



Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

Chess Canada

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CCN is distributed by email to CFC members who have submitted their email address to the CFC:

admin@chess.ca

submissions

CCN is looking for contributions: tournament reports, photos, annotated games. For examples, see this issue or read the 2013.06 Appendix for other ideas.

suggestions

If you have an idea for a story you would like to write, email me:

cfc_newsletter_editor@chess.ca

- John Upper
editor CCN

Chess Canada K2

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Cover: Ace detergent schools dirt.

My pick for best chess-themed ad, even though the c8-sundae & g1-sock make no sense.



editor's notes:

Each time I finish an issue of *Chess Canada* I wonder what *took* so long.

~~Three-~~ Four years into the job and I'm only mildly surprised by how long it takes to do what I *think of* as my job as writer/editor: find interesting events and games, bargain for submissions, write them myself when no one else will, proofread and blundercheck each contributors' work, convert ChessBase, PGN and Word files into something that works in PDF, find photos, white-balance jpegs that look like they've been shot through a slice of lemon, assemble the 300+ parts in Adobe, fiddle 'til it flows, re-proofread and send. Simple, if not easy; and practice has made it easier.

What I don't understand is why it takes me so long to knuckle down and put in the 72 hours or so of concentrated work to get it done. Because, *when I'm done* I really *like* what these issues become. *I read them.* I *always* spot flaws I missed the first dozen times, but I *still* think they're pretty good. And sometimes they *surprise* me. This issue has 33 annotated games, but that's a record-halving 6 annotated by *me*. It has games by almost all of my favourite regular contributors, as well as first-timers like Leon Piasetski and Paul and Dave Ross. There's a long interview with Canada's second-youngest-ever GM, a player who's been contributing to *Chess Canada* since he was an FM and now talks about how he got to GM and what he might do in chess now that there are no more titles to win. In this issue, even Duncan Suttles makes an appearance! What more could I *possibly* ask for?*

If I'd expected even *half* of that I would have started sooner!

Or not. I really, *really* liked the Olympiad Issue; but *that* didn't make me get to work any sooner or harder on *this one*. I have over 20 annotated games that were ready-to-go and got cut from *this* issue because it's already too long; from girls at the Susan Polgar Invitationals, Alex from the Quebec Grand Prix, Aman from Reykjavik, and Eric from TATA Steel...

I would read that. In fact, it sounds so good it's *almost* enough to make me want to write an angry email to complain about having to wait! Probably not. Maybe I should start thinking of my job as just the "getting started" part, since everything flows after that. *Instead*, I told the CFC exec I would quit if I don't send them another issue within two weeks.

Maybe *that* will work.
Maybe we'll have to wait and see.

- John Upper, editor *Chess Canada*..

PS: K2 = Catch-up x Ketsup

The silly titles are partly because calendar-based dating makes no sense when the content and release dates are so far apart, and partly as a parody of the *Informant's* new random non-numerical titles.

*A: annotated game scores to a secret training RR between Yanofsky, Spraggett, Ivanov and Day.



Critical Positions



selected by the editor

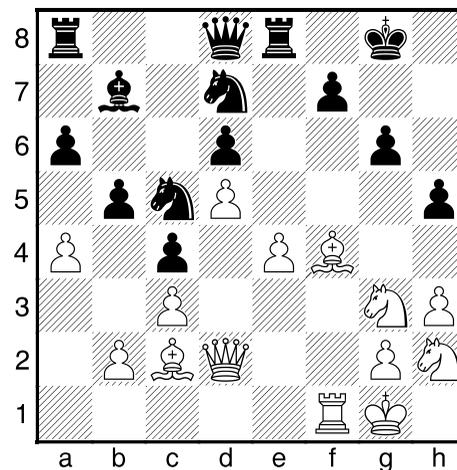
The following diagrams are critical positions from this issue of *Chess Canada*. You can treat them as exercises or as a teaser introduction to what you'll find this month.

These "critical positions" can be:

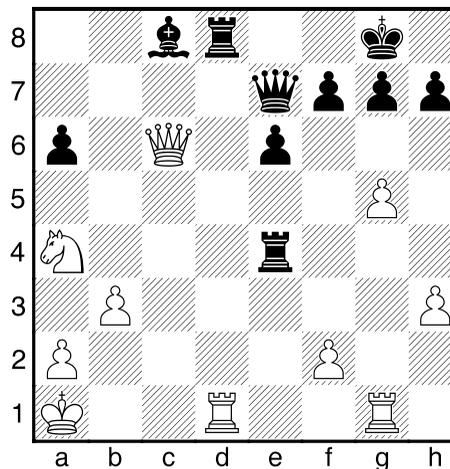
- winning combinations
- surprising tactics
- endgames requiring precise play
- simple calculation exercises
- variation-rich middlegames
- moments when one player went badly wrong.

The  and  squares next to each diagram indicate the player to move.

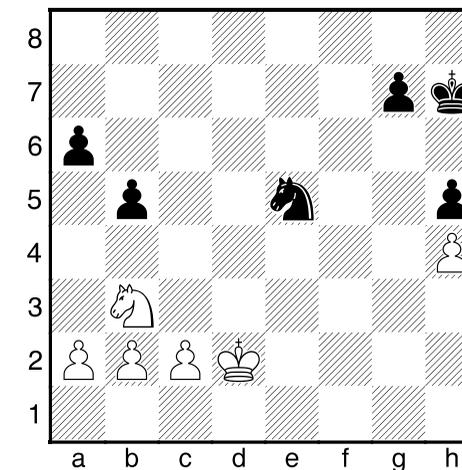
Solutions appear in the game analysis in this month's *CCN*, **in the red diagrams** in the reports named under the diagram. Critical positions usually feature significantly more analytical commentary than the rest of the game.



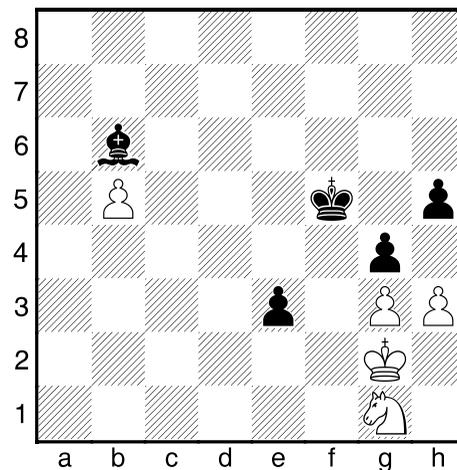
...h4 or ...e7
see: Razvan



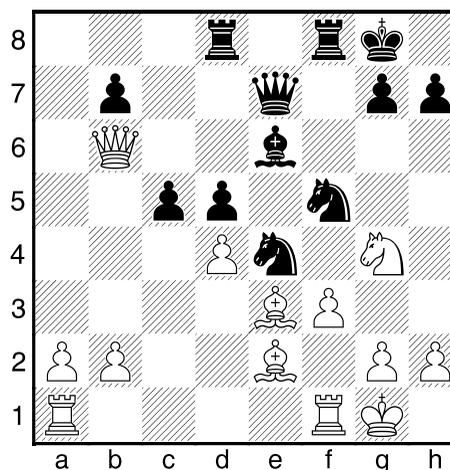
see: Razvan



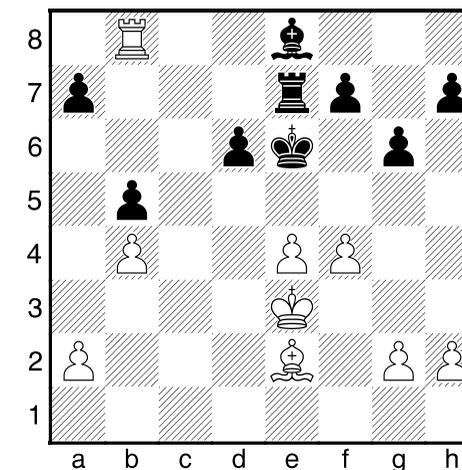
...c4+ or ...f3+
see: Razvan



see: Razvan



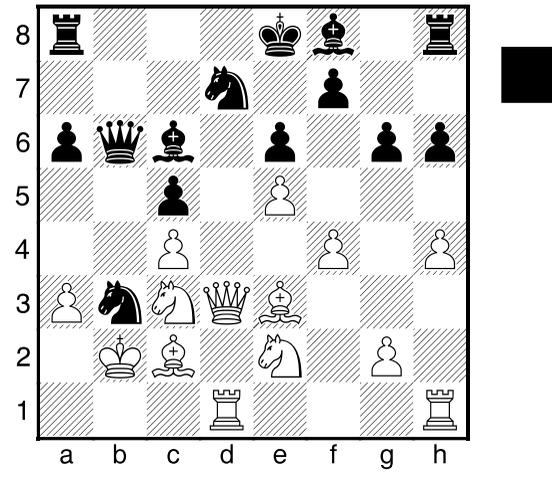
see: Razvan



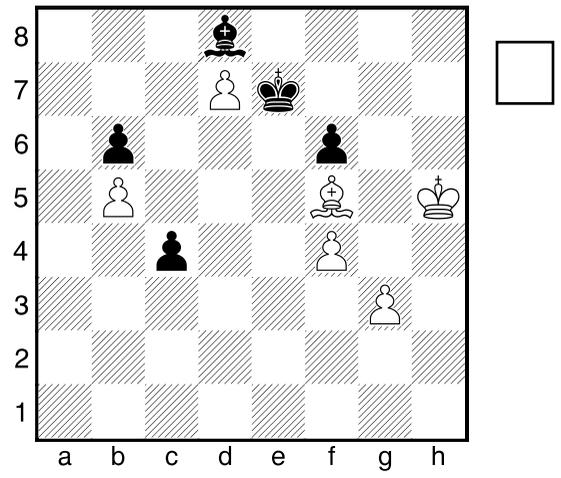
...d5 or ...f5
see: Dresden



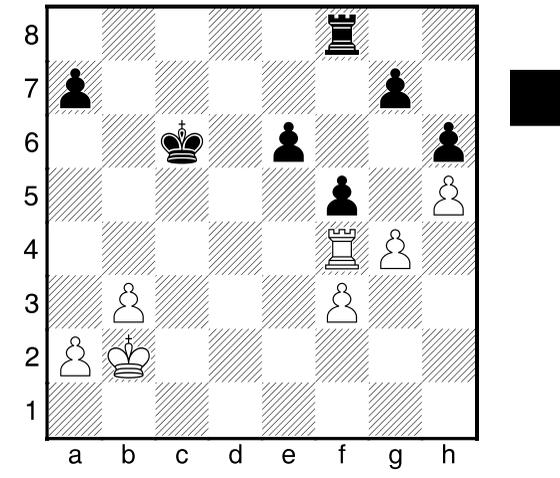
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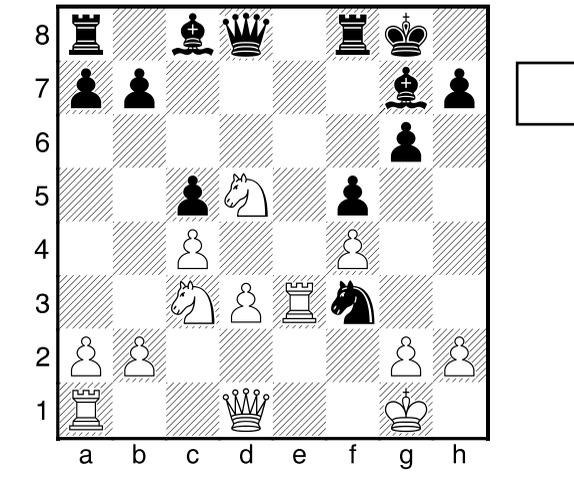
Attempt a perpetual or play for more? see: Dresden



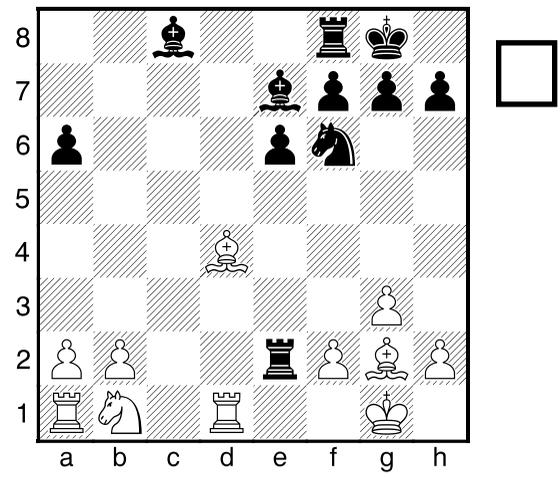
see: Edmonton



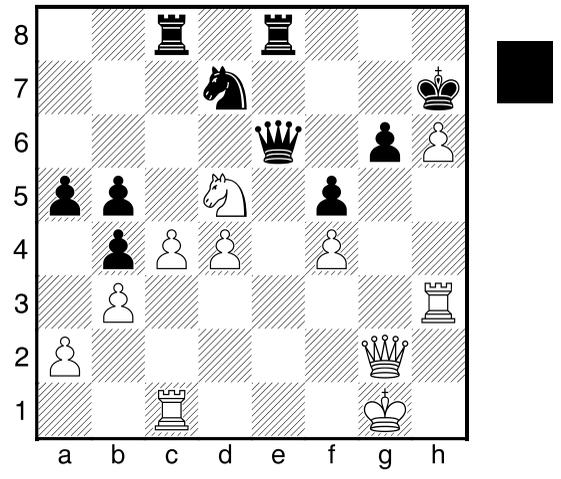
see: Commonwealth



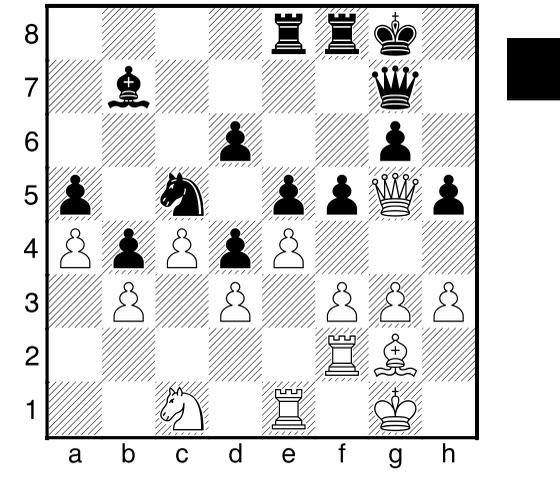
si: Senior



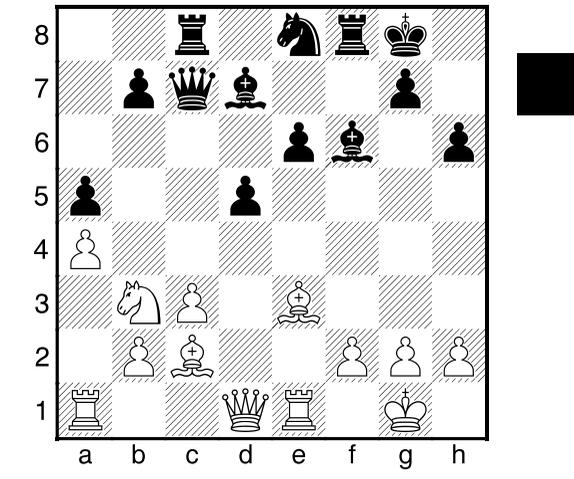
see: Dresden



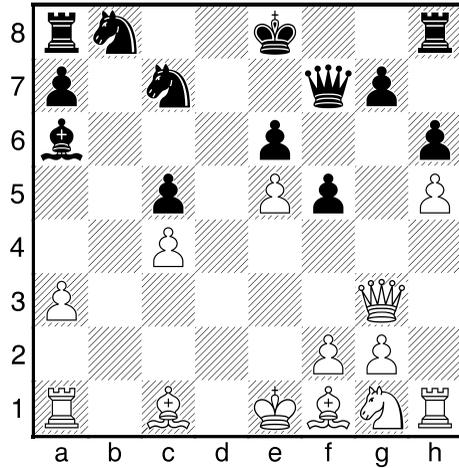
What happens after ... Nf6 ?
see: Commonwealth



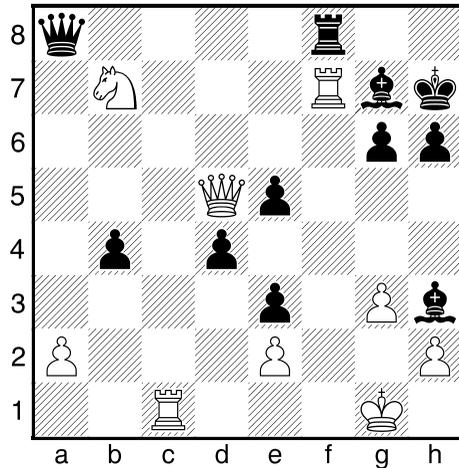
What happens on 34... f4 35. g4 ?
si: Senior



White threatens Qd3-h7 ; what should Black do?
see: Across Canada



see: Across Canada



see: Next Issue



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At 17-years old, Razvan Preotu is Canada's youngest Grandmaster, and second-youngest ever (after Mark Bluvstein, who did it at 16).

Razvan has been a regular contributor to *Chess Canada*, and an excellent one: prompt responses to email, and detailed notes that showed a lot of hard work with no apparent effort to keep his ideas secret.

With the GM title finally in his pocket, and with a big move coming up soon, it seemed like a perfect time for an interview. I picked up Razvan at his parents' Burlington Ontario home, and we went for lunch at a nearby Swiss Chalet.

JU: *I took only a quick look around the restaurant, what do you suppose the probability is that there's another Grandmaster in this restaurant right now?*

RP: *[laughs] I'd say that there is a 100% chance that I'm the only one.*

I think that's a safe bet. Con-

gratulations on getting the title.

RP: Thank you very much.

I guess getting that last Norm took a bit longer than you expected?

RP: Yeah, it took exactly two years. I knew it would take a lot, but I thought a year max.

And you were playing a lot during that time.

RP: I was very active.

So even if you're not at your best, eventually you're just going to hit it.

RP: Exactly.

[The waitress comes by and (somehow) that changes our topic to...]

2016 Calgary International

You won the 2016 Calgary International, which made you the only Canadian to win unshared first in its history. Anton Kovalyov (when he was living in





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Canada but was still registered with Argentina) and Edward Porper both shared first. But you won outright, and ahead of some really strong GMs: Kamsky and Bruzon both played, and both have been way over 2700 not long ago.

Yeah, it was a big surprise, for me... [laughs]...

I think a lot of people were surprised, but cheering you on. Was that the first time you played there?

Yes. That was the first Calgary International for me. It was a great experience and I hope to play there again.

[After the interview, Razvan's participation in the 2017 Calgary International was confirmed.]

I can't remember if you had already got your last Norm then but the GM title hadn't been confirmed...?

Yeah I did get my norm at the World Open [before Calgary] but I still needed my rating requirement, and that was a big step.

Calgary International Champion

Yes, I remember now: the Calgary result pushed you within 8 or 9 points [of 2500], and then you got the extra points just after.

[Razvan annotates two of his games from the 2016 Calgary International plus key games over the summer In this issue of *Chess Canada*.]

I've noticed you haven't been playing much recently. I've looked at the FIDE site and they have almost no games by you in 2017, and hardly any after Cal-



gary in 2016. Why is that?

Well, I feel after I got my title I should focus more on other things. One of them is school: it's my last year.

High School

You're in grade 12 here in Ontario; what's the name of the school?

Dr. Frank J. Hayden. It's one of the newer schools, it's been open for around 4 years.

When you got your GM title was there an announcement at school?

Nope. But everyone who knows me knows that I'm a Grandmaster.

Do you ever get teased about chess at school?

Nope, because there's nothing much to tease about. [laughs] And I'm not focused entirely on chess, there are also other things I do.

Are you on any teams?

No, but I go out with friends and we play sports, just not on school teams.

In the Magnus documentary he talks about how he was teased in elementary school, and you can see it still bothers him.

I remember when I was in elementary school I got teased, but in high school that wasn't a problem

Maybe high-school kids today are mature enough to see it as a worthwhile accomplishment!?
Yeah.

Does your high school have a chess team?

No, but they have a chess club. I come to help if people have questions.

They don't try to compete or send teams to tournaments?

No. There's an Ontario high-school teams championship, I think it's set up by Chris Mallon. It's not like the CCC, but schools send teams of players from any grade. We tried to get a team together but it was too difficult to set up.

What are you studying in school?

My areas are Maths and com-

IM Preotu is the only Canadian to win the title outright.

puter science, which is where I want to focus on [in University].

University Chess Scholarship

Where have you applied for University?

I applied to many Canadian Universities, but I think it is for sure that I will be going to Texas, to UTD [University of Texas at Dallas] for a chess scholarship.

Tell us about the chess scholarship, if you don't mind, since this will involve some questions about money. I'm assuming that because of your title, and because they want to attract players from all around the world, that this is a full scholarship, where you don't pay anything for courses. Does it include anything else?

Yes. Other than tuition, they give me an allowance fee to buy textbooks for school, stuff like that.

Does it include residence and travel fees, to fly you home once a year?

Yes, there's residence on cam-

pus, and I can work the travel fee into the chess subsidy...

The what?

They also give me a "chess fee" that I can spend on improving: on chess books or travelling to tournaments.

How much is that?

It's \$4,500.

Per school year?

Yeah.

Wow! That's a lot; you could go anywhere on that. You must have to fill some requirements for them to keep that...?

I have to fulfill a certain GPA for school, and participate in some team tournaments for the school, and attend a team meeting every week, on Friday, for a couple of hours.

What'll you do at those meetings? Is it a practice session? It can't really be a chess lesson can it?

I mean, some of those University teams in the States are so strong — I think if Webster University A team could enter the Olympiad they'd be in the top 10, and they're not much higher rated than UTD — what kind of a lesson would be useful for such a strong group?

I think it's going to be more like playing and team building, and not chess lessons. It's a great offer. I also went to the campus in February. It's really nice. I met with some of the players on the team.

Who are some of them?

[Gil] Popilski. I met him in Calgary...

[Note: Razvan didn't just "meet" Popilski in Calgary: they played and Razvan won. You can play through his notes in this issue.]

When do you move?

School in the

States starts in mid-August.

And what happens between now and then, in school and chesswise? When do your exams start?

My exams start at the end of June, roughly.

So you have only a month-and-a-bit off this summer?

[laughs] Yeah, this summer is rather short. School and university start here [in Canada] in September, but in the States it starts earlier, but also ends earlier, so that makes up for it.

Do you think you'll be playing in any more tournaments? Are you going to play in the Canadian Junior in Mississauga this summer?

I might. I'd like to play in a few more tournaments. One of them is the Canadian Open, in Sault Ste. Marie this summer. They invited me and I am playing there.

Did they ask you to do any other events there, like a simul?

They did, but the timing is so



tight with other events that I haven't said yes.

Yeah; the Canadian Open often starts a couple of days after the World Open, and that can make extra events a problem.

Exactly.

[later, Razvan was invited to defend his title at the Calgary International, which ended just before the Candian Junior began, and back-to-back events would have left him with too little time to prepare to move to Texas]

will have been on the other side of simuls. What's it like being "on the inside"? Do you like giving simuls?

I like it, but I feel like there's a lot of pressure: you're expected to win most of the games and get a really high percentage; but I enjoy the games, it's a really different experience.

How have you done?

I've done pretty well, but most of my simul games were against kids.



Are you able to remember any of your simul games?

Probably not. Maybe a position or an interesting move, but none of them have been too memorable.

Simuls Inside and Outside

A kid against GM Susan Polgar at the 2007 CYCC in Ottawa. IM Razvan at the Aurora CC, 2014. RBC Capitalize for Kids simul, 2016.



I saw a picture of you doing a simul for RBC. Could you tell us about that?

It was a fundraising event for mental health by RBC. There were four boards, and anyone could join and play, and when one person was done another could join, so it was like a simul but people could come and go.



You looked good in the photo there where you're wearing a suit.

Yeah!

...much better than the informal one of you in the cardboard cut-out.

[laughs]



Simuls

I want to ask you about simuls. I went to your blog, and there are pictures of simuls, but almost all of them are in the last couple of years, since you got your IM title. When was your first one?

At the Aurora Chess Club.

That was right after your IM title?

Yes.

Most of the people reading this



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Did the RBC simul count for your Volunteer Hours?

Yeah, that was part of it.

[Ontario high-school students have to do 40 hours of community service as part of their degree requirement.]

You are going to play at the Canadian Open this summer. Are there any other events you'll play in before going to Texas?

I don't have any slow [time control] events planned, but I'll play at the Canadian Chess Challenge. I'd be the highest titled player to compete in it.

That's true, and probably a record that won't ever be broken. You'll never beat Tanraj's record though...

... with the wins? No, but I'd be the highest titled player.

[BC's Tanraj Sohal represented BC at the Canadian Chess Challenge 12 years in a row and won his board prize 9 times.]

Where is it this year?

The Ontario Chess Challenge is

always in Toronto, and this year the Canadian Chess Challenge is also in Toronto; and even if I don't qualify for it – because Michael is a pretty strong player – I'll still participate in a simul event there, which'll be fun.

[you can watch a video of the start of that simul here:

<https://gmrazvanblog.com/events/>]

You mean IM Michael Song, right? Are you guys both in the same grade?

Yes.

That shows kind of weird thing about the CCC... it's sort of like the Canadians qualifying for the world championship in curling: any one of the top Canadian teams could probably win the world curling championship, but they have to get by each other to qualify, so a lot of the world's best teams get knocked out in the Briar. You and Michael are far and away the strongest players in your year, but because there can be only qualifying player per grade per province, either you or Michael

get eliminated in the provincial qualifier. Have you played in all of them?

Grade 5 was my first Ontario Chess Challenge, and I've played in all of them since then, and all the Canadian Chess Challenges I've qualified for.

It's an interesting event. Ontario can send a team with experts on almost every board, but some provinces might not have even one expert, so those matches are like Goliath vs David's little brother. But then there are the matches against BC...

... and Quebec, they are very close.

... yeah, and those matches could go either way, so it ends up being competitive anyway, just not every round. Kind of like the Olympiads. Speaking of which...



Canadian Chess Challenge
Razvan plays every one... if he can get past archfoe Michael Song.

Olympiad Selection

The Canadian Olympiad team did exceptionally well in Baku, arguably the best Canadian result ever. A lot of people thought that the Selection Committee decision to pick Alex, rather than you or Bator was... rather strange. Bator had a higher rating, and although Alex's rating was still higher than yours, his results in the year since he started playing again had been pretty poor – around 2350. Since then he has played quite a lot better, but the selection committee couldn't have known that when they made their decision. How do you feel about their decision?

I was a bit upset.

I thought I had a good chance to make the team, and I would have enjoyed playing at the Olympiad. But, in the end, there's nothing I could do. But, yeah, I was a bit upset.

When you say "a bit upset", do you mean "Oh, rats, it's rain-

ing" upset? Or do you mean "I shouldn't have punched a hole in the wall again" upset? After all... the Olympiad comes around only every two years, and you could arguably have been put on the previous Olympiad because of a CFC rule about giving special consideration to promising juniors. And when they made their decision in 2016 you still were one Norm short for you GM title, right...? Yeah.

...and the Olympiad is an excel-

lent place to make Norms: it's an 11-round event, with the exception of the first round you won't get any terribly weak opponents, so your level is up; it's a one-game-a-day event so there are chances to prepare, and the Captain can even make favourable colour decisions; so there were plenty of reasons to put you on the team. But you're not going to "Hulk-out" about it...?

No. I mean, it would have been a good Norm opportunity, but I had chances later, and I got

them and made the title. So, I was upset but not like "Oh I HATE THEM for this decision!" or anything.

If you're invited to join the team for the next Olympiad, would you go?

If I could. I don't know if I would be busy when it is.

It's in 2018, in Georgia.

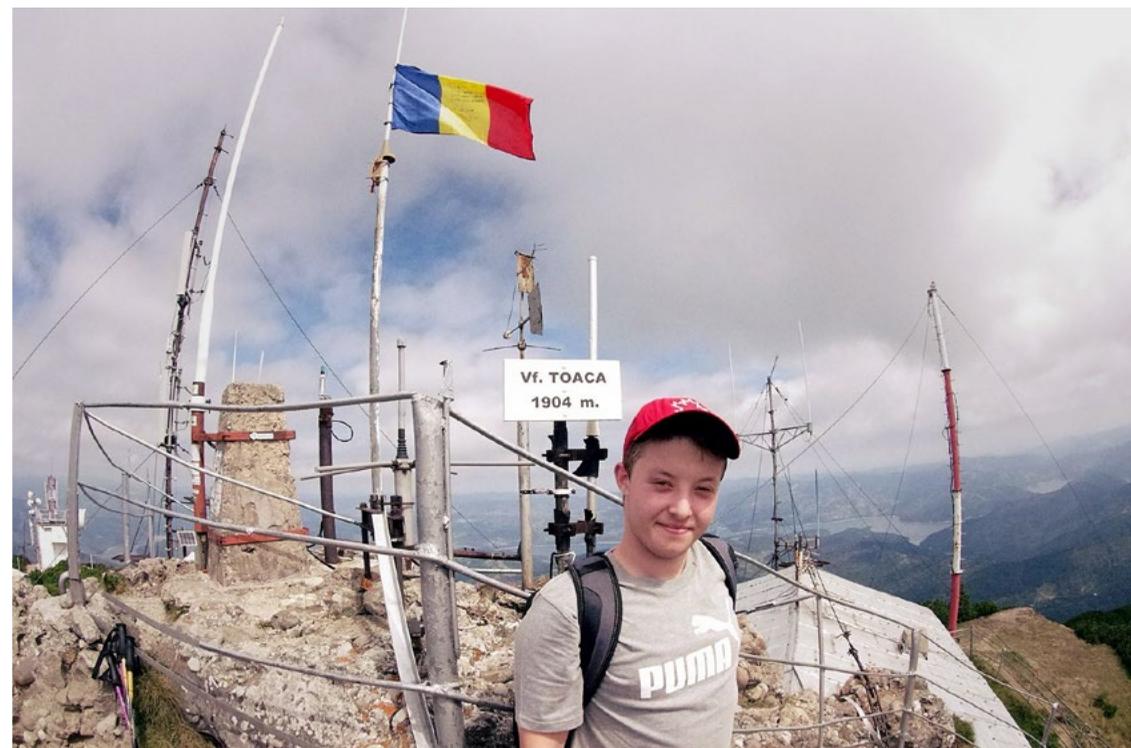
I mean, it depends on what time of year it is...

Well... it sounds to me like the University of Texas would consider it part of your chess development and might even encourage you to play...

[Razvan laughs, as if realizing it might be an academic obligation to play]

Taking the high ground.

On a 2016 visit to Romania.



PRO Chess League

You haven't played much chess lately, but you did play for the Toronto Dragons in the PRO Chess League. Could you tell us how that came about?

Glenn Geffin was organizing the team. He asked a ton of players if they wanted to be a part of it. I thought it would be a great experience, fun, and a lot of strong players were in it.

Did you get to play any strong players?

I played Li Chao [China, 2744].

Even though the PRO League played at 15 + 2, which is a fast rapid, the games made a lot of sense – they weren't far off the quality of regular tournament games. Did you do any practice for that time control to prepare?
Nope. I just played some blitz.

Online?

Yup.

What sites do you play on?

Mostly on ICC – Internet Chess Club.

When you're playing online, is it mostly blitz?

Yes. 3+0 or 5+0.

No bullet? No increment?

No bullet, I don't think it helps improve my play. The problem with increment is that on ICC there are presets of 3/0 and 5/0 and lots of people play them, so when you click those you get a game right away. But if you want to play some other time control you have to set it up and wait for challenges.

If you're playing OTB blitz what's your favourite time control?

3+2 is best.

When you're playing online, do you mainly play friends, or do you play whoever the server pairs you with?

My friends aren't always online when I am, and I don't think it's a good idea to play the same people over and over.

Do you have a rating range which excludes lower rated opponents?

I think I have it set to within 300

points. So, my ICC 3/0 rating is around 2300, which means at that time control I play people 2000 and up.

I assume ICC saves all your on-line games. Do you ever go back and look at them?

Only if there was something interesting in them, but usually they just degenerate into blunders and then I go on to the next one.

Bator Sambuev was on your Toronto Dragons team, so you didn't play against him in the PRO League. For a while there it seemed that you were the only Canadian player to be regularly beating him. How did you do that?

I think once you have a positive record against someone then they're at a psychological disadvantage.

Would you say that about yourself? If you have a losing record against someone, don't you try to prep harder, or do you start to aim for a draw?

I don't try to break the streak, I

still try to win – I always try to win – but if it keeps happening, once, twice, three times... then it really does add up.

Would you try to change your expectations or your opening choices for that opponent?

Maybe expectations, or maybe an opening line, but not a whole repertoire.

Your repertoire looks like it is based on Fischer's repertoire. You open 1.e4, and as Black you play the King's Indian and Benoni, a lot; and against 1.e4 you play... the Najdorf.

I've also started playing more positional defences, like the Nimzo, which I've played before.

Fischer played the Nimzo too, but so did every World Champion since the 1920s...

It's so solid.

Did you ever play 1.d4 and play the White side against the Nimzo?

I've experimented with 1.d4, but I don't have a solid repertoire with it.



Do you ever just pick an opening, maybe in the first round of a small event, and just play anything?

No, I tend to play what I always play.

Do you do that online too?

No. In blitz I play anything. That's the perfect time to experiment with anything.

But you weren't experimenting during the PRO Chess League were you?

No, those were serious games.

The following game was played in the PRO Chess League match between the Toronto Dragons and Montreal Chessbrahs.

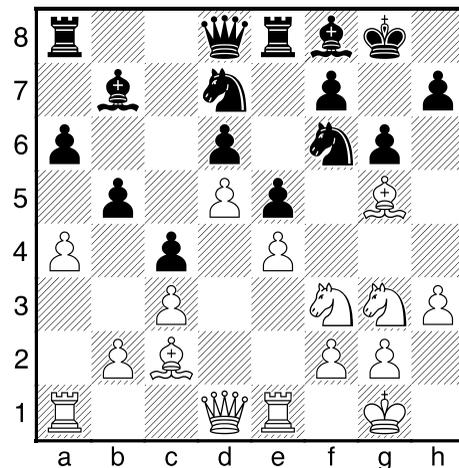
Preotu, Razvan (2495)
Le Siege, Alexandre (2512)
C95

PRO Chess League Chess.com,
18.01.2017

Notes by John Upper

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6
4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♖e1
b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3

♞b8 10.d4 ♞bd7 11.♞bd2
♙b7 12.♙c2 ♖e8 13.♞f1 ♙f8
14.♞g3 g6 15.a4 c5 16.d5 c4
17.♙g5



Razvan has had this position as White at least twice before (see below). Both times he went for queenside play; this time he goes for Black's ♙.

17...♞c5

17...h6 18.♙e3 ♖c7 19.♙d2 h5:
20.♙h6 ♖eb8 21.♙xf8 ♘xf8
22.♙h6 ♙e7 23.♞d2 ♞6d7
24.♖f1 ♙c8 25.f4↑ ♞h7 26.axb5
axb5 27.♞f3 ♙f8= Grandelius,N
(2643)–Karjakin,S (2785) Doha,
2016 (1-0, 90).

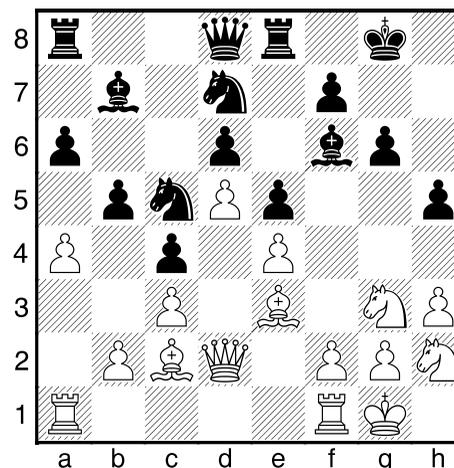
20.♖a3 ♞c5 21.♖ea1 ♙e7
22.♙g5 ♞h7 23.♙xe7 ♙xe7

24.♙e3 ♞f6± (½-½, 36) **Preotu,R**
(2441)–Ghosh,D (2516) Gyor,
2014.

18.♙d2 ♙e7 19.♙e3

19.♖a3 ♞fd7 20.h4 bxa4
21.♙xa4 ♞xa4 22.♖xa4 a5
23.♖d1 ♙a6 24.♙xe7 ♖xe7
25.♙h6 ♞c5 26.♖a2 ♙b5 27.♙g5
♖e8 28.♞h2 f6 29.♙h6 ♙e7
30.♞g4 ♙g7 31.♙xg7+ ♙xg7=
(½-½, 72) **Preotu,R – Hansen,E,**
Canadian Zonal, 2015.

19...♞fd7 20.♞h2 h5 21.♖f1
♙f6

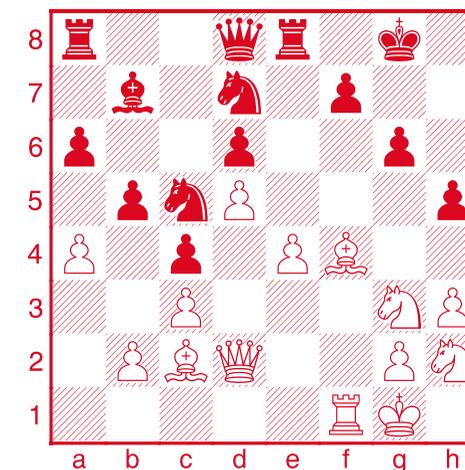


22.f4

22.♞e2 ♙g7 23.g4 ♞f6 24.f3
hgx4 25.hgx4 ♞h7 26.♙g2
♙f6 27.♖h1 ♞g5 28.♞f1 ♙g7
29.♞fg3 ♖h8 30.♖xh8 ♙xh8

31.♖h1+ ♙g8 32.♙e1= Motylev,A
(2634)–Stevic,H (2550) Istanbul,
2003.

22...exf4 23.♖xf4 ♙e5
24.♖af1!? ♙xf4 25.♙xf4



...h4 or ...♙e7

25...h4?

♞25...♙e7 when White has
some compensation in dark-
square control. 26.♙g5 (26.♞f3
♞f6) 26...f6 27.♙h4.

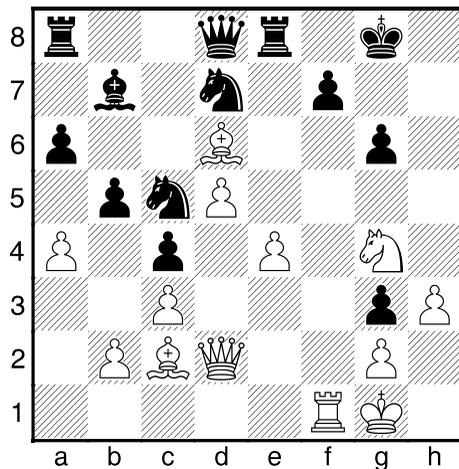
The game move is natural, since
it undermines e4, but it lets
White bring one more piece into
the attack with...

26.♞g4!! → hxg3 27.♙xd6





Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²



White is down a ♖ for a pawn, but Black is busted.

27...f6

27...♔h4!? lets the ♔ defend, but it's not enough:

28.♙xc5! ♘xc5 29.♘h6+ ♔h8 30.♚d4+ ♔h7 31.♖xf7+ ♔xh6 32.♚g7+ ♔h5 (32...♔g5 33.♖f5#) 33.♙d1+-.

28.♘h6+ shows another attacking idea: 28...♔h8 29.♙xg3! ♚xg3 30.♘xf7+ ♔g8 31.♚h6+-;

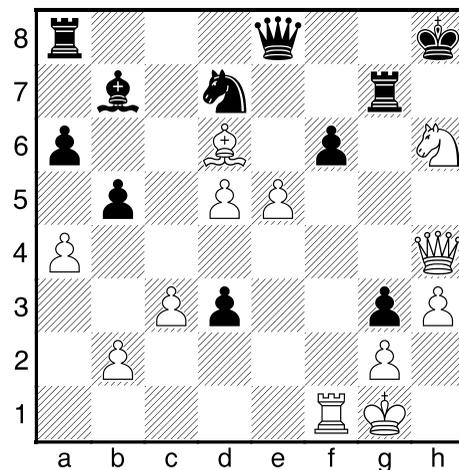
28.♚h6 ♖e7 29.e5!
29.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 30.♖xf6+-.

29...♖h7 30.♚xg6+ ♖g7
31.♘h6+ ♔h8 32.♚h5! ♚e8

33.♘f7+

33.♚h4!+-.

33...♔g8 34.♘h6+ ♔h8
35.♚h4! ♘d3 36.♙xd3 cxd3



37.exf6

This wins, but even stronger is: 37.e6! ♔h7 38.♖xf6! (38.exd7?? ♚e3+ 39.♔h1 ♖xh6-+) 38...♘xf6 39.♚xf6+ ♖g7 40.♚h4! (40.♘f7+ ♔g8 41.♙e5 wins more slowly.) 40...♖h7 41.♙e5+- #2.

37...♖h7 38.f7??

The only mistake... but it could have turned a brilliancy into a loss.

38.♚d4□+- e.g. 38...♖f7
39.♘xf7+ ♚xf7 40.♖f4! ♚xd5
41.♖h4+ ♔g8 42.♚g4+ ♚g5
43.♚e6#.

38...♚d8??

Luckily for White, Black got fixated on trading ♚s.

♘38...♚e3+ 39.♔h1 ♚xh6□-+ (39...♖xh6? 40.♙e5+ ♘f6□ (40...♘xe5 41.f8♚+ ♖xf8 42.♖xf8+ ♔g7 43.♚e7+-) 41.♖xf6 ♔h7□ 42.♖xh6+ ♚xh6 43.♚e4+ ♚g6 44.♚h4+=) 40.♚xg3 ♖f8-+.

39.♚d4+ ♖g7

40.f8♚+ ♚xf8

41.♙xf8

attack2mateU won on time

1-0

PRO Chess Leage Controversy

The Professional Rapid Online Chess League expanded worldwide in 2016 and there were some growing pains.

Miami defeated Toronto in the playoffs, but Toronto was informed the next day by chess.com that the loss had been overturned as one of the Miami players had failed anti-cheating measure and Miami was being disqualified. Miami appealed, and the DQ was overturned, but without any explanation given. I know more than one Toronto player felt cheated by the whole affair.

Curiously, but perhaps only coincidentally, about a month later that same Miami team player was permanently banned from chess.com for cheating.

The other side is to look at what chess.com has to do to combat online cheating. I tell Razvan about an interview with IM Danny Rensch, one of chess.com's rulers, where he discussed their extensive anti-cheating measures. The details are trade secrets, and subject to non-disclosure agreements when explained to the world's top players so they can feel confident they won't get cheated, but Rensch described two of them: one involves using the webcam to follow a players' eye movements to see if they are using external analysis devices, another involves tracking mouse movements to see if a player is adding moves to an external board.

They don't have everything right yet, but they are definitely taking it seriously and spending money on it.

Online Play

As a GM or IM, do you get a free membership on ICC?

I was a member on ICC for a long time before I got the title, and I was paying for that. As a GM I get free membership, but I don't think IMs get them.

Really! Those are some high standards they have there. Maybe that's why ICC isn't doing quite so well any more, or so I've been told. Have you noticed this?

Not really. There are still a lot of titled players. But I think some players like Nakamura only play on chess.com.

I wonder if maybe chess.com has too close a relationship with some of their top players, which leads to suspicions when the disqualification against Nakamura's Miami team got overturned on appeal without any public explanation. What did you think of that decision?

I thought it was pretty strange that it got overturned.

Would you play again in the PRO League if you got a chance?

Yeah, I would definitely play again.

Training

Have you learned anything that you think as made you more efficient at learning?

Hmm, that's interesting. I think, I've used online tools more effectively. There are the tactics exercises I mentioned. And when I want to learn an opening I go online and play [blitz] games to practice, whereas before I would have to wait to play games at a club to practice.

What do you do to work on tactics?

Before tournaments I often use Tactics Trainer on Chess.com. I don't want to do really hard tactics, just simple ones.

How do you manage that on a website like chess.com? Doesn't it tailor the problems to your rating, so that with your rating you'd be getting really hard ones?

I mean, I don't want to be doing

the Dvoretsky-like problems.

Oh, I get ya: those Dvoretsky problems feel like they're designed to embarrass super-GMs and you're looking for 2500-level tactics — really hard for me but not super hard for you. What is your tactics rating on chess.com?

It's like 2700, but that's not so high on their server, where there are ratings over 3000.

Are you a member on chess.com?

Yes. I joined only after I got the IM title, which got me a free premium membership and unlimited tactics.

How many would you do in a day?

Not a set number, but based on time, about ½ an hour, which is enough for me to stay sharp.

When you're learning an opening, do you use mostly databases, or books, or work with friends...?

Before I mostly used coaches, they would show me the openings.

When you say learning openings, do you mean memorizing sequences of moves or typical middle-game plans?

Learning typical middlegame plans for the kinds of positions that could come up.

Are there any particular authors or books you liked using for openings?

Not any particular author, but I always like Gambit books. There was a John Nunn book on the Benoni that I liked.

Really! I think that was a really old book, maybe a Batsford book which would have been published even before Gambit existed... maybe even before you were born!

Do you have any GM models? Players whose games you'll always look at or maybe whose repertoires you happen to like?

Not really. I follow the live events, and I play through their games, but not for any particular player.

Do you watch tournaments live online with GM commentary?





Or review the games with the analysis on ChessBase?

No, I just play through the games on ICC, with just a replay of the board.

[we talk about some games from the Grenke tournament, which was being played at the same day of the interview. Razvan had played through the games that morning and described the winning maneuvers from the top games. I asked if he watched the PRO League semis and finals, and he said he knew the results but had skipped the games.]

You have access to play against computers, do you ever do that?

[groans] I don't like playing against computers...

Why, are they not good enough for you?

[laughs] They're too good.

Does losing against a computer still hurt?

Yeah, and I don't think there's much to learn from them: you're not going to play like them, and they're not going to

play like your tournament opponents.

There's another problem with playing them: you stop looking for tactical oversights.

Yeah, you kind of just trust them.

And you should, because they see further than you... and at short time controls they see further further than we do, and that's exactly wrong prep for tournament chess where you always have to be looking for blunders and traps. My hunch is that when people play against computers they play negatively, trying to play safe and avoid the initiative.

I think a lot of players have the same feeling about computers. I know Magnus Carlsen doesn't play them.

Books and Computers

You grew up in the computer generation, but I read that you played through Kasparov's My Great Predecessors series.

Not all of them. I played

through the ones on Fischer and... [thinks here]... Petrosian, Spassky.

Did you play through the ones on the earlier World Championships?

I didn't do the earlier ones.

Why not? Did you think each one would take too long, or that you weren't interested...

It's not that I wasn't interested, it's just that I thought it would take too long and that it would be best for me to study the later Champions. Chess has evolved so much since the earlier ones.

Yeah. If you're studying Fischer, even though he was playing over 40 years ago you can still learn a lot more about the Lopez than you will by studying Steinitz's games, so you're sort of doubling up on your knowledge.

Exactly.

Did you play through them in books or did you get the digital versions of them – CBV or PGN – that Everyman sells?

I got them as books, so I used a

board...

[surprised] Really?

It took a long time, but yeah. It would have been easier with PGNs, but I didn't have them.

I'm not sure they're all available as PGNs, but most Everyman books are sold in paper versions or PGN/CBV databases. Given the choice, would you rather go through the books with a board or as a database?

I'd rather go with the database. It's a lot more convenient, since you don't have to keep resetting the pieces.

Exactly! Everybody who's over 40 will remember going through Informants or other books and resetting the pieces (incorrectly) and then can't believe these guys are making all these tactical mistakes... [laughs]... and then...

...you've wasted all of your time. With a database you can just click back and that never happens.

Coaches

Who were your chess coaches?

Mikhail [Egorov] was my first coach. I was around 11, and about 1800. I would play in weekly tournaments at the Hamilton chess club. He came to my house — he lives in Burlington too — and we would go over my games with a board, and he would ask me “What was your idea with this move?” We didn’t study openings then, that would have been too much. I think the important thing to get to Master level is to study middlegames.

Middlegame strategies, tactics...?

Thinking process.

Have you read any good books on thinking process?

One was How to Think like a

Grandmaster [Kotov], and another was a Dvoretsky book *Tactical Play*.

How long did you study with Mikhail?

From when I was really little, just after starting tournaments, until I was around 2000.

And then who?

My next coach was a Romanian Grandmaster my father knew. [George-Gabriel Grigore] Everybody called him GGG. We did

lessons online, on ICC.

How did those work?

It’s like Skype, you open an invitation to the other player and you could both move pieces on the board and talk.

would you have the web cam on for that?

No, there wasn’t any point.

Would you email him games and then go over them?

That was a big part of it. When I

didn’t have any games he would choose a game, either a classic game or if he saw I was having a problem with some kind of middlegame, like and IQP, then he would choose a game for us to study.

How long did each of those lessons run?

About two hours, but only once per week.

Did he give you homework?

No.

Didn’t any of your chess coaches give you homework?

No. [laughs]

[I tease Razvan that he got off easy. In the precomputer era I took a few lessons with FM Roman Pelts, who gave me *pages* of homework problems to solve. I couldn’t solve them and told myself they weren’t helping. Only decades later, when I started playing again, did I realize that those were *exactly* the kinds of exercises I should have been working on: precisely targeted at my weakest spots.]



Coach #1 Mikhail Egorov

With Razvan and Michael Song at the 2011 WYCC in Brazil.





Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

How long did you work with GGG?

About two years, then he retired. Then I started working with [GM] Gergely Szabo. I studied with him for a few years, until just before I got my final Norm. At that time we were pretty close in strength and there wasn't much more he could teach me.

You said there's a Chess coach at the UTD. There's only one famous university chess coach in the US, and she doesn't work in Texas anymore, but even she wouldn't be strong enough or up-to-date enough to give lessons to the top players in the US College system. Do you think you'll be mostly

working on your own down there?

I've met the UTD chess coach. His name is Rade Milovanovic. He's not a top player, but he has a lot of experience, and I'll be happy to work with him, and I'll study on my own if I have to.

While we're on this subject of coaching, I want to ask some questions about coaching. I've often thought that there can be a problem if the coach is so much stronger than the player that the coach doesn't really understand the problems the player faces. My favourite quote on this is from an Lev Aronian interview – it might have been a Reddit AMA – where he

says something like "anyone can get to

2350, all you have to do is play one tournament a month and spend an hour or two a week on chess". [both laugh] I am sure that's true about Aronian, and it's probably true of most of the other 2700s -- even if they'd been slackers would still get to FM without even trying...

Because they have a lot of talent.

Yeah. But what it also means is that they have no idea – they can't even imagine – how difficult it is for weaker players to get good. But a player who is less talented might be more aware of the things that made progressing more difficult, and might have ideas about how to work around those difficulties which the super-GMs didn't even notice.

I think it's strange to have someone who is lower rated as a coach; but having someone who's only one class higher – if you're an FM he's an IM – I think that's a significant gap, and he can teach you things about how he got to the next

class. But if you have a teacher who is lower-rated than you... apart from experience, I don't think there's much chess-wise he can teach you.

That's a problem for all the top players: unless they can pay tens of thousands to hire Kasparov, they have to work with coaches who are weaker players. Caruana worked with Chuchelov. And I think Tukmakov is working with So now, and previously worked with Giri. Those super GMs are all working with much lower-rated players as coaches. I feel like, even though there is a big gap in rating between those coaches [and their super-GM clients], they are still Grandmasters, and the lower rated player could still teach things to the super-GMs, despite the rating gap.

You mean like if they have different skill sets...

Yes. And since a lot of the work is on openings, which is mostly time, you don't need someone so close in playing strength.



We meet again in Saint Louis! Susan Polgar presenting Razvan with a GM norm certificate in St. Louis. Next time: UTD vs Webster and no smiles.



Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

Do you know who helps Nakamura on his opening prep?

Nope.

An expert named Chris Littlejohn.

Really!?! [surprised]

He runs Nakamura's computer bank, and Nakamura trusts his chess judgement enough to tell the interesting ideas from not interesting ones – he doesn't just send Nakamura a database with all the analysis. They've been working together for a few years, and Nakamura's opening prep is fantastic, and he has one of the most diverse and up-to-date repertoires out there, although someone as resourceful as Nakamura could make almost any opening seem playable. So, maybe someone with the right combination of chess skills and computer expertise is enough [even without a GM title].

Have you started working with someone else after Gergely?

Um, no.

Does this mean you have no

more chess ambitions?

It doesn't mean that... but if I have any I'll work on it myself.

You said "if I have any". Do you have any?

I want to keep improving in rating. I think 2550 would be good.

To some people that might not sound like a very high number, because you're just below 2500 now, so that's only 55 points. But...

... at that level, with a k value of 10, you have to have a good score against everyone, and a draw against another 2500 GM doesn't help.

Exactly. I think a lot of people underestimate how difficult those last steps are. I was listening to a podcast with IM Christof Sielecki. He's around 2460, and the interviewer asked if he was going to try to get the GM title. Sielecki said that he thought it was possible for him to get the GM title, but with his level of talent he would have to sacrifice everything else in his life to completely focus on the

Norms, and he wasn't prepared to do that just to have a shot at it. The interviewer, who has been around chess for decades, seemed really surprised by this, which I think shows how many people can't imagine the kind of work necessary to get those Norms. Sielecki said that it had taken him years to get his last IM Norm because he kept coming up ½ point short, but when he finally got it he got IM Norms in his next five tournaments!

<https://www.perpetualchesspod.com/new-blog/2017/1/11/international-master-christof-sielecki-aka-chess-explained>

Memory and Talent

A lot of top players have freakish memories, like Ivanchuk is rumoured to have memorized tens of thousands of games and studies...

...and some players even remember the dates and places of the games...

Apparently Kasparov can remember every phone number he's called.

Wow!

Sam Shankland said he has an eidetic memory, and has no trouble remembering anything he reads. Do you know Deen Hergott's story about Anand?

No.

[I tell him Deen's story about Anand memorizing and cross-referencing an *Informant* in one day during the Olympiad. I ask if he's had any experiences like that. Razvan tells me this...]

I was playing in Reykjavik in 2015 and went to their Pub Quiz. Carlsen and [Jon Ludwig] Hammer were there. There were a lot of obscure questions on the quiz. Carlsen is not just a great player, but he remembers so much about the history of the game. It wasn't that surprising, but I found it amazing that



he knows so much about the game and its history, and so he was easily able to answer the questions.

And that's why they won. How did you do on the Pub Quiz? Were you playing with your dad?

No, we were just spectating. We were late; I don't think we'd have done so well, but it would have been fun. We didn't get a chance to talk, but I got a picture with Magnus to remember.

Have you seen the Magnus documentary on Netflix?

No. How is it?

It's.... better than I expected. There's not much in it I hadn't seen before, but there are a lot of photos and videos from when Magnus was a really little kid which I hadn't seen, and a lot of family films. There's a longer version of his rapid game against Kasparov in Reykjavik where they drew. You can see Magnus is bored, and that they changed the rules for Kasparov: all the other games had

started and Magnus is waiting but Kasparov was late and they didn't start his clock. And there are all the usual monkey faces Kasparov makes when he doesn't like his position – eyes bugging out, head shaking—and Magnus getting an ice cream treat after they drew; that was extended footage I hadn't seen before. There's essentially nothing about chess training or much about Magnus's chess improvement in it. So it's basically a biography but without much chess detail.

Yeah. But even as a biography there are gaps: it spends time on his earliest years playing, and then jumps from him being 14 to being world #1 at 19. It shows him celebrating his first match win over Anand, and playing blindfold. It's worth watching, but it's not really any better than the 60 Minutes segment which was only a few minutes long and in fact starts the same way as the documentary, with Magnus playing 10 people blindfold.

Blindfold Date

with Hans Jung outside the St Louis Chess Club.

Can you play blindfold?

Yes. There are some guys at school who play chess, who know how the pieces move, and I thought it would be fun to try, so I played them blindfold. They couldn't believe it!

Were you playing one game blindfold, or more?

I haven't tested myself with multiple games blindfolded. They were around 1600 and it was a long game, but I can keep track of the pieces; so I can definitely do one game.

I can't play even one blindfold game. David Gordon is "only" 2300 and he played six games blindfold last year! Really?!

Yeah, he was doing it outdoors in Gatineau... and he doesn't even practice it.

Oh yeah, I remember now.

And of course, Hans [Jung] can do more than that.

You don't have to be a titled player to play blindfold.



But learning to play blindfold might help you become a titled player.

Travel

How many countries have you been to to play chess?

I haven't counted, but it's quite a lot. I've been to France, Greece, Iceland, Brazil, just to name a few.

You're results in the World Youth haven't been super, is that fair?

Well, I haven't medalled, but I the most recent one was pretty successful, I was 5th or 6th.

Do you find it's easier to play those big international events now that you've had more experience?

I can do more things better now that I have more experience.

Do you get jet lagged?

No. I used to have trouble sleeping away from home, but now I'm used to it.

Do you have any routines you follow during tournaments?

I usually get up about an hour and a half before the game. That lets me get a long sleep, which helps; and it also gives me time to prepare.

You don't prepare the night before?

No. I think this way it's fresher, and there's always a chance they'll switch the pairings. That's not uncommon in North American tournaments, and it's better to be safe than sorry and waste your time.

After Titles

When you got your IM title did you notice it made any difference to your playing, or were you so focused on the GM title that it didn't change much?

Going for the GM title was the next natural step, and one of my IM Norms was also a GM Norm so that made it [the transition] easier.

Apart from relief, have you notice any difference the GM title has made to your life?

I feel accomplished to have

achieved the title. And I guess it's shown me that if you have a goal... and you try your best at something... [Razvan starts getting self conscious here as I look at him over the top of my glasses, expecting a Hallmark moment] ... then you can achieve it. It's a life lesson.

Did you not believe that before you achieved it? :)

Well... before...

You hoped it was true...?

It took such a long time to get my final Norm – two years – of constant play...

Were you starting to wonder...?

Yeah.

Were you starting to think it might not be worth it?

No, not that. But that if I was ever going to get it would have to be soon, since I knew with school and university I wouldn't have much time to put into chess.

I suppose one thing getting the GM title has done is to make

you less interested in playing tournaments.

Yes. For a long time getting the title was the Big Goal, and now that I've accomplished it... [trails off]...

What about playing in the World Junior and maybe finishing in the top 5?

No, not really. It would be a good experience, I'd want to finish at the top but I don't have any score [to aim for]...

When did you think of applying to UTD? Did you think it had to be conditional on getting the GM title?

I applied to UTD after I got the title. I saw – Oh! They have such good offers...

I assume their offers are scaled to the titles, the higher the title the higher the pay. Just like pay for annotating games for the Newsletter [Razvan laughs]. I assume that's why you sent your annotations when you did: I requested them when you were an IM, but you sent them after you got the GM title, so we have



to pay the...

Wait, what!?

Just teasing. ;-)

After the interview Razvan went through a collection of positions I've been compiling to test chess skills and knowledge: famous positions, typical middlegames, endgame studies, etc.

I won't give a detailed report on this until I have tried it with many more players, but I will say that Razan's ability to find the best move in each position was exceptional: accurate and very fast.

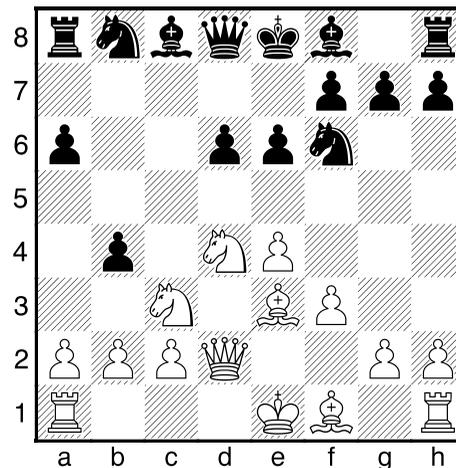
Chess Canada is happy to present six games played by IM Razvan Preotu, and annotated by GM Razvan Preotu.

Notes by GM Razvan Preotu Erenburg, Sergey (2585) Preotu, Razvan (2452) B80

2016 World Open Philadelphia (8), 04.07.2016

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♙e3 e6 7.f3 b5 8.♚d2 b4

The Topalov variation, where Black plays an early ...b4 to attack the White knight. 8...♘bd7 is the main move.



9.♘d1

With ♘d1 White's intentions of playing positionally and castling kingside are clear.

White has two other retreats that are seen more often and tend to lead to sharper positions:

9.♘a4 ♘bd7 10.0-0-0 (10.c4 bxc3 11.♘xc3 ♙b7 12.♙e2 ♙e7 13.0-0 0-0 14.♖ac1 is a more positional way to play, but after 14...♚b8! Black should be able to break in the center with

a timely d6-d5 and equalize comfortably.) 10...♚a5 11.b3 ♙b7 12.a3 ♚c7 13.axb4 d5∞ leads to a very complicated position where both kings are likely to come under attack; see: Caruana–Topalov Stavanger, 2014 (1/2-1/2, 66).

9.♘ce2 e5 10.♘b3 ♘c6 11.g4 (11.c4?! ♙e6 12.♘g3 a5 13.♙e2 a4 14.♘c1 h5↑ Although Black has made a lot of pawn moves, his pieces are optimally placed compared to White's and has some initiative on the queenside.) 11...h6 12.♘g3 ♙e6 13.0-0-0 ♚c7 14.♚b1 d5 15.exd5 ♘xd5 16.♙d3 ♖d8 17.♚e2 ♘xe3 18.♚xe3 ♙e7∞ White has some initiative on the kingside, but Black should be able to neutralize it with precise play. Also, Black has a strong counter-play threat of simply pushing the a-pawn to a4.

9...e5

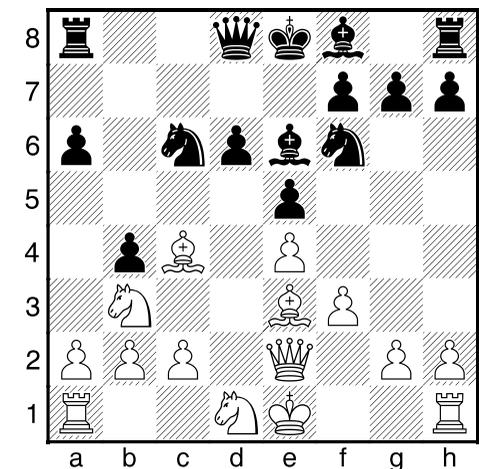
One of the main ideas of ...b4, as the knight can no longer move to d5. However it might have been better to simply develop in order to keep the pawn-structure

more flexible. 9...♙e7 10.♙d3 0-0 11.0-0 (11.♙f2 getting ready for the break e4-e5 can now be met with 11...d5 12.e5 ♘fd7 13.f4 ♙b7 14.0-0 ♘c6=) 11...e5 12.♘b3 a5=.

10.♘b3 ♘c6 11.♙c4

11.♙f2 with the idea of playing ♘e3 was better, as White does not want to commit his bishop to c4 so early where it can be challenged. 11...d5 12.exd5 ♘xd5 13.♘e3 ♘xe3 14.♚xd8+ ♚xd8 15.♙xe3 ♙e6 16.0-0-0+ ♚c7± seems better for White.

11...♙e6 12.♚e2



12...♚c8

12...d5!? 13.♙xa6 ♚c7 is an interesting pawn sacrifice that



I did not consider enough in the game. Black gets a lot of compensation after 14. Nf2 Qd6 15. Nc5 0-0 16. Nxe6 fxe6 17. Qd3 Nc4 18. Qxd4 exd4 19. g3 Kh8 since castling is not possible due to perpetual check: 20. 0-0 Qxg3 21. hxg3 Wxg3+ 22. Kh1 Wh4+ 23. Kg1 (23. Kg2?? Nh5+) 23... Wg3+= .

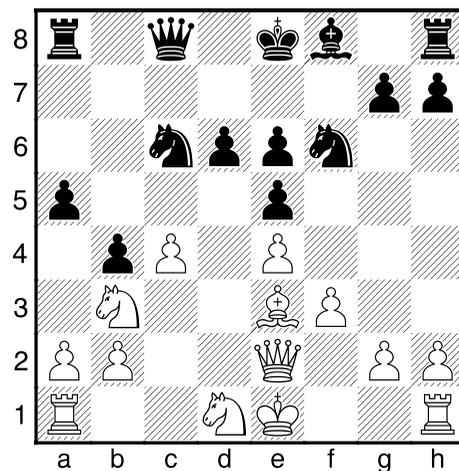
13. Qxe6

White must first exchange bishops before castling: 13. 0-0?? Nd4+ .

13... fxe6 14. c4

14. a3 was the way to fight for an advantage. 14... d5 15. exd5 exd5 16. axb4 Qxb4+ 17. c3 $\text{Qe7}\infty$ Black has the center, but it could potentially be weak in the future.

14... a5=

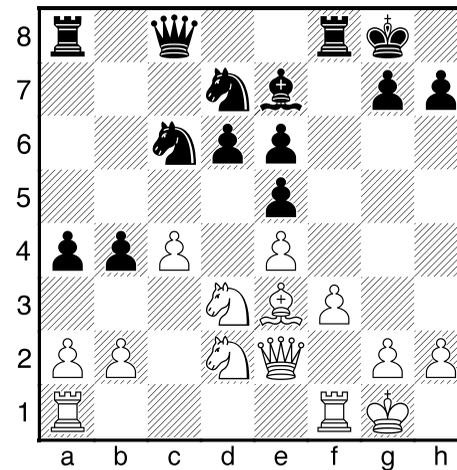


The position is blocked and Black has stabilized.

15. Nf2 a4 16. Nd2

16. Nc1 Qe7 17. Ncd3 is a better square for the knight, as on d2 it is simply misplaced.

16... Qe7 17. Ncd3 0-0 18. 0-0 Nd7



Although Black does not have a real advantage, I was very happy with my position and my chances. Black has the c5 and d4 outpost for a knight, while White doesn't have any outposts.

19. Wf2 Ra5

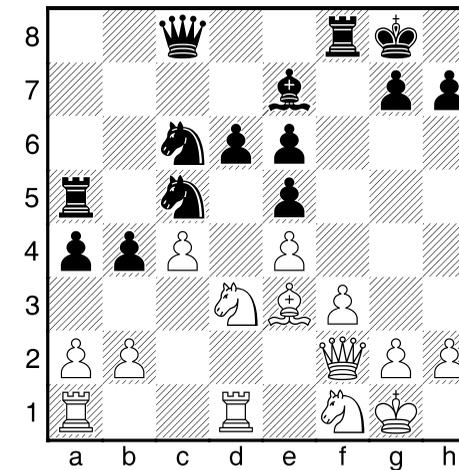
Preparing ... Nc5 .

20. Rfd1 Nc5 21. Nf1?!

21. Nxc5 dxc5 22. Kh1 $\text{Nd4}\bar{f}$;

21. Qxc5 $\text{dxc5}\bar{f}$;

21. We2 is probably the best, but after 21... Nd4 22. Qxd4 exd4 23. Nxb4 $\text{Qg5}\uparrow$ White is under pressure.



21... a3!

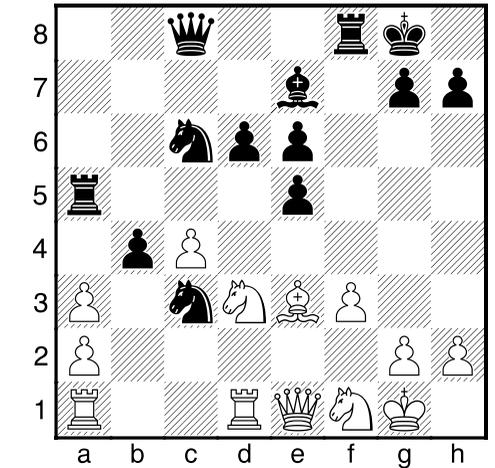
The idea is to gain control of the c3 square.

21... Nxe4 22. We1 Nf6 23. Nxb4 Nxb4 24. Wxb4 Ra8 25. $\text{Ng3}\bar{f}$ is slightly better for Black, but the game continuation promises more.

22. bxa3

22. Nxc5 axb2 23. Wxb2 $\text{dxc5}\bar{f}$.

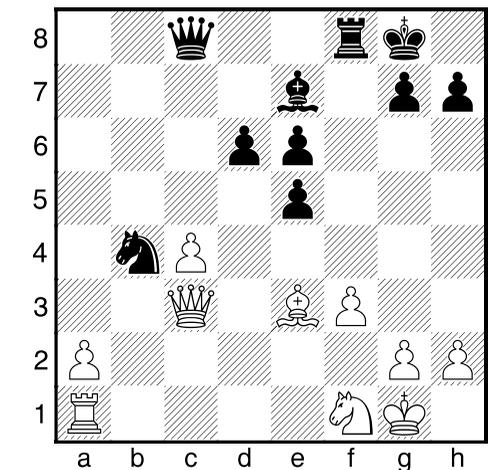
22... Nxe4 23. We1 Nc3



24. Rdc1

24. Nxb4 Nxd1 25. Nxc6 Wxc6 26. Wxa5 Nxe3 27. Nxe3 $\text{Qg5}\bar{f}$;
24. axb4 Nxd1 25. bxa5 Nxe3 26. Nxe3 $\text{Qd8}\bar{f}$.

24... Rxa3 25. Nxb4 Nxb4 26. Rxc3 Rxc3 27. Wxc3



27... Nd5

27... d5! 28. a3 d4 29. Wb3 Na6



30. ♖f2 ♘c5+ was better than the game, as Black has a passed d-pawn and blocked White's bishop.

28. ♖d3 ♘xe3 29. ♘xe3 ♖c5+
30. ♔h1 ♙g5

30... ♖c8 31. ♖d1 ♖a8 32. ♖e2 ♖a3
33. ♖d3 ♖xd3 34. ♖xd3 ♙d8+ Is better and leads to a very similar position in the game.

31. ♘f1 ♖f4

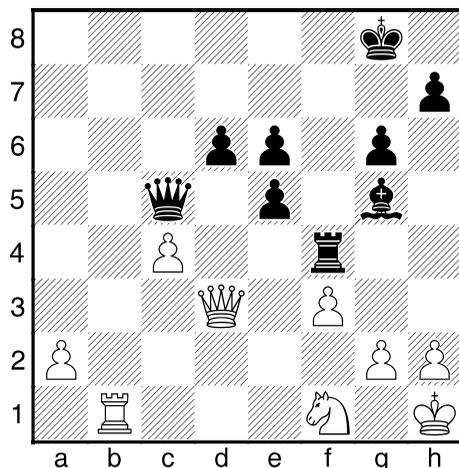
My idea is to play ... ♖d4, but after...

32. ♖b1!

White has counterplay on the open b-file.

32... ♙g6

32... ♖c7 controlling the invasion squares on the b-file is better.



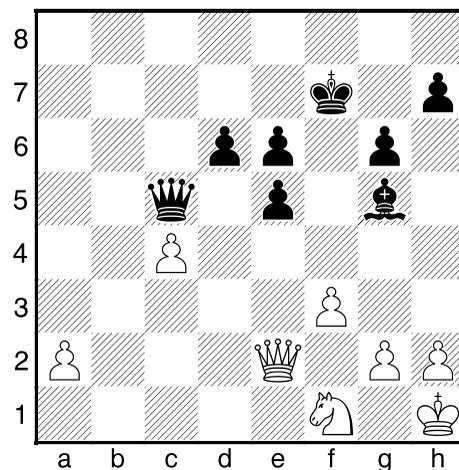
33. ♖b8+?

33. ♖b3! Threatening both ♖b8+ and ♘d2. 33... ♖xc4 34. ♖b8+ ♖f8
35. ♖xd6 e4 36. ♖e5 ♙c1 37. ♘g3
exf3 38. gxf3 ♙f4 39. ♖e2 ♖xe2
40. ♘xe2 ♙e5+ Black is slightly better because of the bishop vs knight, but it will be very difficult to win with so few pawns left.

33... ♔g7 34. ♖b7+ ♖f7

34... ♔h6? allows White to get counterplay after 35. ♘e3 e4
36. ♖c3 ♙f6 37. ♘g4+ ♖xg4
38. ♖xf6=.

35. ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 36. ♖e2+



The exchange of rooks has made White's defense a lot easier.

36... ♙d8

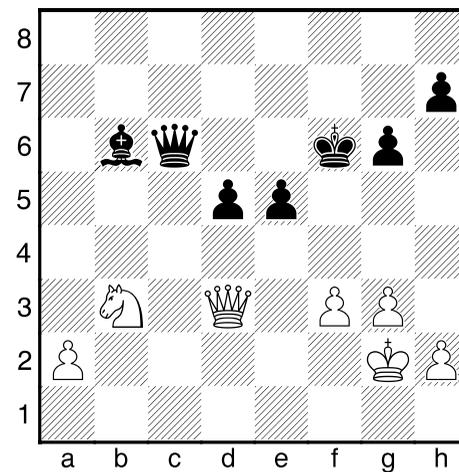
I was proud of this battery idea, but it's not enough to create any serious threats against the White king.

37. ♙g3 ♙b6 38. ♔g2 d5

The only way to play for the win is to create a passed d-pawn. The problem is that this weakens Black's own king.

39. ♘d2 ♔f6 40. cxd5 exd5

41. ♘b3 ♖c6 42. ♖d3



42... h5?

Too slow a move. It's a good idea to advance pawns in the endgame to get space, but a more concrete way of thinking was required. 42... e4 43. fxe4 dxe4 is better, as White does not

have the b5-square to offer an exchange of queens.

43. a4! e4 44. fxe4 dxe4

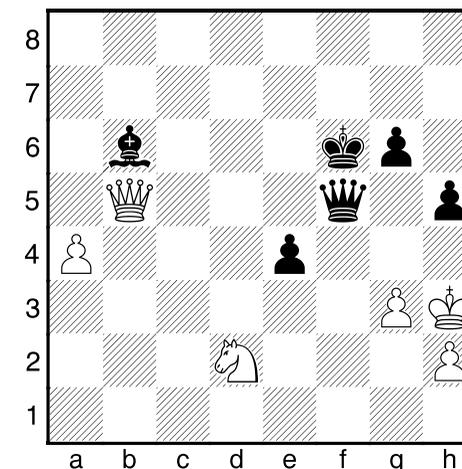
45. ♖b5 ♖c2+

45... ♖xb5 46. axb5 ♔e5 47. ♔f1
♔d5 48. ♔e2= is just a draw. I thought I need to keep queens on in order to make it more complicated for my opponent.

46. ♔h3 ♖f2 47. ♘d2

After some precise moves, White forces the exchange of queens.

47... ♖f5+



48. ♔g2

48. ♖xf5+ ♔xf5 helps Black, although with precise defense it is still a draw: 49. ♘b3 e3 50. ♘c1
♔e5 51. ♔g2 ♔e4 Zugzwang,



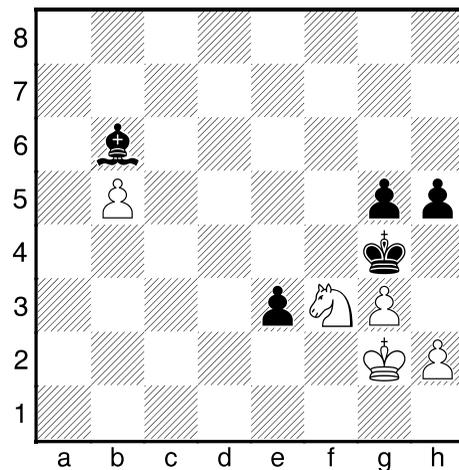
the Black king is able to invade although it's not enough. 52.♔f1 ♕f3 53.♘e2 g5 54.♘c1 h4 55.gxh4 gxh4 56.♘e2 ♔e4 57.h3=.

48...♔xb5 49.axb5=

The endgame is drawn, but as we were both low on time the chances for one of us to make a mistake is very likely. With no further additional time, we were only relying on the 10 second delay.

49...e3 50.♘f3 ♔f5 51.♔f1 ♔g4
51...♔e4 52.♔e2.

52.♔g2 g5



Advancing the kingside pawns

hoping to provoke a weakness is the only plan Black has.

53.♘g1

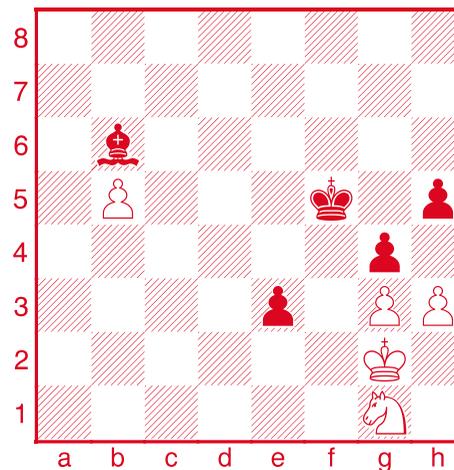
53.♘e1 Was a better square, as on g2 it attacks the pawn on e3 and does not get blocked by g5-g4.

53...♔f5 54.h3?

The losing mistake. Now the g3-pawn is a weakness that can't be defended in the long run.

54.♔f3 g4+ 55.♔e2 ♔e4 56.♔d1 Black cannot improve, White will just shuffle his king or knight back and forth to the e2 square.

54...g4+



55.♘e2

editor – As far as I can tell, 55.♘e2 is actually the losing move. After 55.hxg4+ I can't find a way for Black to win. Here are two tries:

55...♔xg4 and Black can win the g3-pawn, but with the wrong-corner ♔ and ♘ combo and White's advanced b-pawn it's a draw; e.g. 56.♘e2 ♔c7 57.♘g1 (57.♔f1 ♔f3 58.♘d4+ also draws, as the ♘ can give itself up for the e-pawn.) 57...♔xg3 58.b6□= h4 59.b7 h3+ 60.♘h3 e2 61.♘f2+= or 61.b8♔=;

55...hxg4 56.♔f1 ♔e4 this is as dominating a position as Black can get, but White has an improbable fortress: 57.♔e2 (57.♔e1 also draws.) 57...♔c7 58.♔d1□ ♔xg3 59.b6 ♔d3 (59...♔f2?? 60.♘e2+-) 60.b7 and Black can't make any progress.

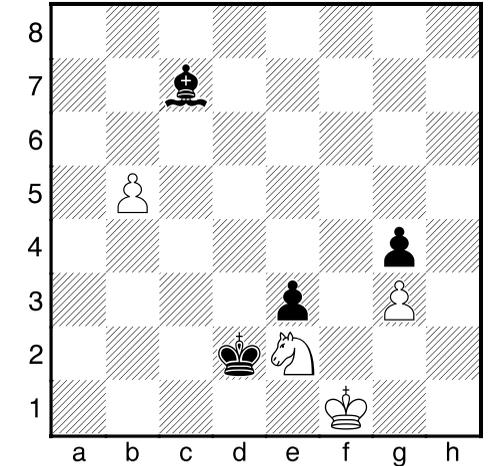
55...♔e4 56.♘f4 ♔a7

57.hxg4 hxg4

White is in zugzwang and must allow the Black king to go through.

58.♘e2 ♔d3 59.♘f4+ ♔d2

60.♔f1 ♔b8 61.♘e2 ♔c7



Another zugzwang, White loses the g3-pawn and the game.

62.♘d4 ♔xg3 63.b6 ♔b8

64.b7 g3 65.♘f3+ ♔d1

66.♘d4 ♔c7 67.♘b5 e2+

68.♔g2 e1♔

A very important win, as this allowed me to play for a GM norm in the final round!

0-1



Notes by GM Razvan Preotu
Preotu, Razvan (2452)
Lenderman, Aleksandr
(2621)

C06

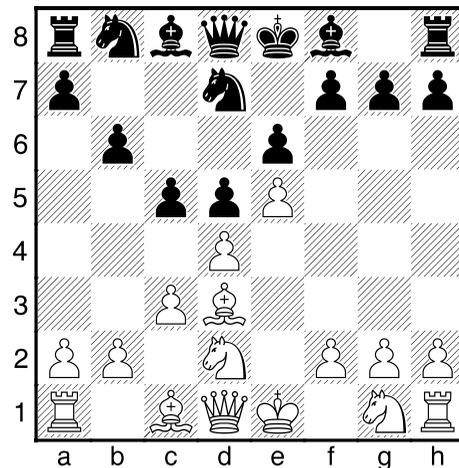
2016 World Open Philadelphia
 (9), 04.07.2016

Having 6/8 I only needed a draw in the last round to get my final GM norm. Although I was playing a strong 2600 GM, I felt confident as I had the White pieces.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 ♘f6

Earlier this year in Manchester, Lenderman played the Tarrasch variation with 3...c5.

4.e5 ♘fd7 5.♙d3 c5 6.c3 b6!?



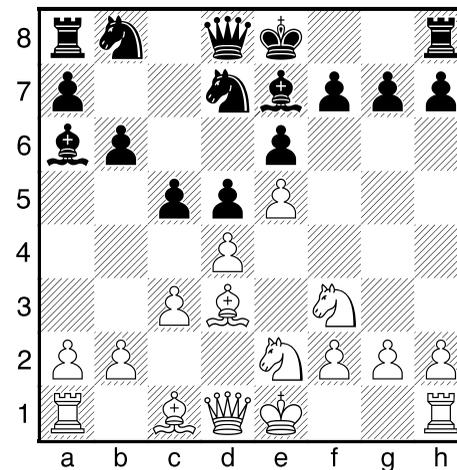
Black tries to trade light-square bishops. 6...♘c6 is more common, putting further pressure on d4.

7.♘e2 ♙a6 8.♘f3

8.♙xa6 ♘xa6 9.0-0 is better, as Black's knight is misplaced on a6 while the queen on d3 is not that well placed.

8...♙e7

♘8...♙xd3 9.♙xd3 ♘c6.



9.h4!?

A typical h-pawn advance in the French, having ideas such as ♙g5 and advancing h4-h5-h6 provoking weaknesses.

White has other testing options:
 9.♙xa6 ♘xa6 10.0-0±;

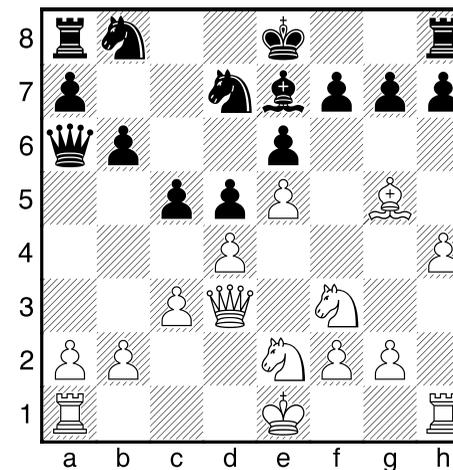
9.c4!? is an interesting idea that I missed in the game, challenging Black's solid pawn formation.

9...♙xc4 10.♙xc4 dxc4 11.d5 ♙c8 12.0-0 0-0 13.♘c3→.

9...♙c8

Trying to exchange queens.

10.♙g5 ♙xd3 11.♙xd3 ♙a6



12.♙d2

12.♙xa6 ♘xa6= gives White absolutely nothing. White has to keep queens on in order to start an attack on the kingside.

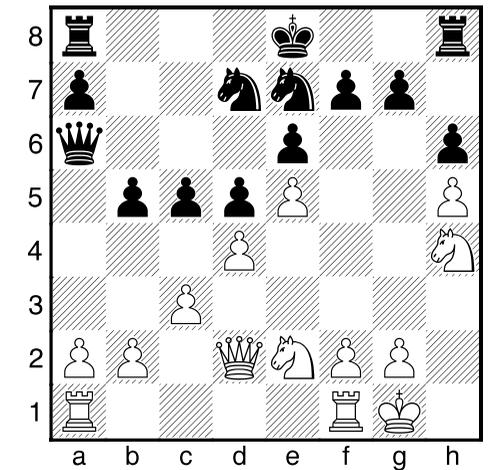
12...♘c6 13.♙xe7 ♘xe7

14.h5 h6

Allowing White to play h6 without the dark-square bishop looks

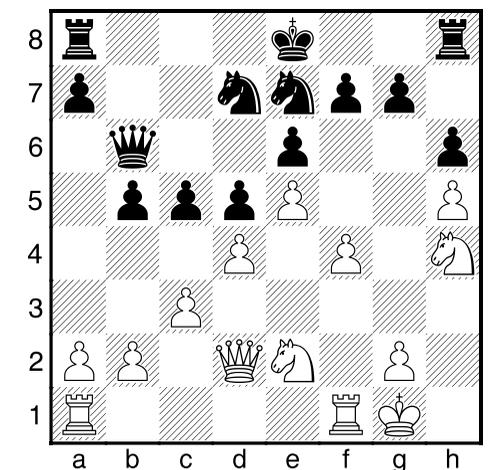
very dangerous.

15.0-0 b5 16.♘h4



White's plan is simple: play f4-f5 and go for mate. I was very optimistic with my position, as Black's counterplay on the queenside looks very slow.

16...♙b6 17.f4



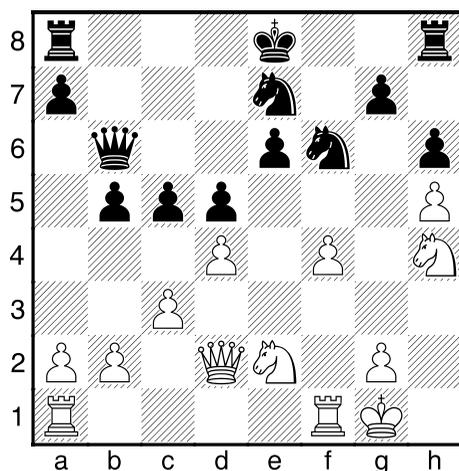
17...f5?

Too early. The opening of the position favours White.

17...0-0 looks scary, but if Black manages to play f7-f6 it will be difficult for White to attack:

18.f5 cxd4 19.cxd4 exf5
(19...♘xe5? 20.f6±) 20.♘xf5
♘xf5 21.♖xf5 f6! 22.exf6 ♘xf6
23.♙d3 ♘g4 24.♖af1 ♖xf5
25.♙xf5 ♘f6=;

18.♔h2 f6 19.♖ac1 a5 20.♖f3=
both sides find it difficult to
continue their attacks.

18.exf6 ♘xf6**19.♘g3?**

19.dxc5! ♙xc5+ 20.♙d4 is very

strong, as trading queens leaves
the e6 and b5 pawns hanging:

20...♙xd4+ 21.♘xd4 ♔d7
22.♘hf3 ♘f5 23.♘e5+ ♔c7
24.♘xb5+ ♔b6 25.a4 a6 26.♘d4
♘xd4 27.cxd4 ♘h5 28.♖f3±

White has the better pawn
structure and pieces, as well as
the safer king;

20...♙d6 21.a4 bxa4 22.♙xa4+
♔f7 (22...♙d7 23.♘d4±)
23.♖ae1± White has the initiative
because of the weak e6 pawn.

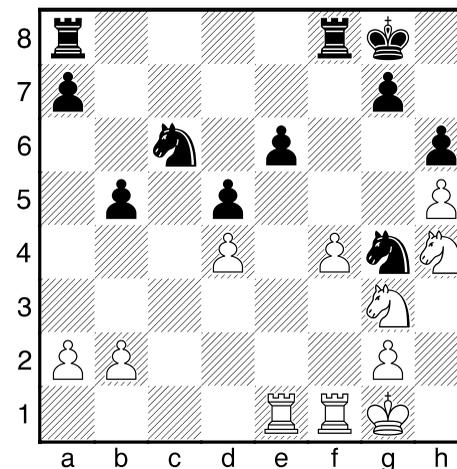
19...0-0 20.dxc5 ♙xc5+**21.♙d4 ♙xd4+ 22.cxd4=**

Both sides have weaknesses, so
the position is equal.

22...♘g4

22...♘c6 23.♖ad1 ♘g4 seems

more precise, forcing the rook to
defend the d-pawn first.

23.♖ae1 ♘c6**24.♘g6**

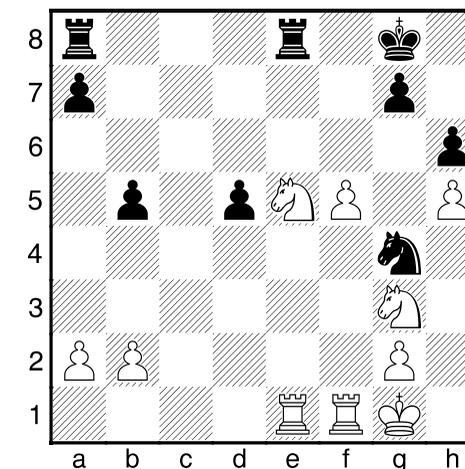
24.♖xe6 seems risky, as it opens
the position for Black's rook.

24...♘xd4 25.♖e7 ♖fe8 26.♖b7
♖eb8 27.♖xb8+ ♖xb8 28.♖d1
♘c2 29.♖xd5 ♘ce3 30.♖d2 ♖c8
31.♘e2 ♖c5= Black obviously

has full compensation for the
pawn and will likely win h5.

24...♖fe8 25.f5 e5

25...♘xd4 26.♖f4 ♘c2 27.♖xe6
♘f6 28.♖f2 ♘d4=.

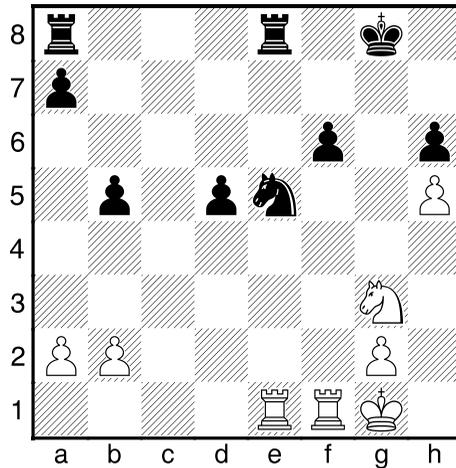
26.dxe5 ♘cxe5 27.♘xe5**27...♘xe5?**

A careless move. Black should
exchange a pair of rooks.



27...♖xe5 28.♖xe5 ♘xe5 29.f6 gxf6 30.♖xf6 ♖c8= Black has enough counterplay to maintain the balance.

28.f6 gxf6



29.♖d1!±

Most likely the move Lenderman missed. White wins back the pawn with the initiative due to Black's weak pawns.

Not 29.♖xf6? ♘f3+.

29...♘g4

editor – 29...♘c4 30.♖xf6 ♘e3 31.♖d4 transposes.

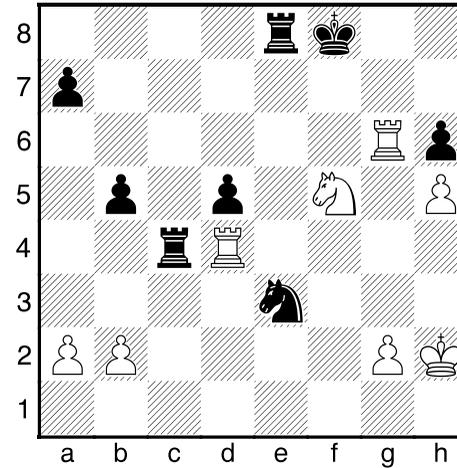
30.♖d4 ♘e3 31.♖xf6 ♖ac8

32.♘f5 ♖c1+

It makes sense to chase the king

away from the center before exchanging rooks.

33.♔h2 ♖c4 34.♖g6+ ♔f8



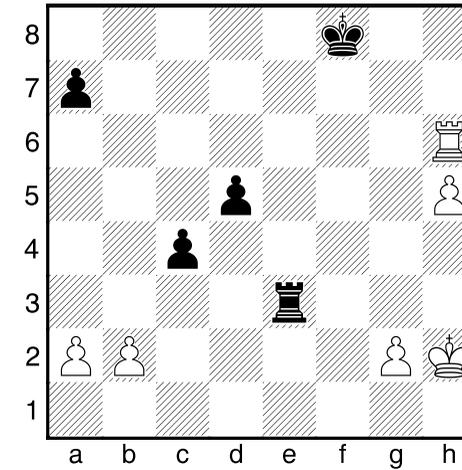
35.♖xc4

35.♖d3 keeps both queenside pawns, but should lead to a drawn rook endgame after 35...♘xf5 36.♖f6+ ♔e7 37.♖xf5 ♖d8 38.♖e5+ ♔f6 39.♖dxd5 ♖xd5 40.♖xd5 a6 41.♖d6+ ♔g5 42.♖xa6 ♔hx5.

35...bxc4

35...dxc4 36.♖f6+ ♔g8 37.♘hx6+ ♔g7 38.♖g6+ ♔h7 39.g4+-.

36.♘xe3 ♖xe3 37.♖hx6



37...♖e5

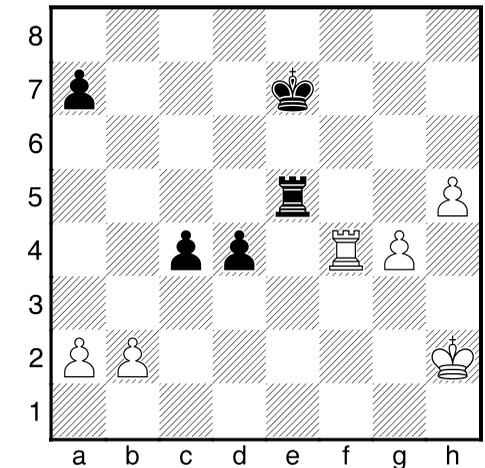
37...♖e2 38.♖d6 ♖d2 (38...♖xb2 39.♖xd5 c3 40.♖c5 c2 41.a4± White should be winning because of the connected passed pawns.) 39.♔h3 ♔e7 40.h6! ♖xb2 41.♖xd5 ♖b8 42.♔g4 ♖g8+ 43.♔f4 ♖h8 44.♖h5 c3 45.♔e3 ♖c8 46.♖h1 ♖d8 47.h7 c2 48.♖c1 ♖h8 49.♖xc2 ♔d6 50.g4+-.

37...d4 38.♖c6 ♖e5 39.h6 d3 40.♖xc4 ♖d5 41.♖c1± White will win the d-pawn and should be winning.

38.♔g3?

38.g4! White needs to push the passed pawns right away. Surprisingly it doesn't seem like Black can defend:

38...♖e2+ 39.♔g3 ♖xb2 40.♖c6!+- White's rook is optimally placed, stopping Black's passed pawns. White will win the race; 38...d4 39.♖f6+ ♔e7 40.♖f4: *Analysis Diagram*



40...d3 41.♖xc4 ♖d5 42.♖c1 d2 43.♖d1+-; 40...c3 41.bxc3 dxc3 42.♖c4 ♖e3 43.a4 a5 44.♔g2 ♖d3 45.♔f2 ♖h3 46.♔g2 ♖d3 47.h6 ♔f6 48.♖c6+ ♔g5 49.h7 ♖d2+ 50.♔f3 ♖h2 51.♖xc3 ♖h3+ 52.♔e4 ♖hx7 53.♖c5+ ♔xg4 54.♖xa5+- With a winning position according to the tablebase.

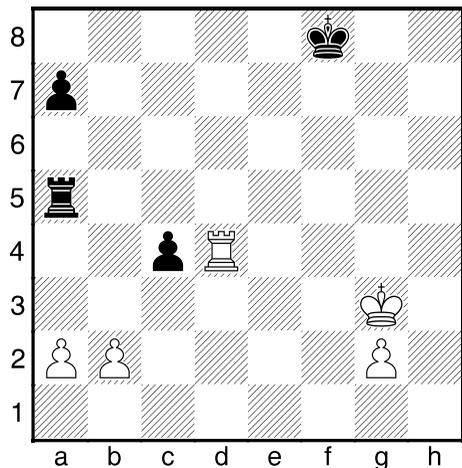
38...d4 39.♖d6 ♖hx5

40.♖xd4 ♖a5=





Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²



Black forces an exchange of pawns, with an easy draw. White's king and g-pawn are not advanced far enough to provide any winning chances.

- 41.a3 c3 42.bxc3 Rxa3
- 43.Rc4 a5 44.Qf4 a4 45.Qe3
- Qe7 46.g4 Ra2 47.g5 a3
- 48.Ra4 Ra1 49.Qd3 a2
- 50.Qc4 Qd7 51.g6 Rg1
- 52.Rxa2 Rxc6 53.Ra7+ Qc8
- 54.Qb4

Although I knew I messed up a great position, I was still very happy with a draw as I got my final GM norm! It took two years to get it, as I got my first and second norm in 2014.

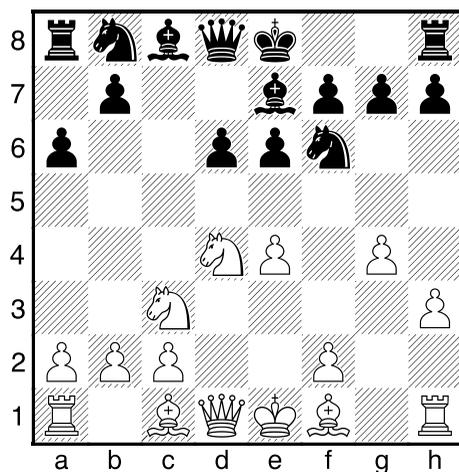
1/2-1/2

Notes by GM Razvan Preotu
Preotu, Razvan (2452)
Popilski, Gil (2542)
B81
2016 Calgary International Calgary (5), 30.07.2016

- 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
- 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.h3

Normally I play the English Attack with 6.f3 but I thought it would be a good idea to surprise my opponent.

- 6...e6 7.g4 Qe7



8.Qg2
 After only 7 moves I forgot my preparation! Although developing the bishop to g2 is typical in other lines, White should play

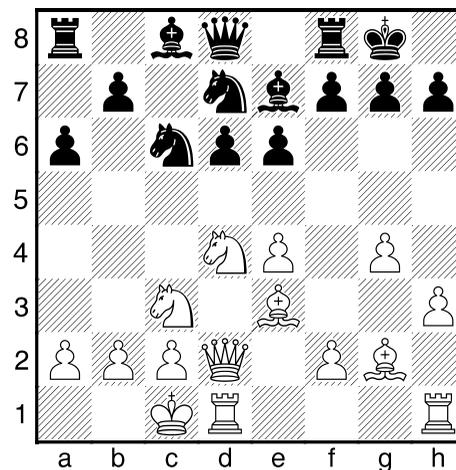
more aggressively against 6...e6.
 8.g5 Nfd7 9.h4 b5 10.a3 is currently the most popular way to play, and what I had prepared.

- 8...Nfd7 9.Qe3 0-0
- 9...Nc6 10.Qe2 0-0 11.0-0-0
- Nxd4 12.Qxd4 b5.

10.Qd2
 This allows White to capture the knight on d4 with the queen if Black trades.

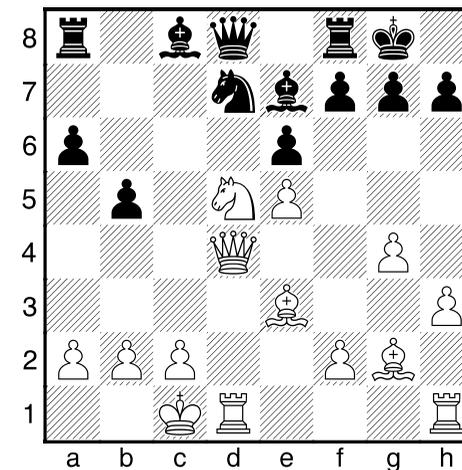
10.Qe2 Nc6 11.0-0-0 Nxd4
 12.Qxd4 b5 13.e5 d5 is played more often, but White doesn't have an advantage, and in fact scores badly.

- 10...Nc6 11.0-0-0



11...Nde5
 The drawback however is that the c4 square is not guarded.

11...Nxd4 12.Qxd4 b5 (Black can play more slowly and stop White's sacrifice idea with 12...Qc7 but White has a strong idea of just pushing the h-pawn to h6: 13.h4! b5 14.h5 Ne5 15.h6 g5 16.f4 gxf4 17.Qxf4 Black's king position is weak, but the strong knight on e5 compensates.) 13.e5 d5 14.Nxd5! *Analysis Diagram*



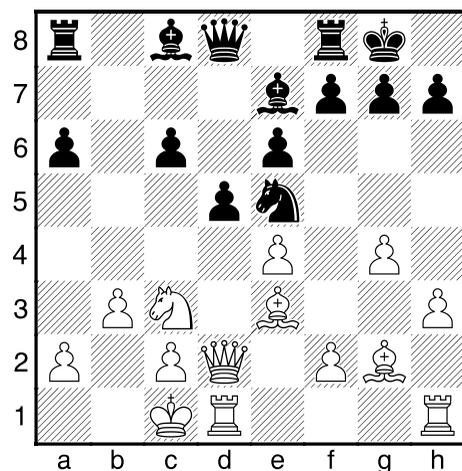
A cool sacrifice, and although it doesn't promise an advantage, it forces Black to play precisely. 14...exd5 15.Qxd5 Qc5 (15...Rb8? 16.Qa7 Qa5 17.Qb1 Black can't move many pieces, and White will win back the

material with e5-e6.) 16. ♖xf7+ ♜xf7 17. ♚xc5 ♜b7 18. ♚d6 ♜xh1 19. e6 ♜f6 20. ♜xh1 (20.g5 ♜g6 is similar.) 20... ♜f8 21. ♚xd8 ♜xd8 22. e7 ♜c8 23. exf8 ♚+ ♜fxf8=.

12. ♜xc6 bxc6 13. b3

13. ♜f1 looks unappealing, but it's probably a bit better as it doesn't weaken the king position.

13...d5



Black now threatens ... ♜c4 again because of ... ♜a3+ and ... ♜b8+.

14. ♚b1

14. ♜a4 was better, as White doesn't waste time moving the king and focuses on controlling the c5-square. 14... ♜b8 15. ♜c5

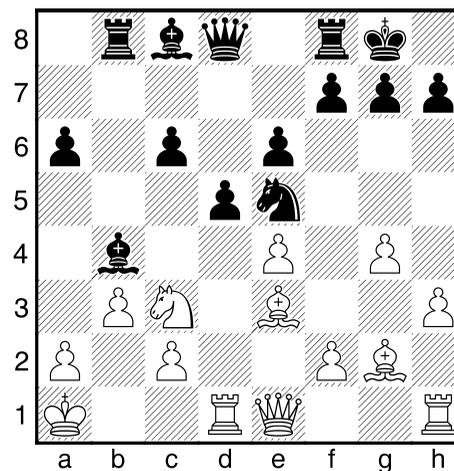
♜g6 16. f4 ♜b5 17. ♚c3 ♜xf4!? an interesting exchange sacrifice in order to gain control over the dark-squares. 18. ♜f1 ♚c7 19. ♜xb5 cxb5 20. ♚b1 ♜e2 21. ♚d3 d4 22. ♚xe2 dxe3 23. ♜d3 ♜b7 24. ♚xe3 ♜c8 25. ♜d2 ♚c3 Black's active pieces force a repetition: 26. ♜hd1 h6 27. ♜e2 ♜g5 28. ♚f2 ♜xe4 29. ♜xe4 ♜f6 30. ♚c1 ♜g5+ 31. ♚b1 ♜f6=.

14... ♜b8 15. ♚a1 ♜b4! ♚

A very annoying pin to get out of.

Black is getting the initiative.

16. ♚e1



16... ♚f6

16... ♜g6 is the more challenging move. Black has ideas of ... ♚f6, and ... ♜f4 or ... ♜h4. 17. f4 ♚a5 18. ♚b2 White threatens to consolidate with ♜d2. 18... ♜h4 19. ♜g1 ♜xg2 20. ♜xg2 dxe4 21. ♜d2 f5 22. ♚g3 ♜b7 (22... ♚c7 23. gxf5 exf5 24. ♜a4 ♜d8 25. ♜xb4 ♜xd1 26. ♜c3 ♜b7 27. ♜c5 ♜a7 28. ♚e3±; 22... g6 23. gxf5 exf5 24. h4= White has enough activity for the pawn.) 23. ♜b1 e5 24. ♜xb4 ♚xb4 25. gxf5 exf4 26. ♚xf4 ♜xf5 27. ♚e3 ♚ Black is up a pawn but has a weak pawn-structure and not a very good bishop.

17. ♜d2

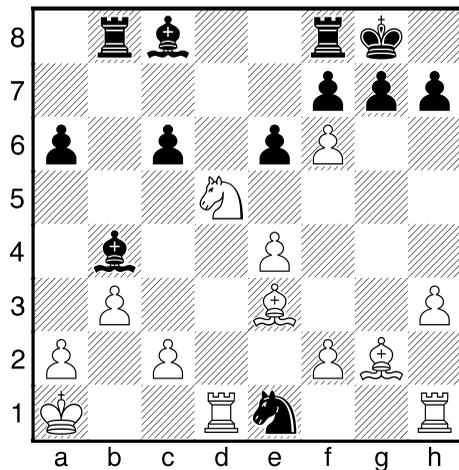
17. g5 ♜f3 18. gxf6 ♜xe1 19. ♜xd5! *Analysis Diagram*



Preetu - Popilski, Calgary 2016
Gata Kamsky in foreground.



Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

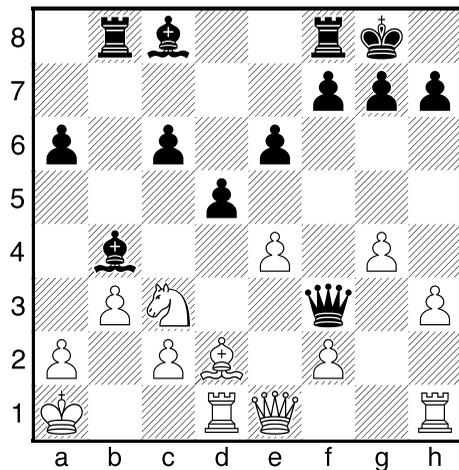


19...xc2+ (19...exd5 20. Rxe1
 Bxe1 21. Rxe1 dxe4 22. Bf4 Bb6
 23. Rxe4 g6 24. Be3 Bb5 25. Re7
 Rf5 26. Qb2 Rxf6 27. h4= The
 active bishop pair compensates
 for the exchange.) 20. Qb2 Nxe3
 21. Nxe3 gxf6 22. Rhg1 Qh8
 23. Bf3 Black is up a pawn but
 White is very active and will likely
 trade off Black's dark-square
 bishop with Nxe3-c4-d6.

17...Nf3

17...Ng6 18. g5 Qe5 19. exd5
 Qxe1 20. Rxe1 exd5 21. Ne2
 Bxd2 22. Rxd2 Nh4 23. Bh1
 Bxh3 24. Nd4 Rfe8 25. Rc1
 Rbc8 26. c4 White has good
 compensation for the pawn, but
 not fully.

18. Bxf3 Qxf3



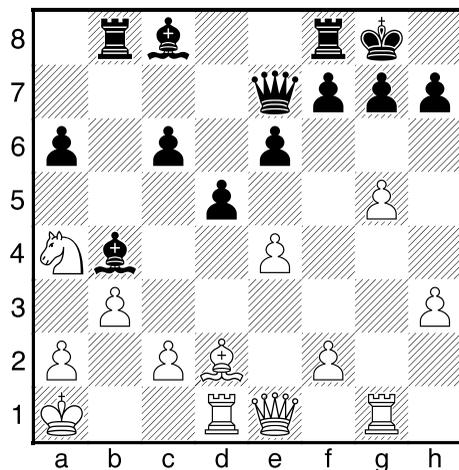
19. Rg1

19. Nxd5? doesn't quite work:
 19...Bxd2 20. Ne7+ Qh8
 21. Qxd2 Qf6+-.

19...Qf6

19...Qxh3? 20. Nxd5! now works
 because there is no ...Qf6+.

20. g5 Qe7 21. Na4=



White has managed to
 unscramble his pieces and not
 lose any material. I felt good
 about my position because
 although it's equal, White will
 be better if it's possible to trade
 dark-square bishops and place
 the knight on c5

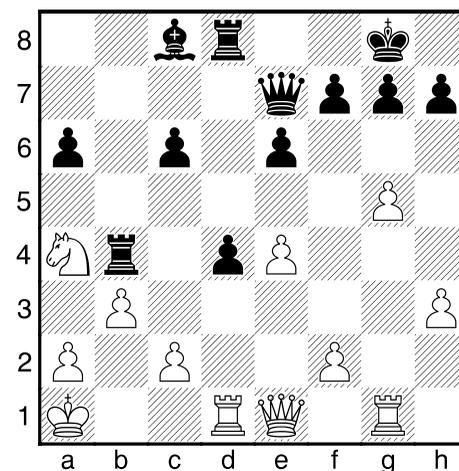
21...Rd8 22. Bc3

White now has ideas of Bf6.
 22. Bxb4 Rxb4 23. f3 e5=.

22...d4

22...Qd6 followed by ...a5 then
 ...d4 seems better, as Black
 would rather recapture with the
 pawn.

23. Bxb4 Rxb4



24. c3!

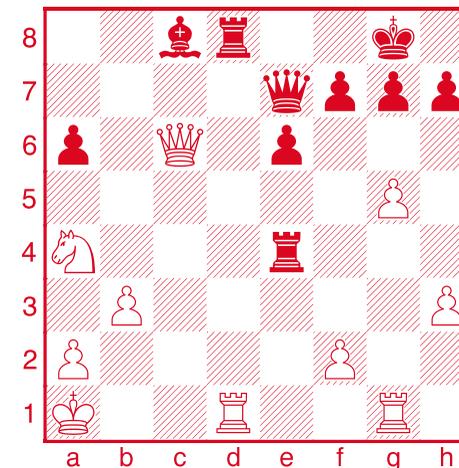
This was my idea, Black will
 have some back-rank problems
 when the d-file opens.

24...dxc3

The exchange sacrifice doesn't
 seem to provide enough
 compensation. 24...Rxa4
 25. bxa4 c5 26. cxd4 cxd4 27. Qa5
 e5 28. h4 White will be able to
 control the c-file and activate the
 rooks.

25. Qxc3 Rxe4 26. Qxc6

26. Qc5 Qf8! 27. Qxc6 Rb4
 28. Nb6 Bb7 29. Qxb7 Rb8
 30. Qxa6 R4xb6 31. Qe2 g6 White is up a full pawn but with
 all the major pieces still on the
 board it will be very difficult to
 win.



26...♖e2?

Trying to set up some counterplay against the White king, but it doesn't work.

26...f5! was forced, making room for the king. 27.♔c5 (*editor* – 27.gxf6 ♖xf6+ 28.♘b2 ♖ed4 29.♖xd4 ♗xd4 30.♖d1 ♗f6∞) 27...♗f8 28.♗c7 ♖e8 29.♖d2 ♖e7 30.♗c3 ♖e8 31.♖gd1±.

27.♘c3!+-

27.♘b6? ♖f8! 28.♘xc8? ♗a3+- this is Black's idea.

27...♖xf2 28.♖xd8+ ♗xd8

29.♖d1

Black can't stop ♗c7 and ♖d8 winning material.

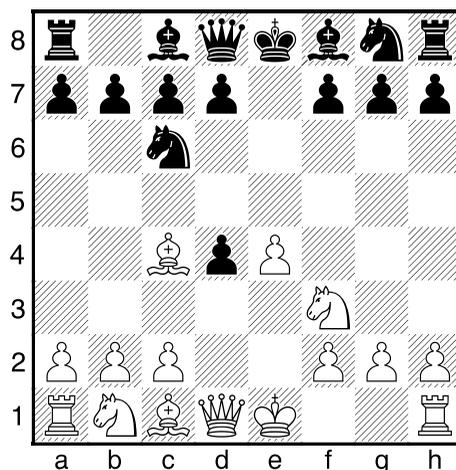
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Notes by GM Razvan Preotu Preotu, Razvan (2452) Mikhalevski, Victor (2545) C54
2016 Calgary International Calgary (9), 01.08.2016

Going into the last round I was clear 2nd, right behind

GM Kayden Troff by only 0.5 a point. But there were also a lot of players only 0.5 behind me, including GM Gata Kamsky. Because Troff was Black against Kamsky, I knew that if I win I had good chances to win the tournament.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 exd4 4.♙c4

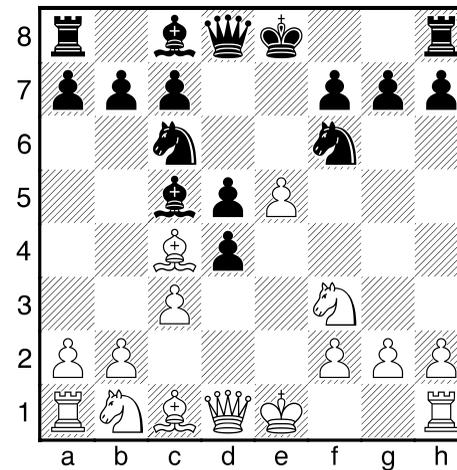


The Scotch Gambit, trying to get my very experienced opponent out of his comfort zone. Mihalveski has written several books on the Ruy Lopez.

4...♙c5

4...♘f6 5.e5 d5 6.♙b5 ♘e4 7.♘xd4 is the main line.

5.c3 ♘f6 6.e5 d5



7.♙e2!?

An interesting move Jabova has played many times.

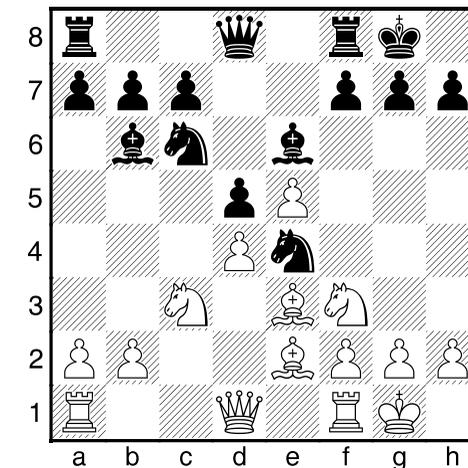
7.♙b5 ♘e4 8.cxd4 ♙b6 is played more often, but the bishop on b5 is often misplaced. White does not want to capture the knight on c6, and might retreat to e2 if Black pins the knight with ...♙g4.

7...♘e4

With 7...d3!? Black trades the right to castle in order to gain the bishop pair and center: 8.exf6 (8.♙xd3? ♘g4±) 8...dxe2 9.♗xe2+ ♗f8 10.b4 ♙d6 11.b5 ♘a5 12.♙g5 ♗e8 13.♗xe8+ ♗xe8 14.fxg7 ♖g8= was played in the game Jobava–Timman,

Hoogeveen, 2014.

8.cxd4 ♙b6 9.0-0 0-0 10.♘c3 ♙e6 11.♙e3



11...f5

11...f6 is more precise, as White doesn't have much of an option but capture.

12.exf6

12.g3 is a possibility. I didn't like that the knight was cemented on e4, but White could chase it away with f3 in the future. Then the passed e–pawn could provide an advantage.

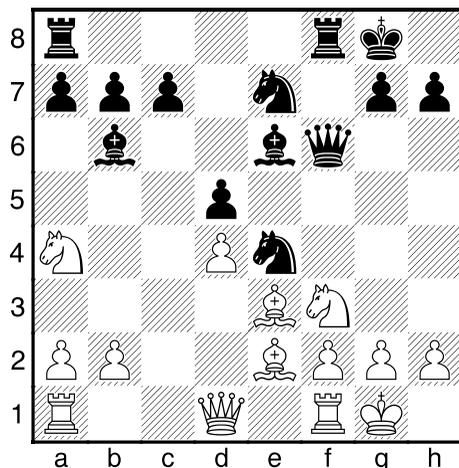
12...♗xf6 13.♘a4

13.♙d3 chases the knight away, but Black can maneuver it to another good square. 13...♘d6



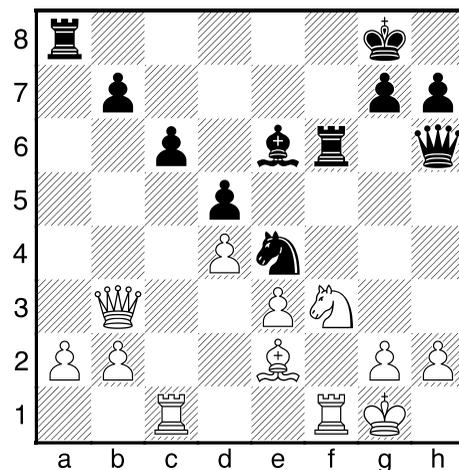
14. ♖g5 ♗f5 15. ♕h5 h6 16. ♖xe6
 ♕xe6 17. ♖fe1 ♕d7=.

13... ♖e7



14. ♕b3

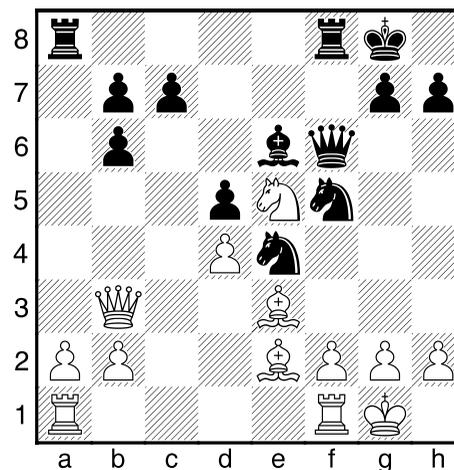
14. ♖xb6 axb6 15. ♖e5 ♖f5
 16. ♕b3 transposes to the game.
 14. ♖c1 is what I wanted to play
 originally, but after 14...c6!
 (14... ♖f5 15. ♖xb6 ♖xe3 16. fxe3
 cxb6 17. ♕d3 White can hope
 for an advantage because of
 the pawn-structure.) 15. ♕b3
 ♖f5 16. ♖xb6 axb6 taking the
 b6-pawn is very dangerous.
 17. ♕xb6 ♖xe3 18. fxe3 ♕h6
 19. ♕b3 ♖f6! *Analysis Diagram*



With a strong initiative for Black
 because of ideas such as
 ...♕h3. Now the best White can

do is to exchange
 pieces with: 20. ♖e5
 ♖d2 21. ♖xf6 gxf6
 22. ♕d3 ♖e4 23. ♖f3
 ♖xa2 24. ♖d2 ♖xb2
 25. ♖xe4 dxe4
 26. ♕xe4 ♖f7=.

14... ♖f5 15. ♖xb6
 axb6 16. ♖e5



16...c5?!

Black gives a pawn to
 create some counterplay,

but it shouldn't be enough
 compensation.

16... ♖xe3 17. ♕xe3 (17. fxe3
 ♕h6 18. ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 19. ♕f3 ♖d2
 20. ♕c3 ♖xf3+ 21. gxf3∞ White
 has a very strong knight but a
 weaker king position.) 17... ♕f4!
 preventing White from playing f2-
 f4. (17...c5 18. f4! ♖a4 19. ♖ad1±
 White is able to get the kingside
 majority moving and should
 be better because of the pawn
 structure.) 18. a3 ♕xe3 19. fxe3
 g6=.

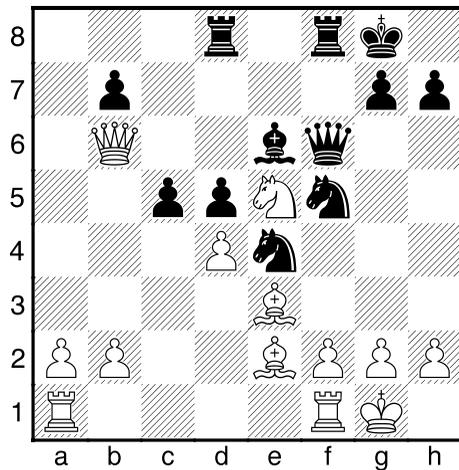


A place at the grownup's table

*Playing Kamsky on board 1,
 GM Victor Mikhalevski on board 2.*



17. ♖xb6 ♜ad8



18. ♞g4?

My idea was to move the knight away to defend the bishop on e3 and prepare f3, but Black has a good response.

18. ♙d3! essentially forces the exchange of queens:

18... ♜d6 19. ♖xb7

cxd4 20. ♙f4

♞e7 (20...

g5? 21. ♞g4+-)

21. ♙g3± White

has consolidated the extra pawn.

18... ♙c8 19. ♖xf6

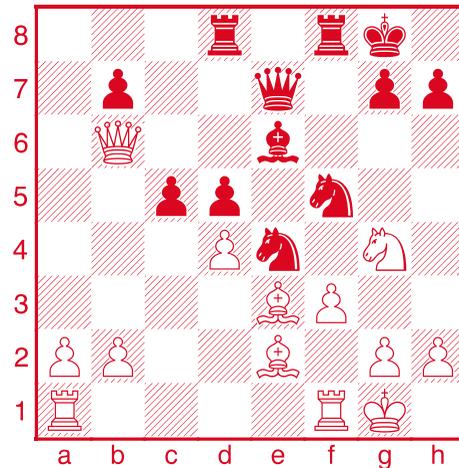
gxf6 20. ♞f3

c4 21. ♙c2 ♞xe3

22. fxe3 ♜fe8± White is up a pawn, but it

won't be easy to win because it's backward.

18... ♖e7 19. f3



19... ♞fg3!

The resource which I noticed one move too late.

19... ♜d6 20. ♖b5 with the bishop on e2 defended, ... ♞fg3 no

longer works. 20... ♙d7

21. ♖d3 ♞f6 (21...

c4 22. ♖a3 ♞g5

23. ♞e5 ♞e6 24. ♖c3±)

22. ♞xf6+ ♜dxf6 23. ♙f2

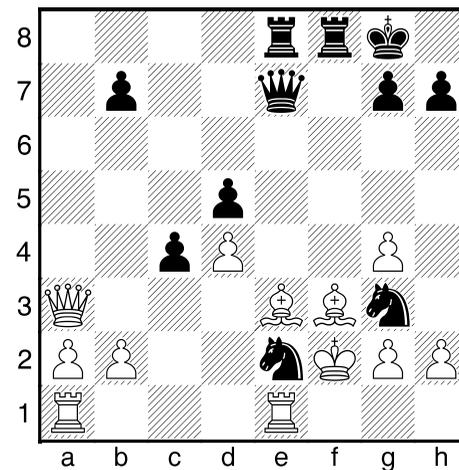
♜e6 24. ♜fe1±.

editor – 19... ♞eg3? is the wrong ♞, since after 20. ♜fe1 Black can't

eliminate the defending ♞ with ... ♙xg4, as in the note below.

20. hxg3

editor – 20. ♜fe1? looks perfectly natural, but allows Black a difficult-to-calculate but very strong attack after: 20... ♙xg4 21. fxg4 ♞c3! 22. ♙f3 ♞ce2+ ♞ 23. ♙f2 ♜de8! 24. ♖b3 ♞c4 25. ♖a3 Analysis Diagram



Even if you could see your way to this position, it would be natural for Black to look for something else, since now both ♞s and his ♖ are attacked. But Black crashes through with: 25... ♜xf3+!! (25...c3 would be OK, if not for ♖xe7+-.) 26. gxf3 ♖h4 ♞ 27. ♙g2 ♞h5 Hard to believe, but Black's "slow" threat

to strip away White's pawn cover is enough for a big advantage:

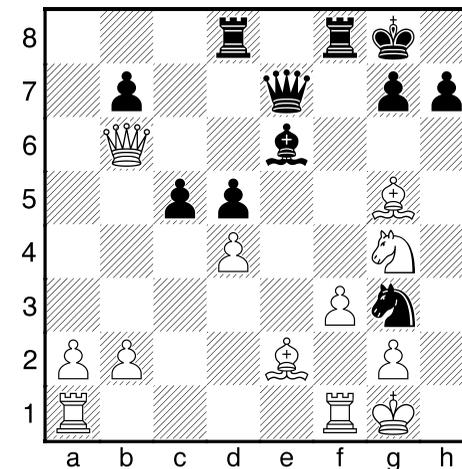
28. gxh5 ♞xh5+- e.g. 29. ♜xe2 ♞f4+ 30. ♙f1 ♖h3+-,

28. g5 ♞ 28... ♜xe3 ♞ 29. ♖xe3 ♞f4+ 30. ♖xf4 ♖xf4± when the Black ♖ has a lot of loose pawns to target.

20... ♞xg3 21. ♙g5

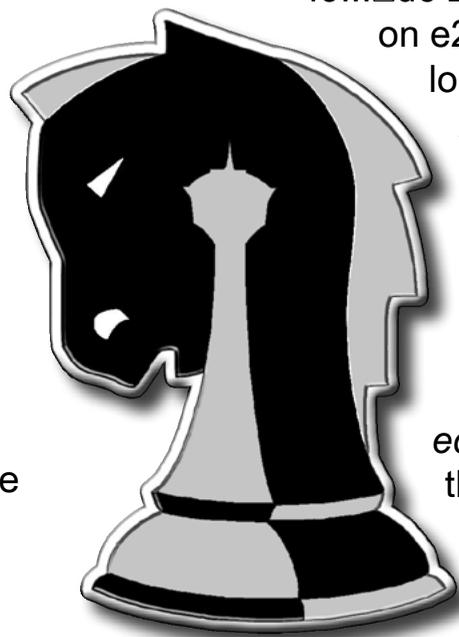
21. ♞e5 ♞xe2+ 22. ♙f2 ♞xd4

23. ♙xd4 cxd4 24. ♖xd4 ♜c8=.

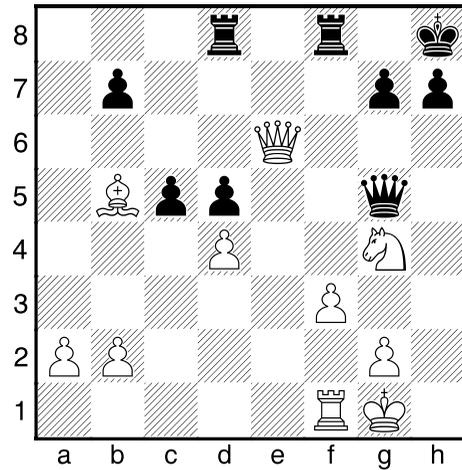


21... ♖xg5?

A miscalculation. 21... ♞xe2+ ♞ 22. ♙f2 ♖xg5 23. ♖xe6+ ♙h8 24. ♖xe2 (24. ♙xe2? ♜fe8+-) 24... ♖xg4= While analyzing after the game, Mikhalveski said he missed the pin on the f-file.

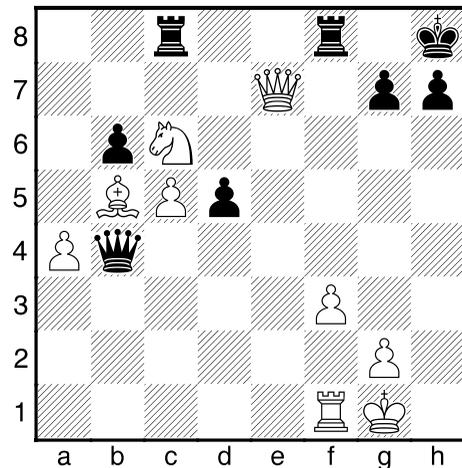


22. ♖xe6+ ♔h8 23. ♕b5 ♞xf1
24. ♜xf1+-



Black has no compensation, the two pieces are much stronger than the rook.

24... ♖d2 25. dxc5 ♖xb2
26. a4 ♖b4 27. ♖e7 b6
28. ♞e5 ♜c8 29. ♞c6



29... ♖c3

editor – 29... ♖xc5+ wins a pawn, but after 30. ♖xc5 (30. ♔h1?? ♜xc6-+) 30... bxc5 31. ♜c1+- Black's passers are controlled and White pushes his a-pawn at will.

30. cxb6 ♜fe8 31. b7 ♜b8
32. ♖d7 ♖e3+ 33. ♜f2 ♖c1+
34. ♕f1 ♖c5 35. ♞xb8 ♜xb8
36. ♔h1 ♖c1 37. ♖d6

A very important win that allowed me to finish clear first with 7/9! Kamsky defeated Troff so I was only 0.5 points ahead of both of them and Popilski.

This was my first time playing in Calgary and I enjoyed it a lot, it was very well organized. I hope I'll be able to play again next year to defend my title!

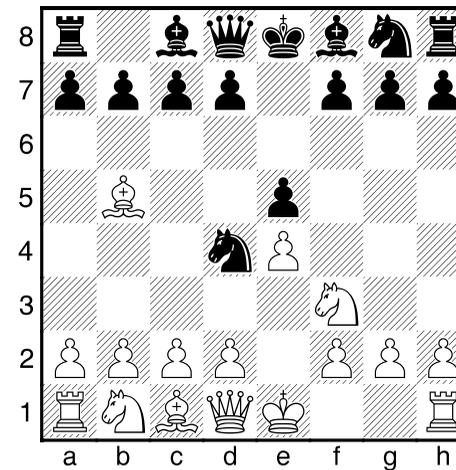
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Notes by GM Razvan Preotu
Preotu, Razvan (2469)
Pressman, Leif (2276)

C61

2016 Washington International
Washington D.C. (1), 13.08.2016

1. e4 e5 2. ♞f3 ♞c6 3. ♕b5
♞d4



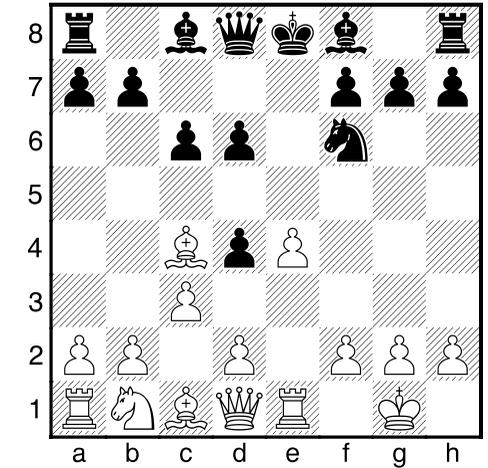
The Bird Opening! Not very commonly played anymore, and for me it was my first time playing against it.

4. ♞xd4 exd4 5. 0-0 c6 6. ♕c4
♞f6 7. ♜e1

7. d3 d5 8. exd5 ♞xd5 9. ♜e1+
♕e7 10. ♕g5 0-0 11. ♕xe7 ♞xe7
12. ♞d2± This is a less ambitious variation for White, but it does

provide a slight advantage because of the activity.

7...d6 8.c3



8... ♞g4!

Black needs to play dynamically otherwise he is just worse for nothing; e.g. 8... dxc3 9. ♞xc3 ♕e7 10. d4±.

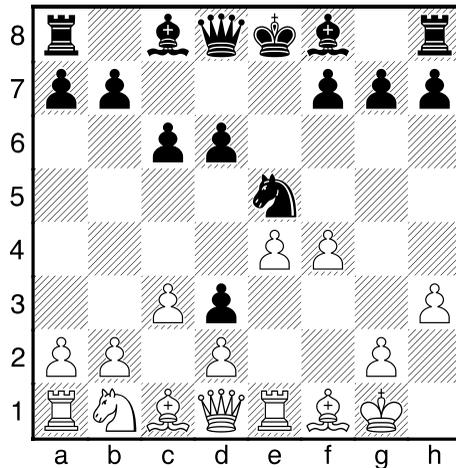
9.h3

9. ♖e2 was another way to prevent ... ♖h4. 9... b5 (9... ♖b6 10. d3 ♞e5 11. cxd4 ♞xc4 12. dxc4 ♖xd4 13. ♞c3±) 10. ♕d3 ♖b6 11. ♞a3 ♞e5 12. ♞c2 dxc3 13. dxc3 ♕e7 14. a4 ♞xd3 15. ♖xd3 bxa4 16. ♜xa4 0-0± White seems slightly better because of Black's pawn weaknesses.



9...♘e5 10.♙f1
10.d3 dxc3 11.♘xc3 ♘xc4
12.dxc4± was White's last
chance to claim an advantage.
Now the game becomes very
sharp.

10...d3 11.f4

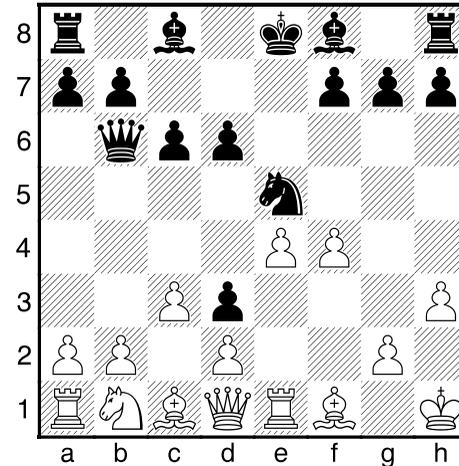


11...♙b6+

11...♘g6 was another serious
alternative. 12.♙f3 ♙f6 13.g3 h5!
14.h4 (14.♙xd3 h4 15.f5 hxg3
16.♙xg3 ♙h4 17.♙e3 ♙xg3+
18.♙xg3 ♘h4 19.d3 g6= Black
has a lot of activity for one
pawn.) 14...♙e7 15.♙xd3 ♘xf4!
16.gxf4 ♙xf4 17.♙e2 ♙h6 18.♙e3
♙xh4 19.♙h2 ♙g6+ 20.♙h1
♙g4 21.♙e2 ♙g5 22.♙xg4 ♙xe3
23.dxe3 ♙xg4 24.♘d2 ♙d7±
Black has two pawns for the

piece and White's pawn structure
is a mess.

12.♙h1



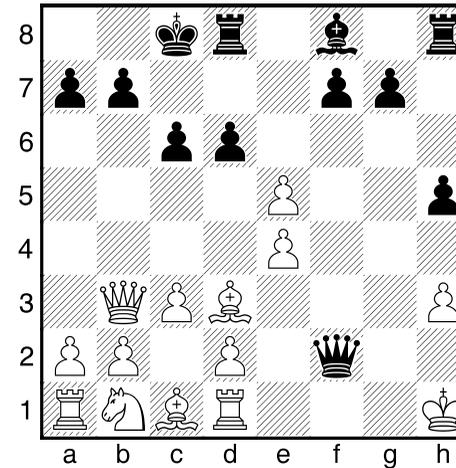
12...h5!

A move that I missed. I was now
very nervous about my position.
12...♘g6 13.♙f3± White wins the
d3 pawn for nothing.

13.♙e3!

The best and only move!
13.fxe5? looks very dangerous,
and it actually gives Black a
winning attack! 13...♙g4 14.♙b3
♙f2 15.♙d1 (15.♙xb7? ♙d8-+)
15...0-0-0! 16.♙xd3 ♙xh3
17.gxh3:

Analysis Diagram



Does Black have more than a
perpetual check?
17...♙h6! Black has more than a
perpetual check.

18.♙g1 (editor – 18.♙f1 ♙g3
19.♙xf7 ♙xh3+ 20.♙g1 ♙g3+
21.♙h1 ♙g6-+) 18...dxe5
19.♙c4 (19.♙d1 ♙xd3 20.♙f1
♙xf1 21.♙xf1 ♙g6 22.♙h2
♙c5-+ White's up a piece, but
those queenside pieces are
so pathetic... just completely
dominated. The king will not be
able to survive with just a lone
rook.) 19...♙f3+ 20.♙h2 ♙f4+
21.♙h1 ♙xe4+ 22.♙h2 ♙f4+
23.♙h1 ♙f3+ 24.♙h2 ♙d6-+.

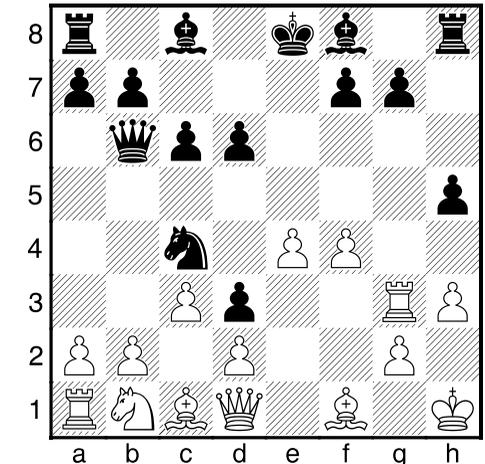
13...♘c4

13...♘g6 14.f5 ♘e5 15.♙xd3
♘xd3 16.♙xd3 g6 17.♙f3 ♙d7

18.fxg6 fxg6 19.d4 ♙e7 20.♙d3
0-0-0 21.♘d2± Black has the
bishop pair, but it's not worth a
very healthy pawn.

14.♙g3

14.♙xd3? ♘xb2± White loses the
exchange without compensation.
14.♙f3 ♙g4 15.b3 d5! opening
the d6-square for the knight.
16.exd5 ♙xf3 17.♙xf3 ♘d6
18.♙xd3 0-0-0 19.♙b2 cxd5
20.♙xd5 ♘e8 21.♙f3 ♙b8=
Material is even, White has a
bishop and two pawns for the
rook.



14...♙g4

14...♙f2? right away is met by
15.♙f3±;





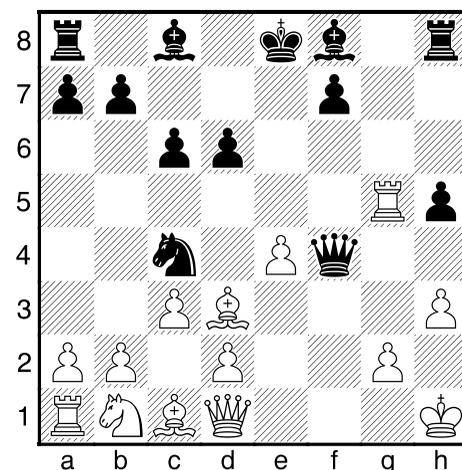
14...♖xb2 15.♔e1 (15.♔b3 ♖xb3 16.axb3 ♖d1 17.♔h2 f5! a very strong move, challenging White's center so d6-d5 is possible.

18.exf5 d5 19.f6 gxf6 20.♙xd3 ♖f2 21.♙g6+ ♔d8 22.♙a3 h4 23.♖f3 ♙xa3 24.♘xa3 ♖e4 25.♙xe4 dxe4 26.♖e3 ♙f5=) 15...h4 (15...♔d8!? simply getting off the e-file to meet ♖a3 with d6-d5. 16.c4 h4 17.♖f3 ♖xc4 18.♖xd3 ♔c7 19.♖a3 ♖b6 20.♙b2→ Black is up a pawn, but his position looks completely crazy. The king is stuck in the center and it should be just a matter of time before White can open the game more.) 16.♖e3 ♖c4 17.♖xd3 ♔c7 18.♖f3 ♖b6 19.d4± White's center gives him the advantage.

14...g5!? is a very interesting move which I noticed, although it looked completely crazy. The idea is to deflect the rook or free the e5-square for the knight.

15.♖xg5 (15.fxg5 h4 16.♖f3 ♖e5 17.♙xd3 ♖xf3 18.♔xf3 ♔c5 19.♙c2 ♔xg5 20.♖a3 ♔g3 21.♔xg3 hxg3 22.d4 ♙h6 23.♙xh6 ♖xh6 24.♖e1≠ White has compensation, but not enough.) 15...♔f2 16.♙xd3 ♔xf4:

Analysis Diagram



17.♙xc4 ♔xg5 18.d4 ♔g6 19.♖d2∞ White has only a pawn for the exchange, but has a nice center and the Black king is still in the middle of the board.

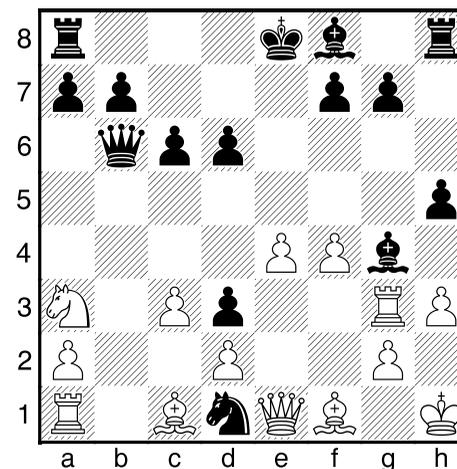
editor – 17.♖xh5?! looks great, but after 17...♖xh5 18.♔xh5 ♖e5 White is up two pawns but is fatally behind in development:

19.♔e2 ♔g3 20.♙c2 ♙g4!
21.hxg4 ♖xg4+-+ and White has to give up the ♔ to stop mate.

19.♙e2 Saves the ♙ and defends f1; now White would be winning after ♖a3, but here Stockfish finds the very weird but strong: 19...♖g4!! interfering with the ♔'s defence of e2, 20.hxg4 (20.♙xg4

♙xg4 21.♔xg4 ♔f1+-+ and Black wins the ♙ and the ♖.) 20...♔f2 and Black takes maximum advantage of White's weak back rank.

15.♔e1 ♖xb2 16.♖a3 ♖d1



17.♖xd3?!

A practical exchange sacrifice, although it's not a very good one. I didn't mind giving up some material if I could get the initiative, as we were both getting low on time with a lot of moves left to make to reach the second time control.

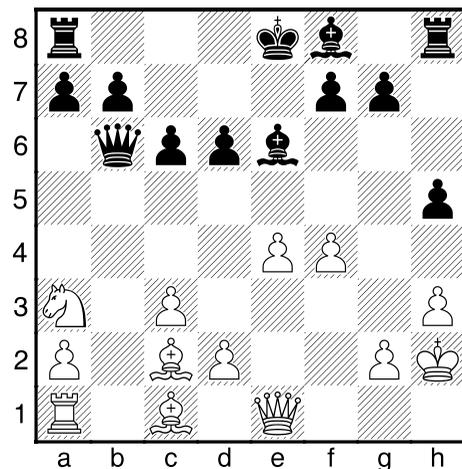
17.♔h2 0-0-0 18.♙xd3 d5 is the variation I saw, and I did not like it. It looked like I would have to play very precisely just to not get

in trouble. 19.♙c2 (19.exd5 cxd5 20.♙c2 ♖b2 21.c4 protecting the knight on a3. 21...♖xc4 22.♖b1 ♔e6 23.♔f2 b6 24.♖b5 a6∞ It doesn't look easy for White to prove what compensation he has for a pawn.) 19...dxe4 20.♙xd1 ♙xd1 21.♔xd1 g5! White's pieces are in such awkward positions that Black wins the knight on a3 by force. 22.d4 (22.♖xg5 ♔f2 23.d4 ♙xa3 24.♔g1 ♔xg1+ 25.♔xg1=) 22...♔c7 23.♖xg5 ♙xa3 24.♖e5 ♙d6 25.♖xe4 f5 26.♖e6 ♙xf4+ 27.♙xf4 ♔xf4+ 28.♔h1=.

17...♖f2+

17...♔f2 was another strong alternative. 18.♖e3 ♔xf4 19.♖e2 ♙xe2 20.♔xe2 ♖f2+ 21.♔g1 ♖g4! (21...♖xe4 22.d3 ♔f2+ 23.♔xf2 ♖xf2 24.♔xf2=) 22.hxg4 hxg4 23.d3 ♔g3 24.♔e3 ♔h2+ 25.♔f2 ♖h6→ Black is the one with an attack now.

18.♔h2 ♖xd3 19.♙xd3 ♙e6
20.♙c2



20...♔a5

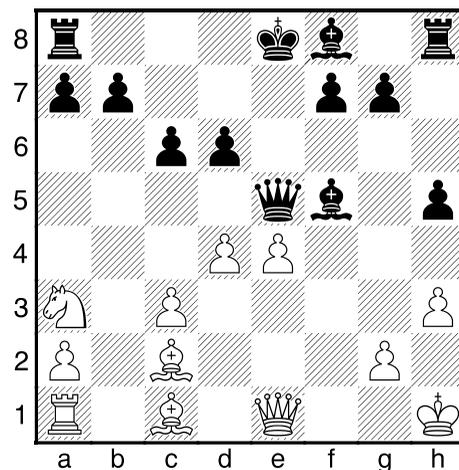
20...0-0-0 21.d4 d5 22.e5♣ Black is up a full exchange but White can still make it complicated because of opposite-side castling.

21.f5?

I thought my initiative would become a lot stronger if I give up another pawn, but there was no need to do that.

The simple 21.d4 is better, as it stops Black's reply of ...♔e5+. Now White get ♘c4 as a free tempo.

21...♔e5+ 22.♔h1 ♕xf5 23.d4



23...♔e6?

After 23...♔e7 24.♕f4 ♕h7 25.♘c4 0-0-0♣ It's difficult for White to prove something. Black

also has counterplay with the pawn advance g7-g5-g4.

24.d5 ♔e7

editor – !, since 24...cxd5? 25.♕g5! threatens ♕a4+ and captures with the e-pawn.

25.♕f4↑ ♕d7

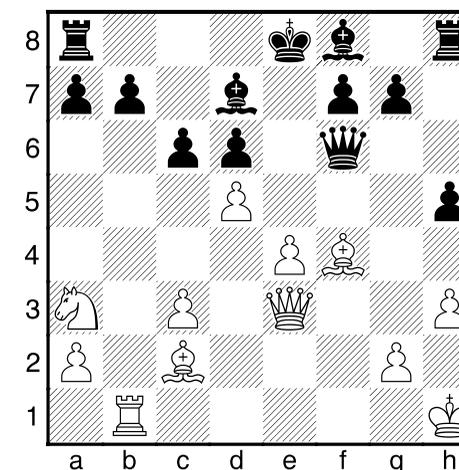
25...♕h7 was another option. My opponent probably wanted to give back the material with a timely rook lift.

26.♖b1

26.♘c4 allows Black to give back material in order to lower White's initiative. 26...♖h6 27.♕xh6 gxh6 28.♗f2 ♕g7 29.♖f1 ♕xc3 30.♗f3 ♕d4 31.♗xh5 0-0-0 32.♖xf7 (32.♗xf7 ♗xf7 33.♘xd6+ ♔b8 34.♘xf7 ♖f8 35.♕b3±) 32...♗g5 33.♘xd6+ ♔b8 34.♗xg5 hxg5

35.♘f5 ♕e5± White is up a pawn but Black has the bishop pair, which will make it difficult to win. I wanted to finish the game off right away so I played what I thought would be harder for my opponent.

26...♗f6 27.♗e3



27...♕c8??

The losing blunder. It was

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necessary to give up the b7 pawn in order to start counterplay. Without a lot of time left it's not very easy to realize.

27...♙e7! 28.♖xb7 g5! 29.♙h2 g4 30.♙d3 gxh3 31.gxh3 ♖g8 32.♘c4 ♚g5 33.♚xg5 ♗xg5 34.h4 ♖g4 35.♘xd6+ ♙xd6 36.♙xd6 ♗xh4+ 37.♚g2 ♞ White's bishop pair is very strong and will likely win back the exchange, only being down a pawn.

28.♙g5+-

Black's queen is out of good squares, and White gets a decisive attack.

28...♚g6 29.e5 ♙f5 30.exd6+ ♚d7 31.♖xb7+ ♚c8 32.♖c7+ ♚b8 33.♚e8+

One of the most unusual games I've ever played!

1-0

Notes by GM Razvan Preotu

Preotu, Razvan (2469)

Kamsky, Gata (2638)

B33

2016 Washington International

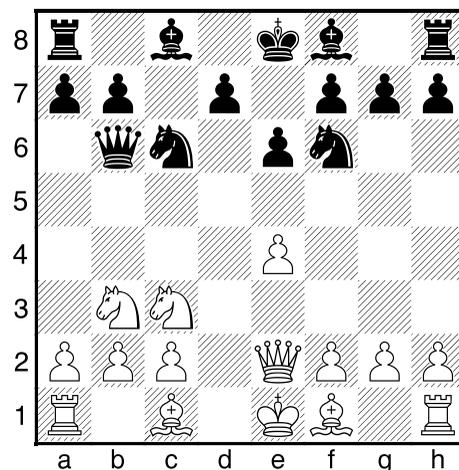
Washington D.C. (5), 15.08.2016

Having a score of 3.5/4, I was not only tied for first but only a few decimals of rating off reaching 2500! This was my third time play Gata Kamsky in the summer, but although it was a familiar experience, I was still nervous!

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6

Our first game of the summer was at the World Open; it went: 2...e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 a6 5.♘c3 b5 6.♙d3 ♚b6 **Preotu**–Kamsky, Philadelphia, 2016 (1/2-1/2, 36).

3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♚b6 5.♘b3 ♘f6 6.♘c3 e6 7.♚e2



The most popular move. White defends the e4-pawn so that the pin with ...♙b4 is not a big deal because of the simple ♙d2. The queen on e2 is also typical in many Sicilians, as it allows discoveries on the e-file.

7...♚c7 8.g4

Asking Black a question on how to deal with the threat of g5.

8...h6

Normally a weakening move that one wants to avoid playing, but the alternative didn't look appealing: 8...d6 9.g5 ♘d7 10.♙e3 looks great for White, as he is much farther in the race.

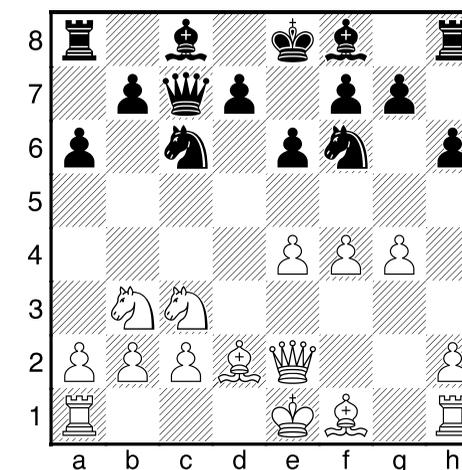
9.♙d2

I would have liked to continue advancing my kingside pawns with 9.f4 but after 9...♙b4! White can't avoid the doubling of his pawns with ♙d2 because f4 would be hanging. 10.♙g2 ♙xc3+ 11.bxc3 e5=.

9.♙g2 seems better because White prepares f4 without having to make a commitment with the dark-square bishop; e.g. 9...a6

10.f4 d6 (10...♙b4 11.e5 ♘d5 12.♙xd5 ♙xc3+ 13.bxc3 exd5 14.♙a3↑) 11.♙e3± the Bishop on e3 is better placed than on d2.

9...a6 10.f4



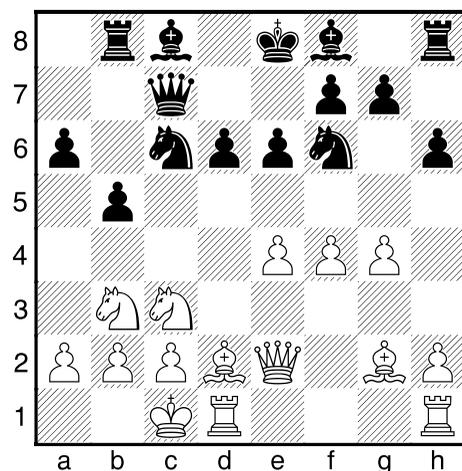
10...d6

10...b5!? 11.e5 ♘b4 (11...b4 12.exf6 bxc3 13.♙xc3 gxf6 14.♙xf6 ♖g8 15.f5 ♚f4 16.h3±) 12.exf6 ♘xc2+ 13.♚f2 ♘xa1 14.♘xa1 ♙b7 15.fxg7 ♙xg7 16.♙g2∞ leads to an interesting position where Black has a rook and a pawn for two knights. I would prefer White though because in the middle game the pieces are generally stronger than the rook.

11.♙g2 b5 12.0-0-0 ♖b8



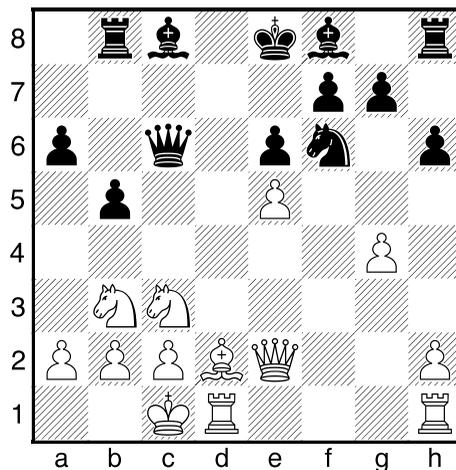
12...b4 13.♘a4 a5 threatens ...♙c8-a6-b5, but Kamsky was probably worried about the sacrifice 14.e5! dxex5 15.♙e3 ♙a6 16.♚d2∞.



13.h4

Probably the most natural move, but there was a stronger alternative.

After the slow 13.♙b1 Black can challenge the center with 13...b4 14.♘a4 e5! which leaves the knight on a4 stranded. Instead, White should open the center with the strong 13.e5! dxex5 14.♙xc6+ ♚xc6 15.fxe5: *Analysis Diagram*



15...♘d7 16.♘a5 ♙c7 17.♘e4 ♘xe5 18.♙f4 ♙e7 19.♙b1↑ The pin on of the knight is a big problem and Black might be best to sacrifice the exchange with 19...f6 (19...♙d7 20.g5 hxg5 21.♘xg5→) 20.♙xe5 ♚xe5 (20...fxe5? 21.♚hf1+-) 21.♘c6 ♙c7 22.♘xb8 ♚xb8 23.h4±.

15...♘d5 16.♘xd5 exd5 (16...♙xd5?? 17.♙a5+-) 17.e6! Opening the e-file before Black can blockade with ...♙e6. 17...♙xe6 18.♙g2 ♙e7 19.♚he1 ♙xg4 20.♙xd5 ♙e6 21.♙c6+ ♙f8 22.♘c5 ♙xc5 23.♙xc5+ ♙g8 24.♚g1 ♚c8 25.♙e3 Black is forced to give up the exchange 25...♙f5 (25...♙h3? 26.♙e5+-) 26.♙c3 g6 27.♚gf1 ♙g5 28.♙xg5 hxg5 29.♙xh8 ♙xh8± Black has a pawn for the exchange,

which isn't enough for full compensation but will make it hard for White to win.

13...h5

13...b4! 14.♘a4 h5 is a more precise move order, because now the White knight is misplaced.

14.e5!?

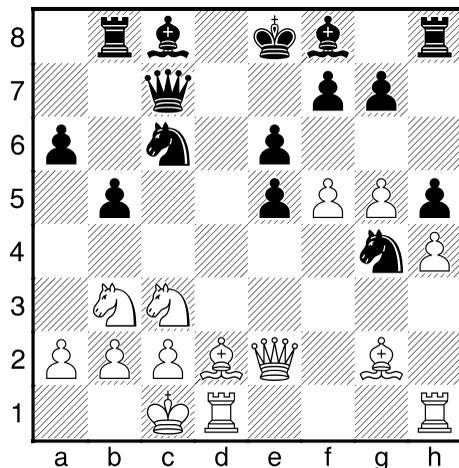
Interesting, but not the best way to open the center.

14.g5 ♘g4 15.♚he1! is very strong, the threat of ♘d5 is awkward for Black to handle. 15...b4 (15...♙b6 16.♘d5 ♙f2 17.♘e3 ♙xe2 18.♚xe2 ♘xe3



19. ♖xe3± (White is enjoying a nice space advantage.) 16. ♘d5 exd5 17. exd5+ ♘e7 18. ♘d4→.

14...dxe5 15.g5 ♘g4 16.f5



White is offering a second pawn to get the d5-square.

16...♙b4

Kamsky does not want to enter any complications.

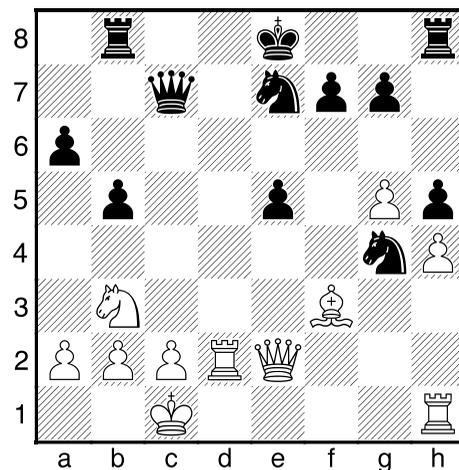
Black could have actually taken the pawn, although it looks really dangerous. 16...exf5 17. ♘d5 ♖a7 18. ♙c3! Black has problems with the e5 pawn, as White threatens to undermine it with ♙f3 and ♘a5. (18. ♙e3 ♘xe3 19. ♘f6+ Only leads to a forced draw. 19...gxf6 20. ♙xc6+

♙e7 21. ♖d2 ♘xd1 22. ♖xd1 ♖c7 23. ♖b4+ ♙e6 24. ♘c5+ ♙xc5 25. ♖xc5 ♙b7 26. ♖d5+ ♙e7 27. ♖c5+ ♙e6=) 18...f6 19. ♘xf6+ gxf6 20. ♙xc6+ ♙f7 21. ♖he1→.

17.fxe6

17.a3 ♙xc3 18. ♙xc3 0-0 19. ♙xc6 ♖xc6 20. ♙xe5 ♖a8 21.f6 g6= Black has stabilized the kingside.

17...♙xe6 18. ♘d5 ♙xd5 19. ♙xd5 ♙xd2+ 20. ♖xd2 ♘e7 21. ♙f3



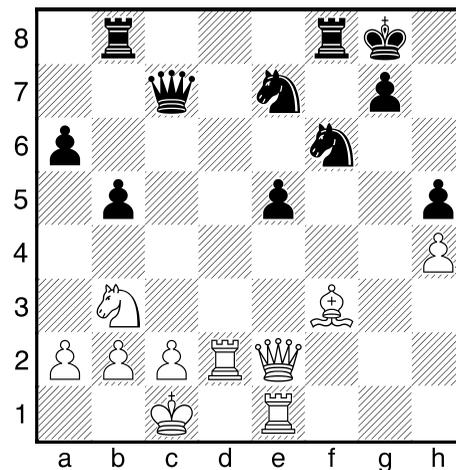
21...f5

After 21...0-0 22. ♙xg4 hxg4 23. ♖xg4↑ White has a simple plan of just pushing the kingside pawns. This is what I was hoping for.

22.gxf6 ♘xf6 23. ♖e1

23. ♖d3! With the idea of attacking the e5-pawn with ♖e3 is better. 23...e4 24. ♙xe4 ♖f4+ 25. ♘d2 0-0 26. ♖d4=.

23...0-0

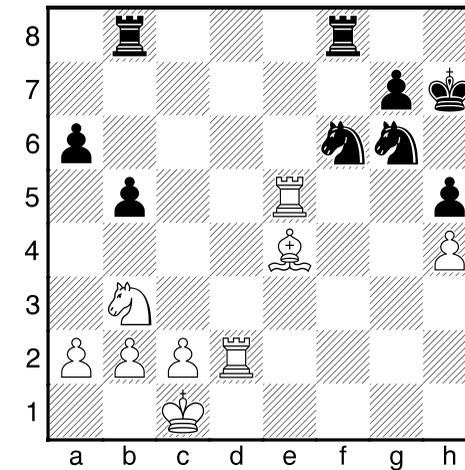


24. ♖xe5?!

White shouldn't rush in taking this pawn.

24. ♖g2 With the idea of ♖g5 is strong. 24...♘f5 25. ♖g5 e4 26. ♙g2 e3 27. ♖dd1 ♖g3 28. ♖xf5 ♖xg2 29. ♖e6+ ♖f7 30. ♖xe3=.

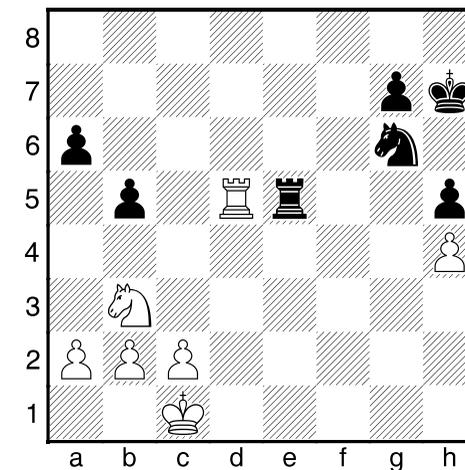
24...♖xe5 25. ♖xe5 ♘g6 26. ♙d5+ ♙h7 27. ♙e4



27...♘xe4 28. ♖xe4 ♖be8

The h4 pawn is a big weakness and hard to keep.

29. ♖xe8 ♖xe8 30. ♖d5 ♖e5



31. ♖xe5

I thought defending the knight endgame was my best chance because I could activate my king quickly.

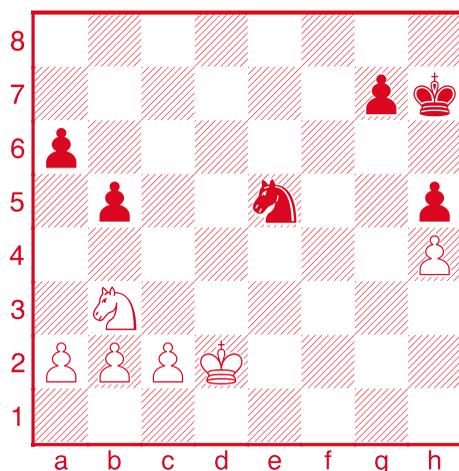


31.♖d4 ♖e1+ 32.♔d2 ♜h1
33.♖d6 ♜xh4 34.♖xa6 ♜g4≠ The
h-pawn is very hard for White to
stop.

31...♞xe5 32.♔d2?

My idea was to give a pawn in
order to activate my king, but
there was no need to do that.

32.♞c5 a5 (32...g5 33.♔d1 gxf4
34.♔e2 is similar.) 33.♞b7 g5
34.♔d1 gxf4 35.♔e2 a4 36.♔f2
♞g4+ 37.♔g2 ♞e3+ 38.♔h3
♞xc2 39.♔xh4= White should
easily draw.



Should Black play ...♞c4+ or
...♞f3+

32...♞c4+?

Kamsky should have gone after

the h-pawn: 32...♞f3+ 33.♔e3
♞xh4 34.♞c5 a5 35.♞e4 ♔h6
36.♞d6 b4 37.c4 bxc3 38.bxc3≠
White may be able to draw
because of the counterplay with
the c-pawn.

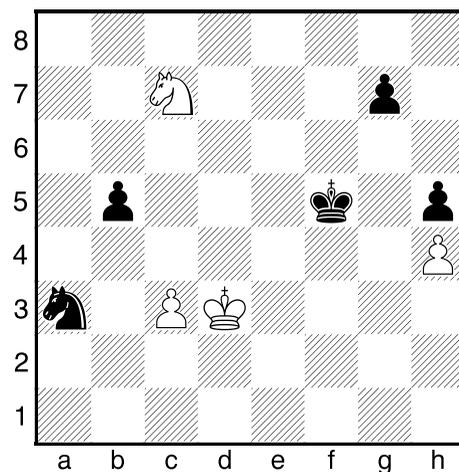
33.♔d3?

33.♔c3 g5 looked extremely
dangerous to me, but White is in
time to get the king back to stop
the pawn: 34.hxg5 ♔g6 35.♞d4
♔xg5 36.b3 ♞e5 37.♔d2 ♔f4
38.♔e2=.

33...♞xb2+ 34.♔e4 ♞a4

35.a3 ♞c3+ 36.♔d3 ♞b1

**37.♞c5 ♞xa3 38.♞xa6 ♔g6-
+ 39.♞c7 ♔f5 40.c3**



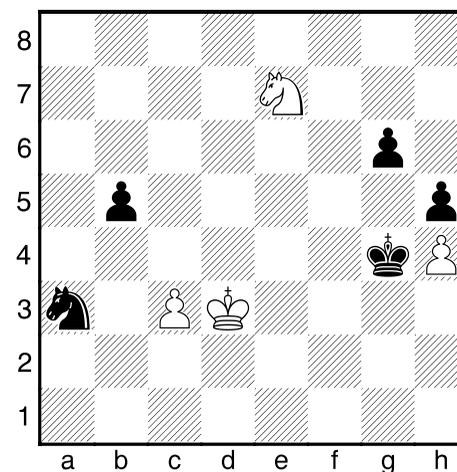
40...♔e5

Kamsky was probably confused
on how to win the h-pawn
without trading it for the g-pawn.

40...♔g4 41.♞e6 g6 42.♞f8
♔xh4 43.♞xg6+ ♔g5 44.♞e5
♔f4 45.♞g6+ ♔g4 Black's
winning plan is to control the
e5-square with ...♞c4 and chase
the knight away with ...♔g5.
46.♔d4 ♞c4 47.♔e4 ♔g5
48.♞f4 h4+ White won't be able
to stop the h-pawn and protect
the c3-pawn.

41.♞e8 g6 42.♞c7 ♔f5

43.♞d5 ♔g4 44.♞e7

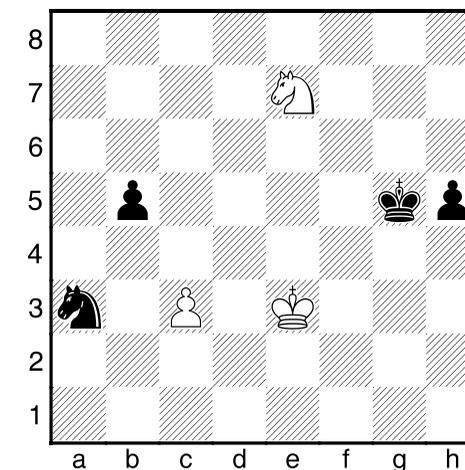


44...g5?

A strange mistake. Black gives
up an important tempo because
the king will be on g5, not on g4.

Better was 44...♔xh4 45.♞xg6+
♔g4+ With the same winning
plan as before.

45.hxg5 ♔xg5 46.♔e3



46...♔g4

46...♞b1 47.♞d5 ♔f5 48.♞f4
h4 49.♞d5 ♔e5 50.♞f4 ♔f5
(50...♞xc3 51.♞g6+=) 51.♞d5
♔g4 52.♔f2=.

47.♔f2

The king has gotten in front of
the pawn, so it's an easy draw.
Black's knight will always be
stuck defending the b5-pawn.

47...♞c4 48.♞c6 ♞d6

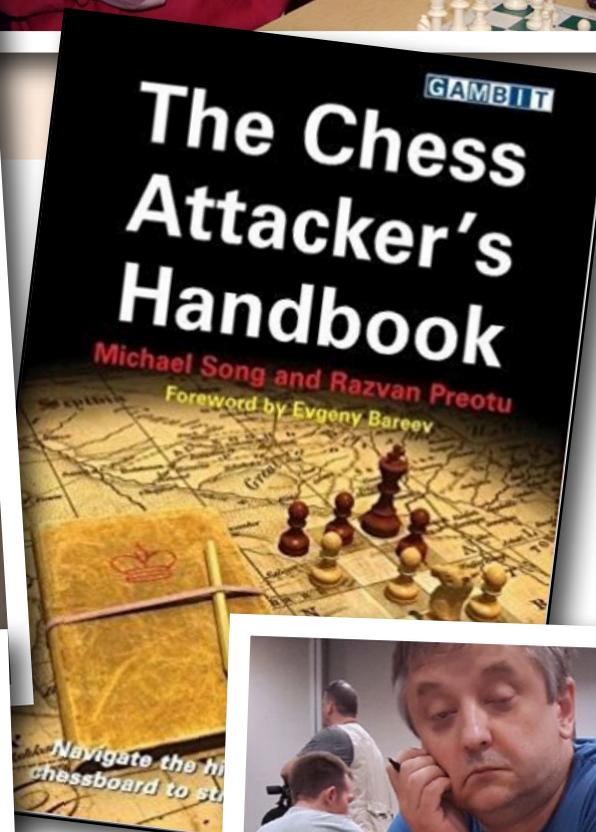
49.♔g2 ♞e4 50.c4

A very important draw! The few
points I gained were enough



for me to cross 2500, meeting the last requirement I needed to achieve my GM title.

1/2-1/2



2011 Hamilton Open with GM Wesley So.

2010 Canadian Chess Challenge.

2017 visiting first coach at the Canadian Jr.

2017 upcoming book from Gambit...!!

2016 Washington Open, sleepy Rene needs sleep.

photos

Rene Preotu

Calgary CC facebook

Maryland Chess Association

John Upper

links

Razvan's Blog

with photos and simul Videos
<https://gmrazvanblog.com/events/>

Razvan swindles blitz win vs FM

Kostya Kavutskiy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Av00X6SBHj0>

Danny Rensch interview:

<https://www.perpetualchesspod.com/new-blog/2017/4/4/episode-18-im-daniel-reusch-vp-of-chesscom>

Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²



editor - The 2016 World Senior Teams Championship took place in Radebeul, a suburb of Dresden, in Germany. It is a 9-round tournament for four-player teams in 50+ and 65+ sections. Women's teams play against the men, but are eligible for separate women's prize.

In the **50+ Section, Germany 1** (Tischbierek, Volke, Bönsch, Gauglitz, Bischoff) won on tie-break ahead of **Armenia** (including Movszisizian and Anastasian), and **England 1** (Nunn, Arkell, Speelman, Flear, Hebden) was 3rd. The Russian women won the women's prize. The Russian team of Balashov, Zhelnin, Pushkov, Vasiukov, and Sveshnikov won all their matches to take the **65+ section**. If you think you noticed a lot of GM names in those line ups, you're right.

The chance to travel to a wonderful place with old friends to compete in a — I have to say it — junior-free event, brought together four veteran Canadian IMs (and one FM) and lured IM Deen Hergott out of a nearly 10 year chess retirement. I asked

Deen to write a Tournament Diary about his return. The three parts of Deen's report were written and submitted before, during, and after the event.

Canada's 50+ Team

IM Deen Hergott, FM Paul Ross, IM Tom O'Donnell, IM Dave Ross, IM Jean Hébert.

IM Deen Hergott Tournamet Diary: 1

Before the Event

Sometime in the Fall of 2015, I received an e-mail from an old chess friend of mine, Dave Ross. Someone who I haven't seen or talked to in a long time, since

Tom O'Donnell's wedding back in the early 2000's — Dave now lives in the States, married to an American.

It's always a pleasure to reconnect with old friends, but this was more than just a "catching up" out of the blue — it was



an invitation to reconnect at a chess tournament. And not just a North American weekender, but a full-out European adventure.

When Dave initially suggested fielding a Canadian team for this Senior Championship, I was disinclined to say yes. More from a financial point of view than a chess one. Yes, my last serious chess event was in 2005 — a four-cities team event with Larry Bevand's Chess 'n Math Association, (scored 1.5/3, losing to Igor Zugic, draw with Thomas Roussel-Roozmon, and win over an expert rep from Quebec City) — but I've kept abreast of world news and activity, written semi-regularly, and done some chess teaching. So my chess interest hasn't waned that much, just my drive to play dissipated at some point, partially due to weekend-schedules and work commitments.

I expressed interest in the idea but some skepticism in coming up with the necessary outlay of cash — I've had some major dental expenses in the past two

years, so that was also a deterrent.

Some months went by, I toyed with the idea some more, and eventually I came to realize that this would be a YOLO opportunity (You Only Live Once). Jean Hébert (Montreal) and Tom O'Donnell (Kingston) live close enough to Ottawa (even if I rarely see them), but the Ross brothers (Dave in Jackson, Mississippi), and Paul in Vancouver, BC, are good friends I haven't seen in many years (Paul, close to 20), and the chance to see them and socialize finally tipped the scales, winning out over the cost factor and any anxiety I might harbour in playing an organized tournament again. I have to say that team events are among my favourite experiences (the Olympiads were wonderful), and Europe is always a special treat. I also decided to tack on a week of travel and sightseeing with a close friend, to make the European destination even more appealing.

Shocked Witnesses Call FIDE Opening Ceremony "a circus"!

Literally.

Preparation?

My preparation has been pretty haphazard, lots of 3 and 5 minute games on ICC (mostly lost on time, but used more to test some opening ideas), some ICC videos, perusing of international chess news, and a look through my old chess library (appropriate for a Senior event, I think!).

Having no recent games might be a bonus in terms of adverse preparation, but I've a feeling I will be playing a fair number of systems I'm familiar with from my active years, so anyone going

back far enough will find examples of what they may face. I also played a lot of different things back then, so I'll still be a bit of a wild guess — some things don't change!

Books??

I brought a funny collection of books with me (Tom O'D had a good chuckle) that I've spent a little time with over the past month or so — a Tony Miles collection (someone I always enjoyed as a creative player, and a leading practitioner of some sys-



tems I play, English Defence 1.c4 b6, as one example), one of the SOS (Secrets of Opening Surprises) series, Keene's Flank Openings, a random NIC Yearbook with opening treatises, and the blue volume of ECO (1.e4 e6 and 1.e4 e5) — yes I know, crazy! And Jonathan Tisdall's *How to Improve Now* — any book that talks about positions and chess thinking is useful for a good chess "state of mind". And following along without a board is also a form of training. So is hunkering down with a multi-million game database, of course, but I'm definitely not coming in with that level of preparation, nor will

I likely play anything theoretical enough that that should be a necessary or real concern.

The biggest hurdles to overcome besides some rustiness are going to be the faster time control (40/90 then game in 30 with 30-second increment per move) and the 9:30 am start time. It may take me a few rounds to get into the swing, but I'm hopeful that the general tournament bonhomie and team camaraderie will see me through. If things take a really bad turn over the chessboard, at least I'll be surrounded by friends, right?

No clowns in the playing hall.



Arrival

I arrived in Radabeul after an exhausting travel ordeal yesterday evening — Berlin was in the low 30s but super humid, and my train to Dresden had no AC nor a seat (they overbooked) — just in time to join everyone at a dinner buffet. It was a sight for sore eyes and weary legs. Everyone seems in a good mood, and it's been great to just have a few days to acclimatize. Canada is actually quite high in the rankings, 6th or 7th of 60ish teams, so it will be a good chance to see if the veterans have still got it!

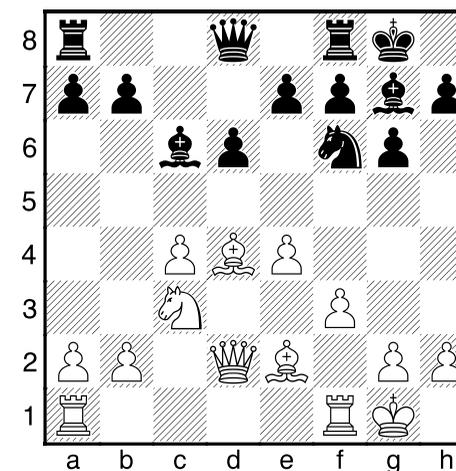
Notes by IM Deen Hergott
Hergott, Deen (2385)
Schmidt, Jorg (2112)
 B38

*World 50+ Teams Dresden (1),
 26.06.2016*

My first serious chess game in over a decade! 1.♘f3 was always one of my favourites and seemed a safe approach for the opening round....

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.♘c3
 g6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♘c6

6.e4 d6 7.♗e2 ♗g7 8.♗e3
 ♗d7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♙d2 ♞xd4
 11.♗xd4 ♗c6 12.f3



A fairly standard position for the Maroczy Bind variation of the Accelerated Dragon. Most common here involve plans with ...a5, forestalling an advance of White's Q-side. Black's next must be considered dubious, or at best very accommodating.

12...♗e8?!

♙12...♞d7 13.♗e3 a5
 ♙12...a5!?

13.♗fd1

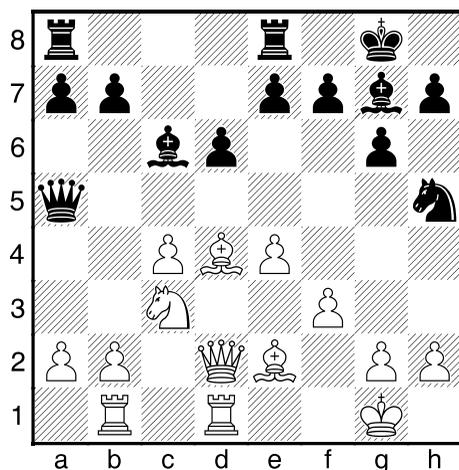
Possibly more useful than Black's ...♗e8, but this is too temperate a reaction. 13.b4! is definitely the right move. This

prevents Black's natural ... $\text{N}d7$ maneuver and gains valuable space.

13... $\text{Q}a5$?!

I was happy to see this as ... $a5$ would likely transpose to typical waters and exploit my cautious play. Now it looks like $b2$ - $b4$ is going to happen again!

14. $\text{R}ab1!$ $\text{N}h5$



Black's last three moves have some point, but they all seem a bit inconsistent, and don't really fit into any long-term plan. Apart from a tactical moment later in the game, this might be the most critical position to consider this game.

15. $\text{Q}e3$

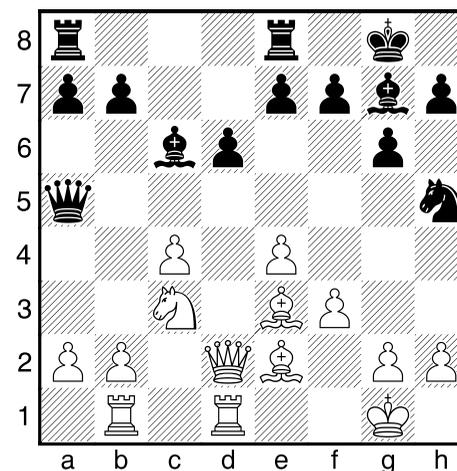
Almost a reflex, given that this move is nearly always played in response to ... $\text{N}f6$ - $d7$. My team didn't like this at all in our post-mortem, but it ranks pretty clearly 2nd by most engines. The captures on $c3$ give Black a plan, something that he has lacked for some moves, and that may be what they didn't care for. It seems White still has the edge though with the B-pair, and I am at least satisfied with that. Trading on $g7$ is certainly simpler and better though.

One good thing I should mention here was that I had only used up 11 minutes on my clock (+30 sec increments) at this point. Normally a very deliberate player (and the time control definitely became an issue in several of my games), I made a conscious effort to try to play quickly in positions I knew reasonably well. That also would have affected my decision.

15. $\text{Q}xg7$ $\text{K}xg7$ (15... $\text{N}xg7$ 16. $b4$ ±) 16. $g4$ $\text{N}f6$ 17. $b4$ $\text{Q}e5$ 18. $f4$ $\text{Q}e6$ 19. $\text{Q}d4!$ is a nice way

to deal with Black's outlier plays and gain a clear edge and space advantage: 19... $\text{K}g8$ 20. $f5$ $\text{Q}e5$ 21. $\text{Q}xe5$ $dxe5$ 22. $\text{Q}f3$

15. $b4$ $\text{Q}xd4+$ 16. $\text{Q}xd4$ $\text{K}g5$ 17. $\text{Q}f1!$? is good enough for some small edge, but Black's pieces make a bit more sense here. The arrival of the Black queen on $g5$ in this line may be partially responsible for my decision to play $\text{Q}e3$ in the game (also anticipating ... $\text{N}f4$ at some point).



15... $\text{N}f6$?!

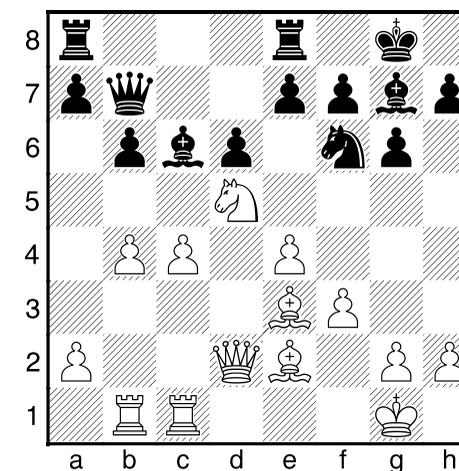
15... $\text{Q}xc3!$? 16. $\text{Q}xc3$ $\text{Q}xc3$ 17. $bxc3$ $b6!$ was certainly Black's chance. White will try to engineer $a4$ - $a5$, or hope to gain something with advances on the K-side combined with the B-pair, but

Black has achieved something significant in the weakening of White's Q-side pawn structure. I saw this line but felt White should be able to demonstrate some advantage. Possibly, but it offers a lot less than the simple trade on $g7$ would have afforded. 18. $\text{R}a1!$ $\text{Q}a4$ 19. $\text{R}db1$ ± intending $\text{R}b4$ and $a2$ - $a4$.

16. $b4$ $\text{Q}c7$ 17. $\text{R}dc1$

Lots of possibilities here: 17. $\text{N}d5$, 17. $a4$, or 17. $b5$ $\text{Q}d7$ 18. $b6!$? but leaves split a- and c-pawns.

17... $b6$ 18. $\text{N}d5$ $\text{Q}b7$



19. $\text{N}xf6+$

This relieves the pressure on Black's game, but I had a



specific idea in mind which would not have been possible otherwise. Objectively, White does better to simply keep up the pressure and attempt to improve the position (19.♙d4!?) and force Black to contend with the monstrous knight on d5.

19...♙xf6 20.c5

This was my intention, and there was too much pressure against d5 to play it on the previous move.

20...b5!

The best try to keep the Q-side closed.

21.cxd6

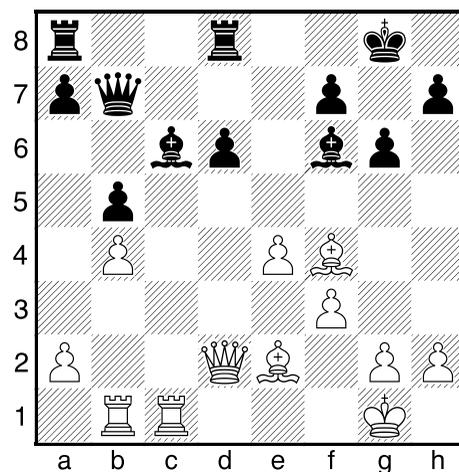
21.a4!/? a6 I wasn't sure if throwing these in was an improvement or not. For the moment I am aiming at a7 so I left the Q-side as is.

21.♖b3!/? is an idea I hadn't considered. Transferring the rook to d3 can be very useful in many lines. I like this move enough that had I seen it I would have chosen it over the game.

21...♖ed8

Why not 21...♖ad8 Weak a7? Maybe, but it seems difficult to exploit. 22.♙c5 ♙e5! (22...exd6 23.♙d4!). Black isn't equal yet, but he's getting closer.

22.♙f4 exd6



23.♙g5?!

23.♖b3! Again this idea! White prepares to triple on d6 as the ♙f4 is already well placed for such a task. 23...d5 (23...♙e5 24.♖d3 ♖d7 25.♙d1!± and with ♙b3 coming, White's army is coordinated and active. My choice in the game is too simplistic, and also yields some Black square counterplay.) 24.e5

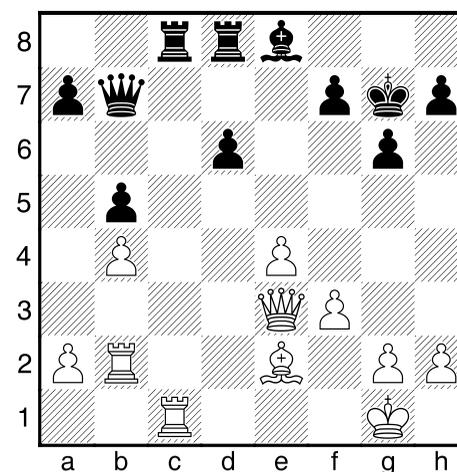
23...♙xg5 24.♙xg5± ♔g7

Not a mistake, but Black should have grabbed a useful diagonal with ...♙b6+.

25.♙e3

Back on track and threatening to win a piece by forking on c3.

25...♙e8 26.♖b2 ♖ac8



27.♖bc2

Natural and reflexive, but losing a little ground again.

27.♖xc8 ♙xc8 (27...♖xc8?)

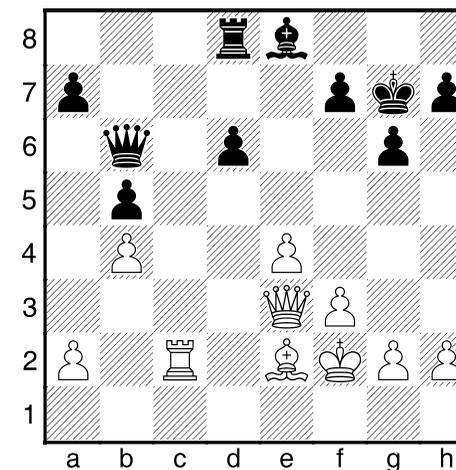
28.♙d4+ and d6 hangs.)

28.♙d4+! ♔g8 29.♙f2± Black can't really do much with the c-file and he remains with the weaker pawn structure.

27...♖xc2 28.♖xc2 ♙b6!/?

If White mistakenly captures on b6, the a-file gives Black enough counterplay to compensate for the horrible pawns. But White's next is natural.

29.♙f2



29...♙f6

A bit of a surprise, but not such a great move. 29...d5! 30.♙xb6 axb6 and again Black is getting closer to his draw, but White has a choice of ways to press, including 31.e5!/?

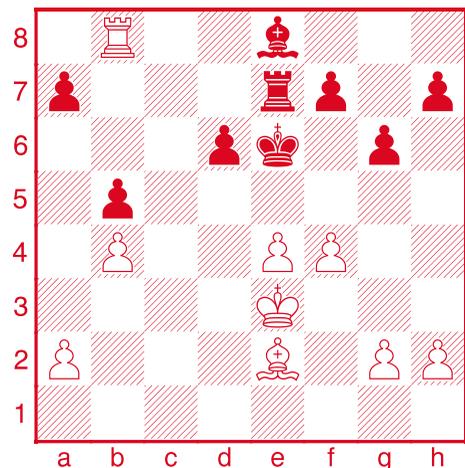
30.f4 ♙xe3+ 31.♙xe3

Some mild time pressure, but the position is tougher for Black.

31...♙e6 32.♖c7! ♖d7 33.♖c8 ♖e7 34.♖b8



FIDE



....d5 or ...f5

34...d5?

Black finally cracks.

34...f5!:

35.♙xb5 ♜xb5 36.♖xb5 ♔f6!
37.e5+ dxe5 38.♖xe5 ♖xe5+
39.fxex5+ ♔xe5 and if there is a win here, I don't see it.

35.♙d3! and the d4-square for White's King provides for nagging pressure, but this was the only way for Black to play on 35...fxe4 36.♙xe4 d5 37.♙d3 ♔d6+ 38.♔d4±.

35.♙xb5 ♜xb5 36.♖xb5 dxe4 37.♖e5+

A spotty game, but a win's a win. As I suspected pre-tournament,

the new time controls were going to prove challenging — that was true for nearly all of my games.

1-0

Notes by IM Deen Hergott Anastasian, Ashot (2532)

Hergott, Deen (2385)

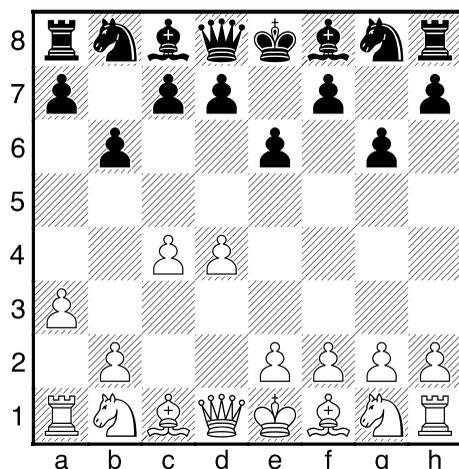
A40

World 50+ Teams Dresden (3), 28.06.2016

1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.a3

A radical way of preventing a pin with ... ♙b4.

3...g6!?



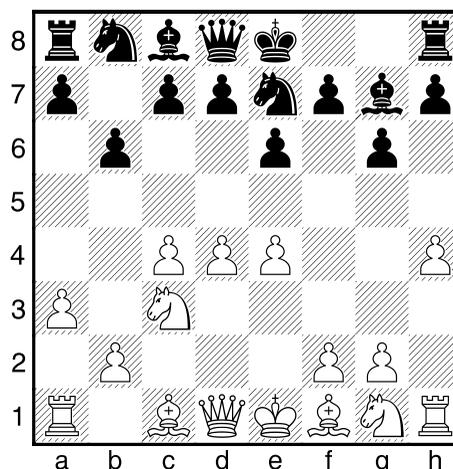
An idea of Tony Miles who

employed the English Defence (1.c4 b6) successfully against many decent players during his career. I only took six chess books to Dresden with me, and no laptop. One of the books was a Tony Miles games collection (*It's Only Me*). It happens that I remembered a game of his against GM Baburin in which he met 3.a3 with 3...g6 and later won because of the weakness of the b3-square! I've long been a fan of Miles' boundless creativity, and decided to give it a go!

4.♘c3 ♙g7

The bishop finds a new diagonal to operate on.

5.e4 ♞e7 6.h4?!

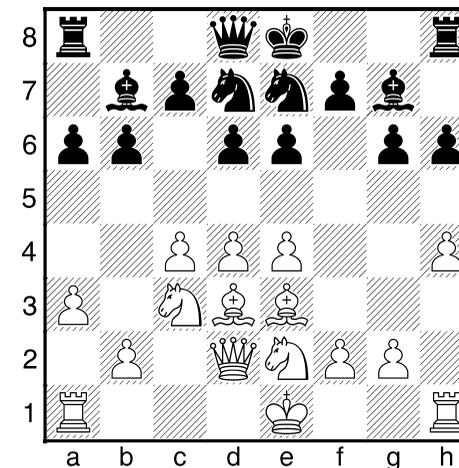


Played after quite a bit of thought, my opponent was critical of this after the game. If nothing else, my opening choice caught my opponent a bit off-guard. So, should Black play to defuse a further h4-h5 advance, or ignore it and strike back in the centre?

6...h6

I opted for this, but 6...d5 was a serious option and would certainly be the classical choice. It may well be a better one.

7.♙e3 ♙b7 8.♙d3 d6 9.♞ge2 ♞d7 10.♚d2 a6



Played in true Hippopotamus fashion. Of course there were options along the way — a fast

...d5 earlier, ...♘bc6, ...♙d7 and ...0-0-0. We were both very much on uncharted territory here, and importantly, as the game will show, I never lost sight of that b3-weakness that Miles exploited so well. Who was it that pointed out the self-evident truth that “pawns cannot move backwards”?

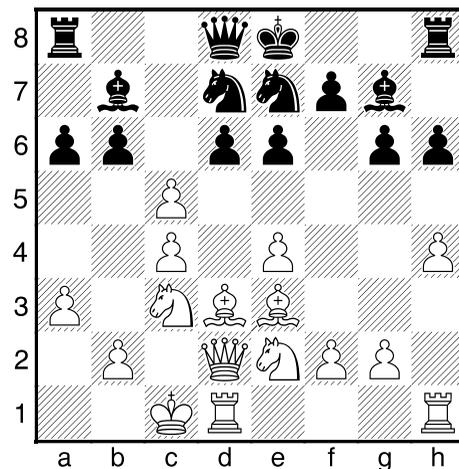
11.0-0-0

Expected, with that h-pawn sticking out like a sore thumb, but I was happy to see this. It clarified my intentions considerably, and lessened the impact of a space-grabbing b2-b4 advance. I also started calculating the possible arrival of a knight on b3 now, which is not as far away as one might originally think!

11...c5 12.dxc5

12.d5 exd5 13.exd5 ♘e5 White is better but Black can play.

Armenias's 50+ GMs
Karen Movsziszian & Ashot Anastasian would be on many country's Olympiad Teams.



12...bxc5!

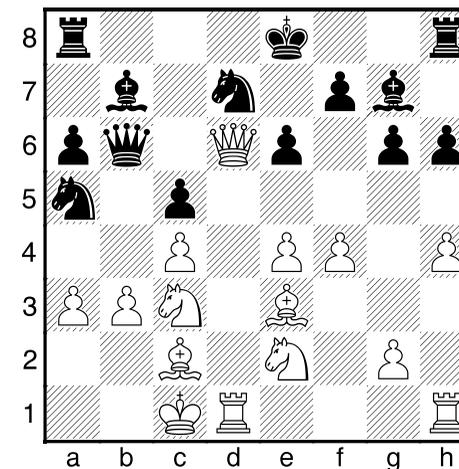


Despite the weakness of the backward d-pawn, I believe this is correct, opening the b-file for counterplay. Naturally it took some calculation to ensure that I had sufficient counterplay.

13.f4

Stopping ...♘e5.

13...♗c6 14.♙c2 ♘a5 15.b3
♙b6!? 16.♙xd6



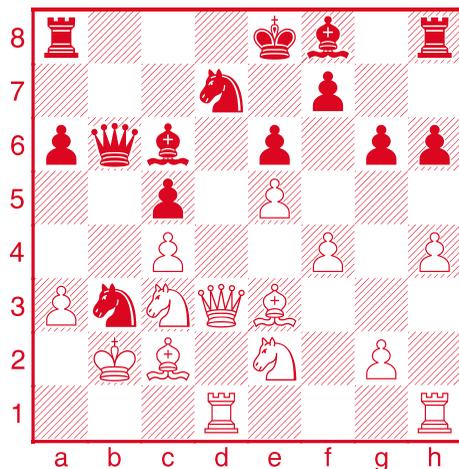
16...♙c6!

The point. Black intends to simply oust the White Queen from d6 with ...♙f8, and recoup the b-pawn. Even ...♖b8, increasing the pressure, is a possibility. Black is not worse, and White must tread carefully now.

17.e5

17.b4 ♘xc4 18.♙xc5 ♘xd6
19.♙xb6 ♘b5! and Black is emerging well from the complications. 20.♙d4 ♙xd4
21.♘xd4 ♘xc3 22.♘xc6 ♘xd1
23.♖xd1 g5!? and Black may be a smidgen better.

17...♙f8 18.♙d3 ♘xb3+
19.♙b2



Now what? Attempt a perpetual, play for more attack with ...Rb8? Is there a Plan C?

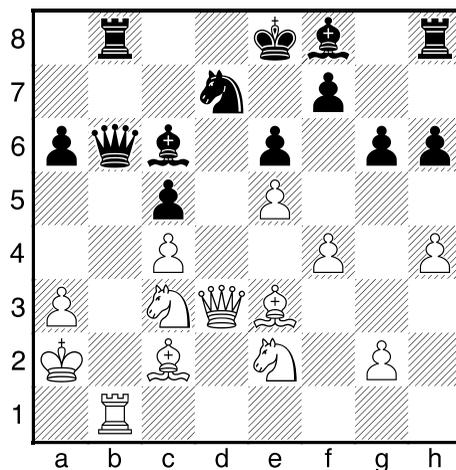
19...Nxd2+

After some deliberation and a descending clock, I chose the line which would allow an immediate draw by repetition. There were, however, two serious alternatives to consider. Probably I should have risked playing for more, but 15 mins. (+5 sec in increments) for 10 moves against a seasoned GM with nothing to play for but all out attack had me a bit worried, and I opted for the sure thing.

19...Nxd2+ 20.Ka2 Nxc2 21.Qxc2 Qxg2!? is an engine suggestion I didn't consider at all.

Eliminating White's light-squared bishop really cuts down on attacking ideas against Black's K-side, so there is some logic to this idea, and it should give Black some advantage, though not as much as 19...Rb8.

19...Rb8 is most critical. 20.Rb1 (20.Ka2 Nxd2! 21.Rb1 is the same.) 20...Nxd2+ 21.Ka2 Nxb1 22.Rxb1 *Analysis Diagram*



22...Qd8! I didn't consider this too strongly, focusing on ...Qc7 reserving the d8-square for the rook. It's quite powerful though. A rook trade now forces a queen trade as well! And both the h4- and g2-pawns are hit now. And, at least one major is coming off now — White's Queen is unfortunately placed. If I'd seen

either of these lines clearly enough, I'd have likely chanced the materialist approach. There's always something seductive about half a point against a higher-rated opponent though — tension throughout the event manifested as a lack of confidence in some of my decisions. That's just a long way of describing "rust"!

22...Qc7 23.Rd1 (23.Rxb8+ Qxb8 24.h5 gxh5! and Black's King is surprisingly safe in the centre. Capturing on h5 is another idea I underestimated when deciding what to play. Naturally Black will need to be a bit careful, but the position should objectively be quite a bit better if the time control can be safely reached.) 23...h5 24.Ne4 Qxe4 25.Qxe4 Nb6! dealing with Qc2-a4, and with ...Qe7 coming, again Black seems to be doing well, barring a time-trouble accident.

20.Qc1 Nb3+ 21.Qb2 Nd2+ 22.Qc1 Nb3+ 23.Qb2 Nd2+ Short but sweet. Despite the chance of playing for the full point, I was satisfied with this game — a successful opening experiment, a couple nice moves (...Qc6! was my fave), and a draw with Black against a GM. More than anything it reassured me of the fact that I was still able to compete with top-notch players after such a long layoff. It was a real tragedy that we lost this match to Armenia — Jean's time forfeiture to Vaganian in what had become a winning B vs N endgame was tragic.

1/2-1/2

...it reassured me of the fact that I was still able to compete with top-notch players after such a long layoff.

- IM Deen Hergott

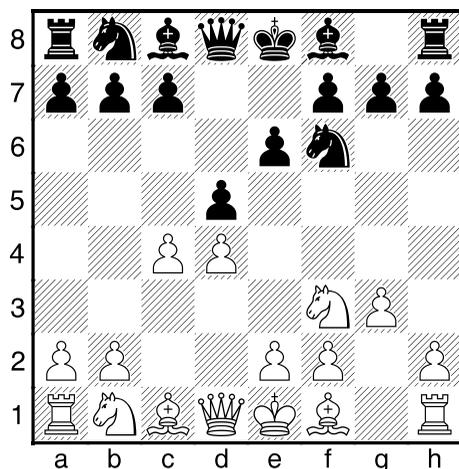


**Notes by IM Deen Hergott
Hergott, Deen (2385)
Nehmert, Uhlrich (2324)**

E02

World 50+ Teams Dresden (5.2),
30.06.2016

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.c4 e6
4.g3



I was playing the Catalan 30 years ago, before it had become a fashionable alternative to the QGD. Nowadays, the theory has grown substantially, but the general positional battle between the light-squared bishops suits my style well I think.

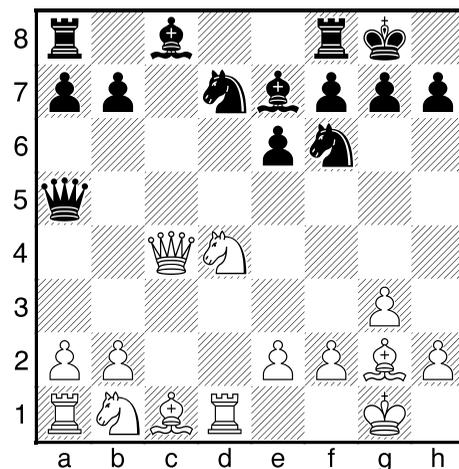
4...dxc4 5.♙a4+

Not a line I've played often (compared with 5.♙g2), but I

wanted to avoid mainline theory and any surprises along the way. Black has many reasonable tries here, and White can't objectively hope for more than a small edge.

5...♘bd7 6.♙g2 c5 7.0-0
cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♙e7 9.♖d1
9.♙xc4 ♘b6 is a little annoying.

9...0-0 10.♙xc4 ♙a5

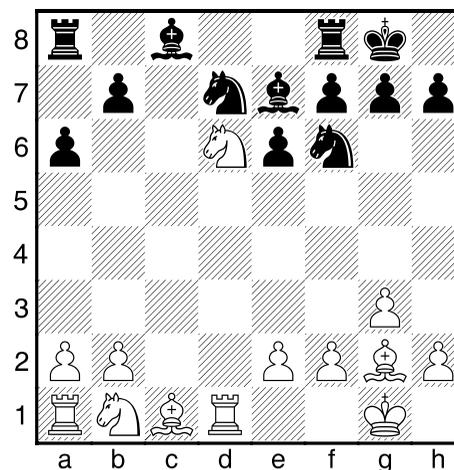


11.♙b5

11.♘c3 ♙h5!? was an idea for Black (in my mind at least), but it's not such a big concern. White's long-term pressure on the Q-side, combined with continuing development give him the upper hand. I opted for a way to shut down this "activity" on the spot, but it's a little too simplistic.

White's still a little better though, in any case.

11...♙xb5 12.♘xb5 a6
13.♘d6



So, how big is White's advantage here? In layman's terms, White has Catalan "pressure",

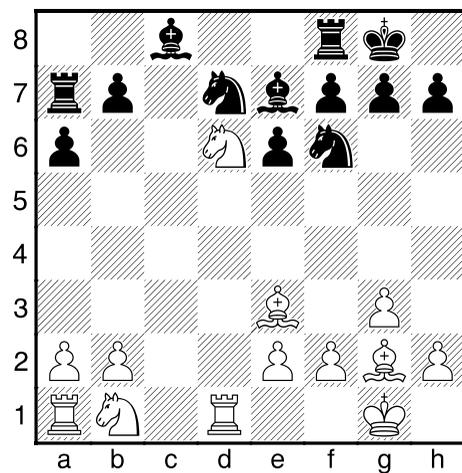
which will result in the win of the B-pair. The position has a symmetrical pawn structure, but is also relatively open — seemed like a riskless plus to me. Maybe not much, but I've always enjoyed trying to nurse these small edges.

13...♖a7!?

13...♘d5 is a more direct try. 14.♙xd5 (14.e4!?) 14...exd5 15.♘xc8 ♖axc8 16.♘c3 ♘f6 17.♘xd5 ♘xd5 18.♖xd5 ♖c2 is a bit like the game in terms of pressure as compensation. Sometimes White's edge will amount to something, sometimes not. 19.♖d7 ♙f6 20.♖xb7 ♖xe2±.



14. ♖e3



The engines like ♗f4 and ♘c3. I didn't see the point in allowing ...b5, but then I missed a strong tactical resource for Black. The main point of ♗f4 is to eye the c7 square, making it difficult for the ♖a7 to reenter society. Provoking ...e5 should be a good thing for White in general as it weakens d5.

14...b6 15. ♘c4?!

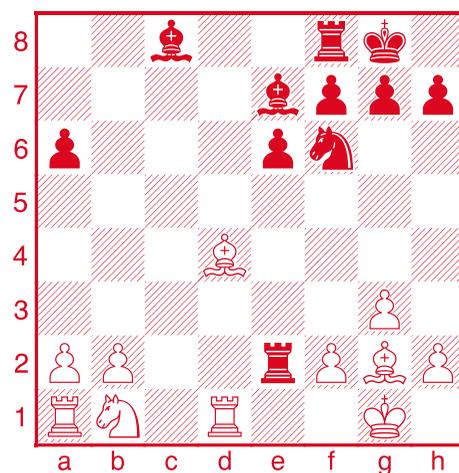
I thought things were smoothly proceeding to plan, but this slip could have cost me most of my advantage. Both 15. ♘c3 and 15. ♘a3!? keep a more serious plus.

15...♖c7

Fortunately Black also plays second-best, and a move I had expected, frankly!

15...♘g4! pretty much equalizes. A younger more tactically alert me might have noticed this. A lucky break! 16. ♗d4 (16. ♗xb6? ♘xb6 17. ♘xb6 ♗c5 18. ♘xc8 ♗xf2+?) 16...e5 17. ♗c3 ♗c5 18.e3 b5.

16. ♘xb6 ♘xb6 17. ♗xb6 ♖c2
18. ♗d4 ♖xe2



This position I had foreseen and assumed that Black's rook, while active, would have some difficulty escaping to safety. I was right in my thinking, but failed to set the biggest tasks for Black to overcome.

19. ♘c3

I spent a long time trying to trap Black's rook, and finally hit upon something that I thought was strong. I missed the simplest of all though, controlling the only safe square for Black's rook directly!

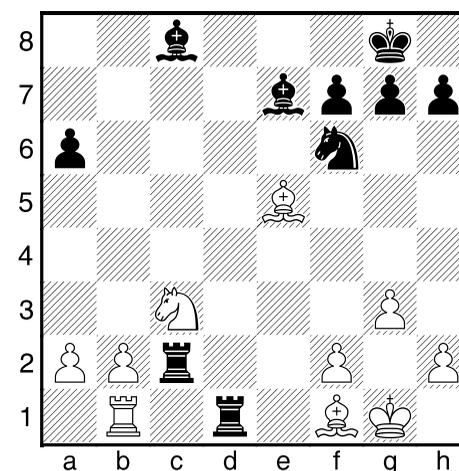
19. ♘d2 e5 20. ♗b6 ♗b4!±;
19. ♘a3 ♗xa3 20. bxa3 ♖c2±;
19. ♗f1 ♖c2 20. ♗c3 ♘e4!±;
19. ♖c1! ♗b4 20. ♖f1 e5
21. ♖xe2 exd4± maybe just winning. White has to get developed but he has no real weaknesses.

19...♖c2

19...♖xb2? 20. ♘d5!

20. ♖ab1 ♖d8 21. ♗f1 e5

22. ♗xe5 ♖xd1



I had seen up to here in analysis and now another crossroads.

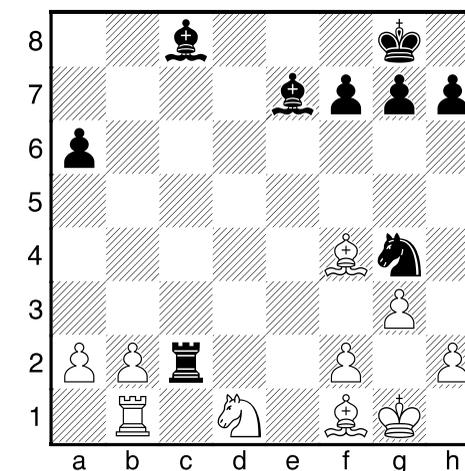
23. ♘xd1!

Guards f2 and b2, and intends ♘e3 to chase Black's rook off the 7th. If 23. ♖xd1, b2 will become a problem again before long.

23...♘g4

23...♗f5 24. ♘e3 ♖xf2 25. ♖c1!+-.

24. ♗f4?

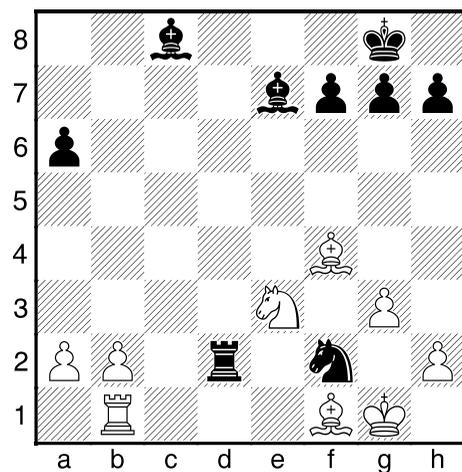


Ugh. Even though 24. ♗d4 "felt" right, I was seduced by the idea of ♖c1, getting rid of Black's rook once and for all. The tactical refutation of my choice is not a simple one, and that is probably what saved me.



24...g5?

24...♖xf2!! 25.♘e3 ♖d2

Analysis Diagram

and amazingly everything holds for Black. The threat of ...♘h3+ saves Black in many lines, and there are no good discoveries against Black's floating rook on the 7th:

26.♘c4 ♘h3+ 27.♙xh3 ♙c5+
28.♙e3 ♙xe3+ 29.♘xe3 ♙xh3=;
26.♖c1 ♘h3+ 27.♙xh3 ♙xh3
and c8 is still defended 28.♘f5?!
♖g2+ 29.♙h1 ♙f8≠;

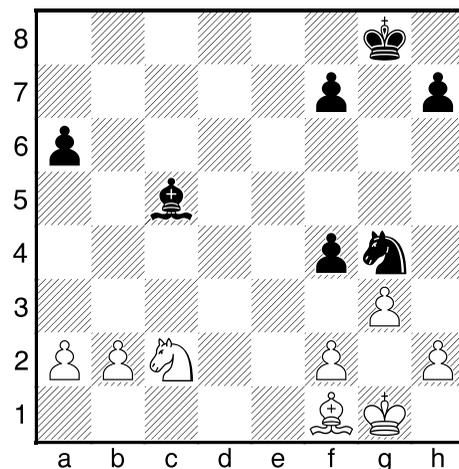
26.♘f5 26...♙xf5 27.♙xd2 ♘h3+
28.♙g2 ♙xb1 29.♙xh3 ♙xa2
30.♙xa6= and the b-pawn isn't
going to be enough.

Phew! Now White is a pawn up in all lines.

25.♖c1! ♙f5 26.♖xc2 ♙xc2
27.♘e3

This I had seen, and the rest is fairly smooth sailing.

27...gxf4 28.♘xc2 ♙c5



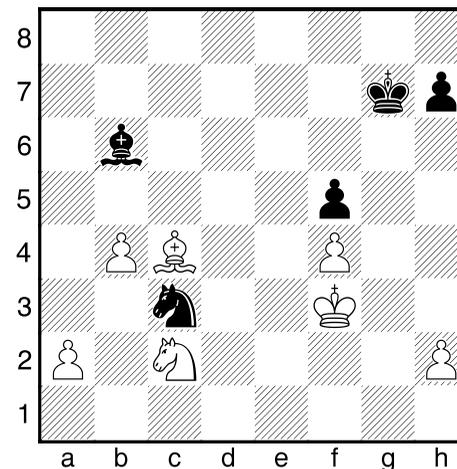
29.gxf4

29.♙xa6! is a bit better, setting the Q-side in motion right away. It turns out ...f3 is nothing. 29...f3 30.♙b7 ♙xf2+ 31.♙f1 ♙a7 32.♙xf3 ♘xh2+ 33.♙g2 ♘xf3 34.♙xf3 and the pawns clearly carry the day.

29...♘xf2
29...a5!

30.b4! ♙b6 31.♙g2 ♘d1

32.♙xa6 ♘c3 33.♙c4 ♙g7
34.♙f3 f5



35.♘e3 ♙g6 36.♙e6 ♙f6
37.♙b3 ♙g6 38.a4 ♘e4
39.♙c2 ♘d6 40.a5 ♙d4
41.♙d3

Another flawed victory, but it felt good to get my feet wet again after so many years. And it was great to see my chess colleagues again — all in all a great trip, tournament and reunion!

1-0

Tournament Diary: 2 During

So, it's round 8 of 9, and after a small loss against one of

the leaders, we are sitting with 9 match points out of 14 (four wins, a tie, and two losses) and roughly where we should be. The tournament is a little odd in that there are five teams clearly favoured (Iceland, England 1, Armenia, and two powerhouse German squads, with nearly all-GM lineups), followed by a huge rating gap (well over 100 points average) and a second tier, of which Canada is sitting at the top by a very small margin. We drew our match with Thuringen (from Germany), who were nearly identical to our team in rating, and lost our matches to higher-rated opponents.

I have to say that team spirit has been quite high, and we've really come together as a group. Games at 9:30 am provide most of the day free to relax, do a bit of preparation, what have you. We've taken to a nightly ritual of walking 60-90 minutes, investigating Radebeul. One day we walked uphill towards [the vineries one can see from our hotel balcony](#). Once towards the famous river Elbe. One afternoon we walked to a large open con-



FIDE



cept cemetery with wide pathways, integrated into a forested area, which showcased a huge memorial dedicated to the fire-bombing of Dresden at the end of World War II. Near the centre of the cemetery, we discovered a dozen large stone obelisks engraved with the names of the famous concentration camps (Auschwitz, Dachau, etc), arranged in a circle around a central commemorative area — the monument was stark, sombre, and quite evocative. Surrounded by forest on a peaceful, comfortably warm summer day, it was a moving juxtaposition of tranquility set against the horror and tragedy of war.

Meals at the hotel have been consistently excellent, with a wide variety of salads, cold and warm appetizers, soup, vegetables, meat dishes, fish, pasta, breads, cheese plates and desserts. Dishes have been on some rotation, so for variety we have eaten out a few evenings as well — once to a Greek restaurant, and another night, Italian. That evening, the restaurant was packed, quite possibly because

of the Germany-Italy Euro Cup 2016 soccer match, which Germany won in a gruelling 9-round penalty shootout. There were fireworks, and open revelry amongst German fans! Paul, my roommate, and I have also taken to visiting a nearby grocery store



for bread, cheese, yogurt, fruit etc. Quality and price have been extremely reasonable.

Time Troubles & Old Times

With a win in this penultimate round, we will likely have to face another powerhouse in the last one — they are running out of opponents to play, and we are top-rated in any trailing point group. This will be a huge test, but we haven't shown anything but goodwill as a team — trying our best, sometimes failing, but just moving on to the next game.

All of us have predictably been having issues with the time control (40/90, game in 30, 30 second increment on all moves), as well as the relatively early start. Jean lost a tragic game on time against Vaganian in a complicated but winning minor piece endgame. That obviously hurt, but he played the next day without complaint. He's had the toughest challenge on paper, as there are a fair number of teams here with tough Board 1 players, followed by a noticeable drop. I've scored decently, but my play has been very spotty. I'll readily

admit that being out of practice is causing a lot of issues with the clock, as I've mismanaged positions badly with incipient time pressure. All of us have had some good and bad moments in our games, but we've been mostly satisfied with overall results.

One thing I have noticed is that the majority of players here don't seem to be suffering as much with the time control. They seem to make practical decisions rather than calculating the details of positions, sometimes not the best or even second best move, but unless a position requires a decisive blow, simply keeping the status quo and saving five minutes might well be worth it in the end. Most games are decided by move 40, so time management seems to take on even more relevance in these games. If I could add one preparatory detail, it would be to get more experience with these incremental TC's. The team, in general, have all had some issues with this, whereas Europeans have regular team practice in league and club play under these conditions.

And I think we have been surprised by how easy it's been to catch up on shared histories and enjoy the thrill of team competition again. It's been a pricy trip, but well worth it. The toughest ordeal for me was getting here, two flights, a bus, and a 2-hour overbooked train trip (Berlin to Dresden), with no seat in humid 35+ degree weather, no AC either. I was never so relieved to find our hotel (where the tournament is being played), and my teammates welcoming me to dinner. After a cool 10-minute shower!

- Deen Hergott

Notes by IM Dave Ross
Ross, Dave (2296)
Schulz, Michael (2127)
 A29
World 50+ Teams Dresden (2.3),
 27.06.2016

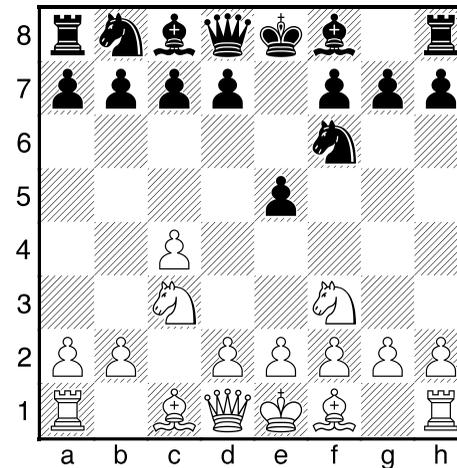
It was a great pleasure to reunite with chess friends from thirty years ago to play in the world over 50 team championship in Radabeul Germany over the summer.

We were the first team from North America to compete but I hope not the last. We fell a little short of our expected result but far exceeded it in terms of a good time.

I started playing FIDE tournaments again about two years ago and I think this was by far my worst performance. Ironically, by far *far* also my best result in terms of rating increase!

I have been asked to analyse my best game, so here it is.

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.♗f3



3...♘c6

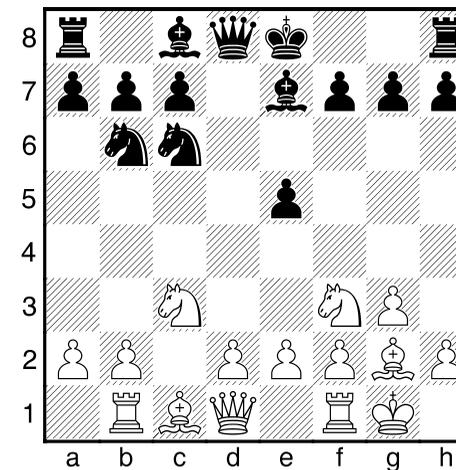
3...e4 4.♗g5 b5!? My opponent mentioned he used to play this

line. I forgot it even existed!! I told him all I remembered was 5.♙c2 had a good reputation 30 years ago. Engines prefer 5.d3 with some advantage to White but less than you would think...

4.g3

I don't usually play this move order so had to take a good look at 4...♘b4.

4...d5 5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.♘g2
 ♘b6 7.0-0 ♘e7 8.♖b1

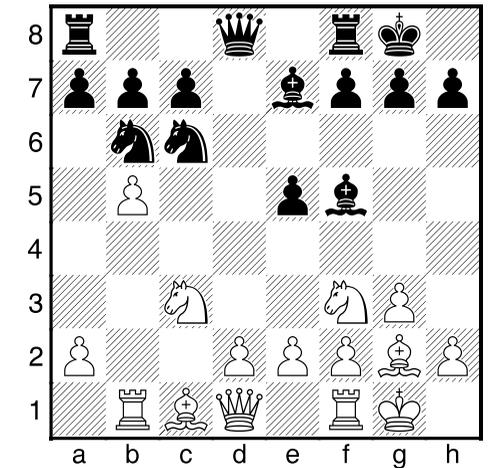


I have played this a few times with good results. It certainly is not objectively better than the far more often played 8.d3, but somehow Black opponents seem less well prepared against this line.

8...0-0 9.b4 ♘f5?!

This is playable but better is 9...a6, when I was going to settle for the modest 10.a3 with the kind of game I was looking for.

10.b5!



10...♘d4

Weirdly enough 10...♘a5 11.d3 f6 might be a better line, at least according to Fritz 15.

10...♘xb1? 11.bxc6 ♘f5 12.cxb7 ♖b8 13.♗xe5 is not playable: White is not even down material here and the pawn on the 7th combined with control of c6 and center pawns is too much.

11.d3 ♘xf3+

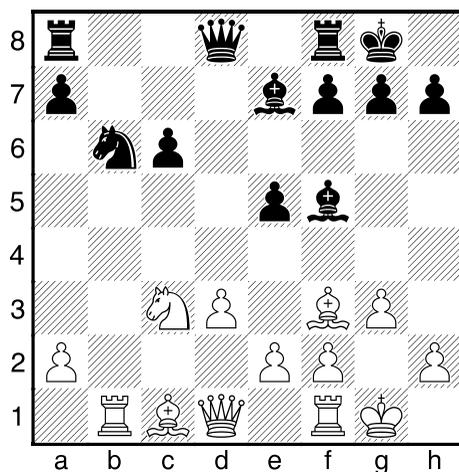
11...♙d6 12.a4±.



FIDE

12. ♖xf3 c6?!

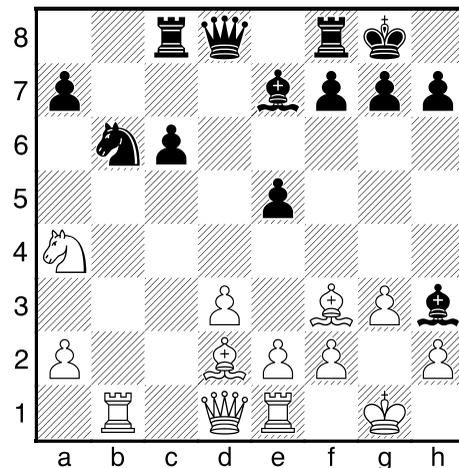
Again, playable, but it was preferable to sit tight with 12... ♖b8 and await developments: 12... ♖b8 13. ♔c2 ♔d7 14. ♘e4±.

13. bxc6 bxc6**14. ♗d2**

Amazingly the first new move! I was shocked. Maybe the old move, ♔c2, was better: 14. ♔c2 ♖c8 15. a4 ♗e6 16. ♗e3 f5 17. ♔b2 ♗f6 18. ♔b4± This was a hard line to find. I considered ♔c2, but thought a position that could have happened would be good for me but it isn't. There were lines where I had my bishop heading for a5 but it turns out to be harmless.

14... ♖c8 15. ♘a4?!

15. a4!

15... ♗h3 16. ♖e1**16... ♘d5?**

This is the first outright weak move of the game.

Much better was 16... c5! 17. ♗a5 ♖b8 18. ♔c2 ♔d6 I assumed this would be better for me but turns out it is next to nothing.

17. ♖b7?!

good enough to maintain the advantage but there are a few better moves:

17. ♔c2! and 17. ♘b2!

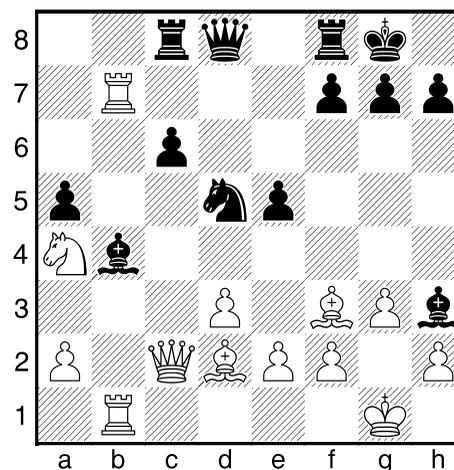
17... a5?

17... ♖c7 18. ♗a5 ♘b6 19. ♖xc7 ♔xc7 20. ♔c2 c5± is a better

defense but White's advantage is not in dispute. White's advantage consists of a healthier pawn structure and better piece coordination. Black can dream of getting in ...c4 some day, getting rid of the most glaring weakness.

18. ♔c2

Finally....

18... ♗b4 19. ♖b1!

White's pressure is growing and Black cracks.

19... ♔d6?

19... h6.

20. ♘b6! ♖cd8

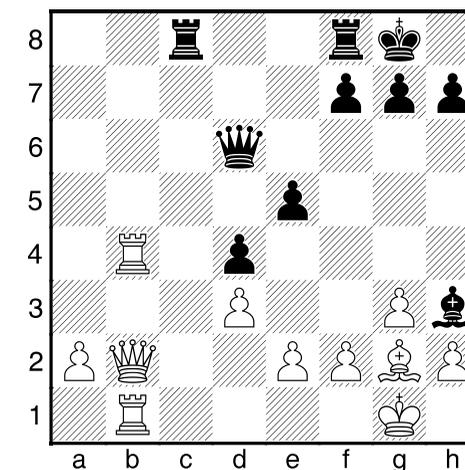
editor – 20... ♘xb6 21. ♖xb6 (21. ♗xb4 axb4 22. ♖xb6 ♖b8! is

similar.) 21... ♗xd2 22. ♔xd2 and White wins the c-pawn or the a-pawn.

21. ♘xd5

Strange that this clean win of a pawn might be cashing in too cheaply. I had my last big think here before my habitual time trouble kicked in. The engine prefers both a4 and ♘c4.

**21... cxd5 22. ♗xb4 axb4
23. ♖7xb4 ♖c8 24. ♔b2 d4
25. ♗g2**



I lost a game to IM Bindi Cheng in the 2016 GPO in this structure but with colours reversed. I can tell you it is a great structure for Rook or Queen endings. This is because of the combination of





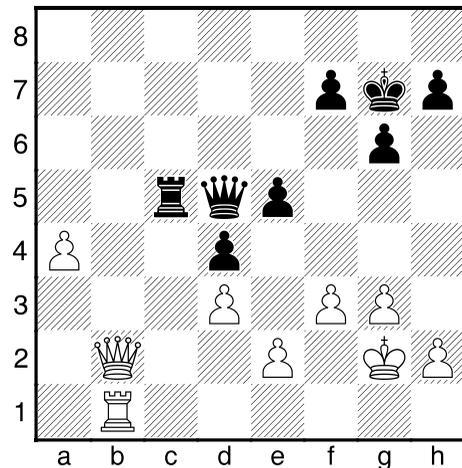
flexibility and lack of weakness. How cool to benefit from my loss so quickly!

25...♙xg2 26.♔xg2 ♖d5+
27.f3

This should be winning.

27...♖c5 28.♖b8
28.a4.

28...g6 29.♖xf8+ ♔xf8
30.a4+- ♔g7



31.♖c1?

The absolute worst move I played this game. I was short of time, but thankfully so was my opponent, so I got away with it.

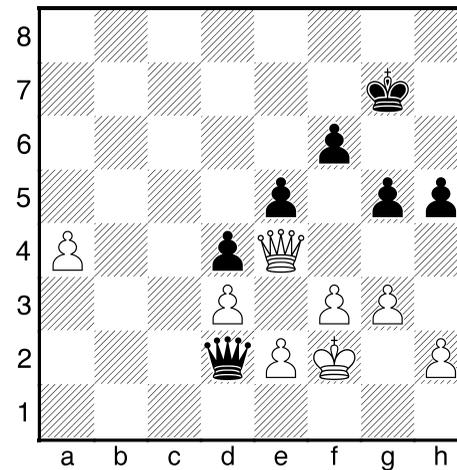
31.♙b6! ♖c2 32.♖b2+-.

31...♖xc1 32.♙xc1 ♖a5??

32...♙a2 33.♙d1 g5 34.♔f2
would be very hard to win, though I would have had fun trying!

33.♙c2 ♖e1 34.♙a2 ♖a5
35.♔f2 h5 36.♙c2 g5
Now I found a forced win.

37.♙c6! ♖d2 38.♙e4 f6



39.f4!

Splat. This rips Black's position to shreds.

39...exf4 40.gxf4 gxf4
41.♙xd4 ♔g6 42.♔f3 ♔g5
43.h4+ ♔g6 44.♙xf4 ♖e1
45.♙g3+

I would highly recommend this event. The beauty of it is anybody can go and make thier

own team. The event is superbly run and it is a chance to see some legends in action: this event had Yusupov, Vaganian, Nunn and Speelman, just to name a few! I sure hope to do this again.

1-0

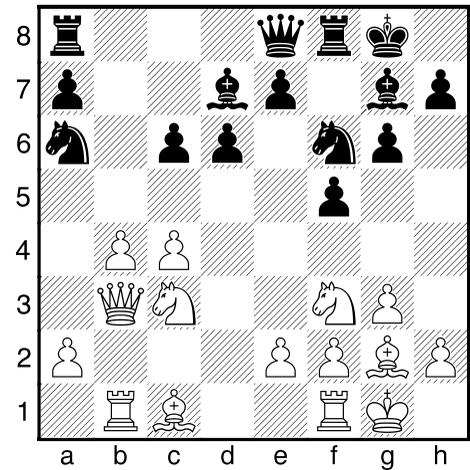
Notes by FM Paul Ross
Vollak, Andreas (2024)
Ross, Paul (2282)

A87

*World 50+ Teams Dresden (2.4),
27.06.2016*

1.d4 g6 2.c4 ♙g7 3.g3 d6
4.♙g2 f5 5.♘f3 ♘f6 6.0-0 0-0
7.d5 ♘a6 8.♘c3 ♖e8 9.♖b1
c6 10.b4 ♙d7 11.dxc6 bxc6
11...♙xc6 12.♙b3 (12.b5 ♙xf3
13.♙xf3 ♘c5=) 12...h6 13.c5+
♔h7 14.♙b2 with a small
advantage for White.

12.♙b3

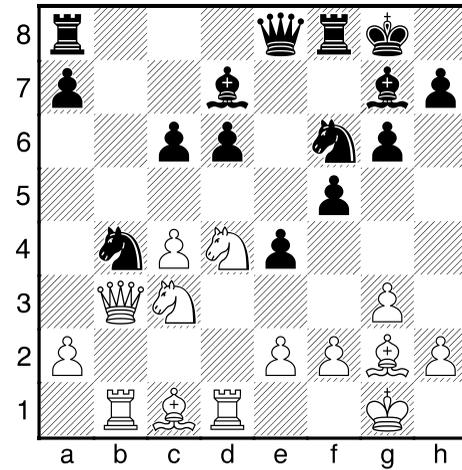


12...e5?!

Both ...♔h8 and ...♘c7 have been played. The engines seem to prefer ...h6 which doesn't show up on the database. 12...e5 is probably overly aggressive and not necessary but does lead to extreme complications which I seemed to be playing for most of the tournament. Ironically, my last 5 games ended in draws, regardless of the complications and material imbalances.



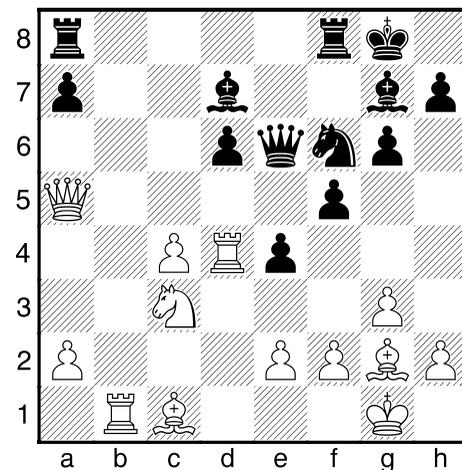
13. ♖d1 e4 14. ♘d4 ♘xb4



15. ♖xb4

15. ♕f4! ± c5 16. ♘db5 d5 17. ♘c7 ♖f7 18. ♘xa8 dxc4 19. ♖a3 ♖xa8 20. ♕d6 ♖c8 21. ♕xc5 ♖xc5 22. ♖xb4 ♖c7 ±.

15...c5= 16. ♖a5 cxd4
17. ♖xd4 ♖e6



18.e3?

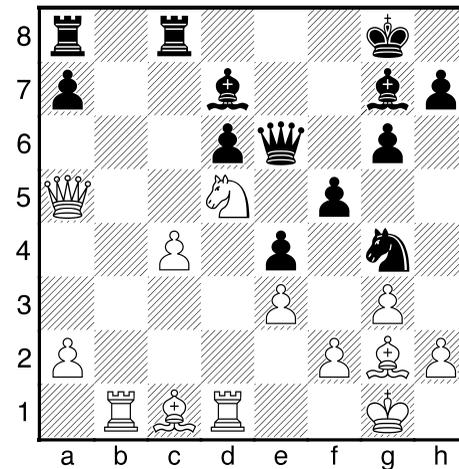
I was starting to get a bit happy after this move as it weakens d3 and f3.

18. ♘d5! ?=

18... ♘g4 ♖ 19. ♖d1 ♖fc8

19... ♖xc4 20. ♘d5 ♖f7 21. ♕b2 ♖a4 22. ♖b4 ♖xb4 23. ♘xb4 ♖b8 24. ♕xg7 ♖xg7 25. ♕f1 ♖b6 ♖.

20. ♘d5



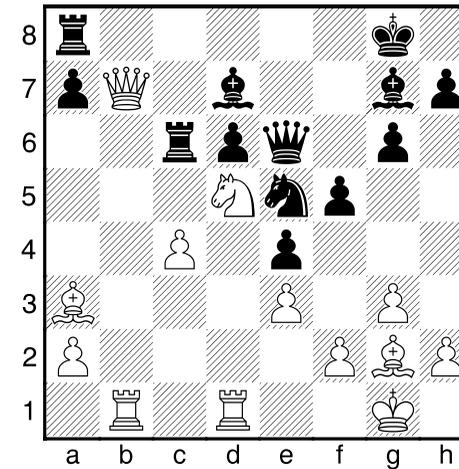
20... ♖c5?!

Not best. I should have simply taken the c4 pawn. For example:

20... ♖xc4 21. ♘b6 (21. ♘c7 ♕c3! 22. ♖d5 ♖xd5 23. ♘xd5 ♕g7 and Black maintains a small advantage.) 21... ♖c5= 22. ♖a6 ♖d8 23. ♖xa7 ♕b5 24. ♕b2

♕xb2 25. ♖xb2 ♖f7 26. ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 27. a4 ♕d3 28. ♕f1 ♘e5 again, Black maintains a small advantage.

21. ♖a6= ♘e5 22. ♕a3 ♖c6
23. ♖b7



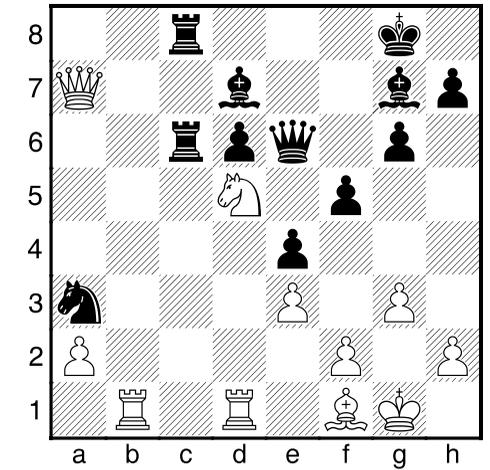
23... ♖ac8?

Throwing away all of the work to get to a decent position. Much better, and keeping a balance, is 23... ♖d8 over protecting d7 is absolutely necessary. 24. ♖xa7 ♖xc4 25. ♖b7 ♖a4 26. ♖b6 ♘f7 27. ♖b3 ♖aa8 ±.

24. ♖xa7 ♘xc4? 25. ♕f1?

Missing a win: 25. ♖b7 ♖d8 26. ♕f1 ♘xa3 27. ♖xa3 ♖e8 28. ♕b5 and Black can resign.

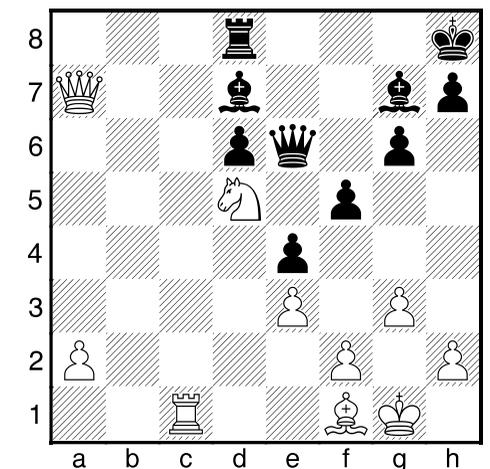
25... ♘xa3



26. ♖xa3?

Again, ♖b7 wins. We were both not able to see this during the game.

26... ♖d8 27. ♖a7 ♖c5
28. ♖bc1 ♖xc1 29. ♖xc1 ♖h8



30. ♕c4?



30.♘b6! ♕e8 31.♖c7 ♖f6 32.♗e7
♕c6 33.♙c7 winning material.

30...♙e8 31.♘c7 ♖e5

32.♘d5 ♖e8

Draw offered and agreed. White has an advantage and should continue with 33.♘b6.

1/2-1/2

Notes by IM Tom O'Donnell

O'Donnell, Tom (2354)
Lewis, Andrew P (2269)

B55

*World 50+ Teams Dresden (3.2),
28.06.2016*

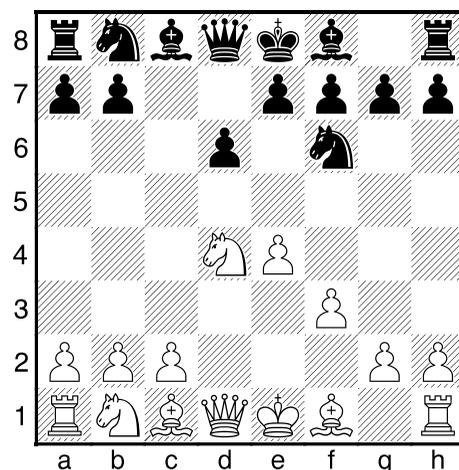
The team's participation in this tournament started as a bit of a joke. I mentioned in passing to Dave on facebook that here was a tournament that we were both "eligible" (due to our advancing age ;-)) to play in. Dave liked the idea and managed to create a team. His brother Paul handled the administrative duties. Thanks to both of them. Also thanks to my teammates for combining their generally good play with no "drama".

The tournament organization was excellent, the playing site was terrific and the accommodations top-notch. Canada could send at least three teams in the 50+ Division that would be contenders for the top ten spots. Next year it is in Greece.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 ♘f6

Though I do work on my students' openings, I don't do much work on my repertoire. A few years ago I picked up a copy of "Dangerous Weapons: The Sicilian" by Emms and Palliser and use a couple of ideas from that book. Here's one line.

5.f3



The Prins Variation.

With best play I doubt this gives White much (if anything) but it does have a couple of nice benefits. First, if your opponent is a Dragon player, you can answer 5... g6 with 6.c4 and they are playing a pseudo Accelerated Dragon. Second, Najdorf (5... a6) players also get 6.c4 and no Najdorf for them.



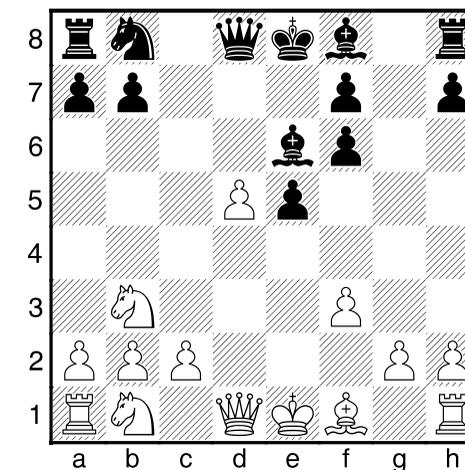
5...e5

The main line. If you like Q-less middlegames then you have good chances of reaching one here.

6.♘b3

6.♕b5+ ♘bd7 7.♘f5 d5! 8.exd5 a6 9.♕a4 b5 10.♕b3 ♘b6 11.♘e3 ♕c5 Here I think Black has good compensation for the pawn, though the line is reasonably popular.

6...d5 7.♕g5 ♕e6 8.♕xf6
gxf6 9.exd5



9...♙xd5

Taking with the bishop was also possible, but it leads to very similar positions. For example: 9...♕xd5 10.♘c3 ♕b4 11.♙d3

Spooky! German pole tries to steal Tom's opening prep.

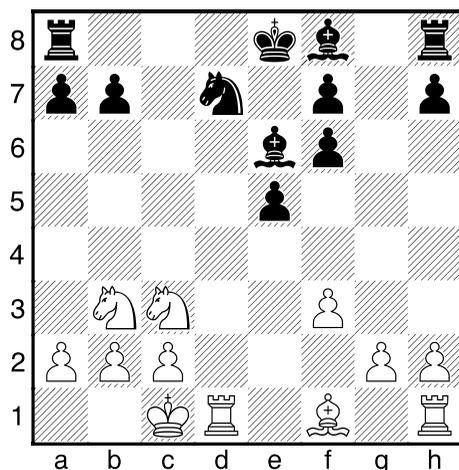
Why else does it ask in English?



♙c6 (11...♙xb3 12.♖xd8+ ♔xd8
13.axb3 (13.cxb3!?) 13...♘d7
14.0-0-0±) 12.♖xd8+ ♔xd8 13.0-0-0+ ♘d7 14.♘e4±.

10.♖xd5 ♙xd5 11.♘c3 ♙e6
11...♙b4 12.0-0-0 ♙e6 another way of attempting to keep both Bs fails to 13.♘d5.

12.0-0-0 ♘d7



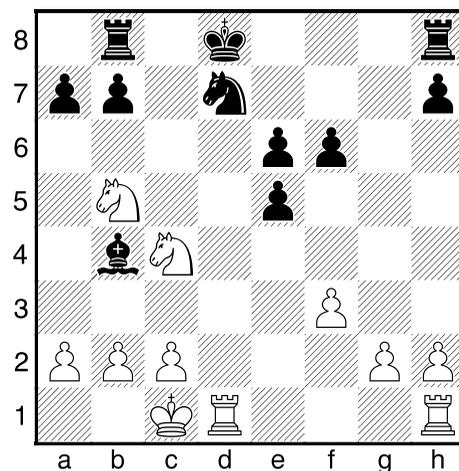
Based on his time usage, my opponent had obviously been surprised by this opening, as he confirmed in the post-mortem, and had been moving slowly since 5...e5. We are still in theory, but here I couldn't recall what I was supposed to play. This sort of thing is a big and common problem when you don't

play in many tournaments and don't practice by playing online (something I very rarely do).

13.♘b5 ♔d8

I expected 13...♔e7 14.♘c7 ♖c8 15.♘d5+ ♙xd5 16.♖xd5 which turns out to be the suggestion in the book. I think White is slightly better here but it's probably not much.

14.♘a5 ♖b8 15.♙c4 ♙b4
16.♙xe6 fxe6 17.♘c4

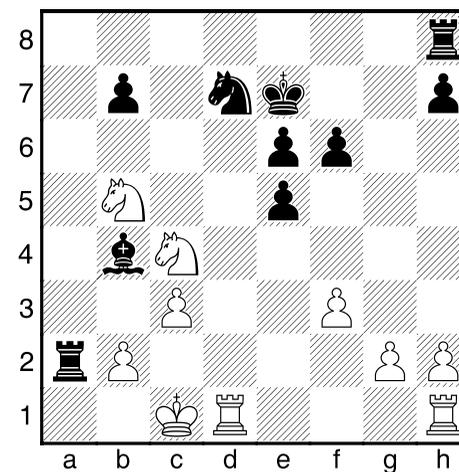


17...♔e7

17...a6?? 18.♘b6 axb5
19.♘xd7+- was played in Prie – Duncan, 1994. White wins material as there is no good way to escape all the discovered checks.

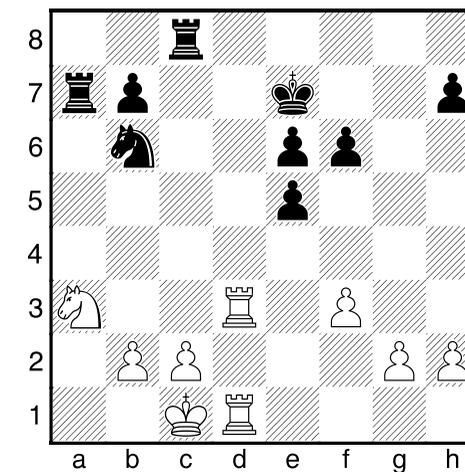
18.♘xa7 ♖a8 19.a3

As I learned later, this is the first new move of the game. I did consider simply retreating the N: 19.♘b5 ♖xa2 20.c3 is Vokarev v Paramonov, 2004:



This didn't look particularly appealing during the game. Still, it is unbalanced and White's plan to trade some pieces then advance the Q-side majority has some merit. One thing to keep in mind in all of these variations is that it is pretty tough for Black to create a strong passed pawn. White mostly keeps the e4-square covered and Black mostly just sits around.

19...♙xa3 20.♘xa3 ♖xa7
21.♖d3 ♖c8 22.♖hd1 ♘b6

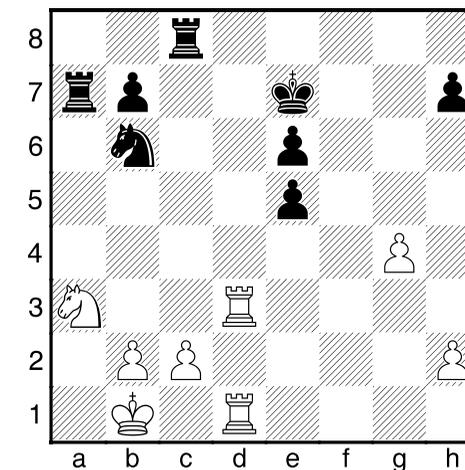


During the game I thought this was inaccurate. Lining up the ♘ and b-pawn this way looks suspicious to me, particularly since Black isn't likely to want his ♖ on a7 for much longer.

23.♔b1 f5 24.g4!?

What can I say? I ran out of useful things to do.

24...fxg4?! 25.fxg4



The exchange of f-pawns, which was totally unnecessary, helps White a lot. Not only are the e-pawns rather weak, but the ♖d3 can now get to h3 or f3 under favourable circumstances.

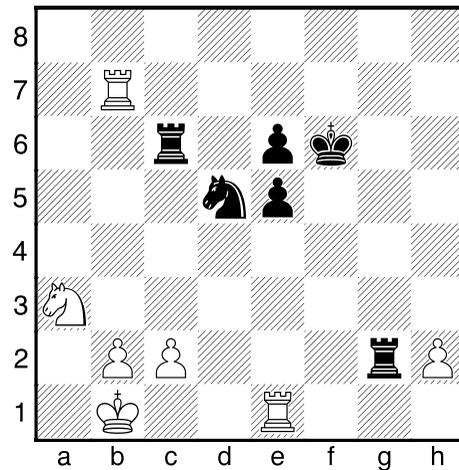
25...♖a4 26.♖b3

I thought a long time about whether to play the text for 26.♖h3 first. It seems it doesn't matter much either way.

26...♖c6 27.♖h3 ♖xg4

28.♖xh7+ ♔f6 29.♖xb7 ♘d5

30.♖e1 ♖g2



31.♖b5?

Better was 31.b3 ♖xh2 32.♘c4 ♖h5 33.♔b2± as this freezes the e-pawns and allows me to prepare to advance my Q-side.

editor – 31.♖h1 hoping to advance the passer leaves Black with a choice of ways to get counterplay:

31...♘e3 32.c3 ♖d6 33.h4 ♖dd2

34.h5 ♖h2=; or

31...e4 32.♖b3 e3 33.c4 ♘b6

34.♖xe3 ♘xc4=.

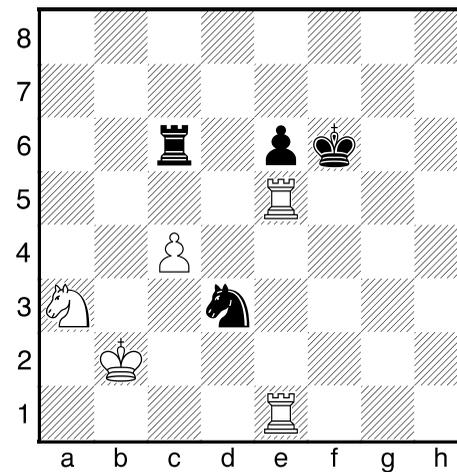
31...♖xh2 32.c4 ♘f4=

Only now did I realize what my opponent intended. Sadly, I think it is too late to do much about it.

33.♖bxe5 ♖xb2+!

33...♘d3 34.♖5e2 was my intention.

34.♔xb2 ♘d3+



35.♔c3 ♘xe5 36.♖f1+ ♔e7

37.♔b4 ♖c8 38.♖d1 ♖d8

**39.♖xd8 ♔xd8 40.♔c5 ♘xc4
41.♘xc4**

This was fairly symptomatic of my play in the tournament. The games that were generally well-played were pretty dull. The more exciting games were pretty bad. ;-)

1/2-1/2

**Notes by IM Jean Hébert
Plaskett, J (2445)
Hébert, Jean (2370)**

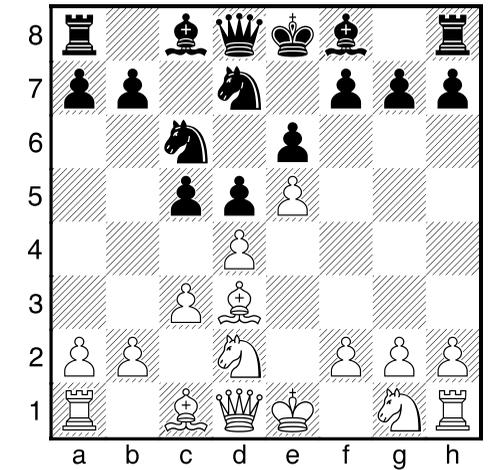
C06

*World 50+ Teams Dresden (3.7),
28.06.2016*

I could have annotated the somewhat more flattering game vs Vaganian, in which I was winning most of the time before losing on time in a winning and riskless endgame; but the following encounter full of adventures is more typical of my resilient but inconsistent play in this event. Thinking of it, it is probably the way I play most of the time nowadays.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 ♘f6

**4.♙d3 c5 5.e5 ♘fd7 6.c3
♘c6**



7.♘gf3

This is the line that Plaskett plays all the time. Very often it involves giving up d4 for good piece play. More common is 7.♘e2.

7...g6

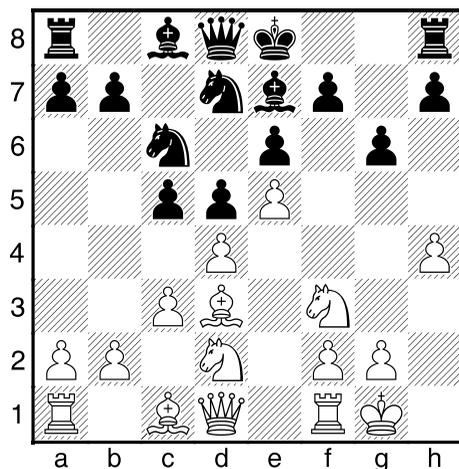
This has been prepared beforehand with Dave Ross' help, with the main plan being ...♙g7 and eventually ...f7-f6. Nowadays most common is 7...♙e7 with the aggressive intention g7-g5.

8.h4 ♙e7!?

Dave argued in favour of the usual 8...h6, but at the board I chose a sideline I liked, based

however on only one game. Sure enough, Plaskett soon went his own way putting me into a position I was much less comfortable.

9.0-0



9...♖b6

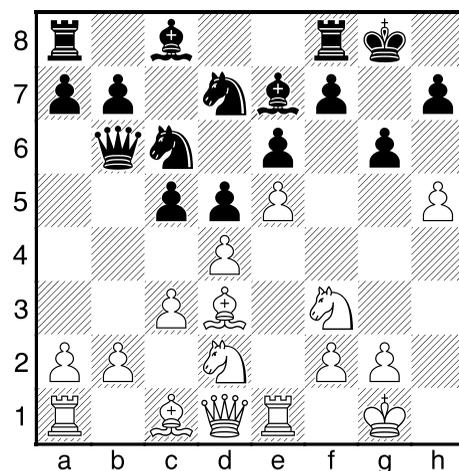
9...h6 is still reasonable, again intending ...g5. 10.♖e1 g5?! 11.hxg5 hxg5 12.♘f1 ♖b6 13.♙xg5 ♙xg5 14.♘xg5 cxd4 15.♖f3 ♘cxe5 16.♖f4 ♖f8 17.♖ad1 dxc3 18.bxc3 f6 19.♘h7 White is much better here while it is hard to improve on Black's previous play. 19...♖f7 20.♘e3 ♖c5 21.♖h6?! (21.♘g4! ♙e7 22.♘g5! would have kept the attack going.) 21...♘xd3 22.♖xd3 ♘e5 23.♘xf6+! (23.♖xd5? is

only good for equality: 23...♖xh7 24.♖xe5 ♖e7 25.♖g6+ ♖f7 26.♖xf7+ ♙xf7 27.♖c5 b6 ½-½ Neelotpal,D (2490)–Ganguly,S (2573) Azul, 2006.) 23...♖xf6 24.♖xf6 ♘xd3 25.♖g6+ ♙d8 26.♖xd3 followed by c3-c4 with an ongoing initiative.

10.♖e1

Putting me on my own. I had looked at 10.dxc5 ♙xc5 11.♖e2 (1-0, 39) Guseinov,G (2623)–Volkov,S (2593) Moscow, 2013, but frankly, I can't remember what was so appealing about it.

10...0-0 11.h5



This d4 pawn sac has been played many times in Plaskett's game, without g7-g6 and h2-h4-

h5. This appears to be neither better nor worse for both sides.

11...cxd4 12.cxd4 ♘xd4

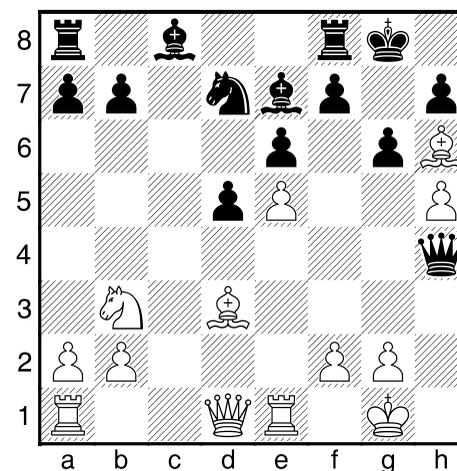
12...a5 gaining space and pre-empting ♘b3 might be a decent alternative to accepting the P-sac.

13.♘xd4 ♖xd4 14.♘b3!

That came as a surprise, but it is clearly best. After the expected 14.♘f3 ♖g4 White simply does not have quite enough for the P.

14...♖h4 15.♙h6

A critical point in the game.



15...f5!?

Plaskett is a dangerous attacker so I was quite afraid of 15...♖d8 16.♖e3! However this may

only be enough for a draw after 16...♖xh5 17.♖xh5 gxh5 18.♖g3+ ♙h8 19.♙g7+ ♙g8 20.♙h6+. I guess that I feared Plaskett may be able to find some ways to keep the pressure, but there is no way really.

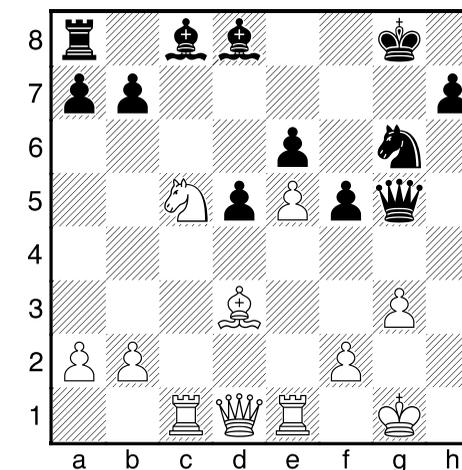
16.♙xf8 ♘xf8

I now feel that this position is playable but in the game I simply played several weak moves to reach a lost position.

17.♖c1 ♙d8?!

17...♖xh5 18.♖xh5 gxh5 is quite reasonable. Keeping the Qs on the board is hardly to my advantage.

18.hxg6 ♘xg6 19.g3 ♖g5 20.♘c5



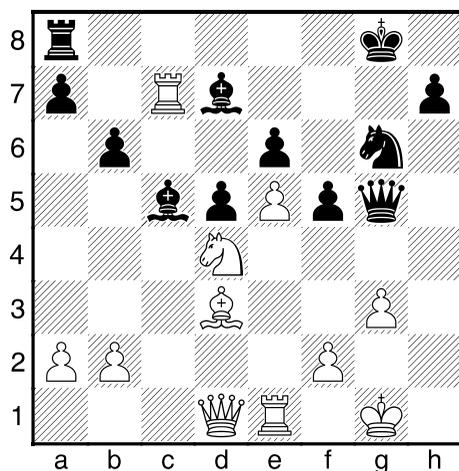
20...b6?!

20...♙a5 21.♖e2 ♘b6 or 20...h5 would have been OK. ...b6 shuts my ♙ in while weakening c6.

21.♘b3 ♘d7 22.♘d4± ♘e7?

22...f4 made more sense in a practical way but at this point Black's game is beyond repair. I put some hope on ...♙c5 but it has a big tactical flaw.

23.♖c7! ♙c5



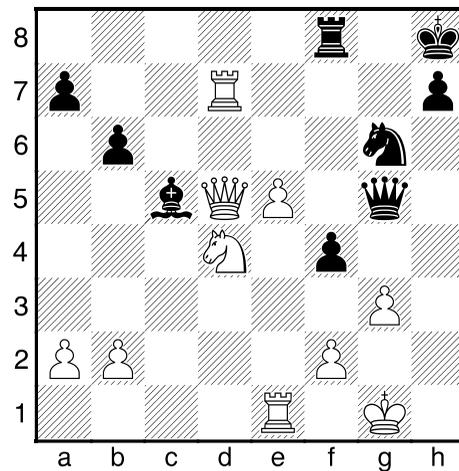
24.♙xf5!

This had been overlooked. Otherwise Black was fine...

24...exf5 25.♖xd7 f4

Now Plaskett becomes worried, but initially reacts correctly.

26.♙f3 ♖f8 27.♙xd5+ ♔h8



28.♖f7?

Played after a long think. Curiously I think that we both saw the same ghosts.

28.e6 wins easily, as I realised during my opponent's think that 28...fxg3 (28...♙xd5 29.♖xd5 fxg3 30.fxg3) 29.♙xg5+- is quite good since taking on f2 leads to nothing.

28.♙b7 also wins but after 28...♙h5 White had to foresee 29.♙h1!! ♙xh1+ 30.♔xh1+-.

28...fxg3

28...♖d8 29.♙b7 ♘f8 30.♖f5 ♙g6 31.♖xf4 ♘xd4 32.♔g2±.

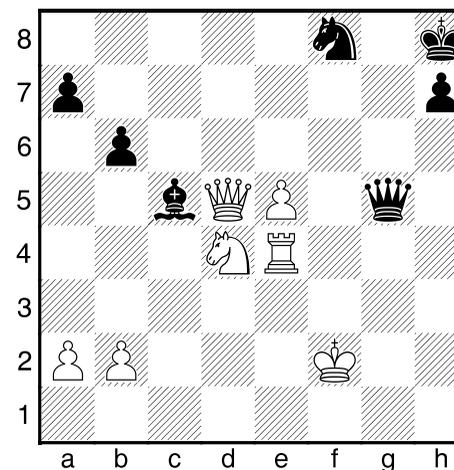
29.♖xf8+ ♘xf8

Now Black is back in the game.

30.♖e4!

The only move to keep some advantage.

30...gxf2+ 31.♔xf2



31...♘g6

Bringing the ♘ into play seemed logical, especially since that the idea of winning crept into my mind. After surviving a lost position one sometimes feel (quite correctly!) that everything becomes possible.

Objectively though, going for the checks might have been better: 31...♙d2+!? 32.♔f3 ♙d3+ 33.♔g4 ♙d1+ 34.♔g3 ♙d3+

35.♔g2 ♙d2+ 36.♖e2! ♙xd4

37.♙xd4 ♘xd4 38.e6 ♘xe6 39.♖xe6 ♘xb2 with good drawing chances.

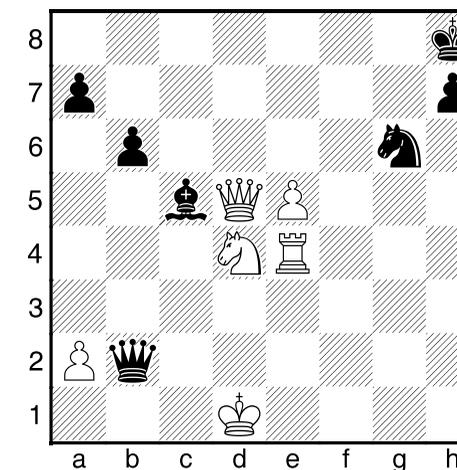
32.♔e2?!

There was no reason to allow a check on f4. Better were 32.♔f3 or 32.♔f1.

32...♙g2+?!

Missing 32...♘f4+! 33.♖xf4 (forced) 33...♙xf4 34.♘e6 and now Black has no perpetual but he can defend his K: 34...♙e3+ 35.♔d1 ♙g1+ 36.♔c2 ♘e7=.

33.♔d1 ♙xb2



34.♘c2

34.e6 was maybe somewhat better, but with a K exposed

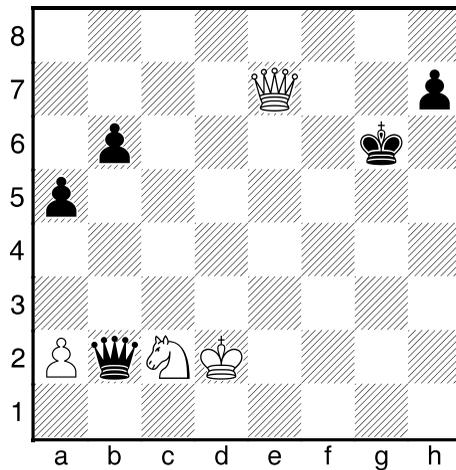
to many checks it is nearly impossible to calculate.

34...♔b1+ 35.♔d2 a5 36.e6 ♕b2?!

Not such a good square.

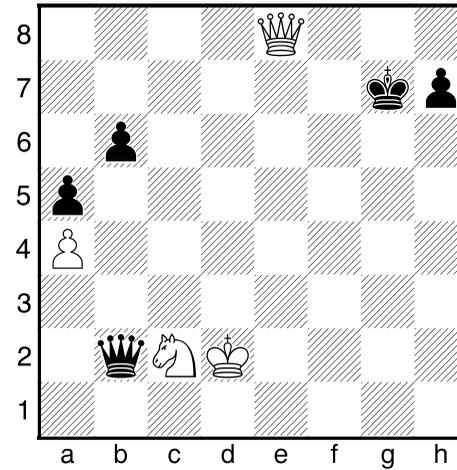
36...♔g7 is a clear improvement preventing the loss of my two minor pieces for R+P.

**37.♖d8+ ♔g7 38.e7 ♘xe7
39.♗xe7+ ♘xe7 40.♖xe7+ ♔g6**



I actually overestimated my drawing chances here, even though they are real. Q+N makes for a dangerous pair.

**41.♖e4+ ♔g7 42.♖e7+ ♔g6
43.♖e8+ ♔g7 44.a4**



44...♖f6 45.♘e3

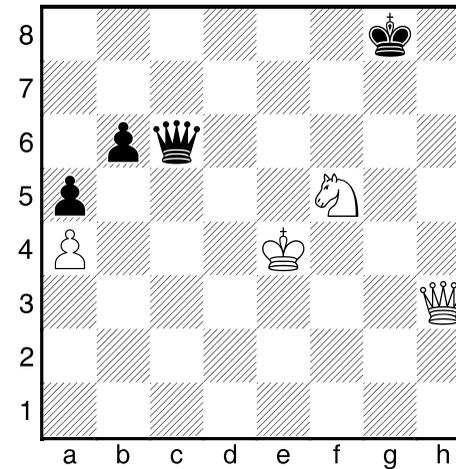
Now White intends to improve his K position.

45...h5 46.♔d3! h4?



Now this P is doomed. 46...♔h6!

**47.♔e4! h3 48.♘f5+ ♔h7
49.♖h5+ ♔g8 50.♖xh3 ♖c6+**

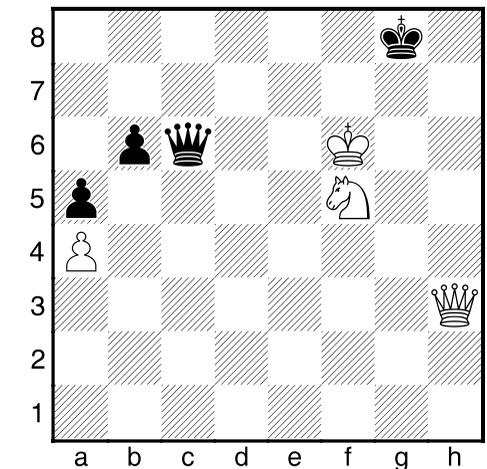


Now I pin my hopes on taking the a4-pawn at a time when I am not getting mated (for example with the WK on g5), or some sort of perpetual. Figuring all this through calculation is quite difficult in practice as the next moves will show.

**51.♔e5 ♖e8+ 52.♔f6 ♖f8+
53.♔g6?!**

53.♔e6 ♖c8+ 54.♔e7 ♖c7+
55.♔f6 ♖c6+ 56.♔g5 ♖xa4 and now it turns out (as unveiled by the computer, of course) that Black do get mated! 57.♖d3! Best but several other moves also win. 57...♖e8 58.♖d5+ ♔f8 59.♖d6+ ♔g8 60.♖f6+-.

53...♖e8+ 54.♔f6 ♖c6+



Plaskett on the prowl.

55.♔e7

55.♔g5! wins as the previous comment shows, but we should add the variation 55...♚c1+ 56.♚e3! and Black must trade Qs to a lost ending.

55...♚c7+ 56.♔e6 ♚c6+

57.♘d6!

A good try that should win...

57...♚xa4

At this point I felt that I should draw, seeing no immediate mate. However things are not so simple.

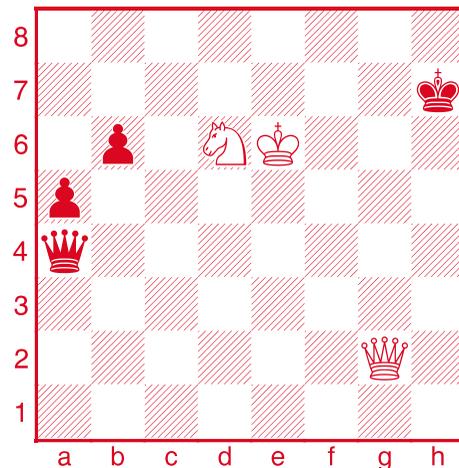
58.♚g2+

editor – In his ChessBase report (link at end) John Nunn shows that 58.♚g3+ is the start of a mate-in-9.

28...♔h7

Sometimes I wonder if games like this make you grow older faster. :)

- IM Jean Hébert



Now White could have won, but with a quiet move humanly impossible to find, as in an end-game study.

59.♚h1+

59.♚g3!! The only move and the computer announces mate in 14! If you find a good enough reason why a human player should find a move like that I am interested in hearing it. 59...♚a2+ 60.♔f6 ♚a1+ 61.♔f7 ♚f1+ 62.♔e7 ♚c1 (62...♚e2+ 63.♔f8 wins.)

63.♚d3+ ♔h6

64.♘f7+ ♔g7

65.♚d4+ ♔h7

66.♚e4+ ♔g7

67.♚g4+ ♔h7

68.♚f5+ ♔g7

69.♚f6+ ♔h7

70.♘g5+-.

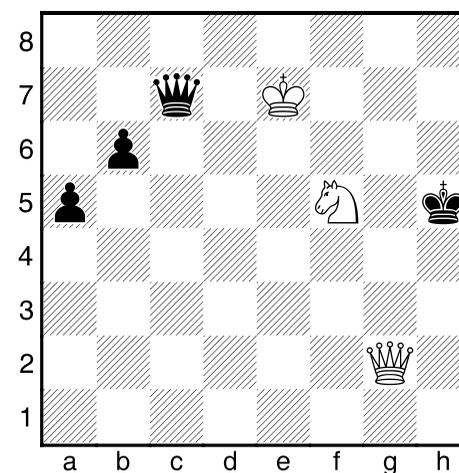
59...♔g6

Now it's drawn. White gets no more chances. Sometimes I wonder if games like this make you grow older faster. :)

60.♚g2+ ♔h5 61.♘f5 ♚c4+

62.♔f6 ♚c3+ 63.♔f7 ♚c4+

64.♔e7 ♚c7+



65.♔e6 ♚c4+ 66.♔e5 ♚c5+

67.♔f6 ♚c3+ 68.♔e6 ♚c4+

69.♔d7 ♚b5+ 70.♔e6

As a final comment, I would like to especially thank Dave and Paul Ross who were the brains that made this exciting chess adventure possible.

On a financial note, the FQE should be thanked for its

contribution to my expenses without which this trip may not have been possible.

Along with the Ross brothers, Tom O'Donnell and Deen Hergott proved as expected to be perfect teammates and companions without which such a team competition cannot be that enjoyable. I was a pleasure to be around those people that I had not seen for at least 10 years, if not 20 in some cases. See you next time guys !

1/2-1/2

IM Deen Hergott Tournamet Diary: 3

After

So close, but no cigar! We almost had 5th place and a modest prize within our grasp, but a narrow 1.5-2.5 loss to a seasoned team from Ukraine (pre-ranking 8th, compared to our 6th) dropped us to 11th on tie-break. We were fortunate in any event to avoid a team like Eng-



FIDE

land 1, only because of a variant of Swiss pairing that expressly forbade giving a team three consecutive Whites or Blacks on first board. So the opportunity itself was fortunate, but we couldn't quite manage to cash in.

Nonetheless, I think I can say without reservation that all of us enjoyed this event very much. We came without huge expectations, but gave our best, and given our overall rustiness we were pretty much satisfied with our performance. Jean definitely had a tough mission on Board 1, lots of very strong opponents (a string of GM opposition at one point), and many with Black. He also played all but one round (8/9), and with no complaint. As I have already mentioned, I was a bit dissatisfied with the consistency of my play, and had a number of draws from significantly better positions. The clock gave me trouble and in more than a few games I found myself down nearly an hour on the clock, or running into time trouble. I've always been a relatively "slow thinker", a much better Rapid

player than Blitz, so these moments were costly, but I'd like to think that a solid 4.5/7 result on Board 2 did help the team morale nevertheless. I even outperformed my FIDE rating, which was a welcome surprise! With a bit of practice, I'm sure I'd eliminate some of the anxiety I felt.

Tom and Dave rounded out Boards 3 and 4 well — both seemed a bit more relaxed with the clock, although they were also affected by the modern incremental TC. I know Tom was disheartened by his loss with Black in the last round, but at one stage it looked as if a draw would do us no good (and frankly a 2-2 tie would have only bought us a few spots), so I think he was right to play sharply for a win. I thought his position was objectively better at some point, though our anal-

ysis afterwards proved the position to be far from simple. His destruction of a German GM in Round 7 was motivating to sit beside, but Jean and I were unable to garner even a half point on the top two boards that round — 2550+ GM's are never easy, especially someone as experienced as former WC challenger, [Artur Yusupov](#)! My opponent, [Alexander Graf](#), was no slouch either. Dave was arguably the one who got the ball rolling as far as the

suggestion of fielding a team. I'm a bit amazed it came together given that we were fielding expenses ourselves, but I'm very glad that it did. His enthusiasm for chess hasn't waned at all from what I could tell, and he was a great teammate to have. I sense that he also felt like he may have squandered some positions from lack of practice, but in the end that's probably something most of us feel at the end of event, out of the spot-

Don't call it a "post mortem". We're not dead yet!



Links

Homepage

(with many photos of German teams)

<http://schachfestival.de/world-team-championship-50-65-2016-en>

Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rW9wSYOch2Q&feature=youtu.be>

John Nunn report on ChessBase
(showing Plaskett's missed #9 vs Hébert)

<http://en.chessbase.com/post/world-senior-team-championship-2016>

editor's thanks to

- Deen for writing this Tournament Diary.
- Rosses for the photos.
- IM Jean Hébert, IM Tom O'Donnell, IM Dave Ross, and FM Paul Ross for annotating games, making this the *first time* we have had a report from a Canadian team where every member annotated a game!

was a bit nebulous, and perhaps a minor complaint, but one of remarkably few for an event with over 500 participants.

Would I go again? In principal, absolutely! But realistically, I'm not sure I could afford it (I may have to wait for the 65+ section), and I wonder if something modest could be set aside in CFC subsidies, or an organized event to help raise some sponsorship funds. It's probably not likely, but it would certainly go a long way towards helping get us there.

Apparently, we were the first North American team in the event, and this was their 4th year!

thanks

I'd like to thank John Upper and the CFC for requesting an article — this really was a unique and enjoyable opportunity for all of us, and it's been great to share some of it with the readership.

- Deen Hergott

players, often in their 60s and beyond, enjoying their shared passion in a strong competitive event — I wish I'd had a bit more time to witness some of the bigger matchups firsthand, but simply being part of it was thrilling in its own right.

The event was very well organized, the hotel was more than adequate, players had access to indoor/outdoor pools, sauna, and an exercise facility, and food was never a problem. The Euro 2016 Football Cup added to the international appeal — one evening Iceland somewhat surprisingly beat out the English squad (with several of their GM's following the game on a large hotel TV), only to see the Brits wreak revenge the next day over the chessboard! There were a number of special daily events planned by the organizers — we had hoped to take in an organized bus tour of Dresden, but found out that the buses were fully booked when I made inquiries before that day's round at 9:30 a.m. The procedure for signing up to excursions

light of a ticking clock and over-the-board pressure of choosing one move over another! Finally, Paul (Dave's brother), our reserve, and my roommate for the event, went undefeated, with a first round win, and five messy entertaining draws. I know he really wanted to win one of these, and it wasn't for lack of trying — several time scrambles saw his positions go from winning to losing to draw, or vice versa. Nerve wracking to watch, and I'm sure even more to play! But he seemed to thoroughly enjoy the event, and our shared time in Europe — we had a lot to catch up on personally too, with nearly 20 years since our last time seeing each other. That, in itself, made the event a special one for me personally.

Concluding Thoughts

I've had the experience of walking into a room full of famous players at Chess Olympiads, but a room full of titled veterans was something new! Some of the players on the winning teams had tremendous personal scores. It was inspiring to see





2015 Edmonton Invitational

The 2015 Edmonton Invitational ran from November 6-11 at the Edmonton Chess Club. It was a 10-player RR designed to give local players a chance to earn an IM Norm by bringing titled foreign players and strong locals together.

The “hired guns” were **GM Jesse Kraai** and **GM Enrico Sevillano** (both USA) and **GM Tejas Bakre** (India).

Unfortunately for local hopes, results went almost exactly according to rating, with the visiting titlists finishing a full 2½ points ahead of their nearest local pursuer in a three-way tie for first with 7.5/9, with Kraai taking the title on tie-break.

Top Canadian finisher was **FM Dale Haessel** with 5/9, which was still 1½ points short of the IM Norm. Dale scored excellently against the locals, but lost all three games to the GMs.

While “almost” all results went exactly according to rating, the biggest possible upset actually happened: **Vlad Rekhson**, the lowest-rated player, beat the tournament winner and top seed Jesse Kraai (game below).

The top-rated Alberta player was **FM Vladimir Pechenkin**. Readers of *Chess Canada* or the Alberta Chess Report will recognize him as an experienced player and skilled annotator. Vladimir agreed to write a Tournament Diary about his expectations and efforts before and during the Invitational, as well as annotate some of the games he liked.

- editor

Vladimir Pechenkin: Tournament Diary

1. Before

The 2015 Edmonton Invitational was created and designed specifically for Norms so it's really about results and results only. No opening experiments or risky play before the time control, please.

The Norm requirement of 7/9 looks daunting but that's just the way it is. In order to succeed I must perform significantly above my current rating. This requires extremely high motivation, solid home preparation, hard work over the board and... a bit (or *quite* a bit) of luck. If all of the above is in place, then the Norm becomes possible. I can't complain about a lack of experience as I have had plenty of it during the last few years.

The drawing of lots done the day before round 1 produced pairings that I can't really be excited about. I anticipate one of the following two scenarios:

1. I am out of business after 4 or 5 rounds already, then the rest of the tournament becomes a social event.
2. I score 3.5/5 or more, then the remaining 4 rounds will be very interesting.

Now let's see what I got in those first five rounds...

Round 1:

Black vs. GM Tejas Bakre

Not the greatest pairing for the first round. The winner of the just-finished Calgary Invitational must be in great shape and hungry for more. I haven't played him before so there isn't much preparation to do. I need to play something that I know well and hopefully match my opponent's performance at the board.

Round 2:

Black vs. David Miller

David is a close friend of mine, so playing him is a little difficult for this very reason. My large positive score against him (+9 =6 -0) is deceiving and does not



guarantee an easy life. In fact, our last few games did not go well for me. David will be very well prepared in the opening as White, while I must find some improvements in my favorite lines to avoid prospectless positions.

Round 3:

White vs. FM Dale Haessel

Dale has just had a good tournament in Calgary and must be looking for more. Again, my large plus score against him (+9 =7 -0) may not mean that much. Perhaps, I'll have some psychological advantage that I should try to utilize. Dale tends to vary his responses to my 1.c4 so it's hard for me to predict what he will choose this time. Going through our previous games and marking the critical junctions in the opening does look like a good start, however.

Round 4:

Black vs. GM Jesse Kraai

I played Jesse twice in 2009-2010 and lost both games. One of them did look like a fight but it was still obvious that the op-

ponents were in different weight categories. I'll try to do better this time, although at this point it's unclear to me how I should approach this game.

Round 5:

White vs. Nicolas Haynes

Nic and I have both lived in Edmonton for the past seven years but have played each other only twice. I can't be satisfied with the score (+0 =1 -1) so my motivation for this game will be higher than usual. Nic is a tricky opponent who can come up with a lot of unexpected moves. The moves may not necessarily be *sound*, but that's not easy to prove over the board. I got a good position out of the opening last time and therefore will be happy to repeat the same line of the Catalan.

Notes by

FM Vladimir Pechenkin

Kraai, Jesse (2506)
Sevillano, Enrico (2464)

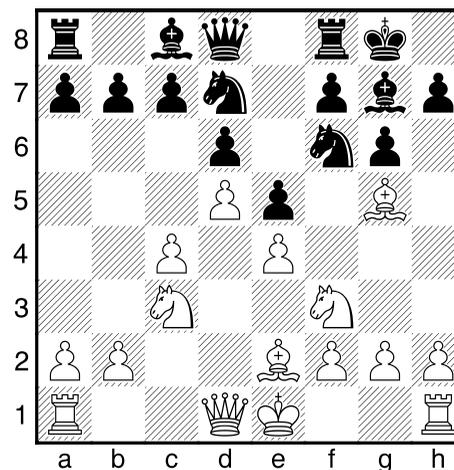
E93

2015 Edmonton Invitational
(2.1), 07.11.2015

editor – This game is rather one-sided, but that makes it a good model for how to beat a (lazy) KID. Look at the nine diagrams in the following game as though they're a comic strip and it will seem like White gets to make all the moves while Black is almost completely motionless.

How to beat a GM: Part I

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6 3.e4 d6
4.d4 ♙g7 5.♘f3 0-0 6.♙e2 e5
7.d5 ♘bd7 8.♙g5



8...a5

The most popular move here is 8...h6 and for a good reason: after 9.♙e3 Black can harass the bishop with 9...♘g4.

9.♘d2 h6 10.♙e3

Now White is able to regroup optimally.

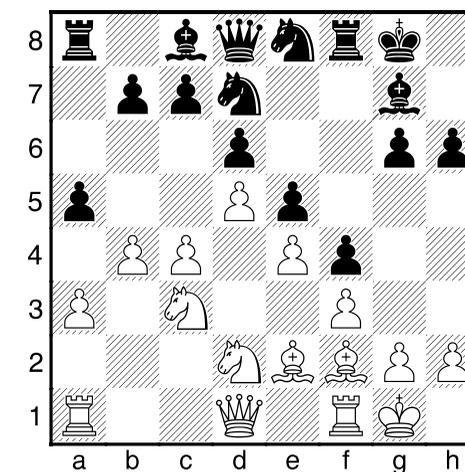
10...♘c5 11.0-0 ♘e8

11...♘fd7!? deserves attention intending to answer 12.a3?! with 12...a4.

12.a3 f5

Now 12...a4? simply loses a pawn to 13.♙xc5 dxc5 14.♘xa4.

13.f3 f4 14.♙f2 ♘d7 15.b4



White has clearly won the opening battle. The position looks almost exactly like the classical King's Indian (Mar del Plata) line, except that Black lost two tempi with his queen's knight. GM Kraai makes the

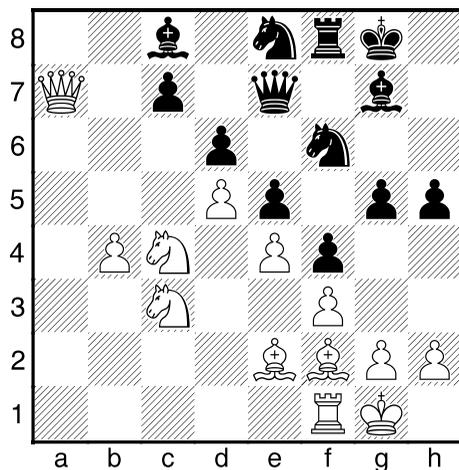


rest of the game look easy. He keeps the opponent busy on the queenside so Black can't even get his kingside attack going.

15...g5 16.c5 h5 17.c6 ♞df6
18.cxb7

White is certainly not interested in locking the queenside up so he prevents b7-b6.

18...♙xb7 19.♞c4 axb4
20.axb4 ♖xa1 21.♚xa1 ♚e7
22.♚a7 ♙c8

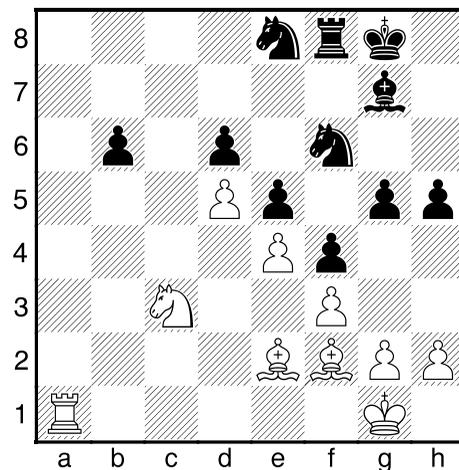


23.♞b6 ♙d7 24.♞xd7 ♚xd7
25.b5 ♙h6

editor – 25...g4 looks more to the point, though White can bail to a better ending with b5-b6.

26.♖a1 ♚g7 27.b6 cxb6

28.♞xg7+ ♙xg7



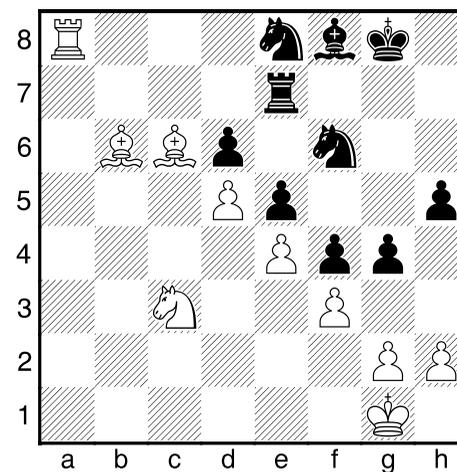
29.♙b5

There is nothing wrong with the simple 29.♙xb6.

29...♖f7

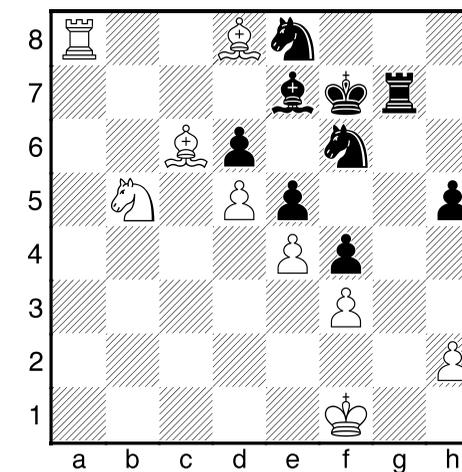
Here Black can try 29...♞c7!?
30.♙c6 ♖b8 making it a little harder for White.

30.♖a8 ♖e7 31.♙c6 ♙f8
32.♙xb6 g4



Black finally achieves this advance but it's not going to do much.

33.♞b5 gxf3 34.gxf3 ♖g7+
35.♚f1 ♚f7 36.♙d8 ♙e7



37.♞a7

White has remained in complete control of the game. Here his play may be slightly improved by 37.♖a7!?! ♚f8 38.♙xe7+ ♖xe7 39.♖a8 ♚f7 40.♖d8 picking up the key d6-pawn immediately.

37...h4 38.♙xe7 ♚xe7

!! ALERT SPOILERS !!

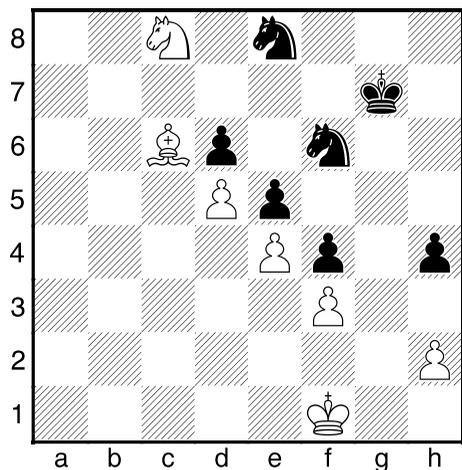
The GMs did their job and spoiled the local's attempts at earning an IM Norm.



Winning GMs Tejas Bakre, Jesse Kraai, and Enrico Sevillano with organizer Dustin Koperski.

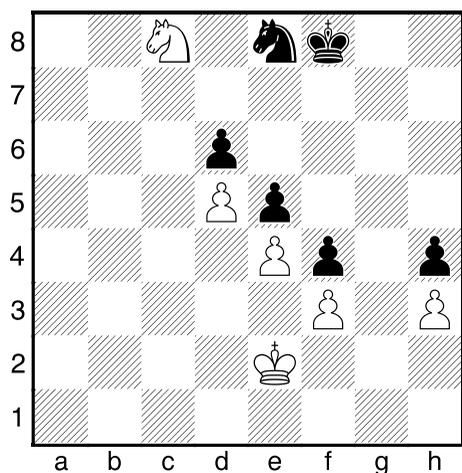


39. ♖c8+ ♔f7 40. ♜a7+ ♔f8
41. ♝xg7 ♔xg7



White is getting really close, but the game isn't over yet. GM Kraai finds a very nice way to win.

42. ♙xe8 ♜xe8 43. h3 ♔f8
44. ♔e2



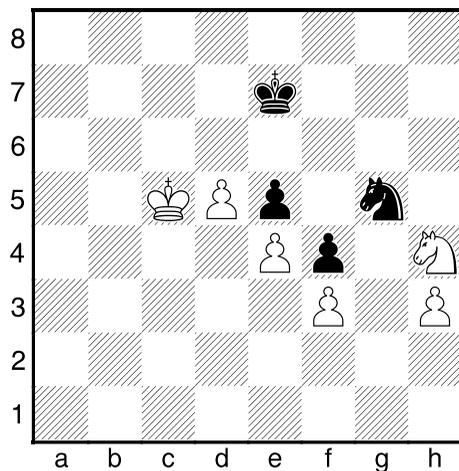
A picturesque position illustrating

complete domination! The white king will soon get to c6; Black's counterplay on the kingside is insufficient.

44... ♔f7

editor – 44... ♖f6 gets to h3 faster, but loses the d- and e-pawns, 45. ♖xd6 ♜h7 46. ♖c4 ♜g5 47. ♖xe5+.

45. ♔d3 ♔f8 46. ♔c4 ♖f6
47. ♖xd6 ♜h7 48. ♖f5 ♜g5
49. ♖xh4 ♔e7 50. ♔c5



The rest requires no comments.

50... ♖xh3 51. d6+ ♔d7
52. ♔d5 ♜g5 53. ♔xe5 ♖f7+
54. ♔xf4 ♔xd6 55. ♔f5 ♜h6+
56. ♔g6 ♜g8 57. ♔f7

1-0

Tournament Diary: 2

During

As it turned out, the first predicted scenario came true. Going through the games, I *did* get lucky a few times, but the other three components necessary for a successful tournament were lacking.

The start of the tournament was actually OK as I got a fine position in the first round against GM Tejas Bakre. He repeated the line from his game with Daniel Kazmaier at the Calgary Invitational that I believe to be innocuous for Black. However, I played overly aggressively in the middlegame, accepting an inferior structure for the sake of initiative. As it often happens, the initiative got extinguished at some point, while the structural deficiencies remained on the board and cost me the game.

In round 2 I succeeded in avoiding a prospectless position against David Miller. Unfortunately, the prospects were either a checkmate or my queen getting trapped. How I managed to win that game is a mystery to

me.

Round 3 featured a see-saw battle with FM Dale Haessel. I didn't like my position around move 30 and offered a draw. Dale declined, however, which is something that never happened before in our games. I haven't checked the game with a computer yet, but it seems to me like poor play from both sides aggravated by never-ending time deficit. At some point I lost control of the clock and almost flagged a couple of times. After that, I decided to play it safe and exchanged queens, which I realized was a clearly *wrong* practical decision. Nevertheless, the opposite-colour bishop endgame may still be winning for me; further detailed analysis is required...

further detailed analysis by
FM Vladimir Pechenkin

Pechenkin, Vladimir
(2327)

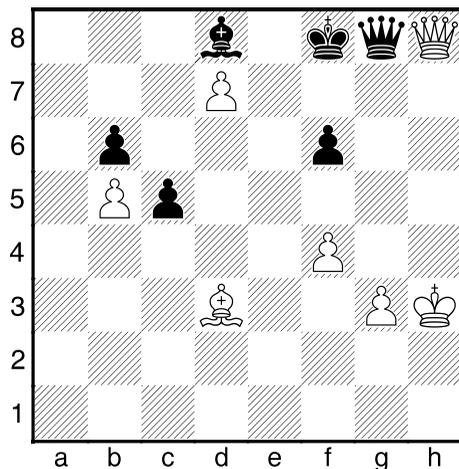
Haessel, Dale (2204)

A36

2015 Edmonton Invitational
(3.3), 07.11.2015



The game featured a lot of twists and turns, eventually reaching the diagrammed position:

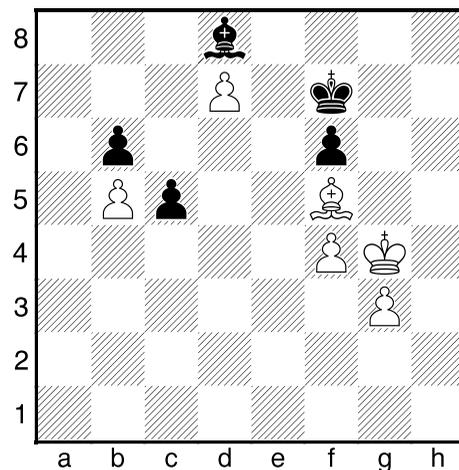


White has an interesting dilemma: to exchange or not to exchange.

In principle, keeping the queens on the board would be the right practical decision, especially since both players were down to a 30-second increment. Black's defence is not easy and he is likely to overlook something sooner or later.

However, the problem was that I had a hard time controlling the clock and almost flagged on a couple of occasions. Therefore, I decided to exchange, almost entirely eliminating the risk of losing.

66. ♖xg8+ ♔xg8 67. ♔g4 ♔f7
68. ♕f5



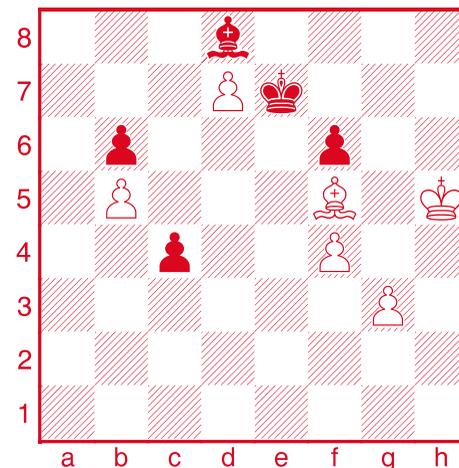
The opposite-colour bishop endgame looks drawn, but my intuition was telling me that it might not be so simple.

68... ♔e7

In case of 68... ♔g7 the white king suddenly changes his mind: 69. ♔f3 ♔f7 70. ♔e4 ♔e7 71. ♔d5+- with a decisive penetration.

Black can try a different version: 68...c4 69. ♔h5 ♔g7 but after 70.g4 c3 71.g5 fxg5 72.fxg5 ♕e7 73.♕c2 White is winning.

69. ♔h5 c4



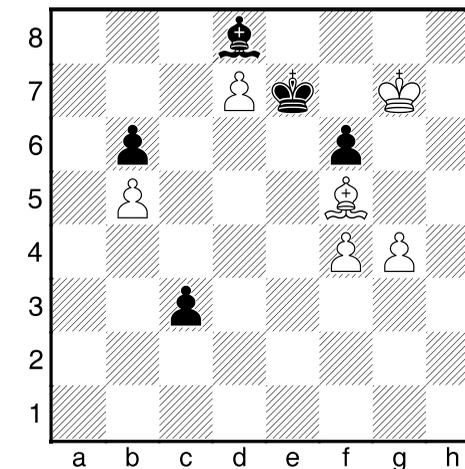
The critical position of the endgame.

70.g4?

It's hard to refrain from this advance with a minute on the clock, but now Black achieves a draw with a sequence of only (but relatively obvious) moves.

It is only when I went to sleep that the following move dawned on me: 70. ♔g6! I rushed back to the computer to confirm that White wins in all the lines with the help of zugzwang. The main idea can be illustrated as follows: 70...c3 71. ♔h6! ♕c7 (71... ♔f7 72.g4! ♕c7 73.g5!+-) 72. ♔g7 The triangle is completed, Black is in zugzwang. 72... ♕d8 (72... ♕d6 loses control of the d8-

square and after 73.d8♖+ ♔xd8 74. ♔xf6 White wins easily) 73.g4
Analysis Diagram



Only now!

73... ♕c7 is insufficient: 74.g5 fxg5 75.fxg5 ♕e5+ 76. ♔h7 c2 77. ♕xc2 ♔xd7 78.g6 and wins.

The most stubborn defence is: 73...c2 74. ♕xc2 ♔xd7 75. ♔f7, and remarkably, Black is helpless. For example, 75... ♔d6 76. ♕f5 ♔d5 (76... ♕e7 77. ♔e8 and Black has to part with his bishop because of another zugzwang; 76... ♔c7 77. ♔e8 leads to the same result.) 77. ♔e8 ♕c7 78.g5 fxg5 79.fxg5 ♔e5 80. ♕d7 and the g-pawn will cost Black his bishop.

70... ♕c7 71.g5 fxg5 72.fxg5



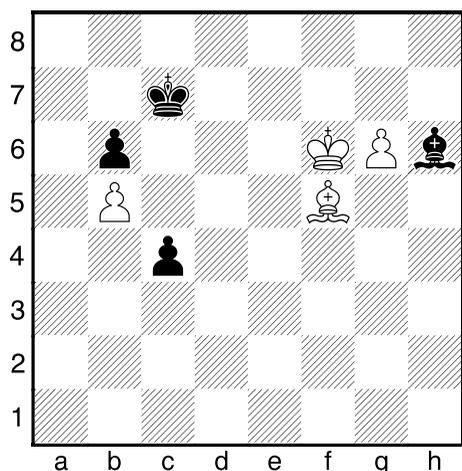
♙e5 73.♚g6

Unfortunately, 73.g6 runs into 73...♙g7.

73...♙f4

The difference from the line above is that the g-pawn can't move.

**74.d8♚+ ♔xd8 75.♚f6 ♔c7
76.g6 ♙h6**



77.♚e6

There is no reason to go for 77.g7 ♙xg7+ 78.♚xg7 ♔d6 79.♚f6 ♔c5 and it's only White who can lose here.

The remaining moves were played simply because I did not want to offer a draw for the second straight time.

**77...♙g7 78.♙e4 c3 79.♚e7
♙h8 80.♙f5 ♙d4 81.♙e4**

It can be concluded that the decision to exchange queens wasn't a bad one, as the resulting opposite-colour bishop endgame was a win for White.

1/2-1/2

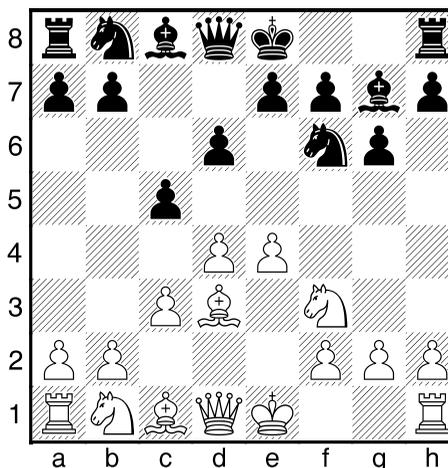
**Notes by
FM Vladimir Pechenkin
Breckenridge, Steven
(2330)**

Miller, David (2114)

B22

*2015 Edmonton Invitational
(3.4), 07.11.2015*

**1.e4 c5 2.c3 d6 3.d4 ♘f6
4.♙d3 g6 5.♘f3 ♙g7**



The line chosen by Black against the 2.c3 Sicilian did not surprise White as he had this same position just a few months before.

6.dxc5

A relatively rare continuation. Apparently, White wants to force the play as early as possible.

Normal here is: 6.0-0 0-0 7.h3 ♘c6 8.d5 or 8.♚e1.

6...dxc5 7.e5 ♘g4

In the aforementioned game, Breckenridge-Almeida Saenz (Brownsville, 2015), Black opted for 7...♘d5 which could have led to difficulties after 8.♙e4!

8.♙b5+ ♙d7 9.e6

Correct, as White's previous play doesn't make sense otherwise.

Rob Gardner, Dale Haessel, Vlad Rekhson, Nicholas Haynes, Vladimir Pechenkin, Tejas Bakre, David Miller, Steve Breckenridge, Enrico Sevillano, Jesse Kraai.

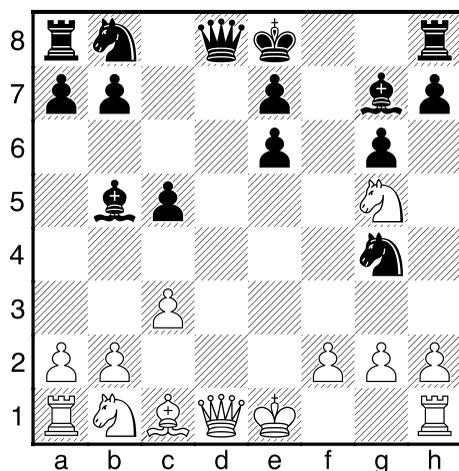


9...fxe6

9...♙xb5? 10.exf7+ ♔xf7
11.♖b3+ is to be avoided.

10.♘g5

The most natural follow-up.
The computer also suggests an untried 10.♘a3!?

10...♙xb5**11.♖xg4**

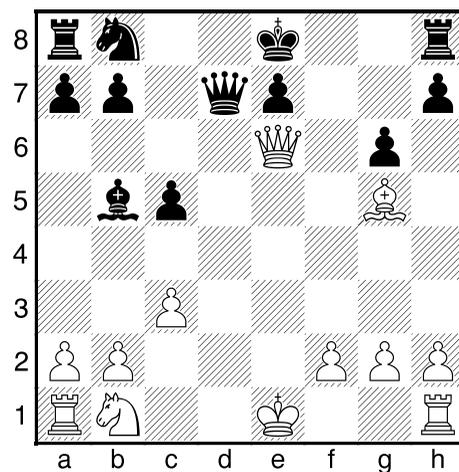
This is the right piece to capture.
After 11.♖xd8+? ♔xd8 12.♘xe6+ ♔d7 13.♘g7 ♖g8 the knight is trapped and will soon be lost.

11...♙f6N

11...♙d7 12.♘xh7!± Denny,K (2290)–Amanov,M (2510) Hastings, 2013 (1-0, 57).

editor – Stockfish suggests

11...♖d3 12.♘xe6 ♙e5 13.♘xc5±.

12.♖xe6 ♙xg5 13.♙xg5 ♖d7**14.♖e5?**

The exchange of queens leaves White with a nominal endgame advantage thanks to his better pawn structure. He is clearly looking for more and overestimates his position.

14...0-0!

Black is happy to castle, while the opponent can't do the same.

15.♙h6??

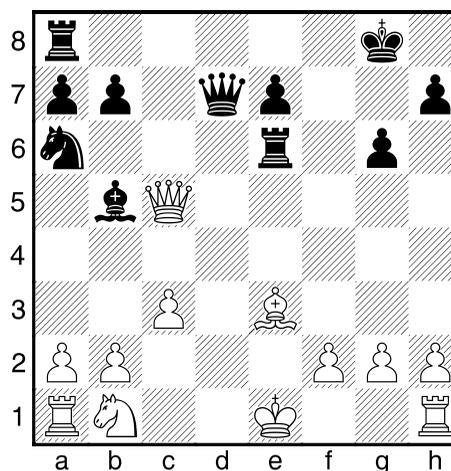
White attacks the rook and threatens a checkmate-in-one, yet this move is a decisive mistake! Also bad is 15.♖xc5? in view of 15...♖f5 16.♖xe7 ♖xe7+

17.♙xe7 ♖e5+-+.

The computer suggests 15.♘a3!? trying to catch up in development.

15...♖f6!

White must have overlooked this simple response, after which the game is essentially over: White goes up a pawn but is fatally behind in development.

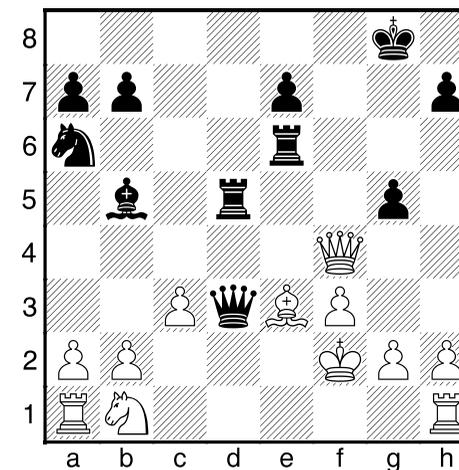
16.♖xc5 ♖e6+ 17.♙e3 ♘a6**18.♖g5**

18.♖d4 is answered by 18...♖d6! and wins.

18...♖d8 19.f3

Now 19.♘a3 is impossible because of 19...♖d2#.

19...♖d3 20.♔f2 ♖d5 21.♖f4 g5



White can safely resign — ♔ trapped, ♔ in a murderous crossfire, playing without either ♖ — but he decides to play 'til checkmate for some reason.

22.♖xg5+ ♖xg5 23.♙xg5 ♖g6 24.h4 h6 25.♘a3 ♖e2+ 26.♔g3 hxg5 27.h5 ♖e5+ 28.♔f2 ♖d6 29.♖he1 ♖d2+ 30.♔g1 ♖g3 31.♘xb5 ♖xg2#

0-1



Tournament Diary 2.5:

During

Round 4 against GM Jesse Kraai was a nightmare. After 7. Qf3 I began wondering whether I'd make it to move 20 and how many queenside pieces I'd be able to develop in the process. My conclusion was that developing more than one would be a tremendous achievement, while move 20 looked unreachable. In reality, I managed to surpass both numbers, but it's definitely not something to be proud of.

The opening of round 5 against Nicolas Haynes went almost as expected. Nic deviated on move 10, but it should not have been a surprise for me. In fact, I was going to prepare the line at a restaurant during the lunch break. What happened, however, is that Nic showed up at the same restaurant and we ended up sitting at the same table. A smart way of avoiding the opponent's preparation! As a result, I had but a vague idea what to do. Fortunately, as I mentioned in my 2014 Edmonton International report,

White should be OK in this line even if he plays sub-par moves. I tried to play provocatively and to entice Nic with some active tries, but he played it calmly and just took the draw by perpetually attacking my queen.

Thus, as I said before, the rest of the tournament will be more like a social event. Let's see what awaits me in the last four rounds.

Round 6:

Black vs. Vladislav Rekhson

As far as I can tell, Vlad is having a great tournament notwith-

standing his losses in winning positions. He hasn't played in such round-robins before and is really excited about this opportunity. Another excellent demonstration of why motivation is so important. Despite a big rating difference and a large plus score in my favor (+6 =3 -0) I consider myself an underdog in this one and will be playing for a draw. Last time Vlad opted for a French exchange variation but I don't think he'll do it again this time. The Classical line looks like the most plausible opening choice for him.

Round 7:

White vs. FM Stephen Breckenridge

Based on FM Breckenridge's tournament so far, I'd give him an award of "the most eccentric player of the event". It seems that he can play either at a 2400 level or as a 1900 player, depending on the circumstances. I have no idea what to expect, and will just try to play my own game.

!! CHESS LESSONS FROM INDIA !!

GM Tejas Bakre went 2 for 2 in thwarting Albertan chess hopes by winning the **Calgary Invitational** in October with 8/9, a point ahead of GM Enrico Sevillano and 2½ points ahead of top Canadians FM Dale Haessel and Gary Ng (!) who won the qualifier.

Bakre scored a combined 11/12 against Canadians in Calgary and Edmonton, conceding draws to Haessel in Calgary and Nicholas Haynes in Edmonton.

Tough love, maybe?



Round 8:**Black vs. Rob Gardner**

According to my records, this will be our 50th game. Again, despite a commanding overall positive score (+24 =20 -5), I will be playing for a draw. An interesting though not atypical thing about Rob is that he is way more dangerous as White than Black. In fact, he reminds me of an old saying by GM Evgeny Sveshnikov that the white pieces give a player an additional 200 rating points. Compare: I am +14 =7 -1 against Rob as White, but only +10 =13 -4 as Black. Concerning my opening preparation, I expect a surprise from him very early on. However, he may also follow GM Kraai's footsteps from round 4. (Jesse based his opening preparation in that game on

my encounter with Rob at the 2015 Edmonton International.) All in all, plenty of lines to look at.

Round 9:**White vs GM Enrico Sevillano**

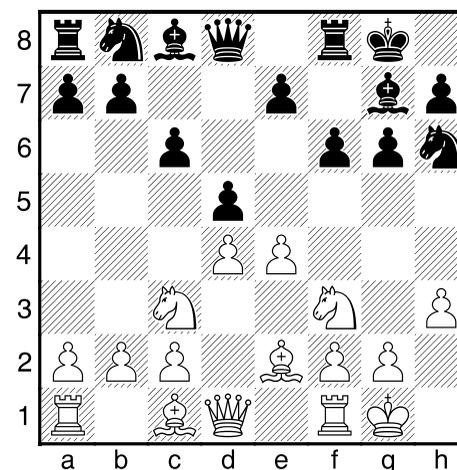
I don't know GM Sevillano well, but I did play him a year ago (draw) and examined some of his games as the editor of the Alberta Chess Report. Interestingly enough, Enrico doesn't strike me as a player of a true GM calibre but such an impression is deceiving. His significant practical strength cannot be underestimated, and he will be a clear favorite in our game. I am tempted to repeat Enrico's pet Benoni line shown to me by GM Victor Mikhalevski, but such a choice will require a more careful thought.

Notes by
FM Vladimir Pechenkin
Rekhson, Vladislav
(2078)
Sevillano, Enrico (2464)

B06

2015 Edmonton Invitational
 (4.5), 08.11.2015

1.e4 g6 2.d4 c6 3.♘c3 d5
 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.h3 ♘h6 6.♙e2
 0-0 7.0-0 f6

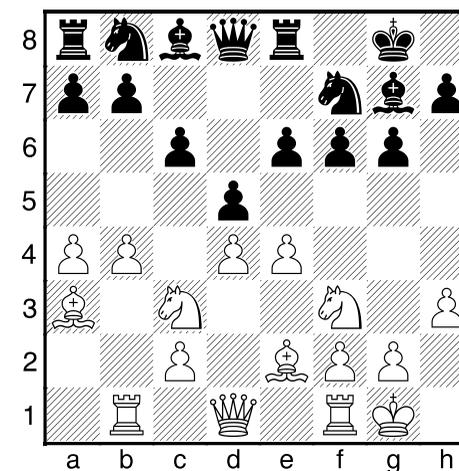


Despite Black's extravagant looking system of development we are still in the book. However, after White's next move the game takes on an independent course.

8.a4 e6 9.b4 ♘f7 10.♙a3

A logical alternative is 10.♖b1!? preparing b4-b5.

10...♖e8 11.♖b1



11...a6

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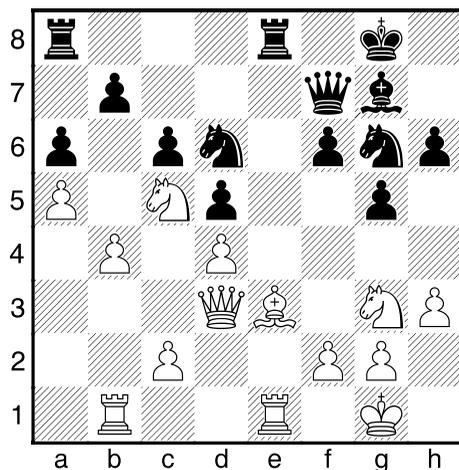


Here Black has a chance to break through in the center: 11...e5!? For example, 12.dxe5 fxe5 13.exd5 e4 14.♘d4 cxd5 with a promising position.

12.a5 ♘d7

Now the game slows down. Over the course of the next dozen moves both players try to gradually improve the positions of their pieces.

**13.♖e1 ♘d6 14.exd5 exd5
15.♙d3 ♘f8 16.♘a4 ♙f5
17.♙xf5 ♘xf5 18.♘c5 ♖c7
19.♙c1 g5 20.♖d3 ♘d6
21.♙e3 ♖f7 22.♘d2 ♘g6
23.♘f1 h6 24.♘g3?!**



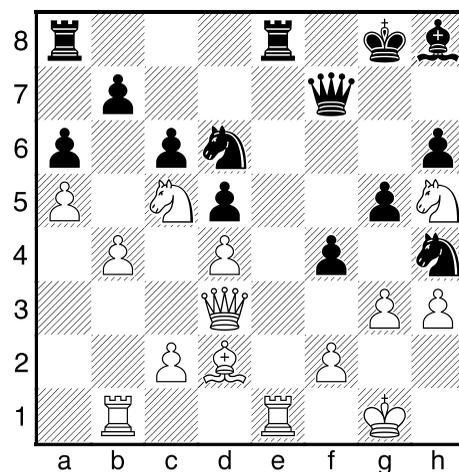
This looks wrong as the black pawns are encouraged to roll

forward.

**24...f5! 25.♘h5 f4 26.♙d2
♙h8!**

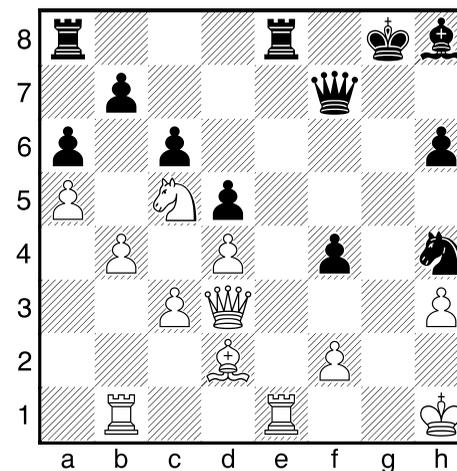
Black is taking over. White must do something about his knight stranded on h5.

27.g3 ♘h4?



The question mark is awarded to Black's whole dubious operation that changes the situation on the board completely. A surprising turn of events, as Black's position was very good and he had several decent candidate moves.

**28.♘xf4 gxf4 29.gxh4 ♘f5
30.c3 ♘xh4 31.♙h1!**



Black is going to have serious problems on the g-file.

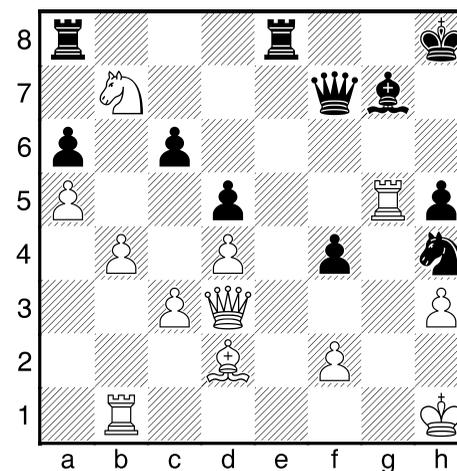
31...h5?

The idea of this move is to take the g4-square away from the rook but White finds a nice refutation.

32.♖g1+ ♙g7 33.♖g5 ♙h8

The lesser evil, but Black's position is critical anyway.

34.♘xb7!

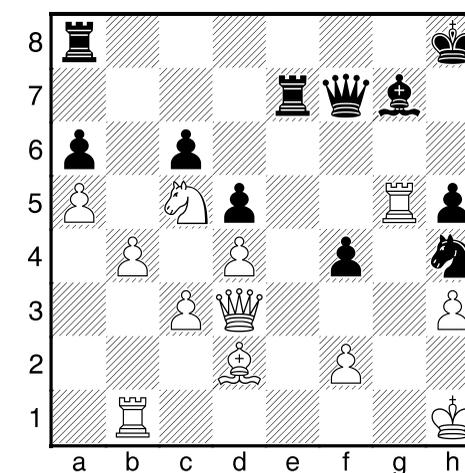


White takes full advantage of the overloaded black queen.

34...♖e6

Relatively best. After 34...♖xb7?
35.♖xh5+ ♙g8 36.♖h7+ ♙f8
37.♖xh4 Black can resign.

35.♘c5 ♖e7



36.♖gg1?

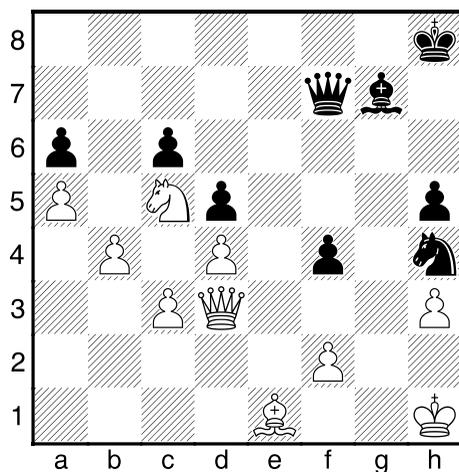
Both opponents were in time pressure so White plays it safe. It turns out that he can distract the black queen again: 36.♙xf4! This time the situation isn't so clear since Black can play 36...♖xf4 37.♖xh5+ ♙h6 White would be lost here if he didn't have 38.♖g3!! regaining the piece with a decisive advantage.



36...♖ae8

The computer discovers that 36...♔h6! suddenly equalizes. The idea is to clear the g-file and then to create threats against the enemy king. For example, the natural 37.♖be1? gets White in serious trouble after 37...♖xe1 38.♖xe1 ♖g8 etc.

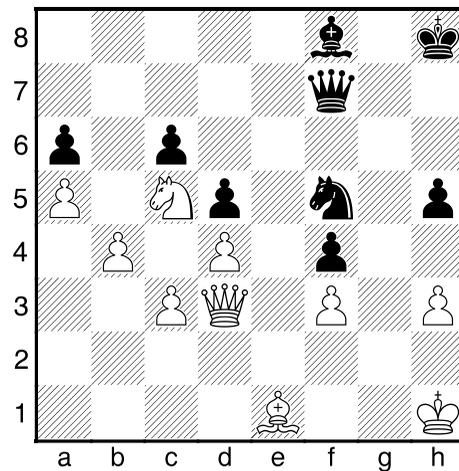
**37.♖be1 ♖xe1 38.♖xe1
♖xe1+ 39.♔f8?**

**39...♔f8?**

Slow. Black can attack immediately: 39...♖e7 40.♔d2 ♖g5 41.♖f1 ♖f5 42.f3 ♖c2 with an unclear position.

40.f3!

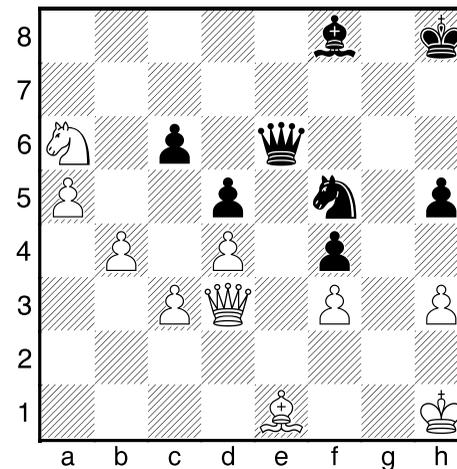
Now White should be winning.

40...♖f5**41.♖xa6?**

Even though White is still winning, I give this capture a question mark for two reasons. First, the knight is now too far away from kingside action, forcing White to play very precisely. Second, Vlad played this move way too quickly. Since the time control passed, he got an extra half an hour on his clock to examine the alternatives and to find a defensive plan on the kingside. When I asked him about it, Vlad said that he wasn't 100% sure that he did make the time control. His opponent's scoresheet had only 39 moves recorded, so Vlad decided to play another move just in case.

As we are about to see, this may have cost him the full point!

If White really wants to capture the a6-pawn immediately, 41.♖xa6!? is a better way to do it. For example, 41...♔xc5 42.bxc5 ♖e6 43.♖f1! ♖e3 44.♖e2 ♖xh3+ 45.♔g1 Black won the h3-pawn but his attack is stalled.

41...♖e6**42.♔f2?**

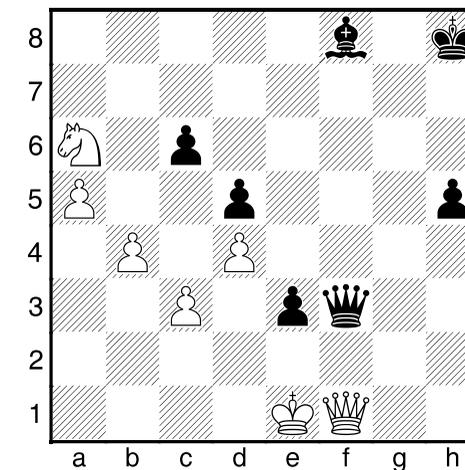
Surprisingly, the losing move!

Correct is 42.♖d2! ♖e3 43.♖e2 ♖xh3+ 44.♔g1 with the same defensive setup as in the line above. In this case Black's bishop is still on the board so he can try to do something with it.

42...♖e3

Unfortunately for White, the rest is pretty much forced.

**43.♔h2 ♖g8 44.♔xe3 ♖g3+
45.♔h1 ♖xh3+ 46.♔g1
♖g3+ 47.♔f1 ♖xf3+ 48.♔e1
fxe3 49.♖f1**



A nice try but it doesn't work.

49...♖xf1+ 50.♔xf1 h4

The only but sufficient move forcing a resignation.

The game could have concluded as follows: 50...h4 51.♖c5 ♔xc5 52.bxc5 h3 53.a6 h2 54.♔g2 e2 55.a7 h1♖+ 56.♔xh1 e1♖+

0-1



Notes by
FM Vladimir Pechenkin
Rekhson, Vladislav
(2078)

Kraai, Jesse (2506)

B22

2015 Edmonton Invitational
(8.1), 11.11.2015

1.e4 c5

Jesse certainly paid attention to the game Rekhson–Pechenkin two days before that reached the dreaded French exchange variation. Therefore, he decides to play the Sicilian rather than the French...

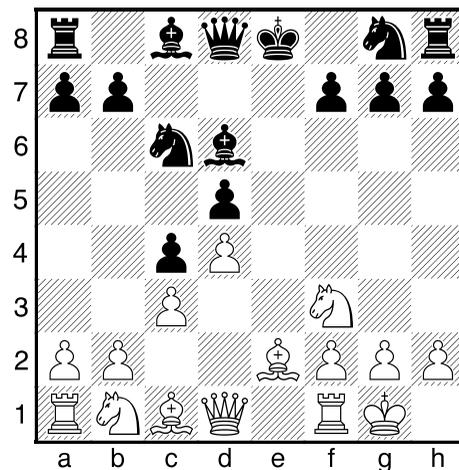
2.c3 e6 3.d4 d5

...but still can't avoid the inevitable.

4...exd5 5.♔d3 ♘c6 6.♘f3 c4

Of course, Black is playing for a win and wants to unbalance the position.

7.♙e2 ♙d6 8.0-0

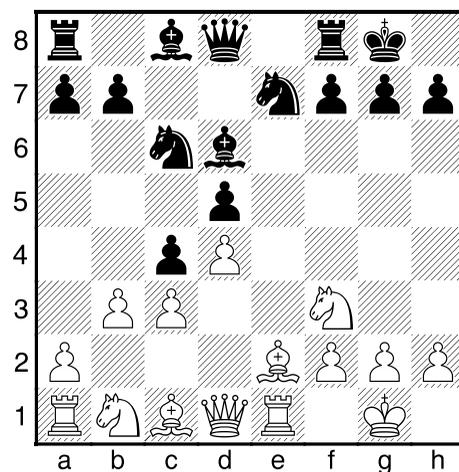


8...♘ge7

It's a little surprising that Black decided not to hold on to his queenside pawn wedge.

8...a6!? 9.b3 b5 10.a4 ♖b8 is OK for him. This idea is available a move later as well.

9.♖e1 0-0 10.b3!



10...cxb3

Now White obtains a nice structural advantage.

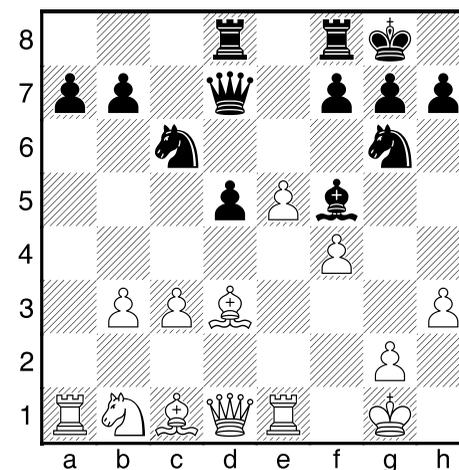
10...b5!? 11.a4 ♘a5 12.♘fd2 looks like trouble for Black, but there is a tactical justification: 12...b4! 13.bxc4 dxc4 14.♘xc4 ♘xc4 15.♙xc4 ♙c7 regaining the pawn with a good position.

11.axb3 ♙g4 12.h3 ♙f5

13.♙d3 ♙d7 14.♘e5?!

Premature. It's time to develop the queenside so a move like 14.♘a3 should be preferred.

14...♙xe5 15.dxe5 ♘g6 16.f4 ♖ad8



17.♙xf5

White may be afraid of

the bishop sacrifice on h3.

Nevertheless, developing the queenside 17.♘a3 is still best. *editor* – 17...♙xh3? doesn't work: 18.gxh3 ♙xh3 19.♖a2!

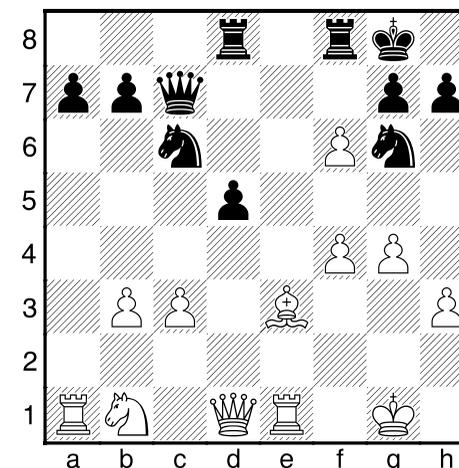
17...♙xf5 18.g4 ♙c8 19.♙e3 f6

This is the right idea if Black knows what to do next.

20.exf6

Correct. 20.e6? looks tempting, but after 20...f5! the brave pawn will soon perish.

20...♙c7!



21.♙f3

White is trying to patch the holes on the kingside.



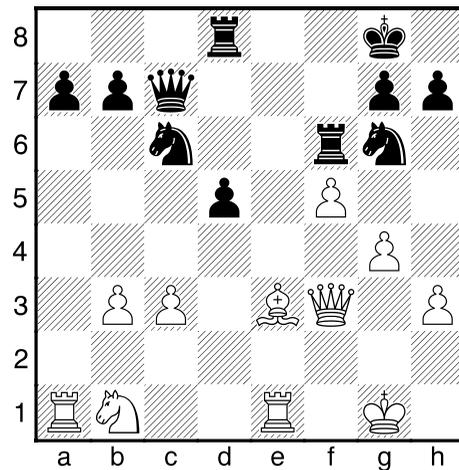
After 21.fxg7 Black has 21...♖f7! with strong initiative. The f4-pawn will soon be captured by the knight.

21...♖xf6?!

The trick is to leave that pawn alone for now.

Instead, Black should break in the center with 21...d4! 22.cxd4 ♞xd4 23.♙xd4 ♖xd4 The number of pawns doesn't really matter for the time being; White's exposed king and a lag in development make it hard for him to hold the position.

22.f5



22...♞h4?

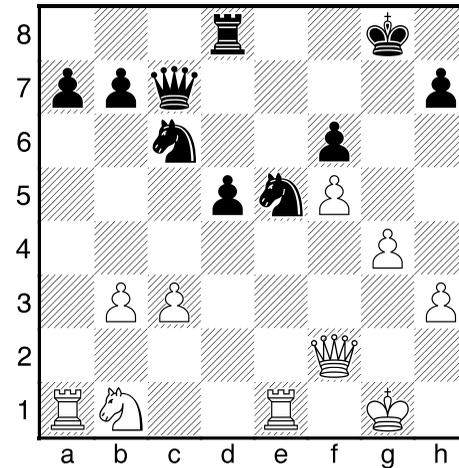
This doesn't work and allows

White to jump in the driver's seat. 22...d4!? is still begging to be played. After 23.♙g5 ♞ge5 24.♙g2 dxc3 25.♞xc3 ♖d3! the position is unclear.

23.♙f2 ♞g6

A sad retreat. 23...♞e5 is answered by 24.♞d2! Even so, this is Black's best chance since he can try to mix things up with 24...♞xf5!

24.♙g5 ♞ge5 25.♙xf6 gxf6



Suddenly, White is up an exchange for not that much. However, the game is far from over. There is still 15 moves left to play before the time control and it's clear that the GM will try to create as much chaos on the

board as possible to confuse the opponent.

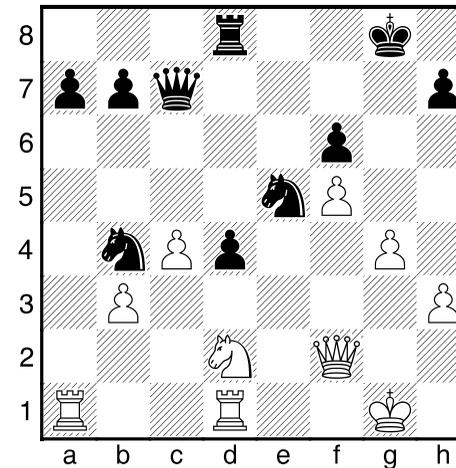
26.♖d1 d4

This push is long overdue although it's still the best move.

27.c4

Certainly not 27.cxd4? ♞xd4 when Black suddenly creates strong threats.

27...♞b4 28.♞d2



28...♞c2?!

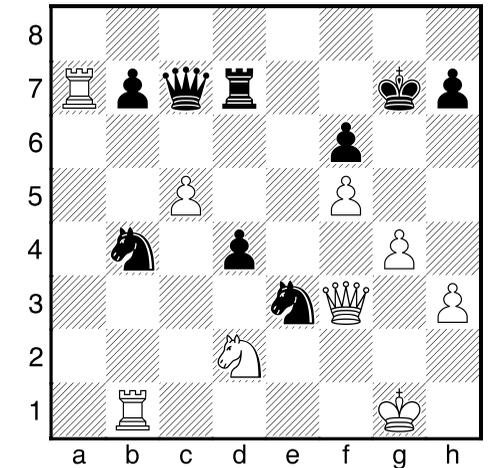
Logical but overly optimistic. It is worth spending a tempo on 28...a6!? to prevent the opponent's queen's rook activation.

29.♖xa7 ♞e3 30.♖da1!

White has enough pieces around

his king, so the other rook will try to inflict some damage on the queenside.

30...♙g7 31.c5 ♖d7 32.b4 ♞d3 33.♙f3 ♞xb4 34.♖b1



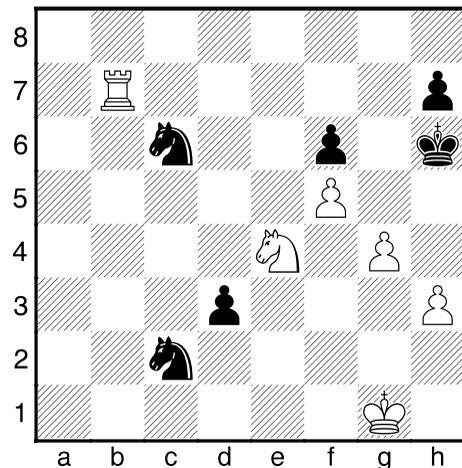
34...♞ec2?

The final mistake, allowing a decisive breakthrough.

34...♙b8 was proposed and closely analyzed in the post-mortem. This is indeed the best move for Black, but White is still well ahead after 35.♖a5

35.c6 ♙xc6 36.♙xc6 ♞xc6 37.♖bxb7 ♖xb7 38.♖xb7+ ♙h6 39.♞e4 d3





40.h4

40.g5+ fxg5 41.♘f6 g4 42.h4 turns out to be a quicker checkmate but the text move is good enough.

40...♘e5 41.g5+ fxg5
42.hxg5+ ♔h5 43.♖xh7+
♔g4 44.g6

The pawn is unstoppable.

44...♔xf5 45.g7 ♔xe4
46.g8♚ d2 47.♖h4+ ♔e3
48.♚b3+ ♔e2 49.♖e4+

1-0

Vladimir Pechenkin: Tournament Diary

3. After

Contrary to my expectations, round 6 did feature the French exchange variation dreaded by so many French players. Myself, I have such a poor record in this line that I actually consider it a legitimate winning try for White. This time White's passive play allowed me to get a better position, but after a couple of inaccurate moves my advantage disappeared.

Round 7 went more or less as predicted. After the time control I had a curious feeling that even though my position might be better according to the computer I should be the one playing for a draw. Both sides then played a fairly normal game for the following 20 moves reaching a dead drawn position. The evaluation did not change until move 74 when Black suddenly committed an inexplicable suicide with 74...Kf6??

In round 8 I received another gift, this time in a form of an unsound piece sacrifice 24. Nxe4? It was one of the few games of the tournament where my opening preparation turned out to be better than my opponent's. Even so, I could have got myself in trouble with a poorly-timed central break 11...e5?! but it ended up well thanks to my opponent's cooperation.

Round 9 was a disaster again. I knew that the position after 11 moves should be good for White, but, unfortunately, under the circumstances the objective evaluation of the position didn't really matter. The reason is that GM Sevillano is especially strong in this type of game, while I can hardly say the same about myself. It is thus not surprising that after just 5 more moves I could have already resigned. The rest of the game was played just for the spectators.

Overall, I can't remember being so lucky in a tournament, but it was only good enough for a 50% score. As we know, luck tends to

average out, so next time I may need to rely on something more tangible — like *skill* — to score points.

FM Vladimir Pechenkin

homepage

<http://www.albertachess.org/2015edminvitationalstandings.html>

editor thanks...

FM **Vladimir Pechenkin** for writing this report, which can't be much fun once the first couple of games kill your Norm chances and take some of the urgency out of the event.

Dustin Koperski for organizing the Edmonton International. You can find Dustin's Soundcloud chess mixes here:
<https://soundcloud.com/dustin-koperski>

...and *whoever* donates a decent camera or cellphone to the Edmonton Chess Club... to help them (and everyone else) see their future events :)



The **2016 Commonwealth Championship** took place July 29 - Aug 6, 2016 in Waskaduwa, Sri Lanka.

185 players competed in the Open section, including 9 GMs and 6 IMs. The top 12 ranked players were all from India, including the top seed: **GM Abhijeet Gupta** (2630) who conceded two early draws to experts but won with 8/9.

A large Indian contingent is not an optimistic sight for foreign players: to a perhaps lesser extent than China, Indian experts tend to have *vastly* underrated FIDE ratings. Canadian FM Shiyam Thavandiran was ranked 13th. He writes about his experience at a tournament that was more than just a tournament...

- editor

Shiyam Thavandiran:

Sri Lanka, also known by some as the “Paradise of the Indian Ocean”, was home of the 2016 Commonwealth Chess Champi-

onship held from July 31st - August 7th. But Sri Lanka meant much more personally to me than just another country hosting a chess tournament. Sri Lanka was the homeland of my parents, and unfortunately I never had an opportunity until this summer to visit. This was main-

ly because of a terrible civil war that started in the 80’s and only concluded in 2009. I was born and raised in Canada, and had no idea late about the country that all my ancestors grew up in.

The timing could not have been better this summer. I had already been planning to visit

Sri Lanka to attend my cousin’s wedding in August, but I badly wanted to play some chess. I checked the Sri Lankan chess calendar and was ecstatic to see that the Commonwealth Chess Championship would start a few days after my last Master’s exam finished at the University



Wedding Day in Jaffna

L2R: older brother Nimalan (who taught me the rules of chess and was my toughest opponent), my father, my mother and me.

of Western Ontario. I arrived a week ahead of my family so that I could play in the tournament. After the tournament, I spent the next few weeks touring Sri Lanka with my family before the wedding. The icing on the cake was a couple of days after the wedding, the Abu Dhabi Masters would begin. This meant I had to miss the reception but it was important to me to play in what would be the strongest tournament in my career.

Of course, it is not enough to just attend a chess event. To do well, serious preparation is required. I realized that this would be my third tournament in Asia. The first two are undoubtedly the worst tournaments of my career. I finished with less than 50% in both the 2008 WYCC Un-

der 16 held in Vietnam as well as the 2011 World Junior held in India. It was clear to me that this was not a coincidence: I struggled with health in both tournaments. In Vietnam, I struggled with dehydration from the very first day, while in India I drank some juice given by the organizers at a dinner on the night be-

fore the rest day. I did not realize it was mixed with local water and had to take antibiotics immediately after, which I had a bad reaction to. Needless to say, I was not in the best shape for the second half of that tournament.

Thus, I decided to spend the limited time I had in the summer (I was taking two graduate

courses) focusing on my health. I spent more time at the Western Student Recreation Center than I had ever before in my 6 years at the University of Western Ontario. While I was at the tournament, I drank more water than I have ever before in my life. I think it paid off because while I lost something like 60 FIDE points in each of the tournaments I mentioned above, I actually managed to gain a couple of rating points this time! But most importantly, I went undefeated in a 9-round international tournament, something I had never done before. Granted, eight of my nine opponents were lower rated, but there were no walk-overs. All of them were underrated and I had to fight for every half point. I finished with 7.0/9 (five wins and four draws), which resulted in a tie for 3rd place and 10th after tiebreak. Unfortunately, a strange tiebreak was used. After direct encounter, which was fine, the next tiebreak was most wins followed by most games with the Black pieces.

Aside from my own physical preparation, the beautiful



The Wedding Ceremony

Bride and groom seated center, with families on either side. left: Nimalan and Shiyam congratulate the newlyweds.





5-star Citrus Hotel Waskaduwa played a huge role in my physical and mental state. The organizers provided free accommodation to all official representatives of the Commonwealth countries. Federations were able to send an official representative for each age group and gender, and so indeed, the “warm Sri Lankan hospitality” as the organizers had advertised, lived up to its name. The food was fantastic, the resort was beautiful, and the staff were extremely friendly.

Nonetheless, the most important thing about a chess tournament is the chess! It started off on a weird note, when it was decided at the Technical Meeting that the format be changed from 10 rounds to 9 rounds. This was due to a suggestion by defending champion and top seed GM Abhijeet Gupta of India. The floor was opened for objections, and though I am sure there were many players that would have rather stuck with the advertised format, but nobody wanted to risk making enemies with the Champion himself.

Evaluating my own play

in the tournament, while I have basic chess deficiencies to work on, I was quite proud of my fighting spirit. In round 5, I was dead lost after a terrible first 6 moves in the opening. I knew the game was over but decided to make it as tough as possible for my opponent. I kept finding ways to extend the game move by move but was still completely lost. Eventually, I managed to find a tactical trick and miraculously saved half a point.

The two games I show below are further examples of this fighting spirit. After not playing the early stages of the game well, I managed to create winning opportunities with resourceful play. The first game is from Round 7 and the second game is from the final round.

- FM Shiyam Thavandiran

Notes by
FM Shiyam Thavandiran
Pujari, Rucha (2137)
Thavandiran, Shiyam

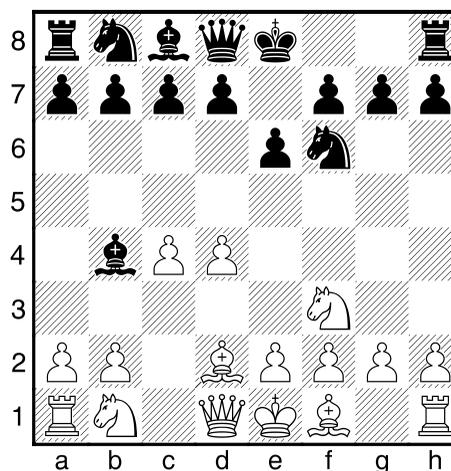
E16

2016 Commonwealth Chess
Championship (7), 04.08.2016

1.d4 e6 2.c4 ♘f6 3.♘f3

An unpleasant surprise. I had based my preparation exclusively on 3.g3 and moreover, I was no longer a big fan of the Bogó-Indian which was my main opening against 3.♘f3.

3...♙b4+ 4.♙d2



While annotating this game, I was surprised to find out this was the main line. I always felt that 4.♘bd2 was more critical because White threatens a3, which forces Black to yield the bishop pair or yield the centre.

4...c5

I decided to improvise with this move, which I had never played before. In the past I have opted

for 4...a5, while 4...♙e7 is the most popular move.

5.♙xb4 cxb4

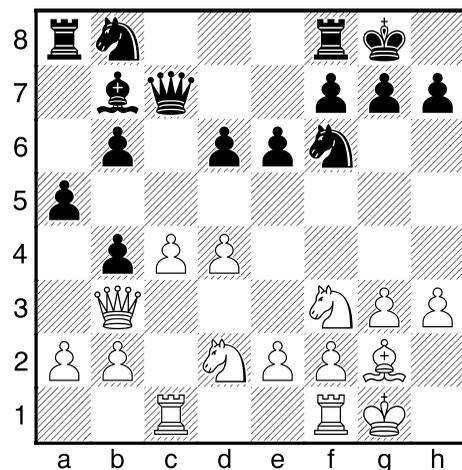
Very logical. White does not object to what Black asks for: doubled b-pawns after capturing away from the centre. For counterplay, Black will try to gain control of the newly vacated c5 square for the b8 knight.

6.g3 b6?!

I played this natural move without thinking, but Black's main plan is to play ...d6 and ...e5 to fight for the c5 square. Black can develop the bishop through the c8-h3 diagonal and so it seems that ...b6 is the start of a bad plan.

6...0-0 7.♙g2 d6 8.0-0 a5
9.a3 ♘a6 10.♘bd2 ♙c7 11.♖c1
♜d8 12.♘e1 e5 (0-1, 35) L'Ami,E
(2627)–Wang,H (2752) Wijk aan
Zee, 2013.

7.♙g2 ♙b7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♘bd2
♙c7 10.♖c1 d6 11.♙b3 a5
12.h3



12...Na6?!

12...Nbd7 Black's knight is much better here than on a6, since White is by no means obliged to give up control of the c5 square.

13.Nh4!?

I confess that I thought White was peacefully trading pieces here. Quite the contrary!

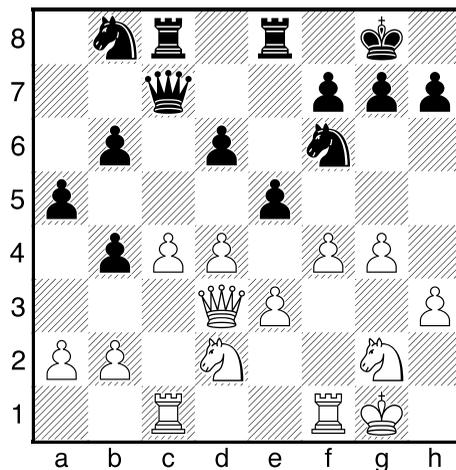
13...Rac8 14.f4!

Now the point of 13.Nh4 becomes clear.

14...Qxg2 15.Nxg2 e5 16.e3 Rfe8 17.Qd3! Nb8

Black can't do without the knight.

18.g4!

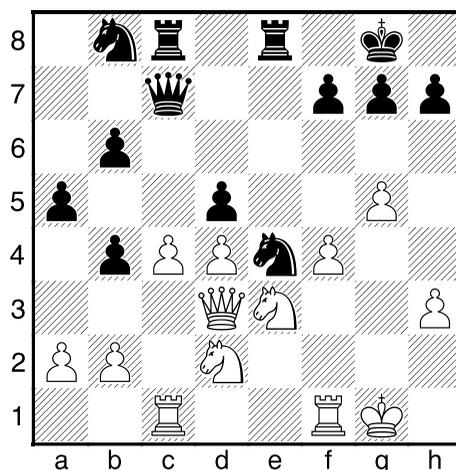


My opponent tries to punish my waste of time. For some reason, I thought I was justified in trying to counter-punish her aggressive pawn storm.

18...exd4 19.exd4 d5?

19...Nc6 Black should have all pieces in the war zone before initiating contact.

20.g5 Ne4 21.Ne3!



Here I had a minor heart attack thinking I was lost. Very fortunately, I was not going to be down a pawn.

21...Nxd2 22.Nxd5 Qd7 23.Qxd2 Qxh3

A saving grace. Still, White is better in almost every positional sense.

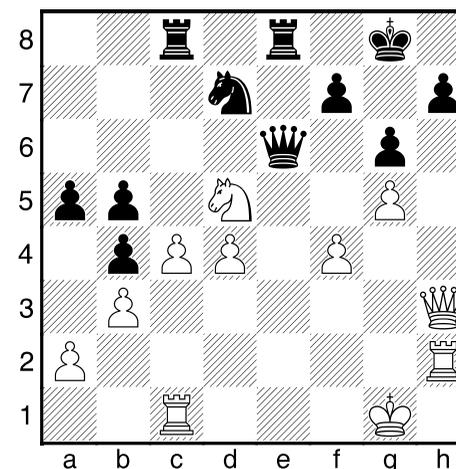
24.Rf2 Nd7 25.Rh2 Qe6?

25...Qf5 This move has to be played to stop Qd3.

26.b3!?

26.Qd3 g6 27.Qh3±.

26...b5 27.Qd3 g6! 28.Qh3



28...h5!!

I was very proud of this concept.

It seemed like White was in full control but suddenly I fight for the initiative with an inventive pawn sacrifice.

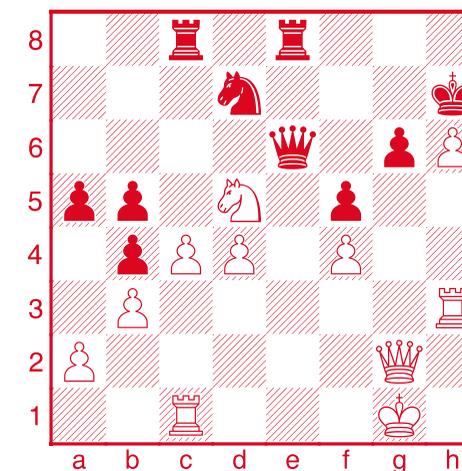
29.gxh6 f5!

The point of h5, which caused White to give up control of the key f6 square.

30.Qg2?

White wants to put pressure on g6, which could have been achieved by the simple 30.Rg2.

30... Qh7 31.Rh3



editor – What happens after ...Nf6?

31...Nf6!!

A devilish trap.



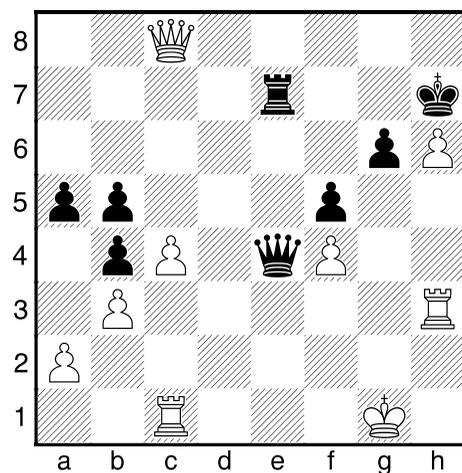
32. ♖xf6+
32. ♖e3 ♗g4̄.

32... ♖xf6 33. ♖b7+ ♖e7!
34. ♖xc8??

The decisive error, although White on a downward spiral. 34. ♖d5 and White is still playing.

editor – after 34. ♖xb5? ♖xd4+-+ and Black's majors force mate.

34... ♖xd4+ 35. ♖h1 ♖e4+
36. ♖g1



36... ♖xf4!-+
This had to be foreseen when Black played 31... ♗f6.

37. ♖c2
37. ♖f1 ♖g4+ 38. ♖h2 ♖e2-+.

♖e1+ 38. ♖g2 ♖f1+ 39. ♖g3
♖e3+ 40. ♖h4 ♖f4#

0-1

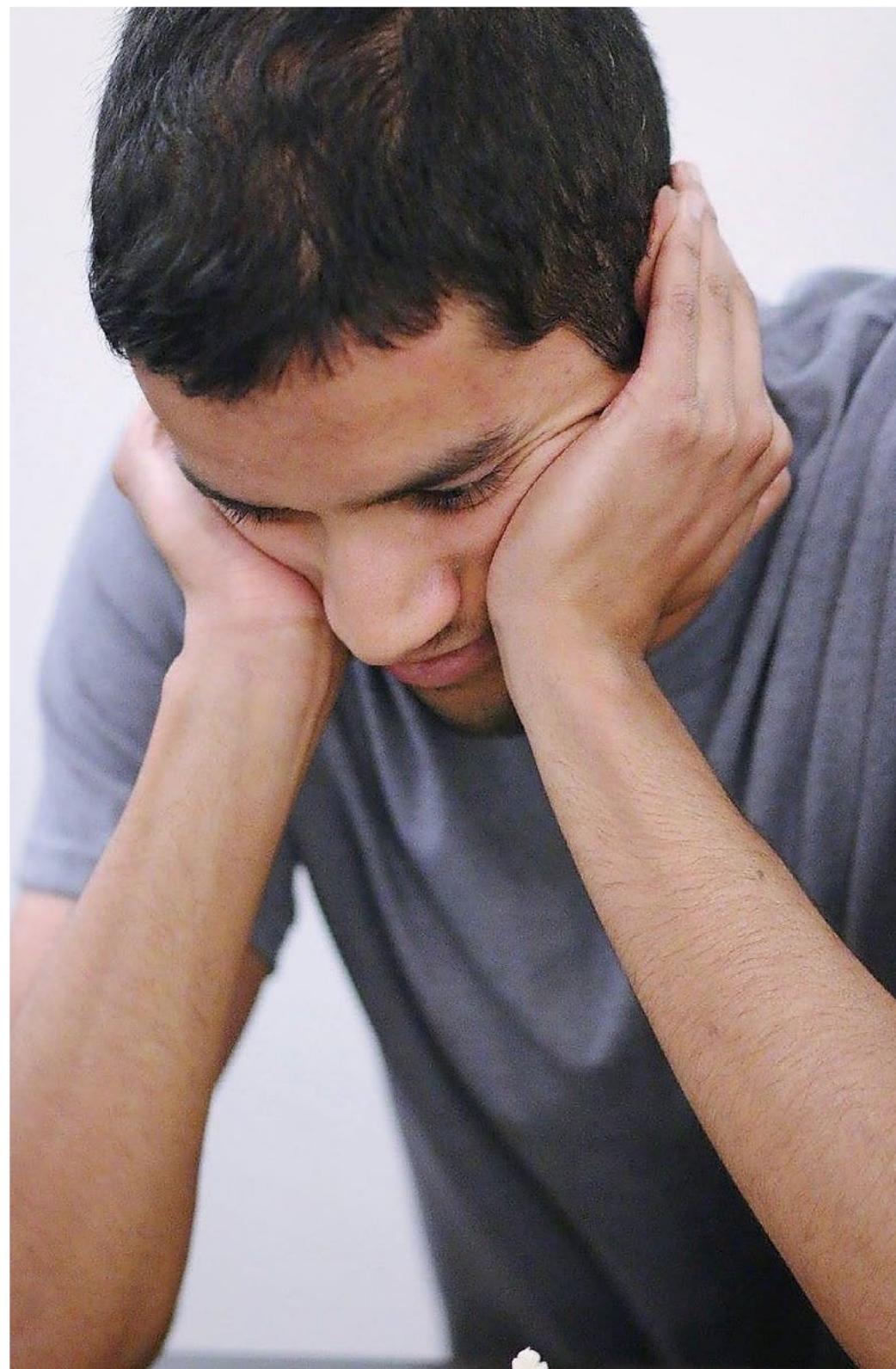
Notes by
FM Shiyam Thavandiran
Thavandiran, Shiyam
Swapnil, S. Dhopade
(2500)

B19
2016 Commonwealth Chess
Championship (9), 06.08.2016

Going into this game on Board 3, it was possible that a win would result in a tie for first place. While it turned out later that the tournament was decided by a decisive result on the top board, a win would still mean =2nd (3rd on tiebreak).

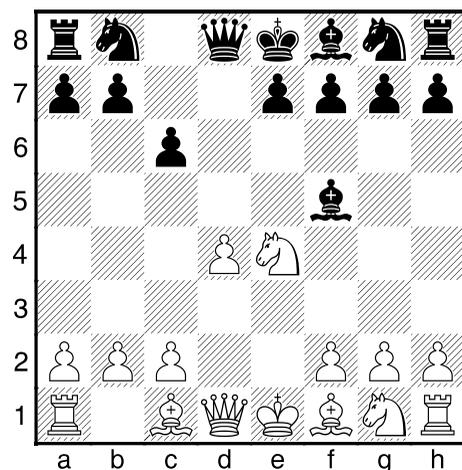
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3. ♗d2
Judging by opponent's slight hesitation, and the fact that my last two games against the Caro-Kan went 3.e5, this was a surprise for him.

3... dxe4 4. ♗xe4 ♗f5



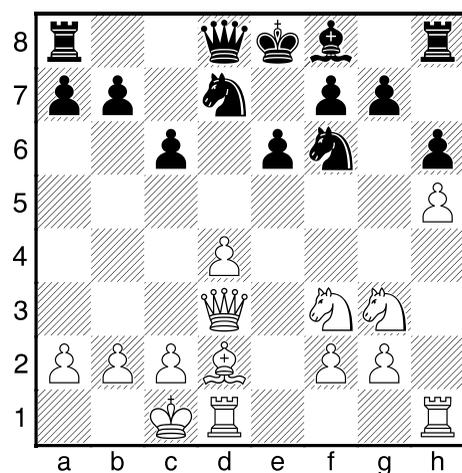


Chess Canada K2: Ketsup 2



I used to exclusively play 5.♘c5 here, but fortunately it is possible to get rid of (some) childish habits.

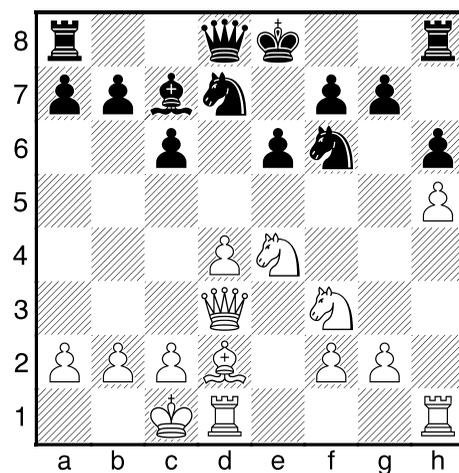
5.♘g3 ♙g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3
♘d7 8.h5 ♙h7 9.♙d3 ♙xd3
10.♙xd3 e6 11.♙d2 ♘gf6
12.0-0-0



12...♙d6!?

My turn to be surprised, as my opponent had no games in the database with this move. One of Black's main ideas is to put the queen on d5, so it seemed like this was not the best line. Instead, 12...♙e7 13.♚b1 0-0 14.♘e4 ♘xe4 15.♙xe4 ♘f6 16.♙e2 ♙d5.

13.♘e4 ♙c7



During the game I felt that this was dubious and spent a long time trying to figure out how to punish it. Unfortunately for me, it turns out this idea has been played many times before and is very sound.

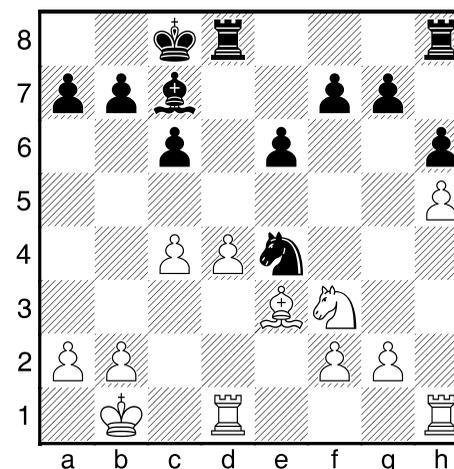
14.♚b1

After failing to find anything

concrete, I decided to play normally.

14.♙b4!/? was what I spent most of my time on, but now I am not sure why I rejected it. 14...♘xe4 15.♙xe4 ♘f6 16.♙e2 ♙d5 17.♚b1 It seems like White has the more pleasant position. If Black tries to castle queenside, White has the annoying ♘e5. 17...0-0-0 18.♘e5.

14...♘xe4 15.♙xe4 ♘f6
16.♙d3 ♙d5 17.c4 ♙e4
18.♙xe4 ♘xe4 19.♙e3 0-0-0



20.♘e5?!

Again, I was still working under the very false assumption that my play was flawless and my opponent's opening play was

dubious.

20.♚c2! White tries to put the king on e2 so that the bishop can move freely. 20...f5 21.g3 ♜hf8 22.♘e5 Black's weak squares leave much to be desired.

20...♜hf8 21.g4? c5

21...f5!/? I was worried about this over the board, but there is not much to fear. During the game, I hallucinated that at the end of line B White was worse, but actually Black is down a pawn! At the very least, he has to spend time winning it back:

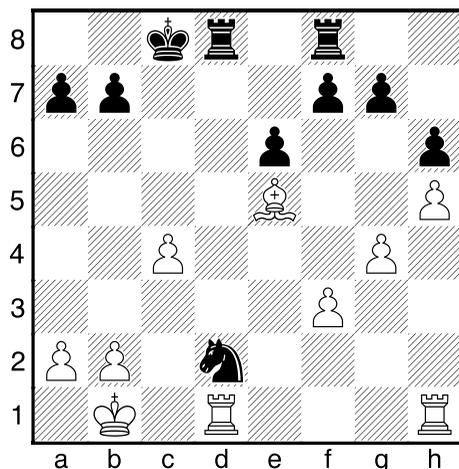
A) 22.f3? f4! 23.♙g1 (23.fxe4 fxe3 24.♘g6 ♜f2) 23...♘g3+;

B) 22.♘g6! f4 23.♘xf8 ♜xf8 24.f3 fxe3 25.fxe4 ♙g3 26.♚c2 e2 27.♜dg1 e1♙ Here was where I forgot that Black loses a pawn by queening! 28.♜xe1 ♙xe1 29.♜xe1 ♜f4 30.♚d3 ♜xg4 31.♜f1↑.

22.f3 cxd4 23.♙xd4 ♙xe5
24.♙xe5 ♘d2+



Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²



White is left with a serious choice: to sac or not sac?

25. ♔c1

25. ♖xd2!? ♖xd2 26. ♕xg7 ♖g8 (26... ♖fd8 27. ♔c1! ♖g2 28. ♕xh6 ♖g8 29. ♕e3±) 27. ♕xh6 ♖f2 28. ♖h3 During the game, I thought that this was unclear and there were chances for both sides, but the computer shows that Black has at least a draw. 28... ♖d8 29. ♖h1 ♖g8=.

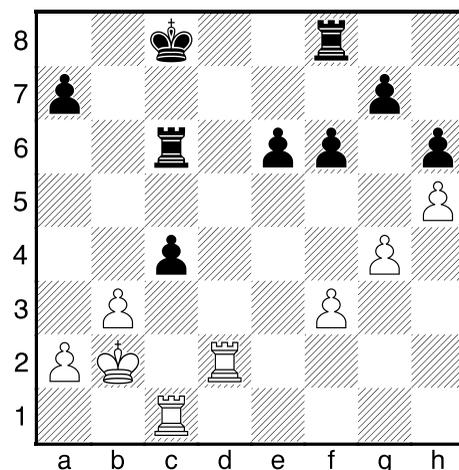
25...f6!

I completely missed this move. If I had seen it, I would almost certainly have gone for the exchange sacrifice on the previous move: 25... ♞xf3 26. ♕xg7 ♖g8 27. ♕xh6±.

26. ♕d6!

It is important to not let Black open the f-file and seize the initiative; e.g. 26. ♕xf6 ♖xf6 27. ♖xd2 ♖xd2 28. ♔xd2 ♖xf3↑.

26...♖xd6 27. ♖xd2 ♖c6 28. b3 b5 29. ♔b2 bxc4 30. ♖c1



30...f5

30... ♔c7 31. ♖dc2.

31. ♖dc2 ♔d7 32. ♖xc4 ♖xc4 33. ♖xc4 ♔d6?

33... fxc4 34. ♖xg4 ♖f7 And at least Black's rook exerts pressure on f3.

34. ♖d4+!

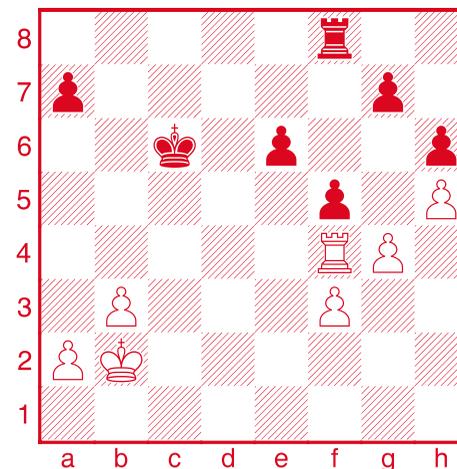
34. ♖f4 ♔e5.

34...♔c6

34...♔e5 35. ♖d7.

34... ♔e7 35. ♖a4 ♖a8 36. gxf5 exf5 37. ♖a6±.

35. ♖f4!



35...a5?

This merely helps White create a passed pawn. Black should have tried to resolve the kingside pressure by activating his King or stabilizing his rook with **35... ♖f6** 36. gxf5 exf5= which is solid for Black.

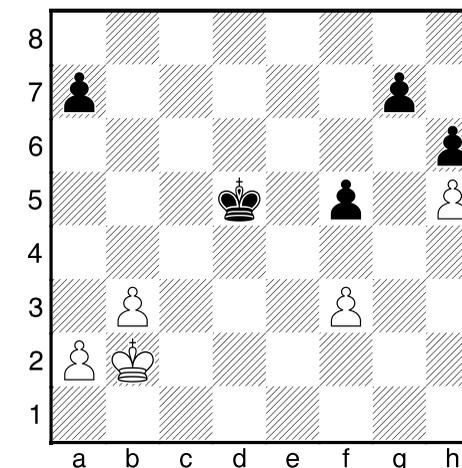
35...♔d5 36. gxf5:

I had no time to calculate the pawn ending but intuitively it felt lost for Black due to the backward pawns on the kingside.

A) 36...exf5 37. ♖a4! ♖a8

38. ♖a5+ ♔e6 39. f4±;

B) 36...♖xf5? 37. ♖xf5+! exf5: Analysis Diagram



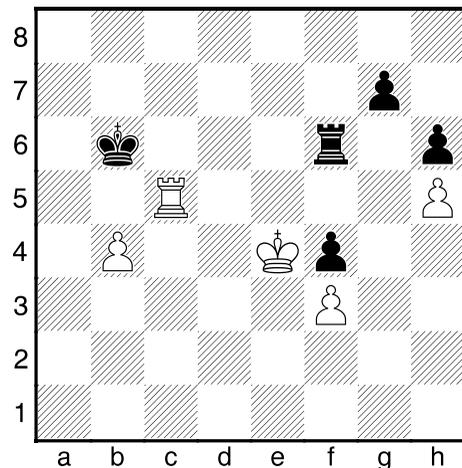
a) 38. b4? ♔c4□ (38... f4 39. ♔c3+-; 38... ♔e6 39. ♔c2+-; 38... ♔d4 39. a4□ ♔e3 40. b5 ♔xf3 41. a5 f4 42. b6 axb6 43. axb6 ♔e2 44. b7 f3 45. b8♞+-) 39. a3 f4□ 40. ♔c2 ♔d4□=;

b) 38. a4? ♔e6! (or 38... g5=) 39. ♔c3 g5 40. hxg6 h5□ 41. ♔d3 h4□ 42. ♔e3 a5□=;

c) White must bring the King in to stop Black's h-pawn 38. ♔c3! ♔e5 39. ♔d2+- ♔f4 40. ♔e2 ♔g5 41. b4+-.

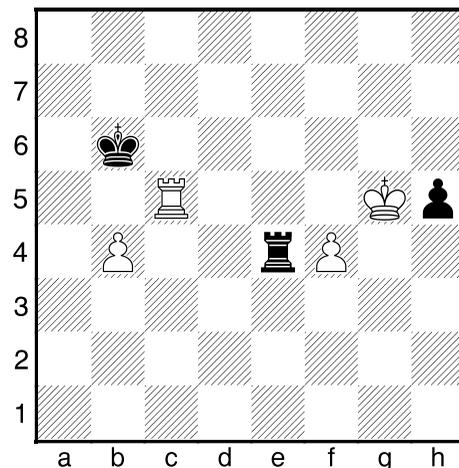
36. ♔c3 ♔c5 37. a3 ♖f7

38.gxf5 exf5 39.b4+ axb4+
40.axb4+ ♔b5 41.♖c4! f4
42.♖c5+ ♔b6 43.♔d4 ♖f6
44.♔e4



In Black's time pressure, White's position has become very promising.

44...g5 45.hxg6 ♖xg6
46.♔xf4 ♖f6+ 47.♔e4 ♖e6+
48.♔f5 ♖e3 49.f4 h5 50.♔g5
♖e4



51.♖c1

As my opponent pointed out after the game, 51.f5 was the best way to win: 51.f5 ♖xb4 52.♖c1+-. Passed pawns must be pushed! Now, my opponent who was playing on increments, played a series of only moves.

51...h4! 52.f5??

52.♖h1 Very simple. White eliminates the passed pawn and also gets in f4-f5 with tempo. 52...♖xb4 53.♖xh4 ♔c6 54.f5+-.

52...h3! 53.f6??

I showed absolutely no concern about Black's counterplay and this cost me a =2nd finish.

53.♖h1 and White still has winning chances.

53...♖e2!

Now Black gets his pawn to the second rank, after which the game must end in a draw.

54.f7 ♖f2 55.♔g6 h2 56.♖h1
♖g2+!

I missed that I never get time to take on h2 because Black keeps checking, or White has to impede the f-pawn to hide!

57.♔h7 ♖f2 58.♔g8 ♖g2+
59.♔f8 ♔b5 60.♖e1 ♖g1
61.♖e5+ ♔b6 62.♖h5 h1♔
63.♖xh1 ♖xh1 64.♔g8 ♖g1+
65.♔h8 ♖f1 66.♔g8 ♔b5 67.f8♔
♖xf8+ 68.♔xf8 ♔xb4

1/2-1/2

CrossTable

<http://www.chess-results.com/tnr232157.aspx?lan=1&art=4&wi=821&zeit=en=99999>



Elephant Orphanage

In Kandy, Sri Lanka, my favourite city to visit due to its beautiful scenery and cooler temperature.



2016 Can Senior



by Victoria Jung-Doknjas+



Since the inaugural BC Senior Championship took place in 2012 with 14 players, each year we have welcomed more and more Seniors to the event. The second year more than doubled attendance to 30 players and then last year we hit our record 33 players. In considering how to make the 2016 event even more special, Co-Organizers Paul Leb-

lanc and Victoria Jung-Doknjas, thought there was no better way to allow more Seniors to experience this very special event in BC than by going national. So, for the first time ever, the Canadian Senior Chess Championship took place in beautiful British Columbia on June 24-26, 2016.

Forty-nine players from BC (Lower Mainland, Vancouver

Island, Northern BC), Alberta, Ontario and Washington and Oregon States, came to play. The event was so popular that registration hit maximum capacity 2 weeks before the start of Round 1 .





Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

Duncan Suttles Kicks It Off

Special guest **GM Duncan Suttles** made the ceremonial opening move. Paul Leblanc sponsored a \$50 “What Move Will Duncan Suttles Make?” contest that was won by Tom O’Donnell, who guessed 1. g3! GM Suttles joined in the group photo, as well as the photo with just the sponsors. This allowed us to create a special GM Suttles’ autographed keepsake for our valuable sponsors.

Sponsors

Once again, we were blessed with a number of sponsors and it was important to the Co-Organizers of this event, Victoria Jung-Doknjas and Paul Leblanc, to ensure that our wonderful sponsors were made to feel appreciated and special, because they *are* in fact very special to us and one of the main factors in helping to make this first-ever-in-BC Canadian Senior Championship a very successful event.



Biggest Upset Awards Don Hack (1248 pts), Jofrel Landingin (407 pts), Hugh Long (275 pts.), Rick Martinson (455 pts), and Richard Bridger (389 pts. missing from photo); each with a \$25 Tim Hortons gift card.

Our Sponsors’ contributions enable us to provide a nice venue, prizes that included substantial glass trophies and a modest prize fund that almost doubled due to the incredible sponsorship and maximum num-

ber of entrants. In addition, we were able to offer all the players complimentary refreshments during all 6 rounds, *and* \$25 Tim Hortons gift cards as “Biggest Upset” Prizes for Rounds 1 to 5.



Duncan Suttles

In addition, all players discovered individually-addressed “Thank You” group photo cards at their boards at the start of Round 5.

Paul and I called up each one of our sponsors to personally thank them for their contribution and to present each of them with a 5x7 group photo + 5x7 Sponsor photo with GM Duncan Suttles, which was autographed by GM Suttles.

A Big Thank You to our Sponsors:

Individual Patrons: \$100+:

GM Duncan Suttles, Paul Leblanc, Victoria Jung-Doknjas, Richard Lapenna, Duncan Haines, Stewart Paulson, Gogs Gagnon, Frank O’Brien, Neale Monkhouse, Doug Sly, and NM Roger Patterson.

Individual Sponsors: \$25 to \$99
Graham Swett and Joe Soliven.

Corporate Sponsors:

Gantzert Law Office, Tim Hortons, Chess Federation of Canada, BC Chess Federation, and Victoria Chess.

And now a word from two of our Sponsors...

“Why do you think it is important to support and sponsor events like the BC Senior Championship, and for this year, the Canadian Senior Championship?”

Duncan Haines:

“The reason I am happy to be a sponsor is simple: if there are no organizers then there will be no tournaments. Excellent tournament organizers like Roger Patterson, Brian Raymer and Paul LeBlanc at Victoria Chess are willing to put in the huge amount of time and effort it takes to have a great event. It is the same with Paul LeBlanc and Victoria Doknjas organizing the BC Senior (and recent Canadian Senior) tournaments. Every detail looked after, excellent TD, great locations, great playing conditions, everything on time etc. So I am very happy to make an additional monetary contribution in order to show my gratitude and support for these organizers. Thanks so much!”



Richard Lapenna:

“I feel it’s important to sponsor Seniors’ events like this because there are many older people in this quickly aging world who have waited a very long time (many decades!) to be able to indulge in their creative passion: chess. It provides an outlet for this artistic (and yes, competitive) activity to be shared with other like-minded folk, and helps fulfill these “old” dreams. It also allows re-acquaintance with friends one might never have thought to see again, and between them to be able to once again create memorable games that will be savored in posterity.”



Format

As for the tournament itself, there were 2 Sections: the 50 Years or Better and the 65 Years or Better. Both were 6 round Swisses, with a 90 mins + 30 sec. increment time control, and CFC and FIDE-rated.

Champions of the 50 Years or Better and 65 Years or Better sections, and the Woman Champion qualified to be Canada’s Official Representatives to the Pan American Senior Championship.

Foreign players were welcomed but only eligible for cash prizes. Only Canadian citizens or Canadian residents were eligible for all prizes including trophies, titles, cash prizes, and the right to represent Canada at the Pan American Senior Championship.

50 Years or Better

In the 50 Years or Better section, the highest rated player, **IM David Cummings**, went undefeated, conceding only 1 draw in the final round enroute to winning the 2016 Canadian Senior Champion trophy + \$200. **Victoria Jung-Doknjas** won the 2016 Canadian Senior Woman Champion trophy and the 2016 BC Senior Woman Champion title; in addition with a 3/6 score, Victoria earned the 2016 U1600 Canadian Senior Champion trophy + \$100. Both IM David Cummings and Victoria Jung-Doknjas qualify to be our official Canadian representatives to the 2016 Pan American Senior Championship in Bolivia.

There was a 4-way tie for 2nd Place Overall in the 50 Years or Better section, where





Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

Daniel E. Salcedo, Joe Soliven, David Rupel (US player), and Duncan Haines all scored 4.5. The first three players split the \$100 prize, and Duncan Haines received the 2016 U1800 Canadian Senior Champion trophy + \$100. After tie-breaks, Daniel E. Salcedo received the 2nd Place Overall trophy and the 2016 BC Senior Champion plaque; but, shared the 2016 BC Senior Co-Champion title with Joe Soliven and Duncan Haines, all three be-

ing the top scoring player from British Columbia.

65 Years or Better

In the 65 Years or Better section, the highest rated player in that section, **IM Leon Piasetski**, with a perfect 6/6 won the 2016 Canadian Senior Champion trophy + \$200 and the 2016 BC Senior Championship title. Leon also qualifies to be our official Canadian representative to the 2016 Pan American Senior Championship in Bolivia.

Paul Leblanc won 2nd Place Overall in the 65 Years or Better section, scoring 4.5 pts./6 games, losing only one game and that was to the Champion. Paul thinks that it is important to support and organize events like the BC Senior Championship, and for this year, the Canadian Senior Championship because, "Chess is more than a game. It is a social experience and this type of event provides the right atmosphere to foster that experience."

Hugh Long scored 4 wins out of 6 games and won the 2016 U1800 Canadian Senior Champion trophy + \$100. Stephen Lester-Smith and Brian Sullivan both scored 2.5pts/6 games and are the 2016 U1600 Canadian Senior Co-Champions, splitting the \$100 prize money, with Stephen taking the trophy with the better tie-break.

Mau-Seng Lee (below) won the 2016 Canadian Senior Championship – **80 Years or Better trophy**, scoring 2.5 pts/6 games.



Games

Chess Canada has five games from the 2016 Canadian Senior Championship, including two annotated by the National Champions.

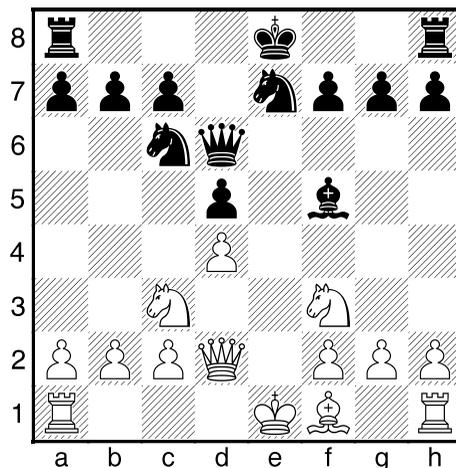
Notes by Duncan Haines Escandor, Manuel (1671) Haines, Duncan (1789)

C01

2016 Canadian Senior Ch. (6),
26.06.2016

This game is from the final round of the Canadian Senior Championship, both players with 3.5 points, both going for the same trophy and prizes. Don't let my opponent's rating fool you, in the past I've seen him beat masters and experts, and in this tournament he won two games against experts.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5
4.♘f4 ♘d6 5.♙d2 ♘e7 6.♘f3
♘f5 7.♘xd6 ♙xd6 8.♘c3
♘bc6



The exchange French leaves both sides with a number of options on how to place their pieces. The computer says equal but that is not the same as drawish.

9.♘b5

Something about not moving a piece twice in the opening probably applies here.

9...♙d7

9...♙e6+ 10.♘e2 0-0-0 Is another way to go but I wanted to keep the option of castling on the same side as White.

10.♘e2 h6

10...f6 is a computer choice but I assumed my queen would soon return to d6 and might want easy

access to f6 or g6. Playing ...f6 makes sense to cover e5 and set up a quick ...g5 and ...h5 in case opposite-side castling occurs with Black on the queenside. 10...0-0-0 is also good.

11.♙f4?!

Looks like a waste of time to me. There is no real threat and the queen will soon have to retreat.

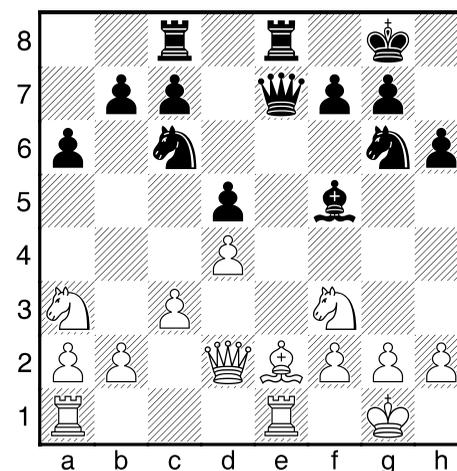
11...♙c8?!

Too passive. Again, I wanted to castle on the same side as White but that was nothing to worry about. 11...0-0-0 or 11...0-0.

12.c3 a6 13.♘a3 ♘g6

First 0-0 made a bit more sense.

14.♙e3+ ♙e7 15.♙d2 0-0
16.0-0 ♙fe8 17.♙fe1



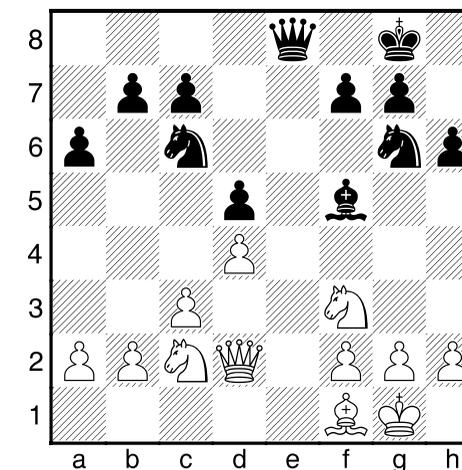
17...♙d7

17...♙f6 f6 would be a more active square for my queen. However, I was anticipating both pairs of rooks being exchanged on the e-file. 18.♘c2 ♘e4 19.♘e3 ♙e6.

18.♙f1 ♙xe1

♘18...♘e4=.

19.♙xe1 ♙e8 20.♙xe8+ ♙xe8
21.♘c2



Trading rooks has helped White more than Black. I thought about exchanging my bishop for the knight but felt my bishop was still a good piece. I was also concerned this would allow a queenside incursion by White's queen.



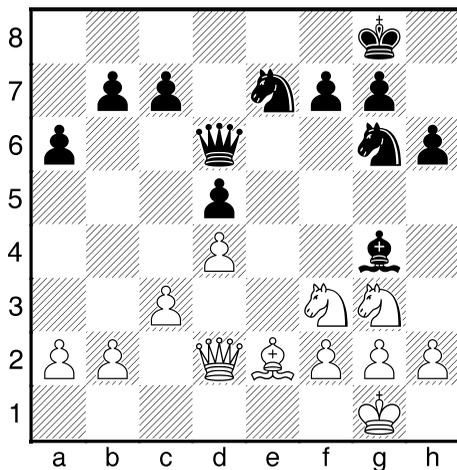
Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

21...♞ce7

I like this move. It opens up my queen and shifts my knight to where it will be needed to help fight for the important f4 and f5 squares.

21...♙xc2 22.♚xc2 ♚e6 23.♚b3 ♞d8 ♞a5 (23...♞d8 24.g3±) 24.♚b4 b6 25.♚a4 is equal, but this was not to my taste at all.

22.♞e3 ♙e6 23.♙d3 ♚d7
24.♞f1 ♙f5 25.♙e2 ♚d6
26.♞g3 ♙g4



I did not have to trade this bishop but since queens and knights work well together I was comfortable with this decision.

27.h3 ♙xf3 28.♙xf3

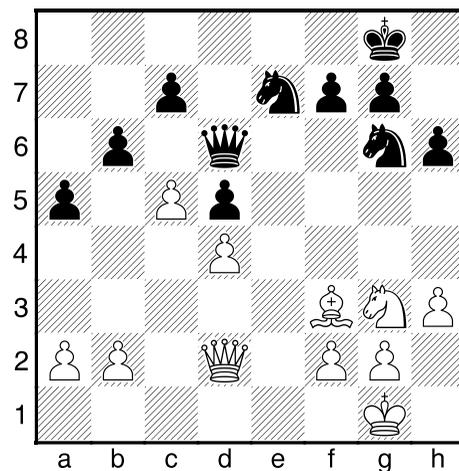
During the last 1/2 dozen moves both sides had many different options. But here we are, and now ...♞f4 would be consistent with Black's previous play. But instead I decided to move my a and b-pawns to black squares, potentially away from the white-squared bishop.

28...a5
28...♞f4=.

29.c4!?

White could have continued to maneuver his pieces to better squares but instead is attracted to my loose pawn.

29...b6 30.c5?



But this is too much.

30...♚f6?

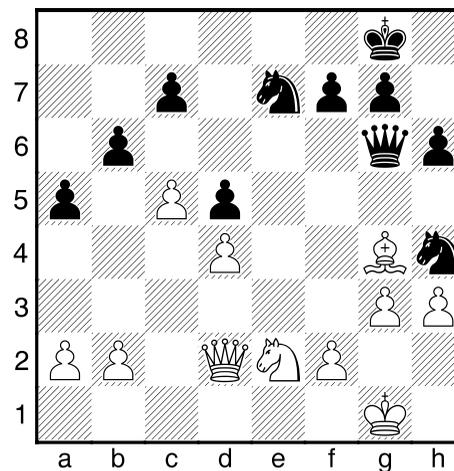
What a wimp, too afraid to take the challenge. I should have!
30...bxc5 ♣ 31.♚xa5 (31.dxc5 ♚xc5♣) 31...cxd4 32.a4 ♞e5 33.♙d1 ♞7c6 34.♚b5 g6♣.

31.♞e2 ♞h4

31...bxc5 32.dxc5 c6 33.b3 ♞e5=.

32.♙g4 ♚g6 33.g3??

33.♚e3 ♚e4=.



33...h5?

So I am sitting at home, casually entering the moves in my computer and all of a sudden the evaluation jumps to over -3!! I almost fell out of my chair when Fritz pointed out this

simple tactic: ...♚xg4-+. It isn't like I didn't see the elements of it since I'm playing ...h5 knowing the bishop has no squares. Give this position as part of a puzzle test and we would all solve it in seconds. But after subjecting an overworked brain to 3 hours of intense planning, calculating, and evaluating, well... yeah, there is still no excuse except: go look at Carlsen-Anand game 6. Meanwhile, I owe an apology to Nigel Hanrahan. The previous day he was showing us his game where both sides overlooked an elementary tactic. And I was thinking, that's pretty bad. Now a few days later I'm getting a well earned lesson in hubris. What goes around... Sorry, Nigel!

34.♞f4?? ♚b1+?

With apologies to Britney Spears, "Oops! We've done it again". White gets 2 questions marks because it's an instantly losing blunder. Again, 34...♚xg4!-+.

35.♚h2 hxg4 36.gxh4 gxh3= 36...♚f5=.

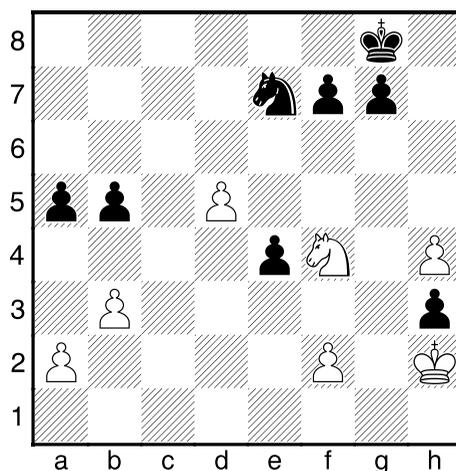
37.b3?! ♚e4

And here I had a hallucination that I was threatening ...♔g2 mate which would gain me a tempo to move ...♘f5 next. 37... bxc5 38.dxc5 ♔f5.

38.cxb6 cxb6 39.♔e3 b5

More active and forcing was 39...♘f5 40.♔xe4 dxe4.

40.♔xe4 dxe4= 41.d5



41...♘c8?

Time was getting short and this was played with relatively little thought. I planned to go after White's a and b-pawns, but it was far more important to get rid of the weak pawn on e4. The black king is in the d-pawn's square.

41...♘f5 42.♔xh3 e3 43.fxe3 ♘xe3=.

42.♔xh3 ♘d6?

Two hasty moves and I've turned an equal endgame into a losing one. An endgame transition worth study.

♠42...f5 43.♘e6 g6 44.f3 ♘d6±.

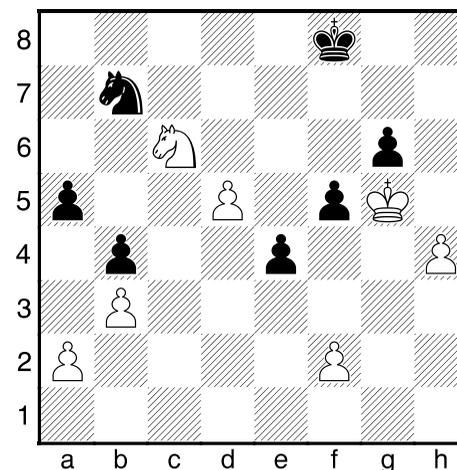
43.♔g4 b4 44.♘e2 ♔f8

Here I realized my plan wouldn't work and I was now losing.

44...♘b5 45.♘g3 ♘c3? 46.d6 ♔f8 47.h5+-.

45.♘d4 g6 46.♘c6 ♘b7

47.♔f4 f5 48.♔g5



And here, dead lost, with most of the other players watching while waiting for the awards

ceremony, I sit for a couple of minutes, helpless, thinking of when to resign.

48...♔e8 49.♔xg6 f4

50.♔f5??

Inexplicable for a player of Manuel's strength. From winning to losing in one move, in a simple position. 50.♘d4+- I would have stopped my clock and shaken hands.

50...e3-+ 51.fxe3 f3

And now it was Manuel's turn to sit helplessly, using his remaining time, searching for an escape that isn't there. I was shocked, no doubt the spectators felt the same. Chess can be very cruel; good thing it's only a game. This position will likely be seared in my brain for a long time to come.

52.h5 f2 53.h6 f1♔+ 54.♔g6

♔f7+ 55.♔g5 ♔xd5+

0-1

**Chess can be very cruel;
good thing it's only a game**

**Notes by Victoria Doknjas
Rampogren, Michael (1782)
Doknjas, Victoria (1545)**

B00

*2016 Canadian Senior Ch. (5),
26.06.2016*

As the only woman participating in the 2016 Canadian Senior Championship, I was guaranteed the 2016 Canadian Senior Woman Champion trophy and title, as well as the 2016 BC Senior Woman Champion title. But that didn't mean it would be an easy tournament: at the start I ranked #30 out of 35 players in the 50 Years or Better section, and the very top players in this section were IM David Cummings and three NMs: Brad Booker, Roger Patterson, and Brian McLaren; so it was no surprise that all my 6 opponents were higher rated than me by 214 pts. to as high as 589 pts.

I ended up tied for #14 out of 35 players, with my last round played on Board #5 with NM Brian McLaren. At this point of the tournament (start of Round 5), I had just won my Round



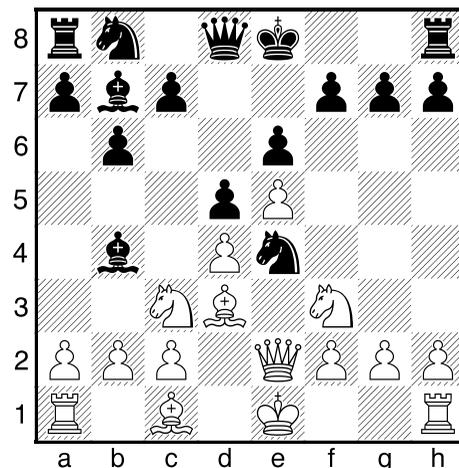


4 game against Philip Harris, who was rated 223 higher. And I drew two players (George Kim and Frank O'Brien) who were also 200+ rated higher, and lost to a 1900 player from Oregon, Joshua Standig.

Michael Rampogren was rated 237 points higher than me; but I was really motivated to win this game, and my confidence playing higher-rated players was building throughout the tournament. Winning this Round 5 game sealed my win of the 2016 U1600 Canadian Senior Championship trophy + \$100. I ended the tournament with 3/6, and a rating increase of 143 points, which was the 2nd most rating gain for the entire tournament.

1.e4 b6 2.♘f3 ♘b7
3.♘c3 e6 4.d4 ♘b4
5.♙d3 ♘f6 6.♙e2 d5
7.e5 ♘e4

**Michael Rampogren
& Victoria Jung-
Doknjas**



Similar to last year, in preparing for the 2015 BC Senior Championship, I asked my sons CM Joshua Doknjas and NM

John Doknjas, to help me get ready for this year's Canadian Senior Championship. Joshua and I decided for me to stay with the Owen's Defence. I played numerous training games online and over-the-board, and equally numerous Knights and Bishops somehow kept getting knocked off the board when I didn't get the sequence of moves just right. In this game, it was one of the rare ones that went into familiar ground as far as the opening was concerned.

8.♙d2

NM John Doknjas was giving me nightly chess lessons leading up to the tournament. One of them dealt with "Bad Bishops". In deciding which piece to exchange, I recognized that if 8... ♘x♙d2, that I would be taking my opponent's Bad Bishop. I also thought I remember Joshua saying that in this position I needed to take White's Knight on c3. After the game, Joshua said I was mistaken, and it was indeed the Bishop on d2 that I needed to take in order to relieve some concerns with a full on attack if I wanted to castle on the Kingside, which is what I concluded during the game.

editor – White hasn't had much success breaking Black's position, even when resorting to a pawn sac: 8.0-0 ♘xc3 9.bxc3 ♙xc3 10.♖b1 ♘c6 11.♙e3 ♙b4 12.♙f4 h6 13.♙b5 ♙e7 14.♙g4 g6 15.c3 ♙d7 16.♘e1 a6 17.♙a4 b5 18.♙d1 ♘a5 19.♘d3 ♙c6 20.♙e2 ♙xc3 21.♙d2 ♙a3 22.♙c1 ♙c3 23.♙d2 ♙a3 24.♙c1 ½-½ Nakamura,H (2798)– Gareev,T (2604) US Ch., 2015.



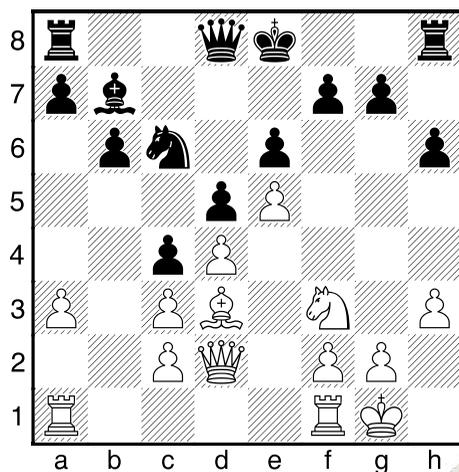


Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

8...♘xd2 9.♙xd2 c5 10.a3
♙xc3

10...♙a5 At the time, I didn't think I could make this move, thinking my Bishop would get trapped; but if 11. b4 then cxb 12. axb ♙xb4, which keeps the Knight pinned and wins a pawn.

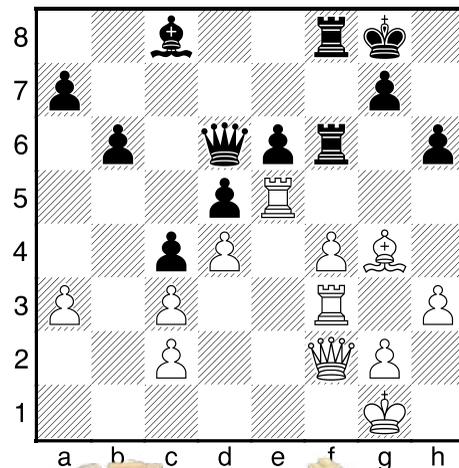
11.bxc3 ♘c6 12.0-0 h6
13.h3 c4



This pushes White's Good Bishop back a bit and not directly shooting at the King-side, where I was planning to castle.

14.♙e2 0-0
15.♘h2 ♘e7

16.♙g4 ♘g6 17.f4 ♘h4
18.♘f3 f5 19.exf6 ♘xf3+
20.♙xf3 ♙xf6 21.♙e1 ♙d6
22.♙f2 ♙af8 23.♙e5 ♙c8



24.g3
24.a4 White has time to just move the pawn from being taken.

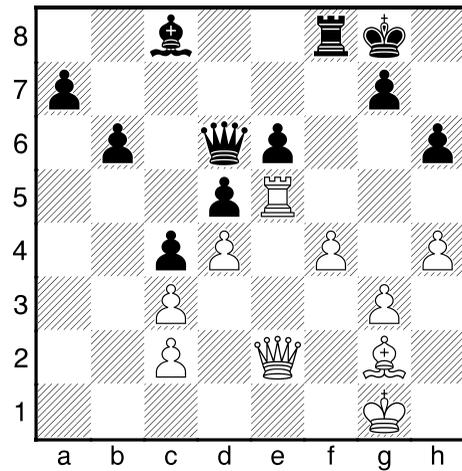
24...♙xa3 25.♙e2 ♙d6
26.♙fe3 ♙e8
26...♙f7 27.♙h5+ g6 28.♙f3 a5

the a-pawn promises Black an edge.

27.♙f3
27.f5 would have kept the situation tense and highly unclear.

27...♙ef8 28.♙g2 ♙f5 29.h4
♙xe5 30.♙xe5



**30...♖f5?**

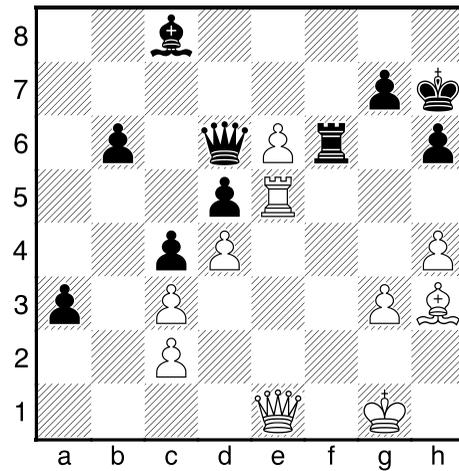
This gave White a chance to win Black's Bishop.

30...a5 Once again pushing this pawn would distract White from pressuring the e6 pawn. 31.♗h3 ♖f6 32.f5 exf5 33.♖e8+ ♖f8-+.

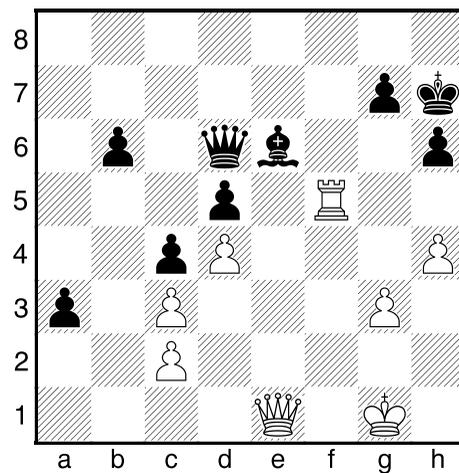
31.♖e3?

♠31.♖xf5! exf5 32.♗e8+ ♔h7 (32...♗f8 33.♗xd5+ ♔h7 34.♗xf8+-) 33.♗xc8+-.

31...a5 32.♗h3 ♖f6 33.♖e5 a4 34.♗d1 ♗a3 35.♗e1 ♗d6 36.f5 a3 37.fxe6 ♔h7

**38.♗f5+**

This allowed Black to eliminate the e6-pawn, which greatly eases the pressure. Better was 38.e7! ♗xh3 39.e8♗ ♖f1+ 40.♗xf1 ♗xf1 41.♔xf1 ♗f6+ 42.♔e2+-.

38...♖xf5 39.♖xf5 ♗xe6**40.♖f8**

40.♗e5 ♗c6 41.♖f1 ♗h3 42.♖f7 ♗g6 43.♖a7 ♗f5 44.♖xa3 ♗xc2 45.♖a1 ♗e4± White has a comfortable edge, although Black's Bishop on e4 could make things somewhat unclear.

editor – ?? White has a material advantage, but I don't see how to turn that into anything while keeping Black's ♗ away from attacking g2.

40...♗xf8 41.♗xe6 ♗f3

41...a2 would have been much quicker. 42.♗e1 ♗a3 43.♗a1 ♗a4 44.♔f1 ♗xc2 45.g4 ♗b1+ 46.♗xb1+ axb1♗+.

42.♗e1 a2 43.♔h2 b5

44.♔h3 ♗f5+ 45.g4 ♗xc2 46.g5 ♗d3+

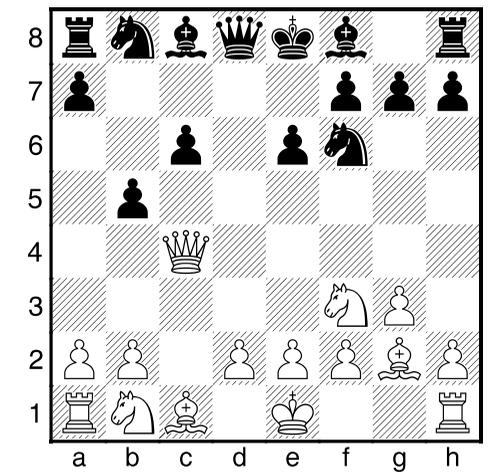
46...♗b1 was a good alternative: 47.g6+ ♗xg6 48.♔h2 ♗b1 49.♗xb1+ axb1♗.

47.♔h2 ♗e4 48.♗g1 ♗xh4+
White resigns.

0-1

Notes by John Doknjas
Soliven, Joe (1989)
Cummings, David (2418)
D30
2016 Canadian Senior Ch. (4),
25.06.2016

1.c4 e6 2.g3 d5 3.♗g2 dxc4
4.♗a4+ c6 5.♗xc4 ♞f6 6.♞f3 b5



With this move Black weakens his c-pawn but counts on being able to push it to c5 later on in the game.

7.♗c2 ♗b7 8.d4

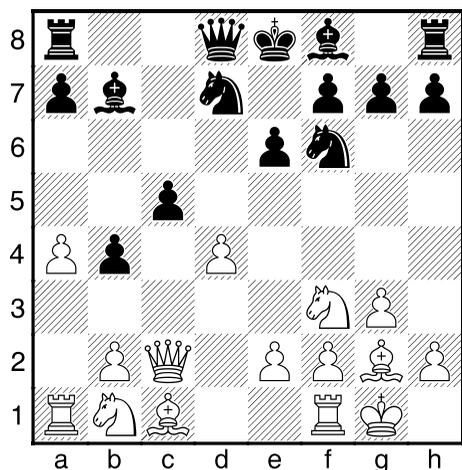
The game highly resembles the Catalan opening. White has some pressure along the c-file, but if Black manages to play c5 he will have a comfortable game.



Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

This line would keep the game in more of an English-like game: 8.0-0!? ♖bd7 9.b3 ♕e7 10.♕b2 0-0 11.d3 c5.

8...♖bd7 9.0-0 c5 10.a4 b4



Now Black has a slight edge due to having a more harmonious placement of his pieces. The Queen on c2 will likely be forced to move in order to avoid an attack along the c-file.

11.♖bd2

Developing the Bishop before playing ♖bd2 would have put more pressure on Black's position. 11.♕g5 ♖c8 12.♖bd2 ♕e7 13.♖fc1 h6 14.♕xf6 ♖xf6 15.♖d3 0-0 16.♖e5 ♕xg2 17.♔xg2 ♖d5+ 18.♖df3

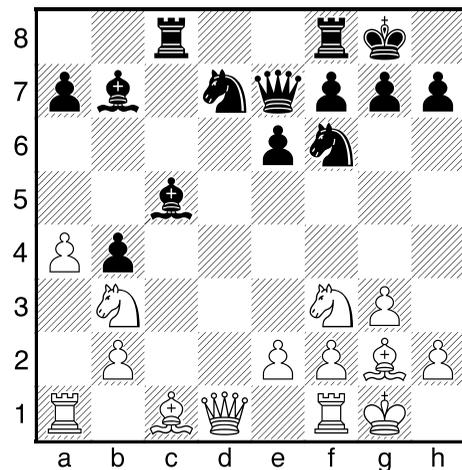
cxd4 19.♖b5= (1/2-1/2, 34) Radjabov,T (2724)–Ponomariov, R (2717) Tromso, 2014.

11...♖c8 12.dxc5

12.♖d3 slows the development of the f8-Bishop. 12...♕e7 13.b3 cxd4 14.♖xd4 ♖c3 15.♖b5? (15.♖b1! ♕xg2 16.♔xg2 ♖c5 17.♖4f3 0-0 18.♕b2 ♖c7 19.♕xc3 bxc3 Black is down an exchange but the monster pawn on c3 and White's lack of coordination seem to balance it out.) 15...♕xg2 16.♔xg2 ♖a8+ 17.♖4f3 a6-+ 18.♖g5 h6 19.♖xg7 (19.♖a5 ♖b7 ...♕d8 or ...♖c5.) 19...♖h7-+ (0-1, 30) Fridman,D (2592)–Grischuk, A (2732) Mainz, 2003.

12...♕xc5 13.♖d1 0-0

14.♖b3 ♖e7



15.♖e1

This move is strong and has multiple purposes: it transfers the Knight to the Queenside to help fight for squares, as well as giving White's Queen on d1 some shelter on the d-file.

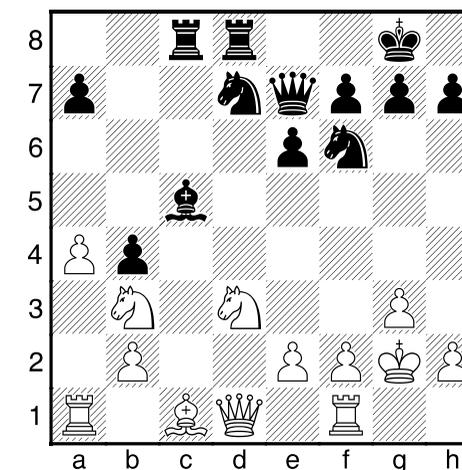
15.♕d2 ♖fd8 16.♖e1 ♕d6 17.♖fd4 ♖c5 18.♖c1 ♖xa4 19.♖xc8 ♖xc8 20.♖a1 ♕xg2 21.♔xg2 ♖b7+ 22.f3 ♖c5 23.♖a5 ♖d5 24.♖d1 ♖b7 (24...♖xd4 25.♕f4∞; 24...♖g4!) 25.♖ab3?? (25.♖xb7 ♖xb7) 25... e5!-+ 26.e4 ♖xe4 27.fxg4 ♖xe4+ 28.♔h3 (28.♖f3 ♖e2+-) 28...exd4 29.♖xa7 ♖e6+ 30.♔g2 ♖e2+ 31.♔h3 ♖xd1 32.♖xb7 ♖f1+ 33.♔h4 ♖e8 0-1 Golcman,E (2336)–Cernousek,L (2321) Prague, 2005.

Taking would give White the Bishop pair advantage, but it opens up White's Queen to an attack along the d-file: 15.♖xc5? ♖xc5 16.♕e3 ♖fd8↑.

15...♕xg2 16.♔xg2 ♖fd8



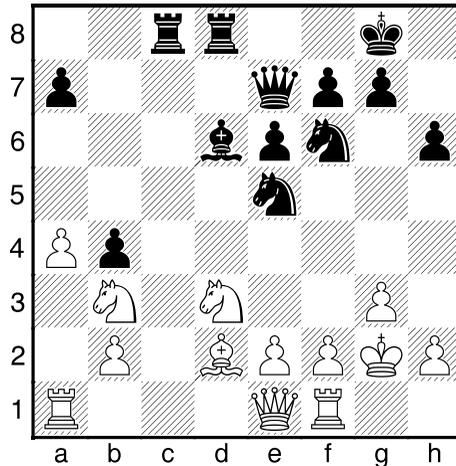
17.♖d3



17...h6

This move stops ♔g5, which makes sense. However, 17...e5 would have seized the initiative immediately: 17...e5! 18.♔g5 e4 19.♞dxc5 ♞xc5 20.♞c2 ♞cd7 (editor – 20...♞b7 and the White ♞ has to hide on b1.) 21.♞b1 ♞e6 22.♞d4 ♞e5♯ Now the Bishop on g5 just ends up being a target.

18.♞e1 ♔d6 19.♔d2 ♞e5



A good move, forcing the exchange of White's Knight on d3. This will eliminate one of the attackers of the b4-pawn, as well as allowing Black's Bishop to attack the vulnerable b2-pawn from e5.

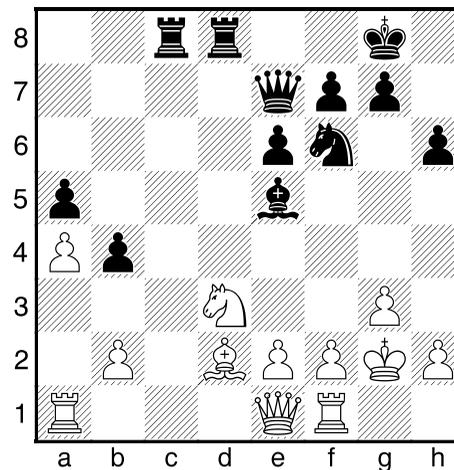
20.♞bc5?

This move allows Black to win two Knights for a Rook.

20...a5?!

This still gives Black an edge, but taking on c5 would have given a bigger one: 20...♞xc5! 21.♞xc5 ♔xc5-+ Most of Black's pieces are in very active positions, whereas White will still need a few moves to untangle and get his Rooks into the game.

21.♞xe5 ♔xe5 22.♞d3



22...♔d4♯

22...♞xd3!? 23.exd3 ♔xb2 24.♞b1 ♞c2♯ Black is better, but this line is somewhat risky since Black is giving up the exchange for the pawn. 22...♔d4 was the safer move.

23.♞c1 ♞d7

Targeting a4 and preparing to centralize the Queen on d5.

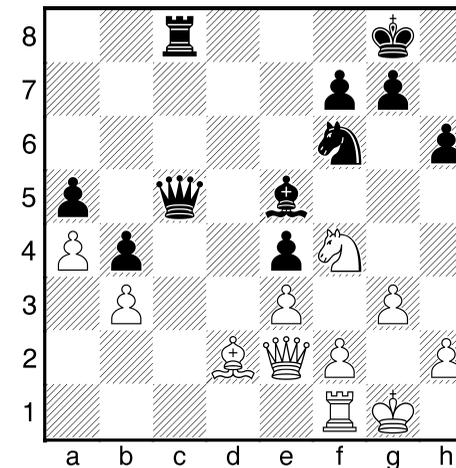
24.♞d1 ♞d5+ 25.♔g1 e5↑

26.♞xc8 ♞xc8 27.b3 e4

This gains more space, but at the same time it gives White's Knight the f4 square. Better was 27...♞e4! 28.♔e1 f5 29.♞b2 (29. e3? ♞g5-+) 29...f4-+.

28.♞f4 ♞c5 29.e3 ♔e5

30.♞e2



30...♔xf4

Now it's a "Good Knight" vs "Bad Bishop" game. White has managed to defend well against the attack, but the resulting situation is very passive for him.

31.exf4 ♞d5 32.♔e3

32.♞d1? ♞d8.

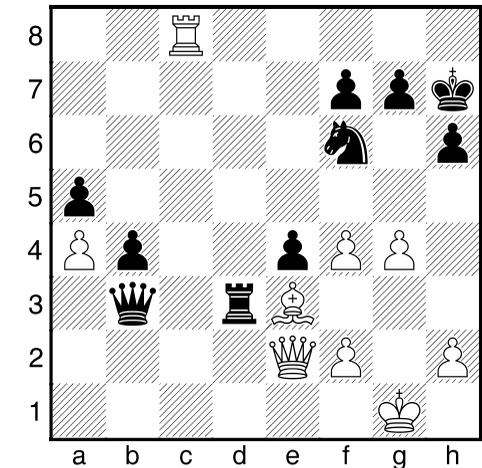
32...♞c3 33.♞d1 ♞d3 34.♞c1

34.♞b1 ♞xb3 35.♞xb3 ♞xb3

36.♔d4 would have been interesting, but Black is still winning: 36...♞xa4 37.♔xf6 gxf6 38.♞g4+ ♔f8 39.♞c8+ ♞e8 40.♞c5+ ♔g7-+.

34...♞xb3 35.♞c8+ ♔h7

36.g4



A good try to get counterplay on the Kingside. However, the lack of coordination between White's pieces and his exposed King makes this very difficult.

36...♞xa4 37.g5 ♞d1+

Simplifying things into a winning



endgame.

38. ♖xd1 ♜xd1+ 39. ♔g2 ♘h5
40. ♜b8 hxg5 41. fxg5

1-0

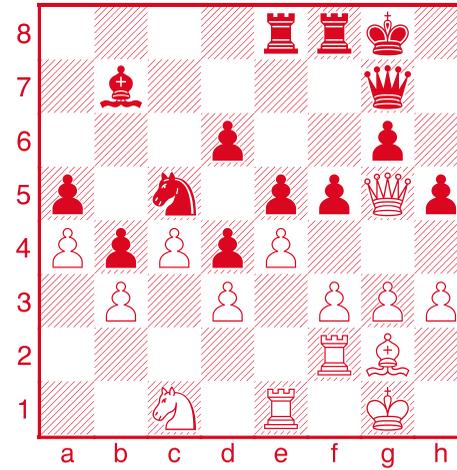
Rampogren, Michael (1782)
Cummings, David (2418)
B40

2016 Canadian Senior Ch. (2),
24.06.2016

Notes by John Upper

1.e4 c5 2. ♘f3 e6 3. ♘c3 a6
4.g3 b5 5. ♙g2 ♙b7 6.d3 b4
7. ♘e2 ♘c6 8.0-0 ♘f6 9.h3
♙e7 10. ♘f4 d6 11.a4 0-0
12.c3 a5 13. ♙e3 ♜b8 14. ♘d2
♙a6 15.c4 ♘d7 16.b3 g6
17. ♘e2 ♙f6 18. ♙h6 ♜e8
19. ♜b1 ♙b7 20. ♘f3 ♘d4
21. ♙e3 e5 22. ♘e1 ♙g7
23. ♖d2 f5 24. ♘c2 ♘f6 25.f3
♖d7 26. ♘cxd4 cxd4 27. ♙g5
♜f8 28. ♙h6 ♖e7 29. ♙xg7
♖xg7 30. ♜bc1 ♘d7 31. ♜ce1
♘c5 32. ♘c1 ♜be8 33. ♜f2 h5
34. ♖g5

What happens on 34...f4 35.g4?



A curious position: 34 moves in and not a single pawn exchange. Black has a space advantage and the only good minor piece (on c5), but has to find a way to make his ♜s useful.

34...f4 35.gxf4

35.g4 tries to keep things closed, but there's a tactical problem: 35...h4! threatening ...♖h7 (defending h4) then ...♘e6 trapping White's offside ♖. 36. ♖xh4 g5! 37. ♖h5 ♜e6 threatening to trap the ♖ with ...♜h6. 38.h4 ♜g6 39.hxg5 ♔f7 threatening to trap the ♖ with ...♜h8. 40. ♖h1 (no, Reti would *not* be proud of this hypermodern battery along the h1-f3 diagonal)

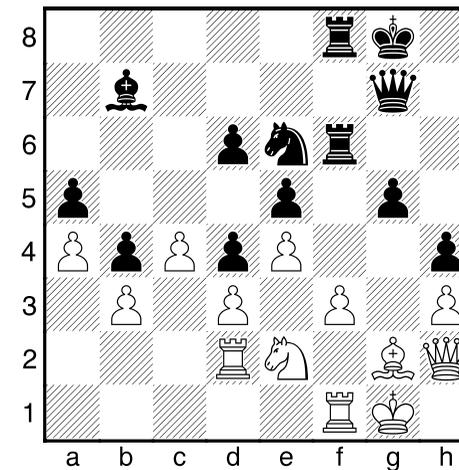
40...♜h8 41. ♙h3 ♘e6 42. ♜h2 ♘xg5 and Black's ♜s crash in along the h-file.

35...♘e6 36. ♖g3 ♘xf4

37. ♜d2

37.h4 would stop the plan Black executes in the game, but wouldn't change the result: Black could win by lining up on the g-file and play ...g5.

37...g5 38. ♘e2 h4 39. ♖h2
♘e6 40. ♔h1 ♜f6 41. ♜f1 ♜ef8
42. ♔g1



Are all of Black's pieces playing?

42...♙c6!

... they will be soon.

43. ♔f2 ♙e8 44. ♔e1 ♙h5

45. ♖h1 ♖f7 46. ♘c1

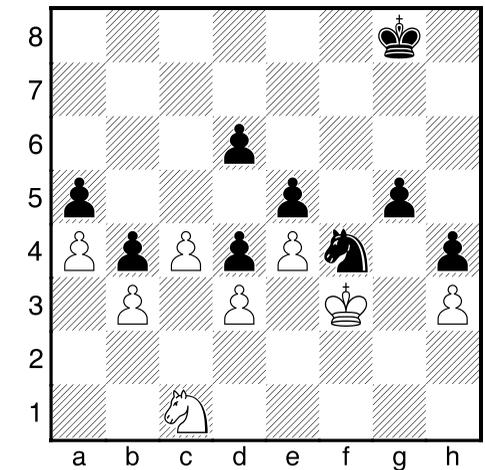
46. ♘g1 saves the f3-pawn, but then 46...♘c5 wins b3 or d3.

46...♙xf3 47. ♜df2 ♙xg2

48. ♖xg2 ♜xf2 49. ♖xf2

♖xf2+ 50. ♜xf2 ♜xf2 51. ♔xf2

♘f4 52. ♔f3



52...♘xh3

Or 52...♔g7 53. ♔g4 ♔g6⊖.

53. ♘a2

53. ♔g4 ♘f4 54. ♔xg5 h3-+.

53...♘f4 54. ♘xb4

Did Black overlook something?

54...axb4 55.a5 ♘e6

No.



56.a6 ♖c7 57.a7 h3 58.♔g3
g4 59.♔xg4 h2

0-1

Notes by IM Leon Piasetski
Pantazi, Emanuel (1816)
Piasetski, Leon (2380)

B06

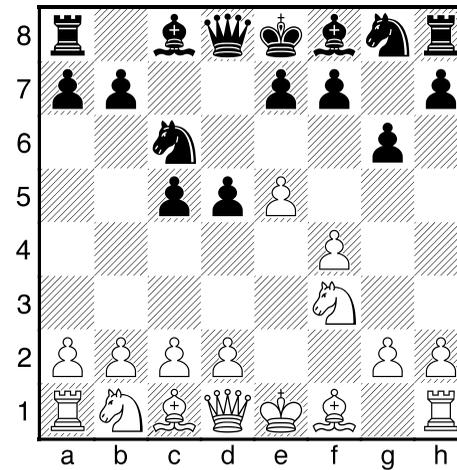
2016 Canadian Senior Ch. 65 (2),
24.06.2016

I had just returned from a 3 month chess tour only two days earlier and was still knocked out when we played this game in the evening (second game of the day on the first day of the tournament).

1.e4 g6 2.f4 d5 3.e5

My opponent was a reasonably strong player around 1966, having achieved draws against GMs Ree, Farago and Jansa. However, here his opening choice was not successful. It would be wiser to play 2.♖c3 to avoid ...d5 as future GM Hebden learned in 1983 after losing against Lobron and then winning against Shamkovitch both in the same New York tournament...

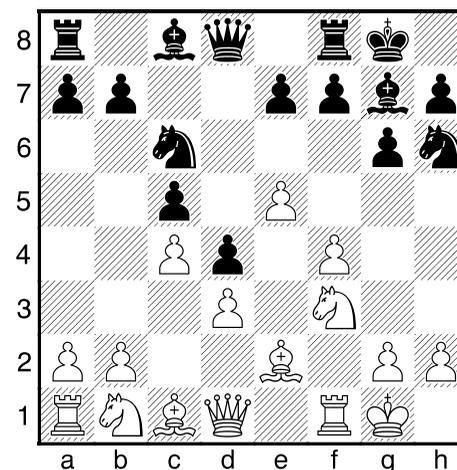
3...c5 4.♘f3 ♘c6



5.c4

An interesting choice but after ...d4 Black gets a long-term space advantage. On the other hand, trying to maintain the centre with c3-d4 would run into lots of pressure from ...♗g4, ...♘f5, ...♙b6 etc.

5...d4 6.d3 ♗g7 7.♗e2 ♘h6
8.0-0 0-0



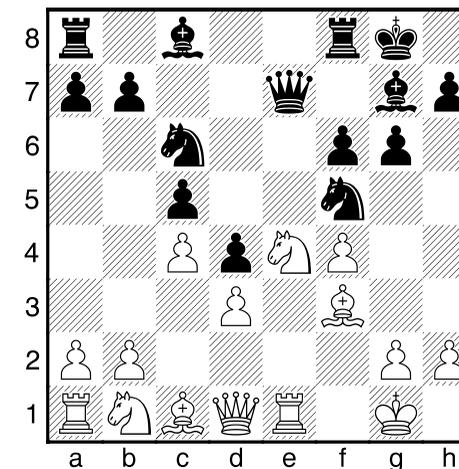
Perhaps White was already not happy at this point since ♘g5 looks like an attempt to muddy the waters. The alternative was simply developing with ♘a3-c2 and aiming for b2-b4. In any case Black can eliminate the White centre with ...f6 and maintain a nice space advantage.

9.♘g5 f6 10.exf6 exf6

11.♘e4 ♙e7?!

Not the best. I was a bit concerned about the long diagonal, but ...b6 was simple and correct, maintaining a clear advantage.

12.♗f3 ♘f5 13.♖e1



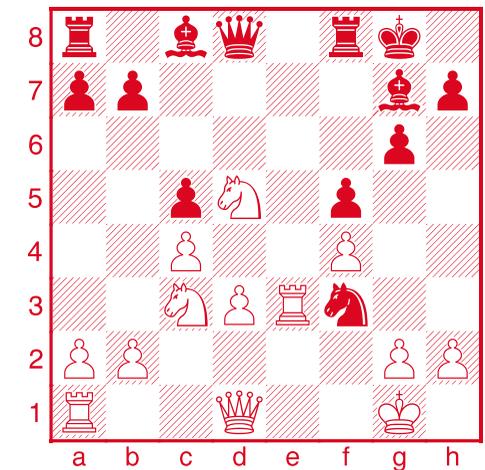
13...♘e3?!

This was my idea – give up a pawn to gain the 2 bishops and control d4. However, there is a tactical flaw and at best the resulting position is only equal. Instead Stockfish recommends ...♘h4 with a small edge for Black.

14.♗xe3 dxe3 15.♘bc3
15.♖xe3?? f5-+.

15...f5 16.♘d5 ♙d8 17.♘ec3
17.♘xc5? ♗d4 wins a piece because ...e2+ is a bigger threat.

17...♘d4 18.♖xe3 ♘xf3+



19.♖xf3

Here White missed a powerful exchange sac. In fact, Black must avoid the sac and remain



a pawn down with the worse position...

19. ♖xf3!!:

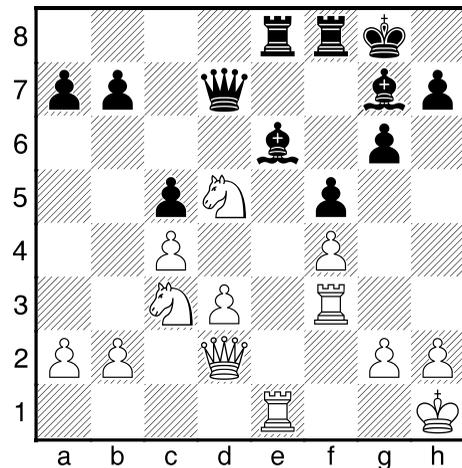
19... ♙d7 20. ♘e7+ ♔h8 21. ♚h1 ♜b6 22. ♖ae1±;

19... ♙d4? 20. ♘b5 ♙xe3+ 21. ♜xe3 a6 (21...b6? 22. ♜e5 ♜f7 23. ♘d6+-) 22. ♘bc7+-.

Of course, I was blissfully unaware of these possibilities and still thought I was better! Perhaps fatigue is good for confidence :-)

19... ♙e6 20. ♜d2!?
20. ♜b3!?

20... ♜d7 21. ♜e1 ♜ae8
22. ♚h1?!
♠22.b3=.



22... ♙d4

Here I could have exchanged all the minor pieces to win back a pawn, but wanted to maintain the pressure. Another interesting option was ...b5.

22... ♙xc3 23. bxc3 (23. ♘xc3? ♙xc4) 23... ♙xd5 24. cxd5 ♜xd5.

23. b3 ♜g7?!

23...b5.

24. ♜ff1 ♙f7?!

24... ♜d7!

25. ♘e7+?

Weird play by both sides! My last two moves anticipated wholesale rook exchanges on the e-file, but instead White gave up two knights for a rook and pawn plus control of the 7th rank.

25. h3 a6 is better for White but the two bishops offer good chances to resist.

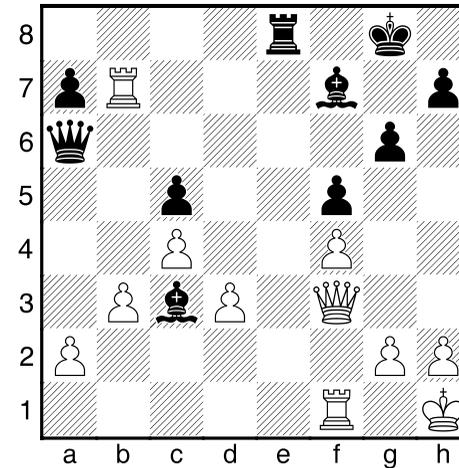
25... ♜xe7 26. ♜xe7 ♙xc3

27. ♜e2?

♠27. ♜e3 b6 28. ♜xa7 ♙a5=.

27... ♜f6! ♠ 28. ♜xb7 ♜e8

29. ♜f3 ♜a6!



30. a4

30. ♜c7 ♜xa2-+ 31. ♜xc5 (31. ♜b7 ♜f2 32. ♜f3 ♠-+) 31... ♜xb3 32. ♜b5 ♙b4 33. ♜b7 a5 34. ♜a7 ♙d2-+.

30... ♙d4 31. h4?-+

White must have been dreaming of attacking motifs but instead unnecessarily weakens his kingside.

31... ♜f6?

Much stronger was the immediate 31... ♜e3! 32. ♜b8+ ♔g7 33. ♜a8 ♜f6 and White gets mated before he can play ♜h8, ♜f8.

32. g3 ♜e3 33. ♜g2 ♙e8

34. ♜b8 ♔g7 35. ♜b7+ ♔h6

36. ♜c7 ♜e6! 37. ♔h2 ♙c6

38. ♜d2 ♜d8 39. ♜xa7 ♜e8

I handled the final phase of the game reasonably well for a sleepwalker :-)

0-1

final thanks to

- our individual and corporate sponsors for supporting our event;
- our players for their enthusiastic participation;
- GM Duncan Suttles for making this special event that much more special by joining us this year;
- our Tournament Director Joe Roback for all his hard work to ensure a smooth running tournament.

I want to especially extend a Big Thank You to my Co-Organizer Paul Leblanc who worked tirelessly to ensure that our first-ever-in-BC's Canadian Senior Championship was a success and enjoyable to all participants. God bless and until next year, when



we do it all again at the 2017 BC Senior Championship in Victoria, BC.

- **Victoria Jung-Doknjas**
Co-Organizer of the 2016 Canadian Senior Championship

photos

<http://wordpress.cvining.com/canadian-senior-2016/>

Nigel Hanrahan, said this:

The event was very well organized.... It's the first tourney I can remember with fresh fruit, granola bars, Belgian chocolates, as well as the usual coffee, tea, etc. for the players...

The hotel had a quiet lobby with plenty of space for skittles and analysis. Very collegial.

Ably directed by Joe Roback, NA. The event took place in Surrey, at the Comfort Inn overlooking the valley of the Serpentine River. On the clear days, driving back and forth to the site, the massive Koma Kulshan or White Sentinel/White Mountain [Mount Baker] could be seen, towering in the distance, dominating the sky, like a Rook guarding the back rank. Very picturesque.

Joe Roback

National Arbiter Joe Roback tells us why he thinks it is important to support and be part of events like the BC Senior Championship, and the Canadian Senior Championship:

"It was such a pleasure to direct the Canadian Senior Championship this year. A few years ago, I wouldn't have thought that I would have been organizing and tournament directing but I'm glad that I am. The last three BC Senior Championships and recently the Canadian Senior last weekend are a lot more personal and friendly than other tournaments I've attended. The players enjoy the event so much that there must have been 12 who donated beyond their entry fee.

Another reason that it's important to be a part of these tournaments is that it's pretty rare that we interact with people who are a lot older or younger than ourselves. Directing this tournament has allowed me to meet some of the most kind and sophisticated people, and really puts things in perspective. A memorable moment was meeting Grand Master Duncan Suttles who made an appearance in the opening ceremony. He is probably the most famous BC player ever and known the world over for his unorthodox style. Because he retired decades ago, I figure that there is no way that I would have met him otherwise."

Trophy winners (and empty-handed TD)





Gatineau Open

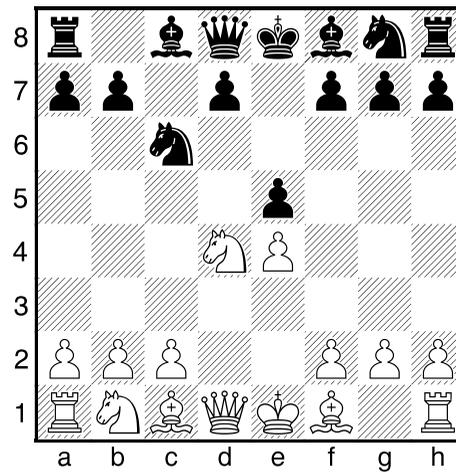
The 2016 Gatineau Open was a 5-round Swiss, once again played at the Gatineau City Hall and ably Organized by **Marcel Laurin** and TD'ed by **Regis Bellemare**. Once again the top seeds were the same, and (once again) **GM Bator Sambuev** beat **IM Jean Hébert** to finish first overall with 5/5. Hébert was clear second with 4/5. Our-of-town juniors **Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux** and **Nicholas Vettese** tied with local **Alex Davies** with 3.5.

Chess Canada is proud to have annotations from the tournament winner to the critical game of the tournament...

Notes by GM Bator Sambuev
Sambuev, Bator (2641)
Hébert, Jean (2457)

B32
Tournoi Ouvert de Gatineau (3),
05.03.2016

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
 4.♘xd4 e5



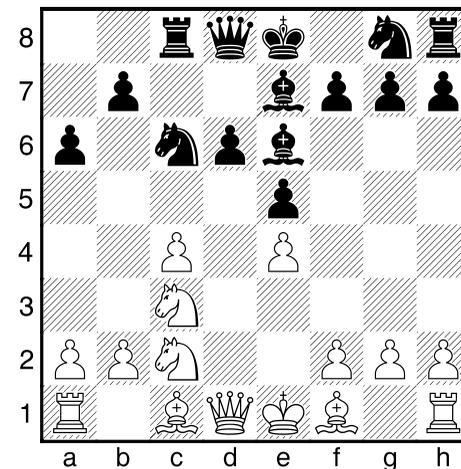
First surprise. I expected any variation but this one. Frankly speaking I know practically nothing about this line. I heard people call it Kalashnikov but have no idea why. And I knew next several moves.

5.♘b5 d6 6.c4 ♕e7 7.♘1c3

This knight. The point is that second one goes to c2 via a3 to cover d4-square. And there is absolutely nothing to do for a knight on d2.

7...a6 8.♘a3 ♕e6 9.♘c2 ♖c8

The main line here is 9...♕g5 As I mentioned above, I am not a specialist of this variation. All what I can say: it's logical move. As well as the text move.

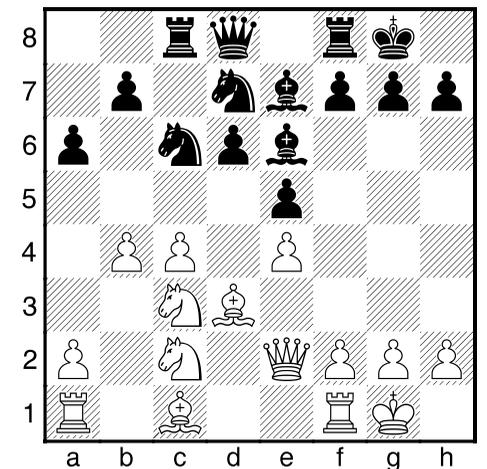


10.♕d3

In blitz I would probably play ♕e2 without thinking. But after some thinking I came to the conclusion that I have only one vulnerable point — c4 — and now I can protect it with ♖e2 and simultaneously prevent ...b7-b5.

Nevertheless, it's a very rare move. I've found only 3 games in my database with this move played. The most popular moves are 10.b3 ♘f6 11.♕d3 0-0 12.0-0 ♘d7. On the other hand, I could play b2-b3 practically at any moment and transpose to the main line. I have no idea whether there is any difference or not.

10...♘f6 11.0-0 0-0 12.♖e2
 ♘d7 13.b4N



Host with the Most Marcel Laurin not only made the tournament, he brought a birthday present for Nicholas Vettese!



Chess Canada K2: Ketsup²

And only this move is a Novelty. On the previous move I could transpose to the main line with b2-b3. After ♖e2, b2-b3 looks inconsistent. I thought that Black's last move was made with two ideas: ...♙g5 and ...♘c5. Thus I prevent ...♘c5 and prepare ♙b2 in the case of ...♙g5.

13...♙f6

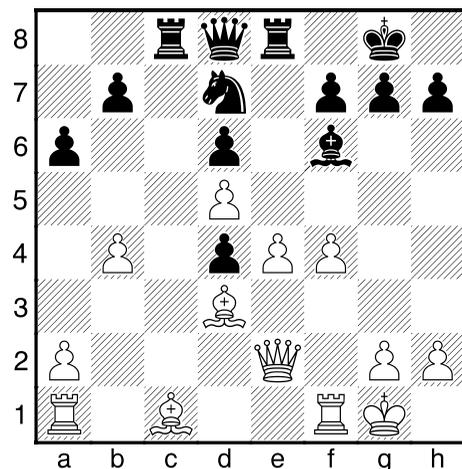
First inaccuracy. Apparently, after the immediate 13...♘d4 14.♘xd4 exd4 15.♘d5 ♘e5 position is equal. Maybe instead of 12.♖e2 White should simply play 12.b3.

14.♘d5 ♙xd5 15.cxd5 ♘d4

16.♘xd4 exd4 17.f4

This is the difference. Now my light-squared bishop is safe.

17...♖e8



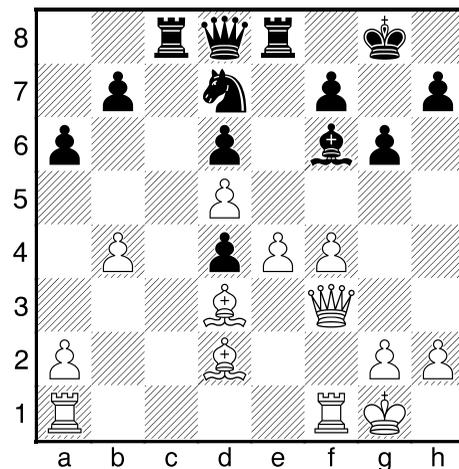
18.♙d2

There was one interesting maneuver: 18.♖f2!? ♖c3 (18...♘b6 19.♙b2) 19.♖f3 and now in the case of 19...♘b6 20.♙b2 followed by ♖f2.

18...g6

I don't understand this move. Black's only counterplay is tied with 18...♘b6 with a few ideas: ...♘xd5, ...♘c4 or ...♘a4. And only after 19.g4 will 19...g6 make sense.

19.♖f3



19...♙g7

Now on 19...♘b6 20.e5 looks very unpleasant. But probably it looks more dangerous than it is. For example: 20...dxe5 21.fxe5

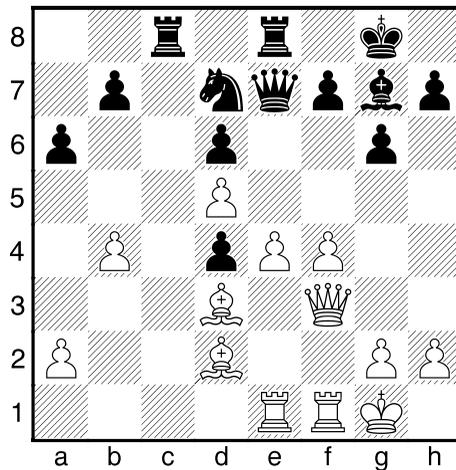


♙xe5 22.♚xf7+ ♔h8 and Black has some ideas: ...♚d5, ...♚h4 etc. Apparently, the simple 20.♖ac1 is stronger.

20.♖ae1

20.♖fc1 is still more logical: White concentrates his forces on the queenside. But when I see a possible breakthrough in the center it's too tempting.

20...♚e7



On 20...♘b6 21.b5!? is interesting. For example, 21...♘c4 22.♙xc4 ♖xc4 23.bxa6 bxa6 24.f5 with initiative.

Here I realized that it's not easy to improve the position. The first candidate move is 21.♔h1. But

then I found one idea where it proves to be that it's better to keep my king on g1. So, I didn't find anything better than

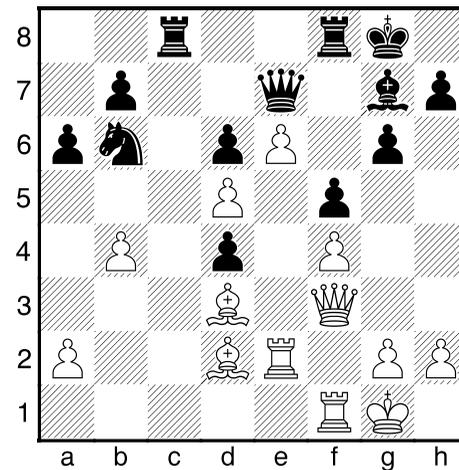
21.♖e2 ♘b6

I wouldn't say "mistake" but a serious inaccuracy. Apparently, my opponent got same problem: how to improve the position? But I was ready for this move!

22.e5! ♖f8

22...dxe5 23.fxe5 ♙xe5 24.♖xe5 ♚xe5 25.♚xf7+ ♔h8 26.♖e1! Now you can see why I didn't play ♔h1.

23.e6 f5



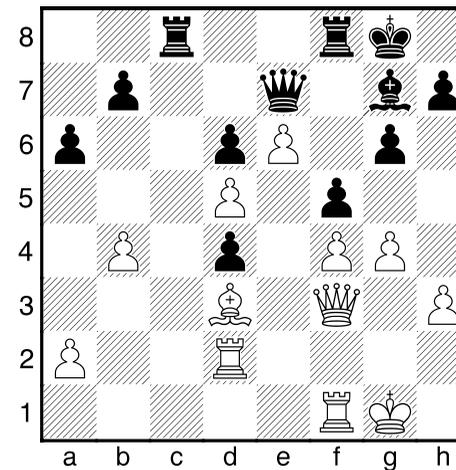
Finally I get something real — a protected passed pawn in

the center. But, apparently, I overestimated my position — it's not so easy to find a way to breakthrough.

24.h3

A consequence of my wrong evaluation. If I had realized that Black's position is pretty solid, I would break through immediately: 24.g4 fxg4 25.♚xg4 ♘xd5 26.f5 with a decisive attack. But I was sure that my position wins itself: I have an extra pawn and two bishops. As usual, I missed some tricks...

24...♘c4 25.g4 ♘xd2 26.♖xd2



26...♖c3

First surprise: now Black can

take on f5 with the rook.

27.♖g2?! ♚h4

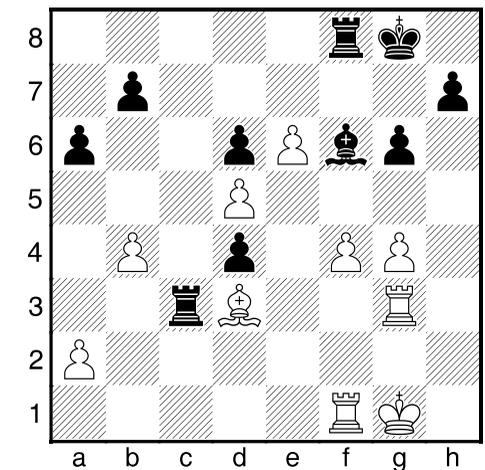
It looks like I lose control over the position. After 27...fxg4 28.♖xg4 (28.hxg4? ♙e5 29.f5 ♚g5 and it becomes double-edged.) 28...♖f5 White is still better, but I don't understand clearly how to make any progress.

28.♚g3

28.♔h2 followed by ♚e2 was stronger, but I said to myself: "No more tricks!"

28...♚xg3 29.♖xg3 fxg4 Black could take later.

30.hxg4 ♙f6



31.♖h3



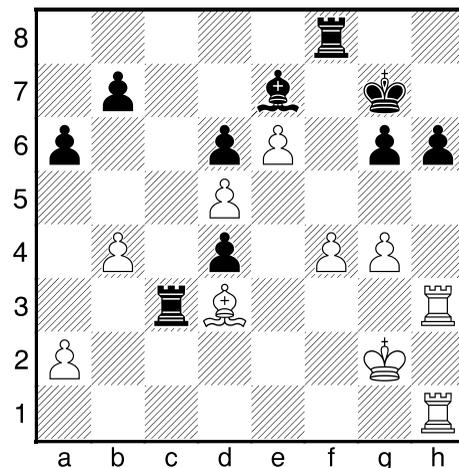
Prophylaxis. Now in the case of ... $\text{Ra}3$ I have $\text{Rf}2$ without allowing ... $\text{Rh}4$.

31... $\text{Kg}7$ 32. $\text{Kg}2$ $\text{h}6$

I can't criticize my opponent for this move, because it takes some time to find following combination, even for my computer.

33. $\text{Rf}h1$ $\text{Ke}7$

HDR Panorama: 15 pix in 1
Absurdly complicated and not worth the effort...



34. $\text{R}xh6!$ $\text{R}xd3$ 35. $\text{g}5!$

This is the whole point! 35. $\text{R}h7+$ $\text{Kf}6$ leads to a draw.

35... $\text{R}g8$ 36. $\text{R}h7+$ $\text{Kf}8$

37. $\text{Rf}7+$ $\text{Ke}8$ 38. $\text{R}hh7$
It's over.

38... $\text{Kd}8$ 39. $\text{R}xb7$ $\text{Re}3$
40. $\text{Rb}8$

1-0

Sambuev, Bator (2641)
Rodrigue-Lemieux,
Shawn (2069)

B13

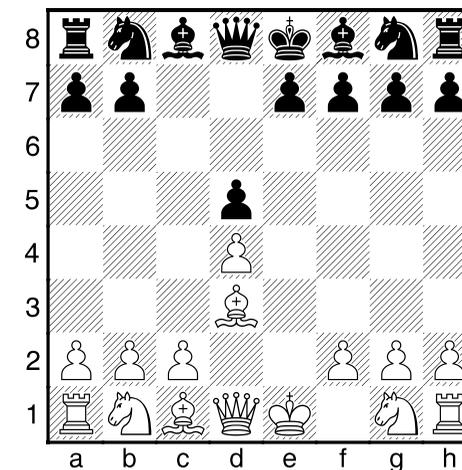
Gatineau Open (5), 06.03.2016

Notes by John Upper

This appeared in the Tactics post on the CFC Newsfeed:

<http://chess.ca/newsfeed/node/793>

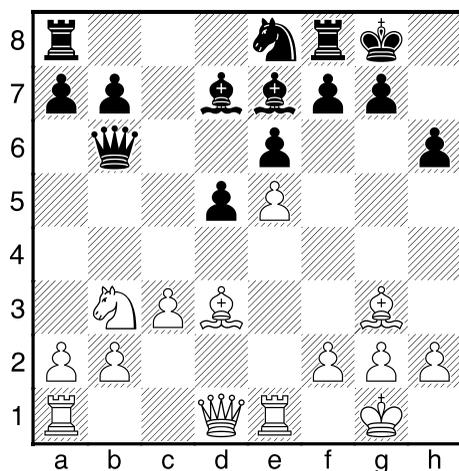
1. $\text{e}4$ $\text{c}6$ 2. $\text{d}4$ $\text{d}5$ 3. $\text{exd}5$ $\text{cxd}5$
4. $\text{Kd}3$



4...e6?!

This leaves the ♖c8 shut in. The main line goes: 4...♘c6 5.c3 ♘f6 6.♙f4 ♙g4 7.♚b3 when Black has several reasonable moves: ...♙d7, ...♙c8, ...♘h5!? and ...♘a5.

5.♘f3 ♙d6 6.0-0 ♘f6 7.♖e1 0-0 8.c3 ♘c6 9.♙g5 ♙d7 10.♘bd2 h6 11.♙h4 ♙e7 12.♘e5 ♘xe5 13.dxe5 ♘e8 14.♙g3 ♚b6 15.♘b3



White has a space advantage, the d4 outpost, a weakened b1-h7 diagonal to attack the Black King, and no weaknesses for Black to target.

15...a5

Black would like to trade his bad

♙d7, but that doesn't seem to

equalize:

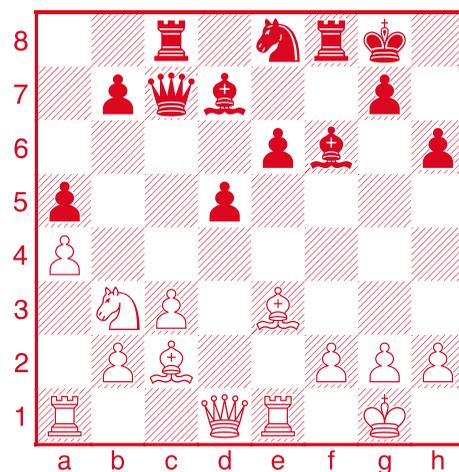
15...♙b5 16.♙c2 declines the trade, but concedes the diagonal. 15...♙a4 16.♚h5!? (16.♙c2 is less energetic, but OK.) 16...♙xb3 17.axb3 ♚xb3 18.♙f4± threatening ♙xh6.

16.a4 ♖c8 17.♙f4

White is going to play ♙e3, which forces the Black ♚ to give up its attack on the ♘b3, and so frees the White ♚ to attack Black's kingside.

17...f5 18.exf6 ♙xf6

18...♘xf6 19.h3 and White's minor pieces get to use the central dark squares now that his pawns are no longer on them.

19.♙e3 ♚c7 20.♙c2

White is preparing ♚d3-h7, driving the Black ♚ into the center. What should Black do?

20...♙e7?!

♠20...♙e5! Frees f6 for the ♘ and recycles the ♙ to d6 with a tempo gain on h2.

White has pressure on Black's center pawns, but by forcing a pawn move in front of the White ♚ (with g3! or h3) Black stops attacking options with ♖ lifts along the third rank and creates some weaknesses in White's Kingside.

a) 21.h3 ♙h2+ 22.♚h1 ♙f4±;

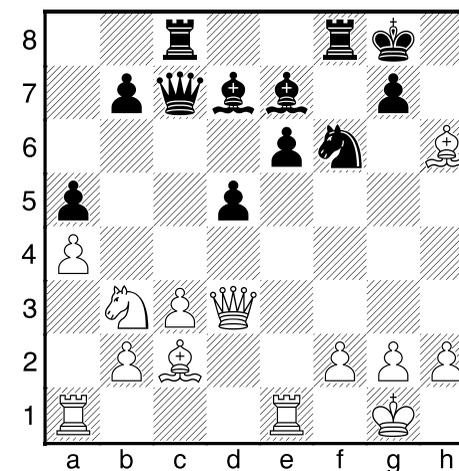
b) 21.♚d3? It's complex, but White gives up the advantage by letting Black take on h2: 21...♙xh2+ 22.♚h1 ♘f6 23.g3 (23.♙xh6 ♙f4∞) 23...♙xg3 24.fxg3 ♚xg3=;

c) 21.♚h5?! ♘f6 22.♚h4 (22.♚g6? ♙e8⌘) 22...♙d6 Black's ♙d6 (rather than ♙e7) leaves him much better coordinated than in the game. Importantly, 23.♙xh6? is now just bad: (♠23.♘d4±) 23...gxh6 24.♚xh6 ♖f7⌘ White has

two pawns for the piece but no attack, as there's no good ♖ lift, and Black can kick out the ♚ with ...♘g4 and ...♖g7.

21.♚d3 ♘f6

21...♖f6 22.♚h7+ ♚f8 (22...♚f7 23.♙d4+-) 23.♙g6 (23.♙d4 ♙d6 24.g3 e5) 23...♙d6 24.h4± or ♚h1!?

22.♙xh6!**22...♘e4**

22...♘g4 attacking h2 and h6 is too slow: 23.♚h7+ ♚f7 24.♚g6+ ♚g8 25.♚xg7#;

22...gxh6 gets mated to a classic pattern: 23.♚g6+ ♚h8 24.♚xh6+ ♚g8 25.♚g6+ ♚h8 26.♖e3 e5 Stopping ♖h3, but after 27.♖g3



there's no defence to both ♔g7 and ♔h6;

22...e5 23.♔g6 ♖f7 24.♙e3± White is up a pawn for free, and Black's ♔ is still not safe; for example, 24...d4 25.♘xd4! exd4 26.♙xd4 White isn't down any material and Black's exposed ♔ leaves him open to too many tactics, including ♖xe7 then ♙xf6.

23.♖xe4!

23.f3 is good, but not as forcing.

23...dxe4 24.♗xe4+-

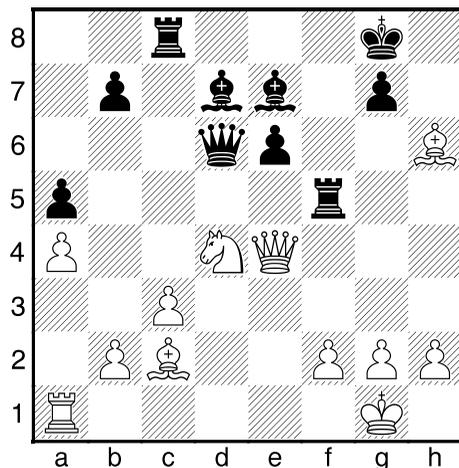
White already has two pawns for the exchange, and Black's ♔ and remaining center pawn are weak.

24...♖f5

Blocking the diagonal is Black's best hope; 24...♖f6 25.♔h7+ ♔f7 26.♙xg7+-.

25.♘d4 ♔d6
Defending e6

and e7. 25...gxh6 26.♘xf5 White will be up two pawns with a huge attack.



26.♖d1

White has many winning moves, but chooses to "invite everyone to the party" as GM Yasser Seriawan says.

26.♙b3 ♖e5 27.♔g4 ♙f6 28.♙f4+-.
Even the nutty-looking 26.g4!? is good enough to win 26...gxh6 27.gxf5 exf5 28.♔xb7+-.

26...♙c6

26...gxh6 27.♘xf5 exf5 28.♖xd6 fxe4

29.♖xd7+- White will be up three pawns in an endgame.

27.♔g4 ♔e5 28.♙xf5

28.♘xe6! keeps the attack going, but White cashes in.

28...exf5 29.♘xf5 ♖f8

30.♘xe7+ ♔xe7 31.♙e3

♖e8 32.♖d4 ♔f7 33.h4 b5

34.axb5 ♙xb5 35.♔g5 ♙c6

36.♔xa5

1-0

2016 Toronto Closed

The Toronto Closed was an 8-player RR held at the Annex Chess Club at a rate of one game per week. It ended in May with **Mike Ivanov** and **FM Victor Plotkin** tied for first with 5.5/7. Mark Plotkin was 3rd, defeating Ivanov in their head-to-head game, but losing to his dad. Mike Ivanov annotates his go-for-broke last-round game,

Notes by Mike Ivanov
Ivanov, Mike (2363)
Southam, David (2148)

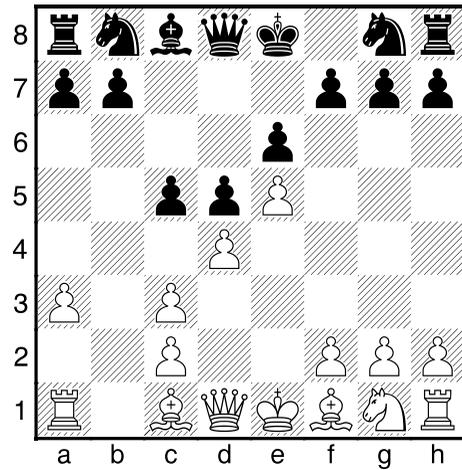
C18

2016 Toronto Closed, 17.05.2016

Going into the last round of the Toronto Closed Championship, the situation was as follows. I was tied for first with Victor Plotkin 4.5 points apiece, with Mark Plotkin and others on our heels. If Victor won as he was the favourite to do, I'd need a full point to catch up and win on better tiebreaks. If both of us drew, then Mark would catch up and anything could happen. A loss on my part would be horrific, winning nothing after a great start to the event. Aggressive play was called for, with the usual Winawer sidelines being tossed into the can in favour of the sharp main lines. A wild game ensued, with the advantage switching sides many times over.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♙b4
4.e5 c5 5.a3 ♙xc3+ 6.bxc3





First time ever playing mainline Winawer for White, which is what happens when you look enough at these depressing positions from the Black side...

6...♔c7 7.h4

Trying to provoke weaknesses on the dark squares.

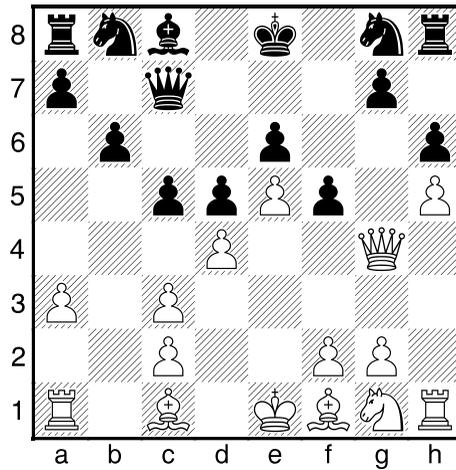
7...b6

A positional approach in contrast to ...♞e7 which leads to more forcing variations with Black often castling queenside.

8.h5 h6 9.♔g4 f5!?

When your name is Misha, you play the semi-sound sac.

Misha Ivanov at the 2016 Canadian University Championship at Queen's in Kingston.



A common idea in these lines to defend the g7 pawn with the c7

Queen, but one that shouldn't work so well with the inclusion of h5 and ...h6, as the g6 square is fatally weakened. It does give White a choice of tempting variations however, which is a strategy in itself...

10.♔g6+

Losing much of the advantage, here is what could have happened instead:

10.♞b5+ ♔f8 11.♔g6 (11.♔h4 cxd4 12.♞e2 a6 13.♞d3 dxc3 14.a4=) 11...♔f7;

10.exf6 ♞xf6 11.♞b5+ ♔f8 12.♔f4 (12.♔f3 c4 (12...e5 editor)) 12...♔xf4 13.♞xf4 c4 14.♞d6+ ♔g8 15.♞f3 a6 16.♞xb8 ♞xb8 17.♞c6 ♔h7 18.♞e5 ♞d8;

10.♔g3 ♞a6 11.♞xa6 ♞xa6 12.♞e2 ♔f7 13.a4 ♞e7 14.♔d3 c4 15.♔e3 ♞b8 16.♞a3 ♞bc6 17.♞f4 0-0 In all variations ♞b5 is very tempting as it forces ...♔f8, yet although the king doesn't castle the ♞b5 runs into ...c4! with nowhere for him to run back. Although the bishop isn't actually trapped and always finds a way to survive, to go into those variations would require an engine's sense of courage.

10...♔f7 11.♔g3 ♞a6 12.c4!? White wants to avoid the trade of light-square bishops, even with a pseudo-pawn sacrifice if needed.

12.♞xa6 ♞xa6 13.a4 ♞e7 was the more logical approach but led to easy play for Black which I



was trying to avoid.

12...♞e7

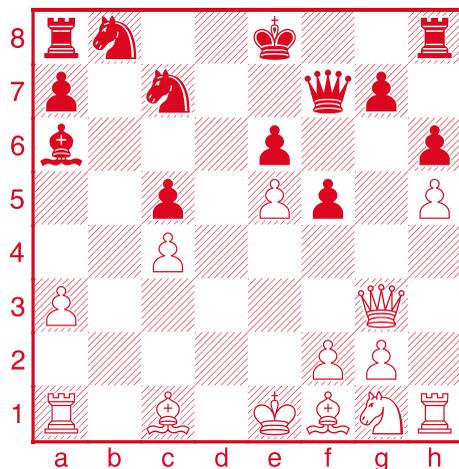
Not falling for traps like 12...dxc4
13.♞f3 :))

editor – This is a trap for the
White ♞: 13...♞e7! 14.♞xa8
♞ec6! and ...♞b7.

13.cxd5 ♞xd5 14.c4 ♞c7?

Seems like a strange alternative
to ...♞e7. Although the knight
protects the rook on a8, he's
limited in scope and remains a
problem for the rest of the game.

15.dxc5 bxc5



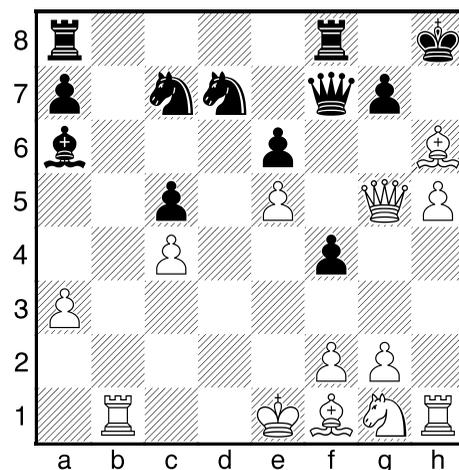
16.♞e3?

Although it's a seemingly natural
move attacking the weakness on
c5, the real weakness is actually

on g6 which calls for ♞f3-h4-g6.

Surprisingly ♞f3! Gives a
decisive advantage to White,
since Black has to give up a
pawn just to castle: 16.♞f3! ♞d7
17.♞h4 0-0 18.♞xh6 f4 19.♞g5+-

**16...♞d7 17.♞b1 0-0 18.♞xh6
f4 19.♞g5 ♞h8!**



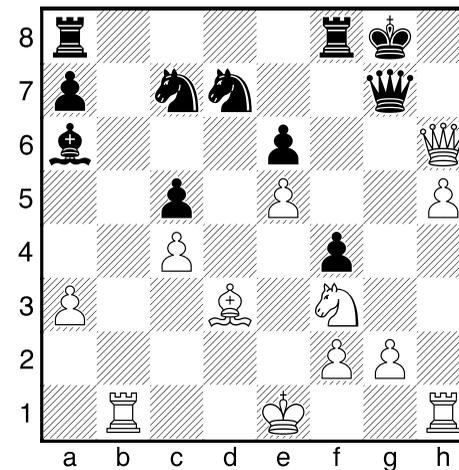
Seeing this position in advance,
I couldn't believe that Black can
survive after losing his g and
h-pawns, even if for a bishop.

20.♞d3 gxh6 21.♞xh6+ ♞g8

22.♞f3

22.♞h4 ♞xe5.

22...♞g7



It turns out the queens are
traded by force, leaving White
wondering where his attack
went. Surprisingly, despite
being down material and having
doubled g-pawns, White retains
dynamic equality due to the
h-file and the awkwardness of
the black pieces.

23.♞g6 ♞xg6 24.hxg6 ♞fd8

25.♞d1 ♞f8

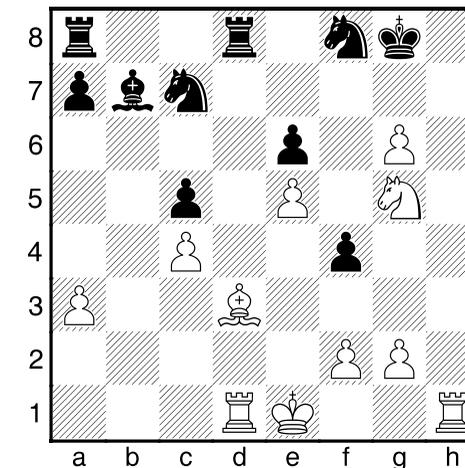
25...♞b7!?

26.♞g5

At this point White has to create
immediate threats of perpetual
or the knight coming to d6/f6
if the game is to continue. The
last few moves have already
been too slow and Black should
consolidate with proper play,

leaving White to suffer in a semi-
salvageable endgame.

26...♞b7



27.♞e2

I saw that ♞h7 should lead to
perpetual check in most lines,
but by this point Victor had
already won his game leaving
me with the task of winning
this “promising” position.

Here are the draws that could
have happened: 27.♞h7 ♞xg2
(27...♞xh7 28.♞xh7 ♞ac8 29.f3
♞c6 30.♞e2 ♞d7 31.♞h4 ♞cd8
32.♞dh1 ♞xd3 33.♞h8+ ♞g7
34.♞1h7+ ♞xg6 35.♞h6+ ♞f5
36.♞h5+ ♞g6 37.♞5h6+ ♞f5=)
28.♞f6+ ♞g7 29.♞h5+ ♞g8
30.♞f6+ ♞g7=.

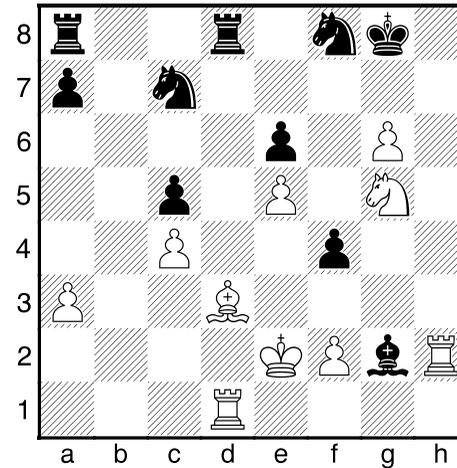


27...♙xg2?

A brave decision but one which is unnecessarily risky and allows White more play than he deserves. The logical ...♖d7 would keep a slight edge for Black.

28.♖h2?

A mistake, but one that was rewarded by Black's next blunder. The surprising 28.g7! would be enough for equality, but not more: 28.g7! f3+ 29.♗xf3 ♕xf3+ 30.♔xf3 ♕xg7 31.♖dg1+ ♕f7 32.♕g6+ ♗xg6 33.♖h7+ ♕f8 34.♖xg6 ♗e8 35.♖xe6 ♖d4 36.♖eh6 is just enough for equality, although Black can press.

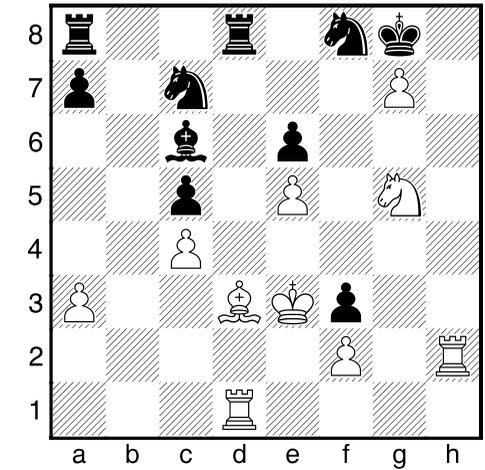
**28...♕c6?**

Leaving White with all the play, with equality plus initiative after g7. For this reason, the black king should probably have moved to g7 at some point to stop any play. However the eccentric 28...f3! would have given Black a big edge. Even

though the bishop seems trapped on g2, he would control key squares (h1) and allow many ways to calm down the position with the bishop coming out later. For example: 28...f3+! 29.♔e3 ♕g7 30.♗e4 ♖ab8 31.♗xc5 ♖b6 32.a4 ♗xg6.

29.g7!

After this, White creates enough problems that Black has to choose from many dangerous-looking variations. To his credit, David chooses the safest of the bunch, but the resulting knights vs. Rook/pawn is still slightly more pleasant to play with White.

29...f3+ 30.♔e3**30...♖xd3+**

30...♗g6 31.♖g1+-;
30...♗d7 31.♖g1 ♗xe5 32.♕h7+ ♕xg7 33.♗xe6+ ♕f6 34.♖h6+ ♕e7 35.♖g7+ ♗f7 36.♗xc7+-;
30...♕xg7 31.♖g1 ♗e8 32.♗xe6+ ♕f7 33.♗xf8 ♕xf8 34.♖h8+ ♕e7 35.♖h7+ ♕f8 36.♖g6 ♖ab8 37.e6+-
So it does look like ♖xd3 is the way to go for Black.



2016 Maritime Open

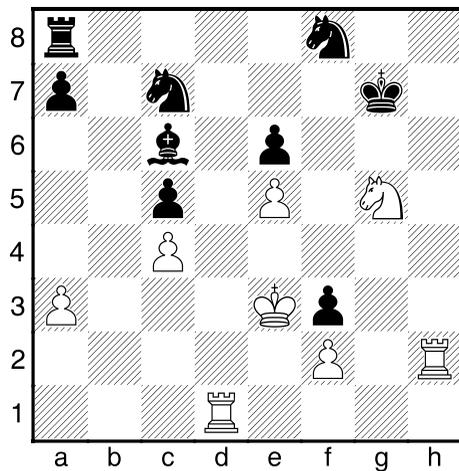
Twenty-four players came out to the Maritime Open Championship in Charlottetown.

FM Robert Hamilton (Fredericton) captured 1st place with a round to spare, scoring 5.5 out of 6. This is his 4th time as Champion, his previous title was... 30 years ago!! I don't know if he's even played more than once since then, welcome back! Robert joins three others as a four-time champion and can try for the record in Saint John at Thanksgiving, 2017.

Tied for second were Joe Horton (Fredericton), Jason Manley (Moncton), Richard Bowes (Hampton, NB), Bill Bogle (Saint John), Roger Patterson (Victoria, BC), and **Kevin Bu** (Charlottetown). Kevin took home the Top U2000 prize. The other sections all had shared winners:

- Top **U1800** were Ken Cashin (Halifax), George Hensel (Fredericton), and Tony Wu.
- Top **U1600** were Trevor Pardy

31. ♖xd3 ♔xg7 32. ♖d1!



Renewing the threats on the g and h-files since Black's clumsy minors have trouble holding their ground.

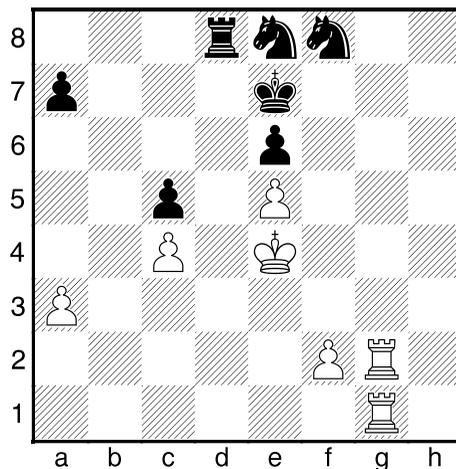
32... ♗e8 33. ♖g1 ♗g6

34. ♘xf3 ♘e8 35. ♖hg2 ♔f7

36. ♘g5+ ♔e7 37. ♘e4

White prefers to go into two rooks + pawn vs. Rook and two knights rather than allow the three black minors+rook to coordinate and gang up on White's knight and two rooks.

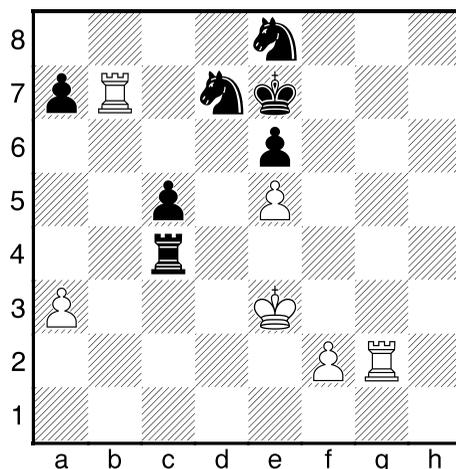
37... ♗xe4 38. ♔xe4 ♖d8



Logical play from both sides led to this endgame, which should still be drawn with best play, but Black still has ways to go before the knight can come to suitable outposts. Until then, White can attack Black's weak pawns and cause problems for the black king.

39. ♖b1 ♖d4+ 40. ♔e3 ♖xc4

41. ♖b7+ ♘d7



42. ♖h2

The wrong way to go, since the a7 pawn should be captured as soon as possible in order to distract the knights with the a-pawn. However, David was playing on increment at this point and the allure of mating tricks and tactics proved too much.

42... ♔d8 43. ♖h7 ♖d4

44. ♖xa7

At this point my opponent resigned (??). Miracles do happen and the mating tricks paid off as David truly believed there was nothing Black could do against ♖a8 and the multiple mate/skewer threats.

But after 44. ♖xa7 ♘b6!

would continue the game with all three results still on the table and us both playing on increment. In this way I was gifted the title of Toronto Closed Champion, since tiebreaks vs. Victor were in my favour because of more decisive games. It wasn't the cleanest game by any standard, but sometimes Caissa favours those who favour semi-correct sacrifices.

1-0



(Fredericton) and Arnab Kundu (Charlottetown).

- Top **U1400** were John MacLean (Halifax) and An Vo (Charlottetown)

report courtesy **Fred McKim**

The following game first appeared on the CFC Newsfeed: <http://chess.ca/newsfeed/node/881>

Bleau, John (1938) Hamilton, Robert (2232)

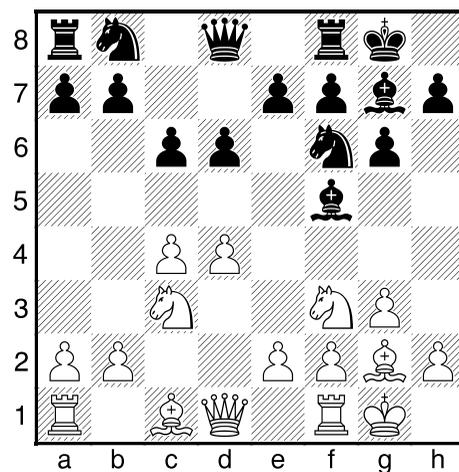
E62

Maritime Open (4), 01.08.2016

Notes by John Upper

Robert “showed” me this game over the phone. I like it because at move 15 White looks totally safe and even a bit better, but only 7 moves later he resigns with a hopeless position despite not making any obvious blunders. I annotated it for the CFC Newsfeed with the title “Master vs Amateur” because it’s such a clear example of how a Master can see positional threats long before an Amateur does. I certainly didn’t see it building...

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.g3 ♙g7
4.♙g2 0-0 5.0-0 d6 6.c4 c6
7.♘c3 ♙f5



Botvinnik engraves:

"More common is ...♙a5 or ...a6, immediately preparing the counterblow ...b7-b5. Continuations such as that chosen by Black in the game have only one point: the opponent may turn out to be insufficiently prepared for them. Since White should not allow the knight jump ...♘f6-e4, and the moves 8.♘d2 or 8.♘e1 have a less forcing character, White's next move is fairly obvious."

Botvinnik–Smyslov
(New in Chess, 2009).

8.♘h4

Since Botvinnik wrote that in the late 1950s, top GMs have tried other, less obvious moves:

8.b3!? ♘e4 9.♙b2 ♘xc3 10.♙xc3 ♙e4 11.♖c1 ♘d7 12.e3 e6 13.♙e2 d5 14.♙h3 ♙xf3 15.♙xf3 and White has the Bishop pair, but Black is as solid as a rock; Matlakov, M (2693)–Berkes, F (2636) Gjakova, 2016 (½-½, 40).

8.♙b3!? ♙b6 (8...♙c8 9.♖e1 ♘e4? 10.♘h4! (1-0, 29) Fressinet, L (2718)–Czebe, A (2479) Bastia, 2010.) 9.♖e1 ♘a6 (9...♘e4? 10.♘h4!) 10.h3 ♙xb3 11.axb3 ♘b4 12.♖a4 a5 13.e4∞ Jumabayev, R (2618)–Utegaliev, A (2485) Almaty, 2016.

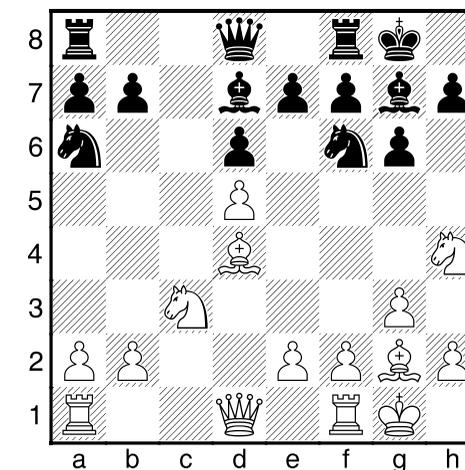
8...♙e6

8...♙d7 9.e4 e5 10.d5 cxd5 11.♘xd5 ♘xd5 12.♙xd5 ♙c6 13.♙d2 ♙f6 14.♖d1! A funny mirror of the Spassky–Fischer game where Fischer let Spassky mangle his kingside with ♙x♘h5, and went on to score his first win. 14...♘d7 15.♙xd6 ♙xh4 16.gxh4 ♙xh4 17.♖d3 a5 (17...♖fd8! 18.♖h3 ♘b6♣) 18.♖g3 ♙f6∞ Sloth, J (2380)–Spassky, B

(2605) Denmark, 1983 (0-1, 50).

9.b3

9.d5 cxd5 10.cxd5 ♙d7 11.♙e3 ♘a6 12.♙d4: *Analysis Diagram*



12...♙a5 13.♖e1 ♘c5 14.e4 ♘a4 15.♘xa4 ♙xa4 16.b3 ♙a3 17.f4± *Botvinnik, M–Smyslov, V* WCh g9, Moscow, 1957 (½-½, 40).

12...♘c7!? 13.a4 (13.e4 b5!) 13...e5 14.dxe6 ♘xe6 15.♘f3 ♙c6 16.h3 ♖e8 17.e3 ♙d7 18.♙h2 b6 19.b4 ♖ac8 20.♖c1 ½-½ Dautov, R (2601)–Baklan, V (2636) Magdeburg, 2014.

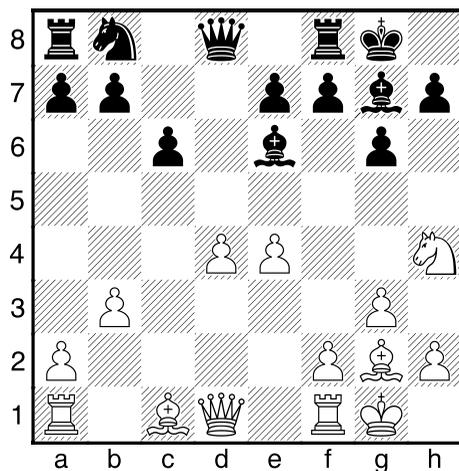
9...d5 10.cxd5 ♘xd5

10...cxd5 is not the way a higher-rated player can create winning chances needed in a



weekend Swiss.

11. ♖xd5 ♙xd5 12. e4 ♙e6



13. ♙b2

Natural, but maybe not best.

13. ♙e3! c5?! would be the move that might scare someone from playing ♙e3, and forces both players to calculate exchange sacs; but White can keep an edge with dynamic play: 14. d5! (14. e5 gives Black a promising exchange sac: 14... cxd4!

15. ♙xb7?! dxe3 16. ♖xd8 ♜xd8 17. ♙xa8 ♞d7 18. ♙e4 ♙xe5) 14... ♙xa1 15. ♖xa1 ♙g4 16. ♙h6±

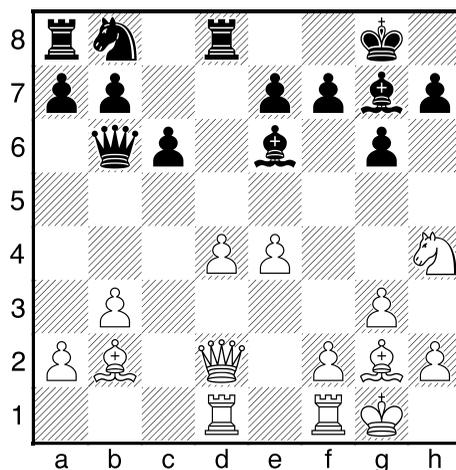
White gets the exchange back with more space and a lead in development and few good squares for Black's minors.

13... ♖b6

13... ♖d6 14. ♖d2 ♜d8 15. ♜ad1 ♙g4 16. f3 ♙e6 17. ♜f2 (17. ♙c3 ♙xd4+ 18. ♖xd4);

13... c5 14. e5 ♙d5 15. dxc5 ♙xg2 16. ♖xg2 ♖c7 17. ♜c1 ♙xe5 18. ♙xe5 ♖xe5 19. ♜e1 with a nice development advantage and queenside majority for White.

14. ♖d2 ♜d8 15. ♜ad1



White is definitely a little better, with the extra space provided by his nice center. But Black is solid, with no particular weaknesses.

15... ♙g4N

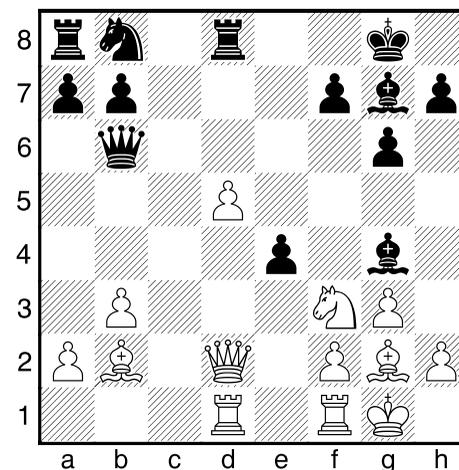
Probing, and giving White a difficult choice between very different middlegames.

15... ♙xd4? is a recurring motif, but is too early here: 16. ♙xd4 c5 17. ♙xc5 ♜xd2 18. ♙xb6 ♜xd1 19. ♜xd1 axb6 20. ♜d8+ ♖g7 and Black's ♜ and ♞ can't get out, though it's worth working out the whole line after 21. ♞f3 ♜xa2.

16. f3

16. ♞f3 e5!? Not Black's only move, but good and complicated. 17. d5 cxd5 18. exd5 e4:

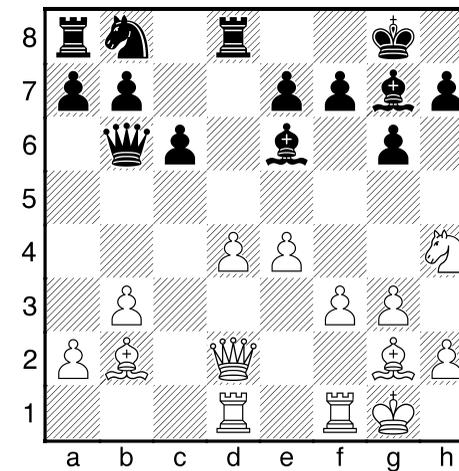
Analysis Diagram



19. ♙xg7 exf3? (19... ♖xg7!?) 20. ♙d4 fxg2 21. ♙xb6 gxf1 ♖+ 22. ♜xf1 axb6 23. ♖g5+- the fork wins a piece and the game.

19. ♞e5! ♙xd1 20. ♜xd1∞ with a complicated mess that computers evaluate as 0.00.

16... ♙e6



17. ♙c3

17. ♖f2 breaks both the diagonal the file pins on the d4-pawn and threatens f3-f4-f5 now that ... ♙g4 can be met by ♜d2. 17... ♖a5 requires a bold response from White: 18. d5 (18. ♙a1 g5!) 18... cxd5 19. ♙xg7 ♖xg7 20. f4! dxe4 21. b4! ♖c7 22. f5! with a strong initiative for White.

17. f4 threatens f4-f5, but after 17... ♙g4 18. ♙f3! (18. ♞f3 ♙xd4+ 19. ♙xd4 c5 20. ♙xc5 ♖xc5+ 21. ♖f2 ♖xf2+ 22. ♖xf2 ♞c6 White still has more space, but with so few pieces it's no advantage.) 18... ♙h3 19. ♜f2! (19. ♙g2 ♙g4 20. ♙f3= shows how hard it can be to play for a win



as Black.) 19...♙xd4 20.♙xd4 c5
21.♙xc5 ♖xd2 22.♙xb6 ♖xd1+
23.♙xd1 axb6 24.♖d2± White
has better development and
structure.

17...a5!

Activating the ♖a8 without
developing the ♘. Note that
...♞d7 not only releases
pressure on d4, it gets skewered
by ♙a5.

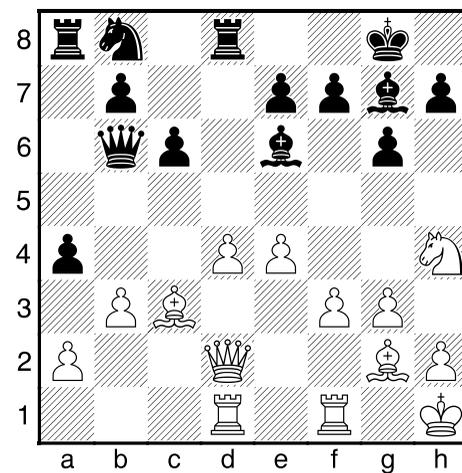
17...♙xd4+ is possible, but
simplifies to equality after:

18.♙xd4 (18.♙h1 ♖d7!∞
defending the ♖ and side-
stepping the skewer on ♙a5.)
18...c5 19.♙xc5 ♖xc5+ 20.♖f2=.

18.♙h1

18.f4 ♙g4 19.♞f3 ♙xd4+
20.♙xd4 c5 21.♙xc5 ♖xc5+
22.♖f2 ♖xf2+ 23.♙xf2 ♞c6=.

18...a4→



Suddenly White's position is
creaking, with weak pawns on d4
and b3.

19.b4?

Compare the activity of the
Bishops.

△19.f4 axb3 20.axb3 (20.f5?
♙c4-+) 20...♖xb3 (20...♙xb3?!
21.♖b1) 21.♖b1=.

19...♞a6!

19...♙c4! is also strong, 20.♖fe1
e5!±;

19...a3 mechanically isolating
the b4-pawn is reasonable, but
not as strong as the game line.

20.♖b2

20.a3 ♙b3 and Black wins the
exchange or the d4-pawn.

20.b5?! creates complications,
but the tactics don't help White,
who is playing without his ♞a4
and ♙g2:

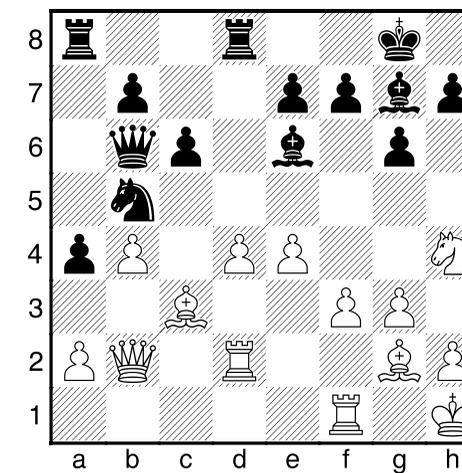
20...♖xb5 21.♖b1 ♖c4 22.♖xb7
♖xa2 23.♖xa2 ♙xa2 24.♖xe7
♙xd4-+.

20...♞c7! is the simplest:
21.bxc6 bxc6 and the black ♞
comes to b5.

20...♞c7!-+ 21.♖d2

21.a3 ♞b5 and White can resign.

21...♞b5



Attacks the d4-pawn and pins it
to the ♙c3.

22.♖fd1 ♙xa2!

Wins a pawn and renews the
threat of ...♙b3.

0-1



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