

Round 1. Tiebreak.

3 June 2007

Aronian-Carlsen (1)

Benoni Defense

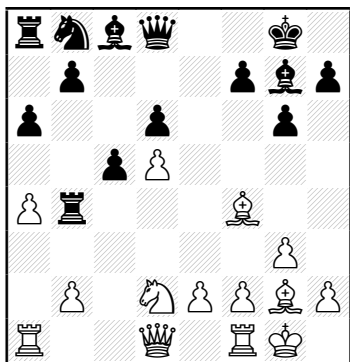
Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.c4 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6

Magnus demonstrates his aggressive intentions. The Benoni Defense is a strategically risky opening, in which Black intends to get counterchances by active piece play.

6.♗c3 g6 7.g3 ♗g7 8.♗g2 0-0 9.0-0 a6 10.a4 ♖e8 11.♗f4 ♗e4 12.♗xe4 ♖xe4 13.♗d2 ♖b4



White's chances in this fairly rare line are higher.

14.b3

A rare move. More normal is 14.♖a2, as Mikhail Tal played.

14...♖xf4

Or 14...♗xa1 15.♖xa1. Keeping the f4-bishop with such kingside weaknesses is dangerous: 15...g5 16.♗e3 ♗f5 17.♗c4 with initiative.

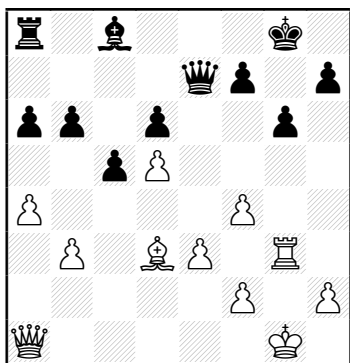
15.gxf4 ♗xa1 16.♖xa1 ♗d7 17.♗e4 ♖e7 18.♖c1

White's advantage is determined by his better development and space advantage, but Black's position is quite solid. He also hopes to make use of his queenside advantage later on.

18...b6 19.♖c3 ♗f6 20.♖e3 ♗xe4 21.♗xe4 ♖d8

Black solved problems with his king by exchanging the e4-knight. The White's king is not very active in positions with such pawn structure, so he should advance his central pawns.

22.♖g3 ♖h4 23.e3 ♖e7 24.♗d3



24...♗b7?!

As a rule, Black does not want placing the bishop to b7, where it is restricted by the opponent's pawns. Maybe he was reluctant to move pawns from his king by 24...f5, but 24...♗d7 was clearly better.

25.e4 ♖e8 26.f5!

Weakening on the e5-square is imaginary, as White has one more f-pawn.

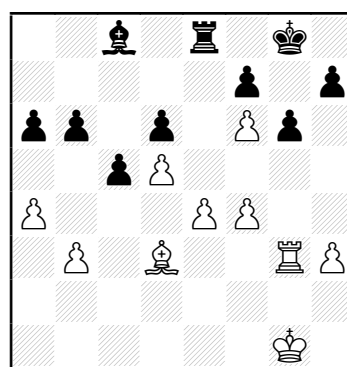
26...♖h4 27.h3

Black could sacrifice on e4 under favorable circumstances, so White opens the way for his king.

27...♗c8 28.♖c3 ♖f4 29.♖f6 ♖e5 30.♖xe5 ♖xe5

Maybe better is 30...dx5!?

31.f4 ♖e8 32.f6!



Levon taught something from the two losses in the main match. In both cases he allowed blocking his own king in a similar manner, after which breaking through the opposite wing decided the game. Now it is time to pay back!

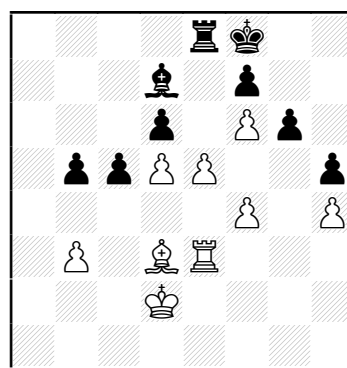
32...♗d7 33.♖e3 b5 34.axb5 axb5 35.e5 ♗f8 36.♗f2

Black cannot allow e6, therefore, he must stand still. White has many ways of improving his position, so in the long run Black is doomed.

36...♗g8 37.♗e2 ♗f8 38.h4 ♗g8 39.♗e1 ♗f8 40.♗d2 h6

Black got sick of passivity, but this move allows White to carry out a decisive breakthrough.

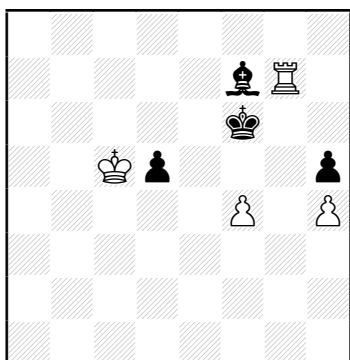
41.♗d3 h5



42.e6! fxe6 43.♗xg6 exd5 44.♗xe8 ♗xe8 45.♖e6

The rest is easy.

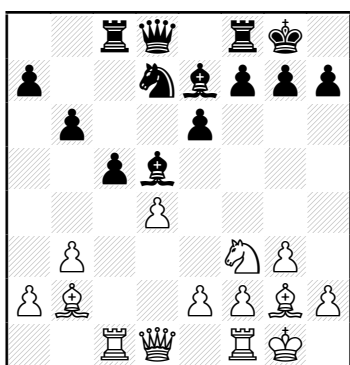
45...c4 46.♖xd6 cxb3 47.♔c3 ♕f7 48.♕xb3 ♖g6
 49.♕b4 ♕f5 50.♕c5 ♗f7 51.♕xb5 ♗e6 52.♕c5
 ♕xf6 53.♕d4 ♕f5 54.♕e3 ♗f7 55.♕f3 ♗e6
 56.♖a6 ♗f7 57.♖a8 ♕f6 58.♖a6+ ♕f5 59.♖a1
 ♗g6 60.♖g1 ♕f6 61.♕e3 ♗f7 62.♖g5 ♕e6
 63.♕d4 ♕f6 64.♕c5 ♕e7 65.♖g7 ♕f6



66.♖xf7+
 Black resigns.

Carlsen-Aronian (2)
English Opening
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1.♗f3 ♗f6 2.c4 b6 3.g3 c5 4.♗g2 ♗b7 5.0-0 e6
 6.♗c3 ♗e7 7.b3
 In the 3rd match game Carlsen outplayed the opponent
 after 7.♖e1 d5 8.cxd5 ♗xd5 9.d4 ♗xc3 10.bxc3, but
 now he decided to change the line for some reason.
 7...0-0 8.♗b2 d5 9.cxd5 ♗xd5 10.♗xd5 ♗xd5
 11.♖c1 ♗d7 12.d4 ♖c8



White's rather inactive play in the opening allowed
 Black to equalize.

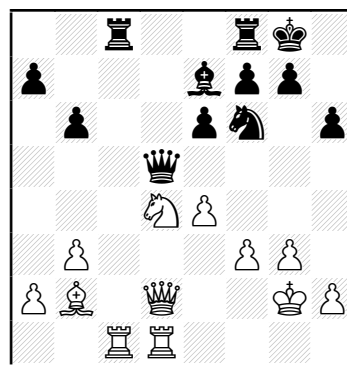
13.♞d2 ♗f6

Anatoly Karpov preferred 13...cxd4 14.♖xc8 ♞xc8
 15.♞xd4 ♗f6 and won the game against Speelman,
 Thessaloniki (ol) 1988.

14.♖fd1 cxd4 15.♗xd4 ♗xg2 16.♕xg2 ♞d5+
 17.f3 h6

17...♞b7 with the idea ...♖c8xc1 and ♖f8-c8.

18.e4



18...♗xe4?!

A rather impulsive move.

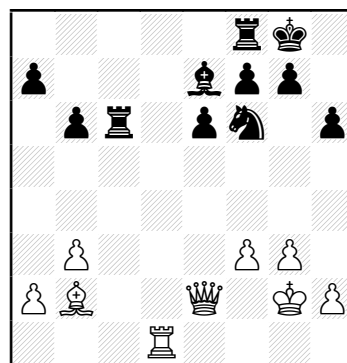
19.♞e2!

This resource was probably underestimated by
 Aronian. He expected 19.fxe4? ♞xe4+ followed by
 ...♗e7-g5. Luckily for him, Black's position is not so
 bad.

19...♗f6!

The best chance – Black sacrifices the queen. In case
 of 19...♗c5 20.b4! ♗g5 (20...♗a4? 21.♗c6 ♞g5?
 22.h4) 21.♗b5 ♞a8 22.bxc5 ♗xc1 23.♖xc1 White
 obtains better chances – all his pieces are very active.

20.♗c6 ♞xc6 21.♖xc6 ♖xc6



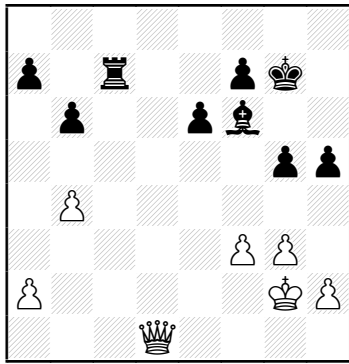
22.♗xf6

Normally the player with the queen should exchange
 rooks. Therefore, 22.♖c1 deserved attention, but
 Carlsen probably did not want to let the knight to d5:
 22...♖xc1 23.♗xc1 ♖c8 24.♗b2 ♗d5 with good
 chances to hold.

22...♗xf6 23.♞a6

After 23.♖d7 ♖fc8 24.♕h3 ♖c2 Black has sufficient
 counterplay.

23...♖c7 24.♕h3 g6 25.♞a4 ♖fc8 26.♖d7 ♕g7
 27.b4 h5 28.♞d1 g5 29.♖xc7 ♖xc7 30.♕g2



The resulting position is even – Black is not worse. In the subsequent game Aronian even tried to look for winning chances.

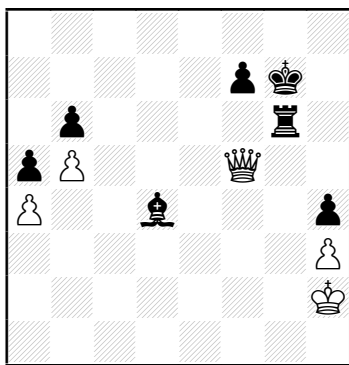
30...♖c4 31.a3 a5 32.b5 ♖d4 33.♗c2 ♖d5 34.a4 ♖d4 35.♗c6 ♗d8 36.♗c3 e5

Надежнее было 36...♗f6.

37.f4 gxf4 38.gxf4 ♗f6 39.fxe5

White should have tried 39.♗c7!? ♖xf4 40.♗xb6, but this line is unlikely to provide real winning chances – Black can even give away his bishop for the b-pawn.

39...♗xe5 40.♗c2 ♖g4+ 41.♖h1 ♗d4 42.h3 ♖g3 43.♗f5 h4 44.♖h2 ♖g6



The White's queen has no objects of attack, but Black also should not try using his f-pawn – after all, queen is a strong piece.

45.♖h1 ♗f6 46.♗f2 ♗g5 47.♗d4+ ♖f6 48.♖g2 ♖g6 49.♗e4+ ♖h6 50.♗e8 ♖g7 51.♗e5 ♗f4 52.♗d4 ♗g3 53.♖h1 ♖g6 54.♗e4+ ♖h6 55.♗e3+ ♖h7 56.♗e4+ ♖g6 57.♗f5 ♖g7 58.♗d5 ♖d6 59.♗f5 ♖f8 60.♗e4 ♖e6 61.♗a8+ ♖g7 62.♗d5 ♖g6 63.♗d3+ f5 64.♗d5 ♖d6 65.♗c4 ♖f6 66.♗c3+ ♗e5 67.♗e1 ♗g3 68.♗c3+ ♖e7 69.♖g2 ♖d7 70.♖f3

Game drawn.

Aronian-Carlsen (3)

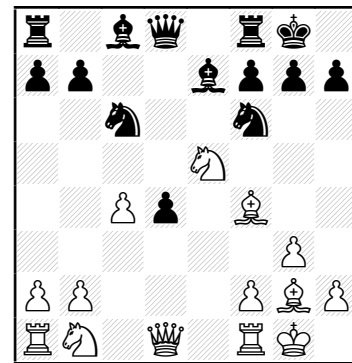
English Opening
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 ♗f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.c4 c5 4.g3

Not allowing the Benoni, which was used by Magnus

in the first rapid game.

4...cxd4 5.♗xd4 d5 6.♗g2 e5 7.♗f3 d4 8.0-0 ♗c6 9.e3 ♗e7 10.exd4 exd4 11.♗f4 0-0 12.♗e5



Black can feel confident in this rare line. However, it is possible that White can claim a minimal advantage.

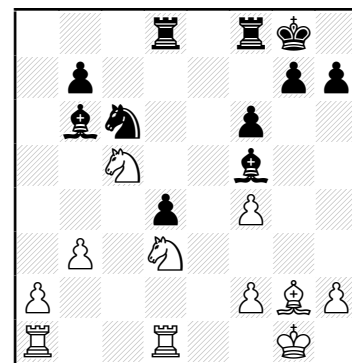
12...♗b6 13.♗b3 ♗a5 14.♗xb6 axb6 15.♗d2 ♗h5 16.♗ef3

A new continuation. White tested 16.♗b3 and 16.♖fe1 before.

16...♗xf4 17.gxf4 ♗d6 18.♗e5 ♗e6 19.b3 f6 20.♗d3 ♗c6 21.♗e4 ♗c7

White safely blocks the d4-pawn, and his minor pieces are quite active. However, disadvantages of the kingside pawn structure does not allow him claiming an advantage. In addition, Black's pieces are also arranged well.

22.c5 ♗f5 23.♖fd1 ♖ad8 24.cxb6 ♗xb6 25.♗ec5



25...♗b4!? 26.♗xb4

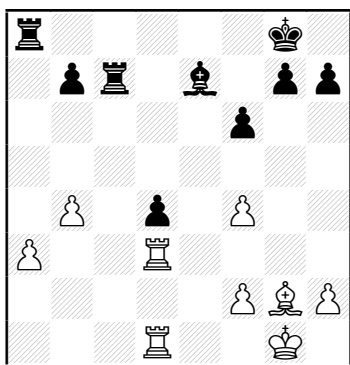
Aronian does not want taking the pawn, as after 26.♗xb7 ♖fe8!? the d-pawn could become a threat, for instance, 27.♗f3 ♗xc5 28.♗xc5 d3, etc.

26...♗xc5 27.♗d3 ♗xd3 28.♖xd3 ♖f7 29.a3 ♖c7

Black could try attacking a weak f4-pawn by 29...♖e7!? 30.b4 ♗a7 31.♗f3 ♖f7 with the idea to move the king forward, but 32.f5 ruins these plans.

30.b4 ♗e7 31.♖ad1 ♖a8?!

Carlsen-Aronian (4)
Queen's Indian Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov

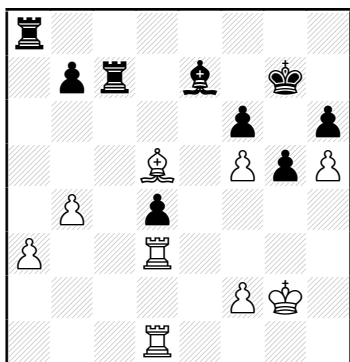


31...♖cd7 is acceptable.

32.♗e4

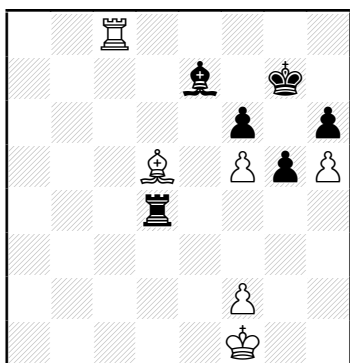
By 32.♗d5+!? ♜f8 33.♖h3 White could pose some problems for the opponent.

32...g6 33.f5 g5 34.♜g2 ♜f8 35.♖h3 ♖d7 36.♖hd3 ♖c7 37.♗d5 ♜g7 38.h4 h6 39.h5



White stands more actively, but it is impossible to squeeze anything out of it. The game is heading towards a peaceful end.

39...♖a7 40.♖f3 ♖c3 41.♖xd4 ♖xa3 42.♗xb7 ♖xf3 43.♗xf3 ♖b3 44.♖d7 ♜f8 45.♖c7 ♖xb4 46.♖c8+ ♜g7 47.♗d5 ♖g4+ 48.♜f1 ♖d4



Draw agreed.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.♗c3

In the 5th game of the classical time control match Carlsen played 4.a3 ♗b7 5.♗c3 d5 6.cxd5 ♗xd5 7.♞c2 ♗e7 8.e4 ♗xc3 9.bxc3 0-0 10.♗d3 and won confidently. However, Magnus again changes the tune, trusting the opponent's homework.

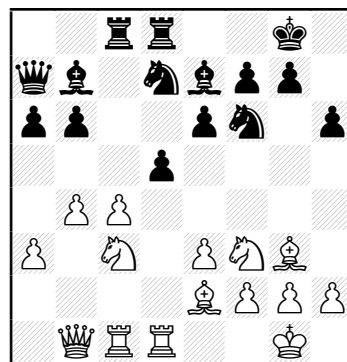
4...♗b7 5.♗g5 ♗e7 6.e3 h6 7.♗h4 c5

Sometimes Black plays 7...♗e4, but does not equalize completely: 8.♗xe4 ♗xe4 9.♗g3 with a small plus to White, Carlsen-Sasikiran (Sarajevo 2006).

8.♗e2 cxd4 9.♗xd4 a6 10.0-0 ♗c6

Usually Black plays 10...0-0.

11.♗f3 0-0 12.♞d2 ♞b8 13.♖fd1 ♖d8 14.♖ac1 d6 15.♞c2 ♞a7 16.a3 ♖ac8 17.♞b1 ♗b8 18.b4 ♗bd7 19.♗g3 d5



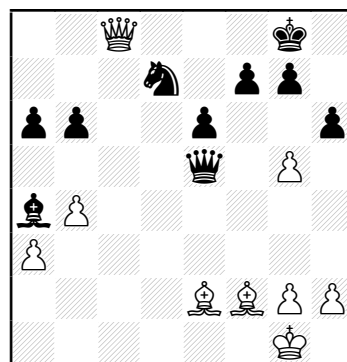
White's unhurried play allowed carrying out this typical freeing break without much effort.

20.cxd5 ♗xd5 21.♗xd5 ♗xd5 22.e4 ♗c6 23.♗d4 ♗a4 24.♖xc8 ♖xc8 25.♖c1 ♞a8 26.f3 ♗g5

One did not have to go into all these complications, as 26...♗f6 gives Black a good game.

27.f4! Otherwise White is unlikely to obtain any chances for advantage.

27...♖xc1+ 28.♞xc1 ♞xe4! 29.fxg5 ♞xd4+ 30.♗f2 ♞e5 31.♞c8+



31...♗f8?!

Probably more accurate is 31...♜h7 32.♗d3+ g6 33.♞xa6 ♞a1+ 34.♗f1 ♞xa3 35.b5 ♞b3! 36.gxh6

(36. ♖xb6 ♗xb5!) 36... ♖d1!? with sufficient counterplay, for example, 37. ♖xb6 ♗c2, and White has to fight for a draw.

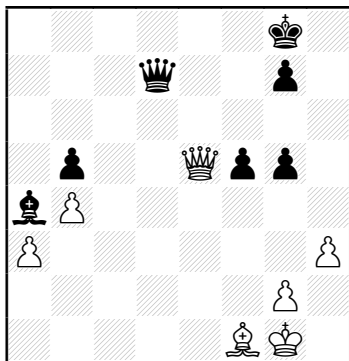
32. ♖xa6 b5 33. ♗f1 hxg5 34. ♖c8 f5 35. ♗c5 ♖f6 36.h3

A forced sequence led to a position in which Black has an extra pawn, but is completely tied up. White doesn't have many resources to create real threats, but Black has problems with moves. He cannot hold the extra pawn.

36...e5 37. ♗xf8 ♖xf8 38. ♖e6+ ♖f7 39. ♖xe5

White got an edge - the a4-bishop supported by the b5-pawn does not decorate Black's position.

39... ♖d7



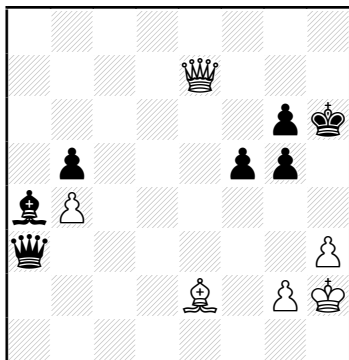
40. ♗e2?!

It seems White could win a pawn by 40. ♖e3!, after which Black has to struggle for a draw: 40... ♗c2!? 41. ♖xg5 ♗d3, etc.

40... ♗h7 41. ♗f2 g6 42. ♖e3 ♖d8

Now the worst is over.

43. ♖e5 ♖d2 44. ♗g3 ♖c1 45. ♗h2 ♖xa3 46. ♖e7+ ♗h6 47. ♖f8+ ♗h7 48. ♖e7+ ♗h6 49. ♖e5 ♗h7 50. ♖e7+ ♗h6



With this move, Levon could simply claim a draw in the game, which enabled him qualifying for the next stage!

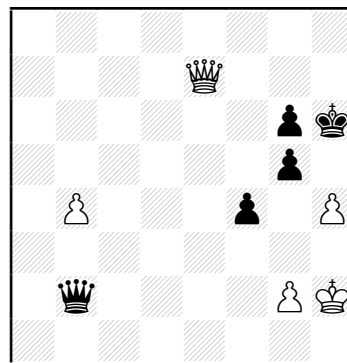
51. ♗xb5

This does not win, but continue the struggle!

51... ♗xb5 52. ♖e5 ♗h7

Simpler is 52... ♖a7 53. ♖xb5 ♖c7+ 54. ♗g1 ♖c3.

53. ♖xb5 f4 54. ♖d7+ ♗h6 55. ♖e8 ♖b2 56. ♖f8+ ♗h7 57. ♖e7+ ♗h6 58.h4



Black has to demonstrate some accuracy!

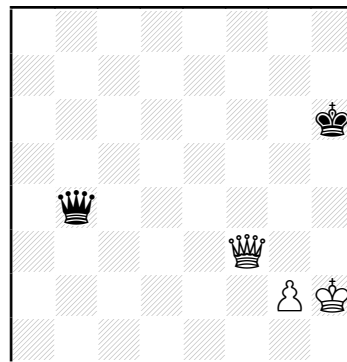
58...f3!

White cannot take the f3-pawn without losing the b4-pawn.

59. ♖xg5+ ♗h7 60.h5

The resulting ending with two pawns vs. one after 60. ♖e7+ ♗g8 61. ♖d8+ ♗g7 62. ♖c7+ ♗g8 63. ♖c8+ ♗g7 64. ♖b7+ ♗h6 65. ♖xf3 ♖xb4 is also an easy draw.

60...gxf3 61. ♖xf3 ♗g7 62. ♖g4+ ♗h7 63. ♖d7+ ♗h6 64. ♖c6+ ♗g7 65. ♖c7+ ♗h6 66. ♖f4+ ♗h7 67. ♖f7+ ♗h6 68. ♖xf3 ♖xb4



White has zero winning chances in this ending - the Black's king is in front of the passed pawn, but Levon manages to find losing chances!

69. ♗h3 ♖b1 70. ♖f6+ ♗h7 71. ♖f3 ♗g7 72. ♗h4 ♗h7 73. ♖f7+ ♗h8 74. ♖h5+ ♗g7 75. ♖g4+ ♗h7 76. ♖h5+ ♗g7 77. ♖e5+ ♗h7 78. ♖d5 ♗g7 79. ♖d4+ ♗h7 80. ♖d7+ ♗h8

80... ♗g6 is also possible.

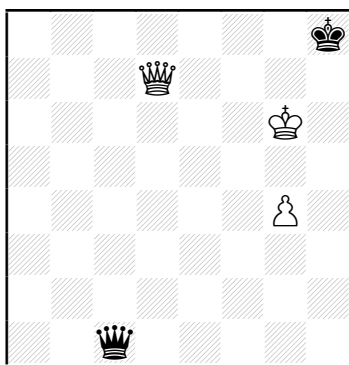
81.g4 ♖h1+?!

This check is not good. It is safer to keep the queen in the center: 81... ♖e1+. Black defends easily: 82. ♗h5 ♖e5+ 83.g5, and now, for instance, 83... ♖h2+ 84. ♗g6 ♖c2+ 85. ♖f5 ♖xf5+ 86. ♗xf5 ♗g7.

82. ♗g5 ♖c1+??

Aronian finds the only losing move!

83. ♗g6

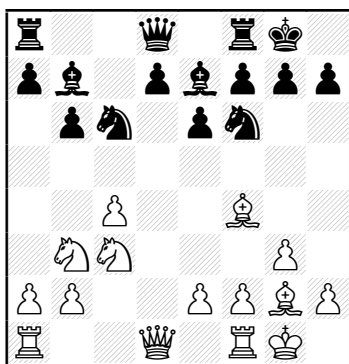


83...♖b1+ 84.♖f5

Now Black either loses the pawn ending or gets mated, therefore he resigned. A stunning end of the game, which doubted Aronian's chances to take part in further stages of the World Championship cycle.

Aronian-Carlsen (5)
English Opening
Notes by grandmaster
Yury Yakovich

1.d4 ♭f6 2.♭f3 e6 3.c4 c5 4.g3 cxd4 5.♭xd4 ♖b4+ 6.♖d2 ♖c5 7.♭b3 ♖e7 8.♖g2 ♭c6 9.♭c3 b6 10.♖f4 ♖b7 11.0-0 0-0



This position occurred twice in Aronian's practice and once in Carlsen's practice. Both players had White.

12.♖d6!? Aronian used this move for the first time, and Carlsen failed to find a good reply in a blitz game.
12...♭a5 13.♭xa5 ♖xg2 14.♖xg2 bxa5 15.e4 ♖c8?! 16.b3 ♖xd6 17.♖xd6 a4? 18.e5 ♭e8 19.♖d4

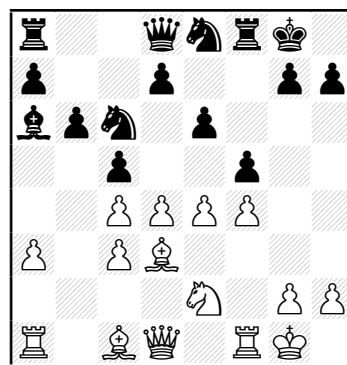
White wins a pawn and converts it with slight flaws acceptable in a blitz game.

19...axb3 20.axb3 f6 21.♖xa7 ♖c7 22.♖xc7 ♖xc7 23.exf6 ♭xf6 24.♭b5 ♖c6+ 25.f3 h6 26.♖a1 ♭h7 27.♖e4 d5 28.♖e2 dxc4 29.♭d4 ♖d5 30.♖xc4 ♖xc4 31.bxc4 ♖c8 32.♖c1 e5 33.♭f5 ♖f8 34.c5 ♭g5 35.♭d6 ♖c6 36.h4 ♭e6 37.♭e4 ♖e7 38.h5 ♖c7 39.♖h3 ♭d4 40.♖g4 ♭e6 41.♖c2 ♭d4 42.♖c3 ♖c6 43.♖a3 ♭e6 44.♖f5 ♭xc5 45.♖c3 g6+ 46.hxg6 ♭e6 47.♖xc6 ♭d4+ 48.♖g4 ♭xc6

49.♖h5 ♖f8 50.♖xh6 ♭e7 51.♖h7
Black resigns.

Carlsen-Aronian (6)
Nimzo-Indian Defense
Notes by grandmaster
Yury Yakovich

1.d4 ♭f6 2.c4 e6 3.♭c3 ♖b4 4.e3 0-0 5.a3 ♖xc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.♖d3 ♭c6 8.♭e2 b6 9.e4 ♭e8 10.0-0 ♖a6 11.f4 f5



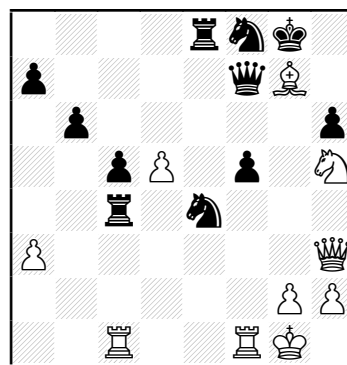
12.e5?!

A risky continuation. 12.♭g3 is played more frequently. However, Yusupov-Karpov (Linares 1993) showed that after 12...g6 13.♖e3 cxd4 14.cxd4 d5! 15.cxd5 ♖xd3 16.♖xd3 fxe4 17.♖xe4 ♖xd5 Black's chances are not worse. Let us not forget that Carlsen need to win, and he takes risks, hoping to force the opponent to spend time on concrete problems in the opening.

12...d6 13.d5 exd5!

Alas for the Norwegian, Aronian found an excellent reply. Black wins a pawn and confidently neutralizes White's initiative.

14.cxd5 ♖xd3 15.♖xd3 dxe5 16.♖d2 ♭e7 17.♖d1 ♭g6 18.fxe5 ♭xe5 19.♭f4 ♖f7 20.♖e2 ♭g6 21.♭e6 ♖d7 22.c4 ♭d6 23.♖b2 ♖e8 24.♖h5 ♭f8 25.♭g5 ♖fe7 26.♖ac1 ♖e2 27.♖c3 ♖2e7 28.♖f1 h6 29.♭h3 ♖e4 30.♭f4 ♖f7 31.♖h3 ♖xc4 32.♭h5 ♭e4 33.♖xg7



33...♭g5! 34.♖b3 ♖xc1 35.♭f6+ ♖xg7 36.♭xe8+ ♖xe8 37.♖b2+ ♖g6 38.♖xc1 ♖e5 39.♖d1 ♭e4 40.♖e3 ♭d7 41.d6 h5 42.♖b3 c4 43.♖xc4 ♖c5+ 44.♖xc5 bxc5 45.♖b1 ♖f6 46.♖b7 ♖e6 47.♖xa7

♙xd6 48.♚f1 c4 49.♙e2 c3 50.♖a6+ ♕d5
 51.♙d1 ♜e5 52.♖a5+ ♕d4 53.♙c2 ♜c4 54.♖a8
 ♜e3+ 55.♙b3 ♜c5+ 56.♙a2 c2 57.♖d8+ ♙c3
 White resigns.

Kasimdzhanov-Gelfand (1)

Queen's Indian defense

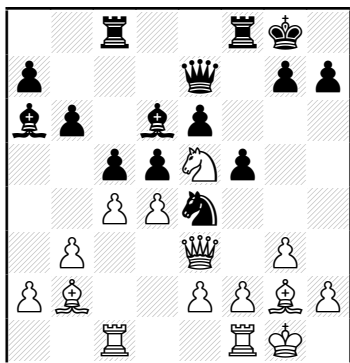
Notes by grandmaster

Yury Yakovich

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♜f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.b3 ♗b4+
 6.♗d2 ♗e7 7.♗g2 c6 8.♗c3 d5 9.♜e5 ♜fd7
 10.♜xd7 ♜xd7 11.♜d2 0-0 12.0-0 f5!?

In the last classical control game of their match, Gelfand selected 12...♜f6, but for the rapid game he prefers playing with pawn chains.

13.♗b2 ♗d6 14.♖c1 ♖c8 15.♜f3 ♗e7 16.♗d2
 ♜f6 17.♜e5 ♜e4 18.♗e3 c5



White's next two moves are unsuccessful. He not only wastes time in a complicated position, but also weakens the kingside and blocks his light-squared bishop.

19.f3?!

More natural 19.♖fd1 is better.

19...♜f6 20.♚h1?

Now Black wins a pawn.

20...cxd4 21.♗xd4 ♗xe5 22.♗xe5

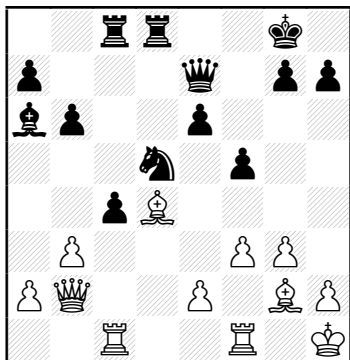
I think 22.♗xe5! is more logical.

22...dxc4 23.♗d2

This move is also dubious. Perhaps White should have played 23.bxc4.

23...♖fd8 24.♗b2 ♜d5 25.♗d4

25.e4? loses immediately to 25...c3!



25...e5

After 7 minutes of thinking, Gelfand decides to return the material. He probably just underestimated strength of 25...♗b4!, threatening c4-c3. Now 26.bxc4 does not work because of 26...♗xb2 27.♗xb2 ♜e3! With decisive advantage, while after the only 26.♗c3 ♜xc3 27.♖xc3 cxb3 28.♖xc8 ♖xc8 Black has an extra pawn and an overwhelming position.

26.♗xe5 c3 27.♗xc3 ♜xc3 28.♖xc3 ♗xe2
 29.♖xc8?!

Maybe the endgame after 29.♗xe2 ♗xe2 30.♖xc8 ♖xc8 31.♖e1 ♖c2 32.a3 offers White more saving chances, although Black's advantage here is obvious, too.

29...♖xc8 30.♗d4 ♗xa2 31.♗d5+ ♚h8 32.♖d1

On 32.♖e1 Black has 32...♗f2!, and after 32.♗xf5 ♗xb3 his passed pawns decide the game.

Now the White's king is less secure that its Black counterpart, and Gelfand starts playing for the attack.

32...h6 33.f4 ♗c2!

Threatening ♗b7!

34.♖e1 ♗f2 35.♖g1 ♖c2 36.♗f7

36.♗xf5 loses immediately to 36...♗xg2+! 37.♖xg2 ♖c1+ 38.♖g1 ♗b7+. The last chance to complicate things is 36.g4, although after 36...♗xf4 Black should also win.

36...♗d3!

The Black's bishop is transferred to e4 with mating attack.

37.h4 ♗e4 38.♚h2 ♖c1! 39.♗e8+ ♚h7 White resigns

Gelfand-Kasimdzhanov (2)

Slav Defense

Notes by grandmaster

Yury Yakovich

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♜f3 ♜f6 4.♜c3 e6 5.e3 ♜bd7
 6.♗c2 ♗d6 7.b3 0-0 8.♗e2 b6 9.0-0 ♗b7 10.♗b2
 ♗e7 11.♖ad1 ♖fe8 12.♖fe1 ♖ad8 13.♗d3 c5
 14.cxd5 exd5 15.♗f5 ♜f8 16.♗h3

A new move. White plans to rearrange his forces by g2-g3 and ♗h3-g2 with pressure on Black's central pawns.

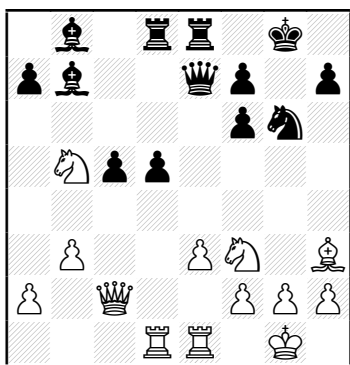
16...♜g6

In turn, Black seeks his chances on the kingside.

17.♜b5

White attempts a forced sequence to spoil Black's pawn structure. I'd prefer to stick to the original plan by 17.g3!?

17...♗b8 18.dxc5 bxc5 19.♗xf6 gx6



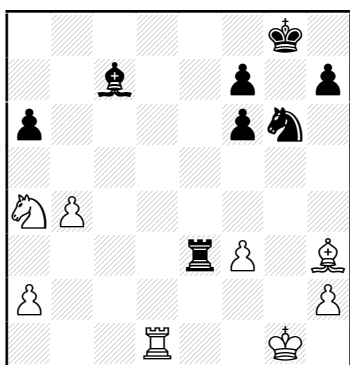
Despite Black's pawn being disconnected, his pieces are quite active. Now 20.g3 is unpleasantly met by 20...♙e4. With the pawn sacrifice, Gelfand attempts to secure the d4-square for his knights, but Kasimdzhanov reacts very actively.

20.b4 a6 21.♘c3 ♜c7!? 22.♗a4 d4! 23.♙xc5 23.e4? loses to 23...♗h4!

23...♗xf3 24.♙xc7 ♗xc7 25.gxf3 dxe3 26.fxe3

Possibly better is 26.♞xd8!? exf2+ 27.♙xf2 ♞xd8 28.♗f1.

26...♞xd1 27.♞xd1 ♞xe3

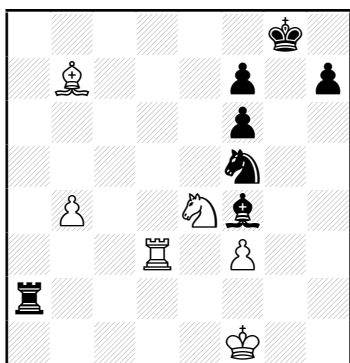


Despite the position has simplified significantly, Black's attack on the dark squares is exceptionally unpleasant, especially bearing in mind Kasimdzhanov huge advantage on the clock.

28.♗f1 ♞a3 29.♗c5 ♞xa2 30.♗xa6 ♗h4 31.♗b7 ♗xh2+ 32.♙f1?!

Possibly 32.♙h1 ♗f5 33.♗e4 is stronger.

32...♗f5 33.♞d3 ♗f4 34.♗e4



34...♙g7?

It seems 34...♗e3+! wins: 35.♙e1 (or 35.♙g1 ♞g2+

36.♙h1 ♞b2 37.♗xf6+ ♙f8 38.♙g1 ♗g3 39.♞xe3 ♗f2+ with decisive advantage) 35...f5 36.♗f6+ ♙f8 37.♗h5 ♗g5.

35.♗c3 ♞a7 36.♗c8 ♗d6 37.♗d5 ♞a1+ 38.♙g2 ♗e5 39.♗d7 ♞a2+ 40.♙f1 ♗c4 41.f4 ♗d6 42.♗f5 White consolidates. Gelfand's only problem now is lack of time on the clock.

42...h5 43.♞c3?!

Stronger is 43.♞g3+.

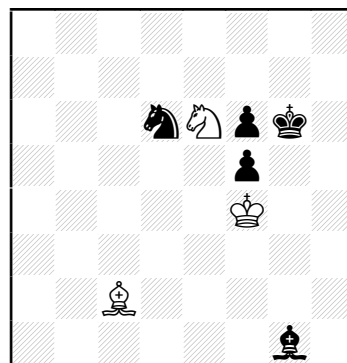
43...♗d2+ 44.♙e1 h4 45.♞c2?! ♗f3+ 46.♙f2 ♞a3 47.♞c3 ♞xc3 48.♗xc3 ♗d4 49.♗h3 ♗xb4

On 49...♗xf4 White trades knights by 50.♗e2!, and Black cannot win the resulting ending with opposite-colored bishops.

50.♗d5

Despite Black's two extra pawns, the endgame is drawish due to defects of Black's pawn structure and presence of the opposite-colored bishops. Kasimdzhanov's attempts to make use of White's time trouble did not succeed.

50...♗c5 51.♙g2 f5 52.♙h2 ♙g6 53.♗g2 ♗e6 54.♙h3 ♗f2 55.♗f3 ♗g3 56.♗d1 ♗d4 57.♗e7+ ♙f6 58.♗d5+ ♙e6 59.♗c3 ♗xf4 60.♙xh4 ♙e5 61.♙h3 ♗d2 62.♗e2 ♗e6 63.♗g1 ♗e3 64.♗f3+ ♙f4 65.♙g2 ♗c5 66.♗c2 ♗e4 67.♗h4 ♗d6 68.♗f3 ♗c5 69.♗b3 f6 70.♗h4 ♙g4 71.♗f3 ♗e4 72.♗e1 ♗c3 73.♗d3 ♗b6 74.♗c2 ♗d5 75.♗d1+ ♙g5 76.♙f3 ♗c3 77.♗b3 ♗b5 78.♗d5 ♗d4+ 79.♙g2 ♗a5 80.♗c5 ♙g4 81.♗e6 ♗c2 82.♗f3+ ♙h4 83.♗c6 ♗e1+ 84.♙f2 ♗d3+ 85.♙g2 ♗e5 86.♗b5 ♗d2 87.♗e2 ♗e3 88.♗d1 ♗b6 89.♗g7 ♙g5 90.♗e6+ ♙g6 91.♗c2 ♗c4 92.♙f3 ♗d6 93.♙f4 ♗g1



94.♗xf5+ ♗xf5 95.♗f8+ ♙f7 96.♙xf5 Draw.

Kasimdzhanov-Gelfand (3)

Petroff Defense

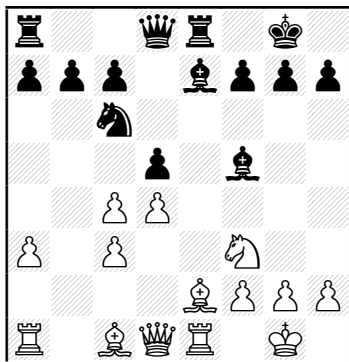
Notes by grandmaster

Yury Yakovich

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6

Gelfand attempts to use the Petroff for peace.

3.♗xe5 d6 4.♗f3 ♗xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♙d3 ♗c6 7.0-0
 ♙e7 8.c4 ♗b4 9.♙e2 0-0 10.♗c3 ♙f5 11.a3
 ♗xc3 12.bxc3 ♗c6 13.♖e1 ♖e8



14.♖a2!?

A novelty!

14...♗a5 15.cxd5 ♖xd5 16.♖b2 c6

Not good is 16...♗c4? in view of 17.♖b3! ♙e6
 18.♙xc4 ♖xc4 19.♖xc4 ♙xc4 20.♖xb7.

17.♖a4 ♖d8 18.c4 ♙f6 19.♙e3 ♙e4 20.♖d2 b6
 21.♗e5 ♖e7 22.♗g4 ♙g5 23.♙f1 ♙xe3

Interesting is 23...f5!? 24.f4 (24.♗e5?! is dubious due
 to 24...f4) 24...♙h4.

24.♖xe3

24.♗xe3!? deserves consideration.

24...♖g5 25.♖d1 ♙f5

25...c5!? looks good: 26.♖g3 cxd4 27.♖xd4 ♗c6
 28.♖d6 ♖ad8!, and Black has an excellent game.

26.♗e5 f6 27.♗f3 ♖f4?!

I think 27...♖h5!?, controlling the e8-square, is
 stronger.

28.♖de2 ♙d7 29.♖e1 ♖xe3 30.♖xe3 ♖d6 31.h3

More active is 31.c5!?

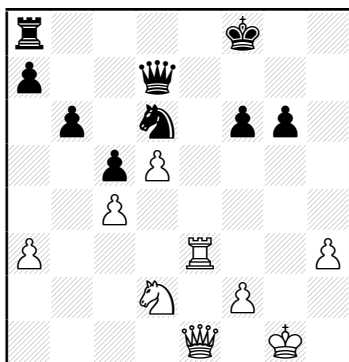
31...c5 32.d5 ♖f8 33.♗d2 ♙f5 34.♙e2!?

White starts fighting for the e6-square.

34...♖d7 35.♙h5 ♗b7 36.g4 ♙g6 37.♙xg6 hxg6
 38.g5 ♗d6?!

Better is 38...♖e8!?, not giving away the e-file.

39.gxf6 gxf6



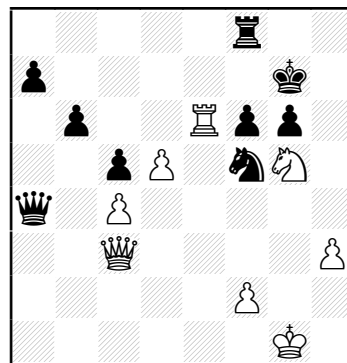
40.♖a1

Stronger is 40.♖e6!, forcing the Black's king to f7 -
 40...♗f7, and only then 41.♖a1 with advantage. It
 would be difficult for Gelfand to defend, bearing in
 mind his serious time trouble.

40...♗g7 41.♖e6 ♖f8 42.a4 ♖f7

Now Black is okay. He only has to be careful and not
 blunder anything.

43.♖c3 ♗f5 44.♗f3 ♖xa4 45.♗g5 ♖f8



46.♖e1?!

After this mistake Black seizes the initiative. 46.♖xf6
 ♖xf6 47.♗e6+ ♗f7 48.♗g5+ led to a draw. 46.♖c6!
 ♗d4 47.♖c7+ ♗g8 48.♖d3 with a sharp game
 offered practical winning chances, as the time
 advantage could become a factor, too.

46...♗d4 47.♖e7+ ♗g8 48.♖d3?

Decisive mistake. 48.♗f3 was necessary.

48...♗f5 49.♖e2 ♖a1+ 50.♗h2 fxg5 51.♖e6+
 ♗h8 52.♖b7 ♖d4 White resigns

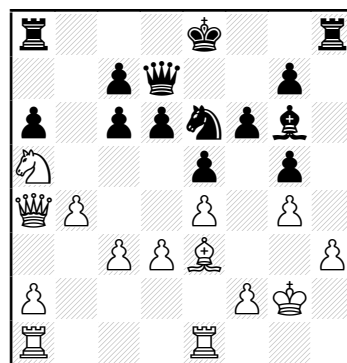
Shirov-Adams (1)

Ruy Lopez

Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♗f6 5.0-0
 ♙e7 6.♖e1 d6 7.c3 ♙g4 8.d3 ♗d7 9.h3 ♙h5
 10.♙e3 h6 11.g4 ♙g6 12.♗bd2 ♙g5 13.♗xg5
 hxg5 14.♗g2 f6 15.♙xc6 bxc6 16.b4 ♗f8 17.♗b3
 ♗e6 18.♗a5 ♖d7 19.♖a4

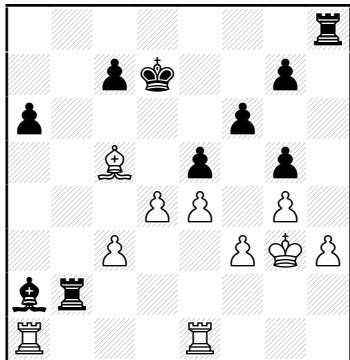


White got a small advantage in a rare line of the Ruy
 Lopez due to superior pawn structure.

19...c5

A sharper 19...d5 does not solve all the problems: 20.f3 d4 21.cxd4 exd4 22.♙d2. As in the last game of the classical control match, Shirov does not avoid an endgame with a small advantage.

20.♖xd7+ ♔xd7 21.bxc5 dxc5 22.f3 ♜ab8 23.♘b3 ♙f7 24.♗xc5+ ♗xc5 25.♙xc5 ♜b2+ 26.♔g3 ♙xa2 27.d4



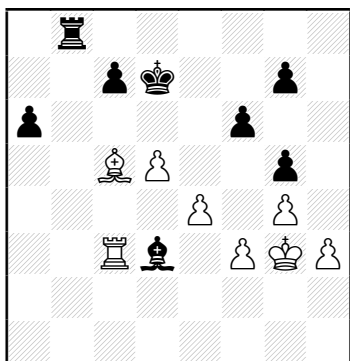
27...exd4?!

Safer is 27...♙e6!?, keeping the center closed. After 28.dxe5 fxe5 29.♙e3 ♙f6 the king can defend the kingside weaknesses, and White has problems carrying out his invasion.

28.cxd4 ♙c4 29.d5 ♜hb8

One should have tried to destroy White's pawn chain by 29...c6, and if 30.d6, then 30...♜e8.

30.♜ac1 ♜e2 31.♜xe2 ♙xe2 32.♜c2 ♙d3 33.♜c3



33...♙f1?!

Preparing ...c7-c6 by 33...♙b5 was already necessary.

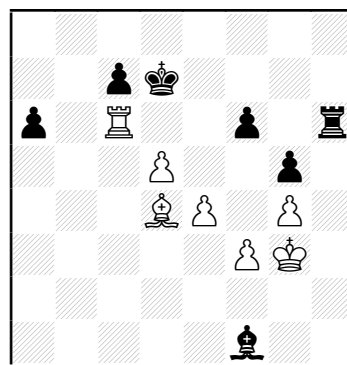
34.h4! gxh4+ 35.♙xh4 ♜h8+

Otherwise the king breaks to the kingside pawns.

36.♙g3 g5?!

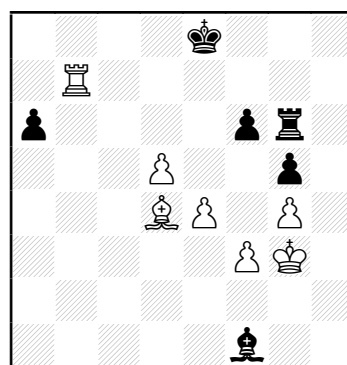
This only creates more weaknesses. However, Black's position was already very tough.

37.♙d4 ♜h6 38.♜c6



White wins a pawn and dominates on board. The rest is easy.

38...♙e7 39.♜xc7+ ♙e8 40.♜c6 ♙f7 41.♜b6 ♜g6 42.♜b7+ ♙e8



43.d6 ♙b5 44.♜e7+ ♙d8

Or 44...♙f8 45.♙c5.

45.♙b6+ ♙c8 46.♜c7+ ♙b8 47.♙a7+ ♙a8 48.d7

Black resigns

Adams-Shirov (2)
Italian Opening
*Notes by grandmaster
Ruslan Scherbakov*

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♙c4 ♗f6 4.d3 ♙c5 5.c3 a6 6.♙b3 ♙a7 7.0-0 d6

The Italian Opening has become popular recently in the tournament practice. The character of play resembles of the Ruy Lopez, but the variations are less forced and sharp.

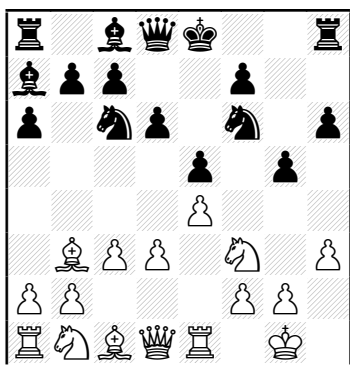
8.h3

More common is 8.♗bd2.

8...h6

On 8...0-0 White planned 9.♙g5.

9.♜e1 g5!



A very interesting idea! Black immediately begins operations on the kingside, utilizing the fact that he hasn't castled yet, and White's h3-pawn is a good object of attack. 9...0-0 10.♘bd2 leads to standard positions.

10.♘h2 g4!

Nevertheless!

11.hxg4 ♖g8 12.♗f3 ♗e7

Black regains a pawn and seizes the initiative.

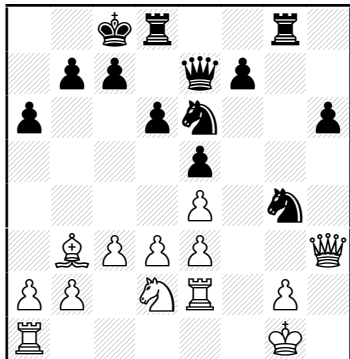
13.♙e3 ♙e3 14.fxe3

Adams attempts to get some play on the f-file, but it is safer to capture on e3 with the queen, turning to defense.

14...♙xg4

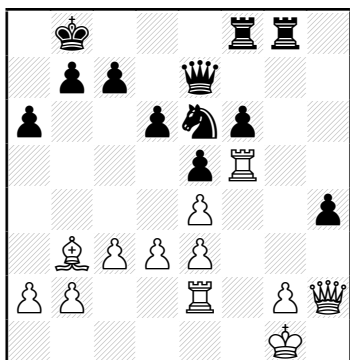
14...♙d7!? 15.♖f1 ♖g6 16.♘d2 0-0-0 followed by ...♗d8-g8 deserved consideration.

15.♘xg4 ♘xg4 16.♗h3 ♘d8 17.♘d2 ♘e6 18.♖e2 0-0-0



Black advantage is doubtless. Having evacuated the king on the queenside, Shirov can now start active operations on the open g-file.

19.♖f1 ♘b8 20.♘f3 h5 21.♗h4 f6 22.♘h2 ♖df8 23.♖f5 ♘xh2 24.♗xh2 h4



25.♙xe6?

Adams plays indecisively. One should have taken the pawn: 25.♗xh4 ♖h8 26.♖h5 ♖xh5 27.♗xh5 ♘c5 28.♙c2, and White can defend.

25...♗xe6 26.c4 ♖h8

It is not bad for Black that his h-pawn remained alive.

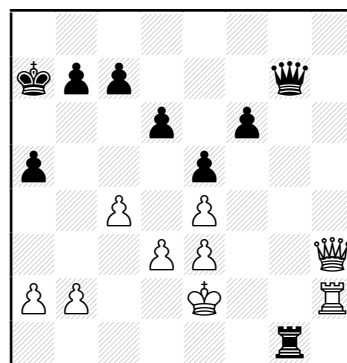
27.♖ef2 ♖h6 28.♗h3 ♖g8 29.♖5f3 ♗e7 30.♙f1 ♖g5 31.♙e2 ♗g7 32.♗h1 ♖hg6 33.♙f1 ♖g3 34.♗xh4 ♖xg2

Gradually Black infiltrates the enemy camp.

35.♖h3 ♙a7!

A strong move that is especially unpleasant in time trouble – Black prevents an endgame possible after ♗h4-h8. Now White can neither simplify the position, nor defend his king or the queenside pawns, which became very vulnerable since the Black's rook invaded his territory.

36.♖h2 ♖g1+ 37.♙e2 ♖b1 38.♙f3 ♖e1 39.♗h3 a5 40.♖fg2 ♖f1+ 41.♙e2 ♖b1 42.♙f3 ♖f1+ 43.♙e2 ♖g1 44.♖xg1 ♖xg1



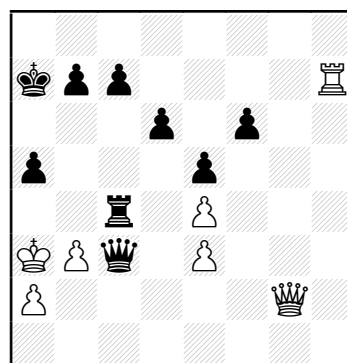
45.♙d2

Curiously, leaving the king in the center by 45.♙f3!? is more tenacious, and if 45...♖a1, then 46.♖g2.

45...♖b1 46.♙c3 ♗g1

Now White is helpless.

47.♗g2 ♖c1+ 48.♙b3 ♗d1+ 49.♙a3 ♗xd3+ 50.b3 ♖xc4 51.♖h7 ♗c3



White resigned in view of inevitable mate.

Shirov-Adams (3)

Ruy Lopez

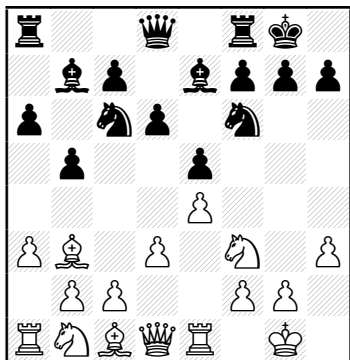
Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

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

Leading the match 2-0, Shirov is not in a mood for a sharp Marshall Attack.

8...♙b7 9.d3 d6 10.a3



It became fashionable recently to handle the Ruy Lopez in such unhurried manner, but one can unlikely pose any problems in such way. It is possible, however, that Shirov is not planning posing problems.

10...♖d7 11.♘c3 ♖fe8 12.♘e2

12.♘d5 ♘xd5 13.exd5 ♘d4 14.♘xd4 exd4 gives Black a good game, Svidler-Kamsky (Sofia 2006).

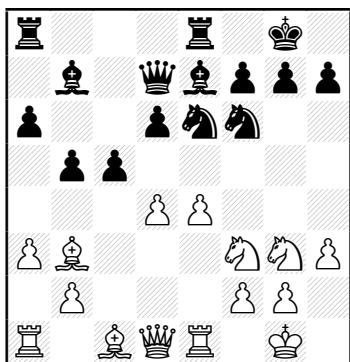
12...♘d8!?

A new move. Adams shows that such maneuver can be played not only in ♙c5 Ruy Lopez. Zhang Zhong-Jenni (Bled, ol 2002) continued 12...h6 13.♘g3 ♙f8 with an acceptable game.

13.♘g3 ♘e6 14.c3 c5 15.d4

Black is well-prepared to this advance. White could continue in the same style by, for example, 15.a4.

15...exd4 16.cxd4



16...d5

Maybe Black should have preferred a more complex game after 16...c4 17.♙c2 d5 18.e5 ♘e4.

17.dxc5 dxe4 18.♖xd7 ♘xd7 19.c6

19.♙xe6?! is not good due to 19...♘xc5!

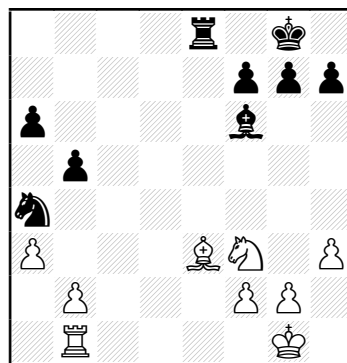
19...♙xc6 20.♘xe4 ♙xe4 21.♖xe4 ♘dc5 22.♖e3

♘xb3 23.♖xb3 ♘c5 24.♖e3 ♙f6

As a result of the tactical skirmish, Black obtains an

advantage in the ending.

25.♖b1 ♖ad8 26.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 27.♙e3 ♘a4



28.♙d4

White's desire to simplify the position is understandable, but perhaps he should have started with 28.b3 ♘c3 29.♖e1.

28...♙xd4 29.♘xd4 ♖e4

An attempt to penetrate via the d-file by 29...♖d8!? deserved attention.

30.♘c6 ♖e6 31.♘b4 ♙f8 32.♙f1 ♙e7 33.b3

After 33.♘d3 White is out of trouble.

33...♘c5 34.♘d5+ ♙d7 35.b4 ♖d6 36.♘c3 ♖d3

37.♖d1 ♖xd1+ 38.♘xd1 ♘a4 39.♙e2 ♙d6

40.♙d3?!

More precise is 40.f4.

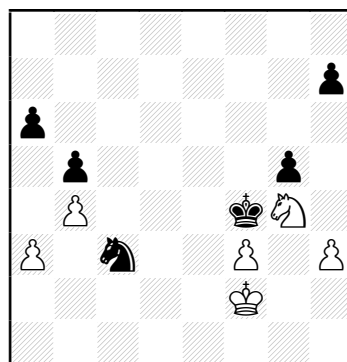
40...♙e5! 41.g3 g5 42.♘e3 f5

Somewhat inaccurate defending led White to difficulties.

43.f3 (43.♙e2!?) 43...f4 44.♘g4+ ♙f5 45.gxf4 ♙xf4

After 45...h5 White draws by 46.fxg5! hxg4 47.fxg4+ ♙xg5 48.♙d4, taking the a6-pawn with the king, after which the Black's knight is tied to the b5-pawn, and the king must control the opponent's passed pawns.

46.♙e2 ♘c3+ 47.♙f2



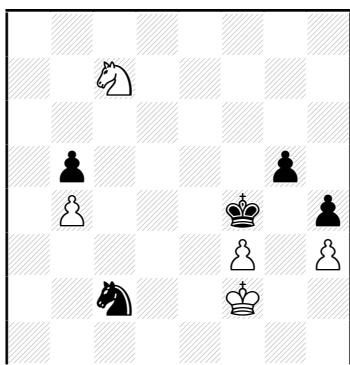
47...♘d5!?

Unfortunately for Black, after 47...♘b1 48.♘f6 ♘xa3 49.♘d5+! ♙e5 50.♘c7 ♘c2 51.♘xa6 his king cannot approach the b4-pawn, because the White's king advances on the kingside, while the knight can be sacrificed to the b5-pawn.

48.♘h6 ♘e3 49.♘g4 ♘d1+ 50.♙e2 ♘c3+ 51.♙f2

h5 52.♘f6 h4 53.♘d7 ♘d1+ 54.♙g2 ♘e3+

55.♙f2 ♘c2 56.♘c5 ♘xa3 57.♘xa6 ♘c2 58.♘c7



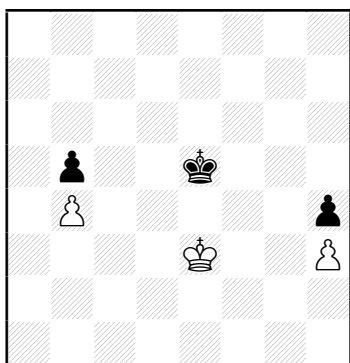
58...♞d4

Black could net a pawn by 58...♞xb4 59.♞xb5 (59.♞e6+?! ♕e5) 59...♞d3+ 60.♕g2 ♞e1+ 61.♕f2 ♞xf3 62.♞c3, but here White holds. Black is unable to get to the h3-pawn, and in some cases, when White gets opposition, the pawn ending is drawn as well.

59.♞d5+ ♕e5 60.♞c3

There are no more problems for White – the position is drawn.

60...♕f4 61.♞d5+ ♕f5 62.♞c3 ♕e5 63.♕g2 ♕d6 64.♕f2 ♕c6 65.♕e3 ♞e6 66.♞e2 ♕d5 67.♕d3 ♕e5 68.♕e3 ♞c7 69.f4+ gxf4+ 70.♞xf4 ♞d5+ 71.♞xd5 ♕xd5 72.♕d3 ♕e5 73.♕e3 ♕d5 74.♕d3 ♕e5 75.♕e3



The players agreed to a draw, which allowed Alexei Shirov to qualify for the next stage.