

West Of England & South Wales Junior Team Tournament 2025

Bristol Grammar School, Sat 11th January 2025

TEAM	BOARD	NAME	R1	R2	R3	TOT
U11	1	Pratt, Adrian	1	0	0	1
U11	2	Narayanan, Swetha	1	1	0	2
U11	3	Scott, Bethany	0	11	1	2
U11	4	Montgomery, Harvey	1	0	1	2
U11	5	Medway, Bence	0	1	0	1
U11	6	Amos, Jack	1	0	1	2
U11	7	Keay, Ben	1	½	1	2½
U11	8	Wales, William	½	1	0	1½
	TOT		5½	4½	4	14
U14	1	Holland, Mac	1	½	1	2½
U14	2	Dong, Vincent	0	0	½	½
U14	3	Pasupulety, Shreyas	0	1	1	2
U14	4	Pocknell, Oscar	0	0	1	1
U14	5	Nerella, Ananya	0	0	1	1
U14	6	Liu, Yuan	½	1	0	1½
U14	7	Nerella, Varnika	1	0	½	1½
U14	8	Jino, Jaisal	1	1	0	2
	TOT		3½	3½	5	12
U14	R1	Edge, Harry	1	1	0	2
U14	R2	Allen, James	1	1	0	2
U18	A1	Caleshu, Caleb	1	1	½	2½
U18	A2	Wills, Jack	1	½	1	2½
U18	A3	Ovcharenko, Viacheslav	½	1	1	2½
U18	A4	Abdalla, Suhayl	0	0	0	0
U18	A5	Sleight, Oliver	0	½	½	1
U18	A6	Yeap, Jun Li	0	1	0	1
	TOT		2½	4	3	9½
U18	B1	Smith, Daniel	0	0	0	0
U18	B2	Darlington, Ben	0	0	0	0
U18	B3	Glasson, James	0	0	0	0
U18	B4	Randhawa, Ronit	1	1	½	2½
U18	B5	Forty, Joe	1	½	½	2
U18	B6	Keay, Joshua	½	0	0	½
	TOT		2½	1½	1	5

“ Not too much silverware to bring home this year, but I thought you all played with great heart and concentration, not a lot of rushing and I was pleased to see so many of you get at least half-marks in your games. If anyone managed a result against the Bristol/Gloucester or Glamorgan teams who swept the podium in all sections, congratulations! Very well done to the U11 team, whose 3rd place would have earned some medals in previous years.”

Key to Symbols

Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning
!!	brilliant move	--+	winning for Black	°	unclear
!	good move	⚖	good for Black	-	with compensation
!?	interesting move	⚖	better for Black	♣	with an attack
?!	inaccuracy	=	equal	♣	with the initiative
?	mistake	±	better for White	⊗	with counterplay
??	blunder	±	good for White	△	with the idea...
+	check	«	winning for White	□	only move
++	double check				
#	checkmate				

I got the computer chess engine **Stockfish 14** to go through the games, to provide a blunder-check and a rough evaluation.

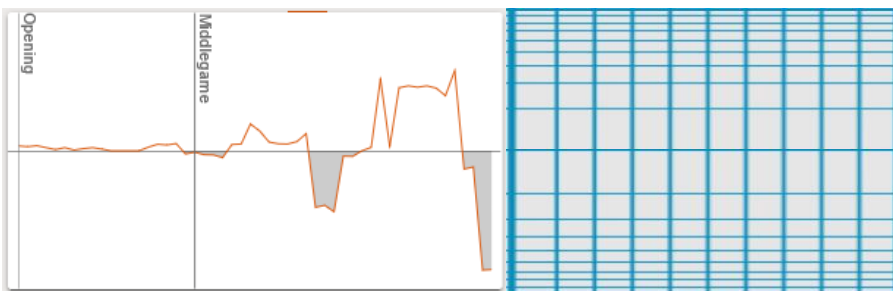
Stockfish' comments are shown in grey type

Variations are shown in blue ital.c type

Variation diagrams are shown in blue.

Stockfish comments on three sorts of move: inaccuracies, mistakes and blunders. I think you can ignore most of the 'inaccuracy' comments: I think it might take three inaccuracies to give you a losing game, and that only against perfect play by your opponent. The things that are losing your games are not inaccuracies but mistakes and blunders. So I've put Stockfish's comments about inaccuracies in light grey type and I left the rest in a bold grey.

Evaluation charts are given on Lichess for each game in 'pawn's-worth' – above the line, White stands better, below, it's Black – yet it's not in equal steps, but in this 'fisheye' log scale – once you are a queen ahead, going 2 Queens ahead doesn't make much difference to the likelihood of winning – and you can get closer and closer to a certain win, but nothing is ever certain.



Do read the notes on (and play through) other people's games – they will have experienced similar situations to you and perhaps responded better. In particular, look at games by players just a bit higher up the board order, or in an older or higher team.

I'm sorry I don't have all your games – but if you turn up any more I will comment of course.

👉 **In fact, that's a standing invitation – if you want me to review any of your games, I will. For a proper chess health check, I'd like about a dozen games, played at fairly slow time controls**

Contents

<i>Key to Symbols</i>	2
THE VERDICT	4
OPENING ADVICE	4
<i>Specific openings</i>	4
A BIT ABOUT HYPERMODERN OPENINGS	7
<i>Health Warning: here be dragons</i>	7
<i>Facing Hypermodern openings as Black</i>	9
MIDDLEGAME ADVICE	10
<i>Get your eye in for tactics</i>	10
<i>Blunder-proofing</i>	10
<i>Energy</i>	11
<i>Key pawn formations</i>	12
ENDGAME ADVICE	14
ALL THE TIPS:	15
THE GAMES:	17
U14	17
U14_1 HOLLAND, MAC	17
U14_2 VINCENT DONG	17
U14_3 SHREYAS PASULUPETY	26
U14_4 OSCAR POCKNELL	33
U18U14_5 VARNIKA NERELLA	37
U14_6 YUAN LIU	42
U14_7 ANANYA NERELLA	42
U14_8 JAISAL JINO	46
U14_9 JAMES ALLEN	46
U14_10 HARRY EDGE	47
U18_B	49
U18B_1 DANIEL SMITH	49
U18B_2 BEN DARLINGTON	52
U18B_3 JAMIE GLASSON	58
U18B_4 JOE FORTY	65
U18B_5 RONIT RANDHAWA	71
U18B_6 JOSH KEAY	75
U18_A	83
U18_1 CALEB CALESHU	83
U18A_2 JACK WILLS	88
U18A_3 VIACHESLAV OVCHARENKO	93
U18A_4 SUHAYL ABDALLA	99
U18A_5 OLIVER SLEIGHT	105
U18A_6 JUN LI YEAP	108
APPENDIX: OPENING NOTES FROM PREVIOUS YEARS	112

THE VERDICT

Some old and some new themes emerged...

Opening advice

In general:

What you are doing in the opening is mostly fine. You could stick closer to some general rules:

1. Develop Knights before Bishops, as a rule, (Knights have fewer useful squares to choose from) and King's-side before Queen's-side (so you can castle). That should mean you play Bb5/Bc4 before Nc3.
2. Finish development before attacking – make sure the Rooks can see each other.
3. All else being equal, move every piece once before you move any piece twice.
4. Your Rooks need an open file – or a half-open one to start with – so develop with that in mind.

Specific openings

Contents.....	3	[B01 Scandinavian Defence].....	65
Health Warning: here be dragons.....	7	[C50 Old Stodge].....	67
A22 King's English].....	9	[C58 Two Knights' Defence, Plerio Gambit].....	69
[B27 Sicilian Defence, Hyper-Accelerated Dragon].....	17	[D02 London System].....	71
[C77 Ruy Lopez, Andersson-Steinitz Variation].....	21	[B11 Caro-Kann, Two Knights' Variation].....	71
[B22 Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation].....	24	[E25 Nimzo-Indian Defence, Knoch Variation].....	74
[D00 Modern London System].....	26	[B08 Pirc Defence].....	75
[B22 Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation].....	27	[C01 French Defence, Exchange Variation].....	78
[C01 French Defence, Exchange Variation].....	31	[A46 Torre Attack?].....	80
[D53 Queen's Gambit, Orthodox Defence].....	33	A84 Dutch Defense: Classical Variation.....	83
[D10 Slav Defence].....	36	[A13 English Opening vs Dutch System].....	84
[A20 King's English].....	37	[C10 French Defence, Marshall Variation].....	87
[C49 Four Knights' Game].....	39	[D02 London System].....	88
[A00 King's English].....	42	[A59 Benko Gambit].....	90
[A25 King's English].....	44	[A15 English Opening vs King's Indian System].....	91
[A07 Réti/Barcza System].....	45	[C45 Scotch Game].....	93
[D10 Slav Defence].....	47	[A45 Catalan Opening].....	96
[A15 English Opening vs KID system].....	49	[A30 English Opening, Symmetrical Variation].....	98
[B23 Sicilian Defence, Grand Prix Attack].....	50	[A46 London System].....	99
[B23 Sicilian Defence, Grand Prix Attack].....	51	[E12 Queen's Indian Defence].....	102
[A15 English Opening vs KID system].....	52	[A85 Dutch Defence, Classical System].....	103
[B06 Pirc Defence].....	53	[B20 Sicilian Defence].....	105
[A15 English Opening vs KID System].....	55	[A40 English Defence].....	106
[C45 Scotch Game].....	58	[C24 King's Gambit Declined].....	108
[A54 Old Indian Defence?].....	60	[B12 Caro-Kann, Advance Variation].....	110
[D31 Semi-Slav Defence].....	61	[C01 French Defence, Exchange Variation].....	111

The level of openings erudition has shot up since COVID, I believe, and you can easily find a YouTube video promising to teach you the secrets of a new opening system in 10 minutes.

➡ Automatic development is dangerous.

However, a few of you don't really have a lot of depth to your opening play – you should not just know a few moves to play against this or that opening, but have a proper understanding of what plans both sides should be following. Just getting your pieces out and castling isn't going to cut it at County level! You can quickly drift into trouble without realising it.

Most common openings:

English Opening (10 games)

Other Hypermodern openings (2 games)

Pirc Defence (2 games)

English Defence (1 game)

I have played Hypermodern openings for both sides for a lot of my own games, but I have a feeling that you shouldn't do, and I shouldn't have either. I have lots more to say about this below.

Sicilian Defence (6 games)

This is a fine Grandmaster defence, perhaps the best to play for a win, maybe not so easy to play as Black at amateur level. The systems you are choosing as White – the Alapin Sicilian and Grand Prix Attack – are good choices.

French Defence (4 games)

This is a very safe and practical defence at amateur level and I believe often easier to play with Black than White. The Exchange Variation is not a very challenging system to use against it – Black will usually feel some relief – unless White follows up with c4, creating an unbalanced IQP position.

London System (3 games)

I am inclined to view this popular system as the Queen's-side version of Old Stodge – a way of bringing out the minor pieces in a routine, even thoughtless, sequence, while neglecting to open a file for the Rooks. It can be played in a more enterprising manner but usually isn't, and I was happy to see Devon players deal it a couple of harsh defeats.

➡ **BUT: a health warning about the London System**

The danger is that once White has trotted out their stereotyped way of developing, they may have a blocked centre as cover to move pieces over towards the King side to attack the black King. It is often hard for Black to come up with a positive plan to interrupt White's approach. So it's important to have a definite plan or variation to play against the London system, or else White will just roll down the King's-side and checkmate you!

Dutch Defence 3 games)

I rather like this too; there are some positional problems to solve but Black gets excellent practical chances in all three of the main branches of theory (Classical, Stonewall and Leningrad).

Scotch Game (2 games)

I rather like the Scotch Game for White; you get an open game with free development and chances to advance on the King's-side.

Caro-Kann Defence (2 games)

A very popular defence at the moment; solid but with some asymmetry, and perhaps enough to pursue a win.

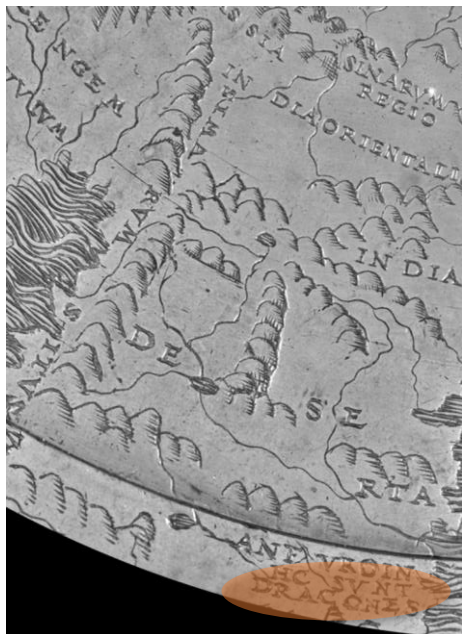
Stodgy White Opening (2 games)

We saw both the Four Knights' Game and the dismal Old Stodge (Giuoco Pianissimo), and I raised an eyebrow at the 5.d3 Ruy Lopez. I strongly believe that you should approach the opening with the ambition, not of avoiding mistakes, but seeking to make your opponent make mistakes by putting them under pressure. With all four Knights coming to the usual squares c3/f3 and c6/f6, and no immediate or obvious way to open a file, the play will usually be slow and boring.

In 2018, I gave some tips on playing these positions, if you find yourself in one of them.

A bit about Hypermodern openings

Health Warning: here be dragons...



In many openings, we can talk of a typical central pawn formation, like an Isolated Queen's Pawn or the Karlsbad structure. The central pawns are fixed for a while, and you can work out what the plans are where your pieces belong.

But in these heavy Hypermodern openings, the central pawns often stay back, and the situation in the centre can be fluid for a long while. Without a fixed centre, it's not obvious where the pieces should be placed, as they have to be ready for anything! So, these are really difficult openings to play: you have to understand a range of common types of position, and uncommon ones too...

“ Again, a word of warning must be given to the inexperienced: do not attempt (these openings) until you have fully tried out, first, the open game, and then the Queen's. These are far and away the most difficult types of opening to master. The writer has spent a considerable portion of his chess-playing life studying them intensively and is still liable to be met with shocks...” – Harry GOLOMBEK in Griffiths & Golombek: *Pocket Guide to the Chess Openings*.



⇒ **So, I don't advise playing hypermodern systems unless you have been playing for quite a while, and know a lot about how to play with and against a strong centre, and are alert to the often very different types of pawn centre than can arise.**

The Hypermodern Approach

'Hypermodern' chess openings are now more than a century old!

We always tell beginners three or four things to do in the opening:

1. Develop your pieces quickly.
2. Get at least a pawn stake in the centre.
3. Get castled, and soon also:
4. Open a file for your Rooks (or half-open one to start with).

Occupying the centre means your pieces have more 'power': they control more squares, and can get around the board more easily.

Allowing your opponent to take over the centre can mean you get crushed beneath a steamroller of pawns.

This was how the opening was understood for a long while, and how it was played by Morphy, and taught by Steinitz and Tarrasch.

But in the 1920s, players like Nimzowitsch, Breyer, Réti and Tartakower started experimenting. Their idea was that the centre needn't be occupied straight away, as long as the opponent couldn't go into steamroller mode. Maybe you could hang back a little: maybe the opponent's big centre could be controlled, or undermined, or completely blown up.

“ Chess is a terrible game. If you have no centre, your opponent has a freer position. If you do have a centre, then you really have something to worry about!” – Dr Siegbert TARRASCH.

And so it proved to be.

This idea of allowing your opponent to set up a big centre, with the hope that you can knock it down or at least use it as a target, is the key idea associated with the Hypermodern School.

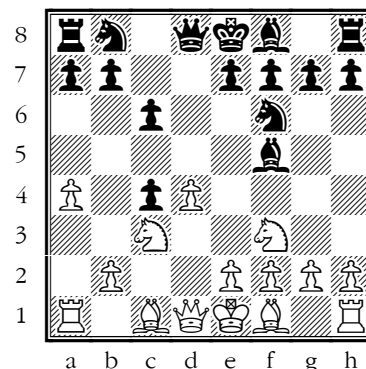
“ Firstly, the Hypermodern School does not actually exist, and secondly, it comes from Nimzowitsch.”

Richard TEICHMANN.

There are several hypermodern openings or systems, like the Réti Opening and English Opening for White, and Grünfeld Defence, Alekhin's Defence, and the Pirc/Modern Defences for Black. But you can play this hypermodern idea in several openings: the main line of the Slav feels quite hypermodern to me, as Black gives up the centre on move 4 with:

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.a4 Bf5 ♠

It's difficult for both sides: as difficult for White to set up and defend the centre as for Black to knock it down; as difficult for White to show an advantage as Black to show equality.



Playing Hypermodern openings as Black

In these systems, White stakes a claim in the centre, and Black holds back, hoping either that the centre will prove a nice target, or that their own delayed advance will be useful.

These are all reasonable defences but I think they are difficult, and they are more difficult than most other classical or semi-open or even Indian defences. White can simply occupy the centre with a mass of pawns and try to run you over like a steamroller. I think opening theory these days suggests that Black can get a playable game but if you're not completely accurate you can get crushed.

Even if you don't get crushed, the centre pawn formation can settle down in a number of different ways, requiring different plans from you in each case –so, firstly, you have to be aware of all the different plans available, and secondly, you need to choose the right plan for the position in front of you. Compared with an opening like the French Defence, where the central pawn structure is often the same and your plans as Black are also the same, you are making life hard for yourself.

Hypermodern openings as White

The situation is often different if you play in the Hypermodern style as White. White holds back from d4 and e4, but Black doesn't have to rush in. Instead, Black can also hold back (in Tarrasch's view, 'answering stupidity with stupidity').

With nothing settled in the centre, the play is often slow and heavy. Good if you are a Grandmaster and want to outplay another Grandmaster, maybe not so good for your local junior rapidplay.

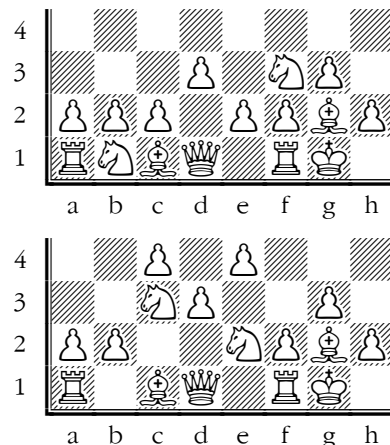
If you insist:

Because I know some of you will do it anyway....

The Hypermodern Systems I hate the least to see you play are:

1. The King's Indian Attack (see the booklet/PGN) ♠
2. The Botvinnik System in the English Opening (a brief mention in the relevant booklet, and the game by Leon Nelson against Dan below) ♠

In both systems, you are likely to get a Stonewall-style attack with a closed centre (see later).



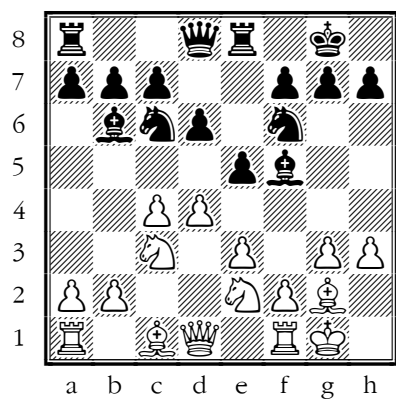
Facing Hypermodern openings as Black

However, there is one situation where the hypermodern approach can prove to be effective, and that's when you get your pieces out according to simple classical principles without really giving credit to the flexibility of hypermodern development. If you just plonk your pieces down in their usual positions you may find that they can be harassed by your opponent's pawns:

A22 King's English]
Korchnoi, Viktor – Szabo, Laszlo
Bucharest, 1963

“ This game shows the advantages of a flexible wall of pawns against orthodox minor piece development.

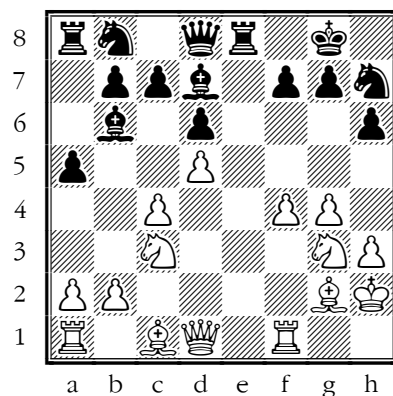
**1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 Bc5
4.Bg2 o-o 5.e3 Re8 6.Nge2 Nc6
7.o-o d6 8.d4 Bb6 9.h3 Bf5?±**



Following classical opening principles, but this is not a classical

opening - rather, White is perfectly placed to harass the black minor pieces which are strutting about without adequate cover.

**10.d5 Nb8 11.g4 Bd7 12.Ng3 h6
13.Kh2 a5 14.f4 exf4 15.exf4
Nh7±**

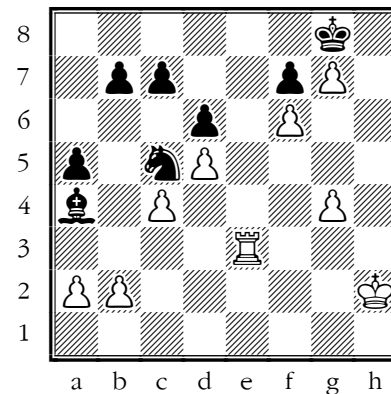


White seems to have a pawn majority on both sides!

**16.g5 Na6 17.gxh6 Qh4
18.hxg7 Nf6 19.f5 Be3
20.Nce4!+- Nxe4 21.Nxe4 Bxc1
22.Rxc1 Nc5**

[22...Rxe4 23.Bxe4 Qxe4 24.Qh5]

**23.Qg4 Rxe4 24.Bxe4 Qxg4
25.hxg4 Nxe4 26.Rce1 Nc5
27.f6 Re8 28.Rxe8+ Bxe8
29.Re1 Ba4 30.Re3+-**



1-o (threat Rh3)

So, simple development against hypermodern openings may not be good enough

I think my advice for facing a hypermodern opening as Black is to play your usual defence to the Queen's pawn opening. There's usually a version of a defence that can be played against the English and Réti openings, and it will give you something to play that is along familiar lines.

Sometimes you get tricked into playing a type of position that you aren't familiar with – which I guess is the point of White's play – so it's worth learning the outlines of a specific system to play. For example, the Reversed Sicilian with 1...e5, 2...Nf6 and 3...d5 is perfectly sound.

In a couple of games, your opponents held the centre stable and stormed down towards your King, and there wasn't much you could do about it by the time the attack was under way.

You must be prepared to disrupt your opponent's plans – not just in hypermodern systems.

See notes in the next section about the Stonewall.

Middlegame advice

Get your eye in for tactics

If you can, **practise spotting things**. You can use books of puzzles (or online puzzles) and you can do little exercises which help you spot threats over the whole board (like the 8 Queens Puzzle).

A little list of tactics for you to warm up with: some you spotted, some you did not!

→ TACTIC: fork.....19	→ TACTIC: fork.....51	→ TACTIC: discovery80
→ TACTIC: net26	→ TACTIC: discovery52	→ TACTIC: skewer.....83
→ TACTIC: undermining.....27	→ TACTIC: skewer.....54	→ TACTIC: pin.....91
→ TACTIC: pin.....28	→ TACTIC: pin.....56	→ TACTIC: fork92
→ TACTIC: destructive sacrifice.30	→ TACTIC: discovery57	→ TACTIC: pin.....94
→ TACTIC: discovery30	→ TACTIC: pin.....59	→ TACTIC: skewer.....94
→ TACTIC: net31	→ TACTIC: skewer.....59	→ TACTIC: skewer.....97
→ TACTIC: net32	→ TACTIC: fork.....61	→ TACTIC: fork98
→ TACTIC: net32	→ TACTIC: discovery66	→ TACTIC: discovery98
→ TACTIC: loose piece37	→ TACTIC: pin.....67	→ TACTIC: discovery103
→ TACTIC: skewer.....39	→ TACTIC: fork.....74	→ TACTIC: fork104
→ TACTIC: undermining.....40	→ TACTIC: fork.....78	→ TACTIC: skewer.....107
→ TACTIC: loose piece46	→ TACTIC: pin.....79	→ TACTIC: fork110
→ TACTIC: loose piece47	→ TACTIC: fork.....79	

☞ **Knowing all the tactics won't help if you don't look for them.**

Blunder-proofing

Every year I see blunders from our under 14 players. I am convinced that you all know the advice about how to avoid blunders and yet it's clear that you don't always follow it.

The good news is that you can reduce the blunder rate in your games, and you do it by:

In a game, you also have to **check for blunders** – yours and your opponents', before you decide on a move.

1. Make sure you are sharp tactically – that you know all the tactical **patterns** and can work out the mechanism – by doing regular tactical **puzzles**. Try and do puzzles that don't have a time limit and commit only once you're sure.
2. Always look at **forcing moves** - checks and captures – which are the easiest sort of moves to analyse and often contain treasure. As Purdy says, "*Examine moves that smite!*" – you should look at every check and every capture on every move (ECECEM).
3. After your opponent has moved, you must check to see what threats they are making. And you must check for threats, not only after your opponent has moved but after you have chosen a move yet before you make your own move. Your chosen move will weaken some squares and strengthen others, so that although your position may be perfectly safe before you move, you may give your opponent a new opportunity by moving.
4. I wonder if another reason you miss things is because you sometimes move **too fast**. (Again, that is a very familiar finding.) I'd be surprised if a few more moments' thought wouldn't save you some embarrassments in your games. You have to **practice not blundering** – by playing slowly and carefully, and getting into the habit of checking your moves before playing them – you will become more careful and can then speed up.
5. This sort of care cannot be practised when playing blitz and it is not easy to do in half-hour-long rapidplay games – so I suggest you start playing some '**classical**' **time control games** online, or more correspondence games, and using as much time as you need. It's easier to add speed to your game once you are careful, then you can still be careful while still playing quickly. (Think about how we learn to play music, or drive a car – slowly and carefully first!) Playing slowly also gives you the chance to look for unobvious threats and to find the most accurate move.
6. Use all your time – or, aim to **use most of your time in most of your games**. I actually thought most of you were doing well with that – in one round in the under 14 section 7 of the 8 unfinished games

featured a Devon player, and again in another round in the under 18 section, which suggests to me you were trying to play slowly and carefully.

7. A useful habit to get into is to make yourself **choose between two moves**. Rather than *think of a move then ask yourself if it's OK*, think about two or more moves, and try and work out which one might be the best, and why. I hope this will open your eyes to more opportunities as well as threats against you.

Energy

This is the middlegame version of advice that I have already given under the section on openings. I wrote all this last year but it still holds!

One secret of chess is that:

➤ Pressure creates mistakes

Maybe your opponent will make a mistake anyway, but you need to make things hard for them to get right.

➤ Every move is precious, so get the most out of each of them.

Some of you are not playing with enough energy – playing safe-looking or do-nothing moves instead – which might seem safe, but this takes all the pressure off your opponent, and gives them a chance to put pressure on you.

So in fact:

➤ Playing safe is dangerous!

So, make sure you are getting full value out of every move – favour moves that don't just develop, but also attack the centre, and also help you castle, and... do as much as you can.

➤ Hurry to finish development, and once that is done, find and put into action a plan that your opponent will find awkward to meet.

An example: 

White has yet to complete development and has an IQP.

Moves that improve White's position include:

- Development with Bg5 or Qb3
- Grabbing space with d4-d5
- Improving the position of developed pieces with Ne5 or Bc4

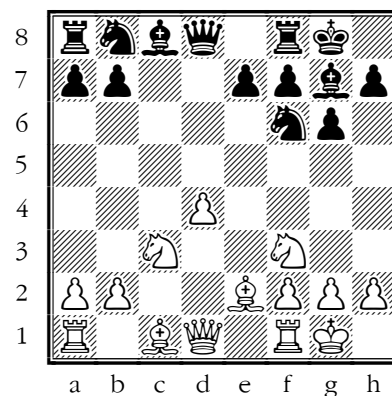
What we saw was h2-h3, which stops Bg4 and Ng4, but neither of those feel like problems that White needs to solve right now.

One move like h2-h3 isn't going to lose you the game, but it takes the pressure off Black, and might give them time to put pressure on you.

BUT:

➤ a one-move-deep attack that has a one-move-deep defence is usually not worth playing;

you waste time and they might do something useful.



Some specifics

➤ If you don't know what to do, don't move a pawn

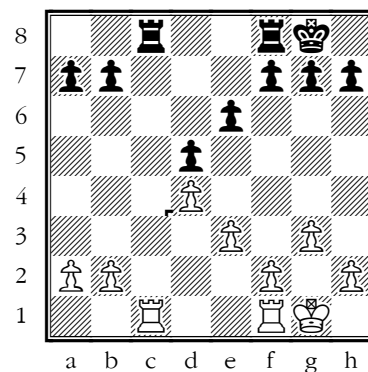
it might make a weakness and you can't move it back later

➤ If you don't know what to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece. (Andersson's Rule).

➤ To take is a mistake! (often)

I don't know if you've ever heard the phrase, to take is a mistake? The idea is that, by taking, you often improve the position of one of the defending pieces.

It's very obvious in the position shown : if either side initiates an exchange of Rooks, they lose control of the file.

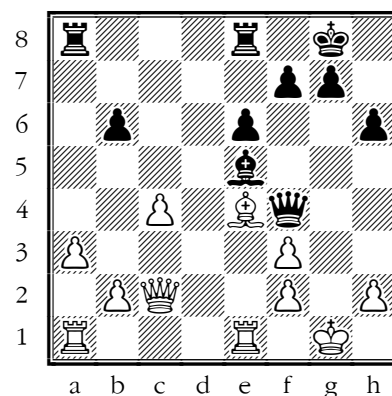


➤ Opposite coloured Bishops are a strong winning factor in the middlegame.

If you pick a weak point in your opponent's position on the same colour square as your Bishop, you will be able to bring one more attacker to bear on it than your opponent can find defenders.

So, if you have OCBs and have the advantage, keep pieces on the board.

Oscar found himself facing a fierce OCB-based attack in one of his games. 



➤ Beware Stonewall-style attacks with a closed centre

The Stonewall Attack (and the Stonewall Variation of the Dutch Defence) has a simple plan:

1. Close the centre
2. Seize space on the King's-side
3. Move pieces towards the black King
4. Open up lines with pawns or with a sacrifice
5. Checkmate!

<https://exeterchessclub.org.uk/content/disaster-stonewall>

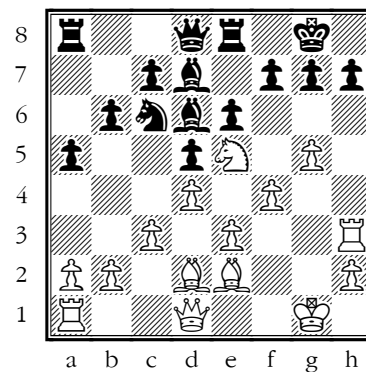
Once this starts rolling, it's very hard to stop (see games lost by Ananya, Dan, Ben, Suhayl...).

It's not just the Stonewall where this works: in any system with a closed centre you will see the same plan in effect, including the Botvinnik System of the English Opening, the Closed Sicilian, the King's Indian Attack, and so on. The centre needn't even be closed, as long as it's stable – the English Attack in the Sicilian works like that, and the attack with the same setup against the Pirc/Modern.

You must do one or all of the following:

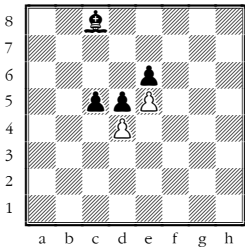
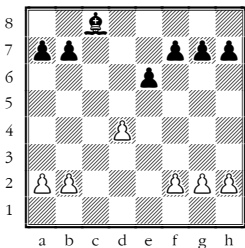
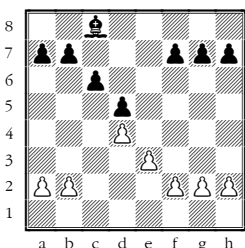
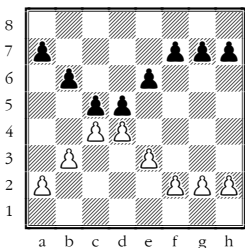
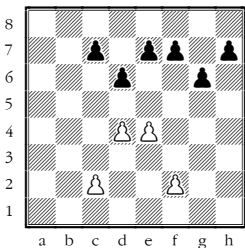
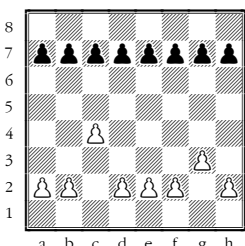
- Don't allow the opponent their target setup (e.g. **1.d4 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.Bd3 Nc6!** Ideas *4.f4 Nb4!* and *4.c3 e5!*)
- Don't castle into the attack
- Get your counterattack going as fast as you can
- Blow up the centre (see analysis in Leon Nelson – Dan Smith)

Easier said than done, I fear, but forewarned is forearmed.



Key pawn formations

You should know the plans associated with your usual openings, and you may be able to discover at least some of those by reading the pawn structure. Here are some examples:

Position	Pawn structure	Comment
French Defence		White has more space and attacking chances on the King's-side; Black has more space and attacking chances on the Queen's-side, and will try to undermine the white centre. Black has a bad light-squared Bishop and White's dark-squared Bishop won't be great. (Blocked King's Indian Defence positions are a mirror-image of this formation). Difficulty: 1
Isolated Queen's Pawn (IQP)		White has more space and, as long as there are lots of pieces on the board, attacking chances; Black has long-term and endgame chances as the pieces get exchanged. Both sides need to watch for the break d4-d5. Difficulty: 2 IQP positions are so common and so important that they are well worth studying. See: https://lichess.org/study/Bo8VSLFh/oyPZpvua https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egHQ_Gor5So
Queen's Gambit Karlsbad		White has a minority attack on the Queen's-side; if White pursues that, then Black will have scope to play actively on the other wing. White does have a central majority and can try to use that instead. Black's light-squared Bishop may find it hard to be useful. Difficulty: 3.
Queen's Gambit Semi-Tarrasch		There are 4 different central pawn captures possible and also a choice of recaptures. The two sides must judge the best placement of pieces for each of the possible future structures e.g. IQP. Difficulty: 4
Pirc Defence		White has committed to pawns to the centre, but they have yet to come into contact with Black's, so it's not yet clear what is happening. Black's usual central pawn counters are ...c5 and ...e5, when we will probably get Black pawns on dark squares and White pawns on light squares, but when and if that happens is not predictable. Difficulty: 5
English Opening		All is undecided. White may have a slight bias towards a Queen's-side advance but in practice either side can play on the Queen's-side, King's-side, or the centre. It's impossible to predict which pieces are going to be better or worse. Difficulty: 6

This is the problem with playing hypermodern systems in a nutshell: there are too many choices!

Endgame advice

➤ **When you are defending in the middlegame, swap off your opponent's strong pieces**

➤ **But when you are behind in material, then you should keep pieces on**

...and try and make difficulties for your opponent.

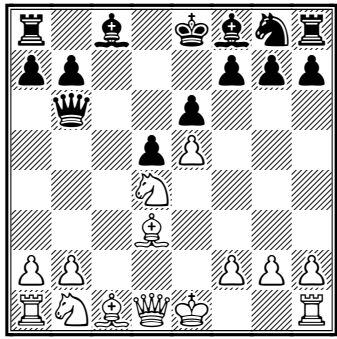
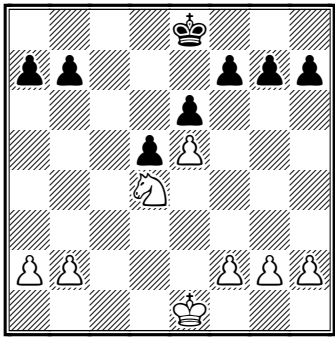
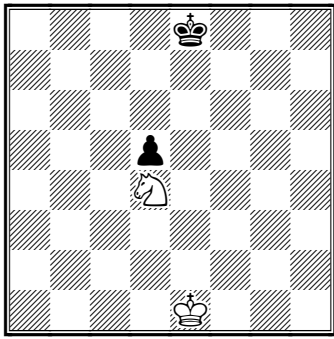
“ I say this every year, but every year our players and our opponents don't do it!

➤ **When you are ahead on material, you should swap pieces off**

...and deny your opponent any chance to trip you up.

Just to emphasise the point:

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Bd3!? cxd4 7.cxd4 Nxd4?? 8.Nxd4

		
Black has fallen for an ancient trap (8...Qxd4?? g.Bb5+) so White is winning. But <u>with so many pieces still on the board, an accident can happen.</u>	All the pieces get swapped off: <u>White wins without difficulty</u>	All the pawns and pieces get swapped off: <u>White can no longer win</u>

The rules for swapping off pawns are complementary: if you are losing then you should swap off pawns because if your opponent is left with simply an extra minor piece they can't force a win; similarly, if you have extra material then you may need pawns on both sides of the board in order to win.

➤ **A single pawn advantage on only one side of the board is not usually enough to win.**

➤ **Pure King and Pawn endings are the hardest to save.**

We saw several instances where a player, who was a pawn behind, ran towards a pure King and pawn endgame hoping for refuge, but found they were dead lost and had no chances of reprieve.

You may know that sometimes there is a stalemate to be had when K faces K with a single pawn on the board. But:

➤ **With more than one pawn on the board, the chances of a win in a K+P endgame with an extra pawn are very good indeed.**

➤ **Opposite coloured Bishops are a strong drawing factor in the endgame.**

You can create a defensive blockade on the same colour squares as you Bishop, and your opponent will find it hard to get through. So, if you have OCBs and have a disadvantage, swap other pieces.

➤ **Rooks are the worst defenders in the endgame.**

If you have to defend a pawn with your Rook, try and do so from the side.

It can be worth giving up a pawn to make your Rook active (rarely true of other pieces).

All the tips:

- In fact, that's a standing invitation – if you want me to review any of your games, I will. For a proper chess health check, I'd like about a dozen games, played at fairly slow time controls 2
- Automatic development is dangerous. 4
- Automatic development means you miss things 5
- BUT: a health warning about the London System 6
- So, I don't advise playing hypermodern systems unless you have been playing for quite a while, and know a lot about how to play with and against a strong centre, and are alert to the often very different types of pawn centre than can arise. 7
- So, simple development against hypermodern openings may not be good enough 9
- You must be prepared to disrupt your opponent's plans – not just in hypermodern systems. 9
- Knowing all the tactics won't help if you don't look for them. 10
- Pressure creates mistakes 11
- Every move is precious, so get the most out of each of them. 11
- Playing safe is dangerous! 11
- Hurry to finish development, and once that is done, find and put into action a plan that your opponent will find awkward to meet. 11
- a one-move-deep attack that has a one-move-deep defence is usually not worth playing; 11
- If you don't know what to do, don't move a pawn 11
- If you don't know what to do, improve the position of your worst-placed piece. (Andersson's Rule). 11
- To take is a mistake! (often) 12
- Opposite coloured Bishops are a strong winning factor in the middlegame. 12
- Beware Stonewall-style attacks with a closed centre .. 12
- When you are defending in the middlegame, swap off your opponent's strong pieces 14
- But when you are behind in material, then you should keep pieces on 14
- When you are ahead on material, you should swap pieces off 14
- A single pawn advantage on only one side of the board is not usually enough to win. 14
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- With more than one pawn on the board, the chances of a win in a K+P endgame with an extra pawn are very good indeed. 14
- Opposite coloured Bishops are a strong drawing factor in the endgame. 14
- Rooks are the worst defenders in the endgame. 14
- With an IQP, you can and must attack. 19
- When it's your turn to attack, you must play with maximum energy. 19
- In critical positions, it's worth spending extra time. 19
- When you are losing, avoid exchanges, and especially avoid pure KP endgames. 21
- Rooks are generally even worse at defence than Knights; it's impossible for them not to lose scope. 23
- It's worth studying the plans for both sides in IQP positions – they are so common anyway but you can also steer for them from both sides. 25
- You now should and do execute the winning plan when you are ahead in material: keep control, swap off pieces, get to an easy endgame. 27
- How do you spot something like this in the future? First, recognise that you are in a new position Second, look for forcing moves Third, make yourself choose between at least two moves. 28
- Players often pick out a likely move, check that it's OK and then play it. Sometimes when you are short of time, that's all you can do. But with a bit more time, make yourself choose – that is, consider more than one move – and that might make you notice a superior choice. 28
- Andersson's Rule: improve the position of your laziest piece. 30
- Sit on your hands! Every move is worth checking – even if you think you are winning easily. 31
- The rule about developing as fast as you can is trumped by any chance to win a piece! 32
- The main line of the Queen's Gambit Declined is often a battle between White's need to develop the Bf1 and Black's need to take on c4 at some point. 33
- This position with many possible central pawn captures is not easy to play. 33
- Doubled, isolated and backward pawns are weak, especially in the endgame – avoid them! 34
- Opposite-coloured Bishops are a strong attacking factor. 34
- Don't swap when you are behind in material 37
- You must keep material on the board if you can when you're losing. 37
- Fluent, fast development is your goal in the opening. .. 38
- If you see a good or even obvious move, it's worth thinking of an alternative before you commit. 38
- Look at every check and every capture at every turn. .. 39
- Double-Rook endgames are tricky: if both sides can coordinate their Rooks, they can cancel each other out,

but whoever manages to coordinate first can overwhelm the defences.....	39	☛ Open lines favour active pieces.....	72
☛ Try and set your opponent problems throughout the game.....	40	☛ To take is a mistake	75
☛ During the opening, have a plan to get your Rooks into play.	40	☛ One-move-deep threats may worsen your position and/or improve that of your opponent.	76
☛ If you're losing (or even if you're just a bit worse) it's not in your interest to play passively with lots of pawn moves.	40	☛ When attacking: two pieces is check, three pieces is mate!.....	79
☛ A flexible pawn front can make it awkward for pieces developed simply in front of their pawns.	42	☛ It's nearly always better to defend with a Rook from the side, as the piece doesn't lose so many options.	90
☛ If your opponent has a clockwork attack you must find something to distract them.	42	☛ If you're defending an endgame, don't make weaknesses.	91
☛ It's always harder to defend than attack	43	☛ Keep pieces on when you are losing.	95
☛ If you're losing, you should try and make a nuisance of yourself – playing 'normally' may lead to a loss.	46	☛ A check or other one-move attack that has a simple one-move defence can often improve your opponent's position.	97
☛ Always look around the whole board when you do your scan for checks and captures.....	46	☛ Attack the weakest point in your opponent's position .	99
☛ Don't swap off pieces when you are losing	47	☛ Opposite-coloured Bishops are very strong in a joint attack with other pieces, but very drawish in an endgame.....	99
☛ You must keep material on the board if you can when you're losing.	48	☛ it's important to have a definite plan or variation to play against the London system or else White will just roll down the King side... ..	99
☛ The advice 'look at every check and every capture' is not new to you I know, but still applies!	52	☛ If you get to a position which you are not sure you have reached before, it's worth a good think to see if you can take advantage of any new opportunities.	102
☛ Positions with opposite-side castling often feature energetic play on both wings. You can advance pawns to open lines on the side you are attacking.	54	2	
☛ Traditional advice is not to weaken your pawns in front of your King when you are being attacked, but if it delays your opponent's attack by a precious few moves, then it might be worth it.....	54	☛ At the end of most c3 Sicilian lines, even if Black has equality, you have a position with a simple plan.....	105
☛ One-move-deep plans either improve your position or can make it worse: make sure you know which!	56	☛ The balance of Bishops and pawns in a position can be crucial – your Bishop(s) must not be obstructed by pawns if you can help it.....	105
☛ As Nimzowitsch used to say: restrain, blockade, destroy!	59	☛ A consistent opening repertoire can foster confidence and gain time on the clock.	106
☛ Keep pieces on if you are losing.....	60	☛ Every move is precious and should be spent wisely.	108
☛ it's a lot easier to come up with moves and especially plans in systems that have been tried before.....	60	☛ I don't normally approve of White playing the Exchange Variation against the French defence... ..	111
☛ To take is a mistake! (often).....	65	☛ When you're defending, don't make any more weaknesses or make your position any more loose than you need to	111
☛ The King needs to be tucked out of the way while Queens are still roaming the board.	66		

THE GAMES:

I got rather fewer score sheets this year, which was a shame.

As always, could we have all the headings on the scoresheets filled in, please?

And some of your handwriting was pretty rough....

“ N.B. I couldn't decipher every move of every game, and some moves were clearly missed out or incorrect, so the moves analysed may not have been the ones you played.

You can play through the games at <https://lichess.org/study/khPVCJwn/> or <https://devonjuniorchess.co.uk/content/jamboree-games-2025>.

The best way to use this booklet may be to use it alongside the playthrough versions of the games online. The Lichess study should also give you the games looking at the position from your side of the board.

U14

U14_1 Holland, Mac

“ Great score on top board, Mac, well done! I didn't arrive back with any of your games [sorry if I overlooked any score sheets] but if you'd like me to look at anything please send some scores along. Writing down the moves is not only one of the laws of chess but gives you something to think about after the game.

U14_2 Vincent Dong

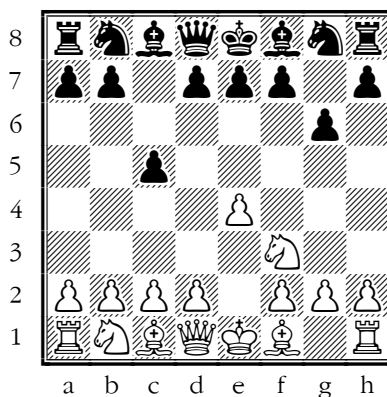
“ I think we both hoped for some better results for you: as you know I have a high regard for your steady play and opening erudition. You missed an opportunity to put your opponent under pressure in the first game and obviously had terrible luck in the second. Both moments might have benefited from a little more thought at the critical moment.

Vincent Dong – Alexis Malibiran

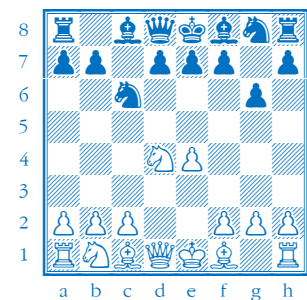
[B27 Sicilian Defence, Hyper-Accelerated Dragon]

“ In a game featuring a slightly unusual IQP position, you lost hold of your central pawn and that in the end was most of the story of the game, with Black converting the pawn ending. The moral of this story is: avoid pure King and pawn endgames when you are behind.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 g6



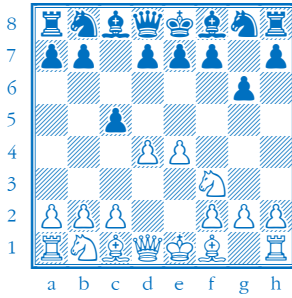
[2...Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6]



*Do you play this position as White?
If so, I suggest you head for it
directly because Black can't avoid it
without danger]*

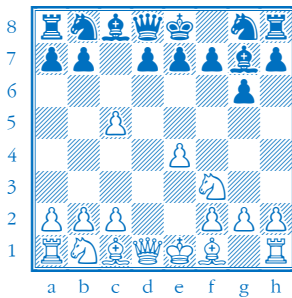
3-c3

[3.d4!]

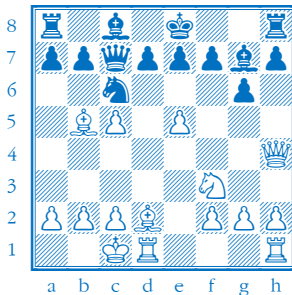


Now Black can try and avoid cxd4, but I've looked long and hard at these options for Black and I don't trust them:

3...Bg7!? 4. dxc5



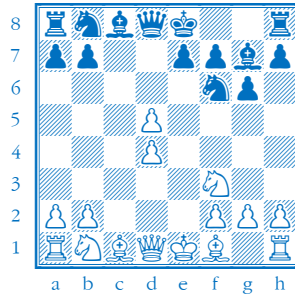
This is quite dangerous for Black
4...Nf6 (4...Qa5+ 5.c3 Qxc5 6.Na3 Nf6 7.Nb5±) 5.Nc3 Qa5 6.e5 Ne4 7.Qd4 Nxc3 8.Bd2 Nb5 9.Qh4 Qc7 10.Bxb5 Nc6 11.o-o-o+-



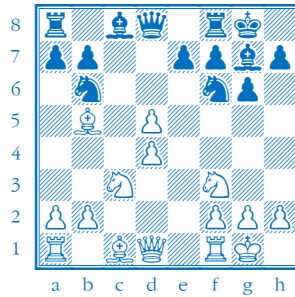
Shaw, John K - Epishin, Vladimir, 1-0, Groningen op, 1999,
<https://lichess.org/wnEn4Hlb>]

3...Bg7 4.d4 cxd4 5.cxd4 d5 6.exd5 Qxd5

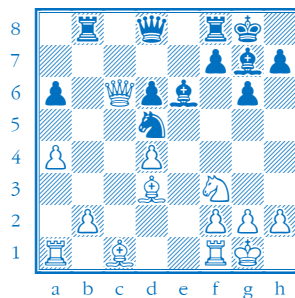
[6...Nf6=



This is supposed to be the best move according to theory when the main line goes 7.Bb5+ Nbd7 8.Nc3 o-o (9.d6! (9.o-o Nb6

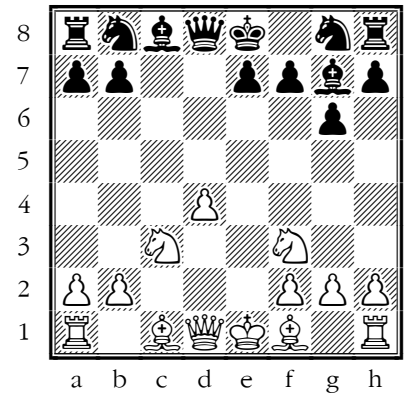


when Black has good prospects against the IQP) 9...exd6 10.o-o a6 11.Bd3 Nb6 12.a4 Nbd5 13.Nxd5 Nxd5 14.Qb3 Be6 15.Qxb7? Rb8 16.Qc6



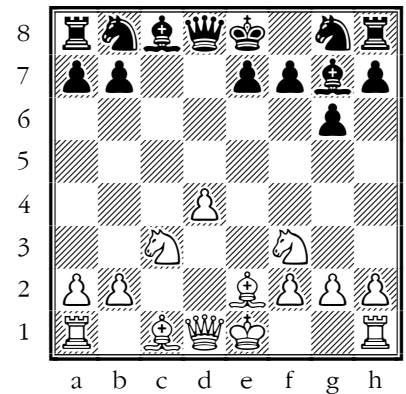
Black has a draw if they want it but can play for more 16...Rc8 (16...Rb3; 16...Nb4)]

7.Nc3 Qd8



With an isolated queen pawn (IQP) position. It's less usual to get one with a fianchettoed Black Bishop, and that probably means you need your light squared Bishop on c4 and not d3.

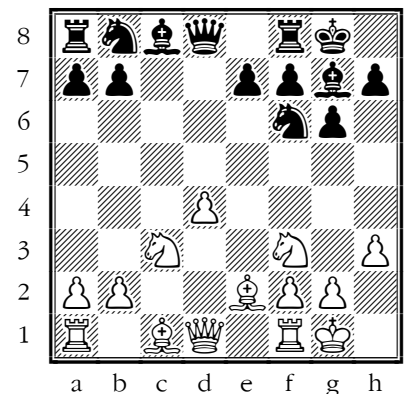
8.Be2



Perhaps a bit cautious.

[8.Bc4; 8.d5]

8...Nf6 9.o-o o-o 10.h3?!



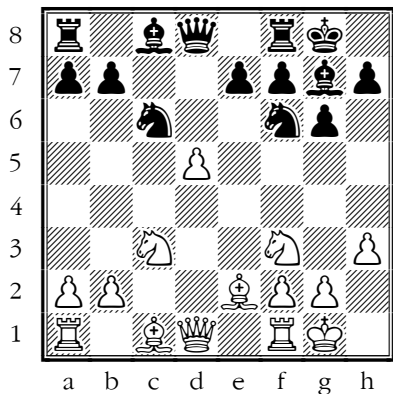
Meek.

➤ With an IQP, you can and must attack.

➤ When it's your turn to attack, you must play with maximum energy.

[10.Bg5; 10.Qb3; 10.d5]

10...Nc6 11.d5!?

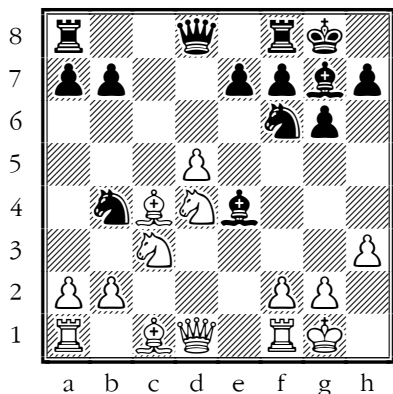


I guess the IQP has a choice about whether to be weak on d5 or d4. Certainly, the pawn push disrupts Black's development and gives you more space; it also gets the pawn off the diagonal of the black Bishop.

11...Nb4 12.Bc4 Bf5 13.Nd4

[13.a3!? Qc7 14.Bb3 Nd3 15.g4 Nxc1 16.Rxc1 Bd7 17.Re1 Qf4=]

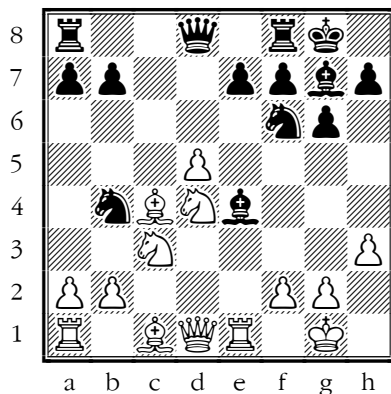
13...Be4±



The pressure on Pd5 is building up and it now looks as though it's going to be taken. I think it's clear that this position is crucial and it was well worth spending time with—which, to be fair, you may have done.

➤ In critical positions, it's worth spending extra time.

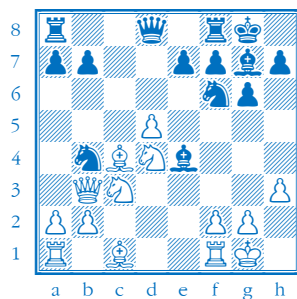
14.Re1?±



Mistake. Qb3 was best.

Now Black goes a pawn ahead.

[14.Qb3! ±

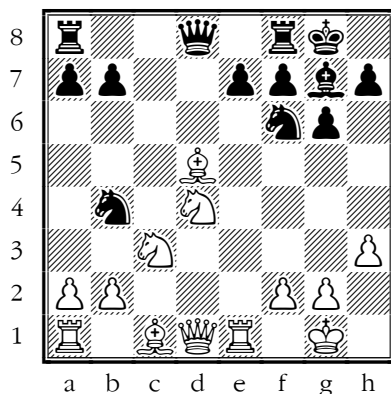


and the pawn escapes capture because of

(14...Nbx d5?? 15.Nxe4; 14...Bxd5?? 15.Qxb4)

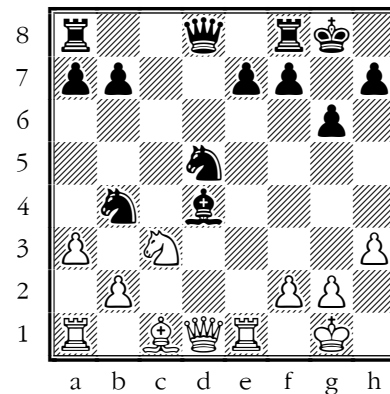
A sample variation: 14...Qb6 15.Be3 Bxd5 16.Nf5 Qc7 17.Nxd5 Nbx d5 18.Bxd5 Nxd5 19.Qxd5 Rfd8 20.Rfc1± Rxd5 21.Rxc7 gxf5 22.Rxb7±]

14...Bxd5?± 15.Bxd5?!-+



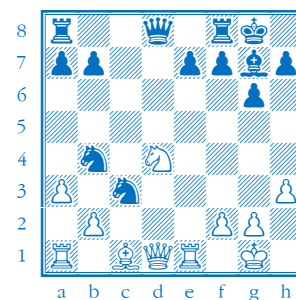
Inaccuracy. Bf1 was best.

15...Nfx d5 16.a3-+ Bxd4?±



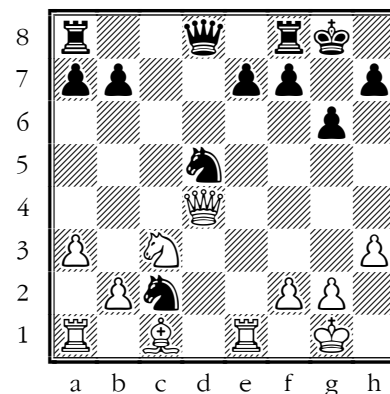
Mistake. Nxc3 was best.

[16...Nxc3



was an opportunity to make a further weakness in the white position.]

17.Qxd4 Nc2



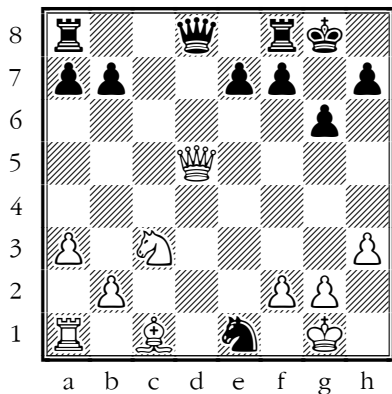
➔ TACTIC: fork

...with a family fork, winning the exchange. This must have been satisfying but White seems to get very good compensation.

18.Qxd5?!

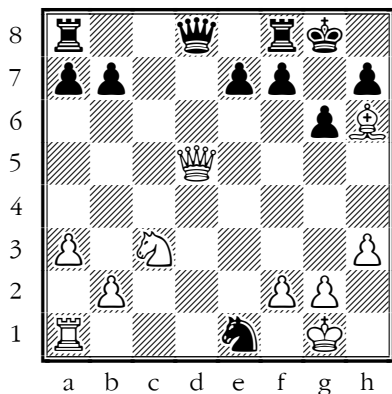
Inaccuracy. Qe4 was best.

18...Nxe1?±



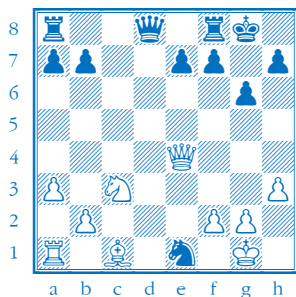
Mistake. Qxd5 was best.

19. Bh6??-+



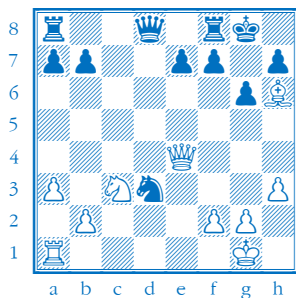
Blunder. Qe4 was best.

[19. Qe4! +=

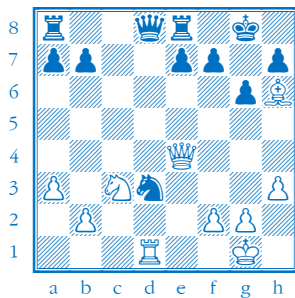


Is the right move here; the knight has to go to d3

19...Nd3 20. Bh6!

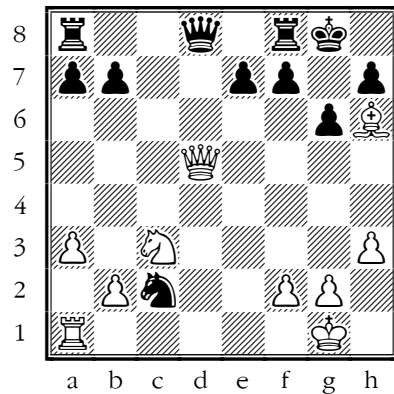


Recovers the exchange because 20...Re8?? 21. Rd1+-



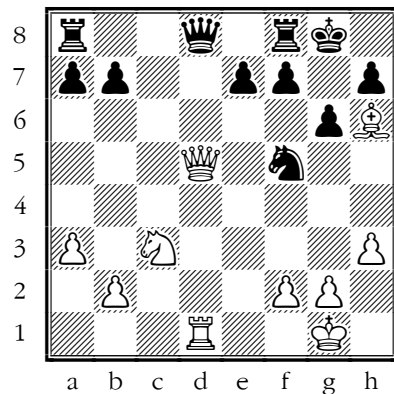
and White is actually winning]

19...Nc2



Now the black knight is able to escape]

20. Rc1 Nd4 21. Rd1-+ Nf5??



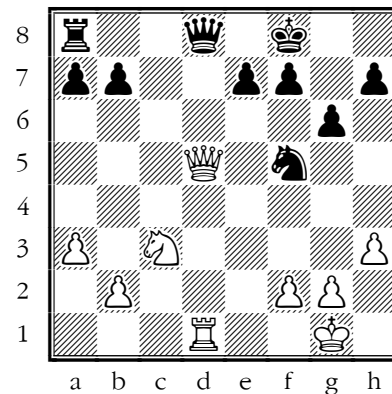
Mistake. Qxd5 was best.

So for the next few moves I'm absolutely confident I've got the move order wrong but I can't reconstruct the correct move order from the score sheet. The pieces do end up on the right squares but I find it hard to believe that the sequence that I have here is the right one.

22. Bxf8?!

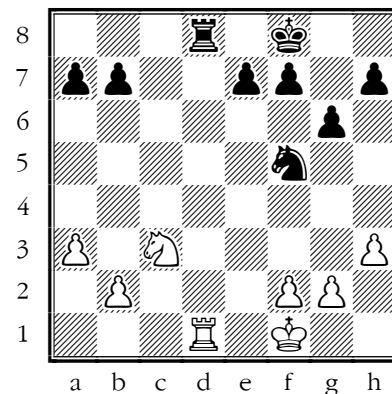
Inaccuracy. Qb3 was best.

22...Kxf8??



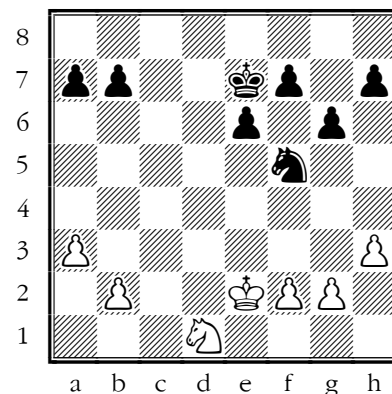
Blunder. Qxd5 was best.

23. Qxd8+ Rxd8 24. Kf1??



Blunder. Rxd8+ was best.

24...Rxd1+ 25. Nxd1 e6 26. Ke2 Ke7-+



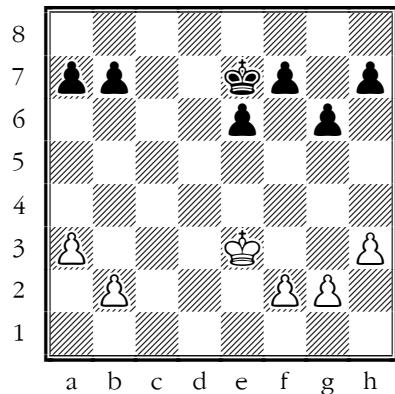
White is in a lot of trouble here but you only make it worse by swapping off your last piece. Endgames with only kings and pawns are usually very straightforward and decided as a win or a draw very quickly; they give you very little chance to make trouble if you are on the losing end of things.

☞ When you are losing, avoid exchanges, and especially avoid pure KP endgames.

27.Ne3?!

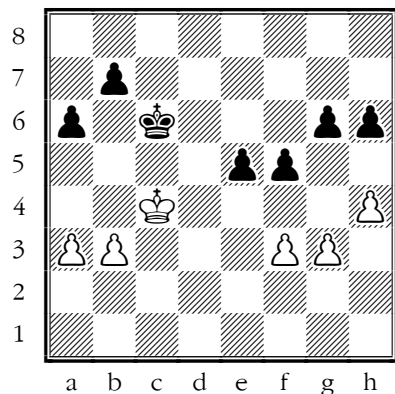
Inaccuracy. Kd3 was best.

27...Nxe3 28.Kxe3



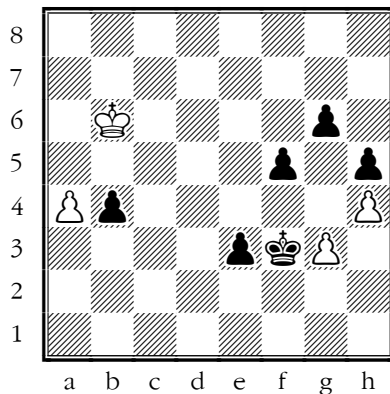
Now I don't think anything can be done; Black plays the remaining moves accurately and White goes down without being able to put up much of a fight.

28...Kd6 29.Kd4 e5+ 30.Kc4 Kc6 31.h4 f5 32.g3 h6 33.b3 a6 34.f3?!



Inaccuracy. Kd3 was best.

34...h5 35.Kc3 Kc5 36.Kc2 Kd4 37.Kd2 a5 38.a4 b6 39.Kc2 Ke3 40.Kc3 Kxf3 41.b4 e4 42.Kc4 e3 43.Kb5 axb4 44.Kxb6?!



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kxb4 was best.

44...e2

...0-1

Vincent Dong – Emma Kong

[C77 Ruy Lopez, Andersson-Steinitz Variation]

“ This was unlucky in more than one respect. Black got more material and more compensation for the lost piece than they should have done, and in fact had a period when they were winning, despite the missing piece. But you pulled it right round, reaching a winning Rook endgame, only for disaster to strike.

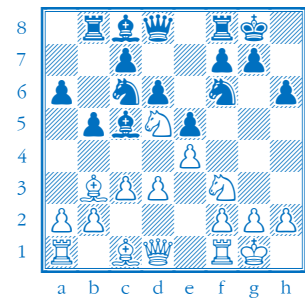
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.d3

This is perilously close to Old Stodge...

5...b5 6.Bb3 Bc5 7.Nc3 h6 8.o-o o-o 9.Nd5 d6 10.c3= a5?!±

Inaccuracy. Rb8 was best.

[10...Rb8



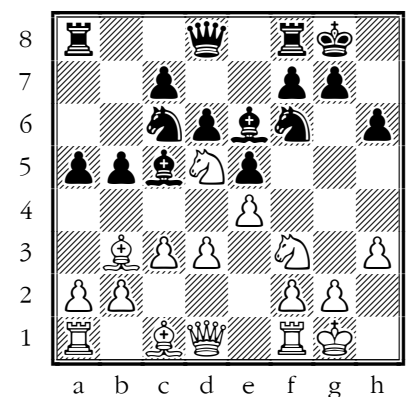
Carlsen, M. - Giri, A., 1/2-1/2, 4th Norway Chess 2016, <https://lichess.org/OdfS3iBg>]

11.h3?!=

Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

[11.d4 Ba7 12.Nxf6+ Qxf6 13.Bd5 Bd7±]

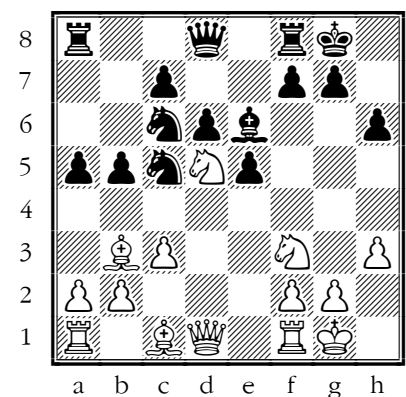
11...Be6??+-



Blunder. a4 was best.

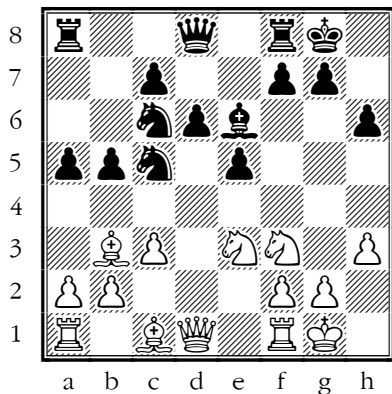
Losing a piece because of the threat of d4-d5.

12.d4 Nxe4?! 13.dxc5 Nxc5+-



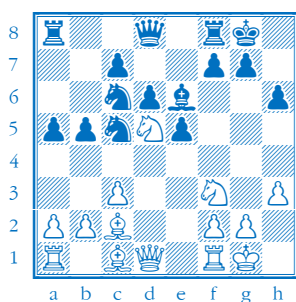
Now the task is to win a won game.]

14.Ne3?? ±



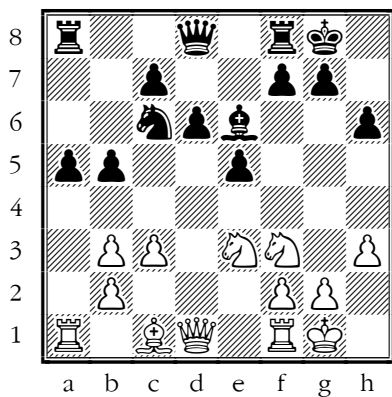
Blunder. Bc2 was best.

[14. Bc2+–



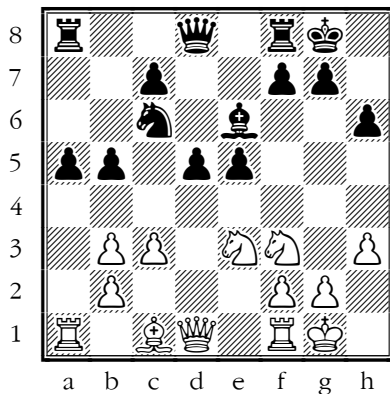
'Blunder' seems harsh but I too would be much less free with my Bishop!]

14... Nxb3 15. axb3±



Now Black correctly tries to make the most of their central pawns.

15... d5?+–



Mistake. f5 was best.

16. b4?!±

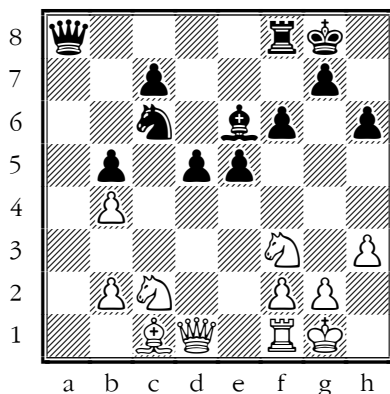
Inaccuracy. Re1 was best.

16... axb4 17. Rxa8 Qxa8

18. cxb4 f6?!+–

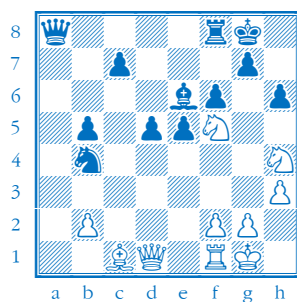
Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

19. Nc2? ±



Mistake. Nh4 was best.

[19. Nh4! Nxb4 20. Nef5!

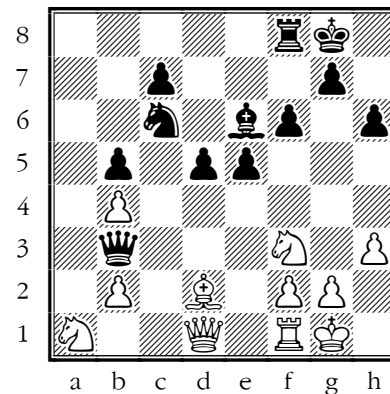


makes good use of the Knights, which turn out to be clumsy in defence.]

19... Qa4?!±

Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

20. Bd2 Qb3± 21. Na1? =



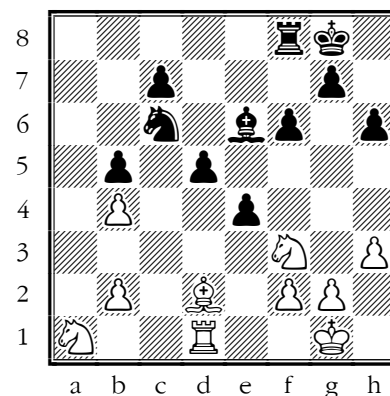
Mistake. Na3 was best.

Black has equal chances; White's pieces lack scope.

21... Qxd1?!

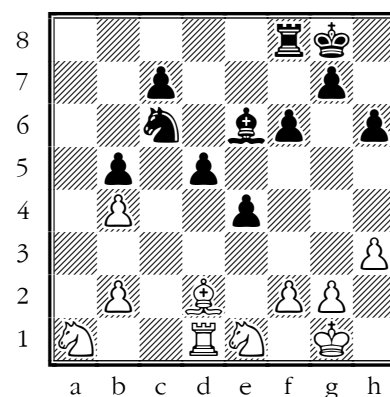
Inaccuracy. Qxb2 was best.

22. Rxd1± e4?+–



Mistake. Ra8 was best.

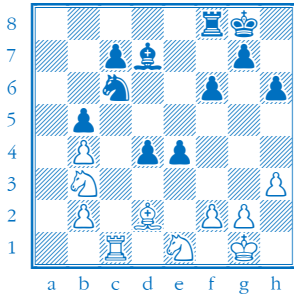
23. Ne1? ±



Mistake. Rc1 was best.

These Knights on the rim are indeed grim.

[23. Rc1! Bd7 24. Ne1 d4 25. Nb3+–

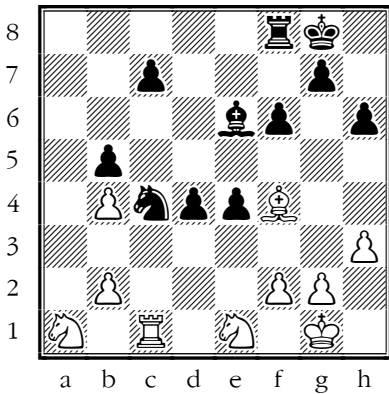


The pawns are more under your eye and your pieces are more active.]

23...d4 24.Rc1 Ne5± 25.Bf4?!=

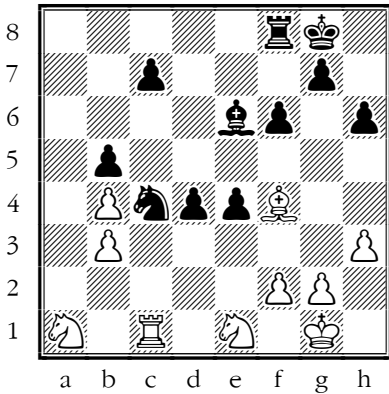
Inaccuracy. Rxc7 was best.

25...Nc4?+-



Mistake. d3 was best.

26.b3? ±

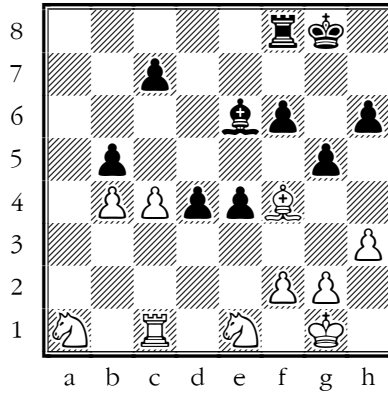


Mistake. Nec2 was best.

26...g5?!+-

Inaccuracy. Ne5 was best.

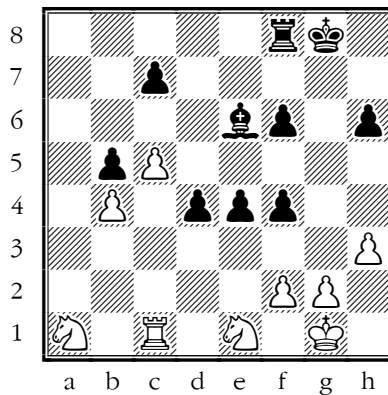
27.bxc4?=



Mistake. Bxc7 was best.

So says Stockfish, but I would have played your move.

27...gxf4 28.c5??-+



Blunder. Nb3 was best.

You're dicing with death now:
Black's pawns are very dangerous.

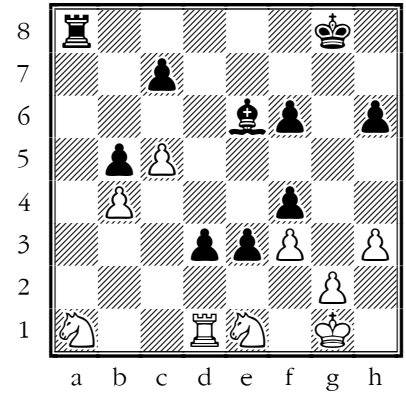
*[28.Nb3 d3 29.Nc5 d2 30.Rd1
dxe1Q+ 31.Rxe1 Bxc4 32.Rxe4=]*

28...d3 29.Rd1?!

Inaccuracy. g3 was best.

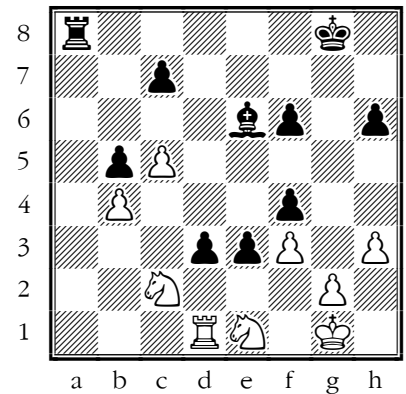
☞ Rooks are generally even worse at defence than Knights; it's impossible for them not to lose scope.

29...Ra8 30.f3 e3??



Blunder. f5 was best.

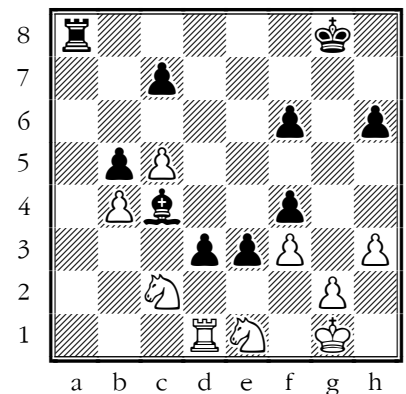
31.Nac2??



Blunder. Nxd3 was best.

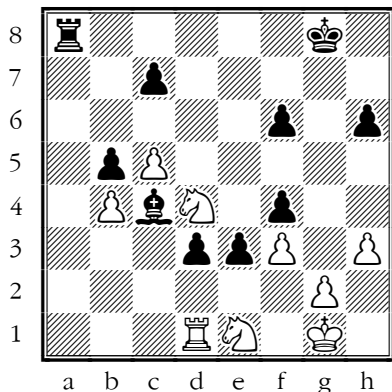
*[31.Nxd3 Rd8 32.Nc2 Bb3 33.Nb2
Rxd1+ 34.Nxd1 Bxc2 35.Nc3 Bd3=]*

31...Bc4??+-



Blunder. d2 was best.

32.Nd4??-+



Blunder. Nxd3 was best.

32...d2 33.Nec2

“ I think this game had a unhappy end: the pawns and the Bishop got swapped off for the two Knights leaving a Rook and pawn end game and you were able to get to a position where your pawn would queen first, and you did promote it – but on the move that you made queening the pawn you were in check, and it was that was your second illegal move, and so your opponent claimed the game and won. That's just a wretched thing to happen and I'm sad for you. Anything to learn from it? Your opponent was in radical time trouble but you were not. If you are winning and your opponent is in time trouble, IGNORE IT. You've got no obligation to move as fast as your opponent does and if you've got time, you must continue to check things. Go through all the usual sorts of routines as if your opponent was not in time trouble. It's not really giving your opponent a chance to think of a way to turn the game around if you're winning and you make sure you win.

...0-1

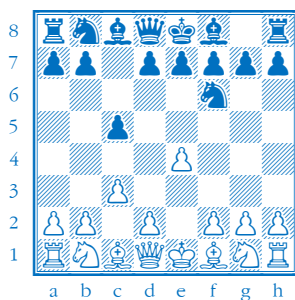
Govind Anandkumar – Vincent Dong

[B22 Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation]

“ You will never significantly worse in this game and when the draw was agreed you actually stood a little better.

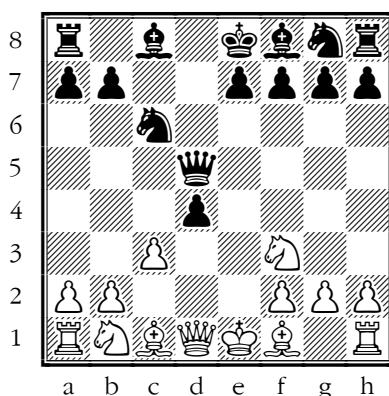
1.e4 c5 2.c3 d5

[2...Nf6



Evgeny Sveshnikov, who was a specialist in the c3 Sicilian and who wrote at least one book about, it says somewhere that he feels sorry for players who were victims of the fashion for playing 2...d5 against the c3 Sicilian, as 2...Nf6 is the better move. I must say I have always preferred 2...Nf6 but there's not a lot wrong with 2...d5.]

3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 Nc6 5.Nf3 cxd4

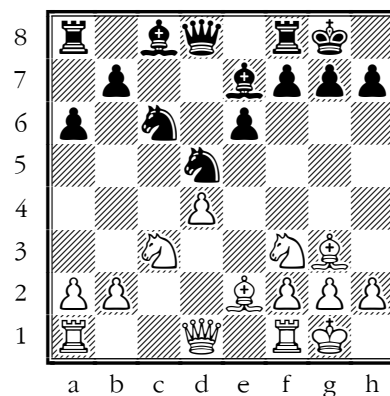


This move must be played in association with a definite plan, or else you are giving the Nb1 a nice square on c3 for no good reason.

Alternatives:

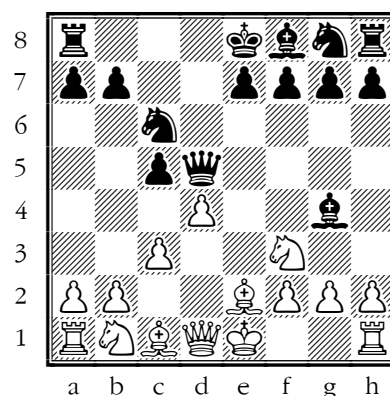
[5...Nf6!? 6.Be2 (6.Be3 Bg4 7.dxc5 e6±) 6...e6 7.o-o cxd4 8.cxd4 Qd6=

9.Na3 Be7 10.Nb5 Qd8 11.Bf4 Nd5 12.Bg3 a6 13.Nc3 o-o

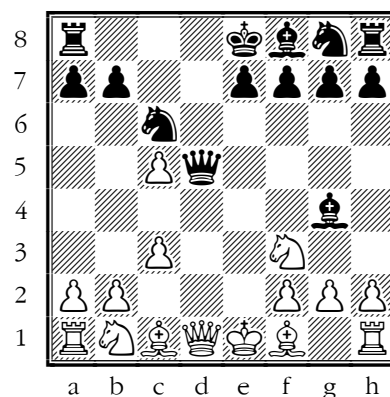


Pavasovic, Dusko - Balogh, Csaba, 0-1, CRO-ht, 2007, <https://lichess.org/Y8kZWfxg;>

5...Bg4!? 6.Be2

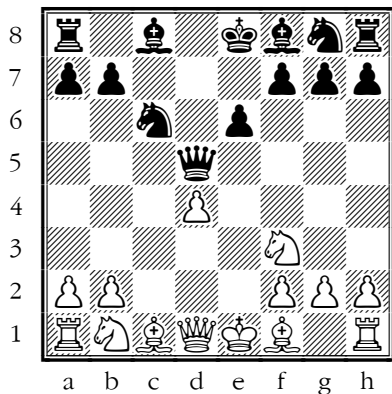


Mamedov, Rau - Polgar, Ju, 0-1, FIDE World Rapid 2014, <https://lichess.org/3MLDIYTY> (6.dxc5



Zhigalko, S. - Al Modiahki, M., 0-1, FIDE World Blitz 2014, <https://lichess.org/JArOGote>]

6.cxd4 e6±

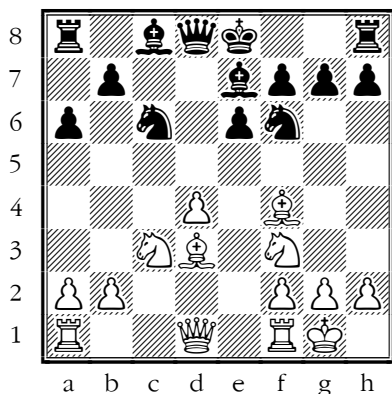


The better plans are:

[6...e5! 7.Nc3 Bb4 8.Bd2 Bxc3
9.Bxc3 e4 10.Ne5 Nxe5 11.dxe5
Ne7±

6...Bg4!? 7.Nc3 (7.Be2 Bxf3 (7...e6
8.Nc3 Bb4 9.o-o Qa5 10.a3 Bxc3
11.bxc3 Nf6±) 8.Bxf3± Qxd4??
9.Bxc6+--)) 7...Bxf3 8.gxf3 Qxd4
9.Qxd4 Nxd4 10.Nb5 Nc2+ 11.Kd1
Nxa1 12.Nc7+ Kd7 13.Nxa8±]

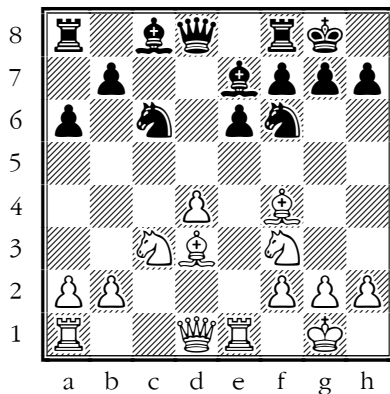
7.Nc3 Qd8 8.Bd3 Nf6 9.o-o Be7
10.Bf4 a6



That makes sense only if you
plan ...b5, because Nb5 is not a
threat.

[10...o-o! 11.Nb5?! a6! (11...Nd5!)]

11.Re1 o-o±



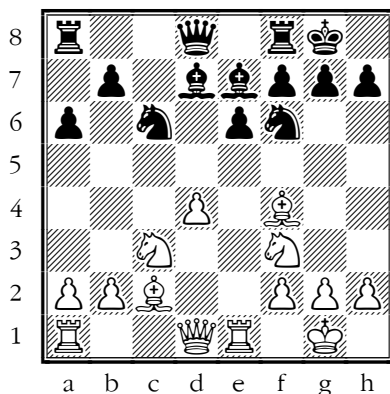
A fairly normal IQP position;
Black's position isn't quite as
settled as it could be.

It's worth studying the plans for
both sides in IQP positions –
they are so common anyway
but you can also steer for them
from both sides.

12.Bc2?!=

Inaccuracy. Rc1 was best.

12...Bd7?! ±

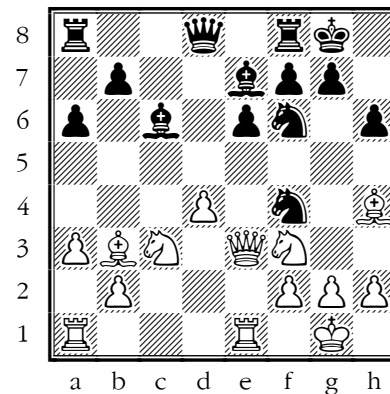


Inaccuracy. Nb4 was best.

[12...Nb4 13.Bb1 b5;

12...b5]

13.Bg5 Nb4 14.Bb3 Bc6 15.a3
Nbd5 16.Qd3 h6 17.Bh4 Nf4
18.Qe3±

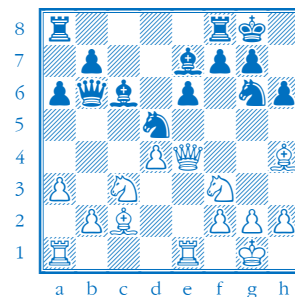


Draw agreed.

I can understand that you wanted
to settle yourself and get some
sort of result after the
disappointments in the previous
two rounds, but in fact Black
stands quite well here and has
most of the chances. I don't see
that White is able to whip up
much of an attacking opportunity
from this position and the isolated
Queen's pawn is thoroughly
blockaded. Stockfish gives a
modest Black advantage here.

1/2-1/2

e.g. 18...Qb6 19.Bc2 N6d5 20.Qe4
Ng6±



U14_3 Shreyas Pasulupety

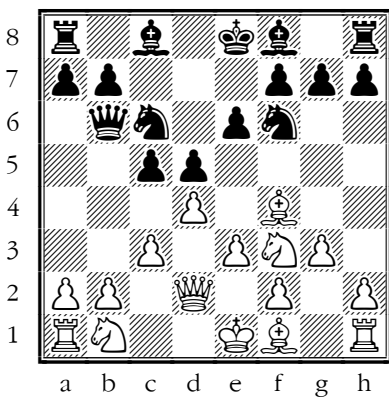
“ Two great wins which could have been joined by a third – well done! The ancient advice to think about the position following your move is very appropriate here, as is the more recent advice to make yourself chose between alternative candidate moves.

Finn Jackson – Shreyas Pasulupety

[D00 Modern London System]

“ After a do-nothing London system opening, White suddenly wobbled and cut off the retreat for their dark squared Bishop. I think you quickly spotted this and although you didn't trap the piece in the most accurate manner, you did net it and won the game without trouble.

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 e6 3.e3 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Qd2 Nf6= 7.g3?!⁷



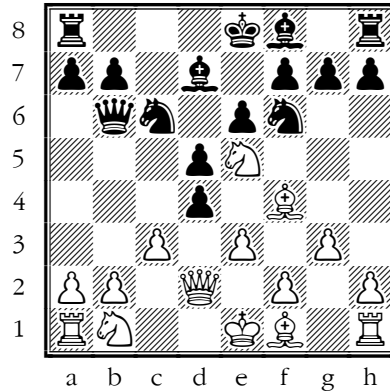
Inaccuracy. h3 was best.

The light squared Bishop could be developed already but this weakening pawn move cuts off the retreat for the dark squared Bishop.

7...Bd7 8.Ne5?!⁷

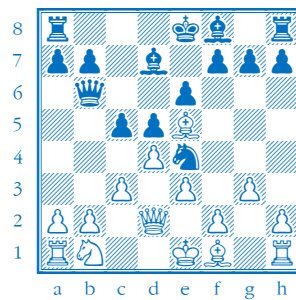
Inaccuracy. Qc2 was best.

8...cxd4?=⁸



Mistake. Nxe5 was best.

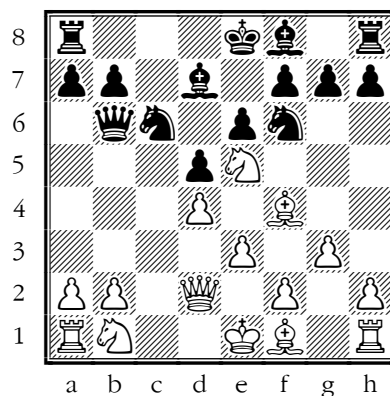
[8...Nxe5 9.Bxe5 (9.dxe5 Ne4 10.Qc2 g5) 9...Ne4



→ TACTIC: net

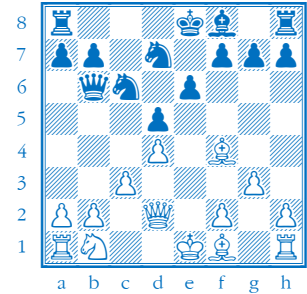
And the Bishop can be trapped with f6 and g5]

9.cxd4??-+⁹



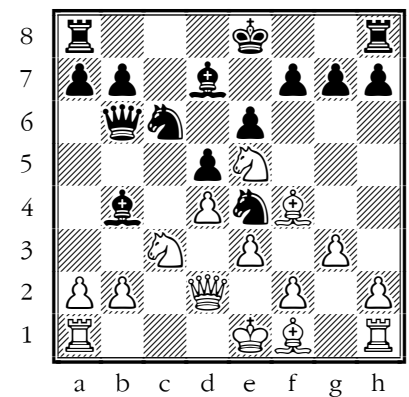
Blunder. Nxd7 was best.

[9.Nxd7 Nxd7 10.exd4=



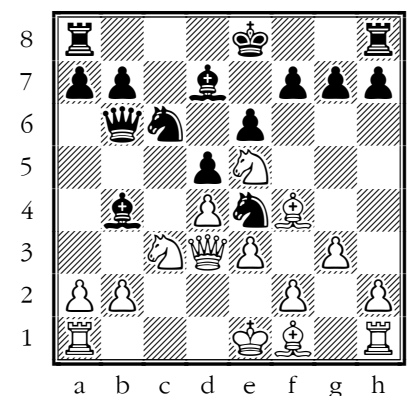
And the Bishop can grovel back to e3.]

9...Bb4 10.Nc3 Ne4?



Mistake. Nxe5 was best.

11.Qd3??



Blunder. Nxd7 was best.

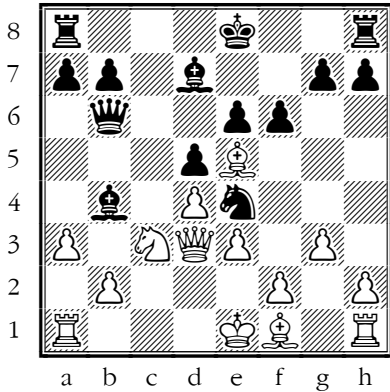
11...Nxe5 12.Bxe5 f6?!

Inaccuracy. Bxc3+ was best.

13.a3?

Shreyas Pasupulety - Ryan Masca

[B22 Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation]



Mistake. Be2 was best.

13...Bxc3+ 14.bxc3 fxe5?!

Inaccuracy. Qb2 was best.

I wouldn't [pay that much heed.

☞ You now should and do execute the winning plan when you are ahead in material: keep control, swap off pieces, get to an easy endgame.

15.dxe5?!

Inaccuracy. Rb1 was best.

15...Qa5?!

Inaccuracy. Qb2 was best.

16.Bg2 Qxc3+ 17.Qxc3 Nxc3

18.o-o o-o 19.Rfe1 Na4

20.Rad1 Bc6 21.e4 Nc3 22.Rd4

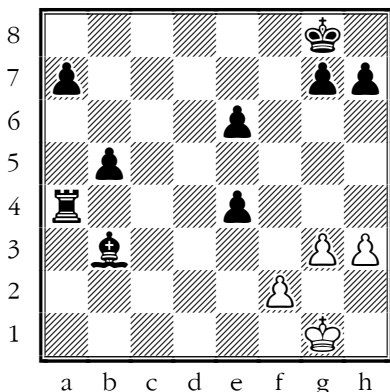
Nxe4 23.Bxe4 dxe4 24.Rd6 Bd5

25.a4 Rfd8 26.Rd1 Rxd6

27.exd6 Rd8 28.Rb1 Rxd6

29.Rd1 Ra6 30.Ra1 Ra5 31.Ra3

b5 32.h3 Rxa4 33.Rb3 Bxb3



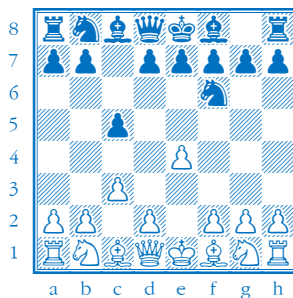
Fine vigorous play from Black throughout.

0-1

“ This was very nearly a joyful attacking game where you played with vigour (although not with complete accuracy) in an open position, but I fear you tripped yourself up at the very end.

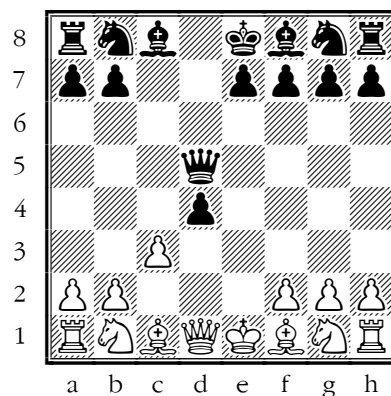
1.e4 c5 2.c3 d5

[2...Nf6



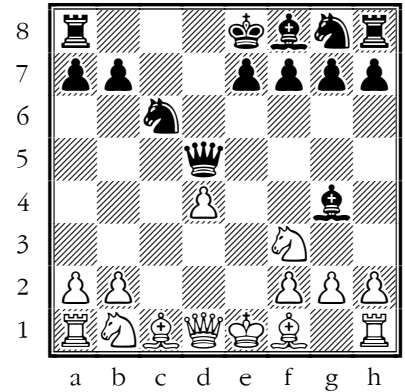
Evgeny Sveshnikov, who was a specialist in the c3 Sicilian and who wrote at least one book about, it says somewhere that he feels sorry for players who were victims of the fashion for playing d5 against the c3 Sicilian, as 2...Nf6 is the better move. I must say I have always preferred 2...Nf6 but there's not a lot wrong with 2...d5.]

3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 cxd4



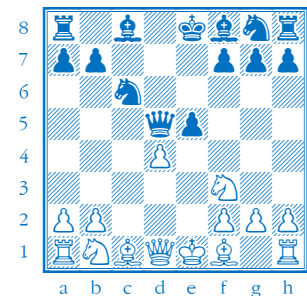
This pawn exchange releases the c3 square for White's knight, and so must be followed up accurately or White will just be better.

5.cxd4 Nc6 6.Nf3 Bg4±



In master chess White wins about half the games from this position – which is to say White scores about 75% of the points.

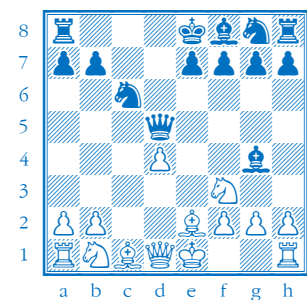
[6...e5



Is the more popular move recommended many years ago by Joe Gallagher in his book Beating The Anti Sicilians]

7.Nc3±

[7.Be2

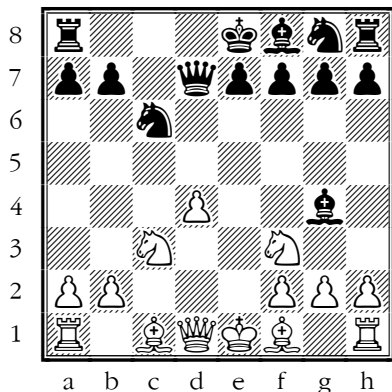


Sets a little trap: 7...Bxf3 8.Bxf3 Qxd4??

→ TACTIC: undermining

9.Bxc6+ bxc6 10.Qxd4+–]

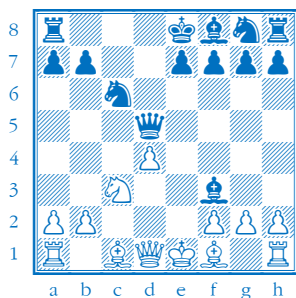
7...Qd7??+–



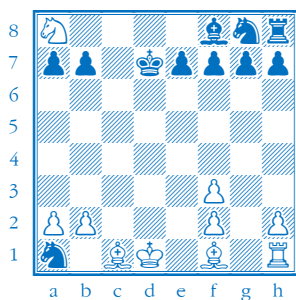
Blunder. Bxf3 was best.

A very interesting position where Black seems ahead in development but their King, facing open lines in the centre, is vulnerable to White's tactics.

[7...Bxf3

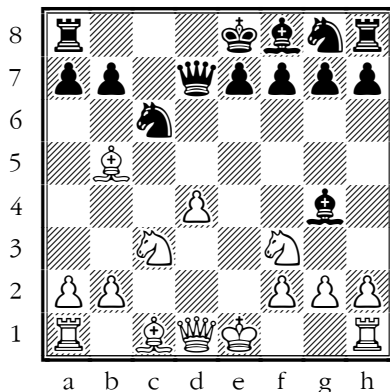


The main line of theory is quite a wild ride 8.gxf3 Qxd4 9.Qxd4 Nxd4 10.Nb5 Nc2+ 11.Kd1 Nxa1 12.Nc7+ Kd7 13.Nxa8±



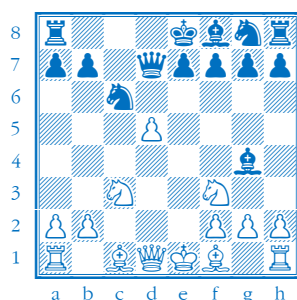
After this curious sequence we reach a position where Black is a pawn ahead but White has the better chances, having the Bishop pair and easier development 13...e6 (13...e5]

8.Bb5?? ±



Blunder. d5 was best.

[8.d5!+-

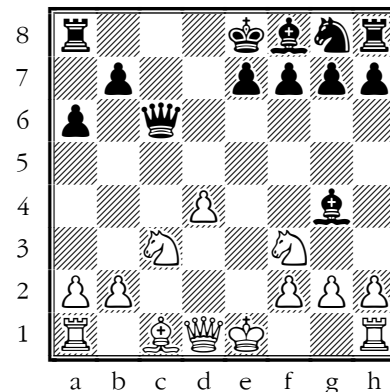


→ TACTIC: pin

Is right, winning a piece, because if the knight moves 8...Nb8? then 9.Bb5+-]

- ☞ How do you spot something like this in the future? First, recognise that you are in a new position Second, look for forcing moves Third, make yourself choose between at least two moves.
- ☞ Players often pick out a likely move, check that it's OK and then play it. Sometimes when you are short of time, that's all you can do. But with a bit more time, make yourself choose – that is, consider more than one move – and that might make you notice a superior choice.

8...a6 9.Bxc6± Qxc6?+-

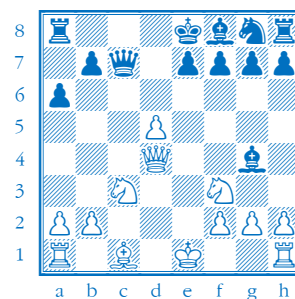


Mistake. bxc6 was best.

10.d5 Qc7 11.Qa4+?!±

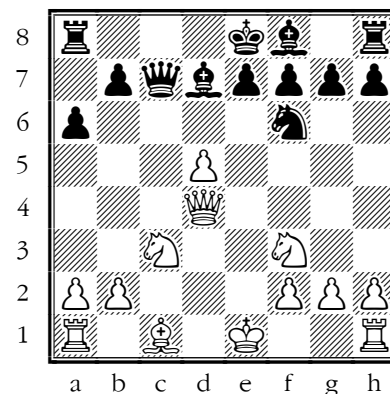
Inaccuracy. h3 was best.

[11.Qd4



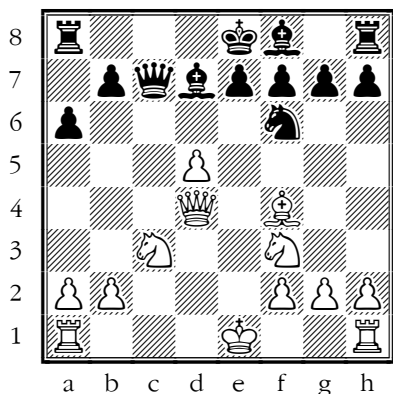
h3 is indeed a good move but this is at least as good; Black is going to find it very hard to develop.]

11...Bd7 12.Qd4 Nf6?+-



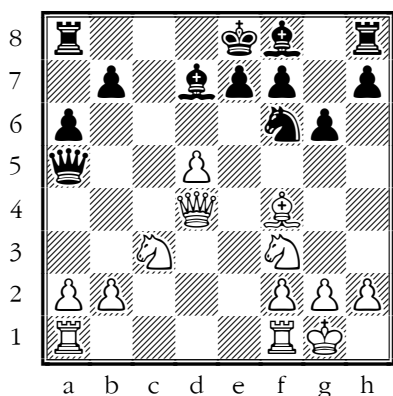
Mistake. e5 was best.

13.Bf4



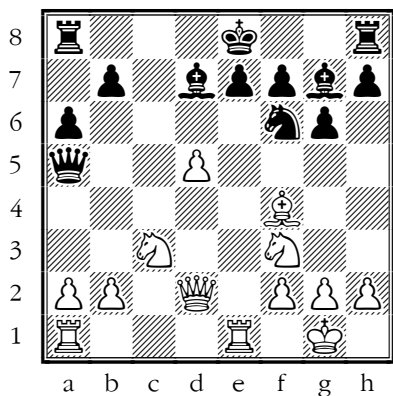
White has almost everything he might want out of an opening: more space, better development and the initiative. All White needs to do now is castle, and they will have a very fine – perhaps winning – position.

13...Qa5 14.0-o g6??



Blunder. e6 was best.

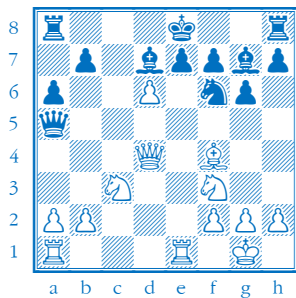
15.Rfe1 Bg7+- 16.Qd2??±



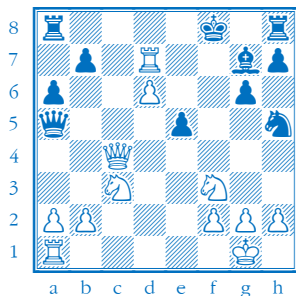
Blunder. d6 was best.

Unnecessarily cautious, but your position was so wonderful before, you're still better here.

[16.d6!+-



Black has no effective discovery with the knight 16...e6 (16...Nh5?? 17.Rxe7+ Kf8 18.Be5 f6?? 19.Rxd7 fxex5 20.Qc4

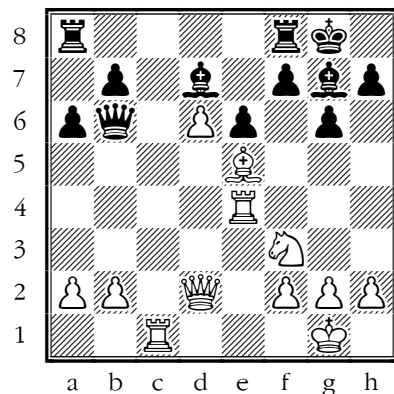


mates) 17.Be5!+-]

16...Qc5 17.d6 e6 18.Rac1 o-o+- 19.Be5?!±

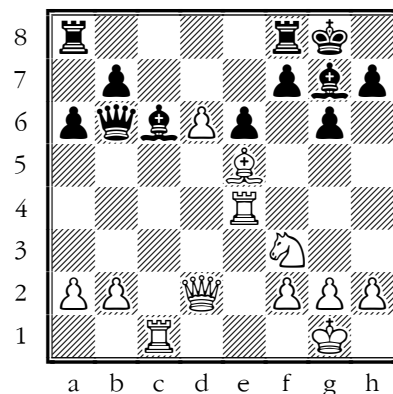
Inaccuracy. Na4 was best.

19...Qb6 20.Ne4 Nxe4 21.Rxe4±



As pieces get swapped off, Black is slowly cobbling together a defence.

21...Bc6??+-

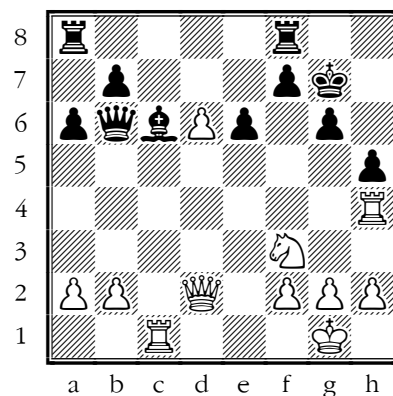


Blunder. Rac8 was best.

22.Bxg7! Kxg7!

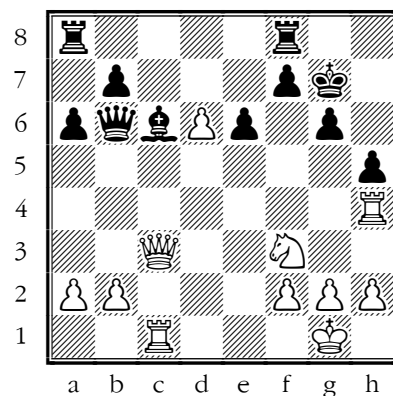
[22...Bxe4?? 23.Qh6!+-]

23.Rh4! h5+-



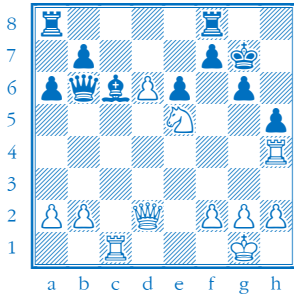
You have done very well so far in finding the right moves but the next one escapes you.

24.Qc3+??±



Blunder. Ne5 was best.

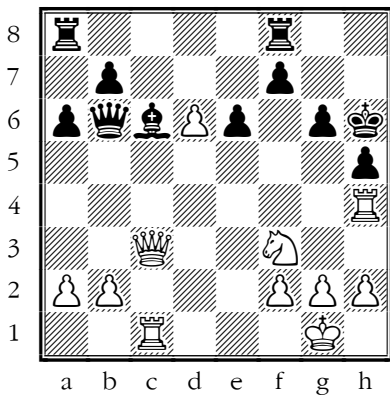
[24.Ne5!



Improves the activity of your least active piece and threatens to remove Black's most active piece]

➔ **Andersson's Rule: improve the position of your laziest piece.**

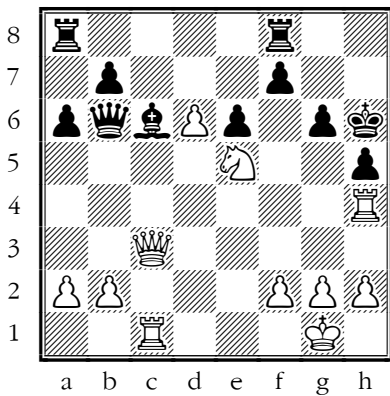
24...Kh6??+-



Blunder. f6 was best.

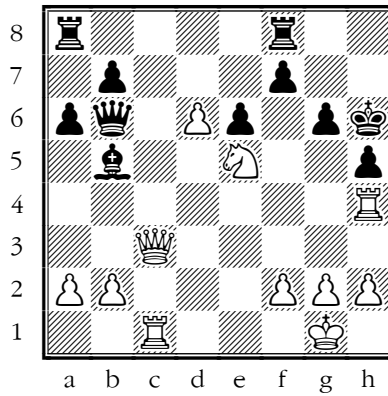
[24...f6±]

25.Ne5!



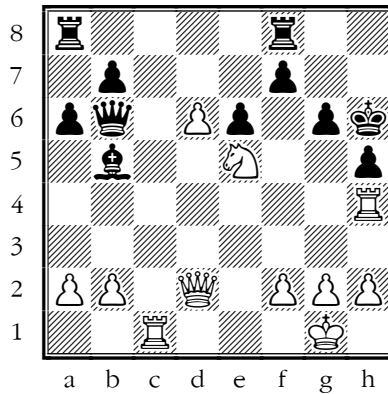
That's the ticket!

25...Bb5??



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kh7 was best.

26.Qd2+??

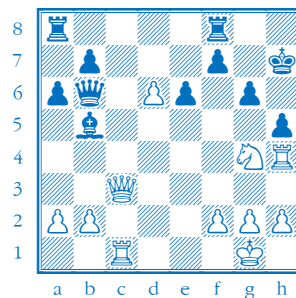


Lost forced checkmate sequence. Ng4+ was best.

White's position is absolutely crushing but this wasn't quite the best move.

[26.Ng4+! Kg5 27.Qf6#

Or 26...Kh7:

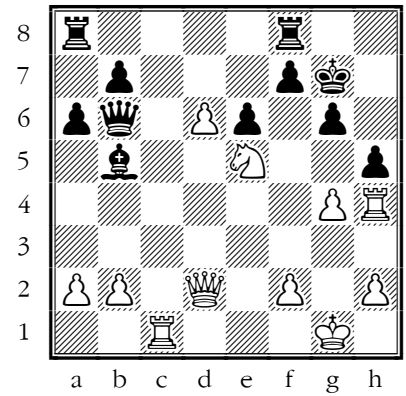


➔ **TACTIC: destructive sacrifice**

Now there's a long although not especially difficult forced checkmate

27.Nf6+ Kh6 28.Qd2+ Kg7
29.Nxh5+! gxh5 30.Qg5+ Kh8
31.Rxh5#]

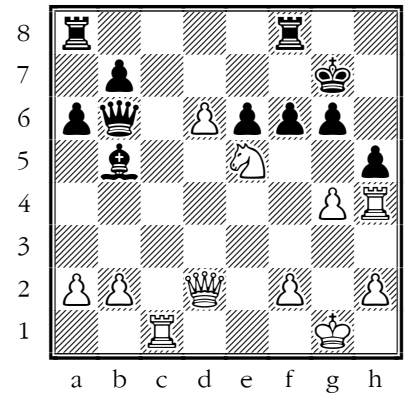
26...Kg7+- 27.g4??±



Blunder. Rc7 was best.

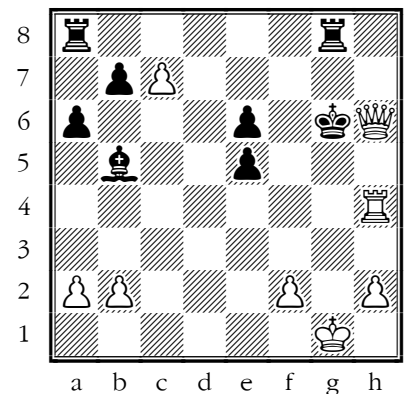
Very logical but best of all was to bring your last piece to threaten the black King.

27...f6??



Blunder. Rad8 was best.

28.Rc7+ Qxc7 29.dxc7 fxe5
30.gxh5 Rg8 31.hxg6 Kxg6
32.Qh6+??



Checkmate is now unavoidable. f3 was best.

➔ **TACTIC: discovery**

The score sheet here doesn't tell the whole story I think – in particular it doesn't record the result! But if I have the position

correct here, then the black King must move with discovered check – after which, tragically, it is Black who checkmates White – so I guess this is the game that you lost.

[32.f3!Kf5+ 33.Kf2]

☞ **Sit on your hands! Every move is worth checking – even if you think you are winning easily.**

32...Kf7+ 33.Kh1 Bc6+ 0-1

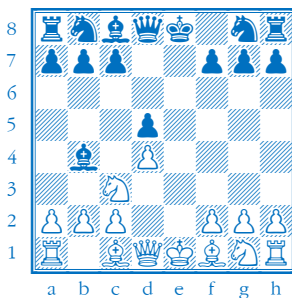
Ish Ananth Dudan – Shreyas Pasupulety

[C01 French Defence, Exchange Variation]

“ White seemed terribly short of ideas against your French Defence and you soon had a small and then a large advantage, never losing control of the game. Pretty to watch!

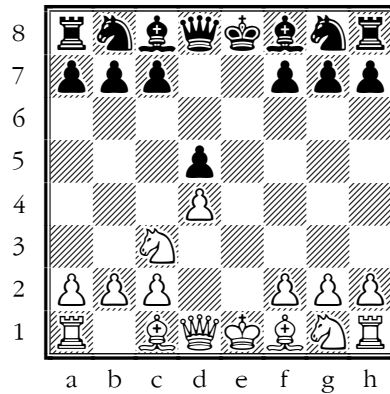
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5

[3.Nc3 Bb4 4.exd5 exd5]



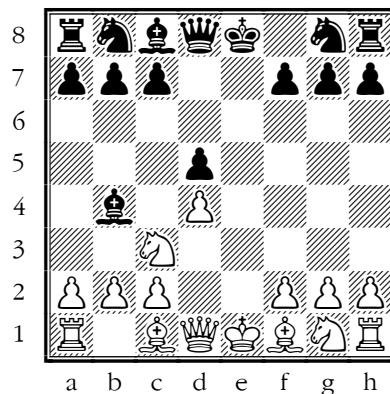
Transposes to the game]

3...exd5 4.Nc3



This apparently logical move I think is an inaccuracy, especially if it is not played with a definite idea in mind. The knight doesn't have anywhere very sensible to go to next and so perhaps should aim for the King side via d2, or wait until after c2-c4, when Nc3 does put pressure on d5.

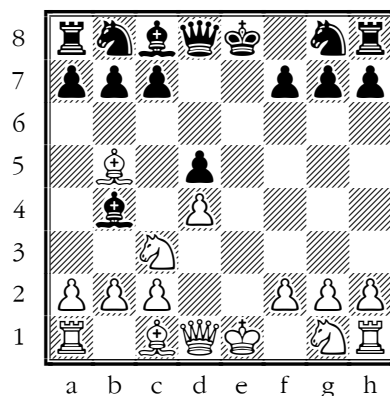
4...Bb4



Transposing to the Winawer]

[4...Nf6]

5.Bb5+



This threatens nothing and just encourages Black to play a move

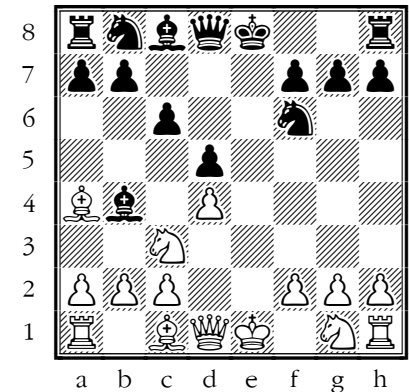
they might have wanted to play anyway, with gain of time!

[5.Bd3]

5...c6= 6.Ba4?!♣

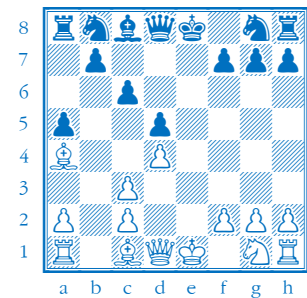
Inaccuracy. Bd3 was best.

6...Nf6?!♣



I think you had a chance here to make trouble for the white Bishop.

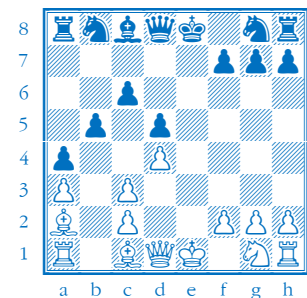
[6...a5!?, 6...Bxc3+! 7.bxc3 a5]



➔ **TACTIC: net**

Now b5 & a4 will net the Bishop

8.a3 b5 9.Bb3 a4 10.Ba2 ♣



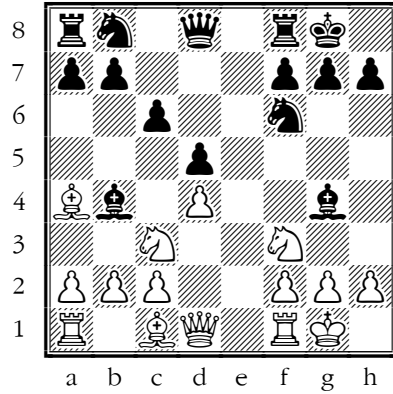
White has saved the piece but can only bring it back into the game by sacrificing at least a pawn. Black can wait for the pawn or simply move the battle towards the King's-side where Black will be effectively a piece up.]

➤ The rule about developing as fast as you can is trumped by any chance to win a piece!

7.Nf3?!♣

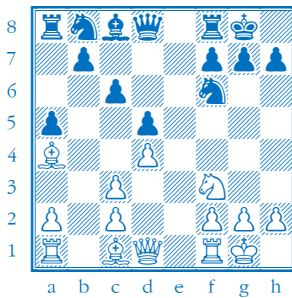
Inaccuracy. Ne2 was best.

7...o-o 8.o-o+ Bg4?♣



Mistake. Bxc3 was best.

[8...Bxc3 9.bxc3 a5



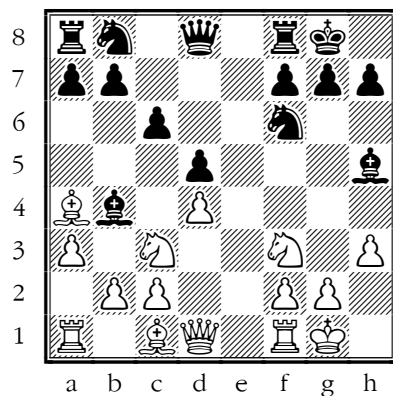
➔ TACTIC: net

This is the strongest plan with the same ideas as explained in the last note 10.a3 b5 11.Bb3 a4 12.Ba2 Bg4 13.h3 Bxf3 14.Qxf3♣

9.h3

[9.Qd3]

9...Bh5♣ 10.a3?!♣



Inaccuracy. g4 was best.

Again White urges Black to play a move they might have wanted to play anyway.

[10.g4 Bg6]

10...Bxc3 11.bxc3 Nbd7

12.Re1?!+

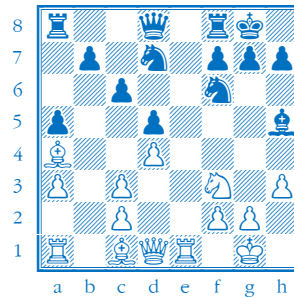
Inaccuracy. Bb3 was best.

[12.Bb3 b5]

12...Qa5?!♣

Inaccuracy. a5 was best.

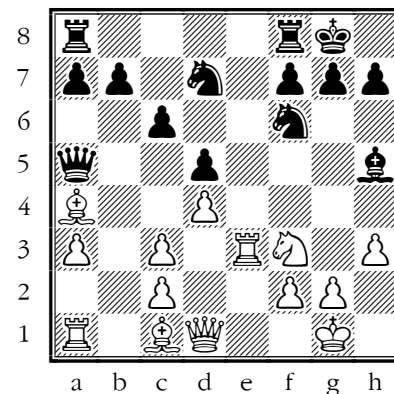
[12...a5!



➔ TACTIC: net

As before, threatens to win the Bishop and will at least trap it behind bars]

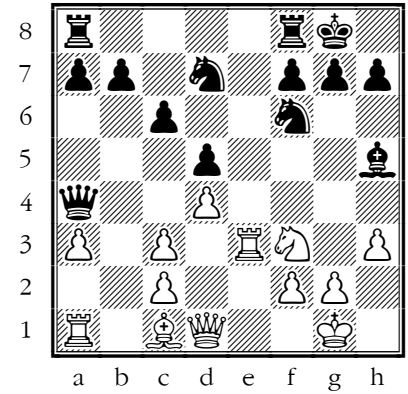
13.Re3??+



Blunder. Bb3 was best.

[13.Bb3]

13...Qxa4



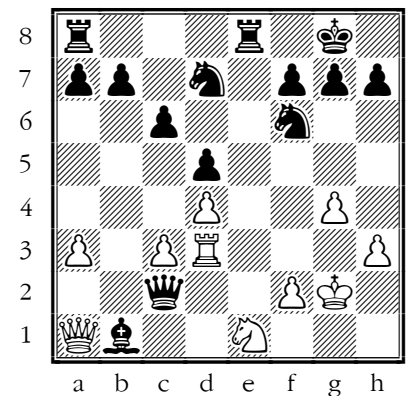
It turned out to be easier to win the Bishop than I thought...

White's position now falls apart and I think the rest of the game doesn't need a lot of comment.

14.g4 Bg6 15.Rb1?!

Inaccuracy. Ne5 was best.

15...Bxc2 16.Qe2 Bxb1 17.Qb2 Qc2 18.Qa1 Qxc1+ 19.Kg2 Rfe8 20.Rd3 Qc2 21.Ne1?!



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Rd2 was best.

21...Rxe1 22.Rg3 Rae8 23.Re3 R8xe3 24.c4 R1e2

0-1

U14_4 Oscar Pocknell

“ Both games featured plenty of sound play from you. Your main line Queen’s Gambit could do with a little more science (or swap it for the Exchange Variation) and I trust you will take more care of your King’s defensive wall in the future.

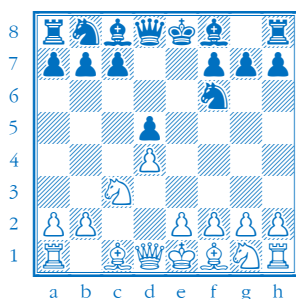
Oscar Pocknell – Jake Bena

[D53 Queen’s Gambit, Orthodox Defence]

“ You handled the Queen’s gambit quite sensibly and had chances of advantage. However, exchanges in the centre led to a level position, and then you allowed Black to mangle your King’s-side defences.

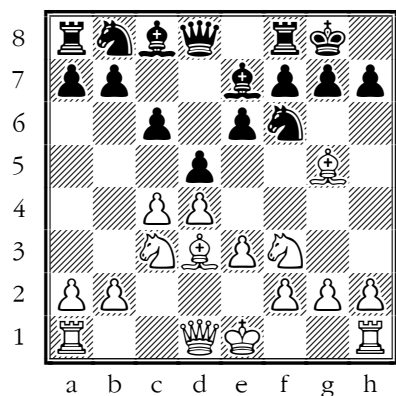
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5

[4.cxd5 exd5]



There seemed to be a time when every single repertoire book recommending the Queen’s gambit also recommended the white play the exchange variation, usually with Nge2. 5.Bg5]

4...Be7 5.Nf3 c6 6.e3 o-o 7.Bd3



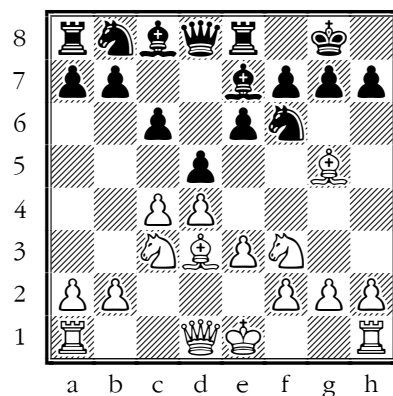
This obviously is a very sensible move and there’s nothing wrong with it but you might on another

occasion try leaving this Bishop at home for little while. It may be that Black will be tempted to play ...dxc4 when you move from f1 to c4 in one move and not to so Qc2 or Rc1 might gain a tempo.

➔ **The main line of the Queen’s Gambit Declined is often a battle between White’s need to develop the Bf1 and Black’s need to take on c4 at some point.**

[7.Qc2; 7.Rc1]

7...Re8?!

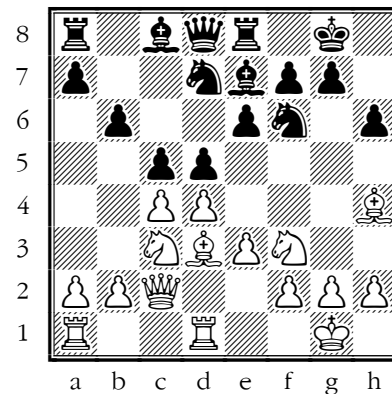


It looks hard for Black to play ...e5, so the Rook has been placed on the wrong file.

8.o-o Nbd7 9.Qc2 h6 10.Bh4 c5
11.Rfd1±

[11.Rad1]

11...b6?!±



Inaccuracy. cxd4 was best.

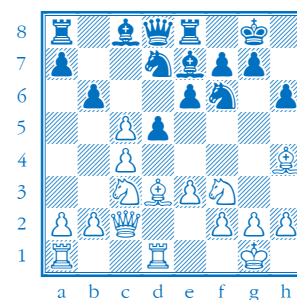
➔ **This position with many possible central pawn captures is not easy to play.**

Both sides have played normal looking Queen’s Gambit moves but Black is a little bit loose and has played not so accurately — losing a move with ...c5 and placing the Rook on a file that is not likely to be opened. White can gain the advantage here with accurate play.

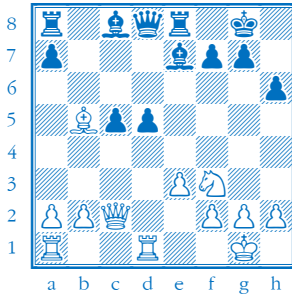
12.e4?!

Inaccuracy. dxc5 was best.

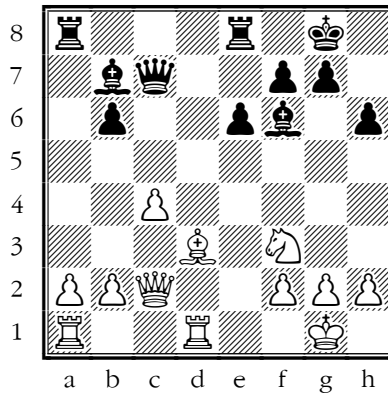
[12.dxc5]



This is awkward for Black mostly because of the Rook on d1 12...Nxc5 (12...bxc5 13.Bxf6 Nxf6 14.cxd5 exd5 (14...Nxd5 15.Nxd5 exd5 16.Bb5

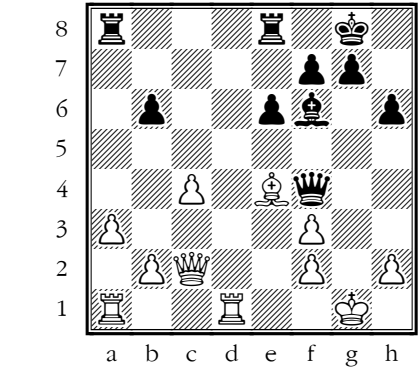


With a more active position; Blacks hanging pawns are more of a weakness than a strength) 15. Bb5 Rf8 16. Bc6 Rb8 17. Nxd5



After the exchanges this position is quite equal – White has an extra pawn but Black has the Bishop pair in an open position.

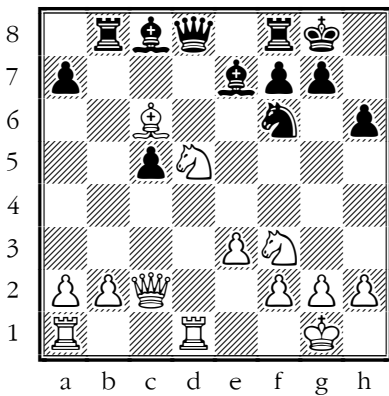
18. a3??



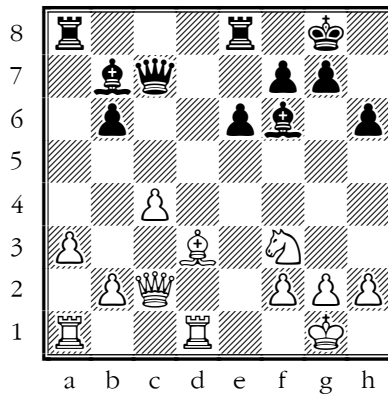
➤ **Opposite-coloured Bishops are a strong attacking factor.**

I'm not sure I've got these next moves correct but if they're right then White and Black missed something important!

20... Be5??±

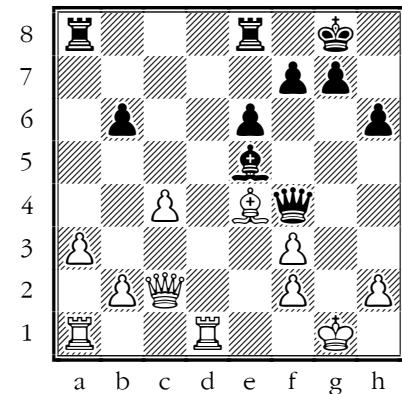


Winning a pawn) 13. cxd5 Nxd3 14. dxe6!



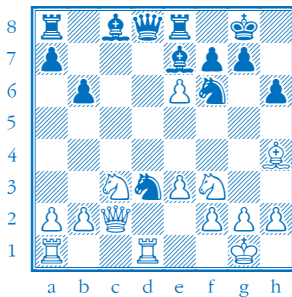
Blunder. Nd2 was best.

This allows Black to break up the white King's defences and start an attack.



Blunder. Ra5 was best.

[20... Ra5!



And White will come out a pawn ahead]

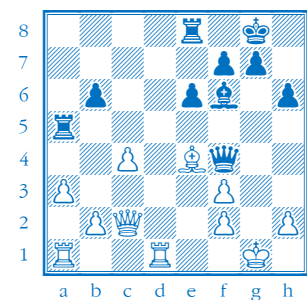
12... dxe4± 13. Nxe4?!=

Inaccuracy. Bxe4 was best.

13... Bb7 14. Bxf6 Nxf6 15. Nxf6+ Bxf6 16. dxc5 Qc7 17. cxb6 axb6=

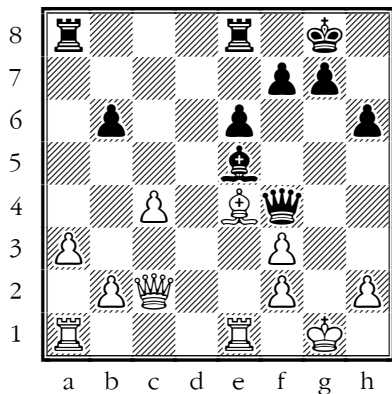
➤ **Doubled, isolated and backward pawns are weak, especially in the endgame – avoid them!**

18... Bxf3! 19. gxf3 Qf4 20. Be4--+



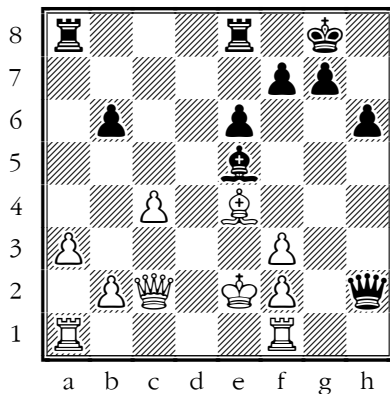
Is an unusual Rook lift on the 4th rank bringing a powerful piece into the attack]

21. Re1??



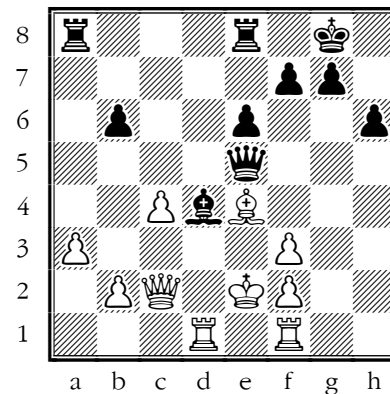
Blunder. Bxa8 was best.

21...Qxh2+ 22.Kf1 Qh1+??



Blunder. Bxa8 was best.

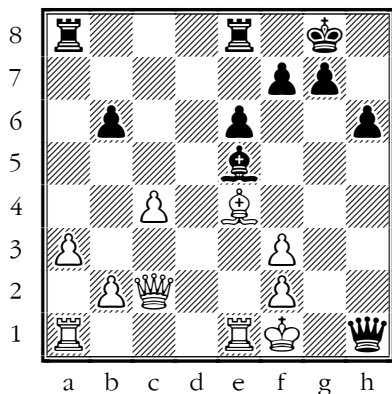
24...Bd4??



Blunder. Rad8 was best.

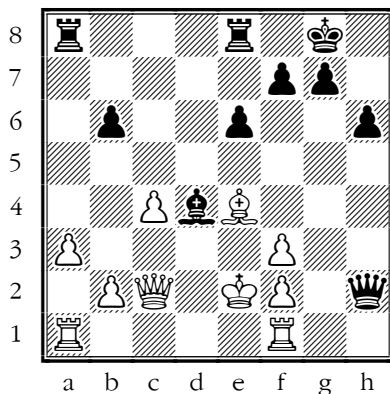
26.Rd2?!

Inaccuracy. f4 was best.



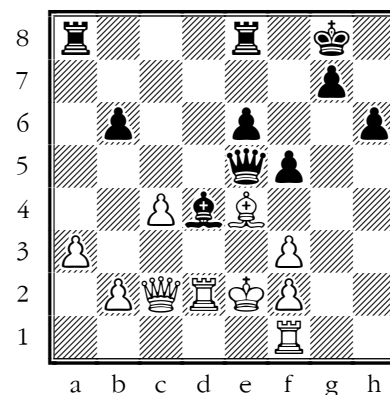
Blunder. Rad8 was best.

23.Ke2 Qh2??



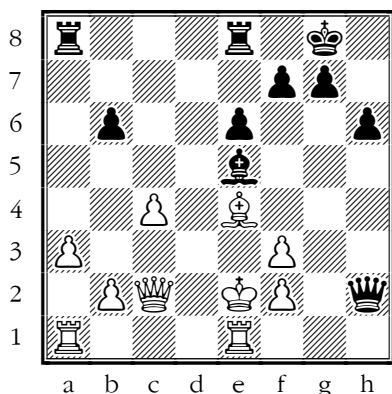
Blunder. Rac8 was best.

25.Rad1??



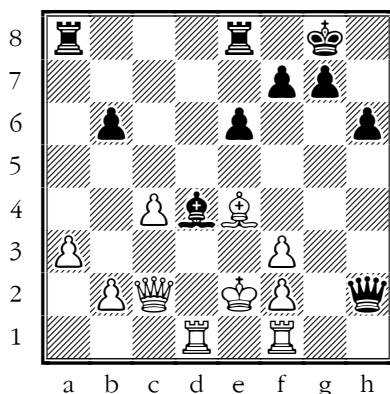
Inaccuracy. Rad8 was best.

27.Re1??



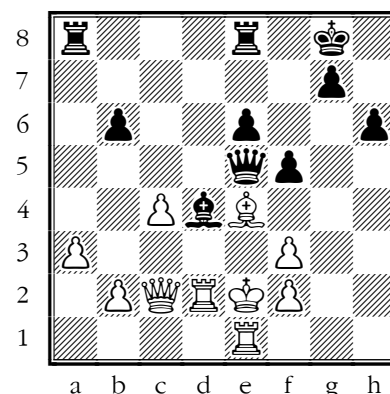
Blunder. Qh4 was best.

24.Rf1??



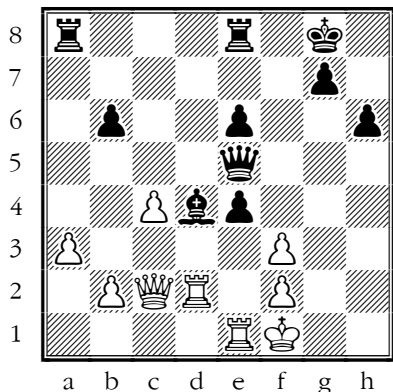
Blunder. Bxa8 was best.

25...Qe5??



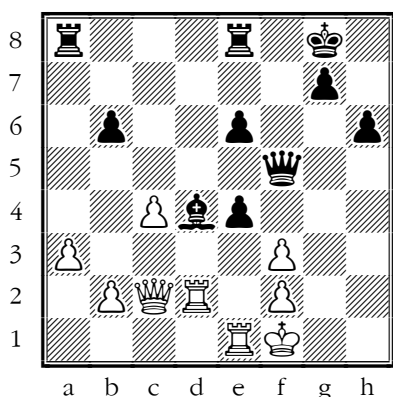
Blunder. f4 was best.

27...fxe4 28.Kf1



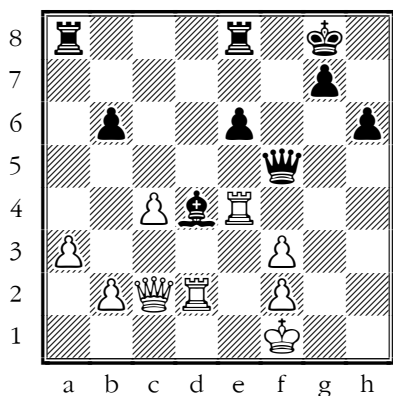
Again I suspect some of these next moves aren't quite right or at least they are in the wrong order.

28...Qf5??



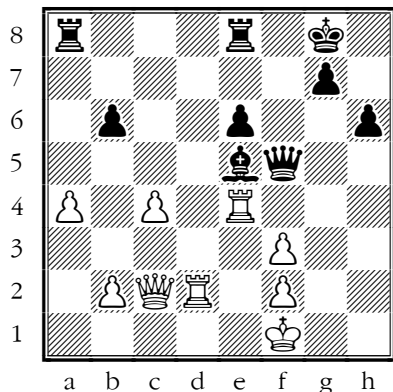
Blunder. Qh5 was best.

29.Rxe4??



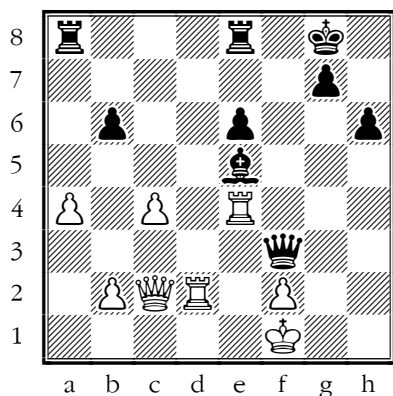
Blunder. Rxd4 was best.

29...Be5 30.a4+-



I'm not sure this position is correct but like is a piece up with the continuing attack and White is quite lost.

30...Qxf3??



Blunder. Bf6 was best.

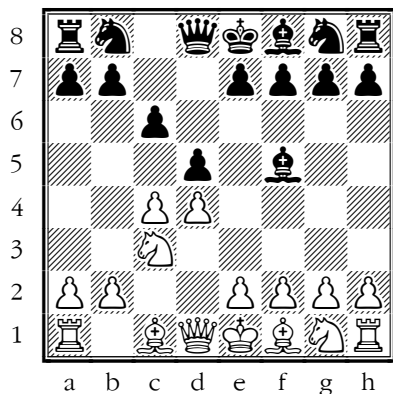
0-1

Oscar Pocknell – Harry Edge

[D10 Slav Defence]

“ White was allowed to win a pawn and convert the win.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3= Bf5?!+-



Inaccuracy. e6 was best.

It's one of the advantages of the Slav defence that Black leaves open the path for the Bc8 to develop either to f5 or g4; however, if Black does develop the Bishop early on, then White's Qb3 can be very awkward!

4.Bf4?!

Inaccuracy. Qb3 was best.

[4.Qb3 Nf6 5.Qxb7 Nbd7 6.Nf3 ±]

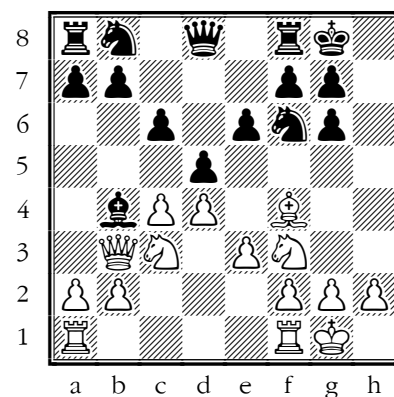
4...e6 5.Nf3 Bb4?!

Inaccuracy. Bd6 was best.

6.e3 Nf6 7.Bd3?!

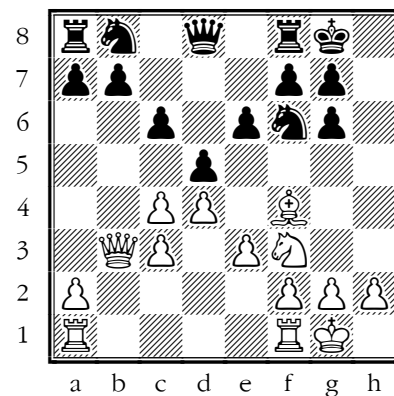
Inaccuracy. Qb3 was best.

7...Bg6 8.o-o o-o 9.Bxg6 hxg6 10.Qb3



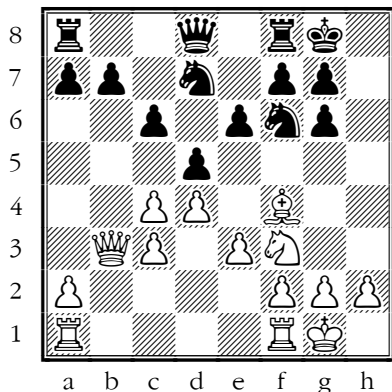
Better late than never.

10...Bxc3 11.bxc3=



This position is equal however Black now allows White to steal the b7 pawn (or overlooks that it is attacked).

11...Nbd7?

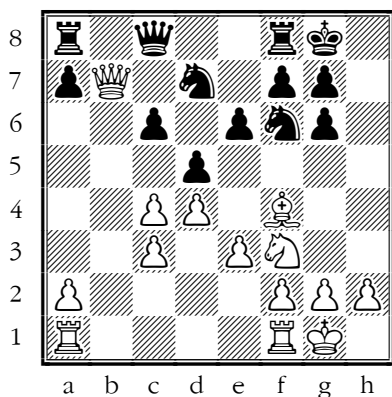


Mistake. b6 was best.

[11...b6]

→ TACTIC: loose piece

12.Qxb7 Qc8?!+–



As in several other games we have seen, Black, behind in material, rushes to exchange Queens, which

is quite the wrong strategy. Black needs to keep material on the board to create complications and invite a mistake by the opponent. With peaceful normal play, White will just win, and that's pretty much what we see in this game.

☞ Don't swap when you are behind in material

13.Qxc8 Raxc8 14.c5 Ne4
15.Rac1 f6 16.Rfd1?!

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

16...g5 17.Bg3 Nxc3?!

Inaccuracy. e5 was best.

18.fxg3 g4 19.Nd2 e5 20.Rb1
Rc7 21.Rb3 e4?!

Inaccuracy. f5 was best.

22.Rdb1 Ra8?!

Inaccuracy. Kf7 was best.

23.Rb7 Rxb7 24.Rxb7 Nf8
25.Rc7 Rb8 26.Nb3 f5 27.Rxc6
Rb7?!

Inaccuracy. Nh7 was best.

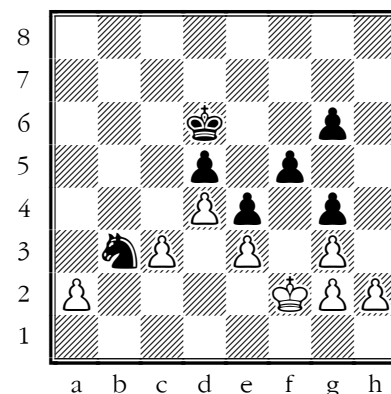
28.Rd6 Rd7 29.Ra6 Kf7 30.c6?!

Inaccuracy. Na5 was best.

30...Rc7 31.Ra5 Rxc6 32.Rxa7+
Kf6 33.Nc5 g6 34.Ra8 Ne6
35.Ra6 Nd8 36.Nd7+ Ke7
37.Rxc6 Nxc6 38.Nc5?!

Inaccuracy. Nb6 was best.

38...Na5 39.Kf2 Kd6 40.Nb3+–
Nxb3??



Blunder. Nc4 was best.

The position was pretty terrible for Black but swapping Knights makes defeat all but certain.

☞ You must keep material on the board if you can when you're losing.

41.axb3 Kc6 42.h3 gxh3?!

Inaccuracy. Kd6 was best.

43.gxh3 g5?!

Inaccuracy. Kd6 was best.

44.h4 gxh4 45.gxh4 Kd7 46.h5
Ke8 47.b4 Kf7 48.b5

1–0

U14_5 Varnika Nerella

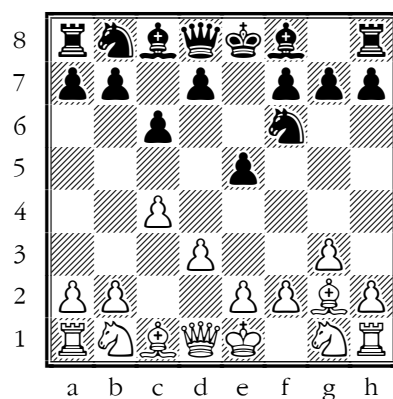
“ You were rather let off the hook in the first game but the second game was pretty flawless, although I'm not wild about your choice of opening as White – you can afford to be a bit more forward.

Avina Soleimani – Varnika Nerella

[A20 King's English]

“ This started well for you against White's lacklustre opening but you lost the thread a little bit and in the end you were lucky to draw: White missed a simple tactic and still stood very well when the draw was agreed.

1.c4 e5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 c6 4.d3?!

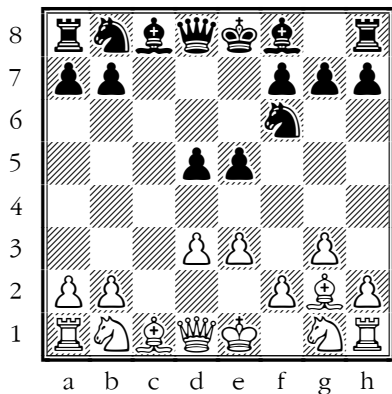


This is hardly a bad move but does nothing to put Black off their plan

of constructing a strong centre. better moves are.

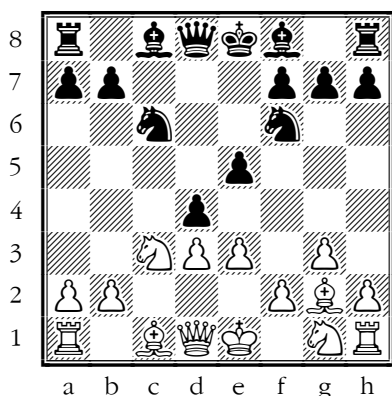
[4.Nf3!?, 4.d4!]

4...d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.e3 7



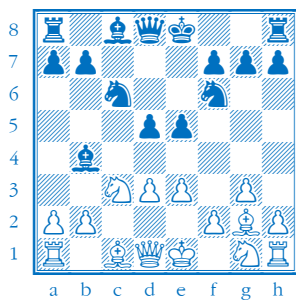
This rather meek pawn move concedes the advantage to Black.

6...Nc6 7.Nc3 f4?!



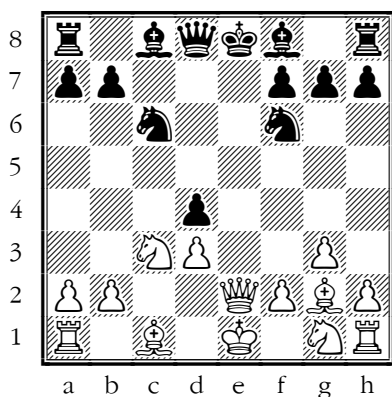
[Better to develop with

7...Bb4 or;



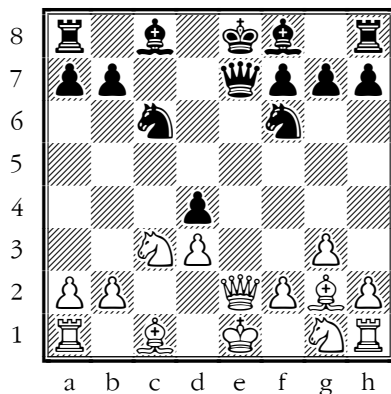
7...Be6]

8.exd4 exd4 9.Qe2?!



Mistake. Ne4 was best.

9...Qe7? =



Mistake. Be7 was best.

That's a mistake, obstructing the development of the Bishop on f8. Either Bishop move blocking the check was better, giving you a clear advantage.

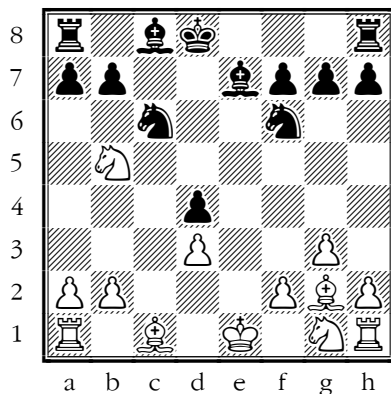
[9...Be6; 9...Be7]

Fluent, fast development is your goal in the opening.

10.Qxe7+?!

[10.Ne4! =]

10...Bxe7 11.Nb5 Kd8?±



Mistake. O-O was best.

[11...O-O]

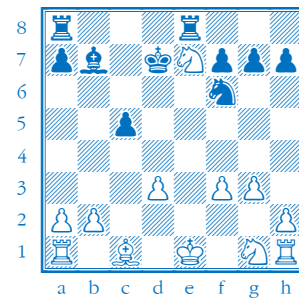
12.Bxc6 bxc6 13.Nxd4 c5

14.Nc6+ Kd7 15.Nxe7 Kxe7!±

Inaccuracy. Bb7 was best.

Oddly enough this natural recapture is a mistake.

[15...Bb7! 16.f3 Rhe8! =]



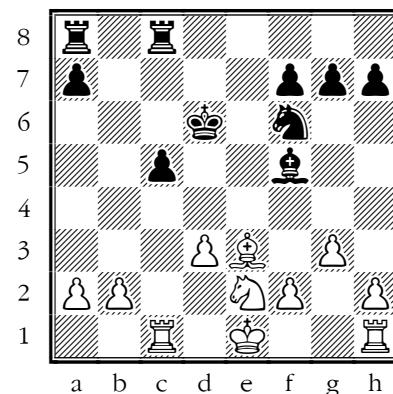
And you are fully equal in this position with all White's pieces undeveloped]

If you see a good or even obvious move, it's worth thinking of an alternative before you commit.

16.Ne2

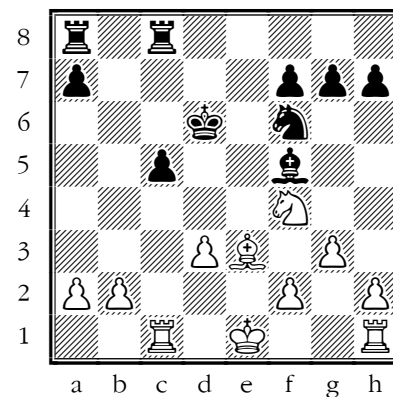
[16.Be3!]

16...Bf5 17.Be3 Rhc8 18.Rc1 Kd6±



Now White has an advantage; it's not easy to get your last piece into play.

19.Nf4?!



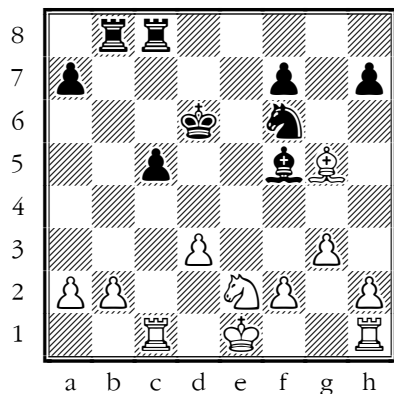
Inaccuracy. Kd2 was best.

19...g5! 20.Ne2± Rab8?!±

Inaccuracy. Bxd3 was best.

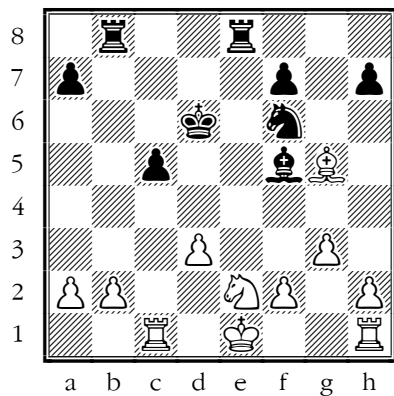
[20...Bxd3 21.Bxg5 c4!? 22.Bxf6 Re8! ♘]

21.Bxg5



Both sides now miss something important.

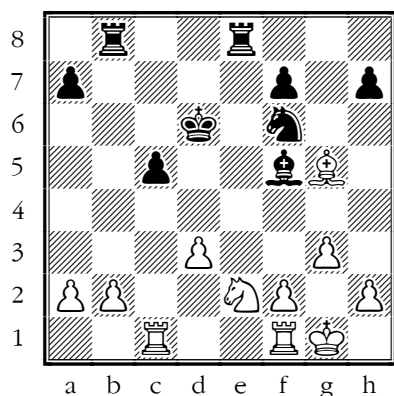
21...Re8?



Mistake. Nd5 was best.

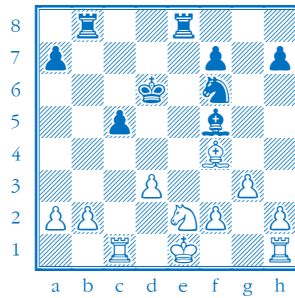
[21...Nd5 22.b3 Bxd3 23.Nf4 Bb5+]

22.0-0??



Blunder. Bf4+ was best.

[22.Bf4+



→ TACTIC: skewer

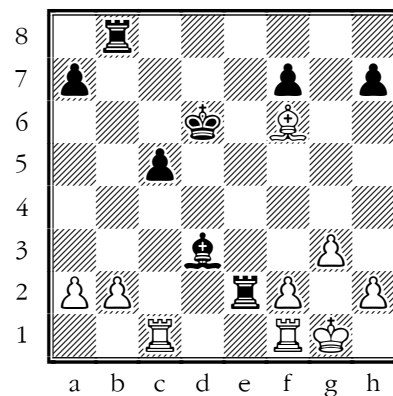
This is why I said it was hard to develop that Rook! The ancient advice to look at every check and every capture on every move still holds.]

☞ Look at every check and every capture at every turn.

22...Rxe2?!

Inaccuracy. Nd5 was best.

23.Bxf6 Bxd3??

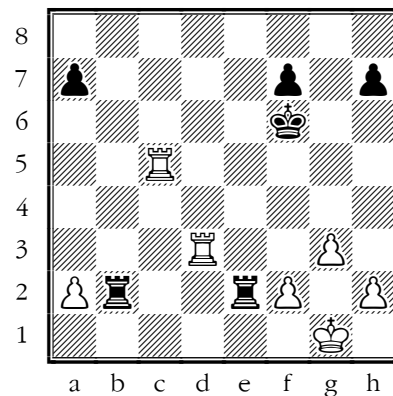


Blunder. Kd5 was best.

This allows White to pin the Bishop and seize the advantage.

24.Rfd1 Ke6 25.Rxd3 Kxf6

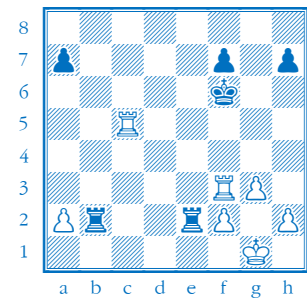
26.Rxc5 Rbxb2+–



Draw agreed.

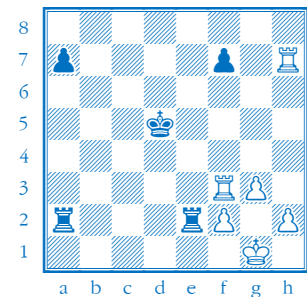
But White should press on here:

27.Rf3+



That's the big point: attacking and defending at the same time.

27...Ke6 28.Rc6+ Kd5 29.Rh6 Rxa2 30.Rxh7+–



When White should win.

☞ Double-Rook endgames are tricky: if both sides can coordinate their Rooks, they can cancel each other out, but whoever manages to coordinate first can overwhelm the defences

...1/2–1/2

Varnika Nerella – Nihal Roy

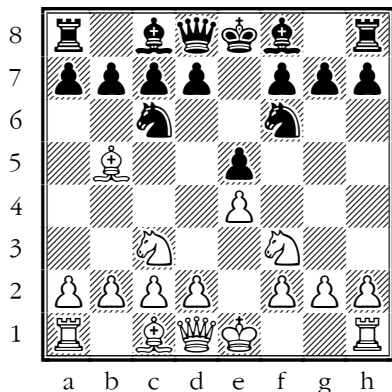
[C49 Four Knights' Game]

“ Black lost a pawn early on and your advantage built and built throughout the game. Getting a winning advantage is one thing but converting is another and I thought you did this very well.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3

[I urge you to start to like 3.d4 exd4 with either 4.Nxd4 or 4.Bc4]

3...Nf6 4.Bb5

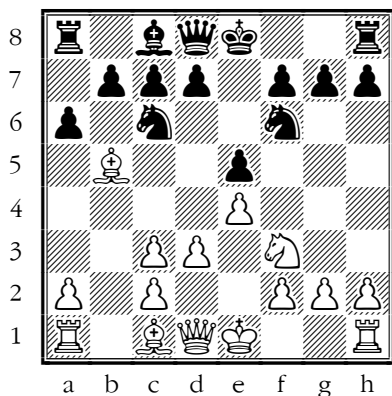


You might not have had the opportunity to hear me rant about how juniors should not play Old Stodge a.k.a. Giuoco Pianissimo (and indeed neither should anybody else). I have similar (although less intense) feelings about the Four Knights' Game: it doesn't do a lot to set your opponent problems if they are moderately alert and neither does it give White much of a clue about what to do once they have developed the minor pieces. In particular, it's not clear how you're going to open a line for your Rooks.

- Try and set your opponent problems throughout the game.
- During the opening, have a plan to get your Rooks into play.

[4. Bc4 Nxe4; 4. d4]

4...Bb4 5. d3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3= a6?+-



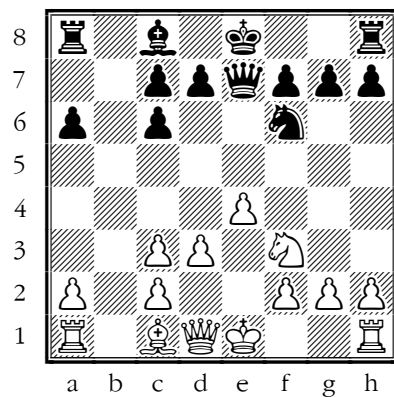
Inaccuracy. d6 was best.

Black fails the 'be moderately alert' test and urges White to take away the defender of the e-pawn.

[6...d6]

➔ TACTIC: undermining

7. Bxc6 bxc6 8. Nxe5 Qe7 9. Nf3+-



White is a comfortable pawn ahead.

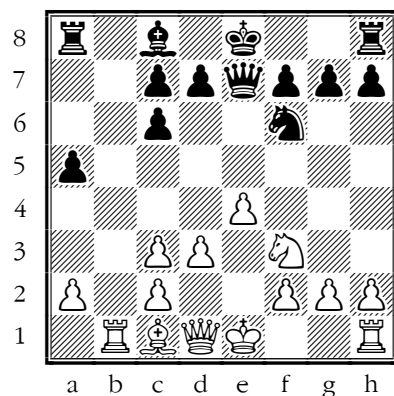
9...a5?!

Inaccuracy. d5 was best.

➤ If you're losing (or even if you're just a bit worse) it's not in your interest to play passively with lots of pawn moves.

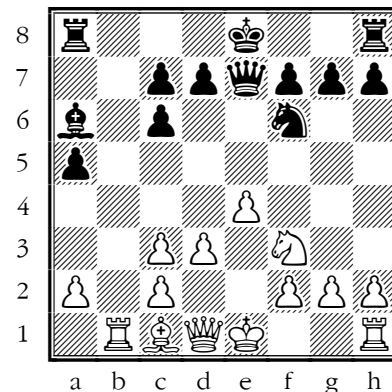
Black should develop quickly and try to make some trouble for White so that White makes a mistake and Black can get back into the game. Black's last move does nothing of the sort...

10. Rb1?!



Inaccuracy. O-O was best.

10...Ba6?

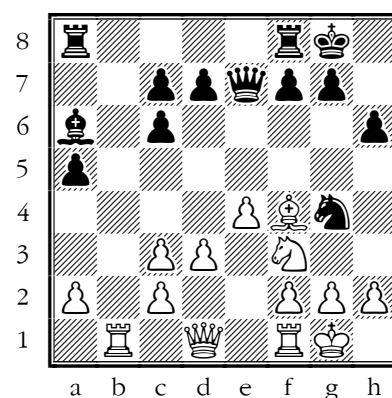


Mistake. d5 was best.

11. O-O O-O 12. Bg5 h6 13. Bf4?!

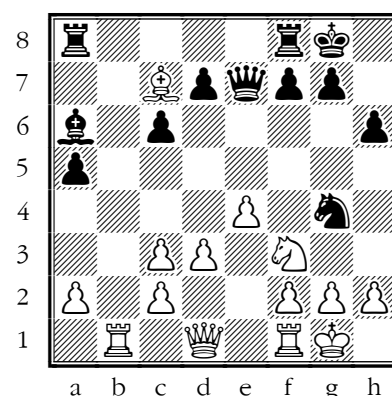
Inaccuracy. Bh4 was best.

13...Ng4?



Mistake. d5 was best.

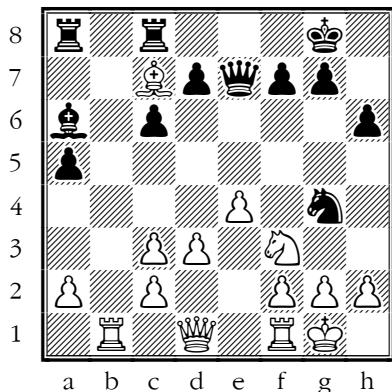
14. Bxc7?!



Inaccuracy. Nd4 was best.

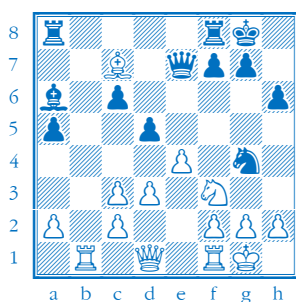
Black doesn't take the opportunity, but this sets up a discovered attack that Black can make with d7-d5.

14...Rfc8?



Mistake. d5 was best.

[14...d5



And Black has the unwelcome threat of dxc4 when your d3 pawn is pinned]

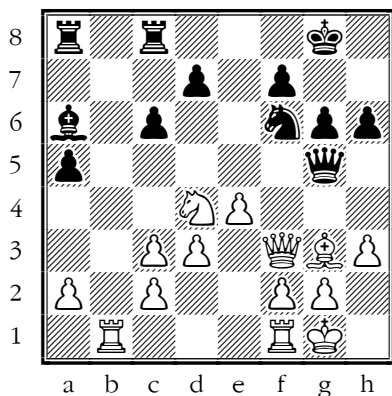
15.Bg3 g6 16.Nd4 Qg5 17.h3?!

Inaccuracy. Nf3 was best.

17...Nf6?!

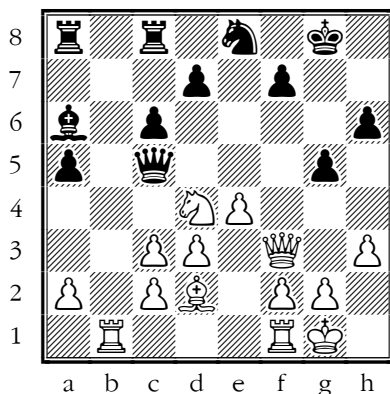
Inaccuracy. Ne3 was best.

18.Qf3



White is very much in control and converts the win without further problems.

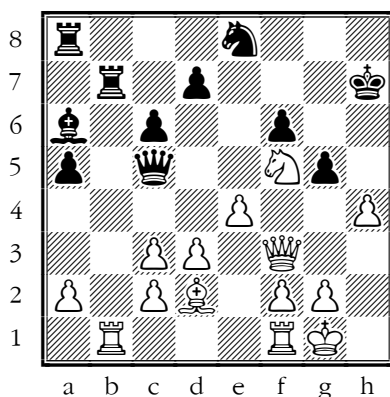
18...Ne8 19.Bf4 Qc5 20.Bd2 g5?!



Inaccuracy. a4 was best.

I did advise Black to make trouble, but this loosening pawn move on the side of the board where they have only one piece (and that on e8) is not going to cause problems for anybody but Black.

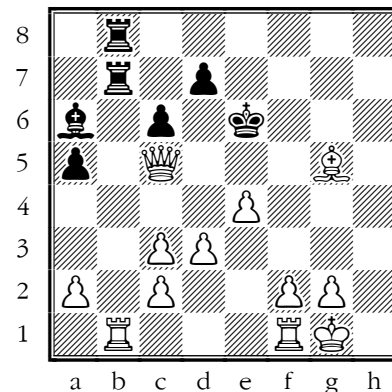
21.h4 f6 22.Nf5 Rc7 23.Nxh6+ Kh7 24.Nf5 Rb7?!



Inaccuracy. g4 was best.

Now White breaks through on the King's-side.

25.Qh5+ Kg8 26.hxg5 Ng7 27.Nxg7 Kxg7 28.gxf6+ Kxf6 29.Qxc5 Rab8 30.Bg5+ Ke6?!

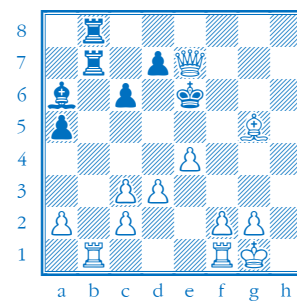


Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kg7 was best.

Do I have this position right?

31.Qf5+

[31.Qe7#



was best, with advantage to White...]

31...Kd6 32.Bf4+ Ke7 33.Bxb8 Rxb1 34.Rxb1 Kd8 35.Qf8#

1-0

U14_6 Yuan Liu

“ I didn't arrive back with any of your games [sorry if I overlooked any score sheets] but if you'd like me to look at anything please send some scores along. Writing down the moves is not only one of the laws of chess but gives you something to think about after the game.

U14_7 Ananya Nerella

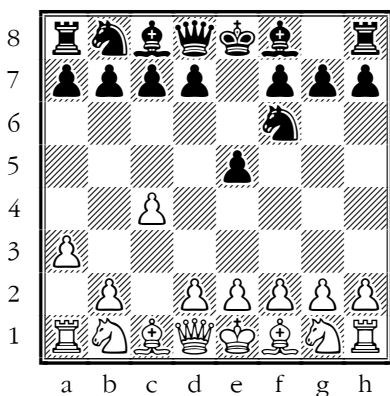
“ Very curious – all three games are from the English /Reti complex. As you will have seen from my introduction, I'm not keen on young players using hypermodern openings. You need a definite plan of development when you are Black and I suggest you use them more straightforward as White.

Csege Manczar – Ananya Nerella

[A00 King's English]

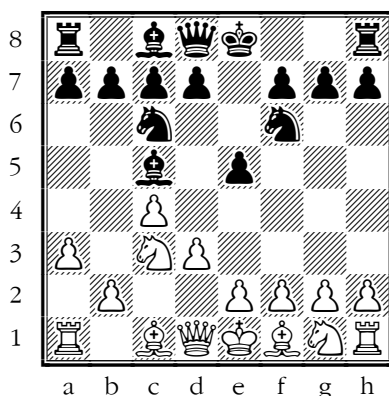
“ White played the apparently straightforward idea of closing the centre, leaving their own King in the middle and attacking on the King side, but you were unable to find anything either to distract or to counter this plan.

1.a3 e5 2.c4 Nf6



White has tricked you into playing a Sicilian defence with colours reversed. I'm not sure if that's much of an achievement when White has wasted(?) a move with a3.

3.Nc3 Nc6 4.d3 Bc5



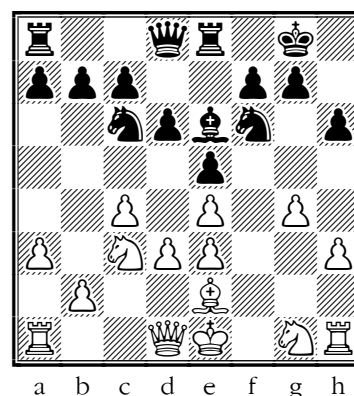
[There's nothing wrong with 4...d5 here]

I don't know if you ever play either side of the Sicilian defence, but it's not usually the case that White in the Sicilian [i.e. Black here] gets very far with straightforward development like this – the minor pieces can sometimes get kicked around by the enemy pawns. This is also a point to be made in your next game.

➔ **A flexible pawn front can make it awkward for pieces developed simply in front of their pawns.**

See the Korchnoi game!

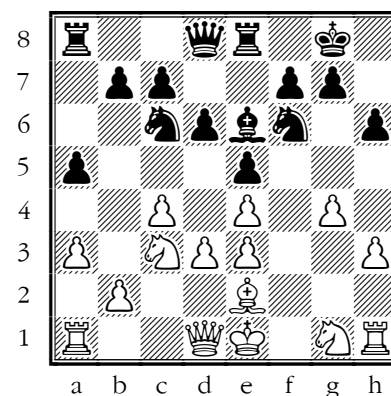
5.e4 o-o 6.Bg5 h6 7.Be3 Bxe3
8.fxe3 d6 9.Be2 Be6 10.h3 Re8
11.g4=



You have found yourself in a position with a blocked centre. it's pretty clear but White wants to attack on the King's-side but what are you supposed to do?

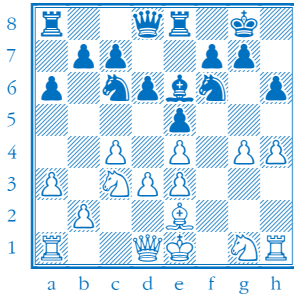
➔ **If your opponent has a clockwork attack you must find something to distract them.**

11...a5?!

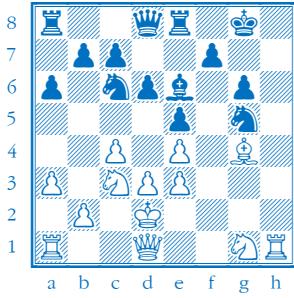


Inaccuracy. a6 was best.

[11...a6 12.h4]

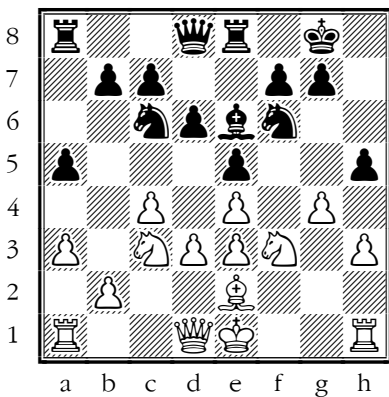


Is not actually that threatening, for example 12...Nh7 13.g5 hxg5 14.hxg5 g6 15.Kd2 Nxg5 16.Bg4



And Black can think about making trouble for White with a move like b5. 16...b5]

12.Nf3 h5?



Mistake. Nh7 was best.

White is trying to attack on the King side and needs open lines to do so – this move clearly helps White.

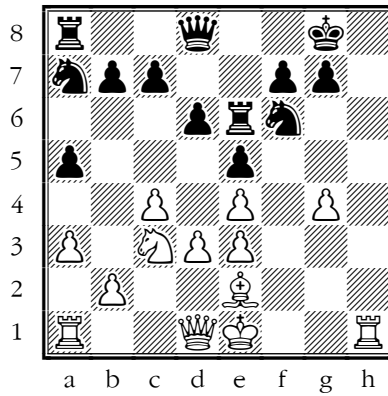
13.Ng5?!±

Inaccuracy. gxh5 was best.

13...hxg4?!

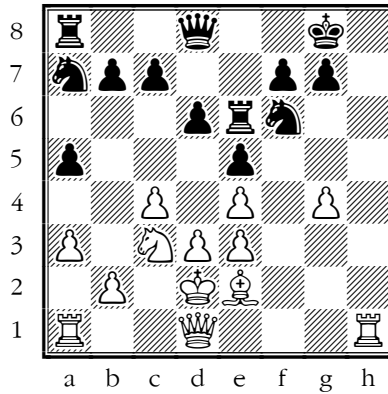
Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

14.Nxe6 Rxe6 15.hxg4 Na7?!+–



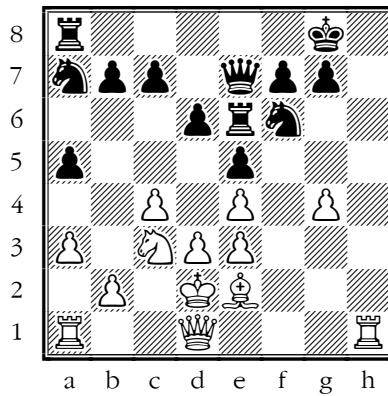
Inaccuracy. Nh7 was best.

16.Kd2



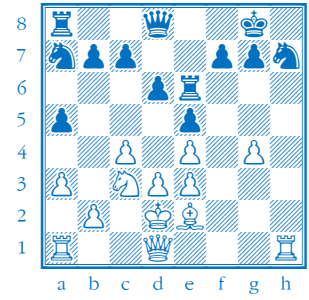
White is still plodding through their plan but Black has not been able to find anything to distract them the end comes quite quickly.

16...Qe7??+–



Blunder. Nh7 was best.

[16...Nh7!



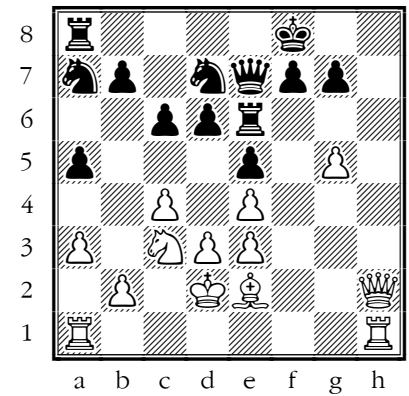
Aims to challenge the H file with the Rook, when you don't stand too badly 17.Qg1 c6 18.Qh2 (18.Rh2 Rh6) 18...Rh6]

It's always harder to defend than attack

17.Qg1 c6?!

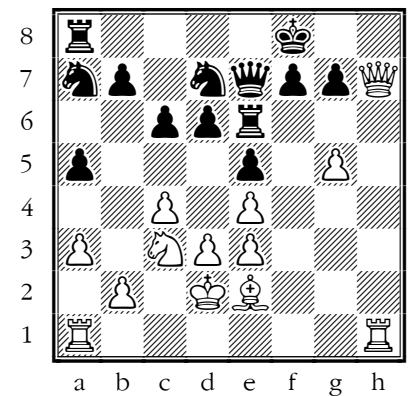
Inaccuracy. Nh7 was best.

18.g5 Nd7 19.Qh2 Kf8??



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Rh6 was best.

20.Qh7??



Lost forced checkmate sequence. Qh8# was best.]

20...Qd8?!+–

Inaccuracy. Ke8 was best.

1–0

“ I haven't a lot to say about this game mostly because I'm not sure what the moves were. You certainly handle the opening better than White and at one point had a nice advantage due to your big centre, but what went wrong after that I do not know.

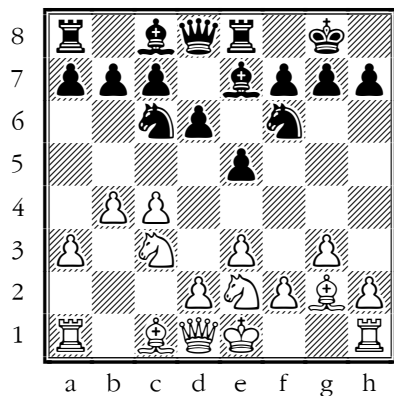
1.c4 e5

No trickery this time – so my advice is to pick either a known variation of the King's English or your usual Queen's Pawn defence.

2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 Nf6

[3...g6 is the main line from this position.].

4.Bg2 Bc5 5.a3 o-o 6.e3 Re8 7.b4 Be7 8.Nge2 d6±

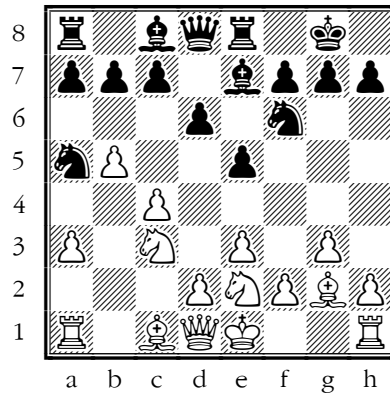


Just as before, you have played sensible classical developing moves, but they don't always work so well against these hypermodern openings. White has developed all their pieces behind their flexible wall of pawns and already has a small advantage because your pieces are not really able to pursue a meaningful plan.

9.b5?!

Inaccuracy. O-O was best.

9...Na5=

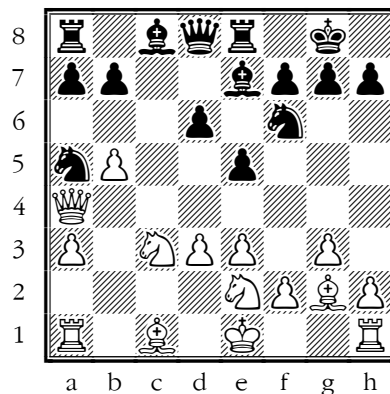


White now spends some time fidgeting with queen and pawns to no great effect while you seize control of the centre.

10.Qa4?! c6 11.d3 cxb5?!

Inaccuracy. d5 was best.

12.cxb5?±



Mistake. Qxb5 was best.

12...Bd7?!=

Inaccuracy. Be6 was best.

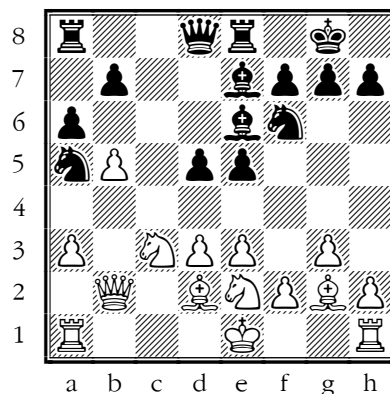
13.Bd2 a6 14.Qb4?!±

Inaccuracy. O-O was best.

14...d5 15.Qb2?!

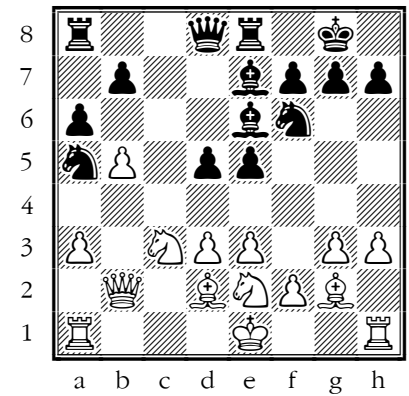
Inaccuracy. Qb1 was best.

15...Be6?±



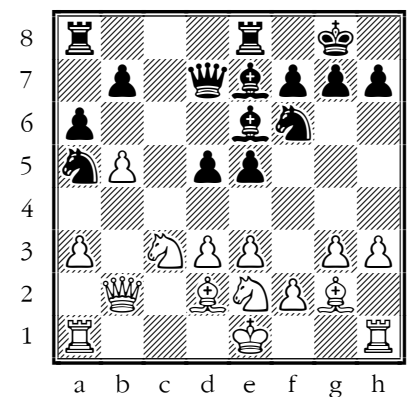
Mistake. d4 was best.

16.h3?



Mistake. O-O was best.

16...Qd7?!±

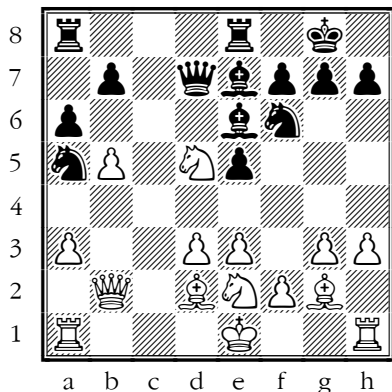


Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

You've got nice development and a big pawn centre and you stand a little better. White has not been able to label your centre as weak and nothing much is happening on the long diagonal.

But for the next few moves, I'm absolutely confident I've got the move order wrong, yet I can't reconstruct the correct move order from the score sheet. The pieces do end up on the right squares, but I find it hard to believe that the sequence that I have here is the right one.

17.Nxd5??

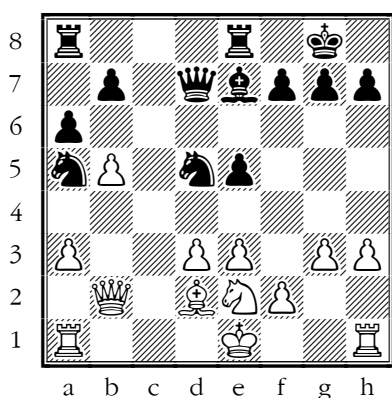


Blunder. Rb1 was best.

17...Bxd5 18.Bxd5?!

Inaccuracy. e4 was best.

18...Nxd5??

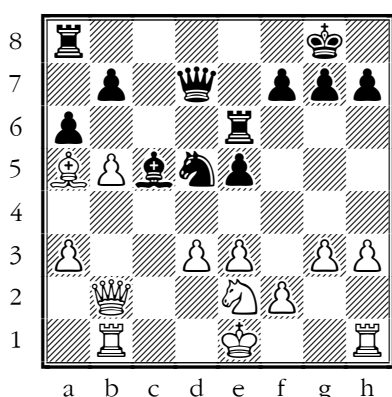


Blunder. Qxd5 was best.

19.Bxa5 Bc5?!

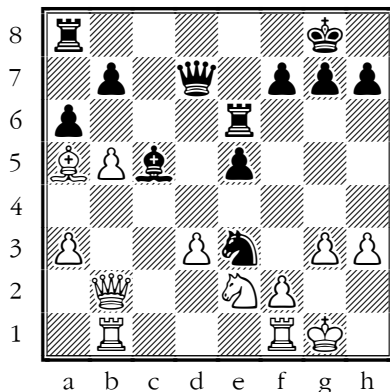
Inaccuracy. axb5 was best.

20.Rb1 Re6?!



Inaccuracy. Qf5 was best.

21.o-o Nxe3??

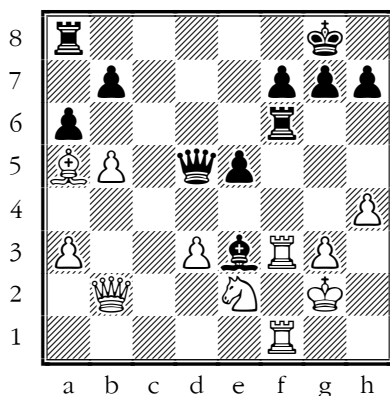


Blunder. Rg6 was best.

22.fxe3 Bxe3+ 23.Kg2 Qd5+ 24.Rf3 Rh6?!

Inaccuracy. Rf6 was best.

25.h4 Rf6 26.Rbf1+--



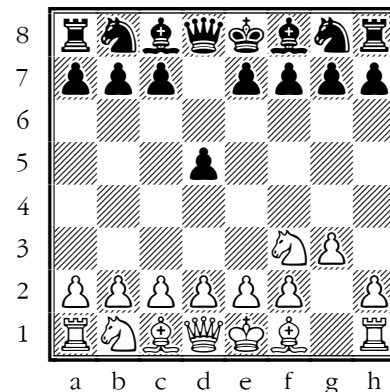
So I think on the score sheet we have the move queen takes Bishop on a5, but this isn't possible because there's a pawn on b5. If I swap the pawn on b5 for the pawn on a6, then Qxa5 becomes possible, but it's clear from later moves written down that this swap didn't happen ... So, unless you manage to sort out the right moves in the right order, I don't think I can say much more about this game.

...1-0

Ananya Nerella – Prisha Chovatia
[A07 Réti/Barcza System]

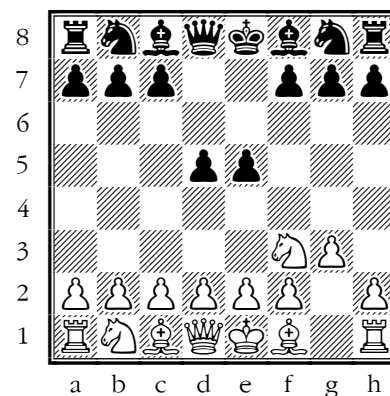
“ You took advantage of Black's mistakes, large and small, and won without trouble.

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3



I have things to say above about playing hypermodern openings... What were you hoping for here? I think the King's Indian Attack is probably the best try from this position but I'm not a huge fan.

2...e5±



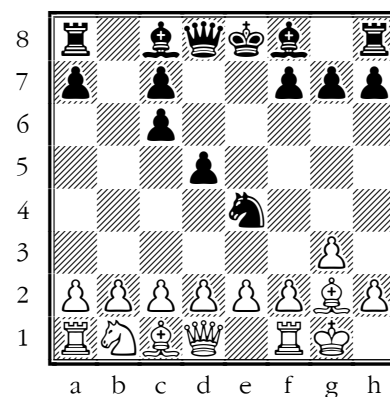
Mistake. g6 was best.

Black is to be commended for the strategy of trying to create a big centre but there is a tactical flaw.

3.Nxe5 Nf6 4.Bg2 Nc6 5.Nxc6 bxc6 6.o-o?!

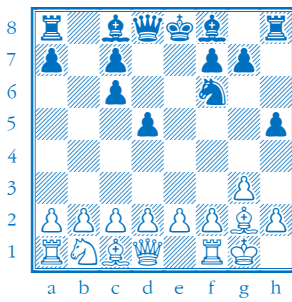
Inaccuracy. d3 was best.

6...Ne4+--



Mistake. h5 was best.

[6...h5



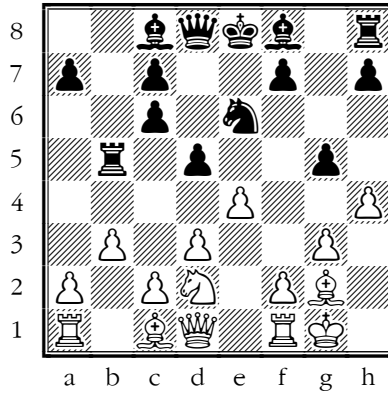
Black is a pawn behind but may be able to create some mischief by starting the standard attack down the H file]

☛ If you're losing, you should try and make a nuisance of yourself – playing 'normally' may lead to a loss.

7.d3 Ng5 8.h4 Ne6 9.Nd2 Rb8 10.e4 Rb5?!

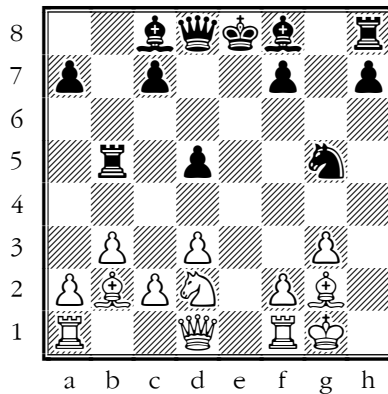
Inaccuracy. Be7 was best.

11.b3 g5



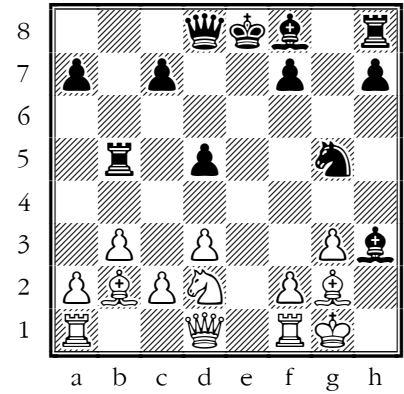
That's the right attitude even if it's the wrong move — actually I'm not sure it's the wrong move...

12.hxg5 Nxg5 13.exd5 cxd5 14.Bb2



Black's position is pretty awful but they still have chances to create trouble - however their next move misses something important.

14...Bh3?

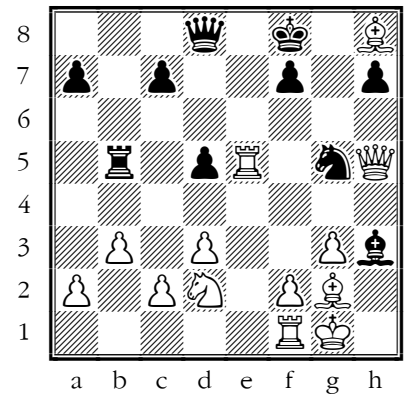


Mistake. Rg8 was best.

➔ TACTIC: loose piece

☛ Always look around the whole board when you do your scan for checks and captures.

15.Bxh8 Bc5 16.Qh5 Bd4 17.Rae1+ Be5 18.Rxe5+ Kf8?!



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kd7 was best.

19.Qh6+ Kg8 20.Qg7#

1-0

U14_8 Jaisal Jino

“ I didn't arrive back with any of your games [sorry if I overlooked any score sheets] but if you'd like me to look at anything please send some scores along. Writing down the moves is not only one of the laws of chess but gives you something to think about after the game.

U14_9 James Allen

“ I didn't arrive back with any of your games [sorry if I overlooked any score sheets] but if you'd like me to look at anything please send some scores along. Writing down the moves is not only one of the laws of chess but gives you something to think about after the game.

U14_10 Harry Edge

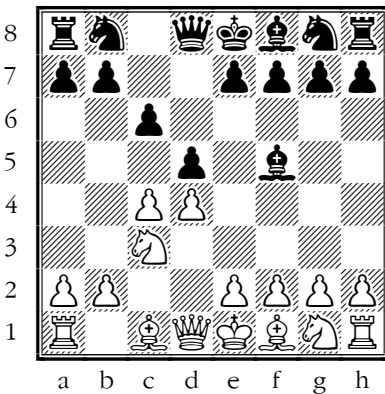
“ I didn't arrive back with many of your games [sorry if I overlooked any score sheets] but if you'd like me to look at anything please send some scores along. Writing down the moves is not only one of the laws of chess but gives you something to think about after the game.

Oscar Pocknell – Hary Edge

[D10 Slav Defence]

“ White was allowed to win a pawn and convert the win.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3= Bf5?!+-



Inaccuracy. e6 was best.

It's one of the advantages of the Slav defence that Black leaves open the path for the Bc8 to develop either to f5 or g4; however, if Black does develop the Bishop early on, then White's Qb3 can be very awkward!

4.Bf4?!

Inaccuracy. Qb3 was best.

[4.Qb3 Nf6 5.Qxb7 Nbd7 6.Nf3 +=]

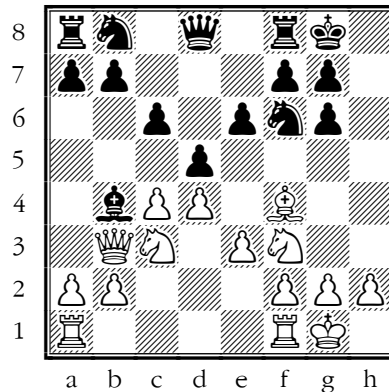
4...e6 5.Nf3 Bb4?!

Inaccuracy. Bd6 was best.

6.e3 Nf6 7.Bd3?!

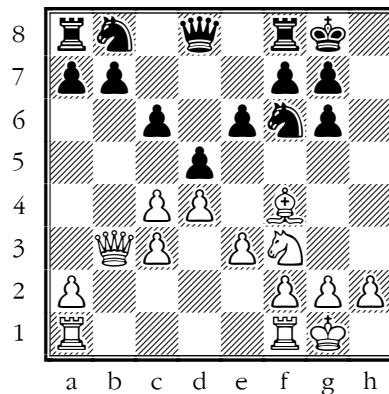
Inaccuracy. Qb3 was best.

7...Bg6 8.o-o o-o 9.Bxg6 hxg6
10.Qb3



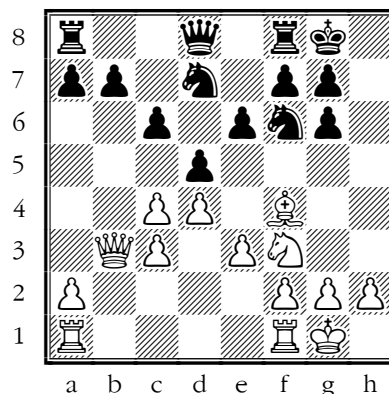
Better late than never.

10...Bxc3 11.bxc3=



This position is equal however Black now allows White to steal the b7 pawn (or overlooks that it is attacked). Only you know which! But if you know, you can learn from it.

11...Nbd7?

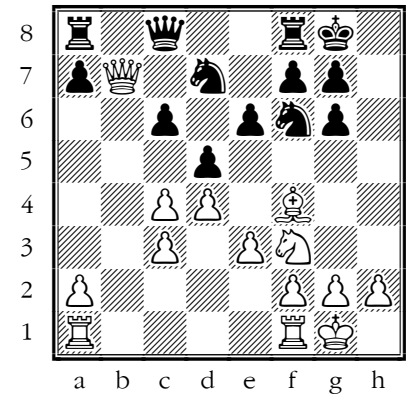


Mistake. b6 was best.

[11...b6]

→ TACTIC: loose piece

12.Qxb7 Qc8?!+-



As in several other games we have seen, Black, behind in material, rushes to exchange Queens, which is quite the wrong strategy. Black needs to keep material on the board to create complications and invite a mistake by the opponent. With peaceful normal play, White will just win, and that's pretty much what we see in this game.

☞ Don't swap off pieces when you are losing

13.Qxc8 Raxc8 14.c5 Ne4

15.Rac1 f6 16.Rfd1?!

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

16...g5 17.Bg3 Nxc3?!

Inaccuracy. e5 was best.

18.fxg3 g4 19.Nd2 e5 20.Rb1

Rc7 21.Rb3 e4?!

Inaccuracy. f5 was best.

22.Rdb1 Ra8?!

Inaccuracy. Kf7 was best.

23.Rb7 Rxb7 24.Rxb7 Nf8

25.Rc7 Rb8 26.Nb3 f5 27.Rxc6 Rb7?!

Inaccuracy. Nh7 was best.

28.Rd6 Rd7 29.Ra6 Kf7 30.c6?!

Inaccuracy. Na5 was best.

30...Rc7 31.Ra5 Rxc6 32.Rxa7+

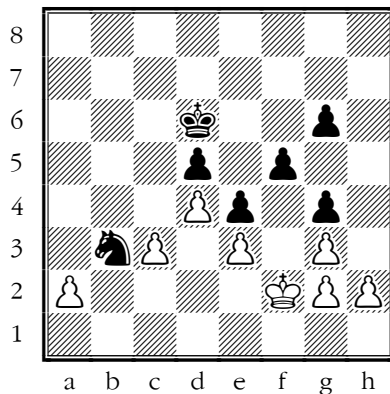
Kf6 33.Nc5 g6 34.Ra8 Ne6

35.Ra6 Nd8 36.Nd7+ Ke7

37.Rxc6 Nxc6 38.Nc5?!

Inaccuracy. Nb6 was best.

38...Na5 39.Kf2 Kd6 40.Nb3+-
Nxb3??



Blunder. Nc4 was best.

The position was pretty terrible for Black but swapping Knights makes defeat all but certain.

☞ You must keep material on the board if you can when you're losing.

41.axb3 Kc6 42.h3 gxh3?!

Inaccuracy. Kd6 was best.

43.gxh3 g5?!

Inaccuracy. Kd6 was best.

44.h4 gxh4 45.gxh4 Kd7 46.h5
Ke8 47.b4 Kf7 48.b5

1-0

U18B_1 Daniel Smith

“ That was a very tough day in the office. All three games found you going slightly off-piste in the opening. We know that for the most part, your opponents don't know more about the opening than you do, but if they do, it can feel like you didn't have much of a say in the game.

Leon Nelson – Daniel Smith

[A15 English Opening vs KID system]

“ White played a structure I've often used myself, the Botvinnik English, and they used the closed centre as cover to start a kingside attack. You were never able to find enough activity or ideas to distract them from this plan, but if you look at the notes there are some ideas for next time.

**1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7
4.Nc3 o-o 5.e4 d6 6.Nge2=
Nbd7**

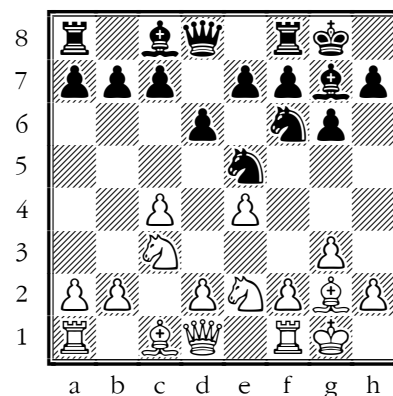
Here's a mini-repertoire of lines for the KID player to play against the English, after Dembo:

- A. 5. Nf3 O-O 6. O-O e5 7. d3 h6!? (7... a6!? 8. Rb1 h6 9. b4 Nh5 10. e3 Be6 11. Bb2 Nd7 12. Qe2 c6 13. a4 d5 14. Nd2 Nhf6 =) 8. Rb1 a5 9. a3 Re8! 10. Nd2 (10. b4 axb4 11. axb4 e4! =) 10... c6 11. b4 axb4 12. axb4 d5! =
- B. 5. e3 O-O 6. Nge2 e5 7. O-O c6 8. d4 Qe7 9. b3 e4! 10. Ba3 Bf5 11. h3 h5! =
- C. 5. d3 O-O 6. Bg5 h6 7. Bd2 e5 8. b4 (8. e4 c6 9. Nge2 Be6 10. O-O Qd7 { <https://lichess.org/VuyWaBvD> } 11. b4 (11. Qc1 { <https://lichess.org/XSHCYplq> }) 11... Na6 12. Rb1 Nc7 (12... b5!?) 13. b5 cxb5 14. Nxb5 Na6! +=) 8... c6 9. e4 Be6 10. Nge2 d5! +=

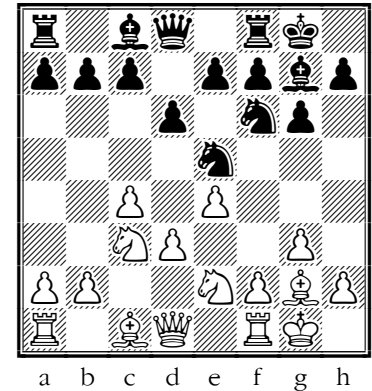
- D. 5.e4 O-O 6. Nge2 e5 and now:

- I. 7. d4 exd4 8. Nxd4 Nc6! 9. O-O!? Nxe4! = with compensation { <https://lichess.org/7G1XG9AV> }
- II. 7. d3 Be6 8. f4 c6 9. Be3 Ng4 10. Bg1 exf4 11. Nxf4 Ne5 =
- III. 7. O-O Be6 8. d3 c6 9. h3 (9. f4 Qd7) (9. b3 Re8 10. d4 Na6) 9... Qd7! 10. Kh2 Na6 11. f4 h5! { <https://lichess.org/QKdzroOr> } 12. Be3 h4! { <https://lichess.org/sy11wOX> } 13. gxh4 (13. g4? Bxg4 14. hxg4? Nxg4+) 13... Nh5 ~

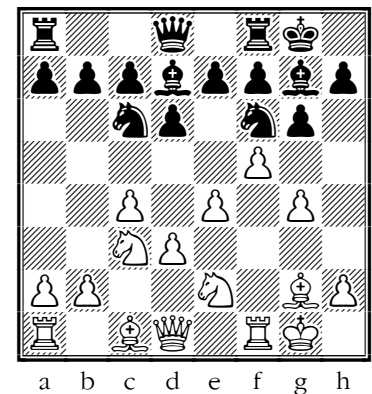
I hope you can see how Black is always hitting back, often in the centre by ...c6 and ...d5, and not letting White settle into their groove.

7.o-o Ne5?!

This just encourages White spawns to lunge forward.

8.d3±**8...Nh5? +=**

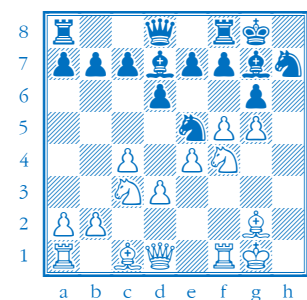
[8...c5]

9.f4 Nc6 10.f5 Bd7 11.g4 Nf6±

Now it's very hard for Black to deter White from their plan.

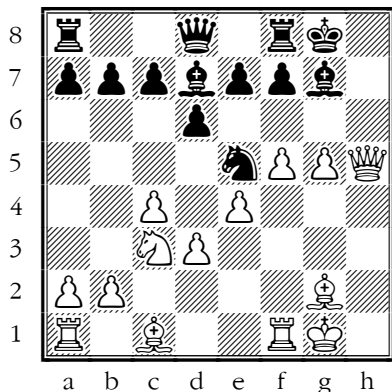
12.Nf4 h6 13.h4 Ne5 14.g5 hxg5 15.hxg5 Nh5

[15...Nh7!?



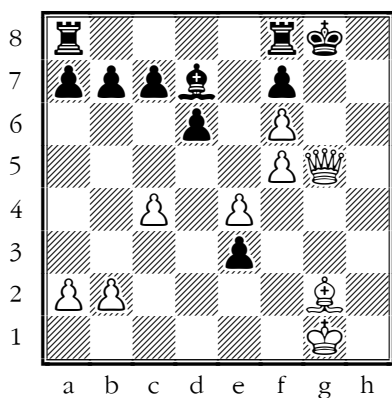
] Might have helped]

16.Nxh5 gxh5 17.Qxh5+-



Now Black is in huge trouble.

17...Nxd3 18.Rf3 Bd4+ 19.Be3 Bxe3+ 20.Rxe3 Nf4 21.Qh4 e5 22.Rf1 Qe7 23.Rxf4 exf4 24.Nd5 Qe5 25.Nf6+ Qxf6 26.gxf6 fxe3 27.Qg5+



Goodnight, nurse.

1-0

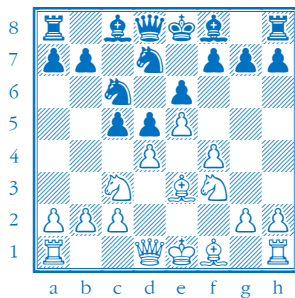
Daniel Smith – Yuxuan Liu

[B23 Sicilian Defence, Grand Prix Attack]

You played a slightly inaccurate opening but Black was no more accurate and you ended up in a roughly equal position but sadly blundered.

1.e4 c5

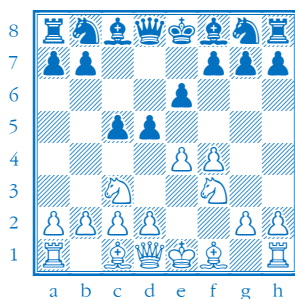
[1...e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be3±



This is the well-known Steinitz variation of the defence. Compared with variation in your game, White has gained a tempo by chasing the black knight from f6, and hasn't lost a tempo playing the pawn first to d3 and only then to d4.]

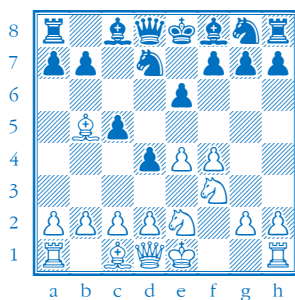
2.Nc3 e6 3.f4 d5 4.e5?!

[4.Nf3!]



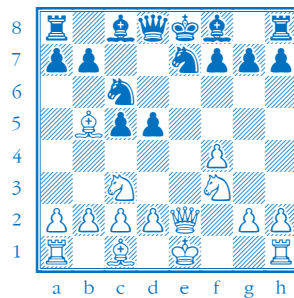
Is the way Jones plays it 4...dxe4

a) 4...d4 5.Bb5+ Nd7 6.Ne2

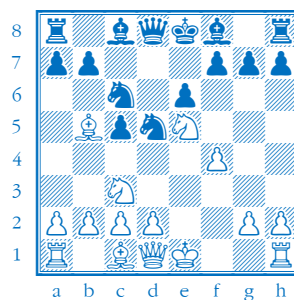


Sveshnikov, Evgeny - Deepan Chakkravarthy, J., 1-0, Dubai op 6th, 2004, <https://lichess.org/WqVqoJML>;

b) 4...Nc6 5.Bb5 Nge7 6.exd5 Nxd5 (6...exd5 7.Qe2

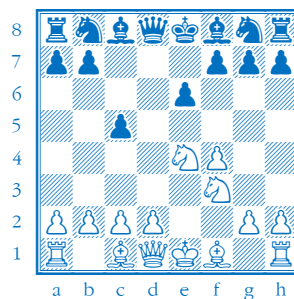


Jones, Gawain C - Nataf, Igor Alexandre, 1/2-1/2, EU-ch 8th, 2007, <https://lichess.org/WuTvHVQz>) 7.Ne5



Hebden, Mark - Kwiatkowski, Feliks J, 1-0, BCF-ch, 1986, <https://lichess.org/Kge1njsR>;

5.Nxe4



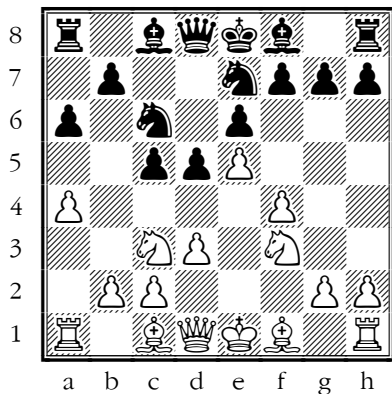
Jones, Gawain C - Rublevsky, Sergei, 1-0, EU-ch blitz 29th, 2010,

<https://lichess.org/stzmLeOp>.

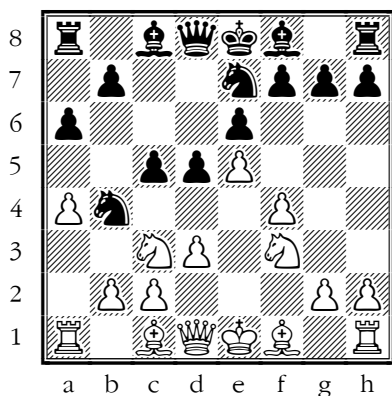
4...Nc6 5.Nf3 a6 6.a4

[6.d4 b5 7.Be3]

6...Nge7 7.d3

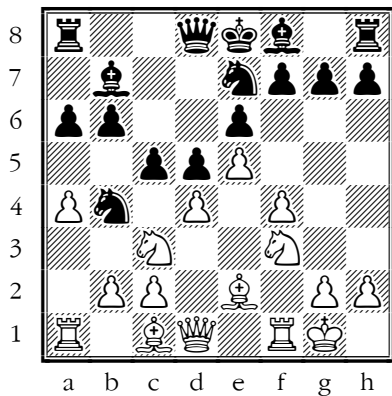


7...Nb4?!=



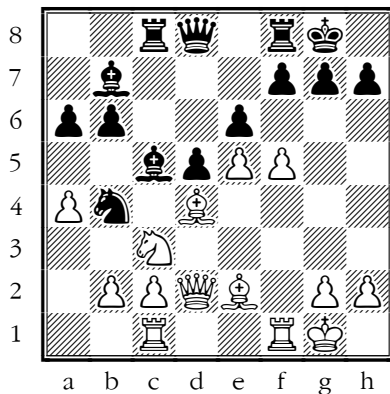
The square b4 is no doubt an outpost for this Black knight but this seems premature.

8.Be2 b6 9.o-o Bb7 10.d4



A fairly typical French sort of position, which, because of the differences described above, is a little bit better for Black.

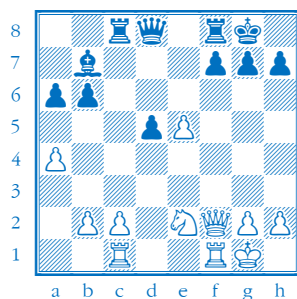
10...Nec6 11.Be3 cxd4 12.Nxd4 Bc5 13.Rc1 Rc8 14.Qd2 Nxd4 15.Bxd4 o-o 16.f5



Definitely the right plan in these positions, although you're not so well placed to make it work here.

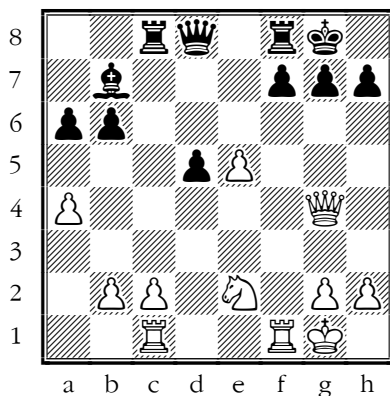
16...Bxd4+ 17.Qxd4 Nc6 18.Qf4 exf5 19.Qxf5 Nd4 20.Qg4=

[20.Qf2!? Nxe2+ 21.Nxe2



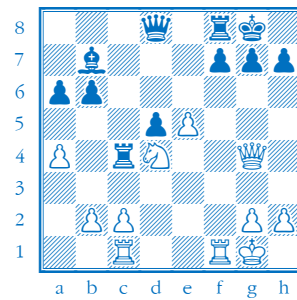
21...Rc4 22.b3

20...Nxe2+ 21.Nxe2



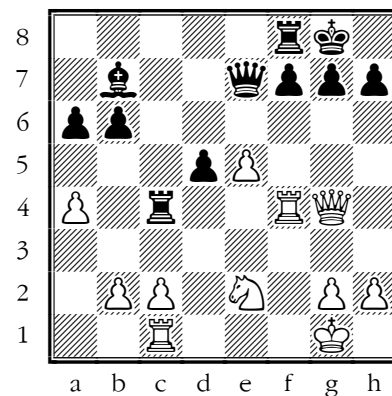
21...Rc4 22.Rf4?!=

[22.Nd4!=



This odd self-pinning move is best, with equal chances. 22...Rxa4? 23.e6!→]

22...Qe7



Now you play a couple of inaccurate moves and one blunder.

[22...Qe8;

22...Re4 23.Nd4 Rxe5]

23.Rxc4?! dxc4 24.Nc3?! Qxe5 25.Qxc4??→ Qe3+

→ TACTIC: fork

0-1

Daniel Smith – Freddie Pick

[B23 Sicilian Defence, Grand Prix Attack]

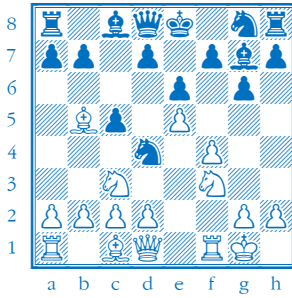
“ Black played a sneaky queen move which had two ideas – only one of which you spotted.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bb5 Nd4 6.o-o

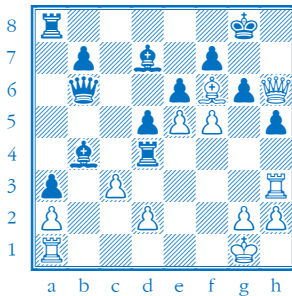
[6.Nxd4 cxd4 7.Ne2 Qb6 8.Bd3]

6...e6 7.Nxd4=

[7.e5!?

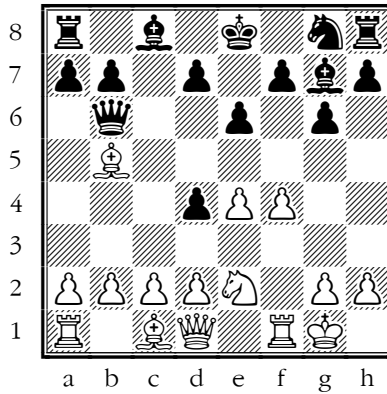


Gawain Jones has played instead
 7...a6 8.Bd3 d5 9.Nxd4 cxd4 10.Ne2
 Qb6 11.Qe1 Ne7 12.b3 Nc6 13.Bb2
 0-0 14.Nxd4 Nb4 (14...Nxd4
 15.Qe3) 15.Qe3 Nxd3 16.Qxd3 Bd7
 17.Qe3 a5 18.Ba3 Rfc8 19.Be7 a4
 20.b4 a3 21.c3 Rc4 22.Rf3 Bf8
 23.Bf6 Bxb4 24.Rh3 h5 25.f5 Rxd4
 26.Qh6



Jones, Gawain C - Gelashvili,
 Tamaz, 1-0, EU-chT (Men) 16th,
 2007,
<https://lichess.org/kNaFodyG>]

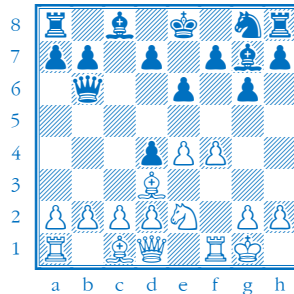
7...cxd4 8.Ne2 Qb6=



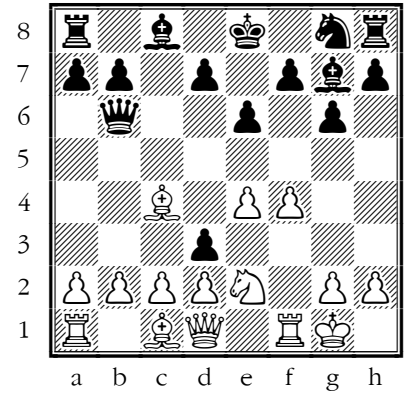
With two threats, one of which you spotted.

9.Bc4??

[9.Bd3! ±



9...d3+!



→ TACTIC: discovery

☛ The advice 'look at every check and every capture' is not new to you I know, but still applies!

10.Kh1 -+

Well, that was a shame. If you want to see some model games by Gawain Jones, who's our current leading exponent of the Grand Prix attack, you can visit:

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?yearcomp=exactly&year=&playercomp=either&pid=&player=jones&pid2=&player2=&movecomp=exactly&moves=&opening=&eco=B23&result=1-0>.

...0-1

U18B_2 Ben Darlington

“ I'm sad you didn't come back with much of a result, but I hope you can see you are there or thereabouts against the top U18s. You had the advantage against Jack from our A team for a long while – well done! But your second game shows the risks of dabbling in hypermodern openings as Black.

Ben Darlington – James Thomas

[A15 English Opening vs KID system]

“ I don't have much of this game but what I have revealed no problems on your part.

1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7
 4.Nc3 0-0 5.e3

I'm not a huge fan of this very solid but rather unenterprising set up for White. The Botvinnik System with 5.e4 is more aggressive and easier to play, I believe.

5...d6 6.Nge2 Nbd7 7.d4 e5±

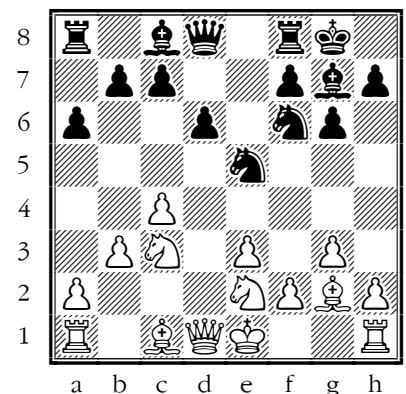
8.dxe5?!=

[8.0-0 Re8 9.b3±]

8...Nxe5?! ±

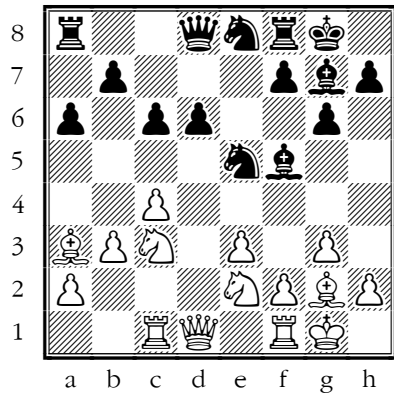
[8...dxe5=]

9.b3 a6



[The unlikely "h4" was on the sheet]

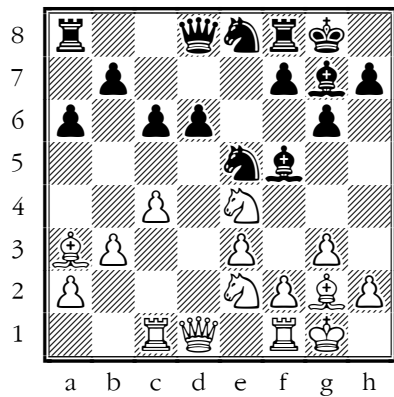
10.0–o c6 11.Ba3 Ne8 12.Rc1
Bf5±



This is all going quite well for White and you had a chance to consolidate your advantage here.

[12...Bg4 13.Ne4]

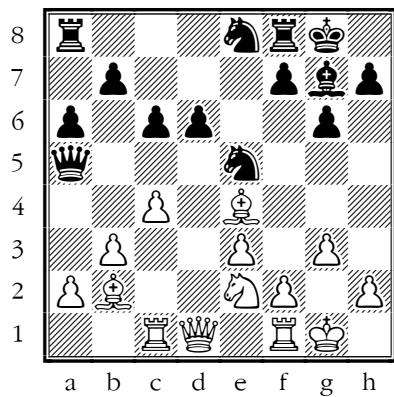
13.Ne4?!



Inaccuracy. Nd4 was best.

[13.Nd4 Bg4 14.f3 Bd7 15.f4 Ng4 16.Qd2]

13...Bxe4 14.Bxe4 Qa5 15.Bb2±



This position is still slightly better for White; I didn't see what happened in the rest of the game.

...0–1

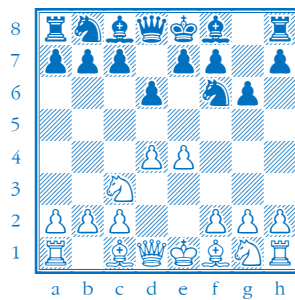
Bence Szakmary – Ben Darlington

[B06 Pirc Defence]

White quickly whipped up a storming attack against your King, which required a bit of defensive skill as well as a bit of luck to survive. But survive you did, only to blunder into a lost position just when chances were nearly even.

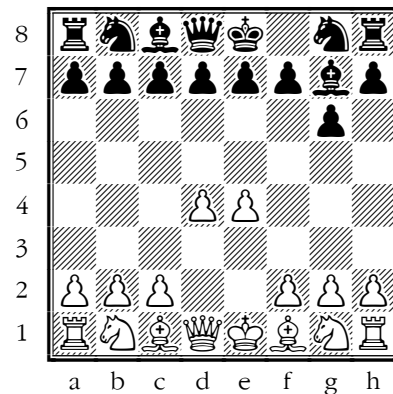
1.e4 g6

[1...d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6]



is the usual Pirc move order, and if there isn't anything you are trying to avoid, it's easiest and best.]

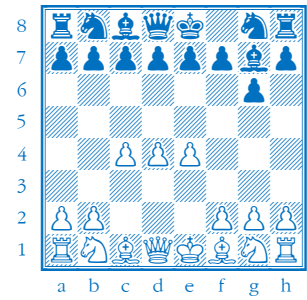
2.d4 Bg7



The Modern Defence, which can transpose into several other systems, but most often the Pirc Defence.

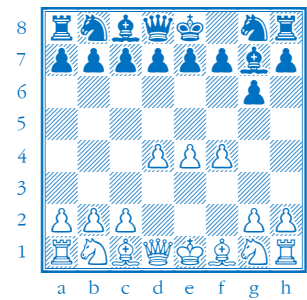
3.Be3

[3.c4



gets you into Queen's-side positions, but perhaps not your usual defence to 1.d4;

3.f4

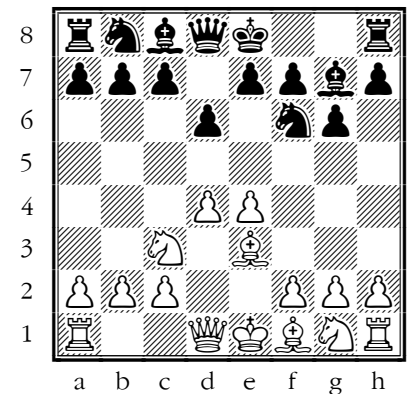


is another headache to be faced only with the Modern move-order.]

3...d6

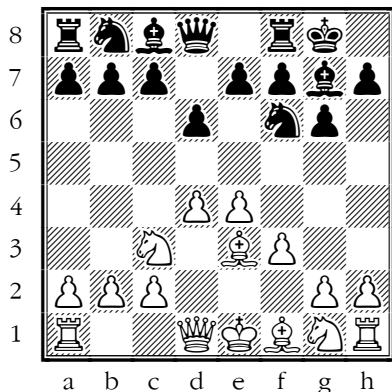
[3...d5; 3...c5]

4.Nc3 Nf6



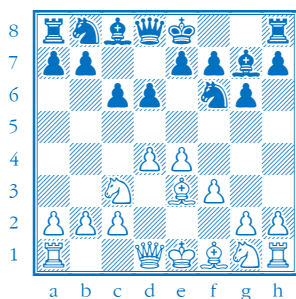
We're now in a Pirc Defence.

5.f3 0–0?!



I don't think this is a bad move, exactly, but it does nothing to distract White from their stereotyped attacking plans.

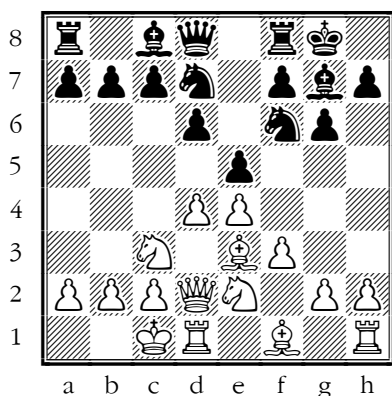
[5...c6



might be best, delaying castling and preparing ...b5, with much more immediate counterplay than in the game;

[5...a6 is an alternative]

6.Qd2 e5 7.Nge2± Nbd7 8.o-o-o



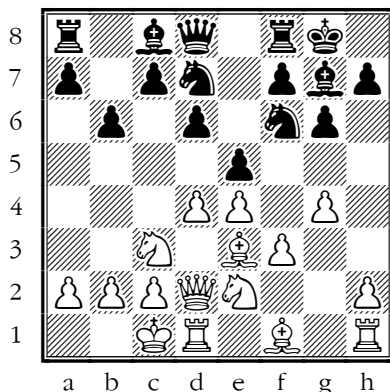
White is playing the 'Yugoslav Attack' from the Dragon Sicilian against the Pirc Defence. In the Dragon, Black has to attack fiercely on the Queen's-side to have any chance of survival.

8...b6?!+-

Inaccuracy. c6 was best.

And that, I'm going to say, is not fierce at all.

9.g4!



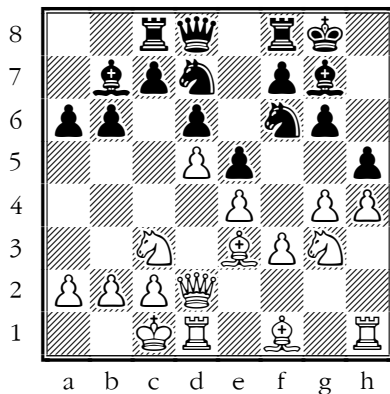
Ready or not, here I come...

☛ Positions with opposite-side castling often feature energetic play on both wings. You can and advance pawns to open lines on the side you are attacking..

9...Bb7?!+-

Inaccuracy. a6 was best.

10.d5 a6 11.Ng3 Rc8 12.h4 h5?!



Inaccuracy. c6 was best.

That's usually considered a fair try in the Dragon.

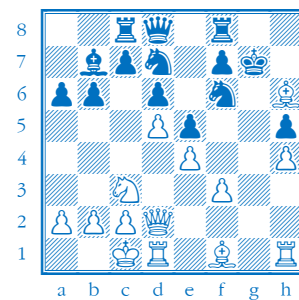
☛ Traditional advice is not to weaken your pawns in front of your King when you are being attacked, but if it delays your opponent's attack by a precious few moves, then it might be worth it.

13.gxh5 gxh5?!

Inaccuracy. b5 was best.

14.Nf5 Kh8 15.Rg1

[15.Nxg7 Kxg7 16.Bh6+

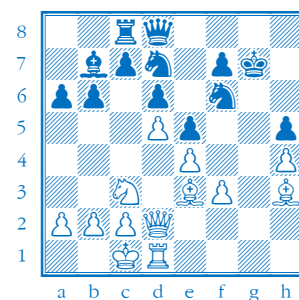


→ TACTIC: skewer

wins the exchange, but White is after bigger prey.]

15...Rg8 16.Bh6

[16.Rxg7 Rxg7 17.Nxg7 Kxg7 18.Bh3+-

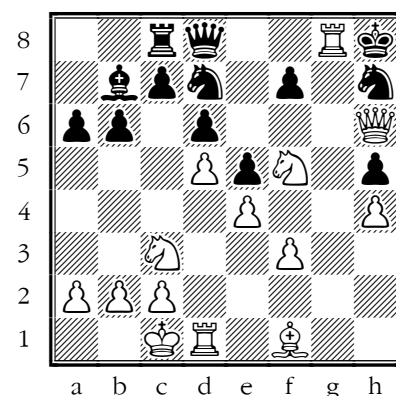


also looks good for White]

16...Bxh6?!

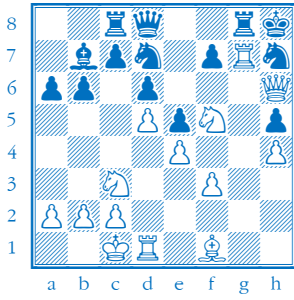
Inaccuracy. Bf8 was best.

17.Qxh6+ Nh7+- 18.Rxg8+?



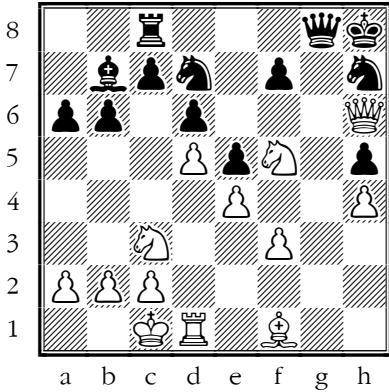
Mistake. Rg7 was best.

[18.Rg7!



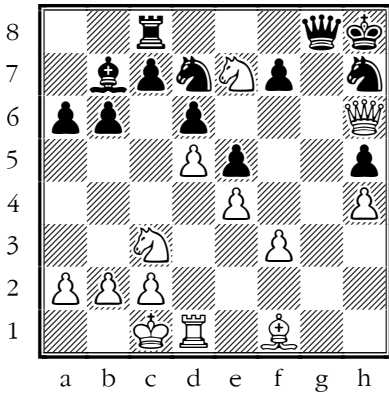
is crushing 18...Ndf6 19.Rxf7 Rb8
20.f4+-]

18...Qxg8



Black is holding on...

19.Ne7??±



Blunder. Bh3 was best.

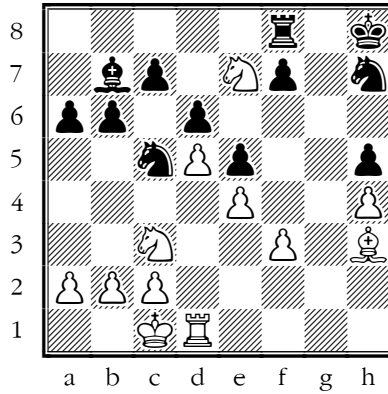
Perhaps White thought they were winning the exchange, but this is a blunder, giving Black welcome relief.

19...Qf8 20.Qxf8+ Rxf8

21.Bh3?! ±

Inaccuracy. Ne2 was best.

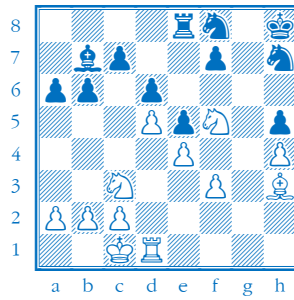
21...Nc5??+-



Blunder. Re8 was best.

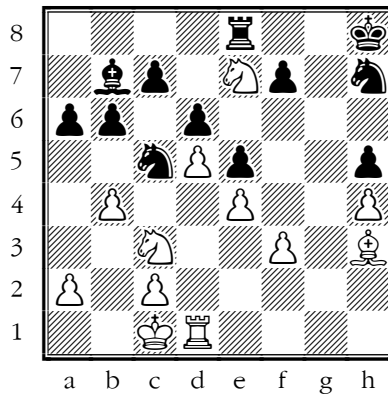
The Knight can hop out, but has to hop straight back again.

[21...Re8 22.Nf5 Ndf8



and Black is close to equality.]

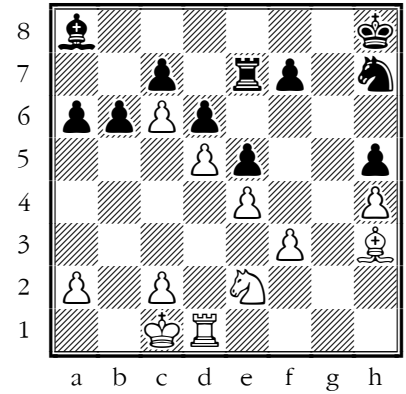
22.b4 Re8



White has no useful desperado move with the Knight, but:

23.bxc5 Rxe7 24.c6! Ba8

25.Ne2+-



White isn't actually ahead in material, but the black Bishop on a8 can play no further part in the game, and so White is effectively playing with an extra piece.

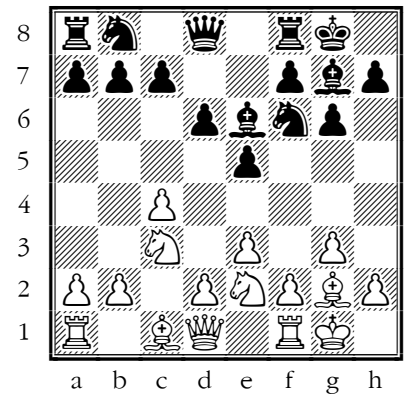
...1-0

Ben Darlington – Jack Wills

[A15 English Opening vs KID System]

“ Very much a game of two halves. Black lost a pawn early on which could have been decisive but material equality was soon restored and an interesting positional battle followed, where White had the advantage for the most part. Black held on and eventually found a way through, when White's defences collapsed.

1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7
4.Nc3 o-o 5.e3 e5 6.Nge2 d6
7.o-o= Be6?!±



un defending the B Pawn this could have lost on the spot .

Inaccuracy. Re8 was best.

8. Bxb7 Nbd7 9. Bg2

[9. Bxa8 Qxa8 10. f3 Bxc4]

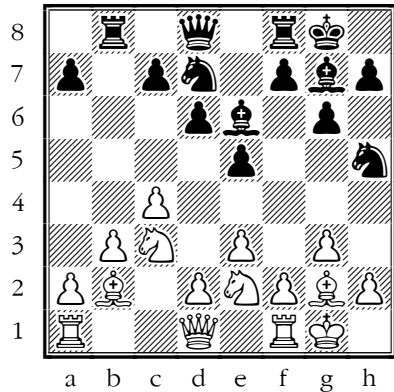
9... Rb8?!

Inaccuracy. Bxc4 was best.

10. b3 Nh5?!

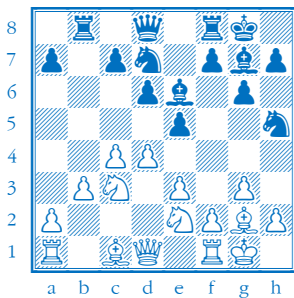
Inaccuracy. Re8 was best.

11. Bb2?!±



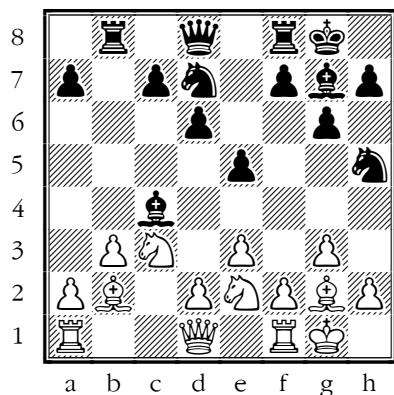
Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

[11. d4!±



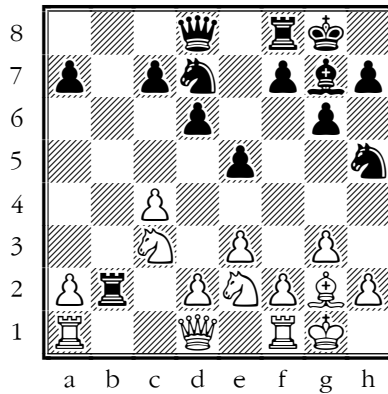
threatens to embarrass the black bishop]

11... Bxc4



→ TACTIC: pin

12. bxc4 Rxb2±



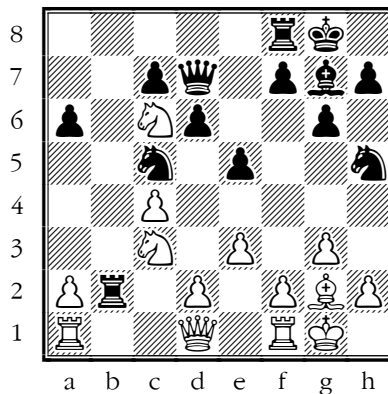
White no longer has the P but has the better position.

White's next Knight manoeuvre has all the hallmarks of a one-move-deep plan, and Black gets some time to regroup.

[13. Qc1 or 13. Rb1 are more to the point.]

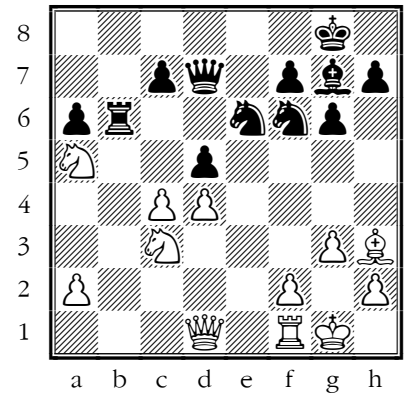
One-move-deep plans either improve your position or can make it worse: make sure you know which!

13. Nb5 a6 14. Na7 Nc5 15. Nc6 Qd7 16. Nc3?!



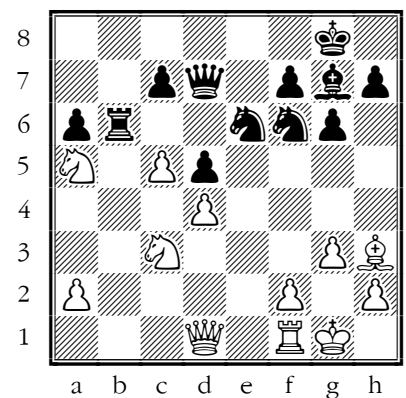
Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

16... Rb6 17. Na5 Nf6 18. Rb1 Rfb8 19. Rxb6 Rxb6 20. d4 exd4 21. exd4 Ne6 22. Bh3 d5±



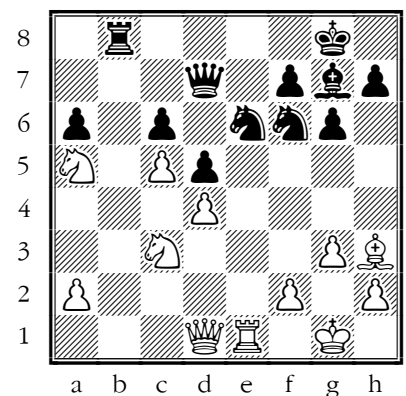
White is still better here, but the next move gives away the advantage.

23. c5?!=



Inaccuracy. Na4 was best.

23... Rb8 24. Re1 c6?

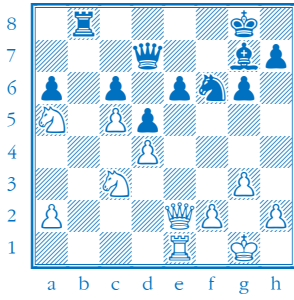


Mistake. Re8 was best.

25. Na4?!

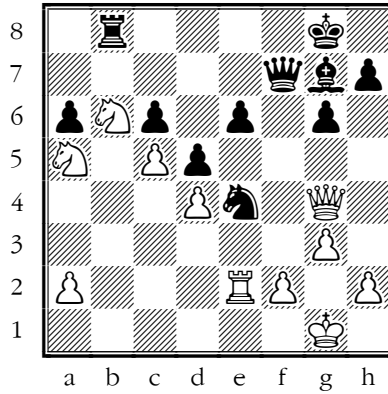
Inaccuracy. Bxe6 was best.

[25. Bxe6 fxe6 26. Qe2



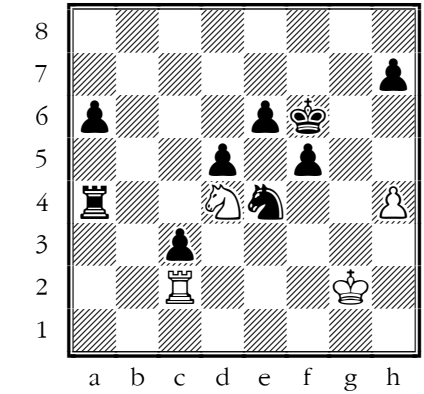
forks e6 and a6]

25...Qc7 26.Nb6 Ne4 27.Bxe6
fxe6 28.Qg4?



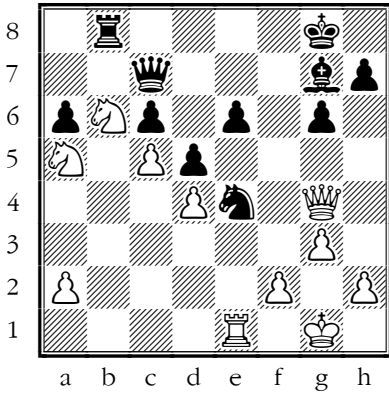
Blunder. Rxe4 was best.

29...Bxd4 30.Qf4 Qxf4 31.gxf4
Bxc5 32.Nd7 Rb1+ 33.Kg2 Bxf2-
+ 34.Nf6+?--+



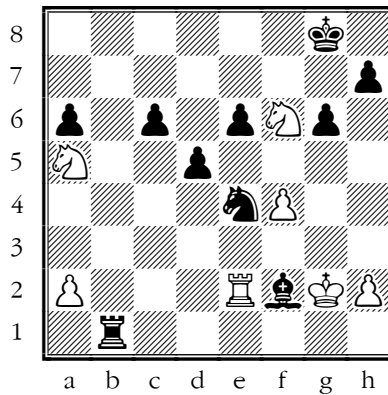
→ TACTIC: discovery

45.h5?



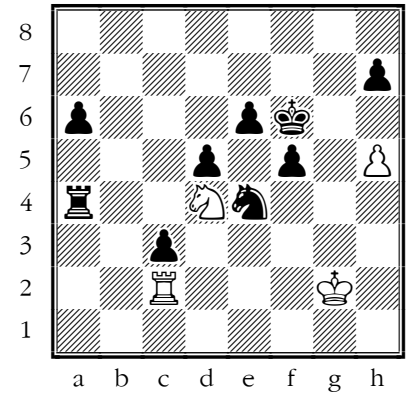
Mistake. Kg2 was best.

28...Qf7 29.Re2??--+



Mistake. Nxc6 was best.

34...Nxf6 35.Kxf2 Ne4+ 36.Kg2
c5 37.Nb3 Kf7 38.Rc2 c4 39.Nd4
Rd1 40.Nf3 Kf6 41.a4 Ra1
42.Nd4 Rxa4 43.f5 gxf5 44.h4 c3



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Ne2 was best.

45...Rxd4

0-1

U18B_3 Jamie Glasson

“ Your best effort was against Slava and could have had a kinder result – I thought you played the first moves very well, although you missed a tactic or two that could have put it away. There were some better opening ideas around than the ones you used as White – you can afford to be bolder if you do a bit of study.

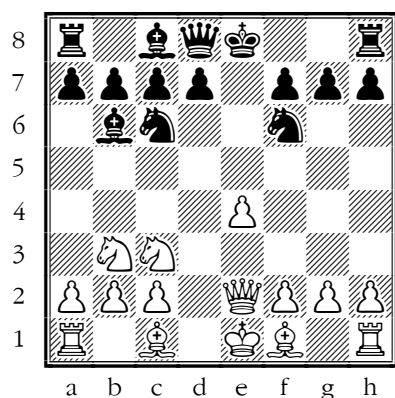
Viacheslav Ovcharenko – Jamie Glasson

[C45 Scotch Game]

“ Whit didn't get much out of the opening and Black came up with an interesting try for the initiative. After a muddled stage featuring errors on both sides, White emerged a pawn ahead, upon which Black swapped everything off into a lost endgame.

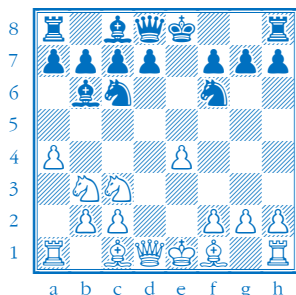
“ It's become traditional for one of our A team players to lose to a B team player, and I thought this was going to be it!

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
4.Nxd4 Bc5 5.Nb3 Bb6 6.Nc3
Nf6 7.Qe2=



This is a move recommended by theory and very often played but it doesn't seem very promising for White.

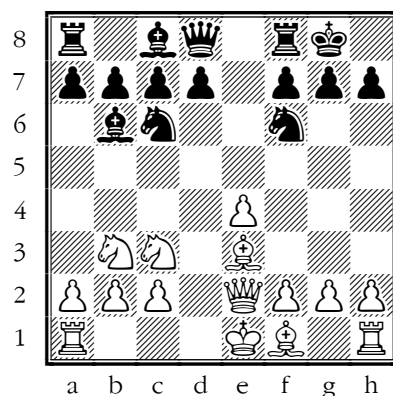
[7.a4



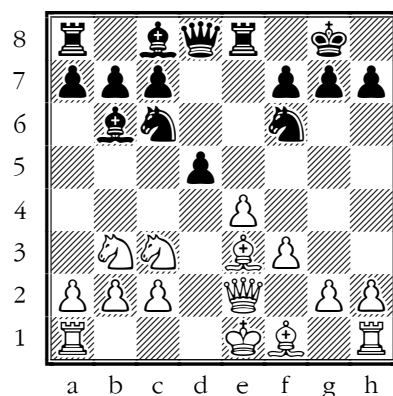
Adams, Michael - Wells, Peter K, 1-0, Dublin zt, 1993,
<https://lichess.org/aYpd4eLE>

This line was all the rage when I was a boy.]

7...0-0 8.Be3

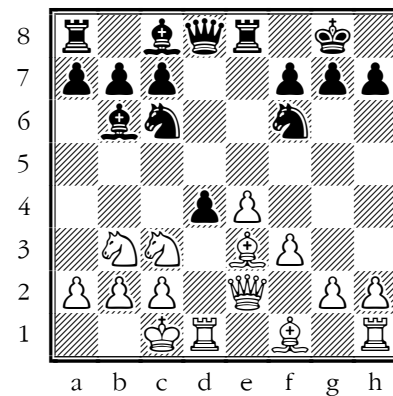


8...Re8 9.f3 d5!?



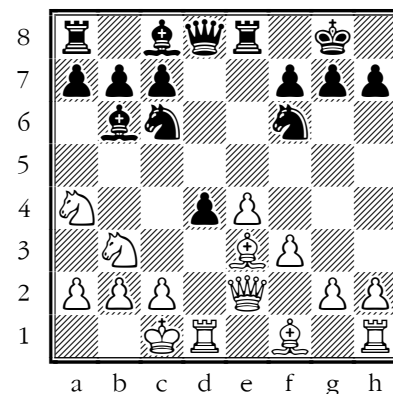
This move starts an interesting messy phase where the right moves for both sides are not obvious.

10.0-0-0 d4±



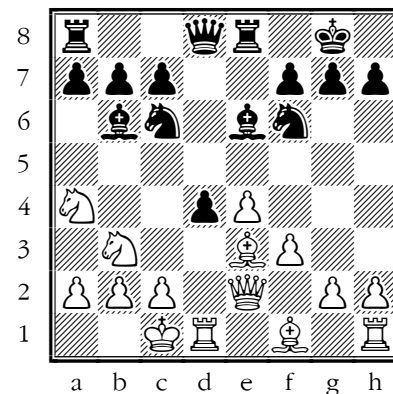
it's about equal. The d-pawn is being held up by magic.

11.Na4?±



Mistake. Qe1 was best. Black has couple of interesting tactics here

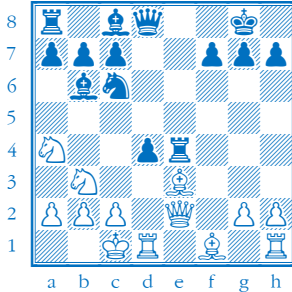
11...Be6?? ±



Blunder. Nxe4 was best.

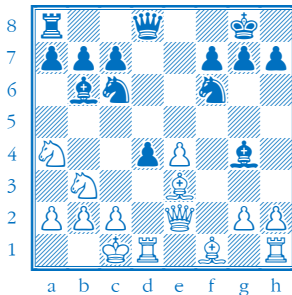
There were two interesting tactical ideas here, but you didn't go for either of them. I don't know why you missed or shied away from them, but you should have a think about it!

[11...Nxe4! 12.fxe4 Rxe4]



→ TACTIC: pin

11...Rxe4!? 12.fxe4 Bg4!

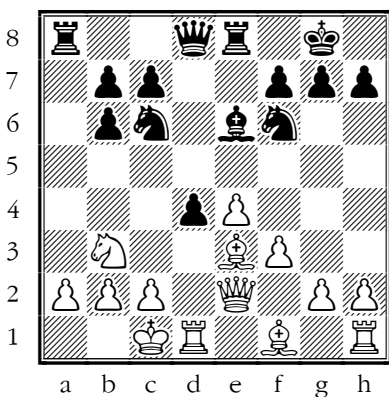


→ TACTIC: skewer

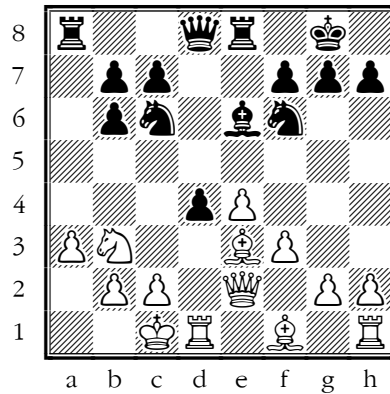
12.Nxb6?!=

Inaccuracy. Kb1 was best.

12...axb6

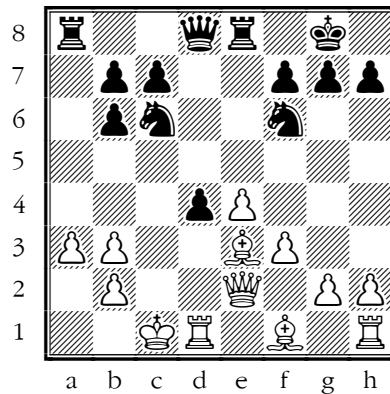


13.a3??-+



Blunder. Kb1 was best.

13...Bxb3 14.cxb3



Now, to keep the advantage, Black needs to spot the tactic pointed out earlier.

14...Re7?? ±

[14...Qd6=]

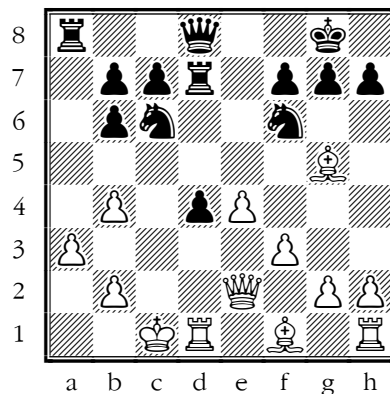
15.b4??-+

[15.Bf2! ±]

15...Rd7?? ±

[15...Nxe4!-+]

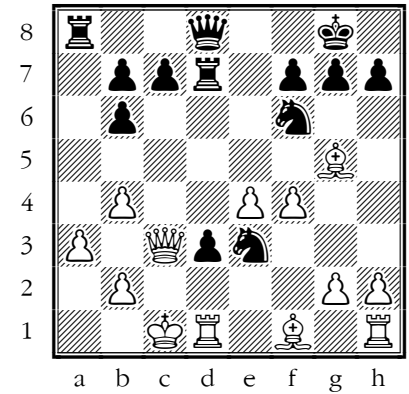
16.Bg5=



Now White has hopes of surrounding and capturing the d-pawn.

As Nimzowitsch used to say: restrain, blockade, destroy!

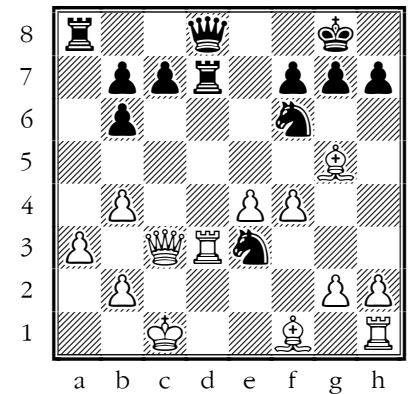
16...Ne5 17.f4 d3 18.Qd2 Nc4 19.Qc3= Ne3?!



Inaccuracy. Nxe4 was best.

[19...Nxe4 20.Qxc4 Rd4 21.Bxd8 Rxc4+ 22.Kb1 Rxd8=]

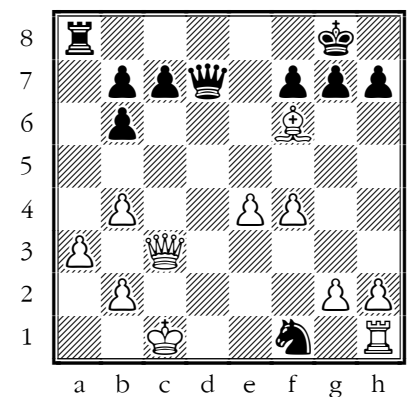
20.Rxd3±



White has succeeded in their aim.

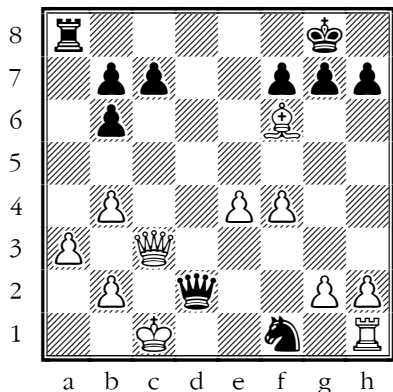
20...Nxf1 21.Rxd7 Qxd7

22.Bxf6±



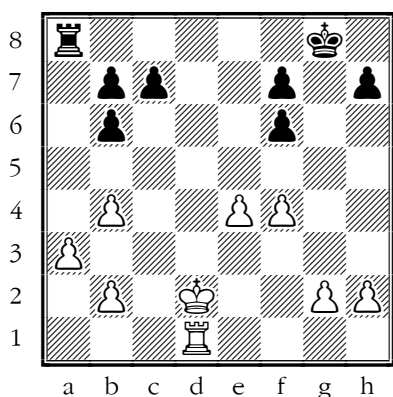
Black is by no means lost here, but their next move loses the initiative allowing White to take over.

22...Qd2+??+-



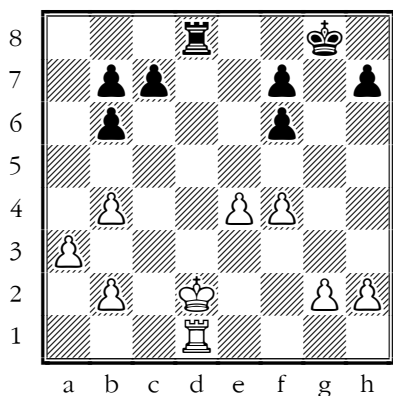
Blunder. gxf6 was best.

23.Qxd2 Nxd2 24.Kxd2 gxf6
25.Rd1+-



White is a pawn ahead here and Black's only chance is to stay in the Rook endgame.

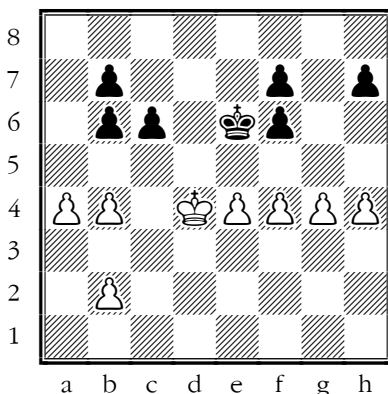
25...Rd8+??



Keep pieces on if you are losing

Interestingly, Stockfish doesn't recognise the Rook exchange as a mistake – perhaps because White is winning anyway – but my advice to Black is still keep the rooks on because they are a drawing factor and the King and pawn ending is just lost.

26.Ke2 Rxd1 27.Kxd1 Kf8
28.Kd2 Ke8 29.Kd3 c6 30.g4
Kd7 31.h4 Ke6 32.Kd4 Ke7 33.a4
Ke6+-

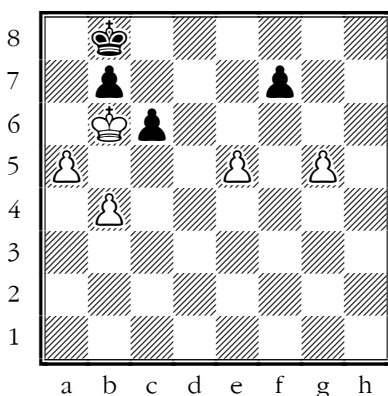


Both sides have strengthened their position as much as they can and White now needs to find a way through which they do what accurately.

34.a5 bxa5?!

Inaccuracy. Ke7 was best.

35.bxa5 Kd7 36.Kc5 Kc7 37.b4
h6 38.g5 hxg5 39.fxg5 fxg5
40.hxg5 Kd7 41.Kb6 Kc8
42.e5+- Kb8?



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kd7 was best.

43.e6 fxe6 44.g6 e5 45.g7 Kc8
46.g8Q+ Kd7 47.Kxb7 e4
48.Qg4+-
1-0

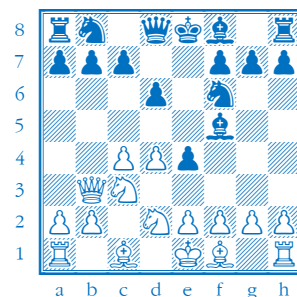
Jamie Glasson – Toby Gakrenhof
[A54 Old Indian Defence?]

“ That was a shame: you had two long spells of advantage

but fell for a simple pawn fork at the end

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nf3

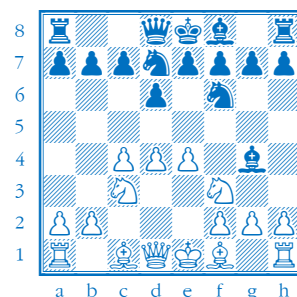
[3.Nc3 e5 4.Nf3 e4 5.Nd2 Bf5
6.Qb3]



[is one of the main lines, with advantage to White]

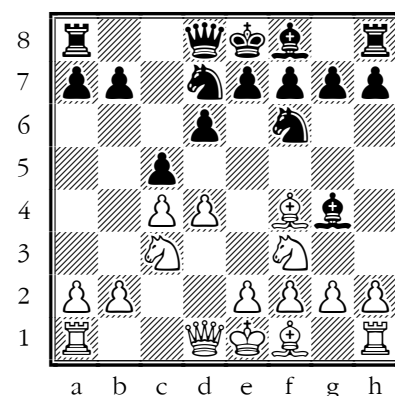
3...Bg4 4.Nc3 Nbd7 5.Bf4

[5.e4! ±



[is surely best, gaining space]

5...c5±



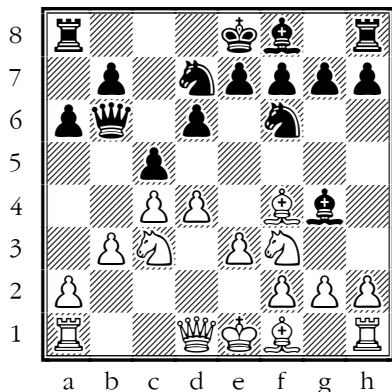
The Home-Made Defence... none of Black's moves are bad, but don't really have a theme.

it's a lot easier to come up with moves and especially plans in systems that have been tried before.

6.e3 Qb6± 7.b3?!

Inaccuracy. Be2 was best.

7...a6?



Mistake. e5 was best.

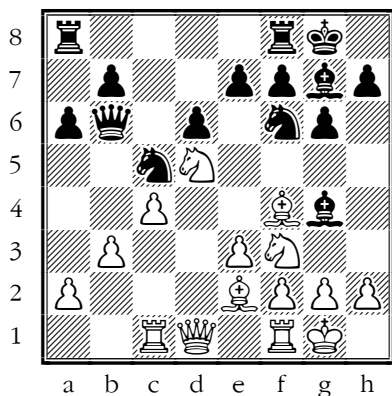
There seems no point to this move.

8.Be2± g6 9.o-o Bg7 10.Rc1 o-o± 11.dxc5?! ±

Inaccuracy. h3 was best.

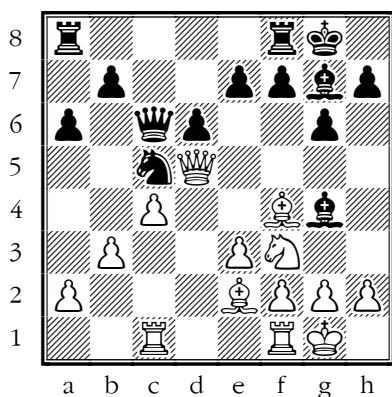
[11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Nh5]

11...Nxc5 12.Nd5?±



Mistake. Bg5 was best.

12...Nxd5 13.Qxd5 Qc6?!±



Inaccuracy. Qa5 was best.

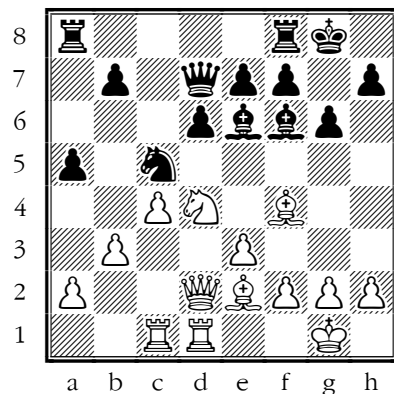
14.Qg5 Qd7 15.Rfd1?!±

Inaccuracy. Qh4 was best.

15...Bf6?!=

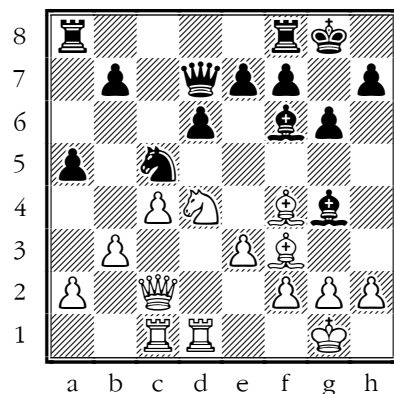
Inaccuracy. Bf5 was best.

16.Qd5 Be6± 17.Qd2 a5 18.Nd4



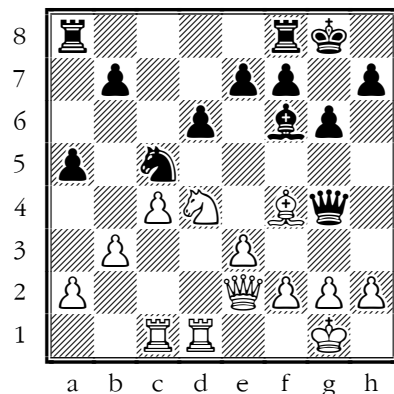
There is an outline of a tactic here: if the black e pawn jumps to e5 you will lose a piece.

18...Ne4 19.Qc2 Nc5 20.Bf3 Bg4



Now the E pawn is free.

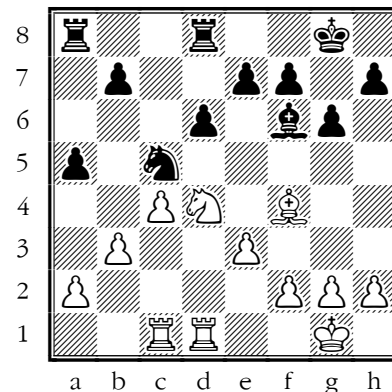
21.Bxg4 Qxg4± 22.Qe2?±



Mistake. h3 was best.

22...Qxe2 23.Nxe2 Rfd8±

24.Nd4??-+



Blunder. Bh6 was best.

→ TACTIC: fork

24...e5-+

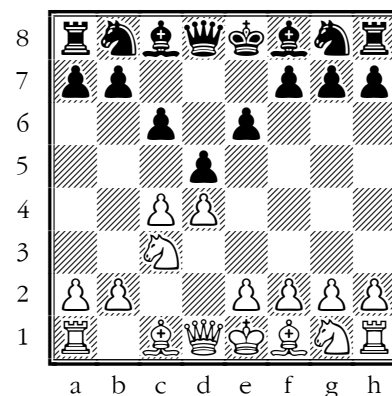
o-1

Jamie Glasson – Alex Curey

[D31 Semi-Slav Defence]

“ You seemed to lose the thread of the game early on – perhaps because you didn't know a plan to play against Black's unusual variation – and I'm sorry to say it went from bad to worse. Have a look at Marshall's Gambit for next time or learn one of the main lines.

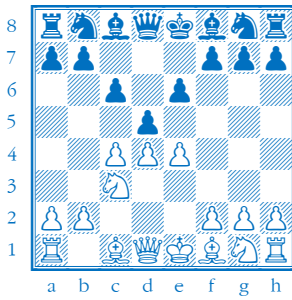
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6



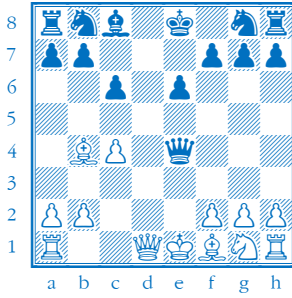
If Blacks c-pawn goes to c6 in the Queen's gambit it always threatens to take and to keep a pawn on c4, as it supports ...b7-b5. The variation Black chooses in this game makes a particular point of this idea.

4.Nf3

[4.e4

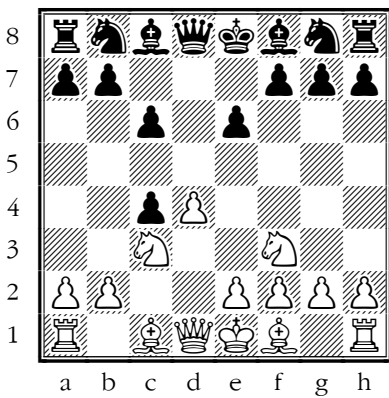


Is a gambit due to Frank Marshall.
The main line goes 4...dxe4 5.Nxe4
Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Qxd4 7.Bxb4 Qxe4+



And White has full compensation
and a death grip on the dark squares
after either 8.Be2 or 8.Ne2]

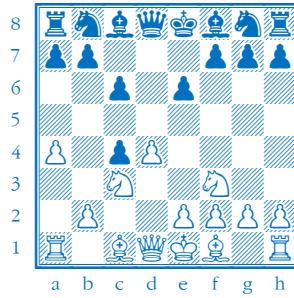
4...dxc4



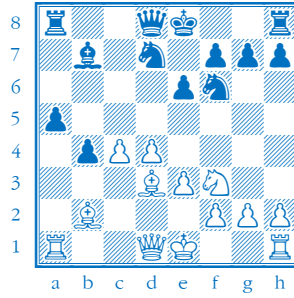
This introduces the Noteboom
variation, sometimes also named
after Gerald Abrahams.

5.e4!?

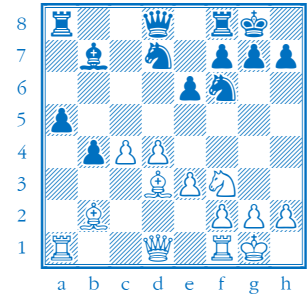
[5.a4!



The mad main lines go 5...Bb4 6.e3
b5 7.Bd2 a5 8.axb5 Bxc3 9.Bxc3
cxb5 10.b3 Bb7 (10...b4 11.Bxb4)
11.bxc4 b4 12.Bb2 Nf6 13.Bd3 Nbd7



Was played several times by the
young Vladimir Kramnik (13...0-0
14.0-0 (14.Qc2) 14...Nbd7



Donchenko, Alexa - Firouzja,
Alireza, 0-1, 83rd Tata Steel
Masters, 2021,
<https://lichess.org/IE2AxxJs>

And I see top grandmasters still
dabble in it]

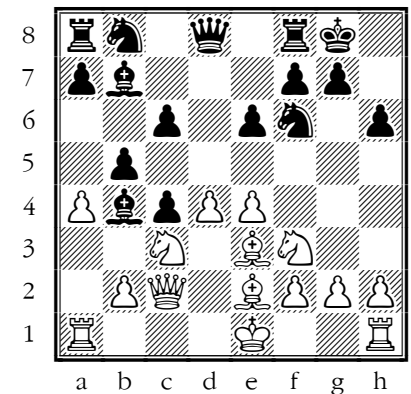
5...b5 6.a4 Bb4 7.Qc2=

[7.Bd2]

7...Nf6 8.Bg5?! +=

[8.Be2!]=]

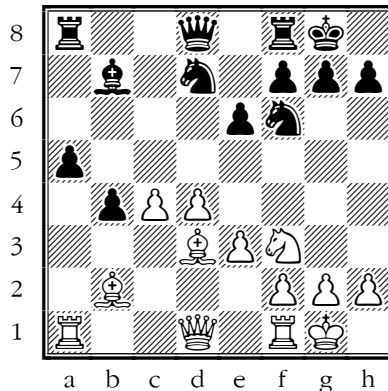
8...h6 9.Be3 Bb7 10.Be2 ♣ 0-0?! ♣



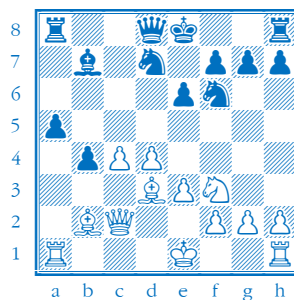
Hardly a bad move, but Black
keeps more advantage by playing
on the queen's side.

[10...a6; 10...Nbd7]

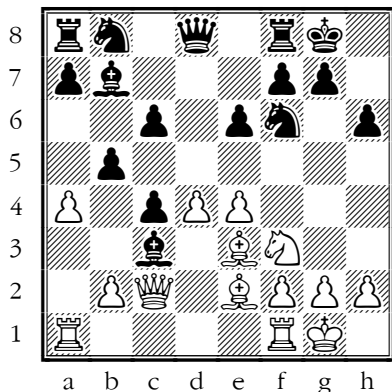
11.0-0 Bxc3?!



Hammer, Jon Ludvig - Nakamura,
Hikaru, 0-1, Norway Chess, 2013,
<https://lichess.org/agxGOMoD>)
14.0-0 (14.Qc2



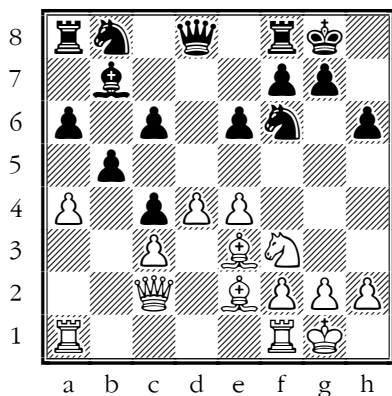
Neverov, Valeriy - Kramnik, Vladimir,
0-1, URS-ch58, 1991,
<https://lichess.org/FgkFRFqD>)
14...0-0



I think Black can keep all the advantages of their position as well as the Bishop pair.

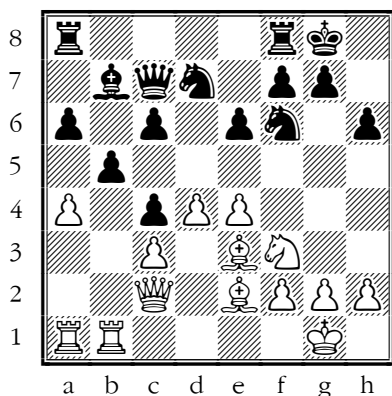
[11...a6!]

12.bxc3 a6=



White has yet to regain the pawn, but has a strong centre as some compensation, as well as the Bishop pair.

13.Rfe1 Nbd7 14.Reb1 ♣ Qc7?! ♣



Inaccuracy. c5 was best.

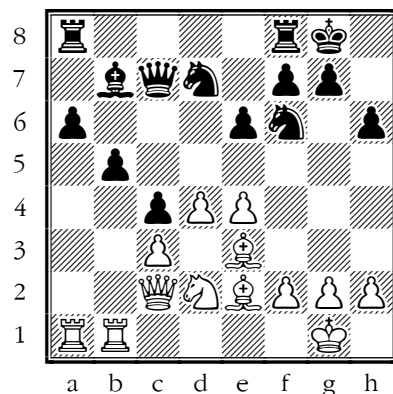
At the moment Black can't do anything with their queenside majority, so it's a good time to try and get your centre and King side pawns moving.

15.axb5?! ♣

Inaccuracy. Nd2 was best.

[15.Nd2 Rfb8 16.f3]

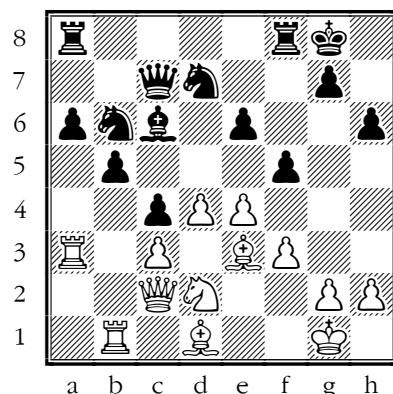
15...cxb5 16.Nd2



Well done — quite the right plan.
16...Nb6 17.f3 Bc6 18.Bd1 Nfd7
19.Ra3?!—+

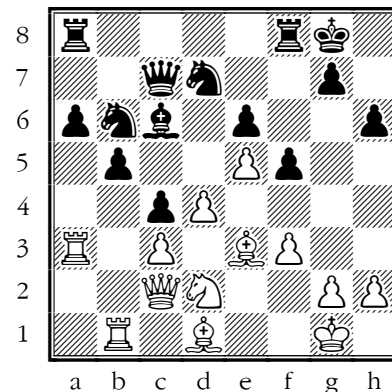
Inaccuracy. Nf1 was best.

19...f5



This position is better for Black, but it's not clear how they should proceed. Under these circumstances, you're probably best off sitting back and waiting for them to reveal their plan.

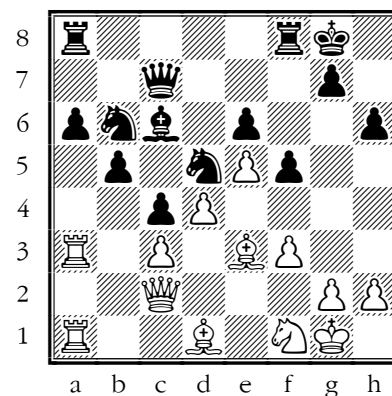
20.e5?



Mistake. Raa1 was best.

This gives away the d5 square and now the black Knights can become active.

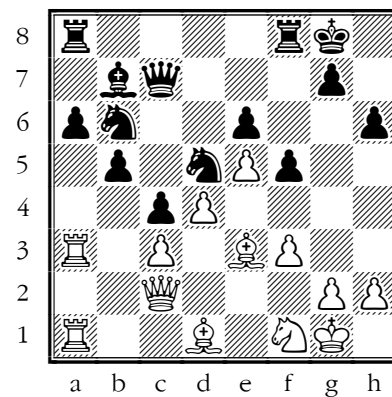
20...Nd5 21.Nf1 N7b6
22.Rba1?!—+



Inaccuracy. Bd2 was best.

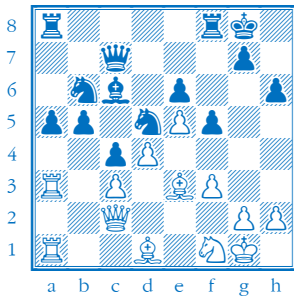
White has successfully doubled rooks on the half open a file but I'm not sure that's doing you any good.

22...Bb7?!



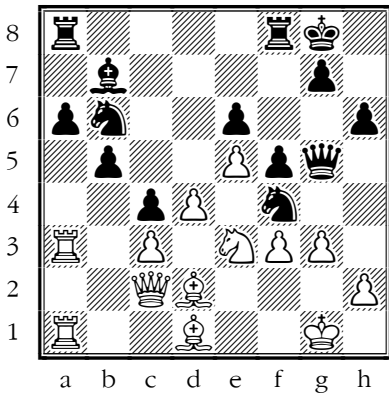
Inaccuracy. a5 was best.

[22...a5!]



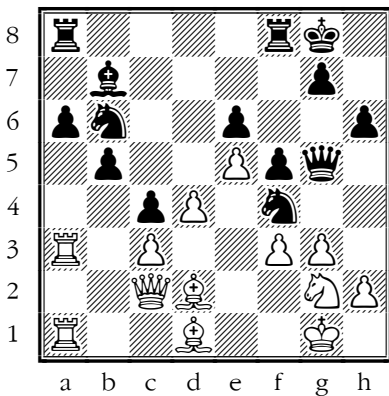
Emphasises how little White has achieved by doubling the rooks
 23.Rxa5 Rxa5 24.Rxa5 Na4]

23.Bd2 Qe7 24.Ne3 Nf4 25.g3 Qg5?



Mistake. Nfd5 was best.

26.Ng2??



Blunder. Kf1 was best.

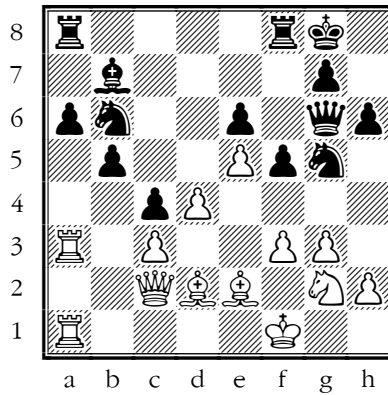
26...Nh3+ 27.Kf1 Qg6?!

Inaccuracy. Qh5 was best.

28.Be2?!

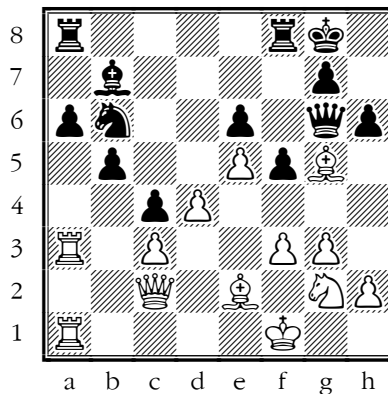
Inaccuracy. Nh4 was best.

28...Ng5?



Mistake. Qh5 was best.

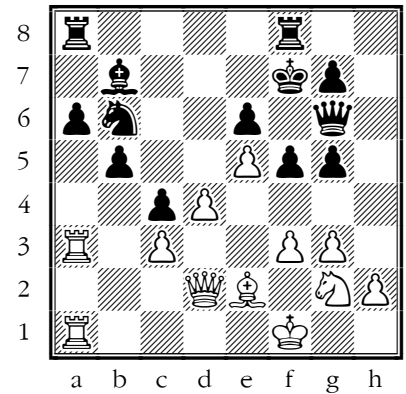
29.Bxg5?!



Inaccuracy. Nf4 was best.

White's position is tough but the Bishop pair is one of their assets.

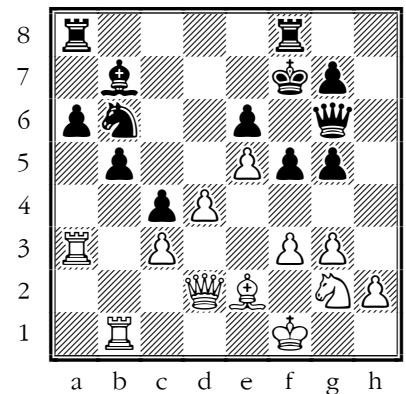
29...hxc5 30.Qd2 Kf7?!



Inaccuracy. f4 was best.

Black begins a plan to make use of the half open h-file and White seems unable to oppose it.

31.Rb1?



Mistake. f4 was best.

31...Rh8 32.Kg1 Rh3 33.Ne1 Rah8--+

...0-1

U18B_4 Joe Forty

“ A bit of a lucky escape in the first game and some fine sound play in the others. To cause your opponent most trouble when you have the advantage, you may need to keep a few more options open for you both.

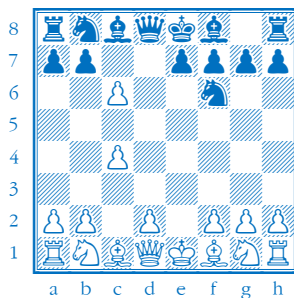
Joe Forty – NN

[B01 Scandinavian Defence]

“ You developed sensibly and centrally, so that when you lost a pawn, it didn't seem to matter too much. However, you then had a rush of blood to the head and moved your King into a danger area, and so lost the exchange. But your Bishop came to the rescue, recovering the exchange and leading to a well-earned draw.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.c4 c6
4.Nc3

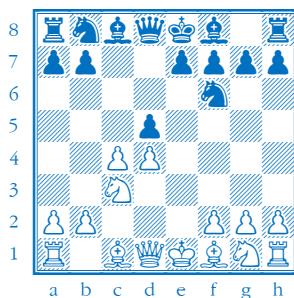
[4.dxc6



Is a gambit pawn which I'm sure Black would be happy for you to take.

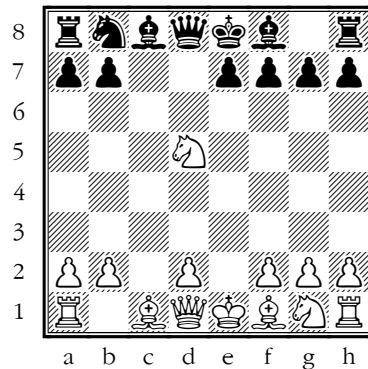
4...cxd5 5.cxd5

[5.d4!?



Transposes into the Panov Botvinnik variation of the Caro Kann. it's a variation I recommend because it often leads to familiar IQP positions]

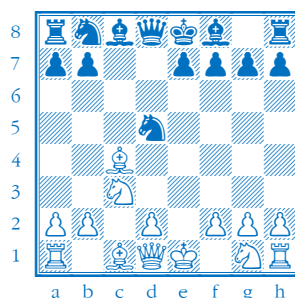
5...Nxd5= 6.Nxd5±



☞ To take is a mistake! (often)

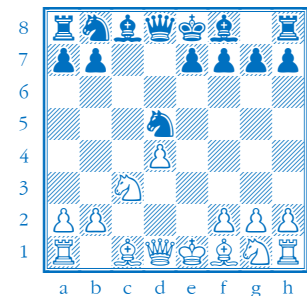
I don't know if you've ever heard the phrase, to take is a mistake? The idea is that, by taking, you often improve the position of one of the defending pieces: in this case, the queen. We always say, don't get your queen out too early, and that's good advice because the queen is often bugged by the opponent's minor pieces, which game time for development by attacking the queen, but in this position the queen has a fine dominating position in the centre and can't easily be attacked.

[6.Bc4!?



You can try and make use of the fact that you haven't yet played D4 by playing this developing move. there are a couple of nice ideas for example 6...Nxc3 7.Qf3! ± (7.Qb3!?)

6.d4

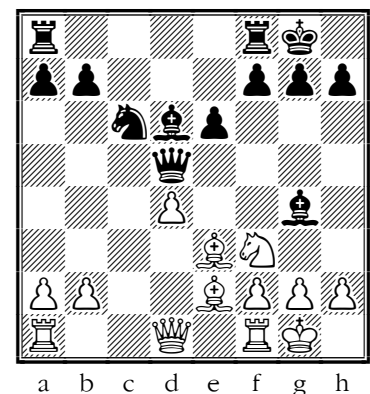


[8.Qa4+! Bd7 9.Qf4=]

6...Qxd5 7.Nf3 Bg4?! 8.Be2

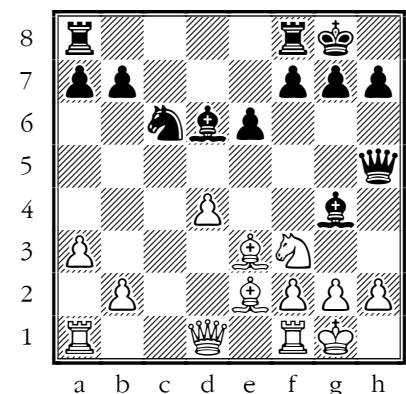
[8.Qa4+! Bd7 9.Qf4=]

8...Nc6 9.o-o e6 10.d4 Bd6
11.Be3 o-o



Black stands a little better here. White's pieces are passive and have little chance of making use of the attacking possibilities of an isolated Queens pawn.

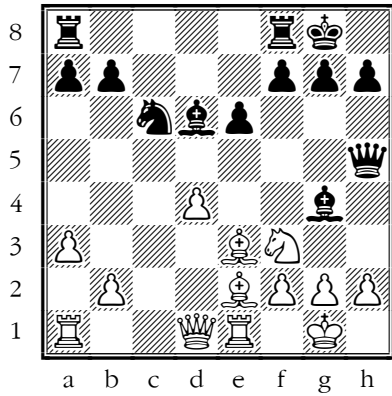
12.a3 Qh5?!



Inaccuracy. Rad8 was best.

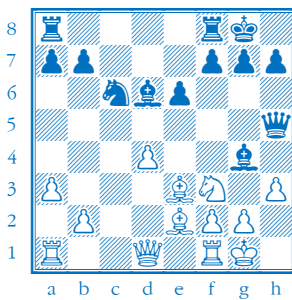
Ganging up on f3 but also attacking h2. It actually seems a bit too early for Black to start attacking – they should complete development instead.

13.Re1?♣



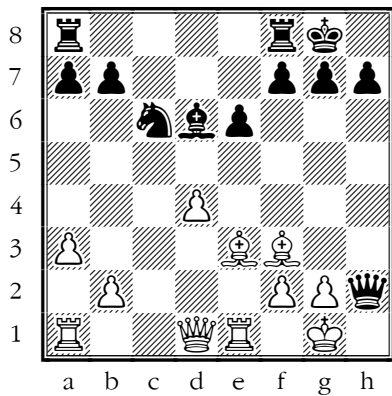
Mistake. h3 was best.

[13.h3! ♣]



[Solves both problems]

13...Bxf3 14.Bxf3 Qxh2+

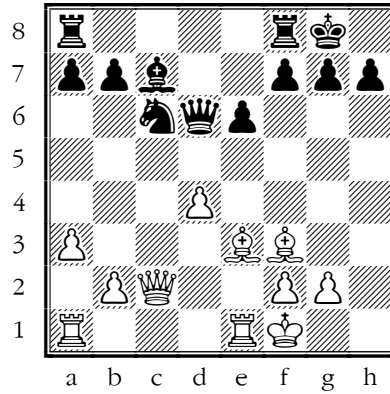


I don't think you're going to get checkmated here, but you are a whole pawn down.

15.Kf1 Bc7 16.Qc2?!♣

Inaccuracy. Rc1 was best.

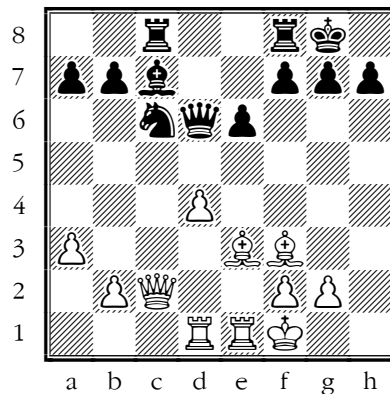
16...Qd6?=-



Mistake. Rac8 was best.

Again Black should stop fidgeting with the queen and complete their development.

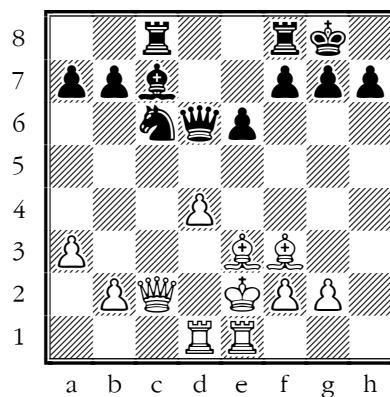
17.Rad1 Rac8?! ♣



Inaccuracy. Ne7 was best.

Despite the missing pawn, White stands slightly better here the Bishop pair is worth something and White has completed development. However you now make a big misjudgement.

18.Ke2??-+

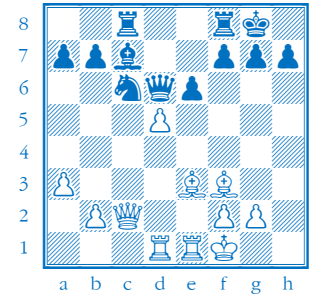


Blunder. d5 was best.

That King was OK where it was, but here it's a magnet for Black tactics.

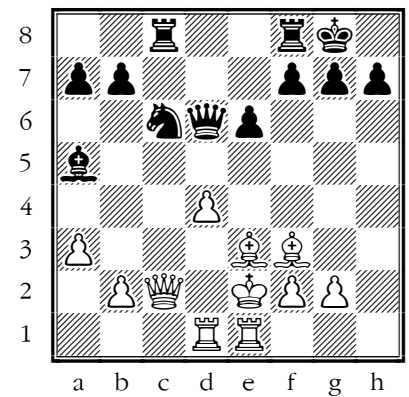
➔ **The King needs to be tucked out of the way while Queens are still roaming the board.**

[18.d5! ♣]



[Gets rid of your isolated Queen's pawn and opens up the game for your Bishop repair]

18...Ba5!



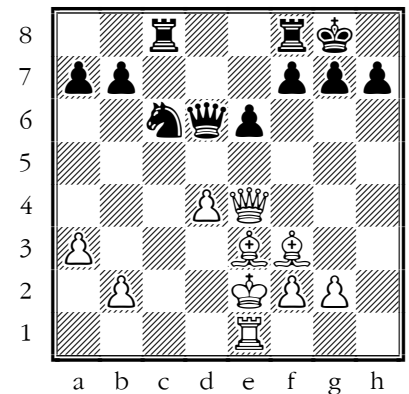
➔ **TACTIC: discovery**

setting up the discovery Nxd4+.

19.Qe4?!

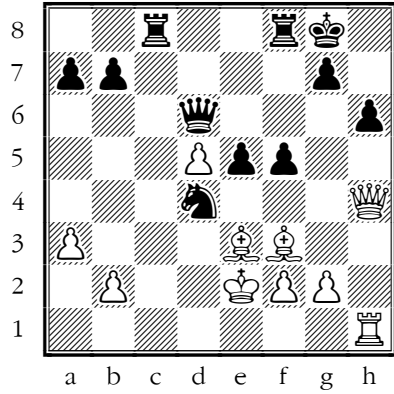
Inaccuracy. Qc5 was best.

19...Bxe1 20.Rxe1



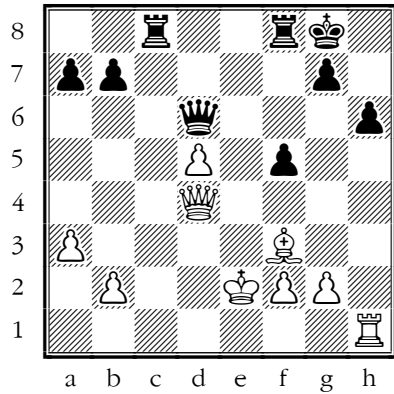
White has the Bishop pair but facing Rook and Pawn is a big ask.

20...f5 21.Qh4 e5 22.Rh1 h6
23.d5 Nd4+=



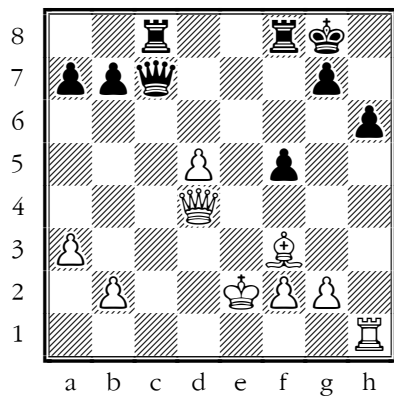
Black offers to return the pawn; it shouldn't make it much harder to win the game, but it might give White unnecessary hope.

24.Bxd4 exd4 25.Qxd4+-



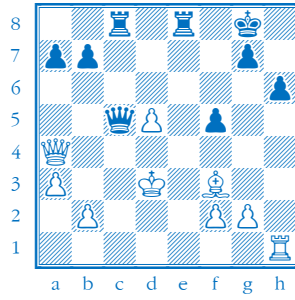
If White can activate the Rook, they will stand well, but Black can prevent this.

25...Qc7?



Mistake. Rc2+ was best.

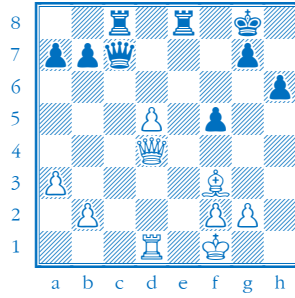
[25...Rfe8+! 26.Kd3 Qc7 27.Qa4 Qc5+-



Is crushing.]

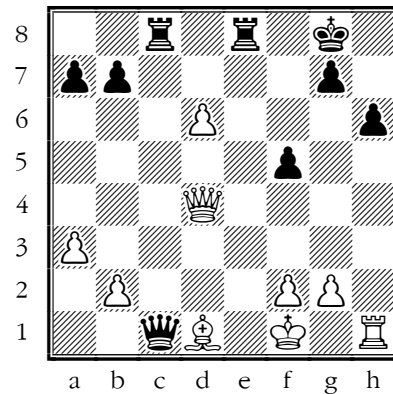
26.d6?!

[26.Rd1 Rfe8+ 27.Kf1



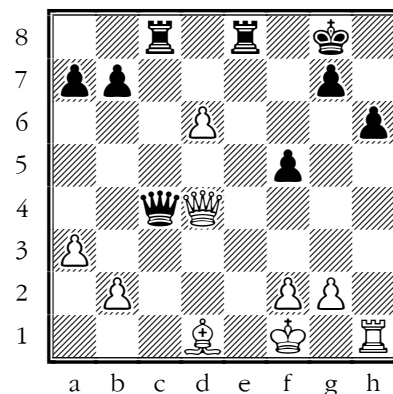
and White is clearly worse, but Black has a much harder job.]

26...Rfe8+ 27.Kf1 Qc1+ 28.Bd1



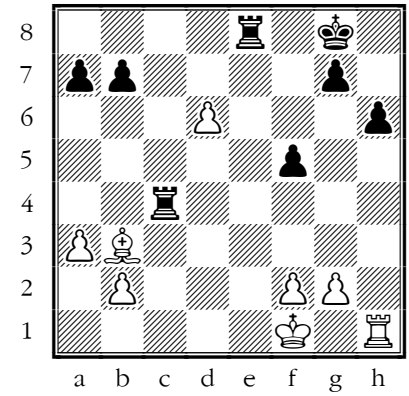
And Black comes up with a huge bucket of hope for White:

28...Qc4+??



Blunder. Qc5 was best.

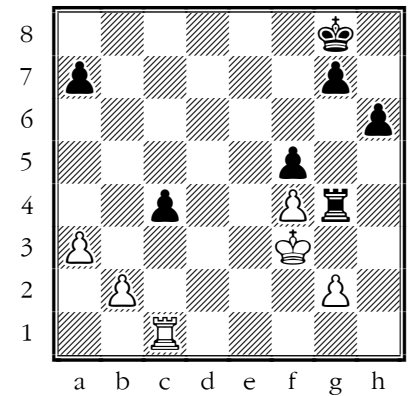
29.Qxc4+ Rxc4 30.Bb3=



→ TACTIC: pin

with equality.

30...b5 31.f3 Rd8 32.Ke2 Rxd6
33.Bxc4+ bxc4 34.Rc1 Rd4
35.Ke3 Rh4 36.f4 Rg4 37.Kf3=



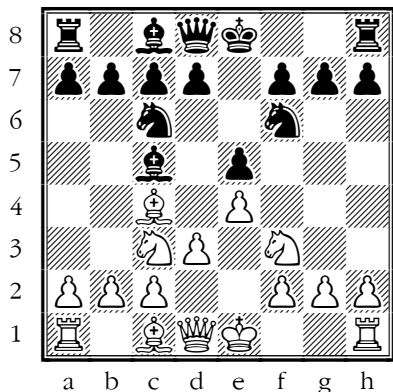
Well done!

1/2-1/2

Ethan Chung – Joe Forty
[C50 Old Stodge]

“ Steady stuff! Although I think you had whatever slim chances were around to win, it needs a bit more accuracy and energy than you found.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.d3 Bc5 5.Nc3

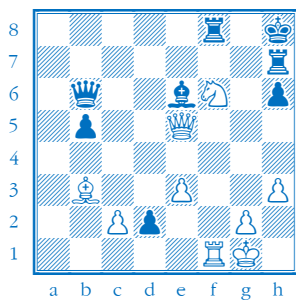


Surprised to see Old Stodge at U18 level. You can tell me that it's sometimes played even at super-GM level, and you'd be right, but it's terribly dry stuff.

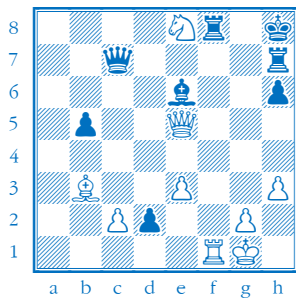
Carlsen, M. - Vidit, S., 1/2-1/2, 84th Tata Steel Masters, 2022,
<https://lichess.org/WTZkGbx5>]

5...h6

[5...a6 6.Nd5 Nxd5 7.Bxd5 d6 8.Be3 Bxe3 9.fxe3 o-o 10.o-o Nb8 11.b4 Nd7 12.Qd2 c6 13.Bb3 a5 14.a3 Nf6 15.h3 h6 16.Rab1 b5 17.Qc3 Bd7 18.Rf2 Qb6 19.Re1 Rfe8 20.Nh4 c5 21.Re1 cxb4 22.Qe1 d5 23.axb4 dxe4 24.bxa5 Rxa5 25.Ng6 Be6 26.Nxe5 exd3 27.Rxf6 gxf6 28.Rxf6 d2 29.Qg3+ Kf8 30.Rf1 Ra7 31.Ng6+ Kg7 32.Nf4+ Kh8 33.Nh5 f6 34.Nxf6 Rf8 35.Qf4 Rh7 36.Qe5

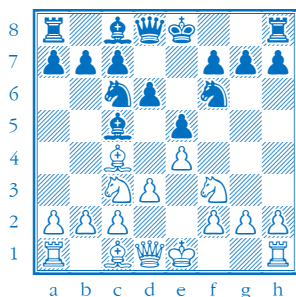


it's still dead equal as long as Black finds ...Rg7 36...Qc7?? 37.Ne8+

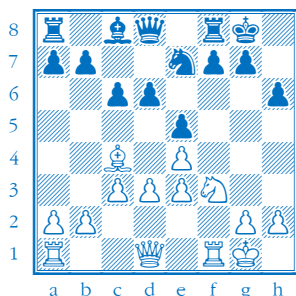


Kramnik, V. - Aronian, L., 1-0, FIDE Candidates 2018,
<https://lichess.org/PXUrAy86>;

5...d6

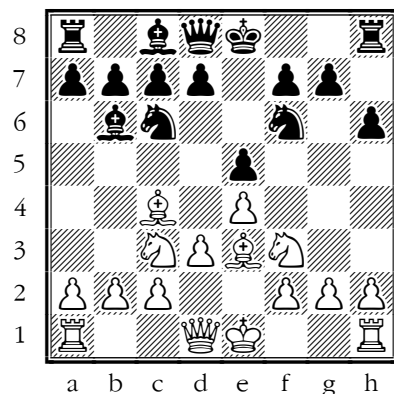


is the main line, when the only way to get any play is to try and mobilise the centre pawns. 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bxf6 Qxf6 8.Nd5 Qd8 9.c3 Ne7 10.Ne3 Bxe3 11.fxe3 o-o 12.o-o c6



has been the main line of theory for over a century.]

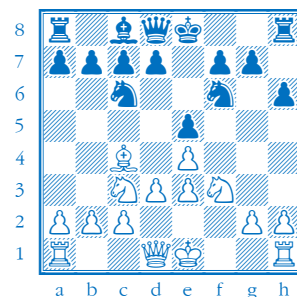
6.Be3 Bb6



That's a good principled move; White doesn't get a half-open f-

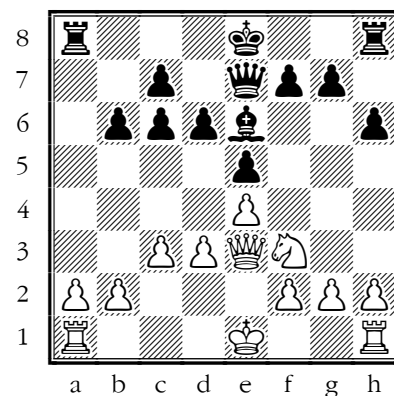
file, and White might give you the half-open a-file.

[6...Bxe3 7.fxe3



and White can dream about an attack down the f-file (see the Kramnik game).]

7.Qd2 Qe7 8.Nd5 Nxd5 9.Bxd5 d6 10.c3 Bg4 11.Bxb6 axb6 12.Qe3 Be6= 13.Bxc6+ bxc6



With all the exchanges, Black's pawn formation has become a little messier, but in fact as the pawns have moved towards the centre, Black can claim a small advantage – particularly having a Bishop facing a Knight.

14.c4 o-o 15.o-o f6 16.Rfc1 d5 17.Nh4 Qf7 18.b3 ♯

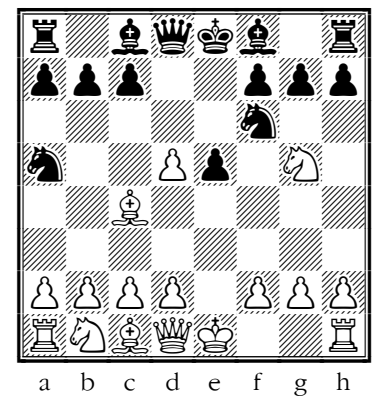
1/2-1/2

Ayush Menon – Joe Forty

[C58 Two Knights' Defence, Polerio Gambit]

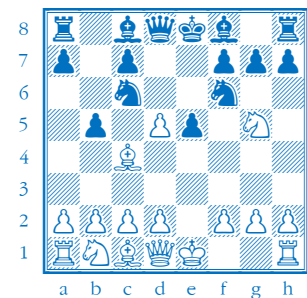
“ Once the game left the path of theory, both players stumbled badly, but it was White's error in playing an unsound piece sacrifice that proved decisive.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Na5=



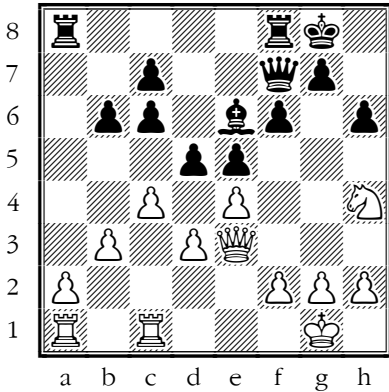
The master move.

[5...b5!?!+=



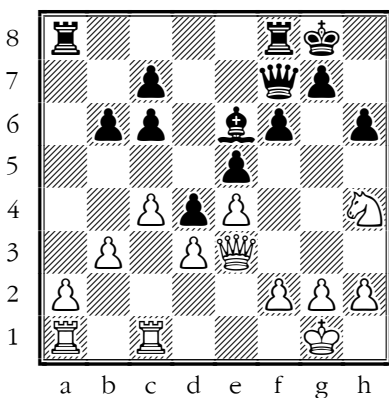
is less well known and a bit easier to understand, I think;

5...Nxd5??±



Black is a little better here: better minor piece, better centre, a few more options.

18...d4?! ♣

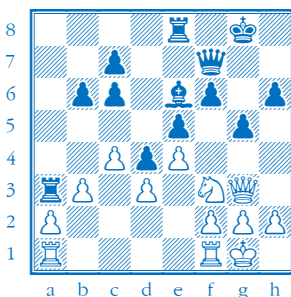


Closing the position helps only White.

[18...Qh5!]

19.Qg3 Rfe8 20.Rf1 g5 21.Nf3 Bd7 ♣

[21...Ra3! ♣



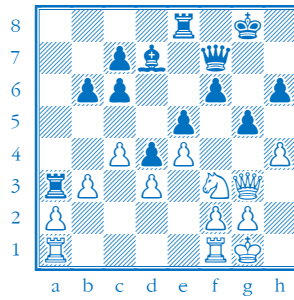
and you can pin down White to the defence of the a-pawn. I have a vague idea this was the idea in one of the puzzles at the training day...

(Hug-Barle 1975

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1998323>.)]

22.h4?! Qe7

[22...Ra3!

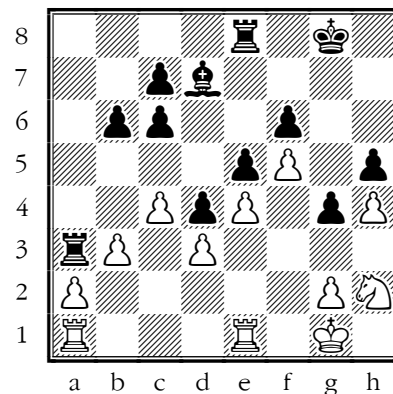


is still best]

23.Nh2 h5= 24.f4 g4 25.f5?!

Inaccuracy. fxg5 was best.

25...Qb4 26.Qe1 Qxe1 27.Rfxe1 Ra3! =

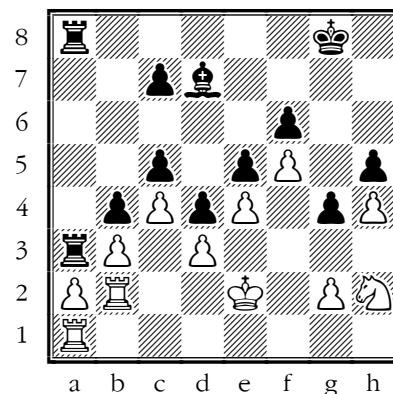


Hurrah! But with everything else stuck in concrete, it doesn't matter any more.

28.Reb1 b5 29.Kf2 Rea8 30.Rb2 c5 31.Ke2?!

Inaccuracy. Nf1 was best.

31...b4?!

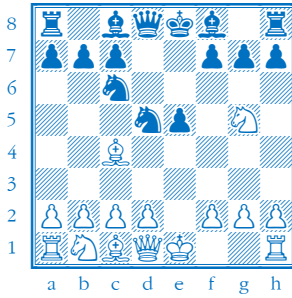


Inaccuracy. bxc4 was best.

The more you close off options, the fewer winning chances you have.

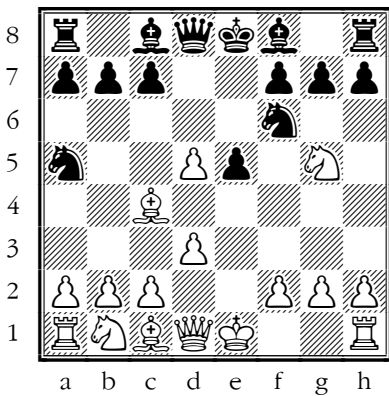
[31...bxc4! 32.bxc4 Rc3! ♣

32.Nf1 Kg7 33.Kd2 Be8=



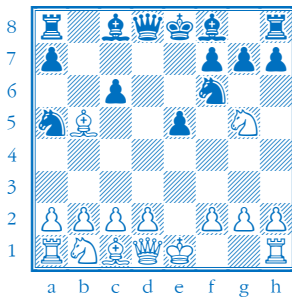
is a well-known mistake, allowing the Fried Liver Attack 6.Nxf7 Kxf7 7.Qf3+ Ke6±]

6.d3



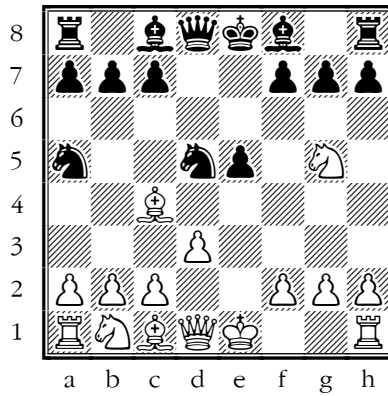
Unusual, and not especially good, but it produces an immediate blunder.

[6.Bb5+ c6 7.dxc6 bxc6



is usual, when the main lines are 8.Be2 (8.Bd3; 8.Qf3]

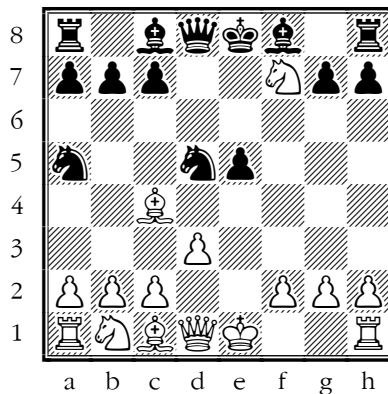
6...Nxd5??+--



Blunder. h6 was best.

This isn't the Fried Liver position, and you can take on c4, so perhaps it's OK? Alas, no...

7.Nxf7??+--

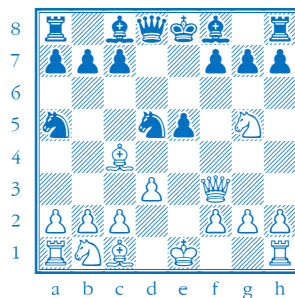


Blunder. Qf3 was best.

White knows all about the Fried Liver Attack, and means to show that it works here too! But it really doesn't...

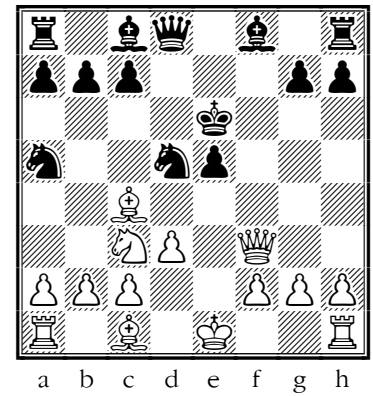
Instead, White has a straightforward attacking idea that gives Black a lot of trouble,.

[7.Qf3!+--



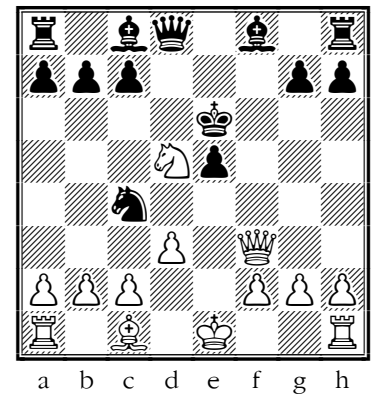
doesn't quite win on the spot, but Black has all sorts of problems 7...Be6 8.Nxe6 fxe6 9.Qh5+ Kd7 10.Bd2 Nxc4 11.dxc4 Nb6+--]

7...Kxf7 8.Qf3+ Ke6 9.Nc3?!



Inaccuracy. Bg5 was best.

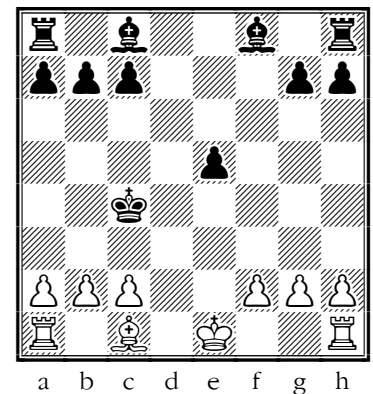
9...Nxc4 10.Nxd5?!



Inaccuracy. Bg5 was best.

More or less forces the exchange of Queens, which is really not what White wants.

10...Qxd5 11.Qxd5+ Kxd5 12.dxc4+ Kxc4+--



Black is a whole piece ahead with no problems, and I would have forgiven White for resigning here. I struggled to find anything to comment on in the rest of the game except to say you kept control throughout.

13.0-0 Bf5 14.Be3 Bc5 15.b3+ Kb5 16.a4+ Kc6 17.Bxc5 Kxc5 18.Rab1 Rad8 19.b4+ Kc4 20.f4 Bxc2 21.Rbc1 Rd2 22.fxe5 Kxb4

23.Rf7 Bxa4 24.Rfxc7 Bc6 25.Rxg7 Re2 26.Rg4+ Ka5 27.Rg5 Re8 28.Ra1+ Kb6 29.Rb1+ Kc7 30.Rg7+ Kb8

31.Rxh7 Rxg2+ 32.Kf1 Rf8+ 33.Ke1 Rg1+-+
0-1

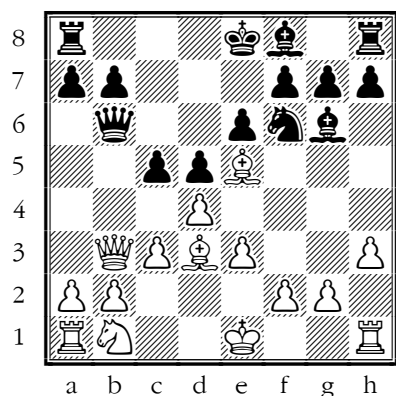
U18B_5 Ronit Randhawa

“ Some fine sound play throughout and a very good score – well done!

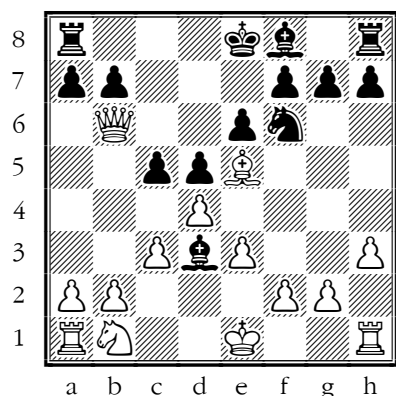
NN - Ronit Randhawa
[D02 London System]

“ On move 10, White's hand called their brain, but got no reply. You converted very nicely, never losing control.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 d5 3.Nf3 Bf5 4.h3 e6 5.e3 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Bd3 Bg6 8.Ne5 Nxe5 9.Bxe5 Qb6= 10.Qb3??-+

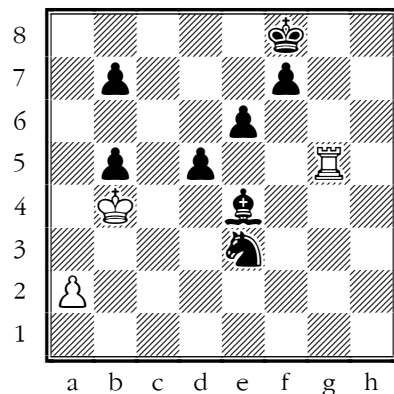


Blunder. Bxg6 was best.
10...Bxd3 11.Qxb6



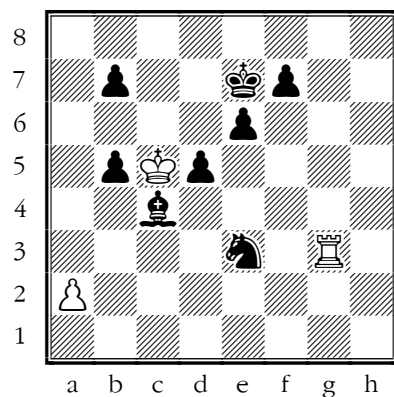
I expect that White, being a piece down, is better off keeping the Queens on, and hoping to make trouble sometime. The rest of the game gives Black no problems at all.

11...axb6 12.Na3 cxd4 13.Bxd4 Bxa3 14.bxa3 Rxa3 15.Kd2 Bg6 16.f3 b5 17.g4 0-0 18.Bc5 Rfa8 19.Bxa3 Rxa3 20.h4 h6 21.h5 Bh7 22.Rhg1 Nd7 23.f4 Be4 24.g5 hxg5 25.fxg5 Ne5 26.Rg3 Nc4+ 27.Kd1 Rxc3 28.h6 Rxe3 29.Rxe3 Nxe3+ 30.Kd2 Nc4+ 31.Kc3 gxh6 32.Rg1 hxg5 33.Rxg5+ Kf8 34.Kb4 Ne3



["Nc5" is on the score sheet]

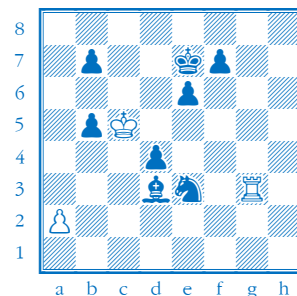
35.Kc5 Ke7 36.Rg8 Bd3 37.Rg3 Bc4?!-+



Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

Black is still winning rather easily.

[37...d4!



holds onto the piece, because 38.Kxd4 Nf5+]

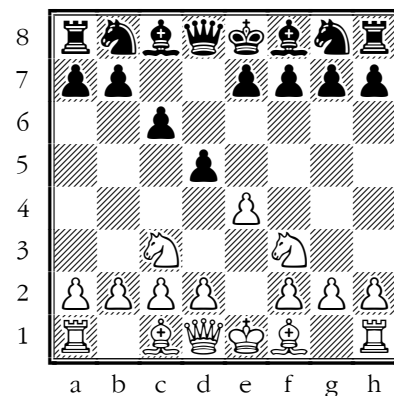
...0-1

Ronit Randhawa - Linish Chandra

[B11 Caro-Kann, Two Knights' Variation]

“ A very nice game where you were winning for most of time and converted nicely although there was one little wobble towards the end that could have cost you the win.

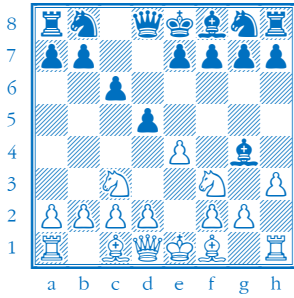
1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3



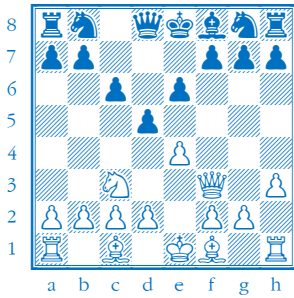
The two knights variation, beloved of the young Bobby Fisher.

3...Bg4 4.Be2

[4.h3

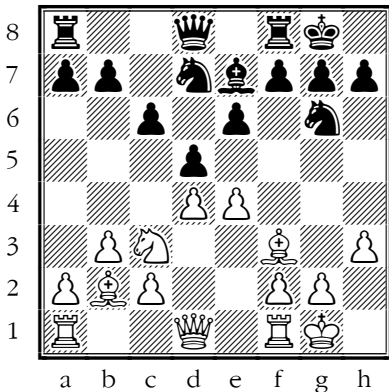


Is the main line which goes 4...Bxf3
5.Qxf3 e6



And now White has to decide how
aggressive they are feeling 6.d3
(6.d4!?) 6...Nd7 7.Bd2 Ngf6 8.g3
(8.g4!?)

4...e6 5.o-o Ne7 6.d4 Ng6 7.h3
Bxf3 8.Bxf3 Be7± 9.b3± Nd7
10.Bb2 o-o±



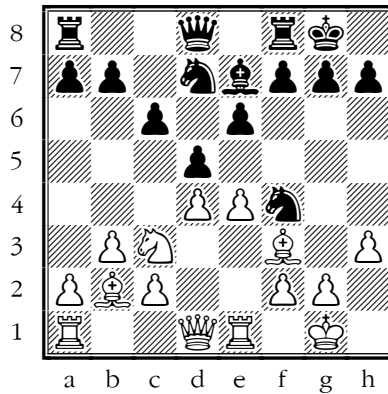
With Black's pawns blocking on
the light squares, White's Bishop
pair have yet to show their teeth. I
think it's still White for preference.

11.Re1?!

Inaccuracy. g3 was best.

[11.g3 Rc8]

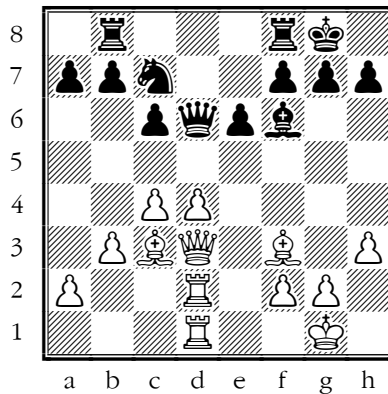
11...Nf4?!



Inaccuracy. Bb4 was best.

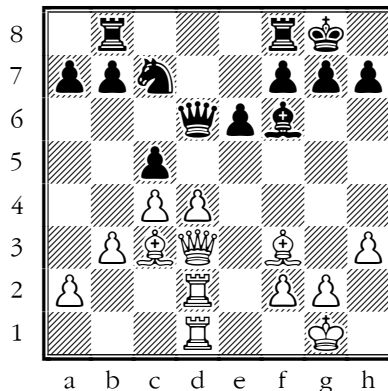
[11...Bb4 12.a3]

**12.Ne2 Nxe2+ 13.Rxe2 dxe4
14.Bxe4 Nf6 15.Bf3 Nd5 16.c4
Nc7 17.Qd3 Bf6 18.Rd1 Rb8
19.Bc3 Qd6 20.Red2±**



What has a fine position here and
Black can only wait for you to
reveal your plan.

20...c5?+-



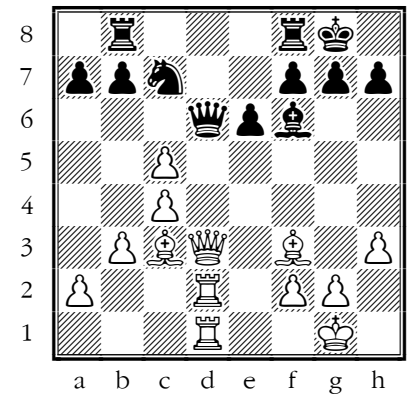
Mistake. Rfd8 was best.

Or they can lash out when the
open lines will favour your active
pieces...

➔ **Open lines favour active pieces**

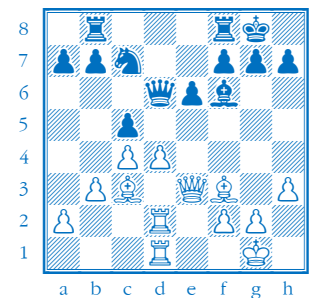
[20...Rfd8 21.g3]

21.dxc5!?+-



You handle the next phase very
well.

[21.Qe3?]



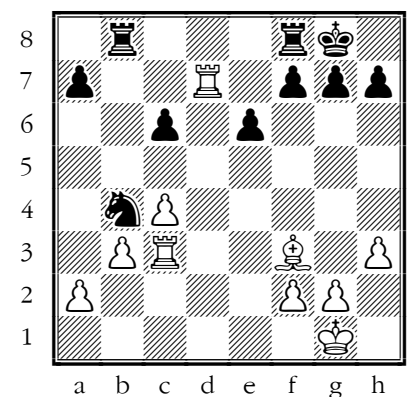
Might be even better]

**21...Qxd3 22.Rxd3 Bxc3 23.Rxc3
Na6?!**

Inaccuracy. a5 was best.

[23...a5]

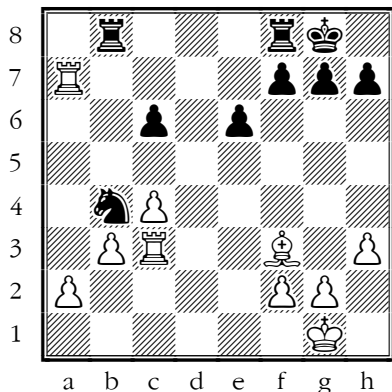
24.c6! bxc6 25.Rd7 Nb4?+-



Mistake. Nc5 was best.

White has a winning position.

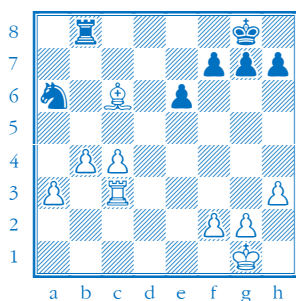
26.Rxa7??±



Blunder. a3 was best.

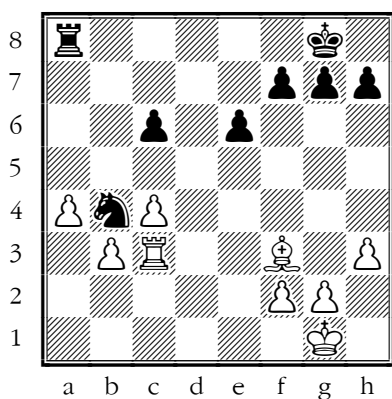
Two question marks from Stockfish is harsh, but a3 is definitely better.

[26.a3 Na6 27.Rxa7 Ra8 28.Rxa8 Rxa8 29.Bxc6 Rb8 30.b4+]



with three connected passed pawns, and a crushing position.

26...Ra8 27.Rxa8 Rxa8 28.a4



Only one passed pawn now and it's not easy to push.

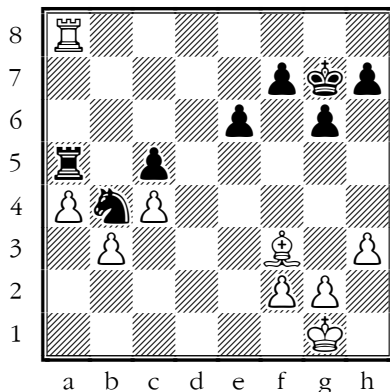
28...g6 29.Rc1 Ra6?!

Inaccuracy. Kf8 was best.

30.Rd1 c5 31.Rd8+ Kg7 32.Rc8 Ra5?!

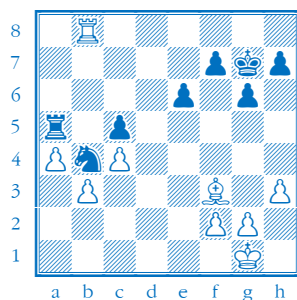
Inaccuracy. Nd3 was best.

33.Ra8?



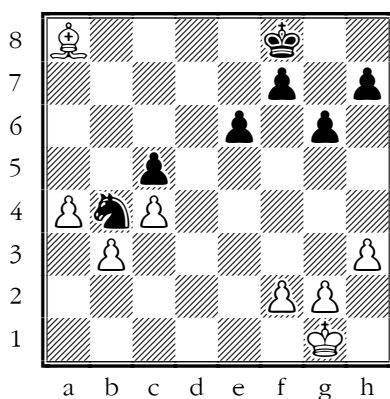
Mistake. Rb8 was best.

[33.Rb8



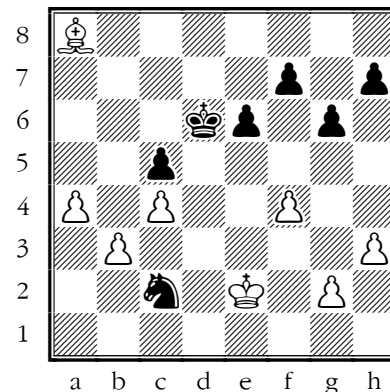
idea Rb5 is best]

33...Rxa8 34.Bxa8 Kf8±



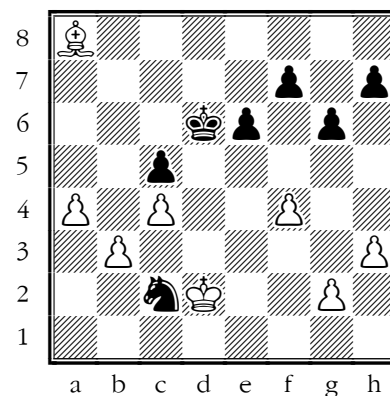
You're still winning here, but your Bishop won't find it easy to support the advance of your pawns.

35.Kf1 Ke7 36.Ke2 Kd6 37.f4 Nc2±



Still better for you, but.

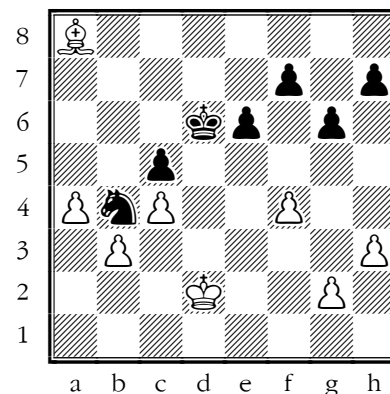
38.Kd2?



Mistake. Kd3 was best.

[38.Kd3]

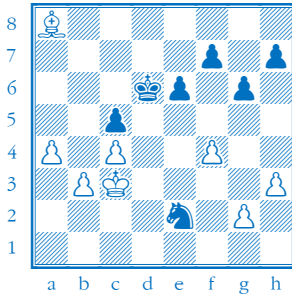
38...Nb4??



Blunder. Nd4 was best.

...and from here you reeled in the fish. But Black's last move was not correct:

[38...Nd4!= 39.Kc3 Ne2+



→ TACTIC: fork

And Black fights on!

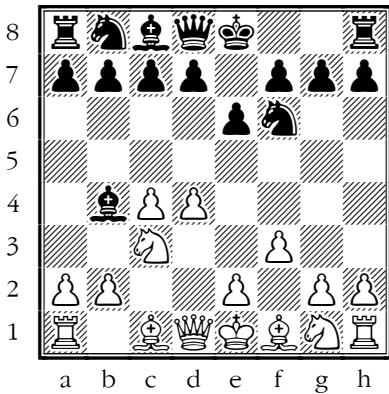
...1-0

Vismith Prabha – Ronit Randhawa

[E25 Nimzo-Indian Defence,
Kmoch Variation]

“ White stood very well coming out of the opening, but you defended well and deserved your draw.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.f3

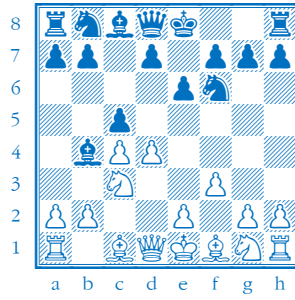


A recently trendy line, although once the computers picked over it, it's clearly worth only equality against best play.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXTBx6HrYm16kXIG3vNEcGWFDsgHdCMgg>

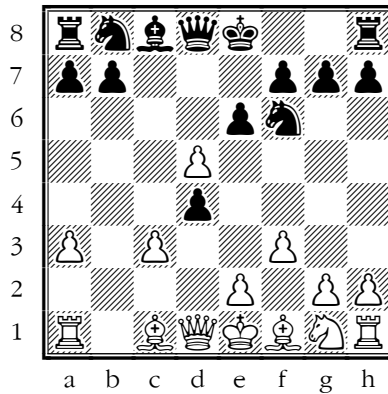
4...d5

[4...c5



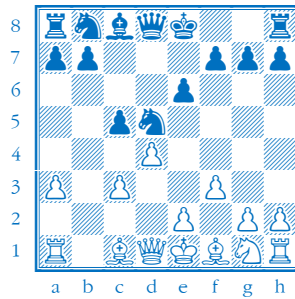
scores fractionally better in master play]

5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.cxd5=
cxd4?!±

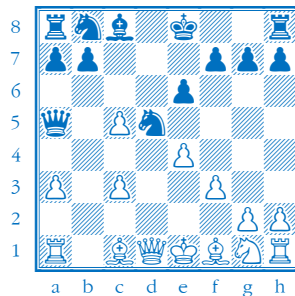


Inaccuracy. exd5 was best.

[7...Nxd5



is most commonly played, when
8.dxc5 Qa5 9.e4

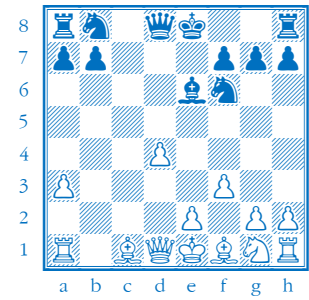


is the best try for an advantage. White's extra pawn is pretty meaningless, but the Bishop pair counts for something.

8.cxd4?! ±

Inaccuracy. dxe6 was best.

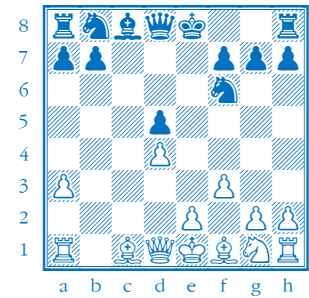
[8.dxe6! Bxe6 9.cxd4



and White is a pawn up with all the other advantages of position, except development.]

8...Nxd5

[8...exd5!

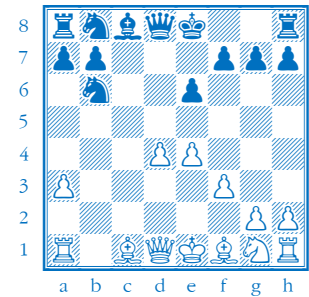


looks better here, holding up e4.]

9.e4 Nf6?!±

Inaccuracy. Nb6 was best.

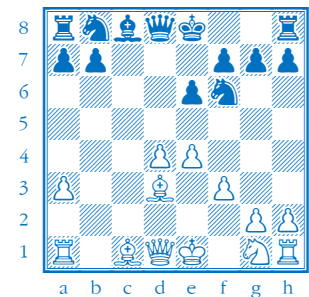
[9...Nb6



and the Knight has more options]

10.Ne2

[10.Bd3!?

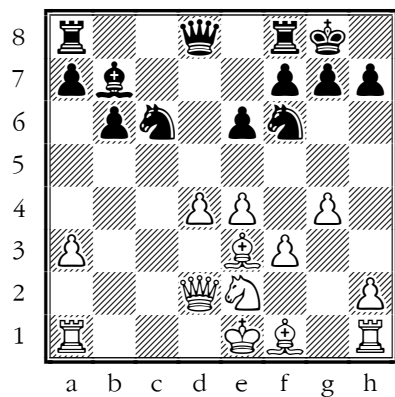


first is best]

10...0-0 11.Bg5 Nc6 12.g4 Qa5+
13.Bd2 Qd8 14.Be3 b6±
15.Qd2?!=

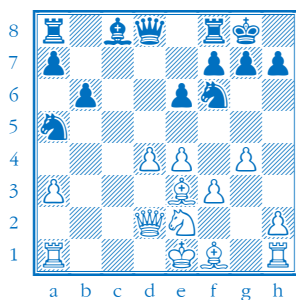
Inaccuracy. Rc1 was best.

15...Bb7?! ±



Inaccuracy. Na5 was best.

[15...Na5!

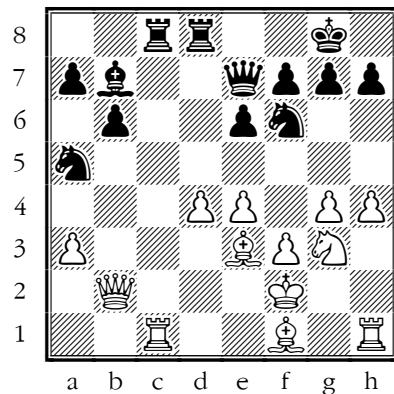


is a cheap shot but helps you
organise your pieces]

16.h4 Qe7?!±

Inaccuracy. Na5 was best.

17.Kf2 Rfd8 18.Qb2 Rac8
19.Rc1 Na5 20.Ng3±

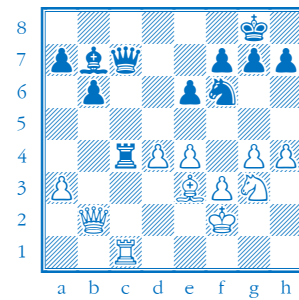


White has been signalling their
intention to attack on the King's-
side for a while, but has yet to
make anything stick. Meanwhile,
you can make a little distraction on
the other wing.

20...Rxc1 21.Qxc1?! Rc8 22.Qb2
Nc4 23.Bxc4 Rxc4 24.Rc1 Rxc1?!

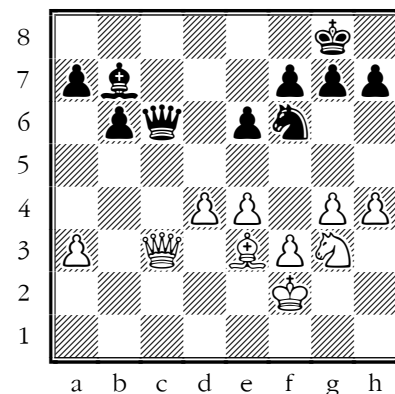
To take is a mistake

[24...Qc7



is better: make White make the
swap.]

25.Qxc1 Qd7 26.Qc3 Qc6±



It's taken you some extra moves to
challenge the Queen. But a lot of
the energy has gone out of the
white position, and you're close to
equality.

27.Qd2 Qa4 28.Qc3 Qc6 29.Qb4
Ne8±

1/2-1/2

U18B_6 Josh Keay

“ You're an old hand at the game now and there are no obvious beams to remove from your eye. But some places remain to improve – greater tactical sharpness would surely gain (and save) some points, and I think you need something more forward-going against the French.

Dev Mistry – Josh Keay

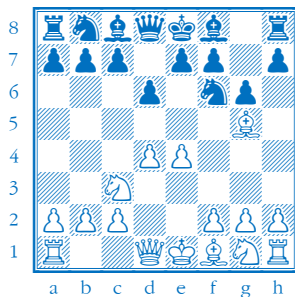
[B08 Pirc Defence]

“ A game that was roughly level throughout and both sides played quite OK, but there was a little tactic cutting off the retreat of the Rook which might have given you a win.

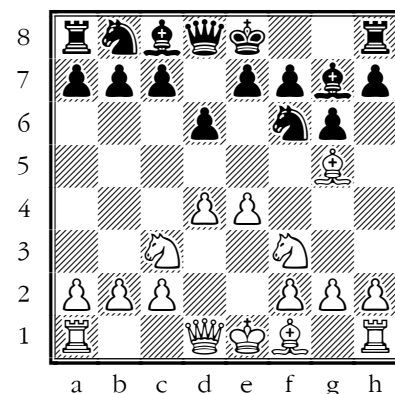
1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Nf3

[4.Bg5

4...Bg7 5.Bg5



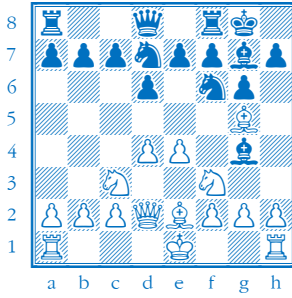
is a move, with perhaps f4 to follow]



Mixing systems.

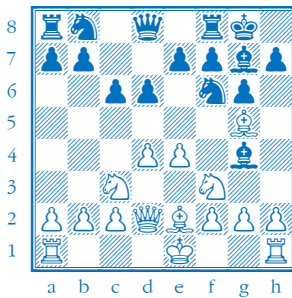
5...o-o 6.Qd2 Bg4 7.Be2 c5?! ±

[7...Nbd7



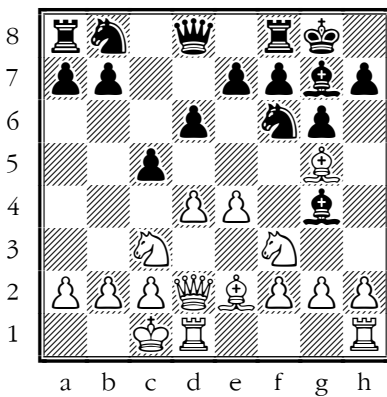
first is best, or;

7...c6



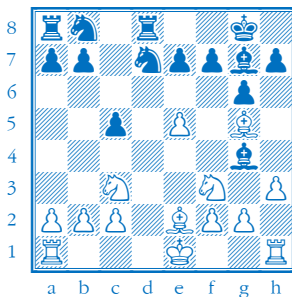
with Qc7 and/or b5]

8.o-o-o?!±



Inaccuracy. dxc5 was best.

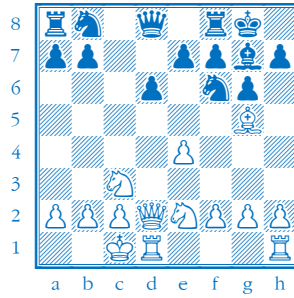
[8.dxc5 dxc5 9.Qxd8 Rxd8 10.e5 Nfd7 11.h3±



and White has a plus, despite the lost tempo]

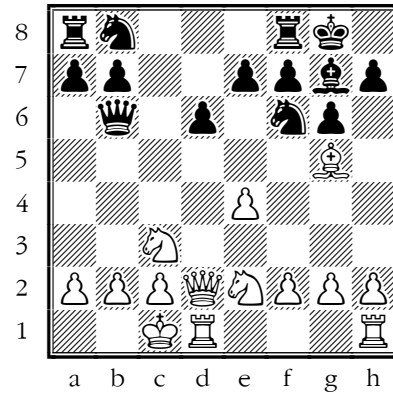
8...cxd4 9.Nxd4 Bxe2

10.Ndxex2=



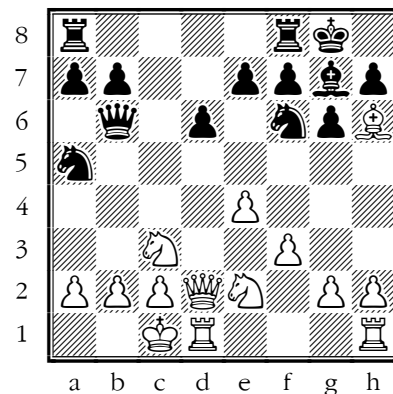
about equal]

10...Qb6?!]



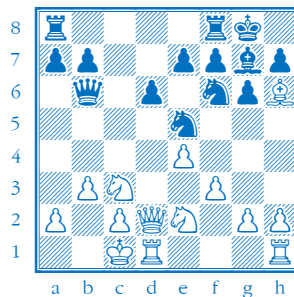
Inaccuracy. Nbd7 was best.

11.f3 Nc6 12.Bh6 Na5?!



Inaccuracy. Ne5 was best.

[12...Ne5 13.b3

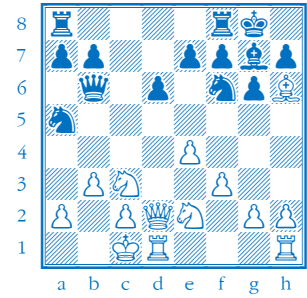


and the Knight on e5 isn't badly off]

13.Bxg7?!=

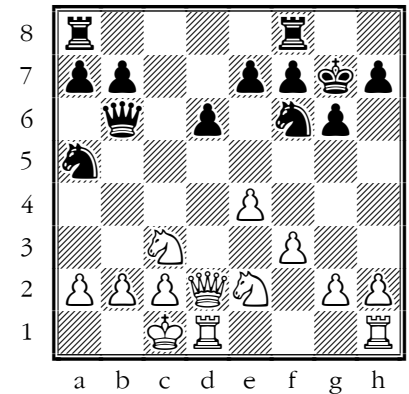
Inaccuracy. b3 was best.

[13.b3! ±



and your Knight has nowhere to go except back to c6.

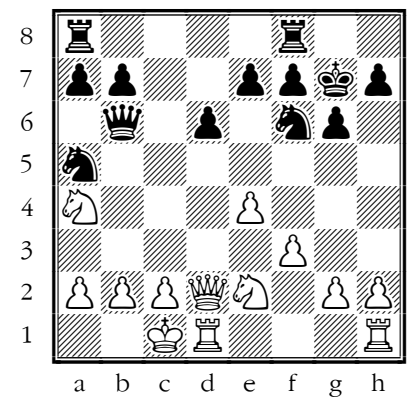
13...Kxg7?!±



Inaccuracy. Nc4 was best.

The last Bishops disappear, so both sides must work out how best to deploy their short-stepping knights.

14.Na4?!=



Inaccuracy. b3 was best.

A pointless 'poke', easily dealt with, and after which the Knight is misplaced.

➔ One-move-deep threats may worsen your position and/or improve that of your opponent.

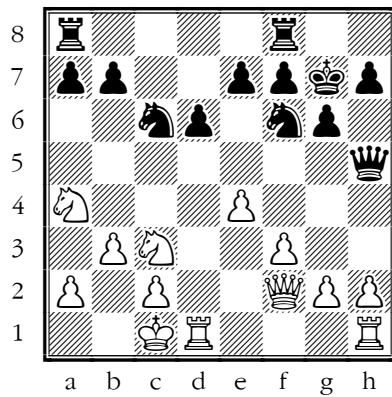
14...Qb5?!

Inaccuracy. Qa6 was best.

15.b3 Nc6 16.Nec3 Qh5?!

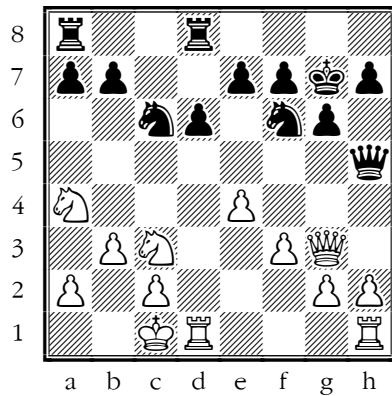
Inaccuracy. Qa5 was best.

17.Qf2?



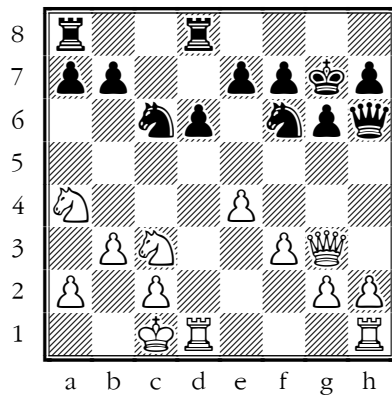
Mistake. Nd5 was best.

17...Rfd8= 18.Qg3?±



Mistake. Qd2 was best.

18...Qh6+?



Mistake. Qa5 was best.

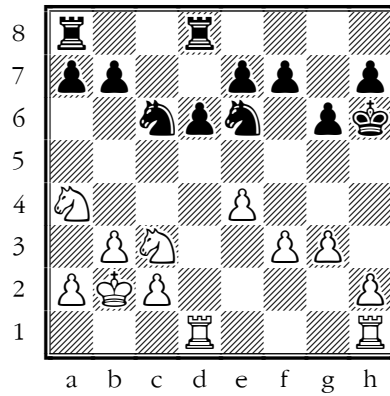
19.Kb2 Nh5 20.Qh4± Nf4?! ±

Inaccuracy. Qf4 was best.

21.Qxh6+?!

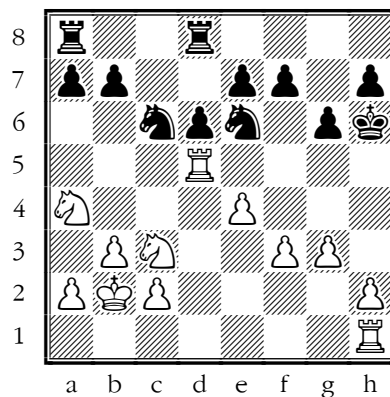
Inaccuracy. Qf2 was best.

21...Kxh6 22.g3 Ne6=



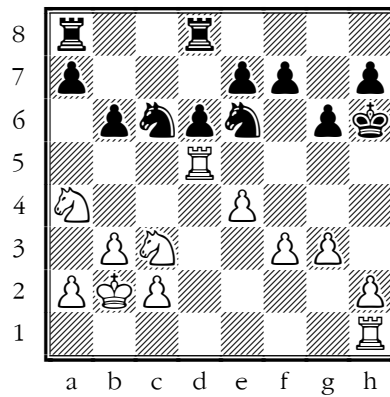
White now advances with the Rook, but its retreat can be cut off.

23.Rd5??-+



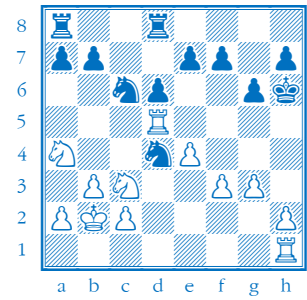
Blunder. Nd5 was best.

23...b6??=

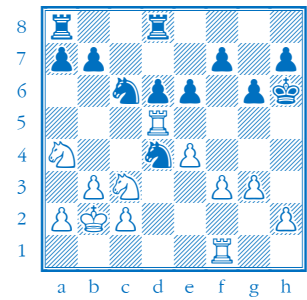


Blunder. Ned4 was best.

[23...Ned4!

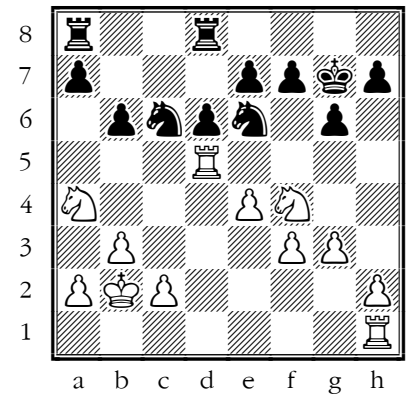


wins at least the f-pawn, because if 24.Rf1 e6!



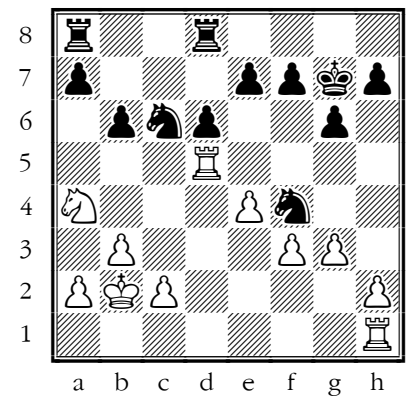
netting the Rook]

24.Ne2 Kg7 25.Nf4??-+



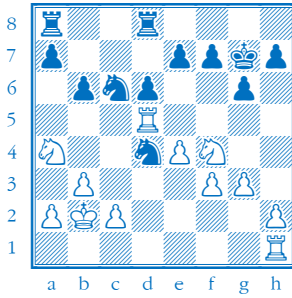
Blunder. c4 was best.

25...Nxf4??±



Blunder. Ned4 was best.

[25...Ned4

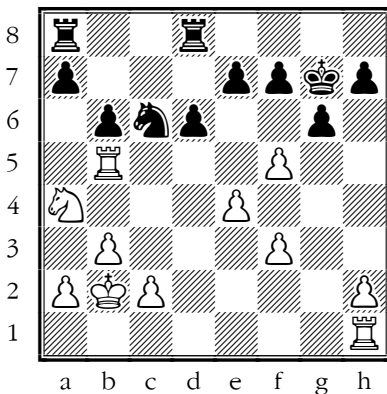


wins the Pf3 as before.]

26.gxf4 Nb4?! ±

Inaccuracy. e6 was best.

27.Rb5 Nc6 28.f5?±

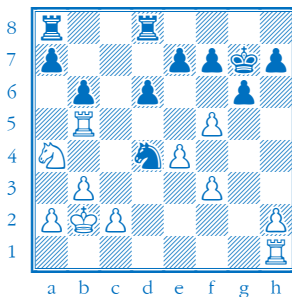


Mistake. Nc3 was best.

28...Rac8?!±

Inaccuracy. Nd4 was best.

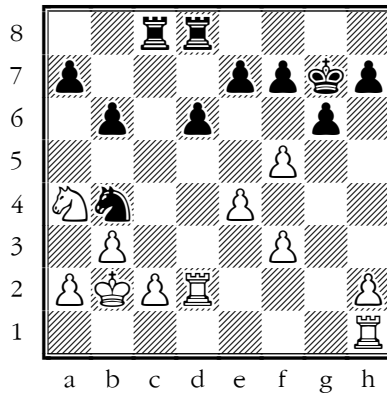
[28...Nd4



→ TACTIC: fork

Picks up that lucky f-pawn]

29.Rd5 Nb4 30.Rd2±



1/2–1/2

I think you pondered about playing on here; there's no harm in it, you do look a little better here, yet Stockfish puts it close to equal chances, so a draw is fair enough. But Magnus would have a go!

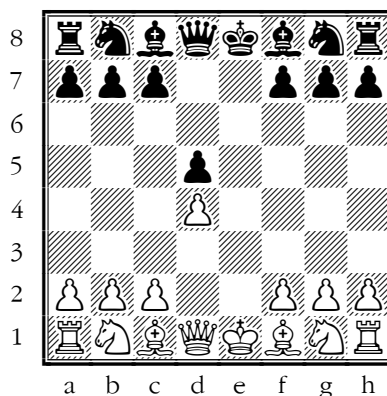
e.g. 30...Kf6 31.fxg6 hxg6 32.h4 Rh8 33.Nc3 Kg7±

Josh Keay – Oliver Hammond

[C01 French Defence, Exchange Variation]

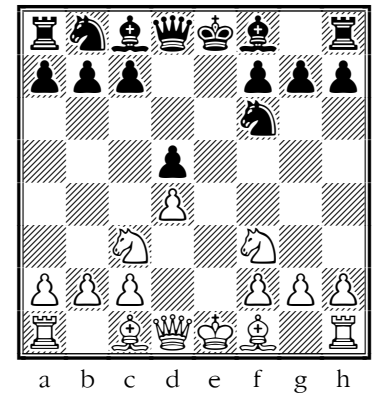
“ There were two missed opportunities for you here, I fear, and either of them could have given you a better result in a game that gradually slipped away from you.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5



This is often rather prospectless for White, even if you are accurate.

4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Nc3=



Well, not so accurate. That Knight really doesn't have much of a career on the Queen's-side. I think I told you this before!

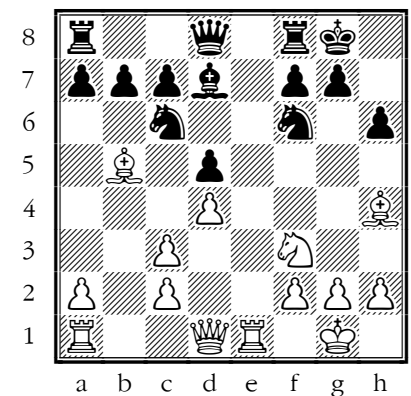
<https://lichess.org/study/RaOlpsQc/vG8RbfXE>

[5.Bd3!±; 5.c4!±=]

5...Nc6 6.Bg5 Bb4 7.Bb5 o–o 8.o–o Bxc3 9.bxc3 h6 10.Bh4 Bd7?! ±

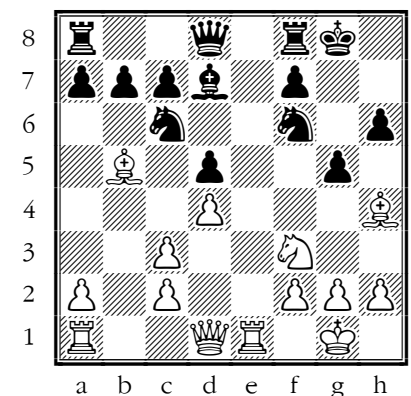
Inaccuracy. Qd6 was best.

11.Re1



The big moment of the game is about to happen:

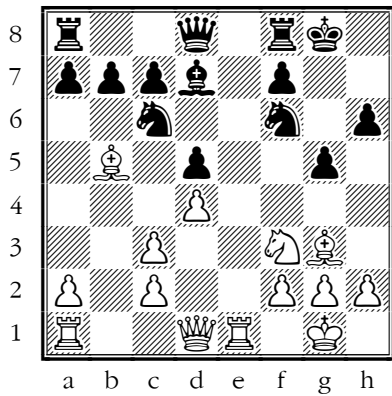
11...g5??+–



Blunder. Re8 was best.

Giving White a chance...

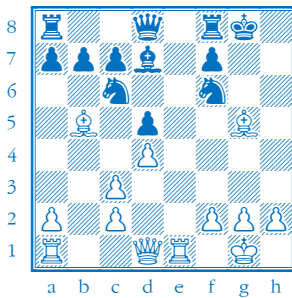
12. Bg3?? ±



Blunder. Nxg5 was best.

...which White ignores!

[12. Nxg5 hxg5 13. Bxg5+—



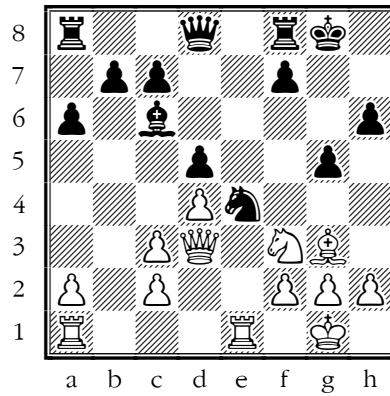
is a standard sacrifice, which I hope you considered! But standard sacrifices don't always succeed, what about this one? Actually, it's fine. The critical line, showing some typical themes, is: 13... Kg7 14. Qf3 Nxd4 15. cxd4 Bxb5 16. Re5 Qd6 17. Bxf6+ Qxf6 18. Qg4+ Qg6 19. Rg5+—

If you can't work it out, how do you judge it? Well, it's only one pawn, Black will never escape the pin, and you can easily bring the Rook into the attack, after which you are attacking with three pieces.

➔ When attacking: two pieces is check, three pieces is mate!

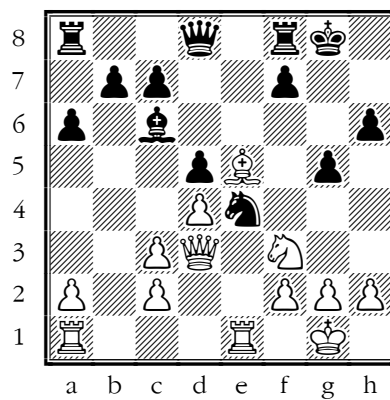
]

12... Ne4 13. Qd3 a6 14. Bxc6 Bxc6±



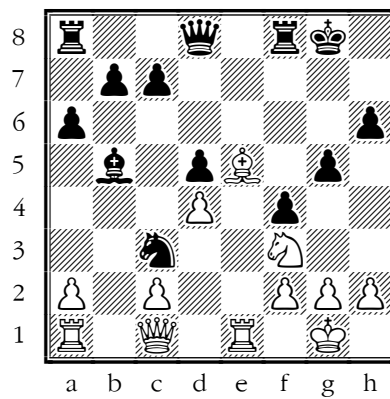
You're still OK here, a little better because of Black's poor Bishop, but now it starts to slip away.

15. Be5?±



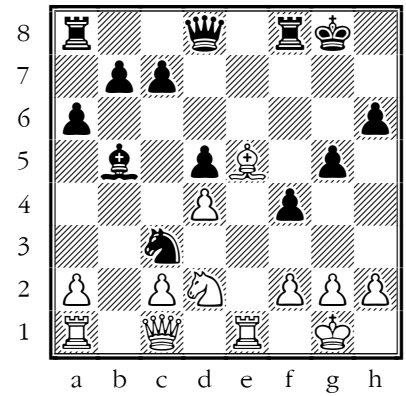
Mistake. Ne5 was best.

15... f6 16. Bg3 Bb5 17. Qe3 f5 18. Be5 f4 19. Qc1± Nxc3?!=



Inaccuracy. Qd7 was best.

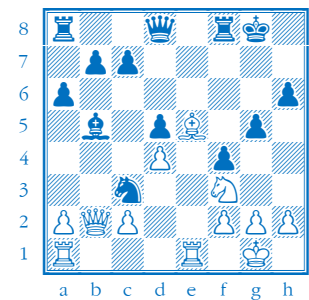
20. Nd2??—+



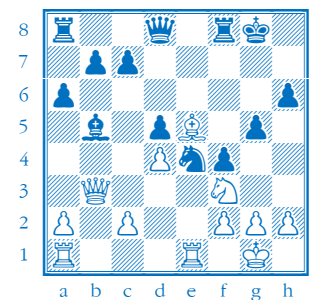
Blunder. Qb2 was best.

Dropping the exchange.

[20. Qb2!



fights back 20... Ne4 21. Qb3

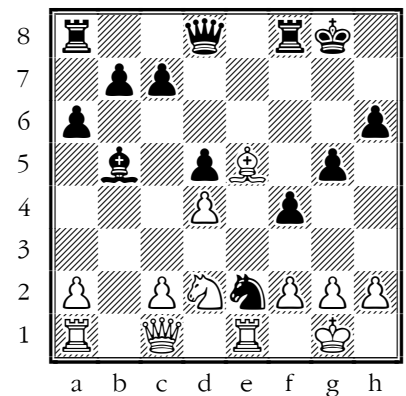


threatens Rxe4

➔ TACTIC: pin

21... Kh7? 22. c4!]

20... Ne2+



➔ TACTIC: fork

21. Rxe2 Bxe2 22. Qb2?!]

Inaccuracy. Qb1 was best.

22...Bb5 23.a4 Bc6 24.c3 Qd7
25.Qc2 Qf5 26.Qd1 Rae8?!

Inaccuracy. Rf7 was best.

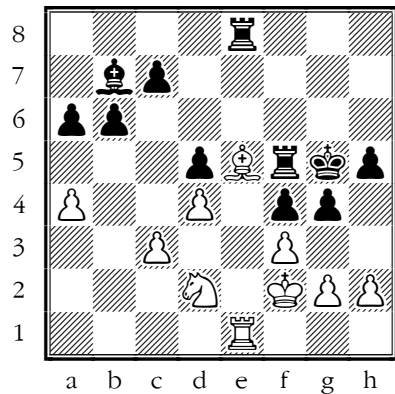
27.Qh5?!-+

Inaccuracy. Bxc7 was best.

27...Kh7 28.Nf3 g4 29.Qxf5+
Rxf5 30.Nd2 Kg6 31.Nb3 b6
32.Nd2 Kg5 33.f3 h5 34.Kf2
Bb7?!

Inaccuracy. Rfxe5 was best.

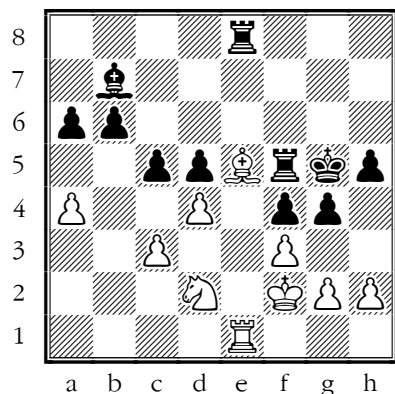
35.Re1?!-+



Inaccuracy. a5 was best.

Black is an Exchange and a pawn ahead, with a not-so-great Bishop, but with all the winning chances. Yet, if I have the position right, there was another opportunity missed:

35...c5??=



Blunder. Bc6 was best.

The last recorded move... But did you miss a chance to draw here?

→ TACTIC: discovery

36.Bxf4+! Rxf4 37.Rxe8 cxd4 38.g3
Rf6 39.f4+ Kg6 40.cxd4=

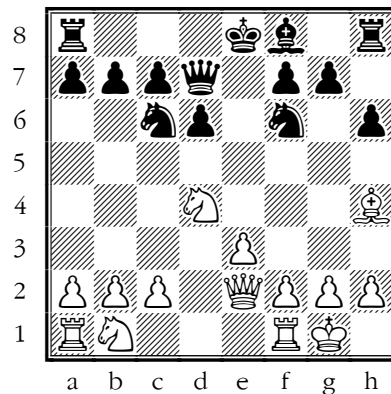
...0-1

Jonmi Saha – Josh Keay

[A46 Torre Attack?]

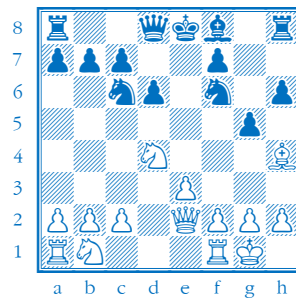
“ White's advantage grew all game, but there was a blink-and-you-miss-it chance for you to draw the Rook endgame.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bg5 h6
4.Bh4 Bg4 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 e5
7.o-o exd4 8.Nxd4 Bxe2
9.Qxe2= Qd7??+-



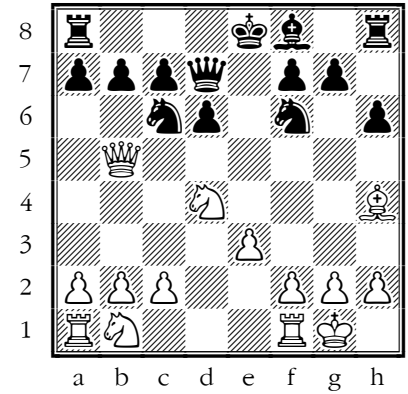
Blunder. g5 was best.

[9...g5



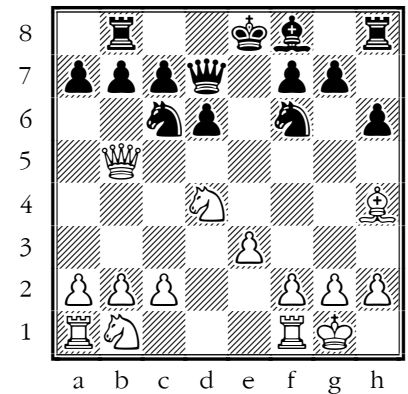
escapes the pin without your pawns being messed up.]

10.Qb5??=



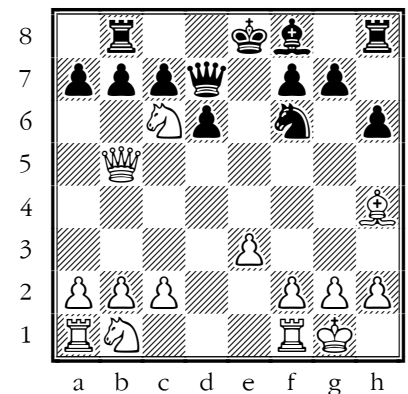
Blunder. Bxf6 was best.

10...Rb8??+-



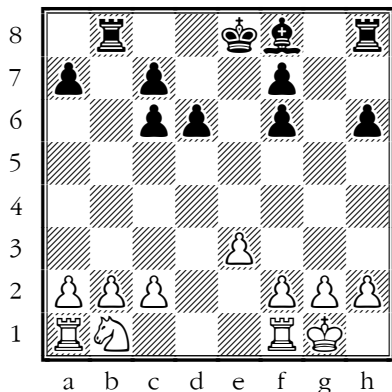
Blunder. Nxd4 was best.

11.Nxc6? ±



Mistake. Bxf6 was best.

11...Qxc6 12.Qxc6+ bxc6
13.Bxf6 gxf6

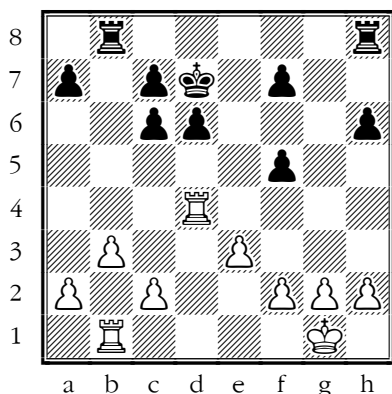


A curious position: the remaining pieces are undeveloped. Black has two sets of doubled pawns – undesirable but not fatal.

14.b3 Bg7 15.Nd2 Kd7 16.Rfd1 f5 17.Rac1 Bb2 18.Rb1 Be5 19.Nf3± Bf6

[19...Rhe8]

20.Nd4 Bxd4 21.Rxd4

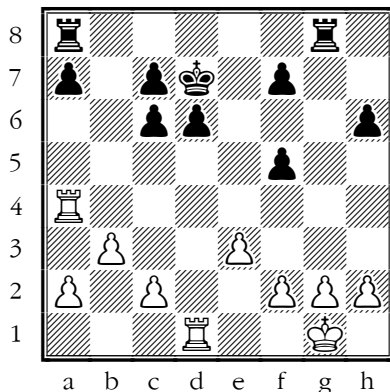


A double-Rook endgame has arisen. Coordinated Rooks are a strong attacking force, and when both sides' Rooks are active there is a strong bias towards a draw. But as we see, if you cannot or will not activate your Rooks while your opponent can activate theirs, you will face defeat.

21...Rhg8?! ±

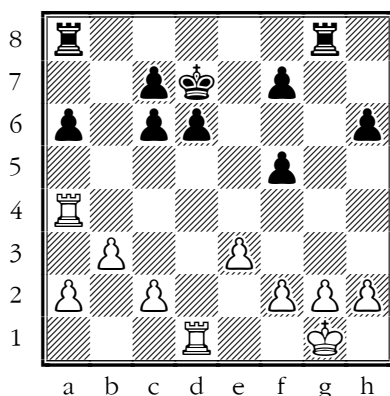
[21...Rb5±]

22.Ra4 Ra8 23.Rd1±



White is getting more active and Black's position is getting critical.

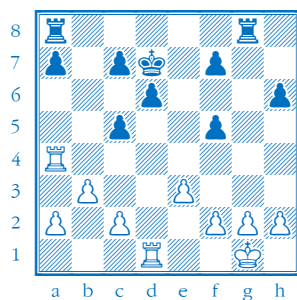
23...a6?!+–



Inaccuracy. c5 was best.

Now White's Rooks jump all over your position.

[23...c5!]



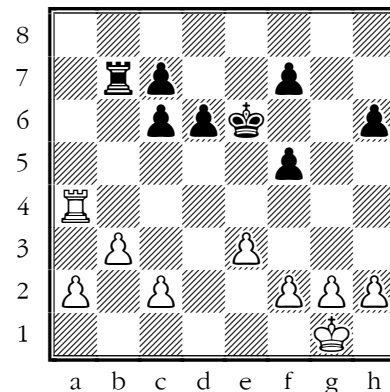
stops White's d1 Rook entering the game so easily.

24.Rdd4!+– Ke6 25.Rh4 Rg6

26.Ra5 Ra7 27.Rha4 Rg4

28.Rxa6 Rxa4 29.Rxa4+–

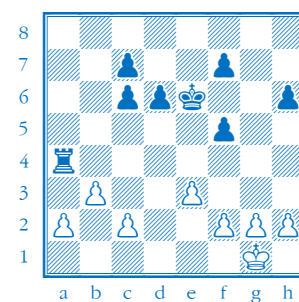
Rb7?+–



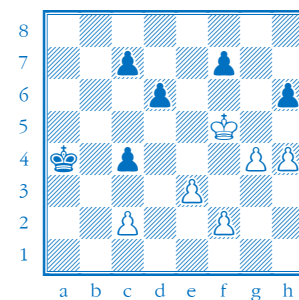
Mistake. Rxa4 was best.

I don't have any good advice for you but I don't think your move is a mistake, whatever Stockfish says.

[29...Rxa4]



I would be wary of this move but Stockfish's first thought is to advise it. The distant passed a-pawn might be weak or a winner! I expect it's a winner, as we can see if we go deep enough... 30.bxa4 c5 31.a5 Kd7 32.a6 Kc6 33.h4 Kb6 34.Kh2 Kxa6 35.Kg3 Kb5 36.Kf4 Kb4 37.Kxf5 c4 38.a4 Kxa4 39.g4



White can make a Queen in 5 moves, Black in 7. 39...Kb4 40.h5 Kc3 41.g5 hxg5 42.h6 Kxc2 43.h7 c3 44.h8Q Kd2 45.Qd4+–]

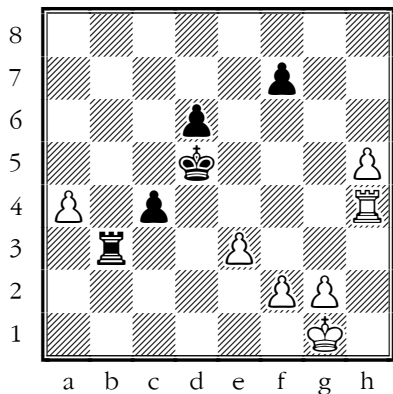
30.Rh4 Ra7 31.a4 c5 32.Rxh6+

Kd5 33.Rf6 c4 34.Rxf5+ Ke6

35.Rb5 cxb3 36.cxb3 c6 37.Rb4

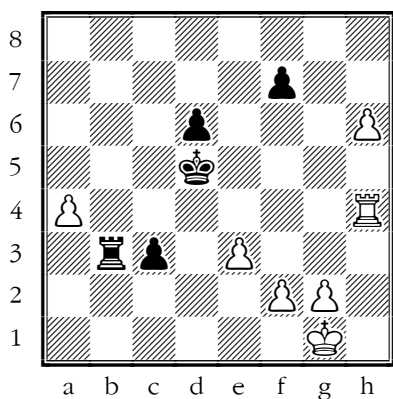
c5 38.Rc4 Kd5 39.h4 Rb7 40.h5

Rxb3 41.Rh4 c4



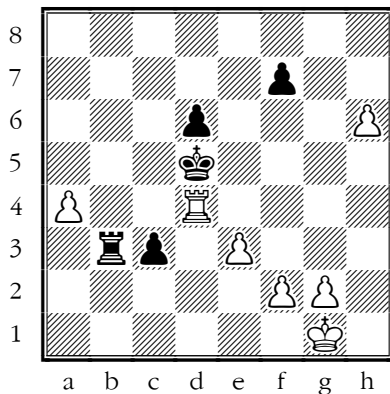
You're fighting hard and almost get your draw.

42.h6 c3??+-



Blunder. Rb1+ was best.

43.Rd4+??=

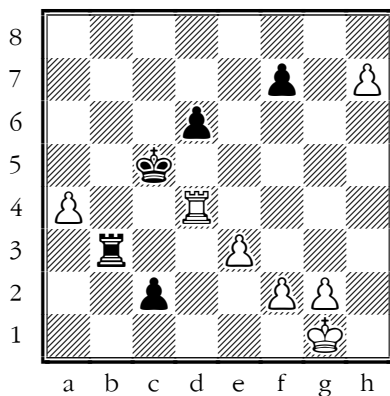


Blunder. h7 was best.

This check only makes it harder for White to make a Queen.

[43.h7 c2 44.h8Q c1Q+ 45.Kh2+-]

43...Kc5 44.h7=c2??+-

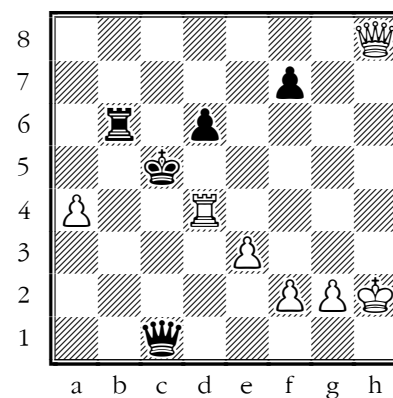


Blunder. Rb1+ was best.

You can remove any new white Queen while threatening to make your own:

[44...Rb1+ 45.Kh2 Rb8=]

45.h8Q c1Q+ 46.Kh2 Rb6??



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Rxe3 was best.

1-0

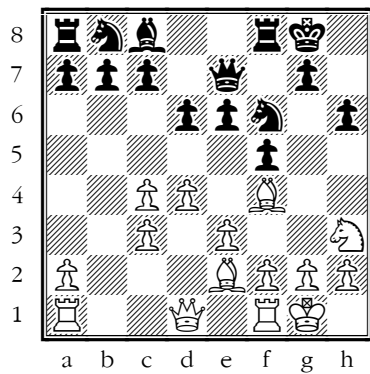
U18_1 Caleb Caleshu

“ Some fine play and a fine score – well done. Perhaps the piece you handle worst is the clock – but if you want to say, if you moved faster then you wouldn’t get such good positions, I won’t argue. I don’t have any more general remarks – the details matter at your level!

Yuxuan Wu -- Caleb Caleshu
A84 Dutch Defense: Classical Variation

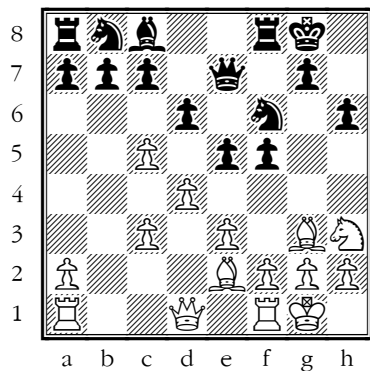
“ What I have of this game shows steady play from both players, after which I know you faced a lot of pressure on the board and on the clock before you won -- well done. }

- 1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.Bf4 Nf6
- 4.e3 Bb4+ 5.Nc3 Bxc3+
- 6.bxc3 d6 7.Be2 O-O 8.Nh3
- Qe7 9.O-O h6



I expect that is too cautious.

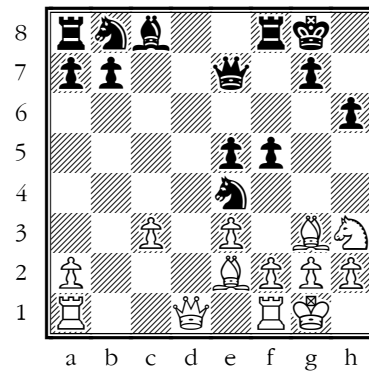
- 10.Bg3 e5 11.c5



White correctly takes the chance to undouble the pawns, but they have other problems in finding a role for the minor pieces, none of

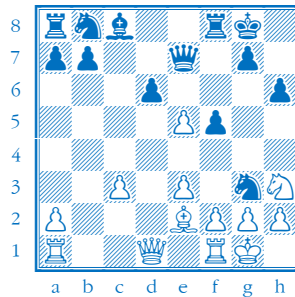
which stand well -- indeed the Nh3 is stalemated.

- 11...Ne4 12.cxd6 cxd6
- 13.dxe5 Nxc3



Stockfish wanted you to sac a pawn here:

(13...dxe5!

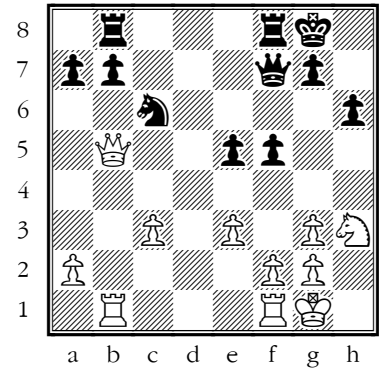


- 14.Qd5+ Be6 15.Qxe5 Nc6 16.Qb5 Nxc3 17.Qd3 Nxe2+ 18.Qxe2 ♯

- 14.hxg3 dxe5 15.Bc4+ Be6
- 16.Qb3 Bxc4 17.Qxc4+ Qf7
- 18.Qb5 Nc6 19.Rab1?!

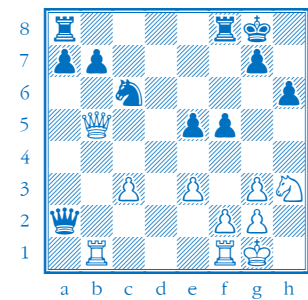
Inaccuracy.c4 was best.

- 19...Rab8?!



Perhaps missing a chance, but not a big one nor one easy to choose,

(19..Qxa2!

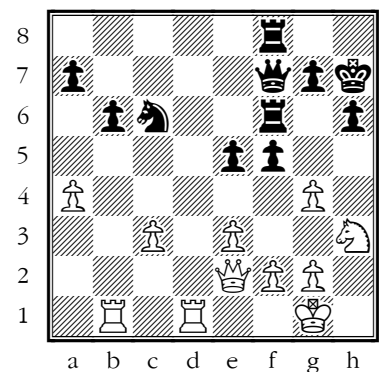


- 20.Rb2 (20.Qxb7?? Rab8! ♯

→ TACTIC: skewer

-) 20...Qf7 21.Qxb7 Qxb7 22.Rxb7 a5 ♯17)

- 20.a4 Qc7 21.Rfd1 b6 22.Qd5+ Kh7 23.g4 Rbd8 24.Qe6 Rf6 25.Qc4 Qf7 26.Qe2 Rf8?!



Inaccuracy.Qg6 was best.

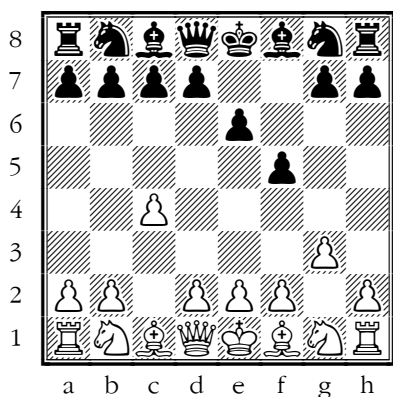
...0-1

Leon Nelson – Caleb Caleshu

[A13 English Opening vs Dutch System]

“ A fluctuating struggle, with some difficult strategy for both sides to sort out, but the advantage lay with White for the most part, to a decisive level at times, and you did well to draw.

1.c4 e6 2.g3 f5



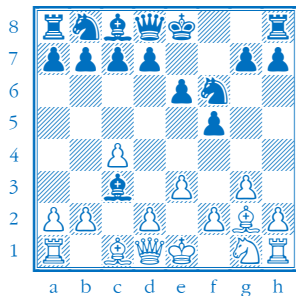
I've played the Dutch against the English in several games and believe it to be an excellent practical try.

3.Bg2 Nf6 4.Nc3 Bb4

[4...Be7]

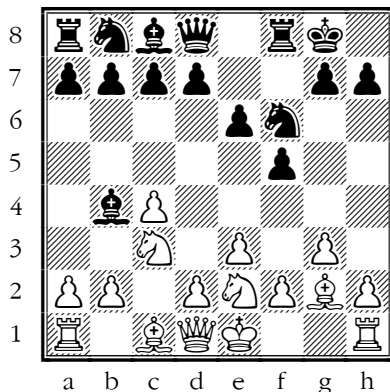
5.e3 o-o

[5...Bxc3!]



before Nge2]

6.Nge2



Now the Bb4 looks a bit misplaced.

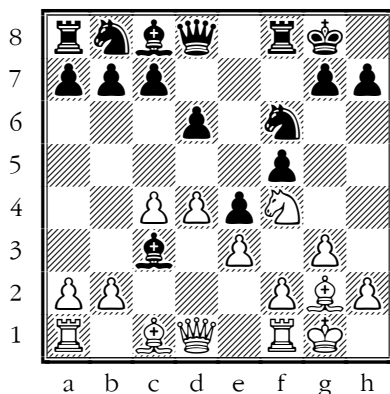
6...d6 7.o-o e5 8.d4± e4±

[8...c6; 8...Qe8]

9.Nf4?!

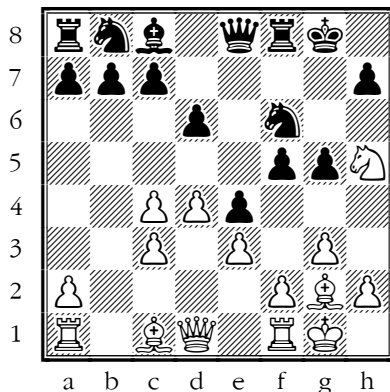
Inaccuracy. Nd5 was best.

9...Bxc3±



I'm sure you're right to take the chance to mess up White's pawns, but you miss the dark-squared Bishop for the rest of the game.

10.bxc3 g5 11.Nh5= Qe8??±



Blunder. g4 was best.

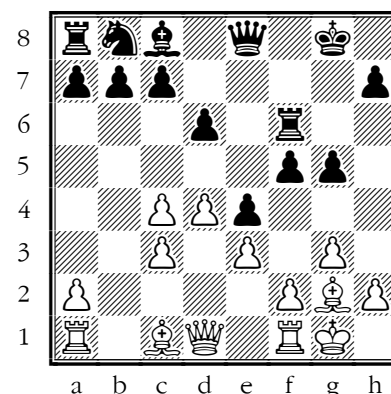
The double question mark from Stockfish seems harsh, but there were better options:

[11...Be6 12.Nxf6+ Qxf6 13.f3 Bxc4;

11...Nbd7 12.Nxf6+ Nxf6;

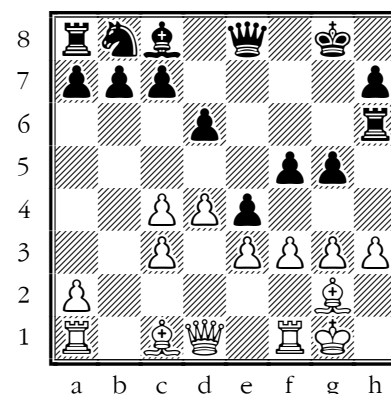
11...g4=]

12.Nxf6+ Rxf6



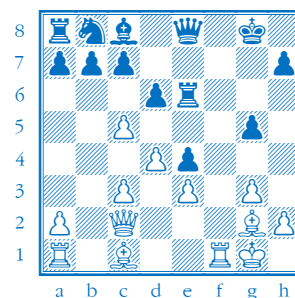
Black looks a little overstretched on the King's-side.

13.f3 Rh6 14.h3?



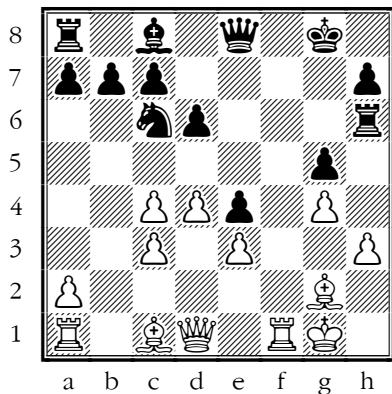
Mistake. fxe4 was best.

[14.fxe4 fxe4 15.Qc2 Re6 16.c5!+-



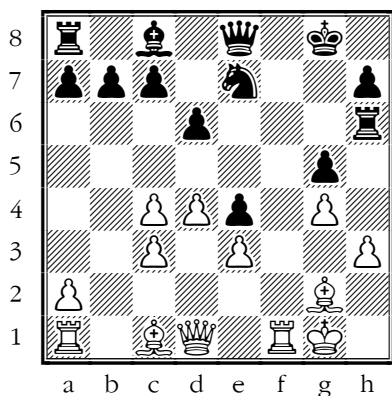
and it is White who has a strong attack]

14...Nc6 15.fxe4 fxe4 16.g4=



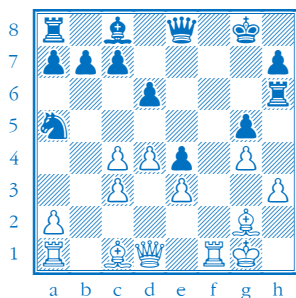
It's about equal.

16...Ne7?±



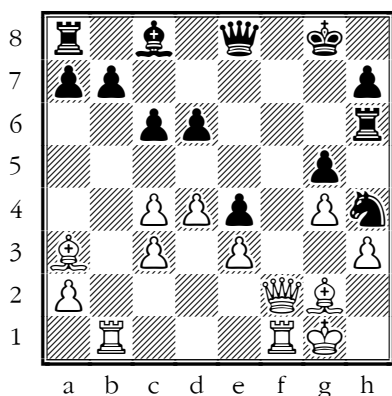
Mistake. Na5 was best.

[16...Na5!]



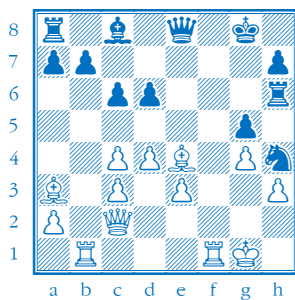
is more awkward for White to meet.]

17.Rb1 Ng6 18.Qc2 c6 19.Ba3 Nh4± 20.Qf2??

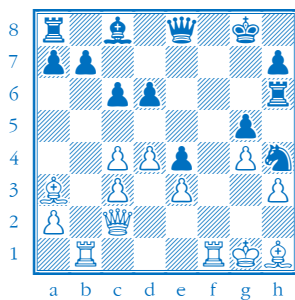


Blunder. Bh1 was best.

[20.Bxe4!?



and; 20.Bh1?]

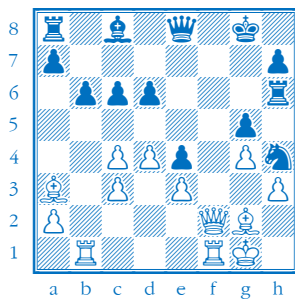


are better]

20...Nxcg2?!

Inaccuracy. b6 was best.

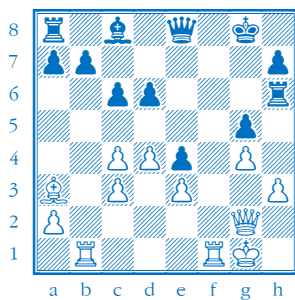
[20...b6!]



Now White has nothing on the Queen's-side, and you might have an edge.]

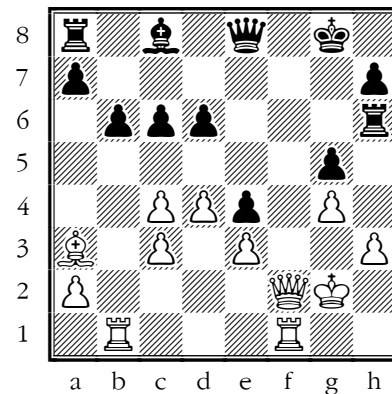
21.Kxg2

[21.Qxg2!]



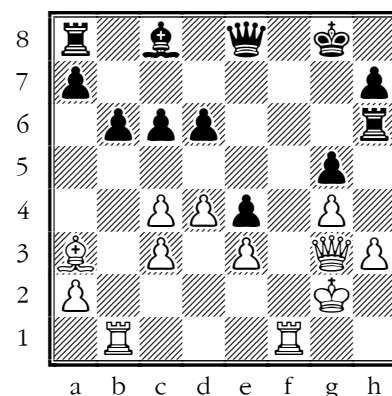
keeps Black tied to the defence of e4.]

21...b6=



Now White should play, and Black prevent, c4-c5.

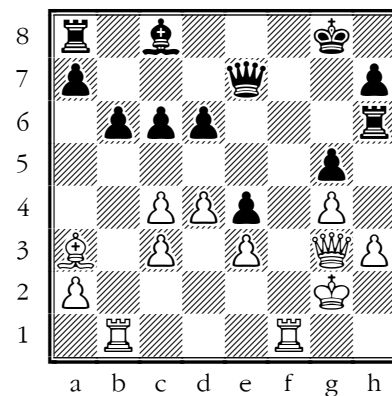
22.Qg3?



Mistake. c5 was best.

[22.c5=]

22...Qe7??

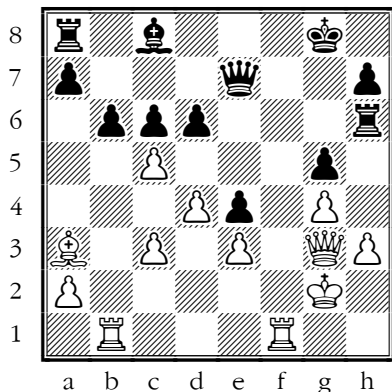


Blunder. c5 was best.

Playing ...c5 yourself blockades the doubled pawns and behind them the Bishop. This is a very Nimzo-Indian idea.

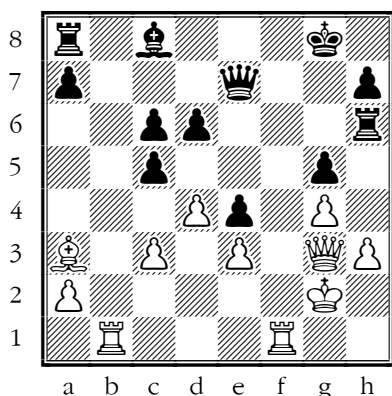
[22...c5! ±]

23.c5!±



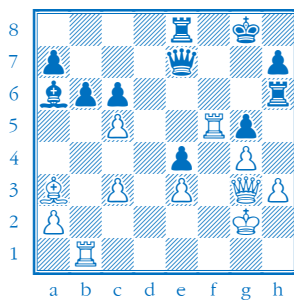
White found it in the end, and now you're in some difficulties.

23...bxc5?+-



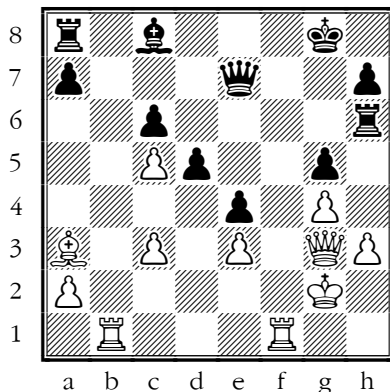
Mistake. dxc5 was best.

[23...dxc5 24. dxc5 Ba6 25. Rf5 Re8]



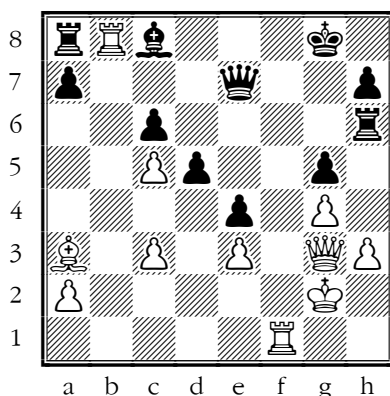
and Black is hanging on.]

24.dxc5 d5



White's major pieces are all better than Black's.

25.Rb8?!±



Inaccuracy. c4 was best.

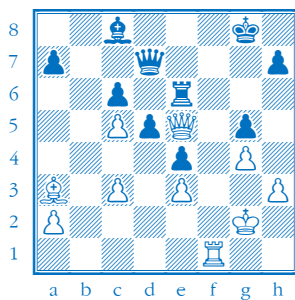
25...Rxb8 26.Qxb8 Qd7?!

Inaccuracy. Qe8 was best.

27.Qe5 Rg6?!+-

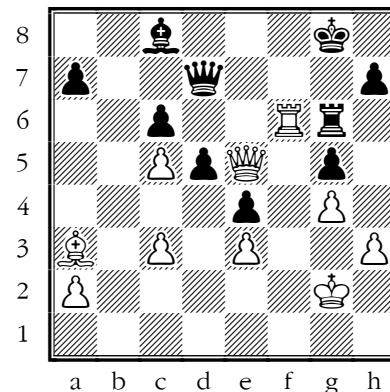
Inaccuracy. Re6 was best.

[27...Re6]



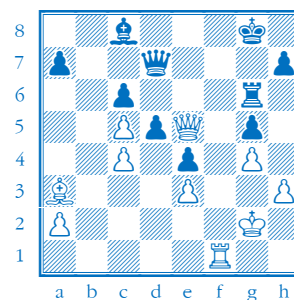
is better according to Stockfish, but that's a tough move to find and tougher to play. 28.Qxg5+ Rg6 29.Qf4]

28.Rf6?? ±



Blunder. c4 was best.

[28.c4!]

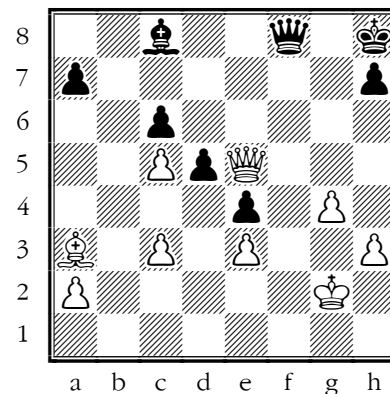


cracks open Black's defences; Bb2 is very dangerous.]

28...Rxf6 29.Qxf6 Qf7 30.Qd8+ Qf8 31.Qxg5+ Kh8?!

Inaccuracy. Qg7 was best.

32.Qe5+?±



Mistake. Qf4 was best.

32...Kg8 33.Qg3?!

Inaccuracy. Qg5+ was best.

33...Ba6 34.Qf4=

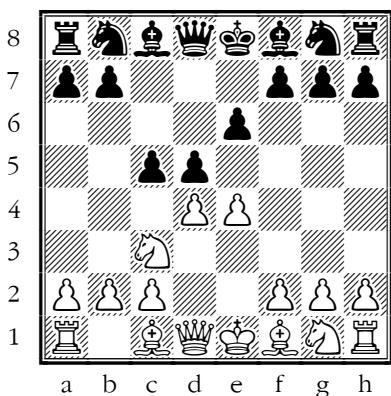
...1/2-1/2

Caleb Caleshu – Sai Dheerey

[C10 French Defence, Marshall Variation]

“ A very competent and controlled win. Black played a terribly risky opening, and lost a piece for a couple of pawns, after which, although they fought long and hard, the result was never in doubt.

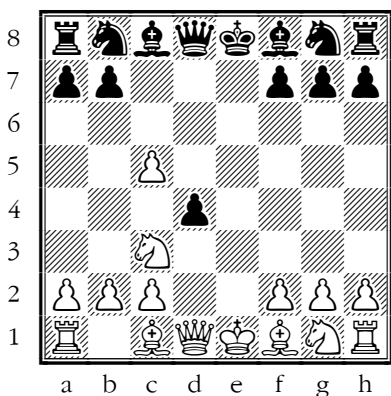
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 c5?!



Inaccuracy. dxe4 was best.

Frank Marshall used to play this, but I think we now understand that Black shouldn't play ...c5 unless White closes the centre, or makes some other concession (like Nd2).

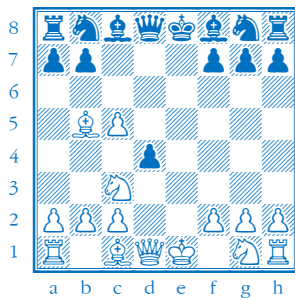
4.exd5 exd5 5.dxc5 d4!?



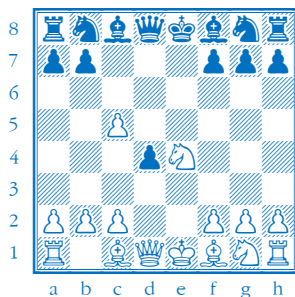
This was Frank's idea.

6.Nb5

[6.Bb5+ and

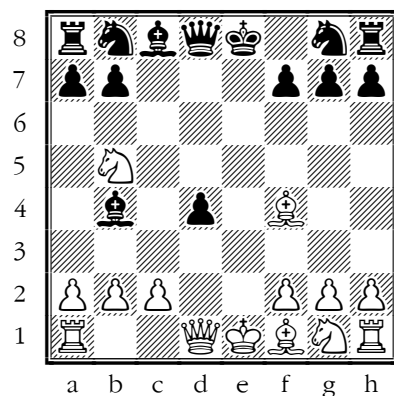


6.Ne4



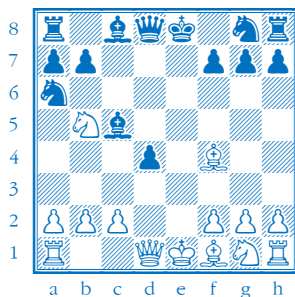
are the recommended antidotes, but there's not a lot wrong with your move either.]

6...Bxc5 7.Bf4± Bb4+??+--



Blunder. Na6 was best.

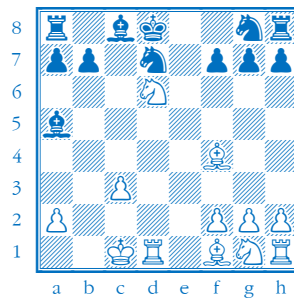
[7...Na6



keeps Black on the board.]

8.c3 dxc3 9.bxc3+--

[9.Qxd8+ Kxd8 10.o-o-o+ Nd7 11.bxc3 Ba5 12.Nd6+--

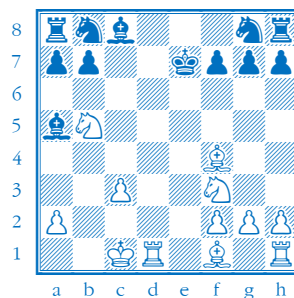


is just as good]

9...Qxd1+?!

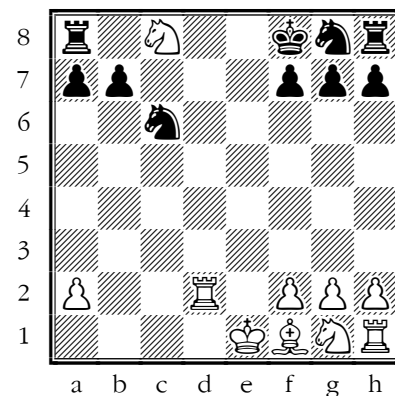
Inaccuracy. Ba5 was best.

[9...Ba5 10.Qxd8+ Kxd8 11.o-o-o+ Ke7 12.Nf3



and Black's position is pretty filthy but material is level]

10.Rxd1 Ba5 11.Nd6+ Kf8 12.Nxc8 Bxc3+ 13.Bd2 Bxd2+ 14.Rxd2 Nc6

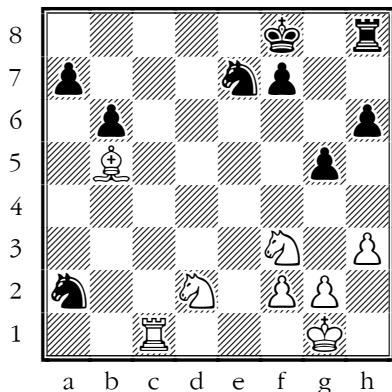


White has a piece for a pawn and Black doesn't have any likely swindling opportunities.

15.Nd6 b6 16.Bb5 Nge7 17.Nf3 h6 18.o-o g5 19.Rc1 Nb4 20.h3 Rd8 21.Ne4?!

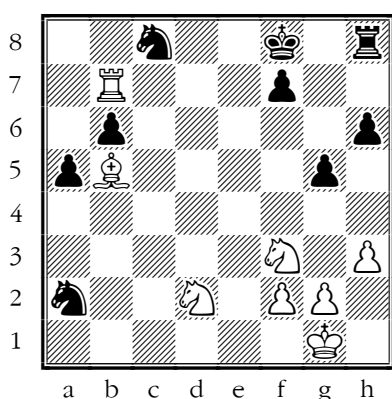
Inaccuracy. Ne5 was best.

21...Rxd2 22.Nexd2 Nx2



Black has a second pawn for the piece, but their remaining pieces are uncoordinated.

23.Rc7 a5 24.Rb7 Nc8?!

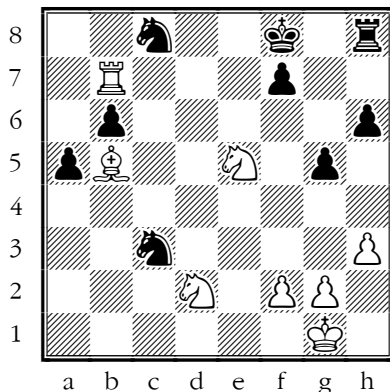


Inaccuracy. Nc3 was best.

25.Ne5?!

Inaccuracy. Ne4 was best.

25...Nc3?!

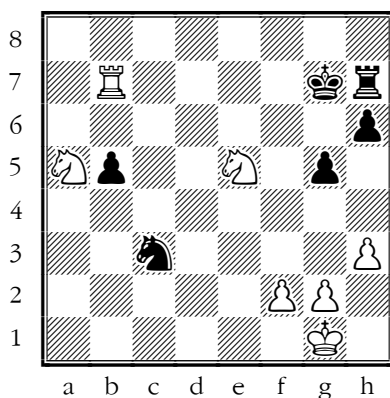


Inaccuracy. Nd6 was best.

26.Rxf7+ Kg8 27.Bc4?!

Inaccuracy. Rd7 was best.

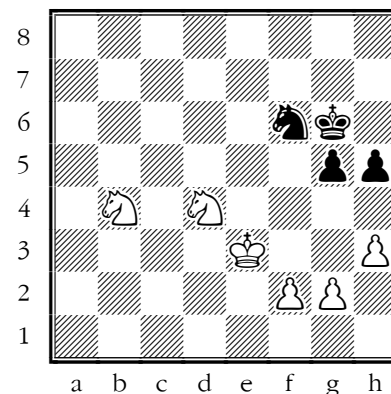
**27...Nd6 28.Rb7+ Nxc4
29.Ndxc4 b5 30.Nxa5 Rh7
31.Rb8+ Kg7 32.Rb7+**



A little shuffle to gain time on the clock?

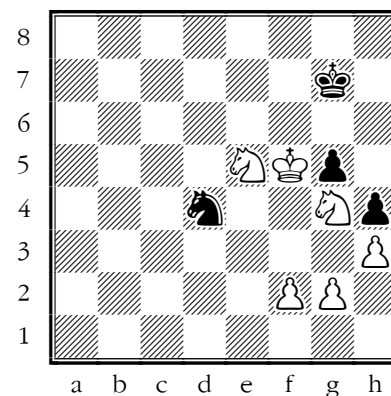
**32...Kg8 33.Rxh7 Kxh7 34.Kf1
Kg7 35.Ke1 Kf6 36.Ng4+ Kg6
37.Kd2 b4 38.Nc6 h5 39.Nge5+**

**Kf5 40.Nd3 Ne4+ 41.Ke3 Nf6
42.Nd4+ Kg6 43.Nxb4**



With the loss of this pawn, Black's hopes of a draw have vanished.

**43...h4 44.Nd3 Kh5 45.Kf3 Kg6
46.Ne5+ Kh5 47.Ng4 Nd5
48.Nf5 Kg6 49.Nfe3 Nf4 50.Ke4
Ne6 51.Ne5+ Kf6 52.N3g4+ Kg7
53.Kf5 Nd4++-**



There may have been more moves but this is crushing.

...1-0

U18A_2 Jack Wills

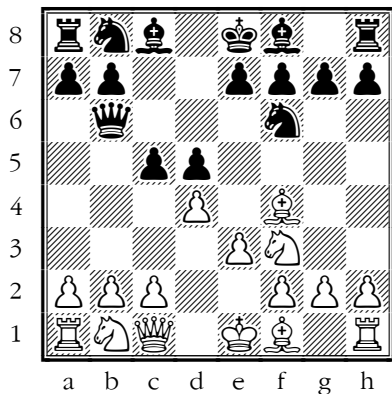
“ Not much wrong with that and a great score. Oddly, you were worst-off against Ben from our B team – I trust that sort of oversight isn't common in your games.

Suraj Rajesh – Jack Wills

[D02 London System]

“ After a level opening, White lost their hold and Black took a firm grip on the game.

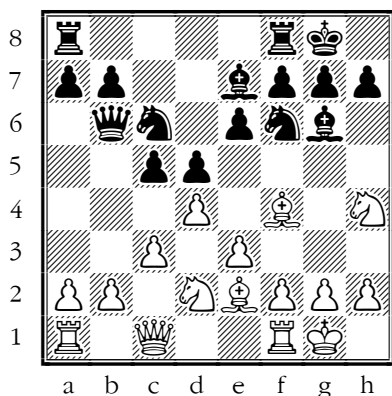
**1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Bf4 c5 4.e3
Qb6 5.Qc1**



This already looks unpromising for White.

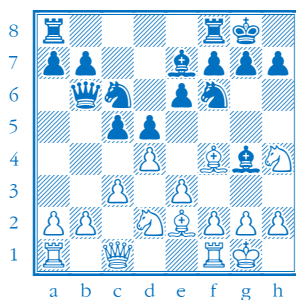
[5.Nc3 c4 (5...a6)]

5...Nc6 6.c3 Bf5 7.Nbd2 e6
8.Be2 Be7 9.o-o o-o 10.Nh4
Bg6



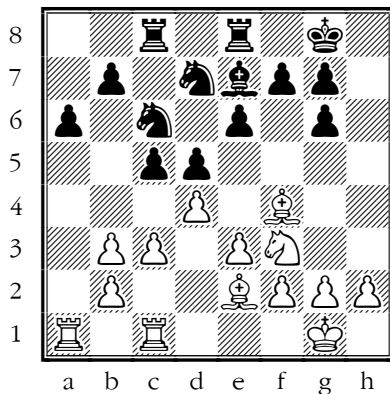
Giving up the Bishop without a fight.]

[10...Bg4!?



seems playable, but it's easier for Stockfish to declare this move is OK than for a human. 11.f3 Bh5 12.g4 cxd4 13.gxh5 Nxh5 14.Bg3 d3 15.Bd1 Qxe3+]

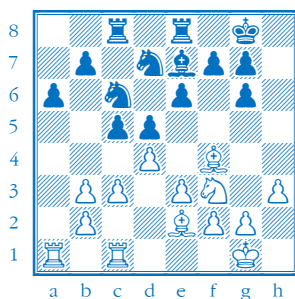
11.Nxg6 hxg6 12.Qc2 Rac8
13.Qb3 Qxb3 14.axb3 a6 15.Nf3
Nd7 16.Rfc1 Rfe8±



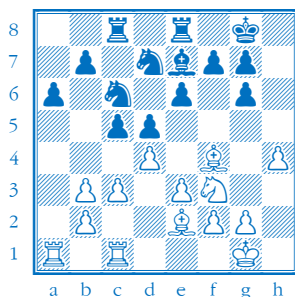
White has perhaps the better chances here (Bishop pair) but it all starts to slip away from them now.

17.c4?!

[17.h3



or, 17.h4



is better.]

17...Nb4!?

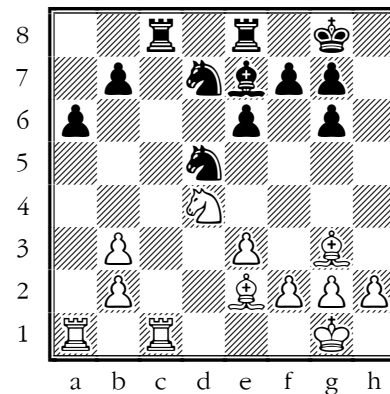
[17...g5! 18.Nxg5 cxd4 ♣]

18.cxd5?!

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

18...Nxd5 19.Bg3 cxd4

20.Nxd4 ♣

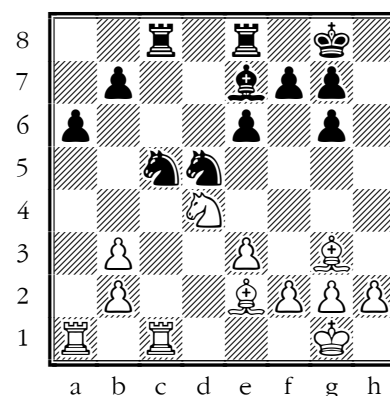


The exchanges have exposed White's doubled pawns, yet they are not easy to get at here.

20...Bf6?!=

Inaccuracy. Nc5 was best.

[20...Nc5!



is the best try]

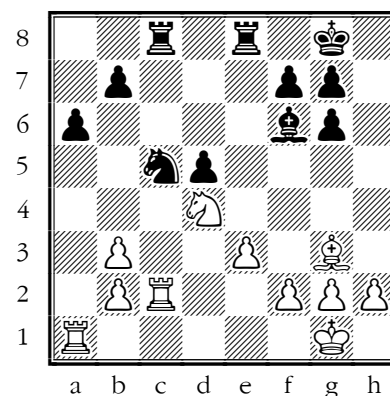
21.Bf3?! ♣

Inaccuracy. Bd6 was best.

21...Nc5 22.Bxd5?! ♣

Inaccuracy. Rd1 was best.

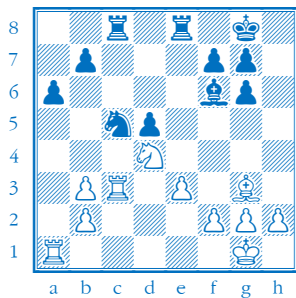
22...exd5 23.Rc2? -+



Mistake. Rc3 was best.

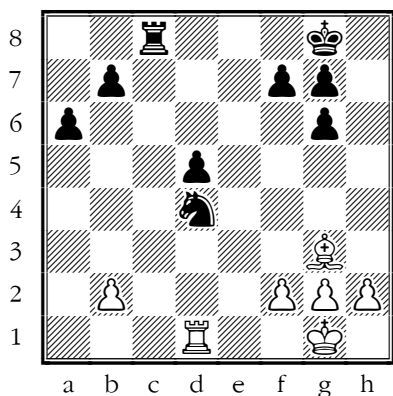
Losing.

[23.Rc3 ♣



Black has very good chances after
23...Bxd4 24.exd4 Ne6 25.Rd1
Nxd4!-+]

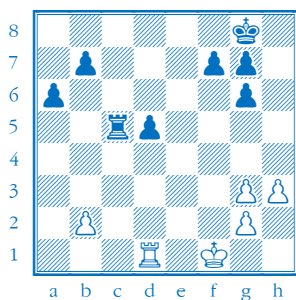
23...Bxd4 24.exd4 Nxb3
25.Rxc8 Rxc8 26.Rd1 Nxd4!



Just to let them know who is
winning. The proud London
bishop is curiously ineffective.

27.h3 Ne2+ 28.Kf1 Nxc3+
29.fxg3 Rd8-+

[29...Rc5!-+]



➡ It's nearly always better to
defend with a Rook from the
side, as the piece doesn't lose
so many options.

It doesn't make a difference in this
game, but next time it might!]

30.Ke2 f6 31.Kd3 Kf7 32.Rc1
Rd7 33.Re1?!

Inaccuracy. Kd4 was best.

33...Re7 34.Rc1 Ke6 35.Re1+
Kd6 36.Rc1 Re4 37.Rc8 Rb4
38.Rg8 Rxb2 39.Rxg7 g5 40.h4
Rxg2 41.hxg5 Rxg3+ 42.Kd2
Rxg5 43.Rxb7 Kc6 44.Re7 Re5
45.Rf7 f5 46.Kd3 a5 47.Kd4
Re4+ 48.Kd3 f4 49.Rf8 a4
50.Rf6+ Kc5 51.Rf8 a3 52.Rc8+
Kd6 53.Rd8+ Kc6 54.Ra8 f3-+

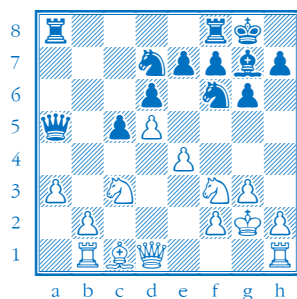
Jack Wills – James Thomas

[A59 Benko Gambit]

“ A very typical Benko struggle
(haven't I seen you play this
with Black?) White couldn't do
much with the pawn against
Black's initiative, but on the
other hand Black couldn't find
a way through.

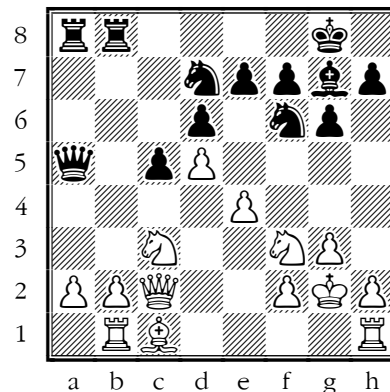
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5
a6 5.bxa6 Bxa6 6.Nf3 d6 7.Nc3
g6 8.e4 Bxf1 9.Kxf1 Bg7 10.g3
o-o 11.Kg2 Nbd7 12.Rb1 Qa5
13.Qc2=

[13.a3]



Busch, Karl - Cade, Stephen, 1/2-
1/2, CM.2000.0.00121,
<https://lichess.org/ITg94Ch6>]

13...Rfb8±



A normal Benko position. The
Benko is not a typical gambit; the
compensation is positional, and
lasts into the endgame – indeed,
endgames are often better for
Black.

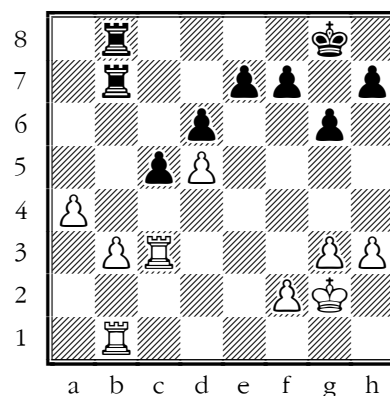
14.Nd2?!

Inaccuracy. a4 was best.

14...Qa6 15.b3 Ne5 16.a4 Qd3?!

Inaccuracy. c4 was best.

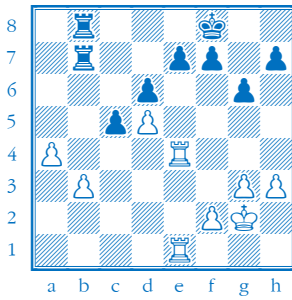
17.Qxd3 Nxd3 18.Nb5 Ng4
19.Rf1 Bh6 20.h3 Nxc1 21.Rfxc1
Bxd2 22.Rd1 Nf6 23.Rxd2 Nxe4
24.Re2 Rxb5 25.Rxe4 Rb7
26.Rc4 Rab8 27.Rc3?!±



Inaccuracy. Re1 was best.

This is the best position Black gets
all game.

[27.Re1! Kf8 28.Rce4!]



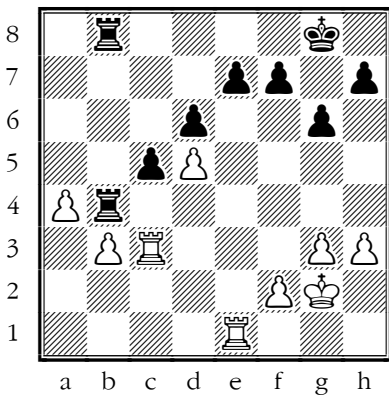
keeping the Rooks active is important.]

27...Rb4?!

Inaccuracy. Kf8 was best.

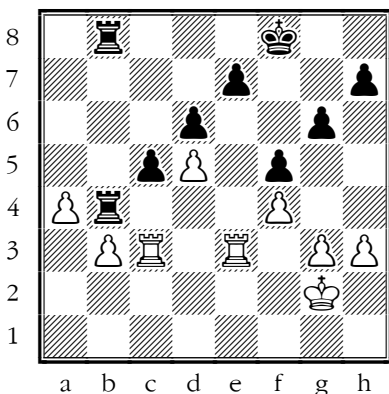
27...Kf8 would stop White's next idea.

28.Re1!



improves the activity of the Rook (defending from the side again).

28...Kf8 29.Ree3 f5= 30.f4?!



➡ If you're defending an endgame, don't make weaknesses.

[30.Kf3 g5 31.Ke2 f4 32.Rf3 ♣]

It doesn't matter here, but it might do next time!

30...h5 31.h4 Ke8 32.Kf3 Kd7 33.Ke2 ♣ Ke8=

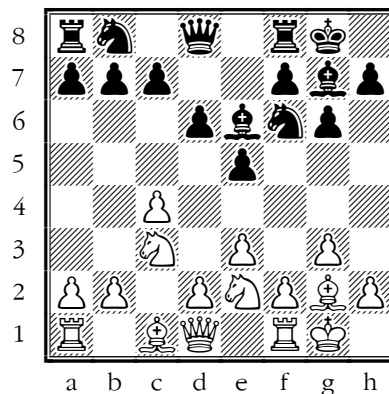
1/2-1/2

Ben Darlington – Jack Wills

[A15 English Opening vs King's Indian System]

“ Very much a game of two halves. Black lost a pawn early on, which could have been decisive, but material equality was soon restored and an interesting positional battle followed, where White had the advantage for the most part. Black held on and eventually found a way through, when White's defences collapsed.

1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.Nc3 o-o 5.e3 e5 6.Nge2 d6 7.o-o= Be6?!



Inaccuracy. Re8 was best.

undefending the b-Pawn. This could have lost on the spot.

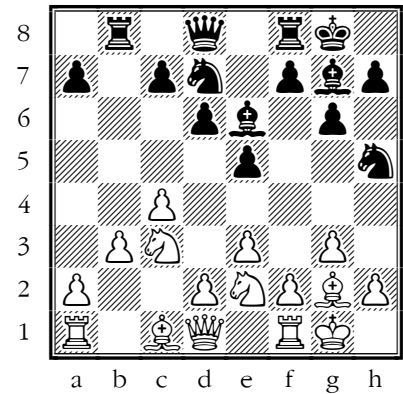
8.Bxb7 Nbd7 9.Bg2

[9.Bxa8 Qxa8 10.f3 Bxc4]

9...Rb8?!

Inaccuracy. Bxc4 was best.

10.b3 Nh5?!±

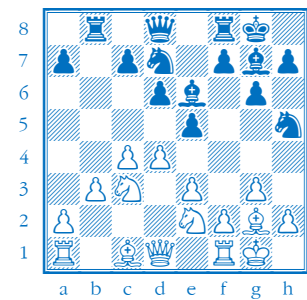


Inaccuracy. Re8 was best.

11.Bb2?!±

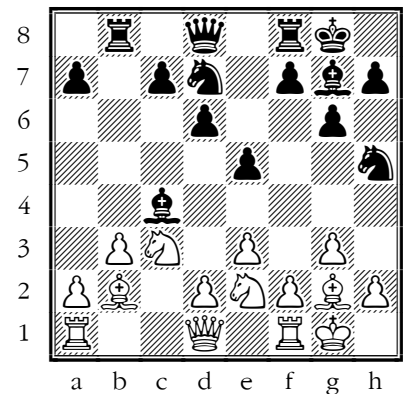
Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

[11.d4!]



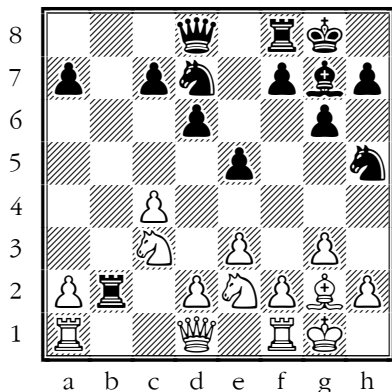
threatens to embarrass the black bishop: 11...Bxc4]

11...Bxc4!



➔ **TACTIC: pin**

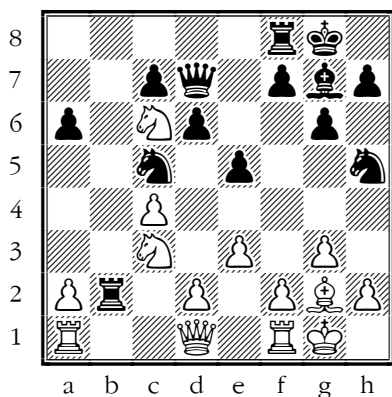
12.bxc4 Rxb2±



White no longer has the pawn, but has the better position. White's next Knight manoeuvre has all the hallmarks of a one-move-deep plan.

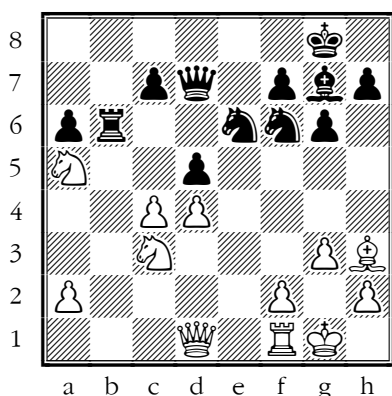
[13. Qc1 or 13. Rb1 are more to the point.]

13. Nb5 a6 14. Na7 Nc5 15. Nc6= Qd7 16. Nc3?!



Inaccuracy. d4 was best.

16... Rb6 17. Na5 Nf6 18. Rb1 Rfb8 19. Rxb6 Rxb6 20. d4 exd4 21. exd4 Ne6 22. Bh3 d5±

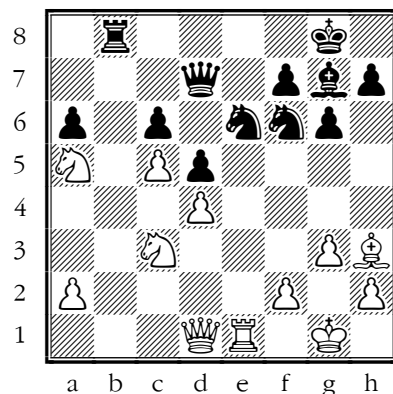


White is still better here but the next move gives away the advantage.

23. c5?!=

Inaccuracy. Na4 was best.

23... Rb8 24. Re1 c6?

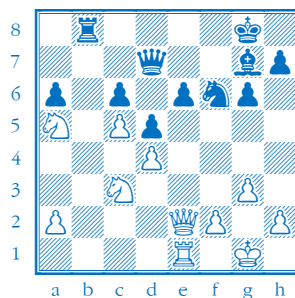


Mistake. Re8 was best.

25. Na4?!

Inaccuracy. Bxe6 was best.

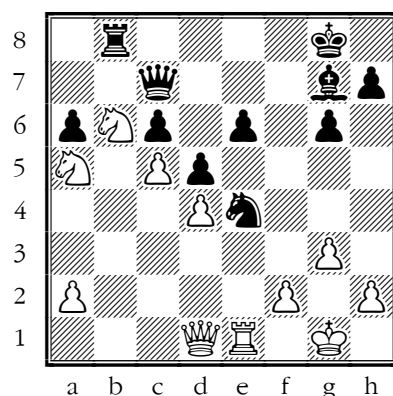
[25. Bxe6 fxe6 26. Qe2!]



➔ **TACTIC: fork**

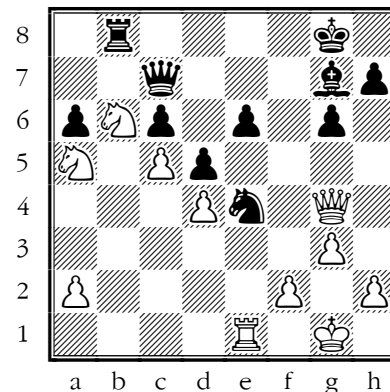
forks e6 and a6]

25... Qc7 26. Nb6 Ne4 27. Bxe6 fxe6±



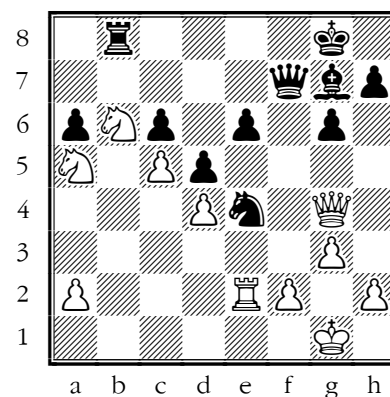
Now the game swings abruptly in Black's favour.

28. Qg4?



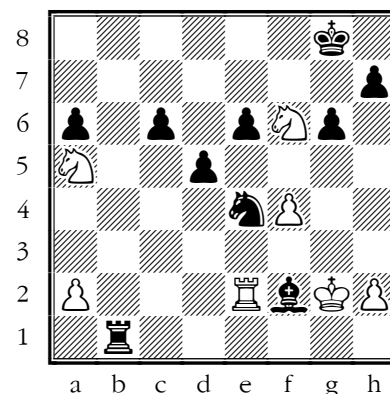
Mistake. Kg2 was best.

28... Qf7 29. Re2??-+



Blunder. Rxe4 was best.

29... Bxd4 30. Qf4 Qxf4 31. gxf4 Bxc5 32. Nd7 Rb1+ 33. Kg2 Bxf2 34. Nf6+?

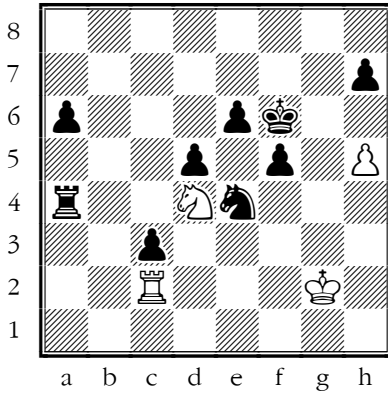


Mistake. Nxc6 was best.

34... Nxf6 35. Kxf2 Ne4+ 36. Kg2 c5 37. Nb3 Kf7 38. Rc2 c4 39. Nd4 Rd1 40. Nf3 Kf6 41. a4 Ra1 42. Nd4 Rxa4 43. f5 gxf5 44. h4 c3 45. h5?

45...Rxd4

0-1



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Ne2 was best.

U18A_3 Viacheslav Ovcharenko

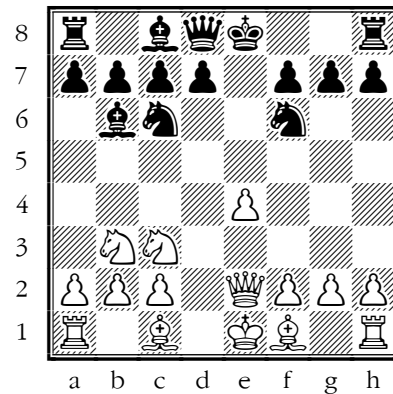
“ The strong impression from your play is soundness – even the computer had little criticism of your play for the most part. You were surprised by Jamie’s push against the Scotch Game, when a little more time might have been well-spent, and there may have been a careless moment in your other win.

Viacheslav Ovcharenko – James Glasson

[C45 Scotch Game]

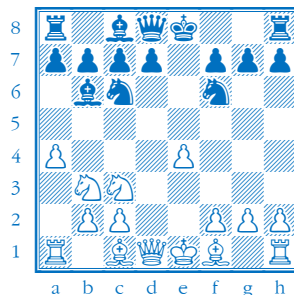
“ White didn't get much out of the opening and Black came up with an interesting try for the initiative. After a muddled stage featuring errors on both sides, White emerged a pawn ahead, upon which Black swapped everything off into a lost endgame. I thought you handled that end game very well

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
4.Nxd4 Bc5 5.Nb3 Bb6 6.Nc3
Nf6 7.Qe2



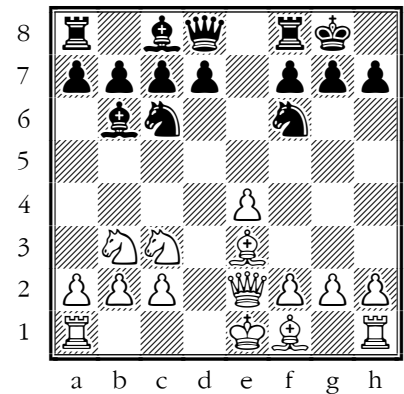
This is a move recommended by theory and very often played but it doesn't seem very promising for White.

[7.a4

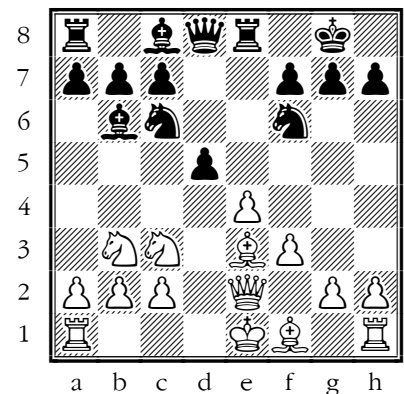


Was all the rage when I was a boy
Adams, Michael - Wells, Peter K, 1-
0, Dublin zt, 1993,
<https://lichess.org/aYpd4eLE>]

7...0-0 8.Be3

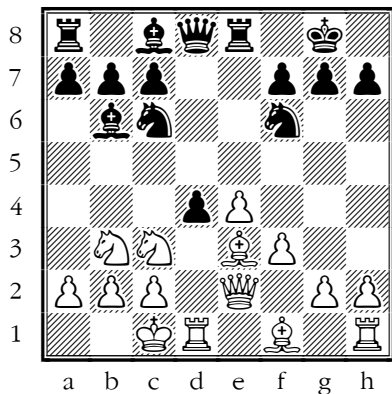


8...Re8 9.f3 d5



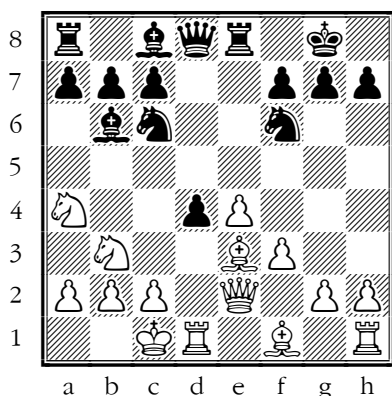
This move starts an interesting messy phase where the right moves for both sides are not obvious.

10.0-0 0 d4±



it's about equal The D pawn is being held up by magic.

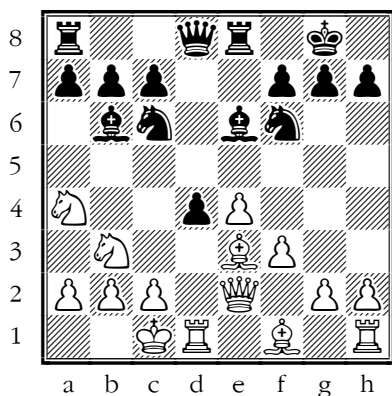
11.Na4??



Mistake. Qe1 was best.

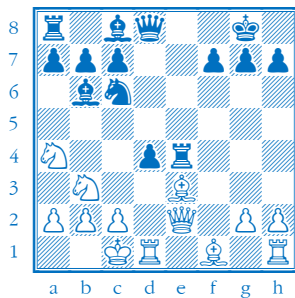
Black has couple of interesting tactics here.

11...Be6?? ±



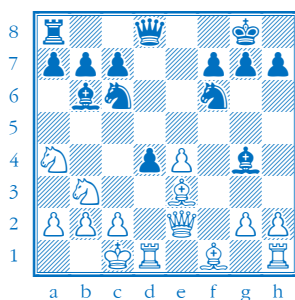
Blunder. Nxe4 was best.

[11...Nxe4! 12.fxe4 Rxe4



→ TACTIC: pin

11...Rxe4 12.fxe4 Bg4!

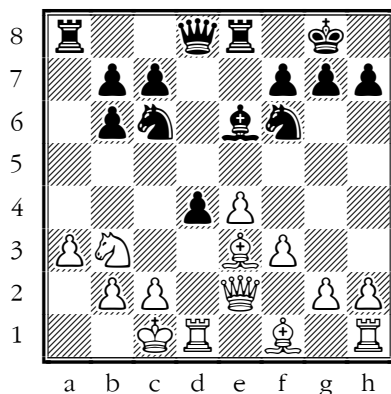


→ TACTIC: skewer

12.Nxb6?!=

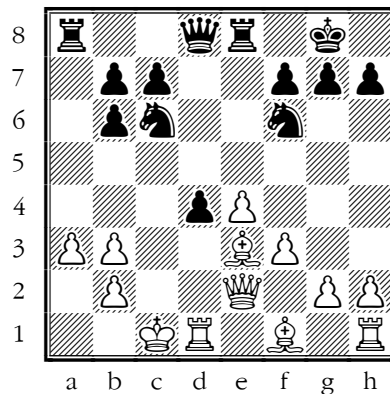
Inaccuracy. Kb1 was best.

12...axb6 13.a3??-+



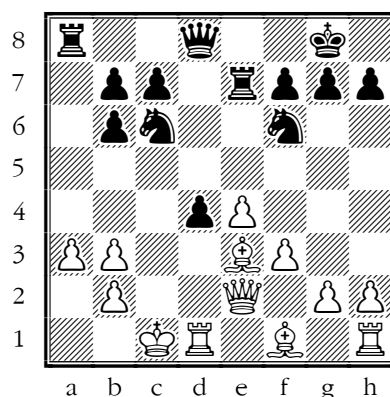
Blunder. Kb1 was best.

13...Bxb3 14.cxb3



Now to keep the advantage Black needs to spot the tactic pointed out earlier.

14...Re7??±

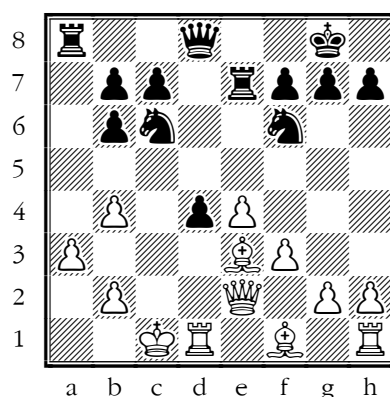


Blunder. Nxe4 was best.

This gives away Black's advantage.

[14...Od6=]

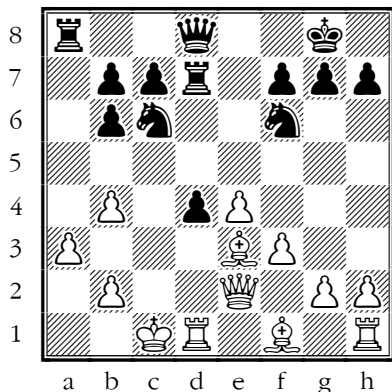
15.b4?? ±



Blunder. Kb1 was best.

This hands the advantage straight back.

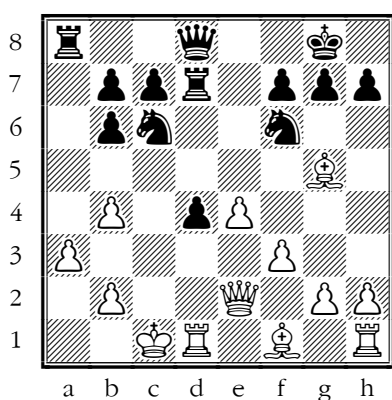
15...Rd7??



Blunder. Nxe4 was best.

This was the last chance for Black to play the tactic.

16.Bg5

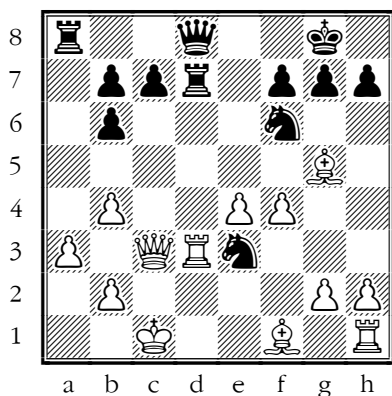


Now White has hopes of surrounding and capturing the d-pawn. As Nimzowitsch used to say: restrain, blockade, destroy!

16...Ne5 17.f4 d3 18.Qd2 Nc4 19.Qc3 Ne3?!

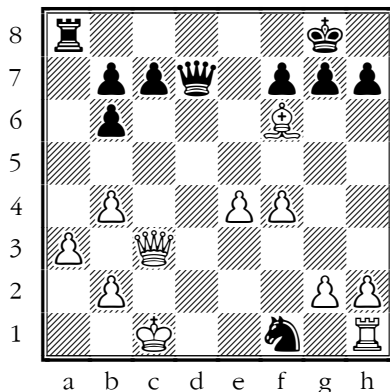
Inaccuracy. Nxe4 was best.

20.Rxd3±



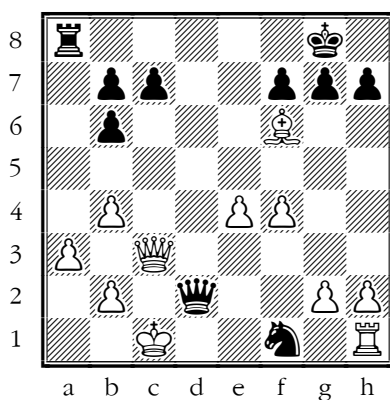
White has succeeded in their aim.

20...Nxf1 21.Rxd7 Qxd7 22.Bxf6±



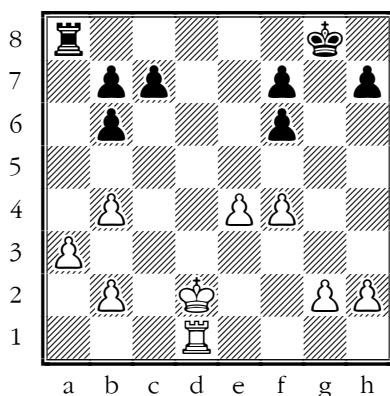
Black is by no means lost here but their next move loses the initiative allowing White to take over.

22...Qd2+??



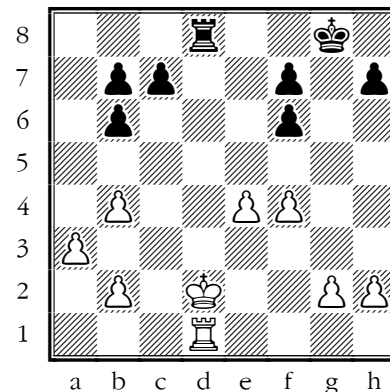
Blunder. gxf6 was best.

23.Qxd2 Nxd2 24.Kxd2 gxf6 25.Rd1+--



White is a P ahead here and Black's only chance is to stay in the Rook end game.

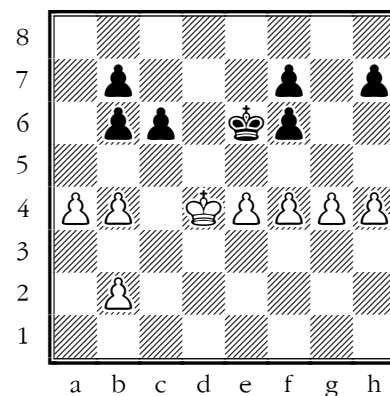
25...Rd8+??



Interestingly, Stockfish doesn't recognise the Rook exchange as a mistake – perhaps because White is winning anyway – but my advice to Black is still keep the rooks on, because they are a drawing factor, and the King and pawn ending is just lost.

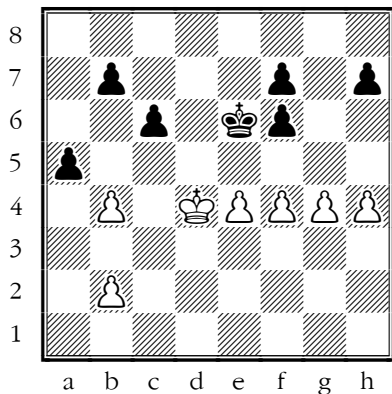
Keep pieces on when you are losing.

26.Ke2 Rxd1 27.Kxd1 Kf8 28.Kd2 Ke8 29.Kd3 c6 30.g4 Kd7 31.h4 Ke6 32.Kd4 Ke7 33.a4 Ke6+--



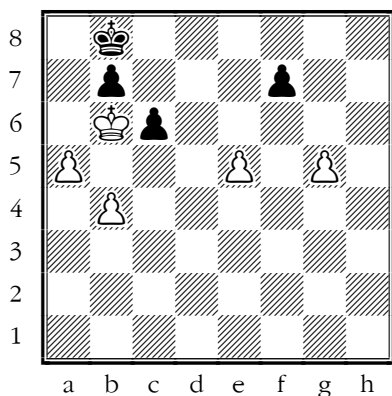
Both sides have strengthened their position as much as they can and White now needs to find a way through which you do accurately.

34.a5 bxa5?!



Inaccuracy. Ke7 was best.

35.bxa5 Kd7 36.Kc5 Kc7 37.b4 h6 38.g5 hxg5 39.fxg5 fxg5 40.hxg5 Kd7 41.Kb6 Kc8 42.e5 Kb8?



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kd7 was best.

43.e6 fxe6 44.g6 e5 45.g7 Kc8 46.g8Q+ Kd7 47.Kxb7 e4 48.Qg4+ 1-0

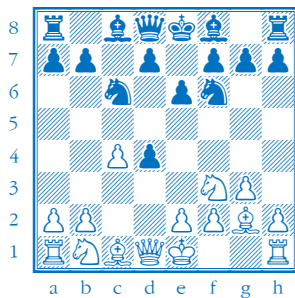
Toby Kubbentelly – Viacheslav Ovcharenko

[A45 Catalan Opening]

“ White plays the opening with little energy or accuracy and you came out winning a Pawn or two and converted the endgame for a nice win. However, there was a little moment when it could all have gone wrong.

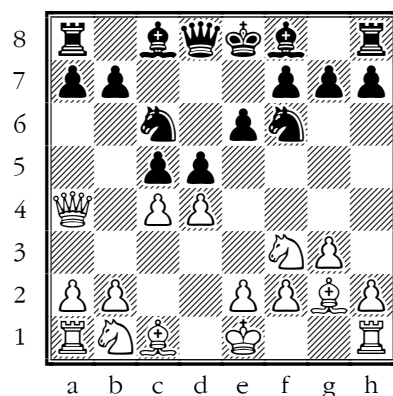
1.d4 Nf6 2.g3 e6 3.Bg2 c5 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.c4 d5

[5...cxd4



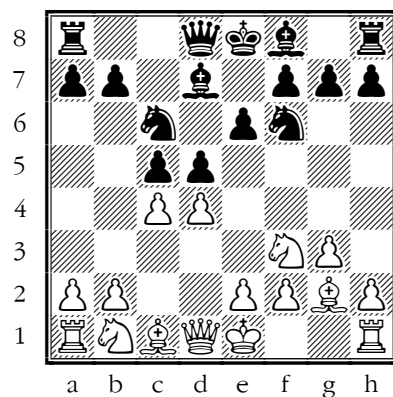
Transposes to a line of the English opening which I have played for both sides]

6.Qa4



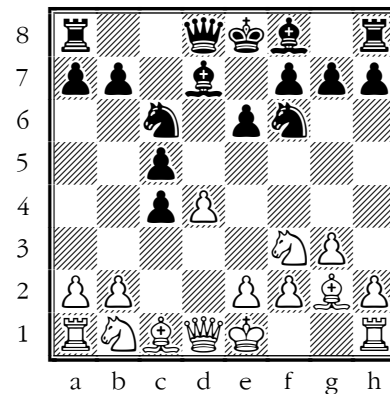
Not sure what that was trying to achieve.

6...Bd7 7.Qd1



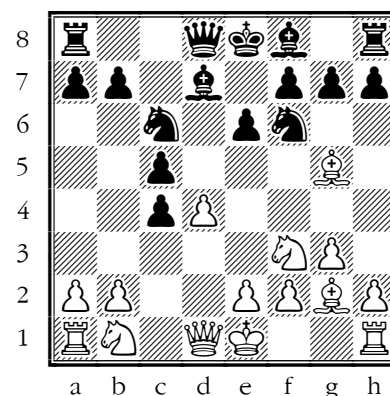
White admits their plan was a mistake but they have lost development and the initiative.

7...dxc4



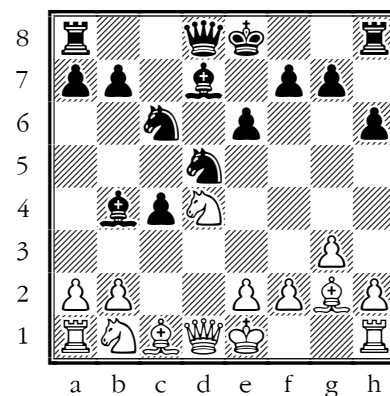
This pawn is not easy for White to recover.

8.Bg5?!-+



Inaccuracy. O-O was best.

8...h6 9.Be3 Nd5 10.Bc1 cxd4 11.Nxd4 Bb4+!

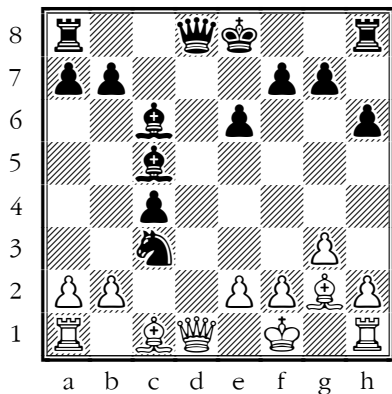


That's rather nice, showing White's position to be awkward.

12.Kf1!?

Inaccuracy. Bd2 was best.

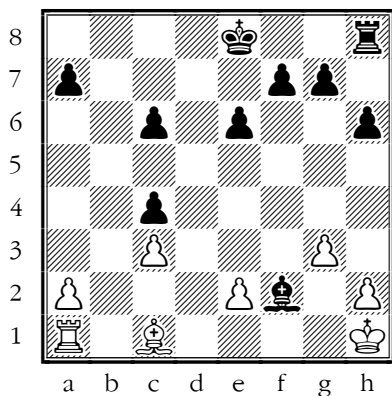
12...Bc5 13.Nxc6 Bxc6 14.Nc3-+ Nxc3?!



Inaccuracy. O-O was best.

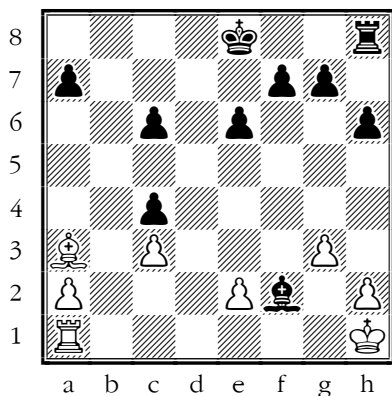
This initiates some exchanges during which you find a way to win another pawn.

15.Bxc6+ bxc6 16.Qxd8+ Rxd8
17.bxc3 Rd1+ 18.Kg2 Rxe1
19.Kxe1 Bxf2



I'm not sure your doubled c-pawns are much of an advantage, but you should win this without trouble with your King's-side pawns.

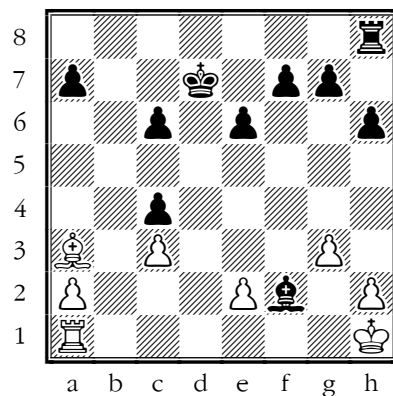
20.Ba3-+



Black has a winning game but as ever care is needed to get the right result.

If I have the position correct here, both sides now make mistakes.

20...Kd7?? ±

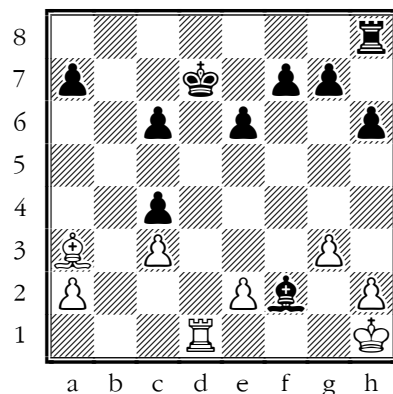


Blunder. Bb6 was best.

→ TACTIC: skewer

If this is the right position, both sides overlook the skewer Rf1 on the next two moves.

21.Rd1+?



Mistake. Rf1 was best.

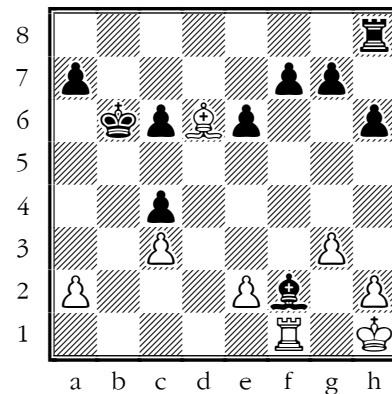
Just chasing the King where it wants to go!

⊖ A check or other one-move attack that has a simple one-move defence can often improve your opponent's position.

21...Kc7 22.Bd6+?!⚡

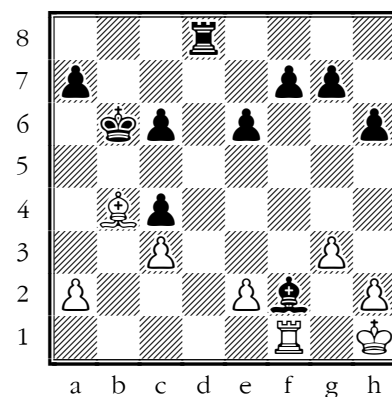
Inaccuracy. Rf1 was best.

22...Kb6 23.Rf1?-+



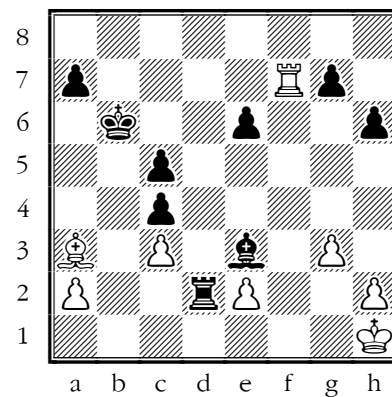
Mistake. Kg2 was best.

23...Rd8 24.Bb4?



Mistake. Be7 was best.

24...c5 25.Ba3 Be3 26.Rxf7 Rd2-+

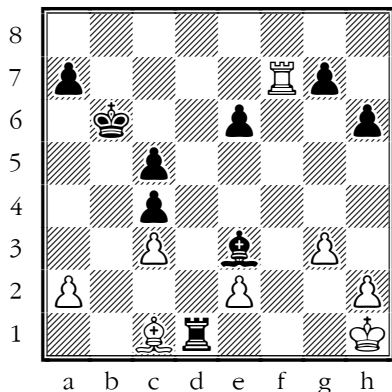


This is all very grim for White and they finish with a final blunder.

27.Bc1?!

Inaccuracy. Re7 was best.

27...Rd1+



→ TACTIC: fork

→ TACTIC: discovery

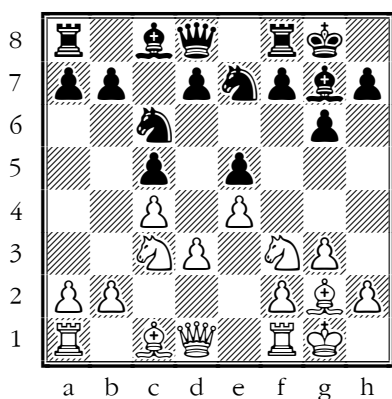
0-1

Ethan McGrath – Viacheslav
Ovcharenko

[A30 English Opening, Symmetrical
Variation]

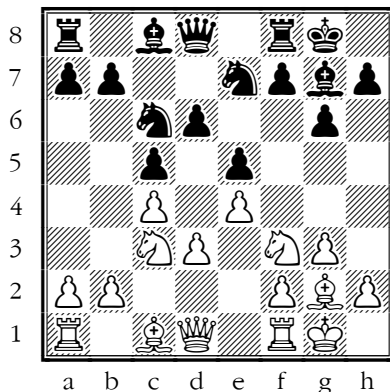
“ You worked hard for the win but couldn't quite find the way in the endgame; I think if there was a missed chance it was earlier in the game.

1.c4 c5 2.g3 Nc6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nf3
Bg7 5.o-o e5 6.d3 Nge7 7.Nc3
o-o 8.e4=



This is the Botvinnik system being played by both sides, but I think it works a lot better with the Knight not obstructing the f-pawn, just as you have played it.

8...d6

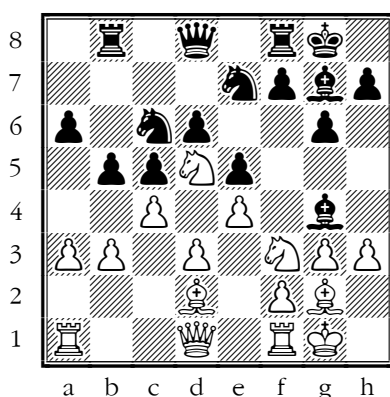


With the centre blocked both sides must seek play on the wings my temperament always tells me to go on the King side but queenside play is perfectly legitimate.

9.a3 Rb8

[9..f5]

10.Nd5 a6 11.Bd2 b5 12.b3 Bg4
13.h3



Both sides must be wary of swapping off all their active pieces and leaving themselves with a bad Bishop – although that's exactly what happens!

13...Bxf3 14.Bxf3 Nxd5 15.cxd5
Nd4 16.Be3 Qf6 17.Bxd4 exd4
18.Bg2 h5 19.f4= Bh6?! ±

Inaccuracy. c4 was best.

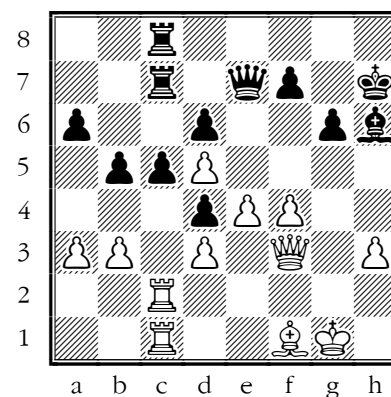
20.Qf3 Rfc8 21.Rac1 Rc7 22.Rf2
Rbc8 23.Bf1 h4 24.gxh4 Qxh4
25.Qg4 Qe7=

Stockfish dismisses this position as equal, showing all zeros –however, a couple of inaccurate moves by White give you some chances.

26.Qf3?!

Inaccuracy. Re1 was best

26...Kh7 27.Rfc2?!

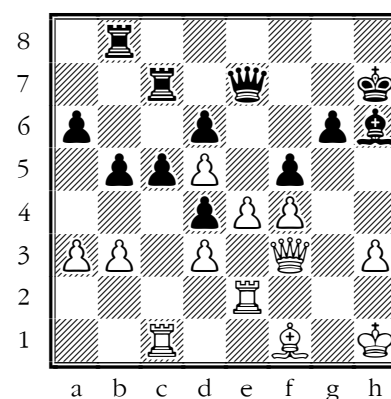


Inaccuracy. Re1 was best.

27...Rb8 28.Kh1?!

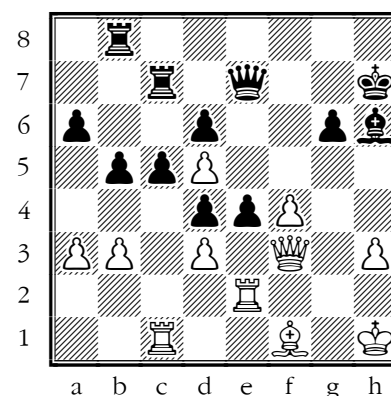
Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

28...f5 29.Re2



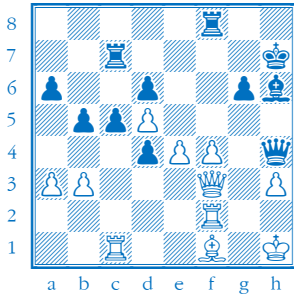
If I've got the moves correct there's a strong move for you here.

29...fxe4?



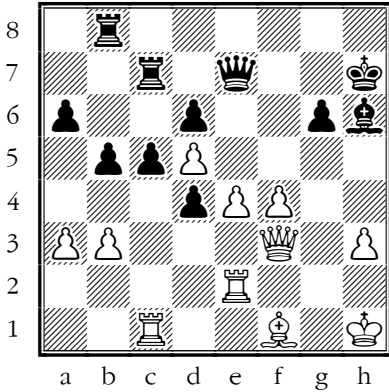
Mistake. Qh4 was best.

[29...Qh4! 30.Rf2 fxe4 31.dxe4 Rf8-
+



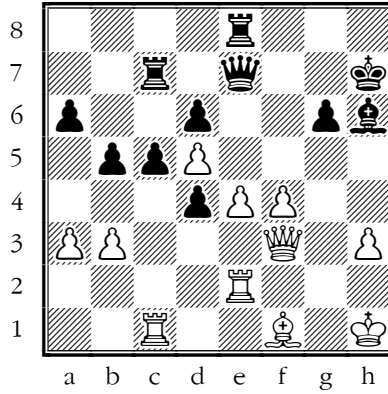
And you win a pawn]

30.dxe4??-+



Blunder. Rxe4 was best.

30...Re8??=



Blunder. Rf8 was best.

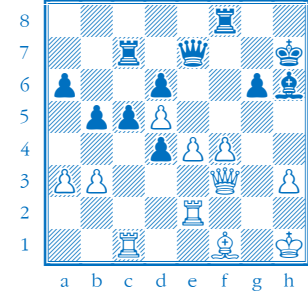
➔ **Attack the weakest point in your opponent's position**

There was a lot more of this game which I think ended up in an opposite-coloured-bishops (OCB) endgame where you were trying hard to find the win. It did look promising but it's well-known that

this type of OCB position is rather drawish.

➔ **Opposite-coloured Bishops are very strong in a joint attack with other pieces, but very drawish in an endgame.**

[30...Rf8!



Is the same idea as before]

1/2-1/2

U18A_4 Suhayl Abdalla

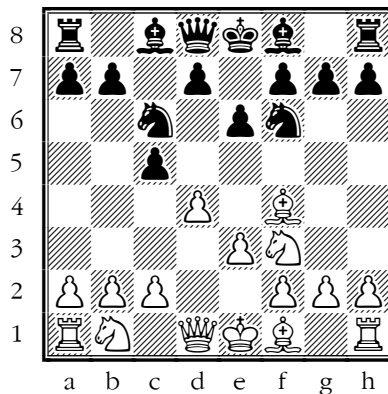
“ Your play was better than your result! So there is some work to do in making every move as good as your best play. The second and third games, where you were White, both featured some casual opening moves that are worth thinking about some more – a little more book study might help.

Benjamin P Hindus – Suhayl Abdalla

[A46 London System]

“ You didn't do anything much wrong in the opening as such but were unable to stop White creating a strong King side attack

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.e3 Nc6



I'm not fond of the London system: I don't like players playing as White and I don't like facing it as Black! White seems to have a terribly stereotyped way of developing, always putting the same pieces on the same squares and then moving pieces over towards the King side to attack the black King. If that's all there was to

it, it wouldn't be much of a threat, but in fact it seems very hard for Black to come up with a positive plan to interrupt White's process. So:

➔ **it's important to have a definite plan or variation to play against the London system or else White will just roll down the King side...**

as in this game.

5.h3?!

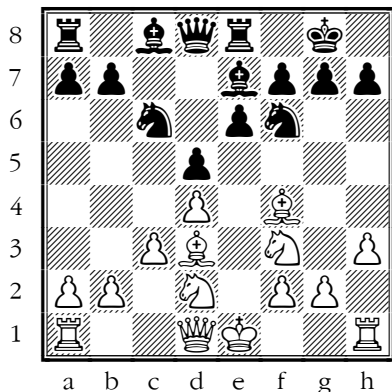
Inaccuracy. Nc3 was best.

5...Be7?!

Inaccuracy. Qb6 was best.

[5...Qb6 is often awkward for White to meet in the London]

6.c3 o-o 7.Nbd2 d5 8.Bd3 cxd4 9.exd4= Re8?! ±



Inaccuracy. Nh5 was best.

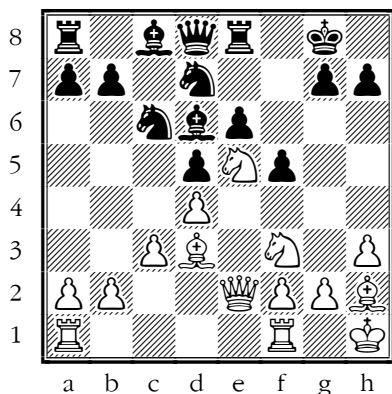
10.0-0 Nh5 11.Bh2 Bd6 12.Ne5 Nf6 13.Ndf3 Nd7± 14.Qe2?!

Inaccuracy. Bxh7+ was best.

14...f5?!

Inaccuracy. Nf8 was best.

15.Kh1?!

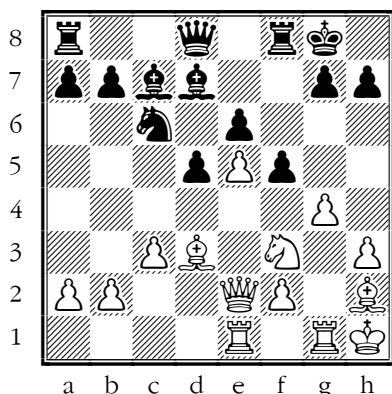


Inaccuracy. Nxc6 was best.

15...Ndxе5?!

Inaccuracy. Bxe5 was best.

16.dxe5 Bc7 17.Rae1 Bd7 18.g4 Rf8+- 19.Rg1?!±

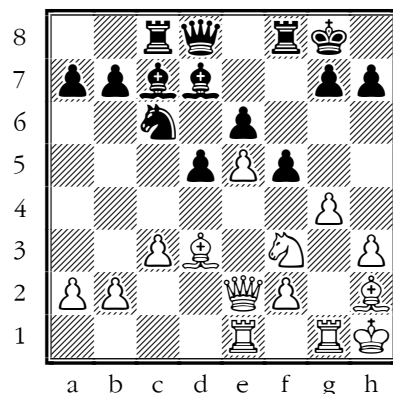


Inaccuracy. gxf5 was best.

For the next part of the game, I'm sorry to say I got into a terrible muddle about the right moves

from the score sheet. I know where most of the pieces were on most turns but I couldn't make a complete clean score out of it.

19...Rc8??+-

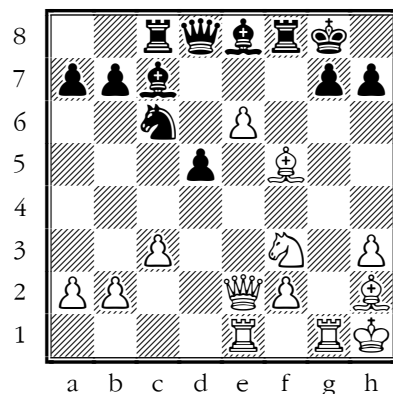


Blunder. f4 was best.

20.gxf5 exf5 21.e6 Be8+-

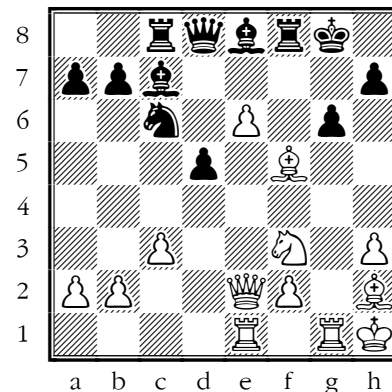
22.Bxf5??-+

Stockfish now complains about several moves by both players! Sometimes the errors are so awful I think I must have the moves of the game down wrongly, so I haven't commented much myself.



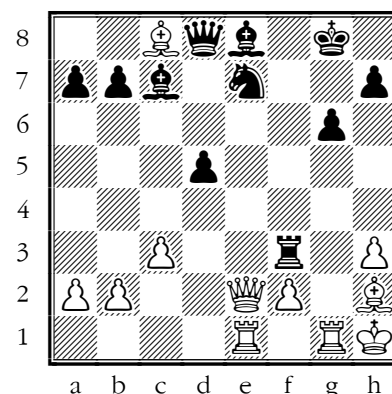
Blunder. e7 was best.

22...g6??+-



Blunder. Rxf5 was best.

23.e7 Nxe7 24.Bxc8 Rxf3?

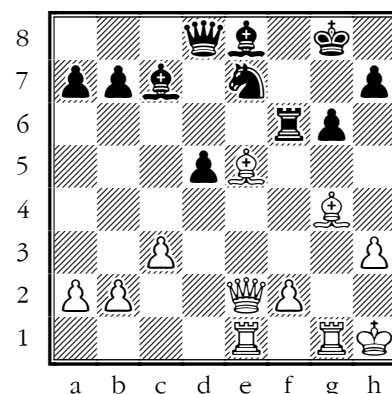


Mistake. Nxc8 was best.

25.Bg4?!

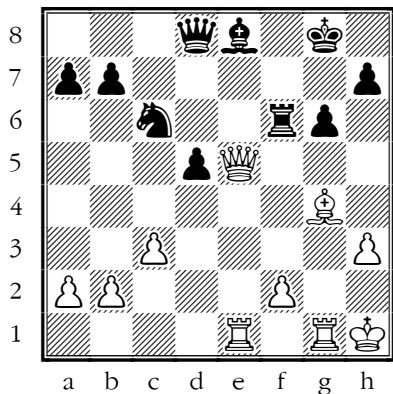
Inaccuracy. Qxf3 was best.

25...Rf6 26.Be5?



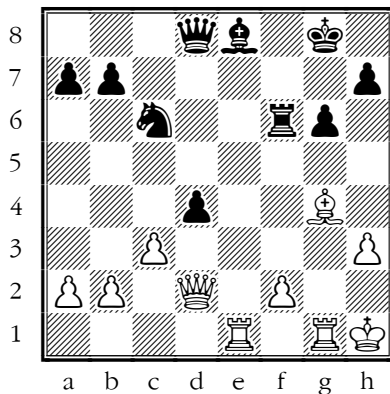
Mistake. Qxe7 was best.

26...Bxe5 27.Qxe5 Nc6?



Mistake. Kf7 was best.

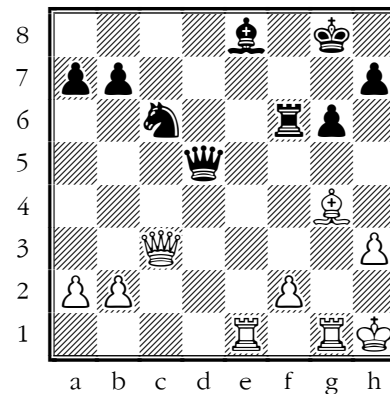
28.Qe3?



Blunder. Qxe8+ was best.

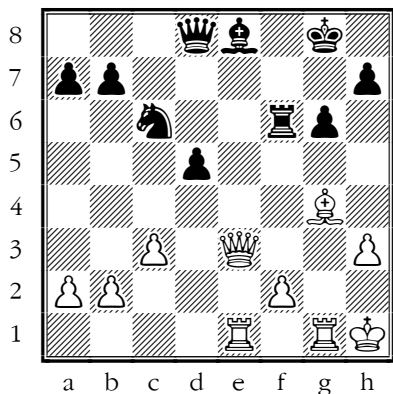
Did you both really miss that?

29...dxc3??



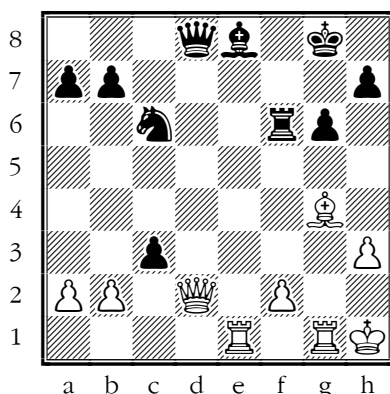
Blunder. Rd6 was best.

31.f3 Rxf3 32.Bxf3 Qxf3+?



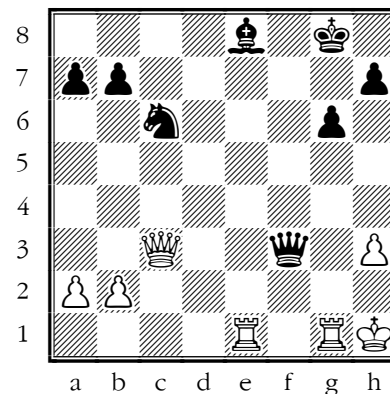
Mistake. Qxe8+ was best.

28...d4?+-



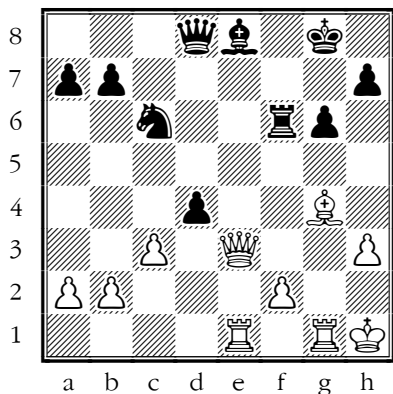
Blunder. Bf7 was best.

30.Qxc3??



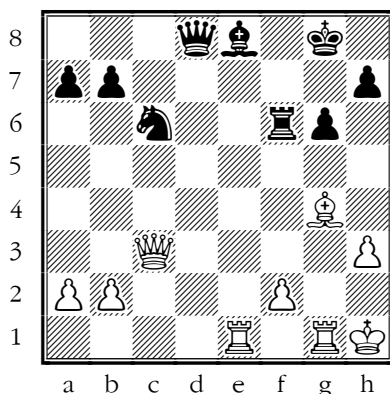
Checkmate is now unavoidable. Qf5 was best.

33.Kh2??



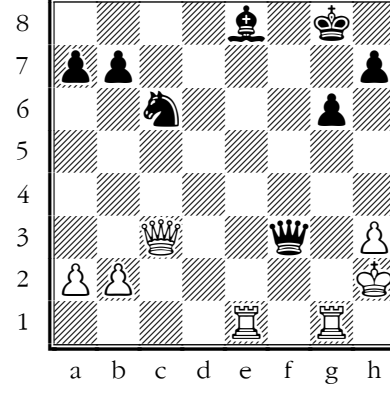
Mistake. Bf7 was best.

29.Qd2??



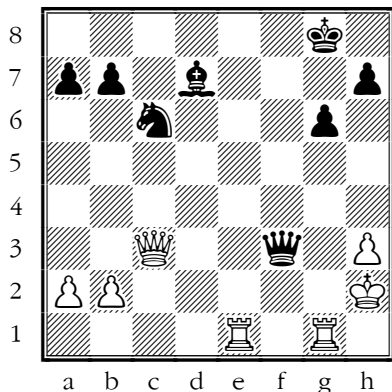
Blunder. Qxd8 was best.

30...Qd5+??



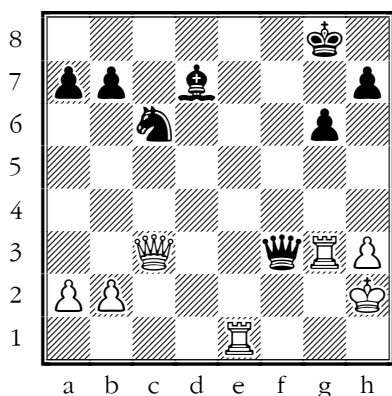
Lost forced checkmate sequence. Qxf3 was best.

33...Bd7??



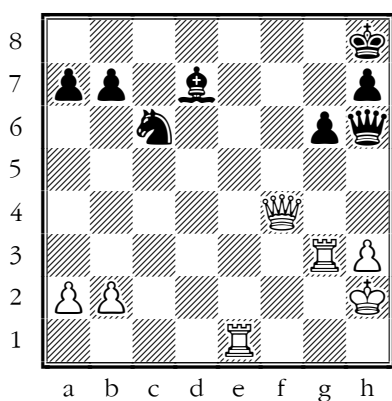
Checkmate is now unavoidable. Qf4+ was best.

34.Rg3??



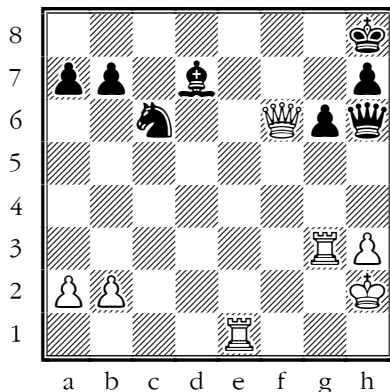
Lost forced checkmate sequence. Qxf3 was best.

34...Qh5 35.Qc4+ Kh8 36.Qf4 Qh6??



Checkmate is now unavoidable. Kg8 was best.

37.Qf6+??



Lost forced checkmate sequence. Qxh6 was best.

37...Kg8 38.Reg1

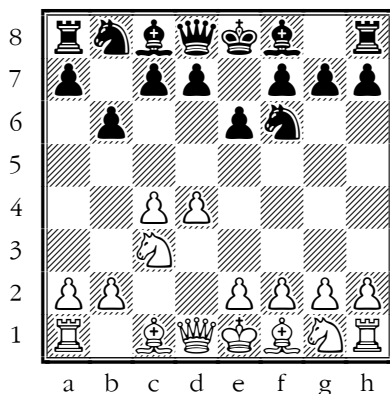
1-0

Suhayl Abdalla – Henry Witchard

[E12 Queen's Indian Defence]

“ You didn't get much out of the opening then Black had pressure against your weak queenside structure and soon won the exchange

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 b6?!



Inaccuracy. Bb4 was best.

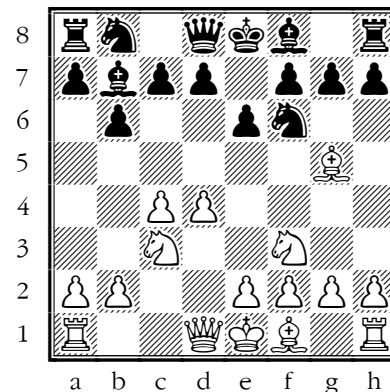
4.Nf3?!

Inaccuracy. e4 was best.

That's too routine a move.

☞ If you get to a position which you are not sure you have reached before, it's worth a good think to see if you can take advantage of any new opportunities.

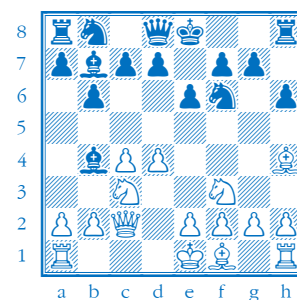
4...Bb7 5.Bg5



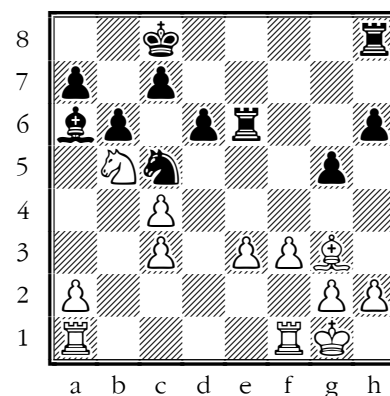
This apparently straightforward system was all the rage few years ago and has a lot of theory associated with it. Perhaps White doesn't get that much but both players need to know what they're doing.

5...Bb4 6.Qc2 h6= 7.Bf4

[7.Bh4!]



Is the right move, tempting Black to weaken their King side. The main line of theory now goes: 7...g5 8.Bg3 Ne4 9.e3 Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 d6 11.Bd3 f5 12.d5 Nd7 13.Bxe4 fxe4 14.Qxe4 Qf6 15.o-o o-o-o 16.Qxe6 Qxe6 17.dxe6 Nc5 18.Nd4 Rde8 19.f3 Ba6 20.Nb5 Rxe6=



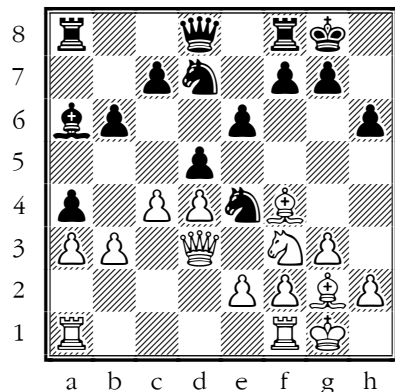
And this apparently obscure position has been played at the top level a dozen times with White

coming out well on top in practical play.]

7...o-o 8.a3 Bxc3+ 9.Qxc3 Ne4
10.Qd3 a5?!

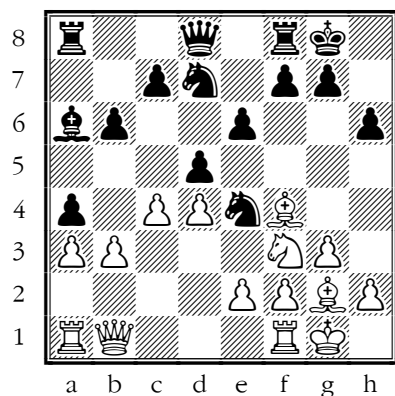
Inaccuracy. c5 was best.

11.g3 d5 12.Bg2 Nd7= 13.o-o
Ba6 14.b3 a4



Black is doing a good job of softening up the white structure but there's nothing too much to worry about yet. White's next move though put the game in great danger, as it lets the black minor pieces have too much fun.

15.Qb1?—+



Mistake. Nd2 was best.

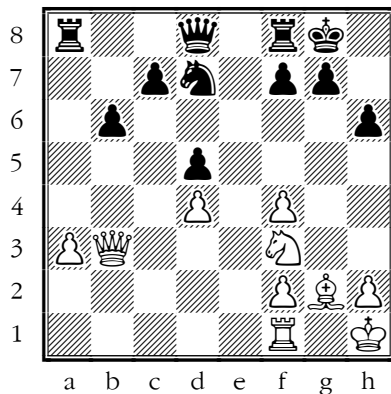
15...axb3 16.cxd5?!

Inaccuracy. Qxb3 was best.

16...Nc3! 17.Qxb3 Nxe2+
18.Kh1 Nxf4

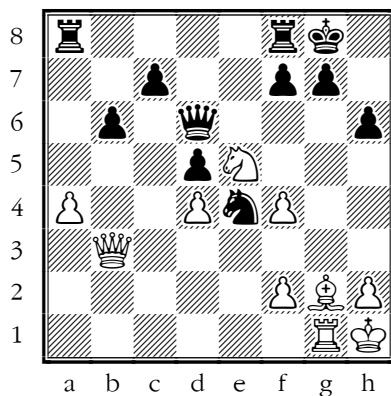
→ TACTIC: discovery

19.gxf4 Bxf1 20.Rxf1 exd5



Black has the exchange and the pawn and stands very well. It's not easy for White to create counterplay.

21.Ne5 Nf6 22.Rg1 Qd6 23.a4
Ne4?!

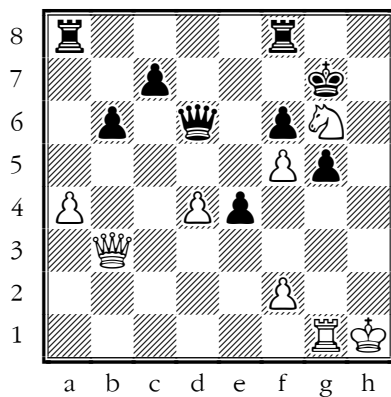


Inaccuracy. Rfe8 was best.

24.Bxe4 dxe4 25.Qg3 g6 26.f5
g5 27.h4 f6 28.hxg5 hxg5
29.Qb3+?!

Inaccuracy. Kg2 was best.

29...Kg7 30.Ng6?

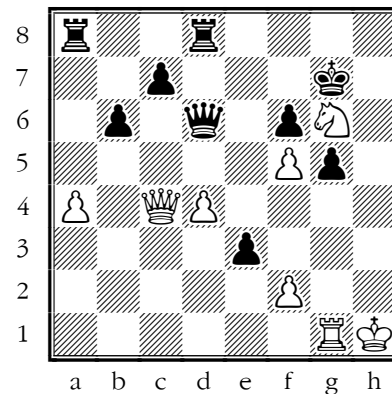


Mistake. Qg3 was best.

30...Rfd8?!

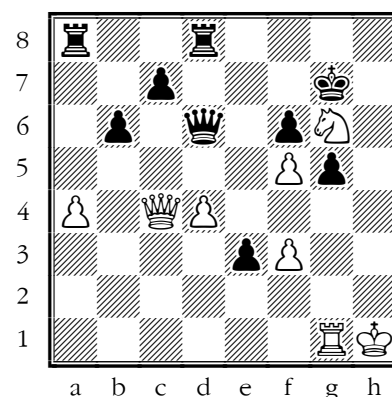
Inaccuracy. Rh8+ was best.

31.Qc4 e3



White has had some success in worrying Black but in fact it's the white King that is the weaker.

32.f3??



Checkmate is now unavoidable. fxe3 was best.

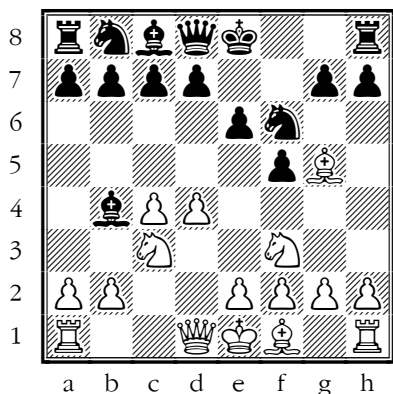
32...Rh8+ 33.Kg2 Qh2+ 34.Kf1
Qf2#

o-1

Suhayl Abdalla – NN
[A85 Dutch Defence, Classical System]

“ You fell for an ancient trap after which there wasn't much you could do.

1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.Nf3
Bb4 5.Bg5



This system doesn't really ask any hard questions of Black, so I think this is a bit too straightforward against such an active opening as the Dutch Defence, and it is almost never played at the top level. (I know Capablanca had a famous win with it against Tartakower in the 1920s, but I can't recall much since!)

I wrote a booklet about facing Indian systems for Queen's Gambit players, intending to recommend d4/c4/Nc3/Bg5 against everything Black could play, yet the only defence I couldn't make it work against was the Dutch.

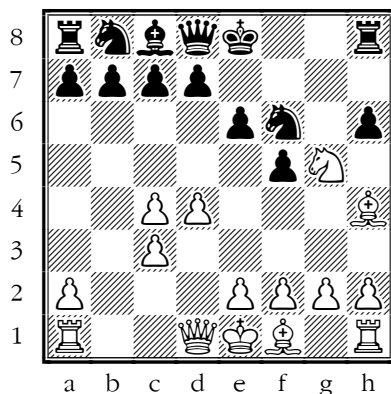
I think 2.Bg5 is a nice awkward move to use, and I know Dutch players often don't like to face 2.Nc3.

5...Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 h6= 7.Bh4?!

Inaccuracy. Bxf6 was best.

This is a kingside version of the famous Noah's ark trap.

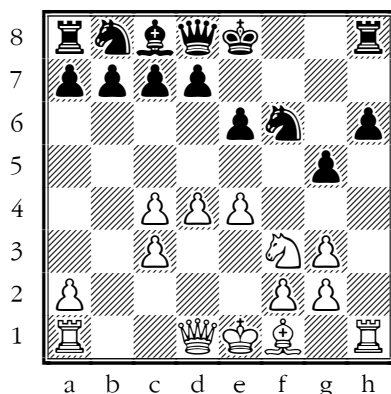
7...g5 8.Nxg5?!



Mistake. Bg3 was best.

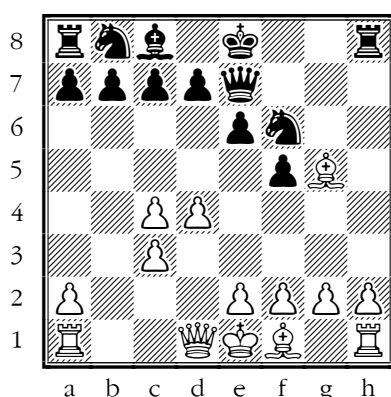
Oddly, Stockfish thinks that you should try and get only one pawn for the piece and not two.

[8.Bg3 f4 9.e4 fxg3 10.hxg3 ♜



At least in this position you have a big strong centre.

8...hxg5 9.Bxg5-- Qe7



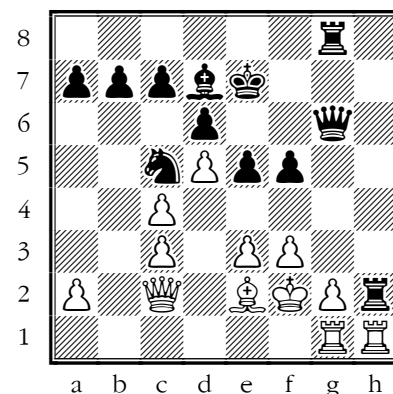
You're a piece down with not much to do. you might be able to

run the h-Pawn but the endgame is a long way off.

10.d5?!--+

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

10...Qg7 11.Bxf6 Qxf6 12.Qd4 e5 13.Qd3 Na6 14.f3 Nc5 15.Qd2 d6 16.e3 Bd7 17.Be2 Qg6 18.Kf2 Ke7 19.Rag1 Rag8 20.Qc2 Rxh2!--+



→ TACTIC: fork

with this breakthrough Black sews up the win.

21.Bf1?!

Inaccuracy. Rxh2 was best.

21...b5?!

Inaccuracy. Qg3+ was best.

22.Ke2?!

Inaccuracy. Ke1 was best.

22...Qh6 23.Rxh2 Qxh2 24.Kf2 Qg3+ 25.Ke2 bxc4 26.Kd1 Ba4 0-1

U18A_5 Oliver Sleight

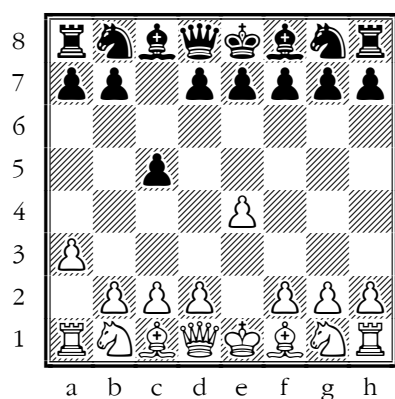
“ Glad to have you with us this year although the scoreboard was not kind to you. Perhaps your handling of the opening phase needs to be more practical?”

Oliver Sleight – Ayush Menon

[B20 Sicilian Defence]

“ You came out of the opening with nothing much and lost the thread later on, but held on to draw.

1.e4 c5 2.a3=



White has tried everything else against the Sicilian, why not this? Perhaps the answer is that it gives Black scope to lead you into unfamiliar positions where the best plan is not obvious – in the Alapin/c3 or the Grand Prix Attack you have some ready-made plans that you can just get on with.

☛ **At the end of most c3 Sicilian lines, even if Black has equality, you have a position with a simple plan.**

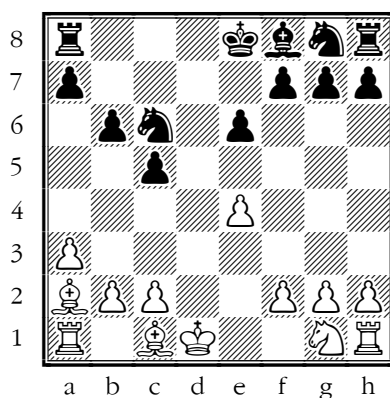
2...b6 3.Bc4 Bb7 4.d3 e6 5.Nc3 d5 6.Ba2?! \bar{f}

Inaccuracy. exd5 was best.

6...dxe4 7.Nxe4 Bxe4?!=

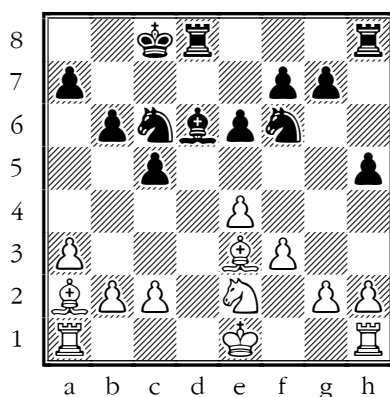
Inaccuracy. Nf6 was best.

8.dxe4 Qxd1+ 9.Kxd1 Nc6=



I'm not sure what you were hoping to get out of the opening but I trust it was better than this!

10.f3 Bd6 11.Ne2 o-o-o 12.Ke1 Nf6 13.Be3 h5=



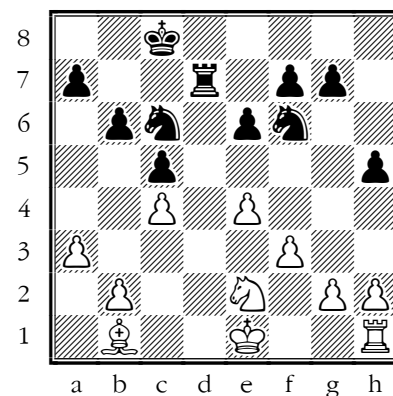
This is still about equal. However, for the next part of the game, you swap off all your pieces apart from your light squared Bishop, and then you put all your pawns on light coloured squares. This leaves your Bishop acting as a tall pawn and not able to defend the position against the mobile knight acting on the dark squares.

☛ **The balance of Bishops and pawns in a position can be crucial – your Bishop(s) must not be obstructed by pawns if you can help it.**

14.Bf4?!

Inaccuracy. Nf4 was best.

14...Rd7 15.Rd1 Rhd8 16.Bxd6 Rxd6 17.Rxd6 Rxd6 18.Bb1 Rd7= 19.c4?f

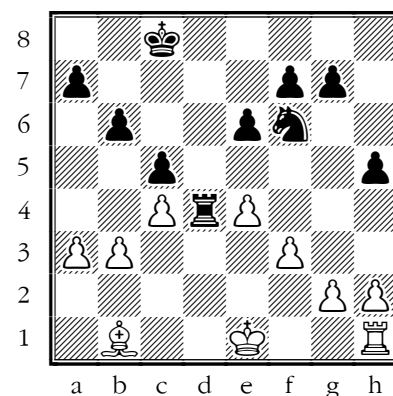


Mistake. h4 was best.

19...Nd4?! \bar{f}

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

20.Nxd4 \bar{f} Rxd4 21.b3



Black has an advantage but doesn't make the most of it.

21...g5?!=

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

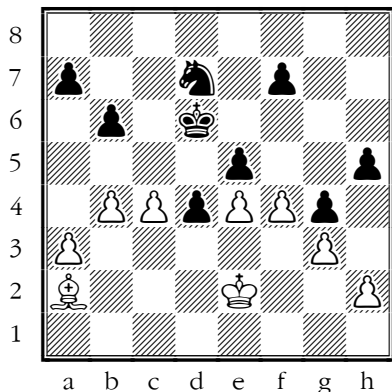
22.Ke2?! \bar{f}

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

22...e5?!=

Inaccuracy. h4 was best.

23.Rd1 Kc7 24.Rxd4 cxd4 25.g3 Kd6 26.b4 g4 27.f4 Nd7 28.Ba2 \bar{f}



Black is still a little better but the position is at risk of seizing up. There's no way through for the black King and the black knight lacks scope.

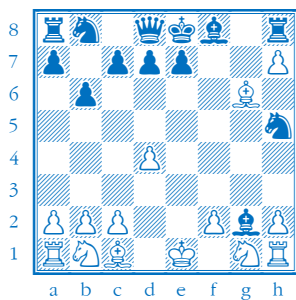
...1/2-1/2

Oliver Sleight – Edward Ames
[A40 English Defence]

“ When you meet an unfamiliar opening it can feel as though you were never in the game... You didn't do anything very daft, but got the wrong end of the stick and you were under a lot of pressure when you made your important oversight.

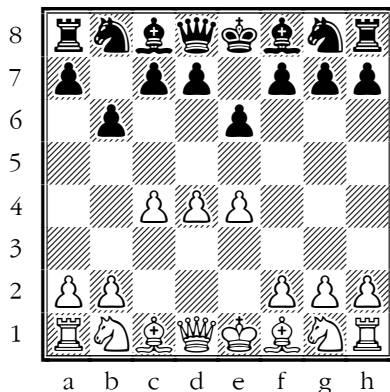
1.e4 e6

[1...b6!? 2.d4 Bb7 3.Bd3 f5? 4.exf5 Bxg2 5.Qh5+ g6 6.fxg6 Nf6 (6...Bg7 7.gxh7+ Kf8 8.Nf3! Bxh1 (8...Nf6 9.Qg6 Bxf3 10.Rg1 Rxh7 11.Qg3 Be4 12.Bxe4 Nxe4 13.Qf3+!+-) 9.Ne5+-) 7.gxh7+ Nxh5 8.Bg6#



Greco 1620]

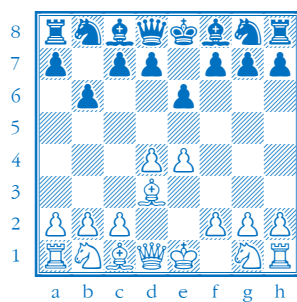
2.d4 b6 3.c4±



Nothing wrong with this, but it's probably pushing you towards types of position that you don't play so often, being an e-pawn player.

➔ **A consistent opening repertoire can foster confidence and gain time on the clock.**

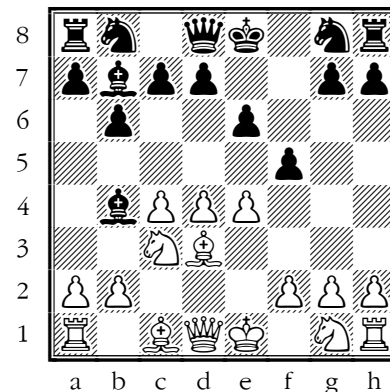
[3.Bd3



We discussed Black's curious opening after the game and decided that this move was probably a better and safer approach, particularly for King-side opening player.

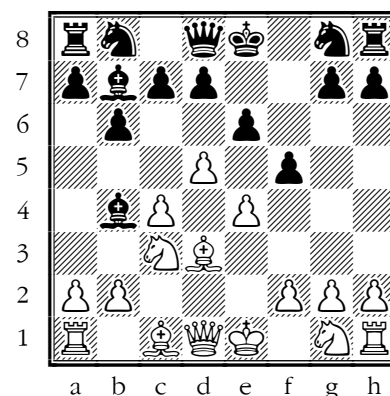
3...Bb7 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Qe2!? ±
(5.e5!±)]

3...Bb7 4.Nc3 Bb4 5.Bd3 f5



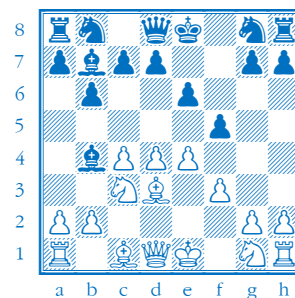
I've often played this as Black; White's centre is under pressure.

6.d5?!=



Very natural but probably a little too loose]

[6.f3=

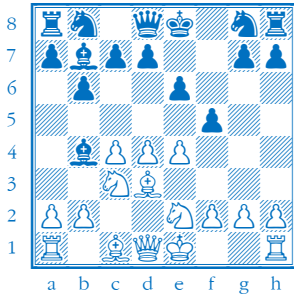


looks OK 6...Nc6 7.Be3 Qh4+ 8.g3 Bxc3+ 9.bxc3 Qh5±

6.Qe2= Is very sensible;

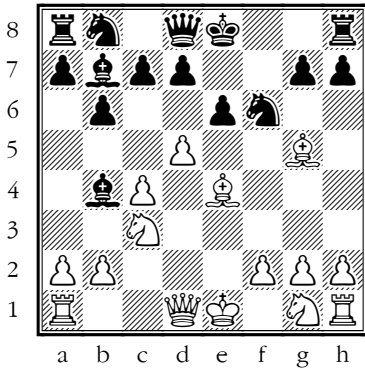
6.Qh5+ g6 7.Qe2= was the big main line when I was a boy but it's not clear that forcing g6 is in White's favour.;

6.Nge2±



I've never seen this move played or analysed in the books, but Stockfish likes it. 6...fxe4 7.Bc2!?

6...fxe4 7.Bxe4 Nf6= 8.Bg5?!?

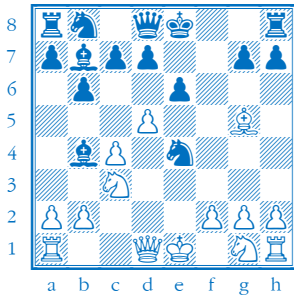


Inaccuracy. Bf3 was best.

[8.Bf3 exd5 9.cxd5 Qe7+ 10.Nge2 Bxc3+ 11.bxc3 Qc5 12.c4 Qxc4]

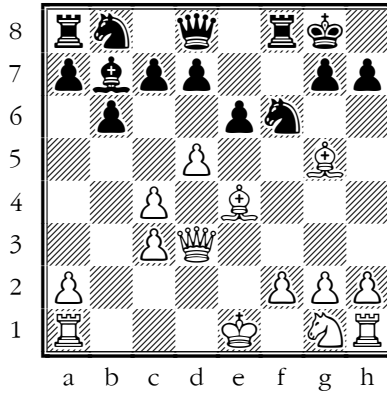
8...Bxc3+

[8...Nxe4]



is an amusing queen sacrifice which I think has been tried but actually is not adequate. 9.Bxd8 Nxc3 10.bxc3 Bxc3+ 11.Kf1 Bxa1 12.Qxa1 Kxd8]

9.bxc3 o-o 10.Qd3?!?



Inaccuracy. Bc2 was best.

[10.Bc2]

10...h6 11.Bh4-- g5?!?

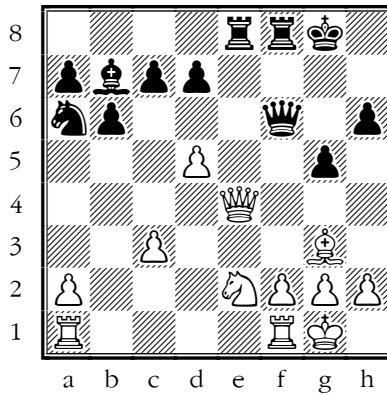
Inaccuracy. Na6 was best.

[11...Na6 12.Bg6]

12.Bg3 Nxe4 13.Qxe4 Qf6

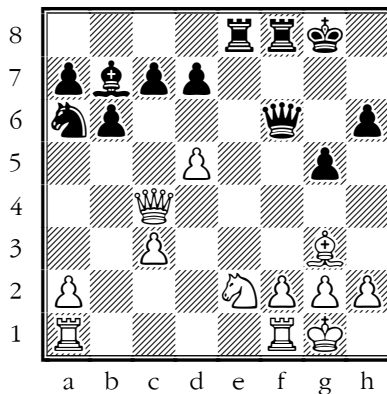
14.Ne2 Na6 15.o-o exd5

16.cxd5 Rae8



Black has a very nice position with lots of targets to aim at and better development.

17.Qc4?!--

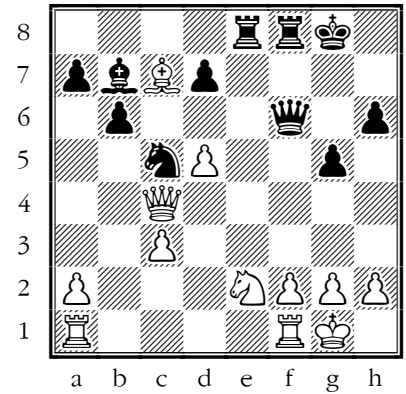


Inaccuracy. Qc2 was best.

This sets you up for a skewer.

[17.Qc2]

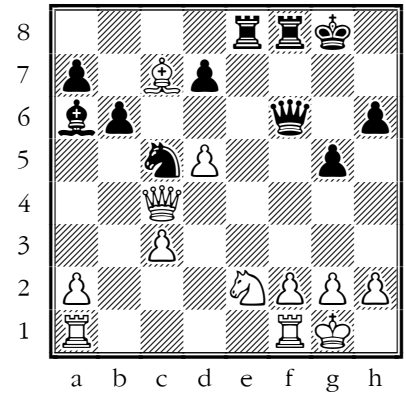
17...Nc5 18.Bxc7??



Blunder. d6+ was best.

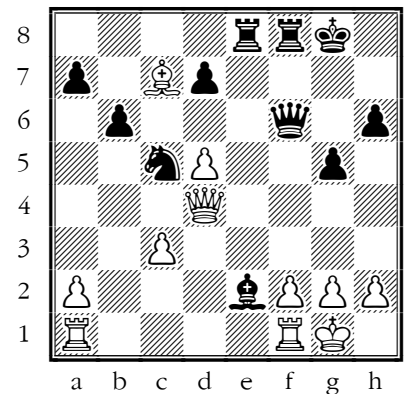
[18.d6+ Kh7 19.Rfe1 h5 20.Nd4 h4 21.Rxe8 Rxe8 22.dxc7 hxg3 23.fxg3 Ba6]

18...Ba6



→ TACTIC: skewer

19.Qd4 Bxe2--



Now you're a whole piece down and, while Stockfish has a couple of nitpicks about your later moves, I don't really think there was anything more you could have done against accurate play by your opponent.

20.Rfe1 Qxd4 21.cxd4 Nb7?!

Inaccuracy. Nd3 was best.

**22.Rac1 Bh5 23.Rxe8 Rxe8
24.Be5 d6 25.Rc7?!**

Inaccuracy. Bg3 was best.

25...dxe5 26.Rxb7?!

Inaccuracy. dxe5 was best.

26...exd4 27.f3 Rd8?!

Inaccuracy. d3 was best.

28.Rxa7 Rxd5 29.Kf2

...0-1

U18A_6 Jun Li Yeap

“ One nice win and you did enough to gain a second in your first game. Really not a lot to criticise – a moment’s hesitation here, a weakening move there – and more experience will bring the greater accuracy you need.

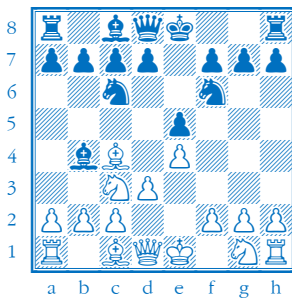
Jun Li Yeap - Yaroslav Sharhorodski

[C24 King’s Gambit Declined]

“ This was a shame! I thought you played the opening with a lot of style and vigour, got a really nice position and I was convinced you were going to win... The advanced passed pawn turned out to be a lot weaker than you must have hoped and, sadly, once it disappeared, Black was in the driving seat.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.d3 Bc5**

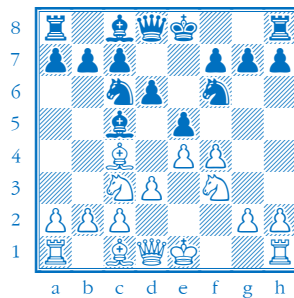
[4...Bb4!]



must be the best way to slow down White's plans. John Emms wrote a couple of books a while ago recommending for White: 5.Nge2]

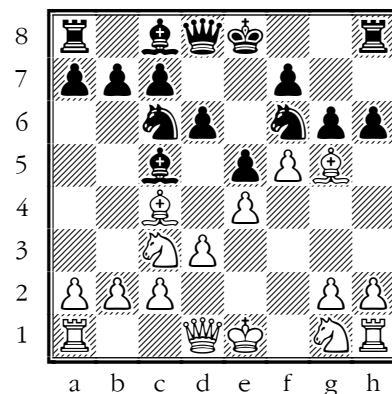
5.f4 d6 6.f5

[6.Nf3]



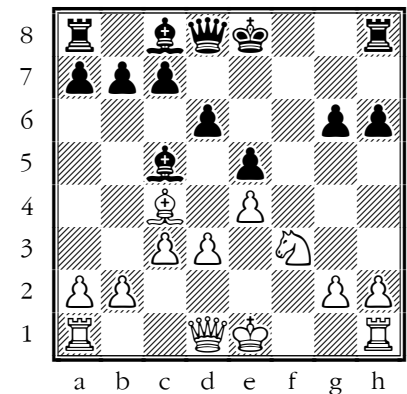
Is the right move, I have always thought, but you make your choice look good]

6...g6?! ± 7.Bg5 h6



All these Pawn moves are unlikely to help Black.

8.Bxf6 Qxf6 9.Nd5 Qd8 10.fxg6 fxg6 11.Nf3± Nb4 12.Nxb4 Bxb4+ 13.c3 Bc5±

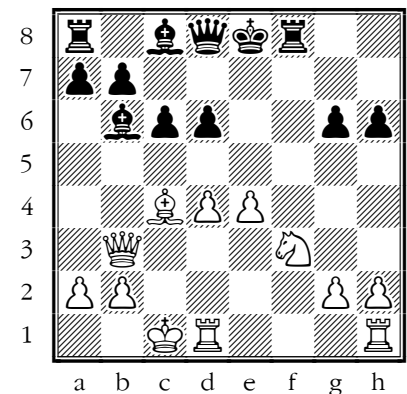


White has a very nice position.

14.Qb3

[14.d4! ±]

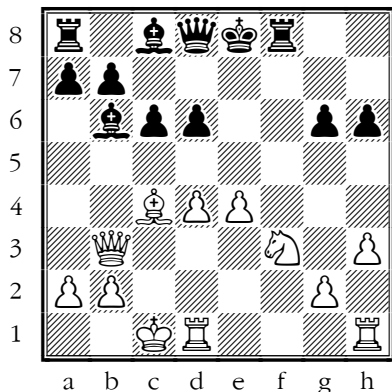
**14...Rf8 15.o-o-o c6 16.d4 exd4
17.cxd4 Bb6±**



This is all still very nice, but now you take a moment to play unnecessary pawn move of your own, and your advantage and your initiative disappear.

☞ **Every move is precious and should be spent wisely.**

18.h3?!=



Inaccuracy. d5 was best.

So this is now about equal.

18...Qf6?±

Inaccuracy. Qe7 was best.

This hands the initiative back to White.

19.e5?! ±

Inaccuracy. Rhf1 was best.

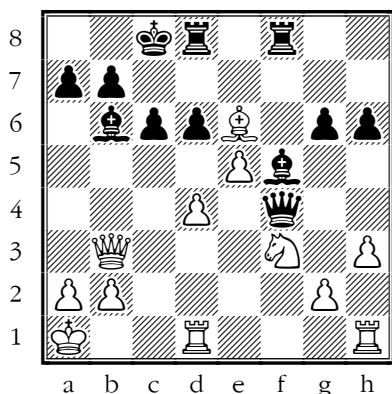
This is a natural way to try and gain the initiative but Black has a couple of checks that allow them to get back to near-equality.

19...Qf4+ 20.Kb1 Bf5+ 21.Ka1±
o-o-o?!±

Inaccuracy. d5 was best.

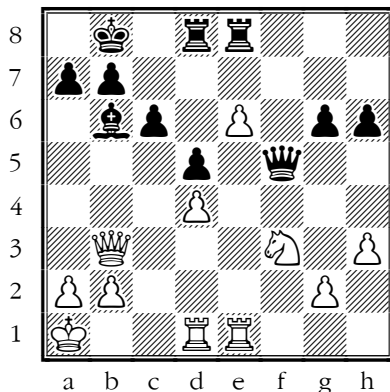
[21...d5 22.Bd3 o-o-o=]

22.Be6+?!=



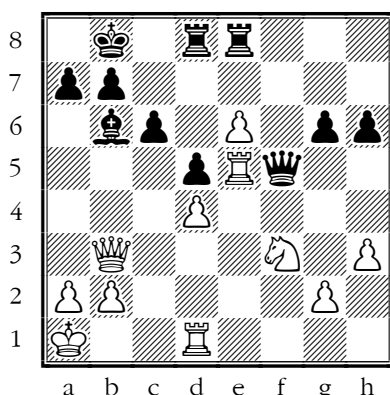
Inaccuracy. e6 was best.

22...Kb8 23.Bxf5 Qxf5 24.Rhe1 Rfe8 25.e6 d5=



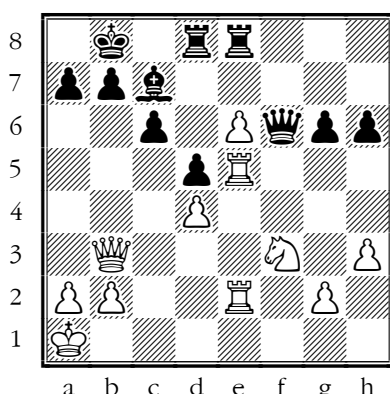
The passed pawn looks promising but turns out to be weak. There was a chance to improve....

26.Re5?!



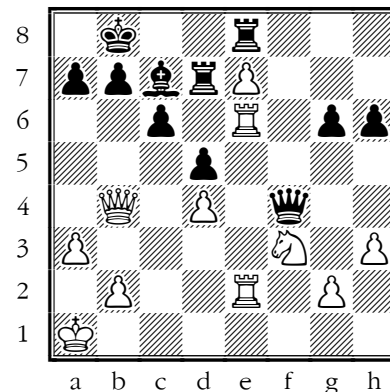
Inaccuracy. e7 was best.

26...Qf6 27.Rde1 Ba5 28.R1e2 Bc7?!



Inaccuracy. Re7 was best.

29.e7 Rd7 30.Re6 Qf7 31.Qb4 Qf4 32.a3±

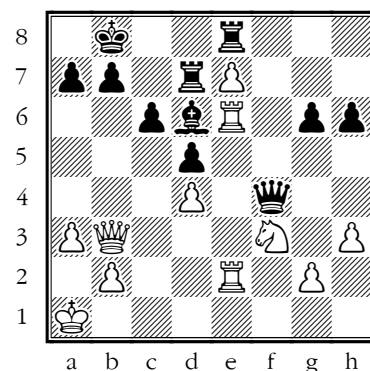


After these manoeuvres, White has regained the advantage, but the next move is a mistake.

32...Bd6?!+-

Inaccuracy. Rd6 was best.

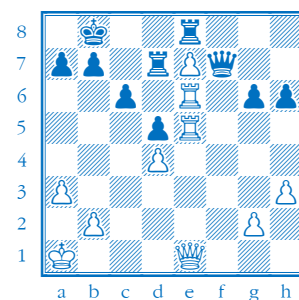
33.Qb3??±



Blunder. Qe1 was best.

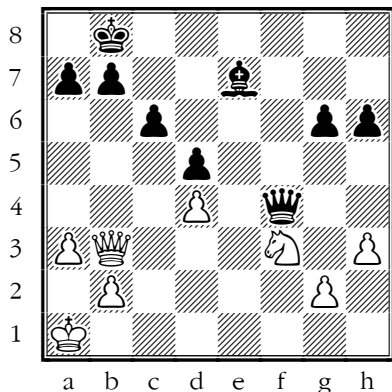
Not sure what your ideas was there.

[33.Qe1 Qf7 34.Ne5 Bxe5 35.R2xe5



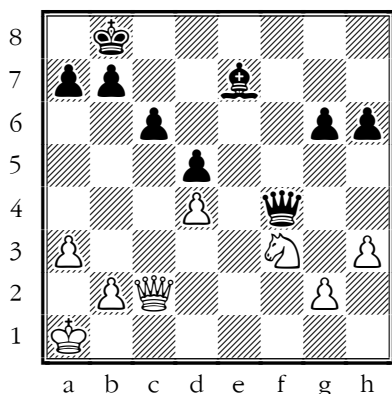
And while it's not obvious here what is your best way forward, it is clear that you've got the type of position you want.]

33...Rdx7 34.Rxe7 Rxe7 35.Rxe7 Bxe7



Now your pawn has disappeared, it's very tricky; the most important thing is to maximise your activity to gain a draw.

36.Qc2?!



Inaccuracy. Ne5 was best.

Not active enough I fear.

36...Qe4 37.Qf2 Bd6 38.Qd2 g5

39.Ka2--+

...0-1

Dev Mistry - Jun Li Yeap

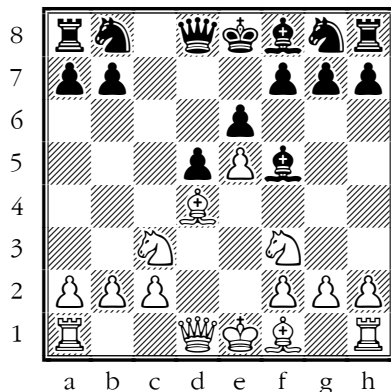
[B12 Caro-Kann, Advance Variation]

“ You equalised nicely against White's sensible-looking but unthreatening opening, and when they made a mistake you pounced.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3 e6 5.Nf3 c5 6.Be3 cxd4?!

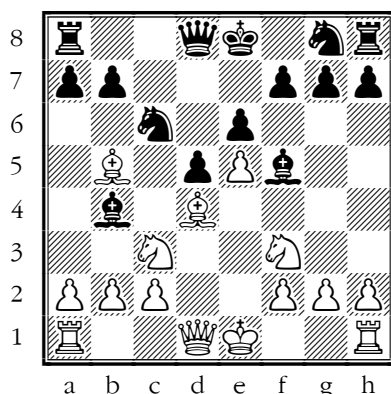
Inaccuracy. c4 was best.

7.Bxd4?



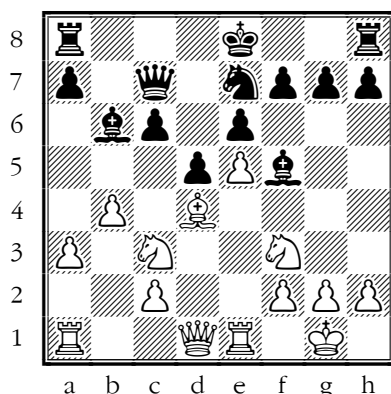
Mistake. Nxd4 was best.

7...Nc6 8.Bb5 Bb4?!



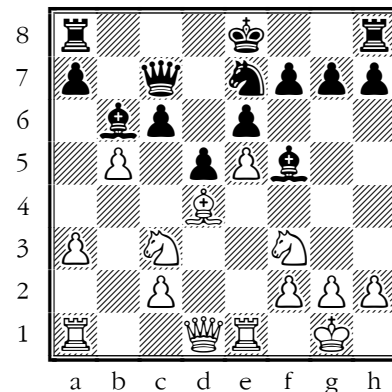
Inaccuracy. Ne7 was best.

9.Bxc6+ bxc6 10.a3 Ba5 11.o-o Ne7 12.Re1 Qc7 13.b4 Bb6=



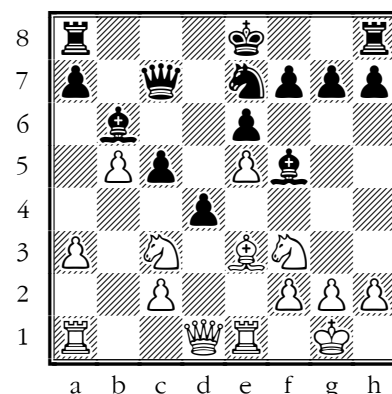
Black's nearly completed development and has a comfortably equal position; however, White now overlooks something important.

14.b5?!--+



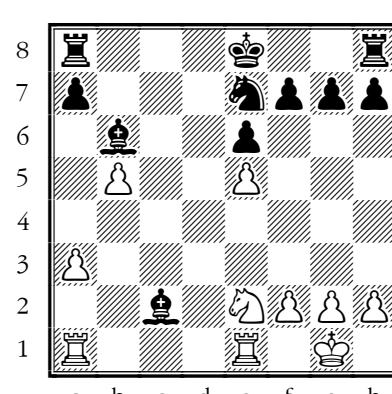
Blunder. h3 was best.

14...c5! 15.Be3 d4



→ TACTIC: fork

16.Bxd4 cxd4 17.Nxd4 Qxc3 18.Ne2 Qxc2 19.Qxc2 Bxc2--+



The dust has cleared a little bit and Black is two pieces ahead; the rest of the game wasn't strictly necessary.

20.Rac1 Bf5 21.Red1 Bg4 22.Rd2 Bxe2 23.Rxe2 o-o 24.Rc3 Rac8 25.Rxc8 Rxc8 26.g3 h6 27.h4 Rc3 28.a4 Rxc3+ 29.Kh2 Ra3

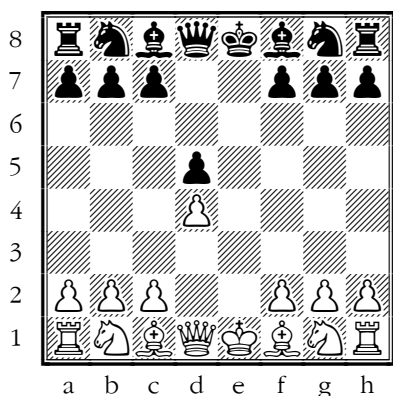
0-1

Jun Li Yeap – Adnay Misra

[C01 French Defence, Exchange Variation]

“ I think you went wrong only at the end of this game; the earlier part was perfectly OK although it didn't yield you much of an advantage.

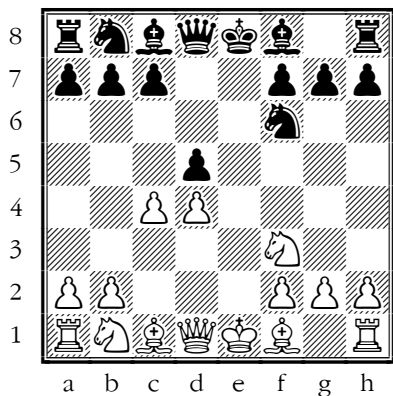
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5



➔ I don't normally approve of White playing the Exchange Variation against the French defence...

But:

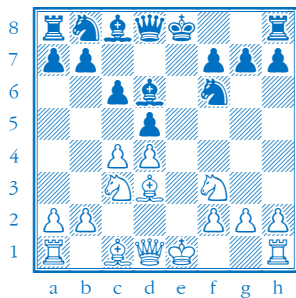
4.Nf3 Nf6 5.c4!?



This approach certainly asks some questions of Black and has been played by Kasparov.

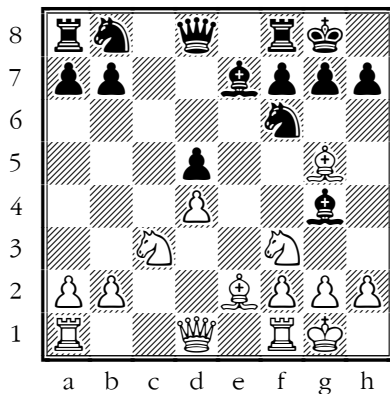
5...Bd6 6.Nc3 c6 7.Be2

[7.Bd3



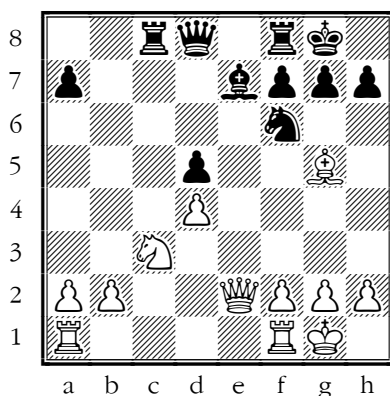
Might be a little more forceful]

7...0-0 8.o-o Bg4 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.Bg5 Be7±



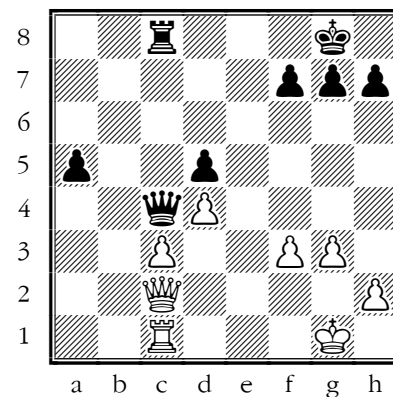
In this apparently quiet position, White's got an extra piece in development and it's White's go, so I think you have got a small to medium sized advantage here.

11.Qb3 Nc6 12.Qxb7 Bxf3 13.Qxc6 Rc8 14.Qa6 Bxe2 15.Qxe2±



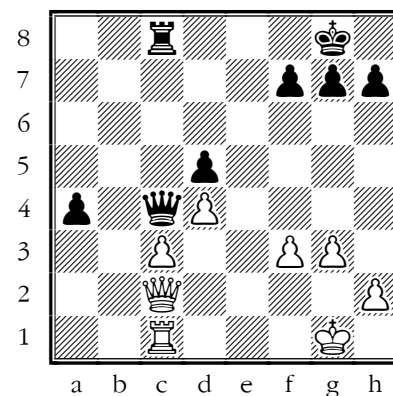
Well, you've got your extra pawn; can you win with it? Black now starts to play very vigorously, as they should, and eventually gets enough counterplay to win the pawn back.

15...Re8 16.Qd3 Ne4 17.Bxe7 Rxe7 18.Rfe1 Nxc3 19.Rxe7 Qxe7 20.bxc3 Qa3 21.Rb1 Qxa2 22.g3 a6 23.Rc1 Qb2 24.Qc2 Qb5 25.Rb1 Qc4 26.Rc1 a5= 27.f3?±



Mistake. Ra1 was best.

27...a4



That was a shame: your last move was a sin of omission as well as commission. The commission part is:

➔ When you're defending, don't make any more weaknesses or make your position any more loose than you need to

The omission was that you could stop the enemy pawn in its tracks with a move like Ra1(-a4), when although Black's got a passed Pawn I think it's about equal.

...0-1.

Appendix: Opening notes from previous years

u14_20043.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2004	Openings: Old Stodge, Giuoco Pianissimo, Sicilian Defence, French Defence, Queen's Gambit, Queen's Pawn Game without c4, King's Gambit, Scotch Game and Gambit
u14_2005b.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2005	Openings: Two Knights', French Defence, Scotch Game, QP Game and Q Gambit, K Gambit, Sicilian Defence, Old Stodge
u14_2006.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2006	Openings: Time-wasting, Italian Game & Old Stodge, French Defence, Queen's Gambit Declined
u14_2007.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2007	Openings: General Opening Principles, Ruy Lopez
u14_2008.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2008	Openings: Queen's Gambit, French Defence, Sicilian, Four Knights, Stonewall
u14_2009.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2009	Openings: General Principles, Old Stodge, Italian Game, Sicilian, Queen's Gambit, Ruy Lopez, Scandinavian Defence,
u14_2010.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2010	Openings: Old Stodge & London System, Double King-Pawn Opening, Semi-Open Games, Q Gambit, Unusual Openings
u14_2011.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2011	Openings: Petroff and Philidor Defences (and another rant about Old Stodge)
u14_2012.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2012	Openings: Bishop's Opening, and the Caro-Kann and King's Indian defences
u14_2013.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2013	Openings: Colle, Scandinavian, Danish, Hypermodern, QG Accepted & Slav
u14_2014.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2014	Openings: The Blackmar-Diemer Gambit
u14_2015.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2015	Openings: tips on Ruy Lopez, Two Knights' Defence, Philidor Defence, Queen's Gambit
u14_2016.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2016	
u14_2017.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2017	Openings: tips on Old Stodge, Two Knights
u14_2018.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2018	Openings: tips on Old Stodge, King's Gambit, Colle, Queen's Gambit, Ruy Lopez, Playing Black in QP Openings, Sicilian
u14_2019.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2019	Openings: tips on Old Stodge, Colle, Meeting the Sicilian
u14_2020.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2020	Openings: play proper openings!
u14_2023.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2023	Openings: Old Stodge, French Defence Exchange Variation
u14_2024.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2024	Openings: Two Knights' Defence
u14_2025.pdf U14 Jamboree games with comments 2025	Openings: Hypermodern openings