

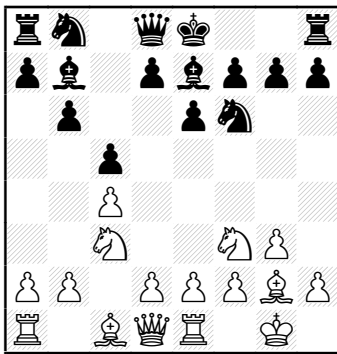
Round 1. Game 3
29 May 2007

Carlsen-Aronian
English Opening
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1. ♘f3

After the disaster in the first game, Magnus implements some first-move corrections, turning not to 1.d4, but to a more solid knight move, which makes it difficult for Black to get well-studied positions.

1... ♘f6 2.c4 b6 3.g3 c5 4. ♖g2 ♗b7 5.0-0 e6 6. ♘c3 ♗e7 7. ♖e1



A popular line of the English Opening.

7...d5

Otherwise White plays e2-e4 and d2-d4, although many people are happy to set up the Hedgehog structure by a6-b6-d6-e6. There is also 7... ♘e4 8. ♘xe4 ♗xe4 9.d3 ♗b7 10.e4 with a small advantage to White.

8.cxd5 ♘xd5 9.d4 ♘xc3 10.bxc3 ♗e4

Mechanically blocking White's e-pawn from moving to e4.

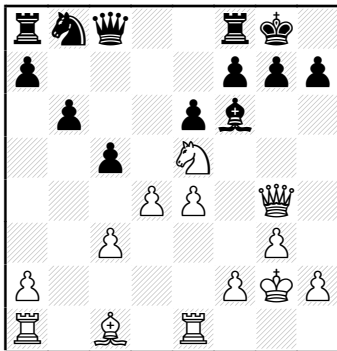
11. ♗e5

Otherwise White cannot build the pawn center.

11... ♗xg2 12. ♖xg2 0-0 13.e4 ♖c8

A new but clearly not the best continuation. Yermolinsky-Atalik (Berkley 2005) continued 13... ♗f6 14. ♘g4 cxd4 15. ♗a3 ♗e7 16. ♗xe7 ♖xe7 17.cxd4 with slightly inferior but acceptable position for Black.

14. ♖g4 ♗f6



This move does not fit together well with the previous one. Black should have paid serious attention to 14... ♘c6!?, not worrying about 15. ♗h6 ♗f6 16. ♘xc6 (in case of 16. ♘f3 e5! – 16...cxd4? is met by 17.e5! – White can lose a pawn: 17. ♖xc8 ♖axc8) 16... ♖xc6. Nevertheless, White is somewhat better after 17. ♖g1 ♖h8 (or 17...e5 18.d5) 18.e5 ♗xe5 19. ♖xe5 or 19.dxe5.

15. ♘f3!

This knight will play a big role later in the game!

15... ♖h8 16.h4

White has two major trumps: strong pawn center and kingside activity.

16... ♘c6 17. ♗g5 cxd4 18. ♗xf6 gxf6 19.cxd4

19. ♖f4!? is also tempting, trying to use weakened position of the enemy king.

19...e5

This forces transition to an ending. However, it does not make Black's life easier.

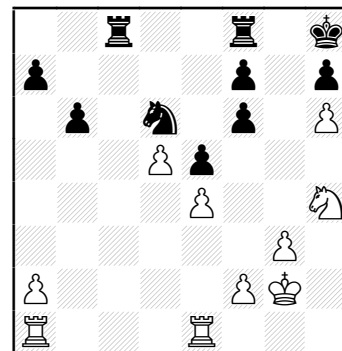
20. ♖xc8 ♖axc8 21.d5 ♗a5

The knight is heading to d6, but this maneuver looks rather slow. Interesting is 21... ♘b4!?, striving for active counterplay and not forgetting to improve the own king later on.

22.h5! ♘c4

The pawn is unstoppable, as well as the White's knight, which is coming to f5: 22... ♖g7 23.h6+!? (23. ♘h4 is also not bad) 23... ♖xh6 24. ♖h1+ ♖g7 25. ♘h4 with strong endgame initiative.

23. ♘h4 ♘d6 24.h6!

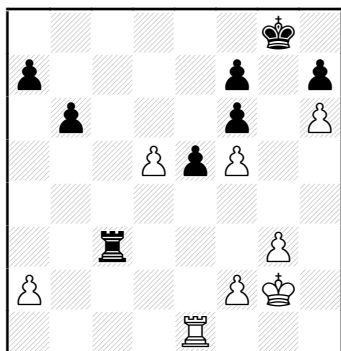


Stamping the Black's king to the back rank and creating a far-advanced pawn, which potentially can become a queen. Despite having control of the c-file, queenside pawn majority and a strong blockade knight on d6, Black's situation is very difficult.

24... ♖c3?

It looks like Aronian underestimated the opponent's chances. The rook is better placed on the second rank: 24... ♖c2! 25. ♖ac1 (it is unlikely that 25. ♖e3 with the idea to attack on f6 is dangerous for Black – after

25...♖fc8 followed by ♖c8-c4 one can at least hang onto the e4-pawn) 25...♖fc8 26.♖xc2 ♖xc2, and now after 27.♘f5 ♘xf5 28.exf5 Black has many different ideas. For example, 28...♔g8 29.♖e4 ♔f8 30.♖g4 e4! (after 30...♔e7 31.♖g7 e4 32.♔f1! White retains good winning chances, contrary to 32.♖xh7? e3 33.d6+ ♔xd6 34.♖xf7 ♖xf2+ 35.♔h3 e2 36.♖xf6+ ♔d5 37.♖e6 ♖xf5, and Black survives) 31.♖xe4 (or 31.♔f1!? ♖d2!) 31...♖d2 with good drawing chances. 25.♖ac1 ♖fc8 26.♖xc3 ♖xc3 27.♘f5! ♘xf5 28.exf5 ♔g8



29.♖e4!

It is possible that Aronian overlooked this strong maneuver, counting only on 29.d6? ♔f8 30.d7 ♔e7 31.♖d1 ♔d8 32.♖d6 ♖c7! 33.♖xf6 ♖xd7 34.♔f3 (34.♖c6? ♖c7!) 34...♖c7!, where Black is okay: 35.g4 ♔e7 36.g5 ♖c4. Now Black cannot set up counterplay, and protecting weaknesses was impossible anyway.

29...♔f8 30.♖g4 ♖c7 31.♖g7 b5 32.♖xh7 ♔g8

Otherwise White simply queens the h-pawn.

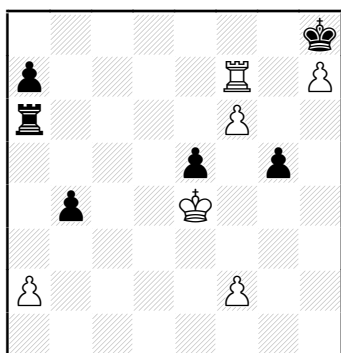
33.♖g7+ ♔h8 34.d6 ♖d7 35.♔f3 b4 36.♔e4 ♖xd6

Black even cannot sacrifice a queen for stalemate in 36...a5 37.♔d5 a4 38.♔c6 b3 39.♔xd7 (actually, there is 39.♖g4!) 39...b2 40.♔e8 b1♖ 41.d7, because there are some Black's pawns left on board.

37.♖xf7 ♖a6 38.g4!

A strong rook on the 7th rank, an active king, and passing pawns – White is dominating, and Black is helpless.

38...♔g8 39.h7+ ♔h8 40.g5! fxg5 41.f6



The king marches to g6 with decisive effect. Black resigns.

Leko-Gurevich

French Defense

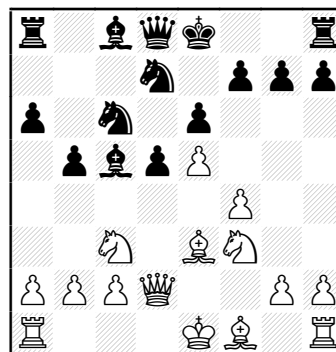
Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5

Gurevich confidently solved opening problems in the first game: 4.♗g5 dxe4 5.♘xe4 ♘bd7 6.♘f3 h6 7.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 8.♗e3 ♘d5.

4...♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 a6 8.♖d2 b5 9.dxc5 ♗xc5



10.♘e2!?

A rare continuation. White plays 10.♗xc5 ♘xc5 11.♖b2 ♖b6 12.♗d3 more frequently.

10...♖b6 11.♗xc5

11.♘ed4?! f6! 12.exf6 ♘xf6 13.0-0-0 ♘e4 14.♖e1 0-0 with an advantage to Black (Van Mil-Hergott, Groningen 1988).

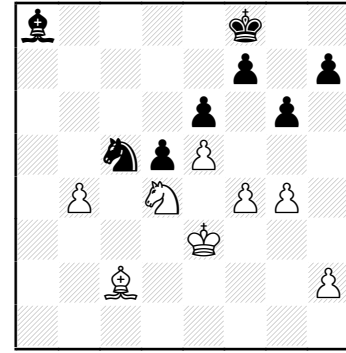
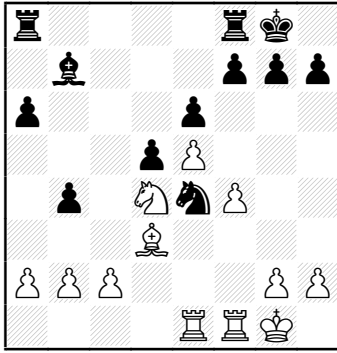
11...♘xc5 12.♘ed4 ♘e4 13.♖e3 b4 14.♗d3 ♗b7 15.0-0

Let us consider this move a novelty. There was a game in which White selected a different act: agreed to a draw. Of course, bad is 15.♗xe4? dxe4 16.♖xe4 ♖d8 17.♘xc6 ♗xc6 with the initiative – the White's king stuck in the center.

15...0-0 16.♖ae1 ♘xd4 17.♖xd4

Weaker is 17.♘xd4, as the queen will be rather tied up defending the d4-knight. The text makes it easier for White to advance his pawns and play with the king.

17...♖xd4+ 18.♘xd4



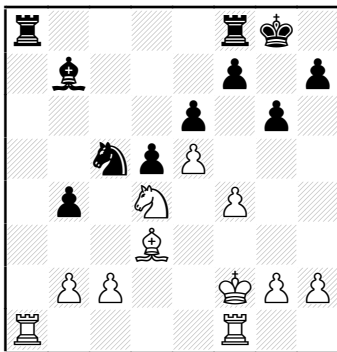
18...g6

Mikhail rejected 18...a5 because of 19.f5, but unexpected 18...d2!? 19.f2 e4 20.f3 d2 21.h3 g6, trying to break White's piece coordination, looked promising.

19.f2!

A good idea – White plans to open up the queenside.

19...a5 20.a3 e5 21.axb4 axb4 22.f2



22...f8?!

This move completely ignores the White's plan. One should think about 22...h5!? or even 22...f6!?

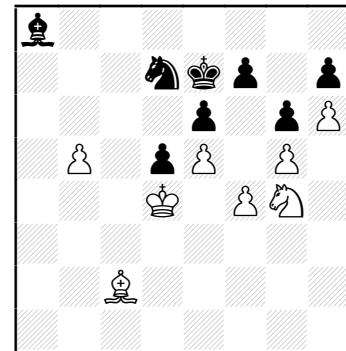
23.g4! b3?!

And this impulsive push only assists White in creating a passed pawn on the queenside.

24.e3!

Maybe Black overlooked this calm move. After 24.xb3 xd3+ 25.cxd3 c2+ 26.e3 xb2 27.c5 c8 White stands better, but Black can hope to obtain some counterplay.

24...bxc2 25.a8 xa8 26.xc2 f8 27.c1 c8 28.a1 a8 29.a8+ xa8 30.b4



The resulting ending is technically winning for White. Yes, Mikhail clearly did not show the best example of handling his pet French Defense.

30...a6 31.b5 e5 32.b3! d7

The bishop ending is totally hopeless.

33.d4 e7 34.e5 b6 35.h4 d8 36.d3 e7 37.e2 d8 38.f1 e7 39.d3 d8 40.c2 e7 41.d1

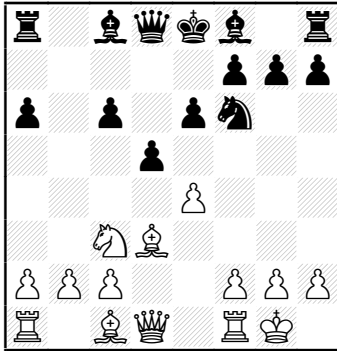
White passes the time control. Now he can finish the game.

41...d8 42.e2 e7 43.g5 d8 44.h5 e7 45.h6! d8 46.d3 e7 47.c2 f8 48.d3 d7 49.f2! e7 50.g4

The knight comes to f6, gets exchanged, and in the bishop ending the White's king invades via the dark squares. Black resigns.

Ponomariov-Rublevsky
 Sicilian Defense
Notes by grandmaster
 Yury Yakovich

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 a6
 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.♙d3 d5 8.0-0 ♘f6



Rublevsky frequently applies this order of moves, therefore this position often occurs in his practice. Last year in Poikovsky, Ponomariov played 9.♙e1!? The game continued 9...♙e7 10.e5 ♘d7 11.♙g4 (Rublevsky faced 11.♘a4 twice, but equalized by 11...0-0 12.c4 a5, drawing with Karjakin in Foros, 2006, and beating Bologan in Poikovsky, 2006) 11...g6 12.♘a4 ♙a5 13.♙h6. Sergey was unable to hold the endgame after 13...♙b4 14.♙xb4 ♙xb4 15.c3 ♙a5 16.b4 ♙c7 17.f4 a5 18.b5 ♘b6 19.♘xb6 ♙xb6+ 20.♙f1 cxb5 21.♙xb5+ ♙d7 22.♙ab1 ♙xb5+ (22...♙b8? 23.c4 with a big advantage to White, Bacrot-Rublevsky, Khanty-Mansiysk (m/2) 2005) 23.♙xb5 ♙c7 24.c4 dxc4 25.♙c5 (Ponomariov-Rublevsky, Poikovsky 2006).

Obviously, Rublevsky planned to improve his game. It is possible that he would reject 13...♙b4 in favor of 13...c5!? 14.b3 c4 15.♙f1 ♙b7, which occurred in Carlsen-Mamedyarov (Moscow 2006) and Khairullin-Svidler (Moscow 2006). Ponomariov showed no curiosity, and deviated by **9.♙e2 ♙e7 10.♘a4**

An unsound kingside attack in Timofeev-Rublevsky (Moscow 2002) failed. After 10.♙f4 0-0 11.♙ad1 ♙a5 12.e5 ♘d7 13.♙h5 g6 14.♙h6 ♙b8 15.h4 ♙e8 16.h5 ♙f8 17.♙g5 ♙g7 18.hxg6 fxg6 19.♘e2 ♙xb2 20.♙xg6 hxg6 21.♙xg6 ♙e7 Black's material advantage decided the game.

10...0-0 11.c4 ♙b7

A natural move. Pawn exchanges 11...dxc4?! (Hamdouchi-Tregubov, Belfort 2002) and 11...dxe4?! (Dominguez-Quezada, Santa Clara 2007) do not equalize. After 11...♙e8 12.e5 ♘d7 13.♙f4 ♘b6 14.♘c3 ♘xc4 15.♙xc4 dxc4 16.♙ad1 ♙b6 17.♘e4 c5 18.♙g4 White seized the initiative in Morozevich-Volokitin (Sochi 2006).

12.e5 ♘d7 13.♙f4 ♘b6!

A novelty that forces exchanges in the center. Weaker is 13...a5, as in Kritz-Kobalia (Biel 2006).

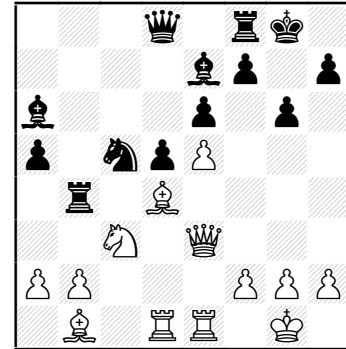
14.cxd5 cxd5

Bad is 14...♘xa4? because of 15.d6 ♙g5 16.♙e4.

15.♘c3 ♘d7 16.♙ad1 ♘c5 17.♙b1 a5 18.♙fe1 g6

Defending against a possible ♙xh7+, ♙h5, and ♙e3-h3.

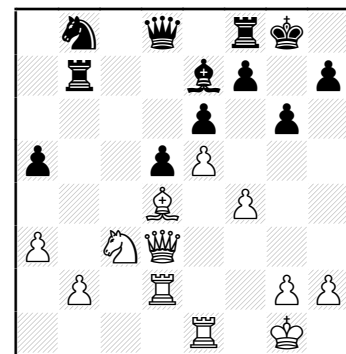
19.♙e3 ♙a6 20.♙d2 ♙b8 21.♙d4 ♙b4 22.♙e3



22...♘d7!

The knight heads to c6 to join the fight for the d4-square.

23.a3 ♙b7 24.f4 ♙c4 25.♙d2 ♘b8 26.♙d3 ♙xd3 27.♙xd3



27...♘d7!

The bishop trade weakened the light squares in Ponomariov's camp, therefore the Black's knight returns to c5. White is forced to put his knight on a4.

28.♘a4 ♙b8 29.♙c1 ♙c8 30.♙dc2 ♙bc7 31.♙xc7 ♙xc7 32.♙xc7 ♙xc7 33.♙c3 ♙b7! 34.♙f2?!

In case of 34.♙xa5 ♙b3! 35.♙h1 g5!? Black's activity completely compensates the sacrificed material. The king move is symptomatic. Ruslan does not want to accept that the position is equal, and starts making pseudo-active moves. Underestimating the opponent's resources was one of the reasons of White getting in trouble in this game.

34...♙b5 35.♙c2 ♘b8 36.♘c3 ♙b7 37.♘e2 ♘c6 38.♙c5 ♙b5 39.♙xe7 ♘xe7 40.♙c3 h5 41.♘d4 ♙b6 42.♙e2 ♘f5 43.♘xf5 gxf5 44.b4?!

This move is again too ambitious. Ponomariov allows

the Black's pawn advancing to h4. The Black's queen begins to create dangerous threats on the kingside.

44...axb4 45.axb4 ♖a6+ 46.♔e3 ♖a7+ 47.♗d4 ♖a3+ 48.♕f2 h4!

Suddenly White faces difficulties.

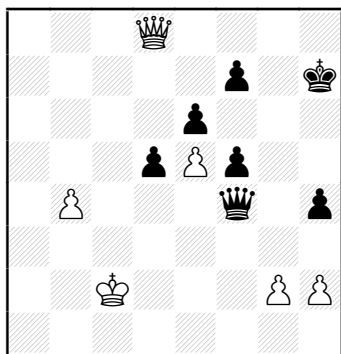
49.♗b6

Ruslan initiates active counterplay linked with the b-pawn without regard to the material. It is difficult to say whether White could defend successfully in case of a passive 49.♗d2.

49...♗b2+ 50.♔e1 ♗c1+ 51.♔e2 ♗c4+ 52.♔d1 ♗f1+ 53.♔c2 ♗c4+ 54.♔d1 ♗f1+ 55.♔c2 ♗xf4!?

After 55...♗xg2+ 56.♔b3, the White's king runs away from checks, and White, combining the perpetual check threats with pushing the b-pawn, obtains good drawing chances.

56.♗d8+ ♔h7



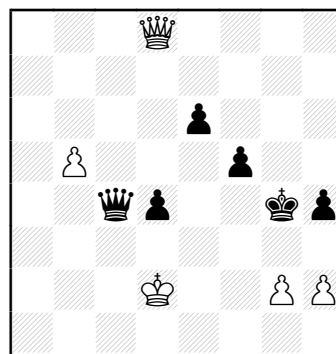
57.♗e7?

Wrong square! It looks like White could save this game by 57.♗f6! After the forced 57...♗c4+ 58.♔d1 ♗f1+ 59.♔c2 ♗xg2+ 60.♔b3 ♗f3+ (or 60...♗h3+ 61.♔a4 ♗xh2 62.♗xf7+ ♔h6 63.♗xe6+ ♔g5 64.♗f6+ with unclear play) 61.♔a4 ♗h5 62.b5 d4 63.♔b4! (the only move!) 63...d3 64.♔c3 White stops the Black's pawn and makes a draw.

57...♗xe5

Now Black's excellently centralized queen serves several purposes: supports the passed pawn, stops the White's b-pawn, attacks the enemy king and defends his own king against the perpetual check. The subsequent play of Rublevsky is admirable. After 6 hours of tense fight, he does not make a slightest mistake and does not give Ponomarev a single drawing chance.

58.♗xf7+ ♔h6 59.b5 ♗e2+ 60.♔c3 ♗c4+ 61.♔d2 d4 62.♗f8+ ♔g6 63.♗g8+ ♔h5 64.♗e8+ ♔g5 65.♗d8+ ♔g4



The Black's king hides from checks. White's kingside is helpless, and pushing the b-pawn does not lead to success, because the Black's passer is no less dangerous.

66.b6 ♗c3+ 67.♔d1 ♗d3+ 68.♔c1 ♗f1+ 69.♔b2 ♗xg2+ 70.♔b3 ♗f3+ 71.♔c4 ♗c3+ 72.♔b5 ♗b3+ 73.♔a6 ♗a3+ 74.♔b5 ♗b2+ 75.♔a6 ♗a2+ 76.♔b5 ♗e2+ 77.♔c5 ♗c2+ 78.♔d6 d3 79.b7

79.♗g8+ ♔f3 80.♗xe6 d2 also wins for Black.

79...d2 80.♔xe6 ♗e4+ 81.♔f6 ♗c6+ 82.♔e5 ♗xb7 83.h3+

Or 83.♗xd2 ♗e7+, 83.♗d4+ ♗e4+, winning in both lines.

83...♔xh3 84.♗d3+ ♔h2 85.♗xd2+ ♗g2 86.♗d1 ♗f2

The endgame is completely hopeless for White. The f-pawn promotes.

87.♔f6 f4 88.♔f5 f3 89.♔g4 ♗g3+ 90.♔h5 f2 91.♗f1 ♗f3+ 92.♔h6 ♗g2

White resigns.

Gelfand-Kasimdzhanov

Slav Defense

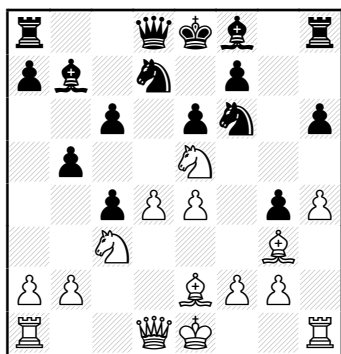
Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 e6 5.♙g5 h6 6.♙h4

Sharp Anti-Moscow Gambit leads to a very complicated game. White sacrifices a pawn, planning to use weaknesses in the opponent's camp. In the first game, Gelfand continued 6.♙xf6 ♗xf6 7.e3 and then got a clear advantage in the subsequent play, however, the opponent could select a more ambitious plan today.

6...dxc4 7.e4 g5 8.♙g3 b5 9.♙e2 ♙b7 10.h4 g4 11.♘e5 ♘bd7



A possible reply – Black does not want keeping an extra pawn, preferring rapid development. In addition, his rook can use the open g-file.

12. ♖xg4

The practice shows that 12. ♘g4 b4! gives Black a good game. Also 12. 0-0 ♗e5 13. ♖xe5 ♖g8 cannot satisfy White.

12... ♖g8 13. ♘d7 ♗xd7 14. ♖f3 0-0-0

14... b4?! is premature: 15. ♘a4 c5 16. ♘xc5 ♖xc5 17. dxc5 0-0-0 18. ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 19. ♖c1 ♖xe4 20. ♖xc4 ♖xf3 21. gxf3 a5 22. ♖e2 with a big advantage (Shchekachev-Shalimov, St. Petersburg 1999).

15. ♖f4!?

A new idea. White moves the bishop away, ruling out possible exchange sacrifices on g3. Another option was tested in S. Ivanov-Shalimov (St. Petersburg 2000) – 15. a4 a6 16. ♖e5. Black reacted quite well: 16... ♗e8! 17. axb5 cxb5 18. d5 ♗e7 (18... f5! is interesting) 19. ♗e2 ♖g7 20. ♖g3 ♖d4! with an excellent game.

15... a6

15... ♗xd4?? is of course impossible due to 16. ♗xd4 ♖xd4 17. ♖e5, and Black loses a piece.

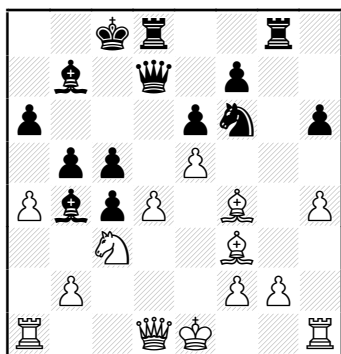
16. a4

After 16. 0-0? Black can already take the pawn: 16... ♗xd4! 17. ♗xd4 ♖xd4 18. ♖e5 ♖d3 19. ♖e2 ♗d7! 20. ♖xd3 cxd3 21. ♖f4 c5 with advantage. Interesting is 16. e5! ♗d5 17. ♘xd5 cxd5 18. ♗d2 with a position resembling of a French Defense. White can hope to get an advantage because of Black's weakened kingside.

16... ♖b4

Of course, Black does not fall for provocation: 16... b4? 17. ♗e2 followed by attack on the c4-pawn.

17. e5 c5!?



An excellent counterblow! The position becomes exceptionally sharp, but one can see that Black's pieces (especially rooks) are more active. His king, however, is as a rule less safe. It is interesting to note that Black had another promising idea: 17... ♗g4! The knight should not be taken: 18. ♖xg4?! ♗xd4 19. ♗xd4 (19. g3?? ♗e4+) 19... ♖xd4, and meanwhile the d4-pawn is already threatened.

18. exf6?

This looks like a serious mistake, giving away the initiative to the opponent. One had to find 18. axb5! cxd4 (18... ♗xb5? 19. 0-0) 19. bxa6 ♖xf3 20. ♗xf3 ♗d5 (weaker is 20... ♗d5?! 21. a7 ♖b7 22. exf6 ♗xf3 23. gxf3 dxc3 24. ♖a4!, and White is much better compared to the line 21. 0-0 dxc3 22. bxc3 ♖xc3 23. ♖ac1 with compensation. The game can go on 23... ♗a7 24. ♖xc3 ♗xc3 25. ♗xc3 ♗xa6 26. ♖c1 (26. ♖xh6! ♖d3 27. ♗b4 ♗c6 28. ♖g5) 26... ♗c6 27. g3 h5 28. ♖h2, and White is unlikely worse. Black is also not worse, though.

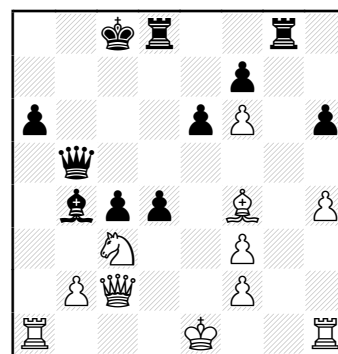
18... cxd4 19. axb5 ♗xb5!

The strongest. Less promising is 19... dxc3 20. ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 21. ♖a4 (weaker is 21. ♖xb7+?! ♖xb7 22. bxa6+ ♖c6, and on 23. ♖a4 there is 23... ♖b5) 21... ♖xf3 22. gxf3 ♖gd8! 23. ♖xb4 ♖d1+ 24. ♖e2 ♖xh1 25. ♖xc4+ ♖b7 26. bxc3 ♖xh4 27. ♖c7+ ♖b6 28. ♖g3 with sufficient compensation for an exchange.

20. ♗c2

A heavy-looking move, but there are no easy ways for White left. For example, a natural 20. ♖xb7+?! ♗xb7 21. ♗e2 did not solve any problems: 21... ♗c6 22. ♖d2 dxc3 23. bxc3 ♖c5, and the White's king will soon feel the grip of the Black's pieces.

20... ♖xf3 21. gxf3



21... dxc3?!

Possibly not the best, however, one cannot play perfectly in such a sharp position. 21... ♖g6! deserved attention. White could defend by 22. 0-0-0! (22. ♖f1 dxc3 23. bxc3 ♖xf6 24. ♗e4 ♗d5!) 22... dxc3 23. ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 24. ♖d1+ ♖c8 25. ♗e4! cxb2+ 26. ♖b1! ♗f5! 27. ♖d4! ♖a3 28. ♖xc4+ ♖d8 29. ♖d4+ ♖e8 30. ♖g3 ♖xf6 31. ♖d3! ♗xe4 32. fxe4 ♖c5 33. h5! with the idea to trap the rook by ♖g3-e5 and good drawing chances

after 33...e5 34.♙xe5 ♖xf2 35.♙xb2.

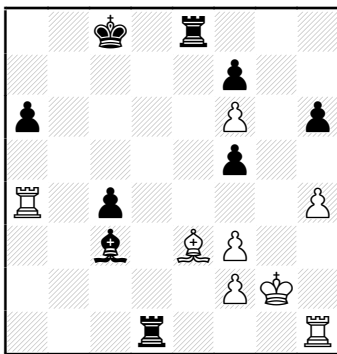
22.bxc3 ♜f5!

Black wins material, but his extra pawns are vulnerable.

23.♜xf5 ♙xc3+ 24.♚e2 exf5 25.♞a4

25.♞a6!? deserved serious attention. The c4-pawn looked more dangerous, but actually it is not easy to defend it: 25...♞ge8+ 26.♚f1 ♚b7 (in case of 26...♞e1+ 27.♚g2 ♞xh1 28.♚xh1 ♞d4 29.♙e3 ♞xh4+ 30.♚g2 the Black's rook is offside: 30...♚d7 31.♚g3 ♞h1 32.♞a4, grabbing the dangerous pawn) 27.♞a4 ♞e1+ 28.♚g2 ♞g8+ 29.♚h2 ♞xh1+ 30.♚xh1 ♞c8 31.♙xh6 ♙xf6 32.h5 ♞h8 33.♙e3 ♞xh5+ 34.♚g2 with real drawing chances.

25...♞ge8+ 26.♙e3 ♞d2+ 27.♚f1 ♞d1+ 28.♚g2



28...♞xh1

It looks like 28...♞g8+! is more promising. 29.♚h2 ♙e5+ forces White to move the last pawn to a dark square: 30.f4 ♞xh1+ 31.♚xh1 ♙d6 32.♞xc4+ ♚d7 33.♞a4 ♞a8, retaining winning chances.

29.♚xh1 ♙xf6 30.♞xc4+ ♚d7 31.♞b4

More accurate is 31.♞f4! ♚e7 (31...♚e6?! 32.♞a4 ♞a8 33.♙xh6) 32.♞b4, and if 32...♞a8, then 33.♙xh6 ♞h8? 34.♞b7+.

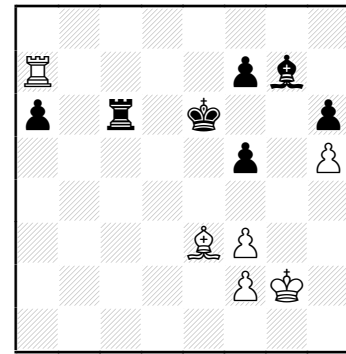
31...♞c8

Stronger is 31...♞a8!, and if 32.♞b7+ (32.♙xh6?! ♞h8; 32.♞a4 h5!, 32.h5 a5 33.♞a4 ♙c3), then 32...♚e8 33.♞b6 ♙g7 34.♙xh6 ♙xh6 35.♞xh6 ♚e7 etc.

32.h5 ♙g7 33.♚g2 ♞c6

Now in the event of 33...♞a8 34.♞a4 it is not easy for Black to make his passed pawn moving without losing weak kingside pawns. Still, the text makes his chances even slimmer.

34.♞b7+ ♚e6 35.♞a7



Black cannot make progress. After **35...♞d6 36.♙c5 ♞c6 37.♙e3 ♞d6 38.♙c5 ♞c6** the players agreed to a draw.

Kamsky-Bacrot

Ruy Lopez

Notes by grandmaster

Yury Yakovich

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

Kamsky does not allow the Marshall attack. He said at one of the press conferences that after the 10-year break he is not ready to participate in theoretical discussions in lengthy and forced variations. Gata plans to use his main trumps – excellent technique and sense of position – in slow maneuvering play.

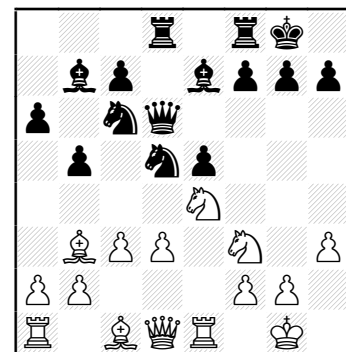
8...♙b7 9.c3

Recently 9.d3 became more popular. Frankly speaking, the resulting positions bored many chess players. Maybe this is why Kamsky selects a less common move.

9...d5 10.exd5 ♘xd5 11.d3

11.♘xe5? is of course bad due to 11...♘xe5 12.♞xe5 ♘f4 with a clear advantage to Black. 11.d4 exd4 leads to an even game.

11...♜d6 12.♘bd2 ♞ad8 13.♘e4



13...♜d7

The diagrammed position occurred in a game of 15-year-old Bobby Fischer. His opponent Laszlo Szabo

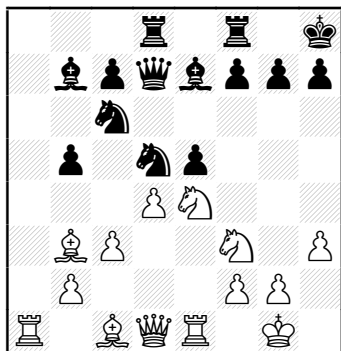
selected an ambitious 13...♖g6 14.♗g3 ♘c5 (14...♗f4!? led to a sharp game after 15.d4 ♗d3 16.♞e3 ♗xc1 17.♞xc1 exd4 18.cxd4), and after 15.d4 (15.♗xe5?? ♗xe5 16.d4 ♗d3-+) 15...exd4 Fischer did not find the winning 16.♗h4! (he played 16.cxd4?) 16...♖f6 17.♗e4! ♖xh4 18.♘g5!

14.a4 ♖h8

Preparing f5.

15.axb5 axb5 16.d4!

Otherwise Black seizes the initiative.



16...exd4?!

Losing the match, Black could try an energetic 16...f5!? with a sharp game, for instance, 17.♗eg5 (17.♗c5 ♘xc5 18.dxc5 e4 19.♗d4) 17...e4 18.♗e5 ♗xe5 19.dxe5 e3 (19...♖c8 20.♖h5) 20.e6 ♖e8 21.♗f7+ ♞xf7 22.exf7 exf2+ 23.♖xf2 ♖xf7 with compensation for a sacrificed exchange.

17.cxd4 f6

Covering e5 and g5 from the White's knights.

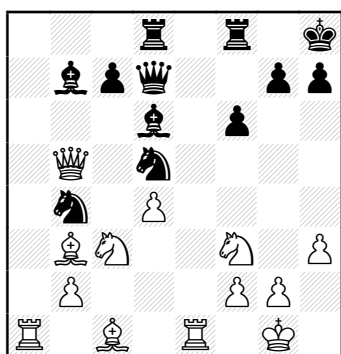
18.♗c3!

White begins to struggle for the d5-square, simultaneously glancing at the b5-pawn.

18...♗cb4 19.♖e2!

Double attack!

19...♘d6 20.♖xb5



20...♗xc3?!

Black proceeds to an inferior ending, although he could continue to fight in a complex middlegame by 20...♘c6 with certain compensation for a pawn because of piece activity.

21.♖xd7 ♞xd7 22.bxc3 ♗d3 23.♞d1 ♗xc1 24.♞axc1 ♘xf3 25.gxf3

Converting of the extra pawn is not easy, but Black is doomed to passivity.

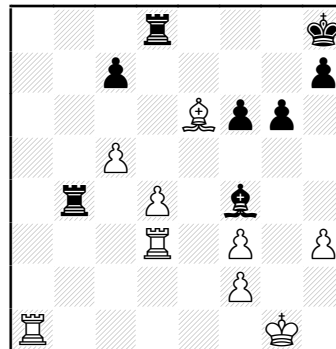
25...♘f4 26.♞a1 ♞d6!?

Bacrot wants to attack White's weak kingside pawns by f6-f5, if the opportunity arises.

27.c4 ♞b6 28.♞d3 g6

28...f5!? made sense here.

29.c5 ♞b5 30.♘c4 ♞b4 31.♘e6 ♞d8



32.d5?!

Kamsky is probably tired, too. Stronger is 32.♞ad1! with the idea to place the pawns on c6 and d5, put the bishop on d7 and threaten the d5-d6.

32...♖g7??

A suicide. After 32...♞c4 it would be difficult for Kamsky to convert the pawn, because 33.c6? is met by 33...♞xc6.

33.d6 cxd6 34.c6 d5 35.♞a7+ ♖h6 36.c7

Black resigns. Apparently, Bacrot did not manage to recover after yesterday's unlucky loss. His today's play was way below his usual standards.

Grischuk-Malakhov

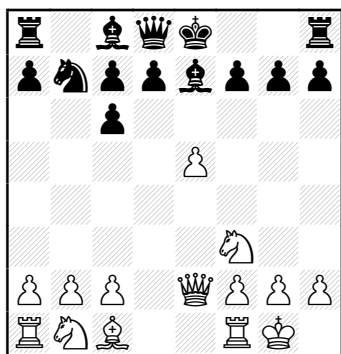
Ruy Lopez

Notes by grandmaster Ruslan Scherbakov

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♘b5 ♗f6 4.0-0 ♗xe4 5.d4 ♘e7

An unexpected opening choice. This line is a rare guest in tournament practice, because of its suspicious reputation. One could expect a Berlin endgame after 5...♗d6 6.♘xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♗f5 8.♖xd8+ ♖xd8. However, Vladimir, considering the match score, decided to play a more complex game. It is possible that he took his opponent's habit to think a lot into account – and the resulting positions give White a lot of tempting continuations.

6.♖e2 ♗d6 7.♘xc6 bxc6 8.dxe5 ♗b7



It is easy to see the reason why this line is out of fashion – nobody likes playing with such knight on b7, surrounded by ruined pawn structure. However, Black wants to bring the knight to e6, and advance of the d-pawn will give him some elbow room.

9. Nc4

More common is 9. Nc3 0-0 10. Re1.

9...0-0 10. Nc3 Qc5!?

An interesting idea – prior to bringing the knight to e6, Black wants to trade the d4-knight. He is short of space, so each vacant square is golden!

11. Rf1 Re8 12. Qf4

The pawn is immune: 12. Nxc6? Qh4! 13. Nd4 Qxd4 14. g3 Qxf2+ 15. Qxf2 Qh5 with good chances to trouble the White's king on the light squares.

12...Qxd4 13. Rxd4 d5 14. b4

The alternatives 14. Qh5 and 14. Qg3 do not cause serious difficulties for Black.

14...a6

A prophylactic move. An immediate 14...Qf5? runs into 15. Qa6!

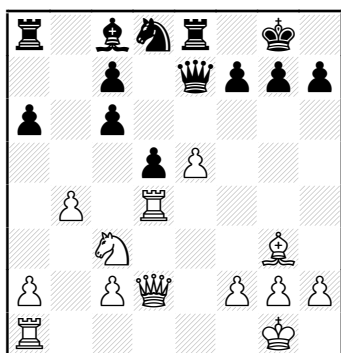
15. Qd2!?

A new move. Smrcka–Yudovich (corr., 1969) continued 15. Qh5, but it did not achieve much after 15...Qd7 16. Rad1 Qf5 17. Qxf5 Qxf5.

15...Qe7

Vacating a square for the knight!

16. Qg3 Nd8



17. Rh4

17. Ne2!? is probably more accurate, planning to meet

17...Qf5?! with 18. c4! Ne6 19. cxd5! Nxd4 20. Nxd4 Qd7 21. e6! fxe6 22. dxc6 Qc8 23. Qe5 with a big advantage. However, Black could obtain a good game after 17...Ne6!? 18. Rh4 a5.

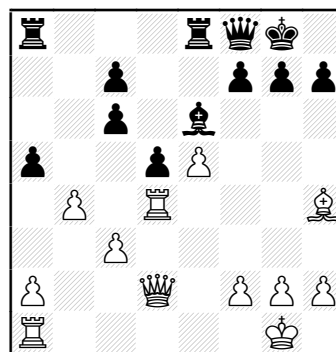
17...Qf5 18. Ne2

Here one could consider a different route for the knight: 18. Nd1!?, but Black stands well after 18...Ne6 19. Ne3 Qg6.

18...Ne6 19. Nd4 Nxd4 20. Rxd4 a5

Black equalized the game completely.

21. c3 Qe6 22. Qh4 Qf8



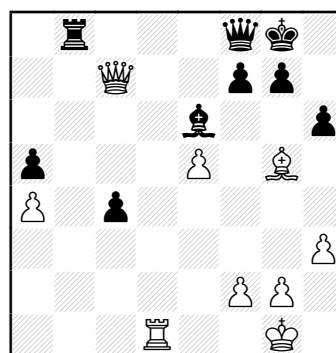
23. Rc1

White demonstrates accuracy, preventing Black from forming connected pawns after ...a5xb4 and ...c6-c5.

23...c5 24. bxc5 Qxc5 25. h3

25. Rd3!? was worthy of consideration, planning to transfer the rook to the kingside. In this case the game could end in a draw by repetition after 25...Qc4 26. Rd4 Qc5 27. Rd3.

25...Rab8 26. a4 Rb3 27. Qg5 Qeb8 28. c4 dxc4 29. Rd8+ Qxd8 30. Qxd8+ Qf8 31. Rd1 Rb8 32. Qxc7 h6



33. Qxb8 Qxb8 34. Rd8+ Qxd8

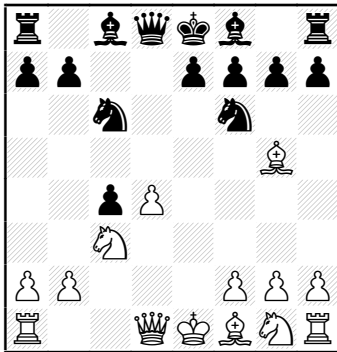
Logical play led to depletion of forces, and the players agreed to a draw.

Polgar-Bareev
Caro Kann Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Yury Yakovich

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5

Polgar changes the opening variation compared to the first game, selecting the Panov Attack.

3...cxd5 4.c4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 ♗c6 6.♙g5 dxc4!?

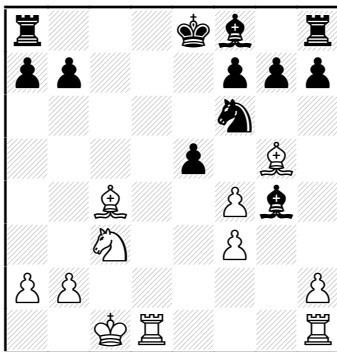


True to his match strategy, Bareev selects the most active and risky continuations. 6...e6 is considered to be safer.

7.♙xc4!?

The most principled. White sacrifices a pawn, because Black's life after 7.d5 ♗e5 8.♖d4 h6! seems too easy.

7...♖xd4 8.♖xd4 ♗xd4 9.0-0-0 e5 10.f4 ♙g4 11.♗f3 ♗xf3 12.gxf3



The diagrammed position already occurred in Bareev's practice. Playing against Grischuk (Moscow, Russian superfinal 2004), he selected a sharp 12...♙xf3!?

13.fxe5 ♙xh1 14.exf6 ♖c8 (14...h6!?) 15.♖e1+ ♗d7, but after 16.♖d1+ ♙d6 17.♙e2! gxf6 18.♙xf6 ♙g2 19.♙e5 ♗e6 20.♙xd6 ♖hd8 21.♙g3 White got an advantage and eventually won.

However, in a recent game Jakovenko-L'Ami (Wijk aan Zee 2007) Black continued 16...♗e8!?, and got a good game after 17.♙e2 (Grischuk recommended 17.♙d3!?) 17...h6 18.♙h4 g5 19.♙g3 ♙e4 20.♙g4 ♖xc3+ 21.bxc3 ♙a3+ 22.♗d2 h5.

Bareev decided not to check out Polgar's preparation,

and played 12...♙e6!?

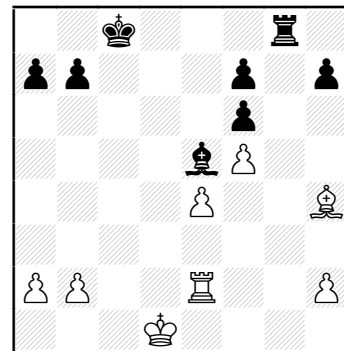
13.♙d3 It is interesting to put a practical test on another Grischuk's recommendation 13.♙b5+!?

13...♙e7 14.f5

14.fxe5 deserved attention, although 14...♗d7 gives Black safe position.

14...♙d7 15.♖he1 0-0-0 16.♖xe5 ♙d6 17.♖e2 ♙c6 White regains a pawn, but Black completes development.

18.♗e4 ♙e5 19.♙h4 ♖d5 20.♗xf6 gxf6 21.♙e4 ♖xd1+ 22.♗xd1 ♙xe4 23.fxe4 ♖g8



The exchanges significantly simplified the game. Black's pawn weaknesses are compensated by activity of his pieces. The game is even.

24.♗c2 ♗d7 25.♗d3 ♖g4 26.♙e1 ♖g1 27.♙f2 ♖d1+ 28.♗c2 ♖h1 29.♙xa7 h5 30.♙d4

An equal rook ending arose. The players attempted to set problems for each other, but in 15 moves the inevitable happened.

30...♙xd4 31.♖d2 ♗c7 32.♖xd4 ♖xh2+ 33.♗c3 h4 34.a4 ♖h1 35.♖d3 ♗c6 36.♗c4 b6 37.♖c3 ♗b7 38.♖d3 ♗a6 39.b4 h3 40.♗d5 ♖h2 41.♗d6 ♖e2 42.♖xh3 ♖xe4 43.♖h8 ♖xb4 44.♗e7 ♖xa4 45.♗xf7 ♗b5 46.♗xf6 ♖a1 47.♖c8 ♗b4 48.♗g6 ♖g1+ 49.♗f7 b5 50.f6 ♗a3 51.♖a8+ ♗b3 52.♖g8 ♖f1 53.♖g5 b4 54.♗e6 ♗c4 55.f7 ♖xf7 56.♗xf7 b3

Draw.

Adams-Shirov

Ruy Lopez

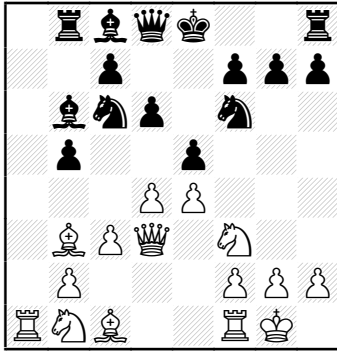
Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

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

The players repeat yesterday's opening, but now Shirov plays a more familiar role.

7.a4 ♖b8 8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♙b6 10.axb5 axb5 11.♖d3



This move posed some problems for Black recently. White wants to take the b5-pawn with the queen instead of a routine 11.♖a3 0-0 12.♖xb5, because the b5-knight often becomes headache. Going back with the queen is much easier. In addition, the knight on d2 supports the center and the queenside.

11...0-0

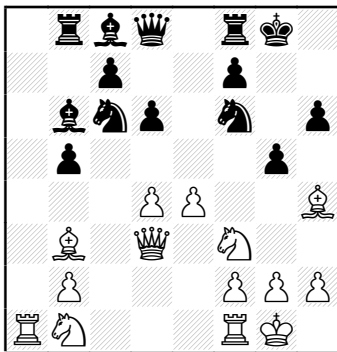
Black also tested 11...♗d7, and now 12.♖a3 0-0 13.♗g5 h6 14.♗h4 ♖e7 (in Shabalov-Friedel, Minneapolis 2005 Black played 14...g5, and after 15.♗xg5 hxg5 16.♗xg5 exd4 17.♖ae1 ♗g7 18.f4 ♗e6 the resulting complicated position is acceptable for Black; however, White's play can be improved) 15.♖fe1 gives White better chances (Negi-Lahno, New Delhi (m/2) 2006).

12.♗g5

12.♖xb5, which already occurred in Alexei's practice, is not very promising: 12...♖e8 13.♖d3 exd4 14.cxd4 ♗xd4 15.♗xd4 ♗xd4 16.♖xd4 ♖xb3 with equality (Kupreichik-Shirov, GER-cht 1997).

12...exd4!

After 12...h6 13.♗xf6! ♖xf6 14.♖xb5 Black did not manage to solve his problems completely: 14...♗e7 (after 14...♗a7 15.♖a4! White got better chances in Negi-Lahno, New Delhi (m/4) 2006, and on 14...♗a5, as in Shabalov-Ganguly, Edmonton 2005, White should play 15.♗c2!), and now 15.♗bd2 ♗g6 gave Black good counterplay in Dvoiry-Mkrtchian, Chelyabinsk 2007, but one could consider 15.dxe5!, although 15...♖f4 gives Black certain compensation for a pawn. 13.cxd4 h6 14.♗h4 g5!



Here comes the improvement! After 14...♗g4?! 15.♗bd2 White strengthens the pawn center and obtains a serious advantage.

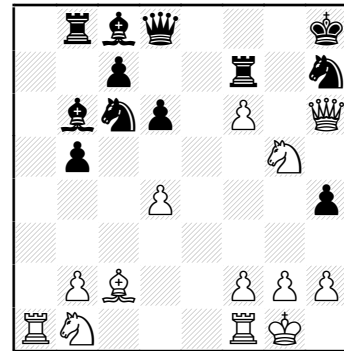
15.e5

This tempting move leads to a forced draw. The sacrifice 15.♗xg5?! is also hardly dangerous for Black: 15...hxg5 16.♗xg5 ♗xd4 etc. The only way to fight for an advantage is 15.♗g3. Black must reply 15...♗h5, after which 16.e5 is not dangerous because of 16...♗g7 17.♗c2 ♖h8 with a good game despite weakened position of the king.

15...gxh4

This move allows the queen invasion, but White is little short on resources.

16.♖g6+ ♗h8 17.♖xh6+ ♗h7 18.♗c2 f5 19.exf6 ♖f7 20.♗g5



Attempts to gradually improve the position can only lead to problems, e.g., 20.♖e1?! ♗d7, and there may be a problem with perpetual.

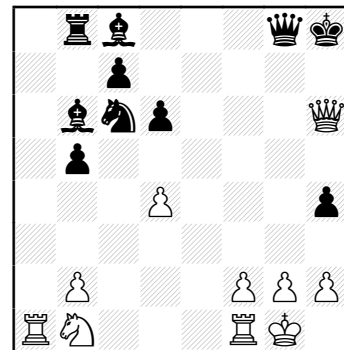
20...♖xf6

The only but sufficient defense.

21.♗xf7+

Regaining a piece by 21.♖xf6+? ♖xf6 22.♗xh7 led to a sad ending after 22...♖f4.

21...♖xf7 22.♗xh7 ♖xh7 23.♖f8+ ♖g8 24.♖h6+ ♖h7 25.♖f8+ ♖g8 26.♖h6+



Draw by perpetual.