

DEVON COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION
E.C.F UNDER 18 COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2011

Venue: *Eton College, Berkshire* 30.6.2012

ECF National Counties' Under-18 Finals: 30th June 2012

Following last year's successful experiment in entering a Devon team into this event, a real effort was made this year to turn out a stronger and more representative team. Although clearly not in the same league as the "big guns" from the South-East, the Devon boys put up a good showing in coming 10th out of 15 competing counties.

Although the bulk of the team came either from Torbay or Exeter with Torquay Boys' Grammar School providing 6 players and the ex-Broadclyst Primary School contingent making up another 3, it was good to see a new face from North Devon, 17 year-old Arthur Rinvoluceri who won both his games as did Jeffrey Leung of TBGS.

Another encouraging feature of the Devon team was the wide age spread with 4 boys in their final year at school or college balanced by 3 players under 12, including Theo Slade who has recently represented England in a tournament in the Czech Republic.

It is certainly an event worth making the effort to attend and will prove to be valuable experience for those boys eligible for the team next year. The august surroundings of Eton College make an extra attraction for players and spectators alike.

Trefor Thynne
8th July 2012

National report: <http://www.ecforum.org.uk/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=3777&hilit=eton&start=15#p92504>

Local Report: <http://www.chessdevon.co.uk/HTML/News/TBGS/base.htm>

Results: <http://www.bjca.org.uk/results.php?eid=1716>

Our thanks go to the organisers!

U18 Open

	Total		Round 1		Round 2	
1	Alex Billings	1	Hampshire (B)	1	Warwickshire	0
2	Jeffrey Leung	1	Sussex	1	Surrey (B) (I)	1
3	Theo Slade	0	Middlesex	0	Manchester	0
4	John Fraser	1½	Surrey (A)	½	Hampshire (B)	1
5	Daniel Nie	0	Hertfordshire	0	Sussex	0
6	Arthur Rinvoluceri	2	Surrey (B)	1	Middlesex	1
7	Nathan Mills	0	Hampshire (A)	0	Surrey (A)	0
8	Jared Wray	0	Berkshire	0	Hertfordshire	0
9	Tomas Trott	1	Norfolk	1	Surrey (B)	0
10	James Royle	½	Buckinghamshire	0	Hampshire (A)	½
11	Reece Whittington	½	Kent	½	??	0
12	Rafe Whitehead	1	Lincolnshire	0	Norfolk	1
13	Greg Susuvee	0			Berkshire (I I)	0
	Totals:	9½		5		4½

(Board 1.1) Keen, C - Billings, A

[C01: French Defence, Exchange Variation]

White had few ideas about how to press ahead and stranded a Knight. Black declined to take the free piece, but got a crunching attack.

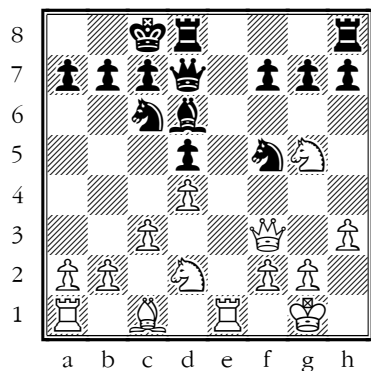
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5

A line lacking ambition... it's not as though White is risking a lot with the Advance.

4.Bd3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bd6 6.0-0 Nge7 7.Re1 Bg4 8.c3 Qd7 9.Nbd2 0-0-0 10.h3 Bh5

[10...Bf5]

11.Qc2 Bg6 12.Ng5 Bxd3 13.Qxd3 Nf5 14.Qf3?



Takes away the Knight's only retreat.

14...h6 15.g4?

[15.Nxf7! Qxf7 16.g4 Nce7 17.gxf5 Nxf5 keeps White's losses to a Pawn.]

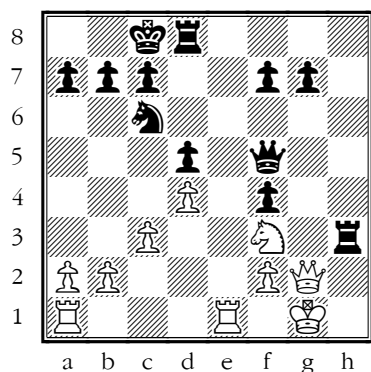
15...hxg5?

[15...Nh4! secures the offered piece.]

16.gxf5 Bf4 17.Qg4?

Invites the Rook to advance with gain of time.

17...Rh4 18.Qg2 Qxf5 19.Nf3 Rxb3 20.Bxf4 gxf4



Black has huge threats against Queen and King. A black Rook on the g-file will bring catastrophe for White.

21.Ng5 Rh4

Material is fairly level, but the Grandmaster move here for White is: Resigns. Black finishes crisply enough.

22.Nxf7 Qxf7 23.Qg5

[23.Qg4+]

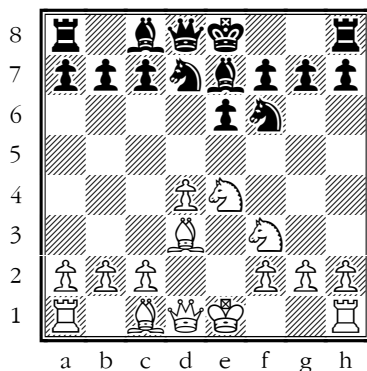
23...Rdh8 24.Kg2 R8h5 25.Re8+ Qxe8 26.Qxg7 Qe4+ 27.Kf1 Rh1+ 28.Qg1 Rxb3 29.Kxg1 Rh1# 0-1

(Board 1.2) Weaving, R - Billings, A

[C10: French Defence, Rubinstein Variation]

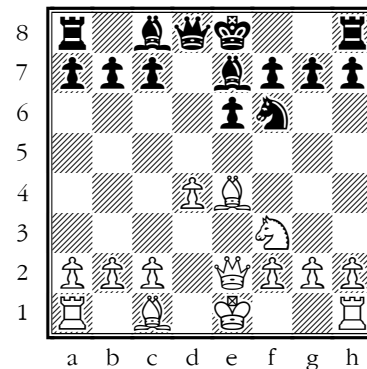
In an ultra-solid opening, Black dropped a pawn on move 8, and couldn't make enough trouble after that. In more complex positions, the odd pawn here or there sometimes seems not to matter, but this was a bad position to drop a pawn in.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Bd3 Be7 6.Nf3 Nbd7



The Rubinstein Variation of the French Defence has a reputation of being very solid. And so it is, but...

7.Qe2 Nxe4 8.Bxe4 Nf6?



Each turn...

9.Bxb7!

Examine every capture...

9...Bxb7 10.Qb5+!

...and every check.

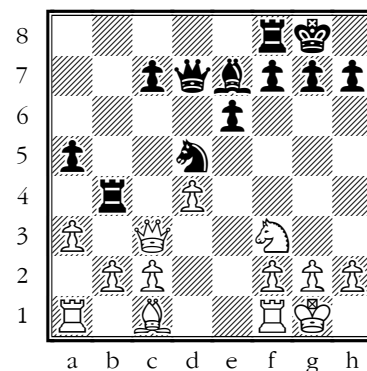
10...Qd7 11.Qxb7 0-0 12.0-0 a5 13.Qb3 Rab8

White has spent a little time in grabbing the pawn, so Black has a little pressure, but it's nowhere near enough to compensate. The position has no dynamism.

14.Qc3

The a-pawn is loose.

14...Rb4 15.a3 Nd5?!



This swipe at the Queen is natural enough, but it means the Rook cannot come back to b5.

16.Qd2 Rbb8 17.Qxa5

Now it's two pawns, and the rest of the game allows Black no chances at all.

17...Ra8 18.Qd2 Rfb8 19.c3 Nb6 20.b4 Nc4 21.Qd3 Qd5 22.Nd2 Ne5 23.Qe2 Nd7 24.Bb2 Nb6 25.c4 Qd7 26.Nb3 Na4 27.Bc1 Nc3 28.Qf3 Na4 29.Be3 Nb6 30.Rfc1 Qa4 31.Bf4 Ra7 32.Na5 Rxa5

Giving up the exchange in the hope of making some play.

33.bxa5 Nxc4 34.Qc3 Nxa5
 35.Qxc7 Re8 36.Qa7 Qb5
 37.Rab1 Qf5 38.Qxe7! 1-0

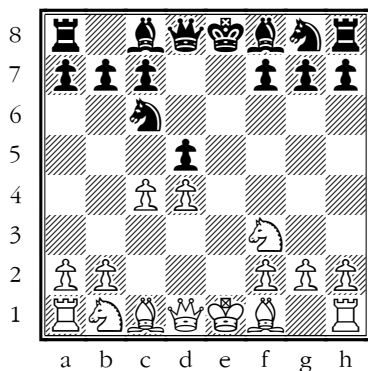
⇒ I know the problem of going to sleep in an apparently innocent position, but it has to be stopped; the other game also had a fairly simple tactical point. I'm a bit loath to hand out advice based on these very contrasting games, but tactical sharpness looks like an issue.

(Board 2.1) Leung,J - Payne,M

[C01: French Defence, Modern Exchange Variation]

I thought White was too vague in the opening but soon had a big structural threat which Black ignored, allowing White to milk the endgame for a win.

1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.exd5
 exd5 4.d4 Nc6 5.c4



A more interesting way to handle the French Exchange. White often gets an IQP and Black may not relish such an open position.

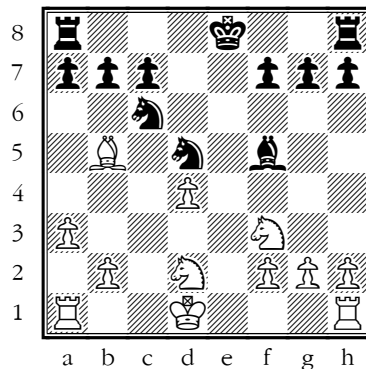
5...Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Qe7+ 7.Qe2?!

[7.Be2 If we are having an IQP, I think White needs to retain Queens.]

7...Bxd2+ ?!

[7...dxc4 ≠]

8.Nbxd2 Nb4 9.Qxe7+
 Nxe7 10.Kd1 Bf5 11.a3
 Nbc6 12.cxd5 Nxd5 13.Bb5

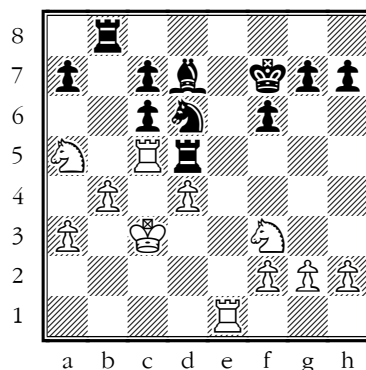


White has worked up a threat to mess up Black's pawns.

13...0-0

Black gives in without a fight.

14.Bxc6 bxc6 15.Ne5 Rfb8
 16.Ndc4 Ne7 17.b4 f6
 18.Nf3 Rd8 19.Re1 Kf7
 20.Na5 Rd5 21.Rc1 Bd7
 22.Rc5 Rb8 23.Kc2 Nf5
 24.Kc3 Nd6



By apparently simple means, White has achieved a plus against a strong opponent.

25.a4 Nb7 26.Nxb7 Rxb7
 27.a5 Rb5 28.Nd2 Rbxc5+
 29.bxc5 Bc8 30.Rb1

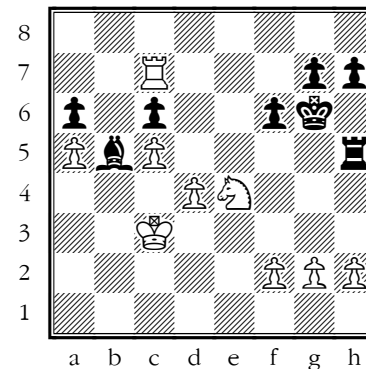
White switches to the other open file.

[30.Nc4]

30...Ba6 31.Rb8 Bb5 32.Rb7
 a6 33.Rxc7+

Cashing in.

33...Kg6 34.Ne4 Rh5



At last Black shows some sort of activity.

35.Nd6

[35.h3 denies Black counterplay.]

35...Bf1 36.Rxc6 Rxh2
 37.Nc4 Bxg2

Now Black has a passed h-pawn, but it's all far too slow.

38.Rxa6 Rh3+ 39.Kb4 Rd3??

In a difficult position, Black makes a huge blunder.

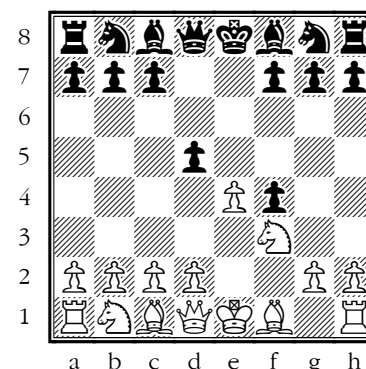
40.Ne5+ 1-0

(Board 2.2) Bank,M - Leung,J

[C36: King's Gambit, Modern Variation]

The ancient pin on the e-file claimed another piece.

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 d5

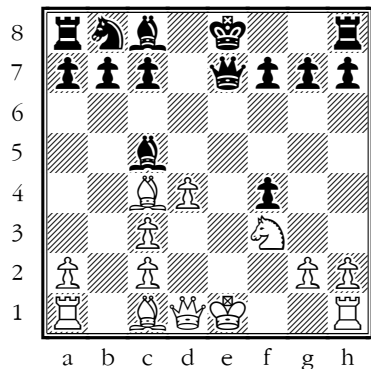


An easy way to get the pieces out, avoiding critical lines.

4.exd5 Nf6 5.Nc3

When I was a boy, the only moves considered were Bb5+ and Bc4. This one looks lacking in focus.

5...Nxd5 6.Bc4 Nxc3 7.bxc3
 Bc5 8.d4 Qe7+!



9.Ne5?

[9.Qe2 King's Gambit endgames are often surprisingly good for White. While this one doesn't look ever so promising, it's better than what happened.]

9...Bd6

[9...f6! 10.Qh5+ Kd8 is good for Black, but having started out refusing to get involved in complications, Black might continue.]

10.Bxf4??

[10.Qh5]

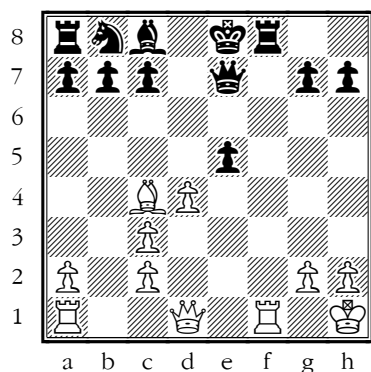
10...Bxe5?

[10...f6! Now wins a piece.]

11.Bxe5?? f6!

At last Black pushes the f-pawn, and it's just winning.

12.0-0 fxe5 13.Kh1 Rf8



14.Qd2

[14.Rxf8+! Kxf8 15.dxe5 would have asked Black harder questions about getting sorted.]

14...Rxf1+ 15.Rxf1 Be6

16.d5 Bg4 17.h3 Bh5 18.Qe3 Nd7 19.Kh2 a6 20.Qd3 Bg6 21.Qe2 Nb6 22.Bb3 0-0-0 23.Rd1 e4 24.Qe3 Qe5+ 25.Kh1 Nxd5 26.Qa7 Nb6 27.Rxd8+ Kxd8 28.Qb8+ Kd7 29.Qxb7 e3 0-1

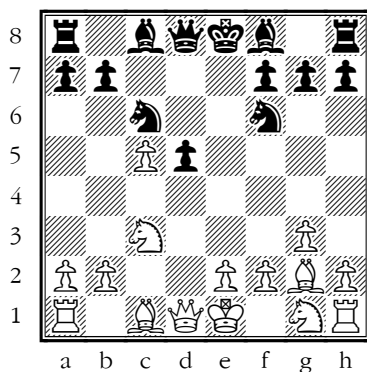
Can't ask more than 2/2 – well done! Do have another look at that French system – I'm pretty sure you need to avoid a Queen swap

(Board 3.1) Waddington, P - Slade, T

[D34: Queen's Gambit, Tarrasch Defence]

In an unusual version of the Tarrasch, Black's d-pawn dropped. There were some ways to be more awkward.

1.g3 d5 2.Bg2 c5 3.c4 e6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.d4 Nc6 6.dxc5 Nf6 7.Nc3

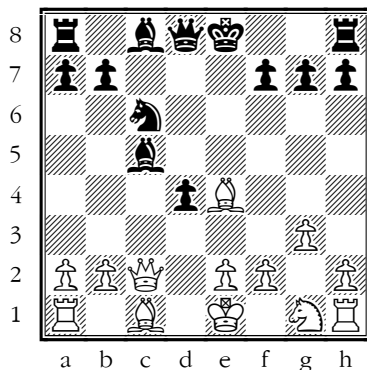


In the Tarrasch Defence, Black accepts an IQP for the chance of some easy development and good activity. White's dxc5 exposes the pawn, and sharpens the play.

7...d4 8.Ne4

[8.Na4 Bxc5!]

8...Nxe4 9.Bxe4 Bxc5 10.Qc2



This looks like a clever fork of c5 and h7. Well, it might be clever, but grabbing pawns often is dodgy.

10...Bb4+

[10...Qb6! Threatening d3-d2 11.Bxh7 and Black has some activity in compensation

B) 11...Bb4+ displaces the King, but]

A) 11...d3! is even better, e.g.

12.Qxd3 (12.Bxd3 Bxf2+)

12...Bxf2+ 13.Kf1 Bxg1! 14.Rxg1 Bh3+;

11.Bd2 Bxd2+ 12.Qxd2

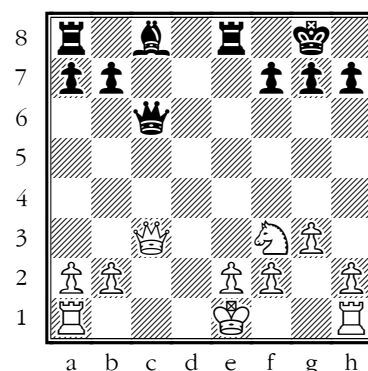
Now Rd1 and Nf3 returns to the theme of the weak IQP.

12...0-0

[12...Be6! 13.Nf3 Bd5!]

13.Nf3 Qd6 14.Bxc6 Qxc6

15.Qxd4 Re8 16.Qc3



16...Qxc3+

I see the weakness on c3, but I'd prefer to keep Queens on.

[16...Qe4 17.0-0 Bg4 18.Rac1 Rac8 and Black's busy pieces are holding for the moment; White's extra pawn looks a long way from promotion.]

17.bxc3 Bg4 18.Nd4 Rac8

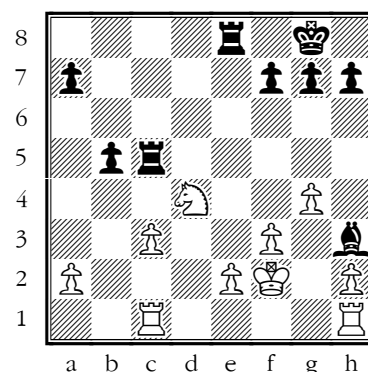
19.Rc1 b5!? 20.f3 Bh3?

[20...Bd7]

21.Kf2

[21.Nxb5!]

21...Rc5 22.g4



Netting the Bishop.

22...h5 23.Rhg1 hxg4 24.fxg4 Rg5 25.Rg3 Bxg4 26.h3 f5

27.hxg4 fxg4 28.Rb1 a6
29.Rb4 1-0

(Board 3.2) Slade, T - Lau, J

[A45: Trompowsky Attack]

White launched a forcing sequence, but at the end had lost coordination.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5

The Trompowsky Attack leads to some obscure positions with scope for original play.

2...Ne4 3.Bf4 c5 4.f3 Nf6

[4...Qa5+!]

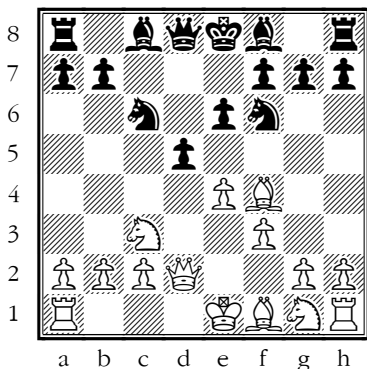
5.e4

[5.d5!? and White is a couple of moves ahead on a Benoni; 5.dxc5! is the book move.]

5...cxd4 6.Qxd4 Nc6 7.Qd2 e6

Probably a setup with ...g6 is better for Black.

8.Nc3 d5



9.Nb5

White starts a forcing sequence.

[9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Nxd5 exd5 Gives Black an IQP with its usual costs and benefits; probably this is better for White. 11.0-0-0 (or 11.Bb5 and castling short) 11...Be6 12.Bb5 Qb6 13.Ba4 Rd8 14.Nh3]

9...e5 10.Bg5

[10.exd5! is a sharp reply, leading to some advantage I think 10...exf4 (10...Nxd5!? 11.Qxd5! exf4 12.Qxd8+ Kxd8 13.0-0-0+ Bd7 14.Nh3 Bc5 15.Ng5!) 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.Qxd8+ Kxd8 13.0-0-0+ Bd7 14.Nd4 and Black's pawns are a real mess.]

10...d4 11.Bxf6 gxf6

At the end of this sequence White can feel smug about the f-pawns, but has some weak dark squares and big co-ordination problems.

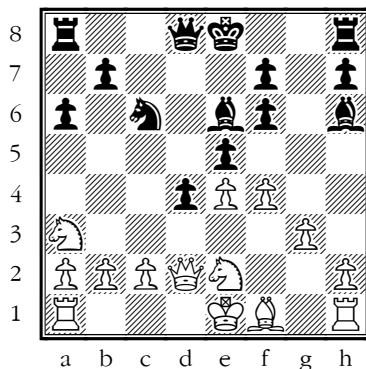
12.Ne2

[12.Bc4 a6 13.Na3 Bb4 (13...Bxa3)]

12...Be6 13.f4?! Bh6!

A common resource for Black in the Tromp.

14.g3 a6 15.Na3



White is suddenly in a real bind.

15...Qb6 16.c3 Rd8 17.h4 Bg4 18.Bg2 Rg8 19.Rf1 Be6

Black refuses all temptations, insisting on complete control.

20.b3 Qc5 21.b4 Qb6 22.Rb1 d3 23.Nc1 Rxc3 24.b5 axb5 25.Nxb5 Qe3+?

Too careful!

[25...Re3+! 26.Kf2 Re2+]

26.Qxe3 Rxe3+ 27.Kd2?

[27.Kf2]

27...Bxf4 28.Kd1 Bg4+ 29.Kd2 Re2+ 30.Kd1 Rxc3+ mating 0-1

☞ **A tough day at the office... You'll get the hang of the Tromp, I'm sure, and that Tarrasch just need a bit more focus on move 10.**

(Board 4.1) Fraser, J - Wood-Polkington, M

[B06: Hippopotamus Defence]

A murky closed game, drawn I think out of mutual bafflement.

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Be3

A common move against the Modern, but not in this position.

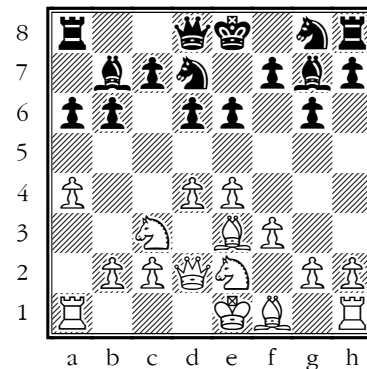
3...d6

[3...c5!]

4.Nc3

Returning to known territory.

4...a6 5.a4 b6 6.Qd2 Nd7 7.Nge2 Bb7 8.f3 e6



Black sets up the Hippopotamus.

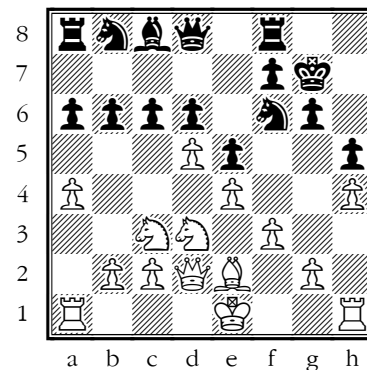
9.Bg5 Ngf6 10.Bh6? 0-0?

[10...Nxe4! with a check on h4 to follow.]

11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.h4 e5 13.d5 h5

with a very closed position that seems to suit no piece on the board.

14.Nc1 Bc8 15.Nd3 Nb8 16.Be2 c6



17.Nf2

Angling for g2-g4, the only break available. It's all safe and slow but without a but more energy Black will be able to meet it with a straight bat.

[17.dxc6 establishes a backward d-pawn, but this one will take a while to label weak. 17...Nxc6]

17...Rh8 18.Rd1 c5 19.b3 Ra7 20.Nb1 Re7 21.c4 Ree8

An odd method of connecting Rooks!

22.Qg5 Nh7 23.Qxd8 Rxd8

With the exchange of Queens, White's chances of a win dry up.

24.g4 Nf6 25.g5 ½-½

(Board 4.2) Fraser, J - Mollomby, A

[B01: Scandinavian Defence]

White played the opening with great caution - so much caution, in fact, that I thought it was very dangerous! But Black developed awkwardly, wasted time and then handed White a simple opportunity.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd6 4.Nf3

[4.d4 is the only critical move]

4...Nf6

[4...e5 looks like a fair try.]

5.d3

A bit too restrained.

[5.d4!]

5...Nc6 6.Be2 e5 7.h3

Stopping what, exactly?

7...Bf5 8.Nh4 Be6 9.Nf3

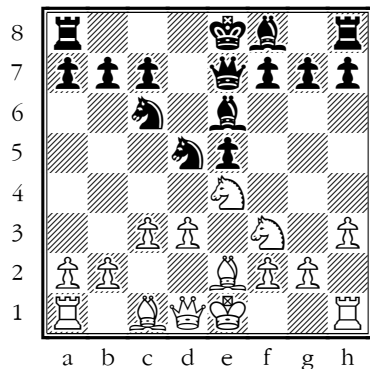
White is a worse here, but not much.

9...Nd5

That doesn't help.

[9...Be7]

10.Ne4 Qb4+ 11.c3 Qe7



The position is a sort of reversed Philidor.

12.Bd2

That's not a great square for the Bishop, and may even weaken the Pd3, so something else could have been undertaken.

12...Nb6

A mysterious manoeuvre.

[12...h6 and f5 or g6 or g5 looks more to the point. Black needs to shift the Bf8 and get castled.

Instead, Black spends the next three moves swapping or sidelining two of their best pieces.]

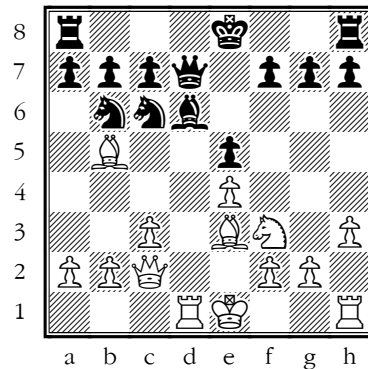
13.Qc2 Bd5 14.Be3 Bxe4 15.dxe4 Qd7

Just invites one more lost tempo.

16.Rd1 Bd6

One last inaccuracy, and White is finally provoked into action.

17.Bb5



17...a6?

Ignoring the threat.

18.Nxe5 Qe6 19.Bxc6+ bxc6 20.Nxc6 Qxa2 21.Bxb6 cxb6?

[21...Qc4! loses but goes down fighting.]

22.Rxd6 0-0 23.0-0 Qc4 24.b3 Qc5 25.Rfd1 Rac8 26.Ne7+ 1-0

Can't complain about the result! In both games you seemed to be over-cautious in the opening, I'd suggest taking a little bit more risk in the hope of putting more pressure on and provoking errors from your opponent.

(Board 5.1) Mavinkurve, A - Nie, D

[B72: Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation]

Black allowed a deadly invasion of the Queen's-side.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6

The Dragon Sicilian, often a fighting affair.

6.Be2 Bg7 7.Be3 a6

A bit early? People have been blending the Dragon and Najdorf

systems, but I think if you're going to play the Dragon, just play it, and don't play creepy-mousy moves like ...a6.

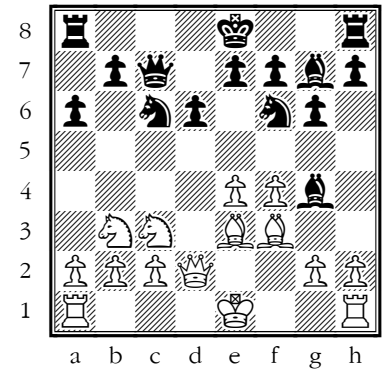
8.Qd2 Nc6 9.f4

Mixing systems.

9...Qa5?!

[9...Bg4; 9...Ng4]

10.Nb3 Qc7 11.Bf3 Bg4?!



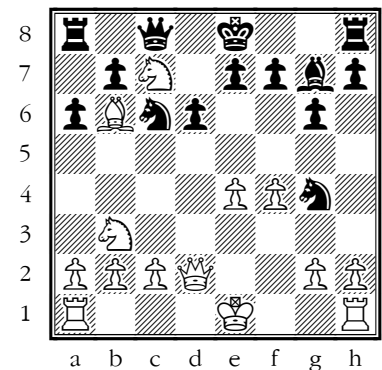
Allows White to decoy the Knight away from watch duty over d5.

12.Bxg4 Nxd4 13.Nd5 Qd8??

From the frying pan into the fire.

[13...Qb8 14.Bb6±]

14.Bb6 Qc8 15.Nc7+



This position is not an advert for playing ...a6!

15...Kf8 16.Nxa8 Qxa8

The exchange ahead, White needs only to develop swap off and win the endgame.

17.c3 Nf6 18.Qe2 Nd7 19.Bd4 Nxd4 20.cxd4 Qa7 21.Rc1

[21.Qd2 keeps control (and the pawn)]

21...Bxd4 22.Nxd4 Qxd4 23.Rc4 Qb6 24.g3 Kg7 25.Kf1 Rd8 26.Kg2 d5 27.exd5 Qb5 28.Rd1 Nf6 29.Rc2 Nxd5 30.Qxb5 axb5 31.Kf3 e6 32.Rcd2 b4 33.Ke4

Ra8 34.Ra1 Rc8 35.Kd3 Rd8
 36.Ke2 Rc8 37.a3 bxa3
 38.Rxa3 Rc1 39.Rb3 b6
 40.Kd3 Rc7 41.Rc2 Rb7
 42.Ke4 Kf6 43.g4 Kg7 44.h3
 Ra7 45.f5 Ra4+ 46.Ke5 gxf5
 47.gxf5 Ra5 48.Rg3+ Kh6

sure?

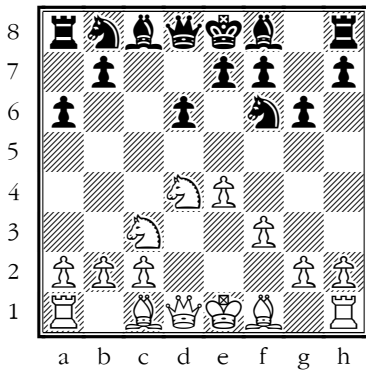
49.fxe6 fxe6 1-0

(Board 5.2) Tarhon, B - Nie, D

[B75: Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation]

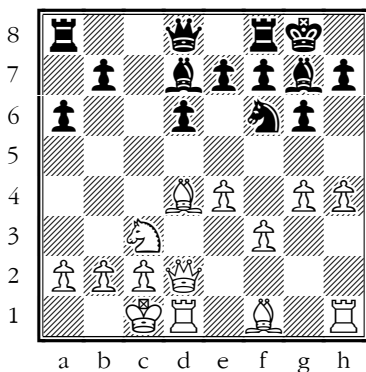
White gained a strong King's-side attack, but couldn't put it away; the attack flared up again in a heavy-piece endgame and Black was outgunned.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.f3 a6



Playing this move so early is usually associated with the plan of ...b5, ...Nbd7 and ...Bb7 and delaying castling. If you're not going to do that, just get your pieces out.

7.Be3 Bg7 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.0-0-0 Nxd4 10.Bxd4 Be6 11.g4 0-0 12.h4 Bd7



Opposite-side castling demands you get on with it!

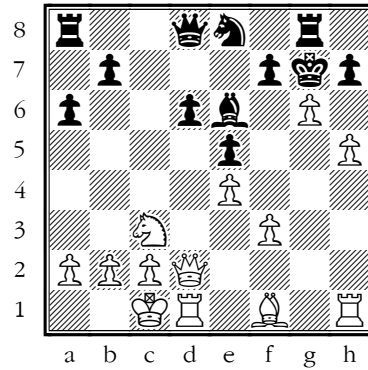
[12...b5]
 13.h5

White's attack is well advanced, Black's has not started.

13...e5 14.Be3 g5 15.Bxg5 Be6 16.Bh6

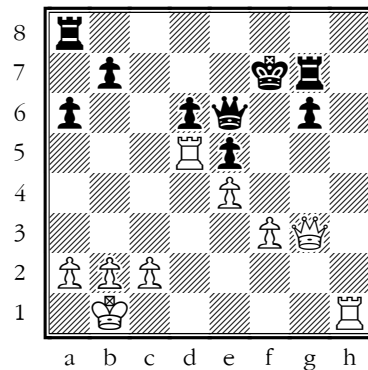
[16.h6! Bh8 17.Bh4! wins directly]

16...Ne8 17.Bxg7 Kxg7 18.g5 Rg8 19.g6!



Opening lines

19...fxg6 20.hxg6 hxg6
 21.Qh6+ Kf7 22.Bh3 Qf6
 23.Kb1 Bxh3 24.Qxh3 Qe6
 25.Qg3 Nf6 26.Nd5 Nxd5
 27.Rxd5 Rg7

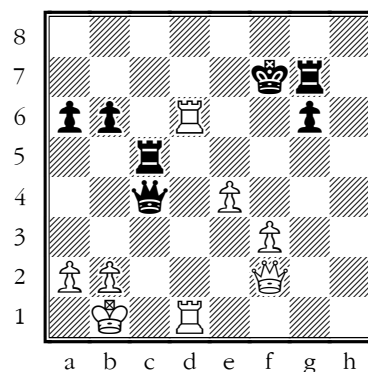


The exchanges have helped Black.

28.Rhd1

[28.f4! keeps White's initiative going.]

28...Rd8 29.c4 b6 30.Rxe5 Qxc4 31.Red5 Rc8 32.Qf2 Rc5 33.Rxd6



White is getting firmly on top.

33...Rg5? 34.Rd7+

[34.Qh4]

34...Kg8 35.Rxg7+ Kxg7 36.Qxb6 Qe2?

[36...Rc5]

37.Qd4+ Kh6 38.Qh8# 1-0

Those couldn't have been a lot of fun... This is a sharp system and a small mistake can be fatal. I'm all for originality in the opening, but if you aren't sure your moves are better, I'd play what you know to be well-founded book moves.

(Board 6.2) Rinvoluceri, A - NN

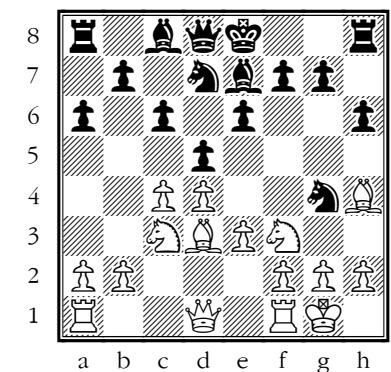
[D37: Queen's Gambit Declined, Unorthodox Defence]

White had a promising position but lost the thread at some point; Black found a neat tactic but straight after overlooked White's simple win of a piece.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 a6

A bit vague.

5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 h6 7.Bh4 c6 8.Bd3 Nbd7 9.0-0 Ng4



10.Bxe7

[10.Bg3 with more space, I would keep pieces on.]

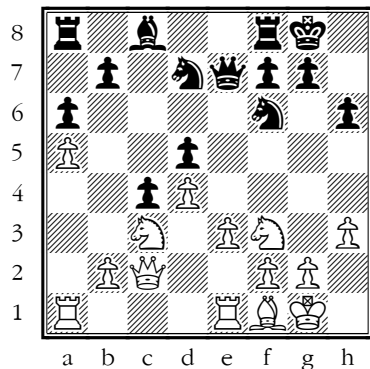
10...Qxe7 11.h3 Ngf6 12.a4 0-0 13.Re1 c5

[13...dxc4 14.Bxc4 e5]

14.Qc2 Nb6 15.cxd5 c4?!

Looks loose.

16.Bf1 exd5 17.a5 Nbd7



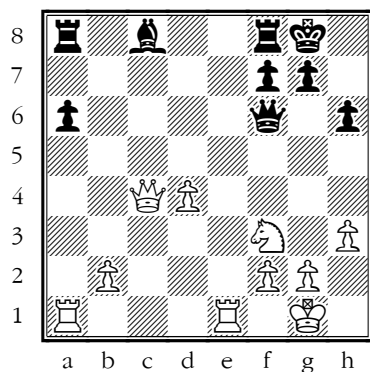
18.e4

Starting a long sequence of swaps and threats, which should win a pawn, but at the end Black has a trick.

18...dxe4 19.Nxe4 b5
20.axb6 Nxb6 21.Nxf6+

[21.Nc5!]

21...Qxf6 22.Bxc4 Nxc4
23.Qxc4



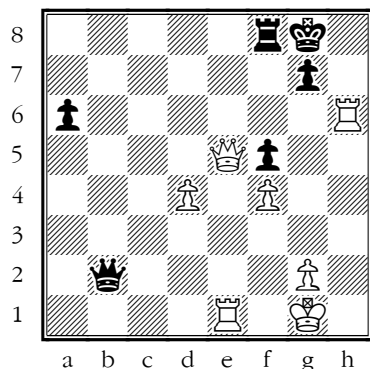
23...Bxh3! 24.Ne5 Qg5
25.Qf1 f5? 26.f4 Qg3 27.Ra3!
Qh4 28.Rxh3

A piece up with good control, White should have no more problems converting.

28...Qf6 29.Qc4+ Kh8
30.Nd7

The sun is coming out.

30...Qd6 31.Nxf8 Rxf8
32.Qc5 Qb8 33.Qe5 Qxb2
34.Rxh6+ Kg8



35.Rxa6

[35.Qd5+ look at every check, they say 35...Rf7 36.Re8#]

35...Qb7 36.Re6 Qd7
37.Re7 Qxe7 38.Qxe7 Rf6
39.Qxf6 gxf6 40.d5 Kf7

Black overlooks the Grandmaster move here (resigns).

41.d6 Kg6 42.d7 Kf7 43.d8Q
Kg7 44.Re6 Kh7 45.Qxf6
Kg8 1-0

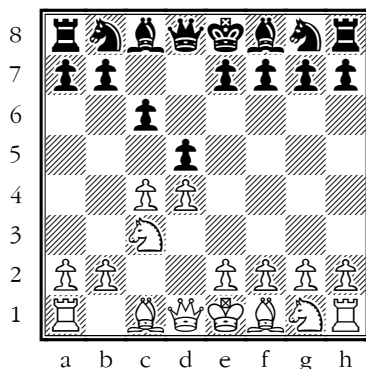
(Board 6.2) Rinvolucris, A - NN

[D13: Queen's Gambit, Slav Defence, Exchange Variation]

A long battle for the point in an OCB game.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3

[3.Nf3]



3...Nf6

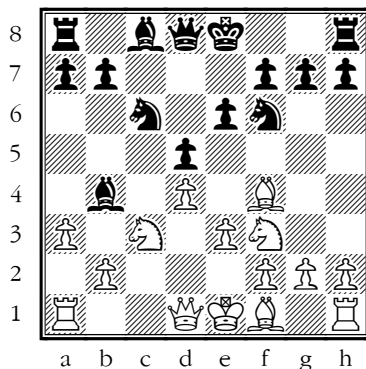
[3...e5!? may be a nuisance worth avoiding with 3.Nf3]

4.cxd5 cxd5 5.Bf4 e6

Black can normally hope to develop the Bc8 in the Slav.

[5...Nc6 6.Nf3 a6 7.e3 Bg4]

6.Nf3 Nc6 7.e3 Bb4 8.a3?!



Spending a move to ask Black to make a move that Black was

probably going to make anyway... This gives away any hope of a plus.

[8.Rc1]

8...Bxc3+ 9.bxc3 Ne4

Black has some initiative.

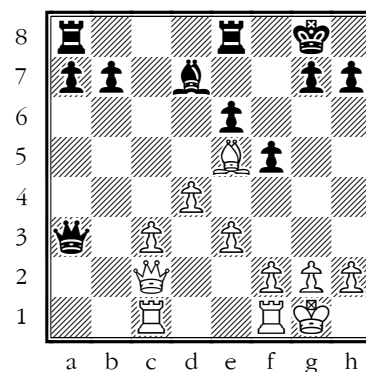
10.Qc2

[10.Rc1 Qa5 11.Qb3]

10...Qa5 11.Rc1 Qxa3
12.Bd3 0-0

[12...Nf6]

13.0-0 Re8 14.Bxe4 dxe4
15.Qxe4 f5 16.Qc2 Bd7
17.Ne5 Nxe5 18.Bxe5

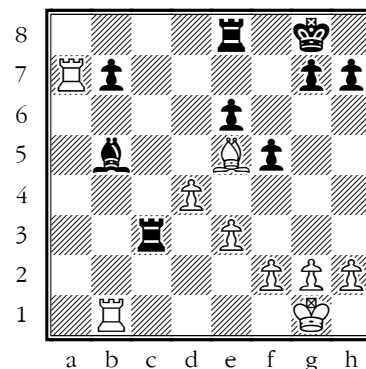


With an interesting position. Opposite-coloured Bishops are very drawish if they are the only things on the board, but with heavy pieces there is a good chance of initiative.

18...Rac8

[18...Rec8! 19.c4!]

19.Ra1 Qxc3 20.Qxc3 Rxc3
21.Rxa7 Bb5 22.Rb1



22...Bd3?!

[22...Ba6! would ask some questions of White's Rook.]

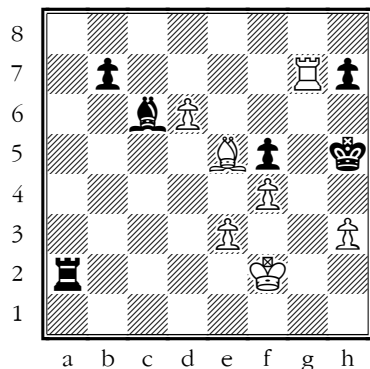
23.Rd1 Be4! 24.d5!

Grabbing a chance

24...Rb3 25.d6

This pawn looms over Black for the rest of the game.

25...Rd8 26.h3 Rb5 27.f4 Rd5
 28.Rxd5 Bxd5 29.Ra3 Rd7
 30.Rc3 Bc6 31.Rc2 Kf7
 32.Kf2 Kg6 33.Rc1 Rd8 34.g4
 Ra8 35.gxf5+ exf5 36.Rg1+
 Kh5 37.Rxg7 Ra2+?



Black seeks counterplay, but...

38.Ke1

...is suddenly faced with threats of mate and promotion.

38...Kh4 39.Rxh7+

[39.d7!/?]

**39...Kg3 40.d7 Bxd7
 41.Rxd7**

With an extra piece and no problems.

**41...Ra3 42.Rxb7 Rxe3+
 43.Kd2 Ra3 44.Rc7 Ra2+
 45.Rc2 Ra8 46.Rc3+ Kh4
 47.Bf6+ Kh5 48.Kd3 Re8
 49.Be5 Kh4 50.Kd4 Rd8+
 51.Kc5 Rc8+ 52.Kd6 Rxc3
 53.Bxc3 Kxh3 54.Ke5 Kg4
 55.Bd2 Kh5 56.Kxf5 Kh6
 57.Ke6 Kg7 58.f5 Kf8 59.f6
 Ke8 60.f7+ Kf8 61.Bh6# 1-0**

☞ You showed a lot of character to come away with two wins, well done! There are a points throughout the games where you could have been more accurate, but there were no great mistakes, and consistency is key to chess success.

(Board 7.1) Nok,J - Mills,N

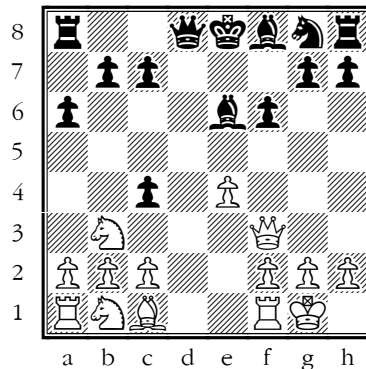
[C69: Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation]

One that got away. White lost a piece in record time, but persuaded Black to give it back soon after. Then a long Bishop endgame turned out better for Black, but the clock decided in White's favour.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6
 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 f6 6.d4
 exd4 7.Nxd4**

[7.Qxd4!]

7...c5 8.Nb3 Be6 9.Qf3 c4!

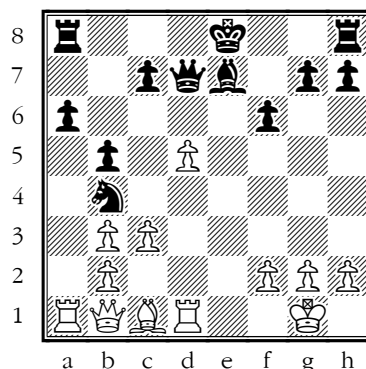


10.Rd1?

Drops a piece.

[10.Nc5! Bxc5 11.Qh5+]

**10...Qc8 11.Qh5+ Bf7
 12.Qa5 cxb3 13.axb3 Ne7
 14.Nc3 Nc6 15.Qa4 Be7
 16.Nd5 b5 17.Qa2 Bxd5
 18.exd5 Nb4 19.Qb1 Qd7
 20.c3**



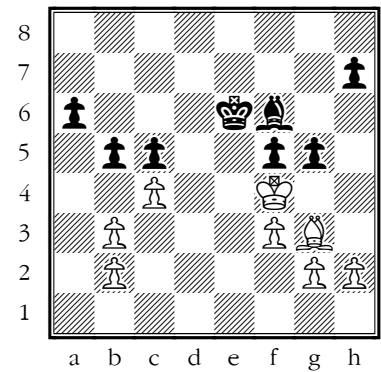
20...Nxd5??

Handing back the piece.

[20...Nc6!]

**21.c4 Nc3 22.Rxd7 Nxb1
 23.Rd1 0-0 24.Rxb1 Rfd8
 25.Bf4 Rxd1+ 26.Rxd1 c5
 27.Rd7 Rd8! 28.Rxd8+ Bxd8
 29.Bd6 Bb6 30.Kf1 Kf7
 31.Ke2 Ke6 32.Bg3 Bd8**

**33.f3 f5 34.Ke3 Bf6 35.Kf4
 g5+**



36.Ke3

[36.Ke3 and for some reason here Black declined to play either 36...Bxb2 or 36...f4+ but perhaps I don't have the exact position correct. Later, Black promoted a pawn to go K+Q against K+B+P but lost on time. In the last ten seconds, Black should have played QxP and offered a draw. But I believe White made an illegal move during Black's last 5 minutes, which should have given Black a 2-minute time penalty, which should have been enough to win with.]

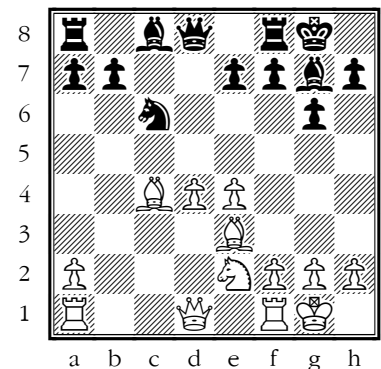
1-0

(Board 7.2) Hardwick,A - Mills,N

[D87: Grünfeld Defence, Exchange Variation]

Black avoided the theory move with an idea which lost a piece.

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5
 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3
 6.bxc3 Bg7 7.Bc4 0-0 8.Ne2
 c5 9.Be3 cxd4 10.cxd4 Nc6
 11.0-0**



All top theory so far. Black hopes to show that White's big centre can be a target as well as an asset.

There are three moves here known to theory, but Black plays a fourth!

11...a6

[11...Na5; 11...e6; 11...Bg4]

12.Rc1 b5??

This looks like a rotten move because of Bxf7+, but in fact Bxf7+ is just level. Yet it's actually disastrous after!

13.Bd5!

Pinning and winning.

13...Nxd4 14.Bxa8 Nxe2+ 15.Qxe2 Be6 16.Bd5 Bxd5 17.exd5 Qxd5 18.Rfd1 Qxa2

[18...Qxa2 19.Qxa2]

1-0

➔ **Deserved a better result!**
Lots of things to praise in your play, but clearly you need to keep the tactical points under better control

(Board 8.1) Wray,J - Head,L

[C50: Old Stodge]

A basic theme in this position seemed unknown to White.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0

This can be played with some specific ideas in mind, but I think it was played today with only some vague ones.

[4.Nc3 d6 5.d3 Nf6 and now White's only hopes for advantage are associated with 6.Be3 or (6.Bg5) ;

4.c3!; 4.b4!?!]

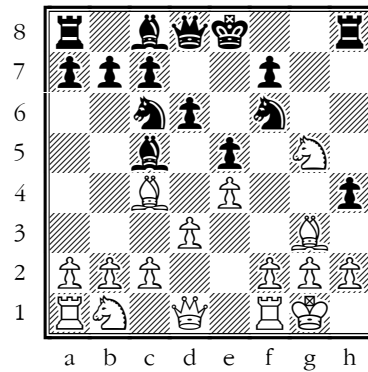
4...d6

5.Nc3 Nf6 6.d3

We often see this position arise after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.Nc3 d6 5.d3 Nf6 and now White's only hopes for advantage are associated with 6.Be3 or (6.Bg5) rather than 6.0-0.

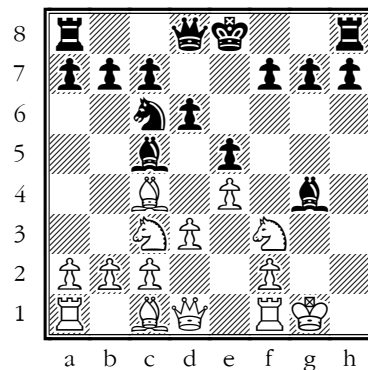
Young players often think this type of position is easy and safe, but in some ways it's both difficult and dangerous. This game is a case in point:

[4...Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.Bg5? (6.Be3) 6...h6 7.Bh4 g5 8.Bg3 h5! 9.Nxg5 h4



10.Nxf7 hxg3 11.Nxd8 Bg4 12.Qd2 Nd4 13.Nc3 Nf3+ 14.gxf3 Bxf3 and wins 0-1]

6...Bg4 7.h3 Bh5 8.g4? Nxg4 9.hxg4 Bxg4



Black has sacrificed a piece for a pawn – overall a pawn – and has threats of ...Nd4 and ...Qf6.

10.Nd5

[10.Bb5! Qf6 11.Nd5! with some hopes of survival.]

10...Nd4!

It's all over.

11.c3 Nxf3+ 12.Qxf3 Bxf3 13.Ne3 Qg5+ 14.Kh2 Qh5+ 15.Kg1

[15.Kg3 Bxe3]

15...Qh1# 0-1

A lesson learned the hard way! This has all been worked out before – do ask (or read) before trying a new opening!

(Board 8.2) Wray,J - Jina,T

[E15: Queen's Indian Defence, Fianchetto Variation]

White had some prospects of a plus out of the opening but one slip and the tables were turned. Chess is an unforgiving game!

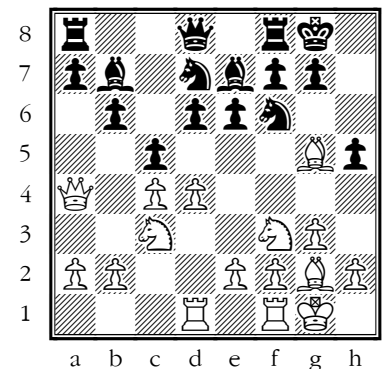
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Ba6 5.Qa4 Bb7 6.Bg2 c5 7.0-0

[7.dxc5 I believe is the theory move, hoping to make it awkward for Black to get sorted out.]

7...Be7 8.Nc3 0-0 9.Bf4 d6 10.Bg5

A square that could have been reached in one move.

10...Nbd7 11.Rad1 h5



Looks unconnected with Black's setup.

12.Bxf6

I like my Bishops too much to play this.

[12.dxc5!]

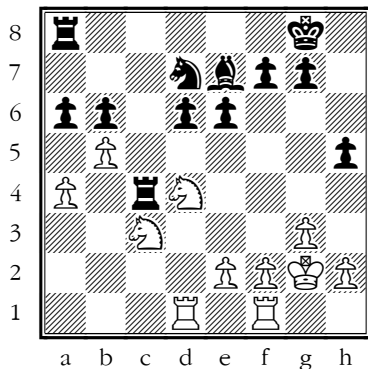
12...Bxf6 13.dxc5! Nxc5 14.Qa3 Be7 15.b4 Nd7 16.Nd4?

[16.Nb5! and White has outplayed his opponent]

16...Bxg2 17.Kxg2 Qc7 18.Qb3 a6

[18...Rfc8! wins the c-pawn.]

19.a4? Rfc8! 20.b5 Qxc4 21.Qxc4 Rxc4



It's all gone wrong for White, who is losing a piece. Unlucky!

22.Rd3 Nc5 23.Rd2 Rxc3
 24.Nc6 Kf8 25.Nxe7 Kxe7
 26.h4 Nxa4 27.bxa6 Rxa6
 28.Ra2 Nc5 29.Rxa6 Nxa6
 30.Ra1 Nc5 31.Ra7+ Kf6
 32.f3 Rc2 33.Kf2 Rb2 34.g4
 b5 35.f4 Rb4 36.Kf3 Rb3+
 37.Kf2 Ne4+ 38.Kg2 Rg3+
 39.Kh2 Rxg4 40.e3 Rxh4+
 41.Kg2 Rg4+ 42.Kh2 Rg3
 43.Rb7 Rxe3 44.Rxb5 Rf3
 45.f5 Rxf5 46.Rxf5+ Kxf5
 47.Kh3 d5 48.Kh4 d4
 49.Kxh5 d3 50.Kh4 d2
 51.Kh3 d1 Q 52.Kg2 Qe2+
 53.Kh1 Kg6 54.Kg1 Qf2+ 0-1

☞ I'm sure you won't fall for that sac again, but do get on top of the openings you choose – there are lots of second-hand books and bits of writing online to consult. You were a bit unlucky in the second game, having played the right plan in a difficult Grandmaster opening. I'm going to guess choosing between 1.e4 or 1.d4 and sticking to it would be a good policy.

(Board 9.1) Clarke, L - Trott, T

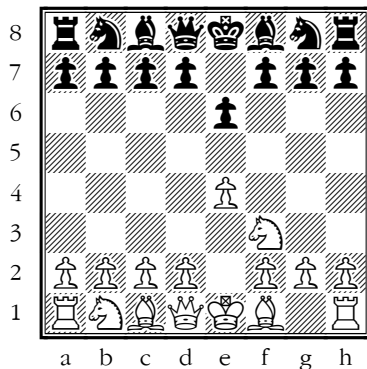
[C00: French Defence]

White scattered pawns like confetti.

1.e4 e6

Have I seen you play the French before? It's a fine defence, and I have a fine booklet on it (what I wrote).

2.Nf3



2...Nf6

[2...d5! This move should follow 1...e6 with the speed of lightning. In fact, I think 1...e6 and 2...d5 can be played no matter what White's first two moves are.]

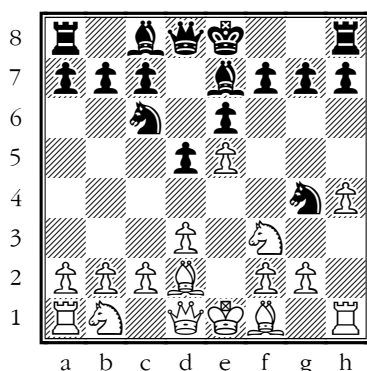
3.d3

[3.e5!]

3...Nc6

Doesn't look right. Black usually wants to push the c-pawn.

4.Bd2 Be7 5.h4 d5 6.e5 Ng4



7.Rh3?

[7.d4]

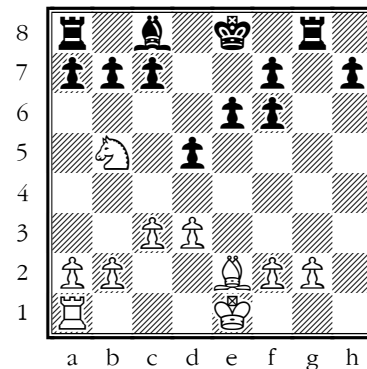
7...Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5
 9.Na3 Bxh4

White has dropped two pawns in 9 moves. We predict that after 36 moves there will be no White pawns left.

10.Bc3 Bf6 11.Qe2 Ng6

With a sneaky threat of ...Nf6

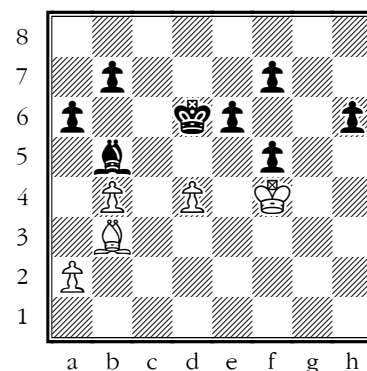
12.Bxf6 Qxf6 13.c3 Nf4
 14.Rf3! Nxe2 15.Rxf6 gxf6
 16.Bxe2 Rg8 17.Nb5



17...Rxd2??

It seems Black has not set his burglar alarm.

18.Nxc7+ Kd8 19.Nxa8 Bd7
 20.0-0 Rxf2 21.Bh5 Be8
 22.Rg1 Rf5 23.Bg4 Rg5
 24.Rg2 Kc8 25.Bf3 Rxd2
 26.Bxg2 Kb8 27.d4 Kxa8
 28.Bf1 Kb8 29.Bd3 h6 30.b4
 a6 31.c4 dxc4 32.Bxc4 Bb5
 33.Bb3 Kc7 34.Kd2 Kd6
 35.Ke3 f5 36.Kf4



After 36 moves, we see White's pawn dropping rate has gone down, but is still simply lost.

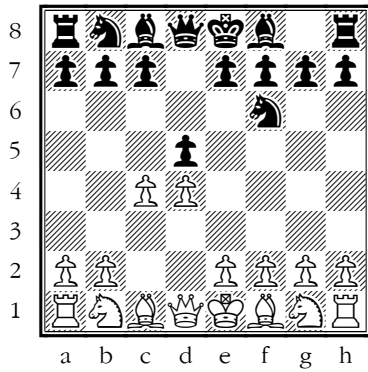
36...Be8 37.a3 f6 38.d5 Bf7
 39.Bd1 b6 40.Be2 a5
 41.dxe6 Bxe6 42.bxa5 bxa5
 43.Ke3 Ke5 44.Kd2 f4
 45.Kc3 Bd5 46.Bc4 Bxc4
 47.Kxc4 f3 48.Kb5 f2
 49.Kxa5 f1 Q 50.a4 h5
 51.Kb6 h4 52.a5 h3 53.a6
 Qxa6+ 54.Kxa6 h2 0-1

(Board 9.2) Trott, T - Reed, S

[D06: Queen's Gambit Declined, Marshall's Defence]

White overlooked something important.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nf6

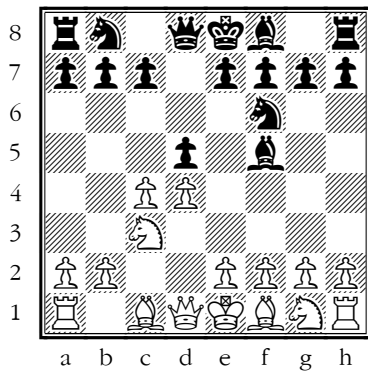


Marshall's Defence, which is clever but gives White the centre.

3.Nc3

[3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.Nf3! (4.e4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5! is the clever bit.) 4...Bf5]

3...Bf5



Black declines the opportunity to support the pawn.

[3...e6; 3...c6]

4.e3

Probably a bit too solid an approach, in general.

[But right now 4.Qb3! wins a pawn!]

4...e6 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Ne5 Nb4

[6...Nxe5! 7.dxe5 Ne4]

7.Bd3

[7.Nd3!]

7...Nxd3+ 8.Nxd3

Black has the Bishop pair.

8...Bd6

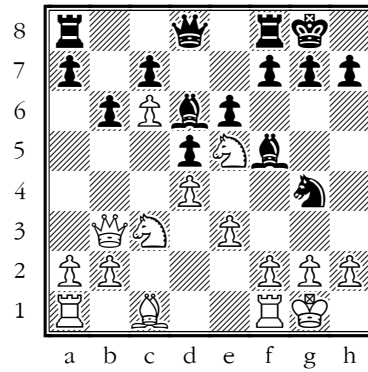
[8...dxc4 9.Qa4+ c6 10.Qxc4]

9.c5 Be7 10.Ne5 0-0

11.Qb3

[11.b4]

11...b6 12.c6 Bd6 13.0-0 Ng4



14.Nd7??

Look at every check and every capture...

[14.Nxg4 Bxg4 15.e4! is safe enough]

14...Bxh2+

That move qualifies on both counts!

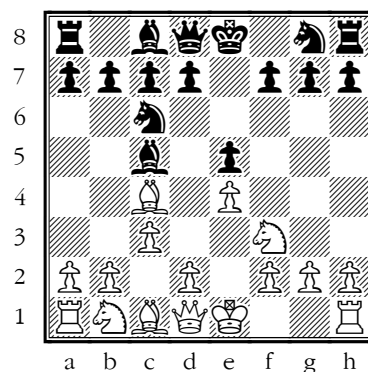
15.Kh1 Qh4 0-1

☞ I know you know what you're doing on the chessboard, but it doesn't always work. I've got a prejudice that you need more match practice, and failing that, more home study – better tactical awareness would have made sure of the first and may have saved the second. I also think you're taking a risk if you adopt new openings without a chance to rehearse them!

(10.1) Royle, J - NN

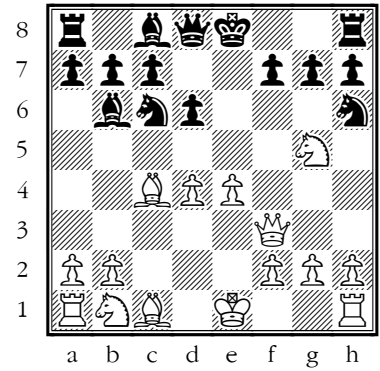
[C53: Guiooco Piano 4.c3]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3!



A quiet cheer from the coach.

4...d6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb6? 7.Ng5 Nh6 8.Qf3



Sorry James, I couldn't bridge the gap. Black next move should have been, but was not,

8...Nxd4! 1-0

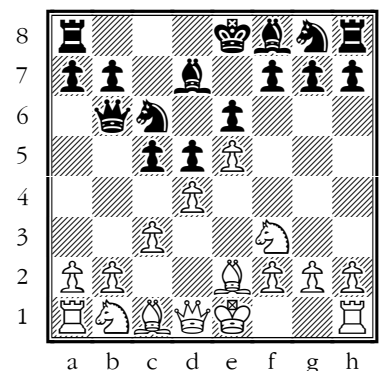
☞ The recording fell apart in one game and I seem to have got back to Exeter without the other. Very sorry about that. I think my comments about your games would overlap with those about Tomas'.

(11.1) Reddiar, G - Whittington, R

[C02: French Defence, Advance Variation]

White lost a pawn but found a perpetual.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Be2 Bd7



No rush for this one.

[6...Nh6!]

7.0-0 cxd4 8.cxd4 Be7

Nor that one!

[8...Nge7]

9.Nc3 Bb4

A square that could have been reached in one move.

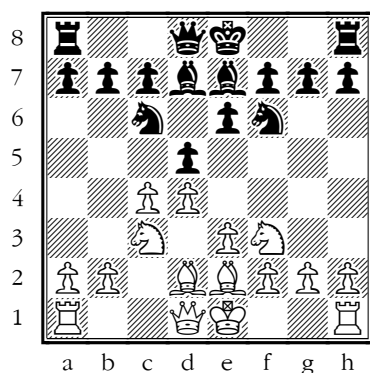
☞ You always play with a lot of heart and energy, but some of that energy needs to come through in finding the very best moves. Some of that opening play was in second gear, when you should be zooming away.

(12.1) Whitehead,R - Vasey,M

[D37: Queen's Gambit Declined]

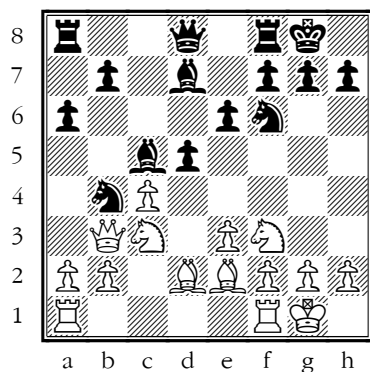
White played the opening very quietly, and then went backwards!

1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e6
4.Nf3 Nc6 5.e3 Be7 6.Be2
Bd7 7.Bd2



White's Bishops are very passively placed. This structure looks a lot better with Bishops on d3 and b2, looking at the Black King's-side, when Black's passive set-up might prove unsafe. When you play this opening, do you have an idea of what set-up you are trying to reach, and what are the main variations? If not, drop me a line sometime, and I'll give you a shove in the right direction.

7...0-0 8.0-0 a6 9.Qc2 Nb4
10.Qb3 c5 11.dxc5 Bxc5



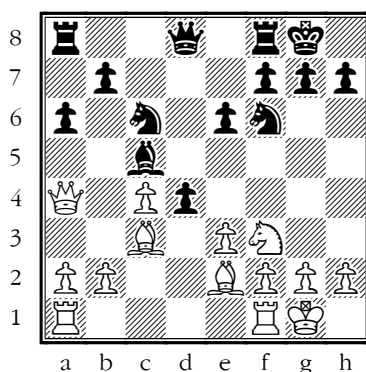
12.Na4

[12.a3 Nc6 13.cxd5 wins a pawn easily enough]

12...Bxa4 13.Qxa4 Nc6
14.Bc3

Daring to step forward...

14...d4

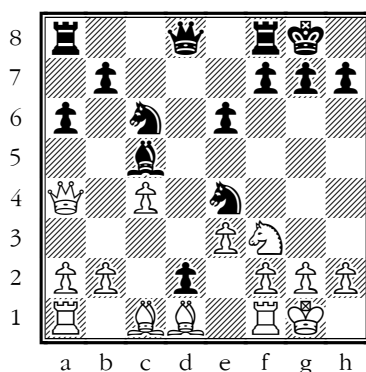


15.Bd2

Oh dear, back again! Now White is pushed off the board.

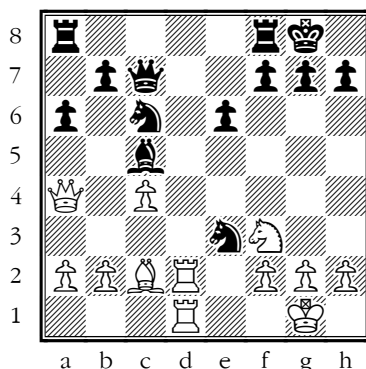
[15.exd4! Nxd4? (15...Bxd4! is better 16.Rad1 Qe8! since 17.Nxd4?? Nxd4 18.Qxe8 Nxe2+!) 16.Bxd4 Bxd4 17.Rad1 e5 18.Nxe5]

15...Ne4 16.Bc1 d3! 17.Bd1
d2!



The Bishop is murdered in his bed.

18.Bc2 dxc1Q 19.Raxc1 Nf6
20.Rfd1 Qc7 21.Rd2 Ng4
22.Rcd1 Nxe3?



I like the idea, but

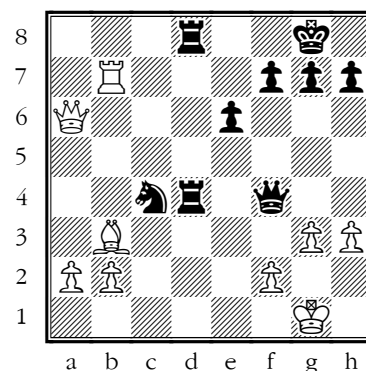
23.Rd7!

Now, I may have got the next bit wrong, but at the end, Black ended up a piece and pawn ahead.

23...Qf4 24.R1 d3?!

[24.fxe3!]

24...Nxc4 25.Rxb7 N6e5
26.Rc3 Rfd8 27.h3 Bd4
28.Rcb3 Nd2 29.Nxd4 Rxd4
30.Qa5 Nxb3 31.Bxb3 Nc4
32.Qxa6 Rad8 33.g3



33...Qc1+

[33...Rd1+ forces mate! It's all checks, so very easy to follow, once you consider the first move. 34.Bxd1 Rxd1+ 35.Kg2 Qe4+ 36.f3 Qe2#]

34.Kg2 Nxb2 35.Qb6 Qd2
36.a4 Nxa4 37.Bxa4 Rxa4
38.Rb8 Qd5+

[38...Qd6 Is this the right position?? 39.Kh2 (39.Rxd8+ Qxd8 40.Qxd8#;

39.Qxd6) 39...Rd4 40.Rb7 g6]

39.Kh2 Rd4 40.Rb7 g6 0-1

(12.2) Ravendran,M - Whitehead,R

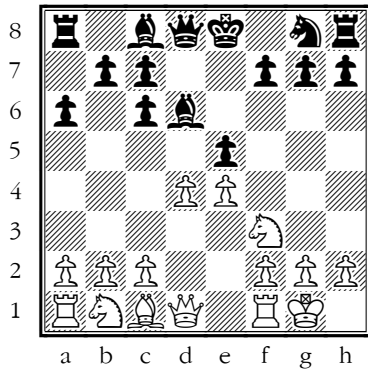
[C68: Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation]

Another e-file pin. Actually, if White had been paying attention, the game could have been decided earlier.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6
4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 Bd6

[5...Qd6]

6.d4



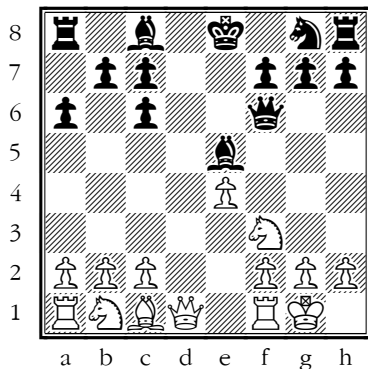
This is an important variation of the most important opening in chess...

6...Qf6??

...so you should know the theory a bit better than this. Black is already losing!

[6...exd4 7.Nxd4]

7.dxe5 Bxe5

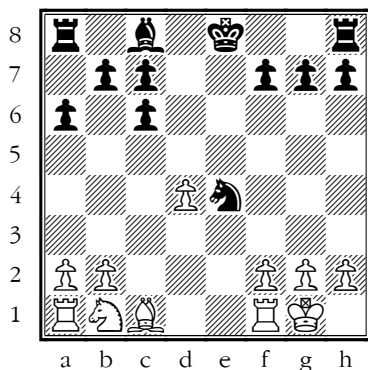


8.Nxe5

White is asleep at the wheel.

[8.Bg5! Qd6 9.Nxe5! Qxe5? 10.Qd8#]

8...Qxe5 9.c3 Nf6 10.Qd4 Qxd4 11.cxd4 Nxe4??



12.Re1

Not a hard move to spot.

12...Bf5 13.f3

Winning a piece. The rest of the game is develop/swap/win the

endgame, and I don't have anything much to say about it.

**13...Bg6 14.fxe4 0-0-0
15.Be3 Bxe4 16.Nd2 Bf5
17.Nf3 Rhe8 18.Bg5 Rxe1+
19.Rxe1 f6 20.Bf4 Bg4
21.Re7 Rd7 22.Rxd7**

[22.Re8+ Rd8 23.Rxd8+ Kxd8]

**22...Kxd7 xd7 23.Kf2 Ke6
24.Bxc7 Kd5 25.Ke3 g5
26.Bd8 h6 27.Bxf6 Ke6
28.Bg7 Bxf3 29.Kxf3 h5
30.h4 g4+ 31.Kf4 Kf7 32.Kg5
Kxg7 33.Kxh5 g3 34.Kg4 b6
35.Kxg3 c5 36.dxc5**

[36.d5 b5 37.d6 Kf6 38.h5 c4
39.h6 b4 40.d7 c3 41.bxc3 bxc3
42.d8Q+ Kg6 43.Qd3+]

**36...bxc5 37.Kf4 a5 38.a4 c4
39.g4 c3 40.bxc3 Kh6 41.c4
Kg6 42.c5 Kf7 1-0**

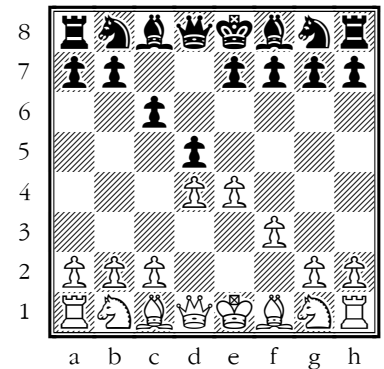
☞ In a nutshell, a bit of study, first of tactical patterns, and secondly of opening play, will do you the world of good. It's not hard or complicated so if you have time I do urge you to have a go.

(12.2) Young, D - Susuvee, G

[B12: Caro-Kann, Fantasy Variation]

In a tricky line of the Caro-Kann, Black stuck out his chin and was knocked out.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3



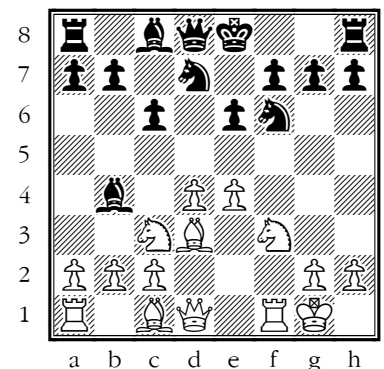
3...Nd7

There are four 'theory' moves here.

[3...dxe4 4.fxe4 e5 5.Nf3 Be6 Stopping White's bishop from coming to c4 and getting ready to support his e-pawn with ...Nd7 and ...Bd6. Here 6.dxe5 Qxd1+ 7.Kxd1 Nd7 8.Bd3 0-0-0 9.Bg5 Be7 10.Bf4 was Rabovszky-Mullner, Balatonbereny 1995, when 10...Nc5 would have given Black pretty good compensation for the pawn;

3...e6; 3...g6; 3...e5]

4.Nc3 dxe4 5.fxe4 e6 6.Nf3 Bb4 7.Bd3 Ngf6 8.0-0

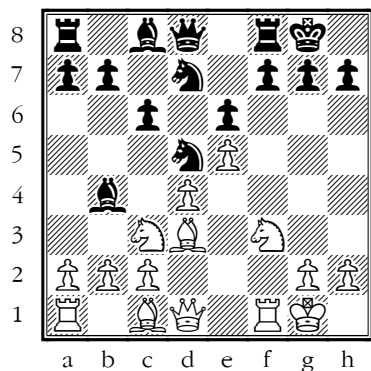


White's position looks great.

8...0-0??

Castling into it.

9.e5 Nd5



10.Bxh7+

A stock sacrifice. Every chess player should play at least one of these in their lifetime.

The list of ingredients are all there:

1. Knight can come to g5
2. Queen can come to the light squares
3. Black Knight is missing from f6 and/or can be taken
4. Black Bc8 can't come to f5
5. One other bit of help is available (here, it's the Rf1)

10...Kxh7 11.Ng5+ Kg8

12.Qh5 Re8 13.Qh7+ Kf8

14.Rxf7# 1-0

➡ **That was a shame – a mistake in the opening can often leave you feeling that you were never in the game. But I think there was something else worth thinking about – and that is what you were thinking when you played your 8th move.**

Endnote from Dave Regis:

Do look at games other than your own, there was lots of interesting chess and plenty to learn from.

I've made some brisk comments about the chess – I'm sorry if I seem always to be complaining, but it's easier to pick on your one mistake than a series of 10 good moves!

➤ Getting better

Most mistakes seemed to me to be either opening mistakes (easy to fix) or tactical oversights (easy to rehearse). If you're not sure how to fix your openings or practise your tactics then let me know!

➤ Two sides of every mistake

In the notes above, I've explained lots of chess mistakes, and why they were mistakes. I might say, this Black move is a mistake, because White now plays A, and this works because B then C and if D then E. (Or, White should have played A, etc.)

But there is another side to each mistake, which I can't tell anything about, but which perhaps you can, and you should try. A mistake in a chess move is also a mistake in thinking.

So, on reflection, was your mistake any of these?

1. You didn't look for the threat - it didn't seem that sort of position. (Game 1.2?)
2. You looked for threats but you didn't see it (Game 3.1?)
3. You saw the threat but you hoped it didn't win (Game 7.2?)
4. You saw the threat but you hoped your opponent didn't play it (Game 12.3?)
5. You misunderstood the position - you thought something was important that was not (or dismissed something that was really important) (Game 3.2)
6. You saw the threat and missed something in the analysis (really, this is going to be some variety of the first five) (Game 7.2?)

If you can catch yourself making a mistake in thinking, that is helpful. If you catch yourself making the same mistake fairly often, then that's a habit you need to get out of!

I'm just as guilty of this as anyone: I just wrote a note for the senior club:

"I thought that it was a quiet, stodgy position, and so I didn't have to look out for my opponent's tactics (Mistake #1). I am here to inform you, ladies and gentlemen, there is no such position..."

➤ Castling

Mr.Thynne mentioned the late castling (perhaps looking at Board 5.1?) while I noticed too-early castling (Board 8.1, Board 12.2). I also saw castling sensibly avoided in a position which may have let the opponent know where to attach (Board 3.1).

Perhaps the only lesson to be drawn is:

Castle because you will or because you must, but never because you can! – Harry Pillsbury

Dave Regis, July 2012