

Round 1. Game 2
28 May 2007

Aronian-Carlsen
Volga Gambit
Notes by grandmaster
Yury Yakovich

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5!?

The Volga Gambit is a rare guest in high-level competitions, but after losing the first game as White, Carlsen tries to initiate complicated struggle in every game.

4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 g6 6.♗c3 ♕xa6 7.g3

The most popular plan at present time.

7...d6 8.♕g2 ♕g7 9.♗f3 ♗bd7 10.♖b1!

The idea of Dutch grandmaster Piket. White tries to neutralize Black's queenside initiative by b2-b3 and ♕c1-b2. 10.0-0 is inaccurate, as after 10...♗b6! it becomes difficult for White to develop the bishop to the a1-h8 diagonal, because 11.♖b1 is met by 11...♕c4!, and Black regains a pawn.

10...♖a5

Preventing b2-b3.

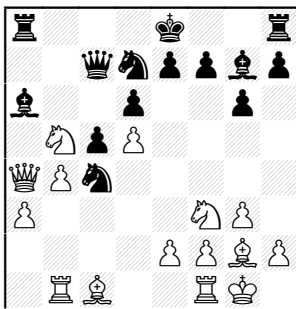
11.0-0

The Black's queen arrived on a5 rather prematurely, so 11.♕d2!? deserved attention.

11...♗b6! 12.a3

White begins the queenside action, because now 12.♕d2 is met by 12...♗c4 13.♕e1 0-0, and on 14.b3 14...♗a3 is unpeasant.

12...♗c4 13.b4 ♖c7 14.♖a4+ ♗d7 15.♗b5



15...♖b8!

After the game Aronian said that he completely overlooked this move, counting only on 15...♖c8, after which 16.bxc5 ♖xc5 17.♕h3! ♗cb6 (17...f5 18.♗g5 with a big advantage to White) 18.♖a5 ♕xb5 (18...♗xd5? loses to 19.♕e3 ♗xe3 20.♗c7+) 19.♖xb5 ♖xb5 20.♖xb5 leads to an ending with a stable advantage to White.

16.bxc5

Now Black has a forced way to equalize the game.

16...♕xb5 17.♖xb5 ♖xb5 18.♖xb5 ♗xc5 19.♗d2 ♗xa3 20.♕xa3 ♖xa3 21.♗e4

Game drawn. As it often happens, although both players aimed at sharp struggle, the complications resulted in a completely equal ending.

Gurevich-Leko
Nimzo-Indian Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♕b4 4.♖c2 0-0 5.a3 ♕xc3+ 6.♖xc3 b6 7.♕g5 ♕b7 8.f3 h6 9.♕h4 d5 10.e3 ♗bd7 11.cxd5 ♗xd5 12.♕xd8 ♗xc3 13.♕h4 ♗d5 14.♕f2

This endgame often occurs in this fashionable line of the Nimzo-Indian Defense. White obtains a small advantage, but Black can hold.

14...c5 15.e4 ♗e7

A more active 15...♗f4?! is met by 16.♕b5 and then 17.♗e2 with an advantage to White, e.g., 16...♖ad8 17.♗e2! ♗xg2+ 18.♗f1 f5 19.d5!, winning a knight for two pawns (I.Sokolov-C.Hansen, Malmoe 2001).

16.0-0-0

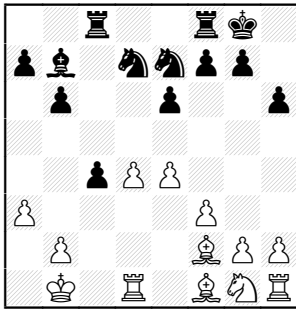
This move has never been played, and, possibly, not by a chance.

16.♕b5 ♕c6 (16...♗c6 followed by 17...a6 is also okay) 17.♕xc6 ♗xc6 is not very promising. Peter defended this position successfully several times: 18.♗e2 ♖fd8 (or 18...cxd4 19.♗xd4 ♗xd4 20.♕xd4 ♖ac8, Topalov-Leko, Cannes 2002) 19.0-0-0 cxd4 20.♗xd4 ♗de5 21.♗b1 ♗xd4 22.♖xd4 ♗f8, and the position is too closed and symmetrical to count on bishop's superiority over a knight (Gelfand-Leko, Wijk aan Zee 2002).

16.♗e2 ♖ac8 17.♗c3 gives White better chances. Peter did not manage to survive after 17...cxd4 18.♕xd4 ♗c5 19.♖d1 ♖fd8 20.♕e3 ♖xd1+ 21.♗xd1 e5 22.b4! ♗e6 23.♗c2 ♗c6 24.♗b2 (Kramnik-Leko, Dortmund 2006), however, the ending is objectively drawn.

16...♖ac8 17.♗b1 c4!

A fresh idea! First it looks like releasing tension in the center should be in White's favor, but the Black's idea is very concrete – Leko locks White's light-squared bishop, thus preparing ...f7-f5.



18. ♖e2

Perhaps it was better to active one of the bishops by 18. ♗g3!?, but after 18...f5 19. ♗d6 ♖f7 Black's chances are higher, because White fails to maintain his center.

18...f5!

White's reply is practically forced.

19. exf5

Bad is 19. ♗f4? fxe4 20. ♗xe6 ♖f6 and then Black takes on f3. 19.e5?! yields an important d5-square to Black without much compensation: 19...b5 20. ♗f4 ♖f7 with advantage.

19...♗xf5 20. ♗c3 ♗f6

Here Black also controls the d5-square, but has a backward pawn on e6. Nevertheless, White must struggle for equality – his bishops are passive, and Black has a clear plan of using his queenside majority.

21. ♗e2

A prophylactic 21. ♖c1!? comes to one's mind, planning to meet 21...♗d5 by 22. ♗e4.

21...♗d5 22. ♗xd5 ♗xd5 23. h4 b5

Black has an easy game: he prepares the queenside pawn advance, while White has no active play.

24. ♖hf1

Attempting to develop the bishop on the g3-b8 diagonal after g2-g4 – the text move protects the f3-pawn in advance.

24...♖f7

Black prepares doubling the rooks, either on the f-file or on some other file.

25. ♖c1 a5 26. ♖c2 ♖a7 27. ♖a1

It turns out that the planned activity seriously weakens a pawn on d4: 27.g4 ♗e7 28. ♗g3 ♖d7! with subsequent bishop retreat. Gurevich has to turn to passive defense completely.

27...♖d7 28. ♖fd1 ♗e7 29. ♗e1 ♗f5 30. ♗f2 ♖dc7 31. ♖d2 ♗e7 32. ♖e1 ♖f7 33. ♗d1?!

Clearly, moving pieces along the first rank is very boring, but White should not prevent his rook from getting to c1. 33.h5! now or earlier is interesting. In case of 33...b4 White can play 34.axb4 axb4 35. ♖ec1.

33...b4 34. axb4 axb4 35. ♗e2 c3+

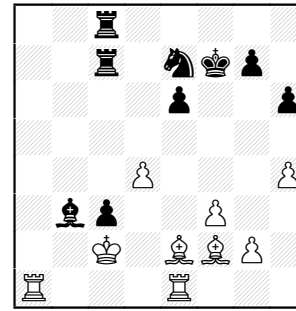
Now Black's initiative is fairly unpleasant.

36. bxc3 bxc3+ 37. ♖c2

37. ♖c1 ♖b7 does not ease the White's task.

37...♗b3+!

A neat blow!



38. ♖c1

38. ♖xb3? loses to 38...c2 with a simple back rank checkmate idea. Even the strongest 39. ♗b5 ♖b7 40. ♖a5 c1♖ 41. ♖xc1 ♖xc1 leads to a decisive advantage to Black.

38...♗d5 39. ♖a3 ♖b7 40. ♗d3 ♗b4

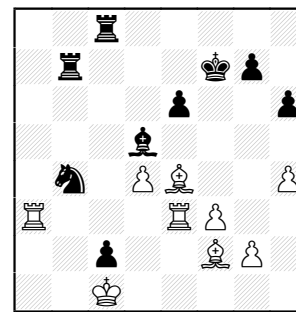
40...♗c4!? may be even stronger, preparing decisive rook penetration.

41. ♗e4 ♗d5 42. ♖e3

42. ♖f1 ♖b5 43. ♗xd5 ♗xd5 with decisive advantage to Black.

42...c2

White loses material. The rest is pure technique.



43. ♖ec3 ♖xc3 44. ♖xc3 ♗a2+ 45. ♖xc2 ♗xc3 46. ♖xc3 ♖b3+ 47. ♖c2 ♗c4 48. ♗g3 ♖e3 49. ♗e5 ♖e2+ 50. ♖c3 ♗d5 51. ♗xd5 exd5 52. g3 ♖e3+ 53. ♖b4 g6

White resigns.

**Rublevsky-Ponomariov
 Sicilian Defense
 Notes by grandmaster
 Yury Yakovich**

1.e4 c5 2. ♗f3 d6 3.d4!

This shows Rublevsky's determination for the fight. Chess public is more used to see a quiet check from b5 in Rublevsky's games.

3...cxd4 4. ♗xd4 ♗f6 5. ♗c3 a6 6. ♗c4!?

Another surprise. Although Rublevsky already employed this ultra-sharp continuation against Svidler in the Superfinal 2006, professional players did not realize that the Sozin Attack became a long-term part of Sergey's opening repertoire.

6...e6 7.♘b3 ♘bd7

A popular continuation. Another common move is 7...b5.

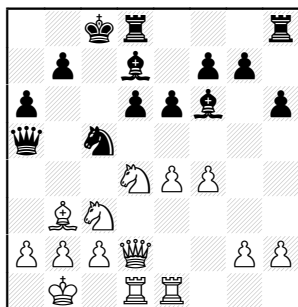
8.♗g5 ♖a5!? 9.♚d2

In the aforementioned game against Svidler, Rublevsky continued 9.♗xf6 ♘xf6 10.0-0 ♘d7 11.f4 ♘c5 12.f5 with complex struggle.

9...♗e7 10.0-0-0 ♘c5 11.♖he1 h6 12.♗xf6 ♗xf6 13.♙b1 ♗d7 14.f4

A tempting 14.♘f5?! leads to Black's advantage after 14...exf5 15.exf5+ ♔d8 16.♚xd6 ♚c7 17.♚d2 ♘xb3 18.axb3 ♗xc3 19.bxc3 ♖e8.

14...0-0-0!?



This natural move is a novelty. Usual continuation is 14...♚c7, and 15.♘f3 leads to double-edged position. Probably Black was worried that after 15.♘cb5!? ♚b6 16.♘xd6+ ♚xd6 17.e5 ♚c7 18.exf6 gxf6 White can contribute from Black's ruined pawn structure. However, this game shows that Black has no serious problems.

19.♚e3 ♙b8

19...♖hg8 20.g3 h5 with mutual chances is also possible.

20.♗c4

White transfers the bishop to more active location.

20...♗c8 21.♗e2

After 21.♘b3 the game is even.

21...e5!

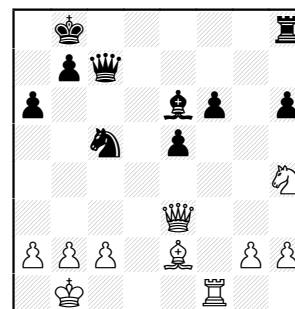
Ponomarev timely creates counterplay in the center.

22.fxe5 fxe5 23.♘f3 ♖xd1+ 24.♖xd1 f6 25.♘h4 ♗e6!

While White prepares to attack Black's pawn weaknesses, Black aims his pieces at the king.

26.♖f1?

Waste of time. White underestimates the opponent's initiative. Safer is 26.g3 with an even game.



26...♖c8! 27.g3

27.a3 is dangerous in view of 27...♘a4 28.♚d2 ♖d8 29.♚b4? ♖d4. 27.♖xf6?? loses to 27...♘d7.

27...♗d5!

The bishop goes to e4. White has no time to attack the pawns, as he must turn to defending.

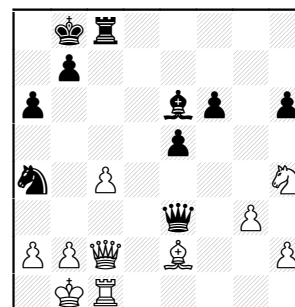
28.♗f3 ♘a4! 29.♖c1 ♗e6

Interesting is 29...♗g8!?, saving an opportunity to transfer the bishop to an important b1-h7 diagonal. 30.♗g4?? loses to 30...♚c4.

30.♗e2 ♖a5 31.c4 ♚b4 32.♚b3 ♚d2!?

In mutual time trouble, Ponomarev creates complications. 32...♚xb3 33.axb3 ♘c5 34.♙c2 is of little promise.

33.♚c2 ♚e3



34.♖f1!

Black threatened b5, and after 34.b3? he wins by 34...♖d8!

34...♘b6

34...♘c5! is worthy of consideration. Now 35.♖xf6? (35.♘g2 is mandatory) loses to 35...♗xc4!! 36.♗xc4 ♘e4.

35.♘f5!

This equalizes. It is difficult to dare playing the position after 35.b3 ♘d5 under the time pressure.

35...♗xf5 36.♖xf5 ♘xc4

36...♚g1+ 37.♖f1 ♚xh2 38.♖xf6 ♘xc4 39.♗xc4 ♚xc2+ 40.♙xc2 ♖xc4+ leads to a drawn ending with Black having an extra pawn.

37.♗xc4 ♚e1+ 38.♚c1 ♚e4+ 39.♚c2 ♚e1+ 40.♚c1 ♚e4+ 41.♚c2

Draw.

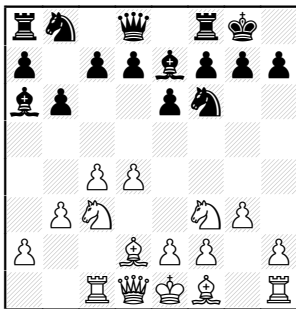
Kasimdzhanov-Gelfand
 Bogo-Indian Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3 ♕a6 5.b3 ♖b4+
 6.♗d2 ♗e7 7.♗c3

There are hundreds games on 7.♗g2 c6 8.♗c3 d5
 9.♗e5 ♗fd7 10.♗xd7 ♗xd7 11.♗d2 0-0 12.0-0 ♖c8
 13.e4 with a slight but lasting advantage to White. Many
 developed variations continue deep into the endgame.
 The plan selected by Rustam is not studied to such
 extent and leaves more room for creativity.

7...0-0 8.♖c1

Veselin Topalov popularized this move.



8...d5

The White's idea is to meet 8...c6 by 9.e4 d5 10.e5,
 although the resulting position is not entirely clear. Now
 10...♗e4 11.♗d3 ♗xd2 (11...♗xc3 12.♖xc3 led Black
 to difficulties in Topalov-Ponomarev, Sofia 2005)
 12.♗xd2 ♗d7 13.0-0 gives White a small advantage
 (Van Wely-Carlsen, Schagen 2006).

9.cxd5 exd5

Black recaptures with the knight more often: 9...♗xd5.
 After 10.♗g2, Black recently started experimenting with
 10...♗a3!?, but White maintains better chances:
 11.♖b1 ♖b7 12.0-0 (Navara-Goloshchapov, Boelln
 2007).

10.♗g2 ♖b7 11.♗e5

After a normal 11.0-0 ♗bd7 (11...♗a6 12.♗f4 ♖e8
 13.♗e5 h6 14.♗b5 gave White activity in Aronian-
 Ivanchuk, Morelia/Linares 2006) 12.♗f4 c6 a standard
 position emerges. White has a slightly better game.

11...♗a6

A standard 11...♗bd7 is also possible.

12.0-0 h6 13.♗f4 c5 14.dxc5

14.♗d3 is another possibility. Black can continue
 14...♖e8, but not 14...cxd4! 15.♗b5 with advantage
 (Jussupov-Bischoff, Hamburg 1991).

14...♗xc5!?

A novelty. On 14...bxc5?! a standard 15.♗c4! gives
 White a good game. The idea is to add pressure against
 Black's hanging pawns by ♗c4-e3, while the Black's
 queen cannot leave d8 because of ♗c4-a5.

In Chuchelov-Kipper, Germany 1995, Black played
 14...♗xc5 15.♗b5, and the strongest 15...♗e6 leaves
 Black with acceptable albeit slightly inferior position.

15.♗d3 ♖e7

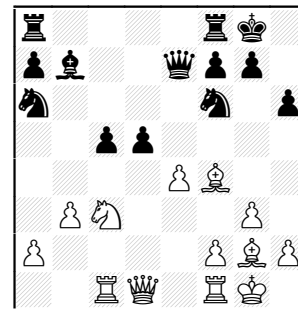
The point of the recapture with the bishop – Black
 develops the queen normally.

16.♗xc5

One could wait with this a little – 16.♗b5!? maintains a
 small advantage.

16...bxc5 17.e4

17.♗xd5 ♗xd5 18.♗xd5 ♖fd8 19.e4 ♗b4 brings White
 nothing. With the text move, White attempts to fix the
 pawn structure, but insufficient control of the center
 makes it difficult to achieve it conveniently.



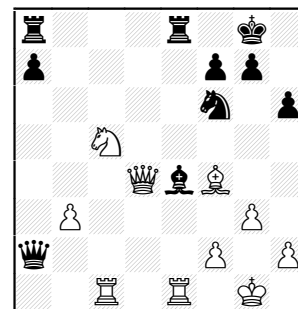
17...d4

Of course, not 17...dxe4? 18.♗d6.

18.♗a4 ♗xe4 19.♖e1 ♖b7 20.♗f1!?

White attempts to snatch both central pawns! In case of
 20.♗xe4 ♗xe4 21.f3 ♗f6 22.♗xc5 ♗xc5 23.♖xc5
 ♖fe8 Black has adequate counterplay.

20...♖fe8 21.♗xa6 ♖xa6 22.♗xc5 ♖xa2 23.♖xd4



Game drawn. On 23.♗xh6 Black can simply retreat the
 bishop: 23...♗c6! (weaker is 23...gxh6? 24.♖xd4), and
 taking the d4-pawn is dangerous: 24.♖xd4?! ♖xe1+
 25.♖xe1 ♖e8! 26.♗e3 ♖c2!, directing the queen via f5
 to White's weakened kingside.

23.♖e2 ♖a5 24.♗xe4 ♖xe4 25.♖xe4 ♗xe4 26.♖xd4
 ♗g5 is harmless for Black, too. After the move in the
 game, Black can again retreat the bishop with equality.

Bacrot-Kamsky
 Dutch Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 f5 2.g3 ♘f6 3.♙g2 g6 4.♗f3 ♙g7 5.b4

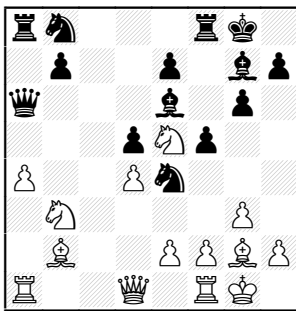
A rare plan against the Leningrad Dutch.

5...c6 6.c4 d5 7.♗bd2 ♗e4 8.♙b2 a5!?

The players took off the trodden path and started creating rather early in the game.

9.bxa5 ♖xa5 10.0-0 0-0 11.a4 ♙e6 12.cxd5 cxd5
 13.♗b3 ♖a6 14.♗e5

The situation is strategically complicated, although symmetry and lack of obvious weaknesses suggest rough equality.



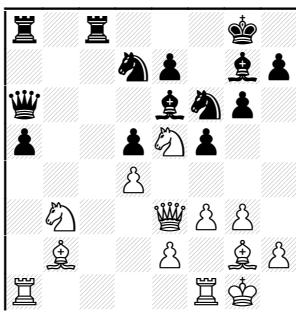
14...b6?!

14...♖c8 should be preferred.

15.♖d3! ♗d7 16.a5?!

More promising is 16.♗c6! ♗f7 17.a5 with better chances.

16...♖fc8 17.♖e3 bxa5 18.f3 ♗ef6



19.♗xa5?

A serious mistake that passes the advantage to the opponent. After a logical 19.♖xa5! ♖b6 20.♖xa8 ♖xa8 21.♗d3 followed by 22.♗b3-c5 White retains the pressure.

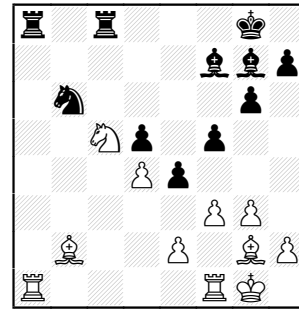
19...♖b6 20.♗d3

Simplifications such as 20.♖b3 ♖xb3 21.♗xb3 do not solve the problem: 21...♖ab8! 22.♖a3 ♖c2 etc.

20...♙f7 21.♖d2 e5! 22.♖b4 e4 23.♖xb6 ♗xb6
 24.♗c5 ♗fd7 25.♗ab3

Safer is 25.♗xd7 ♗xd7 26.e3, but Black is still better here.

25...♗xc5 26.♗xc5



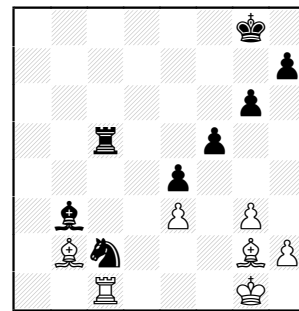
26...♗c4

Being in a time trouble, Black did not dare playing 26...♖xc5!? 27.dxc5 ♙xb2 28.♖xa8+ ♗xa8 29.♖b1 ♙d4+ 30.♗f1 ♗g7, obtaining real winning chances, as the White's passer can be stopped on c7.

27.♙c3 ♖xa1 28.♙xa1 ♙f8

Even stronger is 28...♖a8! with penetration to a2.

29.fxe4 dxe4 30.♙c3 ♗e3 31.♖a1 ♗c2 32.♖c1
 ♙xc5 33.dxc5 ♙b3 34.e3? ♖xc5 35.♙b2



35...♙f7?!

After 35...♖d5! Black wins the e3-pawn.

36.♙f2?

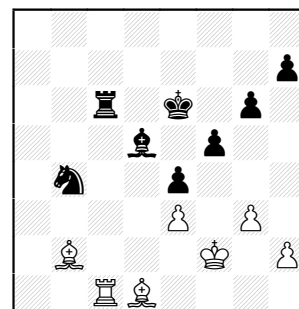
Better is 36.♙f1!

36...♙e6?

And here 36...♖d5! is clearly stronger.

37.♙f1 ♙d5 38.♙e2 ♖c6 39.♙d1 ♗b4

The last few moves of both players were made at a head-spinning pace, but it didn't help Etienne to make the control. White lost on time. It looks like some players are not used to playing without time increment! As for the final position, White should be able to hold it after the rook trade.



Malakhov-Grischuk
 English Opening
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 b6 3.g3 c5 4.♙g2 ♗b7 5.0-0 g6

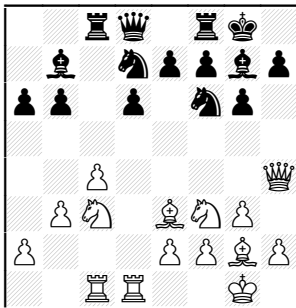
This is one of the safest systems of the English Opening. More than 20 years ago it was employed by Garry Kasparov in the World Championship match against Anatoly Karpov. However, recently White found some interesting aggressive plans, which seriously bother Black.

6.d4 cxd4 7.♖xd4 ♙g7 8.♗c3 d6 9.♞d1 ♘bd7 10.♙e3

Karpov continued harmlessly by 10.b3 ♞c8 11.♙b2 0-0 12.♗e3 ♞e8 13.♞ac1 a6 14.♙a1 ♞c5! 15.a4 ♗a8 16.♗e1 ♞f5! 17.♙xb7 ♗xb7, and Black is at least equal (Karpov-Kasparov, London/Leningrad (m/23) 1986).

10...♞c8 11.♞ac1 0-0 12.♗h4 a6 13.b3

This position became popular recently. White builds up an attack against the enemy king, while Black defends and at the same time prepares a thematic ...b6-b5 break.



13...h5!?

An interesting idea – Black holds the g-pawn, which often goes forward in such positions.

Apart from the text, Black has several possibilities. For example, there is an interesting discussion between Aronian and Kramnik: 13...♞c7 14.♙h3! ♗b8 15.♙g5 (15.g4!? was also tested many times, but in Aronian-Kramnik, Saint Vincent 2005, White was forced to fight for a draw after 15...e6 16.g5 ♗e8 17.♙g2 b5 18.♗e4 bxc4 19.bxc4 d5 20.cxd5 ♙xd5 21.♗c5 ♗xc5 22.♙xc5 ♗d6 23.♞b1 ♗xb1 24.♞xb1 ♞xc5) 15...♙xf3?! (parting with the bishop is not good, better is something like 15...♞e8) 16.exf3 b5 17.♙xd7 ♞xd7 18.♗d5 ♗xd5 19.cxd5, and Vladimir, playing White, obtained a clear advantage (Kramnik-Aronian, Turin (ol) 2006).

14.♙h3!?

Nevertheless! This thematic maneuver is a novelty in this particular position. Earlier White continued 14.♙g5 and 14.h3, planning to carry out g3-g4, with a lively game.

14...♞c7 15.♗g5

A logical decision – with the h-pawn already on h5, the knight will not be disturbed here.

15...♗b8?!

Black underestimates the danger. An immediate 15...b5?! does not seem to provide with adequate compensation: 16.cxb5 axb5 17.♗xb5 ♞xc1 18.♞xc1 ♗a5 19.a4, but 15...♞e8 looks more accurate. White cannot pose real problems. For example, 16.♙d4 (on 16.g4?! one can just take everything: 16...hxg4 17.♙xg4 ♗xg4, but 16.a4!?, ruling out ...b6-b5, deserves a shot) 16...e6! with a good game. White's group on the kingside is basically unemployed.

16.♙xd7! ♞xd7

In case of 16...♗xd7 17.g4! Black has to give away a pawn: 17...♗f6 18.gxh5 ♗xh5 19.♙xb6 ♞cc8 20.♙d4, and the compensation is insufficient.

17.♙xb6 ♗g4?! 18.h3 ♗h6?!

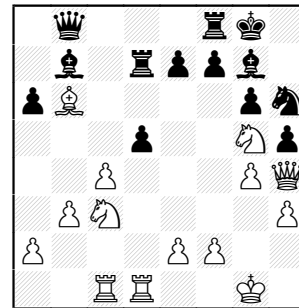
A very dubious maneuver. It was better to return.

19.g4!

Is that possible that Black counted only on 19.e4?! ♙xe4!, regaining a pawn?

19...d5?!

This move makes the situation for Black almost desperate, but there is no compensation for a pawn anywhere. The h1-a8 battery can be neutralized by a simple f2-f3, but how can Black improve the location of his poor knight?



20.cxd5?!

Much stronger is 20.gxh5! ♗f5 21.♗g4 and then h5xg6, securing the e6-square for the knight in addition to a couple of extra pawns.

20...♙xc3 21.♞xc3 ♞xd5

White is a pawn up, but poorly coordinated pieces and weak king make his task more difficult.

22.♞cc1?!

22.♞xd5!? was worthy of consideration. 22...♙xd5 23.♞d3! (23.♙e3?! ♗b4! with idea ...♗h6-f5! or 23.♙c7?! ♗b4 24.♗g3 hxg4) 23...♗xb6 (23...♗e5 24.♞d1 f6 25.♙e3) 24.♞xd5 ♗c6 25.♞d3! with an advantage.

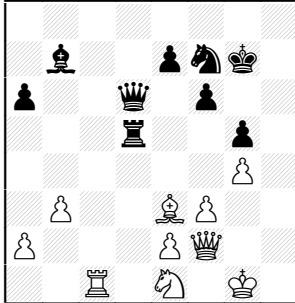
22...♞c8?

Stronger is 22...♞xd1+ 23.♞xd1 f6, after which White is forced to sacrifice a piece: 24.♙e3!? (24.♗f3?? loses to 24...♙xf3 25.♙e3 ♙xe2 26.♞e1 ♗b4! 27.♞xe2 ♗f5!)

24...♖d8! 25.♗c1 fxg5 26.♙xg5 ♘f7 27.♙xg6+ ♕f8, and Black feels not so bad.

23.♗e3 ♗xc1 24.♗xc1 ♖d6 25.♘f3 ♖g7 26.♘e1!
Strong rearrangement, neutralizing Black's initiative and securing a lasting advantage.

26...f6 27.f3! g5 28.♙f2 hxg4



30.♘c2?

One could improve the bishop first: 30.♗c5! ♖d7 31.♘c2, and now 31...♗d1+ 32.♗xd1 ♖xd1+ 33.♘e1 leads to a position with a big advantage to White.

30...♗d1+ 31.♗xd1 ♖xd1+ 32.♘e1 ♖b1 33.♗c5 ♖xa2 34.♙e3 e5

Black regained a pawn. White is still more active, but such activity is not supposed to bring anything real.

35.♗e7 ♖a5 36.♘d3 ♖c7 37.♗a3?! ♗c8

Better is 37...♖c3!

38.♘c5 ♖d6 39.♖c1 ♖c6 40.♖c4 ♖d6?!

And here I like 40...♖b5!

41.♘e4!

Black last moves made in a time trouble were unsuccessful, and Grischuk's position is again unpleasant.

41...♖b6+?!

41...♖xa3 42.♖xc8 ♖xb3 looks dangerous, but I cannot find a decisive continuation: 43.♖xa6 (43.♘g3 ♖b6+ 44.♖g2 ♘d8 45.♖d7+ ♘f7 46.♘f5+ ♖g6) 43...♖d1+ 44.♖g2 ♖d8 45.♖e6 ♖g6 46.♘g3 ♘h6, and Black should hold.

42.♖g2?!

Stronger is 42.♗c5! ♖e6 43.♗e7 (43.♖b4!?) 43...♖xc4 (43...♖xe7? 44.♖xc8 ♘d6?? 45.♖c5) 44.♗xf6+ ♖g6 45.♖xc4 ♗e6 46.c5 with an extra pawn, although Black has some drawing chances.

42...♗e6 43.♖c1 ♖b5

It looks like the pawn could be taken: 43...♖xb3!? 44.♖c5 ♖d1 45.♖f8+ ♖h7! with the idea to take on e2 or return to d8.

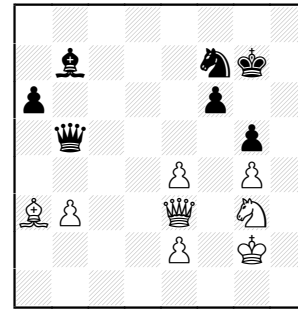
44.♖e3 ♗d5

44...♖xb3! deserved attention.

45.♘g3 e4?

This sacrifice is unnecessary. After 45...♘h6! or 45...♖g6! Black could play on without any worries.

46.fxe4 ♗b7



47.♗b2?!

Missing a chance to finish the game in his favor by 47.♖f3! ♖e5 (47...♘e5 48.♖f5 and ♘g3-h5) 48.♗e7!, snatching the f6-pawn.

47...♘e5 48.♗xe5?

One should not give away such a strong bishop – after 48.♘f5+ White had good chances to build up a strong attack: 48...♖g6 (48...♖g8 49.♖h3!) 49.♖f1! ♘xg4 50.♖h3! etc.

48...♖xe5 49.♖a7 ♖c7 50.♖h3

It is better to return the queen to the center by 50.♖d4.

50...♖g6 51.e3?!

White loses all his advantage.

51...♖h7+ 52.♘h5 ♖e7 53.♖d4 ♗c8!

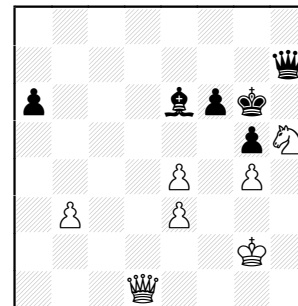
Threatening to take on g4.

54.♖d5 ♗e6 55.♖d1 ♖h7

Attacking the knight!

56.♖g2

More cautious is 56.♖g3.



56...♗xg4

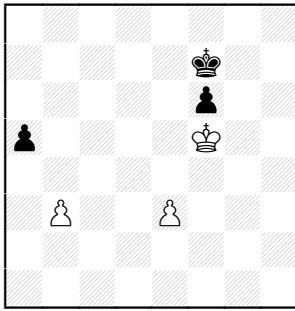
Grischuk could scare his opponent a little by 56...♖d7! 57.♖xd7 ♗xd7, and White has to show some accuracy. Yet, a draw is well within the reach: 58.♖f3 a5 59.♘f4+! gxf4 60.exf4 ♗e8 61.♖e3, trading the f6-pawn, after which even an extra bishop cannot help Black to win.

57.♘f4+! ♖h6 58.♖xg4 ♖xe4+ 59.♖f3 ♖xf3+

60.♖xf3 gxf4 61.♖xf4

Now this long-suffering game proceeds to a pawn ending.

61...♖g6 62.♖e4 a5 63.♖f4 ♖f7 64.♖f5



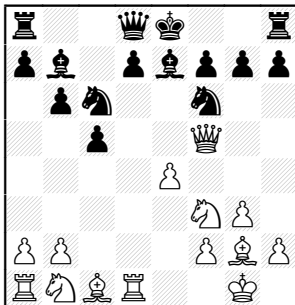
A draw is agreed.

Bareev-Polgar
Bogo-Indian Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Yury Yakovich

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♖a6 5.♖c2 c5 6.d5!?

A topical pawn sacrifice. This line is not studied sufficiently deeply, thus it gives some room for creativity.

6...exd5 7.cxd5 ♖b7 8.♗g2 ♘xd5 9.0-0 ♗e7 10.♞d1 ♘c6 11.♖f5 ♘f6 12.e4



12...d6!?

A novelty. The diagrammed position occurred in practice of Leko, Carlsen and Aronian, and Black always continued 12...g6!?

13.e5!

After lengthy thought Bareev selects the most principled and in my opinion the best move.

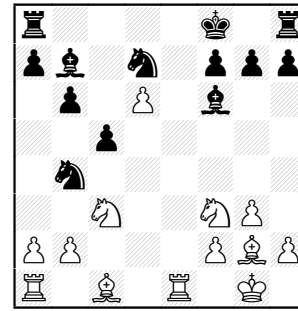
13...♖d7 14.♖xd7+ ♘xd7 15.exd6 ♗f6

The pawn on d6 – strength or weakness? Who made a more accurate assessment, Judit or Evgeny?

16.♞e1+

An important check. Black loses the right to castle.

16...♗f8 17.♘c3 ♘b4



18.♗g5!

Bravo! Bareev is not disturbed by the opponent's quick reactions, and selects the sharpest continuation. White is not afraid to run into a computer analysis.

18...♗xf3?!

In my opinion, not the best reply. Black should accept the challenge by 18...♘c2! 19.♗xf6 (the consequences of the exchange sacrifice 19.♞e7!? ♗xe7!? 20.♗xe7+ ♖g8 are unclear) 19...♘xf6, and after 20.♞e7 reject 'winning' an exchange by 20...♘a1?? because of 21.♞xb7 ♞d8 22.♘e5 with decisive advantage to White, and go for 20...♗xf3! 21.♗xf3 ♞e8! 22.♞xe8+ ♖xe8 23.♗c6+ ♖d8 with a good game.

19.♗xf6 ♘xf6 20.♗xf3 ♞d8 21.♞e7

White's activity becomes threatening. Black must play very precisely to hold the balance.

21...♘c2!

Bad is 21...♞xd6? due to 22.♞xa7 g6 23.♞d1 with a clear advantage to White.

22.♞d1 ♘d4 23.♖g2 ♞xd6 24.♞xa7 g6 25.♗e2!

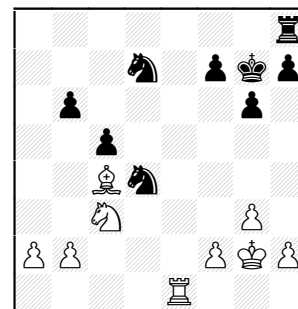
The bishop goes to c4, and the f7-pawn becomes vulnerable.

25...♖g7 26.♗c4 ♞d7

On 26...♞f8, 27.♞b7 is unpleasant.

27.♞xd7 ♘xd7 28.♞e1

28.b4 promises no advantage in view of 28...♘e5! (28...cxb4?? drops a piece to 29.♘e4).



28...♖f8?

A terrible move! The Black's rook will be out of play for a long time. A natural 28...♘f5!? 29.♗d3 ♘d6 30.♘b5 ♘xb5 31.♗xb5 ♘f6 gives Black saving chances.

29.a4

Also 29.♘d5 b5 (or 29...♖g7 30.♗e7 ♖d8 31.♘e3 with a big advantage to White) 30.♙f1 ♖g7 31.♘c7 looks very good for White.

29...h5 30.♘d5 h4 31.g4 g5

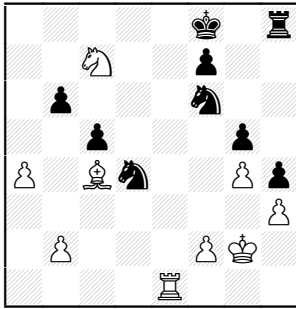
Setting up a trap.

32.♘c7

After 32.♗e7?! Black gets counterplay by 32...♘f6!

33.♗b7 h3+! 34.♖h1 (34.♖g3?? ♘e4#) 34...♘xg4.

32...♘f6 33.h3



33...♖g7?

33...♗g8! is necessary, protecting the g5-pawn in advance. Now Bareev increases his advantage with series of energetic moves.

34.♗e5! ♖h6 35.f4! ♘h7 36.f5

Looking at Black pieces is painful.

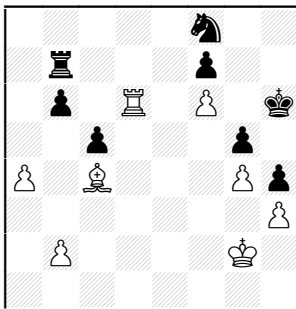
36...♘c6 37.♗d5 ♖g7 38.f6+ ♖h6

Even 38...♘xf6 is better, although after 39.♗xg5+ ♖f8 40.♗f5 the Black's position is not enviable.

39.♙b5

39.♗d6 may be even stronger.

39...♘b4 40.♗d6 ♗b8 41.♘a6 ♘xa6 42.♙xa6 ♘f8 43.♙c4 ♗b7



44.♖f3!

The White's monarch goes to c6. White wins. Polgar attempts to complicate things are in vain – Bareev's advantage is too big.

44...♘d7 45.♖e4 ♖g6 46.♙d3 c4 47.♙xc4 ♘xf6+ 48.♖d4 ♖g7 49.♙b5 ♗e7 50.♗xb6 ♗e4+ 51.♖d3 ♗b4 52.♖c2 ♘xg4 53.♖c3 ♗e4 54.hxg4 h3 55.♗d6 h2 56.♗d1 ♗xg4 57.♗h1 ♗g3+ 58.♖b4 ♗g2 59.♖b3 g4 60.a5 g3 61.♙c6 ♗e2 62.a6 ♗e7 63.♗a1 ♗a7 64.♙g2

Black resigns.

Shirov-Adams

Ruy Lopez

Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

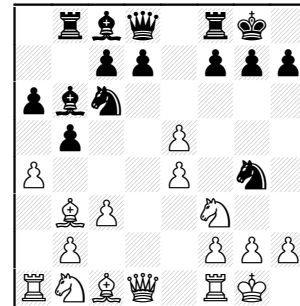
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♙b3 ♙c5

An intriguing opening choice. Recently Michael did not play this line much, while it is one of the cornerstones of Alexei's opening repertoire!

7.a4 ♗b8 8.c3 0-0

Much more common is 8...d6 9.d4 ♙b6 followed by 10.♘a3 0-0 11.axb5 axb5 12.♘xb5 ♙g4 with active play for a sacrificed pawn. It is possible that Adams did not want going into this position against the opponent who played it many times.

9.d4 ♙b6 10.dxe5 ♘g4



11.♙f4

A logical move – White simply protects the pawn. It is a little bit strange that nobody employed this move, although actually the game can still return to trodden paths via move repetition.

Usually White preferred to settle things with an edge pawn: 11.axb5 axb5 12.♙f4 (after 12.♘a3 ♘cxe5 13.h3 – Topalov-Anand, Wijk aan Zee 2006 – Black continued 13...d6! 14.♗e2 (in case of 14.hxg4 ♙xg4 Black's initiative compensates the sacrificed piece) 14...♘xf3+ 15.♗xf3 ♘e5 16.♗g3 ♙e6 and equalized), and after 12...♗e8!? 13.♘a3 (or 13.♘d4 ♘gxe5 14.♘xb5 d6 15.♙a4 ♙g4 16.♗c2 f5! with good compensation for a pawn, Svidler-Khalifman, Moscow 2005) 13...♘cxe5 14.♘xe5 ♘xe5 15.♘xb5 d6 16.♘d4 ♘g6 17.♙g3 ♗xe4 18.♗e1 ♗b7 Black returns a pawn with a decent game.

Interesting is 11.a5!? ♙a7 12.♙f4 ♗e7 13.e6!? dxe6 14.e5, as Kosintseva sisters played. Still the position remains double-edged.

11...♗e7

A more standard 11...♗e8!? is also possible, which can give Black additional tactical possibilities if White takes the b5-pawn with the knight.

12.axb5 axb5

The game transposed to Smirin-Kamsky (Khanty Mansyisk 2005).

13.♗d5

Nevertheless, after a natural 13.♘a3 ♘gxe5 14.♘xe5 ♘xe5 15.♘xb5 d6 it is difficult for White to keep an extra pawn, despite the b5-knight is not being attacked.

13...♙b7!

Adams ignores the threat and simple develops his pieces on active locations.

14.♙xb5 ♙a8 15.♙c4 ♘cxe5 16.♘xe5 ♘xe5

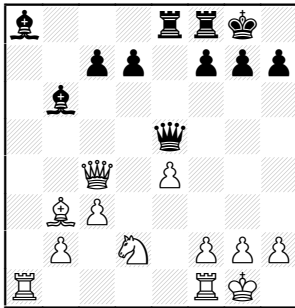
One pawn is regained, and Black still has the initiative. His pieces are clearly more active.

17.♙xe5

Otherwise after ♘e5-g6 White loses an extra pawn.

17...♙xe5 18.♘d2 ♖be8

Only this move is a real novelty. In the aforementioned game, Kamsky continued 18...♙h8 19.♘f3 ♙f4 20.♖ae1 ♖be8, and here the players agreed to a draw. Adams could be afraid of a possible improvement.



19.♖ad1 ♙f4 20.♙d3 ♙xe4 21.♘xe4 ♖xe4 22.g3!

Of course not 22.♙xd7? ♖e2 with sufficient counterplay.

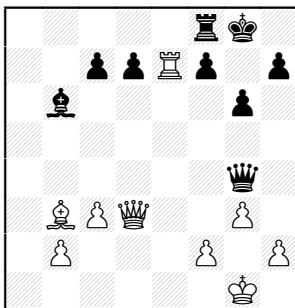
22...♙g4 23.♖fe1!

White also wants to show some activity. And he is right! In case of 23.♙c2 ♖fe8 24.♙xd7 ♙xd7 25.♖xd7 ♖e2 26.♙b3 ♖f8 followed by ♖e2xb2, Black is not worse.

23...♖xe1+

Interesting is 23...♖f4!? 24.♖d2 d6, keeping a pawn, but Black was reasonably worried about the rook getting stuck on the f-file after 25.♙d5. However, maybe this is not too scary after all.

24.♖xe1 g6 25.♖e7



25...♙g5

In case of 25...d6 26.♙d5 Black has to transpose to a difficult endgame: 26...♙f5 27.♙xf5 gxf5 28.♙g2 ♙g7 29.♙f3 ♙f6 30.♖d7 etc. Adams decides to abandon a

pawn, but keep the queens on board – this will force the White’s king staying at home. And the Black’s king is always at the right place – in defense!

26.♙xd7 ♙f6 27.♖e2 ♙g7 28.♙g2 ♖d8 29.♙e7 ♖d3 30.♙e4

In this position trading queens is not dangerous for Black, because the White’s rook must guard the d2-square.

30...♖d7

The f7-square is safely covered, and there are no other kingside weaknesses to be seen. Making use of an extra queenside pawn is very difficult if possible at all.

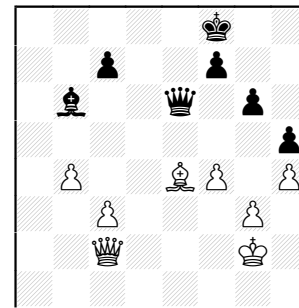
31.♙c2 h5 32.h4 ♙c5 33.♙c4 ♖e7 34.♙e4 ♙b6

35.b4 ♖e6 36.♙d3 ♙e7 37.♙f3 ♖xe2 38.♙xe2 ♙f6

39.♙f3 ♙f8 40.♙d2 ♙g7 41.♙e4 ♙f8 42.f4 ♙e6

43.♙c2

White would have decent chances with a pawn on the e-file instead of a queenside pawn.



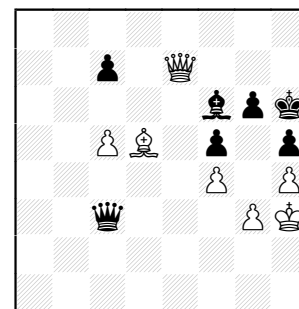
43...f5 44.♙f3 ♙e3 45.c4 ♙d4

Of course, Black is alert and does not allow locking his bishop.

46.c5 ♙g7 47.♙a2 ♙h6 48.♙a8 ♙d2+ 49.♙h3 ♙xb4 50.♙f8+ ♙g7 51.♙e7 ♙c3 52.♙d5

Planning ♙d5-g8 and ♙e7-g5, but this is more of a dream.

52...♙f6



53.♙f8+

On 53.♙xc7 Black obviously intended 53...♙xh4! 54.♙xh4 ♙d2 55.♙h3 ♙xd5 with a draw.

53...♙g7 54.♙e7

A draw is agreed.