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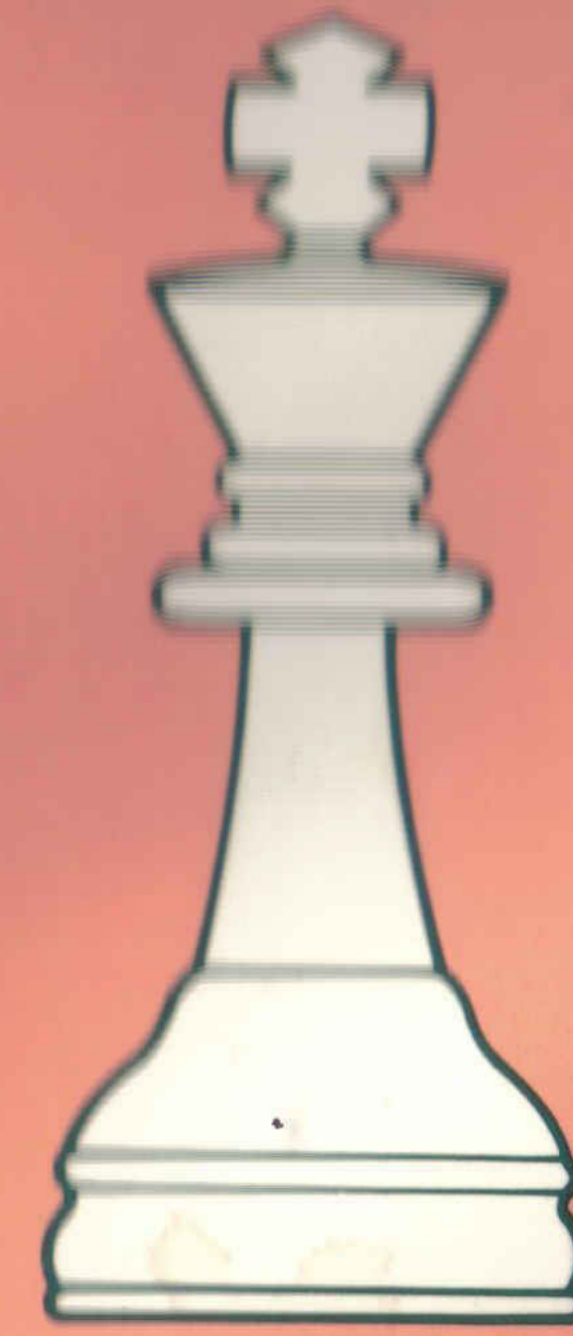
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HOW TO PLAY

THE FRENCH DEFENCE



SECOND EDITION

Shaun Taulbut

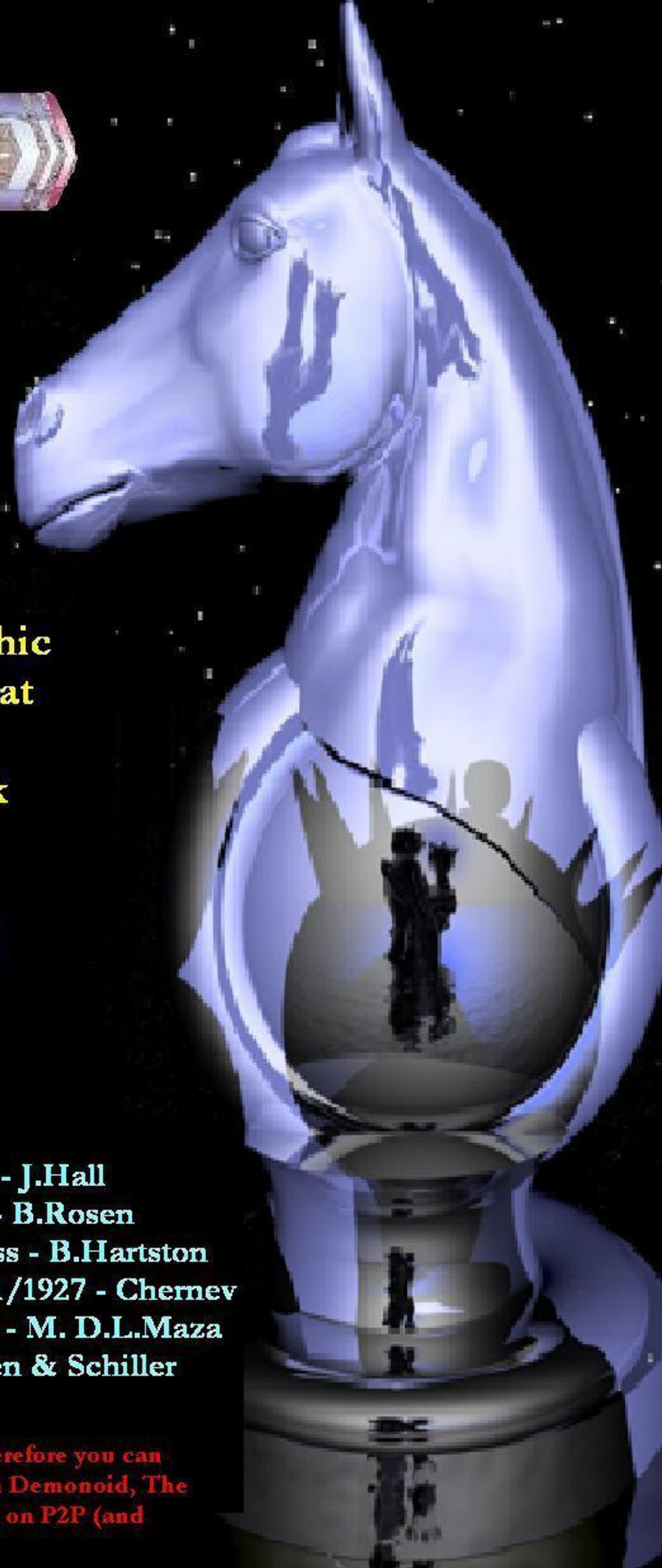


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Torreattack
Jabjab
Tomhawk
IbeBen
MarcinZet
Ooh
Caissal
RichardPryor
And all the other free-thinkers and sharers of Chess Material.

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How to Play the French Defence

How to Play the
French Defence

BRUCE WILKINSON

How to Play the
French Defence

SHAUN TAULBUT

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Shaun Taulbut
Reading, May 1991

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French Defence: Main Line Winawer Moles
French Defence: Tarrasch Variation Keene & Taulbut
French: MacCutcheon & Advance Lines Harding
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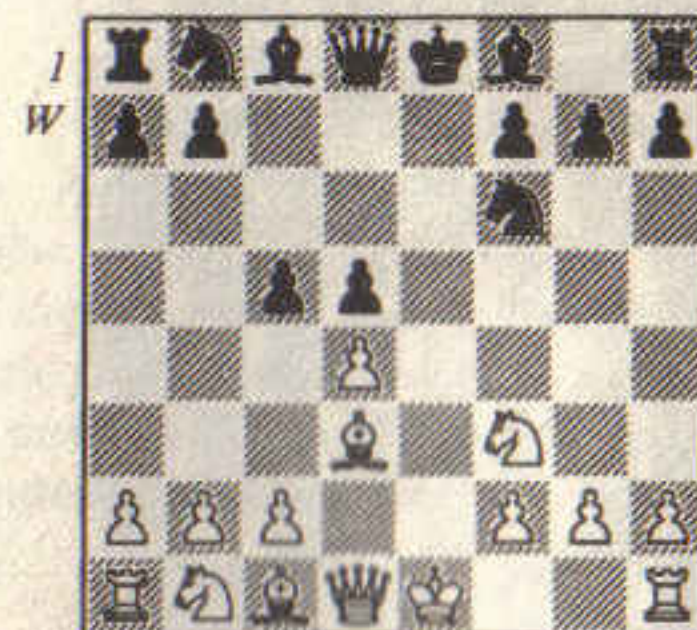
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1 Historical Introduction

The opening 1 e4 e6 was christened the French Defence after the London v Paris correspondence match which was played between 1834 and 1836. This was the celebrated game.

London v Paris 1834-36
(in fact London had the Black pieces but moved first)

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	ed	ed
4	♘f3	♘f6
5	♙d3	c5 (1)



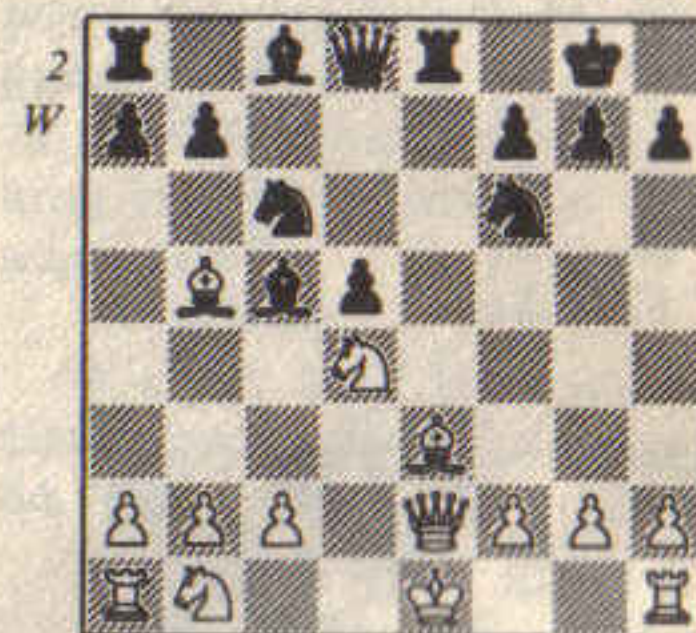
An interesting try to seize the initiative which has been used in a similar position by Korchnoi. For the structural weakness of the isolated d-pawn Black gets free play for his pieces. London tries to take advantage of Black's lack of development in order to win a

pawn, but this leads to trouble down the e-file.

6	♙e2+	♙e7
7	dc	0-0
8	♙e3	♙e8

Already Black is threatening to recapture the pawn with a big advantage due to the pin on the e-file. White resorts to some artificial measures to hang on to his foot soldier on c5.

9	♙b5	♘c6
10	♘d4	♙xc5! (2)



A nice move to play. White cannot now attempt to win the exchange by 11. ♘xc6 bc 12 ♙xc6 because of 12 ... ♙g4 13 ♙d2 d4 14 ♙xe8 de, when Black wins two pieces for a rook with a winning advantage.

11	♙xc6	bc
12	c3	

12 ♘xc6 comes to grief after

12 ... ♖b6 and 12 ♗d2 fails to
12 ... ♕xd4 13 ♗xd4 c5 followed
by ... d4 winning a piece.

12 ... ♕xd4
13 cd c5

White is given no respite and is
forced to give up the exchange.

14 ♗d3 ♖b6
15 0-0

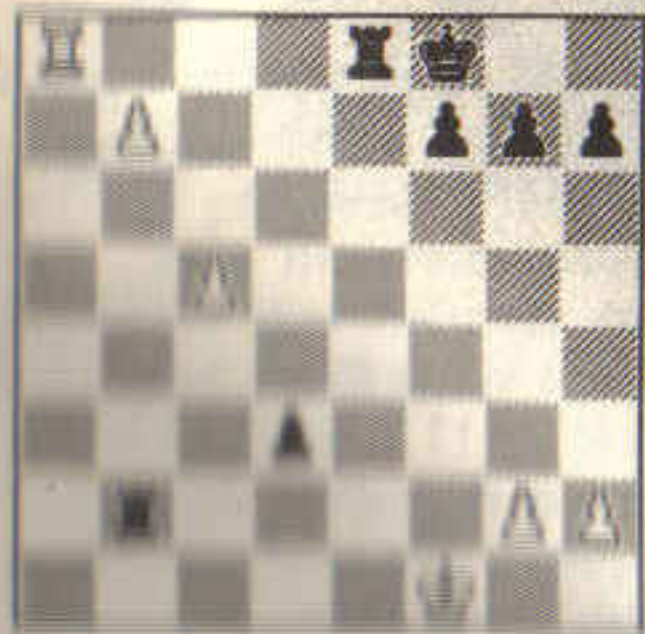
The only way to defend against
... ♗xb2 and ... cd.

15 ... ♕a6
16 ♗b3 ♗xb3
17 ab ♕xf1
18 ♖xf1 ♖g4
19 dc ♖xe3+
20 fe ♗xe3
21 ♖d2 ♗ae8
22 b4 ♗d3
23 ♗xa7

Desperation, but 23 ♖f3 ♗b3 is
hopeless for White.

23 ... ♗xd2
24 b5 ♗xb2
25 b6 d4
26 b7 d3
27 ♗a8 ♖f8 (3)

0-1



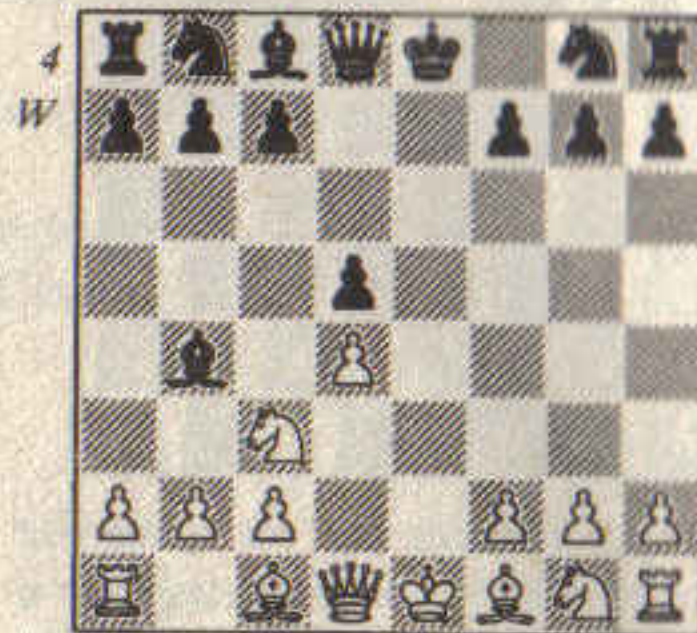
After 28 cd d3 29 ♗xe3+ ♖xe3
30 ♖e2 ♖d8 Black wins easily.

The Winawer Variation of the
French Defence is also known on
the continent as the Nimzowitsch
Variation after the great Aron
Nimzowitsch, who proved it to be
a valuable defence. For many
years the Classical Variation (1 e4
e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖c3 ♖f6 4 ♕g5)
was fashionable and was regarded
as the best line of play for both
sides. The Winawer was thought
to be an inferior defence because
of the exchange line (1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♕b4 4 ed ed) but firstly
Nimzowitsch and then Alekhine
showed it to be satisfactory for
Black.

Here is the game which showed
the critics of the Winawer.

Capablanca-Alekhine
match (1) 1927

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♕b4
4 ed ed (4)

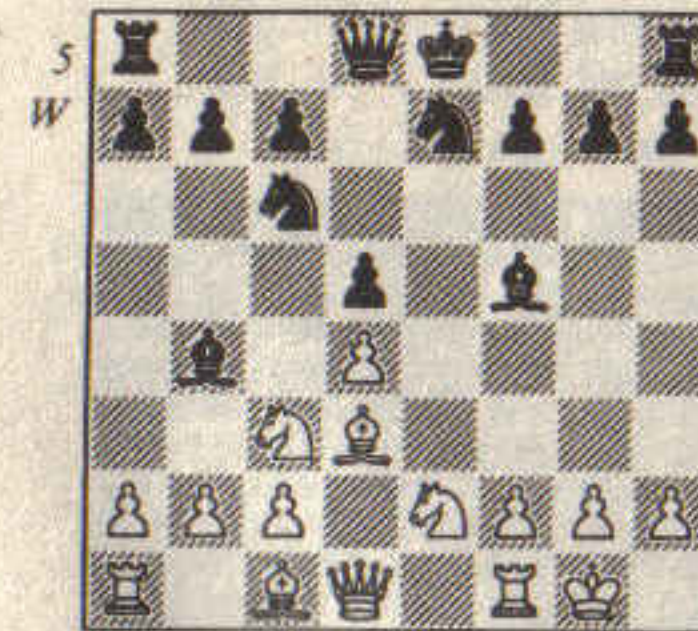


A symmetrical pawn structure
should lead to a fairly equal
position assuming both sides are
equally developed. The key to this
position is the placing of the

bishops. The f1/f8 bishops are
ideally placed on d3/d6 aiming at
the enemy kingside. The c1/c8
bishops either go to g5/g4 or can
be used to neutralise the enemy
king's bishop by the manoeuvre
♖e2/♖e7 and ♕f4/♕f5.

Alekhine had prepared very hard
for this match with Capablanca
and no doubt had studied many
games with this opening, including
those of Nimzowitsch.

5 ♕d3 ♖c6
6 ♖ge2 ♖ge7
7 0-0 ♕f5! (5)

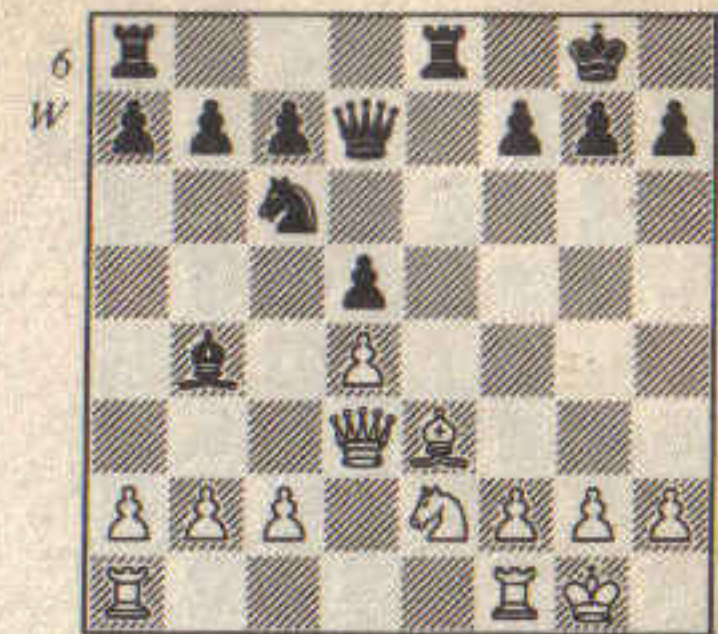


Alekhine immediately challenges
the White KB. Black now has at
least an equal game. Capablanca
plays listlessly for the next few
moves allowing Alekhine to get a
positional advantage.

8 ♕xf5 ♖xf5
9 ♗d3 ♗d7
10 ♖d1

This plan of exchanging off
Black's well placed knight on f5
costs White valuable time. 10 ♕f4
was a better move.

10 ... 0-0
11 ♖e3 ♖xe3
12 ♕xe3 ♗fe8 (6)



Already Black's slight lead in
development makes life uncomfort-
able for White. 13 c3 ♕d6 14 ♕f4
♕xf4 15 ♖xf4 ♗e4 is awkward:
13 ♕f4 and 14 c3 is the best,
leaving Black with a slight plus
but giving good drawing chances.

13 ♖f4 ♕d6!

A fine move from Alekhine.
White can now take the black d-
pawn but this leads to a very bad
game for White: 14 ♖xd5 ♕xh2+
15 ♖xh2 ♗xd5 and now the white
king is exposed and the d-pawn
under fire.

14 ♗fe1

14 c3 is best, preventing the
black cavalry from jumping into
b4.

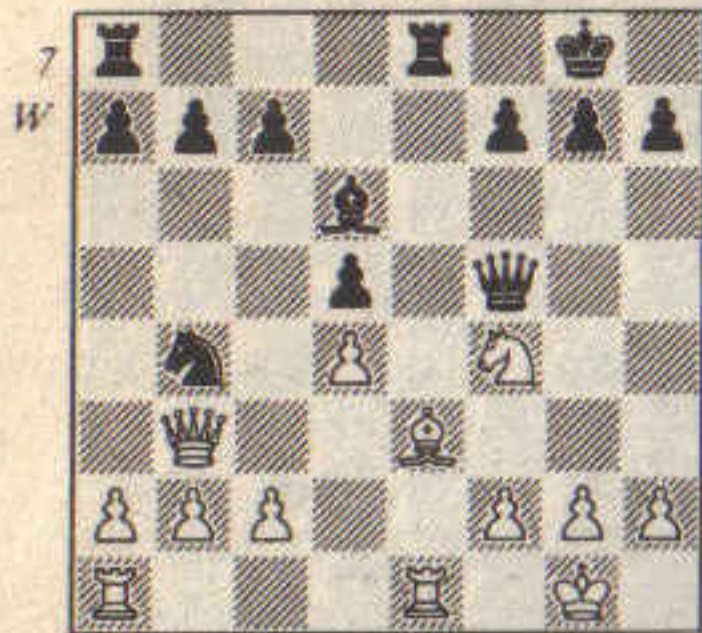
14 ... ♖b4
15 ♗b3

The Cuban wizard is oblivious
to the danger. 15 ♗d2, protecting
the rook on e1, is correct.

15 ... ♗f5 (7)

White should now bail out into
a bad ending with 16 ♖d3 ♖xd3
17 ♗xd3 ♗xd3 18 cd ♕b4 19 ♗ec1
c6 intending ... a5, but he overlooks
a tactical point.

16 ♗ac1? ♖xc2!



17 ♖xc2 ♔xf4

The culmination of Black's strategy. 17 ... ♔xf4 18 ♖c5 would allow White to regain his pawn but now he must attend to the threat of ... ♔xh2+.

18 g3 ♔f5
19 ♖ce2 b6
20 ♔b5 h5

This pawn prepares to advance to h3 where it can form a mating net.

21 h4 ♖e4

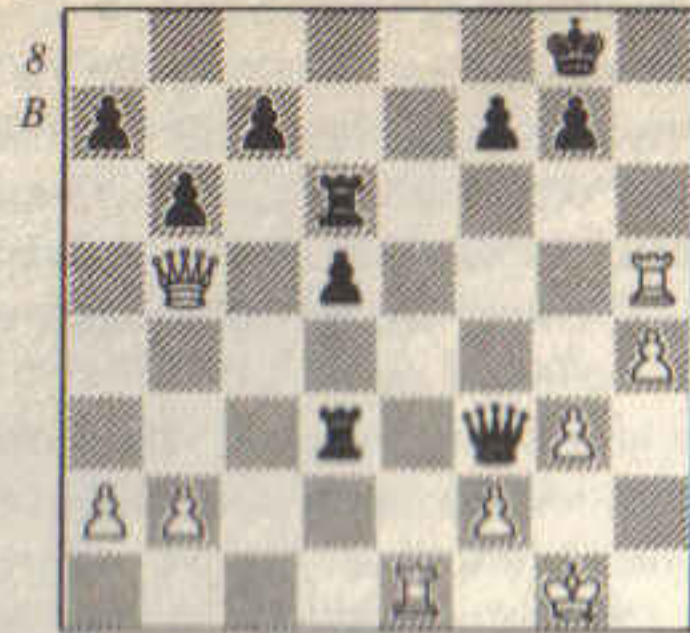
Black now plans to sacrifice his rook on h4 forcing mate but Capablanca defends spiritedly.

22 ♔d2 ♖xd4
23 ♔c3 ♖d3
24 ♔e5 ♖d8
25 ♔xd6 ♖xd6
26 ♖e5 ♔f3
27 ♖xh5 (8)

White is now threatening an immediate mate so Alekhine has no choice but to swap rooks.

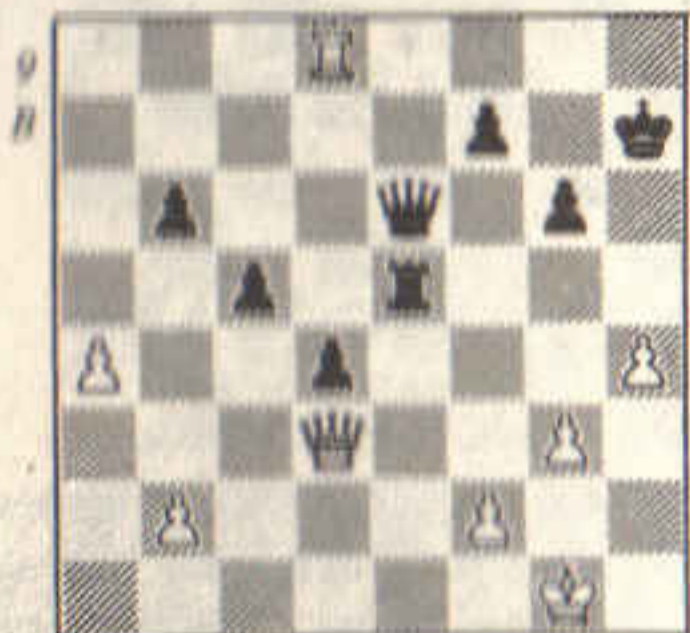
27 ... ♔xh5
28 ♖e8+ ♔h7
29 ♔xd3+ ♔g6
30 ♔d1 ♖e6!

A fine pawn sacrifice by Alekhine which enables him to take the



initiative again.

31 ♖a8 ♖e5
32 ♖xa7 c5
33 ♖d7 ♔e6
34 ♔d3+ g6
35 ♖d8 d4
36 a4 (9)



Alekhine could now have finished the game off with 36 ... ♔e7 37 ♖b8 ♔c7 38 ♖a8 ♔c6 when ... ♖e1+ is a devastating threat.

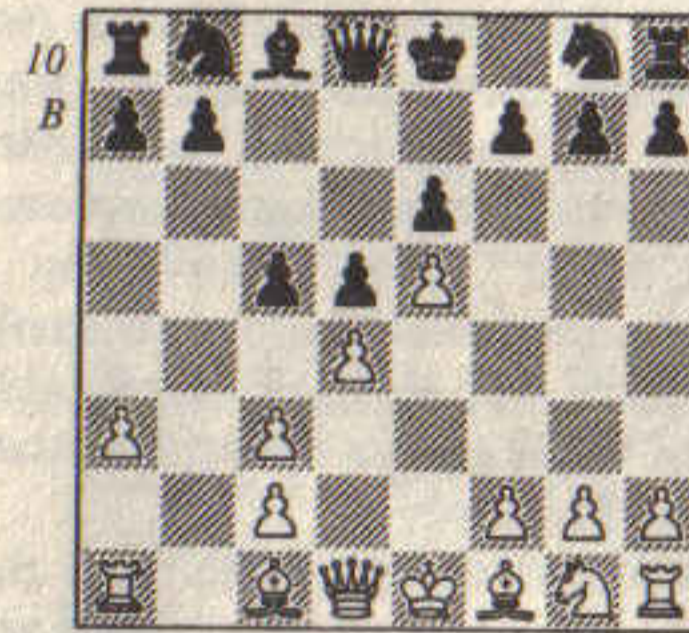
36 ... ♖e1+
37 ♔g2 ♔c6+
38 f3 ♖e3
39 ♔d1 ♔e6
40 g4 ♖e2+
41 ♔h3 ♔e3
42 ♔h1 ♔f4
43 h5 ♖f2

0-1

This game brought about the era of the Winawer since the feared exchange line had been shown to be innocuous. The great Botvinnik adopted the French as one of his main weapons using it just before the war and in his World Championship matches after the war.

Smyslov-Botvinnik
USSR Championship 1944

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♙b4
4 e5 c5
5 a3 ♙xc3+
6 bc (10)

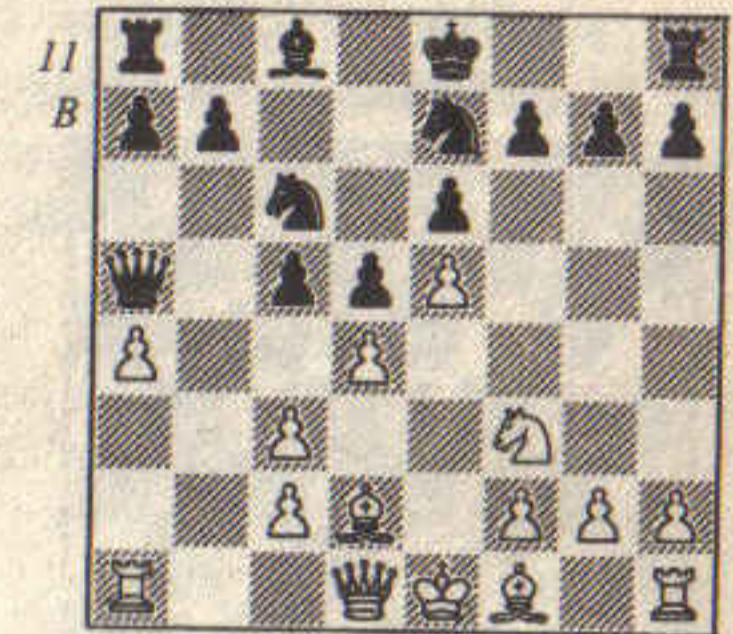


Smyslov and Botvinnik have had many theoretical duels with the Winawer over the years - Smyslov feeling that White is better because of his two bishops and kingside space advantage, and Botvinnik staunchly defending the Black point of view. White's queen-side weaknesses are the most important factor in the position.

6 ... ♙e7
7 a4

Later Smyslov chose the sharp 7 ♔g4 with some success against Botvinnik.

7 ... ♙bc6
8 ♙f3 ♔a5
9 ♙d2 (11)



9 ♔d2, not fearing a possible exchange of queens, is nowadays regarded as the best move in this position. The white QB usually belongs on the a3-f8 diagonal in this line. But Smyslov is hoping to build up a kingside attack.

9 ... c4

An important strategic decision. Botvinnik closes the Q-side and prepares to annex the white a-pawn, which has been cut off from the remainder of the white army. He judges that White's initiative on the kingside is not sufficient compensation for the a-pawn.

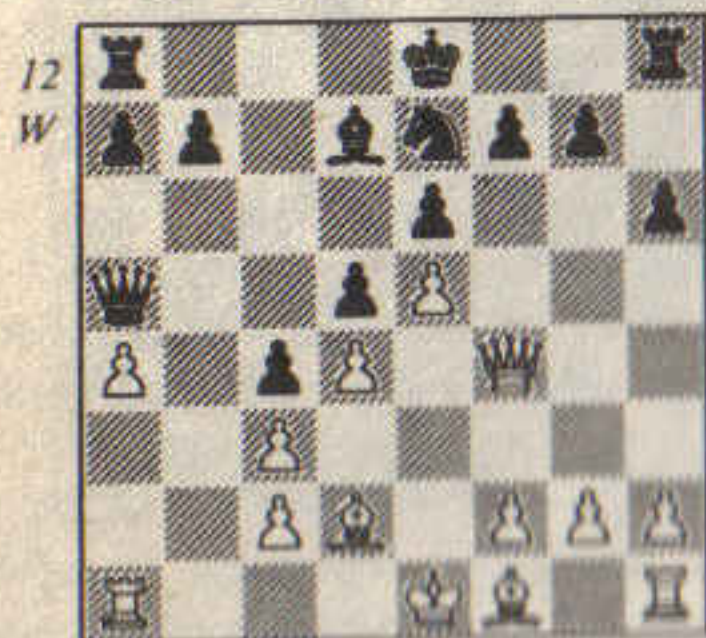
10 ♙g5

A strange move at first sight since Black can easily drive the knight back. Smyslov is planning to post this knight on h5 via h3 and f4. On h5 it ties down the whole black kingside, since ... g6 would allow the knight to settle on f6.

10 ... h6
11 ♖h3 ♗g6

Botvinnik is on the ball and prevents the white knight from reaching h5.

12 ♖f3 ♗d7
13 ♗f4 ♗xf4
14 ♖xf4 ♗e7 (12)



The opening is over and the middlegame begins. It seems like a race of attacks. Black will digest the a-pawn and then march in down the b-file; White will throw his pawns forward on the king-side. Black has the advantage since he can resist on the king-side whereas White's queen-side is vulnerable.

15 h4 ♗xa4
16 h5 ♖b5

Black threatens to invade on c2 and White must attend to this.

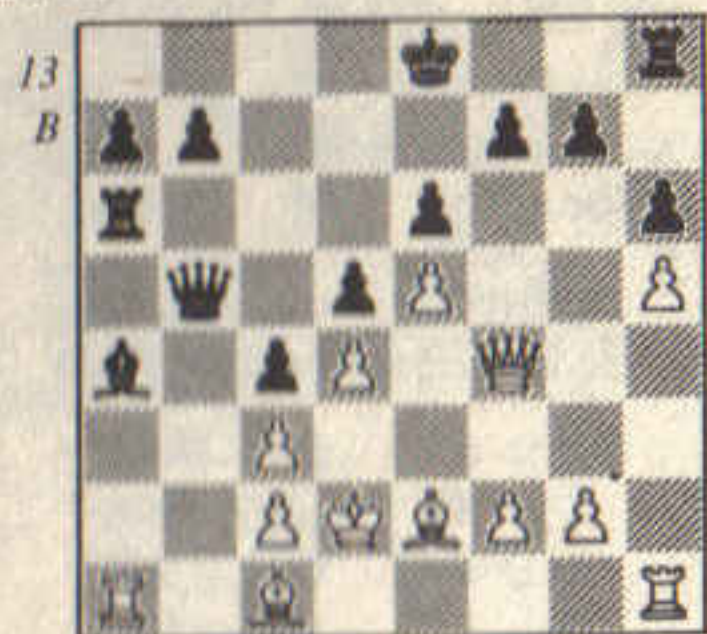
17 ♗d1 ♖c8
18 ♗c1 ♖c6
19 ♗e2

19 g4 is more vigorous and poses Black problems over stopping or dissuading White from the advance g5 followed by opening the g-file.

19 ... ♖a6

20 ♗d2 (13)

White is forced to play this because of Black's discovered attack on the white QR with ... ♗xc2+.



20 ... 0-0

A critical juncture of the game; Black has to decide where to put his king. He could have chosen to leave the monarch in the centre and simplify matters on the queen-side by 20 ... ♖b6 followed by ... ♗d7. Botvinnik decides to castle kingside but this is questionable since White gains a strong initiative.

21 g4

Smyslov does not fall into the trap with 21 ♗a3 ♗xc2 22 ♗xe7 ♖b2 when White is helpless against a deadly discovered check. Instead he hastens to blow up the black castled position with g5, thus forcing Botvinnik to take action immediately.

21 ... f6
22 ef ♖xf6
23 ♖c7 ♖f7
24 ♖d8+ ♗h7
25 f4

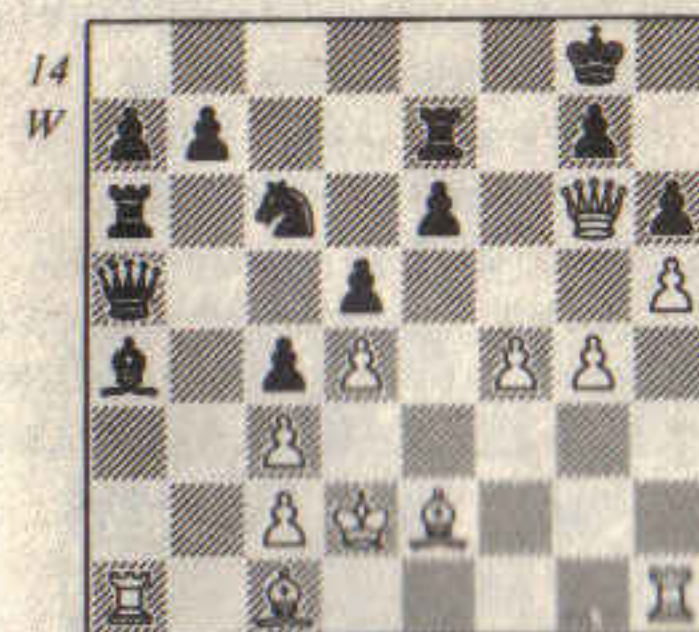
White has developed an attack. The g-pawn is ready to go to g6,

causing a big accident to the black king. Black's best course now is 25 ... ♖d7 26 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 27 ♖xa6 ba 28 ♗e3 with a balanced position. White cannot then push g5 without allowing the black steed to f5. Botvinnik instead chose a risky continuation.

25 ... ♖a5?!
26 ♖b8 ♗c6
27 ♖e8 ♖e7
28 ♖g6+

A mistake. 28 ♖f8 ♖d8 29 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 30 g5 gives White good prospects as the black knight cannot blockade on f5. Now the white queen is short of moves.

28 ... ♗g8 (14)



Botvinnik has prepared a surprise way of snaring the white queen using his rook on a6. Smyslov should now play g5 and gh, making an escape route.

29 ♗a3?! e5

This must have been something of a shock to Smyslov but possibly more accurate is 29 ... ♖c7 30 ♖h1 ♗b4! 31 ♗xb4 ♗e8 and Black should win.

30 fe?

The wrong capture by White. As

we shall see later 30 de would have retained equal chances.

30 ... ♗xd4
31 ♗b4 ♖d8
32 ♖xa6 ba
33 cd ♖b7

Now the black queen comes decisively to g5 with check, which would not have been the case after 30 de.

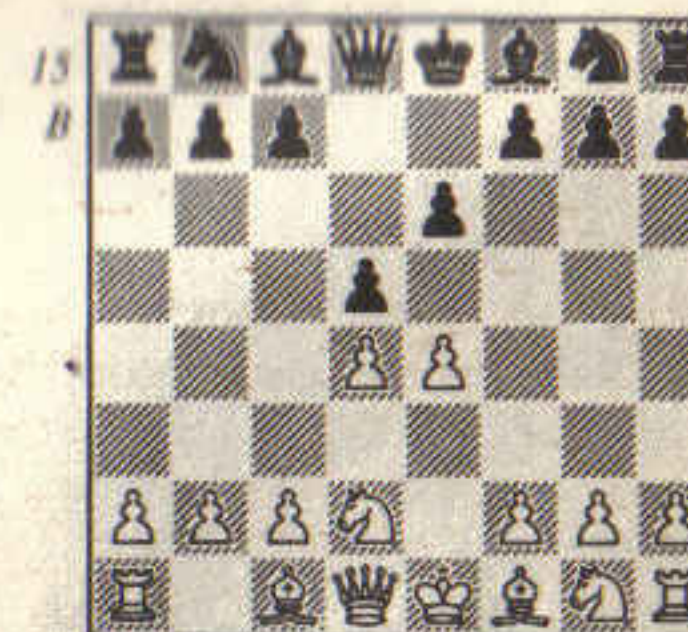
34 ♖xa4 ♖g5+
35 ♗d1 a5
36 ♗f3 ♖xb4
37 ♗xd5 ♗f8
38 ♖f1+ ♗e8
39 ♗c6+ ♗e7
40 ♖xb4 ♖xg4+

Here White sealed 41 ♗c1 but resigned over adjournment. After 41 ... ab Black wins easily.

Both Botvinnik and Alekhine adopted the Tarrasch variation when playing against the French Defence, which shows their belief in the Winawer.

Alekhine-Capablanca
AVRO 1938

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♗d2 (15)



The Tarrasch Variation, pioneered by Tarrasch in the late 1880's, is one of White's soundest ways of meeting the French Defence. White avoids the pin on his QN and thus deprives Black of his ready-made counterplay as in the Winawer. Qd2 does not put so much pressure on the centre as 3 c3 and consequently Black can open the game up if he wishes with $3 \dots \text{c5}$. Capablanca chose the main alternative $3 \dots \text{Qf6}$.

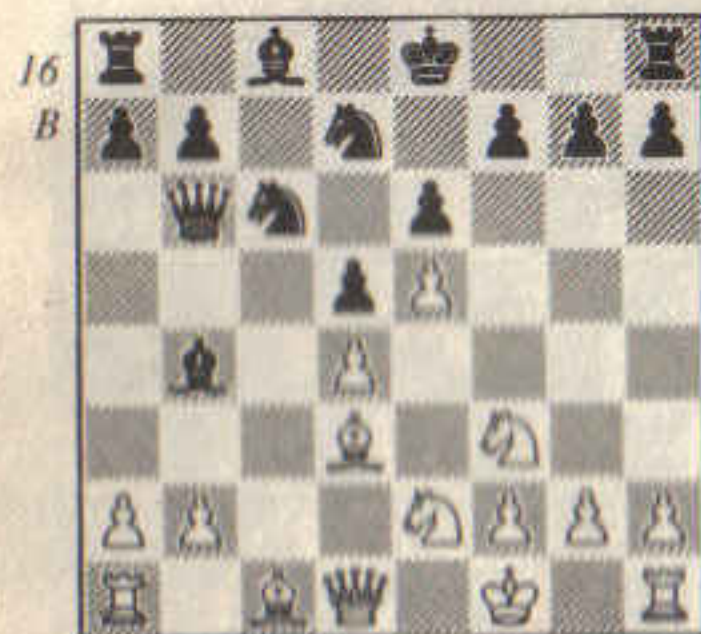
- 3 ... Qf6
4 e5

White now has the usual pawn wedge against the French with a big space advantage, but he has to maintain his terrain and wall on d4 and e5 and this is not an easy task.

- 4 ... Qfd7
5 Qd3 e5
6 e3 Qc6
7 Qe2 Wb6

Black is applying the pressure to d4 but White is able to keep control of this vital square.

- 8 Qf3 cd
9 cd Qb4+
10 $\text{Qf1!?$ (16)



A surprising move. White gives up the possibility of castling when he could have easily interposed the QB. Black is cramped and has very few squares for his pieces. Alekhine therefore avoids exchanges with the idea that the Black men will bump into each other.

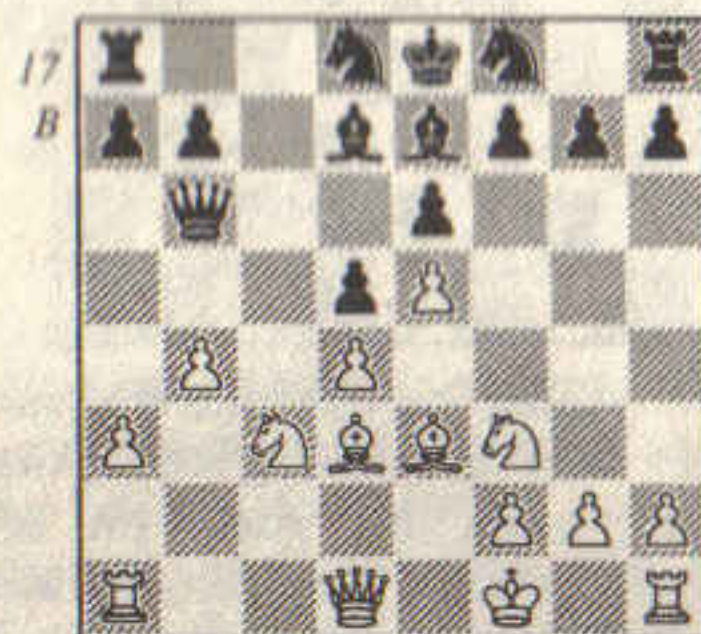
- 10 ... Qe7

The right strategy would be to break open the position with $\dots \text{f6}$ in order to gain some space for the pieces and launch an attack on the white king down the f-file.

- 11 a3 Qf8

Capablanca manoeuvres his men about but Alekhine increases his spaces advantage, going for a quick strangulation.

- 12 b4 Qd7
13 Qe3 Qd8
14 Qc3 (17)

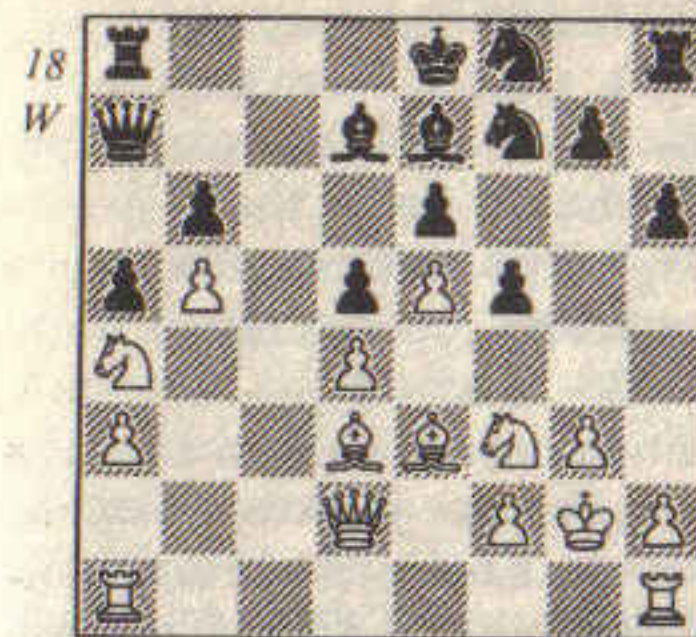


Alekhine prevents the exchange of light-squared bishops by $\dots \text{Qb5}$ and prepares to expand on both wings.

- 14 ... a5
15 Qa4 Wa7
16 b5 b6
17 g3 f5

At last Capablanca stakes on the kingside but it is too late.

- 18 Qg2 Qf7
19 Wd2 h6 (18)



Capablanca is ready to play $\dots \text{g5}$ but Alekhine grabs every inch of the board.

- 20 h4 Qh7
21 h5 Qfg5
22 Qh4 Qe4
23 Wb2 Qf7

Capablanca is now hoping to transfer his KR to the Q-side, but the black army is driven back before the rook can free itself.

- 24 f3 Qeg5
25 g4 fg
26 Qg6+ Qg8
27 f4 Qf3

The bold black knight leaps into the white camp but it has no good retreat. $27 \dots \text{Qf7}$ was dismal but correct.

- 28 Qxh7+ Kxh7
29 Qg6 Qd8
30 Kac1 Qe8
31 Qg3!

The white king moves in to kill the stranded horse.

- 31 ... Wf7
32 Qxg4 (19)



The black knight perishes and Black is still trapped in.

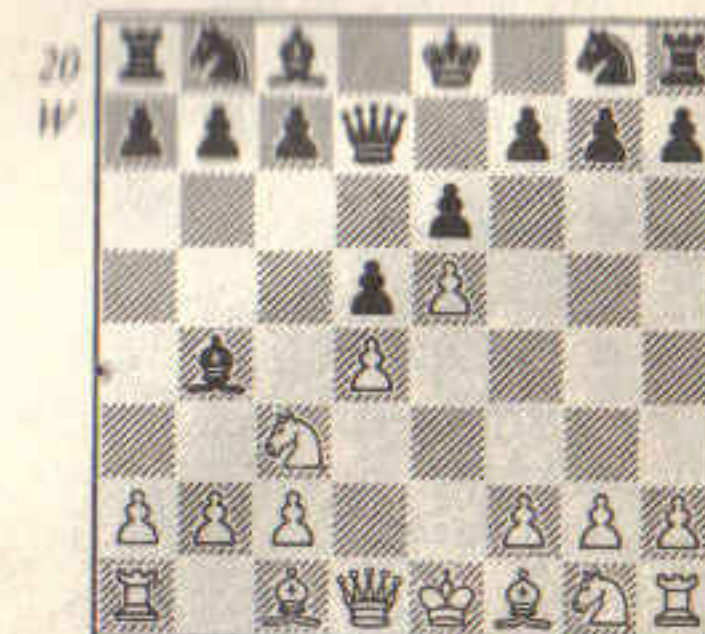
- 32 ... Qh4
33 Qxh4 Wxh5+
34 Qg3 Wf7
35 Qf3 h5

1-0

A game illustrating the dangers of passive play by Black in this line. Botvinnik's successor Petrosian also favoured the Winawer, but adopted a different system, involving the fianchetto of the QB.

F. Olafsson-Petrosian
Bled 1961

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 Qc3 Qb4
4 e5 Wd7 (20)



Black is planning to fianchetto his QB and then castle queenside; hence ... ♖d7. The position is closed, which is to the liking of Petrosian.

5 ♖g4

This attempts to take advantage of the absence of Black's KB from the kingside but Black is well placed to meet this queen sally. 5 ♗d2 followed by quick development is the best course for White.

5 ... f5

A useful move for Black since if White now captures en passant (6 e4 ♗xf6) Black gains a useful tempo for development.

6 ♖g3 b6

7 h4

White restrains a possible kingside pawn advance by Black with ... g5 and thus creates a good outpost for his knight on f4.

7 ... ♗b7

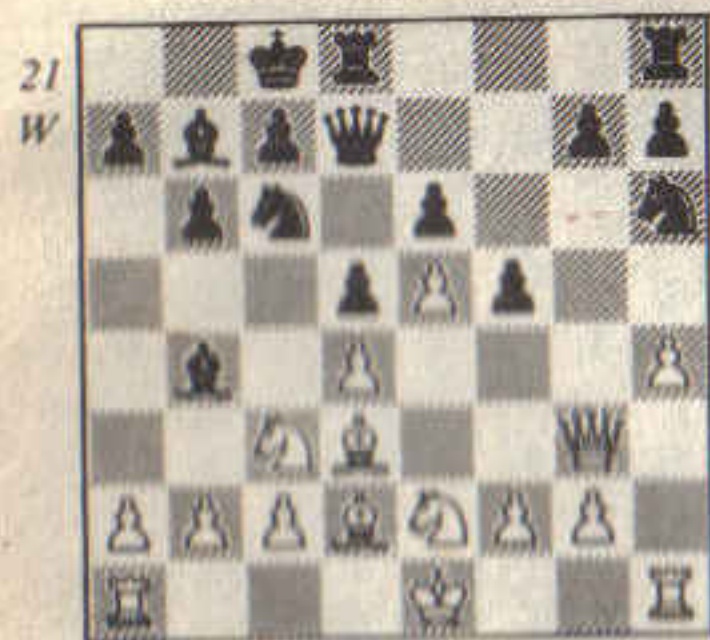
8 ♗d3

White's best plan is ♗d2 followed by ♗f3 and then to switch his QN to f4 via e2.

8 ... ♗c6

9 ♗e2 0-0-0

10 ♗d2 ♗h6 (21)



Petrosian judges that White will not surrender the two bishops in order to double Black's pawns, especially as Black then has the open g-file for his rooks.

11 a3 ♗e7

Now it would be too risky for White to take the g-pawn: 12 ♖xg7 ♗g4 and the white queen is trapped by ... ♗dg8 and ... ♗d8.

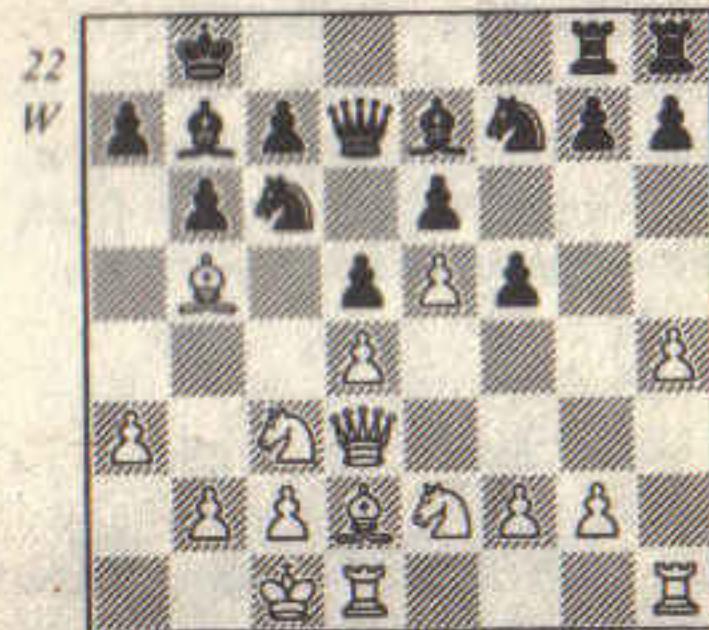
12 ♗b5

White now threatens to take the g-pawn because he can answer ... ♗g4 with ♗xc6 and then pin the Black KB with ♗g5. The pin will enable White to exchange dark-squared bishops and escape via g5.

12 ... ♗dg8

13 ♖d3 ♗f7

14 0-0-0 ♗b8 (22)



Petrosian's last move is clever. He prepares to unpin his QN by playing his queen to c8. Black will be able to gain the initiative on the kingside by advancing with g5 but first he secures the queenside. Such play is typical of Petrosian; he neutralizes any possible threats before proceeding with active play.

15 ♗f4 ♖c8

16 ♗ce2 ♗cd8

17 ♖b3

This move loses material due to the unharmonious disposition of the white pieces. 17 c3 c5 18 ♖b1 was the correct way to avert Black's pressure down the c-file.

17 ... c6

18 ♗d3 c5

White's central position collapses as c3 does not defend the pawn on d4 because of the pin down the c-file.

19 dc ♗xc5

20 ♗h3 ♗xe5

21 ♗f4 ♗f7

Black is not worried about the pin since he can play ... ♗d6 next move if necessary.

22 ♗b5 ♖a8

23 ♗d4 ♗g6

The black centre pawns get ready to trundle forwards, their counterparts having been removed.

24 ♖a4

Olafsson tries to complicate the issue as he is positionally lost.

24 ... ♗xd4

25 ♗d7 ♖f8

26 ♗xd4

26 ♗e6 gives White more swindling chances, but Black comes out on top after 26 ... ♗e5 27 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 28 ♗xd5 ♖b8 29 ♖c6+ ♖b7 30 ♖xb7+ ♖xb7 31 ♗d7+ ♖c6 32 ♗xf7 ♗xf4+ with an extra bishop.

26 ... e5! (23)

Black is all cooped up in one corner but White is unable to develop any dangerous threats and loses a piece.



27 ♗b4 ef

28 ♗xb6 ♗fe5

29 ♗xb7 ♖xb7

30 h5 ♖d6

31 hg ♖xd7

32 ♖xf4 ♗xg6

0-1

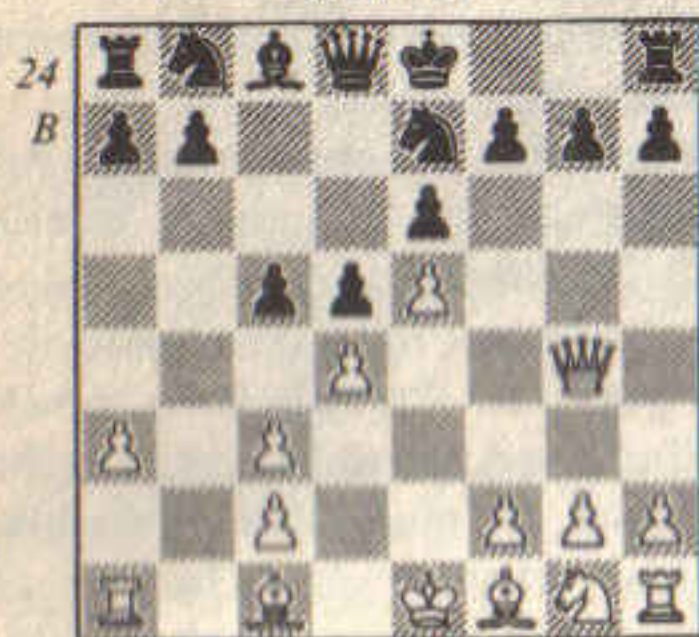
White has no compensation for Black's extra rook.

World Champions tend to set the fashion in the chess world. Both Spassky and Fischer chose 3 ♗c3 against the French and did not play the French themselves. Fischer had trouble against the Winawer, his successes depending on his native ability. In *My 60 Memorable Games* Fischer says: 'I may yet be forced to admit that the Winawer is sound. But I doubt it... The defence is anti-positional and weakens the kingside.' Karpov decided that the Winawer was too interesting for Black and chose the Tarrasch move 3 ♗d2 when meeting the French. Karpov loves positions where his opponents have no counterplay even if he only has a minute advantage to work with. So 3 ♗d2 became fashionable, but a champion of the

French, Korchnoi, showed that Black could achieve an equal game or minor disadvantage with 3 ... c5, and so far Karpov has not been able to prove otherwise. Korchnoi showed the virility of the Winawer in his candidates' match with Spassky.

**Spassky-Korchnoi
Candidates' Final (2) 1977**

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♗b4
- 4 e5 c5
- 5 a3 ♗xc3+
- 6 bc ♖e7
- 7 ♖g4 (24)



Spassky chooses the sharpest continuation aiming to profit from the absence of the black KB. This line is very double-edged with winning chances for both sides.

- 7 ... cd

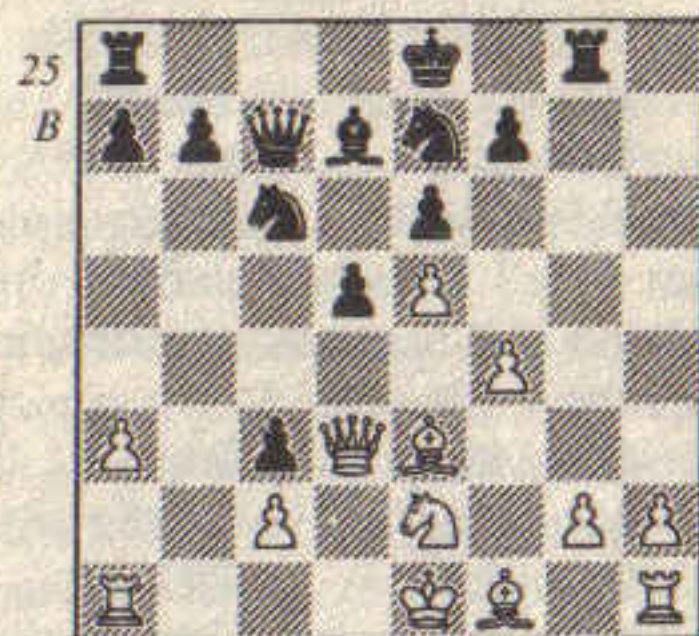
Black sacrifices his kingside pawns in order to gain a lead in development and attacking chances.

- 8 ♖xg7 ♗g8
- 9 ♖xh7 ♖c7
- 10 ♖e2 ♖bc6

White cannot now recapture on

d4 because of ... ♗xd4 and therefore must attend to his e-pawn.

- 11 f4 ♗d7
- 12 ♖d3 dc
- 13 ♗e3 (25)



After the initial struggle the game is taking shape. White has a passed h-pawn which he hopes one day will promote. Black is ahead in development and is planning an attack on the white monarch which is in the centre. At the moment the white king is in no danger, but Korchnoi finds a fine pawn sacrifice.

- 13 ... d4!

This pawn sacrifice opens the c6-g2 diagonal for the black QB and the d-file if White accepts the pawn. Spassky does not take the pawn immediately since 14 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♗d5 is awkward, and 15 ♖xd4 ♗f5 is good for Black.

- 14 ♗f2 0-0-0
- 15 ♗xd4 ♗xd4
- 16 ♖xd4

Now Spassky is aiming at a7, so Korchnoi must protect this point first.

16 ... b6
16 ... ♗c6 17 ♖xa7 is unclear as is 16 ... ♗c6 17 ♖xc3.

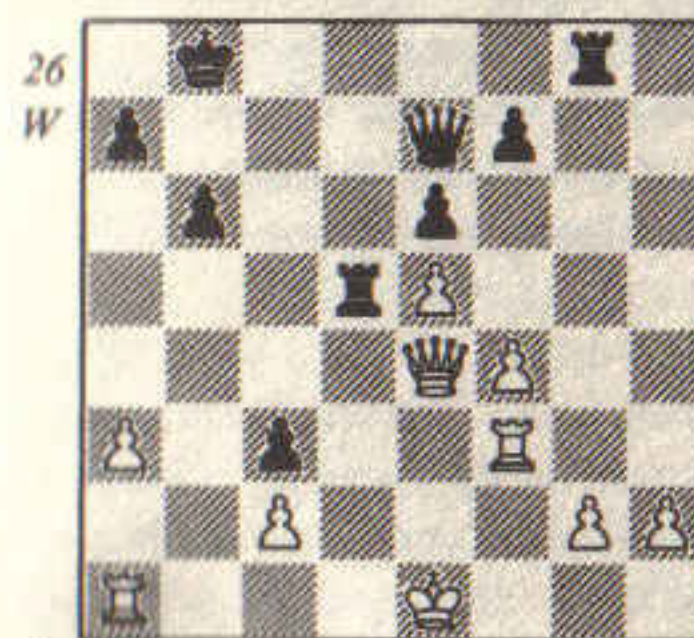
- 17 ♗h4

A useful pin - Black cannot escape with a knight move attacking the queen because his queen is under fire after ♗xd8.

- 17 ... ♗b5
- 18 ♖e4 ♗xf1
- 19 ♗xf1?!

Spassky should have taken a draw here with 19 ♖a8+ ♗d7 20 0-0-0+ ♗d5 21 ♗xd5+ ed 22 ♖xd5+ ♗c8 23 ♖a8+ with perpetual check on d5 and a8. Now his king is stuck in the centre for ever.

- 19 ... ♗d5
- 20 ♗xe7 ♖xe7
- 21 ♗f3 ♗b8 (26)



- 22 ♗f1

A good move here would have been g3, preventing the queen

invasion on h4. On 22 ... ♗d2 23 ♗xc3 ♗xh2 24 0-0-0 is good for White, but 23 ... ♗gd8 is unclear. Now the white king is hounded until the end of the game.

- 22 ... ♗d2
- 23 ♗f2 ♗gd8
- 24 ♖f3 ♗xf2+
- 25 ♗xf2 ♗d2+
- 26 ♗g3 ♖d8

A fine move, tying down the white queen to the defence of the g-pawn - 27 ♖xc3 now loses to 27 ... ♖g8.

- 27 ♖e4 ♖g8+
- 28 ♗h3 ♖h8+
- 29 ♗g3 ♖g7+
- 30 ♗h3 ♗d8
- 31 g4 ♗h8+
- 32 ♗g3 ♖h6
- 33 ♖g2 ♖h4+
- 34 ♗f3 ♗d8

White is now completely tied up and cannot prevent the black rook from coming back to d2.

- 35 ♖g3 ♖e7
- 36 g5

36 ♗e1, bringing the rook over to the defence, is much better.

- 36 ... ♗d2
- 37 ♗g4 ♖b7
- 38 ♖xc3 ♗g2+
- 39 ♗h3 ♗f2
- 40 ♗g4 ♖e4

0-1

After 41 ♖g3 ♗g2 wins.

2 Important Positional Themes in the French

Before starting on a detailed analysis of the variations involved in the French Defence, it seems logical to deal with some of the positional themes which will occur again and again. The French is a solid opening; Black sets up a wall on e6 and d5 and stakes his claim to the light squares in the centre. In contrast, White normally establishes a central pawn wedge on d4 and e5. Black's pawn centre on e6 and d5 limits the scope of his light-squared bishop and this will be our first positional theme. Then we will look at the effect of

White's pawn wedge on d4 and e5 and Black's play against this pawn chain, involving breaks such as ... f6 and ... c5.

Black often obtains static pawn weaknesses after attacking White's foot soldiers on d4 and e5. We shall assess these pawn weaknesses and their relation to the increased activity of the black pieces.

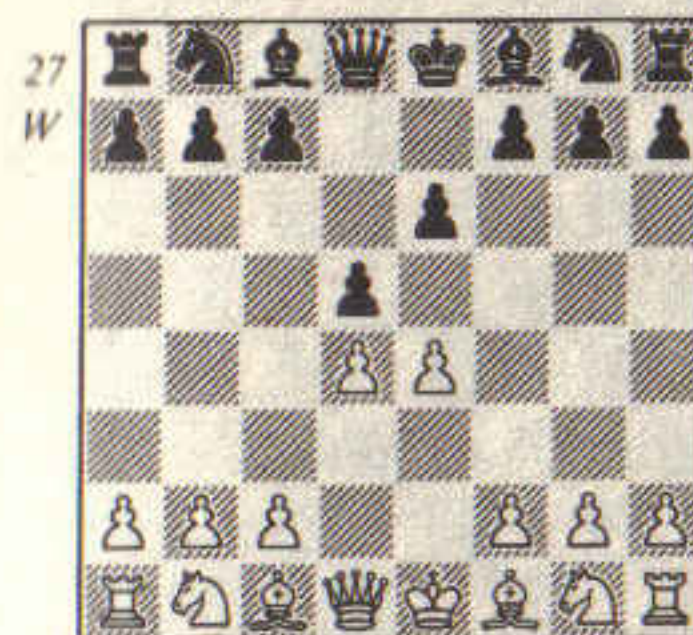
We thus examine the following themes:

- I Black's Queen's Bishop
- II White's Central Pawn Wedge
- III The Backward e-pawn
- IV The Isolated d-pawn

3 Black's Queen's Bishop

Let us consider the position after the opening moves of the French Defence:

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5 (27)



White has no problems over the development of his minor pieces, but Black has already restricted the scope of his light-squared bishop by playing ... e6. The black e-pawn is unlikely to advance and thus the bishop has little future on the c8-h3 diagonal. It can be developed on b7 after ... b6 or on c6 via d7, but often the black d-pawn is fixed on d5, blocking the action of the bishop. A more favourable post for the cleric is on a6, possibly involving an exchange with White's light-squared bishop. In order to draw the reader's attention to the importance of the development of Black's QB we

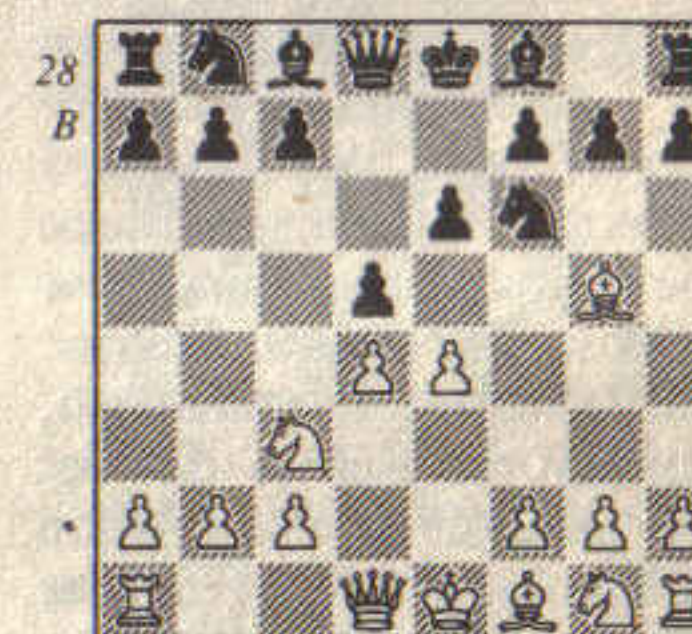
shall examine a famous game Tarrasch-Teichmann, San Sebastian 1912. In this game the impotence of the black QB is the decisive factor.

Tarrasch-Teichmann San Sebastian 1912

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3

In the late nineteenth century Tarrasch had pioneered 3 ♘d2, the favourite of the current World Champion Karpov. Although he was successful with 3 ♘d2, Tarrasch believed it to be inferior because Black could safely play 3 ... c5.

- 3 ... ♘f6
- 4 ♙g5 (28)



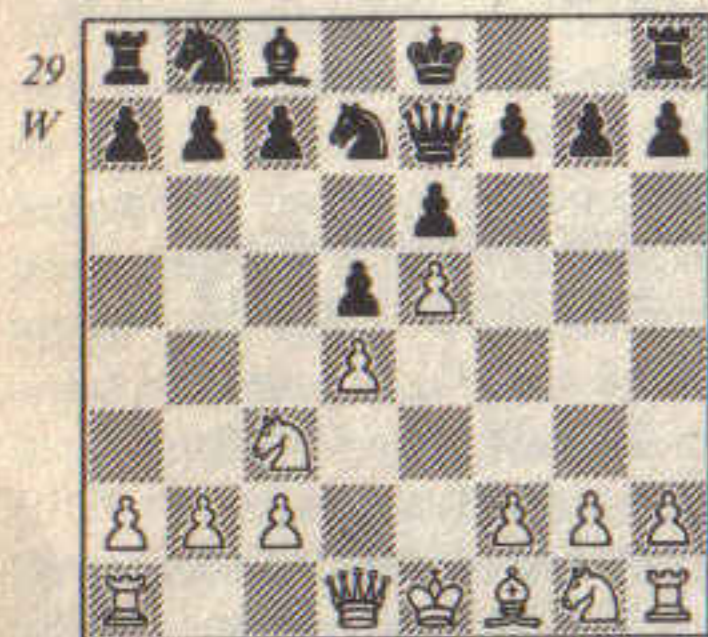
The Classical Variation. White puts pressure on Black by means

of a pin. Black has a choice between the counterattacking 4 ... ♖b4 (MacCutcheon), 4 ... de (Rubinstein/Burn) and 4 ... ♖e7.

4 ... ♖e7
5 e5 ♖fd7

5 ... ♖e4 is interesting and active but probably less sound than the text.

6 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 (29)



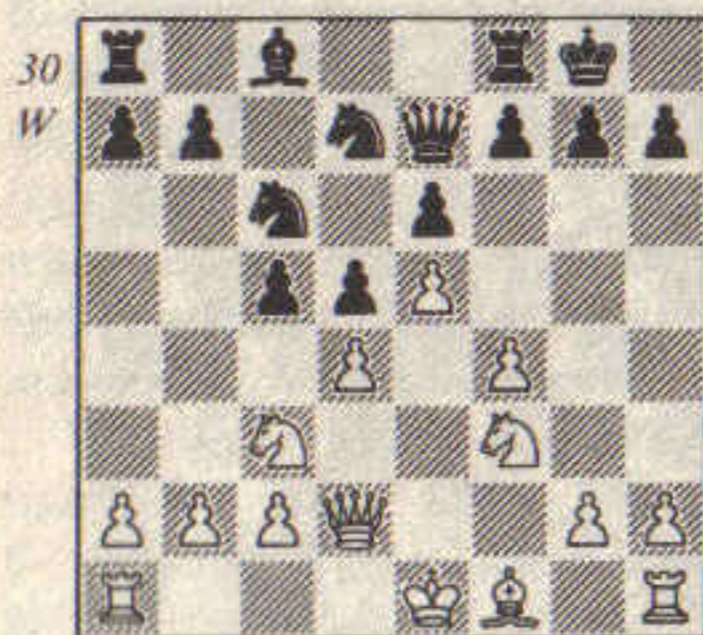
The basic position of the Classical French which has been reached regularly since the nineteenth century. White has a space advantage and freer development for his pieces. The black QB is badly boxed in at the moment. Black's chances reside in his pawn breaks against the white pawn centre - ... f6 and ... c5 will respectively open the f-file and c-file for the black army. Black must be careful when playing these breaks that, after the white pawns on d4 and e5 have been exchanged, the squares d4 and e5 do not become outposts for the white men. White has attacking chances on the kingside and will often himself castle queenside in order to start a pawn storm on the king-

side, but this does of course give Black counterplay on the queenside.

7 ♖d2

A multi-purpose move. White gives himself the option of castling queenside, and prepares to transfer his knight from c3 to e2 or d1 in order to shore up his pawn on d4 by playing c3.

7 ... 0-0
8 f4 c5
9 ♖f3 ♖c6 (30)



Black is pressing on the white centre and White has to decide which side to castle. Tarrasch chooses to bolster up his pawn chain and develop his KB on g2.

10 g3

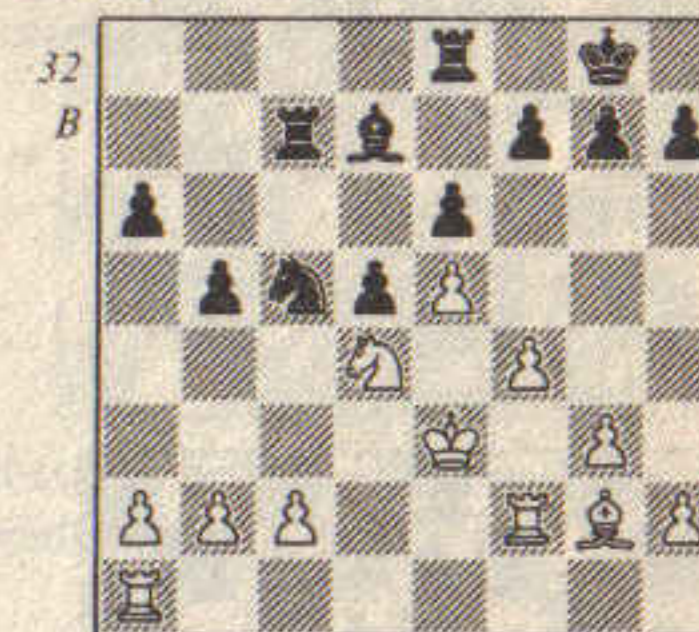
This is a slow form of development. The alternatives are 10 0-0-0 and 10 dc.

10 ... a6
11 ♖g2 b5?

This thrust is premature. Black should normally play this advance only when White has castled long. Black can no longer control c5 with a pawn and this leads to trouble in the endgame. In addition, the black light-squared

19 ♖e3 ♖e8
20 ♖f2! (32)

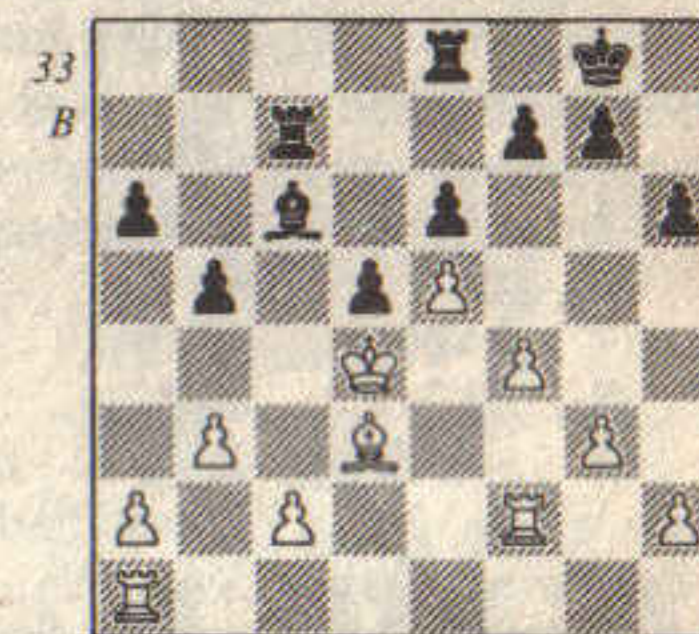
White makes room for his bishop to transfer to d3.



20 ... ♖b7
21 ♖f1 ♖a5
22 b3 h6

This is a mistake since White can open lines on the kingside by fixing this pawn with h4-h5 and then by pushing g4-g5.

23 ♖d3 ♖c6
24 ♖xc6 ♖xc6
25 ♖d4 (33)



Now one black rook is tied down to the defence of c5.

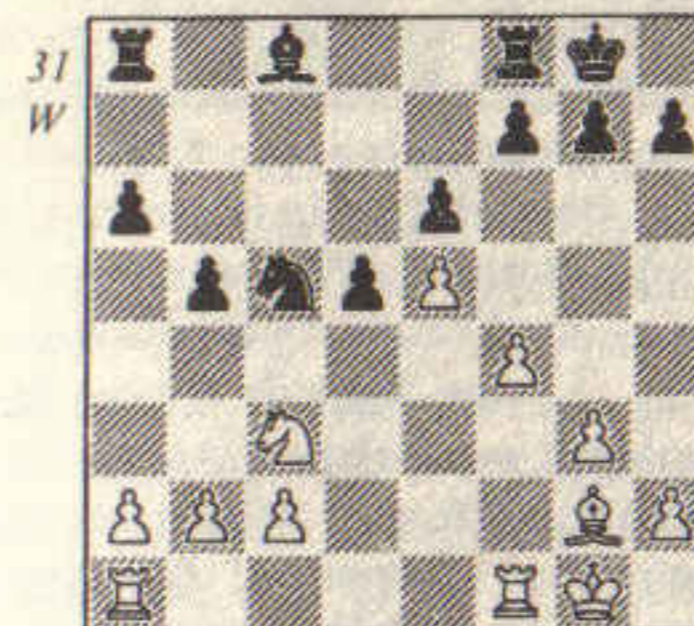
25 ... ♖d7
26 g4 ♖c8
27 h4 g6
28 ♖h1 ♖g7

bishop is severely restricted.

12 0-0 cd

It is difficult to find a decent plan for Black as White has good chances on the kingside if Black does not simplify the position.

13 ♖xd4 ♖xd4
14 ♖xd4 ♖c5
15 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 (31)



Now it seems that the position is not too bad for Black since he can gain some play down the c-file, but White's c-pawn is easily defended. White has a fine post on d4 for his knight and the black bishop is badly blocked in. White has prospects of a gradual pawn advance on the kingside in order to open some files for his rooks to infiltrate the enemy lines.

16 ♖e2 ♖d7
17 ♖d4 ♖ac8
18 ♖f2

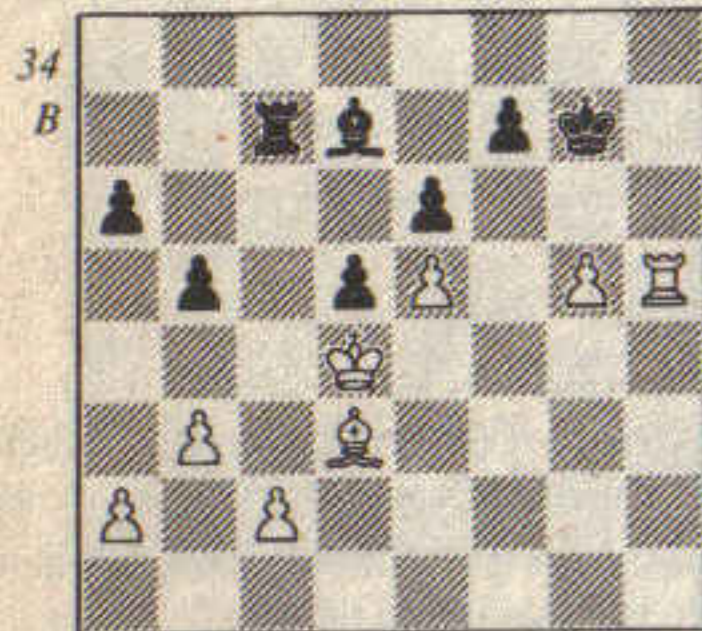
Tarrasch brings his king over to the queenside with the idea of breaking into the black position via c5. This threat compels Black to cover c5 with a piece, thus leaving White with a superiority in forces elsewhere.

18 ... ♖c7

29 h5 ♖h8
30 ♖fh2

In effect, White has an extra rook on the kingside since Black must prevent the white king from invading on c5.

30 ... ♔d7
31 g5 hg
32 fg ♖xh5
33 ♖xh5 gh
34 ♖xh5 (34)



The culmination of White's strategy; Black cannot prevent the invasion by the white rook and has been reduced to moving his bishop to and fro.

34 ... ♔f8
35 ♖h8+ ♔e7
36 g6 fg
37 ♔xg6 b4
38 ♖h7+ ♔d8
39 ♔d3 ♖c3

The losing move. Black had good drawing chances with 39 ... ♖c6 followed by bringing the king to c7. Tarrasch should have played 38 ♔d3 instead of ♖h7+, leaving Black's king on the kingside away from the defence of his pawns.

40 a3 a5

41 ♖h8+ ♔e7
1-0

After 42 ♖a8 Black loses his a-pawn and the game.

Black lost this game primarily because of his bad bishop and weaknesses on the dark squares. Now we have seen the danger of being saddled with a bad bishop we can turn our attention to how to avoid this problem. The easiest way of developing the QB is to play ... b6 and ♔a6 before moving the knight on b8. The exchange of light-squared bishops often favours Black in the French since his pawns are on light squares, thus leaving his KB with a free run and giving him control of the light squares since White has no light-squared bishop.

We shall begin by considering a complete game with an exchange of light-squared bishops and then move on to some specific examples.

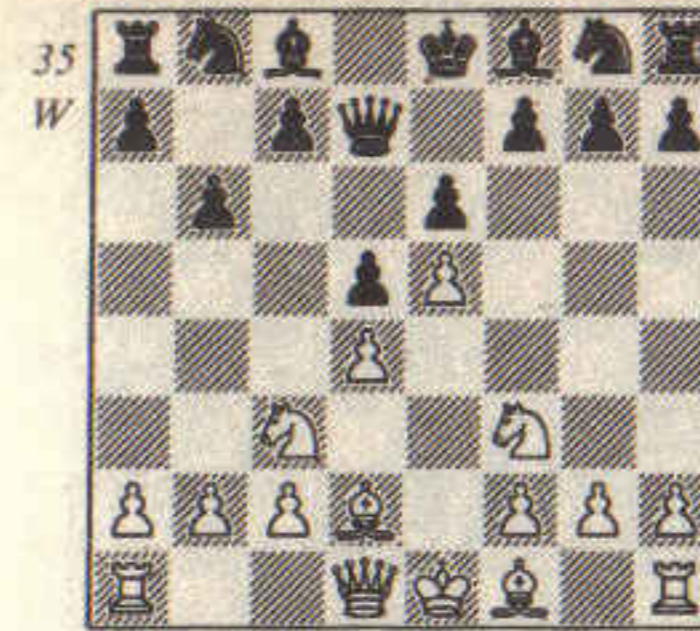
Timman-Seirawan
Lone Pine 1978

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♘b4
4 e5 ♖d7

As we have seen, Petrosian favoured this move which often heralds queenside castling by Black.

5 ♔d2 b6
6 ♘f3 ♔f8 (35)

This last move by Seirawan needs some explanation. 6 ... ♔a6 is the natural move to which White could make several replies:



7 ♔e2, 7 ♔xa6 or 7 ♘e2. If White does play ♘e2, offering the exchange of dark-squared bishops, Black would like to have a suitable retreat for the bishop. At the moment the black KB can easily go back to f8, but if Black has played ... ♘e7 or ... c5 this is impossible. So Seirawan's move is directed against a later ♘e2 by White, giving him the option of attacking the white centre with ... c5.

7 ♔e2 ♔a6
8 0-0 ♘e7
9 ♔xa6 ♘xa6
10 ♖e2

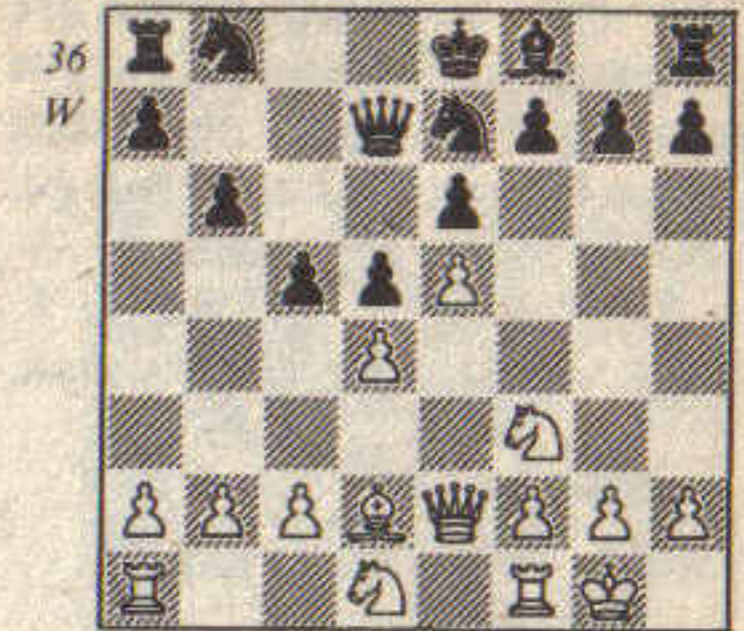
10 ♘e2 was a better idea; the knight will be well placed on f4, aiming to post itself on h5.

10 ... ♘b8

Black is behind in development but with the centre blocked this is not a great disadvantage.

11 ♘d1 e5 (36)

Now if White supports the d4 point with c3 then Black can develop satisfactorily with ... ♘bc6, ... ♘g6 and ♔e7. Black will then have slightly better chances because of his superior bishop. Timman



decides to try to open up the position.

12 dc bc
13 c4 d4
14 ♘e1 h5!

A fine move which crops up often in the French Defence. Black now has a good safe square on f5 for his knight.

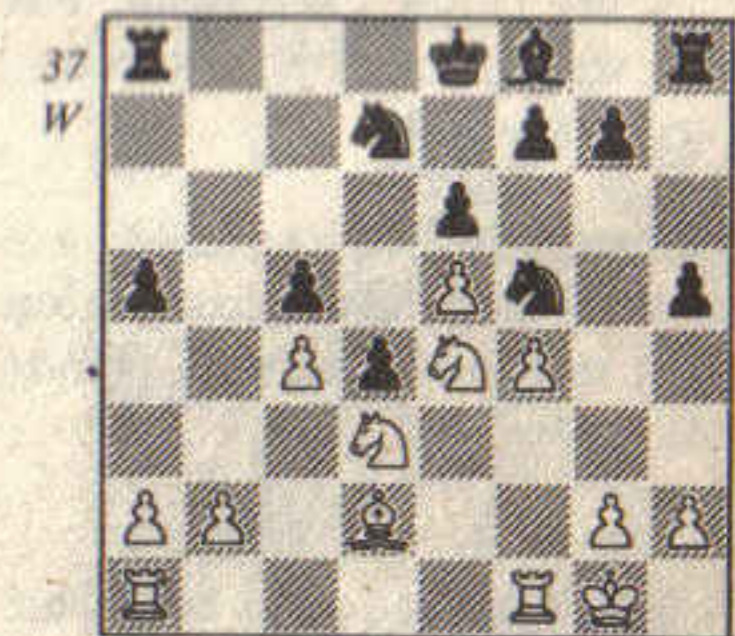
15 ♘d3 ♘f5
16 f4

16 f3 is better as the pawn on f4 blocks in White's bishop.

16 ... ♖b7
17 ♘1f2 ♘d7

Seirawan has carefully defended his pawn on c5 against the double attack by the white knights.

18 ♖e4 ♖xe4
19 ♘xe4 a5 (37)



The white queenside pawns are now restrained. White's only active plan is to drive away the black steed on f5 by g3, h3 and then g4.

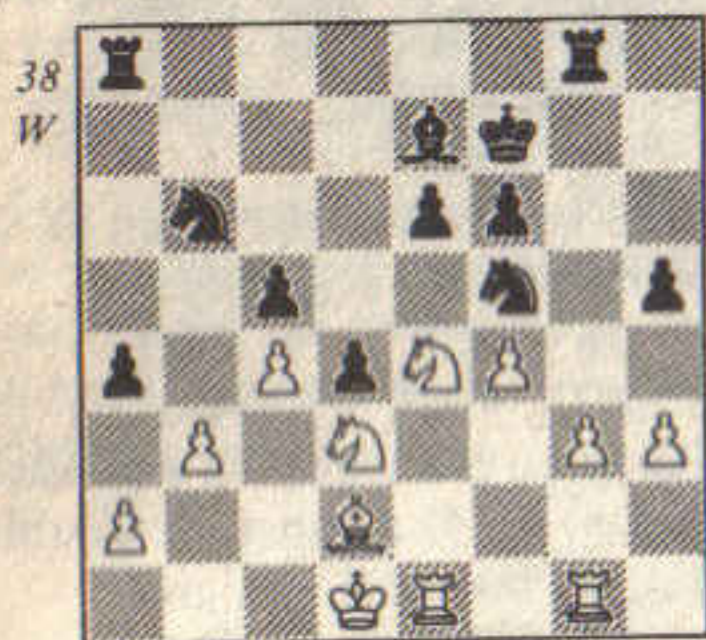
- 20 g3 ♖e7
21 ♖f2 ♖h6

Black anticipates White's plan.

- 22 h3 f5
23 e4 g4
24 ♖ae1 ♖f7
25 ♖e2

Timman brings the king over to the queenside but it was necessary to keep the monarch for the defence of the kingside.

- 25 ... ♖hg8
26 ♖d1 ♖f5
27 ♖g1 ♖b6
28 b3 a4 (38)



Black now breaks through to the white king. Seirawan has calculated that he does not need to defend his c-pawn.

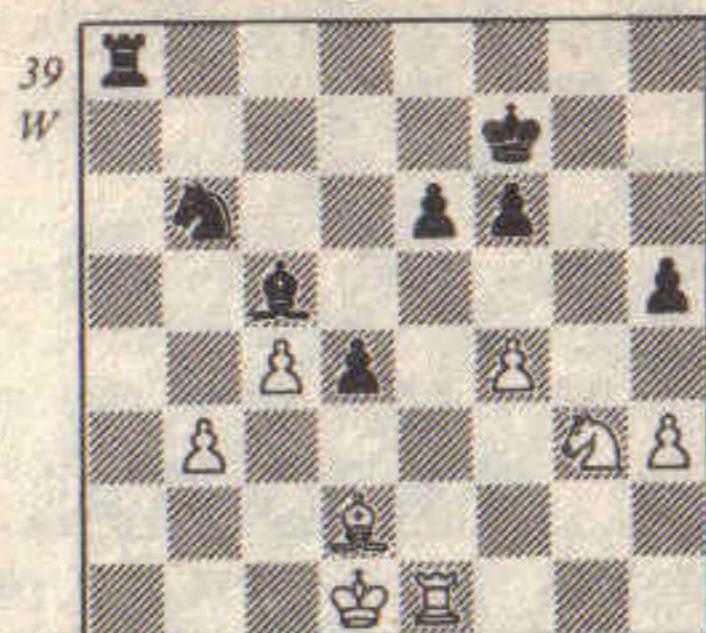
- 29 ♖dxc5

The passive 29 ♖c1 would have prevented the following attack but would not have offered White much hope.

- 29 ... ab
30 ab ♖xg3!

A fine combination by Seirawan.

- 31 ♖xg3 ♖xg3
32 ♖xg3 ♖xc5 (39)



White cannot gobble the black h-pawn because after 33 ♖xh5 ♖a3 34 ♖c2 ♖a2+ 35 ♖d1 ♖b2 he loses his b-pawn and then his c-pawn drops off.

- 33 f5 e4
34 ♖xf5 d3

The triumphant advance of the d-pawn.

- 35 ♖c3 ♖a3
36 ♖d2 ♖xb3
37 ♖a1

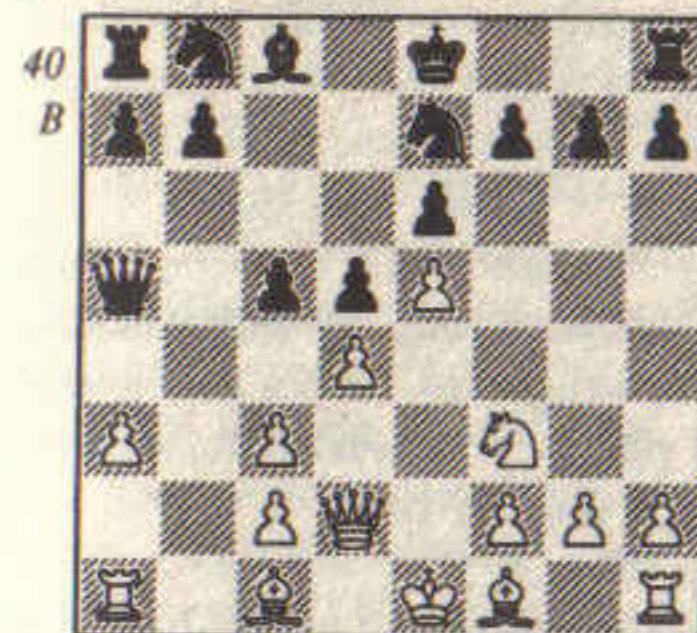
37 ♖xd3 loses a piece to 37 ... ♖a4 38 ♖c1 ♖b4.

- 37 ... ♖b4
38 ♖a7+ ♖g6
39 ♖e7+ ♖g5
40 ♖xb4 ♖xc4+
41 ♖e1 ♖xb4
42 ♖d7 ♖b1+
43 ♖f2 ♖b2+
44 ♖g1 d2

0-1

A very fine game by Seirawan, showing some of the potential of the French Defence. The exchange of light-squared bishops left Black with the better bishop and a good post for his knight on f5. Note-

worthy was the retreat ... ♖f8 to avoid the exchange of dark-squared bishops. Now we shall look at some further examples featuring the black QB. (40)



This position is from a game Hindle-Botterill, British Championship Brighton 1977 and arose from a Winawer. Black now decided to exchange the light-squared bishops.

- 8 ... b6

An interesting continuation which deserves more attention since it is positionally well motivated.

- 9 dc bc
10 ♖b1

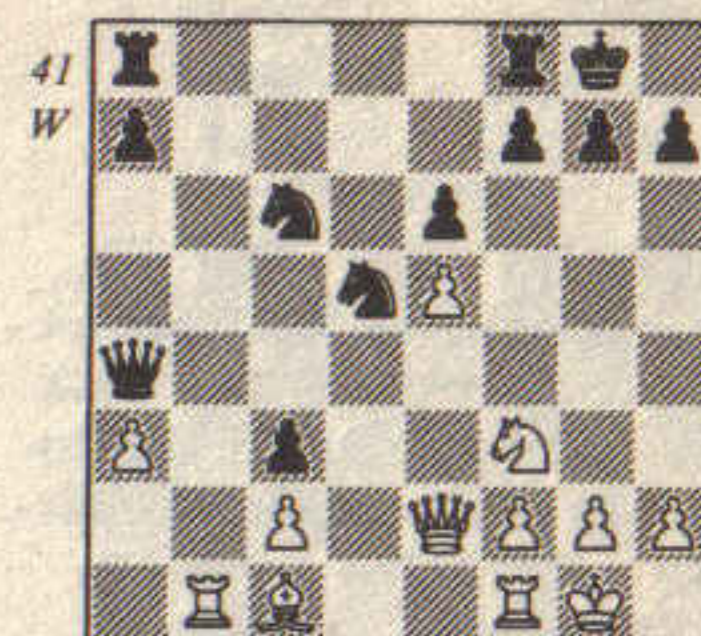
This move does not seem energetic enough. 10 c4 sets Black the most problems.

- 10 ... ♖a6
11 c4 ♖a4

The exchange of queens is bad for Black: 11 ... ♖xd2+ 12 ♖xd2 and Black is unable to develop his QN, e.g. 12 ... ♖d7 13 cd ♖xf1 14 de.

- 12 cd ♖xd5
13 ♖d3 ♖c6
14 0-0 c4

- 15 ♖e2 c3
16 ♖d1 ♖xe2
17 ♖xe2 0-0 (41)

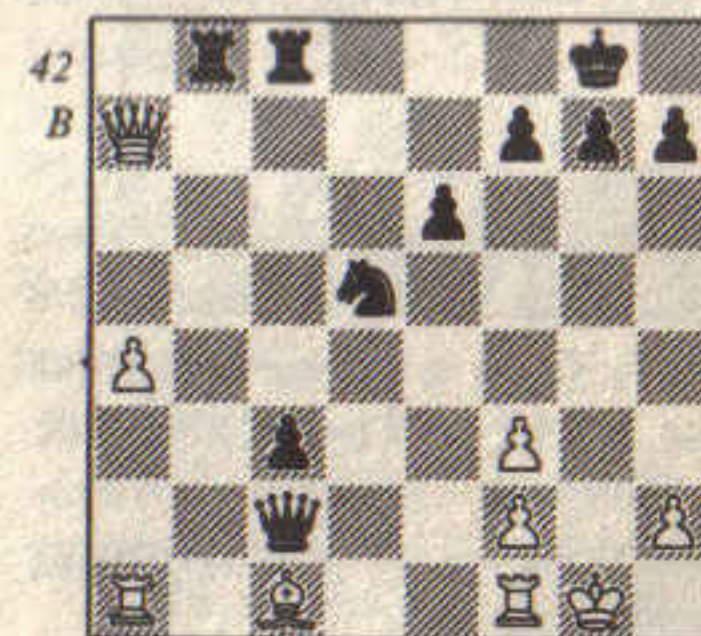


The exchange of light-squared bishops has allowed Black to make good progress. His knight on d5 is superbly placed and White will have great difficulty removing it. White's c1 bishop has little scope and his pawn on c2 is vulnerable. He now tries in vain to break the stranglehold.

- 18 ♖b5 ♖xc2

Now after 19 ♖xc6 ♖xb1 the bishop has no useful discovery.

- 19 ♖a1 ♖fc8
20 a4 ♖ab8
21 ♖c5 ♖xe5
22 ♖xa7 ♖xf3+
23 gf (42)



Black has a winning position due to the wrecked white king-side.

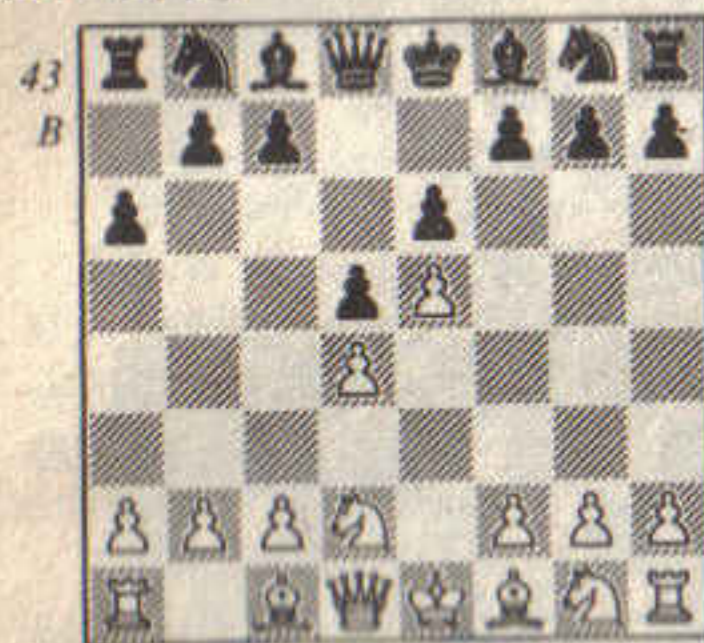
- 23 ... ♖g6+
- 24 ♔h1 ♖h5
- 25 ♔g2 ♖b4
- 26 ♗d7 ♖f8
- 27 a5 ♖f4!

The decisive move. White cannot protect f3 nor take the rook because of mate, so he has to remove the black knight with his queen.

- 28 ♗xd5 ♖g4+
- 29 fg ♗xg4+
- 30 ♔h1 ed
- 31 a6 ♗f3+
- 32 ♔g1 d4
- 33 a7 ♖a8
- 34 ♖e1 h6
- 35 ♖a4 d3

0-1

The black QB may also be developed to an active position via d7, as the following examples show. (43)



This is from a game Krogius-Kärner, Sochi 1977 and started off as a Tarrasch Variation. Black now sparked off some interesting play with . . .

4 ... ♔d7!?

This prepares to exchange the light-squared bishops by ... ♔b5. White could prevent this directly by 5 a4 but after 5 ... c5 6 c3 ♔c6 and a capture on d4, the b4 square would become an ideal outpost for the black pieces.

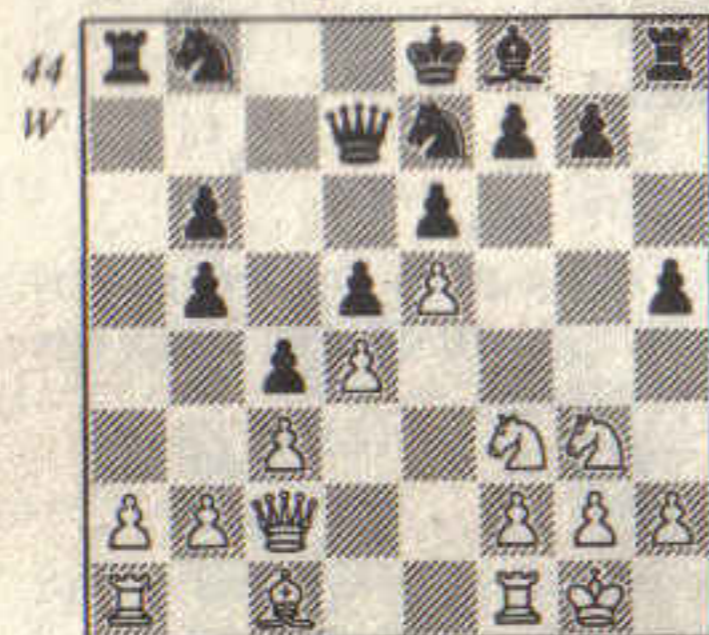
- 5 ♔df3 ♔b5
- 6 ♔xb5?!

An inaccuracy. White should not exchange on b5 as this gives Black pressure down the half open a-file. 6 ♔d3 is best.

- 6 ... ab
- 7 ♗d3 ♗d7
- 8 ♔e2 b6

A good alternative was 8 ... ♗c6, aiming to exchange queens by ... ♗c4. If then 9 b3 b4! is promising for Black.

- 9 0-0 c5
- 10 c3 c4
- 11 ♗c2 ♔e7
- 12 ♔g3 h5 (44)



- 13 ♔g5 ♔g6
- 14 ♔h4 ♔xh4
- 15 ♔xh4 ♔e7
- 16 ♔xe7 ♗xe7
- 17 a4

17 f4 g6 18 a3 would lead to an

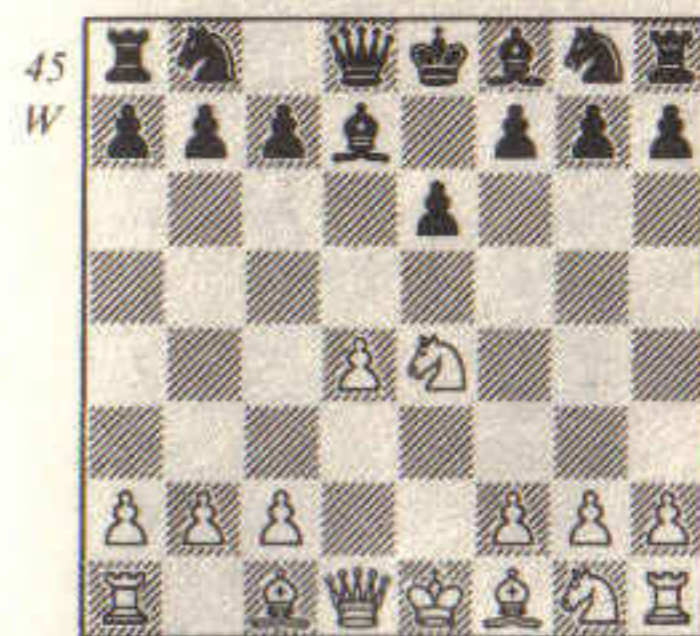
equal position.

- 17 ... h4
- 18 ♔e2 ♗a7
- 19 f4 g6
- 20 b3 cb
- 21 ♗xb3 ba
- 22 ♗b5+ ♔d7

Instead 22 ... ♗d7 23 ♖fb1 0-0 24 ♗xd7 ♔xd7 25 ♖b4 b5 26 ♖xb5 ♖a6 27 c4 dc 28 ♔c3 ♔b6 gives Black a slight advantage whereas now the position is unclear. Black blundered later and lost. A very interesting opening from Kärner. Black can also develop his QB via d7 in the Rubinstein Variation.

Balashov-Suba
European Team Ch Moscow 1977

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♔d2 de
- 4 ♔xe4 ♔d7! (45)

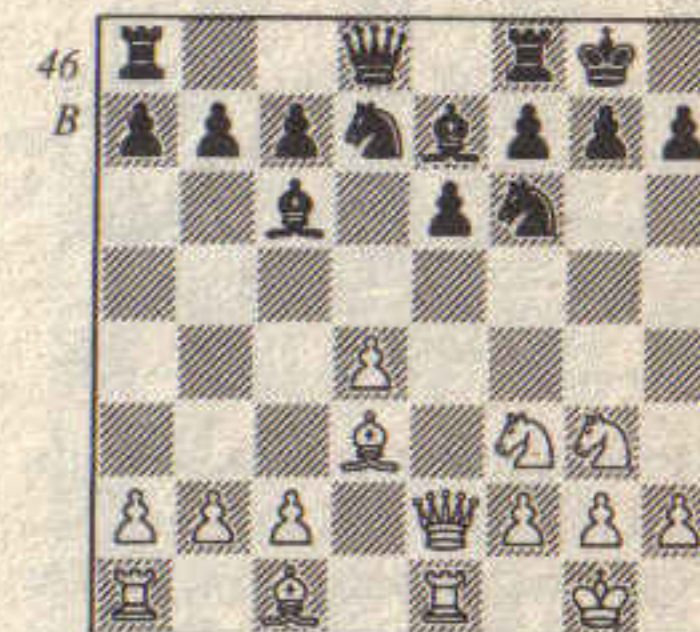


A simple idea to place the bishop on c6, which avoids the weakening of the queenside with ... b6.

- 5 ♔f3 ♔c6
- 6 ♔d3 ♔d7
- 7 0-0

More testing for Black is 7 ♗e2 which allows White to castle queenside in some positions.

- 7 ... ♔gf6
- 8 ♔g3 ♔e7
- 9 ♖e1 0-0
- 10 ♗e2 (46)



White is now threatening the unpleasant ♔f5 in many positions, so Black puts an end to this immediately.

- 10 ... ♖e8
- 11 ♔d2 ♔xf3

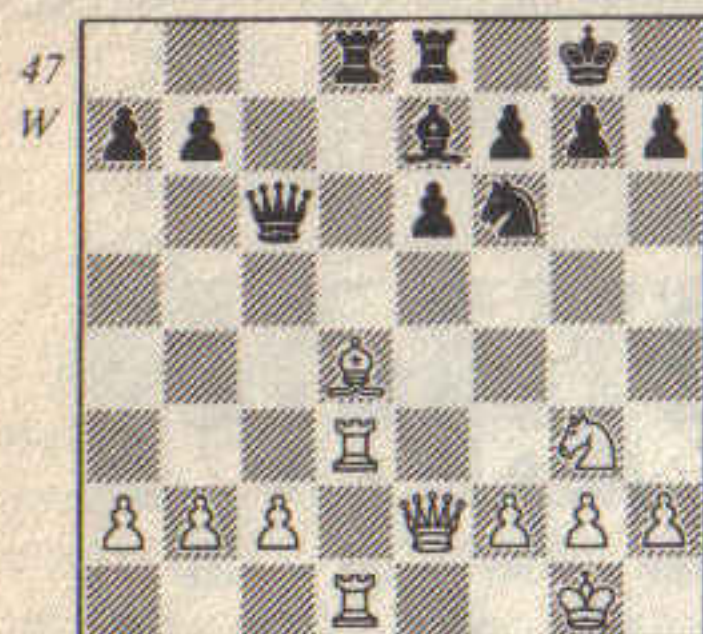
A surprising move surrendering bishop for a knight voluntarily, but this leads to pressure on White's d-pawn.

- 12 ♗xf3 c5
- 13 ♔c3

The alternatives are not any better: 13 dc leaves White in trouble because of his unprotected bishop on d2. 13 ♗xb7 cd gives Black the b- and c-files for his rooks and c5 for a knight. Now Suba could play 13 ... ♔d5 with good play.

- 13 ... cd
- 14 ♔xd4 ♔c5
- 15 ♖ed1 ♔xd3
- 16 ♖xd3 ♗d5

17 ♖e2 ♜c6
18 ♜ad1 ♜ad8 (47)



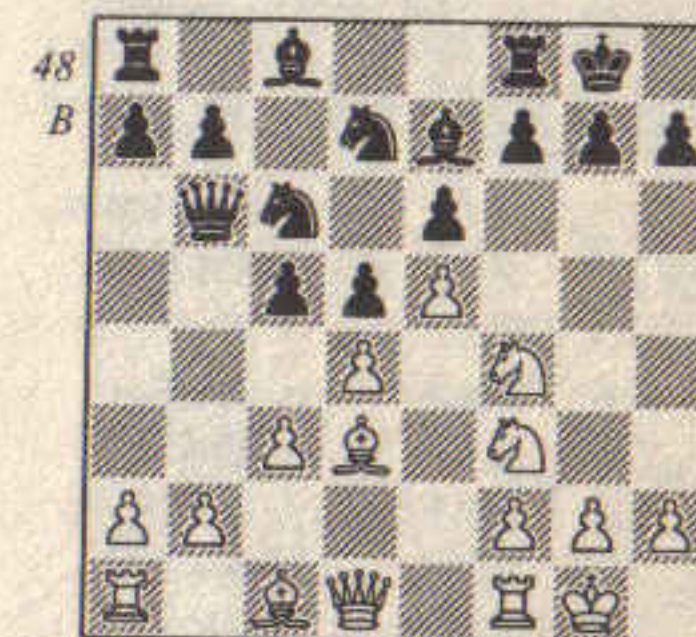
The position is now equal. Suba went on to win in 37 moves.

As we have seen, the pawn structure in the French Defence

hampers the black QB. Time is needed to develop this piece satisfactorily, but in the closed positions of the French this is not a great disadvantage. The solid black wall on e6 and d5 prevents the white army from taking advantage of Black's slow development. In most positions, the exchange of light-squared bishops is favourable to Black since this leaves him with the better dark-squared bishop and leaves White with little light square control. In the relevant chapters we shall look at attempts by White to prevent such favourable exchanges of the light-squared bishops.

4 White's Central Pawn Wedge

In many variations of the French Defence White has pawns on d4 and e5 and sometimes also pawns on c3 and f4. White has a big space advantage on the kingside and his pawn on e5 prevents the positioning of black knight on f6. These two factors can lead to an automatic kingside attack for White especially if Black castles without thinking. White can transfer his army to the king's wing under the cover of his pawn centre.



prospects are few. The QB is blocked in and White is aiming dangerously at the black king.

10 ... ♖h8
11 ♙c2 ♜g8

Black shuffles into the corner, waiting for the onslaught.

12 ♖d3 g6
13 a3 ♜c7
14 b4 b6

The tactical 14 ... cb 15 cb ♙xb4 16 ab ♜xb4 17 ♖d2 ♜xc2 loses to 18 ♜a2.

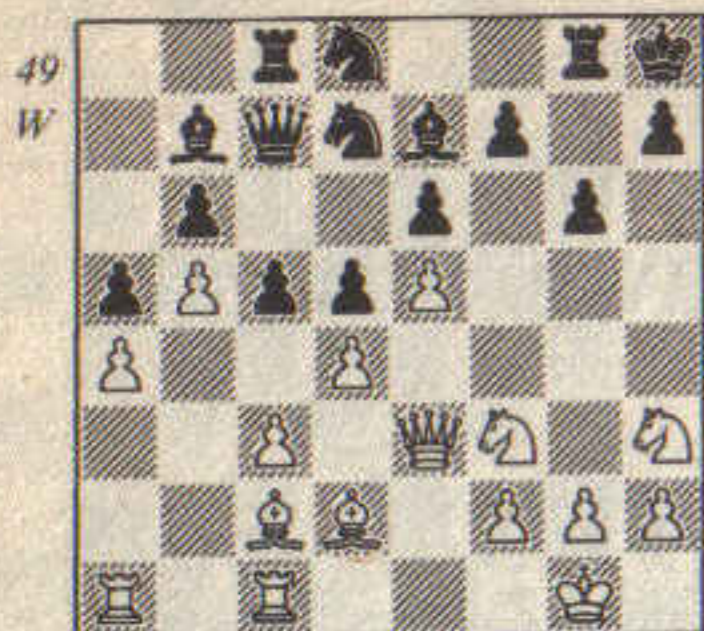
15 ♜h3 a5
16 b5 ♜d8
17 a4 ♙b7
18 ♙d2 ♜c8
19 ♜fc1 ♖g7
20 ♖e3 ♖h8 (49)
21 ♙d3 c4

A strategic mistake; the closure of the queenside means that Black must sit back and wait for

Tarrasch-Von Gottschall Dresden 1892

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘d2 ♘f6
4 e5 ♘fd7
5 ♙d3 c5
6 c3 ♘c6
7 ♘e2 ♖b6
8 ♘f3 ♙e7
9 0-0 0-0
10 ♘f4 (48)

Black has been pressurizing the white centre with ... c5 but did not complete the process with ... f6, and now Tarrasch has ruled out this desirable pawn break because of the attack on e6. Black does not have enough firepower to gain control of d4 and consequently his

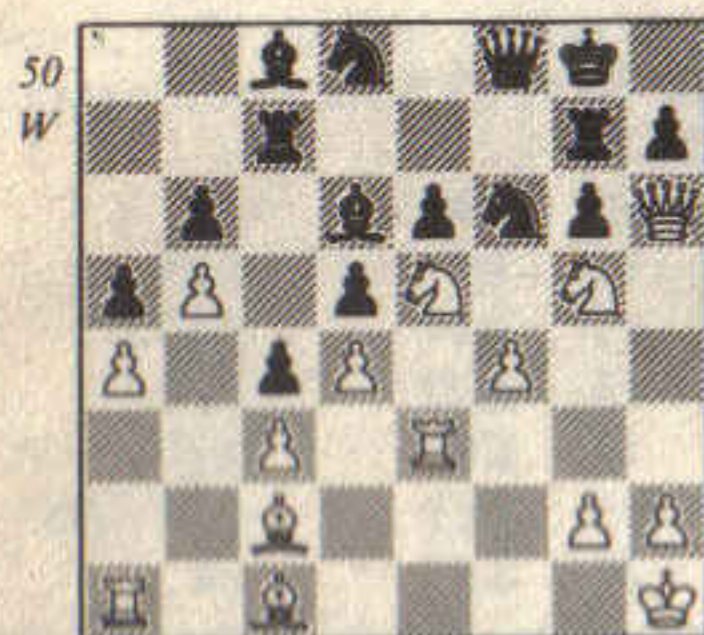


White's coming kingside storm.

- 22 ♖c2 ♜f8
- 23 ♗e2 ♝g7
- 24 ♗e3 ♝h8
- 25 ♖e1 ♗d7
- 26 ♜h1 ♖c7
- 27 ♗h6 ♗e8
- 28 ♜fg5 ♖g7
- 29 f3 ♖c8
- 30 ♜f2 ♜d7
- 31 ♜g4 ♗g8
- 32 ♖c1 ♗f8
- 33 f4 ♝g8
- 34 ♖e3

Threatening ♖h3.

- 34 ... f5
- 35 ef ♜xf6
- 36 ♜e5 ♖d6 (50)



White is well entrenched on the dark squares.

- 37 ♖f3 ♗e8
- 38 ♖d2 ♖xe5
- 39 fe ♜g4
- 40 ♗h4 h5
- 41 h3 ♜h6
- 42 g4 hg
- 43 hg ♜df7
- 44 ♝g2

45 ♖h1 will be crushing, so Black gets desperate:

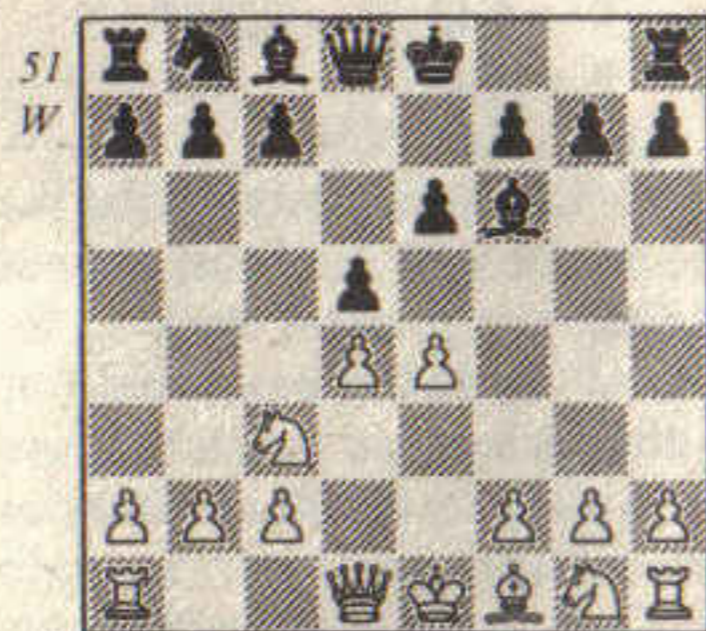
- 44 ... ♜f5
- 45 gf gf
- 46 ♖g3 ♜xg5
- 47 ♖xg5 ♗f7
- 48 ♖h1

1-0

A good illustration of the dangers arising from White's pawn wedge in the centre. The absence of Black's knight from f6 can also be disastrous for Black because of the possibility of attacks based on ♖xh7+.

**Alekhine-Asgeirsson
Reykjavik 1931**

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♜c3 ♜f6
- 4 ♖g5 ♖e7
- 5 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 (51)



White has played the aggressive Richter Attack in which he gives up the two bishops in order to start a direct attack. The exchange of Black's KN leaves his kingside with few defenders.

- 6 e5 ♖e7
- 7 ♜f3 c5
- 8 ♖d3 0-0?

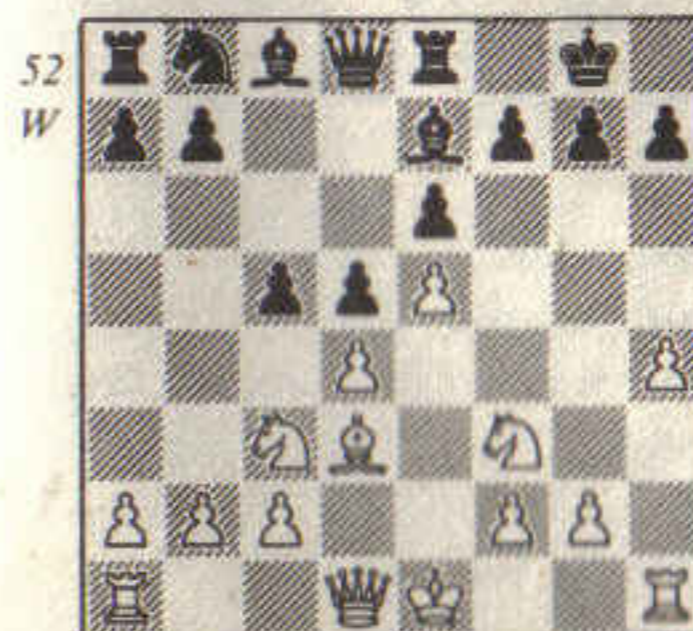
An instructive mistake. Black should not castle kingside when White has several pieces ready for a kingside assault. 8 ... cd 9 ♜xd4 ♜c6 leads to a fine game for Black. He has the two bishops and pressure against the white pawn on e5.

- 9 h4

Alekhine seizes his chance. This move prepares the well known combinational attack ♖xh7+ followed by ♜g5+. If Black captures on g5 then the h-file is open for the white rook. 9 ... h6 would prevent White's combination but would enable White to break open the kingside later by g4-g5.

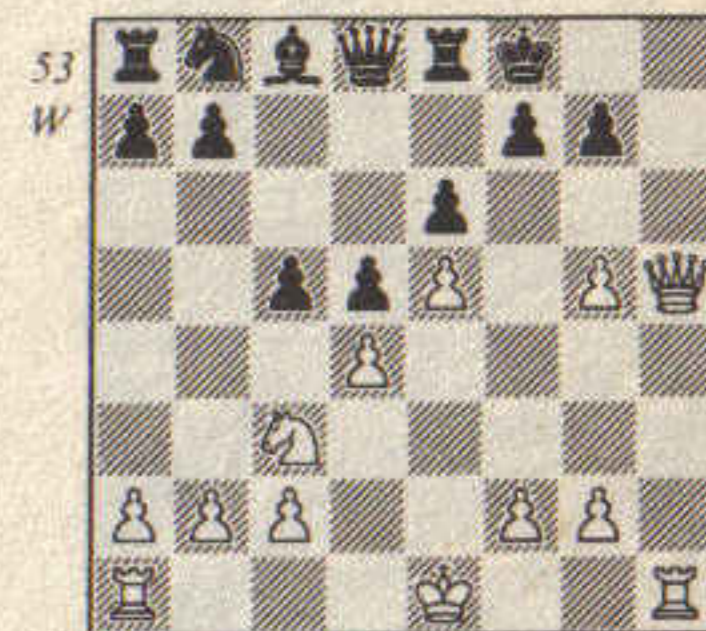
- 9 ... ♖e8 (52)

Black prepares an escape route for his king via e7, but Alekhine has seen further.



10 ♖xh7+
A typical sacrifice in the French Defence, which practitioners must always beware of.

- 10 ... ♝xh7
- 11 ♜g5+ ♖xg5
- 12 hg+ ♝g8
- 13 ♗h5 ♝f8 (53)



White has sacrificed a piece and has no immediate win in sight. He would like to get his knight to d6 via b5. The knight would be insufferable on d6, but at the moment ♜b5 is bad because of ... ♗a5+.

- 14 0-0-0 a6
- 15 g6

This move breaks up the black kingside, and White quickly develops a crushing attack.

- 15 ... ♝e7
- 16 gf ♖f8
- 17 dc ♜d7

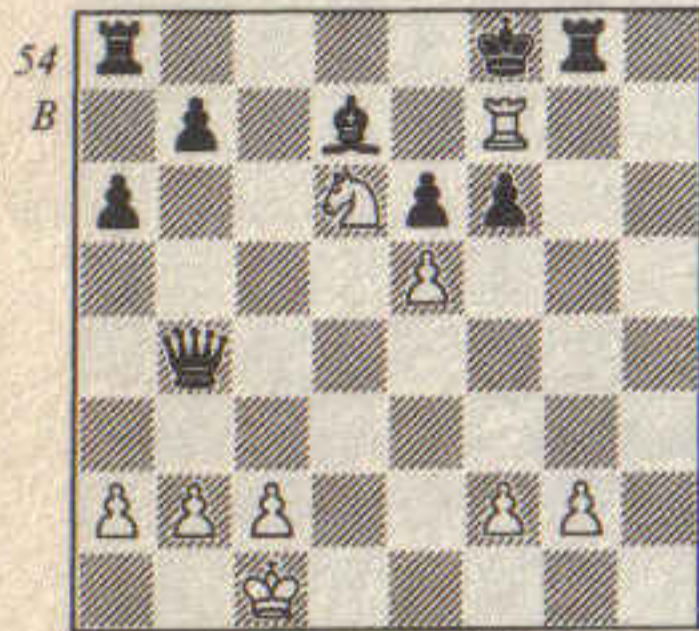
17 ... ♖xf7 fails to 18 ♜xd5 ed 19 ♗g5+ ♝d7 20 ♖xd5+ winning.

- 18 ♖xd5

A fine blow. The white rook cannot be captured: 18 ... ed 19 ♜xd5+ ♝e6 20 ♜f4+ ♝e7 21 ♗g5+ ♝xf7 22 e6+ wins.

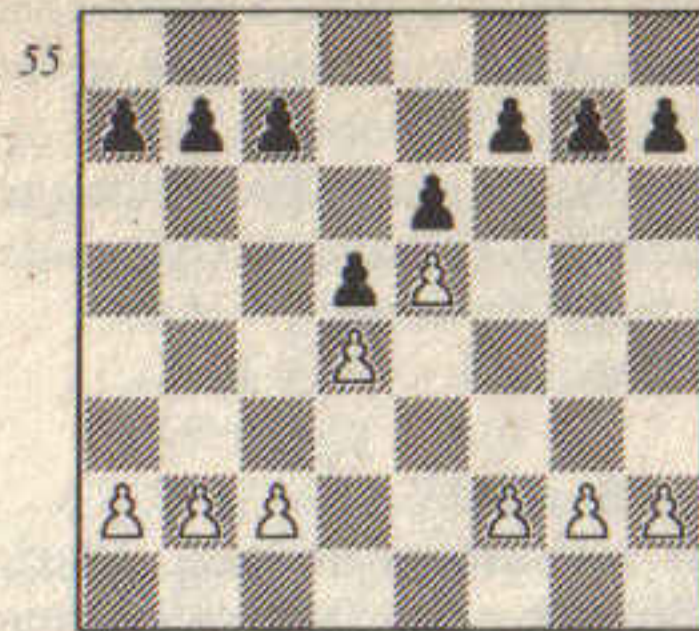
- 18 ... ♗a5

- 19 ♖g5+ ♔xf7
- 20 ♜h7 ♜g8
- 21 ♜d4 ♖xc5
- 22 ♜xd7+ ♔xd7
- 23 ♘e4 ♖b4
- 24 ♘d6+ ♔f8
- 25 ♖f6+ g7
- 26 ♜f7 mate (54)

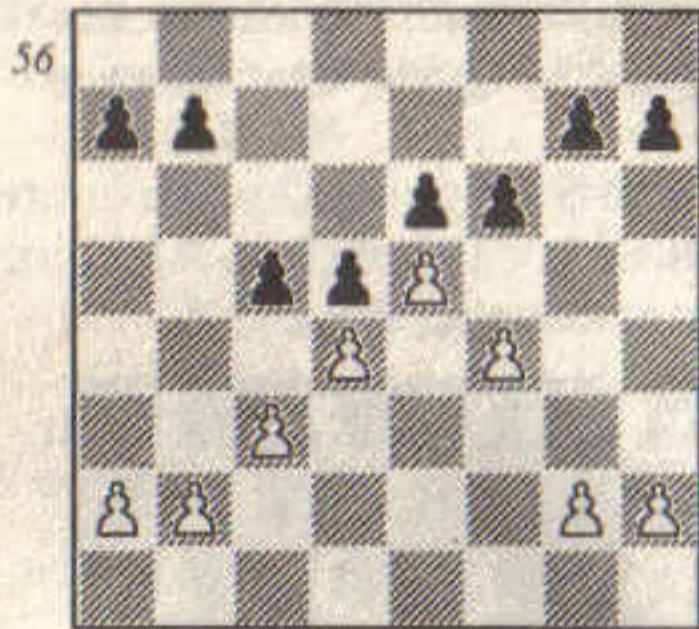


A superb combinational attack by Alekhine which illustrates some of the dangers of castling incautiously in the French Defence. The white pawn wedge on d4 and e5 provides the positional ingredients for a white attack on the kingside. The absence of a black horse on f6 and the cover of the pawn wedge enable White to launch an attack with a good chance of success. For these reasons, Black should not castle too early and must devote his energies to destroying the white pawn wedge in the centre. In many positions he may castle queenside with some safety (55).

Black has two main ways of breaking down the white pawn wedge: ... c5 and ... f6. The pawn break ... c5 alone is usually not enough to break down the pawn wedge since White can easily



support his d4 pawn with c3. The ... f6 break is more critical since White may not always be able to support the e5 pawn with f4 because of the presence of a white knight on f3. When White does have a knight on f3 he usually captures on f6, thus giving up his strongpoint on e5. Black then has more space for his pieces but a backward pawn on e6. This will be our next positional theme but first we shall consider when White can support his e5 pawn with f4 (56).

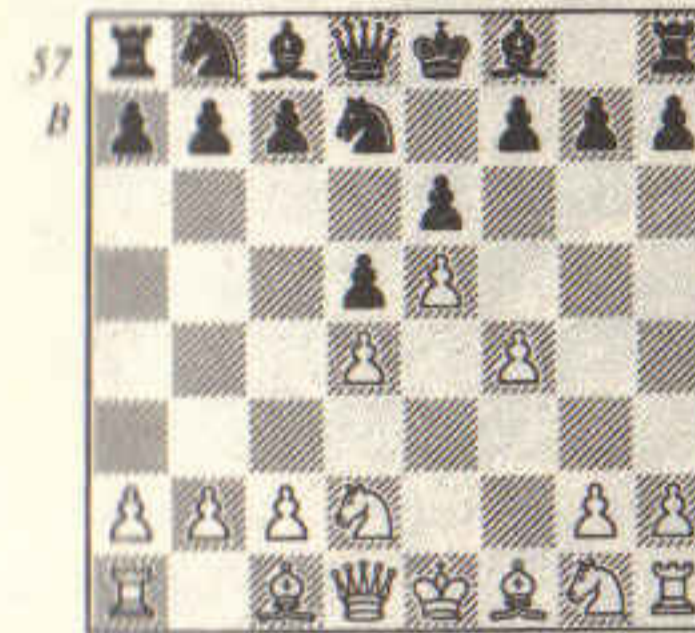


This pawn structure is reached in some lines of the French. White has staunchly defended his pawn wedge on d5 and e5 and this may give him the advantage, as we have seen above. There is an important

difference: White now has a big empire to defend and if Black gets through the white pawn wall the white monarch will be very draughty. Sometimes Black can break through with a cascade of sacrifices, as in the following game.

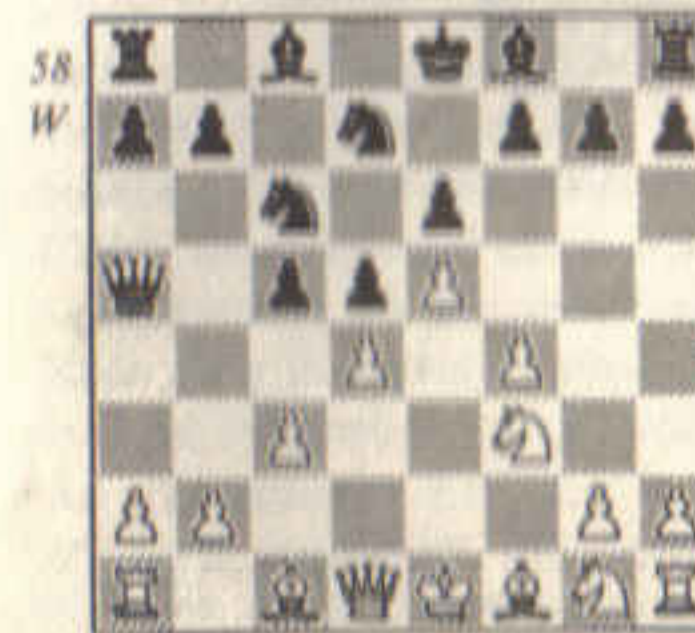
Reshevsky-Vaganian
Skopje 1976

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘d2 ♘f6
- 4 e5 ♘fd7
- 5 f4 (57)



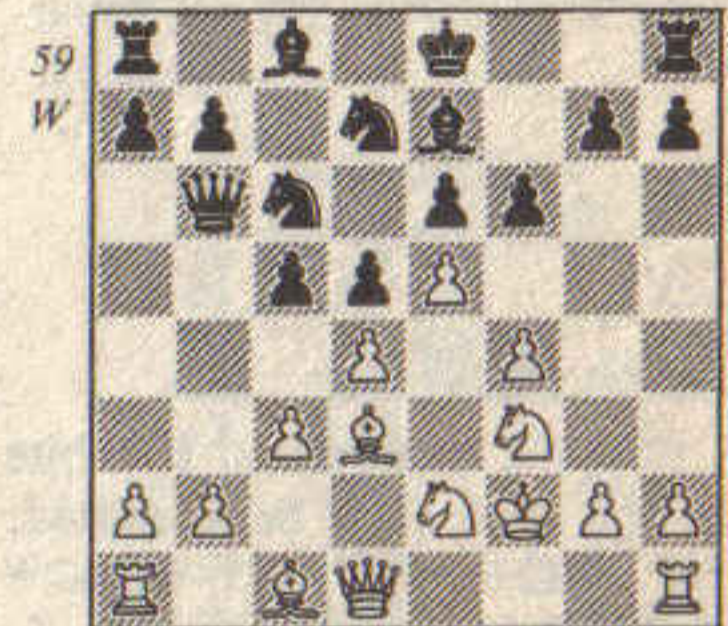
Black must now play actively to avoid incurring a disadvantage.

- 5 ... c5
- 6 c3 ♘c6
- 7 ♘df3 ♖a5 (58)



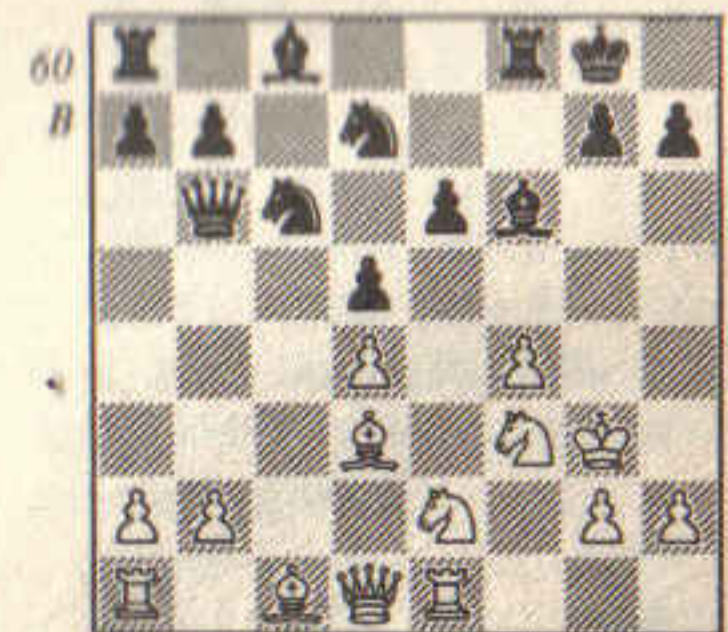
With this move Black attempts to upset White's development by pinning the pawn and threatening to capture on d4. 8 dc is probably White's best reply when Black must recapture on c5 with the queen. Reshevsky's move is popular but also risky.

- 8 ♖f2 ♔e7
- 9 ♔d3 ♖b6
- 10 ♘e2 f6 (59)



The key move for Black, who prepares to open up the f-file towards White's king. Reshevsky decides to keep the file closed and run with his king.

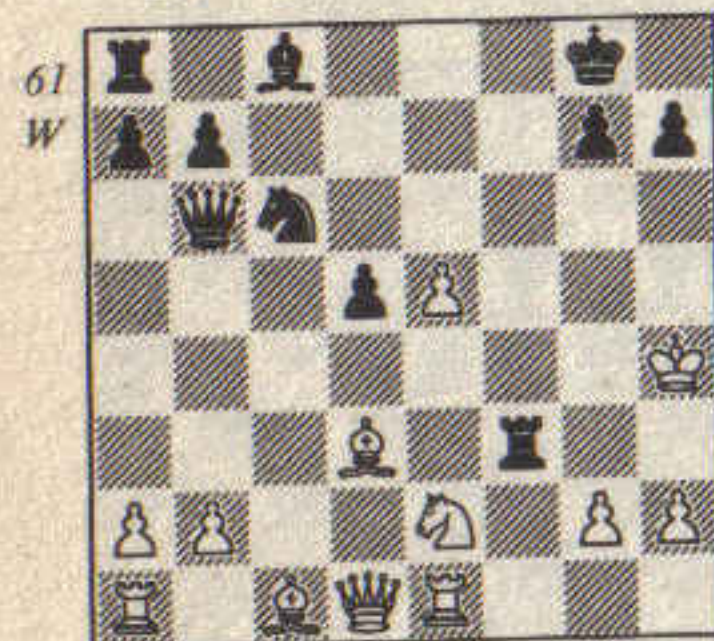
- 11 e6 ♔xf6
- 12 ♖g3 cd
- 13 cd 0-0
- 14 ♜e1 (60)



30 White's Central Pawn Wedge

14 h3 was better, making a bolt-hole for the king on h2. Now Vaganian breaks loose.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------------|
| 14 | ... | e5! |
| 15 | fe | ♞dx5! |
| 16 | de | ♞h4+ |
| 17 | ♞xh4 | ♞xf3!! (61) |



A fantastic conception. If White takes the rook then he is mated: 18 gf ♞f2+ 19 ♞g3 ♞xh2+ 20 ♞g5 ♞h6 mate.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 18 | ♞f1 | ♞b4+ |
| 19 | ♞f4 | ♞e7+ |
| 20 | ♞g5 | ♞e6 |

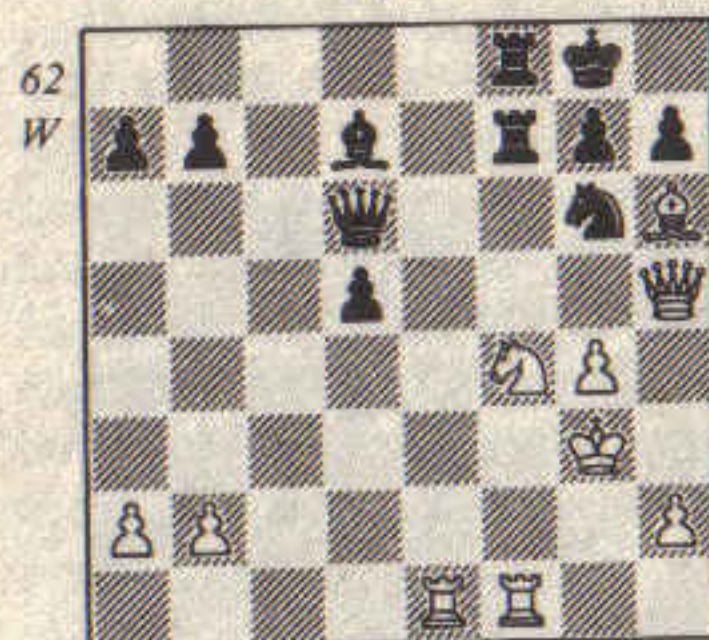
Now White must give back a piece to stop mate on g4.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 21 | ♞f5 | ♞xf5 |
| 22 | ♞f4 | ♞xe5 |
| 23 | ♞g4 | ♞f7 |
| 24 | ♞h5 | ♞e7 |

The start of neat finish by the Russian GM. 25 ♞xe7 loses to ... ♞xf4+.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 25 | g4 | ♞g6+ |
| 26 | ♞g3 | ♞d7 |
| 27 | ♞ae1 | ♞d6 |
| 28 | ♞h6 | ♞af8 (62) |

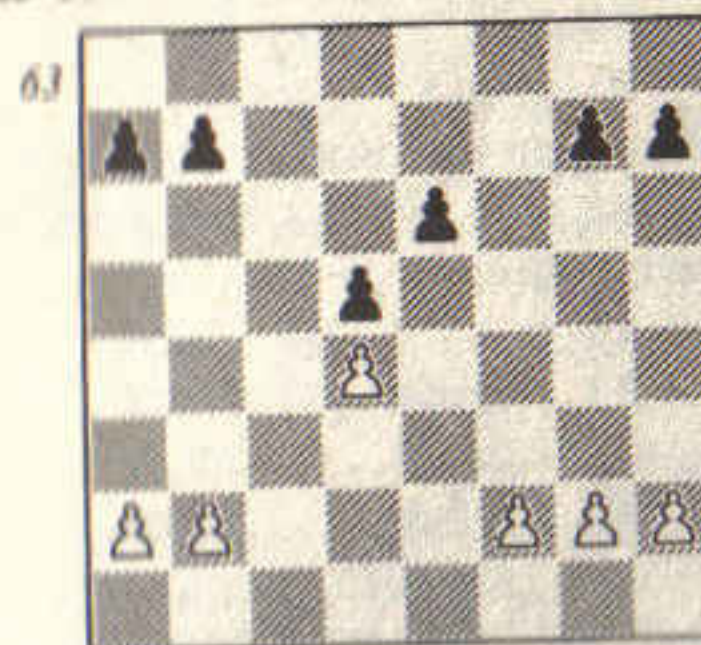
0-1



White is totally helpless. A superb game by Vaganian, showing the possibilities available to Black in such positions.

5 The Backward e-pawn

As we have seen, the break ... f6 is often a critical feature in the French Defence. If Black omits this break White has a lasting kingside space advantage. If White captures on f6 this leaves Black with a backward pawn on e6, a static weakness which needs attention. The basic pawn structure is often like this: (63)

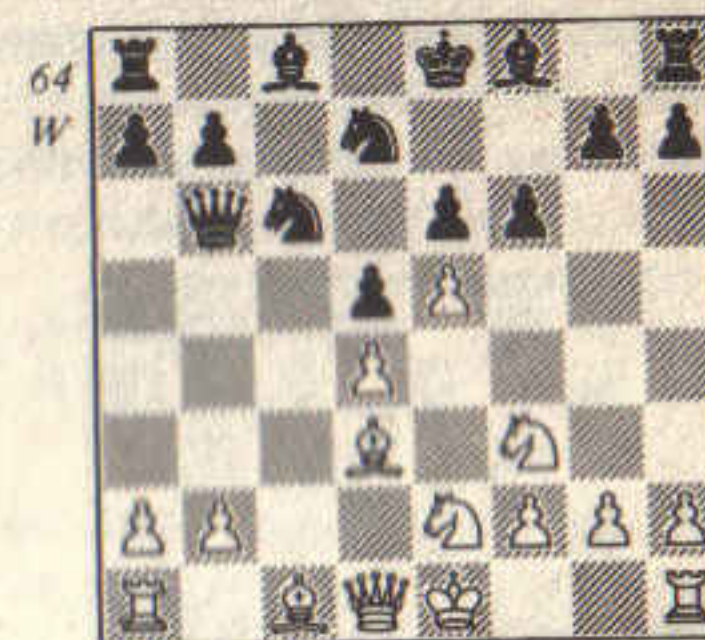


There may also be pawns on the c-file which alter the position only slightly. White has a potential outpost on e5 for a knight and can line up his heavy pieces on the e-file against the backward pawn. Black has the half open f-file for counterplay. In the middlegame, piece play is of major importance but, as the endgame approaches, the weakness of the e-pawn becomes apparent. The control of the square e5 is very important in

this type of position. We shall look at a fine exploitation of the weak e-pawn first in order to show some of the difficulties faced by Black.

Karpov-Hort Budapest 1973

- | | | |
|---|-----|---------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♞d2 | ♞f6 |
| 4 | e5 | ♞fd7 |
| 5 | c3 | c5 |
| 6 | ♞d3 | ♞c6 |
| 7 | ♞e2 | ♞b6 |
| 8 | ♞f3 | cd |
| 9 | cd | f6 (64) |



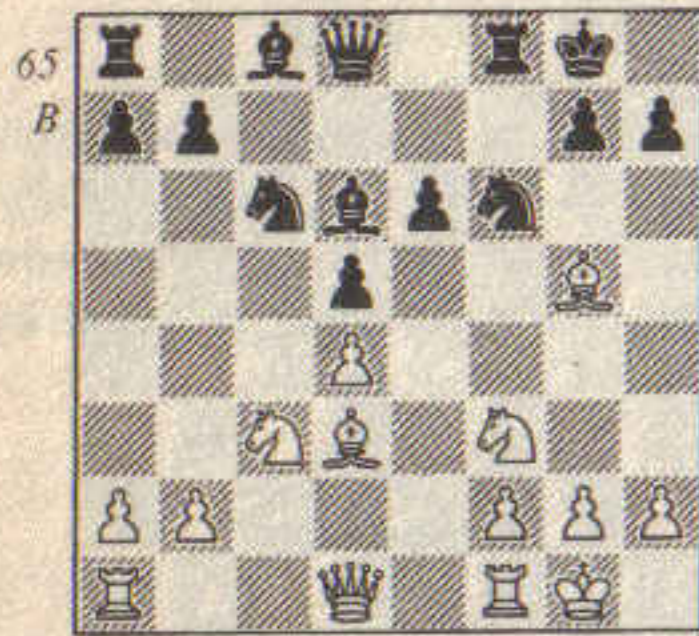
Black could play 9 ... ♞e7 or 9 ... ♞b4, but both of these moves leave White's central pawn wedge unchallenged.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 10 | ef | ♞xf6 |
| 11 | 0-0 | ♞d6 |

12 ♖c3 0-0
13 ♗e3 ♕d8

Black hopes to deploy the queen on the kingside in a possible attack on the white king.

14 ♗g5 (65)



Now Black should continue with the queen transfer to the kingside 14 ... ♕e8!. If White carries out his plan of ♗h4-g3 Black develops a strong attack. If 15 ♗h4 ♕h5 16 ♗g3 ♗xg3 17 hg ♖g4 and White's king is in trouble. This plan was first pointed out by English student international Jon Kinlay. The exchange of dark-squared bishops is a vital feature of this type of position. Hort continued instead with

14 ... ♗d7

This move is too passive.

15 ♙e1

Karpov prevents ... ♕e8 by tactical means. It now fails to 16 ♗xf6 followed by ♖xd5.

15 ... ♕b8

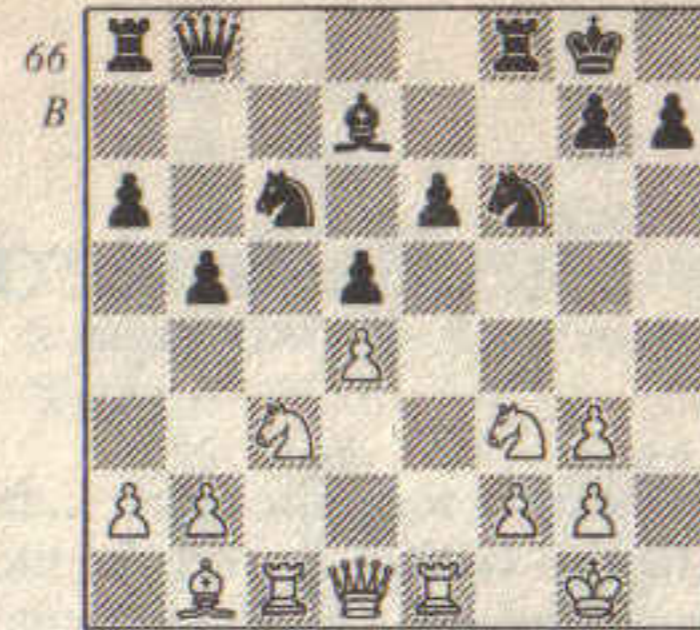
16 ♗h4 a6

17 ♙c1 b5

18 ♗b1 ♗f4

19 ♗g3 ♗xg3

20 hg (66)



The exchange of dark-squared bishops has increased White's control of e5 and Black has no compensating attacking chances.

20 ... ♕b6

21 ♖e2

The knight heads for f4.

21 ... ♙ae8

22 ♖f4

Hort can no longer stand the pressure and breaks out with a combination.

22 ... ♖xd4

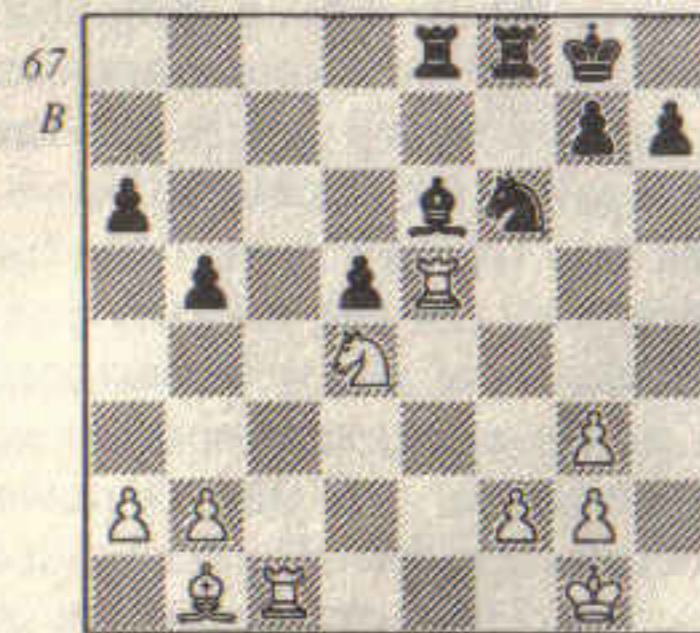
23 ♕xd4 ♕xd4

24 ♖xd4 e5

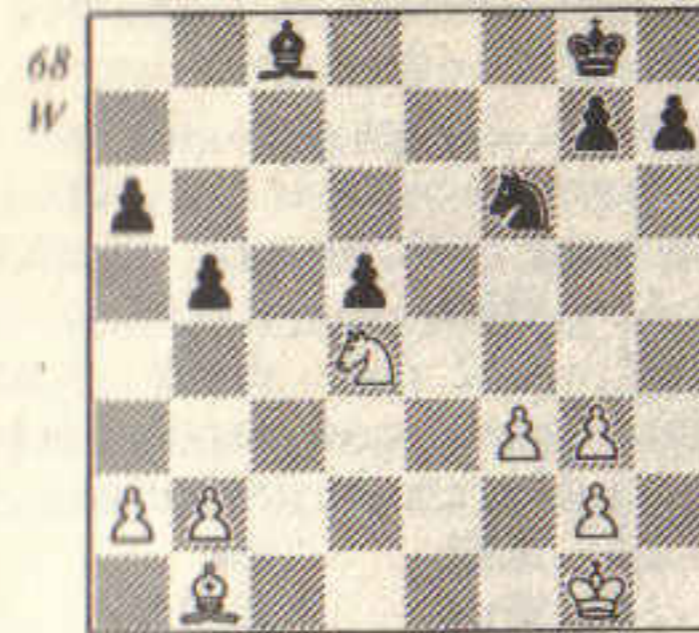
25 ♖fe6 ♗xe6

26 ♙xe5 (67)

Material is now equal and Black has got rid of his weak pawn on e6, but now he has an isolated d-pawn.



26 ... ♗d7
27 ♙xe8 ♙xe8
28 f3 ♙c8
29 ♙xc8+ ♗xc8 (68)



White has a big advantage in the ending. His king can march to the queenside via the dark squares.

30 ♗f2 ♗f7

31 ♗e3 ♗e7

32 b4 g6

33 g4 ♖d7

34 f4 ♖f8

35 g5 ♗d6

36 ♗f3

White is now threatening to create a passed pawn by g4 and f5 which will be decisive, so Hort exchanges knights.

36 ... ♖e6

37 ♖xe6 ♗xe6

38 ♗e3 ♗g4

39 ♗d3 ♗e6

40 ♗d4 ♗g4

41 ♗c2 ♗e6

42 ♗b3 ♗f7

43 ♗d1 ♗e6

44 ♗f3 ♗f7

45 ♗g4

1-0

After 45 ... ♗e6 46 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 47 g4 ♗d6 48 f5 wins. A fine

positional game by Karpov in which Black's pawn weaknesses made his position untenable in the ending. This game shows that Black must play actively and seize every chance for counterplay. If White plays incautiously, Black can whip up a ferocious assault, as in the following game.

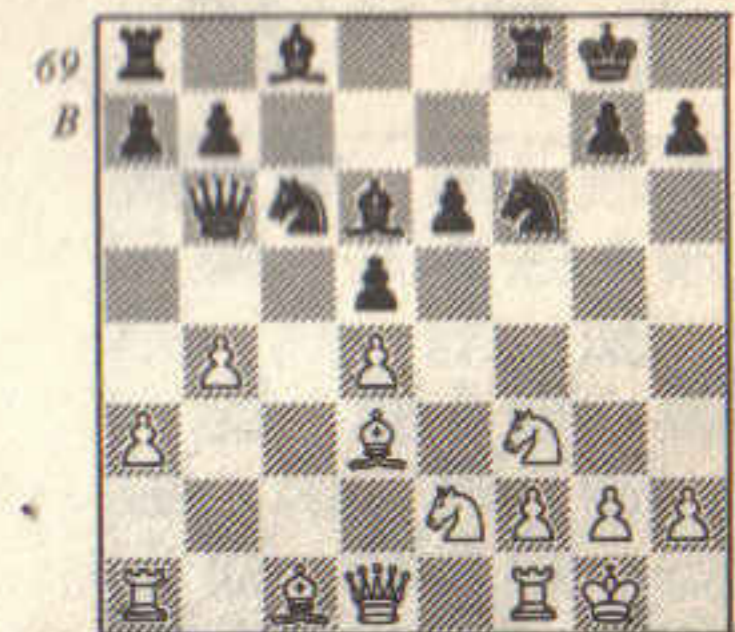
Govedarica-Uhlmann
Vrbas 1977

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖d2 ♖f6
4 e5 ♖fd7
5 ♗d3 c5
6 c3 ♖c6
7 ♖e2 ♕b6
8 ♖f3 cd
9 cd f6
10 ef ♖xf6
11 0-0 ♗d6
12 a3

This move is not strictly necessary. 12 ♖c3 is best here as in the last game.

12 ... 0-0

13 b4 (69)



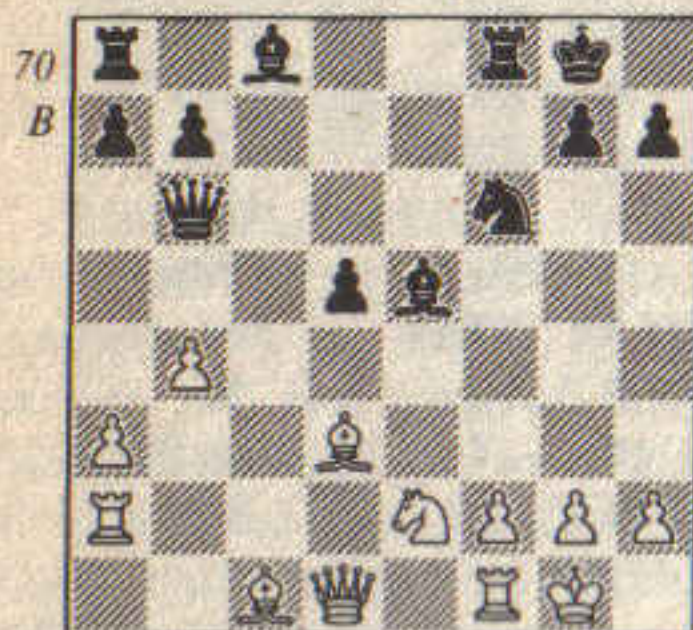
White's plan is to develop his bishop on b2, controlling e5, and

then gain space on the queenside, but now Uhlmann breaks out. Black's control of e5 enables him to dissolve his backward pawn. White cannot blockade the resulting isolated d-pawn because of the threats to his king.

- 13 ... e5
 14 de ♖xe5
 15 ♖xe5?!

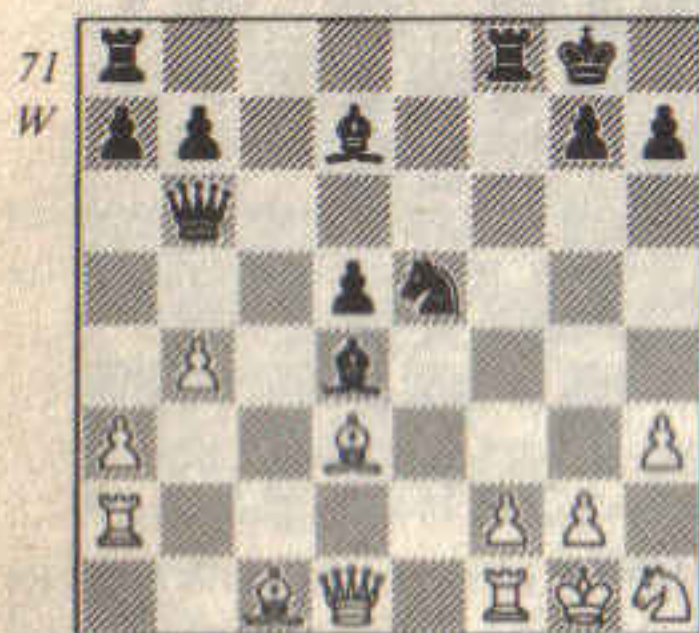
White should attempt to keep control of d4 with 15 ♖ed4.

- 15 ... ♗xe5
 16 ♖a2 (70)



Uhlmann now starts a direct attack on the white monarch.

- 16 ... ♗g4
 17 ♗g3 ♗d4
 18 ♗h1 ♗d7
 19 h3 ♗e5 (71)



Uhlmann is now threatening to win the exchange with ... ♗xd3 and ... ♗b5.

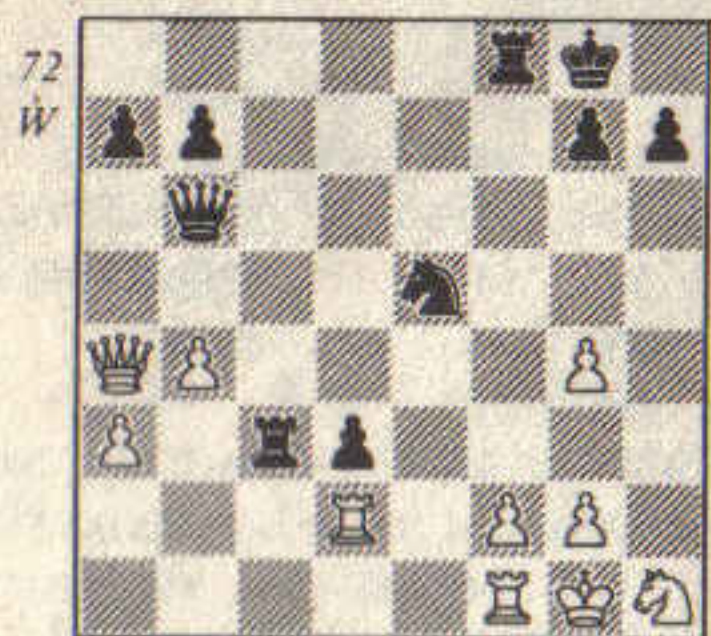
- 20 ♗e2 ♗c3!!

The East German now displays some tactical brilliance to advance his d-pawn. The pawn is immune at the moment because of ... ♗e6, spearing the rook on a2.

- 21 ♖b3 ♖ac8
 22 ♖c2 ♗e6!

White cannot now capture on c3 for ... d4 wins the exchange.

- 23 ♗d2 d4
 24 ♖a4 ♗xd2
 25 ♖xd2 d3
 26 ♗g4 ♗xg4
 27 hg ♖c3 (72)



White must now lose material.

- 28 ♗g3 ♗xg4
 29 ♖d7 ♗f6
 30 ♖f5 ♖d8
 31 ♖e1 ♖xa3
 32 ♖e6 ♖xb4
 33 ♖d1
 33 ♖xf6 fails to 33 ... ♖a1
 34 ♗h2 ♖h4.
 33 ... ♖g4
 34 ♖xf6 ♖xd1+
 35 ♗h2 ♖a6
 36 ♖xa6 ba

- 37 ♖g5 ♖d7
 38 ♗h5 ♖a1
 39 ♖f5 ♖d4
 40 ♖e6+ ♗f8
 41 f4 d2

0-1

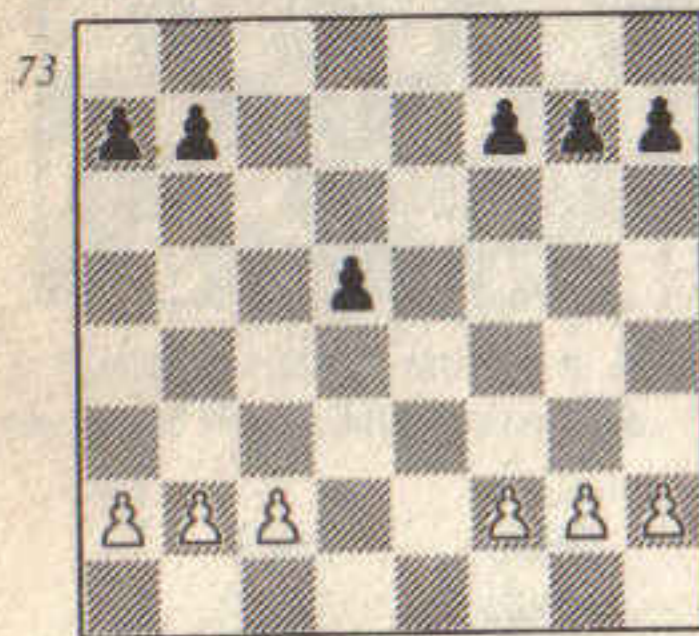
A superb game by Wolfgang Uhlmann, one of the GMs who adhere faithfully to the French Defence. Uhlmann has shown that Black has considerable resources in many lines. White only needs to make a slight slip

and Black's pieces are well placed for attacking purposes. The control of e5 is very important in this line of the French and both sides should regard this as a major strategic objective. Black should deflect White from his strategic aims by threats against the white king. In many positions Black can advance ... e5 which, after exchanges, leaves him with an isolated d-pawn which is our next positional theme.

6 The Isolated d-pawn

Positions where Black has an isolated d-pawn often arise in the French Defence, and thus it would seem helpful to consider these.

The Tarrasch Variation (3 $\text{d}2$) contains most of the isolated d-pawn positions. After 1 $\text{e}4$ $\text{e}6$ 2 $\text{d}4$ $\text{d}5$ 3 $\text{d}2$ $\text{c}5$ it is very likely that Black will get an isolated d-pawn with the pawn structure like this: (73)



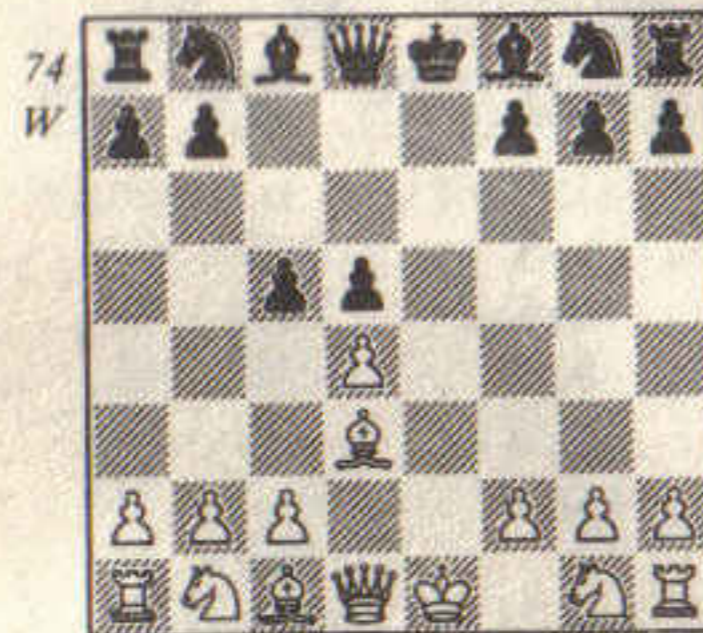
This is a very common pawn structure. White has a good square for his pieces in front of the isolated pawn on d4. This is an especially good post for a knight. Black has play down the half open c-file and possible outposts for his pieces on e4 and c4. Karpov and Korchnoi had a theoretical duel about the assessment of this position in their 1974 Candidates' match in Moscow, Karpov favour-

ing the white side but being unable to prove any significant advantage. Tarrasch himself gave up 3 $\text{d}2$ because he adjudged 3 ... $\text{c}5$ to be equal.

The above pawn structure can also be reached via the Exchange Variation. We will begin with an extreme example showing the dynamic play Black can get in such positions.

Tatai-Korchnoi
Beersheva 1978

- | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 1 | $\text{e}4$ | $\text{e}6$ |
| 2 | $\text{d}4$ | $\text{d}5$ |
| 3 | ed | ed |
| 4 | $\text{d}3$ | $\text{c}5!?$ (74) |



After White captures on c5 Black will have an isolated d-pawn but free play for his pieces, especially his KB on c5. This position is identical to a

Tarrasch French except that White has committed his bishop to d3.

5 $\text{f}3$ $\text{c}6$

6 $\text{e}2+?$

A bad mistake. White tries to take advantage of the pin he sets up on the e-file to win a pawn, but the queen proves to be awkwardly placed on this open file.

6 ... $\text{e}7$

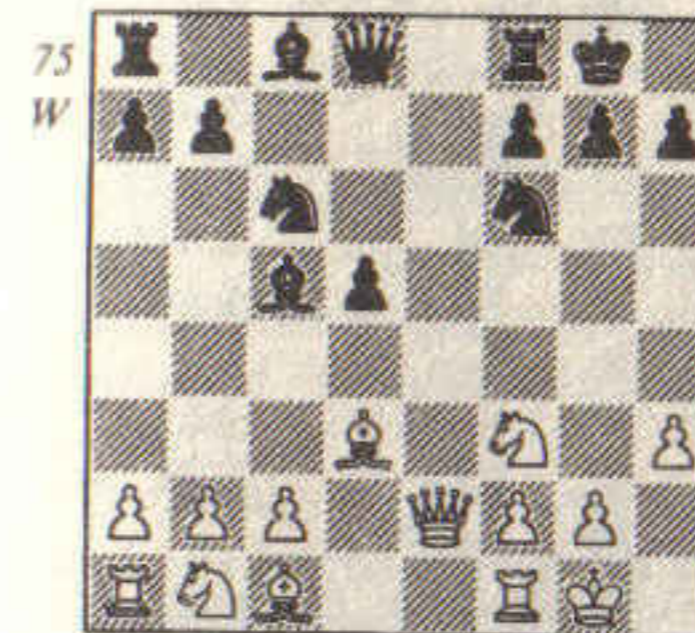
7 dc $\text{f}6$

8 $\text{h}3$

White does not want to allow a pin with ... $\text{g}4$ when ... $\text{d}4$ would be a threat, but he neglects his development.

8 ... 0-0

9 0-0 $\text{xc}5$ (75)



White will have to lose further time with his queen and Black quickly builds up a winning position, aided by a mistake by his opponent.

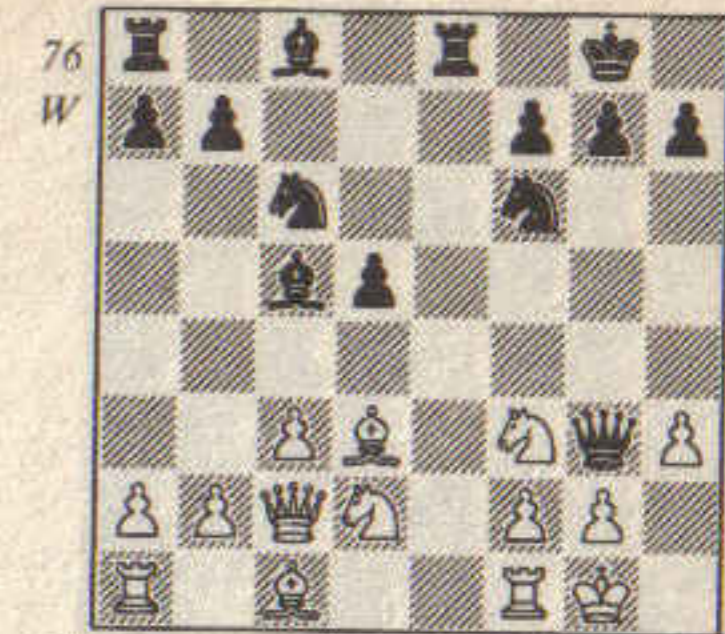
10 $\text{c}3$ $\text{e}8$

11 $\text{c}2$ $\text{d}6$

12 $\text{bd}2?$

A fatal mistake which allows Black to show the drop of poison in his last move.

12 ... $\text{g}3!!$ (76)



Black now threatens ... $\text{xh}3$ followed by mate.

13 $\text{f}5$ $\text{e}2$

14 $\text{d}4$ $\text{xd}4$

0-1

After 15 cd $\text{xd}4$ 16 $\text{xc}8$ $\text{xf}2$ White is mated in short order. A stunning game from Korchnoi. Black's attacking possibilities must not be underestimated. Exchanges favour White since they lessen Black's attacking chances and make the d-pawn harder to defend. We shall look at another classic demonstration of how to play the white side by Karpov.

Karpov-Uhlmann
Madrid 1973

1 $\text{e}4$ $\text{e}6$

2 $\text{d}4$ $\text{d}5$

3 $\text{d}2$ $\text{c}5$

4 ed ed

5 $\text{gf}3$ $\text{c}6$

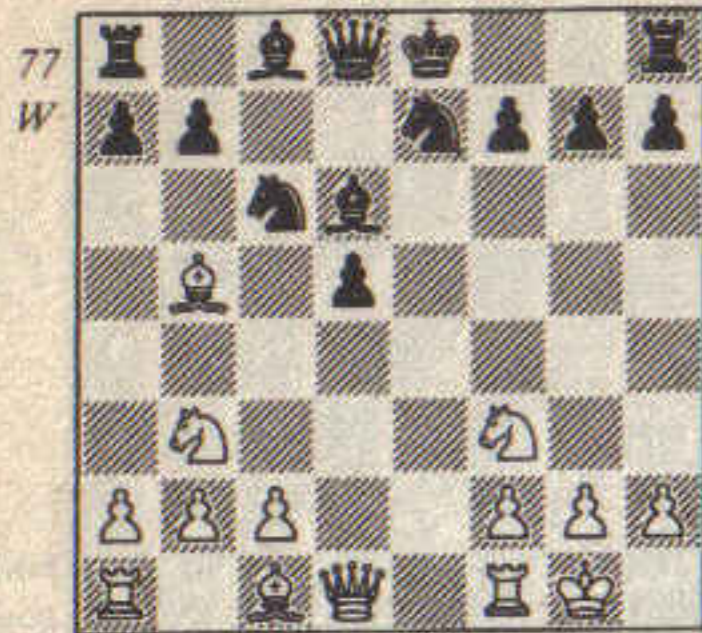
6 $\text{b}5$ $\text{d}6$

7 dc $\text{xc}5$

8 0-0 $\text{ge}7$

9 $\text{b}3$ $\text{d}6$ (77)

A typical position from the Tarrasch. Karpov now embarks on a manoeuvre which we have

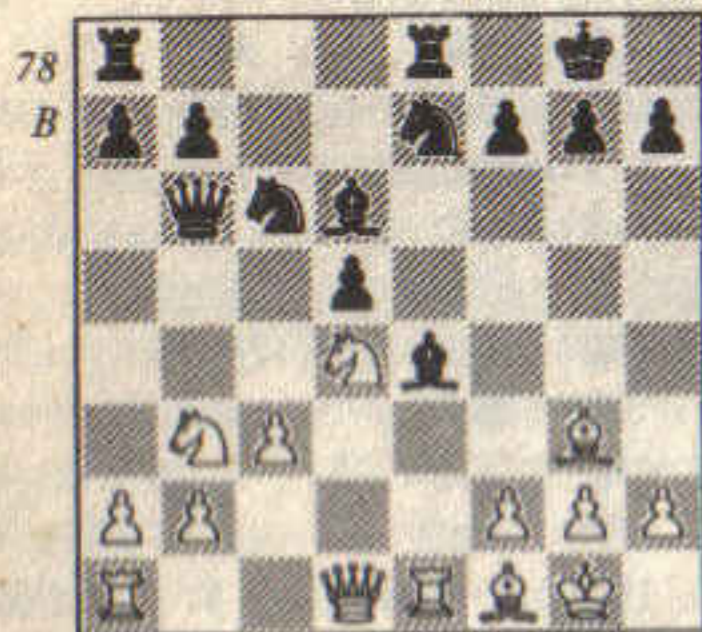


seen before - he aims to exchange the dark-squared bishops, thus increasing White's control of the central dark squares and lessening Black's attacking chances.

10 ♔g5 0-0
11 ♔h4?!

In fact 11 ♔e1 is now the main continuation as it has been discovered that 11 ... ♖b6 is good for Black after 11 ♔h4.

11 ... ♔g4
12 ♔e2 ♔h5
13 ♔e1 ♖b6
14 ♔fd4 ♔g6
15 c3 ♔fe8
16 ♔f1 ♔e4
17 ♔g3 (78)



At this point we shall take a

break to survey the position. White has made good progress since Black's d-pawn is firmly blockaded. White has also carried out the very desirable exchange of dark-squared bishops. This exchange dampens Black's chances considerably. Black's QB is well placed at the moment but White can drive it away later by f3.

17 ... ♔xg3
18 hg a5
19 a4 ♔xd4
20 ♔xd4

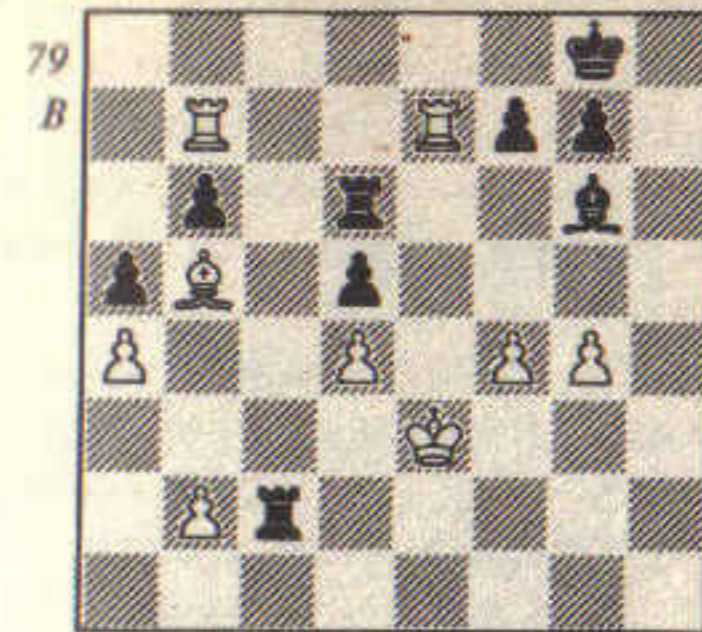
Black cannot now capture on b2: 20 ... ♖xb2 21 ♔b5 when White wins by ♔e2, trapping the queen.

20 ... ♔c6
21 ♔b5 ♔ed8
22 g4 ♔xd4
23 ♖xd4 ♖xd4
24 cd ♔ac8
25 f3 ♔g6
26 ♔e7 b6
27 ♔ae1 h6
28 ♔b7 ♔d6
29 ♔ee7

White is now pressing Black very hard. The threat is f4-f5, winning the f-pawn.

29 ... h5
30 gh ♔xh5
31 g4 ♔g6
32 f4 ♔c1+
33 ♔f2 ♔c2+
34 ♔e3 (79)

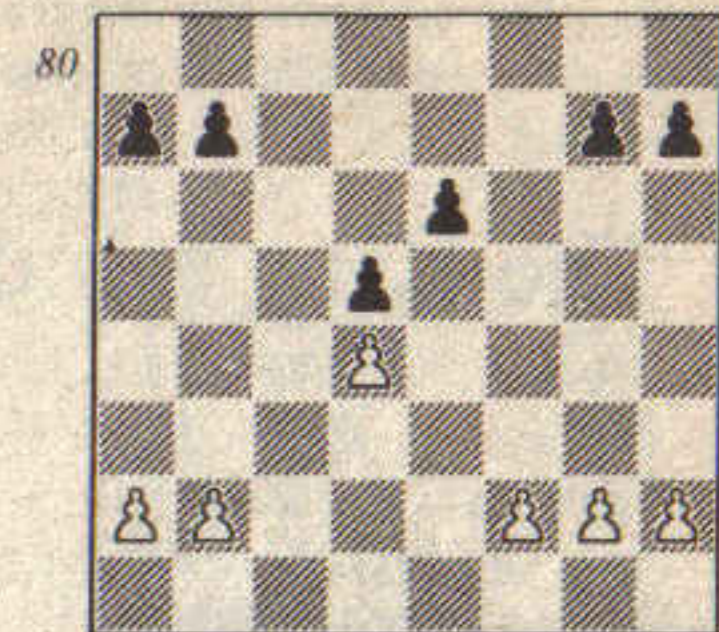
Black now has to attend to the intended f5 push by White. 34 ... ♔e6 35 ♔xe6 fe 36 ♔xb6 ♔xb2 37 f5 wins, so Black has to give up the f-pawn.



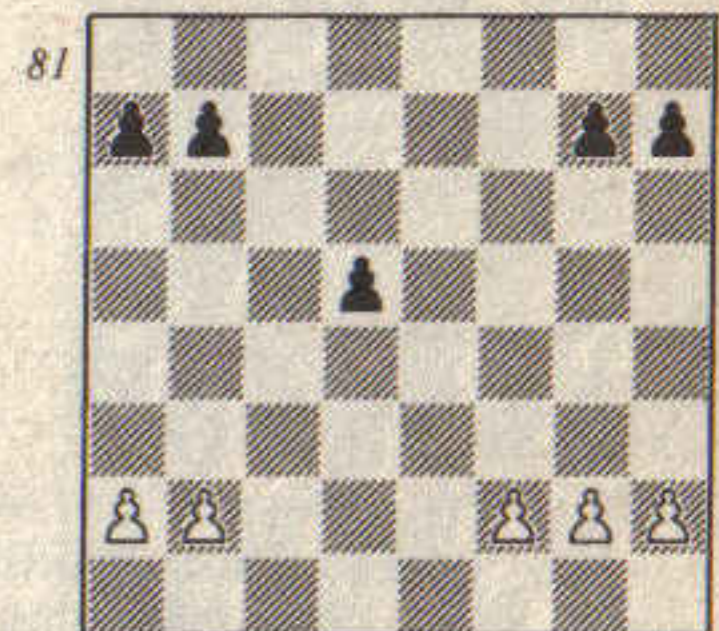
34 ... ♔e4
35 ♔xf7 ♔g6
36 g5 ♔h7
37 ♔fe7 ♔xb2
38 ♔e8 ♔b3+
39 ♔e2 ♔b2+
40 ♔e1 ♔d6
41 ♔xg7+ ♔h8
42 ♔ge7
1-0

A fine game showing how White should play in this variation. Karpov methodically exploited his control of the dark squares in the centre.

These two games have shown some of the characteristics of the isolated d-pawn positions - the role of the dark-squared bishops and outposts for the pieces. Isolated d-pawn positions can also arise from positions in which Black advances the backward e-pawn with ... e5 (80).



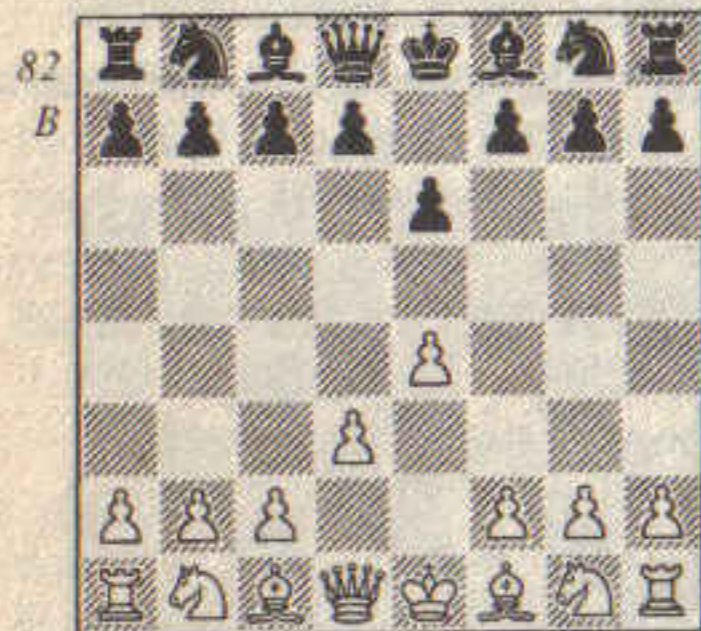
After the pawn push the pawn structure is as follows: (81)



It is important to note that the isolated d-pawn here is a *passed* pawn and must be blockaded by a piece - cf Govedarica-Uhlmann. The chances in these isolated d-pawn positions are balanced but it is dynamic equality. White has the structural advantage and good endgame chances. The particular features of each line will be discussed in more detail later.

7 The King's Indian Attack

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d3 (82)

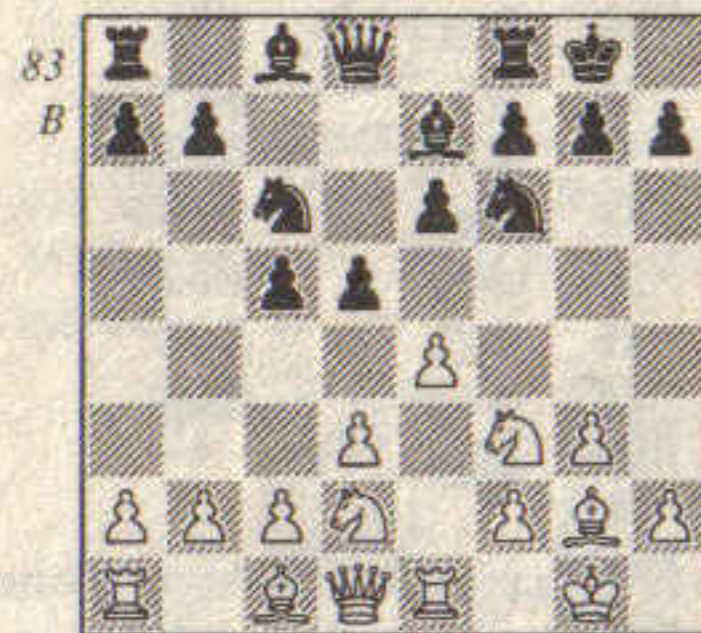


This is a very restrained way of meeting the French which should not pose too many problems for Black. White is obliged to fianchetto his KB and the time taken to do this enables Black to develop easily. The King's Indian Attack is a slow system but not without some potency. White aims for a kingside attack based around his strongpoint on e5. First we shall examine a typical game with the King's Indian Attack to show the characteristics of this variation.

Tringov-Lee
The Hague (Zonal) 1966

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d3 d5
- 3 ♘d2 ♘f6
- 4 ♘gf3 ♗e7

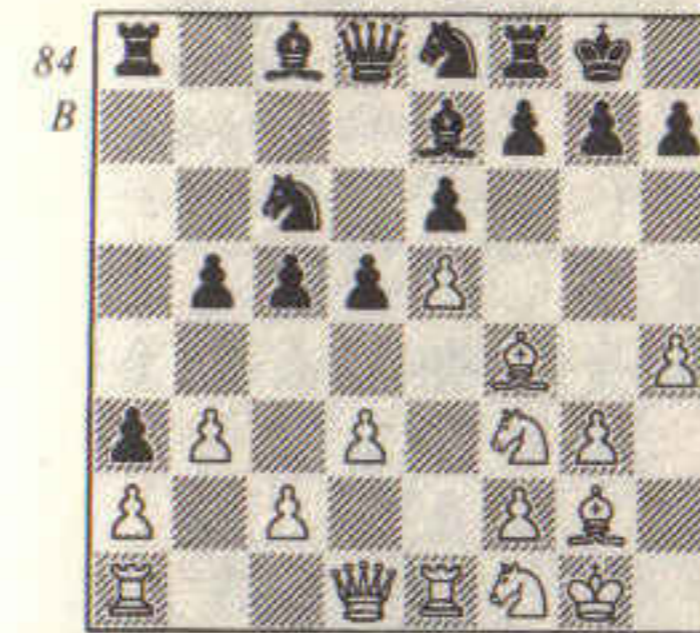
- 5 g3 0-0
- 6 ♗g2 c5
- 7 0-0 ♗c6
- 8 ♚e1 (83)



The players actually reached this position with the move order 1 ♘f3 c5 2 g3 ♘f6 3 ♗g2 d5 4 0-0 ♗c6 5 d3 e6 6 ♘bd2 ♗e7 7 e4 0-0 8 ♚e1! White's plan in this position is as follows: He will advance his e-pawn to e5 using it as a spearhead to cramp Black's kingside. Then he will transfer his pieces over to the kingside ready for an attack there with such moves as ♗h3, ♖e2, ♘f1-h2-g4, ♗f4-g5 and h4-h5-h6. Black has counterchances on the queenside with the pawn advance b5-b4 and a5-a4-a3, which will create outposts for his knights on d4 and c3. In some circumstances Black can also play ... f6, destroying White's advanced post on e5, but

this gives Black a backward pawn on e6 and is only successful when White has played inaccurately. In general, White has an easier game since he is attacking the king - he can afford small inaccuracies whereas Black cannot. In this game Black continued with the active

- 8 ... b5
- 9 e5 ♗e8
- 10 ♘f1 a5
- 11 h4 a4
- 12 ♗f4 a3
- 13 b3 (84)



Black has forced a weakness and now could play to occupy the hole with 13 ... b4 followed by ... ♗c7-b5-c3.

- 13 ... ♗b7
- 14 ♘h2 d4

Black prepares to bring the knight on e8 to d5, but this surrenders the e4 square.

- 15 h5

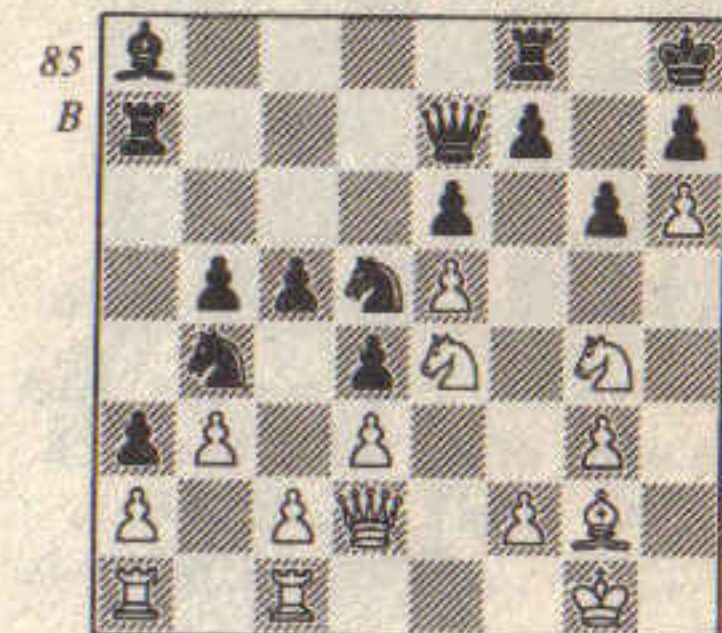
White adopts a similar strategy to Black's on the kingside. This pawn will advance to h6, forcing g6 which weakens the f6 square. The dark-squared bishops can be exchanged by ♗g5 and a white

knight can then go to f6. Black is unable to defend by ... h6 because of a sacrifice by White on this square.

- 15 ... ♗c7
- 16 h6 g6
- 17 ♖d2 ♗d5
- 18 ♗g5 ♗cb4
- 19 ♗xe7 ♖xe7
- 20 ♗g5

The white knight heads for e4.

- 20 ... ♗h8
- 21 ♗e4 ♚a7
- 22 ♗g4 ♗a8
- 23 ♚e1 (85)



White is now planning to open the c-file by c3. In the resulting major piece ending Black will be considerably hampered by the position of his king.

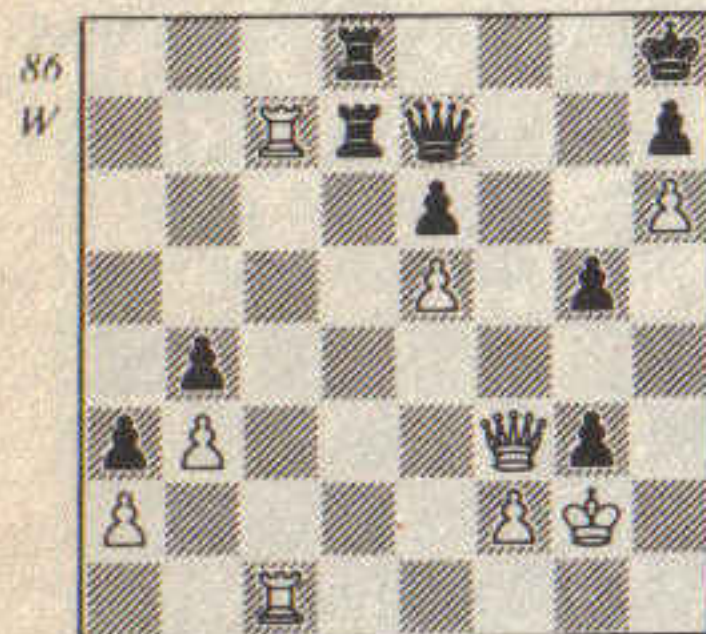
- 23 ... ♚c7
- 24 ♗gf6 ♚fd8
- 25 ♗f1 ♗xf6
- 26 ♗xf6 ♗d5
- 27 ♗xd5 ♗xd5
- 28 c3 dc

Black does not want an open c-file as he would be permanently tied down to his back rank.

- 29 ♚xc3 b4
- 30 ♚c2 f5

31 ♖a1 g5
Black hopes to surround the thorn at h6.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 32 | d4 | ♙a8 |
| 33 | ♙g2 | ♙xg2 |
| 34 | ♙xg2 | ♖cd7 |
| 35 | ♖xc5 | ♖xd4 |
| 36 | ♖e3 | f4 |
| 37 | ♖f3 | fg |
| 38 | ♖c7 | ♖4d7 (86) |



Now White exploits the bad positioning of the black monarch.

39 ♖xd7 ♖xd7
After 39 ... ♖xd7 40 ♖f6+ is decisive.

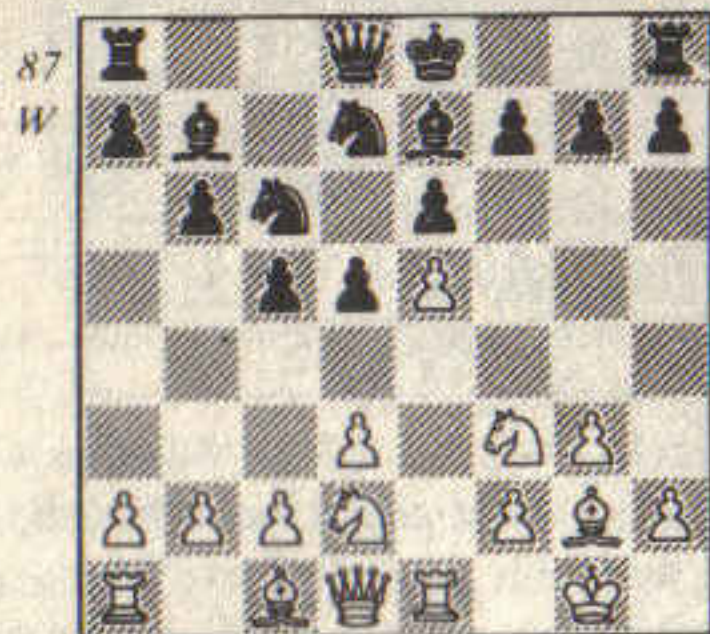
- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 40 | ♖c8+ | ♖d8 |
| 41 | ♖a8 | |
- 1-0

A good illustrative game. White's kingside initiative is usually more dangerous than Black's queenside play. The crux of the matter is that Black is not obliged to castle kingside into White's attack. In the late 1960s a successful scheme was found for Black: He could fianchetto his QB by ... b6 and ♙b7 and then castle on the queenside by ... ♖c7 and 0-0-0. Black could then begin a pawn storm against the white king

with ... h6 and ... g5. This is very effective against White's normal set-up. The white pieces, all huddled together on the kingside, have little room to manoeuvre and White's queenside possibilities are slim.

**Troianska-Jovanović
Ladies' Olympiad 1966**

- | | | |
|---|------|----------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d3 | d5 |
| 3 | ♗d2 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♗gf3 | c5 |
| 5 | g3 | b6 |
| 6 | ♙g2 | ♙b7 |
| 7 | e5 | ♗fd7 |
| 8 | 0-0 | ♗c6 |
| 9 | ♖e1 | ♙e7 (87) |



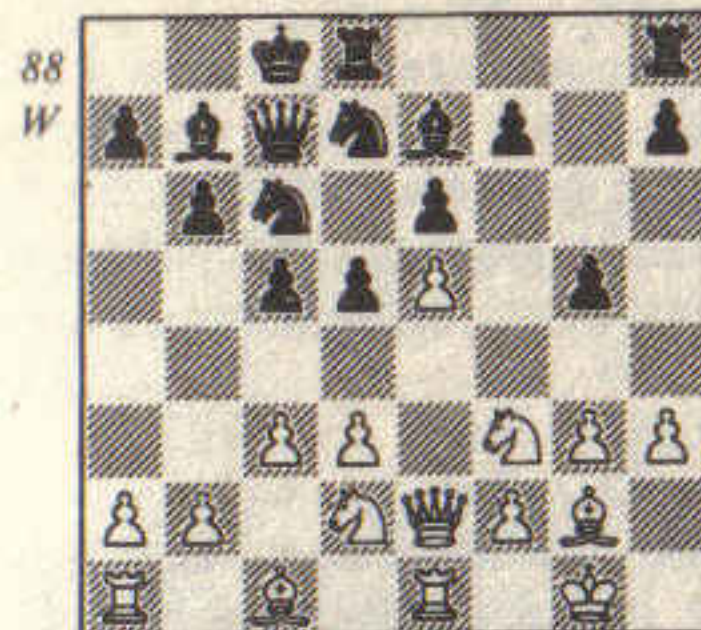
Now White should play actively with 10 c4 and if Black advances with ... d4 11 ♗e4 gives White good chances. Black cannot take the e-pawn without incurring a disadvantage: 11 ... ♗xc5 12 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 13 ♗xc5 with advantage to White. Instead White played the passive

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 10 | c3 | ♖c7 |
| 11 | ♖e2 | g5 |

Black seizes her chance. Now

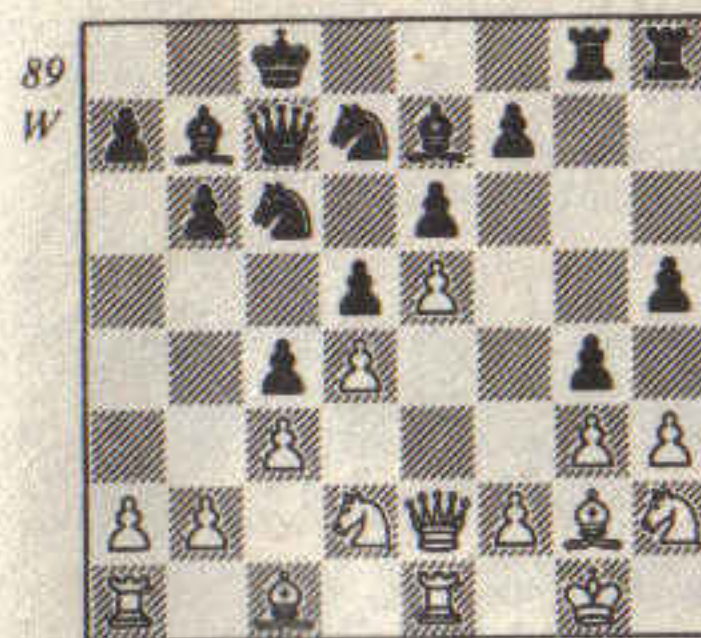
White must attend to the threat of ... g4, winning the white e-pawn, and thus further weaken the kingside.

- | | | |
|----|----|------------|
| 12 | h3 | 0-0-0 (88) |
|----|----|------------|



Black is ready to break through on the kingside with ... h5 and ... g4 and White has no immediate counter on the queenside.

- | | | |
|----|-----|---------|
| 13 | d4 | h5 |
| 14 | ♗b3 | ♖dg8 |
| 15 | ♗h2 | c4 |
| 16 | ♗d2 | g4 (89) |



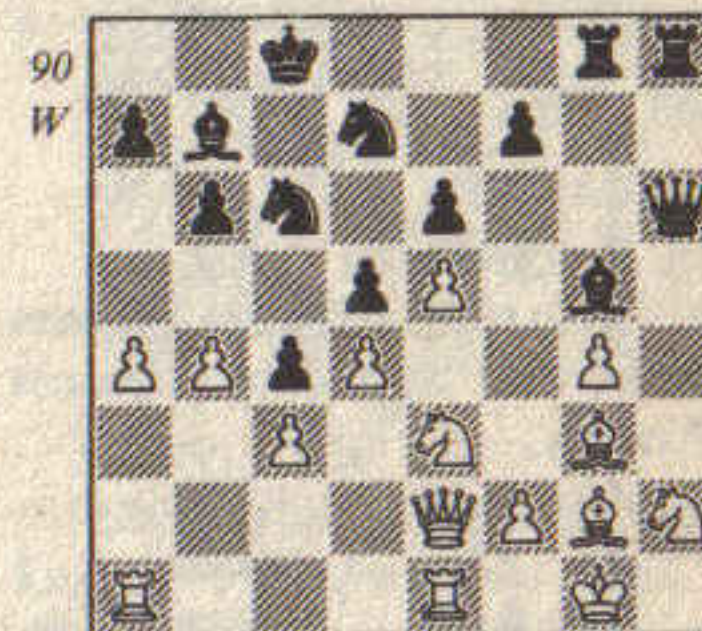
White's best chance now is to seal the kingside temporarily with h4, but it seems satisfactory to capture the pawn on g4.

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 17 | hg | h4 |
|----|----|----|

This pawn sacrifice wins the game. The open h-file will be

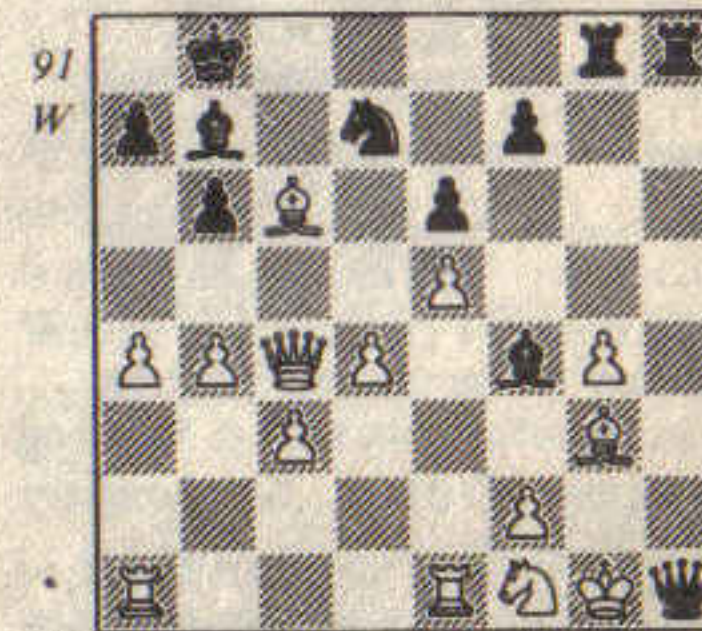
deadly.

- | | | |
|----|------|----------|
| 18 | ♗df1 | ♖d8 |
| 19 | b3 | ♙a6 |
| 20 | b4 | ♖f8 |
| 21 | a4 | ♙b7 |
| 22 | ♙f4 | hg |
| 23 | ♙xg3 | ♖h6 |
| 24 | ♗e3 | ♙g5 (90) |



Now White is really on the defensive with Black planning ... ♙f4, so White is tempted into a piece sacrifice.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------------|
| 25 | ♗xc4? | dc |
| 26 | ♖xc4 | ♙f4 |
| 27 | ♗f1 | ♙b8 |
| 28 | ♙xc6 | ♖h1+! (91) |
- 0-1



A nice conclusion to a well played game by Black. Black's plan of castling queenside worked

very well, but White played insipidly. The crucial positions arise when White plays c4 as in the following game.

**Botterill-Speelman
Hastings 1978/79**

1 e4 c5

Again this game starts as a Sicilian but it is very relevant.

2 f3 e6

3 d3 d5

4 e2

This treatment with e2 before b2 is also applicable against the French.

4 ... e7

5 g3 f6

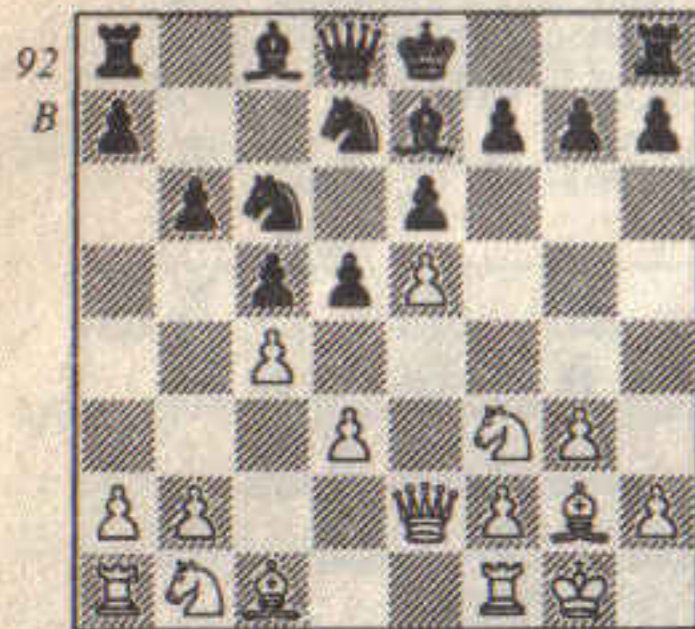
6 g2 c6

7 0-0 b6

Once again Black reserves the option of castling queenside.

8 e5 d7

9 c4 (92)



This position was also reached in Bronstein-Nowak, Sandomierz 1976 where Black continued 9 ... ddb8 and got much the worse of the game after 10 c3 d4 11 e4 h6 12 h4 b7 13 f4 d7 14 h5. Jon Speelman finds a good

alternative.

9 ... f8

A fine move. The knight is ready to go to e6 if White exchanges on d5.

10 h4

White prepares a possible g5, which would exchange the dark-squared bishops and leave Black unable to prevent a white knight coming to d6 some time.

10 ... h6

11 c3 b7

12 e1

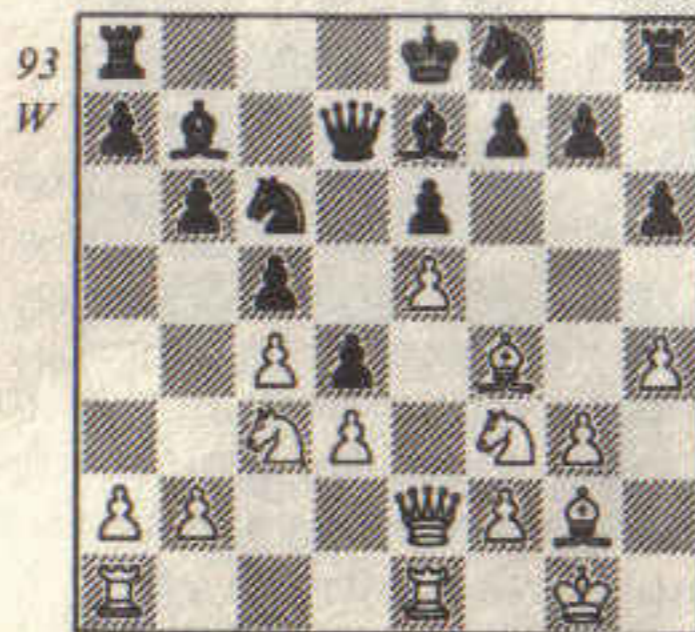
This is the natural move but there is a good case for 12 d1. White would like to play 12 cd ed 13 d4 but this fails to 13 ... cd 14 b5 e6 15 d1 c5 when White is driven back with ... a6. d1 threatens d4 at some point in earnest, so Black would have to play ... d4.

12 ... d7

13 f4

The bishop is exposed to attack here but it is not easy for White to find useful moves.

13 ... d4 (93)



Now Botterill continued with
14 b5

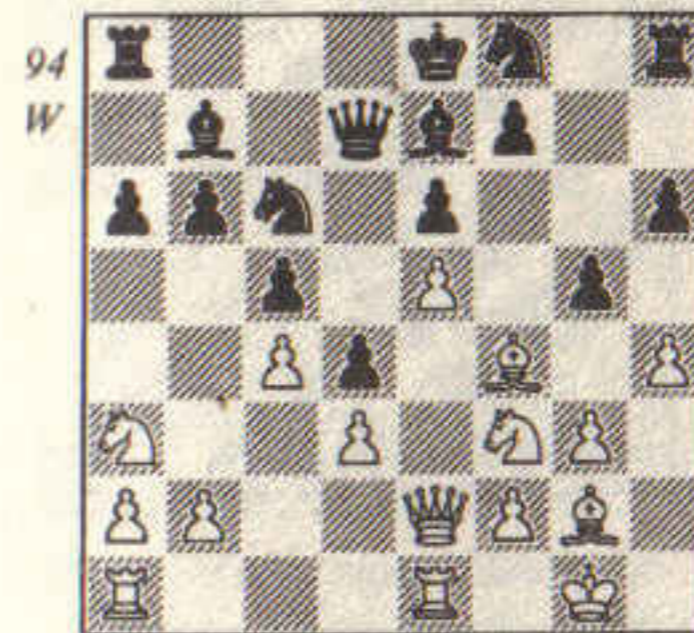
Surprisingly the best move here is the retreat 14 b1 since the knight can easily go to e4 from b1. The immediate 14 e4 is bad because of 14 ... g6, eyeing the white bishop and the e-pawn.

14 ... a6

15 a3

15 d6 xd6 16 ed g6 is bad for White. The pawn on d6 will be surrounded and swallowed by the black army.

15 ... g5 (94)



Now we see the disadvantage of having the bishop on f4. Ideally White would like to keep the kingside closed, answering g5 by ... h5 but with the bishop on f4 this is impossible. Black sacrifices a pawn to open lines on the kingside in readiness for an attack on the white king.

16 hg g6

17 d2

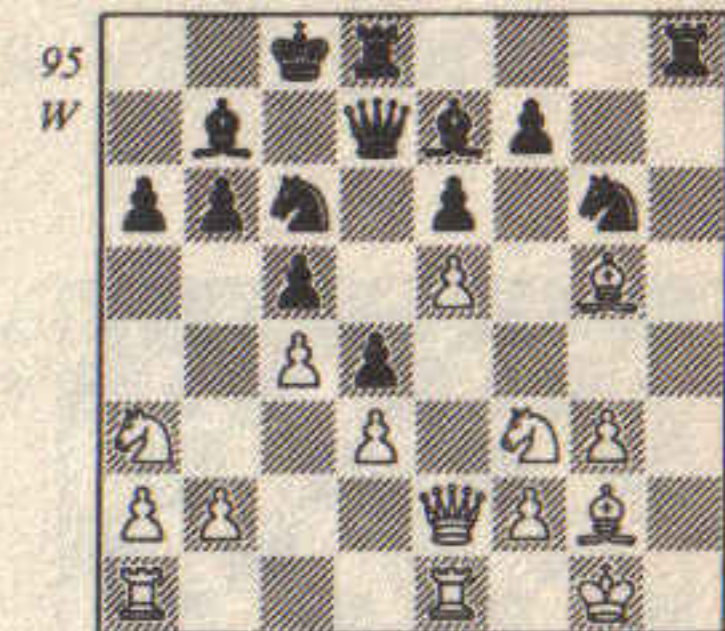
White could have tried 17 d2 but after 17 ... 0-0-0 18 gh xf4 19 xf4 f8 Black obtains very good play on the kingside.

17 ... hg

18 xg5 0-0-0 (95)

Black could have won his pawn

back by 18 ... xg5 19 xg5 cxe5 but then White seizes the initiative by 20 f4!



19 f6

White tries to hold up Black's kingside. If now 19 ... xf6 20 ef h6 White can establish his knight on the strong square e4 by 21 d2 dh8 22 e4 when it is not clear how Black can continue his attack.

19 ... h6

The rook appears to be rather precariously placed here but White cannot take advantage - 20 d2 h5 21 g4 h7 22 g5 h4 only improves Black's position.

20 d2

This leads to a disaster for White on the kingside. The best defensive chance is 20 b1, to bring the knight to e4 via d2. If White had played 14 b1 then he could now defend the kingside by d2.

20 ... g8

Black is now threatening 21 ... f4 which devastates the white position. 21 e4 gxe5 22 xe5 xe5 23 xc5 bc 24 xe5 f5 (preventing White from using

e4) leaves White defenceless.

- 21 ♖g4 ♜cxe5
 22 ♙xe5 ♙xg2
 23 f3
 23 ♙xg2 loses to ... ♜h4.

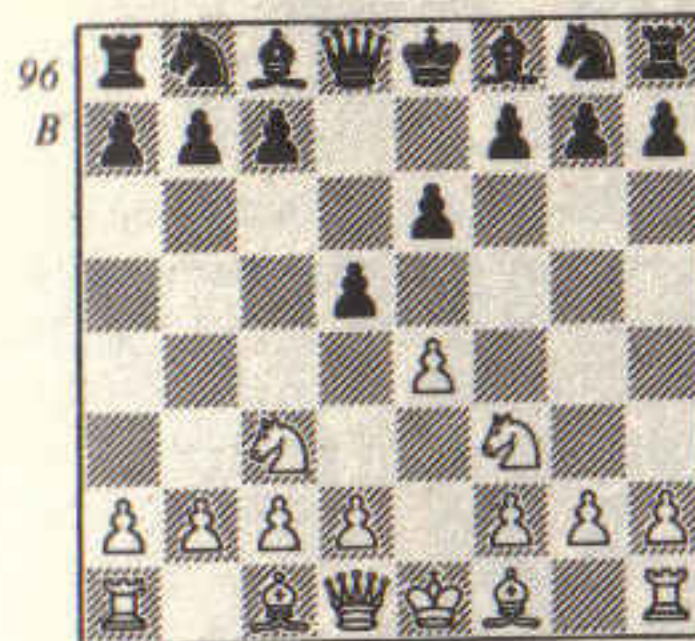
23 ... f5

0-1

A fine game from Jon Speelman, illustrating the attacking possibilities of Black's set-up.

8 The Two Knights Variation

- 1 e4 e6
 2 ♘c3 d5
 3 ♘f3 (96)

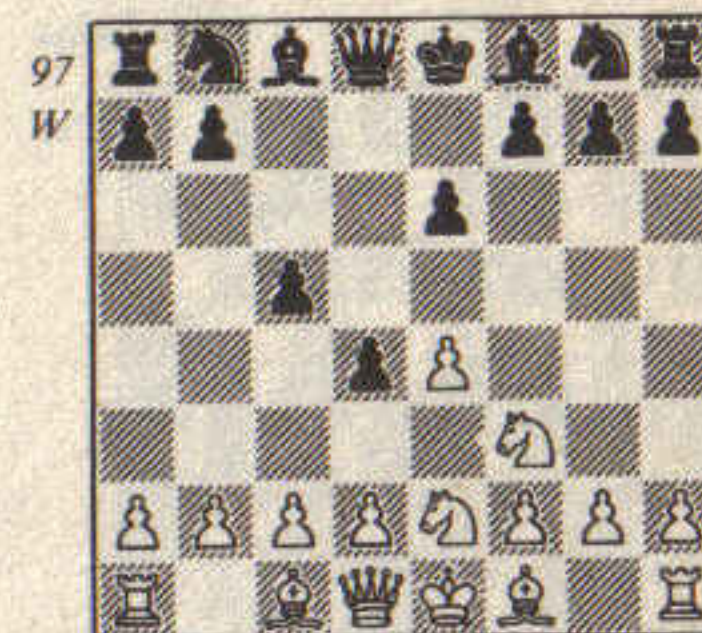


White challenges Black to set up a pawn centre by 3 ... d4 and later ... c5. White hopes to undermine this pawn centre by the breaks c3 and b4 and gain control of the centre himself. Black has the choice of accepting White's challenge or playing 3 ... ♘f6. We shall look at two games illustrating the critical 3 ... d4.

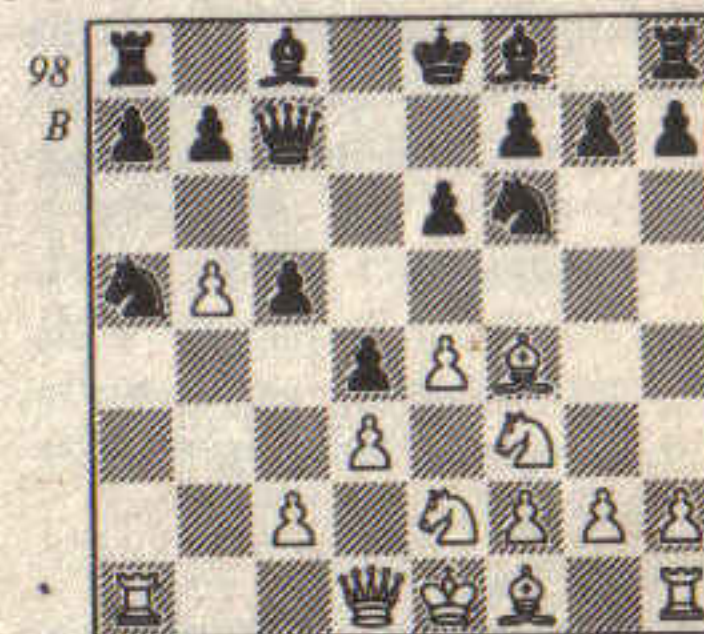
**Ljubojević-S.Garcia
 Palma de Mallorca 1971**

- 1 e4 e6
 2 ♘f3 d5
 3 ♘c3 d4
 4 ♘e2 c5 (97)
 5 e3

An interesting move is 5 b4!? as in Bellon-Korchnoi Palma 1972.



Korchnoi reacted with the double-edged 5 ... ♖b6. After 6 a4 ♘f6 (6 ... ♖xb4? 7 a5 intending c3) 7 a5 ♖c7 8 d3 ♘c6 9 b5 ♘xa5 10 ♙f4 (98) Bellon had sacrificed a pawn for good compensation. White has a lead in development and the knight on a5 is badly placed.



- 5 ... dc
 6 bc

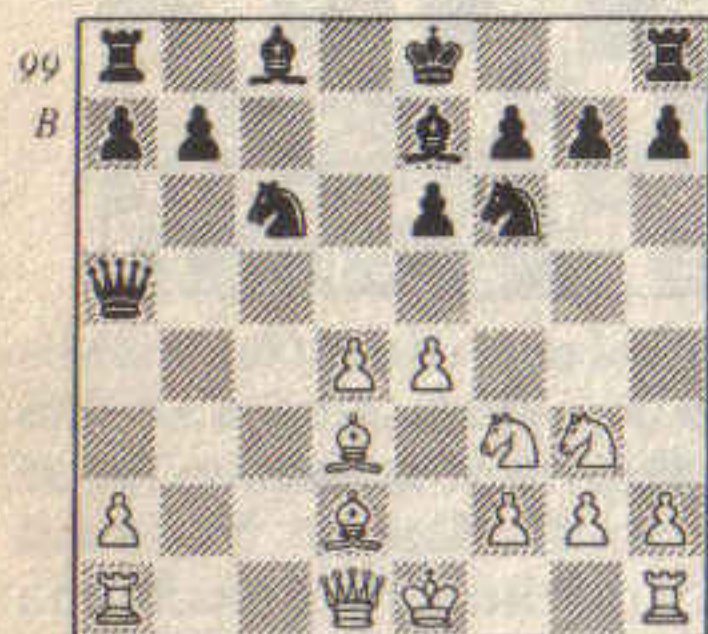
So now White is ready to form

a pawn centre with d4 and Black must react actively to avoid a disadvantage.

- 6 ... ♖f6
7 ♖g3 ♗e7

This gives White almost a free hand in the centre. 7 ... ♖c6, as in the next game Sax-Marić, is preferable.

- 8 d4 ♖c6
9 ♗d3 cd
10 cd ♖a5+
11 ♗d2 (99)

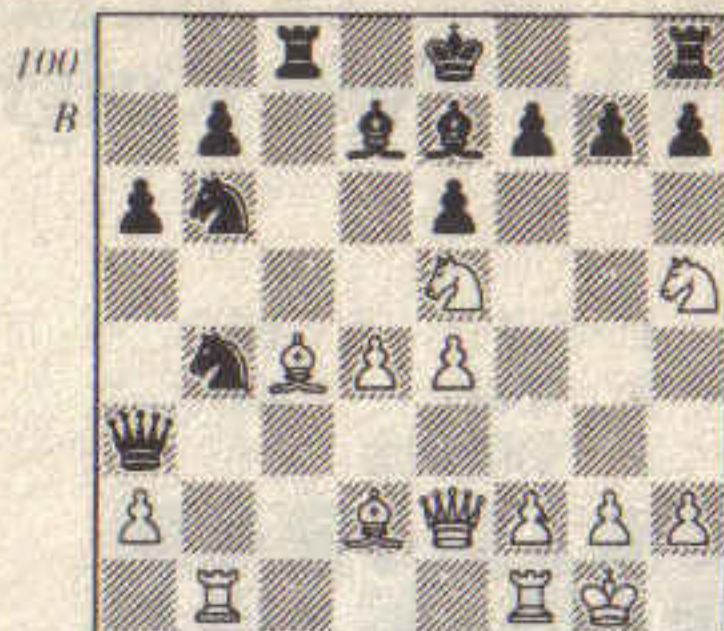


Now Black must continue with 11 ... ♗b4, although he has wasted time by playing 7 ... ♗e7. Garcia hopes to get counterplay on the queenside with his queen, but he is quickly despatched by Ljubojević.

- 11 ... ♖a3
12 ♖e2 ♖b4
13 ♗b5+ ♖d7
13 ... ♗d7 is more sensible.
14 0-0 a6
15 ♗c4 ♖b6
16 ♖ab1

The black knight on b4 is in a precarious position and retreat to c6 allows White to play d5, breaking open the black position.

- 16 ... ♗d7
17 ♖e5 ♖c8
18 ♖h5 (100)



Now Black cannot castle because White wins the exchange after 19 ♖g4 g6 20 ♗xb4 ♗xb4 21 ♖f6+ ♖g7 22 ♖fxd7.

- 18 ... ♖g8
19 ♖b3 ♖a4
20 ♖f3 f6
21 ♖xf6+ gf
22 ♖h5+ ♖d8

22 ... ♖g6 is a better try although White still wins after 23 ♖xh7.

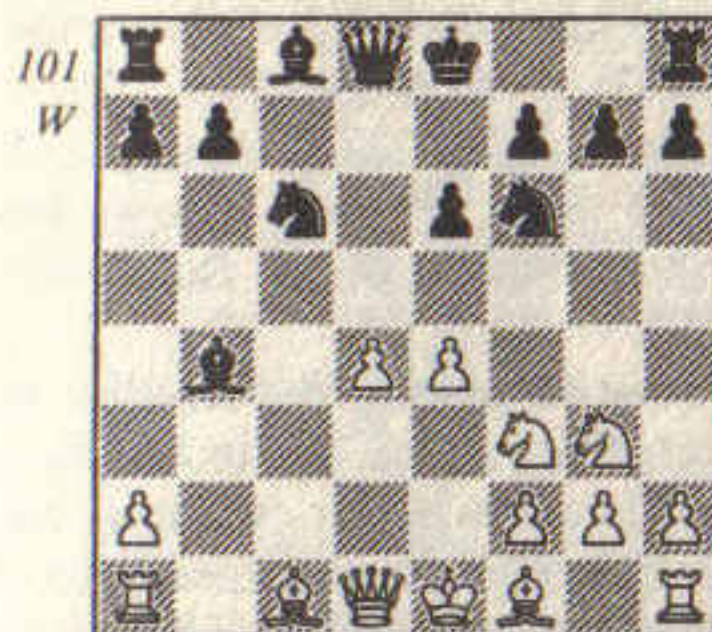
- 23 ♖f7+ ♖e8
After 23 ... ♖c7 24 ♗f4+ wins.
24 ♖d6+ ♖d8
25 ♖xb4 ♖c2
26 ♖f7+ ♖e8
27 ♖d6+ ♖d8
28 ♖xb6 ♖xd2
29 ♖xc8 ♗xc8
30 ♗xe6 ♖g5

1-0
After 31 ♖xh7 ♖xd4 32 ♖h8+ ♖c7 33 ♖xc8 ♖xb6 34 ♖b1+ ♖a5 35 ♖c7+ Black loses. This game was a good illustration of the dangers of this variation. If Black plays passively he is likely to be

swamped. Black can get satisfactory play as in the following game.

Sax-Marić
Vinkovci 1976

- 1 e4 e6
2 ♖c3 d5
3 ♖f3 d4
4 ♖e2 c5
5 c3 dc
6 bc ♖c6
7 d4 cd
8 cd ♖f6
9 ♖g3 ♗b4+ (101)



This check leads to exchanges which ease Black's defensive task.

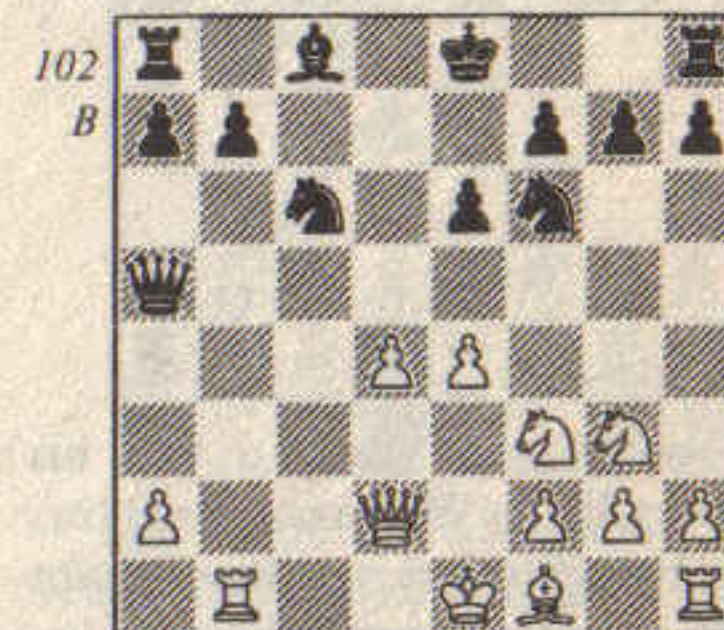
- 10 ♗d2 ♖a5
11 ♖b1

A good move which threatens ♖xb4 followed by ♖b3, winning two pieces for a rook. After the exchange of dark-squared bishops the rook will be well placed, bearing down on the black queenside.

- 11 ... ♗xd2+
12 ♖xd2 (102)

Since neither side can profitably avoid the exchange of queens they must be prepared for the

ending. White has a pawn centre, more central control and possibilities for his rooks on the c- and b-files. White can play ♗b5 with the idea of giving Black an isolated c-pawn by exchanging bishop for knight on c6. If White is allowed to do this he will have a big advantage.



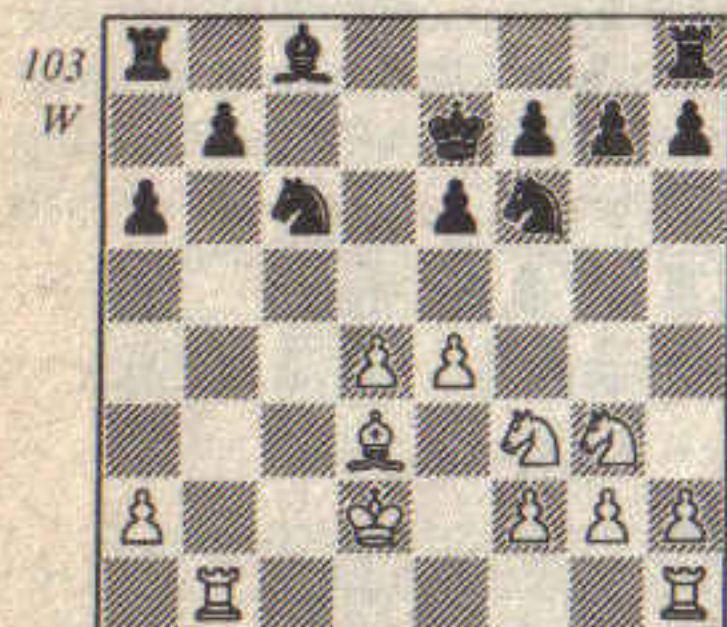
Black must, therefore, either prevent this by moving his knight, or with ... a6 to stop ♗b5 or be prepared to reply with ... ♗d7. White can also try to establish a knight on d6 by e5, ♖e4 and ♖d6. The outlook appears dismal for Black. Can he stop White's threats or should he allow them? Black's counterplay resides in the slightly exposed position of the White's d-pawn. He can put a rook on the d-file. White cannot defend with ♖e3 because of ... ♖g4+, and ♖c3 allows Black to put a rook on the c-file with effect.

- 12 ... ♖xd2+

12 ... ♖e7 is worthy of consideration. White cannot avoid the exchange of queens and Black is ready to swing his rook to d8. Sigurjonsson-Hort, Hastings

1975/76 continued 13 ♖b5 ♗xd2+
14 ♘xd2 ♙d7 with an equal
position.

- 13 ♖b5 a6
14 ♘d2 ♙e7 (103)



Now Black is ready to put his
rook on d8, so White counters this
plan by establishing his knight
on d6.

- 15 e5 ♘d5
16 ♘e4 f6

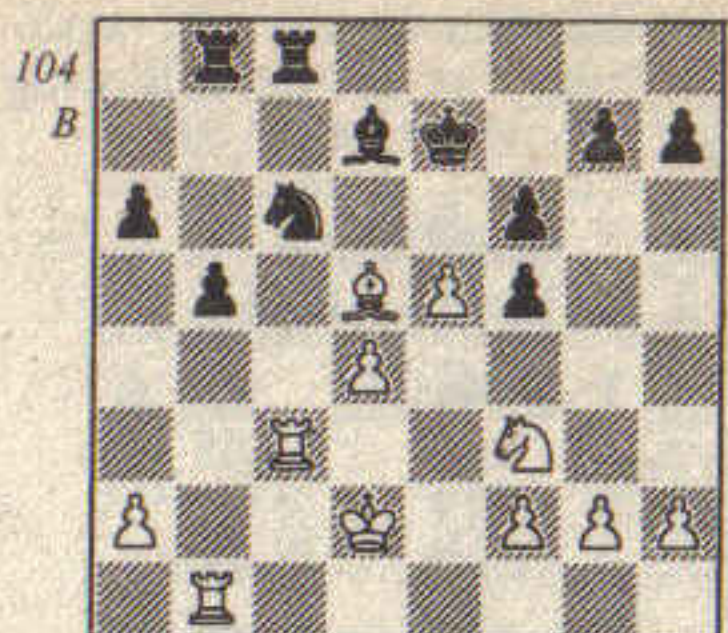
A vital move. Black cannot
allow the white knight to sit on d6
unchallenged and thus prepares to
undermine its support on e5.

- 17 ♘d6 b5
18 ♖hc1 ♙d7

Black is threatening a small
combination 19 ... ♗xd4 20 ♗xd4
fe, winning a pawn. So White is
soon forced to relinquish his post
on d6.

- 19 ♙e4 ♖ab8
20 ♗f5+ ef
21 ♙xd5 ♖hc8
22 ♖c3 (104)

Now Black could have seized a
slight initiative by 22 ... b4 23 ♖c2
a5 24 ♖bc1 ♗a7 25 ♖xc8 ♖xc8
26 ♖xc8 ♙xc8 when his knight is
coming to a good post on b5.



- 22 ... ♗a5
23 ♖a3 1/2-1/2

The game was agreed drawn
here. White retains the advantage
after 23 ... ♙c6 24 ♖xa5 ♙xd5
25 ♖xa6 ♖a8 27 ♖xa8 ♖xa8
29 ♘e3 ♘e6. White is a pawn up
but the black pieces are well
placed.

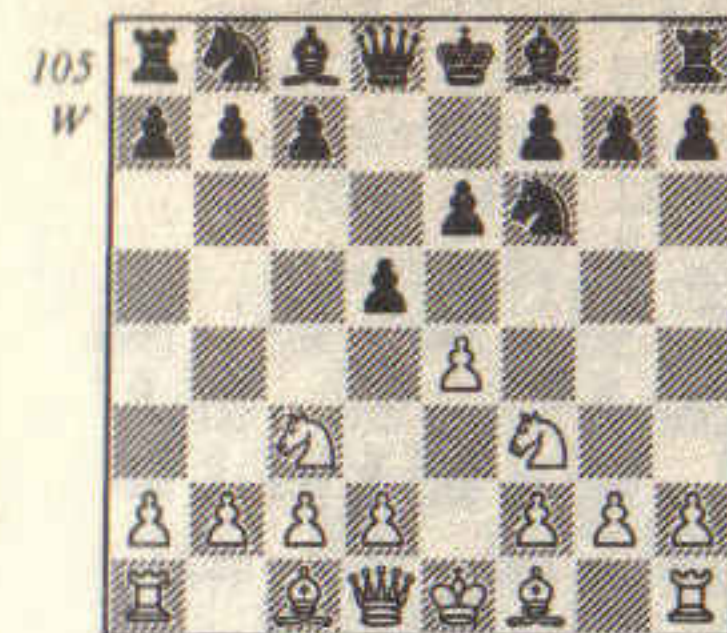
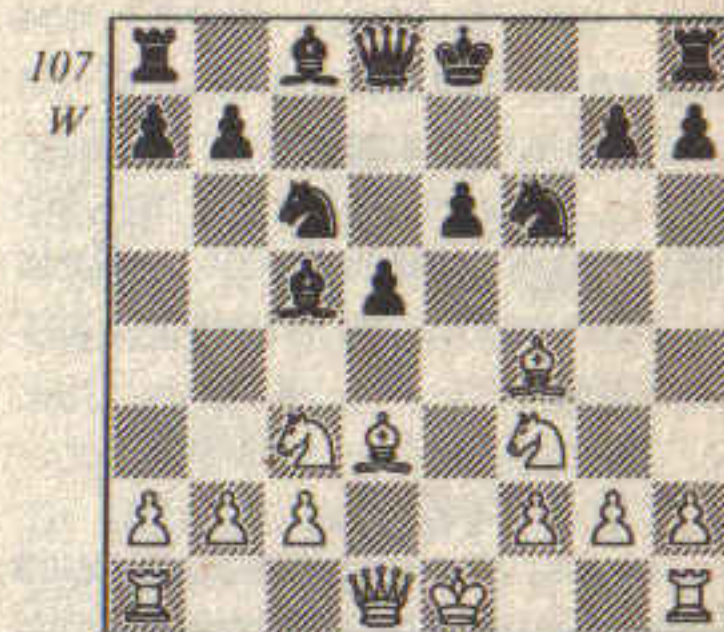
So we have seen that this line is
playable for Black but in practice
White has the better chances due
to his pawn centre and easier piece
development. Black's 2-1 majority
on the queenside is a long term
asset. Now we will turn our
attention to the most popular
choice against the Two Knights
Variation, 3 ... ♗f6.

- 1 e4 e6
2 ♗f3 d5
3 ♗c3 ♗f6 (105)

The move 3 ... ♗f6 puts the
question to White's e-pawn. In
order to retain the initiative White
must advance in the centre with
4 e5. 4 ed leads to the Exchange
Variation which should hold no
terrors for Black and 4 d3 is
innocuous. After 4 e5 ♗fd7 White

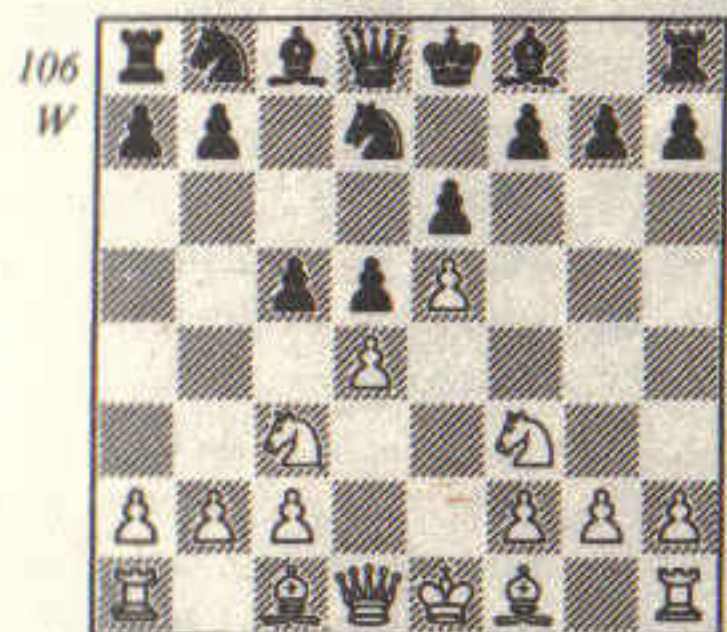
West European Zonal 1978 which
continued

- 6 dc ♗c6
7 ♙f4 ♙xc5
8 ♙d3 f6
9 ef ♗xf6 (107)



is almost compelled to support his
pawn on e5 with d4 and then
Black can play ... c5. Let us
consider the position after

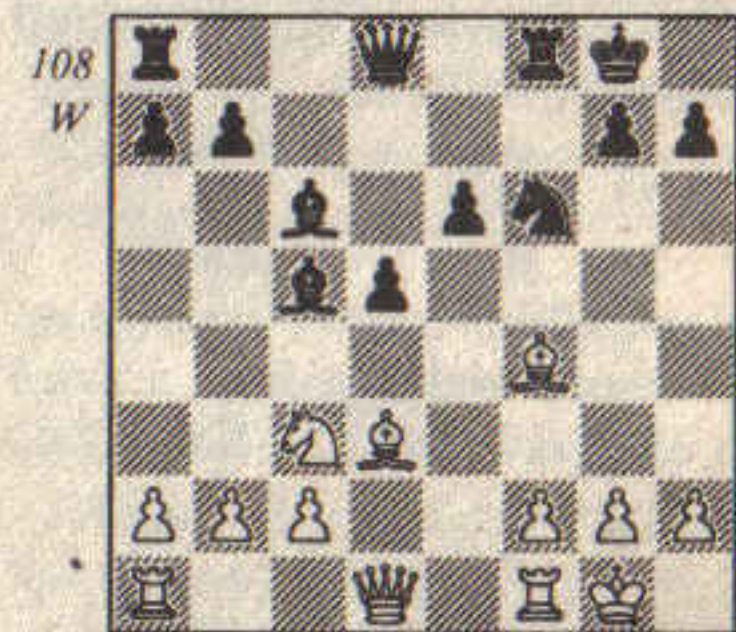
- 4 e5 ♗fd7
5 d4 c5 (106)



A typical French pawn structure
in the centre but White is slightly
embarrassed due to the position of
his knight on c3. He cannot
support the d4 pawn by c3 unless
he moves the knight. ♗e2 would
block in the KB and leave Black
with a good game. So White
normally opts to capture on c5
hoping for good minor piece play.
Black can liquidate the white
pawn on e5 by ... f6 and try to gain
control of the centre. We shall
look at the game Bellon-Speelman,

The white central pawns have
been eliminated and the struggle
revolves around the dark squares
in front of the pawns on d5 and e6.
If White can gain control of these
squares (primarily e5) and stop
the pawns from advancing he will
have the advantage.

- 10 0-0 0-0
11 ♗e5 ♙d7
12 ♗xc6 ♙xc6 (108)



Now White hopes to establish
the blockade but overlooks a
feature of this position - the

unprotected state of his bishop on f4.

13 ♖e2 ♘e4!

With this tactical stroke Black seizes the initiative.

14 ♔e3

The alternatives were not significantly better: 14 ♘xe4? de and White loses a piece or 14 ♔g3 ♘xg3 15 ♖xe6+ ♘h8 16 hg ♖f6 17 ♖h3 ♖g8 followed by ... ♖af8 with tremendous pressure on the white kingside.

14 ... ♔xe3

15 ♖xe3

15 fe was the only chance even though Black has a tremendous positional advantage after 15 ... ♘xc3 16 bc.

15 ... d4

16 ♖e2 dc

17 ♔xe4 cb

18 ♖ab1 ♖f6

It is not easy for White to capture the pawn on b2.

19 c4 ♖ab8

20 ♔c2

White now threatens the capture 21 ♖xb2 because of the discovered attack possibility.

20 ... ♘h8

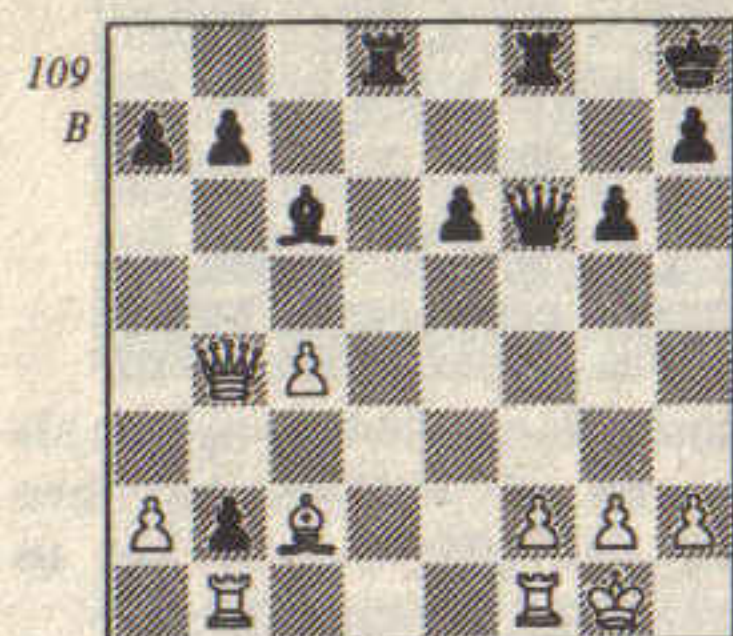
21 ♖d3 g6

22 ♖a3 ♖bd8

Now White cannot capture on b2 without walking into a fatal pin: 23 ♖xb2 ♖xb2 24 ♖xb2 ♖d2

25 f3 ♔a4 26 ♖fc1 ♖c8 and ... ♖xc4 wins. 23 ♖xb2 ♖d2 is also very awkward for White.

23 ♖b4 (109)



23 ... ♔xg2

Black rips open the white king, having drawn White's forces over to the queenside.

24 ♘xg2 ♖f3+

25 ♘g1 ♖f4

26 h3 ♖xh3

27 ♖xb2+ ♘g8

28 ♔f5 ♖xf5

29 f4

White has stopped the mate temporarily but the end is swift.

29 ... ♖d3

30 ♖f2 ♖g3+

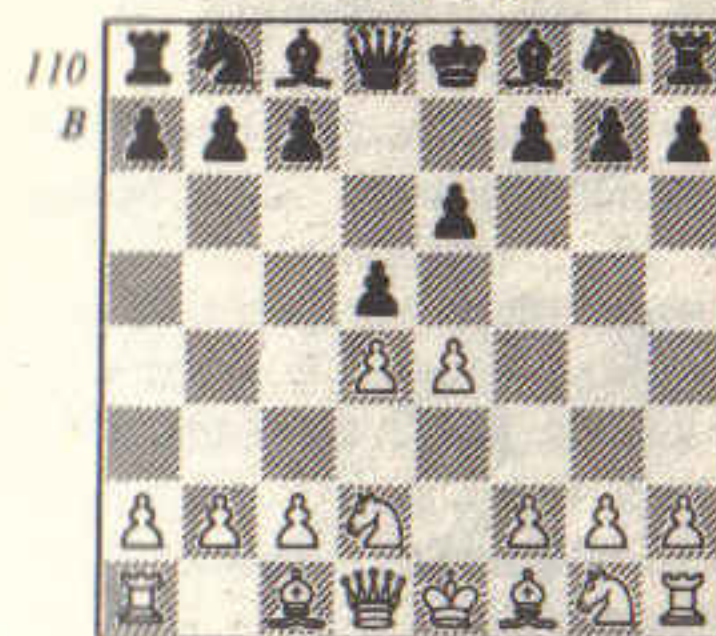
31 ♖g2 ♖xf4

0-1

In conclusion, Black should have no difficulty with the Two Knights Variation either by playing 3 ... d4 or 3 ... ♘f6.

9 Tarrasch Variation I: 3 ... c5

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘d2 (110)



3 ♘d2 was originally pioneered by the great German Dr Siegbert Tarrasch (1862-1934). Ironically Tarrasch gave up his own invention because Black could obtain an isolated d-pawn by playing 3 ... c5. Contrary to the modern view, Tarrasch firmly believed that isolated d-pawn positions favoured the possessor of the pawn.

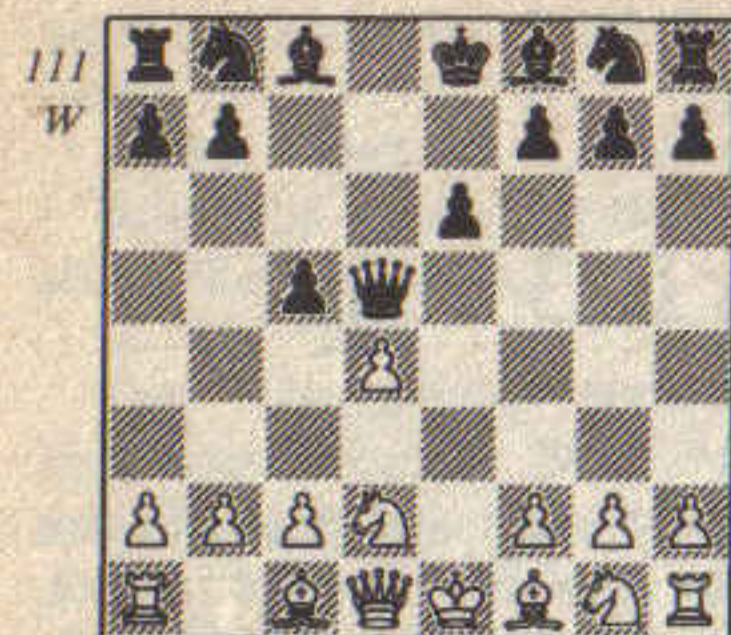
By playing 3 ♘d2, White aims to retain the tension while hoping to profit from the difficulty Black experiences in developing some of his minor pieces. We have noted that Black's QB is a problem child but 3 ♘d2 also stops the easy development of the KB on b4 which occurs after 3 ♘c3. The drawback of 3 ♘d2 is that it

blocks the QB and does not put much pressure on the centre. Consequently Black can liquidate the centre by 3 ... c5 if he wishes and thus free his minor pieces, which he cannot do against 3 ♘c3. In this chapter we shall look at games where Black answers the Tarrasch with 3 ... c5. In the chapter dealing with positional themes the game Karpov-Uhlmann provided a good illustration of how to play the white side.

White normally continues with 4 ed and here Black has an important choice to make - he can opt for the isolated d-pawn position with 4 ... ed or he can avoid it with the queen recapture 4 ... ♖xd5. For the player who does not like the isolated d-pawn position 4 ... ♖xd5 is very playable. We shall look at games involving the queen recapture first.

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘d2 c5
4 ed ♖xd5 (111)

This queen recapture avoids the problems of the recapture 4 ... ed, when Black is usually saddled with an isolated d-pawn. The drawbacks are that the black queen is exposed and the QB



difficult to develop. Petrosian has used this variation extensively, and the Swede Ornstein and English International Jonathan Mestel are also amongst its devotees. Indeed our first game in this line is

**Stein-Mestel
Canterbury 1973**

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘d2 c5
- 4 ed ♖xd5
- 5 ♘gf3

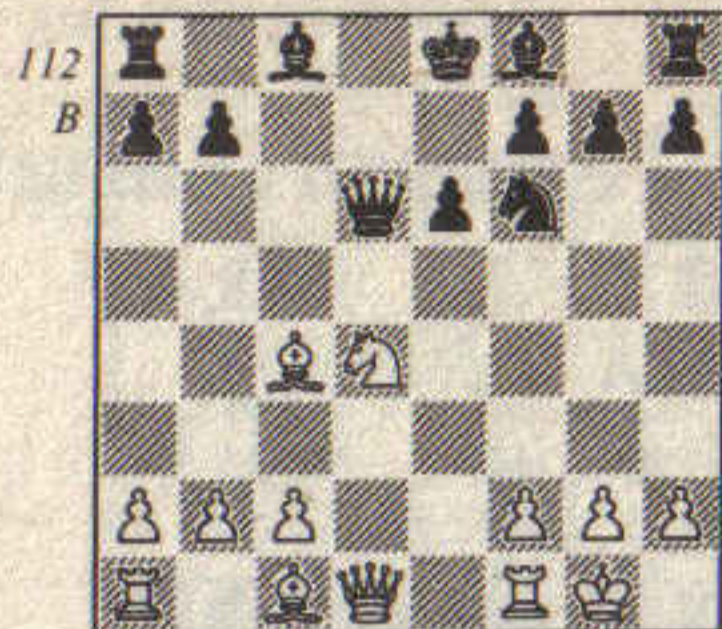
5 dc allows Black to equalise with 5 ... ♗xc5 6 ♘gf3 ♘f6 7 ♗c4 ♖d8 8 0-0 0-0 as in Pirc-Eliskases, Noordwijk 1938. 5 ♘gf3 lets Black take on d4 but White regains the pawn later.

- 5 ... cd

5 ... ♗c6 is bad because of 6 c4 ♖h5 7 d5 ed 8 cd ♖xd5 9 ♗c4 when White has a decisive lead in development. Playable is 5 ... ♘f6 6 ♗c4 ♖c6 7 a4 ♖c7 8 0-0 cd with a slight edge for White, Andersson-Petrosian, Wijk an Zee 1971.

- 6 ♗c4 ♖d6
- 7 0-0 ♗c6
- 8 ♗b3 ♘f6

- 9 ♗bxd4 ♗xd4
- 10 ♗xd4 (112)



Now Black has a choice between the straightforward developing move 10 ... ♗d7 or the more ambitious 10 ... a6, delaying the development of the QB. Black can play 10 ... ♗e7 which leads to positions from the ... ♗d7 line, e.g. Hort-Spassky, Tilburg 1978, which went 10 ... ♗e7 11 c3 ♗d7 12 ♖f3 ♖c7 13 ♗b3 ♗d6 14 h3 ♗e5 15 ♗g5 ♗xd4 16 cd ♗c6 17 ♖e3 ♗d5 18 ♖e5 1/2-1/2.

- 10 ... ♗d7
- 11 ♗b3 ♖c7

Black prepares to develop his KB by ... ♗d6 attacking h2, which would complete his development and leave him well placed.

- 12 ♗g5

White attempts to cross Black's plans. 12 ... ♗d6 is met by 13 ♗xf6 gf 14 ♖h5 when the black king is in trouble. Black cannot castle kingside, and queenside castling allows ♖xf7.

- 12 ... ♗e4

The quiet 12 ... ♗e7 13 ♖e1 0-0 14 ♘f5! is good for White.

- 13 ♗h4 ♗d6

- 14 ♖g4

Defending h2 by 14 ♘f3 allows Black to develop easily with 14 ... 0-0 15 ♖e1 ♗c5, when he has a good position.

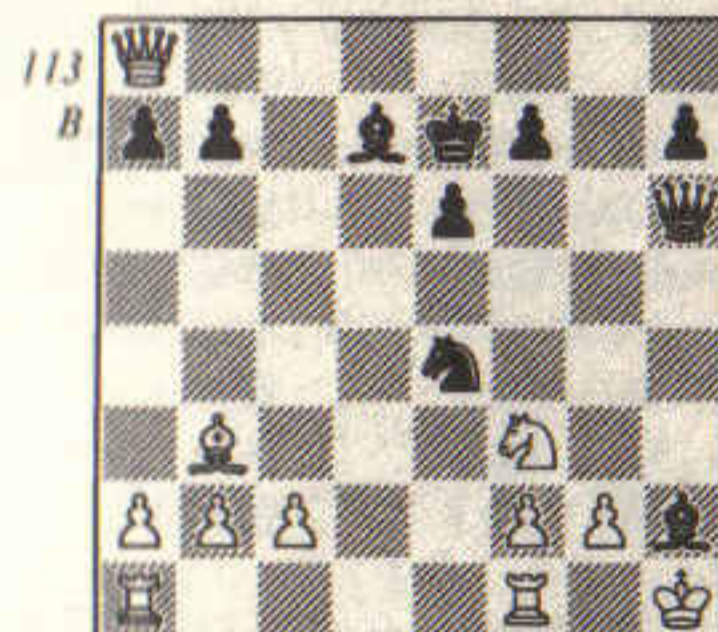
- 14 ... ♗xh2+
- 15 ♗h1 ♖f4!
- 16 ♖xg7

The only consistent continuation for White.

- 16 ... ♖xh4
- 17 ♖xh8+ ♗e7
- 18 ♘f3!

A surprise.

- 18 ... ♖h6
- 19 ♖xa8 (113)



Now if Black plays 19 ... ♗d6+ 20 ♗g1 ♗d2 21 ♖fd1 ♘xf3+ 22 gf ♖h2+ 23 ♗f1 ♗b5+ 24 c4 wins for White - but Black now forces a clever draw.

- 19 ... ♗g3+
- 20 fg ♗xg3+
- 21 ♗g1 ♖e3+
- 22 ♗h1 ♖h6+

1/2-1/2

An entertaining game showing the various tactical motifs in this type of position.

We shall now look at the more critical 10 ... a6.

**Kaiszauri-Ornstein
Eksjö 1981**

(1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗d2 c5 4 ed ♖xd5 5 ♘gf3 cd 6 ♗c4 ♖d6 7 0-0 ♗c6 8 ♗b3 ♘f6 9 ♗bxd4 ♗xd4 10 ♗xd4)

- 10 ... a6
- 11 b3

11 ♗b3 is a good alternative. Jansa-Petrosian, Moscow 1977, continued 11 ... ♗e7 12 c3 0-0 13 ♖f3, when White has a small advantage.

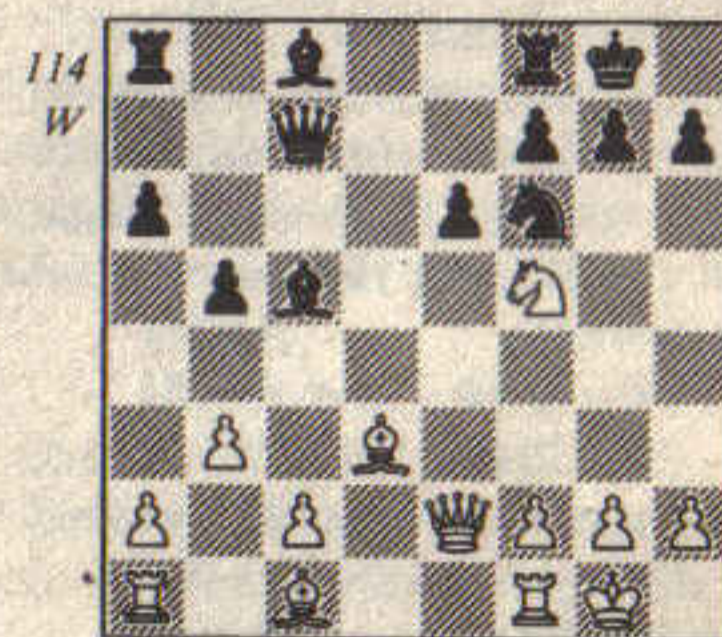
- 11 ... ♖c7
- 12 ♖e2

White prepares to play ♘f5, which will be very awkward for Black. 12 ♗b2 b5 13 ♗d3 ♗d6 14 ♘f3 0-0 15 ♖e2 ♗d5 (Kaiszauri-Ornstein, Eksjö 1980) gives Black fewer problems.

- 12 ... b5
- 13 ♗d3 ♗c5

The simple 13 ... ♗e7 14 ♖e1 is not good for Black because 14 ... 0-0 can be met by 15 ♘f5.

- 14 ♘f5 0-0 (114)



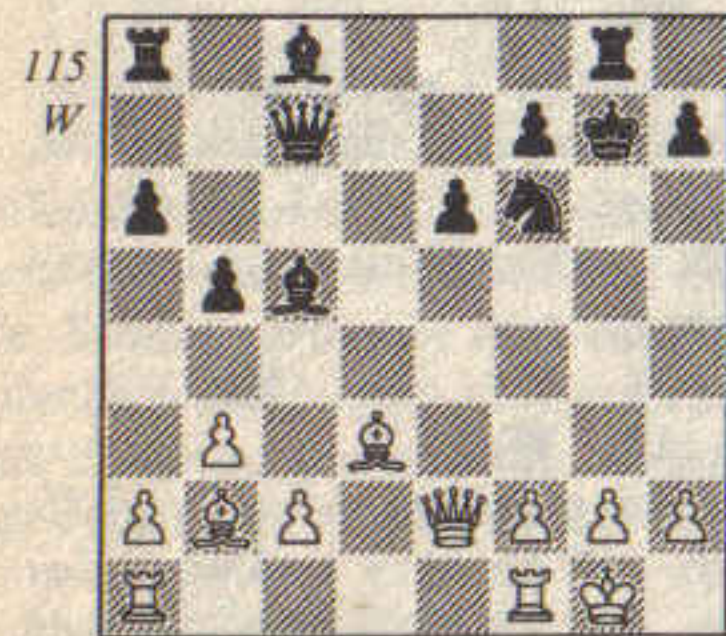
A typical position in this line. White is ready for a sacrificial attack on the black king but the

black army is well developed.

- 15 ♖xg7 ♖xg7
16 ♖b2

The alternative 16 ♖h6+ forces a draw after 16 ... ♗xh6 17 ♖d2+ ♗g7 18 ♖g5+, but after 17 ... ♗h5 it is difficult for White.

- 16 ... ♖g8! (115)



A fine defensive move making a square for the black monarch on f8.

- 17 ♖e4
17 ♖f3 ♖e7! 18 ♖g3+ ♖xg3
19 fg h5 20 ♖f4 ♖h8 21 ♖af1 ♖h6
defends adequately.

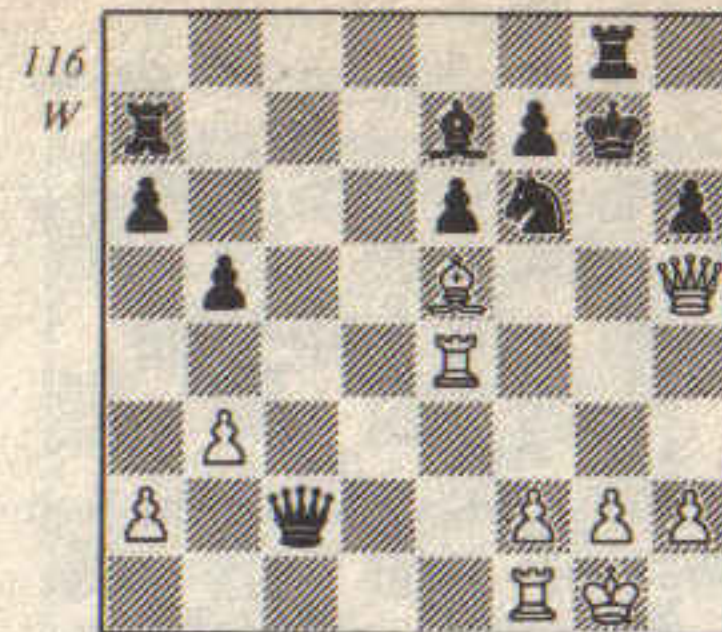
- 17 ... ♖a7
18 ♖h5 h6
19 ♖ad1 ♖e7
20 ♖e5

20 ♖d3 permits Black to hold on with 20 ... ♖f4. But now Black can develop his last piece since White is not threatening the queen.

- 20 ... ♖b7
21 ♖d4 ♖xe4
22 ♖xe4 ♖xc2 (116)

The queen is very well placed here to stop White's attack.

- 23 ♖g4+ ♗f8
24 ♖xh6+ ♗e8
25 ♖xg8+ ♗xg8
26 ♖h8 ♖g6

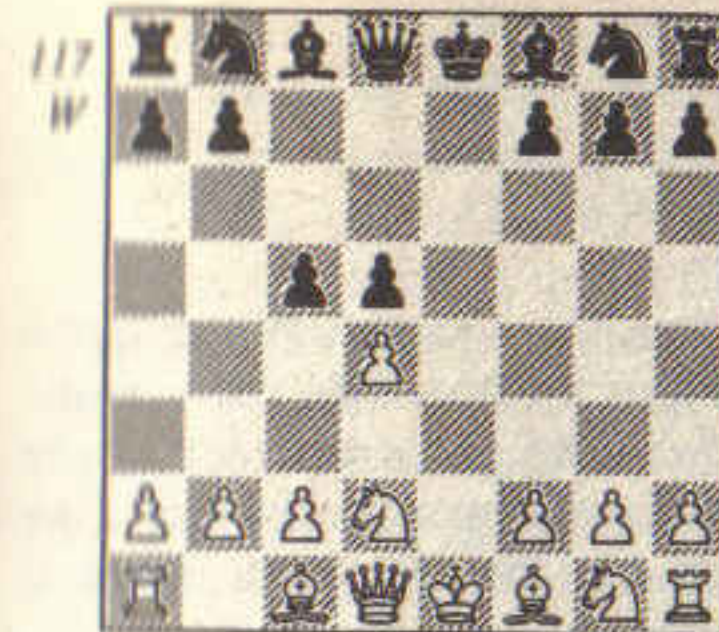


- 27 ♖c1
27 ♖g7 fails to 27 ... ♖f8.
27 ... f6
28 ♖b2 ♗f7
29 ♖h3 ♖d7
30 ♖e1 ♖f5
31 g4 ♖g6
32 ♖f3 ♖d3
33 ♖c6 ♖d6
34 ♖c8 ♖f3
35 g5 fg
36 ♖c2 ♖g4+
37 ♗f1 ♖f5
38 ♖c3 ♖d3+

0-1
A fine defensive effort by Ornstein. These two games are typical of this line. White is ahead in development but Black's pieces are very well placed and if White plays conservatively Black has good chances with a minority attack on the queenside.

The alternative recapture 4 ... ed leads to a very different position (117).

After White captures on c5 Black will be left with an isolated d-pawn - a definite structural disadvantage - but with free play for his minor pieces. Karpov has



firmly supported the white side while Korchnoi has staunchly held to Black's side. As the endgame approaches the isolated d-pawn becomes even weaker, and thus a cornerstone of White's strategy is to exchange pieces. Black will try to avoid exchanges and create attacking chances. We shall look at some games showing the problems facing both sides.

Sax-Petrosian
Rio de Janeiro IZ 1979

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♗d2 c5
4 ed ed
5 ♖b5+

As already mentioned, White would like to reach the endgame. Now Black has a choice between 5 ... ♖d7 and 5 ... ♗c6. 5 ... ♗c6 keeps the position more complex and is Petrosian's choice here. 5 ... ♖d7 will be featured in the next game, Tal-Portisch.

- 5 ... ♗c6
6 ♖e2 ♖e7
7 de ♗f6
8 ♗b3 0-0 (118)



Now White is temporarily a pawn up although his queen is not well placed on the open e-file.

- 9 ♗f3 ♖e8
10 ♖e3 a6

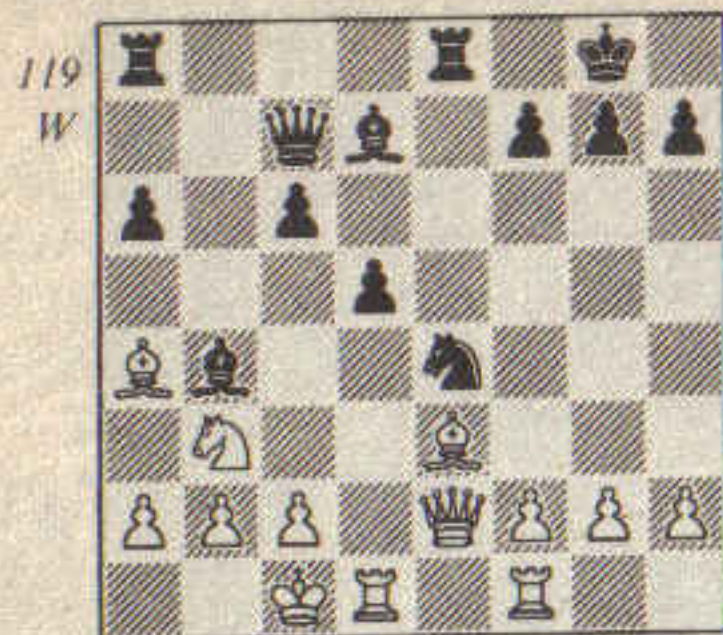
This was played in Smyslov-Uhlmann, Cienfuegos 1973, when White obtained the advantage after 11 ♖d3 ♖g4 12 0-0-0 ♗e5 13 h3 ♖xf3 14 gf ♖c7 15 ♗b1 ♗ed7 16 c4! dc 17 ♖xc4 ♗xc5 18 ♖xf7+! ♗xf7 19 ♖xc5 b5 20 ♖xe7. But Black can improve with 11 ... ♗e4 12 0-0-0 ♗xc5 13 ♖c4 ♗xb3 14 ♖xb3 ♖e6 with only a slight advantage to White.

- 11 ♖a4?

The bishop is badly out of play here since White cannot put enough pressure on the black knight on c6 - ... ♖d7 is always an adequate answer to ♗fd4.

- 11 ... ♗e4
12 0-0-0 ♖xc5
13 ♗fd4 ♖d7
14 ♗xc6 bc
15 ♖he1 ♖b4
16 ♖f1 ♖c7 (119)

Black has a good position with a fine knight on e4 and prospects of an attack against the white



king. The white pieces are disjointed and the bishop on a4 looks silly.

17 ♖d3 ♗xh2!

Petrosian correctly judges that White has no way of exploiting the position of the queen.

18 ♙h1 ♗e5

Not 18 ... ♗xg2? 19 ♙dg1 ♗f3 20 ♙xg7+ ♗xg7 21 ♙h6+ winning.

19 ♘d4 ♙ac8

20 c3 ♙d6

21 ♙c2 g6

22 ♗xa6 ♙a8

23 ♗d3

23 ♗b7 ♘c5 24 ♗b6 ♙eb8 pots the white queen.

23 ... ♙xa2

24 ♙b1 ♙a1

25 ♘c2 ♙aa8

26 ♘d4 ♗f6!

27 ♘f3 ♙a1

28 ♗c2 ♙f5

29 ♘d4

Petrosian now concludes the game with some fine strokes.

29 ... ♙xb1+

30 ♗xb1 ♘xc3

31 ♘xf5 ♘xb1

32 ♘h6+ ♗f8

33 ♗xb1 ♙b8

34 ♙d2 ♙f4
35 ♙h3 ♙xe3
36 ♙xe3 ♗g7
37 ♙f3 ♗xf3

0-1

After 38 gf ♗xh6 White has a hopeless position. A good game by Petrosian and one which shows the promising minor piece play Black can inaugurate if White is careless.

**Tal-Portisch
Montreal 1979**

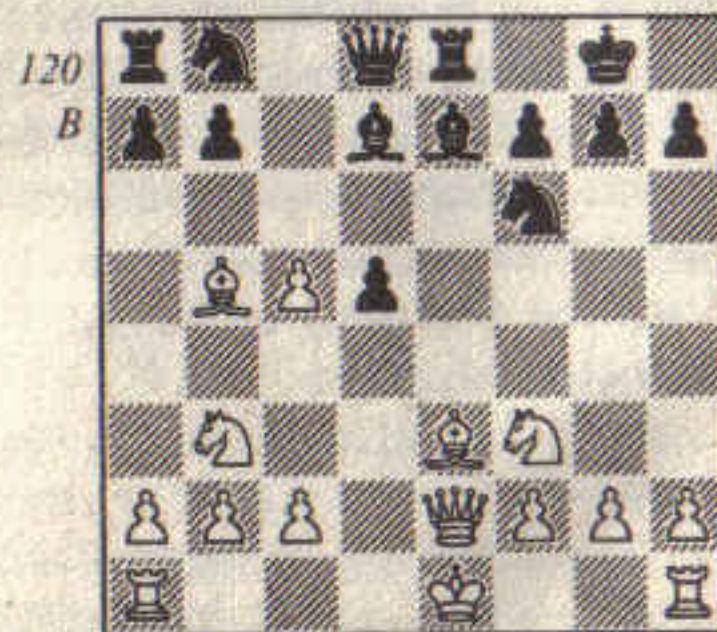
1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘d2 c5
4 ed ed
5 ♙b5+ ♙d7

This alternative to 5 ... ♘c6 gives White more freedom and is more likely to lead to exchanges, which Black does not want.

6 ♗e2+ ♙e7

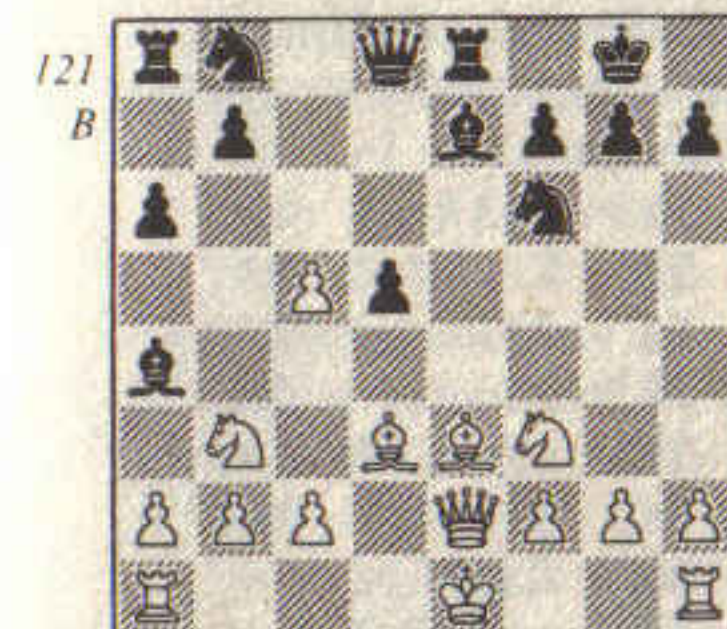
6 ... ♗e7 is playable but the exchange of queens is favourable to White.

7 dc ♘f6
8 ♘b3 0-0
9 ♙e3 ♙e8
10 ♘f3 (120)



Thus a position similar to the previous game has been reached except that Black cannot now play 10 ... ♘e4 because after 11 0-0-0 the black d-pawn is under fire. So Black's choice is restricted - 10 ... ♙xc5 11 ♙xd7 ♘bxd7 12 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 13 ♗b5 ♙c8 14 0-0 a6 15 ♗b4 ♙e4 16 ♗d2 h6 17 ♙ad1 gives White a slight plus as in Larsen-Uhlmann, Candidates' match Las Palmas 1971. White can also play 11 ♘xc5 ♗a5 12 ♗d2 ♗xb5 13 0-0-0 ♙g4 14 h3 ♙h5 with a slight advantage, Tseshkovsky-Vaganian, Lvov 1978.

10 ... a6
11 ♙d3 ♙a4 (121)

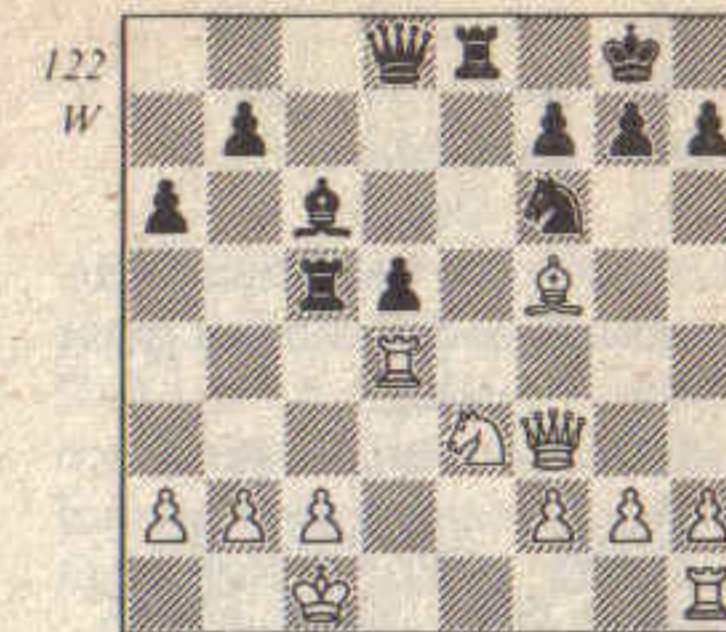


12 ♘fd4 ♘bd7
13 0-0-0

13 0-0 allows Black to equalise with 13 ... ♙xb3 14 ♘xb3 ♘xc5.

13 ... ♘xc5
14 ♘f5 ♙f8
15 ♘xc5 ♙xc5
16 ♗f3 ♙xe3
17 ♘xe3 ♙c8
18 ♙f5 ♙c5
19 ♙d4 ♙c6 (122)

A conventional isolated d-pawn position with White piling up on



the pawn and Black defending stoutly. Tal now perceives that the black rook on c5 is short of squares.

20 b4 ♙b5
21 a4 ♙b6
22 a5 ♙b5

Black must sacrifice the exchange and now was the best chance: 22 ... ♙xb4 23 ♙xb4 d4 24 ♗d1 de 25 ♗xd8 ♙xd8 26 fe ♙xg2 27 ♙d1 ♙e8, when White still has some winning chances.

23 ♗f4

Since the rook cannot run away Tal improves his position first.

23 ... b6
24 ♙d3 ba
25 ♙xb5 axb5
26 ♙hd1 ab
27 ♗b2 ♗c8
28 ♙xb4 ♘e4
29 ♙d3 ♘c5
30 ♙a3 ♘a4
31 ♗c1 ♙d7?!

31 ... h6! is better, when White still has to win.

32 ♗d6 ♙c6
33 ♙d3 h6
34 ♙f4 ♗e6
35 ♗xe6 fe
36 ♘g4 e5

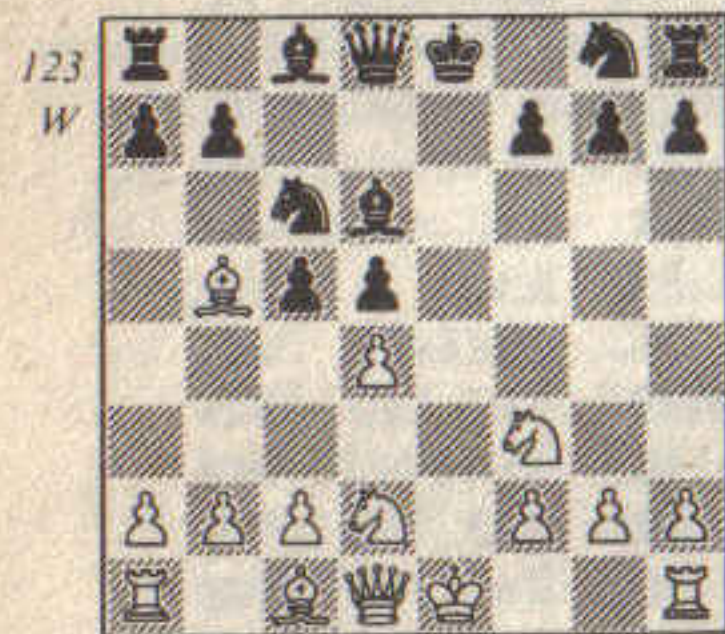
- 37 ♖f5 ♘c5
- 38 ♖c3 ♘d7
- 39 ♖xe5 1-0

An imaginative performance by Tal but Black had a difficult game after the opening. 5 ... ♘d7 naturally leads to exchanges which only accentuate the weakness of the isolated d-pawn and limit Black's attacking possibilities.

White's main fifth move alternative is 5 ♗gf3 and we shall now look at some games with this line.

**Geller-Uhlmann
Amsterdam (IBM) 1970**

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘d2 c5
- 4 ed ed
- 5 ♗gf3 ♘c6
- 6 ♙b5 ♙d6 (123)



- 7 0-0

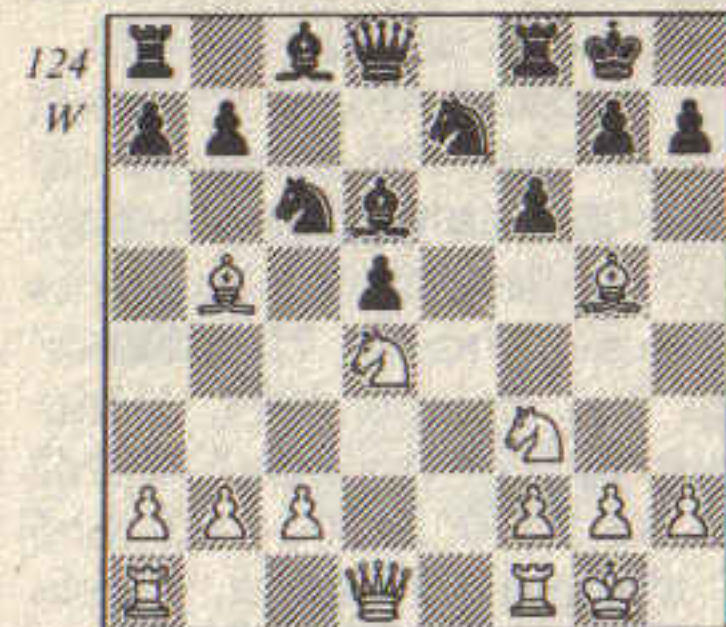
The alternative is 7 dc.

- 7 ... cd
- 8 ♘b3

8 ♗xd4 is a mistake because of 8 ... ♙xh2+ 9 ♗xh2 ♖h4+ 10 ♗g1 ♖xd4, Geller-Ivkov, USSR v

Yugoslavia 1969.

- 8 ... ♘e7
- 9 ♗bxd4 0-0
- 10 ♙g5 ♙f6 (124)



An interesting plan. Black concedes a weakness at e6 but hopes to mask this and establish central counterplay by anchoring a knight on e5.

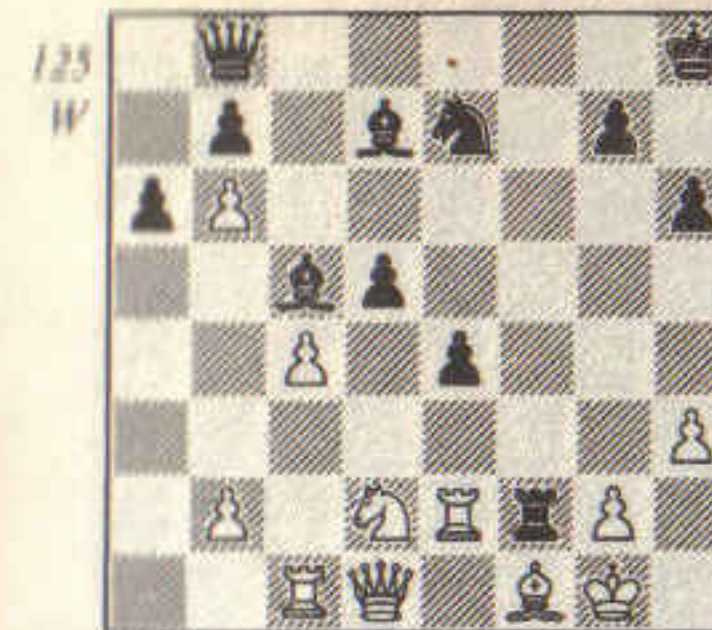
- 11 ♙e3 ♘e5
- 12 ♖e1 a6
- 13 ♙f1 ♗h8
- 14 h3 ♙d7
- 15 c3 ♖c8
- 16 a4 ♖e8
- 17 ♗xe5

A positional mistake since now Black has a mobile pawn centre and the open f-file to play with.

- 17 ... fe
- 18 ♗f3 h6
- 19 a5 ♖c6
- 20 ♙b6 ♖b8
- 21 ♖c1 ♖f8
- 22 c4 e4
- 23 ♗d2 ♖xb6!

The start of a fine combination which blows up the white kingside.

- 24 ab ♙c5
- 25 ♖e2 ♖xf2! (125)



- 26 ♖xf2 e3
- 27 cd ef+
- 28 ♗h1 ♗f5
- 29 ♘e4 ♙xb6
- 30 ♖f3 ♖e5

The weakness of White's kingside dark squares is decisive.

- 31 ♙d3 ♖xd5
- 32 ♘c5 ♖xf3
- 33 gf ♙xc5
- 34 ♖xc5 ♘e3
- 35 ♖c1 ♗g8

Black could not play 35 ... ♙b5 immediately because of 36 ♖c8+.

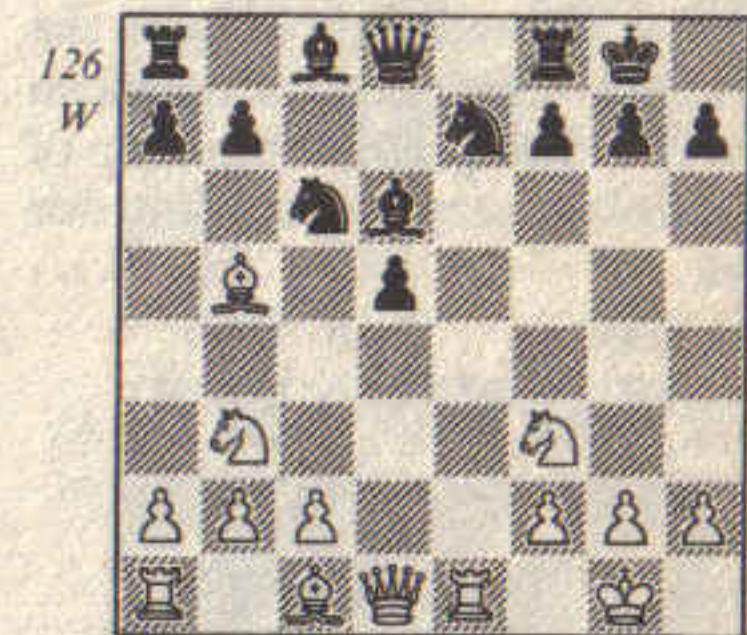
- 36 ♗h2 ♙b5
- 37 ♖c8+ ♗f7
- 38 ♗g3 ♙xd3
- 39 ♖c7+ ♗f6
- 40 ♗xf2 ♘d1+
- 41 ♗g3 ♗xb2
- 42 ♖xb7 ♗c4
- 43 h4 a5
- 44 ♖d7 ♙c2
- 45 ♖c7 ♙b3
- 46 ♗f4 a4

0-1

**Hübner-Korchnoi
Johannesburg 1981**

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5

- 3 ♘d2 c5
- 4 ed ed
- 5 ♙b5+ ♘c6
- 6 ♗gf3 ♙d6
- 7 dc ♙xc5
- 8 0-0 ♘e7
- 9 ♗b3 ♙d6
- 10 ♖e1 0-0 (126)



We have reached a starting point for many games in the Tarrasch ... c5 line. White has a choice between ♗bd4 and ♙g5 at this juncture. ♙g5 is more aggressive, setting up a pin and envisaging a possible capture on e7.

- 11 ♙g5 ♖c7
- 12 c3 h6

A dubious move since White is already considering taking the knight on e7 and needs no provocation. 12 ... ♙g4 is better.

- 13 ♙xe7 ♗xe7
- 14 ♗bd4 a6
- 15 ♙d3 ♙d7

The more active 15 ... ♙g4 runs into 16 h3 ♙h5 17 ♖b3 with the idea of ♗h4-f5, exchanging off the black knight and weakening the d-pawn.

- 16 h3 ♖fe8

In due course the rook becomes

awkwardly placed here. Worthy of consideration was 16 ... ♖ad8.

17 ♖b3!

A very fine move, eyeing the d-pawn and thus restricting the black knight.

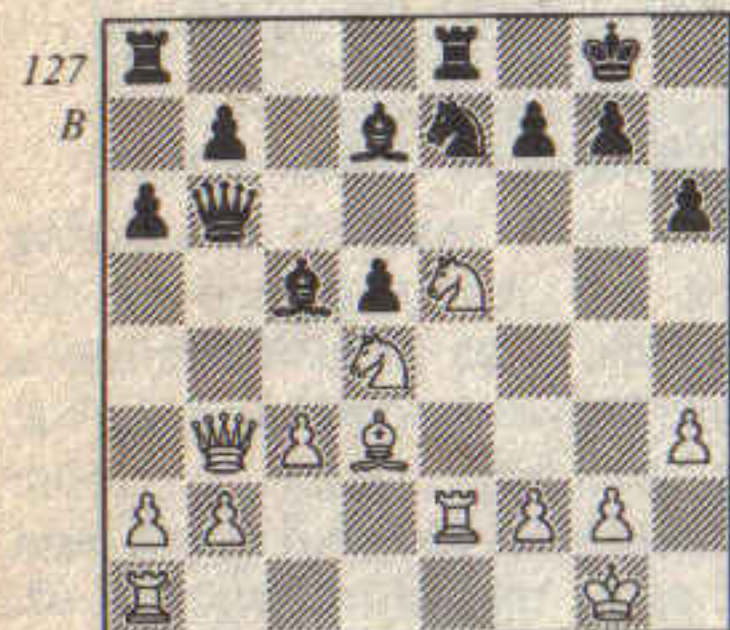
17 ... ♗c5

18 ♖e2

White immediately grasps the right plan - doubling the rooks on the e-file. The gradual build up of pressure is very unpleasant for Black.

18 ... ♖b6

19 ♗e5 (127)



The white knight leaps in. Black now has many ways of losing material: 19 ... ♖xb3 20 ♗xb3 wins, or 19 ... ♗xd4 20 ♖xb6 ♗xb6 21 ♗xd7 ♗c7 22 ♖ae1 ♗d6 23 ♗b6 followed by 24 ♗xd5 wins.

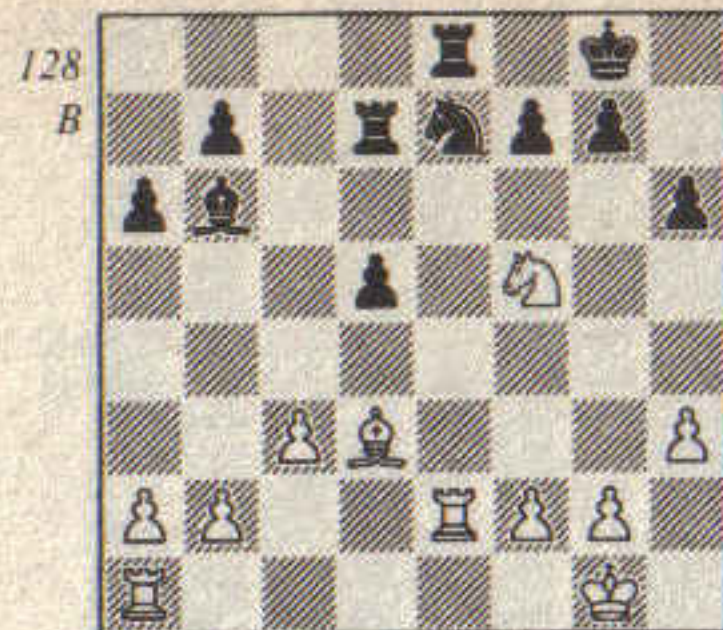
19 ... ♖ad8

20 ♗xd7 ♖xd7

21 ♖xb6 ♗xb6

22 ♗f5 (128)

Black is in difficulties because of the pin on his knight, but surprisingly he can hold the position.



22 ... ♗f8

23 ♖ae1 d4

The correct defence was 23 ... h5 preparing ... g6, driving the white knight away. After 24 ♗c2 ♗c5 25 ♗b3 g6 26 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 27 ♖xe7 ♗xe7 28 ♖d1 d4 29 cd ♗f6 Black regains his pawn with an equal game. Now Hübner wins a pawn.

24 ♗c2 ♖c7

24 ... d3 25 ♗xd3 ♖xd3 26 ♗xe7 is good for White, as is 24 ... ♗c5 25 cd ♗xd4 26 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 27 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 28 ♗xd4.

25 ♗xd4 ♗xd4

26 cd ♖d8

27 ♖d1 ♖cd7

28 ♖ed2 ♗c6

Worthy of consideration was 28 ... ♗d5.

29 d5 ♗e5

30 ♗b3 ♗e7

31 ♗a4 b5

32 ♗b3 g5

33 ♖c2

33 ♖d4, with the idea of breaking up the black position with f4, is better.

33 ... h5

34 ♖d4 g4

This probably loses the game.

34 ... ♗g6 followed by ... h4 would still leave Black with chances of a draw.

35 ♖e2 ♗f6

36 ♗h2 ♖e7

37 ♖de4 ♗f5

38 ♗g3 f6

39 hg+

1-0

After 39 ... hg 40 ♖xg4 wins easily. A polished performance by Hübner, who exploited the pressure down the e-file in superb style. Korchnoi must have been somewhat disconcerted by this game. As the following game shows, Black should strive to obtain active play in the ... c5 lines of the Tarrasch even at the cost of a pawn.

Psahkis-Vaganian
USSR 1981

1 e4 e6

2 d4 d5

3 ♗d2 c5

4 ed ed

5 ♗gf3 ♗c6

6 ♗b5 ♗d6

7 dc ♗xc5

8 0-0 ♗e7

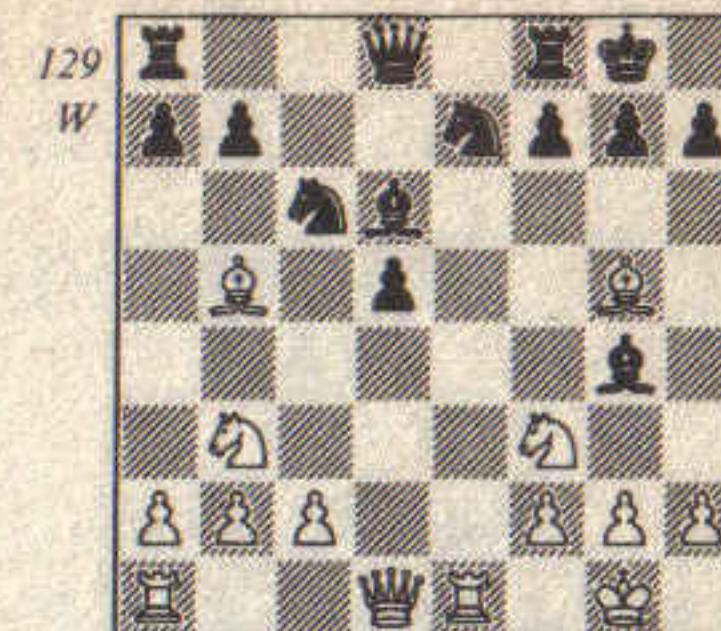
9 ♗b3 ♗d6

10 ♖e1 0-0

11 ♗g5 ♗g4 (129)

12 ♗e2

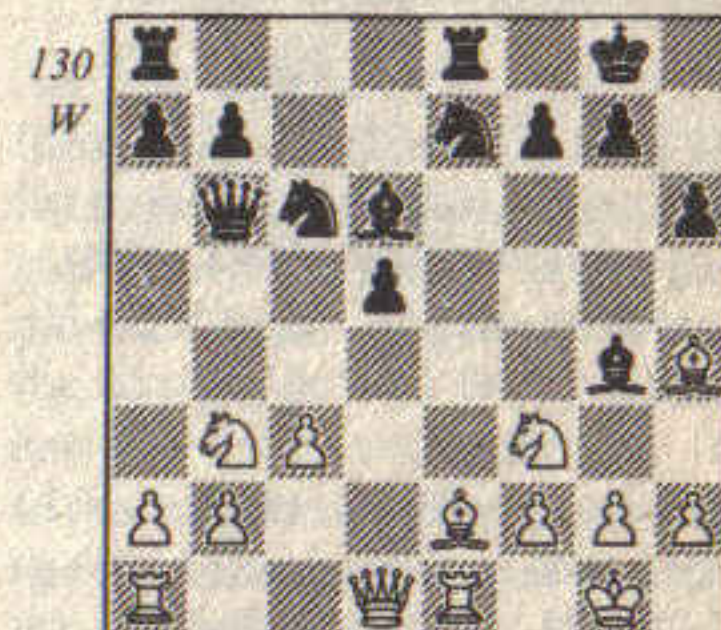
This move has been popular, but more forcing is 12 h3 ♗h5 13 ♗xc6 be 14 ♗bd4 ♖c8 15 c4 h6 16 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 17 g4 ♗g6 18 ♗e5 ♗e5 19 h4 ♗xd4 20 ♖xd4 dc 21 ♖xd4 with advantage to White, Peters-Ervin, Lone Pine 1978.



12 ... ♖e8

13 c3 h6

14 ♗h4 ♖b6 (130)



This move, with the idea of sacrificing the d-pawn, was played in Diesen-Vladimirov, European Junior Ch 1976/77.

15 ♗xe7 ♖xe7

15 ... ♗xe7 16 ♗fd4 is slightly better for White.

16 ♖xd5

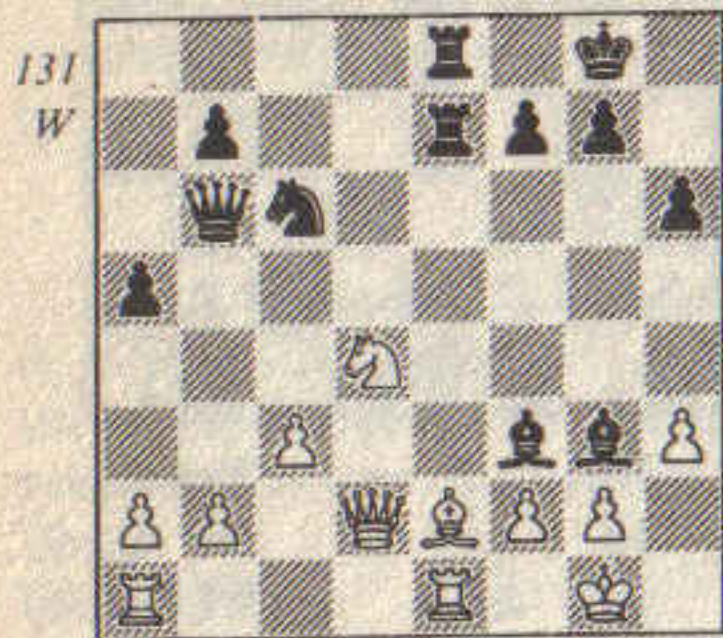
Diesen declined the pawn sacrifice with 16 h3 ♗e6 17 ♗d3 ♖ae8 and the game was agreed drawn on move 20.

16 ... ♖ae8

17 ♖d2

This is better than allowing a black rook to the seventh after 17 ♖xd6 ♖xe2.

- 17 ... a5
 18 h3 g3
 19 b4 xf3 (131)



White now appears to be lost, for if 20 xf3 xd4 21 cd xb2!! wins or 20 gf xd4 21 cd f4! with a big advantage to Black. But Psahkis finds a neat saving resource.

20 f1

Surprisingly, Black cannot make use of his temporary extra piece.

20 ... xf2+

Alternatives were 20 ... xd4 21 xe7 xe7 22 cd with an equal position, or 20 ... xe1 21 xe1 xe1 22 xe1 xd4 23 e8+ h7 24 d3+ f5 25 cd.

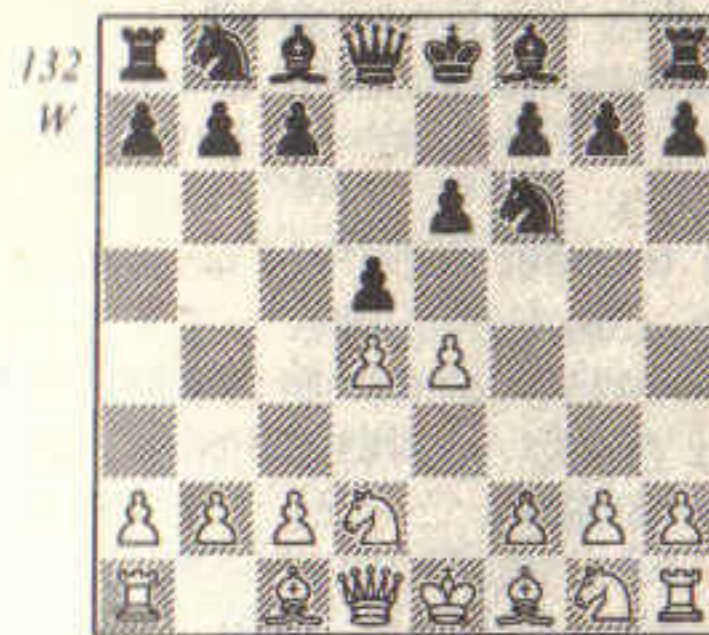
- 21 xf2 xd4
 22 cd d5
 23 xe7 xe7
 24 b3 e4
 25 d1 f6+
 26 g1 b6
 27 c4 d6
 28 d3 g6
 29 a4 g7
 30 xd5 xd5
 31 c4 d6
 32 c3 d5
 33 c4 d6

1/2-1/2

A good fighting game showing how Black should play this type of position. Vaganian concentrated on developing active play rather than holding firmly onto his d-pawn.

10 Tarrasch Variation II: 3 ... f6

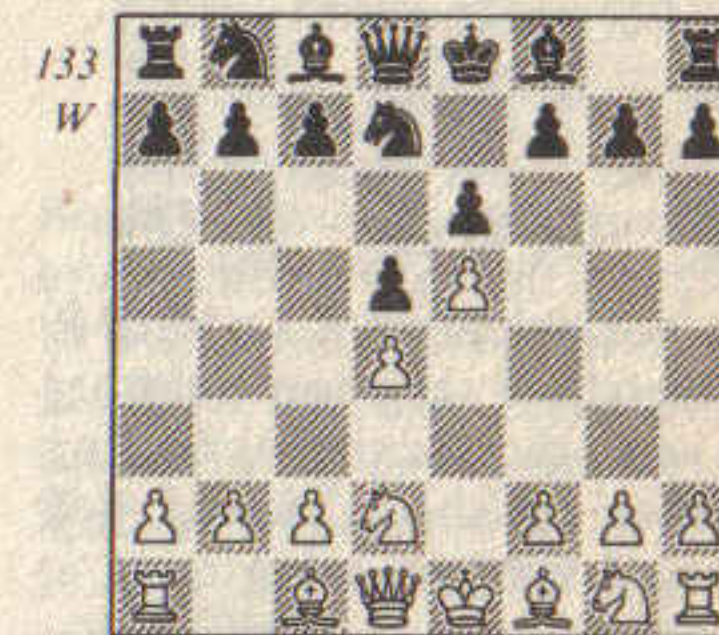
- 1 e4 e6
 2 d4 d5
 3 d2 f6 (132)



This move leads to a different type of game to 3 ... c5. After 4 e5 the centre becomes closed and the game revolves around Black's pawn breaks, ... c5 and ... f6. Tarrasch thought that Black was too cramped after 4 e5, and this opinion was borne out in a game Alekhine-Capablanca. On 4 e5 Black normally retreats his knight to d7, although 4 ... g8 and 4 ... e4 are also possible.

4 e5 fd7 (133)

White is now faced with a choice between 5 d3 and 5 f4. 5 d3 leads to a flexible development of the white minor pieces. The knight on d2 can go to f3 and the g1 knight can go to e2 or f3, depending upon the circumstances.

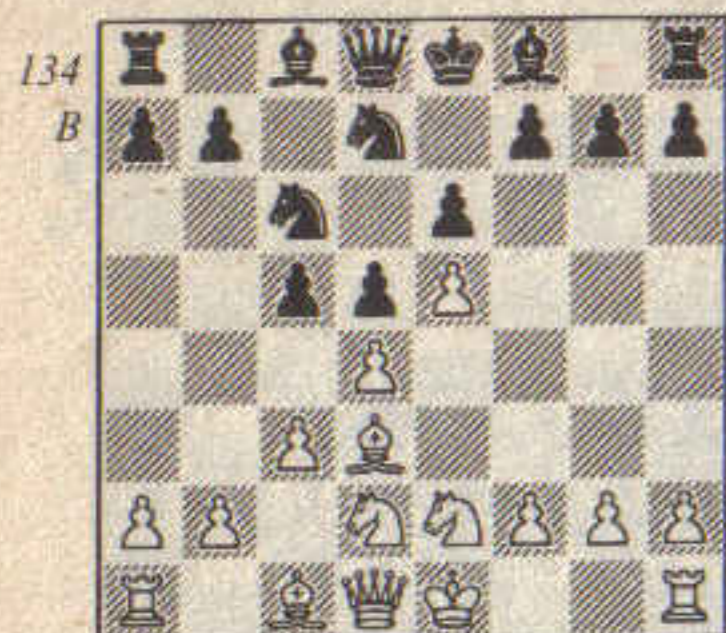


All of White's pieces are aimed at the king-side and Black must be careful of a white attack there since he has a disadvantage in space. 5 f4, however, bolsters up the white pawn chain d4-e5 which Black is going to attack. Thus 5 d3 is less likely to give White a lasting advantage in space than 5 f4. 5 d3 is the less committal of the two moves and has been the choice of World Champion Karpov. We shall look at some games featuring 5 d3 and then move on to 5 f4.

Filguth-Korchnoi
 Sao Paulo 1979

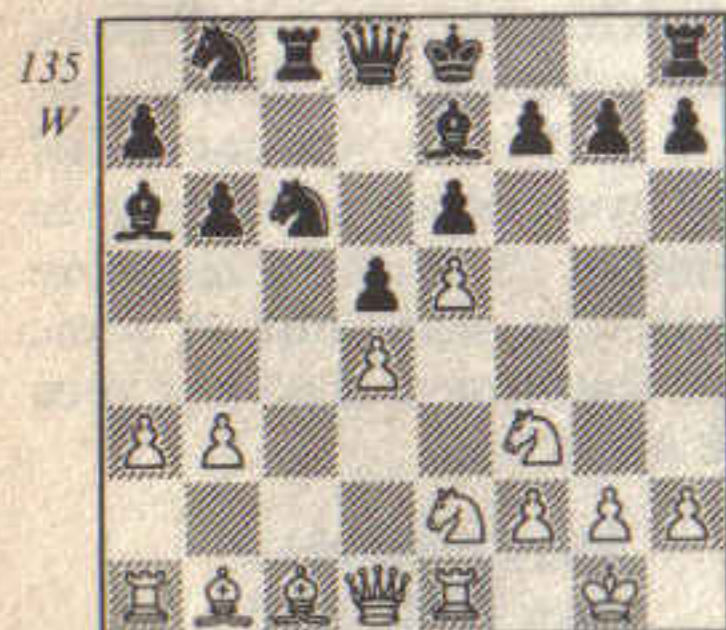
- 1 e4 e6
 2 d4 d5
 3 d2 f6
 4 e5 fd7
 5 d3 c5

6 c3 ♖c6
7 ♖e2 (134)



The normal line is 7 ... cd 8 cd f6 but Korchnoi chooses another plan with the aim of activating his queen's bishop. This is well motivated but time-consuming.

7 ... ♖b6?!
8 0-0 cd
9 cd ♖b4
10 ♖b1 ♖a6
11 ♖f3 ♖c8
12 ♖e1 ♖e7
13 a3 ♖c6
14 b3 ♖db8! (135)



White has the advantage because he can mount a kingside attack. Black's QB is well placed but his knights have little scope.

15 ♖b2?

This is a mistake – the bishop does nothing here. 15 ♖e3 was much better, when White has two attacking plans at his disposal: ♖f4-h5 or ♖d2 and f4. Now Korchnoi finds a good plan.

15 ... h5
16 ♖h3?!

This later turns out to be a weakness. 16 ♖d3 maintains a slight advantage for White.

16 ... ♖d7!

This must have been a shock to Filguth. This move has two purposes:

- a) To transfer the king to a safe haven, i.e. ♖c7-b7-a8.
- b) To enable Black to move his heavy pieces to the kingside via the back rank.

17 ♖g3 ♖a5
18 ♖d2 g6
19 ♖gf1 g5
20 ♖e3 g4!

A fine pawn sacrifice by Korchnoi. White has difficulty getting his forces to the kingside because of Black's rook on c8 and bishop on a6.

21 hg hg
22 ♖xg4 ♖g8
23 ♖h2

23 ♖f6+ ♖xf6 24 ef ♖h6 gives Black a strong attack.

23 ... ♖g7
24 ♖df3 ♖cg8
25 g3 ♖h3
26 ♖h1 ♖gh8
27 ♖g1 ♖h6
28 ♖g2 ♖xb3!

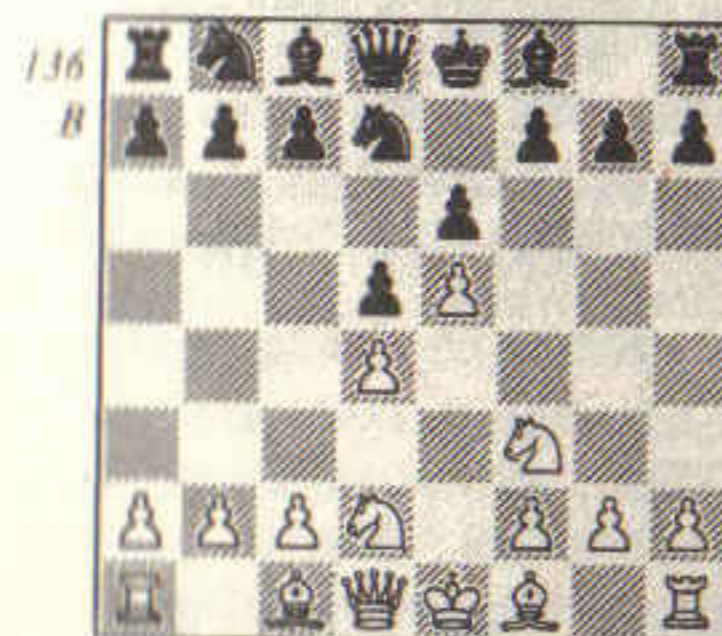
The concluding stroke. After 29 ♖xb3 ♖f1 wins.

29 ♖d3 ♖xd3
30 ♖xd3 ♖xa1
31 ♖xa1 ♖c1+
32 ♖g1 ♖xa3
33 ♖c3 ♖b4
34 ♖b5+ ♖c6
0-1

An imaginative game from Korchnoi, with a king manoeuvre which often occurs in the French. But the method of development chosen by Korchnoi is probably too slow if White plays accurately.

Nunn-Farago
Helsinki 1981

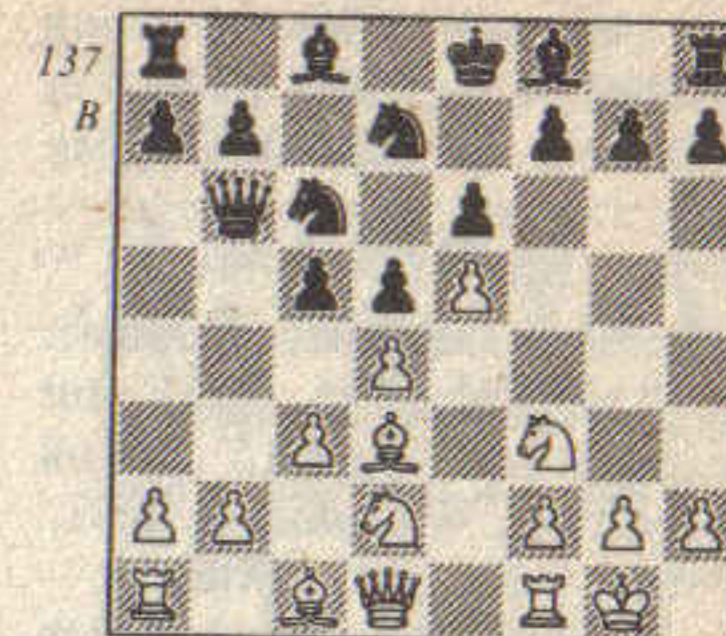
1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖d2 ♖f6
4 e5 ♖fd7
5 ♖gf3 (136)



This move, which envisages a pawn sacrifice, is a favourite of John Nunn.

5 ... c5
6 c3 ♖c6
7 ♖d3 ♖b6
8 0-0 (137)

White offers his d-pawn in exchange for a lead in development.



Black can now accept the sacrifice by 8 ... cd 9 cd ♖xd4 10 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 11 ♖f3, when White has compensation for the pawn. Nunn-Mednis, Budapest 1978, continued 11 ... ♖b6 12 ♖a4 ♖b4 13 ♖c2 ♖c5 14 ♖e2 ♖e7 15 ♖d2 0-0 16 ♖ac1 with equal chances. Farago decides to decline the pawn sacrifice for a move.

8 ... ♖e7
9 ♖e1

White can try the paradoxical 9 dc here, giving up his important pawn on e5. After 9 ... ♖c7 10 ♖b3 ♖cxe5 11 ♖f4 ♖xf3+ 12 ♖xf3 e5 13 ♖g3 ♖c6 14 ♖e2 White has the advantage, Estrin-Ornstein, ICCF Congress 1977.

9 ... cd
10 cd ♖xd4
11 ♖xd4 ♖xd4
12 ♖f3 ♖b6
13 ♖c2

An alternative is 13 ♖g5 as in Plachetka-Knaak, Trnava 1981. After 13 ... ♖c5 14 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 15 ♖c2 ♖d7 16 ♖d4 White has some positional pressure but Black has a solid position.

13 ... ♖c5

13 ... h6 gave White a strong attack after 14 ♙e3 ♖d8 15 ♗a4 in Hort-Dobosz, Trencianske Teplice 1979.

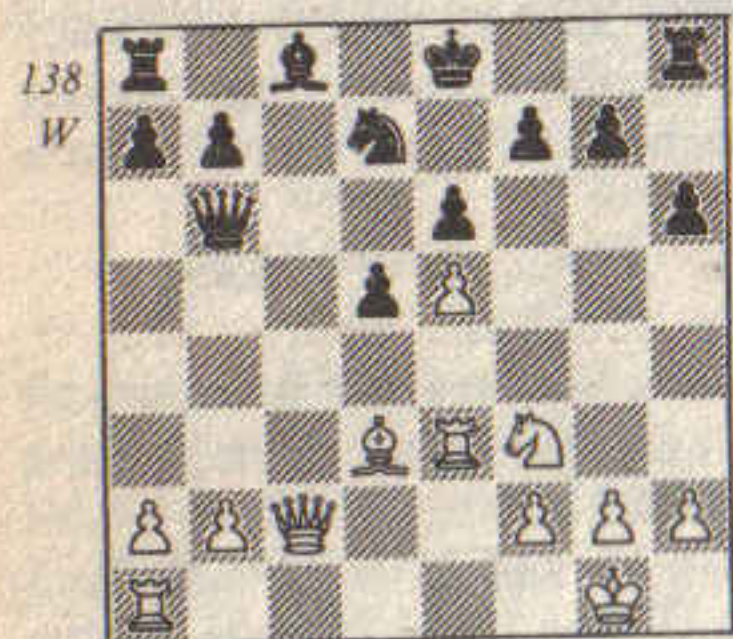
14 ♗e2

White can recapture his pawn by 14 ♙xh7 ♗xc2 15 ♙xc2, but the game is level after 15 ... ♘b8 followed by ... ♘c6 and ... ♙d7.

14 ... ♗b6

Black could have castled here but after 14 ... 0-0 15 ♙g5 f6 16 ef ♘xf6 17 ♗ac1 ♗b6 18 ♘e5 White has good play for a pawn (Nunn).

15 ♙e3 ♙c5
16 ♗c2 ♙xe3
17 ♗xe3 h6 (138)



White is far ahead in development but Black has no weaknesses in his position. Black's plan is simply to develop by ... 0-0, ... ♗e8, ... ♘f8 and ... ♙d7. White should now continue with 18 a4 0-0 19 a5 ♗d8 20 ♘d4 with strong positional pressure.

18 ♗c1 0-0
19 ♙h7+

White feels compelled to go for a direct attack before the black pieces emerge.

19 ... ♘h8

20 ♘g5

The white army clusters around the black king. White now threatens 21 ♙g8 f5 22 ♙xe6 winning.

20 ... f5
21 ♙g6 hg

Forced but good. White would win if his queen could reach the h-file but there is no time.

22 ♗h3+ ♘g8
23 ♗c3 g4
24 ♗h5

After 24 ♗g3 gh 25 ♗xh3 ♗f7 defends adequately.

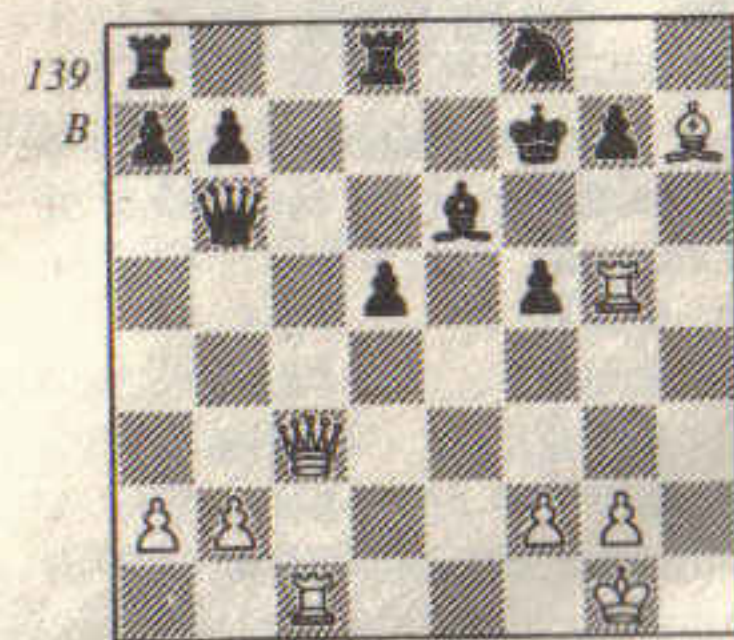
24 ... ♗d8

Now Black is threatening to repulse the attack with ... ♘f8.

25 ♙h7+ ♘f7
26 h3 ♘f8

A mistake. Black could have seized the initiative with 26 ... d4 27 ♗g3 ♗a5 28 f4 ♘f8 29 hg d3 30 gf d2 31 ♗d1 ef 32 ♗g5 ♗b6+ 33 ♘f1 g6 34 ♗h4 ♙d7 35 ♙xg6+ ♘xg6 36 ♗h7+ ♘e8 37 ♗g8+ ♘f8 and Black wins.

27 hg ♙d7
28 gf ef
29 e6 ♙xe6
30 ♗g5 (139)

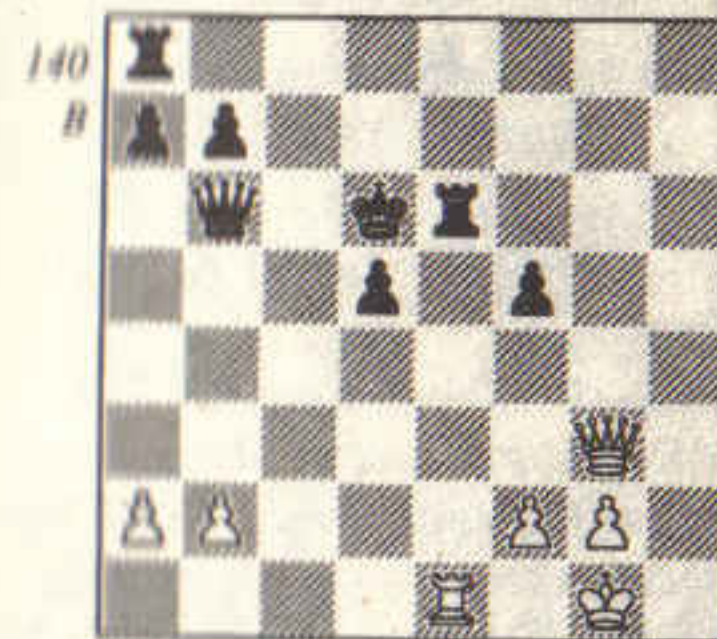


White is still fighting hard, but Black can now come out on top with 30 ... d4 31 ♗g3 g6 32 ♙xg6+ ♘xg6 33 ♗xg6 ♗g8 34 ♗xg8 ♗xg8 35 ♗c7 ♘e8 winning.

30 ... g6
31 ♗h8

White seizes his chance.

31 ... ♘e7
32 ♙xg6 ♘xg6
33 ♗g7+ ♘d6
34 ♗xg6 ♗e8
35 ♗e1 ♗e7
36 ♗gxe6+ ♗xe6
37 ♗g3+ ♘d7
38 ♗g7+ ♘d6
39 ♗g3+ (140)

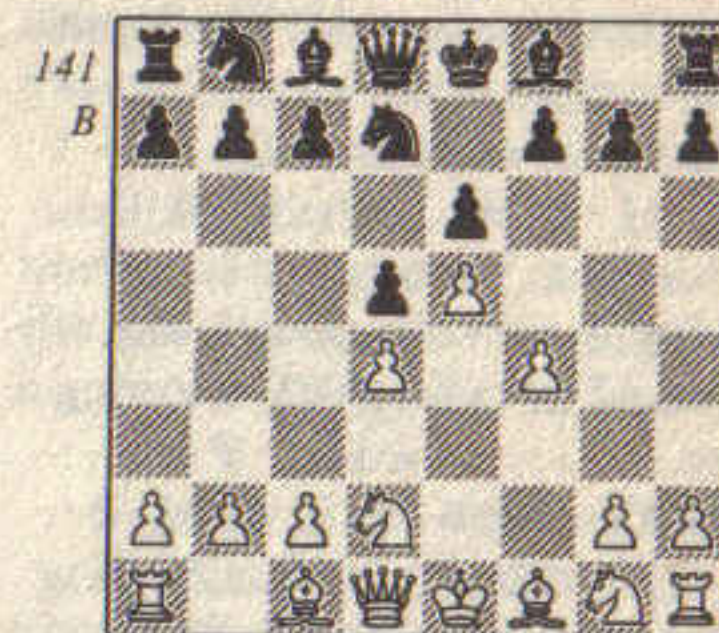


At this stage the combatants agreed to a draw. 39 ... ♘d7 is a draw by threefold repetition. 39 ... f4 is the only winning attempt with the possible continuation 40 ♗xf4+ ♘e7 41 ♗h4+ ♘d7 42 ♗h7+ ♘d6 43 ♗h2+ ♘c5 44 ♗c1 ♘b5 45 ♗h3 with a probable draw by perpetual check.

Hübner-Ree
Wijk an Zee 1981

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5

3 ♘d2 ♘f6
4 e5 ♘fd7
5 f4 (141)



White now has an advantage in space and a solid pawn centre. He has prospects of a kingside attack with f5. Black must therefore play actively to avoid incurring a disadvantage. If he does break through the white pawn chain, White's king will be very exposed. Consequently Black often sacrifices material to get at the white king.

5 ... c5
6 c3 ♘c6
7 ♘df3 ♗a5

By pinning the c-pawn Black threatens to play ... cd when White will be forced to take back with the knight on f3. Then, after ... ♘xd4, the white queen will have to recapture. Black can then gain time by attacking the queen.

8 ♘f2

The king move is very popular here but it seems artificial. White's best line is 8 dc ♗xc5 9 ♙d3 ♙e7 10 ♘e2 ♗b6 11 ♘ed4 ♘xd4 12 ♘xd4 ♙c5 13 ♙c2 with a slight advantage for White, Minić-Udovčić, Zagreb 1970.

- 8 ... ♗e7
 9 ♗d3 cd
 10 cd f6

The correct strategy. Black must endeavour to break down White's pawn chain at all costs.

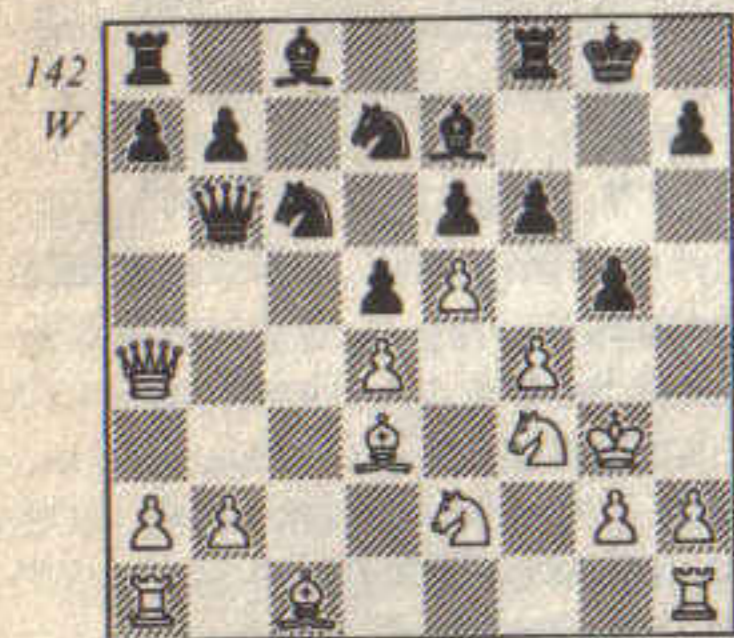
- 11 ♖e2 ♗b6

This pin becomes a constant problem for White. Black already threatens to take on e5, winning a pawn.

- 12 ♗a4 0-0
 13 ♖g3

This removes the nasty pin on the d-pawn but the white king runs into trouble on the kingside. White could exchange queens by 13 ♗b5, but after 13 ... ♖b4 14 ♗xb6 ♖xd3+ 15 ♖e3 ♖xb6 16 ♖xd3 ♗d7 17 ♖c3 ♖a4 Black has the better ending. Black now stuck in

- 13 ... ♗g5! (142)



The thematic breakthrough, crunching the fragile bones of White's body.

- 14 ♗c2 ♖f7
 15 a3 fe
 16 fe ♖dx5!

A typical piece sacrifice in this type of position. Now if 17 de

♖xe5 with the threat of ... ♗d6+.

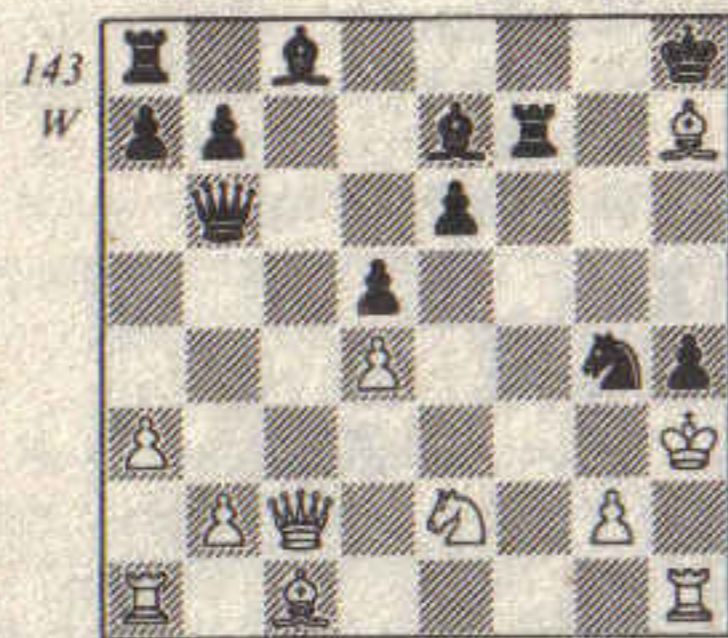
- 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5
 18 ♗xh7+

Trying to distract the black rook from the f-file.

- 18 ... ♖h8
 19 h4

White tries to make some room for his king. Black threatens simply to move his knight and then play ... ♗d6+.

- 19 ... gh
 20 ♖h3 ♖g4!! (143)



A fine combinative blow. Black could win a pawn by ... ♖c4 but now the white king is in trouble - ... e5 will be almost impossible to meet.

- 21 ♗g6 e5?

A shame. This allows White to sacrifice his queen to get out of the mating net. 21 ... ♖f6 22 ♖xg4 e5+ 23 ♖h5 e4 24 ♖f4 ♖f5+ 25 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 leaves White defenceless against ... ♖g7 followed by ... ♖h8.

- 22 ♗xf7 ♖e3+
 23 ♗xc8 ♖xc8
 24 ♗xe3 ♗xb2
 25 ♖he1 ♗b3
 26 ♖c1 ♖xc1?

Again Black falters. 26 ... ♗c3

27 ♖a2 ♗xa3 still gives him good chances.

- 27 ♖axc1 ed
 28 ♗xd5 ♗xd5

28 ... ♗xa3 29 ♖c8+ ♖g7 30 ♖g8+ ♖f6 with an unclear position which is probably a draw.

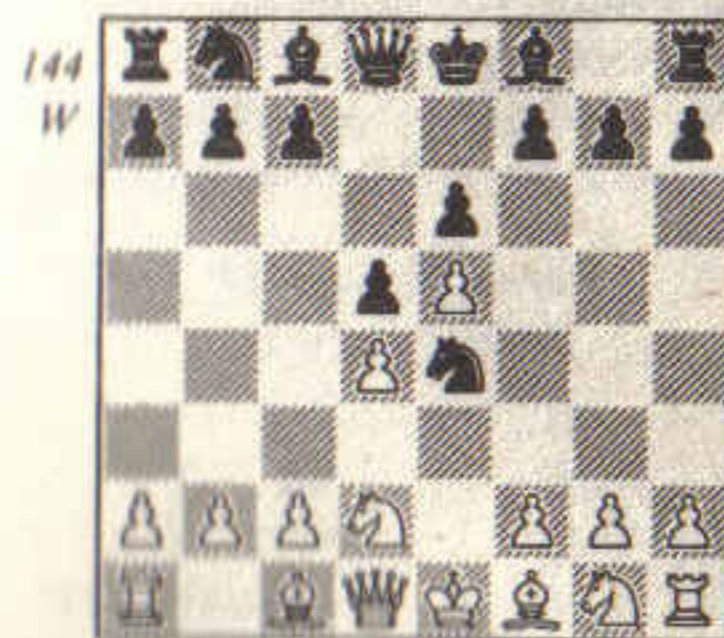
- 29 ♗xd4 ♗xd4
 30 ♖xe7 ♗d3+
 31 ♖xh4 ♗d4+
 32 ♖h3 ♗d3+
 33 ♖h4 ♗d4+
 34 ♖h3 ♗d3+

1/2-1/2

A splendid game which shows the latent possibilities of Black's position.

Ivanov-Malanjuk
 USSR 1981

- 1 e4 e6
 2 d4 d5
 3 ♖d2 ♖f6
 4 e5 ♖e4 (144)



Some Polish masters experimented with this line in the early 1970s, employing it against 3 ♖c3 also.

- 5 ♖xe4 de

This advanced pawn is probably

a weakness.

- 6 ♗e3

This is the strongest continuation. Vasyukov-Malanjuk, USSR 1980 went 6 ♗c4 a6 7 a4 b6 8 ♖e2 ♗b7 9 ♖f4 ♖c6 10 c3 ♖e7 with an unclear position.

- 6 ... c5
 7 dc ♖d7
 8 ♗g4 ♖xc5
 9 ♗b5+

9 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 10 ♗xg7 ♗a5+ gives Black counterplay since the white king has little cover.

- 9 ... ♖d7

Critical is 9 ... ♗d7 10 0-0-0 ♖d3+ 11 ♗xd3 ed 12 ♖xd3 ♗a5, as given by Ivanov in his notes to the game in *Informator*. Now Ivanov gives 13 ♗d4 ♗c6 14 a3 ♗e7 with compensation for the pawn. Matulović-Maksimović, Niš 1977, went instead 13 ♖b1, allowing Black to take on e5 if he wishes. Black declined the pawn with 13 ... ♗b5 and after 14 ♖d1 g6 15 ♖f3 White had a clear advantage. If Black takes the pawn with 13 ... ♗xe5 14 ♖f3 gives White a very dangerous initiative. So the whole line is dubious for Black.

- 10 ♖e2 ♗a5+
 11 ♖c3 a6

If 11 ... ♗b4 12 ♗xg7 wins a pawn as the black rook is attacked, e.g. 12 ... ♖f8 13 ♗xd7+.

- 12 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7
 13 ♗d4 ♗c6
 14 0-0-0 0-0-0
 15 ♖b1?!

This allows Black a promising exchange sacrifice, so worth

considering is 15 ♖f4! defending the e-pawn, and only then ♖b1.

15 ... ♖xd4

A fine exchange sacrifice. Black gets the white e-pawn, which allows him to free his kingside.

16 ♖xd4 ♖xe5

17 ♖c4 f5

18 ♖e2 ♖c7

19 f3 ♘c5

A pity. Black throws away the fruits of his labour. He should play 19 ... b5 20 ♖xc6+ ♖xc6 21 fe ♘b4 22 ef ♘xc3 23 ♖f3+ ♖b6 24 bc ef with an equal position.

20 fe b5

21 ♘d5+! ♖d6

22 ♖xc5 ♖xc5

This mistake loses the game. 22 ... ♘xd5 would have left Black the exchange down but still with some chances of a draw.

23 ♖e3+ ♖d6

24 ♖a3+ ♖d7

25 ♖e7+ ♖c8

26 ♖c5 1-0

Black resigns because after 26 ... ed 27 ♖xc6 ♖b8 28 ♖b6 he loses his queenside pawns. An interesting game, but the conclusion is that 4 ... ♘e4 is a risky line to play.

11 Tarrasch Variation III: Unusual Third Moves by Black

This chapter deals with less frequently seen third moves by Black. The majority of the third moves for Black listed below aim to retain the tension in the centre. By doing this Black hopes that the white QN will be misplaced on d2.

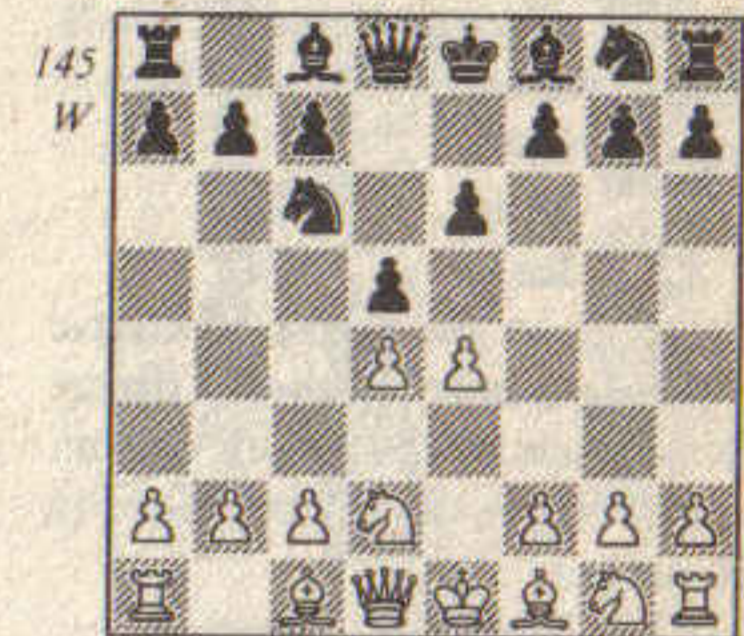
Less frequent replies are: 3 ... ♘c6, 3 ... a6, 3 ... b6, 3 ... ♘e7, 3 ... g6, 3 ... ♘d7 and 3 ... f5.

Several of these will not be discussed here since this book is not a catalogue of moves but one which is concerned with how to play the French Defence. The reader can consult *French Defence: Tarrasch Variation* by Keene and Taulbut. I have decided to look at lines which are similar to other variations of the French Defence.

Hübner-Larsen Montreal 1979

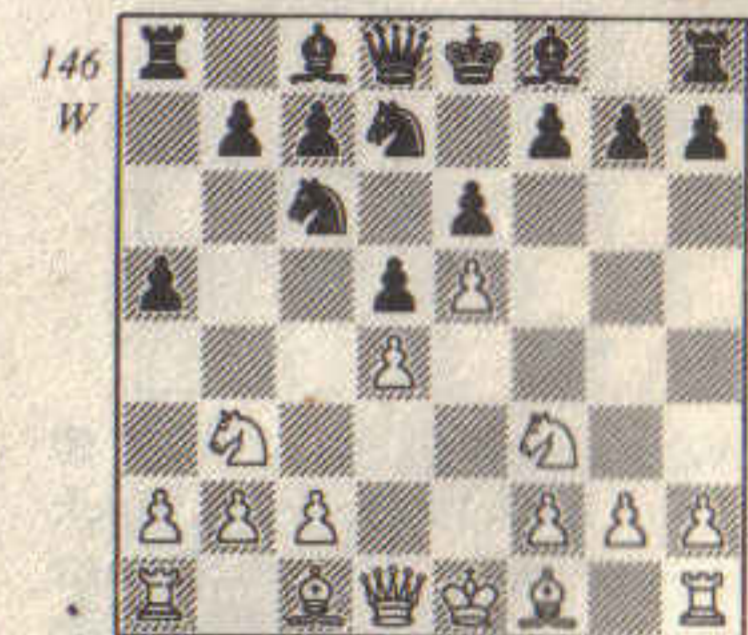
1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘d2 = ♘c6 (145)

This move was a favourite of Grandmaster Guimard in the late forties. It exploits the fact that the white d-pawn is temporarily undefended and threatens the freeing advance ... e5. The disadvantage of 3 ... ♘c6 is that if White advances e5 himself at



some point, Black cannot react with ... c5. Black tries instead to liquidate the white pawn centre by playing ... f6 and then freeing his position with ... e5.

4 ♘gf3 ♘f6
5 e5 ♘d7
6 ♘b3 a5 (146)



Black's last move is strange at first sight but contains a typical idea - to exchange the QB with ... b6 and ... ♘a6.

7 a4

It is not clear whether this move is really necessary. 7 $\text{e}f4$ could be considered.

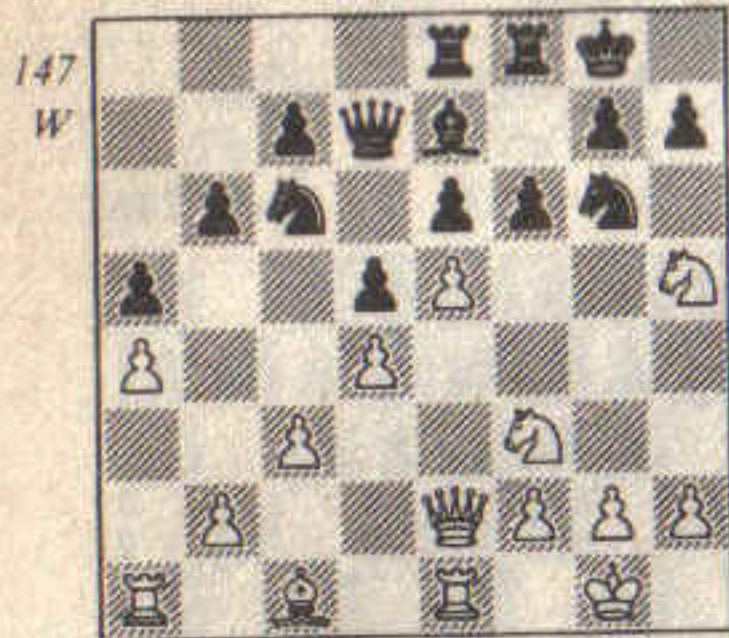
7 ... b6
8 c3 $\text{e}e7$
9 $\text{e}d3$ $\text{e}a6$
10 $\text{e}xa6$ $\text{e}xa6$

Having exchanged his QB, Black can look forward to the future with confidence.

11 0-0 $\text{e}a8$
12 $\text{e}e1$ $\text{e}f8$

Larsen is in no hurry to castle since White cannot launch a direct attack because of the closed centre. He calmly improves the positioning of his pieces.

13 $\text{e}bd2$ $\text{e}g6$
14 $\text{e}f1$ $\text{e}d7$
15 $\text{e}e2$ 0-0
16 $\text{e}g3$ $\text{e}ae8$
17 $\text{e}h5$ $\text{f}6(147)$



If White now exchanges on f6 with 18 $\text{e}f$ $\text{e}xf6$ 19 $\text{e}xf6+$ $\text{g}f$ Black has good chances. The chief merit of Black's position would then be his central pawn mass. White would be unable to exploit the slight looseness of the black king position, his KB having been

exchanged.

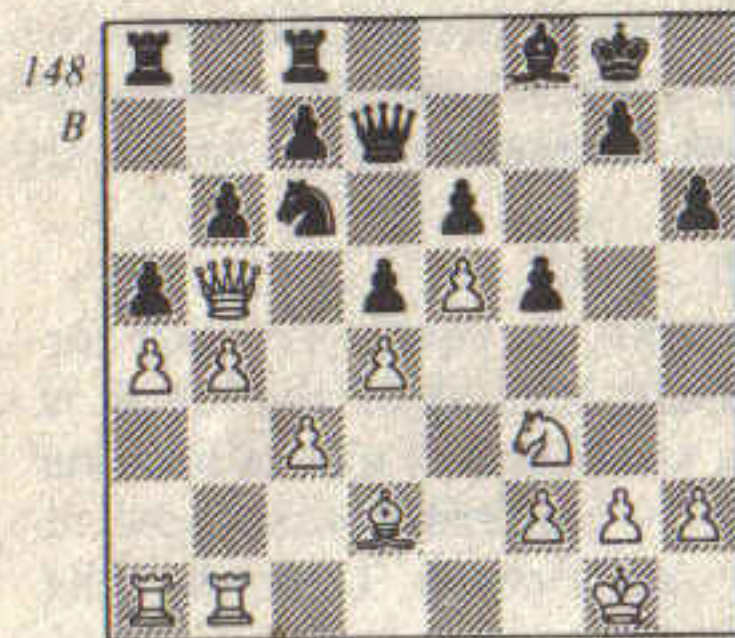
18 $\text{e}f4$ $\text{e}xf4$
19 $\text{e}xf4$ $\text{f}5$

The position is now approximately even.

20 $\text{e}eb1$ $\text{e}a8$
21 $\text{e}b5$ $\text{e}fc8$
22 $\text{e}g5$ $\text{e}f8$

Naturally Black avoids a bishop swap as White's bishop is more limited by the pawn structure.

23 $\text{e}d2$ $\text{h}6$
24 b4 (148)



White could have proceeded quietly by improving the position of his knight with $\text{e}e1$ - $\text{d}3$. Black can now continue 24 ... $\text{e}a7$ 25 $\text{e}d3$ $\text{a}b$ 26 $\text{c}b$ $\text{e}ca8$ 27 $\text{e}c2$ $\text{e}d8$ 28 $\text{b}5$ $\text{e}c8$ when he has equal chances because he can break White's queenside grip with ... $\text{c}6$.

24 ... $\text{g}5$

A dubious move which only weakens the black king position. White is going to move his knight anyway so there is no point in evicting it.

25 $\text{h}4$ $\text{g}4$
26 $\text{e}e1$ $\text{e}e8$
27 $\text{e}d3$ $\text{a}b$
28 $\text{c}b$ $\text{e}a7$

29 $\text{e}c3$ $\text{e}ca8$
30 $\text{e}d1$ $\text{e}d8$
31 $\text{b}5$ $\text{c}5$

31 ... $\text{c}6$ was better.

32 $\text{d}c$ $\text{e}xc5$
33 $\text{e}d3$ $\text{e}b7$
34 $\text{g}3$ $\text{d}4$

This move is too committal.

34 ... $\text{e}f8$ 35 $\text{e}b3$ $\text{e}c5$ is better.

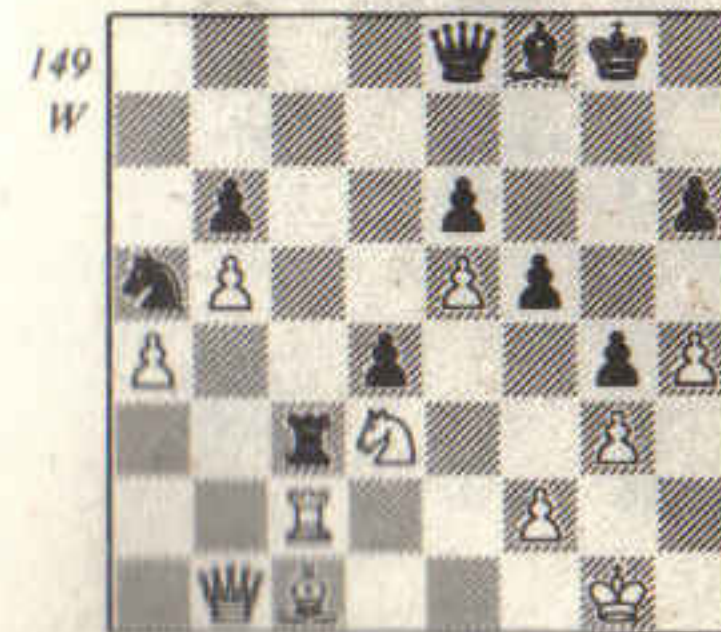
35 $\text{e}d2$ $\text{e}f8$
36 $\text{e}b3$

White also commits an inaccuracy. 36 $\text{e}c1$, threatening to invade on $\text{c}6$, would have been awkward for Black.

36 ... $\text{e}c8$
37 $\text{e}c1$ $\text{e}aa8$
38 $\text{e}a2$

White can keep the advantage with 38 $\text{e}xc8$ $\text{e}xc8$ 39 $\text{e}c1$ $\text{e}xc1$ 40 $\text{e}xc1$ with the idea of $\text{e}d2$ and $\text{e}c1$.

38 ... $\text{e}xc1$
39 $\text{e}xc1$ $\text{e}a5$
40 $\text{e}b1$ $\text{e}c8$
41 $\text{e}c2$ $\text{e}c3(149)$



This appears to be very promising, but it leads to the collapse of Black's position. 41 ... $\text{e}d7$ 42 $\text{e}d2$ $\text{e}b7$ is only slightly better for White.

42 $\text{e}xc3$ $\text{d}c$
43 $\text{e}c2$ $\text{e}c8$
44 $\text{e}e3$

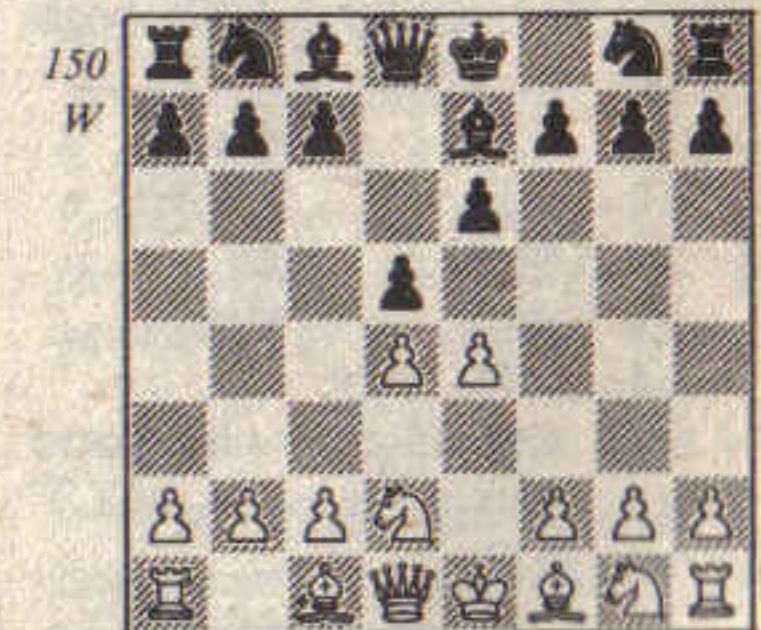
Black's dangerous c-pawn has been blockaded and he can no longer defend the weak pawns in his camp. White threatens $\text{e}d4$ and $\text{e}xb6$.

44 ... $\text{e}c4$
45 $\text{e}xb6$ $\text{e}b3$
46 $\text{e}e3$ $\text{e}a1$
47 $\text{e}e2$ $\text{e}xa4$
48 $\text{b}6$ $\text{e}b3$
49 $\text{e}c2$ $\text{e}c4$
50 $\text{e}a2$ $\text{e}d5$
51 $\text{e}f4$ $\text{e}d1+$
52 $\text{e}h2$ $\text{c}2$
53 $\text{e}xb3$

1-0

Chandler-Henley
Indonesia 1982

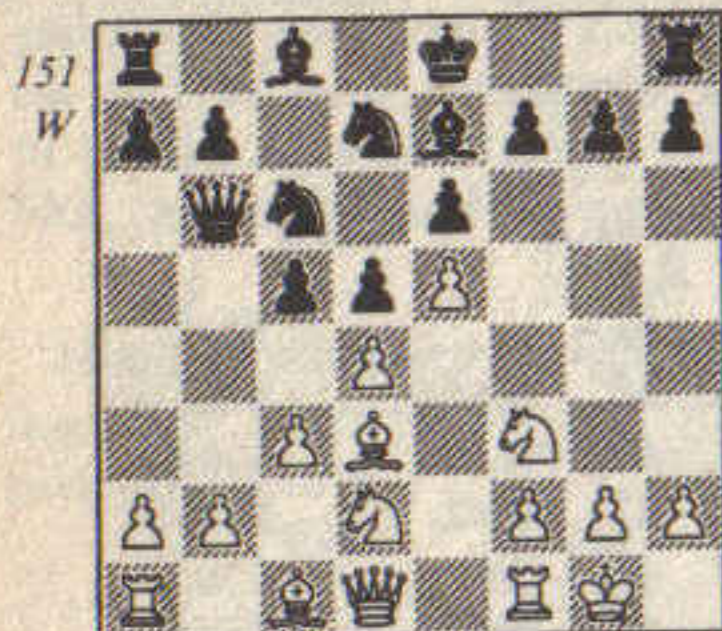
1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 $\text{e}d2$ $\text{e}e7(150)$



This move, a favourite of Romanishin, was popular in the late seventies but does not pose White any problems.

4 $\text{e}gf3$ $\text{e}f6$
5 e5 $\text{e}fd7$

- 6 ♖d3 c5
7 c3 ♘c6
8 0-0 ♙b6 (151)



As we have seen in Nunn-Farago, this position can be reached from 3 ... ♘f6 against the Tarrasch.

9 dc

A strange move, but chess is full of surprises. White gives up the e5 pawn in order to take advantage of his lead in development.

9 ... ♙c7

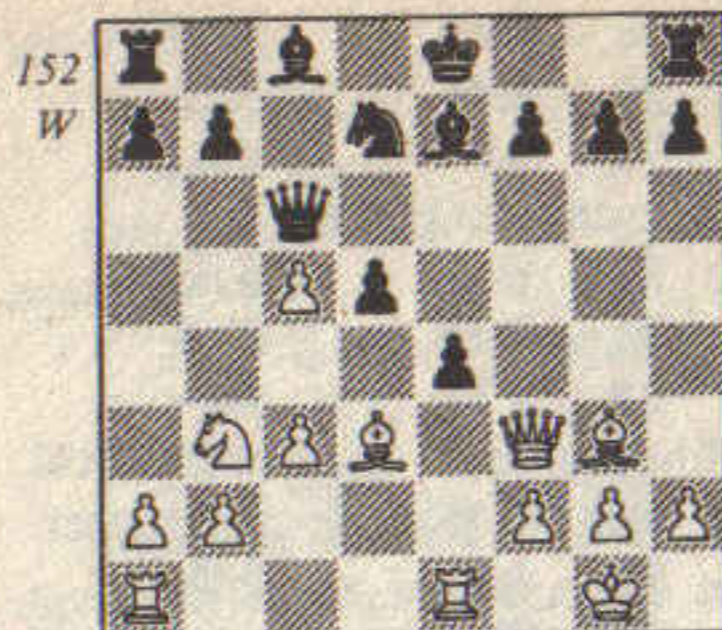
Or 9 ... ♘c5 10 ♖c2 a5 11 ♘b3 ♙c7 12 ♙e1 ♘b3 13 ab with advantage to White.

- 10 ♘b3 ♘cxe5
11 ♖f4 ♘xf3+
12 ♙xf3 e5
13 ♖g3 ♙c6
14 ♙fe1

14 ♙e2 ♙e6 15 c4 is also good for White, Estrin-Ornstein, ICCF Congress 1977.

14 ... e4 (152)

Now Black gets a rude awakening as White hits him with a rook sacrifice.



- 15 ♙xe4!! de
16 ♖xe4 ♙f6
17 c6 ♘e5

17 ... ♙xf3 18 ♖xf3 ♘c5 19 ♘xc5 ♖xc5 20 cb ♖xb7 21 ♖xb7 gives White a very good ending.

- 18 ♖xe5 ♙xe5
19 cb ♖xb7
20 ♖xb7 ♙b8
21 ♘d4 ♖d6
22 g3 0-0

Giving back the exchange is Black's only chance.

- 23 ♘c6 ♙b5
24 ♘b8 ♙xb2
25 ♙d1 ♖xb8
26 ♙d7 ♙b5
27 ♖c6 ♙e5
28 ♖d5

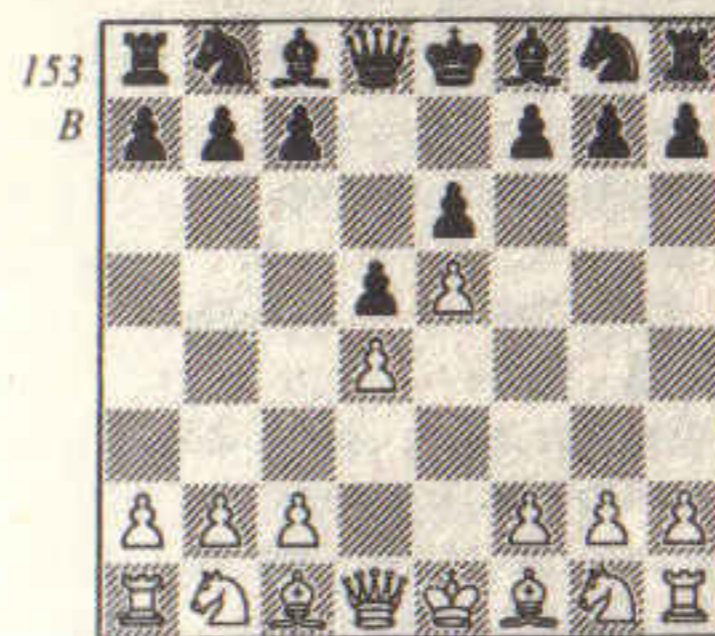
The end is nigh. All of White's pieces aim at f7.

- 28 ... ♙e8
29 ♙b7 a5
30 ♖xf7+ 1-0

A fitting conclusion. After 30 ... ♙xf7 31 ♙xf7+ ♙xf7 32 ♙xb8+ wins.

12 Advance Variation

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 e5 (153)



This was a favourite of the great Dane Aron Nimzowitsch. White immediately gains a kingside space advantage and thus lays down the foundations for an attack there. 3 e5 is committal and Black can play the break ... c5 straight away. The Advance has become less popular since Black has a clear-cut plan of campaign. There has been some interest in the Milner-Barry Gambit.

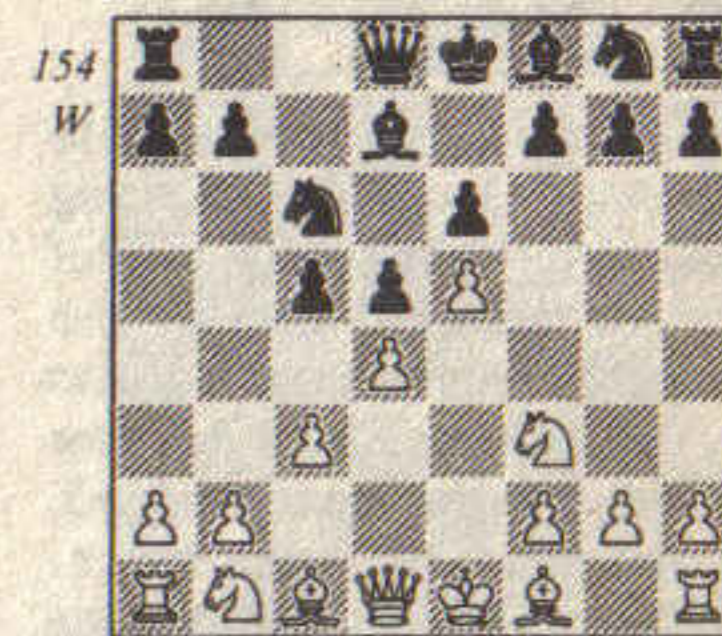
Spassky-Korchnoi
Candidates' Final (18) 1977

- 1 d4 e6
2 e4 d5
3 e5 c5

Korchnoi chooses the most direct plan for Black; attack on

the d4 point. Black can also prepare to fianchetto or exchange his QB with ... b6.

- 4 c3 ♘c6
5 ♘f3 ♖d7 (154)



An interesting move. 5 ... ♙b6 has often been played, when White has a choice between 6 ♖e2, 6 ♖d3, or 6 a3. 5 ... ♖d7 is a flexible move. Black hopes that the bishop can emerge later, possibly via b5 after ... ♙b6.

- 6 ♖e2 ♘ge7
7 ♘a3 cd

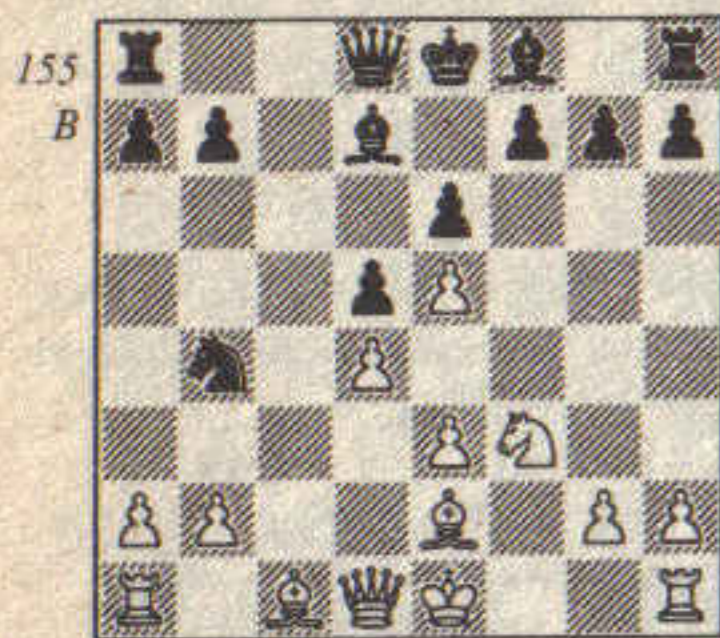
Black does not normally exchange in the centre so readily but here he has a useful manoeuvre in mind.

- 8 cd ♘f5
9 ♘c2 ♘b4
10 ♘e3

Now if 10 ♘xb4 ♖xb4 11 ♖d2 ♙b6 and Black will exchange off

the light-squared bishops by ... ♙b5 .

- 10 ... ♜xe3
11 fe (155)



This position is equal but both sides have potential winning chances. White has possibilities of a kingside attack aided by the half open f-file. His centre is also secure because the d-pawn is now protected by the pawn on e3. Black has chances on the queenside with possibilities of occupying the c-file and infiltrating the light squares by exchanging the light-squared bishops.

- 11 ... ♙e7
12 a3 ♜c6
13 b4 a6
14 ♝b1 ♞a7

Black is now threatening ... ♙b5 .

- 15 a4 ♜c6
16 ♙d2 a5
17 b5 ♜b4

So Spassky has prevented the exchange of light-squared bishops, but now Black has a knight firmly entrenched on b4.

- 18 0-0 0-0
19 ♞e1

Spassky is transferring his queen

to the kingside ready for an attack. Korchnoi could now have played 19 ... f5 20 ♞g3 (20 ef gf 21 ♞g3 ♞h8) 20 ... ♙e8 intending ... ♙h5 with a good game.

- 19 ... ♞h8
20 ♞g3 f6

Again 20 ... f5 was the right move. Black cannot capture on e5 because White would then have a tremendous knight there.

- 21 ♝bc1

Spassky plans ef followed by ♞c7 , so now Korchnoi plays ... f5 , having lost a tempo.

- 21 ... f5
22 h4 ♝c8
23 h5

A better plan was 23 ♞h3 followed by g4 , opening the g-file. White can move his king and then use the file for his rooks.

- 23 ... ♝xc1
24 ♝xc1 ♞a2

Not one of Korchnoi's better moves. 24 ... g5 25 hg ♝g8 would have been at least equal for Black.

- 25 ♝a1 ♞b4
26 ♞h3

Spassky gets on the right track.

- 26 ... ♙e8
27 ♞f2

Now White can swing the rook over to the kingside if necessary.

- 27 ... ♞b6
28 g4 g5

Time trouble now affects the play. 28 ... g6 would have been better.

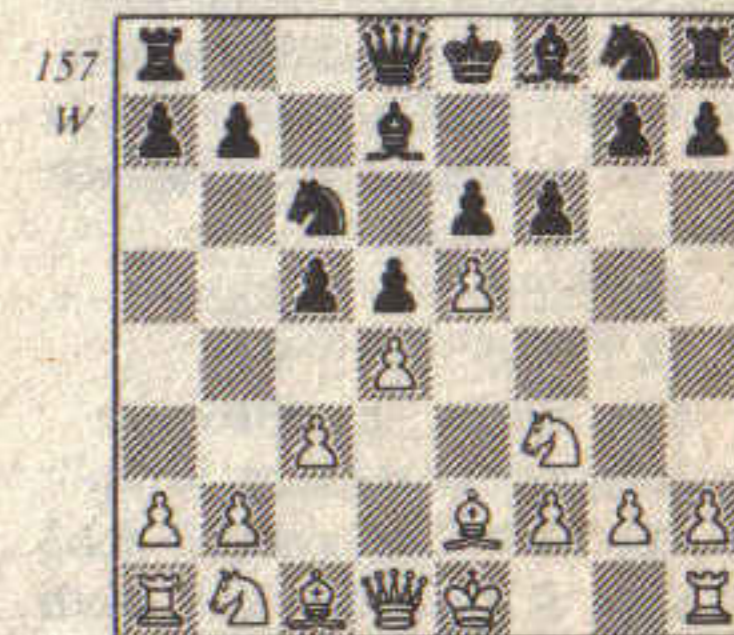
- 29 hg

White could also have tried 29 ♞g2 .

After 41 ... ♙d2 42 ♞a3 ♙e4 White is helpless against the threat of ... ♞h4 , e.g. 43 e6 ♞h4 44 ♞g2 ♙xf3 45 ♙xf3 ♝g8 46 ♞f1 ♞e1 mate.

Kupreichik-Dolmatov
USSR 1980

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 e5 c5
4 c3 ♞c6
5 ♞f3 ♙d7
6 ♙e2 f6 (157)



This direct method of assailing the white centre is critical. Black is left with static pawn weaknesses after ... f6 but will have free play for his pieces.

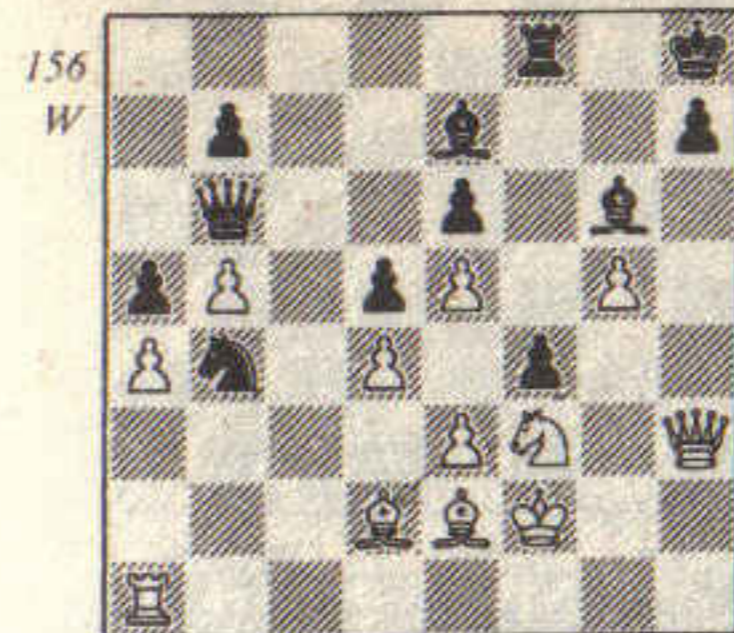
- 7 c4?!

This attempts to smash the black centre but White does not have enough pieces developed for such an attack to work. 7 0-0 is better.

- 7 ... cd
8 cd ed
9 ef ♞xf6
10 ♞xd4 ♙c5 (158)

Black is far ahead in development

- 29 ... ♙xg6
30 g5 f4 (156)



An inspired pawn sacrifice by Korchnoi, giving his bishop more scope.

- 31 ef ♞c2
32 ♝d1 ♙e4

Black cannot play 32 ... ♞xd4 because of 33 ♙e3 .

- 33 ♙e3

White can defend the d-pawn indirectly: 33 ♙c1 ♙xf3 34 ♙xf3 ♞xd4 35 ♙e3 ♙c5 36 g6 and wins.

- 33 ... ♞xe3
34 ♞xe3 ♞c7
35 g6

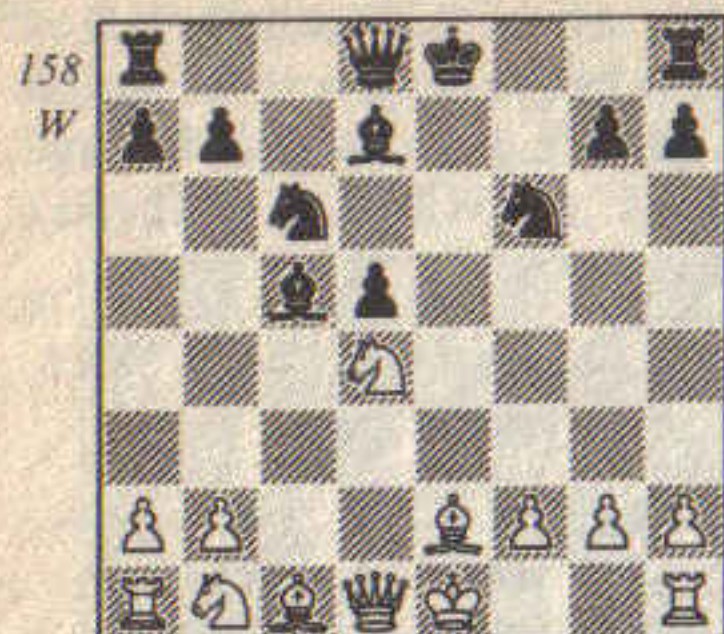
35 ♞xe6 is well met by 35 ... ♙a3 threatening ... ♞c3 .

- 35 ... ♙xg6
36 ♞xe6 ♙a3
37 ♞xd5 ♙c1+
38 ♞f2 ♙xf4
39 ♞c4

39 ♞e5 would leave White with a slight advantage after 39... ♞xc5 40 dc ♙xe5 .

- 39 ... ♞g7
40 ♝g1 ♞h6
41 ♞e3

0-1



and White is hard put to it to find a decent move.

11 ♖xc6

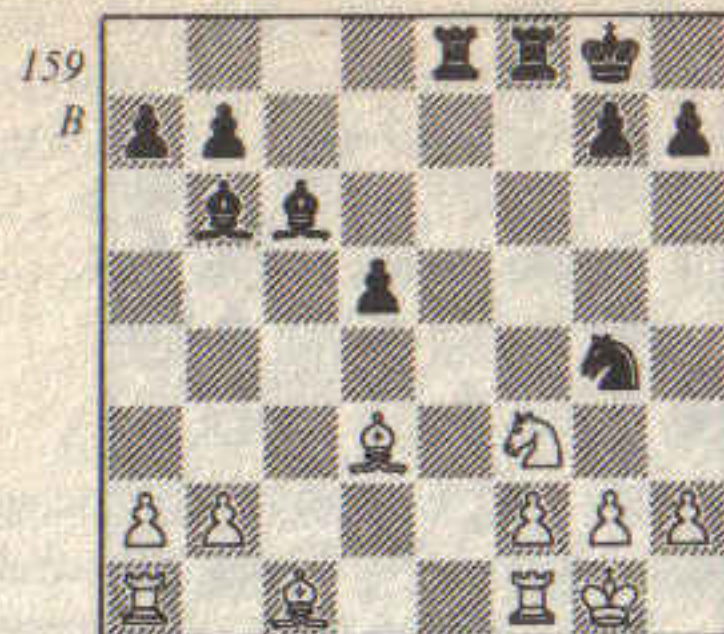
11 ♖b3 ♗xf2+ 12 ♗xf2 ♖e4+ gives Black an irresistible attack. 11 ♗e3 ♗b6 12 ♖xc6 ♗xe3 13 fe bc 14 ♗d4 0-0 is White's best chance of salvation.

11 ... ♗xc6
12 0-0 0-0
13 ♖d2 ♗b6

The pressure mounts on White's game. 13 ♖f3 ♖e4 and 13 ♖b3 ♗xf2 14 ♗xf2 ♖e4 are both terrible for White.

14 ♗b3 ♗ae8
15 ♗xb6 ♗xb6
16 ♗d3 ♖g4
17 ♖f3 (159)

With all of his men bearing down on White's position it is not surprising that Black is able to produce a forcing continuation here.



17 ... ♗xf3!
18 gf ♖e5
19 ♗e2 d4
20 ♗d2 d3
21 ♗d1 ♖xf3+
22 ♗xf3 ♗xf3
23 ♗fe1 ♗e2
24 ♖g2 ♗e6

Now White has great difficulty over his king position.

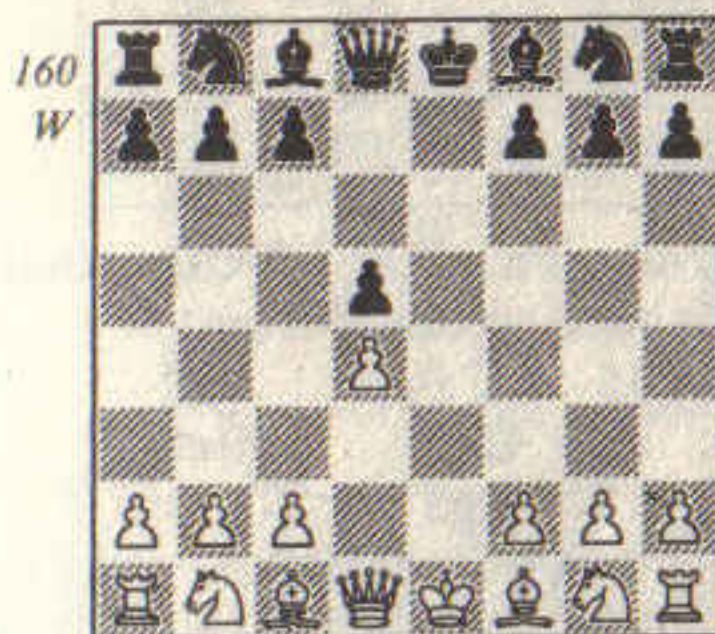
25 f4 ♗g6+
26 ♖h3 ♗g4+
27 ♖g3 ♗d7+
28 ♖f3 ♗c6+
29 ♗e4 ♗e6
30 ♗ae1 g6
31 ♗c3 ♖f7
32 h4 ♗xe4
33 ♗xe4 h5
34 a4 a5
35 b3 ♗d5

0-1

After 36 ♗d2 ♖f6 and ... ♖f5 wins. A fine game by Dolmatov.

13 Exchange Variation

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ed ed (160)



The Exchange Variation was once a feared weapon but has been shown to be harmless. We have already seen the game Tatai-Korchnoi where Black can strive for an unbalanced position with ... c5. After 3 ed ed the position is equal, but fortunately this opening does not lead to a dead draw. Either side can obtain the advantage with only a slight slip from the opposition. How should each side develop its pieces? The KB usually goes to d3/d6 and this appears to be the best square, but the other pieces may be put in one of two different places, e.g. the KN can go to f3/f6 or e2/e7. Both sides may try to exchange the opposing KB by playing ♖e2/♖e7

followed by ♗f4/♗f5 or by ♗f3/♗f6 and ♗f4/♗f5. Indeed much of the play in the Exchange French revolves around the placing of the bishops. The Exchange Variation is satisfactory for Black since White usually has to commit his pieces earlier and Black can adopt a set-up designed to counter White's development.

L. Kovacs-Korchnoi
Sarajevo 1969

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ed ed
4 ♗d3 ♖c6

An interesting attempt to seize the initiative, taking advantage of the fact that White's d-pawn is temporarily undefended.

5 c3

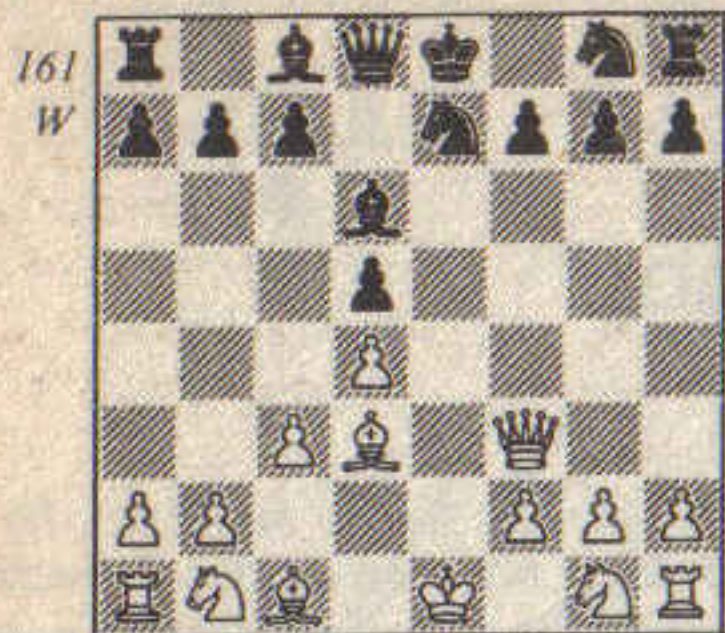
Both 5 ♖f3 ♗g4 and 5 ♖e2 ♖b4 give Black a good game.

5 ... ♗d6
6 ♗f3

6 ♖e2 is well met by 6 ... ♗f6 or 6 ... ♗h4 preventing ♗f4, and 6 ♖f3 by 6 ... ♖ge7 with the idea of ... ♗f5 at a later stage.

6 ... ♖ce7 (161)

Black can now develop his knight to f6 and molest the white queen with ... ♗g4 or ♖g6-h4.



161
W
7 ♖f4
7 ♖g5 h6 8 ♖h4 ♖e6 with the idea of ... ♗d7 and 0-0-0. 7 ♘e2 is best, intending to meet 7 ... ♘f6 with 8 ♖g5.

7 ... ♘f6
8 h3

White is worried about the possibility of ... ♖g4, but it would have been better to play 8 ♘e2 ♖g4 9 ♗g3 ♖xe2 10 ♖xe2 ♖xf4 11 ♗xf4 0-0 when Black has only a slight advantage.

8 ... ♖xf4
9 ♗xf4 0-0
10 ♘e2 ♘g6
11 ♗h2

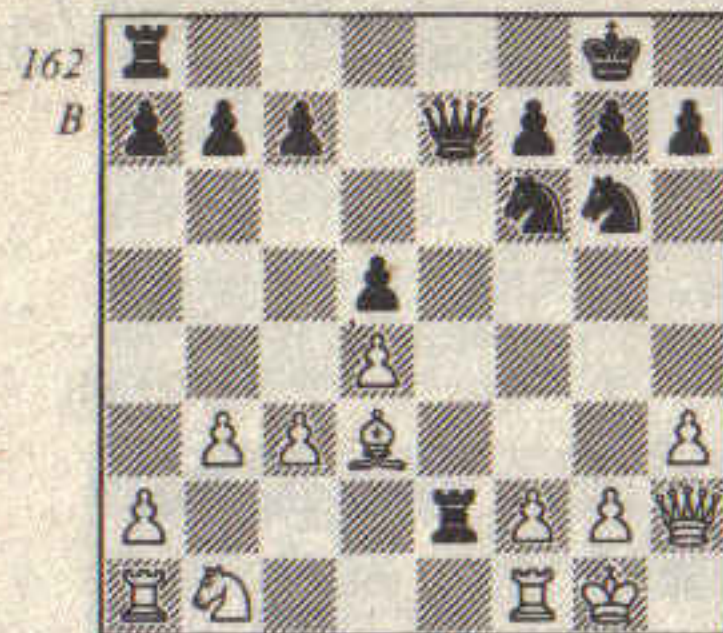
If White captures on g6 then Black gets the half open f-file for an attack. 11 ♗c1 is the most prudent retreat - the queen is badly out of the game on h2.

11 ... ♖e8
12 0-0 ♖f5
13 ♖xf5

White should have played 13 ♘c1 here, when Black has the advantage but not such a decisive

one.

13 ... ♖xe2
14 b3 ♗e7
15 ♖d3 (162)



White is in great difficulty since he cannot get his QN out.

15 ... ♖b2
16 ♗g3 ♖e8
17 ♗g5

White is now at last planning to put his queen on c1, but Korchnoi is ready.

17 ... ♘e4
18 ♗c1 ♖xf2
19 ♖xf2 ♘xf2
20 ♘xf2 ♗f6 +
21 ♘g1 ♘f4
22 ♖f1 ♖e2

Korchnoi swoops in for the kill.

23 ♘d2 ♘xh3 +
24 ♘h2 ♘f4
25 ♘g3 ♘d3
26 ♘e4

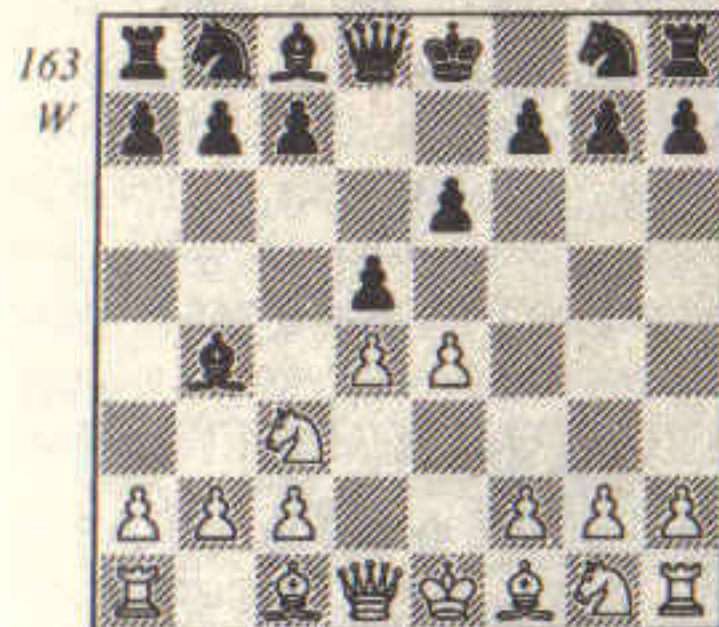
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26 ... de wins easily.

A fine example from Korchnoi of how to play the Exchange Variation.

14 Winawer Variation

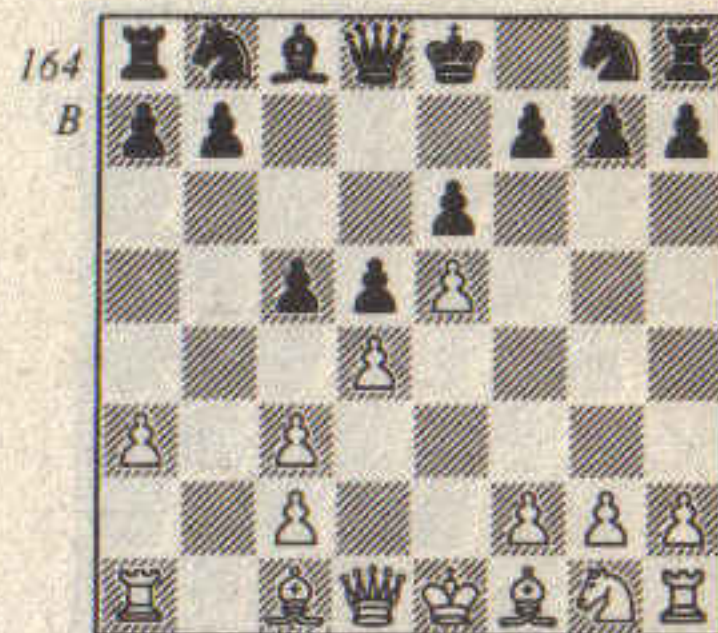
1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♖b4 (163)



163
W

Undoubtedly the most critical of all lines in the French. 3 ... ♖b4 again puts pressure on the e4 point by pinning White's knight. White can now offer the e-pawn by 4 ♖d2, 4 ♗g4 or 4 a3 but normally he advances it with 4 e5. Black can counterattack immediately with 4 ... c5 or play the more conservative 4 ... ♘e7. After 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♖xc3+ 6 bc we have reached a common position in the Winawer (164).

White has the two bishops and a kingside space advantage. He will aim to create attacking chances on the kingside especially if Black should incautiously castle there. White's queenside pawns are weak and Black has good chances in the endgame. The position

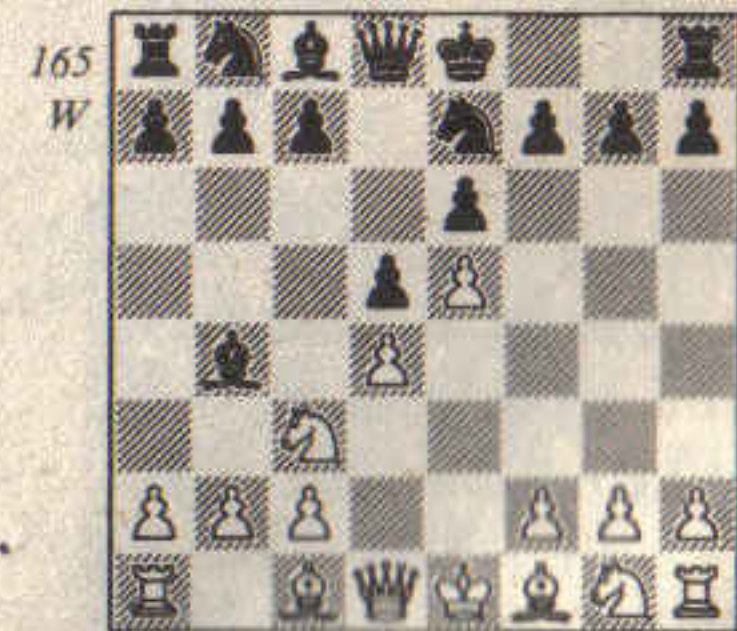


164
B

therefore offers both sides winning chances.

Bronstein-Uhlmann
Tallinn 1977

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♖b4
4 e5 ♘e7 (165)

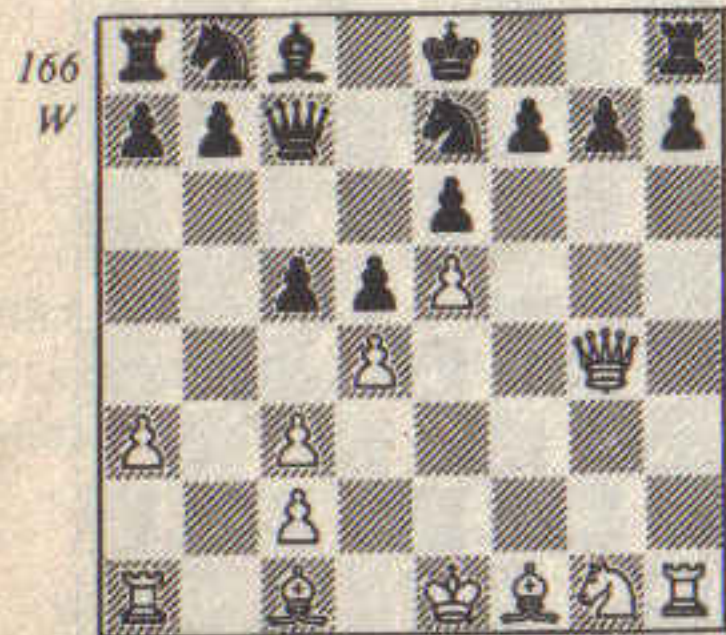


165
W

A slight finesse in move order which is worthy of comment. After 4 ... c5 White can play an

immediate 5 ♖g4, when Black is almost compelled to sacrifice his g-pawn. But after 4 ... ♗e7 5 ♖g4 Black has an alternative in 5 ... ♗f5.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----------|
| 5 | a3 | ♗xc3+ |
| 6 | bc | c5 |
| 7 | ♖g4 | ♖c7 (166) |

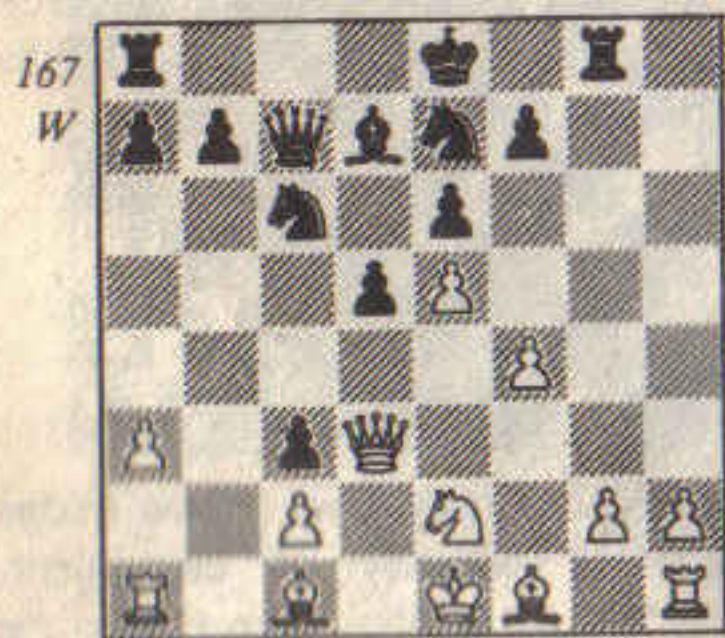


Black takes up the challenge and sacrifices his kingside. In return he gets a lead in development and counterplay in the centre.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 8 | ♖xg7 | ♗g8 |
| 9 | ♖xh7 | cd |
| 10 | ♗e2 | |

The best move, developing a piece while stopping ... ♖xc3.

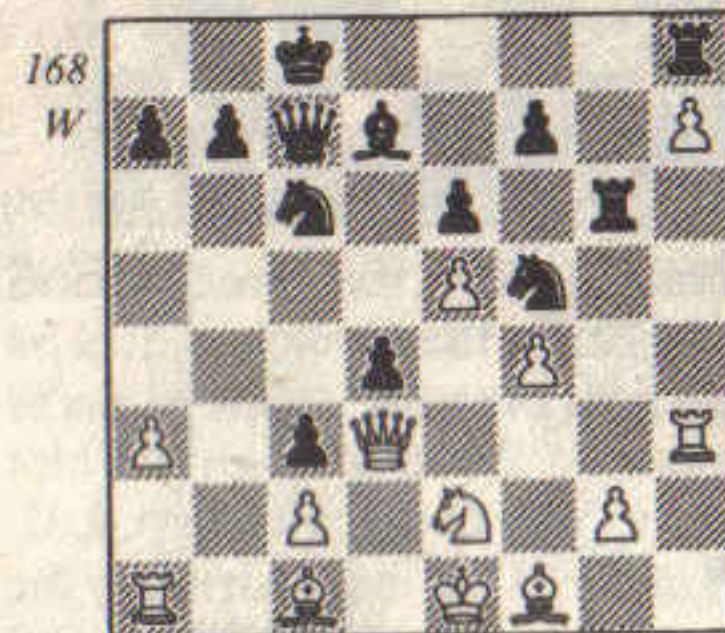
- | | | |
|----|-----|----------|
| 10 | ... | ♗bc6 |
| 11 | f4 | ♗d7 |
| 12 | ♖d3 | dc (167) |



A key position in the main line Winawer. Black is ahead in development but White has the two bishops and a useful passed pawn on the kingside. Bronstein takes a direct course, hoping that the h-pawn will tie up the black forces.

- | | | |
|----|-----|----------|
| 13 | h4 | 0-0-0 |
| 14 | h5 | ♗f5 |
| 15 | h6 | ♗g6 |
| 16 | h7 | ♗h8 |
| 17 | ♗h3 | d4 (168) |

A fine move by Uhlmann, holding on to his advanced c-pawn. 17 ... ♗g7 18 ♖b1 ♗e8 19 ♗xc3 a6 20 ♗xd5 gives White a big advantage.



- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 18 | ♖b1 | ♗e8 |
| 19 | ♖f3 | |

Or 19 g3 f6 20 ef ♗xh7 and Black stands much better.

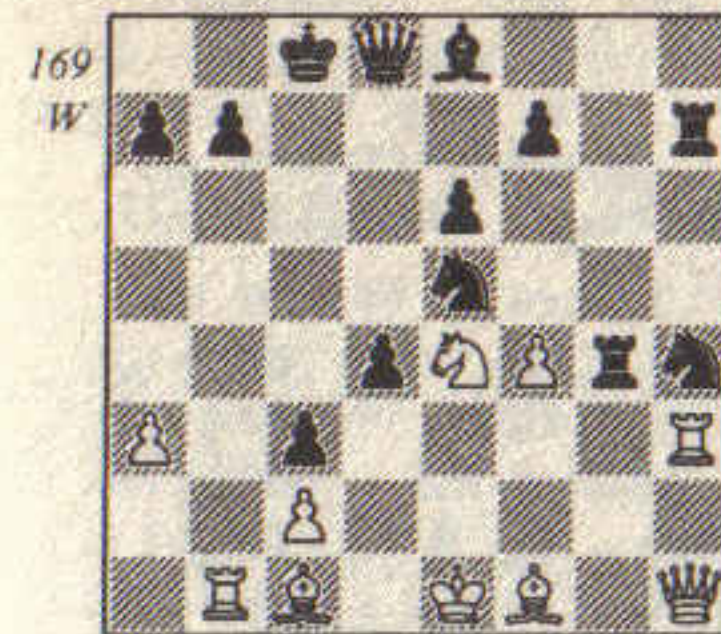
- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 19 | ... | ♖d8 |
| 20 | g4 | |

20 g3 ♗g7 is even worse for White.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 20 | ... | ♗h4 |
| 21 | ♖h1 | |

After 21 ♖g3 ♗xh7 (intending ... ♗f5) White's position is hopeless.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------------|
| 21 | ... | ♗xg4 |
| 22 | ♗g3 | ♗xh7 |
| 23 | ♗e4 | ♗xe5! (169) |



A superb combination from Uhlmann. White has been tactically outgunned. If now 24 ♗d6+ ♖xd6 25 ♖xb7+ ♗d8 26 ♖a8+ ♗e7 and the black king escapes.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 24 | fe | ♗c6 |
| 25 | ♗d3 | |

Again 25 ♗d6+ ♖xd6 26 ed ♗xh1 27 ♗xh1 ♗f3+ 28 ♗f2 ♗xh1 29 ♗xf3 ♗gg1 wins for Black.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 25 | ... | ♗c7 |
| 26 | ♗f2 | ♗h5 |
| 27 | ♗f3 | ♖g8 |
| 28 | ♗f4 | ♗xf3 |
| 29 | ♖xh5 | ♗xf4 |
| 30 | ♖h6 | ♗g5+ |

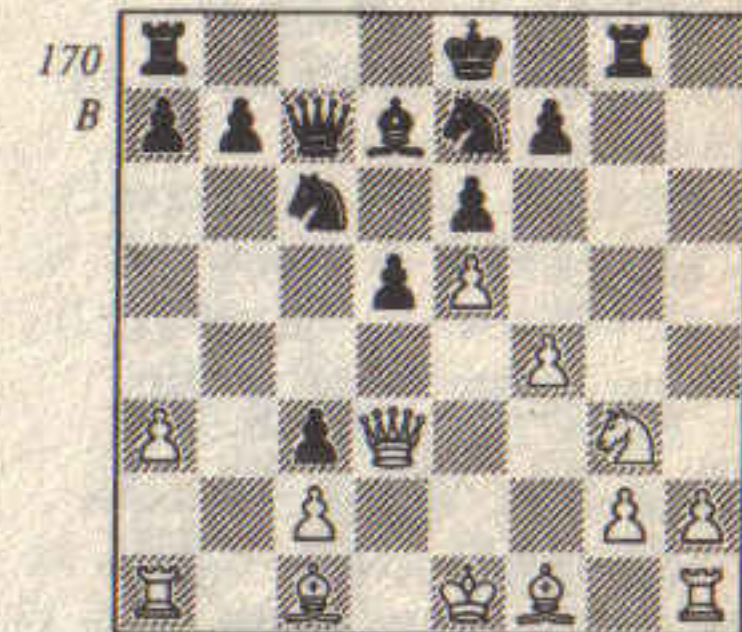
0-1

A fantastic game by Uhlmann showing the resources available to Black in such positions.

Sveshnikov-Webb
Hastings 1977/78

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♗c3 | ♗b4 |
| 4 | e5 | e5 |

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 5 | a3 | ♗xc3+ |
| 6 | bc | ♗e7 |
| 7 | ♖g4 | ♖c7 |
| 8 | ♖xg7 | ♗g8 |
| 9 | ♖xh7 | cd |
| 10 | ♗e2 | ♗bc6 |
| 11 | f4 | ♗d7 |
| 12 | ♖d3 | dc |
| 13 | ♗g3 (170) | |



A more sensible continuation than 13 h4. White plans ♗e2 and 0-0. The drawbacks of this move are that White loses control of d4 and Black can often play ... ♗f5 with pressure down the g-file.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 13 | ... | 0-0-0 |
| 14 | ♗e2 | ♗f5 |
| 15 | ♗xf5 | ef |
| 16 | 0-0 | d4 |
| 17 | ♗f3 | ♗e6 (171) |



Black has a very comfortable position. The white queen is badly tied down on d3, preventing the advance of the black d-pawn.

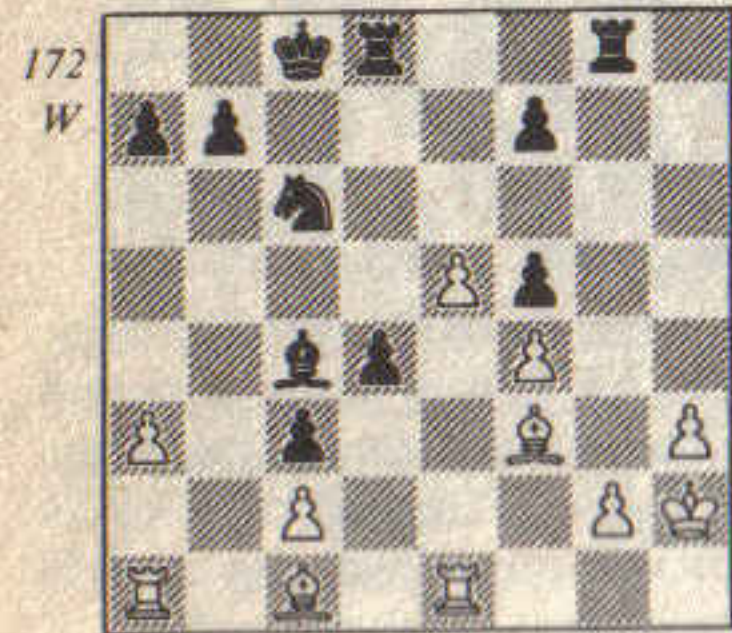
- 18 ♖b1 ♔a2!
- 19 ♖a1 ♔e6
- 20 ♖e1?

It would have been better to take the draw with 20 ♖b1.

- 20 ... ♗b6

Now most of White's pieces are immobilized.

- 21 h3 ♗c5
- 22 ♖h2 ♗c4
- 23 ♗xc4 ♔xc4 (172)



Now White cannot prevent ... d3 and the creation of a deadly passed pawn.

- 24 g4 d3
- 25 cd ♗d4
- 26 ♖e3 ♔d5

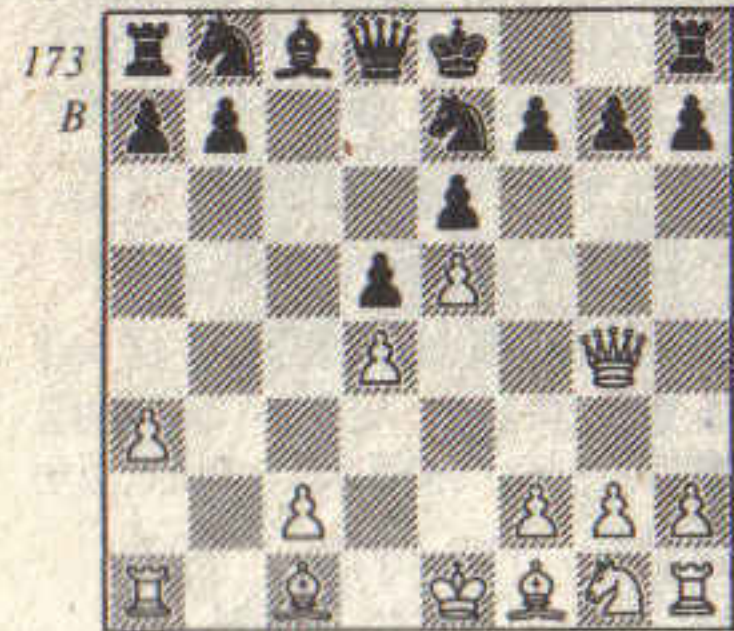
Much better than 26 ... ♗c2 27 dc ♗xa1 28 ♖xc3 winning for White.

- 27 ♔xd5 ♖xd5
- 28 ♖g3 fg
- 29 hg ♖h8+
- 30 ♖g2 ♖b5
- 31 a4 ♖b3
- 32 ♖a3 ♖b2+
- 33 ♖f1 ♗b3
- 34 ♔xb2 ♗d2+

- 35 ♔e2 ♖h2+
 - 36 ♔e3 ♗f1+
 - 37 ♔f3 cb
 - 38 ♖b3 ♗d2+
- 0-1

Spassky-Korchnoi
Candidates' Final (12) 1977

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♗c3 ♔b4
- 4 e5 c5
- 5 a3 ♗xc3+
- 6 bc ♗e7
- 7 ♗g4 cd
- 8 cd (173)



This recapture has rarely been played.

- 8 ... ♗c7
- 9 ♔d1 0-0
- 10 ♗f3 f6
- 11 ♔d3 ♗f5

This move prepares a piece sacrifice.

- 12 ♗h3 ♗c6
- Black can also play 12 ... fe 13 ♗xe5 g6.

- 13 g4 fe
- 14 de ♗xe5

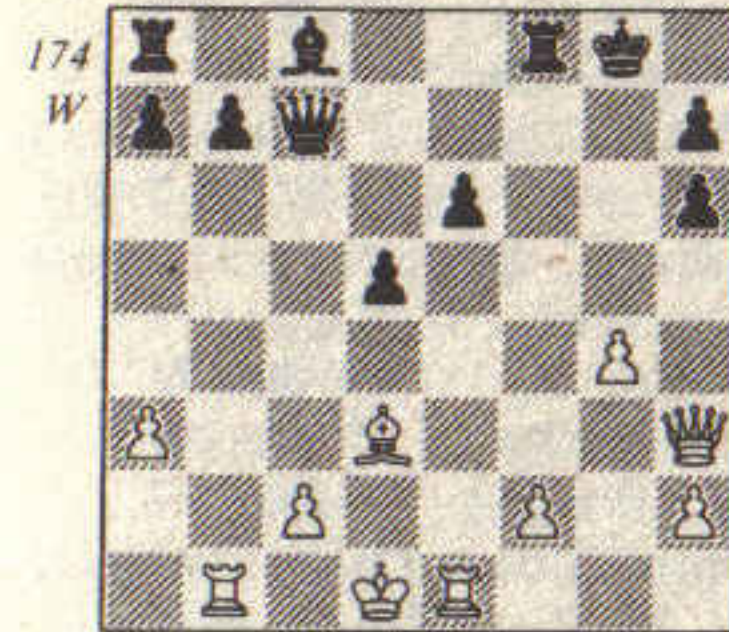
Now if White accepts the sacrifice with 15 gf ♗xd3 16 cd

♗c3 17 ♖a2 ♗b3+ 18 ♖c2 e5 gives Black a strong attack.

- 15 ♗xe5 ♗xe5
- 16 ♖b1

An interesting possibility is 16 gf ♗xa1 17 fe h6 18 ♖e1.

- 16 ... ♗h6
- 17 ♖e1 ♗c7
- 18 ♔xh6 gh (174)



- 19 g5

After 19 ♗xh6 ♗g7 Black has a slight advantage, but this move threatens to open up the g-file.

- 19 ... e5

With 19 ... ♖xf2 20 gh ♗f4 21 ♗g3+ ♗xg3 22 hg an equal ending is reached.

- 20 ♗g3 h5
- 21 ♖xe5 ♔g4+
- 22 ♖c1 ♗g7
- 23 ♗e3 ♖f3
- 24 ♗d4 ♖d8
- 25 ♖b4 b6
- 26 ♔e4 ♖xf2
- 27 h3

27 ♔xd5+ ♖h8 28 ♖e7 ♗xd4 29 ♖xd4 is good for White, but this is hard to see. Both players were in time trouble.

- 27 ... ♖f1+
- 28 ♖b2 ♔xh3

28 ... ♖d1! was good.

- 29 ♔xd5+ ♖h8
- 30 ♗c3 ♖ff8
- 31 ♔b3 ♔f5

31 ... ♖f3 32 ♗xf3 ♗xe5 with a big advantage to Black.

- 32 ♖f4 ♖c8
- 33 ♔c4 ♔g6
- 34 ♖f6 ♖fe8
- 35 ♖d5 ♖c7
- 36 ♗d4 h4
- 37 ♔b3

Spassky missed a win here with 37 ♖d8! ♖c8 38 ♖d7.

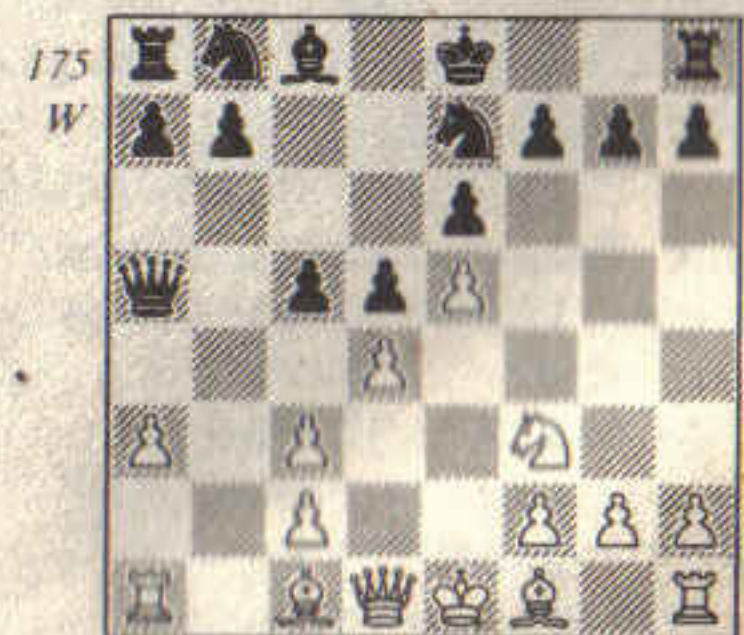
- 37 ... h3
- 38 ♗h4

1-0 (time)

After 38 ... ♔f7 39 ♖d2 ♔xb3 40 cb ♖c5 Black is much better. A sharp cut-and-thrust game full of interesting turns.

Ivanović-Vaganian
Nikšić 1978

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♗c3 ♔b4
- 4 e5 c5
- 5 a3 ♗xc3+
- 6 bc ♗e7
- 7 ♗f3 ♗a5 (175)



7 ... ♔d7!? 8 dc ♖c7 9 ♔d3 ♔a4
10 ♜b1! Spassky-Korchnoi (10),
Candidates' Final 1977.

Black strikes immediately at
White's doubled c-pawns.

8 ♖d2

The alternative 8 ♔d2 will be
featured in other games.

8 ... ♘bc6

9 ♔d3 ♔b6

An interesting move. Black
wishes to exchange the light-
squared bishops in order to gain
control of the light squares.

10 a4 ♔a6

11 dc

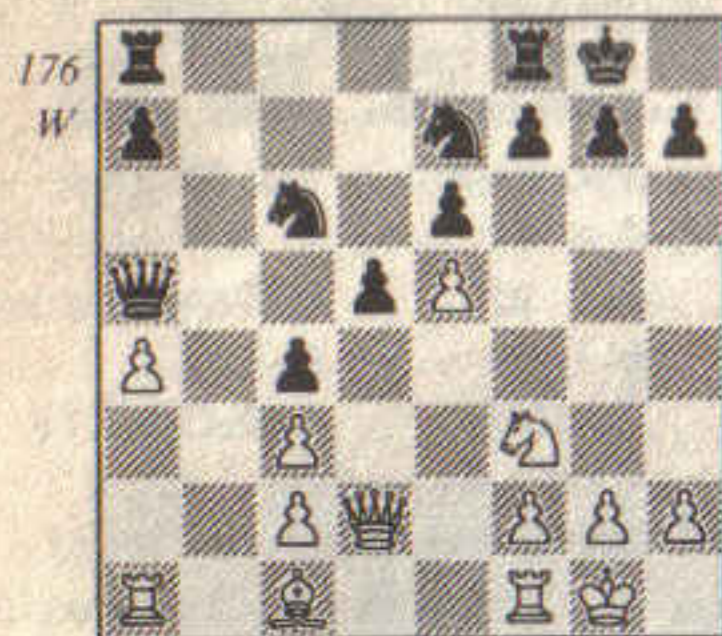
This move loses a tempo.
11 ♔xa6 ♖xa6 12 dc bc 13 ♔a3
♖a5 is equal.

11 ... ♔xd3

12 ♖xd3 bc

13 0-0 c4

14 ♖d2 0-0 (176)



Black already has a slight
advantage. White's Q-side pawns
are very weak.

15 ♔a3 ♜fe8

16 ♔b4 ♖d8

17 ♔xe7

Or 17 ♜ael ♘g6 followed by ...

f6 with advantage to Black.

17 ... ♖xe7

18 ♜ael f5

19 ef

After 19 ♘d4 ♘xd4 20 cd
Black retains his advantage -
White's pawns are still weak.

19 ... ♖xf6

Now Black's pawns in the
centre are ready to roll.

20 ♘d4 e5

21 ♘xc6

If 21 ♘b5 ♜ad8 22 ♘c7 ♜f8
23 ♘xd5 ♖f7 24 ♜d1 ♘h8
followed by ... ♘e7 wins.

21 ... ♖xc6

22 f4 ♖c5+

23 ♘h1 e4

Stronger than 23 ... ef 24 ♖xf4
♜xe1 25 ♜xe1 ♜f8 26 ♖e5 with
equality.

24 ♜e3 ♜ad8

25 f5 ♜d6

26 g4 d4

27 cd ♜xd4

28 ♖f2 ♖d6

29 g5 ♜d2

30 ♖h4?!

30 ♖f4 is better.

30 ... ♜d1

31 ♖f2 ♜e5

32 ♖e2

32 f6 fails to 32 ... ♜xg5 33 f7
♘f8 34 ♜xe4 ♖c6 winning. But
not 34 ... ♖d5?? 35 ♖c5+ and
White wins!

32 ... ♜xf1+

33 ♖xf1 ♖d5

34 f6 ♜xg5

35 fg ♘xg7

36 ♖a1+ ♘g6

37 ♖e1 ♘f6

38 ♖f2+ ♘e6

39 ♖e1 a5

40 h3 ♘d6

41 ♖b1 ♘c7

42 ♖f1 ♜f5

43 ♖g2 ♜f3

44 ♜xf3 ef

45 ♖g7+ ♘c6

46 ♖f6+ ♘c5

47 ♖e7+

47 c3 f2 48 ♘h2 ♖d6+ 49 ♖xd6+
♘xd6 50 ♘g2 ♘e5 51 ♘xf2 ♘e4
52 ♘e2 h6 53 h4 h5 leaves White
with a lost ending.

47 ... ♘d4

48 ♖f6+ ♘e3

49 ♘h2 ♖e4

50 ♖c3+ ♘e2

51 ♖b2 f2

0-1

Hartston-Portisch
Nice Olympiad 1974

1 e4 e6

2 d4 d5

3 ♘c3 ♔b4

In fact in the game 2 ♘c3 and
3 d4 was played, a harmless feint
by White, though good for some
time on the clock according to Bill
Hartston.

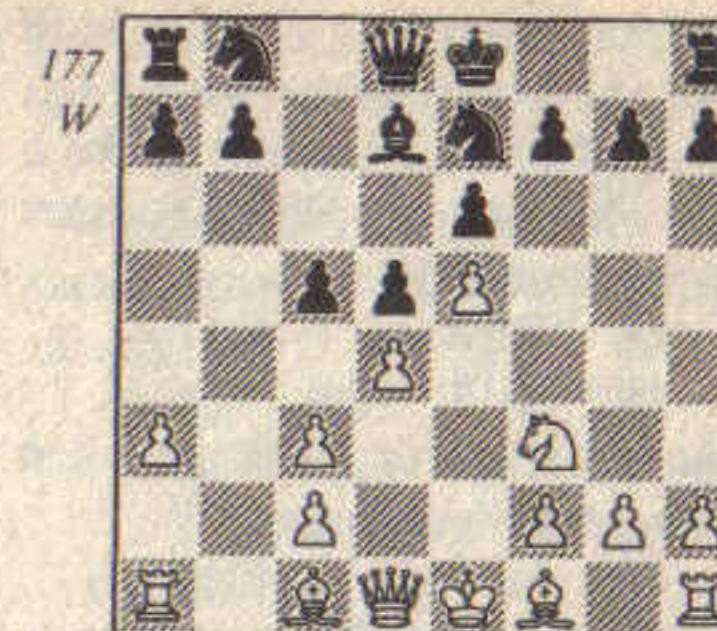
4 e5 c5

5 a3 ♔xc3+

6 bc ♘e7

7 ♘f3 ♔d7 (177)

White can now attempt to take
advantage of this early develop-
ment of Black's QB by capturing
on c5. When Black plays ... ♖c7
to regain the pawn, White will have
♜b1 attacking Black's undefended
b-pawn.



8 a4

White plans to put his QB on
the a3-f8 diagonal.

8 ... ♘bc6

9 ♔e2 ♖c7

10 0-0 b6

11 ♔d3

Moving a piece twice in the
opening is not recommended, but
this move has a point. Black
cannot now castle since this loses
to 12 ♔xh7+. White could have
developed his bishop on d3
immediately but then Black might
have played ... c4, closing the
queenside, followed by castling
queenside.

11 ... h6

12 ♔a3 ♘a5

13 ♜e1

It is surprising that Hartston
did not play his own idea 13 ♘d2.
0-0 14 dc bc 15 ♘b3 as in Hartston-
Markland, Hastings 1971.

13 ... 0-0

14 dc bc

15 ♘d2 ♘g6

16 ♖h5 ♔e8

Black is now preparing to play
... f5 with a good game.

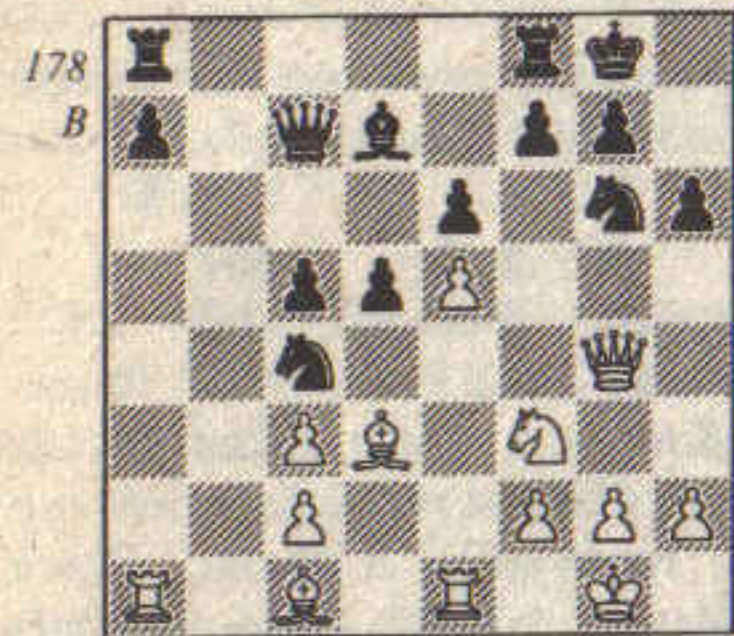
17 ♖e2 ♔xa4

A great surprise. Black could obtain the better game with 17 ... f6 18 ef ♖xf6 but instead grabs a pawn, which allows White to start a kingside attack.

- 18 ♖g4 ♔d7
- 19 ♘f3

Not 19 ♔xg6 fg 20 ♖xg6 when Black's troubles are over.

- 19 ... ♘c4
- 20 ♔c1 (178)



Now if 20 ... ♘cxe5 21 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 22 ♖g3 f6 23 ♔xh6 ♖f7 24 ♔f4 wins for White.

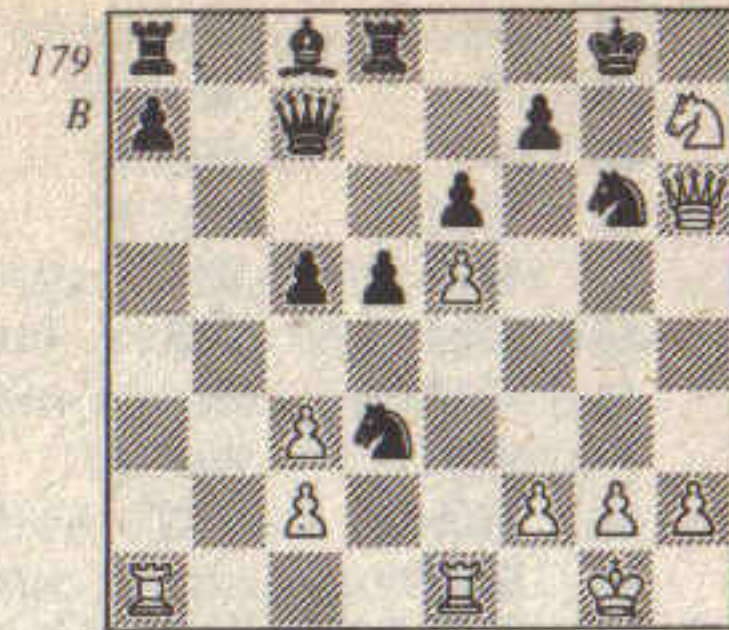
- 20 ... ♔c8

A strange move. 20 ... ♔e8 was possible even though the rook is blocked in.

- 21 ♖h5 ♖d8
- 22 ♔xh6 gh
- 23 ♖xh6 ♘b2
- 24 ♘g5 ♘xd3
- 25 ♘h7 (179)

1-0

This is a cautionary example to players of the Winawer. White can often develop crushing attacks if Black goes pawn hunting on the queenside. Black should concentrate on kingside play with ... f6 or ... f5.

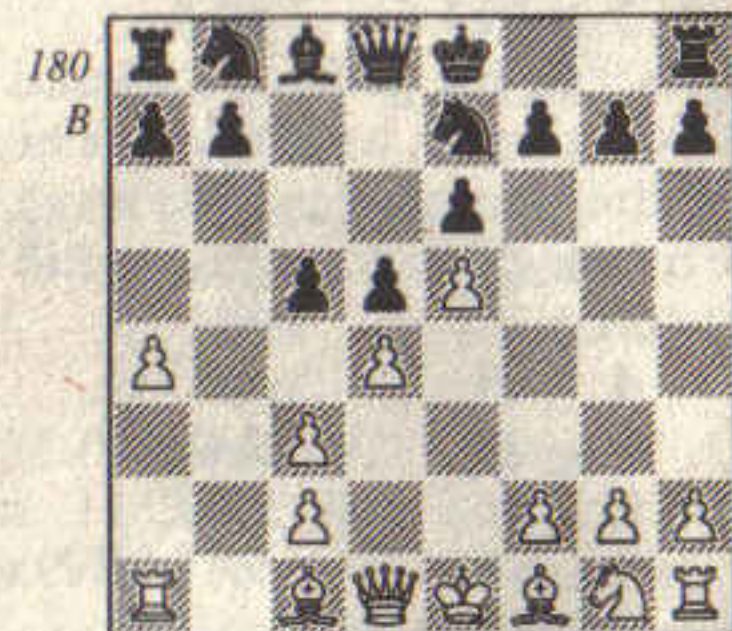


Fischer-Larsen
Candidates' 1/2-final (1) 1971

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♔b4

This was a surprise opening from Larsen, but it seemed that Fischer was unhappy against the French.

- 4 e5 ♘e7
- 5 a3 ♔xc3+
- 6 bc c5
- 7 a4 (180)



Fischer always preferred this move to the pawn snatch 7 ♖g4.

- 7 ... ♘bc6
- 8 ♘f3 ♔d7

The leading exponents of the Winawer, Korchnoi and Uhlmann,

have chosen the lines where Black plays ... ♖a5.

- 9 ♔d3 ♖c7

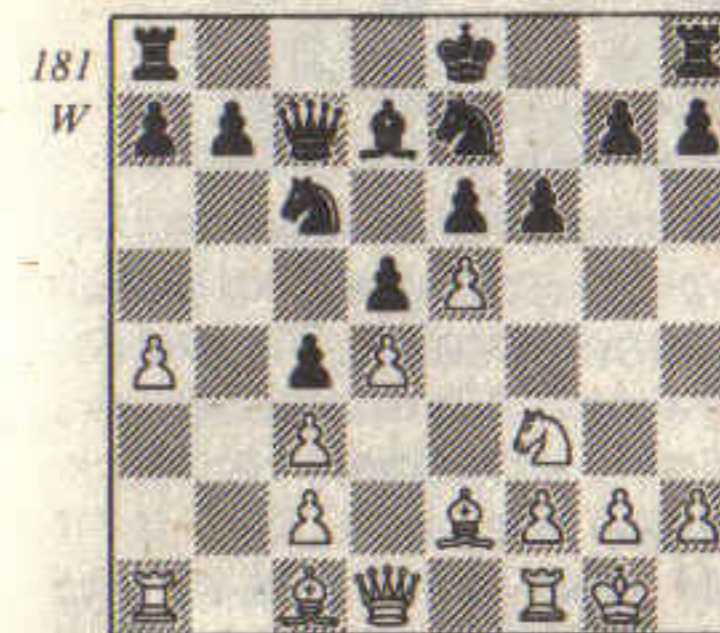
Now 9 ... ♖a5 is ineffective since White does not have to defend his c-pawn. He can play 10 0-0 c4 11 ♔e2 ♖xc3 12 ♔d2 ♖b2 13 ♖b1 followed by 14 ♖xb7 with a dangerous initiative.

- 10 0-0 c4

Larsen embarks on a risky plan. The safer alternative is 10 ... h6 followed by castling short and only then ... f6, recapturing on f6 with the rook.

- 11 ♔e2 f6 (181)

Larsen is following a game Fischer-Mednis, US Championship 1960 which now continued: 12 ♔a3 0-0 13 ♖e1 ♖f7 14 ef gf 15 ♔f1 ♖e8 16 ♘h4 ♘g6 17 ♖h5 ♖g7 18 g3 ♖a5 and Black had the initiative - Mednis won a long game.



- 12 ♖e1

This move is very good. If Black now castles as in Fischer-Mednis, White can capture on f6 and answer the pawn recapture with ♔h6. Then the black rook cannot

go to f7 on account of ♘h4 and ♔h5.

- 12 ... ♘g6

Larsen decides to win the e5 pawn, exposing himself to a fierce attack.

- 13 ♔a3 fe
- 14 de ♘cxe5
- 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5

Capturing with the queen is bad: 15 ... ♖xe5 16 ♔xc4 ♖xc3 17 ♔xd5 0-0-0 18 ♔b3 and White has a powerful pair of bishops.

- 16 ♖d4

A powerful move. The white queen aims at both flanks here and prevents Black from castling queenside for if 16 ... 0-0-0 17 ♖xa7 and the black king position is badly damaged.

- 16 ... ♘g6
- 17 ♔h5 ♘f7

17 ... 0-0-0 18 ♖xa7 b6 19 ♖a8+ ♖b8 20 ♖xb8+ ♘xb8 21 a5 gives White a tremendous attack.

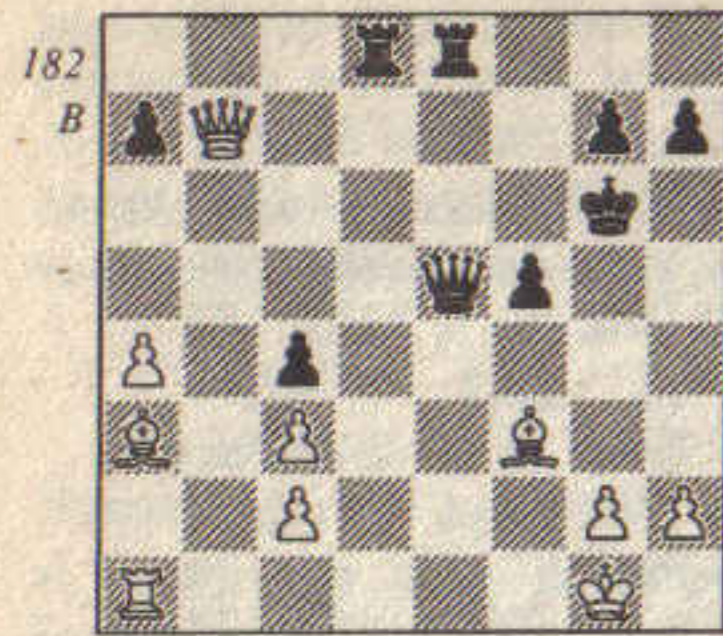
- 18 f4

White has gained a big advantage from the opening. The black king is in the middle of the board and cannot flee.

- 18 ... ♖he8
- 19 f5 ef
- 20 ♖xd5+ ♘f6
- 21 ♔f3 ♘e5

The endgame after 21 ... ♔e6 22 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 23 ♔xb7 is much better for White because he has the two bishops.

- 22 ♖d4 ♘g6
- 23 ♖xe5 ♖xe5
- 24 ♖xd7 ♖ad8
- 25 ♖xb7 (182)



182
B
25 ... ♖e3+
The alternative was 25 ... ♖xc3 26 ♖c6+ ♗g5 27 ♖c1+ f4 28 h4+ ♗f5 29 g4+ fg 30 ♗g2 with winning chances for White. Black cannot now take the rook: 30 ... ♖xa1 31 ♖g4+ ♗e5 32 ♖c5+ ♗d5 33 ♖e3+ gives White a tremendous attack.

26 ♗f1 ♗d2
27 ♖c6+ ♗e6
28 ♖c5!

Superb play. Mate is averted.

28 ... ♗f2+
29 ♗g1- ♗xg2+
30 ♗xg2 ♖d2+
31 ♗h1 ♗xc6
32 ♖xc6 ♖xc3?

32 ... a5 leaves the game finely balanced. Now the white a-pawn becomes the deciding factor.

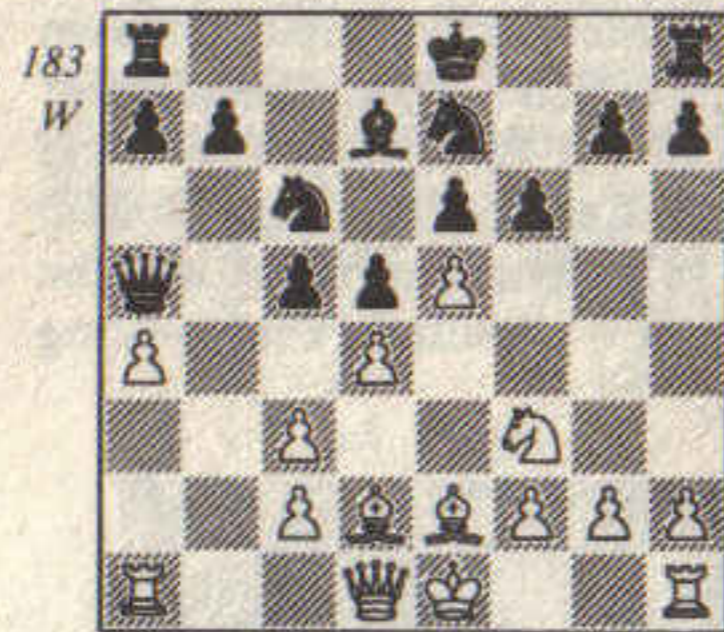
33 ♗g1+ ♗f6
34 ♖xa7 g5
35 ♖b6 ♖xc2
36 a5 ♖b2
37 ♖d8+ ♗e6
38 a6 ♖a3
39 ♖b7 ♖c5
40 ♗b1 c3
41 ♖b6

1-0

Black cannot stop the a-pawn but White can give up his rook for the c-pawn. A brilliant fighting game.

**Spassky-Korchnoi
Candidates' Final (4) 1977**

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♖b4
4 e5 c5
5 a3 ♖xc3+
6 bc ♗e7
7 a4 ♖d7
8 ♗f3 ♖a5
9 ♖d2 ♗bc6
10 ♖e2 f6 (183)

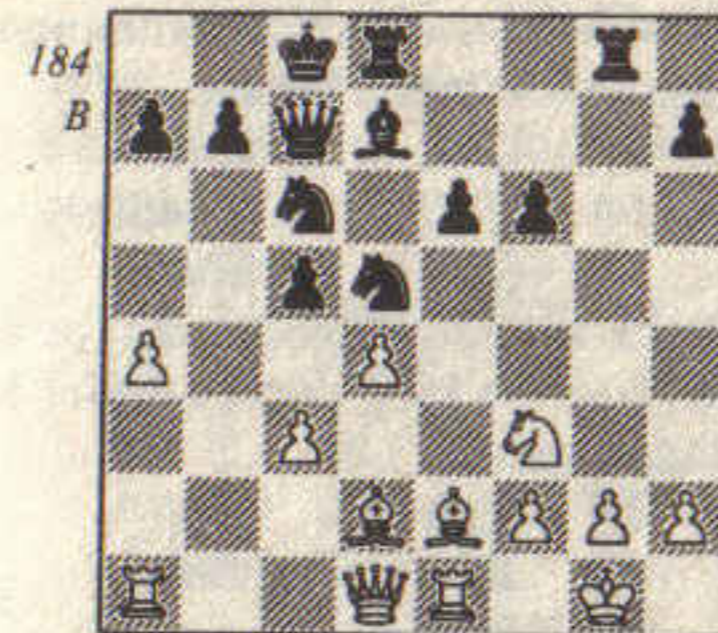


183
W
This immediate attack on the white pawn centre was first played by Korchnoi against Timman at Leeuwarden. Alternatives are not completely satisfactory for Black: 10 ... c4 11 ♗g5 h6 12 ♗h3 0-0-0 13 ♗f4 ♗b8 14 0-0 ♗c8 15 ♗h5 with advantage to White because the knight on h5 holds the black kingside as in Kavalek-Uhlmann, Manila 1976, or 10 ... ♖c7 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♗e1 h6 13 ♖c1 f6 14 ef ♗xf6 15 ♖a3 c4 16 ♗e5, Kurajica-Timman, Skopje 1976.

11 c4 ♖c7
12 ef gf
13 cd ♗xd5
14 c3

Timman-Korchnoi, Leeuwarden 1976 went instead 14 c4 ♗de7 15 dc 0-0-0 16 ♖c3 e5 17 ♖d6 ♗f5 18 ♖xc7+ ♗c7 with equal chances.

14 ... 0-0-0
15 0-0 ♗hg8
16 ♗e1 (184)



16 ... e5!
The struggle sharpens.
17 c4 ♖h3
18 ♖f1 ♗b6

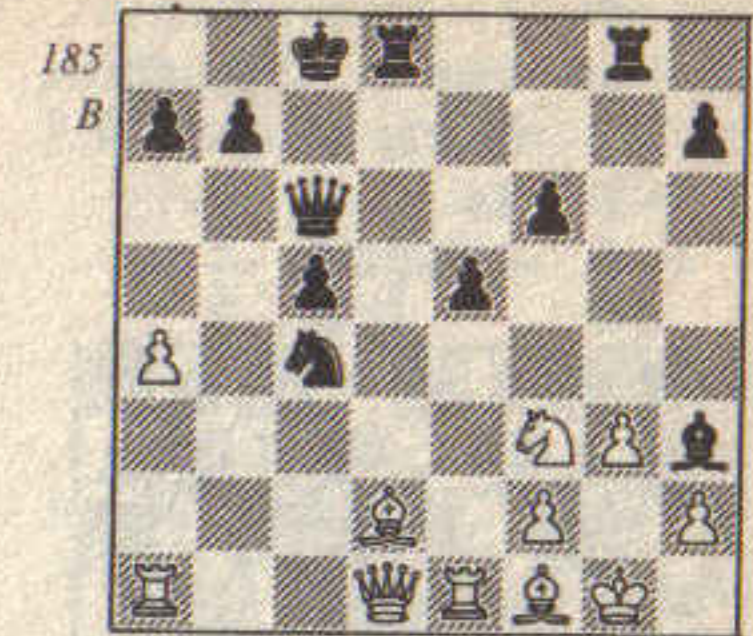
Korchnoi plans a piece sacrifice but best is 18 ... ♗f4! 19 ♖xf4 ef 20 d5 ♖g4 21 ♖b3 ♖xf3 22 ♖xf3 ♗d4 with a positional advantage for Black because of his strong knight.

19 d5 ♗xc4
20 dc ♖xc6
21 g3 (185)

The only move to save White but surprisingly good.

21 ... ♖xf1
22 ♗xf1 e4

The only way to win back the piece. If 22 ... ♗d3 23 ♖c2 ♖d5 24 ♖e3, or 22 ... ♗g4 23 ♖e2 ♗e4



185
B
24 ♖e3.
23 ♖b3 ♖d5
24 ♗ac1
If 24 ♗fd1 ♗e5 is crushing.
24 ... ♗xd2
Not 24 ... ♗e5 25 ♗c5+ ♖xc5 26 ♗c1 and the black pieces are unco-ordinated.

25 ♗xd2 ♖xd2
26 ♗xc5+ ♗b8
27 ♗b1 ♗g7
28 ♗b5 ♗d7
29 ♖e6 e3
30 fe ♗ge7
31 ♖g8+ ♗d8
32 ♖b3 ♗8d7
33 ♖g8+ ♗d8
34 ♖b3

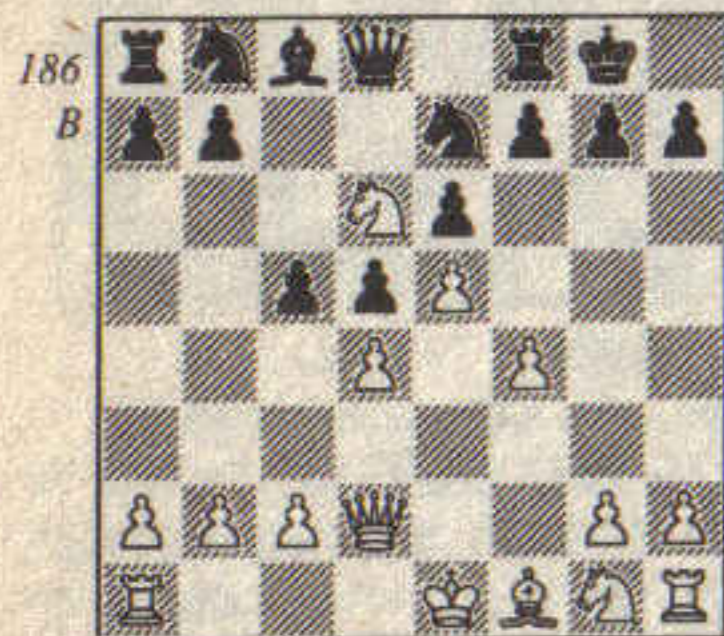
1/2-1/2

**Janosević-Marović
Vrsac 1977**

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♖b4
4 e5 c5
5 ♖d2

A quiet line where White avoids the doubled pawns, but this move should not pose too many problems for Black.

- 5 ... ♗e7
- 6 ♘b5 ♙xd2+
- 7 ♖xd2 0-0
- 8 f4 a6
- 9 ♘d6 (186)



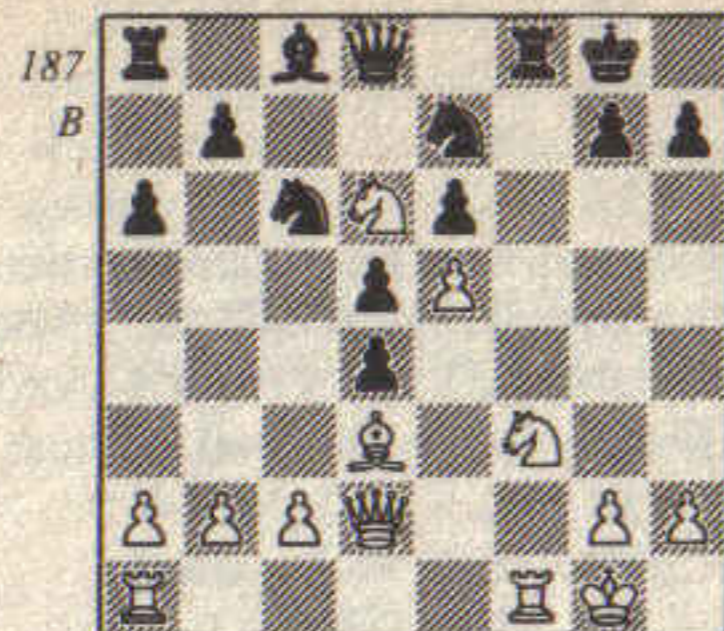
Now White has an imposing knight on d6 which would terrify many players. Black is not in trouble since he can undermine the knight by ... f6. The knight turns out to be a liability.

- 9 ... cd
- 10 ♗f3 ♘bc6
- 11 ♙d3

White is almost forced to sacrifice a pawn: 11 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♗c6 13 ♖d2 f6 and 11 0-0-0 f6 12 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 are both awkward for him.

- 11 ... f6
- 12 0-0 fe
- 13 fe (187)

White was not able to sacrifice on h7: 13 ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 14 ♗g5+ ♗g8 15 ♖e2 ef 16 ♖h5 ♖f6 17 ♖h7+ ♗f8 18 ♖h8+ ♗g8 19 ♗h7+ ♗e7 20 ♘xc8+ ♖xc8 21 ♖xg7+ ♗d6 22 ♗f6 ♖f6 23 ♖xf6 ♘xf6 24 ♖xf4 ♗e4 with a winning endgame for Black.



Now Black invests the exchange to destroy White's centre.

- 13 ... ♖xf3
- 14 ♖xf3 ♗xe5
- 15 ♖h3 ♖xd6

Black has won two pieces for a rook, but his king comes under a vicious assault.

- 16 ♙xh7+ ♗f8
- 17 ♖f1+ ♗e8
- 18 ♖g5

Black's kingside is disappearing but if his king manages to reach safety then his minor pieces will triumph.

- 18 ... ♗d8
- 19 ♖xg7 ♗c7
- 20 c3 dc

A very risky capture. 20 ... d3 is more prudent.

- 21 ♖xc3+ ♗b6
- 22 ♖f7

Perhaps White's strongest plan is simply to advance his h-pawn. Black cannot take the rook because of 22 ... ♘xf7 23 ♖d4+ ♗a5 24 ♖c5+ winning the black queen.

- 22 ... ♗7c6
- 23 ♖b3+ ♗a5
- 24 ♖f2

White should give perpetual

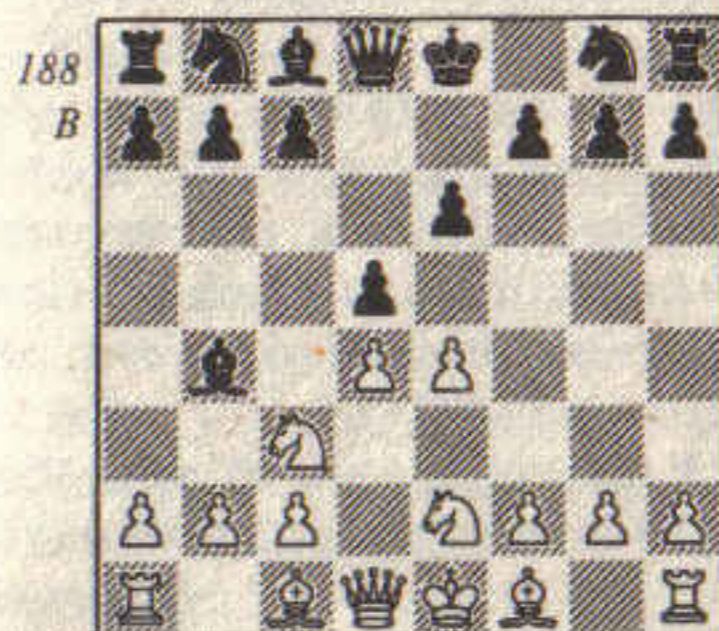
check with 24 ♖a3+.

- 24 ... b5
 - 25 h4 ♖a7
 - 26 ♖g8 ♖c7
 - 27 h5 ♖e7
 - 28 ♙d3 ♖h4
 - 29 ♙e2 ♗d4
 - 30 ♖c3 ♖xc3
 - 31 bc ♗xe2+
 - 32 ♖xe2 ♗g4
- 0-1

A fighting struggle in which White could have taken a draw but decided to go for the whole point.

Campora-Petrosian
Vrsac 1977

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♗c3 ♙b4
- 4 ♗ge2 (188)

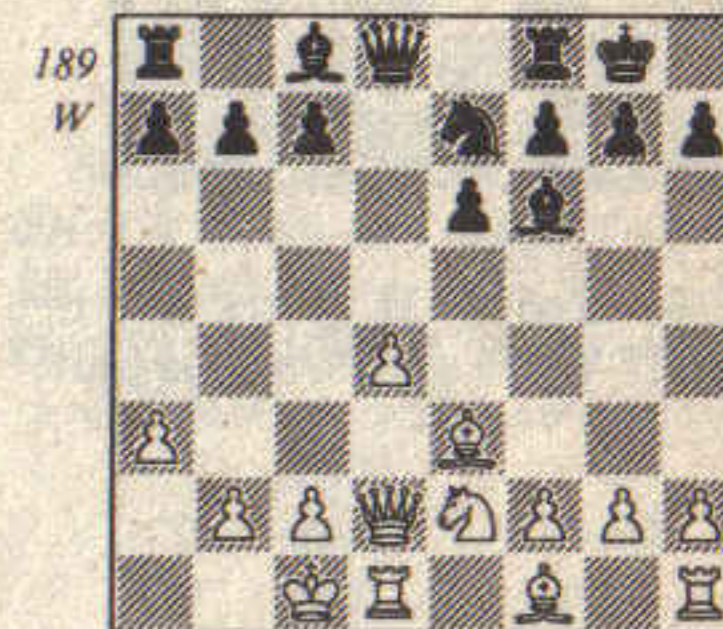


A quiet continuation which avoids the doubled pawns but does not put pressure on the black position.

- 4 ... de
- 5 a3 ♙e7
- 6 ♗xe4 ♗c6
- 7 ♙e3

A passive square for the bishop; on e3 it only protects the d-pawn. 7 ♙f4 was more active and better.

- 7 ... ♗f6
- 8 ♗xf6 ♙xf6
- 9 ♖d2 0-0
- 10 0-0-0 ♗e7 (189)



Black has a comfortable position. His knight can wander to f5 or d5 and he can fianchetto his QB.

- 11 ♗c3 ♗f5
- 12 ♗e4 ♙e7
- 13 ♙g5 b6
- 14 ♙xe7 ♖xe7
- 15 ♗g3 ♗h4

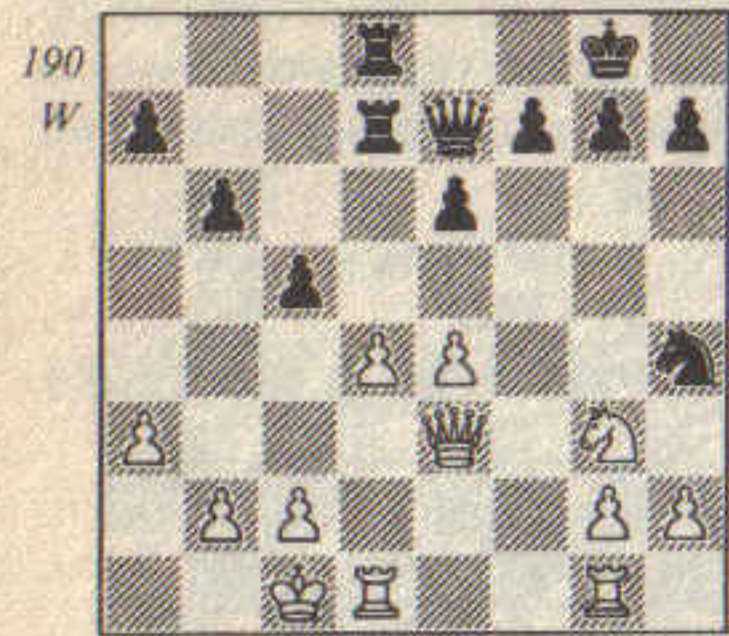
It is admirable how Petrosian restrains the white kingside. White is now tied down to defending g2.

- 16 ♙d3 ♙b7
- 17 f3 ♖ad8
- 18 ♙e4

This leaves White in trouble. 18 ♖f2 was better.

- 18 ... ♙xe4
- 19 fe ♖d7
- 20 ♖hg1 ♖fd8
- 21 ♖e3 c5 (190)

White now has great difficulty in holding on to all of his pawns.

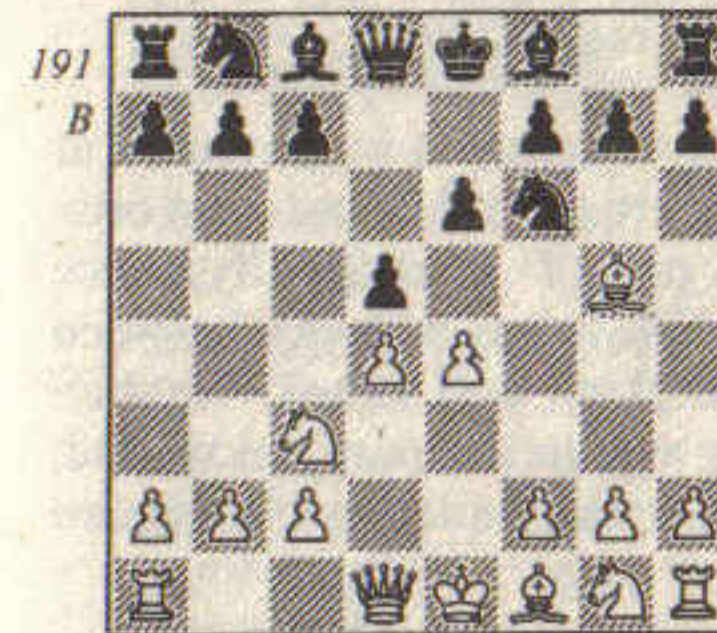


22 c3
 22 dc ♖xd1+ 23 ♖xd1 ♖xd1+
 24 ♗xd1 ♜xc5 and White is hard
 pressed.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 22 | ... | cd |
| 23 | cd | ♖xd4 |
| 24 | ♖xd4 | ♜c5 |
| 25 | ♗b1 | ♜xd4 |
| 26 | ♜xd4 | ♖xd4 |
| 27 | ♖c1 | g6 |
| 28 | ♖c7 | ♗xg2 |
| 29 | ♖xa7 | f5 |
| 30 | ef | ef |
| 31 | ♗c2 | f4 |
| 32 | ♗e2 | ♗e1+ |
| 33 | ♗c3 | ♖d3+ |
| 34 | ♗c4 | f3 |
| 35 | ♗f4 | f2 |
- 0-1

15 Classical Variation

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♗c3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♖g5 (191) | |



Black can now defend against the threat of 5 e5 with 4 ... ♖e7 which we will look at in this chapter. 4 ... ♖b4 (MacCutcheon) and 4 ... de (Rubinstein/Burn) will be covered in later chapters.

After 4 ... ♖e7 White normally advances in the centre with 5 e5. Then Black has a choice of knight moves: 5 ... ♗e4, 5 ... ♗fd7 and 5 ... ♗g8. We shall consider all of these moves.

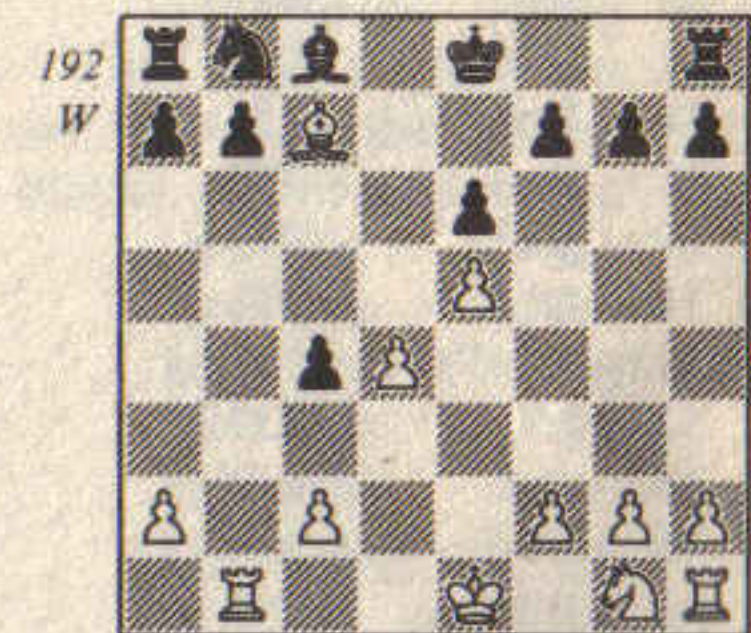
Spassky-Byrne Moscow 1975

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♗c3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♖g5 | ♖e7 |

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 5 | e5 | ♗e4 |
| 6 | ♖xe7 | ♗xc3 |

The alternative for Black is 6 ... ♜xe7 7 ♗xe4 de 8 ♜e2 b6 9 0-0-0 ♗b7 10 g3 c5 11 ♖g2 ♗c6 12 dc ♜g5 13 ♗b1 ♜xe5 14 ♖xe4 ♜xc5 15 ♗f3 with a slight advantage.

- | | | |
|----|------|----------|
| 7 | ♖xd8 | ♗xd1 |
| 8 | ♖xc7 | ♗xb2 |
| 9 | ♖b1 | ♗c4 |
| 10 | ♖xc4 | dc (192) |



The endgame has already been reached. Black has an exposed pawn on c4 and White can tie him down by attacking this pawn.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 11 | ♗f3 | ♗e6 |
| 12 | ♖d6 | b6 |
| 13 | ♗d2 | ♖b7 |
| 14 | ♗c3 | ♖c8 |
| 15 | ♗d2 | f5 |
| 16 | f3 | ♗f7 |
| 17 | g4 | |

White is not yet able to annex the black c-pawn so he concentrates instead on opening lines towards Black's king.

17 ... fg

This always gives White chances of penetrating down the open f-file. 17 ... g6 is better.

- 18 fg ♖e7
- 19 ♖hf1+ ♜e8
- 20 ♙xe7 ♜xe7
- 21 ♖f4 ♖hf8
- 22 ♖xf8 ♜xf8
- 23 ♖f1 ♙c6
- 24 ♖e3 b5

Black has protected c4 but now White breaks open the queenside for his rook.

- 25 a4 ba
- 26 ♖b4 ♜e7
- 27 ♖xc4 ♜d7
- 28 ♖c5 g5
- 29 ♖c4 ♖f8
- 30 ♖a5 ♖f3+
- 31 ♜b4 ♖f2
- 32 ♖xa7+ ♜d8
- 33 c3 ♖xh2
- 34 ♜c5 ♙d5
- 35 ♖b6 ♙b3
- 36 ♜d6 ♜e8
- 37 c4 h5
- 38 ♖e7+ ♜d8
- 39 ♖h7 ♜e8
- 40 ♜xe6 ♜d8

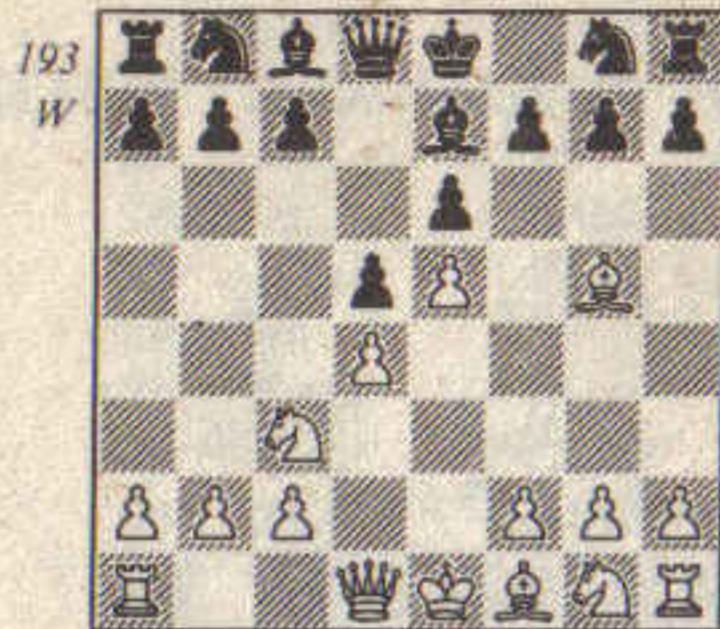
1-0

A nice positional game by Spassky, illustrating the difficulty of this endgame for Black.

Frankfurt Variation: 5 ... ♖g8

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5

- 3 ♖c3 ♖f6
- 4 ♙g5 ♙e7
- 5 e5 ♖g8 (193)



This was played by Tarrasch at Frankfurt in 1887 and has only been played occasionally since then. White has a choice between 6 h4, 6 ♙xe7 and 6 ♙e3. We shall follow a game Ahman-Heidenfeld, 9th Correspondence Olympiad 1977.

- 6 ♙e3 b6

A very common positional theme in the French. Black prepares for an exchange of light-squared bishops.

- 7 h4 h5
- 8 ♙e2 g6
- 9 ♖f3 ♙a6
- 10 ♖d2 ♙xe2
- 11 ♖xe2 ♖c6

11 ... c5 is natural but it is a bad mistake, opening up the position when White is far ahead in development. White should continue with 12 c4 cd 13 ♖fxd4 dc 14 ♖c2 ♖d5 15 ♖f4 ♖xe5 16 0-0-0 with a decisive advantage, Mikenas-Vistanetskis, Lithuania 1947.

12 c3
This seems a little timid. White

should play 12 0-0 when he can still break with c4.

- 12 ... ♖d7
- 13 ♖f4 ♜f8
- 14 0-0 ♜g7
- 15 ♖c2 ♖h6
- 16 g3 ♖f5
- 17 ♖ad1 ♖ad8
- 18 b3

White is poised for c4 but now Black is well placed to meet this threat.

- 18 ... ♖a5
- 19 ♙c1 c5
- 20 dc bc
- 21 c4 d4
- 22 ♖d3 ♖c6
- 23 ♙g5 ♖b4
- 24 ♖xb4 cb
- 25 ♙xe7 ♖xe7
- 26 ♖d3 ♖c5
- 27 ♖d2 ♖d7
- 28 ♖fd1 ♖hd8
- 29 ♖f4 a5
- 30 ♖e1

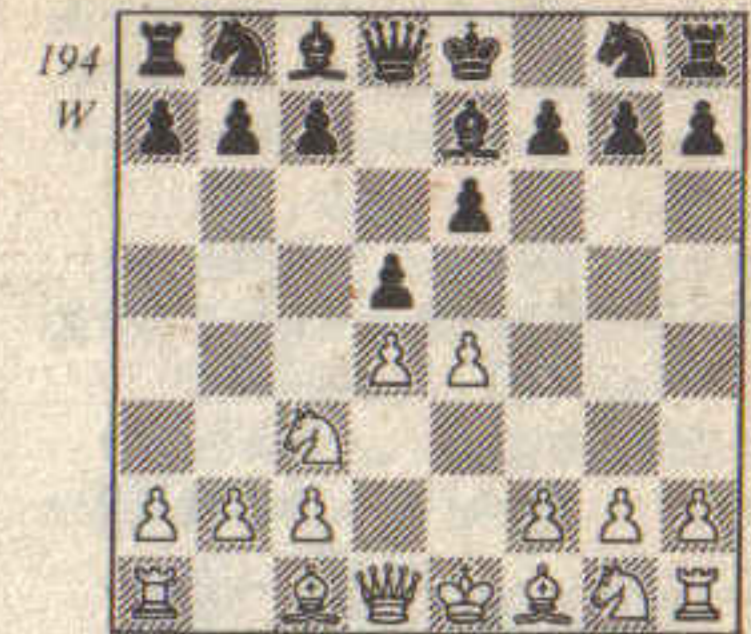
White is planning f3 and g4 but Black is quick to respond.

- 30 ... ♖e7
 - 31 ♖f3 ♖f5
 - 32 ♖fd3 ♖e7
- ½-½

Worthy of inclusion in this chapter is Romanishin's idea 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖c3 ♙e7 when 4 e5 leads to positions similar to the Frankfurt Variation.

Velimirović-Romanishin
Tallinn 1977

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♖c3 ♙e7 (194)



Pioneered by Romanishin. Black waits for White to commit himself.

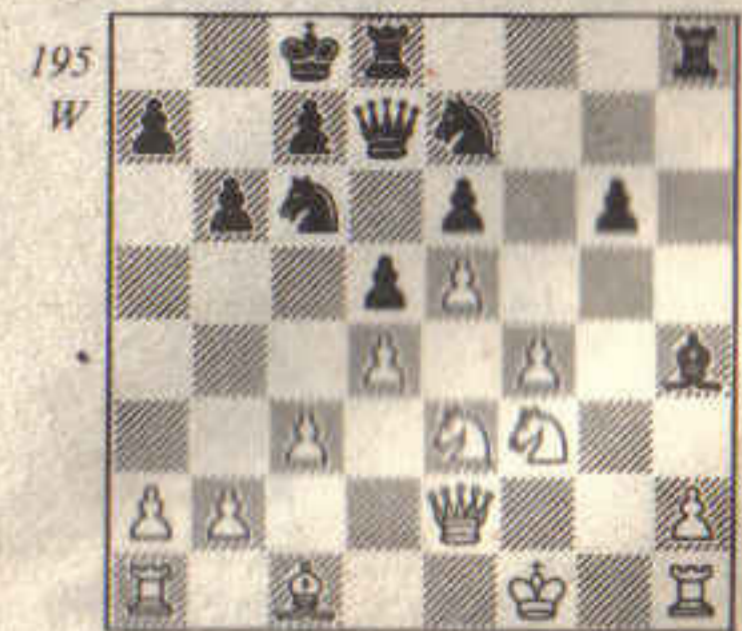
- 4 e5 b6
- 5 g4?!

Possibly playable if Black had castled, but here just a weakness.

- 5 ... ♙a6
- 6 ♙xa6 ♖xa6
- 7 f4 h5

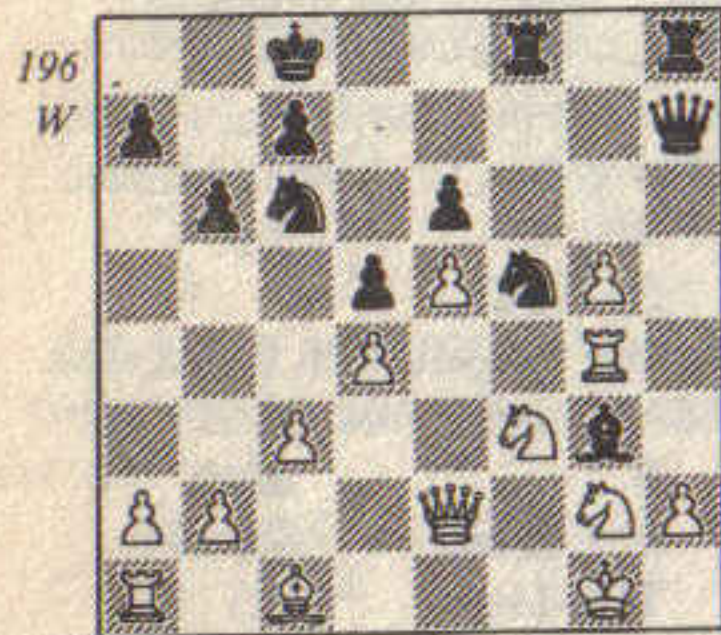
This breaks up White's kingside pawn formation as 8 g5 g6 blocks the kingside completely.

- 8 gh ♙h4+
- 9 ♜f1 ♖e7
- 10 ♖e2 ♖b8
- 11 ♖d1 ♖bc6
- 12 c3 ♖d7
- 13 ♖e3 g6
- 14 hg fg
- 15 ♖f3 0-0-0 (195)



Black is ahead in development and his pieces are well placed to start an attack on the white king.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----------|
| 16 | ♖g1 | ♗df8 |
| 17 | ♖g4 | g5 |
| 18 | ♘g2 | ♘f5 |
| 19 | ♚g1 | ♖h7 |
| 20 | fg | ♙g3 (196) |



The point of Black's brilliant play. 21 hg ♖h1+ 22 ♚f2 ♗h2 is decisive.

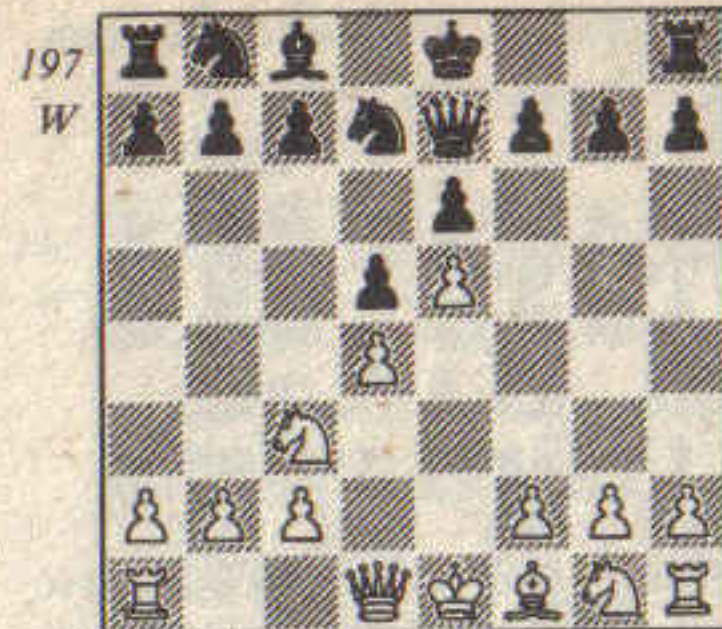
- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 21 | ♙f4 | ♖h5 |
| 22 | ♗xg3 | ♘xg3 |
| 23 | ♙xg3 | ♗xf3 |
| 24 | ♗e1 | ♗xg3 |
| 25 | hg | ♖h2+ |

0-1

After 26 ♚f2 ♗f8+ 27 ♚e3 ♖xg3+ 28 ♚d2 ♗f2 wins the queen.

**Rubinstein-Levenfish
Carlsbad 1911**

- | | | |
|---|------|------------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♘f6 |
| 4 | ♙g5 | ♙e7 |
| 5 | e5 | ♘fd7 |
| 6 | ♙xe7 | ♖xe7 (197) |



The basic position of the Classical French. White has more space for his pieces and the black QB is very limited in its movements. White has a firm grip on the centre; Black can remove the white pawns on d4 and e5 by ... c5 and ... f6 but then White can often entrench his pieces on d4 and e5. Black's only chances reside in opening the c- and f-files and sometimes in an attack on the white king if White castles queen-side.

7 ♖d2

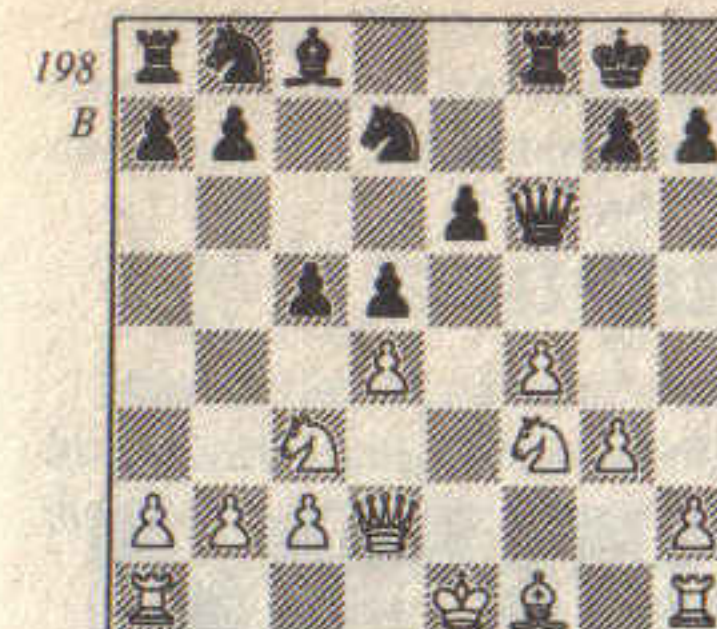
White prepares to castle queen-side. This move also enables him to move his QN since ... ♖b4 is prevented.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 7 | ... | 0-0 |
| 8 | f4 | c5 |
| 9 | ♘f3 | f6 |
| 10 | ef | ♖xf6 |

Probably better is 10 ... ♘xf6 followed by ... ♘c6 and ... ♙d7, but White is in command.

11 g3 (198)

Logical play by White. Black is saddled with a backward e-pawn and e5 and d4 are firmly in White's control.



- | | | |
|----|-------|-----|
| 11 | ... | ♘c6 |
| 12 | 0-0-0 | a6 |
| 13 | ♙g2 | ♘b6 |

If 13 ... b5 14 dc ♘xc5 15 ♘xd5! ed 16 ♖xd5+ ♘e6 17 ♘g5! wins for White, so Black must protect d5 first.

- | | | |
|----|------|--------|
| 14 | ♗he1 | ♘c4 |
| 15 | ♖f2 | b5 |
| 16 | dc | ♘xb2?! |

This does not achieve the

desired breakthrough.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 17 | ♚xb2 | b4 |
| 18 | ♘d4 | bc+ |
| 19 | ♚a1 | ♘xd4 |
| 19 ... | ♙d7 | loses to 20 ♘xe6! |
| ♙xe6 | 21 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 | 22 ♙xd5. |
| 20 | ♖xd4 | ♗b8 |
| Better is 20 ... | ♙d7 | 21 ♗e3 with |
| a big plus for White. | | |

- | | | |
|----|------|----|
| 21 | ♗e3 | g5 |
| 22 | ♗xc3 | |

Not 22 fg ♖f2!.

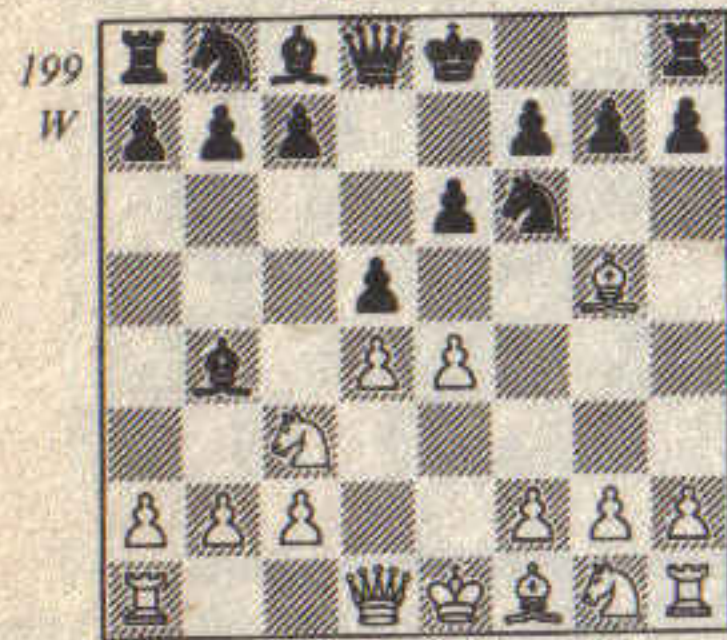
- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 22 | ... | gf |
| 23 | gf | ♙d7 |
| 24 | c6 | ♖xd4 |
| 25 | ♗xd4 | ♙e8 |
| 26 | ♙h3 | ♗f6 |
| 27 | c7 | ♗c8 |
| 28 | ♗xd5 | ♗xc7 |
| 29 | ♙xe6+ | |

1-0

A fine positional game.

16 MacCutcheon Variation

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♘f6
- 4 ♙g5 ♙b4 (199)

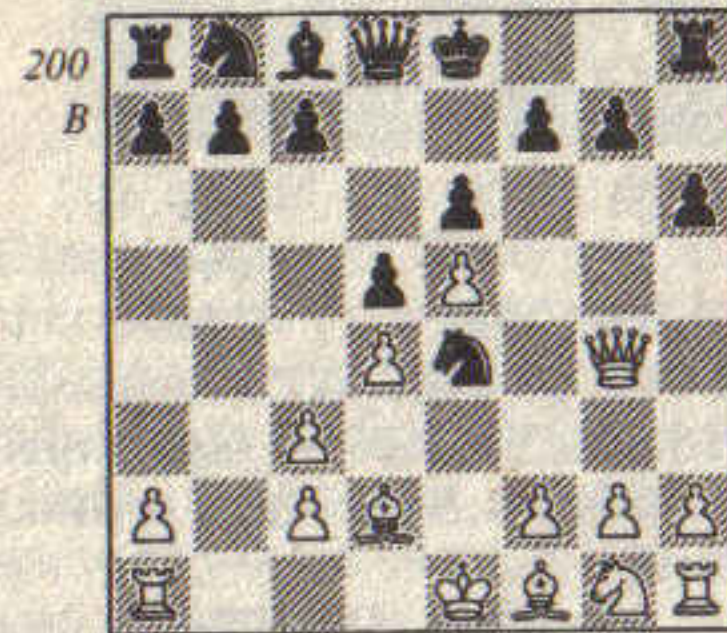


This tactical line was very popular in the last century, but now it is regarded as a risky opening to play.

Pasman-Murei Beersheva 1978

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♘f6
- 4 ♙g5 ♙b4
- 5 e5 h6
- 6 ♙d2 ♙xc3
- 7 bc ♘e4
- 8 ♖g4 (200)

This attack on the g-pawn is awkward for Black. He must either weaken his kingside dark squares with ... g6 or displace his



king with ... ♗f8.

- 8 ... g6
- 9 ♙d3 ♙d7

An interesting move. If White accepts the pawn with 10 ♙xe4 de 11 ♖xe4 then Black gets fine play on the light squares with 11 ... ♙c6. Pasman correctly ignores this and gets on with his kingside play.

10 h4!

Kuindzhi-Murei, Daugavpils 1974 went instead 10 ♙c1 c5 11 ♘e2 ♖a5 12 f3 ♘xc3 with an unclear position.

- 10 ... c5
- 11 h5 g5
- 12 f4

White has a slight advantage - his pawn thrusts are beginning to bite.

- 12 ... ♘xd2
- 13 ♗xd2

Although White has lost the right to castle, his king is in no danger in the middle of the board.

- 13 ... c4
- 14 ♙e2 f5
- 15 ef e5

Murei tries to confuse the issue but White's kingside advantage is decisive.

- 16 ♖f3 e4
- 17 ♖g3 ♖xf6
- 18 fg ♖xg5+
- 19 ♖xg5 hg
- 20 ♘h3 ♖g8
- 21 h6 ♙xh3
- 22 ♖xh3 ♘d7
- 23 ♖f1 ♗e7
- 24 ♖f5 ♘f6
- 25 h7 ♖h8
- 26 ♖xg5 ♖af8
- 27 ♖e5+ ♗f7

Or 27 ... ♘d6 28 ♖f5 ♗e7 29 ♖h6 winning.

- 28 ♙h5+ ♗g7
- 29 ♖g5+ ♗h6
- 30 ♖g6+ ♗xh7
- 31 ♖gg3! ♘g8
- 32 ♙g6+

1-0

After 32 ... ♗g7 33 ♙e4+ wins.

Shabanov-Mnatskanian USSR Ch 1/2-final 1971

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♘f6
- 4 ♙g5 ♙b4
- 5 e5 h6
- 6 ♙d2 ♙xc3
- 7 bc ♘e4
- 8 ♖g4 ♗f8

The alternative to 8 ... g6. The kingside is not so weak, but Black's KR will be out of play for a long time.

- 9 ♙d3 ♘xd2
- 10 ♗xd2 c5

Black may be able to reach a tenable ending after 10 ... ♖g5 11 ♖xg5 hg 12 f4 gf 13 ♖f1 ♘c6 14 ♘h3 ♙d7 15 ♖xf4 ♗e7, but this line is very passive and White has all the chances.

- 11 ♘f3 ♖a5
- 12 h4 ♘c6
- 13 ♖f4

Now after 13 ... cd 14 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 15 ♖xd4 ♙d7 16 ♖h3 ♖c8 17 ♖g3 ♙b5 18 a4 ♙xd3 19 cd White has the advantage since Black is playing without his KR. So Black chooses an innocent developing move which surprisingly allows White to win at once.

- 13 ... b6??
- 14 ♘g5!

A thunderbolt.

14 ... ♘d8 15 ♘xf7 ♘xf7 16 ♙g6 and wins.

15 hg ♖xh1

After 15 ... ♖g8 16 g6 ♘d8 17 gf ♘xf7 18 ♙g6 wins for White.

16 g6 ♗e7

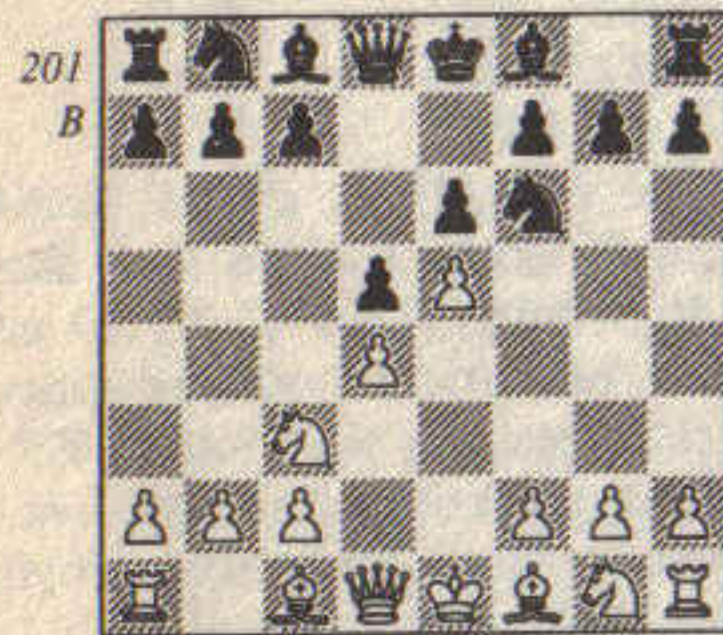
If 16 ... f5 17 ef ♖xa1 18 ♖d6+ ♗g8 19 f7+ ♗h8 20 ♖f8/h2 mate.

- 17 ♖xh1 ♘d8
- 18 ♖h7 cd
- 19 gf dc+
- 20 ♗d1 ♘xf7
- 21 ♖xg7

1-0

17 Steinitz Variation

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♘f6
4 e5 (201)

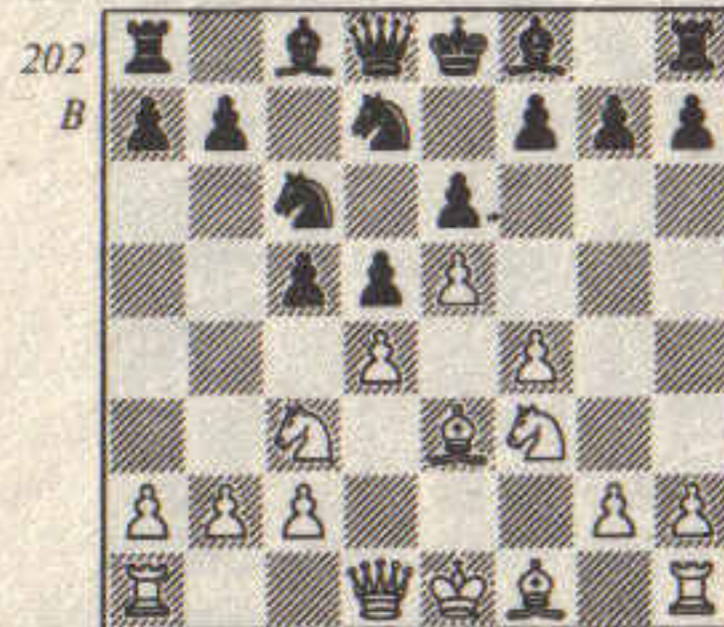


This is a good alternative to the more recognised 4 ♘g5. White goes for a big pawn centre with f4, similar to some lines of the Tarrasch. Black must again react vigorously. Black can play 4 ... ♘e4 which may lead to positions similar to the Tarrasch after 3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘e4. We will concentrate on the main line with 4 ... ♘fd7.

Tatai-Unzicker
Banco di Roma 1982

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♘f6
4 e5 ♘fd7
5 f4 c5
6 ♘f3 ♘c6

- 7 ♘e3! (202)



The critical position. Black must decide how to assail White's centre.

- 7 ... cd

Alternatives are 7 ... a6 and 7 ... ♖b6.

- 8 ♘xd4 ♘xd4
9 ♘xd4 ♘b8

Black manoeuvres his knight to the good square c6.

- 10 ♘d3 ♘c6
11 ♘f2 ♘e7?

This is too passive. Black can retain equality with 11 ... ♖a5 12 0-0 ♘c5, as in Boleslavsky-Tröger, Hamburg 1960.

- 12 0-0 0-0
13 ♘b5

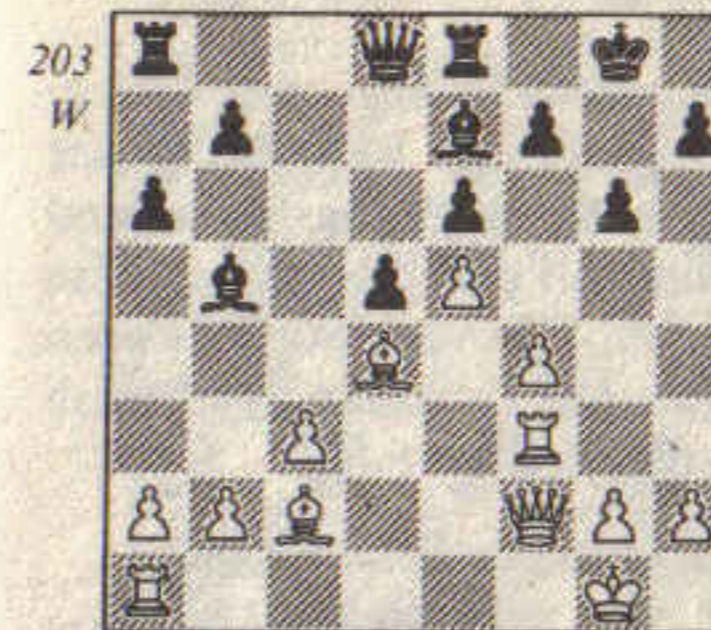
White is in tune with the position and plans to control d4.

- 13 ... ♘d7
14 c3 a6
15 ♘d4 ♘xd4

- 16 ♘xd4 ♖c8

A mysterious queen move - Black should fight with ... f5. White already has a tight grip on the position.

- 17 ♖h5 g6
18 ♖h6 ♗e8
19 ♗f3 ♘f8
20 ♖h4 ♘e7
21 ♖f2 ♘b5
22 ♘c2 ♖d8 (203)



White now lets loose.

- 23 f5! ef
24 ♗xf5 ♗f8

Of course 24 ... gf 25 ♖xf5 is hopeless for Black.

- 25 ♖f4

White is now threatening 26 e6 and 27 ♖e5.

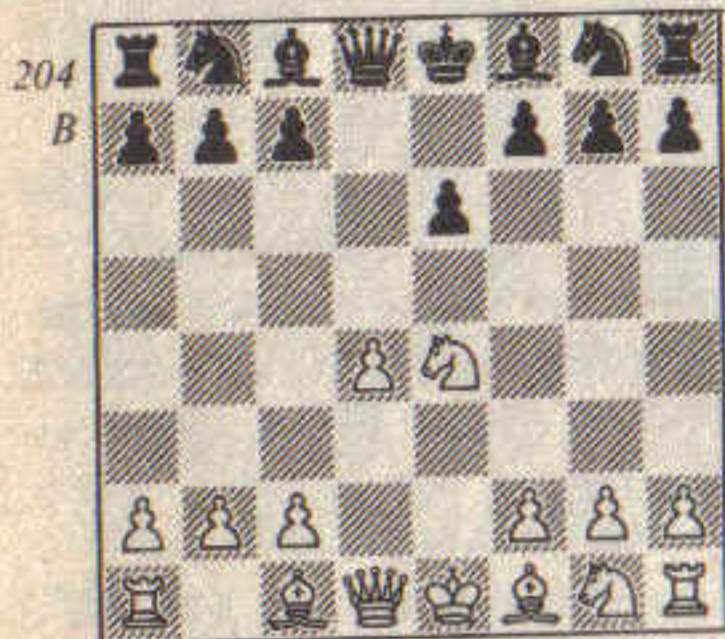
- 25 ... f6
26 ef gf
27 ♖g5+ ♗f7
28 ♖g7+ ♗e8
29 ♗e1 ♗f7
30 ♖g8+ ♗f8
31 ♖xh7

1-0

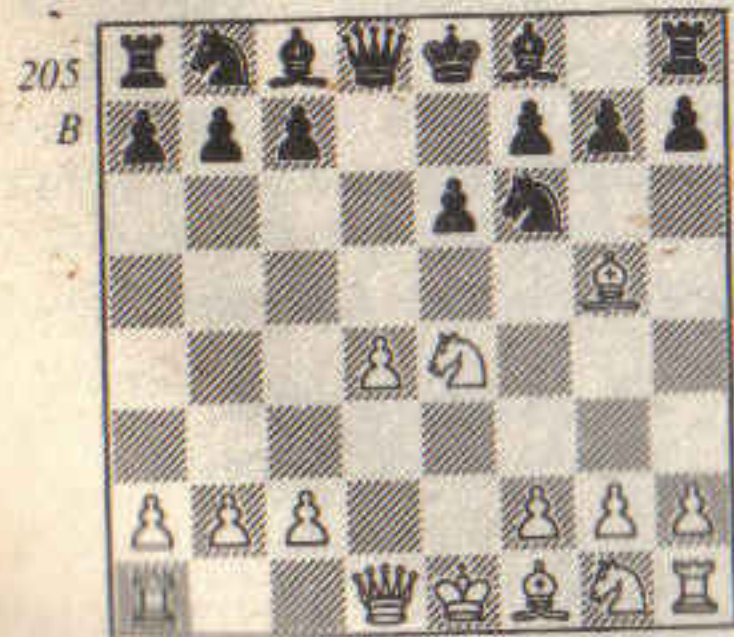
After 31 ... ♗f7 32 ♖g8+ ♗f8 33 ♖g6+ wins. An illustration of the grip that White can get in this line. Black must fight for control of d4 or e5 - 11 ... ♖a5 is satisfactory.

18 Rubinstein and Burn Variations

I am considering these together as they are very similar. The Rubinstein Variation arises after 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 de 4 ♗xe4 (204)



The Burn Variation occurs after 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 ♘g5 de 5 ♗xe4 (205)



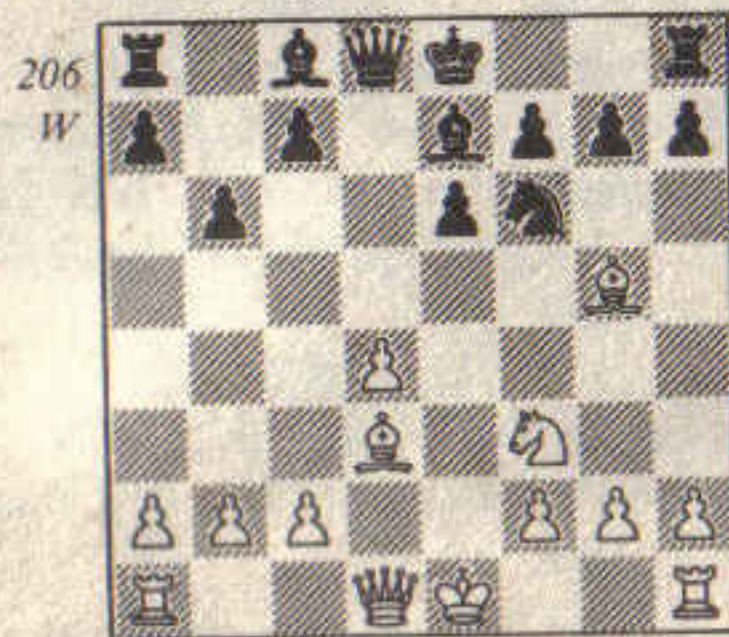
These two variations lead to a different game from most variations of the French. Instead of a blocked centre we have a half open

position in which White has a small centre - pawn on the fourth rank against pawn on the third rank.

Because of his greater space, White naturally has the easier game, but Black has a sound position and can play to equalise with ... c5. This variation has been a favourite of Petrosian and British Master P.H.Clarke.

Schlechter-Rubinstein San Sebastian 1912

- | | | |
|---|------|----------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♗c3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♘g5 | de |
| 5 | ♗xe4 | ♗bd7 |
| 6 | ♗f3 | ♘e7 |
| 7 | ♗xf6 | ♗xf6 |
| 8 | ♘d3 | b6 (206) |

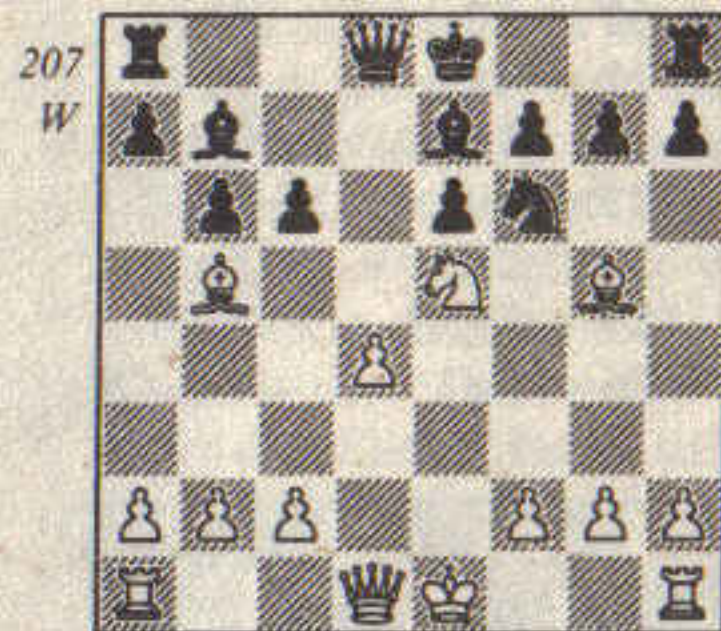


This is a daring move but well

calculated. White has many ways of trying to exploit the temporary weakness on the queenside light squares, but they promise no more than equality.

9 ♗e5
If 9 ♘b5 ♘d7 or 9 ♘xf6 ♘xf6 10 ♘e4 ♗b8 11 ♗e5 ♘xe5 and in both cases White has no advantage. 9 ♗e2 is probably best.

- | | | |
|----|------|----------|
| 9 | ... | ♘b7 |
| 10 | ♘b5+ | c6 (207) |



A surprising tactical point. 11 ♗xc6 loses to 11 ... ♗d5 and 11 ♗f3 ♗d5 12 ♘xf6 cb 13 ♘g7 (13 ♗xd5 is better) 13 ... ♗xf3 is good for Black as in Spielmann-Rubinstein, San Sebastian 1911. The retreat 11 ♘e2 is best although Black then has an easy game.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 11 | ♘xc6+ | ♘xc6 |
| 12 | ♗xc6 | ♗d5 |
| 13 | ♗e5 | ♗xg2 |
| 14 | ♗f3 | ♗xf3 |
| 15 | ♗xf3 | ♗c8 |

Now Black must regain his pawn with the better game.

Black has a better ending because White's pawns are weaker, being divided into three groups

against Black's two groups.

- | | | |
|----|-------|--|
| 16 | 0-0-0 | |
|----|-------|--|

A mistake. White should play 16 c3 followed by a4-a5, trying to obtain play on the queenside.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 16 | ... | ♗d5 |
| 17 | ♘xe7 | ♗xe7 |
| 18 | ♗b1 | ♗hd8 |
| 19 | ♗hg1 | g6 |
| 20 | ♗e5 | ♗b4 |
| 21 | c3 | ♗c6 |
| 22 | ♗xc6+ | ♗xc6 |

White should not have allowed the exchange of knights since now the black rooks can come over to attack the weak white kingside pawns. 22 ♗g4, with the idea of 23 ♗e3, is best.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 23 | ♗d3 | ♗d5 |
| 24 | ♗h3 | h5 |
| 25 | ♗f3 | e5 |
| 26 | de | ♗xe5 |
| 27 | ♗e3 | ♗xe3 |
| 28 | fe | ♗e6 |
| 29 | ♗e1 | ♗f6 |
| 30 | ♗e2 | ♗e6 |
| 31 | ♗c2 | ♗e5 |
| 32 | c4 | ♗e4 |
| 33 | b4 | g5 |
| 34 | ♗c3 | g4 |
| 35 | c5 | h4 |
| 36 | ♗g2 | ♗g6 |
| 37 | ♗c4 | g3 |
| 38 | hg | hg |
| 39 | ♗b5 | bc |
| 40 | bc | ♗f3 |
| 41 | ♗g1 | a6+ |

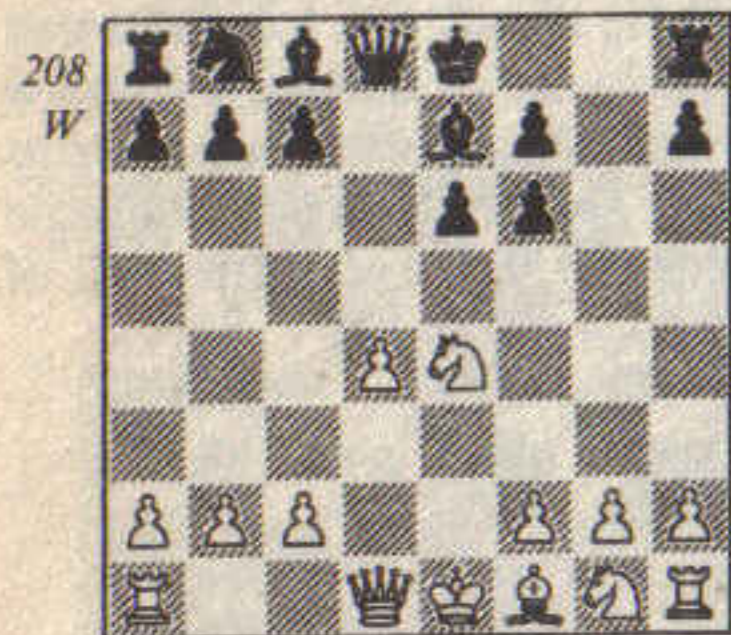
0-1

The white e-pawn can go no further and the white rook must await its death. Black can also play more aggressively in many

lines of these variations by recapturing on f6 with the g-pawn, as in the following game.

Kaplan-Bronstein
Hastings 1975

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♘f6
- 4 ♗g5 de
- 5 ♗xe4 ♗e7
- 6 ♗xf6 gf (208)



Now Black has a bad pawn structure but compensation in the form of the two bishops and the half open g-file.

- 7 ♘f3 ♘d7
- 8 ♖d2 c5
- 9 d5 f5

A complex position. White should now retreat his knight with a slight advantage.

- 10 de fe4
- 11 ed+ ♖xd7

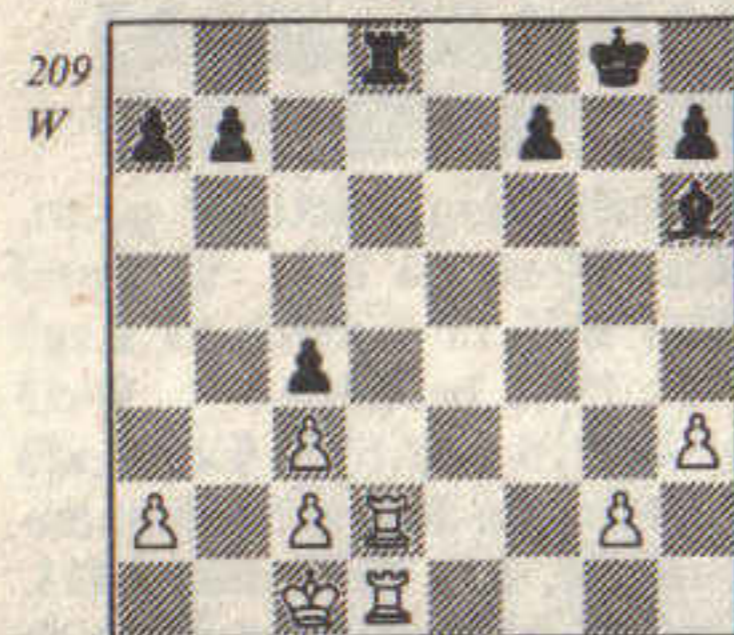
- 12 ♖c3 0-0
 - 13 ♘d2 ♖f5!
- Now all of Bronstein's pieces stream out.

- 14 0-0-0 ♖xf2
- 15 ♗xe4 ♖f4+
- 16 ♘d2 ♗g4
- 17 ♗e1 ♗g5!

This pin spells disaster for White.

- 18 ♗d3 ♗ae8
- 19 ♗ef1 ♖e3
- 20 h3 ♗e2
- 21 ♗f5 ♗h6
- 22 ♗xe2 ♖xc3
- 23 bc ♗xe2
- 24 ♗d5 ♗xd2!
- 25 ♗xd2 ♗d8
- 26 ♗d1 c4! (209)

0-1



White is in zugzwang and soon runs out of pawn moves, when he has to move his king and lose a piece.

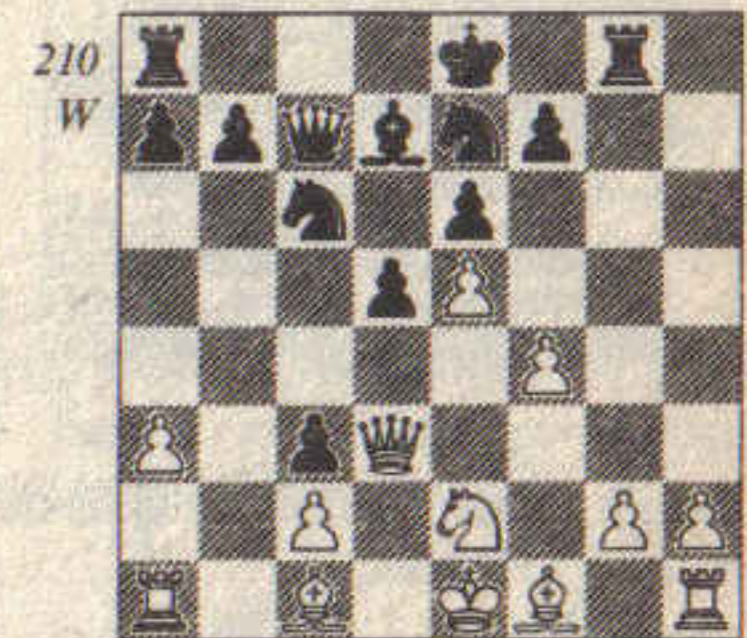
19 Recent Illustrative Games

Since the first edition (1983), there have been considerable developments in the French Defence. Therefore it seems appropriate to examine these by means of complete games. Players of the white side have reverted back to 3 ♘c3 and are meeting the Winawer with an early ♖g4. Recently White has had some success in this line and Black must know the variation in detail in order to survive. Thus we shall commence with the Winawer before looking at other variations.

Short-Kosten
Hastings 1988/89

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘c3 ♗b4
- 4 e5 c5
- 5 a3 ♗xc3+
- 6 bc ♘e7
- 7 ♖g4 ♖c7
- 8 ♖xg7 ♗g8
- 9 ♖xh7 cd
- 10 ♘e2 ♗bc6
- 11 f4 ♗d7
- 12 ♖d3 dc (210)

This position was reached in Spassky-Korchnoi (page 12) and Bronstein-Uhlmann (page 84).



Nigel Short now plays one of the two captures of the Black pawn on c3.

- 13 ♖xc3 ♘f5

Black increases his play against the central dark squares. The knight is well posted here but Black must be careful that it is not driven away by White playing g4 at some point.

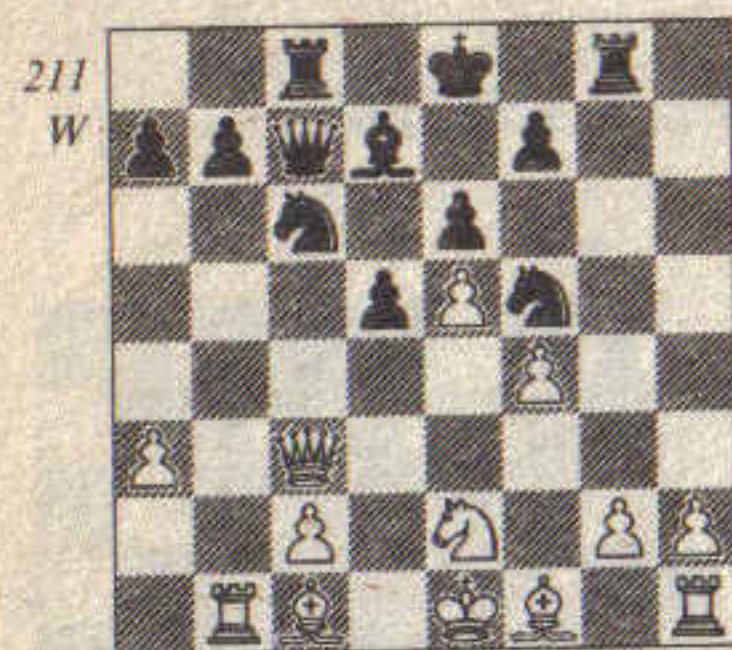
- 14 ♗b1

This prevents the black queen from occupying a good square on b6. 14 ♗d2 ♖b6 15 ♗c1 ♗e8 16 ♖b3 ♖c7 17 ♖d3 a6 18 ♗g1 ♗ce7 was good for Black in Hartmann-Uhlmann, Budapest 1986.

- 14 ... ♗e8 (211)

This is rather committal since now the black king is stuck in the centre. Black needs a number of pawn breaks in order to gain coun-

terplay, and it is difficult to break out with ... f6 and ... e5 with the king in the centre.



211
W
15 ♔d2
White must prevent Black's threat of ... ♗cd4.

15 ... ♖a6
This prepares ... b5 but is too slow after White's next move. 15 ... ♗ce7 16 ♜xc7 ♝xc7 17 c3 also leaves Black with insufficient counterplay, but 15 ... ♖b6 is worth consideration.

16 ♜g1 ♖b5
17 ♔g4 ♗h4
18 ♝g3

This careful move limits Black's counter-chances, and leaves the black knight on h4 badly placed.

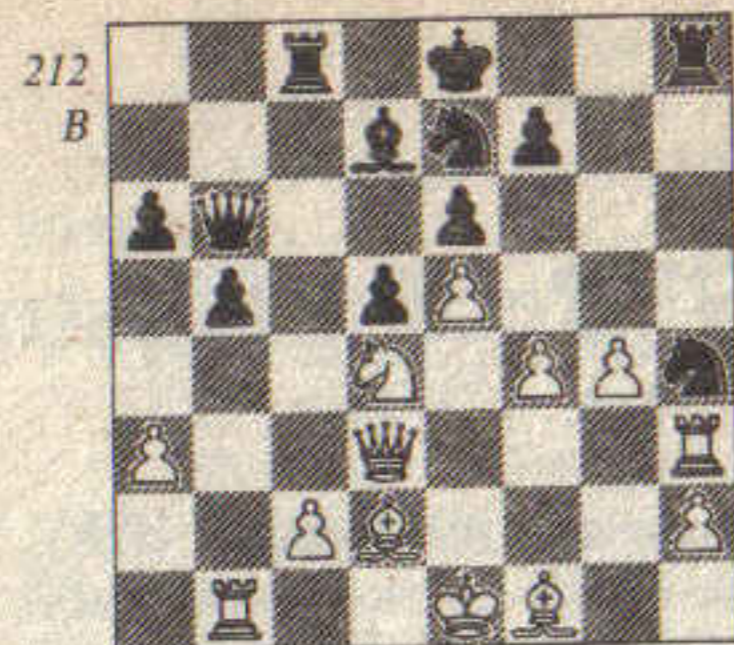
18 ... ♜b6
19 ♜d3

White threatens to win material by ♜h7 and this forces Black into a passive position.

19 ... ♝h8
20 ♝h3

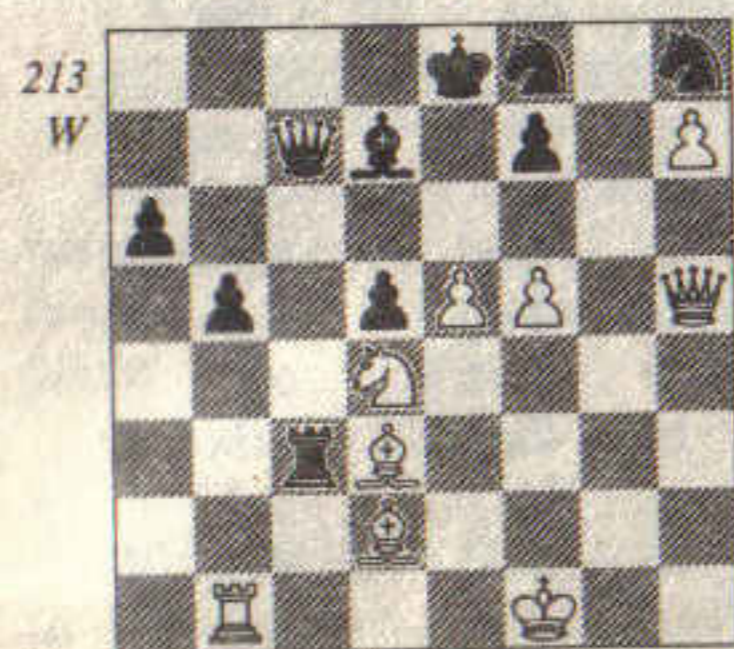
White prepares to evict the black knight by ♜g3.

20 ... ♗e7
21 ♗d4 (212)



212
B
White's play has been successful and he can now advance his king-side pawns.

21 ... ♝c4
22 c3 ♝a4
23 ♜g3 ♗hg6
24 ♝xh8+ ♗xh8
25 ♔d3 ♗hg6
26 h4 ♝xa3
27 h5 ♗f8
28 h6 ♗eg6
29 f5 ♗e7
30 ♜h2 ef
31 h7 ♗eg6
32 gf ♗h8
33 ♜h5 ♜c7
34 ♗f1 ♝xc3 (213)



213
W
Black hopes to confuse White; 35 ♗xc3 ♜xc3 gives Black good

chances, but White simply continues with his plan.

35 e6 ♝xd3
35 ... ♗xe6 36 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 37 ♗xc3 wins for White.
36 ef+ ♗d8
37 ♜g5+ ♗c8
38 ♝c1 ♝xd4
39 ♝xc7+ ♗xc7
40 ♗a5+ ♗b7
41 ♜d8 ♝f4+
42 ♗g1 ♝g4+
43 ♗h2

1-0

The following game features Black's plan of opening the centre in order to try and exploit his lead in development.

Sznapik-Nogueiras
Olympiad 1988

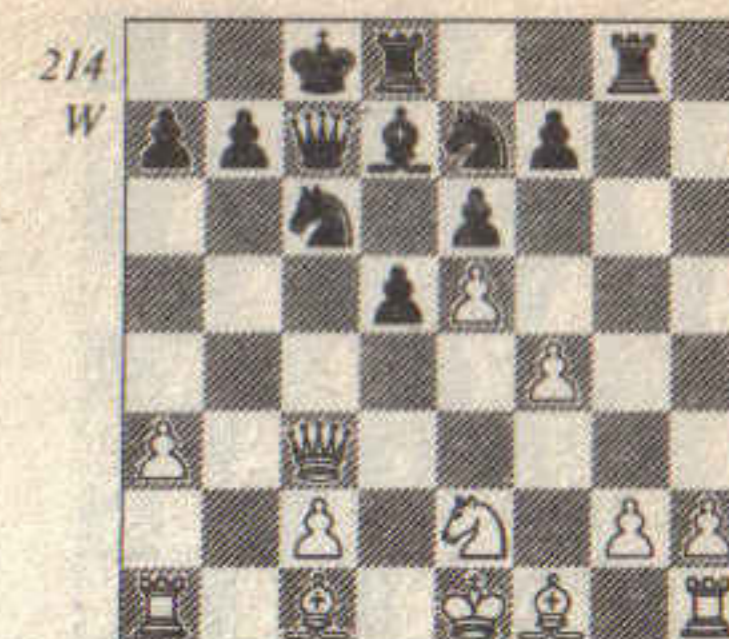
1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♗c3 ♗b4
4 e5 c5
5 a3 ♗xc3+
6 bc ♗e7
7 ♜g4 ♜c7

7 ... ♗f8 or 7 ... 0-0 are the alternatives.

8 ♜xg7 ♝g8
9 ♜xh7 cd
10 ♗e2 ♗bc6
11 f4 dc
12 ♜d3 ♗d7
13 ♜xc3 0-0-0 (214)

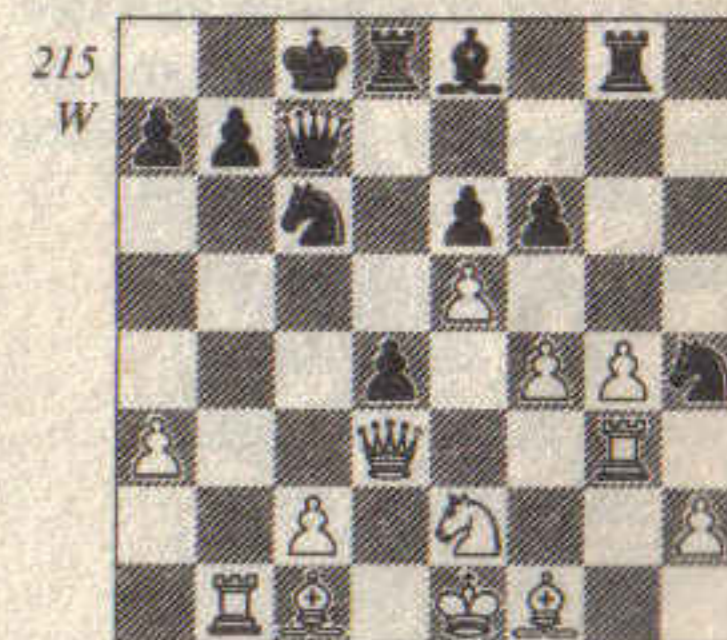
Black aims to open up the centre by ... f6.

14 ♝b1 ♗f5
Black prepares the central thrust ... d4.
15 ♝g1



214
W
15 ♗e3 ♗e8 16 ♗d4 ♗fxd4 17 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 18 ♜xd4 ♜xc2 19 ♝b2 ♜e4+ 20 ♜xe4 de gave Black a better endgame in Mork-Agdestein, Norway 1986.

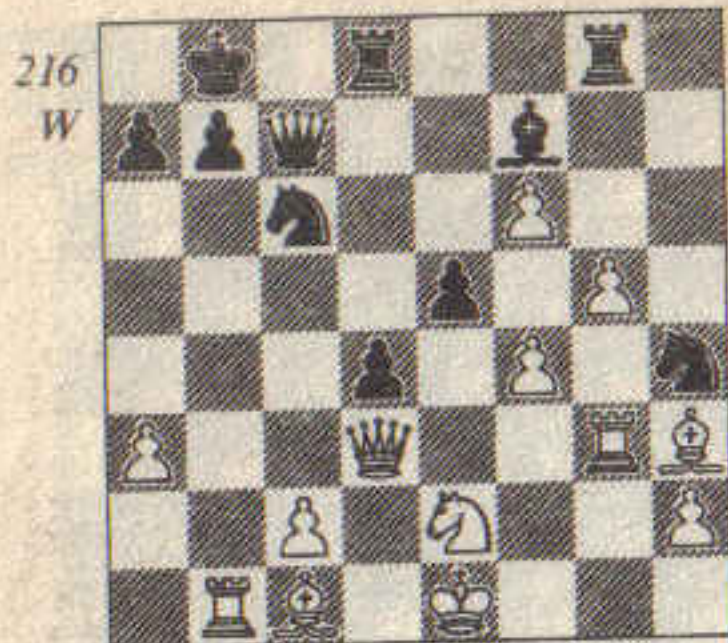
15 ... d4
16 ♜d3 ♗e8
17 ♔g4 ♗h4
18 ♝g3 ♖f6 (215)



215
W
The key move. Black must free his position even at the cost of another pawn.

19 ef e5
20 ♔g5 ♗f7
21 ♗h3+ ♗b8 (216)
22 fe

22 f5 was a better chance for White. Play could continue 22 ... ♗d5 23 ♔g6 e4 24 ♜b5.



- 216
W
- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 22 | ... | ♞xe5 |
| 23 | ♞e4 | ♞ge8 |
| 24 | ♚f1 | ♞eg6 |
| 25 | ♞g4 | ♞xc2 |
| 26 | ♙f4+ | ♚a8 |
| 27 | ♞a1 | d3 |
- 0-1

Black must play very aggressively in these lines before White can make his extra pawn and two bishops into a winning advantage.

Black has also had difficulties when castling against 7 ♞g4.

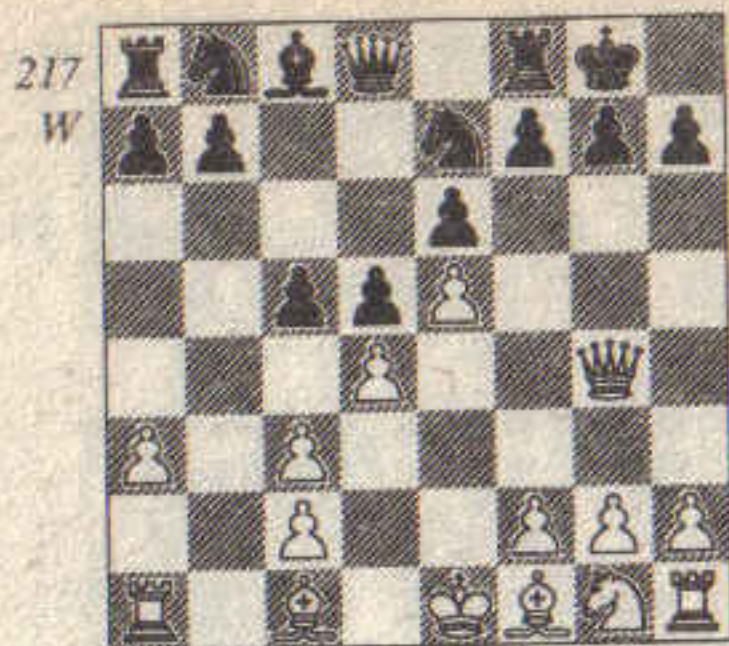
**Vogt-Uhlmann
East Berlin 1989**

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♞c3 | ♙b4 |
| 4 | e5 | c5 |
| 5 | a3 | ♙xc3+ |
| 6 | bc | ♞e7 |
| 7 | ♞g4 | 0-0 (217) |

A bold choice, perhaps favouring White in practical play, however.

- | | | |
|---|-----|------|
| 8 | ♙d3 | ♞bc6 |
| 9 | ♞h5 | |

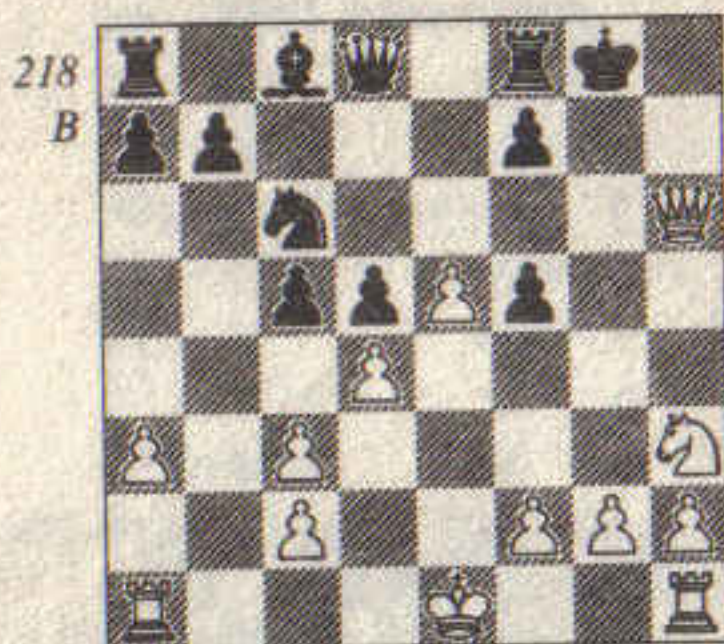
This direct assault presents Black with considerable problems.



217
W

9 ... h6
This allows White to sacrifice on h6 but alternatives are few; 9 ... g6 is horribly weakening; and if 9 ... ♞f5 10 g4.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|
| 10 | ♙xh6 | gh |
| 11 | ♞xh6 | ♞f5 |
| 12 | ♙xf5 | ef |
| 13 | ♞h3 (218) | |



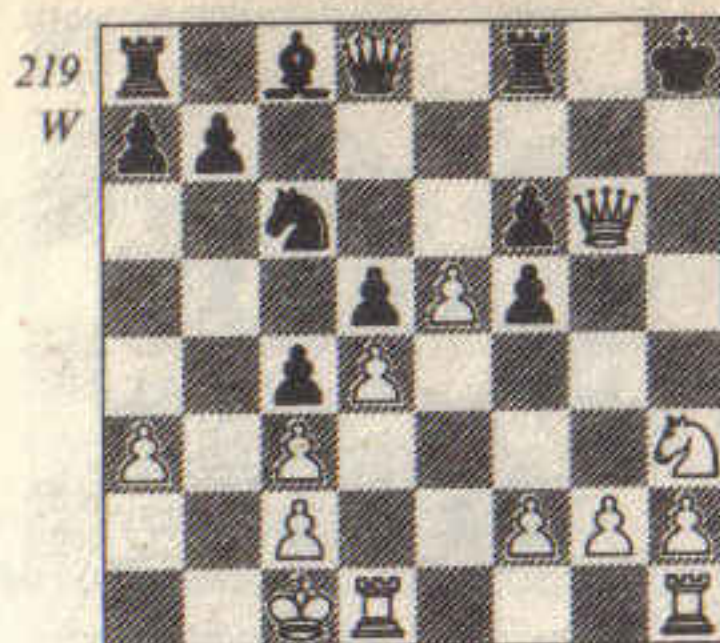
218
B

White threatens ♞g5, mating.

- | | | |
|----|-----|----|
| 13 | ... | f6 |
|----|-----|----|

The alternative defence 13 ... f4 14 0-0-0 ♙f5 15 ♞xf4 f6 16 ♞g6 fe 17 de ♞a5 18 ♞h8+ ♚f7 19 ♞h7+ ♚e8 20 e6 ♞xa3+ 21 ♚d2 ♙xe6 22 ♞xf8 d4 1-0 Kindermann-Psakhis, Dortmund 1989.

- | | | |
|----|-------|----------|
| 14 | ♞g6+ | ♚h8 |
| 15 | 0-0-0 | c4 (219) |



219
W

Black prevents ♞d3, but his kingside is damaged beyond repair.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 16 | ♞he1 | fe |
| 17 | de | f4 |
| 18 | ♞h6+ | ♚g8 |
| 19 | ♞xf4 | ♞e7 |
| 20 | ♞e3 | ♙g4 |
| 21 | ♞xd5 | ♞xa3+ |
| 22 | ♚b1 | |

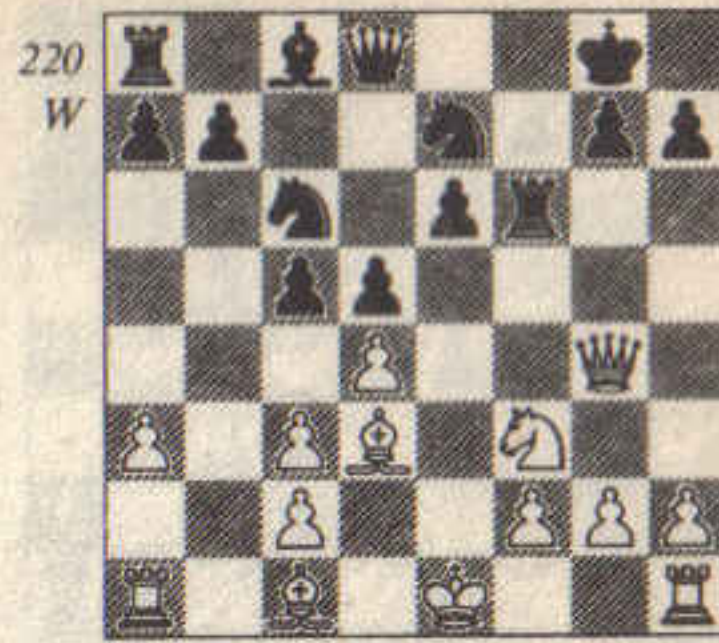
1-0

Black should free himself in such positions with ... f5.

**Maliutin-Piskov
USSR 1988**

- | | | |
|----|-----|------------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♞c3 | ♙b4 |
| 4 | e5 | c5 |
| 5 | a3 | ♙xc3+ |
| 6 | bc | ♞e7 |
| 7 | ♞g4 | 0-0 |
| 8 | ♙d3 | ♞bc6 |
| 9 | ♞f3 | f5 |
| 10 | ef | ♞xf6 (220) |
| 11 | ♙g5 | e5 |

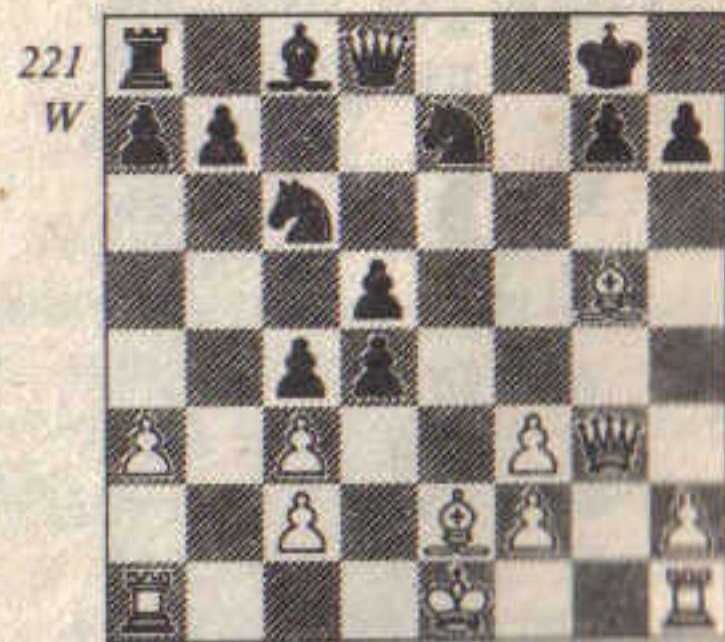
This thrust leads to an exchange sacrifice which gives good practical chances.



220
W

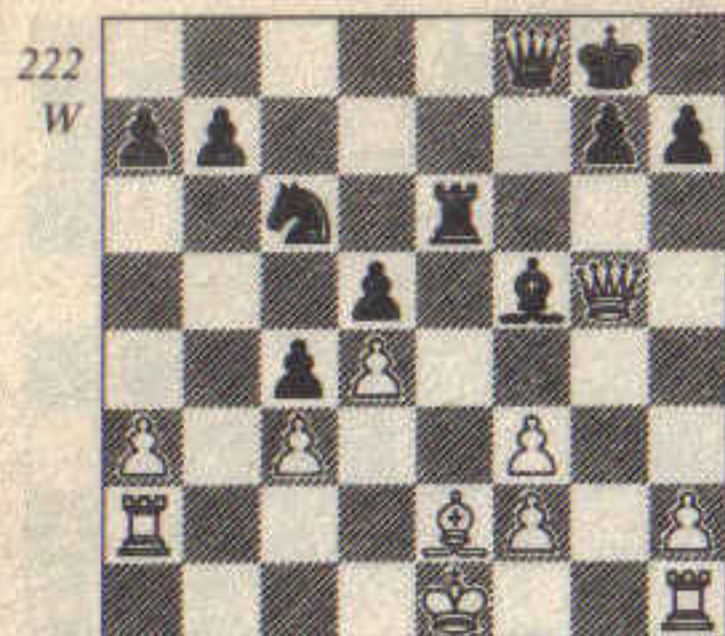
12 ♞g3
12 ♞h4 e4 13 ♙xf6 gf 14 ♞xf6 ed 15 cd cd 16 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 17 ♞xd4 ♙f5 18 0-0 ♞c6 19 ♞e3 d4 20 cd ♞xd4 21 ♞fd1 ♞d8 22 ♞ab1 ♞d7 23 ♞g5+ ½-½, Psakhis-Dokhoian, USSR 1st League 1988.

- | | | |
|----|-----|----------|
| 12 | ... | ♞xf3 |
| 13 | gf | c4 |
| 14 | ♙e2 | ed (221) |



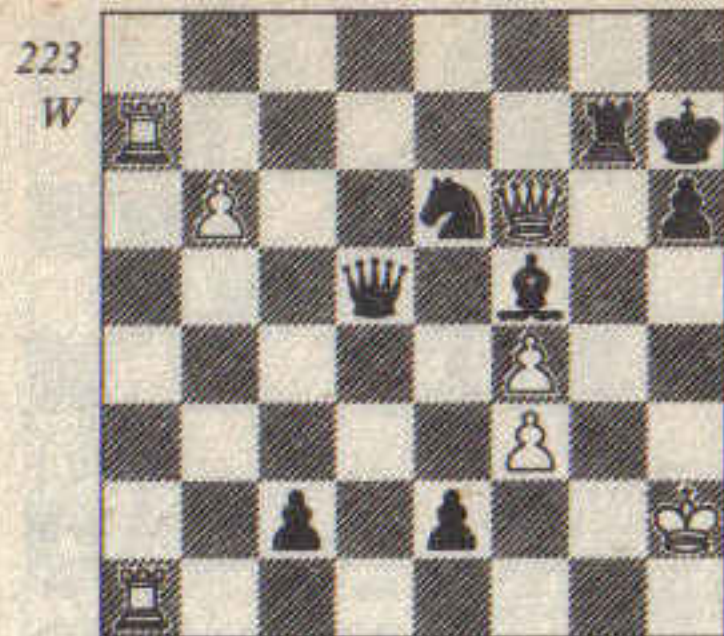
- 221
W
- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 15 | ♙f6 | ♞f8 |
| 16 | ♙xd4 | ♞f5 |
| 17 | ♞g5 | ♞fxd4 |
| 18 | cd | ♙f5 |
| 19 | c3 | ♞e8 |
| 20 | ♞a2 | ♞e6 (222) |

This prevents White from castling.



- | | | |
|----|------|----------|
| 21 | h4 | b5 |
| 22 | h5 | h6 |
| 23 | ♖f4 | a5 |
| 24 | 0-0 | ♗f7 |
| 25 | ♗h4 | ♖h7 |
| 26 | ♞fa1 | ♞f6 |
| 27 | ♞b2 | b4 |
| 28 | ab | ab |
| 29 | cb | c3 |
| 30 | ♞b3 | g5 |
| 31 | hg+ | ♞xg6+ |
| 32 | ♖h2 | c2 |
| 33 | ♞ba3 | ♞g7 |
| 34 | f4 | ♖xd4 |
| 35 | ♞a6 | ♖e6 |
| 36 | b5 | d4 |
| 37 | b6 | ♗b7 |
| 38 | f3 | d3 |
| 39 | ♗f6 | ♗d5 |
| 40 | ♞a7 | de (223) |
| 41 | ♞g1 | ♖g4 |
| 42 | ♞xg4 | ♗h5+ |
| 43 | ♖g2 | ♗xg4+ |
| 44 | fg | e1(♗) |
| 45 | ♗f5+ | ♖h8 |
| 46 | ♞a8+ | ♞g8 |
| 47 | ♗f6+ | ♖h7 |
| 48 | ♗f7+ | ♞g7 |
| 49 | ♗f5+ | |

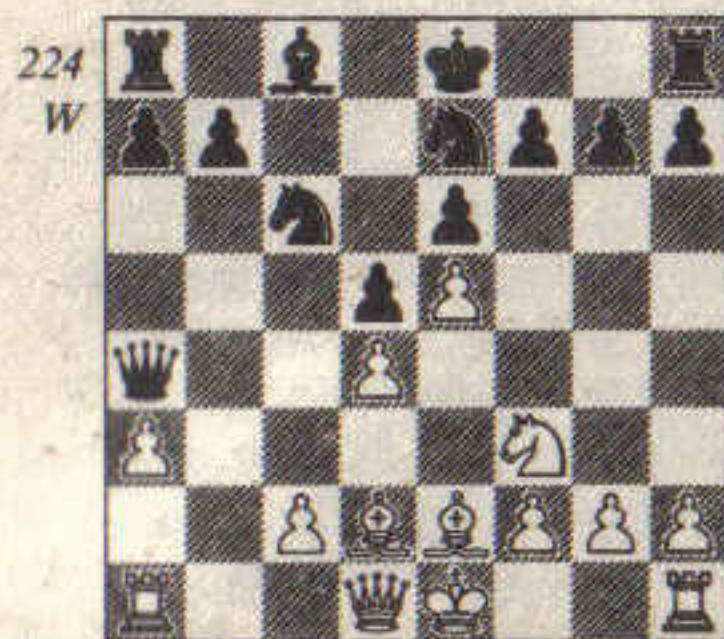
1/2-1/2



The positional lines against the Winawer, 7 ♖f3 and 7 a4, have caused Black less trouble.

Hazai-Nogueiras
Szirak 1986

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♖c3 | ♖b4 |
| 4 | e5 | ♖e7 |
| 5 | a3 | ♖xc3+ |
| 6 | bc | c5 |
| 7 | ♖f3 | ♗a5 |
| 8 | ♖d2 | ♖bc6 |
| 9 | ♖e2 | cd |
| 10 | cd | ♗a4 (224) |



This Cuban idea aims to exchange the light squared bishops by ... b6 and ... ♖a6.

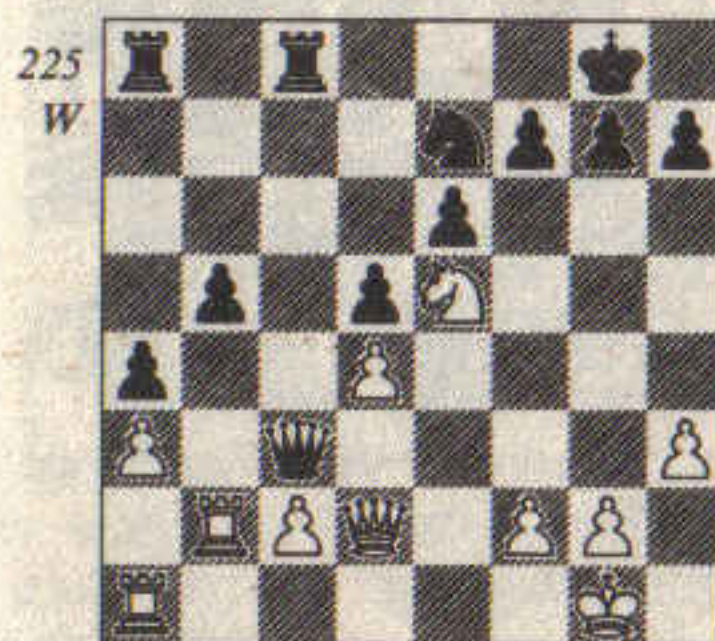
- | | | |
|--|------|------|
| 11 | ♖c3 | b6 |
| 12 | ♗d3 | a5 |
| White cannot prevent ... ♖a6 by 13 ♗b5 because of 13 ... ♗xc2. | | |
| 13 | 0-0 | ♖a6 |
| 14 | ♗d2 | ♖xe2 |
| 15 | ♗xe2 | ♗c4 |

Black can offer the exchange of queens since his knight would have a good square at d5 after the exchange on c4.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 16 | ♗d2 | 0-0 |
| 17 | ♞fb1 | b5 |
| 18 | h3 | ♞fc8 |
| 19 | ♞b3 | a4 |

Black decides to enter an end-game.

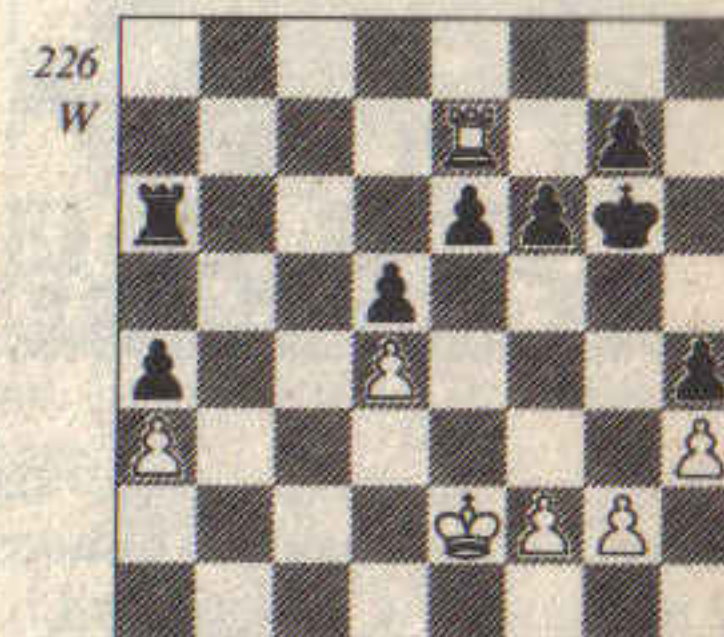
- | | | |
|----|------|------------|
| 20 | ♞b2 | ♖xe5 |
| 21 | ♖xe5 | ♗xc3 (225) |



- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 22 | ♗xc3 | ♞xc3 |
| 23 | ♞xb5 | ♖f5 |
| 24 | ♞b4 | ♞xc2 |
| 25 | ♞ab1 | h5 |
| 26 | ♞b8+ | ♞c8 |
| 27 | ♞xa8 | ♞xa8 |
| 28 | ♞b4 | h4 |
| 29 | ♖f1 | |

The alternative, 29 ♖d3 ♞c8 30 ♖c5 ♖xd4 31 ♞xd4 ♞xc5 32 ♞xh4 ♞c4, wins for Black.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 29 | ... | ♖d6 |
| 30 | ♖e2 | f6 |
| 31 | ♖d7 | ♖c4 |
| 32 | ♖b6 | ♖xb6 |
| 33 | ♞xb6 | ♖f7 |
| 34 | ♞b7+ | ♖g6 |
| 35 | ♞e7 | ♞a6 (226) |



- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 36 | ♖e3 | ♞b6 |
| 37 | ♖f4 | ♞b2 |
| 38 | ♞a7 | ♞xf2+ |
| 39 | ♖g4 | ♞xg2+ |
| 40 | ♖xh4 | ♖h6 |
| 41 | ♞xg7 | ♖xg7 |

0-1

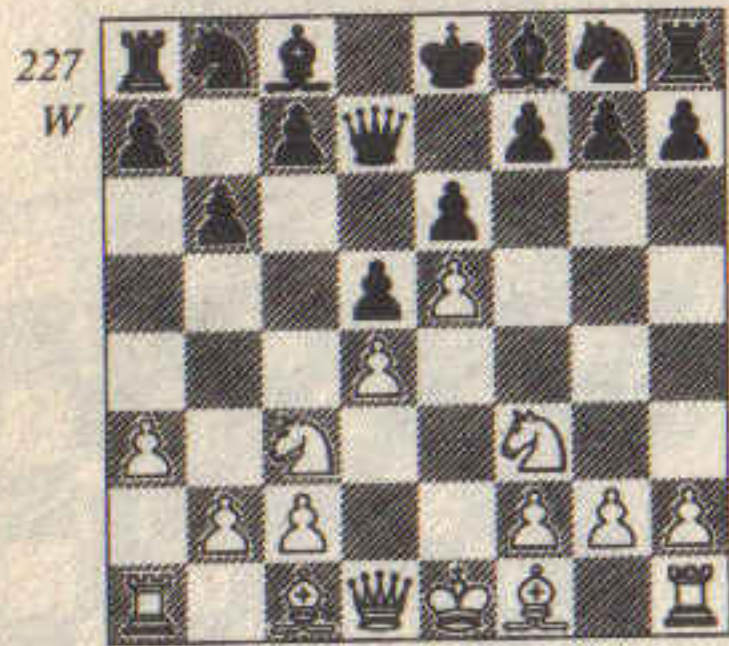
The exchange of light squared bishops is very desirable for Black. In some variations White can avoid the exchange by an early ♖b5, as in the following game.

Chandler-Vaganian
Dubai Olympiad 1986

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♖c3 | ♖b4 |
| 4 | e5 | b6 |

This variation is similar to the 4 ... ♗d7 of F. Olafsson-Petrosian (page 9).

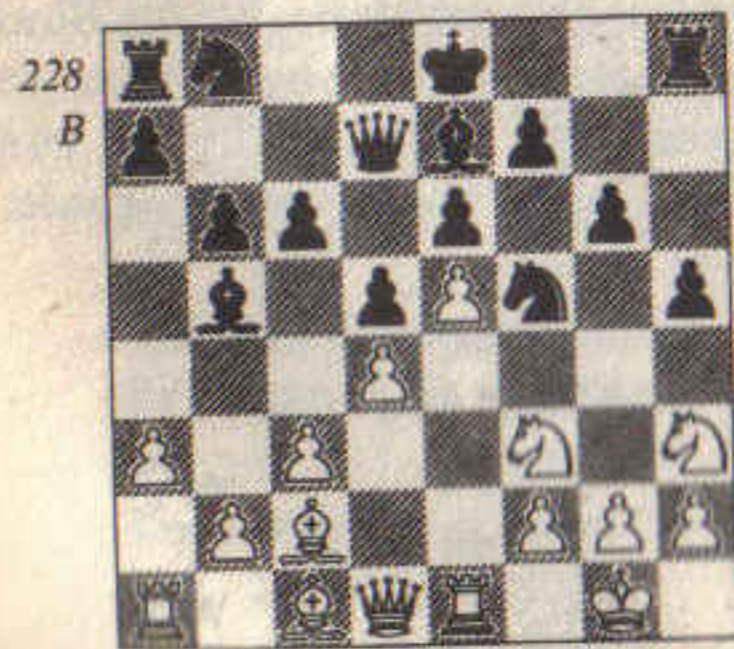
- 5 a3 ♗f8
6 ♖f3 ♜d7 (227)



- 7 ♗b5

The key move to avoid the exchange of light-squared bishops, by retreating the bishop to a4.

- 7 ... c6
8 ♗a4 ♗a6
9 ♖e2 h5
10 0-0 ♖h6
11 ♞e1 ♗e7
12 c3 g6
13 ♖f4 ♖f5
14 ♖h3 ♗b5
15 ♗c2 (228)



White has a distinct advantage because Black has no safe haven for his king.

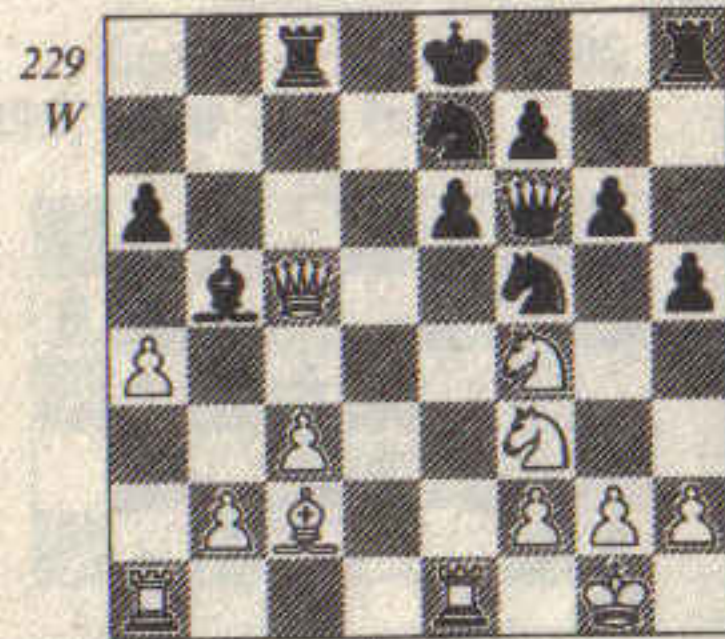
- 15 ... c5
16 ♗g5 ♖c6
17 ♗f6

This almost forces Black to exchange on f6, which opens many lines against the black position.

- 17 ... ♗xf6
18 ef ♜d8
19 dc bc
20 ♖f4 ♜xf6
21 ♜xd5 ♞c8

If 21 ... ♖fe7 22 ♜xc5 ♜xf4 23 ♜xb5.

- 22 ♜xc5 a6
23 a4 ♖ce7 (229)



- 24 ♖d5 1-0

24 ... ♖xd5 25 ♜xc8+, 24 ... ed 25 ♜xc8 mate, 24 ... ♞xc5 25 ♖xf6+ ♖f8 26 ab wins, 24 ... ♜g7 25 ♖c7+ ♖d8 26 ♖xe6+ fe 27 ♜b6+ ♞c7 28 ab wins.

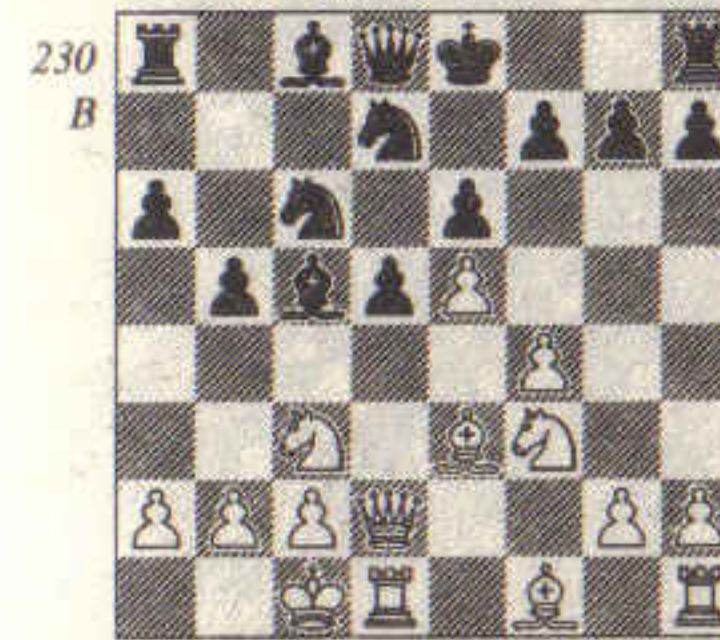
The Steinitz Variation, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖c3 ♖f6 4 e5, has been popular with players of the white pieces. Black can obtain satisfactory play by building up on the queenside with ... a6 and ... b5.

Chandler-Andersson
Haninge 1988

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♖f6
4 e5 ♖fd7
5 f4 c5
6 ♖f3 ♖c6
7 ♗e3 a6

Black aims to build up a queenside attack with ... b5.

- 8 ♜d2 b5
9 dc ♗xc5
10 0-0-0 (230)

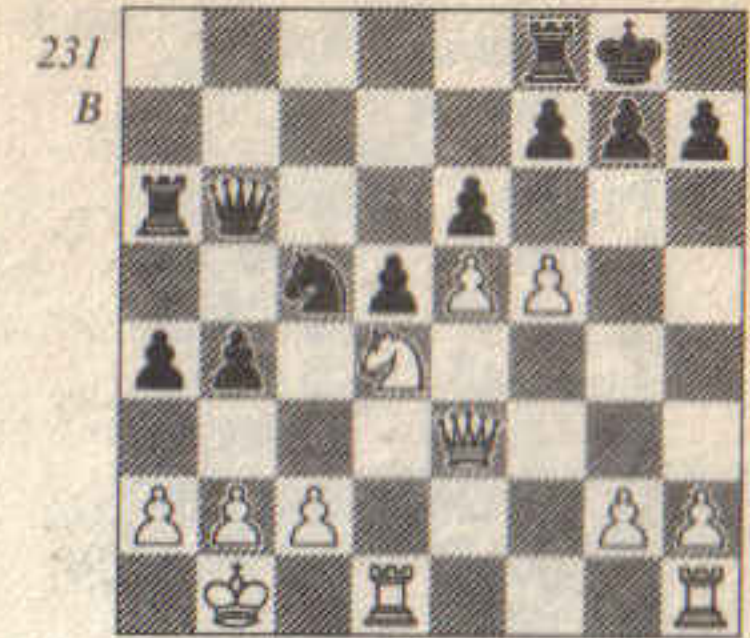


This gives Black a target; it is safer to aim for kingside castling, 10 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 11 ♗d3 with good play for White.

- 10 ... ♜b6
11 ♗xc5 ♖xc5
12 ♗d3 b4
13 ♖e2 a5
14 ♖ed4 ♖xd4
15 ♖xd4 0-0
16 ♖b1 a4
17 ♜e3 ♗a6

The thematic exchange.

- 18 ♗xa6 ♞xa6
19 f5 (231)



Superficially this is attractive but Black is able to defend his kingside.

- 19 ... ♖e4
20 ♞d3
20 f6 gf 21 ef e5 wins for Black.

- 20 ... a3
21 b3 ef
22 ♞f1 g6
23 ♜h6 ♜c7
24 ♞h3 f6
25 e6 ♞e8
26 ♖b5 ♜b7
27 ♖d4 ♞e7
28 ♜f4 ♜c7
29 ♜xc7 ♞xc7
30 ♞e1 ♖f8
31 ♖a1 ♞b6
32 ♞d3 ♞c5
33 ♞c1 ♖e7
34 ♞h3 h5
35 ♞d3 ♞b7
36 ♞e1 ♞bc7
37 ♖b1 ♞c8
38 ♞de3 ♖d6
39 ♞d3 ♖e5

0-1

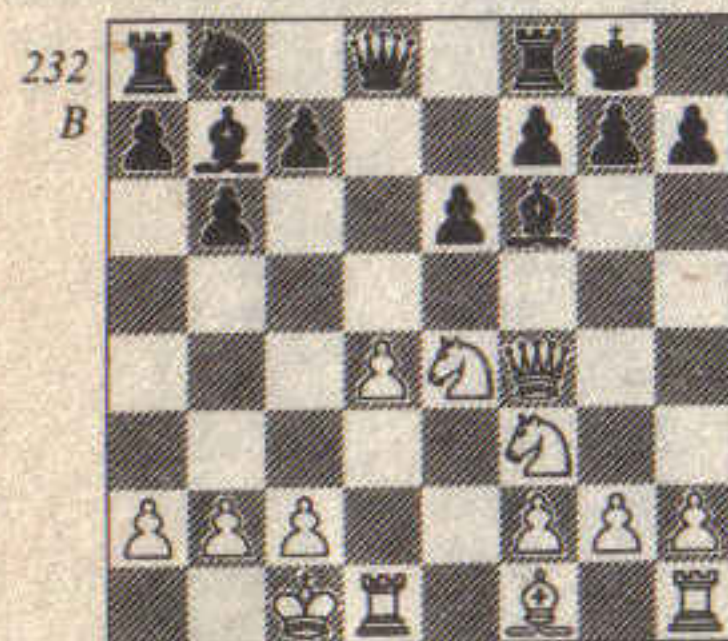
The more usual 4 ♗g5 has often been met recently by 4 ... de.

**Timman-Ehlvest
Belfort 1988**

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♙f6 |
| 4 | ♙g5 | de |
| 5 | ♙xe4 | ♙e7 |
| 6 | ♙xf6 | ♙xf6 |
| 7 | ♙f3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | ♙d2 | |

White prepares queenside castling in order to attack on the kingside.

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| 8 | ... | b6 |
| 9 | 0-0-0 | ♙b7 |
| 10 | ♙f4 | (232) |

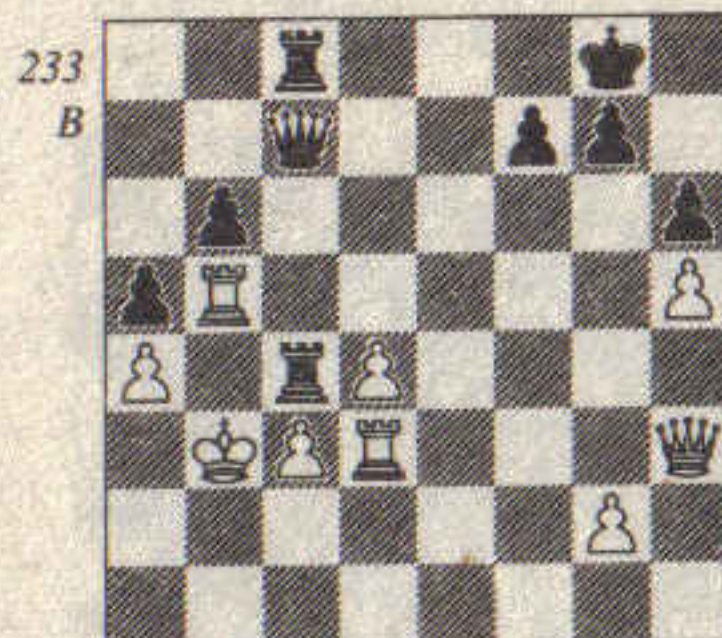


- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 10 | ... | ♙d7 |
| 11 | ♙d3 | ♙e7 |
| 12 | ♙he1 | |

The most aggressive continuation is 12 h4 ♙f6 13 ♙eg5 ♙d6.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 12 | ... | a5 |
| 13 | h4 | ♙f6 |
| 14 | ♙xf6+ | ♙xf6 |
| 15 | ♙e4 | ♙d5 |
| 16 | ♙b1 | ♙c8 |
| 17 | h5 | h6 |
| 18 | ♙e5 | ♙d6 |
| 19 | ♙xd5 | ♙xd5 |
| 20 | ♙g3 | ♙fd8 |

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 21 | f4 | ♙xe5 |
| 22 | ♙xe5 | ♙c4 |
| 23 | b3 | ♙b4 |
| 24 | c3 | ♙d6 |
| 25 | a4 | c5 |
| 26 | ♙b2 | c4 |
| 27 | ♙f3 | cb |
| 28 | ♙xb3 | ♙c7 |
| 29 | ♙b5 | ♙dc8 |
| 30 | ♙d3 | ♙c4 |
| 31 | f5 | ef |
| 32 | ♙xf5 | ♙c7 |
| 33 | ♙h3 | (233) |

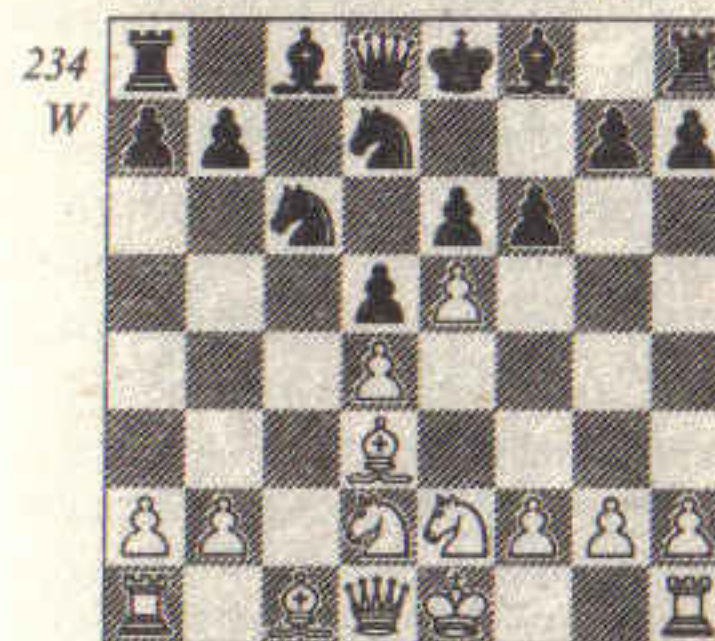


- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 33 | ... | ♙b4+ |
| 34 | ♙xb4 | ab |
| 35 | ♙b2 | ♙c4 |
| 36 | ♙e3 | ♙a8 |
| 37 | d5 | ♙xa4 |
| 38 | ♙e8+ | ♙h7 |
| 39 | ♙xa4 | bc+ |
| 40 | ♙a3 | ♙xd3 |
- 0-1

3 ♙d2 has remained popular with players of the white pieces, but Black still has counterchances either with 3 ... c5 or 3 ... ♙f6. Both of these moves often lead to positions where White has the superior pawn structure, with Black having active pieces in compensation.

**Gelfand-Kosten
Minsk 1986**

- | | | |
|---|-----|----------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♙d2 | ♙f6 |
| 4 | e5 | ♙fd7 |
| 5 | c3 | c5 |
| 6 | ♙d3 | ♙c6 |
| 7 | ♙e2 | cd |
| 8 | cd | f6 (234) |



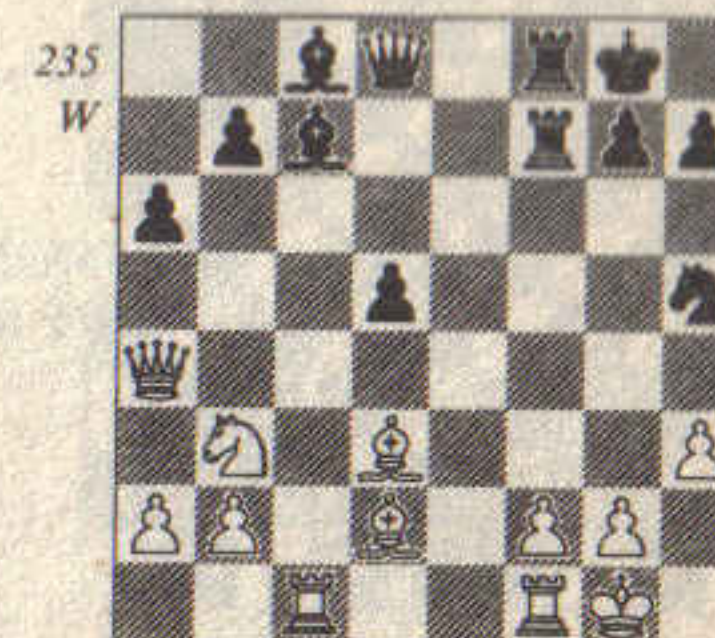
The thematic pawn break; White can now play the tactical 9 ♙f4 ♙xd4 10 ♙h5+ ♙e7 11 ef+ ♙xf6 12 ♙g6+ hg 13 ♙xh8 but Black has compensation for the exchange after 13 ... ♙f7.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 9 | ef | ♙xf6 |
| 10 | ♙f3 | ♙d6 |
| 11 | 0-0 | ♙c7 |
| 12 | ♙c3 | a6 |
| 13 | h3 | 0-0 |
| 14 | ♙e3 | ♙d7 |
| 15 | ♙c1 | ♙ae8 |
| 16 | ♙a4 | ♙a5 |
| 17 | ♙d2 | ♙d8 |
| 18 | ♙c5 | ♙c8 |
| 19 | ♙e3 | e5 |

Although this thematic break leaves Black with an isolated pawn he has sufficient compensation

from active piece play.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 20 | de | ♙xe5 |
| 21 | ♙xe5 | ♙xe5 |
| 22 | ♙b3 | ♙f7 |
| 23 | ♙d2 | ♙c7 |
| 24 | ♙a4 | ♙ef8 |
| 25 | ♙b3 | ♙h5 (235) |

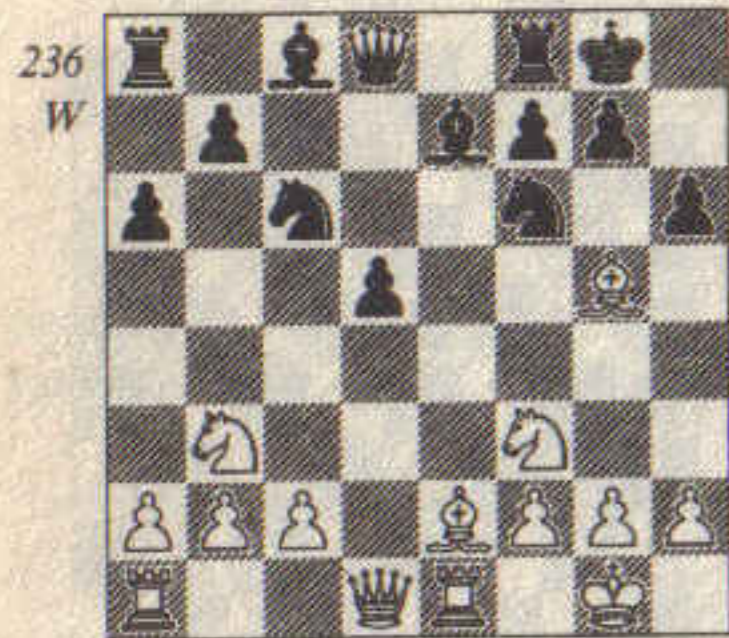


- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 26 | ♙b4 | ♙f4 |
| 27 | ♙xf4 | ♙xf4 |
| 28 | ♙c3 | ♙b6 |
| 29 | ♙c5 | ♙g5 |
| 30 | b4 | ♙xc5 |
| 31 | bc | ♙f3 |
| 32 | h4 | ♙xh4 |
| 33 | ♙d2 | ♙h3 |
| 34 | gf | ♙f4 |
| 35 | ♙xh7+ | ♙xh7 |
| 36 | ♙xd5 | ♙f5 |
| 37 | ♙d6 | ♙g5+ |
- 0-1

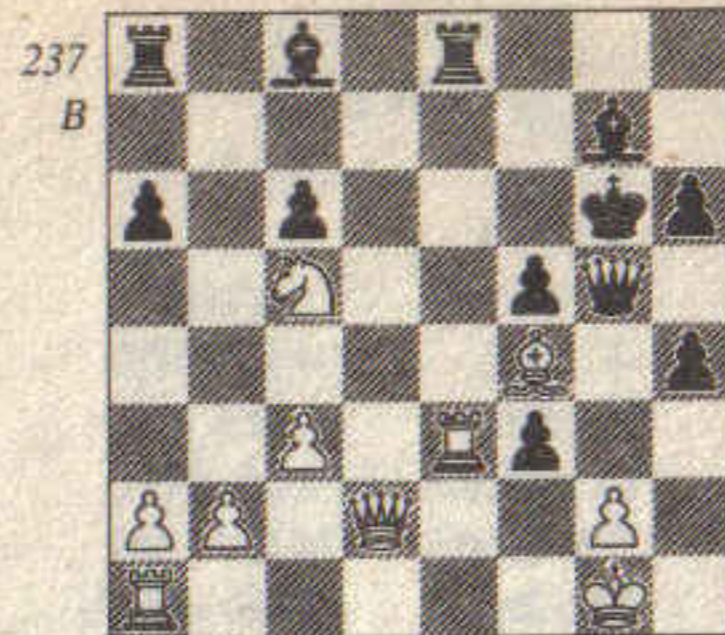
**Renet-Chernin
Lucerne 1985**

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♙d2 | a6 |
| 4 | ♙gf3 | c5 |
| 5 | ed | ed |
| 6 | dc | ♙xc5 |

- 7 ♖b3 ♗e7
- 8 ♗e2 ♖f6
- 9 0-0 0-0
- 10 ♗g5 ♖c6
- 11 ♖e1 h6 (236)

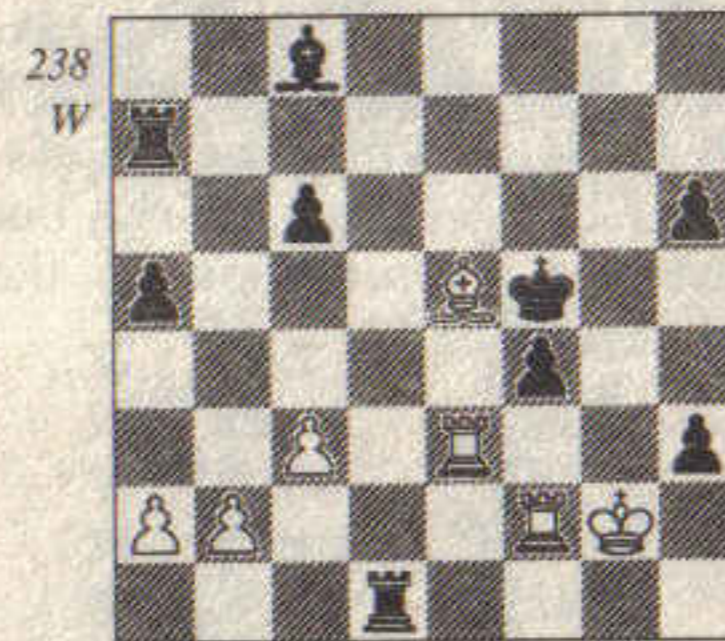


- 12 ♗h4 g5
- 13 ♗g3 ♖e4
- 14 ♗d3 ♗f6
- 15 c3 ♗g7
- 16 ♖fd4 f5
- 17 ♗xe4 de
- 18 ♖xc6 bc
- 19 ♗d6 ♖e8
- 20 ♖c5 ♗h7
- 21 h4 ♗g6
- 22 ♖e3 gh
- 23 f3 ♗g5
- 24 ♗d2 ef
- 25 ♗f4 (237)



- 25 ... ♖d8
- 26 ♖d3 ♗xg2+
- 27 ♗xg2 hg
- 28 ♖ae1 a5
- 29 ♖le2 ♖a7
- 30 ♖e5+ ♗xe5
- 31 ♗xe5 f4
- 32 ♖xg2+ ♗f5
- 33 ♖f2 ♖d1+
- 34 ♗g2 h3+ (238)

0-1



If 34 ♗h2 ♖d2! wins.

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