



MECHANICS'  
INSTITUTE  
Since 1854

# Chess Room Newsletter



**Players of all ages clash in the TNM!**

Issue #1056 | December 31st, 2024 | Gens Una Sumus!

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## Recent Tournaments at the Mechanics' Institute

Alex Robins

The Mechanics' Institute Chess Club finished the year with the end of our final Tuesday Night Marathon of 2024. In the top section, MI Chess Coach **IM Elliott Winslow** (2200) won outright with 5.5 points., **Max Hao** (2065) and **FM Ruiyang Yan** (2345) tied with 5 points, splitting the second and third place prizes. The best u2200 was split three ways between **WFM Natalya Tsodikova** (2138), **Sivavishnu Srinivasan** (2028), and **Edward Lewis** (2006).

In the 1600-1999 section **Roger Christopher Smith** (1808) and **Nguyen Hoang Duy Pham** (1748) tied for the first place prize. Third place and the u1800 prize were split three ways between **Yonathan Admassu** (1753), **Clarke Raymond Vandenhoven** (1620), and **Nursultan Uzakbaev** (1616).

In the 1200-1599 section **Isaac S Mays-Smith** (1429) and **Romeo Nehme** (1359) tied for first with a strong showing of six points each. **Brett Fisher** (1289) and **Shardul S Golwalkar** (1406) tied for third place and also for the best u1400 prize.

In the under 1200 we had a clear winner with **Kyle Ewart Coventry Booth** (1169) taking home the first place prize with 5.5 points. **Paul Blum** (937) was right behind him with 5 points and took home second place. Newly minted scholastic coach **Andrew Braithwaite** (970) and **Steven Lee Myers** (864) tied for third and the u1000 prize.

Full results can be found [here](#).

Thanks to all of our players for coming every Tuesday and we hope to see you next Tuesday!

This tournament was directed by IA Judit Sztaray and National TD Scott Mason.

We started the month of December with our 23rd annual tournament in honor of Charles Bagby; a former trustee, player, and supporter of the chess club. An obituary, with some comments from the legendary Jude Acers can be found [here](#). Bagby may have never officially gotten his honorary Emeritus Master title but he will always have it in our hearts. In the top section **Pranav Sathish** (2318), **Ethan Guo** (2265) and **Patrick Peiju Liu** (2261) tied for the top spot and split the first, second, and third place prizes.

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Judit Sztaray and Senior TD Arthur Liou.

Our flagship event for the month was our 6th Annual John Donaldson Tournament. We're so lucky to have had John as a director and thank you to all of our players for joining us in celebrating his long and continuing chess career. First place was taken by **NM Daniel Cremisi** (2404) with second place, third place, and the u2200

prizes split between **CM Pranav Senthilkumar** (2167), **Rishabh C Gokhale** (2282), and **Christopher Timothy Atkeson** (2187).

Full results can be found [here](#).

These tournaments were directed by IA Judit Szta ray and National TD Scott Mason.

For our Monthly Scholastic Swiss Tournament, **Wesley Lau** (614) took home first in the over-500 section with a perfect 4 points. **Anna Bogdanova** (764), **Kelper McTiernan** (1084), and **Matthew Tang** (720) all finished with 3 points, but the silver went to Kepler based on the tiebreaks and Matthew took the bronze. **Zane Chu** (1103) took 5th with 2.5 points.

In the under-500 section, **Harrison Lin** (unr.) took first with a perfect score, just barely edging out our longtime after school chess participant **Ronan Peterson** (unr.) on tiebreaks. I have a feeling that Harrison and Ronan will both be playing in the over section soon. Third, fourth, and fifth went to **Michael Puterman** (408), **Evan Tsao** (unr.), and **Ariv Deshpande** (374) respectively, with order determined by tie breaks. Thanks to all of our scholastic players and their families for participating in our monthly tournament and we hope to see you back in 2025!

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Judit Szta ray and Senior TD Arthur Liou.

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## Mechanics in the News

Alex Robins

We've had quite a few newsworthy stories regarding players associated with our chess club in the last few months. Below are a few highlights:

Mark Heimann has collected his final norm and is now officially a GM-elect. Huge congratulations to GM-elect Heimann, we hope to still see you at some of our tournaments! You can check out Mark receiving his final norm [here](#).

MI's very own IM Elliott Winslow and FM Frank Thornally were awarded Outstanding Player Achievement awards from the US Chess Federation. (Editor's Note: there's a third roommate in that house and I think he should get one too!)

WFM Natalya Tsodokova won the US Womens' Senior Tournament in Salt Lake City with a whole round to spare! Check out the story written by a participant in the tournament and friend of Mechanics' Dr. Alexey Root [here](#). Big congratulations to Natalya!

Grandmaster, two-time US Champion, and Mechanics' Institute Trustee Patrick Wolff tied for second place at the GM Alex Sherzer Memorial in Virginia. It was a strong tournament and the cross table can be found [here](#)!

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### **Annotated Games from the TNM**

IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from round one of the 2024 Winter TNM annotated by IM Elliott Winslow and the players. All the games from the current TNM can be found here, and games from previous TNMs are in the [Tournament Archive](#).



□ Yan,Ruiyang

■ Bambou,Christophe

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (5.1) 03.12.24

[Winslow,Elliott]

B12

2345

2130

We see into both Ruiyang and Christophe's style of play in this game. There is some content for those of us who aspire to learn some new openings. And it was surprising how in line with modern knowledge the players both were. For me, who knows next to nothing about the Caro Kann and thus even less about the Advanced Variation, it felt like another planet. It felt like Bambou was getting the better of it when he horribly ignored Ruiyang's pawns rushing down the board. She lost her way for a bit but Bambou reciprocated: and Yan wins again.. **1.e4 4 c6 11 2.d4 7 d5 3 3.e5 6 c5 11** They both avoid especially heavy theoretical lines, more towards light but still with a twinge of spicy. **4.Nf3 15** One of the two moves you see all the time at the top.

[The other is 4.dxc5]

[4.c3?! is for folks who think it's a French Defense.]

**4...cxd4 14** And here it's mostly this...

[... or this: 4...Nc6]

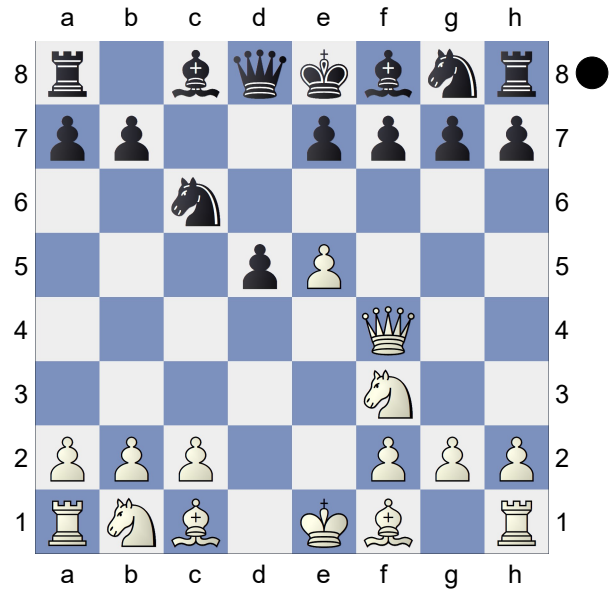
[with a smattering of 4...Bg4!?]

**5.Nxd4 7**

[Let me stick a theoretical article in here by showing a bunch of games with 5.Qxd4!? Nc6 6.Qf4

(Diagram)

There are over 400 games in the Mega Database here. Here are a couple superstar rapid games: e6 7.Bd3 Nb4 8.Nc3 Bd7 (Yes, I know, this looks like an Advanced Variation French Defense between patzers...)



9.0-0!± ( 9.h4 h5 10.Qg3 Ne7  
11.Nd4 Qb6 12.a3 Nxd3+ 13.Qxd3  
Ng6 14.f4 Rc8 15.Nce2 Bc5 16.b3  
Qa6 17.Qxa6 bxa6 18.Bd2 Bb5  
19.Nxb5 axb5 20.b4 Bb6 21.a4  
bxa4 22.Kd1 Rc4 23.Rxa4 0-0  
24.Ra2 Rfc8 25.g3 Ne7 26.Rf1 Kh7  
27.Rf3 Kg6 28.f5+ Nxf5 29.Nf4+  
Kh7 30.Nxh5 Rg4 31.Raa3 Rcc4  
32.Nf4 Nd4 33.Rf1 Nxc2 34.Rd3  
Nxb4 35.Rdf3 Nc6 0-1 Vachier  
Lagrave,M (2775)-Nepomniachtchi,I  
(2775) Paris GCT rapid 2019 (3) )  
9...Rc8 10.Be3 a6 11.Rac1 Nh6  
12.Nd4 f6 13.Qg3 fxe5 14.Qxe5 Nf7  
15.Qg3 Qf6 16.f4 Bc5 17.Nb3 b6  
18.Qf2 Bd6 19.Bxb6 Nxd3 20.cxd3  
0-0 21.Bc5+- Bb5 22.Nxb5 axb5  
23.g3 b4 24.d4 Ra8 25.Ra1 Ra4  
26.Bxd6 Nxd6 27.Nc5 Ra7 28.Rfe1  
Re8 29.Re5 Nf7 30.Re2 Nd6  
31.Rae1 Rxa2 32.Rxe6 Rxe6  
33.Rxe6 Qf5 34.Re1 h6 35.Qe2  
Nc4 36.Qe8+ Kh7 37.Ne6 Nd6  
38.Qd7 Rxb2 39.Qxg7# 1-0 Aronian,  
L (2775)-Jumabayev,R (2628) Chess.  
com Rapid Wk18 Swiss Chess.com  
INT 2022 (3) ]

**5...Nc6 11 6.c4!? 13**

[Relevant: 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd3 e6

8.Nd2 a5 9.Qe2 Ne7 10.Nf3 c5  
 11.c4 dxc4 12.Bxc4 Nd5 13.h4 Be7  
 14.h5 h6 15.Qe4 Ba6 16.Bxa6  
 Rxa6 17.Qg4 Kf8 18.Bd2 Qe8  
 19.0-0 g5 20.Rac1 Qb5 21.b3 a4  
 22.Qc4 Qxc4 23.bxc4 Nb4 24.a3  
 Nc6 25.Bc3 Kg7 26.Rb1 Rd8  
 27.Nd2 Rd3 28.Rfc1 Nd4 29.Kf1  
 Bd8 30.Ne4 Rb6 31.Rxb6 Bxb6  
 32.Ke1 Nb3 33.Rd1 Rxc3 34.Nxc3  
 Ba5 35.Rd3 Nc1  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  Yu,Y (2715)-  
Mamedyarov,S (2734) Tashkent  
UzChess Masters 2024 (8) ]

**6...e6** 11 **7.Nc3** 9 **Bc5** 51 "is cutting  
 edge theory," (says Chessbase's  
 "Novelty Annotation" report) and it might  
 indeed be. **8.Nxc6** 10 **bx c6** 4 **9.cxd5**  
 19 It's been pretty much this or that, by  
 quantity...

[Magnus Checks In: 9.Qg4!? Ne7  
 ( 9...Kf8!?!; 9...g6!?! ) 10.Bd3?!  
 ( 10.Qxg7! Ng6 is a lot of games (well,  
 40+) with a vague pull for White. )

**A) 10...Ng6** 11.0-0 Ba6!?  
 ( 11...Be7!?! );

**B) 10...0-0** Almost a mistake;  
 11.0-0 Ng6

**B1) 12.Bxg6** fxg6! ( 12...hxc6  
 13.Bg5 Be7 14.Bxe7 Qxe7  
 15.b3 Ba6 16.h3 Qa3

17.Rac1  $\pm$   $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  (58) Schmidt,V  
 (2353)-Baumgartner,U (2382)  
EU-ch 2014 sf12 email ICCF  
email ) 13.Na4  $\pm$  /= +0.14/24;

**B2) 12.Na4?! Nxe5** 13.Bxh7+  
 Kxh7 14.Qh5+ Kg8 15.Nxc5  
 Nxc4 16.b3 Nd6 17.Bb2 f6  
 18.f4 Qe8 19.Qe2 Qg6  
 20.Rae1 Re8 21.Rf3 Nf5  
 22.Qf2 a5 23.h3 Kf7 24.Kh2  
 Nd6 25.Rfe3 Nf5 26.R3e2 Nd6  
 27.Bc3 Nb7 28.f5 (How does he  
 do it?) Qg5 29.Bd2 Qh5 30.g4  
 Qh7 31.Nxb7 Bxb7 32.Qb6  
 Ba6 33.Rxe6 Qh4 34.Qc7+ Kf8

35.Qd6+ Kf7 36.Qd7+ Kg8  
 (mate in 4) 1-0 Carlsen,M (2837)-  
Moskalenko,A (2522) Titled  
Tuesday intern op 17th April  
Chess.com INT blitz 2017 (6) ]

[Although, the comparatively rare  
 9.Be2!? brought So and Adams wins.  
 Ne7 10.0-0 Ng6 11.Na4 Be7 12.f4  
 0-0 13.Be3 f6 14.exf6 Bxf6 15.Bd3  
 e5 16.Bxg6 hxg6 17.fxe5 Bxe5  
 18.Rxf8+ Kxf8 19.cxd5 Qxd5  
 20.Qxd5 cxd5 21.Rd1 Bb7 22.Bd4  
 Re8 23.Kf2 Bc6 24.Nc3 Bb8  
 25.Nxd5 Kf7 26.Ne3 Rd8 27.Nc4 a6  
 28.Rd2 Bxh2 29.g3 Kg8 30.Bc5  
 Rc8 31.Be7 Rc7 32.Ne5 Bh1  
 33.Bg5 Kh7 34.Rd7 Rc2+ 35.Bd2  
 Rc8 36.Nf7 Kg8 37.Rd8+ Rxd8  
 38.Nxd8 Bd5 39.Bb4 g5 40.a4 Kh7  
 41.Bd6 Kg6 42.b4 Kf6 43.b5 axb5  
 44.axb5 Kf5 45.g4+ Kxg4 46.Bxh2  
 Kh3 47.Bg3 Kg4 48.b6 Kf5 49.Ke3  
 g4 50.Kd4 Bf3 51.b7 Bxb7 52.Nxb7  
 Ke6 53.Ke4 g6 54.Nc5+ Kf6 55.Kf4  
 g5+ 56.Kxg4 Kg6 57.Be5 Kf7  
 58.Kxg5 Ke7 59.Kg6 Kd8 60.Kf7  
 Kc8 61.Ke6 Kd8 62.Kd6 Kc8 63.Bf4  
 Kb8 64.Kd7+ Ka8 65.Kc6 Ka7  
 66.Nd7 Ka8 67.Nb6+ Ka7 68.Be5  
 Ka6 69.Bb8 Ka5 70.Nd5 Ka4  
 71.Kc5 Kb3 72.Nb4 Kc3 73.Bf4  
1-0 So,W (2765)-Navara,D (2738)  
Saint Louis Champions Showdown  
rapid 2019 (12.3) ]

**9...exd5** 10

[ 9...cxd5 10.b4!?! ]

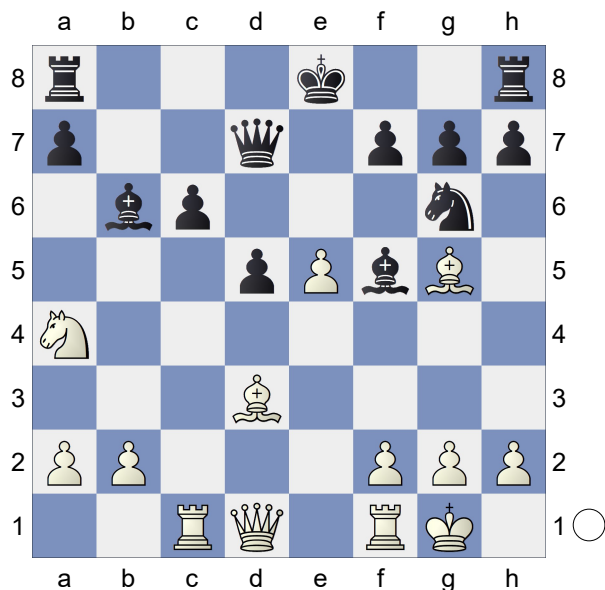
**10.Bd3** 1:06 **Ne7** 38 **11.0-0** 1:09 **Bf5**  
 1:02 **12.Na4** 5:22 **Bb6** 5:24 **13.Bg5**  
 9:04 **Qd7** 4:37 **14.Rc1** 8:44

[ 14.Bxe7 Bxd3 15.Qxd3 Qxe7

**A) 16.Rac1** Rc8 ( 16...0-0  
 17.Rxc6 Qxe5 18.Nxb6 axb6  
 19.Qb1 Qb8 20.Rfc1 g6 21.h4  
 Rd8 22.h5 Qe5 23.hxc6 hxg6  
 24.Re1 Qg5 25.Rxb6 d4 26.Rb3

Qd5 27.Rd1 Re8 28.Rh3 Rxa2  
 29.Rhd3 Re4 30.Rxd4 Rxd4  
 31.Rxd4 Qxd4 32.Qxa2 Qd1+  
 33.Kh2 ½-½ Frijling,J (2270)-  
Goreczny,G (2256) SM-  
2021-0-00450 LSS email ) 17.Qa6  
 Qc7 18.Rfd1 0-0 19.Rxd5 cxd5  
 20.Rxc7 Rxc7 21.g3 Rb8 22.Kg2  
 h6 23.Qd3 Rd7 24.f4 Rc8 25.Nc3  
 d4 26.Ne4 Rdc7 27.f5 Re8 28.e6  
 fxe6 29.f6 Rf8 30.fxg7 Rxg7  
 31.Qc4 Rg6 32.h4 Rf5 33.Qc8+  
 Kg7 34.Nd6 Rf8 35.Qd7+ Kh8  
 36.Nf7+ Kg8 37.Ne5 Rgf6 38.Ng4  
 Rg6 39.Ne5 Rg7 40.Qxe6+ Kh7  
 41.Nd7 Rd8 42.Nf6+ Kh8 43.Nh5  
 d3 44.Qxh6+ Rh7 45.Qf6+ Kg8  
 46.Qg6+ Kh8 47.Nf6 Rdd7  
 48.Qg8# 1-0 Song,Y (2383)-Gunina,  
V (2435) Kazan BRICS Games Blitz  
(Women) 2024 (9);  
B) 16.Rfc1 0-0 ]

**14...Ng6 7:57**



**15.Nxb6?!N 38:17**

[We leave praxis here; 15.Bxf5 Qxf5  
 16.Bd2 Nxe5 (Safer is 16...0-0  
 17.Nxb6 axb6 18.Rxc6 Nxe5  
 19.Rxb6 Nc4=) 17.Nxb6 axb6 18.f4  
 Nc4 19.Bb4 Qe4! 20.Re1 Ne3  
 21.Qf3 Qxf3 22.gxf3 d4 23.Rxc6 f6

24.a3 Kf7 25.Bd2

**A) 25...Nf5!** 26.Rxb6 Rhb8  
 27.Rxb8 Rxb8 28.b4 Ra8 29.Ra1  
 d3 30.a4 Nd4 31.Kf2 Nb3 32.Ra2  
 Nxd2= ( 32...Re8= );

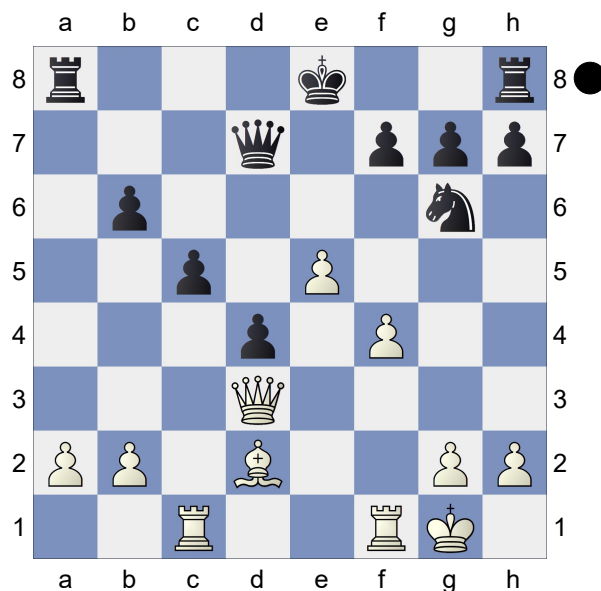
**B) 25...Rad8** 26.Kf2 Rhe8 27.b3  
 Nd5 28.a4 Rxe1 29.Kxe1 Re8+  
 30.Kd1 Re6 31.Rc4 Ne3+  
 32.Bxe3 Rxe3 33.Rb4 Rxf3  
 34.Rxb6 Rf1+ 35.Kd2 Rf2+  
 36.Kd3 Rxh2 37.a5 g5 38.Rb7+  
 Ke6 39.fxg5 fxg5 40.Rb6+ Kf7  
 41.Rb4 g4 42.Rxd4 h5 43.a6 g3  
 44.a7 Ra2 ½-½ (48) Zavrazhnov,A  
(2368)-Osterburg,K (2343) EU-ch  
2021 sf08 email ICCF email ]

**15...axb6 43 16.Be3 5**

[ 16.Bxf5 Qxf5 17.Be3 Nxe5 18.Bd4  
 0-0 19.Bxe5 Qxe5 20.Rxc6=  
 leads to mass pawn dissolution. ]

**16...Bxd3 6:03 17.Qxd3 5 c5 4:32**

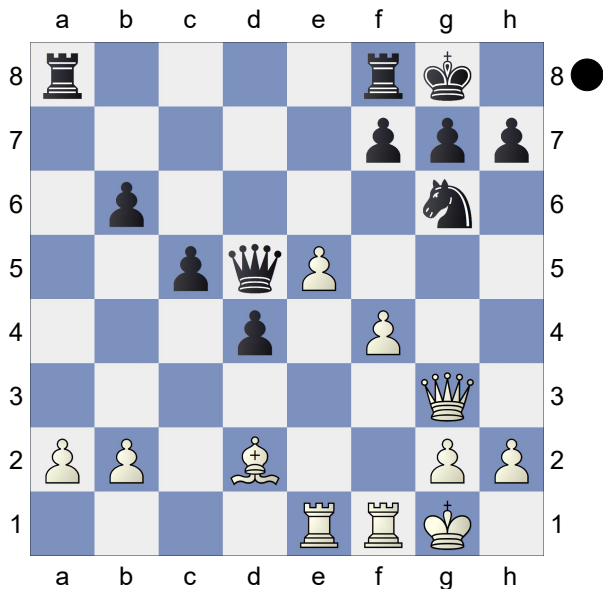
**18.f4?! 1:50 d4! 14:39 19.Bd2 8:27**



**0-0! 11:45** Bambou's pawns \*should\* be  
 the more imposing, or would be were  
 there no kings... **20.Rce1 20 Qd5 2:21**  
 [ 20...Rfe8! ]

**21.Qg3 11:58**

(Diagram)



(times White 13m08s Black 38m37s)

**21...Rxa2??+- 4:58**

[ 21...f5 22.exf6 ( 22.a3? is clearly plus for Black after pretty much anything, with the better minor piece and the fluid pawns. That e5 passed pawn isn't going anywhere. Stockfish 17: -1.19/28 Ne7 for example, over to c6 supporting the pawns in their advance ..b5 and ...c4. ) 22...Rxf6 breaks up White's front of pawns, while Black's remains. 23.Qb3!? c4! 24.Qg3 Rc8! Forget that a-pawn, concentrate on advancing in the center and queenside. SF17: -0.39/24. ( 24...Rxa2? 25.f5= ) ]

[same is 21...f6 ]

**22.f5! 13 Rxb2 15**

[ 22...Nh8 is one of those "objectively best but hopelessly lost" moves the computer puts at the top. ]

**23.fxg6 9:53 hxg6 5:14 24.Bg5 4**

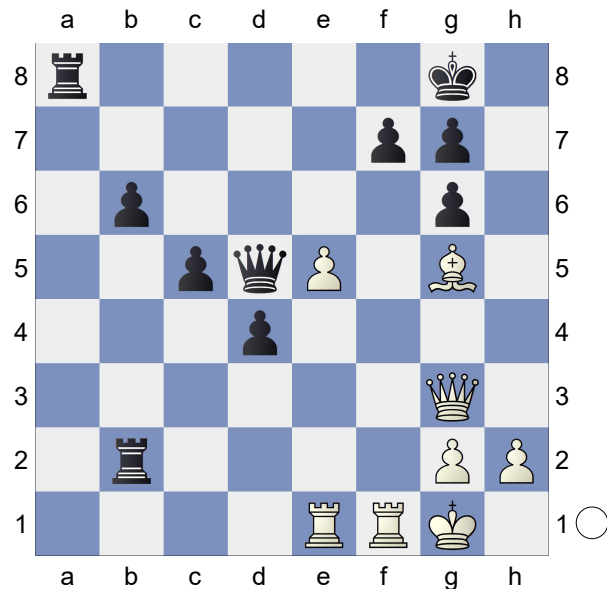
[ 24.e6! wins: Rxd2 25.exf7+ Rxf7 ( 25...Kh7 now everything wins )

26.Re8+ Kh7 27.Qh4+ Qh5

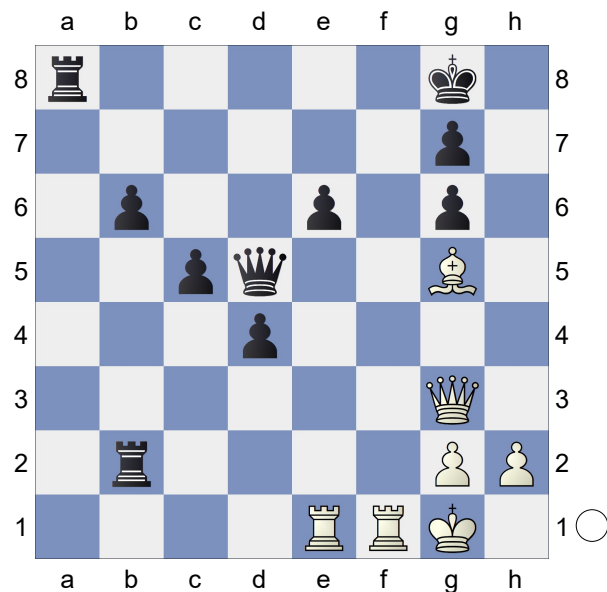
28.Qxh5+ gxh5 29.Rxf7 just happens to be won, with the extra rook just too much for the pawns. ]

**24...Ra8 5:22**

(Diagram)



**25.e6!+- 2:31 fxe6 10:43**



**26.Re5? 4 02m54s**

[ 26.Rf3!? e5! 27.Bc1 e4! 28.Rf6!± ]

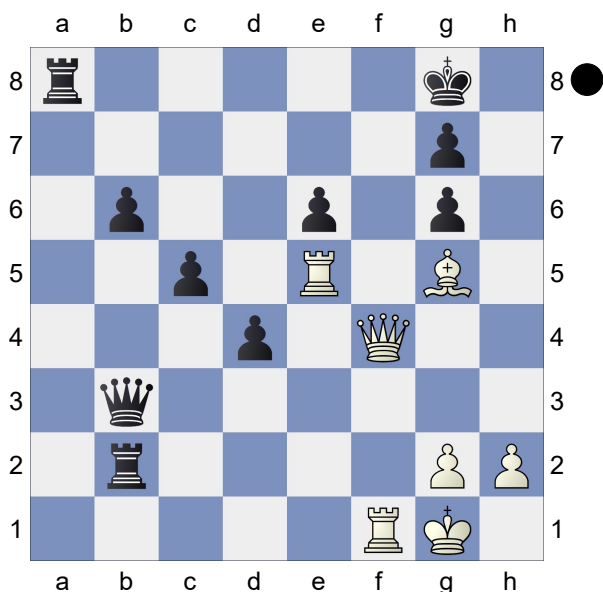
[ 26.Bc1!+- threatens 27.Qxg6 next; and if 26...Rc2 27.Rf3!+- combines attack (Rh3, a/o the f-file) with defense (blocking d5-g2) nicely. It's one of those "gets there one move ahead of the other player" motifs. ]

**26...Qb3= 45 Black 14m19s 27.Qf4?! 2:35**

[ 27.Qxb3 Rxb3 28.Rxe6

with a nominal plus, should have been the only way to fight on, except that now it's an ending with the clock

greatly favoring Black. c4! and here come the pawns... ]



Leaving White with 49 seconds

**27...Qc2? 5:51**

[ 27...Raa2! forces White to sacrifice bishop and rook for a perpetual (everything else is winning for Black):

28.Qf7+ Kh7 29.Bd2! Rxd2

30.Rh5+! gxh5 31.Qxh5+= ]

**28.Qg4± 5 Re8? 2:21**

[ 28...Rb1! 29.Qxe6+ Kh7 30.Ree1 Rxe1 31.Qxe1± ]

**29.Qf3! 48 Kh7 6:06 30.Re4 11**

Nice attack and defence.

**1-0**

**B01**

□ **Lewis,Edward**

**2006**

■ **Viadiu-Illaraza,Hector**

**1907**

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (5.2) 03.12.24

[Winslow,Elliott]

Ed Lewis ended up with a third of third. He might have done even better but for one of "those kids" in the next round. Here he plays an atypically typical game, taking space, cashing in what Glenn Flear calls an "NQE" or "Not Quite an

Endgame." He nearly lets it get away, but comes back to nail it. **1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd6!?**

[ The TNMs have also seen a lot of 3...Qa5 ]

[ And, especially, 3...Qd8!?

(a specialty of Hayes Marvin) ]

**4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bg4 6.Bc4**

[ White could "just" (sorry Sam) play

6.h3± Bxf3 ( 6...Bh5 7.g4 ) 7.Qxf3

c6 8.Bf4! ( 8.Be3; 8.g4!? ) ]

**6...c6 7.Be3 Nbd7 8.h3** Ed is avoiding

tricks. What? Tricks? Ed? **8...Bh5**

**9.Qe2 Nb6** abandoning control of e5

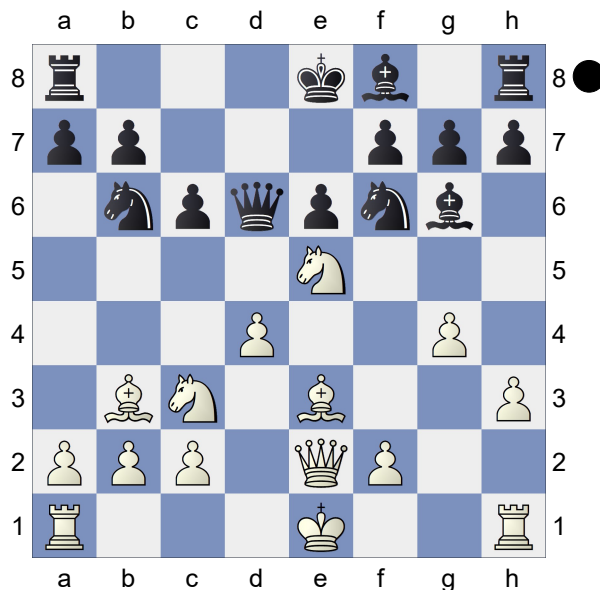
[ 9...e6± ]

**10.Bb3!± e6**

[ Black could still play 10...Bxf3

11.Qxf3 e6 ]

**11.g4! Bg6 12.Ne5**



Hoping for h4. **12...Nfd5N**

[ 12...Ne4 13.Nxe4 Bxe4 14.f3 Bg6

15.h4 h6 16.Nxg6 fxg6 17.Qd3

0-0-0 18.0-0-0 Nd5 19.Qxg6

is the disaster Black must avoid:

1-0 (38) German,N (2064)-Bozhko,A

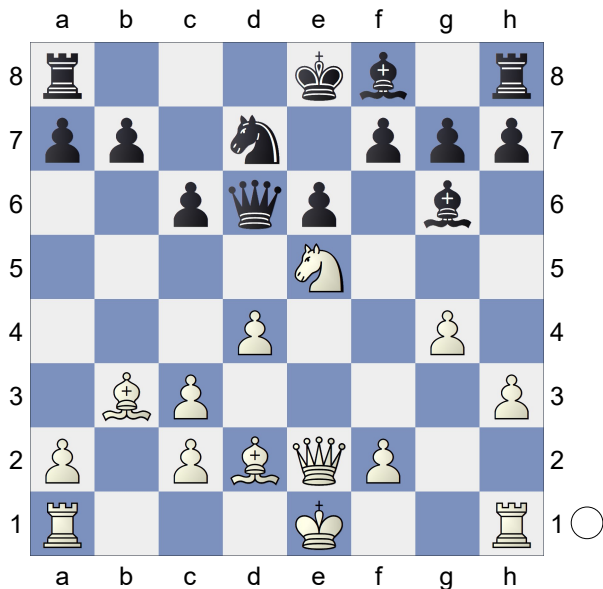
(1716) St Petersburg Korchnoi

Memorial op 2024 (1) ]

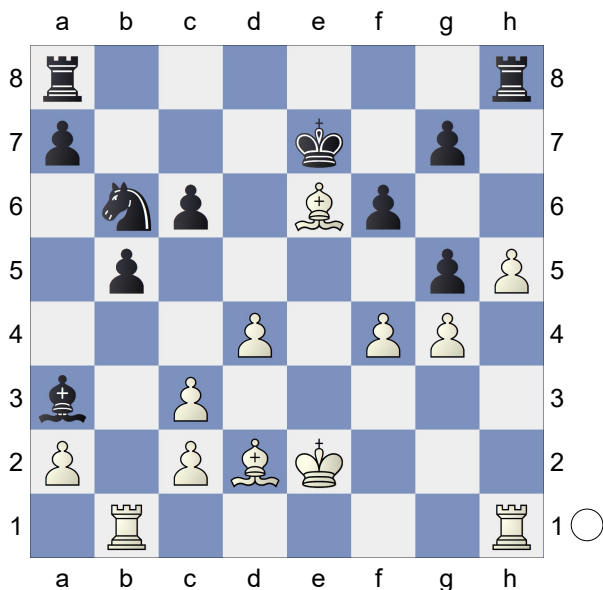
**13.Bd2! Nxc3 14.bxc3!? Nd7**

[ 14...0-0-0± ]



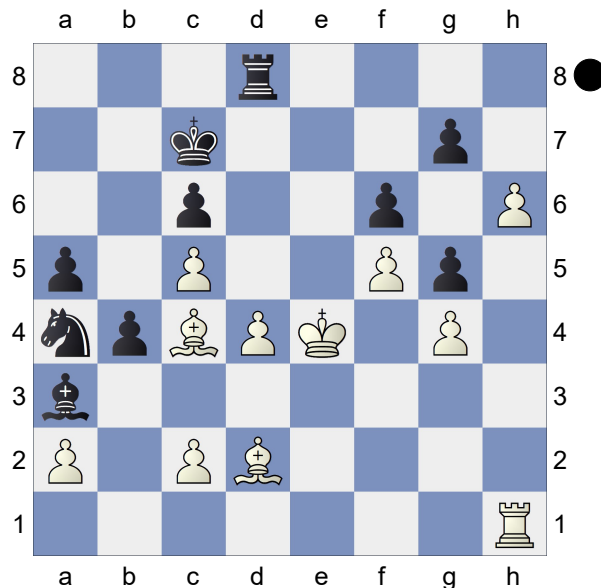


**15.h4!+-** Avoid \*that!\* **15...f6 16.Nxg6 hxc6 17.Qxe6+**  
 [ 17.Bxe6?! 0-0-0+- ]  
**17...Qxe6+ 18.Bxe6 g5 19.h5 Ba3**  
**20.Ke2!?** Now there's a bit of the old Ed!  
 All those other moves are good, too.  
**20...b5 21.Rab1 Nb6 22.f4! Ke7**  
 [ 22...gxf4 23.Kf3 ]



**23.f5**  
 [ 23.Bf5! ]  
**23...Rab8 24.Kd3!** Inhibits Nc4. **24...a5**  
**25.c4 b4 26.Rbe1 Na4 27.c5+-**  
 White's queenside poses are absolutely nothing. **27...Nc3**

[ Δ27...Nb2+ 28.Ke4 Rbe8 ]  
**28.Bc4+ Kd7 29.Re6**  
 [ 29.Bxc3 is fine, best even. ]  
**29...Na4 30.Rd6+ Kc7 31.Ke4 Rbd8**  
**32.Rxd8?!** slips back a bit or more.  
 [ 32.Bb3! ]  
**32...Rxd8 33.h6**  
 [ 33.Be1! ]  
 [ 33.Be3! ]

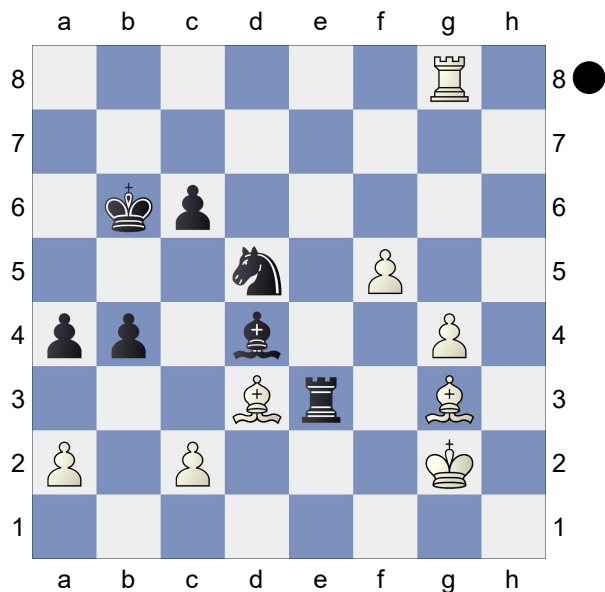
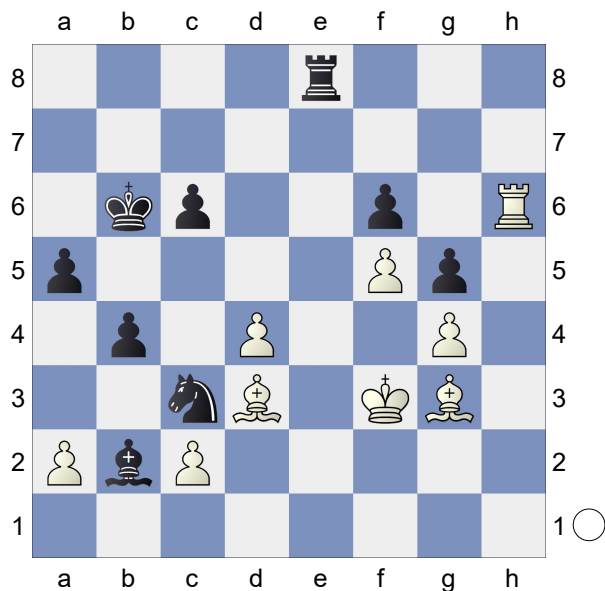


White is just barely winning now.  
**33...gxh6 34.Rxh6 Nxc5+ 35.Ke3**  
 But still winning he is. **35...Re8+ 36.Kf3**  
**Ne4 37.Be1 Bb2 38.Bd3**  
 [ 38.Be6! ]  
**38...Nc3 39.Bg3+ Kb6**

(Diagram)

**40.Rxf6?±**  
 [ 40.Bd6!+- and the rest is easy. There is still a danger of getting checkmated! ]  
**40...Nd5!** Oops! Now it's \*not\* easy.  
**41.Rg6 Re3+**  
 [ 41...Bxd4± 42.Rxg5 a4 43.Bf2± but Black is resisting. ]  
**42.Kg2± Bxd4 43.Rxg5 a4 44.Rg8!**

(Diagram)



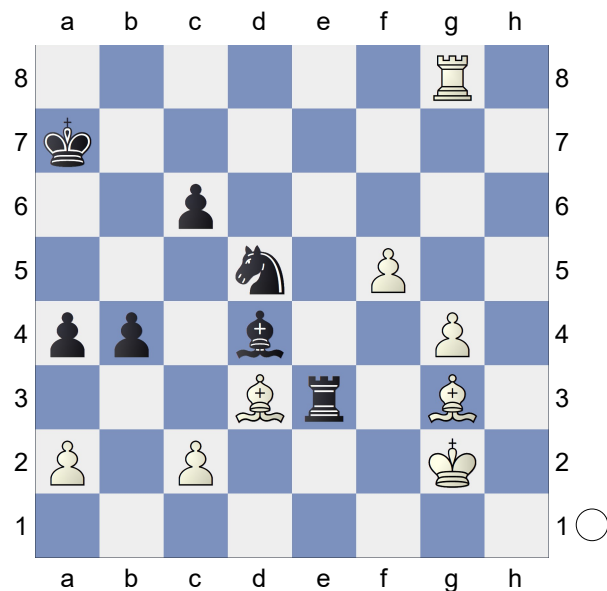
**b3?** Black cannot hold the game after this.

[The best try was 44...Ka7!]

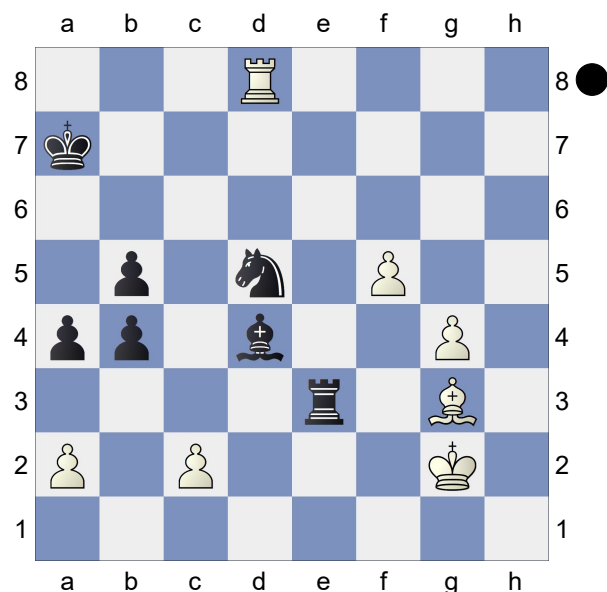
(Diagram)

which poses Ed a nearly impossible task: find the only move to win. 45.Bb5!! Stockfish 17 makes this won but only after quite a while.

**A) 45...Rc3 46.Bxa4 Ne3+ 47.Kh1!! Nxc2 48.g5 (48.Bh2) 48...Rxc3 49.Bxc2 and White does win the rook and opposite-color bishop ending.;**



**B) 45...cxb5 46.Rd8**

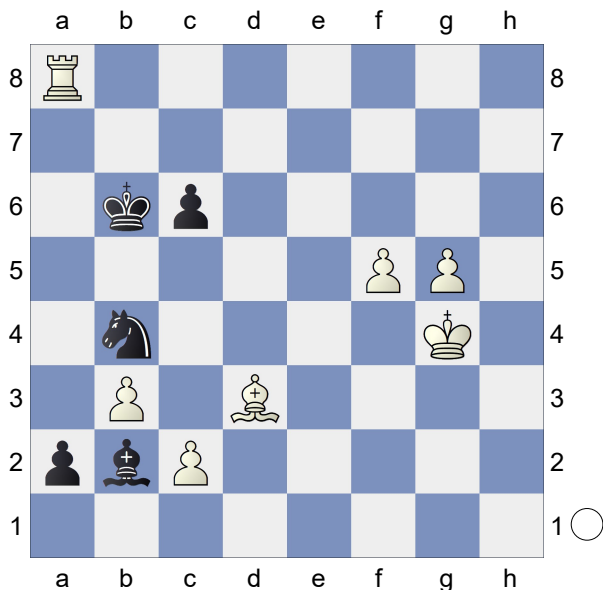


Re2+ ( 46...Be5 47.Bf2! oops ) 47.Kh3! Bc3 48.Rxd5 Rxc2 49.g5!+- (only move) winning. If I had this position in front of me on the board, not to even mention half a dozen moves forward in my head, I'd never be able to assess it! But, running it on a cloud engine, there it is. Let's see: b3 50.axb3 a3 (best try) 51.f6 a2 52.f7

**B1) 52...Bg7 53.Rd1! (only again) Rc8 ( 53...Rb2 54.Be5! (best of a few winning moves) ) 54.Kg4;**

**B2) 52...a1Q ]**

**45.axb3 a3 46.Ra8!** Now it's easy, sort of. **46...Rxc3+ 47.Kxc3 Bb2 48.g5 Nb4 49.Be4** A waste of time, but still well within win. **49...Na6 50.Bd3 Nb4 51.Kg4 a2**



**52.Rxa2**

[ 52.f6 ]

**52...Nxa2 53.f6 Kc5 54.Kf5 Kd6**

**55.g6** White mates. **55...Nc3 56.g7**

**Nd5 57.g8Q Nxf6 58.Qe6+ Kc7**

**59.Be4** What an incredible game! Hector should get credit for putting up quite a fight, although it was always uphill. And Ed -- well, he kept it together, and made it exciting to the end.

Weighted Error Value: White=0.20 (precise) /Black=0.60

**1-0**

□ Winslow,Elliott

**B21**

**2200**

■ Senthilkumar,Pranav

**2158**

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (5.3) 03.12.24

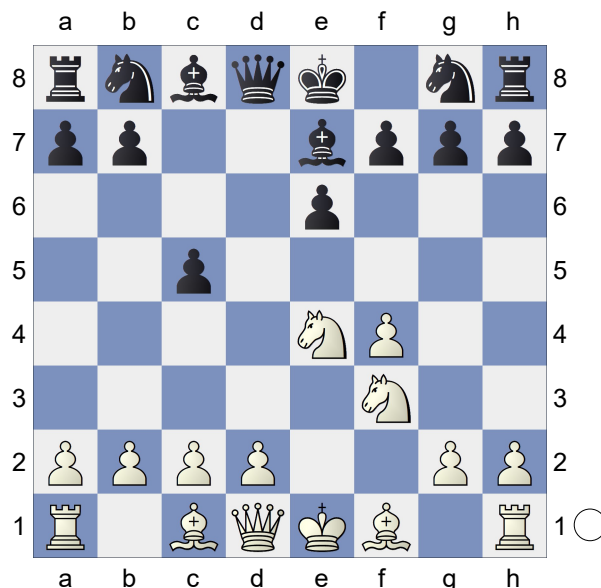
[Winslow,Elliott]

**1.e4 26 c5 21 2.f4!?** 33 I have no idea why I picked up this pawn! (I was going to play 2.Nf3 like I always do) -- so now

I'm playing the Grand Prix Attack. (2.f3 crossed my mind...) **2...d5 29 3.Nc3 24** At least I know \*something\* about this.

[The British Grand Prix masters played 3.exd5 for a while until, I think it was Tal who simply played Nf6! (3...Qxd5 was working out well for White) 4.Bb5+ (4.c4 e6) 4...Bd7 5.Bxd7+ Qxd7 6.c4 e6 and White was looking to equalize. ]

**3...dxe4 41 4.Nxe4 24 e6 19 5.Nf3 5:48 Be7 7:20**



**6.g3?! 2:52**

[ 6.d4! cxd4 ( 6...Nc6 7.Nxc5± )

7.Qxd4± White's f-pawn sticks out like a buck tooth, but otherwise is doing fine (development). ]

**6...Nc6 1:34 7.Bg2 1:06 Nf6 18 8.Nf2 1:36**

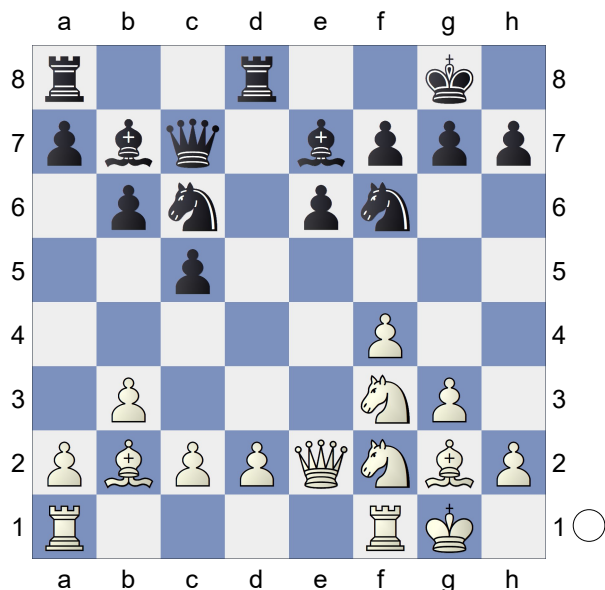
[The standard (from "Novelty Annotation") 2600+ game: 8.Qe2 0-0 9.c3 Qc7 10.0-0 b6 11.Nf2 Bb7 12.Re1 Rad8 13.d3 Rd7 14.Bd2 Rfd8 15.Rad1 Bf8 16.Bc1 Ne7 17.Ne5 Rd6 18.Nc4 R6d7 19.Ne5 Rd6 20.Nc4 R6d7 21.Ne5 Rd6 ½-½ Kasimdzhanov,R (2661)-Harikrishna,P (2719) Sharjah World Stars ICC INT rapid 2020 (1) ]

**8...0-0 41 9.b3 5:34 Qc7 4:02 10.Bb2**

1:25 **b6** 1:27 **11.0-0** 1:04

[ 11.Ne5 Bb7 12.Nxc6 Bxc6 13.Bxc6 Qxc6 14.Qe2= ]

**11...Bb7** 38 **12.Qe2** 5:46 **Rfd8** 3:43



**13.Rfd1** 6:22

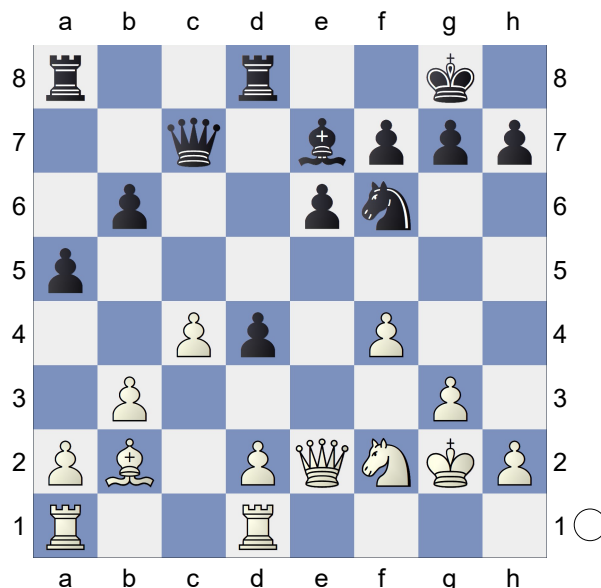
[ 13.Rae1= ]

[Deep into Class Play for the Predecessor: 13.Rfe1 Rac8 14.Nd3 Ba6 15.c4 Bb7 16.Rad1 Ne8 17.Nde5 Nd6 18.g4 Nxe5 19.Bxe5 Qd7 20.Bb2 Bf8 21.d4 cxd4 22.Bxd4 Qc7 23.Kh1 Ba8 24.Ne5 Bxg2+ 25.Qxg2 Qb7 26.Rd3 Qxg2+ 27.Kxg2 Nb7 28.Red1 f6 29.Nf3 Rd6 30.Be3 Rcd8 31.Rxd6 Rxd6 32.Rxd6 Bxd6 33.Nd4 Nc5 34.Kf3 Kf7 35.Nb5 Bb8 36.b4 Nd3 37.a3 Ne1+ 38.Ke4 Nc2 39.Bd2 a6 40.Kd3 Nxb4+ 41.axb4 axb5 42.Be3 Bc7 ½-½ Norman,K (1787)-Obukhava, A (1568) BLR-ch U18 Girls Orsha 2022 (9) ]

**13...Nd4** 1:17 **14.Nxd4** 1:26 **cx d4** 33 **15.c4!?** 29 **Bxg2** 4:58 **16.Kxg2** 17 **a5** 6:28

[ 16...Rac8 ]

(Diagram)



**17.a4!? 11:10** As you can see from the number there, I spent eleven minutes and ten seconds on this move; what you can't see is that the eleven minutes were spent looking at various situations where Black's minority attack on the queenside does quite well, and ten seconds (more like five) were used to (1) even notice 17.a4 (2) decide I just had to play it. According to Stockfish 17 it's 2nd best, but second is a lot better than my usual fare.

[ Maybe if I'd noticed 17.Qf3 (sf17: best) a4? 18.Bxd4!±

I would have at least thought longer. ]

**17...Bc5** 8:45 **18.Nd3** 5:18 **Nd7** 5:36

**19.Rf1** 7:45

[ 19.Ne5 Nb8= ]

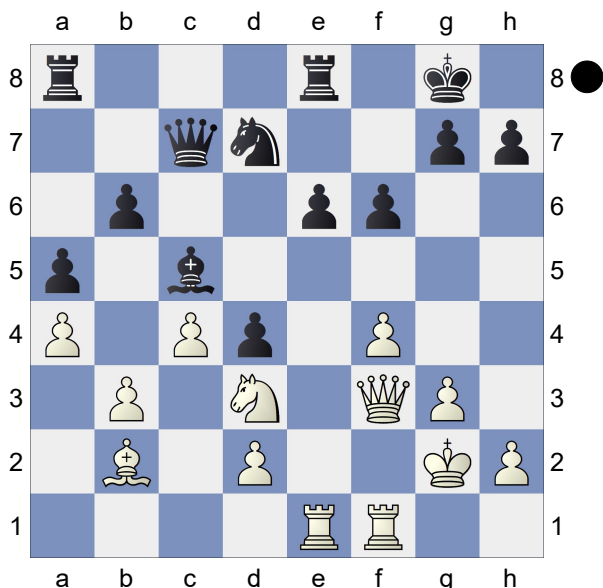
[ 19.Re1= ]

**19...Re8** 2:16 **20.Rae1** 39 **f6** 1:13

**21.Qf3** 1:14

(Diagram)

I've always found myself sacrificing objectivity for combativeness (unintentionally or not) (think Emanuel Lasker!), but before I could appreciate here how bad my game was, he played: **21...Kh8??** 3:59 **22.Rxe6+-** 1:37



An echo on 17.Qf3 a4 **22...Rxe6** 1:29  
(slightly worse than a lot of other moves)  
**23.Qxa8+ 2 Nb8 20 24.Re1 58 Rxe1**  
14 **25.Nxe1 5 Qd8 2:47 26.Nf3 5:00**  
**d3 8:41**

[ 26...h6 27.Qe4 ]

**27.Qe4** 1:32

[ 27.Qd5! ]

[ 27.Bd4!? ]

**27...Na6** 1:45 **28.Ne1** 2:04

[ 28.Bc3 ]

[ 28.Qb7 Nb4?! ( 28...Nc7 29.Qe4  
Na6 back to the game ) 29.Ng5! ]

Not really that much better, but it'd be  
a fun move to play. ]

**28...Nb4** 3:22 **29.Bc3** 37 **h6** 7:17

**30.Kf3** 3:42

[ 30.Bxb4 Bxb4 31.Qxd3 Qe8  
32.Nf3 Bc5 33.Kf1+- ]

**30...f5?! 5:36 31.Qxf5** 1:02 **Qe8** 2:18

**32.Nxd3** 3:06 **Nxd3** 1:09 **33.Qxd3** 3

**Qe1** 38 **34.Qe2** 1:24

[ 34.Qd7! Be7 35.Be5 ( 35.Kg4! ) ]

[ 34.Qd8+ Kh7 35.Qd7! ]

**34...Qh1+ 12 35.Kg4 7 Qc6** 51 **36.Qe5**  
1:38 **Qd7+** 1:49

[ 36...Qg6+ is allegedly better, but  
37.Kf3 Qd3+ 38.Kg2 ]

**37.f5** 2:36 **Bd6** 58 **38.Qe6** 31

**1-0**

□ **Diller,Brad**

■ **Marvin,Hayes Alexander**

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (5.4) 03.12.24

[Diller,Brad/Winslow,Elliott]

**D34**

**2119**

**1881**

Neither of these two had started out so well (2-2), nor finished any better (3.5-3.5), and this game (ultimately drawn) didn't help either of them. It was good though to see Hayes in the top section where he belongs, and he picked up about 20 ratings points (what Brad lost) to justify it. Now if someone would just crush his Center Counter with 3...Qd8 so badly he finds the Caro Kann his maturation will be complete... :-)

**1.c4 e6 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 c5 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.Nc3 d5 6.cxd5 exd5 7.d4** The Tarrasch Defense, on the other hand, I can't really fault, especially with recent top-level novelties shining it up. **7...Be6** Comparatively rare.

[ 7...Be7 8.0-0 0-0 is the "Classical" Tarrasch Defense.

**A) 9.dxc5** Bxc5 ( 9...d4!? );

**B) 9.b3;**

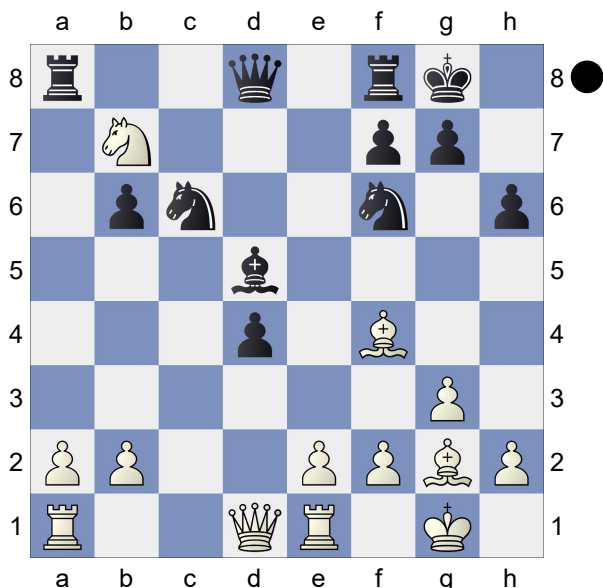
**C) 9.Bg5** cxd4 ( 9...c4 )]

[ 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 is the center of attention lately. Here's a very recent game of note by the WC challenger:  
9.Nb3 Bb6 10.0-0 d4 11.Na4 0-0  
12.Re1 h6 13.Bf4 Be6 14.Nbc5 Bd5  
15.Nxb6?! ( 15.Nxb7!± ) 15...axb6  
16.Nxb7!?

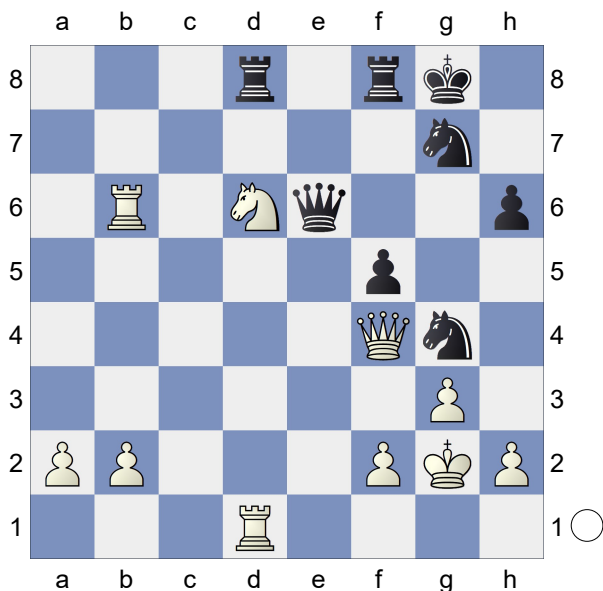
(Diagram)

Qd7 17.e4! dxe3 18.Rxe3?  
( 18.fxe3 ) 18...Nb4 19.Nd6 Bxg2  
20.Kxg2 Rad8 21.Rb3 Nbd5 22.Be5  
Qe6 23.Qd4 Ng4? ( 23...Rxd6  
24.Bxd6 Qxd6 24.Rd1 ( 24.Bxg7!  
Nde3+ 25.Rxe3! Nxe3+ 26.Qxe3  
Qd5+ 27.Kg1 Kxg7 28.Qc3+ Kh7





29.Nc4= ) 24...Ne7 25.Bxg7 Nf5  
26.Qf4 Nxg7 27.Rxb6 f5

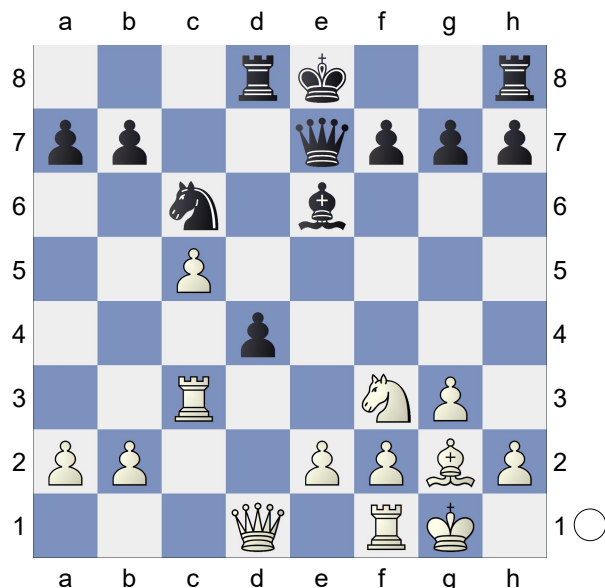


28.h3?! ( 28.a4= ) 28...Ne5  
( 28...Nf6 $\bar{f}$  ) 29.Nc4?? Qxc4-+  
30.Rxd8 Rxd8 31.Qxe5 Rd1! 32.Rb3  
Qf1+ 33.Kf3 Qh1+ 34.Kf4 Rd5  
0-1 Maghsoodloo,P (2723)-Gukesh,D  
(2764) Olympiad-45 Budapest 2024 (8.  
1) ]

**8.0-0 Be7 9.Bg5**

[ 9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.Qb3 Qd7 11.Bg5  
d4?! ( 11...Be7 $\pm$  ) 12.Qb5 $\pm$  ]

**9...Ne4 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.Rc1 Rd8**  
**12.dxc5 Nxc3 13.Rxc3 d4**  
(Diagram)



The Tarrasch is about active pieces,  
and Marvin definitely gets it. **14.Rc1 0-0**  
**15.a3 a5 16.Qc2?!**

[  $\Delta$ 16.Re1 h6 ( 16...Rfe8 17.Qd2 a4  
18.e3 d3 19.Rc3 Bg4 20.h3 Bxf3  
21.Bxf3 Ne5 22.Bg2 $\pm$ ; 16...Bd5  
17.e3 ) 17.Qd2 a4 18.e3 d3  
( 18...dxe3 19.Qxe3 Qf6 20.Rc3  
Bd5+- ) 19.Qc3 Rd7 20.Nd4 Nxd4  
21.exd4 $\pm$  ]

**16...Bd5 17.Rfe1 Rfe8 18.Kf1?**

Preposterous move. d3 is a phantom  
threat.

[ 18.b3 $\pm$  With the idea of Qb2  
attacking the weak d-pawn and  
preparing b4 b5 dislodging the knight  
on c6

**A) 18...Qe6 19.Ng5 ( 19.Qb2!/? )**  
19...Qg6 20.Bxd5 Rxd5 21.Nf3 $\pm$   
Qg4;

**B) 18...Bxf3 19.Bxf3 d3 20.exd3**  
Qxe1+ 21.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 22.Kg2  
Nd4+-;

**C) 18...h5!? 19.h4 g6;**

**D) 18...Qf6 19.Qb2 g5** Stockfish  
recommends this interesting  
countermeasure to neutralize  
white's plan of b4 followed by b5.  
20.h3 Kg7 21.Red1 h5 22.b4  
axb4 23.axb4 g4 24.hxg4 hxg4

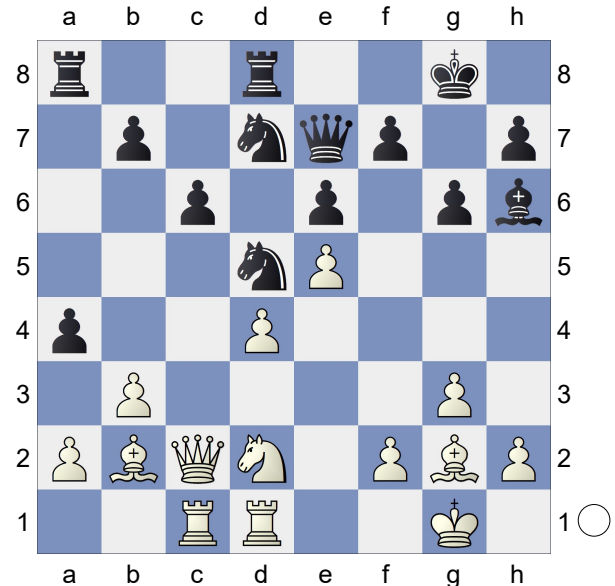
25.Nh4 Bxg2 26.Kxg2± ]  
**18...Qf6 19.Nd2**  
 [ 19.Qd2 a4 20.Qf4 Qxf4 21.gxf4 ]  
**19...Qe6 20.f3??** This loses. I played  
 this out of dismay because the following  
 e4 variation simply equalizes. 20 Nf3  
 which was probably best is equal, too.  
 [ 20.e4 dxe3 21.Rxe3 Bxg2+  
 22.Kxg2 Qd5+ 23.Nf3 Rxe3 24.fxe3  
 Qe6= ]  
**20...Qh6**  
 [ 20...Rc8 ]  
**21.Kf2 Qe3+ 22.Kf1 Qh6**  
 [ 22...Ne5!-+ I was lucky my opponent  
 did not want to play for a win. Ne5 is  
 overwhelming. ]  
 1/2-1/2

□ **Pham,Nguyen Hoang Duy** **D78**  
 ■ **Rajaram,Raghu** **1748**  
 2024 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (5.10)  
*[Winslow,Elliott]* **1800**

Pham tied for 1st-2nd with Roger Smith,  
 with solid openings (I think!) and  
 attention to the opponent's weaknesses.  
 Here he leans in after a slow fianchetto  
 start. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3**  
**g6 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.0-0 0-0 7.Nbd2**  
 [ 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.Nc3 ( 8.Ne5 ) ]  
 [ 7.b3 a5 8.Nc3 Ne4 9.Bb2 Bf5 ]  
**7...dxc4 8.Nxc4 b5?!** The holes in  
 Rajaram's queenside will show out --  
 along with a surprise attack on f7.

[The "Relevant:" game is more fun  
 than usual (and a lesson of sorts):  
 8...Bf5 9.b3 ( 9.Re1!± ) 9...Be4  
 ( 9...a5 ) 10.Bb2 ( 10.Ncd2 )  
 10...Nbd7?! ( 10...Bd5 ) 11.e3  
 ( 11.Ncd2 ) 11...Nd5 12.Ncd2  
 and Black's at-first-easy development  
 shouldn't cost him the two bishops,  
 but Black gets "too" easy: Bxf3?

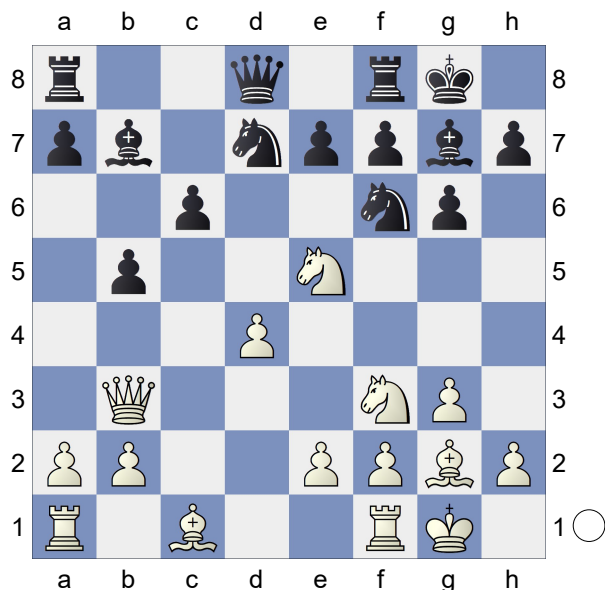
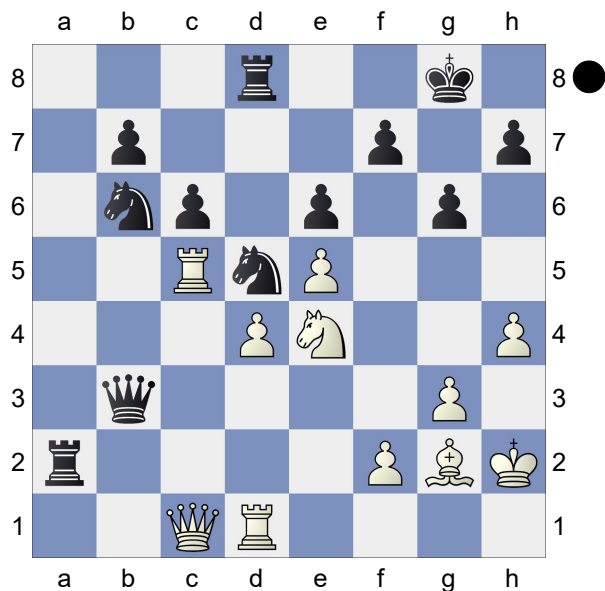
( 12...Bd3 13.Re1 Nb4 14.Nc4  
 Be4= ) 13.Nxf3± e6 14.Qe2 ( 14.e4 )  
 14...Qe7 15.Rac1 ( 15.e4! ) 15...Rfd8  
 ( 15...e5!/? ) 16.Rfd1 a5 17.e4! N5f6  
 18.Qc2?! ( 18.a4! ) 18...a4± 19.e5?!  
 Nd5 20.Nd2?! Bh6= ( 20...Nb4= )



Trading \*this\* bishop could be even  
 more expensive, but the queenside  
 play makes up for it. \*If\* he is careful!  
 21.Qb1 ( 21.a3!= /± ) 21...Qb4?  
 ( 21...axb3 ) 22.Rc4? ( 22.a3!±  
 and 22.b4 ) 22...Qb5 23.Bc1 axb3  
 24.axb3 N7b6 25.Rc5 Qb4 26.Ne4  
 Bxc1 27.Qxc1 Qxb3 Black has  
 equality according to Stockfish, but in  
 practice (and blitz!) this is quite a  
 tricky business. And sure enough...  
 28.h4 Ra2 29.Kh2 ( 29.Rf1!= )

(Diagram)

29...Rda8?? ( 29...Nd7!≠ 30.Qg5! f6  
 31.exf6 Rf8! 32.Rd2! Rxd2 33.Qxd2  
 Nxc5 34.Nxc5 Qc3 35.Qe2 Rxf6  
 36.Qe5 Rxf2 37.Qxe6+= ) 30.Qh6+-  
 Qxd1 31.Nf6+ 1-0 Svane,R (2613)-  
 Noe,C (2518) GER-ch Net blitz  
 qual1 Playchess.com INT 2020 (1) ]  
**9.Nce5 Bb7 10.Qb3 Nbd7**  
 (Diagram)



## 11.Ng5!?N

[Predecessor: 11.Re1 a6 12.Ng5 Nxe5 13.dxe5 Nd7 14.Nxf7 Qc7 15.Nh6+ 1-0 Saraiva,A (1983)-Magalhaes,S (1782) Brasilia op 2012 (5) ]

[Stockfish 17: 11.a4! e6 and if that's best, then White is winning (and indeed the 'eval' is +1.64/22) 12.Nxf7!? ( 12.axb5 Qb6 13.Nc4 Qxb5 14.Qc2+- What a mess of weak squares. ) 12...Rxf7 13.Ng5 Nd5! 14.Nxf7 Kxf7 could be a counter-case to the warning not to trade R+P for B+N (well, here N+N) in the opening

or early middlegame. 15.e4± /+- ]

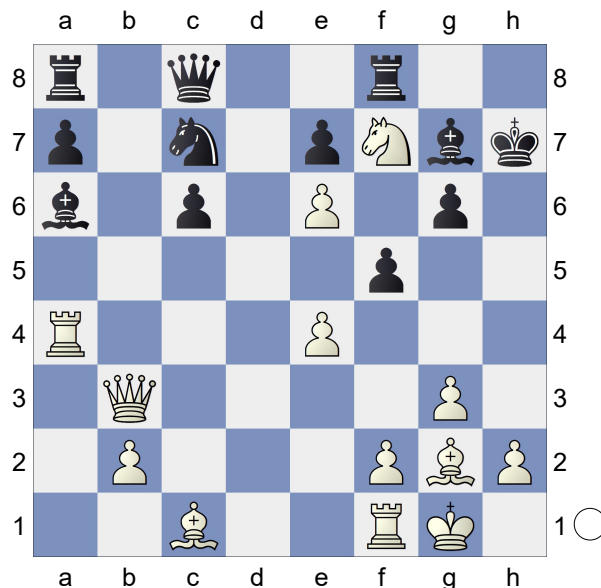
**11...Nxe5 12.dxe5 Nd5± 13.e6!?**

[ 13.Rd1! ]

**13...f5 14.a4 h6? 15.Nf7+- Qc8**

**16.Nxh6+ Kh7 17.Nf7** Between the shaky queenside and new possibilities against Black's king, White is winning.

**17...Nc7 18.e4 bxa4 19.Rxa4 Ba6**



Optimism in picking up some sort of material **20.exf5!**

[ 20.Re1 is fine, but this is fun. ]

**20...Bxf1 21.fxg6+?!**

[ 21.Bxf1! gxf5 22.Qf3 ]

**21...Kg8 22.Kxf1**

[ 22.Bxf1! Qxe6 23.Qd1! Qxg6

24.Nh6+! is Engine in Action (what was played does the job). ]

**22...Rb8 23.Qc2 Qxe6 24.Rh4 Qb3**

**25.Qe2! Qb5 26.Rc4!** Alert to the principle: "With king attack, avoid trading queens." **26...Nd5**

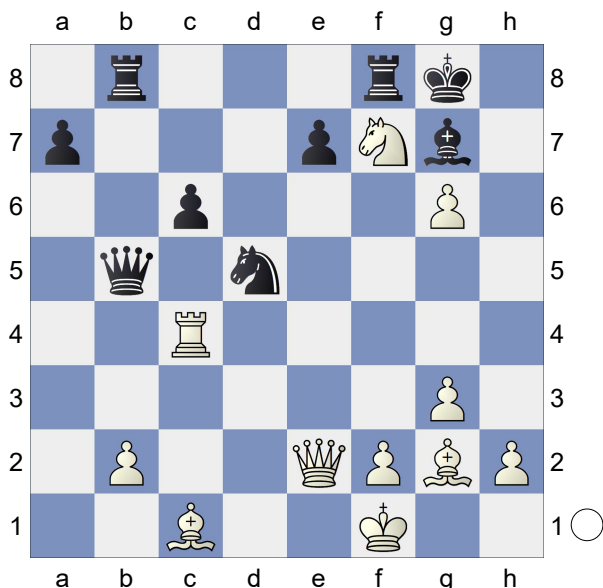
(Diagram)

**27.Kg1**

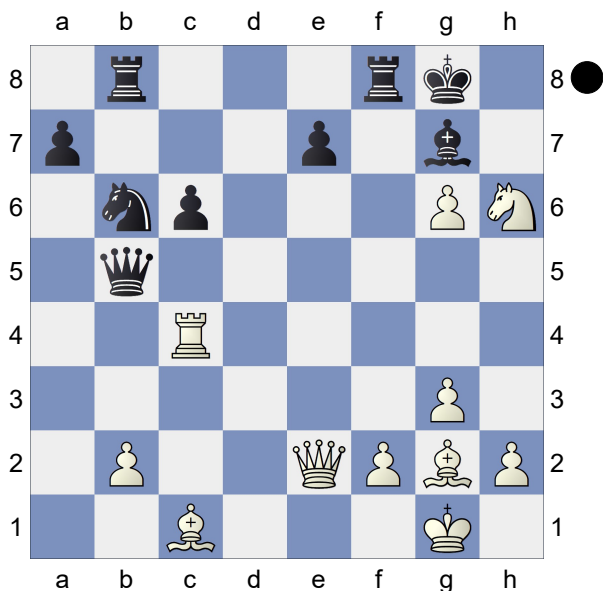
[A nice finish might have been 27.Nd6! when Black has to give up quite a lot to avoid mate. ]

**27...Nb6 28.Nh6+**

[ 28.Nd6! Qe5 29.Re4 Qxd6



30.Qh5 ]  
28...Kh8 29.Nf7+ Kg8 30.Nh6+



**Bxh6** Was Black thinking he was winning!?

[ 30...Kh8!? 31.Nf5! ( 31.Re4 Qxe2 32.Rxe2+-; 31.Rc2 Qxe2 32.Rxe2+- ) 31...Qxf5 ( 31...Rxf5 32.Rh4+ Kg8 33.Qe6+ Kf8 34.Rf4 Rxf4 35.Bxf4 Qc4 36.Qf5+- (That principal again!) ) 32.Rh4+ Kg8 33.Bh3 Qxg6 ( 33...Qxf2+ -- ow ) 34.Be6+ Rf7 35.Rg4 is, despite the 'missing' rook, totally won for White. Qb1 36.Qe5 Qxc1+ 37.Kg2 Kh7 38.Rh4+ Bh6 39.Bxf7 Ow-ow. ]

**31.Qxe7**

[ 31.Qe6+! mates quicker and surer (#7 vs. #12 or so). ]

**31...Rf5?! 32.Qh7+** It's easier to calculate checks,

[ but 32.Bxh6! and instant checkmate was done. Not quite a warning with the proverb "Too many checks spoil the mate." (White is quite winning) ]

**32...Kf8 33.Bxh6+ Ke8 34.Re4+**

[ 34.Bxc6+! gives up the bishop instead of the soon-to-be-queen g-pawn, with mate foreseeable. (#7) ]

**34...Kd8 35.g7** Can't argue with that! An excellent game! And note the the proud and pristine fianchetto'ed bishop sitting on g2, having done its part, while all around is wreckage.

**1-0**

□ **Nehme,Romeo**

■ **Mays-Smith,Isaac S**

2024 Winter TNM: 1200-1599 (5.6)

[Winslow,Elliott]

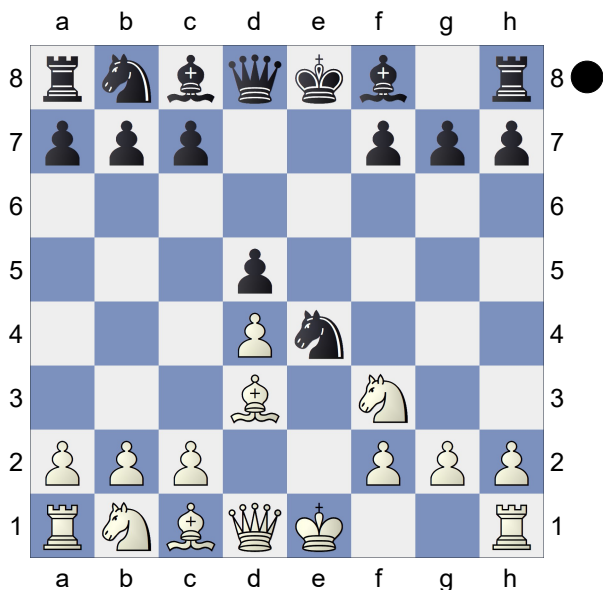
**C42**

**1359**

**1429**

After four rounds Isaac Hays-Smith was in clear first with a perfect score while Romeo Nehme was half a point behind. With this game Romeo jumped half a point ahead. They both then won the rest of the games they played, except that Nehme took a half-point bye in the last round; and thus they tied for 1st-2nd. Here we see excellent opening preparation by Nehme -- or was it just a sharp eye over the board? **1.e4 4 e5 3 2.Nf3 30 Nf6 6 3.Nxe5 43 d6 7 4.Nf3 33 Nxe4 7 5.d4 1:01** With all the excitement (and subsequent dying down of excitement) for 5.Nc3, I'm glad to see that 5.d4 is back in style. I might actually somewhere have the little book "Beating the Petroff" (as we call it in the US), by

GM Vasilios Kotronias and IM Andreas Tzermiadianos, published in 2005, way before Kotronias's career as chess book author really took off (Tzermiadianos wrote an equally important "Beating the French Defense" which also fit into my repertoire). I was already a fan of the move, and this was a boon for me! As for 2025, we'll see if it works out. It certainly did for Romeo! **5...d5 8 6.Bd3 23**



**Bf5 44** The more pertinent lines over the years have been

[ 6...Be7 7.0-0 Nc6 8.c4 Nb4 ( 8...Bg4 )

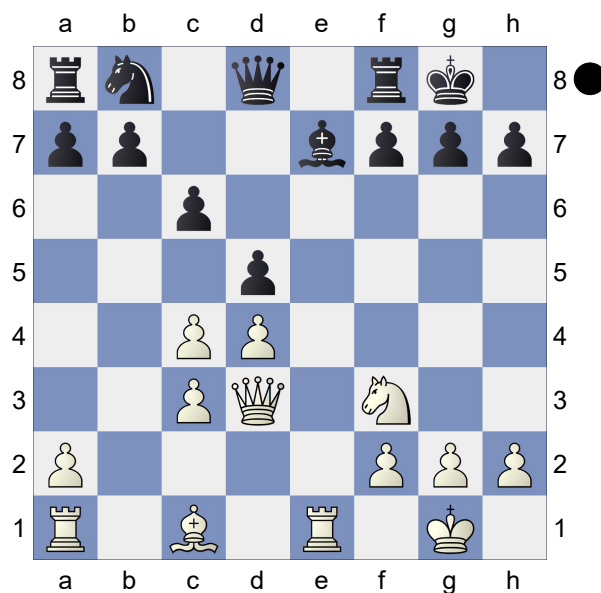
**A)** I take every chance I get to mention one of 6-time U.S. Champion Walter Browne's most amazing moves, in what was a major line for a while: 9.cxd5!? Nxd3 10.Qxd3 Qxd5 11.Re1 Bf5 12.Nc3 Nxc3 13.Qxc3 c6 ( 13...Be6! is a pawn sac that returned the balance ) 14.Bh6!! 1-0 (40) Browne,W-Bisquier,A USA-ch Chicago 1974 (9);

**B)** 9.Be2 dxc4 10.Bxc4 0-0 11.Nc3 Nd6 and on and on. Karpov-Kasparov, World Championship 1985 among others.

(1/2, 73) ]

[ 6...Bd6 7.0-0 0-0 8.c4 c6 became even more popular, thousands of games, still going on. 9.h3 Re8 10.Nc3 Nd7 11.cxd5 Nxc3 12.bxc3 cxd5 13.Bg5 Qc7 14.Re1 Rxe1+ 15.Qxe1 Nf8 16.a4 1-0 (52) Carlsen,M (2832)-Erigaisi,A (2778) Chess.com SpeedChess Chess.com INT blitz 2024 (2.7) ]

**7.0-0 34 Be7 9 8.Re1 36 0-0 20 9.c4 1:40 c6 26 10.Nc3 34 Nxc3 47 11.bxc3 11 Bxd3 4:28 12.Qxd3 12**



A standard sort of position from the Petroff. But now: **12...dxc4? 28**

The most commonly played move -- 36 games in the Mega 2024 database -- but it all but loses -- White has tactics!

[Needless to say, the 2nd played move (14 games) does a lot better: 12...Nd7!]

**A)** 13.Rb1 1/2-1/2 Danin,A (2578)-Teske,H (2531) Norderstedt op 2013 (9) b6 ( 13...dxc4 14.Qxc4 Nb6 15.Qb3± 0.38/42 ) 14.cxd5 cxd5= 0.26/27 15.Rb5 ( 15.Qb5= 0.16/32; 15.Rb2= 0.13/33 ) 15...Nf6 16.Bg5 h6 17.Bh4 a6 18.Rb3!? ( 18.Rb2!? ECW ) 18...b5 19.Bxf6 Bxf6 20.a4 bxa4 21.Ra3 Re8



1-0 (45) Olszewski,A (2311)-Szulc,  
F Sokolka Kresowy op-A 2nd 2011  
(1.2);

**B)** And 13.Bf4 Nf6 ( 13...Nb6  
14.cxd5 Nxd5 15.Bd2= 0.22/30 )  
14.a4 ( 14.Rab1 b6 15.Re2=  
0.01/30 ) 14...Rc8 ( 14...b6  
15.Ne5= 0.28/29 ) 15.cxd5= 0.05/32;

**C)** 13.a4 dxc4 ( 13...h6 14.cxd5  
cxd5 15.Qb5= 0.21/33; 13...Rc8  
14.Rb1 ) 14.Qxc4 Bd6 ( 14...Re8  
15.Bf4= 0.21/32 ) 15.a5= 0.15/35  
( 15.Qd3= 0.09/36 );

**D)** I let Chessbase's "Deep  
Analysis" function have at this  
important position. It wasn't all that  
revelatory: 13.cxd5 cxd5

**D1)** 14.Rb1 b6= 0.26/27  
( 14...Nb6= 0.26/25 );

**D2)** 14.Qb5 Nb6= 0.26/28  
15.a4= 0.24/36 ]

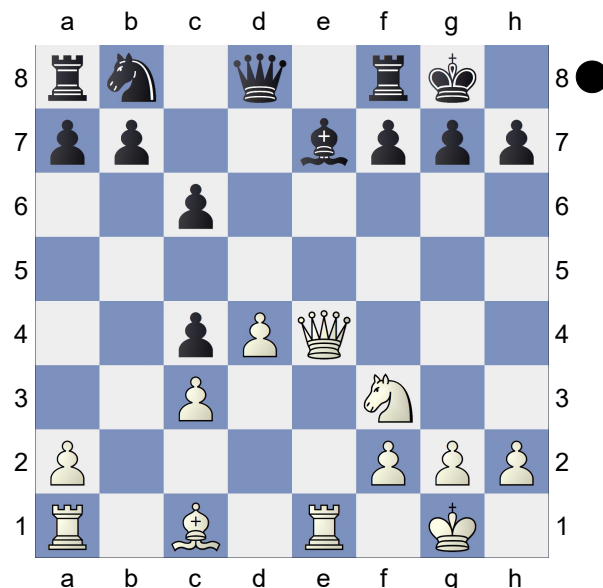
### 13.Qe4!± 13

[ 13.Qxc4 was all those other games,  
with the typical slight advantage  
bordering on equal. And results to  
match. With transpositions, 27 games,  
51.7%. ]

[ 13.Qb1!? is (according to SF17) a  
clear, if smaller, advantage, but does  
fall through the crack between  
"obvious" and "incisive" ... b5?  
( 13...Qd7 14.Ne5 Qc7 15.Nxc4± b5!  
16.Qe4! bxc4 17.Qxe7 Nd7!±  
is incredibly ugly but turns out not  
fatal (!), as between ...Qc8 and ...  
Rac8 Black untangles. ) 14.Qe4  
is the best of both worlds. ]

(Diagram)

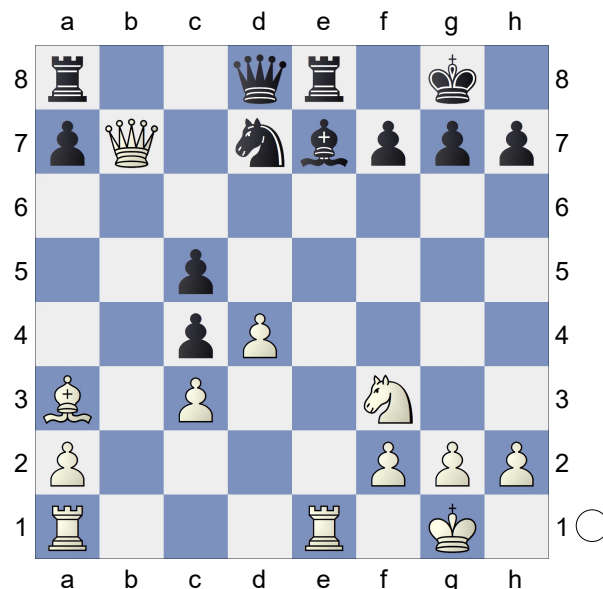
Only two games previously -- but Black  
must tread (why is it always tread?)  
lightly to even stay afloat. All the  
analysis (also done by Romeo!?) put in



here really should be moot, \*if\* players  
of Black would just stop falling into the  
trap, and players of White (like Romeo!)  
would notice that it exists. **13...Bf6N** 1:57

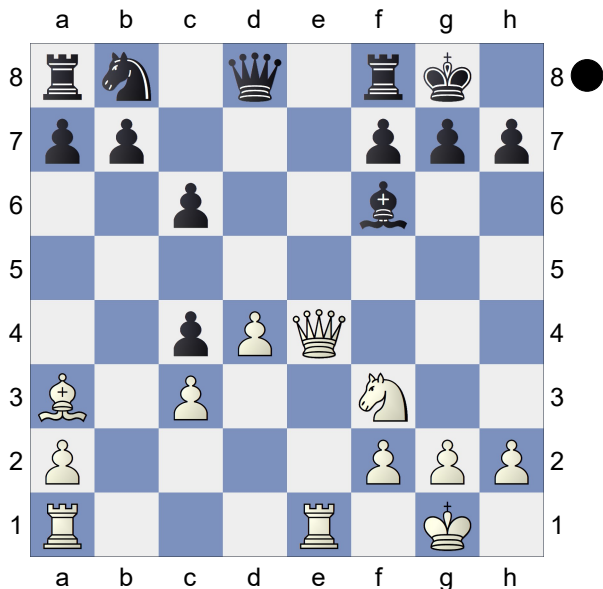
[ 13...Bd6?! 14.Ng5 g6 15.Qh4 h5  
16.g4!+- 1-0 (22) Szczepanski,Z  
(2480)-Couspeyre,T (1274) OP-  
2011-0-01530 LSS email ]

[ 13...Re8! 14.Ba3! ( 14.Ng5 g6  
15.Qh4 h5 16.g4 Nd7! 17.gxh5 Nf8!  
18.hxg6 fxg6± ) 14...c5! 15.Qxb7!  
Nd7□



16.Ne5!N ( 16.Rad1 Qc8 17.Qxc8  
Raxc8 18.dxc5 1-0 (40) Janko,Z  
(2241)-Rohacek,M (2237) SVK-chT1E

0708 Slovakia 2007 (3.4) ) 16...Nxe5  
 17.Rxe5 Rb8 18.Qe4 Bd6 19.Rxe8+  
 Qxe8 20.Qxe8+ Rxe8 21.dxc5 Be5  
 22.Bb4± ]  
**14.Ba3 31**



Do we have to say another word? White wins the Exchange (in German they say "the Quality," which I wish had caught on in English), and leaned in until Black cracked. **14...Nd7 1:11 15.Bxf8 32 Nxf8 1:02 16.Rab1 16:57 Qc7 4:30 17.Ne5 10:52 Re8 43 18.f4 3:24 g6 6:28 19.Qe2 10:30 b5 2:46 20.Qf3 7:42 Rc8 14:57 21.f5 3:05 Bxe5 10:53 22.Rxe5 2:47 Qd6 5:19 23.Rbe1 3:27 Rc7 6:41 24.f6 14:07 a5 4:29 25.Re8 13:21 Qd7 13 26.Qf4 1:51 Qd5 5:12** (This would be a blunder were it not unavoidable mate in 5 anyway.) **27.Rxf8+ 1:06 Kxf8 13 28.Qh6+ 7 Kg8 8 29.Qg7# 8** On one level this game is just "Black falls into opening trap, White wraps it up" but a bit further, this is could have been titled players, 2500 even. That they both went on to tie for 1st is a just reward for this window opening into such excellent play!  
**1-0**

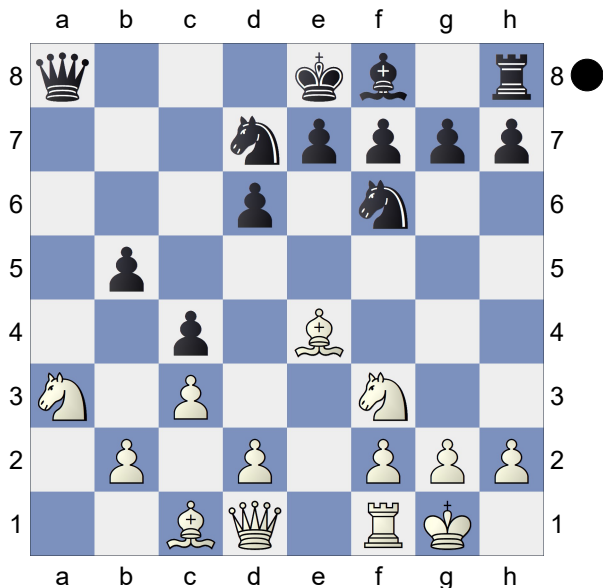
**B51**  
 □ **Tsodikova,Natalya** **2138**  
 ■ **Yan,Ruiyang** **2345**  
 2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.1) 10.12.24  
*[Winslow,Elliott]*

This game could have really thrown the results up in the air! Natalya essentially outplayed Ruiyang, but then... "The hardest game to win is a won game" is now pretty certainly attributed to Emanuel Lasker... **1.e4 3 c5 8 2.Nf3 11 d6 8 3.Bb5+ 14** There was a time when the Rossolimo (2...Nc6 3.Bb5) and Moscow (2...d6 3.Bb5+) were a way to avoid a lot of theory and memorization. No more! **3...Nd7 8** And this also used to be the "younger brother" (well, okay, sister) to the bishop block. Thought to be less sound even. I used to play it, inspired by a Kavalek game, but then decided it was too dangerous and I should keep things "normal." The top players have changed a lot of minds in the last few years though.

[ 3...Bd7 ]  
**4.0-0 14 a6 6 5.Bd3 15 Ngf6 11**  
 What a complex of variations! There are "quiet" sacrificial attacks as well as gentle endgames (which can be treacherous as well). **6.c3 1:14**  
 [ 6.Re1 ]  
**6...b5 1:41 7.Bc2 22**  
 [ 7.c4 ]  
 [ 7.Re1 ]  
 [ 7.a4!? Bb7 ( 7...b4; 7...c4 8.Be2! Bb7 9.axb5 axb5 10.Rxa8 Bxa8 11.Na3 ) 8.axb5 axb5 9.Rxa8 Qxa8 10.Bxb5 Bxe4 11.d4!? For example! ( 11.d3 ) 11...Bxb1 12.dxc5 Be4 13.Re1 Bxf3 14.gxf3 dxc5 ]  
**7...c4 51 8.a4 1:11 Bb7 20 9.axb5 2:02 axb5 9 10.Rxa8 18 Qxa8 12 11.Na3!± 1:19 Bxe4?! 12:51**  
 [ 11...e5!? 12.Nxb5 Qa5! 13.Na3

( 13.Ba4 Bxe4= ) 13...d5! 14.exd5!  
 Bxa3 15.bxa3 Qxd5 16.a4 0-0  
 17.Ba3 Re8 18.Re1± ]  
 [ 11...e6!? ]  
 [ 11...Nxe4! 12.Nxb5 Qb8 13.Re1  
 Nef6 14.Nbd4 e5 15.Qe2± Bd5  
 16.Nf5 Qc7 17.d3 cxd3 18.Bxd3 g6  
 19.Nh6 Bxh6 20.Bxh6 Ng4 21.Bg5  
 0-0 22.Bb5 Ngf6 ]

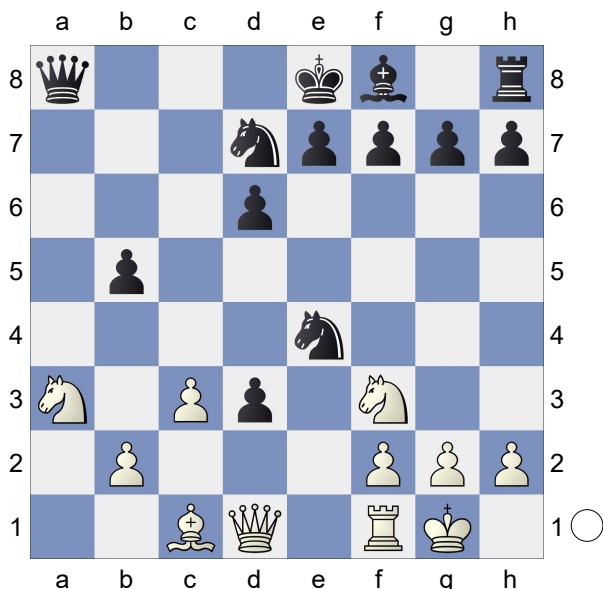
**12.Bxe4** 5:10



**Nxe4?** 10

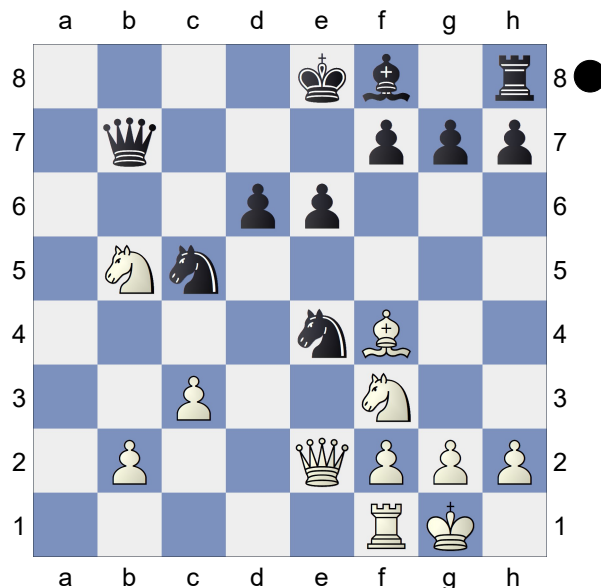
[ 12...Qxe4! 13.Nxb5 e5 14.Nc7+  
 Ke7 15.Nb5 Qb7± ]

**13.d3±** 2:17 /+- **13...cxd3** 5:15



**14.Qxd3?** 11

[ 14.Nxb5! Qb7 15.Qxd3 ]  
**14...e6?** 5:36  
 [ 14...e5!?± /± 15.Nxb5 Qc6!±  
 16.b4!? ( 16.Nfd4!? ) ]  
**15.Nxb5** 7:17 **Qb7** 53 **16.Bf4** 8:26  
**Ndc5?!** 9:29  
 [ 16...d5 17.Nc7+ Kd8 18.Nb5+- ]  
**17.Qe2!+-** 29



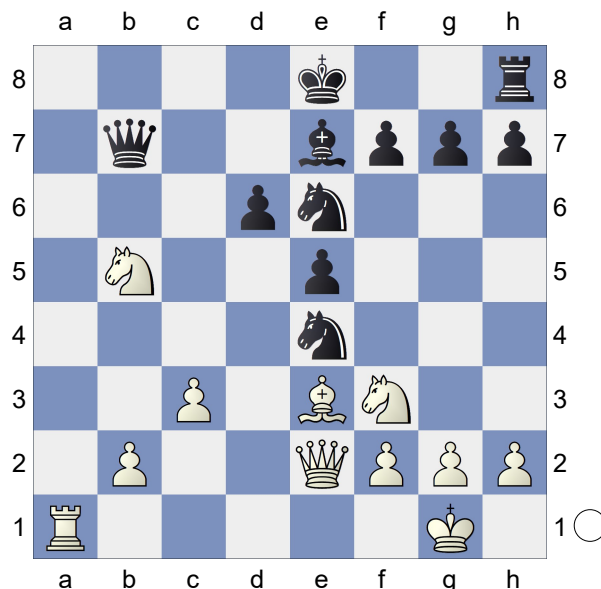
**e5** 21:47 **18.Ra1!** 6:26 **Ne6** 3:29

[ 18...exf4? 19.Ra8+ ]

**19.Be3+-** 5:49

[ 19.Qc4!+- by quite a bit more, says  
 Stockfish. ]

**19...Be7** 12:29



**20.Ne1?!±** 11:25 And this drops quite a

bit of advantage.

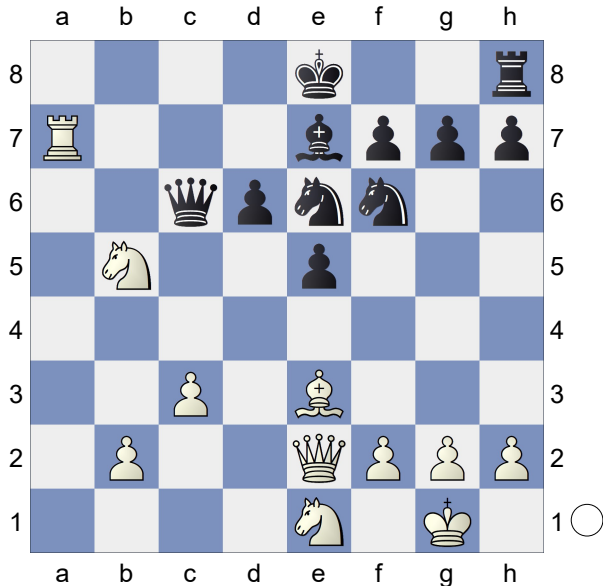
[ 20.Qd3!+- Black remains unable to castle. ]

[ 20.Ra7 Qc6 21.Qd3! Bd8?  
22.Qxe4 Qxb5 23.c4 ]

**20...Nf6?! 7:23**

[ 20...d5!? ]

**21.Ra7 2:37 Qc6 3:49**



**22.c4? 13:50** Finally Black has the window of opportunity and takes it.

[ 22.Nc2! d5! 23.f4!

is incomprehensible to those of us exhibiting mortality, but the computer assures us that White is still on the edge of won. ]

**22...d5!= 2:04 23.Nf3 4:26 dxc4! 3:38**

**24.Na3 4:47 Bxa3! 3:40 25.Rxa3 6:10**

[ 25.Nxe5!? There is now quite a combinative sequence: Qe4 26.Rxa3 0-0 27.Nxc4 Nf4 28.Qf1 Nxc2! 29.Nd2 Nxe3 30.Nxe4 Nxf1 31.Nxf6+ gxf6 32.Kxf1 Rb8 leading to a draw. ]

**25...e4 52**

[ 25...0-0 26.Nxe5 Qe4 27.Nxc4 Nf4 again. ]

**26.Ne5 1:04 Qd5! 23 27.Nxc4 2:17**

**0-0= 6 28.Ra5 42 Qb7 49 29.Ra7 1:44**

A difficult game to fathom! But

instructive.

1/2-1/2

□ **Lewis,Edward**

■ **Srinivasan,Sivavishnu**

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.2) 10.12.24  
[Winslow,Elliott]

**E11**

**2006**

**2028**

This was Ed's undoing, and Siva put himself into the running! **1.d4 1:49:03 Nf6 4:18 2.c4 1:26 e6 9 3.Nf3 21 Bb4+ 10 4.Nbd2 11 0-0 28 5.a3 17 Be7 5 6.e4 16 d6 6** This is a bit annoying for White, who was thinking it was going to be ...d5. I've seen this three times, playing 7.Bd3, 7.g3, and 7.e5 -- won all three, shakily.

[ 6...d5 has been the "theoretical" move, and the jury is still out. We do know that 7.e5 Nfd7 8.Bd3 c5 9.h4!? (bluntly threatening the stock bishop sacrifice) is best handled by ( 9.b4!? ) 9...g6 but that's hardly the end of the story. ]

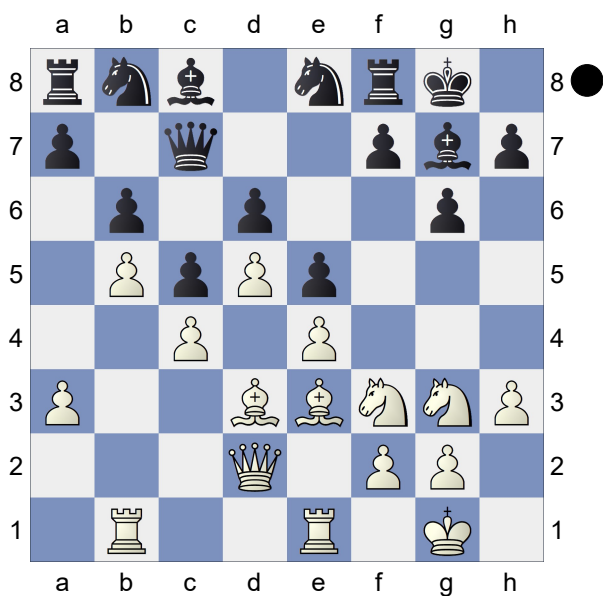
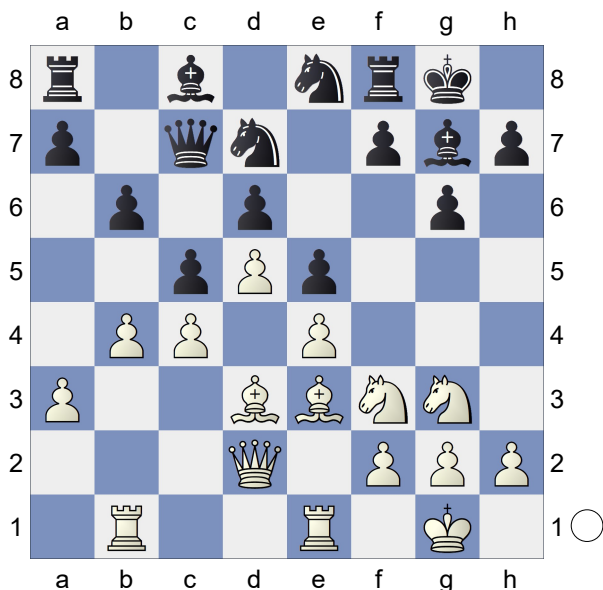
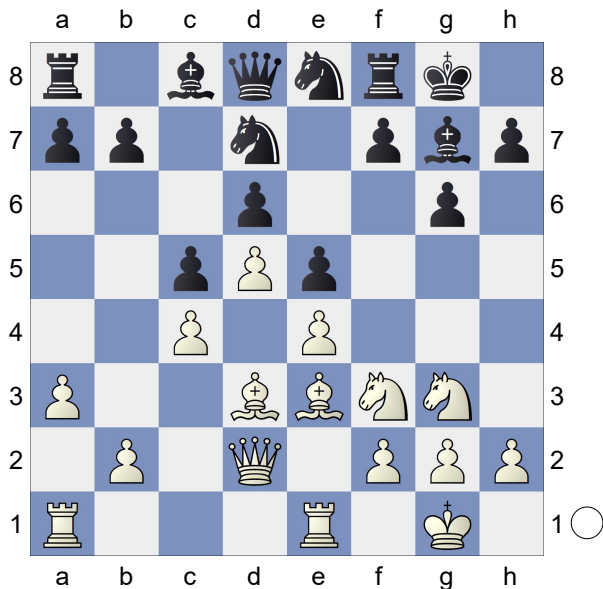
**7.Bd3 26 e5 5 8.0-0 1:28 Nbd7 6:19 9.Re1 4:13 Ne8 4:06 10.Nf1 3:50 Bf6 8:01 11.Be3 3:54 c6 5:54 12.d5 1:53 c5 7:05 13.Ng3 1:21 g6 3:30 14.Qd2 1:11 Bg7 2:33**

(Diagram)

Via the miracle of a long-distance transposition this has turned into some sort of King's Indian. **15.b4 26 b6 1:54 16.Rab1 1:36 Qc7± 9:17**

(Diagram)

**17.b5?! 3:44 13th best! +0.80 vs. +1.25/ 32.** White has a two-front space advantage, closing one front isn't so good. **17...Nb8 2:41 18.h3 2:32**

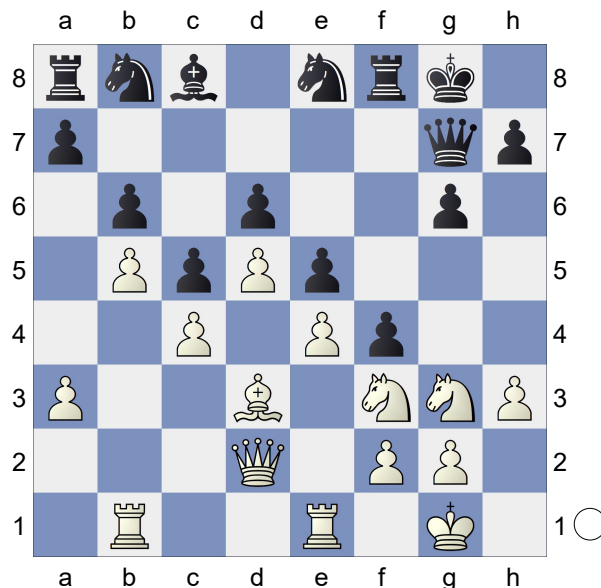


**f5?** 3:16 This needed a lot of

preparation. **19.Bh6?** 7:16

[ 19.exf5 gxf5 20.Ng5! Qe7  
21.Nh5+- among others ( 21.Bf4;  
21.Rb3; 21.Bc2 ) 21...a6 22.bxa6  
Rxa6 23.Rb3 Black is (as usual, the  
computer gets full credit) in big  
trouble. ]

**19...f4!** 38 **20.Bxg7** 3 **Qxg7** 10



Now White is unable to turn the kingside  
around to his favor, and it's Black at  
leisure with the attack. **21.Nf1** 4:16

[ 21.Ne2!? g5 22.Nc3 h5 23.h4?!  
( 23.Kf1 g4 ) 23...gxh4 24.Kh2  
sees Black with a kingside attack,  
despite having so many pieces on the  
first rank. ]

**21...g5** 1:37 -- and Black has a leisurely  
kingside attack. I'm short on time and  
going to just let this be for the rest of  
the game. Worth a look though! **22.N3h2**  
5:03 **Nf6** 5:23 **23.Qe2** 5:46 **h5** 1:32  
**24.Rb3** 1:56 **g4** 3:10 **25.h4** 8:50 **Ne8**  
19:59

[ 25...Qe7! ]

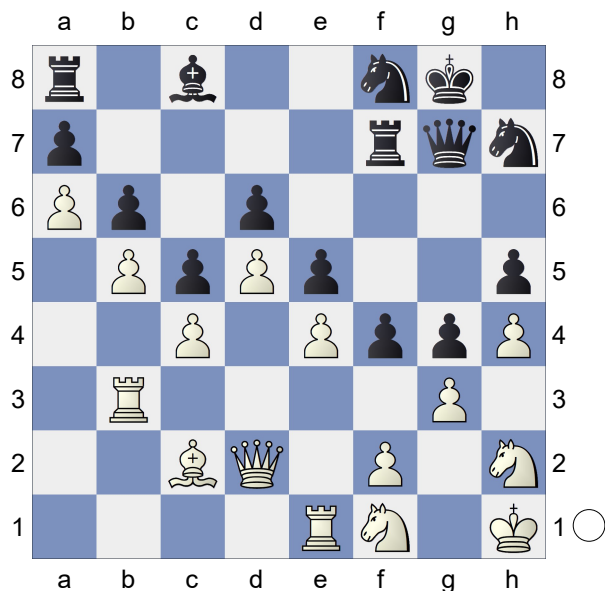
**26.g3** 1:05 **Nd7** 1:47 **27.a4** 21 **Nef6**  
1:31 **28.Bc2** 33 Thinking about lateral  
rook defense, but better to get the  
queenside play, such as it is, going.

**28...Rf7** 1:01 **29.Qd2** 43 **Nh7** 13  
[ 29...Bb7 30.a5 Re8 ]



**30.a5 49 Bb7 18 31.a6?! 18**

So much for that. The "trapped" rook is only temporary; the kingside play remains. **31...Bc8-+ 3 32.Kh1 3:26 Ndf8 15**



**33.f3!? 7:27** White can't stand to just wait for ...Ng6 and sacrifice on h4 for monster pawn storm. It's lost either way. **33...fxg3?! 1:39** Build first! There was more to do.

[ 33...Bd7 ]  
[ 33...Qf6 ]  
[ 33...Ng6 ]  
[ 33...Kh8 ]

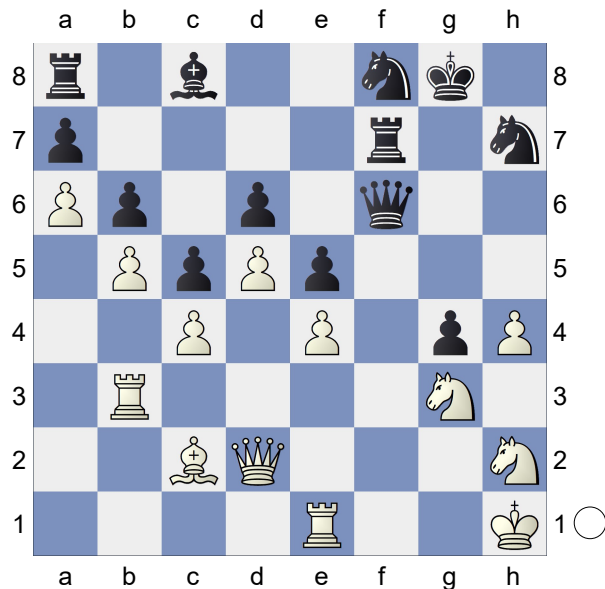
**34.Nxg3 27 Qf6 3:11 35.fxg4 4:31 hxg4 3:25**

(Diagram)

**36.Rf1 5:21**

[ 36.h5!? ]

**36...Qxh4 22 37.Rxf7 16 Kxf7 1 38.Qf2+ 2:06 Nf6 26 39.Rb1 1:17 Ng6 24 40.Rf1 4 Nf4-+ 14 41.Nf5 28 Qxf2 9 42.Nxd6+ 21 Ke7 34 43.Nxc8+ 30 Rxc8 4 44.Rxf2 18 g3 3 The tail end! 45.Rd2 38 Rh8 25 46.Kg1 34 gxh2+ 13 47.Rxh2 6 Rxh2 6 48.Kxh2 27 Ng4+ 4 49.Kg3 13 Ne3 3 50.Bb3 31 Ne2+ 54 51.Kf3 18 Nd4+ 5 52.Kxe3 24**



**Nxb3 4 53.Kd3 26 Nd4 5 54.Ke3 9 Kf6 4 55.Kf2 15 Kg5 12 56.Kg3 2 Nc2 30 57.Kf3 2:09 Na3 6 58.d6 1:28 Kf6 7 0-1**

**B22**

□ **Bambou, Christophe**

**2130**

■ **Winslow, Elliott**

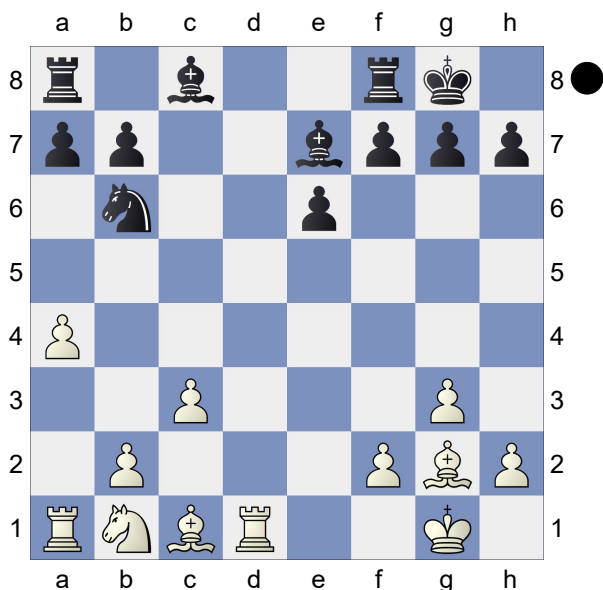
**2200**

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.3) 10.12.24  
[Winslow, Elliott]

Bambou had me in the opening, an Alapin that started looking more like a Catalan, with that pressure on the long diagonal. But then a suspicious pawn sacrifice distracted White from tightening the pressure, and before long it was Black with the queenside play -- which magically turned into White's knight getting stymied on b1. An interesting opening in any case, which puts some more credence to the Alapin as a solid and enterprising response to the Sicilian. **1.e4 1 c5 5:26 2.c3 5 Nf6 1:49 3.e5 5 Nd5 4 4.Nf3 9 d6 20 5.exd6 1:41 e6 1:07 6.g3 6 Bxd6 35 7.Bg2 5 Nc6 1:20 8.0-0 10 0-0 12 9.d4 3 cxd4 3:02 10.Nxd4 5 Nxd4 8:00 11.Qxd4 5 Qb6 1:13**

[The right way is almost certainly 11...Qc7!? 12.c4 ( 12.Bxd5? exd5 13.Qxd5 is mildly suicidal -- Black is ♯ after nearly anything here. ) 12...Nf6 13.Nc3 Bd7= 14.Nb5 Bxb5 15.cxb5 Be5 16.Qd3 Rfd8 17.Qe2 Bd4 18.Bf4 Qb6 19.a4 a5 20.bxa6 Rxa6 21.Qb5 Bxf2+ 22.Kh1 Qxb5 23.axb5 Rxa1 24.Rxa1 Nd5 25.Bxd5 exd5 26.Bc7 Re8 27.Kg2 Bc5 28.b6 f5 29.Ra5 Re2+ 30.Kf1 Rf2+ 31.Kg1 Be3 32.Kh1 d4 33.Rd5 g5 34.Be5 g4 35.h3 Rxb2 36.hxg4 fxg4 37.Rd6 Kf7 38.Bxd4 Rd2 39.Rf6+ Ke7 40.Be5 Rd5 41.Bb2 0-1 (55) Van Foreest,J (2679)-Vokhidov,S (2596) Wch Blitz Samarkand 2023 (4) ]

**12.Qxb6** 41 **Nxb6** 13 **13.Rd1** 1:49 **Be7** 7:36 White is slightly better. **14.a4** 3:46



Threatens to win with a5. **14...a6?!N** 1.03/19 10:40

[ 14...a5!± 0.59/26 Really! So many holes! ]

[A near-2600 player clearly underestimated White's play: 14...Rd8 15.Rxd8+ Bxd8 16.a5 Nd5 17.a6 Rb8 18.c4 Nc7 19.axb7 Bxb7 20.Rxa7 Bxg2 21.Kxg2 1-0 (67) Van Foreest,J (2663)-Donchenko,A (2581)

Wch Blitz Almaty 2022 (9) ]

[Predecessor: 14...Rd8 15.Rxd8+ Bxd8 16.a5 Nd5 17.a6 Rb8 18.c4 Nc7 19.axb7 Bxb7 20.Rxa7 Bxg2 21.Kxg2 Kf8 22.Nc3 Rb4 23.Ra4 Rb3 24.Ne4 Rd3 25.Be3 f5 26.Nc5 Rd1 27.Bf4 Ke8 28.Bxc7 Bxc7 29.Nxe6 Be5 30.b4 Rd2 31.Ra5 Bc3 32.Rxf5 Ke7 33.Nf4 g6 34.Nd5+ Ke6 35.Rf3 Bd4 36.h4 Kd6 37.Kf1 Rc2 38.Nf6 h5 39.c5+ Ke6 40.Nh7 Rb2 41.Nf8+ Kd5 42.Nxg6 Rxb4 43.Nf4+ Ke4 44.Kg2 1-0 (67) Van Foreest,J (2663)-Donchenko,A (2581) Wch Blitz Almaty 2022 (9) ]

**15.Bf4?! 0.62/26 10:24**

[ 15.a5± 1.03/19 Nd5 16.Bd2 ]

**15...e5!?** 1:15/30 6:35 Enterprising but not so sound.

[ 15...Nc4 when Stockfish thinks White's best is -- you guessed it -- 16.Bc1 ]

**16.Bxe5± 2:36 Nc4 4:56 17.Re1?! 0.46/28 1:46**

[ 17.Bd4 Nxb2 18.Re1± Black still hasn't solved the long diagonal problem. ]

**17...Nxb2 0.95/27 4:41**

[ 17...Nxe5!± 0.46/28 18.Rxe5 Rd8! ( 18...Bf6 )]

(Diagram)

**18.Bxg7?** 0.12/29 2:39 He couldn't help but nab this pawn.

[ 18.Bd4± ]

**18...Kxg7= 3:30 19.Rxe7 16 Rd8!= 11 20.Bf3 10:28**

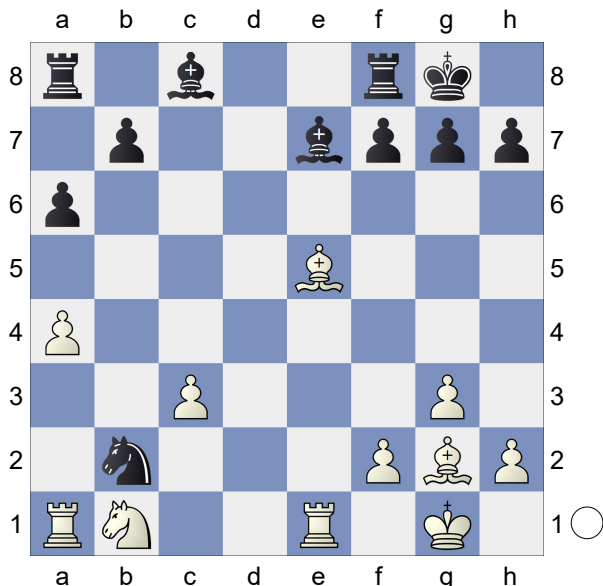
[ 20.Bxb7? Ra7 21.Bxc8 Rxe7-+ ]

**20...Rb8 2:04 Solved! ...b5 coming.**

**21.Kg2 2:51 b6 5:24 or almost.**

[ 21...b5 22.axb5 Rxb5= ]

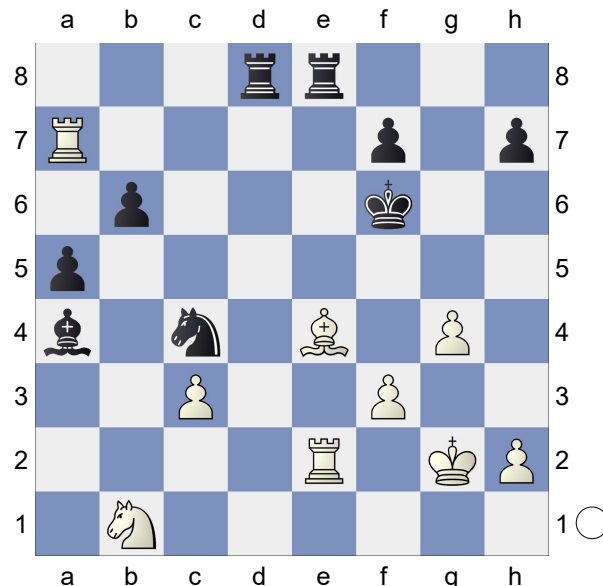
[ 21...Be6 22.Rxb7 Rxb7 23.Bxb7



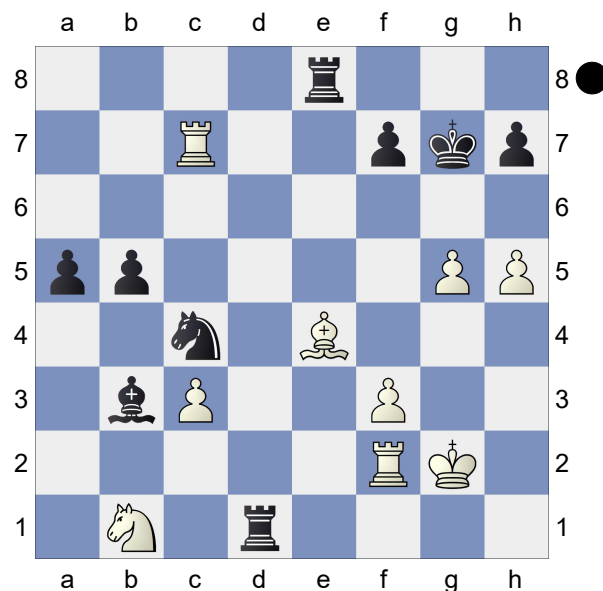
Nd3= 24.Bxa6?? Ne1+ 25.Kf1 Nc2 ]  
**22.Ra2** 3:31 **Nc4** 0.44/32 1:31  
 [ 22...Nd3!= 0.02/31 ]  
**23.Rae2** 1:46  
 [ 23.Be2!± ]  
**23...Bf5** 3:21 **24.Re1?! 5:40**  
 [ 24.Be4 ]  
**24...Kf6?! 5:10** Slightly exposed, but I  
 wondered if I'd have to defend f7 at  
 some point.  
 [ 24...Kf8 ]  
**25.Ra7** 5:04 **a5** 3:56 **26.g4** 7:31 **Bc2**  
 16:01 To watch the evals one would  
 think nothing much was going on, but it  
 felt tense during the game!  
**27.Be4** 3:19 **Re8** 1:13 Starting to let the  
 initiative slip **28.f3** 6:54 **Bxa4** 2:11  
**29.Re2** -0.65/23 8:18 Inhibits Bc2.  
 [ 29.Kf2= -0.16/26 might be stronger. ]  
**29...Rbd8** 3:15

(Diagram)

**30.Rf2?** -1.56/27 2:10 Short on time  
 (finally, it'd been me at first), activity  
 suffers.  
 [ White should try 30.Kf2 ̄ -0.61/27 ]  
**30...Rd1** ̄ 1:34 and, the knight is in  
 trouble! **31.Rc7** 1:06 **b5** -1.29/27 42  
 [ 31...Bb3+- -1.80/23 ...h6 would now



be deadly. 32.h4 Kg7 ]  
**32.h4** ̄ 3:15 **Kg7** 57 **33.g5** -1.85/30 1:07  
**Bb3** 13 **34.h5** -2.50/21 1:28  
 [ 34.Kh3 -1.65/26 A strategic  
 adjustment. was necessary. Re5  
 35.Kg3 a4 ]



**34...Re5!** -+ 2:23 **35.h6+** 2:41 **Kf8** 1  
**36.Bxh7?** -6.68/27 4:04  
 [ 36.Rc8+ -2.31/25 Ke7 37.Rg8 Ne3+  
 ( 37...Rxe4 38.fxe4 Rxb1 39.Rg7= )  
 38.Kg3 Rxe4 Remove Defender  
 39.fxe4 Rxb1 40.g6 fxe6 Discovered  
 Attack 41.Rg7+ Ke6 42.Re2 ]  
 [ 36.Re2!? Rxe5+ ( 36...Rxb1 ) 37.Kf2

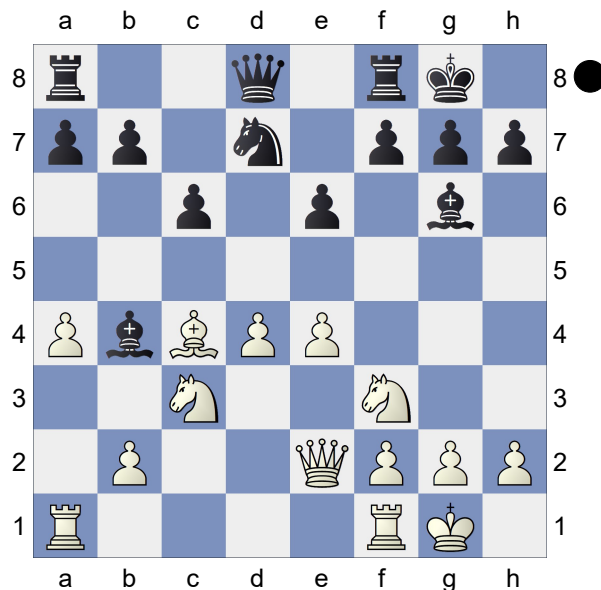
Rd8-+ ]  
**36...Rxcg5+ 20 37.Kh2 6 Rh5+ 16**  
**38.Kg3 33 Rxc6 19**  
 [ 38...Rg1+! 39.Rg2 ( 39.Kf4 Rh4+  
 40.Kf5 Nd6+ 41.Ke5 Rg5+! 42.Kxd6  
 Rxh6+ 43.Kd7 Be6+ 44.Kd8 Rd5+ ) ]  
**39.Be4 42 Rhh1 15 40.Kf4 1:10 Rxb1**  
**59 41.Bxb1 2 Rxb1 6** I couldn't find any  
 crisp win (as in 38... Rg1+!), so I  
 "cashed in" **42.Rh2 1:54 Re1 1:22**  
**43.Rh8+ 27 Kg7 4 44.Rh5 5 Nb6 2:22**  
**45.Rb7 57 Nd5+ 42 46.Kf5 -6.70/22 37**  
**Ne7+ 31** Black is clearly winning. **47.Kf4**  
**28 Ng6+ 52 48.Kg3 15 Bc4 19**  
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.45/  
 Black=0.22 (precise) Quite a tumble!  
 This loss put Christophe just out of  
 reach of the money even with a last-  
 round win. I've been fortunate against  
 him, I think lost just about in every game  
 but I scurry away, mostly. No wait, I was  
 \*winning\* one time before settling for a  
 draw. Still. Next time!  
**0-1**

□ **Hao,Max** **D19**  
 ■ **Mercado,Adam** **2065**  
**1937**  
 2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.4) 10.12.24  
*[Winslow,Elliott]*

Max Hao as White in the last two games  
 (!) shared 2nd-3rd with Ruiyang. Here  
 he shows shaky opening play against  
 the Classical Slav but righted his game  
 to grind out a point against Adam  
 Mercado who nonetheless shows signs  
 of moving up. **1.d4 1 d5 10 2.c4 4 c6**  
**14 3.Nc3 6 Nf6 33 4.Nf3 5 dxc4 12**  
**5.a4 3 Bf5 29 6.e3 3 e6 14 7.Bxc4 4**  
**Bb4 19 8.0-0 5 0-0 15 9.Qe2 3 Ne4 50**  
**10.Bd2 -0.07/28 9:36**

[The pawn sac 10.g4!?± 0.50/26 Bg6  
 11.Ne5 Nxc3 12.bxc3 Bxc3 13.Nxg6

hxc6 14.Rb1 is good compensation. ]  
 [Top "relevant" game is the ever-  
 relevant Dubov succeeding as Black:  
 10.Nxe4 Bxe4 11.Ne5 Nd7 12.Nxd7  
 Qxd7 13.f3 Bd5 14.e4 Bxc4  
 15.Qxc4 a5 16.Be3 Rfd8 17.Rfd1  
 Rac8 18.Rac1 h6 19.b3 Ba3  
 20.Ra1 Bb4 21.Rac1 Ba3 22.Rc2  
 Bb4 23.g3 b5 24.Qd3 bxa4 25.bxa4  
 c5 26.Qb3 c4 27.Rxc4 Rxc4  
 28.Qxc4 Qxa4 29.Rc1 Qd7 30.Kg2  
 Bf8 31.Qa6 a4 32.Rc4 a3 33.Bc1  
 Qe8 34.Ra4 Rc8 35.Bf4 Rc2+  
 36.Kh3 f5 37.g4 fxg4+ 38.fxg4 h5  
 39.g5 e5 0-1 (41) Sarana,A (2685)-  
Dubov,D (2711) Chess.com Rapid  
Wk4 Swiss Chess.com INT 2022 (8) ]  
**10...Nxd2= 3:20 11.Nxd2 13 Nd7 2:08**  
**12.e4?! 6:01 Bg6 2:35 13.Nf3 1:12**



**Kh8N** 10:35 I'm guessing he saw  
 Kramnik on the "long plan" of guarding  
 e6, playing ...f6 and (maybe ...Bf7) and  
 eventually ...e5.

[ 13...Re8 14.Rfd1 Qc7 15.Nh4 e5  
 16.Nxg6 hxg6 17.Bxf7+ Kxf7  
 18.Qc4+ Kf8 19.Qxb4+ Kg8  
 1-0 (30) Salmelin,A (1919)-Luosto,K  
(1889) Tampere We TammerSh B  
2017 (4) ]

[Curious that Stockfish 17 top 5 are

neither of these: best is 13...Qe7  
looking at the usual center breaks,  
maybe with ...Bh5 first. ]

[ 13...Ba5 is up there, ]

[ 13...Bh5 right away, ]

[ even 13...a5 ]

**14.Rfd1** 1:41 **Qa5** 3:50 **15.Qe3** 6:36

**Nf6?! 0.12/22 8:38** The numbers start to  
change sign (i.e. from - to +)(well, from  
- to ± if you can see that).

[ 15...Rad8 -0.29/28 ]

**16.Ne5** 2:31 **Bh5?! 0.52/22 8:41**

[ 16...Rad8= 0.12/29

is more appropriate. ]

[ 16...Rad8 ]

**17.f3± 8:06 c5?! 1.42/27 6:49**

[ 17...Rad8± 0.54/26 ]

**18.d5!± 1:01** White is more active.

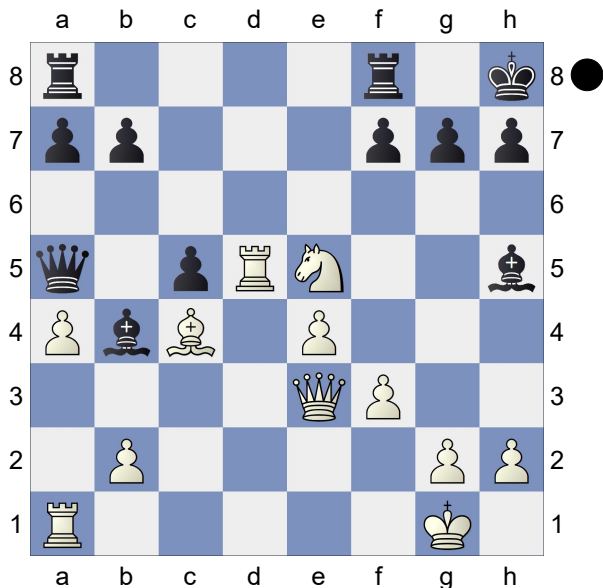
**18...exd5 12 19.Nxd5?! 0.58/27 37**

[ White should play 19.Bxd5!± 1.49/26  
Rae8 20.Nc4 ]

[ or 19.exd5!± ]

**19...Nxd5± 56 20.Rxd5 2:20**

[ 20.Bxd5± was a bit better ]



Hoping for Nd7. **20...Qc7?** 3.40/25 2:37

Black is weak on the light squares.

Black cannot hold the game after this.

[ 20...f6!± 0.73/29

**A) 21.Rd7!?** Rad8 ( 21...fxe5?!

22.Qg5 Bg6 23.Rad1!± ) 22.Rad1  
Rfe8;

**B) 21.Nd7** Bf7 22.Nxf8 Rxf8± ]

**21.Qg5+- 3:15** Plenty good enough  
(there were lots of winners).

[ 21.Nd3 Bg6 22.Nxb4 ( 22.Nxc5?  
Rac8-+ ) 22...cxb4± ]

**21...f6 8:31 22.Qxh5 23 fxe5 12**

**23.Rxe5 2:10**

[ 23.Qxe5?! Qxe5 24.Rxe5 a6+- ]

**23...g6 2.65/29 1:40**

[ 23...Rad8 1.97/27 Considered a  
more optimal continuation. is a better  
defense. 24.Qg5 Rd7 ]

**24.Qg5 8 Bd2 51 25.Rxc5→ 2:08**

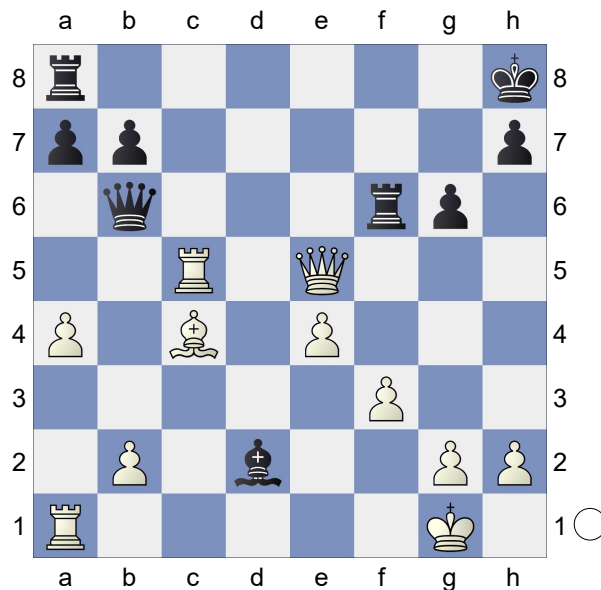
White wants a kill.

[ 25.Qxd2 Qxe5 26.Rf1 Rad8± ]

**25...Qb6 2:35 26.Qe5+ 39**

[ 26.Qxd2? Qxc5+ 27.Kh1 Qxc4-+ ]

**26...Rf6 2:22**



White must now prevent ...Bb4. **27.Kh1**

1:01 Threatens to win with Rd1. **27...Bf4**

50 **28.a5 9:55**

[ 28.Qc3! ]

**28...Qd8?** 3.87/25 3:56

[ 28...Bxe5 2.35/27 29.axb6 Bxb2

30.Rxa7 Rb8 ]

**29.Qc3 26** Consolidation. It's over.

**29...Qe7 5:53 30.Rd5 31 Bh6 3:51**

**31.Rad1 3:11 Bg7 1:00 32.Rd7 25 Qf8**



1:57 **33.Qb3** 52 **b6** 2:10 **34.e5** 52 **Rc6**  
 7.98/25 1:40 **35.Bd5** 37 **Rcc8** 3:09  
**36.Bxa8** 4 **Rxa8** 10 **37.Qd5** 54 **h5** 1:23  
**38.e6** 59 **Qb4** 31 **39.Qxa8+** 16  
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.26  
 (precise) /Black=0.76. It started bumpy  
 but once he got d4-d5 in and occupied  
 that square with pieces on the exchange,  
 Black had trouble finding balance and  
 eventually toppled.  
**1-0**

□ **Parsons, Stephen** **A30**  
**1926**  
 ■ **Diller, Brad** **2119**  
 2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.7) 10.12.24  
*[Diller, Brad]*

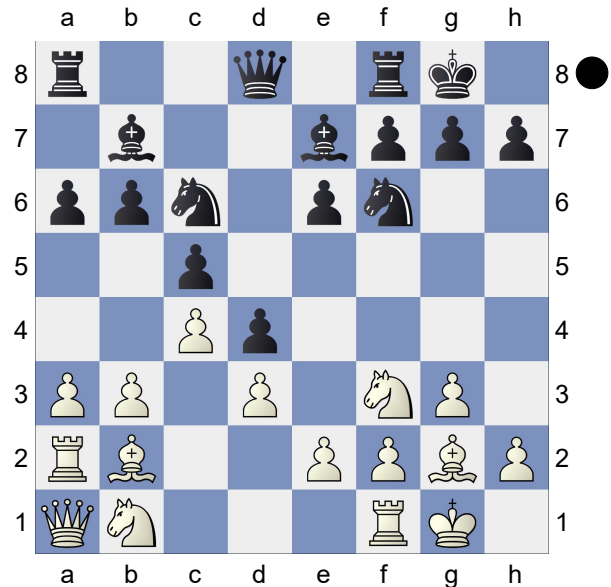
Here we see the danger of studying the classics. :-) Parsons remembered Reti-Capablanca (I think! I \*don't\* remember!) but in the wrong situation, and bunched all his pieces in a far corner from his king. That's not good. I'll leave Diller's notes intact. **1.Nf3 e6**  
**2.b3 Nf6 3.Bb2 b6 4.g3 Bb7 5.Bg2**  
**Be7 6.0-0 0-0 7.c4 c5 8.Nc3 d6 9.a3**  
**a6 10.d3 Nc6 11.Ra2?!**

The preparation of a dubious manouver to prepare for the b4 push. **11...d5**  
**12.Qa1? d4** The queen is out of play and d4 imprisoning the bishop establishes a lasting advantage. **13.Nb1**

(Diagram)

**Qd7 14.Nbd2 h6?!** This prophylactic move was designed to prevent Ng5 followed by a N to e4, but this maneuver simply does not work. For example, if I proceed with **14 ...e5**, then **15 Ng5** fails to **15 ... Ng4 -+**.

[ **14...e5 15.Ng5 Ng4-+** ]  
**15.Rd1 a5 16.Qb1 e5 17.Bc1**



This whole plan to prepare for the b4 push comes at a great cost of marooning his major pieces and allowing me a strong king-side attack where he has few defenders. **17...Ne8?!** This was an inaccuracy where he can undermine my pawn chain with e4 where I do not have Rae8 supporting my advanced f and e pawns.

[ **17...Nh7 18.e4 dxe3 19.fxe3 f5**  
**20.Rf1 Rae8-+** ]

**18.Ne1?**

[ **18.e4 dxe3 19.fxe3 Rd8 20.Ne4**  
**f5 21.Nf2 e4+** ]

**18...f5-+ 19.Nc2 Bd6 20.Nf1 Kh8**  
**21.Bd2 f4 22.Rb2 fxe3 23.hxe3 Qf7**  
**24.Be1 Nf6 25.Nh2?** Temporarily stopping Ng4, but proceeding with the planned b4 was stronger but still losing....

[ **25.b4 Rab8 26.Nd2 e4 27.dxe4**  
**Ne5 28.bxc5 bxc5-+** ]

**25...e4!** This pawn sacrifice supporting the strong Ne5 manouver is devastating.  
**26.dxe4 Ne5 27.f4**

[ **27.f3 Rad8 28.b4 ( 28.e3 d3**  
**29.Nd4 cxd4 30.exd4 Nc6 31.d5**  
**Bc5+ 32.Kh1 Ne5-+ ) 28...Nxc4**  
**29.Rb3 a4 30.Rbd3 Nh5-+** ]

**27...Neg4 28.e5 Bxg2 29.Kxg2 Nxh2**

Stockfish prefers the sacrificial attack with 29 ... Qh5 or 29 ... Bxe5, but I saw that 29... Nh2 followed by Ng4 is overwhelming and requires no calculation when I embarked on the pawn sacrifice beginning with 25 ...e4.

**30.exf6 Ng4! 31.fxg7+ Kxg7**

White is helpless against the dual threat of Qh5 and Rae8 **32.Bd2 Rae8 33.e4 Rxe4 34.Re1 Qb7 35.Kh3 Nf2+**

**36.Kh2 Nd3** Stockfish recommends a quicker path of 35...Rxe1 Qxe1 36 Rf5! , but Nd3 is simple and straightforward and is also winning easily. A win is a win.

**37.Rxe4 Qxe4 38.Ne1 Qe2+ 39.Ng2**

**Nxb2 40.Qxb2 Re8 41.Kh3 Qd3**

**42.Ne1 Qf1+ 43.Kg4 h5+ 44.Kg5 Qh3**

White has no defense to Qg4#.

**0-1**

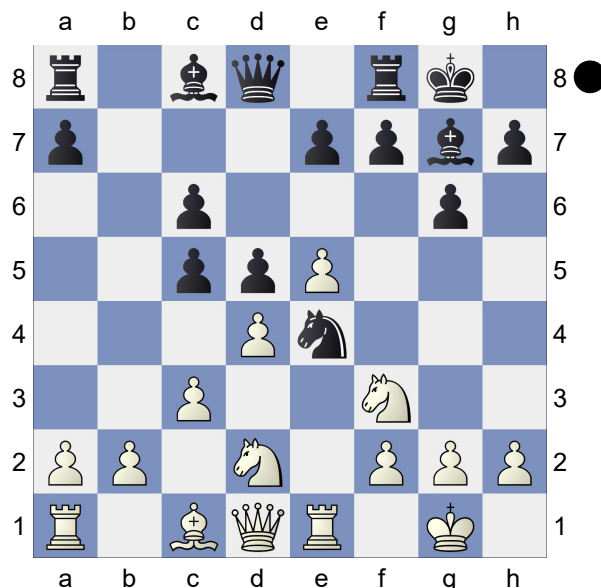
□ **Ni,Leo** **B31**  
 ■ **Ivanenko,Anthony Vladimir** **1880**  
**2023**  
 2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (6.11) 10.12.24  
*[Tactical Analysis 7.0/Winslow,Elliott]*

Tony Ivanenko has been having a rough time lately in the TNMs and also across the Bay in the Friday Night Marathon in Berkeley. But here he finds his focus and dismantles Ni the Younger (his father is also playing) in a sharp Rossolimo. Leo shows promise in general as well, and should be advancing in the coming battles. **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 g6 4.0-0 Bg7 5.Re1 Nf6 6.c3 0-0 7.d4 d5 8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.e5 Ne4 10.Nbd2**

(Diagram)

**f5N** 0.69/27 Not objectively best, but brings the fight to the board.

[Better is 10...cxd4 0.08/31 11.cxd4=



( 11.Nxe4?! dxe4 12.Nxd4 c5 $\bar{f}$  )

11...c5 ( 11...Bf5!? ) 12.dxc5

( 12.Nxe4?! dxe4 13.Rxe4 Bb7

14.Rh4 cxd4 15.Bh6 Bxh6 16.Rxh6

d3 $\bar{f}$  0-1 Hoekstra,M-Shibut,M/

Washington 2000/EXT 2002 (50) )

12...Nxc5 13.Nb3 Nxb3 ( 13...Ne4

14.Be3 a5 15.Rc1 a4 16.Nbd4 Bd7

17.Re2 Rc8 18.Rec2 $\pm$  1-0 Batsanin,

D-Eltsov,R/Novokuznetsk 2001/CBM

85 ext (34) ) 14.Qxb3 d4 Black is

opening diagonals for his light-

squared bishop. ( 14...Bg4

$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  (24) Belkhodja,S-Ikonnikov,V/

Paris 1992/EXT 97 (24); 14...Re8

Ardeleanu,A-Rogozenko,D/Iasi 1999/

CBM 75 [Gershon]; 14...a5

0-1 (20) Pedzich,D-Oral,T/

Loewenstein 1997/CBM 58 ext (36) )

15.Qb4?!N ( 15.Rd1 Be6 16.Qa3

Qb6 17.Nxd4 Bxe5 18.Be3 Rfd8

19.Nxe6 Qxe6=  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  Volzhin,A-

Motylev,A/Dubai 2002/CBM 87 ext

(26); 15.Qd3 Bb7 16.Qxd4 Qxd4

17.Nxd4 Rfd8 18.Nf3 Rd3 19.Bg5

e6 20.Rad1 Rxd1 21.Rxd1 Bxf3

22.gxf3 Bxe5=  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  Grischuk,A-Leko,

P/Dubai 2002/CBM 89 (29); 15.Bg5

h6 16.Bh4 g5 17.Bg3 Bf5 18.Rad1

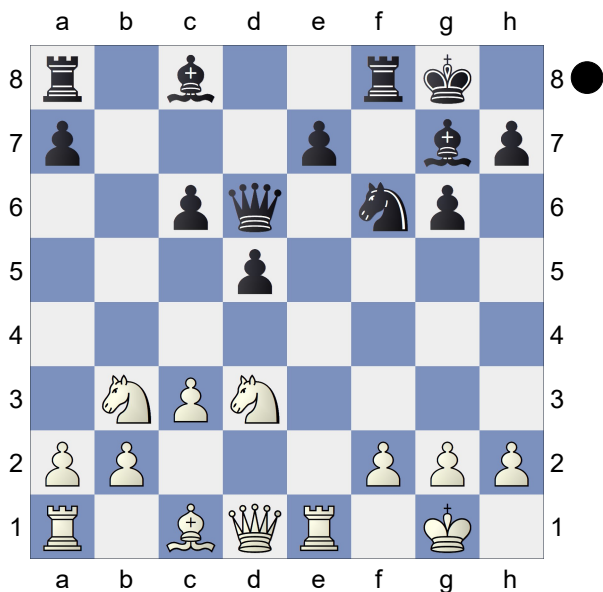
d3 19.e6 f6 20.Rd2 $\pm$  0-1 Kveinys,A-

Degraeve,J/Bled 2002/EXT 2003 (55) ) 15...d3 16.Bg5 Re8 17.Rad1 h6 18.Bh4?! ( 18.Be3 Qd5 $\bar{7}$  ) 18...a5 19.Qb3 (  $\Delta$ 19.Qa3 Bf5 $\bar{7}$  ) 19...Bf5 20.Bg3 Rb8 21.Qa3 e6 22.Nh4 (  $\Delta$ 22.b3 $\bar{7}$  ) 22...Bf8 23.Qa4 Rb4 ( 23...Rxb2 24.Nxf5 exf5 25.Rxd3? Qxd3 26.Qxe8 Rb1-+ ) 24.Qc6 Bg4 25.f3 Bh5 26.Bf2 Rxb2 27.Re4 ( 27.g4? Rxf2 28.Kxf2 Qxh4+ 29.Kg1 Rb8-+; 27.Rxd3? Qxd3 28.Qxe8 Qc2 29.Rf1 Kg7-+ ) 27...Qc8!-+ (notes by Postny) 0-1 (45) McShane,L (2592)-Van Wely, L (2675) EU-ch 4th Istanbul 2003 (7) ] [A later 2600 game: 10...Bf5 11.Nh4 Be6 12.Nxe4 dxe4 13.Rxe4 cxd4 14.cxd4 c5 15.Be3 Qd5 16.Qc2 cxd4 17.Rxd4 Qxe5 18.Nf3 Qb5 1/2-1/2 Fedoseev,V (2664)-Motylev,A (2653) RUS Cup final Khanty-Mansiysk 2015 (2.2) ]

**11.exf6 $\pm$  Nxf6 12.Ne5** White is more than slightly better. **12...Qd6 13.dxc5** 0.01/34

[ 13.Ndf3 $\pm$  0.90/27 ]

**13...Qxc5= 14.Nb3** Excellent horsemanship. **14...Qd6 15.Nd3**



and Bf4 should not be overlooked

**15...Ng4 16.g3 Bf5** Hoping for ...e5.

**17.Be3?** -2.55/25 This move loses the game for White.

[ White should try 17.Nd4 $\bar{7}$  -0.48/29 ]

**17...Nxe3-+ 18.Rxe3 e5 19.Qe2 Bh6 20.f4 Bxd3**

[ Don't take 20...exf4 21.Nxf4 Bxf4 22.gxf4 ]

**21.Rxd3 exf4 22.c4?** -4.85/29

[ 22.Re1 -2.40/31 was worth a try. ]

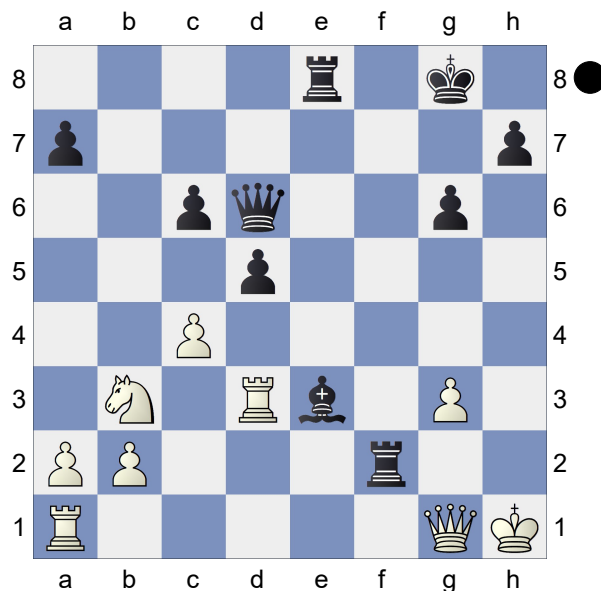
**22...fxg3 23.hxg3** -7.79/26

[  $\Delta$ 23.Rxg3 -4.76/32 Rae8 24.Qd3 ]

**23...Rae8 24.Qg2 Be3+ 25.Kh1 Rf2**

(  $\rightarrow$  ...Qe5!) **26.Qg1** -#8/50

[ 26.Rxe3-+ -4.65/32 Rxg2 27.Rxe8+ Kf7 28.Kxg2 Kxe8 29.Re1+ Kd8 30.Re2 ]



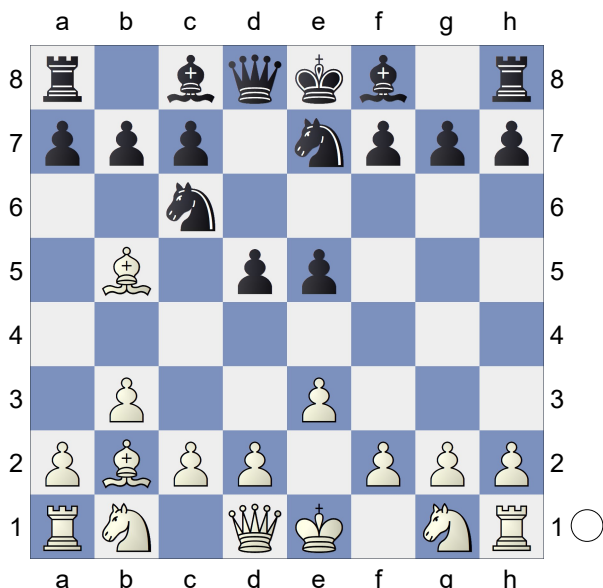
**26...Qe6** Weighted Error Value: White=1.01/Black=0.32. Nice attack by Tony, as will happen when he's having a good day!

**0-1**

A01  
1639

□ Pickering, Carl Anthony  
 ■ Vandenhoven, Clarke Raymond  
 2024 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (6.16)  
 [Winslow, Elliott]

This game is quite interesting! I didn't reach out to find out how "prepared" Vandenhoven's opening play was, but it's a concept to remember. I don't play gambits enough, so this is one I'd like to try out. Andy Lee perhaps!? Clarke's 3-0 in the last three rounds got him up into the money, another third of 3rd-5th. Well done. **1.b3 e5 2.Bb2 Nc6 3.e3 d5 4.Bb5 Nge7!?**



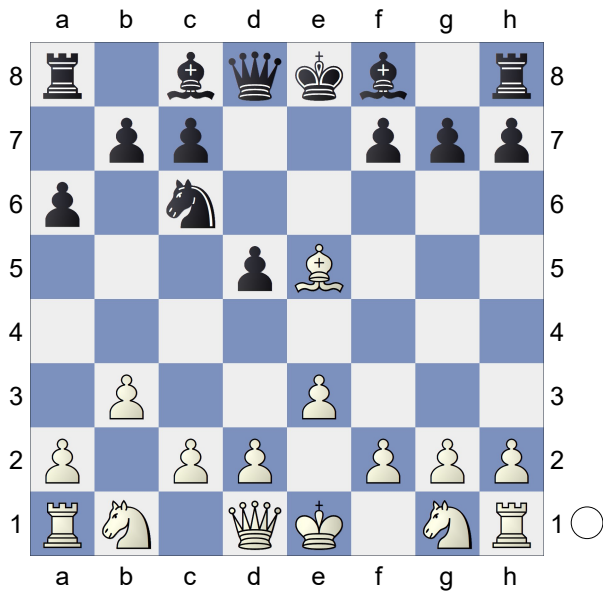
This looks like a blunder! But it's a legitimate pawn sacrifice, which has even reached "the top" - for example Carlsen-So! Admittedly a blitz game, alas as usual. I wonder if Clarke knew what he was getting into! **5.Bxe5!?** GM Romain Edouard went as far as giving this a "?!" in notes to the Nihal-Lagarde game below. But Stockfish 17 (on the fast cloud machine) has it holding up 1st, but -- only for all but dead equality, or at least a number close to 0.00.

[Magnus \*declines\* against Wesley --

and regrets it after a slew of wobbly moves for both sides: 5.h4?  
 A sort of answer to ...Ng6 and stopping ...Qg5 in some lines. But frankly, it's Carlsen on a whim in a blitz game. a6 6.Be2 Be6?!  
 ( 6...Nf5 $\bar{f}$  ) 7.Nf3 f6?! ( 7...d4 $\bar{f}$  although not as good as the previous  $\bar{f}$  ) 8.d4= e4 9.Nfd2 f5 10.c4 Ng8?! 11.cxd5 $\pm$  Bxd5 12.Nc3 Bf7?!  
 ( 12...Bb4= ) 13.Bc4?! ( 13.g4! $\pm$  ) 13...Nf6 14.Bxf7+ Kxf7 15.a3 Bd6 16.g4 Nxg4 17.Ndxe4 Re8 18.Qf3 Qd7 19.Ng5+ Kg8 20.Qd5+ Kf8 21.Nxh7+ Ke7 22.Ng5 Kd8 23.Nf7+ Ke7 24.Nxd6 cxd6 25.Rg1 Kf8 26.0-0-0 Rad8 27.Qf3 Qf7 28.Kb1 Kg8 29.Nd5 Na5 30.Bc3 Re4 31.Rxg4 Qxd5 32.Rxg7+ Kxg7 33.Rg1+ Kh6 34.Qg2 Qxb3+ 35.Bb2 Rg4 36.Qh1 Nc4 0-1 Carlsen,M (2839)-So,W (2753) Chess.com Speed Chess Chess.com INT blitz 2023 (3.27) ]  
 [ 5.Nf3 e4 ( 5...Bd7 6.Bxc6 Nxc6= 0.18/34 ) 6.Ne5 Bd7 ( 6...a6= 0.00/41 ) 7.Nxd7 Qxd7 8.d3 a6 9.Bxc6 Nxc6 10.Nc3 Qe6 11.dxe4 dxe4 12.Qd5 Qxd5 13.Nxd5 0-0-0 14.0-0-0 Rg8 15.g4 Bd6 16.g5 Rde8 17.h4 Be5 18.Rhg1 Bxb2+ 19.Kxb2 Re5 20.Nc3 Rge8 21.Rg4 R8e7 22.Rd5 R5e6 23.Rf4 b6 24.a3 Kb7 25.Ne2 Kc8 26.Ng3 g6 27.Kc1 Kb7 28.Ne2 Kc8 29.Nc3 Kb7 30.Rd2 Ne5 31.Nxe4 Nf3 32.Nd6+ cxd6 33.Rxf3 1-0 Nihal,S (2670)-Lagarde,M (2580) Djerba Masters rapid 2023 (3) ]  
 [Here's what some "cloud" engine spent most of its time (and my 1 "ducat")(11 cents) on: 5.Ne2 a6 ( 5...Bd7 6.d4 exd4= -0.13/36 ) 6.Bxc6+ Nxc6 $\bar{f}$  -0.56/33 ]  
 [ 5.d4 exd4 ( 5...e4 ) 6.exd4 a6 $\bar{f}$  -0.50/31 ]



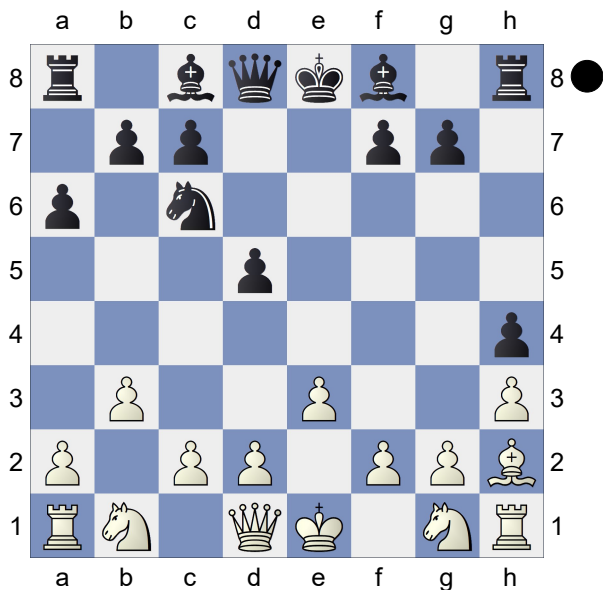
5...a6 6.Bxc6+ Nxc6= 0.00/44



That's a curious evaluation for such a position. **7.Bg3 h5 8.h3?!**

[ 8.h4 ]

**8...h4 9.Bh2**

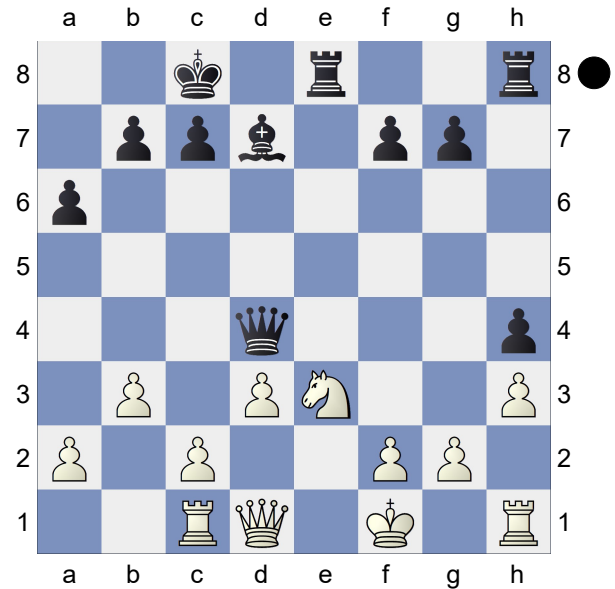


**d4?!**

[ 9...Qg5 10.Kf1 Bf5± gambiting  
\*another\* pawn would be Stockfish's  
choice. Of course. ]

**10.Nf3 Bd6 11.Bxd6 Qxd6 12.exd4  
Bf5 13.d3 0-0-0 14.Nbd2 Rde8+  
15.Kf1 Qf4 16.Nc4 Nxd4 17.Nxd4  
Qxd4 18.Ne3 Bd7 19.Rc1**

(Diagram)



**Rh6±** Slowplaying it could have cost him further on.

[ Missing 19...Rxe3! 20.fxe3 Qxe3-+  
when now ...Rh6 is going to really  
hurt. ]

**20.c3 Qf4 21.Qf3 Qxf3?!** Of course  
the maxim, keep the queens on when  
the opponent's king is a target, applies  
here. **22.gxf3 Rf6 23.d4**

[ 23.Rg1 g6 24.Kg2 ]

**23...Rxf3-+** This is actually pretty bad for  
White! **24.Kg2 Rf6**

[ 24...Rf4! ]

**25.Rhe1 Rfe6**

[ 25...Re4 ]

**26.c4 Re4**

[ 26...Rg6+! 27.Kh2 Rf6 28.Kg2  
Re4 ]

**27.Red1 R8e6** Black is drifting... **28.d5  
Rg6+?! 29.Kf3= Re8 30.Rg1?**

[ 30.Rd4! ]

**30...Rf6+ 31.Kg2 Re4 32.Rc3 Ref4**  
[ 32...Rg6+ 33.Kf1 Rxg1+ 34.Kxg1  
Bxh3-+ ]

**33.Nd1 Rg6+ 34.Kf1 Rxg1+ 35.Kxg1  
Kd8**

[ 35...Rd4! 36.Nb2 Bf5 ]

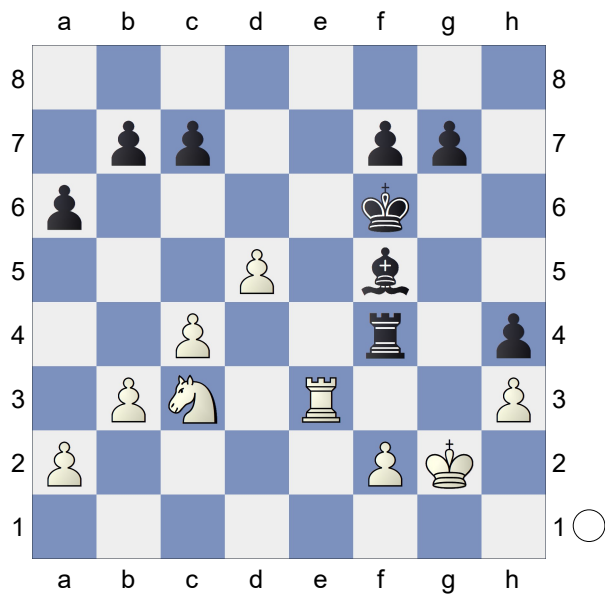
**36.Kg2 Ke7**

[ 36...Bf5! ]

**37.Re3+ Kf6?**

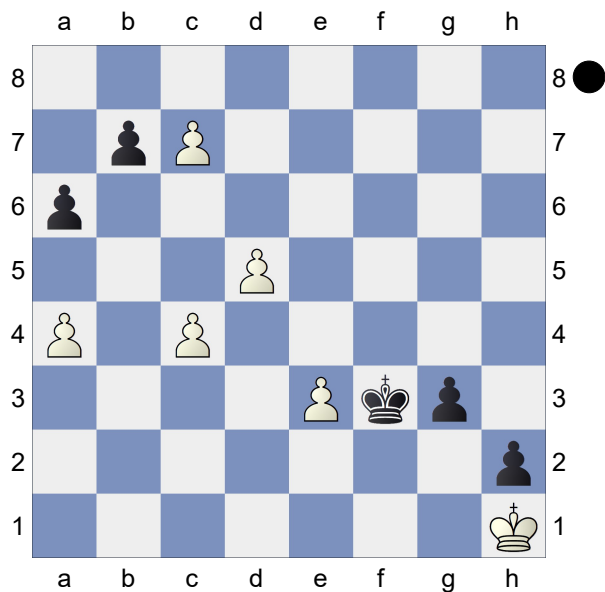


[ 37...Kd6 38.Nc3 Bf5 ]  
**38.Nc3!= Bf5**



**39.Ne2??**

[ 39.d6! c6 (forced) 40.c5= ]  
**39...Re4 40.Nc3 Rxe3 41.fxe3 Ke5**  
 Black dominates. **42.b4 Be4+ 43.Kf2**  
**f5 44.a3 g5 45.a4 g4 46.hxg4 fxg4**  
**47.b5 g3+ 48.Kg1 h3 49.Nxe4 Kxe4**  
**50.b6 Kf3 51.bxc7 h2+ 52.Kh1**



**Kf2!** The triumph of quality over quantity.  
**53.c8Q g2+ 54.Kxh2 g1Q+ 55.Kh3**  
**Qg3#** I quite like Vandenhoven's play  
 here. Okay, so his ending needs work,  
 whose doesn't. He recognized the value  
 of a bishop over a knight with rooks, he

got his king active when he could, he  
 mostly kept White from organizing. (That  
 ...Bf5 could have come earlier.) In all,  
 well done!

**0-1**

**C11**  
 1792  
 1633

□ **Dancig Perlman,Yali**

■ **Ni,Tao**

2024 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (6.20)

[Winslow,Elliott]

I'm not quite sure why I included this  
 game! The little combination to win the  
 exchange was unusual, and surprising  
 how fast Black folded up. **1.e4 e6 2.Nf3**  
**d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.d4 c5**  
**6.dxc5 Bxc5 7.Bd3 Nc6 8.Bf4 a6**  
**9.Qe2**

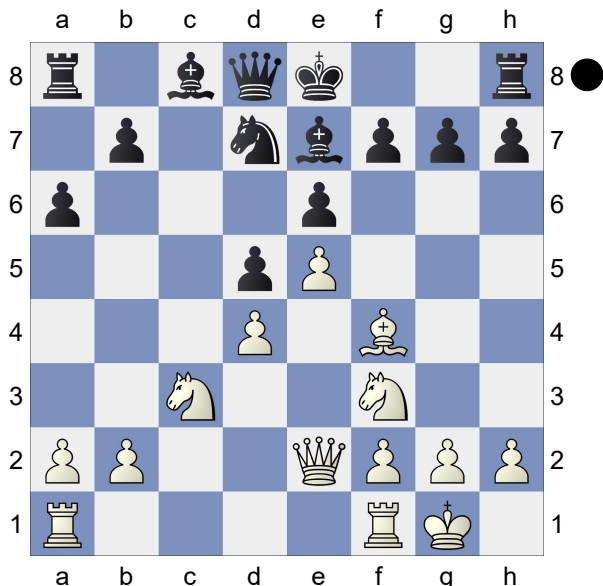
[Relevant: 9.0-0 b5 10.a3 Bb7  
 11.Re1 Ne7 12.h4 Ba7 13.Ng5 h6  
 14.Nh3 Nc5 15.h5 Nxd3 16.Qxd3  
 g5 17.hxg6 Nxg6 18.Bg3 h5 19.Ne2  
 h4 20.Bh2 Rc8 21.c3 d4 22.Nxd4  
 Qd5 23.f3 Rh5 24.Rad1 Nxe5  
 25.Qe2 Ng6 26.Nf2 Qc4 27.Qe3  
 Rd8 28.Ng4 Rf5 29.Qh6 Bxd4+  
 30.cxd4 Rxd4 31.Qg7 Rxg4 32.fxg4  
 Rd5 33.Rf1 Qc5+ 34.Kh1 Qe7  
 35.Rxd5 Bxd5 36.Qg8+ Qf8  
 37.Qxf8+ Kxf8 38.Kg1 Ke7  
 ½-½ (125) Gazik,V (2546)-Pacher,M  
 (2382) SVK-ch Bratislava 2023 (1) ]

**9...Nb4 10.0-0 Nxd3 11.cxd3 Be7**  
**12.d4**

(Diagram)

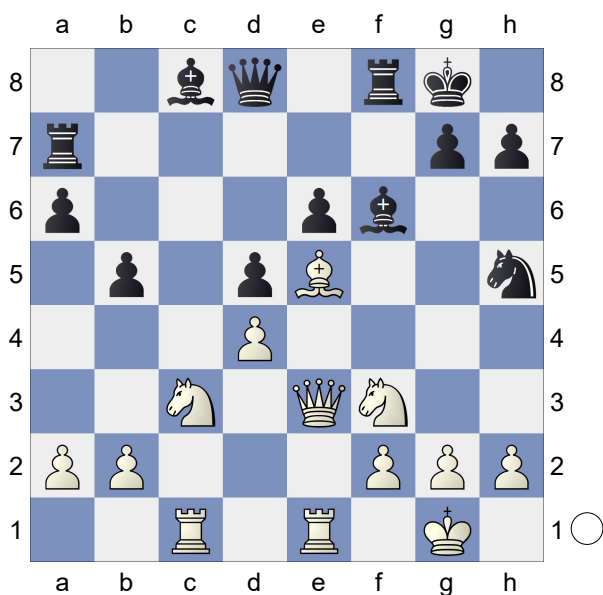
**f6N**

[Predecessor: 12...Nb6 13.Rfc1 Bd7  
 14.Rc2 Rc8 15.Rac1 0-0 16.Nb1  
 Bc6 17.b3 Qd7 18.Qd2 Bb5  
 19.Rxc8 Rxc8 20.Rxc8+ Qxc8  
 21.Qc3 Bd8 22.Qc5 Bc6 23.Bg5



Nd7 24.Qc2 h6 25.Bxd8 Qxd8  
 26.Nbd2 Qe7 27.h3 Qb4 28.Kh2 a5  
 29.Nb1 a4 30.bxa4 Bxa4 31.Qc8+  
 Kh7 32.Nc3 Bc6 33.Nd1 Qb1  
 34.Ne3 Qxa2 35.Ng4 Qa4 36.Qc7  
 Qc2 37.Nf6+ gxf6 38.exf6 Qg6  
 39.Ne5 Nxe5 40.Qxe5 Qg5  
 0-1 Robitaille,S (1558)-Glode,M  
 (1878) Charlesbourg Capablanca  
 2013 (2) ]

13.exf6 Nxf6 14.Rfe1 0-0 15.Bg3  
 Nh5 16.Be5 Bf6 17.Qe3 b5 18.Rac1  
 Ra7



19.g4 Bxe5 20.Nxe5 Nf6 21.g5 Nh5  
 22.Nc6 Qc7 23.Nxa7 Qxa7 24.Ne2

g6 25.Rxc8 Rxc8 26.Qxe6+  
 1-0

B03

□ Mays-Smith, Isaac S

1429

■ Schaezlein, Charlie

1270

2024 Winter TNM: 1200-1599 (6.24)

[Winslow, Elliott]

And this game, by the section co-winner, was curious. It was just a mistake losing a piece, then there was Black with a rook and a couple pawns for bishop and knight, but there was no coordination, and White took it down. Oh, and this opening has always been a slippery creature for Four Pawns Attack players like myself. Somewhere I have a notebook from 1972, where I flowcharted my "refutation" of the Alekhine Defense (those were the days). I don't remember what I had against this ...g6 challenge to White to make something happen. 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4 g6 6.Nf3 Bg7 7.Be3 0-0 8.Nc3 Bf5 9.Bd3 Bg4 10.0-0 dxe5 11.fxe5 Nc6 12.Be2 f6 13.h3 Bxf3 14.Bxf3 Nxc4??

[ 14...fxe5= White has no advantage whatsoever; so \*that\* wasn't "it". ]

15.Bd5+ Kh8 16.Bxc4 fxe5 17.Rxf8+ Qxf8 18.d5 Nd4 19.Qg4!? Nc2

(Diagram)

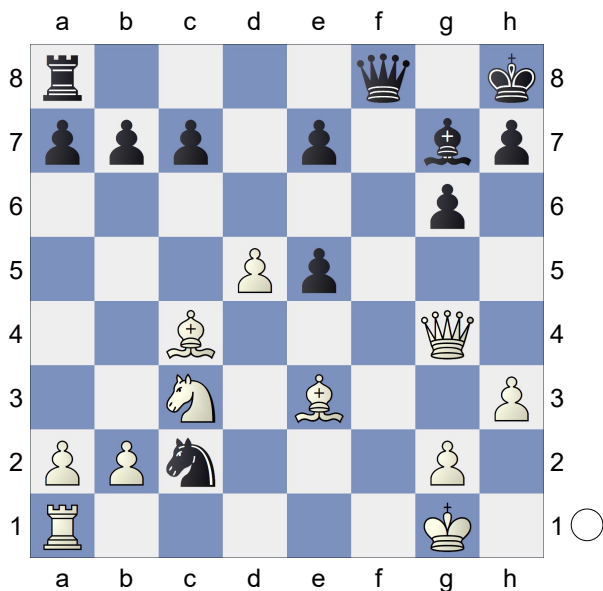
20.Qe4?? Miscalculation, obviously.

[ 20.Rf1! Nxe3 ( 20...Qxf1+ 21.Bxf1 of course ) 21.Rxf8+ Rxf8 22.Qe4 Nf5 23.g4 Nd4 A nice outpost doesn't offset queen vs. rook. ]

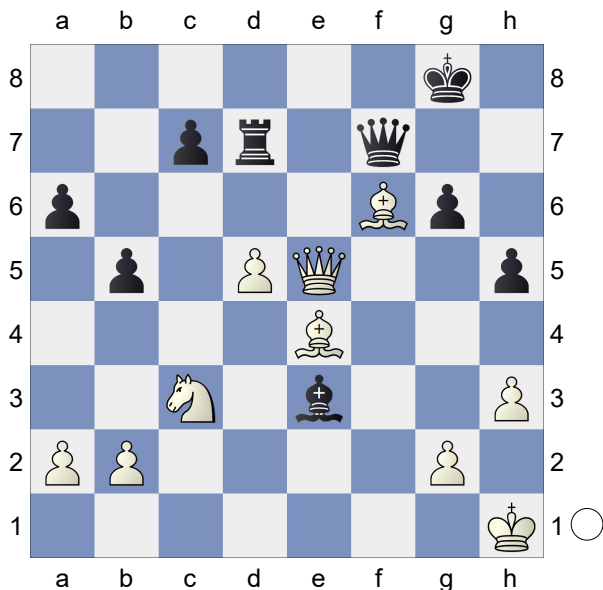
20...Nxa1 21.Qb1 a6?

[ 21...Bh6! 22.Bxh6 Qxh6 23.Qxa1 Qd2= ]

22.Qxa1± b5 23.Bd3 Qf7 24.Qf1 Qg8



**25.Be4 Rd8 26.Bg5 Rd7 27.Qf2 h6  
28.Qh4 Qh7 29.Bxe7 h5 30.Qg5 Bh6  
31.Bf6+ Kg8 32.Qxe5 Be3+ 33.Kh1  
Qf7**



**34.Qe6 b4 35.Bxg6 Qxe6 36.dxe6  
1-0**  
Funny game. Technique matters!

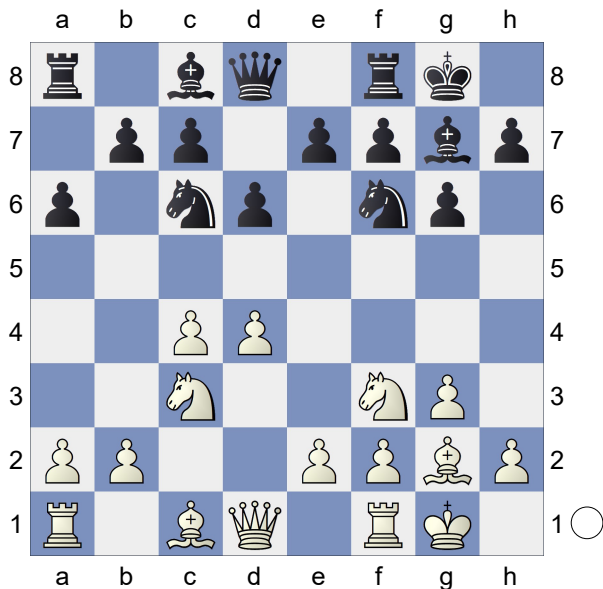
**E63**  
 **Winslow, Elliott** **2200**  
 **Tsodikova, Natalya** **2138**  
 2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (7.1) 17.12.24  
*[Winslow, Elliott]*

Important game! If one thinks strictly in risk vs. reward, dollars, then a draw is likely to be just as good as a loss is bad, for either of us. Tsodikova just came from a weekend in Salt Lake City where she won the 2nd U.S. Women's Senior Championship. In the pregame lecture she showed her win over Anjelina Belakovskaia (who won the inaugural even in Berkeley last year). She's been playing all sorts of sharp lines against the Ruy Lopez, so... **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6** No surprise here! Tsodikova and I are both big fans of the King's Indian Defense. **3.g3** This fits the bill. Plus, I got to finally "fix" my screwup last time and make headway in my Preparation Reparation Project. **3...Bg7 4.Bg2 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 Nc6**

[For many years I've played (as Black) **6...Nbd7 7.Nc3 e5 8.e4 c6**, the "Classical" line. But of late I've been modernizing. ]  
 [ **6...c6 7.Nc3 Bf5** is quite interesting! But it will take a lot of mastery. Caruana plays it, but he seems to have more time to get things right than I. I don't know what I'd have done if \*she\* had played it! ]

**7.Nc3 a6** Natalya stuck with her favorite Panno Variation in the Fianchetto King's Indian.

[ **7...e5** has been a big line of late, with developments in both the trade **dxe5** (and possible queen trade), and the blocked center with **9.d5** and **10.e4**. I've played Black here, with **9...Nb8!**? and it's worked out nicely. ]



**8.b3** This is the line Boris Avrukh switched to in the 2nd edition of his Grandmaster Repertoire series from Quality Chess. Previously he was going with the more ambitious 8.Qd3 lines, but "problems" appeared since publication, as they usually do in chess, and so now a more constrained approach. Still plenty of sharp lines, although mostly Black getting in trouble when trying something tactical, along the long diagonal which b2-b2 could momentarily weaken. Natalya and I sidestep all that, heading into the standard structure with White's d-pawn and Black's c-pawn off.

[I learned 8.d5 Na5 9.Nd2 c5 10.Qc2 Rb8 11.b3 b5 12.Bb2 in the 1960s. There might still be something to it. ]

[The theoretical world has gone through a long stretch of all these gentle lines with 8.h3 Rb8 9.e4 Well, this one can get a bit unruly. ( 9.Be3; 9.Bg5; 9.Bf4 )]

[I don't know what is "wrong" with 8.Qd3 , I'll try to coax that out of his books (but not now). ]

**8...Rb8 9.d5!** Let's just say I was a lot better prepared this time than last. White upsets Black's queenside

expansion.

[ 9.Bg5?! h6 10.Bd2?! e5! 11.d5 Nd4! 12.Nxd4? exd4 13.Ne4 Re8 1-0 47, Winslow-Tsodikova, Spring TNM, 02.iv.2024. No less a topsy-turvy game than this one. ]

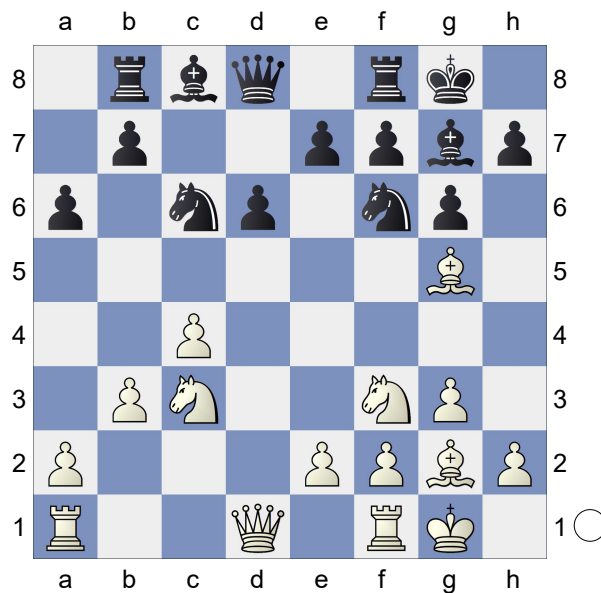
[ 9.Bb2 is certainly common, and played in all the other Panno move lines for Black (as in, some bishop move after 7...a6, like 8...Bd7, 8...Bf5, 8...Bg4). But here 9...b5 is fine and scores well ( 9...Bf5 spikes a plus score except against the obvious 10.Rc1 )]

**9...Na5 10.Bg5!** Avrukh goes with this then-rare idea in his 2018 book. White looks to provoke ...h6, then gain time in return. It is worth a note that many other moves here have over time shown up as well. **10...c5**

[ 10...h6 11.Bd2 c5 12.dxc6 ]

**11.dxc6 "!"** Avrukh **11...Nxc6**

[ 11...bxc6 12.c5! is a major idea. White finds lots of play against Black's queenside and center. Still, Gawain Jones won both games against David Howell in the British Championship knockout -- as Black -- after dxc5 ]



This is the "tabiya" position. Handling this basic pawn structure is an important world of study. **12.Rc1 h6 13.Be3!** Black's move order allows White this.

### 13...Bf5

[ 13...Ng4± is the most played, but White gets the tempo back after 14.Bd2 Nge5 15.Ne1! with h2-h3, f2-f4, e2-e4 in the right order. ]

**14.Nd5± Kh7 15.Nh4** It's just by coincidence I happened to play the same moves as Dutch GM Benjamin Bok. **15...Bd7N**

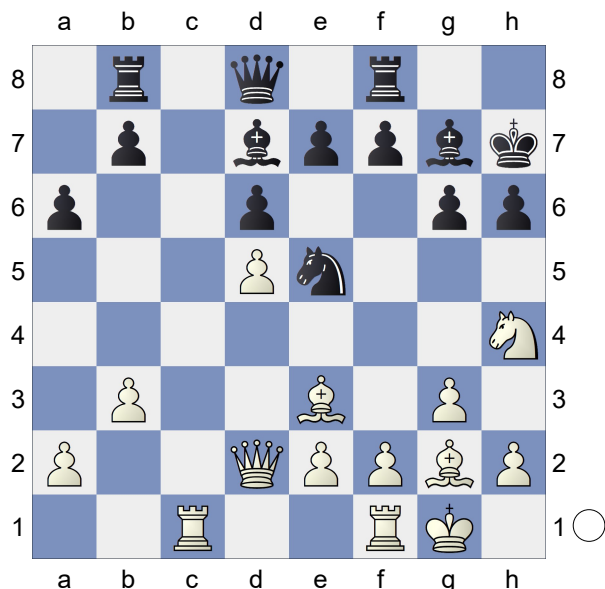
[ 15...Be6 16.Qd2 Re8 17.Bb6 Qd7 18.Nc7 Rec8 19.Nxe6 Qxe6 20.Rfd1 Nd7 21.Be3 a5 1-0 (44) Bok,B (2592)-Jones,G (2635) Olympiad-42 Baku 2016 (4.6) ]

**16.Qd2** White is much more active. But the main thing is, Black hasn't been able to make any queenside headway.

### 16...Nxd5

[ Δ16...Re8 says the Stockfish whole-game analysis. Regardless, White's pressure remains. And 17.Nxf6+ Bxf6 18.Bxh6 \*is\* a pawn, albeit not the healthiest after Qa5 19.Qxa5 Nxa5 20.Be3 Nc6 21.Rfd1 Bxh4 22.gxh4 ]

### 17.cxd5 Ne5



**18.f4?!**

[ 18.h3!±

**A) 18...f5** 19.f4 Nf7 20.Bd4+- and e2-e4 will expose Black's king more than White's.;

**B) I missed that 18...g5** is no good: 19.Be4+ f5 20.Nxf5! ( 20.Bxf5+?? Rxf5-+ )

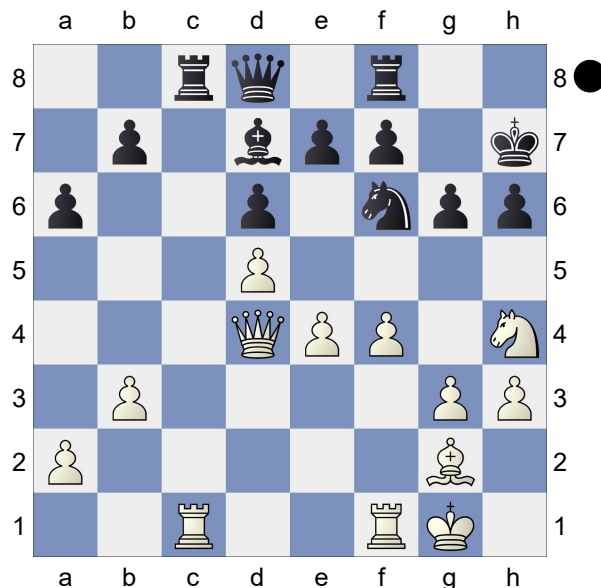
**B1) 20...Rxf5** 21.Qc2! ( 21.g4!/? );

**B2) 20...Bxf5** 21.Bxf5+ Rxf5 22.Qc2 winning the Exchange and the game.;

**C) "Best" is 18...Be8** (or to c8) but now White has the c-file after 19.Rc2 ( 19.f4 Nd7 20.Bf2 isn't as good, it turns out. ) 19...Rc8 20.Rfc1 Rxc2 21.Qxc2 with a close-to-won game.;

**D) 18...-- ]**

**18...Ng4± 19.Bd4 Rc8 20.h3 Bxd4+ 21.Qxd4 Nf6 22.e4**



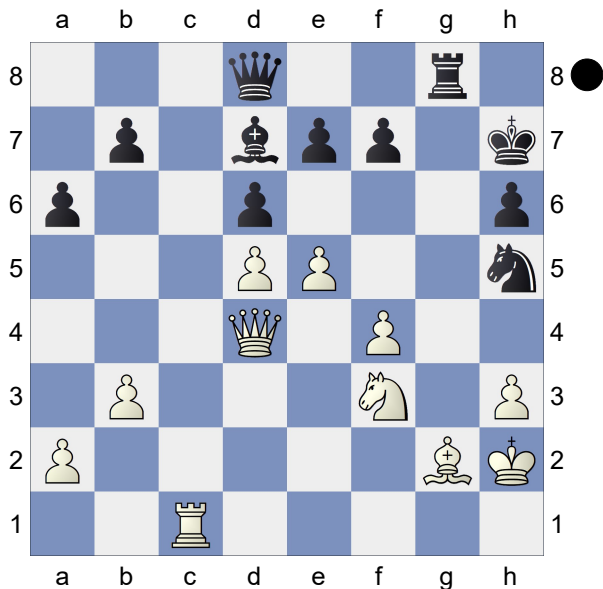
White's impressive center isn't as great as I thought during the game. **22...Bb5?!**

[ 22...Qa5± 23.e5 Nh5 24.Qf2± ]

[ 22...Rxc1 23.Rxc1 g5! is a radical but effective play for activity on the kingside. 24.fxg5 ( 24.Nf3 gxf4 25.gxf4 Rg8 26.Kh2 Nh5 27.e5

(Diagram)





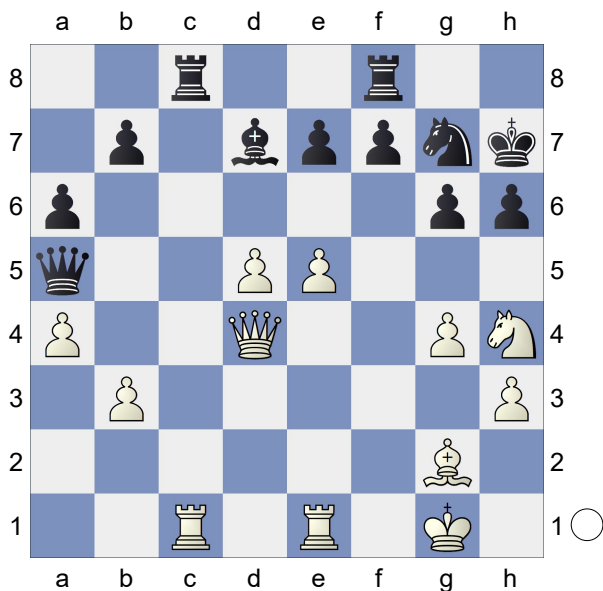
*Rxg2+!* 28.Kxg2 Qg8+

How annoying! ) 24...hxg5 25.Nf3 g4  
26.Ng5+ Kg6 27.h4± Nh5 28.Kh2  
Ng7! ]

**23.Rfe1± Qa5?!** These moves just encourage White to step up. **24.a4 Bd7**  
**25.e5 dxe5 26.fxe5 Nh5 27.g4↑**  
"White is really pushing" (TA 7.0) maybe too hard!?

[ 27.Kh2 ]

**27...Ng7**



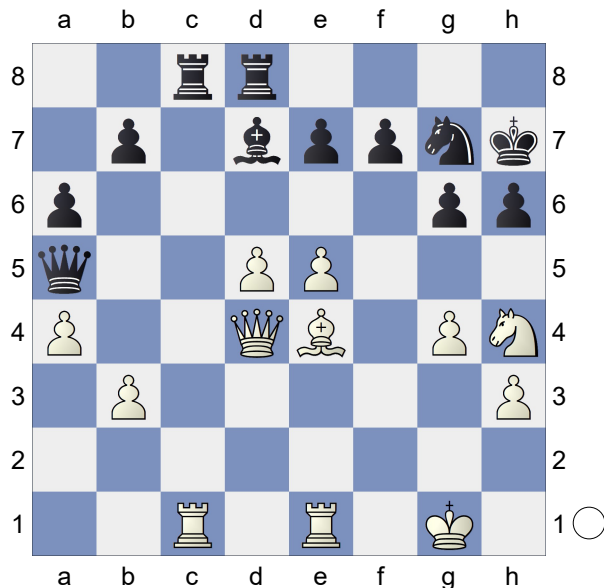
Often Black's "Panno" knight finds a hard time on a5; here it's found at least as bad a plight on g7. But wait...  
**28.Be4?!** Angling for e6, but it just never

makes the scene.

[Consolidating moves are good, but best is 28.b4!?± Qxa4!? ( 28...Qd8 29.Rxc8 Bxc8 30.Nf3 ) 29.Rxc8 Bxc8 ( 29...Rxc8 30.e6± ) 30.Qc5!± ( 30.Rf1 )]

**28...Rfd8?**

[ 28...Rxc1± 29.Rxc1 Rc8 30.Rxc8 Qe1+ 31.Kh2 Bxc8± ]



**29.Ng2?** Dreaming of some h4-h5 breakdown of Black's pawn cover.

[ 29.b4!+- I never ran this down, once I saw I couldn't pick off her queen. But it's pretty decisive: Qxa4 ( 29...Rxc1? 30.bxa5 Rxe1+ 31.Kf2+- ) 30.Rxc8 Rxc8 31.e6!

**A) 31...fxe6?** is too easy (not that I saw it clearly during the game):  
32.Bxg6+ Kg8 33.Qf4  
mate follows.;

**B) 31...Nxe6** 32.dxe6 Bxe6  
33.Bxg6+

**B1) 33...Kg8** 34.Bxf7+! Kxf7  
( 34...Bxf7 35.Nf5 ) 35.Qe4;

**B2) 33...fxg6;**

**C) 31...Bxe6** Black must give up a piece, but that doesn't even stop the horror. 32.dxe6 Nxe6  
33.Bxg6+! ( 33.Qe5 Qxb4

34.Bxg6+ fxc6 35.Qxe6± )  
 33...fxg6 34.Rxe6 Rc1+ 35.Kf2  
 Qa2+ 36.Re2 Rc2 The limited  
 Tactical Analysis function inside  
 Chessbase rated this "±" but  
 Stockfish 17 "running free" has it +3.  
 79/29... ]

**29...Kg8**

[ 29...Rxc1± 30.Rxc1 Rc8 ]

**30.Qe3**

[ 30.Nf4!± ]

**30...Rxc1**

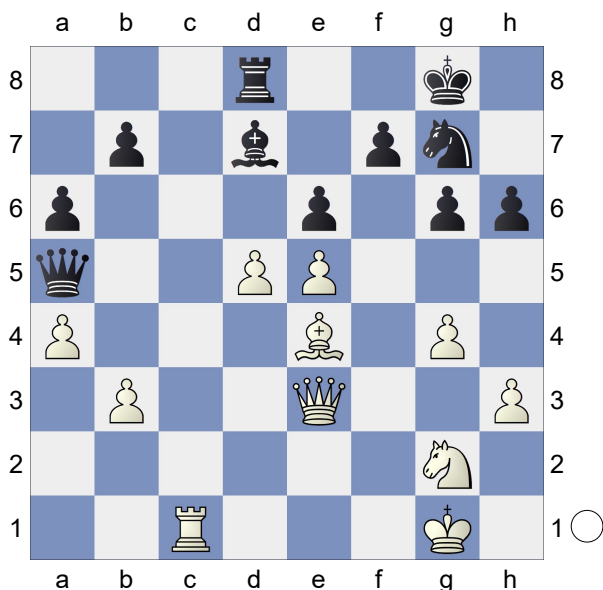
[ 30...e6!= when because of the e5  
 pawn hanging, Black breaks the  
 bind. ]

**31.Rxc1**

[ 31.Qxc1 g5± ]

**31...e6**

[ 31...Rc8± ]



**32.Rc5!+- Qb4**

[ 32...b5 33.d6 Qb6 34.axb5 Bxb5  
 35.Rc7 Qxe3+ 36.Nxe3 Ne8  
 when I \*definitely\* didn't see 37.Bb7! ]

**33.Rc4??** I totally overlooked her next  
 move!

[ 33.d6+- ]

**33...Qa3=** I just expected a repetition.

**34.Qc3?**

[ 34.Qxh6 Qxb3 35.Rd4 ( 35.Ne3?

exd5 Deflection 36.Nxd5 Qxc4-+ )

35...exd5 ( 35...Bxa4 36.d6= )

36.Bxd5 Qb6± ]

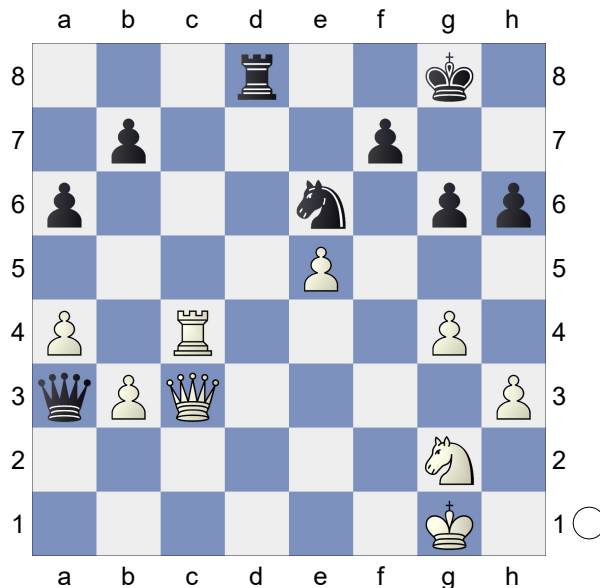
[ 34.d6= Qa1+ 35.Rc1 Qxe5

36.Qb6 ]

[ 34.Qc1 Qxb3 35.d6 Qxh3

36.Bxb7= but scary, to let Black's  
 queen in like that. ]

**34...exd5± 35.Bxd5 Be6 36.Bxe6  
 Nxe6±**



White has weak pawns, a weak king,  
 and look who has the knight on the  
 famous bad square now! **37.Ne3?!**

[ 37.Kh2± ]

**37...Qa2+- 38.Qc2**

[ 38.Rc8 Rxc8 39.Qxc8+ Kg7

40.Qc3 Qe2!-+ ]

**38...Qa1+ 39.Nf1 Qxe5**

(Diagram)

**40.Re4 Qd6 41.Qf2 Rc8 42.Re3 Qd5**

There were better moves **43.Ng3 Qd1+**

**44.Nf1 Rc1 45.Rf3**

[ 45.Qf6!? ]

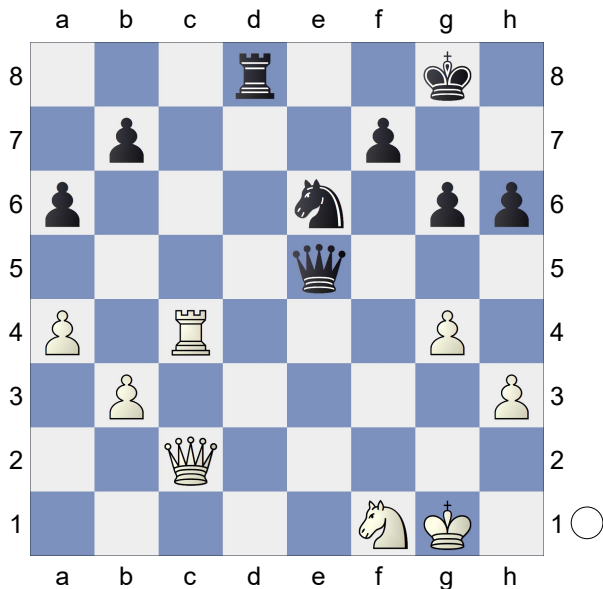
**45...Rc2 46.Qe3 Ng5 47.Rf2 Rc8**

Against Qe8+

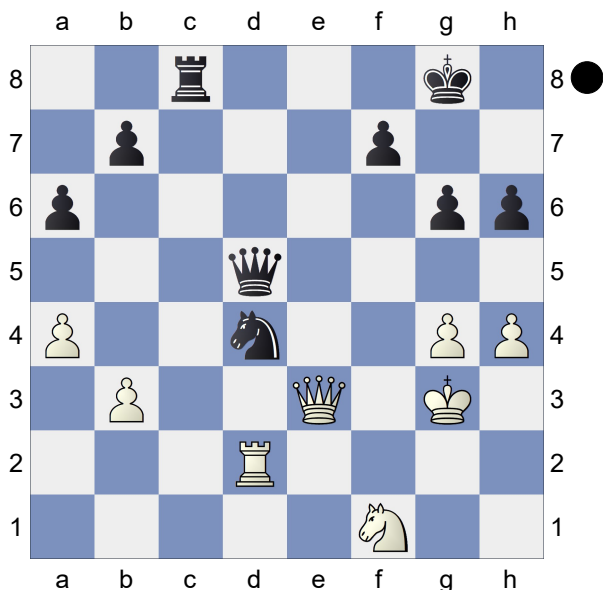
[ 47...Rc6 ]

**48.Kg2 Qd5+ 49.Kh2 Ne4**

Against Ng3 **50.Re2 Ng5 51.h4 Nf3+**



**52.Kg3 Nd4 53.Rd2**



**Rd8** Played after just a few seconds (it's now 4:48-5:48), Black slips back.

[  $\triangleleft$ 53...Qxb3! picks off a pawn via a tactic or two. 54.Kf2 ( 54.Rxd4? Rc3+ Pin ) 54...Qxe3+ 55.Nxe3 Ne6+ ]

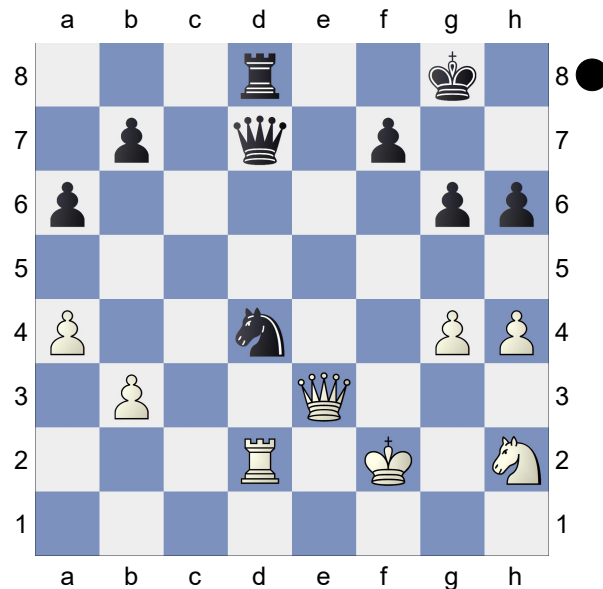
**54.Kf2**

[  $\triangleleft$ 54.Kh3 objectively. ]

**54...Qd7 55.Nh2**

(Diagram)

**h5??** It was Natalya who had run lower on time now (5:03-3:23), and she just



didn't find a way to deal with the pin -- but of course it's there...

[ Better is 55...Qc7!-+ -- a huge counterattack! -- 56.Nf3 Nxf3 57.Kxf3 Qc6+ 58.Kg3 Re8+ ]

**56.Nf3±** Such a swindle. Perhaps Black could put up better resistance, but momentum is totally with White now.

**56...hxg4?**

[ 56...Qc7!± still gets a couple pawns and keeps White's king open, but still White is better: 57.Rxd4 ( 57.Nxd4 Qh2+ 58.Kf3 Qh3+± 0.45/29 ) 57...Rxd4 58.Qxd4± 1.18/29 hxg4± 1.02/35 59.Qxg4 Qc2+ 60.Kg3 Qxb3 61.a5± but White is going to have a hard time making something of this. ]

**57.Rxd4**

[ 57.Nxd4 Re8 58.Qg5 Qc7± ]

**57...Qc7 58.Rxd8+ Qxd8**

(Diagram)

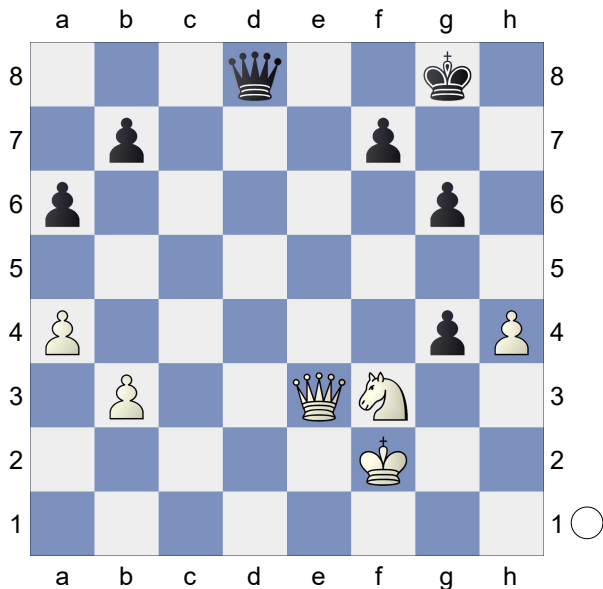
**59.Ng5! Qc7 60.Kg2** Against Qh2+

**60...Kg7 61.Qd4+ Kf8 62.Qd5**

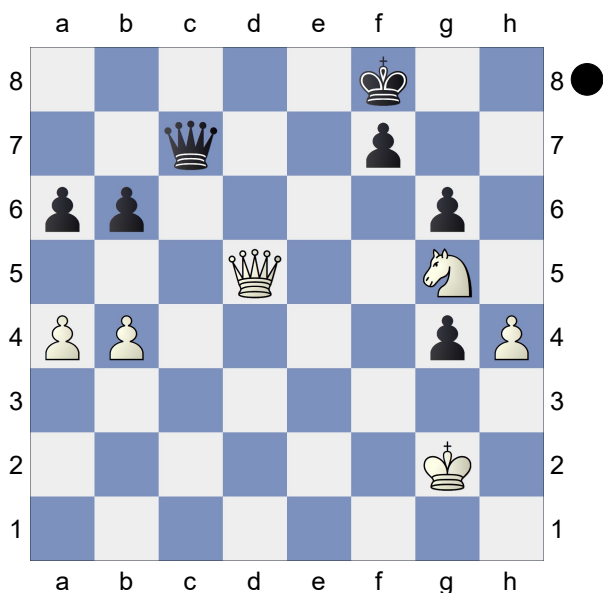
[ 62.Qxg4 Qc2+ 63.Kg3 Qxb3+ 64.Nf3 ( 64.Qf3 Qxf3+ 65.Kxf3 b6± ) 64...Kg8+- ]

[ 62.Qh8+ Ke7+- ]

**62...b6 63.b4**



[ 63.Qd3+- has better winning chances. ]



**63...a5?**

[ 63...Qc2+± is tougher. 64.Kg3 Qc3+ 65.Kxg4 ( 65.Kg2 Qb2+ 66.Kf1 Qf6+ 67.Ke2 Kg7± ) 65...Qxb4+ 66.Kh3 Qc3+ 67.Kh2 Qc7+ 68.Kh1 Qf4 ]

**64.b5+- Kg7 65.Qd4+ Kf8 66.Qxg4 Ke8 67.Qe4+ Kf8 68.Qd4 Ke7 69.Kf3**  
And now Qf4 would win. **69...Kf8**

**70.Ne4**

[ Δ70.Nh7+ Ke7 71.Qe3+ Kd8 72.Nf6 ]

**70...Ke7 71.Qf6+ White mates. 71...Kf8**

**72.Qd6+ Qe7 73.Kf4 f5 74.Qf6+ Ke8 75.Nd6+ Kd7 76.Qxe7+ Weighted Error Value: White=0.40/Black=0.48.** A shock for Natalya, while I was just embarrassed (well, partially). I had to remind myself that I had played parts of the game very well!

**1-0**

□ **Hao,Max**

■ **Srinivasan,Sivavishnu**

2024 Winter TNM: 2000+ (7.2) 17.12.24  
[Winslow,Elliott]

**E05**

**2065**

**2028**

Max Hao shows solid and, on this occasion, well prepared opening play, and keeps young Sivavishnu Srinivasan from tying (as it turned out, me) for first-second. In fact, it could well have been Siva clear. But not this time. This win propelled Hao to 2nd-3rd with Ruiyang Yan (who had taken a last-round bye).

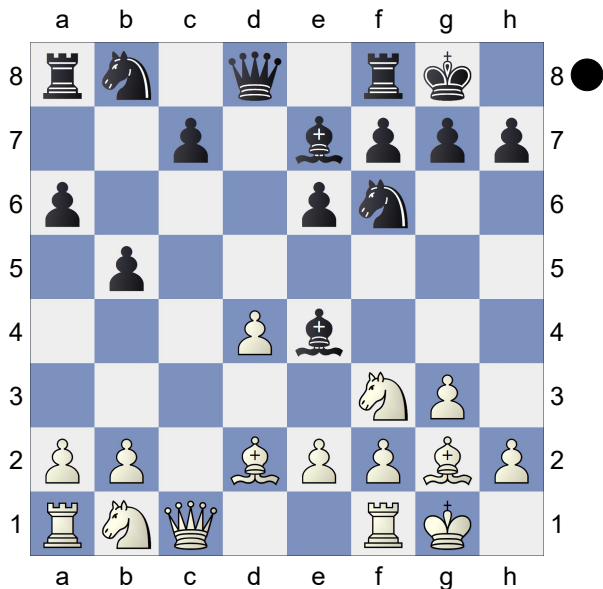
**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3**

[The previous Hao-Srinivasan game went 3.Nf3 Bb4+ 4.Bd2 a5 5.g3 b6 6.a3 Be7 7.Bg2 Bb7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Nc3 1-0, 34; 2023 Fall TNM, 10.10. 2023. ]

**3...d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qa4 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bd2 Be4 11.Qc1**

(Diagram)

This line eventually developed as the clear path quite a few years ago, I think, in Karpov's World Championship matches. Black's best defenses always seemed to be curious, oddball even, coordinations after a lot of hard-to-trust moves. But so it goes. Let's see what Siva does... **11...c6** Every strange thing has been tried here -- and this has in



fact done rather well for one of the more popular moves. **12.Rd1** Most common.

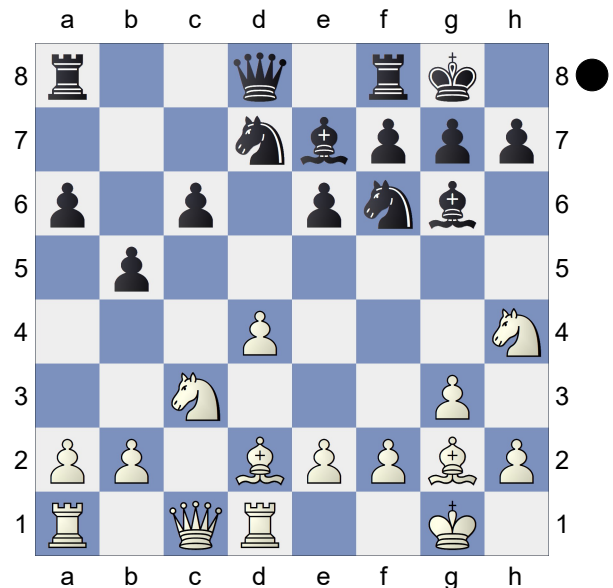
[Here the "Novelty Annotation" button brings up Local Boy vs. Local Boy:  
 12.a4 Nbd7 13.Nc3 Bxf3 14.Bxf3 Qb6 15.e3 Rac8 16.axb5 axb5 17.Qc2 c5 18.dxc5 Nxc5 19.Rfc1 Rfd8 20.Ne2 b4 21.Be1 e5 22.Qc4 Rb8 23.Rd1 Rdc8 24.Rac1 g6 25.Bg2 Kg7 26.Qa2 h5 27.h3 Bf8 28.Kf1 Qb5 29.Qc4 Qb6 30.Qa2 Qb5 31.Qc4 Qa4 32.Ra1 Qb3 33.Qxb3 Nxb3 34.Rab1 Rd8 35.Ng1 e4 36.Ne2 Rxd1 37.Rxd1 Nc5 38.Nc1 Na4 39.Rd2 b3 40.Rd4 Nxb2 41.Bc3 Ba3 ½-½ Shankland,S (2677)-Niemann,H (2733) USA-ch Saint Louis 2024 (4) ]

### 12...Nbd7

[In fact this move has a solid plus score! (41.7%, always from the White side): must have been "Take Sam for a Ride Day". 12...Bxf3 13.Bxf3 Qxd4 14.a4 bxa4 ( 14...Qb6 15.axb5 Qxb5 16.Na3 Qb3 17.Nc4 Nd5 18.Na5 Qb5 19.e4 Nb4 20.Be3 c5 21.e5 N8c6 22.Nc4 Rad8 23.Nd6 Bxd6 24.exd6 c4 25.Qc3 Nd5 26.Bxd5 exd5 27.Qa3 Nb4 28.Qa5 Nd3 29.Qxb5 axb5 30.Ra5 Rxd6

31.Rxb5 d4 32.Bd2 Re8 33.Kf1 h6 34.Ba5 Rf6 35.Rd2 Re1+ 36.Kg2 Rb1 37.Rd5 Ne1+ 38.Kh3 Nf3 39.Rc2 Rh1 40.Rxc4 Rxh2+ 41.Kg4 g6 0-1 Shankland,S (2674)-Svane,R (2637) Chessable Masters Play In Chess.com INT rapid 2024 (6) )  
 15.Na3 Nbd7 16.Bxc6 Rac8 17.Bc3 Qa7 18.Bg2 Nc5 19.Qe3 Qb8 20.Nc2 a5 21.Nd4 Qb6 22.Bf3 h6 23.h4 Rfd8 24.Nf5 exf5 25.Qxe7 Nce4 26.Be1 Re8 27.Qa3 Nxc3 28.e3 Nge4 29.Qxa4 Ng4 30.Bxc4 fxc4 31.Qxa5 Qxb2 32.Qf5 g3 33.fxc3 Qe2 34.Rd7 Nf6 35.Re7 Rxe7 36.Qxc8+ Re8 37.Qf5 Qxe3+ 38.Bf2 Qc3 39.Ra7 Qc4 40.Kg2 Ng4 41.Kh3 h5 42.Bd4 Nh6 43.Qf4 Qd5 44.Bg1 Qh1+ 45.Bh2 Re2 0-1 Shankland,S (2674)-Firouzja,A (2759) Chessable Masters Play In Chess.com INT rapid 2024 (1) ]

### 13.Nc3 Bg6 14.Nh4



### Rc8

[ 14...Bh5! ]

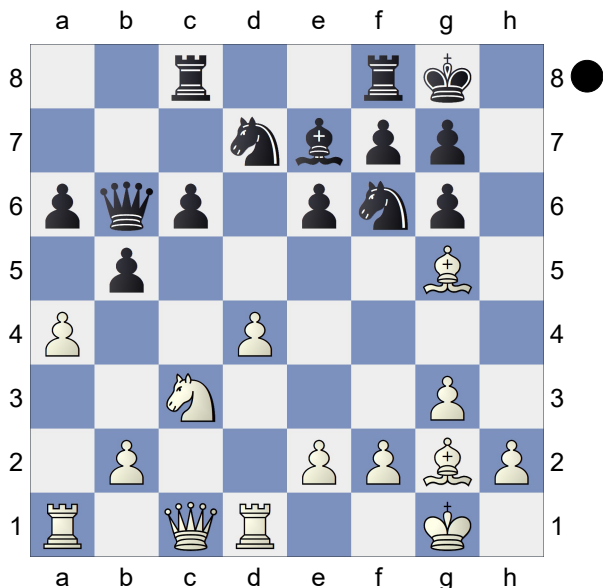
### 15.Nxc6 hxg6 16.Bg5 Qb6

[ 16...Nd5 17.Bxe7 Qxe7 18.Qd2 Rc7 19.Rac1 Rfc8 20.e3 Kf8 21.h4 Nxc3 22.Rxc3 c5 23.d5 exd5 24.Qxd5 Nf6 25.Qf3 c4 26.a3 Rd8



27.Rxd8+ Qxd8 28.g4 Rd7 29.g5  
Rd1+ 30.Kh2 Qd6+ 31.Kh3 Qd7+  
32.Kh2 Qd6+ 33.Kh3 Qe6+ 34.Kh2  
Ng4+ 35.Kg3 Ne5 36.Qxd1 Qf5  
37.Qd8# 1-0 Oganian,M (2454)-Popov,  
I (2609) RUS-chT blitz Sochi 2017  
(15) ]

**17.a4**



**c5?!N**

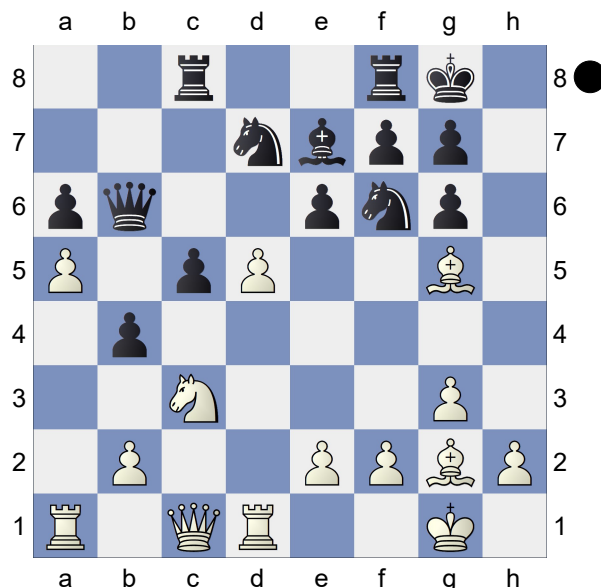
[Predecessor: 17...Rfe8?! 18.axb5  
axb5 19.h4 b4 20.Ne4 Nxe4  
21.Bxe4 Nf6 22.Bf3 c5 23.Qc4 cxd4  
24.Ra6 Rxc4 25.Rxb6 Rd8 26.Rb7  
Bc5 27.Rc7 d3 28.Be3 dxe2  
29.Rxd8+ Bf8 30.Rxc4 e1Q+ 31.Kg2  
Nh7 32.Rd1 1-0 Nihal,S (2650)-So,W  
(2772) Speed Chess Chess.com INT  
blitz 2021. Sarin's speed rating on  
chess.com just slipped back \*under\*  
3200 when he finished 2nd in the  
Titled Tuesday just now... ]  
[Ready? Stockfish likes ... 17...a5=  
or (+0.33/24) after 18.Qf4± ]

**18.d5 b4? 19.a5!**

(Diagram)

**Qc7?**

[ 19...Qd6± ]  
[ 19...Qb8± ]



**20.dxe6!+- fxe6 21.Ne4**

[ 21.Bf4! ]

**21...Rf7?**

[ 21...Ne5 22.Bxf6 gxf6 23.f4± ]

**22.Bxf6?!]**

[ 22.Bf4! is a bigger +-: e5 23.Be3 c4  
( 23...Ng4 24.Qc4 Nxe3 25.fxe3 )  
24.Ng5 Rff8 25.Ne6 Qb8  
26.Qb1!+- ]

**22...gxf6 23.Qc4 f5 24.Nd2 Bf6?!]**

[ 24...Nf8 25.Qxa6 ]

**25.Qxe6** White has won the middlegame  
battle, and pawns are dropping  
everywhere. **25...Nf8 26.Qxa6 Bxb2**

**27.Rab1 Bc3 28.Bd5** Okay, that's not a  
pawn. **28...Rd8 29.Nc4 Rxd5 30.Rxd5**  
**Qe7 31.Nd6 Qe6 32.Qc4 Rd7**  
**33.Qxc5 Qxe2 34.Nb5 Qc2 35.Rbd1**  
**Rf7 36.a6 f4 37.a7 fxg3 38.hxg3**  
**Qa2 39.Rd8 Rf5 40.Qxf5**  
**1-0**

B84

□ Vandenhoven, Clarke Raymond 1620  
 ■ Smith, Roger Christopher 1808

2024 Winter TNM: 1600-1999 (7.5)

[Winslow, Elliott]

Vandenhoven "only" finished tied for 3rd, but with this win he also pulled Roger Smith off clear 1st to 1st-2nd. **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be2** The "Classical" approach -- White gets castled and only then builds up the central position further. **6...e6** And this is the Scheveningen Variation, but via the Najdorf move order, so that the Keres Attack (5...e6 6.g4) is avoided. **7.0-0 Be7 8.f4 Nc6?!**

[ 8...Qc7 9.a4 ( 9.Be3 Nc6 10.a4 ) 9...Nc6 10.Be3 0-0 11.Kh1 was the starting point for so many games including quite a few of the Karpov-Kasparov world championship matches of the 70s and 80s. ]

**9.Nb3?!**

[ 9.Be3 Qb6? ( 9...0-0± is another transposition.; and 9...Qc7 ) 10.Nf5!+- Qxb2 11.Nxg7+ Kf8 12.Qd2! Kxg7 13.a3 The Black queen is trapped. ]

[ 9.Nxc6! bxc6 10.e5± ]

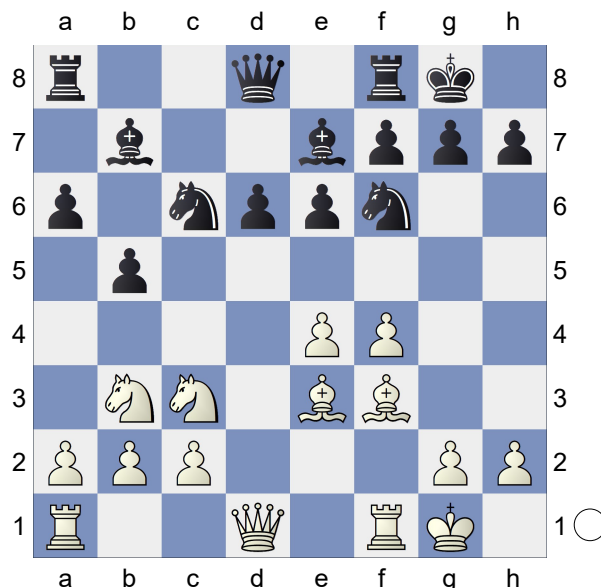
**9...0-0 10.Be3 b5 11.Bf3 Bb7**

(Diagram)

**12.e5N**

[ Relevant: 12.g4 Rc8 13.g5 Nd7 14.Bg2 Re8 15.Qh5 Bf8 16.Rf3 g6 17.Qh4 b4 18.Ne2 h5 19.Qf2 a5 20.Nd2 a4 21.Rh3 Na5 22.Nd4 e5 23.fxe5 Nxe5 24.Rf1 Ng4 25.Qxf7+ Kh8 26.Qxg6 1-0 Grigoryan, K (2608)-Moussard, J (2608) Chess24 Banter Blitz Cup chess24.com INT 2019 (1. 26) ]

**12...Ne8 13.Ne4 d5 14.Nec5 Qc7**



**15.Nxb7 Qxb7 16.c3 g6 17.Kh1 Qc7 18.Qe1 Ng7 19.g4 g5 20.Qg3 gxf4 21.Bxf4 Qd8 22.Qh3 Bg5 23.Bg3 Ne7 24.Nd4 Ng6 25.Bd1 Bh4 26.Bc2 Bxg3 27.hxg3 Rc8 28.Rf6 b4 29.Kg2 bxc3 30.Rh1 h5 31.Nxe6 fxe6 32.Rxg6 h4 33.g5 cxb2 34.Qxe6+ Rf7 35.Bf5 Rcc7 36.Rxh4 Rce7 37.Rxg7+ 1-0**

A07

□ Agdamag, Samuel

1484

■ Mays-Smith, Isaac S

1429

2024 Winter TNM: 1200-1599 (7.6)

[Winslow, Elliott]

And here was Isaac Mays-Smith's push to 1st-2nd with a win over Sammie Agdamag, who had a pretty good tournament regardless. From a symmetrical queenless middlegame, he pressured Black and a blunder ensued... **1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d3 d5 3.Nbd2 Nc6 4.g3 e5 5.Bg2 Bc5 6.0-0 Bg4**

[ Relevant: 6...a5 7.e4 dxe4 8.dxe4 Be6 9.c3 h6 10.a4 0-0 11.Qe2 Qe7 12.Nc4 Nd7 13.Ne3 Bxe3 14.Bxe3 Nc5 15.Bxc5 Qxc5 16.Qb5 b6

17.Qxc5 bxc5 18.Rfd1 Rfd8 19.Bf1 f6 20.Bb5 Na7 21.Bd3 Bb3 22.Rd2 Rd6 23.Bc2 Bxc2 24.Rxc2 Rad8 25.Kf1 Nc8 26.Ke2 Nb6 27.b3 Kf7 28.Nd2 Ke6 29.Nf1 Nd7 30.Ne3 Nb8 31.Nc4 Ra6 32.Rd1 Rxd1 33.Kxd1 Nd7 34.Rd2 Nb6 35.Nxb6 Rxb6 36.Kc2  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  (57) Poormosavi,S (2392)-Alekseenko,K (2655) Titled Tuesday intern op 09th Apr Early Chess.com INT blitz 2024 (4) ]

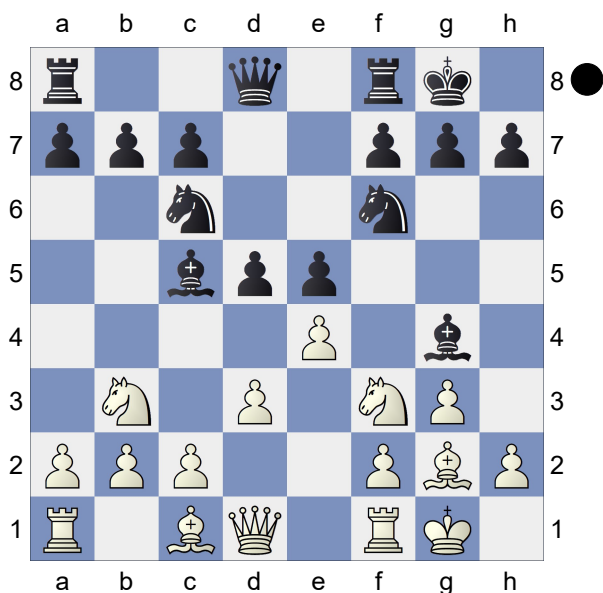
**7.e4?!**

[ 7.c4 Qd7 8.Nb3 Be7 9.d4! is best, if unusual. ]

**7...0-0=**

[ 7...dxe4 8.dxe4 h5!? (Stockfish 17) ]

**8.Nb3?**

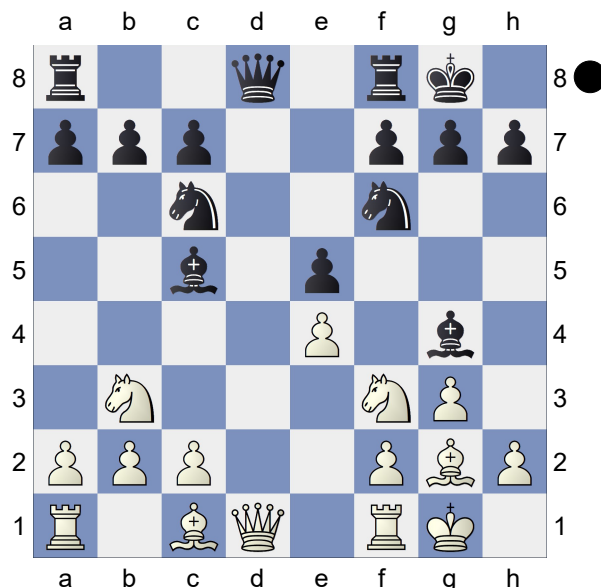


**dxe4! 9.dxe4**

(Diagram)

**Qxd1!N**

[Predecessor: 9...Bb6= 10.Bg5?? Qxd1 11.Raxd1 Nxe4-+ 12.Be3 Bxe3 13.fxe3 Nf6 14.Nc5 e4 15.Nh4 Bxd1 16.Rxd1 Rad8 17.Rxd8 Rxd8 18.Nxb7 Rd2 19.Nc5 Rxc2 20.Nxe4 Rc1+ 21.Bf1 Nxe4 22.Kg2 0-1 Bachert,D-Nguyen,D



Baden-ch U12 Eppingen 2004 (5) ]

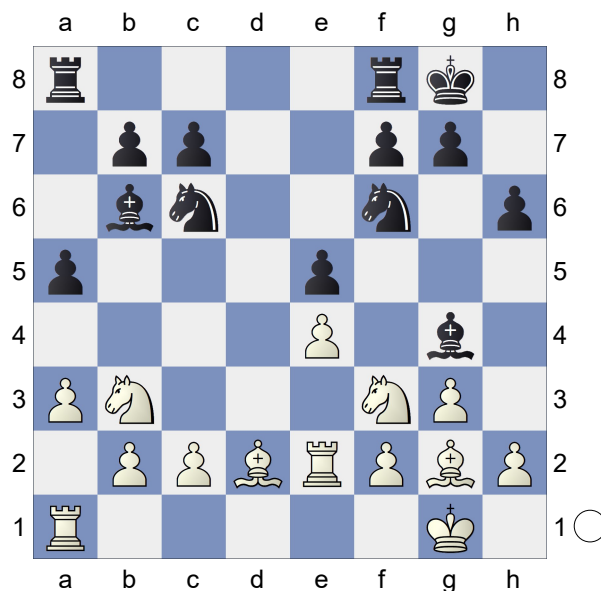
**10.Rxd1 Bb6**

[ 10...Nxe4!? 11.Nxc5 Nxc5 12.Be3 Ne6 $\bar{f}$  ]

**11.Re1 Nb4**

[ 11...Be6 $\bar{f}$  ]

**12.Re2 $\bar{f}$  h6= 13.a3 Nc6 14.Bd2 a5**



**15.h3?? Bxf3 16.Bxf3 a4! 17.Nc1 Nd4-+ 18.Bg2 Nxe2+ 19.Nxe2 Rad8 20.Bc3 Rfe8 21.Kf1 c6 22.Ke1 Ra8 23.Rd1 Kh7 24.Bf3 Ba5 25.Rd3 Re7 26.Bg2 Nd7 27.Bxa5 Rxa5 28.Nc3 Nb6 29.Nd1 Rc5 30.Rc3 Rc4 31.b3 Rd4 32.f3 Red7 33.Ne3 axb3 34.cxb3 Rd3 35.Rxd3 Rxd3 36.Nc2**

Rxb3 37.h4 Nc4 38.a4 b5 39.axb5  
 cxb5 40.Ke2 Rb2 41.Kd3 Rxc2  
 42.Kxc2 Ne3+ 43.Kb3 Nxb2 44.Kb4  
 Ne3 45.Kxb5 Nf1 46.f4 Nxb3 47.fxe5  
 Nxe4 48.Kc4 Kg6 49.Kd4 Kf5  
 0-1

□ Booth, Kyle Ewart Coventry C41 1169  
 ■ Blum, Paul 937  
 2024 Winter TNM: u1200 (7.28) 17.12.24  
 [Winslow, Elliott]

In a tough, tense battle for the top of the Under-1200 section, this game was hard to top. Kyle Booth has been coming up with some extraordinary chess for his rating, which is going up accordingly.

1.e4 d6 2.Nf3 e5 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4  
 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Be3 g6 7.Qd2 Bg7  
 8.f3 0-0 9.0-0-0 Re8 10.g4 Ne5  
 11.Be2 Bd7

[Relevant: 11...a6 12.h4 c5 13.Nb3  
 c4 14.Nd4 b5 15.g5 Nh5 16.Nd5  
 Bb7 17.f4 c3 18.Nxc3 Nc4 19.Bxc4  
 bxc4 20.Nde2 Bxe4 21.Nxe4 Rxe4  
 22.Nc3 Rb8 23.Rhe1 Rxb2 24.Kxb2  
 Qa5 25.a3 d5 26.Bd4 Bxd4  
 27.Rxe4 1-0 Savanovic, A (2355)-Lalic,  
 K (2246) Garesnica op 2023 (6) ]

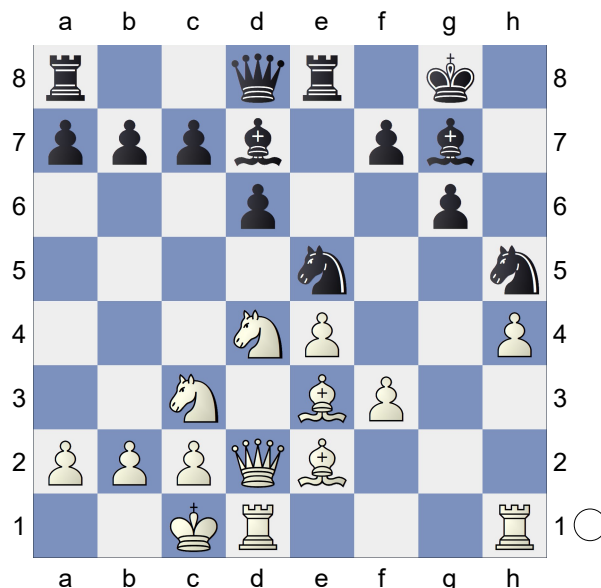
12.h4 h5 13.gxh5 Nxh5

(Diagram)

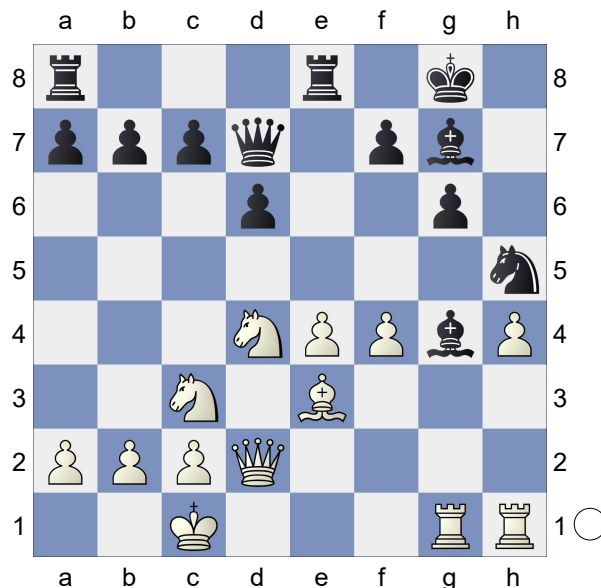
14.f4!?N

[An early game from now-super-GM Navara: 14.Bg5! (more accurate) f6  
 15.Be3 a6 16.Rhg1 c5 17.Nb3 c4  
 18.Nd4 b5 19.f4 b4 20.fxe5 bxc3  
 21.Qxc3 fxe5 22.Rxg6 exd4 23.Bxd4  
 Bf5 24.exf5 Nf4 25.Bxc4+  
 1-0 Navara, D (2499)-Kallio, H (2517)  
 EU-chT (Men) 13th Leon 2001 (3.2) ]

14...Ng4 15.Bxg4



[Surprisingly 15.f5!+- comes out best, allowing the trade of the dark-square bishop, but everything else is in its favor -- mainly speed. Nxe3 16.Qxe3 Qf6 ( 16...c5 17.Ndb5 ) 17.Rhg1!? ]  
 15...Bxg4 16.Rdg1 Qd7



17.Qg2? There was a key move -- for both sides! -- here:

[ 17.f5!

A) 17...Nf6 18.h5! tears away Black's pawn cover. ( 18.Bh6 is also good );

B) 17...gxf5 ]

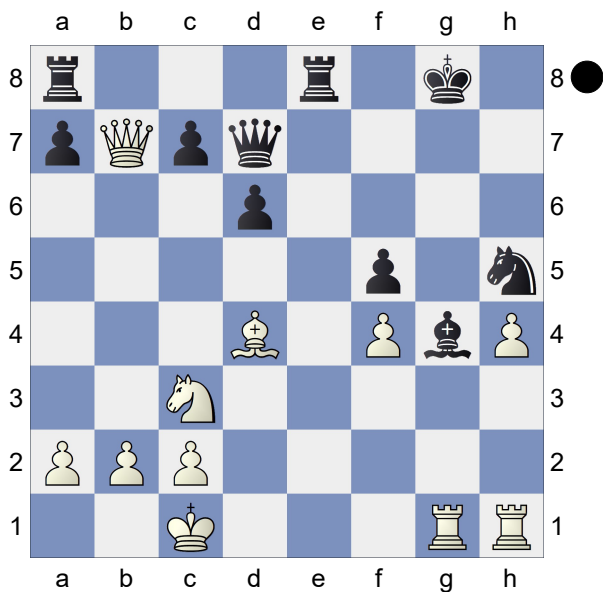
17...Bxd4? There's no need as it turns out to toss this in.

[ 17...f5! 18.exf5 gxf5 and the block of the g-file turns the tide 19.Bd2 ( 19.Qxb7 Rab8 20.Qd5+ Qf7 21.Nxf5!? Bxf5 22.Bxa7 Qxd5 23.Nxd5 Rb7 24.Bd4! ) and here is the shot 19...d5! (I confess, it's the computer finding it) and it's Black's central pawns' turn. ]

**18.Bxd4± f5 19.exf5 gxf5**

[ 19...Bxf5!? ]

**20.Qxb7**



**Nxf4?! 21.h5+- (just)**

[ 21.Qf3! Ng6 22.Qg2 Ne5 23.Ne4!+- ( 23.Qd2? (White tries to sneak in) Nf3!±; 23.Nd5!+- is about as good (as 23.Ne4) )]

**21...Kh7**

[ 21...d5!? ]

**22.b3?**

[ 22.Be3! ]

**22...Qc8?**

[ 22...Rab8± ]

[ 22...a5± ]

**23.Qc6+- Re2?! 24.Nd5**

[ 24.Rf1 ]

**24...Nxd5 25.Qxd5 Qe6?**

[ 25...Qf8 ]

[ 25...Qg8 26.Qc6 Qc8 27.Re1! is the surprising (but very strong) best move (no ...Rae8). ]

**26.Qxa8 Qh6+ 27.Kb2 Qd2 28.Qh8# 1-0**



## Tales from the Chess Café

Richard Hack

I know a chess player with an odd habit of losing games that are winning for at least one clear moment before being diverted, spoiled, and ultimately thrown away. I won't give the player's name, but some readers may know it, or suggest name after name that may fit. Sometimes the winning edge is maintained for only a move or two before being stymied by ghosts and too much caution. Sometimes the problem is trying to be so objective, careful, and perfect that what-ifs pile up until they obscure basic board vision and the clear lines that may connect with each other to construct the road to an actual win in the end. There are many reasons why the edge is not maintained and developed through broadening the scope of advantage and building up double and triple threats that can make an opponent cave under the pressure. Sure, one can say later, "That's just chess, and no, I'm not a loser," but that like everything on the board has to be described in general and analyzed in just enough detail.

Since Paul Whitehead's retirement in April and his move to Virginia to be closer to his kids, the Chess Café has been led first by Michael Walder and now by Ray Freeman. Attendance has been smaller without Paul and the people he knows in the world of chess, but the group discussions have remained lively and fruitful. It has been a staple of the Mechanics' chess club for more than three and a half years, and its veterans keep turning up as well as newcomers. We like to show our own games in addition to those of professional players of the past and present. Many interesting problems and puzzles are presented also. Some of the more fascinating and difficult ones have come our way from Gadir Guseinov, an Azerbaijani GM born and raised in Russia, who coaches some of our club members online and combs the web for interesting compositions.

Quotes heard at one meeting (undated):

"His pawns are giving me protection."

"I didn't play particularly well, but I got an overwhelming position."

"I began playing at age 70, and my practice is 3 online games a day."

"In an endgame when you're ahead, get the big pieces off the board."

It might be relevant here to recall that on Lincoln's Birthday in 2024, a person at the cafe noted, "Dumbed-down computers make stupid mistakes no human would make." Even I can see a lot of long, irrelevant sequences provided by our metallic ally. Many recommend analyzing your games as thoroughly as you can, and then go to the computer, while others say that if you're not a master, you shouldn't even use it, except for preparing an opening or getting some analytical help.

On August 5 we covered 7 games and 2 puzzles. Sometimes we do more than that in our 90 minutes from 4:00-5:30 PM on most Monday afternoons. Not infrequently we push closing time a little past that. On Aug. 12 I heard about the site [2700chess.com](http://2700chess.com), which is up-to-date on the top 100 players in the world. Paul used to

check it out a lot. On Aug. 19 Mike Walder attributed the saying "The longer you take, the bigger the mistake" to his friend Nate at the North Avenue Beach Pavilion in Chicago. "He had all the chatter." (I knew that venue, too, as a good place to go for outdoor games.)

On Sept. 9 Michael Walder talked about winning the Brilliancy Prize in an American Open 40-some years ago that had 7 GMs participating. He was paired in the first round with Larry Christiansen, who won as White with a Four Pawns Attack against the King's Indian. He then showed us a game with him as White vs. IM Larry Remlinger, rated 2471. As it developed, he said, "I didn't know it was better for Black, but I'm an optimist when it comes to attacking." There is another story of him as a 1500 player at age 15 getting a draw with a 2190 player, but that will have to wait for another time.

On Sept. 16 (Mexican Independence Day, which I forgot to mention at the meeting) someone alluded to Karpov saying that Fischer would have won their 1975 match 60-40, and that Anand said Fischer's tactical awareness had not advanced with the recent solutions to older problems, that attacking players of the '70s and '80s showed that some of the brilliant moves of the '50s didn't work anymore; that Fischer's way was classical; and that Gelfand and Kramnik had advanced chess beyond the understanding of the '80s and '90s.

Sophia Rohde showed up on October 21, saying she had re-joined the Mechanics'. She had some news about the recent Olympiad in Budapest. FIDE now pays 30% of the costs of teams being there. Said Hungary was not a good choice because many teams couldn't get visas, so FIDE voted that they could be under the Russian flag. She mentioned some of Judith Polgar's suggested changes to the Olympiad, which I briefly tried to look up and think might be in the latter's one-hour interview on New in Chess previewing the event. Sophia also mentioned the New York State Girls coming up that weekend and noted that the percentage of girls in the state scholastic tournament had been increasing.

On Oct. 28 someone noted that Sam Shankland is the best player to come out of the Berkeley Chess School. That venue holds regular Friday night tournaments which some of our Tuesday night players often attend. Competitive artists just can't get enough.

Editor's Note: The chess cafe is free and open to the public on Zoom every Monday at 4pm (barring holidays).

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## Imposter Syndrome

Zorba Hughes

I have never played in tournaments. I'm afraid my rating would be ridiculously low, like 300. That would bother me. I would go into a deep depression. People say it's just a number, but to me, it isn't. It's a reminder of what a failure I am - mathematically speaking. I have spatial recognition as well as pattern recognition. Calculations and seeing moves ahead are my downfall. I come from playing on the streets where selling wolf tickets is the norm. Trash talking your way into a win. But when faced with real adverse competition, I fear being made to look an imposter.

I love chess. I have several sets. I carry one with me like a lawyer does a briefcase. But as I grow older there are certain truths I must face. I'll never be as good a player as I desire to be. I'm an only child. Mechanics' is like a second family to me. I don't want to let myself nor them down by being some mediocre player. I'm more than a woodpushing patzer. My wits get me through life. I want to be able to hold my own in a tournament. Some would say I'm overthinking this. Maybe I am. I just don't want to feel intellectually naive. Like swimming, it's a fear I must conquer. But until then. I'll enjoy playing. This is my last article of 2024. Thank you Mechanics Institute for allowing me to chronicle stories, also thank you to Alex Robins and Christian Brickhouse for the opportunity. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. See you in 2025.

Editor's Note: Zorba you would never let us down! I think one of the great things about chess is there are so many ways to engage it - tournaments are only one avenue.

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## Book Review

IM John Donaldson

*Unveiling the Victory: How Spassky won the Third World Junior Chess Championship Antwerp 1955* (Thinkers Publishing 2024, hardcover 255 pages, list price \$50) by Henry Serruys reviewed by John Donaldson.

Boris Spassky is a chess icon. Best remembered for his loss to Bobby Fischer in the 1972 World Championship and not for the many great matches he won in the mid-to-late 1960s, when he defeated the likes of Geller (twice), Keres, Korchnoi, Larsen, Petrosian and Tal, Spassky has always been a fan favorite. This is due in part due to his good sportsmanship, friendly demeanor, and tendency to speak his mind in public. The latter trait made him a rare exception among Soviet citizens.

Reading *Unveiling the Victory: How Spassky won the Third World Junior Chess Championship Antwerp 1955* we learn that the 10<sup>th</sup> World Champion (1969-1972) was always his own man, even as a teenager. During the World Junior, Spassky's KGB guardians had their hands full keeping an eye on the Leningrad teenager.

*Unveiling the Victory: How Spassky won the Third World Junior Chess Championship Antwerp 1955* by the Belgian chess historian Henri Serruys, not only gives all of the games but also offers comprehensive reporting on the event with in-depth looks at all the participants. He not only presents contemporary accounts of the event, but also draws heavily from the papers of the tournament organizer Hendrik Baelen. Dozens of crisp black and white photos, sprinkled throughout the book, add to the effort to recreate this historic event.

Today the World Junior Championship, open to players under 21, doesn't have the glamour it used to. Players have gotten stronger (World Champion Gukesh is 18!) and have no shortage of events to choose from. This was not the case 70 years ago when the World Junior was often the very first international event teenagers played in. Spassky made his debut at Bucharest 1953 where he defeated Vassily Smyslov, but he was very much the exception to this rule. The rest of the field in Antwerp, which included future Grandmasters Lajos Portisch, Georgi Tringov, Dragoljub Ciric and Edmar Mednis, were debutants.

Portisch would go on to become one of the best players in the world and qualify for the Candidates on several occasions, but he didn't finish second in Antwerp. That honor would go to the Latvian born New Yorker Edmar Mednis who would later make his mark in the chess world as an author, writing many well-regarded instructional works, particularly on the endgame. Mednis was an excellent second at the 1955 World Junior with an undefeated 7 from 9, a point behind Spassky who dominated the competition.

The final player on the podium, Spaniard Miguel Farre Mallofre, would go on to become an International Master and represent his nation in two Olympiads. He didn't pursue a career as a chess professional, instead becoming a well-regarded music professor in Barcelona.

Portisch was fourth in the competition followed by Tringov, a mainstay of Bulgarian chess for many decades. Further down in the standings was the Dutch representative Joop van Oosterom who later became a billionaire and chess patron, perhaps best known for sponsoring the famous Melody Amber tournaments.

*Unveiling the Victory: How Spassky won the Third World Junior Chess Championship Antwerp 1955* is a first-rate account of an important but forgotten event that deserves to be better remembered. Those who want to learn more about this tournament, the history of FIDE at the time and the development of junior chess will find this book an excellent read.

## Tony's Teasers

J. Dobrescu, Shakhmaty v SSSR 1956  
White to move and mate in two





## A New Puzzle in the Library

Every week or so Mechanics' Institute's Head of Technical Services, **Steven Dunlap**, puts up a chess puzzle in the library for our members to solve.

White to move and win material:



## Solutions

For Tony's Teaser:

**1.c4!** If black moves the bishop **2.Qe4#** if 1...Kxc4 or 1...Kd4 then 2.Qd5# seals the deal.

For the Puzzle in the Library:

**1.Rg3!**

From a childhood game by Samuel Reshevsky, we see a discovered attack combined with a double pin, a "trifecta" of chess. With the f-pawn pinned to the black Queen and that Queen also pinned to its King. Black will lose their Queen.

From *Chess Review* January 1955, p2, #1.  
Basement Special Collections (1955 also available in the Internet Archive)



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