



MECHANICS'
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Since 1854

Chess Room Newsletter

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
CULTURE IN COMMUNITY

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Chess

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- Scholastic Chess
- Chess Classes and Programs
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- Grandmaster-in-Residence
- Tournament Archive

General Information

Welcome to the Chess Club at Mechanics' Institute

Whether you are just starting to learn how to play chess, or a titled player, we have something for you!

Chess at the Mechanics' Institute offers a full spectrum of opportunities for players of all levels:

- **Casual Play:** Drop in anytime during standard weekday business hours to enjoy casual, friendly games in our historic club space. It's a great way to meet fellow chess enthusiasts and play at your own pace.
- **Rated Tournaments:** For those seeking competitive play, we host a variety of USCF- and FIDE-rated tournaments throughout the year. Check our tournament calendar regularly to find events that fit your schedule and rating level.
- **Learning Opportunities:** Whether you're a beginner or looking to sharpen your skills, we offer classes and coaching

The Mechanics' Institute Chess Room enters a new era with a brand new website!

Issue #1061 | July 5th, 2025 | Gens Una Sumus!

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Recent Tournaments at the Mechanics' Institute

By Alex Robins

In June we finished our first Silman Memorial Tuesday Night Marathon and it was a fitting tribute to his memory here. We were also very lucky to have support from Gwen Feldman who donated Jeremy's books to be given as prizes and substantial sums to the 2000+ section as well as Brilliancy Prizes. Check out the Brilliancy Prizes below in Elliott's column. These prizes and Jeremy's memory came together to make this quite the special tournament at Mechanics'. The top section was taken by **GM Mark Heimann** (2596) with 6.5 points out of seven and won a big check - and one rating point! While we've been visited by many famous GMs over the years, Mark is one of the only GMs to play in our TNM! Right behind Mark with 5.5 points and the only player to draw the GM was **Sebastian Suarez** (2259). Third place was split four ways between **Jimmy Heiserman** (2303), **Natalya Tsodikova** (2254), **Chinguun Bayaraa** (2198), and **Rohan Das** (2154). It was one of the strongest TNMs we've had in quite some time and a big thank you to everyone who played and helped to keep Jeremy Silman's memory alive.

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

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

Before the end of the TNM, we started our June off with our first **Mike Goodall Memorial Tournament**. First place in the top section was taken by **Rishi Rajendran** (1999) with 3.5 points and who has since crossed the expert threshold. Second and third place were split between **Max Hao** (2126) and **Tapas Natraj** (1899) with three points each. Finally, a special congratulations to **Austin Chen** (1523) who won the bottom section with a perfect score.

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

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

As usual, we had a blast at our **Monthly Scholastic Swiss** and saw a lot of familiar faces and students from our camps! In the over 600 section, first through fifth went to: **Kendall Poon** (1098), **Brandon Lung** (1024), **Kepler McTiernan** (1037), **Blouin Morin** (926), and **Vincent Ford** (712). In the under section, **Sergei Pimenov** (489) took first with 3.5 points and was followed by **Jacob Cheung** (582), **Eugene Lung** (unr.), **Shane Davis**



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(458), and **Leo Sugayan** (375). A big thank you to all of our scholastic players and their families for their continued support!

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

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

On the 21st and 22nd we had our monthly 2-day FIDE tournament, this time the **59th Stamer Memorial**, which was a big hit. Congratulations to **Aryan Achuthan** (2200) who finished in the top section of the tournament with a perfect score. The middle section was also won with a perfect record of four wins from **Fang Sun** (1933). While we like it when there are clear winners, unfortunately that's not always the case, particularly in a 4-round tournament. In that spirit, I would like to acknowledge **Vik Markova-Raina** (1272) and **Aneesh Banerjee** (1211) who split the prize for the bottom section and both went undefeated with 3.5 points. Congratulations to all of our players!

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

This tournament was directed by IA Abel Talamantez and FA Scott Mason.

We ended July with our **24th Gross Memorial Tournament** on the 28th. Congratulations and welcome back to **IM Kyron Griffith** (2485) who won the top section outright with 3.5 points. **Vishnu Nanugonda** (2245) was right at his heels with 3 points and second place. Behind the two of them was a 10(!) way tie for third - and you can find all ten of those players at the link below. Congratulations in the middle and bottom sections to **Daniel Rob Perlov** (1720) and **Kaihan Liu** (1282) who won their section with perfect scores - well done!

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

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

Annotated Games from the TNM

By IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from the Silman TNM annotated by IM Elliott Winslow along with the Brilliancy Prize winners awarded by GM Vinay Bhat and IM John Donaldson. All the games from the current TNM can be found here, and games from previous TNMs are in the [Tournament Archive](#).

□ Smith, Olivia

■ Diller, Bradley R

2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (3.4) 20.05.2025
[Diller, Brad/Winslow, Elliott]

C18

2137

2070

Nominated by GM Mark Heimann (with this note):

Olivia played some very enterprising chess this tournament (including ...g6 followed by an immediate ...g5 pawn sacrifice in the last round against Seb) and this game is no exception. She demonstrates the power of opposite colored bishops in favor of the attacker as she crashes through an originally very blocked center in this French Winawer. I recall wondering if Olivia would be able to break through as I watched the early middlegame in real time, and finding this game very aesthetically pleasing as I replayed it.

1.e4 3 e6 1 2.d4 6 d5 2 3.Nc3 8 Bb4 8 4.e5 17 c5 11 5.a3 13 Bxc3+ 3 6.bxc3 5 Nc6 12

One of the central ideas of the uncommon move 5 ... Nc6 is to prepare Qa5 followed by early queenside castling if White delays the Qg4 sortie.

Unfortunately, I failed to grasp this concept, because typically this setup is thwarted by an early Qg4.

7.h4 1:11 A good alternative which is typically followed by h5 gaining space on kingside. 7...Bd7 13:48

[7...Nge7]

8.Qg4 17:01

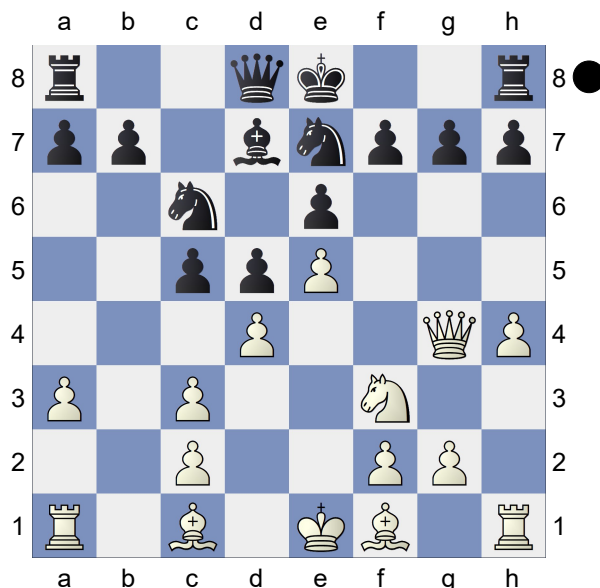
[8.h5 Qa5 9.Bd2 0-0-0 10.Nf3]

8...Nge7 8:12

[8...Qa5!]

9.Nf3? 9:37

[9.Qxg7]



9...Nf5? 6:56

[9...Qa5! 10.Bd2 Qa4 11.Qxg7 0-0-0 12.Bd3 cxd4]

10.Bd3± 1:44 h5 11:43 11.Qf4 58 Qa5

11:55 12.0-0 45 0-0-0 39 13.Rb1 5:58

[13.dxc5! (Guseinov) Qxc5

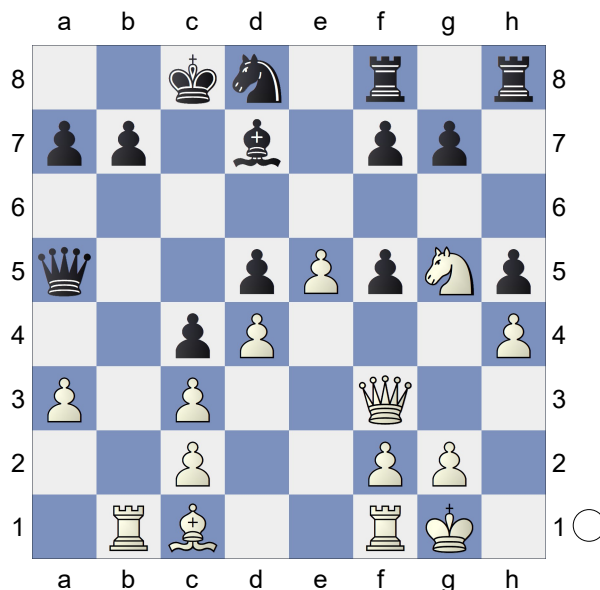
14.Rb1+-]

13...c4 3:20 14.Bxf5 24 exf5 11

15.Ng5 55 Rdf8 7:00 16.Qf3 4:27

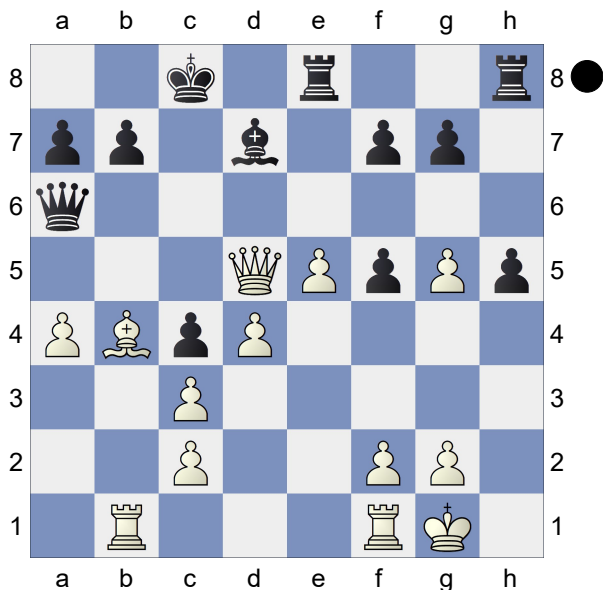
Nd8? 1:16

[The position after 16...Be6± is holdable, but unattractive for Black because there is no counterplay.]

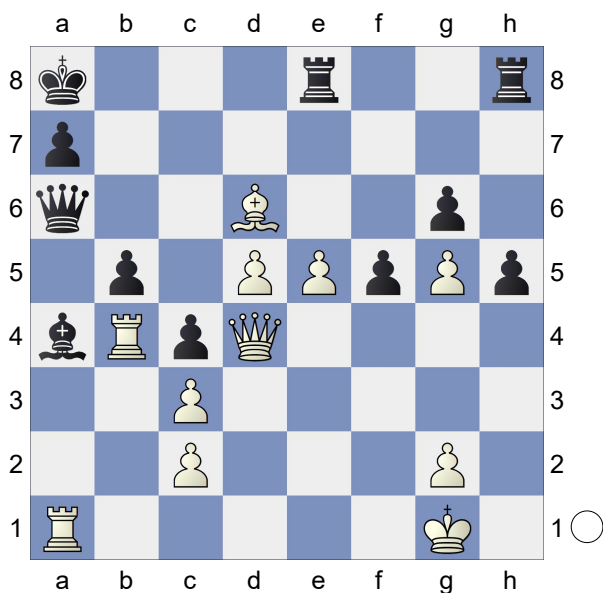


(Diagram)

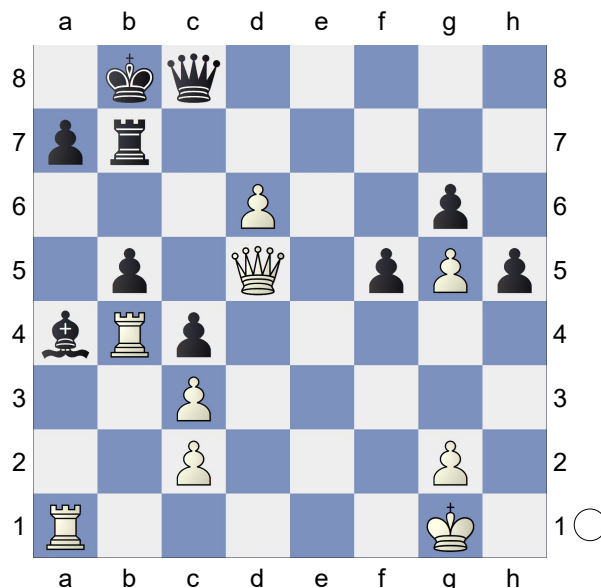
17.a4!+- 10:07 An excellent move by White that I considered but failed to see that the follow-up with 20 Bb4 forces the win of the critical d-pawn. **17...Ne6 3:20**
18.Ba3 46 Nxg5 28 19.hxg5 4 Re8 25
20.Bb4 1:22 Qa6 12:34 21.Qxd5 1:30



Be6 9 22.Qc5+ 1:08 Kb8 29 23.d5 6:22
Bd7 37 24.Qd4 1:08 Ka8 1:39 25.Bd6
8:31 f6 1:58 26.f4 1:39 fxc5 2:44
27.fxc5 11 g6 28 28.Rb4 4:47 Bxa4
1:16 29.Ra1 54 b5 1



30.Bc5 2:37 Rh7 29 31.e6 4:04 Qc8
1:14 32.e7 2:16 Rhxe7 49 33.Bxe7 27
Rxe7 1 34.d6 1:01 Rb7 1:04 35.Qd5
3:15 Kb8 32



36.Raxa4 23 bxa4 16 37.d7 13
1-0

C65
2597
Heimann, Mark
Coyne, Theodore James
2263
 2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (6.1) 10.06.2025
[Winslow, Elliott]

Nominated by Mark Heimann (here is his capsule summary of the game):
 "Playing against the ultra-solid Berlin Defense, Heimann uses some interesting queen footwork to bring about a position where Black is objectively fine, but the position becomes sharp with opposite side castling. Sacrificing material to lure the black king into a very restrictive central pin, Heimann patiently improves his position while down a full rook and eventually capitalizes on a nice checkmate combination as Black struggles to free himself. This game is not perfect, as Black has for one move a stunning tactic to free himself with a decisive queen sacrifice, but this highlights the complexity the position."
 Nominated by Mark Heimann (here is his capsule summary of the game):

THE FINAL STRETCH: Going into Round 6, Heimann and Suarez were 1st-2nd with 4½-½ having drawn their matchup back in Round 3, but while Mark beat Coyne, Sebby lost to Chinguun -- and both games had real opportunities to go the other way. Theo went bonkers in the early middlegame; instead of playing a line that would lead to a fairly hard-to-lose pawn-down bishop of opposite colors game (a rook and a queen also on the board, but pretty dry), he stepped into a crushing pin for Heimann, only for the GM to drastically blunder. And Theo didn't see it! An incredible mutual oversight.

1.e4 34 e5 11 2.Nf3 6 Nc6 4 3.Bb5 4 Nf6 29 Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defense. The greatest minds in modern chess have struggled to make something of White's "Spanish Torture" which, starting anew with Kramnik's World Championship success against Kasparov in 2000, has become more the Unbeatable Annoyance. Of course there have been plenty of wins for White since then -- but for Black as well! **4.d3 6**

[4.0-0 Nxe4 5.d4 Nd6 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 Nf5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8

was The Main Line for decades. I used to always play this way, even won as White vs. Arthur Bisguier, American Grandmaster. Frankly, I got a lost endgame which he botched up. It was 1990, he was -- well, he was 60! That's no excuse!]

[Nowadays the Main Line seems to be 4.0-0 Nxe4 5.Re1 Nd6 6.Nxe5 Be7 7.Bf1 Nxe5 8.Rxe5 0-0

and somehow White makes some little thing happen in this excruciatingly balanced position.]

[4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.d3 Bc5 is just a transposition, although it does commit immediately.]

[It is worth pointing out that 4.Nc3 is the Spanish Four Knights, which was the Main Line in another century -- no, back another one, to the 1800s.]

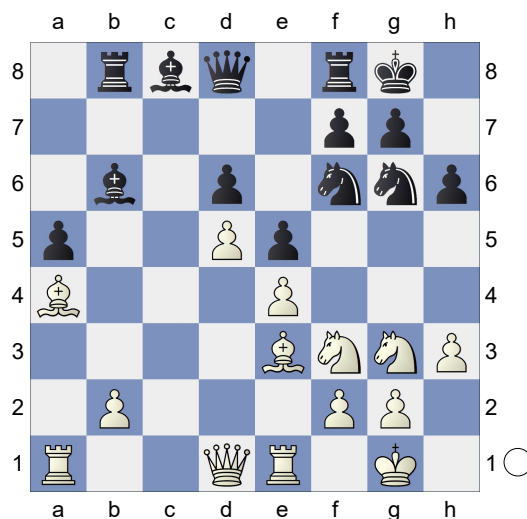
4...Bc5 10 5.Bxc6 18 And this has been supplanted altogether,

[mostly by 5.c3 when it's now mostly 5...0-0 6.0-0 d6 and

A) is more common than 7.h3, "the modern move," although I might mention this little game (in case you haven't seen it yet): a6 8.Ba4 h6 9.Re1 b5 10.Bc2 Bb6 11.Nbd2 Ne7 12.a4

A1) 12...Bb7 13.d4 (13.Nf1 Ng6 14.Ng3 bxa4 15.Bxa4 d5 16.Qc2 c5 17.b3 d4 18.Ba3 Rc8 19.Red1 Kh7 20.Rab1 1-0 (34) Rincon R,J (1658)-Jaimes,F (1822) San Antonio del Tachira 2013) 13...Ng6 14.Nf1 Re8 15.Ng3 d5 16.exd5 Qxd5 17.axb5 axb5 18.Rxa8 Bxa8 1-0 (47) Schon,E (2002)-Yuen,J AUS-ch U18 Sydney 2008 (3);

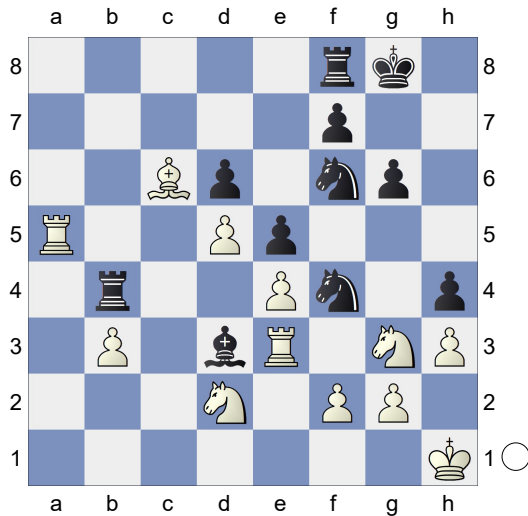
A2) 12...Rb8N 13.d4 Ng6 14.Nf1 c5 15.Ng3 cxd4 16.cxd4 bxa4 17.Bxa4 Bb7 18.d5 a5 19.Be3 Bc8



A2a) 20.Ra2 Bxe3 21.Rxe3 h5=;

A2b) 20.Nd2 Bxe3 21.Rxe3

Rxb2? (21...Nf4=) 22.Bb3
 Bxh3! 23.gxh3 Nf4 24.Kf1
 Qd7 25.Ne2±;
A2c) 20.b3?! Bxe3 21.Rxe3
 Nf4 (21...h5!⚡) 22.Bc6
 (⚡22.Rc1⚡) 22...Rb4
 (22...h5!; 22...Bxh3!? 23.gxh3
 Nxh3+ 24.Kg2 Ng4⚡)
 23.Qc2?! g6⚡ 24.Kh1?! Ba6
 25.Qa2?! Bd3+- 26.Nd2 h5
 27.Qxa5 Qxa5 28.Rxa5 h4

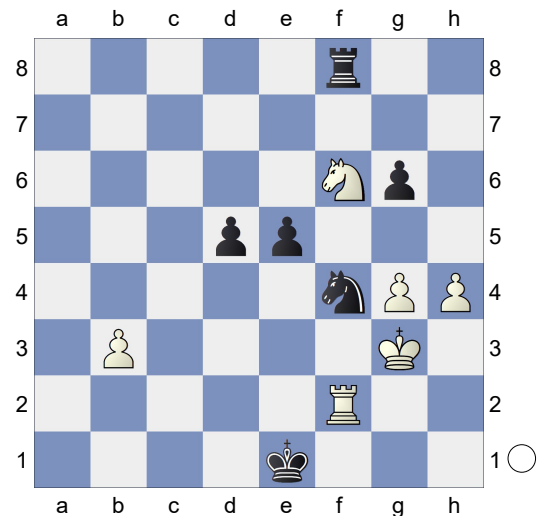
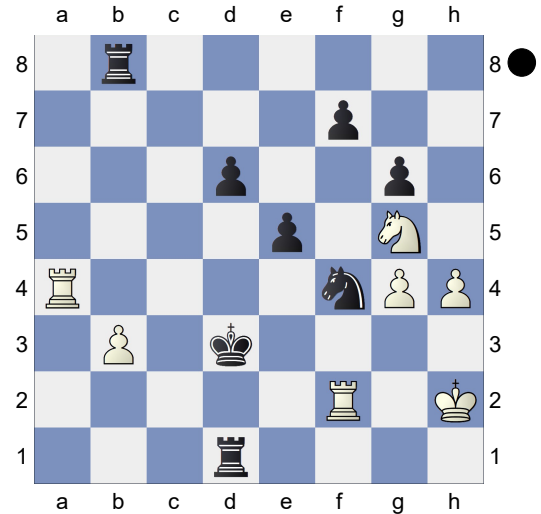


29.Ra4 Rfb8 30.Ra2 Kg7
 31.Ra7 Rd4 32.Nf3 hxc3
 33.fxc3 Nxh3 (33...Bxe4!)
 34.gxh3 Bxe4 35.Kh2 Rd1
 36.g4 Bxd5 (36...Rh8!)
 37.Bxd5 Nxd5 38.Re2 Nf4
 39.Rc2 Kf6 40.h4 Ke6
 41.Ng5+ Kd5 42.Ra5+ Kd4
 43.Ra4+ Kd3 44.Rf2+-

(Diagram)

f6? (44...Rh8; 44...f5; 44...d5;
 44...Kc3) 45.Rf3+⚡ Ke2
 46.Ra2+⚡ Rd2 47.Rxd2+
 Kxd2 48.Ne4+ Ke2 49.Kg3
 d5 (⚡49...Rc8) 50.Nxf6⚡
 Rf8?! (50...Rd8) 51.Rf2+⚡
 Ke1

(Diagram)



52.Nd7?⚡ (52.g5=)
 52...Ne2+?? (52...Re8)
 53.Rxe2+- Kxe2 54.Nxf8 d4
 55.Ne6 d3 56.Nc5 Ke3
 57.Na4 e4 58.h5 gxh5
 59.gxh5 Kd2 60.Nb2 e3
 61.Nc4+ Ke2 62.Kf4
 1-0, Gukesh,D (2787)-Carlsen,
 M (2837) Stavanger June 1,
 2025. Magnus really
 floundered this one!;

B) 7.Nbd2]

5...dxc6 6 6.Nbd2 5

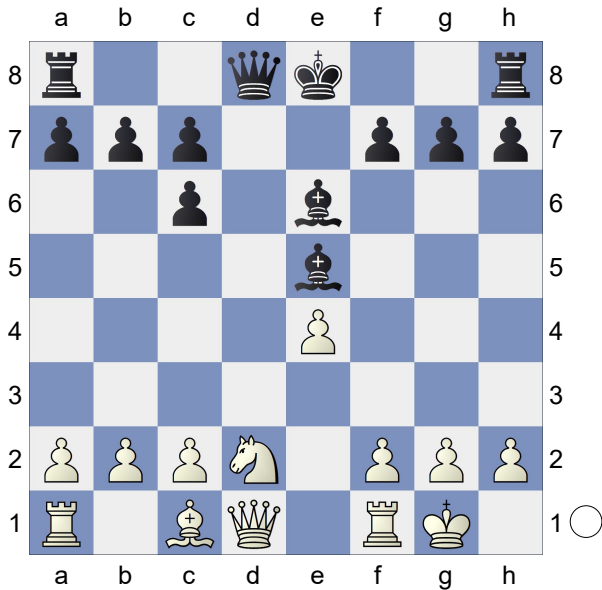
[6.Nxe5? Qd4 7.Be3 Qxe5+- 8.d4
 Bb4+ 9.c3 Qxe4 10.cxb4 Bg4]

6...Be6 3:16 7.0-0 2:19

[7.Nxe5? Qd4 8.Rf1 Qxe5+-]

7...Bd6 3:08 8.d4 7:46 8.Nb3 is gaining
 in popularity (although Stockfish 17.1

prefers out game move). 8...Nd7! 39
 9.dxe5 9:08 Nxe5 21 10.Nxe5 12 Bxe5
 6



A pair of bishops can counterbalance a lot of other things. But do note, one aspect is always keeping in mind the possibility of trading the "same" bishop for the knight, when the ever-interesting "bishops of opposite colors" remain....

11.Qh5?!N 13

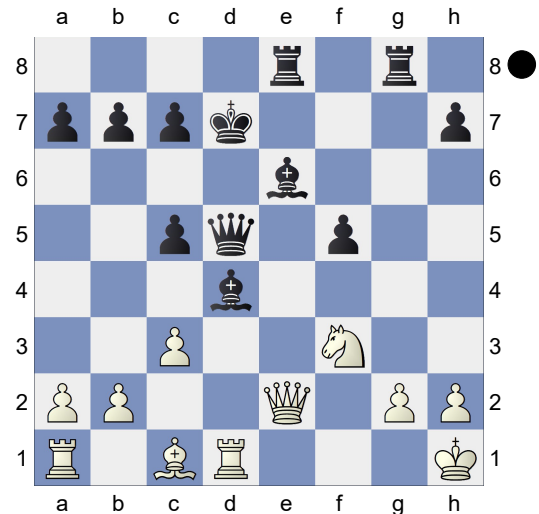
[Looks like the only try for any advantage at all would be 11.f4! Bd4+ 12.Kh1 f5! 13.Qh5+ g6 14.Qe2

A) 14...fxe4!

A1) 15.Qxe4?! is deftly met by Qd5 16.Re1 Kd7 when it's White who has to be careful (but, like everything in engine-land these days, 0.00 after some time and a long string of only moves): 17.f5! gxf5 18.Qe2= Rae8 19.Rd1 Rhg8 (19...Kc8=) 20.Nf3 c5 21.c3

(Diagram)

f4! (everything else loses)
 22.Bxf4! (same) (22.cxd4?? Bh3+-) 22...Bh3! (same)
 23.Qb5+ Kc8 24.Bg3



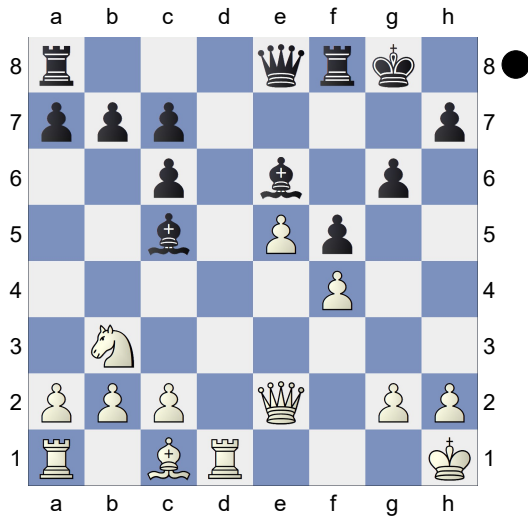
Bxg2+ 25.Kxg2 Re3 (25...Rgf8 26.Rf1 Re3) 26.Rf1 Rf8 27.Qa5 Re2+ (27...Rf7=; 27...Be5=; 27...Rexf3?? 28.Qxc7#) 28.Kh1 Re7 29.cxd4= (29.c4=);

A2) 15.Nxe4 0-0 16.Rd1 Re8 17.Be3 (17.c3 c5 18.cxd4 Bd5 19.dxc5 Rxe4 20.Qxe4 Bxe4 21.Rxd8+ Rxd8) 17...c5 18.Bxd4 cxd4 19.c3 c5 20.Qb5 Bf7 21.Nxc5 Qb6 22.a4 Rad8 23.Nxb7 (23.Rxd4 Rxd4 24.cxd4 Re7 25.Qxb6 axb6 26.Nd3 Re2 (0.00/d39)) 23...Rd5 24.Qxb6 axb6 25.Rxd4 Rxd4 26.cxd4= Bd5 27.Nd6 Re2 White has some sort of little something but we know it will peter out, give it time...;

B) 14...0-0?! 15.Rd1 (15.Nf3 Bf6 16.Rd1 Qe8) 15...Qe8 16.e5 Bc5 17.Nb3

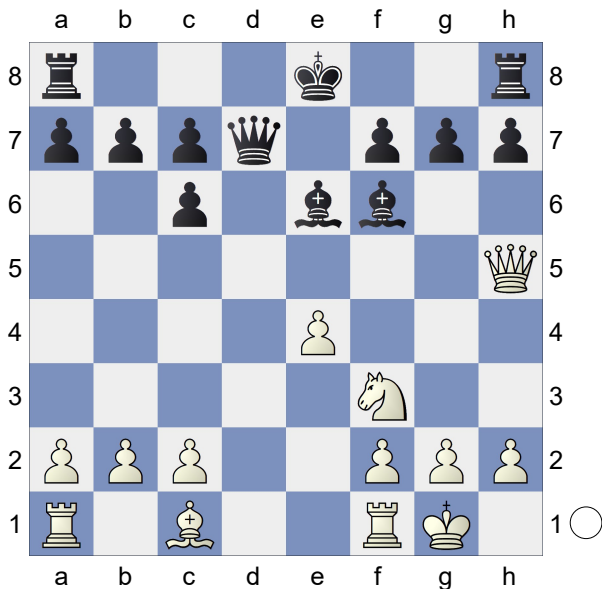
(Diagram)

and here Hans tried too hard to win, and was deftly outplayed by Robson: Be7 18.Be3 Qf7 19.Nc5 Bc4 20.Qf2 b6 21.b3 Be6 22.Nxe6 Qxe6 23.Qe2 a5 24.a4 Rfd8 25.h3 h5 26.Bf2 Rd5 27.c4



Rdd8 28.Qe1 Bb4 29.Qe2 Be7
30.c5 bxc5 31.Qc2 c4 32.bxc4
Kf7 33.Be1 Bc5 34.Bh4 Rdb8
35.Rd3 Rb4 36.Rad1 Rxc4
37.Qb3 Re8 38.Rd7+ Kg8 39.Bf6
Rxf4 40.Qg3 1-0, Robson,R (2693)-
Niemann,H (2733) US ch, Saint
Louis 24.10.2024]

11...Bf6 20:56 and 0.00/26 12.Nf3 1:37
Repels Qd4 12...Qd7= 3:27
[12...h6= might be more reliable, or
not.]



13.Qc5?! 7:14 Nobody's engine doubts
that this is suspect, but it's funny to see:
the "TA gives two moves as "=":
[13.h3=]

[and 13.Bg5=]

13...b6! 14:46 Black's making a bit of
hay, but it's costing him on the clock:
[White: 1:07:17, Black 0:49:21] 14.Qa3
53 Qd6 8:19

[14...a5! is superior.]

15.Qe3 45

[15.Qa6!]

Now a string of engine-best moves...

15...Be7 49 16.b3 5:46 0-0-0 2:53

17.Bb2 36 Rhg8 1:51 18.Qe2 10:55

Kb7! 4:53 19.a4 1:38

[19.e5!]

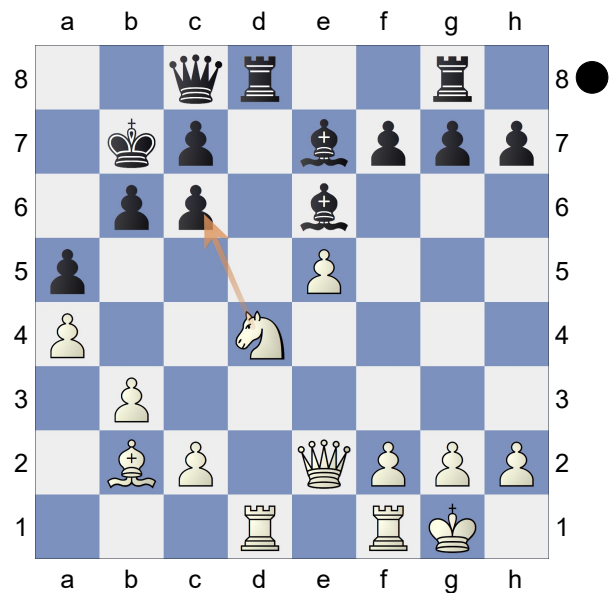
19...a5 3:55 20.e5 1:50

[20.Rfd1 Qf4 21.Rxd8 Rxd8

22.Bxg7 Rg8]

20...Qd7 1:01 21.Rad1 58 Qc8 56

22.Nd4 36



Threatens to win with Nxc6!. White has
the initiative. 22...Bc5?!= 1:51

[White: 47:53, Black: 28:47] SF 0.00/30
Wrong order -- he could always play this
next move.

[22...Bd7! -0.52/29]

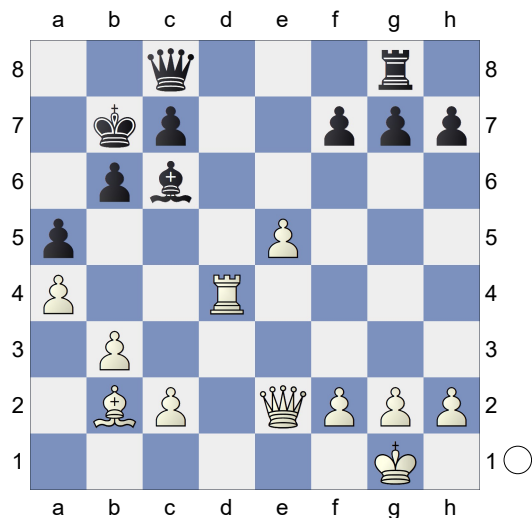
23.Nxc6! 9:09 Discovered Attack,

Decoy 23...Kxc6?? 4:05 This is a

complete misread of the position. Maybe
four minutes wasn't enough time to (1)
appreciate he'd fallen into a tactic (2)
accept that he was no longer better (3)

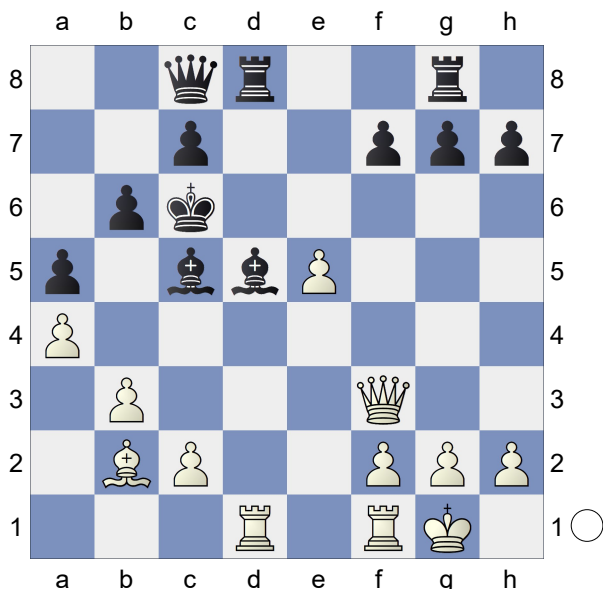
could put the skids on and hold a pawn-down position.

[23...Rxd1! 24.Rxd1 Bd7! (24...Kxc6 25.Qf3+; 24...Bg4? 25.Qe4+-) 25.Nd4! (25.b4!? axb4 26.Nxb4 Bxb4 27.Qe4+ Bc6 28.Qxb4 Qf5±) 25...Bxd4! 26.Rxd4 Bc6=



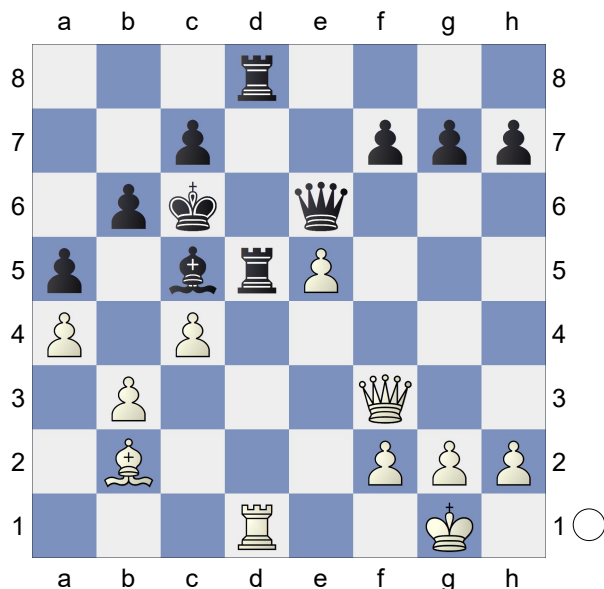
as Shankland has in his most recent book, "Zeroes" (meaning: White has a lot of moves; they all achieve dead drawn positions). This would have been a "typical" Berlin result. Like the Marshall Attack, White achieves a pawn up, but it's insufficient for advantage, let alone a win.]

24.Qf3+- 5:29 Bd5 37



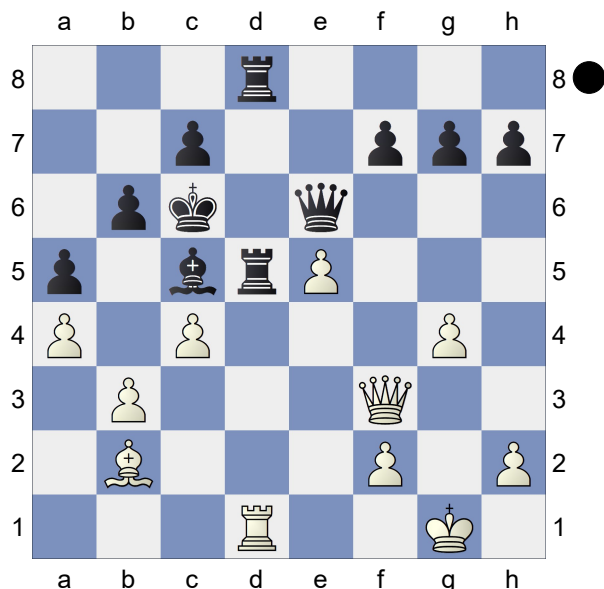
25.Rxd5 5 Rxd5 5 26.c4 25 Qe6 21

27.Rd1 20 Rgd8 24



28.g4?? 3:51

[28.cxd5+- Rxd5 29.g4 So White now has a pit-bull vice grip on Black's rook on d5. Black can only move his bishop and queen to d7 or d8 (or e6). So White can array things (that is, that majority of pawns) on the kingside, and sooner or later there will be the sound of bone crunching. Except Heimann was in too much of a hurry! Endgame Crime #1!! (or 29.h4 or almost anything, now...)]

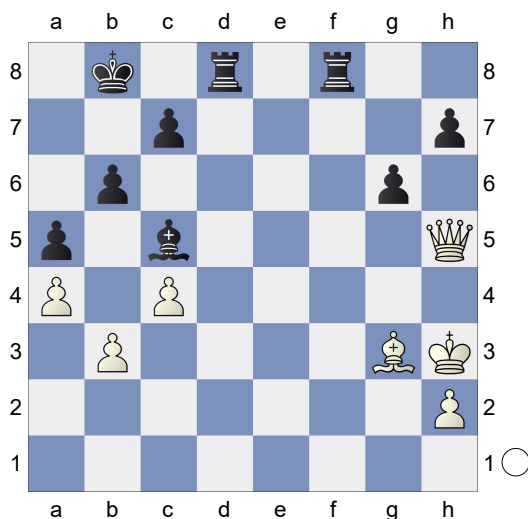


28...Be7?? 4:06 Theo must have been

convinced it was over, and made sure it was so. As it happens, White's last was a colossal blunder!!

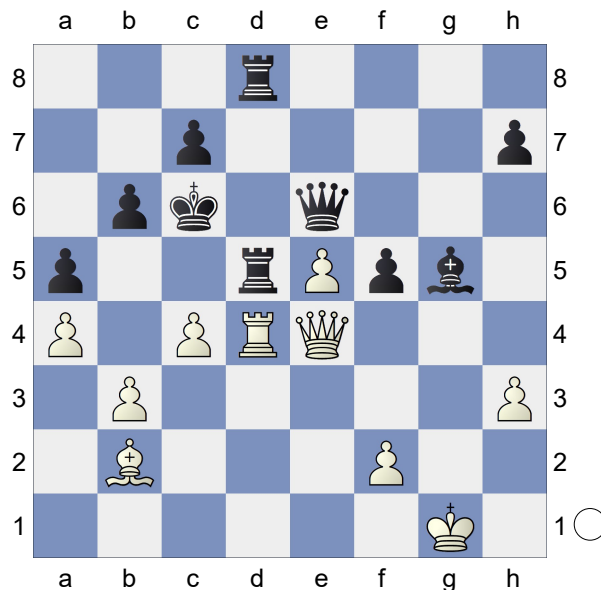
[Given the results on the other boards, had Coyne been able to find...

28...Qxg4+!! there could have been a four-way tie for first going into the last round! 29.Qxg4 Rxd1+ 30.Kg2 and now 30...R8d2! is best by quite a lot (30...R1d2? 31.Qe4+! Kd7 32.Bc1! Rxf2+ 33.Kg3 h6 34.Ba3!± will ruin Black's queenside pawns and more or less force a perpetual, unless Rd2 35.Bxc5 bxc5 36.Qf3 leads to anything (nope, there're those zeroes again...); 30...Kb7?! is still an advantage, maybe even a win, but definitely no clincher like the other.) 31.Qf3+ Kd7 32.e6+ (32.Qxf7+ Kc8 33.Qf5+ Kb8) 32...fxe6 33.Qf7+ Kc8 34.Qxe6+ Kb8 35.Qe8+ Rd8! (35...Kb7+ 36.Qe4+ Ka7 37.Be5 Rxf2+ 38.Kh3 Rd7 39.Qxh7 Rf3+; 35...Ka7 36.Be5 Rxf2+ 37.Kh3 Kb7+) 36.Qh5 R1d2 Changing of the assassin. f2 falls, and it gets rough after that. 37.Be5 Rxf2+ 38.Kh3 Rff8! 39.Bg3 (39.Bxg7 Rf4) 39...g6



Two rooks *and* a pawn: bad deal.]
Now where were we -- Oh yes,
Grandmaster Technique 1.01. **29.h3**

1:53 **g6** 1:52 **30.Rd4** 4:27 If nothing else, White's king could now pass to the queenside, and even cxd5 and Kc4 would win Black's rook **30...Bg5** 5:44 **31.Qe4** 1:03 **f5** 1:36 **32.gxf5** 3:42 **gxf5** 7



Black imagines some chances on the g-file. **33.Qf3** 50 **Bh6** 1:35 **34.Kf1** 8:32 Heimann seems uncertain? Or maybe he's putting everything just right...

[34.cxd5+ Rxd5 35.Rxd5?! (35.Kf1) 35...Qg8+ 36.Kh2 Qxd5 37.Qxf5 Kb7±]

34...Bg7 1:15

[Δ34...Kb7 35.Rxd5 Kc8 is a weak improvement: 36.Qd3 and White can add c4-c5 to improving his king.]

35.Qg2 32 **Bf8** 8:24

[35...Qg6 is futile.]

36.f4

[36.cxd5+ Rxd5 37.f4 Bc5 38.Rd3 keeps the enemy bishop away from f4]

36...Bc5 2:56

[36...Qg6 37.cxd5+ Kd7 38.Qxg6 hxg6]

37.Rd3 14

[37.cxd5+! for some reason]

37...R8d7? 16

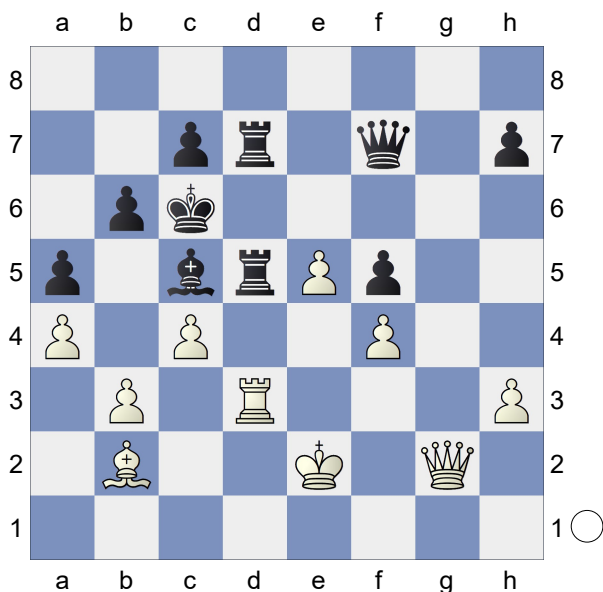
[37...Kb7 is a better defense, but

insufficient: 38.cxd5 Qh6 39.d6+ Kb8 40.Qg5 Qxg5 41.fxg5 cxd6 42.exd6 Bxd6 43.h4+-]

38.Ke2 22

[38.cxd5+! Rxd5 39.Ke2 Bg1!? 40.Bc1! Bc5 41.Kd2 Bb4+ 42.Kc2]

38...Qf7 21



39.Kd2 50

[39.cxd5+! Kb7 (39...Rxd5 40.Bc1) 40.e6 Qe8 41.Be5 Rd8 42.d6+ Ka7 43.Qg7]

39...Bb4+?! 34 If Black has any chance, this is where it'd be.

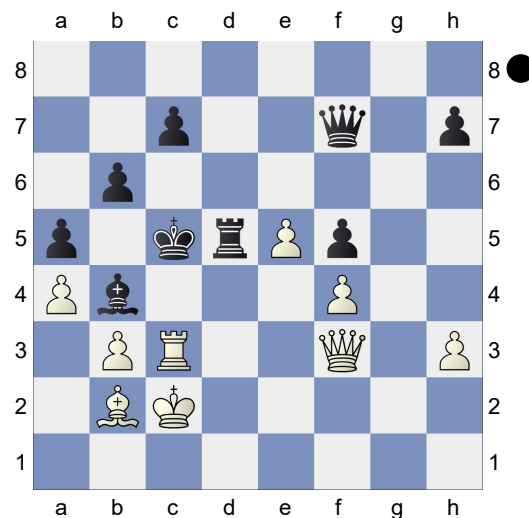
[39...Kb7 40.cxd5 Rd8 41.e6! Qg8 42.Qxg8 Rxd8 43.Bd4! Bb4+ 44.Ke2 it's not all that clear if White is winning, numbers or not.]

40.Kc2 5 Kc5!? 26 Stockfish hates it, but it is the dream of liberation. **41.Qf2+ 1:02**

[41.Rxd5+? Rxd5 42.cxd5?? Qxd5=]
[41.cxd5 Rxd5 42.Qf2+ Kc6 43.Qf3 Kc5?! 44.Rc3+!]

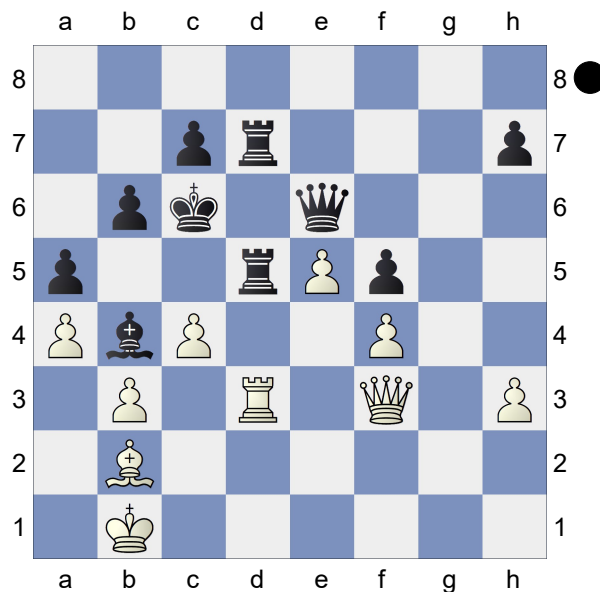
(Diagram)

41...Kc6 13 42.Qf3 15
[42.cxd5+]



42...Qe6 23 43.Kb1!? 31

[43.cxd5+ Rxd5 44.Bc1]



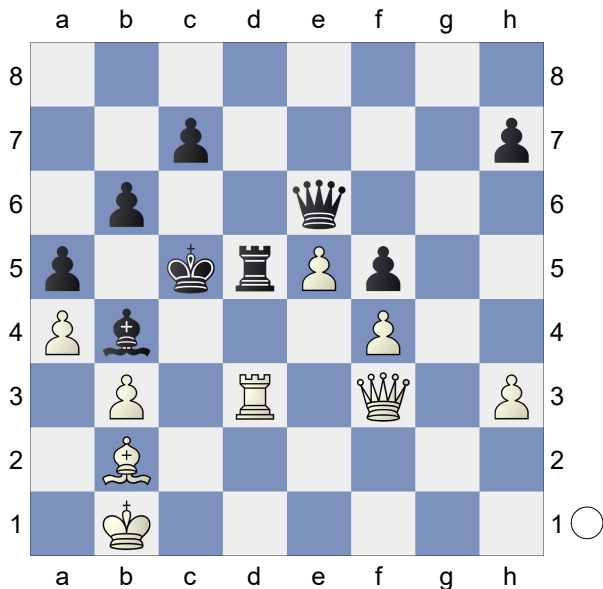
43...Kc5? 39 Down to three minutes Coyne commits Chess Suicide, but the pawns were going to run regardless.

[43...Qg8+- 44.Ka2 (44.cxd5+ Rxd5 45.Rd1 Be7+-) 44...Bf8 45.cxd5+ Kb7 46.d6+ c6 and everything is winning.]

44.cxd5 22 Rxd5 11

(Diagram)

45.Rc3+! 5 Bxc3 43 46.Qxc3# 3
Weighted Error Value: White=0.57/



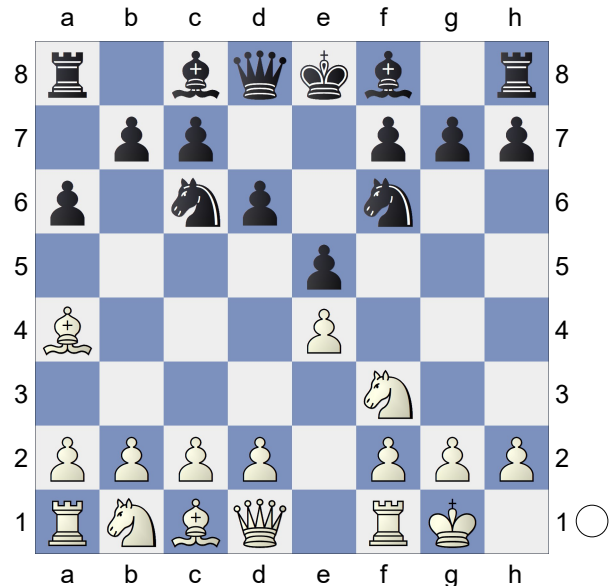
Black=0.85

1-0

Suarez, Sebastian **C60**
 Heimann, Mark **2200**
 2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (3.1) 20.05.2025 **2597**
[Winslow, Elliott]

A key game for the eventual standings as of this Newsletter, when these two players are tied for 1st-2nd after five rounds. But forget that, the story is how close now-master Sebbby Suarez came to beating now-*GM* Mark Heimann! Okay, earlier he came rather close to losing as well. And in the ending he certainly fumbled the ball at the goal line this game! Still, Even bringing a grandmaster to the brink of defeat is an achievement, and a mark (argh!) in his progress. As for Mark, he's got to wonder what happened, and recognize how close he came to losing there! (It should be noted that Heimann was earlier on the brink of winning as well!) Here is Suarez's comment in offering this game for a brilliancy prize: "Here is my Brilliancy Prize Submission.

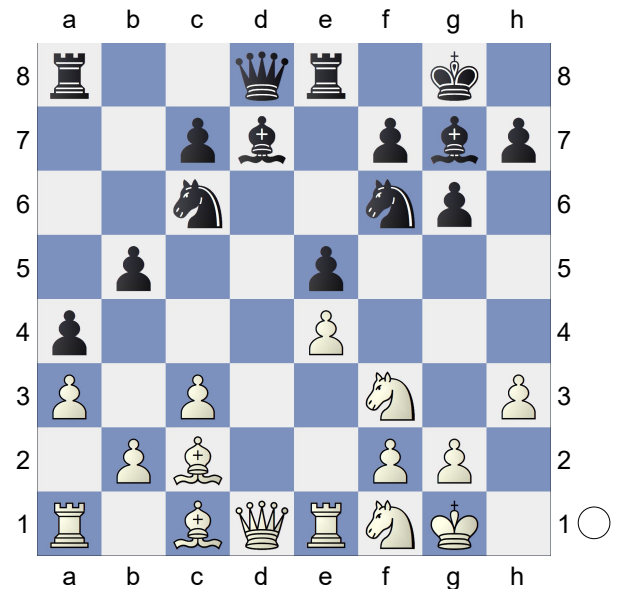
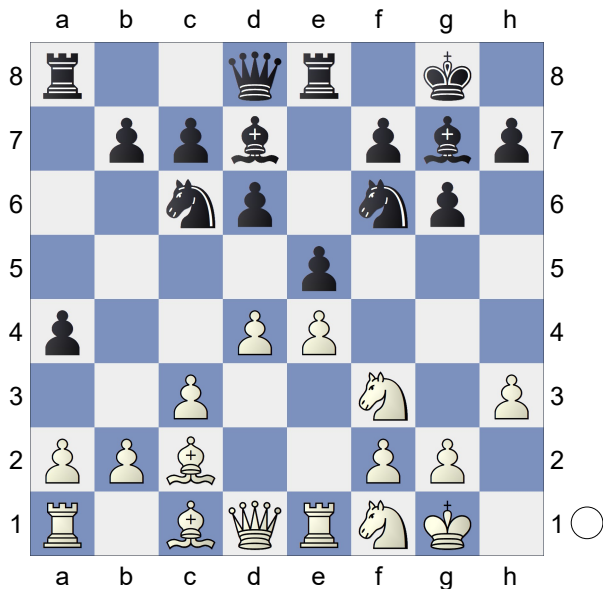
I think this is a brilliant game because I outplayed GM Mark Heimann with several brilliant moves to get a winning position. But sadly failed to convert it into a win but the fact that I managed to outplay him and be so close to winning the game is why this game is so brilliant.
 " 1.e4 15 e5 2.Nf3 7 Nc6 2 3.Bb5 7 a6 5 4.Ba4 4 Nf6 5 5.0-0 51 d6 7



This hybrid Ruy (not really a Chigorin, not really a Modern Steinitz) is being seen in games by the heavy hitters (mostly blitz games of course) and even articles written about lately. At least Black doesn't have to worry about his queenside pawns being picked on (as after ...b5). 6.Re1 37 Bd7 5 7.c3 6:15 g6 55 8.h3 2:07 Bg7 8 9.d4 1:54 0-0 9 10.Nbd2 21:11 Re8 33 11.Bc2 2:03 a5 25 12.Nf1 1:46 a4 28

(Diagram)

White is slightly better. 13.a3?! 2:03
 [13.Bxa4 exd4 14.Bxc6 Bxc6
 15.Nxd4 Bxe4 (15...Nxe4 16.Nxc6
 bxc6 17.a4=)]
 [White has universally played 13.Ng3±
 Here's some 1-minute chess between



a former Peninsula boy and a former ... well... b5 14.Be3 Na5 15.Bd3 Nc4 16.Bxc4 bxc4 17.dxe5 dxe5 18.Qe2 Bb5 19.Rad1 Qb8 20.a3 Qb7 21.Bg5 h6 22.Bxf6 Bxf6 23.Nf1 Rad8 24.Ne3 Rd3 25.Nd5 Bg7 26.Nb4 Red8 27.Nxd3 cxd3 28.Qe3 Bc4 29.Nd2 Be6 30.Nf3 Qxb2 ½-½ (94) Carlsen,M (2835)-Naroditsky,D (2619) Bullet Chess Losers, Chess.com 2023]

13...b5= 43 Stockfish 17.1 makes Black better than equal already. 14.dxe5 8:35 Not too ambitious, but perhaps sensible in that Black might be pulling ahead spacewise. 14...dxe5 5:19

(Diagram)

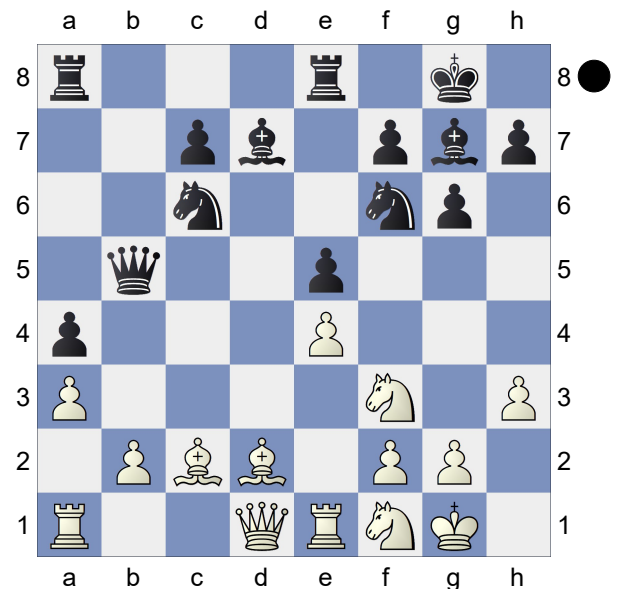
15.c4N 3:38 It's getting a bit worse further.

[15.Bg5 h6 (15...Na5!) 16.Bh4 (16.Bxf6!?) 16...Qc8?! 17.Ne3 (17.c4!=) 17...Na5 18.Bg3 Nh5 19.Bh2 c6 20.Qe2 Nf4 21.Bxf4 exf4 0-1 (60) Alekseenko,K (2702)-Sjugirov, S (2680) Chess.com INT 2022]

15...Qb8 5:04

[15...bxc4! 16.Bxa4 Nd4 17.Bxd7 Nxd7 The forward c-pawn helps

Black's knights aim at d3 and b3.]
16.cxb5 3:20 Qxb5 37 17.Bd2? 10:01
[17.b4!?=]
[17.b3]
[17.Bd3!? when all three straight-back retreats are miniscule plus Black.]



17...Nd4 2:10 Black has a strong knight and is better 18.Bc3 1:29 c5 3:29

19.Bd3 58 Black has space advantage and is better 19...Qb7 1:01

[19...c4!]

20.Bc4?! 17

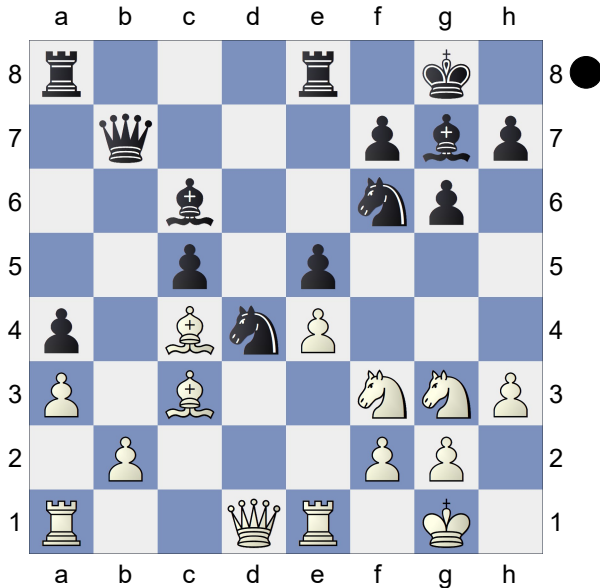
[20.N1d2]

20...Bc6 7:59

[20...Nxe4!? 21.Rxe4 Qxe4 22.Bxf7+ Kh8 23.Ng3 Qc6]
 [20...Bb5!]

21.Ng3 3:03

[21.N1d2]



21...Rad8!-+ 2:01 Avoiding any tactical sequences (for a move at least), and just upping the pressure.

[21...Nxe4 22.Nxe4 Bxe4 23.Rxe4 (23.Bxf7+ Qxf7 24.Rxe4 Rf8) 23...Qxe4 24.Bxf7+ Kh8 25.Bxe8 Rxe8 26.Bxd4 (26.Qxa4? Nxf3+ Discovered Attack 27.gxf3 Qxa4-+) 26...cxd4 27.Qxa4]
 [21...Bxe4 22.Rxe4 (22.Bxf7+ Qxf7 23.Nxe4 Nxe4=) 22...Nxe4 23.Nxe4 Qxe4 24.Bxf7+ Kh8 25.Bxe8 Rxe8 26.Bxd4 cxd4 27.Qxa4=]

22.Qb1?! 31

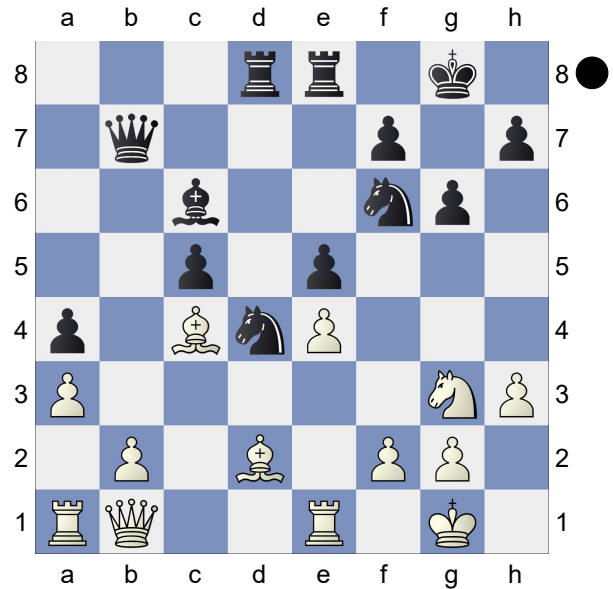
[22.Rb1]

22...Bh6-+ 5:50 23.Nd2 12:20 Bxd2?! 3:50

[23...Bb5-+ 24.Ngf1 Bxc4 25.Nxc4 Qb5 26.Nfd2 Nh5 27.g3 Bxd2 28.Nxd2 Ne2+]

24.Bxd2 3

(Diagram)



Nf3+?! 24

[24...Bb5 25.Ba2 Qa6 26.Qc1 Bd3]

25.gxf3 13 Rxd2 4 26.b4! 2:47 Rd4! 11:47 27.Qa2?! 48

[27.Rc1]

27...cxb4 1:44

[27...Red8! with various threats via b4 and d2 (and ...Qe7 and ...h5-h4!). 28.bxc5 Qe7]

28.axb4 2 Red8 22 29.Rab1? 10:05

[29.Rec1]

29...Bb5-+ 1:08 30.Rec1 1:33

[30.Bxb5 doesn't really help]

30...Rd2 9:21

[30...Qa7!]

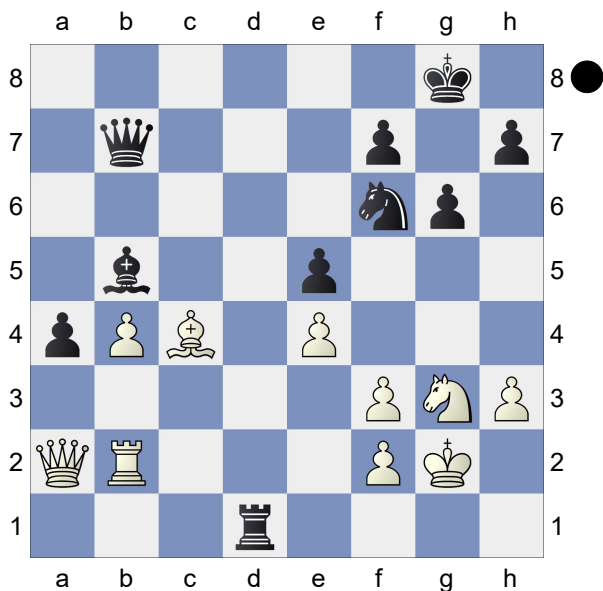
31.Rb2 25 Rd1+ 44 32.Rxd1 2 Rxd1+ 4 33.Kg2?! 20

[33.Kh2 was a better defense.]

(Diagram)

33...a3? 3:06

[33...Nh5! is a shot of sorts. 34.Nxh5 gxh5 White's knight was the last defender 35.Re2 Qc7! (35...Qe7 36.f4 exf4 37.Bxb5 Qg5+ 38.Kf3 still lost, but squirming) 36.Rc2 (36.Bxb5 Qc1) 36...Qe7]



34.Bb3= 1:36

[34.Rc2 Bxc4 35.Qxc4 Rb1
36.Qc8+ Qxc8 37.Rxc8+ Kg7
38.Ra8=]

34...axb2 42

[34...Nh5!? \bar{f} deserves consideration.
35.Nxh5 Bf1+ 36.Kg1 (36.Kg3?
Qe7-+) 36...Bc4+ (36...axb2
37.Bxd1 Qxb4 38.Qa8+ Qf8 39.Nf6+
Kg7 40.Qxf8+ Kxf8 41.Bc2 \pm)
37.Bxd1 Bxa2 38.Rxa2 gxh5
(38...Qxb4 39.Nf6+ Kg7 40.Nd5 \bar{f})
39.Rxa3 Qxb4 40.Ra8+ Kg7]

35.Bxd1= 2 White is holding 35...Qd7?
30

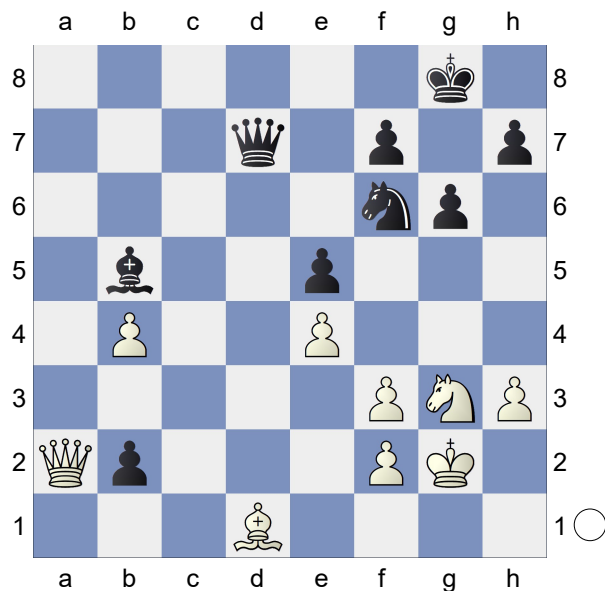
[35...h5= 0.00 36.Qxb2 h4]

(Diagram)

But now the tide turns. **36.Qxb2! \pm 46**
Qxd1? 5:59

[36...Qe7! might work better. 37.Be2
Bd7! \bar{f} (37...Bxe2? 38.Nxe2 Nd7
39.Qc3+-)]

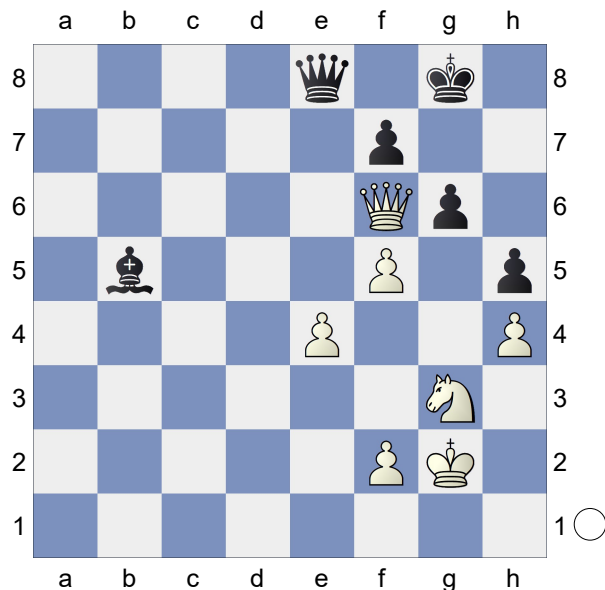
37.Qxe5+- 2 Qa4 49 38.Qxf6 5 Qxb4 3
White is a pawn up in this endgame, with
a knight vs. a bishop and the action on
just one side. **39.h4 38 h5 29 40.f4 39**
[40.e5!]



40...Qf8? 4:06 The eval jumps from -2 to
-4 or so.

[40...Bc4 41.f5 Kh7]

41.f5 24 Qe8 15



42.e5 2:25

[42.Kf3! Shades of the famous Short-
Timman king march!]

42...Qa8+ 3:57 43.Kh2 13 Qf3 36

44.fxg6 17 Qxf6 5 45.exf6 2 fxg6 9

KB-KN. White is a pawn up. **46.Ne4 12**

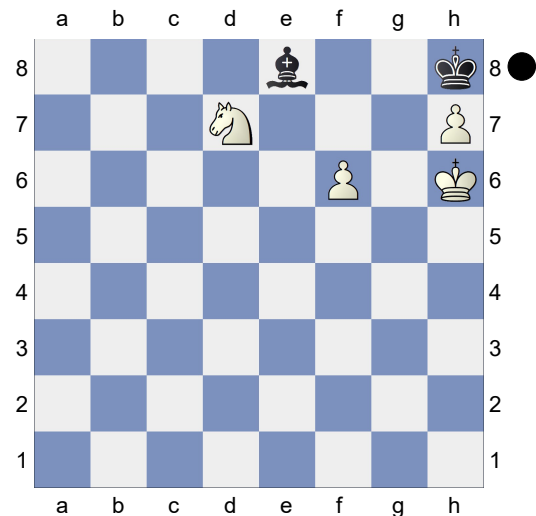
Bd3 2:02 47.Ng5 23

[47.Nd6 Kf8 48.Kg3 Kg8 49.Kf4
Kf8 50.Kg5 Kg8 51.f4 Bc2 52.Nc4]

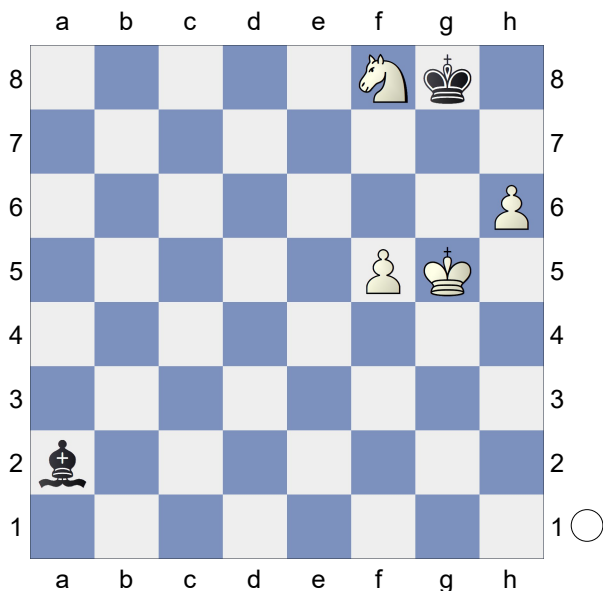
47...Kf8 51 48.Kg3 4 Bb1 49 49.Kf4 5

Bc2 6 50.Nf3 19 Kg8 55 51.Kg5 13

Kh7 5 52.Nd4 19 Bb1 10 53.Kf4 1:12
 Kg8 6 54.Nc6 2:30 Kf7 25 55.Kg5 2:41
 Kg8 3 56.Ne5 38 Kh7 3 57.f7 24 Kg7
 2 58.Nxg6 13 Kxf7 3 59.Nf4 5
 [Not 59.Kxh5 Bxg6+ 60.Kg5 Bd3=]
 59...Bc2 52 60.Nxh5 9
 [60.Kxh5 Bh7 61.Kg5 Be4+-]
 60...Bb1 21 61.f4 8 Bc2 16 62.f5 11
 Bb1 9 63.Nf4 8 Bc2 13 64.Ng6 6 Bb3
 17 65.Ne5+ 15 Kg7 5 66.h5 25 Ba2 9
 67.Nd3 4:09 Bb3 10 68.Nb4 46 Bc4 14
 69.Nc6 10 Bb3 9 70.Nd4 1:10 Ba2 5
 71.Ne6+ 10 Kh7 11 72.Nd4 1:39 Bc4
 22 73.Kf6 35 Bg8 11 74.Kg5 29 Bc4 4
 75.Nc6 12 Bb3 16 76.Ne7 15 Ba2 10
 77.h6 34 Bb3 14 78.Ng6 7 Ba2 10
 79.Nf8+ 7 Kg8 4

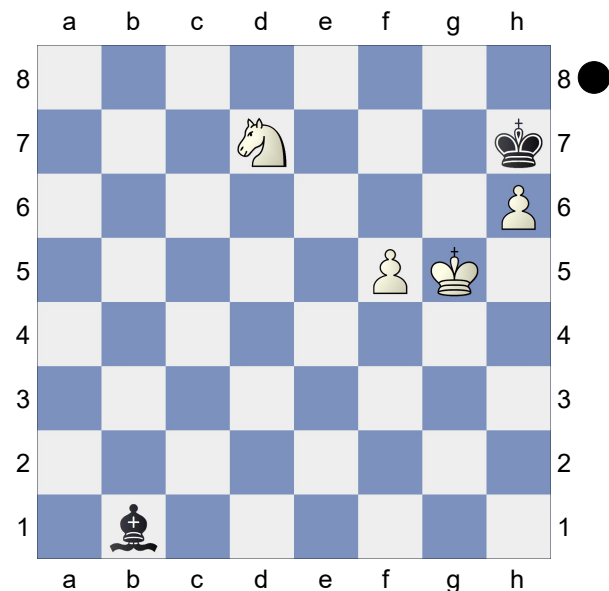


80...Bb1!= 17 The position is equal. A
 subtle difference! 81.Nd7 37 Kh7 7
 White's poor king can't save a pawn.
 82.Kg5 1



This should be mate in ten moves or so
 80.Kf6?? 57 Sebastian had less than
 two minutes plus the 30-second
 increment, so it was probably just too
 much for him; this was his last moment.
 [80.h7+! is quickest: Kh8 81.Kh6 Bf7
 82.f6 Be8 83.Nd7!

(Diagram)



Bxf5! 11 Just works. 83.Nf8+ 16 Kg8 2
 84.Kxf5 13 Kxf8 2 85.Kg6 8 Kg8 2
 86.h7+ 6 Kh8 2 87.Kh6 5
 Heimann defended stubbornly and sure
 enough, a tiny path appeared. That's
 part of what being a grandmaster is
 about! White=0.36/Black=0.56
 1/2-1/2

]
 [80.f6]
 [80.Ng6 and other knight moves...]

□ Liou,Arthur

■ Rajaram,Raghu

2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (7.9) 17.06.2025

[Winslow,Elliott]

B54

2030

1848

Nominated by Arthur Liou

A 22-move game against the Paulsen Sicilian featuring a few sacrifices. After steady development, White breaks through with two knight sacrifices, the first declined and the second accepted, to unleash a decisive combination. The culminating shot, a bishop sacrifice reveals a crushing tactical threat, which would result in winning significant material. Black resigned, leaving a beautifully efficient finish. A compact and elegant attacking game.

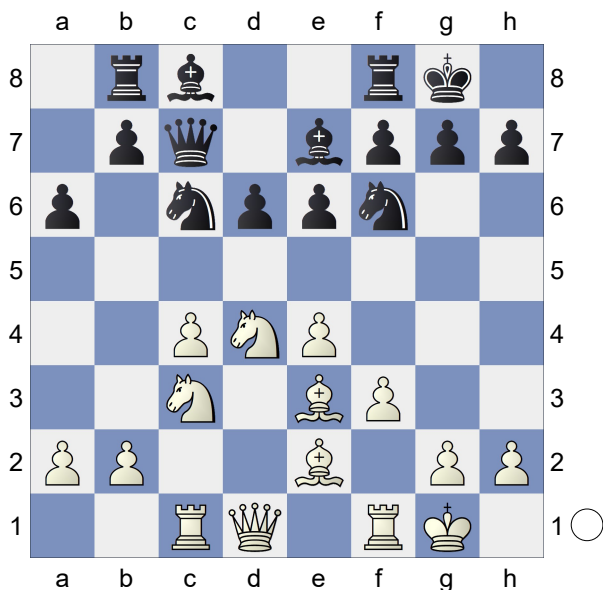
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 a6 4.Nc3 d6

5.Be2 Nc6 6.d4 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Qc7

8.Be3 Nf6 9.Rc1 Be7 10.0-0 0-0

11.f3 Rb8

[♖11...Rd8]



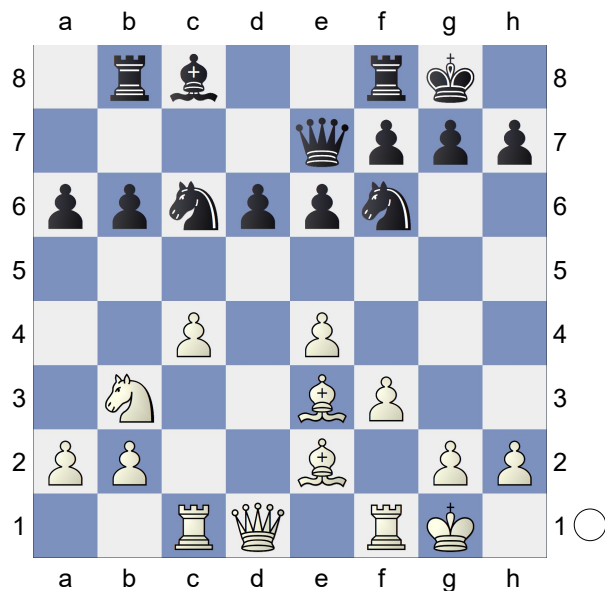
12.Nd5!± Qd8

[12...exd5 13.cxd5]

13.Nxe7+ Qxe7 14.Nb3

[14.Qd2+-]

14...b6



15.Qd2N

[15.Bf4 Ne5 16.Qd4 Nxf3+ 17.gxf3

e5 18.Qd2 exf4 19.Rfd1 Rd8

20.Qxf4 Nh5 21.Qe3 ½-½ (49) Shilo,

E (1975)-Puczyłowski,M (1959)

Ketrzyn 2006]

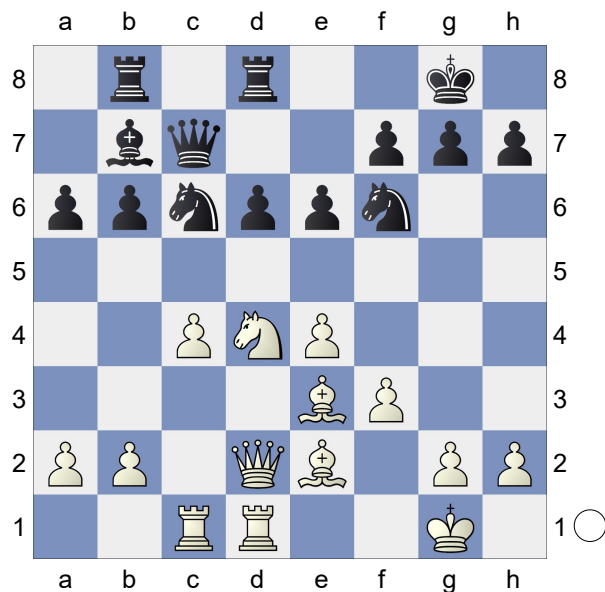
15...Rd8 16.Rfd1 Qc7

[16...h6± 17.Rc3 e5]

17.Nd4+- Bb7

[17...Nxd4 was necessary. 18.Bxd4

(18.Qxd4 e5±) 18...a5]

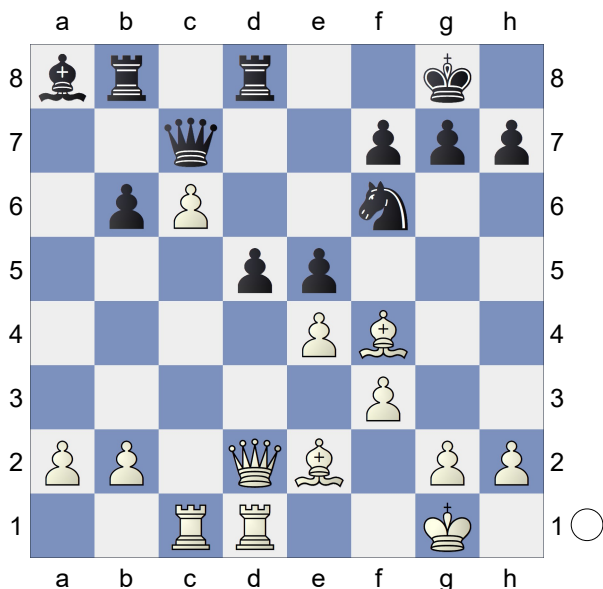


18.Nb5! axb5

[18...Qd7 19.Nxd6]

19.cxb5 d5 20.bxc6 White is clearly

winning. 20...Ba8 21.Bf4 e5



22.Bxe5! Weighted Error Value: White=0.
04 (flawless) /Black=0.50
1-0

□ Bayaraa,Chinguun

■ Suarez,Sebastian

2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (6.2) 10.06.2025
[Winslow,Elliott]

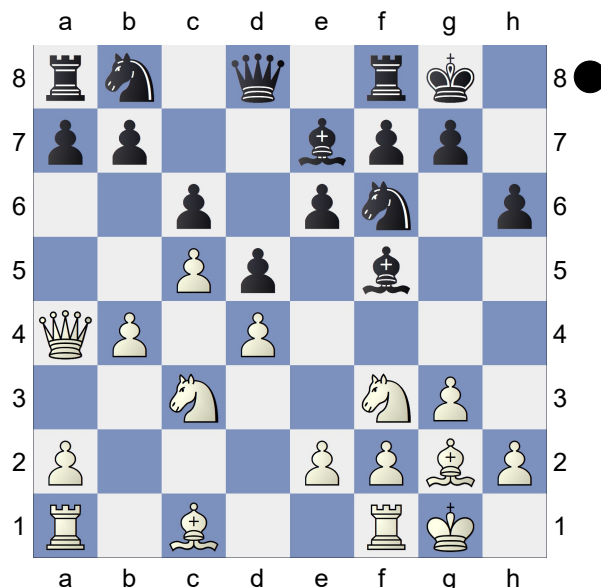
Sebastian Suarez was aligned to take
1st-2nd with GM Heimann, but just
couldn't put Chinguun Bayaraa away.

1.Nf3 19 d5 8 2.d4 21 Nf6 10 3.g3 15
Bf5 42 4.Bg2 7 h6 34 5.0-0 8 e6 16
6.c4 16 c6 19 7.Qb3 14 Qb6 35 8.Nc3
2:05 Be7 24 9.Qa4 7:24 0-0 5:27
10.c5 35 Qd8 5:46 11.b4 56

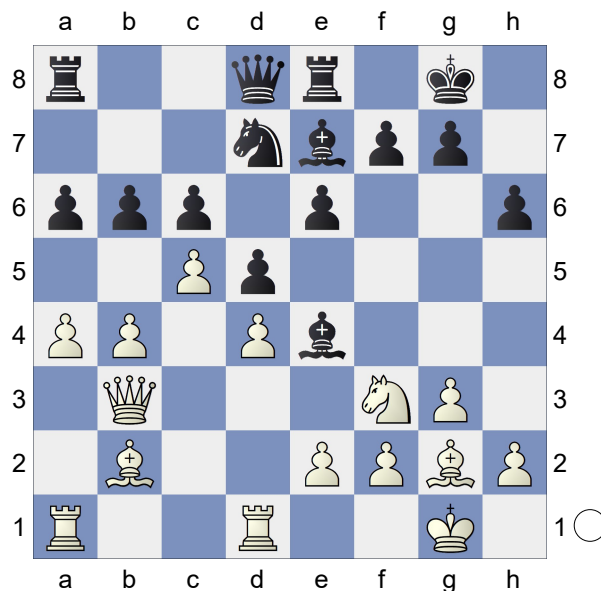
(Diagram)

Black has an edge. **11...Ne4N 24:14**

[11...b5 12.Qb3 a5 13.Bf4 axb4
14.Qxb4 Ne4 15.Nd2 e5 16.Ndxe4
exf4 17.Nd2 Bf6 0-1 (29) Nemov,A
(2110)-Geller,J (2548) Togliatti 2014]
12.Bb2 42 a6 4:08 13.Rfd1 1:56 Nd7
1:20 14.Qb3 2:25 Re8 3:45 15.a4 1:12



b6 2:20 Black wants to play ...a5.
16.Nxe4 1:18 Bxe4 1:41



17.Rac1? 16:04

[17.Ne5= Nxe5 18.Bxe4 dxe4
19.dxe5]

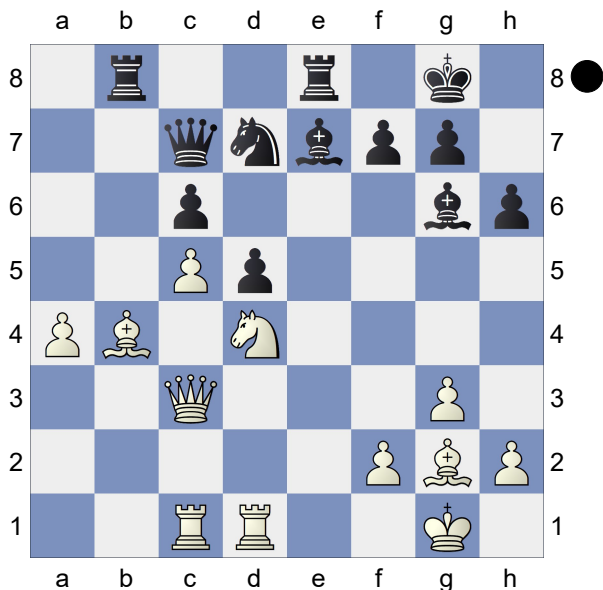
17...a5 12:39 Black dissolves White's
queenside wall. A familiar collapse in a
number of lines of the Slav. **18.Ba3**
14:20 axb4 22 19.Bxb4 7 bxc5 39
20.dxc5 11 Qc7 54 21.Nd4 3:16 Bg6
2:44

[21...Bxg2+ 22.Kxg2 Reb8]

22.e4 30 Rab8 3:55

[22...dxe4 23.Nxe6 Qb7 24.Nd4 7
(24.Nxg7 Reb8 7)]

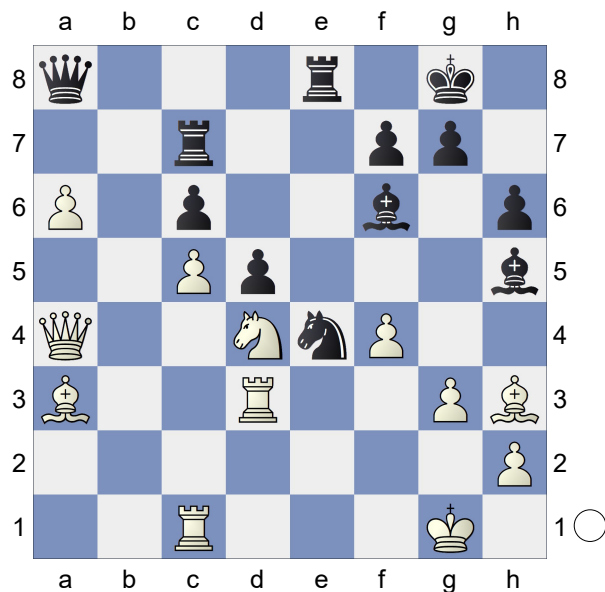
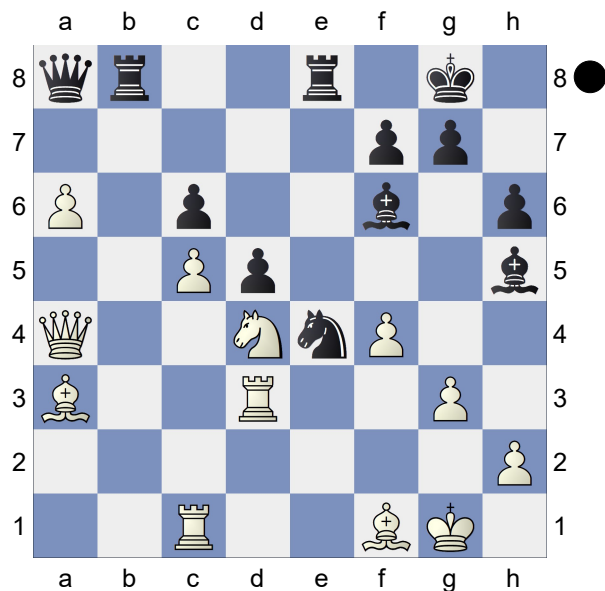
[$\Delta 22...Bxe4$ 23.Bxe4 (23.Nxe6?
fxe6 24.Bxe4 Reb8-+) 23...dxe4
24.Nxe6 Qc8]
23.exd5 2:02 exd5 2 **24.Qc3 4:07**
[24.Qa3 \mp]



24...Qb7!-+ 4:59 **25.Ba3 1:48**
[$\Delta 25.Qa1$]
25...Qa8 5:44 **26.a5 1:48** **Ne5 3:29**
[$\Delta 26...Bf6$ 27.Ra1 Rb5]
27.f4 \mp 6:18 **Nd7 5:44** **28.Bf1 2:22** **Nf6 1:20**
[$\Delta 28...Bf6$...Nf8 is the strong threat.
29.Bb2 Nf8]
29.a6 30 Ne4 3:43 **Strong Square Black (e4)** **30.Qa5 11**
[White should play 30.Qf3! \mp]
30...Bh5 1:21
[30...Bd8 31.Qa4 Rc8 32.Bb2=]
31.Rd3 3:29 **Bf6 57**
[31...Bd8 32.Qa4 Rc8 33.h3 \pm]
32.Qa4 26

(Diagram)

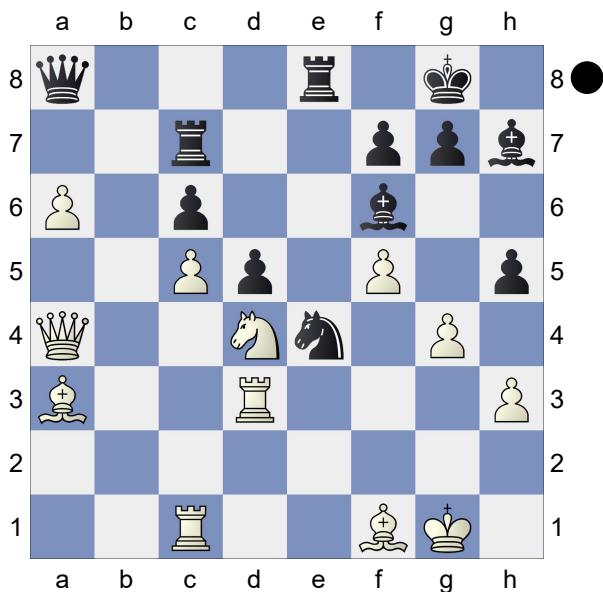
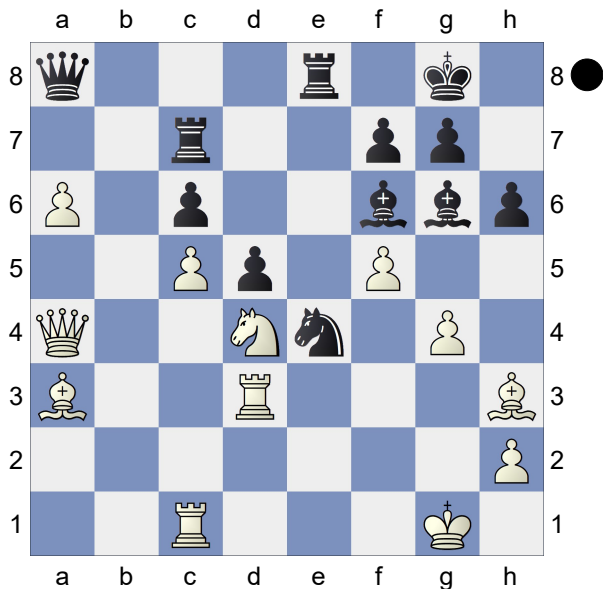
Rbc8 24
[32...Bg4! \mp]
33.Bh3? 1:32
[33.Bb2=]
33...Rc7-+ 38



34.g4? 13:27
[34.Rb1 Ra7 35.Rb6 Bxd4+
36.Qxd4 (36.Rxd4? Nc3-+)]
34...Bg6 5:29 **35.f5 18**

(Diagram)

Bh7? 4
[35...Ra7!-+ 36.fxg6 Rxa6 37.gxf7+
Kxf7]
36.Bf1 1:36
[36.Bb2!= keeps the balance.]
36...h5 \mp 5 **37.h3? 59**
[37.Bb2 \mp]



37...Bg5? 39 In extreme complications and, once again, extreme time pressure [White: 12:16, Black: 01:21], Black misses a way.

[37...Ra7!+- (with or without ...hxg4 first) still wins: 38.Re3 Bg5! 39.Ree1 Qb8! 40.Qb3 Bf6!]

38.Rb1± 1:40

[38.Rc2!±]

38...Nf6 34

[38...hxg4± 39.hxg4 g6]

39.Bc1 1:45 **Bxc1** 13 **40.Rxc1** 4 **hxg4** 27 **41.hxg4** 3:56

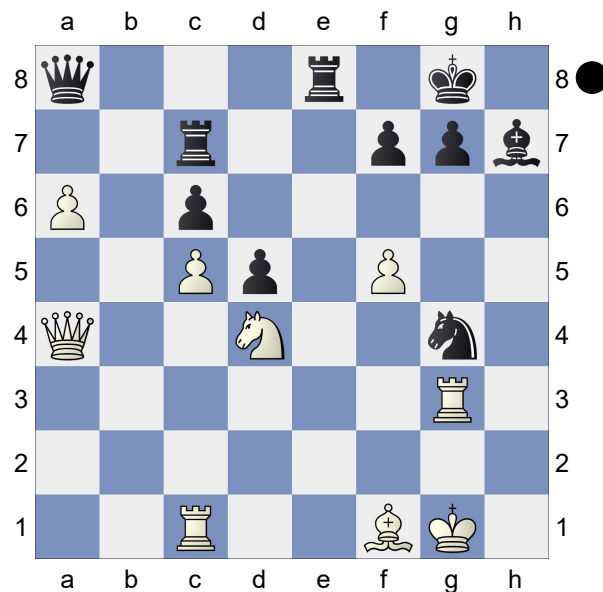
[41.Ra3!]

[41.Qa5!]

41...Nxg4?! 1

[41...Re4!? might work better.]

42.Rg3!+- 39



Active counter play! **42...Ne3** 1:51

43.Qa5 59

[Δ43.Bd3]

43...Rd7? 33

[43...Rce7]

44.Qc3 5 **Bxf5** 39 **45.Rxe3** 29 **Rxe3** 20

46.Qxe3 5 **Be4** 10 **47.Qg3** 47 **Rd8** 59

48.Qc7 26 **Re8** 34 **49.Rc3** 39

[Not 49.Qxc6 Qd8 50.Rc3 (50.Bg2 Bxg2 51.a7 Bh1=) 50...Qg5+ 51.Kf2 Qe5+-]

49...Bg6 30 **50.Rb3** 41 White threatens

a7! and mate. **50...Rf8** 31 **51.Nxc6** 30

Bh5 30 **52.Rb8** 12 Weighted Error

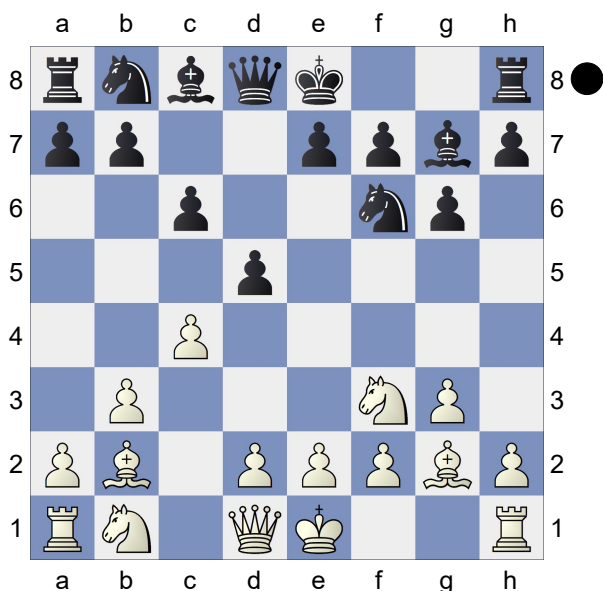
Value: White=0.40/Black=0.92

1-0

□ Heimann,Mark 2597
 ■ Bayaraa,Chinguun 2176
 2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (7.1) 17.06.2025
 [Winslow,Elliott]

A win here for Bayaraa would have brought about a two- or three-way tie for 1st! But in a strange and difficult opening,

it was Heimann who eventually oriented better, and after the last slip went unpunished he cruised to victory. **1.c4 2** And why does Heimann have White in his last two rounds? (1) He was a full point ahead of two 4½'s, and he'd already played Suarez (2) Heimann had had BWBWBW; Bayaraa had gone BBWWBW -- so that is apparently a reason for Chinguun to be alternated, else he'd have had 4 out of 5 of his last games White. I'm guessing here. **1...Nf6 27 2.g3 27 c6 8 3.Nf3 22 g6 41 4.b3 33 Bg7 7 5.Bb2 6 d5 18 6.Bg2 36**



b5?! 35 (EW: Rather drastic! And already doubling White's first-move advantage, if you believe in Stockfish numbers. But...

[6...0-0±]

7.d3?! 1:38 White refuses to play ball -- at a cost! This reminds me of seeing the Alekhine Defense, 1.e4 Nf6, answered with 2.d3?! (for that matter, anything but 2.e5). So points to Chinguun for psychology!

[Was Chinguun going to sac a pawn after 7.cxb5± 0-0!? , as "given" by the "Tactical Analysis" run I've been toying with on ChessBase? 8.Nc3]
[Of course Black can just take back,

and so after 7.cxd5! he'd be more advised to, since it's a center pawn we're talking about here. cxd5 8.Nc3 0-0 9.Nxb5 Ba6 10.Nc3 Nbd7 11.d4± What's to talk about -- White is just up a pawn.]

7...0-0 5:41

[Having said the above, interesting to see that 7...dxc4!?= " deserves consideration" (TA). Stockfish Unchained (i.e., not under whatever strange conditions the TA submits the analysis to) actually tries to pawn off a tiny Black advantage if White recaptures 8.bxc4 bxc4]
[But White can also play the Catalan-like gambit style with 7...dxc4 8.a4!? with who-knows-what happening on the long diagonal if White gets axb5 in.]

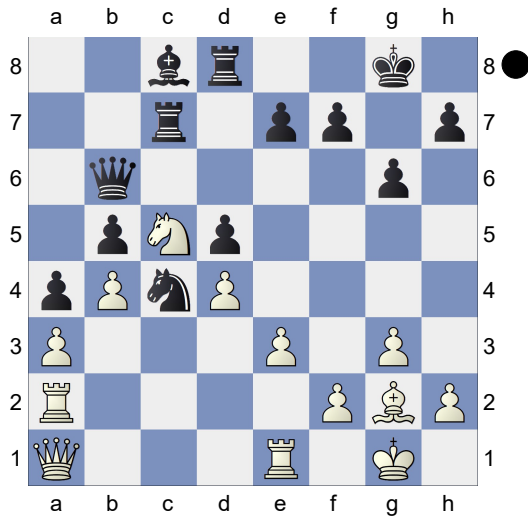
8.0-0 36 Nbd7± 1:22 Well of *course* this position has happened a few times, including twice in the last century! (saying that makes it seem so old).

9.cxb5 4:44

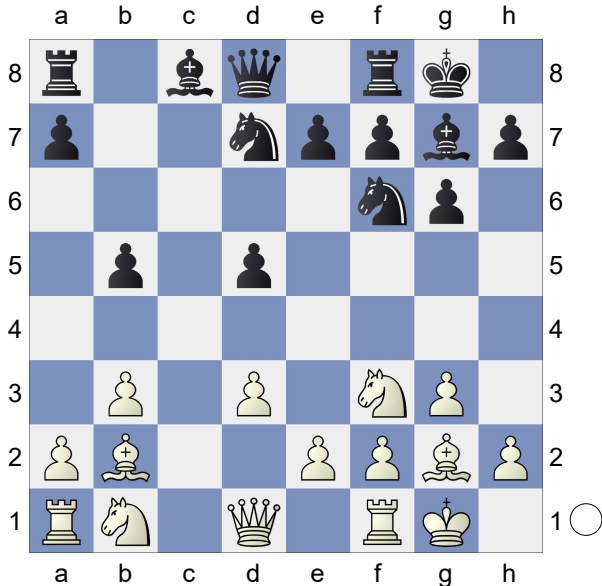
[9.Nbd2 has happened a few times, as much by transposition as not) Bb7 10.cxb5 cxb5 11.b4 a5 12.a3 a4 13.Ra2 Rc8 14.Qa1 Qb6 15.Ne5 Nxe5 16.Bxe5 Ne8 17.Bxg7 Nxg7 18.Nf3 Rc7 19.d4 Nf5 20.e3 Nd6 21.Ne5 Nc4 22.Nd3 Rd8 23.Re1 Bc8 24.Nc5

(Diagram)

Cute! Now the mortal goes a bit off the rails, and loses quickly. Bf5 25.Qc3 Qf6 26.f4 h5 27.h3 Be4 28.Bxe4 dxe4 29.Nxe4 Qf5 30.Nf2 Rdc8 31.Qd3 Nd6 32.e4 Qd7 33.Kg2 Rc3 34.Qd2 Rb3 35.Rc1 Nc4 36.Qe1 Qxd4 37.Kh2 h4 38.gxh4 Qf6 39.f5 Qxh4 40.Rc3 Rd8 41.fxg6 Nd2 0-1 (41) Fioramonti,



H (2325)-Shirov,A (2677) Novi Sad 2016]
9...cxb5 15

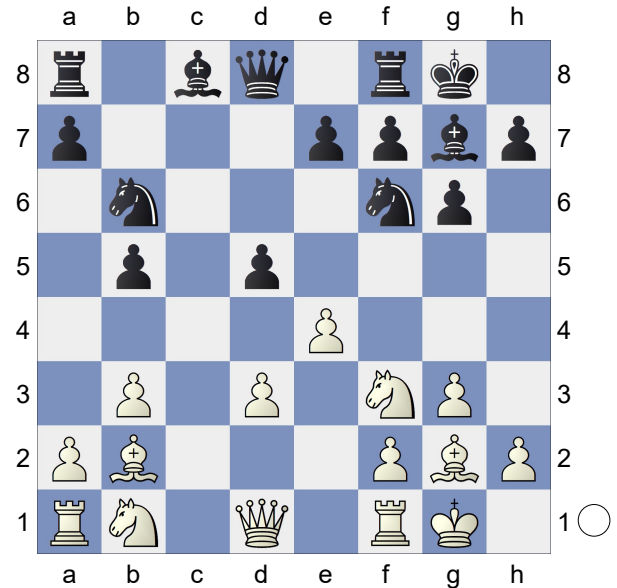


10.e4?!N 16 A stake in the center, or a steak on the burner? In any case, Chinguun lets it be.

[10.Na3 a6 11.Nc2 Bb7 12.Ne5 Nxe5 13.Bxe5 Qd7 14.Qd2 Rfd8 15.Nd4 Bf8 16.Rac1 0-1 (65) Kokoszczyński,J (2250)-Lerch,J (2274) Titled Tuesday (blitz) 23.1.2024]

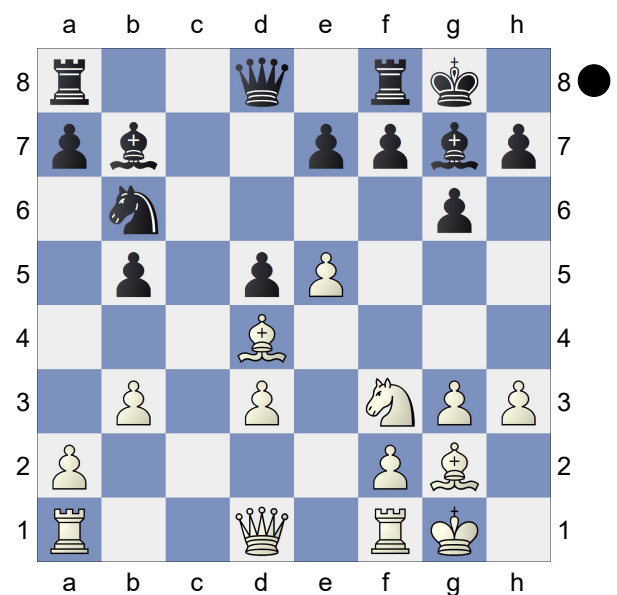
[A couple other moves have been played as well (I leave those references out, in deference to the ratings of the players), while Stockfish (17.1) favors 10.Nbd2± with a plus

that may or may not fade with depth of analysis (I can wait to find out).]
10...Nb6? 4:59
 [Better is 10...dxe4 11.dxe4 Bb7= /7]



11.e5± 2:03 Now Heimann takes hold of the game. **11...Ne8 17** (heading for ...d4 !?!) **12.h3 26**
 [12.Na3!]

12...Bb7 4:03 13.Nc3 3:36 Nc7 2:31 14.Ne2 1:13 Ne6 2:37 15.Ned4 3:08 Nxd4 21 16.Bxd4 6



From a weird opening: a weird middlegame. But some principles apply

even here, for example: c5 is weak, as are Black's queenside pawns. **16...Rc8 31 17.Qd2 58 Nd7 6:38** There just isn't enough time to put everything in order. So Chinguun tosses a pawn. **18.Qe3 5:24** White is more active, and pushing the e-pawn would disjoint Black's pawns.

[18.Bxa7?! d4= is a nice trade-down to a drawable ending. 19.Bxd4 Bxf3 20.Bxf3 Nxe5 21.Bxe5 Bxe5]

[But 18.a4! is even stronger.]

18...e6 4:44 19.Bxa7± 25 White snips a pawn. Still there is a long way to go to make it count. **19...Qa5 1:24 20.Bd4 50 Rc2 1:21**

[20...b4 21.Qd2 Rfd8]

21.a3+- 36 b4 2:19 22.Rfc1 11:29

[22.Qe1!+-]

[22.a4+- Rfc8 23.Rfc1 Ba6 24.Rxc2 Rxc2 25.Ne1 Out!]

22...Rfc8 2:36

[22...Rxc1+± 23.Qxc1 bxa3]

23.a4 7:06 Qc7 7:00 24.Bb2 3:06

[24.Rxc2?! Qxc2 25.Ne1 Qc7± (25...Qxb3 26.Bf3±)]

24...Ba6 3:41 25.Bf1 3:20

[25.Ne1+- is more deadly. Rxc1 26.Rxc1]

25...Qb8 4:45

[25...d4± might work better. 26.Nxd4 (26.Bxd4? Rxc1 27.Rxc1 Qxc1+-) 26...Rxc1 27.Rxc1 Qxe5]

26.Rxc2 2:46 Rxc2 6

(Diagram)

27.Rb1 34

[27.Bd4?! Qc7 28.Ne1 Rc6±]

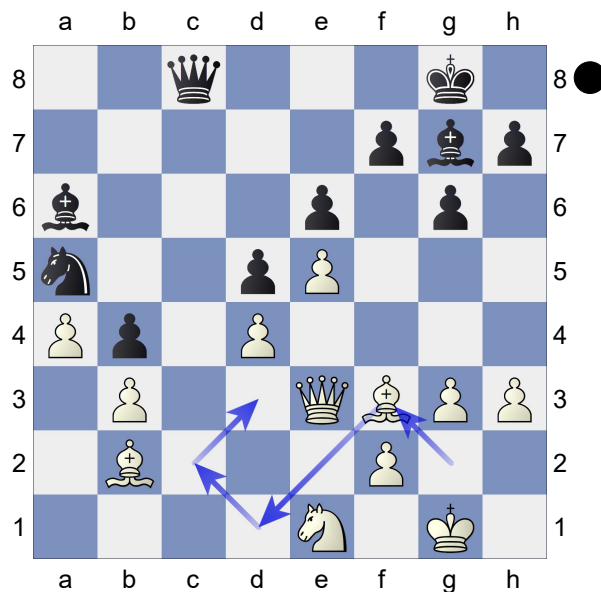
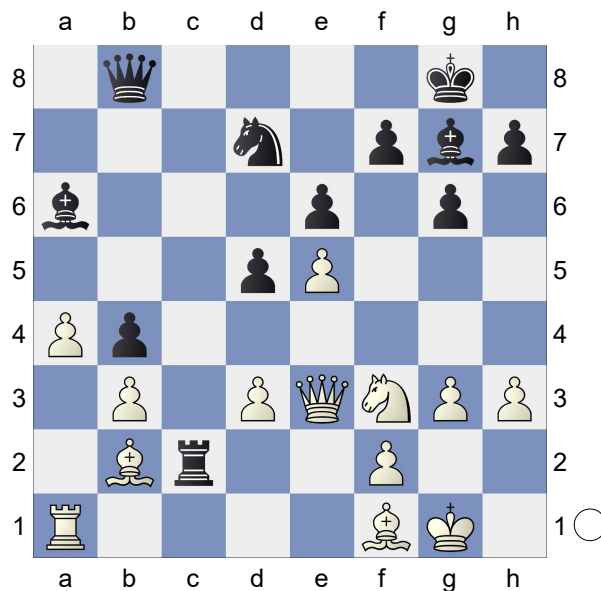
27...Qb7 5:59 28.Ne1 2:52 Rc8 35

29.Bg2 7:20 Nb8 2:24 30.d4 3:04 Nc6

15 31.Rc1 2:21 Na5 8 32.Rxc8+ 49

Qxc8 6 33.Bf3 15

(Diagram)



Bf8 1:34 34.Bd1 11 Be7 54 35.f4 46

[35.h4+-]

35...Bd8 4:25 36.Qd2 1:40 Nc6 30

37.Nf3 2:26 Bb6 24

[37...h5± 38.g4 hxc4]

38.g4 38 Qd7 3:39 39.Bc2 29 Qa7 57

[39...Bd8 40.h4 f6 41.exf6 Bxf6]

40.f5 31 Qc7 2:41 41.Kg2 1:47 exf5 10

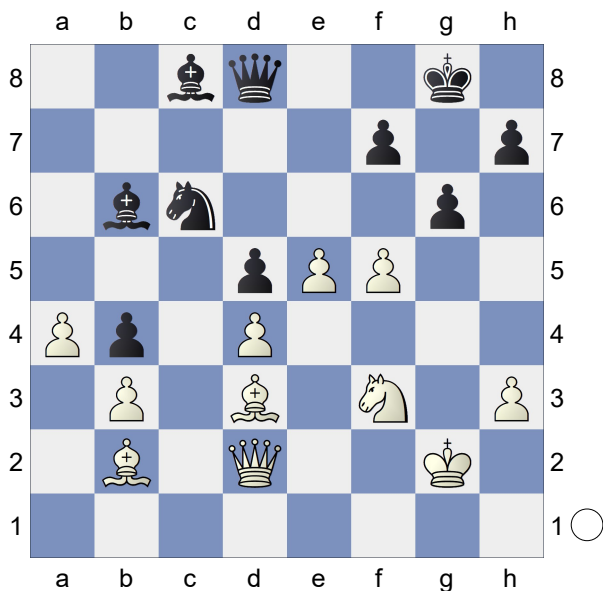
42.gxf5 7 Bc8 20 43.Bd3 50 Qd8 3:20

(Diagram)

44.h4 4:23

[44.Qh6 Qf8 45.Qg5 Bd7+-]

[44.f6]



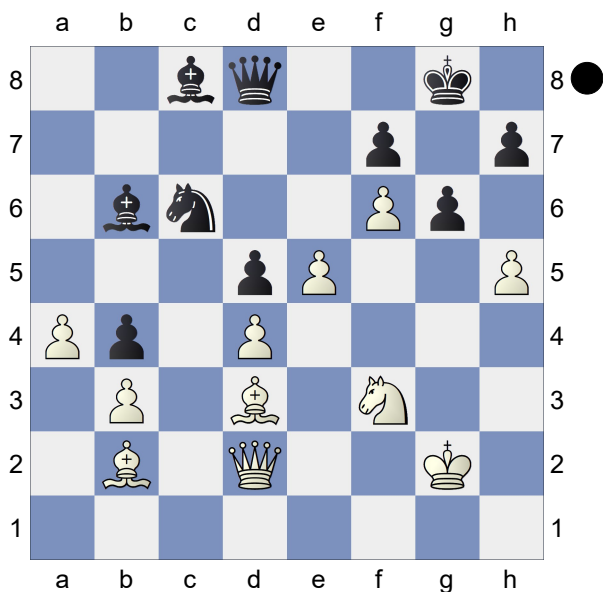
44...Ne7? 2:37

[44...Bxf5 is tougher. 45.Bxf5 gxf5]

45.f6 1:36

[Not 45.Qxb4 Nxf5 46.Bxf5 Bxf5±]

45...Nc6 11 **46.h5** 38



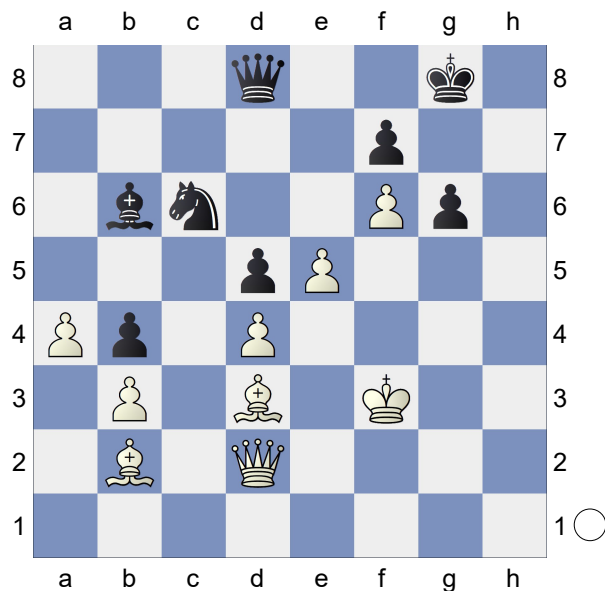
Bg4 1:56

[Δ46...Nxe5 47.Nxe5 (47.dxe5 Qd7+-) 47...Qxf6 48.Qxb4 Qg5+ 49.Kf2 Qxe5 50.Qxb6 Qf4+ (50...Qh2+? 51.Ke3+-) 51.Ke1 Kg7]

47.hxg6! 27 White crashes through.

47...Bxf3+ 23 **48.Kxf3** 5 **hxg6** 20

(Diagram)



49.Bxg6! 12:48 **fxg6** 12 **50.Qh6** 3 **Kf7** 4:44 **51.Qg7+** 50 **Ke6** 5 **52.f7** 11

An excellent combination of queenside containment and cracking on the kingside. Weighted Error Value: White=0.22 (precise) /Black=0.60
1-0

□ **Suarez,Sebastian**

■ **Smith,Olivia**

2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (7.2) 17.06.2025
[Winslow,Elliott]

C66

2200

2137

Suarez clinches clear 2nd with this old/new Ruy Lopez. Smith's choice of variation is curious; keeping pieces on the board? Was she aware that a win might have given *her* 2nd alone? (Well, that's how it turned out.) In any case, Sebby was indeed a bit shaky when on uncertain ground (I suppose it's possible he's booked up on this, too!), but he brought it around. And when Olivia misstepped in her pushing her kingside pawns and let it get locked up "forever," the Suarez just had to find his way in, eventually. **1.e4** 3 **e5** 6 **2.Nf3** 15 **Nc6** 8 **3.Bb5** 18 **a6** 8 **4.Ba4** 5 **Nf6** 7 **5.0-0**

1:38 d6 27 6.Re1 3:18 Bd7 13

The "Fall Through the Cracks" Defense.
As in, lots of books don't even mention it,
just covering the Breyer, Chigorin,
Marshall, Anti-Marshall, Arkhangel, etc.

It's a Steinitz, sorta. 7.c3 2:37 g6 36

C66: Ruy Lopez: Steinitz Defence.

8.h3?! 11:13

[8.d4±]

8...g5!= 40 Okay, I take back what I said
earlier about not playing an aggressive
variation. Stockfish 17.1 is totally behind
this move as well. 9.Nh2?!N 6:59

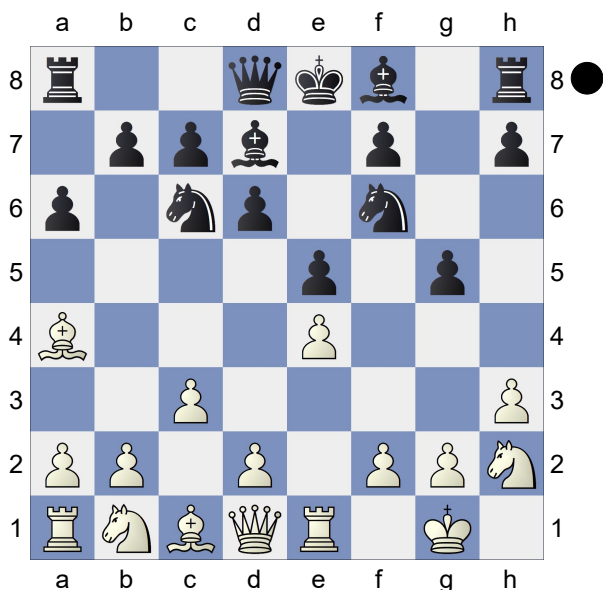
[9.Nxg5= Rg8 10.d4]

[9.d4 g4 10.hxg4 Nxg4 11.Nbd2 h5

12.Nf1 h4 13.Ng5 Rg8 14.d5 Rxg5

15.dxc6 bxc6 16.Bxg5 Qxg5

½-½ (25) Agrest,I (2227)-Faerber,D
(2398) Karlsruhe 2025]



9...h5 9:14

[9...g4!± is much more aggressive,
and just objectively better.]

10.d4 6:11 Rg8 2:48

[10...g4=]

11.Nf1 4:04

[Better is 11.Nd2±]

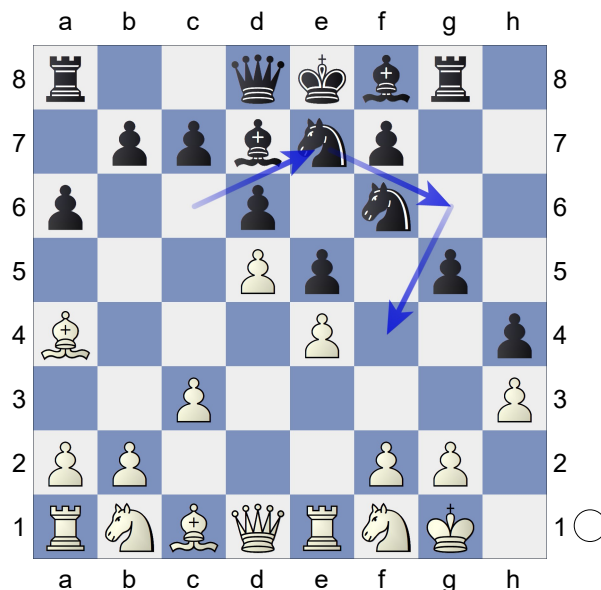
11...h4? 2:37

[11...Ne7!±]

12.d5!↑ 4:52 White is on a roll. Black is

going to have one horrible bishop.

12...Ne7 9:31



13.Bxd7+ 2:49 Nxd7?! 3:05

[13...Qxd7± (threatening ...g4) 14.f3
Nh5 gets to f4 faster.]

14.Ne3+- 5:11 Ng6 3:04 15.Nd2 12:13

Nf4 49 16.Ndf1 3:28 Mature positional

maneuvering by Sebbly! 16...Qf6 14:43

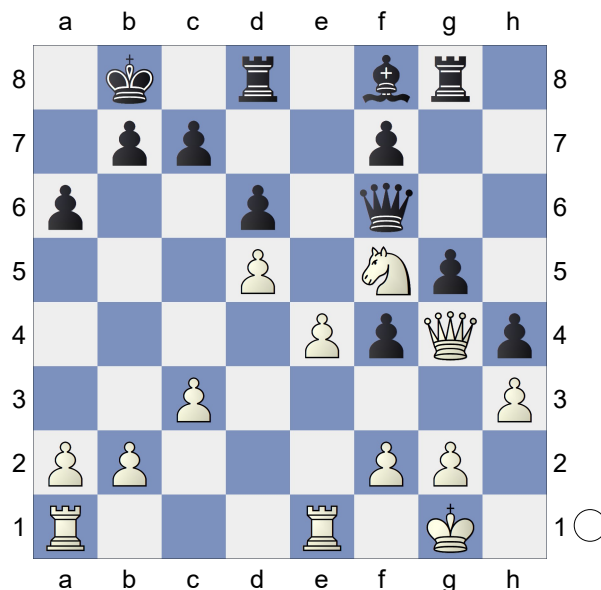
17.Nh2 4:12 0-0-0 2:05 18.Nhg4 4:01

Qg6 19 19.Nf5 1:16 Nf6 7:24 20.Nxf6

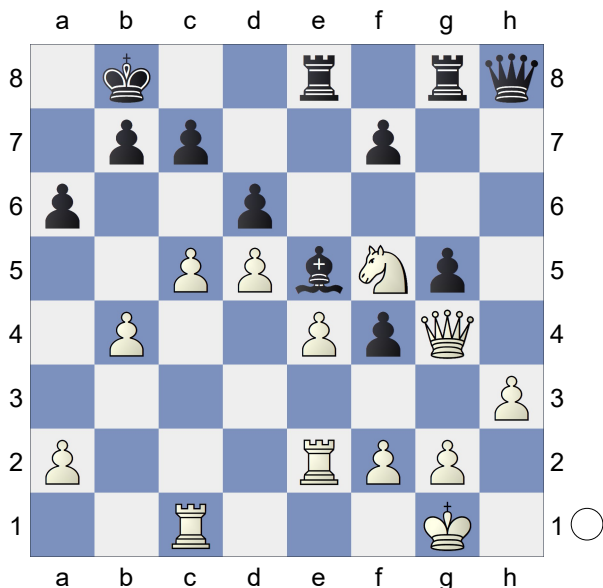
2:31 Qxf6 5 21.Qg4 4:30

[21.b4!]

21...Kb8 5 22.Bxf4 3:17 One way to
deal with the knight -- if it needed
dealing with at all. 22...exf4 36



23.Nxh4?! 1:55 I might be wary removing this pawn, but with the knight back on f5 everything is stopped (no ... f3). **23...Bg7 1:54 24.Nf5 52 Bh8 1:14 25.Re2 49 Rde8 28 26.c4 1:23 Qg6 2:10 27.Rc1 2:06 Be5 2:46 28.b4 [28.c5?! dxc5 29.Rxc5 Qb6±] 28...Qf6 1:07 29.c5 3:32 Qh8 8:04**



30.f3 1:07

[Δ30.Rec2]

30...Rg6 4:48

[Δ30...Qh7 and if you believe engine evaluations, White is close to "not winning" (oops, I blinked -- it's +2.05/d31)

31.Kh2 34 Qf6 1:45 32.Rec2 12 Qd8 4:37 33.a4 24 Rh8 43 34.a5 53 Qf6 7:55

[34...dxc5 35.bxc5 Qe8]

35.c6 16 Rc8 1:47 36.cxb7 2:13 Kxb7 6 37.Rc6 17

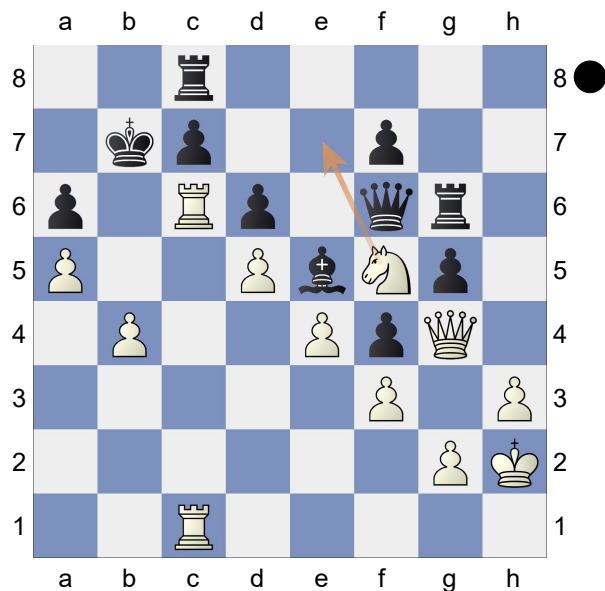
(Diagram)

Qd8?! 2:00

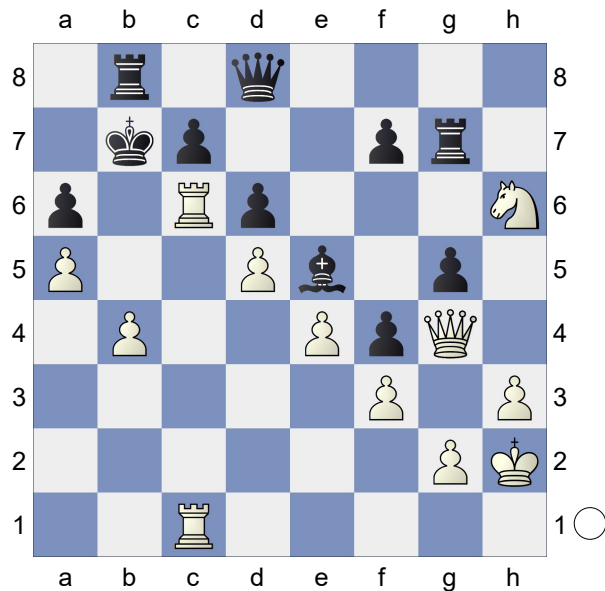
[37...Rgg8!]

38.Rb1?! 1:50 Nothing wrong with this, except that

[38.Ne7!! Qxe7? 39.Rb6+!! would have been an instant finish!]



38...Rb8 2:04 39.Rbc1 1:13 Rg8 5:07 40.Nh6 1:23 Rg7 1:48



41.b5 1:32 f6 44 42.bxa6+ 1:24 Ka7 17 43.Qf5?! 1:02

[43.Qe6! Re7? 44.Nf7!]

43...Rb5?! 1:26

[43...Ka8 44.a7 Kxa7]

44.Ng4?! 21

[Δ44.Qe6]

44...Rxa5 49 45.Nf2 21

[45.Qe6]

45...Rxa6 43

[45...Ra3]

46.Rxa6+?± 25

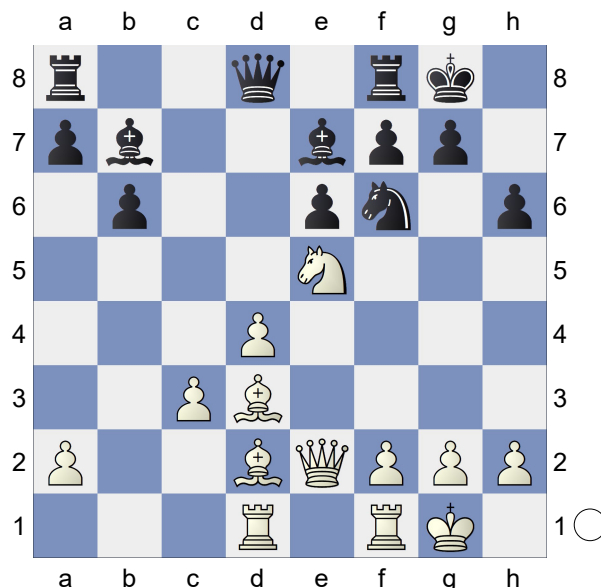
[46.Nd3+-]

46...Kxa6 4 47.Nd3 20 Qd7 26
 [47...Kb5 48.Qg4 Qe8 49.Rc2 Ka4]
 48.Qxd7 54 Rxd7= 7 Clearly Suarez
 has let it slip away. The bad bishop is
 almost irrelevant. Of course they're both
 in extreme time pressure -- a minute
 each! 49.Rb1 2 Bc3 52 50.Rb3 40 Ba5
 12 51.Rb8 2 Ka7 30 52.Rf8 6 Bc3 13
 53.Nf2 27 Ng4 would now be deadly.
 53...c5?+- 1:37
 [53...Rg7!± 54.Ng4 Rg6]
 54.dxc6 4 Rc7 4 55.Ng4 16 Rxc6 18
 [55...Be1 56.Rxf6 Bg3+ 57.Kg1
 Rxc6 58.Kf1 Rc1+ 59.Ke2+-]
 56.h4! 57
 [56.Nxf6 Bd4 57.h4 gxh4+-]
 56...Be1?! 14
 [56...gxh4 was necessary. 57.Nxf6
 Be5]
 57.h5! 27 Best of many wins 57...Bg3+
 1:49 58.Kh3 4 d5 19 59.exd5 45 Rc1
 27 60.Nxf6 16 Rh1+ 30 61.Kg4 2 Rh2
 12 62.Kxg5 44 Bh4+ 27 63.Kxf4 37
 Rxg2 25 64.Ng4 45 Bg3+ 21 65.Kg5
 1:00 Rd2 18 66.Rf5 35 Kb6 59 67.h6
 10 Intending h7 and mate. 67...Rd1 28
 68.h7 17 Rh1 5 69.Nh6 42
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.52/
 Black=0.72
 1-0

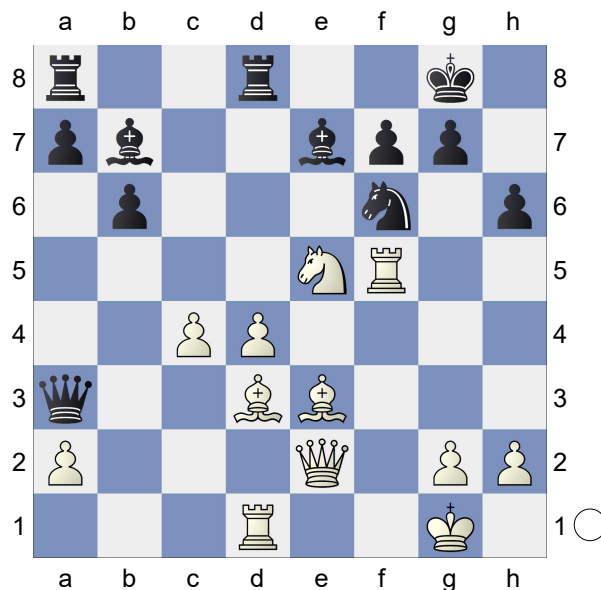
□ Winslow, Elliott D26 2200
 ■ Smith, Roger Christopher 1826
 2nd Silman TNM: 2000+ (7.11) 17.06.25
 [Winslow, Elliott]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6
 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 Nbd7
 8.0-0 dxc4 9.Bxc4 c5 10.Qe2 cxd4
 11.exd4 Nb6 12.Bd3 Nbd5 13.Rad1
 h6 14.Bd2 Nxc3 15.bxc3 b6 16.Ne5
 Bb7

(Diagram)



17.f4!?
 [♠17.Qe3 (SF17.1)]
 17...Qd5?! 18.Be3?!
 [18.f5!]
 [18.Rde1!]
 18...Qa5 19.c4 Rfd8 20.f5+-
 Good enough.
 [20.g4! (SF17.1) -- I looked at this but
 just couldn't bring myself to play it.]
 20...exf5 21.Rxf5 Qa3



22.d5?!
 [The simple prophylactic 22.Kh1!
 gets the comp nod.]
 22...Bc8!± 23.Rf3 Bd6?
 [23...Bc5! 24.Kh1 (24.h3) 24...Re8

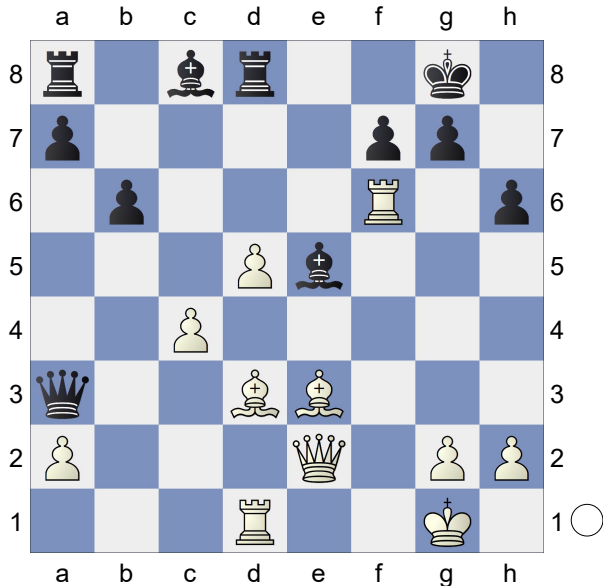
25.h3! Rxe5 26.Bxc5!±]

24.Rxf6!?

[24.Bd4 Bxe5 25.Bh7+! Nxh7
26.Rxa3 Bxd4+ 27.Rxd4+-]

24...Bxe5

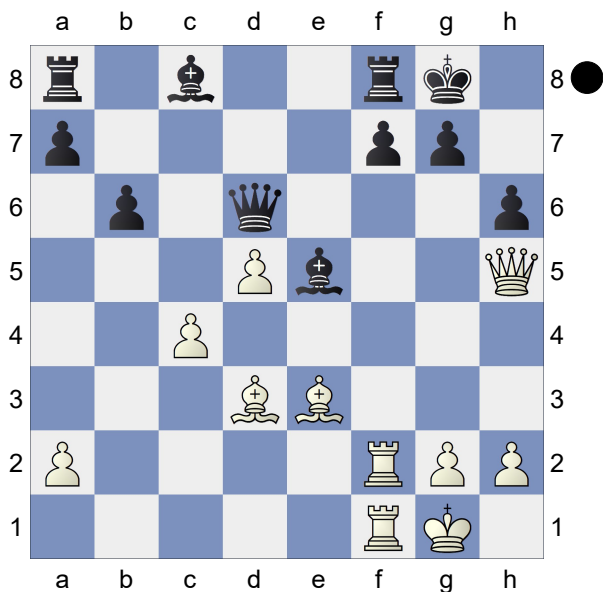
[24...gxf6 25.Qh5! Bxe5 26.Qxh6 f5
27.Qg5+]



25.Rf2?

[25.Rxf7! I saw this this just after I moved. Kxf7 26.Qh5+ Kg8 (26...Kf6 27.Rf1+) 27.Qxe5+-]

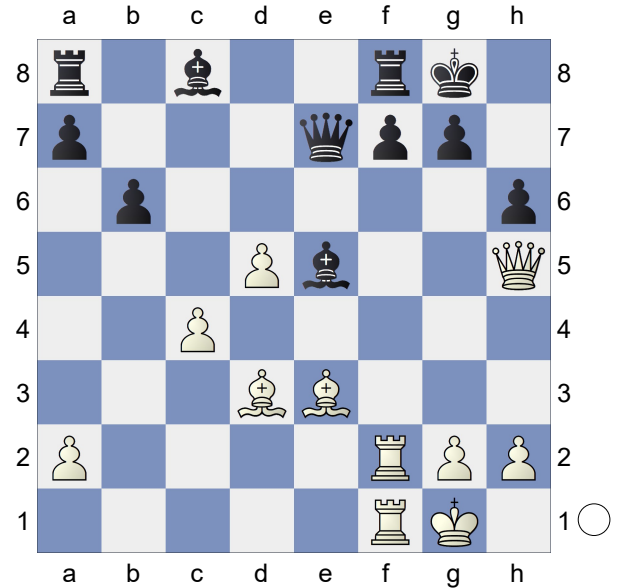
25...Qd6!± 26.Qh5 Rf8 27.Rdf1



Qe7?

[27...f5! 28.Kh1! Bd7 29.Bxf5 Rxf5!

30.Rxf5 g6 31.Qg4!±]



28.Rf3?!

[Δ28.Kh1]

[Another miss: 28.c5!!

A) 28...bxc5? 29.Rxf7 Rxf7

30.Rxf7 Qxf7 31.Bh7+ Kxh7

(31...Kf8 32.Bxc5+ Ke8 33.Bg6

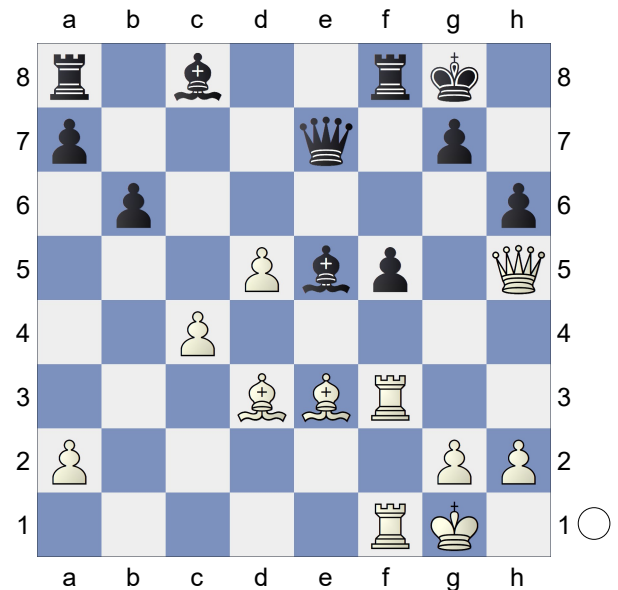
Qxg6 34.Qxg6+ Kd8 35.Qf7 Bf6

36.Qf8+ Kd7 37.Qd6+ Ke8

38.Qc6+);

B) 28...f5 29.c6 Those pawns are overwhelming.]

28...f5!



29.g4!± Out on a limb? Yes. Stockfish

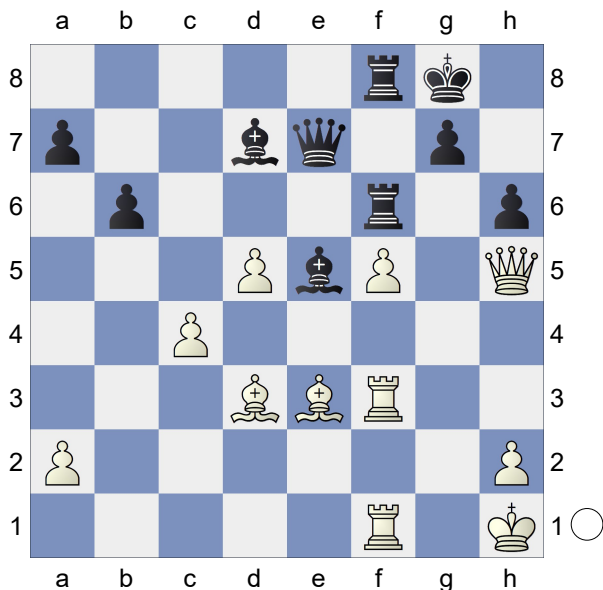
makes it best. 29...Bd7?! 30.gxf5!+-

Rf6 31.Kh1?!

[31.Bf2!+-]

31...Raf8

[31...Qa3! 32.Bc1 Qd6]



32.h4?

[32.Rg1!±]

32...Qa3!= 33.Bg5! Be8?!

[33...Qxa2 34.R3f2 Qa3 35.Bxf6 Bxf6!=]

34.Qg4± Qxa2 35.R1f2?!

[35.Rh3!±]

35...Qa1+ 36.Rf1 Qb2 37.R3f2?! Qd4

38.Qxd4 Bxd4± 39.Bxf6 Bxf2

40.Be7?!

[40.Rxf2! Rxf6 41.Kg2±]

40...Rf7 41.d6?!=

[41.f6!? gxf6! (41...Bxh4?? 42.Bg6+-) 42.Bb4 Bc5 43.Bxc5 bxc5 44.Ra1±]

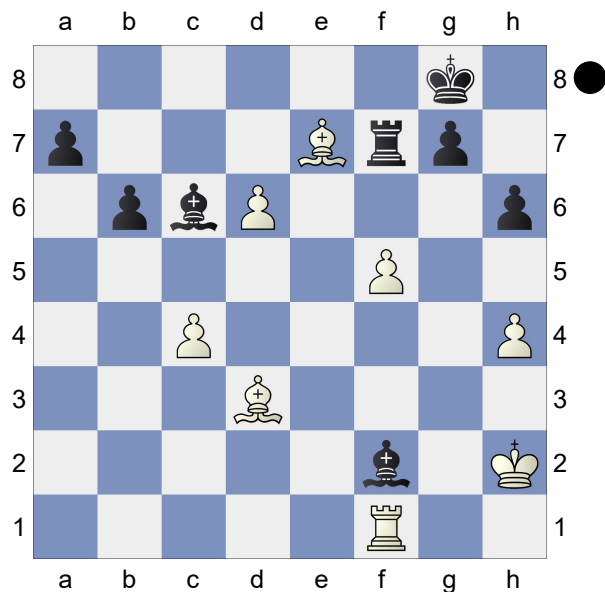
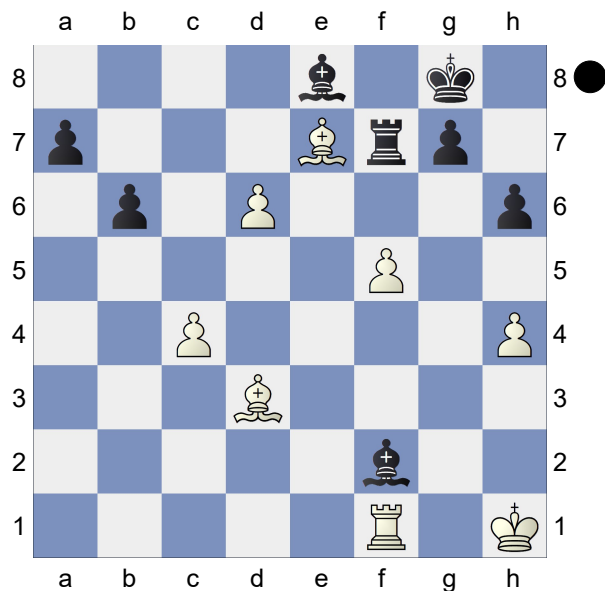
(Diagram)

41...Bc6+

[41...Rxe7!? 42.dxe7 Bxh4! 43.Ra1 Bxe7 44.Rxa7 Bc6+= (44...Kf7=)]

42.Kh2

(Diagram)



Rxe7??

[42...Bc5! 43.Re1 Rxe7! 44.dxe7 Kf7 45.Be4 Bd7 46.Bd5+ Ke8=]

43.dxe7+- Bxh4 44.Be4□ Be8

[44...Bd7 45.Bd5+ (45.Rd1!? Be8 46.Bd5+ Kh7 47.Kh3) 45...Kh7 46.Rd1 Bxe7 47.Be4]

45.Bd5+ Kh7 46.Kg2+-

[46.Kh3!]

[46.c5!]

46...Bf6 47.Re1 g6 48.Re6 Kg7

49.Bc6 Bxc6+

[49...Bf7 50.e8Q]

50.Rxc6 Bxe7 51.Rxg6+

[51.Rc7! Kf8 52.fxg6]

51...Kh7

[51...Kf7 52.Rxh6]

52.Kf3 Bc5

[52...h5 53.Kf4]

53.Kg4 Be3 54.Kh5 a5 55.f6

1-0

□ **Mays-Smith, Isaac S**

■ **Marvin, Hayes Alexander**

2nd Silman TNM: 1600-1999 (6.15)

[Winslow, Elliott]

E11

1643

1919

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Bb4+ 4.Bd2

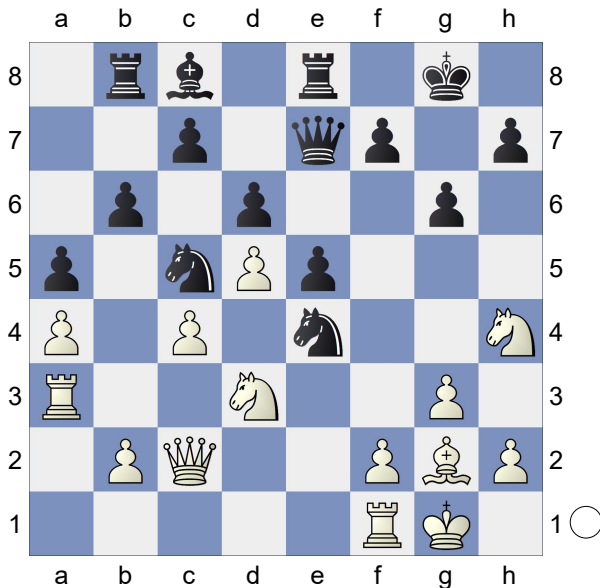
Qe7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.a3 Bxd2+ 7.Nxd2

d6 8.Ngf3 Nbd7 9.0-0 Re8 10.e4 e5

11.a4 a5 12.Qc2 b6 13.Nh4 g6

14.Ra3 Rb8 15.Ndf3 Bb7 16.d5 Nc5

17.Ne1 Bc8 18.Nd3 Nfxe4



19.Nxe5 dxe5

[19...Qxe5!]

20.Bxe4 f5 21.Bf3 e4 22.Re1 Bd7

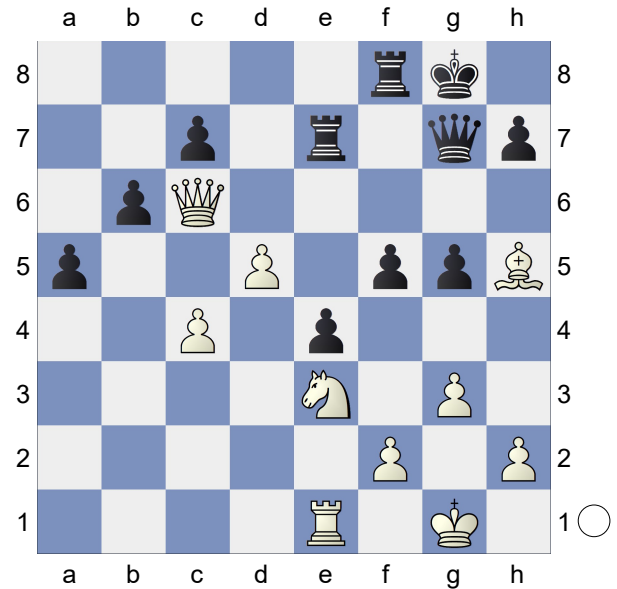
23.Bd1 Qf6 24.Be2 Bxa4 25.Rxa4

Nxa4 26.Qxa4 Qxb2 27.Qc6 Qg7

28.Ng2 g5 29.Bh5 Re7 30.Ne3 Rf8

(Diagram)

31.d6 cxd6 32.Qd5+ Kh8 33.Nxf5



Qf6 34.g4 Re5 35.Qxd6?? Rxf5

36.Qxf6+ R5xf6 37.Rb1 Rxf2 38.Rxb6

e3 39.Re6 e2

0-1

□ **Dutter, Frederic**

■ **Touset, Stephen**

2nd Silman TNM: 1600-1999 (6.16)

[Winslow, Elliott]

B07

1900

1545

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.Bg5

(155 games)

[over 30,000 games 4.Nf3]

4...exd4?!

[4...Nbd7]

[4...h6! 5.Be3 (5.Bh4 Nbd7

sidelines the bishop) 5...Ng4 6.Bc1

and the amazing part of this is --

White is still (a tiny bit) better! +0.22/

31 on Stockfish 17.1.]

5.Qxd4 Be7 6.0-0-0 0-0 7.Bc4

[7.f4±]

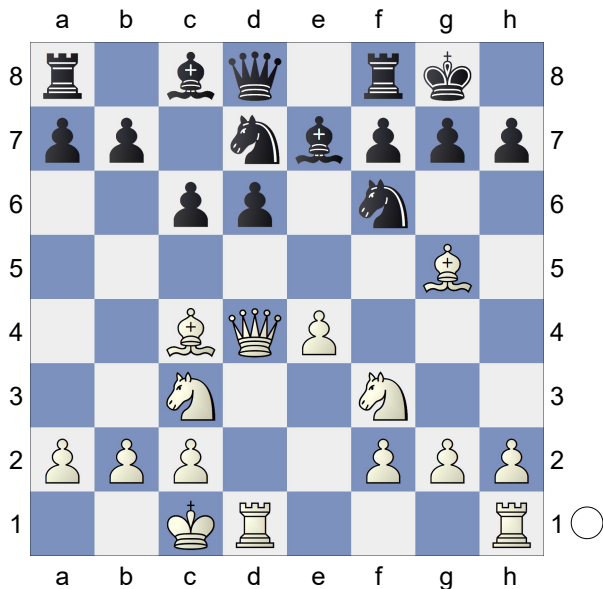
7...Nbd7

[7...Nc6= 8.Qd2 Be6 9.Bxe6 fxe6]

8.Nf3 White is slightly better. 8...c6?

[8...h6± 9.Bh4 c5]

(Diagram)



9.Bxf6N

[9.e5!+- dxe5 10.Nxe5]

[Predecessor: 9.Bb3 Qa5 10.Rhe1

Ne5 11.Bd2 Qc7 12.Bf4 Nfd7

13.Qd2 a5 14.Nd4 Nc5 15.a3

0-1 (46) Mihajlov,S (2375)-Babazada,
K (2476) Chess.com INT 2022]

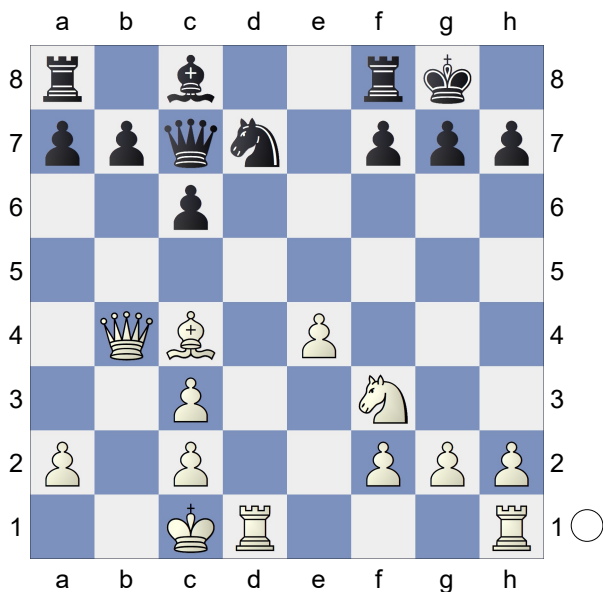
9...Bxf6= 10.Qxd6 Bxc3

Black sacrificed a pawn

[10...Qa5=]

**11.bxc3± Qa5 12.Qb4 White has more
active pieces. 12...Qc7**

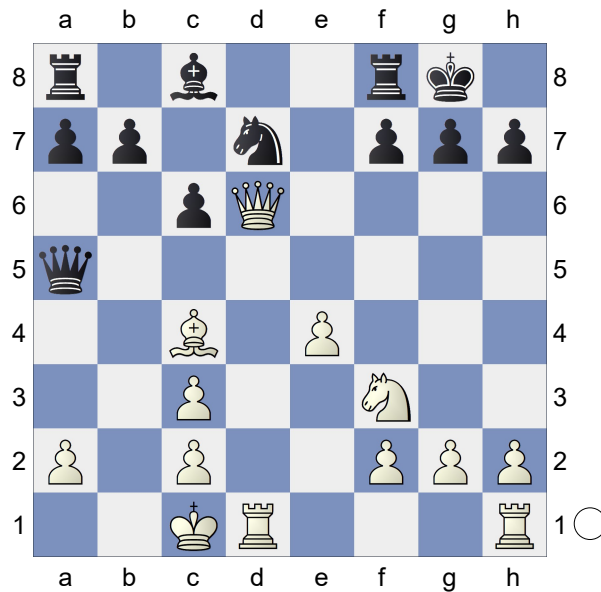
[12...Qxb4± 13.cxb4 c5]



13.Qd6

[13.Qe7!+-]

13...Qa5



14.Qd4??-+

[14.Qb4!± is forced if you want to stay
better. Qxb4 15.cxb4]

14...b5?

[Black should try 14...Nb6-+ 15.Bb3
c5]

15.Bd3?

[Only move: 15.Bb3±]

15...Nb6?

[15...Qxa2 16.Kd2±]

[15...c5!+- picks off the *right* pawn
and pushes the bishop to quite a
worthless square (e2).

A) 16.Qe3

A1) 16...Qxc3? 17.e5±

(17.Bxb5±);

**A2) 16...c4! 17.Be2 Re8 18.e5
h6!-+ Black now brings out
pieces with more and more
threats; White is pretty much
hopeless.;**

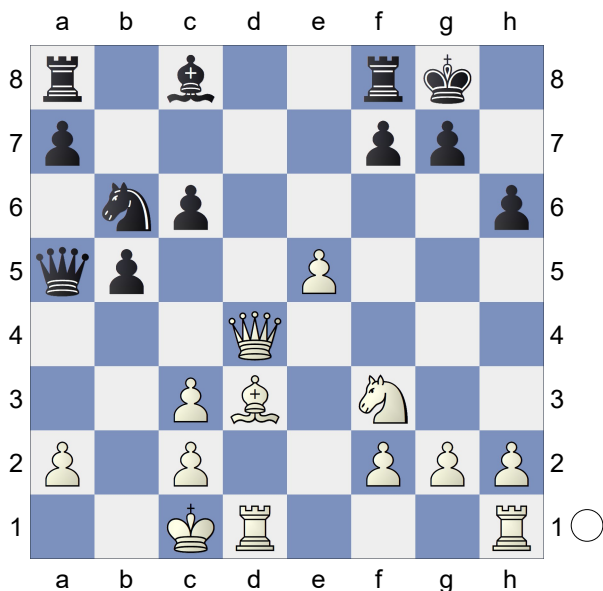
**B) 16.Qd6 Qa3+! (SF 17.1 left to
run) (16...c4 17.Be2± Qxc3;
16...Qxc3) 17.Kd2 (17.Kb1 Nb6
18.Bxb5 Be6 is a massacre)
17...Nb6 18.Ke1 Na4!-+]**

16.e5!?

[16.Qb4!? Qxa2 17.Ne5]

16...h6

[16...Be6 Threatens to win with ... Nc4!. 17.Qh4 h6 (17...Qxa2 18.Qxh7#)]



17.Qe4= g6

[17...Qxc3 18.Qh7#]

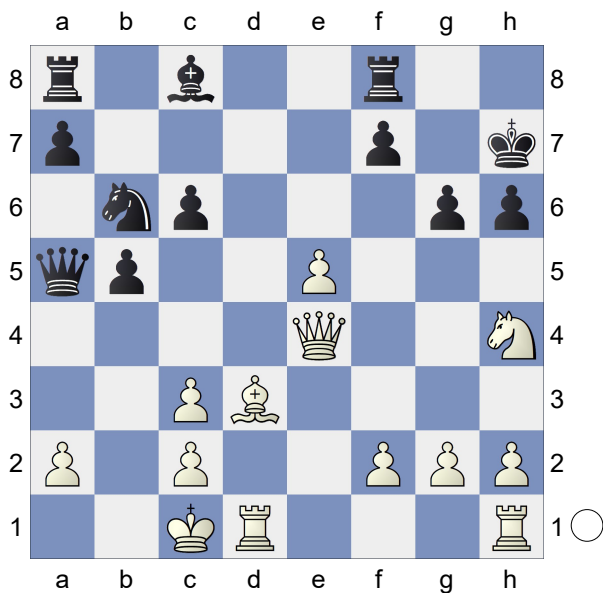
18.Nh4 Black must now prevent Nxg6!.

18...Kh7??

[18...Qxc3 19.Nxg6 Rd8 20.Nf4± (20.Ne7+ Kf8#)]

[18...Qa3+= 19.Kd2 Qe7

(19...Qxa2? 20.Nxg6 Rd8 21.Ne7+ Kf8 22.Nxc6+-)]



19.Nxg6!+- White threatens Ne7+ and mate. 19...Kg7 Weighted Error Value: White=0.97/Black=1.05 Some suspect moves earlier, but then a nice destruction sacrifice to end it by Fritz!

[19...Qa4 20.e6]

[19...Kg7 20.Nf4! is even better than just taking the rook.]

1-0

□ Marvin,Hayes Alexander

A48

■ Admassu,Yonathan

1919

1661

2nd Silman TNM: 1600-1999 (7.5)

[Winslow,Elliott]

With four players tied for the lead at 4½-1½, it would be hard to make any significant prize without scoring this final round. And the games were struggles. Hayes Marvin played his signature Torre Attack, and showed the value of experience, mostly outplaying Yonathan Admassu well into a queen and rook game, but there he drastically faltered, trading queens into a nothing rook ending which he quickly turned into less than nothing. There it was Admassu all the way, activating his rook then his king

(Jacob Aagard, "Conceptual Rook Endgames," Chapter 1, "Activate the Rook First")(well, okay, Aagard credits both Mednis and Dvoretsky). 1.d4 1 Nf6

21 2.Nf3 4 g6 23 3.c3 4 Bg7 15

4.Bg5 6 The Torre System (or "Attack").

Innocuous-looking, but it must be taken seriously. And White has a wide range of options and plans, as does Black of course. 4...0-0 17 5.Nbd2 21 d6 20

[Let me toss in 5...d5 6.Bxf6 Bxf6

7.e4 dxe4 8.Nxe4 Bg7 9.Bc4 Nd7

10.0-0 Nf6 11.Qe2 b6 12.Nxf6+

Bxf6 13.Ne5 e6 14.Rad1 Bb7

15.Rfe1 a6 16.a3 Qd6 17.Rd2 b5

18.Bd3 Rad8 19.h3 c5 20.dxc5
Qxc5 21.Ng4 Bg7 22.Red1 h5
23.Ne3 Bh6 24.Re1 Rd6 25.Bc2
Rfd8 26.Rxd6 Rxd6 27.Nf1 Qd5
28.f3 Qc5+ 0-1 (28) Marvin,H (1703)-
Jirasek,L (2299) Shankland Blitz, MI
2024.11.15]

6.e4 6 c5 10 7.dxc5 9

This is overwhelmingly played

[7.Bd3 b6 8.0-0 Bb7 9.Qe2 cxd4
10.cxd4 Nfd7 11.Nc4 Qe8 12.e5
1-0 (64) Marvin,H (1649)-
Tirouvingadame,A (1732) New Year
TNM 2024]

7...dxc5 2:49 8.Bc4 10 And this too
[although Kamsky (and Kasparov!)
have occasionally been seen behind
8.Be2]

8...Nc6 58 9.0-0 1:00 The old main line.

9...h6!? 1:15 Scores very well!

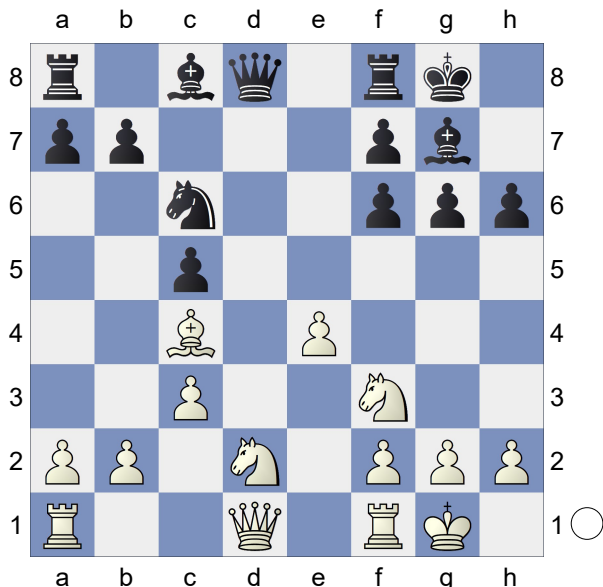
[9...Qc7 is, still, the most played by a
lot]

10.Bxf6 33

[10.Bh4 Nh5! Black has a plus score
with this, Stockfish 17.1 likes it --
and Kamsky is 4½-½ in the database
on the White side!]

[Kamsky has played 10.Be3 too]

10...exf6! 3:09



Here also, -0.22/32 on 17.1. Most

players are loath to "weaken" their pawn
structure this way. **11.h3N 1:17**

[11.Re1 b6 (11...Qc7!? 12.Qc2
Rb8 13.a4 a6 14.h4 b5 15.Be2?
h5 16.axb5 axb5 17.Nb3 Qb6
18.c4 b4 19.Red1 Re8 20.g3 Bf8
21.Nh2 Qc7 22.Bd3 Ne5 23.Bf1 g5
24.hxg5 fxg5 0-1 (24) Owens,J
(2034)-Susla,V (2067) LSS email
2014) 12.Qc2 Qc7 13.Rad1 Bb7
14.Bd5 Rad8 15.Nf1 Ne7 16.Bxb7
Qxb7 17.Ne3 h5 ½-½ (77) Le,T
(2501)-Yoo,C (2455) PNWCC Online
blitz JP 10th, Chess.com 2020]

11...Qe7 6:58 12.Qc2 3:37 The position
is equal. **12...Kh8 14:30 13.Rfe1 1:20**
Nd8?! 4:28

[13...Qc7=]

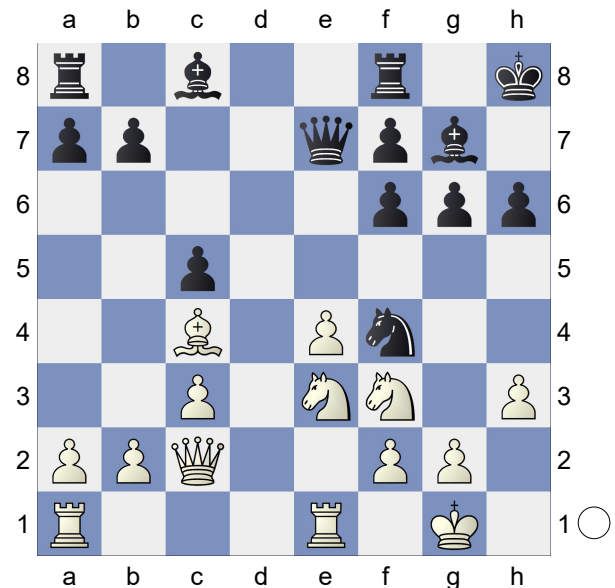
[13...Rb8]

14.Nf1± 1:36 Ne6 2:08

[Maybe a bit better is 14...Be6±
15.Bxe6 Nxe6]

15.Ne3± 2:15 Nf4?! 4:09

[Δ15...Nc7]



16.Nd5 52

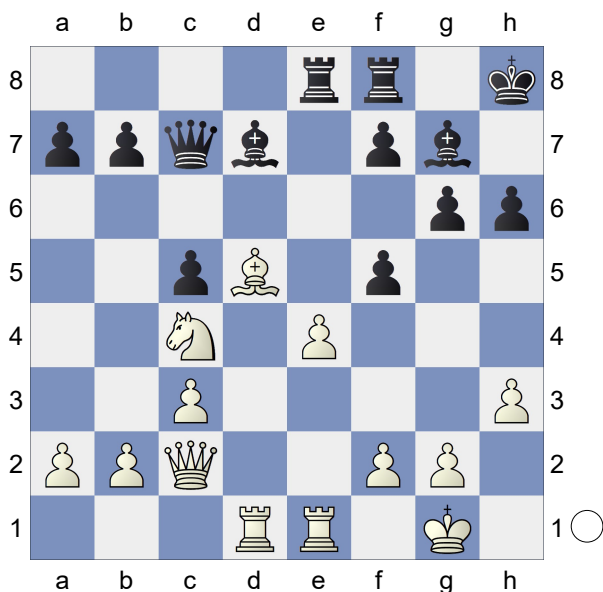
[16.h4!± h5? 17.g3+-]

16...Nxd5± 4:58 17.Bxd5 19 Qc7 2:33

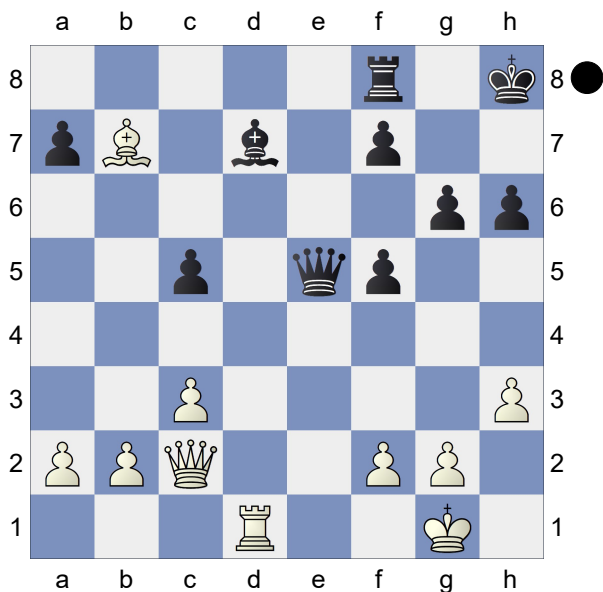
18.Rad1 1:26 Bd7 1:21

[18...Re8]

[18...Rb8]
19.Nd2?! 2:50
 [19.Qb3 Bc6 20.Bxc6 Qxc6
 21.Rd5±]
19...Rae8= 5:51 20.Nc4 2:50 f5 5:56
 [20...h5!=]



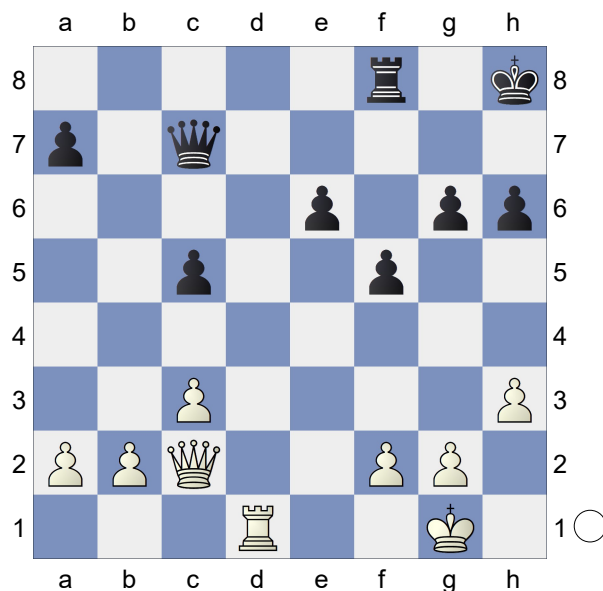
21.e5! 3:25 Works combinatorily, but no panic if Black follows up correctly.
21...Bxe5 1:43 Has to be done, or else just worse. **22.Nxe5 27 Rxe5 22**
23.Rxe5 17 Qxe5 40 24.Bxb7 43



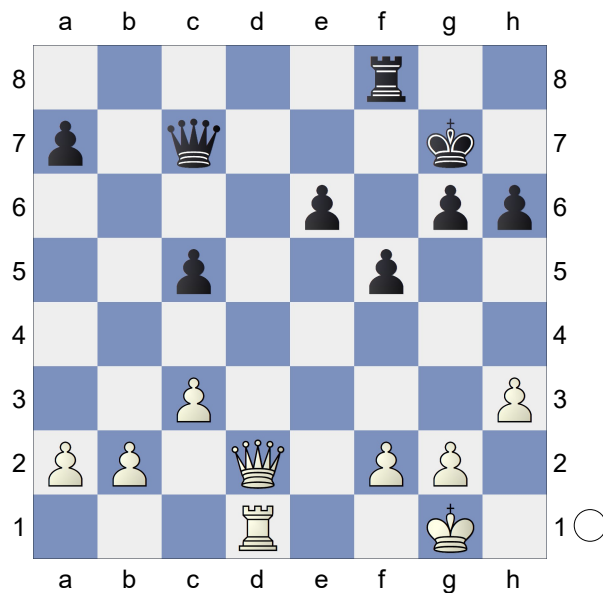
Marvin has an edge with his healthier pawn structure, but Black's queen stands well. [White: 1h17m] (+0.18/35)

24...Qc7?! 3:38 [Black 33m] Not so well now! Looks like that time deficit is affecting Black's play.

[24...Be6= is healthier.]
25.Bd5± 3:03 +0.33/32 25...Be6? 1:32
 [25...Bc6± Once Black gets in ...Kg7 and something with the rook, it's holdable.]
26.Bxe6+- 1:16 fxe6 20



27.Qd2?! 1:00
 [27.Qa4!+- Rd8?! (27...Rf7 28.Qe8+ Kg7 29.Qxe6) 28.Rxd8+ Qxd8
 29.Qxa7 Qd1+ 30.Kh2 Qd6+ 31.g3
 Black has too many problems.]
27...Kg7 5:03



28.Qd7+? 1:07 This move goes against a lot of principles. White owns the d-file, but after this it's Black's in four moves; White has a queenside majority and might consider mobilizing it; Black's king is clearly the more exposed of the two, so keeping power on board makes sense, not trading it off.

[28.b4!+- Too extreme an eval? Not according to Stockfish 17.1, although it's "only" 1.85/33]

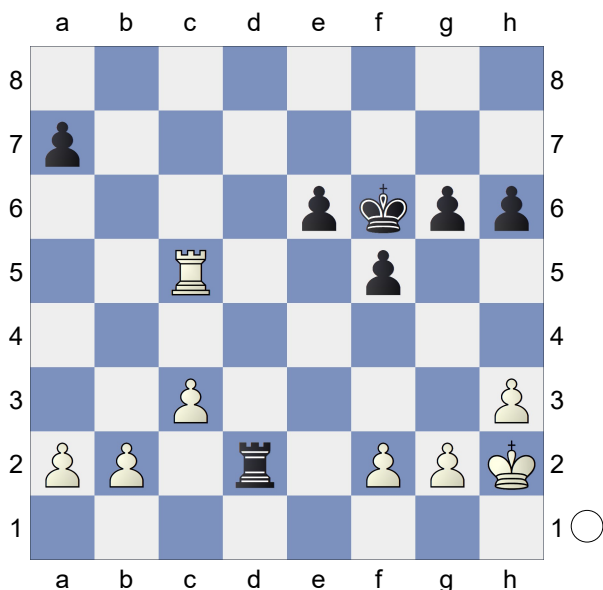
28...Qxd7= 2:55 **29.Rxd7+ 8 Rf7** 1:03 **30.Rd6!?** 25

[30.Rxf7+ Kxf7 is all 0.00.]

30...Kf6 20 **31.Rc6** 13 Everything is turning into zeros, but this could be better prepared.

[31.b3 for example.]

31...Rd7 9 The Active Rook. **32.Rxc5** 27 **Rd1+** 13 **33.Kh2** 4 **Rd2** 25



34.Rb5? 1:43 The losing move.

[34.f3= (or a king move, to g3 or g1) and White has no worries.]

34...Rxf2+ 28 **35.a4** 50 **e5** 1:28

This pawn is lead runner. **36.b4** 28 **e4** 25 **37.Ra5** 31 **e3** 6:30 And now ...e2 would win. **38.Kg1** 22 **Rf4** 8:41

39.Ra6+ 20 **Ke5** 44 **40.Rxa7** 9 **Ke4** 11 **41.g3** 2:27 **Rf2** 2:33 **42.Re7+** 2:47 **Kf3** 16 **43.a5** 1:39 **e2** 7:47 **44.a6** 35 **Rf1+**

36 45.Kh2 5 **e1Q** 33 **46.Rxe1** 8 **Rxe1** 7 **KR-KP** 47.**b5** 6 **Ra1** 1:12 **48.c4** 12 **Ke4** 34 **49.c5** 11 **Kd5** 8 **50.b6** 15 **Ra2+** 34 **51.Kg1** 5 **Kc6** 29 **52.a7** 16 **Kb7** 15 Black used his chance.

Weighted Error Value: White=0.50/ Black=0.18 (very precise)

0-1

□ Ploquin, Phil

■ Dutter, Frederic

2nd Silman TNM: 1600-1999 (7.16)

[Winslow, Elliott]

B04

1637

1900

Meanwhile, on the other top board of the 1600-1999 section, Phil Ploquin and Frederic Dutter were swapping advantages all game before "Fritz" relented to a repetition while in a won game (!). Thus they both tied for 2nd-3rd, not bad. **1.e4** **Nf6** Dutter's favorite Alekhine Defense. **2.e5** **Nd5** **3.c4** **Nb6** **4.d4** **d6** **5.exd6** **cxd6** **6.Nf3** **g6** **7.Be2** **Bg7** **8.Be3** **0-0** **9.0-0** **Bg4** **10.Nbd2** **Nc6?!**

[10...e5±]

11.h3

[11.d5!±]

11...Bf5?

[11...Bxf3= keeps the balance.

12.Nxf3 e6]

12.g4N

[12.d5±]

[12.a3 d5 13.c5 Nc8 14.b4 a6

15.Nb3 b6 16.Rc1 bxc5 17.Nxc5

Qb6 18.Qb3 Rd8 19.Bxa6 Rxa6

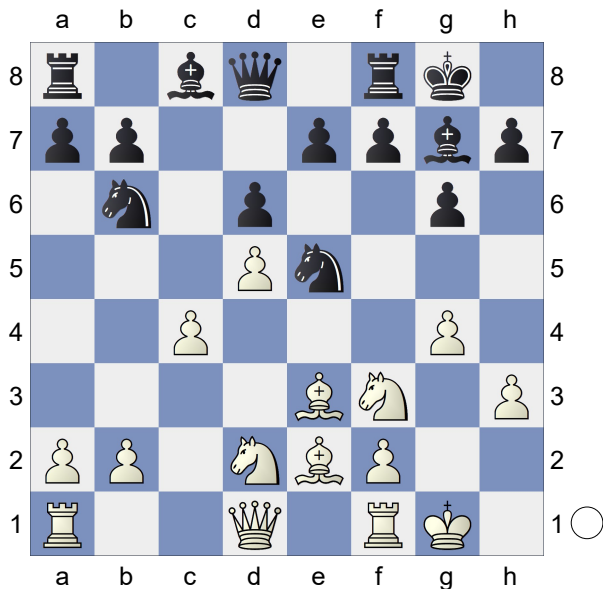
0-1 (67) Maione, M (1914)-Fiolo, C

(1483) Salsomaggiore Terme 2019]

12...Bc8 **13.d5** **Ne5**

(Diagram)

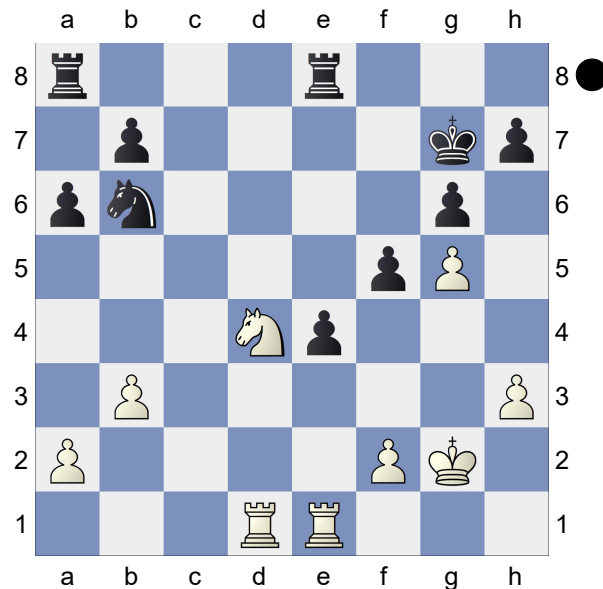
14.Bd4



[14.Nd4!±]
14...f5= 15.Nxe5 dxe5 16.Bc3 e6
17.dxe6
 [17.Qb3!±]
17...Bxe6± 18.Nf3 Qxd1?
 [18...fxg4 19.Qxd8 Rfxd8
 (19...Raxd8 20.Ng5+-) 20.Ng5 Bxc4
 21.Bxc4+ Nxc4 22.hxg4±]
 [18...Bxc4 19.Bxc4+ Nxc4 20.Qb3±]
 [18...Qe7]
 [18...Qc7]
 [18...e4!± 19.Nd4 Bxd4 (19...Bxc4
 20.Bxc4+ Nxc4 21.Ne6±) 20.Bxd4
 Qh4]
19.Raxd1= Bxc4 20.Bxc4+ Nxc4
21.b3 Nb6 22.g5
 [22.Nxe5= fxg4 23.hxg4]
22...Rfe8+- 23.Rfe1 e4 Discovered
Attack 24.Bxg7 Kxg7
 [Not 24...exf3 25.Bd4=]
25.Nd4 a6
 [25...Kf7+- 26.a4 Red8]
26.Kg2?
 [26.f3±]

(Diagram)

26...Kf7! 27.Ne2 Rad8 28.Nf4 Rxd1
29.Rxd1 Nc8 Prevents Rd6



[29...Ke7! Hoping for ...Rd8. 30.f3
 (30.Rd4 a5+-)
A) 30...Rc8 31.fxe4 Rc2+
 (31...fxe4 32.Rd4±) 32.Kg3 fxe4
 (32...Rxa2 33.exf5 gxf5 34.Re1+
 Kf7 35.Re6±);
B) 30...Rd8! 31.Rc1 Rd2+-
 (31...Kd6)]
30.Rd7+ Re7 31.Rd8 Re8 Prevents
Rxc8. 32.Rd7+ Re7
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.51/
 Black=0.35
 ½-½

□ Babayan,Gagik

■ Yan,Rayna

2nd Silman TNM: 1600-1999 (7.17)
 [Winslow,Elliott]

B12

1725

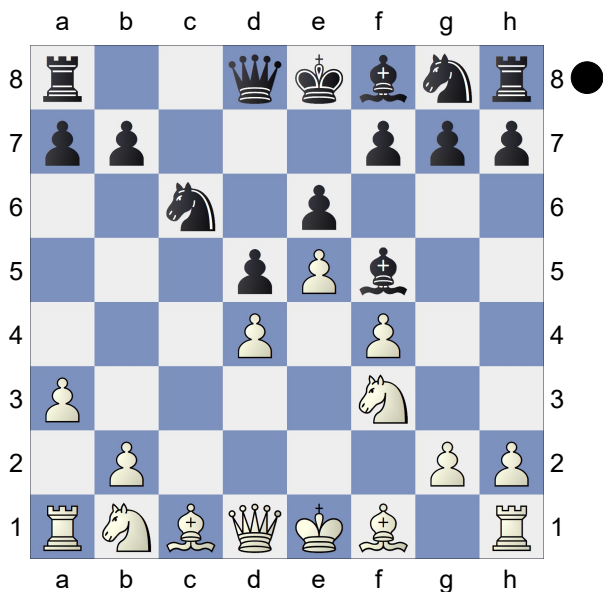
1681

I wanted to include this game for
 Rajna's resilience -- she held on and on,
 they traded off a few blunders (I've
 limited myself to "?" to protect the guilty),
 when Gagik finally slipped badly she
 pounced! And when I noticed she'd tied
 for 2nd-4th it *had* to go in.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6
5.f4 cxd4

[**Relevant:** 5...Nh6 6.Nf3 Bg4 7.dxc5 e6 8.Be3 Nf5 9.Bf2 d4 10.cxd4 Bxf3 11.Qxf3 Nfxd4 12.Qd1 Bxc5 13.Nc3 Qb6 14.Rb1 Rd8 15.Bd3 Nf5 16.Bxc5 Qxc5 17.Qe2 0-0 18.g4 Nh4 19.Ne4 Qb4+ 20.Kf1 Nd4 21.Qf2 Ndf3 22.Nd6 Qxf4 23.Rd1 Qxe5 24.Nc4 Qf4 25.Qg3 Qxg3 26.hxg3 Ng6 27.Kf2 Nd4 28.Be4 b6 29.Ne3 Nb5 30.Nc4 Rd4 31.Rxd4 Nxd4 32.Rd1 Rd8 33.a4 Kf8 34.Bxg6 hxg6 35.Ne5 Mikaelyan,A (2483)-Antal,G (2571) Chess.com INT 2020 1-0 (62)]

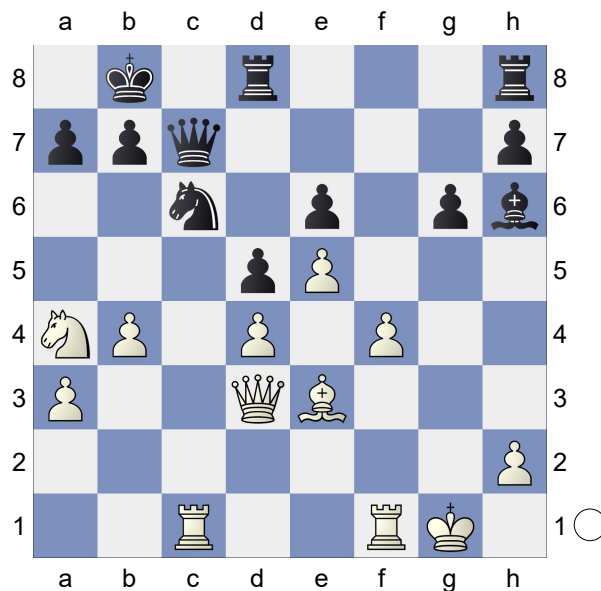
6.cxd4 Bf5 7.Nf3 e6 8.a3



Nge7N

[**Predecessor:** 8...Nh6 9.Nc3 Bg4 10.Bb5 Nf5 11.Bxc6+ bxc6 12.Qa4 Qb6 13.Ne2 Bxf3 14.gxf3 Be7 15.0-0 0-0 16.Rd1 c5 17.Kh1 Rfc8 18.Rb1 cxd4 19.Nxd4 Rc4 0-1 (19) Fizer,M (1952)-Smolik,J (2233) Skalica 2021]

9.Nc3 Bg4 10.Be3 Nf5 11.Bf2 Bxf3 12.gxf3 Be7 13.Bh3 Nh4 14.0-0 Ng6 15.Be3 Qc7 16.f5 Nf8 17.f4 0-0-0 18.Rc1 Kb8 19.b4 exf5 20.Bxf5 g6 21.Bh3 Ne6 22.Ne2 Qb6 23.Bxe6 fxe6 24.Nc3 Bf8 25.Qd3 Bh6 26.Na4 Qc7



27.Nc5

[27.b5!]

27...Qf7 28.Qb5?

[28.Bd2]

[28.Kh1]

28...Ka8?

[28...Rc8!=]

29.Nxb7+- Qxb7 30.Qxc6 Qxc6

31.Rxc6 Rde8 32.Rfc1

[32.Kg2]

[32.a4]

32...Re7

[32...Rhf8]

33.b5

[33.Bf2]

33...Kb7 34.a4 Rf8 35.Rf1 Rc8

36.Rxc8 Kxc8 37.Kg2 Rc7

(Diagram)

38.Rc1?

[38.h4]

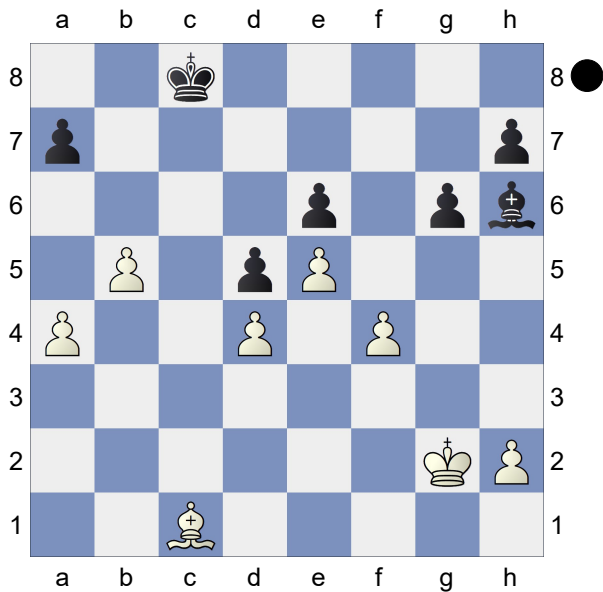
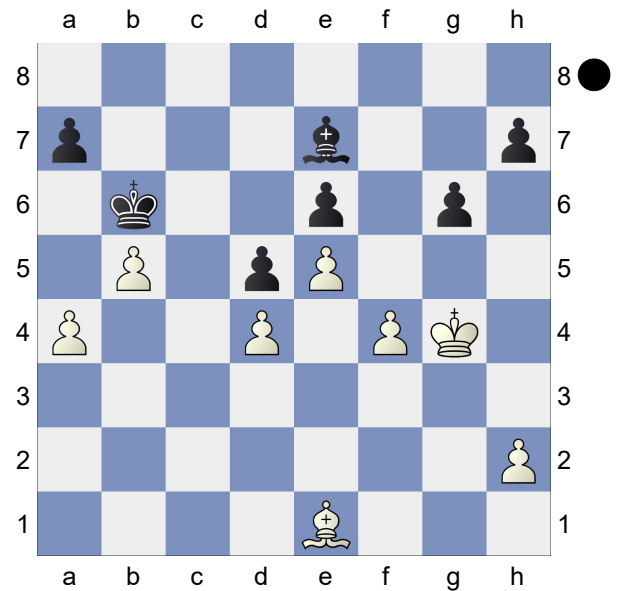
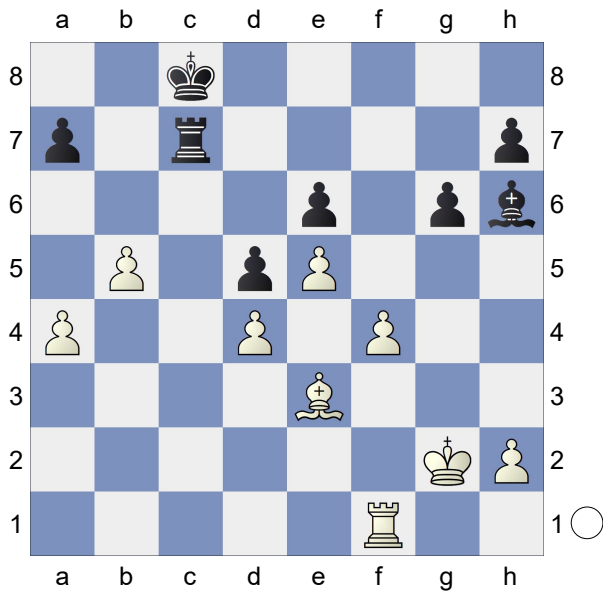
[38.Kf3]

38...Rxc1 39.Bxc1

(Diagram)

Kc7?

[39...Bf8!= 40.h4 h5 (40...a6 41.bxa6 h5)]



[39...a6! 40.bxa6 Bf8=]

40.Kf3?

[40.h4+- Bf8 41.h5]

40...Kb6=

[40...Bf8=]

41.Bd2 Bf8 42.Kg4 Be7 43.Be1

(Diagram)

h6?+-

[43...a6]

[43...Kb7]

[43...Kc7]

[43...h5+ 44.Kh3 Kc7]

44.Kf3?=-

[44.Bh4!+-]

44...Bf8?+-

[44...Kb7]

[44...h5]

[44...a6]

[44...Kb7]

[44...Bd8]

45.h3?=-

[45.Kg4+-]

45...Be7

[45...h5]

[45...a6]

46.Bd2 Bf8 47.Kg3 h5?

[47...Be7]

[47...Ba3]

(Diagram)

48.Kf3?=-

[48.f5!! exf5 (48...gxf5 49.Kh4+-)
49.e6+- The best of many winners]

48...Ba3 49.Ke3 Bf8 50.Kd3 Ba3

51.Kc3 Be7 52.Kb3 Bf8 53.Bb4

Bh6 54.Bc5+ Kb7 55.a5 Bxf4

[55...a6=]

(Diagram)

B38

□ Booth, Kyle Ewart Coventry

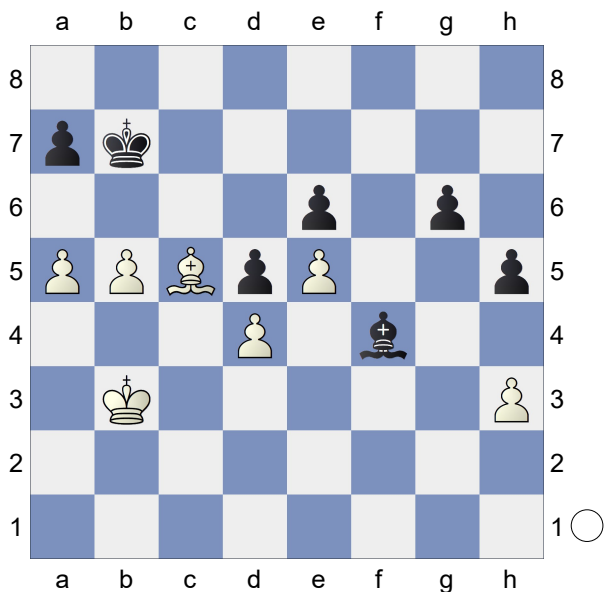
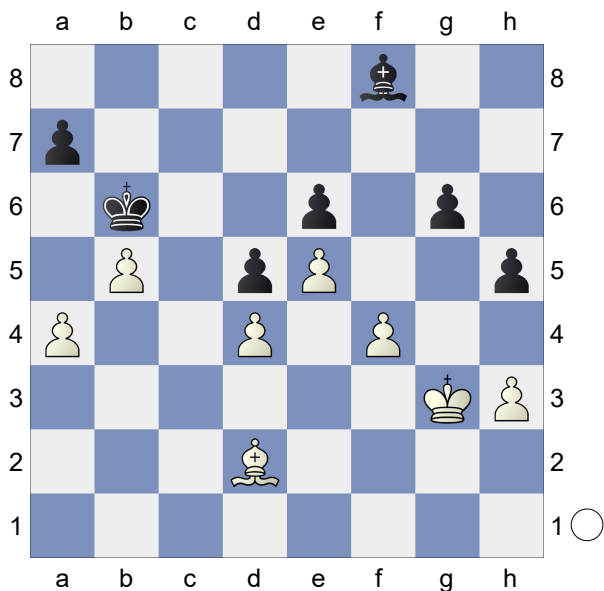
1246

■ Merk, Felix Elias

1267

2nd Silman TNM: u1600 (6.23) 10.06.25

[Winslow, Elliott]



Felix Merk was in clear 1st but here Kyle Booth leapfrogs into that post with a convincing attack on the Accelerated Fianchetto. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.c4 The Maroczy Bind is the main reason many Dragon Sicilian players use the 2...d6 4...Nf6 5...g6 move order. 5...Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0

[7...Ng4!? 8.Qxg4 Nxd4 9.Qd1 is still out there, even with e5!? although modern engines have White squarely ahead after 10.Qd2 d6 11.Bd3]

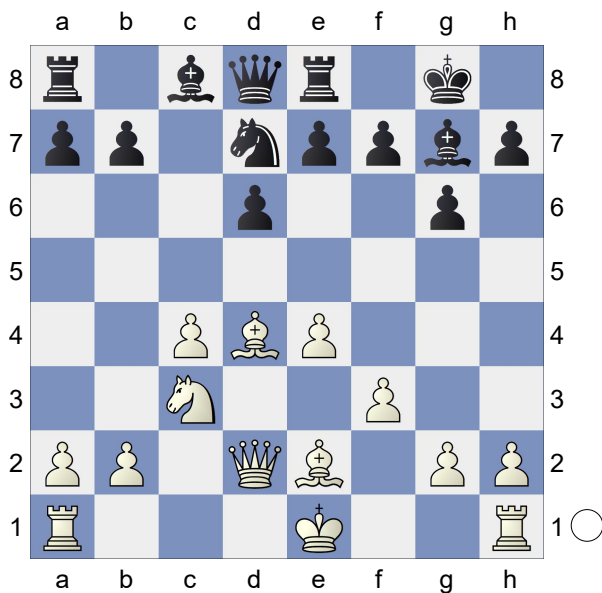
8.Be2 d6 9.f3 Somewhat redundant when it comes to g4 control 9...Re8 Black has plenty of more intentional moves,

[including even 9...Nh5 (Stockfish's favorite).]

10.Qd2 Nxd4!?

[10...e6!? when ...d5 *is* going to happen.]

11.Bxd4 Nd7



56.h4?

[56.a6+=]

[56.Bf8 g5 57.Bh6=]

56...g5!-+

[56...a6-+]

57.hxg5 Bxg5 58.Bb4 Be3 59.a6+ Kb8

[59...Kb6]

60.Bd6+ Ka8

[60...Kc8]

61.Be7 Bxd4 62.Bf6 Bf2 63.Kb4 h4

64.Bg5 h3 65.Bf4 Bg1 66.Bg3 h2

67.Bxh2 Bxh2 68.Kc5 Bxe5

0-1

Doesn't fit well with Black's previous move. **12.Bxg7!N**

[12.Be3 Nc5 13.0-0 a5 14.Rfd1 b6
15.b3 Bb7 16.Rab1 Be5 17.a3 e6
18.Bf1 1-0 (43) Van Dael,S (2082)-
Redzisz,M (1834) Prague 2016]

12...Kxg7 13.0-0?±

[13.0-0-0!+- White isn't prohibited
from pursuing a kingside attack in
the Maroczy Bind...]

13...Nc5?!

[13...Nf6±]

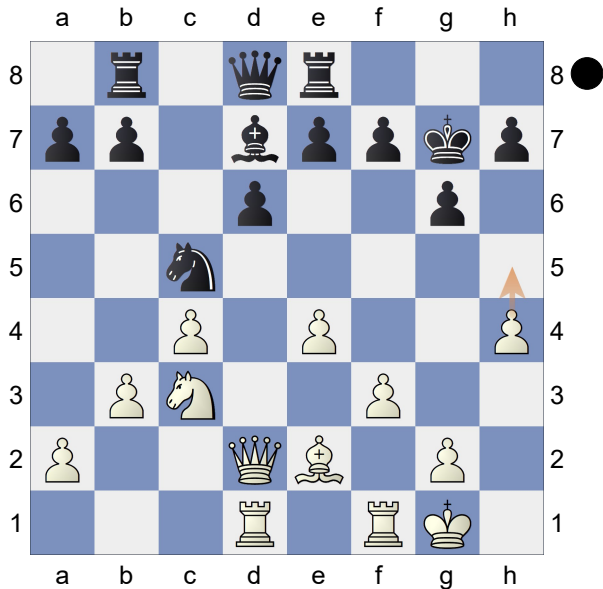
14.Rad1 Bd7 15.b3?!

[Better is 15.b4!± Na4 16.Nd5]

15...Rb8

[Black should play 15...a5±]

16.h4!?



h6?!

[16...f6±]

17.f4!+- Bc6?

[17...Qb6 18.Kh1 Bc6]

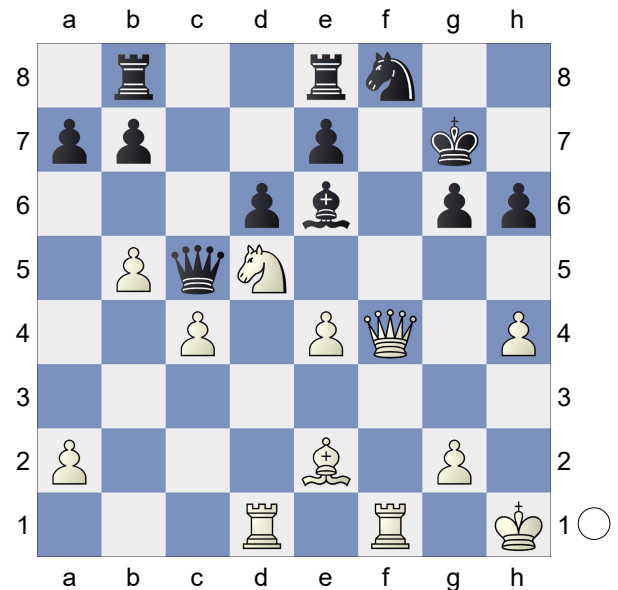
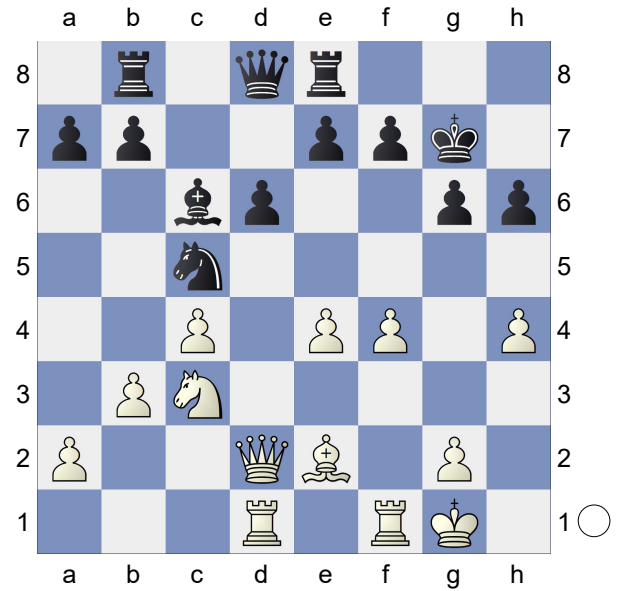
(Diagram)

18.b4! Ne6 19.f5+- Massive expansion!

19...Nf8 20.fxg6 fxg6 21.b5 Qb6+

22.Kh1 Bd7 23.Qf4 Be6 24.Nd5 Qc5

(Diagram)



25.Nxe7?± On one level, wins a pawn;
on another level, breaks Black's
structure; but on a third level, it just
lets Black trade queens and put up a
fight.

[25.Bg4+-]

[25.Qg3+-]

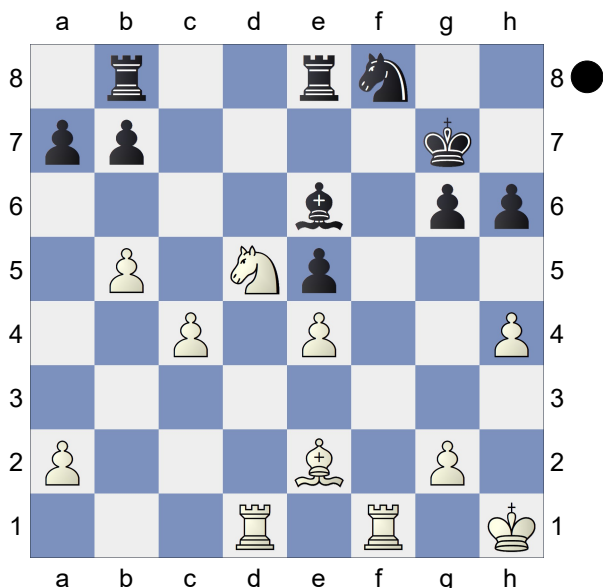
25...Qe5!±

[25...Rxe7? 26.Qf6+]

26.Qxe5+ dxe5 27.Nd5↑

(Diagram)

White is still doing well, even without a
mating attack on the king, with an extra



pawn. **27...Nd7?** Deals with the wrong threat (c4-c5).

[27...Rbc8± is a better attempt at defense, although 28.h5!? Nd7 29.Rd3! (29.hxg6?! Nc5±) 29...Nc5 30.Rg3 g5 31.Rf6! Bf7 32.Re3+-]

28.Nc7+- Re7 Giving up.

[28...Nc5 29.Nxe8+ Rxe8 30.Kg1! Nxe4 31.Rd3!+- Sometimes pawns are just in the way.]

29.Nxe6+ Rxe6 30.Rxd7+ Kg8 31.c5 a6 32.Bc4 Rbe8 33.Rxb7 axb5 34.Rxb5 Kg7 35.Bxe6 Rxe6 36.Rb7+ Kg8 37.Rc1 Rc6 38.Rb6 Rc7 39.c6 g5 40.Rb8+ Kh7 41.Rb7 This sets up the final-round confrontation with Sacha Sloan, both with 5-1.

Weighted Error Value: White=0.26 (precise) /Black=0.57

1-0

□ Sloan, Sacha Marino

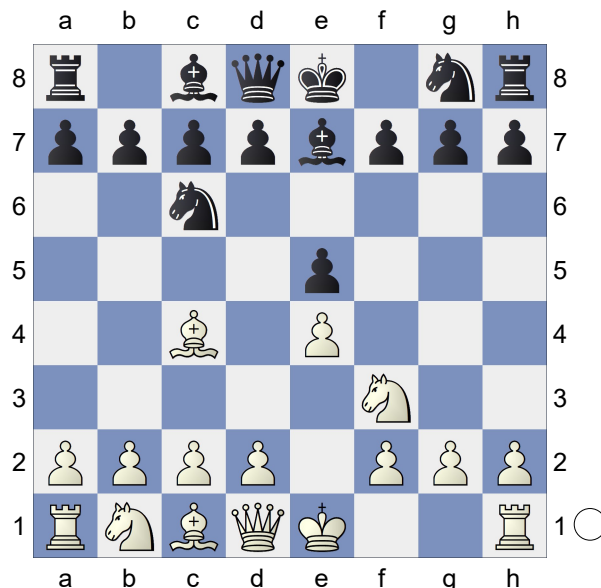
■ Fitzgerald, William

2nd Silman TNM: u1600 (6.24) 10.06.25

[Winslow, Elliott]

Sacha Sloan continues his march of wins since losing in Round 3 to Merk;

here he takes advantage of somewhat loose play from William Fitzgerald to clip a pawn here, snip a pawn there, and grind out a win in a bishops of opposite colors endgame. **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Be7**



I *think* this is the Hungarian Defense.

For some inexplicable reason I was compelled to pay close attention to its particulars back in the 1960s(!) -- perhaps Robert Enders was playing it, or maybe it got more attention than it deserved in I.A. Horowitz's "Chess Openings, Theory & Practice (1964)." It (3...Be7) is a mere flicker next to the Giuoco Piano (3...Bc5) and the Two Knights Defense (3...Nf6), having come along "late" in 1851 compared to one or two centuries before for the others (in the Database of course), but it has bits of logic to it here and there. And there are thousands of games. **4.d4**

(#1 of course) **4...d6** A "challenge" is issued...

[4...exd4! is "engine" and obvious. But then the Hungarian makes less sense.

A) 5.c3!? Nf6?! was played by the only two 2700 players (no 2600s!) to see this occur: (5...Na5! 6.Be2!

C50

1056

1263

dxc3 7.Nxc3 d6= /±) 6.e5 Ne4!?
 (6...Ng4?! 7.cxd4 d5 8.Be2 h5
 9.Nc3 Be6 10.Qa4 0-0 11.h3
 Nh6 12.Bxh6 gxh6± 0-1 (37)
 Riehle,M (2347)-Karjakin,S (2752)
 Chess.com INT 2020) 7.Bd5! f5
 8.cxd4 Nb4?! (8...d6±) 9.Bb3 d5
 10.exd6 Qxd6± 0-1 (21) Ozdemir,S
 (2164)-Andreikin,D (2729) Chess.
 com INT 2023;

B) 5.Nxd4 d6 6.0-0 Nf6
 is the Antoshin Variation of the
 Philidor Defense, except that with
 Bc4 in White is less interested in
 castling queenside (...b5 is
 enabled), so quieter play ensues.
 White has a little something in the
 better center control, not much.]

5.dxe5 A hard move to understand, not
 to mention that it's far and away the
 most popular!

[Enough fooling around: 5.d5! Nb8
 (Stockfish doesn't make 5...Nb4
 inferior by much!?!) 6.Bd3!
 and White "entertains" on the
 queenside with various pawn
 advances, mostly c2-c4 of course. It
 is interesting to show what Stockfish
 17.1 is making the main line Bg4 7.h3
 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 Nd7 9.a4 Bg5±
 It's not easy to get rid of bishops
 that fast! Alas, +0.63/31 on 17.1.]

5...dxe5 6.Qxd8+

[6.Qe2= could well be better, for
 psychological reasons (Black *wants*
 you to exchange!), but SF says no]

6...Bxd8 Voila! 7.Be3 Nf6 8.Nc3
Bg4?!

[8...Be7 Of course the best move is to
 move that bishop yet again!]

9.h3 One game...

[♠9.0-0-0 really is the way to go]

[GM Draw: 9.Bb5 Nd7 10.0-0-0

Ncb8 11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxd7+

½-½ (12) Shirov,A (2695)-Campora,D

(2550) Biel 1995]

9...Bxf3N

[and In that One game, the guy
 backed down: 9...Bd7 10.0-0-0 h6
 11.g4 g5 12.Rhe1 a6 13.Bd5 0-0
 14.Bxc6 Bxc6 15.Nxe5 Bxe4
 16.Nxe4 Nxe4 1-0 (67) Sosovicka,J
 (2085)-Polacik,I (2175) Bratislava
 2010]

10.gxf3 Nd4! 11.Bxd4 exd4 12.Ne2!

[12.Nb5!? picks off the d-pawn! But
 it's hardly a pawn's worth of plus after
 Nh5! (or 12...g6! 13.Nxd4 Nh5
 14.Ne2 c6 15.f4 Bc7 16.e5 Rd8
 and Black goes, ...Ke7, ...Rf8, ...f6
 etc.)]

12...c5

[12...g6! Again, ...c6 is what Black
 should want from the c-pawn.]

13.Rg1

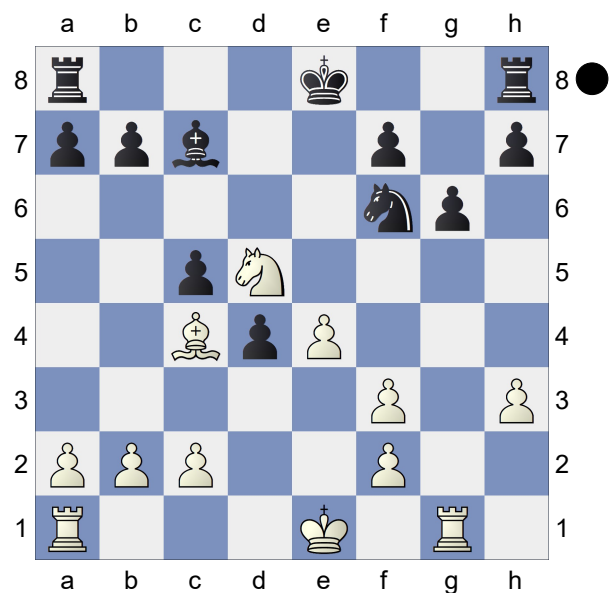
[13.Nf4!± heading for d3.]

13...g6

[13...0-0]

14.Nf4 Bc7 15.Nd5?!

[15.Nd3!]



15...Bd8?

[15...Nxd5! 16.Bxd5 Rb8!=

Black's bishop is ideally placed]

16.Bb5+?! This just gives Black some

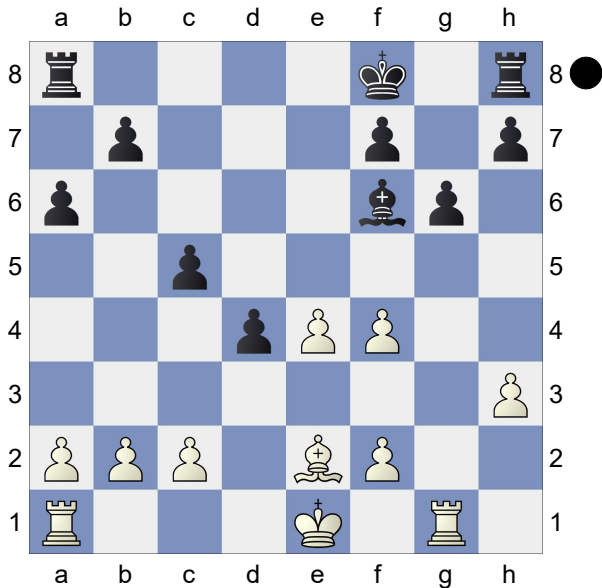
moves for free.

[16.Nxf6+! Bxf6 17.f4!± but not here!
White takes over the dark squares!
First playing 18.Ke2 and 19.Kf3 so
there's no trouble with defending the
f4-pawn.]

16...Kf8 17.Nxf6 Bxf6 18.f4 a6

19.Be2

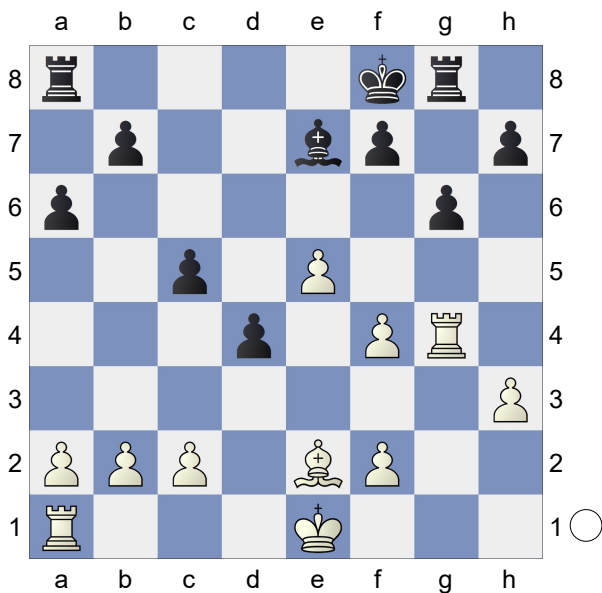
[19.Bc4± gets to d5 at least.]



**19...Rg8?! For playing ...g5. Not a good
plan. In fact, it never happens. 20.e5!**

Bh4 21.Rg4 Be7

[21...Bd8]



22.0-0-0?!= The king is much better
situated where it is, keeping options like
Kf1 (protection of f2) or Kd2 (possible
run up the light squares).

[22.a4! The rook on a1 could end up
well-placed, as well.]

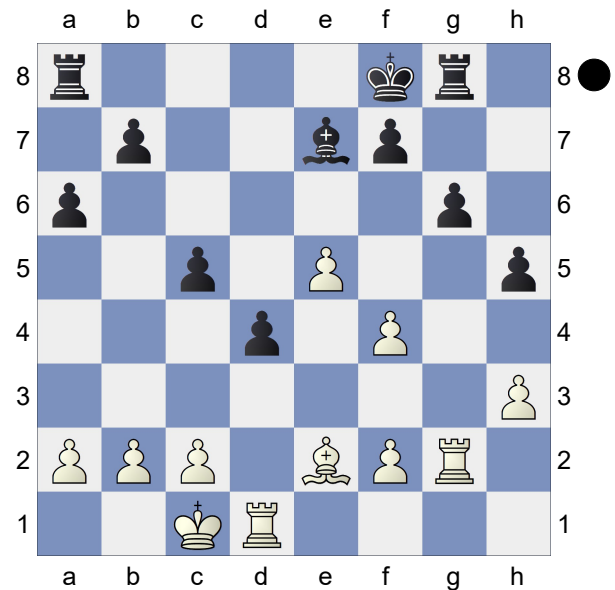
22...h5?! No hurry for this!

[22...b5=]

[22...f5=]

[22...Rg7=]

23.Rg2±



Kg7?+- In any case, this is bad.

[23...b5! might well be William's last
chance to hold.]

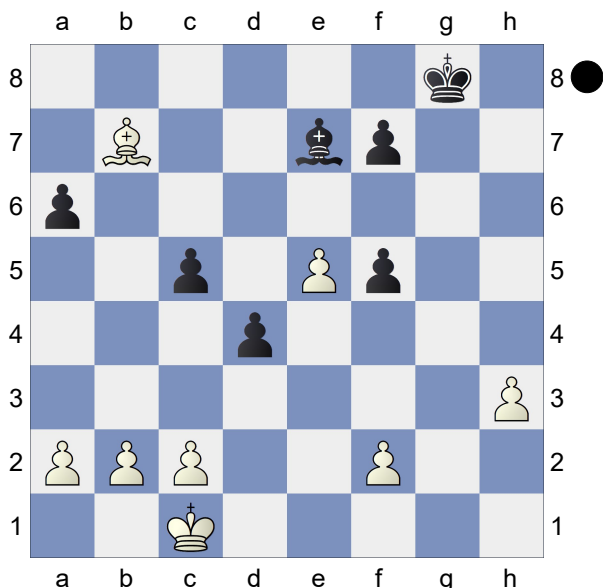
24.Bxh5 Can't be wrong, right?

[Incredibly, Stockfish slightly favors
24.Bf3!? Rab8 25.Rdg1 Bh4
26.f5+-]

**24...Kh6 25.Bf3 Rab8 26.Rdg1 Kh7
27.f5 gxf5 28.Rxg8 Rxg8 29.Rxg8
Kxg8 30.Bxb7**

(Diagram)

It's dead lost. Now 21 moves of
inevitability. **30...a5 31.Bc8 Bh4 32.f3
Bg3 33.e6 Bf4+ 34.Kd1 fxe6
35.Bxe6+ Kg7 36.Bxf5 Bg3 37.Kd2
Kf6 38.Bg4 Ke5 39.Kd3 Kd5 40.b3
Be1 41.f4 Bg3 42.f5 Bh4 43.Bh5**

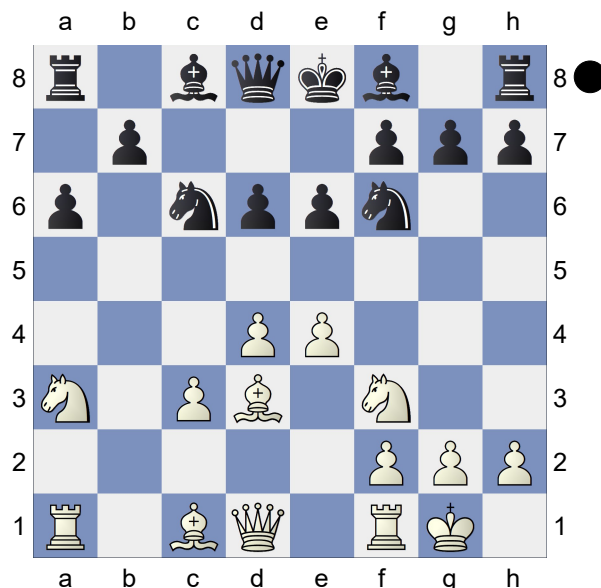


**Be7 44.Bf7+ Kc6 45.Kc4 Kd6 46.Kb5
Bd8 47.h4 Bxh4 48.Kxa5 Be1+
49.Kb6 Bb4 50.a4 Kd7 51.a5**
Excellent technique by Sloan.
1-0

□ Booth, Kyle Ewart Coventry **B20 1246**
 ■ Sloan, Sacha Marino **1056**
 2nd Silman TNM: u1600 (7.6) 17.06.2025
[Booth, Kyle/Winslow, Elliott]

1.e4 5 c5 18 2.a3 6 Nc6 44
 [2...g6]
 [2...e6]
3.b4 7 cxb4 58 4.axb4 8 Nxb4 2:01
5.c3 9 Nc6 17 6.d4 6 e6 41 7.Na3 5:52
Nf6 3:24 8.Bd3 9:07 The position is
 equal. **8...d6 1:39 9.Nf3 4:21 a6 1:12**
10.0-0N 3:00
 [10.Bg5 Be7 11.0-0 0-0 12.Re1
 Bd7 13.Rb1 b5 14.Qe2 Rb8 15.e5
 Nd5 16.Bxe7 Qxe7 17.Qe4
 0-1 (28) Bautista, E (1524)-Bellisario,
 C (1473) ICCF email 2020]

(Diagram)

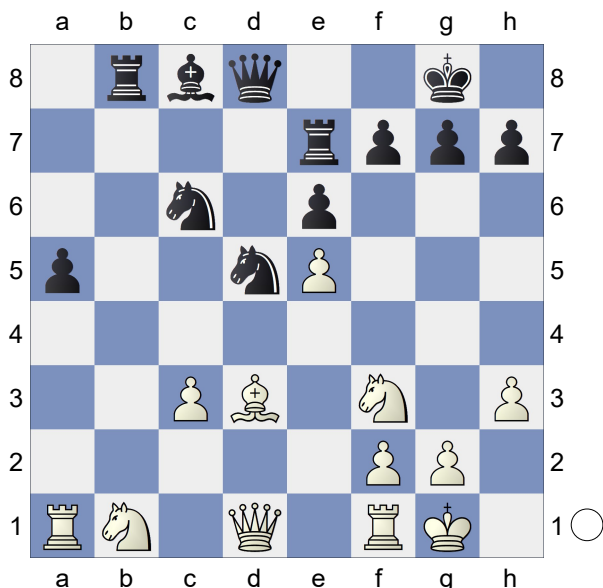


Probably even this far out players will
 disagree based on their preference:
 Black is up a pawn vs. White has a big
 center and obvious compensation.

10...Be7 1:33 11.h3 5:17 b5? 1:06
 [Better is 11...0-0=]
12.Nxb5!± 1:41 Rb8 4:12
 [12...0-0±]
13.Na3 2:33 0-0 1:26 14.e5 3:31
 [14.Bf4±]
14...dxe5= 18 15.dxe5 2:40 Nd5 5:37
16.Nb1 5:55 a5 1:20
 [16...Qc7=]
17.Ba3 5:06
 [17.Qe2± was preferable.]
17...Re8 4:06 18.Bxe7 51
 [18.Qd2 keeps more tension. Qb6
 19.Bd6 Bxd6 20.exd6 Nf6 21.Rd1]
18...Rxe7 18

(Diagram)

(I wasted far too much time here trying
 to make some sort of Greek gift sac
 work) **19.Re1± 12:56**
 [EW: Stockfish 17.1 makes best to be
 19.Qa4 Bb7 20.Qe4 g6 21.Qh4 Kg7
 22.c4 Nb6 23.Qf6+ Kg8= (0.00)]
 [EW: While the details after the
 classic bishop sacrifice are no better



nor worse: 19.Bxh7+ Kxh7 20.Ng5+!

A) 20...Kg6? 20...Kg8 -0.06

21.Qd3+ f5! 22.exf6+?

(White should play 22.Qg3+-+ f4

23.Qh4 Nxe5 24.Nd2) 22...Kxf6=

23.Ra4! Black must now prevent

Nd2!. e5! 24.Ne4+ Kf7!

And now ...Kg8 would win. 25.Ng5+

Kf6! =;

B) 20...Kg8 21.Qh5 Repels Ba6.

Qh7+ would kill now. Reb7 22.Re1

Nxe5 (22...Nf4!? 23.Qh7+ Kf8

24.Qh8+ Ke7 25.Qxg7 Nxe5

26.Rxe5 Rxb1+ 27.Re1 Ne2+

28.Kh1 Rxa1 29.Rxa1 Qd5

30.Nxf7 Rb3 23.Qh7+ Kf8

24.Rxe5 Qf6 25.Nf3 a4= (0.00)]

19...Reb7?! 4:32

[19...Rd7 7]

20.Ra4 9:56

[20.Qa4]

[20.Qa4= Rc7 21.Qe4]

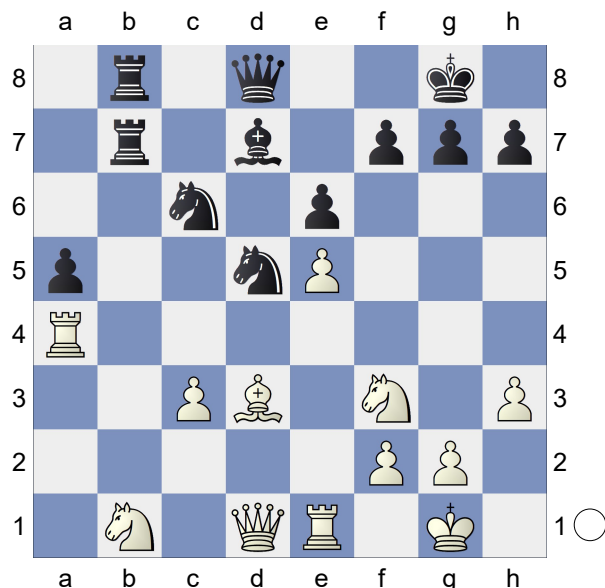
20...Bd7 2:50

[20...Rb2]

[20...Rd7!?]

(Diagram)

21.Nh2?? 6:22 (Just a horrible move; I



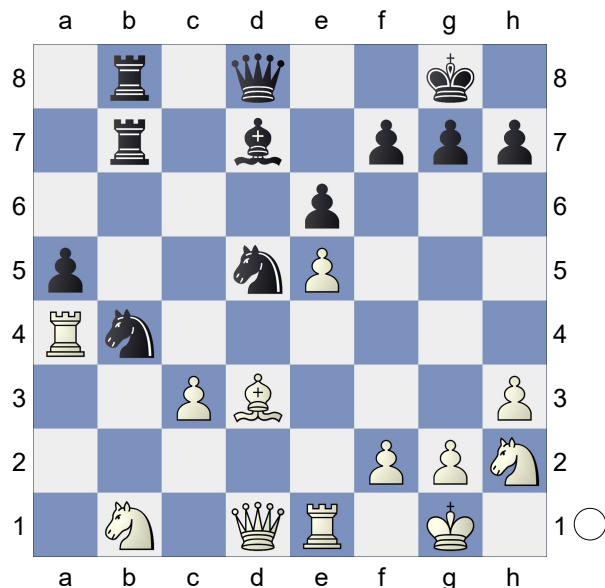
should have swung the rook over which was entire point of Ra4)

[21.Ra3= and White stays safe.]

[21.Rh4]

[21.Rg4]

21...Ncb4! 1:28



22.cxb4 3:21 Bxa4 12 23.Qxa4 47

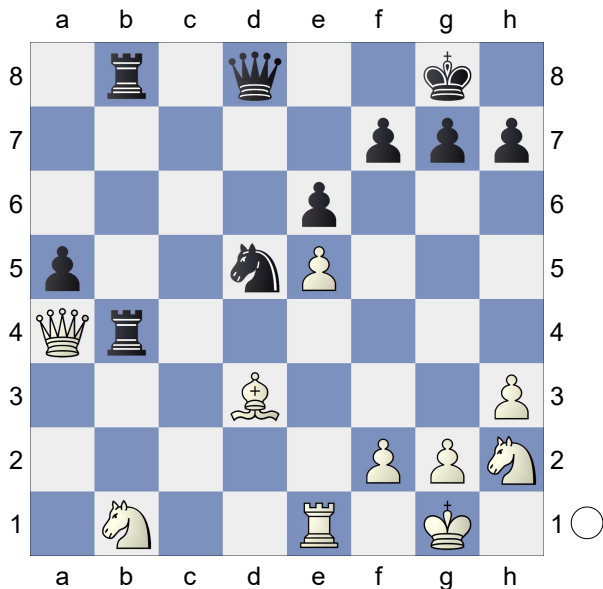
Rxb4 6

[23...Nxb4]

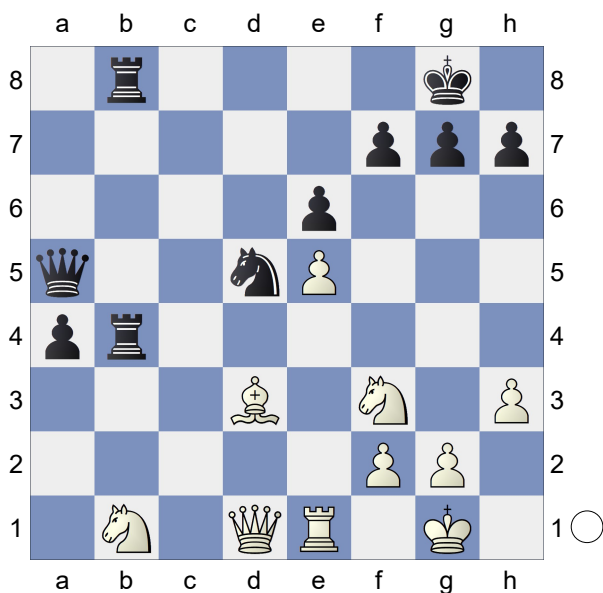
(Diagram)

24.Qd1 1:44

[24.Qa1]

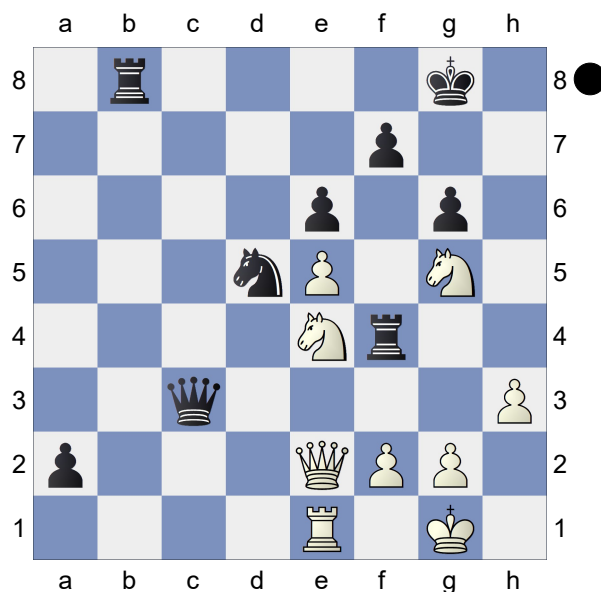


[24.Qa1♣ is the only way for White.]
24...a4?! 2:45
 [24...Nf4!-+]
 [24...Nf4-+ and Black stays clearly on top. 25.Bc2 Rb2 (25...Qxd1 26.Rxd1 Rc4 27.Na3♣)]
25.Nf3?! 2:46
 [25.Be4♣]
25...Qa5?! 1:25
 [25...Nf4-+]



26.Bxh7+? 1:15 (Very low on time; position is hard to play so I went for tricks but they don't work.) **26...Kxh7-+ 41 27.Qd3+?! 1:52**

[27.Ng5+ Kg6-+ (27...Kg8!)]
27...Kg8 37
 [27...g6!]
28.Ng5 32 g6 31 29.Qf3 4:27 Rf4 2:19
 [29...Rxb1 30.Qxf7+ Kh8 31.Qh7#]
30.Qd1 51 a3 1:48 31.Nd2 2:22 Rd4 34 32.Qf3 30 Rf4 2:15
 [Not 32...Qxd2 33.Qxf7+ Kh8 34.Qh7#]
33.Qd3 39 Qc3 1:20 Repels Ra1 34.Qe2 2:22 a2 35 35.Nde4 19



Qxe1+ 1:22 Promotion 36.Qxe1 12 Rb1
 A winning pin. What a bad dream for White.
 But a cool game by Sloan.
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.91/
 Black=0.37
0-1

D20
 □ **Merk, Felix Elias 1267**
 ■ **Quinn, Dahlia 1329**
 2nd Silman TNM: u1600 (7.24) 17.06.25
 [Winslow, Elliott]

Last Round! Alas for Merk, the best he could make it after his loss in the previous round is a tie for 1st-3rd, as the two 5-1s are playing each other (he has

4½). But he does his part, in the scrappy 3.e4 e5 line in the Queen's Gambit Accepted of Dahlia Quinn. And takes clear 2nd. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4**

[3.Nf3 is what we always played decades ago, to avoid Black's next move.]

[3.e3 can be played, with the "enitcement" b5 (3...e5! 4.Bxc4 exd4 5.exd4 when "Magnus Was Here": Nf6 6.Nf3 Be7 7.0-0 0-0 8.h3 Nbd7 9.Nc3 Nb6 10.Bb3 c6 11.Re1 Nbd5 12.Ne5 Be6 13.Bg5 Re8 14.Na4 h6 15.Bh4 Bb4 16.Rf1 Nf4 17.a3 Qxd4 0-1 (27) Tkachiev,V (2642)-Carlsen,M (2801) 4th WCh Blitz, Moscow 2009) 4.a4 c6 5.axb5 cxb5 6.Qf3 Woops!]

3...e5 Black has a smorgasbord of replies: this is the most principled, whatever that means these days.

[3...e5]

[3...c5]

[3...Nf6]

[3...Nc6]

[3...b5!? has some "irregularities" and excitement]

4.Nf3 Bb4+

[the main avenues are 4...exd4 5.Bxc4 Nc6 6.0-0 Be6 (6...Bc5)

A) 7.Bxe6 fxe6 8.Qb3 Qd7 (8...Qc8 9.Ng5) 9.Qxb7 Rb8 10.Qa6 Nf6 (10...Bd6);

B) 7.Bb5]

5.Bd2

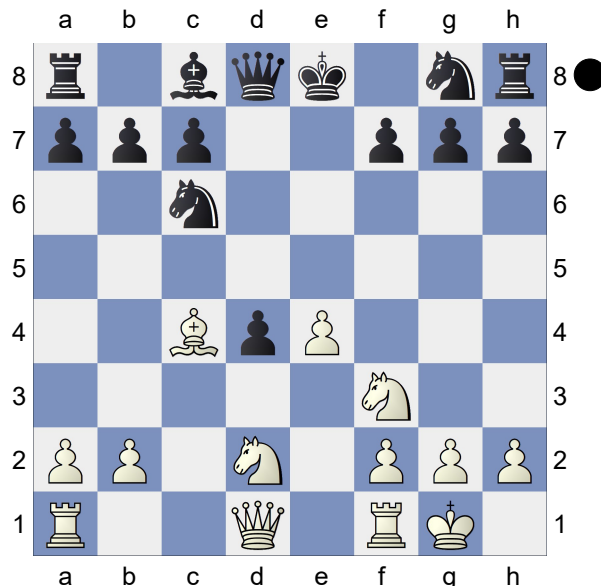
[5.Nc3!]

[5.Nbd2!?]

5...Bxd2+ 6.Nbxd2 exd4 7.Bxc4 Nc6 8.0-0

[8.Nb3!? since there's no ...Bb4+ to worry about any more (!)]

(Diagram)



White has compensation. **8...Bg4?**

This is a disarmingly sharp opening (it is, after all, the "Queen's Gambit"...)

[8...Nge7!?±]

9.Qb3+- Qd7

[♖9...Bh5 10.Qxb7 Nge7]

10.Bd5N

[10.Qxb7 Rb8 11.Qa6 Nge7±]

[10.Bxf7+! Ke7 11.Bd5 Rb8

12.Bxc6 Qxc6 13.Rac1 Qd6 14.e5

Qd7 15.Qa3+ Kf7 16.e6+

1-0 (16) Krensing,J (2253)-

Schumacher,K (1915) Verden 2006]

10...Rb8

[10...Nd8 11.Ne5 Deflection

(11.Nxd4 Nf6±; 11.Bxb7 Rb8=)

11...Qe7]

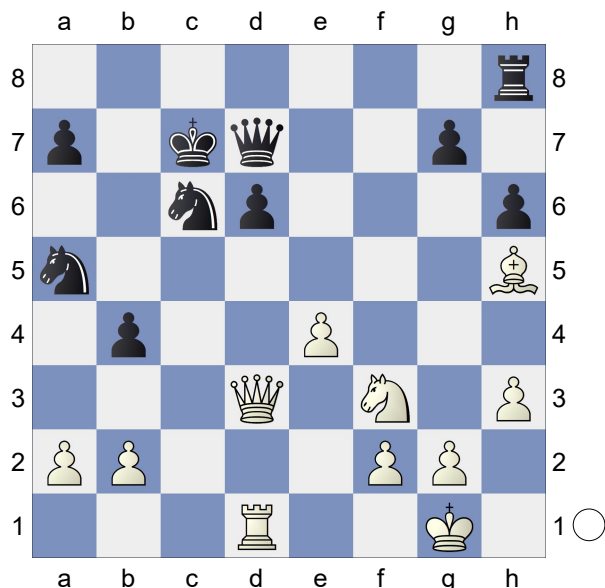
11.Rac1 Nge7 12.Bxf7+ Kd8 13.h3 Bxf3 14.Nxf3 h6 15.Rfd1 b5 16.Rd3 Rb6 17.Rcd1 Na5 18.Rxd4 Rd6 19.Rxd6 cxd6 20.Qc3 Nec6 21.Bh5 b4 22.Qd3 Kc7

(Diagram)

23.e5! Rd8

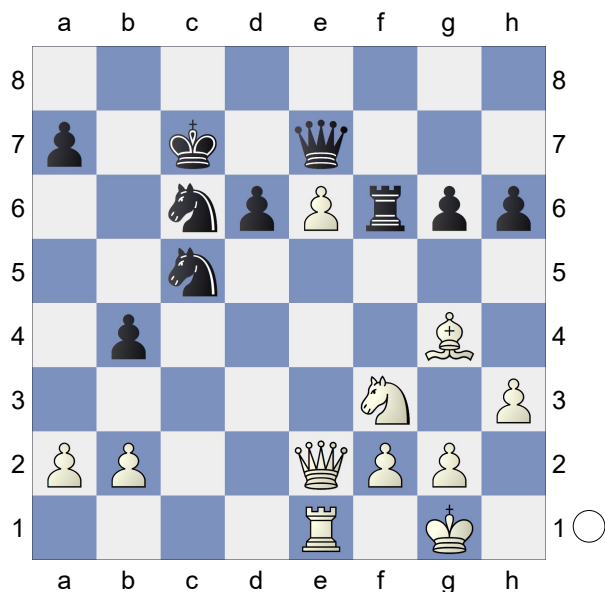
[23...Nb7 24.Rc1]

24.Bg4 Qe7 Black is weak on the light squares **25.e6 Nb7 26.Re1 Nc5 27.Qg6 Rf8 28.Qc2 Rf6 29.Qe2?**



**Kd4 45.g4 Kc3 46.h5 gxh5 47.gxh5
d5 48.Kd1** White took control after the
opening.
Weighted Error Value: White=0.45/
Black=0.86
1-0

[29.Nh4+- is more deadly.]
29...g6?
[29...h5± 30.Bxh5 Rxe6]



30.h4! Rf4 31.Bh3 Nd8?
[31...a6 keeps fighting. 32.Qe3 Re4
33.Qxh6 Rxe1+ 34.Nxe1 Nxe6]
32.Qe3 Rf6
[32...Re4]
**33.Qxh6 Ncxe6 34.Ng5 Kd7 35.Nxe6
Nxe6 36.Qe3 Qf7 37.Qxa7+ Ke8
38.Qxf7+ Kxf7 39.Bxe6+ Rxe6
40.Rxe6** White mates. 40...Kxe6
KP-KP. White is two pawns up. **41.Kf1
Kd5 42.Ke2 Ke4 43.a4 bxa3 44.bxa3**



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Remembering Anthony P. Corrales: Two Years Later

By Colin Ma and IM John Donaldson

Anthony P. Corrales, who taught chess classes and directed children's chess events at the Mechanics' Institute, passed away in July 2023. His passing was noted in a tribute by IM John Donaldson in the chess room newsletter (Issue #1040 - August 12, 2023). A follow-up tribute appeared a year later (Issue #1051 - July 20, 2024).

Donations of chess books to the Mechanics' Institute Library have been made in honor of Anthony's memory. These books in the library bear the bookplate "In Memory of Anthony P. Corrales."

An initial batch of twenty-six chess books was donated in the first year after Anthony's passing. After the first year, twenty-seven more chess books were donated to the library to honor Anthony's memory. There are now fifty-three books in the Mechanics' Institute Library honoring Anthony's memory. The number of books has more than doubled.

Anthony started working at the Mechanics' Institute in 1998 and stayed there for nearly two decades. During his time at the Mechanics' Institute, his focus was on scholastic players and adult improvers. The selection, coverage, and pedagogy of the chess books donated to the library reflect Anthony's focus.

- Comprehensive Chess Course, Volume I: Learn Chess in 12 Lessons by Lev Alburt and Roman Pelts (Chess Information and Research Center, 2011) - Call Number 794.1 P393 v.1
- Comprehensive Chess Course, Volume II: From Beginner to Tournament Player in 12 Lessons by Lev Alburt and Roman Pelts (Chess Information and Research Center, 2001) - Call Number 794.1 P393 v.2
- The King in Jeopardy by Lev Alburt and Sam Palatnik (Chess Information and Research Center, 1999) - Call Number 794.12 A345
- Chess Handbook: Rules, Tactics, and Strategies for the Improving Player by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2020) - Call Number 794.1 B247
- Chess Workbook for Children by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2006) - Call Number Child 794.1 B247c
- Chess Strategy Workbook by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2010) - Call Number 794.1 B247b



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- Chess Tactics and Combinations Workbook by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2019) - Call Number 794.1 B247w
- Chess Openings: An Overview of Standard Variations by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2022) - Call Number 794.1 B247ch
- Chess Endgame Workbook by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2021) - Call Number 794.1 B247c
- Attacking the Chess King Workbook by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2019) - Call Number 794.1 B247a
- Teaching Chess in the 21st Century: Strategies and Connections to a Standards-Based World by Todd Bardwick (Chess Detective Press, 2010) - Call Number Child 794.1 B247
- Chess Tactics for Students by John A. Bain (Learning Plus, Inc., 2023) - Call Number Child 794.1 B162
- Winning Chess Exercises for Kids: Tactics and Strategies to Outsmart Your Opponent by Viktoria Ni (Z Kids, 2024) - Call Number Child 794.1 N577
- Your Jungle Guide to Chess Tactics: Sharpen Your Tactical Skills! by Peter Prohaszka (Thinkers Publishing, 2021) - Call Number 794.12 P964
- Winning Chess: How to Perfect Your Attacking Play by Irving Chernev and Fred Reinfeld (Batsford, 2013) - Call Number 794.1 C52.1 2013
- The Tactics Bible: Magnum Opus by Efstratios Grivas (Thinkers Publishing, 2019) - Call Number 794.12 G872t
- Your Jungle Guide to Rook Endings by Efstratios Grivas (Thinkers Publishing, 2020) - Call Number 794.124 G872
- A Complete Chess Course by Antonio Gude (Gambit Publications, 2015) - Call Number 794.1 G922
- A World Champion's Guide to Chess: Step-by-Step Instructions for Winning Chess the Polgar Way! by GM Susan Polgar and FM Paul Truong (Russell Enterprises, 2015) - Call Number 794.1 P76w
- Chess for Hawks: Improve Your Vision, Sharpen Your Talons, Forget Your Fear by Cyrus Lakdawala (New in Chess, 2017) - Call Number 794.1 L192c
- Clinch It! How to Convert an Advantage into a Win in Chess by Cyrus Lakdawala (New in Chess, 2018) - Call Number 794.12 L192c



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- World Chess Champion Strategy Training for Club Players: From Bobby Fischer to Ding Liren by Thomas Willemze (New in Chess, 2023) - Call Number 794.15 W699
- World Champion Chess for Juniors: Learn from the Greatest Players Ever by Joel Benjamin (New in Chess, 2020) - Call Number Child 794.15 B459
- How to Out-Prepare Your Opponent: A Complete Guide to Successful Chess Opening Preparation by Jeroen Bosch (New in Chess, 2022) - Call Number 794.122 B742
- Super Chess Kids: Win Like the World Young's Champions! - Franco Zaninotto (New in Chess, 2018) - Call Number Child 794.1 Z31
- The Lasker Method to Improve in Chess: A Manual for Modern-Day Club Players by Gerard Welling and Steve Giddins (New in Chess, 2021) - Call Number 794.1 L352w
- Your Jungle Guide to Unbalancing Your Opponents: Tips & Tricks of Young Chess Guns by Dorsa and Borna Derakhshani (Thinkers Publishing, 2021) - Call Number 794.1 D427

The books by GM Lev Alburt and his co-authors are part of the Comprehensive Chess Course Series, a multi-volume set that provides thorough instruction in chess. Some of the other volumes in the series were already in the Mechanics' Institute Library.

NM Todd Bardwick is an experienced chess teacher and author from Colorado who wrote chess books for younger players under the moniker of the Chess Detective. The books by Bardwick are mostly workbooks. A workbook approach can be helpful to many students of chess.

The books by John A. Bain, WIM Viktoria Ni, GM Peter Prohaszka, Irving Chernev, and Fred Reinfeld are about chess tactics.

Two books of GM Efstratios Grivas were added to the collection. One is a book on tactics, and the other is a book on the rook endgame. The rook ending is a very common endgame in chess. The book is somewhat advanced and is a good follow-up to Grivas's earlier book, Practical Endgame Play: Mastering the Basics, which is in the Mechanics' Institute Library.

The books by Antonio Gude and Susan Polgar and Paul Truong are one-volume works that provides excellent instruction for the new player, with the Gude book being more advanced.

Prolific chess author IM Cyrus Lakdawala had two books added to the collection. One is about playing more aggressively, and the other is about winning a game in which you have an advantage.



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The books by IM Thomas Willemze and GM Joel Benjamin annotate the games of past world champions, which can be very instructive and entertaining.

General instruction on chess improvement can be found in the books by IM Jeroen Bosch, FM Franco Zaninotto, IM Gerard Welling, FM Steve Giddins, and IM Dorsa Derakhshani, and FM Borna Derakhshani.

Anthony's contributions to Mechanics' Institute chess will be long remembered. He started his work at the Mechanics' Institute in 1998, teaching a class for children every Saturday and directing monthly scholastic chess tournaments. This was all new for the Mechanics' Institute at the time. Anthony, with his infectious enthusiasm and love for the game, was the right person for the job.

Anthony's duties soon expanded to teaching a weekly class at various inner-city high schools in San Francisco. Here, his outgoing personality and worldly manner opened doors into underserved communities, exposing many high school students to the game who otherwise would never had the opportunity.

Anthony also offered private chess lessons to both children and adults.

During Anthony's time at the Mechanics' Institute, he was frequently seen in the chess room. Anyone who participated in chess activities at the Mechanics' Institute would have encountered Anthony. His Saturday morning class took place in the annex to the chess director's office. Whenever there was a tournament on a Saturday morning, he would start off the first round with instructions and a pep talk, then go teach his class a few steps down the hallway. Running tournaments in the chess room was a role that he enjoyed. He took a great interest in tournament players' games, observing their endgames. He would provide helpful comments and encouraging words to some players after rounds were completed.

Anthony dealt firmly with the occasional rambunctiousness of chess players in the chess room during tournaments. Anthony always spoke his mind. In any given situation, he would tell it like it is.

Anthony also played a very helpful role during the visit of Boris Spassky, tenth world champion, to the Mechanics' Institute in 2006.

Normally, chess coaches are good with beginners or advanced students. Not both. This is not surprising as the skill sets for the two are quite different. Working with beginners does not require a huge amount of chess knowledge but does demand total engagement with the student and lots of positive reinforcement. Conversely, working with advanced students (Anthony had two of these, including two-time U.S. Junior Champion Gregory Young) requires a different toolbox. Anthony had the ability to teach both beginners and advanced students as a talented teacher.



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Anthony was not a particularly strong tournament player, but his understanding of the game was close to that of a master's. More importantly, he possessed the most important skill that a teacher can have — the ability to motivate his students to study on their own. This is not something that can be forced, but needs to be encouraged if the student is to make real progress. Anthony possessed this rare ability and always seemed to know the right book for pupils at the right time.

Anthony truly loved chess. American mythologist and scholar Joseph Campbell was credited with the philosophy to "follow your bliss." Anthony was a man who followed his bliss at the Mechanics' Institute.

The loss of Anthony was a devastating one for the Mechanics' Institute chess community. He passed away while he was in his mid-50s. He should have been given many more years of life to live. Tragically, his life ended too soon. However, we can find solace in his legacy.

The vibrant scholastic program that the Mechanics' Institute possesses today owes a debt of gratitude to its pioneer, Anthony Corrales. While Anthony cannot participate in Mechanics' Institute activities anymore, he has a living legacy at the Mechanics' Institute. The vibrant scholastic chess program and the numerous chess books in his name in the library are testaments to his memory. He was a beloved teacher to his students during his time at the Mechanics' Institute, and this legacy will ensure that chess players will keep learning and improving their game for years to come.

Anthony loved chess books, and having a legacy of chess books in the library dedicated to his memory is a fitting way to honor him.

If someone is remembered, he is not truly gone. Anthony will be always remembered at the Mechanics' Institute. He is not gone. He is still with us in spirit.



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FM Rui Yan Claims Clear Victory at the 2025 Susan Polgar Foundation Girls' Invitational

By IA/NTD Dr. Judit Sztaray

Every event with GM Susan Polgar is special—but this year's Susan Polgar Foundation Girls' Invitational (SPFGI) was truly unforgettable. I had the joy of watching a fantastic player, FM Ruiyang (Rui) Yan, take clear first place with poise, focus, and heart.

Rui holds a special place in my heart. I've had the privilege of watching her grow over the past 12 years—from a shy yet incredibly bright, funny and enthusiastic child into a warm, witty, and determined young woman. A Bay Area native, Rui has played in countless events I've run, and seeing someone from your home community succeed at this level is something uniquely meaningful.

I've celebrated many of her milestones—from her WIM and FM titles to her impressive performance at the 2023 U.S. Women's Championship. That same year, Rui shared the SPFGI co-champion title with IM Alice Lee. I was originally set to be Chief Arbiter but had to step back due to work. Watching from afar, I was still proud. But this year? I was right there as she claimed the title outright. With calm determination and unwavering focus, she led the tournament from start to finish. When Round 6 concluded and we announced Rui as the 2025 SPFGI Champion, my Bay Area heart was full.



With FM Rui Yan (right).



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A Community, Not Just a Competition

But SPFGI is more than a tournament—it's a celebration of what happens when young women are uplifted and empowered through shared passion. Under the visionary leadership of GM Susan Polgar, the event is defined not just by competitive excellence but by camaraderie, confidence, and connection.



She has been part of a group of high-school girls who were occupying the top boards round after round, and all the girls on the rest of the boards looked up to them, got encouragement from them, and were inspired by them. There was an unmistakable energy in the air—one of mutual support and joy. Girls from across the country and beyond came together, not as rivals, but as peers, teammates, and friends. Between rounds, the venue buzzed with laughter, spontaneous analysis sessions, and friendships in the making. The energy was unmistakable: mutual respect, shared joy, and collective celebration.



FM Rui Yan playing on Board 1 and taking a peak at the game on Board 2.



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Susan Polgar's Legacy of Leadership

At the center of it all was GM Susan Polgar, whom I'm honored to call both a friend and colleague. I've had the privilege of serving as Chief Arbiter and co-organizer of SPFGI since 2019, and every year, I'm reminded of how powerful her leadership is.

Susan doesn't just host this event—she lives it. She's fully present from beginning to end, personally invested in each player's journey. Her example teaches the girls what commitment, excellence, and resilience truly look like. In her talks, she shares wisdom with empathy and authenticity, always reminding the girls that their value extends far beyond rating points. She's built a legacy that goes beyond trophies—she's changing lives.



GM Susan Polgar observing one of the many games at the event.

More Than Moves: Lifelong Bonds

What makes SPFGI truly magical isn't just the chess—it's the lifelong bonds forged in this unique environment. The cheers after tough rounds, the shared meal times, and side events and activities—these are the moments that last.

For players and staff alike, the event was a reunion of old friends and the start of new friendships. I was especially lucky to work once again with my wonderful friend Anastasia Wyzywany, whose top-tier organizational skills brought the entire event to life. And I was joined by an old friend, a fantastic Deputy Chief Arbiter, Aiya Cancio, whose calm focus and positive spirit made everything run smoothly. Last, but not the least, it's always a great honor to work with GM Liem Le, who's wisdom and thorough



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approach to everything, not just chess chess games, make the event even more professional.

Thanks to this team, the four days felt more like a celebration than a job.



With Anastasia Wyzywany (middle) and Aiya Cancio (right).

Until Next Year...

As we packed away the boards and clocks, what remains is the sense that we've all been part of something truly special. SPFGI 2025 wasn't just a chess tournament. It was a place where girls grew not just as players, but as leaders, friends, and community-builders. And thanks to Rui Yan—and every girl who brought their whole selves to the event—we go home inspired and eager for what next year will bring.

The 2025 SPFGI was held June 21-25 at Webster University. Full event rules and details, along with the side events can be found [here](#). The tournament crosstable can be found [here](#). Top board games are available on the [events page on Chess.com](#).



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Please find below [one of Rui's game](#) that she was kind enough to annotate for us.

[Event "2025 Susan Polgar Foundation Girls' Invitational"]

[Site "Webster University, MO"]

[Date "2025.06.23"]

[Round "1"]

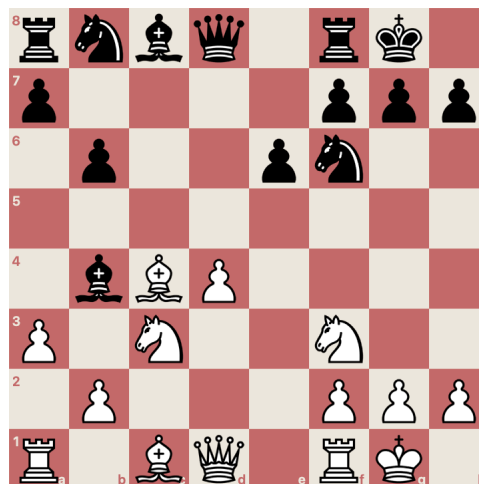
[White "Liang, Candice"]

[Black "Yan, Ruiyang"]

[Result "0-1"]

[Link "<https://www.chess.com/analysis/game/pgn/5krmoLG6xW/analysis>"]

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 O-O 5. Bd3 d5 6. Nf3 dxc4 7. Bxc4 c5 8. O-O cxd4 9. exd4 b6 10. a3 ?! {Wastes a move, as I will take on c3 eventually.}

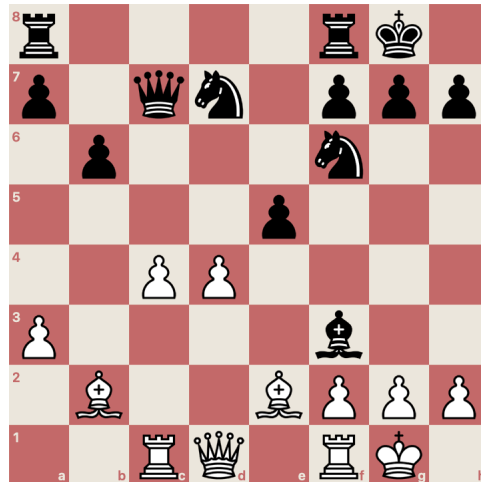




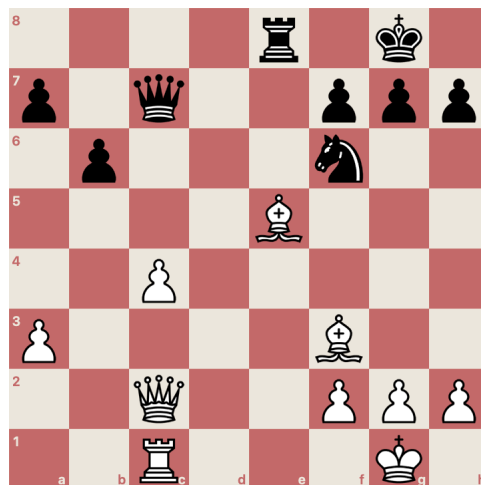
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(10. Bg5 {This is a more dynamic approach, and puts pressure on my f6 knight while threatening d5 later on.}) 10... Bxc3 11. bxc3 Bb7 (11... Qc7 {May have been a better move, as it puts pressure on the c file immediately.}) 12. Be2 Qc7 13. Bb2 Nbd7 14. Rc1 e5 15. c4 \$5 {Forces me to open up the center & trade pieces >:{}}



15... Bxf3 (15... exd4 {I wasn't sure about this during the game, as it opens up the position a lot more. It also wasn't clear to me on how I could exploit the weaknesses on c4 and a3.}) 16. Nxd4 Rad8 {With dynamic equality.}) 16. Bxf3 Rad8 17. Qc2 (17. d5 {This would be a better move, as it still leaves a lot of play in the position. Even though my knights get the c5 square, white's bishops are very dynamically positioned.}) 17... Rfe8 18. Rfe1 exd4 19. Rxe8+ Rxe8 20. Bxd4 Ne5 21. Bxe5 {I don't like this move as she trades off her bishop pair, and it leaves me with a very nice position. Additionally, the two weaknesses at c4 and a3 are harder to defend after this trade.}

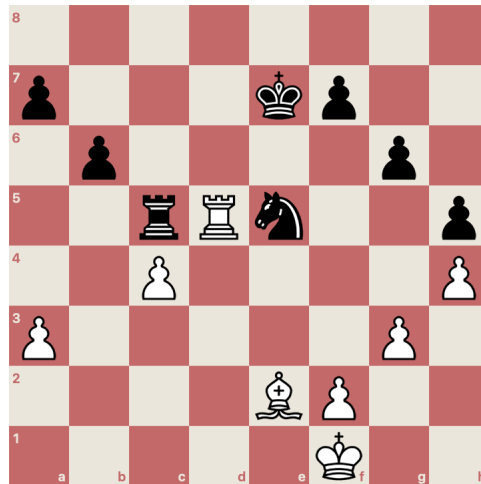




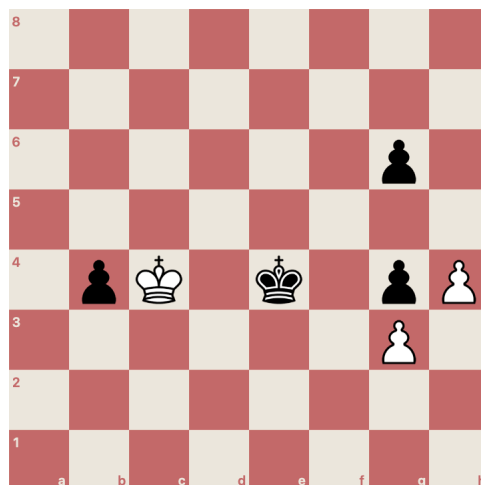
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21... Rxe5 22. Qd3 Qe7 23. g3 Ra5 24. Rc3 g6 25. Qe3 Qxe3 26. Rxe3 Kf8 {The Queen trade makes my technical task a little easier.} 27. h4 Rc5 28. Be2 h5 29. Rb3 Re5 30. Rb2 Ke7 31. Kf1 Nd7 32. Bf3 Rc5 33. Re2+ Kf8 34. Rd2 Ne5 35. Be2 Ke7 36. Rd5 {White needs to keep the rooks on the board to create more counterplay and drawing chances; the bishop alone is insufficient to hold.}



(36. Rd4 {This would be a better alternative.}) 36... Rxd5 37. cxd5 Kd6 38. f4 Ng4 39. Bxg4 hxg4 40. Ke2 Kxd5 41. Kd3 b5 42. f5 a5 43. fxg6 fxg6 44. Ke3 Ke5 45. Kd3 b4 46. axb4 axb4 47. Kc4 Ke4 {0-1 Black wins.} **0-1**



This article is part of the [blog published on Chess.com.](#)



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Six New Books by Thinkers Publishing

By IM John Donaldson

The latest offerings by the Belgian publisher Thinkers Publishing (thinkerspublishing.com), all handsome hardcover books, feature several on openings.

The Modernized Vienna of the Queen's Gambit Declined by Fernando Peralta (223 pages)

The Modernized Bird's Opening by Raven Sturt (583 pages)

A Complete Repertoire for Black after 1...e6 by Nicholas Yap (509 pages)

The Carlsbad Pawn Structure Revisited by Christian Bauer (203 pages)

The Modernized Petrov's Defense by Milos Pavlovic (206 pages)

The Modernized Vienna of the Queen's Gambit Declined by Fernando Peralta really stood out to this reviewer. The Vienna variation of the Queen's Gambit occurs after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4, with the main line and only testing reply 5.e4 (5.e3 transposes to a line of the Queen's Gambit Accepted where the early development of White's knight on c3 is not considered challenging).

During much of the Vienna's existence, Black invariably played 5...Bb4 and White instantly replied 6.Bg5. That line is now considered theoretically quite drawish, but more recently the substitution of the gambit continuation 6.Bxc4! Nxe4 7.0-0! has led to many White victories and put the Vienna temporarily under a cloud. This changed with the invention of 5...b5 by the Argentine born Spanish GM Salvador Del Rio.

Here is what the author has to say about the line covered in this book:

The primary goal of this work is not to recount a story or to acknowledge the creative efforts of a friend, although those are satisfying perks, I allow myself. This is a theoretical book about a chess variation that (it could not be otherwise) I will call the Del Rio Variation. It is one of the most fascinating openings that can be played today, leading almost immediately to highly dynamic and complex positions. Additionally, it can be set up quite easily. For example, after 1.d4 Nf6 (1...d5 is another possible move order to reach the same position) 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 (from 1.d4 all of White's moves are the most popular). Then 4...dxc4, establishing the Vienna Variation.

Today opening books rely heavily on computer engines (could it be otherwise?) with the author responsible for presenting to the reader what they consider the most important variations. This process is not simply a matter of copying the engine assessments (at least it shouldn't be!). Ideally, at a minimum, the student should get an idea of what the



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main lines are, especially what is most important for games played between human beings.

Peralta, long one of Argentina's top players with a rating fluctuating between 2550 and 2630, has gone well beyond this. *The Modernized Vienna of the Queen's Gambit Declined* is a model of what an opening book should be. A strong player with considerable experience playing the Vienna, Peralta keeps an objective viewpoint throughout despite this book being written from Black's perspective. He identifies the most critical variations and offers not only an overview of existing theory but his own assessments of the variations, primarily with concrete variations but also through explanatory prose that explains the key ideas for both sides.

Here is one example that examines one of the most important lines in the Vienna, where White transfers his queen to the kingside (Qd1-d2-f4) looking to attack.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.e4 b5 6.e5 Nd5 7.Nxb5 Nb6 8.Be2 Nc6 9.Nc3 Be7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Qd2 Bb7 12.Qf4 Nb4 13.Qg4 Kh8 14.Rd1



14...Qe8!?



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The author writes:

You will probably not find any game in your database with this move at the moment. It was played by IM Mario Villaneuva in the Argentine National League (I already mentioned that this variation is very popular in my country!). The move may seem quite mysterious at first sight but it contains some subtle ideas:

1. It defends e6 which sometimes allows us to play ...f6 or ...f5.
2. When we exchange White's knight on g5 and White recaptures with his bishop he does not win a tempo by threatening the queen.
3. The White queen on h5 (a recurring square in this variation) can allow us to play ...f5. After the eventual exchange of queens, the move exf6 is no longer permissible.
4. The rook on a8, instead of going to its classic (but somewhat abstract) position on b8 can move to d8 and exert strong pressure on d4. We already know that this system of White's get along badly with the bishop on e3 so the pressure makes more sense here.
5. In addition, the Queen can appear on g6, c6 or a4 as the game progresses. Not so bad for a single move. Even so, the Black king is in this variation and it will be necessary to play with a fair amount of precision to maintain good chances.

This reviewer was struck by the fact that this variation (5...b5) leads to play that bears some affinity with the Meran variation 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 c6 5.e3 Nbd7 6.Bd3 dxc4 7.Bxc4 b5 8.Bd3 Bb7 9.e4 b4 10.Na4 c5 11.e5. Like the Meran variation Black gets the use of the d5 square and all his minor pieces are active. The lines are relatively easy to learn and not over theoretical.

The Modernized Vienna of the Queen's Gambit Declined is a great book. Anyone looking for a defense to 1.d4 (paired with either the Nimzo-Indian or Queen's Gambit Declined) will find Peralta's work an excellent guide.

Highly Recommended

The Modernized Bird's Opening by Raven Sturt (583 pages)

American Grandmaster Raven Sturt has written a whopper of a book on Bird's Opening (1.f4) that comes in at close to 600 pages. Many books on the Bird's incorporate transpositions to other openings - the King's Gambit after 1.f4 e5 2.e4, a reversed



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Leningrad Dutch 1.f4 d5 3.Nf3 Nf6 3.g3, and a Closed Sicilian 1.f4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.e4 followed by g3 or a Grand Prix Attack 1.f4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.e4.

This is not the case with Sturt's work which offers original lines like 1.f4 Nf6 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 a6 4.c4, 1.f4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 Bf5 4.Nc3 with the idea of a quick d3 and e4, 1.f4 g6 2.Nf3 Bg7 3.e4 d5 and 1.e4 g6 2.Nf3 Bg7 3.e4 d6 4.d4 Nf6 5.e5.

Sturt, while being a strong champion of the Bird, maintains objectivity and points out 1.f4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.b3 g6 4.Bb2 Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.Be2 Nc6 7.0-0 d6 is one of Black's answers to 1.f4. He then examines 8.Bb5! Na5! 9.Be2 Bf5 and 9...Nc6.

If you are a Birdman or Birdwomen this is a book you will want to have.

A Complete Repertoire for Black after 1...e6 by Nicholas Yap (509 pages)

Pairing the French and Dutch Defenses together has a long tradition dating back to Mikhail Botvinnik who made these openings his mainstays. One benefit is being able to meet 1.d4 with 1...e6 and only later ...f5, in so doing avoiding many of the tricky lines after 1.d4 f5 like 2.Nc3 and 2.Bg5, etc.

Yap not only advocates for the Dutch, but for the Stonewall variation. Here he varies from the Sixth World Champion in recommending lines with Black's bishop on d6 instead of e7. This is part of a trend toward more flexibility with the fianchetto of Black's queen bishop an alternative to the traditional ...Bc8-d7-e8-h5. Aiming for ...c5 is not something old school Stonewall users often did but is commonly seen today.

The Winawer variation (3.Nc3 Bb4), the Tarrasch (3...a6) and ...Nc6 and ...Qb6 versus the Advance are recommended lines in the French in this well researched book.

The Modernized Petrov's Defense by Milos Pavlovic (206 pages)

Serbian Grandmaster Milos Pavlovic's book on the Petrov (or Petroff if you prefer) differs from the earlier book in this review in that presents an overview of the opening rather than a specific repertoire. This includes both the main line (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d4 d5 6.Bd3 Be7 7.0-0 Nc6), the trendy (5.d3 Nf6 6.d4 d5 7.Bd3 Bd6 8.0-0 0-0) which transposes to the Exchange French where White's tries to use his first move advantage in a symmetrical position and odd-ball lines like 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nd3, a favorite of Andrew Karklins, a two-time participant in U.S. Championships in the 1970s.

Pavlovic gives a lot of attention to 3.d4 Nxe4 and 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.Nc3 in this book which is quite comprehensive but lacking in explanatory prose.



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The Carlsbad Pawn Structure Revisited by Christian Bauer (203 pages)

The resurgence of interest in the London System, Exchange variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined and Exchange variation of the Caro Kann has led to interest in the underlying pawn structure common to all three openings. The pawn structure d4 and e3 versus d5 and c6 or d4 and c3 versus d5 and e6, is commonly referred to as the Carlsbad structure. It gets its name from the Carlsbad (now Karlovy Vary) 1923 tournament although it made its first tournament appearance much earlier.

The Carlsbad Pawn Structure Revisited by French Grandmaster Christian Bauer examines the typical plans for both sides. These include:

Strategic Plans for White

1. Minority Attack (b4-b5) – White advances pawns on the queenside to create weaknesses in Black's camp (especially the backward c6 pawn).
2. Central Breaks (e4) – White can prepare e3-e4 to break in the center, challenging Black's d5 control.
3. King's Side Play (f3 & g4) – Occasionally, White shifts plans to the kingside, especially if Black castles kingside.

Strategic Plans for Black

1. Kingside Attack (f5-f4) – Black can initiate counterplay by pushing pawns on the kingside.
2. Blockade & Knight Maneuvers – Knights on d6 or e4 can help control key squares.
3. C-file Control – Placing a rook on c8 and contesting the open c-file is a common idea.

There is no question that learning to play both sides of the Carlsbad variation will pay big dividends.

The Magic and Beauty of Quiet Chess Moves by Boguslaw Boder and Jacek Bielczyk 300 pages.

This may be the first book devoted entirely to quiet spectacular moves - moves which don't involve a check or a capture that creates a hidden threat or improve the position without immediate violence. Boder and Bielczyk offer the reader 700 positions with detailed solutions.



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Announcing our GM in Residence, Sam Shankland!

By Alex Robins

I'm very excited to announce that Mechanics will be hosting Sam Shankland here for a series of events this month and in the Fall. Sam first played a tournament in the Chess Room as a teenager in 2004 and we're honored now to host him as our GM in Residence. I know our players will be thrilled to get the chance to learn from one of the world's best players. Check out below for information about our upcoming events and classes.

Office Hours with GM Shankland

July 8th

12:30-5:30pm

Mechanics' members are invited to drop in ahead of the Tuesday Night Marathon for a rare chance to connect with former US Champion Sam Shankland. Challenge Sam to a blitz game, pose a tough chess question, or try your best to stump him with a puzzle (good luck with that!)

Tuesday Night Marathon Lecture

July 8th

5:30-6:30pm

After your member-exclusive time with Sam, don't miss his lecture that kicking off our Summer Tuesday Night Marathon! There's no better way to sharpen your game before round one begins. This popular event fills up fast, so be sure to register early!

Lecture and Blitz with GM Sam Shankland

Thursday July 24

Lecture at 6:00 pm

Tournament begins at 7:00 pm

Join us for a 7 round 3+2 blitz tournament with GM Sam Shankland. Here's your chance to be paired with one of the strongest players in the world!

Register [here](#).



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GM Masterclass with Sam Shankland

July 28 - August 1

Daily from 4:00-5:30pm

Hybrid format - In person session on Monday & Friday at Mechanics' Institute.

Join Grandmaster and former US Champion Sam Shankland for an exclusive, week-long masterclass at the Mechanics' Institute! This is a rare opportunity to learn directly from one of America's top players in a small-group setting. Spots are limited, so don't wait to register.

Participants will help shape the curriculum by voting on a selection of advanced topics curated by Sam himself.

Eligibility:

Recommended for players with a USCF rating of 1500+. Players below this rating may be considered at staff at staff discretion - please email chessroom@milibrary.org.

\$300 Mechanics' Institute Members

\$350 for Non-Members

Early Bird registrations through July 8th will get \$50 off their registration.

Register [here](#).



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Tony's Teasers

Johann Berger, 2025.

White to play and win.





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New Puzzle in the Library

By Steven Dunlap
White to Play and Win





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Solutions

For Tony's Teaser:

1.Na5 Bf7 2.Rh4 Be8 3. Rh3 Ka3 4. Nc4 (and Rh3 next is unstoppable)

For the Puzzle in the Library:

1.Qxh7! Kxh7 2.Rh6#

or 1.Qxh7 Nxh7 2.Rg8+ Rxc8 3.Nf7#



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Contact Us

Mechanics' Institute Chess Club is on the 4th floor at 57 Post Street, San Francisco, CA.
Our phone number is 415-393-0110.

We welcome any feedback, articles, or "Letter to the Editor" piece.
Submit yours today at chessroom@milibrary.org

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