

Round 2. Game 2.

7 June 2007

Shirov-Aronian

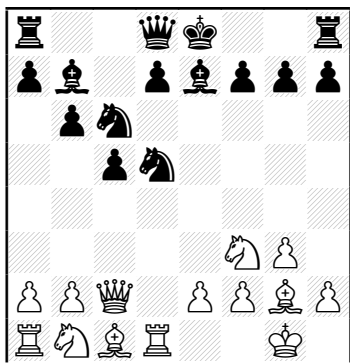
Queen's Indian Defense

Notes by grandmaster Yury Yakovich

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♙a6 5.♖c2 ♙b7
6.♙g2 c5 7.d5!?

This pawn sacrifice occurred in one of the Elista games between Bareev and Polgar.

7...exd5 8.cxd5 ♘xd5 9.0-0 ♙e7 10.♞d1 ♘c6



11.♗a4

A novelty. Bareev continued 11.♗f5 in the game mentioned above.

11...♘f6 12.♘c3 0-0 13.g4

The point!

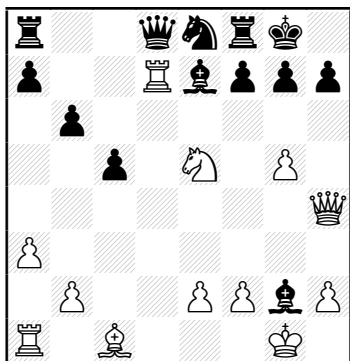
13...♘b4!

According to Shirov, prior to the game he discovered that this move gives Black sufficient counterplay, but decided not to change his opening plan.

14.a3 ♘bd5 15.♘xd5 ♙xd5 16.g5 ♙c6 17.♗h4 ♘e8

Dubious is 17...♘e4?! in view of 18.♘e5! ♙xg5 19.♘xc6 ♙xh4 20.♘xd8 ♘xf2 21.♞d5! ♞axd8 22.♞h5 with advantage to White.

18.♘e5 ♙xg2 19.♞xd7



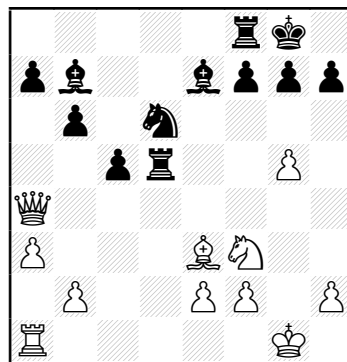
19...♙b7!

This decision is typical for Aronian. Instead of fighting for equality by 19...♗c8 20.♞xe7 ♙c6, he sacrifices a queen, getting a rook, a bishop, and a clear plan of playing in the center and on the queenside.

20.♞xd8 ♞xd8 21.♙e3 ♞d5!

Driving away the knight and centralizing.

22.♘f3 ♘d6 23.♗a4



23...b5! 24.♗c2

The a7-pawn is untouchable: 24.♗xa7? ♞a8 25.♗b6 ♙d8, winning a queen.

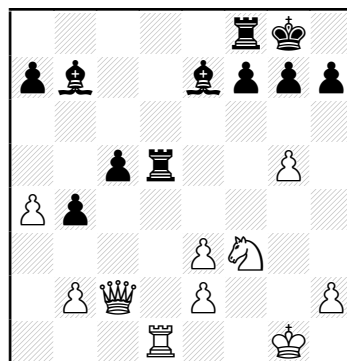
24...♘f5 25.a4?!

Shirov criticizes this move. Probably stronger is 25.♙f4 or 25.♞d1, although in these lines Black also has full compensation for the queen.

25...b4

Not good is 25...♘xe3 26.fxe3 ♙xg5?! 27.♙f2 b4? in view of 28.e4, winning a piece.

26.♞d1 ♘xe3 27.fxe3



27...♞xd1+

In the diagrammed position Shirov was correctly concerned about 27...c4!? – this was the reason to criticize his 25th move. Black's pawns become very dangerous. After the sample 28.♞xd5 ♙xd5 29.e4 ♙e6 30.♘d4 ♞c8 31.♘xe6 fxe6 followed by c4-c3, Black obtains good winning chances, as the White's queen must guard the passed pawn. It is interesting to note that the computer assesses the resulting position as a better for White. Aronian rejected 27...c4 because he wanted to coordinate his forces first, and then advance the c-pawn.

28.♗xd1 ♞d8 29.♗c2 g6

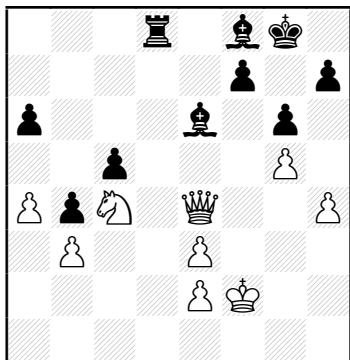
A multipurpose move. Black makes luft, prepares to transfer the bishop to g7, and controls the f5-square.

30.h4 ♙d6 31.♙f2 a6 32.♘d2

The knight goes to c4. Maybe it was better to place there a queen (32.♗c4)? The queen is a bad blocker

of course, but on c4 it prevents ...♙e6 (the a6-pawn is attacked). And the knight can find other good squares, such as e4.

32...♙f8 33.♘c4 ♙c8 34.♚e4 ♙e6 35.b3



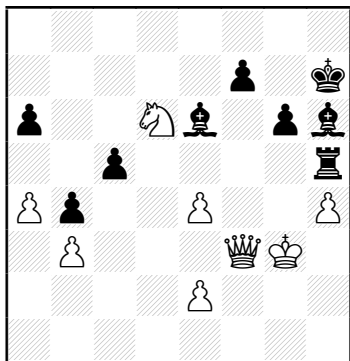
35...♗d5!

Black arranged his pieces well, and can start bothering the White's kingside.

36.♙g3 h6! 37.gxh6 ♙xh6 38.♚f3 ♙h7 39.e4 ♗h5

Alexei had just a minute left on the control move, and he selected the active 40.♘d6!?

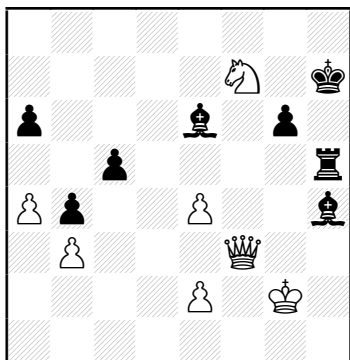
In the case of 40.♚f6?, 40...♙g7 41.♚e7 ♙xc4 42.bxc4 b3 43.♚xf7 b2 gives Black a winning advantage – the b-pawn wins the game. On 40.♗d3 Black could respond by 40...g5!?, and it is practically impossible to evaluate the consequences of this move in a minute. However, Aronian finds the opportunity to attack the h4-pawn after the text-move as well.



40...♙g5! 41.♘xf7

The only move, as 41.hxg5? loses to 41...♗h3+.

41...♙xh4+ 42.♙g2



42...c4!?

Levon chooses the most aggressive continuation again. In the case of 42...♙e7 White begins his counterattack by 43.♚f4! (bad is 43.e5? in view of 43...♗f5 44.♚c6 ♙xf7 45.♚d7 (45.♚c7 ♙d5+, etc.) 45...♗xe5) 43...♙g8 44.♘d6 ♙xb3 45.♘c8 with complications that are hard to assess.

43.bxc4 ♙g8

Leads to a draw.

Now 43...♙e7 is met by 44.e5!, as on 44...♗f5 White has 45.♚c6 ♙xf7 46.♚c7! (the d5-square is under control) with the initiative, although the b-pawn secures Black from losing the game - 46...♙f8! 47.e6 b3. During the game, Shirov was concerned about 43...b3!?, thinking that he must give away a piece: 44.♚xb3 (44.♘d6? is bad due to 44...♗g5+ 45.♙h1 ♗g3 46.♚f4 ♗h3+ 47.♙g2 b2, and wins) 44...♙xf7 with some winning chances.

However, it seems here White can play 44.e5!, too. 44...♗f5 (44...b2 is harmless for White due to 45.♚b7 b1♚ 46.♚xb1 ♙xf7 47.♚b7 ♙g8 48.♚c8+ ♙g7 49.e6) 45.♚e4! ♗xf7 46.♚xh4+ ♙g7 47.♚d8 with a possible draw.

44.♘d6 ♗g5+ 45.♙h1

45.♙f1? loses to 45...♗g3 46.♚f4 ♙h3+ and 45.♙h2? fails to 45...♙g3+.

45...♗g3 46.♚f4 ♗h3+

Draw.

Bareev-Leko

Slav Defense

Notes by grandmaster

Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 ♙g4

A rare move. Usually Black plays 4...♙f5.

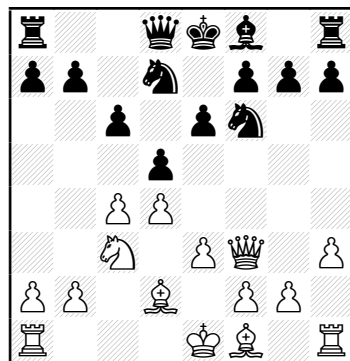
5.♘c3

On 5.cxd5 Black replies 5...♙xf3 6.♚xf3 cxd5 with a very solid position.

5...e6 6.h3 ♙xf3

In the case of 6...♙h5 White could seriously consider 7.g4 ♙g6 8.♘e5, as in Bareev–Bruzon (Khanty Mansyisk 2005), and White got a slight advantage after 8...♘bd7 9.♘xg6 hxg6 10.a3 g5 11.♙d2 ♙e7 12.♚f3 g6 13.0-0-0 (Evgeny won that game).

7.♚xf3 ♘bd7 8.♙d2



8...♙b4!?

Black develops the bishop, at the same time increasing control of the center. On 8...♗d6 White can already begin active operations on the kingside by 9.g4! (Dreev - Movsesian, Sarajevo 2002).

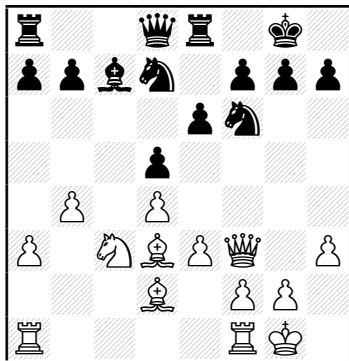
9.♗d3

On 9.g4 Black obviously intended 9...♗xc3 10.♗xc3 ♘e4 with a good game.

9...0-0 10.a3

Here 10.g4?! is also premature, as after 10...e5 Black seizes the initiative due to his development lead.

10...♗a5 11.b4 ♗c7 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.0-0 ♖e8



Leko shows unequivocally that he intends to push his central pawn forward. Nobody had any doubts about it, though.

14.♖fc1

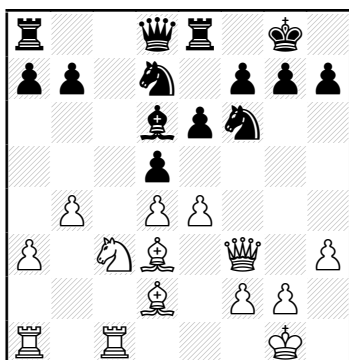
Only this strange-looking move is a novelty. In Kharlov-Al Sayed (Dubai 2003) White immediately started playing in the center by 14.e4. The game went on 14...e5 15.♗g5 h6 16.♗h4 g5 17.♗g3 exd4 18.♗xd5 ♘xd5 19.exd5 ♗e5 20.♗xe5, and here 20...♖xe5 looked more accurate, to follow by ♗d8-d6 with an even game.

14.♖ac1 is more logical, but Bareev realized that after 14...e5 (now 14...♗d6?! 15.e4! gives White a clear plus) 15.♗xd5?! e4 16.♗xe4 ♗xe4 17.♗xc7 ♗xd2 the f1-rook is attacked, and after, say, 18.♗xb7 ♖b8 19.♗xa7 ♗xf1 20.♗xe8 ♗xe3!, Black has no problems to say the least. However, White has other opportunities, e.g., 15.e4! exd4 16.♗xd5 ♗xd5 17.exd5 ♗e5 18.♗g3 or 15.♗f5!?, which give him hope for a slight advantage.

14...♗d6

The hasty 14...e5? gives White an advantage after 15.♗xd5 e4 16.♗xe4 ♗xe4 17.♗xc7 ♗xd2 18.♗xb7 (18.♗f5!?) 18...♖b8 19.♗xa7, etc.

15.e4



At this moment Bareev has already spent an hour more than his opponent, so he initiated peace talks. Black can respond to 15.e4 by 15...e5! (certainly not 15...dxe4? 16.♗xe4 with unpleasant initiative). White could try obtaining some advantage by 16.♗g5! h6 17.♗h4, but, according to Leko, the final position of this game was studied at home, and it is logical to conclude that he knows how to make a draw.

Rublevsky-Grischuk

Scotch Game

Notes by grandmaster

Yury Yakovich

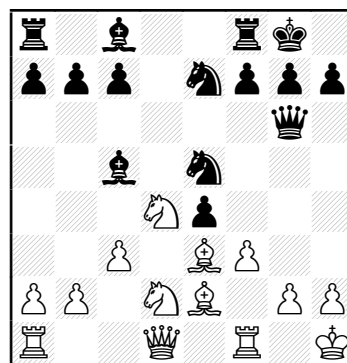
1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.d4 exd4 4.♗xd4

The Scotch Game is one of the favorite openings of Rublevsky.

4...♗c5 5.♗e3

Recently Sergey preferred 5.♗xc6.

5...♗f6 6.c3 ♗ge7 7.♗c4 ♗e5 8.♗e2 ♗g6 9.0-0 d6 10.f3 0-0 11.♗d2 d5 12.♗h1 dxe4



13.♗xe4

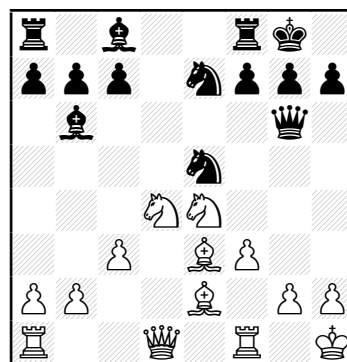
In the diagrammed position Rublevsky always played 13.fx4, but after 13...♗g4 14.♗f4 ♗xe2 15.♗xe2 ♗d6 16.♖ad1 ♖ae8 he did not achieve any advantage in the following games:

a) 17.♗g3 a6 18.♗b3 b5 19.♗a5 ♗g4 (Rublevsky-Kobalia, Kazan 2005);

b) 17.♗xe5 ♗xe5 18.♗b5 ♗xd4 19.cxd4 ♗b6 (Rublevsky-Georgiev, Saint Vincent 2005);

c) 17.♗b5 ♗g4 18.e5 c6 19.♗xb7 ♗xe5 20.♗xe5 (Rublevsky-Najer, Warsaw 2005).

13...♗b6



14. ♖e1

A novelty. L.Milov–David (Bastia 2005) went on 14. ♖f2 ♗f5 15. ♖c1 ♗xd4 16. ♖xd4 with equality.

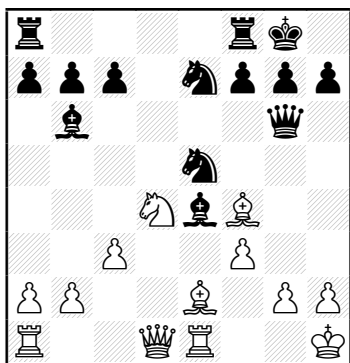
14... ♖f5!

An accurate decision.

15. ♖f4

15. ♗c5?!, recommended by some engines, is not dangerous for Black in view of a human-like reply 15... ♖fe8!?, e.g., 16. ♗xb7 ♖ab8 17. ♗c5 ♗d5 18. ♗xf5 ♗xe3 19. ♗xe3 ♖xc5 with rough equality.

15... ♖xe4



16. ♖xe5

One could complicate the struggle by 16. ♖xe4!?, and now

a) 16... ♖xe4 The most principled but probably not the best continuation. 17. ♖g5! ♗7c6 (or 17... ♗7g6 18. ♖f3 ♖d3 19. ♖xb7 with some advantage to White) 18. ♖h5 ♖d3 19. ♗xc6 bxc6 20. ♖xe5 ♖xd1+ 21. ♖xd1 f6 22. ♖xf6 ♖xf6 23. ♖f3 with a small advantage in the ending;

6) 16... ♗5c6!? 17. ♖h5 ♖f6 18. ♖f1 ♗xd4 19. ♖xc7 ♖c6 20. ♖xb6 axb6 21. cxd4 (or 21. ♖xd4 ♖b5!) 21... ♖xe4 22. ♖f3 ♖e6 with an approximately even game;

b) 16... ♗7c6!? In my opinion, the safest option. 17. ♖h5 (in the case of 17. ♗xc6 ♗xc6 18. ♖g4 (18.e5?! ♖f5) 18... ♖f6! Black holds on e5 and obtains a good game) 17... ♖f6 18. ♖f1 ♖e7 19. ♗f5 ♖e6 with an even game.

16... ♗c6 17. ♗xc6 ♖xc6 18. ♖d3 ♖h5

The position is completely equal – so it's a draw.

Gelfand-Kamsky Slav Defense

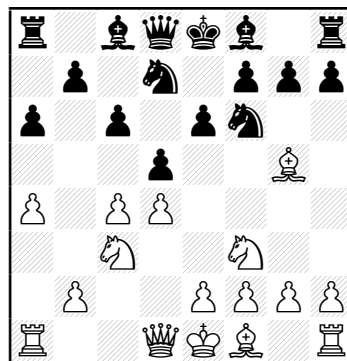
Notes by grandmaster Ruslan Scherbakov

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. ♗c3 ♗f6 4. ♗f3 a6 5.a4

This advance is not the most popular reply to the Chebanenko System, selected by Kamsky. The players must know a lot of different opening theory, because now the game can transpose to a number of various Slav-related systems. Insertion of ...a7-a6 and a2-a4 can favor Black, as he gains control of the b4-square. However, there is also some positive news for

White – carrying out the thematic ...d5xc4 followed by ...b7-b5 is now more difficult for Black, as White can take on b5 twice!

5...e6 6. ♖g5 ♗bd7



7.e3

The alternative is 7.cxd5 exd5 (7...cxd5 is less logical after the knight was developed to d7, but is also playable) 8.e3 ♖e7 9. ♖d3 0-0 10. ♖c2 ♖e8 11.0-0. The arising position resembles of the Karlsbad Variation, however, the insertion of ...a7-a6 and a2-a4 corrects plans of both sides. White cannot carry out the minority attack by b2-b4-b5, however, he has other opportunities. Kramnik–Gelfand (Novgorod 1997) went on 11... ♗f8 12. ♖ae1 ♖e6 13. ♗e5 with a small but lasting advantage to White. Probably Boris considered this variation less suitable for today's game.

7... ♖a5 8.cxd5

8. ♗d2 ♖b4 9. ♖c2 c5 occurred often but without much success.

8...exd5

In the case of 8... ♗xd5 White has an interesting pawn sac 9.e4! ♗xc3 10.bxc3 ♗f6 11. ♖d3 ♖xc3+ 12. ♖e2 with initiative due to a space advantage.

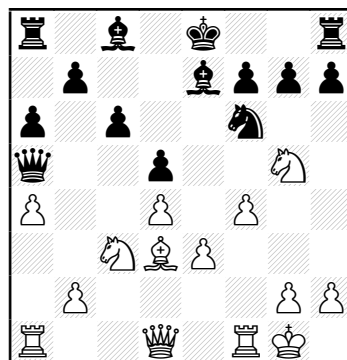
9. ♖d3 ♗e4

Only this move can justify recapturing with a pawn on the previous move – now Black at least trades one of the opponent's knights. Otherwise developing the queen to a5 simply makes no sense.

10.0-0 ♗xg5 11. ♗xg5 ♖e7

The immediate 11... ♗f6 is also played.

12.f4 ♗f6



13. ♖c2

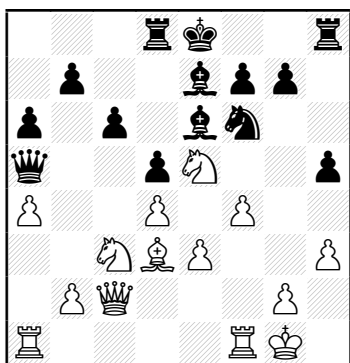
A new and quite logical move. White tries to provoke

weakening of the opponent's kingside. In Zakharevich-Kobalia (Elista 2001) White immediately moved the knight towards e5: 13.♞f3 0-0 14.♞e5, and after 14...c5 15.g4! obtained good winning chances and eventually won. Black could defend better, though: that is, he could delay castling.

13...h6 14.♞f3 ♜e6

Kamsky did not risk castling, as Black can face a strong attack after 14...0-0 15.♞e5, preparing a pawn storm. However, the move ♜d1-c2, although it provoked a weakening in the Black's camp, also slowed down the attack: the g4-square should be taken under control again, and the d4-pawn can become weak after 15...c5! It is very likely that castling was possible, despite all the dangers.

15.♞e5 ♞d8 16.h3 h5!?



An interesting idea – Black keeps the king in the center, but rules out White's possible pawn attack on the kingside. 16...0-0 is not losing here, too – 17.g4 c5 18.g5 hxg5 19.fxg5 ♞d7, and the position is unclear, although White probably should not rush with g4-g5, and take time to improve his position first.

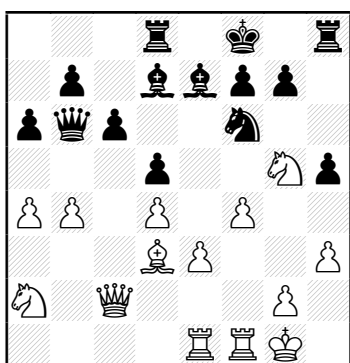
17.♞f3!?

The White's knight comes towards the vacant g5-square.

17...♞f8 18.♞g5 ♜d7 19.♞ae1

19.♜g6 is parried by the only adequate defense: 19...♜e8! (of course not 19...fxg6?? 20.♜xg6 ♜e8 21.♞e6+).

19...♜b4 20.♞a2 ♜b6 21.b4



White wants to stop ...c6-c5 once and for all.

21...a5!?

A struggle of plans takes place, but White's chances are higher, because the Black's camp is sliced in two

parts, and at some point he may lack defenders at certain sector of the board.

22.bxa5

22.♞b1 axb4 23.♞xb4 deserved attention, but Black is not forced to take on b4 by 23...♜xb4, which gives White an endgame advantage after 24.♜b3 – he can simply retreat by 23...♜a7!?

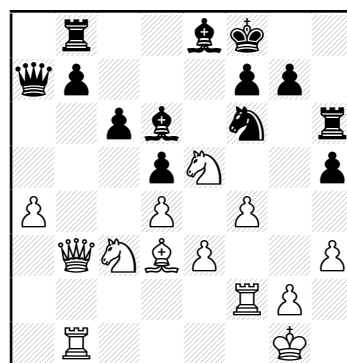
22...♜xa5 23.♞b1 ♜a7 24.♞c3 ♞h6 25.♜b3 ♞b8

Kamsky is obviously reluctant to retreat the bishop on c8, as he is concerned about the f7-square.

26.♞f3!?

Gelfand again moves this knight and returns it to the center!

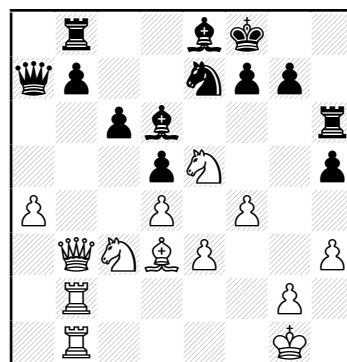
26...♜e8 27.♞e5 ♜d6 28.♞f2



28...♞g8!?

An interesting maneuver. Black brings the h6-rook into the game, the knight goes to e7, and under favorable circumstances he can even think about the ambitious ...f7-f6. However, the text-move temporarily weakens control of the center. The immediate break 28...c5! is interesting. After 29.♞xd5 cxd4 30.♞b6! dx3 31.♞c2! White remains in control, but the game becomes sharper, and Black could find some chances to take the initiative.

29.♞fb2 ♞e7?



Careless move in anticipation of the time trouble. On 29...b6 White can continue 30.a5! b5 (30...bxa5?? 31.♜xb8! ♜xb8 32.♞xb8) 31.♞a2. Necessary is 29...♜c7, and White keeps some pressure, but Black can defend.

30.♜c2?

White misses an unexpected chance! After 30.♜b6! Black is forced to play 30...♜a8 (30...♜xb6? 31.♞xb6 drops the b7-pawn for free) 31.a5!, and the

threat a5-a6 is very strong: 31...f6!? (31...Te6? 32.a6! bxa6 33.Wxb8 Qxb8 34.Txb8 Wa7 35.T1b7; 31...Qc8 32.Wd8! Qxe5 33.fxe5) 32.a6! (after 32.Qf3? Qc8 33.Wd8 White does not threaten Qe5-d7, so Black can force a draw by 33...Qe7 34.Wc7 Qd6) 32...bxa6 33.Wxb8 Qxb8 34.Txb8 Wa7 35.T1b7 Wxb7 36.Txb7 fxe5 37.fxe5 with good winning chances.

30...Qg8 31.Qf3

The point of this move is not one more knight relocation but strengthening the center: Black is seriously planning ...c6-c5.

31...Qd7 32.Tb3?!

This move is slow and gives Black a comfortable game. 32.a5!? is more challenging.

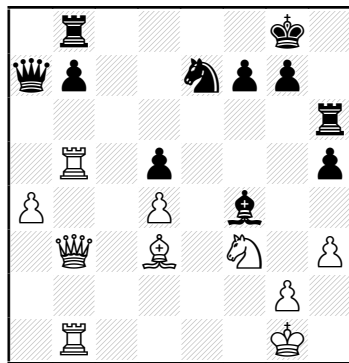
32...c5! 33.Qb5 Qxb5 34.Txb5 cxd4 35.exd4

Or 35.Qxd4 Qxf4!

35...Qxf4

Suddenly Black not only won a pawn, but also brought the king's rook into play. White regains material, but he already has to demonstrate accuracy.

36.Wb3



36...Tc6

More promising is 36...Te6! with the idea to protect the knight in the variation 37.Txb7? Txb7 38.Wxb7 Wxa4. Instead of capturing the pawn, White can proceed with 37.Qc2, and then 37...Tc6!? looks good – White struggles for equality.

37.Txb7

The preliminary 37.Wb4!? deserves consideration.

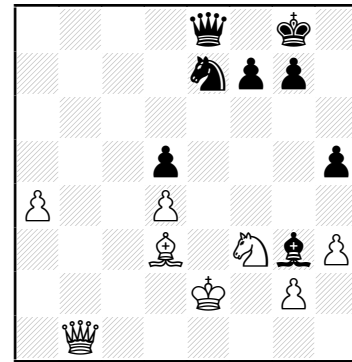
37...Tc1+ 38.Qf2

The tactical blow 38.Txc1?! Txb7 39.Wxd5 is calmly refuted by 39...Td7!, but not 39...Qxd5?? 40.Tc8#.

38...Txb1

The trap 38...Qg3+! leads to the same position after 39.Qe2 Txb1 40.Txb8+ Wxb8 41.Wxb1 We8!, while 39.Qxg3? is bad: 39...Txb1 40.Txa7 (40.Txb8+? Wxb8+ with check!) 40...T1xb3 41.Txe7 Txd3.

39.Txb8+ Wxb8 40.Wxb1 Qg3+ 41.Qe2 We8!



White has a passed pawn on the a-file, but his king is fairly vulnerable. Pluses and minuses of the sides are balanced – the most likely outcome is a draw.

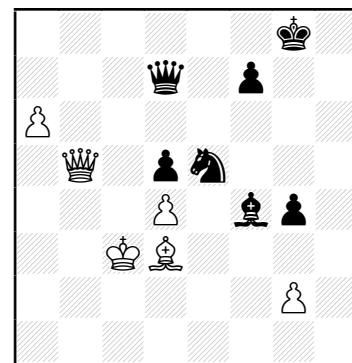
42.Wb5 Qc6+ 43.Qd2 Qf4+ 44.Qc3 Wd7

In the event of 44...We7 White cannot take the knight: 45.Wxc6?? Wa3+ 46.Qc2 Wc1+ 47.Qb3 Wxc6, but 45.Qb3 or 45.Wc5 is enough.

45.a5 g5!? 46.a6 g4 47.hxg4 hxg4 48.Qe5

An attempt to play for a win by 48.Qe1 is dodged by 48...Wc7! 49.Wxd5 Qd6 50.Qc2 Qb4+! 51.Wc4 Qxa6 52.Wxc7 Qxc7 with a draw.

48...Qxe5



49.Wxd7

In the case of 49.Wb8+ Qg7 50.dxe5 White has no realistic winning chances, while it is quite possible to overlook some nasty check after 6 hours of playing, e.g., 50...Wa4! 51.a7 Wa3+ 52.Qd4 (after 52.Qc2? Wa2+ White drops the a7-pawn: 53.Wb2 (53.Qc3?? Wd2+ 54.Qd4 Qe3+) 53...Wxa7), and now even 52...Qg3 (or 52...Wa4+) does not lose: 53.a8W Qf2+ 54.Qxd5 Wxd3+ 55.Qc6 Wc4+ 56.Qd7 We6+ 57.Qc7 (57.Qd8?? Qb6+) 57...We5+ with perpetual.

49...Qxd7 50.a7 Qb6 51.Qb5 Qd6 52.Qc6

Game drawn.