the initiative for White. Black simply cannot develop pleasantly.

The Hungarian Defence with 3...♗e7 is another story. As can be seen above, after the theoretical 4 d4 Black gets a reasonable game with both 4...exd4 and 4...d6. White might be on the verge of an edge in some lines, but this is no worse than Black can expect in other slightly passive systems. 3...♗c5 and 3...♘f6 are still the best moves, but 3...♗e7 is not trailing so far behind.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗e7

3...♘d4 – *Game 49*

3...h6 – *Game 50*

3...g6

4 d3 – *Game 51*

4 d4 cxd4 *(D)*

5 ♗g5 – *Game 52*

5 ♘xd4 ♗g7 6 ♘xc6 bxc6 7 0-0 d6 – *Game 53*

4 d4 exd4

4...d6 *(D)*

5 dxe5 – *Game 56*

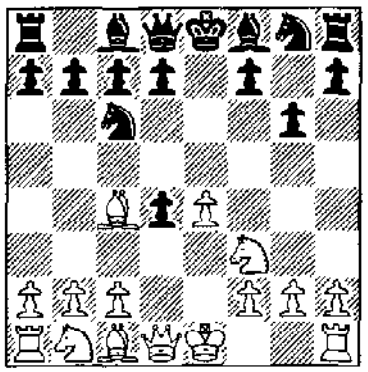
5 d5 – *Game 57*

5 ♘c3 ♘f6 – *Game 58*

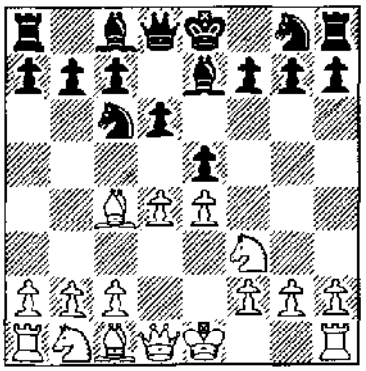
5 ♘xd4 d6 6 ♘c3 ♘f6 7 0-0 0-0 8 h3 *(D)*

8...♘e5 – *Game 54*

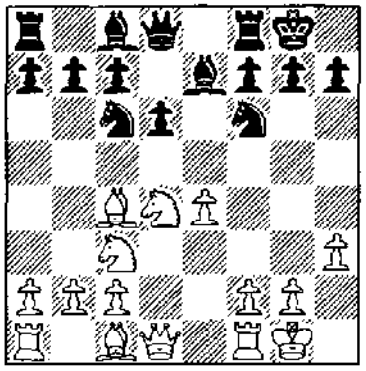
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4...exd4



4...d6



8 h3

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