

Grandmaster Repertoire

Gawain
Jones

**The
Dragon**

VOLUME ONE

Tired of bad positions? Try the main lines!

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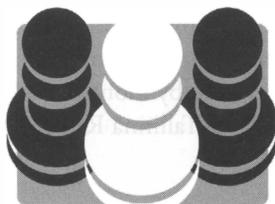


Grandmaster Repertoire

The Dragon 1

By

Gawain Jones



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The Dragon 1

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Key to symbols used

±	White is slightly better
∓	Black is slightly better
±	White is better
+	Black is better
+ -	White has a decisive advantage
- +	Black has a decisive advantage
=	equality
±	with compensation
+	with counterplay
○	unclear
?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
!?	a move worth considering
?!	a move of doubtful value
#	mate

Preface

From Harry Golombek and B.H. Wood in the 1940s, through to the 1960s with players such as

O C Peter Lley Bill Hirtsh D Andrew Wh 40 Jit Adrti kahl t @ S 1 QH: 425SG Oi s6V0H 1

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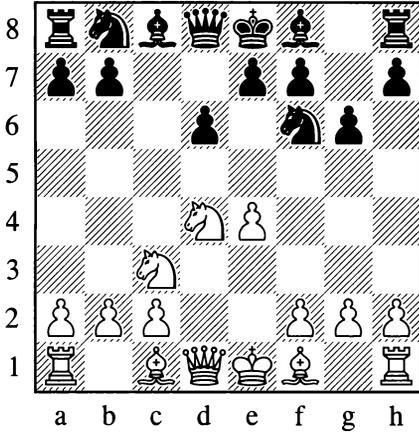
Hiarc Opening Book

Nielsen: *The Sicilian Dragon for the Tournament Player 1 & 2*, ChessBase 2013

Williams: *Killer Dragon 1 & 2*, Ginger GM 2011

Move Order Guide

The Dragon is reached after the opening moves 1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f S.t c3g



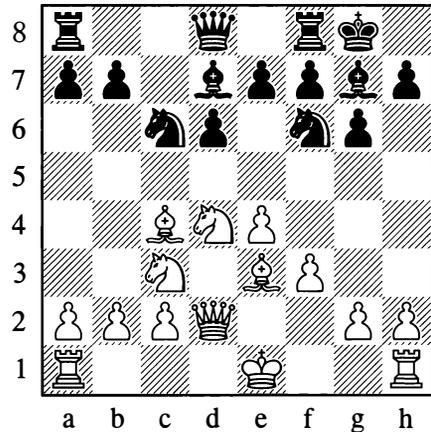
It will be the starting position of our repertoire. There are, of course, a number of ways for White to avoid the Open Sicilian, but to discuss them here would be to stray too far from our main topic, especially when books such as *Experts on the Anti-Sicilian* and Kotronias's forthcoming *Beating the Anti-Sicilians* offer dedicated coverage of these lines.

I will, however, draw your attention to another plausible route to the Dragon, which I have occasionally used in my own practice: 1.e4 c5 2.t o g 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f S.t c3 (5.e5? a5t wins a pawn) S...d6

The above move order has the advantage of avoiding 3. b5t, which is one of White's most popular anti-Sicilian weapons. However, it also opens up some other possibilities for the first player: 4. xd4 is a significant option; 3.c4 angles for a Maroczy Bind; and even 3.h4! can be considered.

Overall the 2...g6 move order gives White more interesting ways to deviate from the Open Sicilian, so the traditional 2...d6 should be preferred by most players. However, if your repertoire happens to include the Accelerated Dragon (meaning that 3.c4 isn't a worry), and you are facing an opponent who plays both the Open Sicilian and 3. b5t, then you may consider 2...g6 to eliminate one of his preferred systems.

Moving on, the primary topic of the first volume is the following main line: 6. e3 g7 7.O O Os.Wd2. c6 9. c4 d7

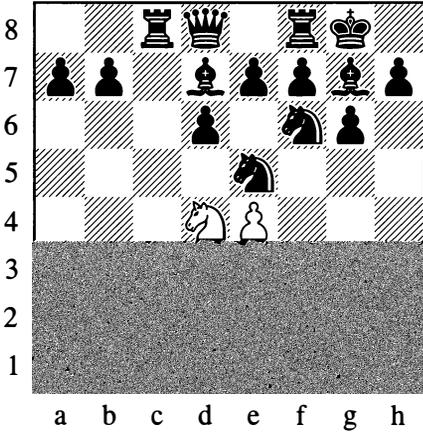


After the most common 10.O O Q, I have recommended the Topalov Variation as our main weapon. The tabiya after 10..J c5 11. b3 t xd4 12. xd4 b5 is discussed in Chapters 7-9. This bypasses the myriad complications of the Soltis Variation, as well as the critical 12.< b1 variation referred to below.

However, White can obstruct the above plan by altering his move order with 10.h4. It would be dangerous to allow the pawn to

advance further, so I recommend 10..h5. Then after 11.0-0-0 ♖c8 12.i b3 t e5 we reach the Soltis Variation, with White having avoided the Topalov Variation.

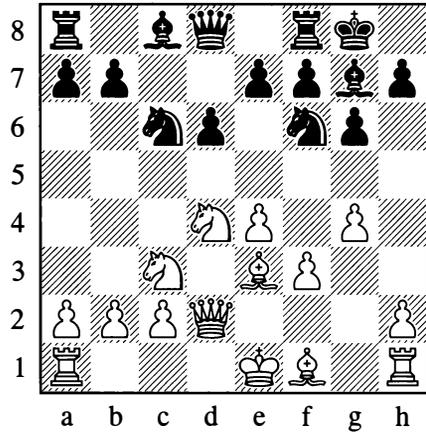
This isn't the end of the world for Black, as he too has avoided certain possibilities. Take the position after 10.0-0-0 ♖c8 11.i b3 t e5:



From this position, 12.h4 h5 reaches the Soltis Variation. However, the most critical test is reckoned to be 12...b1. Therefore, if White cuts out the Topalov Variation with the 10.h4 move order, he also sacrifices this important option which might have been available had he preferred 10.0-0-0.

Should you wish to play the Soltis Variation as your main choice, rather than the Topalov, I have also included the Burnett Variation in Chapter 10 as an interesting way to challenge 12...b1. This means that, whichever line you choose, you will have a complete repertoire. However, either move order will require you to be ready to play the Soltis Variation. That is why I have covered this first, in Chapters 1-6.

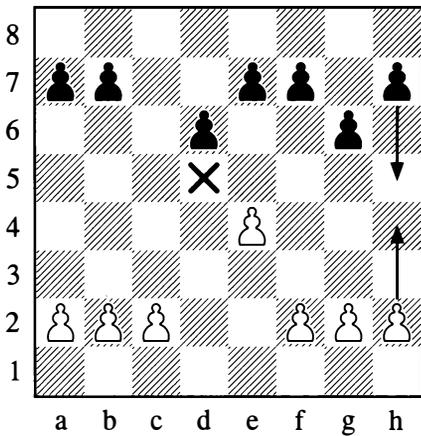
The final two chapters of this first volume are devoted to another important system: ♘g4



I am recommending the established main line of ♘...i e6. This generally leads to a healthy game for Black, but you must be ready for a variety of position types, from quiet endgames to double-edged middlegames with unusual pawn structures, as found in the final chapter with 10.t xe6 f e6.

Dragon Themes

Before getting down to the theory, we will examine a number of commonly occurring themes in the Sicilian Dragon. Let's start by considering the pawn structure, as this is what dictates the character of the position.

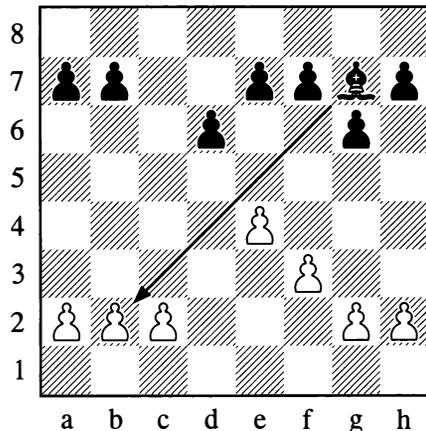


The Dragon is defined by the early deployment of Black's dark-squared bishop to g7. This speeds up Black's kingside development and gives him serious counterattacking chances, but it also has a couple of downsides. Black nearly always castles kingside, so White often tries to exploit the 'hook' on g6 by quickly advancing his h-pawn. Black's other potential problem is the d5-square. After developing his bishop to g7 Black does not really want to move his e-pawn, as the d6-pawn will then be weak. White can try to exploit this by moving the c3-knight to d5. This might be played as an attacking measure, to remove the defensive knight on f6, or it could be for positional gains: if Black elects to exchange knights then White will recapture with his e-pawn, intending to exert pressure along the e-f file.

Despite these drawbacks, I believe the advantages of Black's set-up are enough to compensate for the risks. Black develops his dark-squared bishop more actively than in other variations of the Sicilian. The critical lines involve White castling queenside, after which the g7-bishop combines attack and defence, covering the dark squares while pointing at White's king, and the b2-pawn in particular. Black also has an extra central pawn and will generally be happy in the endgame.

I will now present what I consider the most important themes of this opening, with some lightly annotated games to illustrate the most important ideas.

1) The Dragon Bishop

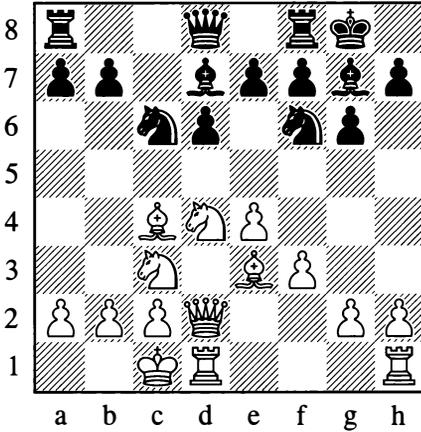


We will start with a couple of games in which White completely underestimates the power of the g7-bishop.

Milenko Lojanica – Gawain Jones

Victoria 2009

1.e4 c5 2.l O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.l xd4 l f
 S.l c3 g6 6.J e3 J g7 7.O l c6 S.Wd2 O O
 9.J c4 J d7 l O O O O



10..J b5!?

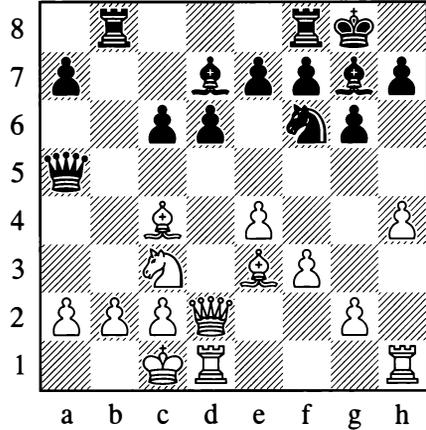
This move introduces the Chinese Dragon, an interesting and relatively new way of fighting against the Yugoslav Attack.

10..l c8 is how I recommend playing in this book.

l l.l xc6? bxc6

As you will see in variation B3 of Chapter 12 (page 246), this change in the pawn structure gives Black a nice position even when he has spent a tempo putting the rook on c8. Here White is really asking for trouble with the rook already on the b-file.

12.h4 Ws



13.l bl??

My opponent must have been worried about my attack and so decided a queen exchange would be his safest approach. However, the g7-bishop is now allowed into the game.

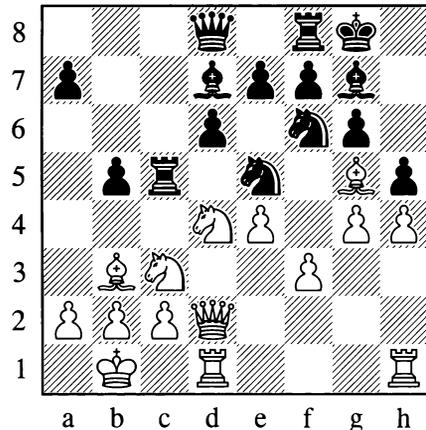
13..l xe4!

The mate threat on b2 will cost White his queen.
 O 1

Ismet Burovic – Peter Schreiner

Zadar 2014

1.e4 c5 2.l O d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.l xd4 l f
 S.l c3 g6 6.J c4 J g7 7.J e3 O O S.O l c6
 9.Wd2 J d7 10.J b3 l c5 ll.h4 hS 12.O O O
 l eS 13.J gS l cS 14.< bl bS lS.g4



15...a5

15...h4 is my recommendation, as detailed in Chapter 1.

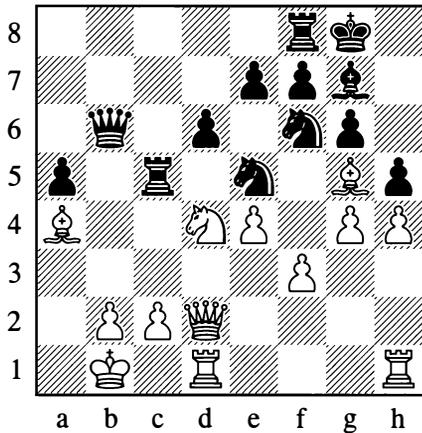
16.a4?

This simply accelerates Black's attack.

16.gxh5 and 16. xf6 are both much more critical.

16...bxa4 17.t xa4i xa4 18h a4 b6!

Black increases the pressure.



19.9 St xf!

We should always be looking out for this blow. Black sacrifices a piece to open up the sleeping g7-bishop.

20. e3

White declines the piece.

Instead after 20.Cxf3 Cxe4 21.1 cl Cc3t 22.@ a1 C xa4 Black regains the piece and has an extra pawn together with his huge attack.

20...t xd4 21. xd4t g4

White threw in the towel. Indeed, as Chris Ward notes, 22.1 d2 c4 would pick up a rook.

0 1

2) The ...d5 break

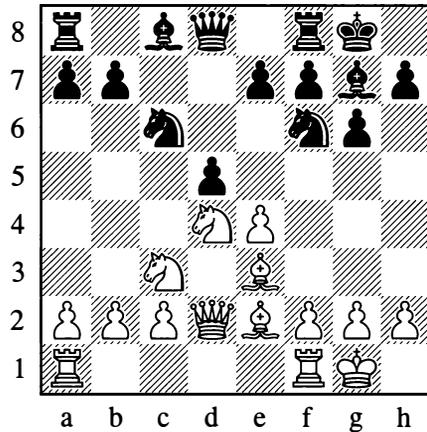
It is often said that if Black manages to counter in the centre with ...d5 in the Sicilian, then he has at least equalized. This is because White's main trump in the Sicilian is his extra space. In the Dragon, the ...d5 break also rids Black of any problems with the d5-square. This will be my recommended approach in many lines, particularly the 9.0-0-0 Yugoslav Attack and Classical Variation, both of which are covered in the second volume.

Aimen Rizouk – Gawain Jones

Hinckley 2012

1.e4 c5 2.t a d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f S.t c3 g6 6i e2i g7 7.0-0 t c6 8i e3 0-0 9. d2 d5

Though it is not forced, I think this central break is the critical test of White's slower lines.



10.exd5 t xd5 11.t xc6 bxc6

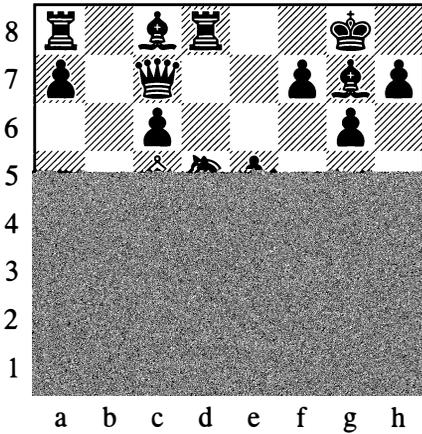
This is a common structure after our central break. Black's queenside pawns are split and White has an outpost on c5 but Black has sufficient counterplay down the b-file and in the centre.

12. fdl c7 13i d4

White spends a tempo to try and block in the g7-bishop but it will only be temporary.

13...e5 14. c5 d8

This type of position is more usual with the white king on the queenside. His king might look more vulnerable there, but at least then White can try attacking on the kingside.



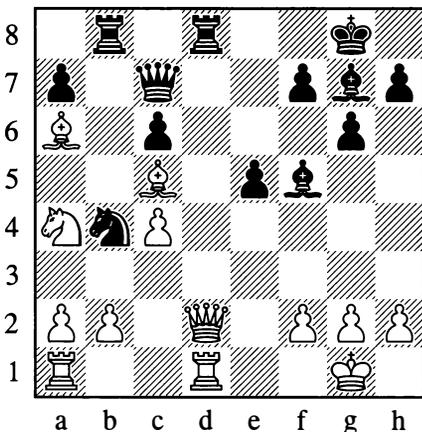
15... a4?

My grandmaster opponent has trouble finding a plan. Black's position was already comfortable but now White gets into a lot of trouble.

15... f6 16. a6 ab8 17.c4?

Going from bad to worse.

17... b4

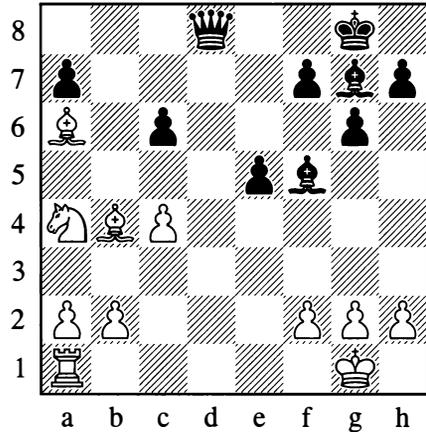


18' xd8

18. d6! xd6 19. Wxd6 Wxd6 20! xd6 i f8 followed by taking on a6 leaves Black with two huge bishops for the rook.

18... xd8 19. xd8 ' xd8 20h b4

Black's material advantage is enough to win slowly, but White's poor coordination and vulnerable kingside make the win easy.



20... c2 21.b3 e4 22. e1 d4

0-1

3) Exchange sacrifices

If you want to enjoy your time playing the Dragon, you need to get used to sacrificing your rook for a minor piece. This can happen in many forms.

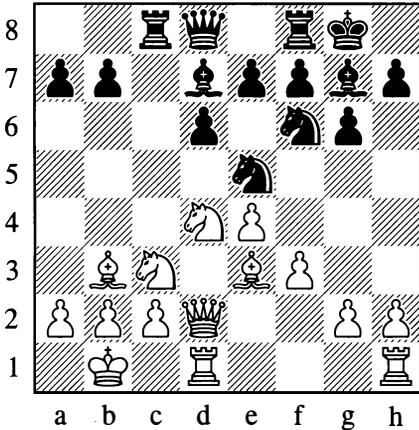
3.1) Sacrifice on c3

This is a common motif throughout the Sicilian and the sacrifice one generally thinks of first. Black damages White's structure and weakens his king's defences. I should point out that in the Burnett Variation (covered in Chapter 10) Black actually sacrifices the rook on c4, but the themes are extremely similar.

Vassily Ivanchuk – Magnus Carlsen

Bilbao 2008

1. e4 c5 2. O d6 3. d4 c d4 4. t xd4 t f
 5. t c3 g6 6. e3. g7 7. O t c6 8' d2 O O
 9. c4 . d7 10. O O O c8 11. b3 t eS
 12. bl



12...a6!?

T is little pawn move became fashionable a few years ago. I feel it must be too slow to be objectively best, but it's certainly interesting.

Later in the book I will recommend the more established 12...d2 c4.

13. he1

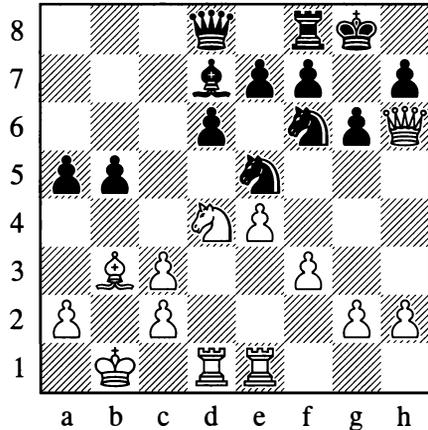
T is is a solid move, but 13.h4 must be the critical test. In the Yugoslav Attack every tempo is vital.

13...b5 14. h6h 6! S' xh6 xc3!?

T e future World Champion cannot resist the thematic sacrifice.

16.bxc3 as

Black does not even have a pawn for the sacrificed exchange, but White's king will be vulnerable for a long time. T e b3-bishop is also short on squares.

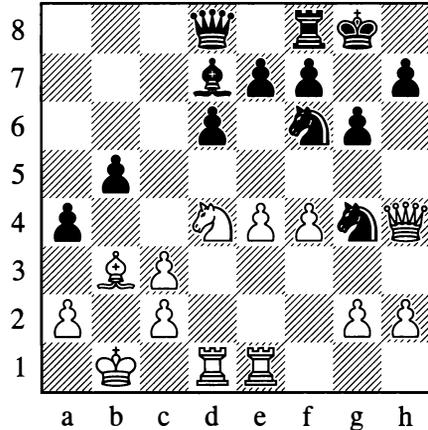


17. e4

Ivanchuk accepts the challenge of an extremely sharp game.

17.a3 Wc7 18.Wd1 i c8 would give Black typical compensation.

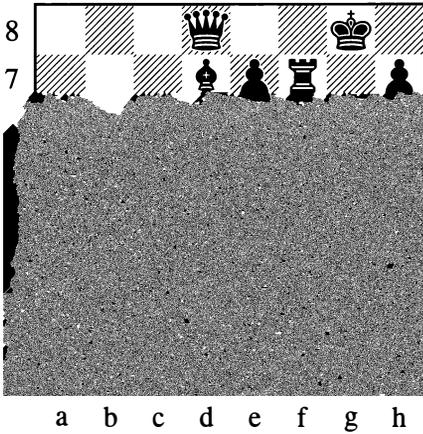
17...t eg4 18' h4 a4



19. t!?

19.h3 is an alternative approach. 19...axb3 20.t xb3 (20.cxb3 e5! gives Black good play, as mentioned by Ward.) 20...t xe4 21.li xe4 l f6 Black has still not managed to pick up any pawns for the exchange but he has much the better structure and long-term pressure on the queenside. Meanwhile White's kingside attack has been halted.

19...xf7 20.e5 t d5 21.e6 t xc3t



22.< c1

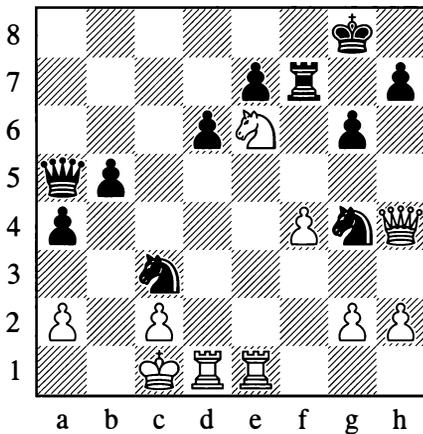
22.Wa1! was the critical test. After 22...c f6! 23.exf t mx f 24.l d3 White has two extra exchanges in return for a pawn, but matters are far from simple. Following 24...\ c8 25.\ g3 b4 White will have to give back one exchange on c3 to slow Black's attack.

22... xe6

22...c f6!? was still interesting.

23.t xe6' a5

Ivanchuk now decides Black's attack is too strong and so forces the draw.



24' xg4 t xa t 25.< b2 \ c3t 26< xa ' xc2t 27.< al ' c3t 28< bl ' b3t 29.< al ' c3t
1/2-1/2

3.2) Sacrifice on g5

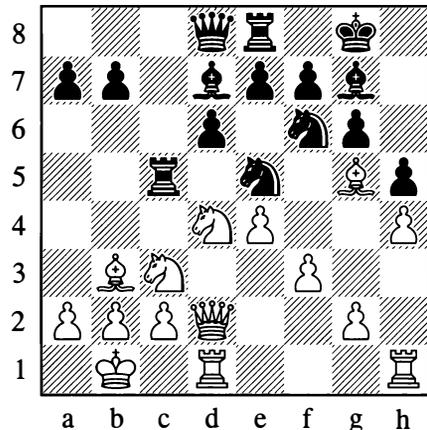
Whereas the sacrifice on c3 is aggressive, the present theme is a defensive idea. The Soltis structures are those with h2-h4 for White and ...h5 for Black. Once those moves have been played, White often puts his bishop on g5 in order to put pressure on the f6-knight and e7-pawn. Black puts his rook on c5 and gets ready to relieve the pressure by taking the bishop, often after White has already sacrificed a couple of pawns to open up lines. The sacrifice deflects White's f-pawn, preventing f4-f5 ideas and gives Black a strong outpost on e5.

Teimour Radjabov – Magnus Carlsen

Baku 2008

1.e4 c5 2.V f3 d6 3.d4 c d4 4.l hd4 l f 5.l c3 g6 6. e3. g7 7.f3 l c6 8' d2 0-0 9. c4. d7 10. b3 c8 11.h4 h5 12.0-0-0 l e5 13. g5 c5 14.< bl e8

I actually recommend 14...b5 but the theme illustrated in this game is relevant to our repertoire.

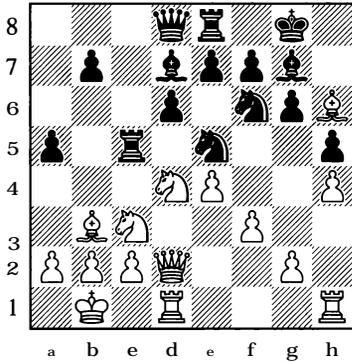


15.g4

This pawn break is one of White's ambitious attempts at refuting the Dragon.

Magnus continues to deploy the Dragon from time to time. A rapid game of his from last year continued:

15. h6 a5?!



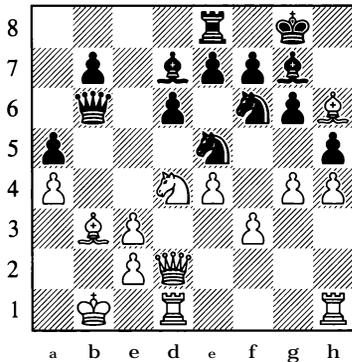
16.a4

Playing on the kingside with 16.g4 or 16. xg7 seems more critical.

16..: b6 17.g4 xc3!

Again Magnus shows he has a soft spot for the exchange sacrifice.

18.bxc3



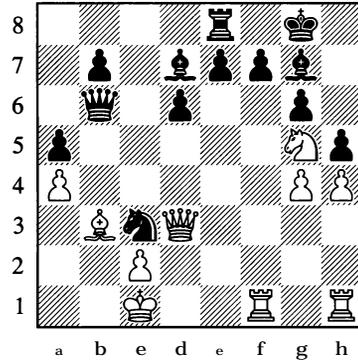
18..1 xf3!?

Investing another piece to open up the g7-bishop.

19.t xf t xe4 20. d3t xc3t 21.' c1 xh6t 22.t g5 g7! 23. df1?

This wasn't one of those positions where one should avoid taking a pawn with check. After 23. xf t ' h8 24: xg6 Black has nothing better than forcing a draw with: 24...We3t 25. d2l e2t 26.' d1t c3t=

Here the engine declares a big advantage for Black after the calm:

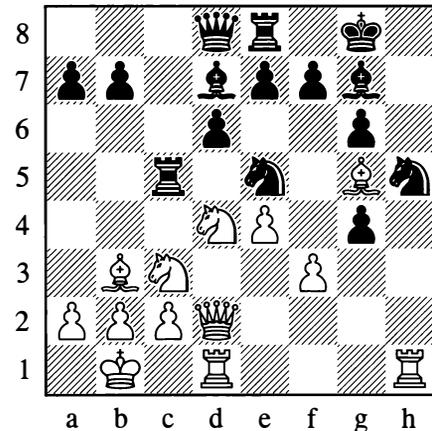


23..: xg4!N

Magnus preferred the logical 23..d5, blocking out the b3-bishop, with a draw the eventual outcome in Karjakin - Carlsen, Dubai (rapid) 2014.

15..h g4 16h5 t xh5

In Chapter 1 we will examine a similar position with our pawn on b5 and rook back on f8.



17J xh5!

White sacrifices everything to get at Black's king. T is would be premature in the position with the rook still on f8, but here it is critical.

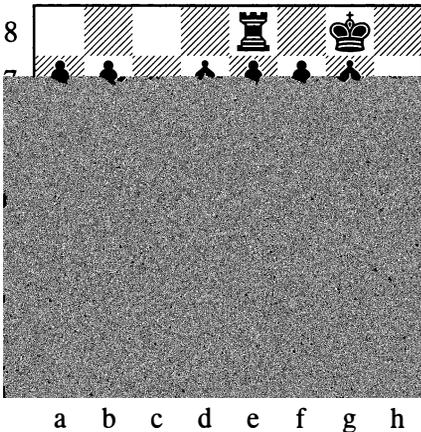
17.l d5 is the main line in the analogous position arising after 14...b5, but here it does not make much sense as the e7-pawn is already defended.

17...g h5 18' h2 t g6

In the analogous position I recommend 18...l xf3 but here there is a big difference. A er 19.l xf3 g f 20.1 xh5 then 20... g5?? continues as per my recommendation on page 38. (Instead Black must try either 20...e6 21.l d5 f6 22.j h6 l e7 or 20...j e6.) In the present position the f -pawn is unprotected, so the simple 21.1 xf t leads to mate.

19' xh5' a5

T e immediate 19...l xg5!? 20.1 xg5 e6 is also possible, and was in fact Eddie Dearing's recommendation in *Play the Sicilian Dragon*.



20.f4

An important detail is that 20.1 xg6? can be met by 20...e6!.

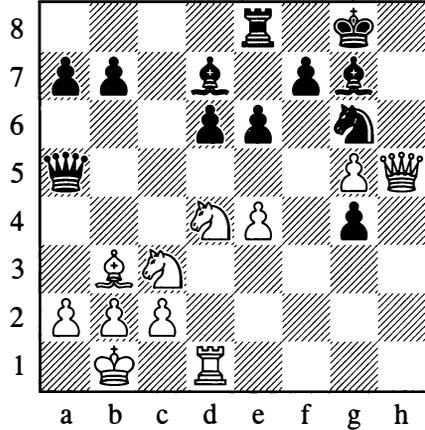
20...l xg5!

Black sacrifices the rook to prevent f4-f5, thereby slowing down White's attack.

20...e6? would be a big mistake due to 21.f5!.

However; the alternative exchange sacrifice 20...l xc3! 21.bxc3 Wxc3 is interesting. T e computer informs me that both 22.j xf t Wxf 23.f5 and 22.f5 l e5 23j xe7 lead to draws

21.f g5 e6

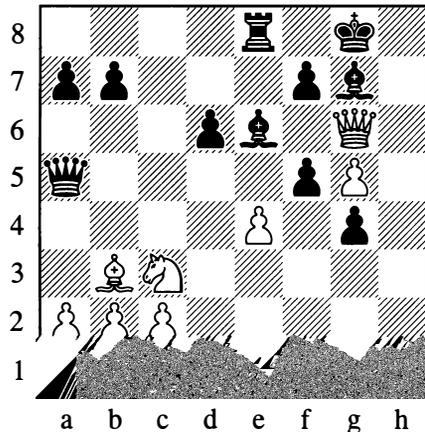


22.t f ?!

Radjabov gets too ambitious.

22.1 xg4 should have been played but it does not put Black under any pressure; see Alvarez Sabor - Garcia Diez, email 2008

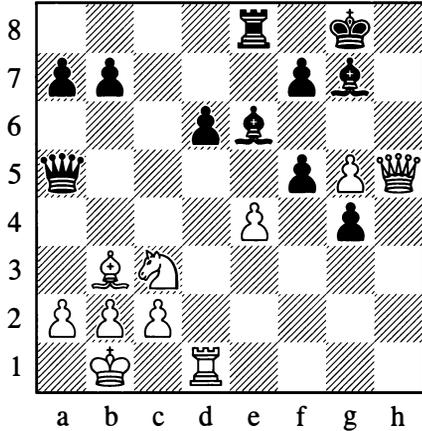
22...ex 23' xg6i e6!



24.Wh5

White is forced to retreat his queen.

24.j xe6 Exe6 25.Wxf5 j xc3 26.bxc3 Wxf5 27.exf5 Ee4 leaves White in a horrible endgame.

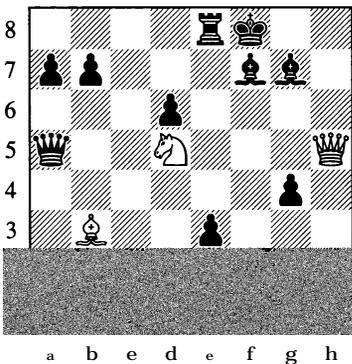


24...f e4

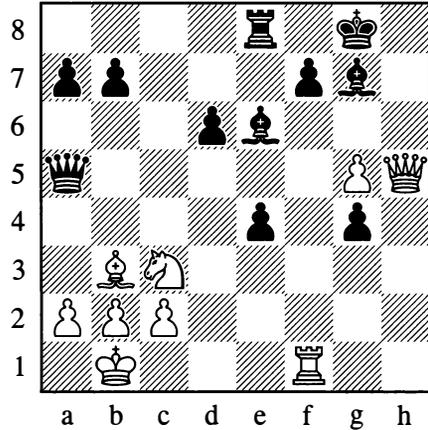
24...We5 also looks strong utilizing the new outpost.

25.Ef

Teimour should probably have tried 25.t d5!?. The queen is blocked out on a8 and so White at least threatens g5-g6. Chris Ward shows that Black is still better after: 25...e3! 26.g6 ' f8!?. (26...f5 also looks excellent; White simply cannot get around the g7-bishop.) 27.gxf j xf 28.Ef1



28..Welt! 29.Exel j xh5 30.Efl t j f 31.t xe3 Exe3 32.Exf t < e8 Thanks to the threat of mate on the back rank, Black has a clearly better endgame.



25...We5!

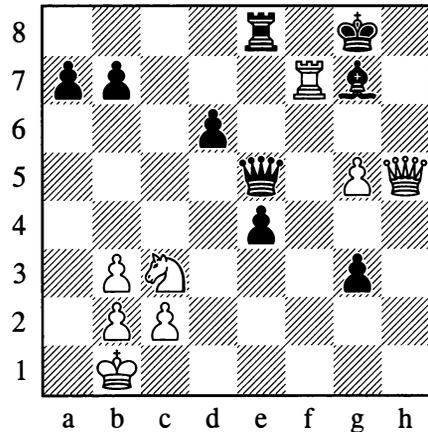
The queen takes up a dominating outpost. White needs to arrange g5-g6 to get his attack going but the pin along the f5th rank makes that impossible.

26.J i xb3

26...Ef8 is also excellent for Black.

27.a b3g3

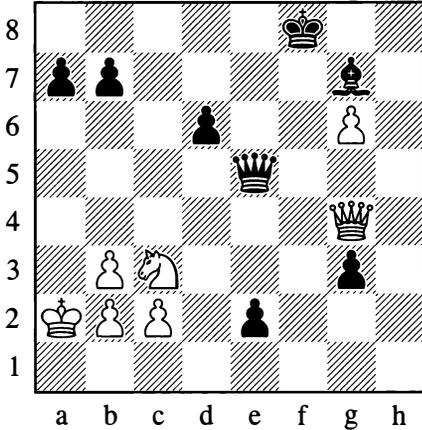
Black has an extra pawn - and a powerful one at that - as well as the better minor piece and a safe king.



28. @a2 f 29. xf t @xf 30. Vg4 e3
31. g6 e2?

A rare slip from the World Number One.

Black should have preferred 31... < e7, as Ward points out.



32. V0 t?

Radjabov misses his chance.

32. d7! would have created enough threats to draw the game.

32... @e8 33. Vf t @d8 34. Vg8t @d7
35. Vf t Ve7 36. Vf t @d8! 37. Vast b6
38. VdS el=V 39. Va8t @d7 40. Vb7t @e8
0-1

3.3 Sacrifice on d5

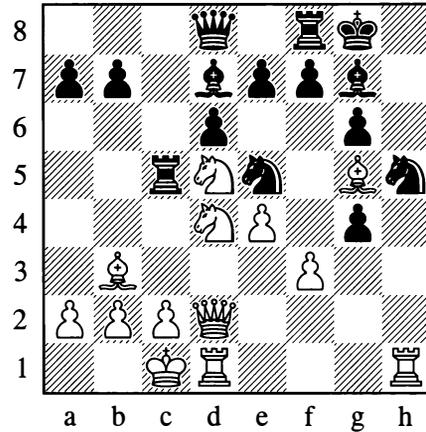
Like the previous example, this is a defensive measure. T is time Black waits for the knight to jump to d5 from c3 before giving up the rook.

Krum Georgiev – Davorin Komljenovic

Biel 1989

1. e4 c5 2. ♘f3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. txd4 tf
S. t c3 g6 6. e3. g7 7. 0 t c6 8. c4. d7

9. Vd2 0-0 10. h4 c8 11.. b3 hS 12. 0-0 0
t eS 13. gS cS 14. g4 hxg4 15. hS t xhS
16. l dS



16.. xdS!?

Black immediately gives the exchange in order to slow White's attack and kick-start queenside counterplay.

16... EeS is my recommendation, examined in variation B4 of Chapter 2. We will probably still take on dS but we'll wait for a few moves generally until White has made his own exchange sacrifice on hS.

17.. xdS V b6

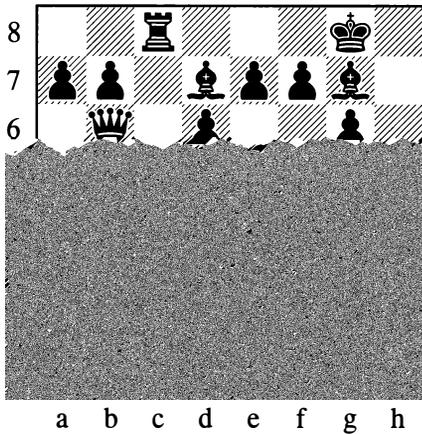
As we have seen already, the b2-pawn is a weak point in White's position.

18. b3

IS.c3 is a safer move which blocks the long diagonal.

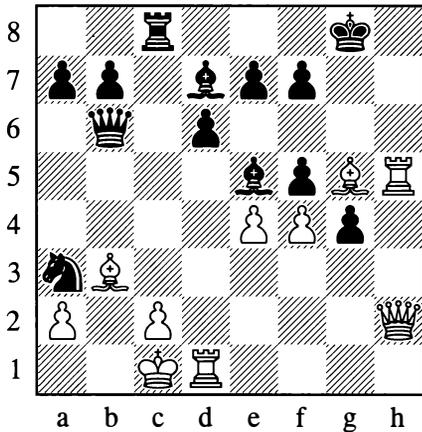
18.. c8 19. t f ?

T is a thematic try for White but here it fails, just as it did in the previous game.



19...gxf5 20. xh5 t c4
 Black breaks through to b2.

21. h2 xb2t 22. @bl e5 23.f4 t a t
 24.< c1
 Black finds a nice way to wrap up the victory.



24...g3 25.f e5
 25. \ xg3 runs into 25... xc2t! 26. xc2
 \ b2t when all of White's pieces start dropping
 with check: 27. d2 \ xc2t 28. e1 c3t
 29. f1 \ xdl t 30. g2 \ e2t 31.c gl d4t
 32. hl \ xh5t- +

25...g h2 26h e7 xb3
 A pretty finish.
 0 1

4) Preserving the dark-squared bishop

As we have already seen, the g7-bishop is Black's pride and joy, so White often attempts to exchange it by putting his bishop on h6. Sometimes Black's bishop is so powerful that he can simply drop it back to h8 and give up the f8-rook instead.

Vasily Panov – Vladimir Simagin

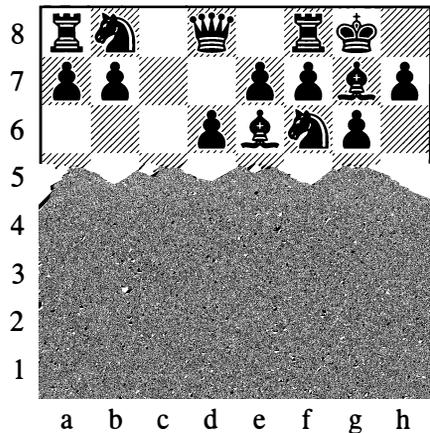
Moscow 1943

This is one of the earliest examples of a Yugoslav Attack.

1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f
 5.t c3g 6. e3 g77.0 0-08.t b3?

This retreat is premature but this opening was relatively unexplored at the time, and players were still experimenting with different set-ups

8.. e6!?
 Attempting to exploit White's move order:



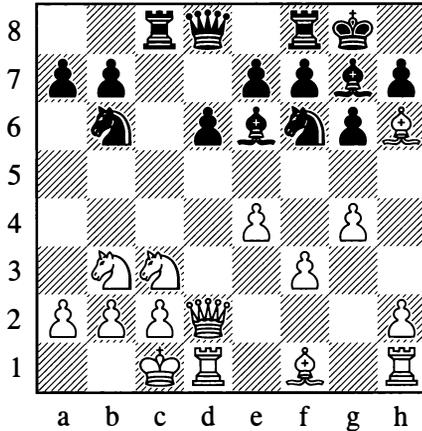
9. d2 t bd7
 Simagin gets creative.

9...t c6 is a more sensible square for the knight and will be examined on page 259.

10.0-0 0 b6 1.g4 c8 12.. h6?

White plays into Black's hands.

12.h4 would be a better way of exploiting Black's slow queenside play.



12... h8?

An interesting concept, but not the strongest exchange sacrifice available here.

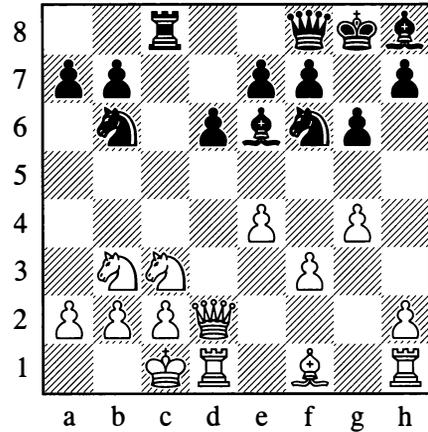
Most Dragon players have seen the theme so many times that their fingers would be itching to play 12... xh6 13.Wxh6 Exc3! 14.bxc3 Wc7 with strong queenside play. The queen might look dangerous on h6 but, without any other pieces to support the attack, it is simply of side. In fact, White has to drop his queen back immediately in order to give the king some cover:

13. x

13.h4!? also looks dangerous.

13..xf8

White should be clearly better with the extra exchange, but it is interesting to see how he drifts. The dark-squared bishop gives Black good long-term counterplay.



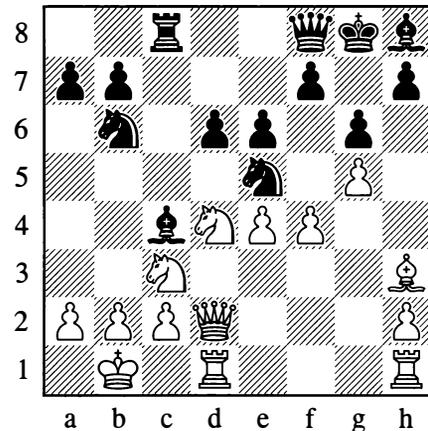
14. d4

White should probably keep attacking with something like 14.h4, rather than getting distracted by trying to consolidate the extra material.

14... c4 15.g5 fd7 16. h3?!

The computer does not mind this move but, with the h-file blocked, White will now struggle to create any attacking chances.

16...e6 17.@bl e5 18.f4



18..1 f !

A wonderful sacrifice, giving up a whole piece to open the long diagonal. We have seen the theme of sacrificing a knight on f3 a few

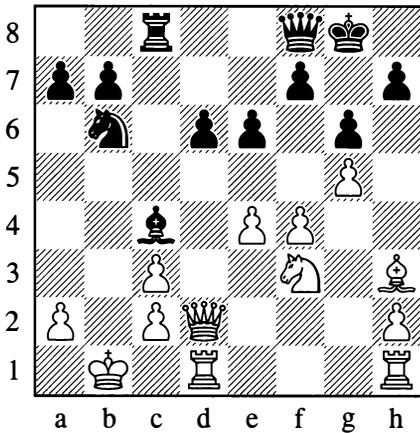
times already, but normally there is a pawn to capture on that square.

19.1 x i xc3 20.hxc3?

The most obvious move, but now Black gets full compensation for the jettisoned rook.

20.Wxc3 xa2t 21. xa2 l xc3 22.bxc3 d5 would also give Black sufficient counterplay.

20.Wxd6! should have been played. Black can win back the exchange with 20... e2 but White emerges with an extra pawn after 21.Wxf8t xf8 22. g2 xdl 23.l xdl.



20...d5!

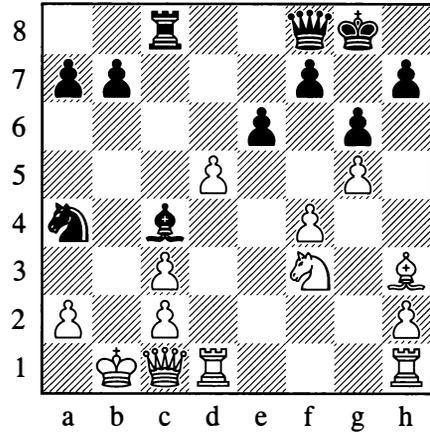
Opening a path for the queen.

21.Wc1l a4

All of Black's pieces are now involved in the attack, while White's h1-rook and h3-bishop are mere bystanders.

22.exd5?

White cannot afford the time for this



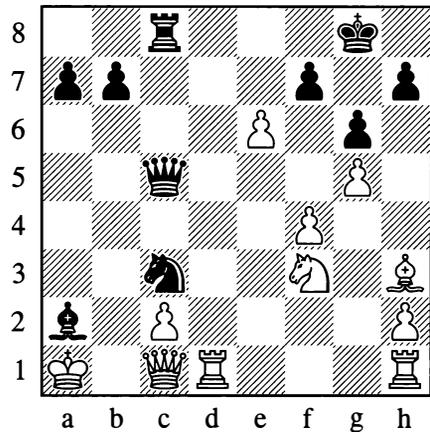
22...i xa t! 23.i al

23. xa2? loses to 23...l xc3t 24. b3 Wc5, for example 25.Wa3 Wc4t 26. b2 l xdl t 27. al Wxd5 and Black wins

23..Wc5!?

Simagin is enjoying leaving his pieces hanging but 23...l xc3! was stronger.

24.dxe6l xc3



25J M!

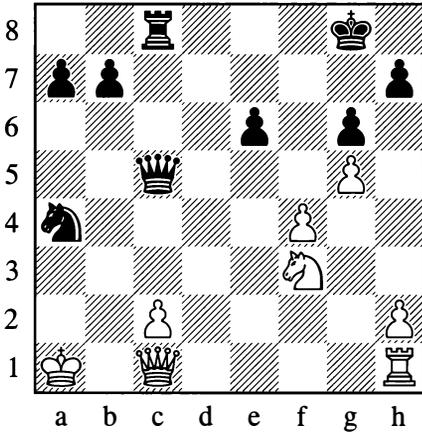
White could have saved himself with 25.e7!. The c8-rook is now attacked and the e7-pawn can annoy Black. The correct result appears to be a draw, for instance: 25...Wa5 26.l d8t g7 27.e8=l t h8 28.l xc8 e6t 29. b2 Wb4t 30. al Wa5t =

25... e6 26i xe6 f e6

Panov now found that the rook on d4 doesn't actually help to defend his king. He tried the desperate:

27J a4 xa4

Black was now material up as well as having a huge attack, and the end was swift.



28.c4 d8 29. @a2' b4 30. e1 d3 31. xe6 t c3t 32. @a1' a5t 33' a ' xa #

The next game features a theoretical line in which it has long been known that Black can happily give his rook for White's dark-squared bishop.

Claudio Gentile – Gawain Jones

Genoa 2003

1.e4 c5 2.t f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f 5. c3 g 6i e3i g7 7.f 0 0 8' d2 c6 9.0 0 0 d5 10.exd5 t xd5 11.t xc6 bxc6 12i d4 e5

T is is the old main line.

12...i xd4 is the modern move, and my proposed approach in the second volume.

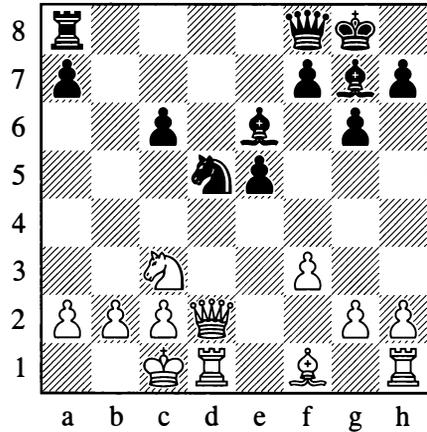
13i c5i e6 14i ?

My opponent can't resist the lure of a free exchange but now Black gets great play.

14.t e4 is normal.

14..' xf

Black already threatens to win the queen with ...i h6.



15.t xd5

T repairs Black's structure but is the only way to slow Black's initiative.

15. bl e4!N While other moves are also good for Black, I like this thematic approach. Black sacrifices a pawn to unleash his uncontested dark-squared bishop. White's position is already difficult, for instance 16.t xe4 Eb5 17.b3 f5 18.t g5' a3 19.c4 t c3t with mate to follow.

15...c d5 16' a5 b8

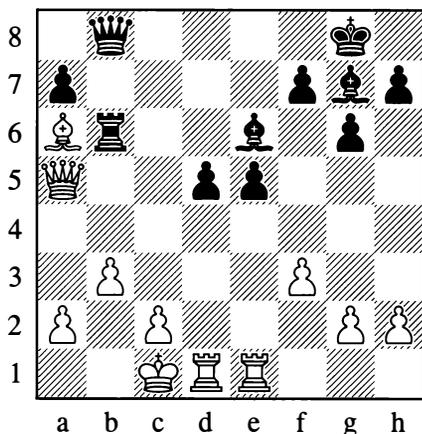
In return for the exchange Black has a lead in development, a strong centre and an extremely powerful bishop pair.

17.i a6?

White obviously wanted to complete development but this is a clumsy square for his bishop.

17...! b6 18! he1 Wb8 19.b3

A necessary but chronic weakening of the dark squares around White's king.



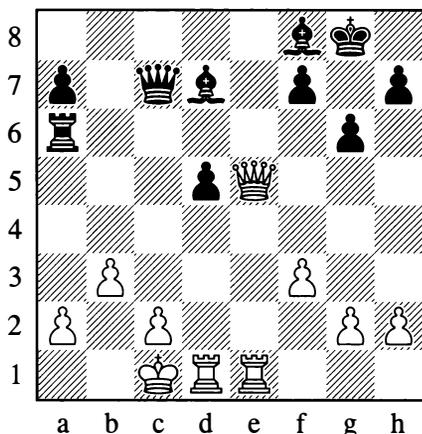
19..Wc7 20.Wa4

White now loses his bishop by force.

20... f8! is still winning, as White's dark squares are just too weak.

20...i d7 21.Wa3i f 22.Wb2! xa6 23.Wxe5

Here I chose the safe approach:



23..Wxe5

Instead 23...Wa5 is completely winning for Black, as 24! xd5 Wxa2 25! xd7! e6! 26.Wc3 ! xelt 27.Wxel Wait 28< d2 b4t picks up

the queen. Nevertheless, my move was good enough to win without too many difficulties. ...0-1

5) The pawn sacrifice

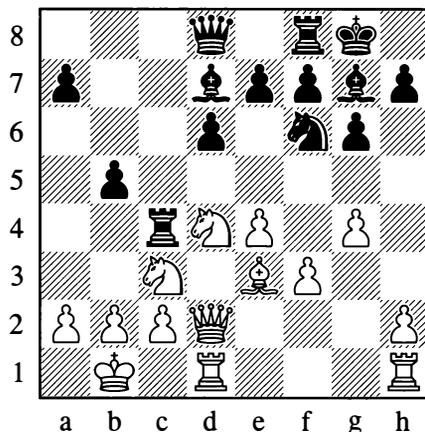
As well as the various exchange sacrifices we have examined, Black often gives a queenside pawn to open up lines towards White's king. This will be particularly relevant in the Topalov Variation, but for now I will show another line where it is risky for White to grab the pawn.

Andrei Shchekachev – Mikhail Golubev

Dimitrovgrad 1988

1.e4 c5 2.v f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f 5.t c3 g 6.i e3 i g7 7.f t c6 8.i c4 0-0 9.Wd2 i d7 10.0-0 ! c8 11.i b3 t a5 12.@bl t c4 13.i xc4! xc4 14.g4 b5

This topical line is covered in Chapter 10.



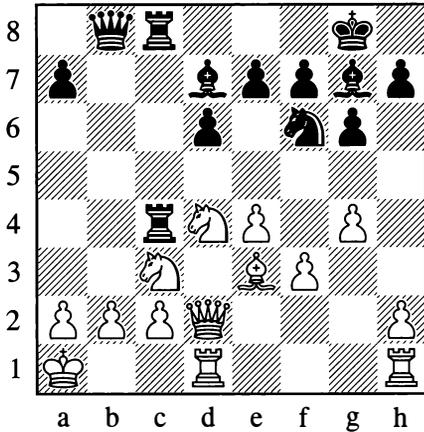
15.t d b5?!

The pawn is too hot. 15.b3 is the critical test.

15..Wb8 16.t d4! fc8

At the cost of a pawn, Black has already brought all his pieces into the attack. Watch how White is never given a moment's respite.

17.♠a1



17...i xg4!

Enterprising play! Again we see Black sacrificing to bring the g7-bishop into the game.

18.f g4! xe4 19.We2

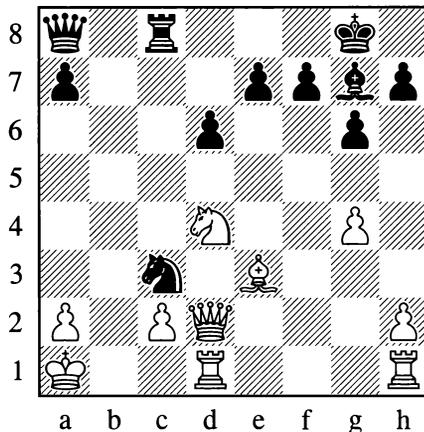
19.1 xe4 is better but 19...Exc2 still favours Black. This is all covered in variation A of Chapter 10.

19.J xc3

On page 201 I give 19...1 xc3 as the main continuation, but both moves are strong.

20.bxc3! xc3 21.Wd2Wa8!

The young Golubev is not interested in the d1-rook; he's going for mate! 21... b7! is an equally effective way to transfer the queen to d5.



22.Wd3e5 23.Edf

Not the most resilient, but White was lost anyway.

23...exd4 24.i f4 Wd5 25' b2 gb8t
0-1

6) White's attack: "Sac, sac, mate"

Care has to be taken to prevent White from crashing through on the kingside. The following game, along with the above quote from the winner; became a famous example of what Black must avoid in the Dragon.

Robert Fischer – Bent Larsen

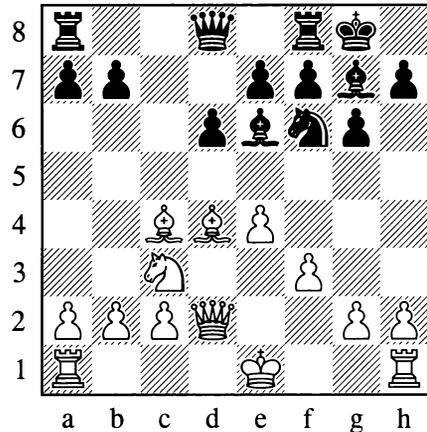
Portoroz 1958

1.e4 c5 2.l f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.l xd4 l f
5.l c3 g 6.i e3 i g7 7.£ 0-0 8.Wd2 l c6
9.i c4! xd4

9... d7 is the normal way of playing

10.i xd4 i e6

This old line was actually resurrected recently by Hikaru Nakamura.

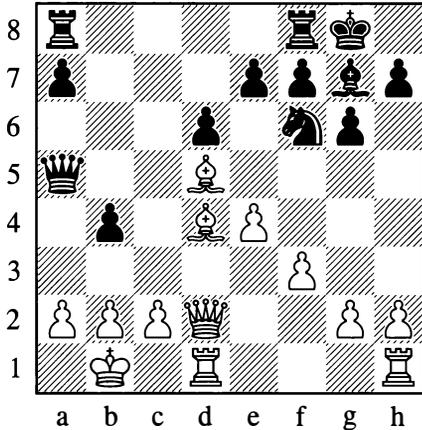


11.£b3 ♖a5 12.0-0-0 b5 13.♔b1 b4

13...♞fc8 is the modern interpretation.

14.1 dSL dSIs.L dS

15.exd5! was Tal's improvement the following year. T is still considered better for White, and is the reason why 13...b4 is no longer played. After 15... b5 16.Ehel a5 17. e2 xe2 18.Exc2 White has a small edge with his bishop pair and pressure down the e-file, even if my engine thinks this is playable for Black.



15...EacB?

Larsen underestimates the strength of the light-squared bishop.

15...l xd5! had to be tried. Various games have continued 16. xg7 l c3t! 17. xc3 (17.bxc3 Eab8! was an important nuance in Fernandez Aguado - Lerch Gallemi, Spain 1992) 17...bxc3 18. xc3 xc3 19.bxc3 Efc8= with sufficient play for the pawn.

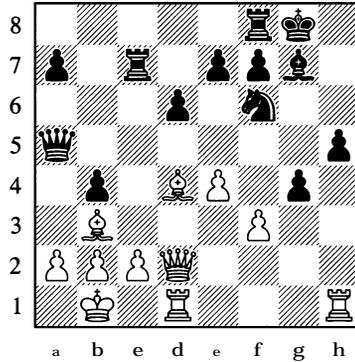
16i b3!

Fischer doesn't give Black a second chance. T e b3-bishop does a great job both defending the queenside and setting its sights on Black's kingside.

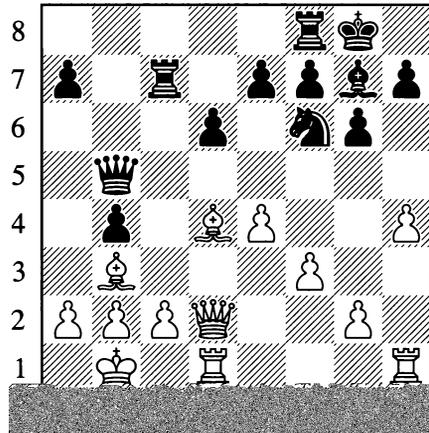
16..Ec7 17.h4 V bS

Larsen prepares to push his pawn to a4 but his counterattack comes much too slowly.

17...h5 would be the usual way of slowing White's attack but Ftacnik shows that 18.g4! is dangerous. His line continues: 18..hxg4 19.h5 gxh5 (19...l xh5 20. xg7 c xg7 21.f g4 is also terminal)



20.f g4 hxg4 21.Edg1 e5 22. e3Ed8 23. h6 White's attack is already mating, while Black has not produced any counterplay whatsoever.

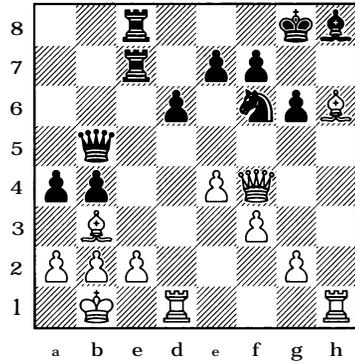
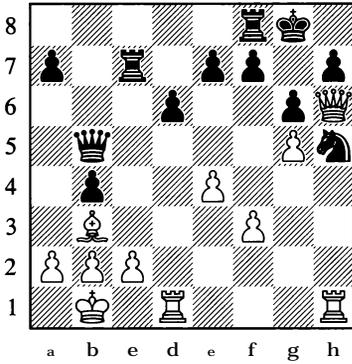


1B.hS!

Of ering a pawn to open the h-file.

1B..J B

Actually the pawn was taboo: 18..l xh5? 19. xg7 c xg7 20.g4 l f6 21. h6t g8 22.g5l h5

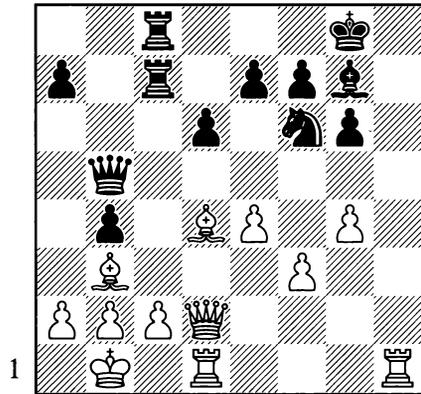
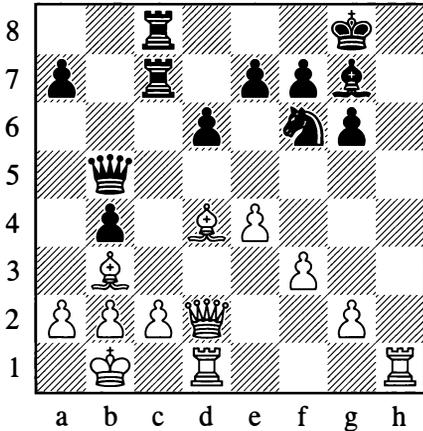


23. h5! gxh5 24.g6! hxg6 25. xg6t i h8
 26.' h6t i g8 27.2glt is one particularly
 brutal possible finish.

23.i f8! Exf8 (23...t h5 is no longer possible
 due to 24.' xf #) 24.Exh8t \ xh8 25.' h6t
 t h7 26.Ehl Black must give up his queen
 to prevent mate 26..' h5 27. h5 gxh5
 28.i

19h h g

Here we see another way in which the b3-bishop makes its presence felt. Often Black prefers to recapture with the f-pawn to keep the h-f file closed and his king more secure, but here it is impossible due to the pin.



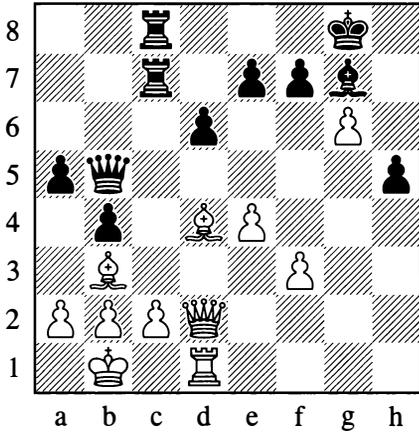
20.g4

Fischer continues his attack in the most natural way.

20.i e3! is another interesting idea, intending to try and exchange dark-squared bishops. 20...a5 21.i h6 i h8 22.' f4! (22.i f8 t h5! seems to just about cling on) 22...a4

23.g6!

Fischer crashes through. The rest is hopeless.



23..e5 24.g t < f 25.. e3 d5 26.exd5
xf 27.d6 f 28. g5 b7 29. xf .
30.d7 d8 31. d6t
1-0

7) Black's defensive measures

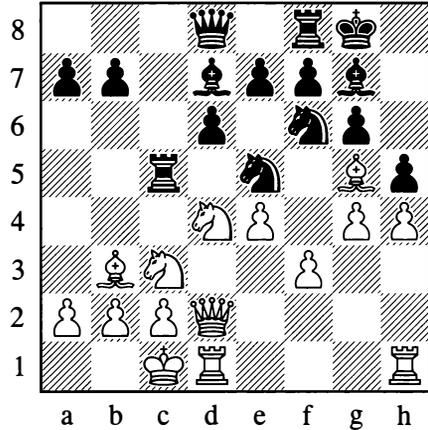
The above game shows how important it is to prevent White's kingside attack breaking through. That normally means meeting h2-h4 with ...h5. White often continues his attack with a subsequent g2-g4, intending to meet ...hxg4 with h4-h5. We have already seen this approach in a couple of games. Another important defensive idea is to play ...g5 to keep the kingside closed.

Vassily Ivanchuk – Veselin Topalov

Belgrade 1995

1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f
5.t c3 g6 6. e3. g7 7.O t c6 8. d2 O O
9. c4. d7 10.h4 c8 11. b3 h5 12.O O O
t e5 13. g5 c5 14.g4

T is used to be the main line but Black found sufficient defensive resources.



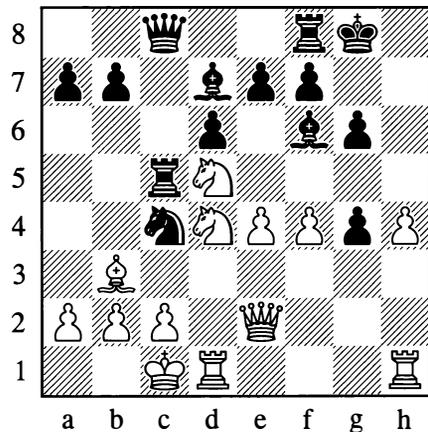
14...hxg4 15.f4 t c4 16. e2 c8

On the other side of the board, Ivanchuk found the improvement 16...l a5!. See Chapter 2 for further details

17..

After 17.f5?! Topalov was able to reveal another point of the queen sidestep with 17...l xb2! in Oll – Topalov, Moscow (ol) 1994.

17... xf 18t d5



18.. xd5!

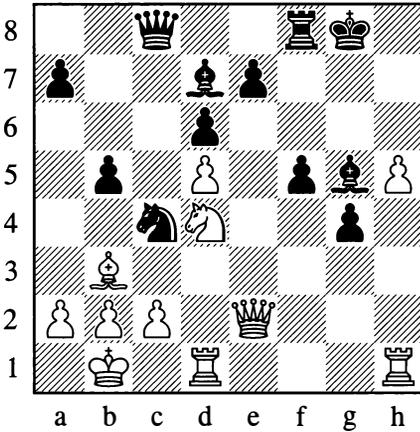
First we get a recap of one of our thematic exchange sacrifices.

19.exd5 b5 20.h5 g5!

And now this important defensive resource. White's h5-pawn gets in the way and prevents his pieces from infiltrating down the h-f file.

21.f g5. xg5 22. b1 f !

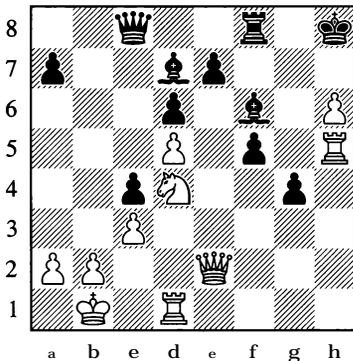
Pushing the pawns in front of one's king might look hasty, but Topalov has successfully judged that his king will be safe on the h-f file.



23.J d3

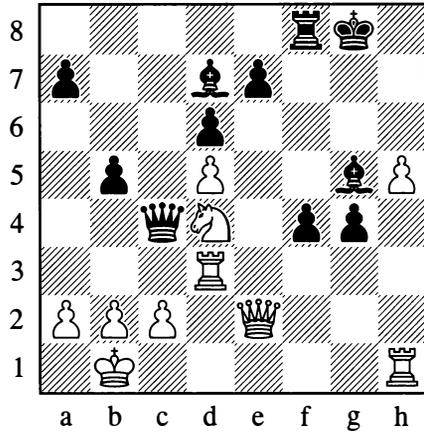
This move has been criticized but White's position is already difficult to play.

Schulz analyses 23.h6 \ h8 24.: h5 i f6 25.i xc4 bxc4 (25...Wxc4 26.Wxc4 bxc4 27.l xf5 is incorrectly given as a clear advantage to White. In fact Black is still much better here, despite the material deficit, as after 27...: b8 28.b3 i e8 29.: hhl i g6 30.: hfl cxb3 31.axb3 g3! he has great counterplay.) 26.c3



Now 26...Wf8 is a clear improvement on Schulz's line. Black's king is completely safe, the bishop pair is a long-term trump and the connected passed pawns will be extremely tough to stop.

23...f4 24. xc4 Wxc4



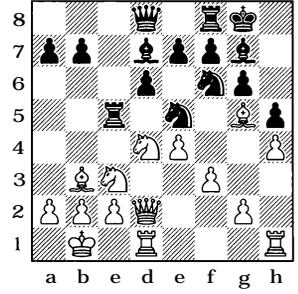
Ivanchuk, completely disgusted at his position, surprisingly resigned here. While resignation is clearly premature, Black certainly has an excellent position. Not only will White have to deal with the passed pawns, but Black can also switch to attacking on the queenside. With the king on h8 and bishop on f6, White will not be able to create any attacking chances of his own.

O 1

That concludes our discussion of the most important Dragon motifs. I hope this introduction will help you to make sense of the proposed repertoire, even when things become wildly complicated.

Chapter 1

Soltis Variation



♖i g5 ♜ ♗4i ♖d

Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.t f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f 5.t c3 g6 6. e3 g7 7.f 0-0 8.1 d2
t c6 9. c4 d7 10.0-0-0 c8 11. h3 t e5 12.h4 h5 13. g5 c5! 14. h1
14...h5

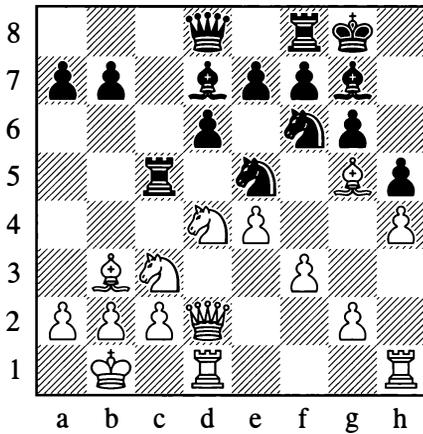
A) 15.t d5?	30
B) 15. x	31
C) 15J he1 a5 16.f4 t c4! 17. xc4 xc4 18.e5 h4! 19.t ch5 dxe5 20.f e5 t d5	33
C1) 21.e6	35
C2) 21.V d3	36
D) 15.g4 h g4	36
D1) 16.f4	37
D2) 16.h5 t xh5	38
D21) 17. x 5?	38
D22) 17.f g4	39
D23) 17. dg1	40
D24) 17.t d5 e8 18. x 5 g 5 19.V h2 xd5! 20. xd5 V h6!	41
D241) 21.V x 5	42
D242) 21.f4	43
D243) 21.t f x 22.exf V c5!	45
D2431) 23.f g4	45
D2432) 23.V x 5	47

1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 l f
 S.l c3 g6 6.i e3 i g7 7.0 0-0 8' d2 l c6
 9.i c4 i d7 10.0 0-0 g8 11.i b3 t eS
 12.h4 h5 13.i g5 g6S!

An important move. The rook is usefully placed here, both supporting the pawn break ...b5 and the a5 square so the queen can enter the game. The rook also prepares to sacrifice itself for a knight (or even on rare occasions for the bishop) that jumps into d5.

14.< b1

This is the mainline of the entire Soltis Variation. The following lines are sharp and critical and so need to be studied carefully.



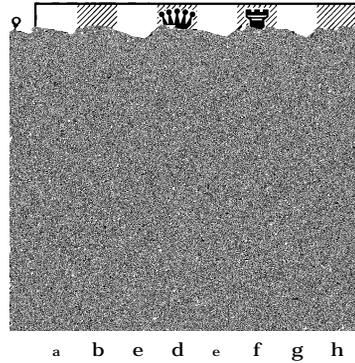
14...b5

Traditionally this has been Black's main try.

14...Ee5 is the modern alternative but I don't see any reason not to follow the older lines. In fact, I believe this line became fashionable because of a move order issue; if White were to play 12.< b1 most players react with 12...Ee5. Then 13.h4 h5 14. g5 Ec5 would reach this position but with the rook already committed to e5.

Our first branching point of the chapter sees us consider A) IS.t d5?, B) IS.gxf6, C) IS.g h e l and D) IS.g4.

15. h6?! This is must be much too slow. 15...a5
 16. xg7 xg7 17.a3 was seen in Andreev - Hermanov, Alushta 2005, and here there was no reason not to continue our queenside expansion with:



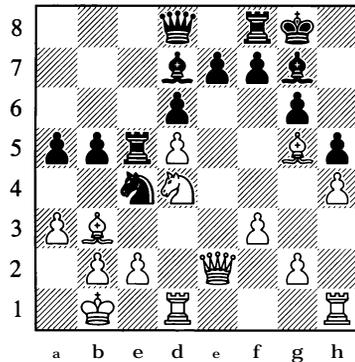
17...b4N IS.axb4 axb4 19.t a2 a5 20. xb4 a7+ A typical manoeuvre with the queen.

A) IS.l d5?

This doesn't particularly challenge Black.

IS...l xd5 16h d5

16.exd5 Blocking in the b3-bishop cannot be advised. Now Black's queenside play flows easily. 16...a5 17.a3 t c4 IS. e2 was Della Morte - Bertaccini, Villa Martelli 2013, and here I suggest:



IS... b6N Black has an overwhelming advantage. The d5-pawn is dropping if White does nothing and 19. xe7 (19. xe7 Ee5 just

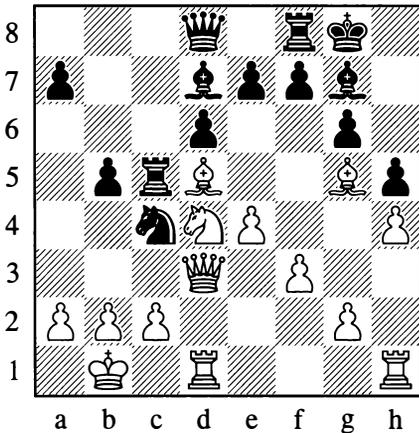
drops the piece) 19... c7 20. xc4 (20.We4 l xb2! 21. xb2 a4 22.i a2 b4 +) 20...bxc4 21.We3 b8 22.Wc3 1kb7 23.i cl i f5 leaves White completely tied up.

16...l c4 17.Vd

17.Wf2?! T e ill-advised choice of a player who became a GM the next year. 17...Wb6 18.g4 e5! An embarrassing pin. 19.9xh5 (19.l b3 1xd5! is the point) 19...exd4 20.h6 i e5 21.f4 d3! 22.h7t xh7 23.f e5 dxc2t 24.Wxc2 l a3t 25.bxa3 1xc2 Mrva - Cemousek, Slovakia 2004, was a powerful demonstration of Black's resources.

Meanwhile 17.We1?! was the choice of a future Super-GM but again it back red horribly: 17...Wb6 18.c3 b4! 19.i xc4 xc4 20.l b3 bxc3 21.l cl 1fc8 0-1 Vitiugov - Nithander; Herceg Novi 2005. I doubt the Russian Super-GM has lost many worse games

17.i xc4 bxc4 18.i h6?! M. Tan - Langerak, Rijswijk 2000. Here the position was surely crying out for 18...c3N, although 18..i xh6N 19.Wxh6 Wb6+ would also have been strong



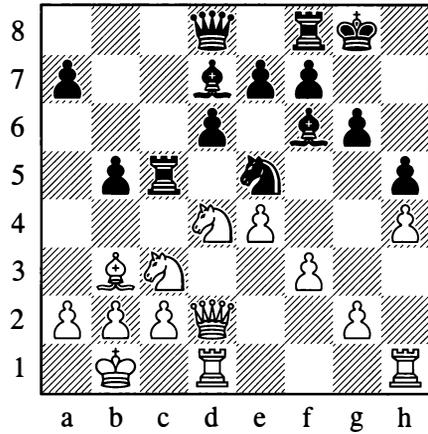
17...Vc7N 18. xc7Ec8+

Black's queenside attack is landing while White still hasn't started on the kingside. 19...l xb2! is one nice threat.

B) 15i xf

White allows Black an uncontested dark-squared bishop. If White doesn't crash through immediately then he will be in deep trouble.

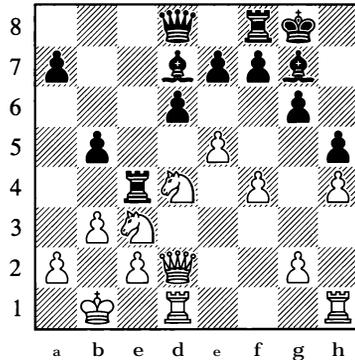
15...♗xf6



16.g4

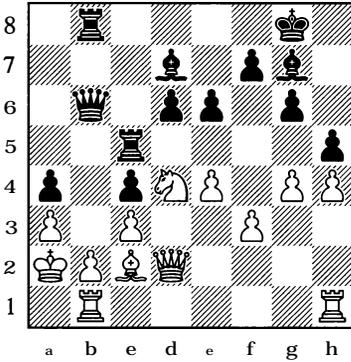
I think this is the only challenging continuation.

16.f4 l c4 17.i xc4 1xc4 07...bxc4N also looks good for Black. White has to try 18.f5 but I think Black is faster with 18..Wb6.) 18.e5 i g7 19.b3 Mannion - Kilgour; Troon 1990. Here Black should have brought the rook all the way back:

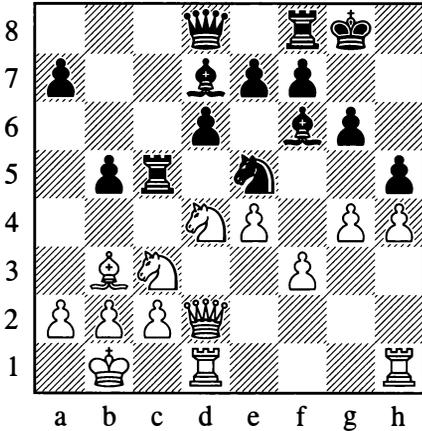


19...1c8N Not allowing l e4 with tempo. White's gained little for ceding the bishop pair.

16.t d5 g7 17.g4 is at least a logical follow-up, but 17...e6 18.t e3 a5 19.c3 a4 20. c2 t c4 21.t xc4 bxc4 22.a3 Wb6 23. a2 : b8 saw Black's counterplay arrive quickly in M. Dizdarevic - Stojic, Sydney 2009. After 24: b1 Black should have found:



24...e5N 25.t e2 hxg4 26.f g4 xg4+ White has little play to of set the pawn deficit.



16...h g4 17.hS
17.t d5

T is is rare but I think it is a better move order as it isn't as easy to close up the kingside.

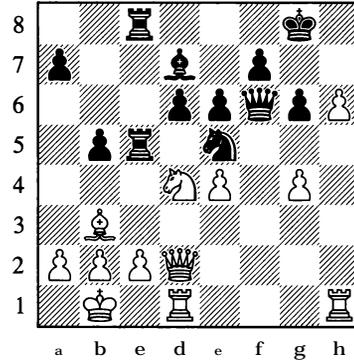
17... g7 18.h5 e6 19.h6

19.t e3?N gxf3 20.hxg6 Wf6! wouldn't get White anywhere.

Nor would 19.t f4N t c4 20.Wh2 g5.

19... f6 20.t xf6t Wxf6 21.f g4: fc8

I might have taken the opportunity to close up the kingside for good with 21...< h7N.



22.g5 We7 23.h7t < h8 24.t e2 b4! 25.Wxd6 Wxd6 26: xd6 c6 27.: h4 t f3 28: g4: xg5 29: xg5t xg5

All of White's pawns were dropping in I. Zaitsev - Basin, Minsk 1983.

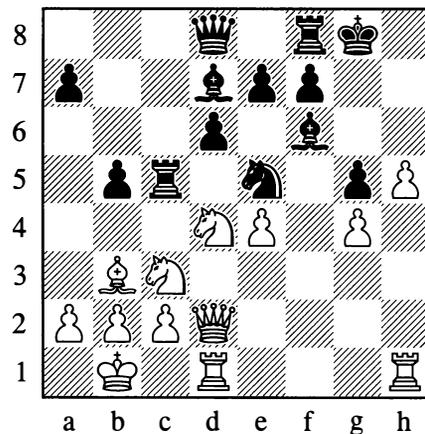
17...gS!

T is is a strong move, closing up the kingside.

18.f g4

18.f4 gxf4 19.Wxf4 e6! White's attack isn't getting anywhere as Black's king can hide safely in front of the h-pawn.

18.t d5 has been tried a couple of times, but 18...gxf3! 19: dg1 (19: hg1 < h7+ Nowak - Bensek, email 2004) 19...< h7+ looks excellent for Black.

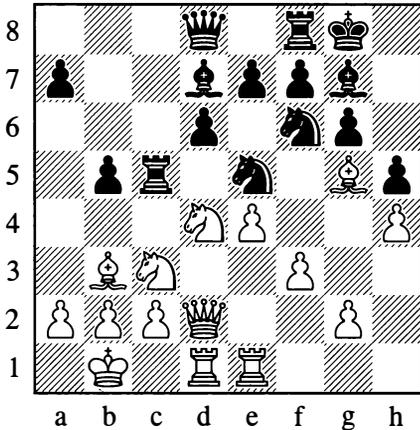


1S...aS 19.1 dS xdS! 20h dS e6+

White's bishop was trapped in Soreghy - Gonzaga Grego, email 2011.

C) 1S. he1

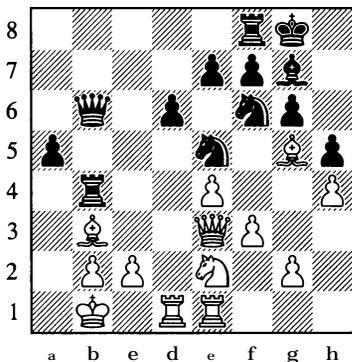
White is preparing to crash through in the centre but Black's queenside play is coming fast enough.



1S...aS 16.♘

Now White needs to continue his plan of opening the centre as he doesn't have enough time to defend on the queenside.

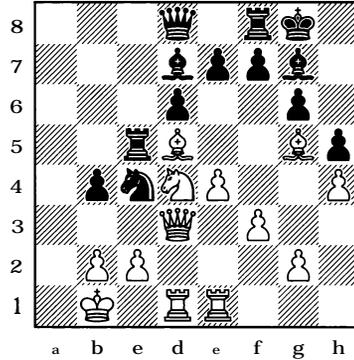
16.a4? is no good: 16...bxa4 17.t xa4 i xa4 18. xa4' b6 19.' e3 2c4 20. b3 2b4 21.t e2



21...' b7 22.2d4 a4 0 1Yuk no- Levkovsky, Dnipropetrovsk 2003.

16.a3? b4 17.a b4 a b4 and now:

a) 1B.t dS t xdS 19. xdS t c4 20.' d3 was Jahrz - Raabe, Pinneberg 1996, when best would be:



20...' c7N Black's attack is coming far too quickly, for example: 21. xe7 2xdS! 22.exdS 2aB 23.c3 t xb2! 24.' xb2 bxc3t 2S.' xc3 2a2t 26.' xa2' xc3 +

b) 1B.t a4 Correa - Delai, Sao Paulo 2011. Here the straightforward 1B.. xa4N 19. xa4 ' aS 20.b3t c4! is absolutely crushing.

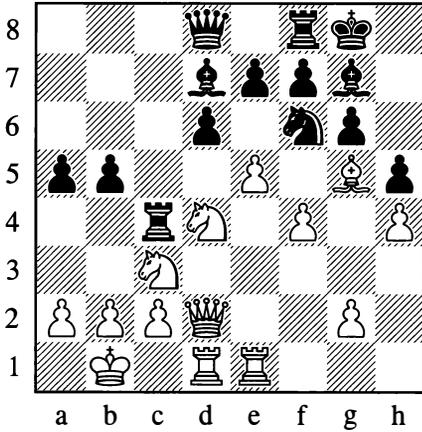
c) 1B.t a2N is W ite's only way to remain on the board but 1B..' aS 19.' xb4 ' a7! is extremely dangerous.

16..l c4! 17.h c4

17.' d3? Sidestepping with the queen is a common idea to retain the light-squared bishop but here it has no logic as 17...a4 forces the trade anyway (17...t g4!N is also interesting but unnecessary). 1Bi xc4 bxc4 Krenz - Peschel, Wuerzburg 1997. W ite couldn't afford to give Black an extra two tempos for his attack and he now ran into serious trouble down the b-file.

17... xc4 18.eS

As Vigorito mentions, 1B.t dxbS? would be a big mistake: 1B.. xbS 19.t xbS ' b6 20.t d4 t g4 gives Black a huge initiative.



1B..b4!

Continuing our own attack. Try to remember this motif: with the bishop on g5 trapped in by its own pawns, Black doesn't need to move the f6-knight.

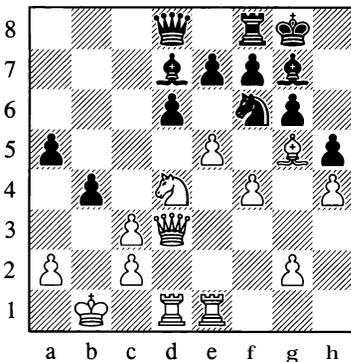
19.t cb5

19.exf6?! cannot be advised. The g7-bishop, which was temporarily blocked, now wakes up. 19...exf6 20.Wd3 Exc3! 21.bxc3 f g5 22.cxb4 gxf4 23.b5 Wxh4+ Sandstroem - W. Taylor, email 2005. Black has two pawns for the exchange, a strong bishop pair and continued attacking chances against White's vulnerable king.

19.Wd3

That allows:

19...Exc3! 20.bxc3



20...bxc3!N

20...1 d5 is reasonable for Black and has been played previously, but I think the immediate capture is even stronger:

21.Wxc3

21.exf6 exf6 is bad for White

21.t b5 f5 22.Wxc3 t e4+

21...t d5 22.Wf3

22.Wb3 Was leaves Black with a strong attack.

22...Wb6t 23.t b3 c6

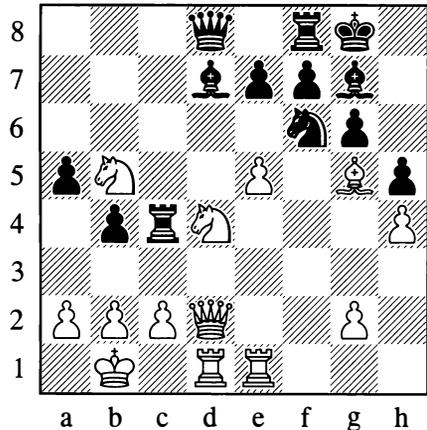
Black's attack is easily worth the sacrificed exchange and I think a lot more.

19...d e5

Now that Black has the d5-square for his knight we can exchange on e5. White's knight on b5 is also rather short on squares.

20.f e5

20.t f3? An attempted improvement by the French GM but 20...Wc8! was a good response. Getting out of the pin attacks the b5-knight and also puts pressure on c2. 21.t a7 Wa6 22.f e5 f5 23.exf6 Exc2 24.Wxc2 xc2t 25. xc2 exf6 Santo Roman - Marin, Belfort 1995. White's opening idea has been a disaster. The material count may be roughly balanced with queen and two pawns versus rook, bishop and knight but the knight on a7 is still trapped and White's king is extremely open. Black is simply winning.



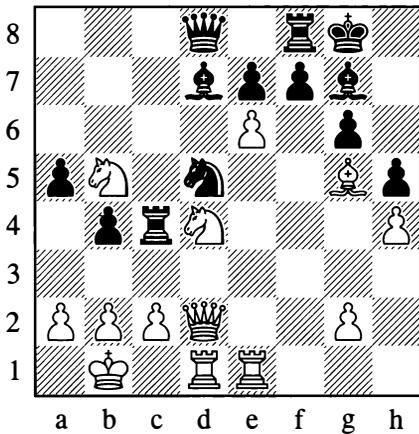
20..1 d5

Now White can try either C1) 21.e6 or C2) 21.Y d3

21.t d6? looks a tempting way to redeploy the knight but 21...t c3! is extremely powerful. 22.bxc3 bxc3 23.' d3 : xd4! 0-1 Florescu - Rogozenco, Sovata 2001.

C1) 21.e6

T is hasn't been played in an over-the-board game but is White's only logical way to continue.



21..i xb5

21...f e6!N

T is is an interesting try if you wish to keep more life in the position.

22.t xe6

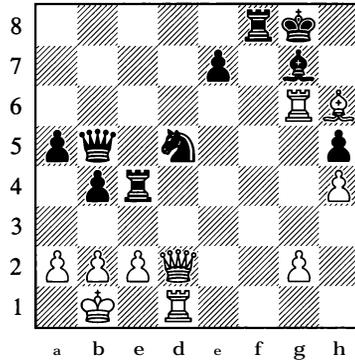
22.' d3 : c5 23.' xg6 looks scary for a moment, until you see 23...' e5! forcing the exchange of queens and leaving Black with a clear advantage 24.' xe5 i xe5+

22...i xe6 23.: xe6' d7 24.: xg6

24.' xd5 ' xd5 25.: xd5 : fl† 26.i c1 : xh4 T e pin along the back rank regains the piece and leaves Black with the better prospects in the ending for example: 27.a4 : hhl 2S.ma2 : xc1 29.: xe7 : hd1+

24...' xb5 25.i h6

White's kingside initiative seems to be enough for a draw:



25...t c3t

25...: g4!?

26.< al t xdl 27.: xg7t mhS 2S.: xe7 : eS

2S...t e3! is also a draw: 29.i xfS t xc2t

30.mb1t a3t 31.< al t c2t=

29.' d6 : xe7 30.' f6t mh7 31.' xe7t mxh6

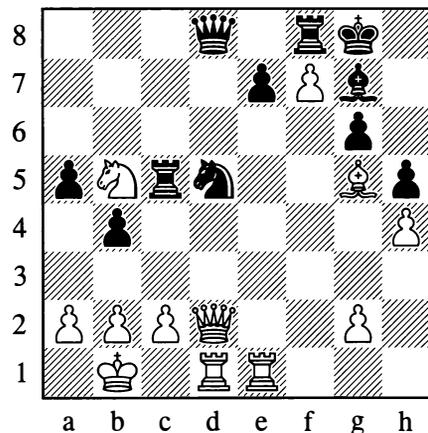
32.' f6t=

22.i xb5: c5

T is is Black's simplest route to equality. T e following few moves are basically forced.

23.exf t

23.t d4 f6! 24.i h6' bS+



23..J xf 24.i d4 l c3t! 25.bxc3 bxc3

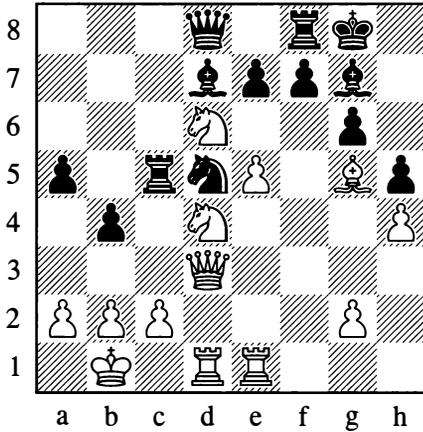
26.Y d3 5 27.Y xg6 ♗xd4 28h d4 Y xd4

29.W6Wb4t 3o.Wb3

The tactics have blown themselves out and left an equal endgame, Barlow - Fester, email 1998.

C2) 21.Wd3 c5 22.t d6

The correct move order if White wants to try and extricate the knight, but there is a strong reply:



22...Wb8!

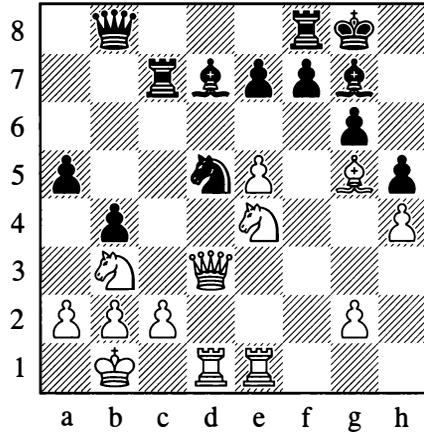
Black gets out of the pin and also has ideas of ...t c3t.

23.t e4

23.t b3 t c3t illustrates one of Black's ideas. 24.bxc3 Exc3 25. xe7 Exd3 26.Exd3 was Van Kempen - Poli, corr: 1994, and now 26... g4N favours Black. White's king is still vulnerable and he'll have a tough time fighting Black's queen and bishop pair.

23.. c7 24.t b3

24.e6N had to be tried but Black is still on top after 24...f e6 25. cl e5 26.t b3t f6'.



24..a4N

Improving on 24... e6 in Santo Roman - Koch, Nantes 1993, when White escaped with a draw.

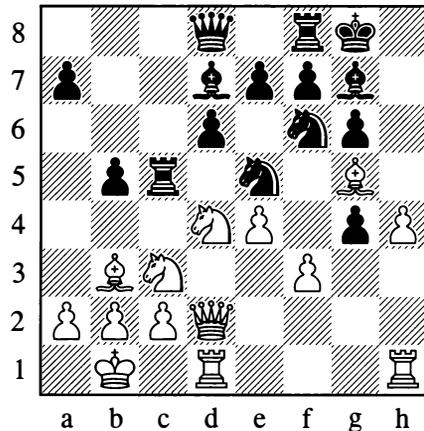
25.Wxd5

25.t bc5 t c3t!

25...a b3 26.c b3. e6 27.Wd4 fc8

Again Black's attack is just too quick.

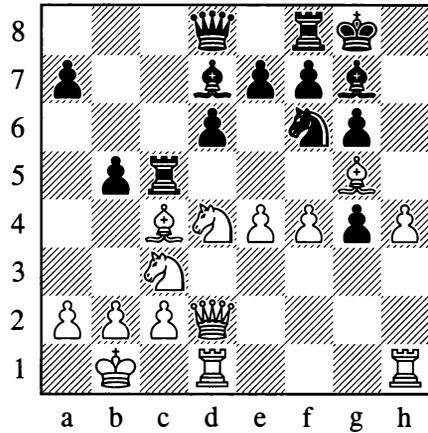
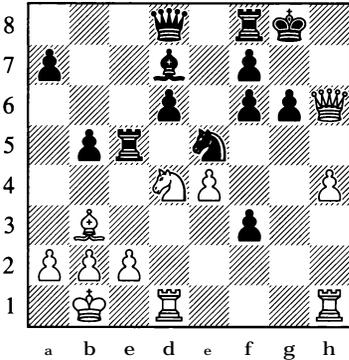
D) 15.g4 hxg4



We will check D1) 16.f4 before moving on to the critical D2) 16.h5.

16. xf6 xf6 transposes to variation B above.

16. t d5! N has never been played but it popped up as one of the engine's top choices, so I thought I should check it. An interesting line continues 16... gxf 17. i xf6 0 7. h5?! doesn't work out: 17... t xe4 1B. Wf4 t xgS 19. WxgS : xd5! 20. xdS e6+) 17... xf6 1B. t xf6t exf6 19. Wh6



17... bxc4

Recapturing with the pawn looks stronger to me here. The rook remains in control on the 6th rank and the b-file opens for counterplay. I will present a few sample lines

19... f2!? 20. t fS gxf5 21.: hg! t f g1=W 22.: xg! t t g4 23.: xg4t f g4 24. Wg6t < hB 2S. Wh6t=

IS. f N

1Be5 dxe5 19. f e5 t dS 20. hS WaS 21. t e4 Wxd2 22. xd2 EccB+

DI) 16.f4

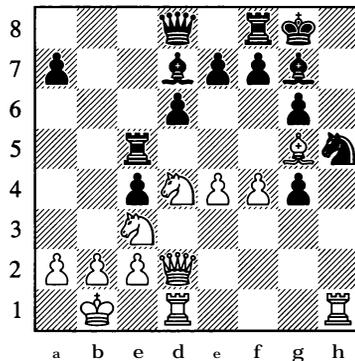
1B xf6 xf6 19. t dS was Smilek - Schmalz, Valasska Bystrice 2014, when 19... e6 was good enough to win for Black, though 19... WaSN+ may be even stronger.

In the 14.g4 Variation (see next chapter) this is the normal way to continue after sacrificing the g-pawn, but ...b5 is now a far more useful move than < b1.

1Bh5 t xhS

16... t c4 17.. xc4

17. Wd3 WaB! N T is looks like an interesting idea. The queen gets out of the way of the fB-rook to allow doubling on the c-file while also putting pressure on e4. 1Bh5 t xhS 19. t dS : xd5 20. exdS WxdS+ reveals another point.

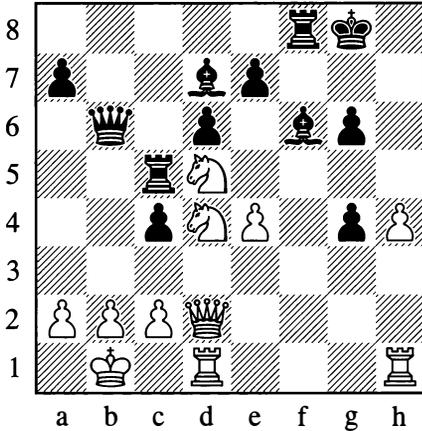


17. We2 t hS! A neat way of exploiting the location of the white queen. 1B: he1 WaS 19. t dS : xdS 20. exdS A. Forgacs - Vrban, Hungary 2001. Here 20... t g3! N would have combined well with Black's 17th. 21. Wf2 (21. Wxe7 xd4 22.: xd4 t f5 +) 21... t fS 22. t xfS xfS Black has an overwhelming attack.

19. fS (T is position was actually reached by a different move order: There White tried 19.: xhS gxhS 20. fS, but after 20... xd4 21. Wxd4 f6 22. c1: f 23.: h1: h7 had little

to show for the exchange and two pawns in
 A. Zaitsev - Kucherenko, Kharkov 2003.)
 19...Wb6 20. xe7: bH

18..Wb6 19.f g f g 20. xf . xf
 21.1 d5

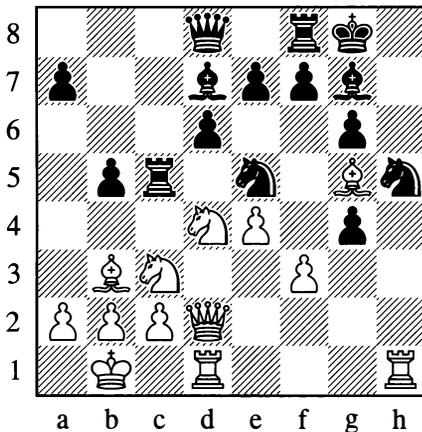


21..J hd5! 22.exd5 c3 23' xc3: c8 24' d2
 . f - +

D2) 16h5

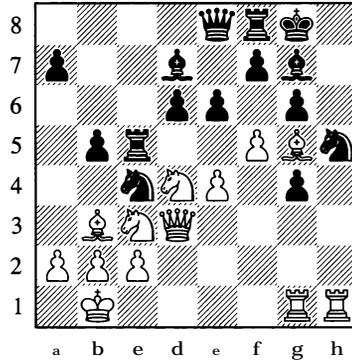
White is going route one.

16..1 xh5



White can try the crude D21) 17.: xh5?,
 as well as D22) 17.f g4, D23) 17.Edg1 and
 D24) 17.1 d5.

17.f4?! has been tried here as well but 17...1 k4
 should be good for Black. 18.Wd3 (18. xc4
 bxc4 transposes to the note on 18.h5 in
 variation 0 1 above.) 18..We8! 19.f5 e6
 20.: dg1 Valentin - Aubert, Torcy 1991.
 Black's last couple of moves were strong but
 here he should have continued the plan with:



20...exf5N 21.exf5 We5! Black is winning.

If White tries 17. h6 then 17...e6!N is a
 good antidote. T e b3-bishop is muf ed and
 the black queen can now come to the king's
 defence.

D21) 17.: xh5?

Giving the exchange immediately is an
 inaccurate move order:

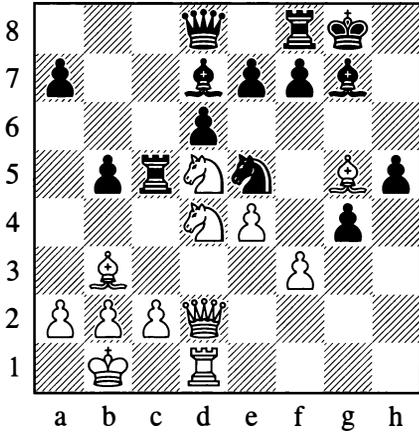
17...g 5

White has sacrific ed the exchange and two
 pawns for the attack. Here the best way to
 defuse his initiative is to trade as many pieces
 as possible.

18.1 d5

18.Wh2 t xf3! Not only does this grab
 another pawn but it trades material and
 leaves the g4-square available for our bishop.
 19.t xf3 gxf3 20.t d5 (20.Wxh5N : xg5!
 21.Wxg5 e6 is another common defensive
 theme. 22.Wh5 Wf6 White has been left with
 a two-pawn def cit and no attack.) 20...: xd5!

21. i xd5! g4 Potkin - Kargin, Moscow 2006.
The kingside has been closed and White should have nothing at all to show for the three sacrificed pawns.



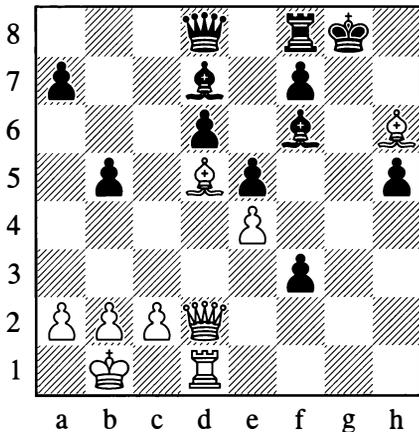
15...Bxd5!

15...Ee5 would transpose to variation 0 24 below.

19. i xd5! xf!
The same theme

20. i xf gxf3 21. i h6 e5 22. i g5 i f 23. i h6

Here in Wan Yunguo - Emiroglu, A bena 2012, they simply repeated but, as I observed on ChessPublishing, Black has another possibility:



23...i g4!N

Black is doing very well, for example:

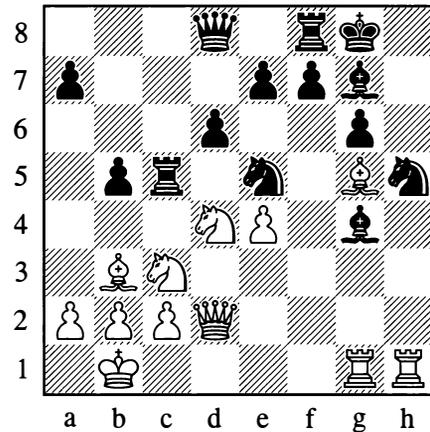
24. i x @x 25. We3i g5 26. Wxa7Wf +

D22) 17. f g4

This is extremely rare but is sharp and forcing so should be checked.

17...i xg4! S! dgl

Here I think the most accurate move order is



15...BeSN

I've again looked at a few natural-looking lines

19. 1 d5

19. i h6 e6 20. i xg7 < xg7 21. c cxb5 ' d7 22. c c3 EhS+

19...a5 20. c3

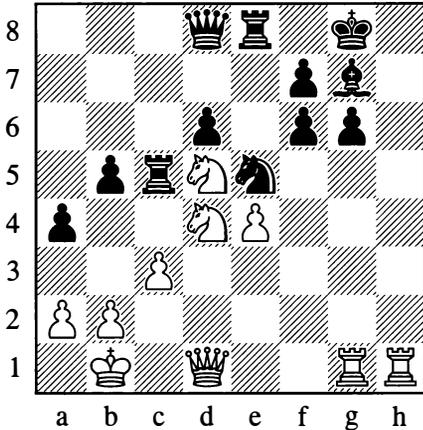
20. c e3 a4 21. i d5' b6°

20...a4 21. i dl

21. i c2 a3f

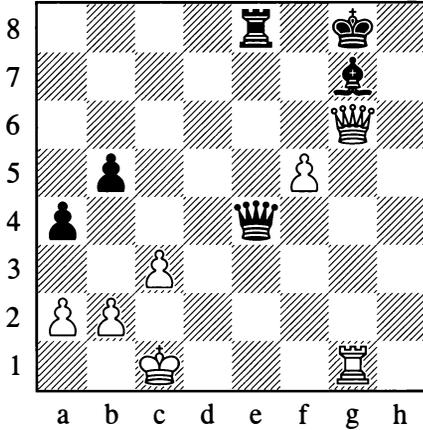
21...i xdl 22. Wxdl l f 23. i xf exf

If White does nothing, Black can follow up with capturing on d5 and ...f5. Therefore the critical continuation is



24. f! g 25. ex c f 26. t d l
 White is threatening l h8t followed by Wh6t mating.

26..h d5 27.t xd5 t c8 28.t xd6t c g8
 29.t xf l g6 30.Bxg6 fxg6 31.t xg6 t a8
 32J gl t e4t 33.c d l
 33.Wa1??We1t

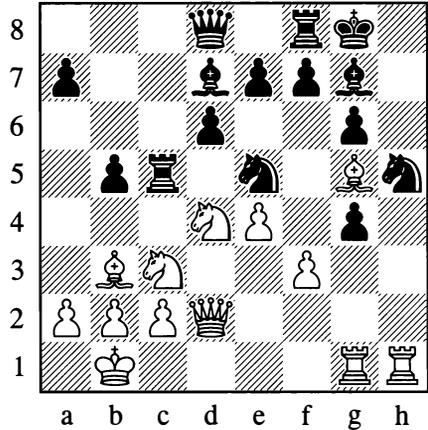


33..t e3t 34.c c2t e4t 35.c d l=
 T e line might look unlikely but it shows interesting ideas for both sides.

D23) 17.l dgl

As far as I can see, Gast- Zaremba, Parsippany 1999, is the only game to have featured this

move, but again it's among my engine's first few choices and so needs checking

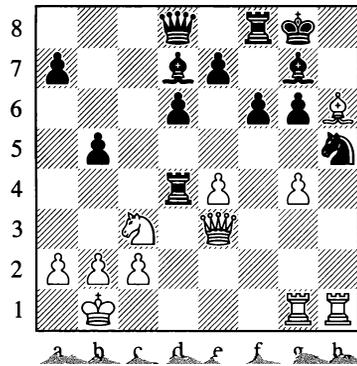


17..l c4N
 This is sensible as the d4-knight is no longer so well defended.

18.h c4 l xc4 19.t f l?
 19.f g4

Another important line.
 19..l xd4 20.We3 f6!?
 20..j xg4 21.l xg4 (21j h6 Wb6!) 21..f5o is unclear. The engine assesses with the helpful 0.00.

21.j h6
 21j h4 l c4 22.gxh5 gxh5 23j xf6! l xf6
 24.Wg5 j g4 25.Exh5 Wf8 26.Wxg4 l f lt
 27.l d1 l xe4! Black has successfully fought of White's initiative



21...e5 22.gxh5 g5 23.i xg5

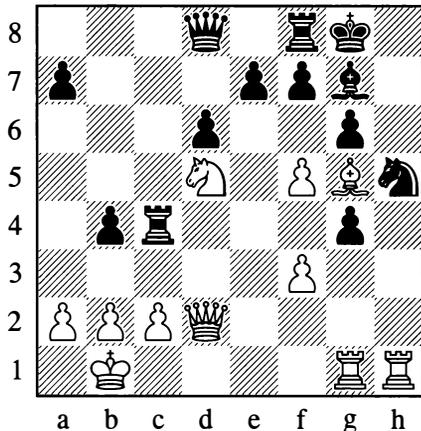
23.i xg7 ' xg7 leaves the black king quite safe.

23..f g5 24.l xg5 < hS 25.h6 i f6 26.l g7! i e6

The position is messy but Black controls a lot of the important squares so I think the best White can hope for from his attack is a perpetual.

19..i x5 20.ex5 b4 21.t d5

21.' e2 d5 22.l dl g3 is messy but seems okay for Black. 23.i xe7 l eS 24.' xc4 dxc4 25.i xdS l xdS 26.f g6 f g6 and Black has good compensation.



21..J d4 22. h2 g3 23.t xe7t xe7 24. xh5! g h5 25.i xe7 l e8 26.i g5 . e5 27.l xh5@g7=

The game has liquidated into an equal endgame.

D24) 17. ♔d5 ♜e8 18. ♜xh5

IS.f g4i xg4 19.l dg1 transposes to variation 022 above

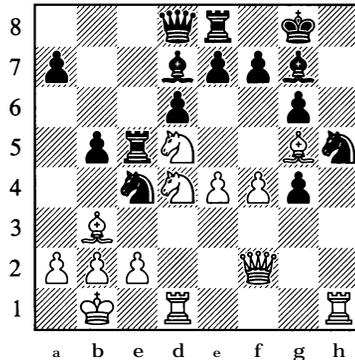
IS.f4?

In the 14.g4 variation White normally continues like this However with ...b5 already played, Black gains an important tempo defending the knight.

IS..l c4 19.' f2

19.' d3 was S. Farago - Pham, Budapest 1995, and now 19...a5N 20.a3 l xd5! 21.exd5' b6 would put Black on top.

After 19.i xc4 l xc4 20.l f5!? Brekhov - A. Smirnov, Saratov 2005, 20..l xe4N looks easiest. 21.l xd6 l d4 22.' xd4 i xd4 23.l xd4 f6 24.l xeS f g5 +



19..l xd5! 20.exd5' b6

Black's position is already to be preferred and the following sequence increases his advantage:

21.i xc4 bxc4 22.' d2? c3! 23.' xc3 l cS 24.' d i f5

Black's pieces have become too active. White doesn't last long.

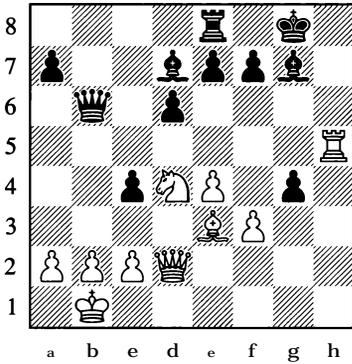
25.l h2l c4 26.l hd2i xd4 27.' b3l b4

0-1 Corujedo Hernandez - Perez Soto, Cuba 2002.

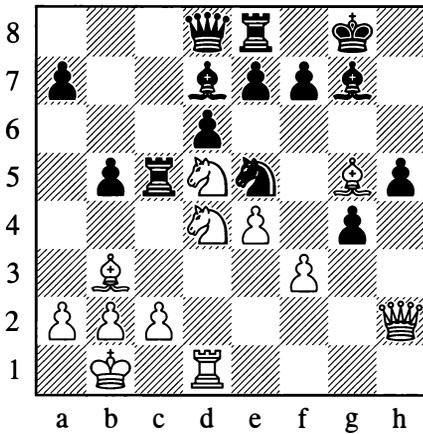
18..g 5 19. h2

White is currently the exchange and two pawns down, but he has all his pieces in the attack and we need to deal with it accurately.

It's better for White to go with his queen first. Here 19.l h1?! should be met in the same manner as the text move 19..l xd5 20.i xd5 ' b6 21.i e3 l c4 22.i xc4 bxc4 23.l xh5 In Ankerst- Kodric, Slovenia 1996, Black had so far defended well, but now instead of lashing out with 23..f5 he should have played the more usual-looking:



23...2b8N 24.c3 g f With the point 25.l f5 . xf5! 26.. xb6. xe4t 27.' al 2xb6+.



19..J xd5!

Time to give back some of that extra material to slow White's attack.

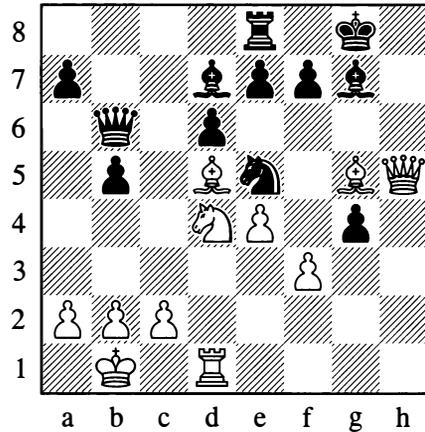
20.h d5' b6!

When I had this position I instead put my queen on c8 but this active square is better. From b6 the queen hits the knight and can go to c5, b7 or even f2 depending on how White continues to attack. In some lines it is very important that we are controlling the g1-square. Now we are ready to kick the bishop back with ...e6.

We have reached an important junction, with White having three moves: D241) 21.' x 5 D242) 21.f4 and D243) 21.l f .

D241) 21.' xh5

T is probably the most logical move and is one of the critical lines



21...e6 22.. b3 gxf3 23.l xf

If White doesn't take the pawn immediately then we can use it to annoy him, for example:

23.. h6. xh6

23...f2!? immediately can also be considered.

24.i xh6 f2!

When this position was reached, White became rather overambitious with:

25.l f5?

25.i f6 should be preferred when 25...i b7 (25... c6!?) 26.2hl f1=i t! 27.2xf1 1 xe4 28.2gl t l g6 29.2fl l e5 30.2gl t would be a possible draw.

25...exf5 26.2h1 fl=i t!

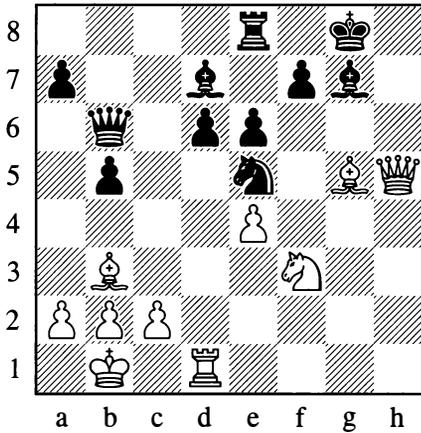
A vital deflection.

27.2xf1 d5!

Now Black has time to bring the queen over to the king's defence - another useful facet of putting the queen on b6.

28.i h5 dx4

White's attack had disappeared completely in Ivanovic - Romero Holmes, Terrassa 1989.



23.. f!

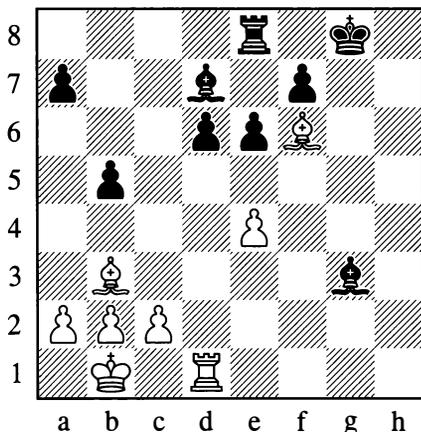
I think this is Black's only move to keep equality. By coming over to the kingside the black queen hassles White's pieces and controls some important squares.

24.1 xe5 h e5 25. g4

25. h6N Wg2! looks risky but the queen and e5-bishop control enough squares to prevent White increasing the pressure, for instance: 26. e3 mf8 27. g5 c6 28: xd6 xe4 29. h6t g7 30.Wc5! mg8 31.: d1 Wf3 32J g1 g6=

25.. g3! 26. xg3h g3 27. f

Despite having traded queens, White still has some pressure, and with it compensation for the pawn. We need to be accurate for another few moves.

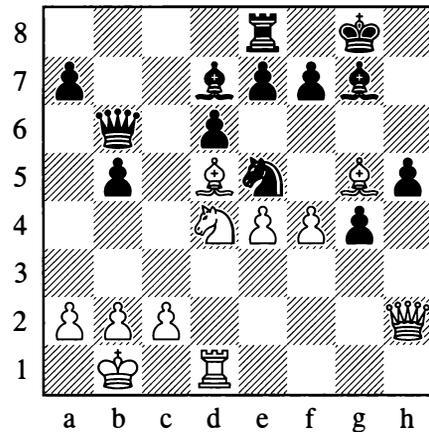


27...mh7! 28.e5 c6 29.exd6 mg6! 30. e7 l xe7! 31.d e7 mf =

After a long sequence we've reached an interesting endgame. T is has been played in a few correspondence games and it seems clear that Black has at least enough compensation. T ee7-pawn is dropping and the two connected passed pawns are difficult to deal with.

D242) 21.f4

T is is the rarest of White's tries here but also has to be dealt with accurately.



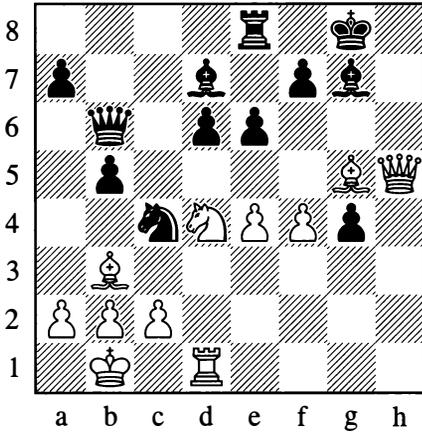
21...e6! 22. b3

22.f5? was played in Acuna Celada- Marcos Herrero, Madrid 2012, but here Black can simply play 22...exd5N with an extra piece.

22...t c4 23. xh5

23.f5? was another curious f4-f5 blunder. In Cemousek - Sluka, Olomouc 2000, Black took on f5 but instead 23.. xd4N is simply a piece.

T is position has only been reached once, in G. K ss - Pham, Budapest 1999, and doesn't seem to have been tried in computer or correspondence chess either. However I think the position is quite dangerous and so Black needs to be accurate.



23..Jb7!N

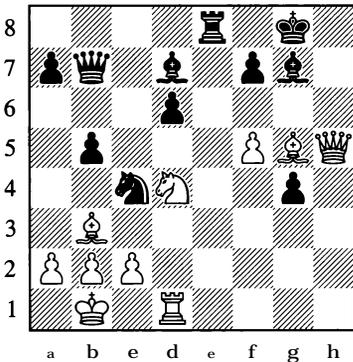
After studying the position in a lot of depth, I think this is best. The queen is finding a path to the kingside. The positions are sharp and so, even though it is very rare, I'd make sure you feel comfortable with the following variations.

23...i xd4?loses to 24.e5.

24i xc4

24.f5 exf5 25.exf5

25.i h6 Wxe4 26.i xg7 xg7 27.Wg5t < h7= White has no more than perpetual; the black queen is extremely useful on e4.



25..i xd4!?

25...Wd5 also looks fine.

26! xd4i xf5 27.i c1

27.a4 ! elt 28.< a2 Whl! forces White to exchange queens.

27...i g6 28.Wxg4! e4=

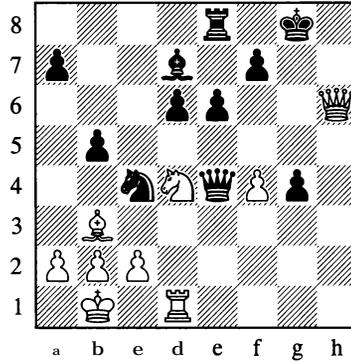
24.i h6i xh6

24...Wxe4 25.i xc4 bxc4 26.i xg7 xg7

27.Wxg4t Wg6=

25.Wxh6 Wxe4

White should first play:



26.i xc4

The immediate 26.f5? fails to 26...We3!

26.l !? exf5 27.i xc4 bxc4 28.Wg5t f8

29.Wh6t g8 is also a draw.

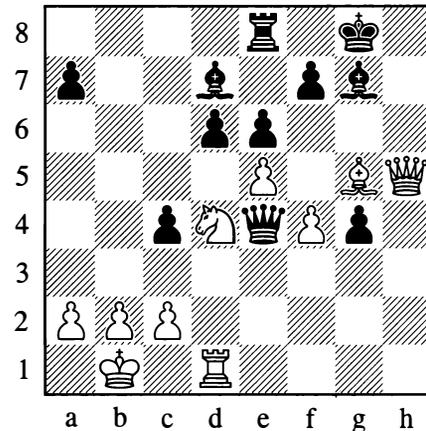
26...bxc4 27.f5

Only now can this be played, but again it is simply a draw:

27...exf5 28.Wg5t h7 29.Wh5t g7=

24...bxc4 25.e5 We4!

As we've just seen, this is an excellent square for the queen.



26 xg4

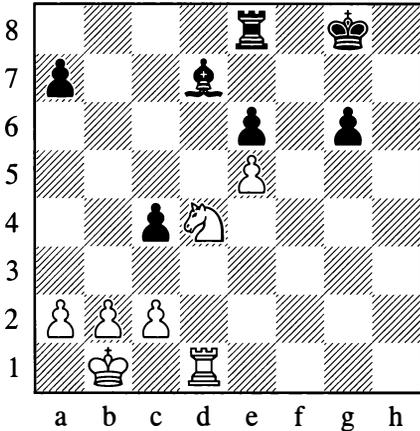
26.i f6 Wg6 27.Wh4 g3 Remember to use the advanced kingside pawns to create counterplay. 2S.Ehl @fS 29.l g1 g2 30.Wh2 dxe5 31. xe5 xe5 32.f e5 Wg4 33.WhSt @e7 34.Wf6t @fS= with another draw.

26...dxeS 27.i f

27.Egl exd4 2S. f6 Wg6 29.Wxg6 f g6 30.Exg6 @f 31.Exg7t @xf6 32.Exd7=

27..WgG 28\ xgG f gG 29.h eS i xeS 30f eS

When I first reached this position I was concerned that Black might have to suffer with the four pawn islands, but I think he can generate sufficient counterplay with the passed g-pawn and pressure against the e5-pawn, for example:



30...aS 31. f

31.@cl EcS 32.c3Ec5 33.c f c6 34.EdSt @f 35.EcS @e7 36.c d4 @d7 37.l gS l xe5 3S.Exg6 d5=

31...< g7 32.@cl h8! 33 f h4 34.c xe6t i xe6 3S. xe6gS 36.@d2 e4=

0243) 21.c f i xf 22.exf \ cS!

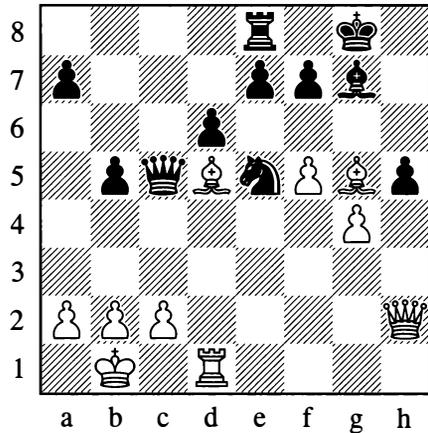
This is Vigorito's suggestion and I agree it is the most accurate. We put some pressure along the

5th rank and prepare to get some counterplay on the c-file. The move has only been played once in over-the-board chess, but I believe it is an important defensive resource.

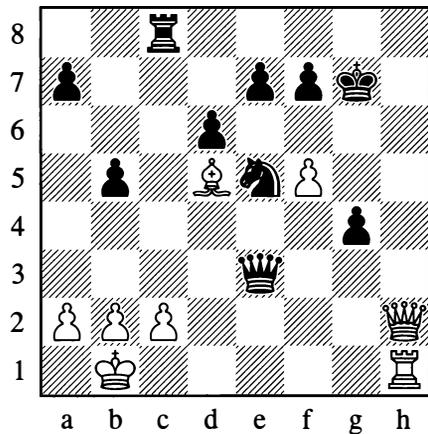
The final split of the chapter sees White choose between 02431) 23f g4 or 02342) 23\ xhS.

D2431) 23f g4

This was Yakovich's suggested way of attacking.



23..hxg4 24. h6 c8 2S.h g7 @xg7 26 hl \ e3!



This looks hairy but without dark-squared bishops, Black's king can actually be fairly safe

if it's forced forwards via f6-g5-f4. The g-pawn promises decent counterplay while, with limited material, White struggles to create any mating nets. The e5-knight keeps Black's position together.

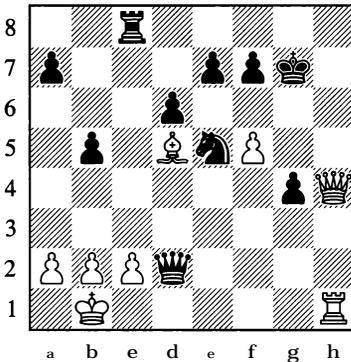
27. Wh7

27. h4!?

Yakovich's suggested novelty. Black's easiest is

27... d2

Hitting the bishop and threatening a mate of our own.



28. Bg4

28. Bg4!? exf6 29. Wh7 MB 30. WhBt Wc7 31. WxcB Wxd5 White has picked up the exchange but Black has far too many pawns and a monster knight on e5 holding the position together; so White still needs to take the draw with 32. Wc7 Wc6 33. WcBt Wc7=.

29. Wf4

White doesn't have more than a draw, e.g.

29. Wh7

29. a3 gB! We're now threatening to run our king to safety on the queenside and so 30. Wxe7 is forced. 30... Wxe4 31. Wg5t 1 g6 32. Wh6t f6 33. f g6 xg6 will likely be another perpetual.

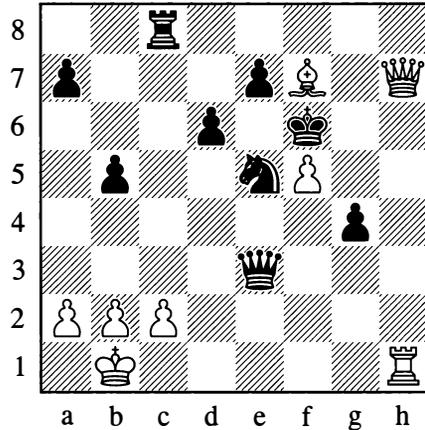
29... f6 30. h6t g5 31. h5t

31. Wg7? 1 g6 suddenly leaves White in a lot of trouble.

31... f6 32. a3 Wxe4 33. Wh6t 1 g6=

27... c f 28h !?

This is how a few correspondence and computer games have run.



28... Wd !

Again this is a good way to create counterplay. Even without the V-pawn, Black has sufficient resources to keep equality.

29. b3

29. a3 was tried in a recent computer game, but with 29... Wxc2 30. Wa1 c3 Black created perpetual threats of his own. The rest of the game is of course accurate but also interesting: 31. WhBt Wxf5 32. j a2 d3 33. WfBt Wc4 34. j b1 Wc2 35. Wxe7 f3 36. g1 d4 37. Wh4 Wf2 38. Wh1t Wc2 39. g2 g3 40. Wc2

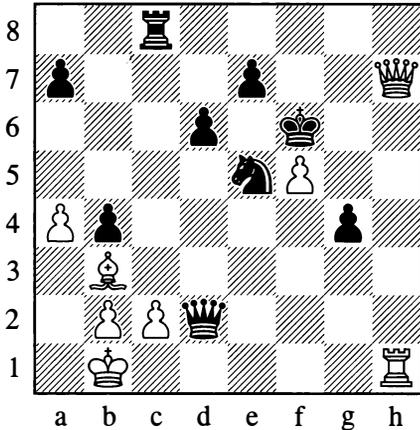
d1 41. xf2t gxf2 42. We4t Wd2 White kept checking for another ten moves before the draw was agreed in don52 - mercure, engine game 2014.

29... h4!

Forcing White to make a concession on the queenside if he wants to create some luft for his king.

30. a4!?

White gave up winning chances immediately with 30. h6t g5 31. h5t Wf6 in Albano Rivaes - Gonzalez Barcina, email 2011.

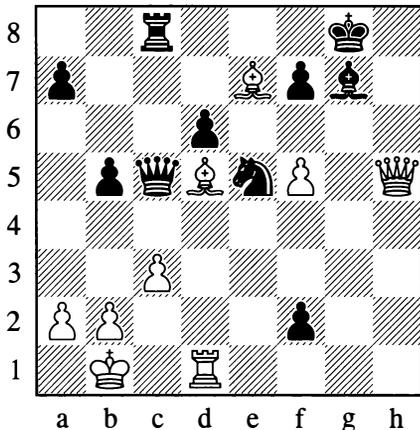


30..bxa3 31.bxa Eb8! 32.Eh6t g5
 33.Eh5t f 34.g a a5! 35.Eh6t g g5
 36.Eh2 Wd1 37.Wh6t g xf 38.Ed2 Wg1
 39.Ee2Exb3 40.c b3Wa7

And here Pascual Perez - Ortiz, email 2009, was agreed drawn. These lines are of course sharp and I can see you feeling uneasy about the king running around the centre of the board. However, we know there's no mate there as long as we're accurate, and Black has decent counter-chances of his own.

D2432) 23Wxh5 Ec8
 24.c3 gxf3 25.i xe7 f !

It's important to use all the resources in the position.

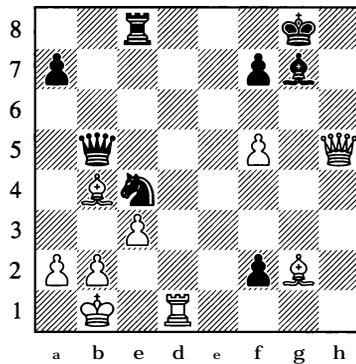


26i g2

Or 26.f6! xd5 27.Exd5 f1= t 28.1 dl ' f3 29.' xf3 which was drawn here in Vera Ruiz - Serrano Salvador, corr: 2008

26..We3

26..b4!N looks like an interesting alternative: 27.i xd6 (27.f6?? bxc3 and the engine informs me it's mate in 10) 27..' b5 28i xb4! c4 We have sacrific ed two pawns to open up lines towards White's king. Coupled with the advanced f-pawn I think Black has much the better practical chances. The engine thinks White should defend with:



29.' g5! a5 30.a4!' b6 31.1 d3' f6 32.' xf6 xf6 33. d6 l xd6 34.1xd6 g7 This endgame should be a draw but White still needs to be a bit careful as the f2-pawn remains dangerous

27.Ehl

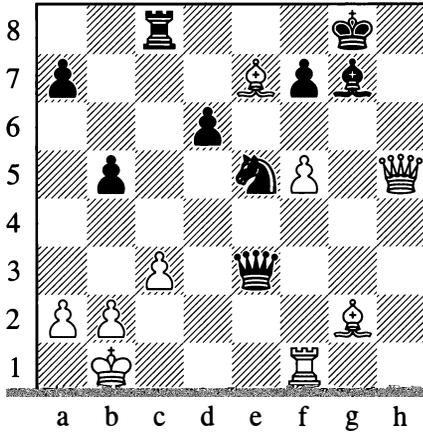
27.f6!N h6 28. xd6 looks likely to reach a drawn endgame after 28..1d8 29. xe5 1xd1t 30.' xd1 ' xe5 31.' f3' e3 32.' xe3 xe3=.

27...f Wt! 28.Exf ?

This was a big mistake for a correspondence game, even in the pre-computer era

Instead White had to play the unnatural-looking 28. xf1! when the game would end

in repetition after: 28..! e1t 29.< c2' e4t
 30.< cl' e1t= Kuersten - Lovakovic, email
 2000.



28..1 c4! +

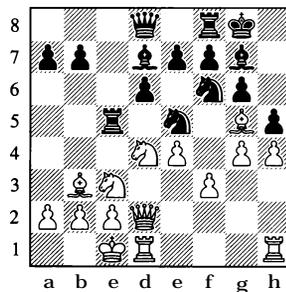
Suddenly all of Black's pieces are attacking and White has no defence. The game ended abruptly after:

29.i g5 Wd3t 30.c c1t xb2 31.f c3t

0-1 Shorokov - Pillhock, corr: 5dcE1

Chapter 2

Soltis Variation



14g4

Vaiation Index

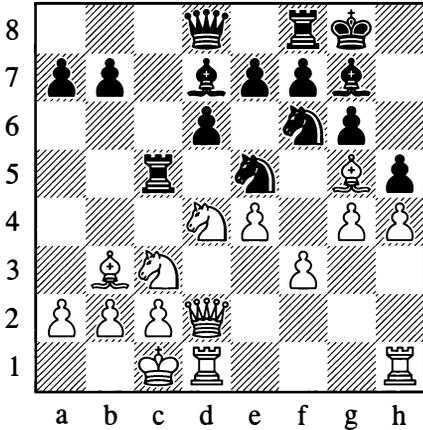
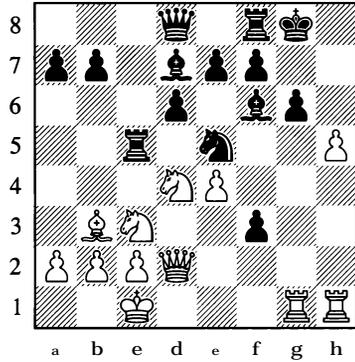
1.e4c52.t O d63.d4c d44.t xd4t f 5.t c3g66. e3. g77.0 0-08' dl t c6
9. c4. d7 10.0 0-0 c8 11.. b3t e5 12.h4h5 13. g5 c5! 14.g4

14...h g4

A) 15. xf	50
B) 15.h5t xh5	51
B1) 16. xh5?	52
B2) 16.f4?	52
B3) 16. dg1	53
B4) 16.t d5 e8	54
B41) 17.f g4	55
B42) 17. xh5 g 5 18.' h2 xd5! 19.. xd5	
' b6 20.' xh5 e6 21.. b3gxf3	56
B421) 22.. h6	56
B422) 22.. e3	57
B43) 17.f4 t c4	59
B431) 18.' e2	59
B432) 18.' f	59
B433) 18.' d3	60
C) 15.f4 t c4	60
C1) 16.. xc4	61
C2) 16' d3b5	62
C21) 17.h5?	62
C22) 17.. x . xf 18.e5d e5 19.t dxb5t xb2!	63
C221) 20.' xg6t?	64
C222) 20.< xb2	65
C23) 17.£	66
C3) 16' e2t a5! 17.e5t xb3t 18t xb3 xc3! 19.bxc3. c6	67
C31) 20.exf	68
C32) 20. hf t e4	69
C321) 21.' c4	69
C322) 21.' xg4	70

1.e4 c5 2. f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 l f
 5.l c3 g 6i e3i g7 7.f 0 0 8 d2 t c6
 9i c4 i d7 10.0 0 0 g c8 11.i b3 l e5
 12.h4 h5 13i g5 g c5 14.g4

Traditionally this was the main line, but Black figured out how to defend so White players have switched to 14.Wb1 in their bid for an advantage. The themes of both are similar but theory has decided it's in White's favour to include mb1 and ...b5.



14..h g4

We will examine A) 15i and B) 15.h5 before moving on to the main line C) 15.f4.

15.Edg l!?

We always need to pay attention to moves that put all of White's pieces pointing at our king. Here I think the most accurate defence is:

15..gx f3 16. x f6

If White tries to smash through immediately with 16.h5 we have 16..f2! 17.Wxf2 t eg4 1.S.Wd2 Exg5! 19.h6 (19.Wxg5 h6 exploits the location of White's king) 19..Ec5 20.hxg7 mxg7+.

16.. x f6 17.h5N

17.t x f3 e6+ was seen in Maassen- Pillhock, corr. 1990. White's position continued to deteriorate and Black won a short time later.

17..g5! 1.S.Exg5t xg5 19.Wxg5t mh7

T is may look scary but White can't bring any more of his pieces into the attack, for example:

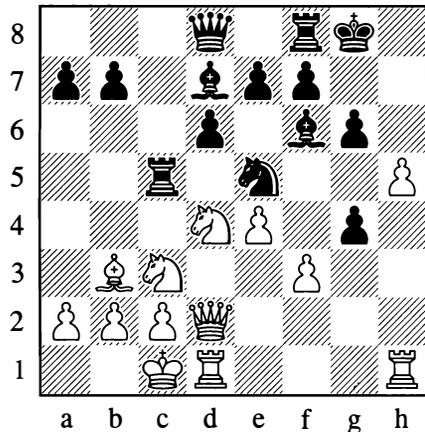
20.t f5 x f5 21.Wxf5t WhS 22.Wf4 f2!
 23.Wh6t

23.Wxf2 e6+

23..mgS 24.Wg5t Wh7 25.Wf5t Wh8

A) 15i i x f 16.h5

16.f4 t c4 will simply transpose back into the main lines examined via the 15.f4 move order. For 17.Wd3 b5 see variation C22 on page 63. 17.We2t a5 transposes to the note on 17. x f6 in variation C3 on page 67. 17. xc4 Exc4 transposes to the note on 17. x f6 in variation C1 on page 61.



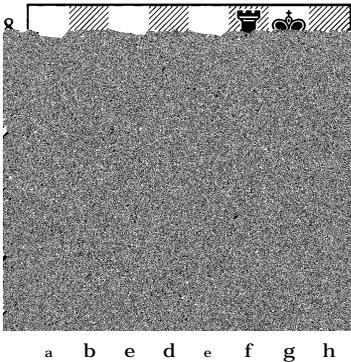
16..g5!

We've already seen this idea of closing up the kingside in a similar position with b1 and ...b5 included - see page 32.

17.1 d5

17.f4? is much worse as the king is precariously placed on c1: 17...gxf4 18. xf4? (18.t d5 occurred in Banos - Ji. Houska, Czech Republic 2005, and now 18... g5N is simplest.) 18..t d3t! 19.Exd3 g5 Black picked up the queen in Niessen - Wellner, Porz 1989.

17.f g4 Now the pawn storm on the queenside is a bit slower as we've not yet played ...b5, so I think the easiest is 17... a5 (17... xg4 grabbing the g-pawn is also okay) 18.t f5 as in C. Halasz - Pal, Hungary 1997. Now an improvement is



18.. xf5N 19.9xf5t c4 20. xc4Exc4+

17...gxf3

T is still looks strong, even without the inclusion of the queenside moves

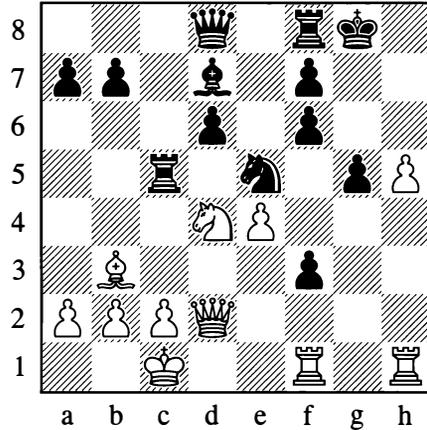
18.l x t

18.Edfl e6 19.t xft xf6+ Fiensch- Raty, corr: 1986.

18.Ehgl h7! 19.t xft exf6 20. e3 was Gaida - Maliszewski, Poland 1991. Here there was no reason to jettison the f -pawn so 20..g4N should have been played.

18..ex 19.Edf

19.t xf3 t xf3 20. xd6 Ec7 21.Ehfl g4 and White hadn't got anywhere in Mularczyk - Raty, corr: 1986.

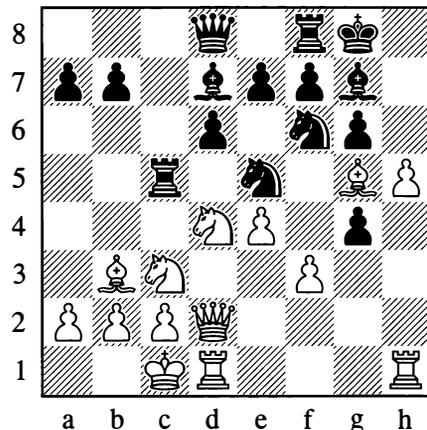


19.. g4!? 20J hgl d7 21. e3 i g7 22.i bl Eh8

We have been following Chalupa - Novy, Czech Republic 2001. Black is two pawns up and h5 is dropping, while his king is perfectly safe

B) 15.h5

T is is White's other main try, playing in exactly the same manner as after 14.' bl b5. I'll try to f ag up the dif erences between them.



15... xh5

As mentioned above, this split is almost identical to that on page 38 in Chapter 1: B1) 16.Exh5?, B2) 16.f4?, B3) 16.Edg1 and B4) 16. d5.

16.. h6 e6! 17.l dg1 was Sasirekha - A. Gara, Szeged 1994. Here we should play 17...t xf3!N 18.l xf3 gxf3 19.. xg7 < xg7 20.l xd6 Eg5 21.Ed1 f2 with a big advantage.

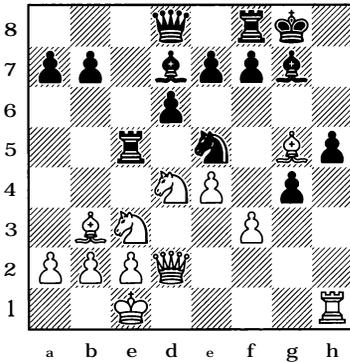
B1) 16.Exh5?

Sacrificing the exchange before playing f3-f4 is nearly always a mistake.

16...g 5 17.. d5

17.l h2?! allows 17...t d3t or 17...Exc3N, both of which are decisive.

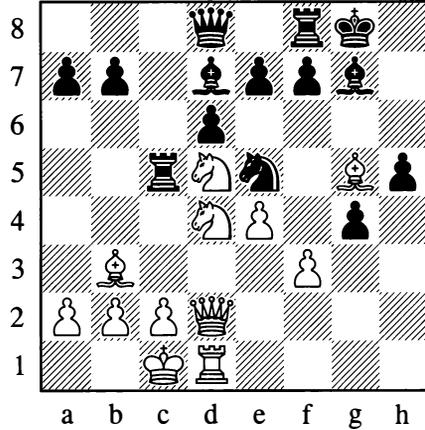
17.Eh1 was tried in Kiltti - Hallenberg, Espoo 1997, but White doesn't get anywhere after:



17...gxf3N 18.Exh5 (18.. h6 e6) 18...1 a5 +

17.f4 tries to rectify White's previous error but now Black can instead play 17...t c6N. Remember, exchanging pieces is a good way to defuse White's attack.

The text was played against a young Shirov. He continued with the thematic:



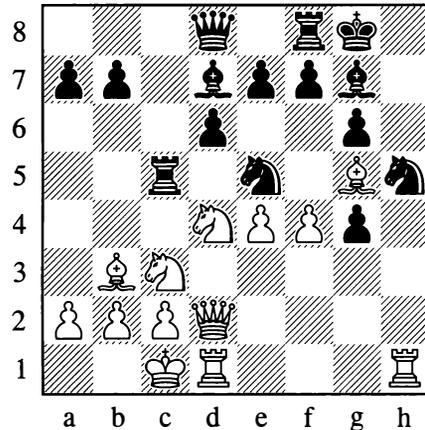
17...Exd5 18.. xd5 gxf3

There's also nothing wrong with copying our previous treatment: 18...t xf3 19.t xf3 gxf3 In Strowsky - Helstrofer, Cannes 2000, White tried 20.e5 (20.. h6N e5! is the important idea to remember) but after 20... g4! Black was just winning.

19.1 f . xf 20.exf ' d7 21.' f4 Ec8 22. bl ' b5 +

Rios Parra- Shirov, Turja 1989.

B2) 16.f4?

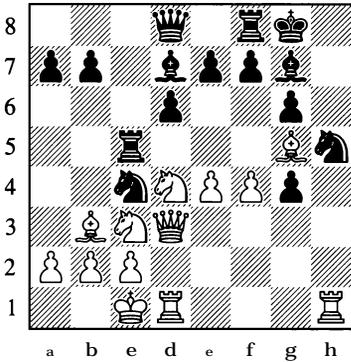


As in the 14.< b1 variation, this is a flawed plan.

16...l e4 17. e2

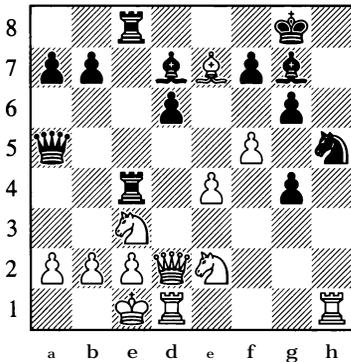
White's idea behind placing the queen on e2 is that he can play f4-f5 without allowing ...l e5 to gain a tempo.

17. d3 gives us the option of transposing to 15.f4 with 17...b5 or copying Vigorito's suggestion in a similar position:



17..J xg5!? 18.f g5! e5 Black went on to win in Yanqing Yang - Ziji Zhang Zhongshan 2014.

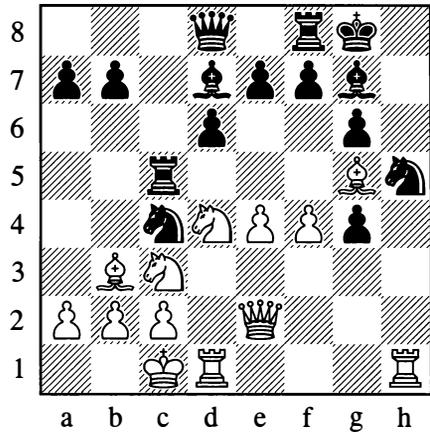
17. xc4 Exc4 18.l de2 There's very little positive one can say about White's position. He has sacrificed two pawns and given up his light-squared bishop and what he has received in return is nebulous. 18..' a5! looks excellent for Black, for example: 19. xe7 Efc8 20.f5



20...Exc3! 21.t xc3 Exc3 22. bl a4 23.Ecl b4 24.f6 t xf6 25. xd6 (Or 25. xc3 xc3

26.bxc3 t xe4 and despite White's extra two rooks he is completely lost.) 25...t xe4 26. xb4 t xd2t 27. al Exc2 28.Exc2 xc2 29. xd2 e4 + Guizar - Schartner, corr 2001.

As mentioned in the above note to 17. d3, Vigorito suggests:



17... xg5!?

17...t a5! N, playing like Ivanchuk did in the main line, also looks interesting.

18f g5 e5

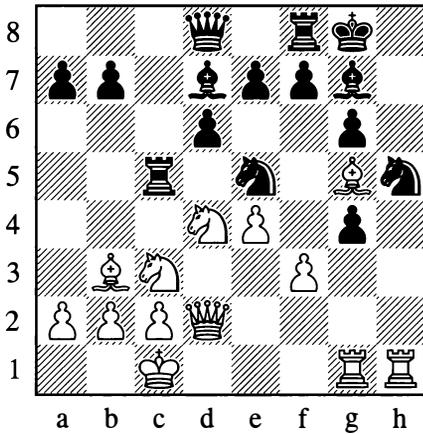
At the cost of an exchange, Black has a beautiful outpost for his knight. The only game to reach this position didn't last long.

19. xh5?! g 5 20. h2g3

0-1 Kaiumov - Serper, Soviet Union 1986.

B3) 16. dgl

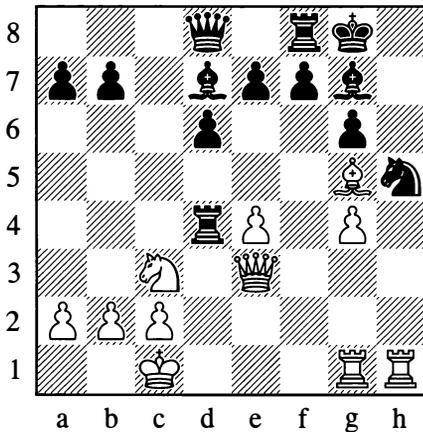
This rare idea has only been played once, in Bordas - S. Farago, Budapest 1990, but again it needs to be taken seriously. I think we can try to play in the same manner as with bl and ...b5 inserted.



16..t c4!N
 16..Wb6!N 17.i h6i f6 18i e3

17.. c4 gxc4 18f g4
 18.t f5?! doesn't really achieve anything as
 18..i xf5 19.exf5 i xc3 20.bxc3 Wa5 leaves
 White's king too exposed.

18..gxd4 19. e3
 Now I like



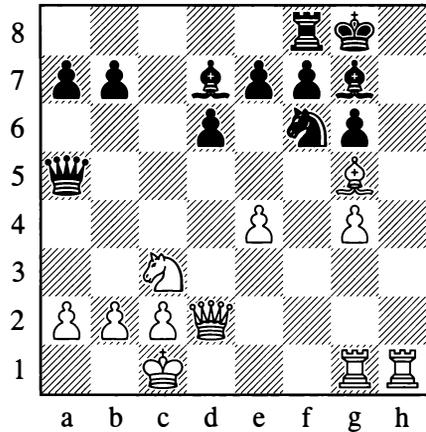
19..t f 20. xd4
 Taking the rook is automatic but Black now
 gets strong counterplay.

20.i h6!t xg4 21.Exg4i xg4 22.i xg7 xg7
 23.Wh6t (23Wxd4t f6+) 23... f6 24.Wh4t
 g7= is just a draw.

20.Wh3!? Ee8 21.i h6 i xg4 22.Exg4 t xg4
 23.i xg7 xg7 24.Wh1 t f6 25.Wh4t g7=
 is another perpetual.

20.i xf6 i xf6 21.Wh6 looks dangerous but
 af er 21..Ee8 White can't get any further.

20..Wa5 21. d2
 21.t d5 t xd5 22.Wxd5 Wa4



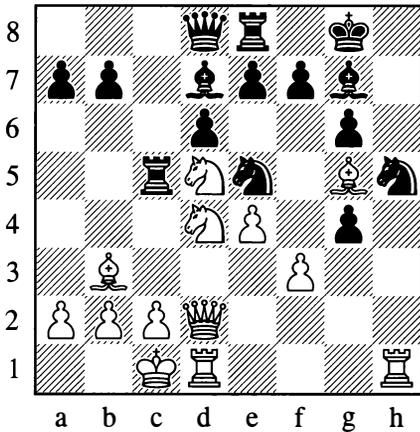
21..gc8!?
 T e immediate 21..t xe4 should also be
 considered.

22.i h6
 22.e5 t xg4 23i xe7 Wxe5 24.i xd6 Wd4=

22..t xe4 23t xe4 xa2 24.c3 alt
 25@c2 a4t
 Black has at least a draw as 26. d3! d5! is
 extremely dangerous

B4) 16t d5ge8

16..Exd5! is also possible immediately, but
 it makes sense to play in the same manner as
 we do after 14. b1 so we're less likely to get
 confused.



White's options again have a familiar feel: B41) 17.f g4, B42) 17J h5 and B43) 17.f4.

As usual 17. h6? should be met with 17...e6+.

17.t f5? was tried in a couple of games but the forcing 17... xf5! 18.exf5 t xf3 19.We3 t xg5 20.Wxg5 (or 20.f g6 e6! 21.gxf t t xf 22. xh5 exd5 + Gibis - Gschwendtner; Germany 1994) 20...e6 is good for Black, Foukal - Nov , K atovy 2004.

17.t f4? Wa5! Black's position was already pleasant but here White panicked and after 18.t xg6? Wxd2t 19. xd2t xg6 20. xh5t f4 21. xf4 xh5 Black was completely winning in Correa- Petrova, Chotowa 2010.

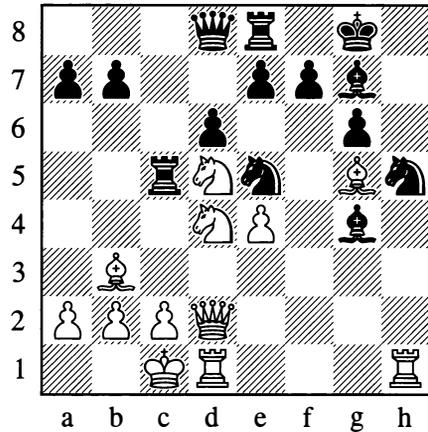
B41) 17.f g4

T is move is extremely rare. In fact the only game I could find to reach this position was agreed drawn immediately after Black's reply. However, the move is the engine's top choice and so should be checked. Play might proceed as follows:

17...i xg4

½-½ Frolov - Kahn, Budapest 1996.

17...t f6N is also worth considering

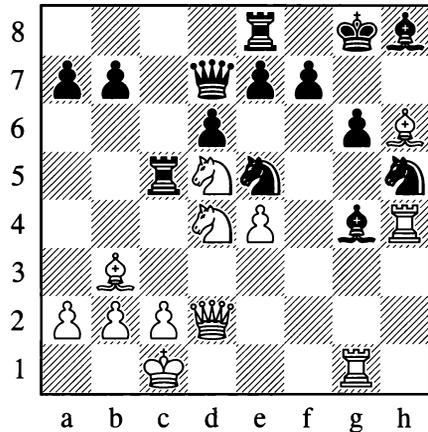


18. dglN d7 19.i h6i h8

19...e6 also looks fine: 20. xg7 < xg7 21.t e3 f3 22.t ef5t (22. h3 xe4 23. xh5 t d3t 24.< b1 xh5 25.cxd3 c6o) 22...exf5 23.t xf5t < g8 24.Wh6 xh1 25. xg6t t xg6 26.Wxg6t mf8 27.Wh6t < g8-

20. h4

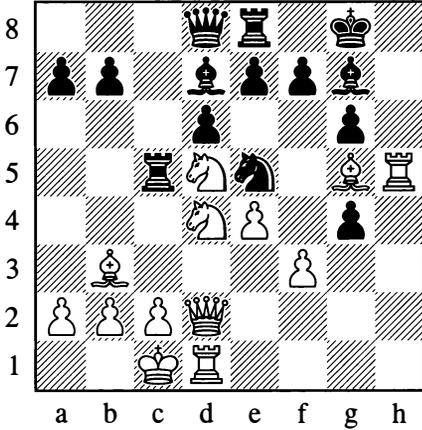
20.t e3 t f6 21.t xg4 t exg4 22. h4 d5! 23.exd5 Exd5! 24. xd5 Wxd5 25.t b3 t xh6 26.Wxh6 g7+



20..e6 21.. c3 h5 22. hxg4 . xg4 23. xg4C

B42) 17J xh5

T is is White's other critical try but it's been defanged.



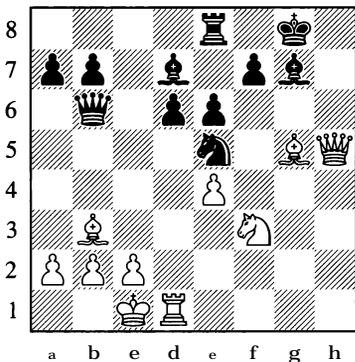
17...gxh5 18. ♖h2 ♙xd5! 19. ♗xd5 ♜b6 20. ♗xh5

Of course 20.1 f5?? doesn't work here as b2 is undefended - a key difference between this position and 14.c b1. The b5-pawn would block Black's pressure on b2.

20...e6 21. b3 gxf3

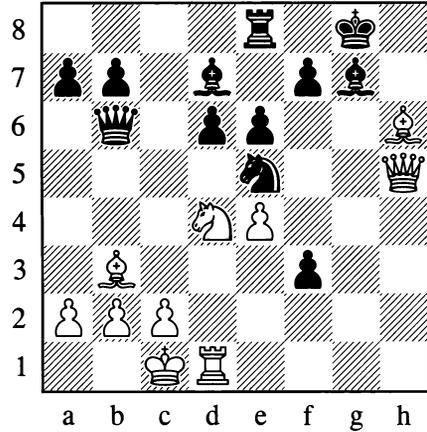
Now White has two main choices: B421) 22. h6 and B422) 22. e3

22.1 xf3? N T is was my main line in the 14.< b1 variation but here White gets into trouble after:



22...1 c5! The big difference is that White cannot move his bishop from g5 due to ...1 d3t picking up the queen.

B421) 22. h6



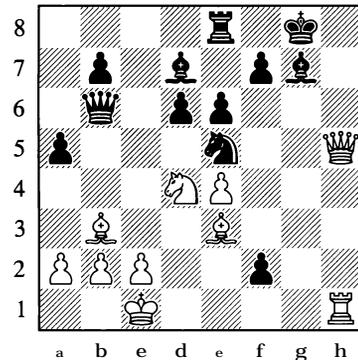
22...f N

I think this is a strong move. Dealing with the pawn costs White a few tempos and allows Black to get organized.

23. xg7

23.1 g5! d3t! 24.cxd3' xd4+

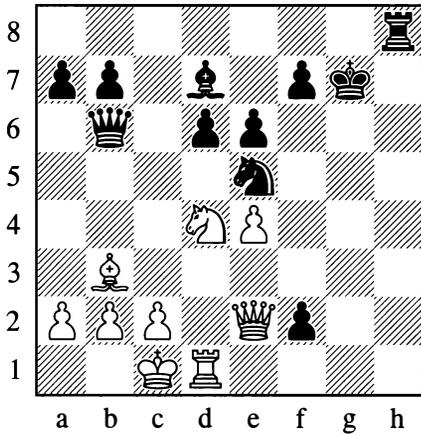
23.1 e3 a5! Pointing out that the b3-bishop is short of squares. 24.2hl (24.1 f5 ' a6! 25.1 g7 fl=' - +; or 24.a4 i xa4! 25.1 xa4 l c4 26.1 b5! xe3 27.1 xe8' c7+)



24...! d8 Black gets time to bring the queen to

f6, slowing down White's effort to win the f2-pawn. 25. xf2? Wf6 followed by 26...a4 wins a piece.

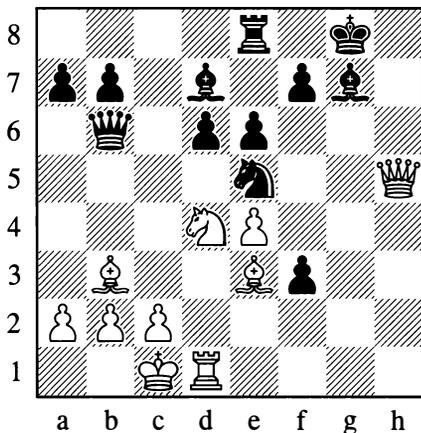
23.. kg7 24.V e2 h8
24... c6!?



25.Vx h6

The took gives Black's king good protection while Black still has an extra pawn.

B422) 22.i e3



22...V a5!N

This was offered as an alternative by Vigorito and still doesn't appear to have been tried. It looks perfectly playable to me and I've added some possible variations.

22...Wd5

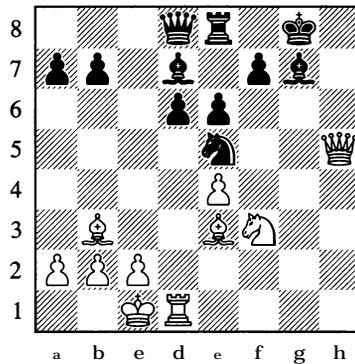
In practice Black has always dropped the queen back to here. The idea is to bring the queen to f6 to help support the king and create threats along the long diagonal.

23.1 xf3

This is White's best. He manages to restore material parity but he'll still suffer a little in the endgame.

a) 23. g5? Wa5! The bishop on g5 is caught in an awkward pin. 24. Wh4? (24.c b1 c6N 25.1 xc6 bxc6 26. h6 xh6 27.Wxh6 Wc5+) 24...1 g6 25.Wh5 f2 + Farooqui - Sosonko, Malta (ol) 1980.

b) 23.c3? Wf6! White now regrets not having taken that pawn on f3 as it's not so easy to round up. 24. c2 Wg6 25.Wh4 Wg4 26.Wh2 Wg2 27.Wf4 Wg4 28.Wh2 Wg2 29.Wf4 1 g4 + Kaakinen - Froeberg, corr. 1991.



23...1 xf 24.Wxf3 Wf6 25.Wxf6 xf6

Vigorito gives the following reference: 26. f4 c6 27. glt < f5 28. xd6t e7 29. f4

This was apparently drawn in Marton Bardocz - Grima, corr. 2004, although I can't find the game. Black can continue here with:

29... c5

Black has a small edge thanks to the better bishops and the vulnerable e4-pawn, although White should be able to hold the draw.

23.Eh1

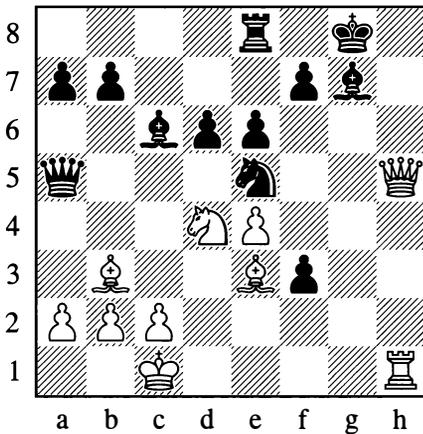
23. bl t c4! 24. xf3 t xe3 25.Wxe3 f8
26.c3 eT+ Black's king is safe and he can
now try to utilize his extra pawn.

23.Wh3 c6!? 24.t xc6 bxc6 25.Wg3 f8+

23.! gl?? t d3t T is is of course the point
behind putting the queen on a5.

23.. c6

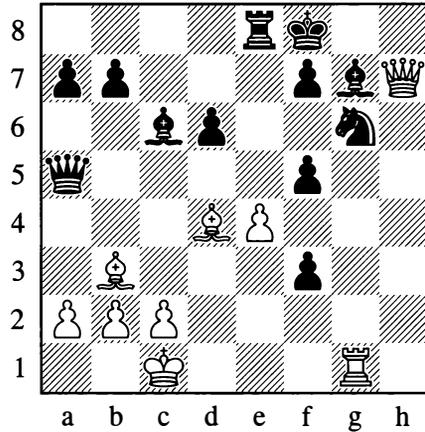
The following line is long and so almost
certainly contains a flaw somewhere, but at any
rate the position seems easier for Black. White
struggles to create any meaningful threats
whilst at the same time preventing Black from
mating on e1 and stopping the f -pawn from
causing trouble.



24.' h7t ♠f8 25.Egl l g6 26.l f !
White's best practical try.

26.t xf xe4+ or 26. h6?We5 +.

26..ex 27. d4
27. xf ?We5 +



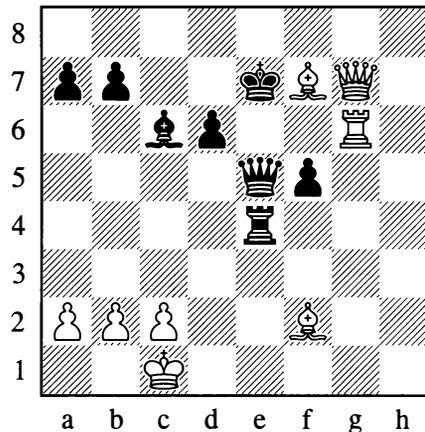
27..Ee5! 28i !f 29i Exe4 30' g8t
30.Wxg6?We5 +

30.! xg6??! elt 31. xel Wxel#

30..' e7 31.' xg7

31. xg6 xb2t! 32. xb2 We5t 33. cl
Wf4t 34. b2! b4t 35. c3 Wxf2 +

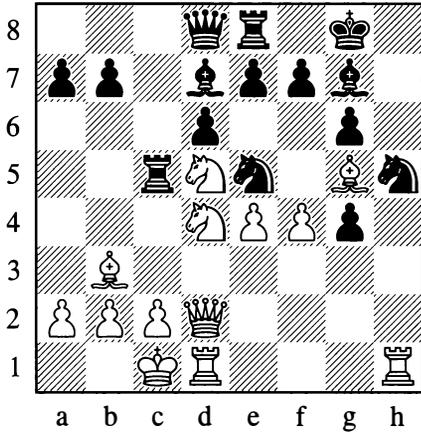
31..' e5 32.Exg6
32.Wxg6?! Wf4t



32..Eelt 33' d2 Ee2t 34' dl ' xg7
35. h4t!' xf 36.Exg7t ' xg7 37.' xe2
White should hold the ending.

B43) 17.f4

T is used to be White's idea but, like 17.! xh5, once Black had had time to study the variation it was discovered to be harmless and is now very rare.



17...t c4

Now White needs to decide where to put his queen: B431) 18 ♖2, B432) 18 ♜ f or B433) 18 ♜ d3.

B431) 18 ♜e2! aS!?

I have a soft spot for this move. Black immediately gets rid of the b3-bishop after which White's attack is much less potent.

19.f

19.1 e3 t xb3t 20.t xb3 ! xd5! 21.exd5 1 b6T e exchanges favour Black - even when the exchanged down- as he has two good pawns, f4 is vulnerable and White's minor pieces are ineffectual. White tried to keep the queens on the board, but after 22.1 e1 f5 23.! d2 ! c8 Black was obviously the one attacking in A besa- Gorzaga Grego, email 2010.

19...t xb3t 20.a b3

20.t xb3 ! xd5! 21.! xd5 t g3 22.1 h2 t xh1 + Bartakke- Mari Arul, Chennai 2006.

20.. aS 21.@bl : hdS

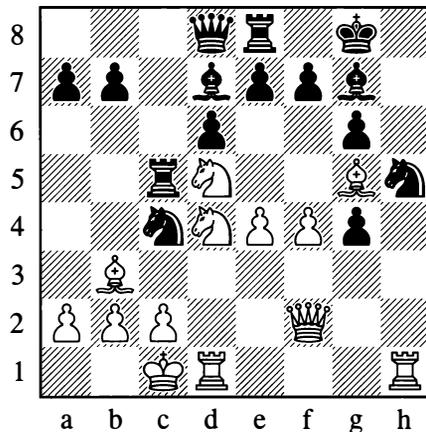
We've seen this motif enough times now that I don't feel we need yet another exclamation mark.

22.exdS xdS 23. xg4 i xd4 24. xd4 xd4 25J xd4 t g3 26J h3

T e game ends here claiming a White win. Either Black forgot to send his reply back or there was an input error; as Black is just winning Guizar- John, corr: 1997.

B432) 18 ♜ f

I suggest we play in the same style here too. However, as White's last didn't hit the knight we can take advantage of a more accurate move order:



18...! xdS!

T is hasn't been played in over-the-board chess but has scored well in correspondence.

19.exdS 1 aS 20.f

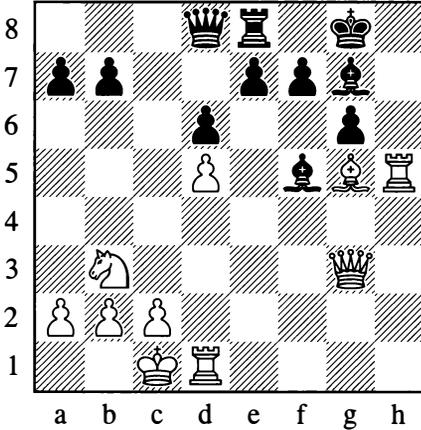
White's only aggressive option, as otherwise the g5-bishop is likely to be trapped for the rest of the game.

20...t xb3t 21.t xb3

21.axb3 1 a5 22.< b1 1 xd5+ Eiben - Cardelli, corr: 1997.

21...h ! 22J hh5 g3! 23 xg3

23.Wf3 Wc5! is Black's cunning idea, which both defends f5 and threatens mate on c2, so Black can pick up the rook for free.

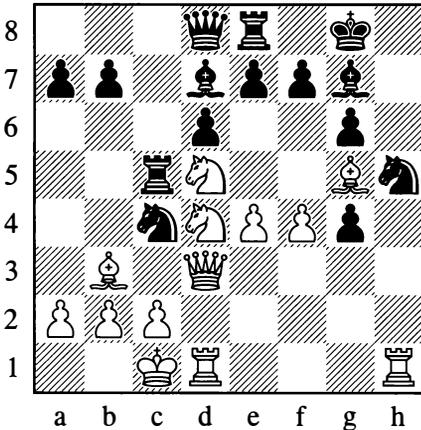


23..g h5 24i h6i g6+

Black won several moves later in Hempel - Noeth, email 2010.

B433) 18. d3

White's queen is more active here but the downside is that after f4-f5 we'll be able to return our knight to e5 with tempo. Therefore it makes less sense to put the knight on a5 now.



18.. c8!

A rare move, but it appears to be promising for Black.

19J xh5

Or 19.f5 Exd5!. We want to block in the bishop on b3 20.exd5t e5 Now White has no pressure on f . 21.We2 Xxf5 H. Koch - Goy, email 2007. White's attack has disappeared and the three pawns are far too much for the exchange.

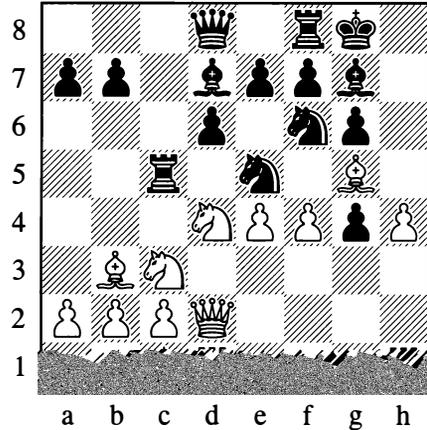
19.t xe7t is probably the reason 1S...Wc5 is so rare but as Vigorito points out 19...Exe7 20.Xxe7 t xf4 is good for Black, although after 21.Wf1 I'd prefer 21...t h5 followed by ...We5.

19..g h5 20. xe7t Exe7 21i xe7W68

After White drops back his bishop we can play either 22...b5 or 22...t a5, both of which leave Black with a clear extra pawn.

C) 15.f4

The main line. White pushes the knight away from the centre.



15.. c4

White's options are C1) 16i xc4, C2) 16. d3 and C3) 16. e2.

C1) 16i xc4 xc4

Here Black has had to recapture with the rook but White still isn't in time to create any major threats

17.e5

17. e2? xc3! 18.bxc3 a5 is promising for Black.

17.i xf6

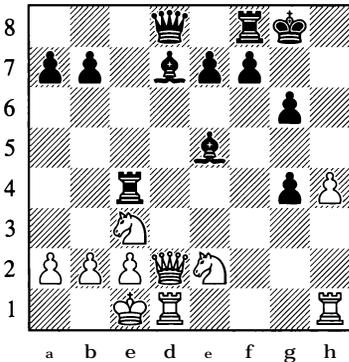
White is not in time to crash through.

17...i xf6 18.e5

18.t d5? worked well in Lazic- Mladenovic, Paracin 2009, but only because Black didn't play 18..i xd4N. Why not take the piece? Black is winning: 19.b3 (19. d3 i xb2!?) 20.c xb2i b5) 19...e6 20.bxc4i c5! White's king is wide open.

18...dxe5 19.f e5i xe5 20.t de2

T is was Pepino - Faraoni, Asti 1998, and now I like:



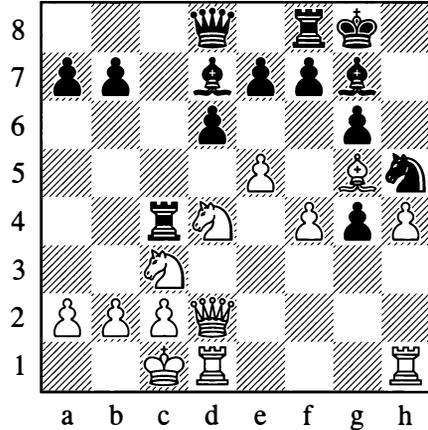
20...! 7N 21.h5 e6 22.hxg6 f g6 23. h6 e7 24. xg6t g7+

17...c h5

By blocking the h-f1e, White's attacking chances are lessened.

Black has another interesting choice: 17...b5! Ignoring the kingside has worked well in practice 18.t dxb5 i xb5 19.t xb5 (19.exf6 exf6 20.t xb5f g5 21.hxg5' b6 22. h2 fc8

23.t c3 : b8 24. h7t c f8 25. d2 ' xb2 0 1 Froehling - Reschke, Wiesbaden 1992) 19...t e4 20. d5' c8 21.t a3?: b4 22.i xe7 ' f5! 23. hf1 Rada- Lanz Calavia, corr. 1998. Mter 23...: c8N White is unable to deal with all the threats.



18Wd3

18t d5 f6 simply picked up a piece in V. Rodriguez - Granara Barreto, Montevideo 1999: 19.exd6 exd6 +

18.exd6N can be met with either 18..' b6 19.dxe7 : e8 20.t de2 i f5+ or 18..f6 19. e2 : xd4 20.dxe7 : xd1t 21. xd1 ' c8 22.exf8= t i xf8+.

18.. xd4

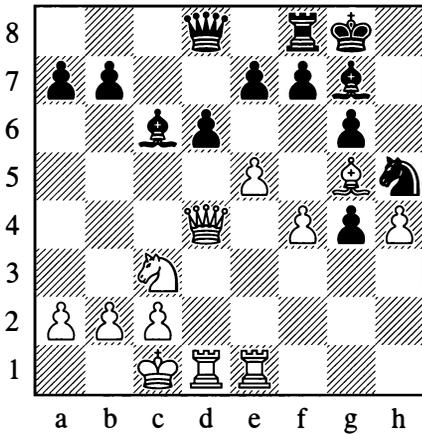
18..' c8?N is also good for Black.

19.Wxd4i c6

White's position doesn't look so bad but his main problem is the trapped bishop on g5. Should he move the f-pawn to try and extricate it, then the g7-bishop will become extremely powerful.

20. hel

20.t d5f6! 21. c4 c h8 22.f5 f g5 23.f g6 : f4! 24.t xf4 gxf4+ was Mueller - Marhun, corr. 1988. Black's minor pieces dominate the board.

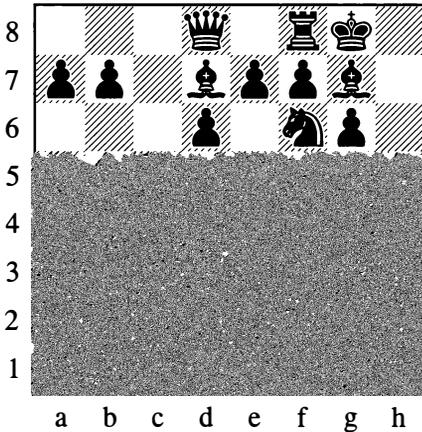


20...f6

Black picks up the g5 bishop with a decisive material advantage.

C2) 16.Wd3

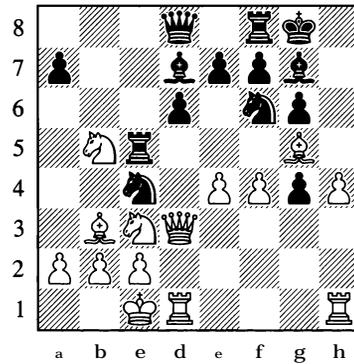
T is the more logical square for the queen but is actually rarer than 16. e2. I believe this is because White wants to continue with f4-f5 and doesn't want to allow Black to gain time with ...t e5.



16..b5

White's main tries here are C21) 17.hS?, C22) 17. x and C23) 17.f .

17.t dxb5? allows a tactic you will see frequently in similar positions



17...t xb2! 1B' xb2 t xe4 19.' xe4 xb5 20.l rd4 c6 21.t d5 xd5 22. xd5 ' a5 Black had a winning attack in Bendana Guerrero - Isaev, corr. 1988

17.< b1 would in fact transpose to variation 0 1 of Chapter 1- see the note on 17.' d3 on page 37.

17.e5

T doesn't have any independent merit if Black replies with:

17...dxe5

17...' cB? is an interesting independent option for Black.

White should now transpose.

1B xf6

Instead 1Bt dxb5? is a big mistake. Whenever White plays this, clearing the long diagonal, you should check whether 1B..t xb2! works. Here it does 19.< xb2 e4 20.' d2 ' b6! 21.t d4 l fcb 22.t ce2 a5 Black's attack was breaking through in Atri Sangari - Vescovi, Moscow (ol) 1994.

1B.. xf6

See variation C22 below.

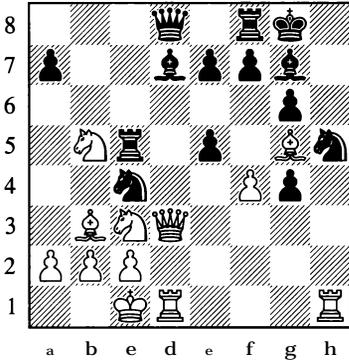
C21) 17.hS?

T is still doesn't work.

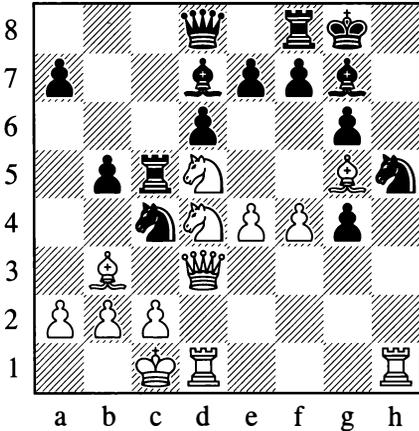
17...t xhS 18.t dS

1B.f5? might look dangerous but Black has a trick: 1B.. xd4! 19.' xd4 e5 20. xdB exd4 + A useful resource and well worth remembering

18.e5 dxe5!? T is liquidates into a pleasant endgame. (My engine tells me Black is winning after 18... b6N but the positions are more complex.) 19.t dxb5 Jucker - Schendel, com. 1989. Here both Dearing and Vigorito point out a strong continuation for Black:



19...exf4! 20. xc4 1xg5 21. xd7 xd7 22.1xd7 f3 T e pawns overwhelm White.



18..f !

White's pieces start to get pushed back and any attempts at sacrificing fail emphatically

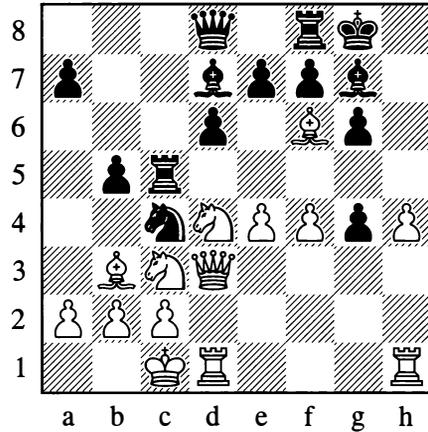
19. h4

No better is 19.t e3 f g5 20.t xc4 bxc4 21. xc4t d5! 22. xd5t 1xd5 23.exd5t xf4 + Jakirlic - Sirota, Melbourne 1998, or 19.e5 1xd5 20. xg6 e8 21. e4 1xd4 22.1xd4 f g5 + Zyla- B. Grabarczyk, Warsaw 1990.

19...e6 20.t e3 x4

T is position has been reached in a surprising number of correspondence games but Black should just be winning - we have three extra pawns af er all.

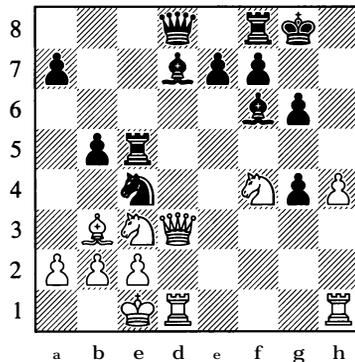
e 22) 17.i x



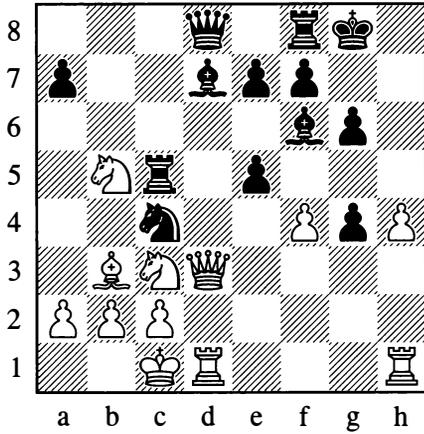
As is of en the case when White trades of this bishop, he runs into trouble along the long diagona .

17..i x 18.e5 d e5 19. d b5

19.t de2 exf4 20.t xf4 (20. xd7 is analysed by Dearing; 20... xd7 21.1xd7 f3 22.t g3 e5 23.t ge4 Here I'd prefer 23... f4t [over his 23...g3] 24.Wbl 1e5 +.) T e text occurred in Musil - Ji. Houska, Olomouc 2006, and now best is



20.. c7N 21.f d5 Exd5 22.l xd5 j xbl t
23' bl Wc5 +



19..t xb2!

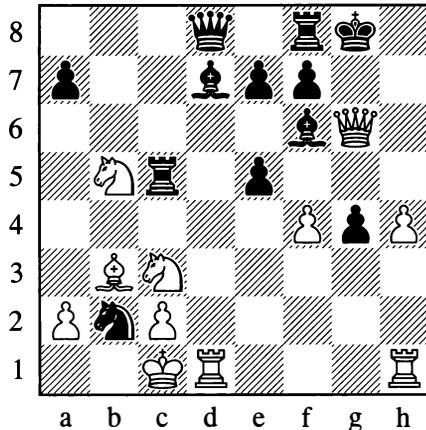
Black conjures up a fierce attack coupled with two strong connected passed pawns.

Now we should examine C221) 20. xg t? before the more critical C222) 20' xb2.

Dearing also points out that 20.Wxd7?l xd1! wins material.

C221) 20. xg t?

Taking a pawn in front of your opponent's king with check is of course tempting, but here it just leaves White's pieces too loose.

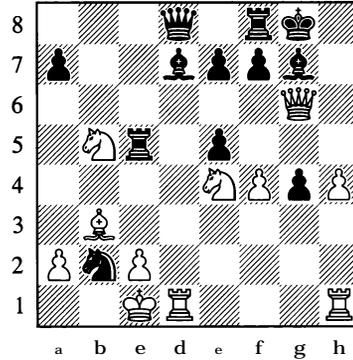


20.. g7

White can't get any further on the kingside and he now has the impossible task of defending against Black's initiative.

2U{ xb2

21.l e4



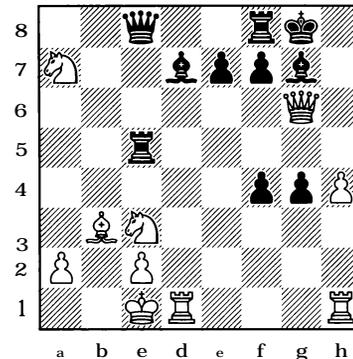
21..Exc2t N was pointed out by Golubev. (21..Ec4 was played in Diani - Casas, email 2011, and also worked well.) His line continues 22.< xc2 l xd1 23.Exd1 Wc8 24.< bl j f5 +.

21.h5 Wh8! is given in various sources as winning for Black.

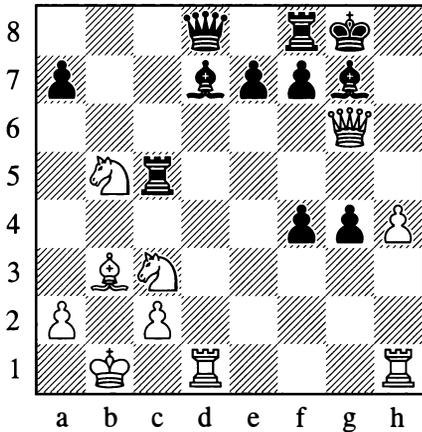
21...exf4 22.@bl

22.l d4 Wa5 23.Ed3 Exc3! 24.Exc3 Wb4! 25.Ed1 Wxb3t 26.axb3 f g6 Again Black's pawn phalanx is too strong and White is still rather tangled on the long diagonal.

22.< c1 Wc8 23.l xa7 was Lavrentyev - Efremov, corr: 1996.

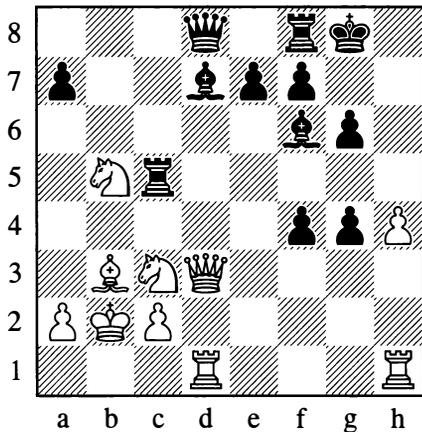


23... a5N 24.1 e4 (24J hd7 ' xh1t)
 24... f5 25.' b6 xe4 26.' xc5 xh1- +



22..Y aS 23hd 7 xc3 24Yxg4 YxbS
 2S. dS xb3t 26.a b3YxdS 27. gl Y eS
 0 1 Delancy - Moingt, Belgium 1993.

C222) 20.' xb2 exf4



21.' d!

It looks strange to choose c1 over b1 but now the white king is closer to Black's connected passed pawns, which is important in the endgame.

21.' xg6t g7 simply transposes to variation e 221 above.

21.' b1 e6 22.' xd7 ' xd7 23J hd7 xc3 is another unpleasant endgame. Despite the extra piece the endgames are generally hopeless for White.

21...e6

Blocking the a2-g8 diagonal and so indirectly defending g6

21...' g7

This is recommended by both Dearing and Vigorito.

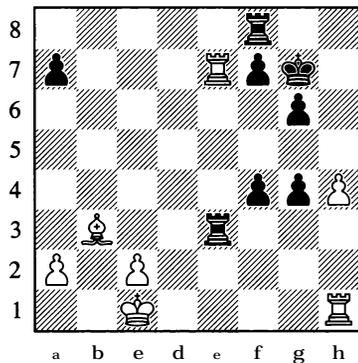
22.' xd7 ' xd7 23.Ehd7 xc3 24.1 xc3 xc3 25. xe7

25.' d2 e3 26. e1 xel was agreed drawn in A. Lopez – A. Peters, email 2004.

25... e3

This is assessed as a clear advantage for Black by Dearing, probably based on the game Bernard - Habermehl, corr. 1992, which continued 26. xa7? f3 27. Wd2 e2 2S. Wd3 g3 and the pawns were again too strong.

Instead White has to play:

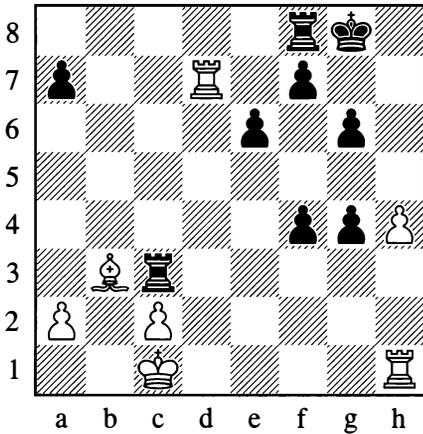


26. xe3N f e3 27.' dl f5 2S.' e2 f4 29. d5
 White has good drawing chances.

22Y xd7

One point of Black's previous move is that 22.1 e4N can now be met with 22... xb5! as the queen is defended. Following 23.' xdS xdS 24.1 xc5 White has an extra rook, but the pawns are still too strong after 24...g3.

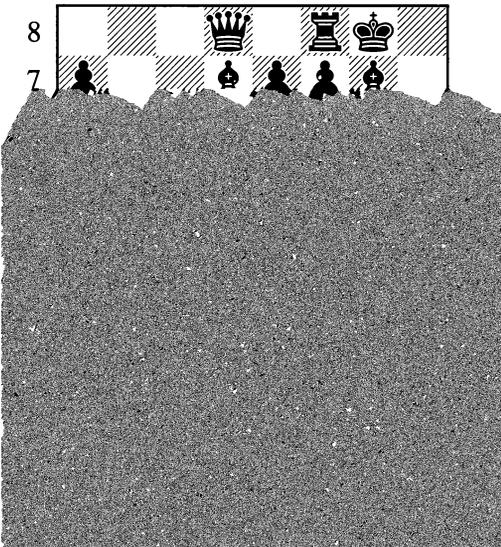
22..Y xd7 23J hd7. bc3 24.c xc3 i hc3



There has been quite a bit of correspondence action in this position with Black scoring +5 =2- 0. Obviously it is a very difficult position to defend.

C23) 17.f

Black again has many good options but the most straightforward is



18..Y c8

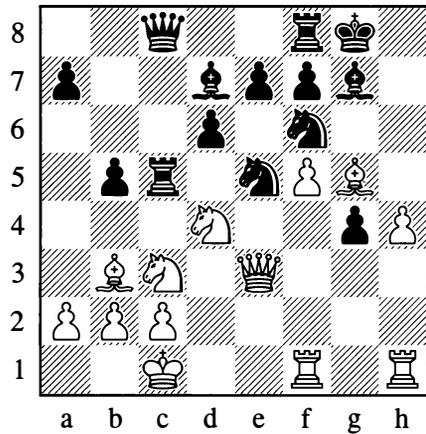
Black puts pressure on the f5-pawn and leaves the option of ...t e5 whenever it's convenient.

19J d

19.Ehf1 t e5 20.We3 Exc3!? (20...a5?N might be even stronger) 21.Wxc3 Wxc3 22.bxc3 Ec8 leaves Black in a pleasant queenless middlegame.

19. xf6 xf6 20.t e4 (20.Edg1N < h8= defends comfortably as 21.Exg4 allows 21...t e5) 20.. xd4 21.Wxd4Exf5+ Gonzalez Gil - FlorTrejo, email 2003

19...c e5 20Y e3



20...a5N

20...Exc3!? may also be considered.

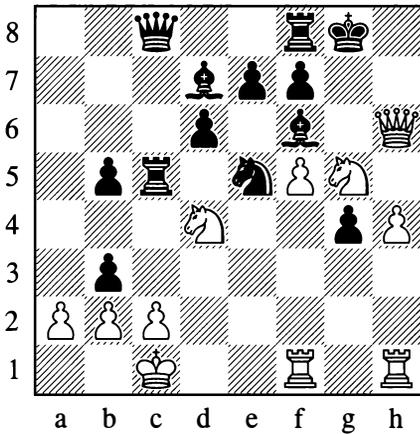
It's important to check the following line:

21. x

21.h5 < h7!

21... xf 22.c e4a4 23Y h6a b3 24.c g5

It is looking rather scary for Black, but he is able to keep everything under control:



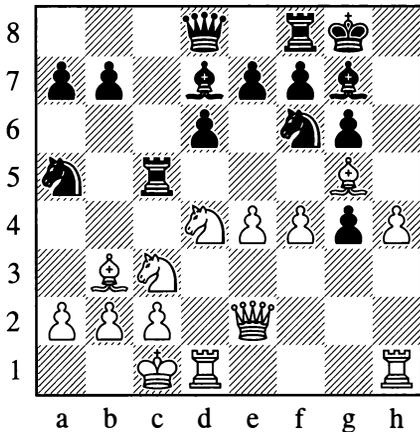
24...h2 25. d1 Ed8 +

C3) 16We2

I spent a lot of time here because all the main options seem to be doing well for Black. In the end I decided to follow Ivanchuk, whose move doesn't allow White even equality.

16...l a5!

Ivanchuk's brainchild. It may seem strange to move the knight again but Black is getting ready to trade on b3 and sacrifice on c3.



17.e5

In practical games this has been played almost exclusively. It makes sense for White to try and exploit our loss of control of the e5-

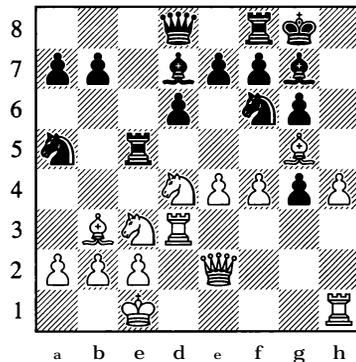
square but, as usual in this structure, Black can simply ignore the threat to the knight.

17.f5 1xb3t 1B1xb3 (1Baxb3 was tested in Farkas - Yaroshenko, corr. 2005. Here I'd play 1B..a5N with the idea 19.'b1 \ a6+. If White doesn't acquiesce to the queen trade he'll run into trouble on the a-f1e.) 1B..1xc3 19.bxc3 gxf5+ We've reached another position that has been seen in quite a few correspondence games and again Black is scoring well. White has the more vulnerable king and Black's bishop pair is useful.

17. xf6 xf6 1B.\ d3 (1Bt d5 e5! 19.t xf6t \ xf6 20.f e5 dxe5 + Burrige - Ben Fredj, email 2012) 1B..t xb3t 19.t xb3 1xc3! (19...1h5N might be even stronger) 20.bxc3 \ c7 21.h5 \ xc3+ Wernikiewicz - Berza, email 2006.

17.\ e3 doesn't change much: 17...t xb3t 1Bt xb3 (1Baxb3 \ a5 19.' b1 1fcB20t de2 1Bc6 gave Black a winning attack in Peng - Me, Calgary 2009) 1B..1xc3 19.bxc3t h7+

17.1d3 as played in T. Meier - Haas, Wuerttemberg 2004, attempts to cut of our plan but it doesn't help:

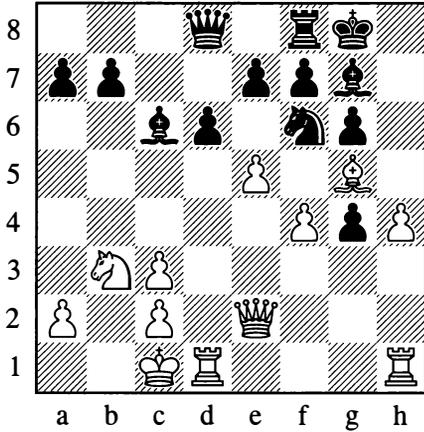


17...t xb3tN 1Bt xb3 1xc3! 19.1xc3 t h5 20.1e3 \ b6+ We still threaten ...f6, and 21. xe7 1eB 22. g5 f6 doesn't help.

17...1 xb3t 18! xb3 ! 19.bxc3 c6

For the price of the exchange Black has one pawn, a safe king and good attacking chances. Meanwhile White's structure has been compromised and the bishop is still totally dead on g5. Black can actually win back the exchange by force here too.

19...WcS! is a good alternative plan.



Now C31) 20.e is rarely played, while C32) 20J hf is more common.

20.exd6 has only occurred in one over-the-board game. 20...exd6 21: hf1 T at game continued 21...WcS, which worked well in Pogonina – I. Korobov, Nizhnij Novgorod 1999. Instead 21...WeS! is suggested by Dearing giving Black a good ending after 22.WxeS: xeS 23: xd6! t e4; and 21...: eSN looks even stronger:

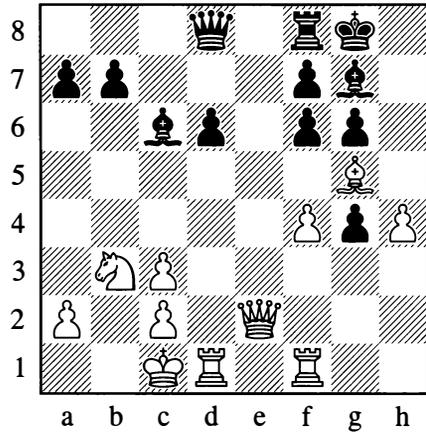
Perhaps White should try 20. xf6N but 20.. xh1 21: xh1 exf6 22.e6 We? 23.Wxg4 f5!+ is excellent for Black.

C31) 20.exf exf

As I wrote earlier, this trade is dangerous for White as the dormant g?-bishop comes to life.

21. hf

21.Wxg4 xh1 22: xh1 f g5 23.hxg5: e8+ Vigorito suggests this is how White should try and play this variation and calls it unclear; but I think Black is a lot better. White doesn't really have an attack as the black king is quite safe on f8 while White's king is too vulnerable.

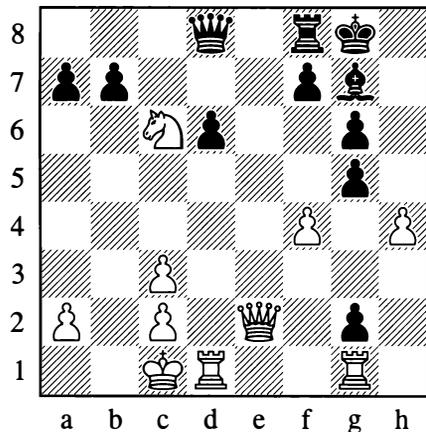


21...g3!N

It seems a shame to give up that passed pawn and powerful bishop for a mere rook: 21... f3 22: xf3 gx3 23.Wxf3 f g5 24.hxg5 We?' Garini - Ruiz.Jarabo Pelayo, email 2006.

After the strong text move, play might continue as follows:

22! d4g2 23 gl f g5 24.l xc6 24.hxg5 xd4 25.cxd4 Wa5+



24...bxc6 25. xg2' b6 26' a g 4+

C321) 21' c4

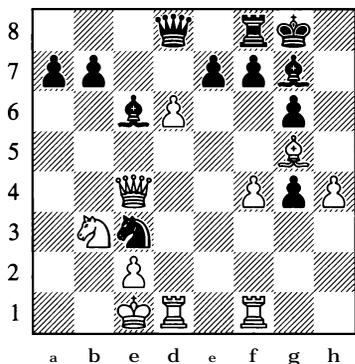
C32) 20.ghf t e4

Apart from the two forks on c3 and g3, Black also threatens ...f6 trapping the bishop. Even if all that fails, White will find it hard to protect his king.

Vigorito gives 20...t d5 an exclamation mark, and it also looks good, but e4 feels a more natural square for the knight to me.

White must now decide between C321) 21' c4 or C322) 21' xg4.

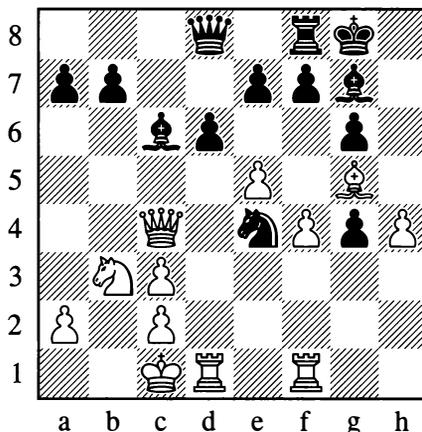
21.exd6 t xc3 22.1 c4 (the Almasi brothers offered the line 22.1 xe7 t xa2t 23.< bl t c3t 24.< cl f6 2S.1 e6t c hS +) 22...t xa2t 23.< bl t c3t 24.c cl Bravo Sedamano - Pelikian, Sao Paulo 1995. Here Black doesn't need to take the draw.



24...j bSN 2S.dxe7 1 xe7 26.j xe7 j xc4 27.j xfSj xfS= With a powerful position.

Meanwhile if White tries to defend with 21.1 d3 then 21...f6 simply picks up the bishop. 22.t d4 1 aS! 23.t xc6 1 a3t 24.c bl bxc6 2S.1 xe4 gbSt 26.1 b4 gxb4t 27.cxb4 f gS was a crushing illustrative line given by the Almasis.

T is was played in the stem game, which continued as follows:

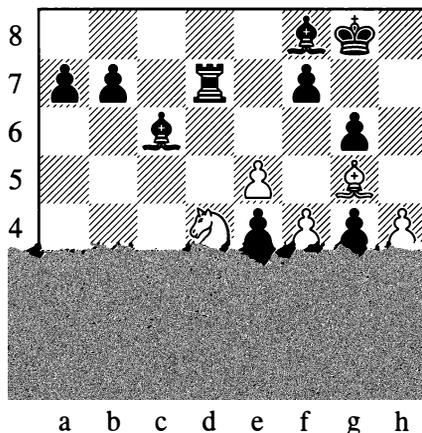


21...d5 22' xe4

Instead after 22.1 d4 f6 23.8fel bgS 24.8xe4 gxf4 (Zoltan and Istvan Almasi wrote an article suggesting 24...gxh4 which is also winning.) 2S.8eel 1 b6 26.8g1 g3 Black had a crushing position in jml26- pivovoy, Internet 2012. The pawns proved too strong.

22...d e4 23.gxd8 gxd8 24. xe7 gd7 2S. gS. f 26.t d4

T is was Smirin - Ivanchuk, Paris 1994, and here I like:



26..e3!N

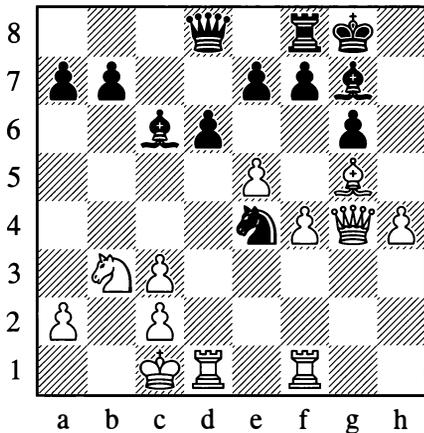
White struggles to stop both pawns for example:

27.J e1 i a t 28.\ bl g3 29.h e3g2 30.J g3 Exd4 31.c d4i b4!

White has no defence to ...i e1-f2.

C322) 21.' xg4

White takes a pawn and cuts out one of the forks but now his king is rather bare.



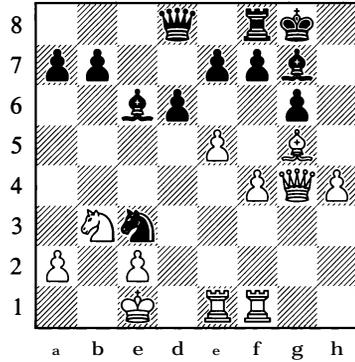
21...t xc3+

Black's attack is dangerous and even in correspondence games White has been unable to defend.

22.Exd6

With 22.h5 White desperately tries to continue the attack, but 22..l xd1 23.Exd1 ' eB! 24.Wh4 i e4 25.l d2 f6+ favoured Black in Abrahamyan - K einman, Berkeley 2011.

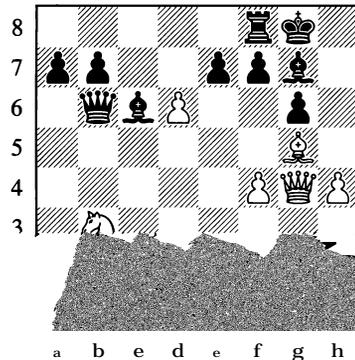
Against 22.l de1 I think Black should play:



22..i d5!N With a dangerous attack. 23.f5 (23.h5 Wc7 24.hxg6 l xa2t 25.< b1 l c3t 26.< c1 f g6+) 23..WcB 24.i xe7 l xa2t 25.< b1Wc3+

22.l d2 WeB! 23.f5 (23.WxcB l xcB 24.i xe7 is a lesser evil but 24...dxe5 25.f e5 i xe5 is a pretty miserable endgame.) 23..i xe5 24.i xe7 l xa2t 25.< d1 l eB 26.i xd6 i b2!/? Setting up a mating net. 27.i b4 i b5 2Bl f3 l xb4 29.Wxb4 Wc6 30.Wf4 i e5 31.Wg4i c3 32.f g6 f g6 33.l c1 i a4 34.l b3 i xb3 0-1 Schwenger - Mittermueller, email 2005.

Vigorito suggests that White should try 22.exd6 when he points out that Black has at least a draw, but in fact 22..l xa2t 23.< bl Wb6! is just winning, 24.< xa2 (24.f5 i e4!; or 24.dxe7 l c3t 25.< c1 We3t 26.l d2 f5! White's queen is actually trapped and 27.exfB=Wt i xfB 2BWg1 i a3 is mate.)

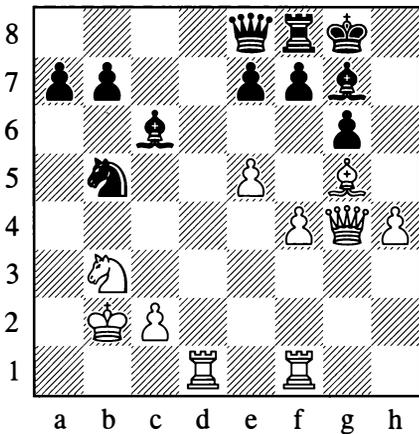


24...i a6t 25. bl i a3 26.: d4 e4! With a crushing attack.

22...l xa2t 23. bl l c3t 24. b2WeS
 24...c a4t also worked well. 25.' t3
 (25.' t1i e8 26.: d4 f6 would be quite similar
 to 24...i e8) 25...i e8 26.: d3 f6 27.i e6t
 i f 28i xf t : xf 29.c a5 c b6 30.: d8t
 : f8 31.: xf8t xf8 32.c xc6 bxc6 0 1 Gomez
 Galan Arene- Simmelink, email 2006.

24...i c7!N is also worthy of consideration.

25: d4l b5 26.gddl
 26.h5 didn't help White much. 26...c xd4
 27.c xd4 d5 28.hxg6 f g6 29.: dl e6+ Tanti
 - Santo, email 2009.



26..f ! 27.We6t h8 2S.h5 g h5 29.exf
 ex 30WxeS gxeS 31li h4 ft 32. c1l c3
 33.gdel l e2t 34. dl i b5 35.ga i c3
 0 1 Van Essen - Skulason, email 2001.

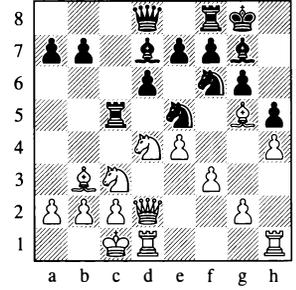
Conclusion

This was a long chapter and I apologize for the amount of theory, but it is quite critical to the viability of the Soltis Variation and the Dragon itself. Luckily the theory seems to have worked out in Black's favour and these lines are now extremely rare.

White has two principal ways of playing this variation. The 15.h5 lines result in similar positions to those in 14. b1, and you should study both carefully. Against 15.f4, Ivanchuk's 16...c a5! both looks good theoretically and is easy to play. The idea is to simply exchange on b3 and then sacrifice on c3 when White's attack is extinguished, giving us strong counterplay.

Chapter 3

Soltis Variation



14th Move Alternatives

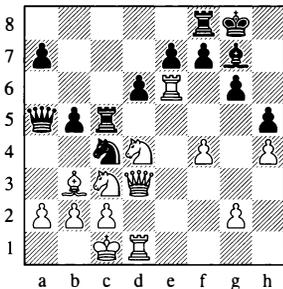
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♖c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7 7.f3 0-0 8.♚d2
 ♜c6 9.♙c4 ♙d7 10.0-0-0 ♞c8 11.♙b3 ♘e5 12.h4 h5 13.♙g5

13...♞c5

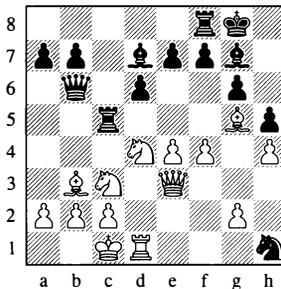
A) 14.♘de2?!	74
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D) 14.f4 ♘c4	79
D1) 15.♙xc4	79
D2) 15.♚d3 ♘g4 16.♙xc4 ♘f2 17.♚e2 ♘xh1 18.♙b3	80
D21) 18...♚b6	82
D22) 18...♙g4 19.♘f3 ♞xc3! 20.bxc3 ♚a5	83
D221) 21.♞d3	83
D222) 21.♞xh1	84

B) after 20.♞xe6



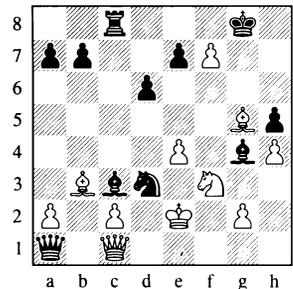
20...♙xd4!N

D21) note to 19.f5



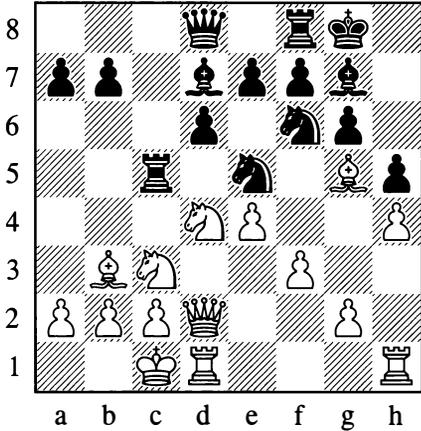
19...♙g4!N

D221) note to 23.♙b1!

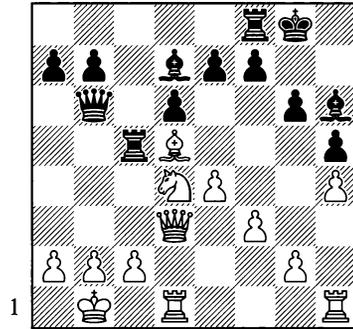


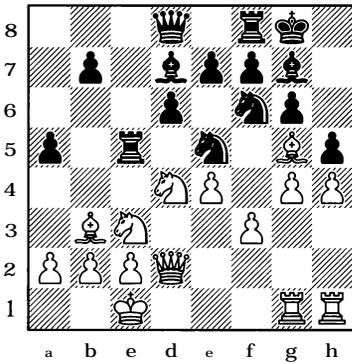
28...♙g7!N

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Qf6
 5. Nc3 g6 6. e3. g7 7. O-O 8. d2 t c6
 9. c4 . d7 10. O-O c8 11.. b3 t e5
 12. h4 h5 13.. g5 c5



This chapter sees us focus on White's options at move 14: A) 14. t de?, B) 14.. xf , C) 14. h4 and D) 14.f f5, D





15...a4!N 16.t xa4

16.j xa4 j xa4 17.t xa4 Ec4 1B.t c3 Wb6

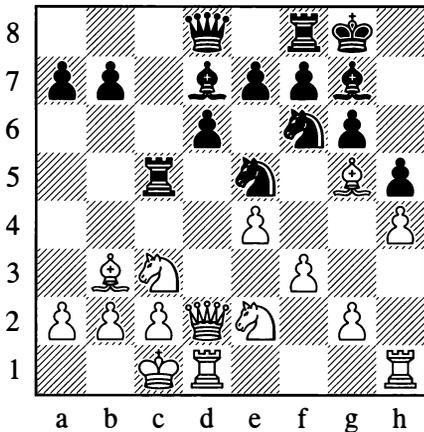
19.j e3Efc8+

16...j xa4 17.j xa4 t c4 1B.Wd3Wb6 19.j b3 Efc8

Black's position is well set up and White can't crash through: 20.j xf6? j xf6 21.gxh5 fails to 21...t xb2! +.

A) 14.t de??

T is is a rather passive option and gives Black easy play.

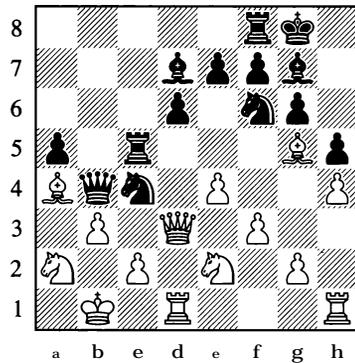


14...h5 15, x

At least here we see an idea coupled with dropping the knight back. White attempts to use the pin along the f-f le but it doesn't really work.

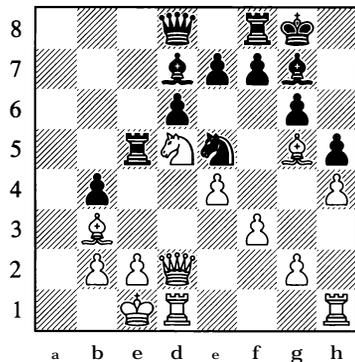
15.j e3 t c4 16.j xc4 Exc4+ White has lost a lot of time with his j e3-g5-e3 manoeuvre and Black is extremely comfortable.

15.c b1 a5 16.a4 bxa4 17.j xa4 (17.t xa4 j xa4 1Bj xa4 t c4 19.Wd3 Diaz Dalaglio - Villanueva, Buenos Aires 2004. The most accurate finish would be 19...t g4!N 20.f g4 t xb2 21.Wb3 Wc7 with an overwhelming attack.) 17...t c4 1B.Wd3 Wb6 19.b3 Wb4 20.t a2 The game was allegedly agreed drawn here in Molander - Frisk, Finland 1996, but Black's position would be completely crushing after:



20...Wb6N Onesampleline could be 21.t ac3 j xa4 22.t xa4 t a3t 23.c a2 Exc2t 24.c xa3 Wb4#

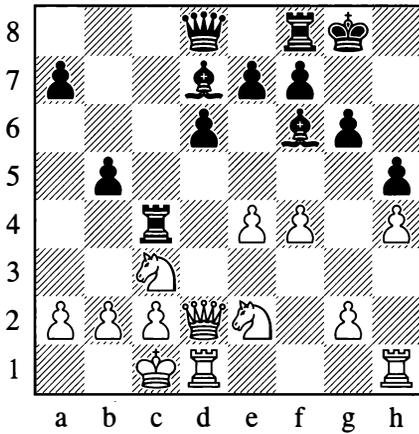
15.t f4 Having a knight on d5 would be pleasant for White but there's simply not enough time 15...a5 16.a3 b4 17.a b4 a b4 1B.t cd5t xd5 19.t xd5



19.. aS! 20.c xe7t Wh7 21.' xd6 c xf3!
22.gxf3j c3! 23.bxc3 bxc3 24.< bl EaS Black
had played a pretty game and scored a crushing
win in De Rosa- Gaponenko, Ischia 2010.

15..j xf 16.f4t c4 17.h c4 xc4

17...bxc4N IS.eS j g7 19.exd6 e6! is also
good for Black; White doesn't have a sensible
way to deal with Black doubling on the b-f le.

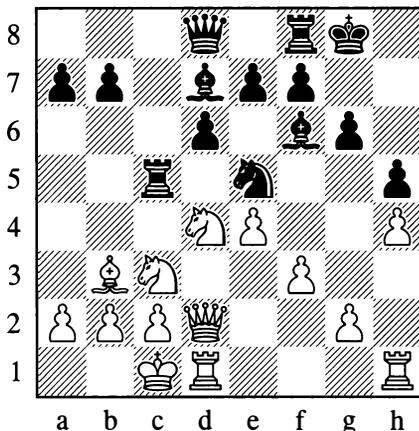


18.e5. g7 19.exd6. f

A few White players have stumbled into this
position but Black's score is overwhelming.
Black's pieces are coordinating far too well,
while White's extra pawn is irrelevant.

B) 14.. xf .

Again we should compare this position to the
one with the king on b1 and pawn on b5.



15.f4

IS.c dS j g7 16.Wbl saw White trying to
transpose to the aforementioned line (normally
reached from a 14.Wbl move order). Now
16..bS would transpose to a good line for
Black (see the note on 16.c dS in variation B
of Chapter 1 on page 32) while 16..aS!? 17.a4
c c4 IS.' gS e6 19.' xdS ExdS' also favoured
Black in Seraf movic - Berza, email 1999.

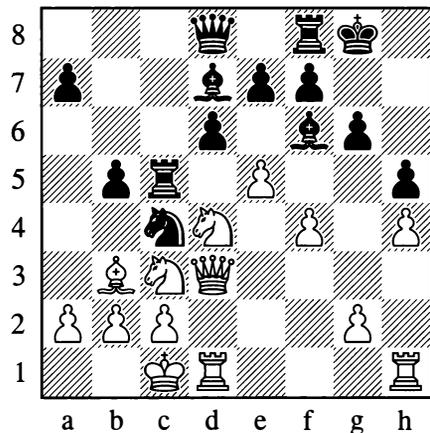
IS.g4 hxg4 is another transposition, this time
to variation A of Chapter 2 on page 50

15..l c4 16 d3

Comparing the lines, White could try
16j xc4N but 16..Exc4 17.eS j g7 is just
good for Black.

16..b5 17.e5

Playing for a quick f3-f4 and e4-e5 is the
only logical continuation after trading on f6.



17... g7 18 hel

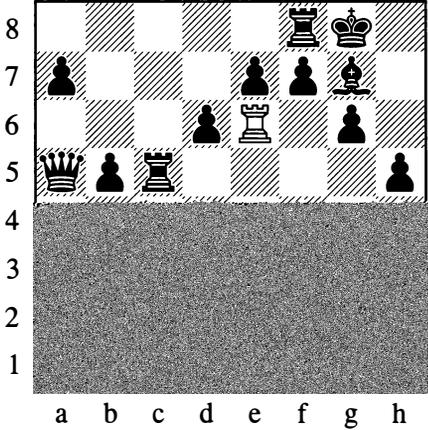
IS.c e4 EcS 19.e6 was tried twice by an
IM: 19..j xe6 20.c xe6 j xb2t 21.Wbl
f e6 22.c gS Ef6 23.Ehel In Pokojowczyk -
Mestel, Malta (ol) 1950, 23..' d7N 24.c xe6
WhS+ would have left W ite with the more
vulnerable of the t o kings.

18.. a5 19.e6

19.t e4 l c7 didn't get White anywhere in Hausdorf - Alico, email 2008, as he decided to continue with 20.t c3 when 20...dxe5 21.f e5 e6+ was just good for Black.

19..i xe6 20.he 6

As played in Pieper - Visetti, Aachen 1982, when Dearing observes that Black should have played:



20..i xd4!N

Black has the better prospects.

C) 14J hel

White declines to open up the h-f file and will instead play for the e4-e5 break.

14..h5 15.f4

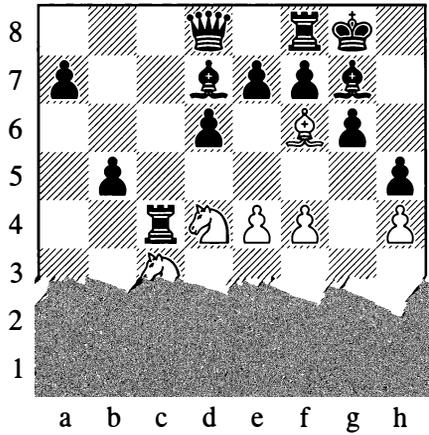
For IS.< bl see variation C of Chapter 1 on page 33.

15..l c4 16i xc4 xc4

This position is similar to the one examined in the 14. bl chapter. The only differences are the white king on c1 rather than b1 and Black's pawn still on a7 rather than as. In general that favours Black as ...WaSxa2 becomes an idea while ...b4xc3xb2 also comes with check.

Now C1) 17.i ? is nothing to fear; while C2) 17.e5 is more testing

C1) 17.i ?



As always giving up the dark-squared bishop is a big concession.

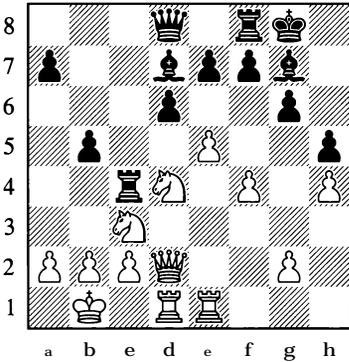
17..i 18e5i g7 19.h3

This isn't a move that White wants to play as now he'll be vulnerable down the long diagonal.

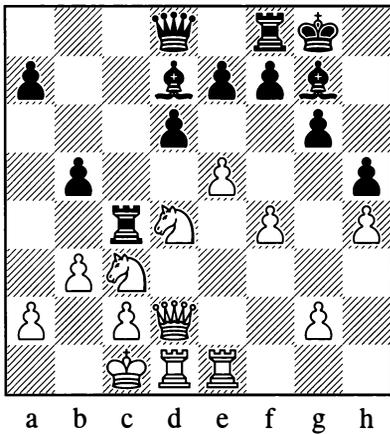
Surprisingly an Open Sicilian expert lost all sense of danger and played: 19.t cxb5? Wb8 (19...Wb6!N would be even stronger) 20.t c3 dxe5 21.f e5 i g4 22.Wd3 l c5 (Evidently Miles wanted to avoid 22...l fc8N 23.t d5 but here Black should just be winning after 23... h7! 24.t xe7 l 8c5.) 23.t f3 Nunn - Miles, London 1980. Now increasing the pressure on the queenside with 23...l fc8N would have left Black with a decisive advantage.

19.f5? b4! already wins material for Black. 20.t d5 dxe5 21.Wg5 h7! White couldn't both move his knight and prevent ...i h6 pinning the queen in Barge! - Civin, Cesky Brod 1996.

19. b1 was played in Farah - Seminara, Buenos Aires 1996, but if White wanted his king on b1 he should have played it earlier. Here I quite like:



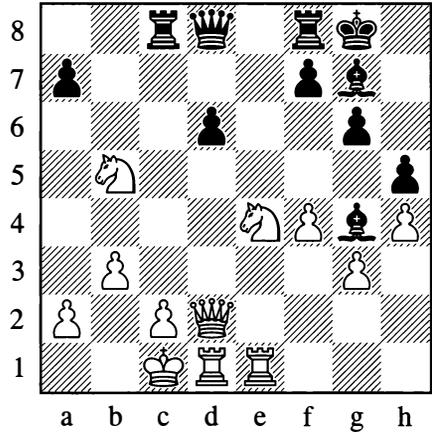
19... a5! N20 b3 (20.C cxb5 is still dangerous 20...dxe5 21.f e5 xb5 22.Cxb5 Wb5 23. d5 ! fc5 with a strong initiative) 20...dxe5! 21.C de2 (21.bxc4 exd4 22.Cxb5 g4 23! e1 ! d5 simply disgusting) 21...! xc3 22.Cxc3 g4 23.f e5 xd1 24.Cxd1 a5+



19...! c5
19...! c5! N is possible too.

20.1 e4 ! c8 21.exd6 i g4 22.1 xb5 exd6 23.g3

23.C bxd6 N ! c6 24. d5 c7+ is also dismal for White.



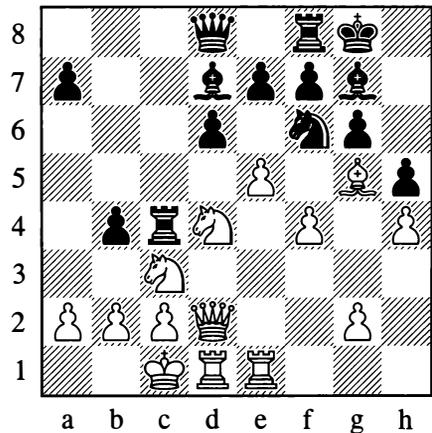
23...d5! 24.1 ed6
24. xd5 a5 was Black's point.

24...! c5 25.b4 ! xb5! 26.1 xb5 Wb6 27.a4 i xdl 28.1 xdl Wa6 29.Wxd5 Wxa4+

White wasn't able to defuse Black's initiative, even with many weeks of thinking time, in Lopez Garcia- Zimmermann, email 2005.

C2) 17.e5 b4!

We have seen this already. Black needn't move his knight as the bishop will be trapped on g5 anyway.



18.Wd3
19.S.exf6?

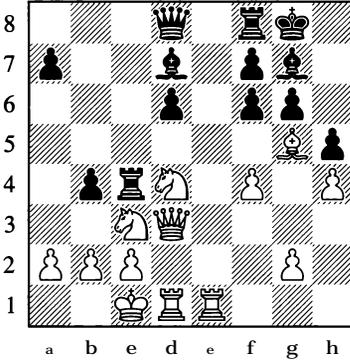
It allows Black to play:

18...exf6!

18...bxc3 19.Wd3 Exd4 20.Wxd4 would transpose to our main line, but this is even stronger.

19.Wd3

19.t e4? f g5 20.t xg5 Exd4 0-1
Benyovszki - Alien, email 2000.



19...Exc3!

Here this is the stronger exchange sacrifice.

19...Exd4 20.Wxd4 bxc3 is another transposition to our main line.

20.bxc3 f g5

This version isn't quite as bad for White as the one with b1 and ...a5 thrown in, as the king is a bit more secure. Still, Black is to be preferred.

21.hxg5 bxc3 22.Wxc3 Wb6 23.Wd3 i g4 24.Ed2

This was all played in the old correspondence game Dravnieks - Edelstein, corr: 1983, and now best is:

24...Wa5!N

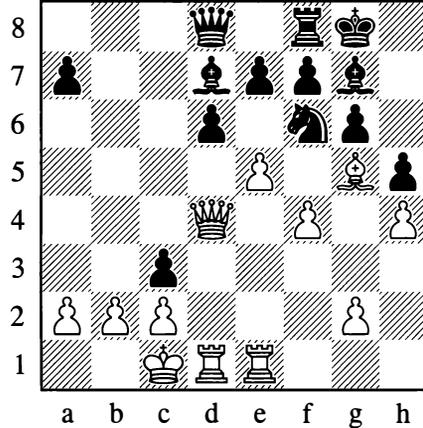
Black has a pleasant position.

18..J xd4

Continuing the comparison, 18..Exc3!? can also be played to keep more life in the position. However, it should be noted that on 19.bxc3 we should not play 19...t d5. After 20.cxb4 Black couldn't recapture on b4 with the pawn in Mrdja - Capuano, Campobasso 1998.

Instead 19...bxc3!N 20.Wxc3 t d5 21.Wb3 Wa5 leads to a complicated position.

19. xd4 bxc3

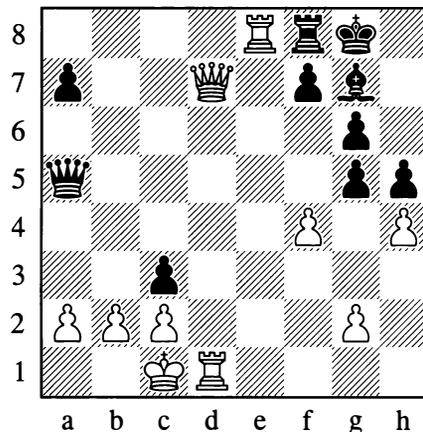


20.exf

As White knows his bishop will be trapped anyway 20.i xf6?! could be tried, but now 20...Wb8! looks like a good antidote: 21.Wxc3 exf6 22.exd6 f5 23.Wb3 Wc8+ Black's bishop pair is too strong.

20...exf 21. xd6 f g5 22. xd7 a5 23J e8!

White's only move he has to try and exchange some pieces to give his king a fighting chance of survival.



23... xa2

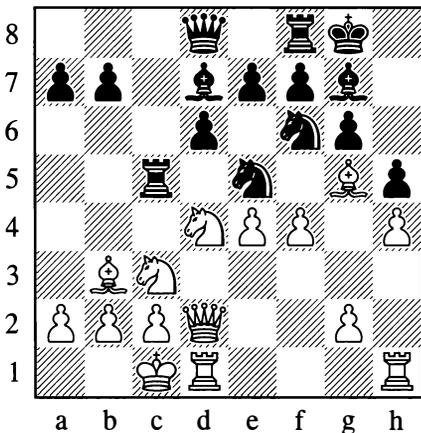
23... b4!? is also interesting, but should end as a draw with best play. 24.Exf8 xf8 25.bxc3 xf4 26. b2 was Musanti - Felgaer, Villa Ballester 2000, and now most accurate is 26... b8! N 27.1 a1 (27.1 c1 gxh4+ favours Black thanks to his strong kingside pawn mass) 27... g3 28.1 b2 b8=

24.Exf t i 25.bxc3 g f4

This position has been reached a few times and should be drawn. White's king is too vulnerable to try anything while Black can't make much progress with limited material.

D) 14.f4

This is the most critical line in this segment. Many strong GMs have essayed 14.f4 in the past but it has now been neutralized and is rarely seen.



14...t c4

We will first examine D1) IS.i xc4 before the more popular D2) IS. d3.

15. e2? just loses material to 15... g4, as 16.1 f3 allows 16...1 xb2! 17.1 xb2 a5. White had no way to defend his knight in the Tiel - Aramil, Saint Paul 2000.

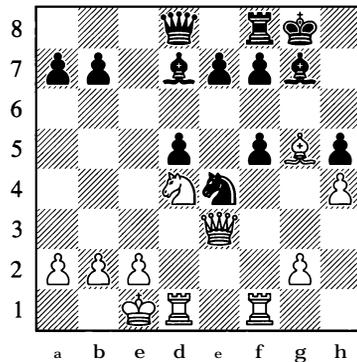
D1) IS.i xc4

Capturing on c4 doesn't put Black under any pressure. This is due to the fact that e4-e5 doesn't really threaten anything with the bishop on g5 entombed by its own pawns.

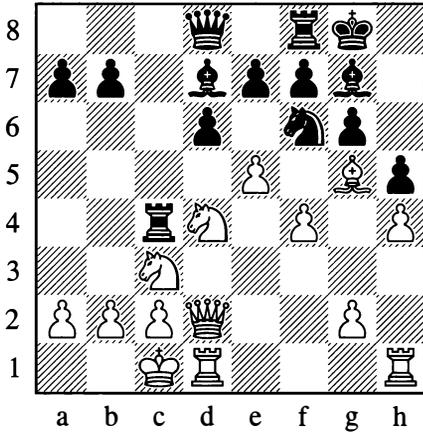
IS..J c4 16.e5

Black can meet 16.Eh1 with 16...b5, transposing to variation C above, while 16...1 h7! N garnering the bishop pair also looks good for Black.

16. d3?! has been played a few times but 16...Exc3! is a strong response: 17. xc3 (17.bxc3 1 g4!+ was suggested by Ziatdinov. White has too many holes in his position.) 17...1 xe4 18. e3 d5 White has to watch out not to lose his bishop and so tried 19.f5 gx f5 20.Eh1 in Gorovkyh - Matlakov, Peterhof 2007.



Here 20... b6N would have been excellent for Black. The knight on e4 dominates the board and Black's rook pawns are eight squares away from the king. White can try grabbing the e7-pawn, but 21. xe7 Ee8 leaves White in all kinds of pins. 22. g5 (22. a3 h6) 22...1 xg5 23. xg5 I f8! White can't defend against both ... xd4 and ... h6.



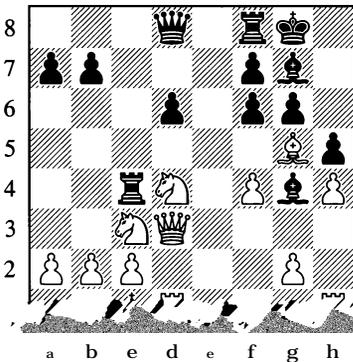
16..i g4!

Black calls White's bluff and instead forces him to make some concessions of his own.

17. d3

This is probably White's best attempt to extricate himself

17.exf6? Capturing the knight merely opens up the g7-bishop. After 17...exf6 18.Wd3 as in Foerderreuther - S. Zhou, Internet 2008, Black should have chosen:

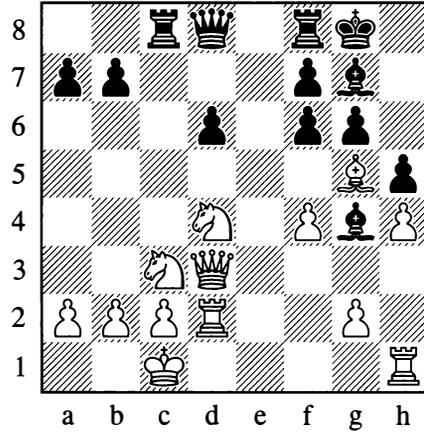


18...: xd4!N 19.Wxd4 f g5 20.Wxd6 i xdl Black wins material.

17. f3? was played in Arias - Henao, Bogota 1992, but it allows Black a more active square for his knight: 17...l e4N 18.l xe4 :xe4 Black's rook is quite safe while the g5 bishop

again looks ridiculous 19.Wd3 (19.Wd5 : e2 or 19.exd6 Wb6) 19..i f5+

17...BcS 18.exf exf 19.Bd2

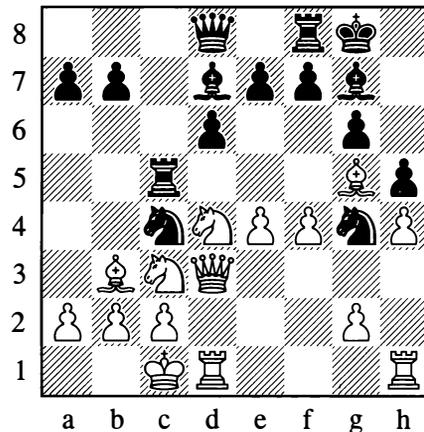


19..d5! 20. b5 f g5 21.f g5 l c4 22.l de2 eS! 23. xd5 l c7 24. b3 l e7! 25.l f4 l el t 26.l xel xel t 27.l dl l eS+

Black completely dominated in Torgersen - Haugen, email 2011.

D2) 15. d3! g4

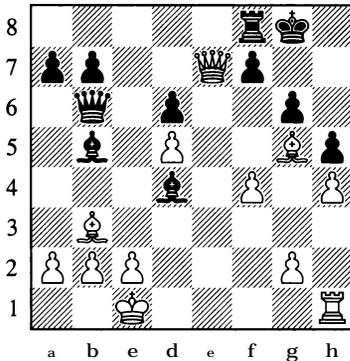
This has been established as Black's best. Instead of defending the c4-knight, Black prefers to create more threats.



16. xc4

White has to take the knight or his opening has failed.

16.1 d5? Exd5! 17.exd5 1 ce3 Black's knights run rings around White's pieces. 1S.Ede1 (1S.Ed2N 1 f5 19.1 xf5 xf5 20.Wf3 f6+ is another idea; again White regrets his 14th move.) 1S...Wb6 19.Exe3 1 xe3 20.Wxe3 xd4 21.Wxe7 b5 Black's pieces are all so much more active than their counterparts.



White felt obliged to give up his queen with 22.Ee1 EeS 23.WxeSt xeS 24.ExeSt, but after 24...c g7 25.c3 Wb5! 26.Ee4 Wf1 t 27. dl f2 it was clear Black was doing well in Collin - Montella, corr. 2003.

16.Edf1? White deals with the fork on f2 but now Black's queenside play comes much too quickly. 16...b5 17.f5 is White's only hope for counterplay, but here Black can play 17...gxf5N, as 1s.1 xf5? (1S.exf5 a5+) fails to 1S... xf5 19.Exf5! xb2!

16.Ehf1? T is move also prevents the f2 fork but allows a different one: 16...1 ce3 17.1 d5? T is didn't help. 17...Exd5! 1S. xd5 1 xdl 19.Exdl Mok - Konguel, Yerevan (ol) 1996. Here there was no reason to avoid the winning 19...1 f2N.

16.We2?

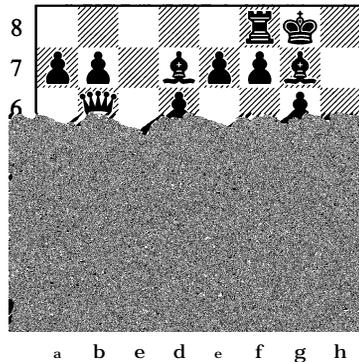
T is is another attempt to deal with the fork on f but it leaves the white king exposed: 16...1 xb2! 17.< xb2 Wb6!

Black's attack is dangerous. I've added in a couple of illustrative lines:

1S.e5

a) 1S. xe7N Exc3 (1S...EfcS also looks good, with the pretty idea 19.Eh3 1 f2! 20.Wxf2 xh3) 19. xc3 EeS 20. g5 (20. xd6 b5! 21.Wd2 Exe4 22.Ehel Exe1 23.Wxel Wxd6+) 20...a5+ White's king is too vulnerable.

b) 1S.Eh3N EfcS! (1S... xd4 19.Exd4 Exg5+ regains the piece but continuing the attack looks even stronger) 19.f5 Otherwise Black plays ...1 f . 19...Exc3 20.Exc3 xd4 21.Exd4 Wxd4+



1S...dxe5 19.f e5 EfcS 20.1 e4 Exe5

Dearing gives this as Saggi - Flavio Pompeo, corr. 2002. I couldn't find the game, but Black's attack is far too strong.

16...1 f 17.\ e2

17.Wf1? has been tried but now 17...1 xdl! just wins. T e queen is tied down to defending c4 and 1s.1 xdl xd4 dropped the knight in Ramirez Medina - Blandon Villa, Barcelona 2013.

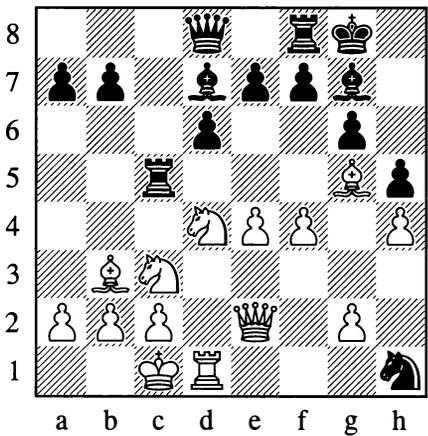
17...1 h 18. b3

Played a most exclusively. By dropping back the bishop, White's queen is now free to move.

As Vigorito points out 18! d5?! can be met with 18... g4!N. For example: 19.1 f3 l g3 20.Wd3 EeS=

1S.l f3? l g3 19.Wd3 xc3 20.bxc3 is a line given by Mironenko and Bangiev. Here Dearing's suggested improvement 20...b5! 21. d5Exc3 is simply crushing.

1S.f5 preventing the bishop coming to g4 was tried in Wegener - Rother; Germany 200S. Here 1S...l g3N 19.Wd3 Exc4! (19...b5 is given by Bangiev, which is also good for Black) 20.Wxc4 gxf5 favours Black. White can try 21.l d5 EeS 22.l c7 but after 22...l xe4 23.l xeS WxeS+ Black's two pawns are again worth more than the exchange.



When this line was played against me in a rapid game I opted for the interesting 021) 18..Wb6, bur I think 022) 18..i g4 is Black's simplest response.

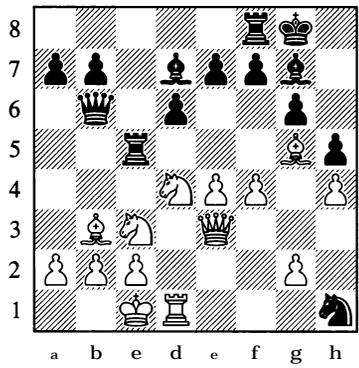
021) 18..Wb6 19.£

T e critical test. Again White has to try and prevent the bishop coming to g4, even if that means ceding control of the important e5-square

19.1 f is the older move. Here I suggested

19...l g3!N on ChessPublishing, 20.We1 Dearing ends the line here with an assessment of clear advantage to White bur, as I gave previously, 20... e6 21.Ed3 (White isn't in time to take the knight: 21.Wxg3? xc3 22.bxc3 xb3 23.axb3 Exc3 +) 21... xb3 22.axb3 EfcS looks promising for Black.

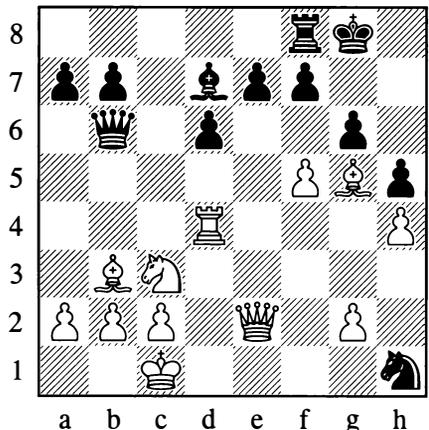
19.We3 was tried in Weil - De Sa Nobrega cou. 2000. Here I suggested:



19... g4!N A powerful move, as 20.Exh1 Exg5! 21.hxg5 xd4 favours Black.

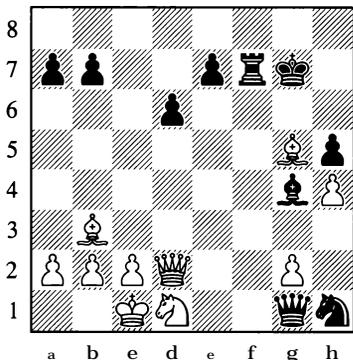
19...i xd4 20.Exd4 Exf T is the point of ...Wb6.

21.ex 21.Ed1? Exg5 22.hxg5 g4 23.We1 xdl 24.l xdl Wd4+ was good for Black in Schuermans- Decoster; Belgium 2005.



21.Jxd4 22'e1!?

22.fg6 appears to run to a draw after: 22...g1t 23.l d1 g4 24.gxf t c g7 25.' d2 : xf ! Golubev's suggestion - previously Black exchanged on d1 but then the ending is slightly unpleasant. Now White can't make progress as he's tied down to defending d1.



26. h6t (26. xf ' xf 27.' d5t e6 28.' xd6 l f2 was agreed drawn in Schranz - Barbarics, email 2007, as White has nothing better than perpetual.) 26...' g8 27. e3 ' xdl t Black works out that now the ending needn't be feared. (27...' f1!N looks possible) 28.' xdl xd1 29.c xd1 a6 30. g5 e5 31. xf t ' xf 32.c e2 l g3t 33.c f3 l fl = Guizar - Berza, email 2008

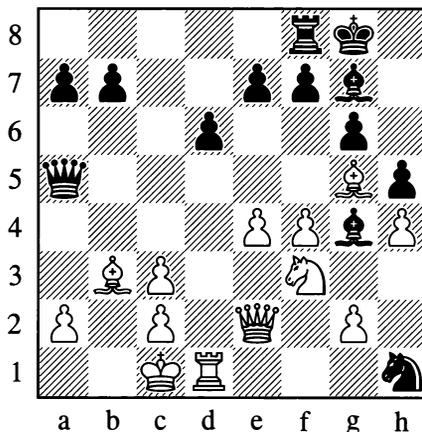
22...gxf5 23' xhl

Macieja - Jones, Warsaw 2010 The forcing lines have ended and it is time to take stock of the position: Black has a rook and two pawns along with a good structure for the two minor pieces. The engines assess the position as equal, but I tend to prefer the two pieces - and indeed during the game I felt a bit uncomfortable. It's a matter of personal preference whether to choose this or 18... g4.

D22) 18..i g4 19.1 f gxc3!

With White's pieces distracted on the kingside we don't need to hesitate in our counterplay.

20.bxc3' a5



Now D221) 21.gd3 has been tried, though D222) 21.gxhl is more common.

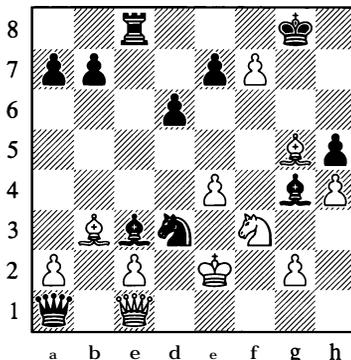
D221) 21.gd3h c3

Vigorito of es 21...: c8! as a possible alternative which the engines also assess as 0.00.

22' e3gc8 23.c bl!

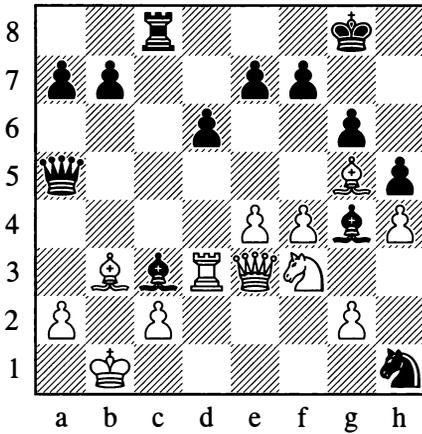
T is has to be played.

23.f5?! ' a3t 24.c dl ' b2 Now Black has managed to infiltrate with his queen. 25.f g6 ' alt 26.' c1 l f2t 27.' e2 l xd3 28.gxf t Eames - Snape, Birmingham 2005. Here Vigorito proposes the following improvement:



28.. g7N 29.i h6t (or 29. xal i xal
30.cxd3 e6) 29... h7 30.cxd3 (30. xal?
i xal 31.cxd3 mxh6) 30... xc1 31.i xc1
g7+ Black has good winning chances.

Here my engine considers almost everything
to draw, with the most forcing being:



23..l g3
23...i e6!? 24.i xe7 i xb3 25.cxb3 i b4
26.i xd6i xd6 27.: xd6 c7=

23...: c7!?

24. e7l f 25. gl

A draw was agreed at this point in
Ishemguzhin- Demchenko, corr: 2012.

Not 25. c1? i xf3 26.gxf3 l d2t 27.: xd2
i xd2 28. gl h7 29.i xf b4t 30.i b3
i xf4 +.

25..l g3

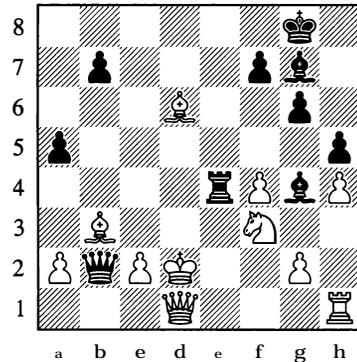
Now 25...i xf3? would be a big mistake
as 26.gxf3 l d2t 27.: xd2 i xd2 allows
28. xg6t.

26. e3l f =

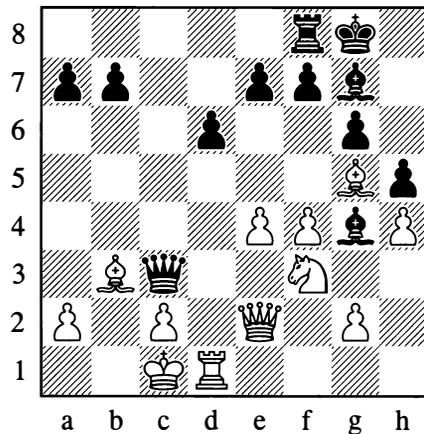
D222) 21.: x l xc3 22.: dl

White is wise to allow the perpetual.

Instead 22. dl?! was tried in T. Ernst -
Asendorf, Hamburg 2005, but as Vigorito
points out, 22...a5N would be promising for
Black. T e line might continue 23i xe7 b2t
24.md2: e8 25i xd6: xe4 when the only way
to prevent immediate catastrophe is to play:



26. a1! xal 27.: xal i xf3 (27...i xal
28.i xf t mg7 29.c3 isn't so clear although
Black should be a bit better with 29... xf3
30.gxf3 : el!) 28.gxf3 : d4t 29.me3 : xd6
Black has a pleasant endgame with the better
structure, and in particular White will struggle
to defend the h4- and f4-pawns T e drawish
tendencies of the opposite-coloured bishops
will only emerge should White succeed in
trading rooks.



22..Nb2t

22...a5! was tried in Vetoshko - Bargan, Chervonograd 2008, and can be played if you're feeling in a combative mood.

23' d2' c3t

A draw was now agreed in Fenollar Jorda - Serrano Salvador, email 2008.

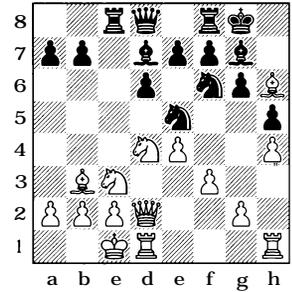
Conclusion

14.f4 is definitely the critical line in this chapter. It's useful to remember that we don't necessarily need to move the f6-knight after White plays e4-e5, as the bishop is often trapped on g5. 15.Wd3 is met by the strong 15...l g4!, exploiting the big fork on f2. After the further 16.i xc4 l f2 17.We2 l xh1 18.i b3 I think 18...i g4 is simpler than 18...Wb6, when White should probably steer the game towards a draw or risk being worse.

In a lot of these lines the key is figuring out the most precise time to sacrifice the exchange, either to open up White's king or to defuse his attack.

Chapter 4

Soltis Variation



13i h6

Vaiaion Index

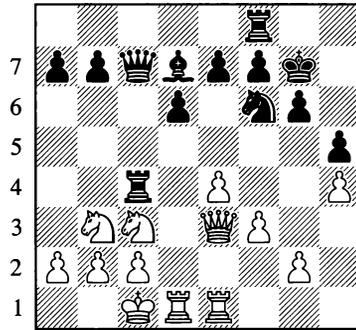
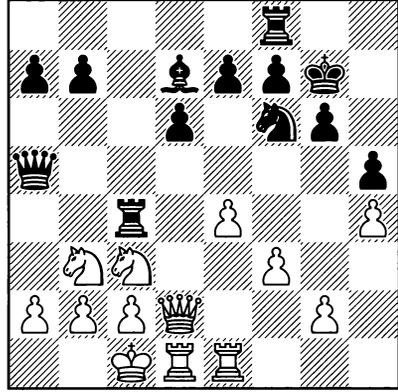
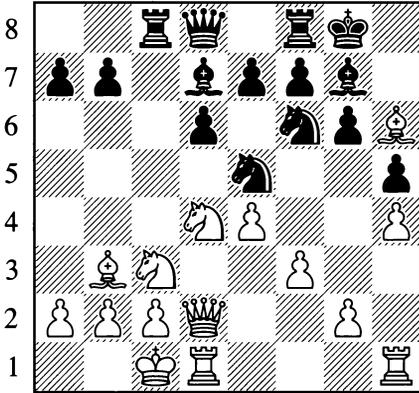
1.e4 c5 2.f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.f3 S1. c3 g6 6.i e3i g7 7.f 0-0
8.V d2l c6 9.i c4i d7 10.0-0-0 c8 11.i b3l eS 12.h4 hS 13.i h6

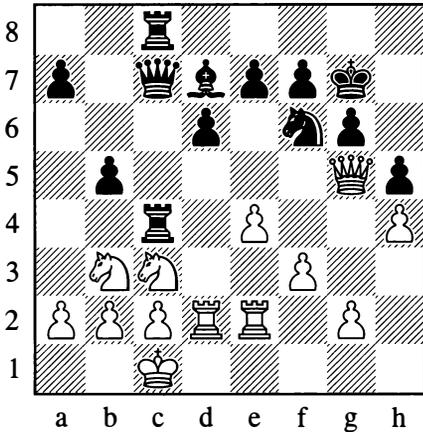
13...l c4! 14.i xc4 xc4 lS. i xg7 @ xg7

A) 16. he1	87
B) 16.l dS eS! 17.l b3l xdS 18.V xdS	88
B1) 18..V c7	88
B2) 18... c6	89
C) 16.@ b1	90
C1) 16..V b6!?	90
C2) 16..V aS 17.l b3V c7	91
C21) 18.l dS	92
C22) 18.g4	93
D) 16.g4 hxg4 17.hS h8! 18.hxg6 f g6 19.f4 eS	94
D 1) 20.f eS dx eS	9S
DU) 21.l b3	9S
D 12) 21.l de2	96
D2) 20. x 8V x 8	97
D21) 21.l b3	98
D22) 21.l de2	99
D3) 20.l de2 xh1 21. x 11 xe4 22.l xe4	
xe4 23.f eS xe2! 24.V xe2 V gst	99
D31) 2S.@ b1	100
D32) 2S.V d2	101

1.e4 c5 2.f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.txd4 txf3
 5.txc3 g6 6.e3 i7 7.f4 8.d2 t c6
 9.i c4 i d7 10.0-0-0 c8 11.i b3 . e5
 12.h4 h5 13.i h6

White aims to trade the dark-squared bishops





20...e6N

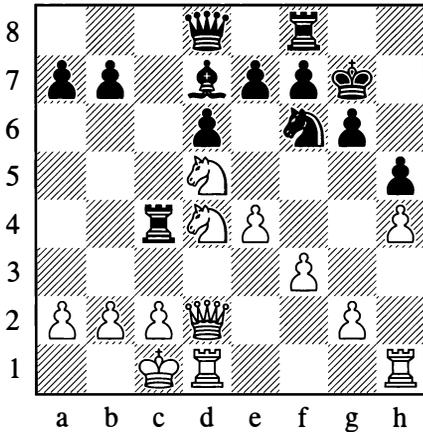
Taking control of the d5-square. White's pieces look ridiculous.

21.1 x b5. x b5 22. Wxb5 d5

Black has wonderful play for the pawn.

B) 16.1 d5

This is also a normal idea for White, but here it's not particularly effective.



16...e5!

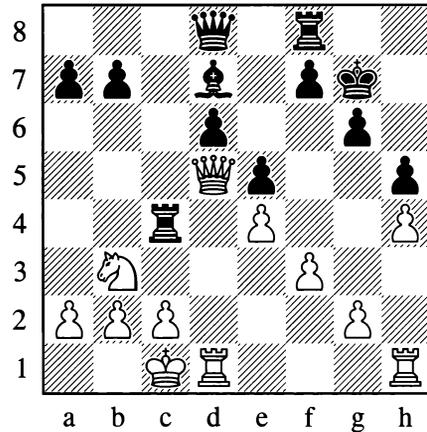
This is an important resource to remember: Once the g7-bishop has been removed, ...e5 becomes an important way to fight for the centre.

17.1 b3

17.1 x f6? loses immediately to 17... d4.

17.t e2 c xd5 18' xd5 Ec6+ is similar to the text continuation.

17...1 xd5 18.V xd5



Black has two promising options in B1) 18..V c7 and B2) 18..Ec6.

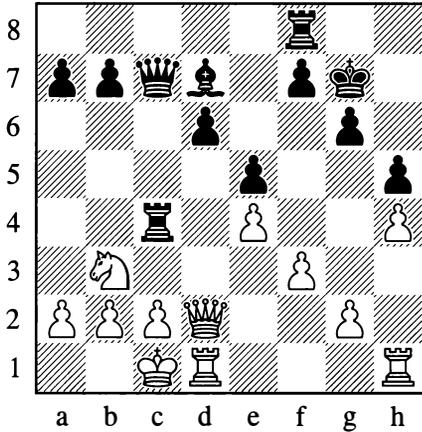
B1) 18..V c7 19.V d2

19.Ed2 e6 20.' d3 a5 21.' b1 a4 22.c c1 Ec8+ Siil - Kukk, Estonia 1999.

19.c3 Ec6 20.' b1 e6 21.' d2 was Ivanovskis - Romanelli, Argentina 1995, and now Black should have chosen 21...a5N followed by ...a4-a3.

White's best hope is probably 19.' xd6N, but still Black has the slightly better prospects in the ending after 19...Exc2t 20.' b1 e6 21.' xc7 Exc7+.

The text was played in Vehi Bach - Komljenovic, San Sebastian 1993, and now I think Black should choose:



B2) 18.. c6

It's understandable to feel uneasy about ceding the d5-outpost to your opponent, but here White can do little with it. White's main problem is that he lacks a good plan while Black can easily put pressure on White's king.

19' a5

19.94? T is rarely works with Black's pawn on e5. 19..hxg4 20.h5 g5t 21.mb1 e6 22. d3 c4 23.h6t mh7 Black was completely winning in Ashanina - Stephan, Avoine 2010.

19..f !N

19..d5!N is also interesting with the idea 20.exd5 f5.

19.< b1 e6 20. d2 f5!T is an interesting idea; Black fghts on both sides of the board. 21.f4 c7 22.g4? Aesthetically pleasing, but it doesn't work:

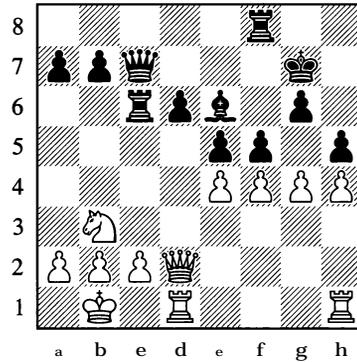
Black has completely taken over the centre of the board. One sample line continues:

20J he1 f e4 21. xe4

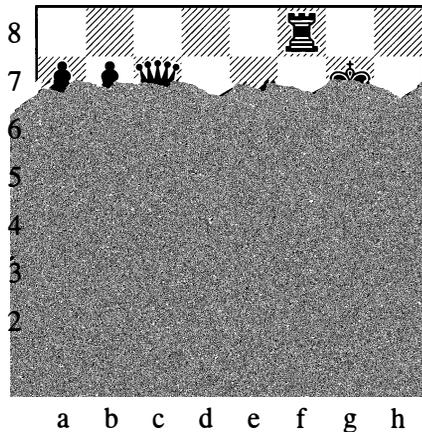
21.f e4 g4

21.. xe4 22.f e4 g4 23. el

23. xd6? xd6 24.Exd6 Efl t 25.< d2 Ed It



22..f g4 23.f5 xb3 24.axb3 e7 25.f g6 Ef4! + D. Wells - A. Eckersley-Waites, Swansea 2006.



19.. e6N

T is suggested by Dearing. Black is better as 20. xa7? c7! leaves White in severe trouble; 21..Exc2 and 21..Ea6 are both threatened.

23..Jwb6+

Black dominates.

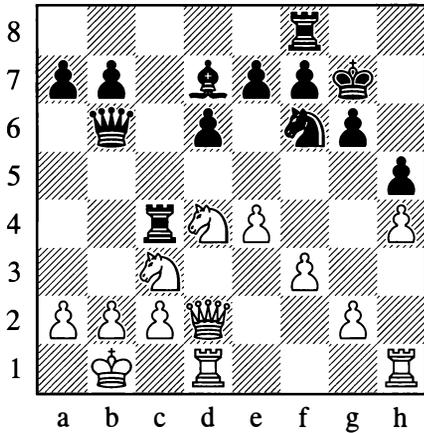
19.. b8 was a more ambitious move that worked well in Ter Sa akyan - Abdyjapar, A - Ain 2014. Black is better here too.

C) 16i b1

T is is a more patient approach. Black can respond with C1) 16.. b6! or C2) 16.. a5.

C1) 16.. b6!?

T is interesting sideline was suggested by Dearing and also looks fully adequate for Black. The point is not to allow White to gain a tempo with 1 b3, while it's useful to be able to exchange queens with the exchange sacrifice on d4.



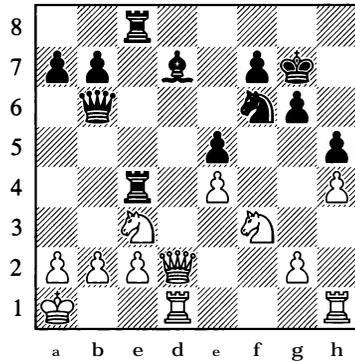
17.t d5N

Perhaps this is the most sensible way to try and punish the queen's location.

17.g4?! The caveman approach isn't justified. 17...hxg4 18.h5 2xd4! The exchange sacrifice is always an important defensive resource. 19.Vxd4 Vxd4 20.h6t (20.2xd4 gxh5+ The bishop and two pawns outrank the rook here as the g-pawn is so strong) 20...< h7 21.2xd4 gxf3 22.< c1 g5 23.< d2 g4 It was clear that the two pawns were again worth far more than the exchange in Hausmann - Rook, Germany 1990.

17.f4 e5! If possible, Black always wants to deal with f-f4 like this. 18.f e5 dxe5 19.1 f3

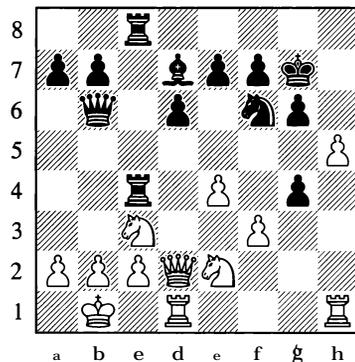
2fc8 20.< a1 Savidis - Korlotsidis, Petroupoli 2012. Here it was time for the move a Dragon player should be itching to play:



20...2xc3N 21.bxc3 i e6 22.2b1 V a6! (22...V a5 23.c4! isn't so clear) 23.2b2 l xe4 Black has a fantastic position.

17.2he1 A slow approach which doesn't cause Black any problems. The simplest seems to be 17...e5 18.1 b3 2c6= as in Staf - Sazon, email 2010. White has no way to increase the pressure on the d6-pawn and we can continue with ...i e6 and ...2fc8

17.1 de2 White prepares to play g2-g4 without allowing a queen exchange. 17...2fc8 18.g4 hxg4 19.h5 Vilacoro Lavina - Perez Cameselle, Madrid 1998. Here Black should have kept the kingside closed with:



19...g5N 20.Vxg5t < h7 The h5-pawn is very useful in defending Black's king.

17...1 xd5 18.exd5 c5

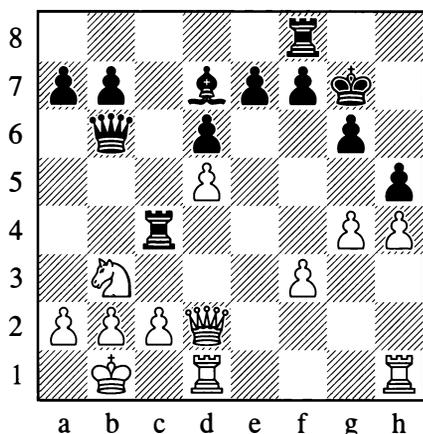
18...e5 is also possible, but after 19.dxe6 f e6 20.t e2 Black's structure is a bit loose. Ideally we'd want a dark-squared bishop here.

19.1 b3 c4

I don't think White has better than repeating here, for example:

20.g4!?

20.Eh6 Ee8= Black is solid. 21.g4? now doesn't work: 21..hxg4 22.h5 f5+



20..hxg4 21.h5 xc2 22' xc2

22\ xc2?? f5 23\ c1 Ec8t loses immediately.

22... f 23 d3 c8 24' d2' b5 25.1 c1

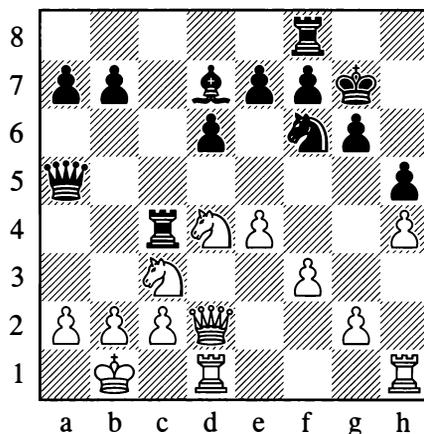
25.Ed1 Wxd3t 26.Wxd3 xd3t 27.Exd3 gxh5 28.f g4 hxg4 Black's three pawns are far more dangerous than White's knight here.

25.. xc1t 26 xc1 xd3

We've arrived at a messy position but one where Black can't be worse. White's king is at least as vulnerable as Black's, and the bishop on d3 is powerful.

C2) 16..' a5

The main line I actually saw this position reached in the World Cup in Tromso 2013, with the young talent Wei Yi playing Black against Super-GM Ian Nepomniachtchi. I watched with interest to see what White's idea was

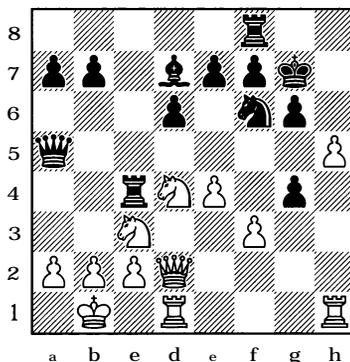


17.1 b3

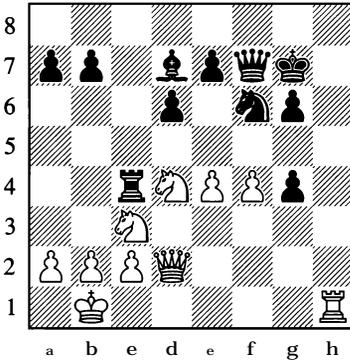
This move, forcing the black queen to move again, is the main line.

17.t d5 is a move lacking in ambition. Following 17...Wxd2 18.Exd2 t xd5 19.exd5 Efc8 20.Ee1 < f6= Black had comfortable equality and actually went on to win in Kalod - Macieja, Presov 2000.

17.g4!?! hxg4 18.h5 Here Black should defend as he would without \ b1 and ...Wa5 thrown in:

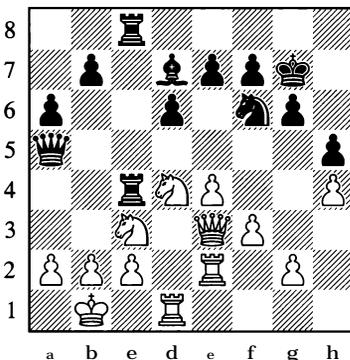


1S...ghS1N 19.hxg6 (19.t b3 We5 20.f4 t xe4! 21.f e5 t xd2t 22.t xd2 gd4 Again I'd prefer Black's huge clump of kingside pawns to the knight.) 19...gxh1 20.gxh1 f g6 21.t b3 (21.Wh6t f doesn't get White anywhere) 21...We5 22.f4 We6 23.t d4 Wf



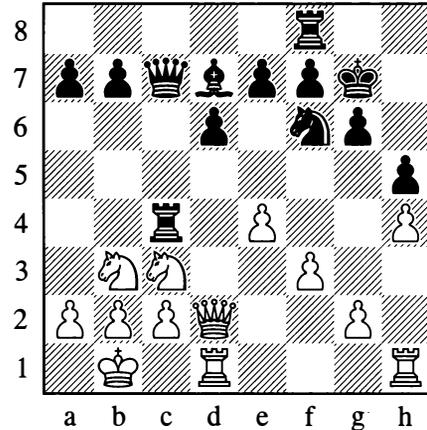
The position may look a little dangerous but, with quite a few pieces exchanged and the black queen helping defend the king. Black is fine. Remember we also have an extra pawn here.

17.ghe1 was Nepomniachtchi's choice. He evidently decided White doesn't have enough of an attack to mate, and so tried to sit on his less experienced opponent - but Wei Yi was more than up to the task. 17...gfcS 1S.We3 a6 A useful waiting move. (The problem is that 1S...b5?! 19.e5! is awkward.) White is actually struggling to improve his position here. He tried 19.ge2, when Black was completely fine after:



19...Wc5 Black went on to score an impressive upset in Nepomniachtchi - Wei Yi, Tromso 2013. However, as I previously suggested, 19...e5N looks rather good for Black. For example: 20.t b3 Wc7 21.ged2 gc6 We have our typical plan of expanding on the queenside. 19...gxc3!N also looks tempting.

17...Wc7



White can choose between C21) 18.t d5 and the standard pawn break C22) 18.g4

C21) 18.t d5

This is slightly more challenging when the queens remain on the board.

18...t xd5 19.exd5: c8

19...Wb6 20.g4 gfcS will transpose to our main line.

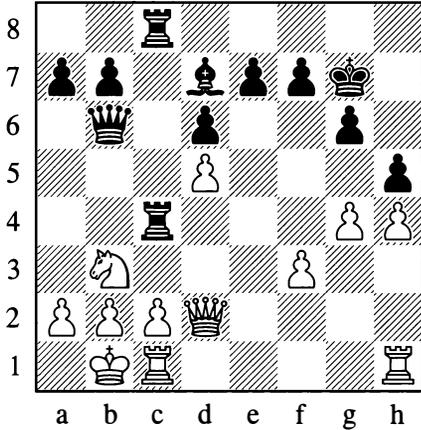
20: c1

After 20.t d4N Black has enough dynamic play to justify the slight weakening of his structure with 20...e5!?. For example: 21.dxe6 f e6 22.g4! (22.Wg5 WdS=) 22...e5 23.t f5t xf5 24.gxf5 gxc2 25.Wg5 gxb2t 26. xb2 Wc3t 27. b1Wc2t 2S. a1Wc3t =

The solid 20...gc5 21.ghe1 WdS 22.We2 gxd5 23.Wxe7 Wc7 is also fine.

20...b6 21.g4

We have been following Hossain- Henrichs Bad Wiessee 2008. Here I like



21...e5N

21...Eh8N is also possible, as 22.%e2 b5 23.%xe7? runs into trouble: 23...Ee8 24. g5 Ee5 25.Wd2 hxg4+

22.dxe6

22.gxh5 f5! is bad for White.

22..., be6 23.g h5 f

Black has enough counterplay against the c2-pawn.

24.hxg6

24.t al defends the pawn but is passive. 24...Eb4 would force White to repeat, while 24...gxh5 is stronger. T e bishop does a good job of defending Out king

24.. xc2t

24...Exc2 and even 24...f g6!? can both also be considered.

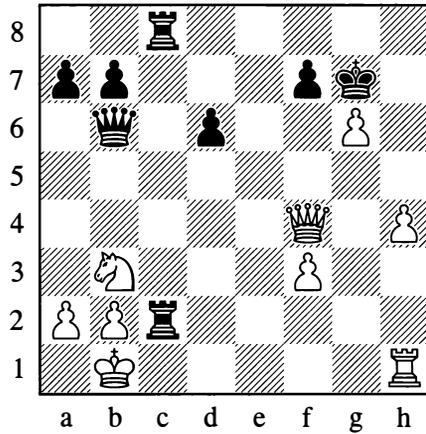
25.Exc2

25. al Ea4 +

25..J hc2 26.%f4

26.Wg5 Wf2 27.gxf t xf = White has no more than perpetual as he can't bring any of his

other pieces into the attack.

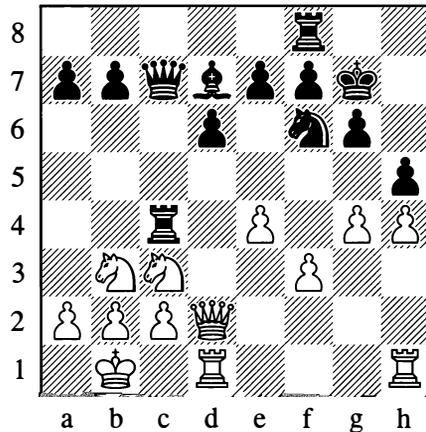


26..fxg6 27.h5 gg2 28.h6t g8 29.h7t g7 30.h8=%t gxh8 31.gxh8 gg1t 32.t c1 xh8=

And again W ite has to be happy with the perpetual.

e22 18g4

As Kasparov observed when discussing this structure, without this break W ite can't hope for any advantage.



18..h g4 19.h5 gxc3

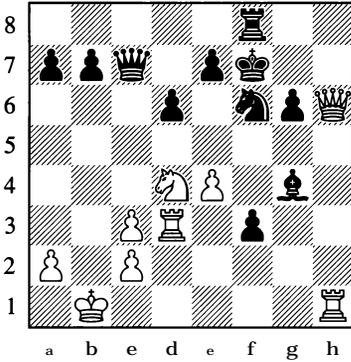
Again we utilize the defensive exchange sacrifice. It's important that we get to keep our f6-knight to defend the king.

20.hxg6

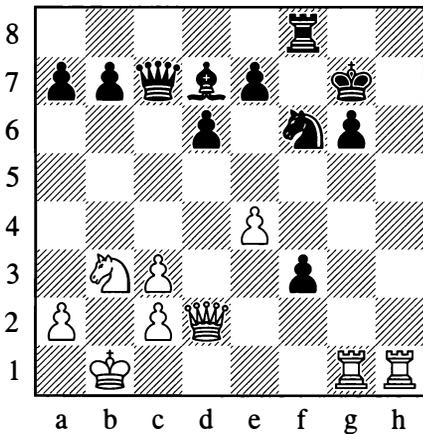
20.bxc3gxf3 21.hxg6f g6 simply transposes.

20..f g6 21.bxc3gxf3 22J dgl

22. h6t < f 23: d3 . g4 24.4 d4 T is position was reached in the game Z. Ivanovic - Elison, email 2005, and now an interesting try is



24...: g8N T e idea is that after 25.4 xf3 we can run with the king 25...< eS 26: e1 . xf3 27.: xf3 4 d7° An unclear position has arisen. T e knight is going to be strong on e5 and our king should now be safe In fact with such a strong outpost and White's bad structure, the endings will be good for Black.



22...@f

Preparing to run the king to the safety of the centre.

22...: gS! as played in Aroshidze - Loetscher; Baku 2002, also looks interesting

T e only game to reach this position continued as follows:

23 gS?!

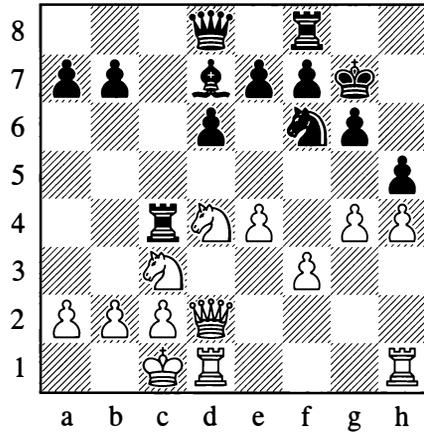
23: g3N is better, when 23... g4 24. g5 . h5 25: xh5 gxh5 26. g6t ' e6 looks like a draw after 27. f5t ' f 2S. g6t.

23...: g8 24. f4?! xc3 2S.: f g4

Black had far too much material for the rook in De la Iglesia - Enjuto Velasco, Madrid 2001.

D) 16.g4

T e logical continuation of White's 13th move - he wants to mate!



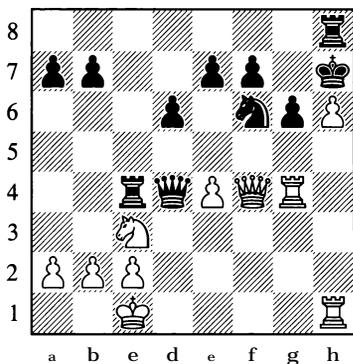
16..hxg4 17.hS : h8!

It's important to remember this method of defending your king, which is one of the reasons White's attack is generally more dangerous if he can keep his bishop on h6 for a little longer:

18hxg6

1S.h6t? Closing the kingside can hardly be recommended; Black's king is completely

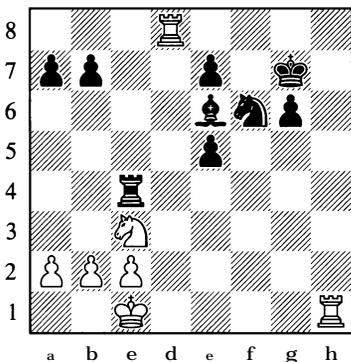
safe on h7. 18...< h7 19.f g4 i xg4 20: dg1
 (or 20: dfl ' a5 21.t b3 ' e5 + Oijala -
 Jouhki, Mikkefi 1999) 20...' b6 21.' f4' xd4
 22: xg4 Adam - Feletar, Szombathely 2003.
 Here the most accurate would be:



22...: xc3N 23.bxc3 ' xc3 24.< b1 : c8
 25: g2: c4 Black has an overwhelming attack.

18..f g 19.♘

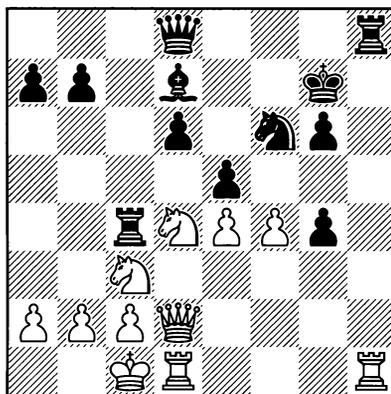
19.f g4 xg4 20.e5 forces Black to give up
 the exchange but unfortunately for White
 after 20...dxe5 21.t e6t xe6 22.' xd8: xd8
 23: xd8 the endgame doesn't favour him.

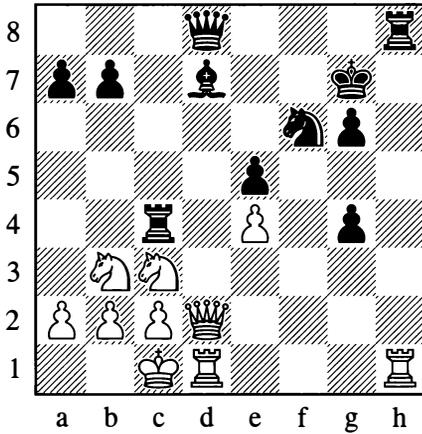


In fact, after 23...g5N I prefer Black's pawns.

19A50

tn-





21... h3!

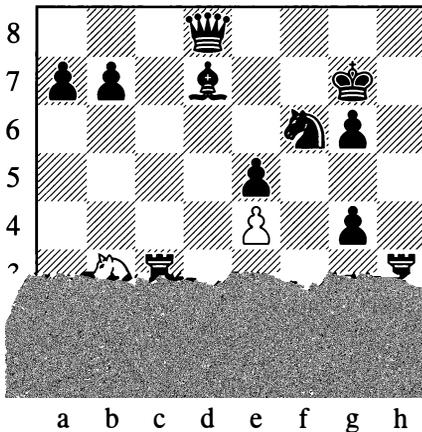
Reaching a rather similar position. A few correspondence games have continued as follows:

22. hf

22' d6N seems to me the only way to try and gain from putting the knight on b3. 22...' e8 23.t cS However here Black can play 23... xh1 (23... d4!? is also interesting) 24.l xh1 ' f8 2S.t e6t . be6 26.' xe6 l xc3! 27.bxc3 ' a3t 28. bl ' cS with good pressure.

22... c c3!

A strong exchange sacrifice. It's illustrative to see how quickly Black won:



23.bxc3 ' e7 24' g5 i c6 25' b2 h5
26' e3 l xe4 27.l a5 l f 28.l xc6 bxc6
29. fel e4 30.c4 f 31. al g5 32' b3
g6

0-1 Febland - Simmelink, email 200G

D12) 21.l de2 h3!

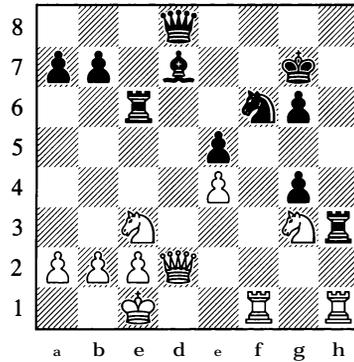
A nice idea, which blockades the h-f file and slows White's attack. As always in this line, the extra pawn on g4 is very useful. White has tried various moves, but nothing is overly convincing.

22. hf

White's idea is to capture on f6.

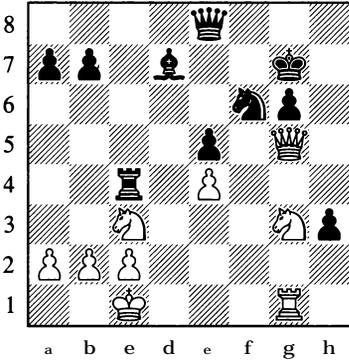
22.' d6?! T is is just a shot in the dark. 22...' e8! 23.l hfl l f3 24.l hl bS 2S.< b1 b4 26.t dS t xe4+ Stjzhkina - Sryzhkina, Palanga 2012.

22.l dfl l c6 23.t g3 was Bilguun - Froewis, Vienna 2012, and now best would have been:



23...' e7N White doesn't have any way of increasing his attack and so is clearly worse.

22.' gS In practice this has been White's most common move but I don't think it should particularly challenge Black. 22...' e7 23.l xh3 gxh3 24.l gl ' e8 2S.t g3 Prandstetter - Kalod, Czech Republic 1999. A strong continuation for Black is



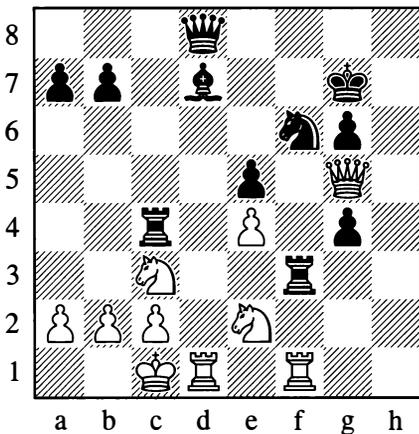
25...t h7N 26.We3 (26.t h5t c hB 27.Wxg6 Wxg6 2B: g6 h2 29.t g3 l c6 and Black's h-pawn wins the day) 26...WfB 27.t d5 (27.t h5t?! again doesn't work as 27...c hB 2Bl xg6 Wfl t 29.t d1 l d4 is crushing) 27...l c6+ Black has fought off W ite's attacking intentions and can now start working on converting his extra material.

22...l f

22...l c6!? also looks reasonable if W ite seems intent on a repetition. 23.l xf6 l xf6 24.Wxd7t Wxd7 25.l xd7t l f 26.l xf t c xf was a roughly level ending in Hausdorf - Walczak, email 2007.

23Wg5

23l h1l h3 simply repeats.

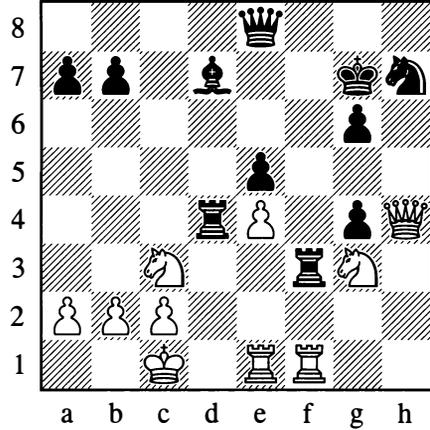


23..' e8 24. g3: d4 25J del

After 25.l xf3?! l xdl t! 26.t xdl gxf3 Black was clearly better in K achiyan - Brodsky, Yerevan 1996.

25..t h7 26' h4

Antemia - L. Komljenovic, Germany 200B Here Black has lots of moves that maintain the balance, but I'd opt for:



26..' f N

One sample variation could be:

27.l hl

27.t d5l xd5!? 2B.exd5 Wf4t 29.Wbl t f6 with dynamic equality.

27... g8

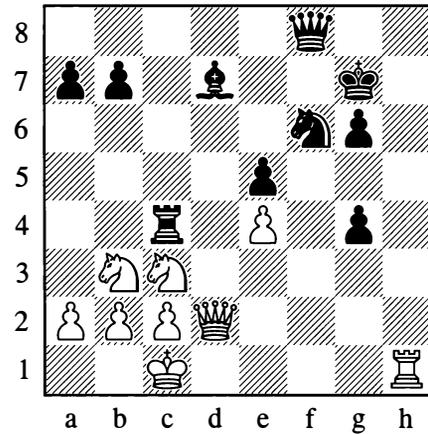
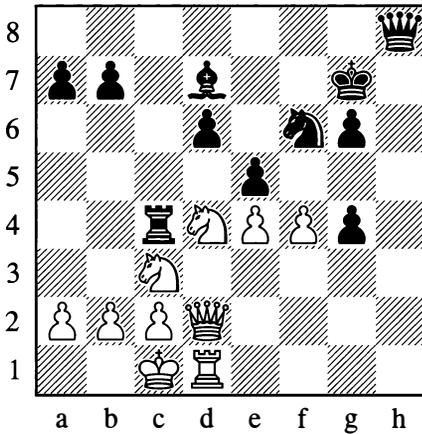
W ite doesn't have anything better than repeating.

28' d8t ' e8 29' h4' f =

D2) 20hh 8

T is move is rare in over-the-board games, but correspondence players have tried it from time to time.

20..' : h8



White again has to decide where to put his knight: 0 21) 21.1 b3 or 0 22) 21.1 de2

0 21) 21.t b3 ♣ f

Vigorito gives this his mark of approval and it has been played almost exclusively in the correspondence encounters

However, 21..1 xc3! also looks interesting. After 22' xc3 Black has to find 22...' h6!, picking up the f4-pawn, as in Mocnik - Danculovic, email 2006.

22.f e5

22.' xd6?' xd6 23.1 xd6 c6! T is endgame has been reached a couple of times, but Black is simply winning: again the g4-pawn is just too strong.

22...dxe5 23.1 hl

23' g5 was Hinriksson - Heikkinen, Finland 1992. Here 23..' e7N is given by an anonymous annotator and looks like an improvement. Black has good control over the position.

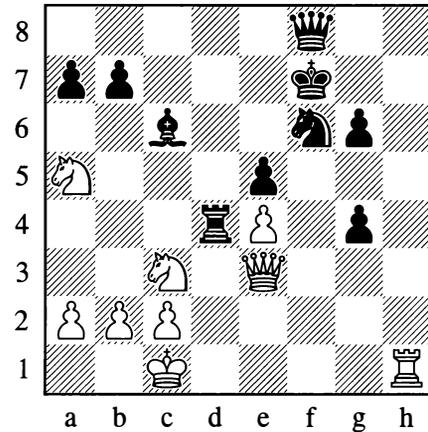
23' e3 b6 24.1 fl Posytek - Greene, corr: 1997 (24' g5 ' e7 is an improved version of the 23' g5 line.) 24..1 c6!N White's compensation for the pawn has dried up completely.

23... c6!

We don't need to worry about h6! it's just a check.

24.t a5! d4 25. ♣ h6! @ f 26 ♣ e3

Here I see no reason not to bag another pawn:



26... xe4!N

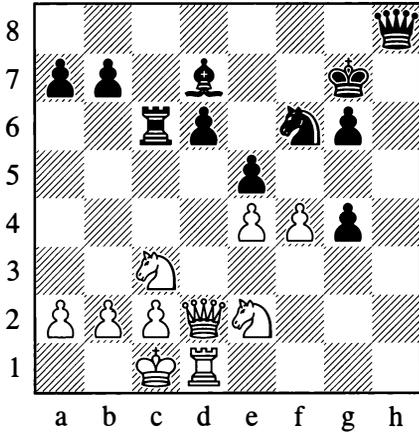
The arising endgame will favour Black.

27.t xe4! xe4 28 ♣ xa7 ♣ e7 29 ♣ xb7 ♣ xb7 30.t xb7! a4

White's three connected passed pawns look dangerous but our advanced g-pawn trumps them.

D22) 21.f de2 g c6

21..i fS!N also looks decent for Black, for example: 22.f e5 (22.i xd6? As usual the queen trade fails miserably. 22..i xd6 23J hd6 i c8+) 22..l xe4 23.i d5 (23.l xe4 : xe4 24.exd6 i f2+) 23..i f 24.i xb7 i f5 25.i xf t c xf 26.exd6 l xc3 27.l xc3 c eS Despite the pawn def cit Black has the better chances, although it should probably be a draw.



22.We3

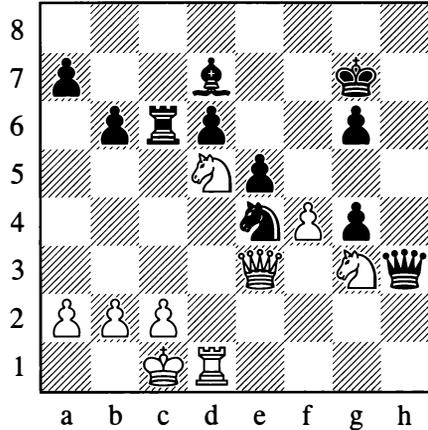
22.f e5 dxe5 23.c bl i h3 24.i el i e3 25.i h4 i e6 26.: d3 i c5 27.: dS : cS! was good for Black in Bortnik - Traur, email 2003. It's only one check on hS.

22..b6 23.f d5

Vigorito suggests 23.f e5 as an improvement, although his continuation of 23..dxe5 24.l d5 i eS! favours Black.

23..Wh3 24.f g3 f xe4!

It's worth giving the piece for two pawns to exchange into an excellent ending.



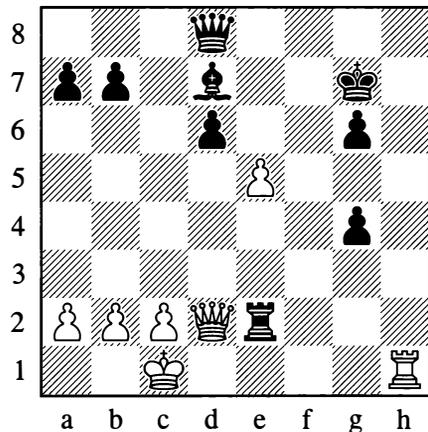
25.f xe4 Wxe3t 26.t he3 exf4 27.f d5 i f Koch - Dahlsroem, email 2007. Black's three pawns are too strong for the knight.

D3) 20.f de2l hhl 21.gxhl f xe4 22.f xe4

As Dearing observes, 22.i d3? loses at once to 22...: xc3! 23.l xc3! f2.

22..gxe4 23.f e5 gxe2!

Another important defensive exchange sacrifice. T is slows down W ite's attack and allows us to bring our queen over to improve the king's protection.



24.Wxe2

24.' h6t

Since the first game back in 1971 it has been established that this merely leads to a draw, for example:

24...i f 25.' h7t

Or 25.' f4t i g7 26.' h6t= with an immediate draw, as given by Vigorito.

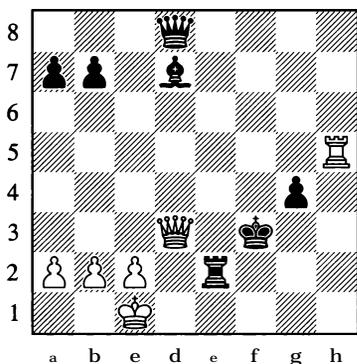
25... e6 26.' xg6t i xe5

Black's king may look vulnerable but it can run and try to hide in front of the g-pawn.

27. h5t f4 28.' xd6t i f3 29.' d5t i f4

30.' d4t f3 31.' d3t

31.' d5t i f4 32.' d4t ½-½ Gal - Nizynski, corr: 1989.



31... e3 32.' ft

32.' d1t ½-½ Burlak - Takeuchi, email 1996.

32...i g3 33.' g1t i f4 34.' f2t i e4

35.' g2t f3 36.' e2t e3 37.' g2t

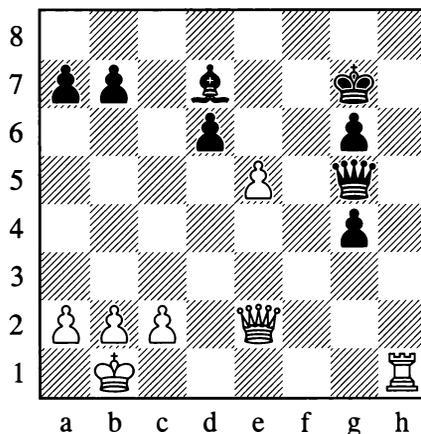
½-½ Valverde Toresano - Onder, email 2000.

24...' g5t

White can try D31) 25.@bl or exchanging queens with D32) 25.' d2.

D31) 25.@bl

T is White's more ambitious try but in fact I think Black has the better prospects.



25...i c6!

T is an important intermezzo. First of all we improve the location of our bishop before capturing on e5

26. e1

26. g1 f3 A strong idea, rerouting the bishop and preventing White's queen from invading 27.' f2 (As Vigorito observes 27.' xf3?? loses immediately to 27...g f3 28. xg5 f2 which is, of course, Black's point.) 27...dxe5 28.' xa7 g3 29.' c5 was agreed drawn in Hudak - Piccirilli, email 2006, although it was rather premature. With 29...g2N Black can press forever.

26...d e5

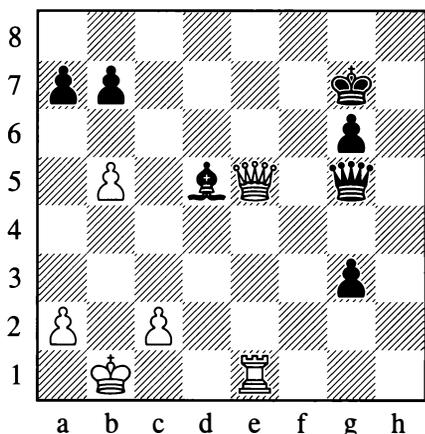
Black's king is now completely safe and, with two pawns for the exchange, Black is certainly better with the always-powerful g-pawn.

27.b4

27.' xe5tN' xe5 28. xe5i f6 29. e3 f5 is dangerous for White.

27...g3 28.b5i d5 29.' xe5t?

Now this move simply loses



29..Vxe5 30J xe5 g2 31.Eel < f 32.Eg1 e5

0-1 Cilloniz Razzeto - Rivas Maceda, email 2007.

D32) 25.Vd2

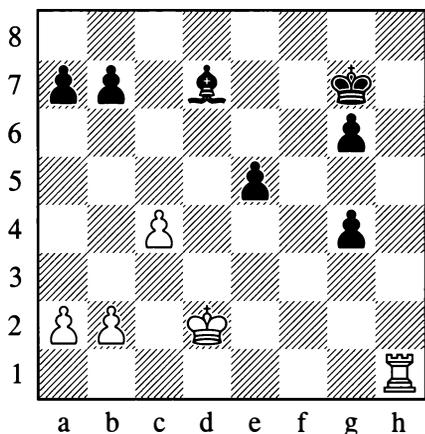
This move has been seen in various correspondence games.

25..Vxd2 26.< xd dxe5

The consensus is that the arising endgame is merely a draw. Some examples:

27.c4

27.We3 c6 28.Eg1 f3 29.a4 f6 30.a5 We6 31.c4 Wd6 32.b4 a6= B. Gonzalez - G. Evans, email 2005.



27... c6

27... f6 28.b4 e6 29.Ec1 g5 30.We3 h4 31.Eh1t g3 32.Eg1t ½-½ Schueppel - Drake Diez de Rivera, email 2006.

28.Eg1 f 29.< e3 < f 30.h4 < e6 31.Ec1 e4 32.b5 g3 33.c5 < d7 34.c6t c7 35.a4 g2 36.c b7t

½-½ Helmreich - G. Evans, email 2007.

36..< xb7 37.a5 g5 38.< f

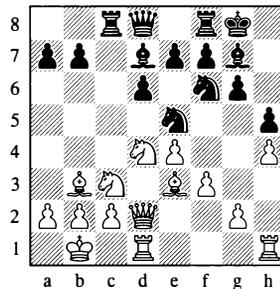
½-½ W arrier - Amico, email 2008

Conclusion

All Yugoslav Attack positions are sharp and 13. h6 is no exception - although the critical line is quite narrow. Nepomniachtchi's 16. b1 doesn't look too challenging and so you should focus more on 16.g4. It's important to remember 17..Eh8! fighting for control of the h-file. White has various ways to win the exchange with e4-e5, but Black always has good compensation. 23..Exe2! is very important to remember; and White should probably take the perpetual on of e7. Instead, the ending with queen, bishop and five pawns versus queen, rook and three favours Black.

Chapter 5

Soltis Variation



13. ♖b1

Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 ♞f6 5.♞c3 g6 6.♞e3 ♞g7 7.f3 0-0 8.♞d2
 ♞c6 9.♞c4 ♞d7 10.0-0-0 ♞c8 11.♞b3 ♞e5 12.h4 h5 13.♖b1

13...♞c4! 14.♞xc4 ♞xc4

A) 15.b3	105
B) 15.♞de2 b5	107
B1) 16.♞d4?!	109
B2) 16.b3 ♞c8	110
B21) 17.♞d4?!	111
B22) 17.♞d5	112
B3) 16.♞h6 ♞a5	113
B31) 17.g4	113
B32) 17.♞xg7	114
C) 15.♞b3 ♞b8!?	116
C1) 16.♞g5	116
C2) 16.♞d4	117
C3) 16.♞h6	118
D) 15.g4 hxg4 16.h5 ♞xh5	121
D1) 17.fxg4	122
D2) 17.♞dg1 ♞f6 18.♞h6	123
D21) 18...♞xe4 19.♞xe4 ♞xd4 20.♞e3	
♞e5 21.♞f4 ♞g7 22.♞h2	124
D211) 22...f6	124
D212) 22...f5N	125
D22) 18...♞xd4!	126

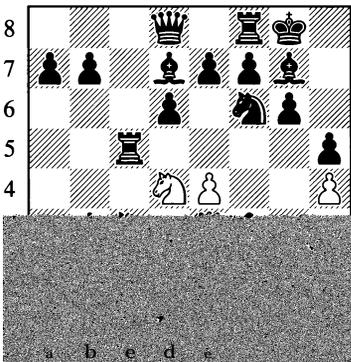
1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.t xd4 l f
 S.t c3 g 6i e3i g7 7.O O O S.Wd2 t c6
 9i c4 i d7 10.O O O EcS 11.i b3 l eS
 12.h4 hS 13.mbl

With this move we see another line which used to be popular, but is seen pretty rarely these days. In contrast to the Soltis variations examined earlier, White isn't trying to mate Black and instead is hoping for a slight positional edge. The king is more usefully placed on b1 - for instance it deters ...' aS ideas. However, these days White normally plays the king move before touching his h-pawn as White wants to play with g2-g4 instead.

13...t c4 14i xc4

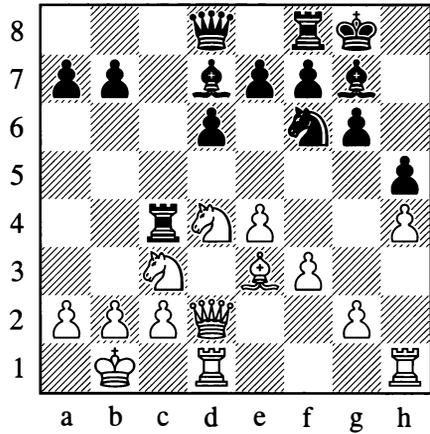
It's generally considered difficult to mate the black king without removing the bishop from g7. Therefore if White has the choice, he will nearly always give the light-squared bishop for the knight.

14.' e2 t xe3 1S.' xe3 EcS 16.Ehe1 In the game Pritchett - Miles, Torquay 19E2, Black chose to sacrifice a pawn with 16...b5, but instead I think a more reliable continuation is:



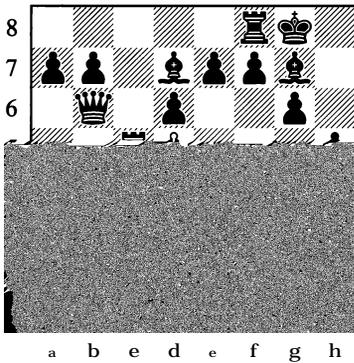
16...' c7N Black prepares to treble on the c-file and play ...b5 safely. White's previous move only really looks logical coupled with an e4-e5 break or with 17.t dS?, but here 17...t xdS 1BexdS as! 19.a4 bS+ would leave White with deep problems.

14...Exc4



Now White has a variety of options. Firstly we will examine what happens if White hits the rook with A) 1S.b3, which is not as weakening as it may appear. White would like to exchange dark-squared bishops, so his ro main lines involve dropping b7- lyl t Ws.D. Bar:s 2004

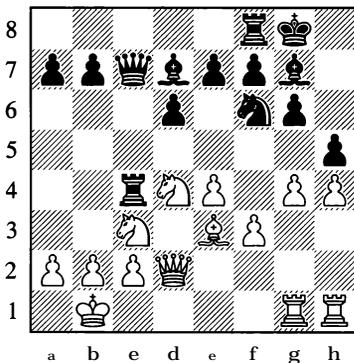
Mueller- Berch, email 2003. Now White is winning the exchange but his dark squares will be too vulnerable.



15... f5! N 19. xc5 dxc5+
Black threatens both ...c5-c4xb3 and ...\ f6.

15.: dg1
White transparently prepares g2-g4.

15...\ c7 16.g4
White's only logical follow-up.
16.t ce2 Ehlting - Hellwig Dortmund 1999, allows Black to take over the centre completely with 16...e5! N 17.t b3 d5+ as 1S.exd5? loses to 1S...: xc2 19.\ xc2 f5.
Acunzo- Perilli, Italy 19S5, and here I think it's time for:



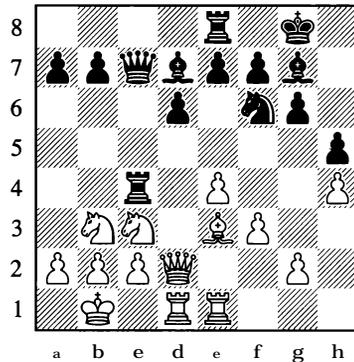
16...: xc3! N 17.bxc3
17.\ xc3 is even worse. 17...\ xc3 1S.bxc3 hxg4+ At least one more pawn is also dropping.

17...hxg4 1S.h5: cS 19.hxg6 f g6+
Black has a typical Dragon counterattack.

15: hel
T isn't a particularly challenging move. White gives up on any kingside intentions and simply develops his final piece.

15...: eS
White's last didn't threaten anything, so I think we should play this semi-waiting move. It's generally useful in the Dragon to have the e7-pawn defended. Black now has ideas of ... \ a5 without having to worry about t d5, and a later h6 could be met by simply dropping the bishop back. A couple of examples continued:

16.t b3 \ c7



17. d4
17.\ d3 b6 1S. d4 \ cS Black gets out of the way of a t d5 fork. 19.t d2: c6 20: cl Eroe Inrico - Pharaomum, engine game 2014. Here I'd prefer 20...\ bSN so that we can try expanding on the queenside. White still hasn't actually found a plan.

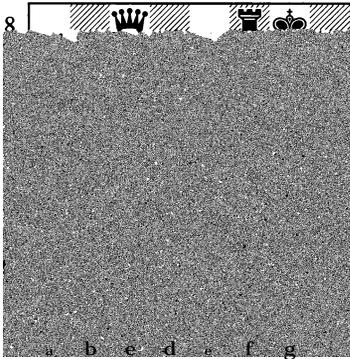
17... e6 1S.t d5 xd5 19.exd5 a5 20: e2 a4 21.t cl a3

In Dervishi - Malakov, Genoa 2000, Black had quickly taken a strong initiative. White is in a lot of trouble as 22.b3? loses to 22...: xd4 23.\ xd4 t xd5 24.\ xd5 \ c3.

15. ♖d3

T is is another nothing move from White. Dropping the rook back is fine, but I prefer:
15... cB 16.l de2

16.l b3 was Zurita Galisteo - Barrero Garcia, Seville 2003. Here Black should prepare...b5 with 16...a6N, as the immediate 16...b5 allowed 17.l a5 when the b-pawn can't be defended.



16...b5 17.l f4

17.b3 T is doesn't force the rook to move as Black can play 17...Wb7. Limp - Caldeira, Sao Paulo 1997, continued 1B1 d4 ! xd4 19.l xd4 b4 20.l a4 when Black would have been doing well had he played the logical 20...i xa4N 21.bxa4 ! cB+.

White prepares to put one of his knights on d5, so it makes sense to play:

17...! eB

Lanka- Borge Groningen 1997, continued:

1B1 cd5! xd5 19.l xd5 e6 20.l f4 d5+

Black has a comfortable position.

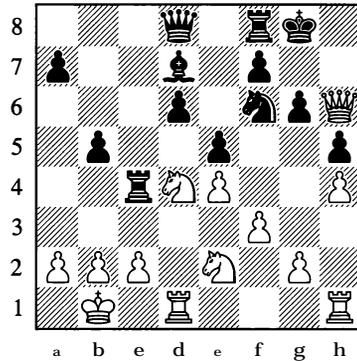
15.l ce2 b5 16.i h6

16.c3 was played in the old game T seshkovsky - Gufeld, Daugavpils 197B, but White's play wasn't convincing. 16...WbB 17.l b3?! ! fcB

1B1 ec1 Here Black has lots of promising paths, but Dearing's suggestion of 1B...b4+ is certainly very good for Black.

16...i xh6 17.Wxh6 e5!

T is is a typical idea once the dark-squared bishops are exchanged.



1B1 f5!N

T is is mentioned by Hindenburg Melao. I think White has enough for a draw but no more.

1B1 b3 i e6 19.Wd2 ! c6 Black's pieces coordinate well, Vescovi - Braga, Sao Paulo 1999.

1B...gxf5 19.! h3!

Melao examines 19.Wg5t but neglects to mention 19... h7 when Black is better; for example: 20.! xd6 ! gB! 21.Wxf6 Wxf6 22.! xf6 i e6! 23.exf5 g7+

He also gives 19.94? as interesting, but White is getting nowhere after 19...hxg4 20.l g3! eB!

19...f4 20.Wg5t h7 21.! xd6

Black has a couple of different approaches, but the simplest is:

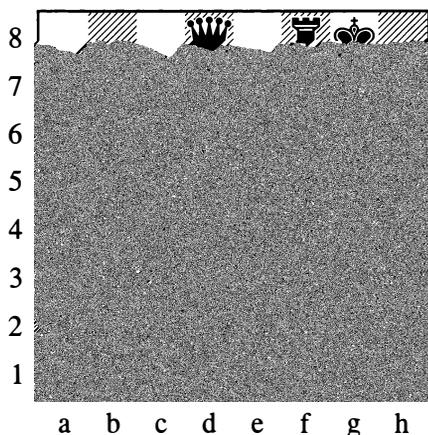
21...! c6 22.! xc6 i xc6 23.Wxe5 Wd1t 24.l c1 i d7

White will have to deliver perpetual after something like:

25.Wxf6 i xh3 26.gxh3 Wxf3 27.Wf5t g7 2B.Wg5t h7 29.Wf5t =

A) 15.h3

White creates a hole in front of his king but it's useful to push the rook back. T is used to be considered too weakening but is in fact one of White's better ways to try and find an edge.



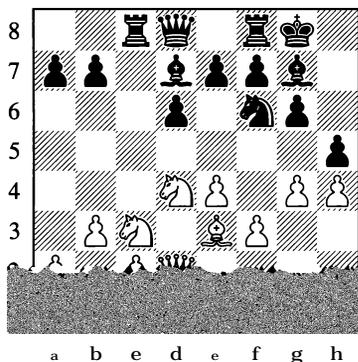
15.J c8

15...: 5? would be a better square in principle but here it fails to 16.l e6!.

16.l d5

16.l de2 b5 transposes to variation B2 on page 110

16.g4!? As far as I can see this move has only been played once, in the game Marwan - Otchiyev, Tehran 200B. I spent quite a long time trying to find a good way to hang onto the material, but forcing Black's rook back appears to favour White in those positions. In the end I decided on a different approach, exploiting the weakness White just created on the queenside.



16...Wa5!N Not allowing White his attack. Now the pressure on White's knight forces him

to exchange queens 17.l d5 Wxd2 IB1 xe7 ' h7 19.Exd2 (19.i xd2 is similar: 19...EceB 20.i f4 Exe7 21.i xd6 EfeB 22.i xe7 Exe7 23.g5l eB) 19...EceBT e knight is trapped, so White has to try: 20.i f4 Exe7 21.i xd6 EfeB 22.i xe7 Exe7 Another interesting imbalance. I think Black's bishop pair has a lot more potential than White's rook and two pawns. The position is probably equal but I'd much prefer to play as Black.

16...c xd5 17.exd5

With the knights exchanged, White's attack on the kingside will come quite fast.

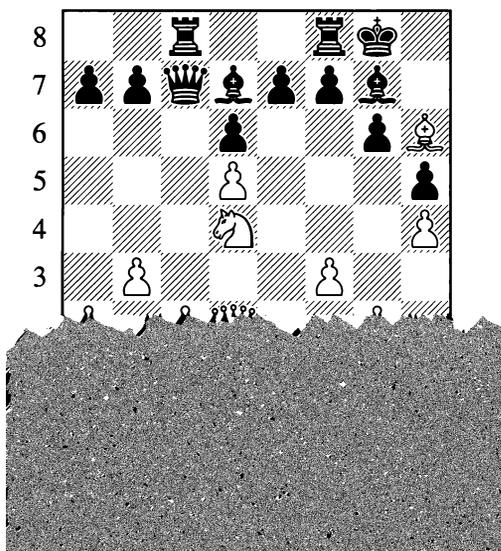
17...' c7

Black's safest response.

18i h6

IB.c4? T is was the only move covered by Dearing but now IB..b5! smashing open White's king works well. 19.cxb5 Wb7 20.i h6 Wxd5 21.i xg7 ' xg7 22.Wb2 < g8+ Murey - Kudrin, Beersheba 19B4.

IB.g4N T is always needs checking, but here IB..hxg4 19.f g4 Wc3 is safe. An important idea is revealed after 20.We2i b5!=-.



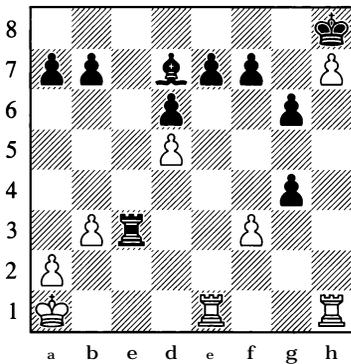
xd2 20.Exd2 < xg7 21.Ee1, when White eventually ground out the full point after 21...Efe8 However, I think with 21... f6!N, keeping the rook free, Black should have been fine. A possible continuation would be 22.c4 a6 23.a4 b5!-, although these positions aren't much fun so I prefer my suggestion.

We offer the exchange, but Black will be able to exploit that weakness in front of White's king. This is how the game might proceed:

19. x

19.c4 b5! 20.i xf8 < xf8 21.cxb5 b6 White's king looks precariously placed.

19.g4!? also needs checking of course, but I don't think Black has cause to worry. 19...hxg4 20.h5 i xd4!? The most concrete approach. 21. xd4 xc2t 22.< a1 c3t 23. xc3 Exc3 24.i xf8 < xf8 Here the only line we need to examine is 25.h6 < g8 26.h7t < h8 27.Edel! but again Black's counterplay comes in time:



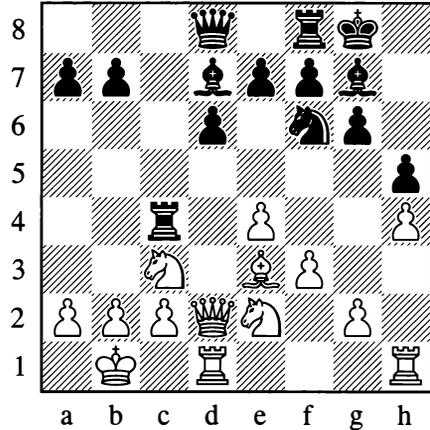
27...g3! 28.Exe7 g2 29.Eg1 i h3 30.Exf Ec2 31.Eel Ee2 32.Exe2 g1= t 33. b2 d4t 34.< a3 cst With a draw.

19..i x 20.Ehel V c5 21.c4 i g7

Black's structure is sound and White's king is loose. Black will follow up with ...a6 and ...b5 with strong pressure.

B) 15.1 de2

Comparing White's two main lines, 15.t de2 defends its companion on c3 and in some cases White will want to continue with t f4 and try and stick a knight on d5. 15.t b3, meanwhile, controls the a5-square and makes e4-e5 a more serious threat.

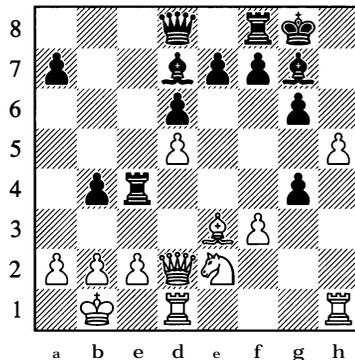


15..h5

We will follow in Kasparov's steps

Again White has a wide range of choices. We will follow an instructive game by Tiviakov after B1) 16. d4?, before moving on to B2) 16.h3 and B3) 16. h6

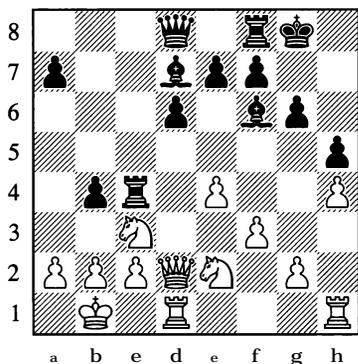
16.g4?! This always needs checking, but here it doesn't work. I think the simplest refutation is 16..b4 17.t d5 t xd5 18.exd5 hxg4 19.h5 This far we have followed Y. Hernandez - Lozano Martin, Malaga 2001. Now Black's strongest is:



19..Wa5N 20.hxg6 f5! 21.1 d4 xg6+ We've seen Black's bishops occupy these spots before. They successfully combine defending their own king and putting pressure on White's

16.1 d5?! Black doesn't have the ...Wb6 motif we saw after 15.1 d5, but this is still premature. After 16..1 xd5 17.exd5 Saborido Bua - Cubero Ferreiro, La Coruna 1999, I like Dearing's suggestion of 17..Wa8!N. The pressure on d5 prevents White from playing d4. We'll continue with ...Jfc8 and ... f5.

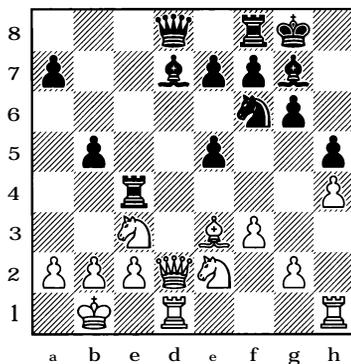
16. g5?! b4 17. xf6 xf6 This position is more normally reached by the bishop going via d4 before capturing on f6, but this move order bypasses Tiviakov's 16...e5.



18.1 d5 g7 19.1 xb4 (19.b3 This has been played in a couple of engine games but it's obviously not a move a human would want to play, as White has chronic weaknesses on the dark squares. After 19..1 :5, and whichever way White chooses to capture on b4, Black will play ...a5 followed by ...a4 exploiting the hook on b3.) Black would have good play for the pawn with any normal move, as he has the bishop pair and open lines to attack along. However, he has an even stronger reply: 19.. xb2! 20.r xb2 Wb6 Black will regain the piece with a continuing attack.

16.e5?!

I can imagine being worried by this move during a game, but it doesn't work.
16...dxe5



17. g5

17.1 e4 1 xe4 18.f e4 Figiel - Karpik, Naleczow 1986. Here Dearing observes that Black can play 18...: xe4!N, when he continues 19.Wd3 (19.Wxd7 Wxd7 20.: xd7 : xe3 +) 19..Wa8 20.1 c3 : d4! 21. xd4 exd4 22.1 xb5 e5 and Black completely dominates. White won't be able to stop the pawns' advance.

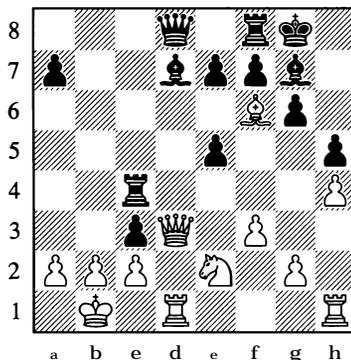
17..b4 18. xf6

18.1 d5 1 xd5 19.Wxd5 : c7+ was a clear extra pawn in Rettore - Bonaccorsi, Saint Vincent 1999.

18..bxc3 19.Wd3?

We have been following Roger - Majcher, France 2001.

19.Wxd7 can be answered with 19..Wb8 20.1 xc3 exf6 but was still a better try.



19.: 6N 20b3
 20.1 xc3EbS 21.b3Ed4 +
 20...exf6 21.Wxc4
 21.Wxd7 Ec7 +
 21... b5 22.We4 f5 +

Black wins the other knight and the game.

16.l f4

T is was one of White's ideas behind dropping the knight back to e2 but it doesn't really impress

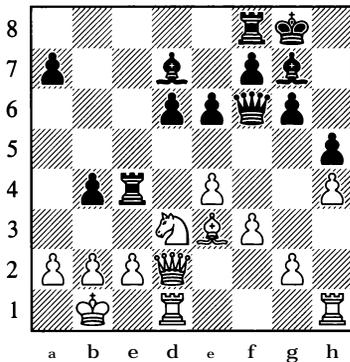
16...b4 17.l cd5 e6

T ere is also nothing wrong with the more popular 17...l xd5 IS.l xd5 e6=.

IS.l xf6t

IS.b3 T is is really asking for trouble along the long diagonal. IS...l xd5 19.1 xd5 exd5 20.bxc4 dxc4 21.Wxd6 (21. h6N xh6 22.Wxh6 e6 also gives Black good compensation) 21..Wa5 22. d2? White cracks (He had to contest the long diagonal with 22. d4, although Black still has good compensation after 22... xd4 23.Exd4 e6; 22.Wxd7?? loses at once to 22...b3! 23.cxb3 cxb3 24.axb3 Wa1t 25. c2 Wc3t 26.Wb1 Wb2#) 22... a4! 23. xb4 xc2t 24.Wc1 Wxa2 25.e5 h6t 0-1 Lukaszewicz - Bednarska, Konin 1990.

Is...Wxf6 19.l d3

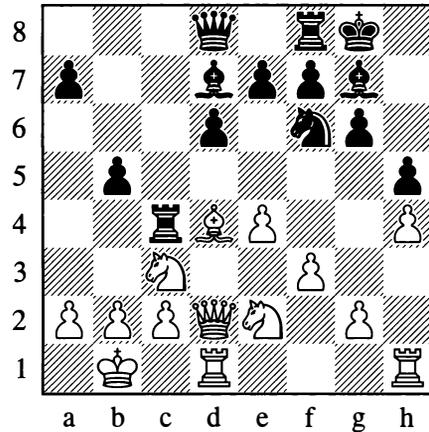


19...EfcSN

White's manoeuvre l d4-e2-d3 has not impressed, and he should now wimp out with:

20. g5
 20.Ec1 WdS'
 20..Wd4 21. e3Wf6=

B1) 16. d4?



16...e5!

T is strong idea was first played by Tiviakov. Black's play is too fast for White to exploit the temporary weakening of the structure.

17.. e3

17. xa7?N T e pawn is too hot, for example: 17...b4 IS.l d5 l xd5 19.Wxd5 (19.exd5 Wa5) 19... e6 20.Wb5 WaS 21.b3 Wxa7! 22.bxc4 EbS 23.Wc6 fS! +

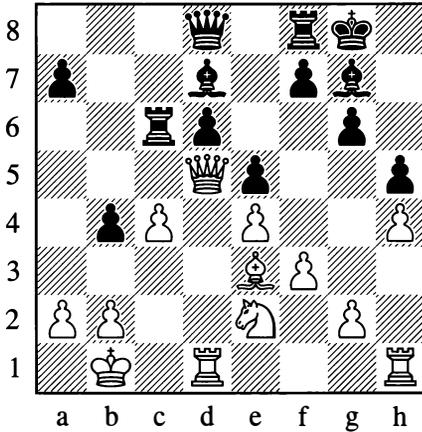
17...b4 18.t d5t xd5 19' xd5gc6

If White were able to reroute his knight from e2 to d5 he would be happy, but here the knight is blocked out of play. Black has a simple plan of combining attacking down the c-file and playing ...a5-a4.

20.c4

T e f ture World Champion tries to grab some space and prevent Black from ever breaking with ...d5.

20.Wd2 Wa5 21.c4 Exc4 22.Wd5 was Yudasin - Lahav, Israel 1996. A er 22... b5N Black is clearly better.



20...Wc7 21.b3

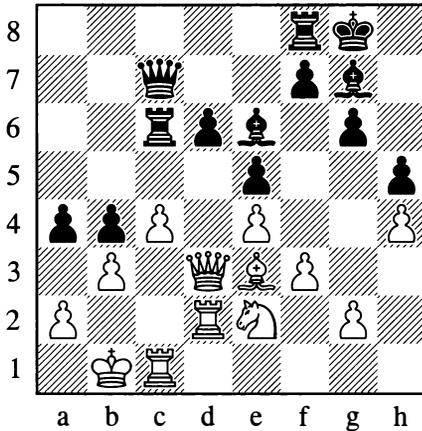
Notes attributed to ChessBase continue 21.c5 e6! 22.cxd6 \ b7 23.\ d3, when after 23...: dB Black will regain the pawn with a pleasant position.

21...a5 22.: d2

22.c5 still doesn't work: 22...\ a7+

22...a4 23.: c1. e6 24.Wd3

Up until now this has been Anand - Tiviakov, Tilburg 1992. Mter impressively dynamic play the Dutch GM should have continued:



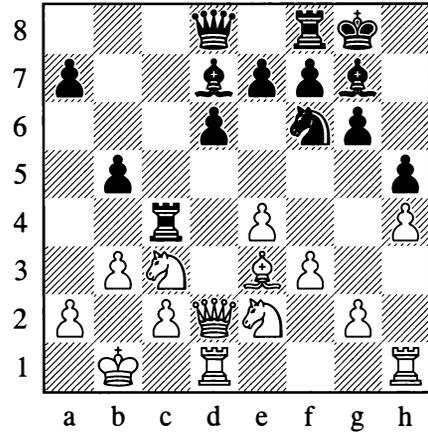
24...: aSN

Black will continue by playing on the a-fle. White is in a lot of trouble, for example:

25.: cc2Wa5 26.1 c1. f
White can barely move!

B2) 16b3

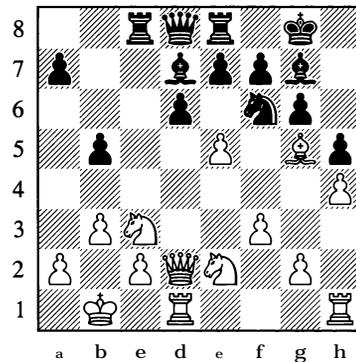
As we have already discussed, this forces Black to retreat his rook but creates some holes around the white king



16...: cS

Now Black should be able to punish B21) 17.. d4?, while B22) 17.1 d5 leads to an exciting battle.

17. g5 : eB IB.e5 Rook - Authier; email 1999. Black can now exploit the location of White's bishop with:



IB..1 h7N 19.exd6 1 xg5 20.dxe7 (20.hxg5 exd6 21.\ xd6 f5 gives Black fantastic

compensation for a mere pawn.) 20..' xe7
 21.' xd7 ' xd7 22.Exd7i xc3 23.t xc3 Exc3
 24.hxg5 Ee2+ With good winning chances in
 the ending, Black's rooks are so active.

17.i h6

T is is a better approach, and I advocate
 playing as we would in the main line with:

17...' a5 1B i xg7

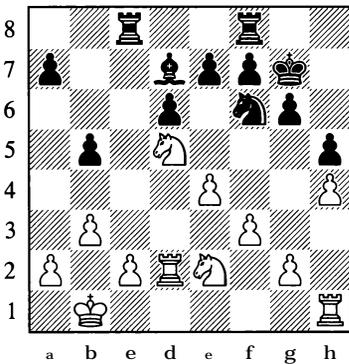
1B.t d5N is the critical test of Black's
 previous, but after 1B..' xd2 19.t xe7t

h7 2o.i xd2 EceB 21.i b4 Exe7 22.i xd6
 EeeB 23.i xfBi xfBo I would be happy with
 the bishop pair: We've examined a similar
 endgame in the note to White's 16th move
 in variation A earlier in the chapter:

1B.g4? would fail to 1B..i xh6 19.' xh6
 Exc3

1B.. xg7 19.t d5' xd2 20.Exd2

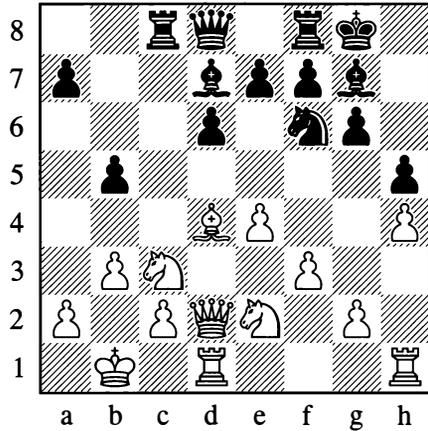
In Pohlmann - Sciupokas, *COFF.* 19B7,
 Black got overly creative and kept the
 knights on the board - eventually going on
 to lose. Exchanging knights is simply equal:



20...t xd5N 21.exd5 b4=

B21) 17.i d4?

T is usually where White puts his bishop
 but I think it has a serious faw:



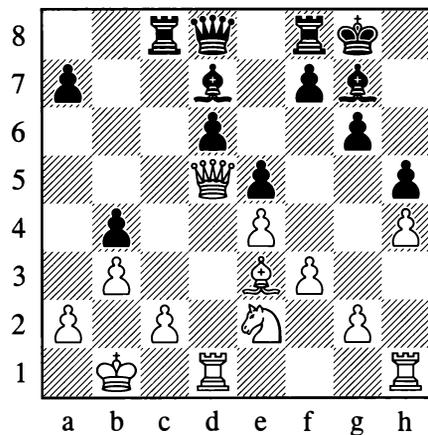
17...e5! 18i e3

Taking the pawn is asking for trouble:
 1B i xa7 ' c7 19.i e3 b4 20.t d5 t xd5
 21.exd5 ' a5 I gave this on ChessPublishing
 and wrote: " d Black will soon follow with
 ...e4 with a great initiative." Black is in fact
 completely winning.

18..b4 19.1 d51 xd5 2o.V xd5

20.exd5' a5+ again leaves White in trouble
 along the long diagonal.

T is far was reached in Trim - Yore, USA
 1995. Here I recommended:



20...J c6N

Black wants to play along the c- and a-fles

21.g4

An attempt by White to gain counterplay, but it doesn't seem sufficient.

21... f5 ! 22.1 df

22.gxh5 Wxf

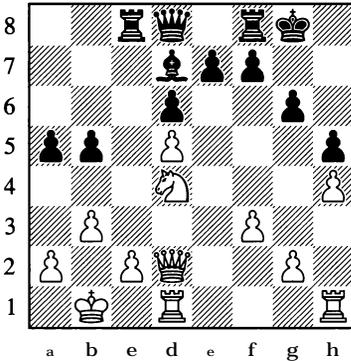
22...1 fc8 23.g S1 xc2

The position favours Black.

B22) 17.t dS1 xdS 18.exdS as

19. d4h d4 20' xd4

20.t xd4 was played in Duppel - Pogonina, Halkidiki 2000.



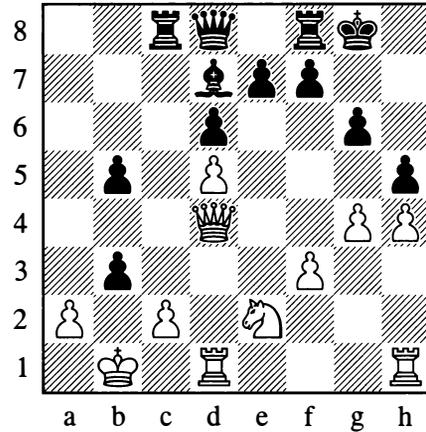
Black should immediately target the weak d5-pawn with 20...1 c5N. White cannot really defend the pawn so should go on the offensive. 21.g4 (21.t e2 . f5 22.t c3 a4+ or 21.Wg5 e5+) 21...%hd5 22.gxh5 1 xh5 However, with the active rook on h5 I don't believe in White's attack, for example: 23.t e2 . c6 24.t g3 1 c5 25.h5 g5+

20...a4

We now get a classic race. Whose attack will crash through first?

20...Wc7 21.1 d2 Wc5= Horvat - Brkic, Pula 2001, is a sensible alternative.

21.g4 a b3

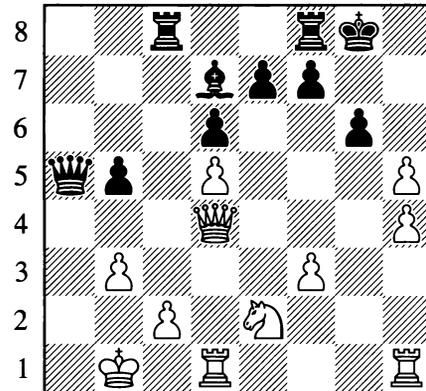


22.a b3!

22.cxb3 was better but White was obviously concerned about opening up the b1-h7 diagonal. Now he won't really be able to capture on h5 as... f5t will be too painful, so his attack is slowed down. After 22...Wa5 the position is roughly level.

22..' aS 23.g S

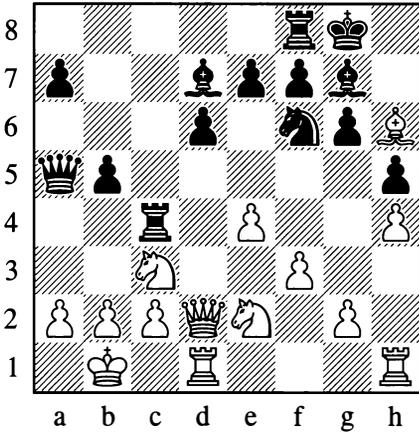
Poli - Kratochvil, email 2008 Here Black winning



25..Ea8!

Despite the pawn on g6, Black's attack has arrived first.

B3) 16. h6 Y a5



As usual B31) 17.g4 is an aggressive continuation, while White follows a more positional path with B32) 17.h g7 - which was Anand's choice against Kasparov in Game 11 of their World Championship match.

17. g5? was a bizarre move played the first time this position was reached. White simply cannot give Black so much free time to develop his queenside attack. I include the game as Black won quite instructively: 17...b4 18. d5 19. xd5 19. Wxd5 Ec5 20. Wd3 e6 21.1 c1 W a4 22. xe7 EfcB 23. Ed2 c3 24. xd6 xa2t 25.1 xa2 EaS 26.< c1 Wxa2 27.< dl Wxb2 28. f4 xd2 29.< xd2 Ea3 0-1 Suetin - L. Szabo, Leningrad 1967.

17.1 dS

The knight jump should always be calculated before playing the queen to a5.

17...Wxd2 18.1 xe7 < h7 19. xd2 1 xe4

Black's clearest route to equality.

19...EeB would reach a similar ending to one we have already examined in the notes to variation A. 20.b3 White needs Black's rook

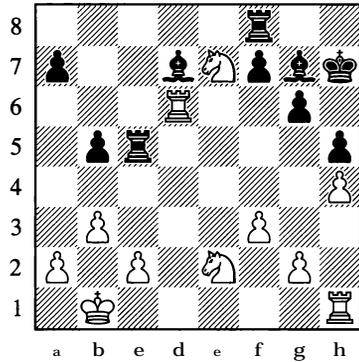
to be on a dark square. 20..Ec7 21. f4 e6 22. xd6 Ecxe7 23. xe7 Exe7 Krotov1 - Flitsch, corr: 1995.

20.b3 1 xd2t 21.Exd2 Ec5 22.Exd6N

Taking the pawn must be critical.

The game Arencibia Rodriguez - Marin, Andorra 1995, continued 22.1 g3? EeB 23.1 d5 c6 24.1 f4 b4' and Black had a pleasant edge.

Now on ChessPublishing I suggested:



22...Ee5 23.Exd7 Exe2 24.g4 EeB 25.1 c6 EcB 26.Ed6 fB=

B31) 17.g4

This is probably White's last chance if he wants to play aggressively. It is time Black should take the material on offer.

17...hxg4 18.h5 gxf3 19.h g7 xg7 20.hxg6 f g 21.Y h6t ?

This check simply forces Black's king to a safer spot.

21.1 d4!N is suggested by Chris Ward. He continues 21...b4 (21...f2!? and 21... g4!? are also considered) 22.1 d5 1 xd5 23.exd5 Wxd5 when he describes the position as 'murky'. Actually I think only White can be worse. 24.Ede1! e6 25.Wh6t f 26.1 xf3 ' eB 27.Wxg6t ' dB 28.1 g5 e5 The black king has found relative sanctuary while Black still has that extra pawn.

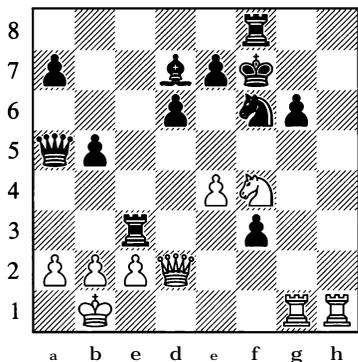
21.Edg1

I found one correspondence game on my database that continued in this manner:

21...< f 22.1 f4 Exc3

22...Eg8!N looks an interesting alternative, for example: 23.1 fd5 b4 24.1 xf6 bxc3 25.Eh7t (25.Wf4 We5! works out well for Black af er 26.Wxe5 dxe5 27.1 xd7 < e6' or 26.Eh7t Eg7 27.Wxe5 dxe5 28.1 xd7 Exe4')

25...< xf6 T e following is an interesting line, and like almost all interesting computer lines, it appears to be a draw: 26.Wf4t Wf5! 27.e5t dxe5 28.Wxc4 . e6 29.Wh4t g5 30.Wh6t Wg6 31.Wh2 Wf5 32.Wh6t=



23.1 d5. e6 24.Wg5. xd5

24...< e8!N 25.1 xc3 Wb6 looks a reasonable way to proceed if Black is not satisfied with the draw.

25.Wxg6t

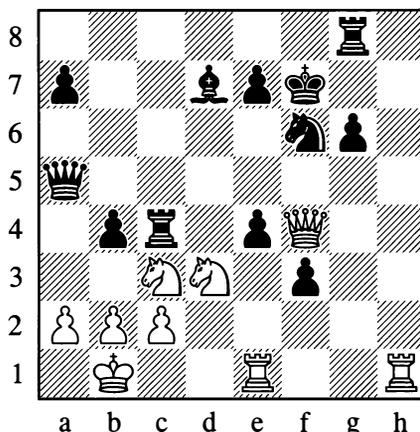
A draw was agreed in Llorente A varez - De Oliveira, email 2009.

21...< f 22.t f4 gg8

Black already stands well here, and White only compounded the situation:

23.e5! dxe5 24.t d3 b4 25.gde1 e4 26. f4

T is was the route of Gudyev - Diani, corr: 1998, when simplest would have been:

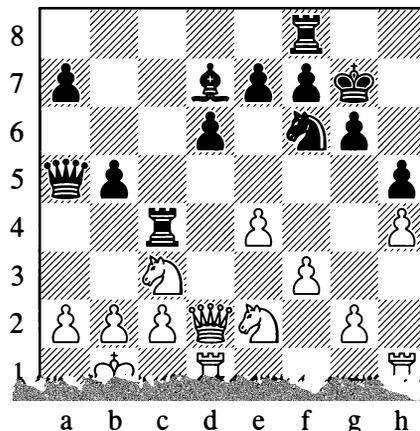


26.. f N 27.t e5t e6 28. xf t xf 29.t xc4 bxc3

Black has a decisive advantage.

B32 17.. xg7 xg7

White has succeeded in trading dark-squared bishops, but in return Black has grabbed some space on the queenside and is pretty active.

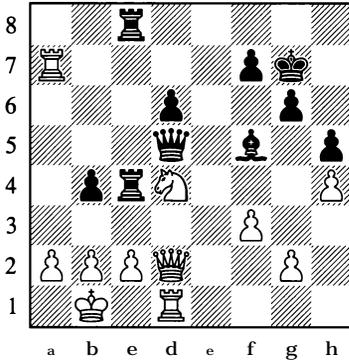


18.t f4

18.g4 will simply transpose to variation B31 above after 18..hxg4 19.h5 gxf3.

18.1 c1N is apparently an old suggestion by Gufeld, but 18..Efc8 19.1 b3 Wb6 , as suggested by Dearing, feels far easier for Black.

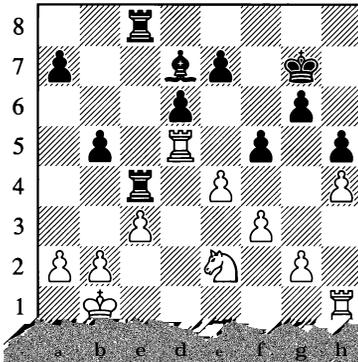
1S..l he1 T ere can't be anything wrong with centralizing White's f'nal piece but it doesn't put any pressure on Black either. 1S...l fc8 19.t d4 b4 20.t d5 t xd5 21.exd5 Wxd5 22.l xe7 f5 23.l xa7 A logical series of moves led us to this position in Marcotulli - Granara Barreto, email 2003, and here the most accurate is:



23... xc2tN 24.t xc2 WcS 25.t e3 Wxa7 26.t xc4l xc4=

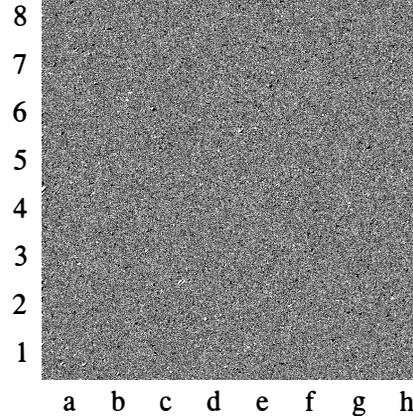
1S.WgS Prol Medeiros - Braga, Sao Paulo 1999. In certain variations the queen can be annoying on g5, pinning the b5-pawn, but here Black can simply ignore it: 18...l fcSN 19.eS dxes 20.WxeS WdS! (Dearing suggests 20... e6 21.WxbS Wc7 with decent pressure for the pawn.) 21.t e4 g8! White can't utilize the pin along the d-file. T e engine tries to trap the rook with 22.b3 (22.g4 t xe4 23.f e4 l ScS+) 22...l xc2 23.t 4c3, but after 23...l Sxc3 24.t xc3 l xg2 2S.l h2 l xh2 26.Wxh2 WaS+ Black is certainly not worse.

1S.t dS is simply a slightly worse version of the main line, as W ite would prefer to have a knight on dS after the exchanges. 1S...Wxd2 19.lxd2 t xdS 20.l xdS (20.exdS l fcS 21.g3 as 22.c3?! b4+ Dion - Jobe, email 2000) 20...l fcS 21.c3 fS! Even with the queens exchanged Black still wants the initiative.



22.b3 l 4cS 23.l xcS l xcS 24.exfS xfSt+ Black had a slight advantage in the ending with the more active pieces in Abdel Azim - Hakk, Cairo 2003.

1S..J S 19.l cd5



19..J d

With this move Kasparov offered a draw: Black has completely solved any opening problems. As it turned out, Anand soon blundered and Black won easily.

19...b4!? has only been played once, but is an interesting approach should you want to keep more play on the board. T e game continued: 20.t xe7 l xc2 21.Wxd6 b3 22.axb3 l xb2t 23. xb2 Wc3t 24.' a2 l cS 2S.WxcS Wxc5 26.t ed5 t xd5 27.l xdS Wf2t 2S.' a3 c6 29.l g5 Here it's given as a W ite win in

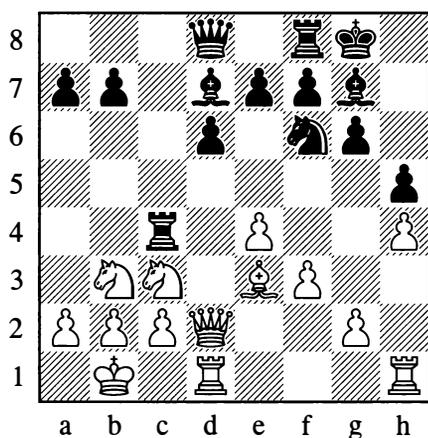
Abdulla - Robinson, Kemer 2009, but with 29.. d2N Black is certainly not worse.

20J hd21 xd5 21.1 xd5 c f =

Anand - Kasparov, New York (11) 1995.

C) 15.1 b3

White's other main line and Karjakin's choice fairly recently. Even though that was a blindfold game we should take his preparation seriously.



15.. b8?!

This was an interesting and rare approach from the highly theoretical Danish GM, and second to Magnus Carlsen, Peter Heine Nielsen. The idea behind White's last is generally to play i d4 and t d5 without allowing the black queen to come out to a5. By putting the queen on b8 instead of the more standard c7, Black needn't worry about the knight jumping into d5.

We will pay closest attention to C1) 16. g5, C2) 16. d4 and C3) 16. h6.

16.g4

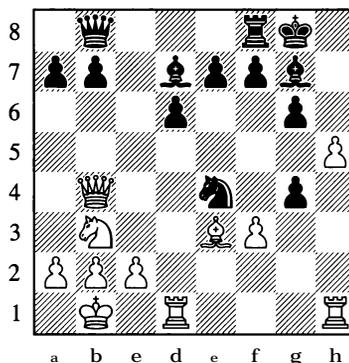
In all Soltis positions this pawn sacrifice has to be carefully checked.

16..J hc3!

It's important to get rid of that knight before it jumps into d5.

17.Wxc3 hxg4 18.h5 t xe4 19.Wb4

19.We1N gxf3 Here Black's kingside looks solid enough. Once the bishop gets to f5 Black controls most of the important squares. 20.hxg6 (20.Wh4 i f5 21.t d4 Wc8+) 20...f g6 21.Wh4 i f5+



19...t g3 20J hg1 t xh5 21.f g4 t f6 22.g5 t h5

With a fairly balanced position. The knight is a bit of side but blocks up the kingside entirely. Material is roughly level, and Semrl - Ham, corr: 2012, was eventually drawn.

C1) 16. g5

White has ideas of taking on f6 and jumping the knight into d5, while we also need to watch out for e4-e5 ideas.

16..J fc8?!

Ignoring what looks like White's bigger threat.

17.e5

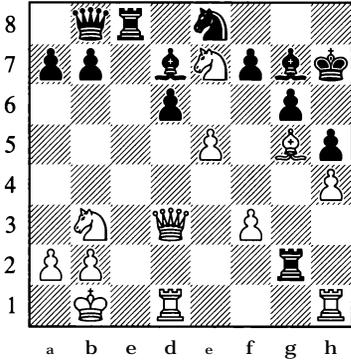
17.i xf6?N i xf6 18.t d5 doesn't really work here, as Black has 18..Exc2 19.t xf6t (19.Wxc2 Exc2 20.< xc2 < g7+) 19...exf6 20.Wxd6 Wxd6 21.Exd6 i e6+.

17...d e8

17...Exc3!N 18.bxc3 l e8 could also be considered.

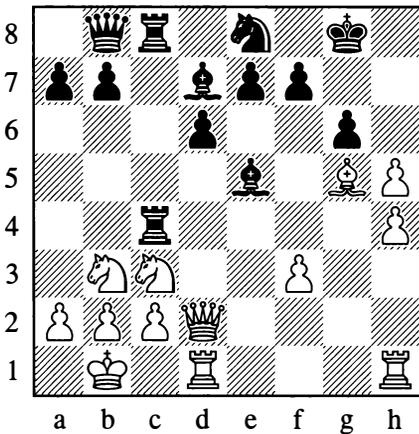
18.g4

18.l d5N Exc2 19.1 xe7t h7 20.' d3 Exg2 Our rook on g2 proves extremely irritating for White.



An interesting fantasy variation runs 21.f4 Ecc2 (21...dxe5?) 22.l d2 Exb2t! 23. xb2 dxe5 24.' xd7 exf4t 25. cl ' e5 26.Edg1! White's only move to prevent immediate carnage 26... alt 27. c2 ' c3t 28 dl ' alt 29. c2' c3t with a draw.

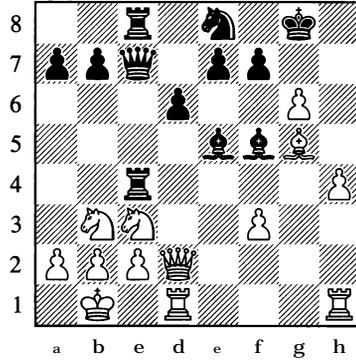
18..., x.e5 19.9 5



19...Exc3!N

I prefer this more direct approach in practical play.

In Kusmierek - Sciallero, email 2009, Black was successful with 19...i f5 20.hxg6' c7!. A rather scary move to make if you haven't got many days to analyse!



21.gxf t ' xf 22.Ehel Exc3 23.bxc3 i xc3 24.' f4 e6 25.Ee2 i e5 26.' cl ' c4+ Black was completely dominating

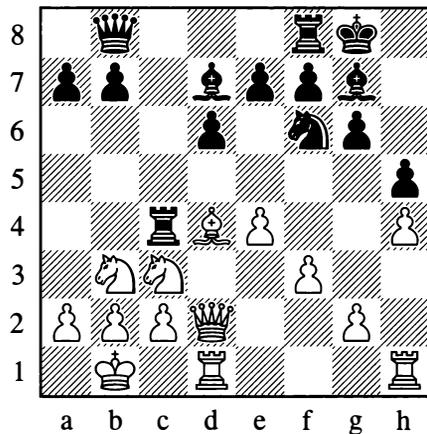
20.bxc3h e321.' cl , f

Black has a strong initiative which looks to more than compensate for the exchange.

22.h g6' e7!

A neat idea, borrowing from the one employed in the game

C2) 16, d4



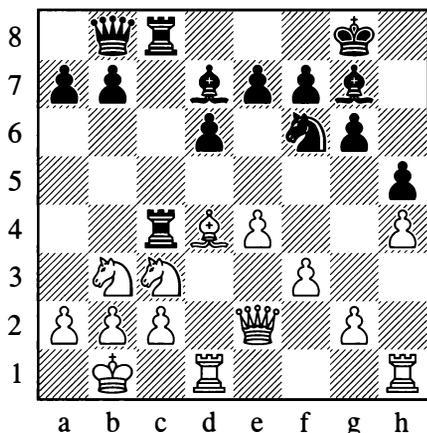
White's usual continuation, but with the queen on b8 it lacks any bite.

16.J 8 17. e2

17.1 a5? 1 xe4! 18.1 xe4 Exd4 was simply losing for White in Brzozka - Veinger, Russia 2002.

17.Ehe1 prepares to break in the centre but we can actually ignore it with 17...b5N, as 18.e5? b4 19.exf6 Exd4! 20.' xd4 xf6+ is excellent for Black.

17.' e3N T is would be an improvement on Karjakin's play. On ChessPublishing I recommended: 17...b5 18.e5 (18. xa7? T e pawn is too hot. 18..' a8 19.1 a5 E4c7 20. b6 Exc3 21.bxc3 e6 gives Black an extremely strong attack.) 18..'Exd4! 19.Exd4 (19.1 xd4 b4!+) 19...dxe5 20.Ed2 e6 Black has great compensation.



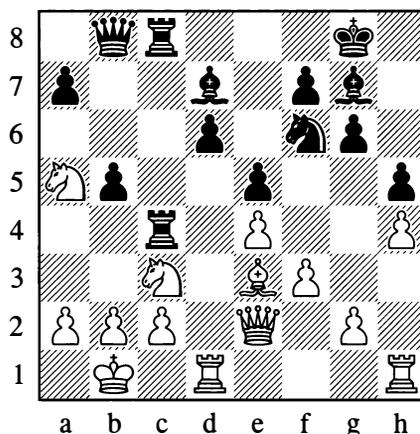
17...e5!

T is move needs to be carefully judged in the Dragon. On the one hand it blocks in the g7-bishop, but here Peter Heine has correctly judged that gaining time and taking control of the centre is more important. T e real question is always whether White will be able to sit on the d5-outpost forever. Here his pieces aren't so well coordinated - especially that knight on b3 - so Black will likely be able to break with ...d5, when the g7-bishop will find a new lease of life.

18i e3hS 19.t aS

T is move doesn't slow up Black's attack but in any event White is unable to stop 19...b4.

As I gave on ChessPublishing, 19.Ec1 b4 20.1 d1 d5 would give Black a strong initiative.



19...h4! 20.t dS

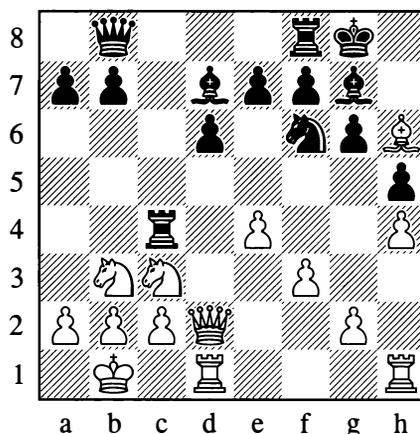
20.1 xc4 wouldn't have saved White. 20...bxc3 21.b3 b5! Strangely that knight on c4, which looks quite stable, is indefensible. Peter Heine gives 22.Wa1 xc4 23.bxc4' b2#

20.. xc2

Black broke through and didn't have any problems converting the full point in Karjakin - PH. Nielsen, Beijing (rapid) 2011.

C3 16i h6

T is looks fairly critical.



16..Jc SN

T is was Peter Heine's own suggestion on his DVD and feels more reliable to me.

16...bS

I found two correspondence games which reached this position.

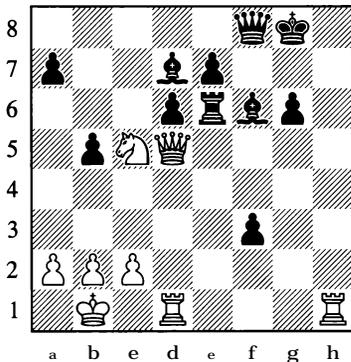
17.g4 hxg4 1S.hS g f 19.hxg6 f g6 20.l dS
20. dg1 looks scary but 20...i g4 seems to hold on, and was indeed drawn in Marturano - Fasano, corr. 2014.

20... xe4 21.l xf6t

21.i xg7N xg7 22- h6t f o is another dangerous-looking position, but Black does currently have a few extra pawns.

21...i xf6 22.WdSt e6 23.i xfS WxfS
24.l cS!?

24.Wxf3N eS is another double-edged position but, with the bishop pair and two pawns for the exchange, Black will be more than okay unless White can somehow find a way through.



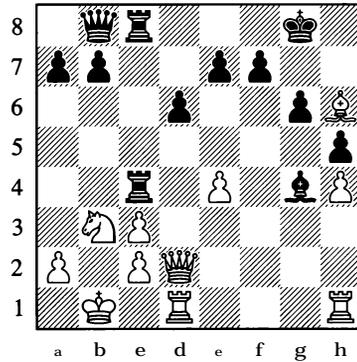
24...dxcS 2S.Wxd7 eS 26.Wh3i g7 27.Wh7t
f 2S. hg1 e6 29.Wh3 WaS 30. dfl f6
31. g3=

A ter an interesting fght the gameliquidated into a drawn ending in Ljubicic - Haugen, email 2011.

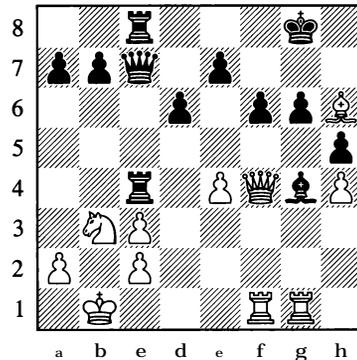
17.h g7

After examining 17.g4 you'll see why White might improve by exchanging on g7 immediately.

17.g4 l xe4! T is is Peter Heine's big idea. By doubling rooks on the c-file Black has put pressure on c2, so W ite is now forced to recapture with the pawn: 1S.f e4 i xc3 19.bxc3i xg4



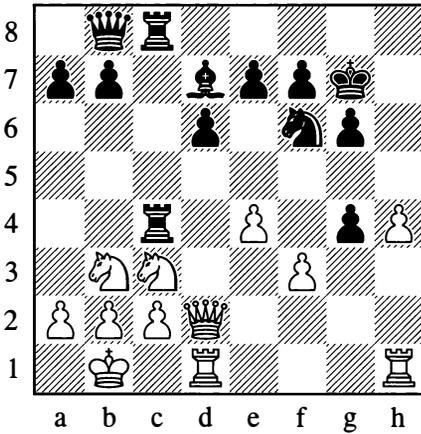
Black has two pawns for the piece and will pick up a third. T e chief question revolves around whether White can exploit Black's weak dark squares, and it doesn't seem that he can. T e analysis continues 20. dfl Wc7! 21.Wf4 f6 and Peter Heine leaves it here. Now the dark squares are covered, White's only attempt to break through to Black's king is an exchange sacrifice on g4. T erefore we should check 22. hg1; however Black has at least a draw with:



22... xc3 (22... h7!? and 22...Wc6 could also be tried.) 23. xg4 xb3t 24.axb3 Wxc2t
25. a1 Wc3t=

17...@xg7 1S.g4 h g4

I see nothing wrong with Peter Heine's idea, but 1S...Exc3! also looks interesting to me. One sample line could run: 19.bxc3 hxg4 20.h5 gxf3 21.hxg6 f g6 22.Wh6t mf 23.Ehgl EgS 24.Edfl i c6 25.t d2 WdS 26.t xf3 Wb6t 27.mal Wc5 Black has a reasonable position.



19.h5 Eh8 20.l d5
20.hxg6

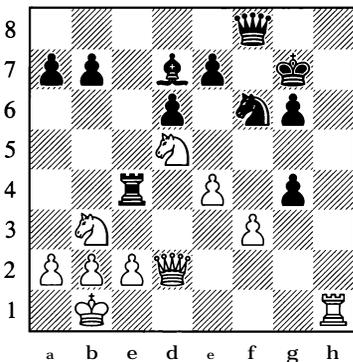
T is also needs checking of course, but Black has enough resources.

20...f g6 21.t d5 Exhl

21...gxf3 also defends. Generally if there are two sound lines then the attack can't be so strong. 22.t xf6 exf6 23.ExhS WxhS 24.Wxd6 i g4 25.We7t mh6 T e bishop on h5 will keep the king safe

22.Exhl WfS

Black again controls enough squares to prevent White from any mating ideas.



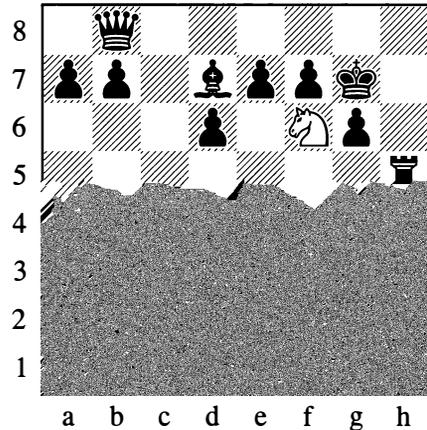
23.Wh6t mf 24.Wg5 t xd5 25.Wxd5t i e6 26.Wxb7

26.Eh7t mgS 27.Wxe6t mxh7 2S.Wxc4 wins a piece, but after 2S...Wxf3 Black's g4-pawn is worth at least enough for the knight and so W ite will need to force perpetual.

26...gxf3 27.t d2 Ec5 2S.t xf3 mg7 29.t d4 i gS 30.Wxa7 Ee5=

20..Exh5 21.l x

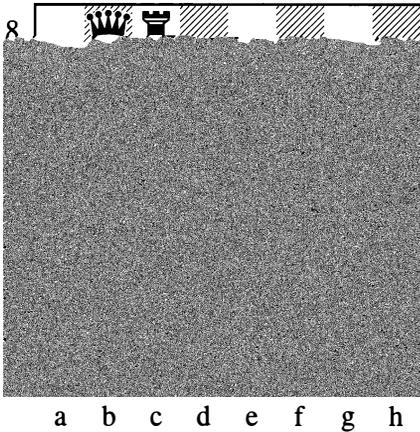
My engine pops up with: 21.e5! dxe5 (As I wrote above, Black's position appears to be sound enough for two viable lines. Here 21...t xd5 also works. 22.Exh5 t f4! 23.Ehhl i f5 24.t d4 dxe5 25.t xf5t gxf5 26.f g4 f g4 Black has three pawns for the piece and adequate defensive resources) 22.t xf6 Exhl 23.Exhl mxh6 24.Wxd7 gxf3 White will probably have to exchange either the rooks or queens to win the advanced f-pawn. Black will have the better chances in the ending with his four uncontested kingside pawns.



21..ex 22.Exh5 g h5

T is is where Peter Heine leaves the line. We should check a little further:

23.Ehl Ec8! 24.e5
24.Exh5 EhS'



e5 16... c7 17.h5 was played in Espejo - Vila Dupla, Seville 2000, when Dearing's suggestion of 17...! xc3!N 18' xc3' xc3 19.bxc3 t xe4 would have been totally crushing.

16.Edg1? Zhou - Luanchen, Zhongshan 2014, was a dangerous but not quite sound attempt. Here taking the second pawn was rather too hot. Better was 16..' a5N (16...e5N also looks like a decent defence) 17.h5 (17.t b3 ' h5+) 17...gxh5 18.f g4 t xe4! 19.t xe4' xd2 20.t xd2 xd4 21.gxh5 Eg4+

24.. h8 25.ex t x 26.f g4h g4;

T is looks safe for Black. We have two extra pawns and it doesn't look like White is that close to delivering mate.

D) 15.g4

T is move briefly flickered into fashion a few years ago but was quickly dropped. However, it probably has the most bite of any of White's options. I believe it's rareness stems from the fact that with 13' b1 White has already declared he wants a quieter game than is usually seen in the Soltis Variation.

16... hh5

16...gxh5!?

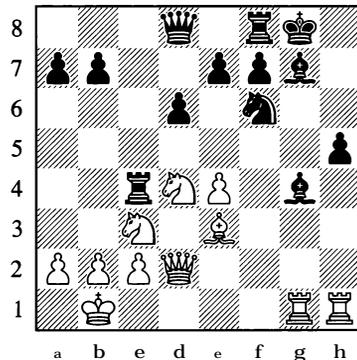
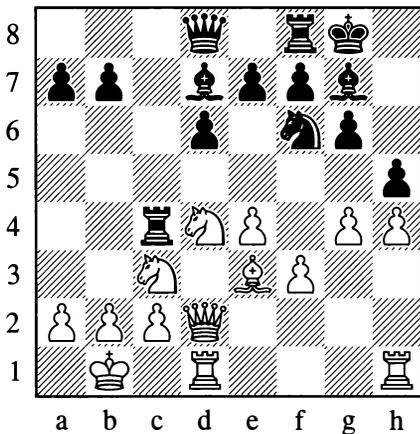
T is is rare but looks to be another interesting option. In this precise position it seems important to have a knight on f6 to control the d5-square.

17.f g4

17.t d5 was tried anyway in Serra Olives - Truyols, Palma de Mallorca 1991, but Black can defend with 17...e5!N.

17. h6?N xd4! T is typical trick still works. I thought I had to check Black could escape after 18' g5 Exd1† 19.t xd1 t e8 20' xh5 but now both moves with the f-pawn are winning.

17... xg4 18. dg1



15..h g4 16.h5

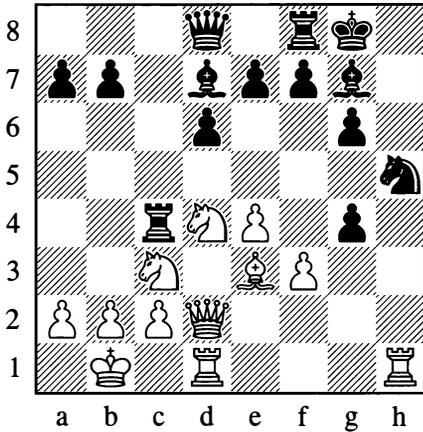
16.f4?T ere's little logic to this move when Black has already exchanged the knight from

18..' c8N

Covering the f5-square.

1S...: hc3 19.Wxc3 4 xe4 20.Wd3 as played in Bilguun - Munk bayar, Ulan Ude 2013, would also have been fine had Black continued: 20...4 c5N (20...d5? 21. h6! xh6 22: hh5 was seen in the game) 21.Wd2 f5=

19.4 d5 eS 20.Wd3 b5°



0 1) 17.f g4 needs to be taken seriously, but I think 02) 17. dgl is White's critical follow-up.

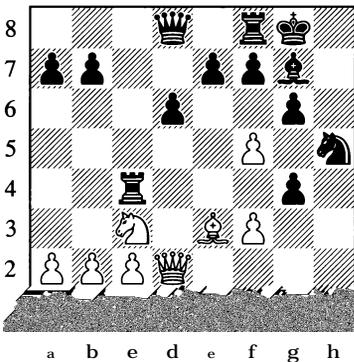
17. xh5? has been seen occasionally, but here White has no justification in giving the exchange.

17.4 f5?!

T is one isn't particularly scary.

17... xf5 1S.exf5

Black has many good options but the strongest appears to be:



1S... xc3N

I suggested this move on ChessPublishing and it still looks good.

1S...Wa5 is also promising, 19.4 d5 (19.Wd5N is necessary, but Black is still better after 19...Wxd5 20.4 xd5 gxf3 21.4 xe7t h7+.) 19...Wxd2 20.4 xe7t ' h721. xd2 Karli - Lund, Rogaska Slatina 2011. Here my suggestion of 21...gxf3!N is clearly better for Black. I gave 22. dh2 d4 23.f g6t (23. xd4 xd4 24.f6 ' h6 25. xh5t gxh5 26.4 f5t ' g5 27.4 xd4 f2+ T e f- and h-pawns are stronger than the knight.) 23...f g6 24. xh5t gxh5 25. xh5t g7 26. h6t ' O 27. f5t ' e6! 2S. xfS f2 Again the advanced f pawn is worth more than White's extra piece.

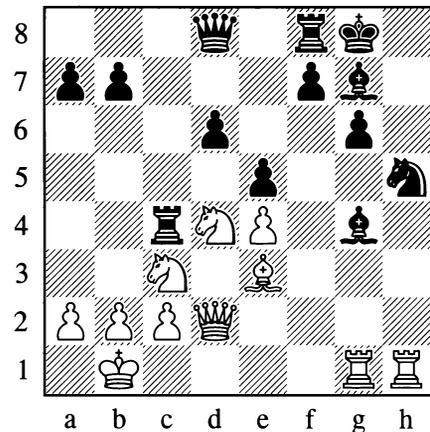
19.bxc3 Wa5 20. d4 Wb5t 21. ' cl Wxf5 22.f g4 Wxg4 23. dgl WF3

Black will give up the exchange on d4 followed by trading queens with an extremely promising endgame.

0 1) 17.f g4. xg4 18 dgl e5

Black immediately fghts back in the centre

1S...Wd7 is a so possible. Guizar - Fleetwood, corr. 2000, continued: 19. h4 (19.4 d5N fcSo) 19...4 f6 20. h6 4 xe4! 21.4 xe4 xd4 22.Wc1 xe4 23. xg7 ' xg7 24.Wh6t ' f6 25.WxfS Here 25...e5N looks better for Black. His king has adequate protection and he will soon be able to start advancing his pawns.



19.1 f !

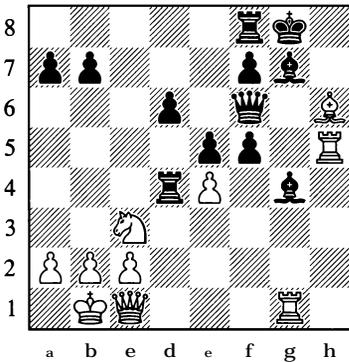
T is is White's only way to keep the balance.

19.c dbS? f3! 20.Wd3 (20.Eh3 xe4 With the e-pawn gone Black's defence is rather easier. 21.ExhS was tried but White's attack was foundering. 21..gxhS 22.c xd6 Exc3! 23.Exg7t Otherwise Black was about to cover with 23... g6. 23...' xg7 24. h6t ' h7 + Zvan - Starcic, Kranj 1999) 20..Exc3 21.c xc3 xh1 22.Exh1 a6+ White is able to win back the d-pawn but will still be a clear pawn down, Piorun - Robson, Chennai 2011.

19...gx5 20.ex !N

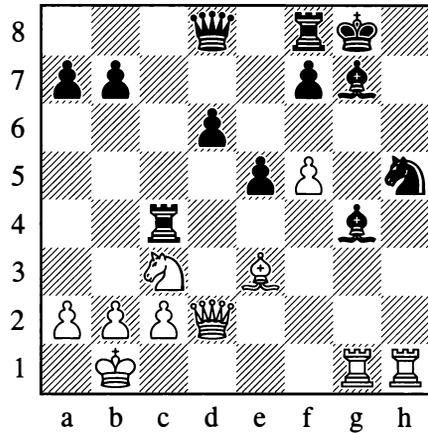
T is was my suggestion for White on ChessPublishing.

20. h6?! was played the only time this position was reached, but 20..Ed4 21.Wc1 Wf6 was better for Black. Here White had to try 22.ExhSN (Instead 22. xg7?! c xg7 23.c dS Exd5 24.exd5 was Cabrera Ladron de Guevara - Batista, Havana 2013, when 24...e4N would just have been winning. Black will follow up with ...We5, ...f6 and ...c f with a rock solid position.)



22... xh5 23.Exg7t Wxg7 24. xg7 ' xg7 25.exf5 Ef4! 26.Wg1t g6! 27.f g6 f g6 28.c d1 Ef1 29.Wg4 Eh1+

White has a dangerous initiative for the piece. I think the most pragmatic defence is



20...Exf5 21. xh5i g6

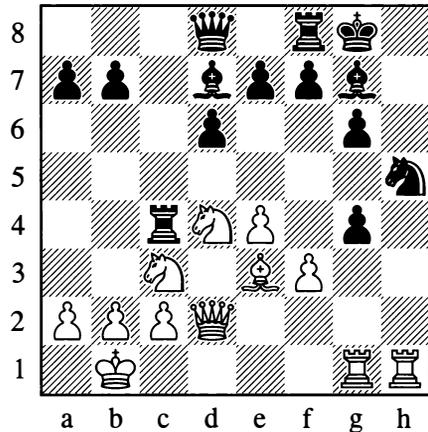
T e bishop does a good job defending the black king.

22i h6

It is important that Black can defend against this move with:

22... h4! 23i g5 d4li

D2) 17. Edg1

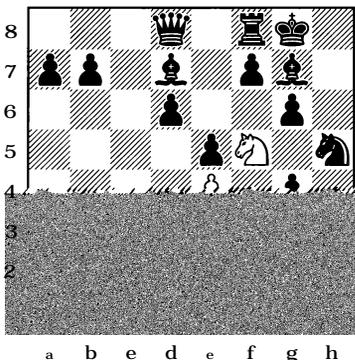


17...1 f

T is move feels unnatural as we're accustomed to the knight being used to blockade the h-f file. Here, however, I believe it's more important to f ght for control of d5

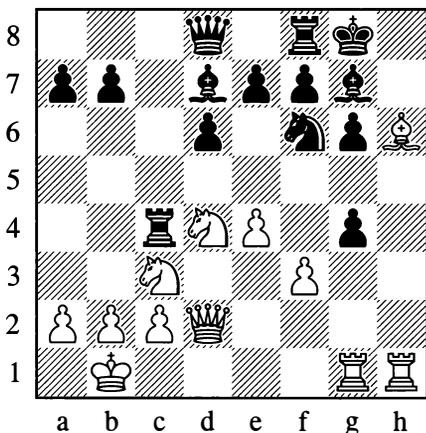
17...Wc8 has been Black's most common response but I don't trust it.

17...Exc3!N is interesting though. For example: 18.Wxc3 e5 19.t f5! 0.9.f g4 appears to just be a draw: 19...exd4 20. xd4 t f6 21.Ef1 t xe4 22.Wh3 f6 23.Wh7t WO 24.Eh6 t d2t 25.Wcl t xf1 26.Wxg6t Wg8 27.Wh7t=)



19...gxf5 20.Exh5 f4 21. f2 (21. xa7 g3 Black's pawn structure makes pleasant viewing!) 21...Wc8 (21...g3? 22. xg3)

18. h6



Some fantastic variations arise after D21) 18..l xe4, although D22) 18...Exd4! is more pragmatic.

D21) 18..l xe4

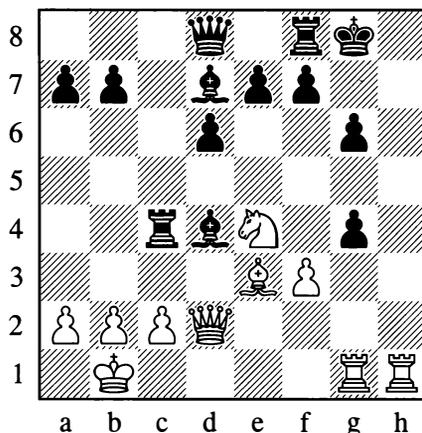
Black's position looks a bit hairy in this variation, but as far as I can see there's nothing fantastic for W ite. Black has more defensive resources than are immediately apparent.

19. l xe4

19.f e4 doesn't challenge Black. 19... xd4 20.. e3. e5 21. f4. xf4 22.Wxf4 Exc3! Here W ite should bail out with: 23.Wh6! (23.bxc3? f6 24.Wh6 Wb6t! 25.Wcl wO 26.Wh7t W68 T e king escapes to safety and so Black is a lot better:) 23...Eh3 24.Exh3 gxh3 25.Exg6t f g6 26.Wxg6t With a draw.

19... xd4 20. e3

20. xf8 Wxf8 21.b3. xgl 22.bxc4 Wd8! is an important idea



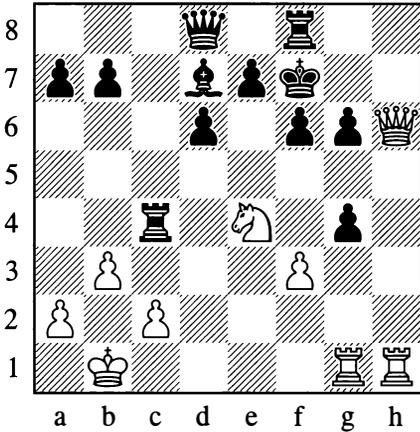
20... e5 21. f4. g7 22." h2

T is position soon transposes to a couple of correspondence games after D21) 22..f , but the exciting D212) 22...f N must also be considered.

D211) 22..f 23. h6i h6
24." xh6Wf 25.h3

25.Wh7t W66 26.Exg4 Wd5 Here on ChessPublishing I wrote "[this] looks insane

but possibly the king will run to safety via c6-c7 and to bB" Stock sh is certainly happy with Black's position!

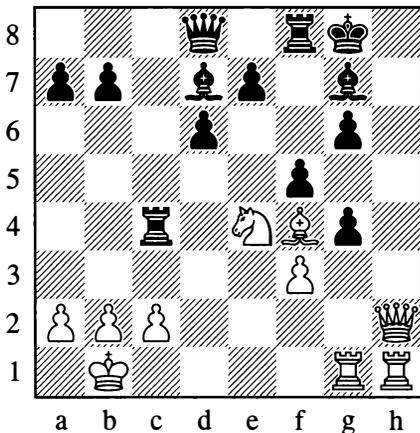


25.J xe4 26.Wh7t < e6 27.f e4

The king looks rather precarious on e6, but in fact it's hard for White to attack it without any minor pieces. The position is about balanced and the game was eventually drawn in Grego- Sogin, corr. 2013.

D212) 22...f N

This was a move I analysed on ChessPublishing. The following line is so fascinating I thought I would share it here as well.

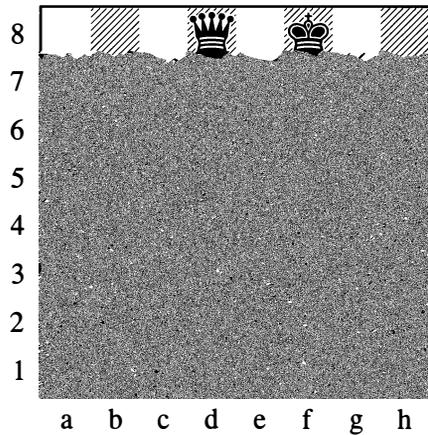


23.t g5!?

23.Wh7t f 24.Eh6 (24.t g5t f6+ doesn't get White anywhere) T is is another dangerous-looking position, but with 24...Wb6! White doesn't appear to have more than a draw after 25.Wxg6t gB 26.Wh7t=. Instead, 26. c1 Exc2! 27. xc2? EcBt would deprive White of the draw. Black is doing rather well, as 2B. b1? Exc It is catastrophic.

23..J6 24.Wh7t < f 25.t e4!

White's only move not to be clearly worse. These positions are so sharp that they are near impossible to play accurately without having done a lot of work on them beforehand. T means the better-prepared player will have a big advantage.



25..Jc 2!?

25..f e4 26. h6 f 27.Wxg7t e6 2BExg4 d5! may also survive but this isn't so much fun.

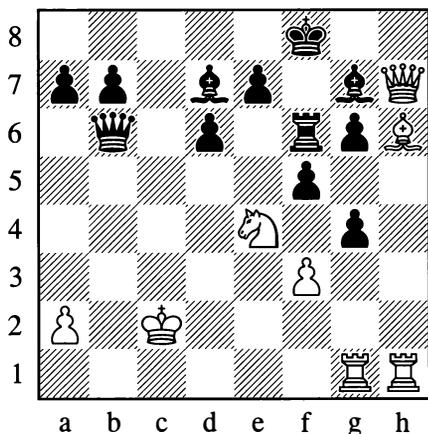
26. h6!

26. xc2? f e4 27. h6 Wc7t! Opening up the back rank for Black's king to scurry to safety. 2B. b1 xh6 29.Wxh6t eB+

26..h b2t! 27.< xb2Wb6t 28< c2

2B c1 is also very sharp: 2B...Wc6t! 29. d1 Wd5t 30. el Wa5t 31. f2 White's only way to play for more than the draw. 31...Wxa2t

32. t d2' gS 33. i xg7 t' xg7 34. hSt' gSo
 Black has a lot of pawns for that rook!



28... a4t!

Necessary for Black's counterplay.

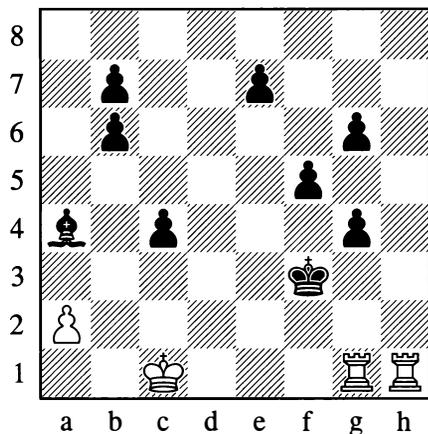
29. @c1. xh6t

29...' c6t? wouldn't work anymore due to 30. b2' c2t 31. a3 and White will successfully block the checks

30. xh6t @f 31. h7t @e6 32. g8t @e5 33. c4! d5! 34. f4t! @xf4 35. l x t dxc4 36. t d5t @f

36.. g5 was actually the move I gave on ChessPublishing, but perhaps f3 is a better square for the black king.

37. l xb6 a b6



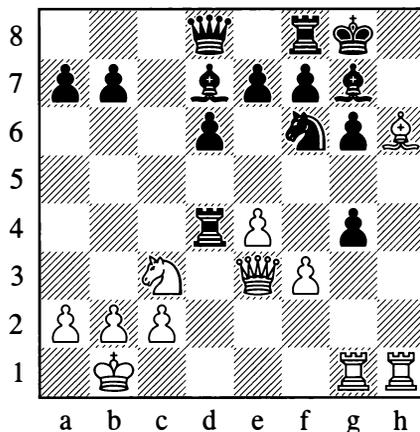
Black has bishop and six pawns for the two rooks, an imbalance I don't think I'd ever seen before. The engine slightly prefers White but the pawns are very dangerous. I would be happy to take Black here.

D22) 18..J hd4!

After that interlude we'll return to more practical chess! This is Black's simplest response, which has been tried by some well-prepared correspondence players.

19. e3!

Black's idea can be seen after: 19. ' xd4N i xh6 20. J xh6 ' b6! 21. ' xb6 (21. ' d1 l cS= would see Black attacking) 21...axb6+ Without queens on the board, Black has the better chances.

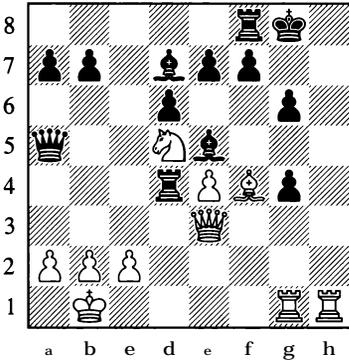


19...l he4!

This move was a novelty when I first analysed this position, but it has since been tested in a correspondence game. 19...' b6? 20. i xg7 l d1t 21. t xd1 ' xe3 should have lost immediately in Papadopolous- Koutsidis, corr: 2013, had White thrown in the killing intemezzo 22. i xf6!N.

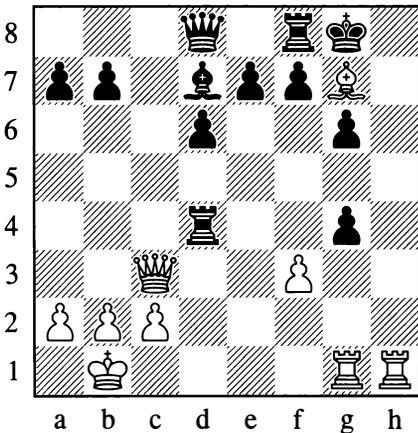
20. xg7

20.f e4 j eS! looks good for Black. 21.j f4
(21.j x fS Wxf8+) 21...WaS 22.i dS



22...WxdS!? I have a soft spot for queen sacrifices, and this is a rather good one. Mter 23.exdS l xf4+ Black has two bishops and three pawns for the queen and a completely secure king.

20...l xc3t 21.Wxc3



21...e5! 22L Wxf

Black has fought off White's first wave and looks completely fine to me. A draw was the final outcome in Cvak – E. Campbell, corr. 2014.

Conclusion

This is another line which has probably seen its heyday. With 13. bl White is attempting to play positionally, but the game can quickly spark into life.

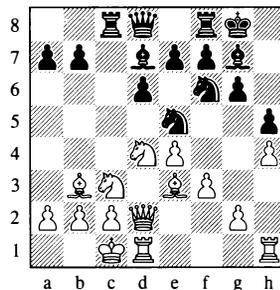
The two established main lines are IS.1 de2 and IS.1 b3. Against the former, Kasparov's treatment looks like straightforward equality, while 19...b4!? can also be investigated.

IS.1 b3 is probably more interesting when I like Peter Heine Nielsen's IS...WbS. His analysis seems to hold up and he scored a nice victory against Karjakin.

IS.g4 should also be checked, as this looked like it might become fashionable a few years ago. I've given Black various options on how to face this, depending on your own preference and amount of time available to study the line.

Chapter 6

Soltis Variation



13th Move Alternatives

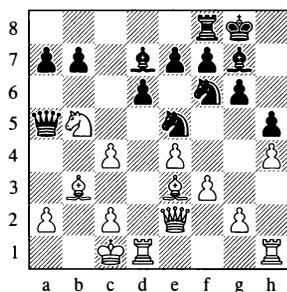
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1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7 7.f3 0-0
 8.♚d2 ♘c6 9.♙c4 ♙d7 10.0-0-0 ♚c8 11.♙b3 ♘e5 12.h4

12...h5

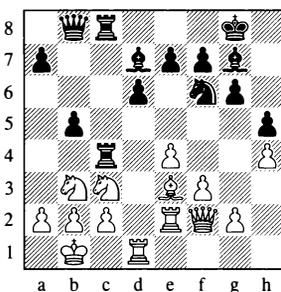
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note to move 13



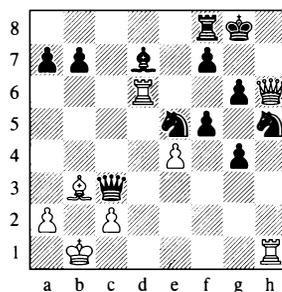
16...♘xc4!N

B1) after 20.♙e2



20...a5!N

D21) note to 20.fxg4



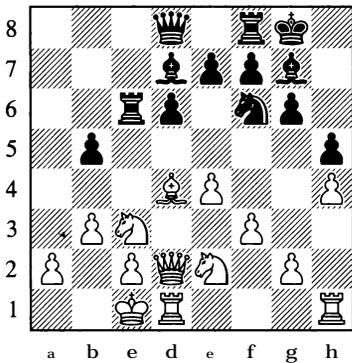
23...♘c4!N

1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.t xd4 1 f
S.t c3 g 6i e3i g7 7.O 0 0 8.V d t c6
9i c4 i d7 10.O 0 0 k8 11.i b3 1 eS
12.h4 hS

White's rare 13th move alternatives aren't particularly dangerous, but for the sake of completeness we should cover A) 13.t dS, B) 13J hel and C) 13. dgl, before moving on to the critical D) 13.g4.

13.t de2?! b5 14.i xa7 Taking the pawn must be the main idea behind dropping back the knight, but again White will regret swallowing the poisoned offering. (After 14.i h6 a5 Black's queenside play comes far too quickly. 15.i xg7 < xg7 16.a3 b4 17.axb4 axb4 1S.t a2 : aS 19. xb4 was Djondras - Stratmann, Hessen 1999, and now best is 19...t c6N 20. d2

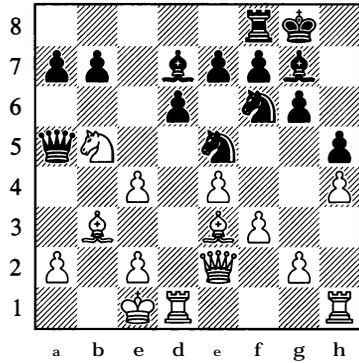
b6+ when Black's attack is obviously more than enough compensation for the pawn.) 14...t c4 15i xc4 : xc4 16.b3 : c6 17.i d4 T is was Wantiez - Tkachuk, Germany 2009, when best would have been:



17... a5N 1S.< b1 : fcS+ Again Black's pressure is overwhelming.

13. e2 A Dragon player struggles to resist a temptation as strong as this! 13...: xc3!? 14.bxc3 c7 (14...b5?N) Black has full compensation for the exchange - in the shape of attacking chances and the better structure. It's likely Black will snaf e at least one

pawn too. 15.t b5?! a5 16.c4]. Nielsen - Harwood, Koge 2010. Here Black has a strong breakthrough:



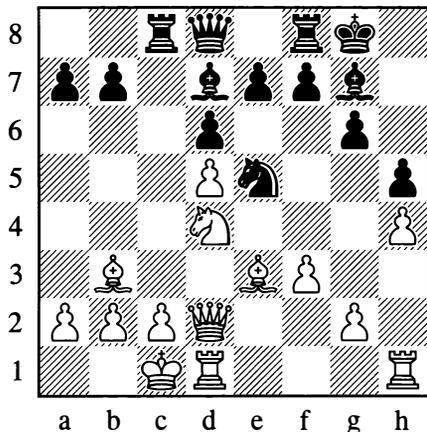
16...t xc4!N 17i xc4 i xb5 1s.i xb5 a3t 19.c d2 b4t! 20.c cl t xe4 +

A) 13.t dS

For this exchange to be in White's favour he needs to already have broken through on the kingside. Now it's White's king which will be more vulnerable, while the bishop on b3 also finds itself short on squares.

13...t xdS 14.exdS

14.i xd5 If White takes with the bishop I like continuing in the same vein with: 14...a5N 15.a3 b5+ Black has pleasant attacking chances.

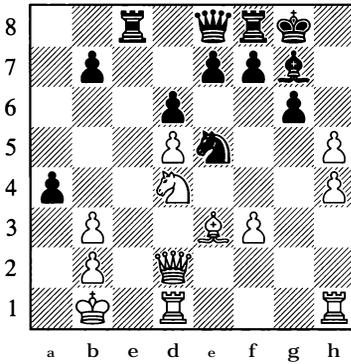


14...a5! 15.a4

15.a3 was A. Filippov - Dmitrienko, Novosibirsk 2003, and here the most accurate looks to be 15...! c7N. Black prepares to recapture on c4 with the queen and can counter 16. h6 with 16...t d3t!

15.. e8 16 xa5

16.g4 A desperate return to attacking on the kingside. 16... xa4 17.< b1 xb3 18.cxb3 a4 (18...hgx4N is also good for Black) 19.9kh5 Asgari - Ghaem Maghami, Tabriz 2011. Now I like the following pretty move for Black:



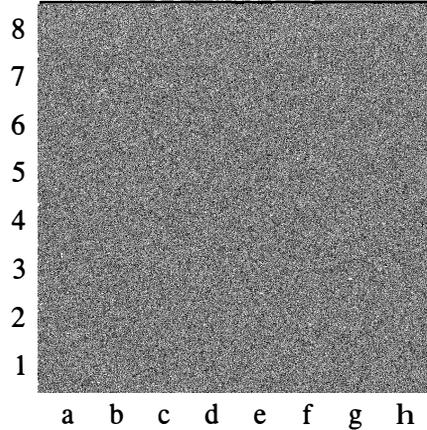
19...Wd7!N White has to watch out for checks on f5, and his king is just too exposed. For example: 20.hxg6 f g6 21.f4 (21.t e6 axb3 +) 21...t f3! 22.t xf3 (22.Wd3 axb3!) 22...axb3! White is unable to defend against ...Wa4-a2# whilst at the same time stopping ...Wf5t being terminal.

16...! a8 17. b4. xa4 18.c3. xb3 19. xb3 c8

Black obviously has a pleasant position, but in both games to reach this position White failed to offer the best resistance.

20.. g5?

Allowing a nice trick:

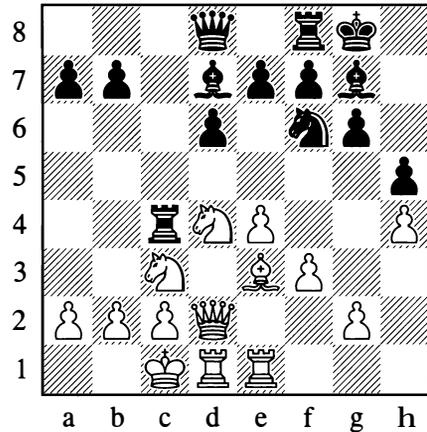


20...t d3t! 21.@d2t f - +

B) 13! hel

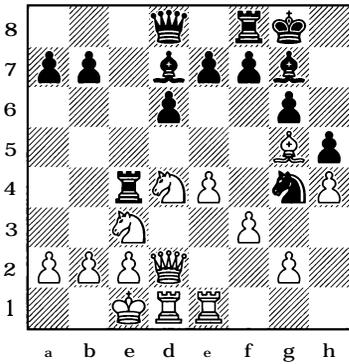
Completing development can't be wrong, but now White is unlikely to open up Black's kingside.

13...t c4 14.. xc4! xc4



White can now choose between B1) 15.@b1 and B2) 15.t b3

15. g5 T e d4-knight is now loose, and we can exploit it with 15...t g4!.



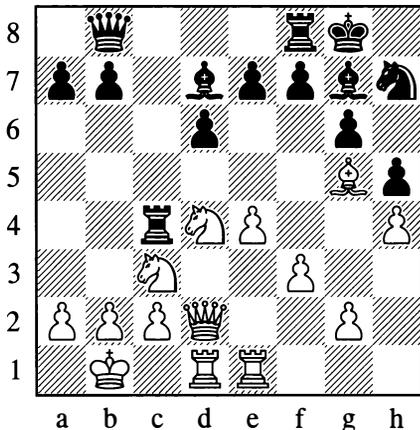
16.t de2? was now tried in K akimov - Umirgaliev, Samara 2002. (16.t b3 would have been better; but 16..Exc3! 17.bxc3 t eS is still much easier for Black.) Here perhaps Black simply overlooked that 16...t f2N picks up the rook. White can try to complicate matters with 17.t dS, but 17...f6! 1S.t xf6t exf6 19.i dSt h7 20.i xc4 t xd1 (20..f gS!?) 21. d2 t xb2 22.< xb2 fSt favours Black.

B1) 1S.i bl ' b8

Black gets out of any potential e4-e5 problems and prepares ...bS.

16i gS1 h7!?

Black doesn't have to repeat and could just start with 16...EfcS.

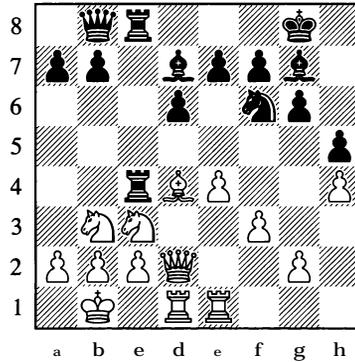


17.i e3! f 18! b3 U8

Black is already very comfortable.

19' f

19. d4 occurred in Escobar Forero - Delgado Ramos, Havana 200S. Now Black needn't worry and can just carry on with his thematic queenside play:

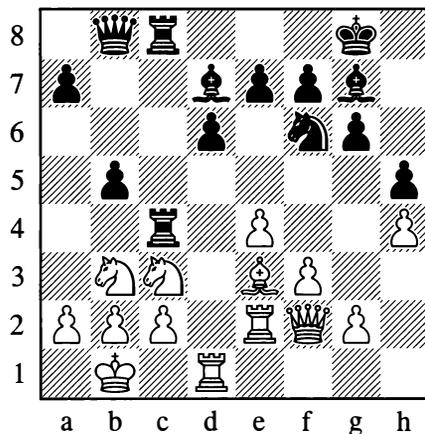


19...bSN One possible continuation could be 20. xf6 xf6 21.t dS Exc2 22.t xf6t exf6 23.i xd6 i xd6 24.Exd6 e6 which can only favour Black.

19..bS 20J e2

20. xa7N i aS+ As usual, the a7-pawn is too hot to grab.

We have been following Gonzalez Galvan - Martinez Martin, Ronda 1997. Now the strongest is to continue of ering the a-pawn:

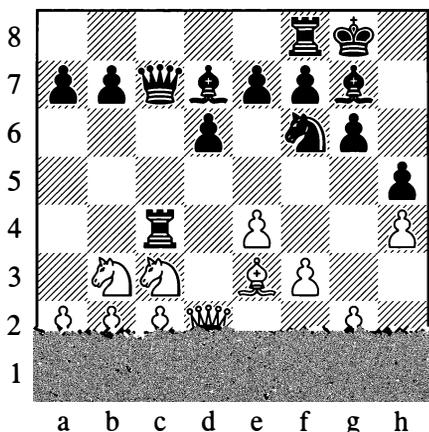


20..a5! 21. xa5 1 c3! 22.bxc3 Wb8
 23.1 b3 e6 24. c1
 24. d4! a3 +

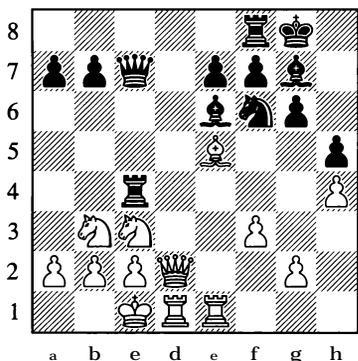
24..1 d7+
 Black has a powerful initiative.

B2) 15.1 b3Wc7

15..' bSN could also be considered here.



16. d4 e6 17.@bl
 17.e5! This thrust at least makes some sense of White's last. 17...dxe5 1S. xe5 Here 1S..' b6, as played in Joachim - D. Muse, Germany 1999, was fine but Black had a better continuation:

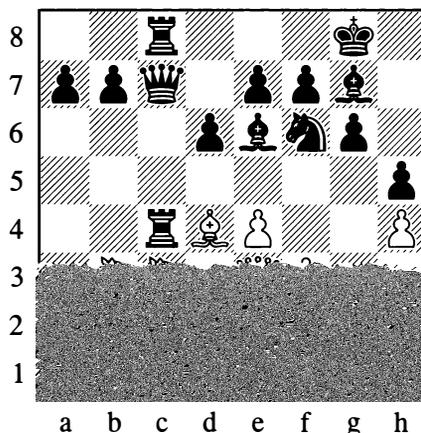


1S..4 e4!N 19. xc7 (19.Exe4 xe5)
 19..4 xd2 20. g3 4 xb3t 21.axb3 EccS=

17.' d3! The only point to this move that I can see is to prepare White's next, but there is a serious flaw: 17...Ec8 1S.4 d2?Exd4! 19.' xd4 4 d5 20.' d3 4 b4 21.' e3 4 xa2- + Black converted the full point shortly afterwards in Devangi - Swapnil, Balaguer 2005.

17...Ec8
 The main problem with White's position is that he lacks a plan. It is difficult to play decent moves if you cannot see an ultimate goal.

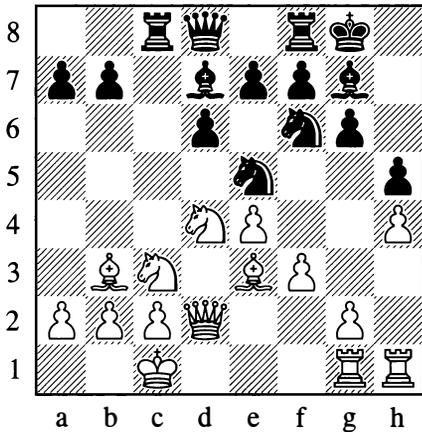
18.Wb3
 1S.e5! fails to a tactic we have already seen: 1S...dxe5 19. xe5 4 e4! 20. xc7 4 xd2t 21.4 xd2 E4xc7+ Green - Vallejos, email 2001.



18..b6 19.e5 dxe5 20.h e5Wb7=
 With an eventual draw in Hallengren - Mezera, email 2003.

C) 13.Edg1

We've already seen this move played in almost all positions, so it's logical to look here too.

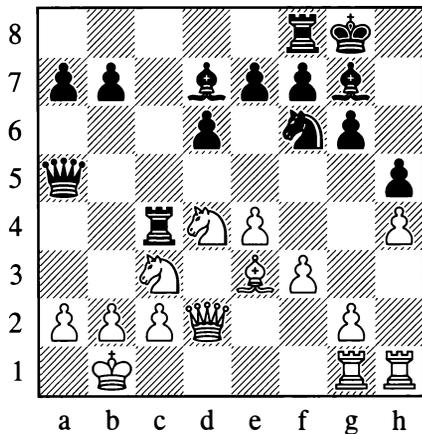


13.. ' a5 14.< b1

14.g4 hxg4 15.h5 (15. h6 as seen in Guimaraes - Del Rey, A garve 199B, was an odd mix of plans. Dearing suggests 15... xh6N 16.' xh6 l xc3 17.bxc3 ' xc3 + when Black has broken through frst.) Now 15..t xh5 would transpose to a position examined in variation 0 21 below, while 15...l xc3!/? also looks good.

14. h6?! was tried in Iatrino- Galdelli, Rome 1997, but is again a rather odd mix of plans. Dearing's 14... xh6N 15.' xh6 l xc3 16.bxc3 ' xc3+ is a good antidote.

14..t c4 15i xc4 i c4

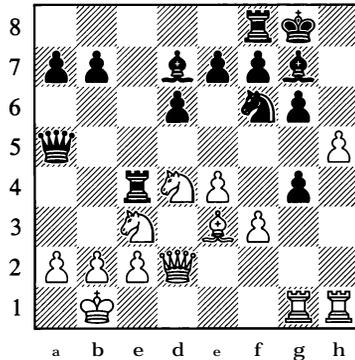


T is position could be reached by the 13.\ b1 move order. T ere I recommend putting the queen on c7, but the queen being on a5 doesn't change so much.

16.t b3

16.g4 hxg4 17.h5

Now Black should play:



17...gxh5!N

17...l xc3 would follow the suggested line with the queen on c7. Here, however, the pin on the rook allows White a strong reply: 1Bh6! hB 19.h7t! t xh7 T is was Schulze - Percze, email 2002, when 20.l xh7N \ xh7 21.l hIt looks rather dangerous. For instance: 21...\ gB (21...\ g7 could be better; but I still prefer White after 22.bxc3) 22.t f5! l xe3! (22... xf5 23.' h2 and suddenly it's mate) 23.t xe7t I g7 24.' xa5 l xf3 T e position is still far from clear, but W ite is probably to be preferred due to Black's lack of coordination.

1Bf g4

1Bt b3 ' e5 19. f4 W e6+ T e queen is quite safe here.

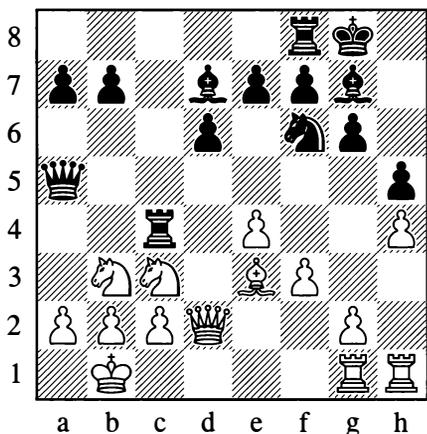
1B..t xe4!

T is time Black is the one able to use the pin.

19.t xe4' xd2 20.t xd2l xd4 21.gxh5

21. xd4 xd4 22.l g2 hxg4 +

21..l g4+



16..Wc7

The position is extremely similar to the one examined via 13. b1 and 15.l dg1 in the previous chapter on page 104. The only difference is the knight has dropped back from d4 to b3.

17.i d4

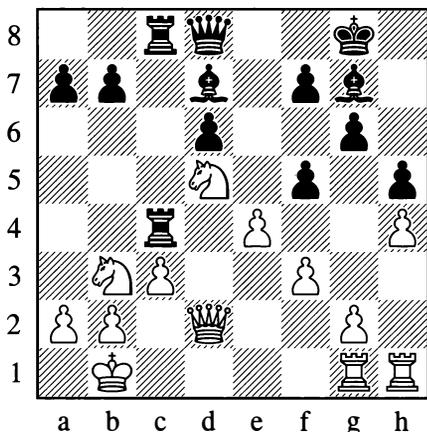
I think this is the only way White can try to exploit the change.

17.g4 l xc3! 18.bxc3 hxg4 is the same recipe, Stoenescu - Rene, Paris 2006.

17...l c8 18i

18.g4?N would allow 18...e5! 19. e3 l xc3!+.

18..ex 19.t d5Wd8 20.c3f ;

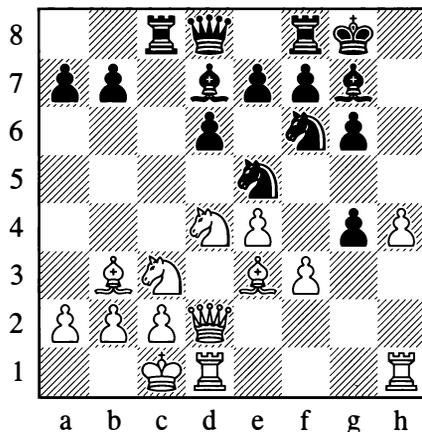


Black quickly remedied his structural defect in Z. Ivanovic - Isaev, email 2005.

D) 13.g4

White's most direct approach. Were this good for White, this entire variation would be in trouble.

13..hxg4



White can push forward with either D1) 14.f4? or D2) 14.h5

14.l dg1 Wa5 transposes to the note on 14.g4 in variation C above.

14. g5 would be an odd move order: It's not entirely clear what White is trying to avoid as 14...l c5 would transpose to Chapter 2. 14..t h5!N, blocking the h-pawn, and 14..t h7!N could both also be analysed.

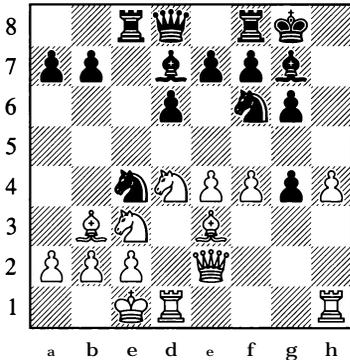
14. h6 T is is another slightly odd mix of plans. The safest continuation looks to be 14..t h5 15. xg7 < xg7 16.f4 t c4 17. xc4 l xc4 18.t d5 e5+ Rohde - Soltis, New York 1977.

D1) 14.f4?

Compared to line C of Chapter 2, this is a much worse version for White as the bishop on e3 puts no pressure on Black at all.

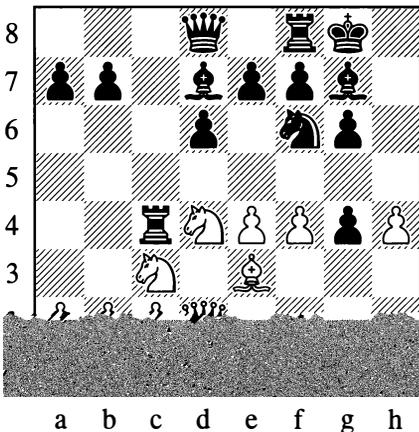
14...t c4!S. xc4

15.v e2 If White moves his queen I think the simplest is



15...t xe3N 16.v xe3 Here I quite like 16... h6!?, for example: 17.' b1 e5 18.t de2 exf4 19.t xf4 xc3 20.bxc3t h5+

1S... xc4



16.eS

16.h5 t xh5 transposes to the note on 15.f4? in variation 0 2 below.

16.f5 xc3 (16...gxf5N also looks strong) 17.v xc3 t xe4 18.v d3 gxf5 19.h5 v a5 20.a3 e5 Black's huge mass of pawns are worth more than the exchange. 21.h6 f6 22.t b3 Cervera Procas - Flores Escuin, Zaragoza 1998. Here Oearing's suggestion of 22...v b5N, forcing the queens of the board, would just be winning.

16...t hS

By blocking the h-pawn, White's attack grinds to a halt.

17. d3

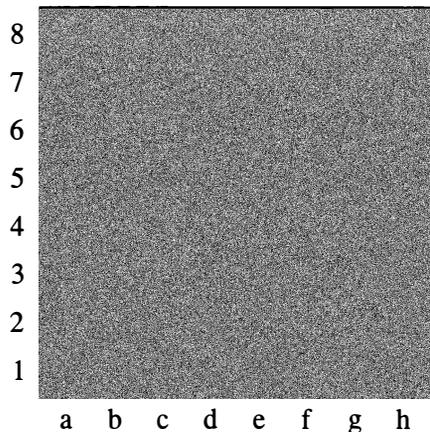
Against 17.e6N Chris Ward of ers 17...f e6 18.v d3v c8 19.v xg6 t xf4 20.v xg4 e5 +.

17... c8 18! S

18.exd6 exd6 19.t cb5 xb5 20.t xb5T is far was reached in Maryasin - Litvinov, Minsk 1981. Here Oearing recommends 20...t xf4N 21. xf4 xf4 22.t xd6 v c6 which is simply winning.

18.J e8 19.e6

Nguyen - Pham, T ua T ien Hue 2000. Here Black took with the bishop, which still left him with an excellent position, but there is a more accurate continuation:

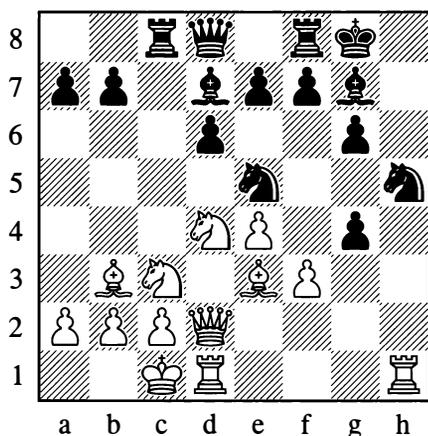


19...f e6N 20. xg6

20.t c3t xf4! 21. xf4 xd4

20..exd5 21.Wxh5 e5 +

02) 14.h5 t xh5



I don't think White can justify his material deficit after 021) 15J dgl?, but 022) 15. h6 is a sterner test.

1S.f4? t c4 16.. xc4 l xc4 17.fS aS 18' b11 xc3 19.bxc3l c8 is simply very good for Black.

1S.. gS

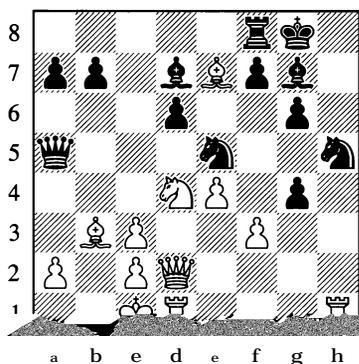
T is again is a strange time to put the bishop on gS.

1S...l xc3!?

1S...l cS would transpose to variation B of Chapter 2.

16.bxc3 aS 17.. xe7

In Zagorsek - Fraser, Budva 2013, Black had so far played with fine sacrificial spirit. I think he should have kept it going with:



17...l c8N 18. xd6 t c4

Black is currently the exchange down but has strong pressure - even if the queens get exchanged. Some possible lines are:

19.. b4

19. xc4 l xc4 -

19...t xd2 20.. xaS t xb3t 21.a b3

21.t xb3 t g3 22.l h2. c6 White's pawns are starting to drop.

21...gxf3 22.t xf3. g4 23l d3t f4 24.l e3 b6 24...t g2= would draw immediately.

2S.. b4 t e2t! 26' t!2 t g3 27.l g1 t xe4t 28.l xe4. xf3

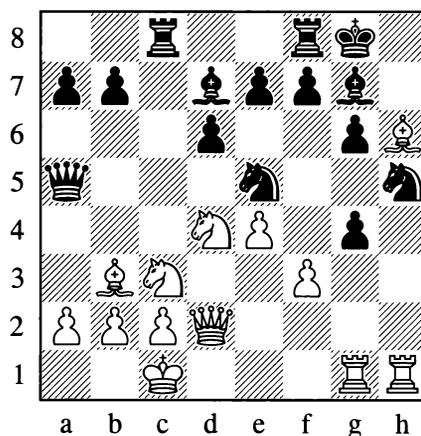
Black has one pawn for the exchange and the c3-pawn looks like it will also drop. I would prefer to have the two connected passed pawns

021) 15.l dgl?! W65

1S...l xc3!?! is a decent alternative.

16. h6

16.< b1? as played in Rian - Celis Chang Singapore 2007, is too slow. 16...l xc3N 17.bxc3l c8 looks strong for Black.



16...xc3! 17.bxc3

17...xcg7 was tried in the first game to reach this position, but Black successfully refuted White's plan. 17...xc2! 18.cxc2 xc8t 19.cxd1 Wxd7+ 20.cxd7 cxa7 21.fxa4 cxc4

De Firmian - Kudrin, Gausdal 1982. The three pawns for the exchange give Black a decisive advantage.

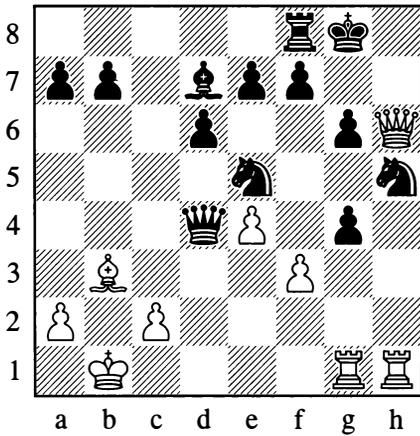
17...i xh6 18 xh6 xc3 19' bl

Another reason for White playing an earlier ' bl.

As Chris Ward points out, 19.Exh5? loses to 19...' a1t 20.' d2' xd4t 21.' cl' a1t 22.' d2t xf3t 23.' d3' d4t 24.' e2t xg1t 25' fl gxh5.

19..Wxd4

Black has a large material advantage - two pieces and three pawns for the rook - and can afford to give some back to defuse White's initiative.



20f g4

The immediate 20.f4? fails to 20...' e3 +.

20Ed1?

The rook is really going the wrong way, ceding some of the pressure on Black's king.

20...' c3

At this point even 20...' xdl tN 21.Exdl gxf3 is good for Black.

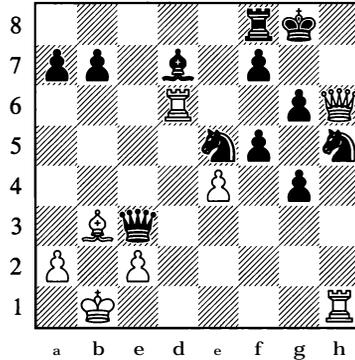
21.f4 e6! 22.f5

22.f e5' xe5 would still leave Black with a large material advantage. White's attack has

disappeared, and the queen on e5 does a wonderful job.

22...exf5 23.Exd6

Kariz - Barth, Bela Crkva 1983. Here Ward observes that Black missed a winning combination:

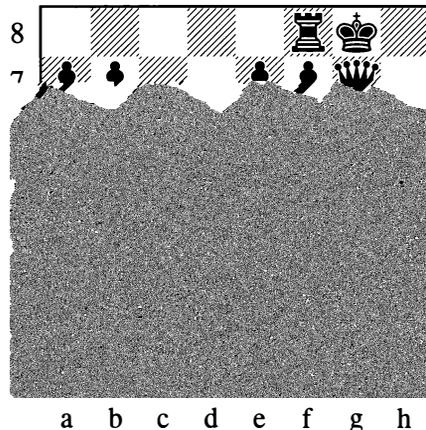


23...t c4!N 24.i xc4 ' b4t! 25i b3 ' xd6 26.Exh5' dl t 27.' b2' d4t! 28.c3' g7

Black will have four extra pawns in the ending.

20...i xg4 21.Exg4 t xg4 22. xg6t g7 23 xh5

This position has been reached twice, and in both games Black played 23...t f2 which seems to force a draw. Some annotators have instead suggested the following move, which must be better for Black:

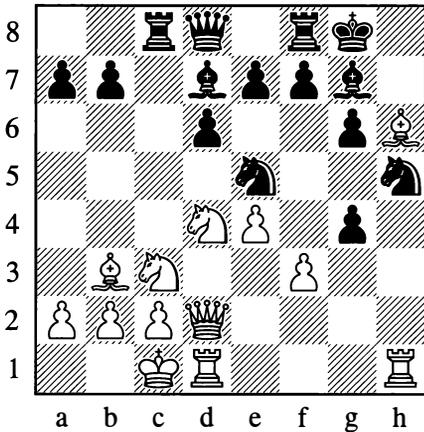


23.. e5

White has some pressure, but not enough for the two pawns. The queen and knight adequately defend the black king and the bishop on b3 is rather shut out of the game.

0 22) 15. h6

Here I've decided to recommend a rare continuation:



15...@h7!

Black immediately puts the question to the h6-bishop.

15...e6

This has been established as the main line, and is the reason no one plays this for White anymore, but I don't think matters are so clear. The most common continuation is

16.Edg1 Wf6 17. xg7 Wxg7 18.f g4 t f6 19.95t h5

Here White has tried a lot of different approaches, but the most dangerous seems to be

20.t ce2!

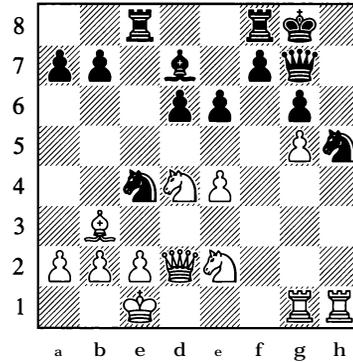
White's idea is simply to exchange the h5-knight and then penetrate down the h-file.

It's not easy to see a good remedy.

20...t c4

Here everyone has moved their queen, when

Black is doing well. However, I think White has better:



21..xc4!N

As far as I can see this has never been played, but it is actually the most critical.

21..Exc4

The game J. Polgar - Kaidanov, In their Sicilian Theme Match in 2010, had a very similar position to this, but with Black's rook on e8 and the white king on b1. That is a favourable version for White, but I think this is also extremely dangerous. The engine initially prefers Black but can't find a plan. White's position is solid, and it's not easy to see how to utilize the extra pawn.

n .b3! Ec5 23.t g3 t xg3 24.Exg3 Efc8 25. bl

So Black manages to gain a tempo on the Polgar game, but Egh3 is still a looming threat.

Vigorito points out the immediate 25.Egh3?? loses to 25...Exc2t!! 26.t xc2 Wa1#.

25...e5

Black covers the h3-square, but after White's next I don't trust Black's position at all.

26.t e2

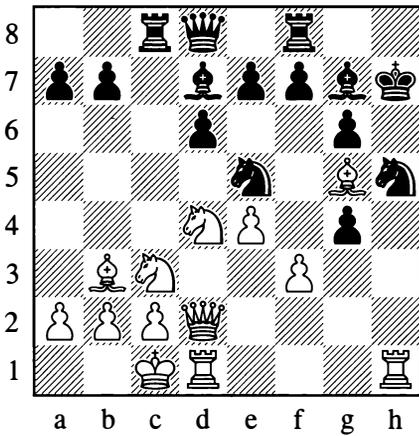
If we manage to avoid being mated White will still have good positional compensation for the pawn.

A relatively recent grandmaster dash continued 0 221) 16. g5, while 0 222) 16. xg7 is more common.

16.Exh5N is much too Optimistic, and Mekhitarian gives the line: 16...gxf5 17.Eh1 Eh8! Again challenging the h-file is key. 18.Exh5< g8 19. g5 Exh6 20.Exh6i b6 +

D221) 16i g5

This was played in an interesting fight between Mekhitarian and Fier in 2012, which the White player subsequently annotated. It's interesting to compare this position with variation B of Chapter 2. There we would have reached this position after 15 moves, with the black rook on c5 and king back on g8 but with White to move. We would probably prefer to have the king back on g8, but I feel the extra move must be more important.



16...Exc3!

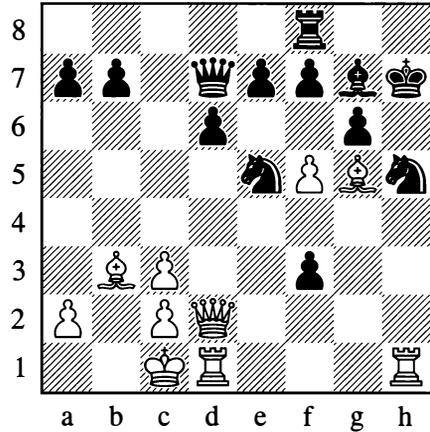
Black has a lot of alternatives but this feels the most thematic.

17.bxc3 gxf3 18. f i x 19.ex

We will follow Mekhitarian's analysis for a couple more moves:

19...i d7N

I think is a strong improvement. Mekhitarian - Fier, Americana 2012, continued 19...i c7 and was eventually drawn.



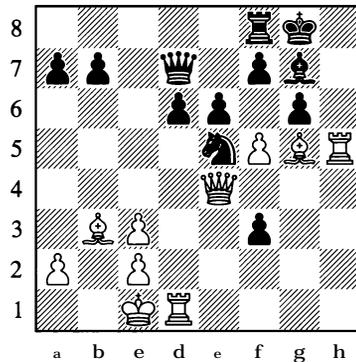
20.Wf4

Certainly White's most dangerous approach.

After leaving my computer a long time to consider the position it found nothing for White and wanted to play 20.Wb1, but 20...i xf5 21. xe7 Ec8 22. xd6 f2+ is much better for Black.

20..Eh8!

Mekhitarian also mentions this, although his main line of analysis continues: 20.. g8 21.i e4 e6 22.Exh5

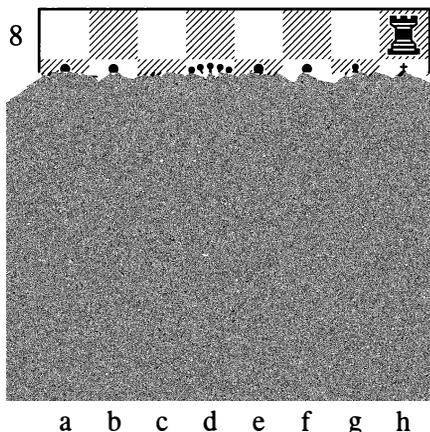


22...gxf5 (22...exf5 23.Eh8t!! is a fantastic find. 23.. xh8 24.i h4 g7 25.Eh1 Ee8 26. f6+) 23.f6° These positions feel rather murky so I think we should steer away.

Instead I think 20...: h5! is strong. Black was getting into trouble on the h-file in the previous line so it makes sense to cover it.

21. e4?

I think Black was doing well anyway, but it's important that this move can be met with:



21...g !22: xh5t c g6
Black is winning.

D222) 16i xg7

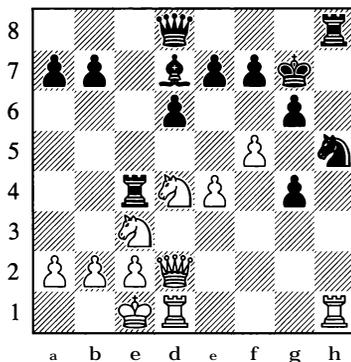
In practice this has been the most popular, but with the bishops exchanged I think Black can withstand the pressure.

16...c xg7 17.f g4

17.: xh5? has been White's most common try, but Black can easily defend: 17...gxh5 1.S.Wg5t 1 g6 19.1 f5t vxf5 20.exf5 e6+ Black is doing extremely well. If White takes on h5 then Black can trade queens on h4, and exchanging on d5 will leave Black with rook and three pawns for the two minor pieces.

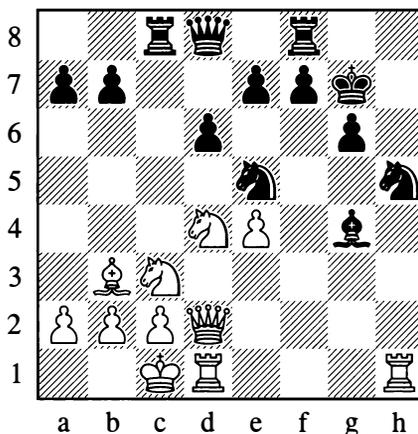
17.Wg5 doesn't impress particularly, but in Foniak - Zakhartsov, Dagomys 2009, matters became much worse for White after 17...: hS 1.S.f4?f6! 19.Wh4 1 xf4 20.Wg3 g5 +.

Mekitarian has obviously analysed this variation in some detail. In his annotations he also gives 17.f4N C e4 1.S.Wxc4: xc4 19.f5 : hS+ but remarks that he thinks it's unlikely White has enough compensation. I continued the line:



20.C d5 e5 21.f e6 f e6 22.C e3: a4 Black is comfortably on top as 23.C xg4? fails to 23...e5

17...i xg4



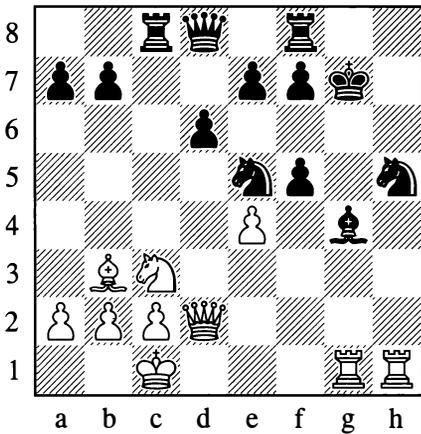
18.1 f t!N

I think this could well be White's most dangerous continuation, but Black doesn't need to be worried.

Instead Garcia Ramos- Navarro Diaz, Cullera 2012, didn't last long: 1S.: dg1?: hS+ 19.C d5 e6 20.C f4?C xf4 21.Wxf4?C d3t 0-1 Oops!

18..gxf5 19J dgl!

19.' g5t T e immediate check is tempting but doesn't work well: 19..t g6 20.exf5i xd1 21i xf ! (21. xd1 e6! 22.' xh5 Eh8 + or 21.Exd1t hf4 +) 21..Exf White is currently a rook and two pieces down, so Black can afford to lose all his minor pieces to give him time to beat of the attack. 22.' xg6t c f8 23.t xd1 (23. xd1 ' b6! 24.Exh5 ' d4t- +) 23..' c7! T e mate threat allows Black time to activate his queen: 24.c3 Eg7 25.' xh5 ' c5+



19..Eh8

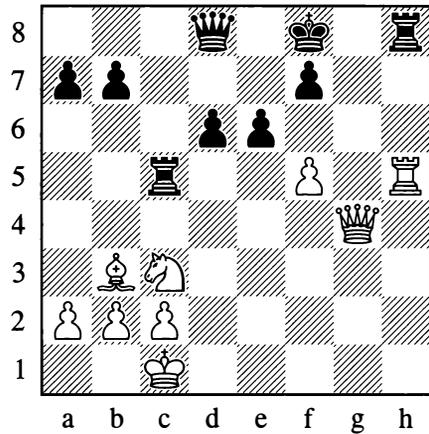
19...e6!? 20.Exh5 Eh8 21.Exh8 ' xh8 22.exf5 ' h6 23.' xh6t xh6 is likely to be drawn

20' g5t

20.exf5? ' g8! 21.t d5 f8 +

20..g8f8 21.ex e6! 22.h g4c xg4 23' xg4 Ec5 24.Exh5

24.f e6 ' g5t 25.' xg5 Exg5 26.exf Eh6+ or 24' d4 Eh6+.



24.. xh5 25' xh5 xf ;

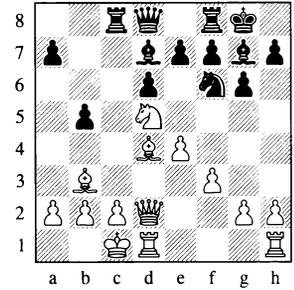
T e attack has dissipated and the rook and two pawns outweigh the minor pieces. Obviously that was a long line so there might be some mistakes, bur Black also has the safer 19...e6.

Conclusion

Of the variations examined here 13.g4 is definitely the most critical. It was tried in the early days of the Soltis Variation when people were trying to prove the Dragon lost by force. White players stopped playing this after having bad results in the 15.i h6 e6 line. However, I don't think that line is completely without venom. Instead 15...c h7 looks like a good option where I haven't found a way for White to reach equality, a though the positions are of course still very sharp.

Chapter 7

Topalov Variation



13. ♘d5 – The Main Line

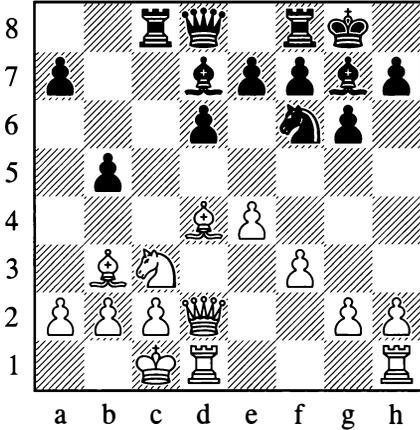
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f 5.t c3 g6 6.. e3. g7 7.O O-O 8.Wd2
t c6 9.. c4. d7 10.O-O-O t xd4 12.. xd4 b5 13.t d5

13...t xd5 14.. xg7! @ xg7

A) 15.. xd5 a5	144
A1) 16.h4	144
A2) 16.a3	145
B) 15.exd5! a5 16.a3	147
B1) 16... b6	147
B2) 16...@ g8!	149
B21) 17.g4?!	150
B22) 17.h4 b4 18.a b4 a b4	151
B221) 19.Wd4	152
B222) 19.We3!?	154
B223) 19.Wxb4	155
B224) 19.h5	156
B23) 17J hel c5	158
B231) 18.g4	159
B232) 18. e3! b4 19.a b4 axb4 20.Wxb4 Wa8	161
B2321) 21.. c4. f 22. a3 Wc8 23.b3 Wc7	162
B23211) 24. a6!?	162
B23212) 24.Wd2	164
B2322) 21.@ d2	165

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f
 5.t c3 g 6 e3 g7 7.0 0 0 8' d t c6
 9 c4 d7 10.0 0 0 c8 11. b3 t xd4
 12h d4 b5



This is the Topalov Variation. It was introduced in 1996 by the future world champion against Short. Topalov drew that game and only repeated the idea once more, losing to Shirov five years later.

Black has exchanged a pair of knights in order to gain time to advance his queenside pawns. Black's plan is straightforward: he will push his a-pawn next and either trap the b3-bishop or open lines towards White's king. White has two main plans. He can play slowly, exchanging the remaining pair of knights and dark-squared bishops, with the intention of stifling Black's counterplay and exerting pressure, either along the e-file or with h4-h5. Alternatively, he can leave the bishop to its fate and go straight for Black's king.

13.t d5

The positional approach is the main line. White trades knights in order to forestall Black's plan of trapping the b3-bishop.

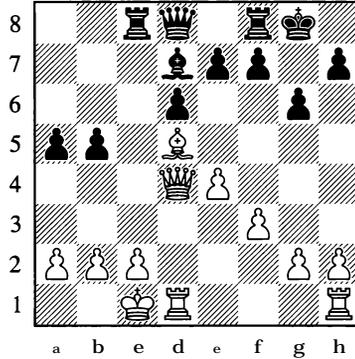
The sharp 13.h4 is the subject of Chapter 5.

Other moves will be dealt with in Chapter 9.

13..t xd5 14h g7!

It is useful for White to force the black king to the exposed g7-square.

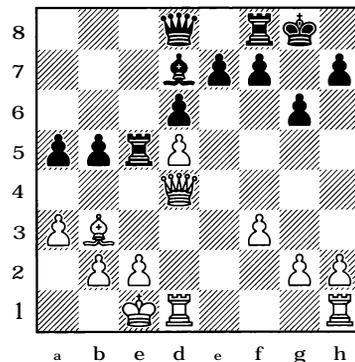
14.Xxd5 is harmless 14..Xxd4 15. xd4 as (15... c7 was seen in the stem game Short - Topalov, Novgorod 1996, but the text move is more ambitious)



This is similar to variation A. The only way White can try to exploit his queen's location on d4 is to play 16.e5, but after 16..Xf5 17.: d2 e6 18.Xe4 Xxe4 19.f e4 dxes 20. xeS b6 21.h4 : fdS' Black was more than comfortable in Gutierrez - Siewert, email 2004.

14.exd5 Xxd4 15. xd4 a5 16.a3 : cS

Comparing this position to the main line in variation B2, it is clear that Black has gained. As we will see, Black is often happy to retreat the king to g5 of his own volition, so the net effect is that White has wasted time moving his queen to d4. It is not clear if the queen is particularly better placed here than on d2.



17.g4

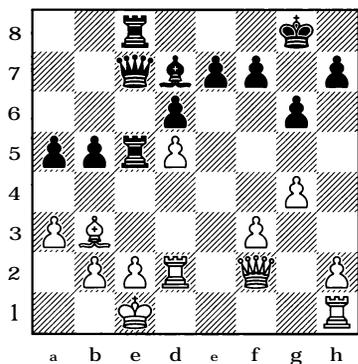
17.: he1N does not appear to have been played. A sample line is: 17...: c7 (17...b4!? 1.S.axb4 axb4 19. xb4 aS is an alternative plan; the position is the same as in Karjakin - Shirov in variation B231 except the pawn is back on g2; I don't think that changes the assessment.) 1S.: d2 . f5! 19.94 a4 20.gxf5 axb3 21.c3 : c4 22. d3 b4 23.a b4 : xb4 Black has good attacking chances.

17... c7 1S.: d2

A er 1S.c3? b4! Black crashes through: 19.a b4 axb4 20. d2 (20. xb4 : bS wins the bishop) 20..bxc3t 21.bxc3 T is was Deshetres - Yun, Montreal 2010, and now after 21...e5!N 22.dxe6 . xe6 + White's king is too vulnerable.

1S...: cS 19. f2

In I. Filipovic - Bertusi, Sibenik 200S, Black overlooked a strong idea:



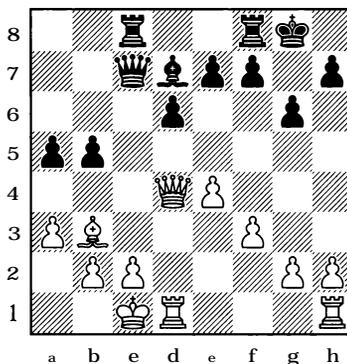
19...a4!N 20. a2 b6!+

White must take time out to stop ...: xc2t, which gives Black time to force through ...b4 on the next move.

14...@xg7

It is worth checking A) 15i xd5, but the critical option is B) 15.exd5!.

15. xd5 seems strange and the simple 15...a5 16.a3 gS already looks good for Black; the threat is ... e6. 17. d4 c7 (17... e6!? also looks decent)

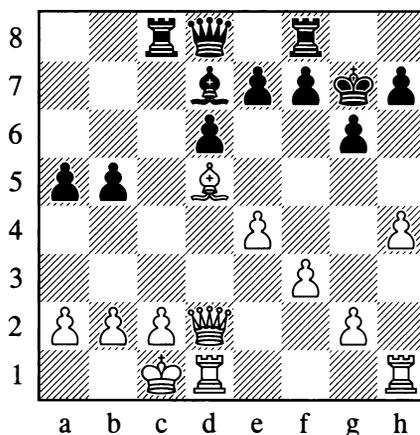


White was forced to deal with the threat of ...a4, when the prospect of mate on c2 means that the bishop is lost. However; 1S.a4?? bxa4 19.. xa4 e5! was not the way to do it; White resigned in Ortiz Perez- Natalicchio Escalante, Las Palmas 2009.

A) 15i xd5a5

White's bishop is close to being trapped, so he must make an important choice between A1) 16h4 and A2) 16.a .

A1) 16h4



White leaves his bishop to its fate and stakes everything on a kingside attack.

16...e6

Both 16...h5 and 16...h6 are playable if Black wishes to avoid the forced draw in the main line.

winning in Paredes Bustamante - Menzi, Kemer 2009.

17.h5

17.i b7 Eb8 18.i a6?

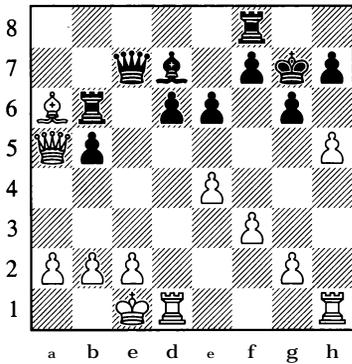
18.i c6N uses a little tactic to retain the bishop but 18...i xc6 19.i c3t g8 20.i xc6 Eb6 21.i c3 b4 is still comfortable for Black.

18...Eb6 19.i xa5?

White had to throw in 19.h5 g5 before playing 20.i xa5 but after 20...i c7 Black is still better; the white bishop will inevitably be lost.

19...i c7 20.h5

In Nussbaumer - Gimenez Aguirre, Prague 2012, Black transposed to the above note with 20...g5. Instead he could have obtained a winning advantage with:



20...Ea8N

Intending to defend along the seventh rank as follows.

21.hxg6 f g6 22.i d2i e8! 23.i h6t Wg8 +

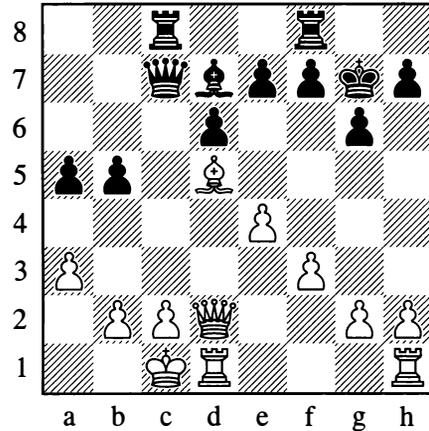
17...exd5 18.hxg6 hxg6 19.' h6t f 20' h4t

T is is the more accurate check and forces an immediate draw.

20i f4t? W6? allows Black to play on and after 21.i g5t? W6 22.i g3? i c7 he was

20.. g7 21.' h6t=

A2) 16a ' e7



17.h4

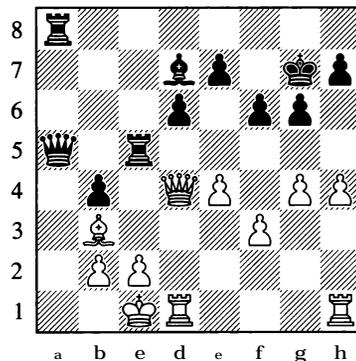
17. bl?

With Black's attack already under way, White cannot afford a waiting move.

17...b4 18.axb4 a b4 19.i b3

19.h4 is too slow, which is hardly surprising after White has lost a tempo with his king. 19...i a5 20.h5 Ea8! 21.c3 bxc3 22.i xc3t i xc3 23.bxc3 Ef 8t Black had a clearly better ending in S. Farago - Citak, Budapest 2007.

19...i a5 20.i d4t f6 21.h4 Ec5 22.g4 Ea8 23. c1



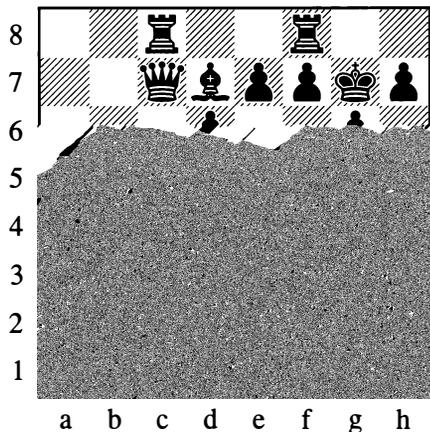
23... a4 24.Wd2 xb3 25.cxb3 2acS 26.We3 Wb6 27.We2 2c2t 2S.We3 2Sc5

0-1 Ortiz Suarez - Gashimov, Ourense 2009. A smooth victory from the sadly missed Azerbaijani Super-GM.

17...b4

The most forcing continuation.

Again it is possible for Black to play more slowly with 17...h6 or 17...h5 IS.g4 2hS.

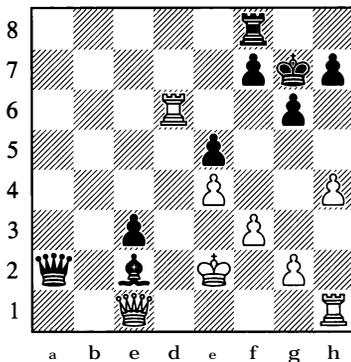


18a b4?

1S.h5!N was necessary. Black has several playable moves but the most ambitious is 1S...g5! (1S...bxa3 leads to an immediate draw after 19.hxg6 axb2t 20.Wb1 hxg6 21.Wh6t mff6 22.Wh4t Wg7 23.Wh6t=) 19.axb4 axb4 20.Wxg5t mhS 21. b3 e6 22.We3 xb3 23.Wxb3 Wa5 Black has good compensation for the pawn.

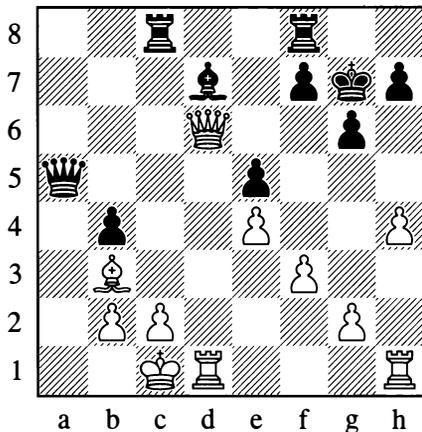
18..a b4 19. b3 Wa5 2o.Wd4t e5! 21.Wxd6

21.We3? allows Black to smash through: 21...2c3 22.bxc3 bxc3 23. a4 xa4 24.2d5 Wb4 25.Wdl Wb1t 26.Wcl xc2t 27.me2 Wa2 2S.2xd6



So far Black had done everything right in J. Geller - Halyavskiy, Moscow 2006. At this point, as I observed on ChessPublishing, 28... a4t!N would have been totally crushing as after 29.me3 b5! White cannot defend against the mate threats on both e2 and a7.

Returning to the main line, I found an improvement over Q. Zhou - Yun, Toronto 2011.



21... c6!N

Black's attack is coming faster; for example:

22.We7

22.h5 2fd8 23.h6t mgS 24.Wf6 Wa1#

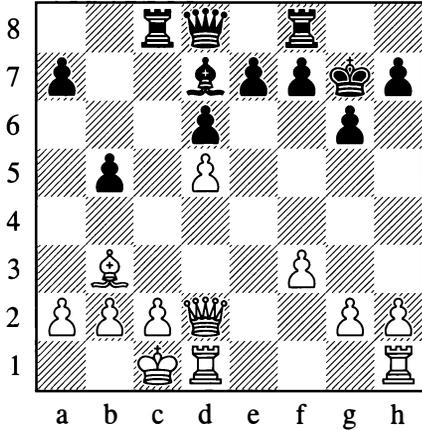
22...2ce8 23.Wg5

23.Wd6 2d8 24.Wxc6 Wa1# is the same motif

23.J d8

T e mating net is formed.

B) 15.exd5



T is capture is the only way to put pressure on Black. It may seem counterintuitive to block in the bishop but White can try to generate play down the e-file as well as on the kingside.

15...a5 16.a3

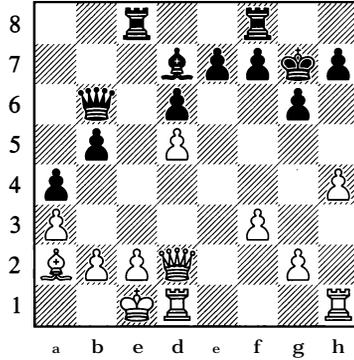
16. d4t? might seem tempting but after 16...< g5 we have transposed to the note on 14.exd5 on page 143. As we will soon see, there are good reasons for Black to retreat his king anyway.

Should you not wish to sacrifice a pawn, B1) 16.. b6 is a possibility which has been seen in a lot of correspondence games. However, I think White can claim an advantage if he is accurate. For that reason, B2) 16..' g8! will be my main recommendation. Incidentally, this move is not considered in De la Villa's repertoire book.

16...b4? has historically been the most popular move. However, it is now considered premature, so I will not devote any more space to it.

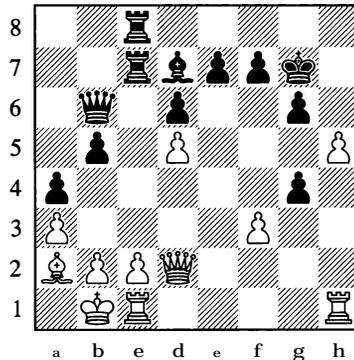
B1) 16..V b6 17J hel

17.h4? is a serious error: 17...a4 1S. a2 Keler - Bayram, Konya 2012. As Ward observed, Black missed a great chance here:



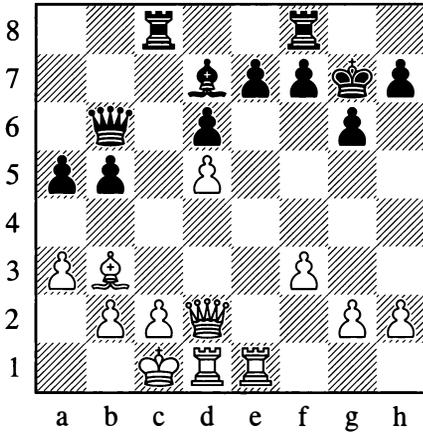
1S...: c2t!N 19. xc2 (19.< xc2 f5t 20.< c1 Ecst- +) 19...EcS 20. xcS xcS Despite the approximate material equality, Black is close to winning. White's king is vulnerable and his pieces lack coordination. Black can combine threats against the king with an attack on White's kingside pawns.

17.g4 covers the f5-square, avoiding the tactical problem seen in the above line, but it fails to put any pressure on Black. T e following game was accurately played by both sides: 17...Ec7 1S.< b1 EfcS 19.Ec1 hS!? 20.h4 a4 21. a2 hxg4 22.h5



22...Exc2! 23.Exc2 fS 24.hxg6 xc2t 2S.< a1 EhS 26.Ee1 (26.ExhS?? glt)

26.. xg6 27.Wc3t ' g8 28.Wc8t ½-½ Sebi chess- Gora, Internet 2006.



17..J 8 18.g4

Rogozenko assesses the situation as clearly better for White. I do not believe Black's position is that bad, but it is true that he is struggling for counterplay. It is hard to achieve anything on the queenside, so Black usually tries fighting back on the kingside with a timely ...f5.

18..J b8!?

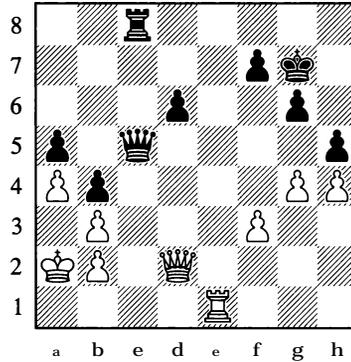
It looks odd to move the rook of the semi-open c-f file but we are now threatening to break through on the b-f file.

Black has to be careful, as the thematic 18..b4?! gives White two good replies

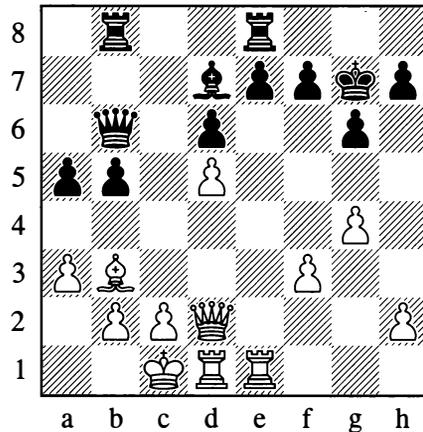
a) 19.axb4 axb4 20.Wd4t Wxd4 21.2xd4 2b8 22. d2 g5t occurred in suj_shredder8- erdo, engine game 2012. Black may be able to hold the endgame but it is a pretty depressing one for him, as he will always have to keep an eye on the vulnerable e7- and b4-pawns. Black would much prefer to have a pawn on a5 instead of b4 in order to obtain counterplay along the b-f file.

b) 19.a4 also favours White as Black will

struggle to do anything on the queenside. Black's difficulties were well illustrated by the following game: 19..Wc5 20. b1 e5 21.cxe6 xe6 22.h4 xb3 23.cxb3 2xe1 24.2xe1 h5 25. a2±



Anand - Tiviakov, Wijk aan Zee 2001. White's king is absolutely safe and he can proceed to attack Black's king while maintaining pressure against the d6-pawn.



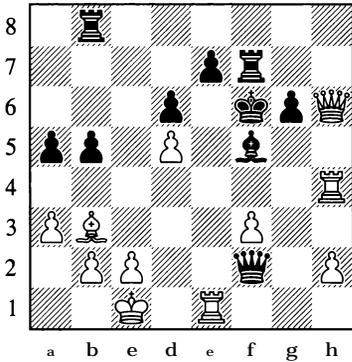
19.2e4!

19.h4N a4 20. a2 b4 21.axb4 Wxb4 22.c3 2ec8- grants Black sufficient counterplay.

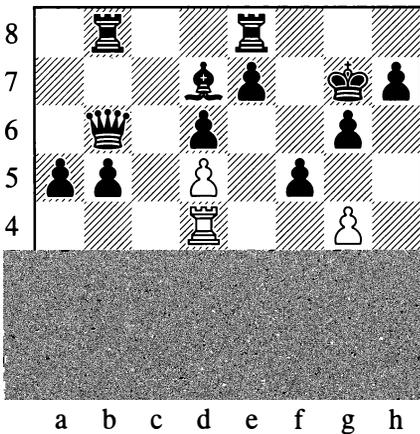
19..f !? 20.2d4

20.gxf5N xf5 21.2h4 is a direct approach that needs to be checked, but the bishop on f5 does a good job defending the king and Black actually has several ways to defend.

One sensible line runs: 21..E f8 22. h6t c f 23. xh1 t c f6 (23...c e8!?) 24.Eel Ef 25. h6' f2 T e black king may look strange on f6 but White's king is actually in more danger. A logical finish might be:



26.Ehe4!? xe4 27.Exe4' flt 28. d2' f2t= With a perpetual.

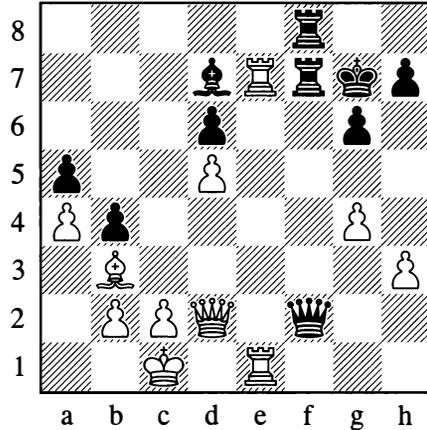


20..b4 21.a4 f g4 22.f g4 E f8 23J el f 24. de4 bf

White's pressure against the e7-pawn gives him a slight advantage. On the other hand, the b3-bishop is rather misplaced. We will follow a correspondence game in which Black managed to obtain a drawing endgame by sacrificing the e-pawn.

25.h3 f !? 26. xe7

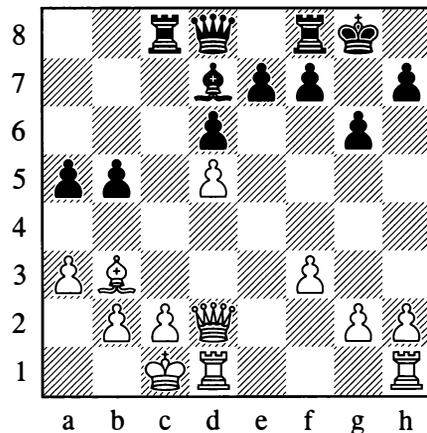
26. d3!?! is another idea



26.. h4 27. e3 s g5 28. xf xf 29.s bl f 30.c3 xe3 31. xe3 bxc3 32. xc3h5 33. c2h g4 34.hxg4 g5 35. c4 f t 36.s a2 f 37.s a3 f t 38.b3 g3 39. c7 xg4

The g-pawn proved enough of a nuisance that White had to take the draw in Winkler - Olesen, email 2007. Although 16..' b6 still seems to hold up at correspondence level, there is no denying that Black is under pressure, so I would suggest playing the move below, as I have done myself

B2) 16..s g5!



This line suddenly became popular after Shirov used it to easily hold Kajakin in 2009, but perhaps the credit should go to a young

Vocaturu, who played it against Karjakin five years earlier. It looks strange to move the king without any prompting but it's actually a subtle waiting move. Black postpones the sacrifice of his b-pawn to see whether White intends to play for mate along the h-file or positional pressure along the e-file.

We will analyse B21) 17.g4?, B22) 17.h4 and B23) 17.Jhel. The last two moves have been tested in a similar number of over-the-board games, but the rook move has been the leading choice in correspondence and engine practice.

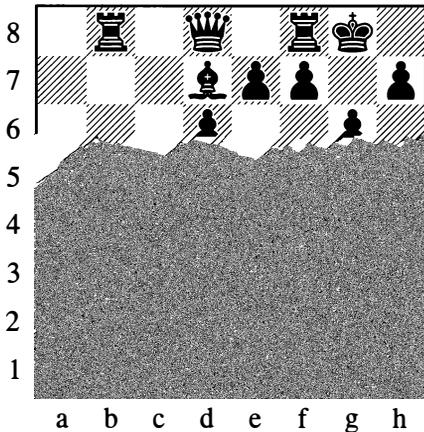
B21) 17.g4?

Controlling the f5-square is generally useful for White but, with kings on opposite flanks, he never has enough time.

17...b4

17...f5!N is an interesting way of fighting back on the kingside, but there is no reason to deviate from the main line.

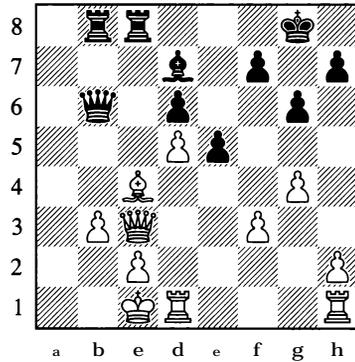
18.a b4 a b4 19.Vxb4 gb8



20.Vd4?

The rarer 20.Wc3 is a less severe but Black still has fabulous compensation: 20...Wb6 21.i c4 : fc8 22.b3 e5! In the following correspondence

game, White did well to cut his losses and bail out to a slightly worse endgame:



23.dxe6 i xe6 24.Wd4 i xc4 25.Wxb6 : xb6 26.bxc4 : xc4' White was able to hold in Kachkin - Baklanov, email 2006.

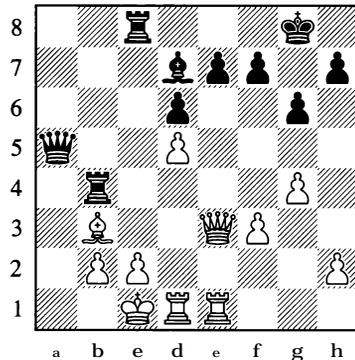
20...V a5

Black's initiative is far too powerful. You can see how detrimental the lost tempo (g2-g4) is to White's position.

21.ghe1

21.i c4 : b4 22.b3 e5! 23.dxe6 i xe6 24.c3 : xb3 25.i xb3 i xb3 was winning for Black in Palladino - Sgherri, email 2010.

21.Wc3 : b4 22. : he1 : c8 23.We3 was seen in Jahncke - Koepke, Internet 2009, and here I found a killing novelty:

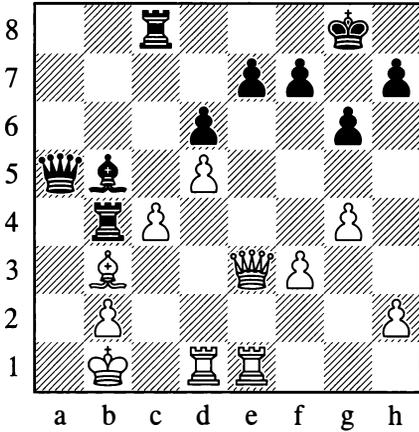


23...i b5!N The point is to stop the white king

from escaping to the kingside. 24.h4 ' alt 2S.Wd2' xb2 26.Ebl Ed4t- +

21.J b4 22' e3: c8 23' bl i b5 24.c4

In Rahimov - Vakhidov, Tashkent 2007, Black captured the pawn with a good position, but he missed something even stronger.

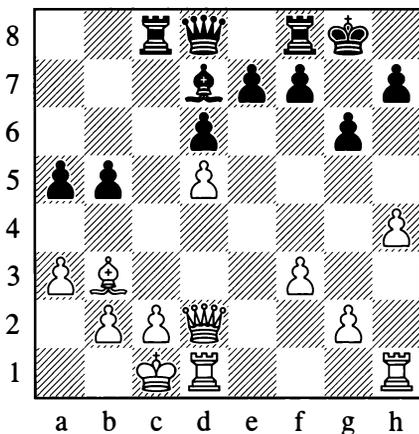


24...i a4!N

Instead of being distracted by a meaningless pawn, Black goes straight for the white king and wins at once.

25.i xa4' xa4 26' c3: a8 +

B22) 17.h4



T is the more forcing of the two main options

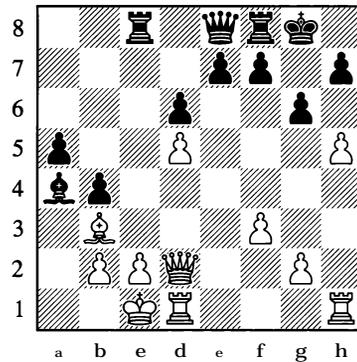
17...b4 18.a b4

In a few games White has instead opted to decline the pawn and sacrifice one of his own instead:

18.a4' e8

18...f6!? is an alternative plan, when 19.h5 g5 20.f4 led to balanced play in Groot - Ressler, email 2009. It seems likely that the game will end in some sort of perpetual but there is a lot of play left.

19.h5i xa4



20.hxg6

I gave the following line on ChessPublishing: 20' h6 g5! A important resource; by sacrificing the g-pawn, we keep the kingside closed. 21' xg5t < h8 22' e3 i xb3 23' xb3 ' b5 24.< bl Ec7 2S' e3 EgB 26.g4' cS=

20...f g6 21.Exh7!

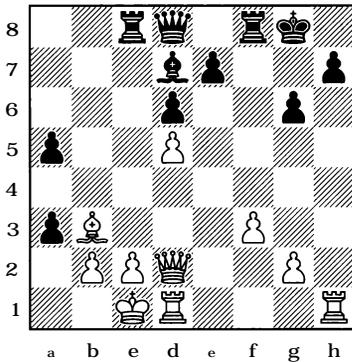
White's attack arrives just in time but it is only enough for a draw.

21...< xh7 22.Eh1t Wg7 23' h6t < f 24' f4t Wg7 25' h6t

1/2-1/2 Ojucic - Roganovic, Cetinje 2010.

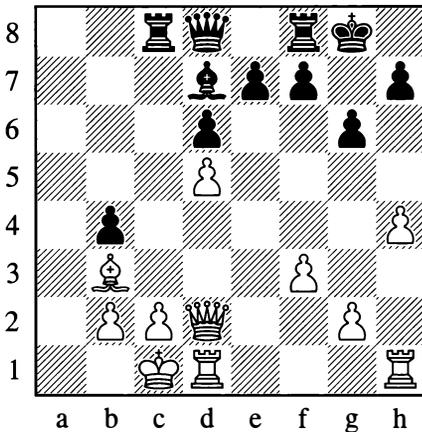
IB.hSN gives Black a choice. IB..bxa3 (My engine also gives 0.00 evaluations for IB..a4 and IB..i f5.) As I observed on ChessPublishing, the game will probably end

in the same type of draw as in the line above.
 19.hxg6 f g6



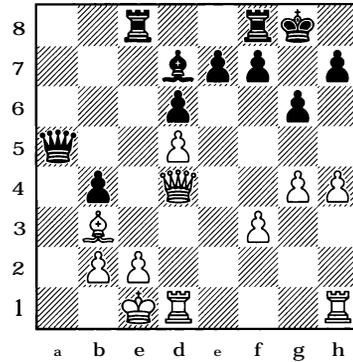
20.Exh7! Wxh7 21.Eh1 t Wg8 22.Wh6 WO
 23.Wh7t Wf6 24.Wh4t=

18...a b4



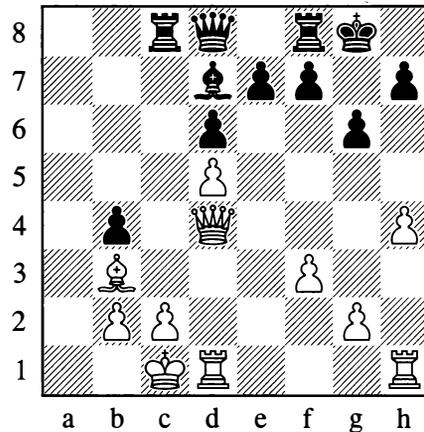
We have reached an important branching point where White may consider B221) 19. d4, B222) 19. e3!?, B223) 19. xb4 or B224) 19.h5

19.94? prevents the bishop from coming to f5 but every tempo matters. 19...Wa5 20.Wd4



20..J c3!? The rook is immune and so Black picks up a pawn, as both ...Wa1xb2 and ...Exf3 are threatened. (On ChessPublishing I gave 20...e5N 21.dxe6 xe6+ when Black has a strong initiative; both options are clearly better for Black.) 21.Wd2 Exf3 22.Edf1 Eg3 23.Ehg1 Exg1 24.Exg1 e5+ Mullon - Gonzalez Vidal, Arinsal 2011.

B221) 19. d4



19.. f !

An important move which highlights one of the reasons for retreating the king on move 16. Now White has to deal with the threat of ... xc2.

19...Wa5 is the main move but I think White has some pressure here, which is why I am keen to avoid this position with all of our move orders.

20. d2

White won the first two games from this position, but Black's position is fine after:

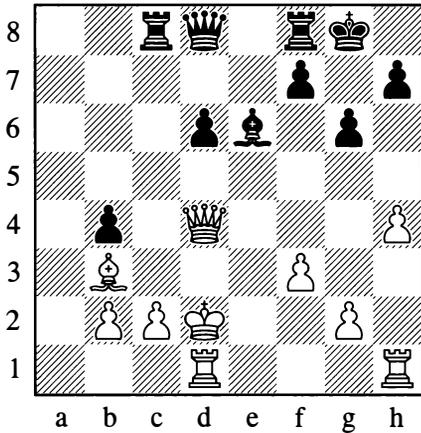
20...e5!

I suggested this important improvement on ChessPublishing, and it was subsequently tested in a correspondence game.

21.d e6

In the event of 21. Wxb4 h5+ White is rather vulnerable on the dark squares.

21..., xe6



22., xe6

22.me2N i xb3 23.cxb3 c2t 24. d2We7t 2s.mf2 xd2t 26.Wxd2 c8 is equal. Perhaps White should already be thinking about bailing out in this way.

22...f e6 23J del

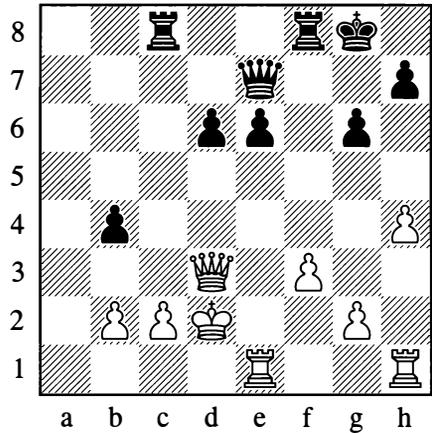
With such a loose king White can hardly hope for an advantage. As we will see, Black has a few ways to handle the position, indicating that White's play is not a critical test of the Topalov Variation.

23...Wc7 24.Wd3 We7!N

This slight improvement would force White to play accurately to retain equality.

24... f4!N is also fine, but one good line is enough.

24... f6 was played in the game. The remaining moves look strange but are backed up by deep computer analysis. 25.h5 Wa5 26.hxg6 b3t. By this point my engine evaluates several of Black's options as 0.00, but White has to walk a narrow line. 27.c3 Wg5t 28.mdl h5!? 29.g4 hxg4 30.g7 f5 31. h8t mxg7 32.Wd4t e5 33.Wa7t xh8 34. h1t mg8 35.Wh7t f8 36.Wb7 c7!? 37.Wxc7 f 38.Wc8t e7 39.Wc7t e6 1/2-1/2 Senzacqua - Speisser, corr. 2013.



25J e4!

This looks like the most accurate. White attempts to get some counterplay.

25.h5?! WgSH is the point of Black's last move.

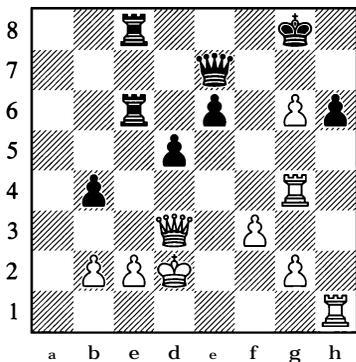
25.We4 f5! 26.Wxe6t Wxe6 27. xe6 dSt 28.me3 (28. cl? loses to 28...b3 29.c3 a8 30.mbl daS +) 28... xc2+ Black will end up with an extra pawn in the endgame.

25...d5 26J g4

26.Wxd5? fd8 wins for Black.

26..k 6 27.h5l 8 28 c1

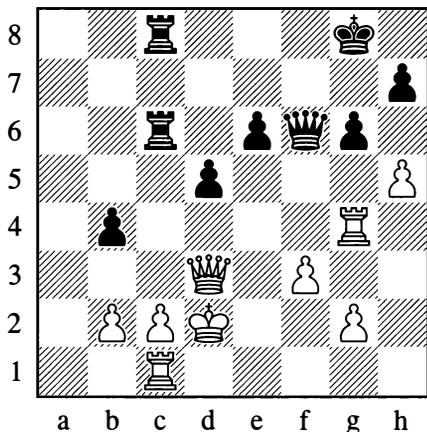
28.hxg6 can be met by a surprising counter:
 28..h6! (28..gxc2t 29.%xc2 gxc2t 30.' xc2
 1 c5t 31.c d3 hxg6 should be a draw)



29.gxh6 1 a7! 30.1 d4 Exc2t 31.< e3
 1 xd4t 32.Exd4 c g7 33.Edh4 Exb2 Black
 has the better prospects in the endgame, but
 W ite should probably hold. An accurate
 continuation is 34.Eh7t < xg6 35.E4h6t c f5
 36.g4t c e5 37.f4t c d6 38.f5 and it looks like
 a draw.

28..%f

Black could also opt to keep the game
 double edged with 28..1 d6!?

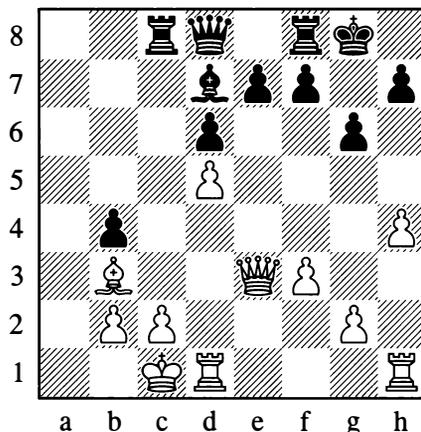


29.%d4

29.hxg6 h5! 30.Exb4 1 g5t 31.c d 1 1 xg2 is
 trickier for White.

29...%xd4t 30J xd4 gb6
 T e endgame is equal.

B222) 19%e3!?



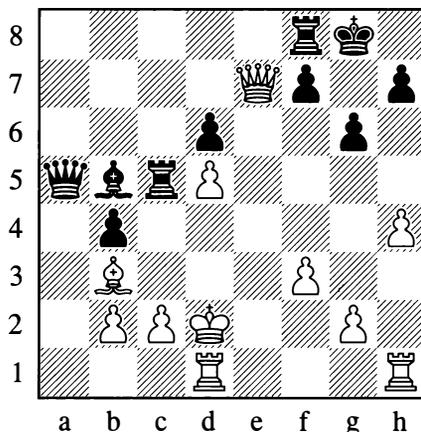
T e queen defends the b3-square, nullif ing
 our ...i f5xc2 plan, while also giving the king
 an escape square.

19...%a5 20.md2 gc5 21.%xe7!

White should have preferred 21.h5N, when
 21..i f5 is similar to variation B224 below.

21... b5!N

21..i f5 22.Ea1 1 b5 23.Ea7 was Ortiz
 Suarez- Wang Arlington 2014, and here Black
 missed a tactical shot: 23..i xc2!N 24i xc2
 Exd5t 25.< cl b3 with a dangerous attack. T e
 text move looks even stronger though.



22. xd6

T is is the obvious move to consider:

22.h5 : e8 23: a1! ' b6 24' a7' d8+ is a useful idea to remember: the queen can often infiltrate White's position via the g5-square.

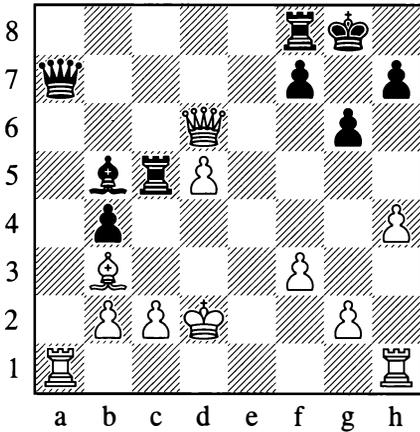
22: a1 looks like White's best chance, although he is still struggling after 22...' b6 23' a7' d8!.

22.. a7!

White's king is suddenly vulnerable, for example:

23: a1

23: h6! : fc8+



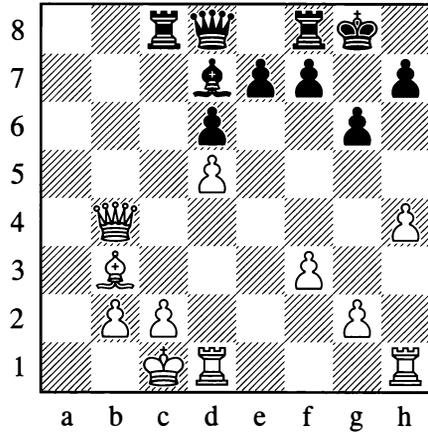
23...: xc2! 24' xc2

24.i xc2' f2 25\ cl : c8 +

24.. f t 25' bl . d3t 26' cl : c8t

27. c6: xc6t 28.dxc6 e3t 29' dl . b5
Black is winning.

B223) 19. xb4



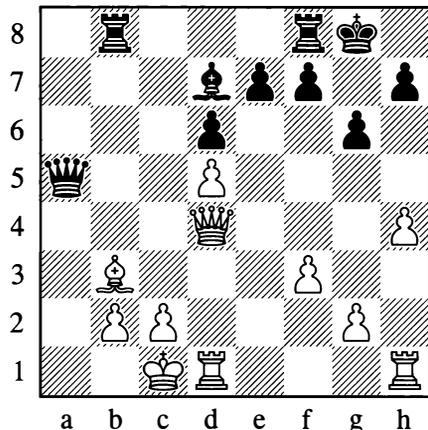
Taking the pawn is risky here, and Black has achieved a huge score against it. We will start with a typical regrouping plan.

19..J b8! 20. d4

20' c3 ' b6 21.: d4?! : fc8 22.: c4 occurred in B. Socko – T L. Petrosian, Internet (blitz) 2004. Had this been played at a longer time limit, Black would probably have found 22...e5!N with an excellent position, for example: 23.h5 : a8 24.: xc8t : xc8 25.i c4 ' f2+

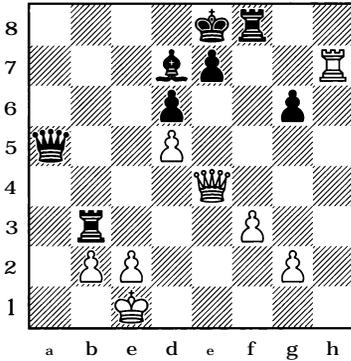
20.. a5

White's position is already dif cult.



21. c3

21.h5? White does not realize what grave danger he's in. 21..Exb3! 22.hxg6 (22.cxb3 Ec8t 23.<b1 f5t- +) 22...f g6 23.Exh7 c xh7 24.Eh1t c g8 25.Eh8t < f 26.Eh7t c e8 27. e4

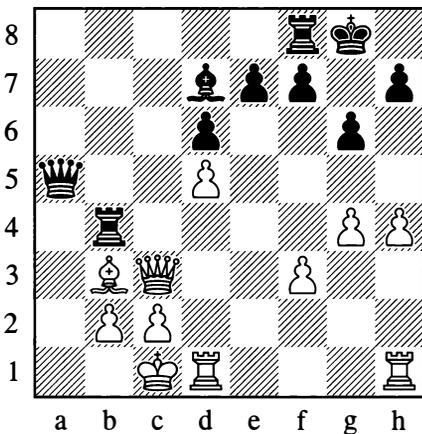


27...' a1t 28.< d2 Ed3t! + Schuh - Hahn, Germany 2012. A beautiful example of deflection.

21...Eb4 22.g4?

22. c4N Ec8 23.b3 is suggested by Catalin Navrotescu but 23...e5+ works well. The last move is often desirable for Black in this variation, not least because the blocking of the long diagonal makes his king much more secure.

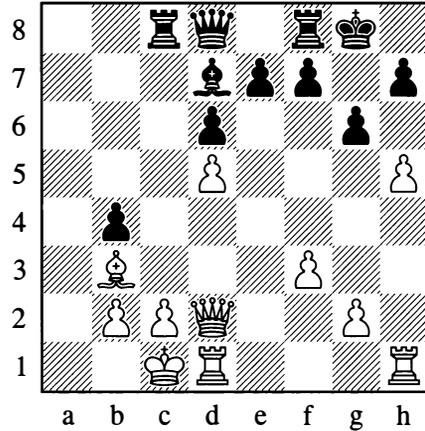
The text move allowed Black to mop up quickly.



22..Ec8 23' e3 ' alt 24< d2 ' xb2 25< e1 i b5 26Bh2 xb3

O 1 Meurs- Mostertman, Agneaux 2012.

B224 19.h5



19..i f !

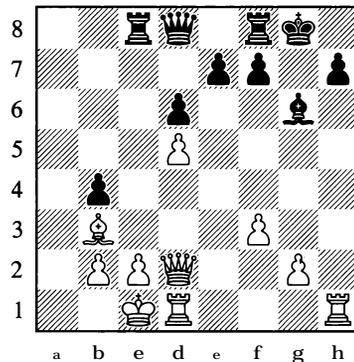
The bishop comes to the defence of its king while also threatening to take on c2.

19..' a5 is criticized by Pavlovic as he too is trying to avoid the position after 20' d4. With accurate play I believe Black should be okay but the position isn't so much fun, as White will run his king to relative safety on the kingside.

20' xb4

White could also consider:

20.hxg6 xg6



21. d4N

21. xb4 occurred in D. Ledger - R. Pen, Hastings 2011, and here I would continue with the normal queenside shuffle: 21...Eb8N 22. c3 (22. d4? e5! 23.dxe6?!

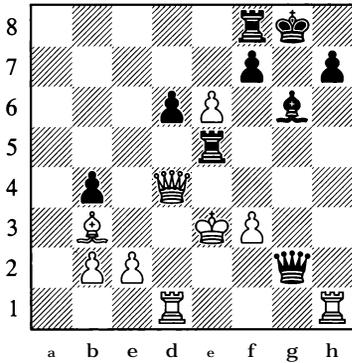
Exb3!+) 22... b6=

21...Ec5! 22.Wd2 e5

22... c8!N is another interesting approach.

22... b6 is given an exclamation mark by Pavlovic, but I prefer to play ...e5 whenever possible in these lines. Here it might lead to a drawn endgame after an exciting sequence:

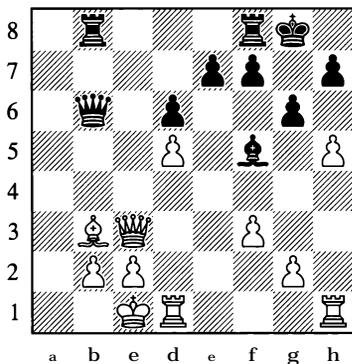
23.dxe6 gSt 24.We2 xg2t 25.< e3 EeSt



26. xe5! dxe5 27.Edg1 xg1t 28.Exg1 f e6 29.Eg5! f7 30.Exe5 Ee8=

20..Wc7

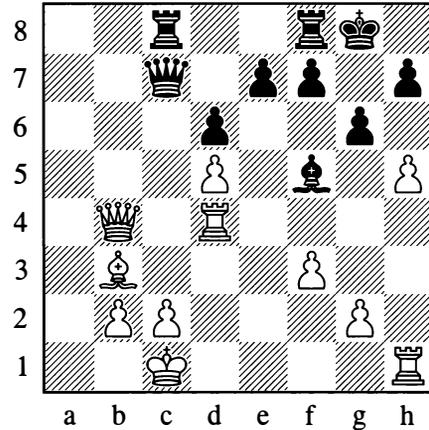
20...Eb8N 21. c3 b6



T is not so clear with the h-pawn still on the board, as White can try to annoy us with 22.h6

21. d4

We have been following S. Kaplan - Kostopoulos, Kavala 2011. Black has more than one possible improvement:



21.. a7!N

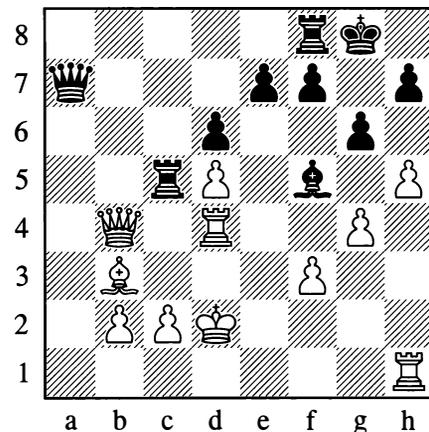
21..gxh5!N was a suggestion of mine on ChessPublishing but the queen move is trickier:

22. d2

After 22. a4 c5 White's pieces are quite awkwardly placed; he cannot repeat with 23. b4? as we have 23... xc2! 24. xc5 dxc5.

22..J 5 23.g4

23.hxg6. xg6°

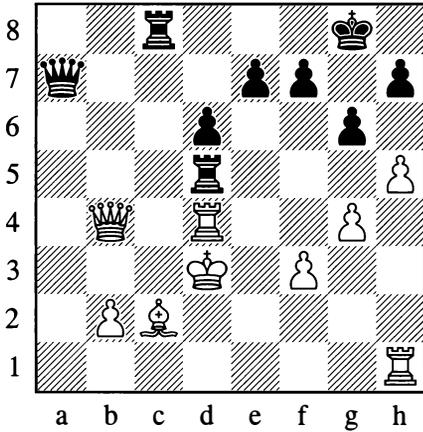


23.J b8 24.Wa4: a5 25.Wc4: c8 26.Wb4

After nudging the queen around for a few moves, we now have the nice tactic:

26... bc2! 27.i xc2: xd5! 28.' d3

2B: xd5? Wf2t 29.< dl Wxc2t 30. el Wc1t 31: dl We3t 32.< f1 Wxf3t- +



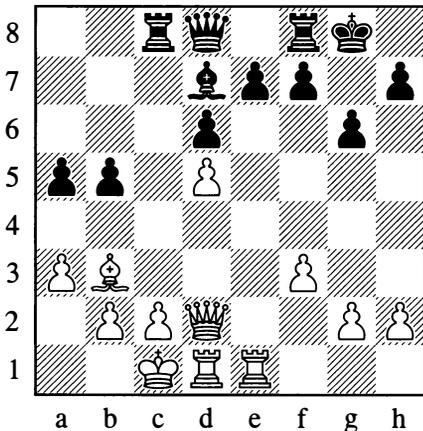
28...: xd4t

2B...Wa6t!? 29. d2: b5 is also possible if you wish to continue attacking

29.Wxd4 Wxd4t 30.' xd4: xc2:

Black's extra pawn gives him some winning chances in the ending, although we do need to watch out for White's passed b-pawn.

B23) 17.: hel



17...: c5!

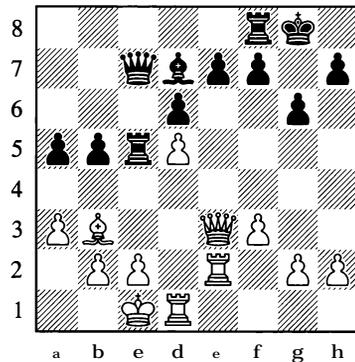
When I reached this position I muddled up my move order and played the immediate 17...b4. I subsequently got into some trouble in J. Polgar - Iones, London 2012, although I managed to draw in the end.

The rook move - which is not mentioned in Kalifman's repertoire book - is stronger. Since White has committed to a slower plan, we can spend a tempo strengthening our position before sacrificing the b-pawn.

We will start by analysing B231) 18.g4, which was Karjakin's attempt against Shirov, before moving on to B232) 18.: e3!. The latter move was favoured by Leko and Ganguly, both noted theoreticians, and I consider it the critical test of the Topalov Variation.

1B.< b1 b4 19.axb4 axb4 20.Wxb4: eB 21.g4 WxB gave Black typical compensation in the Internet game, hugodave- wolfgang bailer.

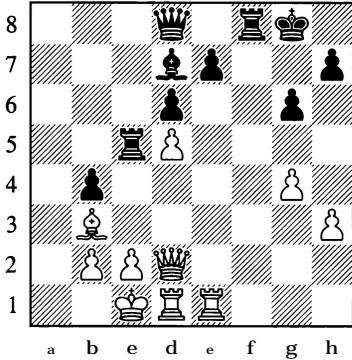
1B.We3 was the sensible choice of a GM in a recent game. 1B..Wc7 19.: e2 In Aroshidze - Oliva, Barbera del Valles 2014, Black's most straightforward equalizing plan would have been:



19...: eN 20.: d4 e5 21.dxe6 i xe6 22.f4 (22.: e4 d5 23.: e5: cB-) 22...i d7 23.Wd3: xe2 24.Wxe2 a4 25.i d5 i f 26.: d2 h5 27.h3 WcB- Black's pressure against c2 compensates for the vulnerable d6-pawn.

B231) IS.g4 b4

IS...fS!? is another interesting plan and one that the engines have been trying. Black will still ultimately give up his b-pawn but first he wants an open file for his other rook. 19.h3 f g4 20.f g4 b4 21.a b4 axb4



22. xb4 (22. e3 didn't get White anywhere either: 22...l aS 23.< d2 bS 24.l a1 l xa1 25.l xa1 l f 26.l e1 aS 27.h4 d7 2S.g5 a6= newton296 - solidor; engine game 2012.) 22...l f3 23.< b1 aS 24. d4 l a5 25.c3l a7 Practice has demonstrated that Black has enough pressure for the sacrific ed pawn; see, for instance, Houdini 2.0- Houdini 2.0, engine game 2011.

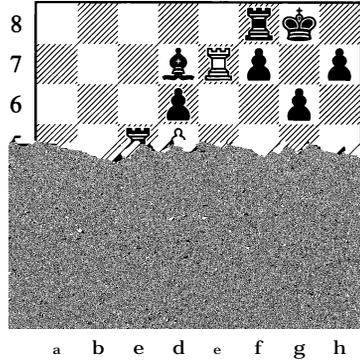
19.a b4 a b4 20.Wxb4' aS

Black's pressure down the three queenside files compensates fully for the sacrific ed pawn.

21.@d2

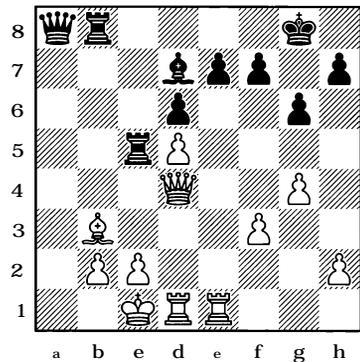
21.l d3 alt 22.< d2 xb2 23. d4 was already agreed drawn in Pineda - M. Silva, email 2012.

21.l xe7N is a more I previously considered critical but evidently players have decided it is too dangerous. On ChessPublishing I gave: 21... alt 22.< d2 xb2 23. f4 (23.l xd7? loses to 23...l xc2t! 24.< d3 l fcS with mate to follow)

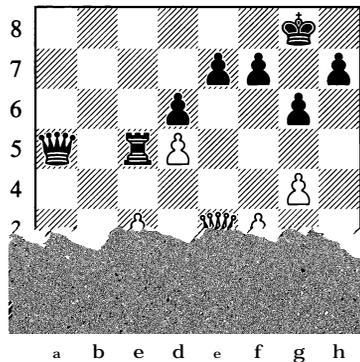


23.. bS 24.< e1 l c3 25.h4 c4! T e engine gives this as equal but in practice the position is likely to be trickier for White with his king roaming the open board. 26. xc4 b4 Black regains the bishop and is likely to pick up the c-pawn.

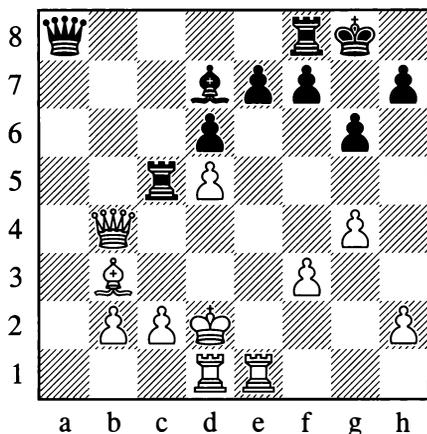
Another game continued: 21. d4l bS



22.l d3 WaIt 23.< d2 Wa5t 24.< d1 l b4 2S.We3 a4 26. xa4 l xa4 27.c3 l a2 2S.l d2 In Moreno Tejera - Asis Gargatagli, Navalmoral 2012, Black took the d5-pawn but it would have been more accurate to play:



2B..J b5!N Forcing White to open the second rank. 29.b4 Wa4! 30. e2 Exd5 + T e vulnerability of White's king will be the deciding factor:



21..J b8

21...e5!?

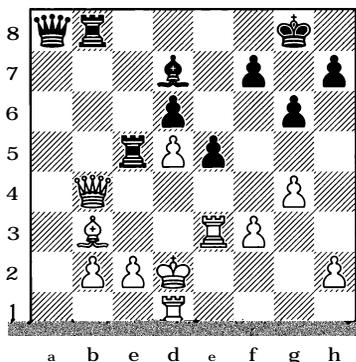
The runner-up in this year's Women's World Championship chose this move, presumably to keep more life in the position against her lower-rated opponent. The game continued:

22.Ee3!?

22.Eal!N looks to be White's best, but Black still has good counterplay following 22...WdB 23.Exe5 Wf6 24.Ee4 Wxf 25.Wd4j b5

22...EbB

22...Wa7!N followed by ...f5 would have been promising for Black.



23.Wa3?

23.Eal! was necessary, with rough equality after 23...Exd5! 24.Ed3 Exd3! 25.cxd3 Wb7.

Now in Umudova - Pogonina, Batumi 2012, Black could have won with:

23...Ea5!N 24.Wxd6 Exb3! 25.Exb3 Exd5!

With decisive material gains.

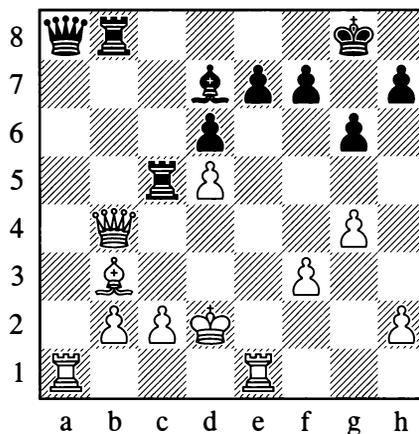
22.Eal

Karjakin wisely steers the game towards a draw.

22.Wd4? loses the queen to 22...Exb3!, just as we saw in the previous note.

22.We4? Wa5! 23.c e2 e5! 24.< f2 f5! would grant Black a huge initiative, as I noted on ChessPublishing.

22.Wf4 is White's best try if he wishes to prolong the game but his position is precarious. After 22...Exb3! 23.cxb3 Wxd5! 24.< e2 Wxb3 Black has good compensation for the exchange, as I noted on ChessPublishing.



22...Exd5!

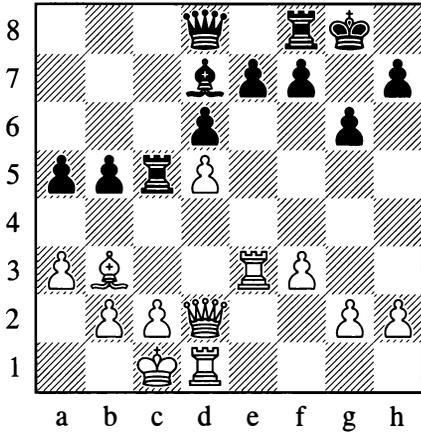
22...Wxd5!N 23.j xd5 Exb4 24.j b3 is also equal, but enables Black to keep the game going if he wishes.

23' e3 Ee5! 24' d2

½-½ Kajakin- Shirov, Bilbao 2009. White has to accept the draw as 24. f2? allows 24...Wxf3! 25. xf3 xb4+.

21...Wxe7! 22.Wxe7 xb3 23. d2 f8 24. d1 xc2 25. xc2 xc2 26. e1 c5 27.Wxd6 xd5 Pavlovic's line results in what should be a drawn ending.

B232) 18. e3!



White prepares to double on the e-file, while the rook also does a good job protecting the bishop once the b-file is opened.

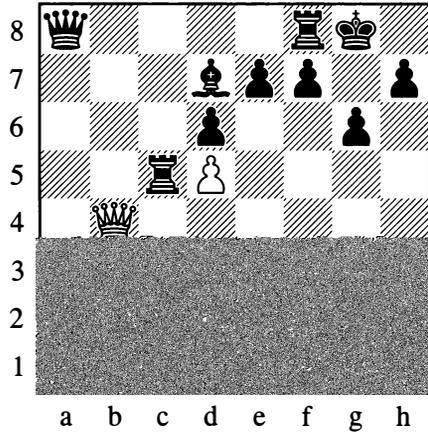
18..b4

Black should not delay his counterplay any longer.

19.a b4

19.a4!N As we saw in the notes to variation B22, White can also decline the pawn offering, Pavlovic offers the following: 19...We8 20.We2 (20. del? xa4 21. xe7 Wxe7 [Pavlovic gives 21...Wb5 which also looks good for Black] 22. xe7 xb3+) 20... xa4 21. xe7

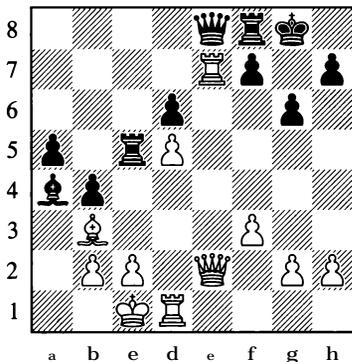
19...a b4 20. xb4 a8



The position is similar to variations B21 and B223, but this is a better version for White. The e3-rook covers the third rank and gives some cover for his king. White has two major plans: he may either run his king over to the kingside or try and consolidate its safety on the queenside. Black should be patient and keep up the pressure, almost in the style of the Benko Gambit.

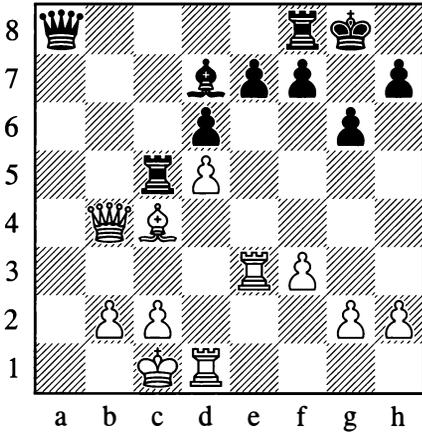
B232(1) 21.J c4 is one critical option but the main line is B232(2) 2U? d .

Pavlovic notes that 21. xe7! Wa1t 22. d2 Wxb2 gives Black good counterplay.



21.Wd4 b8 22. xe7 (22. d2 transposes to variation B232(2)) is simply a forced draw: 22... xb3 23. xd7 Wa1t 24.< d2 Wa5t 25. c1 Wa1t ½-½ Seyb - Fedorovsky, Wunsiedel 2012.

B2321) 21.. c4



White clears the third rank for a rook swing and attempts to block the c-f file.

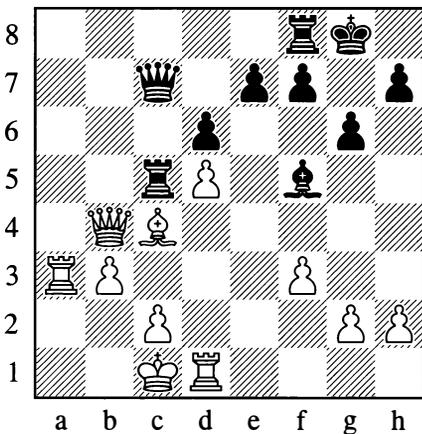
21... f

21...l b8? would now fail to 22.l a3±.

22.l a3

The e-pawn is still distinctly poisoned: 22.l xe7? l fc8 23.l d4 Wa1t 24. d2 Wg1 25.Wc3l a5+ Kover- Waite; email 2010.

22.. c8 23.b3 c7



Comparing this to the positions under variation B2322, White now has control of the a-f file. However, the a3-rook might prove to be

misplaced if we can arrange a suitable break in the centre. We have reached a final branching point where White can choose B23211) 24.l a6! or B23212) 24.Wd .

B23211) 24J a6!?

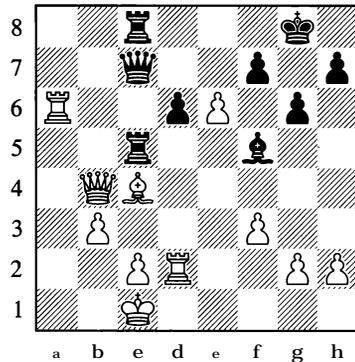
This was seen in an email game which we will follow for a few moves.

24...l b8

Also interesting is

24...Ec8! N 25.l d2

25.g4 l b8! It is useful for Black to have encouraged White to create a few holes on the kingside. 26.Wa4 d7 27.Wa2 b5 28. xb5l bxb5 29.l cGwb8 30.l xc5 dxc5 25...eG 26.dxc6



26...d5!

You should always be on the lookout for this idea

27.e7!

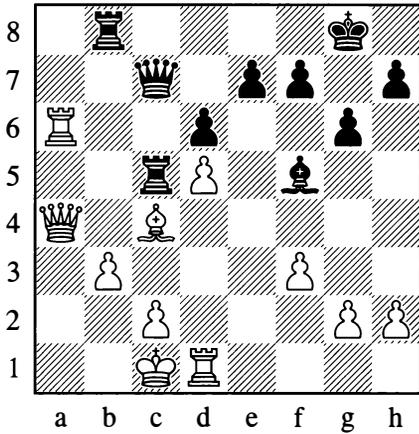
An extremely messy position! Best play seems to be:

27...l e8 28.g4 xc2 29.l xd5 l d5 30. xd5 d3t 31.l cGWe5

The e7-pawn will drop and I think White's king is too exposed for him to be able to exploit the extra pawn.

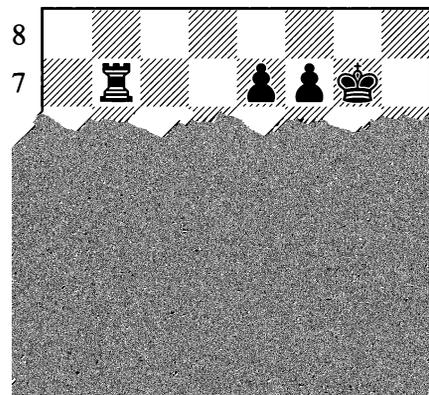
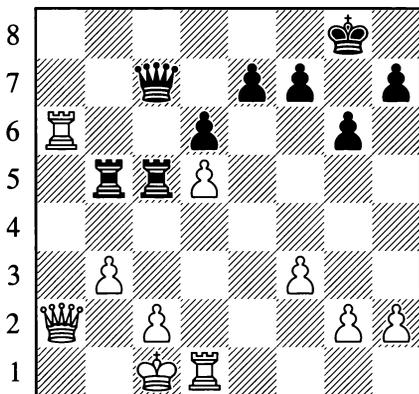
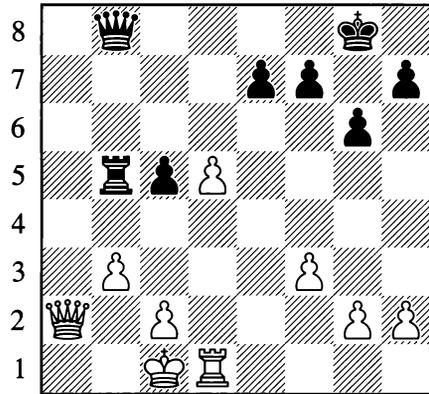
25. a4

Here I would like to recommend an improvement.



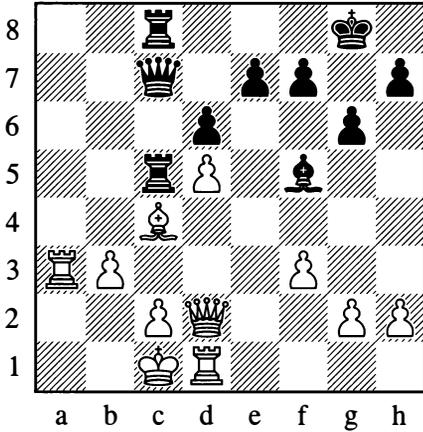
25... d7N

25...e5 led to a quick draw: 26.dxe6 j xe6
27.Ea7 Wc8 28.Wa6 1/2-1/2 Van



42.d6f 43.d e7 gxe7=

B23212) 24. d2 gxc8

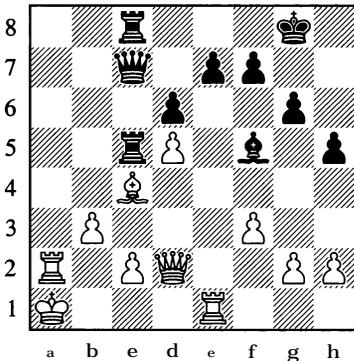


We have reached another fairly typical position for this line. White has kept his extra pawn and defended against the immediate threats. However, it is not easy for him to make any progress as Black has so much pressure. I think in a perfectly-played game the result would be a draw and in an over-the-board game Black would have good practical chances.

25. d4

Other moves do not change the assessment:

25.mb2 : b8 26.mal h5 27.: a2 : c8 28.: e1
 At this point, rather than keeping passing, Black decided to liven things up:



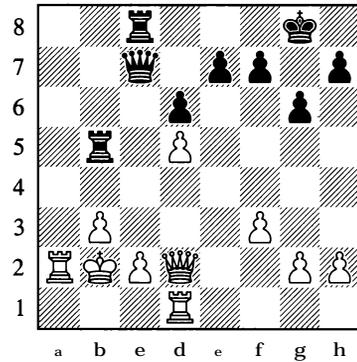
28...: xc4! 29.bxc4' xc4 30.: a3' c5 31.: a5
 ' c7 32.: dl mh7 33.: a3 ' c5 34.: a2 e5
 35.dxe6 j xe6 Black had enough pressure to hold the draw fairly comfortably in the Internet game, dead_in_thewater- eroe inrico, even if the game did last 245 moves!

25.: a4j d7 26.: a2j b5

Trading bishops is a double-edged decision. White's bishop was not doing much on c4 but it was blocking the c-f file and preventing our counterplay. Now we can try putting pressure on both c2 and d5

27.j xb5: xb5 28.mb2

28' d3 was seen in derecho- the_godfather, engine game 2013, and now I recommend 28..' b6N to keep White's king on the queenside.



28...: c5 29.mb! : c3 30.: e1 ' b7 31.: e4
 : 8c5 32.: d4' b5 33' e1 mg7 34.: d2

Nightingale - Rook, corr. 2012. Here Black should have kept waiting with:

34...' b7N

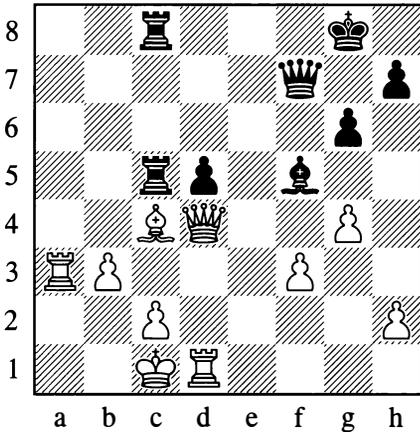
White has not made any progress in the past few moves; I think the position is probably just a draw.

25...e6 26.dxe6 d5

Fighting to open the c-f file.

27.exf t xf 28.g4

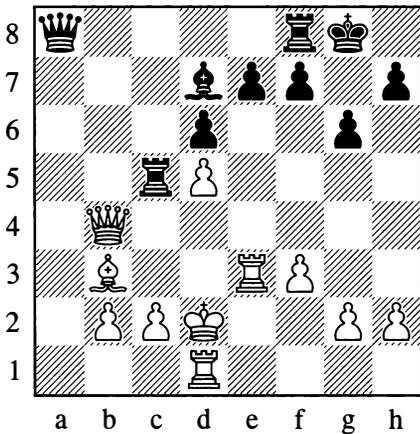
28.j d3? allows 28...: xc2t !.



28..b e2 29.@xe2 xe4t 30.bxe4 xe4t
31.' xe4 dxe4

This position has been reached in some engine games, all of which were drawn. There are simply not enough pawns left for White to have any significant winning chances.

B2322) 21.@d2



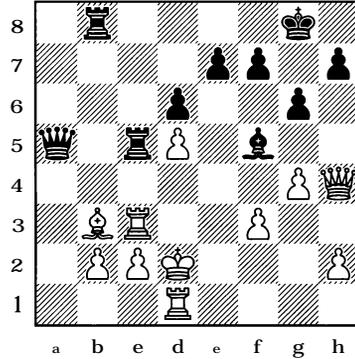
It is time White decides on running his king.

21... b8 22.' d4

This is the best square for the white queen, both defending the d5-pawn and preparing to trade a pair of rooks with c3.

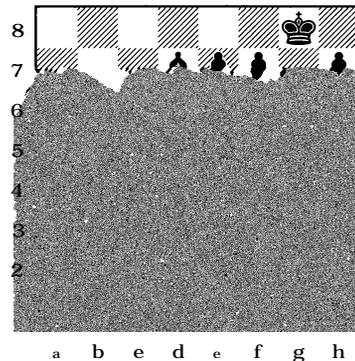
22. a1? would allow the idea we saw in Kajakin - Shirov with 22...: xd5!

22.Wh4 f5 23.: c3WaS 24.g4? This position was seen recently in Pacher - Baumegeger, Vienna 2015, when Black missed a great opportunity:



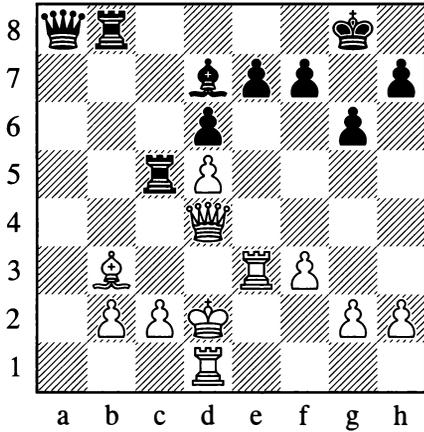
24... xc2! 2S.' xc2 Wb4 White has no way to defend his bishop, so Black crashes through. This game is a good indication of the practical difficulties facing White; he must constantly be on his guard against various tactics.

22.Wf4 Wa5t (As I previously indicated on ChessPublishing, 22... f5!N also looks fine for Black, as 23.: xe7Wa5t 24.' e2Wd8! forces White to repeat: 2S.: a7 [25.: e3? xc2-+] 2S...Wb6 26.: e7=) 23.' e2 : b4 24.Wh6



24..Wa7 2S.: e1 This was Schwarz - Loetscher; Germany 2012, and here Black

could have regained material while keeping a good position with 25... a4!N.



22...J a5t!

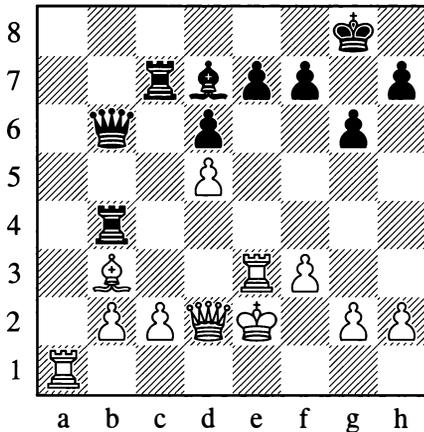
T is check prevents White from trading a pair of rooks.

23.< e2

23! 3?loses to 23...Exb3! 24.cxb3 Exd5

23..Eb4 24\ d2V b6 25.Eal Ec7

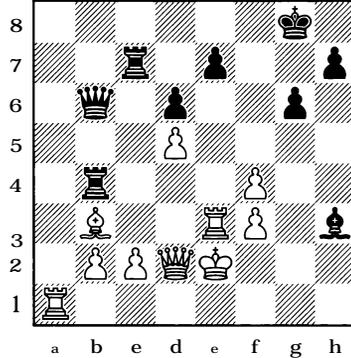
25...Ec8 was played in Ganguly - Konguvel, Dresden 2012. Black held on for a draw in that game, but I think guarding the e7-pawn is more important than worrying about the back rank.



26.< f

White continues his king's odyssey.

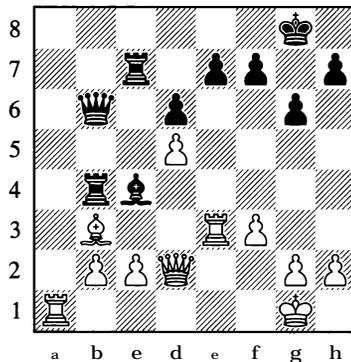
26.h3! is an odd move, somewhat typical of engine chess! Here Stockfish flashes up 26...f5!N which looks to give Black good counterplay, for example: 27.g3 f4 28.gxf4 . xh3



White's structure is ugly and we can now count on long-term counterplay with the passed h-pawn, as well as pressure against White's king

26..i b5t 27.< r

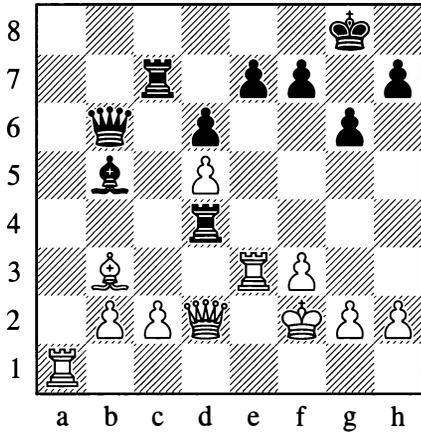
27.mg1?!N is almost a successful completion of White's plan but 27... c4! solves all of Black's problems:



28.. xc4?! (28Ea3 is better but 28..Eb5 still regains the pawn) 28...Ecxc4= White's problem is that the rook on e3 is no longer defended by his king so both the b2- and c2-pawns are hanging.

27... d4

Continuing to hassle White.



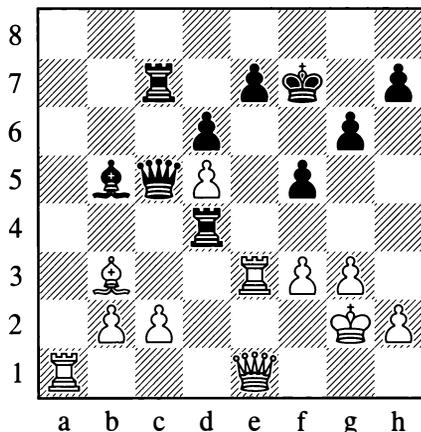
28 a5 c5 29 e1 f1?

This is the most active approach, striving to keep the initiative.

29...j c4 is also possible. After 30j xc4 Exc4 31.c3 Eb7 32.Wd2 Eb3 Black will just try to sit on the position and prevent White from mobilizing his extra pawn.

30g3 c f 31.c g2

31.Ed1N j a6 32.f4 h5!? 33.h4 j b5= also grants Black sufficient play. White may have kept his extra pawn but he has no way to utilize it.



31...i c4!

The d5-pawn is dropping.

32... c4

32.Ec3 Wxd5= does not change much.

32... xc4 33.c3 xd5 34.b3 4c6 35.c4 d4 36. dl c5

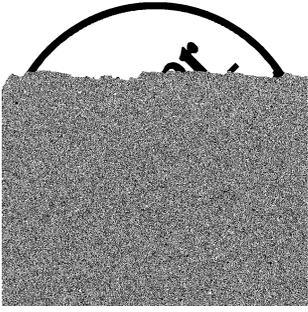
½-½ Riccio - Ham, corr. 2012.

Conclusion

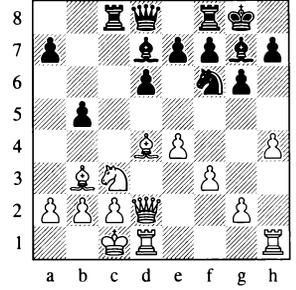
We spent a while in the early part of the chapter getting acquainted with some typical ideas and seeing some of the problems facing Black in the 16...Wb6 variation. Having done that, we focused on the more promising 16...< g8!, when White has two major options

17.h4 is an aggressive choice but Black's queenside play generally arrives quickly. Remember that our bishop is usefully placed on f5, where it guards our own king while putting pressure on White's. Watch out for ...j xc2 ideas!

The main line is 17.Ehe1. If White knows his theory he can reach a position with an extra pawn, but he will remain under some pressure. It is hardly surprising that most human players have declined to play this way, as one slip from White can leave him in a lost position. Even in engine-versus-engine games Black has scored a few wins, although most have been drawn. From a theoretical perspective I don't think Black should have to suffer too much to hold the draw, and in a practical game I would rate his chances as equal.



Topalov Variation



13.h4

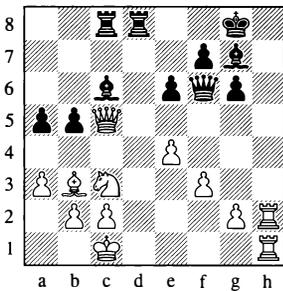
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.t f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f S.t c3 g6 6.i e3 i g7 7.f O-O 8. d2
t c6 9.i c4 i d7 10.O-O t xd4 12.i xd4 bS 13.h4

13...a5

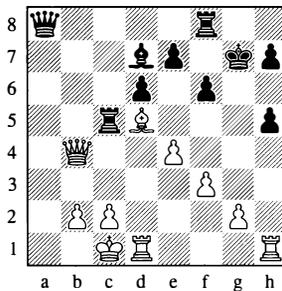
A) 14.i xf ?	169
B) 14.e5	171
C) 14.a3	172
D) 14.h5 a4 IS.i xf i x !? 16.hxg6 e6!	
17.e5! i g7! 18J N i xe5 19J dhl f g6	173
D1) 20.i d5!?	177
D2) 20.t d5!?	179

A) after 21.♞c5



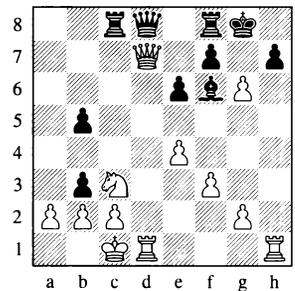
21...♞d5!N

C) note to 16.♞a2



22...♞a1!N

D) note to 17.e5!



18...♞xd7N

1.e4 c5 2.t O d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.t xd4 t f
5.t c3 g6 6.i e3 i g7 7.O O O 8' d2 t c6
9.i c4 i d7 10.O O O Ec8 11.i b3 t xd4
12.i xd4 b5 13.h4

T is is White's most aggressive approach.
T e race is on!

13...a5

We will examine four main options, the last of which is by far the most critical:
A) 14.i x ?i, B) 14.e5, C) 14.a3 and D) 14.h5.

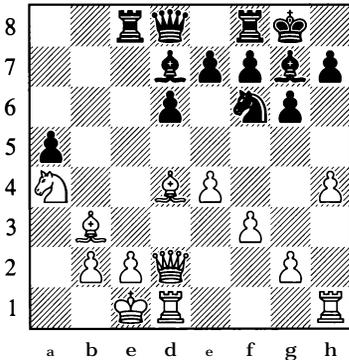
14.a4?

T is has been seen surprisingly of en but it is simply a blunder.

14...bxa4 15.t xa4

Normally White continues blindly with this recapture.

One strong GM realized his mistake and tried to change the course of the game with: 15.i a2 a3 16.h5 axb2t 17.' xb2 Ortiz Suarez - Ibarra Chami, Villahermosa 2014. Here Chris Ward suggests the sensible 17...i e6N giving the possible continuation: 18.i xe6 f e6 19.hxg6 hxg6 20.Wg5? Ec4 21.Wxg6 Exd4! 22.Exd4 Wb6t- +



15..i xa4! 16.i xa4 Ec4

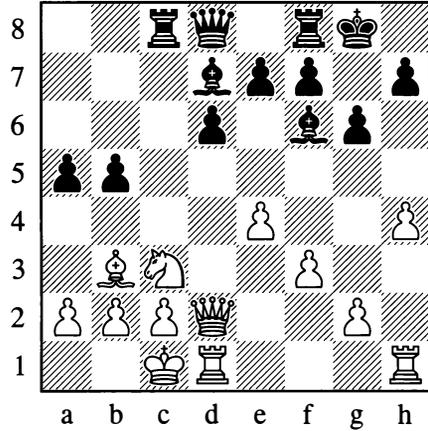
Only here does White discover his dilemma.
17.i b3

17.i xf6? makes matters even worse:
17...i xf6 18.i b3 Wb6 19.Wd3 Ed4 20.We2
a4 21.c3 axb3 22.cxd4 Ec8 23' d2 Ec2t- +
Rudolf - Fruebing Budapest 2006.

17...t xe4

Black wins a pawn while keeping an excellent position.

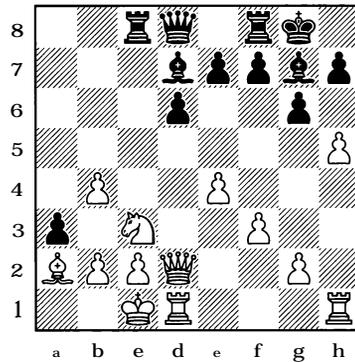
A) 14.i xf ?i xf



As always in the Dragon, if White cannot achieve anything tangible then it is a mistake to give Black an uncontested dark-squared bishop.

15.h5i g7! 16.hxg6

After 16.a3 a4! 17.i a2 b4! 18.axb4 a3 Black succeeds in breaking through:

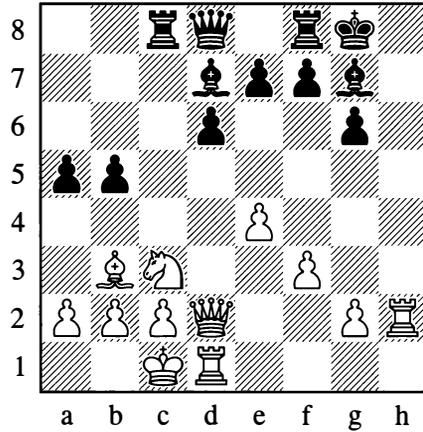
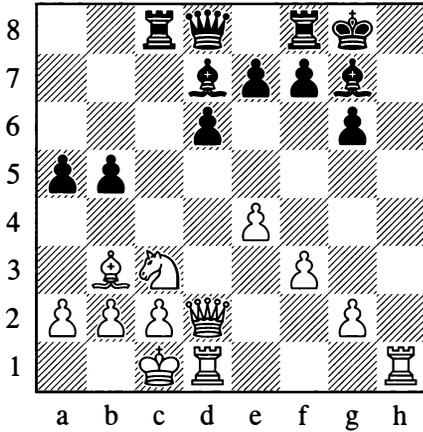


19.' b1 axb2 20.hxg6 hxg6 21.Wg5 e6
22.Wxd8 Ef d8- In gorni - grujov, engine game 2013, the b2-pawn was definitely a strength rather than a weakness.

16...hxg6

White can set up a mating threat along the h-file but Black can just sidestep with the f5-rook and remain quite safe

21..Eg5! 22.e5! dxe5 23.1 e4 Wb6! 24.1 g5t i f5 25.Exg6 Wc3t 26.i b1 We2 27.Ec1 Wc4!+



17.J h2

The alternative is:

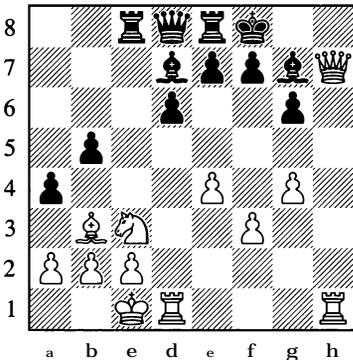
17.g4 a4

17...1hc3!N looks simpler: 1.S.bxc3 a4 19.Wh2 (19. d5Wc7 20.e5!ECS') 19..EeS 20.Wh7t i f5 21. xf < xf 22.Eh6 Wb6 23.Wxg6t i f5+

1.S.Wh2 EeS 19.Wh7tN

This is White's only chance. Instead 19.1 d5? simply allowed Black to take on b3 in Oberweis- Kulhanek, Kemer 2007.

19..i f5

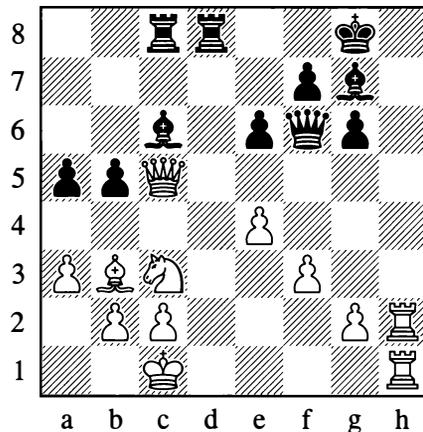


17...e6! 18. xd6 f

Black cleverly uses the potential fork on f4 to prevent White from taking on d7.

19.Edh1 Efd8 20.a3. c6 21. c5

In Halvax - Neubauer; Linz 2011, Black could have crowned his previous fine play as follows.



20. xf !i xf 21.Eh6

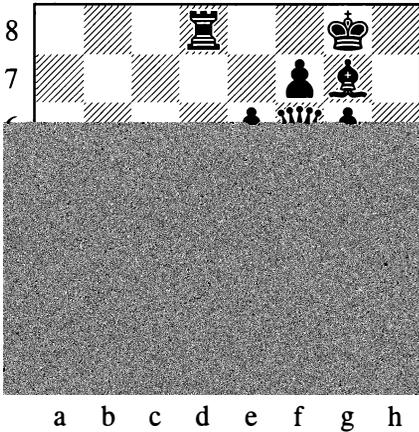
White's initiative looks dangerous but can be defused with a series of accurate moves

21... d5!N 22. xb5

22.We3 xb3 23.cxb3 b4 wins.

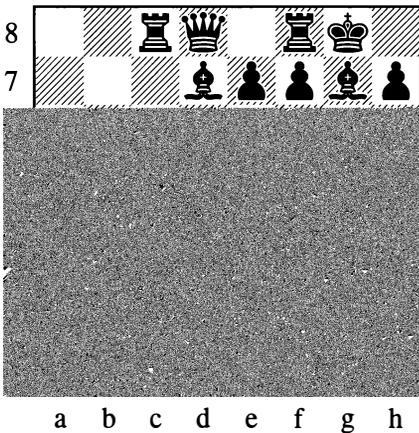
22.... xb3 23. xb3 Exc3! 24.bxc3

24.Wxc3 Wf4t also wins the queen.



24... f4t 25@bl gb8 +

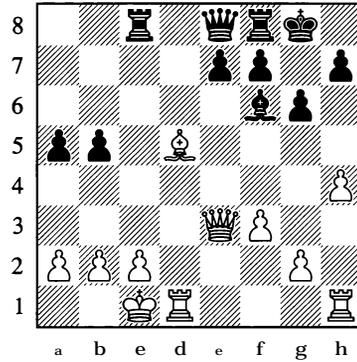
B) 14.e5 dxe5 15.h e5



T is has a lot of similarities to 13.e5 (variation B of the next chapter) and likewise should not trouble Black.

15.... c6 16. e3 e8 17.h5

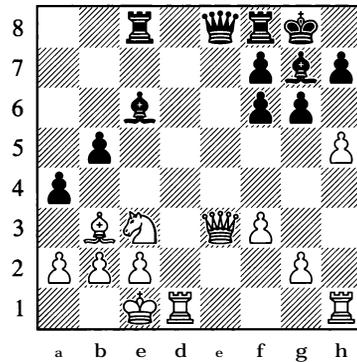
In one game White played aggressively with: 17.j xf6 j xf6 1S.t d5 j xd5 19.j xd5 T e opposite-coloured bishops have the potential to make both attacks more potent but Black's will arrive f rst:



19...e6 20j e4 We7 21.h5 T is position was reached in Olsarova- Malikova, Frydek Mistek 2009. Had Black found 21...a4!N followed by ...Wb4, she would have been doing excellently.

17...a4 18. d5

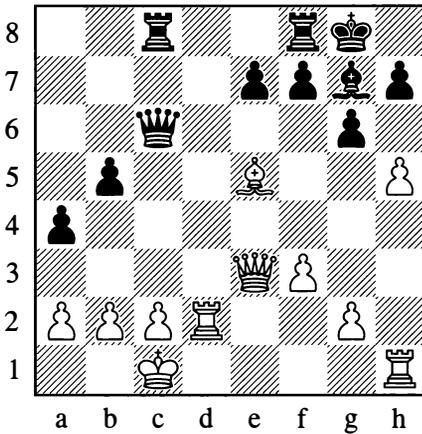
1S.j xf6 was tried in Demidowicz - Zakoscielna, Szklarska Poreba 2007. Now that White's attack is one tempo closer; Black should instead recapture with the pawn: 1S...exf6!N



19.WxeS f eS 20j d5 j xd5 21.t xd5 (21. xd5 f5+) 21... e2+ Black has the better prospects in the ending

18..h d5 19.1 xd5 l xd5 20.gxd5 c6 2U d2?

21.Wd3 was necessary although White is the one f ghting to hold the balance.



16.l d5 l xd5 17. xg7 xg7 gives White a choice of recaptures:

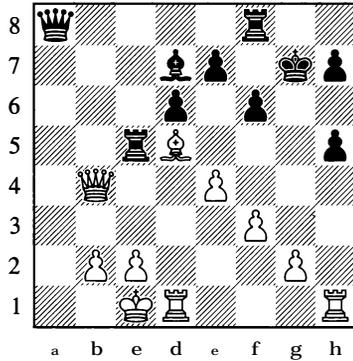
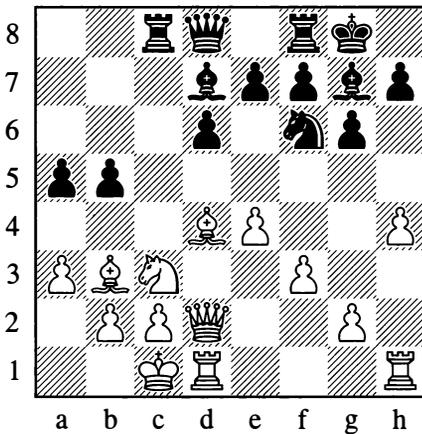
a) 18.exd5 has been the more popular and higher-scoring move, but after 18.. g8! we immediately transpose to variation B22 of the previous chapter on page 152. (18..1 a5 is less accurate as we may want to go for a plan with ... f5.

b) White has recaptured with the queen in a few games, but it is not particularly promising: 18.l xd5 : c5 19.l d4t f6 20.h5 gxh5 21.l xb4 1 a8 22. d5 Now in Dzaja- Havas Topusko 2012, Black should have played:

21...Wb6! 22. e2 Wxa2+

White's opening had clearly been a failure in Lo Presti - Tristan, Mar del Plata 2008

C) 14.a3

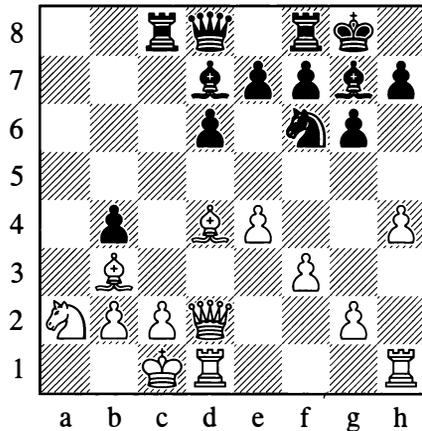


22...1 a1t !N 23. d2 1 a7+ Black has the more pleasant position.

T is is likely to transpose to the previous chapter, but there are a few independent possibilities to consider:

14...h4 15.a h4 a h4 16.l a2

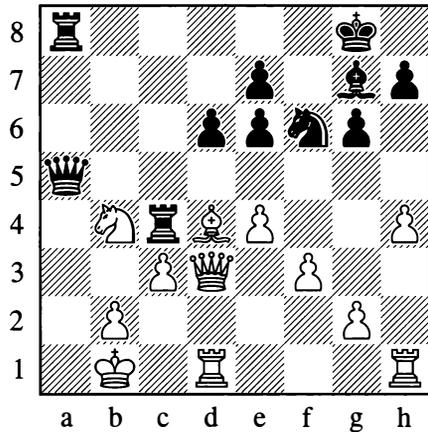
16.l b1? places the knight on a terrible square; it puts no pressure on b4 and has no route of escape. Several games have continued 16..1 a5 17.h5 a4 18. xa4 1 xa4 when Black already has a decisive attack.



16... e6

I like the idea of eliminating the bishop which is holding White's queenside together.

16...EbB? also works well, and was the choice of Australian GM David Smerdon in a recent correspondence game. 17.t xb4 ' a5 1B.c3 EfcB 19.Wbl h5 20.Eel e6 21.g4 hxg4 22.h5 gxh5 23.i xf6 i xf6 24.f g4 Exc3 25.bxc3 Exb4 ½-½ W. Fischer - Smerdon, corr. 2015. Black has at least a perpetual and I am sure in an over-the-board game Dave would have kept playing



17.L e6

17.Wbl was played in Oparin - Nechaev, Vladivostok 2014, and here the straightforward 17...i xb3N 1B.cxb3 EaB 19.' xb4 ' d7 20.t c3 EfbB 21.' c4' b7+ would have given Black a good position.

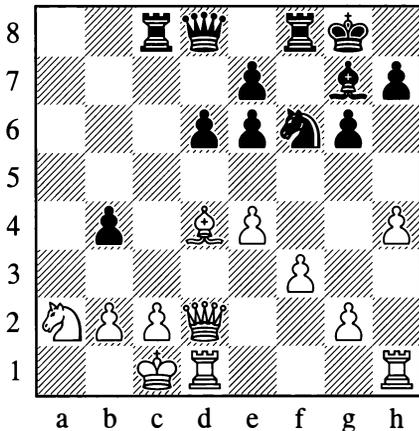
21...gxd4! 22.c d4

22.' xd4 t d5 23.' xg7t (23' c4 ' alt 24.Wc2 t e3t) 23... xg7 24.exd5 exd5 isn't much better:

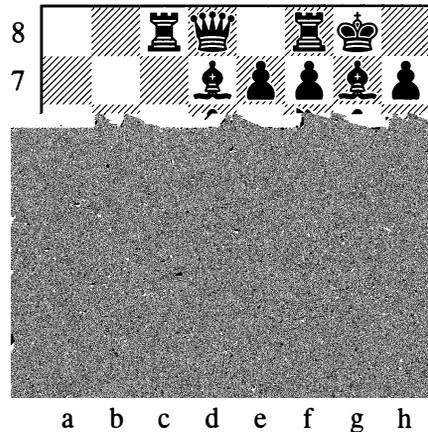
17...f e6

22...Wxb4 +

Black had a favourable material imbalance as well as the initiative in Zenishchev - Payne, email 2001.



D) 14.h5a4



18.t xb4?

White has to try 1BWblN although Black will have great compensation for the pawn after either 1B...EaB or 1B...b3!?

This position is the gateway to the sharpest lines of the Topalov Variation. Each side ignores the other and hurls its pawns towards the opposing king.

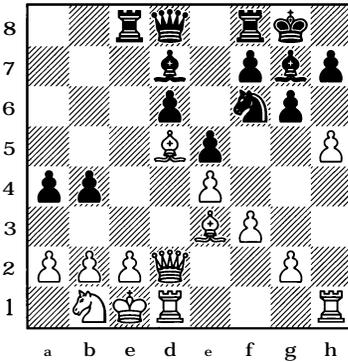
18...Wa5 19.' bl Ec4 20.<3 ga8

Black's attack is playing itself

21.Wd3

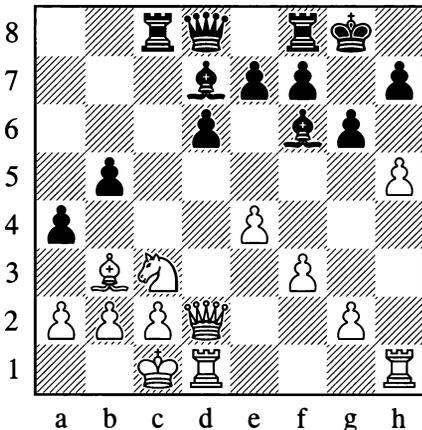
15L

15. d5! allows Black to gain time for his attack: 15...e5 16. e3 b4 17.1 b1



17...1 xd5 (On ChessPublishing I of ered 17...' c7N which is also promising for Black. Mter 18.hxg6? I actually overlooked that Black could play the immediate 18...t xd5! 19.9xh1 t ' h8 20.exd5 f5 21.c3' c4 with a winning attack.) 18' xd5Ec6! Black obtained a powerful attack by trebling on the c-file in Novikov - Matinyan, Sochi 2007.

15.. x !?
15...exf6 has traditionally been the main line but the text move is a promising deviation which I used successfully against Judit Polgar. T e next few moves must be remembered carefully, as accurate play is needed to withstand White's attack.

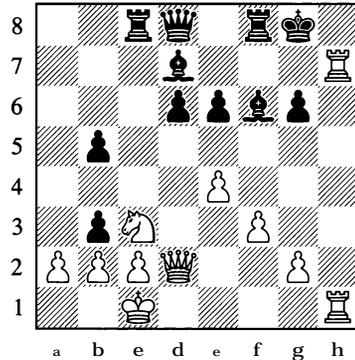


16h g6e6!
T is strong move blocks the b3-bishop and takes control of the d5-square. More importantly, it also prevents White from playing 17.' h6 due to 17... g5t. T ensuing positions are quite unlike anything else in this book. It looks as though White has a souped-up version of his normal kingside attack but Black has various defensive resources, of en involving the c1-h6 diagonal. Let's also not forget that White's bishop is trapped.

17.e5!
T is is not only the most energetic move; it is also the only way for White to maintain the equilibrium.

17.' b1?wasplayed in OatIhotse- Mmoneng, Gauteng 2011, and now the simple 17...f g6!N would have kept the h-file closed and allowed Black to defend with a rook on f if needed. Mter 18' xd6 axb3 19.' xd7' xd7 20.Exd7 b4! White must give up a piece for nowhere near enough compensation.

17.Exh7? is too ambitious 17...axb3 18Edh1 (18' xd6 is better but, as Chris Ward observed, after 18...bxa2 19.1 xa2 ' c7 the piece is stronger than the pawns) 18..f g6



19.a b3 (19.Eh8t is a common theme to force a draw but here 19.. xh8 20.Exh8t Wf ! 21.Eh7t We8 + sidesteps the perpetual.)

19..j eS 20.c b1Ef 21.Exf xf - + White's attack had been neutralized in Escobar Forero - K ewra, Barcelona 2012.

22.bxc3

22.Exf6? bxa2 wins immediately.

22...b2t! 23. xb2 xf 24.Exh7t g6+

170 t v S 2f - Oxd7r2Psom = af e2

17.i xd6!?

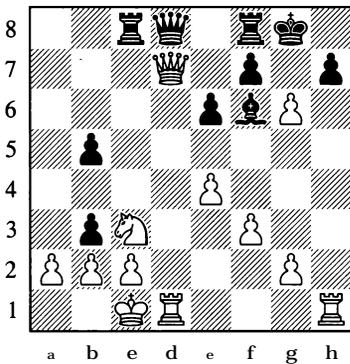
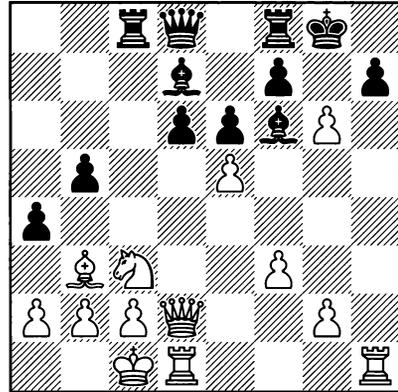
T is is the best of the alternatives, but Black still gets the upper hand with accurate play.

17...a b3 ls.i xd7

ls.i h2? h6! + is another useful defensive idea to remember, Rieger - Schmidrathner, Oberwart 2012.

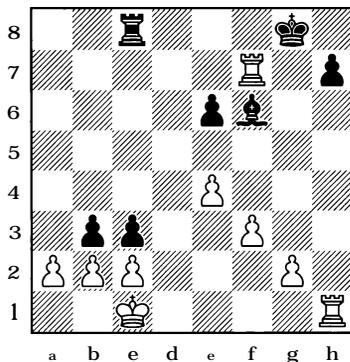
1S.axb3N hxg6 19. b1 (19.i xd7? i a5 is too dangerous) 19..Exc3! 20.i h2 EeS 21.e5 j g7 22.bxc3 i c7+ Black's king is completely safe and he can now focus on his own attack.

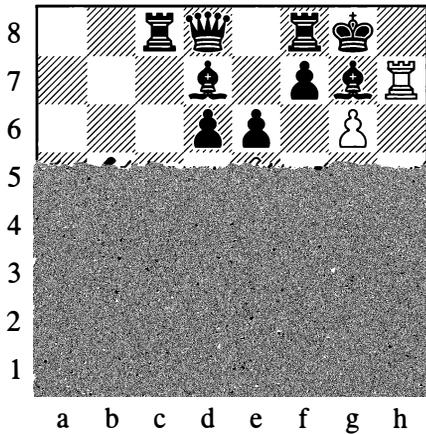
T e text move was played in Salazar - Castrillon Gomez, Ouran 2011. Here Black can claim some advantage af er trading queens



1s..i xd7N 19.Exd7 b4! 20.gxf t Exf 21.Exf bxc3!!

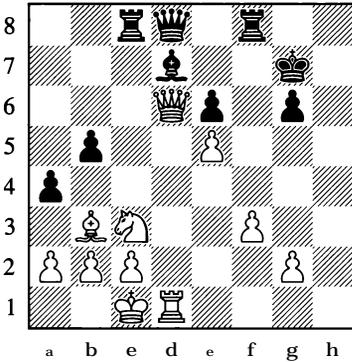
A beautiful move





18..i xe5

18..f g6!? is playable, but 19! dh1 gives Black nothing better than transposing to the main line with 19... xe5. White can also try 19! xg7!?! c xg7 20.Wxd6, reaching a position that I gave as good for White on ChessPublishing.



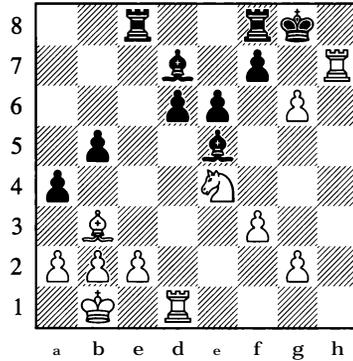
However 20...! f ! looks like a draw with best play: 21. xe6 Wg5t 22.c b1N (22! d2 ! c6 is no improvement for White, and Black eventually prevailed in ABoarei - Stanescu, corr: 2014.) 22...! c6! 23. xf ! xd6 24! xd6 c xf 25! xd7t c e8=

After the text move White has quite a few different routes to a draw, all utilizing the idea of sacrificing both rooks for the e5-bishop. However, I don't think he has anything better:

19Mh 1

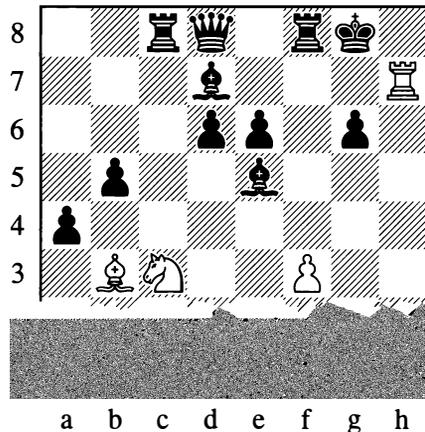
19. d5 f g6 20! dh1 is another transposition.

19.Wh6N Wf6! 20.t e4 Wf4t 21.Wxf4 xf4t 22.c b1 e5 is another line given by Ward.



White can get three pawns for the piece with 23. xa4 bxa4 24.t xd6 xd6 25! xd6. His drawing chances are good, but after 25... b5 Black should still be preferred.

19..f g

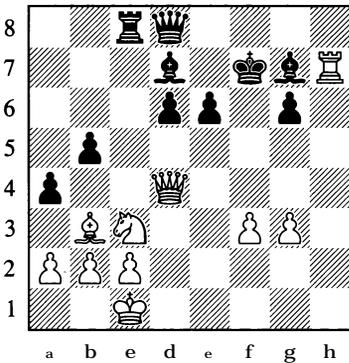


This is the main tabiya of the 15... xf6 line. White has many possible moves but most of them involve taking the same perpetual with ! h8t. According to my engine's readout, White has no less than eight drawing possibilities!

The two most interesting moves are 01) 20. d5! and 02) 20. t d5! N.

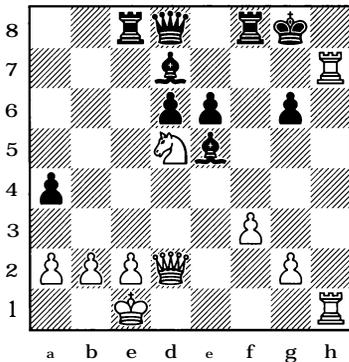
In the first over-the-board game to reach this position, White decided to take the draw immediately: 20. EhSt xhS 21. ExhSt c xhS 22. h6t c gS 23. xg6t hS 24. h6t ½–½ Fusco - Tristan, Buenos Aires 2011.

I decided to check 20.g3! N as it was Stockfish's ninth suggestion! However, 20...Ef ! looks good for Black: 21.Exf c xf 22.Eh7t g7 23. d4



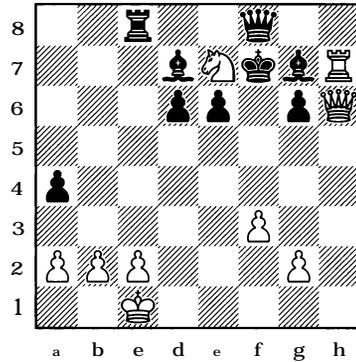
23... g5t! 24.f4! f6 25. xd6 EdS'

I also wanted to see if White could try: 20.i xa4N bxa4 (20...Exc3! also seems to draw immediately) 21.l d5! (White should take the draw with 21.EhSt =)



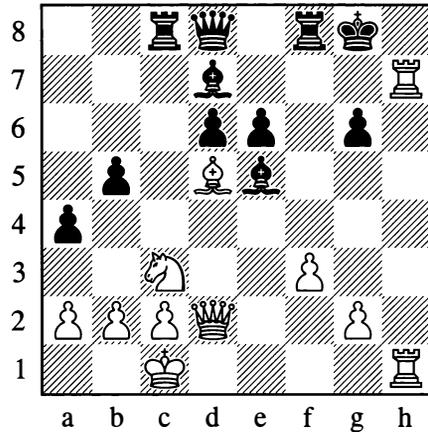
However, it turns out that the calm 21...Ef ! gives the king more than enough protection.

My analysis continues 22.Exf xf 23.Eh7t i g7 24. h6' fS 25.l e7



25...d5! The king needs to be able to run to d6. 26. g5 a3! 27.b3 Ec3 2S. h6 i eS 29. g5 Ec7 30. f4t xe7 31. xc7t i d7+ Bizarre stuff, but good for Black in the end.

01) 20. d5!?



It was Judit Polgar's choice against me. White saves the bishop by tactical means.

20..J7!

I decided I would breathe easier without an enemy rook on the seventh.

2Uf 7

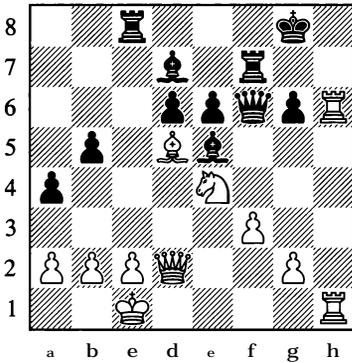
21.E7h6! N

Retaining the rooks is also interesting.

21..Wf6

21.. f4?? 22. hSt g7 23. 1h7t wins

22.1 e4

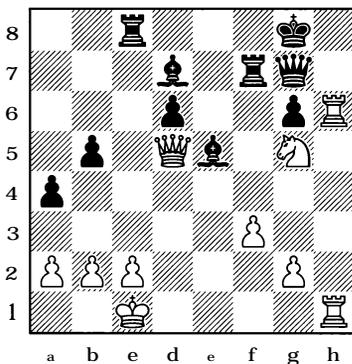


22..Wg7

T is the most concrete continuation although 22..Wf5! is also playable.

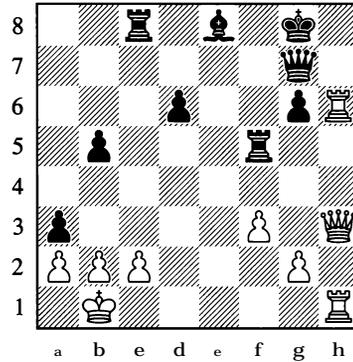
23.1 g5 exd5 24.Wxd5

24. h7 gives Black more options, although it's still a draw: 24..Wxh7 (24... f4 and 24... xb2t are both also given as 0.00) 25. xh7 f4!? (25... xh7 26.Wxd5t i hS 27.1 xh7 f5! 2S.g4 f4t 29.i d1 xc2t 30.i e2 b1= is also a draw, as the white king cannot escape the checks on c2 and c1) 26. hSt (26. xf xd2t 27.i xd2 f5 2S.c3 a3! 29.bxa3 d4! favours Black as 30.cxd4? c2t 31.i e3 xg2 32.i f4 xg5 + picks up the knight.) 26... g7 (26...i xhS?? 27.1 xf t g7 2S.Wxf4) 27. h7t i gS= An amusing finish.



24.. f4t! 25. b1 xg5 26.Wxg5 f5! 27.Wg3! eS 2S.Wh3 a3!?

Not all of these moves are completely forced, but neither side has any more than a draw along the way. The finish might be:



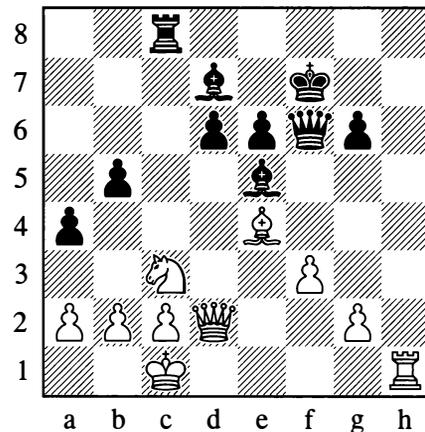
29. hSt f 30.bxa3

30. h7? h5! +

30..Wc3 31.Wh7t Wg7=

21...< x 22. e4Wf

The position has stabilized and we can take a time-out. White's pieces have been repulsed and we are left with a dynamically equal middlegame.

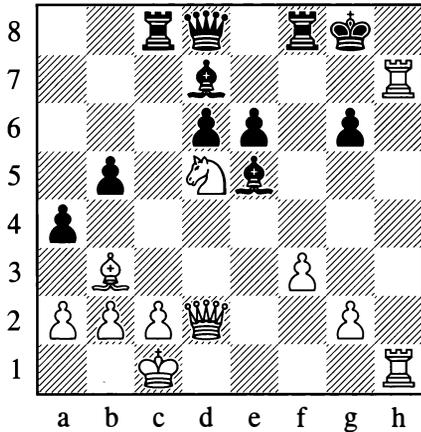


23.< b1=

23. h7t? i gS 24. xd7? is obviously still not playable as Black has 24... f4.

The text move was played in J. Polgar - Jones, London (rapid) 2013. During the game I was feeling quite confident but in truth the position is still balanced. However, the bishop pair and central pawns make Black's position somewhat easier to play, and I went on to win.

D2) 20.f d5!N



Chris Ward and Daniel King had fun analysing this move in the commentary room during my game with Judit.

20...a b3

This is the obvious reply, although Black can also ignore the bishop and simply exchange of White's most aggressively placed piece:

20...E f 21.E x f

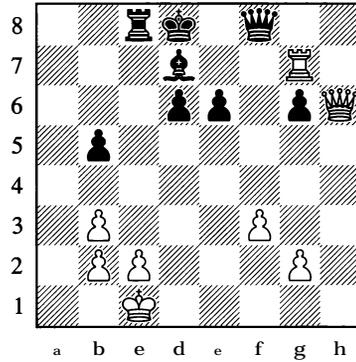
21.' h6?! Exh7 22.' xh7t WfS looks scary but the e5-bishop keeps everything under control: 23.' xg6 j eS! 24.' xe6 j f 25.' h6t j g7 26.' f4 axb3 27.axb3 WgS+

21...Wxf 22.Eh7t j g7 23.' h6

23.' d4' fS 24.' f6t WgS 25.' xg6 axb3 26.Exglt' xg7 27.t f6t fS 2S.t h7t WgS is another draw.

23...' fS 24.t e7 axb3 25.axb3 Wxe7 26.Exglt WdS

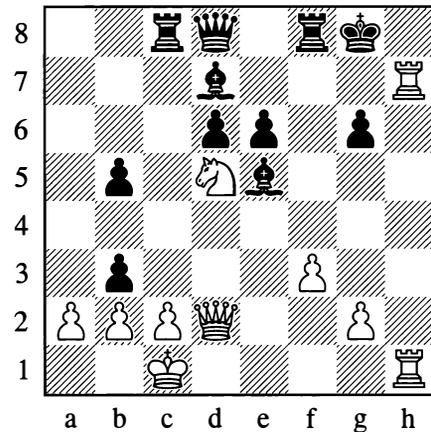
It looks like Black is running away but White can still hold.



27.' h7!

Creating a drawing mechanism.

27...' f4t 2S. bl j eS 29.Ea7' f6 30.' b7 j c6 31.' h7=



21.Wh6 Bxc2t 22.< dl Bxg2 23.f e7t Wke7 24.Bxe7 Bx

A completely crazy position! Black has something close to material equality, with two bishops and three pawns for the queen. Both kings are exposed but I think White has to be more careful.

25a b3

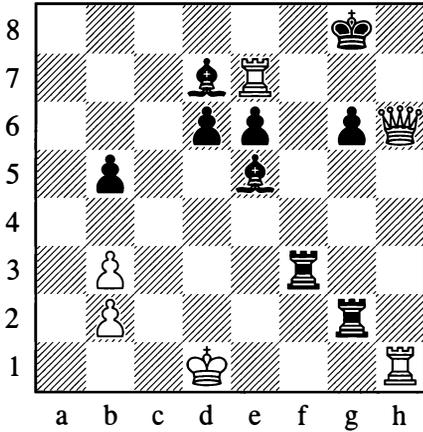
The b3-pawn was too dangerous to be left on the board.

One pretty line from Chris continues 25.Exd7?? Ed3t 26. cl (or 26.Wel j g3t 27.Wfl Ef2t 2S. el Exb2t 29.Wfl Edl#)

26... xb2t 27.< bl bxa2t 28.< xa2 l a3t
29.Qbl l al mate!

Conclusion

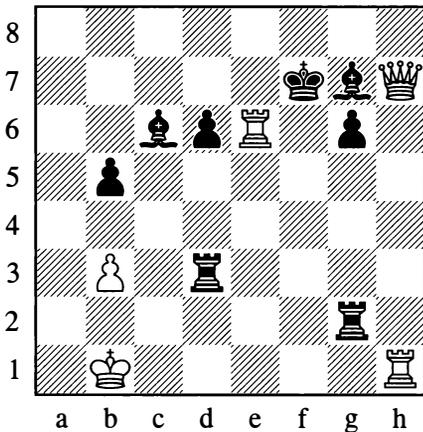
13.h4 is an aggressive approach but after 13...a5 Black's attack is just as dangerous. The main line with 14.h5 leads to sharp play but the rare 15... xf6! seems like a fully adequate solution, leaving White with nothing better than a draw. It will be interesting to see how the theory of this rare move develops; for now though, I see no problems for Black.



25... c6

Chris ends his analysis here, mentioning that the engine regards it as completely equal. A logical continuation would be:

26.l xe6 d3t 27.' c1h b2t 28.' bl . g7
29.Vh7t ' f

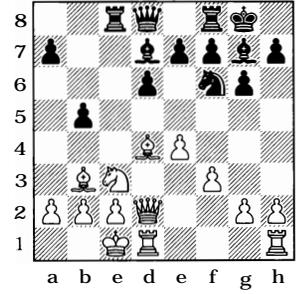


30. e7t ' xe7 31.Vxg7t ' e6 32.Vg8t
' e5 33. e1t ' f4=

Black has enough pieces guarding his king that the game is likely to end in perpetual, potentially performed by either side.

Chapter 9

Topalov Variation



Other 13th Moves

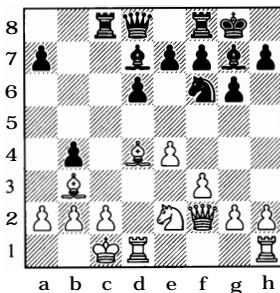
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2. f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. xd4 f5 5. c3 g6 6.. e3. g7 7.f3 0-0 8. d2 c6 9.. c4. d7 10.0-0 0-0 xd4 12.. xd4

12...b5

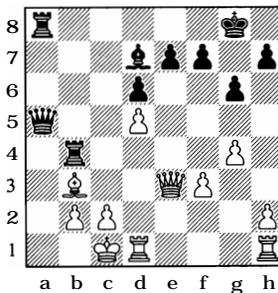
A) 13.g4	182
B) 13.e5 dxe5 14.. xe5. c6	183
B1) 15. e3	184
B2) 15. xd8	185
C) 13.a3	186
D) 13.. xa7 b4	188
D1) 14. e2	189
D2) 14. d5 xd5 15.exd5 a5	190
D21) 16.. d4?	191
D22) 16. e3	193

note to move 13



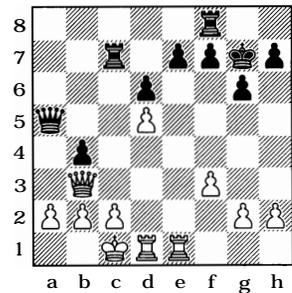
14...Wc7!N

C) after 23.We3



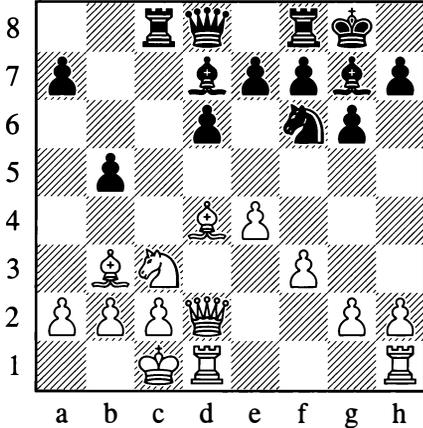
23... b5!N

0 22) note 20.8d4



20...Wc5!N

1.e4 c5 2.f3 a6 3.d4 cxd4 4.f1 f6 5.f3 g6 6.e3 g7 7.a0 0 8% d1 c6 9.0 0 0 d7 10. c4 c8 11. b3 1 xd4 12.h d4 b5

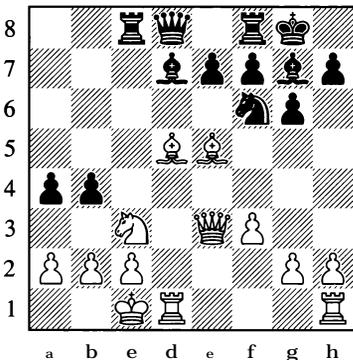


We have spent the last two chapters examining 13.f d5 and 13.h4. In this chapter we will round up White's remaining options against the Topalov Variation, the four main ones being A) 13.g4, B) 13.e5, C) 13.a3 and D) 13. xa7.

13.< b1 a5 is likely to transpose to variation C after 14.a3

Instead 14.a4? bxa4 15.f xa4 xa4 16. xa4 1 c4+ is a trap we've seen already, while 14.f d5? would simply lose material after 14...a4!N.

13.%e3 a5! It looks like White's last move prevented this but his queen turns out to be unfortunately placed. 14.e5 (14. b6N h6!+) 14...dxe5 15. xe5 a4 16. d5 b4



White found nothing better than 17. xf6 in Gaulupeau - Guerin, Paris 2010, but after the simple 17... xf6N 18.f e4 g7+ Black's initiative is obviously too strong.

13.%f2

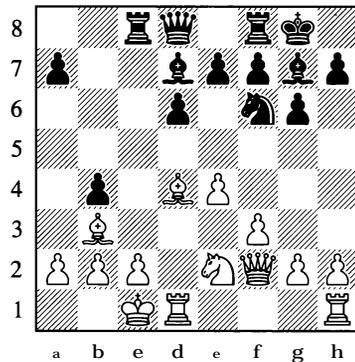
White is lining up pressure on the a7-pawn but it is hard to understand the logic when he could just take it immediately.

13...b4 14.f e2?

This is the usual follow-up but now the queen is misplaced.

14.f d5 1 xd5 15. xg7 < xg7 16.exd5 was seen in M. Lopez - A. Martinez, Santa Cruz 2010, and now the normal 16...a5N is pleasant for Black.

Perhaps White should try 14. xf6N although 14...bxc3 (both recaptures on f6 are also fine) 15. xg7 < xg7 16.' xa7 cxb2 17.< xb2 1 a8 18' d4t f6 of ers Black good compensation.



14...' c7!N

Black will follow up with ...a5, with excellent prospects on the queenside. Note that White cannot grab the a-pawn:

15. xa7? e6 16.f d2 xb3 17.axb3 1 a8 +

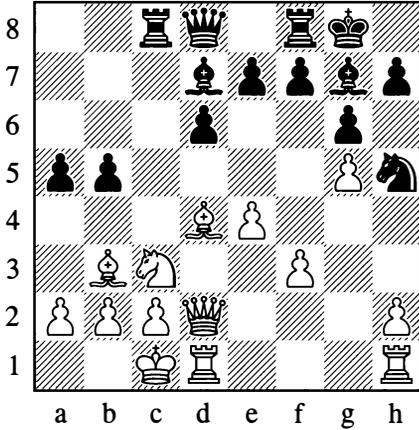
A) 13.g4

This pawn advance never puts any pressure on Black in the Topalov Variation.

13.0a5 14.g5

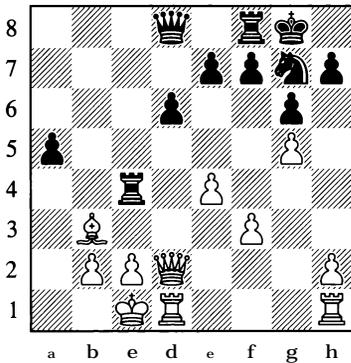
14.a3 b4 gives White an inferior version of variation C of Chapter 8, as g2-g4 is less useful than h2-h4.

14...1 h5



15.h g7

Another game continued: 15.a4? bxa4 16.t xa4 i xa4 17.i xa4 ! c4 18.i xg7 t xg7 19.i b3



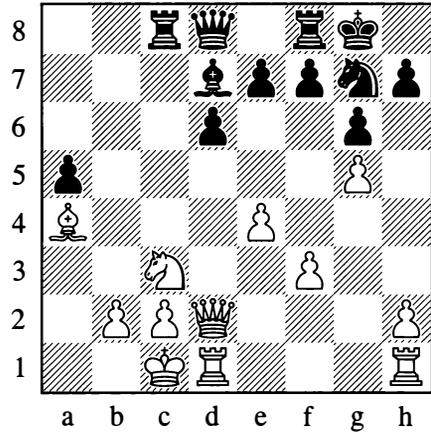
It was Gonzalez Roca - Gashimov, Ourense 2009, another game by the much-missed elite GM. Here I think the most accurate continuation is 19...! c5N, intending to attack with ...Wb6, ...! b8 and ...a4. Moreover, if White survives the onslaught then his weak kingside structure may give him problems in a future endgame.

15...1 xg7 16.a4?

16.a3 should be preferred although Black is still doing well.

16...bxa4 17.h a4

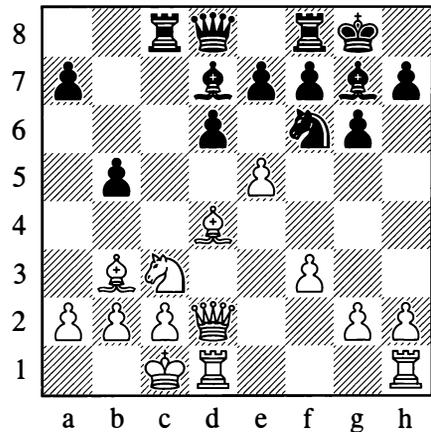
17.t xa4 was seen in A med Holi Ali - Ankit, Dubai 2013, and now 17...i xa4N 18i xa4 Wb6= is similar to the Gashimov game above.



17...h c3! 18h d7EcS 19.i a4" b6

Black's queenside initiative was already decisive in Somborski - Roganovic, Sombor 2009.

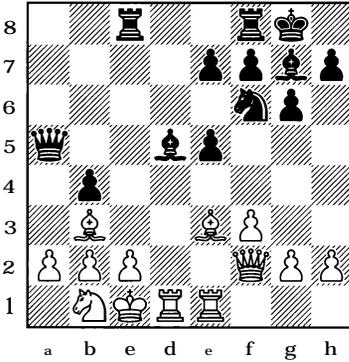
B) 13.eS



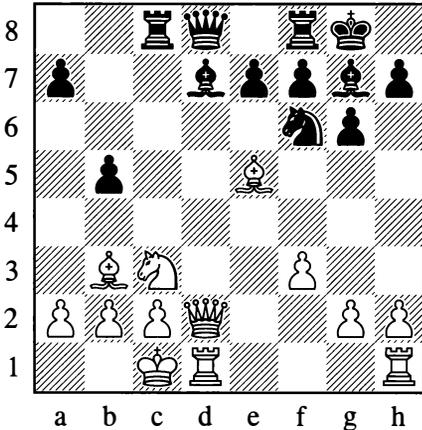
The immediate central break does not put much pressure on Black.

13...dxe5 14. e5

14. xa7? I can see some logic behind first giving the e-pawn and only then capturing on a7, but Black can reopen the long diagonal whenever he wishes. The following game featured logical play on both sides: 14... c7 15. e3 c6 16. e2 a5 17.1hel b4 18.l bl d5 19. f



This was Epstein - J. Shahade, Denver 1998, and here 19... xb3!N 20.a b3! d5 + would have been crushing, as White's position is terribly passive.

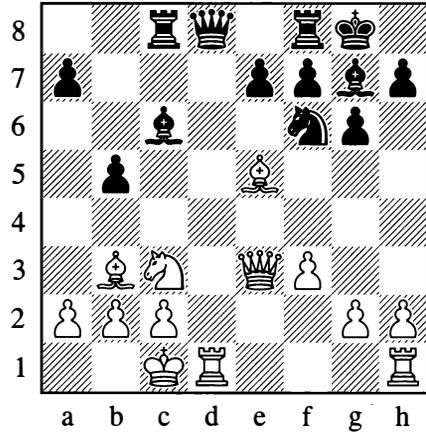


14... c6

From this position White may try B1) IS.We3 or B2) Is.Wxd8. The latter is more prudent, as Black's attack is coming quickly.

15. g5 b6 reaches a position where Black has scored 6/6 so far. The following game illustrates the play rather nicely: 16. d4 b7 17.h4 a5 18.a3 b4 19.axb4 axb4 20.l bl a6 21.h5 a4 22. xa4 xa4 23.l d2 1fdB Black was winning in Esenov - Smerdon, Dresden 200B.

B1) IS.We3



Compared with the note above, Black can no longer put the queen on b6, but he still has excellent chances.

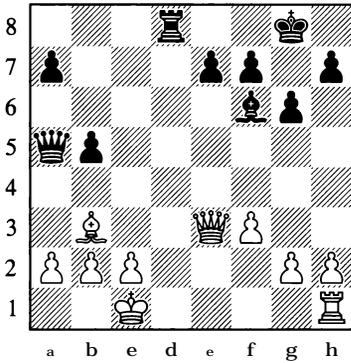
IS...Wd8 16a

Black has a crushing score against most other moves.

16. bl b4 17. xf6 xf6 B1 d5 xd5 19.1xd5 c7 20.h4 1fdB+ has been seen a few times. Black is dominating the opposite-coloured-bishop middlegame, as he can block in the b3-bishop with ...e6 whenever he chooses.

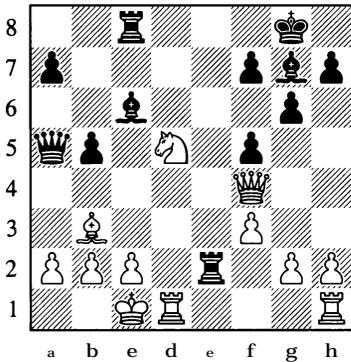
16.h4 b4 17. xf6 (17.l e2 gives Black a pleasant choice between 17... a4+ as played in Y. Zhao - Perelman, Aurora 2013, and 17...l g4!N Bf g4 xe5+) 17... xf6 B1 d5 xd5 19.1xd5 c7+ is similar to the note above.

16. xf6?! Even future GMs are not immune to ceding the dark squares! 16... xf6 17.t d5 xd5 1S.1hd5 fdS 19. xdSt xdS



20.f4 Wc7 21.c3 b4 22. dl xdl t 23.Wxdl bxc3 24.bxc3 xc3+ Neiksans - Vocaturo, Balaguer 2010.

16. d4 was played against a Dragon expert and White did not last long: 16... feS 17. xf6?! exf6 1s.Wf4 f5 19.t d5 e2+ It is worth seeing the remaining moves

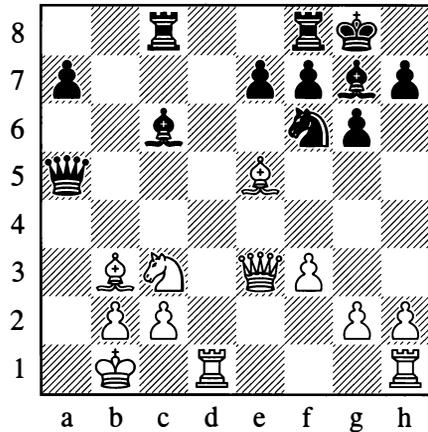


20.g4? xd5 21. xd5 exc2t! 22. xc2 Wxa2 23. xb5 Wal t 24.Wd2 Wxh1 25.Wg3 dSt 26.We2 Wcl 27. d3 eSt 2S.Wf2 f4 29.Wg2 Wel # Bertholee- Tiviakov, Netherlands 2000.

16..b4 17.a b4 xb4

17...Wal tN is an easy route to equality if Black wants it: 1S.Wd2 Wxb2 19.t d5 t xd5 (19...t e4t! 20.Wxe4 xe5o) 20. xb2 t xe3 21. xg7 Wxg7 22.Wxe3 With a level ending,

18@bl a5



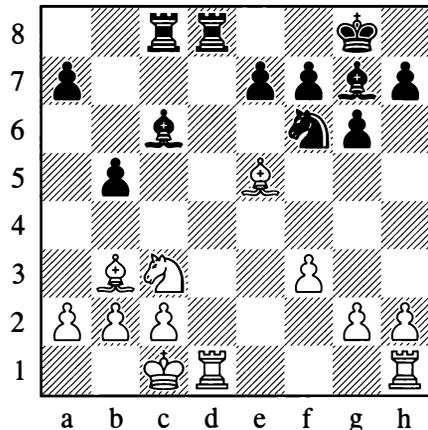
19h ?

I don't know why so many players are eager to give up the dark-squared bishop in this line. W ite should prefer something like 19. helN with approximate equality.

19..i xf 2o.l 5 i xd5 21. xd5 c7 22.ghdl xh2+

Padilla - Cordova, Lima 2002.

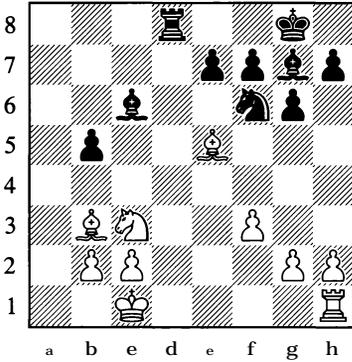
B2) 15. xd8 f d8



16J hd8t

W ite has also tried chipping away at Black's queenside immediately: 16.a4 a6 (T is is the simplest reply, although 16..bxa4! 17. xa4

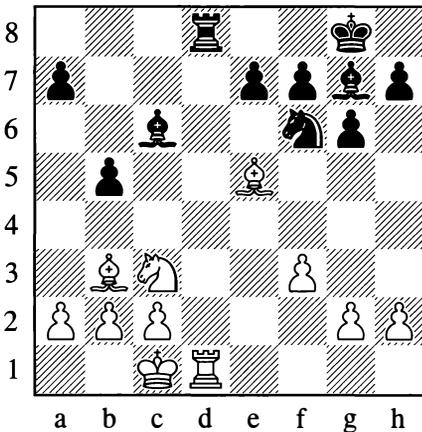
xa4 15.1 xa4 h6t 19.@bl 1 d5 20. d4
 1 e3 is also possible if you would prefer some
 imbalance in the position; see Baramidze -
 Polzin, Austria 2006.) 17.axb5 axb5 18.2xd8t
 2xd8



19.2dl h6t 20.@bl 2xd1t 21.1 xdl T e
 endgame is equal, although Aroshidze -
 Svetushkin, Kusadasi 2006, is a nice example
 in which Black managed to grind out a win.

16..2xd8 17.2dl

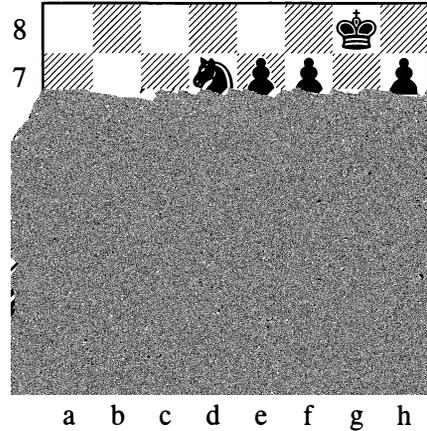
White is simply chopping wood but he has
 to be careful in the endgame, as Black has the
 more mobile pawn majority and the b3-bishop
 might find itself shut out of play.



17...i h6t! 18' bl xdl t 19.1 xdl 1 d7
 20i d4 as 21.c3
 21.c4 b4! favours Black.

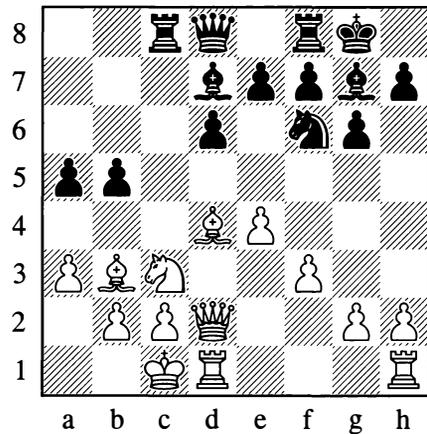
White's best seems to be 21.1 c3 e6 22.a4 b4
 with balanced play.

In N. Mamedov - Kudrin, Moscow 2005,
 Black could have fought for the advantage with:



21...f4N 22.h3 a4 23.g2 f!+
 White's pieces are rather passive.

C) 13a as



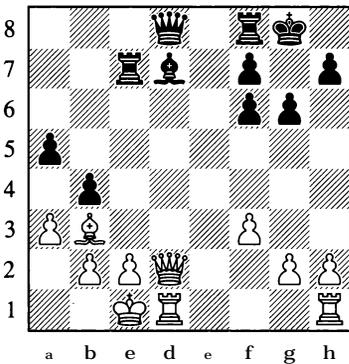
14.c bl

White adopts a defensive approach, hoping
 to soak up the pressure and eventually exploit
 his extra pawn (after ...b4).

14.1 d5 1 xd5 15. xg7 @xg7 16.exd5
 transposes to variation B of Chapter 7.

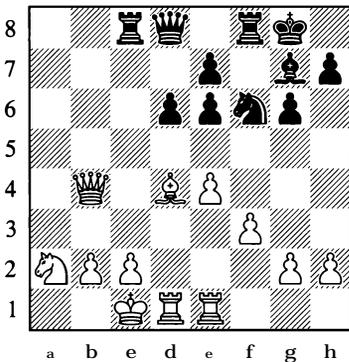
14.h4 leads back to variation C of Chapter 8, although it may well transpose again to variation B22 of Chapter 7 after 14...b4 15.axb4 axb4 16.t d5 t xd5 17.i xg7 xg7 18.exd5 < g8

14.e5 has a lot of similarities to 13.e5 and likewise should not trouble Black. 14...dxe5 15.i xe5 Here we don't have to worry about the pressure on the d7-bishop and can just get on with it on the queenside. 15...b4 16.i xf6 i xf6 17.t e4! c7 18.t xf6t exf6



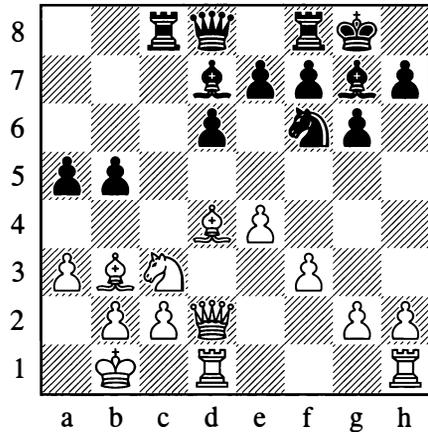
19.a4 i c8 20.! hel i e6 21.i xe6 f e6= rated rko- el-shaddai, engine game 2012.

14.! hel is a rare approach among humans, but the positions resemble those in the main line (after 14. b1). 14...b4 15.axb4 axb4 16.t a2 i e6 17.i xe6 f e6 18.i xb4 Here I like the human approach of:



18..t d7!N 19.i xg7 (after 19.i b3 t c5

20.i xc5 ! xc5 21.i xe6t < h8 White may be two pawns up but Black has a vicious initiative) 19.. xg7 20.! e3 ! b8 21.i c4 e5 Black has full compensation.

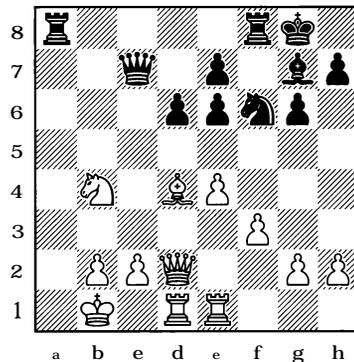


14..b4 15.a b4 a b4 16.t a

16.t d5 does not make any sense here as the b4-pawn isn't dropping. 16...t xd5 17.i xg7 < xg7 18.exd5 T is position could actually be reached via the 13.t d5 move order, but with White having made the strange decision to play < b1 rather than capturing the b4-pawn. Black will get strong play down the a-file. (18.i xd5?! < g8+ is even worse for White.)

16..Wc7 17.t xb4

17.! hel is one of those curious moves that engines pick up on and play in lots of games, yet it remains almost untouched in tournament play. 17...i e6 18.i xe6 f e6 19.t xb4 ! a8 Black has good compensation. One example continued:



20.c3 t d7 21.i xg7 xg7 22.b3: a5 23.Wb2 : fa8 24.: al t c5 25.: xa5 : xa5 26.h4 Wb7 27.: b1 h6 28.g4 e5= Trembecki – P Nagy, email 2009.

17.h4 was tried in another correspondence game. Black can proceed with the same plan: 17...i e6 18i xe6 f e6 19.t xb4 : a8 20.c3 Wa5 21.Wc2: ac8



a b c d e f g h

22.Wb3 I can't imagine many players being happy having to put their king on such a square! 22..t d7 23i xg7 Wb7 24.: al Wb5 Olofsson - Grigoryev, email 2009.

8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

a b c d e f g h

17...: a8

Black's queenside play obviously gives him fantastic compensation for the pawn. Finding the right defensive moves in a practical game would be difficult, and even in engine games Black has the upper hand.

18.t d5!

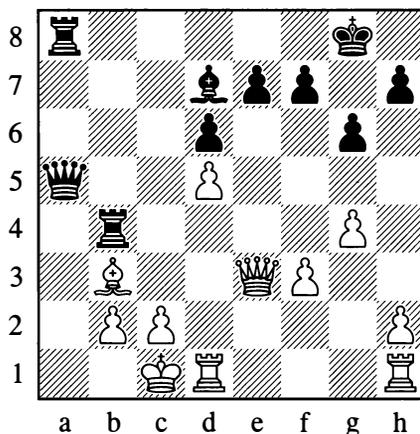
Not the best move, but it was played in both of the over-the-board examples on my database.

18..t xd5 19.exd5

19i xd5i xd4 20.Wxd4: a4 21.Wc3 Wdft HongXing - Sun Fanghui, China 2013.

19...i xd4 20. xd4 Ef 8 21.g4 a5 22.' d : b4 23. e3

In Sule - K. Saric, Djakovo 2006, Black should not have been in a hurry to check on al and take on b2. A stronger move (though by no means the only winning continuation) would have been:



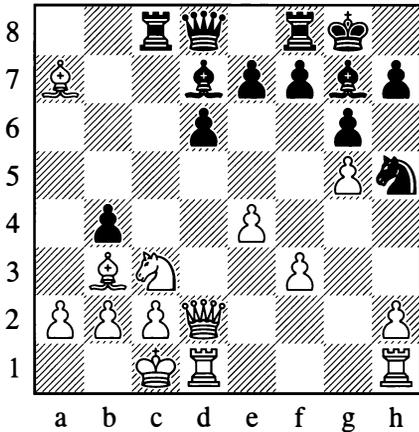
23.. b5!N

Preventing White's king from f eeing to the kingside. A similar motif can be found earlier on page 154.

D) 13h a7

T is can be compared with the lines in Chapter 7 where Black gives up a pawn on the queenside. T e structure is slightly dif erent but the general evaluation is the same: Black obtains full compensation.

13..b4



White sometimes tries 0 1) 14.t e2 but the main line is 0 2) 14.t d5.

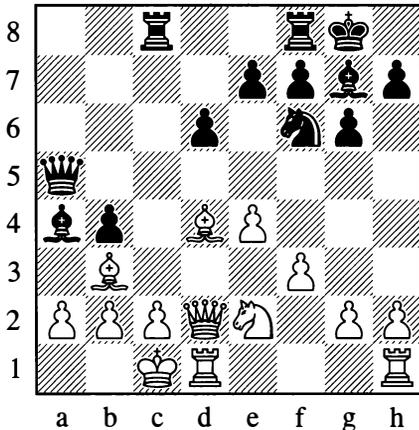
0 1) 14.t e2

Keeping the knights on the board does little to challenge Black.

14.. a5 IS.. d4. a4

Black's queenside play is coming fast.

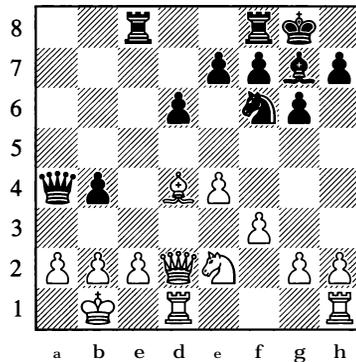
15...e5? 16j e3 d5 is also interesting and is likely to transpose after 17.exd5j a4 18 bl j xb3 19.cxb3. This was the actual move order of the game quoted at the end of the variation.



16.Wb1!

The only way to keep the balance.

16j xa4?! xa4 17. bl



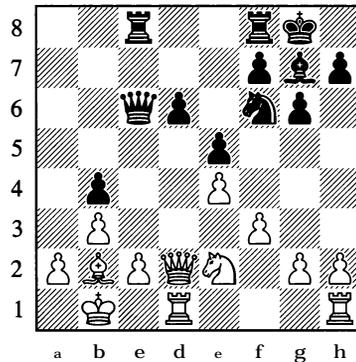
17...e5!

With the e2-knight misplaced, Black has enough time to expand in the centre.

18.b3

18j e3 d5! 19.exd5 l xd5 20.' xd5 (20j g5?N loses to 20..e4! as Pavlovic observes. The finish might be: 21.f e4 j xb2! 22.exd5 : a8 +) 20..' xc2t 21.c a1 ' xe2 22.' d2 : c2 23.' xe2 : xe2= Black had a great endgame in Limberg - Anso Moyano, Sao Paulo 2004.

18..' c6 19j b2



19...d5! 20j xe5

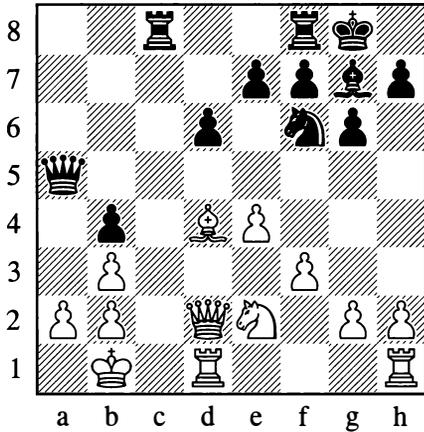
Leaving Black's centre intact is even worse: 20.l g3 : fd8 21.' e2 ' c7 22.: d3 d4 23.' d2 j h6! 24.' d1 : a8 25.l e2' a5 + Black was dominating in Gulbas - Zelbel, Belgium 2012.

20...dxe4 21j b2 exf3 22.gxf3 l d5 23j xg7 xg7 24.' xd5' xc2t 25. a1' xe2+

White's loose king and fragile kingside pawns gave Black the upper hand in Schut - Tik anen, Wijk aan Zee 2012.

16... xb3 17.c b3

Now we can execute a familiar central break.

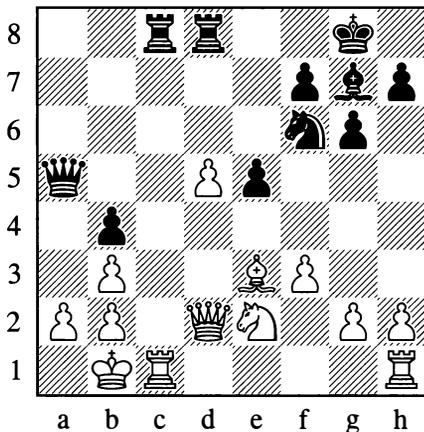


17...e5

17...Ea5 is a decent alternative. White can cling onto the pawn but Black maintains good pressure. 18.f1 c1 (Instead 18.a4 bxa3 19. xa5 Exa5 20.bxa3 Exa3= is simply a level ending.) 18...Efc5 Peters- Moskow, Los Angeles 2010.

18. e3 d5 19.exd5 Efd8 20.Ec1

20.d6N is another try, when 20...i f5 21.Ec1 Ea5 22.a4 Exd6 23. c2 1 d5 again provides good compensation for the pawn.



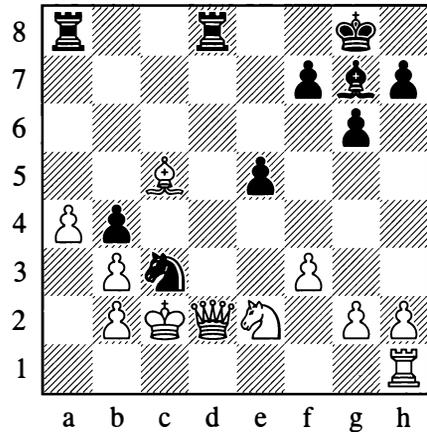
20..J a8!?

20..1 xd5N is reasonable but the text move keeps things more complex.

21.a4 1 xd5 22J c5 xc5 23. xc5 1 c3t 24. c2?

Now Black wins material by force.

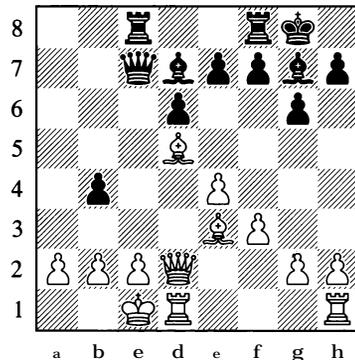
24.' xc3N bxc3 2S.1 xc3 Ed2 would arrive at a double-edged but roughly level ending.



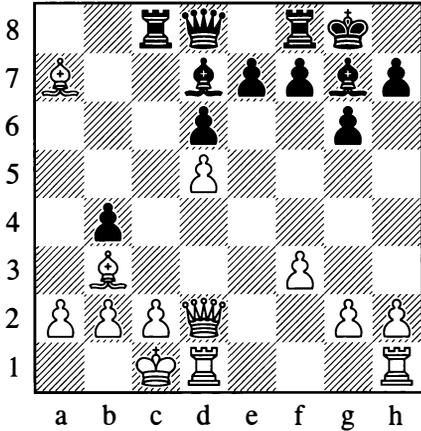
24...Exd2t 25. xd2 Ed8t 26. e3 . h6t 27. f 1 xe2 28. xe2 Ed2t 29. e1 Ec2+ Palencia- J. Garcia, Mislata 2011.

D2) 14.1 d5 1 xd5 15.exd5

1S.i xd5?? actually loses at once. 1S...' c7 T e pressure along the c- and a-fles will be too much for White. 16.i e3



16... a4! Forcing White to open the long diagonal as well. 17.b3 (17. b3 xb3 IS.axb3 EaS 19.' xb4 EfcS+) 17... b5+ Lazov - Mladenovic, Skopje 2013.

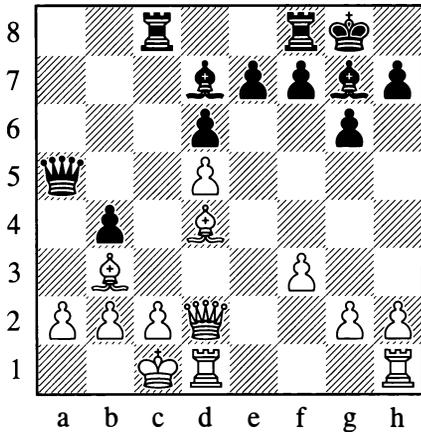


1S...' aS

White can address the attack on his bishop with D2) 16 d4?! or D22) 16' e3.

D2) 16 d4?!

The immediate bishop retreat gives us an additional option.



16..Exc2t!

A pretty shot. Black gets good compensation regardless of how White recaptures.

16... a4 should transpose to variation 0 22 after 17.' e3. Instead 17. xa4?' xa4 IS. xg7 was played in Huynh Mai Phuong - Hoang Xuan T anh, Can T o 2001, when both players overlooked the crushing 1S...b3!N.

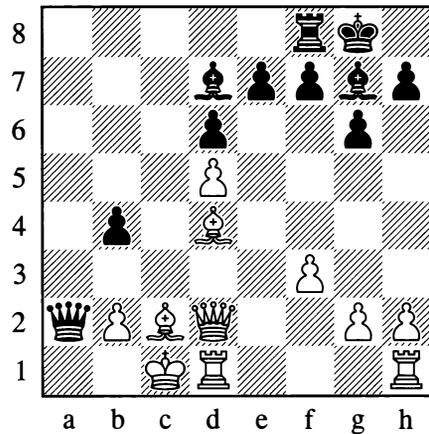
17.h c2

17.c xc2? loses immediately to 17... f5t 1S. cl Ecst.

17.' xc2T is is White's safest path. 17...EcS 1S.' xcSt xcS White has a slight material advantage with two rooks for the queen but Black has the stronger light-squared bishop, safer king and can play on the dark squares. 19. b1 f5t 20.c a1 h5 21. xg7 xg7= Perdomo Abad - Natalicchio Escalante, Gran Canaria 2009.

17...' xa2

At the moment Black only has one pawn for the rook but White will have to give up a lot of material to fend of the attack. The first threat is 1S...' a1t so White has to move his queen.



18' f

1S.' e3 might be a slightly lesser evil but, as Pavlovic commented, Black can play in the same way. 1S...EcS 19.c d2Exc2t IN 20. xc2 ' c4t 21. d2 xd4 The queen is better placed on e3 than f2 but Black's initiative still has plenty of power.

1s..J ks

W ite is already in trouble.

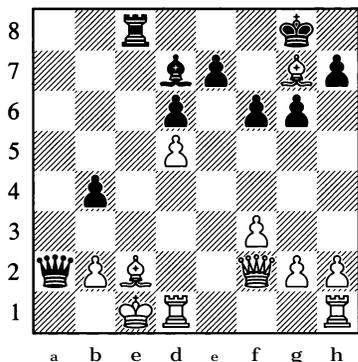
19. d2

T e best chance to survive seems to be:

19.. xg7N f6!

Renewing the threat of ...b3.

19...' xg7 20' d4t gives White a crucial tempo to defend.



20. d2!

20.. h6?b3 is crushing.

20...' xb2 21.Ec1 b3 22' a7!

T e position is crying out for a mate but White just about clings on. Nevertheless, Black is still much better.

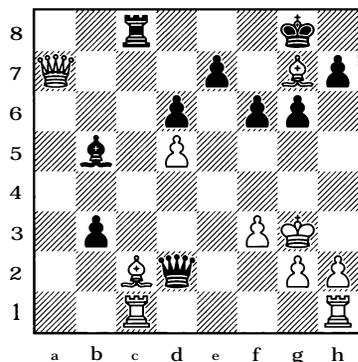
22...' c3t

22..Exc2t 23.Exc2 bxc2 24.Ec1 ' b4t

25.' xc2 . a4t 26.' d3 ' a3t 27. d4!

' xcl 28' xe7 With queen and bishop versus the lone king you'd think there would be a mate, but it transpires that White can escape into a drawn ending.

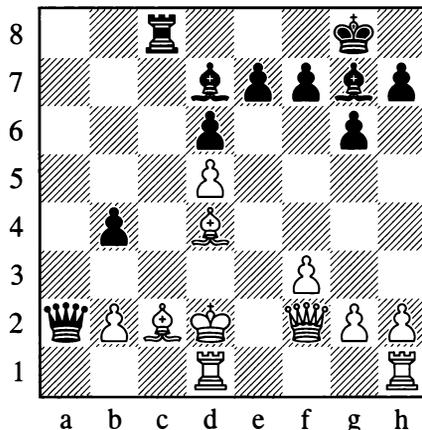
23. e2. bSt 24. f2' d2t 25.' g3



2S..b2! 26. xf6! bxc1= 27.Exc1 exf6

28. xg6!' gst 29. f2' h4t 30.' e3Ef8=

At the end of a long weird line, Black will pick up the bishop as White's king is too exposed.



19.. xc2t!

T e second rook also sacrific es itself on c2!

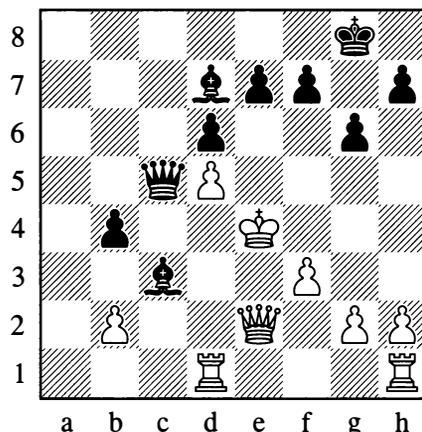
20. xc2 c4t 21. d2h d4

Two players have found themselves on the wrong side of this brilliancy.

22. e2

After 22' f1 . c3t! W ite already felt compelled to resign in Anarkulov - Vakhidov, Tashkent 2011. He could have played on a little longer; but after 23.bxc3' xc3t 24. e2 . bSt 25.' f2. xf1 26.Ehxf1 b3 Black has too large a material advantage.

22..i c3t! 23. e3 c5t 24. e4



24..i f t

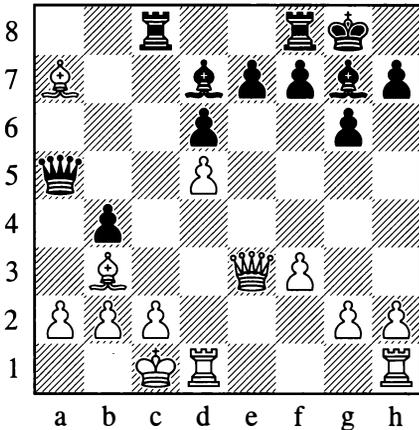
Apparently 24..fSt is mate in eight.

25.@f4i eSt 26.@g5f t 27.@h4gst

0 1 Bakre- Kadziolka, Pardubice 2004. An impressive GM scalp.

D22) 16' e3

T is is obviously the safer of the two options



16..i a4 17.i d4i xb3

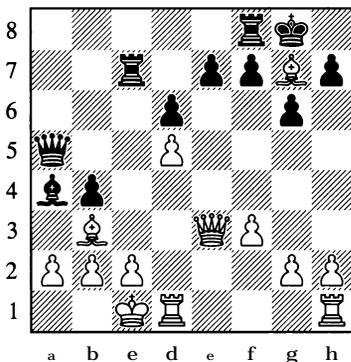
17..J 7!?

T is is an interesting move order but it should simply transpose.

18i xg7

T e trick is that 18i b6?? is refuted by 18..i xb3! 19.axb3 i xb2t! with a decisive attack.

18.c bl i xb3 19.Wxb3 transposes to 19.c b1 in the notes to the main line.



18..i xb3!N

It's important to get the move order right.

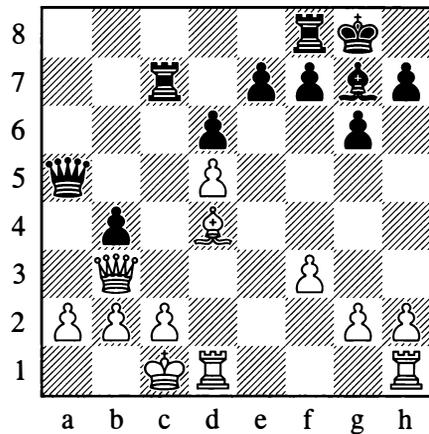
18..\ xg7 has been played a few times but White has the strong novelty 19.c4!N, closing up the queenside as 19...bxc3? fails to 20.Wd4t.

19.Wxb3 \ xg7

We have transposed to the main line.

18' xb3 c7

Our plan is to pressure White along the a- and c-fles. T e queen on b3 does a useful defensive job but is rather misplaced for anything aggressive. Accurate play from both sides will generally lead to something of an impasse where neither side can do much.



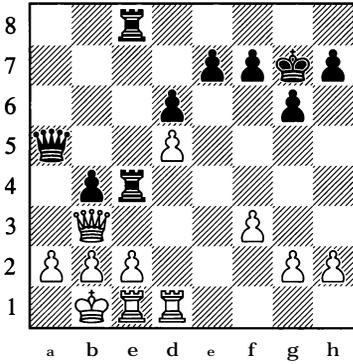
19i xg7

19.c bl 1 fc8 20i xg7 \ xg7 21.l c1

21.l d2 l a8 22.l hdl was seen in john7bits - janwan, engine game 2012. Here 22...l ca7!N 23.c3 bxc3 24.Wxc3t Wxc3 25.bxc3 l c7 26.l c2 l a3 reaches a drawn ending, as we have enough pressure against White's weak pawns that he cannot make progress.

21...l c4 22.l hd1

T e position after 22...l 8c5 23.l el was agreed drawn in Frander - Torma, Hungary 2012, but I prefer:



22... c5N

White has succeeded in defending his material but it will be difficult for him to make any progress. The game might continue:

23. i d3 mgB

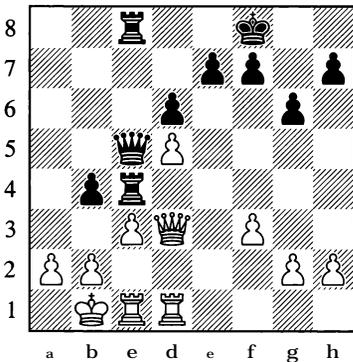
Black gets out of the way of an annoying check on d4.

24. c3!?

With the rooks this way round you have to be aware of this idea. White is trying to trade into a favourable ending with a strong passed a-pawn. However, Black can defend easily with:

24... mfB!

Bringing the king one square closer for the upcoming rook-and-pawn endgame. White has to waste a move to force the queen exchange.



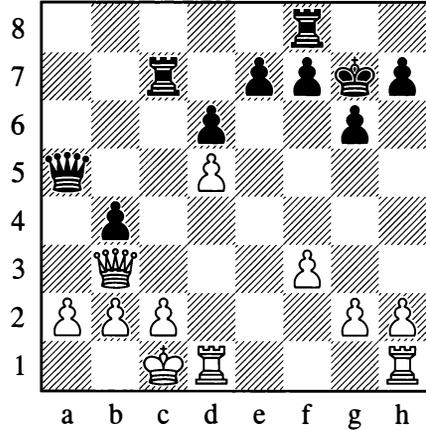
25. i d2 bxc3 26. i xc3 l xc3 27. i xc3 i xc3 28. Bbxc3 l xc3

The extra tempo means that Black is fine, for instance:

29. mb2 l c5 30. a4' eB 31. b3' d7 32. l d4 e6=

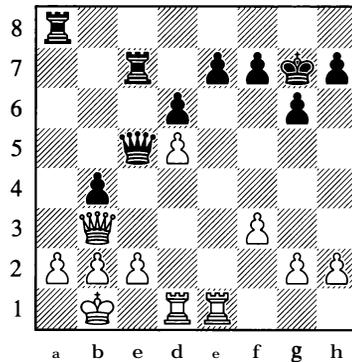
19... mx 7

White now has a choice between hitting the b4-pawn and centralizing his king's rook.



20. J d4

20. l hel has been White's most common path but it allows Black to start his regrouping without delay: 20... i c5!N (20... l aB is the right idea, but playing it immediately allows 21. l e4! as in J. Shahade - T. Kosintseva, Bled [oil 2002) 21. mb l (now 21. l e4 allows 21... i f2) 21... l aB

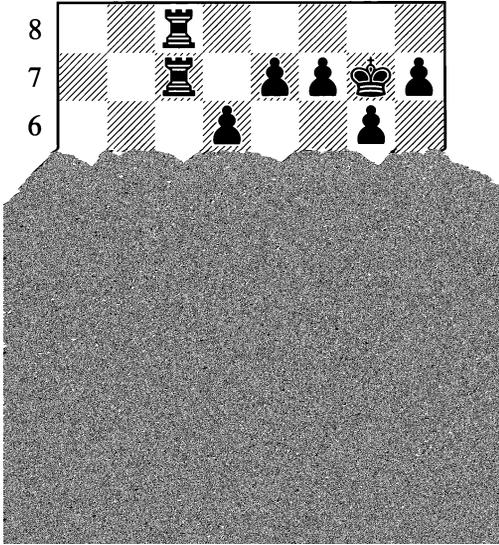


Black is threatening to treble on the a-file. 22. l e2 l ca7 23. c3 is therefore logical but after

23...bxc3 24. xc3t ' xc3 25.bxc3= we reach a similar position to one covered under 19. b1. White's queenside pawns are too vulnerable to make any progress.

20. Jc8 21. hdl c5 22. 1d2

We have been following Huber- Reeve, Red Deer (2) 2003. Now I would put pressure on the a-f file with:

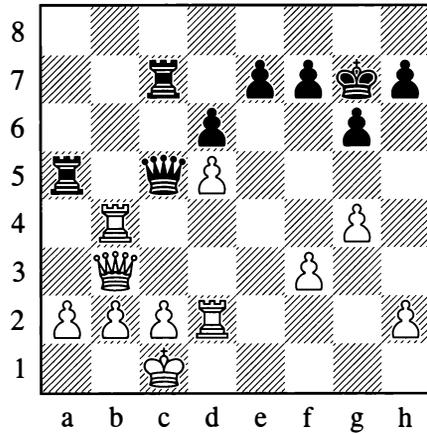


23.. a5 24. xb4

Now White can take this pawn without dropping his g-pawn.

24.c b1 ca7 25.' xb4 xa2 26.c3 ' c8 of ers Black good counterplay, as White's king is about to be forced on a march.

If White tries to sit then we can start a plan of trebling on the a-f file, for instance: 24.h4' a7! 25.c b1 c8 26.h5 a8=



24.. xa 25. xa2 xb4;

It will be difficult for White to hold on to his extra pawn while also keeping his king safe. Black has full compensation which should last a long time, provided he does not allow a queen exchange.

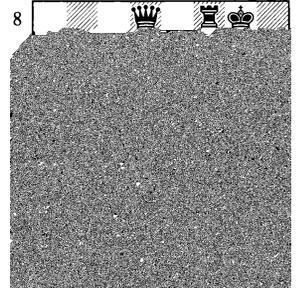
Conclusion

Neither 13.e5 nor 13.a3 is especially challenging; my recommendations are theoretically fine and have produced excellent practical results for Black.

13. xa7 b4 is more interesting. Sacrificing a pawn for long-term pressure against White's queenside is one of the defining themes of the Topalov Variation, so this scenario should not worry us at all. If White errs with 16. d4? then you can unleash a spectacular rook sacrifice on c2. Even after the correct 16.' e3, Black's activity and queenside pressure always offers good value for the missing pawn.

Chapter 10

Yugoslav Attack



Bunt Variation

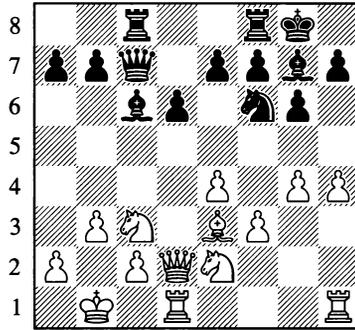
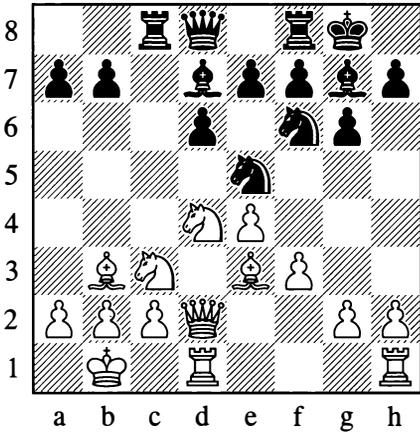
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.f3 S.f3 c3 g6 6.. e3. g7 7.f4 0-0 B.Wd2
 1.c6 9.. c4. d7 10.0-0-0 cB 11.. b3! es IV b1! c4 13.. xc4 xc4 14.g4
 14...b5

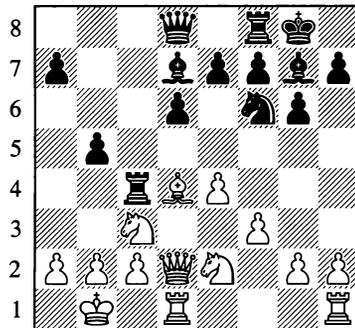
A) 1s.1 d b5?	199
B) 1S.g5	202
C) 1S.h4!?h5	203
C1) 16.1 d5	204
C2) 16.g h5! xh5	204
C21) 17.1 de2	205
C22) 17.1 ce2	206
D) 1S.b3! b4!?	207
D 1) 16.1 ce2?	207
D 2) 16.bxc4 bxc3 17.&xc3 Wc7	208
D 21) 1B. c1	209
D 22) 1B.@ c1	209
D 23) 1B.@ a1	211
D 24) 1B.g5! h5	213
D 241) 19.@ a1	214
D 242) 19.@ c1	216
D 25) 1B.h4 h5	217
D 251) 19.9 h5!?	217
D 252) 19.9S	219

1.e4 c5 2. O d6 3.d4 c d4 4. xd4 . f
 S. c3 g6 6i e3i g7 7.O O O 8.Wd2 . c6
 9i c4 i d7 10.O O O gc8 11.i b3 . eS
 12.@bl

The isking sidestep is arguably the most critical test of the Dragon. Black can avoid it with the Topalov Variation, but I would like to show you an interesting way of battling against it. I can't promise that every variation that follows will be completely sound, but Black's set-up is a lot of fun and a good practical weapon.



12... c4 13i xc4
 13.\ e2?! Giving oh



15...e3!N 16. e3

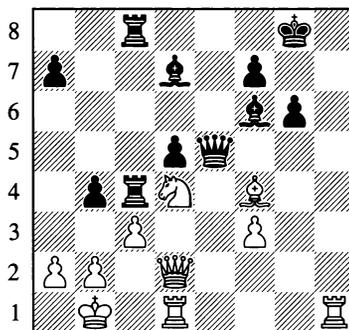
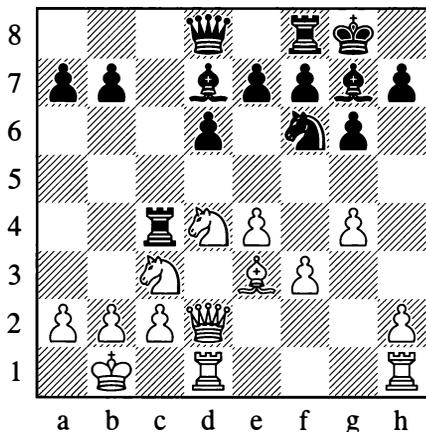
16. xa7? is far too dangerous 16..b4

17.t dS t xdS 1s.i xdS . e6 19.i xd6

i aS +

16..b4 17.t dS t xdS 1s.i xdS Ec6

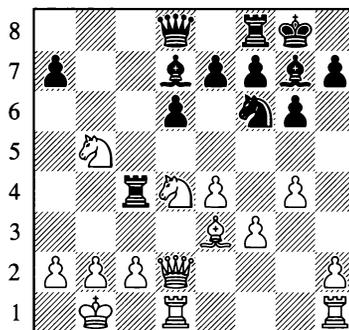
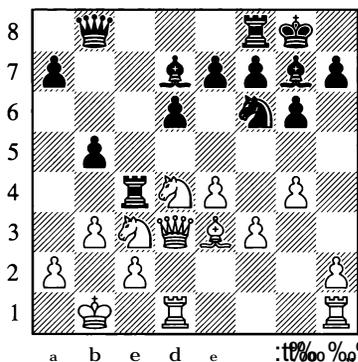
Intending ...i c7 with excellent chances on the queenside.



14...h5

Several other moves have been tested, but the text is the most challenging. We will analyse A) 15.t d h5?, B) 15.g5, C) 15.h4!? and D) 15.h3!.

15.i d3 is a curious move; White prevents ...b4 but it's not entirely clear what his plan is 15..i bS! 16.gS (As Chris Ward points out, 16.b3?N could be met with:



the 15.t dxb5 move order but, as we will see below, Black does not have to exchange on b5 in that line. 16..Wb5 17.t d4 1.fc5 1S.b3 t d7 T e position was interesting and fine for Black in Rudnev - D. Miroschnichenko, Voronezh 2007.

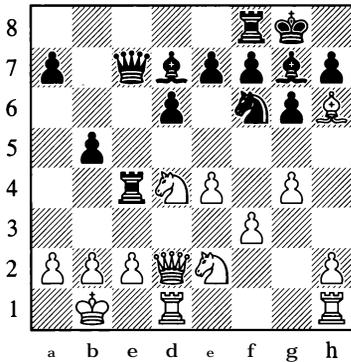
15.t ce2

T is move was once played by Karpov so it must be given some respect, though it was only in a blitz game.

15..Wc7 16.i h6?

16.h4N is better, although Black is fine after 16...1.c5 17.h5 e5 1S.hxg6 f g6 19.t b3 1xc2.

In Karpov - Sosonko, Brussels (blitz) 19S7, Black could have obtained an excellent game with:



16..i xh6!N 17.Wxh6 1.c5

17...e5 1S.t f5 i xf5 19.9xf5 1xc2 20.t c3 1xc3 21.bxc3 Wxc3 is equal, but Black can play for more.

I can see why Sosonko might have been scared at bringing White's queen so near his king, but White does not have time to threaten anything.

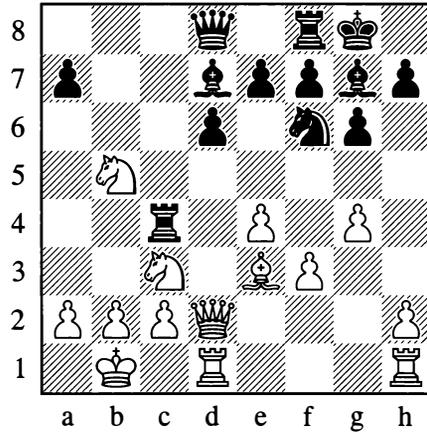
1S.c3

1S.t g3? b4 19.t gf5 gxf5 20.gxf5 c h8 Mter 1S.t f5!? Black can probably accept the sacrifice and withstand the attack with precise play, but 1S...i xf5 19.9xf5 Wc5+ is a simpler route to an advantage.

1S...b4 19.cxb4 Wb7+

White is under pressure on the queenside.

A) 15.t d b5?!



Capturing the pawn is considered dangerous for White, and this seems like the worse of the two ways to do it.

15..Wb8!

15..i xb5 16.t xb5 transposes to 15.t cxb5!N above but, when the d-knight takes on b5, Black does not have to exchange it.

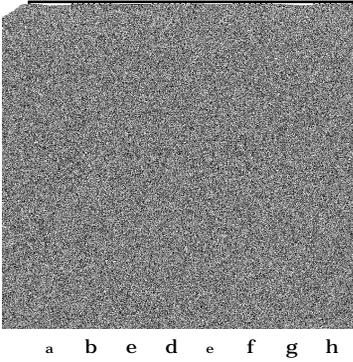
16.t d4

White has tried a few different approaches, but none of them appeal.

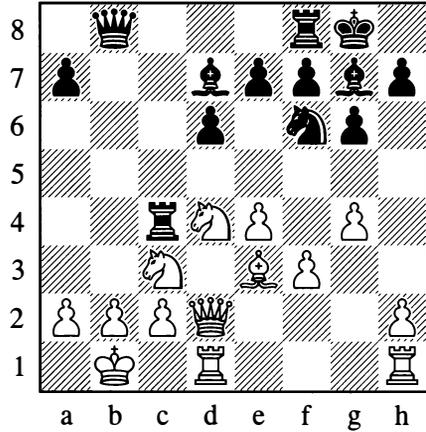
16.a4? a6 17.t a3 Bildat - Pont Font, Internet 2004. Here the most accurate finish would have been 17...t xe4!N 1S.f e4 (1S.t xe4 Wxb2#) 1S...1xc3+ when White obviously cannot survive the onslaught.

16.e5?! dxe5 does not really help White, and 17.t xa7?! only makes things worse. 17...e4 1S.g5 occurred in Stofers - Jacobs, email 2001, and now 1S...t d5!N 19.Wxd5 1xc3+ would have given Black both a dangerous attack and an extra piece, as the a7-knight cannot escape.

16.b3 xb5! 17.bxc4 xc4t 18.i al Wb4
 Black has excellent compensation for the exchange.

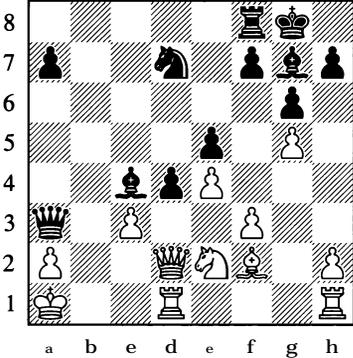


27.e5 xe5 28. xe5 : xd2 29.: xd2 Wb5
 30.: hdl 1 b3t 31.l xb3Wxe5t+
 White faces an unpleasant endgame.



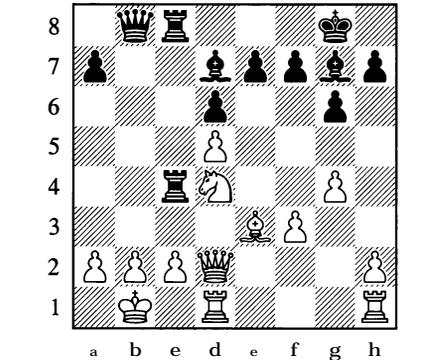
19. d4 e5! 20. f2 d5 21.g5
 21.l xd5N hardly helps 21..l xd5 22.exd5
 e4t 23. d4 Wa3 24.c3 xd4 25.cxd4 exf3+
 21...d4 22.l e2
 We have been following Dantas- Pott, email
 2005. Here I would prefer:
 22...Wa3N 23.c3I d7

16..: £8
 At the cost of a pawn Black has an extremely
 strong attack. Meanwhile White's kingside
 of ensive is yet to get out of the blocks.



17. al
 W ite's alternatives run into knockout blows

17.l d5?I xd5 18.exd5 occurred in Holloway
 - Zhou, Internet 2007, and here Black missed:

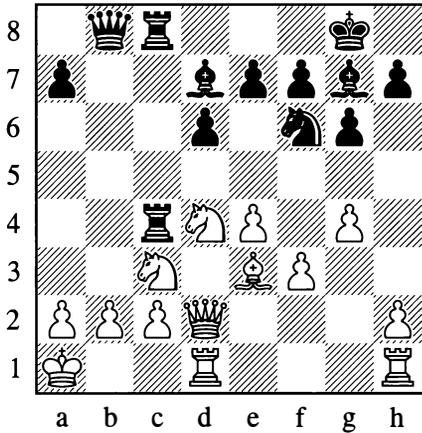


24.cxd4
 Opening up the long diagonal towards the
 king is a sad decision for W ite to make, but
 there is nothing better:
 In the above game Black had chosen the
 a4-square for the queen, but then 24.: b1
 defended. In the present position the
 same move would be too dangerous af er
 24..l c5+.
 24...exd4 25. xd4 I c5 26.l cl : d8
 Too many pins!

18..: xc2!N 19.Wxc2 : xc2 20. xc2 Wb7- +
 White's pawns will start to drop of while he
 tries to defend his king.

17.l de2?Beijerinck- Van Meegen, Venlo 2009.

17..j xg4!N 18.f g4 (18.e5 j xf3 19.exf6 j xf6 does not help) 18..t xe4 19.Wc1 j xc3 White is busted.

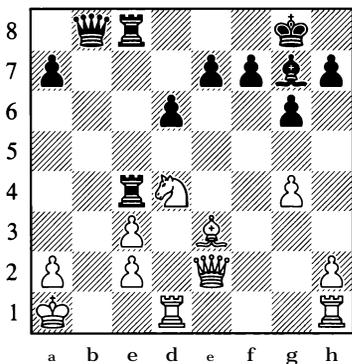


17...J xg4!

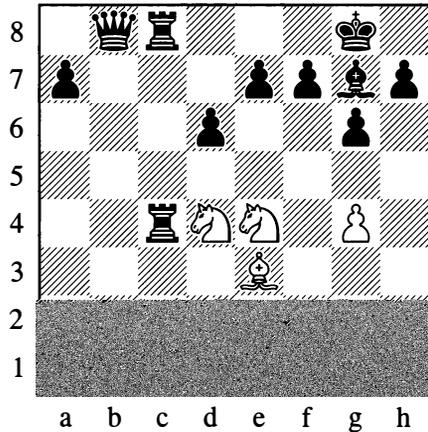
It comes anyway!

18.f g4 t xe4 19.t xe4

Declining the knight brings White no joy: 19.Wc2?! t xc3 (19...Exc3 also worked extremely well in Shchekachev - Golubev, Dimitrovgrad 1988, as covered on pages 23-24 in the thematic introduction) 20.bxc3 Here I found a strong nuance to improve on Richardson - Nesis, corr. 1984:



20..Wc7!N Black threatens both to capture on c3 and to play ...Wa5, targeting the a2 pawn. 21.Ed3 (21.Ed2 Wa5 +) 21...Exc3 22.Eb1 e5 + White dies on the long diagonal.



19..Rxc2!

The point of the combination becomes clear: White will have to give up his queen to prevent mate.

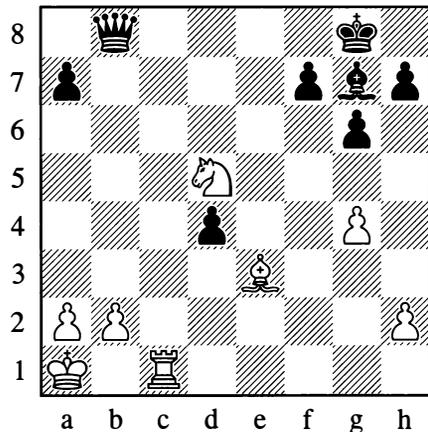
20.Wc1

20.Eb1 Exd2 21.t xd2 e5 + Gim - Nesis, corr. 1988. Black's pawns will roll inexorably forward.

20..Jc1 t 21.Jc1 d5 22.1 c3 e5!?

22..j xd4N 23.j xd4 e5 24.j f2 Wb7+ is a fine alternative.

23.t xd5 xcl t 24. xcl exd4



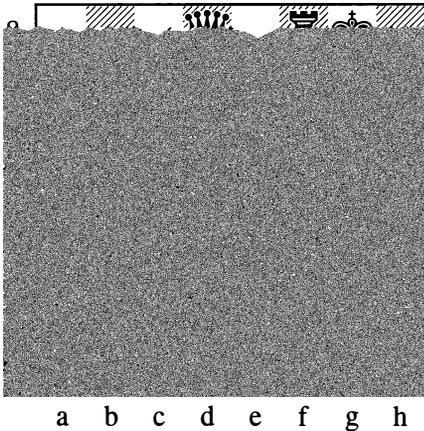
25.J xd4

25. t e7t N i fB 26. g5 is a better try, although the ending is still highly unpleasant for White.

25... d4 26. J st V xcs 27. l e7t < g7 2s. l xcs £- +

White regained the queen but was left in a lost ending in Mathlopoules - Le Bled, corr. 1997.

B) 15. g5! h5



White intends to make progress on the kingside by bringing one of his knights to g3, but Black has enough resources to counter this plan.

16. l de2

16. b3 b4 17. bxc4 bxc3 1B. ' xc3 ' c7 transposes to variation 0 24.

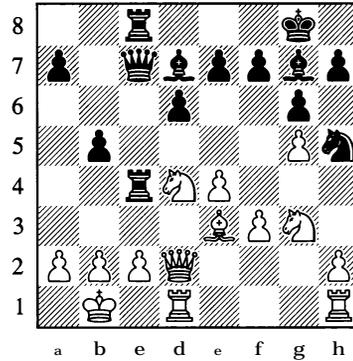
Obviously bringing the other knight is a significant alternative:

16. t ce2' c7 17. t g3

17. b3 Ec5 1B. t g3 Here I don't think Black needs to fear the open h-file and can happily play: 1B... t xg3! N (1B... EcB has been played a couple of times and is also adequate) 19. hxg3 EcB 20. ' h2 (20. Ec1 Ec3+) 20... i fBN 21. ' xh7?! only misplaces the queen, and after 21... Exc2 Black's attack is more relevant.

17... EcB!

When White has not made the weakening move b2-b3, I think it is better to keep the h-file closed.



1B. t xh5 gxh5N

In Roberts - C. Oavies, Cardiff 1997, Black opted to take on d4 and c2 immediately. Although this is also playable, I would prefer to retain the dark-squared bishop and keep the threat in reserve.

19. c3 d5+

Black has excellent play.

16... i e6!?

Black could also play more slowly with something like 16... a5N as 17. t g3? . xc3 1B. bxc3 ' cB is far more dangerous for White than for Black. After the text move we will follow a rapid game which Black won in great style.

17. b3

Mikhalevski gives 17. t xb5N . xb2! 1B. xb2' bB 19. ' a5 a6! 20. ' xa6 Eb4t with a strong initiative.

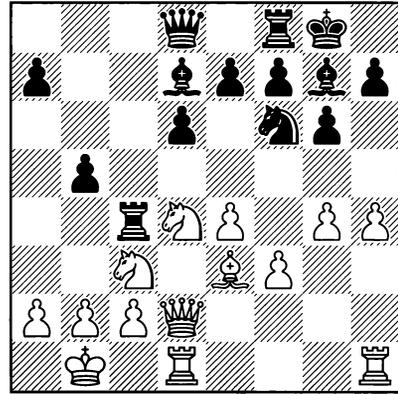
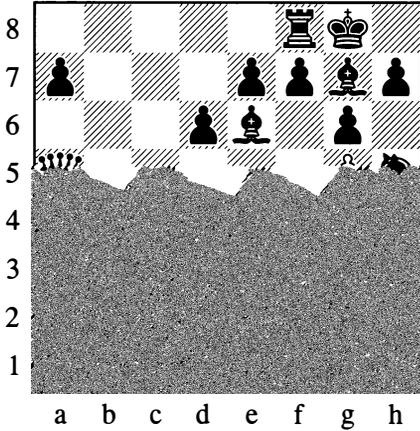
17... b4! 1S. l a4

1B. t d5N is better: 1B... xd5 19. exd5 . c3 is suggested by Mikhalevski. Play continues 20. t xc3 bxc3 21. ' d3 Ec7 when the position is quite messy. It seems a shame to have given away the dark-squared bishop, but the

c3-pawn is a thorn in White's side. White's kingside structure will also give him some problems later in the game.

C) IS.h4!?

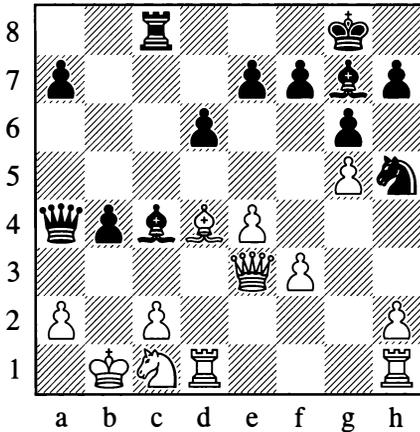
18.. a5!



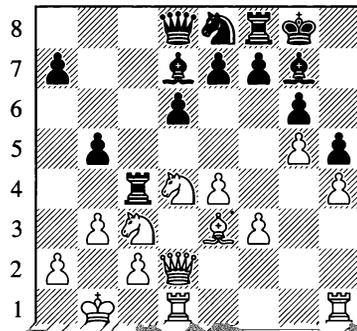
19.bxc4?

Black was already doing well, but this was suicidal.

19...i xc4 20i d4 xa4 21.t c l l c8 22. e3

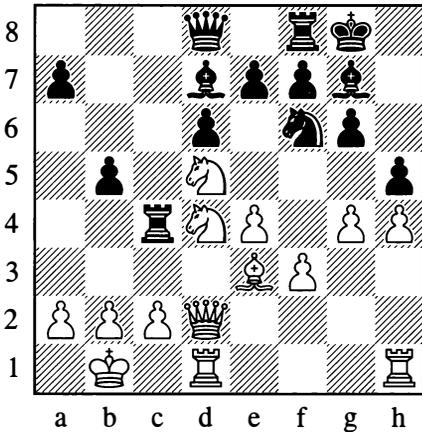


22..i xa4 t! 2



Previously I described this position as "probably a good version of 15.b3 for White." However, I overlooked the crucial difference that after 17...Eg5! White can no longer win material with 18.t e6 f e6 19. xc5 dxc5 as the c3-knight is now hanging. Following 20.t xb5 Wb5! 21.Wxd7 We5+ Black has a dangerous initiative.

C1) 16.t d5



This approach has been played a few times and needs checking: if White can get rid of the f6-knight then our kingside will become vulnerable.

16...e5!

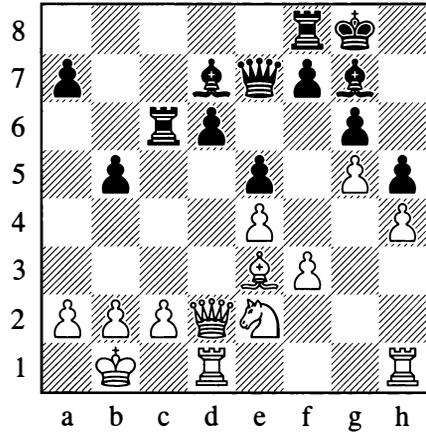
This is my top choice, although an interesting alternative is 16...t xd5 17.exd5 as in Csolto - Kral, Slovakia 1999, and now 17...Was!N 18.gxh5 Wxd5 19.hxg6 f g6 with unclear play.

17.t xf t

17.t b3 t xd5 18.Wxd5 e6 19.Wxb5 hxg4= is fine for Black.

17... xf 18g5 e7 19.1 e2 c6

White has the d5-square but I don't think he can do much with it, for example:



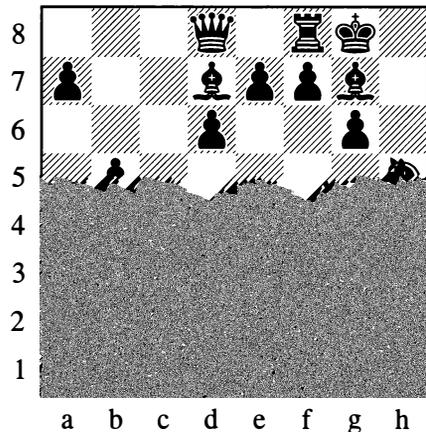
20.t c3i e6 21.t d5

21.t xb5? is asking too much of the white position: 21..EbS 22.t c3 Wb7 23.b3 EbcS 24.t d5 xc2 25.Wxc2 Exc2 26.< xc2 xd5 27.Exd5 Wa6+ White cannot prevent the queen from infiltrating.

21..i xd5 22. xd5 fc8

Black's position is not at all disastrous. True, we have the wrong bishop, but White cannot make progress on the kingside without unleashing it. Meanwhile, Black can creep forwards on the queenside.

C2) 16g 5t xh5

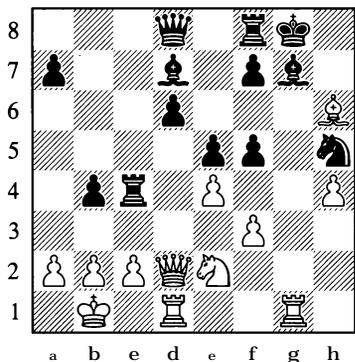


Opening the kingside is undoubtedly White's most dangerous approach. White

can choose between C21) 17.t de2 and C22) 17.t ce2

17.t dxb5? was played in T Ernst - T Karlsson, Stockholm 2001. A glance at variation C21 below reveals the interesting fact that Ernst had switched sides from over a decade earlier. However, his pawn grab was too greedy, and 17..." b5N 1S.t d4 1 fcS 19. a1 " b7 would have put White under heavy pressure.

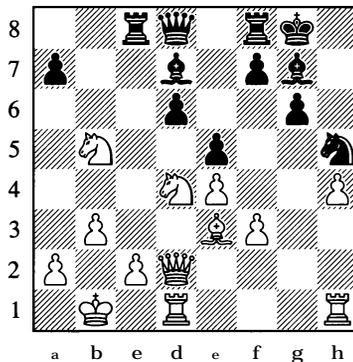
17.l hg1!? is a sensible move, and 17...b4 1S.t ce2 was seen in Krzykowski - Plichta, Kowalewo Pomorskie 2008. Here I think Black should defend dynamically with 1S...e5N, when 19.t f5!? is critical. (19.t b3 i f6! reaches a complicated position.) 19...gxf5 20. h6



20... h7! 21. xg7t xg7 22." xd6f e4 White has some attacking chances, but Black has adequate resources. The critical continuation is 23." xe5 (23.f e4 1 xe4 24.t cl t f5 25." xd7 " xd7 26.l xd7 t xh4=) 23..l gS 24.l d5l r6! 25." xe4t f5 26." d4l r7

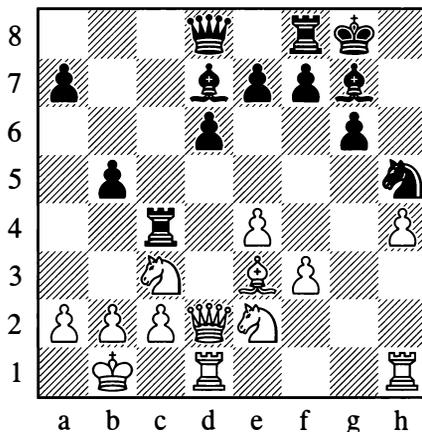
17.b3N Engines wish to play this move, forcing the rook to retreat, but humans have not felt so bold. It is hard to live with the chronic weakness along the long diagonal. 17...l rS Black gets good play if White decides to grab the pawn: 1S.t cxb5 (1S.t dxb5 " a5

19.t d5" xb5 20.t xe7t h7 21.t xcS 1 xcS 22." xd6 e6o) 1S...e5



19.t f5 (19.t xd6 exd4 20. xd4 xd4 21." xd4 1 r7o) 19.. xb5 20.t xd6 a6 21.t xcS " xcSo We have another complicated material imbalance, but I like Black's chances. White's king is not entirely safe, and Black might even consider ...f5 at some point.

C21) 17.t de2



White has scored heavily with this knight retreat, but I think the statistics are rather misleading.

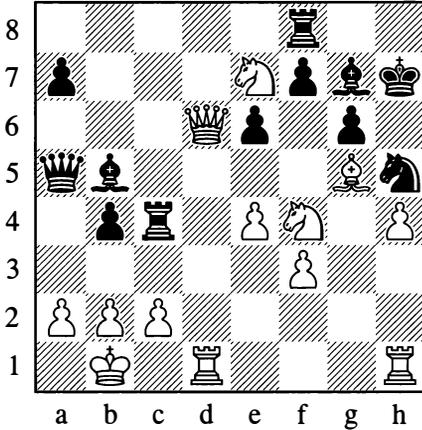
17...b4! 18.t d5 e6 19i g5 Wa5 20.t e7t h7 21.Wxd6

Here I found a significant improvement over De Firmian - T Ernst, Lugano 1989.

21...Ab5!N

Black is doing well. The knight on e7 is trapped, and Black's attack is coming much faster than White's. A nice illustrative line is

2V f4

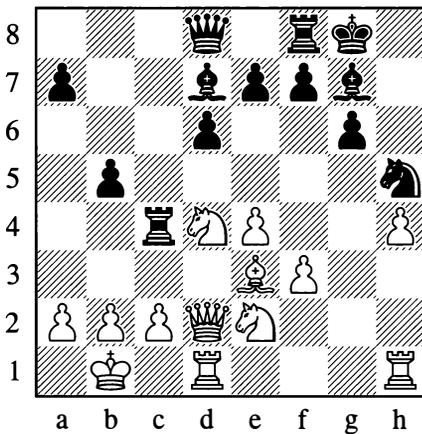


22...1 c2! 23i xc2Ae5! 24' f2

24.' xe5i a4t-+

24..' fa2 25' fb4 Aa4t 26i d2 h dl
27.1 xh5 gb8+

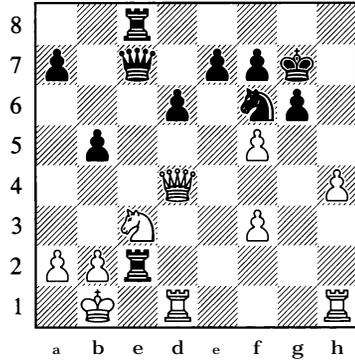
e 22) 17.1 ce2



This is White's other main move and possibly the better knight to retreat.

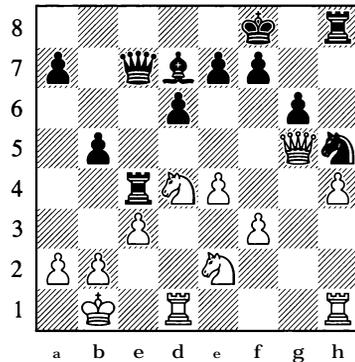
17...! f7 18Ah6gc8 19h g7i xg720J 1

Another game continued: 20.1 f5t ? i xf5
21.exf5 xc2 22.Wd4t 1 f6 23.1 c3



In Nilsson - Welin, Stockholm 1980, Black got scared and gave back the material on c3, but the simple 23... g2N would have been excellent for him.

20.c3N looks sensible, but Black has decent play after: 20... h8 21.Wg5 mf8 (21...Wd8!?
22.1 f5t i xf5 23.exf5 c5 24.1 d4 e5! also looks fine)



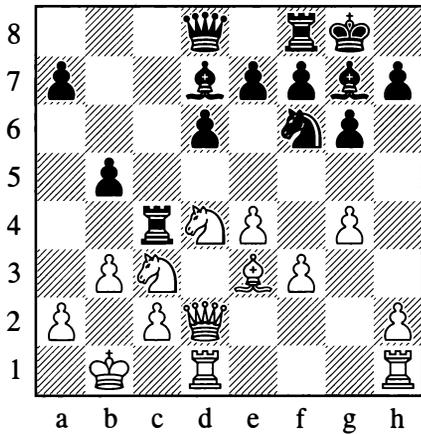
22.1 xb5 Wb6 23.1 bd4 c8

Returning to the main line, this position was reached in Pogonina - Sudakova, Elista 2002. At this point I would take the opportunity to control some squares on the kingside with:

20...gh8N 21.t c3' f5=

Black has a perfectly healthy position.

0) IS.b3



T is is supposed to be the refuration of Black's last move, but we have an interesting sacrificial resource which is not mentioned in De la Villa's book.

IS...M!?

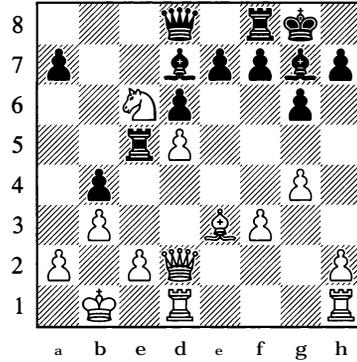
Nielsen refers to this as the Stocck Variation but I prefer Dearing's nomenclature, as the Scottish brothers Waiter and Andrew Burnett appear to have been the first two players to play it. Black sacrifices the exchange and a pawn in order to open up lines towards White's king.

Black's problem is that the natural 15...2c5? allows 16.l e6!

15...2c5 has been tested extensively, but after 16.l dxb5 Black does not have sufficient play for the pawn.

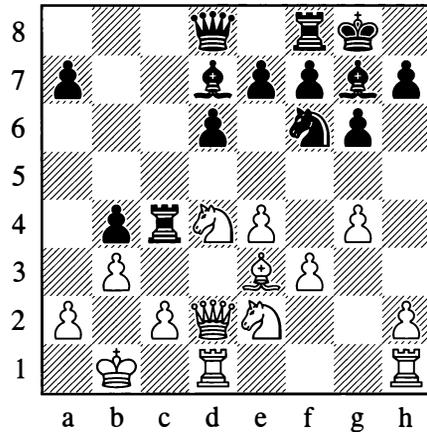
0 1) 16.l ce2?! has been played several times, but the main move is of course 0 2) 16.bxc4.

16.l d5 1 xd5 17.exd5 2c5 1S.l c6 (18.l e6!N is checked by Nielsen, who recommends 1S... xe6 19. xc5 xg4 20.f g4 dxc5 White is the exchange for a pawn up, but has definite issues along the long diagonal.)



T is was Zharov - Bezotosniy, Moscow 2009, and here 1S...2xc6N would have been the right way to give up the exchange. 19.dxc6 xc6 20.2hf1 c3 Black has fine compensation.

0 1) 16.l ce2?!



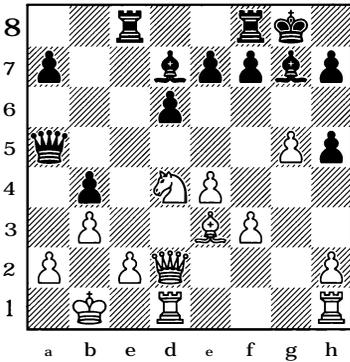
In the stem game White wimped out with this move, and perhaps your opponents will do the same if they feel scared.

16..J s 17. xb4?!

White wins a pawn but accelerates Black's attack.

17.l g3 \ a5 1S.h4 e5 19.1 de2 2c6 20.g5 occurred in Studer - Lokander, Al-Ain 2013, and now 20...2fc5N 21.2c1 l eS+ would have favoured Black.

17.g5 N1 h5 IS.t g3 is a typical plan which is always worth checking, but this time IS...Wa5! is strong: 19.1 xh5 gxh5



Black's kingside looks ugly, but White has no attacking chances to counterbalance Black's strong queenside pressure. 20.f4 (20.a4 Ec3+) 20..j g4+

17.j h6N was apparently considered as an improvement in the Fraser - Burnett post-mortem. I think the simplest reply is 17..j xh6 IS.Wxh6 h5= when Black is comfortably placed. It is worth adding that the caveman approach 19.h4? is well met by 19..e5 20.h5 Wc7! when Black defends adequately.

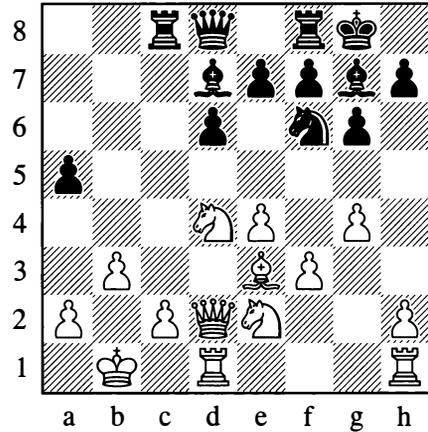
17...a5

One of the original Burnett games continued: 17...Wc7 1S.g5?! 1 h5 19.c4 a5! 20.Wel a4 21.l g3? axb3 22.axb3 Ea5 (22...Eb5!N would have been immediately decisive, for example 23. c2 Exb3! 24.< xb3 Eb5t 25.< c3j b5 26.Wf1 Wa5t 27. c2Wa2t 2S.< c3Ec5 and White is powerless in the face of all those pins.) 23.Ed2? Wa7 24.Eb2?j xd4 O- 1 Fraser - A. Burnett, Glenrothes 2003.

18.Wd2

1S.Wa3N Wc7 19.c4 Wb7 20.< a1 a4+ is also unpleasant.

T is position was reached in Sipos - Budai, Budapest 2003. Here Nielsen points out the improvement:

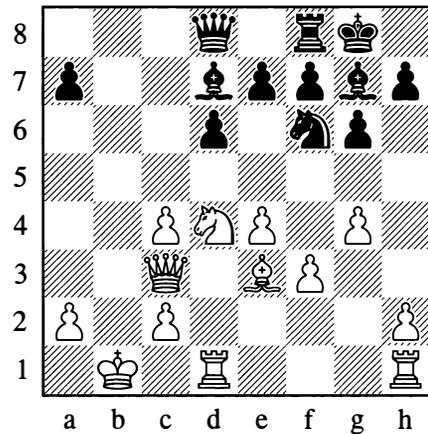


18..e5!N

White has nothing better than:

19.1 f g 20.g d5! 21.Ehgl h8 White has insufficient play for the piece.

D2) 16.bxc4 bxc3 17.Wxc3



Taking the exchange must be critical.

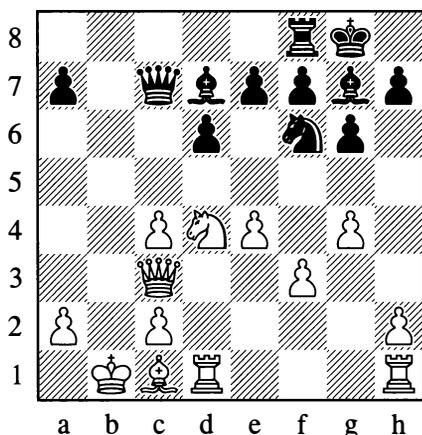
17...Wc7

So where exactly does Black's compensation arise? First of all White's king is now rather vulnerable; Black can attack down both the open b-file and the long diagonal. The queen on c3 defends the c4-pawn but feels rather loose, while the c4-pawn is likely to drop of whenever Black wishes.

Black has two major plans. We should always consider the ...d5 break, exploiting the location of White's queen to open the centre. If the black knight can go via d5 and exchange itself for the e3 bishop, we should obtain great play on the dark squares. If the ...d5 plan is not suitable, there are a few alternative ways to reroute the knight. Moving the d7-bishop to either a4 or e8 and following up with ...l d7-e5/b6 is quite usual.

A common problem for White is finding a plan. He has tried several moves, we will analyse 021) IS. cl, 022) IS. ' cl, 023) IS.i a1, 024) IS.g5 and 025) IS.h4.

021) IS. cl



When I tried this variation my opponent had a long think before playing this logical move. White reroutes the bishop to give his king some cover, while attempting to fight for the long diagonal.

IS..J bStN

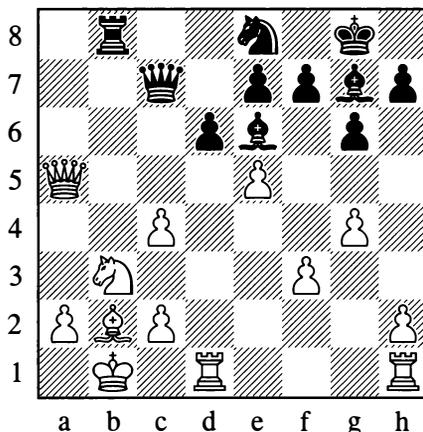
18...d5? was my overambitious try in Greet - Jones, Torquay 2009.

18...i e6N was my suggestion on ChessPublishing. In the event of 19.1 xe6?! (19.i b2 Eb8 transposes to 18...Eb8t below)

19..Eb8t 20.i b2 f e6 Black has a strong initiative and White's king is seriously exposed.

The rook check is Nielsen's recommendation. His line continues as follows.

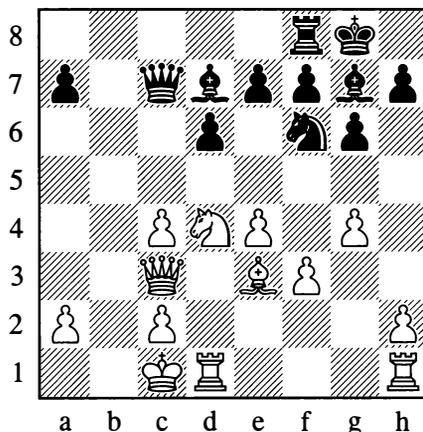
19. b2 e6 20.t b3a5! 21.e5t eS 22.Wxa5



22..J xb3! 23.Wxc7 xb2t 24.i xb2h e5t 25.i b3t xc7 26.a4i f C

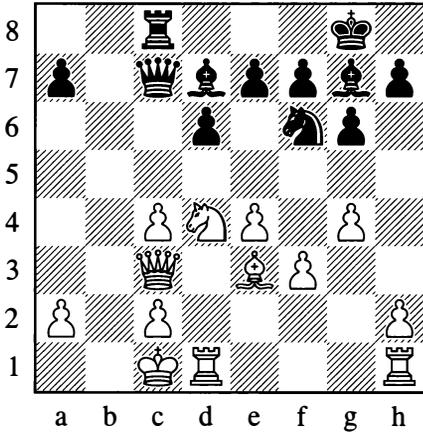
An intriguing endgame has arisen. White has a slight material advantage, with two rooks and a pawn against three pieces, but Black's minor pieces coordinate beautifully and White's pawn structure is compromised. I would be happy playing Black.

022) IS.i cl



White decides to run his king back towards the centre. However, doing so immediately allows Black to do without the check on b8, as White has already made his decision.

1S...BcS

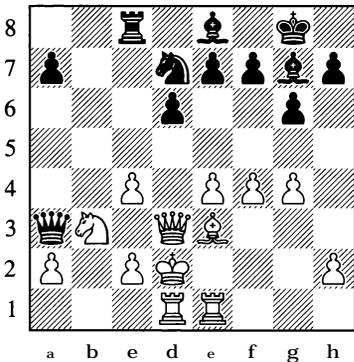


19.h4

19.g5N c h5 transposes to variation 0 242.

19.Wd3 was played in two of the three games to reach this position. I presume White was scared about the pins along the c-f file and the long diagonal, but 19... a4!N is a strong reply, preparing ...c d7 to activate the knight while gaining time against the queen. My engine already assesses the position as equal, a sure sign that Black has powerful compensation.

19.: he1 e8! is a thematic idea to make way for the knight to be rerouted. 20.Wd3 Wa5 21.c b3 Wa3t 22.' d2 c d7 23.f4



It is was Perske - Van Heirzeele, Li neburg 2014, and here 23...Wa4!N would have put White in some trouble.

19...h5

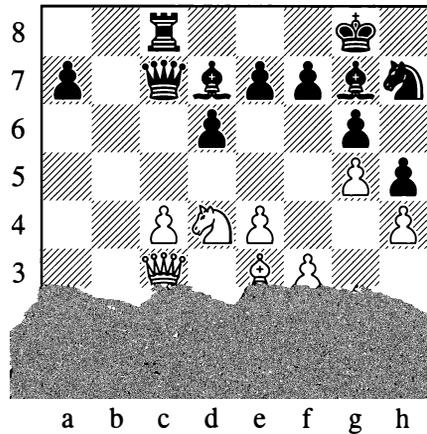
Blocking the h-pawn is Black's safest way of playing.

20.g5! h7

The knight is temporarily sidelined, but will come back into the game via f8. Meanwhile the closing of the kingside should favour Black.

21.' d2

21.: d3N was the suggestion of Van Oelft and Ris, after which I suggested the logical 21...c f8 on ChessPublishing. It is not clear how White should continue, while Black still has many useful moves. 22.f4? would be good for White in principle, but in this particular position it allows 22... c6!+.



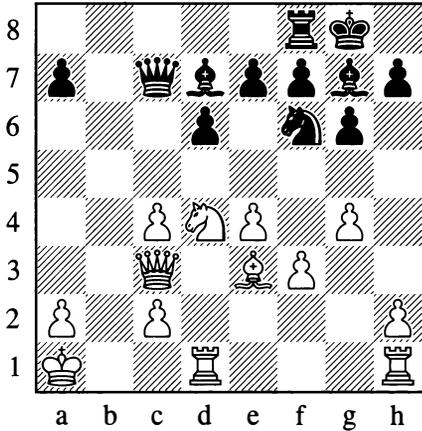
21... e6!

Black exploits the fact that the queen would now hang with check, should White take on e6.

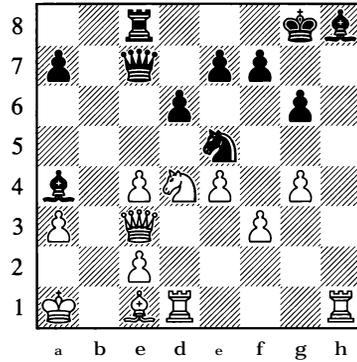
2V e2. xc4t 23' f l f

Black ultimately overpressed and lost, but at this point he had excellent compensation in Bok - Cheparinov, Biel 2011.

D23 1S.c al



20.h4 t d7 21.h5 t e5 22.hxg6 hxg6 23. h6 h8 24. cl



Another logical contender: T is time White decides his king will be safest in the corner:

1s...k s 19J bl

T is is the most natural continuation, and the only move to have been tried in over-the-board games

19. d3 is a natural choice to get out of two pins, but the typical reply of 19... a4! prepares to bring the knight to d7 and hit the queen with tempo.

19.h4 can be met dynamically with 19...d5! (there is also 19...h5 with a normal position) 20.g5 t e8 21.exd5 t d6 22.h5 gxh5! 23: xh5 f5+ and Black's pieces coordinate wonderfully.

19.a3?

This was tried in one email game. I don't see a lot of sense to it, although I remember when analysing this line many years ago it was the type of move that engines liked to suggest.

19... a4

19...d5N also looks like a good solution. After 20.g5 t e8 21.exd5 t d6 White has to find 22. f4! t b5 (22... c5!?) 23. xc7 t xc3 24. a5 t xdl 25: xdl : xc4 26.c3 in order to maintain rough equality.

24... f6!N

T is improvement gives Black excellent chances. Instead the game proceeded with the horrible blunder 24...t xc4?? allowing 25: xh8t c xh8 26:t e6t 1-0 Schumacher - Cowling email 2009.

19.95N

As far as I am aware, White has not played this precise move order, but of course there are some potential transpositions.

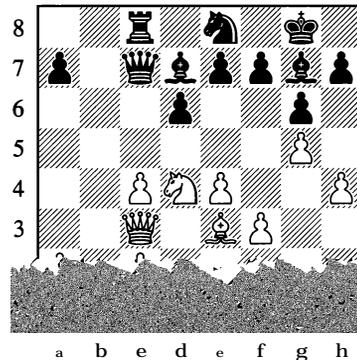
19...t e8

T is is Nielsen's suggestion, and it certainly makes sense once we have developed our rook. Black prepares to break with ...d5

19...t h5 is also possible of course.

20.h4

20.: d3 gives Black many good options, but an aesthetically pleasing one is 20...d5 (20.. e6+ is also sensible) 21.exd5 b5!+.



20...d5!

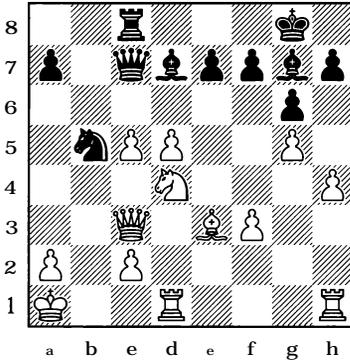
A typical idea, vacating the d6-square for our knight to jump back into the game.

21.exd5

21.h5?! dx4 22.f e4 gxh5!+

21...l d6 22.c5 l b5

White has no good square for his queen.



23.l xb5

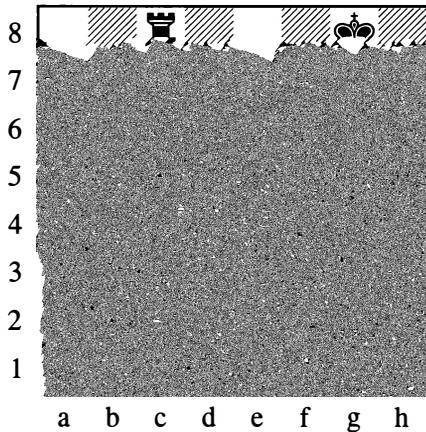
23.' d3??' xc5 +

23.' b4?as+

23.' c4?l a3 24.' c3' xc5 25.' xc5 Exc5+

23... xc3t 24.l xc3 f5o

Nielsen gives a similar line without h2-h4 and ...Ec8 T e position is messy but dynamically equal.



19...d5N

T is was my suggestion on ChessPublishing.

19... e8 has been played in all four games, and has scored well. By now you must recognize Black's plan of vacating the d7-square for the knight.

20.g5

In the event of 20.e5 ' xe5 21.c5 ' c7 Black's central pawns are ready to roll.

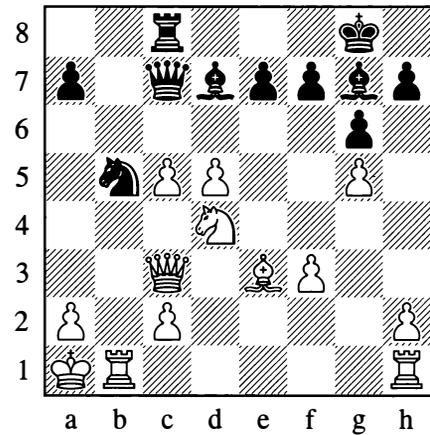
20...l e8 21.exd5 t d6

A another typical manoeuvre for this variation.

22.c5

22.Eb4?? as wins

22...t b5



23.Exb5!

23.' b4?' e5 is disastrous for White.

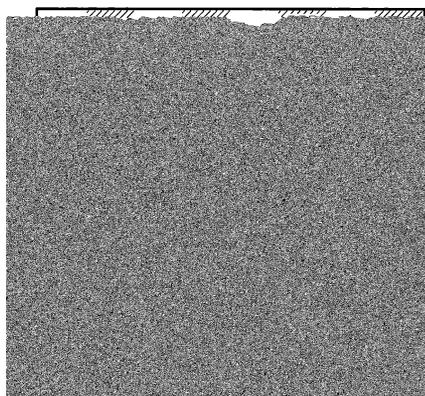
23.. xb5 24.Eb1

24.c6' d6'

24... e2!i

For the moment White still has a material advantage, but the pawns on f3, d5 and c5 all look likely to drop.

D24) 18.g5



a b c d e f g h

In over-the-board games this has been seen the most often. White immediately forces us to make a decision regarding our knight. However, on a positive note, we're now extremely unlikely to get mated down the h-file.

18...t h5

Black obviously has another option with the knight, but the text move seems better to me. The knight looks a little misplaced but it will try to come back into the game via the f4-square. In fact, the game will revolve around that square to a great extent, as White's most logical plan involves advancing with f-f4 in order to prepare e4-e5.

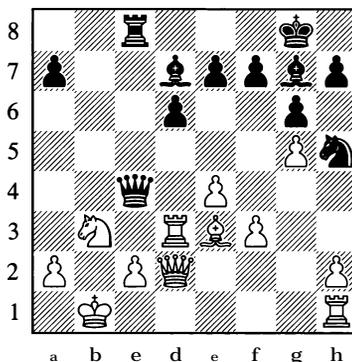
Most game have continued with either D241) 19.@a1 or D242) 19.@c1.

19.Ed3 Ec8

19...a5!?

20' d2' xc4 21.1 b3?!

21.Eb3N should have been preferred, but Black still has good compensation after 21...a5 or 21...d5



21...J c3!N

21...a5!? was played in Haznedaroglu - Sluka, Olomouc 2007, but the text move, which I suggested on ChessPublishing, seems more precise.

22' d1

22.Exc3' xc3 23' xc3 Exc3 reaches a level endgame.

22...' b5 23.J d4 J xd4

23...J b4 24.J b2 l f4 25.Ee3 l g2 26.Ed3 l f4= is an amusing repetition if Black wants a draw.

24.Exd4' xg5=

Black is doing f ne.

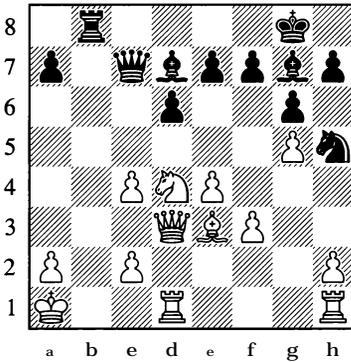
19' d3 Eb8t

19...J e6!N is another interesting way of playing the position. Mter 20.1 xe6 f e6 21.J d4 l f4 22' d2 J xd4 23' xd4 e5 24' e3 l e6 White has succeeded in exchanging both of Black's bishops, but White's structure is really ugly. The knight can start jumping around and picking of the stray pawns.

20.i a1N

20.i c1? occurred in Kuchynka - Olsar, Stare Mesto 2009. It is always hard for White to decide which way to go with the king, but on this occasion going towards the centre looks wrong. On ChessPublishing I recommended 20...J e5N, preparing to bring the knight on h5 back into the game. My engine already favours Black.

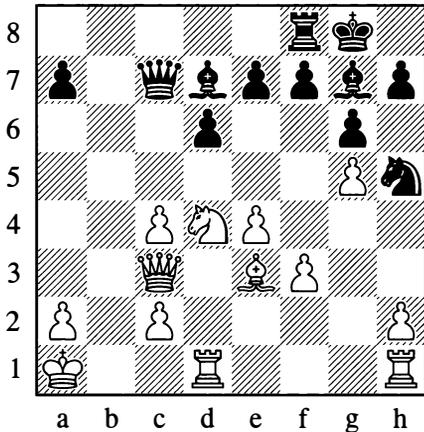
20.1 b3N a5 21.c5 d5b is another possible direction.



20...! b4 21.! b1 ! xc4 22.! b8t c8 23.! b2 l f4°

Black has succeeded in activating his knight, and has good counter-chances.

D241) 19. al



As we have already seen, the question of where to put the king represents a major dilemma for White in this variation. On the one hand the a1-square looks more natural, as the king gets away from the centre while allowing the rook to come to b1. However, it is hard for the king to feel comfortable while being stuck in the fring line of the Dragon bishop.

19... e6

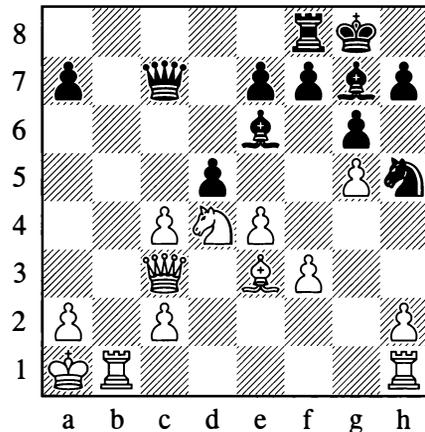
This is Peter Heine Nielsen's suggestion on his DVD. Black attacks the c4-pawn while preparing ...d5.

19... h3 has been seen in correspondence play. Black tries to misplace White's rooks before returning to e6 20.! he1 ! c8 21.! b1 g2 "This is annoying for White," says Vigorito, but after 22.\ d3 xf3 23.! b2 g4 24.! eb1 White is the one holding a slight initiative.

20.! bl d5!

Black opens up lines for his pieces and is now ready to bring the errant knight back into the game. In this variation we are obviously not worrying too much about material - the initiative is key.

20.. xc4N would allow White enough time to consolidate with 21.! b4 ! c8 22.! hb1, as Khalifman pointed out in his 2009 book. However, the text move is a serious improvement which was played the following year:

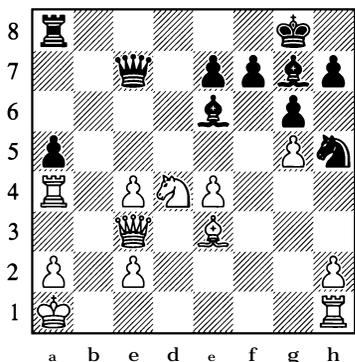


21.! b2

This was played in the only game to reach this position. It makes sense for White to try and dampen the power of the g7-bishop.

21.! b4N is a human move, and the main line given by Peter Heine. His analysis continues

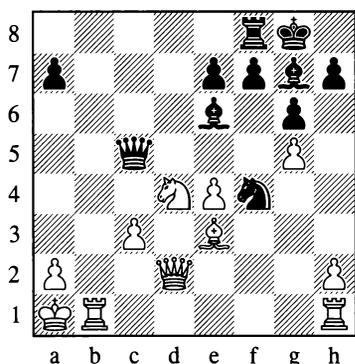
21...dxe4 22.f e4 as! 23.l h4 (23.EbSt f4 also gives Black dangerous counterplay) 23...Ea8



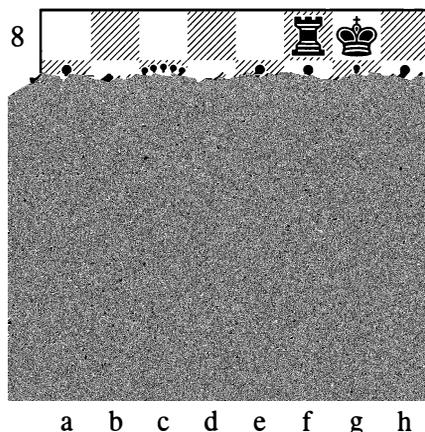
The Danish grandmaster mentions that Black is threatening ...j d7. The game might continue 24.cSj d7 25.Ea3 a4 26.Eb1j c6 when the rook looks rather stupid on a3 while Black is about to pick up the e4-pawn and probably the one on c5 too. I think Black has good chances

21.cSN is the computer's suggestion, but after the logical 21...dxe4 22.f e4 t f4 23.Eb2 we have transposed to the main line below.

Instead 23.l d2? is initially offered by my engine, but it runs into a problem: 23...1 xS 24.c3



24...j xa2!! White is in serious danger, for example: 25.c xa2? 1 aSt 26.c b2 Eb8t 27.t b3 1 a4 28.l c2 t d3t 29.l xd3 Exb3t 30.c cl Exc3t 31.l xc3j xc3 +

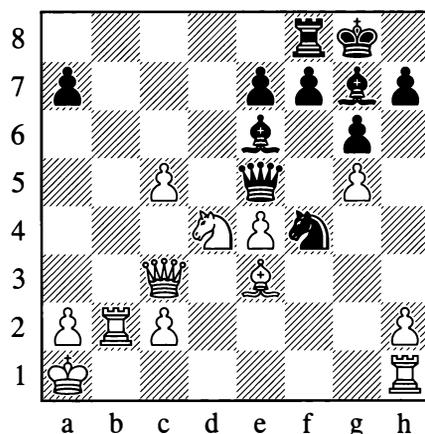


21...d e4 22.f e4 . f4

22...j xc4!N could also be played, but Black continues with his non-material approach.

23.c5 e5

It's time to take stock of the position. Currently White still has an extra pawn and exchange. However, the exchange of Black's d-pawn for White's f-pawn has left White with an ugly structure, and the e-pawn is dropping immediately. The knight has become active and the bishops are both pointing at White's king,

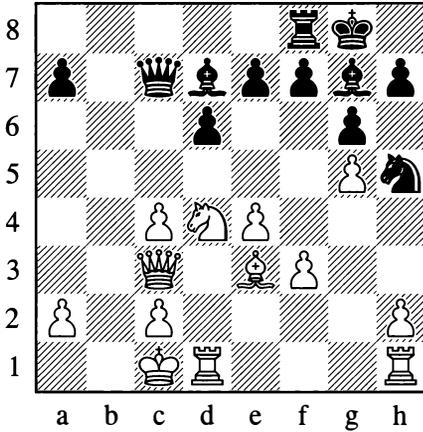


24 d2 xe4 25.Bhbl d5 26.Bb8 e5 27.Bxf t

The players agreed a draw here in Anderson - Mason, email 2010. As this was a correspondence game we can be fairly

confident about the quality of the moves, so the result must be considered an encouraging sign for Black's exchange sacrifice.

D242) 19. @c1

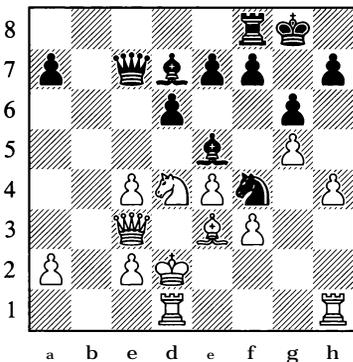


It was White's choice in the highest-rated game to have been played in the Bumett Variation so far:

19. J b8

My engine already indicates that Black is fully equal.

19... e5!? is a good alternative, wasting no time in bringing the h5-knight back into the game. 20.g d2 (both 20.Ehfl L f4' and 20.Wd3 Eb5' are pleasant for the second player) 20..L f4 21.h4 At this point in Havlikova - Sluka, Olomouc 2008, Black got too ambitious with 21.. f5?!. My recommended improvement on ChessPublishing is



21.. e6!N T e c4-pawn will drop, leaving Black with beautiful coordination. Meanwhile White's pieces look rather scattered.

20.' d3

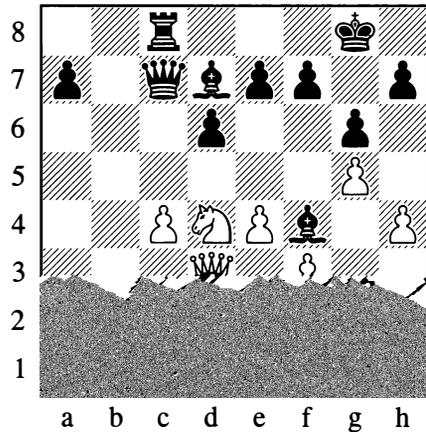
White would like to play 20.f4N but there are too many pins 20.. g4! 21.Ed2 f3 22.Ee1 xe4'

20.. e5 21.h4l f4

21..Wa5 22.g b1 e6 23.L b3 Wa4 24. cl xc4 was agreed drawn in Khlopov - Morcin, email 2011. However, Black has a strong initiative and really should have played on.

22. xf4 4t 23.@b2

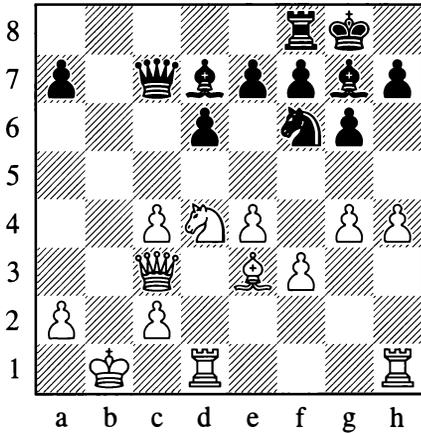
We have been following B. Socko - Stoeck, Germany 2006, the first GM outing for the Bumett Variation. Black's strongest continuation would have been:



23..' b8!N 24.@al b4

It is a typical way to reroute the rook; Black wants to win the c4-pawn without allowing a queen exchange. In the ensuing position, Black's two bishops will be no worse than White's rook and knight.

D25) IS.h4

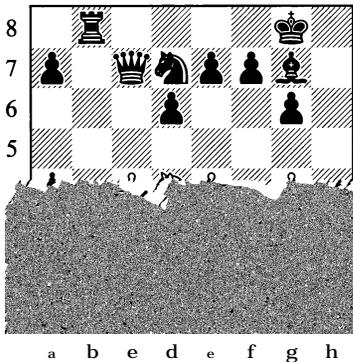


It is suggested by Van Delft and Ris, and apparently Benjamin Bok also proposed it as an improvement over his game with Cheparinov. White does not bother consolidating his extra material, but instead wishes to carry on attacking.

IS...h5

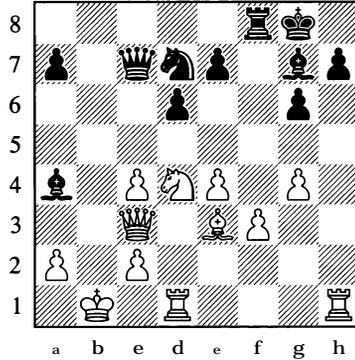
This is the safest way. First we aim to cut out White's kingside play, and only then prove our compensation.

IS...EbSt was suggested by 'Swiss_Dragon' on the ChessPublishing forum, but I couldn't make it work: 19.Wc1 a4 20.h5 1 d7 21.hxg6 hxg6



22.Eh3! Ec5 23.Edh1 Wxc4 24.Wxc4 Exc4 25.l b3t Pjl - Schroeder; email 2011.

IS... a4 is one of Nielsen's recommended approaches, and in principle it's the way I would like to play. However, a problem arises after: 19.h5! d7 20.hxg6 f g6



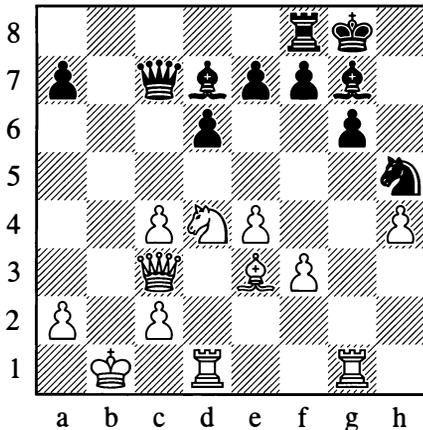
21. c1! I could not find a good way to proceed from here. (21. h6 is the only move looked at by Nielsen.) 21...Exf3 was tried in Salvado - Flitsch, cor: 2013, but 22.c5!N followed by Wc4(t) seems strong for White. One could argue that a typical opponent over the board would be unlikely to find (or have prepared) all these moves, but I don't think it's worth the risk.

IS...d5!N is the other line suggested by Nielsen. It is also interesting, but I will focus on the move I prefer:

White may continue with D251) 19.g h5! or D252) 19.g6.

D251) 19.g h5! t xh5 20J hgl

This interesting way of playing has been recommended by Van Delft and R.s. White has a straightforward idea of putting the rook on g5, and it took me a while to find a defence with which I was happy.

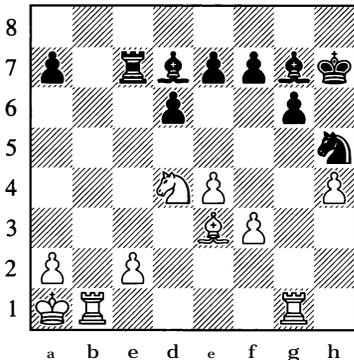


20.J k8!N

I eventually concluded that this is the most accurate.

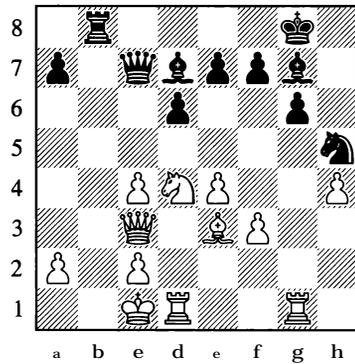
20...: b8t worked well in one game, and it is worth checking both king moves

a) T e game continued: 21.mal : b5! An aesthetic way to reroute the rook and prevent White's plan. 22.: b1 (22.: g5 : c5) 22...: c5 23.Wb3 : xc4 24.Wb8t mh7 25.Wxc7 : xc7 Despite the queen exchange, Black still has excellent play:



26: gdl f5! 27.exf5 gxf5 28: b2! f6 29.l e2 c6 30: fl l d5 31. d4 e5 Black obtained the upper hand in Harf - Haumann, email 2008.

b) 21.mcl !N



T is suggestion of Van Delf and Ris is more annoying. 21...a6 22.: g5! The rook does a fine job on the ff h rank. Now we have to watch out for the idea of giving the rook for either the knight on h5 or, in the event that we play ... e5, the bishop. White's last move also prepares c4-c5.

21. g5!

Continuing the plan that was annoying me in similar positions. Here, though, I think Black can defend without too many problems.

21... f 22. a5

22.: xh5! g5! doesn't get White anywhere, as after 23: gl t mh7 Black's king is safe enough.

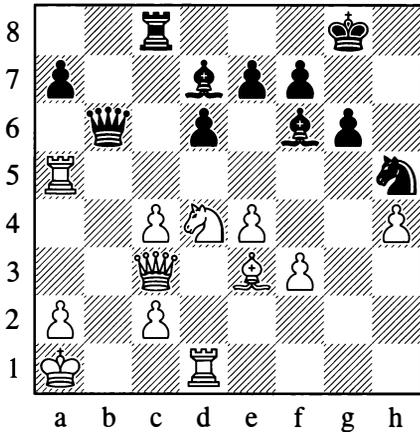
22...Wb6t!

Adding further pins to the position.

23@al

T is is the engine's preference, but now we will always have counterplay along the long diagonal.

23.mcl l g3 24.md2 can be met by the quiet 24...a6! (24...: xc4 is also playable) with the point that 25: a3 d5! gives Black a dangerous initiative.



23..1 g3!?

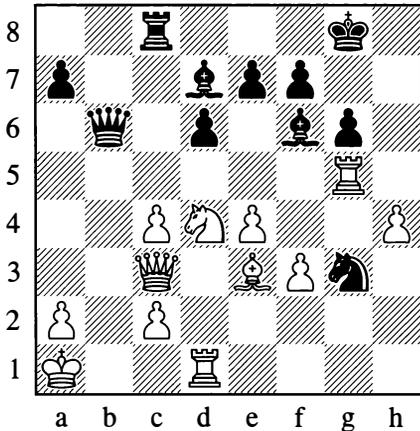
23..J c5 24.: a3 V c7 also of ers long-term pressure

24.: g5!?

I think this is quite a human idea, attempting to give back the exchange to regain the initiative.

24.: e1?: xc4 25.V xc4 V xa5+

24.: a3 e6 25.V a5 V xa5 26.: xa5 xc4 is quite similar to the main line below. White probably has some small edge after 27.c3 (not 27.: xa7! e2), but after 27...a6 I think Black's position is completely playable.



24..i e6!

The position is still tricky for White as his pieces look rather misplaced.

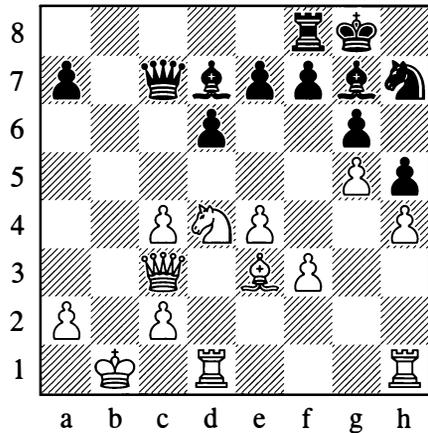
25' b3

25.: xg3?: xc4 26.V b2 (26.V a3 : xc2- +) 26...: b4 27.V a3 V c5 gives Black an overwhelming attack.

25..1 e2 26' xb6 a b6 27J g2i xc4'

White has played extremely accurately, managing to trade queens and retain the extra exchange. However, matters still aren't dear, as he is caught in some awkward pins while Black has good squares for all his pieces. My engine assesses the position as around equal.

D252) 19.951 h7



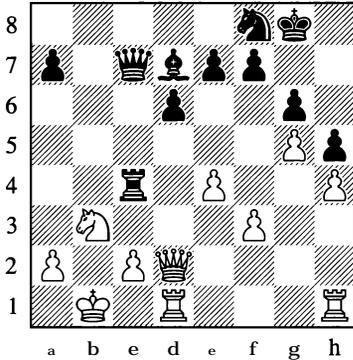
We saw a similar position already in Bok - Cheparinov, which started with 18/ c1. The knight may look misplaced on h7 but it will reroute via f8. With the kingside closed, it is not easy to determine how White should continue.

20.@al

20.c c1 : c8 transposes to the aforementioned Bok - Cheparinov game; see variation D22 on page 209.

20.: d2 was tried in Roberts- Gorzaga Grego, email 2008. I'd go for 20...: b8tN 21.c al l f8 22.: bl : c8 with typical pressure.

20.Wd3 l bSt 21.t b3 t fS 22. d4 xd4
23.Wxd4 l b4 24.Wd2 l xc4 White has
survived the first wave while retaining the
extra exchange. However, his king's safety is a
long-term issue, and it is not easy to improve
his position. The following computer game is a
good illustration:



25.l he1 l a4 26.Wf2 l b4 27. b2 t e6
28.Wd2 l a4 29. a1 t dS!? 30.l e3 t c6
31.Wc3 e6 32.l b1 a5 33.Wd2 t e5 34.l c3
WbS 35.We1 Wb6 36.f4t c4 37.l d3t a3T is
was asterix_2006 - idontknow, engine game
2012. It is clear that Black has been outplaying
White, although White did manage to hold
the draw in the end.

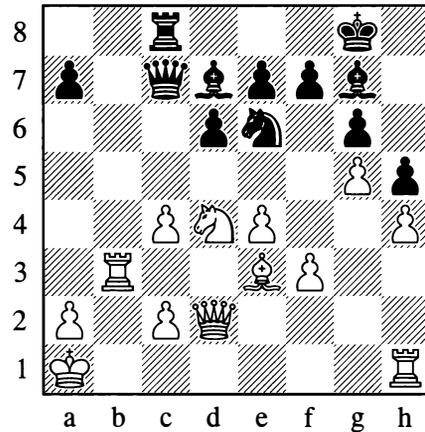
20.J c8 21.l bl l f

Continuing to improve our pieces. Despite
the material deficit, we don't need to rush
anything in this variation, as White's problems
are long-lasting.

21..Wxc4? 22.Wxc4 l xc4 23.l hd1 l xc2 is
the wrong idea; Black has regained two pawns,
but the resulting endgame is slightly better for
White.

22.l b3 l e6 23. d2

This was seen in Hedman - Carlsson, Malmo
2012. Here there's nothing wrong with simply
grabbing the loose pawn:



23.. xc4N 24.c3 a5

Black has full compensation for the
exchange. A sample line is:

25.l hbl l c5 26.l b8 l xb8 27.l xb8t
h7+

Conclusion

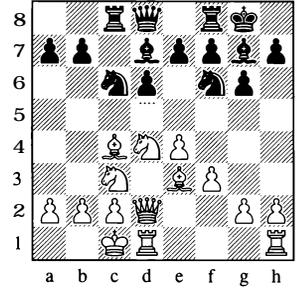
12.< b1 t c4 13. xc4 l xc4 14.g4 has been
a major problem for Black in recent years.
However, the exchange sacrifice with 14...b5
15.b3 b4 offers Black good practical chances,
and I have not been able to find anything
like a refutation. Black gets good long-term
compensation, based not only on attacking
the exposed white king, but also on White's
terrible pawn structure.

Of the alternatives 15.h4 is definitely the
most dangerous. This line has not been looked
at in detail for some time, but perhaps if the
exchange sacrifice catches on, White players
will move to investigate the fresh positions
there.

Finally, let me remind you not to worry if
playing so far behind on material isn't for you.
With the proposed repertoire in this book,
you can avoid the 12. b1 line by choosing
the Topalov Variation (see Chapter 7) against
10.0-0-0.

Chapter 11

Yugoslav Attack



Mr Linsa er 10000

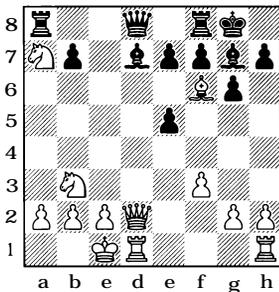
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2. f d6 3.d4 c d4 4. xd4 f 5. c3 g6 6., e3, g7
7.f 0-0 8. d2 e6 9., e4, d7 10.0-0-0

10..J 8

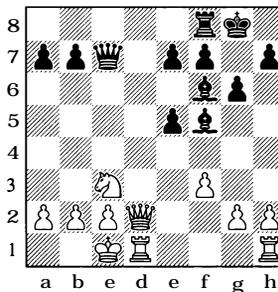
A) 11., e2 a6 12. bl b5 13.g4 xd4!? 14., xd4 e5	222
A1) 15., f	225
A2) 15., e3	226
B) 11., b3 e5	228
B1) 12., h6?	228
B2) 12.g4?! b5!	229
B21) 13.h4?	230
B22) 13.a3	231
B23) 13.g5 b4! 14. ee2 h5	232
B231) 15.♟	234
B232) 15. g3	234
B3) 12., g5!? e4 13., xe4 Exe4	
14.e5! dxe5 15. de2 Ee7 16., x	235
B31) 16..., x	237
B32) 16...exf	239

B3) note to 15./ de2



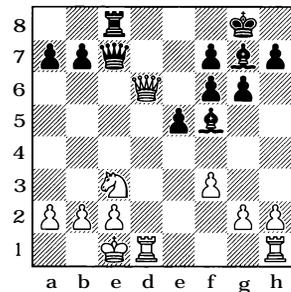
18...exf6!N

B31) after 19./ c3



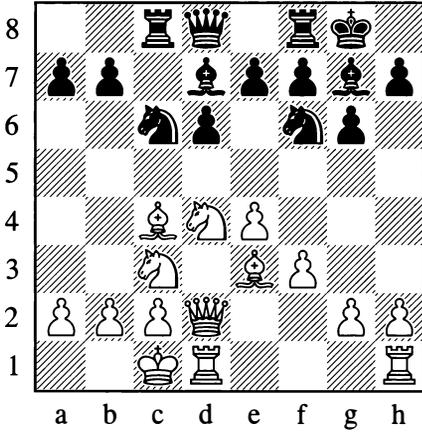
19." e4!N

B32) after 20.Wd6



20...Wxd6N

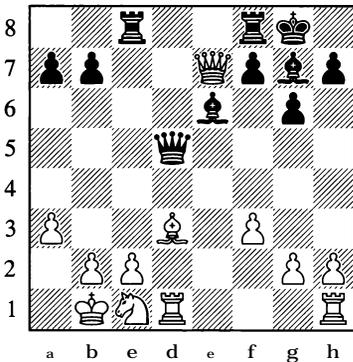
1.e4 c5 2. d4 3.d4 c d4 4.l xd4 l f
 S.t c3 g 6i e3i g7 7.f 0-0 8' d2 t c6
 9i c4i d7 10.0-0-0 c8



In this standard position we will examine the unusual A) 11.i e2 followed by some sidelines after the usual B) 11.i b3.

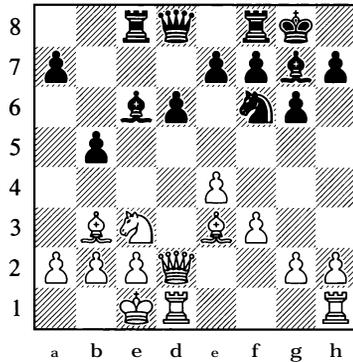
In a surprising number of games White hasn't noticed the threat: 11.h4?? t xd4 12.Wxd4 t g4 +

11. d3?! T e bishop is unfortunately placed here 11...d5! 12.exd5 t b4 Black regains the pawn with a strong initiative. We could stop here, bur I will include a nice illustrative game: 13. bl t f d5 14.t xd5 t xd5 15.t e2?? Surely White had to hold on to his dark-squared bishop. 15...t xe3 16.Wxe3 Wa5 17.Wxe7 e6 1S.a3?! Wd5 19.t cl



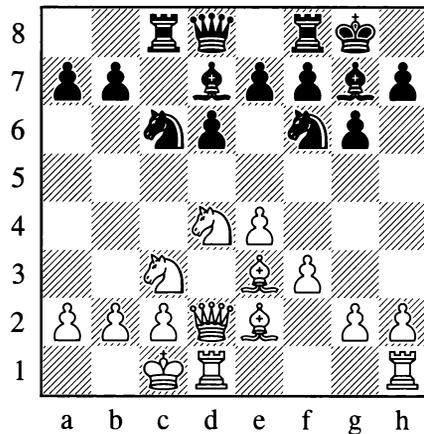
19... xb2! 20. xg6 (20. xb2 We5t 21. bl a2t! 22.' ha2 Wxe7- +) 20..Wa5 21. d3 g7 22.Wh4 h6 0-1 Ventimiglia- Makarczuk, email 2001.

11.t xc6 xc6 12. b3 b5 (12...a5? is also interesting) reaches a Topalov Variation where, instead of Black exchanging on d4, White has exchanged on c6. T is favours Black, as the bishop does a good job controlling the d5-square, and e3 is generally a worse square than d4 for the white bishop, as t d5 no longer forces the trade of bishops.



13. xa7 b4N 14.t d5 t xd5 15.exd5 Wa5 16.We3 a4 We have transposed to variation 0 22 of Chapter 9- see page 193.

A) 11.i e2



Retreating the bishop along the f1-a6 diagonal appears to lose a tempo but White's argument is that, with the bishop on d7, the ...d5 break is harder to achieve. This rare move gives a lot of fertile ground to explore, but Russian GM Boris Savchenko has tried it a few times.

11...a6

This has generally been Black's preference in correspondence and engine games. With White's bishop on a rather passive square, Black can afford to spend a tempo preparing ...b5.

11...d5!?

This was a possibility I mooted on ChessPublishing. Critical looks to be:

12.1 xc6

12.exd5?! 1 b4 regains the pawn with a decent position: 13.d6 Wb5+

12.1 xd5 1 xd5 13.exd5 1 xd4 14. xd4 f5 15.c4 Wxd5 16. xg7 Wxd2 Originally I thought White was marginally better, but Black should be fine.

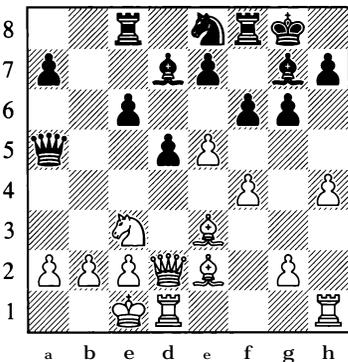
12.Wb1 dxe4 13.f e4 1 xd4 14. xd4 e6 also looks okay for Black.

12...bxc6 13.e5 1 e5 14.f4 Wb5 15.h4

15.Wel Wc7

15...f6

Thus far I gave on ChessPublishing. Here I wrote "with a messy position" and suggested there should be some practical testing. A possible continuation is



16.h5: b5 17.hxg6 hxg6 15.< b1 f e5 19.f e5 xe5 20. d4 xd4 21.Wxd4 1 f6 22.b3 Wb4 T e position remains unclear.

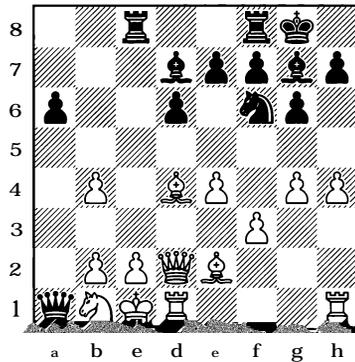
12. b1

12.g4 b5 13.h4

13.< b1 transposes to the main line. This text move is riskier.

13..1 xd4 14. xd4 Wb5 15.a3 b4 16.axb4 Wait 17.1 b1

This is an extremely dangerous way of playing for White, and I can see only engines being happy to defend.



17... e6N

This looks like a good option.

17...e5!? 15. c3 d5 19.exd5 e4 20.g5 e3 21.Wel 1 h5 22. xg7 1 xg7 was another extremely messy position that was later drawn in Matei - Grego, corr. 2012.

15.Wc3 Wb4 19.1 c3

19. c3 d5!? 20.e5 d4! 21: xd4 1 d5 gives Black a strong initiative.

19..Wxb4 20.h5: b5

Black has excellent counter-chances.

12.h4 1 h5!?

This looks peculiar, but it highlights another flaw with White's 11. e2. Now Black will be able to exchange of the light-squared bishop.

12..b5 is fine as well. 13.1 xc6 was Kajumov - Oganyan, Anapa 2009, and now

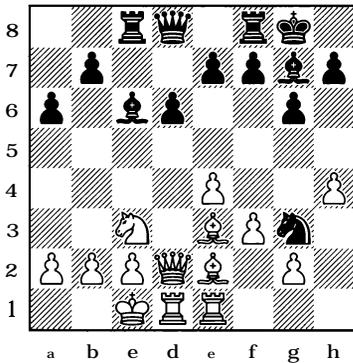
13.. xc6N is logical. 14.t d5 (Attacking with 14.h5?! does not work: 14..t xh5 15.g4 t g3! 16.Eh3 b4 17.t d5 xd5 1S.exd5 t xe2t 19.' xe2 e6') 14.. xd5 15.exd5 EeS= The position resembles the note to White's 13th move in the main line below.

13.Ehe1 t g3 14.t xc6

In Rissanen - Kapusta, email 2009, Black rushed to exchange on e2, but I would prefer:

14.. xc6N

Black is doing fine, for example:



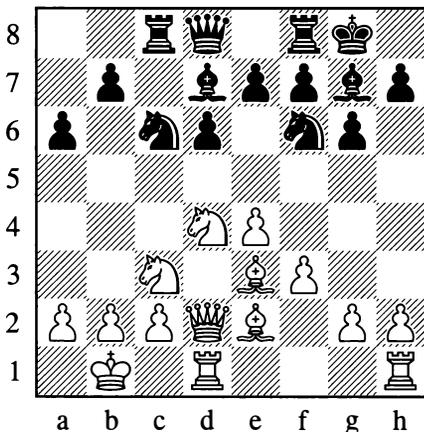
15. h6

15. c4 b5 (15.. xe4!?) 16. b3 a5=

15. d3 xc3! 16.' xc3 xe4'

15.. xh6 16.' xh6 e6 17. d3 ' f6 1S.' g5 t h5

With equal chances.



12..h5 13.g4

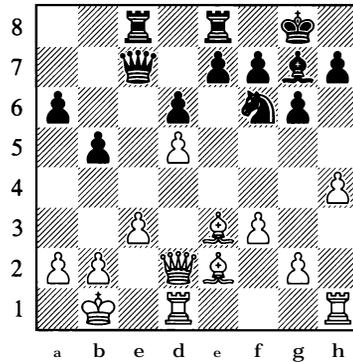
White's alternative way of playing is

13.t xc6 xc6 14.t d5 xd5 15.exd5' c7

Black will combine pressure down the c-file with opening the e-file.

16.c3EfeS 17.h4

This position was reached in Efremov - Nilsson, corr. 2011. Here I would play:



17..' d7N

Preparing to open the e-file. A couple of sample lines continue:

1S.h5

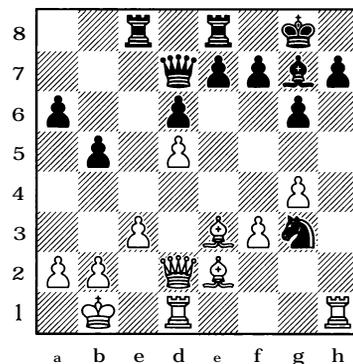
1S.g4 e6 19. h6 xh6 20.' xh6 b4! gives Black good counterplay. White cannot keep the queenside closed with 21.c4? as 21..exd5 favours Black.

1S..t xh5 19.g4

19. d3 t f6°

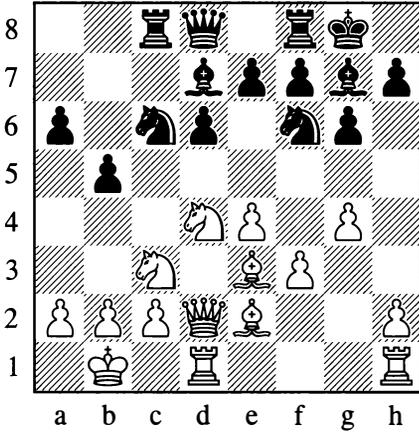
19..t g3

19..t f6 is also possible.



20. d3

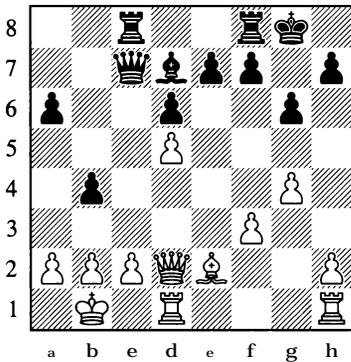
20: h3 t xe2 21.Wxe2 b4 22.cxb4 Wa4+
20...t xh1 21: xh1 Wb7 22.Wh2 h5 23.gxh5
Wxd5 24.We2 b4°



13... xd4!?

T is leads to a fascinating, double-edged position.

13...b4 is a solid alternative which leads to a quieter game: 14.t d5 t xd5 15.exd5 t xd4 16. xd4 xd4 17.Wxd4 Wc7 18.Wd2



18..f5! Black fights for counterplay. He could sit passively, but that would allow White to build an attack on the kingside. 19.h4 (19.g5f4 20. d3 f5 21.h4 Wc5 22: he1: c7 23 xf5 : xf5 24: e4 a5= crawly - nikolay15, engine game 2012.) 19..f g4 20.h5 f5 21. d3 xd3 22.cxd3 gxh5 23.f g4: O 24.gxh5 Wb6

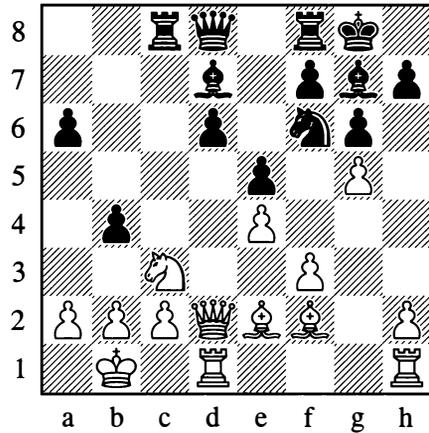
25.Wg2t < h8= crawly - crgiorgio, engine game 2013.

14, bd4 e5

T is looks anti-positional, but the point is to follow up with ...b4, when the c3-knight only has the d5-square available.

We will analyse AI) 15. f and A2) 15. e3. T e moves are similar, but there are some subtle differences which I will point out.

AI) 15.. f b4 16.g5



16...bxc3

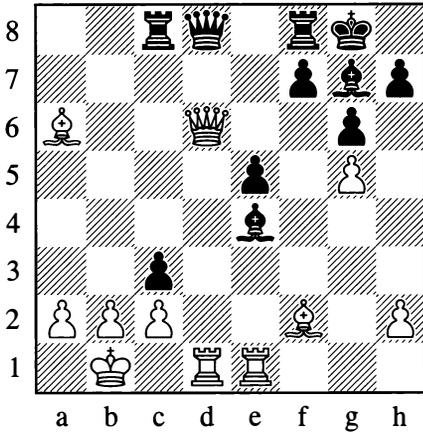
16...: c6!N looks to be an interesting alternative. Af er 17.t a4 t h5 18.Wxb4 t f4 19. fl Wxg5 20.Wb7 : xc2 21.< xc2 xa4t 22.b3 b5 Black has decent compensation for the exchange.

17.Wxd6. xe4 18f e4. e6

18..Wa5!N is an untested attempt to exploit the location of the bishop on f2. 19: d5 (19.Wxd7?? loses to 19..Wb4 20.b3 Wa3) 19.. b5° With a complicated position.

19, ba6, be4 20! hel

As far as I can see, the possibility of attacking the bishop in this way is the point behind putting the bishop on f2.



20... xc2!N

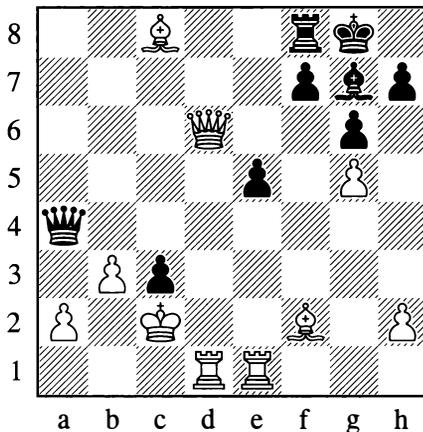
I would be extremely tempted to try this sacrifice, although 20... f5!N also leads to interesting play.

21. xc2 Wa5

Black has given up a whole rook but will pick up a few pawns, while his c-pawn is extremely powerful and White's king is walking around in no man's land.

22.h c8Wa4t 23b3

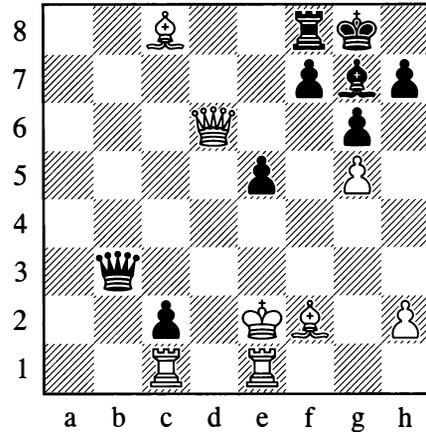
23.mxc3Exc8t 24. \ d3i f8 25. ♖xe5 ♜c6∞
Black will at least pick up the queen for his rook.



23...Wxa2 24. d3c2

24...Exc8 25. d7 Eb8 also leads to unclear play.

25.Ed1 Wxb3t 26. e2



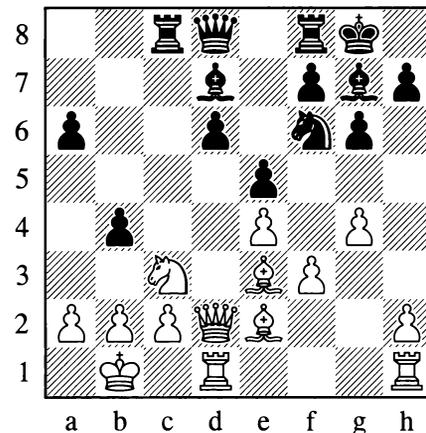
26..e4! 27. f i c8 28. xe4Wb5t 29. e2 . b2 30. e3 c4!

Provoking a weakening of White's kingside

31.h3 C8C

The position remains complicated but dynamically balanced.

A2) 15. e3b4



16.g5

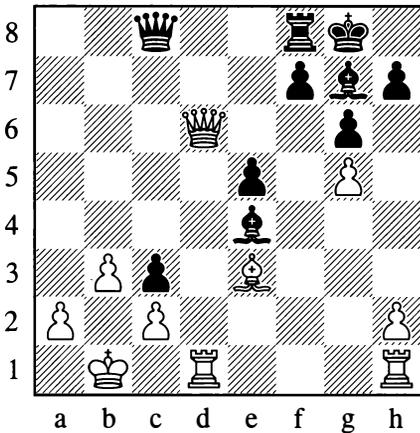
16. ♘d5 ♘xd5 17.exd5 is not at all dangerous: 17...f5N This looks natural, grabbing space in

the centre. Mter 1S.h4 f4 19.j f2 e4! 20.f e4 j a4 21.j d3 Wf6 22.Wc1 b3+ Black has a strong initiative.

16...bxc3 17." xd6 t xe4 18.f e4 i c6!
Continuing the sharp debate.

19.i xa6i xe4 20.i xc8" xc8 21.b3

White's position may be playable for an engine, but it looks extremely dangerous to me. At every turn White must watch out for sacrif ces on c2, opening up his king.



21..." a8N

T is looks like the most threatening practical try. I've added in some potential lines. You should note that White's moves are almost all forced, and the slightest error might see him fall into a mating net.

22. hf

22.Bhgl j xc2t!?

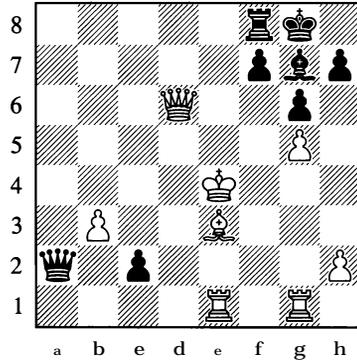
22..J bS and 22... cS also look interesting.

23.@xc2 Wxa2t 24.@d3 e4t! 25. xe4 c2 26. del

26J d5EeSt 27.@f3Exe3t 2S. xe3Wxb3t

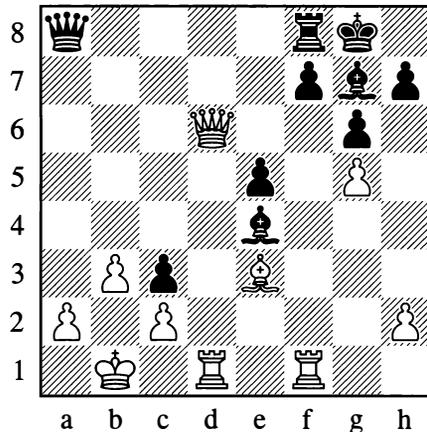
29. f2 cl=W 30.Excl Wb2t 31.Ed2 Wxcl

looks like another draw.



26...WaSt! 27. f4 EdS 2S.Wc7 Ed5! 29.@ g4 29.Wxc2?! Ef5t 30.Wxf5 WbSt 31. g4 gxf5t+ 29...Ed3

Black has an extremely dangerous attack and my engine, after some time, decides the position is equal. Practically I would, of course, take Black.

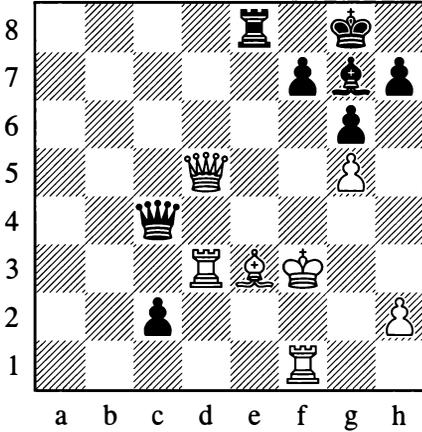


22...i xc2t! 23.< xc2" xa2t 24.< d3 e4t 24...Wxb3!?! could a so be considered.

25.< xe4 c2 26. d5

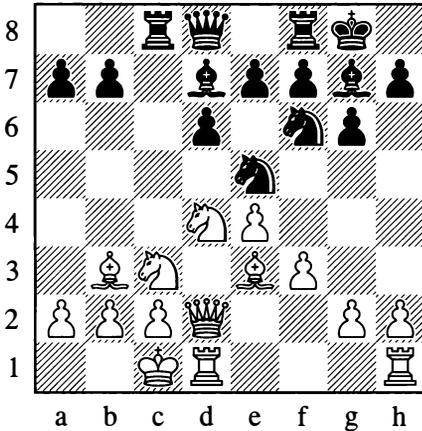
26.Edel WaSt 27. f4 Wg2! maintains the balance.

26.. e8t 27.< f " xb3 28. d3 " c4 29." d5



29. J xe3! 30. @xe3 cl = t 31. Exc1 xc1t
T e endgame must be drawn.

B) 11. b3! e5



In the remainder of the chapter we will examine three sidelines from this popular position: B1) 12. h6?, B2) 12.g4? and B3) 12. g5?.

12. e2? covers the c4-square but allows 12...1xc3! 13.bxc3 a5 when Black has typical Dragon compensation.

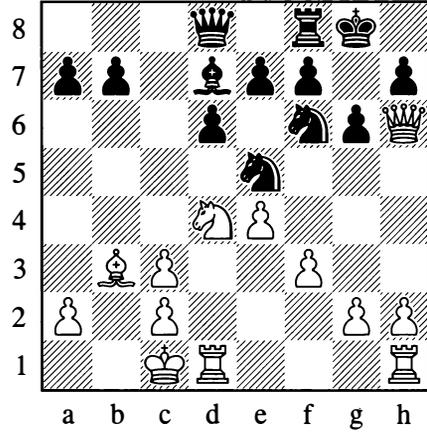
B1) 12. h6?

If White wishes to play this way then he should start with 12.h4, as examined in Chapter 4.

Here White's attack is slower, and so we can play thematically.

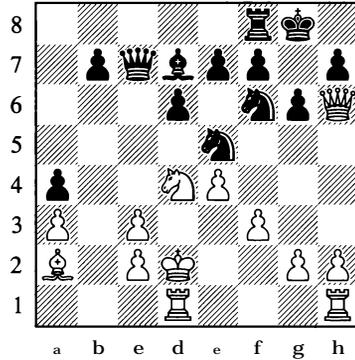
12... xh6 13. xh6 Exc3! 14.bxc3

Compared to the position with h2-h4 and ...h5 inserted, the g6-pawn is now much better protected and so White doesn't have any O-f4 ideas. In an old game Korchnoi showed a good approach.



14...a5! 15.a4

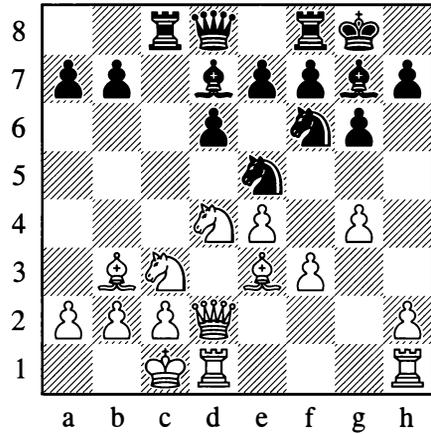
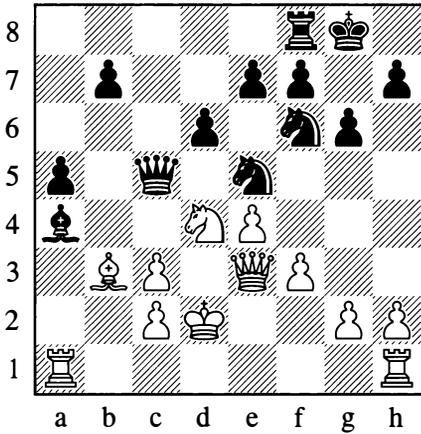
15.a3 has also been tried. A game involving a young David Navara continued: 15... c7 16.< d2 a4 17.i a2 Navara - Ptacnikova, Czech Republic 1998 At this point Iceland's top female player missed a tactical shot:



17...l eg4!N 18.f g4 (18. g5 l f2+)
18...l xe4t 19.mc1 xc3 With a powerful attack.

15... e7 16 e3 e5 17. < d2Axa4! 18J a1

B2) 12.g4?



18..h b3!?

18..i d7+ is a good alternative, but the Old Man of Chess chooses to improve his opponent's structure in order to gain a tempo for his attack.

Generally g2-g4 does not work very well if Black can immediately start his counterattack.

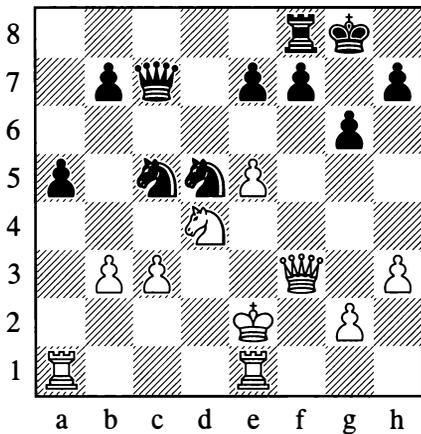
19.cxb3 dS! 20.h3 dxe4 21.f e4 1 ed7 22< e2 ' e7 23J he1 l eS 24.eS l dS 2S.' O

12..bS!

Exploiting the weakened f -pawn. White's main responses are B21) 13.h4?!, B22) 13.a3 and B23) 13.gS.

Now in Geller - Korchnoi, Moscow 1971, Black should have played:

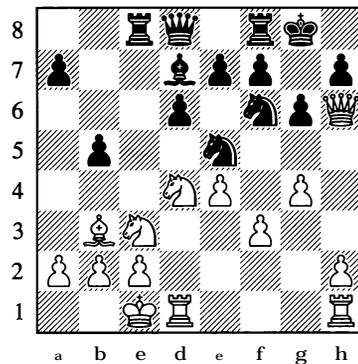
For the sake of completeness, it is worth mentioning that 13.t cxb5?! fails to 13..l xf !N.



13.i h6? is too slow. In general in the Dragon, the moves g2-g4 and i h6 don't combine very well, although you do have to watch out for some f5 ideas. 13..i xh6 14.' xh6

2S..l e4!N

With a decisive advantage.

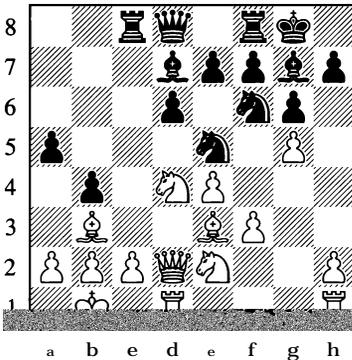


Here the simple 14..a5N looks strongest:

15.a3 (15.C dxb5 a4 16. xa4 Wa5 17.We3 xb5 1S. xb5Bxc3 19.Wxc3Wxb5+) 15...b4 16.axb4 axb4+ Black has his typical attack.

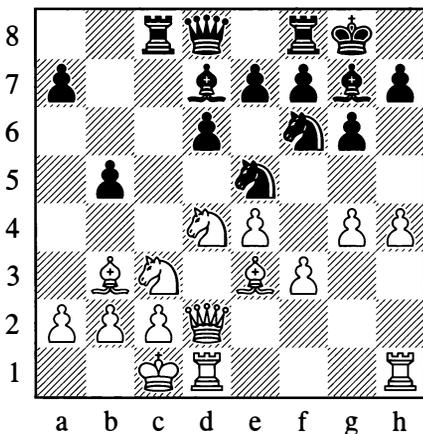
White is also struggling af er:

13.< b1 b4 14.C ce2
 14.C d5 Cxd5 15. xd5 e6 16. b7 (16. b3 a5 +) 16...C c4 17.We2 C xe3 1S.Wxe3 Bc4 19. a6 Bxd4 20.Bxd4 Wb6 was winning for Black in Lapinski - Moranda, Leba 2006.
 14...a5 15.g5



15...C xf3! N
 T e sacrifice looks extremely tempting, although 15...C h5 is also good of course.
 16.C xf3 C xe4 17.Wd3 C c5 1S. xc5 Bxc5+
 Black already has two pawns for the piece and open lines for his bishops, while the b3-bishop is, as usual, extremely short of squares.

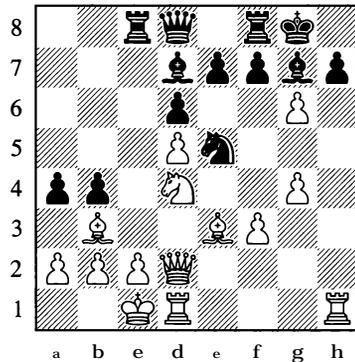
B21) 13h4?!



This is more hopeful than anything else; White's attack is far too slow.

13...b4 14.l ce2
 14.C b1? a5 is already winning for Black. In the Topalov Variation I mentioned how poor a square b1 was for the knight in this structure.

14.C d5 Cxd5 15.exd5 (After 15. xd5 e6 16. b3 a5 White has problems with his b3-bishop and is already dropping material.)
 15...a5 16.h5 a4 17.hxg6



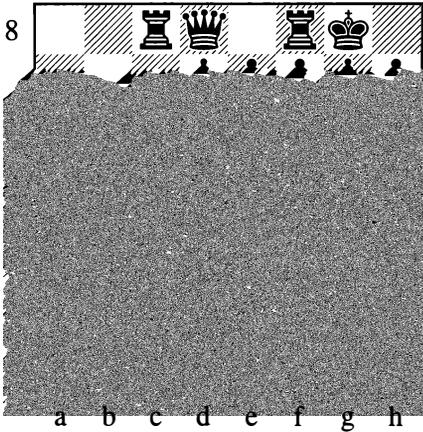
17...axb3 (17...f g6N 1S.Wh2 h5! 19.9xh5 C xf3 20.C xf3 Bxf3 + is even more accurate) 1S.Wh2T is was Romano- Elitropi, Bergamo 2007, and now Black could have won with: 1S...h6N 19. xh6 C xf3! (19...bxa2 20. xg7 a1=Wt is also good enough, but there is no need to make it messy;) 20.C xf3 Bxc2t- +

14...a5
 If we compare this to the Topalov Variation, the bishop is worse placed on e3 than d4, the knight is well-placed on e5 and White's c3-knight has already been pushed back to e2. It's clear that White has an inferior version, and he is already in deep trouble.

15.h5
 15.g5 C h5 16.f4 C g4 17. gl a4 1S. d5 e6 19. b7 Bc7 20. a6 Wa8 21. d3 b3 22.a3

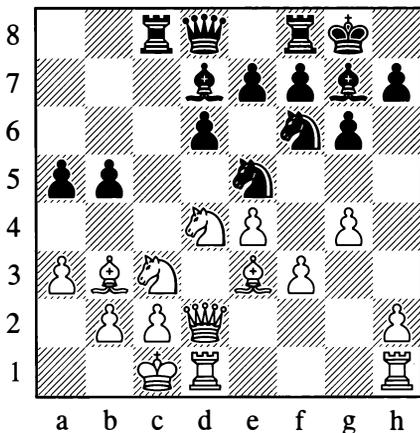
bxc2 23j xc2' xe4 + Murray - Bourached, Bunnatty 2013.

1S...a4 16i ds l xds 17.exdS t c4 18' d3
 In Toenniges - T Ernst, Bad Wildbad 2002, Black opted to win the exchange with 18...a3 19.b3 l b2, but he missed something even stronger:



18...h3N
 White simply cannot cope with all the threats.

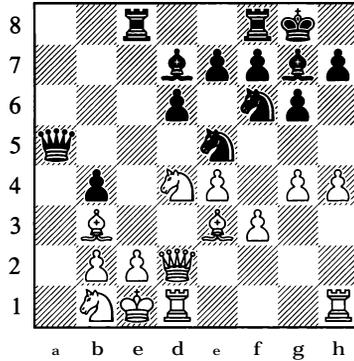
B22) 13a3as



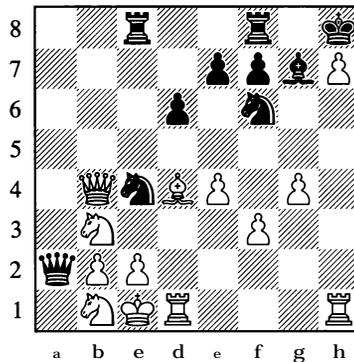
T rowing in these two pawn moves does not change much; Black's attack is still coming much more quickly.

14.gS

14.h4 b4 1S.a b4 a b4 16.l b1 (16.l a2 l c4 17j xc4l xcH) 16..' aS In the Topalov Variation we examined similar positions with the d4- and eS-knights exchanged. Here Black is still doing excellently, for example:



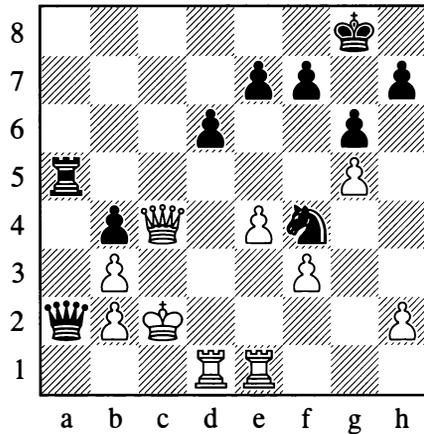
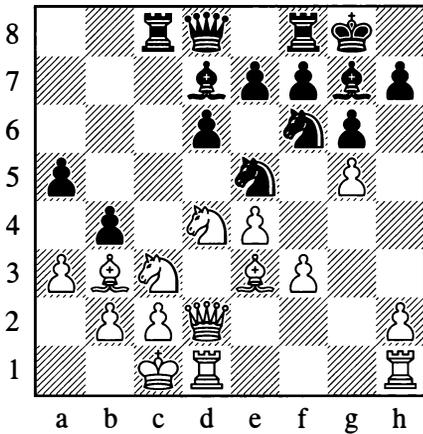
17.hS j a4! 18.hxg6 j xb3N T e strongest continuation. Black can afford to sacrifice a pawn or two in front of his king as his attack on the queenside is immediately decisive. 19.l xb3' a2 20.gxh7t < h8 + White cannot deal with the threats to both b2 and b3 An attractive finish might be: 21.' xb4 l c4 22j d4



22...l dS!! 23.exdS' xb2t! 24.j xb2j xb2#

14...b4

14...l hS is also strong; the mutual a-pawn moves favour Black. However, we may as well be consistent.



15.a b4 a b4 16.t a2 t h5 17.@bl a8
18. d5!

18.t xb4 is better, although 18..Wa5
19.t a2 Wa6 maintains serious pressure.

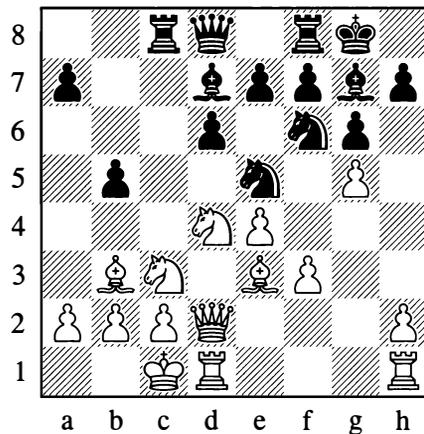
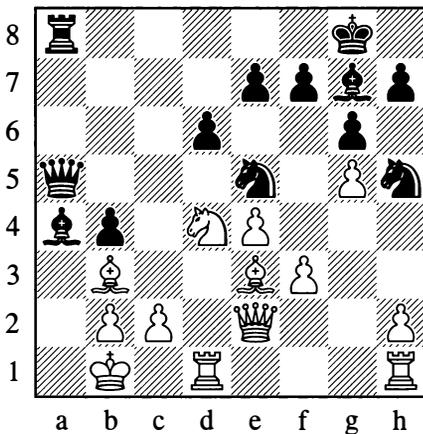
18.. xa2! 19. xa2 ' a5 20. b3 a4
21.' e2 a8

Black obviously has fantastic compensation for the exchange. It is instructive to see how he converted that to something tangible.

29..t g2! 30. e2 c5 31.' xc5 d c5
32. xg2 c4+

Material is now roughly equal but the combination of White's weak pawns, in particular the one on f3, and his exposed king meant it wasn't too difficult for Black to secure the full point in Deneuveille- Matisson, email 2008.

B23) 13.g5



22.@cl t c6 23.' c4 l xd4 24. xd4 xd4
25.' xd4 t f4 26. hel xb3 27.c b3 ' a
28.' c4 a5 29.@c2

T is White's only logical continuation.

13..b4!

Magnus Carlsen's choice, which seems to refute White's opening play.

14.t ce2

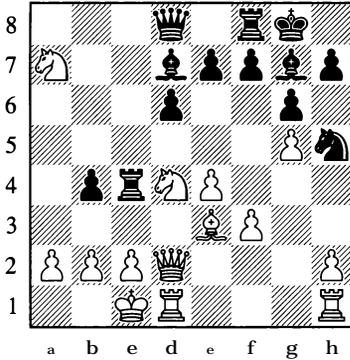
No better is

14.t cb5 t h5 15.t xa7

White has won a pawn, but his knight is now caught horribly of side.

15..t c4! 16.i xc4 Exc4

Black has typical compensation thanks to his strong attack coupled with White's trapped knight on a7.



17.b3

Trying to close the queenside.

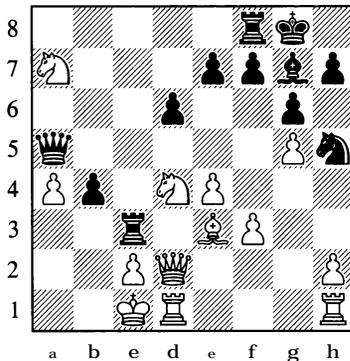
Another game continued: 17.Wd3 i xd4!

Ensuring that the a7-knight is cut of permanently. 18.i xd4 Wc7 19.i e3 Ea8

20.Ehel t f4 21.i xf4 Exa7 0 1 Garcia Diez - Carrettoni, email 2006.

17...Ec3 18.a4 i xa4! 19.bxa4 Wa5

The piece sacrifice gives Black a huge attack.

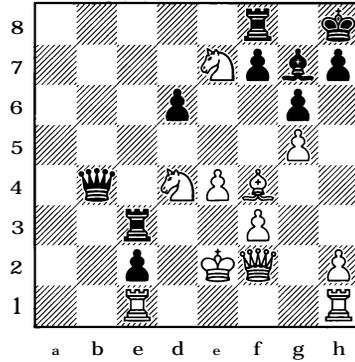


20.t ac6

20.t ab5 Wxa4 21.t xc3 Wa3t 22.< b1 bxc3 wins

20..Wxa4 21.t xe7t < h8 22.Wf2 b3 23.< d2 Wb4 24.< e2 bxc2 25.Ecl t f4t 26.i xf4

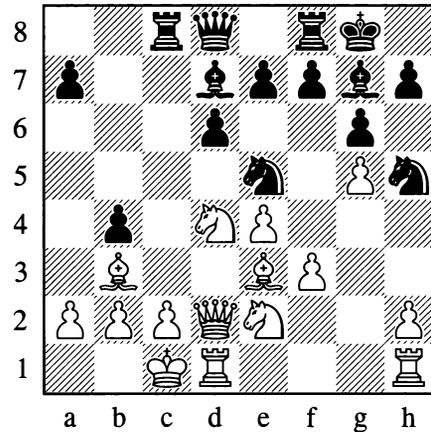
Now in Goncharov - Schilling, email 2008, the simple recapture would have done the trick:



26..i xd4N 27.Wg2 f5! +

Black has a decisive attack.

14..t h5

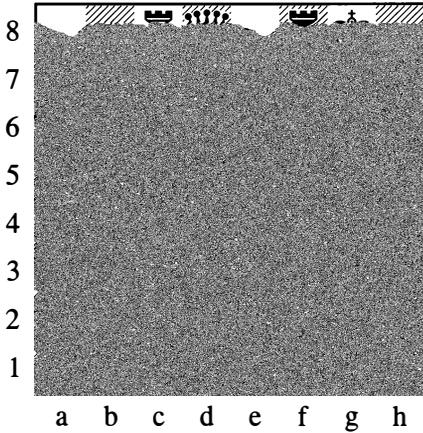


Black has great chances from this position, but it is still worth checking some of the details. We will analyse B231) 15.£1 and B232) 15.t g3.

15.Wxb4? is assessed by Boensch as clearly better for White, but after 15...a5! 16.Wa3 a4! Black is winning material and the game: 17.i d5 e6 18.i b7 t c4 19.Wc3 t xe3

20.Wxe3 1 b8 21.j a6 0-1 In Vanek - Gschwendtner, Czechoslovakia 1988, White resigned before Black could play 21...Wb6.

B231) 15.f4



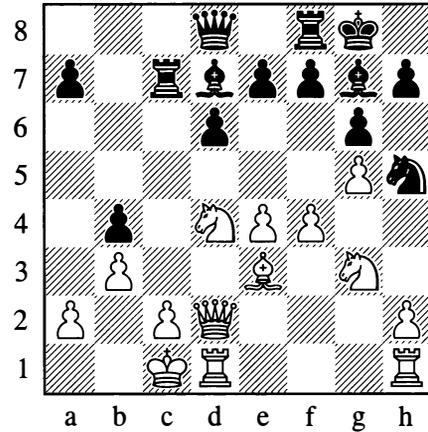
It is what was Judit Polgar's try in her game against Magnus Carlsen. However, it should be mentioned that it was only a rapid game; I doubt that she would have chosen this line in a standard game.

15...t c4 16.i xc4l xc4 17.b3

17.Wd3Wc7 18.f5l c8 19.< b1 occurred in the more recent game Stachanczyk - Boudriga, Tromso (ol) 2014. Here I like the thematic 19...a5N when Black has a great position. White cannot even force a structural concession with 20.L g3 in view of 20...L f4=.

17...l c7 18.l g3

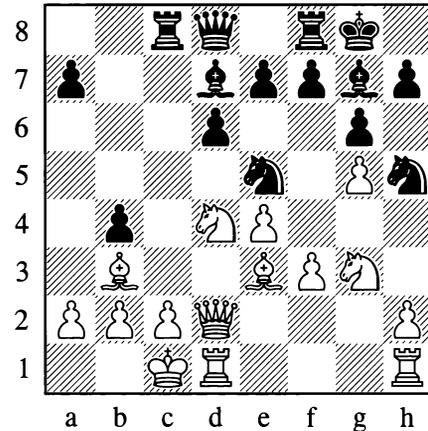
In J. Polgar - Carlsen, Mainz (rapid) 2008, Magnus continued ignoring White's kingside intentions. However, I am sure that in a long-play game he would have chosen:



18..i g4N

Keeping complete control. In an absolute sense, Black is already winning.

B232) 15.l g3



It has been White's most common choice, hoping to get play along the h-f file.

15...a5! 16.l xh5 g 5

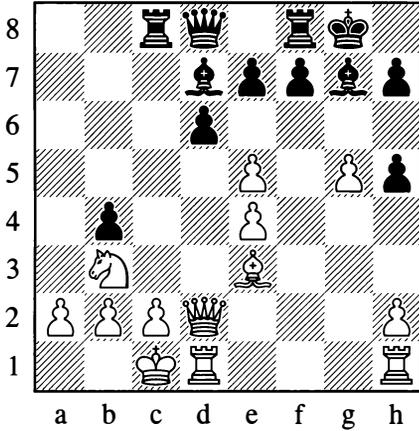
Black has allowed his kingside to be fractured but White's attack has been slowed, while Black is about to crash through.

17.f4

17.L f5 was punted in another game: 17...a4 18.j d5 b3!? (The immediate 18...e6N is also strong) 19.axb3 e6 20.L xd6 exd5 21.L xc8

i xc8 22.f4 l f3 23." xd5 e6 24." d3 a b3
25.c3 c4 26.i bl " g4 0 1 White threw in the
towel in Overgaard - Bek esletten, email 2008

17...a4 18.f e5 a b3 19.1 xb3



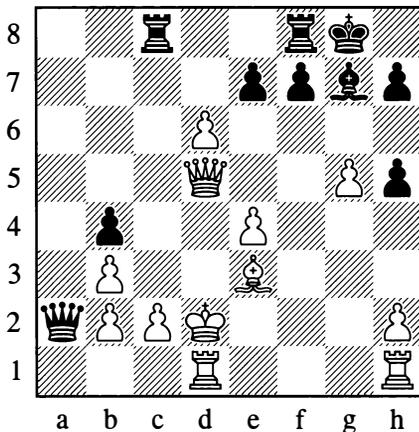
19... e6!

19... xe5 has been the most popular move, when Black is also doing well. However, the text move is even stronger:

20. exd6

20." xb4 N " c7 21." c3 " b8=

20...h b3 21.a b3" aS 22' d5' a2 23' d2
Now in Hardy - Percze, email 2004, the most accurate continuation would have been:



23...e6 N 24' d3h b2 25.d7

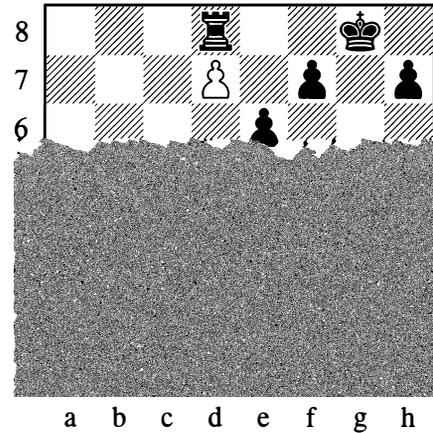
25. e2 l c3 26." d2 " as 27.d7 " xe4 is also crushing for example: 28.d8=" ' g2t 29. f2 " f3t 30. el " xh1t 31.me2 " e4t 32.mfl l xc2- +

25...l xc2! 26' el

26. xc2 a3# and 26' xc2 c3t 27. d3 " a6# are quicker routes to the same result.

26.. c3t 27.' f l d8

White is completely tied down.

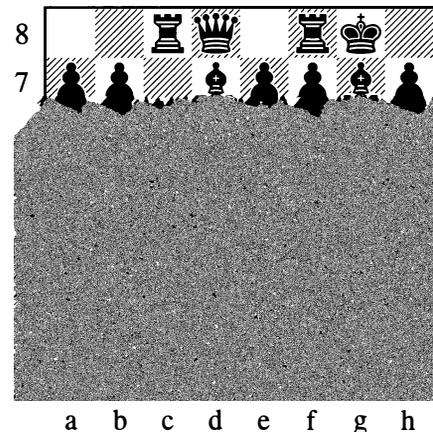


28. b6h4+

White's last move didn't actually threaten anything:

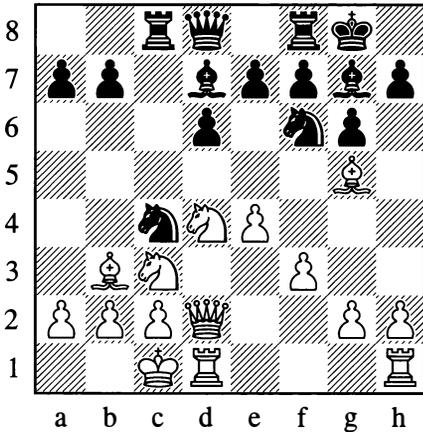
29.h d8? l f t 30' gl g2t 31' f ' f #

B3) 12. g5!?



It is the most interesting of the sidelines examined in this chapter. Moving the bishop again looks peculiar, but remember it's the main move with 12.h4 h5 inserted. White puts pressure on the e7-pawn and has ideas of f-f4 and e4-e5.

12... c4



13.i xc4

13.Wc2?! would be a strong move in the analogous position after 12.h4 h5 13.i g5 t c4, but here it runs into a series of sacrificial blows: 13...t xb2! 14.< xb2 l xc3! 1S.i xf6 (1S.' xc3 WaSt 16.' b2 Wxg5 picks up the bishop, which would not be possible with a pawn on h4) 1S...l xb3t 16.axb3 i xf6 Black had more than enough play for the exchange in Westerinen - Tajan, Torremolinos 1974.

13.Wd3

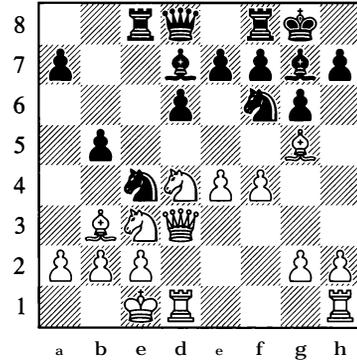
This move might feel more logical when there is no bishop to capture on d4. However, it is hard for White to achieve much with the c4-knight dominating the position.

13...b5 14.f4

In the event of 14.l he1 I like 14...e6!N. Black takes control of the d5-square and is ready to expand on the queenside.

Now in Mnatsakanian - Cebalo, Bad

Zwischenahn 2005, Black missed a strong possibility:



14...b4!N 1S.t d5

1S.t ce2 t a5+

1S...t xd5 16.i xc4

16.exd5 t a5+

16...t e3!?

16...t b6 is also good.

17.i xf t l xf 1S.Wxd Wc7 19.1d2 Wc4

13.J c4 14.e5!

This is White's big idea. The pin along the d-file is rather annoying. Alternatives lead nowhere:

14.t de2 Wa5 is comfortable for Black.

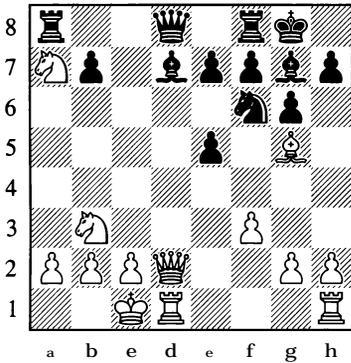
14.t b3 i e6 1S.e5 t e5 is fine for Black: 16.l he1 (Attempting to exploit the pin with 16.exd6?! t xd6 17.t b5 runs into 17...Wb6 1S.t xd6 exd6 + with a decisive attack) 16...Wc7 17.t b5 Wb6 1S.t a3 l c7 19.i d Wa6 20.exd6 t xd6 21.t c5 Wb6 Black had nothing to worry about in Brustman - Batceceg, Novi Sad 1990.

14...d e5 1S.t de2

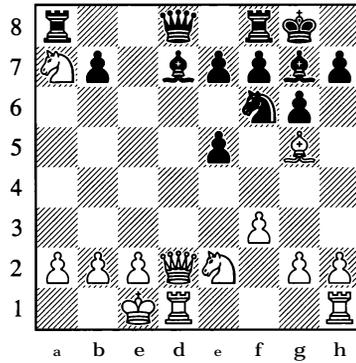
This looks like the more challenging retreat.

The alternative is 1S.t b3 l c7 16.t b5 (16.i xf6 exf6 17.t b5 is similar to the main line, but the knight isn't on such a good circuit on b3 as on e2 17...i f5 1S.t xc7 Wxc7

19. b1 ! c8 20. a1 i e6+ Niedermaier - W. Schmidt. Bad Neustadt 1986.) 16...! c8 17.t xa7! a8



17...! c5N is also strong; after 18.i xf6 i xf6 19.' xd7' b6+ Black regains the piece with a fine position.



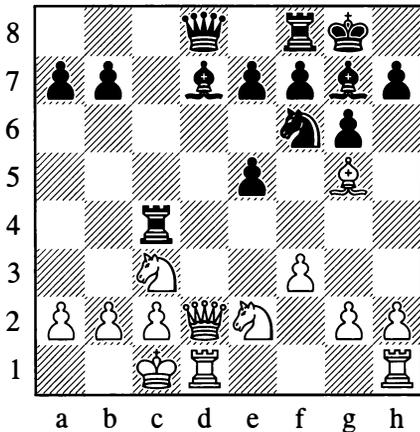
18.i xf6 Here I prefer: 18..exf6!N 19.' xd7 ' b6 20.l b5 l fd8 21.' c7 ! xdl t 22.! xd1 ' xb5+ Material is level, but I think it will be easier for Black to utilize his extra f- and e-pawns than for White to start advancing the pawns in front of his king

18.i xf6 exf6 19.' xd7 ' a5 20.l b5 ! fd8 21.' xb7?

21.' c7 is better, although Black is still for preference after 21..i h6t 22.f4 ! xdl t 23! xd1' xb5+.

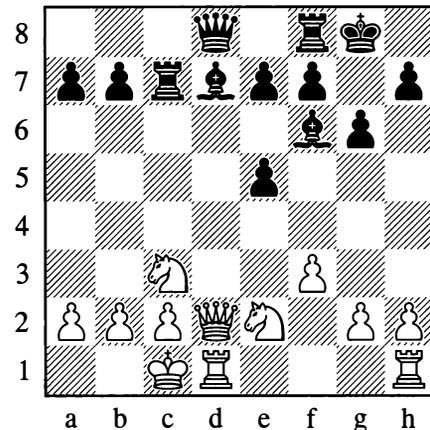
21..i h6t 22.f4 ! db8 23' c6 ! xb5 24' c4 exf4

Black was winning in Niewold - Evans, email 2008.



Returning to the main line, it is worth examining B31) 16...i x and B32) 16...ex . Both moves are playable, but they lead to different types of positions.

B31) 16..L



15.J 7 16L

Going after the a-pawn is unimpressive:

16.l b5! c8!

In all the over-the-board games Black has sacrificed the exchange here with 16..i f5, but the text move is just excellent for Black.

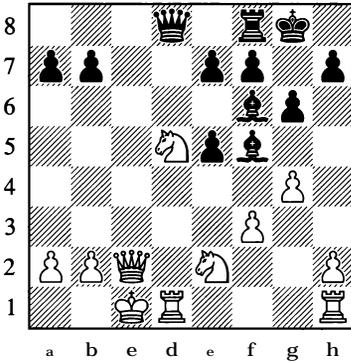
17.l xa7

17.i xf6 i xb5+

17...! a8

The more aggressive option.

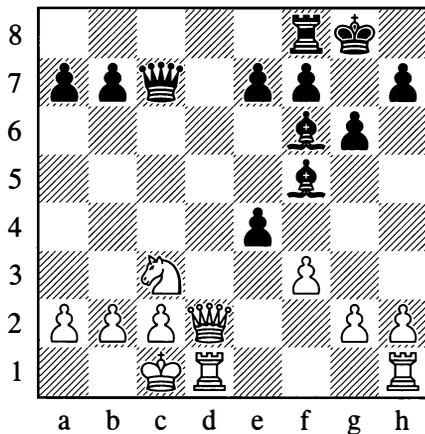
17. t d5. f 18. t xc7
18. g4? xc2t 19. Wxc2



19... g5! This move must have been overlooked. 20. b1 . xc2t 21. xc2 Wc8t 22. < b1 e6 + Black soon won in M. Hansen - Borge, Tastrup 1992.

18.. ' fc7 19. t c3 e4! N

19...b5 has been played, but I like this suggestion by Chris Ward. Black offers another pawn to open up lines for his bishops



20. t d5

White goes after the strong dark-squared bishop.

The only move Chris examines is 20. f e4.

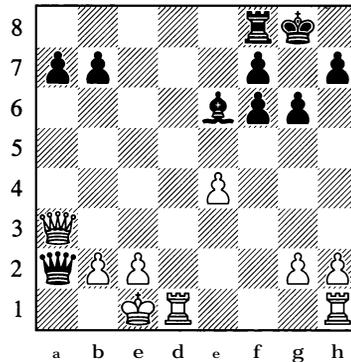
His analysis continues 20... xc3 21. Wxc3 Wxc3 22. bxc3 xe4 when the endgame looks balanced. White still has a slight material advantage, but it will be hard to exploit it due to his fractured queenside. Meanwhile Black has a powerful bishop and a potentially strong passed e-pawn.

20. t xe4 is more critical, but Black can obtain good counterplay: 20... xe4 21. f e4 W e5 22. Wb4 a5 23. Wb6 c8 White will have to take care over the long diagonal. One might well argue that the dark-squared bishop is worth a rook.

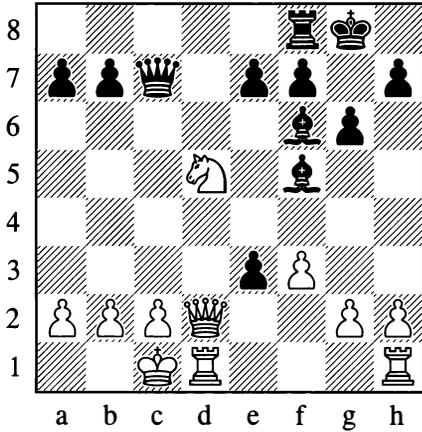
20... e3!?

Black jettisons the pawn to deflect White's knight.

20... Wc4 21. t xf6t exf6 22. Wd5 Wa6 23. f e4 e6 24. Wd6 Wxa2 25. Wa3



25... Wxa3! (there is also 25... Wc4 26. he1 c8 when Black continues to have pressure for the exchange) 26. bxa3 c8: White should be a little better thanks to his material advantage. However, I don't think it's enough to win. The e6-bishop is protected and controls some important squares, in particular preventing White from taking the seventh rank. Having four pawn islands will make it tough for White to create a passed pawn, and without a passed pawn he cannot win.



21.t xe3

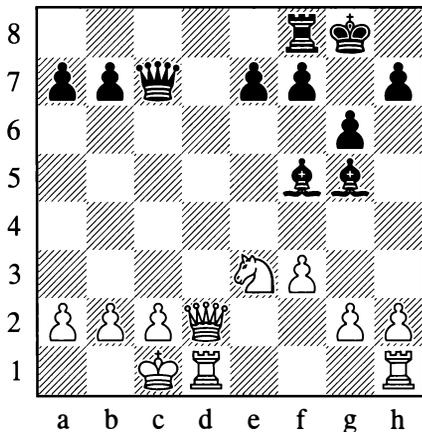
Mter 21.t xf6t ?! exf6 22.Wc3 We7 Black has a huge pawn and an attack along the c-f file looming.

21.l xc7 exd2t 22.' xd2 2c8 23.t d5 2xc2t 24.' e3 2xb2 is a level endgame.

21.We2!/? is interesting. However, with 21..Wa5 22.t xf6t exf6 23.Wxe3 Wxa2 24.Wa3Wc4 Black still has good compensation.

21..i g5

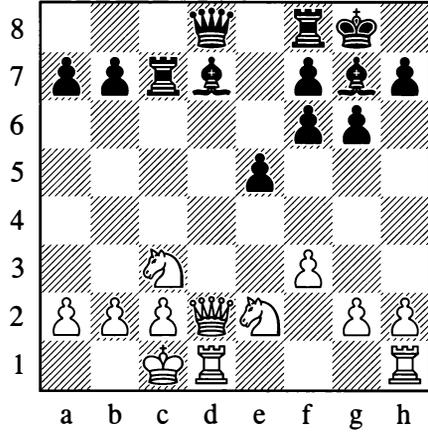
The two bishops coordinate well and put White in an awkward pin. One possible continuation is



22J hel c8 23.c3 i e6 24.' bl Wxh2 25.g4Wg3C1

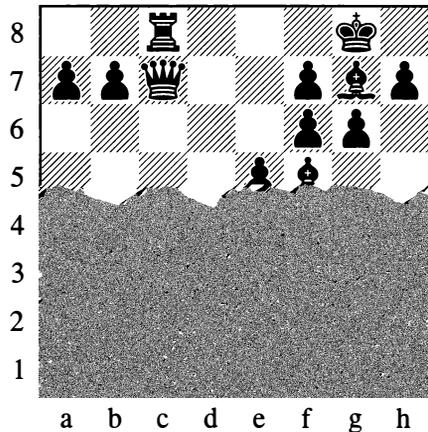
Or even 25..Wxd2 26.2xd2 < g7a •

B32 16..exf



In principle I prefer this structure to the one with the pawn on e7. That's because White won't be able to control the e4-square so easily and it will be easier for Black to create a passed pawn. The downside is that the d6-square is now undefended and so Black will struggle to keep the queens on the board.

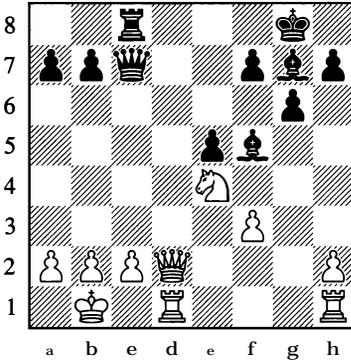
17.t b5i f ! 18.t xc7Wxc7 19.t c3 c8



20.Wd6

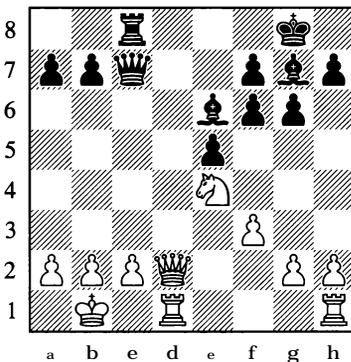
I think this is the most challenging. Since Black is the one with the material deficit but the better attacking prospects, White tries to force the exchange of queens.

20.g4 e6 21.< b1 f5 22.gxf5 xf5 23.l e4 occurred in Guseinov - Moranda, Cappella la Grande 2006.



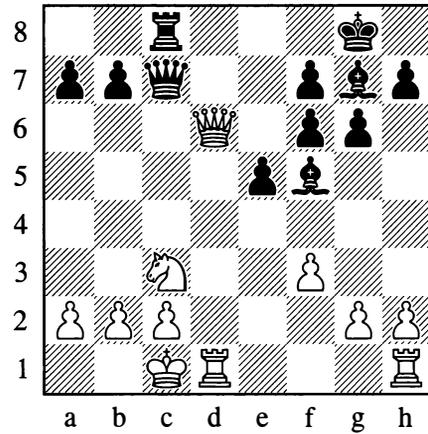
Here I suggest 23...b5N when Black has good counterplay, and the chances are roughly balanced. I would like to add that h2-h4 should be met by ...h5 (rather than ...h6) to keep the c1-h6 diagonal open.

20.< b1 e6 21.l e4 was played in Kindermann - K. Georgiev, Dortmund 1991.



Here I would start to open up the path of the g7-bishop with 21...f5N, for example: 22.l d6 : b8 23.h4 e4 24.f e4 f e4 25.' e3 b5+ The d6-knight looks pretty but is not

targeting anything while Black's bishops make an impressive sight.



20.. xd6N

20...' c4 21.' e7! is rather annoying so Black should acquiesce to the queen exchange.

2U hd6i f ! 22.: d5

22.: xf6 ' g7= traps the rook and so regains the material.

22...i e7 23: hdl r g7

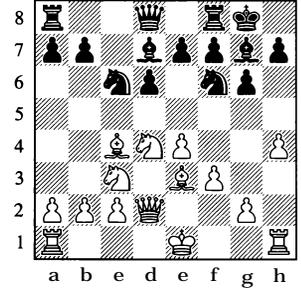
We have reached a complicated ending. White has a slight material advantage, but two bishops and a pawn aren't much worse than rook and knight. Black's plan is to drop his bishop back to e6 followed by advancing the f- and e-pawns. It will not be easy for White to keep control of the position.

Conclusion

The only dangerous line looked at in this chapter is 12. g5!?. At first this move looks strange, but it has a few points. I think the exchange sacrifice is the simplest way to play against it. The critical moment comes on move 16 when you have a choice between the aggressive 16... xf6 or playing the endgame with 16...exf6, both of which offer Black good counter-chances.

Chapter 12

Yugoslav Attack



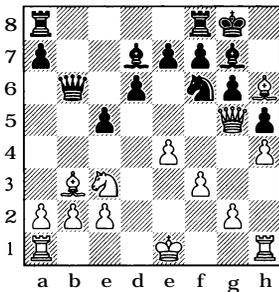
1Q4- Minor Lines

Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.t f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 t f 5.t c3 g6 6. e3 g7
7.f 0-0 8. d t c6 9. c4 d7 10.h4
10...h5

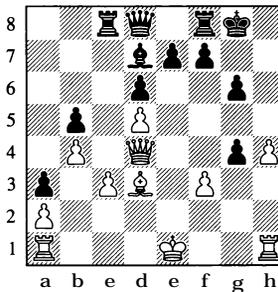
A) 11.t xc6	242
B) 11. b3 g c8	244
B1) 12.t d5	244
B2) 12.g4	245
B3) 12.t xc6!?	246

A) note to 13. xg7



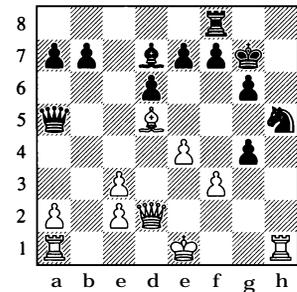
14...c4N

81) after 20. d3



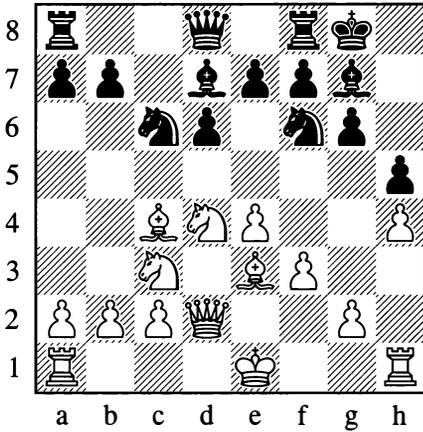
20...e5N

82) after 18.bxc3



18..f6N

1.e4 c5 21 d6 3.d4 c d4 4.l xd4 t f
 S.t c3 g6 6 e3 g7 7.f 0 0 8\ d l c6
 9 c4 d7 10.h4 h5



I spent a while considering other move orders, but both Kasparov and Carlsen chose to play this way. Generally this position will just transpose to the Soltis Variation. White's only other option that we need to take seriously is the knight exchange on c6. We will start with the immediate A) 11.t xc6 before considering the more flexible B) 11. b3.

By far the most common continuation is 11.0 0 0 ! c8 12.i b3 l e5, which takes us back to the Soltis Variation.

11.l de2! c8 12.i b3 is covered on page 244 - see 12.l de2 in the notes to variation B.

11.g4 is an aggressive attempt, but White isn't going to deliver mate without the use of his a1-rook. 11...hxg4 Here 12.0 0 0 was played anyway, when 12...l e5 13.i b3! c8 transposes to variation D of Chapter 6. (13..l h5!? was an interesting independent option in Travkin - Le Ruyet, Pardubice 2013.)

A) 11.t xc6 bxc6

I think if White really wants to play this way he would do better to wait for Black to commit

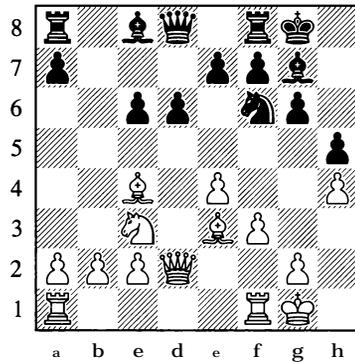
his rook to c8. Not many humans want to give Black an extra central pawn and control over the d5-square, which is often the main weakness in Black's position in the Dragon. It is no coincidence that many of the game references in this chapter are from the engine domain.

12. h6

Exchanging the dark-squared bishops is a natural plan for a human player: Since 11.i h6?? would have dropped material, the present line is White's fastest way to achieve his goal.

12.0 0 0 gives Black more than one decent option: 12..i a5 (12..i c8 13.i h6 i e6 T is plan of trading light-squared bishops always looks reasonable to me. 14.i xg7 ' kg7= el-shaddai - jm26, engine game 2013.) 13.' b1 ! fb8 14.i b3 i e6= wizzardpower - gamestar; engine game 2012.

12.0 0 After choosing to play the Yugoslav Attack and even getting as far as playing h2-h4, I can't imagine many people then being happy to castle kingside. Computer chess at work again... 12..i c8!? (12..i c8N 13.l fd1 i e6= looks a completely viable plan here too.)



13.l ad1 i c7 14.i d4 l d7 15.i xg7 ' kg7 16.b3 i a5= wizzardpower - saL 21, engine game 2012.

12. b3

T is is an odd move order to adopt.

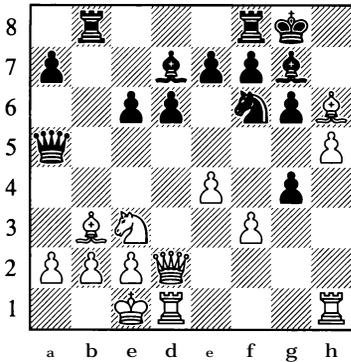
12...1 c7

12..1 8 transposes to variation B3, but it would be an odd choice via this move order. Yet again 12...1 c8!N 13.0-0 e6 is fully playable.

13. h6: ab8 14.g4!?

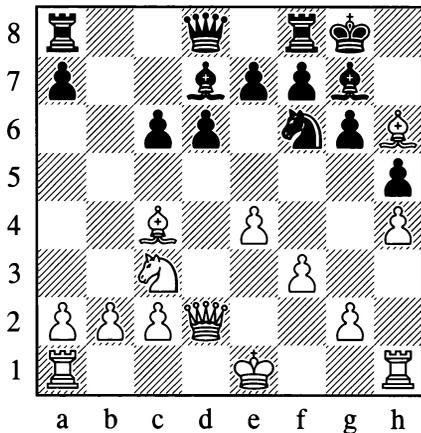
Suddenly the game becomes sharp.

14...1 aS 1S.0-0 Ohxg4 16.hS



16...: xb3!? 17.cxb3 gxf3 18.b4 1 xb4 19.hxg6 f g6 20: dg11 g4

daami - jm126, engine game 2012, was a mess. As usual in all-engine games, the complications eventually resulted in a draw.



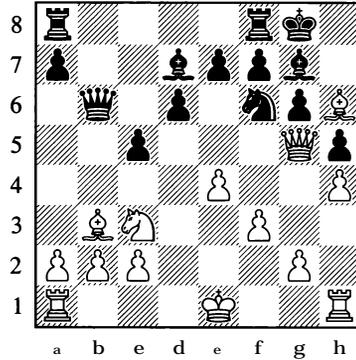
12...c7

It makes sense to take control of the dark squares that White has just vacated.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, 12...1 c8N also looks playable.

13h g7

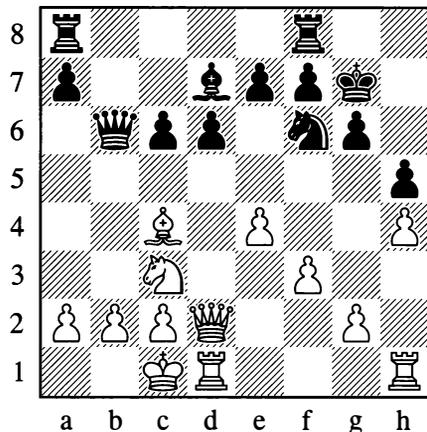
13. b3 cS 14.1 gS? was an aggressive attempt seen in Hooker - Lange, USA 1996. White is trying to mate Black immediately, but his idea contains a few which both players overlooked:



14...c4!N 1S. xc4 1 xb2 16.c d2: fc8 Black wins material. Perhaps White had his hopes set on 17.1 xg6 but 17...1 xe4t! 18.1 xe4 1 d4t 19.< e1 1 xa!t 20.< e2: xc4 wins

13...Wg7 14.0-0-0

14.b3?! I can imagine White being afraid of committing his king to the queenside due to the semi-open b-file, but leaving it in the centre is even worse. 14...: ad8!?!S.1 a4 1 c7 16. d3 dS+ Black successfully took over the centre in Maguire- A. Burnett, Glasgow 1997.



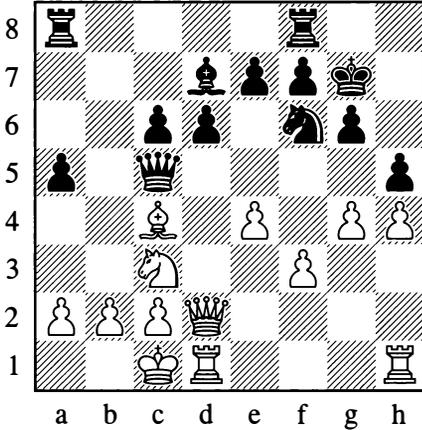
14...a5

14..J abEN 1S.t a4' b4= is a playable but dull alternative.

15.g4!?

Now the game starts heating up.

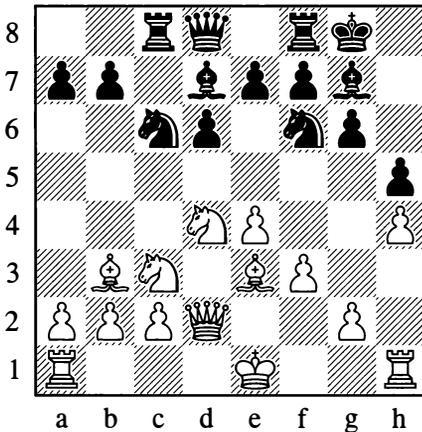
15..' c5



16.e5? Wke5 17J hel Wc5 18.g5 l g8 19. b3 f ;

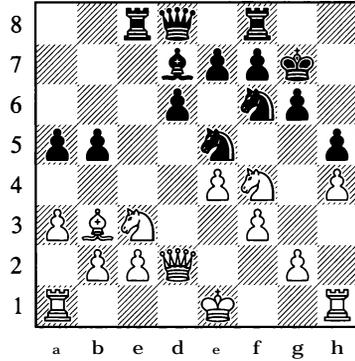
Momeni - Hakki, Dubai 1996. White has grabbed some space, but Black has picked up a pawn and his king is quite safe.

B) 11. b3 c8



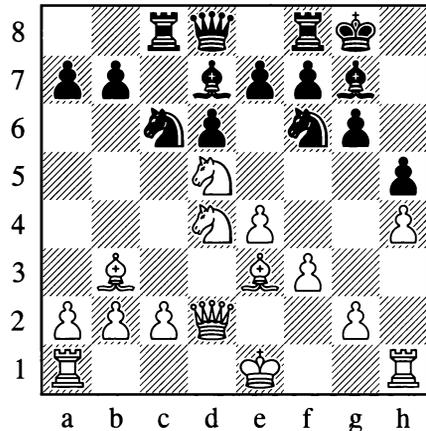
12.0 0-0 would of course transpose to the Soltis Variation, but we should also consider B1) 12.1 d5, B2) 12.g4 and B3) 12.1 xc6!?

12.1 de2 is a slow set-up that doesn't create any problems. 12...l eS 13. h6 bS 14.a3 aS 1S. xg7 xg7 16.1 f4



T is position was reached in G. Kuzmin - Rashkovsky, Vilnius 1980. Here there was no need to rush with 16..l c4, and Black could instead have started with 16..J eBN. White has got himself into yet another of those positions where it is not easy to see what his plan might be.

B1) 12.1 d5



This has been played from time to time, but it strikes me as premature.

12...1 xd5 13.exd5 1 xd4

13...1 e5!? also looks comfortable.

14. xd4. xd4 1S." xd4 as

Black's play is free-flowing and already White is somewhat on the back foot.

16.c3

16.a4N does not prevent 16...b5!

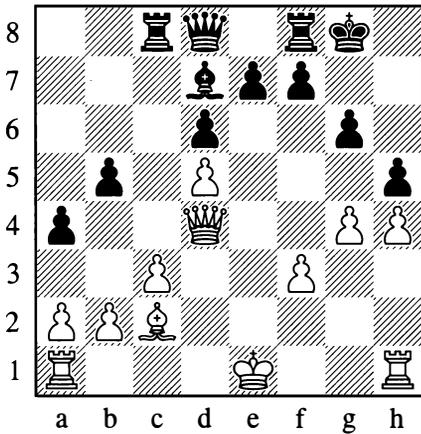
16..b5 17.g4

White tries to get some play of his own.

17.a3N is suggested by Georgiev, when 17...e5

18.dxe6 . xe6 19j xe6 Ee8 will be around level, wherever White chooses to put his king,

17...a4 18. c2



18...a3 19.h4?

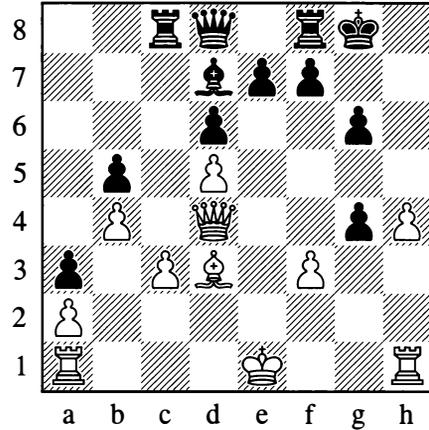
19.b3 was necessary, when Georgiev gives 19...' c7 20. d2 hxg4 21.h5 c5+.

19.9xh5 axb2 20.Eb1 is also mentioned by Georgiev, but 20.. a5! improves on his analysis 21.Exb2 (21. d2Ec4 22. e3b4 +) 21...Exc3 22.0 0 a3 23.h6 c5+

19...h g4 20. d3

20.h5N e5! 21.dxe6 Ec4!+ forces White to drop back.

We have been following Malisauskas - Ki. Georgiev, Biel 1993. Here I would opt for:



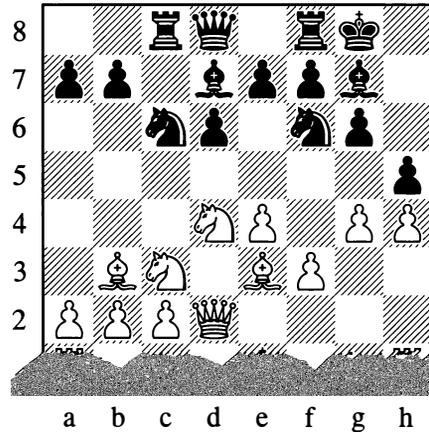
20..e5!N

20..j f5!N is an interesting suggestion of the computer.

21.d e6 8e8+

Black is set to retake the initiative.

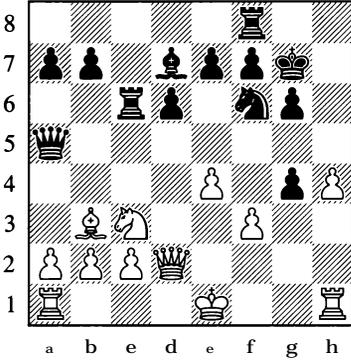
B2) 12.g4



Another aggressive attempt, but if White wants to play this he should first exchange on c6. This move was once tried by the strong French GM Romain Edouard, so I had to check it for my match against him, but I still don't know what his idea was.

12...hxg4 13.h5?

13.l xc6 can be met by 13..bxc6, transposing to the note on 13.g4 in variation B3 on the next page. However, Black can also play for more with 13..Exc6, which worked well in the following game: 14. h6 Wa5 15. xg7 < xg7



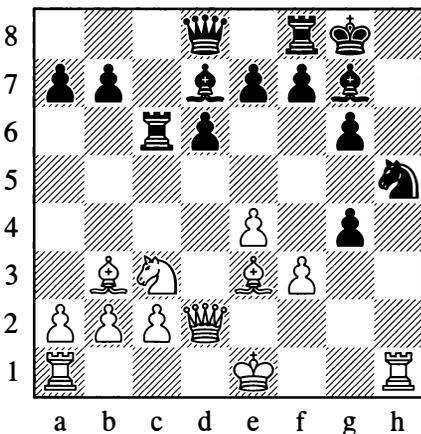
16.h5 Eh8 17.h6t T is was Scherber - Babar, Sueder 1996, and here I would have preferred 17... h7N with a big advantage; Black's k ng is totally safe

13..l xh5 14.l xc6

14.0 0 01 e5 transposes to variation D2 of Chapter 6 on page 136.

14..Exc6

White's play feels far too optimistic to me, as Black has active pieces as well as a material advantage.

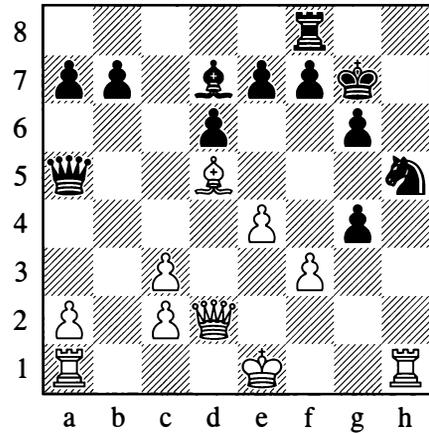


15. h6Y a5 16h g7

White would like to bring his second rook into the game, but 16.0 0 0N allows the typical 16..Exc3! 17. xg7 xg7 18.bxc3 g3+.

16...< xg7 17. d5Exc3 18.bxc3

Edouard - Cvitan, Switzerland 2014.

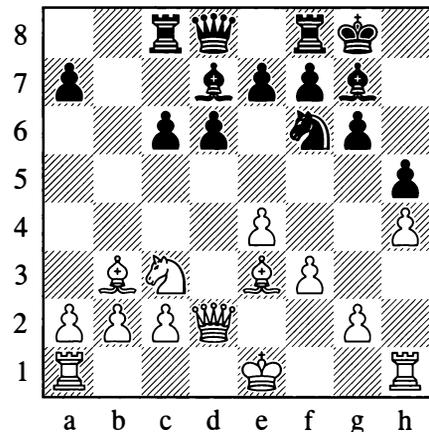


18..f IN

During my preparation I decided that this move was the most accurate. I see no way for White to break through, and actually it seems to be Black who has the safer king. A sample continuation is

19.f g4 xg4 2o.Eh4 £ + 21.exf ?Ex !+

B3 12 xc6! ?bxc6



It is was Anand's doomed attempt in the 1995 World Championship match. Exchanging on c6 is a double-edged decision. Black's structure improves but White is hoping to slow down his queenside play and, if he can provoke ...c5, play on the light squares c4 and d5. If White's strategy is to work, he will have to prevent Black from breaking in the centre.

13. h6

Anand logically exchanges the dark-squared bishops

13.Ed1 is an attempt to play positionally. (Compare 13.0 0 below.) 13..' c7N (13..' a5N 14.0 0 EfdB= is also fine) 14.0 0 EbB I want to prevent White from cementing control of the light squares. 15. g5 . cB!? 16.Efe1. a6= T is looks a decent rerouting to me.

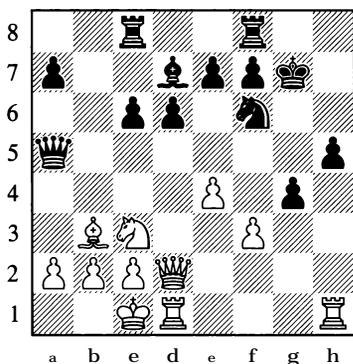
13.g4!?

It is direct attempt only appears to have been tried in a single email game.

13...hxg4

13...c5!N 14. c4 . e6!? (14...EbB 15. h6 Eb4 16. b3 a5 also looks reasonable) 15. xe6 f e6 is an interesting alternative. Of course my engine reckons everything is 0.00 here!

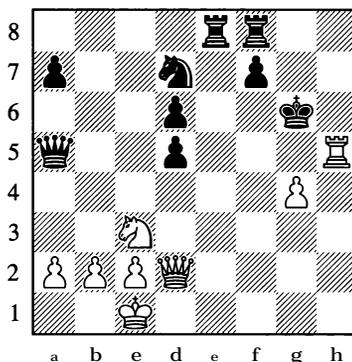
14.0 0 0 ' a5 15.h5 gxh5 16. h6 < h7 17.. xg7 Wxg7



1Be5! ' xe5 19.Edel ' a5 20.Exe7 EceB 21.. d5!

It reatening a deadly check on g5, but Black has a defence.

21...< g6! 22.Exd7 l xd7 23.f g4 cxd5 24.Exh5



24...f6! 25' h6t Wf 26' h7t < e6 27' f5t < e7 28.Eh7t Ef 29.' xd5' xd5 30.l xd5t < e6 31.l c7t < e7

At this point a draw was agreed in Sikorsky - Joppich, email 2010. A completely crazy game, but it all appears sound.

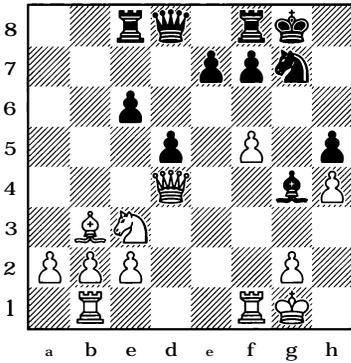
13.0 0!?

It is a rather intriguing way of playing that a few engines have adopted. White isn't trying to do anything drastic, but rather to play positionally. In some positions White has e4-e5 threats, but in general he simply wishes to manoeuvre his pieces around until Black can do nothing. As I mentioned earlier, this is computer chess style!

13...l e8!?

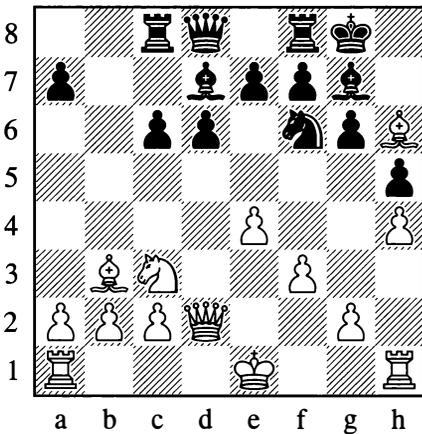
Most games have seen 13...c5 but I like not to cede control of the d5-square yet. After White has castled kingside there is no need to rush things.

14.Eab1 l c7 15.f4!?. g4 16.f5 gxf5 17.exf5 d5 18. xa7 l eB!? 19. d4 . xd4t 20' xd4 l g7



2U 6 1 f5 22.f e7 W h e7 23. f2 ' xh4
24. ' xh4! xh4=

The endgame was about equal in the refather-jetro, engine game 2012, but I slightly prefer Black, as his minor pieces are active and the bishop on b3 is stuck out of play.

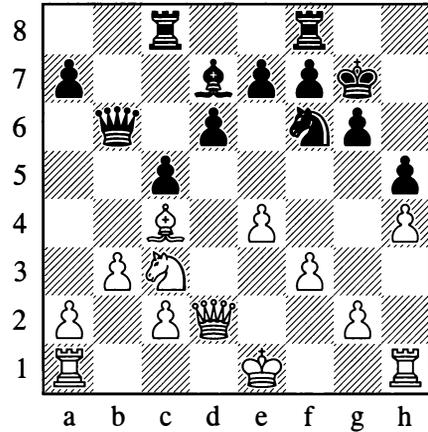


13..c5!

In the present position Black should speed up his queenside counterplay, as White might still try to crash through with g2-g4.

14. c4 W b6 15., b g7 x g7 16.b3

16.1 b1 e6 17.0-0 l cd8 18' e3 j c6 19.b4 d5! favoured Black in Trani - Bartosik, email 2002. Even in a correspondence game, preventing Black from liberating his position is not easy.



16.. e6!

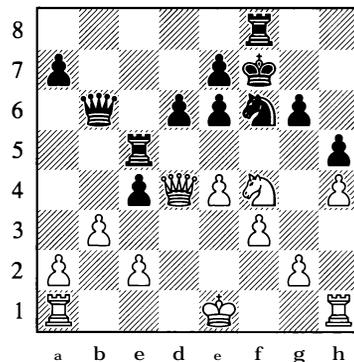
Fighting for the d5-square

17.1 d5?!

Anand does not want to give up control of the centre, but perhaps he had overlooked the strength of Black's Bth.

17.1 a4 ' c7 B j x e6 f e6 19.0-0 d5 was agreed drawn in Klapp - Marxen, email 2007. It's rather early to abandon the fight, but Black has certainly solved any opening problems.

17.j x e6 f e6 may look like an ugly structure for Black, but it has some major advantages. Black has good control of the d5-square, play down the f-file and is ready to expand in the centre. Similar themes will be discussed in more detail under 9.g4 in Chapter 15, but for now I will mention a game where Black handled the position successfully: 1B.1 e2 c4 19.' d4! c5 20.1 f4 g f



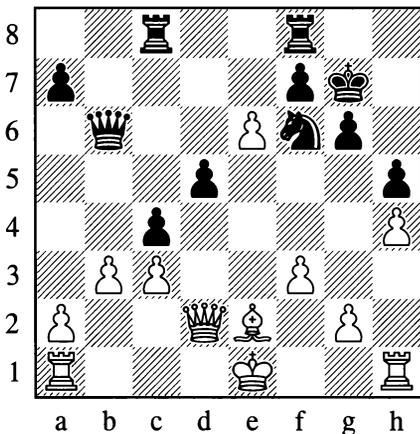
21.t h3 e5 22.t g5t g8 23.We3 cxb3
24.Wxb3t Wxb3 25.cxb3 Efc8+ Peled - Poli,
email 2003.

17...i xd5 lS.exd5 e5!
Kasparov takes his fair share of the centre
while presenting White with a dilemma.

19.d e6?
I can imagine that Vishy really didn't want to
take that pawn, but also didn't want to suf er
in a bad-bishop-versus-good-knight position
where Black is free to expand on the kingside
with ...f5. It feels like a dream King's Indian!

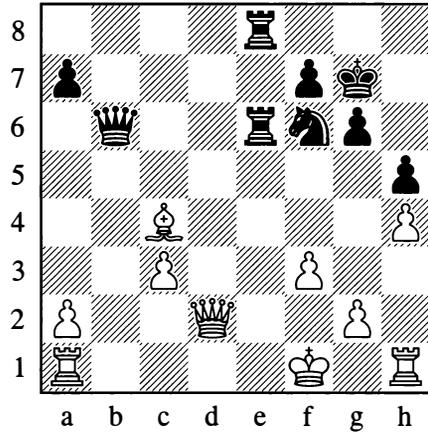
19.0 0 t d7 20.f4 f5 21.Wc3 mh7 22.a3
Ece8+ is a good illustration of the kind of
thing Anand was presumably scared about, De
Almeida - Lilleoren, email 2006. However,
the move played leads to worse suf ering for
White

19...d5! 20.i e2c4 21.c3?
Kasparov suggested 21.Ed1N as an
improvement, but 21...f e6 is still more than
comfortable for Black.



21...EceS!
Black has a clear advantage, and Kasparov
ends the game of ciently.

22.bxc4 gxe6 23.Wf gfeS 24.i d3 dxc4
25.i xc4



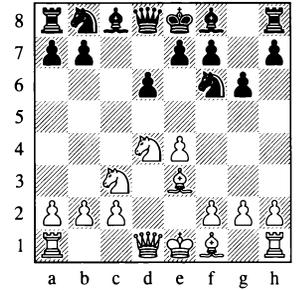
25...t e4!
0 1 Anand - Kasparov, New York (13)
1995.

Conclusion

Most of the

Chapter 13

Yugoslav Attack



Early Deviations

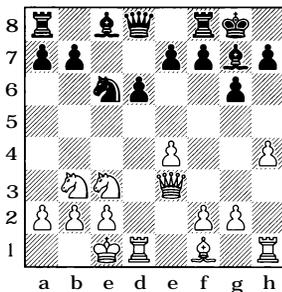
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.t a d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.t xd4 t f 5.t d g6 6.. e3

6... g7

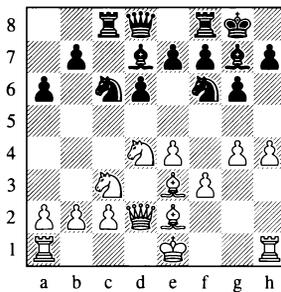
A) 7. d2 t g4	251
A1) 8.0-0-0	251
A2) 8.. g5 h6 9.. h4 t c6 10.t b3. e6	252
A21) 11.. e2	253
A22) 11.0-0-0	254
B) 7.a 0-0	254
B1) 8.g4	254
B2) 8.. c4 t c6	255
B21) 9. e2	255
B22) 9.. b3	257
B3) 8. d2 t c6	259
B31) 9.t b3	259
B32) 9.. c4. d7	262
B321) 10.g4	262
B322) 10.. b3	264

A1) after 11.h4



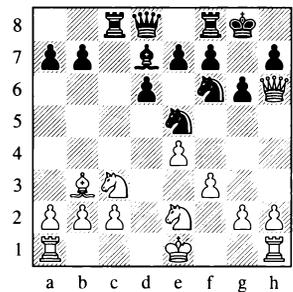
11...1 b6fN

B321) after 12.h4



12...d5!N

B322) note to 11.g4



13...b5!N

1.e4 c5 2 f d6 3.d4 c d4 4. xd4 . f
5. c3g 6 e3 g7

In this chapter we will deal with the rare
A) 7.Wd2, followed by various sidelines after
B) 7.f .

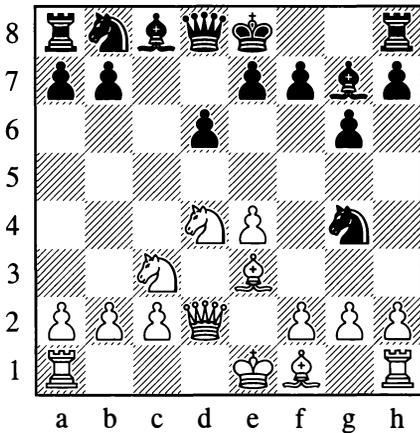
7.h3 is covered under 6.h3 g7 7. e3 - see
Chapter 19 of Volume 2.

As so 7. c4 leads to the Chapter 17 of
Volume 2.

A) 7.Wd2. g4

White's move order gives Black this additional
option.

7...c c6 is likely to transpose back to the main
lines after 8.f3. If White refuses with 8.O O O,
then 8...c g4 favours Black, as shown in
variation A 1 below.

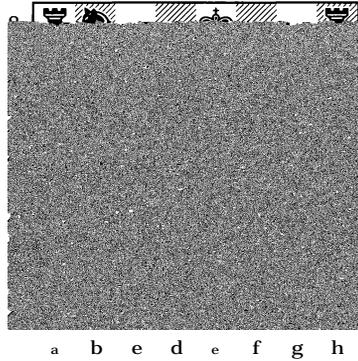


White may react with A1) 8O O O or
A2) 8 g5.

8 f4? xd4! 9.Wxd4 e5 saw Black Win
material in Duarte Costea- Uberos Fernandez,
email 2008.

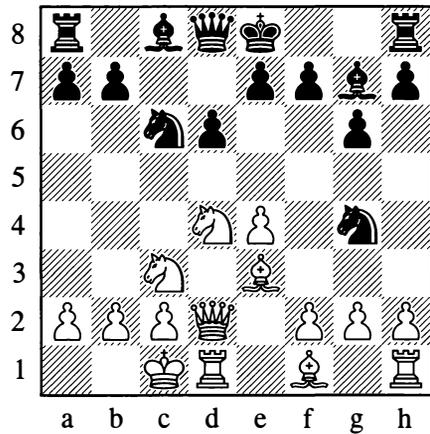
8 b5t T rowing In this check does not
challenge Black 8... d79. g5(9. xd7t c xd7

10.O O c xe3 11.Wxe3 O O+ Black has a
small edge due to his uncontested bishop)
9...Wb6! N T is looks an interesting way to
exploit the loose nature of White's position.



10.Ed1 (10.O O O Wxd4 11.Wxd4 xd4
12.Exd4 c xf2 13.Ef1 c g4) 10...c c6 11. xc6
bxc6 12.h3 f6! 13. f4 c e5 14.b3 c f '

A1) 8O O O. c6



There is nothing wrong with exchanging on
e3 immediately, but it is worth maintaining
the tension for another move, if only to give
White the chance to make the mistake given
in the next note.

9. h3

9.c xc6 bxc6 10 d4? h6 is even worse for
White.

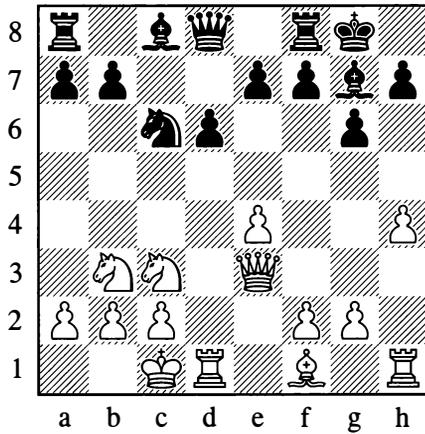
9... t xe3 10Wxe3 0-0

Black should be slightly better here; he just needs to be slightly careful without the f6-knight defending his kingside.

10..' b6!N seems playable, but it seems logical to castle before committing to a plan.

11.h4

11.f4 a5+ saw Black with the much faster attack in P Schmidt - Delgado Ramirez, Internet 2009.



11...Wb6!N

I like this novelty, which either leads to a positional advantage without queens, or to a gain of time for Black's middlegame attack.

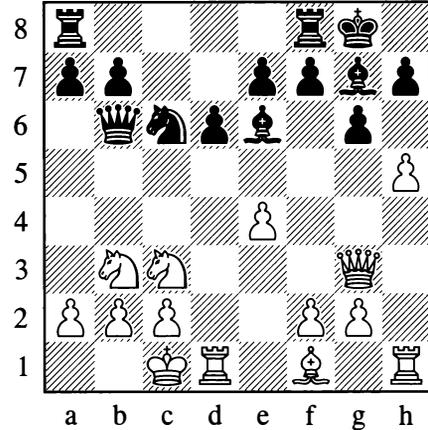
12.Wg3

12.' xb6 axb6 13.t d5 Exa2+

12..i e6 13.h5?

T is is the only scary move, but Black is much faster:

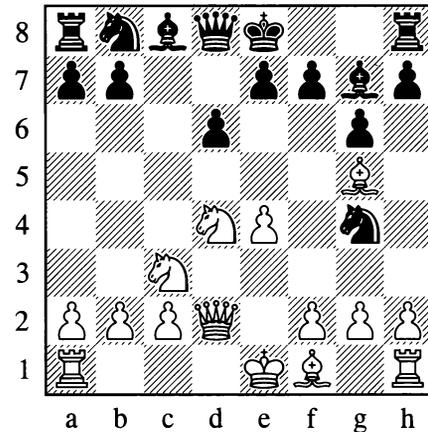
13.t d5 was necessary, although 13.. xd5 14.exd5 t a5+ leaves Black with a pleasant edge.



13.J 8 14.hxg6hxg6 1S.' h4 t b4 +

White has just one check while Black, with almost all his pieces pointing at White's king, has a decisive attack.

A2) 8i gS



T is is the only critical test. White refuses to cede control of the dark squares without a fight.

8..h6

It seems most accurate to hit the bishop immediately, so that it will be forced to go to h4.

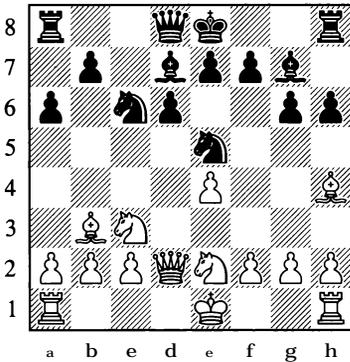
9i h4

This line resembles the 6. e3 t g4 variation of the Najdorf. Comparing the positions, if Black continues with ...g5 then he will have lost a tempo - although ...a6 is not the most useful move in any case. A more significant point is that, with the g7-bishop already developed, Black can gain time against the d4-knight.

9...t c6 10.t b3

10.t xc6 bxc6 11.h3 (11. c4 t e5 12. b3 a6+) 11...t e5N This is a natural move that has not been played. Perhaps Black has been worried about 12.f4 but 12...g5, borrowing an idea from the Najdorf, gives Black a clear advantage.

10. b5 also fails to put any pressure on Black. 10... d7 11.t de2 This is the only justification I can see for White's previous move, but it fails to impress. 11...a6 12. a4 t ge5 13. b3



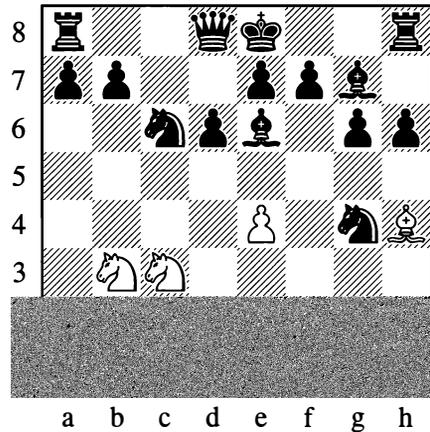
13...t a5! 14.f4 t ec4 This position was already more pleasant for Black, and 15.V d3? t xb2= was simply an extra pawn in Bortot - Ralle, France 2005.

10.. e6

Now that White's knight has been forced to retreat, Black can develop the bishop to its most active square. White has two contrasting ways of handling the position: he can either revert to some sort of Classical Variation with A21) 11. e2 followed by castling kingside, or he can continue playing in the spirit of the Yugoslav Attack with A22) 11.O-O-Q

11.f t f6 12.O-O-O-O gives rise to a rather unusual-looking Yugoslav Attack where Black's attack should at least match White's, as the bishop on h4 feels rather misplaced. 13. xf6N xf6 14.V xh6 is given by Schulz, but 14...V b6+ gives Black fantastic compensation.

A21) 11. e2

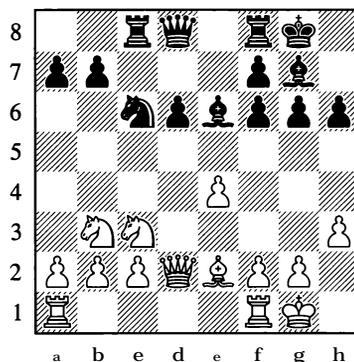


This is the safer option, but Black can still keep the game sharp.

11... r8 12.O-Og5!?

The GM decides to put pressure on his lower-rated opponent immediately.

Black can also play more calmly with 12...O-O, for instance: 13.h3 t f6 14. xf6 exf6 (14... xf6!? 15.V xh6 V b6 16.V d2 t d4 17. g4 V b4 gives Black strong pressure in return for the pawn)



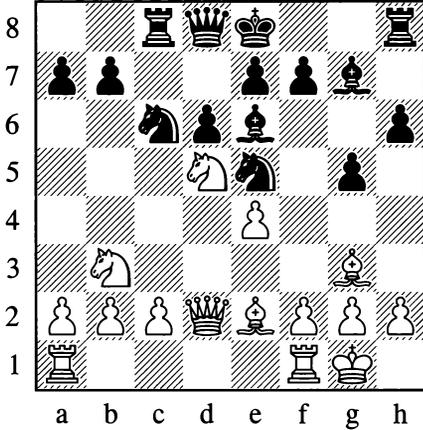
15. ad1 f5 16. exf5 xf5 17. t b5 d5 Black is fine.

13..0-0N

Black's queenside attack comes rather quickly.

13. g3t geS 14. t dS

14. @bl . xds!?! IS. exdS t b4 16. c3 Wd7! 17.. bS



17. cxb4 ' xa4 IS. t xa5 b6 19. t c4 : xc4 20. xc4 : aS gives Black a dangerous initiative. White has to try 21.: c1 but Black is for preference after 21...t e5 .

The text is more sensible, and should lead to a draw.

17...Wf t 18 @al t c2t 19. @a t b4t 20. @al =

White should settle for the repetition, as 20. cxb4?! : c2 21. d3 : xb2t 22. a3 ' e5 gives Black a strong attack.

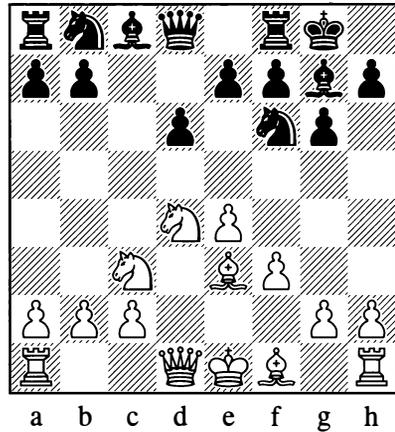
14...t g6

14...g4!N 15. f4 gxf3 16. gxf3 h5 reaches another messy position.

B) 7.f 0-0

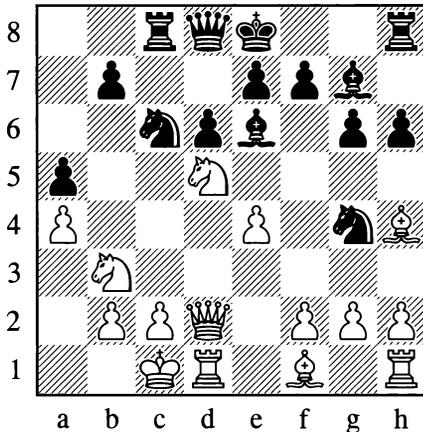
IS. c3hS 16. f l ceS

The position was complex and double-edged in Anakidze- Shanava, Tbilisi 2010.



A 2) 11.0-0-0 as 12. a4 : c8 13. l dS

These natural moves occurred in Rytshagov - Salmensuu, Finland 1995. Here I would prefer the simple move:



This is the main starting position for the Yugoslav Attack. The remainder of the chapter will discuss various set-ups after B1) 8.g4, B2) 8. c4 and B3) 8.Wll .

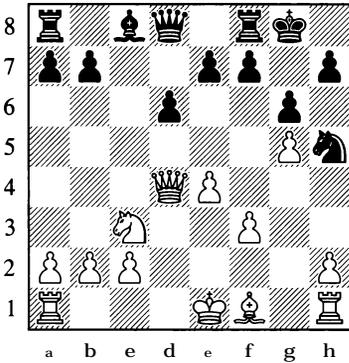
B1) 8g4t c6

S...d5! is an experimental alternative, but the natural developing move works fine.

9.h4?

White should really play 9.Wd2, transposing to the 9.g4 variation as covered in the next two chapters.

9.g5? cedes control of a couple of important squares and leaves White with an inflexible structure. 9...t h5 10.Wd2 t xd4 11.i xd4 i xd4 12.Wxd4



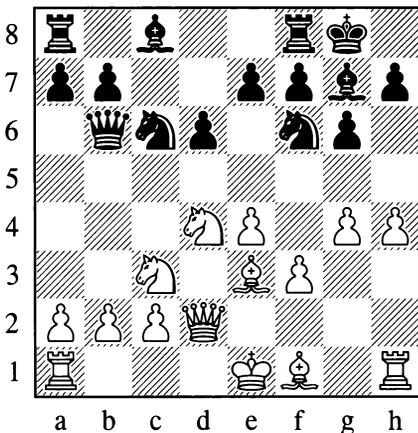
T is position was reached in M. Schlosser - Pisk, Austria 2010, and now 12...i e6N 13.O O Wa5- would have been simplest.

9...Wb6!

Successfully exploiting White's hasty kingside pawn storm

10.Wd2?

10.t a4N has to be tried, although 10...Wa5t 11.t c3 t xd4 12.i xd4 e5 13.i e3 d5! 14.g5 d4= still favours Black.

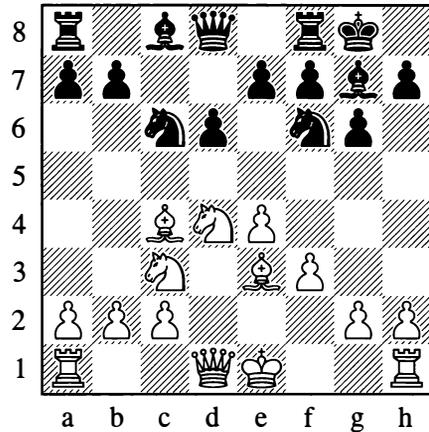


10...1 xg4!

White's position just collapses.

11.1 a4! xd4 12.1 xb6! xf t 13. e2! xd2 14.1 xa5! xe3 15. xd2!i h6 16.i d3! g4 0-1 Leakovic - Cebalo, Vinkovci 2007.

B2) Si c4. c6



Now 9.Wd2 leads to the big main line, but White can also try the sidelines B21) 9.' e2 and B22) 9.i b3.

9.O O is an odd choice with f2-f3 on the board. T is position will be discussed under the 6.i c4 move order - see the note with 8.f3 on page 269 of Volume 2.

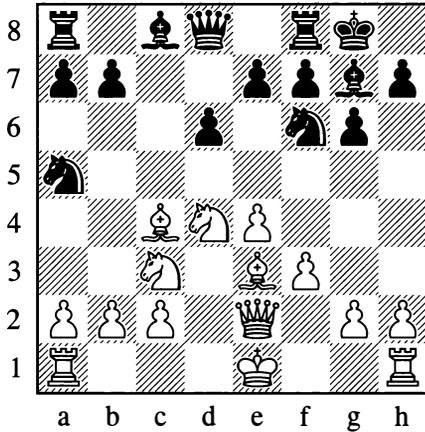
B21) 9' e2

T is a speciality of the creative Swedish GM Jonny Hector. Instead of playing for i h6 and mating Black, White normally plays slowly with kingside castling. From e2 the queen controls the c4-square, and White hopes to make e4-e5 work at some point.

9...1 a5

Harassing the bishop makes sense, as it can no longer drop back to e2.

Black can also start with 9...i d7. One possible continuation is 10.O O O t a5 11.i b3, transposing to variation B22.



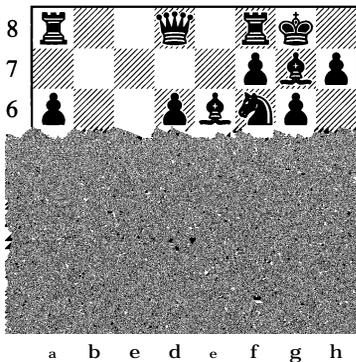
10. d3

If White allows the bishop to be traded then obviously he cannot hope for anything at all.

10..a6 11.0-0

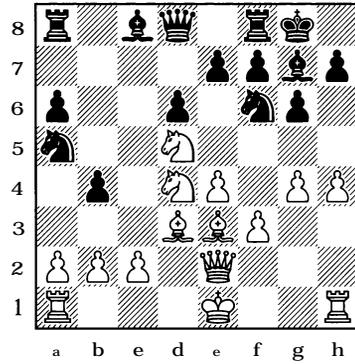
Trying to play more aggressively back res, as the white queen is not well placed to support a kingside attack. A couple of examples

11.0-0 0 b5 12.Wf2 b4 13.1 ce2 e5 14.1 b3 i e6

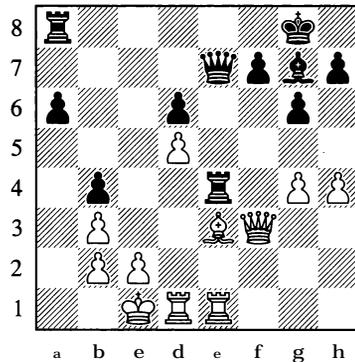


15.c b1 l xb3 16.cxb3 a5 17.i b5 Wb8 18.i a4 d5+ T e Dragon expert had taken control in Berkvens- Tiviakov, Zwolle 2000.

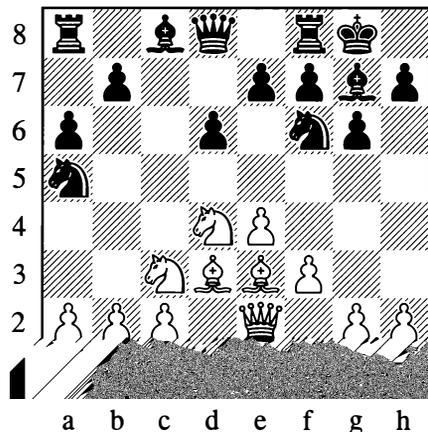
11.g4 b5 12.h4 b4!? (12...h5N also looks comfortable for Black) 13.1 d5



13...e5! 14.1 b3 l xd5 15.exd5 e4 16.i xe4 : e8 17.0-0-0 01 xb3t 18.axb3 i xg4 19.f g4 : xe4 20.Wf3 We7 21: hel In Wollenweber-Rogozenco, Bargteheide 2012, the GM playing Black had at least two good continuations, the simplest being:



21...We5N (21...f5!N) 22.i d4 Wf4t 23.Wxf4 : xf4+ With good winning chances in the endgame.

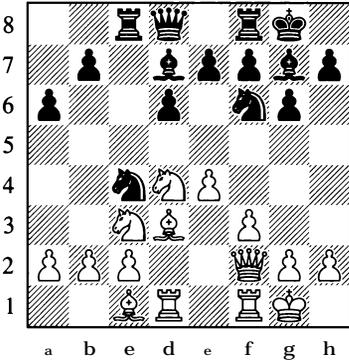


11... d7

Hector has been happy to play this with White, but objectively Black is no worse, and I think the position is easier for Black to play.

12. ♖f2

Another game continued: 12! ad1 ! c8
13! f2! c4 14! j c1



14...b5 (14..I b6!N would be my choice. Black threatens to move his f6-knight, unleashing an attack on the d4-knight, and 15! b3! xf2! 16! xf2 b5' is more than okay for Black.) 15! fe1! b6 16! j f1 e6' Hector-Zelbel, Nuremberg 2012.

12..Jk68

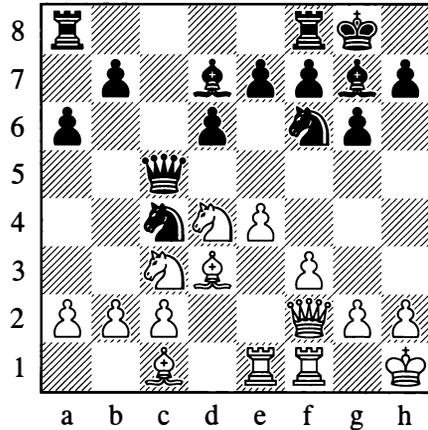
White's last move did not threaten anything so 12...b5N is also completely fine.

13! ael l c4 14. cl' cs

14...b5 15! d1 l e5 16! j e2 occurred in mario demonti- crgiorgio, enginegame 2013, and now 16...d5N looks promising. White's last few moves make a strange impression, while Black has simply played logical moves focusing on the centre.

1S. hl

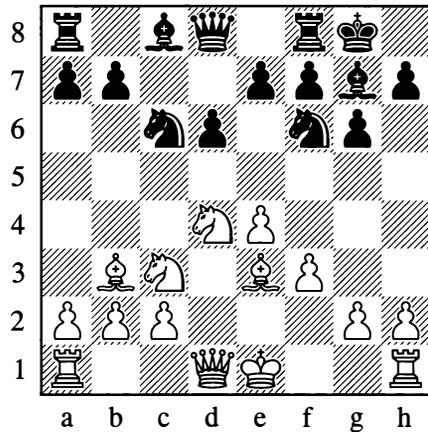
T is position was reached in Hector - Ward, Copenhagen 1998. Here I would have played:



1S...hSN

I like Black's position.

B22) 9. h3



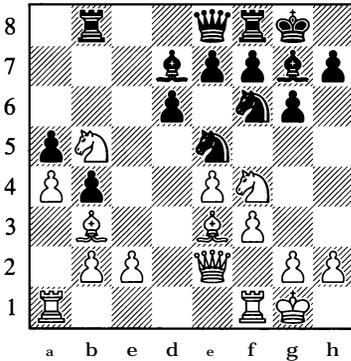
T is position has mostly occurred via an Accelerated Dragon move order. In that variation, the possibility of a quick ...d5 means that, if W ite desires a Yugoslav Attack, he is virtually forced to play an early j c4-b3 before f2-f3. T ere are ways for Black to try and exploit the premature j b3 move, but I am content to head for normal Dragon pathways. In this section we will deal with a few rare lines where W ite avoids putting his queen on d2.

9.. d7 10' e2

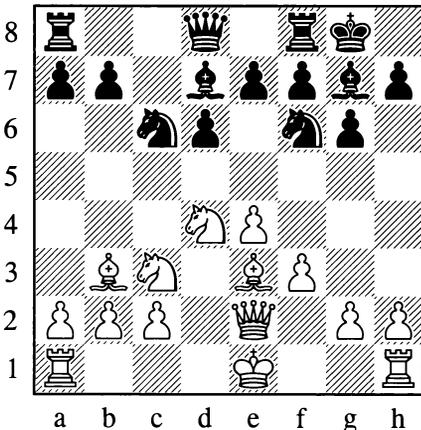
10.h4 h5 11.Wd2 transposes to variation B of Chapter 12.

In the event of 10g4 I like 10...a5!N 11.a4 t xd4 12.i xd4 i e6 with balanced chances. Black's play is designed to exploit White's early bishop retreat and the weakening of the f3-pawn.

10.t de2 is rather slow, and Black has a choice of good continuations. 10..Eb5 T is makes sense now that White has taken his eye of the b5-square. (10...t a5 is also sensible, hoping to make use of the bishop pair.) 11.0 0 b5 12.t f4 a5 13.a4 b4 14.t b5 t e5 15.We2 We8



16.t c7 Wd5 17.t b5 In Bologan - Ki. Georgiev, Debrecen 1992, Black shunned the repetition with 17...Wc5! and eventually scored the full point.



10..l a5

Putting the knight on a5 makes sense whenever the bishop cannot drop back to e2.

11.0 0 0 a6

11..Ec5 is also sensible; Black is not threatening to put the knight on c4, but the exchange sacrifice on c3 could be tempting.

12" d2

T is makes a strange impression. Surely wasting a tempo with We2-d2 can't be beneficial, as both ...a6 and ...t a5 are useful moves.

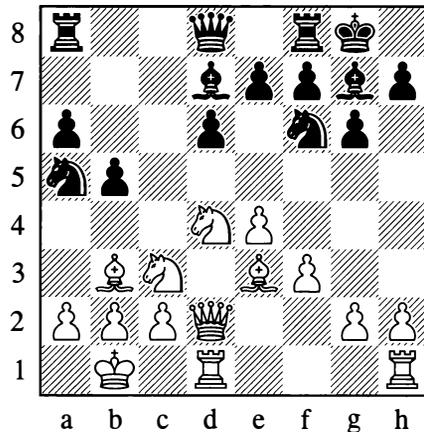
However, White's other queen moves also fail to impress: both 12.Wf b5+ and 12.Wd3 b5 13.< b1 b4N 14.t d5 t xb3 15.t xf6t i xf6 16.cxb3 a5+ favour Black.

12..b5

T is seems like the most obvious way to use the extra tempo.

13.c b1

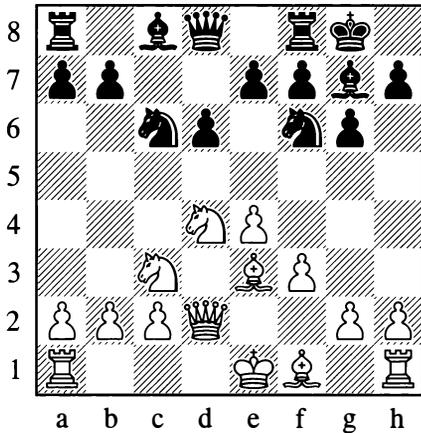
Now in S.B. Hansen - B. Larsen, Aars 1995, the most logical continuation would have been:



13...h4N 14.t d5 t xb3 15.t x t i x 16.t xb3 a5

The queenside pawns are rolling while White's attack has not even started.

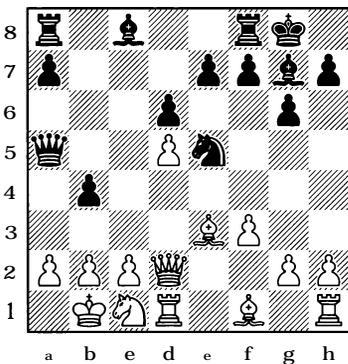
B3) 8V d2 t c6



Here we will analyse the weird-looking B3) 9.t b3 followed by sidelines after B3) 9. c4.

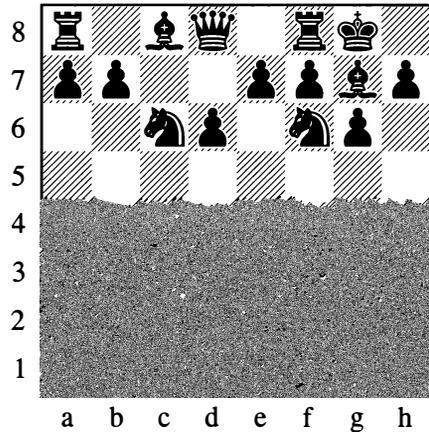
9.l xc6?! does not make much sense. The only reason I can see for it is if White intends to continue 9...bxc6 10 h6, but the simple 10... xh6 11.Wxh6 Wa5 is promising for Black.

9.l de2 seems unnatural with the bishop still on f1, so it is hardly surprising that this move has been played overwhelmingly by computers rather than humans. 9..b5!? I like this approach, immediately exploiting White's strange last, although of course there are other good moves. 10.0 0 0 (10.l xb5 d5 11.0 0 0 dxe4 12.Wxd8 l xd8 13.l xd8 t l xd8 is at least equal for Black) 10..Wa5 11.< b1 b4 12.l d5 l xd5 13.exd5 l e5 14.l cl



This position was reached in A. Vajda - F. Nemeth, Felix Spa 2007, and here 14..Wc7!N is strong. The queen makes way for the a-pawn and applies pressure along the c-file. 15. h6 xh6 16.Wxh6 f5 17. d3 l xd3 18.l xd3 mc8

B3) 9.t b3



This development pattern is more usual in the Classical lines examined in the second volume. In the present position White loses some time for his attack, and the knights can sometimes be hit by advancing queenside pawns.

9... e6

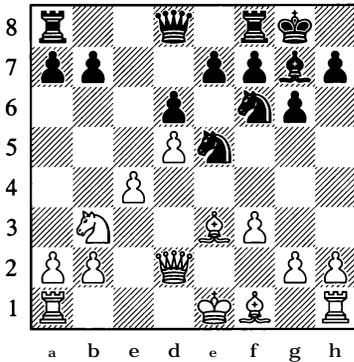
With the e6-square no longer under White's control, this makes the most sense to me. However, Black has a viable alternative in 9...a6, just as in the Classical.

10.0 0 0

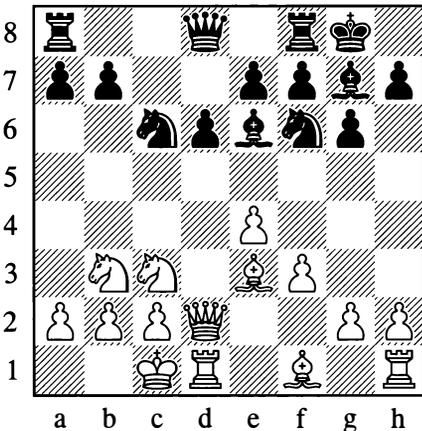
10. h6?! has been played of en but leaves the dark squares too loose. 10... xh6 11.Wxh6 Wb6!N 12.0 0 0 a5+

10. e2 does not have much logic here, unless White has decided to switch back to kingside castling. Black can play any normal queenside move or 10..d5, which equalizes at once.

10.t d5! As a general rule, exchanging the knight on this square is only really useful for White when his attack is already close to breaking through. Here it just loses time. 10.. xd5 11.exd5 t e5 12.c4 (12.0-0 0? proves to be too optimistic after 12...1 c7 13. b1 a5N) If White could catch up on development while keeping his structure intact then he might claim a positional advantage, but Black can spoil his plan:



12...: B 13: 1 Now in Nonnenmacher – Hermann, Bad Pymont 1949, Black missed the opportunity to destroy White's structure with 13...b5!N 14.cx b5 Excl t 15.t xcl 1 aB when Black regains the pawn with the more pleasant position.

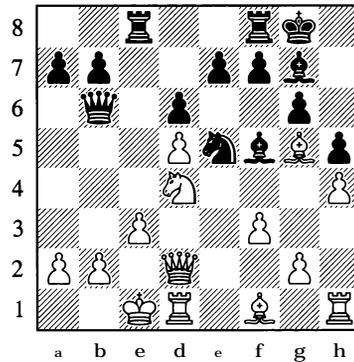


10... e5
We have a strange version of a 9. c4

Yugoslav Attack. Black should not rush to play ...t c4, as then he would be two tempos behind (due to xc4 coming directly as opposed to c4-b3xc4). However, White is also at risk of losing two tempos if he gets tempted to return his knight to d4.

11. h6

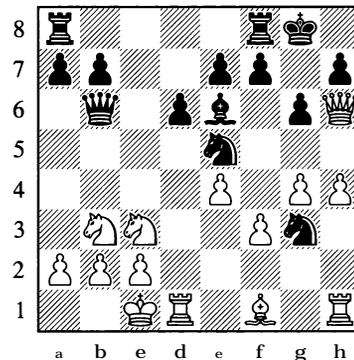
11.h4 h5 12. g5 EcB 13.t d5! A mistake, but it was hard to see how White should continue 13...t xd5 14.exd5 f5 15.t d4 1 b6 16.c3



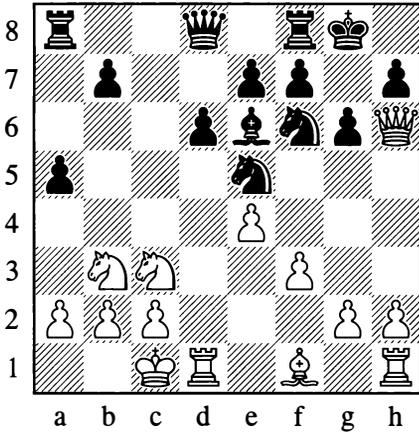
This position was reached in Smolak – Sypien, Rudnik 2000, and here Black missed 16...Exc3t !N 17.1 xc3 EcB with an overwhelming advantage.

11... xh6 12Wxh6 a5

12...1 b6N is a thematic move once the dark-squared bishops have been traded. A possible continuation is: 13.h4 t h5! Again utilizing the weaker dark squares. 14.g4 t g3

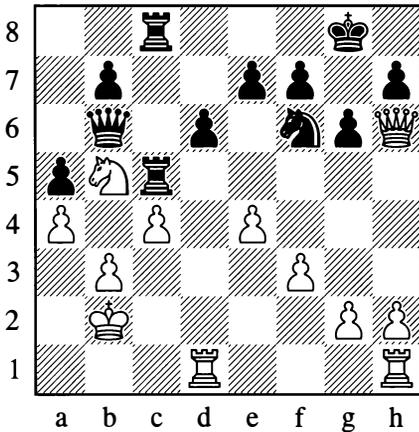


15.l h2 (15.l h3 Wf2! 16.t d2 [16.h5? Cxf1
17.hxg6 We3t- +J 16...f6+ White's attack gets
nowhere.) 15...Cxf3 16.l g2 Cxf1 17.l xf1
C e5 1S.h5 f6+ With such a powerful knight
on e5 Black's kingside should be fine, and the
king can always run into the centre if necessary.



13.a4 ' b6 14.l d4 l 8 1S.t dbS t c4
16i xc4 . xc4 17.b3 i xbS 18.l xbS gcS
19. b2gac820.c4

This series of logical moves was played in
Alonso - PH. Nielsen, Cappelle la Grande
1995. The Danish GM failed to capitalize with:



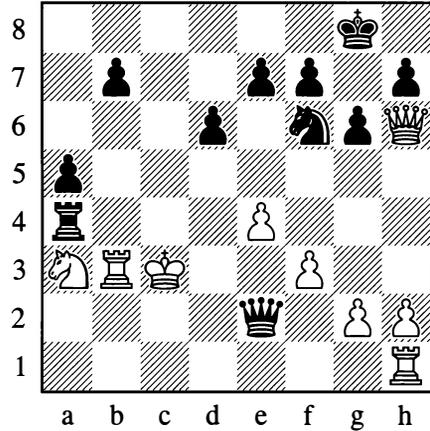
20...gxc4N 21.bxc4 gxc4

Black exploits the exposed white king
to recoup the material with interest, as the
following line demonstrates.

22.gd3

22. a2 Wc5+

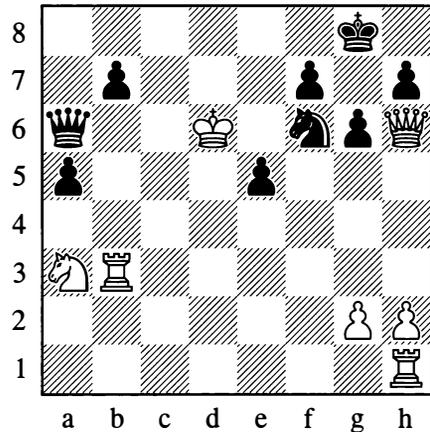
22...gxa4 23.gb3 ' f t 24. c3 ' e2
2S.t a3



2S...gxe4! 26.f e4 t xe4t

White can only prevent mate by giving his
queen.

27. d4 est 28. dS t f t 29. xd6' a6t



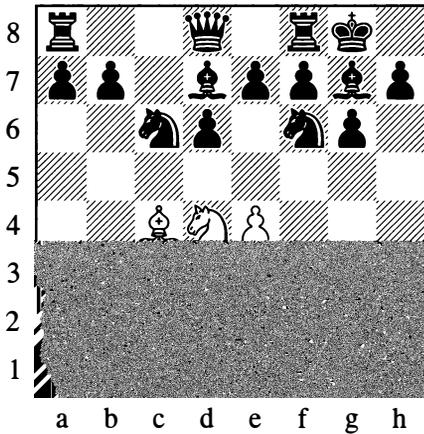
30. xeS

White must allow the fork, as 30. c7Wc6t
31. bS t d7t 32. a7Wa6 is mate.

30...t g4t 31. d4 t xh6

Black wins easily.

B32) 9.J c4 J d7

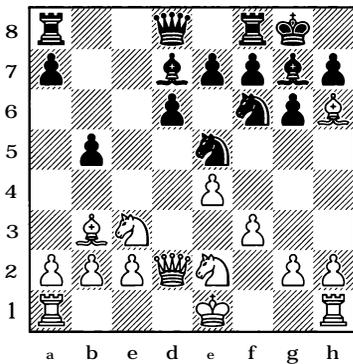


In the final branch of the chapter we will deal with any sidelines arising after this most popular tabiya. Two such options are B321) 10.g4 and B322) 10.J b3.

10.0 0 0 was covered in the first eleven chapters.

10.h4 was covered in Chapter 12.

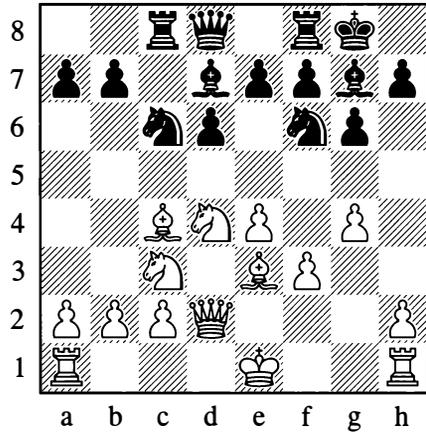
10.l de2 makes a bit more sense now that the light-squared bishop has been developed, but it still fails to put pressure on Black. 10..l e5 (10..l a5!?) 11.i b3 b5 12.i h6?! Exchanging these bishops when White's king is still in the centre is nearly always a mistake.



12...b4 13.l d5i xh6 14.' xh6l xd5 15i xd5

l cs= White is already in some trouble. In one game he tried 16.h4 l xc2 17.h5, but after 17...g5! 1S.Wxg5t < hS Black had a decisive advantage in Ziatdinov - Kudrin, Toronto 1995; his king is quite safe, while its white counterpart is vulnerable in the centre.

B321) 10.g4 Ec8



11.J e2

T is retreat looks strange, but it was tested in a game between two of China's top GMs.

11.i b3 is covered in variation B322 below.

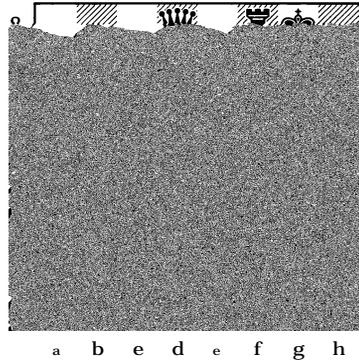
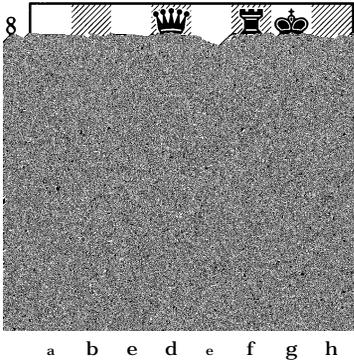
11...a6

11..l xd4 12.i xd4 Wa5 eventually resulted in a well-contested draw in Yu Yangyi - Wei Vi, Danzhou 2013, but I would prefer to keep more tension in the position.

12.h4

12.0 0 0 b5 13.< b1 was examined in variation A of Chapter 11, via the move order 11.i e2 a6 12.< b1 b5 13.g4.

12.0 0 is an odd move when White has already played the committal 10.g4. However, in a correspondence game perhaps White felt there was no danger. 12..l e5 13.g5 l h5 14.f4l c4 15i xc4 Exc4

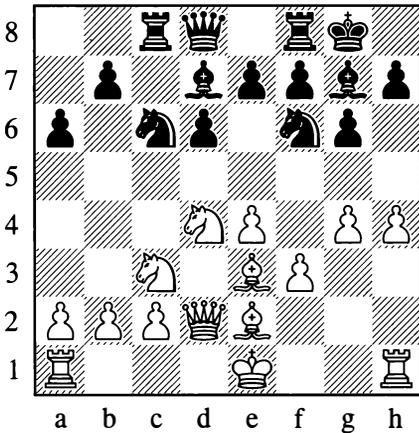


16.f5 i e5 17.Ead1 e6! Black was already taking control in T Hansen - Myakutin, email 2005.

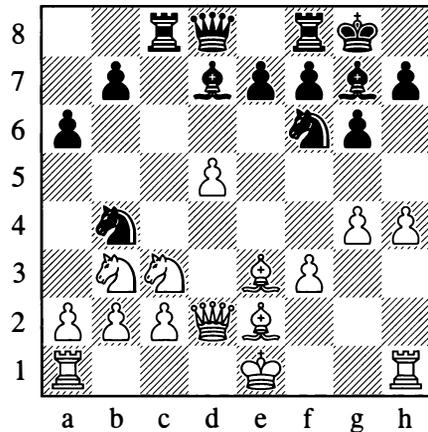
17...e5! 18.1 xe5 Ee8 19.1 d4 1 b8 With W it's king stuck in the middle, Black has a strong initiative and full compensation for the pawn.

In Sanchez Comesana - Corrales Jimenez, Havana 2011, Black went for the obvious 12...b5, but I like the following idea even more.

13.0 0-0 dx4 14.g5 l h5 15.f e4 l g3 16.Ehg1 i xd4 (16...1 c7!?) 17.i xd4 l xd4 18.Exg3 (18.1 xd4? Exc3!) 18...e5 T e position is balanced.



13...t b4 14.t b3



12...d5N

T is break is not essential, but it is tempting when White has been wasting so much time. I will present a few sample lines

13.exd5

13.g5 l h5 14.1 xd5 l xd4 (14...1 g3!? 15.Eh2 l xe2 16.Exe2 l e5 also gives Black good compensation) 15.i xd4 i xd4 16.Wxd4 Exc2 17.Ed1

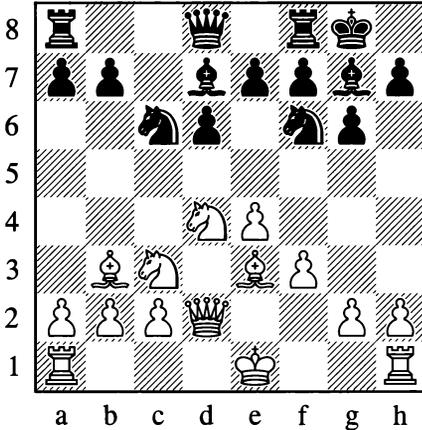
14..., bg4! 15.f g4 xc3

T e combination is pretty, but it is hardly surprising that such ideas are lurking in a position where White has hurled his pawns forward while neglecting to castle.

16.Wxc3 t f d5 17.Wd2 t xe3 18.Wxd8 t bxc2 19.@f xd8

White has escaped to an endgame, but Black still has an initiative at no material cost.

B322) 10.i b3



Just like the earlier variation B22, the present position normally arises via an Accelerated Dragon move order where White plays an early i c4-b3 out of necessity.

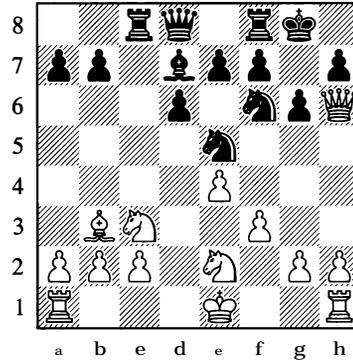
10...: 8

White's move order gives us the extra possibility of 10...1 xd4 11.i xd4 b5, but I am happy to stick to Out normal formula.

11.g4

11.h4 and 11.0 0-0 have been covered earlier in the book, while 11.0 0 is a harmless sideline covered briefly on page 269 of the second volume. Apart from those moves I considered two other sidelines:

11.t de2 1 is a better time to drop back the knight than on move 10, as at least now Out rook is committed to c5. Nevertheless, Black is still comfortable. 11...t e5 12.i h6 i xh6 13.' xh6 occurred in Malisauskas - Raudas, K aipeda 1990, and here I propose:

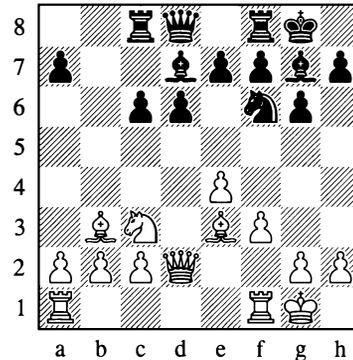


13..b5!N Black has a promising position and White's kingside attack isn't getting anywhere, for instance: 14.h4 b4 15.t d5 t xd5 16.exd5 (16.i xd5 : xc2 17.h5 g5 is a motif we have seen previously) 16...f6!+

11.t xc6 bxc6 12.0 0

12.h4 h5 takes us back to variation B3 of Chapter 12, and 12...c5!? can also be considered.

12.i h6 i xh6 13.' xh6 was seen in Eynard - Cosulich, Recoaro Terme 1967. Here I recommend 13..' b6N followed by ...c5 - the normal approach once the dark-squared bishops are exchanged.



In Chapter 12 we encountered a similar position with h2-h4 and ...h5 inserted. It seems strange, but the present version may actually be a slight improvement for Black, as the g6-pawn is securely defended.

12...c5

12...1 e8!N would follow my suggestion in the analogous position.

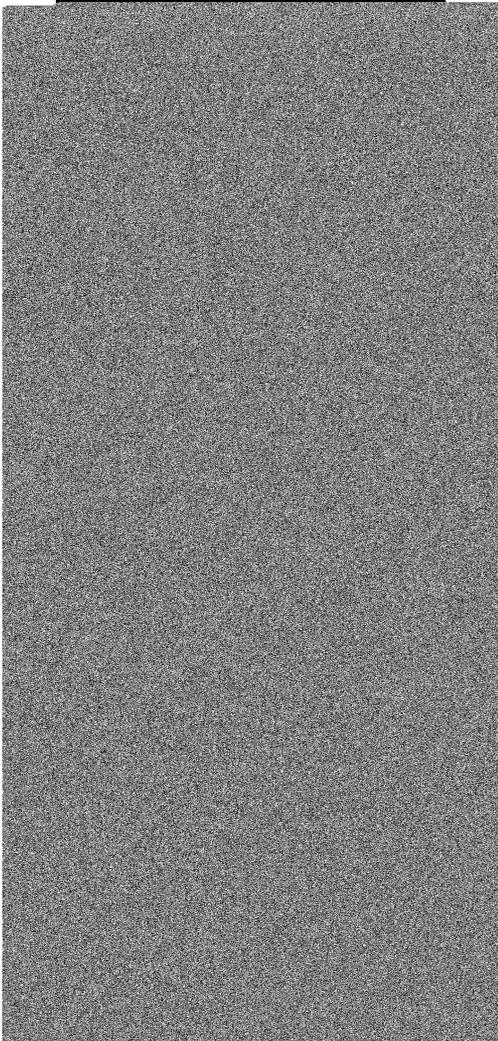
13. c4 e6!

An important difference that comes from having the pawn on h7. Now the g6-pawn will be comfortably defended after the following exchange.

14. xe6 f e6 15.Eab1 Wa5 16.We2! d7=

Black was fine in robotman - fischerfanatic, engine game 2012.

After the text move, Black used a plan that I suggested earlier in a position where White had combined c4-b3 with g2-g4.



15..' d7N

15...h5!N is also interesting. One possible continuation is 16. xf6 xf6 17.gxh5 Wb6° with a messy position.

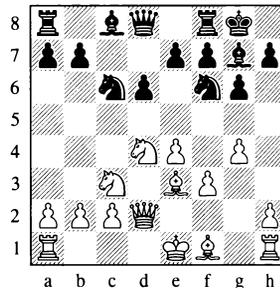
16.h5' e6! 17.. x ' x 18.c e2' e5

Conclusion

Most of the lines examined in this chapter are extremely rare for a good reason. White has many ways to reach an equal position but most are far easier for Black to play, and thematic Dragon ideas usually work well. Normally an early c4-b3 is just a move order idea by White to avoid certain lines (for example the Chinese Dragon), but with our repertoire we have no such issues.

Chapter 14

Yugoslav Attack



9.g4 without 10. xe6

Vaiaion Index

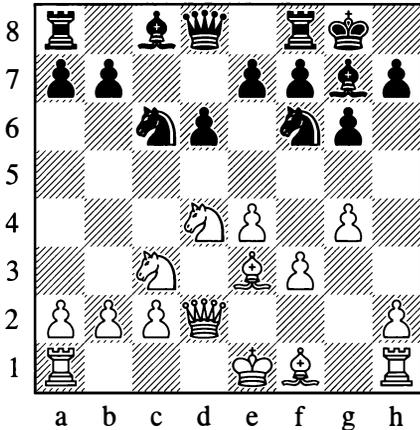
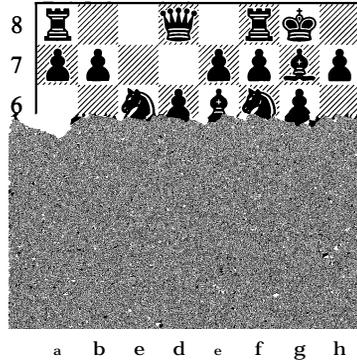
1.e4 c5 2.l f d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.l xd4 l f 5.l c3 g6
6. e3. g7 7.f 0-0 8 d2 l c6 9.g4

9... e6

A) 10.g5?	268
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B1) 11.h5?	270
B2) 11.0-0-0	271
B3) 11.e5!?	272
B4) 11.g5	274
C) 10.0-0-0 l xd4 11.. xd4 a5	275
C1) 12.g5	275
C2) 12.h4	277
C3) 12.c b1 fc8 13.h4?! xc3! 14. xc3 xa2t 15.c cl	278
C31) 15... xg4	279
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C4) 12.a3 ab8	282
C41) 13.h4 b5	282
C411) 14.h5?! b4	282
C4111) 15.h g6!?	284
C4112) 15.l d5	285
C412) 14.l d5	286
C42) 13.c b1 fc8	287
C421) 14.g5	289
C422) 14.h4	291

1.e4 c5 v f d6 3.d4 c d4 4.t xd4 < f
5.t c3 g 6. e3. g7 7.f 0 0 8' d2 t c6
9.g4

T is line has an interesting history. Initially it was played as a positional approach, attempting to create a bind. T at strategy was subsequently defused by Black, but more recently the interest has switched to White's capturing on e6 (after Black's next move) and initiating a double-edged tactical fight.



10...d5?N

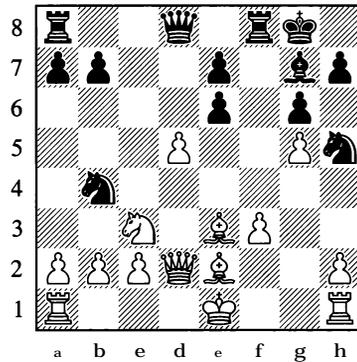
Exploiting White's leaving his king in the centre. I like Black's chances, for example:

1.g5

11.exd5 1 xd4 (11... xd5 is also fine)
12. xd4 1 xd5 13. xg7 xg7 14.0 0-0
1 f6 15. d3 ' a5 16.h4 t d5 17.t xd5
' xd2t 18.Exd2 xd5=

11...l h5 12.l xe6f e6 13.exd5l b4!?

13... xc3 14.' xc3 exd5 15.0 0-0 1 f4=
also looks acceptable.



9... e6

Black can avoid the t xe6 plan by inserting 9..l xd4 10. xd4 and only then playing 10... e6. T en 11.0 0-0 would transpose into variation C below but 11.h4! is more dangerous, as Black's counterplay isn't so easy with White's king still in the centre. A tematively, 11.l d5 was Kapov's choice for a small edge.

T is chapter will cover A) 10.g5?!, B) 10.h4 and C) 10.0 0-0

10.l xe6 is covered in the next chapter.

10. e2

Neither side can af ord to waste a tempo in the Yugoslav Attack, and this move does not feel at all critical. I think we should counter it with the typical central break:

14.Ed1

14.0 0 0?' a5! is too dangerous

14.dxe6?! ' a5 also looks risky; there is no sanctuary for White's king.

14... xc3

14...' a5!?' is another idea

15.' xc3l xd5 16.' e5' d6 17.' xd6 exd6=

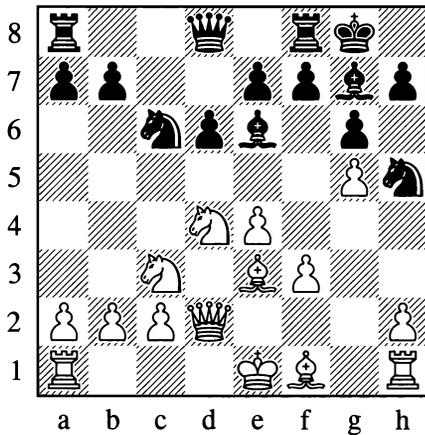
White has the bishop pair; but his kingside structure is compromised and Black has a strong outpost on f4. T e chances are balanced.

A) 1 O g S ?!

It is always a committal decision. White forces the knight to move but blocks the c1-h6 diagonal, which severely limits his kingside possibilities. White also has a long-term problem with his kingside structure, as the f4-square may become a fantastic outpost after an exchange of bishops, and White's kingside pawns might also become vulnerable.

10...t hS

The database indicates that Black has scored 9/9 from this position!



11. ♖e2

This has been tried a couple of times, but we can exploit White's weak dark squares.

11.0 0 0 a5 12. b1 t xd4 13. xd4 xd4 14. xd4 xg5+ leaves Black a clear pawn up.

11.t d5 occurred in Moncayo Romero - N. Kosintseva, Athens 2001, and now 11... xd4!N 12. xd4 xd5 13.exd5 t xd4 14. xd4 a5t 15.c3 e5+ illustrates White's potential problems: her dark squares are terribly weak.

11.t xe6

This move tends not to combine well with

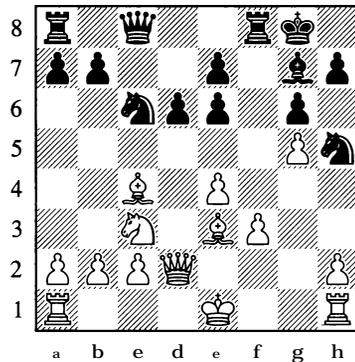
g4g5, as White struggles to deal with the open f-file.

11...f e6 12. c4

12. h3 was seen in Kofidis - Gavrilidis, Peristeri 2010, and now 12... d7N is simplest. Black will bring the c6-knight to c4 via either e5 or a5, with an excellent position. After the text move Black can improve on Eu. Levin - Rust, Philadelphia 2000.

12... c8!N

White is under pressure across the board, for instance:

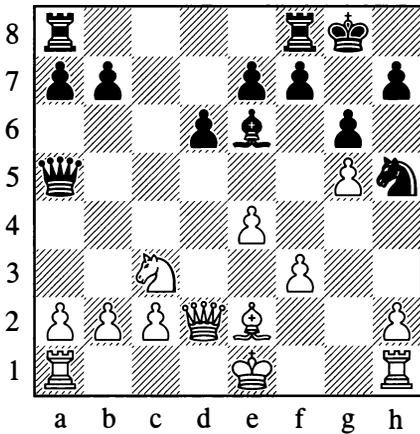


13.0 0 0 t a5

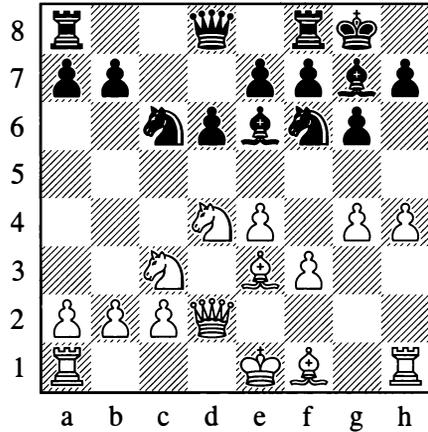
13...Exf3 is also possible, but there is no need to allow White any counterplay with 14. e2.

14. e2 t c4 15. xc4

15. d3t xe3 16. xe3 xc3 17. xc3 xc3 18.bxc3 t b



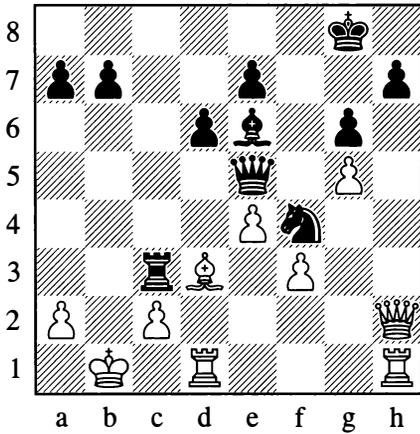
B) 10.h4



14..JW&S!

A beautiful square for the black queen, supporting the knight's arrival on f4.

IS.0-0-0 ac8 16.@bl CS 17.h4 t f4
18.i d3 fc8 19.hS xc3 20.bxc3 xc3
21.h g6f g6 22.' h2



22..hS! 23g h6@h7

Black's attack is unstoppable.

24' h4 gS 2S.' el t xd3 26 xd3 ' bSt
27.@cl ' xd3

0-1 Trap! - Barczay, Decin 1978

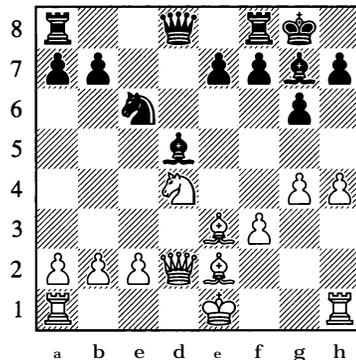
T is optimistic move allows us our thematic Dragon break.

10...dS!

White has tried several responses, the main ones being B1) 11.h5?!, B2) 11.0-0-0, B3) 11.eS!?, and B4) 11.g5.

11.1 xc6?! bxc6 12.g5 fails to 12...Cxe4!
13.f e4 d4 14.i xd4 i xd4 15.0-0-0 i e5+
and Black's bishops completely dominated in
Duca - Jianu, Eforie Nord 2009.

11..exd5 is another odd mix of plans. 11...1 xd5
12.1 xd5 i xd5 13.i e2 Czarnota - Smokina,
Chisinau 2005. Here Black missed a great
chance with:



13... c7N 14.0-0-0 : fdS Black is already winning as there are too many threats. For example, 15.h5 loses to both 15... xa2 and 15...t xd4 16.. xd4. xd4 17.Wxd4. xf3.

11.t xe6?

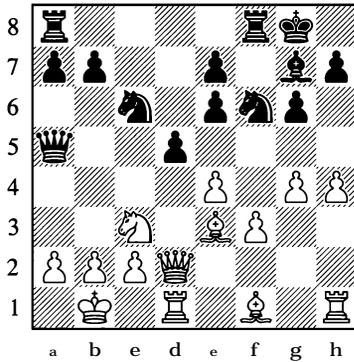
T is is a lot worse than on the previous move. White's h2-h4 is inef ectual as he is unable to hold his centre.

11...f e6 12.0-0-0 Wa5!

12..d4 13. xd4 t xd4 14.Wxd4 Wxd4 15: xd4 t xg4 liquidates to an endgame where Black is at least equal, but the attack on the queenside is even more promising.

13.mbl

Mter 13.exd5 t xd5! 14.t xd5 Wxa2 Black already had a decisive attack in Ramalho - Guimaraes, Lisbon 1999.



13...d4!

Now this move is even stronger than on the previous turn.

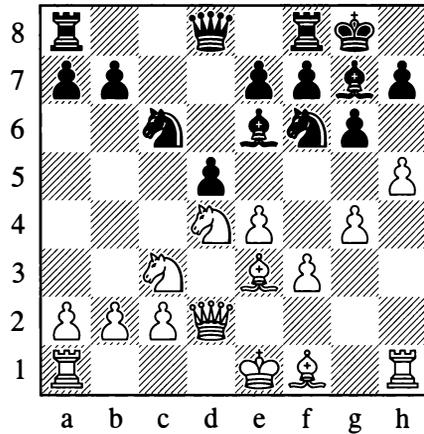
14.. xd4

In Infante - Vera Insfran, Bogota 2003, Black should have played:

14...: adSIN

Winning material.

B1) 11.h5?!



T is is too optimistic; with the centre about to be opened up, White's flank attack is not going to work.

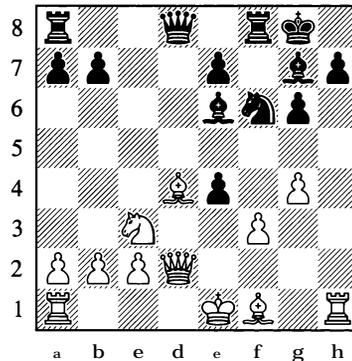
11...t xd4

T e immediate 11...dxe4N is also good.

12. xd4 d e4 13.h6

13.0-0-0 transposes to the note on 13.h5?! in variation B2.

13.hxg6 f g6! Other things being equal, it is generally safer to keep the h-pawn as a protector of Black's king. In the present position it is def nitely the better option, as the open f-f le is important while the light-squared bishop keeps the a2-g8 diagonal secure. A good example continued:

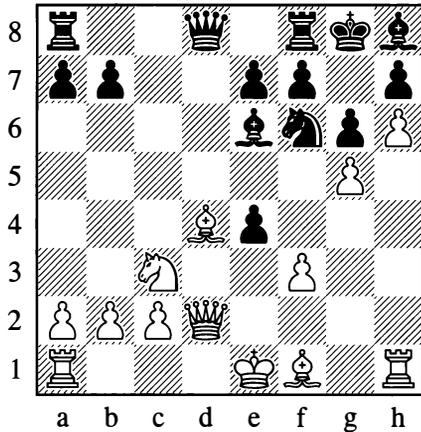


14.0-0-0 exf3 15. h2 d6 16. e5 c5
 17. xf6 : xf6 18.mb1 h6 White's attack had
 completely stalled and Black was winning in
 Natri - Stisis, Kallithea 2002.

Black has an extra pawn and good winning
 chances.

B2) 11.0-0-0

13... h8 14.g5



14...e3!

A useful fnessse, defecting White's bishop.

15. xe3

15. xe3? is refuted by 15...C g4!

15...t d5 16. d4 t xc3 17. xh8

17. xc3 was seen in Lebedev - Le Bled,
 email 2002, and now 17... xd2t.N 18.mxd2
 xc3t 19.mxc3 : ac8t 20.md2 d5 21.: h3
 f6+ reaches a promising endgame for Black, as
 White's kingside pawns are all weak.

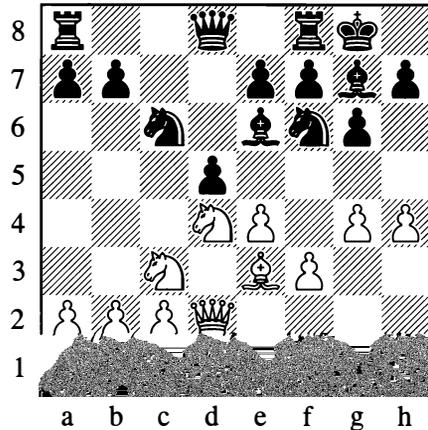
17...Vkd2t

17...mxh8! is playable, but Black does not
 need to look for an improvement.

18. xd2 t xa2 19. d4 l 8 20.c3 t b4
 21. b5 f 22.: a4

T is position was agreed drawn in Van der
 Wiel - Miles, Utrecht 1986, but the English
 GM could have played on.

22...t c2



T is can be dealt with in the same way as the
 previous line.

11...! xd4 12.h d4 dxe4 13.g5

W ite needs to come to terms with the fact
 that his attack is almost always slower than
 Black's in these lines. T herefore it makes sense
 for him to try and exchange pieces.

13. e3 is a more aggressive approach, but
 keeping the queens on the board is risky.
 13... a5 14.g5 c h5 15. xg7 C xg7 16. xe4
 c f5+ Black's knight holds his kingside
 together; Giurgiu - Simmelink, email 2006.

13.h5?!

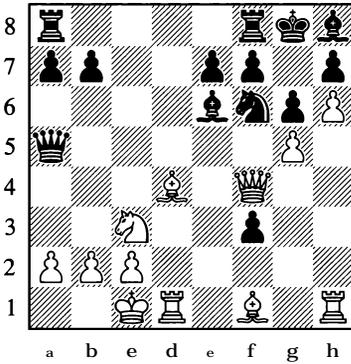
T is is similar to 11.h5?! and, likewise, far
 too optimistic.

13...exf3 14. f4

14.hxg6 f g6 in an exact transposition to
 13.hxg6 f g6 14.0-0-0 exf3 in the notes to
 variation B1 above

14... a5 15.h6 h8 16.g5

Now in Motylev - Klimentov, Briansk 1995,
 Black's strongest continuation would have
 been:



16...t h5!N

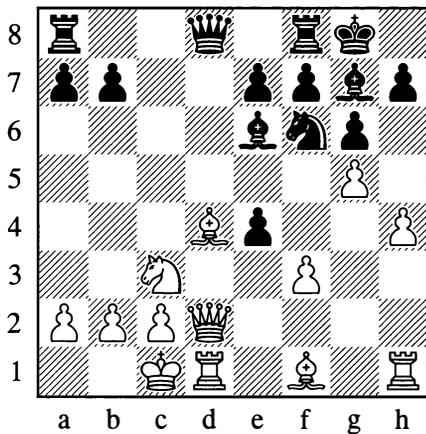
Probably rejected because of the exchange sacrif ce, but White cannot break through.

17.: xh5

White has no choice, as 17.: xf3 xd4 1S.: xd4 " xg5t is easy for Black.

17...gxh5 1S. xhS xhS 19. b5" b6!

Black takes control of d4 and, more importantly, defends the bishop, thus enabling himself to close the long diagonal with ...f6 next. Black should be able to convert his material advantage.

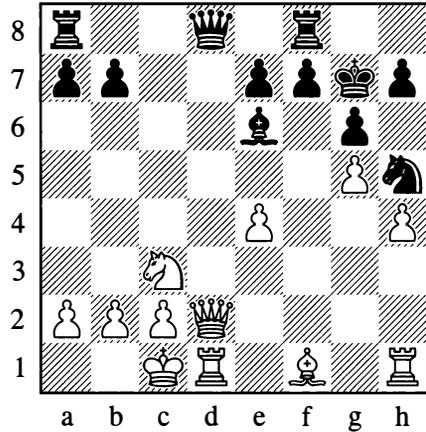


13...t h5 14. xg7

14.f e4 is similar. 14... xd4 15" xd4 " xd4 (avoiding the queen exchange with 15..." c7!?) is also completely playable, Grabner - Gerhards, email 2005) 16.: xd4 : fdS 17.: a4 t g3 In this equal position a draw was agreed in Pascual Perez- Gonzaga Grego, email 2005.

14..! xg7 15.f e4

15.t xe4: cS'



15.." xd2t

T is leads to a harmless endgame but, here too, Black can also keep the queens on with 15.." a5!?! as in Kupreichik - Car, Serpukhov 2009.

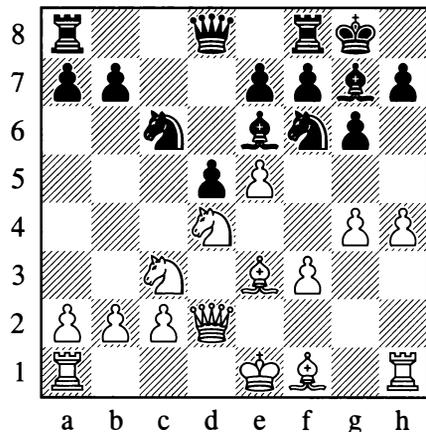
16.: xd2t g3

16...f6!N also looks tempting; I would definitely prefer to be Black, as White's kingside looks vulnerable.

17.: g1l x 18gx gad8=

Romizin - Zakarov, email 2006.

B3) 11.e5!?



This interesting sacrifice is perhaps White's most challenging continuation.

11...c xe5

Grabbing the pawn seems critical, although Black has a fully playable alternative:

11...t d7

This is the safer, less complicated option.

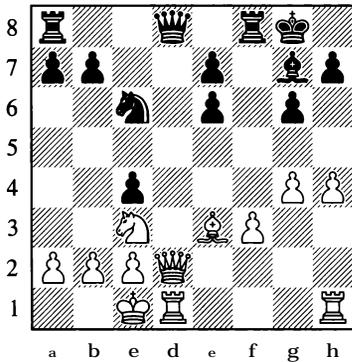
12.0-0-0

12.f4?! xg4 13. e2 xe2 14.1 xe2 h5

15.0-0-0 e6+ White did not have a lot to show for the sacrificed pawn in Vera Ruiz - Sgheri, email 2011.

12.t xe6N f e6 13.f4 would be great for White if he had time to consolidate, so it's important that we have 13...t dxe5! 14.f e5 d4 15.0-0-0 xe5 when Black is not worse.

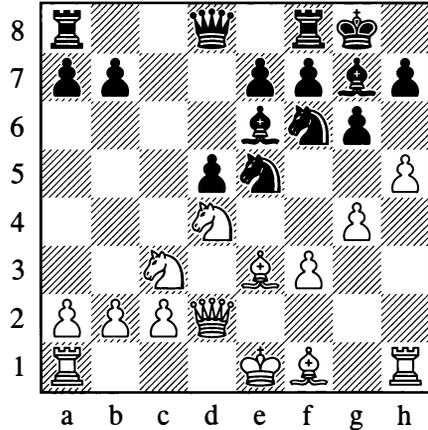
12...l dxe5 13. e2 t c4 14.1 xe6 f e6 15. xc4 dxc4



16. e2 a5 17. xc4 xc3 18.bxc3 e5 19.2hel 2xf 20. d4 d5 21. e2 2afS 22.Wb2l a5 23. xe6t xe6 24.2xe6

Black had slightly the better of the endgame in Chupin - Berza, email 2004.

12.h5



12...c xf t!

This piece sacrifice to open the centre is an important detail. Since White has not castled, simply attacking on the queenside will not produce results in time.

13.c xf h g4 14. g2

14.h6!N

This move retains the h-pawn, but Black still has decent chances after:

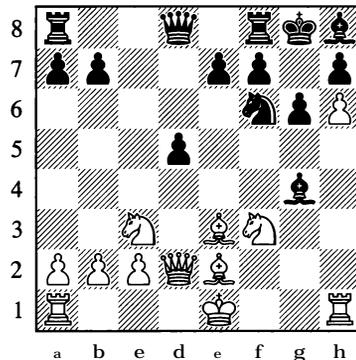
14... hS

14...l e4 15.hxg7 t xd2 16.gxfS= t xfs 17.1 xd2 is highly unclear. Generally I prefer the pieces to the queen, but here it is not so easy for White to coordinate.

15. e2

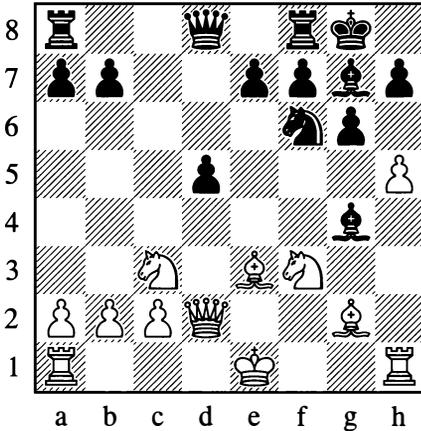
15. g2 2xS+ looks awkward for White, as 16.0-0-0?! 2xc3! 17.bxc3 a5 is really asking for trouble.

15.t e5 f5 is also unclear:



15..e5! 16.l xe5t xe2 17.Wxe2 2e8 18.l xf W67 19.l xh8 Wxe3 20.Wxe3 2xe3t 21. d2 2e6 22.2ae1 2ae8

The complications have resulted in a level ending.



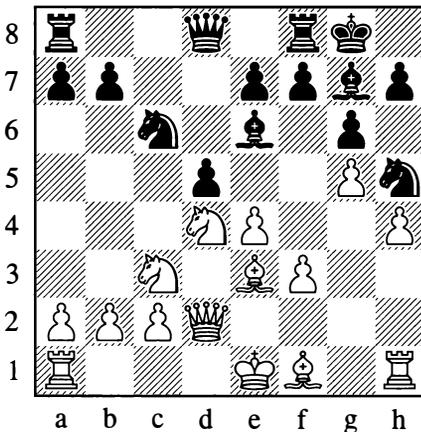
14...h h5

14...l xh5!N 15.2h4f5 16.0 0 Oe6 is an alternative approach that looks fun for Black.

15.0 0 0 2c8 16.t xd5 t xd5 17.' xd5 Y t7 18.Y t4i g4!

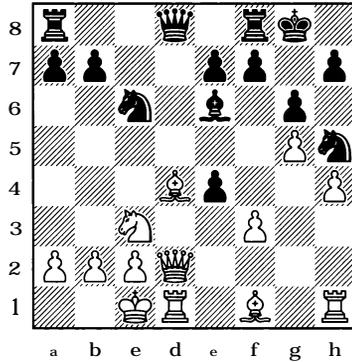
Black had a dangerous initiative in Kobese-Wu, Hastings 2006.

B4) H.g5t h5



12.l xe6

12.0 0 0 t xd4N was a suggestion of mine on ChessPublishing. (Black can also transpose to variation B2 with 12...l xd4 13.t xd4 dxe4 13.t xd4 dxe4



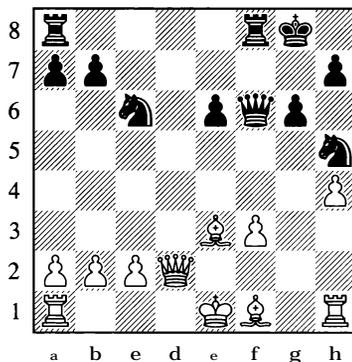
14.l xe4 (14.f e4 Wa5 leaves Black with much the stronger attack) 14...l xd4 15.Wxd4 Wa5+ Black is extremely comfortable.

12...f e6

Tony Miles assessed this as a clear advantage to Black. While I think that's an exaggeration, Black is certainly doing well.

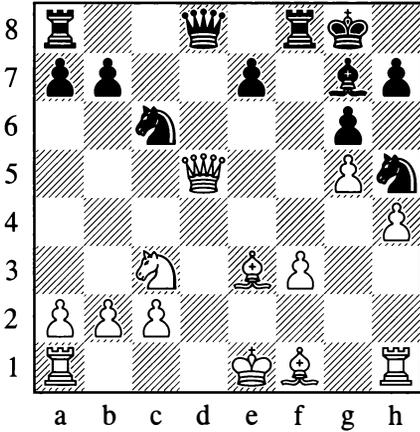
13.exd5 exd5 14.Y kd5t

Likewise 14.l xd5 fails to cause problems: 14...e6 15.l f6t (15.l c3 Wa5) 15..t xf6 16.gxf6 Wxf6



17.0 0 0 2ad8 18.t d3 t e5 19.' bl l xd3 20.cxd3 Wxf3 21.t xa7 l f4' Black is more active and has the safer king. The dark squares

around his king look vulnerable but White lacks the coordination to exploit them.



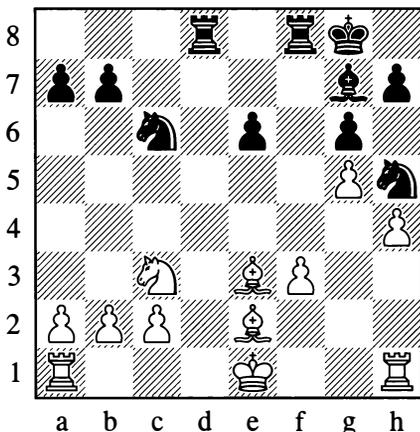
14...e6 15. xd8

As I noted on ChessPublishing, 15. xe6? < hS= ensures Black of an excellent game; W it's king is stuck in the centre, while ...EfS-eS is a big threat.

15... a d8 16. e2

16.Eh3 is the other way to defend the f-pawn but 16...t b4 17.Ec1 b6 promises Black at least enough compensation, as he is much more active. White won't be able to hold on to his extra pawn as he tries to get his pieces to interact with each other:

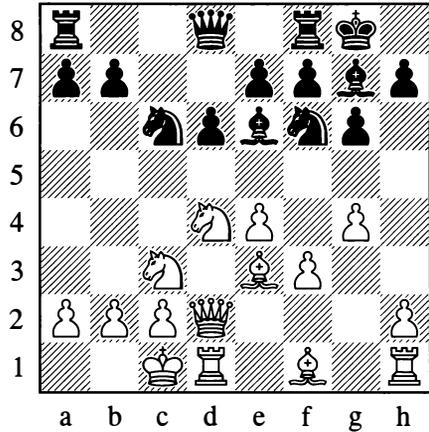
Fernandez Cardoso - Oliva Castaneda, Havana 2010.



16... d4 17.. xd4 xd4

Black has dangerous play on the dark squares

C) 10.0-0-0

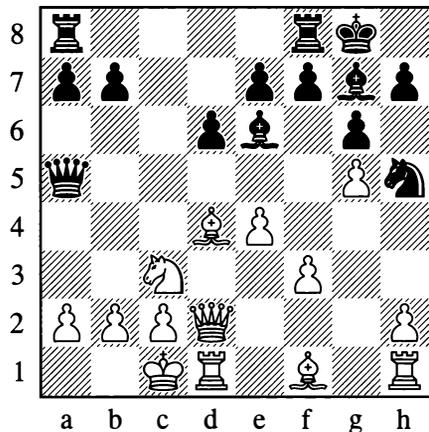


This is how White used to play this line, but nowadays it's not considered to give Black any problems. The trouble for White is that his attack is less potent than Black's, so he will be forced to trade queens

10...t xd4 11.h d4 a5

From here we will analyse C1) 12.g5, C2) 12.h4, C3) 12.i b1 and C4) 12.a3.

C1) 12.g5 t h5



As I wrote earlier, g4-g5 is always a committal decision. Sometimes it is White's best, but that normally applies when the centre is fluid and White can gain something tangible from forcing our knight to move. Here White gets to exchange bishops but I don't think that is enough to offset the long-term problems.

13. i xg7

13.a3? simply dropped a pawn after 13... xd4 14. \ xd4 \ xg5t+ in Daugherty - Phillips, email 2003.

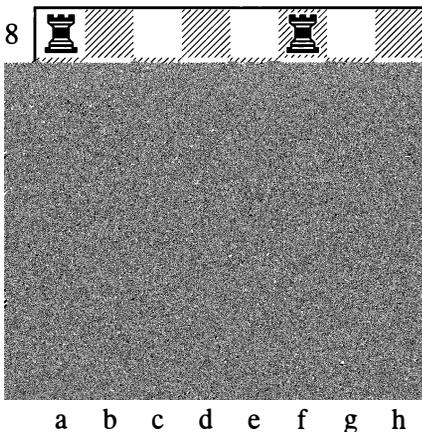
13...c xg7 14. ♖!

T is somewhat risky, but it is the consistent follow-up to White's 12th move. Other moves give Black easy play:

14.c b18acS!N White will likely have to grovel in an unpleasant endgame after something like 15.1 d5 \ xd2 16.8xd2 xd5 17.8xd51 f4+.

14.1 d5 is also asking for a lot of suffering: 14...\ xd2t 15.8xd2 xd5 16.exd5 f6+ Pekarek - Tupy, Czech Republic 2004.

14.a3 8acSN is comfortable for Black. White can still try 15.f4 but 15...8xc3! 16. \ xc3t \ xc3 17.bxc3 l xf4 gives Black great compensation for the exchange.



14...i a 15.i e2 ac8 16.h1 5

16.f5!N may be more accurate but Black seems to be okay. 16... gS 17. xh5 (17.f6 8xc3 IS.f e7 [1S.\ xc3 \ xg5t 19.\ d2 l f4+] IS...8xc2t 19.\ xc2 8eS=) 17... c4! IS.\ e3gxh5 19.8hg1 \ alt 20. d2 \ a5T e position is messy but Black's chances are not worse, for instance: 21.g6 f g6 22.f g6 \ e5+

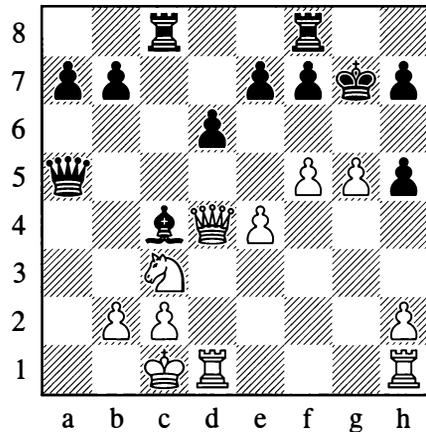
16...g h5 17.f i c4

Black's kingside might look ugly but actually it is not easy for White to attack. Meanwhile we are a pawn up and our queenside intentions are clear.

18. \ d4t

1S.f6tN c gS! 19.f e7 \ alt 20.1 bl 8feS+ also favours Black.

Now in Schiappoli - Di Giulio, Napoli 200S, Black should have continued:



18...c g8!N 19. hg1 b5

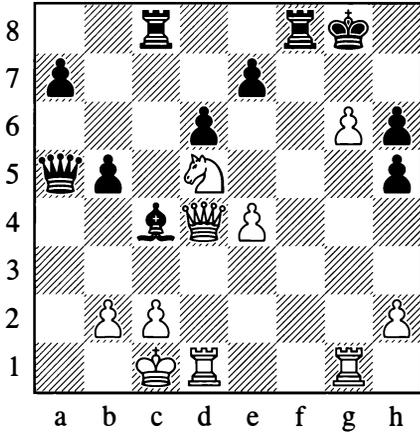
Black's queenside play is coming fast.

20.g6 f g6 21.f g6 h6!

Keeping the kingside closed.

22.1 d5

22.g7 8f + does not help White.

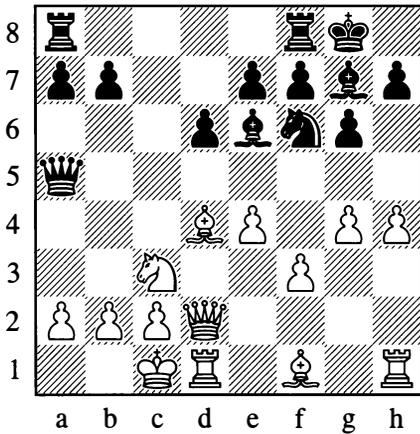


22... xd5 23.WxdSt

23.exd5 1 a1t 24.< d2 1 a4! trades the queens.

23..@g1 24.Wd4t f 2S.eS dxsS 2G.WxsS Wc7;

C2) 12.h4



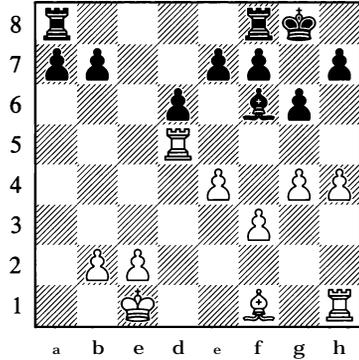
T is is another aggressive but risky approach. White bets everything on his kingside attack, but the loss of the a2-pawn ensures that his own king will never be safe

12.. xa2 13.h5

White has to plough on.

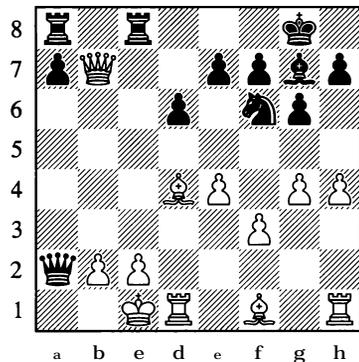
13.1 d5? has no logic to it at all. 13...1 xd2t 14.1 xd2 In Taborsky - Kuljabin, Klatovy 1999, 14..1 xd5N 15.exd5! ac8+ would have left Black with a clear extra pawn.

13. xf6? is similarly inconsistent; it is too late for White to back out of the complications. 13.. xf6 14.1 d5 1 xd2t 15. xd2 xd5 16.1 xd5

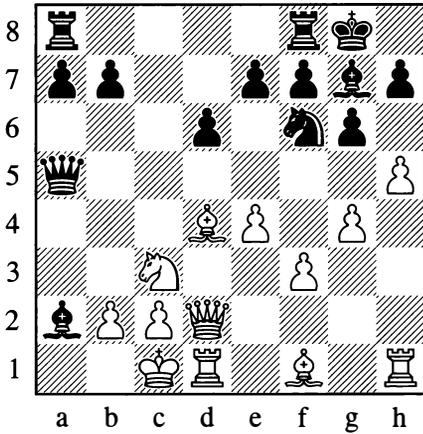


T is was Al K alidi - Firas, Baghdad 2013, and now 16.. e5N+ would have claimed the f4 outpost, leaving White doomed to be tortured for the rest of the game.

13.1 xa2? 1 xa2 accelerates Black's attack. 14.1 b4 1 fc8 15.1 xb7 In Coppini - Nazarenus, Budapest 1995, the most accurate route to the win would have been:



15..1 xg4!N 16.f g4 (16. xg7 1 e3!+) 16.. xd4 17.1 xd4! ab8 +



13... ac8N

I think this is the correct rook. The one on f5 will become developed if White chooses to exchange on g6.

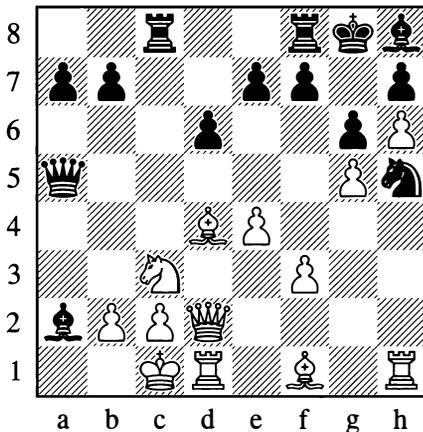
14.h6

This is generally how engines like to continue. This can be explained by the positive effect of extra space on its evaluation function.

A human opponent is more likely to try and crash through. However, after 14.hxg6 f g6 15. e2 e6 16.< b1 b5!+ I don't see what White is doing

14... h8 15.g5t h5

I examined this position carefully and failed to find a way through for White.



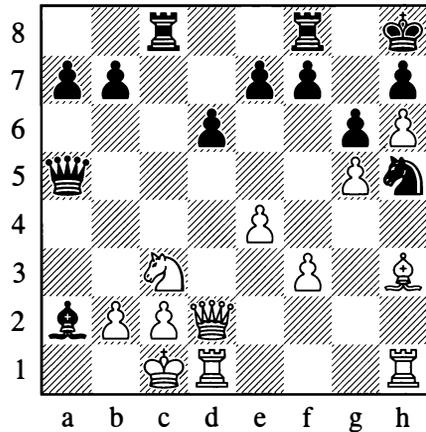
16. x 8

16.f4 e5! is clearly better for Black.

16.Exh5? The exchange sacrifice has to be checked but we don't need to fear it. 16...gxh5 17. xh5 mxh5 1S.f4 (1S.i d4t f6) 18..f6+ The long diagonal is closed and we can follow up by sacrificing back on c3, resulting in an endgame with at least one extra pawn. (The immediate 1S...Exc3? is not so clear as White can throw in 19.i d4t!)

16.. x 8 17.. h3

After 17.f4 f6 1S. h3 Ec6! Black has the scarier attack as well as the extra pawn. For instance, if 19. g4 g5 20. xh5 i alt 21.t b1 a2 Black wins



17...Ec6! 18. d7

1S. g4 e5! blocks the long diagonal and enables us to concentrate on our own attack.

18..J a6 19.f4 i c5

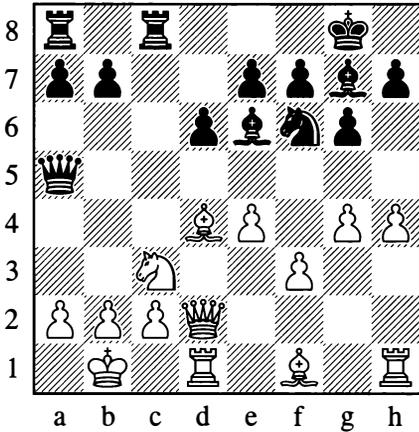
C3 12.i bl

This is normally just used as a different move order to reach the main line, but there are a few unique White tries

12...Uc 8 13h4?

This is highly risky

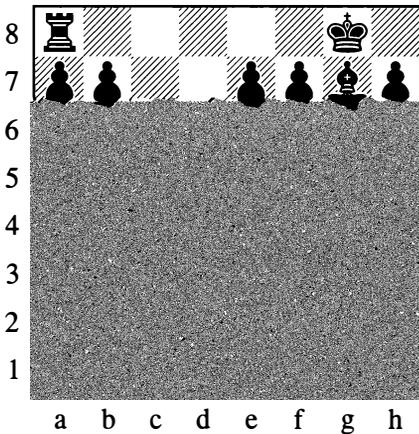
13.a3 Eab8 transposes to variation C 42.



13..Exc3 14. xc3 xa t 15' c1

We now have a pleasant choice between heading for a promising ending with C31) 15... xg4 and keeping the queens on the board with C32) 15... al t.

C31) 15..h g4



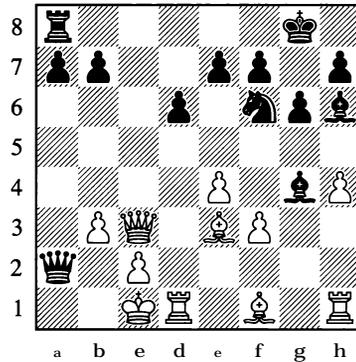
A though I referred to this move as leading to an endgame, White needs to be extremely accurate to reach that stage. In many games he has failed to do so, as you can see from the following game references.

16.f g4!

Taking the bishop is the only way to survive. I checked six other moves, many of which lose quickly due to a devastating check on h6.

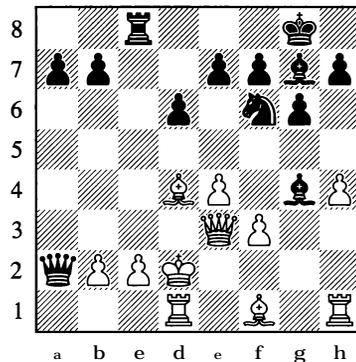
a) 16.Ee1? In Drogovoz - Menzi, Budva 2013, Black could have won with: 16..Ec8! N 17.Wd3 h6t 18. e3 (18i dl xf3t! 19.Wxf3 Wb1t 20.me2 Wxc2#) 18.. xf3 19. xh6 xh1- +

b) 16.b3? h6t 17. e3



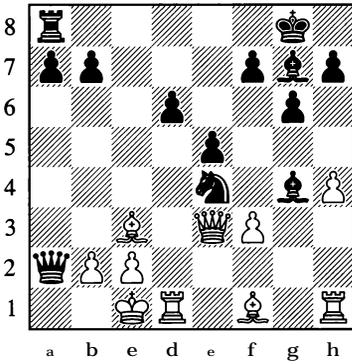
17...t xe4! This is a key tactical motif. 18.f e4 xe3t 19.Ed2 Ec8 Black had a crushing attack in Leite - Nidi, Ceske Budejovice 2014.

c) 16.i d2? Ec8 17.We3



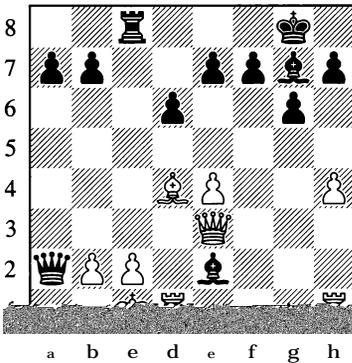
17...t xe4t! 18.Wxe4 f5 19.We3 Exc2t 20.mel Wa5t 21. c3 xc3t 22.bxc3 Exc3 23.Wd2 We5t 24. e2 Ec2 0 1 Dorenberg - Riemersma, Enschede 1992.

d) 16.We3? looks like a sensible way to cover the c1-h6 diagonal, but 16...e5! 17.. c3! xe4! again leaves White defenceless



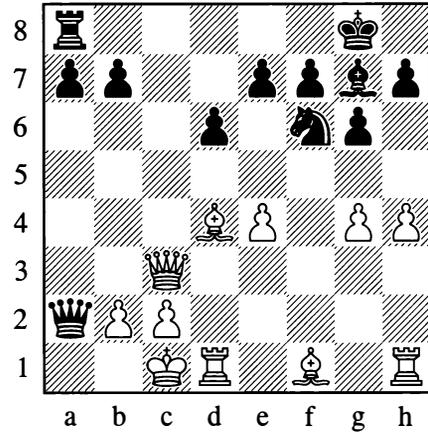
1S.b4 1 xc3 19.Wxc3. h6t 20.: d2 : cS 0- 1 Lopez Gonzalez - Belezky, Seville 2005.

e) 16.. e2?: cS! 17.We3! xe4! 1S.f e4. xe2



19.: de1 0.9.Wxe2 . xd4 20.: xd4 Wãt 21.< d2 Wãh1+) 19... xd4 20.Wãd4 T is occurred in Exposito Garcia - Alberdi Vinas, Spain 1991, and now 20...: c4!N 21.We3 Wãt 22.< d2 Wãb2 would have yielded an overwhelming attack.

f) 16.. c4?! . h6t 17.. e3 . xe3t 1S.Wxe3 Wxc4 19.f g4 l xg4 T is time there is no immediate mate, but af er 20.Wf4 : cS 21.c3 h5 Black again had a decisive advantage in Luuk onen - Vasilev, Siofok 1996.



16..Wãt 17.@d2! xe4t 18@e1

1S.< e2! xc3t and 1S.< e3 Wãd1 are both hopeless.

18...l xc3 19.: xal h d4

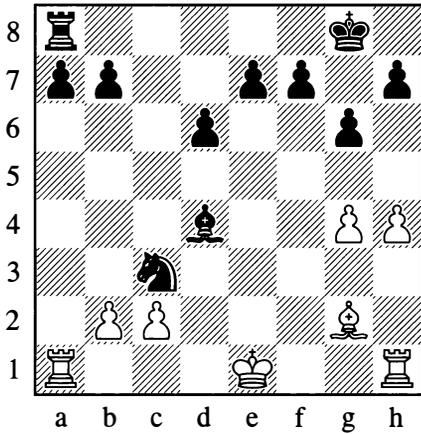
The knight is defended tactically due to the loose rook on a1. Black currently has three pawns for the exchange but White can exploit the precarious nature of the knight to obtain good drawing chances.

20.. g2!

White attacks the b7-pawn and also prepares to take on c3 now that the a1-rook will be defended.

20.. d3?! allows Black to regroup. 20...l d5 21.: b1l e3+ Vanlerberghe- Carnes, Auxerre 1996.

Attacking the knight immediately fails to get anywhere as we have another nice trick: 20.: a3 l d5 21.: d3! b4! T e threat of a fork on c2 means that the bishop is defended. 22.: b3 l xc2t 23.< d2 T is occurred in Ribeiro - Clavijo, Cienfuegos 1996, and here 23...: cS!N gives Black promising chances in the ending.



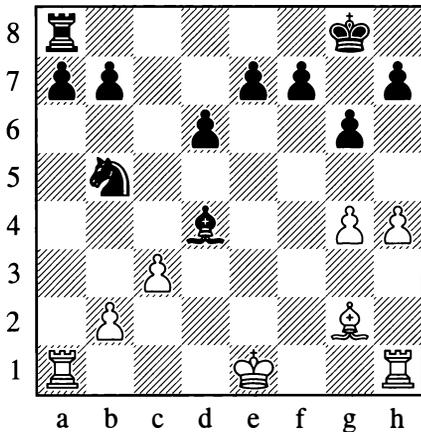
20..1 bS

20...Ec8?N looks an interesting idea, again defending c3 tactically. 21.bxc3 xc3t 22. f2 xa1 23.Exa1 Exc2t T is may well be a draw as Black's queenside pawns are dropping of , but White will still have to work for it.

21.d !

21. f1? had no real logic and allowed Black to defend his pawn with 21...Eb8' in Dabrowska- Shishkin, Polanica Zdroj 1994.

21.Eh3 was played in Hedrera - De Zan, Argentina 1995, and now after 21.. b6N 22. xb7 Eb8 23. g2 e6' the endgame looks unpleasant for White. He is outgunned on the dark squares and will struggle to slow the advance of Black's central pawns.



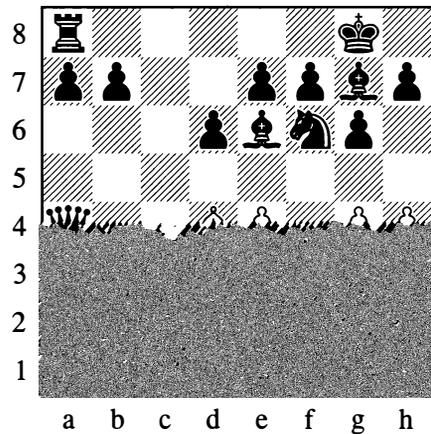
21..i b6!N

21..t xc3 was played in Kozlowski - B. Grabarczyk, Slupsk 1989. After the knight was taken Black triumphed with the pawn mass against the bishop, but White missed 22.Eh3!N which is rather annoying.

22i xb7 d8

White has a slightly improved version of the position we saw after 21.Eh3 above, as his pieces are somewhat better coordinated and Black is a little slower to advance his centre. Nevertheless, I would still opt to play as Black here.

C32) 1S..&alt 16.@d2' a4



T is time Black retains the queens and once again forces White to play accurately.

17.@e3!N

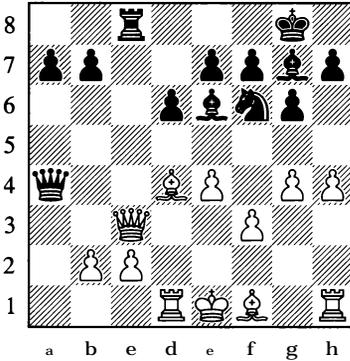
I believe this is White's only way to get close to equality.

17.e5? has been played a couple of times but it just loses. 17...dxe5 18. xe5 In Rohackova - Hrabovsky, Dunajska Streda 1999, the simple 18...C d5N would have won material.

17. c1? Ec8 18.b3 Exc3 19.bxa4 Exf3+ is another excellent endgame for Black.

17.b3?! 1 xe4t IBf e4" xd4t 19." xd4 xd4 gave Black a big advantage due to White's vulnerable pawns in Orsini - Dragojlovic, Castel di Sangro 2007.

17.< e1 is a better try but af er 17...2cB Black still has the upper hand:



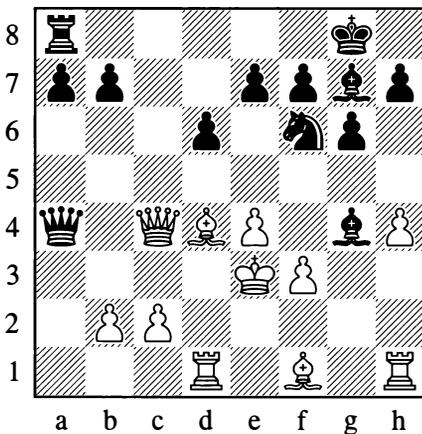
IBb3? (1B" d3N is necessary but Black still has the better ending after IB...: xc2 19." b5 " xb5 20. xb5 a6) IB...: xc3 19.bxa4 : xf3 20. d3 l xg4+ Jose Q ueralto - Lecha Gonzalez, Spain 2004.

17...h g4

17...: cB!? IB" d3 d5 is an interesting alternative.

ISJWc4!

Mter IBf g4 e5!+ Black regains the piece with a dangerous attack.



IS..JWd7 19." b5!

19. xf6 e6! 20. h3 xc4 (20... xf6!?) is possible if you still want to play for mate) 21. xd7 xf6 Black has the better ending with the two pawns for the exchange.

19... xb5 2o.h b5. e6

White has managed to trade of the queens and is only a little worse in the ending. However, this is hardly an endorsement of 13.h4?!

C4) 12.a3: ab5

T is is Black's most accurate move order, preparing ...b5 without delay. White may respond with C41) 13.h4 or C42) 13.< bl.

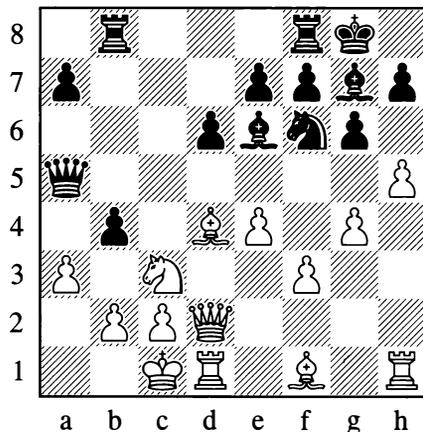
C41) 13.h4

White pushes ahead with his k ngside attack, but he would be ill-advised to challenge Black to a race.

13...b5

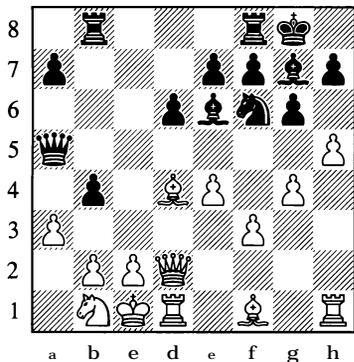
We will check the optimistic C411) 14.h5? followed by the more reasonable C412) 14.t d5.

C411) 14.h5? b4

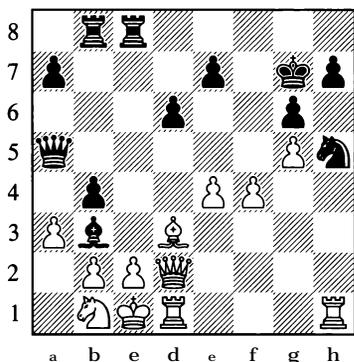


Black is the first to create a threat. White's two main tries are C4111) 15.h g !? or C4112) 15.l d5.

15.t bl ? is too passive.



15..J fc8! 16.hxg6 f g6 (16...hxg6+ also looks safe and excellent for Black) 17.g5 t h5 18.i xg7 i xg7 19.f4 i b3 20.i d3 Now in Popescu - Dumitrache, Creon 2000, Black missed a pretty way to continue:



20..i xc2!N 21.i xc2 b3 Obviously our queen is taboo due to the mate on c2, and 22.t c3 bxc2 23.< xc2 (23.Wxc2 t xf4 +) 23..Wa4t leaves us with a dangerous attack.

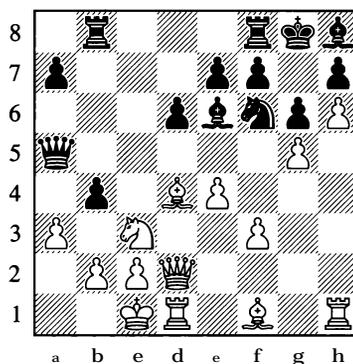
15.h6

I think a lot of Black players breathe a sigh of relief when they see this move, as they no longer have to worry about being mated on the h-f file! True, we still have to watch out for

mates from a knight on e7, but that can only happen if we are extremely careless.

15..i h8 16.g5

16.t d5 i xd5 17.exd5 was seen in Meszaros - Porat, Szombathely 2004, and now 17...: fc8!N gives Black a dangerous attack, while it is hard to see where White's counterplay lies.

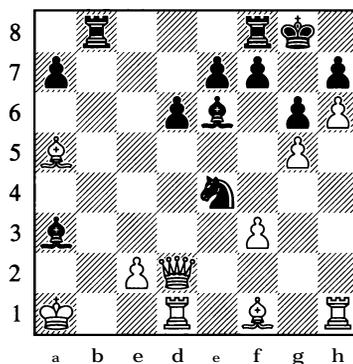


16..bxc3 17.i xc3t xe4! 18.i xa5?

18.f e4 is necessary, but 18..i xc3 19.Wxc3 Wxc3 20.bxc3: fc8+ is a horrible ending for White.

18..i xb2t 19.i bl i xa3t 20.< al

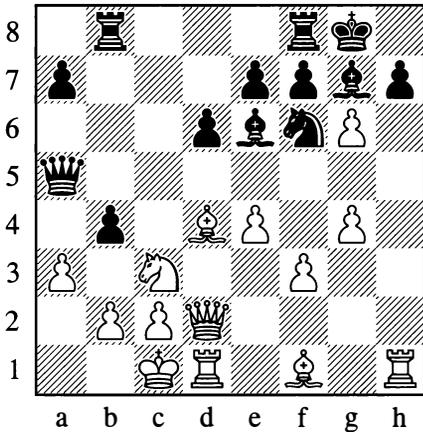
In Belec - Cernousek, Strmilov 2005, Black took the queen and won easily, but there is actually a forced mate.



20..i b2t!N 21.< bl i c3t 22.< cl i a2

White cannot stop the rook from delivering mate on bl.

C411) 15.hxg6?



This has only been tried in a single correspondence game.

15...hxg6

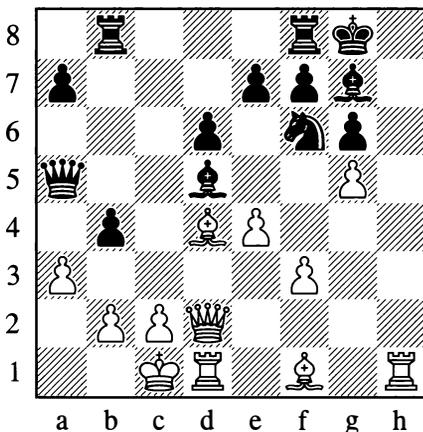
15...bxc3 16.i xc3 Wb6 17.gxh7t c h8 is messy.

However, 15...bxa3!N looks a tempting alternative, and after 16.gxh1 t < h8 17.b3 Ef c8 Black has the more dangerous attack.

16.t d5i xd5 17.g5

17.exd5 Wxd5 18.axb4 Wa2 19.Wd3 Exb4 leaves White in trouble.

In Bericat - Pesce, corr. 1990, Black played 17...l h5 and drew quickly, but he missed something more powerful.



17...l xe4N 18 h2

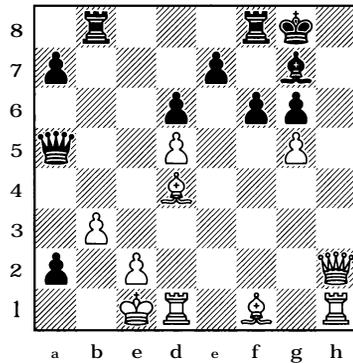
18.f e4?i xe4 19.i xg7c xg7 20.Eh4 We5 + doesn't get White anywhere.

18..f

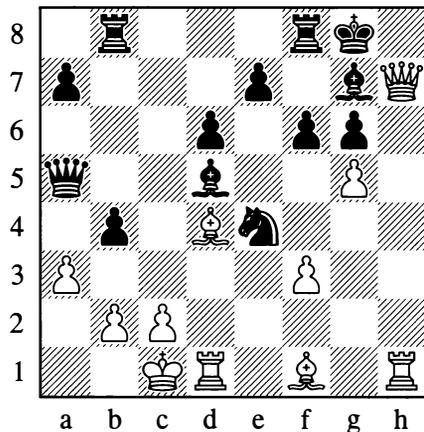
The position is extremely complicated but we can defend against White's threats while keeping a strong attack of our own.

19. h7t

No better is 19.f e4 bxa3 20.b3 a2 21.exd5 (21.c b2 i xb3! 22.cxb3 Exb3t! 23.c xb3 Eb8t 24.< c2 Wa4t- +)



21..a1=Wt 22.i xa1 Wxalt 23.c d2 Wd4t 24.i d3 f5 Black will follow up with ...c f , keeping an extra pawn as well as the safer king.



19.. f 20J h6@e8!

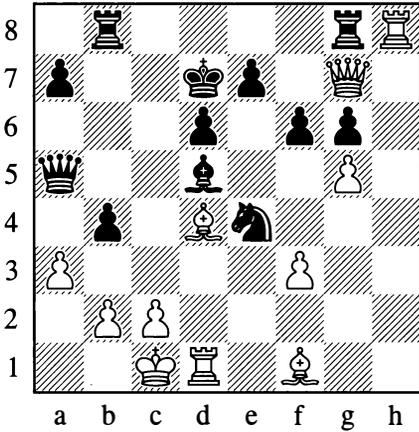
The king runs to safety.

21. xg7

21.Wxg6t doesn't work either: 21..Ef 22.f e4 bxa3 23.exd5 a2 24.b3 a1=Wt 25. xa1 Wxa1t 26.< d2 Wd4t 27. d3 Wf4t 28.< e2 f g5 +

21...EgS 22.EhS < d7

Black's king has escaped and White has run into trouble with his queen.

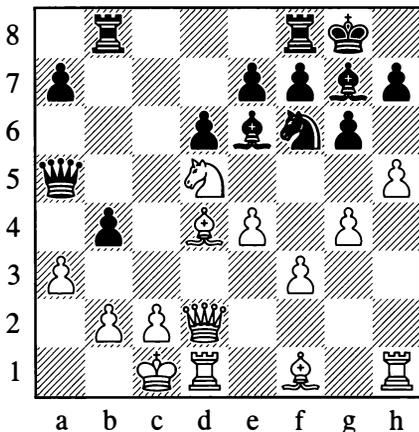


23f e4

T is White's best try, but Black keeps a big advantage after:

23..Exg7 24h bSh e4+

C4112) 15.1 d5



T is move comes too late to exchange queens, and White soon falls into trouble.

15...h d5 16.exd5 xd5 17.a b4

White regains the pawn temporarily, but material turns out to be the least of his concerns.

17... a !

White does not have a satisfactory defence.

1S.c3

18.b3? was refuted elegantly in the following game: 18..Efc8 19.hxg6 Exb4! 20.gxf t f8 21.c3 Wxb3 22.Wh2 Exd4 0-1 Wolf - W. Schmidt, Germany 2006.

1S..J fcS

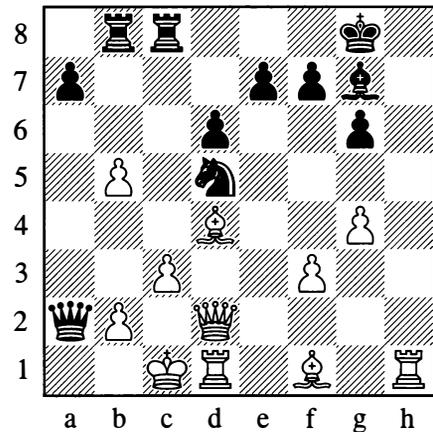
Black brings his last piece into play.

19h g6h g6 20b5

White tries to keep the queenside as closed as possible.

2o..1 d5!

T e knight Joins the attack with deadly effect. T e f nish might be:

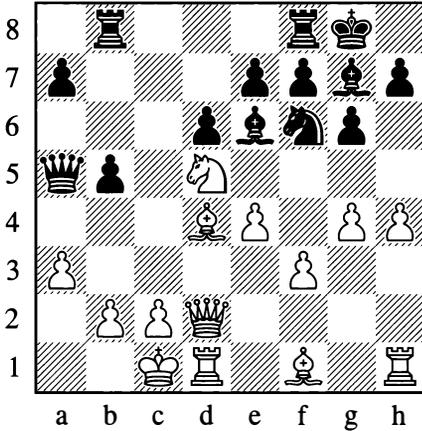


21h g7

21.Wc2 e5 22. g1 f6! also gave Black a mating attack in Muhren - P Littlewood, Ghent 2004.

21... alt 22.Wc2 t b4t 23.Wb3 a2t
24.Wxb4 a5#

C412) 14.t d5



T is is White's last opportunity to exchange queens, and he is well advised to take it.

14... xd2t 15J d2i xd5

Our perfect endgame in the ensuing structure would see us play with the knight versus White's light-squared bishop, while controlling the f4- and/or e5-squares.

16.exd5

T is position might not look terribly interesting but, while it's true that it is equal and most computer battles have ended in draws, more than half of the over-the-board encounters have ended decisively.

16.i xf6 is an extremely unambitious approach by White, and after 16..i xf6 17.: xd5 b4 1S.axb4 : xb4 the position is simply equal.

16..l d7!?

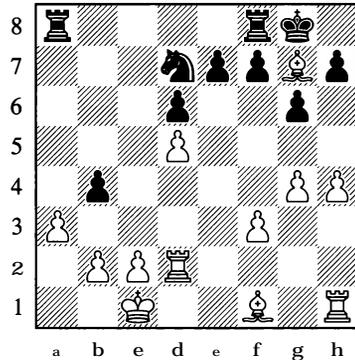
T is was the choice of a young Levon Aronian and it looks sensible to me; the a7-pawn is not really hanging.

T e more common 16...a5 is also completely fine for Black.

17.f4

17.i xg7 i xg7 1S.i g2 b4 19: el bxa3 20.bxa3 : feS+ occurred in Swathi - Swapnil, Aurangabad 2011, and shows how the position is easier for Black to play. Black can slowly prepare to play down the b- and c-f les.

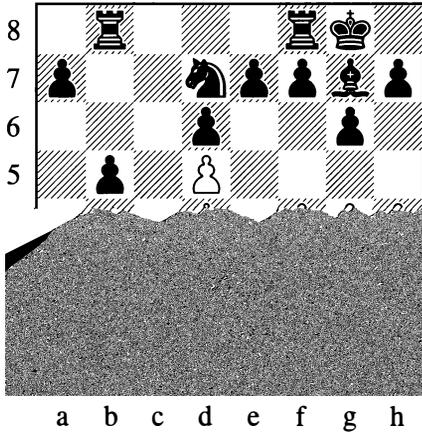
Mter 17.i xa7 : aS 1S.i d4 b4 the potential mate on a1 enables Black to regain the pawn with slightly better chances. 19.i xg7



19...bxa3!?(19..i xg7N also looks interesting as White cannot hold onto his extra pawn: 20: d3 c e5 21: b3 bxa3 22.bxa3 : a5 23.c4 : cS 24: c3?: xd5+) 20.i d4 a2 21.b3 a1=' t 22.i xa1 : xa1t 23< b2 : fa8 24.i g2 : la2t 25.i c1 c e5 1/2-1/2 Koronowski - Karasek, email 2009.

17.g5!N has not yet been played but is a more aggressive approach: White wants to open up the h-f le and deliver mate. With such reduced material this should not be possible but, to be on the safe side, I would throw in 17...h5 when the kingside is completely blocked.

17.i b1 a5 1S.g5 is another way for White to build up on the kingside: 1S...b4 19.a4 i xd4 20: xd4 c c5 21.h5 c xa4 22: dh4 T is may look scary, but 22...h6! defuses White's attack and the game was soon agreed drawn: 23.hxg6 hxg5 24.gxf t i xf 25: h7t < eS 26: g7 1/2-1/2 Domanov - Svartbo, email 2006.

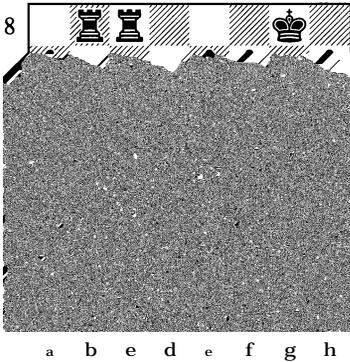


I7...b4

17...l cS was Levon's choice and is also perfectly fine for Black.

ISJ h3

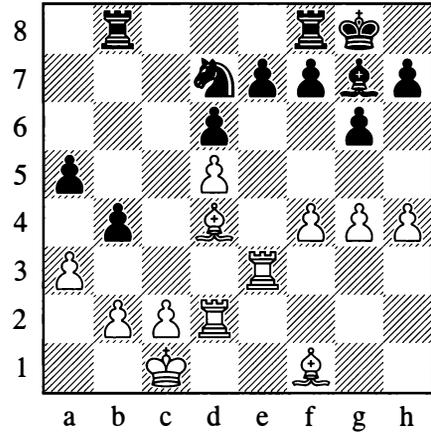
Another game continued: 18.a4 i xd4 19.%xd4 %fc8 20.i bS l cS 21.< d2 (21.%b4? l d3t is a pretty way of using both pins)



21...a6 (Playing on the kingside with 21...fS!N looks like an interesting alternative) 22.i e2 as 23.%gl %c7 24.i bS %bc8 2S.fS l d7 26.i xd7 %xd7 27.f g6 hxg6 28.< d3 %cS 29.%g2 1/2-1/2 Drake Diez de Rivera - Ljubicic, email 2009.

IS...a5 I9.%e3

We have been following Abhishek - Swapnil, Visakhapatnam 2011. Here I think the most accurate is



I9..bxa N

A sample line is

20J xa : feS

20...l cS!? could also be considered.

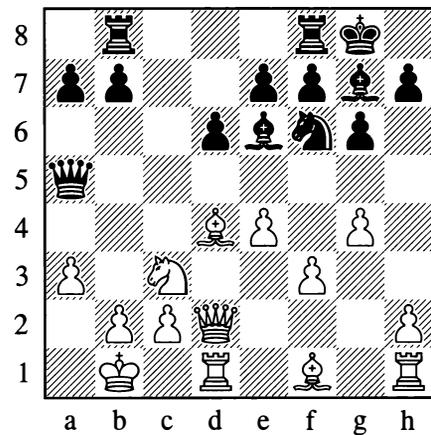
21.i xg7 < kg7 22.: xa5: b4 23.: f

23.%a7 allows 23...%xf4!

23..t f 24.g5 t g4 25.: a t h2 26.: f t g4=

With a repetition.

C42) 13.ϕb1

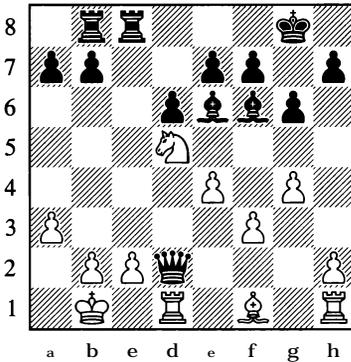


T is sidestep is typical when the queen has gone to as.

13.J fc8

Black develops his final piece and prepares to push the b-pawn. Now C421) 14.g5 has been quite popular; and C422) 14.h4 has been the most common move of all.

14. xf6?! is not White's best route to the endgame. 14... xf6 15.l d5 Wxd2 (Black can also keep the queens on the board with 15..Wa4! since e7 is now defended. Following 16.l xf6t exf6 17. d3 a5 18.Wf4 b5 19.Wxf6 b4 20.Wd4 Wc6 Black had strong play for the pawn in Postolachi - Seegert, Kemer 2009.)



16.l xf6t < g7+ A important move to remember in the Dragon. Black maintains the integrity of his structure and has a slight advantage in the ending.

14.l e2

This was once played by a young Magnus Carlsen.

14..Wa4!?

14...Wxd2 15J xd2 a6= also gives Black nothing to worry about.

15.g5

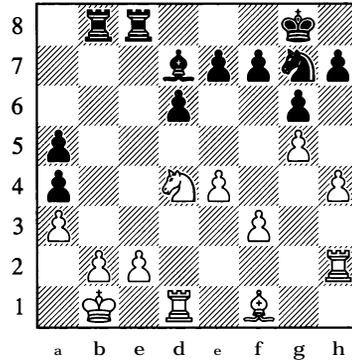
White should probably admit that his last move was not the most challenging and simply repeat with 15.l c3 Wa5.

15..t h5 16. xg7 l xg7 17.l d4 b5 18.Wb4 18.. d7!

Improving over 18..Wa6 as played in Carlsen - Snarheim, Asker 2003.

19.h4 a5 20.Wxa4 bxa4 21.l h2

In Agopov - Carlsson, Porto Carras 2011, Black could have obtained the better chances with:



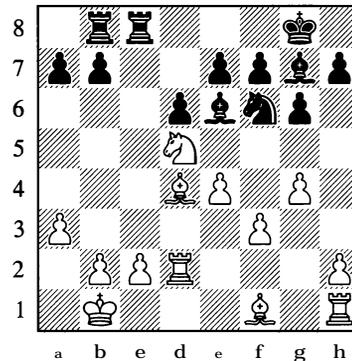
21..l h5!N

The doubled a-pawns may look ugly but they offer Black good prospects along the b-file. On the other flank, Black has achieved the desired control over the f4-square.

14.l d5

This is similar to the main line, but the positioning of the pawns on h2 and b7 means that Black can equalize immediately.

14..Wxd2 15.l xd2



15..l xd5

If you wish to keep more life in the position then 15.. xd5 is a playable alternative.

16. xg7

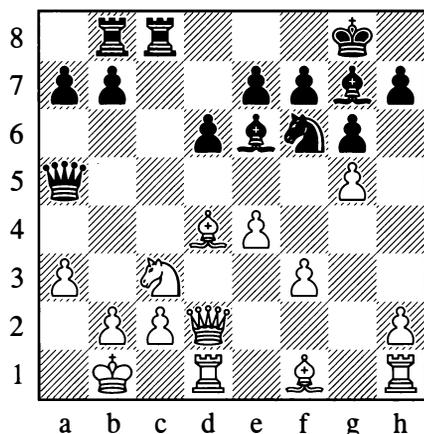
We see the difference between this and

variation C422 after 16.exd5? which no longer works, as after 16...i xd5 17.i xg7? i xf3 there is no Eh3, so Black is simply two pawns up.

16...t d!

At this point a draw was agreed in Anand - Kasparov, New York (1S) 1995. Some other games have been played on from this position, but White has no advantage in the ensuing opposite-coloured-bishop endgame. If you prefer to avoid this type of endgame then 16... g7 17.exd5 i d7 is playable, although White may be able to claim the smallest of advantages.

C421) 14.g5



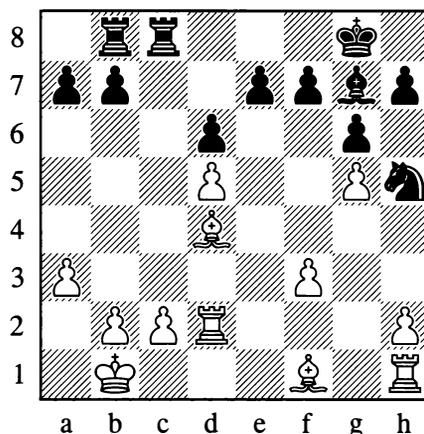
I am normally critical of this move, but this is one of the better times to play it. White's idea is to force the trade of the e6-bishop for the knight on d5, after which he will aim to exert pressure against e7.

14...' h5 1s.1 d5

1S.i xg7? is the wrong idea. 1S...' hg7 16.i d3? (16.' d4t is better but I still like Black after 16...' e5N 17.' xe5t dxex when the change in the structure cements our control over f4.) 16...b5 17.' e2 b4= Black had a strong attack in Sukandar - Nguyen Duc Hoa, Jakarta 2012.

1S... xd2 16.Exd2i xd5 17.exd5

Opening the e-file is something of an achievement for White, but it does not offer him any more than equal chances.



17...a6 18. h3

18.Eg1 was the choice of Anatoly Karpov. It may look a little strange, but White has ideas of developing the rook to g4, where it controls the important f4-square and prepares to swing over to the queenside. I would like to recommend 18...'f5!N as a way of cutting across White's plan. Black is completely fine and will generate counterplay along the h-file.

18i d has also been tried but after 18...' e5 Black's control over the f4-square promises him at least equal chances. 19.Eg1 was played in Nedoma - Borowiec, email 2007, and now 19...'f6!N would have been good.

18..'k4 19i 7

Retaining the bishop pair with 19.i b6 did not really work out in the following game: 19...' e5 20.ma2 Eh4 21.i d7 h6! Black has already started to take over. White tried 22.i f2 Exh2 23.Exh2 i xh2 24.gxh6 in Maggiora - Rusak, email 2006, and here I think 24...' e5N is the most accurate. The h6-pawn is weak and looks likely to drop within a few moves.

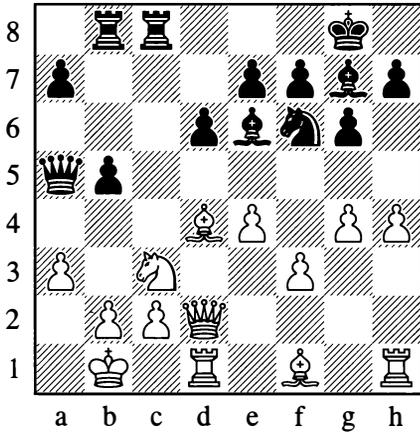
26. d7

26: d7! : xh6 27.: ee7 f5+ and the bishop is trapped.

26..t f

Repeating the position. Should you encounter this variation over the board, you can always repeat once before deciding whether to play on with one of the lines mentioned above.

C422) 14.h4 b5



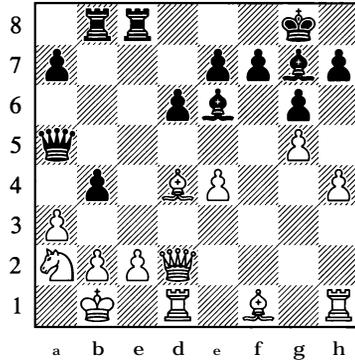
15.t d5

Black's attack is coming fast, so White had better trade queens while he still can.

1S.hS? b4 needs no further analysis; Black's attack is much stronger:

1S.l xbS? has been tried a few times but it is a poor decision. 1S...: xbS (even 1S... a4!? looks good, but there is no reason to deviate from the main line) 16.i xbS xbS 17.hS as+ Sephrk oui - Ghari Zadeh, Tehran 2001. Material may be roughly equal but Black's minor pieces are far more effective for attacking purposes.

1S.gS?! allows the typical 1S...b4! with a dangerous attack, for example: 16.l a2 4 xe4! 17.f e4



17...i xd4!N (17...i xa2t 1B' xa2 i xd4 19. xd4 was the move order of the game, but White did not need to take on d4.) 1B. xd4 i xa2t 19.< xa2 We have transposed to the game, and after 19...bxa3 20.b3: xc2t 21.< a1 : xb3 White could not survive the onslaught in Tello Nunez - Guerrero Olmos, Mondariz 2003.

1Si xf6?

T is tends to be harmless at the best of times, and here it comes too late.

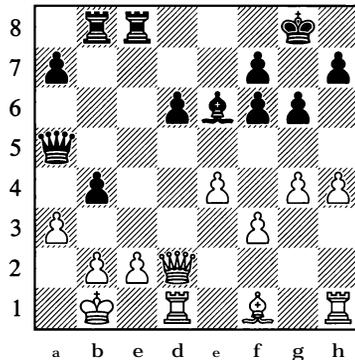
1S...i xf6 16.l dS b4!

I see no way for White to defend his queenside.

17.4 xf6t

17.gS? i c3! was already resignable in Goncharov - Kabanov, Omsk 2001.

17...exf6



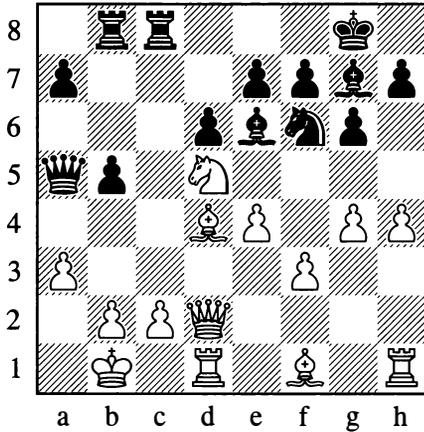
1Bb3?!

1B: h2 seems like the best try, and was

played in M. Schmidt - Pollmueller, Passau 1998. Nevertheless, after 18..Eb6!N, defending the d-pawn and preparing ...Ec3, I doubt that White can prevent our attack from crashing through.

18..' xa3 19.i cl j xb3! 20.i xa3 j xc2t 21. al bxa3

Black won easily in Livshits - Parkanyi, Budapest 1999.



15..i xd2 16.Exd2

16.l xf6t is absolutely nothing for White, and after 16..j xf6 17.Exd2 j xd4 18.Exd4 Black has slightly the better of the ending.

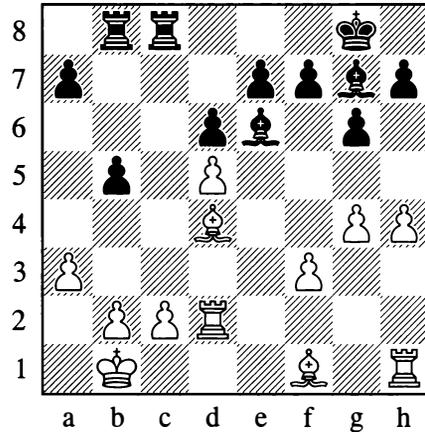
16..l xd5

Black prepares an ambitious piece sacrifice to reach a double-edged endgame.

If you don't feel like giving up a piece then 16..j xd5 is a solid alternative, although White may be able to claim a tiny edge.

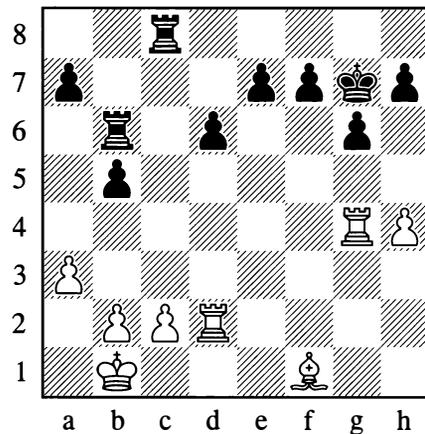
17.exd5

17.j xg7 can be met by the familiar 17..l e3 18.j d4l xfl 19.Exfl a5 with an equal ending. In fact Vishy A and switched colours from his earlier draw with Kasparov and another quick draw was agreed after 20.e5 in J. Polgar - A and, Dortmund 1997.



17...h d5!? 18h g7 . 19.Eh3 h g4 20.Eg3 @xg7 21.Exg4 Eb6

This position has been reached a few times in computer battles, as engines tend to value the piece over the three pawns. Results, however, have been positive for Black, and I think White has a tough job preventing our straightforward plan of advancing the central pawns. The point of Black's last move is to overprotect d6 in order to advance the e-pawn.

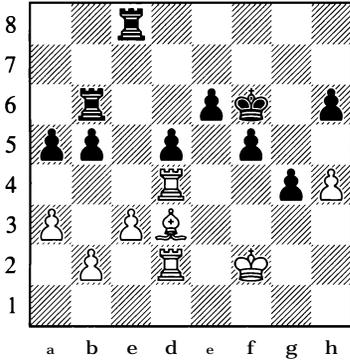


22.Ee4

Another couple of examples also worked out fine for Black:

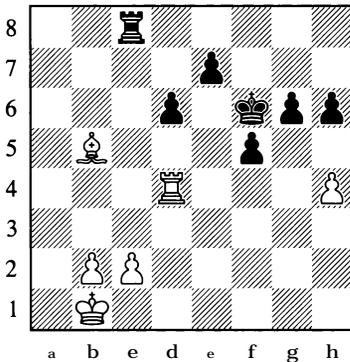
22J f2 e6 23.Ed4 f5 24.' cl ' f6 25.Efd2 d5

26.< d1 h6 27.c3 g5 28. e1 g4 29. d3 a5
30.< f2



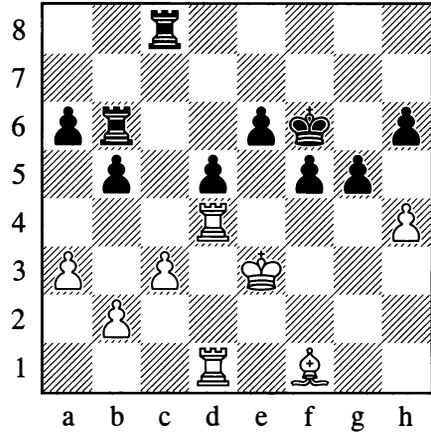
30...b4! 31.cxb4 axb4 Four connected passed pawns! 32.a4 c1 33.a5 b8 34.a6 e5 35. f1 f4 36. d1 c2t 37. 4d2 b3 38.h5 bc8 T e a-pawn gives White some counterplay but it is clear that Black was the one pressing in don007 - f cc2, engine game 2012.

22. d5 a6 23. gd4 f5 24.a4 < f6 25.axb5 axb5 26. xb5 xb5 27. xb5 h6



White has managed to win a pawn but, with a pair of rooks exchanged, it will prove even harder to slow down Black's pawn avalanche. A ter 28. d5 Black correctly evaluated that the ending after 28... c5!? 29. xc5 dxc5 was drawn, nitropower - elk, engine game 2013.

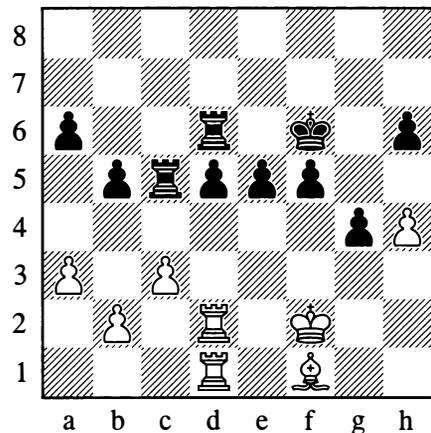
22...e6 23.c3 d5 24. ed4 f 25.i cl h6 26. dl g5 27.i d2 a6 28.i e3 i f



Around here my engine still evaluates the position as slightly better for White. In reality, however, there is little he can do but wait, while Black can simply prepare the gradual advance of his pawns. I will leave the rest of the game as an indication of how you might go about winning such an endgame.

29.i e2 Ed8 30.Ehl Ebb8 31.Eb4 Eg8 32.Edl g4 33.i f Egd8 34.Ebd4 Ed6 35.i f Ebd8 36i g2 Ec8 37.i f Ec5 38.E4d2 e5

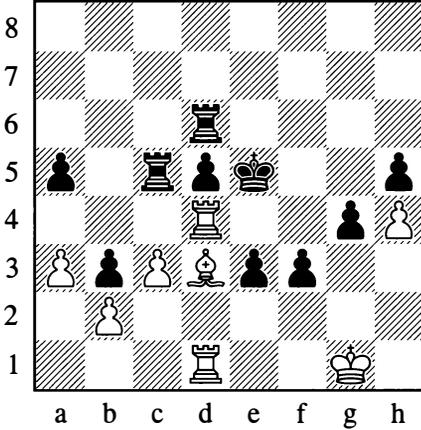
Having strengthened the position as much as possible, Black inches ahead.



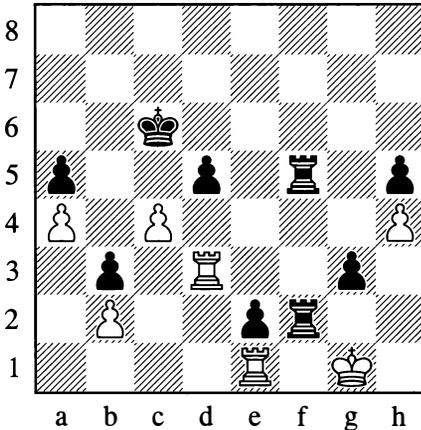
39.i d3 Ec8 40.i bl Ecd8 41.i g3 h5 42.i g2 e4 43.Ed4 i e5 44.Eel a5 45.i f Eb8

46J e d l b 4 47., a b 3 48, b l c 8 49. a 4
c 5 50 < g l f 4 51. a d 4 e 3 52, d 3 f

White will soon have to give up his bishop,
leaving Black with a winning rook ending.



53 < h 2 d c 6 54, f e 6 55 < g 3 e 2
56J e 2 f e 2 57. e l < d 6 58 < f c 7
59. d 2 f t 60 < g 3 e 3 t 61 < h 2 f t
62 < g l g 3 63 c 4 e 5 64 a 4 < c 6 65. d 3
e f



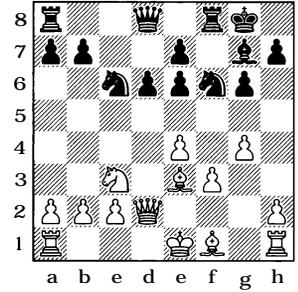
The remaining moves are not interesting in
vodkamaster21 - f cc2, engine game 2012,
White gave up his rook for the e2-pawn and
was mated on move 77.

Conclusion

9.g4 is a serious option but, with the help
of the lines I have presented, I hope you will
be happy to take it on. This chapter mainly
focused on the old main line of 10.0-0-0.
This is a sound continuation, but it does not
really put Black under pressure. Black's attack
is generally the faster of the two, so White is
virtually forced to trade queens and enter a
level ending. However, in most variations we
can still reach double-edged positions, and I
think Black has good chances to play for the
whole point. In the next chapter we will deal
with a more modern interpretation of White's
9th move.

Chapter 15

Yugoslav Attack



10. ♖xe6

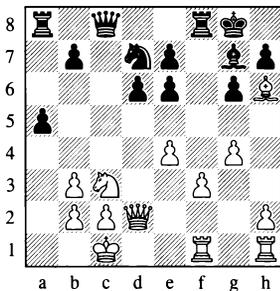
Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2. f d6 3.d4 c d4 4. xd4 f 5. c3g6 6.. e3. g7
7.f 0 0 8. d2 c6 9.g4. e6 10. xe6

10...f e6

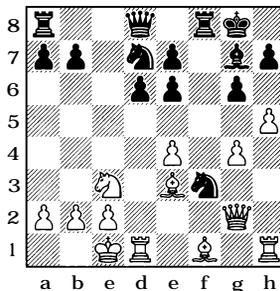
A) 11.. c4	296
A1) 11...d5	297
A2) 11... c8!?	297
B) 11.0 0 0 e5 12.. e2 c8	298
B1) 13.. h6	299
B2) 13.@ b1	302
B21) 13... fd7	302
B22) 13... c4	303
B3) 13.h4 fd7	306
B31) 14.h5!?	306
B32) 14.f4 c4 15.. xc4 xc4 16.e5: ad8	309
B321) 17.exd6 l f !	309
B3211) 18. d4	310
B3212) 18. g2	311
B322) 17.h5	312

A2) after 16. h6



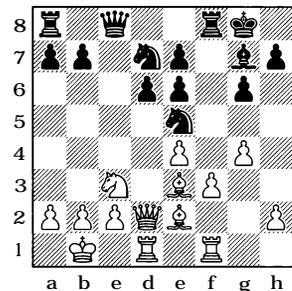
16...♗xc3!N

B) note to 12. e2



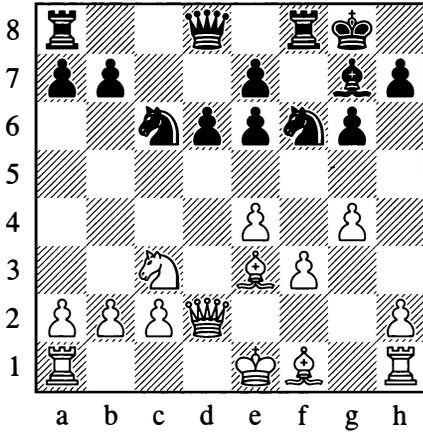
14...E 8N

B21) note to 14.f4



14...t b6!N

1.e4 c5 2. f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.cxd4 c6
 5.c3 g6 6.i e3 i g7 7.f3 0-0 8.J d c c6
 9.g4. e6 10.cxe6 f e6

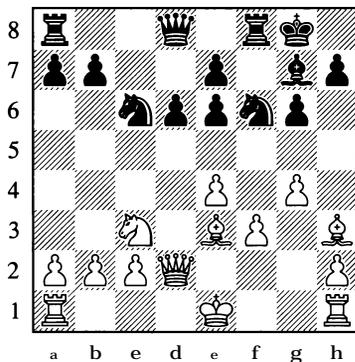


Historically this move was criticized as it was thought the exchange favoured Black, on account of his play down the semi-open f file and control of the d5-square. However, the change in the pawn structure also leaves Black's kingside slightly more vulnerable, and in recent years White has sought to exploit this by developing a quick attack.

White's two main options are A) 11.i c4 and B) 11.0-0-0

11.h4? d5 transposes to the note on 11.i xe6? in variation B of the previous chapter on page 270.

11.. h3



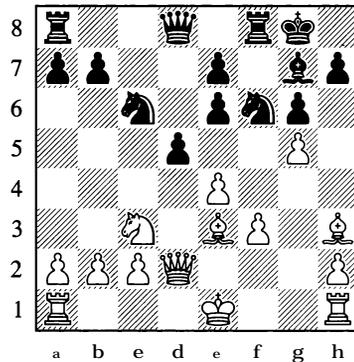
This odd-looking move has been used repeatedly by Chambers in correspondence play but, unsurprisingly, it hasn't caught on. White's idea is evidently to target e6, but the bishop gets in the way of his h-pawn and therefore slows his attack. White also relinquishes control of the important c4-square.

11...d5!N

11...1 e5 has been played most often, and also looks to favour Black. However, I believe that the text move virtually refutes White's idea.

12.g5

12.0-0-0 does not prevent 12...d4! 13.. xd4 xd4 14. xd4 1 xd4 15.Exd4 1 d5! when the ridiculous bishop on h3 gives White problems. 16.Ed1 1 e3 17.Edg1 Exf3 18.Eg3 Exg3 19.hxg3 . xc3 20.bxc3 g5+ White has a truly hideous ending.



12...d4! 13.gxf6 Exf6

Black regains the piece and keeps the better chances. It should be noted that grabbing the exchange backfires on White:

14.. g5? dxc3 15. xd8t Exd8 16.. xf6. xf6 17.. xe6t mg7

Black has a clear advantage.

A) 11.i c4

Targeting the e6-pawn looks logical, but the bishop will not be able to remain on its active

post. Black can exploit the weakness on f3 with AI) 11...d5 or, in analogy with the main line, play A) 11...Wc8!?

AI) 11...d5 12.exd5 e5
13i e2 t xd5 14.t xd5

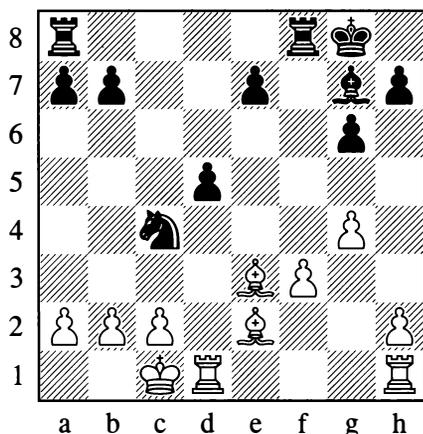
14.0-0 O?! t xf3 1S. xf3 Exf3 gave White nothing for the pawn in Benyovszki - Berk ey, email 2000.

14...Wxd5

The lack of a safe location for White's king forces him to trade queens.

14...exd5! is also playable if you wish to keep the queens on the board.

1S.Wxd5 exd5 16.0-0 t c4



17.i d4i h6t 18i bl t d2t 19i al e6

With a level endgame, Varga - Porat, Budapest 2005.

A) 11...Wc8! 12i b3

12.0-0 O?! t a5N 13. e2 t c4 is good for Black.

12...t a5 13.0-0

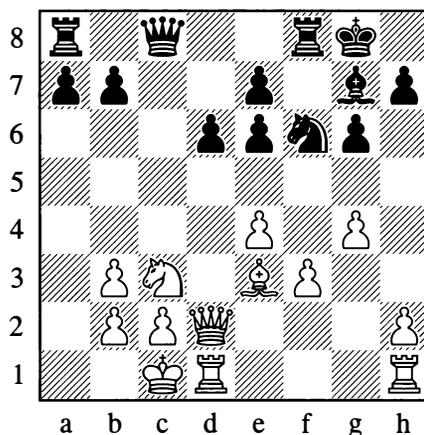
13.0-0 was tried once but hardly looks

threatening 13...t xb3 14.cxb3 Varga - Palkovi, Budapest 1997. Here I like 14...t d7N 1S.Eacl t e5, rerouting the knight to an active square 16. g2' d7=

13...t xb3t 14.a b3

Recapturing this way looks logical, but White has to watch out for the plan of opening the a-f file.

14.cxb3 t d7 1S.Ehfl b5 16. b1 has been played, and now 16... xc3!N 17.bxc3 as looks tempting; I think Black has the faster attack.



14...t d7 1S.Edf

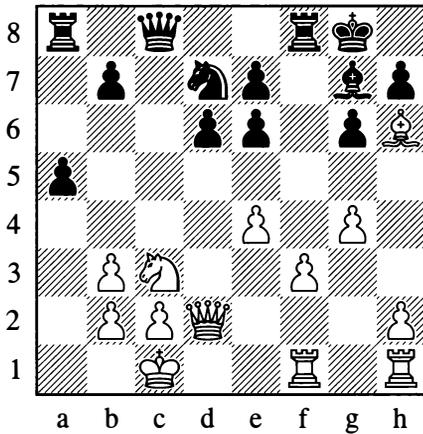
1S. g5 was tried fairly recently in Gieben - Hertel, Groningen 2014, but the simple 1S...EON favours Black.

1S...a5

The immediate 15... xc3!N also looks strong.

16i h6

Now in Zinchenko - Tukhaev, Evpatoria 2006, Black could have obtained a ne position with a somewhat counterintuitive move:



16..i xc3!N

Giving up the Dragon bishop works well here.

17.bxc3

17.' xc3 is safer although 17...' xc3 18.bxc3 2fc8 19. b2 a4+ favours Black.

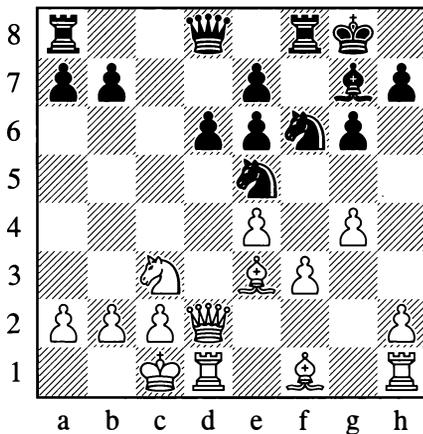
17...2f

Black's attack is much faster, for example:

1S.h4 a4 19.h5 a b3 20.c b3 ♖c5 21.h g h g

White's attack has stalled while Black's is just getting underway. T e computer already evaluates the position as winning for Black.

B) 11.0-0-01 e5



12.i e2

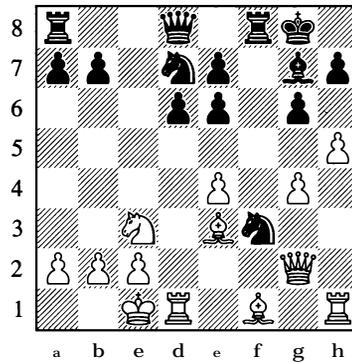
12.h4!?

T is has only been played a couple of times but needs to be taken seriously. White simply abandons the f-pawn and gets on with his attack.

12...t xf3 13' g2 t d7 14.h5

Trying to kick back the knight with 14.2h3 does not work: 14...t de5! 15i e2 T e f -knight may be trapped, but Black's counterplay overruns White. 15..' a5! 16.i xf3 t c4+ Despite White's extra piece, he is in huge trouble. A l his pieces are bunched on the kingside and he will f nd it tough to defend against ...t xb2.

A ter the text move I recommend ignoring the kingside and getting on with our counterplay.



14...2c8!N 15.hxg6' a5!

White is in trouble:

16' h3

16.gxh7t mh8 17.2h3t de5 + Black's king is nicely protected by the h7-pawn while White is powerless against the attack on the opposite flank.

16...hxg6 17.2d3

17' h7t f 18i h6 2g8 doesn't get White anywhere

17...2xc3 18.2xc3' xa2+

Black's attack has landed f rst.

12...♖c5

In the past few years this has become the main line. The queen may look strange, but it combines attack and defence by preparing ...' c4 while guarding the e6-pawn.

12...Ek8 used to be the main line but White has caused some problems with 13.' b5! a6 14.' d4, hitting the vulnerable e6-pawn.

12...1 a5 is also playable; I have tried it a couple of times but would now prefer the text move.

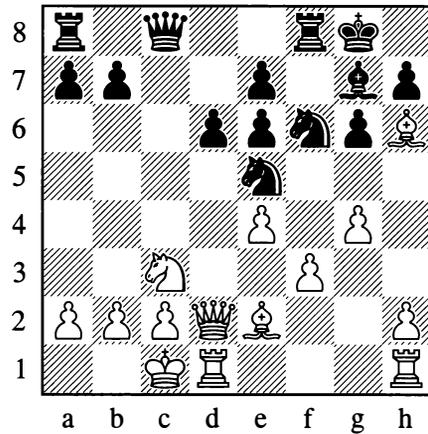
White's three most important tries are B1) 13.i h6, B2) 13.c b1 and B3) 13.h4.

13.g5?! ' h5 is similar to the 10g5 line I investigated at the start of the previous chapter. Yet again, I don't approve of prematurely pushing the g-pawn. 14.Ehf1 was seen in Goebel - Koepke, Nuremberg 2012, and now 14...' c4N would have been comfortable for Black.

13. d4 has been tried in a few correspondence games but it's hard to believe that White has better than repeating after 13...' c6. I suppose White's idea is to play 14. g1, when a future ...' c4 won't fork queen and bishop, but the bishop looks rather passive on g1. 14...' d7 15.Ef1 ' ce5 16. d4 ' c4 17. xc4 1 xc4 18. xg7 Wxg7= resulted in a typical position for this line in Strengell - Soederberg, email 2009.

13.Ehe1 was a surprising positional approach seen in a GM battle. 13...t c4 (13...a6!N would ask White exactly what the point was of his previous move) 14. xc4 1 xc4 15. d4 Bartel - Sebenik, Biel 2014. Here I would play 15...t d7N with another normal, balanced position.

BI) 13.i h6



The bishop avoids being hit by a future ...' c4 but now the queen can develop via c5.

13..h 6 14.V xh6V c5 15.h4

15.Ehf1 was played by a strong GM in Smirin - Antipov, Yerevan 2014, but it looks too slow; after 15...' c4N I prefer Black.

15..J ac8

Black has lots of different options but this looks quite sensible; we are simply preparing ...b5.

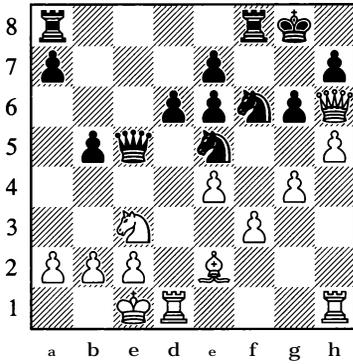
15...b5!N

I suggested this on ChessPublishing, and I still find it a reasonable move.

16.h5

This must be critical.

Black's idea is always to meet 16.t xb5 with: 16...' xf3! 17. xf3 1 xb5 18.g5 t xe4! 19. xe4 Eab8 Despite White's extra piece, he has to allow the draw as his queen is so bad, for example: 20.b3 1 e5 21. d3 1 a!t 22.Wd2Ef2t! 23. e3 1 e5t 24.Wxf2 1 f4t 25.We2 1 g4t 26. e3 1 g3t= White has nowhere to hide from the checks on the dark squares.



16...b4!

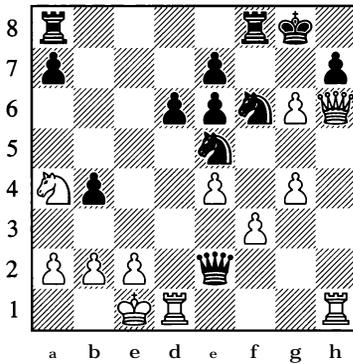
On this occasion we cannot use the defence 16...t f ?! 17.Wd2 g5 as the b-pawn hangs. 1S.t xb5±

17.t a4 Wf2 1S.hxg6!?

The line I gave on ChessPublishing continued 1S.l de1 gxh5 19.1 hf1 Wh2 20.gxh5 (20.l h1 Wf2=) 20... hS with an unclear position.

1S...Wxe2

This seems likely to end in a draw. Our queen is powerful on the second rank, hitting c2, and so White has to try and hit it away.



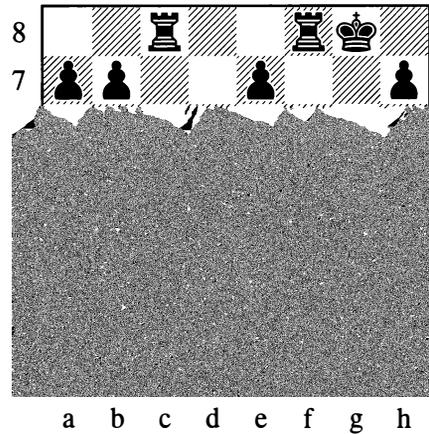
19.1 de1 Wf2

19...Wb5? 20.g5+

20.l e1

20.g5 l acS 21. b1 t xg6 22.gxf6 l xf6 23.Wxh7t fS looks respectable for Black, as the king can run to its hiding hole on d7.

20...We2 21.l e1=



16h5

16. b1N b5 17.Wd2 transposes to 16.Wd2 below.

16.Wd2!?

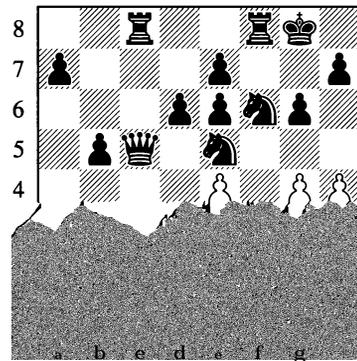
This has not been played but I think it needs considering. The queen wasn't doing so much on h6 and so it drops back to defend the c2-pawn.

16...b5

16...h5!? is my engine's choice but it looks risky to me, despite the '0.00' evaluation.

17. b1

17.t xb5 t xf3! is always Black's point when the pawn goes to b5 in these positions. 17.h5 gxh5 1S.gxh5 CIS.g5 is also possible but I think Black's counterplay is fast enough after 1S...t fd7; we threaten both to take on f3 and to play ...b4.) 1S... hS We have transposed to the note to White's 15th move in the main line.



17...b4 18! a4 V c6 19.b3 h5!?

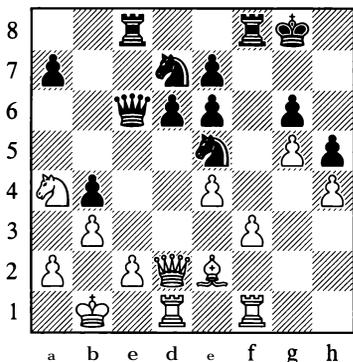
Here this move works quite well.

20.g5

20.gxh5 xh5 looks good for Black with his control of the f4-square.

20...l fd7 21.2hfl

21.f4 2xf4! 22.V xf4 V xc2t 23' a1 V xe2+



21...2f4!

A nice idea. If Black can hold on to the f4-square then the e5-knight will dominate, so White has to play:

22.V xf4

22. b5?! keeps the c2-pawn, but 22...V xb5

23.V xf4! c4! 24.2f2! db6 is dangerous.

22...V xc2t 23' a1 V xe2 24.V d2 V xd2

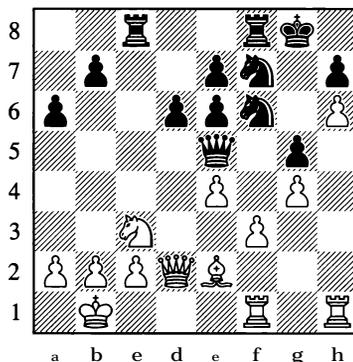
25.2xd2 2f8 26.f4! g4

Black has full compensation.

16...g h5

16...l f !? 17.V d2 g5= looks like a respectable alternative, keeping the kingside closed. 18' b1 (18.f4? gxf4 19.V xf4 l g5 20. c4 l f e4 21. xe6t c h8 22. f5 e6 0 1 Marques- Quintiliano Pinto, Sao Paulo 2012, showed some of White's practical difficulties.)

18...a6 19.h6V e5 20.2df1



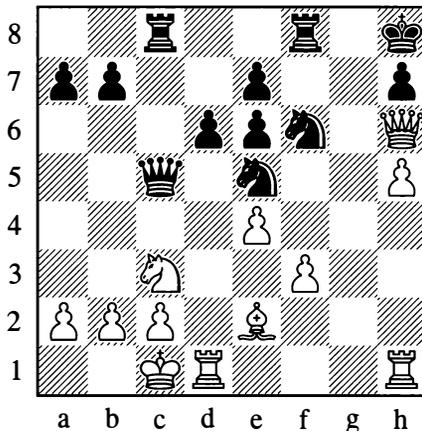
This was played in Wegener - Polzin, Germany 2012. Here I would prevent White from opening the f-file and play 20...V f4!N, when Black's domination of the dark squares promises him the better chances.

17.g h5

White would ideally like to keep the h-file open but 17.g5?? loses to 17...V e3t 18' b1 l f when the queen is trapped.

17...i h8

The h-file is closed and Black can easily defend on the g-file, so White's attack has been drastically slowed down. This is another position which has undergone a lot of testing in engine-versus-engine games, with Black scoring well.



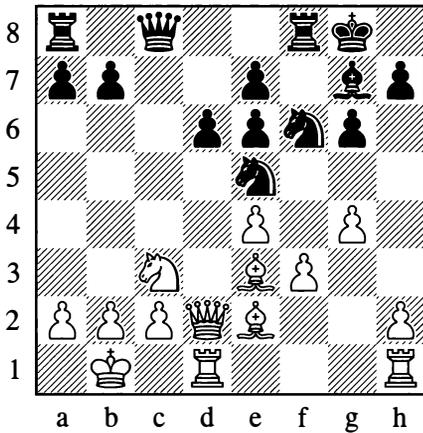
18i bl

18. d2 b5 19. t xb5 t xf3 20. xf3 xb5= was fine for Black in Petruzzelli - Sgheri, email 2010.

18...a6 19.Y c1 b5 20.a b4 21.a b4 Yxb4 22.Y e3 b8 23.b3 f8 24.@b2 a5 25. al t fd7

Black had coordinated all its pieces into the queenside attack and went on to win in Chiron 2- Stockfish DD, engine game 2013.

B2) 13.@b1



It is time White takes a moment to consolidate his queenside before pushing forward on the other wing. B21) 13...l fd7 is the solid reply, but the sharper B22) 13...l c4 is also playable.

B21) 13...l fd7

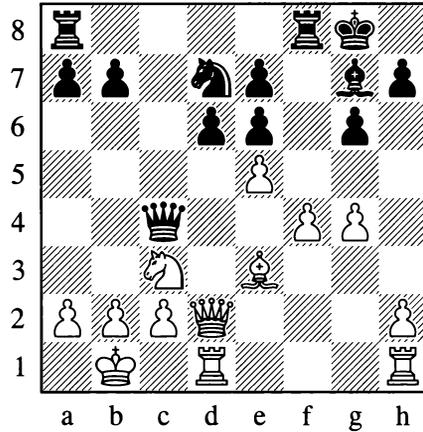
Playing in the same way as we would after 13.h4.

14.f4

14J hfl was played against me by GM Zbynek Hracek but I don't consider it critical. 14...t b6!N was a suggestion of mine on ChessPublishing and I still rather like it; the point is to cement a knight on c4. (14...t c4 was also fine for Black in Hracek - Jones,

Porto Carras 2011.) 15. d4 t ec4 16.Wg5 f6 17. cl xd4 18.2xd4 c5=

14...l c4 15.h c4Yxc4 16.e5



16...@b6!

This looks most reliable in this exact position.

16...2ad8 is similar to variation B32, but with b1 instead of h2-h4. I think the difference favours White as a2 is now defended, though of course the position remains playable for Black: 17.exd6 t f6 18.dxe7 2xd2 19.exf8= t xf8 20. xd2 t xg4 21.2deU

17.. d4

17.exd6 2fd8 is equal.

17.2he1 dxe5 18.f e5 xg4 19. xb6 axb6 20. d7 2f2 21. xb7 2af8 22. xe7 f5 23.2d3 xe5= gave Black sufficient counterplay in magnum - squeeek, engine game 2013.

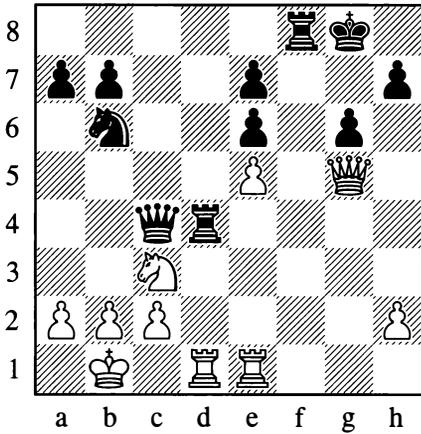
17...dxe5 18.f e5 ad8 19. hel h6!

White is trying to block the g7-bishop out of the game, so it makes sense to exchange it.

20.g5

20. xh6 2xd4 is balanced.

20...i xg5 21.Y xg5 xd4



not too quick. However, the positions may still become rather sharp.

15. d4

15. h6 isn't as good as when White has played 13.h4, as his attack is a tempo slower here 15..

22J d4

In the event of 22. fe7 2xd1 t 23.2xd1 2f1!? Black exchanges rooks and moves his queen to d5 (and maybe to d7 next) when he is easily equal. (23...2f !? is also possible.)

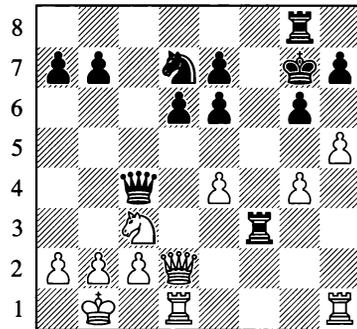
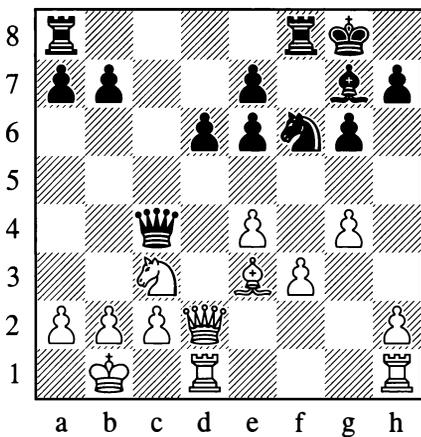
22..' xd4 23' xe7

Trying to attack with 23.h4?! t c4 24.h5? backfires after 24...t xb2!.

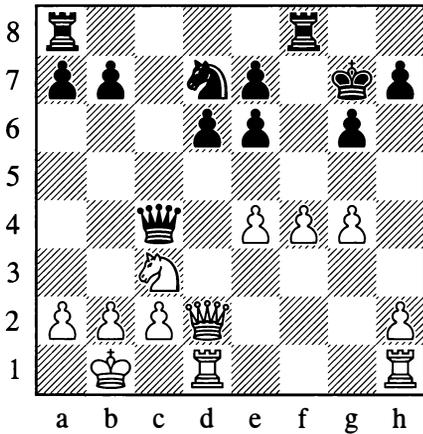
23..' d7

Black is fine.

B22) 13... c4 14.. bc4' xc4



This is more provocative but I think Black can get away with it, as White's kingside play is



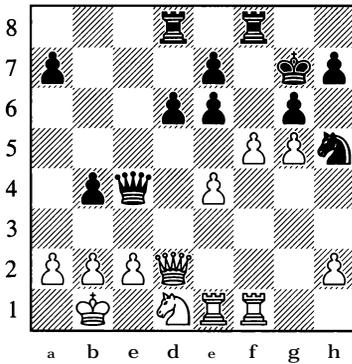
17...t f !

The position is complicated but Black has good counter-chances.

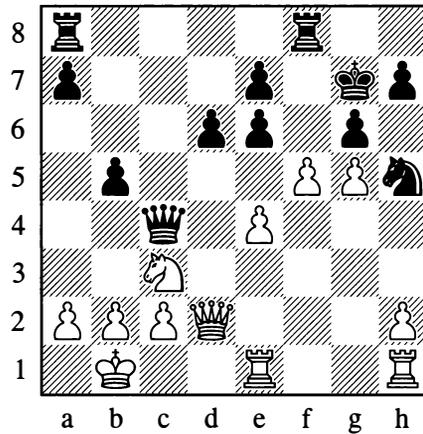
18J del h5 19.95l h5 20.f !N

This dangerous move was brought to my attention by Nikos Ntirilis. White sacrifices a pawn in order to open lines of attack.

An engine battle continued: 20.Ehf1 b4 21.l d1 Ead8 22.fS



22...dS! 23.b3' cS 24.f g6 dx4 2S.' g2l f4 26.' g3 Ec8 27.' f2 l xg6 28.' xcS ExcS 29.Exf8l xf8 30.Exe4 as= The complications had petered out to an equal ending in frefather- bouddha#77, engine game 2012.



20...g

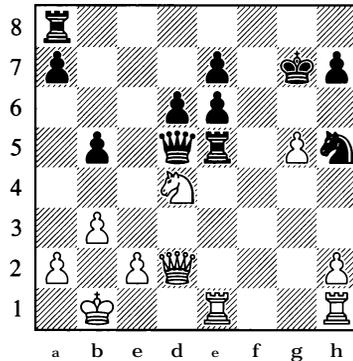
20...b4? 21.l e2 exfS 22.exfS ExfS 23.l d4 favours White.

21.ex : x 22h3' c6 23t e2

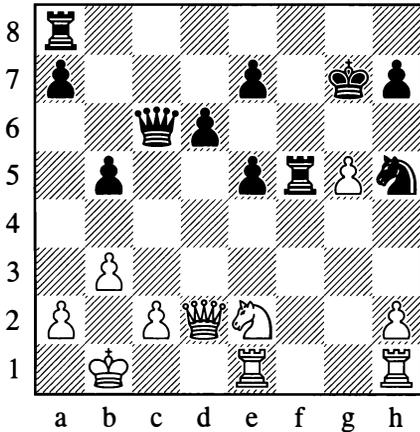
The knight is heading for d4 or g3.

23..e5!?

23...EeS is safer; by trading material Black lessens White's attack. 24.l d4 (24.l g3 enables Black to simplify with 24...l xg3 2S.hxg3 ExeIt 26.Exel eS= followed by rerouting his queen to g6 via e8) 24...' dS



2S.Ed! Ef8 26.' c3 (26.Ehf1 as 27 : f8 xf8 28.' xaS t f4o) 26...t f4 27.t fSt Ef fS 28ExdS l xdS 29.' aS b4 30.' xa7 f o White may be able to claim a tiny advantage but it will be hard for him to make progress safely, as that will involve pushing his queenside pawns



24. g3 25. hxg3

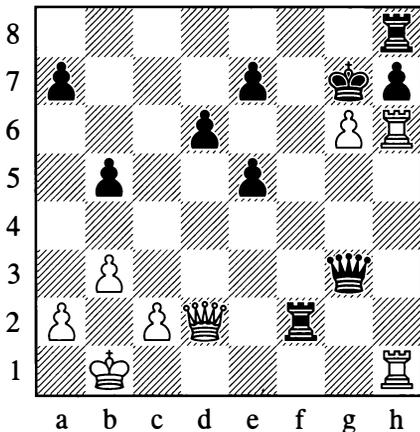
White has sacrificed a pawn for pressure down the h-file. The position looks dangerous for Black but I think he has enough counter-chances.

25...Bh8 26.Bh6

I also considered 26...h2 We8 27.Wh6t Wg8 28.We6t WO 29.Wd7 a6° and Black's king is safe enough.

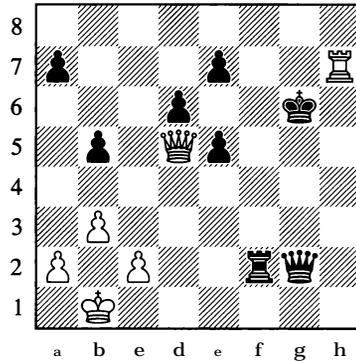
26..Wf 27.Beh1 ' xg3 28.g6 gi l

White seems to be crashing through on the kingside but it is surprisingly difficult to catch the black king. Meanwhile Black is able to generate some threats of his own. I've offered a couple of possible continuations.



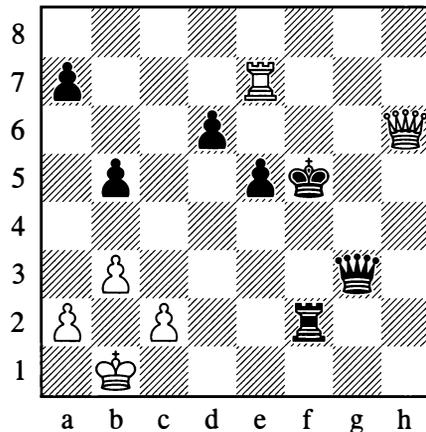
29.gx 7t

29.Wd5 Wg2 30.: hh7t (30.Wd3 d2 31.Wc3 [31. xh7t 31..Wd5 32. xh7t xh7 33. xh7t ' kg6 34.Wh3 34... g2!= W ite has no mate, so the game will end in perpetual.) 30... xh7 31. xh7t ' kg6



32.Wg8t Black's king looks naked but White doesn't have enough material left to create a mating net. 32...' f5 33. g7 Wf1t 34.Wb2 xc2t 35.Wxc2 We2t =

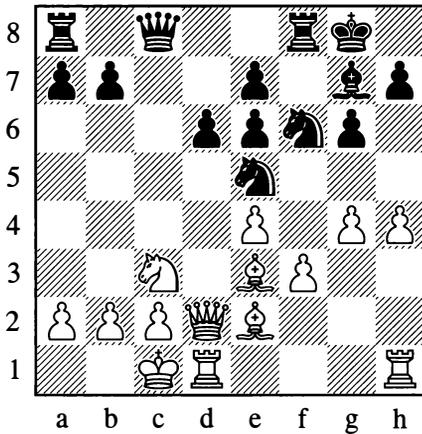
29..Bxh7 30.gxh7t xg6 31.' h6t f 32. xe7



32..' glt 33. b2 gh2 34' xd6 ' d4t 35' xd4 exd4 36.gxa7d 37.Bc7 b4=

With a drawn endgame.

B3) 13.h4



13..1 fd7

Black attacks the f -pawn and, more importantly, opens up the diagonal for the g7-bishop.

13..4 c4 is the other main line. It's arguably more logical, and can transpose, but it gives White additional options, 14.i xc4 ' xc4 15.i h6 being the main theoretical issue. With the bishops exchanged, White seems to keep a slight advantage. (15.h5 4 d7 would transpose to variation B31 below.)

White may proceed with B31) 14.h5!/? or B32) 14.f4.

Unlike the first of the main lines discussed below, 14.i d4? allows Black to gobble the f-pawn: 14...4 xf3 15.i xf3 i xd4 16.' xd4 l xf 17.h5 In Van Osch- Pijpers, Borne 2011, Black could have obtained a clear advantage by blocking up the kingside with 17...g5!N.

B31) 14.h5!/?

This is a dangerous approach. An important point is that White isn't actually sacrificing the f-pawn.

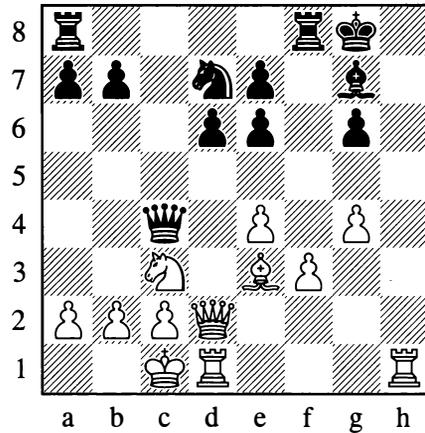
14..1 c4

14...4 xf3? allows 15.4 d5! when the tactics work in White's favour.

15. xc4' xc4 16.hxg6 hxg6

This position has not been played in many over-the-board encounters but has had a lot of testing in correspondence and computer chess. Thus far Black is holding without any major problems.

16..1 xf3!/? was an interesting approach by Viktorija Cmilyte but one I struggle to fully trust.



17.f4

This has been White's main try.

17.' h2 has been tried in a couple of correspondence games but it doesn't really work: 17...1 xf3 18.' h7t f Black's king often turns out to be safer than it looks in these lines 19.i h6 l gS 20.i xg7 l xg7 21.' hS l gS 22.' h7t fS+ White's attack had been halted, leaving Black with a clear advantage in Martello - Simmelink, email 2003.

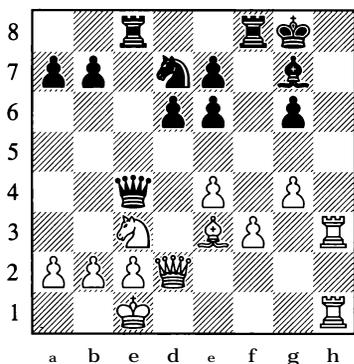
17.l h3

This is rare but quite sensible; White defends the f3-pawn and prepares to double on the h-file.

17..1 acS 1S.l dh 1N

White can also try: 1S.Wh2N b5 (1S...l e5!?)
 19J hl Exf3 20.Exf3 l xf3 21.Wh7t r f
 22.i h6EgS looks quite safe for Black as our
 pieces are well placed) 19.i h6i xc3 20.bxc3
 Wxc3 21.i xfS Wlt t 22.r d2 Wc3t Black
 has at least a draw.

A game continued 1S.i h6 i xc3 19.Wxc3
 Wxc3 20.bxc3 Ef 21.Edhl Eh7 22.i g5
 Exh3 23.Exh3 t f6 and Black had the
 slightly better of the ending in Crook -
 Johnson, com. 2001.



1S...i xc3 19.bxc3

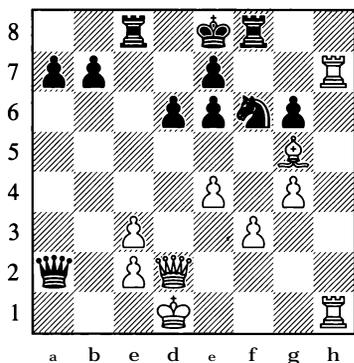
19.Wxc3 Wxc3 20.bxc3 Ec7! = A curious-
 looking move, but the point is to defend
 along the seventh rank whilst also keeping an
 eye on the a7-pawn; for example, 21.EhSt
 r f 22.ESh7?! r eS 23.i g5 t e5+ and
 Black is better.

19...Wxa2 20.< d1

Black can get at least a draw with our usual
 king run.

20...r f 21.Eh7t r eS 22.i g5 t f6

White must f nd:

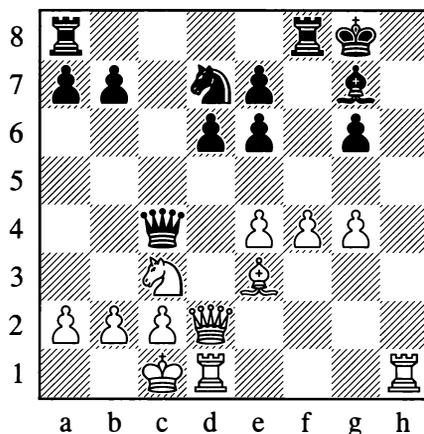


23.Exe7t! r xe7 24.Eh7t < eS 25.Wxd6 Wa lt
 26.i c1

26.r e2? Wa6t wins

26...t xh7 27.Wxe6t r dS 2S.Wd6t =

With a perpetual.



17...i xc3

Giving away our beloved bishop may look
 suicidal but the black king can run to safety
 via f -eS, and it is important to generate
 counterplay.

18.bxc3

As Chris Ward observes, 1S.Wxc3 Wxc3
 19.bxc3 t f6 is comfortable for Black.

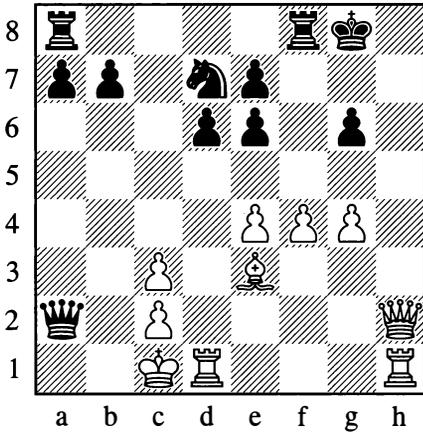
We now have an odd position. Both kings are
 exposed and will have to fee to the centre for
 some cover:

18.. xa

1S...EacS is a different approach which has
 also been holding up for Black. However, I
 think the text move is the easier move to play;
 the lines are quite forcing and therefore easier
 to remember:

19. h2

On Chess24, GM Huschenbeth ends his
 analysis here, assessing the position as unclear:



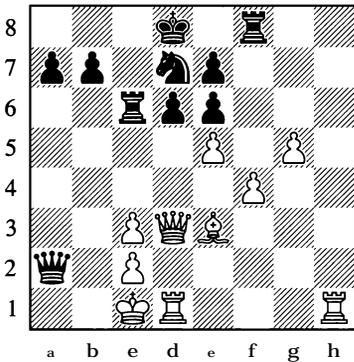
19...c f !

T is is forced. Not for the frst time, the black king rushes to the centre where the pawn clump and knight will keep it secure.

20. h7t c e8 21. e5!?

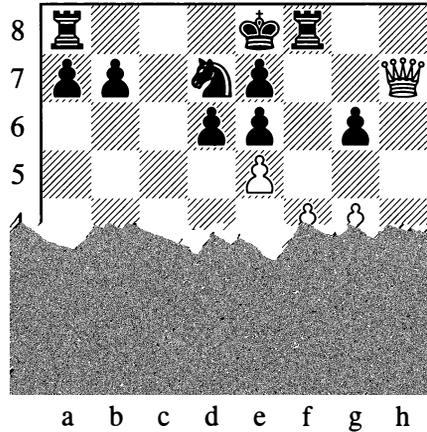
T is seems the most challenging. White attempts to open the centre before our king finds safety.

Instead 21. Wxg6t d5 seems fine for Black, as the following result confirms: 22. e5 c5 (22... dxe5 would transpose to our main line) 23. Wd3 ½-½ Hervet - Bobel, corr. 2013. Of course the draw is rather premature but the players presumably worked out the following line: 23... c6 24. g5



24...< c5! 25.g6 g5 26. h7 Wa3t 27.< d2 dxe5 28.< e2 d6 (28...l f6!?) 29. g7 h5

30. h7 g5 is ,another amusing draw) 29.Wc4t c6 30.Wd3 d6=



21...dxe5! 22' xg6t c d8

A lot of correspondence and engine games have reached this position and White has not found a way to give Black problems. T e wall of pawns on the e-f file may look ugly but it is useful for protecting the king.

23' d3' a!t 24.c d2' a6

T is is safest. White has to accept the queen trade, after which Black has had no problems holding the draw.

24...Wa4!?

If you wish to keep more play in the position, this is a good alternative.

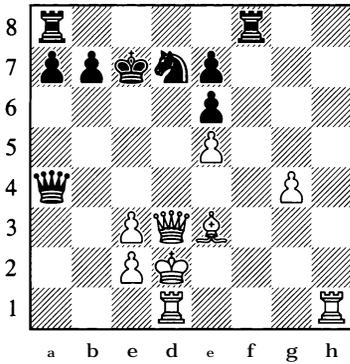
25.f e5

25 e!7! was tried in one game but after 25... c7 26. h7 ad5 27.We2 c5! Black had castled by hand and suddenly it was White's king which was much more vulnerable. 28.f e5 l xe5 29. xdSt xdS O 1 Pilarska - Fessler; email 2010.

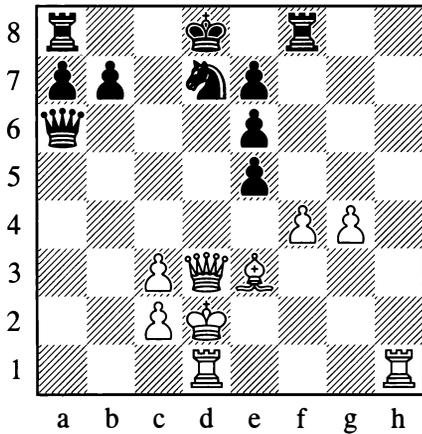
25...< c7=

Black's king is safe enough and he is preparing to bring the as-rook into the game. By this point I believe the position is far easier for Black to play in practice. T e following computer game was accurately played, so I

will leave the rest of it to give you an idea of how both sides could proceed.



26.1 d4 1 a6 27.2a1 1 c6 2B.2h7 2adB
 29.2xe7 cB 30.Wc1 1 bS 31.1 b4 1 e2
 32.1 d4 2f3 33.Wd2 2ft 34. b2 2xa1
 3S.Wxa11 xeS 36.1 xa71 d lt 37.Wa2 1 xc2t
 ½-½ oops- FrauHolle, engine game 2014.

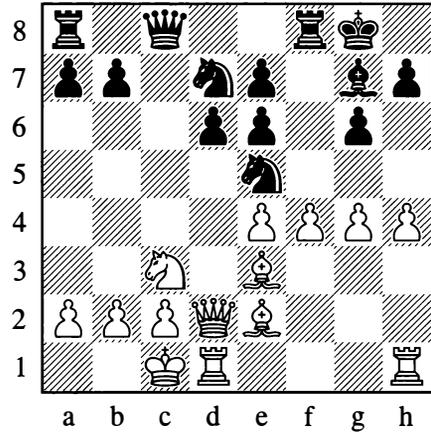


2S. xa6
 2S.f e5N 1 xd3t 26. xd3 (26.cxd31 xe5-)
 26..1 xeSt 27.We4t 1 d7 is another level
 endgame.

2S..bxa6 26.f eS t xeS 27. e2t e8
 28. d4 c8-

A surprising number of games have reached this position but they were all drawn.

B32) 14.f4



T is the most popular move and it leads to sharp play.

14...t c4 IS.. c4 xc4 16.eS ad8!

Black has tried lots of different moves here but I think this is the most accurate. Black defends the knight, thus preparing to capture on e5. If White takes on d6 then we will have a useful pin down the d-file.

White's most challenging replies are B321) 17.exd6 and B322) 17.hS.

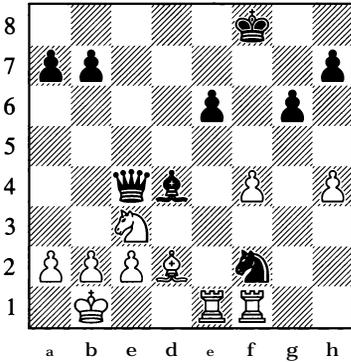
17.1 d3 does not challenge Black at all.
 17...1 xd3 1B.2xd3 1 b6 19.Wxb6 axb6
 20.exd6 2xd6 21.1 e2 e5 22.f eS 2xd3
 23.cxd3 Wke5 ½-½ Farkas - Ljubicic, email 2006.

B321) 17.exd6 f !

17...exd6 has been more popular, but after 1Bh5wxc3 19.1 xc3 1 xc3 20.bxc3 White has a better ending and Black has to suffer.

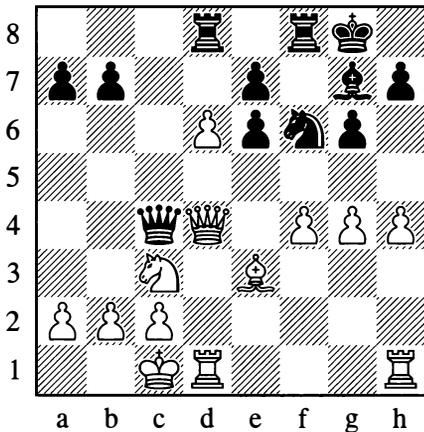
The text move is an important nuance which I first saw suggested in *ChessVibes Openings*. White may escape the pin with B3211) 18. d4 or B3212) 18. g2.

1.S.dxe7 is an important move to check but Black's queen operates better than White's rooks in this position. 1.S...: xd2 19.exd5=Wt ' xfs 20. xd2 t xg4 21.: de1 t f2 22.: hfl d4 23.' b1



This was reached in Haba- Koepeke, Germany 2012, and now 23...' f N would have left Black with good control of the position.

B3211) 18. d4



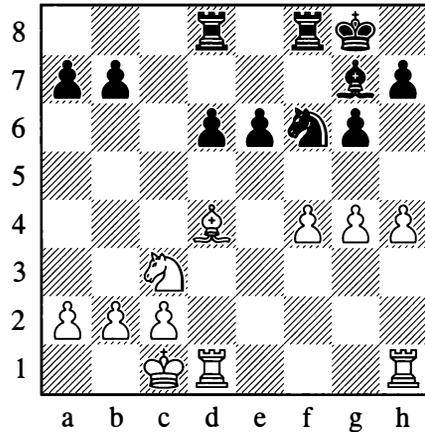
This has been tried in all the correspondence games in this line but Black has no real problems in the ending.

18... xd4 19.h d4exd6

19...: xd6 looks ugly but a recent correspondence game confirmed that Black's activity compensates for his structural

weaknesses: 20.t b5 : d5! 21.t c7 : xd4! 22.: xd4 t d5 23.: xd5 exd5 24.t e6 : f6 25.: e1 h8 In Polatel - A. Manninen, corr: 2015, Black had fully equalized as ...' f was coming.

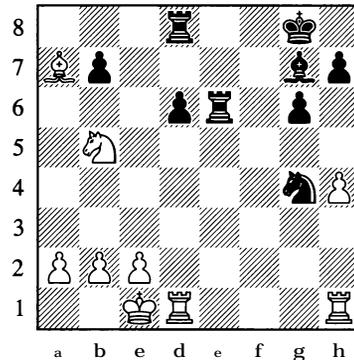
Taking with the pawn avoids exchanging so many pieces, but the position remains equal after accurate play from both sides



20J hgl

20.h5 t xg4 21.hxg6 hxg6 22.: he1 : xf4 23. xg7' xg7 24.: xe6' f = Serradimigni - Kopelevich, corr: 2013.

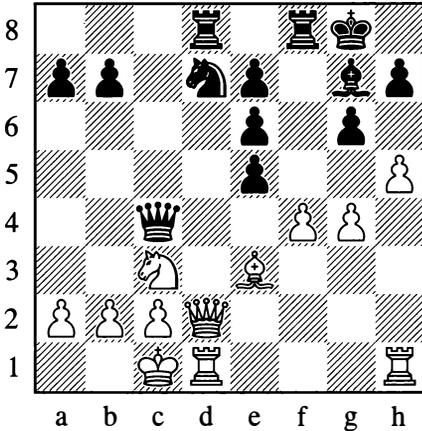
20.f5t xg4 21.f e6: fe6 22.t b5: xe6 23. xa7



23...: a5!? 24.a4 (24.t c7 : xa7 25.t xe6 t f2=) 24...h5 25.: hg1: e5= Schakel - Grego, corr: 2012.

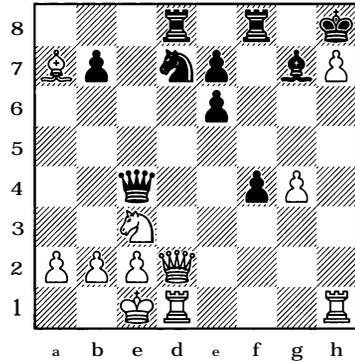
Since 17.exd6 appears to have been defused, we will finish by examining White's most aggressive try.

B322) 17.h5 d e5



18..hxg

18..exf4!? also works well: 19.9xh7t < h8
20. xa7? A risky pawn grab. (20. f2 xc3
[20..Wc7?!] 21.Wxc3t Wxc3 22.bxc3 e5=)



20..b6 21.Wd3 Wc8!? 22.g5 Was 23.Wa6 Ef5
24.g6 Ea5 25.Wc4 Exa7 26.Wxf4 Ec8 27.Eh3
l e5 0-1 Van der Houwen - Percze, email
2002.

18.hxg

T is is the only move to have been tried thus far, but Black has two good ways to meet it.

18.f5N

This was suggested by Van Delft and Kuipers in *ChessVibes Openings*. Their analysis continues:

18..gx f5

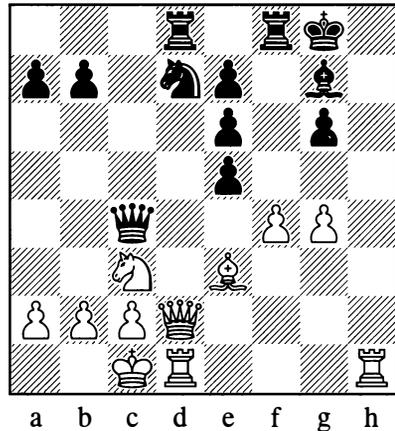
18..l f6? does not work here as 19.Wxd8 Exd8 20.Exd8t @f 21.f g6t hxg6 22.h6! wins for W ite.

19.h6 f6!?

There is also 19... h8 20. b6! l xb6 21.Wg5t @f 22.Wh5t @g8 23.Wg5t @f = with a perpetual.

20.g5 h8 21.g6 hxg6 22.Wg2 @h7 23.Ehgl Eg8 24.Wxb7 f6 25.Exd7 Exd7 26.Wxd7 a6

The Dutch analysts conclude that Black has compensation and I agree, even if my engine takes a while to see it. With two pawns for the piece, along with a huge pawn mass and a completely safe king, I would prefer to play as Black.



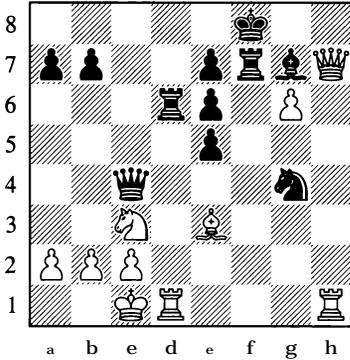
19.f !?

A more common continuation has been:

19.Wh2 l f6 20.Edfl Ef f6 21.f5
21.f e5?! l xg4 22.Wh7t < f8 23.Exf t
< xf = is given by Chris Ward, who observes that Black is doing well. He is covering both f1 and h6 and so White's attack has been neutralized.

21..l xg4 22.Wh7t < f 23.Edl Ed6!+
24.f g6

24. g5? gxf5 0-1 was the strange ending to S. Larsen - L. Van Damme, email 2007.



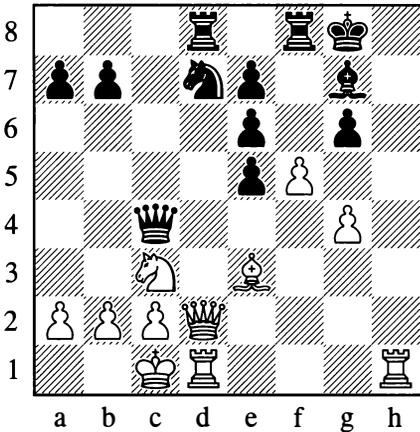
24...2xd1 t!

It looks odd to wait for White to take on g6 before exchanging rooks, but Black now has access to f1.

25.2xd1 2f1 26. g5 i f6 27.Wh2 2xd1 t 28.i xdl We4'

Black eventually won the ending in Matsenko - Kargin, Marianske Lazne 2013.

The text move was my suggested improvement for White on ChessPublishing. However, Black is well placed to meet it.



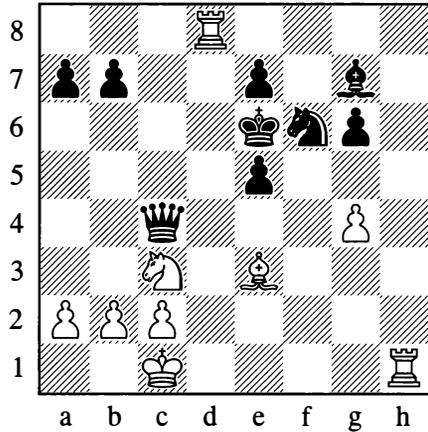
19...t f !

Black's queen will prove to be more powerful than the rooks.

20' xd8 Exd8 21.Exd8t c f 22.f e6t

22.g5 gives us various options but I would be tempted by 22...exf5! 23.gxf6 xf6, when Black's four uncontested pawns will take some stopping.

22...c xe6



23. ba7 bS 24.gS t hS 25.i f b4 26.t dl ' xal 27.Eb8 c f +

Black eventually prevailed in the computer encounter Shredder 12 - Critter 1.2, engine game 2011.

Conclusion

10.c xe6f e6 is much sharper than the approach we saw in the previous chapter. There are lots of concrete lines so my analysis had to be thorough. After 11.0 0-0 i e5 12. e2 WcS 13.h4 i fd7 the sharp 14.h5! must be taken seriously, but Black seems to be fine with accurate play. The main line is 14.f4 i c4 15. xc4 Wxc4 16.e5, but this appears to have been defused by 16..J adS!. Going back a few moves, careful comparisons should be made between 13.h4 and 13.c b1, while 13. h6 should also be checked carefully.

Variation Index

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l.e4 cS 2.l O d6 3.d4 c d4 4.l xd4 l f S.l c3 g6 6 e3 g7 7.0 0-0 8' d2 l c6 9 c4
d7 10.0 0-0 c8 11. b3 l eS 12.h4 hS 13. gS cS! 14.' bl bS

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- 0 12) 21.1 de296
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 - 0 21) 21.1 b398
 - 0 22) 21.1 de299
- 0 3) 20.1 de2: xh121: xh11 xe4 22.1 xe4: xe4 23.f eS: xe2! 24.Wxe2 Wgst 99
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 . d7 10.0 0 0t xd4 12. xd4 bS

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 - B2) 12.g4 245
 - B3) 12.t xc6! 246

Chapter 13

l.e4c5 2.l f d6 3d4c d44.l xd4! f S.l c3g66. e3. g7

- A) 7. d2 t g4 251
 - A 1) 8 0 0 0 251
 - A2) 8 g5 h6 9. h4 t c6 10.t b3 e6 252
 - A21) 11. e2 253
 - A22) 11.0 0-0 254
- B) 7.f3 0 0 254
 - B 1) 8.g4 254
 - B2) 8. c4 t c6 255
 - B21) 9. e2 255
 - B22) 9. b3 257
 - B3) 8. d2 t c6 259
 - B31) 9.t b3 259
 - B32) 9. c4 d7 262
 - B321) 10.g4 262
 - B322) 10. b3 26

Chapter 14

l.e4c52.t O d63.d4c d44.t xd4t f 5.t c3g66.J e3J g77.0 0-08 d2t c69.g4J e6

A) 10.g5? 268

B) 10.h4 d5! 269

B1) 11.h5? 270

B2) 11.0 0 0271

B3) 11.e5? 272

B4) 11.g5 274

C) 10.0 0 04 xd4 11. xd4 a5 275

C1) 12.g5 275

C2) 12.h4 277

C3) 12.c bl : fc8 13.h4? : xc3! 14. xc3 xa2t 15.c cl 278

C31) 15... xg4 279

C32) 15... alt 281

C4) 12.a3 : ab8 282

C41) 13.h4 b5 282

C411) 14.h5? b4 282

C4111) 15.hxg6! 284

C4112) 15.4 d5 285

C412) 14.4 d5 286

C42) 13.c bl : fc8 287

C421) 14.g5 289

C422) 14.h4 291

Chapter 15

l.e4c52.t O d63.d4c d44.t xd4t f 5.t c3g66.J e3J g77.0 0-08 d2t c69.g4
J e6 10.t xe6f e6

A) 11. c4 296

A1) 11...d5 297

A2) 11... c8! 297

B) 11.0 0 04 e5 12. e2 c8 298

B1) 13. h6 299

B2) 13.' b1 302

B21) 13..4 fd7 302

B22) 13..4 c4 303

B3) 13.h4 4 fd7 306

B31) 14.h5? 306

B32) 14.f4 4 c4 15. xc4 xc4 16.e5 : ad8 309

B321) 17.exd6 4 f6! 309

B3211) 18. d4 310

B3212) 18. g2 311

B322) 17.h5 312



Grandmaster Repertoire

Gawain Jones