

West Of England & South Wales Team Tournament

Tiverton, Saturday 21st January 2012

I hope you still remember the games! I've given each of the games a quick run-through, and made some overall comments. Three games (or fragments!) is not a lot to go on, so if you think I have got things wrong when talking about your chess, you may know better than me.

This booklet is in two parts: general advice pulled from all the games, and then going through each player in turn.

Do read the comments on other player's games; I've usually put a diagram before important ideas, so you don't need to play over the games. [Although, if you do want to go over the games, I can put them on the Exeter Junior Chess Club blog.]

Look especially all the tips which look like this:

Something everyone should know.

The most important things for all of you were the same as they are every year!

1. **Set problems from the start**, and
2. **take your chances**:

In more detail:

1. **play to win – play actively**, and set your opponent problems. Then they will make mistakes!
2. **spot tactics** – when your opponent makes a mistake, take your chances and don't give the opponent any free gifts!
3. **play a proper opening**, and then these things will all happen automatically

A combination of a bit more opening science and a little more tactical skill would have produced better results all round.

If you want me to explain any more about what I've said, please feel free to ring on 01392 431 785 or e-mail me at chessnut@blueyonder.co.uk

Getting better

Dave Regis, February 2012

chessnut@blueyonder.co.uk

If you want to know what books or other materials might help you, I can suggest a few things (but I'd hate it to feel like homework!). I have enclosed any opening booklets I think might help, and after that, make sure you put your nose in a book of tactics puzzles or the **Chess Tactics Server** online at chess.emerald.net.

Also, if there are other games of yours that you would like some feedback on, let me know.

I've got a bunch of stuff for young people on the Internet at:

www.exeterchessclub.org.uk/juniors

And for players of any age at:

www.exeterchessclub.org.uk/index

If you don't have access to the Internet, or have trouble using it, then get in touch with me directly and I can print it out or recommend some other study material.

Previous instalments of these U14 match reviews can be found online:

<http://exeterchessclub.org.uk/content/devon-u14-chess-team>

That page also has some sort of index to topics.

Again, if you can't get at them, and want to read them, let me know.

I hope you all continue to enjoy the game and thrive in the future.

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Just the facts...

U14	Name	R1	col	R2	col	R3	col	Total
	1 John Fraser	0	b	1	w	1	w	2
	2 Tomas Trott	0	w	1	w	0	b	1
	3 James Royle	0	w	0	b	0	b	0
	4 Ben Newman	½	w	1	b	0	b	1½
	5 Taylor Finch	0	b	0	b	1	w	1
	6 Reece Whittington	1	b	½	w	½	b	2
	7 Becky Trott	0	b	0	w	½	w	½
	8 Tom Ferdinand	0	w	1	w	0	b	1
	9 Greg Susevee	1	w	1	b	1	w	3
	10 Lionel Pike	½	w	0	b	0	b	½
Res	11 Rafe Whitehead	0	b	1	b	1	w	2
Res	12 Oliver Pike	1	b	bye	1	0	w	2
	Round score		3		5½		4	
	Overall score		3		8½		12½	
	Position		3		3		3	

The other teams were South Wales, Somerset and Wiltshire.

If we had scored as well in Rounds 1 and 3 as we did in round 2, there would be a bit less singing in the hillsides.

Not bad, but not great! Oh, but take a bow the reserves, who won the Reserves competition.

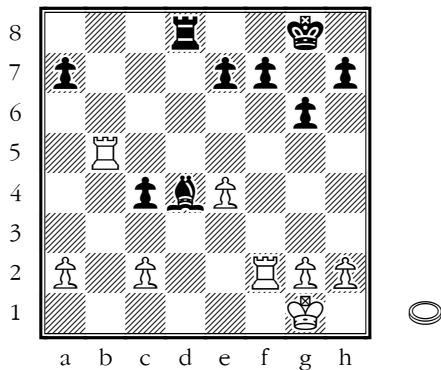
Some general advice from the games Finishing off and endgames

Know how to finish off a game by swapping off pieces

Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.

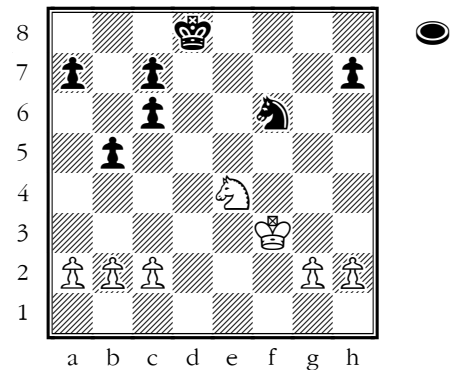
I say this every year, as not every player knows it!

Two of our players just swapped off their last piece and went into a dead lost King-and-Pawn endgame.



23. Rd5??

White is a pawn down and must avoid exchanges. Black wants to swap! Black may be winning after Rb7 but it's hopeless for White if all the pieces come off.

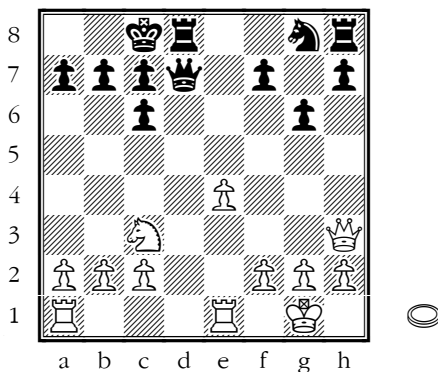


28...Nxe4??

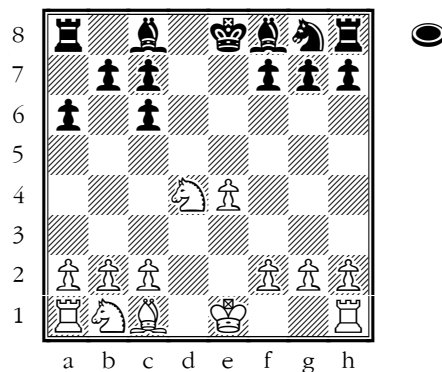
More or less the same thing. White doesn't have an extra pawn, but they do have an extra pawn on the King's side, and can make a passed pawn. Black can't do the same on the other side (at least, not if White plays properly!)

Working majority

Here's an interesting point about the endgame. In the second example above, we saw that 28...Nxe4?? was bad because of White's working majority of pawns on the King's side. Easy enough?



White avoided the exchange and played 15. Qh4. Can you see the similarity? If you look at the pawn structure, you can see that White can make a passed pawn, and Black cannot! White has a winning King-and-Pawn endgame, and so White should take every chance to swap off pieces.



There is actually an variation of the Ruy Lopez where White can go for this structure very quickly:

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 (Black has to take this way to be able to play 5.Nxe5 Qd4!) 5.d4 exd4 6.Qxd4 Qxd4 7.Nxd4

Now, White's a long way from winning and there's lots else going on, but if all that happens is that Black swaps off, Black should lose.

Openings advice

These are the openings you actually played:

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C64: Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Defence	22	C44: Scotch Game	42
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The opening is a race to get your pieces into play

You should all know the three main goals of the opening:

- get your pieces out
- get castled
- get at least a share of the centre

If you can do all those quickly, you might be able to attack before your opponent is ready. Similarly, if you don't get on with your opening jobs, you can lose to a quick attack.

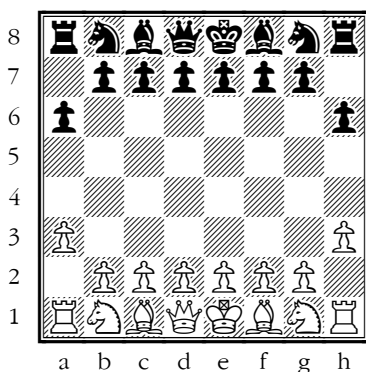
Because you need to go your opening jobs quickly, don't waste time.

- Don't waste time in the opening moving a piece twice (without good reason: you can take a Queen!)
- Don't waste time taking unimportant pawns
- Don't waste time moving unimportant pawns

Centre pawns are important, the rest usually are not.

In particular:

Ban the Delarpom!



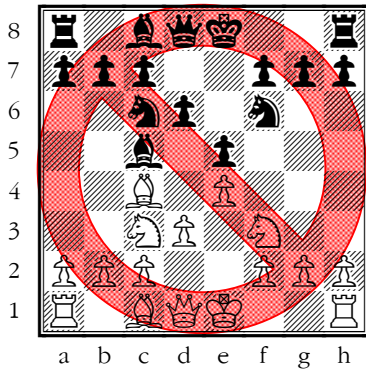
DLRPMs are Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves. They usually announce "I don't know what to do", which is never something you want to tell your opponent.

Once in a while you will want to prevent a pin or support the advance of a Knight's Pawn, but 90% of these DLRPMs I see really are Dreadful.

Use Anderssen's Rule to find a better move! That is:

If you haven't anything better to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece.

No more Old Stodge!



I keep writing about this rotten, blocked, difficult opening and if I had my way it would be banned.

People think it's safe and they know it, but you will see below it's not safe and they don't know it!

If I catch any of you playing it again I'm going to send around the Anti-Stodge Squad.

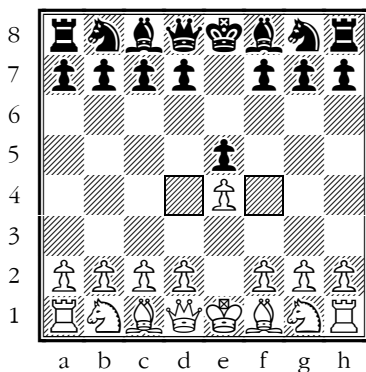
If you don't understand why it's so rotten (and the rest) please see the 2004 booklet:

http://exeterchessclub.org.uk/x/FTP/u14_20043.pdf

<http://exeterchessclub.org.uk/content/no-more-old-stodge>

Or see the next tip:

Aim for a pawn break with d2-d4 or f2-f4



After opening e2-e4 and seeing e7-e5 as a reply, make a plan to attack the e5 Pawn with a pawn of your own – either the d-pawn or the f-pawn.

Why?

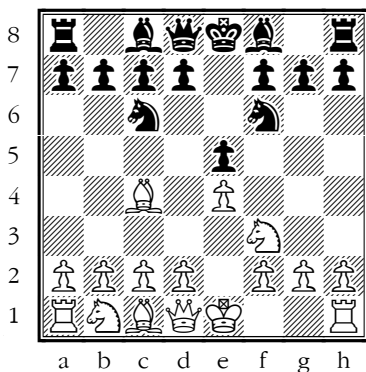
1. This will give your opponent a problem (and they might make a mistake)
2. It will make an open file (or a half-open file) for your Rooks (which might get stuck)
3. It might allow you to take over the centre – the most important part of the board.
4. It will give you a fun, open game and a chance to spot some tactics!

Old Stodge gives you none of these chances.

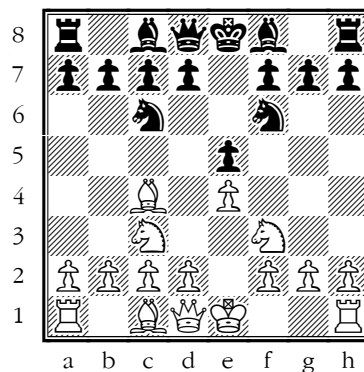
Learn a standard opening!

There are lots to choose from, but it has to be better than making it up as you go along. Playing an opening involves more than getting to move 2 and not knowing what to do – you should have an idea about what set-up you are trying to reach, what move-order you are going to use and to know the basic plans and traps for each side. It's all been worked out before, so pick one you like the look of and make friends with it. Become an expert in what you play!

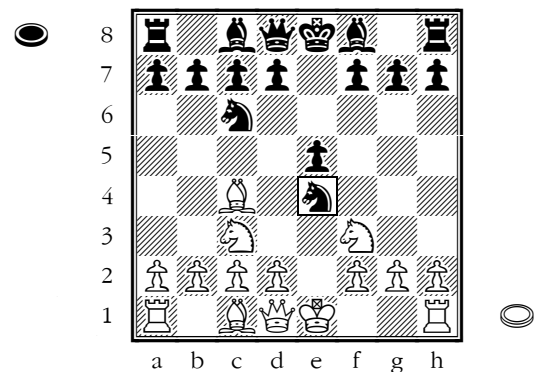
For example, I saw three games where neither side seemed to know a very common idea:



With the Two Knights' move order, Black can stop White playing Old Stodge in the usual way



If White replies 4. Nc3...



...Black can play the surprise temporary sacrifice 4...Nxe4! and Black gets an easy open game no matter how White responds.

White should know enough not to allow this, Black should know enough to take their chance!

Have an idea what to do if Black dodges

As you get better at chess, you will find opponents who avoid your standard opening. So you should also have some idea what to do against the most common Black defences – for example, the Sicilian, French and Caro-Kann Defences.

I can give you some suggestions if you like:

Basic Opening Repertoire for young players

You want a standard opening to learn? Here is my suggestion:

System for White	Scotch Gambit	1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4
When Black avoids your main system	IQP systems	Sicilian 1.e4 c5 2.c3 & d4 French 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.c4 Caro-Kann 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4
System for Black against 1.e4	French Defence	1.e4 e6
System for Black against 1.d4	Tarrasch Defence	1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5

The ideas and some of the variations are given with example games are given in a free booklet:

→ <http://www.exeterchessclub.org.uk/x/FTP/JuniorRepertoire.pdf>

I also have some things to say about IQP systems below.

Now, you might not like all those choices, depending on your style. Do you like to attack, or win slowly and carefully? You can find an opening to suit each style...

	Beginners	Careful players	Attacking players	Gambit players
System for White	Scotch Gambit (as above)	Scotch Game (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4) Queen's Gambit (1.d4 d5 2.c4)	Scotch Gambit (as above) Colle System (1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 with Bd3, 0-0, Nbd2 and e3-e4)	Evans' Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4) Koltanowski Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d4) Danish Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3)
When Black avoids your main system	IQP systems (as above)	King's Indian Attack: e4/d3/Nd2/g3/Bg2 Bg5 systems with c4 Bg5 systems without c4	IQP systems (as above)	Morra Gambit (1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3) Korchnoi Gambit (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Ngf3 Qb6 8.0-0)
System for Black against 1.e4	French Defence (as above)	French Defence (as above) Petroff Defence (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d4 d5 6.Bd3 with 6...Be7)	Two Knights' Defence (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 b5) Petroff Defence (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d4 d5 6.Bd3 with 6...Bd6)	Two Knights' Defence (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 b5) Schliemann Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5)
System for Black against 1.d4	Tarrasch Defence (as above)	Swiss Defence (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 0-0 6.Nf3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 a6)	Tarrasch Defence (as above) Dutch Stonewall (1.d4 f5 with ...d5) (as above)	Albin Counter-Gambit (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5) Benkő Counter-Gambit (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5)

Now, I've probably got a little booklet to read on all of these systems. From what I can see of your openings, I might have included a booklet or two that might suit you. I also have a ChessBase/PGN version of the booklet you can play through, and if you email me and tell me you know how to look at files like these, I will send you a copy.

The most common openings were:

Sicilian Defence	6
Old Stodge	2
Bishop's Opening	2
Other Double King's Pawn openings	4
Caro-Kann	2
French Defence	2
King's Gambit	2
King's Indian	2

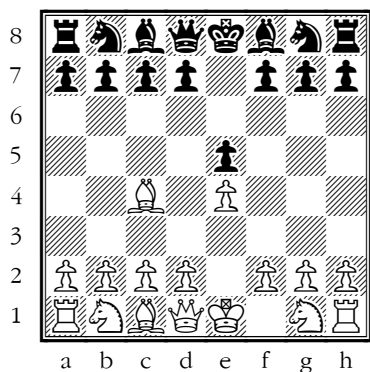
I've written about some of these openings before, and don't want to repeat myself or copy big chunks of these old booklets. So, check out these:

Index to writing about opening lines in old booklets:

- 20-04: 2 pages on Old Stodge (*yeuch*), 1 page each on the Sicilian Defence, French Defence, Queen's Gambit, 1/2 pages on the Queen's Pawn Game, King's Gambit, Scotch, Stonewall Attack
- 20-05: A paragraph on several openings, a bit more on the QGD Exchange
- 20-06: Just a paragraph on several openings
- 20-07: Old Stodge (*again!*), 2 pages on Ruy Lopez
- 20-08: 2 pages on Queen's Gambit (1/2 pages on the French Defence, Sicilian Defence, Four Knights, Stonewall Attack)
- 20-09: Just a paragraph on several openings
- 2010: Just a paragraph on several openings
- 2011: Old Stodge (*oh no, not again...!*), Petroff and Philidor Defences
- 2012: Bishop's Opening, Caro-Kann and King's Indian

This year we saw the Bishop's Opening, and the Caro-Kann and King's Indian defences, none of which I have written about before, so I thought this year I'd do those.

Bishop's Opening



I quite like this move for White: it avoids some nuisance openings like the Petroff and keeps open the chance of going nuclear with f2-f4. But Black should have fewer problems than against 2.Nf3 or 2.f4.

Black should play 2...Nf6 when White can try:

3.Nc3

Our usual trick still works:

3... Nxe4 4. Qh5 Nd6 5. Bb3 when Black can enter the Bonkers Zone with 5...Nc6 6.Nb5 or play quietly with 5...Be7. If that's also too risky, 3...Nc6 is OK.

3.d4

This is hoping for the Urusoff Gambit (3...exd4 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.Qxd4) but but 4...Nc6 is a safe main line of the Two Knights' Defence.

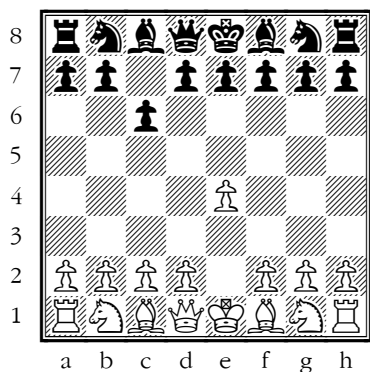
3.d3

You would have thought that 3...d5 was best here, but it is not; try 3...Nc6 instead.

3.Nf3

Now 3...Nc6 is the Two Knights' Defence again.

Caro-Kann Defence



This has a reputation of being a very quiet and solid defence. And it can be just like that!

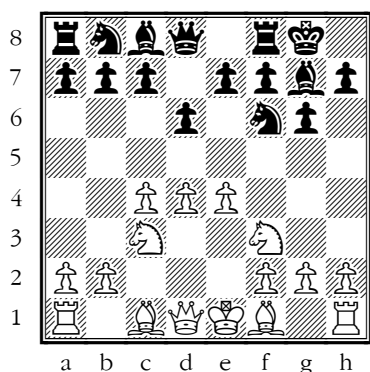
So if White wants an advantage, they have to try very hard, and that can mean playing a very sharp game.

Only opposition players tried the CK, so I'm really writing this to tell you what to play against it, and my advice is to open up the game and play an Isolated Queen's Pawn position. The nice thing about doing that is you get to play the same sorts of positions more often, and get to be an expert.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4!

You can see John play this in Round 3.

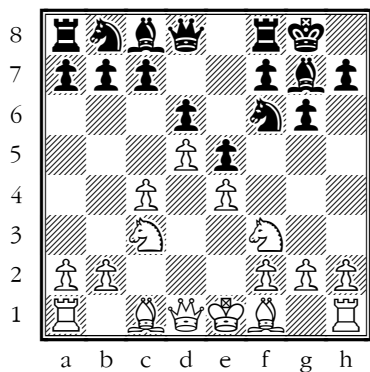
King's Indian Defence



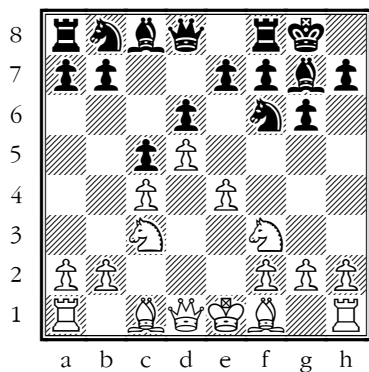
Only opposition players tried the KID, so I'm really writing this to tell you what to play against it (and similar systems). But also see the section above on closed pawn centres.

Black wants to blockade on the dark squares with moves like ...e5 or ...c5 (or both). White's pawns usually end up on light squares.

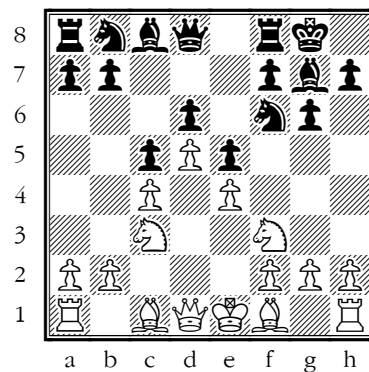
After d4-d5 White has more space, a good and a bad Bishop and needs a plan to open a file for the Rooks!



White's Bf1 is bad, blocked in by its own pawns. White's best pawn break is c4-c5, so b2-b4 after castling is good. Black will aim for ...f7-f5.



Here White's pawn break is e4-e5 and so Bf4 or maybe Nd2 and f4 should be played.



Very stodgy! The pawns don't tell you where to play any more, but White can still plan to get rid of the bad Bishop.

Clearly, White has more space, so other exchanges should be avoided.

Middlegames

Middlegame: Tactics

You will know the proverb, *Look before you leap!*

That's a good proverb for chessplayers, I think. In lots of the games had at least one moment where a player was given a huge chance to get ahead – winning a piece or something. And they didn't always take these chances!

You must learn to spot these chances in your own games – chances for you and your opponent. And the trick is, to spot them before your opponent gets a chance to play them! A lot of the time, you were losing pieces and groaning, but you weren't saying *oh, I don't understand that move*, you were saying, *oh dear, I should have seen that!* Well, yes, usually you could have seen it, and you need to ask yourself why you did not.

So think a little before playing a move. That doesn't mean picking up the piece and holding it and waving it around over the board so that you can't see anything that is going on! It means looking before you pick up the piece.

Know the basic tactics

Make sure you know all the basic sorts of tactics.

You can't play what you don't see, and it's hard to see an idea you don't know about.

Here is a list of some the tactics that were around;

I've marked them in the games with a → symbol, so you can use this book as a training test.

If you aren't sure about some of these, have a look at the games, and if you still aren't sure, ask me!

→ Famous combinations..... 10	→ Tactic: Skewer, 20	→ Tactic: deflection] 27	→ Tactic: fork..... 38
→ Tactic: net?..... 15	→ Tactic: Fork..... 20	→ Tactic: discovery + pin]..... 28	→ Tactic: Zugzwang! 39
→ Tactic: outnumbered..... 16	→ Tactic: Fork..... 20	→ Tactic: fork..... 28	→ Tactic: undermining..... 39
→ Tactic: pin..... 16	→ Tactic: pin 21	→ Tactic: discovery _..... 29	→ Tactic: sacrifice 40
→ Tactic: fork..... 16	→ Tactic: fork..... 21	→ Tactic: pin..... 29	→ Tactic: pin & mate..... 40
→ Tactic: mate 16	→ Tactic: undermining _..... 21	→ Tactic: net 29	→ Tactic: outnumbered..... 41
→ Tactic: discovery..... 16	→ Tactic: discovery..... 21	→ Tactic: fork _..... 29	→ Tactic: fork..... 41
→ Tactic: fork..... 17	→ Tactic: mate 22	→ Tactic: pin Ne6+]..... 29	→ Tactic: fork..... 41
→ Tactic: undermining, discovery..... 18	→ Tactic: fork..... 22	→ Tactic: fork..... 29	→ Tactic: overloading 43
→ Tactic: fork] 18	→ Tactic: fork..... 24	→ Tactic: pin..... 30	→ Tactic: fork, but 43
→ Tactic: net]..... 19	→ Tactic: fork..... 24	→ Undefending b6..... 30	→ Tactic: fork..... 43
→ Tactic: mate 19	→ Tactic: Pin!..... 25	→ Tactic: pin!]..... 31	→ Tactic: discovery..... 44
→ Tactic: disco..... 19	→ Tactic: fork..... 25	→ Tactic: fork..... 34	→ Tactic: fork] 45
→ Tactic: in-between move ... 19	→ Tactic: skewer 25	→ Tactic: fork..... 35	→ Tactic: fork en passant!]..... 46
→ Tactic: combination..... 19	→ Tactic: fork..... 26	→ Tactic: net 35	→ Tactic: fork] 49
→ Tactic: loose pieces drop off! (LDPO) 19	→ Tactic: fork _..... 27	→ Tactic: fork..... 36	→ Tactic: undermining..... 49
	→ Tactic: pin..... 27	→ Tactic: decoy 36	

You can see how common forks are, but these aren't just Knight forks, they are also forks with every other piece, including Pawns!

Look for forcing moves!

Notice what makes a lot of tactics work: checks, captures, and threats. So of all the moves you look at when thinking about a move, you should pay special attention to checks, captures, and threats.

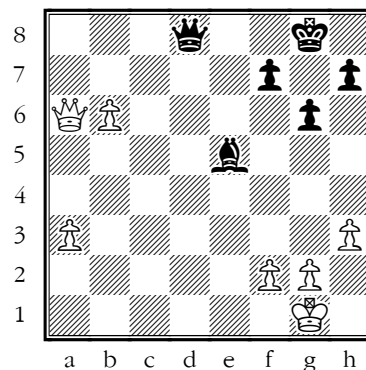
The idea in a nutshell is:

Notice every check and every capture on every move.

Even daft-looking moves (like giving up a Queen for nothing) can force a checkmate.

It's a tough habit to get into, but just look below at all the times when a piece was lost because someone didn't notice.

Another example is in the diagram: *1...Qd1+* is obvious, and *1...Bh2+* is pointless, but a combination of the two is deadly: *1...Qd1+ 2.Qf1 Bh2+* wins the Queen!



Clues

You should look twice if you have a clue that there might be a tactic. The clues are:

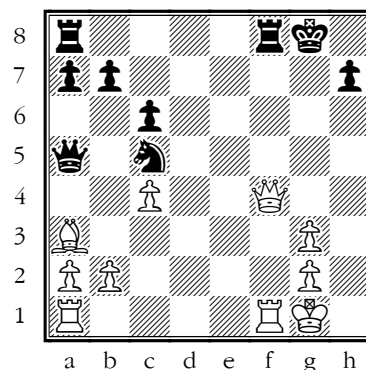
1. unsafe King (open to checks or doesn't have any moves)
2. loose pieces (undefended or only just defended enough)

If you can play a check with your Queen that also hits a barely defended piece, you will win the piece.

Two clues in this position, so

1. Qg5+ House!

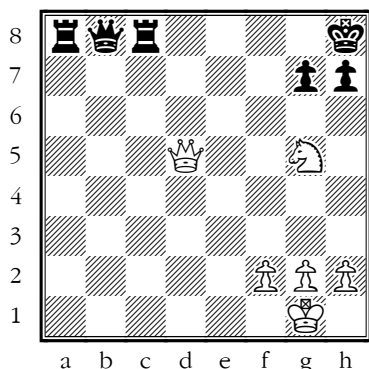
John Nunn says, Loose Pieces Drop Off (LPDO)!



Famous combinations

Also, we had an opportunity to play two of the most famous combinations in chess – but you can't play what you can't see, and usually you can't see what you don't know about. So remember these ideas for next time!

Philidor's Legacy



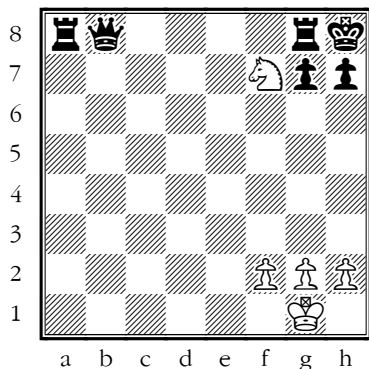
When shown this position, young players often settle for a perpetual check with

1.Nf7+ Kg8 2.Ng5+

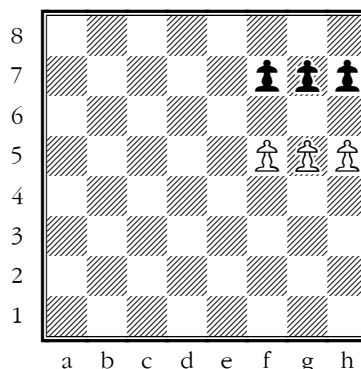
But you can make a checkmate with

1.Nf7+ Kg8 2.Nh6++ Kh8 3.Qg8+! Rxf8 4.Nf8#

A smothered mate.



Endgame breakthrough

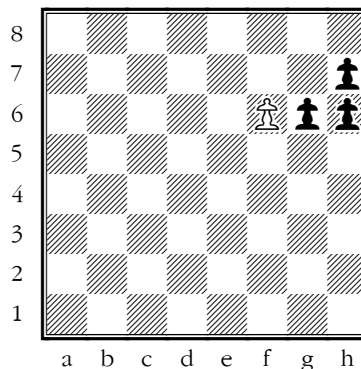


It's easy for the pawns to become blocked but White can duck and dive to get one pawn through to promote:

1.g6! fxf6 2.h6! gxh6 3.f6! or

1.g6! hxg6 2.f6! gxf6 3.h6! Magic!

If Black refuses to take the offered pawns, White can take a Black pawn on the seventh rank, and promote.



Practising tactics

There are lots of tactics puzzle books. Get one! Even if you have solved all the puzzles in a book, keep going over it, so the ideas are right at the top of your mind when looking at positions during a game.

Not interested in a book? There are also some free websites that test and rehearse your tactical thinking, like chess.emerald.net – well worth signing up!

Middlegames Strategy

Anderssen's Rule

Strategy is not so important to get right as tactics. So often, before the game gets going, one side or the other has lost a piece! But if there isn't anything tactical to do, well, what do you do?

Anderssen's Rule: If you haven't anything better to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece.

That's a piece, not a pawn.

Exchanges

Exchanges are either good or bad for you – make sure you know which!

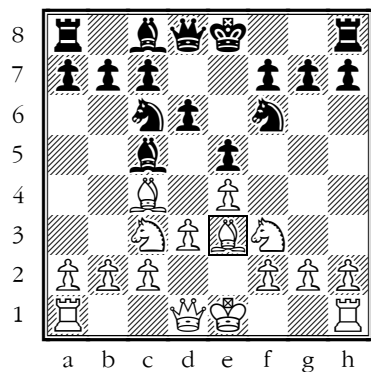
That way we won't see players swapping off the only piece that gives them any hope... (see under Endgames).

Swapping pieces is good if and only if:

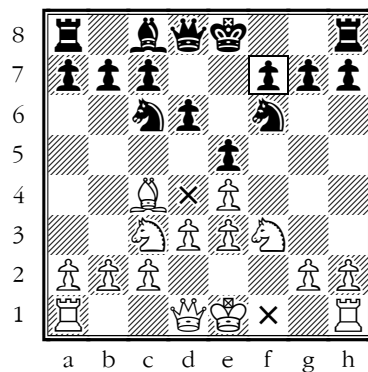
1. you are winning on material
2. you are short of space
3. the opponent's piece was doing an important job
4. the opponent's piece was placed better than yours

Otherwise, think twice!

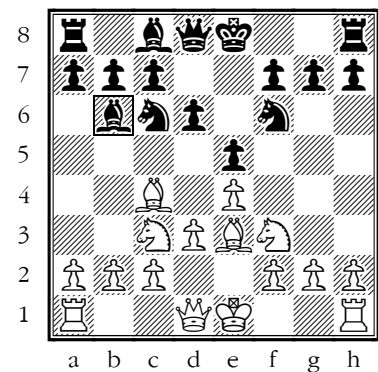
Here's a common example, which turned up a couple of times in the games.



White sometimes plays **Be3** to oppose Black's best minor piece.



If Black swaps off, White gets extra control of the centre and a half-open f-file aiming at Black's King. (Yes, there are doubled pawns, but they are not really weak. How is Black going to gang up on e3?)



Just drop the Bishop back to b6, and all remains safe. In fact, if White swaps with **7.Bxb6 axb6**, Black has a little pressure down the a-file.



Listen to the Pawns

The Pawns are small pieces with a big story to tell.

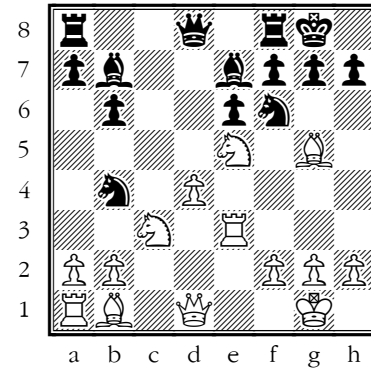
If Anderssen's Rule doesn't help you, try listening to the Pawns.

They can tell you which pieces to swap off, which side of the board to play on, and what plan to follow next! For example: positions with an Isolated Queen's Pawn (IQP). These common positions can and should be played by both sides – you should know how to win with and against the IQP!

If you have the IQP:

- you have more space.
- therefore, you should avoid exchanges.
- you are able to move about the board more easily.
- you are able to attack the enemy King.
- you have a support point on e5 for a Knight.
- you have a pawn break with d4-d5 (or ...d5-d4)

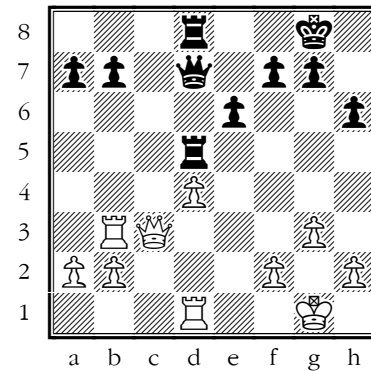
This is Keene-Miles, 1975; White won by a King's-side attack



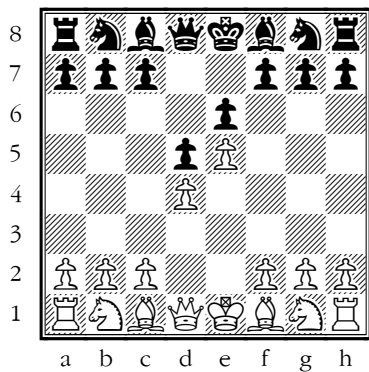
If your opponent has the IQP:

- you should restrain or blockade the pawn in case it advances.
- you have a target to aim at.
- you have less space and should seek exchanges.
- the weakness of the IQP will get worse in the endgame, so you should seek exchanges

This is Kortchnoi-Karpov 1981; Black won by creating more weaknesses with ...a5-a4 and threatening ...e5



Let's have a look at some blocked positions next:



French Defence Pawn Centre

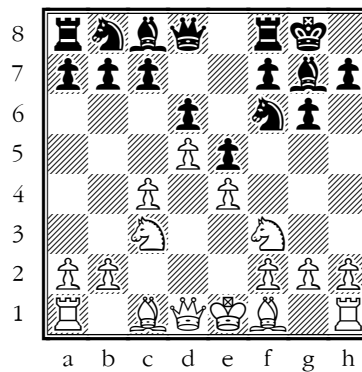
Black's Bishop on c8 is bad (blocked in by its own pawns) and so is White's Bishop on c1. Black would like to swap off the light-squared Bishops and White would like to swap off the dark-squared Bishops.

White has more space on the King's-side and Black has more space on the Queen's-side. That's where each side should aim to attack.

To open up a line for the Rooks, White can play c4 or f5. After 1.c4 dxc4, White's d4 pawn would be backward. So, White is better off playing for f5, when if ...exf5 the e5 pawn is strong and the f7 pawn comes under attack. This fits in with attacking on the King's-side.

To open up a line for the Rooks, Black can play ...c5 or ...f6. After c4 dxc4, Black's e6 pawn would be backward. So, Black should start with the idea of ...c5. This fits in with Black's Queen's-side attack.

There's a lot more to these positions than I have put in these short summaries, but I hope that's enough to get you started!



King's Indian Pawn Centre

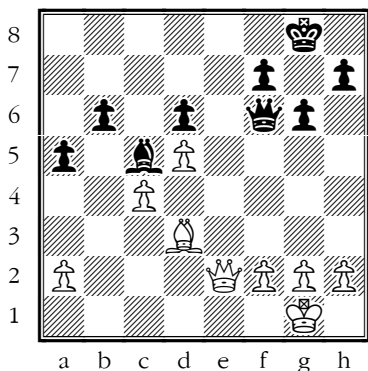
Black's Bishop on g7 is bad (blocked in by its own pawns) and so is White's Bishop on f1. White would like to swap off the light-squared Bishops and Black would like to swap off the dark-squared Bishops.

Black has more space on the King's-side and White has more space on the Queen's-side. That's where each side should aim to attack.

To open up a line for the Rooks, White can play c5 or f4. After f4 exf4, White's e4 pawn would be backward. So, White is better off playing for c5, when if ...dxc5 the d5 pawn is strong and the c7 pawn comes under attack.. This fits in with attacking on the Queen's-side.

To open up a line for the Rooks, Black can play ...c6 or ...f5. After ...c6 dxc6, Black's d6 pawn would be backward. So, Black should start with the idea of ...f5. This fits in with Black's King's-side attack.

OCB middlegames



Opposite coloured Bishops (OCBs) can be very drawish in the endgame. But in the middlegame they are more winningish, because if they attack something on one colour square, the defender may not have the right pieces to defend. For example, in this position White doesn't have a Bishop to defend f2 or swap off Black's bishop, so has to tie up the Queen to defend f2.

All the Tips

If you aren't sure about some of these, have a look at the positions in the game, and if you still aren't sure, ask me!	
Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.....	3
Make sure you know all the basic sorts of tactics.....	9
You can't play what you don't see, and it's hard to see an idea you don't know about.	9
Notice every check and every capture on every move.	9
John Nunn says, Loose Pieces Drop Off (LPDO)!.....	10
Anderssen's Rule: If you haven't anything better to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece.....	11
Exchanges are either good or bad for you – make sure you know which!.....	11
If Anderssen's Rule doesn't help you, try listening to the Pawns.	12
Grabbing pawns with your Queen is risky!.....	15
Know where your pieces should go in your chosen openings, and know the plans that go with them!.....	16
I recommend you aim for Isolated Queen's Pawn positions when you can, then you will always know what you are supposed to be doing.....	16
Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.....	17
Do learn a line to play against each of Black's most common defences.....	17
Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.....	18
Don't help your opponent!.....	18
Do learn a system to play against the various ways Black can digde your main opening system,.....	19
It's worth learning how to play IQP positions, because they turn up a lot, and if you learn how to play them, you can aim for them.....	20
Keep hold of the Bishop that is on the opposite colour to your central Pawns.....	20
Don't leave your pieces without a retreat.....	20
Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.....	20
Pick some openings you like and stick to them; you will become expert in them and do better than if you keep switching systems.....	21
Look at every check and every capture, every move. ..	21
If you keep playing the same sort of position, you should get to know all the tricks.....	21
An exchange is usually going to be better for you or better for your opponent – make sure you know which it is!	22
When Kings castle on opposite sides, you must rush to attack.....	23
After your clever idea, it's your opponent's move, so make sure there isn't a clever counterpunch before committing yourself.....	24
Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.....	25
These Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves usually announce "I don't know what to do".	26
Look at every check and every capture, every move... ..	27
Find a line you like to play against 1.d4, keep playing it, and you will learn more about how to play the line for both sides.	32
You can't play what you don't see, and it's hard to see an idea you don't know about.	35
Keep the Bishop that goes on the opposite coloured squares to your central pawns.....	35
You should have a really good reason for moving pieces twice in the opening. Let everyone have a turn!	36
A swap of two developed pieces for a sleepy Rook rarely works well; the pieces will be easier to use than a Rook in the corner for a long while.....	36
Look at every check and every capture, every move... ..	36
You should have a really good reason for moving pieces twice in the opening. Let everyone have a turn!	37
These raids with just one piece are generally a complete waste of time.....	37
Don't move the pawns in front of your castled King without a very good reason.	38
We say in Exeter, KUFTE, which stands for, King Up For The Endgame!.....	39
If you don't know what to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece.....	39
Backwards moves are sometimes hard to spot.	40
If your Rooks are not connected, you should always be in a hurry to complete your development.	42
Exchanges are either good or bad for you – make sure you know which!	42
Castling early can even be bad in these dreadful Old Stodge positions.	44
With opposite-side castling, you usually get a race to attack the enemy King.	44
It is often worth giving up a pawn to have an open line towards the enemy King.	44
Don't leave your pieces without a retreat	44
The jobs for the opening are (1) Get your pieces out, (2) Get at least a stake in the centre, and (3) Castle.	47
Unless you have a really good reason, connect your Rooks before moving a piece twice.....	47
If you see a good move, sit on your hands for a moment and look for a better one!	47
Try not to move the pawns in front of your castled king, because you make holes in the defences.	48
Move every piece once before you move any piece twice.	49
Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.	50

The Games

Some comments below are made with punctuation:

! Good move

! ? Tricky or interesting move

? Poor move

?! Dodgy or risky move

I showed the games to Fritz, the chess computer programme, and some of its suggestions are included. If you see a move in brackets without any sort of comment, it's probably one from Fritz.

You might not agree, but it's worth a think!

There are also some evaluations done as symbols. So, = means an equal position (and not a draw offer).

± A little better for White ± Definitely better for White +- White is winning

∓ A little better for Black -/+ Definitely better for Black -+ Black is winning

Again, you might not agree!

Smaller diagrams mean this is a position that could have happened, but didn't appear in the actual game.

I John Fraser

“ 2/3 on top board was a mighty performance, including a real demolition of Welsh No.1. It's a pleasure to see you improve. ”

R1 NN-John Fraser

B23: Sicilian Defence

“ In an unusual opening, Black grabbed a hot pawn but got his Queen stuck. ”

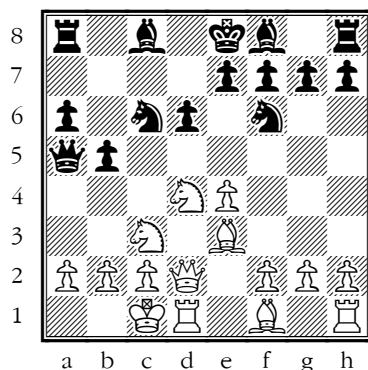
1. e4 c5
2. Nc3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Qxd4

A reasonable try.

4. ... a6
5. Be3 Nc6
6. Qd2 b5

[6...Nf6]

7. Nf3 Nf6
8. 0-0-0 Qa5
9. Nd4



If this is White's best setup, then 2.Nf3 and 4.Nxd4 is the right way to get it!

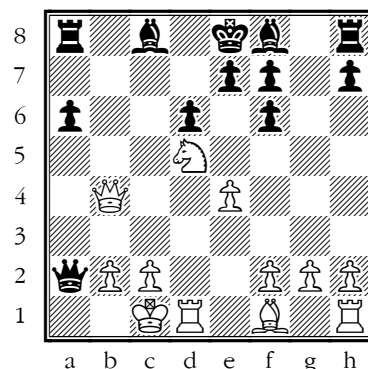
9. ... Nxd4
10. Bxd4 b4

Apparently winning the a-pawn, but it's not so simple.

11. Bxf6 gxf6
12. Nd5 Qxa2

Grabbing pawns with your Queen is risky!

13. Qxb4



A pawn each so far, but is the black Queen trapped after Bc4?

→ **Tactic: net?**

13. ... Be6

[13...Bh6+! saves the day.]

14. Bc4

[14.Nc7+ is best here]

14. ... Bxd5?

Confused?

[14...Bh6+! still works: 15.f4 Bxf4+! 16.Nxf4 Qxc4! and Black even stands better.]

15. Bxa2 Bxa2

16. Qa4+

- 1-0

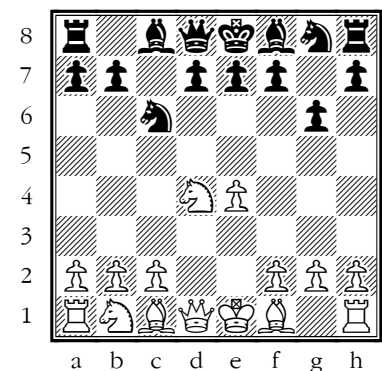
→ **Tactic: fork**

R2 John Fraser-NN

B34: Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

“ Black weakened d6 and White pounced on it! Black gave up the dark-squared Bishop and was quickly torn apart by pins. ”

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 g6



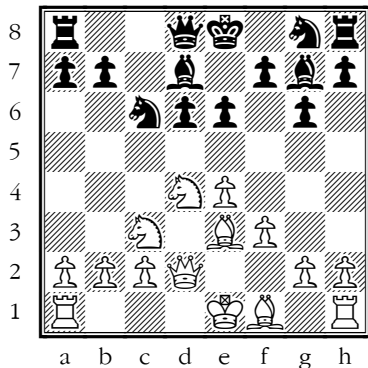
Black dares White to play the Maròczy Bind, 5.c4. Black often gets counterplay in the open Sicilian by playing either ...b5 or ...d5 (or both!). Maròczy concluded that White should play c2-c4 if possible, which stops both moves. But if you like to attack, the plan you played seemed to turn out OK...

5. Nc3 Bg7

6. Be3 d6

When Black plays the Dragon like this, one idea is to play ...d7-d5 at some point. But this is not bad, of course.

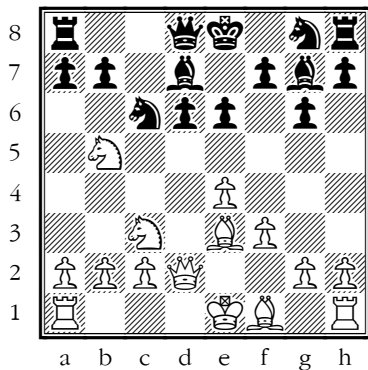
7. Qd2 Bd7
8. f3 e6?



This doesn't fit well with ...g6; Black needs the Bishop on g6 to cover holes on h6, f6 and d6, and there is no square it can do that from. Black should just play the normal 8...Nf6 which would get us back to the book lines.

Know where your pieces should go in your chosen openings, and know the plans that go with them!

9. Ndb5



9. ... Bf8

→ **Tactic: outnumbered**

10. Nxd6+ Bxd6
11. Qxd6

White has a pawn with a Vulcan Death Grip on the dark squares.

11. ... Nge7
12. 0-0-0 a6
13. Bg5 b5

[13...Bc8 might relieve some pressure]

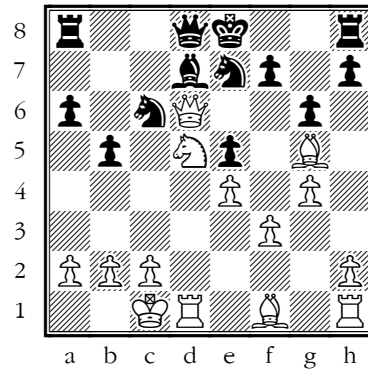
14. g4

[14.e5!]

14. ... e5??

[14...f5]

15. Nd5!



→ **Tactic: pin**

→ **Tactic: fork**

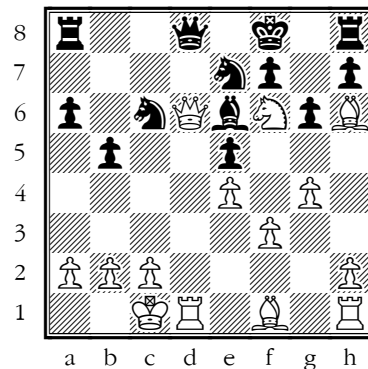
Of course! Now the pressure is unbearable.

15. ... Be6?

[15...0-0 avoids being mated, if Black really wants to hang on... but I think getting checkmated might be his best idea! 16.Nxe7+ Nxe7 17.Bxe7]

16. Nf6+ Kf8

17. Bh6#



→ **Tactic: mate**

A very pretty mate with the minor pieces.

1-0

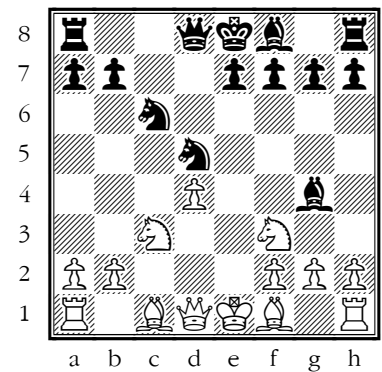
R3 John Fraser-NN

B13: Caro-Kann Defence, Panov Variation

“ Active play and sharp tactics won you a piece early on. Well done! ”

1. e4 c6
2. d4 d5
3. exd5 cxd5
4. c4 Nf6
5. Nc3 Nc6
6. Nf3 Bg4

7. cxd5 Nxd5



I recommend you aim for Isolated Queen's Pawn positions when you can, then you will always know what you are supposed to be doing.

8. Be2

[8.Qb3! is the main line, fishing for an endgame plus]

8. ... e6

9. 0-0 Nxc3

Strengthening White's Pawn centre.

[9...Bb4]

10. bxc3 Bd6

11. Re1 0-0

12. Qa4 Qc7

13. g3 Ne7

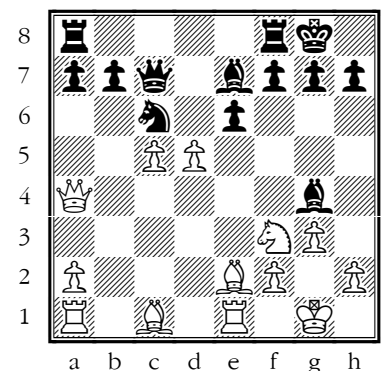
14. c4 Nc6

[14...Qc6]

The Pawn centre becomes a juggernaut.

15. c5 Be7

16. d5!

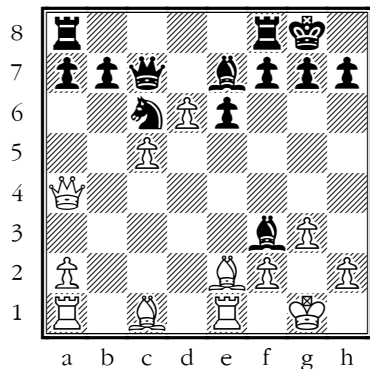


→ **Tactic: discovery**

16. ... Bxf3

[16...exd5 17.Qxg4]

17. d6!

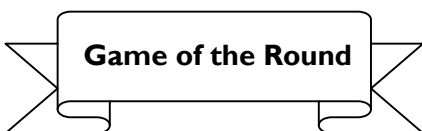


→ **Tactic: fork**

17. ... **Bxd6**
 18. **cxd6 Qxd6**
 19. **Bxf3**

with an extra piece

Your powerful play in this game made it my...



19. ... **a6**

[19...Qd4]

20. **Bxc6**

[20.Ba3!]

20. ... **bxc6**

[20...Qxc6]

2 Tomas Trott

“ You always play a strong game with lots of balance and good ideas; it didn't work out so well this year, as you got out-gunned in a complex position in the first game. ”

RI Tomas Trott-NN

B34: Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

“ The Sicilian is very sharp, and it's worth learning a line against it (rather than just making it up as you go along). Black was a little bit sharper than you to gain a couple of pawns, but keeping pieces on would have helped at the end. ”

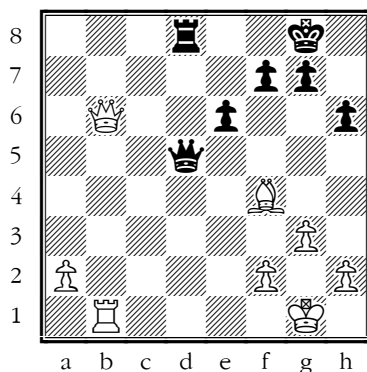
1. **e4 c5**
 2. **Nc3 Nc6**
 3. **Nf3 d6**
 4. **d4**

Changing back to the main lines, but on the way you may have

21. **Ba3! c5**
 22. **Rec1 Qd2**
 23. **Bxc5 Rfc8**
 24. **Be3 Qb2**
 25. **Rab1 Qe5**

[25...Rxc1+]

26. **Rxc8+ Rxc8**
 27. **Qxa6 Rd8**
 28. **Qb6 Qd5**
 29. **Bf4 h6**



30. **Qxd8+**

A good idea, crushing any chances for Black.

Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.

30. ... **Qxd8**
 31. **Rb8 Qxb8**
 32. **Bxb8 Kf8**

33. **a4 Ke8**
 34. **a5 Kd8**

[34...Kd7]

35. **Be5**

[35.a6]

35. ... **f6**

[35...Kd7]

36. **a6! Kc8**

37. **Bd6 e5**

38. **Kf1 g6**

39. **Ke2 Kd7**

40. **a7 Kxd6**

41. **a8Q Ke6**

42. **Qe8+ Kf5**

[42...Kd6]

43. **g4+ Kg5**

44. **h4+ Kxg4**

45. **Qxg6+ Kxh4**

46. **Qxh6+ Kg4**

47. **Qxf6 Kh5**

48. **Qg7 e4**

49. **Ke3 Kh4**

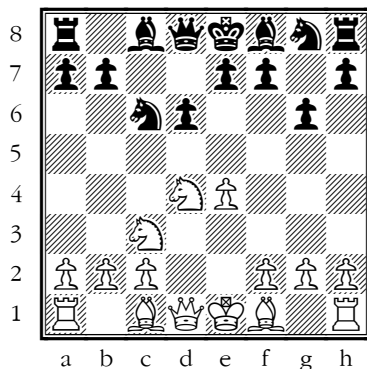
50. **Kf4 e3**

51. **Qh7#**

1-0

avoided what Black was planning to play.

4. ... **cxd4**
 5. **Nxd4 g6**



6. **Bb5**

That's too good a Bishop to give up for a Knight. It's not one of the best lines against Black's Dragon.

[The main lines start with 6.Be3; 6.f4; the Bishop probably belongs on e2 or c4]

Do learn a line to play against each of Black's most common defences.

I recommend 2.c3, which can lead to IQP positions.

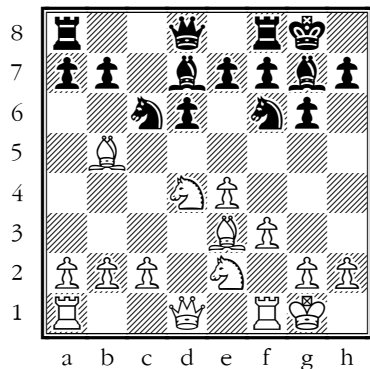
6. ... **Bd7**

7. **Be3 Bg7**

8. **0-0 Nf6**

9. **f3 0-0**

10. **Nce2**



Not a lot of point to this, and it loses a piece.

→ **Tactic: undermining, discovery.**

[10.Qd2! connects the Rooks]

10. ... d5

Normally Black should play this move in the Sicilian if it's possible. But there is a better move:

[10...Nxd4! 11.Nxd4 e5

→ **Tactic: Undermining**

12.Bxd7 exd4 and White has two Bishops hanging.]

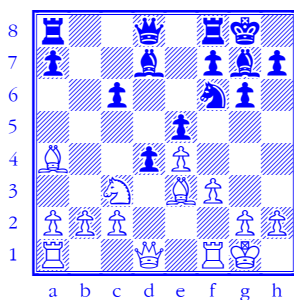
11. Nc3

Back to its first posting.

[11.Bxc6!]

11. ... dxe4?

[11...e5! wins a piece again. 12.Nxc6 bxc6 13.Ba4 d4



→ **Tactic: fork]**

12. Bxc6 bxc6

13. Nxe4 Nxe4

14. fxe4 c5

Skewering the Pawn on b2

15. Nb3 Bb5

16. Rf2 Bxb2

17. Rb1

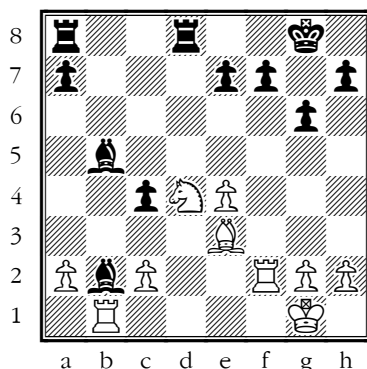
[17.Rd2 is interesting, but doesn't help.]

17. ... Qxd1+

18. Rxd1 Rfd8

19. Rb1 c4

20. Nd4?!



I can see your idea, but in fact it allowed Black to launch a little exchanging combination.

[20.a4! is best, hoping to get back on level terms. 20...cxb3 21.axb5 Be5 22.Rxb3 with equal material]

20. ... Rxd4!

Very Capablanca!

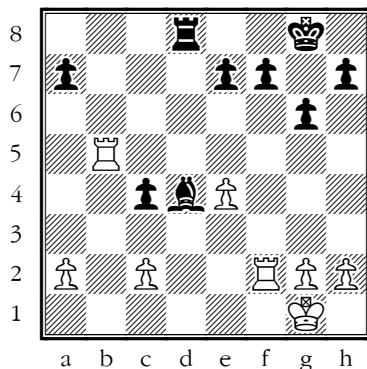
[20...Bxd4 21.Bxd4 Rxd4 22.Rxb5]

21. Bxd4

[21.Rxb2 Rxe4 with two pawns for Black, but the opposite coloured Bishops might rescue you.]

21. ... Bxd4

22. Rxb5 Rd8



23. Rd5??

White is a pawn down and must avoid exchanges. Black wants to swap!

Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.

I guess you know that, so I don't know what you might have been confused by.

[23.Kf1 Bxf2 24.Kxf2 Rd2+ 25.Kf3 Rxc2 26.Ra5 is not pretty, but there is still hope.]

Don't help your opponent!

23. ... Rxd5

24. exd5 Kg7

25. Kf1 Bxf2

26. Kxf2 Kf6

27. Ke3 Ke5

28. c3 g5

29. g4

[29.Ke2]

29. ... Kxd5

30. a4 a5

31. Kf3 e5

32. h3 e4+

33. Ke3

[33.Kf2]

33. ... Ke5

0-1

R3 Tomas Trott-NN

E22: Nimzo-Indian Defence

“ White's nicely centralised pieces overwhelmed Black's defences. There were simple tactical mistakes on both sides which might have made a difference! ”

1. d4 e6

2. c4 Nf6

3. Nc3 Bb4

4. Qb3

An unusual line against the Nimzo-Indian.

4. ... Bxc3+

[4...Nc6! is best, e.g. 5.a3 Nxd4! 6.Qxb4?? Nc2+]

5. Qxc3 b6

6. Bg5 Bb7

7. e3 d6

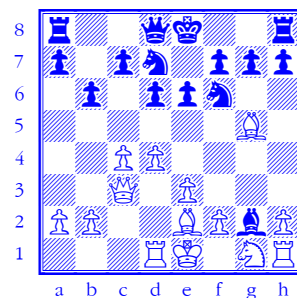
8. Rd1 Nbd7

9. Be2??

[9.Nf3!? is obvious; 9.f3!? aims to increase your space advantage.]

9. ... 0-0??

[9...Bxg2!]

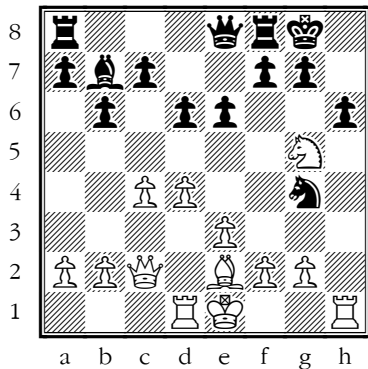


→ **Tactic: net]**

- 10. Nf3 h6
- 11. Bh4 Qe8
- 12. Bg3 Ne4
- 13. Qc2 Nxc3
- 14. hxg3 Nf6
- 15. g4?!

[15.Rh4]

- 15. ... Nxc4
- 16. Ng5



→ **Tactic: mate**

→ **Tactic: disco**

[16...hxg5?? 17.Qh7#]

A neat idea, but not hard to spot or defend!

- 16. ... g6

[16...Nf6 is simpler]

- 17. Ne4

[17.Nxf7]

- 17. ... f5

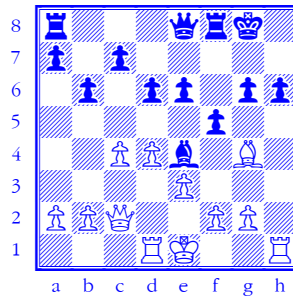
Looks loosening, but White is in no position to invade

- 18. Bxg4??

[18.Nc3]

- 18. ... fxg4??

[18...Bxe4!]



→ **Tactic: in-between move**

wins a piece]

- 19. d5

[19.Rxh6!]

- 19. ... exd5

- 20. cxd5 Qe5

[20...h5]

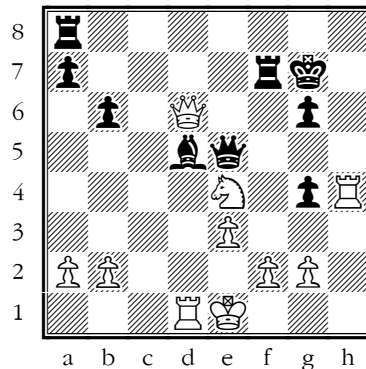
- 21. Rxh6 Kg7

- 22. Rh4 Bxd5

[22...Rae8]

- 23. Qxc7+ Rf7

- 24. Qxd6!



→ **Tactic: combination**

White now has excellent chances

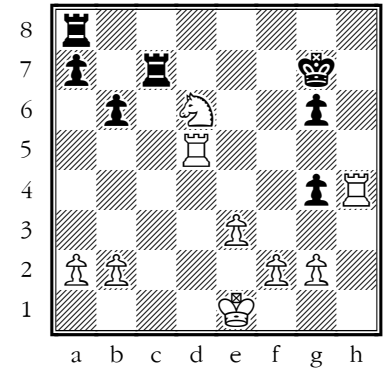
- 24. ... Qxd6

[24...Qxe4]

- 25. Nxd6 Rc7??

[25...Bxa2]

- 26. Rxd5



→ **Tactic: loose pieces drop off! (LPDO)**

That helps!

- 26. ... Rd8

[26...Rf8]

- 27. Rxc4 Rc6

[27...Kh7]

- 28. Rgd4

[28.Nf5+]

1-0

[R3 SCORESHEET MISSING]

3 James Royle

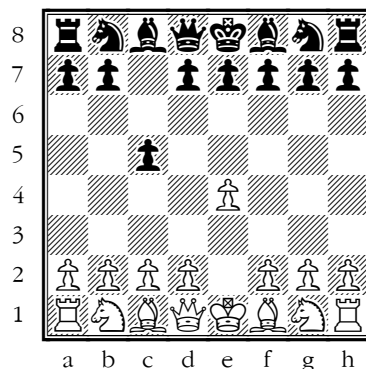
“ You did enough to win both games, and could have come away with a much better-looking result. I liked your fighting spirit, trying to play on and win where another player might have settled for a draw. Your tactical play is a bit wobbly, is that just being rusty? I hope the blunders will start to disappear if you keep practising; doing puzzles might help.”

R1 James Royle-NN

B20: Sicilian Defence

“ A good effort, with plenty to learn from. Both sides missed tactics and other points, so it could have gone either way. ”

- 1. e4 c5



- 2. c4

Not bad, but not likely to give Black any problems if they are happy to level things up with ...e5. Then the game becomes even stodgier than Old Stodge!

Do learn a system to play against the various ways Black can didge your main opening system,

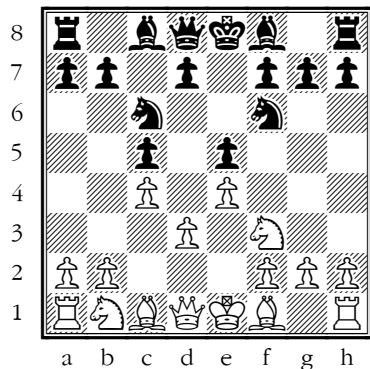
[2.c3 is the system I recommend, going for a big centre, although we usually end up with an Isolated Queen's Pawn position.]

It's worth learning how to play IQP positions, because they turn up a lot, and if you learn how to play them, you can aim for them.

2. ... Nc6
3. Nf3 e5

It's now a blocked and difficult game for both sides.

4. d3 Nf6



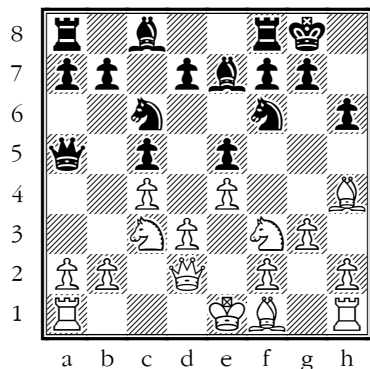
5. Bg5

That's White's good Bishop, so White should keep it safe.

Keep hold of the Bishop that is on the opposite colour to your central Pawns.

[5.h3! stopping ...Ng4 5...d6 6.Be3! Just for once, one of those DLRPMs is correct!]

5. ... Be7
6. Nc3 Qa5
7. Qd2 h6
8. Bh4 0-0
9. g3!?



Tempting ...g5, but if Black doesn't play ...g5, the Bishop on h4 has no future.

Don't leave your pieces without a retreat

[9.Nd5]

9. ... Nd4

[9...g5 might be OK for Black, there is not a direct attack for White that I

can find. 10.Bxg5 hxg5 11.Qxg5+ Kh8 12.Nxe5 with three pawns for the piece]

10. Nxd4

[10.Bg2]

10. ... cxd4

11. Nd5 Nxd5

[11...Qxd2+! 12.Kxd2 Nxd5! 13.exd5 g5! wins a piece for Black.]

12. Bxe7?

[12.Qxa5!]

12. ... Qxd2+

13. Kxd2 Nxe7

and Black has won a piece by a different method.

14. f4 f5

15. Re1 exf4

16. gxf4 fxe4

17. Rxe4 Ng6

18. Rxd4 Rxf4

19. Rd6 Rf6

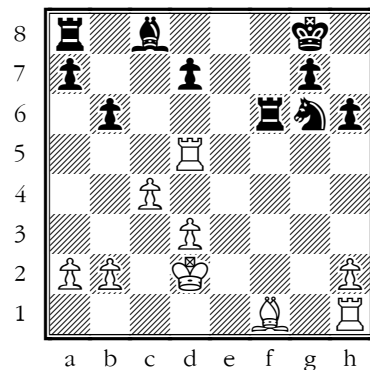
20. Rd5

Correctly avoiding exchanges.

Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.

[20.Rxf6]

20. ... b6



21. Bg2??

Risks losing material in two different ways!

[21.Rg1]

21. ... Bb7!?

→ **Tactic: Skewer,**

...but it doesn't work...

[21...Rf2+!

→ **Tactic: Fork**

wins!]

22. a3

[22.Be4! was necessary, allowing the Rook to move.]

22. ... Bxd5??

Forcing White to play a fork.

[22...Rf2+!]

→ **Tactic: Fork**

23. Bxd5+ Kh7

24. Bxa8 Rf2+

25. Kc3

[25.Ke3]

25. ... Ne5

26. Be4+ Kh8

27. d4

[27.h4! Frees the Rook.]

27. ... Nf3

28. Bxf3 Rxf3+

29. Kc2 Rf2+

30. Kc3

I think I might have the next couple of moves wrong, but in any event, White lost the h-pawn, leaving Black with two passed pawns on the King's side.

30. ... Rxb2

[30...g5]

31. Re1

[31.Rxb2]

31. ... Rh3+

32. Kc2 a5

33. Re7 Rh2+

34. Kc3 g5

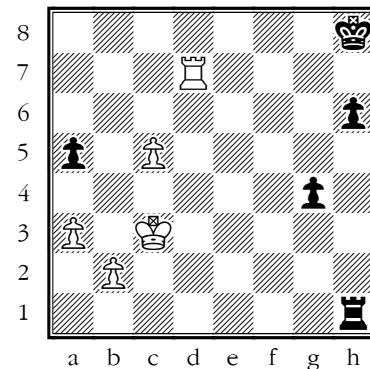
35. Rxd7 g4

36. c5!

Good, getting counterplay.

36. ... bxc5

37. dxc5 Rh1



38. c6?

[38.Rd2;

38.b4]

38. ... g3

[38...Rc1+! Skewer]

39. c7

Logical, but losing

[39.Rd2 was essential]

39. ... Rcl+

40. Kb3

[40.Kd2!]

40. ... g2

41. c8Q+

[41.Rd8+]

41. ... Rxc8

42. Rd1 h5

43. Ka4 Rg8

0-1

R2 NN-James Royle

C55: Two Knights' Defence

“ There was a confused early stage where both sides got the tactics muddled, and eventually Black won a piece, but then gave it back! The game continued to swing back and forth as both sides battled on for a win. Another day might have produced the result you wanted, there really wasn't much in it. ”

1. e4 e5

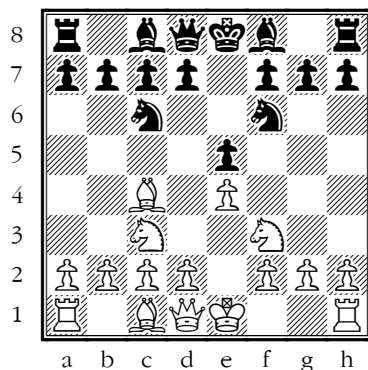
The French 1...e6 is worth sticking with, if you like it.

Pick some openings you like and stick to them; you will become expert in them and do better than if you keep switching systems.

2. Nf3 Nc6

3. Bc4 Nf6

4. Nc3?



Not exactly bad, but gives Black a huge chance to get easy equality.

Look at every check and every capture, every move.

4. ... Bb4?

And that's a chance Black should know and should take!

If you keep playing the same sort of position, you should get to know all the tricks.

[4...Nxe4! 5.Nxe4 (5.Bxf7+ Kxf7 6.Nxe4 d5! 7.Neg5+ Kg8) 5...d5!]

5. 0-0 Bxc3

6. dxc3 Nxe4

[6...0-0]

7. Qe2

[7.Re1! Nf6 8.Nxe5 0-0 9.Nxc6 with the better game for White]

7. ... d5!

[7...f5!?

8. Nxe5??

White is confused

[8.Rd1]

8. ... Nxe5!

9. Bd3

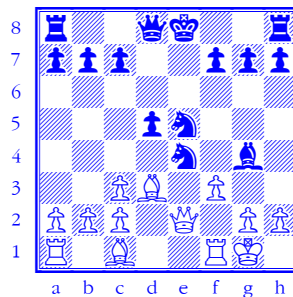
[9.Bb3]

9. ... Bg4??

[9...0-0! keeps the piece]

10. Qe3

[10.f3!



→ Tactic: pin

→ Tactic: fork

recovers the piece for White]

10. ... Qf6

[10...Be6! unpins and wins]

11. Bxe4

[11.f3! still gets back the piece]

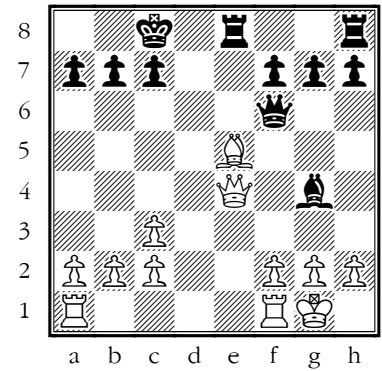
11. ... dxe4

12. Qxe4 0-0-0

13. Bf4! Rde8

[13...Ng6! saves the piece for the last time]

14. Bxe5!



→ Tactic: undermining

→ Tactic: discovery

14. ... Rxe5

15. Qxg4+ Kb8

16. Rfe1 Rg5

[16...Rhe8! gets the last lazy piece out of bed]

17. Qd7 a6

18. Re8+

[18.Re7]

18. ... Rxe8

19. Qxe8+ Ka7

20. Qe3+ Kb8

21. Rd1

White's extra pawn is meaningless

21. ... b6

22. Qe4 h5

23. Rd5 h4

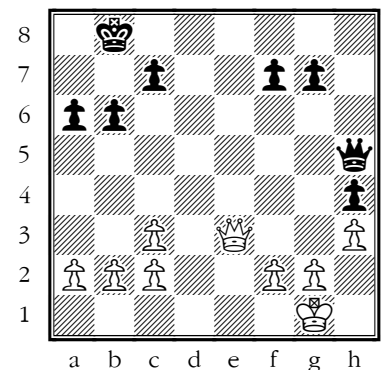
24. Rxg5 Qxg5

25. Qe3

[25.f4]

25. ... Qh5

26. h3



26. ... Qd1+!

27. Kh2 Qxc2

28. Qe8+ Kb7

29. Qxf7

Now, that's been a swap of a meaningless pawn on c2 for an important one on f7.

An exchange is usually going to be better for you or better for your opponent – make sure you know which it is!

White can now hope to make a passed pawn, although advancing pawns on the King's-side risks perpetual check.

29. ... g5

[29...Qxb2! 30.Qxg7 Qxf2!]

30. Qd5+ Ka7

31. Qd7 Kb7

32. Qd5+

[32.f3]

32. ... Ka7

33. Qxg5 Qxf2

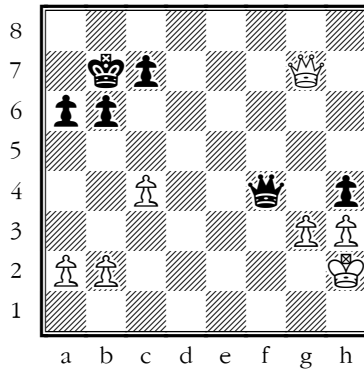
34. Qg7

[34.b4]

34. ... Kb7

35. c4 Qf4+

36. g3??



→ **Tactic: mate**

[36.Kg1!]

36. ... hxg3+??

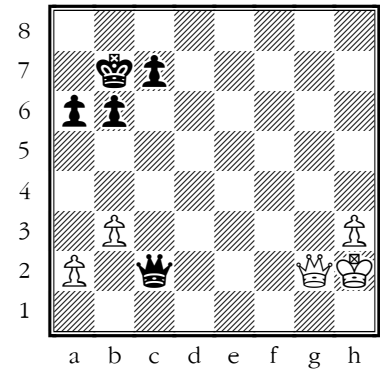
[36...Qf2+! 37.Kh1 hxg3 mates, so White would have to give up the Queen]

37. Qxg3 Qxc4

38. b3 Qc2+?

[38...Qf7]

39. Qg2+



→ **Tactic: fork**

this 'cross-check' is also a fork which forces a Queen swap

39. ... Qxg2+

40. Kxg2 Kc8

[40...Kc6]

41. Kf3

1-0

R3 [SCORESHEET MISSING]

4 Ben Newman

“ You have a good understanding of chess and a nice active style. I hope the blunders will disappear if you keep practising; doing puzzles might help. ”

R1 Ben Newman-NN

C64: Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Defence

“ Looked like a decent start!”

1. e4 e5

2. Nf3 Nc6

3. Nc3

Yawn.

3. ... Bc5

4. Bb5

last book move

4. ... d6

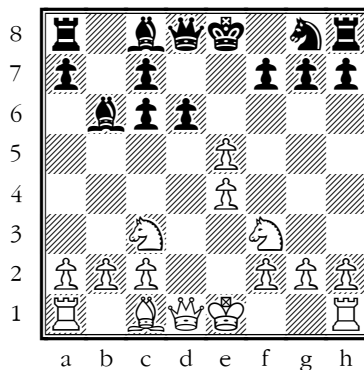
We have slid into a version of the Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Defence.

5. Bxc6+ bxc6

6. d4 Bb6

[6...exd4!]

7. dxe5



7. ... d5?

Black can't count?

[7...Ne7 Developing, is probably better. White might be forced to undouble the pawns.]

8. exd5

1-0

R2 NN-Ben Newman

C50: Bishop's Opening → Old Stodge

“ After White's stodgy opening, Black built up a fine Queen's-side attack against the enemy King. ”

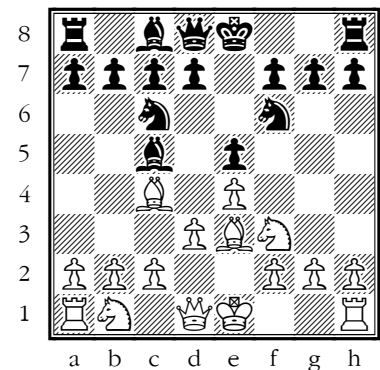
1. e4 e5

2. Bc4 Nf6

3. d3 Nc6

4. Nf3 Bc5

5. Be3



5. ... Bxe3

[5...Bb6! is the right plan. 6.Bxb6 axb6 and the doubled pawns are not a weakness, but a2 might be]

6. fxe3

Again, the doubled pawns are not a problem. e3 won't be weak as Black can't attack it (...Qg5, anyone?) and the half-open f-file will be useful.

6. ... d6

7. Nc3 Bd7

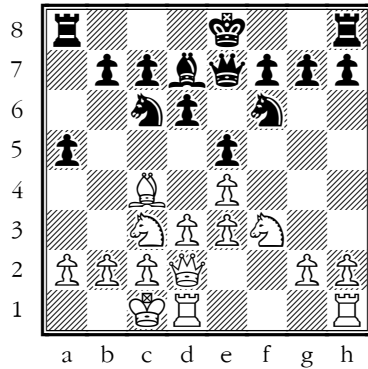
[7...Be6! 8.Bb3 Qd7]

8. Qd2 Qe7

9. 0-0-0

[9.0-0]

9. ... a5!



Quite right!

When Kings castle on opposite sides, you must rush to attack.

10. Rde1 a4

11. a3 Na5

12. Ba2 0-0

13. h3 Rfb8

14. g4 b5

15. Ref1 c5

16. Nd1

[16.g5!]

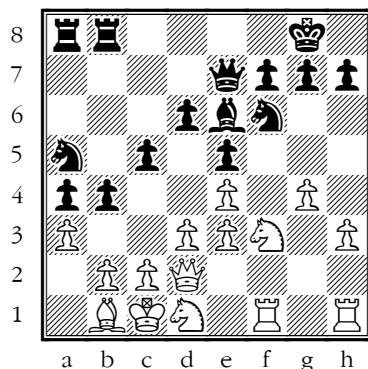
16. ... Be6

[16...b4 idea b3 looks good]

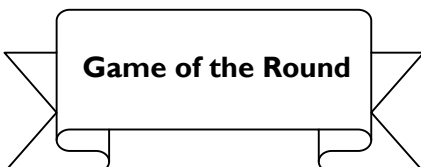
17. Bb1

[17.Bxe6]

17. ... b4



Your strong consistent Queen's-side attack made this game my...



18. axb4?

Doing Black's work for him.

[18.Ng5]

18. ... cxb4

19. Qf2 b3

[19...a3! is even better]

20. Nxe5

Desperation.

[20.c4]

20. ... dxe5

21. c3 a3

Some people are on the pitch!

They think it's all over!

22. bxa3 Qxa3+

23. Qb2 Qxb2+

Yes, no need to get fancy, swap off and win.

[23...Qd6]

24. Nxb2 Rc8

25. Kd2 Nd7

26. Rc1 f6

There were plenty more moves, but the next one was given as Be4

0-1

R3 NN-Ben Newman

C49: Four Knights' Game

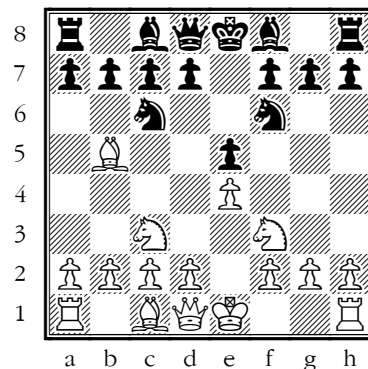
“ Black came up with a big idea but it had a big hole in it! I liked your idea of allowing doubled pawns – most people were too nervous of creating weaknesses to do that, and it showed your understanding of the game.”

1. e4 e5

2. Nf3 Nc6

3. Nc3 Nf6

4. Bb5



4. ... Bb4

[4...Nd4!? is a way of trying to unbalance the position and try for a win.]

5. d3 d6

6. 0-0 Be6

7. h3

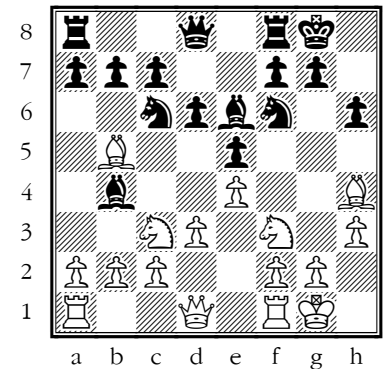
These Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves usually announce "I don't know what to do".

[7.d4]

7. ... 0-0

8. Bg5 h6

9. Bh4



9. ... Qd7!!

That's quite a grown-up idea.

[9...Nd4]

10. Bxf6

Messing up Black's pawns, but Black has some ideas of using the g-file.

10. ... gxf6

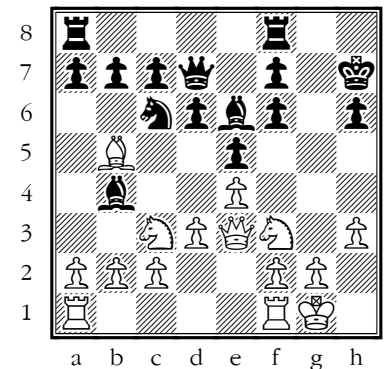
[10...Bxc3]

11. Qd2

[11.Nd5]

11. ... Kh7

12. Qe3



12. ... Bxh3??

[12...Bc5, 12...Rg8]

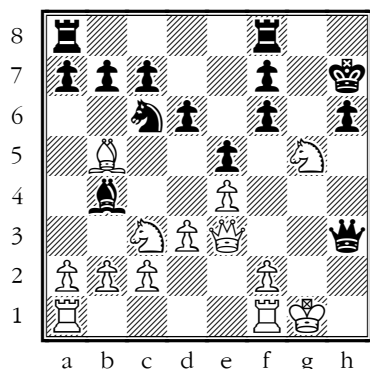
Not a bad idea, but

13. gxh3 Qxh3??

Black threatens mate, but

[13...Bc5]

14. Ng5+!

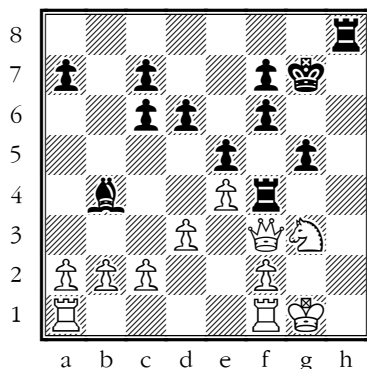


→ **Tactic: discovery**

After your clever idea, it's your opponent's move, so make sure there isn't a clever counterpunch before committing yourself.

14. ... hxg5

15. Qxh3+ Kg7
 16. Bxc6 bxc6
 17. Ne2 Rh8
 18. Qg4 Rh4
 19. Qf3 Rah8
 20. Ng3 Rf4



→ **Tactic: fork**

21. Nh5+

21. ... Rxh5

22. Qxh5 Bc5
 23. Rael Rh4
 24. Qf3 Rf4
 25. Qg3 Kg6
 26. Kg2 Rh4

[26...Kg7]

27. Rh1 Rf4
 28. Rh2

[28.Qh3]

28. ... Bxf2
 29. Qxf2 Rxf2+
 30. Kxf2 f5
 31. exf5+ Kxf5
 32. Rg2 g4
 33. Reg1
 1-0

5 Taylor Finch

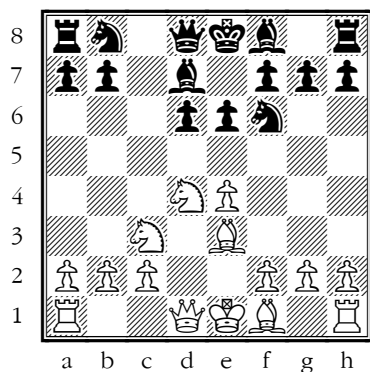
“ Great attitude and fighting spirit – you deserved a better result. If you get the hang of the Sicilian, you will be able to worry a lot more opponents, but it's probably more important to do what you can to eliminate silly mistakes.”

RI NN-Taylor Finch

B80: Sicilian Defence, Scheveningen Variation

“ Black was a bit slow with the Queen's-side minority attack, and White got in the first punch. Black showed great attitude in fighting back, but with every swap, White got closer to the win. ”

1. e4 c5
 2. Nf3 d6
 3. d4 cxd4
 4. Nxd4 Nf6
 5. Nc3 e6
 6. Be3 Bd7



That Bishop doesn't need developing yet, and might even be better on b7.

[6...Be7; 6...a6]

7. Bc4

[7.Ndb5! is the sort of move that you shouldn't encourage with a move like ...Bd7]

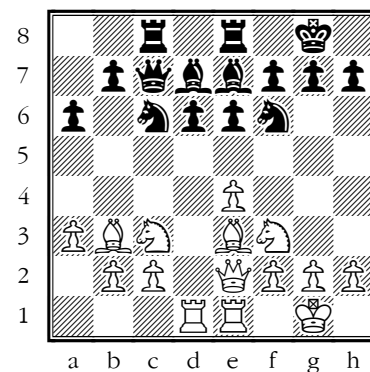
7. ... Nc6
 8. Bb3 Be7

We are back in a normal-looking Scheveningen.

9. 0-0 0-0
 10. Qe2 a6
 11. a3 Re8!?

The e-file won't be open for a bit, but after ...d5 White's Queen might get nervous.

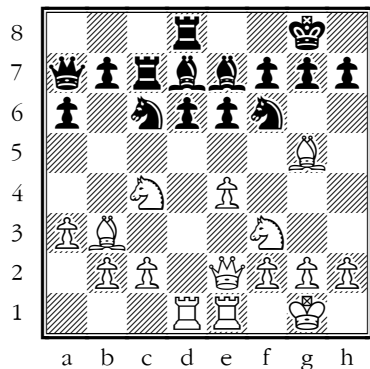
12. Rad1 Qc7
 13. Rfe1 Rac8
 14. Nf3



14. ... Red8!?

[14...b5! was overdue. You must know this idea to play the Sicilian!]

15. Na4! Qb8
 16. Nb6 Rc7
 17. Bg5 Qa7
 18. Nc4



In the end, the attack on d6 comes from c4.

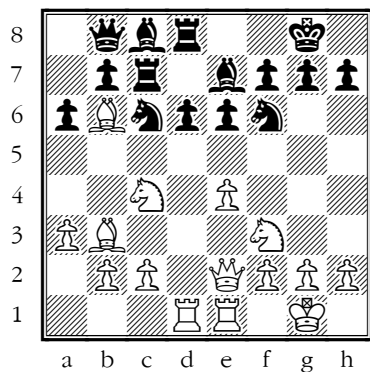
18. ... Bc8?

Saves the pawn but loses the Exchange.

[18...d5! is best, losing a pawn but making a mess]

19. Be3 Qb8

20. Bb6



→ **Tactic: Pin!**

20. ... h6

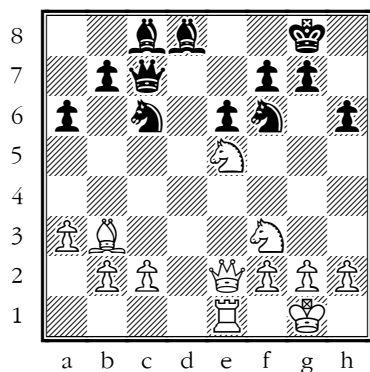
[20...Nd7]

21. Bxc7 Qxc7

22. e5! dxe5

23. Rxd8+ Bxd8

24. Ncxe5



24. ... Ne7

Correctly avoiding swaps.

Swap pieces when you are ahead,
swap pawns when you are losing.

25. Qc4 Qb8

26. Rd1 Bc7

27. Qc5 Ned5

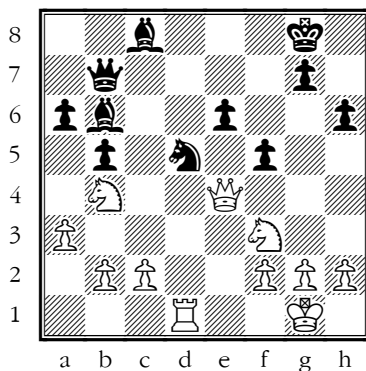
28. Bxd5 Nxd5

29. Qd4 b5

30. Nc6 Qb7

31. Nb4 Bb6

32. Qe4 f5



Black is doing so well at being a nuisance, it doesn't feel as though White is winning because White is not well co-ordinated. If Black gets the two Bishops active, White might regret taking the Exchange!

33. Qe5 Bc7

34. Qd4

[34.Qe1!/?]

34. ... Nf4

[34...Bb6!/?]

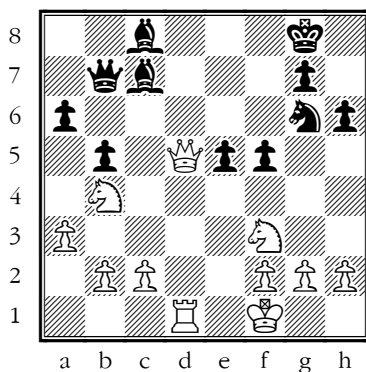
35. Kf1 Ng6

[35...e5!/?]

36. Qc5 e5?

[36...Kh7!/?]

37. Qd5+



→ **Tactic: fork.**

Forcing a Queen swap, after which a lot of the fight goes out of Black's position.

37. ... Qxd5

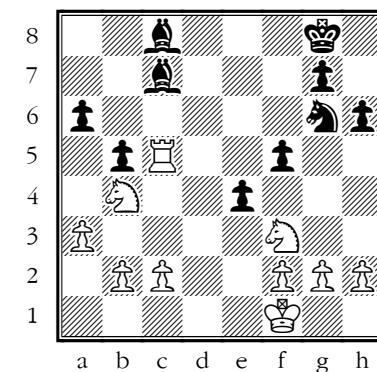
38. Rxd5

[38.Nxd5]

38. ... e4?

[38...Ne7]

39. Rc5!



→ **Tactic: skewer**

39. ... exf3

40. Rxc7 fxg2+

41. Kxg2

Overall, Black loses a pawn, but more important is that with every swap White gets closer to winning.

41. ... Be6

42. Rc6 Kf7

[42...a5]

43. Rxa6 Nh4+

44. Kf1 f4

45. Rxe6

Unnecessary, although White should still be winning without trouble.

[45.Ke2]

45. ... Kxe6

46. b3 g5

47. a4 bxa4

48. bxa4 Kd6

49. a5 Kc7

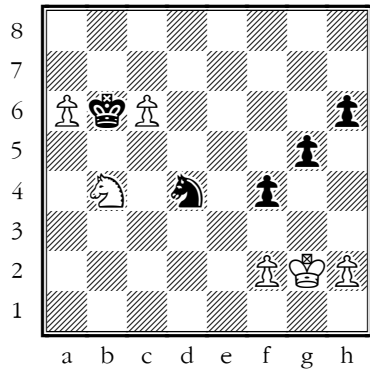
50. a6 Kb6

51. c4 Nf3

52. c5+ Ka7

53. Kg2 Nd4

54. c6 Kb6



55. Kh3 Nxc6

[55...h5! asks White to show a plan!]

56. Nxc6 Kxc6

[56...h5]

57. Kg4 Kb6

58. Kh5 Kxa6

59. Kxh6 g4

60. Kh5 g3

61. hxg3 fxg3

62. fxg3 Kb6

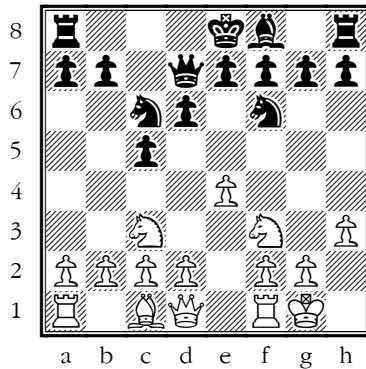
1-0

R2 NN-Taylor Finch

B52: Sicilian Defence, Moscow Variation

“ This game looked as though it might have a similar story to the last one: you dropped an exchange, and White swapped off to win despite you fighting hard. But this time your fighting attitude was rewarded, and you got right back into the game and were unlucky to lose in the end. I think I got the moves muddled somewhere, but there were plenty of interesting points in the play. ”

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. Bb5+ Bd7
4. Bxd7+ Qxd7
5. 0-0 Nf6
6. Nc3 Nc6
7. h3



These Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves usually announce "I don't know what to do".

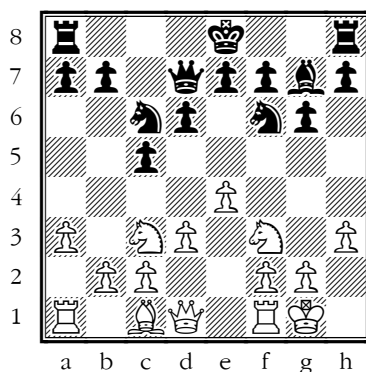
This move is preventing a pin from a Bishop that isn't on the board!

7.. ... g6

8. d3 Bg7

9. a3

And again! This should have made you happy.



9. ... e5

That move puts a bit of a damper on the Bg7, and makes a hole on d5.

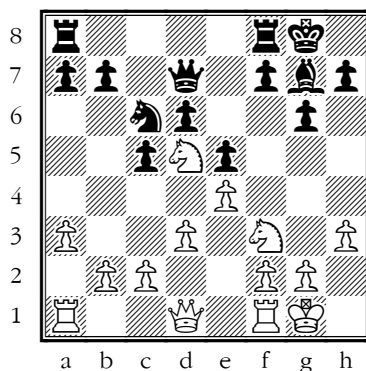
10. Bg5!

White sets out to remove the defenders of d5.

10. ... 0-0

11. Bxf6! Bxf6

12. Nd5! Bg7



So, White has a splendid outpost for the Knight on d5, but until it co-ordinates with some other White pieces, Black is OK.

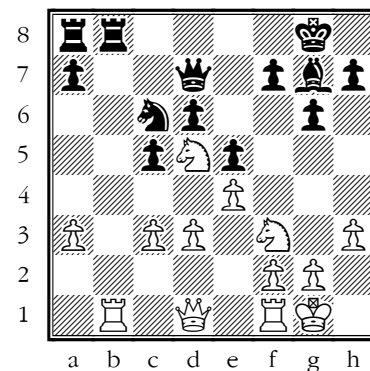
13. b4 b6

14. bxc5 bxc5

15. c3 Rfb8

[Some of the rest of this game makes better sense if this move was Rab8]

16. Rb1



16. ... Rc8

[16...Rxb1! 17.Qxb1 Rb8! grabs the open file 18.Qa2 Ne7! swaps off the dominant Knight (although Black's Bishop is still pretty duff for the moment).]

17. Rb2

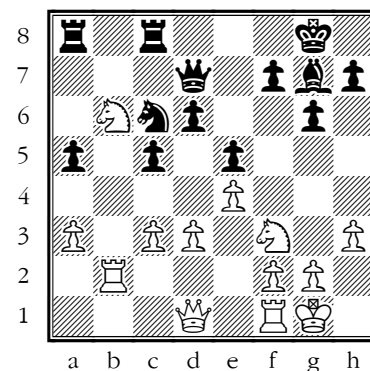
White is threatening to take over the only open file.

[This move makes no sense after 15...Rab8]

17. ... a5??

[17...Rab8]

18. Nb6



→ **Tactic: fork**

18. ... Qb7

19. Qb1

[19.Qa4]

19. ... Rd8

[19...Rab8]

20. Nc4?

[20.Nxa8 is best, of course]

20. ... Qc7

21. Rb7 Qc8

22. Rb5

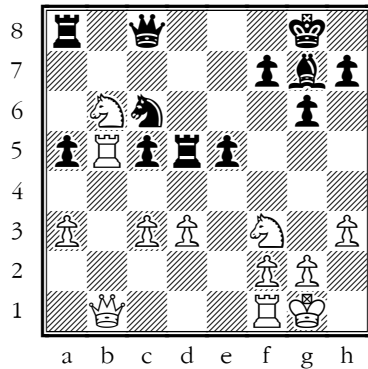
[22.Ng5!]

22. ... d5?

[22...Rb8]

23. exd5 Rxd5

24. Nb6



→ Tactic: fork

Oh dear, Black has had a hint on move 18!

24. ... Qd8

25. Nxd5 Qxd5

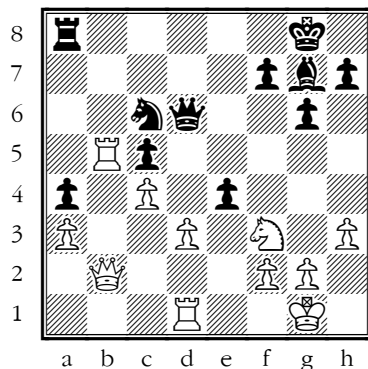
26. c4 Qd6

27. Rd1 a4

28. Qb2?

[28.Rb6]

28. ... e4!



→ Tactic: fork

→ Tactic: pin

29. Qe2 exf3

30. Qxf3 Nd4??

[30...Rd8]

31. Qe3??

Are those two moves really right? You're allowed to take pieces

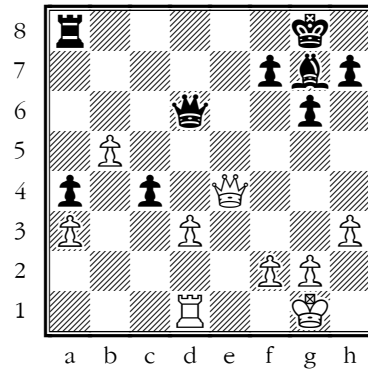
even if they are a long way away! So maybe the Rook was on b8.

[31.Qxa8+]

31. ... Nxb5

32. cxb5 c4

33. Qe4



33. ... cxd3??

Lightning strikes twice!

[33...Rd8]

34. Rxd3??

[34.Qxa8+]

34. ... Qb6??

[34...Qf8]

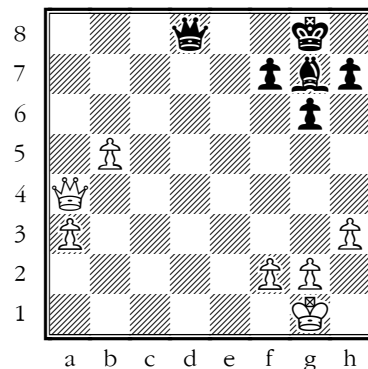
35. Qxa4??

[35.Qxa8+]

35. ... Rd8

[35...Rxa4]

36. Rxd8+ Qxd8



I think we've got the right position at last, and Black has a piece for a couple of pawns.

37. Qa6

[37.Qf4]

37. ... Be5

38. b6

[38.g3!]

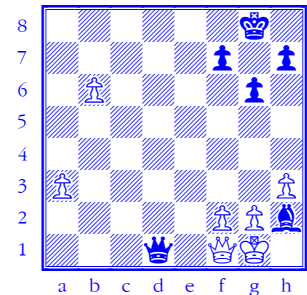
38. ... Qd6?

Ooh, two checks in a row would have given you this one!

Look at every check and every capture, every move

...Qd1+ is obvious, and ...Bh2+ is pointless, but a combination of the two is deadly!

[38...Qd1+! 39.Qf1 Bh2+]



→ Tactic: deflection]

39. g3

[39.Qa4]

39. ... h5

[39...Bd4]

40. Qa7

[40.Qa8+]

40. ... Qc5

[40...Bd4]

41. a4

Those two pawns look dangerous, were you playing for a win?

[41.Qa4]

41. ... Bxg3

[41...Kg7]

42. Qa8+ Kg7

43. Qg2

[43.Qf3]

43. ... Be5

[43...Bb8]

44. b7

[44.Qe4]

44. ... Qb4

[44...Qc1+ 45.Qf1 Qc6 46.Qb1 Qxa4 47.b8Q Bxb8 48.Qxb8 Qd1+ 49.Kg2 Qd5+ is hard to win: when you advance your pawns, you will expose your King to checks.]

45. Qc6 g5

[45...Qf4]

46. Kg2

[46.Qd5]

46. ... g4

47. hxg4 Qxg4+

48. Kf1 Qf4

49. Qg2+ Kh7

[49...Kf8]

50. Qd5 Kg6

51. a5 Bb8

52. a6 Qa4

53. Qd3+ Kg7

54. Qc3+ Kg8?

[54...f6]

55. Qc8+ Kg7

[55...Kh7]

56. Qxb8

White has recovered the piece.

56. ... Qxa6+

57. Ke1

and there is probably a perpetual there for Black.

[57.Kg1]

1-0

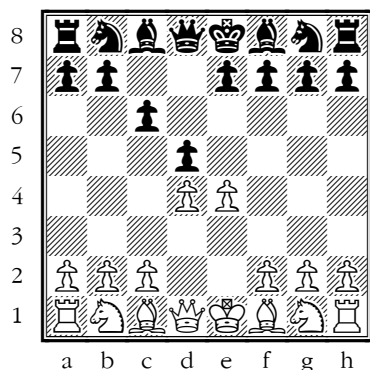
R3 Taylor Finch-NN

“ [B18: Caro-Kann Defence]

There was an early scuffle in the centre, and White came out with an extra piece. However, the players handed the advantage back and forth for a while, until Black grabbed a final piece that turned out to be a Wooden Horse. ”

1. e4 c6

2. d4 d5

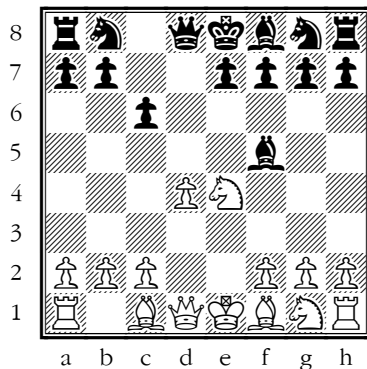


3. Nc3

[3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 is my recommendation]

3. ... dxe4

4. Nxe4 Bf5



5. Bd3?

Not one of the book lines!

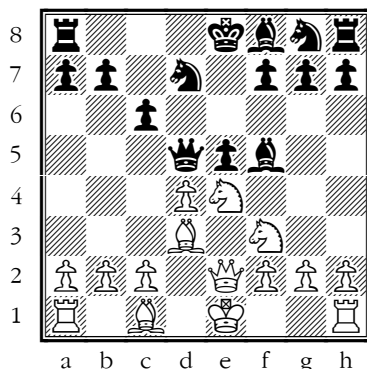
[The book moves are 5.Ng5 and 5.Ng3]

5. ... Qd5

[5...Qxd4! looked worth a try. It's sometimes risky to grab pawns in the opening, but I feel a centre pawn is often worth it.]

6. Qe2 Nd7

7. Nf3 e5

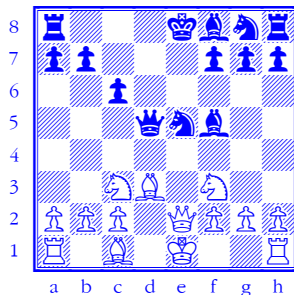


Black is determined to pick a fight, but White is ahead in development and that's usually a clue that it's not going to go well for Black.

[7...Bxe4]

8. c4!?

[8.dxe5! Nxe5?? 9.Nc3!]



→ Tactic: discovery + pin]

8. ... Bb4+

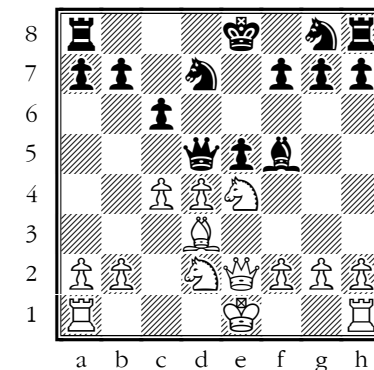
[8...Qe6]

9. Bd2

[9.Kf1!? leaves Black looking a bit over-extended.]

9. ... Bxd2+

10. Nfxd2?!



[10.Qxd2!]

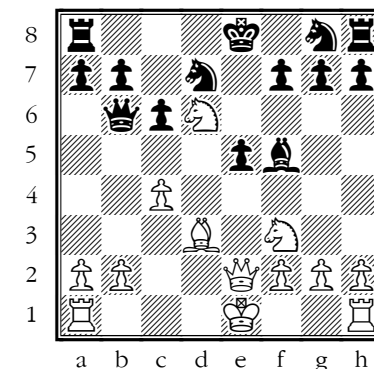
10. ... Qxd4??

[10...Qe6]

11. Nf3! Qb6

[1...Bg4! is slightly better, still losing a piece after 12.Nxd4 Bxe2 13.Nxe2]

12. Nd6+!



→ Tactic: fork

12. ... Kf8

13. Nxf5 Qc7

14. 0-0 Re8

15. Bc2 e4

16. N3d4 Ngf6

17. Rad1 Ne5

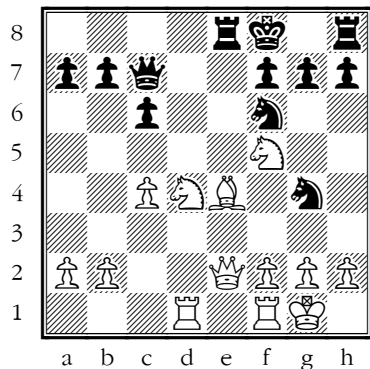
[17...g6]

18. Bxe4??

Setting up a pin.

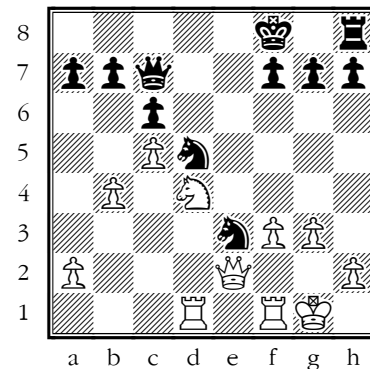
[18.c5]

18. ... Neg4!



→ Tactic: net

- [20...h5]
 21. f3! Rxd4
 22. Nxd4 Qb6
 [22...g6]
 23. c5 Qc7
 24. b4 Nd5
 [24...h5]
 25. Qd2
 [25.Qf5!]



→ Tactic: fork

looks good, but
 27. Rde1 Nxf1??

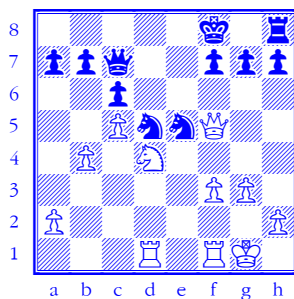
Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes, as they say (I fear the Greeks, even when they carry gifts).

- [27...Qd7]
 28. Qe8#
 1-0

→ Tactic: discovery

→ Tactic: pin

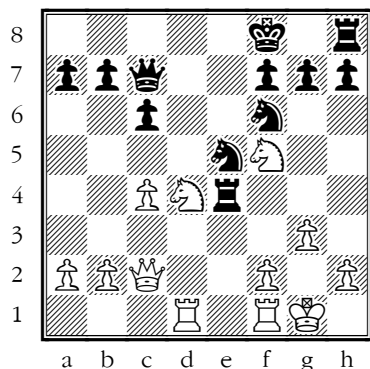
19. g3 Rxe4
 [19...g6]
 20. Qc2
 [20.Qd2]
 20. ... Ne5?



→ Tactic: fork

→ Tactic: pin Ne6+]

25. ... Nc4
 [25...h5]
 26. Qe2 Nce3



6 Reece Whittington

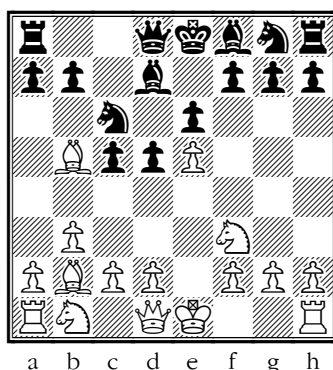
“ A score of 2/3 with no losses is a terrific result – well done. I also liked your never-say-die attitude. As with most players, you could do with a few more moves from the books in your openings and a bit more tactical awareness in the rest. ”

RI NN-Reece Whittington

Coo: French Defence

“ This game had a great story: strong centre, good development, win material, swap off and win the endgame. It was a bit more wobbly than that with some tactical oversights on both sides, but it didn't spoil the ending. ”

1. e4 e6
 2. Nf3 d5
 3. e5 c5
 4. b3 Nc6
 5. Bb5 Bd7
 6. Bb2



6. ... Qb6

[6...Nxe5!]

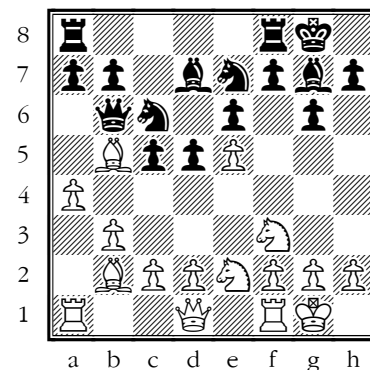
→ Tactic: discovery

wins a pawn. Remember that one, it turns up a lot in the French!]

7. a4 Nge7
 8. 0-0 g6

Developing this way makes a hole on d6, but White is in no position to get a Knight there for now.

9. Nc3 Bg7
 10. Ne2 0-0



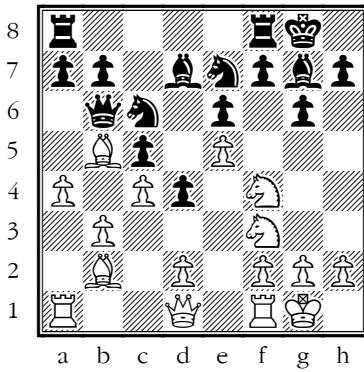
11. c4?

[11.Nf4]

11. ... d4!

shuts out the Bb2.

12. Nf4?



12. ... Rfd8?

Missing a chance! Both captures on e5 win a pawn.

[12 ... Bxe5! is OK too, 13. Nxe5 Nxe5 14. Bxd7 Nxd7 allows a recapture on d7. ;

12 ... Nxe5! 13. Nxe5 A) 13 ... Bxe5 14. Bxd7 (14. Nd3 Bxb5 15. Nxe5 Be8) 14 ... Bxf4;

B) 13 ... Bxb5 14. axb5 Bxe5]

13. h3?

These Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves usually announce "I don't know what to do".

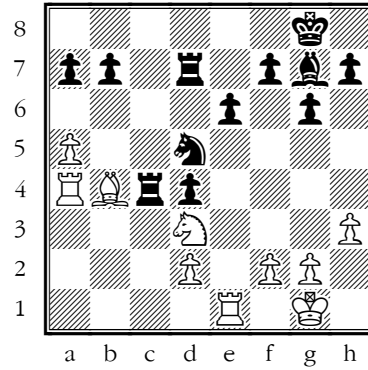
[13.Nd3!]

- 13. ... Nxe5!
- 14. Nxe5 Bxe5
- 15. Nd3 Bg7
- 16. Ba3 Rac8
- 17. Bxd7 Rxd7
- 18. b4?

Drops another pawn.

[18.a5!]

- 18. ... cxb4
- 19. Bxb4 Rxc4
- 20. a5 Qb5
- 21. Qa4 Qxa4
- 22. Rxa4 Nd5
- 23. Re1

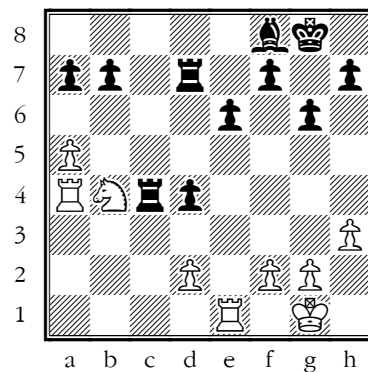


23. ... Nxb4

24. Nxb4?

[24.Rxb4]

24. ... Bf8!



→ **Tactic: pin**

- 25. d3 Rxb4
- 26. Rxb4 Bxb4
- 27. Ra1 Rd5
- 28. Ra4 Bxa5
- 29. g4 Bb6
- 30. Rb4 a5??

→ **Undefending b6.**

[30...Rc5]

- 31. Rxb6 a4
- 32. Rxb7 Ra5
- 33. Rb1

[33.Rb8+]

- 33. ... a3
- 34. Ra1 a2
- 35. f4 Ra3
- 36. Kf1 Rxd3
- 37. Rxa2 Rf3+
- 38. Ke2 Rxh3
- 39. Ra1 Re3+
- 40. Kd1

[40.Kf2]

- 40. ... d3

[40...Rf3]

41. Ra2 h5

42. gxh5 gxh5

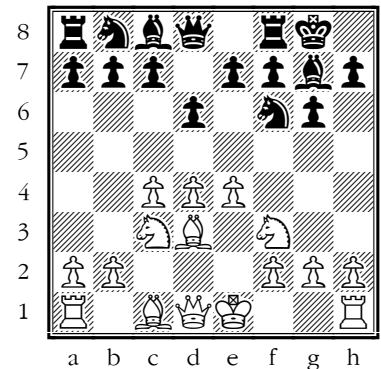
0-1

R2 Reece Whittington-NN

Ego: King's Indian Defence → Benoni

“ I don't think you knew how to tackle Black's defence, so you played some sensible-looking moves that didn't go anywhere very promising. You hung on well to draw an OCB ending, but you could have made it easier on yourself at a couple of points. ”

- 1. d4 Nf6
- 2. c4 g6
- 3. Nc3 Bg7
- 4. Nf3 d6
- 5. e4 0-0
- 6. Bd3



My way of thinking about these positions is: Black is going to blockade on the dark squares, so my pawns are going to get stuck on light squares, so I probably want to put my Bishop on e2 so it can see around the pawns.

- 6. ... c5

That's a system called the Benoni. Black wants to bash open the long diagonal for the Bishop.

- 7. d5

last book move

- 7. ... Nbd7

- 8. Be3!? Ng4!

Black recognises that the e3 Bishop is your better one, and now you should keep it.

- 9. Qe2?

[9.Bg5!]

- 9. ... Nxe3!

10. Qxe3

Now Black owns the dark squares.

10. ... Nf6

11. 0-0 Bd7

[11...Ng4]

12. Rfe1

[12.h3]

12. ... e6

This is a common plan, but a bit late here.

13. dxe6! Bxe6

Black's d-pawn looks a bit sickly, but there is no easy way to attack it

14. Rad1

[14.Nb5 a6;

14.Qf4 Nh5]

14. ... Qb6

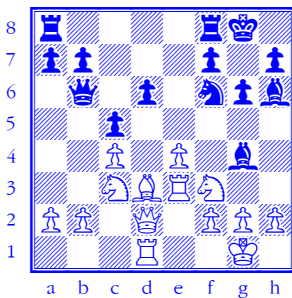
15. Qd2 Bg4

16. Re3??

[16.Re2]

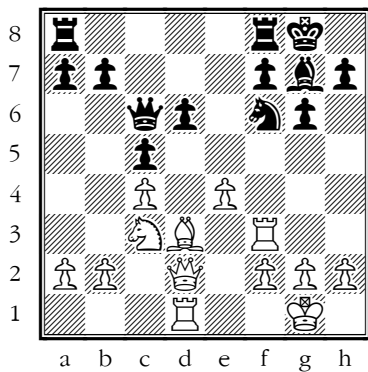
16. ... Bxf3??

[16...Bh6!



→ **Tactic: pin!**

17. Rxf3 Qc6

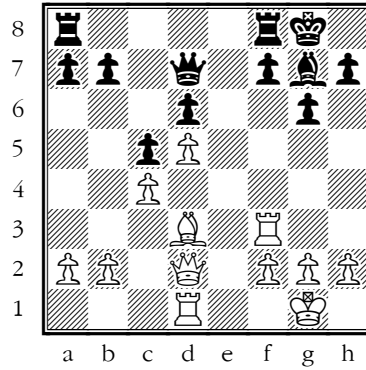


18. Nd5?

This move allows Black to shield the weak d-pawn.

18. ... Nxd5

19. exd5 Qd7



Now we have a position with opposite coloured Bishops (OCBs). They can be drawish on their own but winningish if the Bishop can co-ordinate with other pieces, as the defender can't swap it off.

20. b3 Rae8

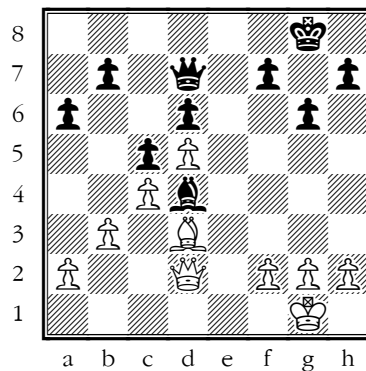
21. Re1 Rxe1+

22. Qxe1 Re8

23. Re3 Rxe3

24. Qxe3 Bd4

25. Qd2 a6



26. b4?!

This makes an unnecessary isolated a-pawn.

26. ... cxb4

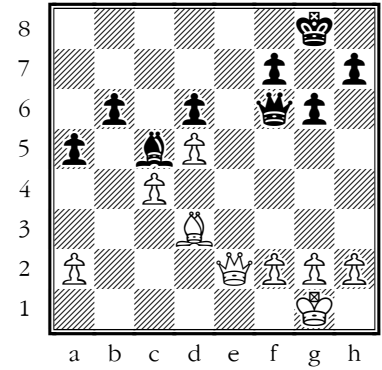
27. Qxb4 b6

28. Qa3 a5

29. Qb3 Qd8

30. Qd1 Qf6

31. Qe2 Bc5



This is the sort of thing I meant about being winningish: White doesn't have a Bishop to defend f2 or swap off Black's bishop.

32. Bb1?

[32.g3 is safer]

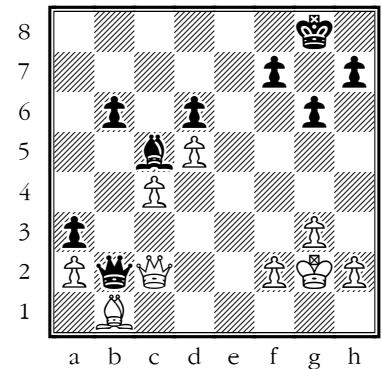
32. ... Qa1!

33. Qc2 a4

Black is very active, but is it enough for a win?

34. g3 a3

35. Kg2 Qb2



36. Qxb2?

You keep helping your opponent! No need to give them a passed pawn.

[36.h4!]

36. ... axb2

37. Bc2 Ba3

38. Kf3 Kg7

39. Ke3 Kf6

40. Kd3 Ke5

41. Kc3 Bc5!

42. f3 Bd4+

43. Kb4 Be3

44. Kc3 Bc1

45. f4+!

White's team keeps out the Black King.

45. ... Kf6

46. Kb4 Ke7

47. Kb5

Now White has some counterplay.

47. ... Be3

48. Kc6 f5

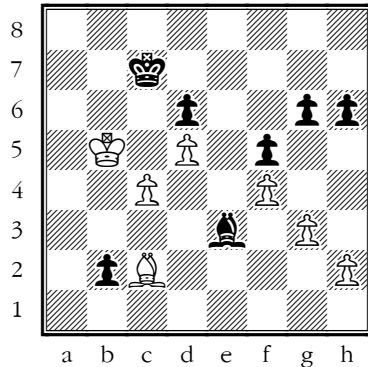
49. Kb5 h6

50. a4 Kd7

51. a5 bxa5

52. Kxa5 Kc7

53. Kb5



53. ... g5!?

A good winning attempt.

54. fxg5 hxg5

55. Bxf5 g4

56. Bc2 Bg1

57. Kb4 Bxh2

58. Kb3 Bxg3

59. Kxb2 Bf4

60. Be4 g3

61. Kb3 Kb6

62. Kb4 Bd2+

63. Kb3 Kc5

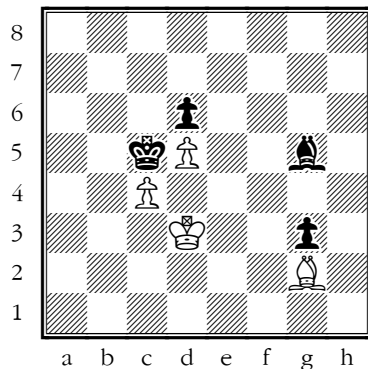
64. Kc2 Bf4

65. Kd3 Be5

66. Bg2 Bf4

67. Be4 Bg5

68. Bg2



I expect this is still drawn, but Black really wants the Bishop on c5 or f2

68. ... Bh4

69. Be4 Kb4

70. Bg2 Kb3

71. Kd4 Kc2

72. Ke4 Kc3

73. c5 dxc5

74. d6 Bd8?

[74...c4!]

75. Kf4 Kd4

76. Kxg3 Ke5

77. Kf3 Kxd6

78. Ke3 Bb6

79. Kd3 Ke5

80. Kc4 Kd6

The White King will never budge.

81. Bf3 Ke5

82. Bg2 Kd6

83. Ba8 Kc7

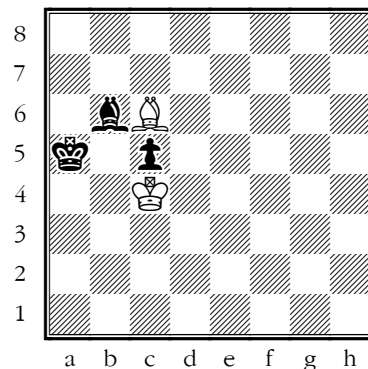
84. Bg2 Kb8

85. Bd5 Ka7

86. Bh1 Ka6

87. Bd5 Ka5

88. Bc6



1/2-1/2

R3 NN-Reece Whittington

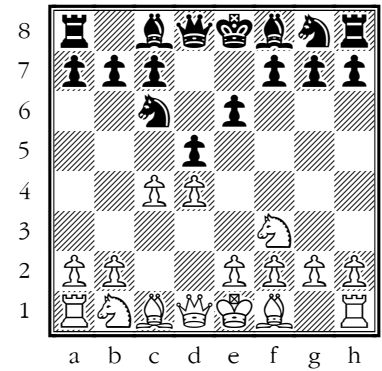
Do7: Queen's Gambit Declined

“ A long struggle with weak pawns and dark-squared weaknesses, again showing your determination. White wanted to be sure of the win, but spent so long on his moves that he could have lost on time! ”

1. d4 d5

2. c4 e6

3. Nf3 Nc6



That's hard to make work. Black needs to get in ...c5 or ...e5 or their Rooks will go to sleep, and this move gives up on ...c5.

Find a line you like to play against 1.d4, keep playing it, and you will learn more about how to play the line for both sides.

[3...Nf6! 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bg5 0-0 6.e3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 a6 This is the very solid Swiss Defence 8.Bd3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 b5 10.Bb3 c5;

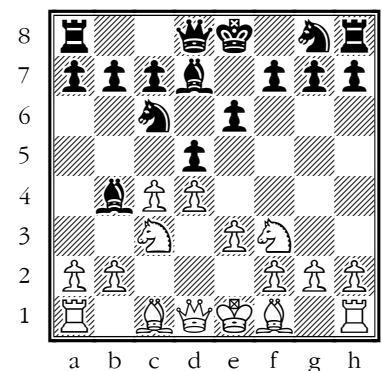
3...c5! This is the more aggressive Tarrasch Defence]

4. Nc3

[4.Bf4 rubs it in about ...e5, when Black will have a pretty duff game]

4. ... Bb4

5. e3 Bd7



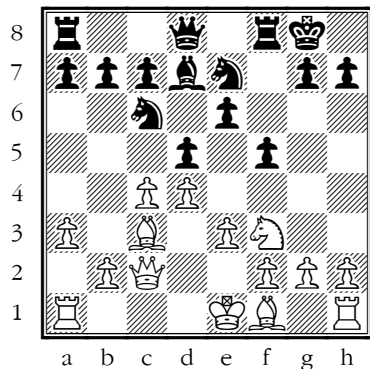
That Bishop didn't need to be moved, and in fact it should wait to see if ...e5 gets played.

6. Bd2 Nge7

7. a3 Bxc3

8. Bxc3 0-0

9. Qc2 f5



Black has only a light-squared Bishop, so should think twice about putting pawns on light squares.

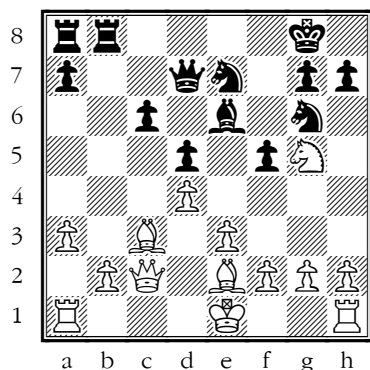
10. cxd5 exd5
 11. Be2 Ng6
 12. Qb3 Be6
 13. Qxb7 Qd7
 14. Qb3 Rfb8
 15. Qc2 Nce7

[15...f4]

16. Ng5

[16.h4]

16. ... c6



17. Bb4

Black's c-pawn is backward, and the square in front of it is a nice spot for White's pieces, especially now that Black doesn't have a dark-squared Bishop.

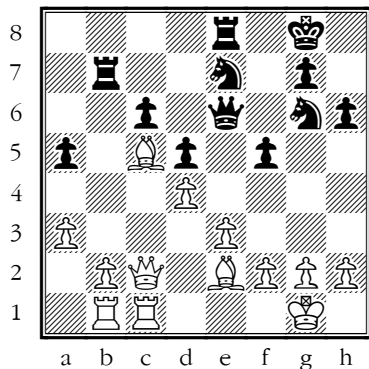
17. ... a5
 18. Bc5 Rb7

[18...f4]

19. Nxe6 Qxe6
 20. 0-0 Re8
 21. Rab1 h6

These Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves usually announce "I don't know what to do".

22. Rfc1



Very logical play by White. Black badly needs some counterplay, and if White is going to be moving over to the Queen's-side, Black should make trouble on the other side, starting with ...f4!

22. ... Qe4
 23. Bd3 Qe6
 24. Qc3

[24.g3]

24. ... Ra8

[24...f4!]

25. Qc2

[25.g3!]

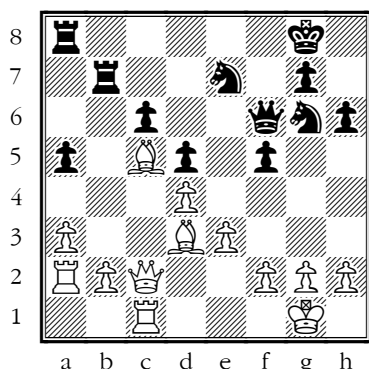
25. ... Qf6

[25...Re8]

26. Ra1

[26.g3]

26. ... Rab8
 27. Ra2 Ra8



28. Rca1

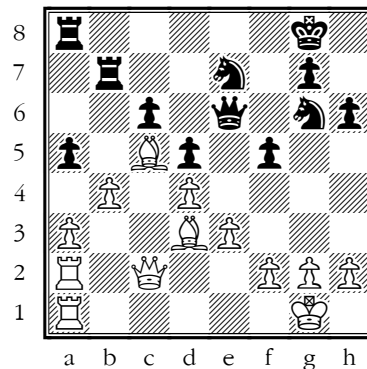
White is having fun rearranging the Rooks, but Black should not sit back and watch.

[28.g3]

28. ... Qe6

[28...f4!]

29. b4



29. ... a4

These fidgets on the Queen's-side help White.

[29...f4!]

30. Qd1 Qd7
 31. Bc2! Nc8
 32. Bxa4! Nb6
 33. Bxb6 Rxb6
 34. Bb3 Qe6
 35. Qd2 Qf6
 36. Rc1 f4!

Right idea, rather late!

37. e4 Rd8
 38. exd5 cxd5
 39. Rc5 Qg5
 40. g3 Nh4!?
 41. Qxf4 Qxf4
 42. gxf4 Nf3+

[42...Rbd6]

43. Kg2 Nxd4
 44. Bxd5+ Kh8

[44...Kf8]

45. Rd2

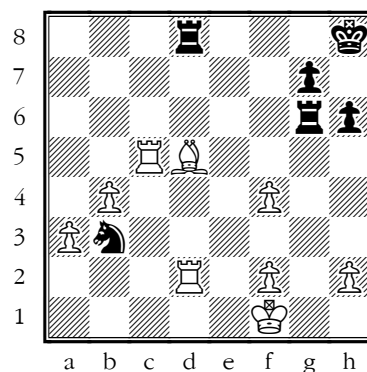
White has a winning game.

[45.Be4]

45. ... Rg6+

[45...Nb3]

46. Kf1 Nb3!



→ **Tactic: fork**

[46...Nc6]

47. **Bxb3 Rxd2**
 48. **Rc8+ Kh7**
 49. **Bc4**

[49.Bc2!]

→ **Tactic: pin**

wins back the exchange, but White was getting short of time.]

49. ... **Rd1+**

[49...Rf6]

50. **Ke2 Rgd6**
 51. **a4 R6d2+**

[51...Ra1]

52. **Ke3 Rb2**
 53. **Bd3+**

[53.f5]

53. ... **g6**
 54. **b5 Rb3**
 55. **Rd8 Ra1**
 56. **Rd7+ Kg8**
 57. **Ke4?**

[57.Rd4]

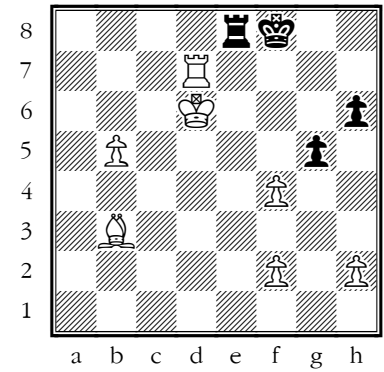
57. ... **Rxa4+!**
 58. **Ke5 Ra8??**

[58...Rab4]

59. **Bc4+! Kf8**
 60. **Bxb3 Re8+**

[60...Rb8]

61. **Kd6 g5**



[61...Rb8]

62. Rf7+

White's flag fell, but Black had not been making any progress, so a draw was given.

[62.Rf7+ Kg8 63.Re7+ Kf8
 64.Rxe8+ Kxe8 65.b6+]

½-½

7 Becky Trott

“ Your attacking attitude is great – I do love to see someone let fly with the King's Gambit now and then – but you need to have a bit of opening knowledge and tactical technique too. But there is hardly anyone in the team that doesn't apply to!
 Just one game; if there are other games of yours that you would like some feedback on, let me know.”

R1 [SCORESHEET MISSING]

R2 Becky Trott-NN

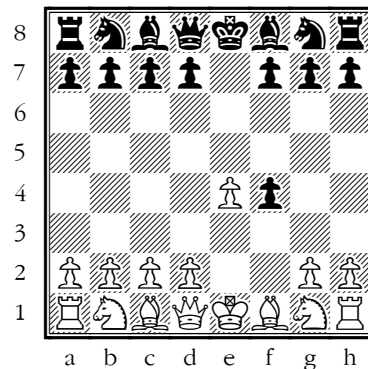
C33: King's Gambit Accepted, Suicide Variation

“ A bit of a roller-coaster! There was a moment of panic early on, a Vulcan Death-Grip on e6, a trapped Queen and a brilliant mating combination that didn't get played. Action-packed!
 You know what you're aiming at, it just needed a more steady eye, and that will come with practice. ”

1. **e4 e5**
 2. **f4**

I am pleased to have someone on the team who likes the King's Gambit!

2. ... **exf4**



3. **d4??**

Oh panic! I think you need to learn more about what happens after move 2!

3. ... **d6**

[3...Qh4+! and White is busted!]

4. **Bxf4 f5**
 5. **Nc3**

[5.exf5]

5. ... **Be7**

[5...fxe4]

6. **Nf3**

[6.exf5]

6. ... **c5**

[6...fxe4]

7. **Bb5+ Bd7**

8. **d5**

[8.exf5]

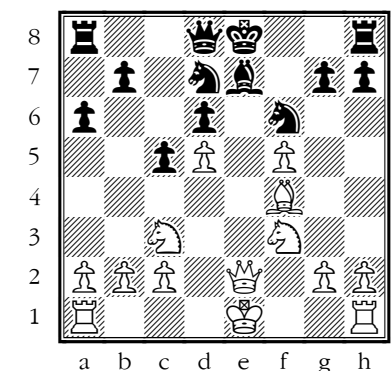
8. ... **a6**

[8...fxe4]

9. **Bxd7+ Nxd7**

10. **exf5 Ngf6**

11. **Qe2**



White has more space and an extra pawn, with a fierce grip on the light squares.

11. ... **0-0**

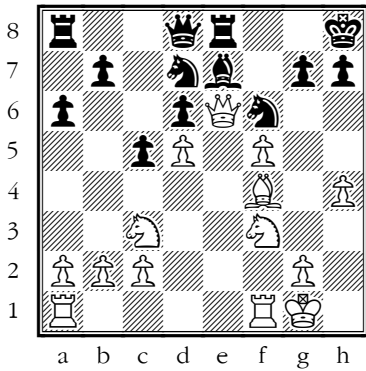
12. **0-0 Re8**

[12...Ne8]

13. **Qe6+ Kh8**

Now, Black is in great danger, but ...Be7-f8 will net the Queen.

14. h4

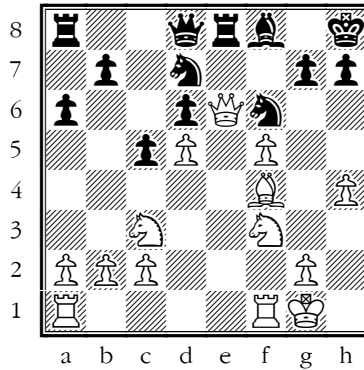


→ **Tactic: fork**

[14.Ng5! wins the Exchange, as if 14...Rf8 15.Nf7+ Kg8 (15...Rxf7) 16.Nxd8+!+-

We looked at 16.Nh6+ Kh8 17.Qg8+?? when 17...Rxf8?? is a fantastic mate after 18.Nf7#! but 17...Nxf8! saves the day]

14. ... Bf8!



→ **Tactic: net**

15. Ng5! Qa5??

[15...Ne5]

16. Qf7??

[16.Nf7+! Kg8 17.Nh6+ The perpetual check would be better than losing the Queen, but in fact 17...Kh8 18.Qg8+!! Nxf8 19.Nf7#! now works!]

Do find out about the different tactical ideas that you can.

You can't play what you don't see, and it's hard to see an idea you don't know about.

16. ... Re7

→ **Tactic: net**

Gotcha!

...0-1

R3 [SCORESHEET MISSING]

8 Tom Ferdinand

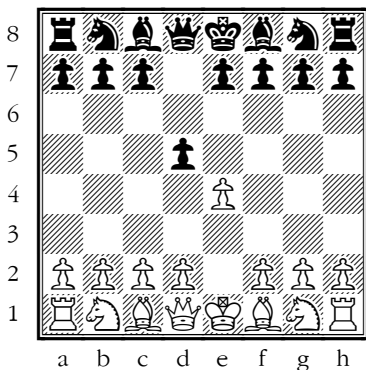
“ I've been a bit hard on you below for playing Old Stodge (even though you won), but you need to bring some better ideas to the board than Old Stodge. Old Stodge is not really easy, it's not even safe and to be honest you're not playing the best ideas. Your notation went a bit wrong, otherwise I would have more than your openings to comment about! If you have other games that you think you would like some feedback on, send them along. ”

R1 Tom Ferdinand-NN

B01: Scandinavian Defence

“ It's worth learning a line to play against this annoying defence. ”

1. e4 d5



2. e5

Black gets easy play after this.

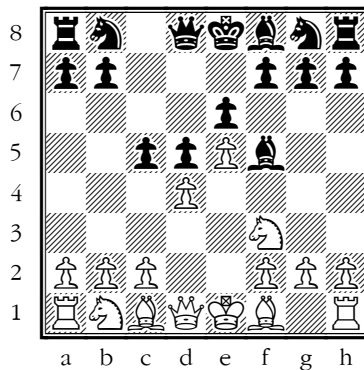
[2.exd5 is the main line.;

2.d4 dxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.f3 is an interesting gambit]

2. ... Bf5!

3. Nf3 e6

4. d4 c5



5. Bb5+

That's your good Bishop, so hang on to it!

Keep the Bishop that goes on the opposite coloured squares to your central pawns.

With a blocked Pawn chain in the middle, with Black pawns on light squares, you would expect Black's light squared Bishop to be bad, but it's fine, thanks to Black's second move.

5. ... Nc6

6. Nc3 Qc7

7. Be3 c4

8. 0-0 a6

9. Bxc6+ bxc6

White has the wrong Bishop to go with the pawns.

10. b3 cxb3

11. Nd2

Maybe a move or two missed out here?

[11.axb3]

...

R2 Tom Ferdinand-NN

C55: Old Stodge

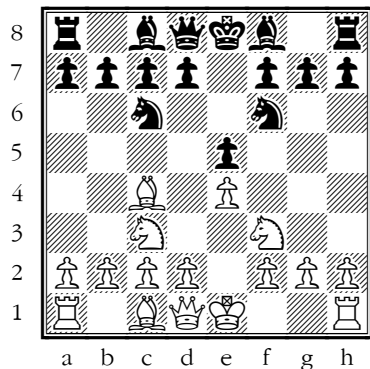
“ I'm guessing you play this line quite a bit, but there are still some ideas you could learn! ”

1. e4 e5

2. Nf3 Nc6

3. Bc4 Nf6

4. Nc3!?



“ Open up! This is the Anti-Stodge Squad! You are arrested on suspicion of playing a boring opening, and if convicted are going to be sent to Gambit Camp for a week.”

Here are two better ideas:

[4.Ng5 grabs a pawn and puts up with an attack;

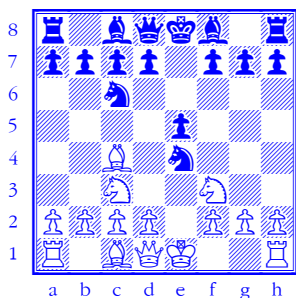
4.d4 goes for an attack and gives up a pawn.

Depends on your style, but Old Stodge suits nobody...]

4. ... Bc5?!

[I wouldn't mind so much people playing Old Stodge if they played it well; here you are allowing Black to play a well-known trick to get an equal game:

4...Nxe4!



→ **Tactic: fork**

9 Greg Susevee

3/3 was a great result! You have a nicely balanced style, you avoided trouble for the most part and you took your chances well. You did seem a lot more interested in your attacking ideas than your opponent's, which could have led to more trouble in round 3. ”

R1 Greg Susevee-NN

C44: Scotch Game

“ That all went well! Black didn't play so well and at points seemed to be on your side... ”

This doesn't win pawn but it wins freedom for Black and White has next to nothing.]

5. d3 0-0

Castling can be done too early in this difficult line.

You see, this is one of the reasons I don't like Old Stodge: natural moves can turn out badly. People think it's easy and safe when actually it's hard and tricky!

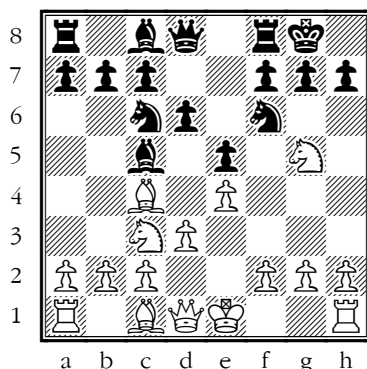
6. Ng5?!

You should have a really good reason for moving pieces twice in the opening. Let everyone have a turn!

That looks like a waste of time here. Before this move, you have 3 pieces in play, right?

[6.Bg5! with ideas of Nd5, or 6...h6 7.Bh4 (7.h4 hxg5 8.hxg5 Nh7? 9.g6!) 7...g5 8.Nxg5 hxg5 9.Bxg5]

6. ... d6



7. Bxf7+

[7.Be3!?!]

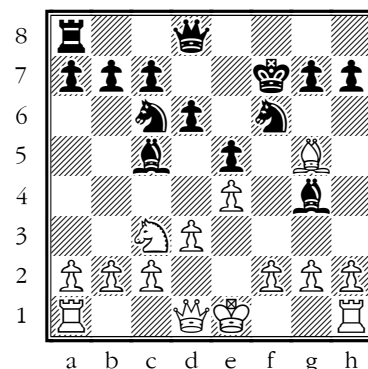
7. ... Rxf7

8. Nxf7 Kxf7

Now you have just one piece in play!

A swap of two developed pieces for a sleepy Rook rarely works well; the pieces will be easier to use than a Rook in the corner for a long while.

9. Bg5 Bg4??

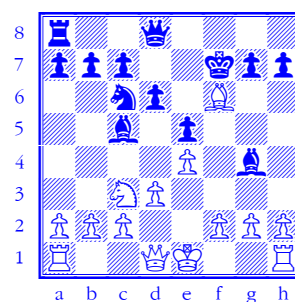


[9...h6]

10. Qd2?

You can win a piece here:

[10.Bxf6!



→ **Tactic: undermine g4**

10...Bxf2+!

→ **Tactic: decoy**

(idea ...Qxf6+)

11.Kd2! wins a piece]

Look at every check and every capture, every move

10. ... h6

11. Bxf6 Qxf6

12. Nd5 Qg5

13. Qxg5 hxg5

1-0

R3 [SCORESHEET MISSING]

1. e4 e5

2. Nf3 d6

3. d4 f6

[3...Nf6]

4. Bc4 Nc6

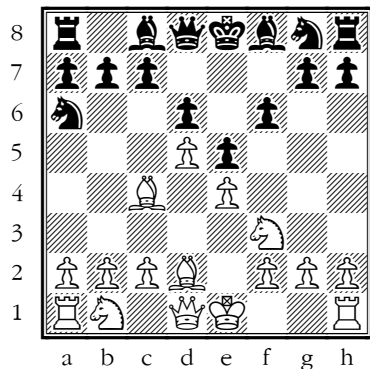
5. d5

[5.Nc3]

5. ... Nb4?!

Where's he going?

6. Bd2 Na6

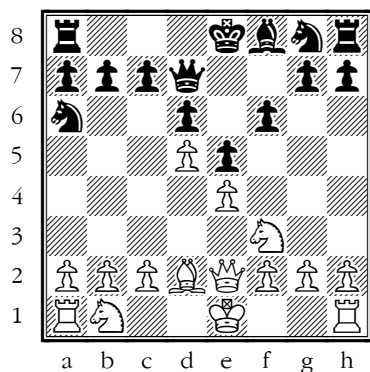


7. Bb5+

[7.0-0 Developing is probably best, when White needs 2 moves to connect rooks and Black needs at least 5]

You should have a really good reason for moving pieces twice in the opening. Let everyone have a turn!

7. ... Bd7
8. Qe2 Qc8
9. Bxd7+ Qxd7



10. Nc3 Nb4

White still needs 2 moves but Black now only needs 3

With a threat, but wasting time.

[10...g6]

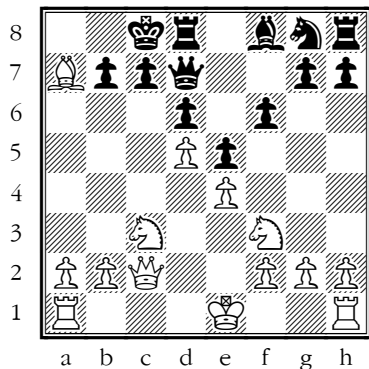
11. Be3 Nxc2??

[11...Nh6]

12. Qxc2 0-0-0?

[12...a6]

13. Bxa7?!



13. ... Nh6

[13...b6!? nets the Bishop, but it's not going to matter: 14.Rc1]

14. Ne2

[14.Na4]

14. ... Ng4

These raids with just one piece are generally a complete waste of time.

[14...Qb5]

15. h3 Nh6

[15...Qb5]

16. 0-0 f5

17. Ng5 Be7

18. Ne6 Rde8

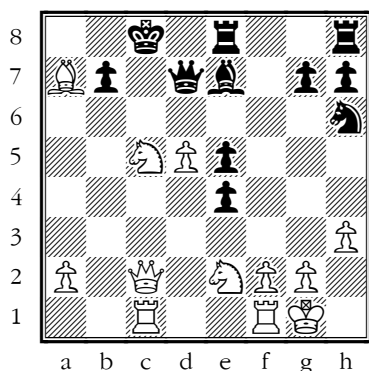
19. Rac1 c5

20. b4 fxe4

[20...b5 is perhaps better, but it shouldn't affect the result.]

21. bxc5 dxc5

22. Nxc5



22. ... Bxc5?

Forcing White to mate Black!

[22...Qxd5!]

23. Qxc5+ Kd8

24. Bb6+ Qc7

25. Qxc7#

1-0

R2 NN-Greg Susevee

C10: Petroff Defence

“ Some young players don't seem to know what to do with their Rooks, and leave them in the corners like paperweights. This is what to do with Rooks! ”

1. e4 e5

2. Nf3 Nf6

That's a smart idea – a good move and not everyone knows what to do about it.

3. Nxe5

[The main line, while 3.d4 is my current recommendation.]

3. ... d6

4. Nf3 Nxe4

5. d3?!

Can't be right – can you hear the Bf1 grumbling? Like I say, not everyone knows it!

[Better lines include 5.d4; 5.c4; and 5.Nc3]

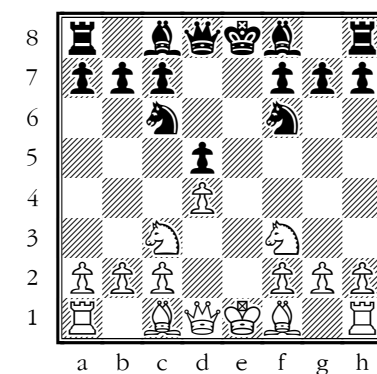
5. ... Nf6

6. Nc3 d5

7. d4

White admits their mistake.

7. ... Nc6



Looks balanced!

8. Bg5 h6?

Black is asking White to mess up the pawns!

[8...Be7!]

9. Be3

[9.Bxf6 gxf6 (9...Qxf6? 10.Nxd5)]

9. ... Be7

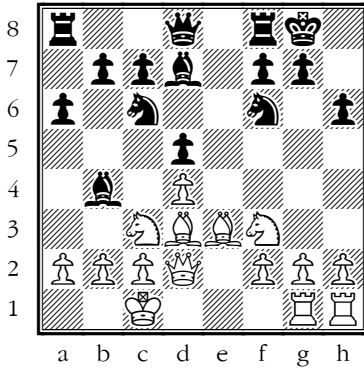
10. Bb5 Bd7

11. Qd2 a6

12. Bd3 0-0

13. 0-0-0 Bb4

14. Rdg1



White is gearing up for a King's-side attack, but it never happens.

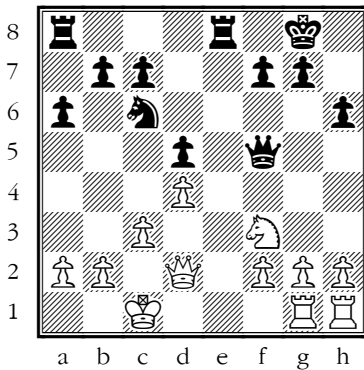
[14.Bxh6!? is interesting, and shows the danger of those dreadful little Rook's pawn moves. In fact, I think Black is well enough developed to hold the defence: 14...gxh6 15.Qxh6 Bxc3 16.bxc3 Ne4 17.Bxe4 dxe4 18.Ng5 Bf5 19.g4 Bg6 20.Ne6! But next time, it might work.]

Don't move the pawns in front of your castled King without a very good reason.

14. ... Bxc3

[14...Re8; 14...Ne4!]

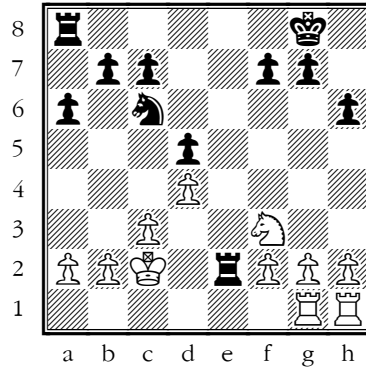
- 15. Qxc3 Ng4
- 16. Qd2 Nxe3
- 17. Qxe3 Re8
- 18. Qd2 Qf6
- 19. c3 Bf5
- 20. Bxf5 Qxf5



21. Qc2?

Playing safe can be dangerous.

- 21. ... Qxc2+!
- 22. Kxc2 Re2+!



→ Tactic: fork

23. Kd1

[23.Kc1]

23. ... Rxf2

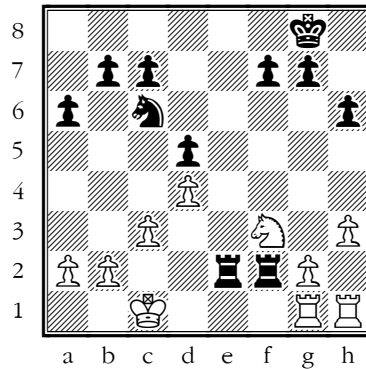
[23...Rxb2!]

24. Kc1 Re8

25. h3

[25.Re1]

25. ... Ree2!



The Rooks are in Rook Heaven.

26. Ne5

[26.Rf1]

26. ... Nxe5

27. dxe5 Rc2+

28. Kd1 Rfd2+

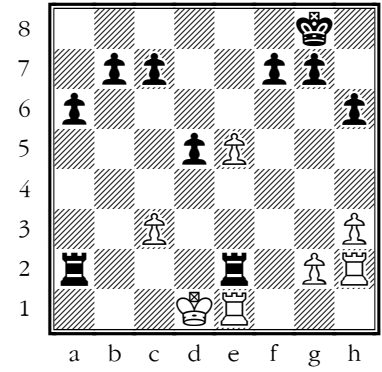
[28...Rxb2 threatens mate 29.Kc1 Rxa2 30.Kb1 Rfb2+ 31.Kc1 a5! and White can do nothing about a5-a4-a3 and Ra1#]

29. Ke1 Re2+

30. Kd1 Rxb2

31. Rh2 Rxa2

32. Re1



[32.Rf1]

32. ... Rxe1+?

[32...Rf2! threatening ...Ra1# wins quickly]

33. Kxe1 a5

34. Kd1 Rb2

35. Kc1 Rb6

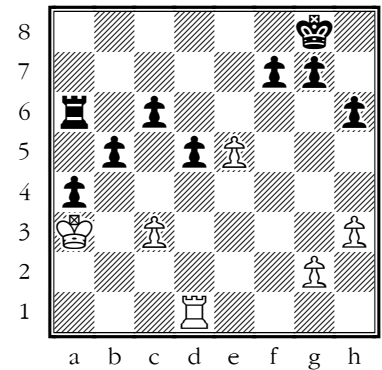
[35...Re2!]

36. Rh1 Ra6

37. Kb2 a4

38. Ka3 b5

39. Rd1 c6



Black has to win this game a different way now.

40. Re1 c5

41. Rd1 b4+

42. cxb4 cxb4+

43. Kxb4 a3

44. Ra1 a2

45. Kc5 d4

46. Kxd4 Kf8

47. Ke4

[47.Kc3]

47. ... Ke7

48. g4

[48.Kd5]

48. ... f6

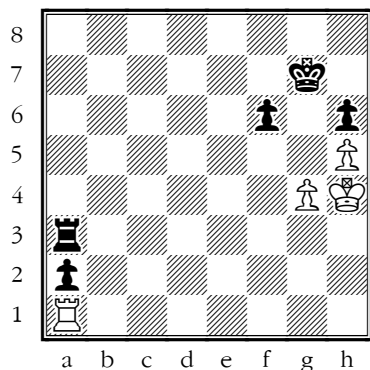
[48...Ke6! KUFTE!]

We say in Exeter, KUFTE, which stands for, King Up For The Endgame!

- 49. **exf6+ gx f6**
- 50. **Kf5 Kf7**
- 51. **h4 Ra5+**
- 52. **Kf4 Kg6**
- 53. **h5+ Kf7**
- 54. **Kg3 Ra3+**
- 55. **Kh4**

[55.Kf4]

- 55. ... **Kg7!**



→ **Tactic: Zugzwang!**

I think I've only ever had one of these, in 40 years of playing chess! White has to damage their position.

- 56. **g5 f5!?**

Applying the zuggie again.

[56...hxf5+! is fine...]

- 57. **gxf6+**

[57.g6!/?]

- 57. ... **Kxh6**

and again!

- 58. **Rf1 a1Q**

- 59. **Rxf5**

[59.Rxa1]

- 59. ... **Qd4+**

- 60. **Rf4 Qxf4#**

0-1

R3 Greg Susevee-NN

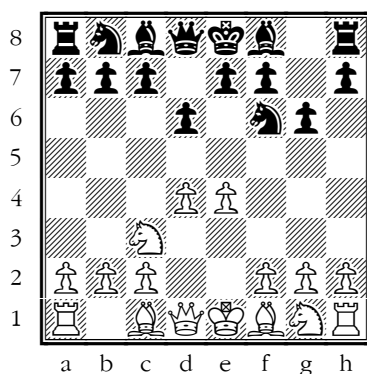
Bo8: Pirc Defence

“ In a difficult modern opening, White played very logically for quick development and a sacrificial attack. It was all pretty to watch on top but it had couple of loose wheels underneath! The game became quite scrappy, and was brought to an unexpected end when Black lost a Queen. ”

- 1. **e4 d6**

- 2. **d4 Nf6**

- 3. **Nc3 g6**



Tricky stuff! Black holds back in the centre to see how White will set up shop.

- 4. **Nf3**

[4.Be3 and f3 with the idea of g4 is what I recommend.]

- 4. ... **Bg7**

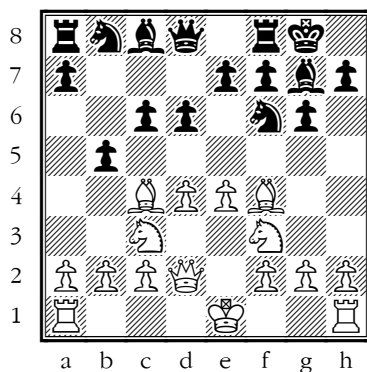
- 5. **Bc4 0-0**

- 6. **Bf4**

All logical enough, with a classic development, but you really need a specific idea to play against each of these odd systems.

- 6. ... **c6**

- 7. **Qd2 b5**



- 8. **Bb3?**

[8.Bd3]

Black's threat shouldn't be hard to spot!

- 8. ... **a5?**

Oh, it was too hard for Black too!

[8...b4!

→ **Tactic: undermining**

wins the e-pawn.]

- 9. **a4?**

Forces Black to carry out their threat.

[9.a3]

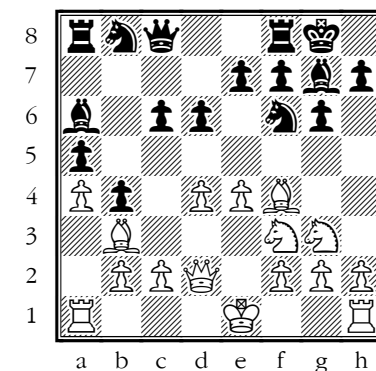
- 9. ... **b4**

- 10. **Ne2 Ba6!?**

This move makes it awkward for White to castle and get the Rh1 into play, but a Pawn is worth more.

[10...Nxe4!]

- 11. **Ng3 Qc8**



- 12. **h3**

These Dreadful Little Rook's Pawn Moves usually announce "I don't know what to do".

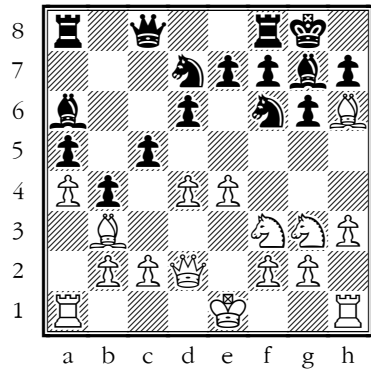
If you don't know what to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece.

Here, it's one of your Rooks.

[12.0-0! Castling long allows Black some counterplay on the Queen's-side, but leaving the King in the centre allows even more.]

- 12. ... **Nbd7**

- 13. **Bh6 c5**



White can strike in the centre.

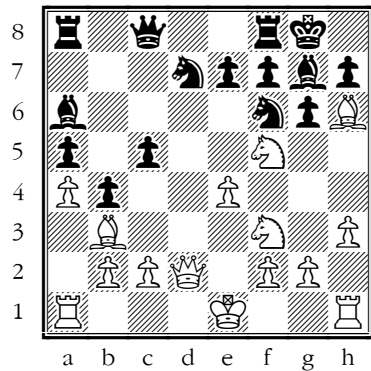
14. dxc5

[14.e5! would ask Black some hard questions. 14...Ne8 15.e6!]

14. ... dxc5

[14...Bxh6]

15. Nf5!?



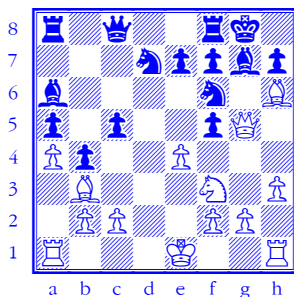
→ **Tactic: sacrifice**

[15.Bxg7 first may be even better;

15.e5! is the right move 15...Ne8 16.e6! again is very good for White.]

15. ... Re8??

[I expect both players saw the idea 15...gxf5 16.Qg5!?



→ **Tactic: pin & mate**

but missed the defence 16...Ne8!+]

16. Nxc7

White is a piece up but the Knight cannot escape; also, the Bishop has to stay on h6 to keep it on the board.

Meanwhile, White also needs to find a home for the King.

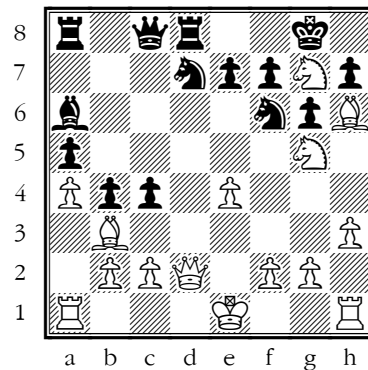
16. ... Rd8

Lining up a discovered attack on your Queen.

17. Ng5

[17.Ne6!? fxe6 18.Bxe6+ Kh8 19.Ng5!]

17. ... c4



18. Bxc4?

[18.Ba2 and c2-c3 and the Bishop lives on!]

18. ... Qxc4

19. Qd3

[19.b3]

19. ... Qc6

20. Qb3 Bc4

[20...Ne5]

21. Qe3 Ba6

White must race to get the other pieces into the attack while the Bishop and Knight are stuck

[21...Rac8!?

22. Qb3 Ne5

23. f4

[23.N7e6]

23. ... Nxe4

24. fxe5 e6

[24...Nxc5! puts Black on top, and White's King looks very lonely]

25. Nxe4

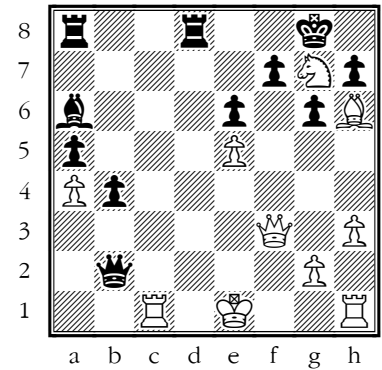
[25.N7xe6]

25. ... Qxe4+

26. Qe3 Qxc2

27. Rc1 Qxb2

28. Qf3



[28.Nxe6]

28. ... Qxc1!??

[28...Rac8! and again it's the White King which is more vulnerable. White's extra Knight on g7 looks less important than the fact that Black has an extra Rook in play.]

29. Bxc1

Backwards moves are sometimes hard to spot.

29. ... Kxg7

[29...Rac8]

30. Qf6+ Kf8

31. Bh6+ Ke8

1-0

10 Lionel Pike

“ You are careful and don't rush, but I wonder if you are careful to a fault – you are thinking about bad things that might happen rather than thinking about making something good happen. In the Introduction, I said that the main things to think about for most players are to make sure you do things: (1) set problems and (2) take your chances. Both of those are true for you! It's worth learning a more mainline opening system, as that way you might (a) set your opponent more problems and (b) more often know what you are supposed to be doing in a position. Then you can look forward to your opponents playing more mistakes and getting more wins. You also need to get your eye in for basic tactics, so you can pounce when the chance comes; you can practice that with a book or online.”

R1 Lionel Pike-NN

C47: King's Pawn Game

“ Both sides were happy with a draw in the end. There were several points where one or both players missed a chance; look out for these ideas next time! ”

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. g3

I've tried to put you off this idea before... It's not a bad move, but what's your idea? You told me it's to protect the e-pawn. Well, the e-pawn doesn't need protecting, so you are solving a problem you haven't got!

You should be trying to set Black some problems by

3.d4 or

3.Bb5 or

3.Bc4 with the idea of playing d2-d4.

I know g3 has been played by Grandmasters, but I suggest you wait until you are a GM before you play it again!

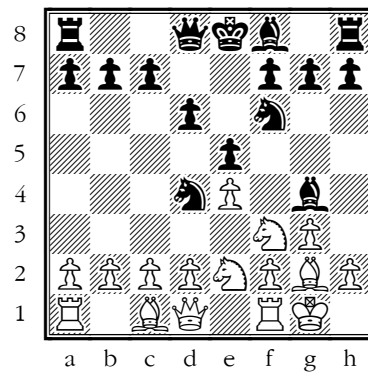
3. ... d6

I would develop the Bishop before moving ...d6.

[3...Nf6 4.d3 d5=]

4. Bg2 Nf6
5. Nc3 Bg4
6. 0-0 Nd4
7. Ne2??

[7.Re1; 7.h3? Nxf3+ 8.Bxf3 Bxh3]



7. ... d5??

[7...Nxf3+

→ **Tactic: outnumbered**

wins the under-defended Knight]

8. Nexd4

[8.Nfxd4]

8. ... exd4

9. exd5 Qxd5

10. Nh4!?

Interesting idea, but not really in your interests.

[10.Re1+ is more to the point, stopping Black castling, at least for a while.]

10. ... Qd6

[10...Bxd1! 11.Bxd5 Nxd5 12.Rxd1]

11. Qe1+ Be7

12. f3?

Weakens the King, blocks the Bishop and strands the Knight!

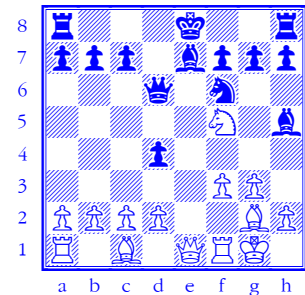
[12.Bxb7!]

12. ... Bh5

[12...Be6! when your Knight has no squares to go to!]

13. d3

[13.Nf5!



→ **Tactic: fork**

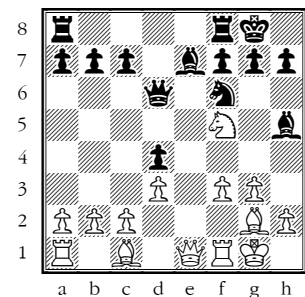
on d6 & g2, and on g2 it forks e8 and h5 so it won't get stuck.]

13. ... 0-0?

[13...Bg6!]

14. Bf4?

[14.Nf5!



→ **Tactic: fork**

wins the Bishop on e7]

14. ... Qc5

15. g4

[15.Qe5!?

15. ... Bg6

[15...Nd5]

16. Nxb6 fxb6

17. a3

[17.b4!? is an interesting idea to get some activity 17...Qxb4 18.Qe6+ Kh8 19.Rab1 Qc5]

17. ... Rae8

½-½

R2 NN-Lionel Pike

C44: Scotch Game

“ A lesson in when swapping off leads downhill to defeat. ”

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4! Qe7

Not the best: it's obviously unkind to the Bf8

[3...exd4]

4. Nc3 g6

Probably the best way to organise the position.

[4...exd4]

5. Bb5

[5.Nd5]

5. ... Bg7

[5...exd4]

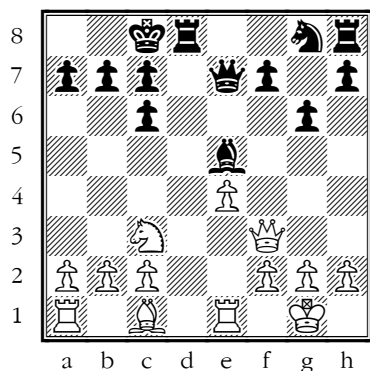
6. Bxc6

[6.Nd5]

6. ... dxc6
7. 0-0

[7.Nxe5!]

7. ... Bg4
8. dxe5 Bxf3
9. Qxf3 Bxe5
10. Re1 0-0-0



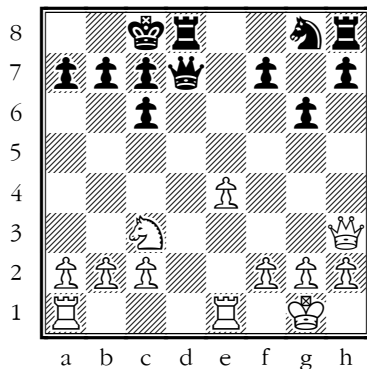
Black is getting sorted out.

11. Bf4 Bxf4?!

[Just developing with 11...Nf6 is better.]

If your Rooks are not connected, you should always be in a hurry to complete your development.

12. Qxf4 Qf6
13. Qe3 Qd4
14. Qh3+ Qd7



15. Qh4

Why doesn't White accept the Queen swap? White has a working majority for the endgame.

15. ... Qe7

[15...Ne7 makes some sense, connecting the Rooks at last.]

16. Qg4+ Qd7

17. Qf3 f5

[17...Qe6]

18. Rad1 Qe6

[18...Qe7]

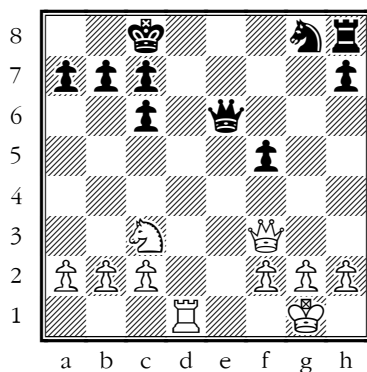
19. Rxd8+ Kxd8

20. Rd1+

[20.Qe3]

20. ... Kc8

21. exf5 gxf5



22. Qe3

White should go for the endgame, and Black should not!

Exchanges are either good or bad for you – make sure you know which!

22. ... Qxe3

23. fxe3 Nf6

24. Kf2 Rd8

And every exchange favours White

[24...Ng4+]

25. Rxd8+ Kxd8

26. Kf3 b5

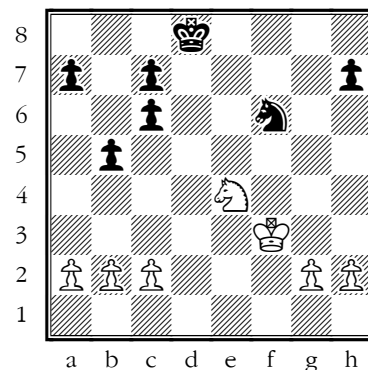
[26...Ke7]

27. e4

[27.Kf4]

27. ... fxe4+

28. Nxe4



28. ... Nxe4??

Suicide.

[28...Nd5]

29. Kxe4 a5

[29...Ke7]

30. Kf5

[30.Kd4]

30. ... Kd7

[30...Ke7]

31. Kf6

[31.Kg5]

31. ... Kd6

[31...Ke8]

32. g4 c5

33. h4 c4

34. Kg7

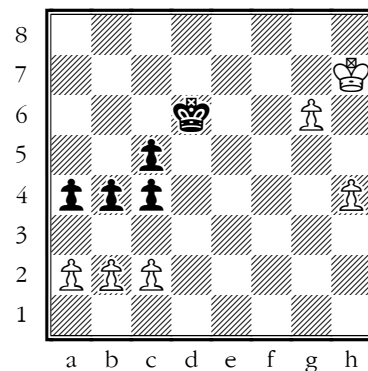
[34.c3]

34. ... c5

35. Kxh7 a4

36. g5 b4

37. g6??



White allows Black a moment's chance.

[37.c3!]

37. ... b3!

I thought, beginning a famous Queening combination

38. axb3 axb3??

[38...c3!! 39.bxc3 a3! with new hope!]

39. cxb3 cxb3

40. g7 Kd5

41. g8Q+ Kd4

42. Qxb3 c4

43. Qd1+ Kc5

44. b3 cxb3

[44...Kb4]

45. Qxb3 Kd4

46. Kg6

1-0

R3 NN-Lionel Pike

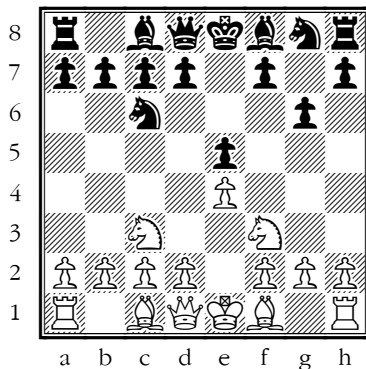
C46: Three Knights' Game

“ This game was mostly about the tactical chances that Black allowed White, after which Black tried hard to attack. I'd like to see you going in that hard from the first move, especially with White! ”

1. e4 e5

2. Nf3 Nc6

3. Nc3 g6



These fianchetto defences are hard to handle.

[3...Nf6]

4. Be2

Very tame.

[4.d4 exd4 5.Nd5 is the best way to make trouble for Black.]

4. ... Bg7

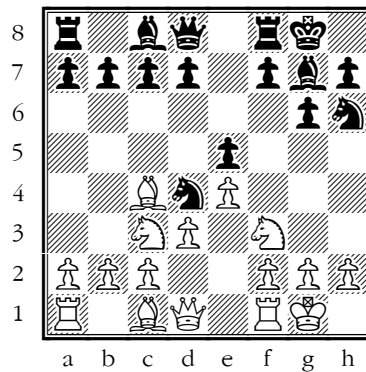
5. 0-0 Nh6

Hmm, where is it going next?

[5...Nge7]

6. Bc4 0-0

7. d3 Nd4



Black should be developing. This move leaves the Bg7 overworked.

[7...d6]

8. Bxh6!

→ **Tactic: overloading**

[8.Nxe5! is another way of doing the same thing]

8. ... Bxh6

9. Nxe5 Qe7

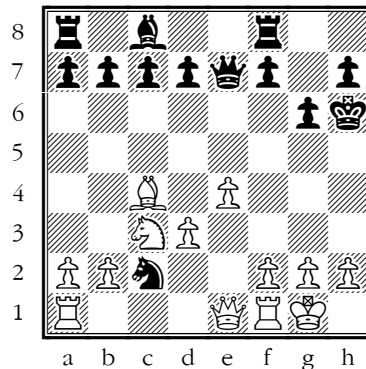
[9...d6]

10. Ng4 Kg7

[10...Bg7]

11. Nxb6 Kxb6

12. Qe1 Nxc2?



→ **Tactic: fork, but**

[12...Qg5]

13. Qd2+!

→ **Tactic: fork**

A fork met with a fork!

13. ... Qg5

14. Qxc2 d5

15. exd5 Bh3

[15...Bd7]

16. f3

[16.f4]

16. ... Rae8

[16...Qe3+]

17. Ne4 Rxe4?!

Black is determined to counterattack.

[17...Qe3+]

18. dxe4 f5

[18...Bd7]

19. exf5

White shouldn't bring the Rook into the attack.

[19.Kh1]

19. ... Rxf5

[19...Bxf5]

20. Rf2 Qh4

21. Qd2+ Rg5

22. g3

[22.Rc1]

22. ... Kh5

[22...Qxc4]

23. b3 Rxc3+?

Brave but Black has only two pieces left to attack with.

[23...Bf5]

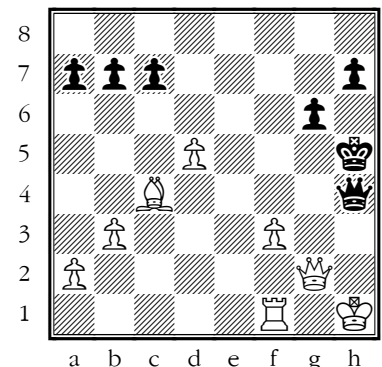
24. hxg3 Qxc3+

25. Rg2 Bxg2

26. Qxc3 Qe5

27. Rf1 Qd4+

28. Kh1 Qh4+



29. Kg1?

[29.Qh2! forces the swap of Black's last piece]

29. ... Qd4+

30. Rf2 Qd1+

[30...Qh4]

31. Bf1 Qxd5

[31...Qd4]

32. Be2

[32.Qh1+]

32. ... c5

[32...Kh6]

33. f4+

→ Tactic: discovery

33. ... Kh6

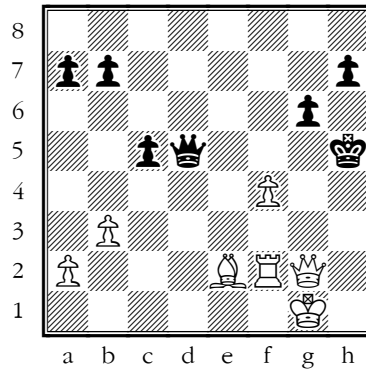
34. Qxd5 b6

35. Rg2 Kg7

36. Qd7+ Kh6

37. Rh2#

1-0



11 Rafe Whitehead

“ Lots of sensible stuff with a nice result of 2/3. If you add a few more teeth in your opening systems, and get your eye in better for tactics, then you will be unstoppable. ”

RI NN-Rafe Whitehead

C50: Bishop's Opening → Old Stodge

“ Quite an interesting game, with some ideas that turn up a lot. In the event, Black got a Knight stranded and couldn't do much about the attack. White was free to run pawns at the King's-side, as White's own King was safe on the other side. ”

1. e4 e5

2. Bc4 Nf6

3. d3 Bc5

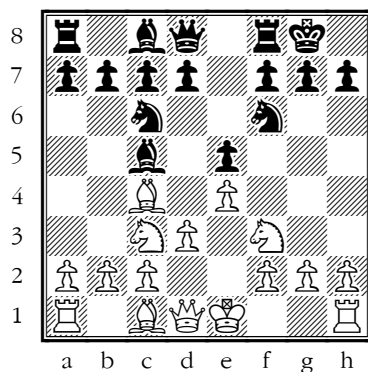
[3...c6; or 3...Nc6; are more threatening to White.]

4. Nf3 Nc6

5. Nc3

Yawn.

5. ... 0-0



Castling early can even be bad in these dreadful Old Stodge positions.

One of the points is that you can't easily chase away a pinning Bishop after Bg5 with ...h6 and ...g5, as you weaken your King's side.

6. Be3 Bxe3?!

Half-opening the f-file, which is good for White. What about the doubled pawns? Well, can Black attack them, and show they are weak? If not, then this swap is simply good for White.

[6...Bb6! 7.Bxb6 axb6! is a swap that Black would welcome.]

7. fxe3 d6

8. Qd2 b6?!

Spending a valuable move to develop a Bishop that can already be developed. And where can it go from b7?

[8...Bg4; 8...Be6; 8...Bd7]

9. 0-0-0

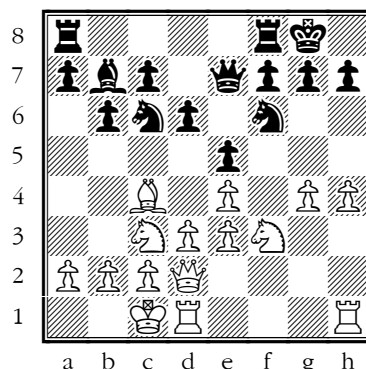
With opposite-side castling, you usually get a race to attack the enemy King.

Black needs to throw up the Queen's-side pawns to break up the defences and maybe open up a line for the Rooks.

9. ... Bb7

10. h4 Qe7

11. g4?!



[11.a3]

11. ... Nxc4

I don't know if this was a surprise to White, or how they felt about it!

It is often worth giving up a pawn to have an open line towards the enemy King.

12. h5

[12.Rdg1!?

12. ... h6

[12...Na5! gets rid of White's best piece.]

13. Rdg1 Qf6?

Strands the Knight!

Don't leave your pieces without a retreat

[13...Nf6]

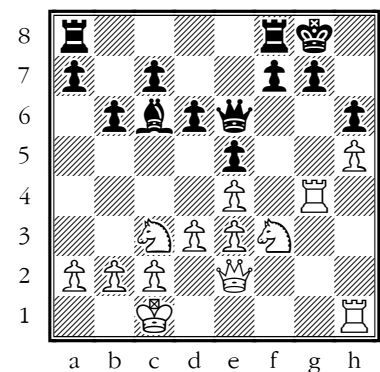
14. Qe2! Bc8

[14...Nxe3]

15. Bd5 Bd7

16. Bxc6 Bxc6

17. Rxc4 Qe6



[17...Bd7]

18. Rgg1

[18.Rhg1!]

18. ... b5

19. Nd4

[19.Nh4]

19. ... Qd7

[19...exd4]

20. Nxc6 Qxc6

[20...f6]

21. Qg4 g5

22. hxg6 Kg7

[22...f5]

23. Qf5 f6

24. Qe6

[24.Nd5]

24. ... Rae8

[24...Qe8]

25. Qh3 Rh8

26. Qf5 Qb7

[26...d5]

27. Qd7+ Kg8

28. Qf7#

1-0

R2 NN-Rafe Whitehead

C55: Bishop's Opening → Two Knights' Defence

“ There was a mad five minutes where both sides couldn't really see what was going on, after which the game settled down into more normal lines. Black came out of the mess with a few extra pawns, and played the winning plan without fuss. ”

- 1. e4 e5
- 2. Bc4 Nf6
- 3. Nf3 Nc6
- 4. b4

I like the attitude, but that's punching in the air.

[4.Nc3]

4. ... Bxb4

With an extra move over Evans' Gambit.

5. Nc3?

[5.c3]

5. ... Bxc3

6. dxc3 Nxe4

7. 0-0 0-0

8. Bd3

[8.Re1!]

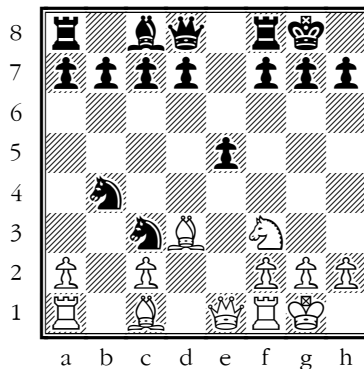
8. ... Nxc3

[8...d5!]

9. Qe1

There now follows a remarkable series of tactical oversights.

9. ... Nb4??



[9...Nd5]

10. Qxc3 Nd5?

[10...Nxd3]

11. Bg5??

[11.Qxe5!]

11. ... Qxg5??

[11...Nxc3! 12.Bxd8 Rxd8]

12. Nxc3??

[12.Qc5!]

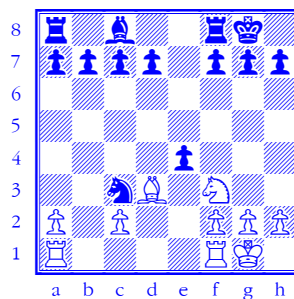
12. ... Nxc3

13. Nf3??

[13.Bxh7+]

13. ... d6

[13...e4!]



→ **Tactic: fork!**

14. Ng5

Fidgety!

Now the game settles down a bit.

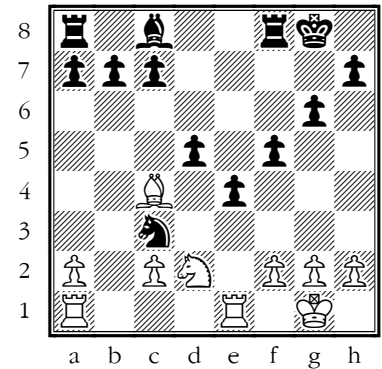
14. ... g6

15. Rfe1 f6

16. Nf3 f5

17. Nd2 e4

18. Bc4+ d5



19. Bb3 Bd7

[19...Kg7]

20. h3

[20.Re3]

20. ... Bc6

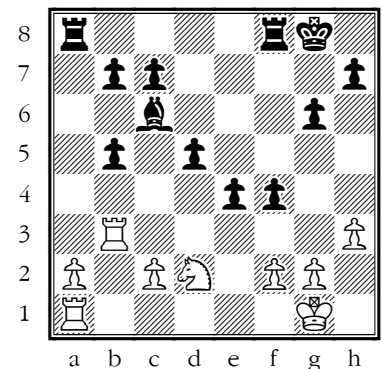
[20...Rfe8]

21. Re3 Nb5

22. Ba4 f4

23. Rb3 a6

24. Bxb5 axb5



25. f3?

[25.Rb4]

25. ... e3!

26. Nf1 e2

No rush

27. Nd2 Rfe8

[27...Rxa2]

28. Re1

[28.Rbb1]

28. ... b4

[28...Rxa2]

29. Rb2 Bb5

30. Kf2

[30.Rxb4]

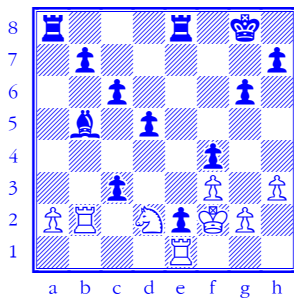
30. ... c6

31. c4??

[31.Nb3]

31. ... dxc4

[31...bxc3!]



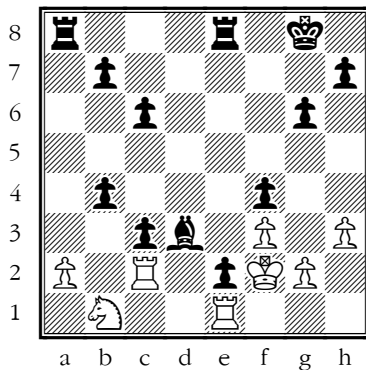
→ **Tactic: fork en passant!**

32. Rc2

[32.Rxb4]

32. ... c3

33. Nb1 Bd3



34. Rd2??

[34.Rcc1]

34. ... cxd2

35. Nxd2 Rxa2

36. Nb3

[36.Nb1]

36. ... Bc4

37. Nc1

[37.g3]

37. ... Ra1

38. g4

[38.Nd3]

38. ... b6

39. Rh1 e1Q+

40. Rxe1 Rxe1

41. Kxe1 Rxe1+

42. Kd2 0-1

R3 Rafe Whitehead-NN

A48: Modern Defence

“ White had good control of the centre and although Black tried to sneak down the wing, White was never in any trouble. After Black lost a piece it was all smooth sailing into harbour. ”

1. d4 g6

2. Nf3 Bg7

3. c4 Nf6

4. Bf4

[4.Nc3 d6 5.Bg5 is what I recommend.]

4. ... d6

5. e3 Ne4

Early!

[5...Nh5]

6. Bd3 Nf6

That's been a waste of time, then.

7. 0-0 Bd7

That didn't look important right now.

[7...Nh5]

8. Nc3 e6

[8...Nh5 grabs the Bishop pair.]

9. e4

Not consistent, but not a bad move for all that.

9. ... c6?

[9...0-0]

10. Bxd6 Na6

11. e5 Ng4

12. h3 Nh6

13. Be4 f5

[13...Nf5]

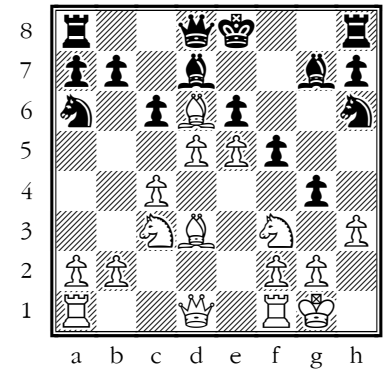
14. Bd3

[14.exf6! en passant.]

14. ... g5

[14...Nf7]

15. d5 g4



Black is trying hard to get an attack going. It will be tough while White has control of the centre.

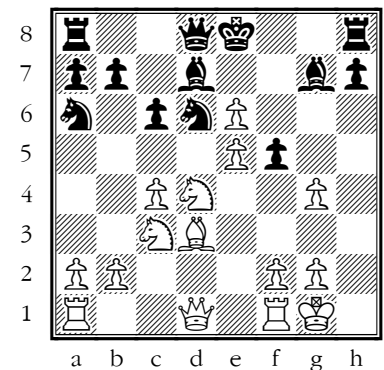
16. Nd4 Nf7

17. hxg4

[17.dxe6!]

17. ... Nxd6

18. dxe6



18. ... Bxe6??

[18...Bxe5]

19. Nxe6 Qd7

20. Nxc7+ Qxc7

21. exd6 fxg4

22. Be2

[22.Re1+]

22. ... g3

[22...h5]

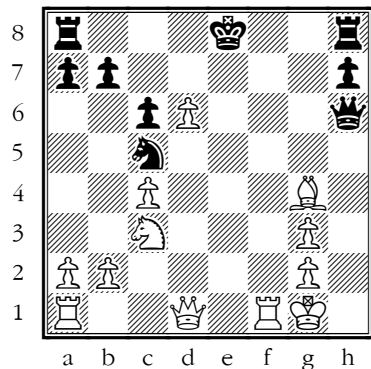
23. Bg4 Qh6

[23...0-0]

24. fxg3

[24.Qe2+]

24. ... Nc5



[24...Qe3+]

25. b4

[25.Qd4! with many threats (h8 c5 e5)]

25. ... Nd7

[25...Qe3+]

26. Rf4

[26.Qe2+! mates]

26. ... Rg8

[26...0-0-0]

27. Qd4

[27.Qe2+]

27. ... 0-0-0

28. Rd1 Qg5

[28...Kb8]

29. Bxd7+

[29.Qxa7]

29. ... Rxd7

[29...Kb8]

30. Qxa7 Rxd6

31. Rxd6 Qxg3

32. Qa8+ Kc7

33. Qxg8

[33.Rd7+]

33. ... Qxf4

[33...Qxg8]

34. Qd8#

1-0

12 Oliver Pike

“ I'm going to guess, if you put a bit more into your games you would get more out of them. You played really quickly, which is great if you're getting all the moves right, but you were getting some of them quite wrong. You were giving your opponent some really easy chances, and even if your opponents didn't always notice it, you should have noticed! So, look more carefully when you play, and maybe practise puzzles between games, if you want to improve.”

RI NN - Oliver Pike

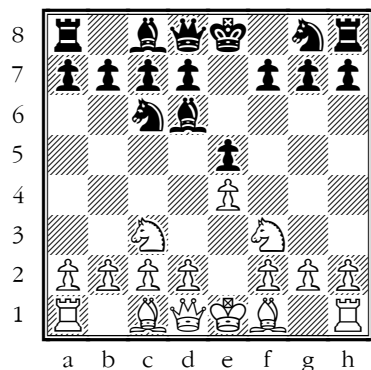
C50: Three Knights' Game

“ White was more than generous and you finished off nicely. There were a couple of moves where you had a choice of captures, and chose the second-best – was that because you played the first one you saw without checking?”

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Nc3

Yawn.

3. ... Bd6



That's not very kind to the Bishop on c8! Well, you can always play ...b6 and ...Bb7, but moving the d-pawn to d6 helps support your

stake in the centre, and moving it to d5 upsets White's stake in the centre, so you get more value out of the move doing two jobs at once. That way, you will complete your opening jobs more quickly and easily, and will be in a position to attack before your opponent.

4. Na4

Odd.

The jobs for the opening are (1) Get your pieces out, (2) Get at least a stake in the centre, and (3) Castle.

This move doesn't help White do any of those things.

4. ... Nf6

5. Bd3

Just as for Black's choice, it's now harder to get out the Bc1.

5. ... 0-0

6. 0-0 Nd4

Unless you have a really good reason, connect your Rooks before moving a piece twice.

7. c3 Nc6

8. b3

White tries the fianchetto, but it doesn't fit in with the Pawn on c3.

8. ... Re8

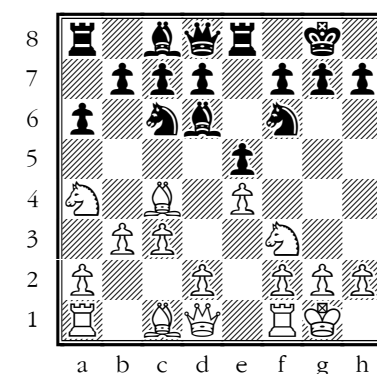
9. Bb5

It would have made more sense to play Bb5 instead of b3, then follow up with moving the d-pawn, but first White would have to protect the e-pawn.

9...a6

[9...Nxe4!]

10. Bc4??



10. ... Nxe4??

Going for the smaller prize!

[10...b5!]

→ **Tactic: fork!**

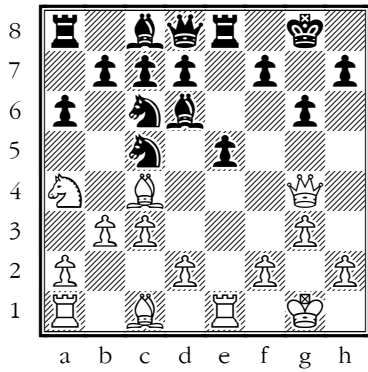
If you see a good move, sit on your hands for a moment and look for a better one!

11. Re1 Nc5

12. Nh4?? Qxh4

13. g3 Qd8

14. Qg4 g6



This defends against a threat that has not been made! But what has been made are some weak dark squares.

Try not to move the pawns in front of your castled king, because you make holes in the defences.

15. Qf3 Rf8

16. d4

Right sort of move, poor timing!

16. ... exd4

17. cxd4 Nxd4

18. h4?? Nxf3+

Is there a stronger move than taking a Queen with check?

19. Kg2 Nxe1+

20. Kf1

Black's plan should now be (a) get the rest of your pieces out, (b) swap off when you can, (c) go for checkmate or making a new Queen.

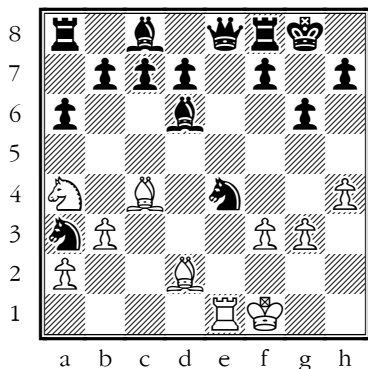
20. ... Qe8

21. Bd2 Nc2

22. Rcl Na3

23. Rel Ne4

24. f3

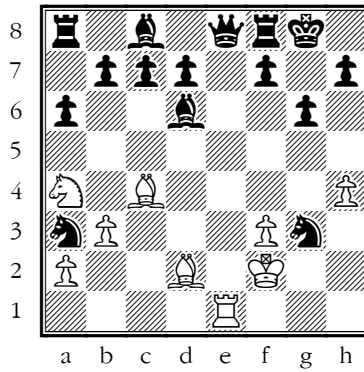


24. ... Nxc3+

Again, going for the smaller prize!

[24...Nxd2+!]

25. Kf2



Although Black is way ahead on points, all Black's extra points are asleep on the Queen's-side.

If you don't complete development, you risk having an accident when your opponent attacks.

25. ... Qd8

26. Bg5 Be7??

Black should count before moving!

27. Bxe7 Qe8

28. Kxg3 Nc2

29. Re2 Nd4

30. Nc3??

Overall, losing a Rook.

30. ... Nxe2+

31. Nxe2 Qxe7

32. b4 Qe5+

33. Nf4 Qd4

34. Bb3 d6

35. Ne2 Qb2

36. Kf2 Re8

37. Kg3 Qxe2

38. a4 Re3

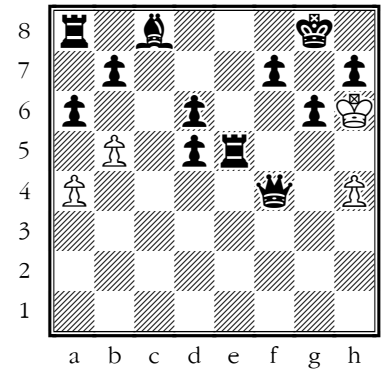
39. Bd5 c6

40. b5 cxd5

41. Kf4 Qxf3+

42. Kg5 Re5+

43. Kh6 Qf4#



I guess you could say, I didn't need my Queen's-side pieces, but next game, you might!

0-1

R2 BYE

R3 Oliver Pike-NN

A40: Queen's Pawn Game

" You played your moves very quickly, but I wonder if you had thought a bit longer you might have come up with some better ones. "

1. e3

This doesn't look as though it will cause Black any anxiety.

1. ... e5

2. d4 Nc6

[2...exd4 3.exd4 d5 gives Black an equal game.]

3. d5 Nb8

4. Bd3 Nf6

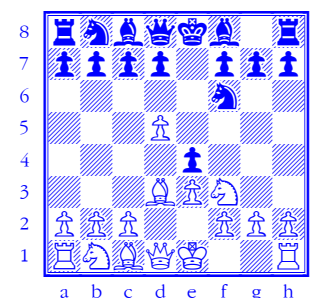
5. Nf3?

If you were playing a little slower you might have spotted Black's best reply!

[5.Nc3]

5. ... d6?

[5...e4!



→ **Tactic: fork]**

6. 0-0?

[6.Nc3]

6. ... g6?

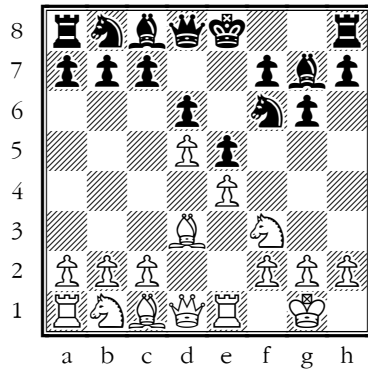
[6...e4]

7. e4

Whew...

7. ... Bg7

8. Re1



That doesn't look like a file that will be opened, I would leave it where it was.

8. ... 0-0

9. Ng5 Qe7

10. Nh3

You look like you are ready for f2-f4, but that really needs the Rook on f1.

[10.Nc3]

10. ... Nbd7

11. Nc3 Nc5

12. Nb1

White has wasted a lot of time with the Knights.

[12.Ng5]

Move every piece once before you move any piece twice.

12. ... c6

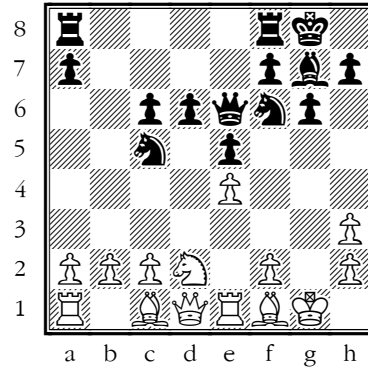
13. dxc6 bxc6

14. Nd2 Bxh3

Punching a hole in White's King-side defences.

15. gxh3 Qe6

16. Bf1



Black has done all the opening jobs (develop, castle, central control) and can move over to the attack.

16. ... Nh5

Aiming at the hole on f4.

[16...Rab8]

17. Bg2 Nf4

18. Qf3 Qe7

[18...f5!]

19. Nc4 Nce6

20. Ne3

[20.Bxf4]

20. ... Ng5

21. Qd1

[21.Qg3]

21. ... Qf6

22. Ng4 Qe6

[22...Ngxh3+!]

23. Be3

[23.Bxf4!? saves the pawn but gives up the dark squares.]

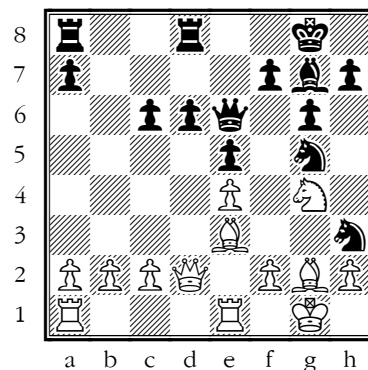
23. ... Rfd8

[23...h5]

24. Qd2??

[24.Bxf4]

24. ... Nfxh3+



→ **Tactic: undermining**

Now the Knight on g4 is loose.

25. Bxh3 Nxf3+

26. Kg2

[26.Kh1]

26. ... Qxg4+

27. Kf1 Qg1+

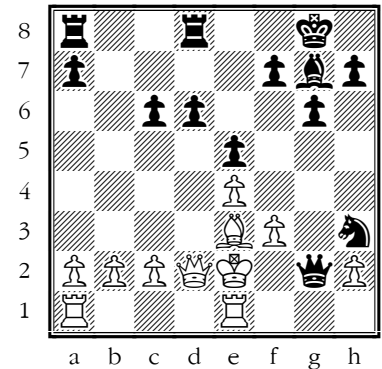
28. Ke2 Qg4+

[28...Qxh2]

29. f3

[29.Kf1]

29. ... Qg2+



30. Kd1 Qxd2+

[30...Qxf3+]

31. Bxd2 d5

32. Rc1

[32.Ke2]

32. ... dxe4

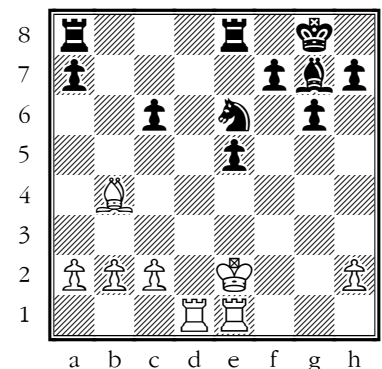
33. fxe4 Nf2+

34. Ke2 Nxe4

35. Ba5 Re8

36. Rcd1 Nc5

37. Bb4 Ne6



38. Rd6

[38.Kf2]

38. ... Nf4+

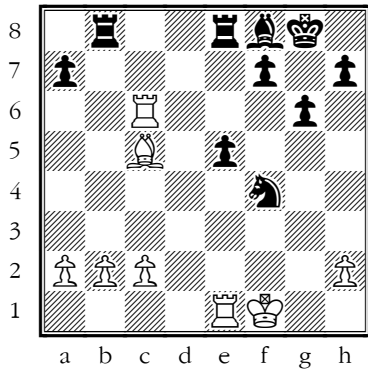
39. Kf1 Rab8

40. Bc5

[40.Ba3]

40. ... Bf8

41. Rxc6!



41. ... Bh6

[41...Bxc5! Swapping off is the road to victory.]

Swap pieces when you are ahead, swap pawns when you are losing.

42. Rd6

[42.b3]

42. ... Rxb2

43. Rc6

[43.Bxa7]

43. ... Rxc2

44. h4

[44.Bf8]

44. ... Nd3

45. Rd1 Nc1

[45...Nxc5]

46. Rxc1

[46.Rdd6]

46. ... Rxc1+

47. Ke2 Rc3

48. a4

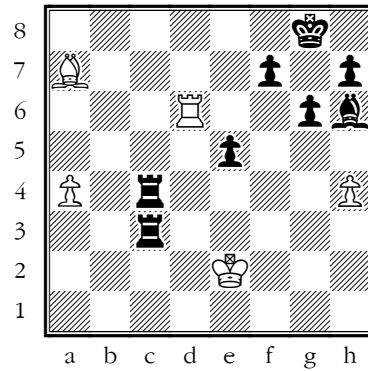
[48.Bf8]

48. ... Rd8

49. Rd6 Rc8

50. Bxa7 R8c4

51. Rd2?



Ooh, that's a bad miss! But it shouldn't affect the result.

[51.Rd1]

51. ... Bxd2

52. Kxd2 Rb3

53. Be3 Rxh4

54. a5 Ra3

55. a6 Rxa6

56. Ke2 Ra3

57. Kf2 Raa4

58. Ke2 e4

59. Kf2 Rh3

60. Ke2 g5

61. Kd2 g4

62. Ke2 Ra2+

63. Kf1 Kg7

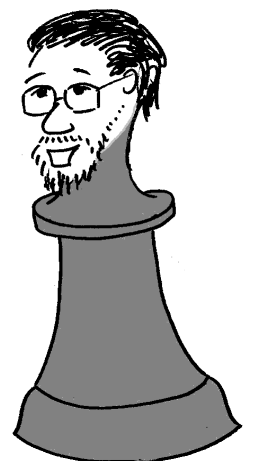
64. Bf2 g3

65. Bg1 Rh1

0-1

That's the lot!

Best wishes for your future games



Dave Rogals