GAMBIT

Chess College: Pawn Play

Efstratios Grivas

A step-by-step guide
to chess excellence

Bibliography

Informator; various contributors; Informator 1966-2004
Chess World Championships; James H. Gelo; McFarland 1999
ChessBase Mega Database; various contributors; ChessBase 2004
Encyclopaedia of Chess Endgames (database); various contributors; Informator 2004
Exploring the Endgame; Peter Griffiths; A. & C. Black 1984
Greek Chess Chronicles; Triantafyllos Siaperas; GCF 1970-3
Greek International Masters; Efstratios Grivas; Skyfos 1986
Moscow Chess Seminar; Efstratios Grivas; Aegina 1989
New In Chess (Magazine); various contributors; Interchess BV 1984-2004
New In Chess (Yearbooks); various contributors; Interchess BV 1984-2004
NicBase Database; various contributors; Interchess BV 2004
Pawn Endings; Alexandar Tsvetkov; Chess Enterprises 1985
Personal notes and analysis; Efstratios Grivas; 1980-2004
Rook Endgames; Yuri Averbakh; Sportverlag Berlin 1988
Shakhmatny Biulleten; various contributors; Shakhmatny Biulleten 1985-95
Zurich International Chess Tournament 1953; David Bronstein; Dover 1979

Contents

Symbols	4
Bibliography	5
Introduction	6
Passed Pawn	8
Isolated Pawn	20
Doubled Pawns	41
Backward Pawn	55
Hanging Pawns	68
Pawn-Majority	80
Pawn-Minority	90
Central Strike	101
Index of Games	109
Index of Openings	111

Introduction

Every chess-player who wishes to improve his level in the difficult subject of chess is obliged, first of all, to study methodically and understand the existing principles that govern the theory of the opening, middlegame and endgame.

Most chess-players focus more on the study of opening theory than other aspects of the game. The reasons are probably clear: opening theory is easier to learn and can provide immediate results, although this is based more on the opponent's ignorance than our own abilities. Even for a chess trainer, it is easier to teach some variations from this or that opening or a set of simple tactical motifs than to engross himself in the exposition of middlegame and endgame theory.

Yes, middlegame and endgame theory does exist. The great difficulty in approaching it lies in the fact that it does not follow absolute and clear-cut paths, but rather involves deep research in the ideas and logic by which specific types of positions are treated. Moreover, unlike opening theory, the theory of the middlegame and the endgame does not change rapidly based on modern developments and remains almost intact through the years.

In view of the above, any chess-player who wishes to follow a chess career or simply become a better player must refrain from the commonplace and assume a different approach. He must develop a good understanding of middlegame and endgame theory, so as to be able in his games to proceed in a proper way after his chosen opening has reached its conclusion. The chess-player can differentiate himself only in the opening; there, each one of us brings forth his own beliefs and convictions, and in general his own experiences and preferences. Objectively, no opening loses – but also no opening wins. The opening is just the beginning of the journey and serves to offer us a comfortable start. But to reach the end of this journey successfully we have to count on our knowledge and experience, as regards middlegame and endgame theory.

Endgame theory teaches us two fundamental issues. First, how to extract the maximum from a basic theoretical position with little material, where the experts (and practice comprising thousands of games) have reached definite conclusions. Second, the way in which we can handle an endgame, depending on the material remaining on the board, and the ideas and plans we should employ. This second issue is significantly more difficult to master because, apart from making full use of the first one (we must be aware of the possible outcomes of the endgame in question) it is greatly influenced by our experience and understanding, which are basically derived from the images and impressions we have from related positions. And, of course, a primary role is played by the effort we have invested in studying.

In middlegame theory, things are even tougher. We are obliged to study various types of positions with specific strategic and tactical attributes, so as to understand the underlying ideas and be able to employ them ourselves in similar situations. Besides, while many chess-players have studied these topics and acquired knowledge, it is the application of this knowledge in practice that helps differentiate between them. True, chess is not a simple activity, but it becomes so much more attractive when we acquire this knowledge...

This is the second of three books that deal with middlegame and general chess theory. The purpose of this series is to introduce the reader to advanced training concepts, using the same methods of presentation and instruction that were taught to me personally by famous trainers that I have worked with. I owe to these people gratitude for their valuable contribution to my progress as a chess-player. Besides, the fact that I succeeded in attaining the grandmaster title is owed first and foremost to the education I received and then to my personal work and effort.

Volume 2: Pawn Play

In this, the second volume of the series, we focus on pawns and investigate many important aspects of their role in chess, their strengths and weaknesses, and their impact on the battle as a whole.

Passed Pawn

By definition, a pawn is passed when it can advance to promotion without encountering any opposing pawns in its path.

Possession of a passed pawn and the ability to exploit its potential is a strategic element that can often determine the result of the game.

The passed pawn may prove significant in the middlegame, gaining space and tying down the opponent's pieces, but its true strength comes to the fore in the endgame. In practically all types of endgames, possession of a passed pawn is considered a decisive advantage, particularly when the remaining material is scant. Even if it proves impossible to promote the pawn, its mere presence is enough to restrict the enemy pieces, force material gain or simply to maintain the initiative.

Consequently, this strategic element greatly influences (and is influenced by) the matter of piece exchanges. A passed pawn must be blockaded, so as to have its power restrained as much as possible. The minor pieces (knight or bishop) are ideal for this purpose, as they can rarely be forced to retreat by enemy forces. On the other hand, the major pieces (queen and rook) find it difficult to achieve a stable blockade as they are easily harassed, while one must also consider that, for such valuable pieces, dealing with a mere pawn cannot be an efficient form of employment. Taking the above into account, it becomes clear that the side with the passed pawn should seek to exchange minor pieces and retain the major ones; the opposite applies to the other side.

A factor of crucial importance is the ability of the defending king (i.e. the one facing the passed pawn) to participate in the proceedings. After exchanging the major pieces (and especially the queens), the king can approach the passed pawn and blockade it (or generally stop its advance), thus freeing the other pieces of its army for other duties.

A passed pawn that has been securely blockaded and efficiently neutralized may become a weakness and then this very important element may even lead to the loss of the game.

In general, the side possessing a passed pawn has clearer plans and aims. The other side usually seeks ways to blockade it or, if this proves impossible, obtain counterplay on another part of the board. One good option is 'harassment' of the opponent's king. In practice this option often proves very effective, but unfortunately it is not always employable!

The most fundamental rule of exploiting this strategic element is: passed pawns must be pushed!

Grivas – Kotronias

Athens 1986

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗e2 0-0 6 ♗g5

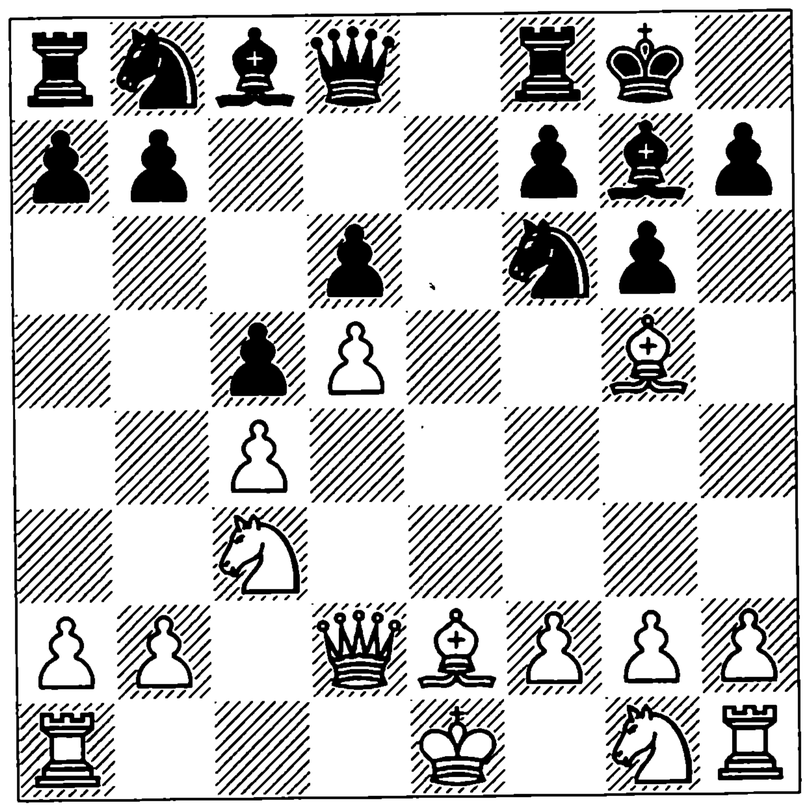
The Averbakh Variation of the King's Indian Defence.

6...c5 7 d5 e6

One of the older lines. Most players prefer to play 7...h6 8 ♗f4 e6!?, with a complicated position.

8 ♕d2! exd5 9 exd5 *(D)*

B



9...♕b6

An active response. White retains a small plus after 9...♖e8 10 ♘f3 ♗g4 11 0-0.

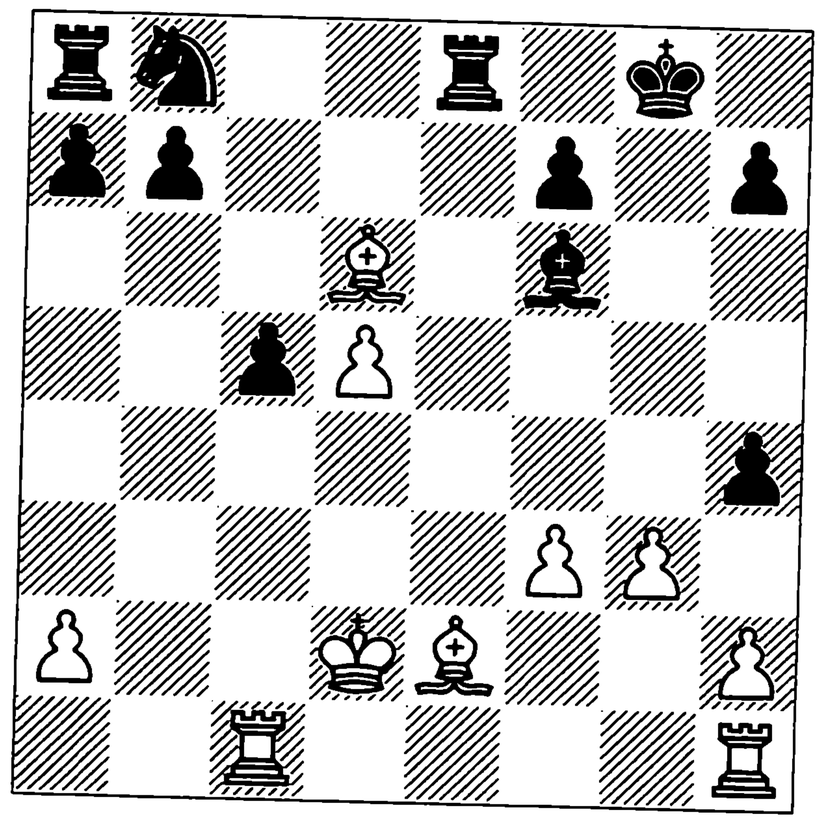
10 ♘f3 ♗f5 11 ♘h4!

Practically forced, as 11 ♖c1 ♘e4 12 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 13 b3 leads to equality, Grivas-Šahović, Athens 1983.

11...♘e4 12 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 13 f3! ♕xb2 14 ♖c1 ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 ♗xd5!

An idea of Yurtaev's, fully in line with Black's general plan. 15...♗f5? 16 ♘xf5 gxf5 17 ♖b1! is significantly inferior.

16 cxd5 ♖e8 *(D)*



W

Black's compensation for the piece lies in two pawns and the bad placement of White's king. Moreover, his position looks much more harmonious.

17 ♗f4!?

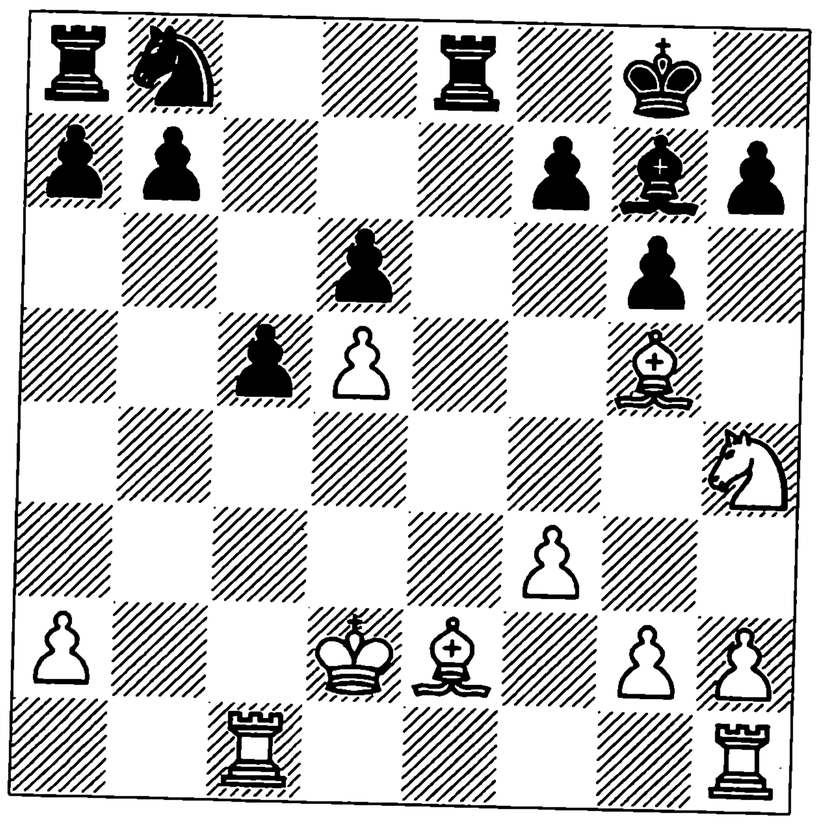
A complicated position is reached after 17 ♖he1 a6 18 ♗d3 (18 ♗f4?! ♗f6 19 g3 g5 20 ♗xd6 gxh4 21 ♗xc5 ♘d7 22 ♗a3 hxg3 23 hxg3 ♖e5 24 ♗c4 b5 25 ♗b3 a5 was slightly better for Black in the game Lerner-Yurtaev, Tallinn 1983) 18...♘d7 19 a4!?, as in Liogky-Yurtaev, USSR 1984.

17...♗f6 18 g3!

A strong novelty. White returns the extra material in return for active piece-play and a dangerous passed pawn. Black took over the initiative after 18 ♗g3 a6 19 f4 ♘d7 20 ♗g4 ♘b6 21 ♗f3 ♘a4 22 ♗f2 b5 in Zaichik-Yurtaev, Volgodonsk 1985.

18...g5 19 ♗xd6 gxh4 *(D)*

20 ♗c7!



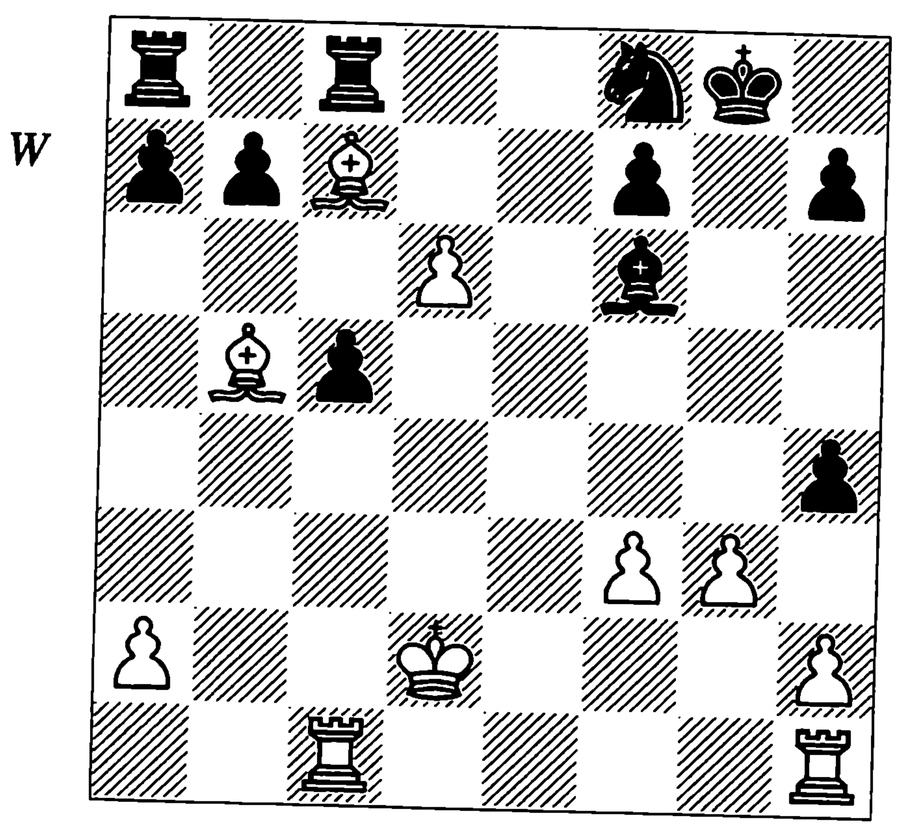
W

The only way. The alternatives were significantly inferior: 20 ♗xc5?! ♖d8! 21 ♗c4 ♘d7 22 ♗e3 ♘b6 23 ♗xb6 axb6 = or 20 ♖xc5? ♘d7 21 ♖c7 ♘b6 22 ♖xb7 ♖ed8 with the initiative for Black. White must make full use of the position's prevalent strategic element, the passed pawn. The presence of another important element, the bishop-pair, enhances the power of this pawn. However, the position is not a one-sided affair: Black has no obvious weaknesses and should be able to withstand White's assault with correct play.

20...♘d7! 21 ♗b5?!

White should play 21 d6!, because after the text-move Black has at his disposal the strong tactical sequence 21...a6! 22 ♗xd7 ♖e7 23 d6 ♖xd7 24 ♖he1 (not 24 ♖xc5? ♗e7! 25 ♖d5 ♗xd6! 26 ♗xd6 ♖ad8), equalizing.

21...♖ec8?! 22 d6 ♘f8 *(D)*



W

23 ♖he1?

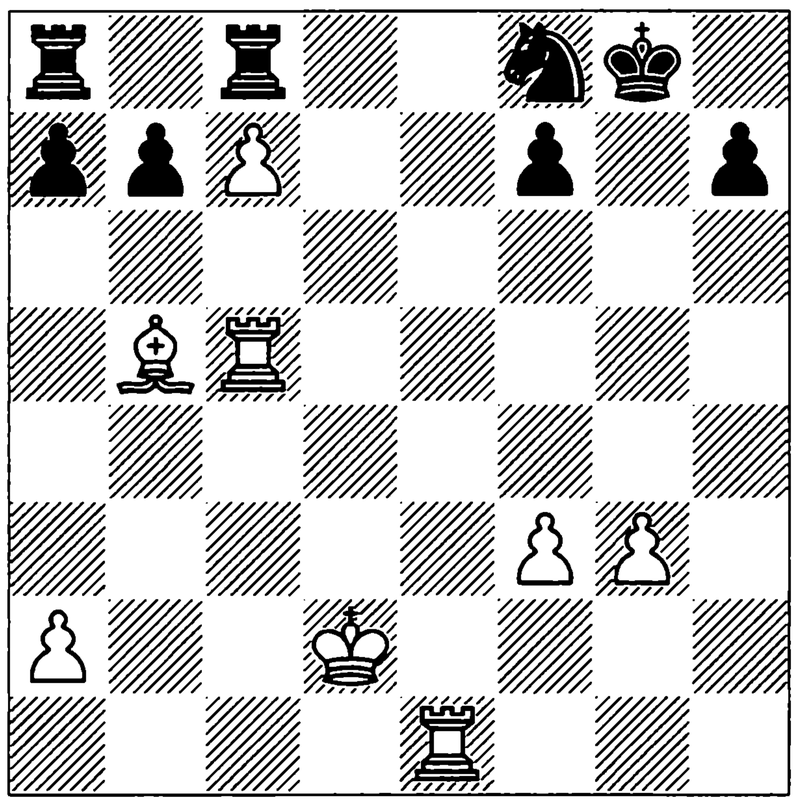
White can retain a slight plus with 23 ♖xc5! ♘e6 24 ♖f5 ♘xc7 25 dxc7 ♗e7 26 ♖c1 ♗d6 27 ♖d5!. In any case this had to be played instead of the text-move.

23...hxg3 24 hxg3 ♗d8?

Black commits a significant error. He could instead have equalized with 24...a6! 25 ♗d3 ♗d8 26 ♖xc5 ♘e6 27 ♗f5! ♘xc5 28 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 29 ♖e8+ ♔g7 30 ♖xd8. Now Black's position becomes hopeless.

25 ♖xc5 ♗xc7 26 dxc7! *(D)*

B



A passed pawn on such an advanced square is a painful thorn in Black's side. Besides, with every piece exchange White's superiority is growing as Black's chances for counterplay diminish.

26...♘e6 27 ♖xe6! fxe6 28 ♗d7 ♔f7 29 ♔e3 ♔f6

Weaker resistance is offered by 29...♔e7? 30 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 31 ♖h5! ♖xc7 32 ♖xh7+ ♔d6 33 ♖xc7 ♔xc7 34 ♔d4 with a winning pawn ending, or 29...b6? 30 ♖c6! ♔e7 31 ♗xe6.

30 g4! h6 31 ♔e4 ♔e7 32 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 33 ♔e5 ♔d7 34 ♖c2! *(D)*

Driving Black into zugzwang. Black has no good moves any more.

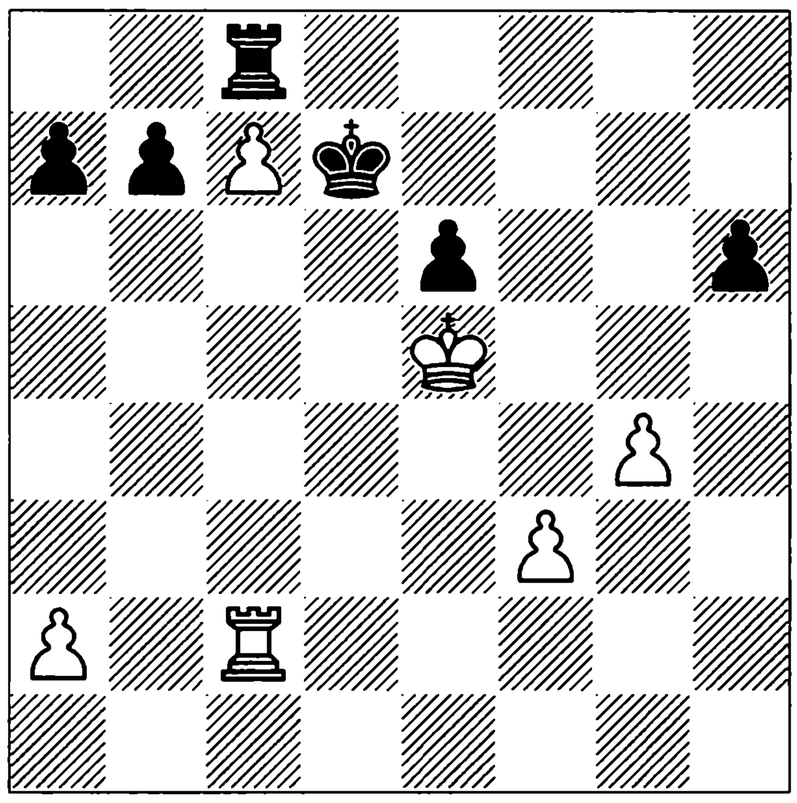
34...b5

This leads to material losses, but White would win easily after either 34...♔e7 35 f4 b5 36 g5 hxg5 37 fxg5 a5 38 g6 or 34...♖xc7 35 ♖xc7+ ♔xc7 36 ♔xe6.

35 ♖d2+ ♔e7 36 ♖d6 ♖xc7

Or 36...♖f8 37 ♖d8! ♖xd8 38 cxd8♕+ ♔xd8 39 ♔xe6 a5 40 ♔d5 +–.

B



37 ♖xe6+ ♔f7 38 ♖xh6 ♖c5+ 39 ♔f4 ♖c4+ 40 ♔g5 ♖a4 41 ♖h7+ ♔e6 42 ♖h2 a5 43 f4 ♖e4 44 f5+ ♔d7 45 f6 b4 46 ♖h7+ 1-0

Grivas – Colović

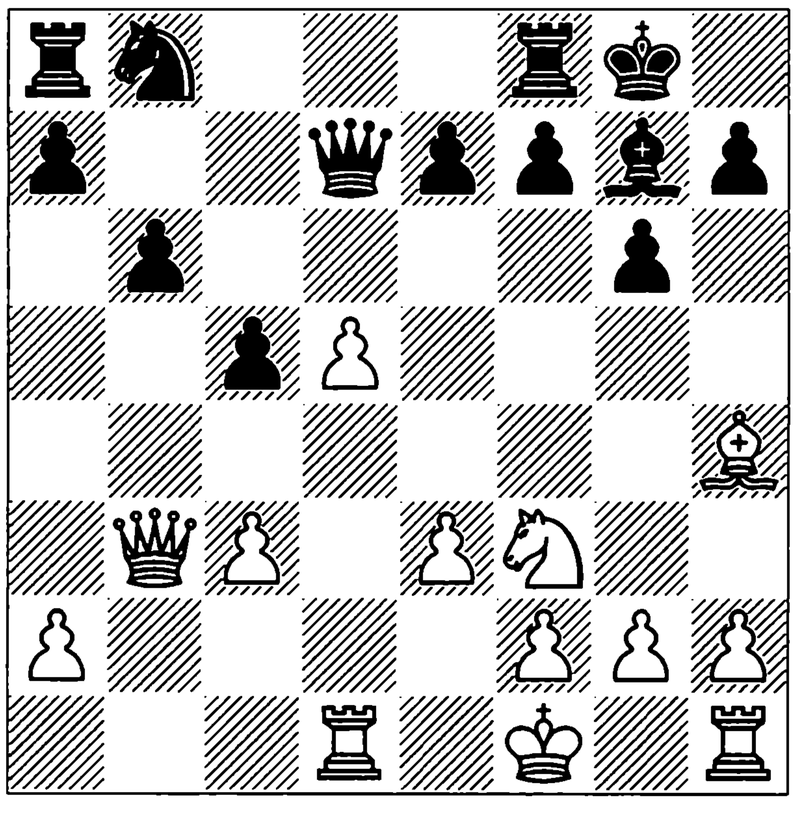
Budapest 2001

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 c4 ♗g7 4 ♘c3 d5 5 ♗g5 ♘e4 6 ♗h4 ♘xc3 7 bxc3 dxc4 8 ♕a4+ ♕d7 9 ♕xc4 b6 10 ♕b3 ♗a6 11 e3 ♗xf1 12 ♔xf1 c5

Another possibility is 12...0-0 13 ♔e2 ♘c6.

13 d5! 0-0 14 ♖d1! *(D)*

B



14...♗f6?

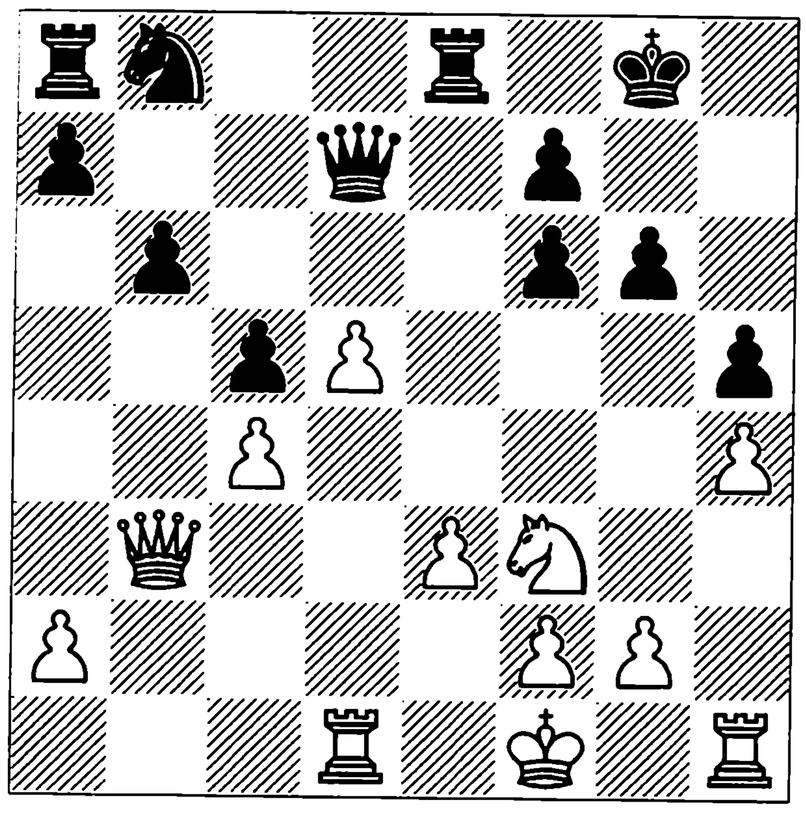
14...e5 is much better, when 15 dxe6 ♕xe6 16 ♕xe6 fxe6 17 c4! ♘c6 18 ♔e2 gives White only a slight edge, Grivas-Wl.Schmidt, Novi Sad OL 1990. The text-move reduces the pressure on the e7-pawn but hands White a protected passed pawn, while at the same time exchanging minor pieces.

15 ♗xf6 exf6 16 c4!

Now the passed pawn cannot be assaulted. Instead, its advance would have been premature. as White has not completed his development.

16...♖e8 17 h4! h5 *(D)*

W



White was threatening to start an attack against the black king by means of the advance h5. Black has prevented this plan, but now his kingside pawn-mass cannot easily advance. Black's main problem in this position is the complete lack of any possibility for counterplay.

18 g3 ♕g4 19 ♔g2 ♘d7 20 a4!

The process of advancing a passed pawn is never a simple matter. White is trying to open a second front on the queenside in order to keep Black's pieces occupied in defensive (and thus generally passive) positions. The combination of queenside initiative and passed pawn will increase White's advantage and lead to victory.

20...♖ab8 21 ♕c2 ♘e5?! *(D)*

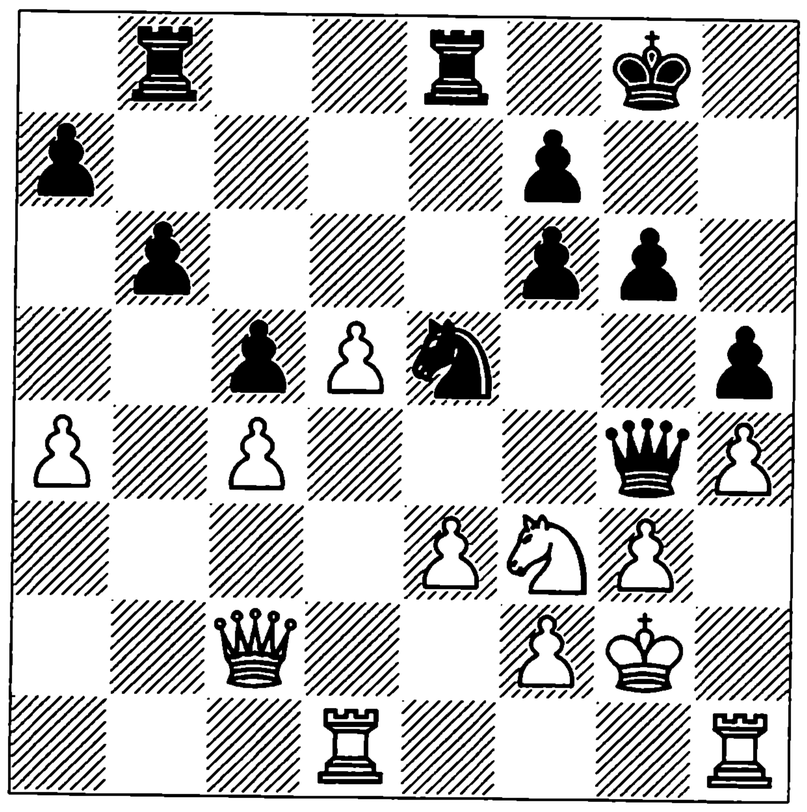
Exchanging the last remaining minor piece cannot possibly be in Black's favour. Lack of a good plan often leads to bad moves. Obviously 21...♕e4 (to exchange major pieces instead) was better, so that the black king could safely come to the centre and contribute to his army's defensive actions.

22 ♘xe5 ♖xe5

After 22...fxe5 23 e4 White totally dominates the position; for example: 23...♕d7 24 ♖hf1 f5 25 f4!.

23 ♖d2 ♖be8 24 ♕d3!

W



Strengthening the e3-square, on which Black may have entertained the idea of a sacrifice to complicate matters. Indeed, 24 ♖b1? ♖xe3! would have disrupted White's plans.

24...♕d7

The rook ending arising after 24...♕e4+ 25 ♕xe4 ♖xe4 26 ♖c1 does not offer Black any hope of survival.

25 a5! ♖e4?!

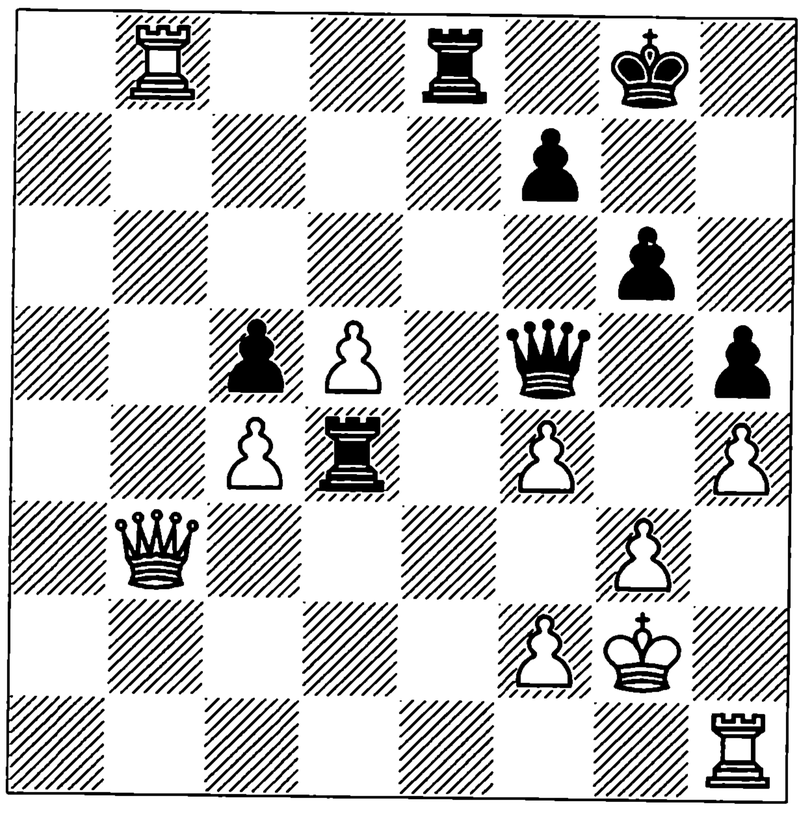
The passive 25...♕d6 offers more chances, although even then White would eventually exploit his significant superiority.

26 axb6 axb6 27 ♖b2! f5

Making an effort for counterplay at any cost, as the b6-pawn was doomed anyway after Black's 25th move (27...♕d6 28 ♖hb1).

28 ♖xb6 f4 29 exf4 ♖d4 30 ♕b3! ♕f5 31 ♖b8! *(D)*

B



White has a material advantage, so he seeks piece exchanges.

31...♕e4+ 32 ♔h2 ♖xb8 33 ♕xb8+ ♔h7

Or 33...♔g7 34 ♕e5+! ♕xe5 35 fxe5 ♖xc4 36 ♖d1 +–.

34 ♕c7! ♔g8 35 ♖a1!

At last the h1-rook joins the battle, since its earlier duties (protecting the king) are no longer required.

35...♖d2

35...♖xc4 also loses quickly: 36 ♖a8+ ♔g7 37 ♕d8.

36 ♕xc5 ♖c2 37 d6 ♖xc4 38 ♕e5 ♕f3 39 d7! ♕xf2+ 40 ♔h3 ♔h7 41 d8♕ 1-0

The passed pawn has completed its mission and forces Black's resignation!

Grivas – Votruba

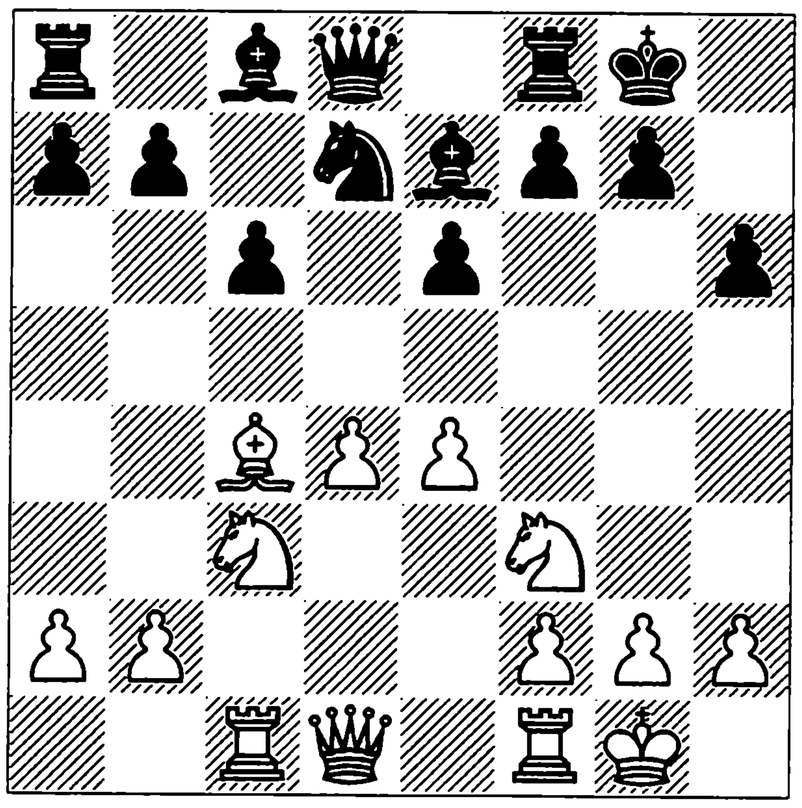
Athens 1984

1 d4 e6 2 c4 d5 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 7 e3 ♕d8 8 ♗d3

White also obtains a slight advantage after 8 ♕b3 ♘d7 9 ♗d3 ♗e7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♖ac1, Grivas-Triantafillidis, Iraklion 1983.

8...♗e7 9 0-0 ♘d7 10 e4 dxc4 11 ♗xc4 0-0 12 ♖c1 *(D)*

B



12...b5

Better than 12...b6 13 d5! exd5 14 exd5 ♗b7 15 dxc6 ♗xc6 16 ♘d4 ♖c8 (16...♗b7? 17 ♘e6!; 16...♘e5!? 17 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 18 ♗d5 ♖c8 19 ♕a4!) 17 ♗a6 ♖c7 18 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 19 ♘d5 ♖xc1 (19...♖d6? 20 ♖c8! 1-0 Grivas-Ioakimidis, Thessaloniki 1984) 20 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 21 ♕xc1 with advantage for White.

13 ♗b3 b4 14 ♘a4 ♗a6

14...♗b7!? is interesting, as in Grivas-Kuczynski, Groningen jr Ech 1985/6.

15 ♖e1

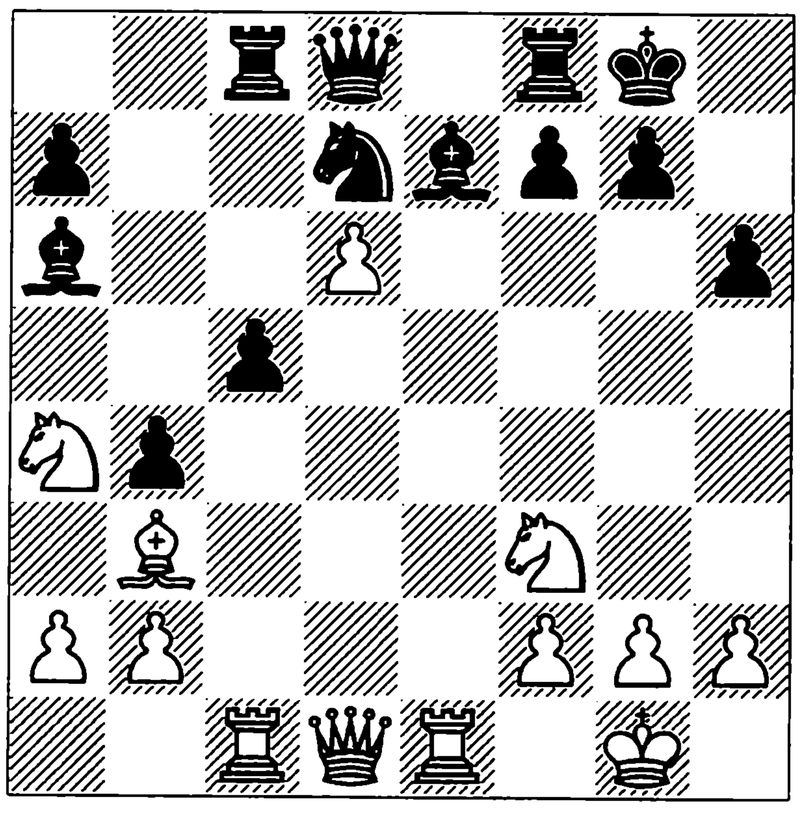
15 ♗c4?! ♗b7 is inferior.

15...♖c8 16 d5! exd5 17 exd5 c5?!

Black hands White the positional advantage of a passed pawn. Instead he should have preferred 17...cxd5 18 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 19 ♕xd5 with a slight advantage for White, and then find something other than 19...♘f6?! 20 ♕xd8 ♗xd8 21 ♘e5 ±.

18 d6! *(D)*

B



Passed pawns must be pushed!

18...♗f6 19 ♕d5! ♘b6 20 ♘xb6 axb6 21 ♘e5!

As usual, minor-piece exchanges benefit the side with the passed pawn, i.e. White. Consequently White is using tactical threats towards that goal. It should be noted that White could also have chosen the 'tactical shot' 21 d7? ♖c7 22 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 23 ♖e8+ ♔h7 24 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 25 ♗xf7 ♖xd7 and ended up in a very bad position, having lost his greatest strength (the passed pawn!) in the process.

21...♗xe5 22 ♖xe5 c4!

Black commences a tactical sequence to undouble his queenside pawns. However, this operation involves further exchanges, something that cannot possibly harm White.

23 ♗c2 b3! 24 ♗b1 bxa2 25 ♗xa2 ♖c5 26 ♕d4 ♖xe5

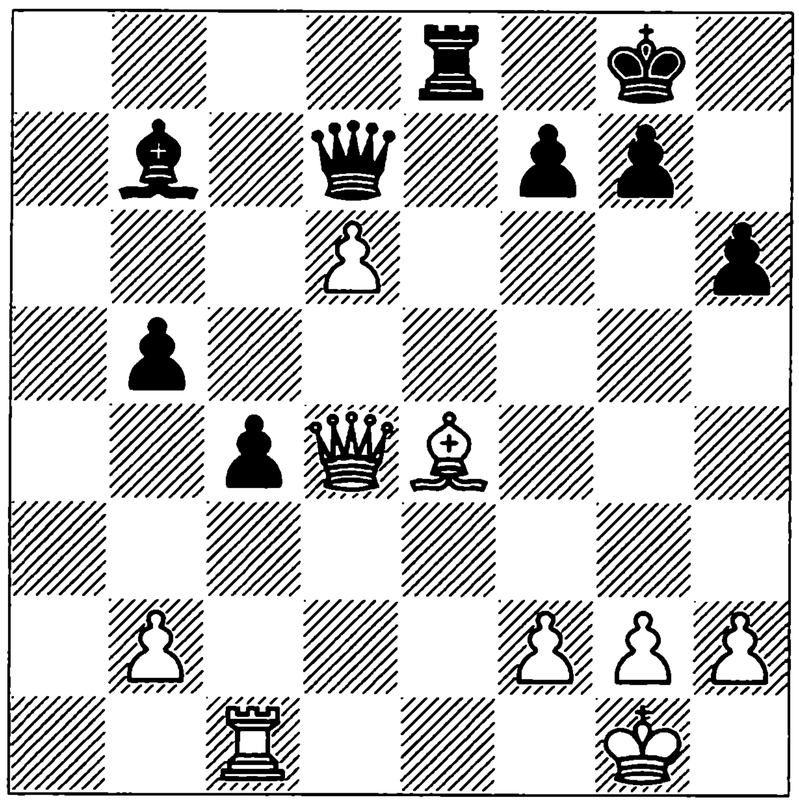
Exchanging the rooks is much better than 26...♕f6? 27 f4!.

27 ♕xe5 ♖e8 28 ♕d4 b5 29 ♗b1 ♕d7

The pawn must be blockaded, but the queen is not the best piece for the job. Negligent blockading would be disastrous: 29...♗b7?! 30 d7! (30 ♗f5? ♕g5!) 30...♖e7 31 ♗f5! g6 32 ♗h3 f5 33 ♖d1 ♔h7 34 ♕d6, etc.

30 ♗e4 ♗b7?! *(D)*

W



Why exchange minor pieces?

31 f3?!

White had a much better option at this point, namely 31 ♗xb7 ♕xb7 32 d7 ♖d8 33 ♖d1 ♕c7 (33...b4?! 34 ♕e5!) 34 ♕e4! with a significant advantage. Note that the black king cannot approach the pawn: 34...♔f8 35 ♕h7! ♖xd7? 36 ♖e1! f6 37 ♕h8+ ♔f7 38 ♕e8#.

31...♗xe4 32 fxe4 ♕e6?!

In time-pressure Black could not bring himself to play the necessary 32...f6!, weakening his king but preventing White from connecting his central pawns.

33 ♖d1 ♖d8 34 e5!

White is now clearly better. The passed d6-pawn cuts Black's position in two and prevents any possible counterplay.

34...♔h7 35 ♕b6! ♕d7 36 h3

Taking the g4-square away from the black queen and threatening ♖d5 with material gain. Black decides to throw caution to the wind as further passive defence would be hopeless.

36...♖c8! 37 ♖d5 c3 38 bxc3 ♖xc3 39 ♖xb5?!

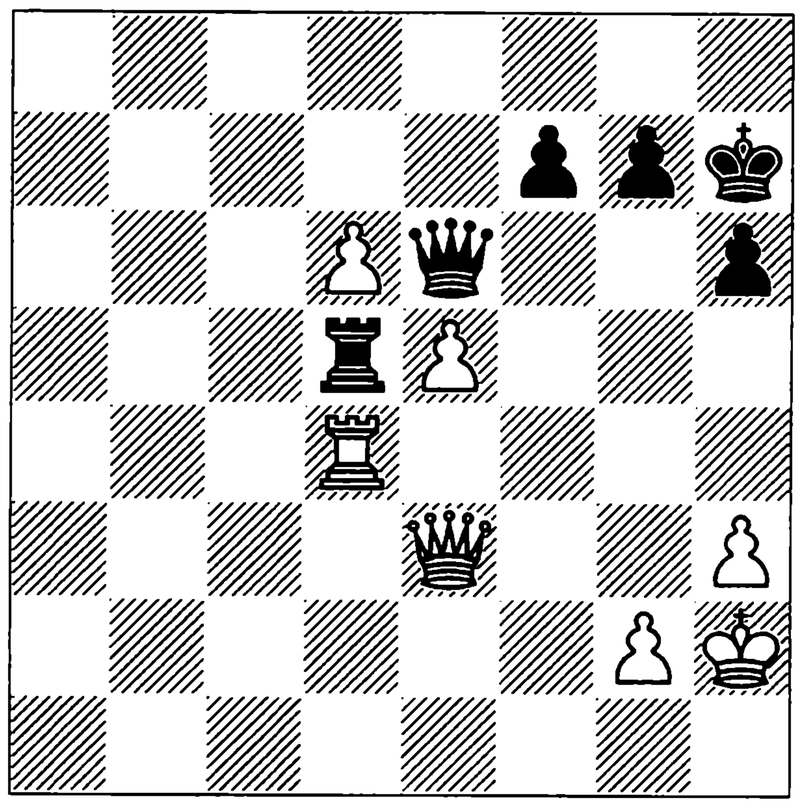
Time-pressure prompted this inaccuracy. White would win faster with 39 ♕xb5! ♕a7+ (39...♖c1+ 40 ♔h2 ♕f5 41 ♕d3! or 39...♕f5 40 ♕f1!) 40 ♔h2 ♕f2 41 ♖d1!.

39...♖c1+ 40 ♔h2 ♕f5 41 ♕e3! ♖d1!

41...♕f1 42 ♖b7! ♕h1+ 43 ♔g3 would not have saved Black.

42 ♖b4 ♖d5 43 ♖e4 ♕e6 44 ♖d4! *(D)*

B



White wraps up the game with a simple but pretty tactic.

44...♖xe5?!

Exchanging the rooks is essential, although the queen ending is clearly hopeless for Black, as the white king can assist the promotion of the d-pawn. The other option was 44...♔g8 45 ♕e4! ♖xe5 46 ♕a8+ ♔h7 47 d7 +–.

45 ♕d3+ g6 46 d7 ♖e3 47 ♕xe3! 1-0

Black resigned due to 47...♕xe3 48 ♖d1! (and certainly not 48 d8♕?? ♕e5+ with perpetual check!).

Grivas – Lalev

Asenovgrad 1985

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♗b4+ 4 ♗d2 c5 5 ♗xb4 cxb4 6 e3 0-0 7 ♗e2 d6 8 0-0 ♖e8?!

Theory considers 8...b6 and 8...♘c6 as better moves.

9 a3 bxa3 10 ♖xa3

White is also slightly better after 10 b4!? a5! 11 ♖xa3 ♘c6 12 bxa5.

10...♘c6 11 ♘c3 e5 *(D)*

12 ♘b5!

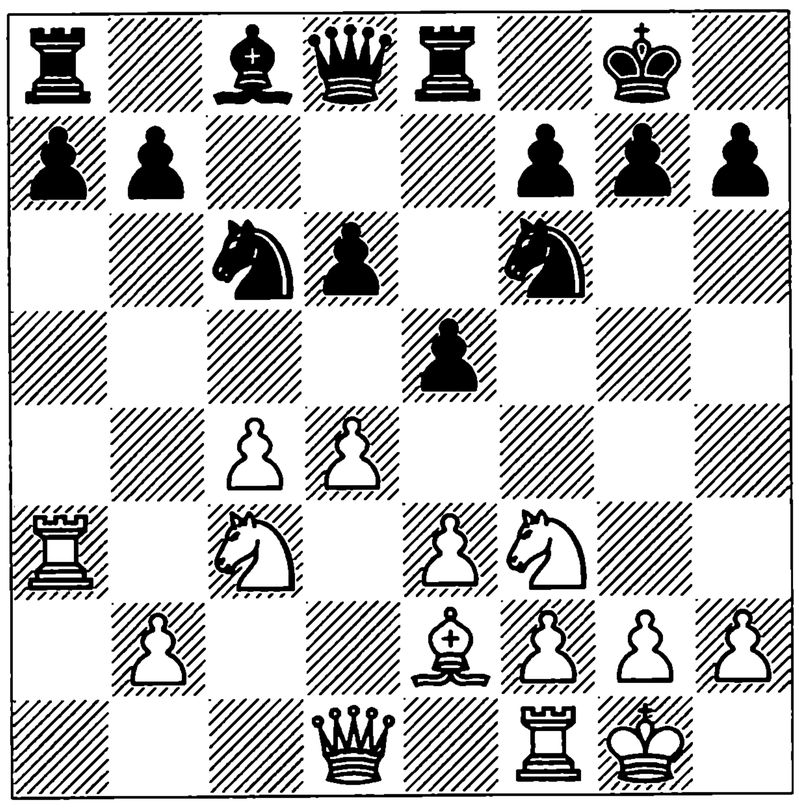
Exerting pressure on a7 and d6.

12...♗g4

12...a6 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 ♘d6 ♖e7 15 c5! ±.

13 h3 ♗h5?

Better is 13...♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 e4 15 ♗e2 ±.



21 b6 dxe3!

Creating weaknesses around the white king and hoping somehow to drum up counterplay. Meanwhile, 21...d3? was still impossible: 22 ♗xd3 e4 23 ♗b5!.

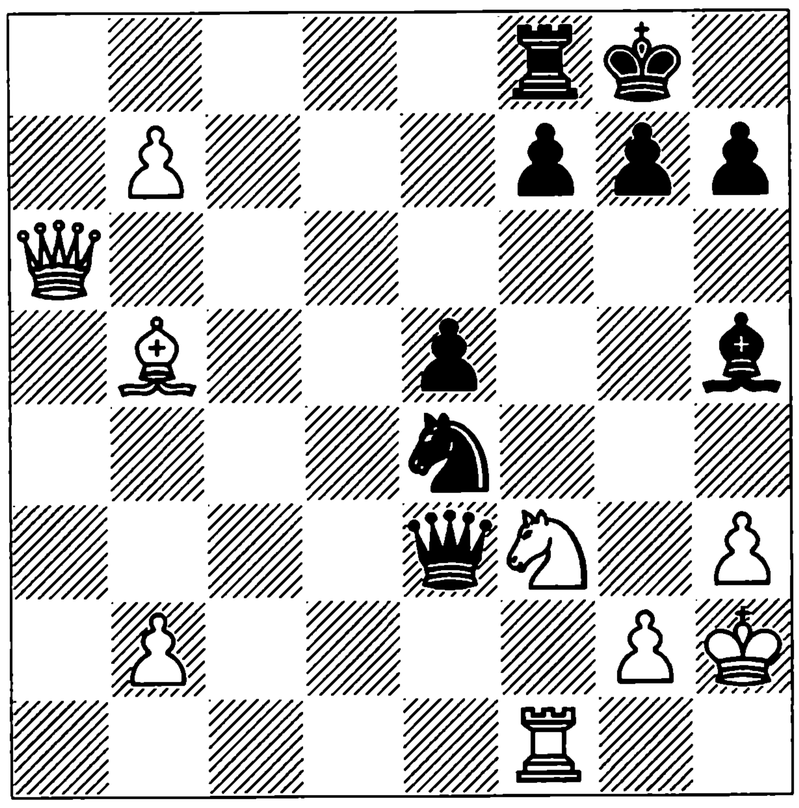
22 fxe3 ♕c5 23 ♗b5! ♖f8!

23...♕xe3+? 24 ♔h2 ♖f8 25 ♗c6! leads to a quick loss for Black, as his knight does not have access to e4.

24 b7 ♕xe3+ 25 ♔h2 ♘e4? *(D)*

25...♕f4+! would have kept the game within the boundaries of a draw.

W

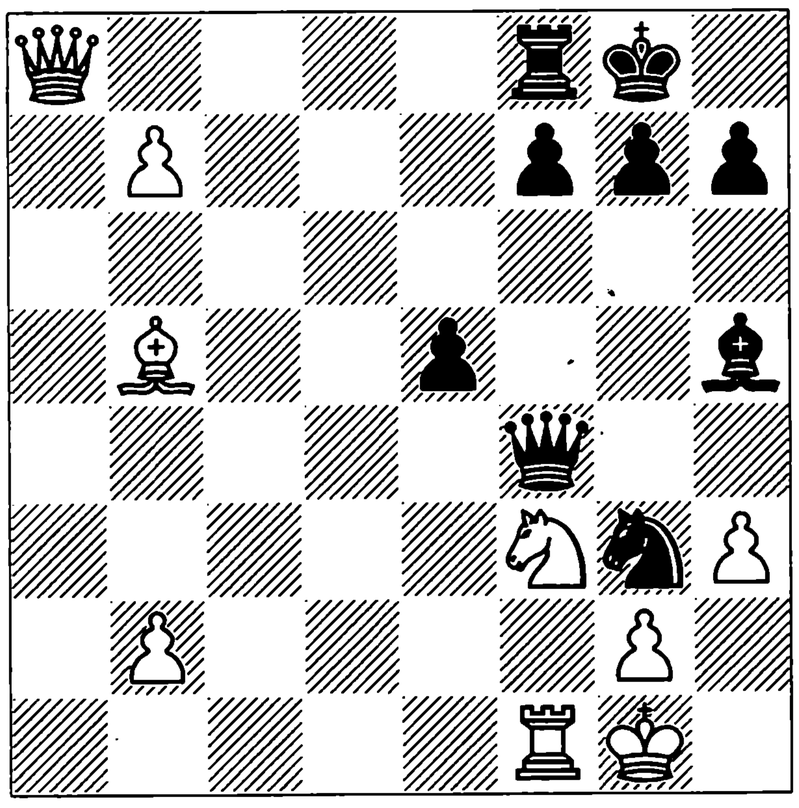


26 ♕a8?

Black's pressure had driven White into time-trouble, which in turn caused this serious error. White could have won with 26 ♕a3! ♕b6 27 ♗c6! ♗xf3 (27...♘c5 28 ♘xe5 ♘xb7 29 ♕xf8+!) 28 ♖xf3 ♘c5 29 ♗d5!.

26...♕f4+ 27 ♔g1 ♕e3+ 28 ♔h2 ♕f4+ 29 ♔h1 ♘g3+ 30 ♔g1 *(D)*

B



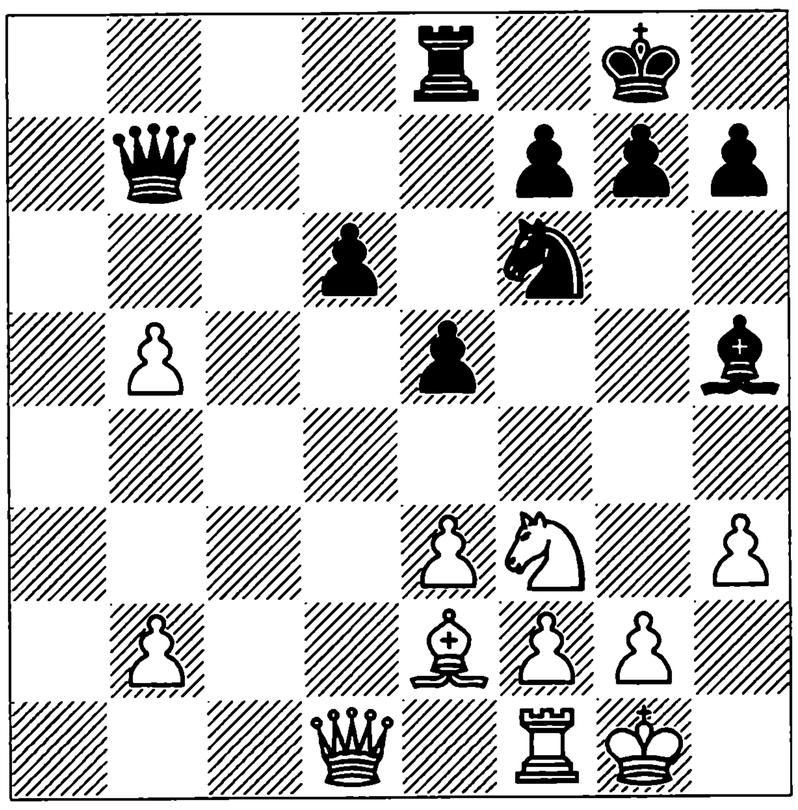
W

14 d5! a6! 15 dxc6 axb5 16 ♖xa8?!

16 cxb7?! ♖xa3 17 bxa3 bxc4 is unclear, but White can obtain a large advantage with 16 cxb5! ♖xa3 17 bxa3 bxc6 18 bxc6.

16...♕xa8 17 cxb7 ♕xb7 18 cxb5 *(D)*

B



White has obtained a passed pawn on the queenside (the b2-pawn is of no great value) and wishes to make use of it. Black is obliged to create counterplay in the centre and on the kingside, as White is likely to transfer his forces from there to the queenside in order to assist the advance of the passed pawn.

18...d5! 19 ♕a4 d4

Black's problems would only increase after 19...♖a8 20 ♕c2! ♖c8 21 ♕f5 e4 22 ♘d4 ♗xe2 23 ♘xe2 ♖c2 24 ♘d4 ♖xb2 25 ♖c1!.

20 ♕a6! ♕e7

20...♕xa6? 21 bxa6 is a very difficult ending for Black. If 21...d3?, then 22 ♗xd3 e4 23 ♗b5!. But now the passed pawn is free to advance.

30...e4!

Instead, Black loses after 30...♕e3+? 31 ♖f2 ♕b6 32 ♘xe5! ♕xb5 33 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 34 b8♕+.

31 ♗e8 ♘e2+! 32 ♔h1

White would even lose after the overambitious 32 ♔f2? ♕g3+ 33 ♔e3 (33 ♔xe2 exf3+ 34 gxf3 ♕e5+!) 33...exf3 34 b8♕ fxg2+ 35 ♕xg3 gxf1♘+!!.

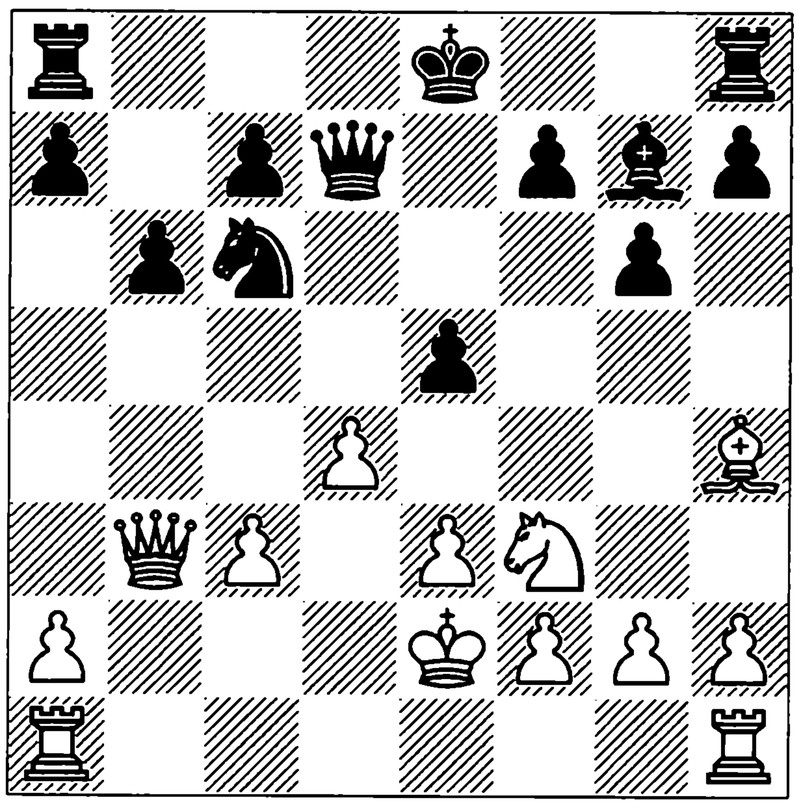
32...♘g3+ 33 ♔g1 ♘e2+ 34 ♔h1 ♘g3+ 35 ♔g1 ½-½

Grivas – Vakhidov

Khania 2000

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗g7 5 ♗g5 ♘e4 6 ♗h4 ♘xc3 7 bxc3 dxc4 8 ♕a4+ ♕d7 9 ♕xc4 b6 10 ♕b3 ♗a6 11 e3 ♗xf1 12 ♔xf1 ♘c6 13 ♔e2 e5 *(D)*

W



14 ♗g3

A new move. White seeks to stabilize the centre. If Black now proceeds with 14...exd4?! 15 cxd4 he will face serious problems down the semi-open c-file.

14...e4 15 ♘d2 ♘a5 16 ♕b2 f5 17 a4 0-0 18 h4!

Discouraging any ideas of a kingside initiative Black might have had.

18...♖ac8 19 ♕a2+! ♕f7

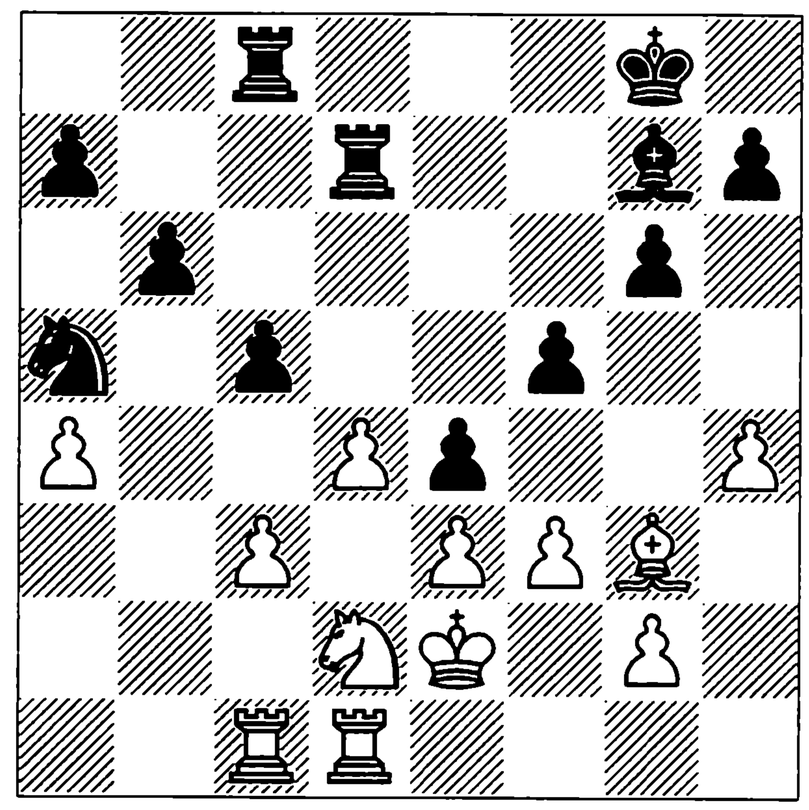
Black is forced to exchange the queens, as after 19...♔h8 20 ♘c4! ♘xc4 21 ♕xc4 (and if 21...c5?! then 22 d5!) White is in full control of the centre and the position in general. He would then be free to develop his queenside play. On the other hand, the queen exchange allows the white king to reside safely in the centre.

20 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 21 ♖ac1 c5

Despite the fact that this move allows White a passed pawn in the centre, it cannot be blamed, as no other way for Black to develop play is apparent. Had Black continued passively instead, White would have prepared the advance c4-c5 with a strong initiative on the queenside.

22 ♖hd1 ♖d7 23 f3! *(D)*

B

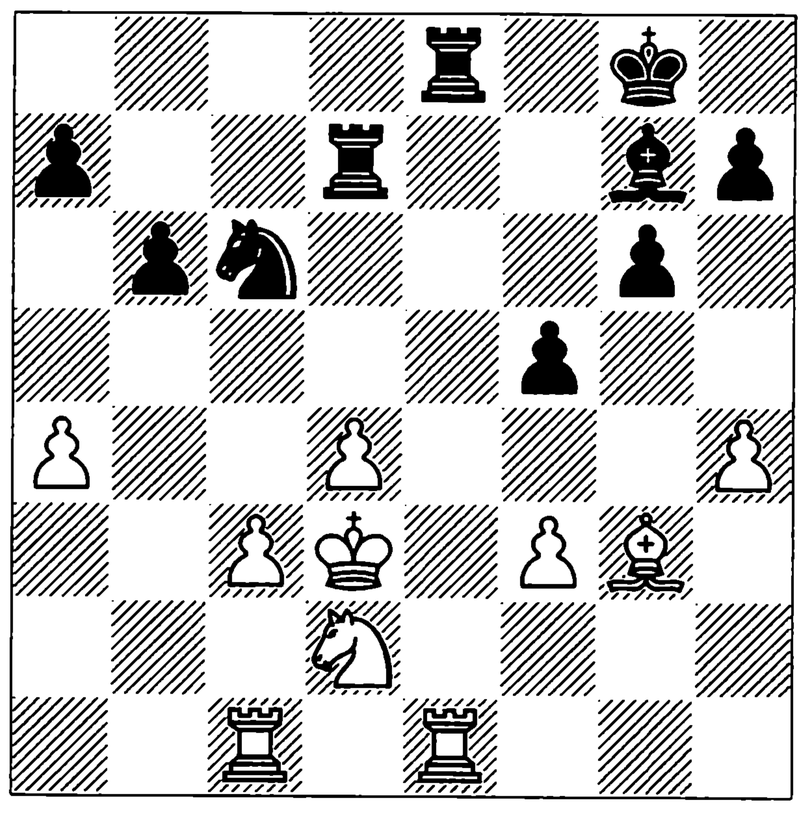


White strengthens his centre further and increases the significance of his centralized king.

23...exf3+ 24 gxf3 ♖e8 25 ♔d3 ♘c6 26 ♖e1 cxd4 27 exd4 *(D)*

27 cxd4?! gives Black a golden opportunity to complicate matters by 27...♘xd4!! 28 exd4 ♖xd4+ 29 ♔c2 ♖c8+ 30 ♔d1 ♖cd8 31 ♖c2 ♖xa4.

B



27...♖c8 28 ♘b3 ♘e7 29 ♗e5

As before, tactical reasons forced White to reject 29 c4? ♘c6 30 d5 ♘b4+ 31 ♔d2 ♘a2! with equality. Thus, White decides to reduce the pressure on the d4-pawn by exchanging bishops.

29...♗xe5 30 ♖xe5 ♘d5 31 c4! ♘b4+ 32 ♔e3 ♘c6 33 ♖e6 ♘d8 34 ♖e5 ♘c6 35 ♖e6 ♔f8

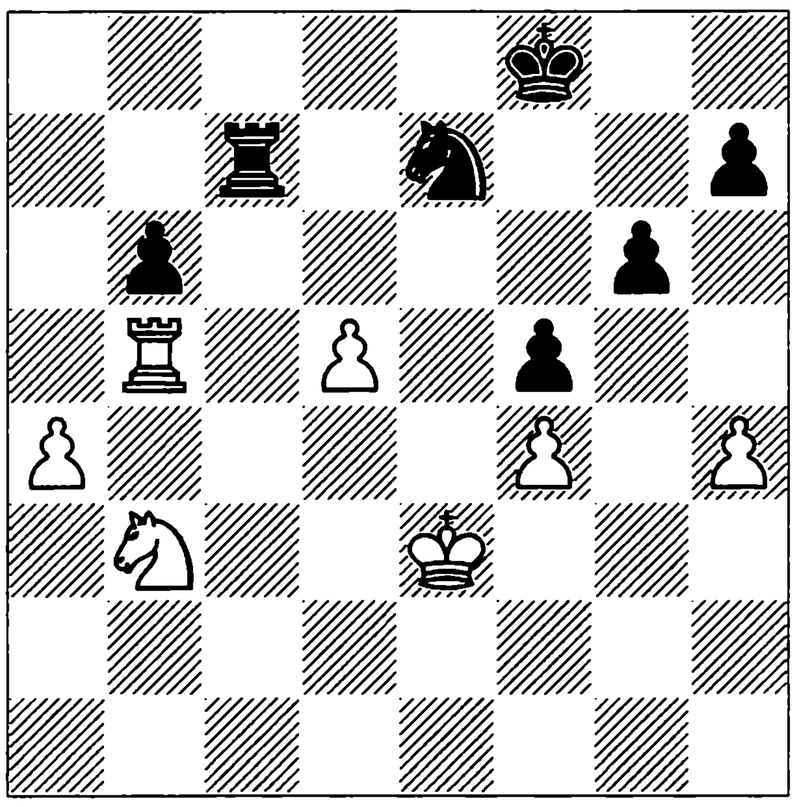
White has gained a lot of time and would meet 35...♘d8 36 ♖e5 ♘c6 with 37 f4! ♘xe5 38 fxe5, when his impressive mass of central passed pawns would prove decisive.

36 f4 ♖dc7 37 c5

Forced because Black was threatening to play 37...♘d8.

37...♘d8 38 ♖e5 ♘c6 39 ♖e6 ♘d8 40 ♖e5 ♘c6 41 cxb6 axb6 42 ♖b5 ♘e7 43 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 44 d5! *(D)*

B



The passed d-pawn has finally succeeded in advancing!

44...♖a7 45 a5! bxa5 46 ♘xa5

Material remains equal but White is better. The passed d-pawn and the active placement of his pieces (especially the king) are sufficient for victory.

46...♘c8 47 ♘c4 ♖e7+ 48 ♔d3 ♖e8 49 ♖b7 ♘e7 50 ♔d4

White's position is superb and victory is near. Black decides to sacrifice his knight, hoping to eliminate White's last pawn and reach a drawn ending.

50...♘xd5 51 ♔xd5 ♖e4 52 ♘e5 ♖xf4 53 ♖xh7 ♔g8 54 ♖h6 ♔g7 55 ♖xg6+ ♔h7 56 h5 ♖h4 57 ♖g5 ♔h6 58 ♘f7+ ♔h7 59 ♖xf5

The game has been decided. Black prolongs the game, hoping for a tragic mistake by White in the final time-scramble.

59...♖a4 60 ♔e6 ♖a6+ 61 ♔e7 ♖b6 62 ♘e5 ♔h6 63 ♘g4+ ♔g7 64 ♖g5+ ♔h8 65 ♔f7 ♖b7+ 66 ♔g6 ♖b6+ 67 ♘f6 ♖b5 68 ♘g4 ♖b6+ 69 ♔f5 ♔h7 70 ♘f6+ 1-0

Koustas – Grivas

Athens 1982

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 d3 d6 6 c3 ♗e7 7 ♘bd2 0-0 8 ♘f1 b5 9 ♗b3

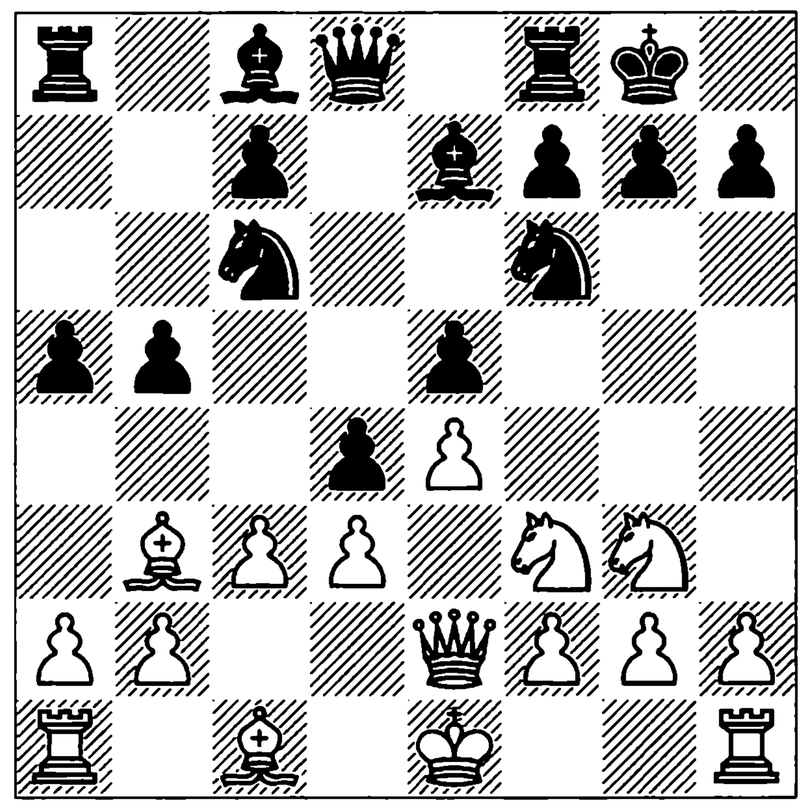
A better option is 9 ♗c2 d5!? 10 ♘g3 ♗e6 11 0-0 ♘d7!? with unclear play, Barbulescu-Grivas, Sofia 1982.

9...d5 10 ♕e2

White had a couple of interesting alternatives: 10 exd5 and 10 ♘g3!?.

10...d4! 11 ♘g3 a5! *(D)*

W



Black assumes the initiative on the queenside, threatening ...a4-a3.

12 a3 ♗e6 13 ♗xe6 fxe6 14 a4?!

A waste of time. White should have preferred 14 0-0 a4, with just a slight advantage for Black.

14...dxc3 15 bxc3

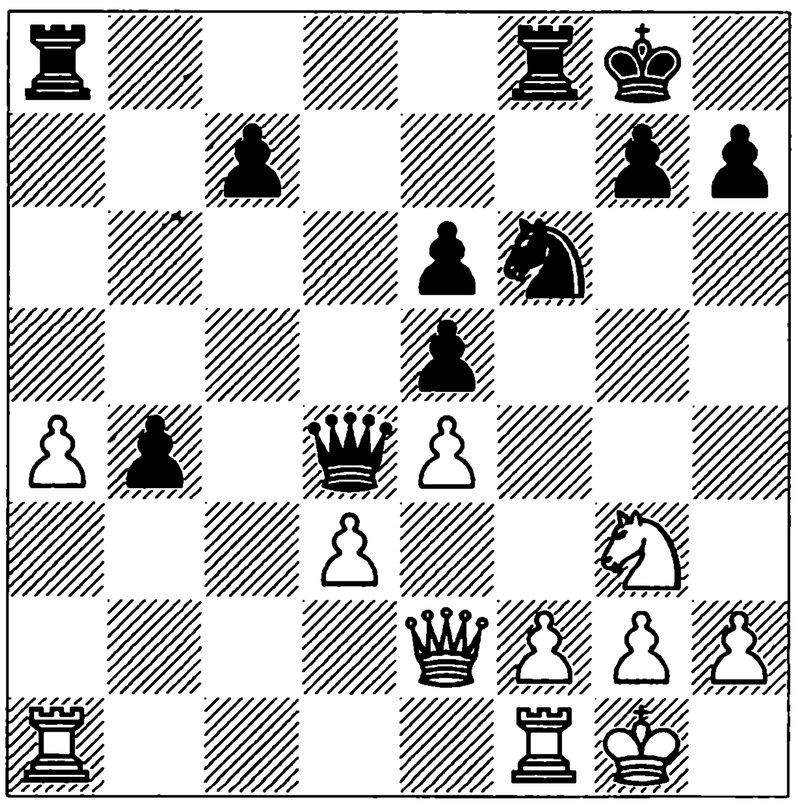
After 15 axb5 ♘d4 16 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 17 0-0 ♖fd8 18 bxc3 ♕xd3! 19 ♕xd3 ♖xd3 20 ♗g5 a4 Black obtains a dangerous passed a-pawn.

15...b4! 16 ♗b2 bxc3 17 ♗xc3 ♗b4!

The best way to defend the e5-pawn. After the forced exchanges that follow, the weaknesses on a4 and d3 are accentuated.

18 ♗xb4 axb4 19 0-0 ♘d4! 20 ♘xd4 ♕xd4! *(D)*

W



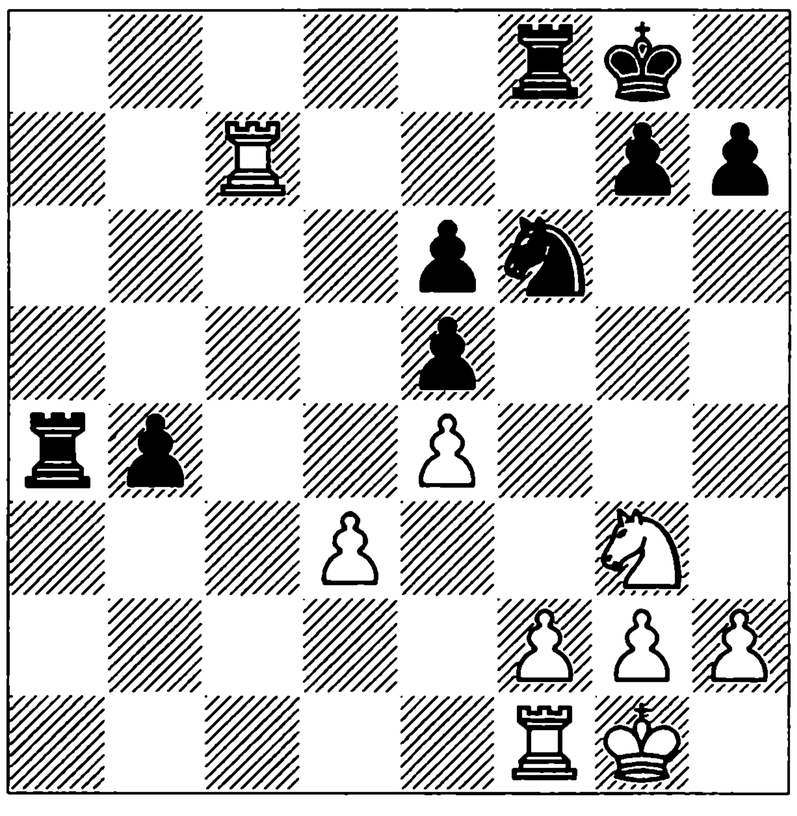
An important move. Black's weak pawns on the e-file cannot be attacked, in sharp contrast to White's weaknesses on a4 and d3. This difference promises Black the advantage.

21 ♕a2! ♖a6! 22 ♖ac1

Black would be better after 22 ♖fc1 c5!, while 22...♕xd3 23 ♖xc7 ♘xe4 24 ♘xe4 ♕xe4 is also good for him, but perhaps not enough to win the game.

22...♕d7 23 ♕c4 ♖xa4 24 ♕xc7 ♕xc7 25 ♖xc7 *(D)*

B



25...♖b8!

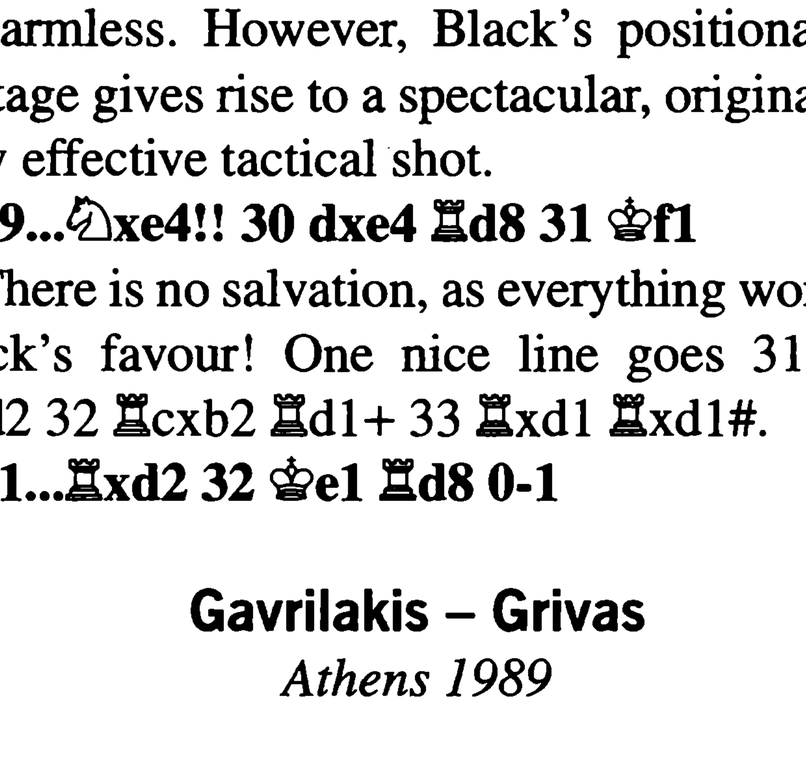
After more exchanges Black has obtained a strong passed b-pawn, which the rook rushes to support. The immediate 25...b3?? would be a gross error in view of 26 ♖b7, when Black has lost his advantage.

26 ♖b1 b3 27 ♖c3?!

The last mistake. 27 ♘f1 should have been played.

27...b2 28 ♘f1 ♖a1 29 ♘d2 *(D)*

B



White was counting on this to hold the position, as now 29...♖xb1+ 30 ♘xb1 ♖a8 31 ♖c2 is harmless. However, Black's positional advantage gives rise to a spectacular, original and very effective tactical shot.

29...♘xe4!! 30 dxe4 ♖d8 31 ♔f1

There is no salvation, as everything works in Black's favour! One nice line goes 31 ♖c2 ♖xd2 32 ♖cxb2 ♖d1+ 33 ♖xd1 ♖xd1#.

31...♖xd2 32 ♔e1 ♖d8 0-1

Gavrilakis – Grivas

Athens 1989

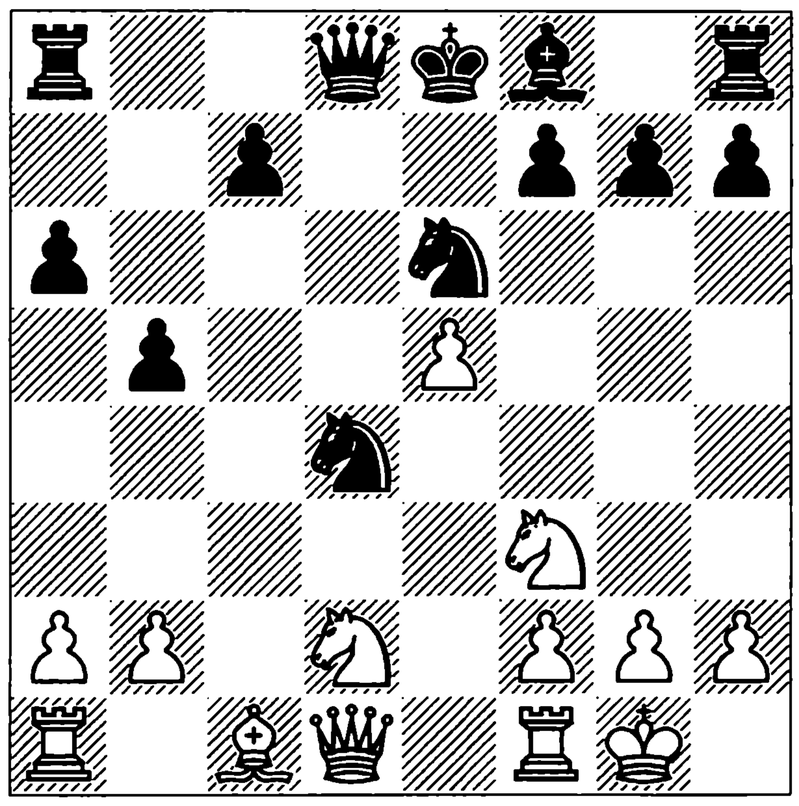
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 ♘bd2 ♘c5 10 c3 d4 11 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 12 cxd4 ♘cxd4 *(D)*

13 a4

A theoretically harmless variation with a dangerous sting in practice. One often sees 13 ♘e4; for example, 13...♗e7 14 ♗e3 ♘f5 15 ♕c2 0-0 16 ♖ad1 ♘xe3 17 fxe3 ♕c8 18 h3!? ♖d8 19 ♘h2 ♖xd1! (19...♕b7?, Geller-Grivas, Athens 1988) 20 ♕xd1 ♕e8! 21 ♖f5? ♘c5? (21...♕c6!) 22 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 = Kotronias-Grivas, Athens 1989.

13...♗e7

Black may have a better option in 13...♗c5 14 ♘e4 ♗b6 15 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 16 axb5 axb5 17



W

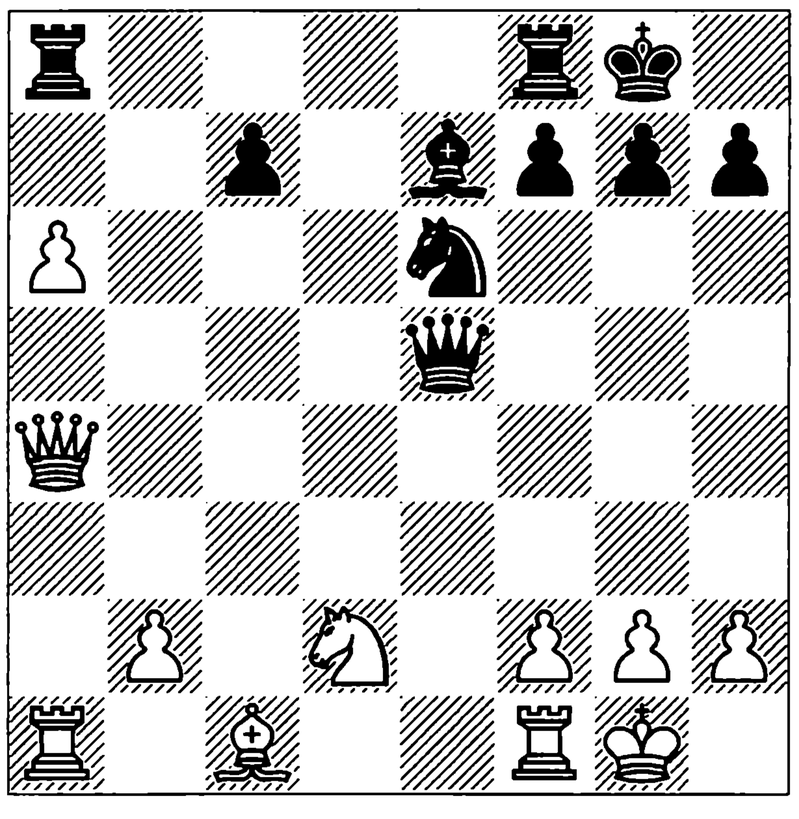
♖xa8 ♕xa8 18 ♘g5 ♕d5 19 ♗e3 ♘xg5 20 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 21 ♗xd4 ♘e6 22 ♗e3 g5! = Kotronias-Flear, Athens 1989.

14 ♘xd4 ♕xd4?

But this is a serious mistake. According to Minev, the correct path is 14...♘xd4 15 ♘e4 ♘e6 16 ♗e3 ♕xd1 17 ♖fxd1 0-0 with equality.

15 axb5 ♕xe5 16 bxa6 0-0 17 ♕a4! *(D)*

A splendid move. Earlier tries had not troubled Black at all: 17 ♖e1?! ♕b5 18 ♕a4 ♕xa4 19 ♖xa4 ♘c5 20 ♖a3 ♘e6 21 ♖a1 ♖a7! 22 ♘f3 ½-½ P.Popović-Grivas, Dubai OL 1986; 17 ♘f3 ♕b5 18 ♕a4 ♕xa4 19 ♖xa4 ♘c5 20 ♖a5 ♖xa6 21 ♖xa6 ♘xa6 22 ♗d2 ♗f6 23 ♗c3 ♗xc3 24 bxc3 ½-½ Psakhis-Dolmatov, USSR Ch (Frunze) 1981.



B

17...♘c5

Black also failed to solve his problems after 17...♖fb8 18 a7 ♖b7 19 ♘f3 ♕d5 20 ♗e3 in Ehlvest-Marin, Tallinn 1989.

18 ♕c4!

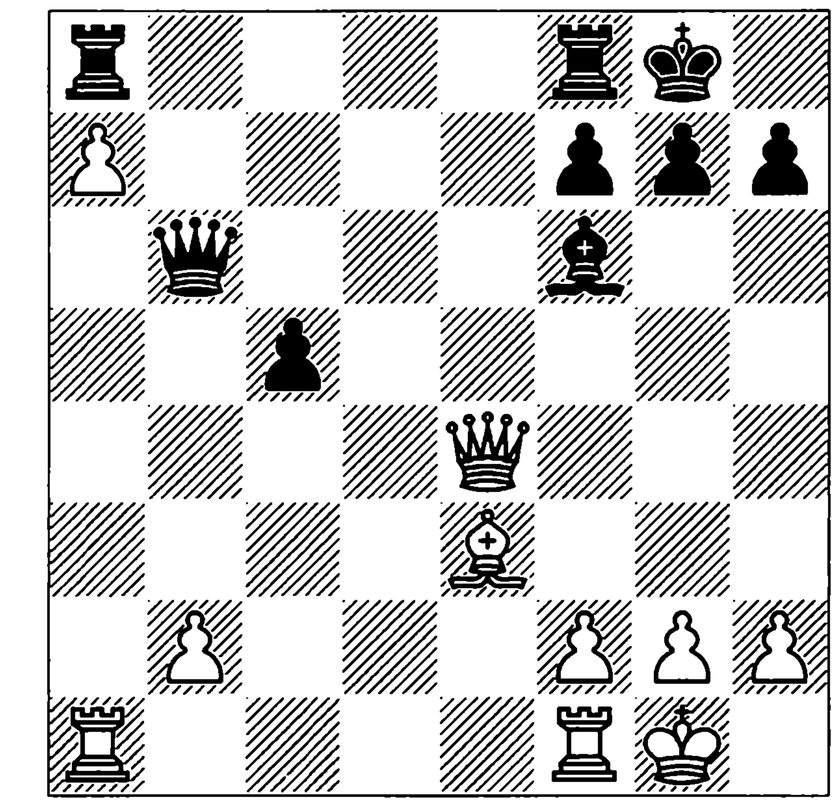
18 ♕c6? ♖a7! 19 ♘f3 ♕d6 20 ♕xd6 ♗xd6 21 b4 ♖xa6! 22 bxc5 ♖xa1 23 cxd6 cxd6 only leads to a drawish ending.

18...♕d6

Black's problems also remain after 18...♕e6 19 ♕xe6 fxe6 20 a7 ♖f4 21 ♘f3! ♖b4 22 ♗e3, since White's passed a-pawn is exceptionally strong.

19 ♘e4! ♘xe4 20 ♕xe4 ♗f6 21 a7 ♕b6 22 ♗e3 c5 *(D)*

White wins easily after 22...♕xb2 23 ♖ab1 ♕c3 24 ♕xa8! ♖xa8 25 ♖b8+.



W

23 ♕f5?

This blunder mars an otherwise well-played game. There was a simple route to victory: 23 ♖fc1! ♖xa7 24 ♖xa7 ♕xa7 25 ♗xc5 ♖c8 26 b4.

23...♗d4! 24 ♗xd4 cxd4 25 ♕a5 ♕xb2

Black has regained material parity, but White retains an edge thanks to his more advanced passed pawn. Black must quickly advance his own pawn to distract White's pieces.

26 ♖fb1 ♕c2

Compulsory. In case of 26...♕c3? White wins with 27 ♕d5!, threatening 28 ♕xa8!. But now Black can defend against the same threat: 27 ♕d5? ♖xa7! 28 ♕xd4 ♖xa1 29 ♖xa1.

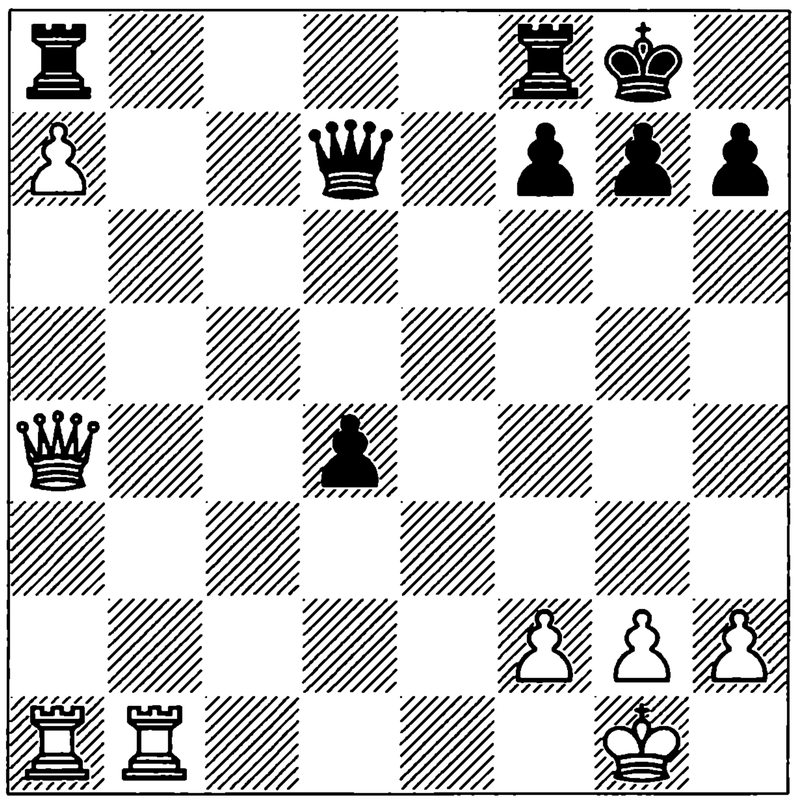
27 ♖c1 ♕e4 28 ♖e1 ♕b7 29 ♖eb1 ♕d7?

After 29...♕e4! and ...d3-d2 Black would have no more problems. But after the text-move things get tough.

30 ♕a4! *(D)*

30...♕d5

B

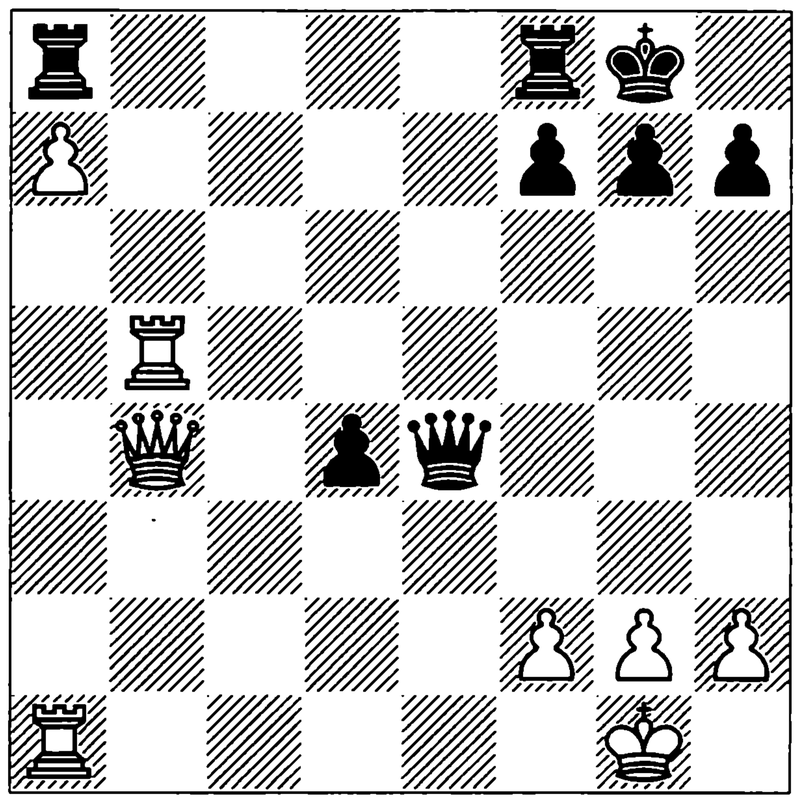


Other moves lose simply: 30...♕d8 31 ♖b7!, 30...♕d6 31 ♕b4! ♕d5 32 ♖a5! or 30...♕xa4 31 ♖xa4 ♖fd8 32 ♔f1, when the white king is close to Black's passed pawn, in contrast to the black king who has no chance ever of approaching the white passer.

31 ♖b5! ♕e4 32 ♕b4 *(D)*

White's deadly threat of ♖b8 seals Black's fate.

B



32...♖fd8 33 ♖b8 ♕e8

Black gives up the d-pawn, but there is nothing better: 33...♕d5 34 ♕b6! ♖f8 (34...d3 35 ♕xd8+ ♕xd8 36 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 37 a8♕) 35 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 (35...♖xf8 36 ♕b8 ♕a8 37 ♕xa8 ♖xa8 38 ♖b1!) 36 ♕b8+ ♔e7 37 ♖b1!.

34 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 35 ♕xd4 h6 36 h4 ♕c6 37 g3 ♔h7 38 ♖b1 ♕c2 39 ♖b8 ♕c1+ 40 ♔h2 ♕c6 41 ♕d3+ 1-0

Isolated Pawn

A pawn is considered isolated when there are no pawns of the same colour on the neighbouring files. Thus, it has been detached from the rest of its camp's pawn-structure and can be supported only by pieces. Isolated pawns can be classified in two categories, the flank and central isolated pawns.

The first group, flank isolated pawns, generally constitute weaknesses and as a rule should be avoided, as their positive merits are minimal to zero and without theoretical value. Exceptions occur only in case that their owner has obtained other strategic or tactical pluses in exchange for their creation.

The second case is still hotly debated, even to this day. This category will form the basis of our considerations below.

In the opening, the isolated pawn is no cause for concern for its possessor, as it can offer quick development, spatial superiority, control of central squares and the initiative.

In the middlegame, the isolated pawn, along with the advantages stated above, creates the preconditions for a powerful initiative, either in the centre or on either flank. The side with the isolated pawn is compelled to seek activity, as a passive treatment of the position leads as a rule to serious problems and, after appropriate exchanges, to a difficult ending.

Indeed, the weakness of an isolated pawn becomes evident in the endgame. The resulting problems are multiple and revolve both around strategic issues and the protection of the pawn itself, as the reduced material makes this harder.

Thus, an isolated pawn is at the same time a strength and a weakness. A strength, if the dynamic and usually short-term advantages it confers prevail; a weakness, if its static weaknesses come to the fore.

For a better understanding of the concept of the isolated pawn we have to state its strengths and weaknesses.

The fundamental weaknesses of the isolated pawn can be described as follows:

1) The pawn itself can be weak, as it cannot be protected by other pawns but only by pieces. Therefore, should it be attacked by more pieces than it is defended by, its loss is unavoidable.

2) The square in front of the isolated pawn constitutes an outpost for the opponent.

3) Passive handling of the position by its possessor, as it causes disharmony in the placement of the pieces, can have dire consequences, and not just for the pawn itself.

4) In an ending, the pawn's weaknesses becomes more pronounced, as was already mentioned above.

5) It can exert a negative psychological influence on many chess-players who, affected by the unpleasant prospect of an endgame, seek unjustifiably violent solutions in the middlegame.

The positive sides of the isolated pawn can be determined as follows:

1) It offers greater control of central squares.

2) It offers the possibility of a central strike by its advance.

3) It offers a space advantage.

4) It offers better and quicker development, especially in the opening.

5) It offers opportunities of exploiting the open and semi-open files it creates with its presence.

6) It offers the initiative in the opening and middlegame.

One very sensitive issue that both sides must attend to with great care is the matter of piece exchanges. The question to be asked is: which piece exchange is favourable for each side, and consequently undesirable for the other? In general, the possessor of the isolated pawn should avoid unnecessary piece exchanges without

gaining anything substantial in return. If he must accede to some exchange and has a choice, then it is best to avoid exchanges of the minor pieces (bishops and knights) and prefer those of the major pieces (queens and rooks). In an endgame with minor pieces the chances of survival are especially high, while in a major-piece ending these chances are virtually nil.

Finally, the player with the isolated pawn should avoid the creation of further weaknesses in his pawn-structure, as then he will have to face additional problems. However, as nothing is absolute, the solutions to these problems depend on each specific position, as well as the sum of the strategic and tactical elements that govern it.

A. Exploitation of Negative Aspects

Makridis – Grivas
Patra 1981

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 b6 3 ♗g2 ♗b7 4 c4 e6 5 ♘c3 c5 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 ♕c2?!

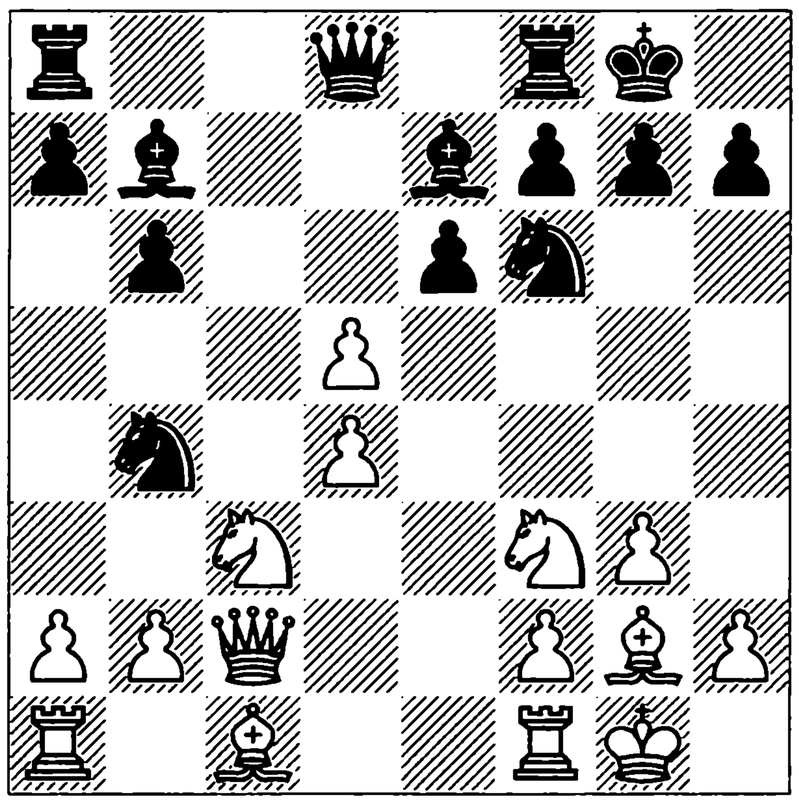
The white queen is unsatisfactorily placed on c2, as the future opening of the c-file will leave it exposed. The theoretical move 7 d4 and even 7 ♖e1 are considered (and must be) better.

7...0-0 8 e3 ♘c6 9 d4

Perhaps 9 ♖d1 is more accurate.

9...cxd4 10 exd4 d5! 11 cxd5 ♘b4! *(D)*

W



The consequence of White's inaccurate 7th move.

12 ♕b3 ♘bxd5 13 ♗g5 h6 14 ♗xf6?!

White has been left with an isolated pawn on d4 and should therefore avoid any exchanges that would allow Black to head towards an ending; White's weaknesses would then be predominant. 14 ♗d2 is better.

14...♘xf6

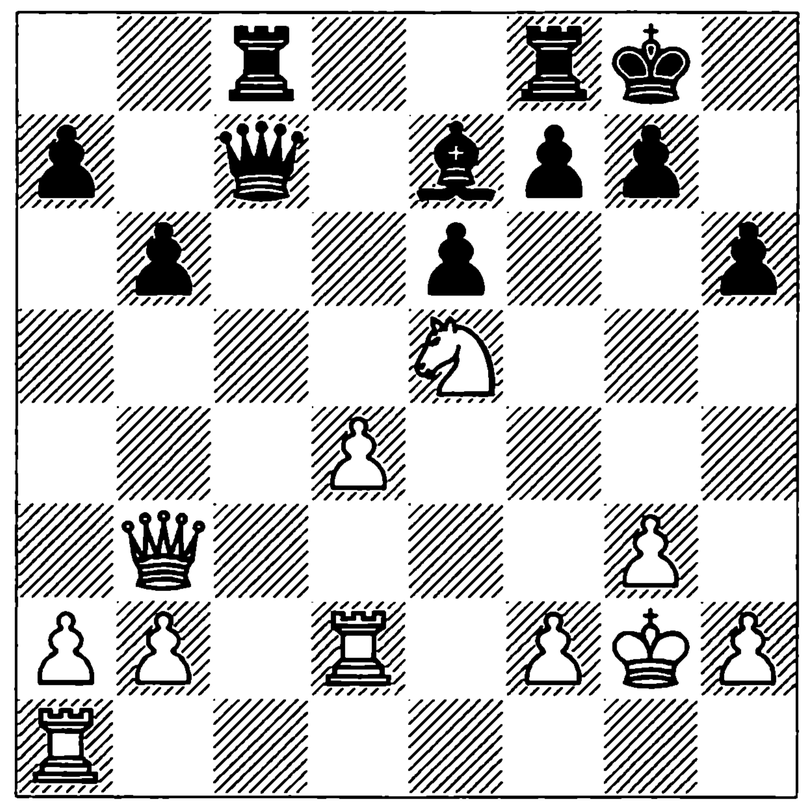
The careless 14...♗xf6?! 15 ♘e4! ♗e7 16 ♘e5 would allow White to equalize.

15 ♖fd1 ♖c8 16 ♖d2 ♘e4!

Exchanges favour Black!

17 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 18 ♘e5 ♗xg2 19 ♔xg2 ♕c7! *(D)*

W



Black must prevent White from advancing d5 at all costs, as then his advantage would be significantly reduced.

20 ♖ad1 ♗f6 21 ♘g4 ♗g5 22 ♘e3

After 22 f4 ♗e7 23 d5 exd5 24 ♖xd5 White has got rid of his weakness on d4 but is still at a disadvantage due to his exposed king and worse minor piece (knight vs bishop in an open position with pawns on both flanks).

22...♕c6+?!

A rather mediocre move. 22...♗xe3! 23 ♕xe3 ♕c4! 24 b3 ♕d5+ is much better.

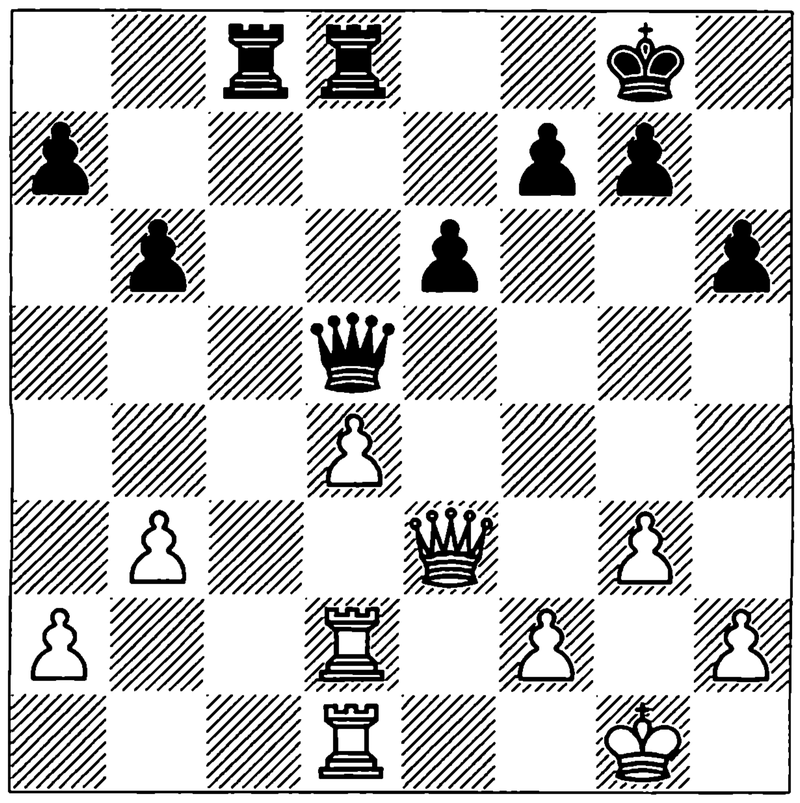
23 ♔g1?!

White should have taken up the chance for 23 d5! exd5 24 ♕xd5 (24 ♖xd5!?) 24...♕xd5+ 25 ♖xd5, leaving Black only slightly better thanks to his superior minor piece.

23...♗xe3! 24 ♕xe3

After 24 fxe3 ♖fd8 Black would retain his advantage, in view of the weak hanging central pawns on d4 and e3.

24...♕d5 25 b3 ♖fd8 *(D)*



Black has the upper hand as he has a clear target (the isolated white pawn on d4). His strategy has so far been crowned with success, as he has managed to exchange all the white minor pieces. The next step is to triple the major pieces on the d-file and then push ...e5, winning the target pawn. A characteristic example of this standard procedure is the game Korchnoi-Karpov, Merano Wch (9) 1981: 1 c4 e6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 d4 ♗e7 4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗h4 0-0 7 ♖c1 dxc4 8 e3 c5 9 ♗xc4 cxd4 10 exd4 ♘c6 11 0-0 ♘h5 12 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 13 ♗b3 ♘f6 14 ♘e5 ♗d7 15 ♕e2 ♖c8 16 ♘e4 ♘xe4 17 ♕xe4 ♗c6 18 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 19 ♖c3 ♕d6 20 g3 ♖d8 21 ♖d1 ♖b6 22 ♕e1 ♕d7 23 ♖cd3 ♖d6 24 ♕e4 ♕c6 25 ♕f4 ♘d5 26 ♕d2 ♕b6 27 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 28 ♖b3 ♕c6 29 ♕c3 ♕d7 30 f4 b6 31 ♖b4 b5 32 a4 bxa4 33 ♕a3 a5 34 ♖xa4 ♕b5 35 ♖d2 e5 36 fxe5 ♖xe5 37 ♕a1 ♕e8 38 dxe5 ♖xd2 39 ♖xa5 ♕c6 40 ♖a8+ ♔h7 41 ♕b1+ g6 42 ♕f1 ♕c5+ 43 ♔h1 ♕d5+ 0-1.

26 ♕e5

A correct reaction, preventing the aforementioned plan, as after the exchange of queens the white king can come to the rescue of the d4-pawn. *Naturally, Black is still better as his own king can also freely participate in the battle.*

26...♖c6 27 ♕xd5 ♖xd5 28 ♔f1 g5!

Gaining space and preparing the approach of the black king.

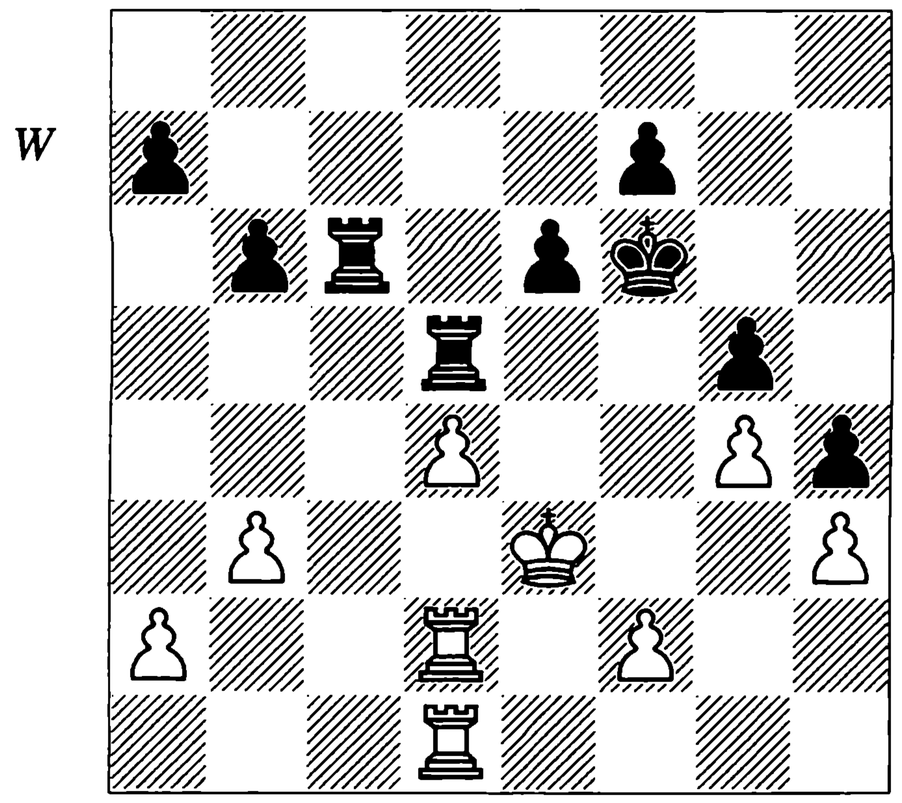
29 h3 ♔g7 30 ♔e2 ♔f6 31 g4?!

White must try to avoid the creation of new weaknesses. The passive 31 ♔d3 was necessary.

31...h5! 32 ♔e3

32 gxh5? ♖c8 and ...♖h8xh5 would have been even worse.

32...h4! *(D)*



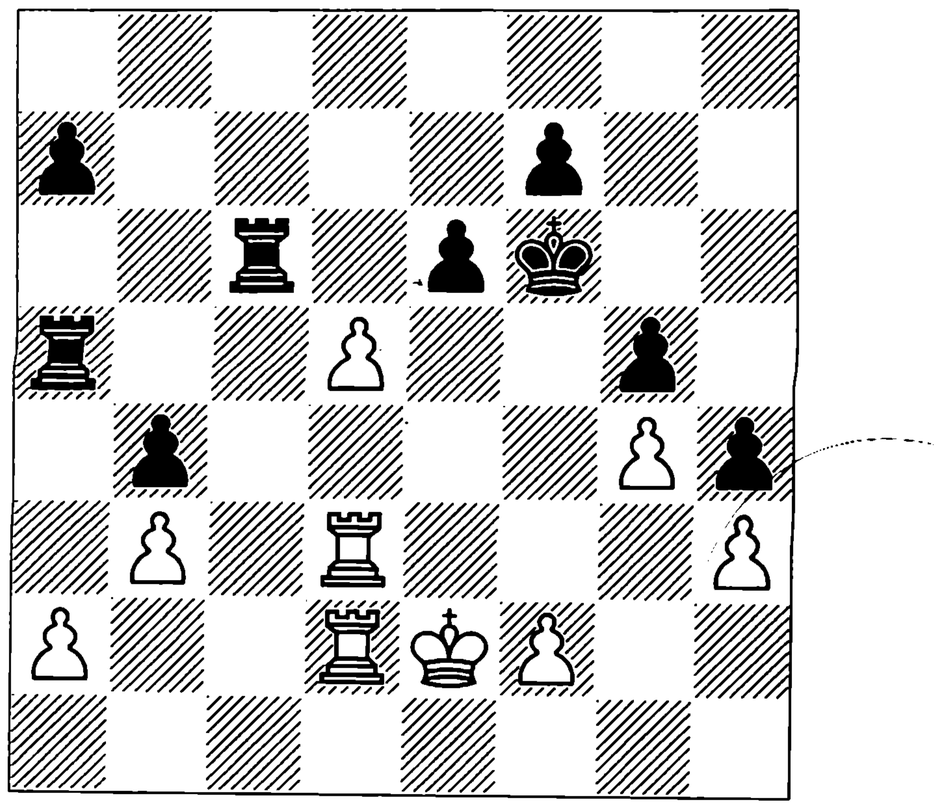
Fixing a second weakness on h3 (the first one being the d4-pawn).

33 ♔e2 b5!

Black endeavours to fix a third weakness on a2. Black obtains a *won position* by following the well-known *rule of the three weaknesses (1 weakness = advantage, 2 weaknesses = significant advantage, 3 weaknesses = winning advantage).* White is unable to react as his pieces are tied to the defence of his weak pawns.

34 ♖d3 b4 35 ♖1d2 ♖a5 36 d5? *(D)*

Accelerating the end. White should have tried to defend with 36 ♖b2 ♔e7 37 ♖dd2 ♔d6 38 ♖d3 ♔d5 39 ♔e3 ♖c1!, although it seems unlikely that he would have managed to save himself.



36...exd5 37 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 38 ♖xd5 ♖c2+ 39 ♖d2?!

As the pawn ending is obviously lost for White, he should have tested Black's technique in the rook ending after 39 ♔e3 ♖xa2.

39...♖xd2+ 40 ♔xd2 ♔e5 41 ♔e3 f5! 42 gxf5

Or 42 f3 fxg4 43 fxg4 a6!. The weaknesses on a2 and h3 seal White's fate.

42...♔xf5 43 f3 ♔e5 44 ♔e2 ♔f4 45 ♔f2 a6 46 ♔e2 ♔g3 47 ♔e3 ♔xh3 48 ♔f2 a5 49 ♔g1 ♔g3 50 ♔h1 ♔xf3 51 ♔h2 g4 52 ♔h1 g3 53 ♔g1 g2 0-1

Grivas – Renet

Olympiad, Erevan 1996

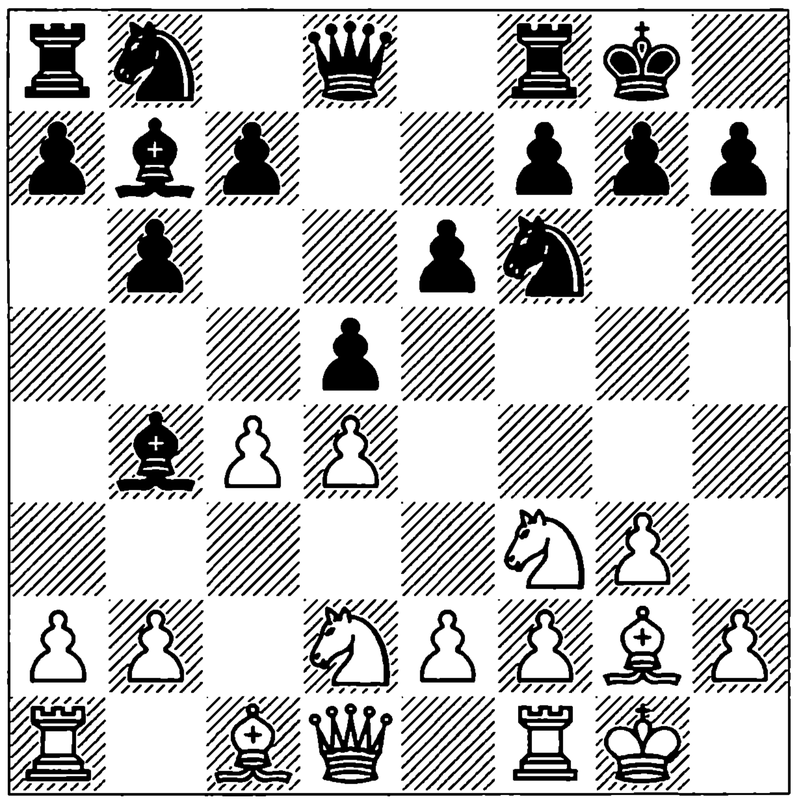
1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 d4 e6 3 c4 ♗b4+ 4 ♘bd2 b6

In the game Grivas-Papaioannou, Athens 1996, Black went down a complicated path involving material sacrifices: 4...0-0 5 g3 d5 6 ♕c2 c5 7 ♗g2 cxd4 8 ♘xd4 e5 9 ♘4b3 ♗g4 10 cxd5 ♘xd5 11 a3 ♗e7 12 ♘c4 ♗e6 13 ♘xe5 ♗f6 14 ♘d3 ♘a6 15 0-0 ♖c8 16 ♕d1 ♕b6 17 ♗d2 ♖fe8 18 ♘bc1 ♘e7 19 ♖b1 ♘g6 20 ♗e3 ♕b5 21 ♗xa7!, and White later converted his considerable material advantage to a win.

5 g3 ♗b7 6 ♗g2 0-0 7 0-0 d5 *(D)*

Another possibility is 7...♗xd2 8 ♗xd2 d6 9 ♕c2 ♘bd7 10 ♖ad1 ♗e4 11 ♕a4 ♕c8 12 ♗g5 ± Grivas-Tzoumbas, Aegina 1996. 7...♗e7 was played in Grivas-Am.Rodriguez, Athens 1984, analysed on page 72.

W



8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♘e5 ♗d6?!

An inaccuracy. Black should prefer 9...♗e7 10 ♕c2!? c5 11 ♘df3 ♘a6! 12 ♗f4 ♘e4 13 ♕a4, with a symbolic advantage for White, Grivas-Stoica, Sofia 1986.

10 ♘dc4! ♗e7 11 ♘e3

The white knight has significantly improved its prospects by its transfer to e3, from where it both pressurizes the d5-pawn and eyes the f5-square.

11...♕c8 12 ♕c2! g6 13 b3!

Since Black was forced to weaken his king-side with 12...g6, White places his dark-squared bishop on the long diagonal.

13...c5 14 ♗b2 ♘a6 15 ♖ac1 ♕e6 16 ♘d3!

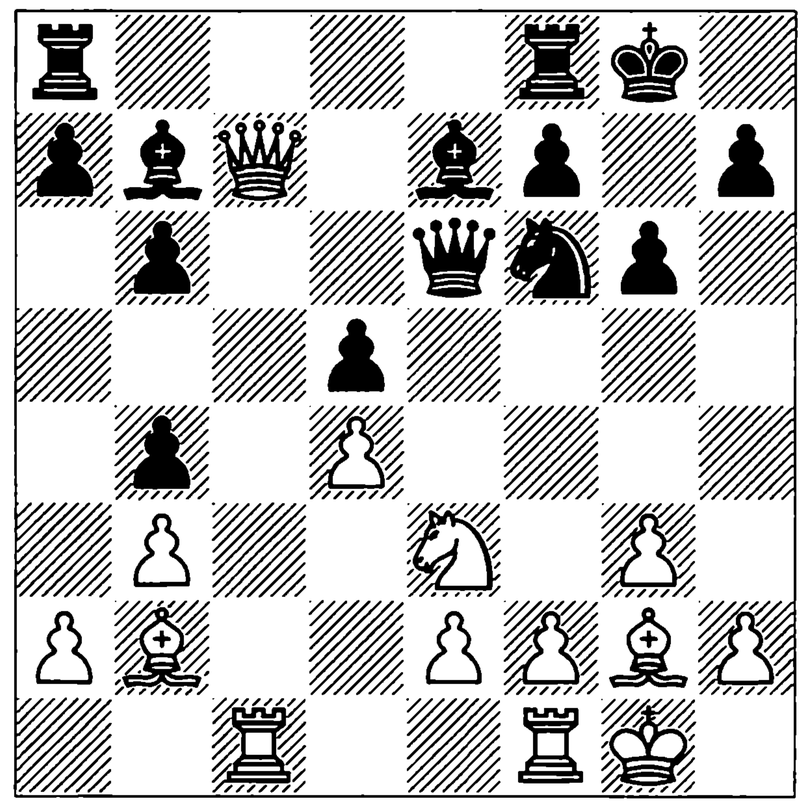
Black is facing serious problems as White has some direct threats (dxc5, ♗xf6 and ♘f4) against the d5-pawn.

16...♘b4?!

I believe that Black should have acquiesced to an inferior position with 16...cxd4 17 ♗xd4.

17 ♘xb4 cxb4 18 ♕c7! *(D)*

B



White wishes to bring about a favourable ending, as the doubled black b-pawns offer him a 5:4 majority in the centre and on the kingside. White has effectively 'won' a pawn.

18...♖ab8 19 ♕e5 ♗d6 20 ♕xe6 fxe6 21 ♖c2 ♖bc8 22 ♖fc1 ♔f7 23 ♖xc8 ♗xc8!

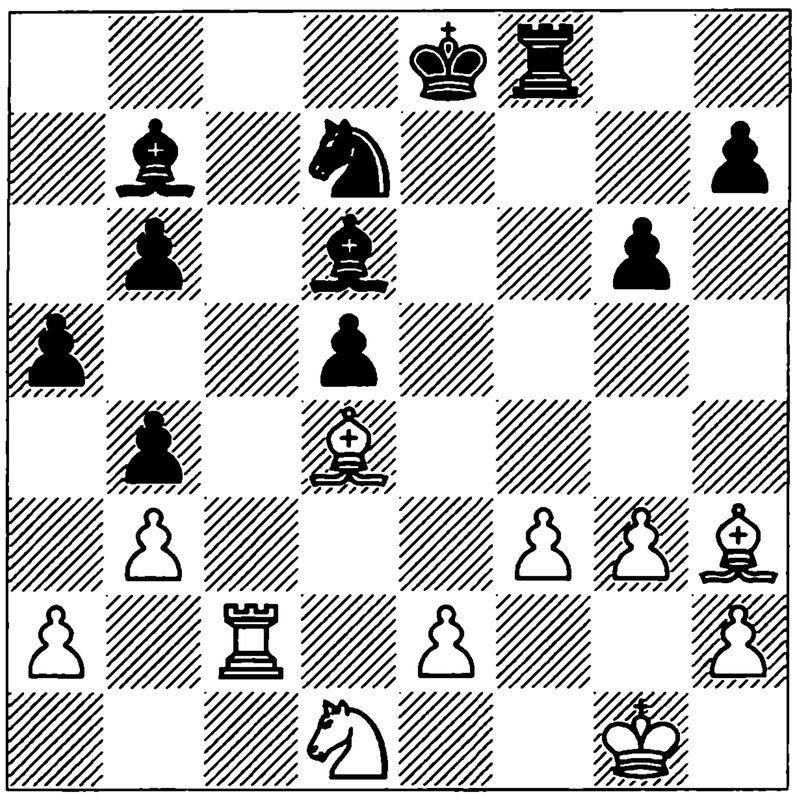
The exchange of a second pair of rooks, as well as any other exchange, would favour White, whose ultimate aim is a pawn ending! The c-file is hardly important, as White cannot make use of it in the near future.

24 ♖c2 ♔e7 25 f3 ♗b7 26 ♘d1 ♘d7 27 ♗h3 a5 28 ♗c1 e5?!

Black defends against White's threats (♗g5, ♘f2 and e4) but creates a further structural weakness (the isolated d5-pawn) in the process; as compensation he obtains the c5-square. It is hard to suggest anything better for Black, as he is condemned to defence in a passive position.

29 ♗g5+ ♔e8 30 ♗e3 exd4 31 ♗xd4 *(D)*

B



31...♗c5?!

Piece exchanges only help White. Black should therefore have opted for the immediate 31...♘c5.

32 ♗xc5!

Black's play would be justified after the very weak 32 ♗xd7+? ♔xd7 33 ♗xc5 ♖c8! and 34...bxc5, when he even has the advantage!

32...♘xc5 33 ♖d2 ♔e7 34 ♘e3 ♖d8 35 ♘c2 ♗c6 36 ♗g2 ♘e6 37 f4! ♘c5 38 ♔f2 ♖d6 39 ♔e1 ♘e6 40 ♘d4! ♗d7 41 ♔d1

During the last few moves White has improved the scope of his king and bishop. The next step is to exchange one more piece, but White is in no rush as Black cannot improve his position.

41...♘c5 42 ♘c2 ♗e6 43 ♗f3 ♗f7 44 ♖d4 ♘a6 45 ♖d2 ♘c5 46 e3 ♗e6 47 ♘d4 ♗d7 48 g4!

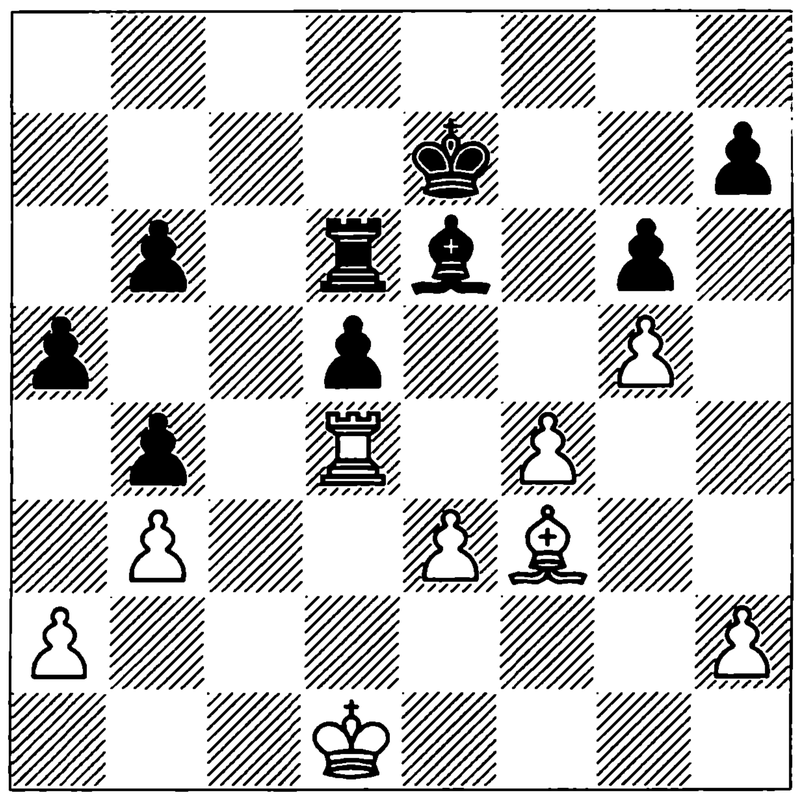
White sets the correct plan in motion, namely the advance of the kingside majority (3:2).

48...♘e6?!

Black hopes to pressurize White's queenside pawns with his light-squared bishop, but this plan fails to materialize and therefore Black should have refrained from exchanging more pieces.

49 g5! ♘xd4 50 ♖xd4 ♗e6 *(D)*

W



Having nailed down Black's kingside pawns, White plans the h4-h5 advance, which will either lead to an open file for the white rook to invade or to a further weakening of Black's kingside structure. In both cases White's advantage will reach decisive proportions.

51 h4!

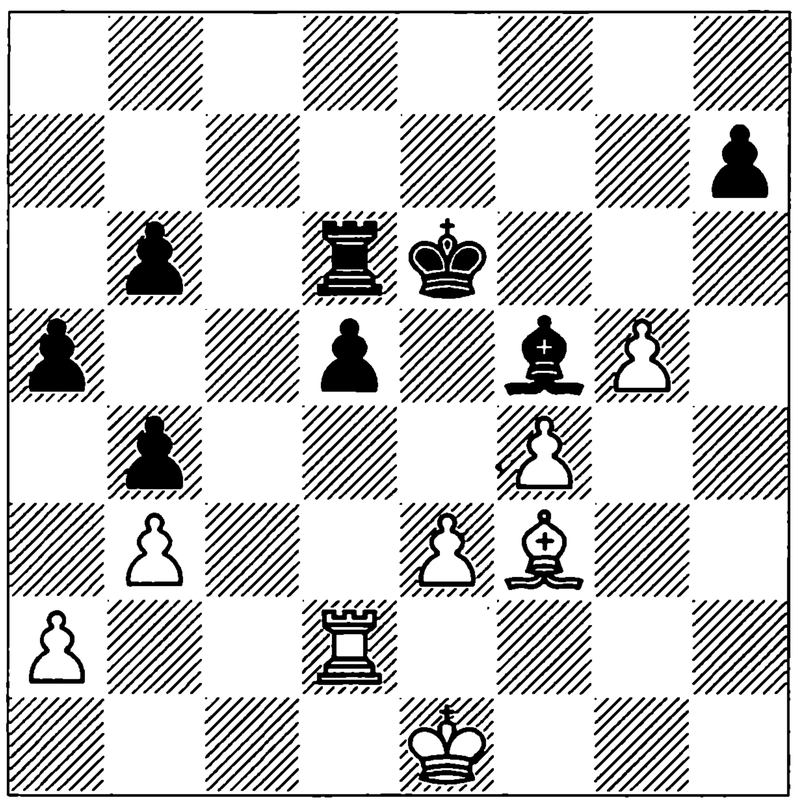
Setting in motion the natural break!

51...♖d7 52 h5 gxh5

After 52...♖d6 White can continue either by bringing his king to d4 and his rook to h2, or by the direct 53 h6! ♖d7 54 e4 dxe4 55 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 56 ♗xe4 ♗g8 57 ♔d2 followed by ♔d3-d4 and f5, winning easily.

53 ♗xh5 ♗f5 54 ♗f3 ♔e6 55 ♖d2 ♖d6 56 ♔e1! *(D)*

B



The last detail! White will bring his king to g3, from where it will endeavour to exchange

the light-squared bishops. Black is unable to react.

56...♖d7 57 ♔f2 ♖d6 58 ♔g3 ♔e7 59 ♗g4 ♙e4

Black desperately tries to avoid exchanges.

60 f5 h6!?

Attempting to set up a defence on the dark squares after 61 g6 ♔f6!.

61 ♔f4! hxg5+ 62 ♔xg5 ♖f6 63 ♖h2!

White now wins easily as the 'extra' pawn on f5 is very powerful.

63...♖f8 64 ♖h6 ♗b1 65 ♖xb6 ♗xa2 66 f6+ ♖xf6 67 ♖xf6 ♗xb3 68 ♖b6 1-0

Grivas – Karayiannis

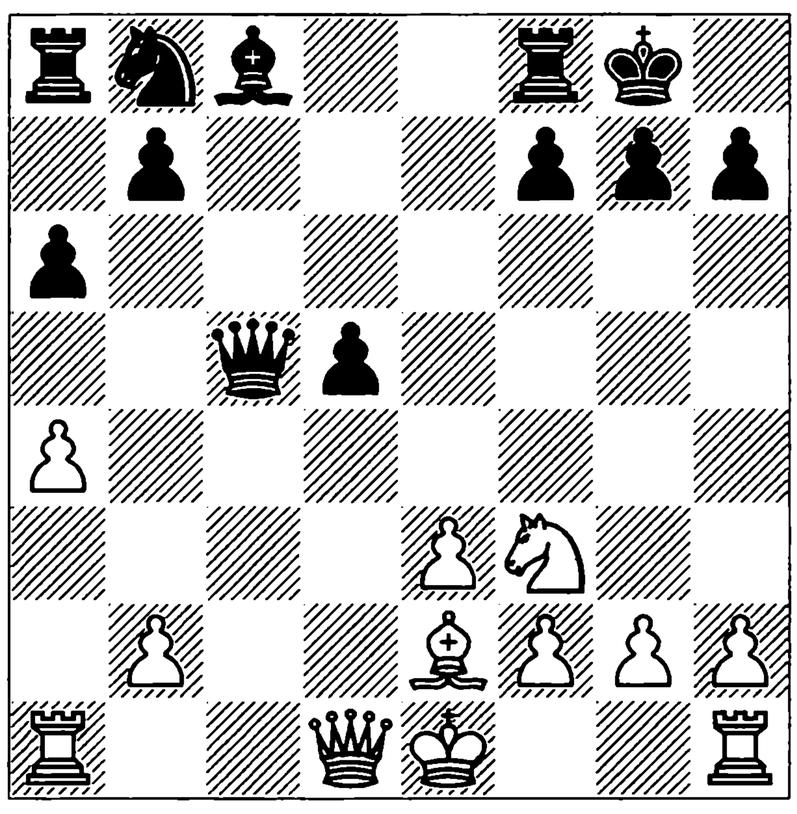
Corfu 1988

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♘f3 a6 7 a4!?

More common is 7 a3 or 7 cxd5.

7...c5 8 cxd5 ♘xd5 9 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 10 ♘xd5 exd5 11 dxc5 ♕xc5 12 ♗e2 *(D)*

B



Black is stuck with an isolated pawn but has great freedom of movement and White suffers from weaknesses on the queenside dark squares (the consequence of 7 a4!?).

12...♕b4+?

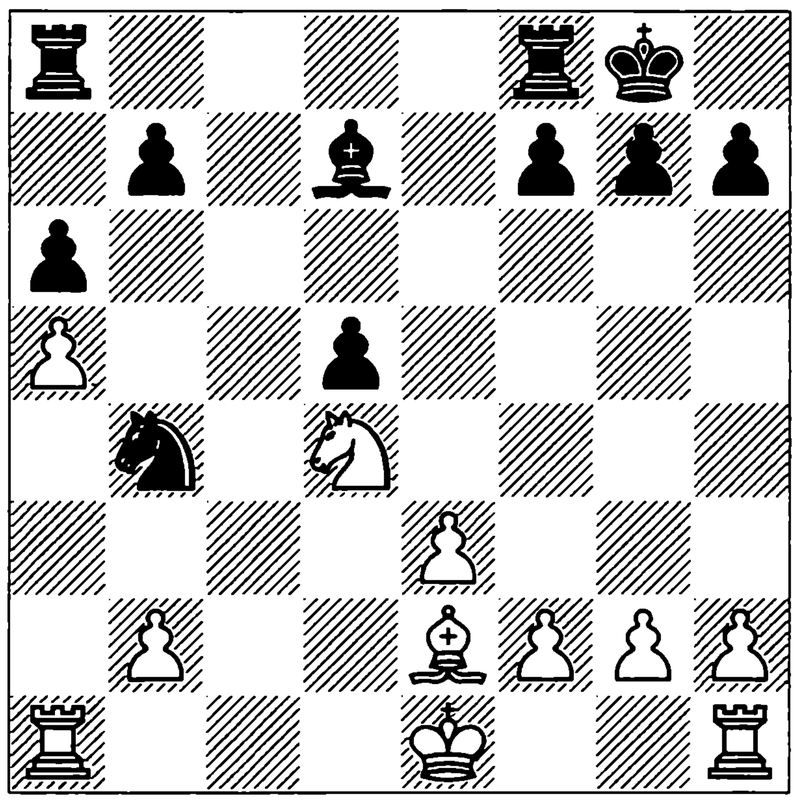
This is a serious mistake, inviting an endgame favourable for White. Instead, 12...♘c6 13 0-0 ♖d8 would promise equal chances.

13 ♕d2 ♘c6 14 ♕xb4 ♘xb4 15 ♘d4!

White now enjoys a small but permanent edge due to the isolated black pawn on d5 while Black cannot sufficiently annoy him.

15...♗d7 16 a5! *(D)*

B



Gaining control of the b6- and c5-squares for the d4-knight, while also fixing the black queenside pawns on the same colour squares as the e2-bishop (thus turning them into future targets).

16...♖fc8 17 ♔d2 ♘c6 18 ♘b3!

White could also continue with 18 ♘xc6 bxc6 19 b4 ±, but the move played also retains a big plus.

18...♘e5 19 ♖hc1 ♔f8

After 19...♘c4+ 20 ♗xc4 dxc4 21 ♘d4 and 22 ♔c3 followed by ♔b4 White's superiority is decisive thanks to the weak dark squares in Black's queenside and the doomed c4-pawn.

20 ♖c5! ♖xc5 21 ♘xc5 ♗c6 22 ♔c3! ♔e7 23 ♔d4 f6 24 f4!

After bringing his king to d4 White will mobilize his kingside pawns to create inroads for invasion. Black has several weaknesses (a6, b7 and d5) and worse-placed pieces, so it is unlikely that he can avoid defeat.

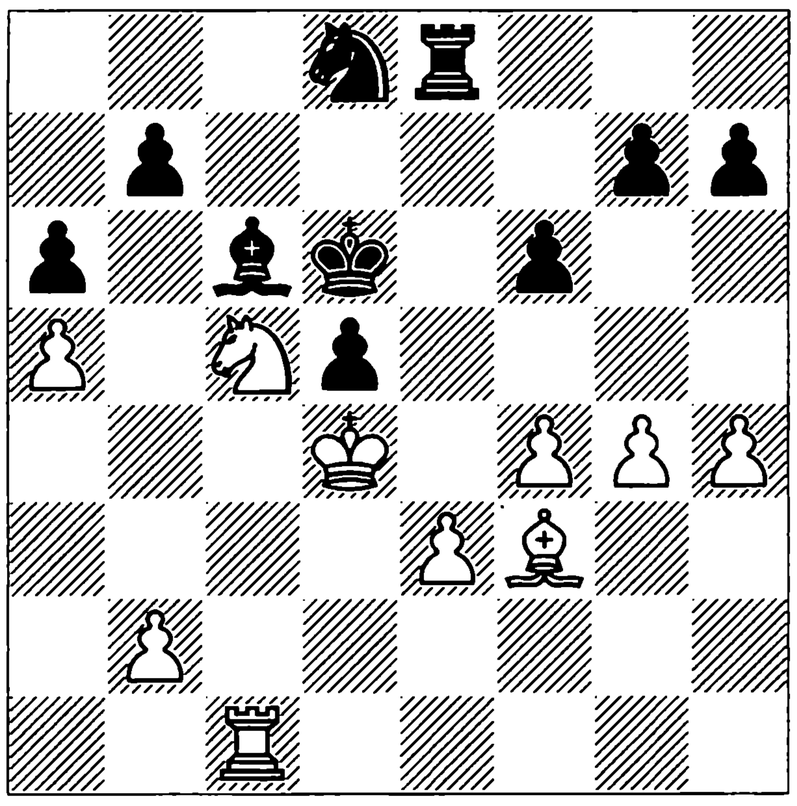
24...♘f7 25 ♖c1 ♔d6 26 ♗f3 ♖e8 27 h4! ♘d8 28 g4 *(D)*

28...♘e6+?

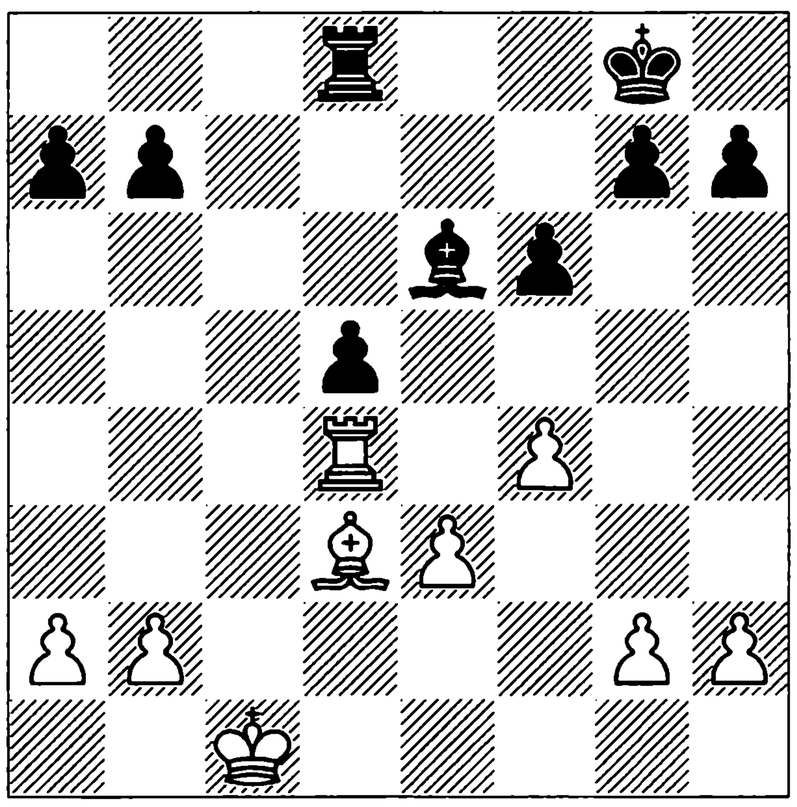
Black's position was anything but pleasant, but exchanges will not help to improve it. He should have instead waited passively for White to prove his superiority.

29 ♘xe6 ♖xe6 30 ♖c5!

Winning the isolated black d-pawn. But what would have happened if White had not had this continuation at his disposal? The winning plan would consist of a breakthrough on the kingside


B

and the penetration by the white pieces into Black's camp. A characteristic example is the following, from the game Szabo-Penrose, Bath Echt 1973: 1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 e6 6 ♘db5 ♗b4 7 ♗f4 0-0 8 ♗d6 ♗xd6 9 ♘xd6 ♕b6 10 ♕d2 ♘d4 11 ♖d1 ♕xd6 12 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 13 ♖xd4 d5 14 cxd5 ♘xd5 15 ♘xd5 exd5 16 e3 ♗e6 17 ♔d2 ♖fd8 18 ♗d3 ♖ac8 19 f4 f6 20 ♖c1 ♖xc1 21 ♔xc1 *(D)*.


B

The diagram position is very similar to both the current game and the previous ones. White's plan is simple and consists of two phases. During the first phase White will maximize the potential of his pieces, bringing his king to d4 and his bishop to f3. The second phase consists of the kingside breakthrough. Black can hardly react to this plan, as the absence of an adequate number of offensive and defensive pieces leads him to passivity. This is a 'textbook' example and constitutes perfect proof of the value of 'middlegame theory'. The continuation of the game fully justified White's play: 21...h6 22 ♔d2 ♔f8 23 ♖a4 a6 24 ♖b4 ♖d7 25 ♔c3 ♔e7 26 ♔d4 ♔d8 27 ♗e2 ♔c7 28 ♗f3 b6 29 ♖b3 ♖d8 30 ♖c3+ ♔b7 31 g4 ♖d6 32 a3 a5 33 h4 ♗f7 34 f5 ♖d8 35 ♖c2 ♖d7 36 g5 fxg5 37 hxg5 hxg5 38 ♖g2 ♖d6 39 ♖xg5 g6 40 fxg6 ♖xg6 1-0.

30...♖e7 31 b4!

Naturally not the careless 31 ♗xd5? ♖xe3!.

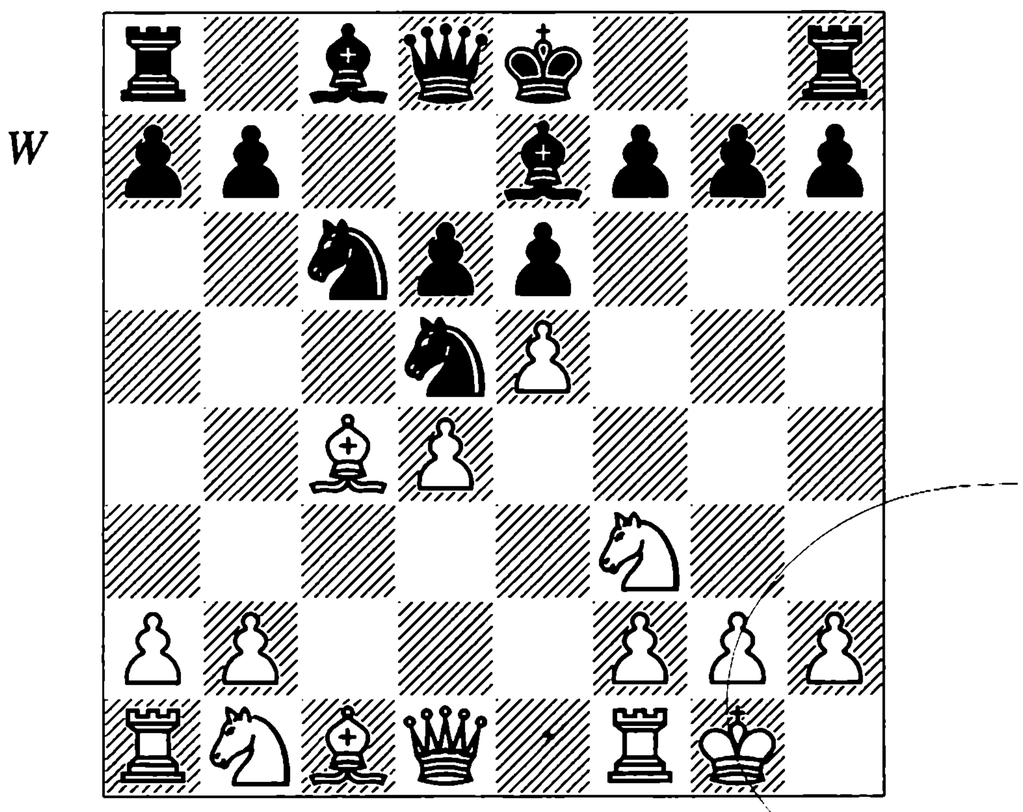
31...g5 32 hxg5 fxg5 33 ♗xd5 gxf4 34 exf4 ♖e1 35 ♗xc6 bxc6 36 ♖c3 ♖b1 37 ♔c4 ♖g1 38 g5 ♖f1 39 ♖d3+ ♔c7 40 ♖d4 ♖c1+ 41 ♔d3 ♖e1 42 ♖e4 ♖d1+ 43 ♔e2 ♖b1 44 ♔f3 ♔d6 45 ♔g4 ♔d5 46 ♖e7 ♖xb4 47 ♖xh7 c5 48 g6 ♔e6 49 ♔g5 ♖b1 50 f5+ ♔e5 51 ♖e7+ ♔d6 1-0

Duncan – Grivas

London 1998

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 c3 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘d5 5 d4 cxd4 6 ♗c4 e6 7 cxd4 d6 8 0-0 ♗e7 *(D)*

Also interesting is 8...♘b6 9 ♗b5?! (9 ♗b3!) 9...♗d7 10 ♘c3 a6 11 ♗e2 ♘b4 12 ♗g5 ♕c7 13 ♖c1 ♗c6 14 a3 ♘4d5 15 ♘e4 ♘d7 16 ♖e1 dxe5 17 dxe5 ♗e7 18 ♕d4 0-0 19 ♗d3 ♕b6 with a satisfactory position for Black, Pierrot-Grivas, Budapest 2001.


W

9 ♖e1

In this position several ideas have been tried. Here is a sample of my experiences:

a) 9 ♘c3?! ♘xc3 10 bxc3 dxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 dxe5 ♕xd1 13 ♖xd1 ♗d7 14 ♗e3 ♖c8 15 ♗e2 ♗c5 16 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 17 ♖d4 ♗c6

and Black is better, Oschetzki-Grivas, Khania 1995.

b) 9 a3 0-0 10 ♕e2 ♗d7 11 ♗d3 ♖c8 12 ♕e4 f5 13 exf6 ♘xf6 14 ♕h4 g6 15 ♗h6 ♘h5 16 ♕e4 d5 17 ♕e3 ♘g7 is unclear, K.Nikolaidis-Grivas, Athens 1995.

c) 9 ♘bd2 ♘b6 10 ♗b3 d5 11 ♗c2 0-0 12 ♘b3 f5 13 exf6 gxf6 14 ♕e2 ♖f7 with good play for Black, Kouvatsou-Grivas, Aegina 1996.

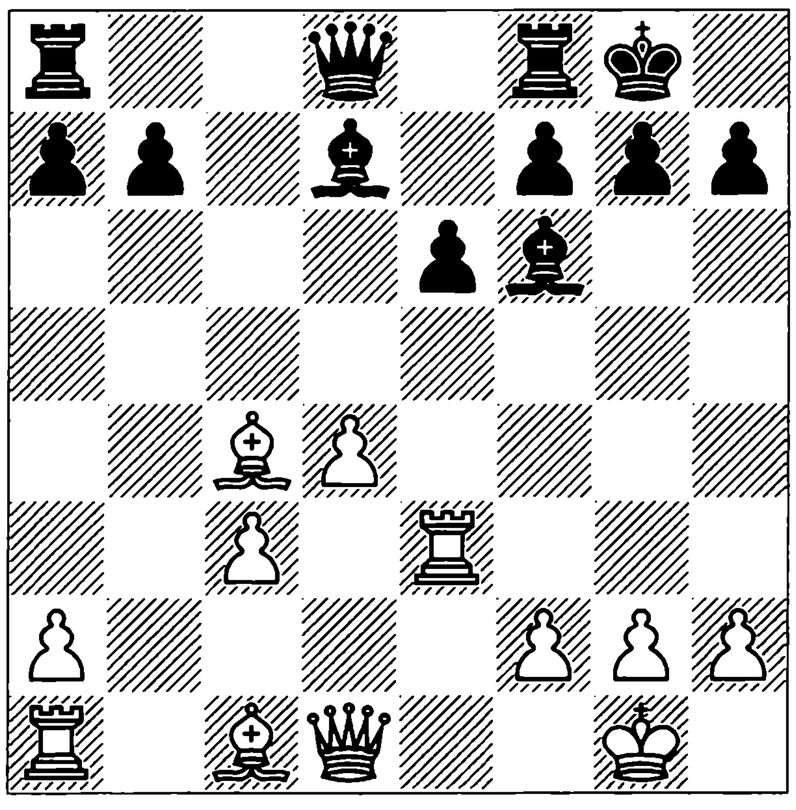
d) 9 ♕e2 0-0 and now: 10 ♖d1 ♘b6 11 ♗b3 d5 12 a3 ♗d7 13 ♘c3 ♖c8 14 ♗c2 f5 15 exf6 gxf6 16 ♕d3 ♖f7 17 ♖e1 ♘c4 and Black has the initiative, P.Pandavos-Grivas, Athens 1996; 10 ♘c3 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 dxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♕xe5 ♗d7 14 ♗b3 ♗f6 15 ♕e3 ♗b5 16 ♖d1 ♖c8 17 ♖b1 ♕a5 and Black is better, Managadze-Grivas, Athens 1997; 10 ♕e4 ♖e8 11 ♗d3 f5 12 exf6 ♘xf6 13 ♕e2 ♗d7 14 ♘c3 ♕a5 15 ♖d1 a6 16 ♗c4 d5 17 ♗b3 ♗d6 18 ♗g5 ♕c7 with unclear play, Tassopoulos-Grivas, Athens 2001.

9...0-0 10 ♘c3

White's strategy is pretty harmless for Black, who can feel satisfied with the outcome of the opening.

10...♘xc3 11 bxc3 dxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♖xe5 ♗f6 14 ♖e3 ♗d7 *(D)*

W



Black has brought about hanging pawns and a weak isolated pawn on a2. He will now try to exploit these weaknesses by highlighting their negative side.

15 ♗b3 ♖c8

After the premature 15...b5?! 16 a4! White would not stand worse.

16 ♕d3

Here the tempting 16 c4? b5! would offer Black a clear plus.

16...♖e8 17 ♗d2 ♗c6 18 ♖ae1 ♕d7!

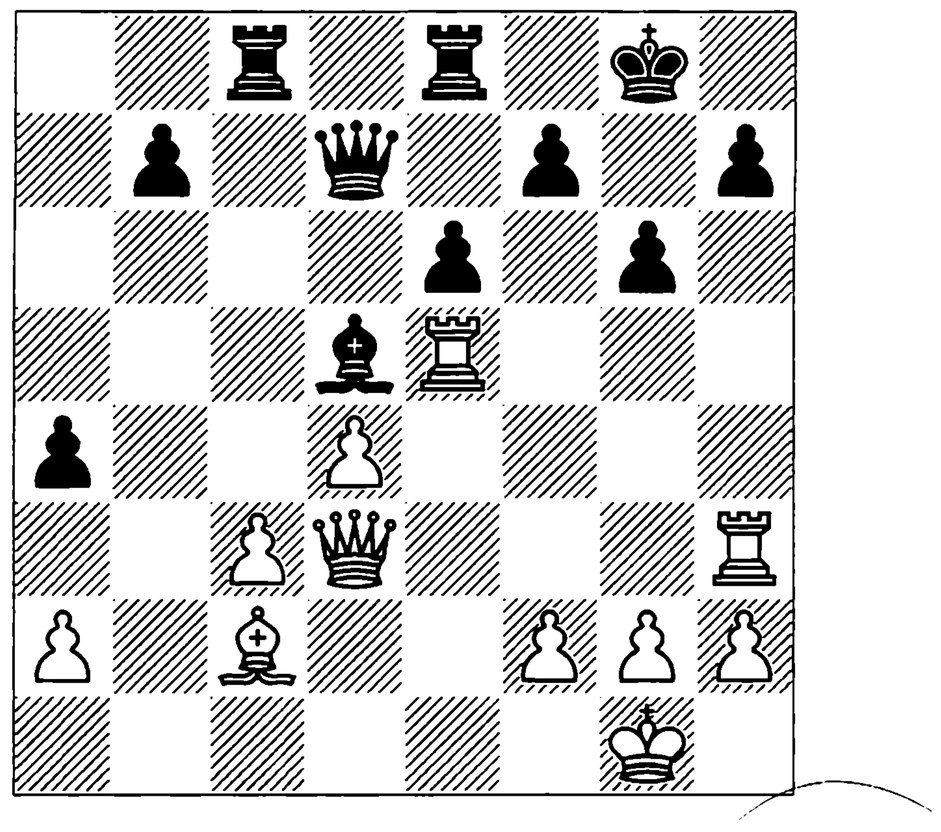
A good plan, aiming to exchange the b3-bishop (under favourable circumstances), after which White's attack will lose much of its force. White's dynamic potential in this position is much greater than is initially apparent, so Black must take serious precautions. Exchanging pieces is the way to go.

19 ♖h3 g6 20 ♗f4 a5!!

An excellent idea. Naturally, 20...♗a4 21 ♗e5 ♗xe5 22 ♖xe5 ♗xb3 23 axb3 would not worry White at all. Black hopes for 21 a3 b5! and 22...♗d5!, which provokes the exchange of bishops without ironing out White's inferior pawn-structure.

21 ♗e5 ♗xe5 22 ♖xe5 a4 23 ♗c2 ♗d5! *(D)*

W



Black has immobilized the hanging white pawns and will now develop pressure on the c-file. We must emphasize the majestic placement of the d5-bishop, which operates both defensively and offensively. Any aggressive operation by White on the dark squares (♕d2-h6) is adequately met by the advance ...f5!.

24 ♗b1 ♖c7 25 ♕d2 f5 26 ♖g3 ♖e7!

Black carefully organizes his defence. His 2nd rank will prove to be a 'Maginot Line' for White.

27 h4!? ♖g7! 28 ♕f4

After 28 h5?! gxh5! the g2-pawn would come under pressure.

28...a3!

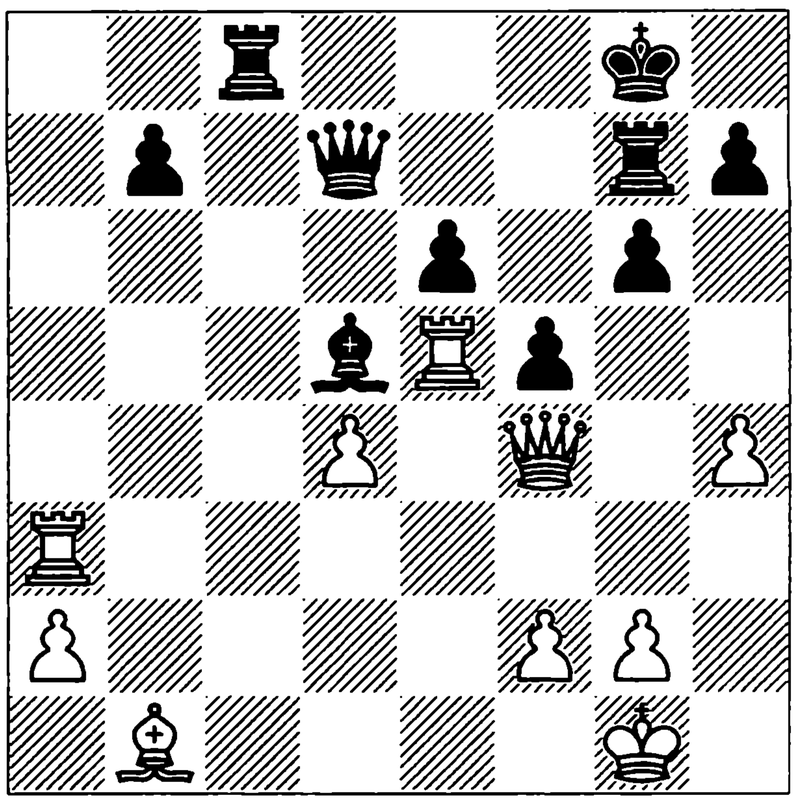
Fixing the weak a2-pawn on the same colour square as the d5-bishop.

29 c4?!

Under the burden of finding an active plan, White decides on a pawn exchange, which however leaves him with an isolated pawn on d4. I think he should instead have waited with 29 ♖e2.

29...♖xc4 30 ♖xa3 ♖c8 *(D)*

W



Black has the advantage as he has clear targets, the weak isolated white pawns on a2 and d4. White on the other hand is unable to apply serious pressure on the black pawns on b7 and e6, as these are adequately protected by the d5-bishop, which is placed on the outpost in front of an isolated pawn. If we were to remove the bishops from the board, the position would be equal, as both sides would have equally important targets. This difference in the scope of the bishops is obvious and determines the outcome.

31 ♕d2 ♕c6!

Setting up the double threat 32...♕c1+ and 32...♗xg2. White has only one reply.

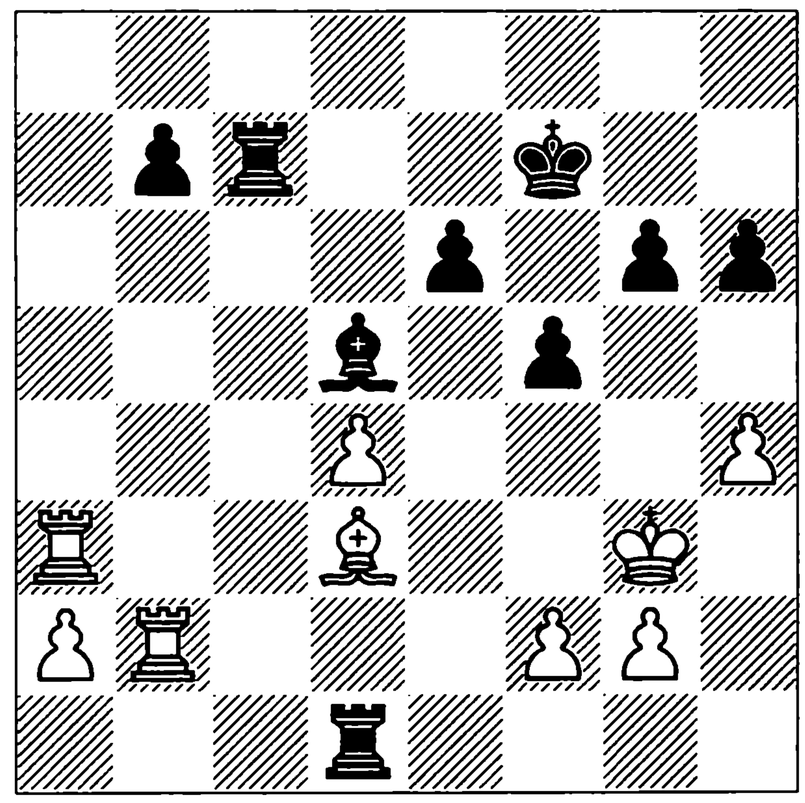
32 ♗d3! ♕c1+

And not the mistaken 32...♗xg2? 33 ♖c5!. The exchange of queens will increase Black's plus, as it will not only forestall future counterplay by the white pieces but will also allow the black king to join the battle.

33 ♕xc1 ♖xc1+ 34 ♔h2 ♖gc7 35 ♖e2 ♔f7 36 ♖b2 ♖d1 37 ♔g3 h6! *(D)*

Intending to dominate the dark squares as well when, in conjunction with Black's already

W



obvious control over the light squares (the d5-bishop), the noose around the white king will tighten.

38 ♖e2 g5 39 hxg5 hxg5 40 f3 ♔f6 41 ♔f2 f4 42 ♖b2 ♖cc1!

Strange as it may seem, White has no satisfactory moves any more. For example: 43 g3 ♖h1! 44 ♔g2 ♖cg1+, 43 ♖e2 ♖f1# or 43 ♔e2 ♖g1! 44 ♔f2 g4!.

43 ♗e2 ♖xd4

The aim has been achieved, as the cooperation among the black pieces has forced the capture of the d4-pawn.

44 ♖a8 ♗c6 45 ♖f8+ ♔g7 46 ♖a8 ♖d5!

Planning ...♖dc5-c3, forcing further piece exchanges.

47 ♖c8 ♖dc5 48 ♗d3 ♖5c3 49 ♖d2 ♗d5 50 ♖xc3 ♖xc3 51 g3 ♖a3!

The a2-pawn is next! White loses more material.

52 gxf4 gxf4 53 ♗e4 ♗xe4 54 fxe4 ♔f6 55 ♖b2 ♔e5 0-1

B. Exploitation of Positive Aspects

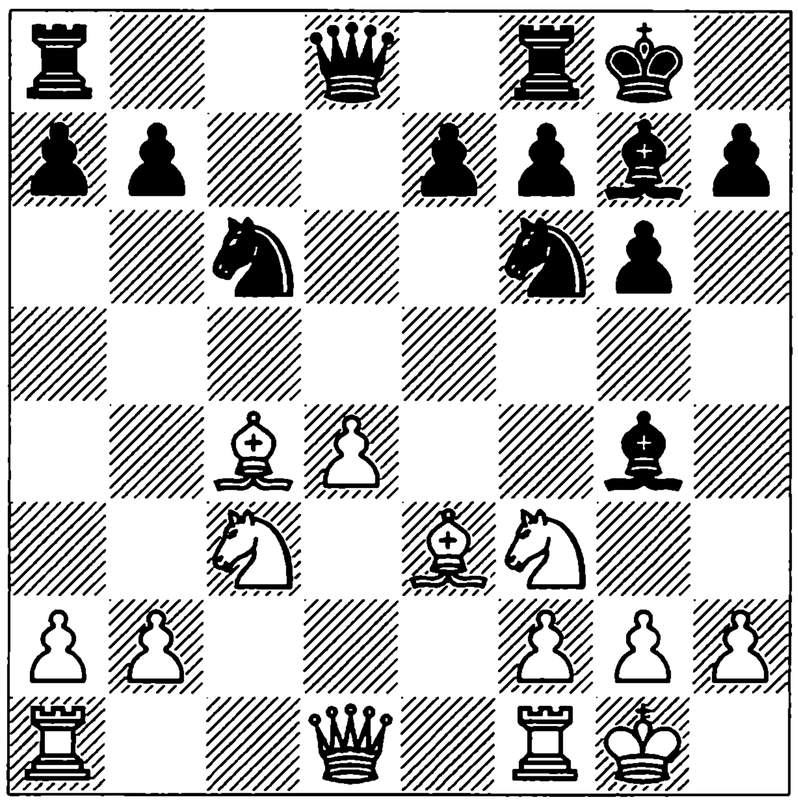
Halkias – Grivas

Levidi 2001

1 ♘f3 c5 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e3 ♘f6 5 d4 0-0 6 ♗e2 cxd4 7 exd4 d5 8 0-0 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 ♗g4 10 ♗e3 ♘c6 *(D)*

We have reached one of the main lines of the Tarrasch Defence, but with reversed colours.

W



White's extra tempo is enough for equality, but not for anything more.

11 d5 ♗xf3 12 ♕xf3 ♘e5 13 ♕e2 ♘xc4 14 ♕xc4 ♕d7

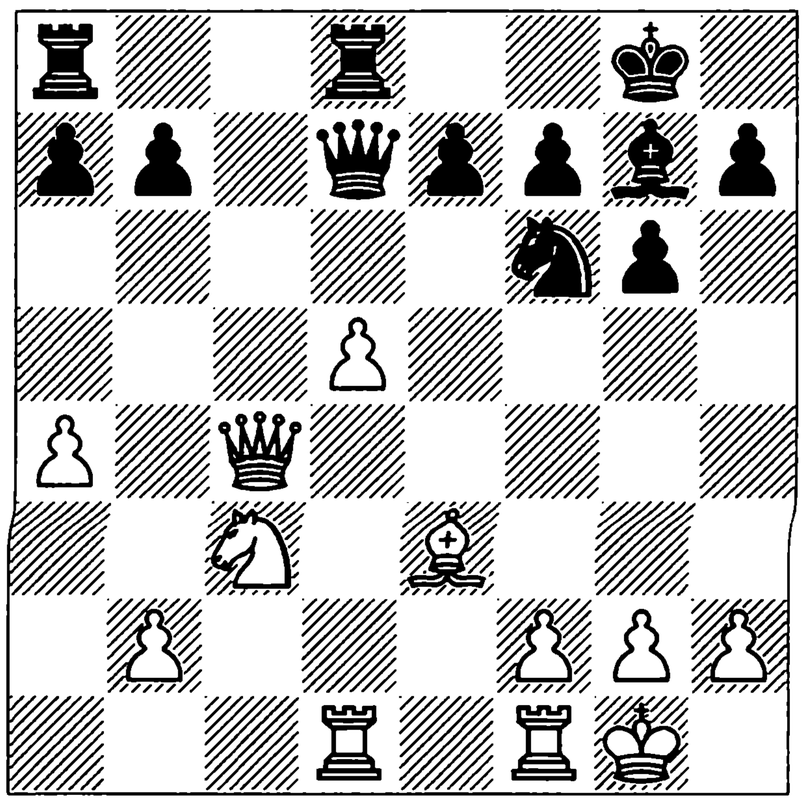
The exchanges of minor pieces seem to favour Black, who wishes to base his plans on the exploitation of the isolated white d-pawn.

15 a4!

With this excellent move White seeks the initiative on the queenside, while also preventing the 'annoying' plan ...a6 & ...b5.

15...♖fd8 16 ♖ad1 *(D)*

B



16...♕f5

The solid 16...♘e8, planning ...♘d6, seems more healthy. The lunge of the black queen is risky as the queen is lacking support in its venture from the other black pieces.

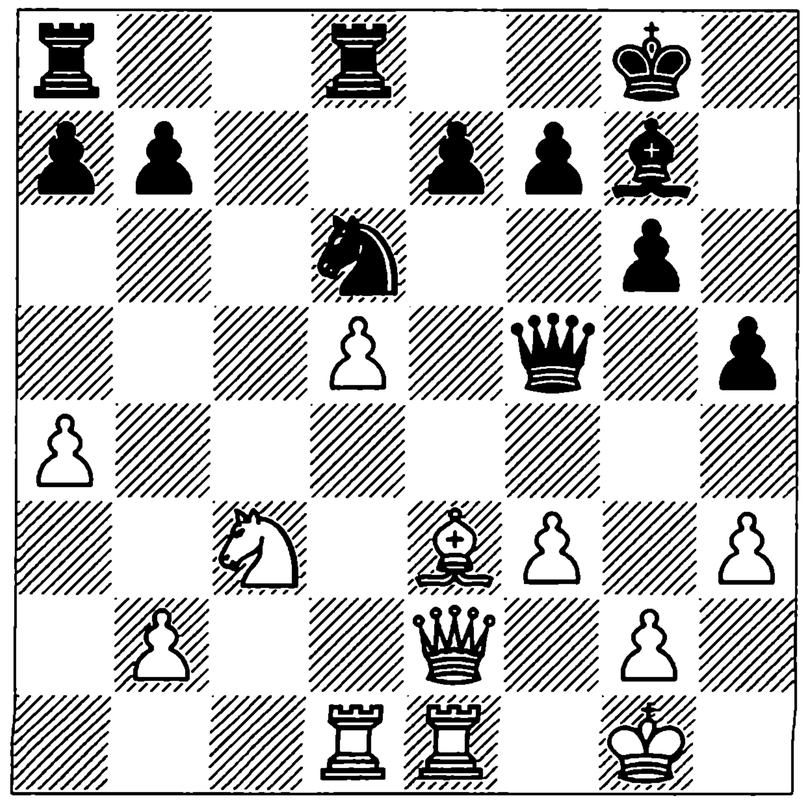
17 f3! h5?!

Weakening the black king, since White's intended g4 advance cannot be prevented anyway.

White correctly reorientates his strategy towards Black's weakened kingside. Again the immediate 17...♘e8, intending ...♘d6, was better.

18 h3! ♘e8 19 ♖fe1 ♘d6 20 ♕e2 *(D)*

B



20...h4?

This is the root of all Black's problems. His plan is wrong as it is based on a mistaken evaluation of the position. The prudent 20...♖e8 is a relatively safe choice.

21 ♕f2! ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♘c4 23 ♗d4!

Black's play would be justified after 23 ♕xh4?! ♘xe3 24 ♖xe3 ♖xd5 25 ♖xd5 ♕xd5 26 ♕xe7 ♕d1+ 27 ♖e1 ♕xa4 28 ♕xb7 ♖d8, when a draw is the most likely result, despite White's extra pawn. White's attacking possibilities are quite serious, thanks to the d4-bishop and the exposed and weak black h4-pawn; both these factors constitute a threat to the black king.

23...♕g5 24 f4 ♕h5 25 ♕f1?!

Stronger was 25 ♗xa7 ♖xd5 26 ♖xd5 ♕xd5 27 ♖xe7. White appears to be seeking absolute superiority, but simple solutions are at the same time the most effective.

25...♕xd5! 26 ♖xe7!

After 26 ♗b6 ♕xd1 27 ♖xd1 ♖xd1 28 ♕xd1 axb6 Black would maintain the balance. White correctly tries for more.

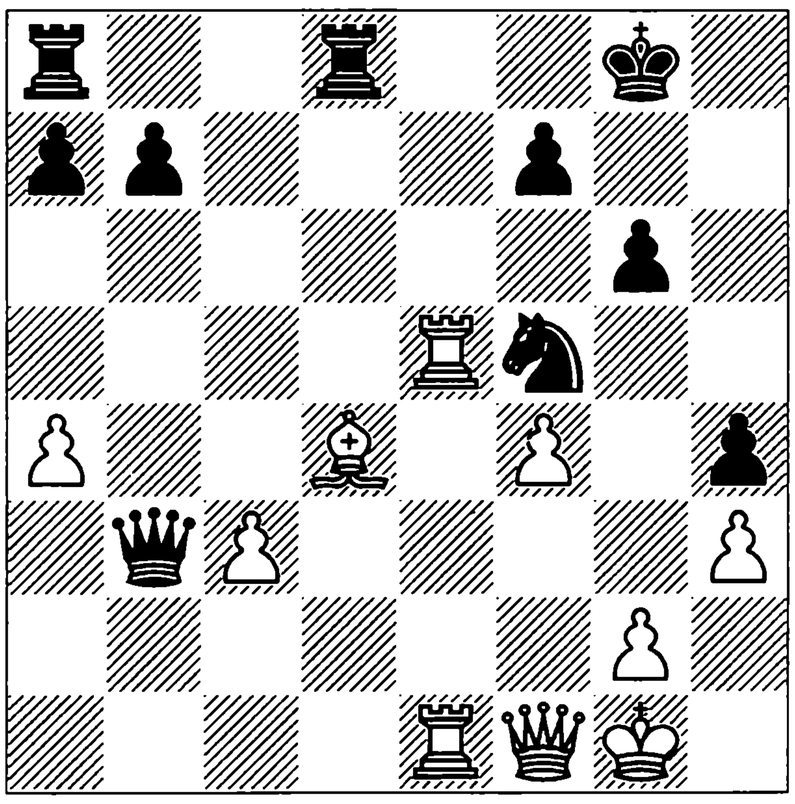
26...♘d6! 27 ♖e5 ♕b3 28 ♖de1 ♘f5 *(D)*

The essence of Black's defence, as the exchange of the powerful d4-bishop would allow him to equalize. White cannot allow this.

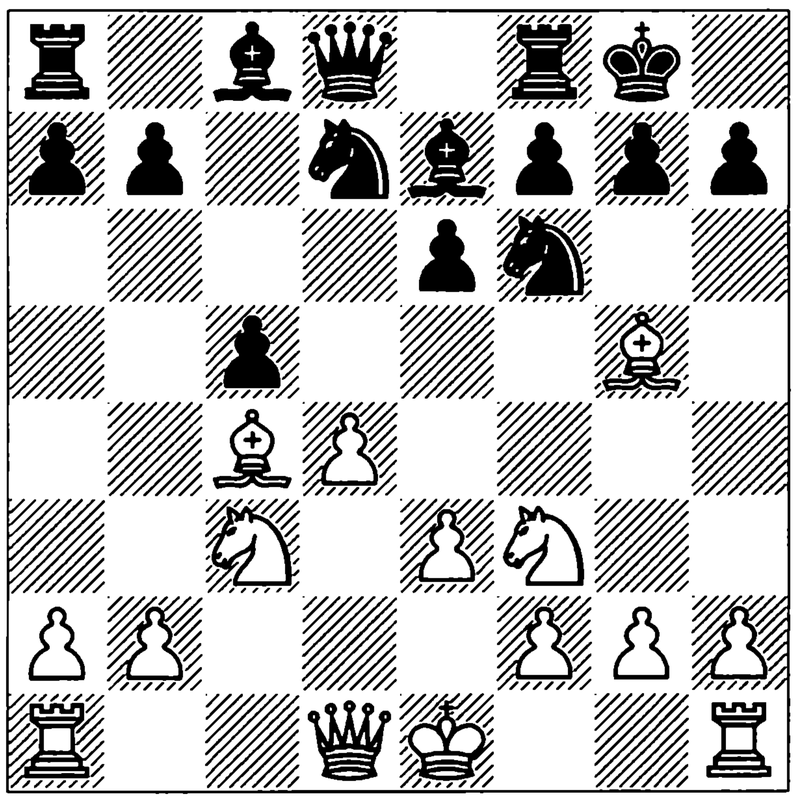
29 ♖xf5! gxf5 30 ♕f2 ♖xd4!

Practically forced, since the d4-bishop is more valuable than the d8-rook.

W



W



31 cxd4 ♕xa4 32 ♕xh4 ♕xd4+?

Black proves to be greedy and careless, ignoring the safety of his king. 32...♖e8! was necessary, when White retains some chances but, due to the black passed queenside pawns, the game would probably end in a draw.

33 ♔h2 a5

Black wrongly believed he might even win the game, but how can that be possible with such an exposed king? The last phase of White's attack is exemplary.

34 ♖e5! a4 35 ♕g5+ ♔f8 36 ♕e7+ ♔g8 37 ♖xf5

White's threats cannot be met.

37...♕c4 38 ♖g5+ ♔h7 39 ♖h5+ ♔g8 40 ♕g5+ 1-0

Grivas – Gekas

Thessaloniki 1988

1 c4 e6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 d4 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♘f3 ♘bd7 7 ♗d3!?

The Botvinnik Variation of the Orthodox Queen's Gambit, also known as the 'Variation of the Lost Tempo'! By selecting this particular line, White shows his preference for more lively positions, avoiding the stabilization of the centre after 7 cxd5. On the other hand, of course, he loses a tempo!

7...dxc4 8 ♗xc4 c5 *(D)*

After the passive 8...c6 9 a4 ♘d5 10 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 11 0-0 ♖d8 12 a5! White was slightly better in Grivas-Haritakis, Corfu 1988. 8...b6 may be compared with the game Grivas-Gabriel, Budapest 1994 in Volume 1 of this series.

9 0-0 ♘b6

9...a6 would transpose to the game Grivas-An.Georgiou, Thessaloniki 1988 (see page 77).

10 ♗b3 cxd4 11 exd4 ♗d7

Black can also play 11...♘fd5!? 12 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 13 ♖e1 ♖d8 14 ♖c1 ♘xc3 (14...♘f6 15 ♕e2 ♕b4 16 ♘e4 ♘bd5, Korchnoi-I.Zaitsev, USSR Ch (Erevan) 1962, 17 ♖c4! ±) 15 ♖xc3 ♗d7 16 d5 ♕d6 17 dxe6 ♗xe6 18 ♕xd6 ♖xd6 19 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 20 ♖xe6 fxe6 21 ♖c7 ♖d8 22 ♔f1 ♖d7 23 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 with better prospects in the ending for White, Timman-Ree, Amsterdam 1984.

12 ♘e5

In the famous game Botvinnik-Vidmar, Nottingham 1936, 12 ♕d3 ♘bd5?! (12...♘fd5!) 13 ♘e5 ♗c6 14 ♖ad1 was played, with advantage for White.

12...♖c8

After 12...♗c6 13 ♘xc6 bxc6 14 ♖c1 White enjoys the better endgame prospects.

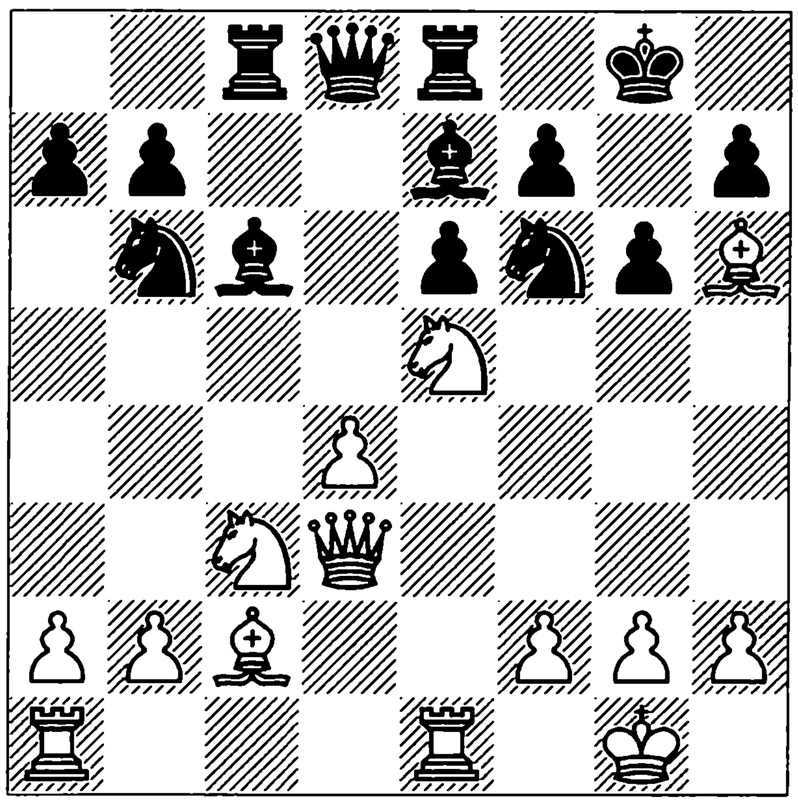
13 ♕d3! ♗c6 14 ♗c2 g6 15 ♗h6 ♖e8 16 ♖fe1 *(D)*

White has activated all his pieces, also succeeding in weakening the black king's cover in the process. Even more important is the fact that Black has failed to exchange any pieces. As a result, his position is uncomfortable and requires increased attention.

16...♘bd5 17 ♗b3!

The bishop's mission on the b1-h7 diagonal has been completed, so it switches to the very promising a2-g8 line. At the same time White prevents piece exchanges with 17...♘xc3? due to 18 ♘xf7!!.

B



17...♗f8

Better chances are offered by 17...♕a5, intending ...♘xc3 and ...♗a4, when White retains an edge but Black succeeds in exchanging some pieces, thus relieving his position.

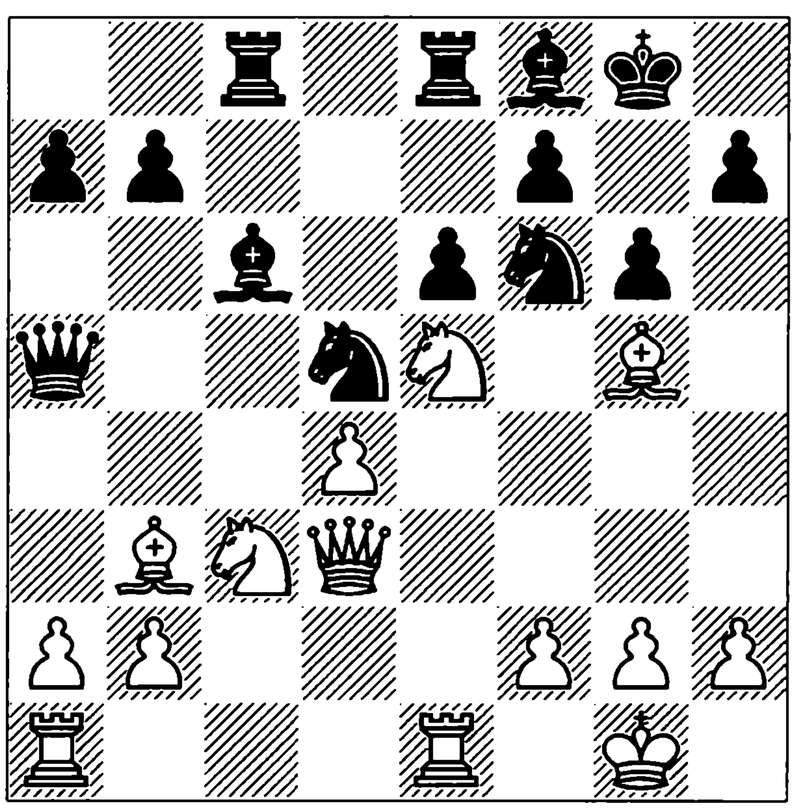
18 ♗g5!

Exchanges favour the defending side!

18...♕a5? *(D)*

And here comes a blunder. Black should have focused on defence with 18...♗g7.

W



In this particular position White has a winning line, which stems from the multiple and insufficiently protected weaknesses around the black king, on the f6- and f7-squares in particular. Black's last move was of decisive importance, as it left the aforementioned squares and the king at White's mercy.

19 ♕f3! ♗g7

There's nothing better, in view of the threatened 20 ♗xf6 and 20 ♗xd5.

20 ♘e4!

20 ♗xd5? is a mistake, as after 20...♗xd5 21 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 Black can survive.

1-0

Now there is no satisfactory defence, as Black loses quickly after 20...♘xe4 21 ♕xf7+ ♔h8 22 ♖xe4 with an extra pawn and the threat of 23 ♘xg6+ hxg6 24 ♖h4+, as well as 20...♕d8 21 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 22 ♗xd5 exd5 23 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 24 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 25 ♗xf6.

Grivas – Soylu

Olympiad, Elista 1998

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 e3 g6 5 d4 ♗g7 6 ♗d3 0-0 7 h3!?

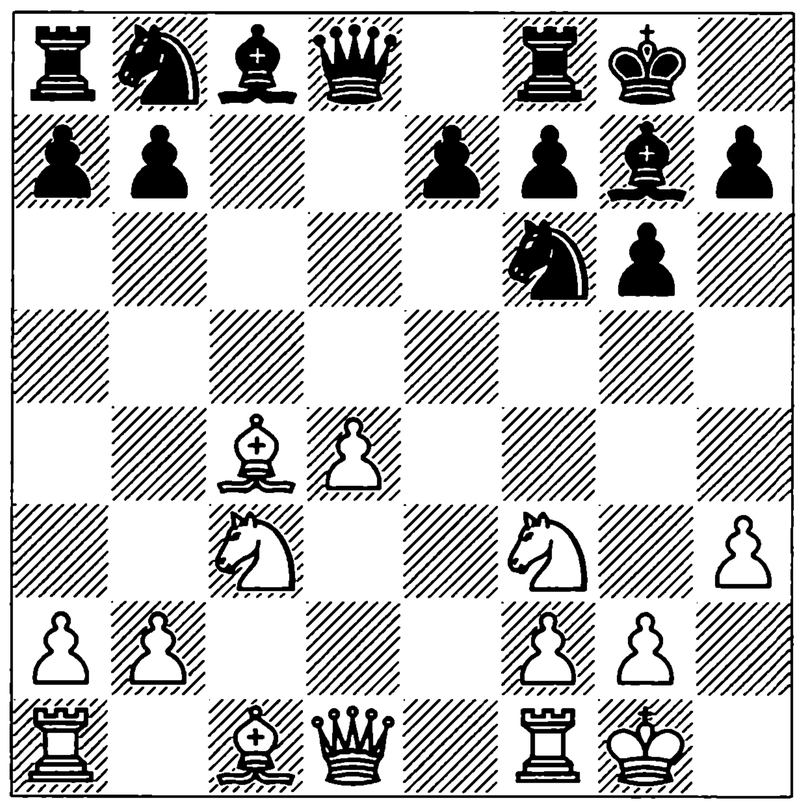
One more often encounters 7 0-0 ♗g4 (for 7...♘bd7?! see the game Grivas-Radulov, Athens 1991, analysed in Volume 1 of this series) 8 h3 ♗xf3 9 ♕xf3 e6 10 ♗d2 ♘bd7 11 cxd5 cxd5 12 ♖fc1 a6 13 ♖c2 ♖e8 with a minimal edge for White, Grivas-Smyslov, Karditsa 1995.

7...c5?!

White will now have an extra tempo compared to the game Halkias-Grivas, Levidi 2001 (see page 28), due to the fact that Black has played the move ...c5 in two steps.

8 0-0 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 cxd4 10 exd4 *(D)*

B



10...♘bd7

Black could not play 10...♗g4 or 10...♘c6 11 d5. The positive aspects of 7 h3 are revealed.

11 ♖e1 ♘b6 12 ♗b3 ♘bd5!?

Black has blockaded the isolated pawn by occupying the square in front of it. White could

now win a pawn by playing 13 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 14 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 15 ♖xe7 ♗e6, but then Black would have compensation; thus, he preferred to increase the pressure.

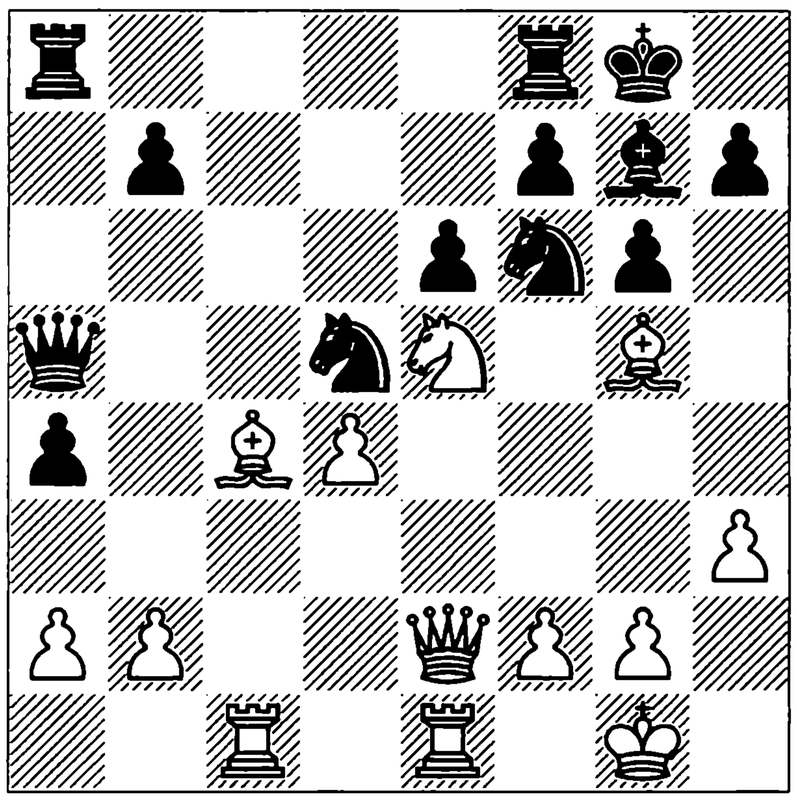
13 ♗g5 ♗e6 14 ♕d2

White has completed his development and, apart from natural moves like ♖ad1 and ♗h6, the positional exchange sacrifice ♖xe6 always figures in his plans.

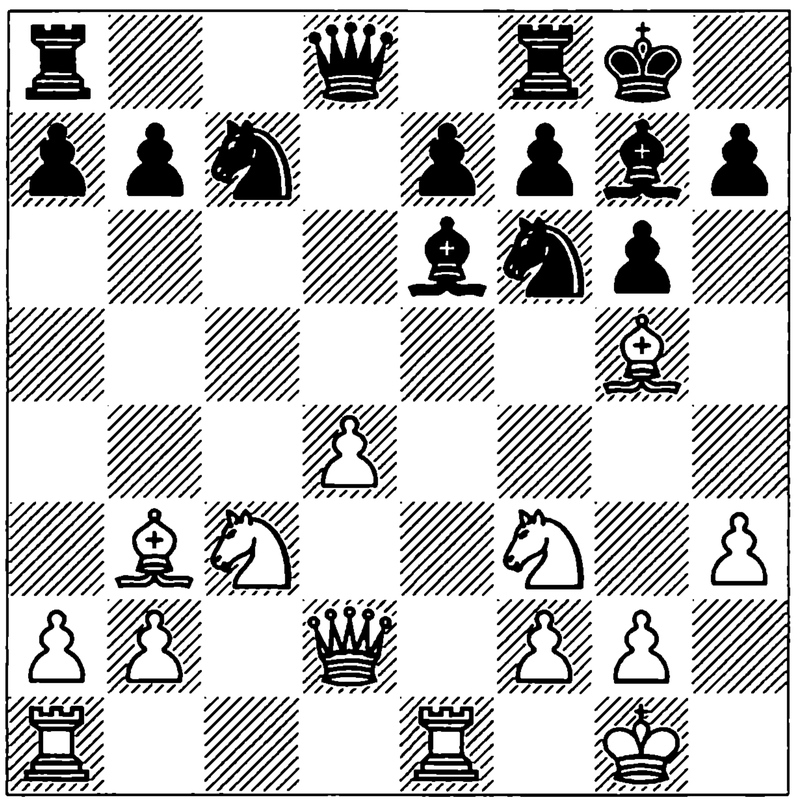
14...♘c7 *(D)*

14...♘xc3?! 15 bxc3 ♗xb3 16 axb3 can only favour White.

B



W



15 ♗c2

White could also try 15 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 16 ♗h6 ♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 ♗xh6 18 ♕xh6 ♕xd4 19 ♖xe7 with advantage, but instead he preferred to keep all the pieces on the board, hoping to exploit his spatial superiority and his attacking chances against the black king.

15...♗d5!? 16 ♘xd5

16 ♘e5 was also possible, but the desire to obtain the bishop-pair was too great.

16...♘cxd5 17 ♗b3 e6 18 ♘e5 a5

Further weakening Black's pawn-structure, but creating a good post for the queen on a5. Black could alternatively play 18...♕d6, but not 18...♕b6? 19 ♗xd5! exd5 20 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 21 ♘d7.

19 ♖ac1 a4 20 ♗c4 ♕a5 21 ♕e2 *(D)*

White's position is better as he possesses the bishop-pair and controls more space. By comparison, the black pieces do not cooperate well and are unable to apply pressure on the isolated d4-pawn. Black's only achievement is the occupation of the outpost on d5, and it is this fact that holds his position together.

21...♕b6?

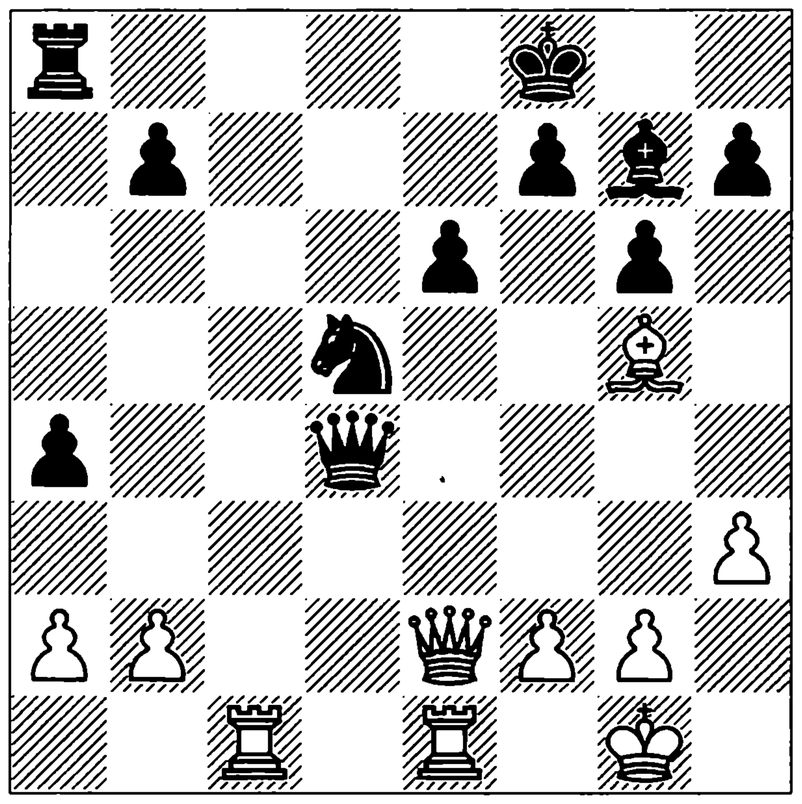
A serious error with decisive consequences, caused by Black's time-pressure (in which he found himself due to his effort to treat the position effectively). But the search for a good move is not easy at all. 21...♖ac8? 22 ♗xf6! ♘xf6 (22...♗xf6 23 ♘d7!) 23 ♘xf7! ♖xc4 (23...♖xf7 24 ♗xe6 ♖xc1 25 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 26 ♕e6+) 24 ♖xc4 ♖xf7 25 ♖c8+ ♗f8 26 ♕xe6 allows White a significant plus, as does 21...♖ad8 22 ♕f3!. 21...a3!? looks like the only move, fighting for the initiative on the queenside.

22 ♗xd5! ♘xd5

22...exd5 23 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 24 ♘d7 would have suited White even better.

23 ♘d7 ♕xd4 24 ♘xf8 ♔xf8 *(D)*

W



White has won the exchange for a pawn and can count on victory. Of course, there is still a

lot of work to be done as there are no obvious targets in Black's position. White must seek piece exchanges.

25 ♖c2 ♔g8 26 ♖d1 ♕b4 27 ♗d2 ♕h4 28 ♖c4 ♕f6 29 ♗c3!

An apparently irrational move, allowing White's queenside structure to be disfigured. However, elimination of the excellently placed d5-knight is more important, as it will allow the white rooks to infiltrate Black's camp.

29...♘xc3?!

In view of the above comment, Black had to try 29...♕g5! 30 ♗xg7 ♔xg7.

30 bxc3 h5 31 ♖c7 ♖d8

White was threatening 32 ♖dd7.

32 ♖xd8+ ♕xd8 33 ♖xb7 ♗xc3 34 ♕f3 ♗f6 35 ♖a7 ♕d4

The only – but insufficient – hope for Black was 35...♔g7 36 ♖xa4.

36 ♕b7! ♕d1+ 37 ♔h2 1-0

Grivas – Tassopoulos

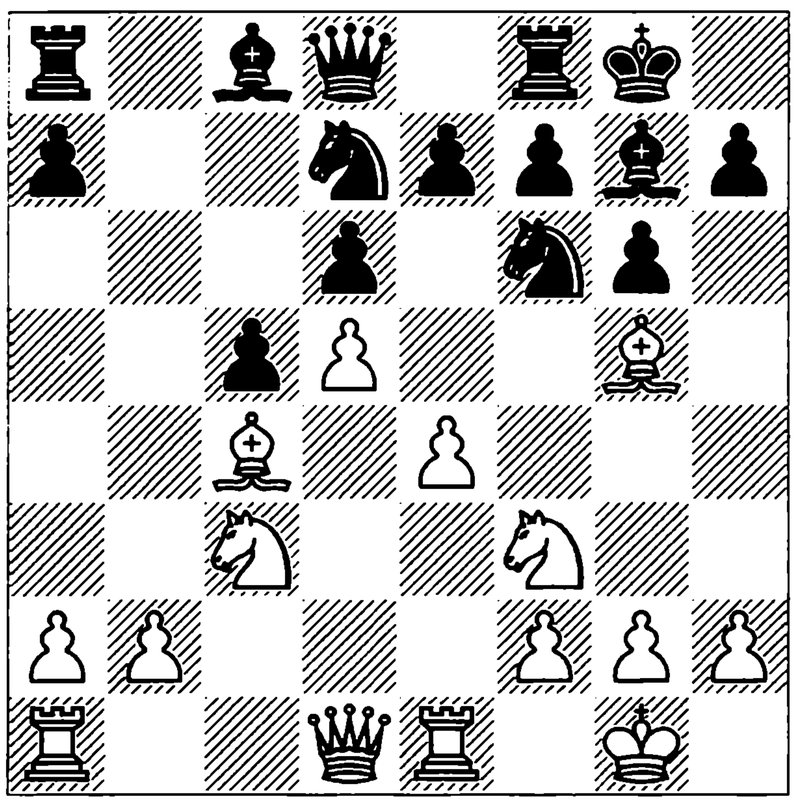
Athens 2003

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 ♗g5 bxc4

Other possible lines are 4...♘e4 5 ♗f4 ♕a5+ 6 ♘d2, Grivas-Khalifman, Leningrad 1989 and 4...g6 5 d6!, Grivas-Lputian, Athens 1983. For more information on this opening variation one can refer to the game Grivas-Kjeldsen, Cannes 1995, analysed in Volume 1 of this series.

5 ♘c3 d6 6 e4 g6 7 ♗xc4 ♗g7 8 ♘f3 0-0 9 0-0 ♘bd7 10 ♖e1 *(D)*

B



10...♖b8!?

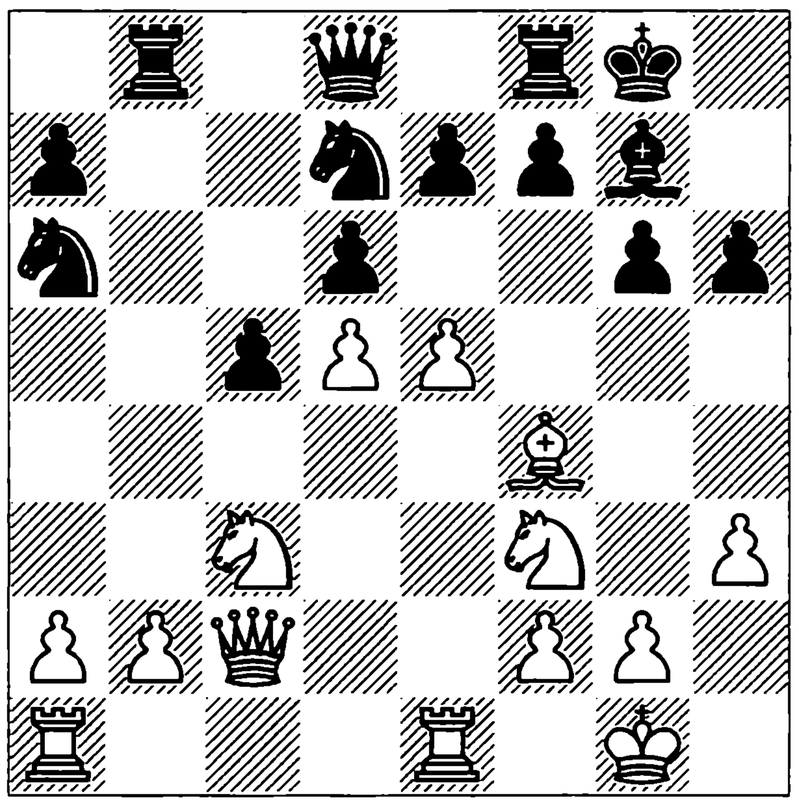
10...♘b6 11 ♗f1 was played in the game Grivas-Leko, Budapest 1993. Another option is 10...♘g4!? 11 ♗f1! ♘ge5 12 ♘d2! ±.

11 ♕c2 h6 12 ♗c1!

The best. After 12 ♗d2?! ♘g4! 13 ♗f1 ♘ge5 White must exchange a pair of knights, as the d2-square is not available to the f3-knight. White's plan is to achieve the e5 advance with the help of a set-up with h3 and ♗f4. Black's chosen method of preventing White's plan is unsatisfactory.

12...♘e8?! 13 h3 ♘c7 14 ♗f4 ♗a6 15 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 16 e5! *(D)*

B



White's superiority is increasing, as he has already achieved his main aim.

16...dxe5 17 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 18 ♗xe5 ♖b7

After 18...♗xe5 19 ♖xe5 ♖b7 20 ♖ae1 Black would face unbearable pressure on e7.

19 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 20 ♖ad1 ♖d7

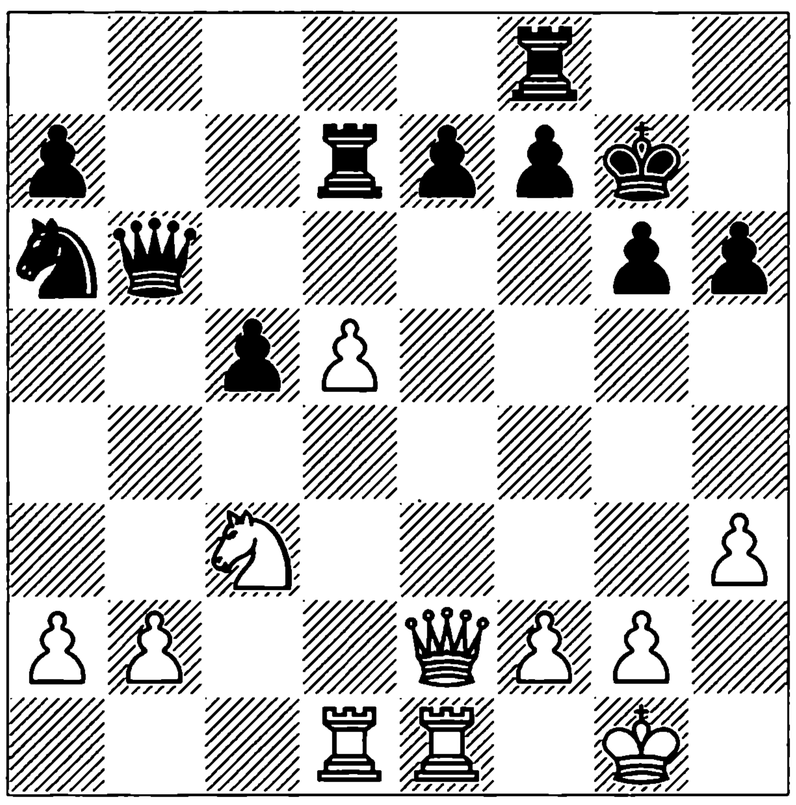
White is better as Black has several weaknesses (e7, c5 and a7) while the isolated white d-pawn is a thorn in Black's side and cannot be effectively attacked. One would expect White to apply direct pressure on Black's weak pawns. However, there are two other important elements in the position: the weakened cover of the black king and the lack of harmony among the black pieces (especially the a6-knight is misplaced).

21 ♕e2! ♕b6 *(D)*

21...♘b4 22 ♕c4! would not help Black, but now the black queen has also abandoned the king's defence.

22 d6!!

W



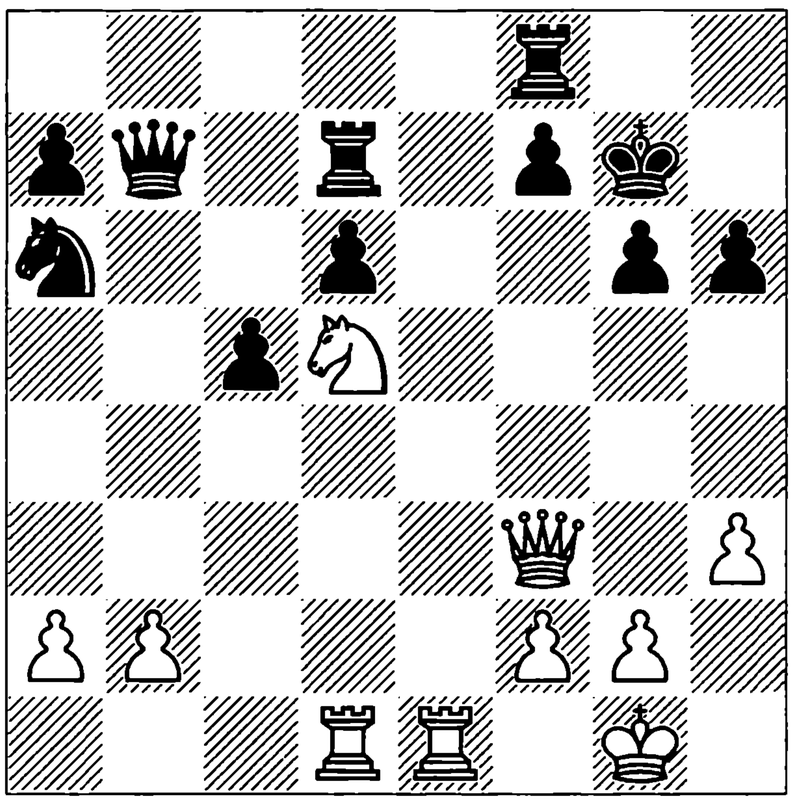
The isolated pawn advances and sacrifices itself, cutting Black's camp in two and simultaneously weakening the defence of the black king (the f6-square in particular). This typical idea, although not often met, is characteristic of the potential of the isolated pawn.

22...exd6?!

It was better to decline White's sacrifice by 22...♖xd6 23 ♕e5+! ♔h7 24 ♕xe7 ♖xd1 25 ♖xd1 ♔g8 26 b3, when White retains an advantage but it is kept within reasonable bounds. Black failed to realize the dangers facing his exposed king.

23 ♘d5 ♕b7 24 ♕f3! *(D)*

B



24...♘c7

Forced, as White was threatening 25 ♕f6+ ♔h7 26 ♕c3!. No relief was offered by 24...f6 25 ♕g3! or 24...♕xb2 25 ♖e2! ♕b5 (25...♕b7 26 ♕f6+ ♔h7 27 ♕c3) 26 ♕f6+ ♔h7 27 ♖de1!.

25 ♕c3+! f6 26 ♘f4

White has multiple threats (♕g3, ♕d3) while the black pieces are still unable to coordinate.

26...♖e8?

Hastening the end by allowing the transformation of White's positional advantage into material gain. One possible line was 26...♕b4 27 ♕g3 g5 28 ♘h5+ ♔g6 29 ♕d3+! f5 (29...♔xh5 30 g4+ ♔h4 31 ♕g3#) 30 g4! and ♘g3, with a clear advantage for White.

27 ♖xe8 ♘xe8 28 ♕d3! f5 29 ♘e6+ ♔g8 30 ♘xc5!

Winning material and the game.

30...♕c6 31 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 32 b4 1-0

Grivas – Hug

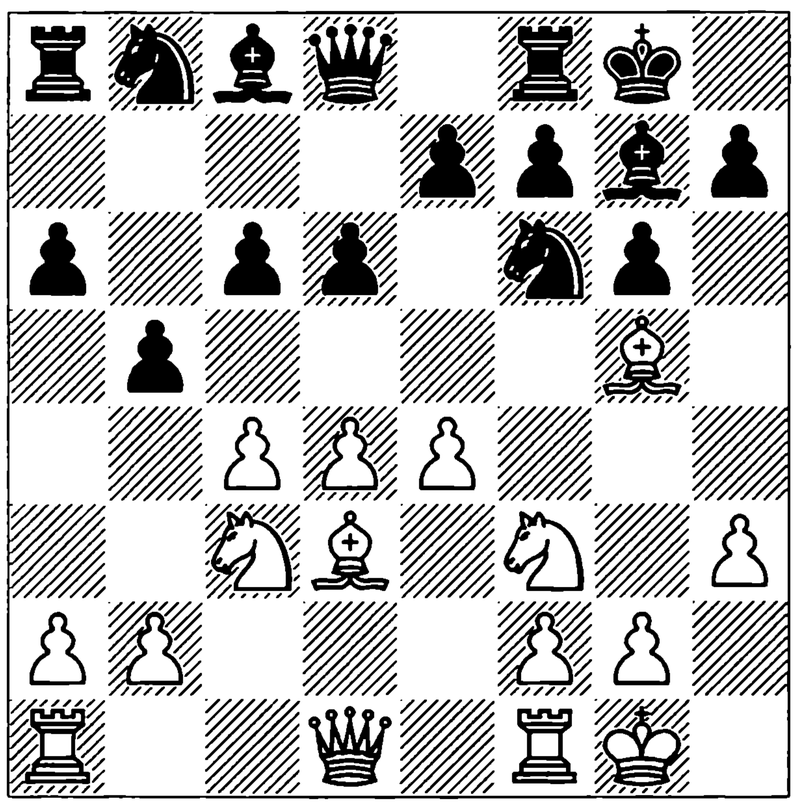
Olympiad, Moscow 1994

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 h3 0-0 6 ♗g5 c6

Black reacts to White's set-up in a rather passive way, although his idea is not lacking in strategic foundations.

7 ♘f3 a6 8 ♗d3 b5 9 0-0 *(D)*

B



9...♖a7?!

In the game Grivas-Sigalas, Khania 2000, Black opted for the natural 9...♘bd7 10 ♖e1 h6 11 ♗e3 ♘b6 12 b3 ♘fd7 13 ♖c1 b4 14 ♘e2 c5 15 ♕d2 ♔h7 16 d5 ±. Black's plan in the game does not inspire confidence.

10 ♕d2 bxc4

Practically obligatory, as 10...♘bd7 would not be in tune with 9...♖a7?!.

11 ♗xc4 ♘xe4 12 ♘xe4 d5 13 ♗d3 dxe4 14 ♗xe4 ♗e6

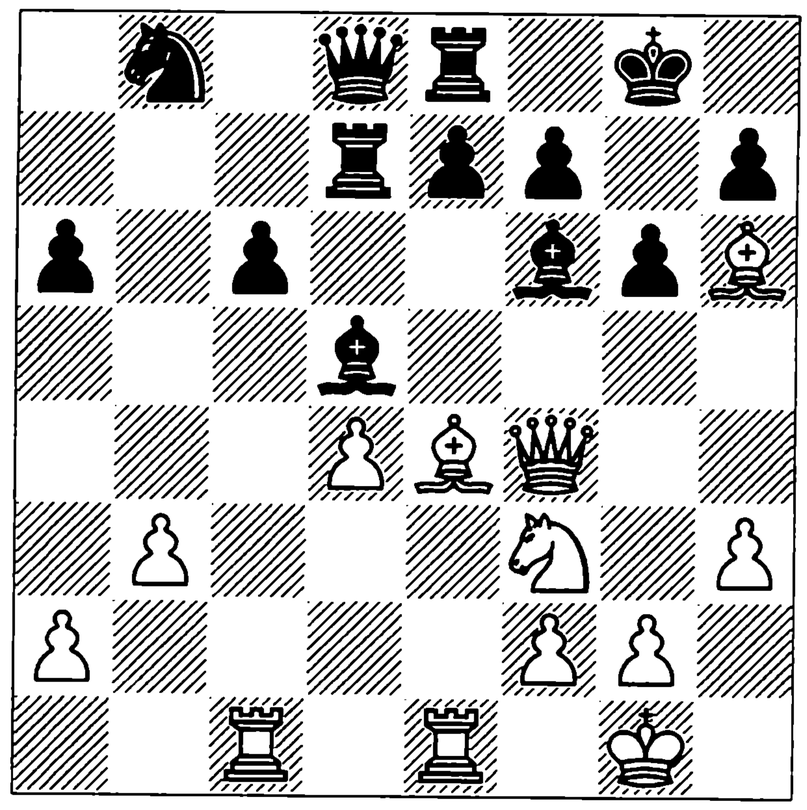
Both sides have acquired an isolated pawn. However, White's d4-pawn is obviously stronger than Black's c6-pawn. Consequently, White has the advantage, all the more so since he controls more space and his pieces are better placed.

15 ♖fe1

15 ♗h6 was another possibility.

15...♖e8! 16 ♗h6 ♗f6 17 b3 ♗d5 18 ♖ac1 ♖d7 19 ♕f4! *(D)*

B



The white pieces apply annoying pressure on Black's position. In particular, the b8-knight is unable to develop.

19...♖d6 20 h4! ♗xe4 21 ♖xe4 ♖d5 22 ♗g5!?

This move cannot be considered bad, but 22 ♘e5! poses Black more problems.

22...♖f5 23 ♕e3 ♕d6 24 ♖e1 ♖f8

After the natural 24...e6 25 g4! ♗xg5 26 ♘xg5 ♖d5 27 ♖f4 the threats of 28 ♘xf7 and 28 ♘e4 are decisive. Black instead sacrifices a pawn and keeps hoping for the best.

25 ♖xe7?

After the simple 25 ♘e5! White's superiority is decisive.

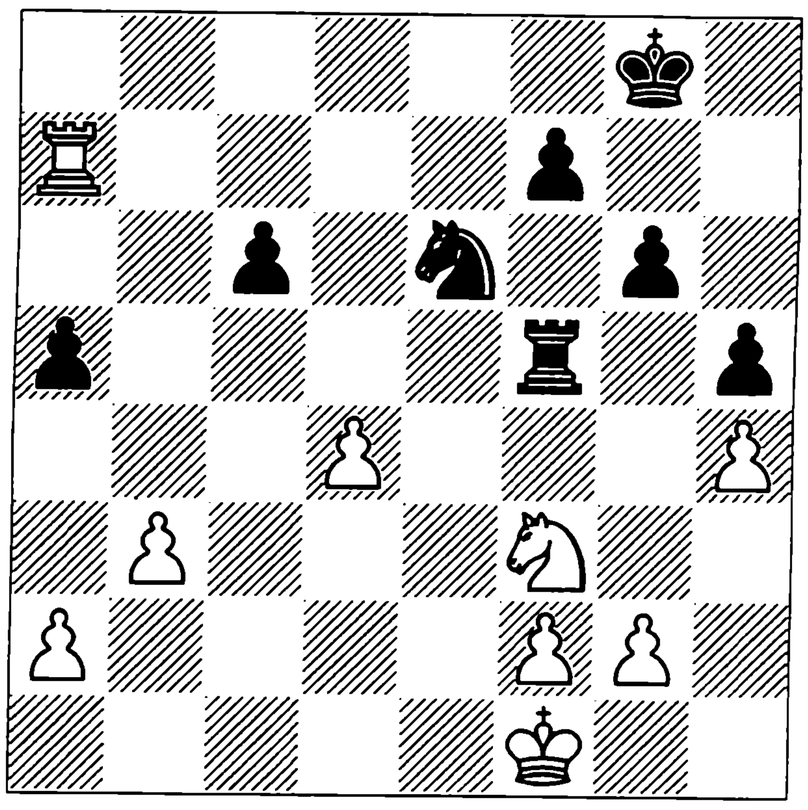
25...♘d7?

Black should play the natural 25...♕xe7 26 ♕xe7 ♗xe7 27 ♖xe7, leading to an unclear position.

26 ♖e8 h5 27 ♖xf8+ ♘xf8 28 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 29 ♕e7! ♕xe7 30 ♖xe7 ♘e6 31 ♖a7 a5 32 ♔f1 *(D)*

White's great strategic superiority has been transformed to a material plus. The ending that has arisen is clearly winning for White, who

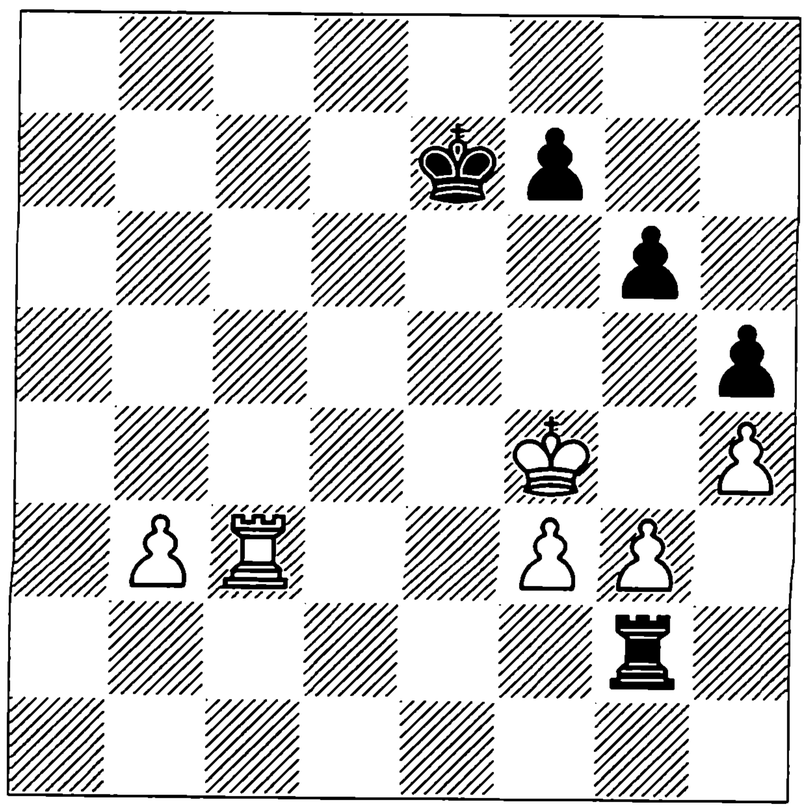
B



has an extra pawn and well-placed pieces. Black correctly sought his chances in a rook ending. The game finally ended in a draw, after White displayed ignorance in the face of Black's tough defence.

32...♖d5 33 g3 ♘xd4 34 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 35 ♖xa5 ♖d2 36 ♔g2 ♔f8 37 ♔f3 ♔e7 38 ♔e3 ♖b2 39 ♖a4 c5 40 ♖a6 ♖c2 41 f3 ♔d7 42 ♖a4 ♔e6 43 ♔e4 ♖e2+ 44 ♔f4 ♖f2 45 ♖a6+ ♔d7 46 ♖f6 ♔e7 47 ♖c6 ♖xa2 48 ♖xc5 ♖d2 49 ♖c3 ♖g2! *(D)*

W



This type of ending has been thoroughly studied by the theoreticians. If White could find the time to play f4, then he would win. Black holds the draw with accurate play.

50 ♖c7+ ♔e6 51 ♖c1 ♖b2 52 ♖c6+ ♔e7 53 ♖b6 ♖f2 54 ♖b8 f6 55 b4 g5+ 56 hxg5 fxg5+ 57 ♔xg5 ♖xf3 58 ♔h4 ♔f7 59 ♖b7+ ♔f6 60 ♖b6+ ♔f7 61 ♖b5 ♖b3 62 ♖f5+ ♔e6 63 ♖b5 ♔f6 64 ♖b6+ ♔f5 65 ♖b8 ♔g6 66 ♖b7 ♔f6 67

♖b5 ♔f7 68 ♖f5+ ♔e6 69 ♖f4 ♔e7 70 ♖e4+ ♔f6 71 g4 hxg4 72 ♔xg4 ♖b1 73 ♔f4 ♖f1+ 74 ♔e3 ♖e1+ 75 ♔d4 ♖xe4+ 76 ♔xe4 ♔e6 77 ♔d4 ½-½

Grivas – G. Georgadze

Zonal, Ankara 1995

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 a6 5 a4!? e6

Another interesting line for Black is 5...g6!? 6 e3 ♗g7 7 ♗e2 (7 b4!? ♗g4 8 ♗e2 ♘bd7 9 cxd5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xd5 cxd5 11 ♕b3 ± Azmaiparashvili-Hodgson, Groningen 1994) 7...c5 8 dxc5 ♕a5 9 cxd5 ♘xd5 10 ♕xd5 ♗xc3+ 11 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 ♕xc5 13 ♖c1 ♕f5 14 ♗d3 ♕d7 15 ♘e5 ♕d8? (15...♕e6!) 16 ♗xg6!! 1-0 Atalik-Chakvetadze, Rethymnon 1995.

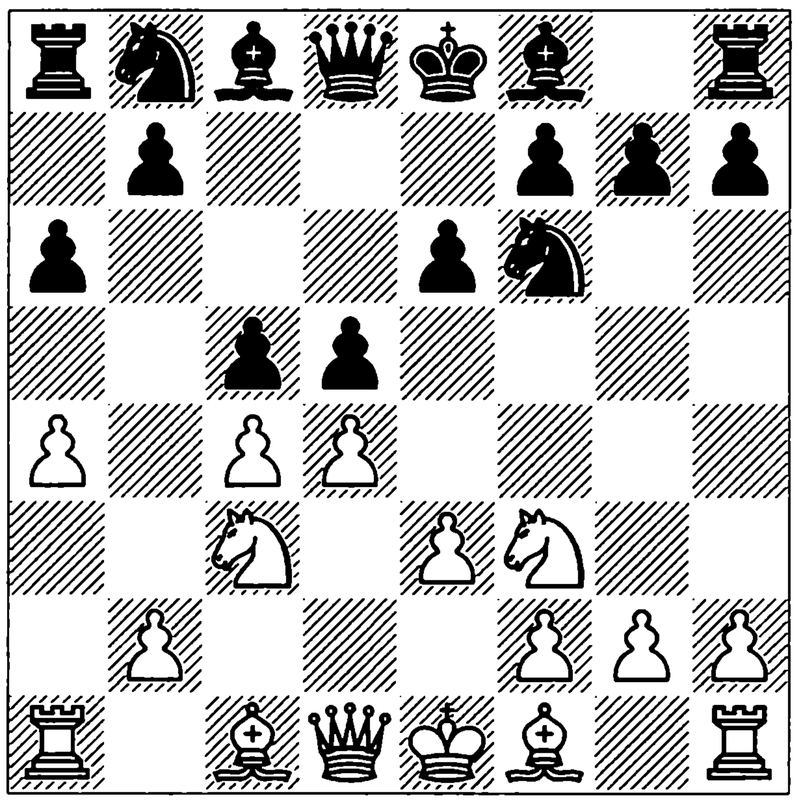
6 e3

White has tried various alternatives in this position, such as 6 ♗g5, 6 g3, 6 ♘e5 and 6 cxd5.

6...c5! *(D)*

Objectively best. Although Black loses a tempo by playing ...c5 in two steps, the move 5 a4 has weakened the b4-square, which the b8-knight aims to control from c6. The continuation 6...♗b4 7 ♗d3 0-0 8 0-0 ♘bd7 9 ♗d2 offers White a slight edge (and rather more than that if Black plays 9...b6? 10 ♘xd5! ♗xd2 11 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 12 ♕xd2, as in Grivas-Rotman, Rishon le Zion 1993).

W



7 cxd5?!

White rushes to give Black an isolated pawn, but the continuation 7 ♗d3 ♘c6 8 0-0 cxd4 9 exd4 ♗e7 10 ♖e1 0-0 11 b3 ♗b4 12 ♗b2 b6 13 ♖e3 (Notkin-Epishin, St Petersburg 1996) is healthier and should be preferred.

7...exd5 8 ♗e2 ♘c6 9 0-0 ♗d6 10 b3 cxd4!

A new move, better than the older 10...0-0 11 dxc5 ♗xc5 12 ♗a3 ♗xa3 13 ♖xa3 ♗g4 14 h3 ♗h5 15 ♘d4 ♗xe2 16 ♘dxe2 ♕d6 17 ♖a2 ♖fd8 18 ♖d2 ♕c5 19 ♕c2 d4 20 exd4 ♘xd4 21 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 22 ♘e4 ♕xc2 23 ♘xf6+ gxf6 24 ♖xc2 ± Grivas-Porfiriadis, Iraklion 1994.

11 ♘xd4 ♕c7! 12 ♘f3

Forced, as 12 h3?? ♘xd4 13 ♕xd4 ♗e5 would have been terminal.

12...♗e6 13 ♗a3 ♗xa3 14 ♖xa3 0-0

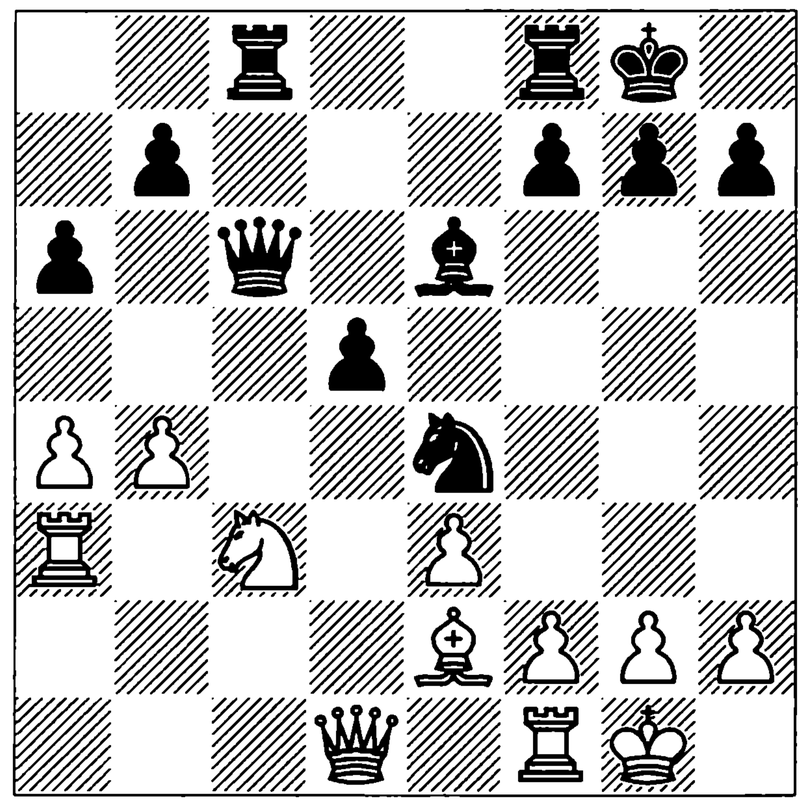
Black has developed naturally and enjoys active piece-play in exchange for his isolated pawn on d5. White has not managed to set up his army as desired, while the weakened queenside becomes the source of several problems.

15 ♘d4 ♖ac8

The careless 15...♘b4?! 16 ♘a2! would suit White as he would then exchange his worst piece (the c3-knight).

16 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 17 b4 ♘e4! *(D)*

W



A very strong move, after which White faces trouble on the queenside. From a practical viewpoint and, although seemingly unattractive, 18 ♘xe4 dxe4 19 b5 ♕c5! 20 ♕a1 a5 21 ♖d1 should have been tried. White preferred a passive continuation, refusing to rid Black of his static weakness.

18 ♘b1?! ♕b6! 19 b5 a5

Now the white queenside pawns can become targets for the e6-bishop.

20 ♖d3 ♖c5!

Black prepares to invade along the c-file. White's difficulties are growing.

21 ♖d4 ♖fc8 22 ♗d3 ♕c7 23 ♘d2 ♖c1 24 ♕e2

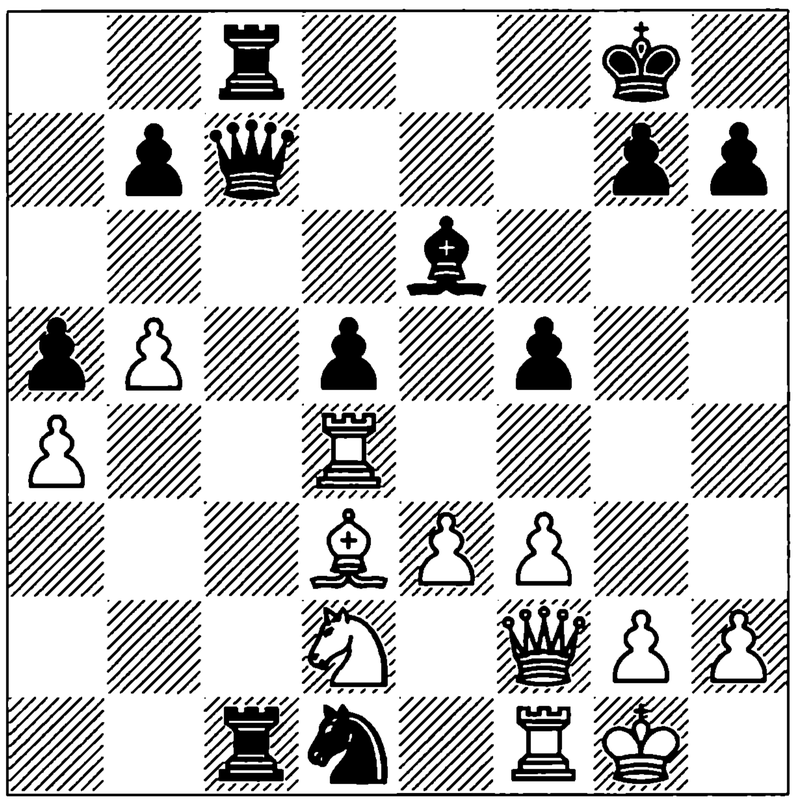
White cannot continue with 24 ♕xc1 ♕xc1 25 ♖xc1 ♖xc1+ 26 ♘f1 (26 ♗f1 ♘c3! 27 ♔h1 ♖a1) 26...♘c3! 27 f3 ♖a1, as he then loses material.

24...f5 25 f3?

Some practical chances were offered by 25 ♖xc1 ♕xc1+ 26 ♘f1, which had to be tried. With the text-move White also weakens the e3-pawn.

25...♘c3! 26 ♕f2 ♘d1! *(D)*

W



The black knight is dancing in White's ranks, while the scattered white pieces cannot offer even a semblance of defence.

27 ♕e2 ♕e5!

It is quite logical that tactics work in Black's favour, as his pieces are very effectively coordinated.

28 ♘b3 ♘xe3!

Winning an important pawn, and thus turning the isolated d5-pawn into a passed pawn and a candidate for promotion.

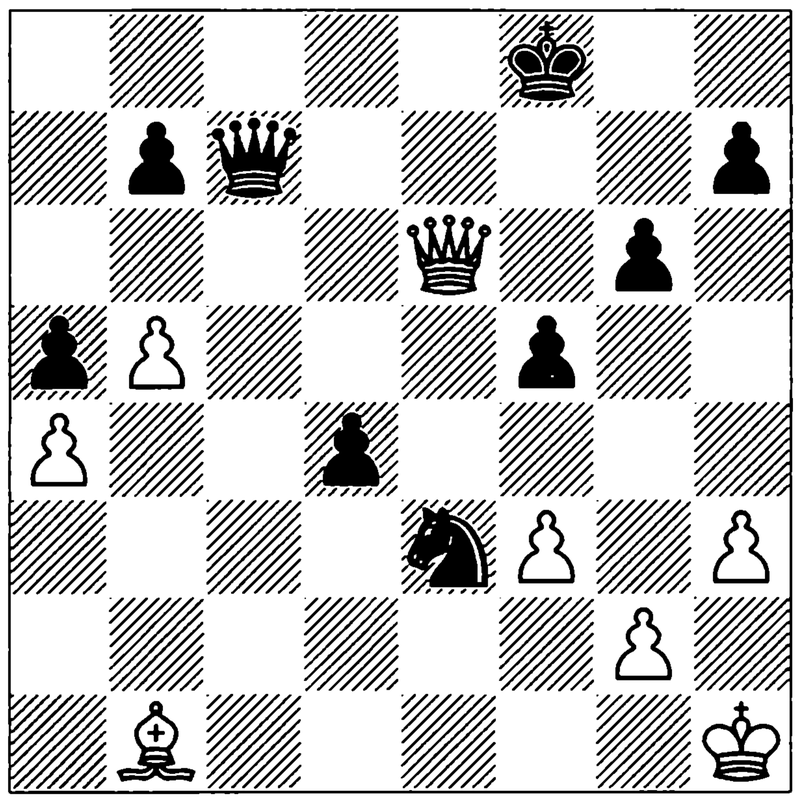
29 ♖xc1 ♖xc1+ 30 ♘xc1 ♕xd4 31 ♘b3 ♕b6 32 ♔h1 d4 33 ♕b2?!

White is lost but in any case had to try to defend; thus he should avoid piece exchanges. 33 ♘d2 is more combative and should have been preferred as White's last chance.

33...♗xb3! 34 ♕xb3+ ♔f8 35 h3 g6 36 ♗b1 ♕c7 37 ♕e6 *(D)*

Not the naïve 37 ♗a2? ♕c1+ 38 ♔h2 ♘f1+ 39 ♔h1 ♘d2+.

B



37...♕c1+ 38 ♔h2 ♘f1+ 39 ♔g1

39 ♔h1 ♘d2+ 40 ♔h2 ♕c7+ 41 ♔g1 ♘xb1 would deny White any hope of a perpetual check.

39...♕e3+! 40 ♕xe3 ♘xe3 41 ♔f2 ♔e7 0-1

The ending is clearly winning for Black since, apart from the extra pawn, he controls the dark squares and the white queenside pawns are weak. A nice and instructive game.

C. Defence with an Isolated Pawn

Grivas – Inkiov

Kastel Stari 1988

1 e4 c5 2 c3 d5 3 exd5 ♕xd5 4 d4 e6 5 ♘f3 ♘f6 6 ♗e2 ♘c6 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 ♗e3 cxd4 9 ♘xd4!?

A relatively novel idea, in place of the old and common 9 cxd4 0-0 10 ♘c3 ♕a5 11 a3 ♘d5 12 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 13 ♖c1 ♖d8 14 ♗c4 ♕h5 15 ♘e5 ♕xd1 16 ♖fxd1 ♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♗d7, Sveshnikov-Salov, Norilsk 1987, which allows Black to equalize comfortably. White intends to apply pressure on the queenside by placing his bishop on f3 and accomplish the advance d5 under favourable circumstances.

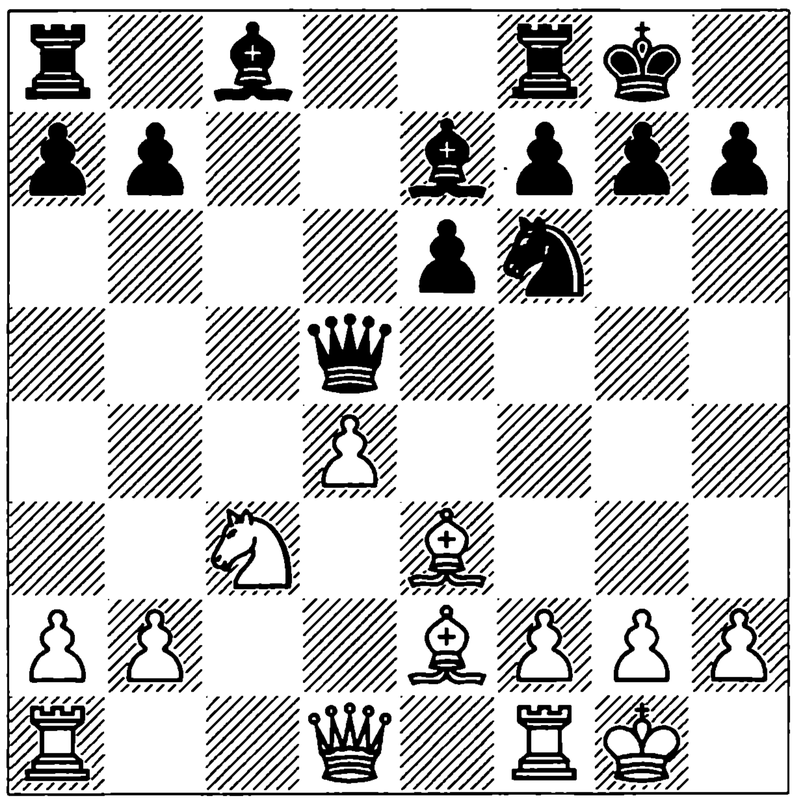
9...♘xd4 10 cxd4

Black is comfortable after 10 ♗xd4 0-0 11 ♗f3 ♕a5 12 ♘d2 ♕c7 13 ♕e2 ♗d7 14 ♗e5

♕c8 15 ♖fd1 ♖d8 16 ♘e4 ♘xe4 17 ♗xe4 ♗c6, as in the game Gergs-Gawlikowski, 2nd Bundesliga 1987/8.

10...0-0 11 ♘c3 *(D)*

B



11...♕a5!

Other moves are unsatisfactory:

a) 11...♕d8 12 ♗f3 ♗d7 13 d5 exd5 14 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 15 ♕xd5 ♗c6 16 ♕xd8 ♖fxd8 17 ♗xc6 bxc6 18 ♖ac1 ♗f6 19 b3 ♖d6 20 ♖c4 is much better for White, Sydor-Drimmer, Bath Echt 1973.

b) 11...♕f5 12 ♗d3 ♕h5 13 ♕xh5 ♘xh5 14 d5 ♘f6 15 ♗c4 exd5 16 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 ♗e6 18 ♗xe6 fxe6 19 ♖ac1 with a permanent edge for White, Rause-Agopov, Jyväskylä 1994.

12 ♗f3

White failed to achieve any advantage after 12 ♕b3 ♗d7 13 ♗f3 ♗c6 14 ♗xc6 bxc6 15 ♕b7 ♗b4 16 ♖fc1 ♗xc3 17 ♖xc3 ♖ab8 18 ♕xc6 ♖xb2 in Hedge-Roy Chowdhury, Calcutta 1996.

12...♗d7?!

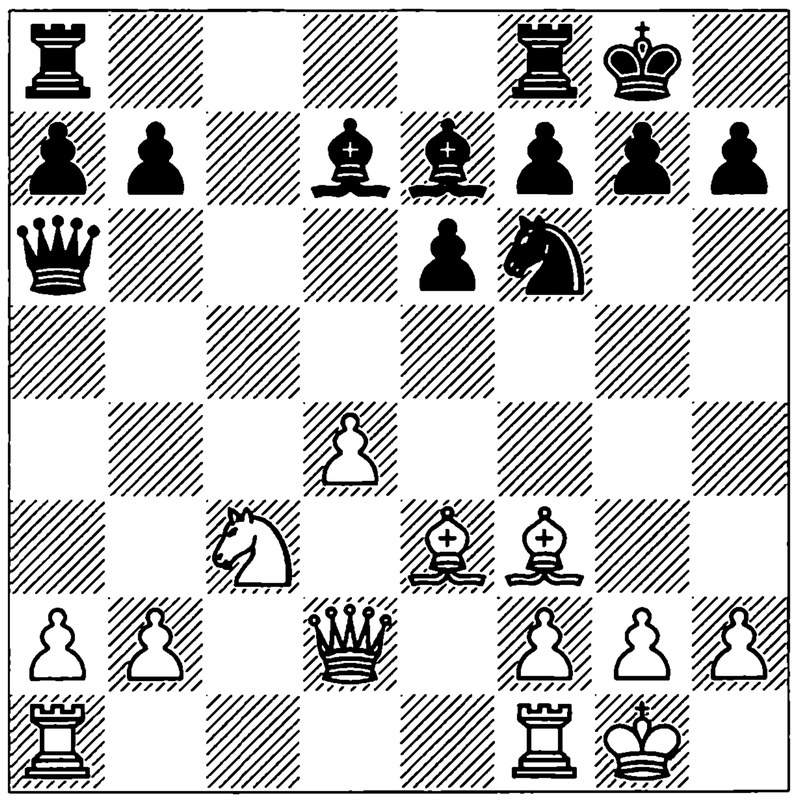
Better is 12...♖d8 13 ♖e1 ♗d6 14 ♕b3 ♖b8 15 ♖ac1 b5 16 ♗g5 ♗e7 17 ♗f4 ♗d6 18 ♗e5 ♗xe5 19 dxe5 ♘d7 20 ♖cd1 b4 21 ♕a4 ½-½ Bukacek-Peterwagner, Austrian Cht 1989.

13 ♕d2?

Naturally, 13 ♗xb7? ♖ab8 14 ♗f3 (14 ♕b3? ♕c7) 14...♖xb2 is pleasant for Black. White should have executed the advance 13 d5!, which promises at least a slight edge due to his more active pieces. The text-move has a double purpose (14 ♗xb7 and 14 ♘d5) but Black easily counters White's intentions.

13...♕a6! *(D)*

W



14 a3?!

White erroneously persists in chasing the advantage. Instead, a repetition by 14 ♗e2 ♕a5! 15 ♗f3 ♕a6 should have been preferred.

14...♗c6! 15 ♗e2 ♕a5

Black has every reason to be satisfied with the outcome of the opening, as White has ended up in a passive position and without any prospect of activity.

16 ♕d3 ♖ac8 17 ♖ac1 a6 18 ♖fd1 ♘d5

Although Black's plan is clear (piece exchanges), he could have delayed it for a while in favour of 18...♖fd8.

19 ♘xd5 ♗xd5

After 19...♕xd5?! White can equalize: 20 ♗f3 ♕d7 21 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 22 ♖xc6 ♕xc6 23 d5!.

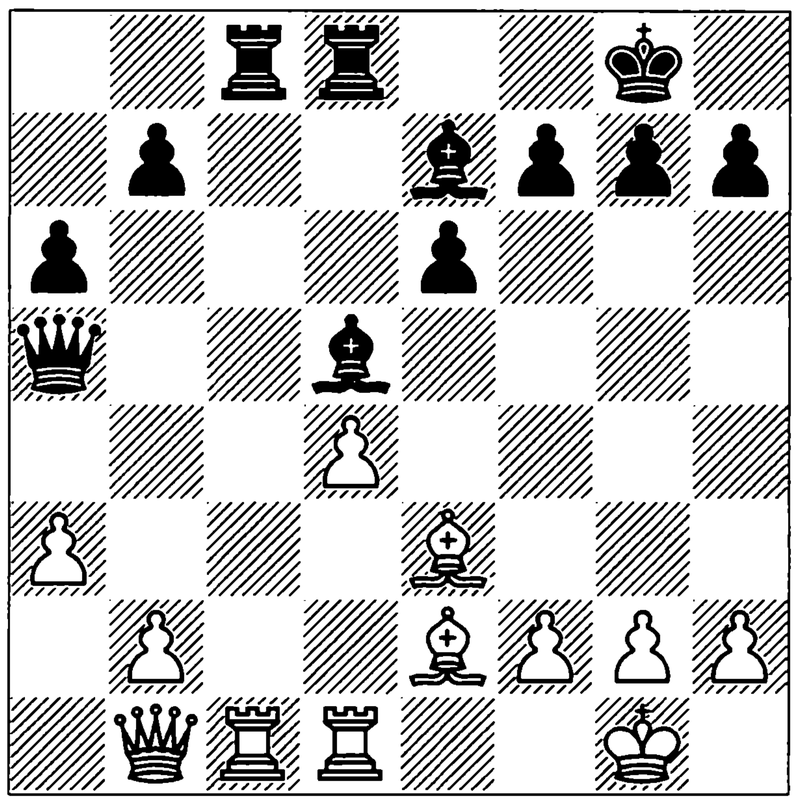
20 ♕b1!

White wishes to exchange the major pieces and defend a slightly inferior position. This is the correct approach, as the alternatives would have unpleasant consequences.

20...♖fd8 *(D)*

White is now all set and proceeds to exchange the major pieces. It must be noted that the absence of knights is in favour of the side with the isolated pawn (i.e. the defending side in our case), as the knight is the indicated piece to be placed on the outpost in front of the isolated pawn.

21 ♖xc8! ♖xc8 22 ♖c1 ♕d8 23 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 24 ♕d3 ♕c6 25 f3 ♗d6 26 ♕d2 ♕c7 27 h3 h6 28 ♗d3 f5 29 ♕c2!



Offering the exchange of the last remaining major piece, so that the white king can come to the centre and assume defensive duties. Perhaps Black should have avoided this exchange, but White's position would anyway be passive but satisfactory – naturally with the draw as its ultimate aim.

29...♕xc2 30 ♗xc2 ♗g3 31 ♗d3!

Avoiding the careless 31 ♔f1 ♗c4+!.

31...g5 32 ♔f1 ♔g7 33 ♔e2 ♔f6 34 ♗d2 h5 35 ♗a5 h4 36 ♗d2 ♗f4 37 ♗xf4 gxf4 38 ♔d2 ♔e7 ½-½

Black no longer has any winning chances as White has full defensive control of the position; the absence of major pieces guarantees White half a point.

Strictly speaking, the following game features a backward pawn, rather than an isolated one, but the themes and ideas involved are very similar.

Grivas – Sturua

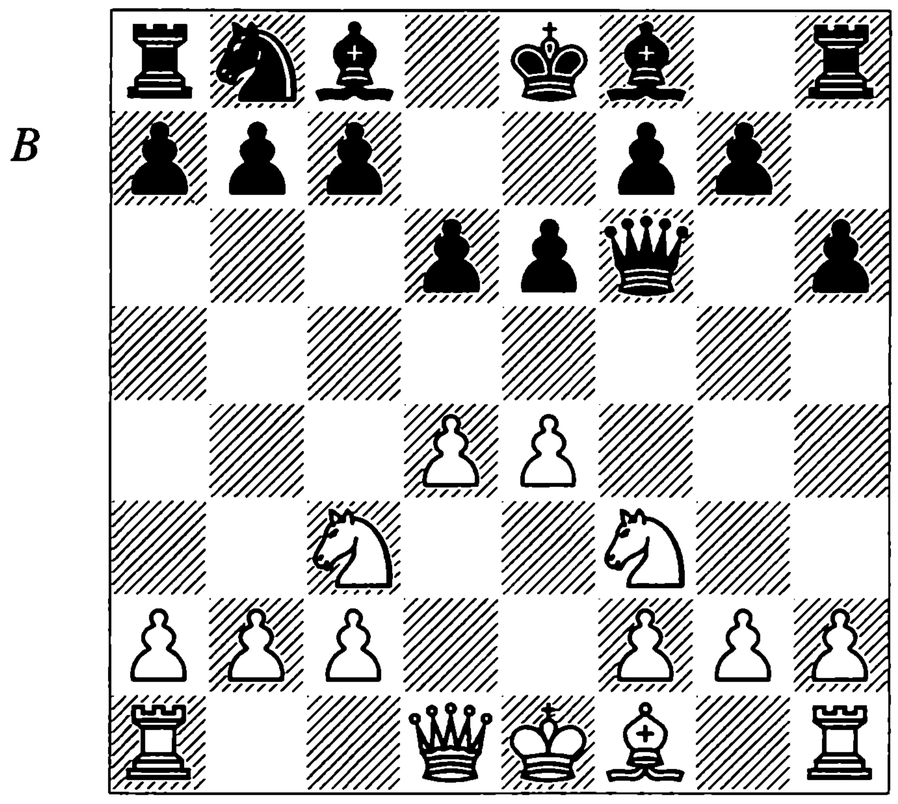
Katerini 1992

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♗g5 h6 4 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 5 e4 d6

5...b6?! is an inferior try: 6 ♗d3 ♗b7 7 ♘bd2 d5 8 ♕e2 dxe4 9 ♗xe4 c6 10 ♘e5 ♗d6 11 f4 0-0 12 0-0 ♕e7 13 ♘dc4 ♖e8 14 ♕h5 with an advantage for White, Grivas-E.Pandavos, Khania 1987.

6 ♘c3 *(D)*

The immediate 6 e5 is also interesting: 6...♕e7 7 ♘bd2 g6 8 ♗d3 ♗g7 9 0-0 dxe5 10 dxe5 ♘c6 11 ♕e2 ♗d7 12 a3 g5 13 ♗e4 g4 14 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 15 ♘d4 ♕d7 16 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 17 ♘c4 0-0-0 18 ♕xg4 ± Grivas-Luther, Leningrad 1989; Black's play can be improved though.



6...a6!?

Black also has at his disposal the active 6...g5!? 7 e5! dxe5 8 ♘e4 ♕e7 9 ♘xe5 ♘d7 10 ♕d2 ♗g7 11 ♗b5 0-0 12 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 13 f4 ♗c6 14 ♘xc6 bxc6 15 fxg5 hxg5 16 ♕xg5 ♕xg5 17 ♘xg5 ♗xd4 18 ♖b1 ♖ab8 19 b3, Grivas-Logothetis, Kallithea 2002; White retains the advantage. Alternatively, 6...♘d7 7 ♕d2 g6 8 0-0-0 a6 9 e5 ♕e7 10 exd6 cxd6 11 g4 ♗g7 12 h4 b5 led to an unclear position in Grivas-E.Pandavos, Komotini 1992.

7 ♗d3?!

A dubious move that offers White nothing but trouble. 7 ♕d2, intending 8 0-0-0, or 7 h4!? should have been preferred.

7...♘c6 8 0-0 ♗d7!

Black must be satisfied with the opening outcome as White does not seem to enjoy any initiative as compensation for the bishop-pair.

9 e5?!

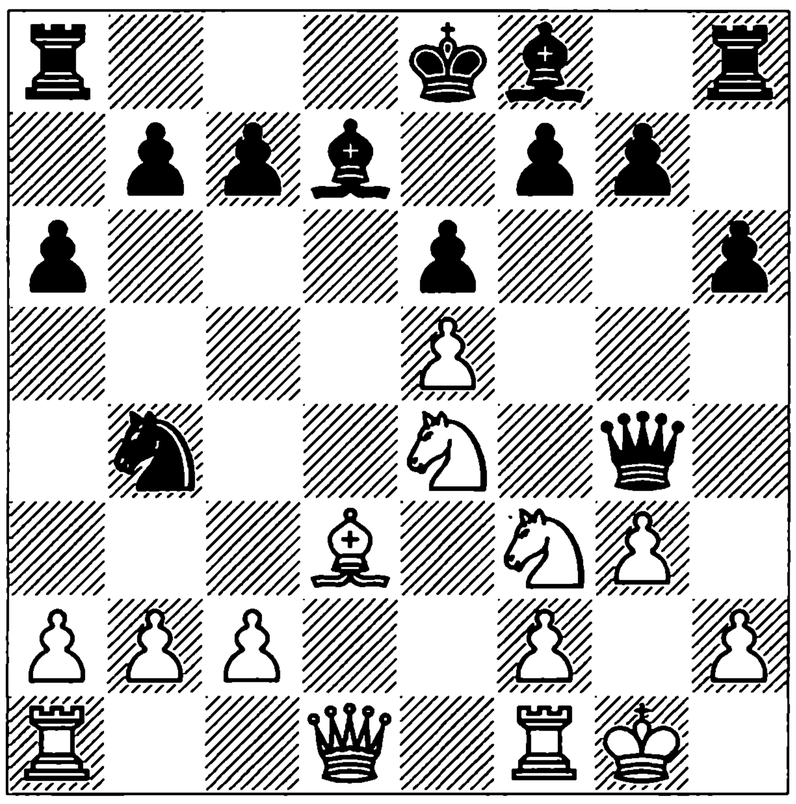
White should now continue with the passive 9 ♘e2 e5 10 c3, but instead decided to 'complicate' the position, refusing to resign himself to passivity.

9...dxe5 10 ♘e4 ♕f4! 11 g3 ♕g4 12 dxe5 ♘b4! *(D)*

Black exchanges the remaining white bishop. White's position is becoming critical as the walls come closing in.

13 ♔g2! ♘xd3 14 cxd3

W



The only way, intending to keep the h1-a8 diagonal closed when the d7-bishop reaches it. However, now a weak backward d-pawn is added to Black's list of possible targets. White's position remains unpleasant.

14...♗c6 15 ♕e2 ♗d5?!

Black could also play 15...♗e7 16 ♖ac1 0-0 with a steady plus.

16 ♖ac1 c6 17 ♘c3!

By exchanging the dangerous d5-bishop White improves his position.

17...♗xf3+?!

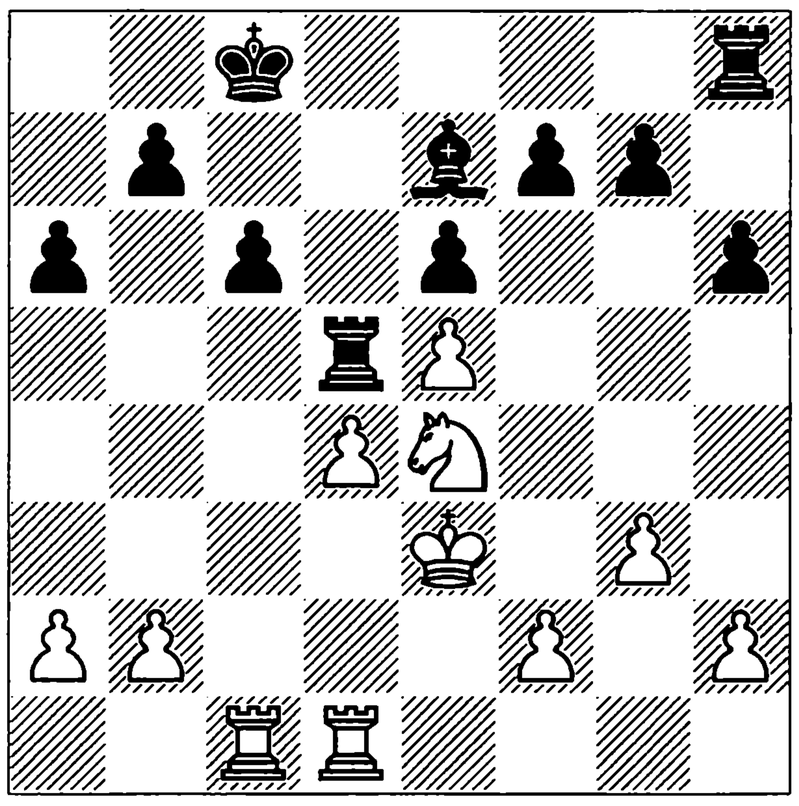
This only helps to activate the white king. Better was 17...♖d8 18 ♘xd5 ♖xd5, intending to complete development and then start dealing with the weak d-pawn, which is effectively isolated.

18 ♕xf3 ♕xf3+ 19 ♔xf3 0-0-0 20 ♖fd1 ♖d4 21 ♘e4 ♗e7 22 ♔e3 ♖d5

Not, of course, 22...♖hd8? 23 ♘d6+!.

23 d4 *(D)*

B



One's first impression from looking at this position is that Black is better. A closer examination, however, will convince us that this superiority is in fact infinitesimal, as White has only one weakness (the backward d-pawn) and decently placed pieces. Moreover, the white king fully participates in the proceedings, effectively adding one more piece to White's defensive army. The conclusion is that White can defend if he plays accurately.

23...♖hd8 24 ♖d3 f5!? 25 ♘c5!

Intending to force exchanges, which at first seems contradictory to the general principle of avoiding them when in possession of an 'isolated' pawn. This particular case is an exception to the rule, as very simply the remaining black pieces will be unable to create new weaknesses or pressurize the d4-pawn.

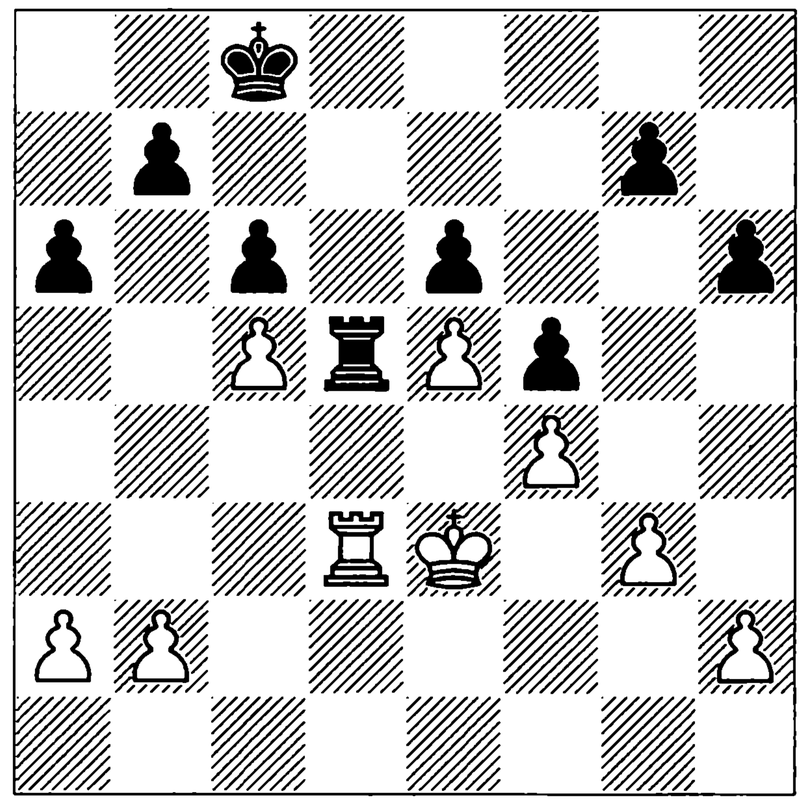
25...♗xc5 26 ♖xc5 ♖xc5

Black submits to equality as he cannot improve his position.

27 dxc5 ♖d5 28 f4!? *(D)*

28 ♖xd5 cxd5 would lead to a drawn endgame as, despite Black's many possibilities and his protected passed pawn on d5, White survives in every line.

B



28...a5

After 28...♖xc5 29 ♖d6 ♖c2 30 ♖xe6 ♖xb2 31 ♖g6 ♖xa2 32 ♖xg7 ♖xh2 33 ♖f7 the passed white e- and f-pawns would prove far more dangerous than all of Black's foot soldiers. Black acquiesces to the draw as in any other case he would be the only side running risks.

29 a3! ♔c7 30 b4 ½-½

Doubled Pawns

Doubled pawns are those pawns of the same army that lie on the same file. These pawns can be classified in four main categories:

1) *Flank doubled isolated pawns*: their positive aspects are usually short-term and consist of the strengthening of squares, the additional semi-open file they create and active play for the pieces. In the long term these pawns constitute a serious weakness, as they display every single aspect of a weak pawn-structure. Overall, such pawns usually are a liability and one is advised to avoid them. Still, there are some exceptions, most notably in the Sicilian Defence, where the side taking on such pawns obtains other concrete counterbalancing advantages.

2) *Flank doubled pawns*: these are often beneficial for the owner, as they offer an additional semi-open file and direct their power towards the centre. Moreover, taking into account that they are part of a pawn complex, they are able to support and be supported by other pawns harmoniously.

3) *Central doubled isolated pawns*: the advantages and disadvantages of flank doubled isolated pawns apply, with one significant difference, that these pawns now control important central squares; this is a short-term benefit but can often prove of decisive importance. In the long term these pawns become weak and are easy targets in an endgame. Just as with flank pawns, the square in front of them becomes an outpost for the opponent, carrying with it all the normal headaches for the owner of the doubled pawns.

4) *Central doubled pawns*: the most popular form of doubled pawns, as it not only occurs most often but also has significant merits (control of central squares, semi-open file, mutual support between the pawns) while its negative aspects are minimal and are usually only encountered in the endgame, where these pawns may become vulnerable.

Taking the above into consideration, we can reach some conclusions regarding doubled pawns. The advantages they offer are control of important squares and one additional semi-open file. Their main disadvantage is their vulnerability when they are attacked by the opponent; this vulnerability becomes obvious (as in all cases regarding pawn-structures) in the endgame.

The creation of doubled pawns, with all its advantages and disadvantages, must not be part of an exchange with other positional concessions that could possibly harm our position irreparably. The careful examination and complete evaluation of our possibilities and plans must be the governing factor in making any decisions regarding pawn-structures.

In general, the strategic element of doubled pawns is a very sensitive subject and only experience derived from practice can enable us to understand when to employ it and when to avoid it. Our decisions should be greatly influenced by the examination of the rest of our pawn-structure, as well as the harmonious disposition of our army in its entirety.

Brynell – Grivas

Leningrad 1989

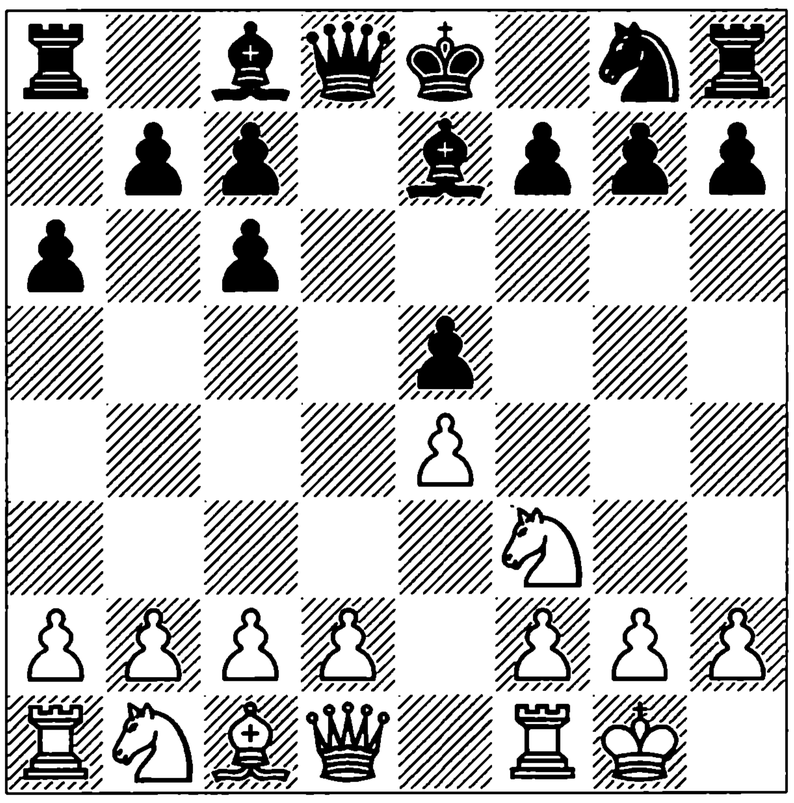
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗xc6 dxc6 5 0-0 ♗e7!? *(D)*

A seemingly strange move but with great depth. Black does not wish to include the move ...f6 in his plans and prefers normal development. As is common in the Exchange Ruy Lopez, White has the better pawn-structure and Black, as compensation, the bishop-pair.

6 d3

White has a large choice between several logical moves:

a) 6 ♘xe5 ♕d4! 7 ♕h5 (7 ♘f3 ♕xe4 8 ♖e1 ♕g6 9 ♘e5 ♕f5 10 d4 ♗e6 leads to equality,



Van der Weide-I.Sokolov, Dutch Ch (Rotterdam) 1998) 7...♗e6! 8 d3 ♘f6 9 ♘f3 (9 ♕g5 ♕c5! 10 ♘c4 ♕xg5 11 ♗xg5 ♘xe4 12 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 13 dxe4 ♗xc4 14 ♖d1 ♖ad8 15 ♘c3 c5 16 a3 ♖d4 =) 9...♕xe4 (9...♕xf2+ 10 ♖xf2 ♘xh5 =) 10 ♕xf7+ ♗xf7 11 dxe4 ♘xe4 = Brynell-Hector, Swedish Ch (Linköping) 2001.

b) 6 ♘c3 ♗f6 7 ♕e2 ♗e6! 8 b3! ♘e7 9 ♗a3 g5! with unclear play, Zhang Zhong-De Vreugt, Wijk aan Zee 2003.

c) 6 c3 ♘f6! (6...♗g4? 7 h3 ♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 ♘f6 9 ♖d1! c5 10 d4! cxd4 11 cxd4 exd4 12 e5 ♘d7 13 ♖xd4 c5 14 ♖d1 ♕c8 15 ♕g3 g6 16 ♘c3 0-0 17 ♘d5 ♖e8 18 e6 fxe6 19 ♘c7 ♘f8 20 ♘xa8 ♕xa8 21 ♕c3 ♕b8 22 ♗h6 e5 23 ♕c4+ 1-0 Makropoulos-Grivas, Iraklion 1983) 7 ♖e1 ♗g4 with equality.

d) 6 b3 c5!? 7 ♘xe5 ♕d4 8 ♘c4 ♕xe4 9 ♗b2 ♘f6 10 ♖e1 ♕g4 11 f3? ♕h4 12 ♘a5 ♗e6 13 g3 ♕h3 14 ♘xb7 0-0 15 ♘c3 c4 16 ♘a4 ♖fe8 17 bxc4 ♗xc4 18 ♘a5 ♗d5 19 c4? ♘g4 20 ♕e2 ♗c5+ 21 ♘xc5 ♖xe2 22 ♖xe2 ♗xf3 23 ♖ae1 h6 24 ♘d3 ♘xh2 25 ♖e8+ ♔h7 0-1 Tzoumbas-Grivas, Ikaria 1995.

e) 6 d4 exd4 7 ♘xd4 (7 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 8 ♘xd4 ♘f6 9 ♖e1 ♗d7 10 ♘d2 0-0-0 11 ♘2f3 ♖de8 12 ♗g5 h6 =) 7...♘f6! 8 ♘c3 0-0 9 ♗f4 ♖e8 10 ♖e1 ♗b4 11 f3 ♗xc3! (11...♕e7?, Khalikian-Novopashin, Jurmala 1975) 12 bxc3 c5 ∓.

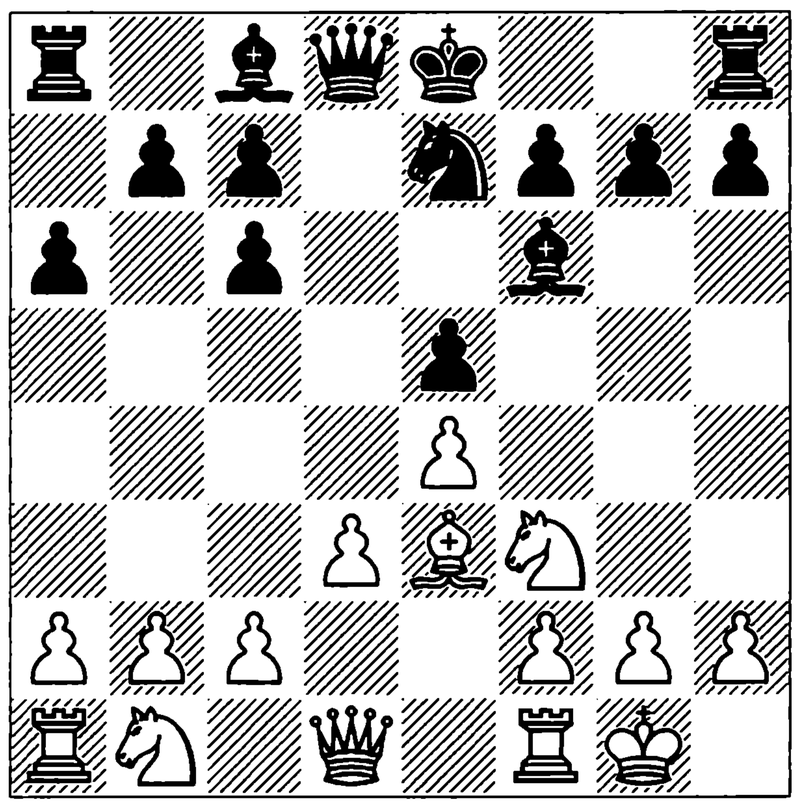
6...♗f6

White is slightly better after the inconsistent 6...f6?! 7 ♘h4 ♗e6 8 ♘f5 ♗f8 9 f4 exf4 10 ♗xf4 g6 11 ♘g3 ♗g7 12 ♘c3 ♘e7 13 ♕d2 ♕d7 14 ♗h6 0-0 15 ♗xg7 ♔xg7, although Kokkinos-Grivas, Athens 1982 ended favourably for Black: 16 ♕e3 ♖ad8 17 ♘ce2 f5 18 exf5 ♘xf5 19 ♕e5+ ♔g8 20 ♘e4 ♕e7 21 ♘c5 ♖de8 22 ♘xb7?? ♗c8 0-1.

7 ♗e3

7 d4 ♗g4! 8 dxe5 ♕xd1 9 ♖xd1 ♗xe5 leads to equality, while 7 ♘bd2 ♘e7 8 b3 c5! 9 ♘c4 ♘c6 10 ♗b2 ♕e7 11 ♘e3 0-0 proved satisfactory for Black in Borkowski-Zielinski, Mikolajki 1991.

7...♘e7 *(D)*



8 ♘bd2

White must be careful as the tempting 8 d4?! ♗g4! 9 c3 (9 dxe5 ♕xd1 10 ♖xd1 ♗xf3 11 gxf3 ♗xe5) 9...♗xf3! 10 gxf3 (10 ♕xf3? exd4 11 cxd4 ♗xd4 12 ♖d1 c5!) 10...♘g6, Zelčić-Kerstić, Pula 1998, gives Black the advantage.

8...♘g6 9 ♘c4 ♗e6! 10 b3

White does not have any promising continuations at his disposal. Black is now threatening ...b6 and ...c5, while after 10 ♘a5?! b6! 11 ♘xc6 ♕d6 12 d4 ♗c4 (12...♕xc6 13 d5 ♕d7 14 dxe6 ♕xe6 =) 13 dxe5 ♕xc6 14 exf6 ♗xf1 15 fxg7 ♖g8 16 ♔xf1 ♖xg7 he would have the edge.

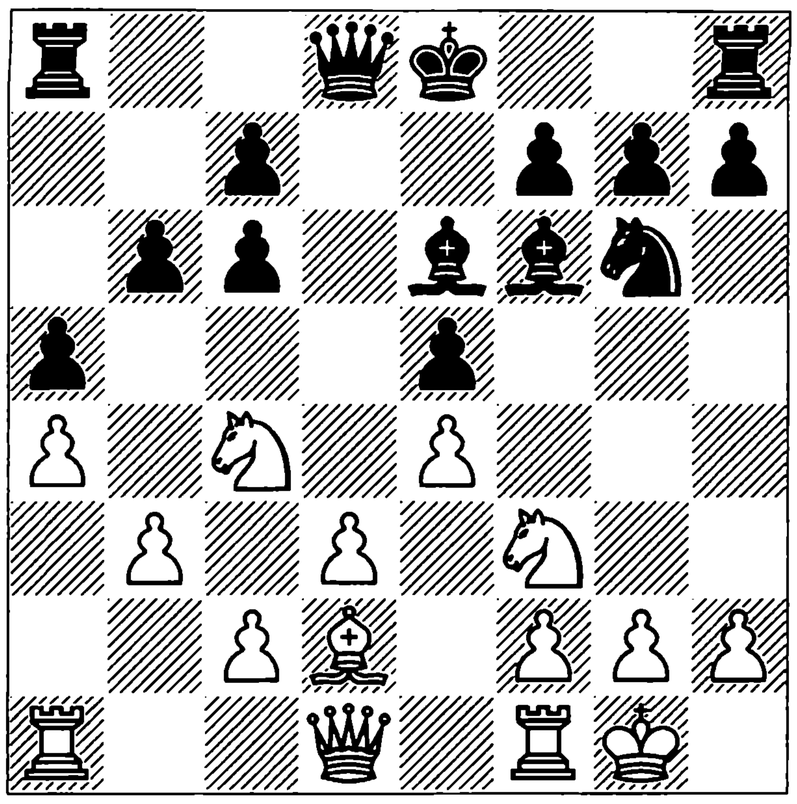
10...b6 11 a4 a5?!

11...c5! is not entirely clear, but pleasant for Black (12 a5?! b5 13 ♘cd2 ♗e7! and ...♗d6). Indeed, the black doubled pawns must fight for control of the centre.

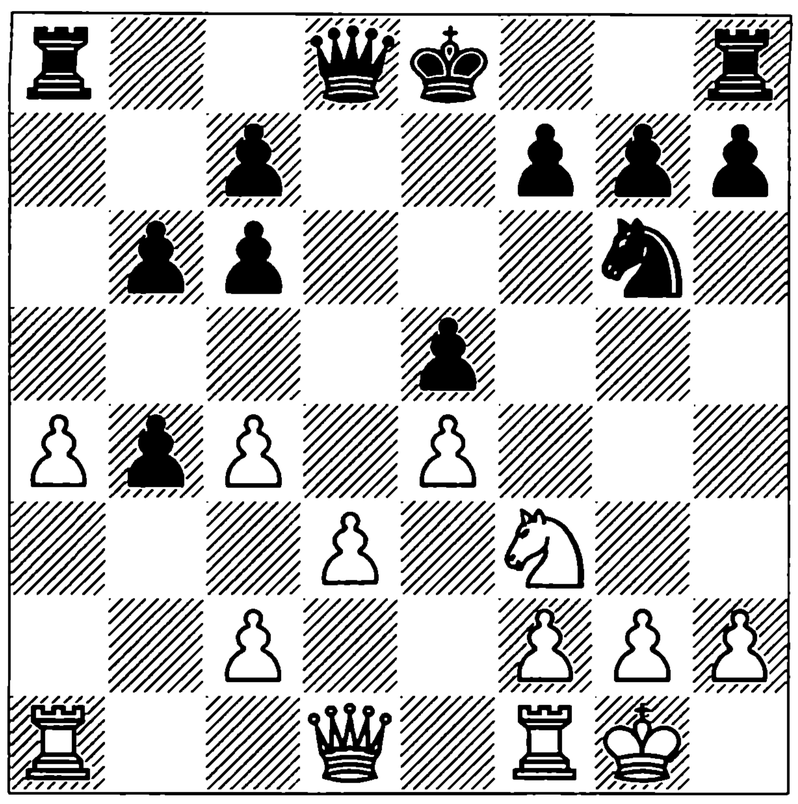
12 ♗d2! *(D)*

White immediately grasps the problems of the position and regroups his pieces in order to

B



W



pressurize the black e5-pawn (13 ♗c3). Black reacts correctly, maintaining the balance.

12...♗xc4! 13 bxc4!?

White is trying for something better than the sterile equality resulting from 13 dxc4 c5 14 ♗c3 c6. Then neither player would be able to tip the scales in his favour.

13...♗e7!

Black could also continue with 13...0-0 but the move chosen is more active, as now he threatens to gain the upper hand by 14...♗c5 and 15...♕f6!.

14 ♗c3 ♗b4! 15 ♗xb4

This exchange was compulsory, because the alternatives 15 ♗xe5? ♘xe5 16 ♘xe5 ♗c3 17 ♘xc6 ♕d6! and 15 ♗b2?! ♕e7 16 d4 exd4! (16...♗d6? 17 c5! bxc5 18 dxe5 ♘xe5 19 ♘d2! with advantage for White) 17 ♘xd4 0-0! 18 ♘xc6 (18 ♘f5? ♕xe4 19 ♘xg7 ♘f4 20 f3 ♕g6 21 g3 ♖ad8 22 ♕b1 ♖d2!) 18...♕xe4 19 ♘xb4 axb4 would leave Black on top.

15...axb4 *(D)*

Both sides possess doubled pawns, which control important central squares. The weak isolated white pawn on a4 is not an easy target, as White can continue with ♘d2-b3 and a5. However, things are not that simple, as now 16 ♘d2 c5 17 ♘b3 ♘e7 18 a5 ♘c6! would leave Black with a clearly preferable pawn-structure.

16 c5!!

An excellent move, keeping White in the game.

16...♕e7!

After 16...bxc5? 17 ♘d2 and ♘c4 White would be on top, as the extra tripled black pawns would be practically useless while the passed white a-pawn would become powerful.

17 cxb6 cxb6

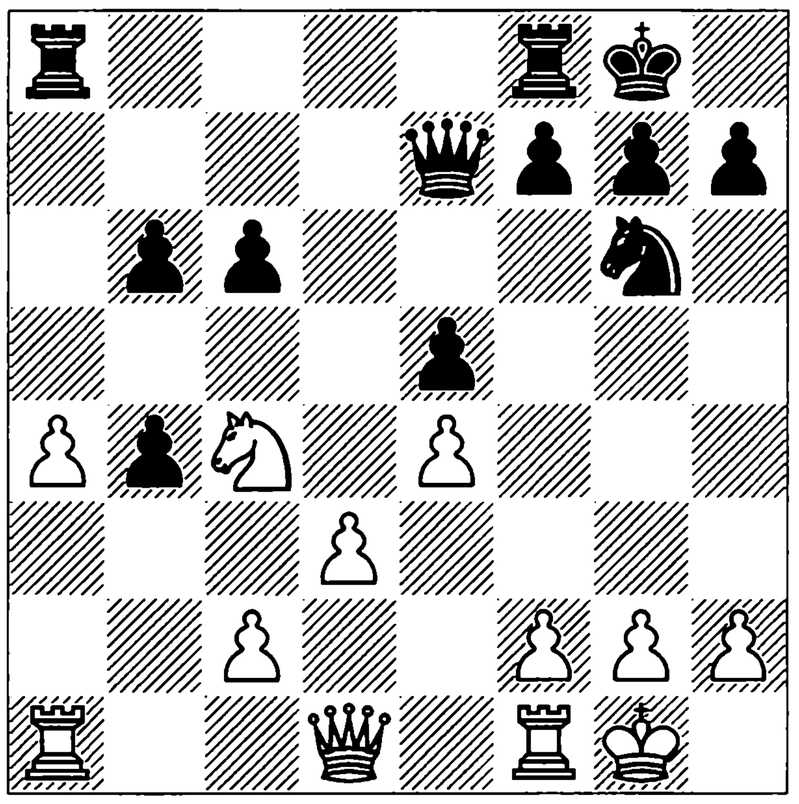
The exchange of the front c-pawn has given White access to the c4-square; by placing his knight on this square White can prepare a queenside initiative.

18 ♘d2!

The only acceptable continuation. 18 ♕d2 0-0 19 ♖fb1 c5 20 c3 bxc3 21 ♕xc3 ♕d6, followed by ...♘f4 and ...♖fd8, allows Black the initiative.

18...0-0 19 ♘c4 *(D)*

B



19...♖a6!

With two ideas, protection of the b6-pawn and pressure on a4. Worse is 19...b5?! 20 axb5 cxb5 21 ♘e3, when White obtains the significant d5-square while the black queenside pawns are very weak.

20 ♕d2 ♖fa8 21 ♖ab1

21 ♖fb1? would be a tragic mistake due to 21...b5!.

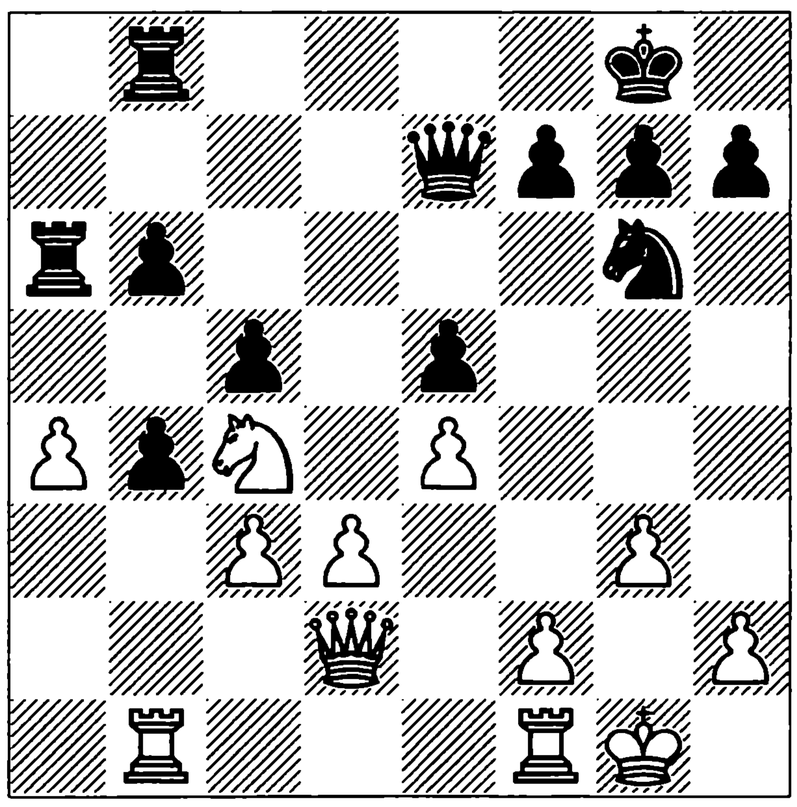
21...c5 22 g3!

White would like to play 22 c3 bxc3 23 ♕xc3, but then 23...♘f4! 24 ♕xe5 (24 ♖fe1 ♖d8! 25 ♘xe5 ♖d4! 26 ♘f3 ♖dxa4 is unclear) 24...♕xe5 25 ♘xe5 ♖e8! 26 ♘c4 ♖xa4 27 ♘xb6 ♖d4 does not offer him anything substantial. By keeping the black knight out of f4 he now threatens 23 c3!.

22...♖b8! 23 c3 *(D)*

23 ♖a1 ♖ba8! 24 ♖ab1 ♖b8 would lead to a draw.

B



23...♖xa4

After 23...b5?! 24 axb5 ♖xb5 25 cxb4 cxb4 26 ♖b3 White enjoys a slight plus, as he has adequately blockaded the passed (but weak) black b4-pawn and can apply significant pressure on it.

24 cxb4 cxb4 25 ♖b3

And here after 25 ♘e3?! ♕d6! 26 ♘d5 ♘e7 27 ♘xb4 ♖c8 Black would have the advantage as the b4-knight is terribly misplaced.

25...♕c5 26 ♖fb1 ♖d8!

Black must remain active. Now the continuation 27 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 28 ♕xb4 ♕xb4 29 ♖xb4 ♖xd3 30 ♖xb6 ♖d8 leads to a draw.

27 ♘e3 h6 28 ♖c1!? ♕d6! 29 ♘f5

Accurate, as 29 ♘d5?! ♘e7! 30 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 31 ♘xb4 b5 is pleasant for Black.

29...♕d7 30 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 ½-½

The players agreed to a draw, as the natural continuation 31 ♕xb4 b5 32 ♖c3 (but not 32 ♖c5?! ♕xd3 33 ♖xb5 ♕d1+! 34 ♔g2 ♖d3!) maintains the balance. A very interesting game with theoretical interest, due to the strategic complexity of the opening and also thanks to the extensive practical application of the strategic aspects of doubled pawns in it.

Topalov – Grivas

Balkaniad, Kavala 1990

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗xc6 dxc6 5 ♘c3

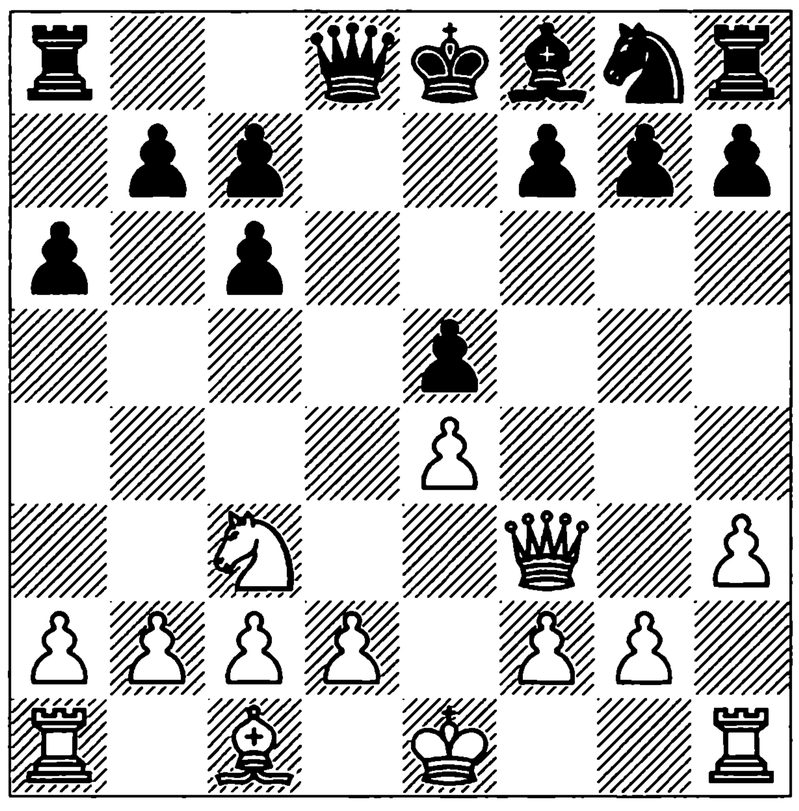
Practice has shown that 5 d4 exd4 6 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 7 ♘xd4 ♗d7 8 0-0 0-0-0 gives Black a satisfactory game, and consequently White has sought new ways of contesting the initiative.

5...♗g4

5...f6 6 d4 (6 0-0?! c5!) 6...exd4 7 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 8 ♘xd4 ♗d7 is also reasonable.

6 h3 ♗xf3 7 ♕xf3 *(D)*

B



Both sides have chances in this position. If White succeeds in playing d4, exchanging off the black e5-pawn, then he will enjoy a clear superiority thanks to his better pawn-structure (a 4:3 majority on the kingside), as Black will be unable to counterbalance this with the standard bishop-pair advantage – he just surrendered it!

7...♘e7

Kr.Georgiev-Grivas, Kavala (Balkaniad) 1990 continued 7...♕f6!? 8 ♕xf6 ♘xf6 9 d3 ♗c5 10 ♘e2 ♖d8 11 f4 exf4 12 ♗xf4 ♖d7 13 ♗e5 ♗e7 14 ♘g3 ♗d6 15 ♗xd6 cxd6 16 0-0 0-0 17 a4 ♖e8 18 ♖f5 ♖e5 19 a5 ♖xf5 20 ♘xf5 g6 21 ♘xd6 ♖xd6 22 e5 ♖e6 23 exf6 ♖xf6 24 ♖a4

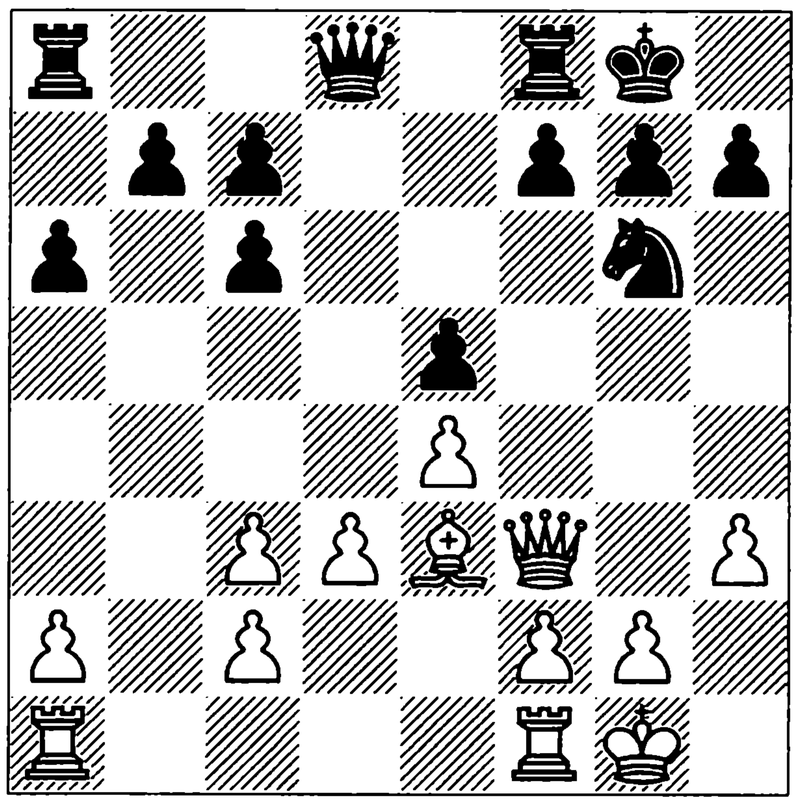
♖d6 25 ♖b4 ♖d7 26 ♔f2 f5 27 d4 ♔f7 28 ♔e3 ♔e6 29 c4 ♔d6 30 ♖b6 ♔c7 31 ♔d3 g5 32 b4 ½-½.

8 d3 ♘g6 9 ♗e3

I would prefer 9 a3 ♗c5! 10 ♗e3 ♕e7 with equal chances.

9...♗b4! 10 0-0 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 0-0 *(D)*

W



Again both sides have doubled pawns controlling crucial central squares. Black's pawn-structure is again slightly preferable due to the weakness of the white a-pawn, but this pawn cannot be attacked in the near future. The position is balanced, as neither side has any direct, worthwhile plan of improving their position. Finally, it must be mentioned that the relatively closed character of the position means that the e3-bishop is not superior to the g6-knight.

12 g3 ♕d7 13 ♗c5 ♖fe8 14 ♕g4!?

White could also continue with 14 ♔g2 ♘f8! (intending ...♘e6) 15 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 =.

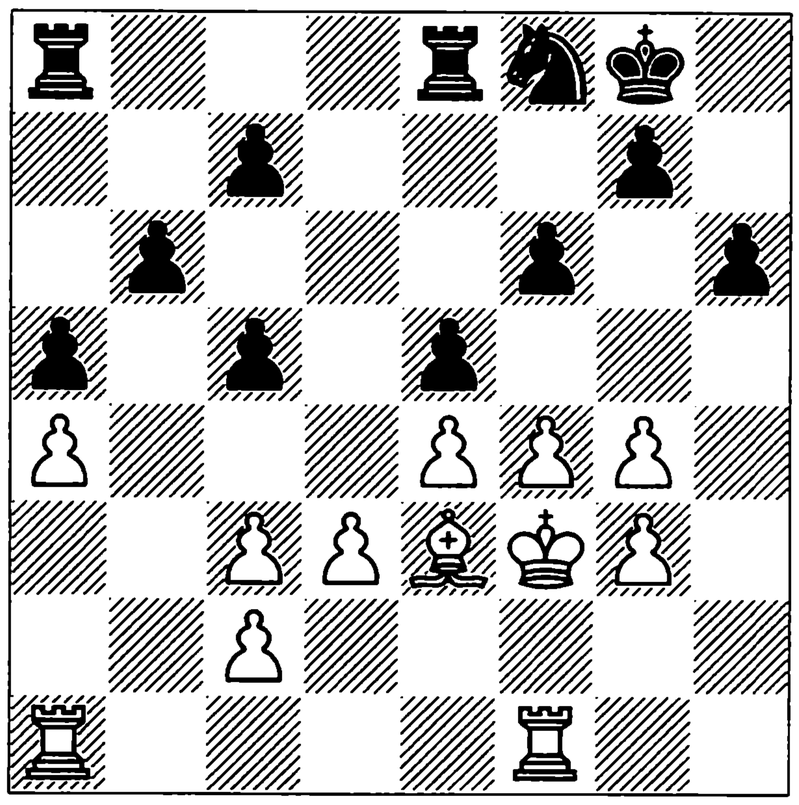
14...♕xg4 15 hxg4 h6!

Otherwise White would play 16 g5! followed by ♔g2 and ♖h1, with pressure on the semi-open h-file.

16 f4 ♘f8 17 ♔g2 b6 18 ♗e3 c5 19 ♔f3 f6 20 a4 a5 *(D)*

Black has placed all his pawns on the same colour squares as the white bishop, thus violating an important strategic principle. However, this particular position is an exception, as the chosen placement of the black pawns restricts the action of the e3-bishop, while the white pawns may become targets for the f8-knight (particularly the a4-pawn).

W



21 d4!? cxd4 22 cxd4 exd4 23 ♗xd4

The position has opened up, something that theoretically favours the side with the bishop. However, the weak white queenside pawns counterbalance the advantage of the better minor piece, and thus the position remains equal.

23...♖ad8 24 ♖fd1 ♖d7! 25 ♖d3 ♖ed8 26 ♖ad1 ♔f7 27 ♗e3 ♔e7 28 ♔e2 ♘e6 29 c3 ♘f8 30 ♗c1 ♖xd3 31 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 32 ♔xd3 ♘d7 33 ♔d4 ½-½

The ending is drawn, as neither side can make significant progress without offering the opponent chances. A relatively calm game where both sides played cautiously.

V. Spasov – Grivas

Balkaniad, Kavala 1990

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 d6 4 0-0 ♗d7 5 c3 ♘f6 6 ♖e1 a6 7 ♗a4

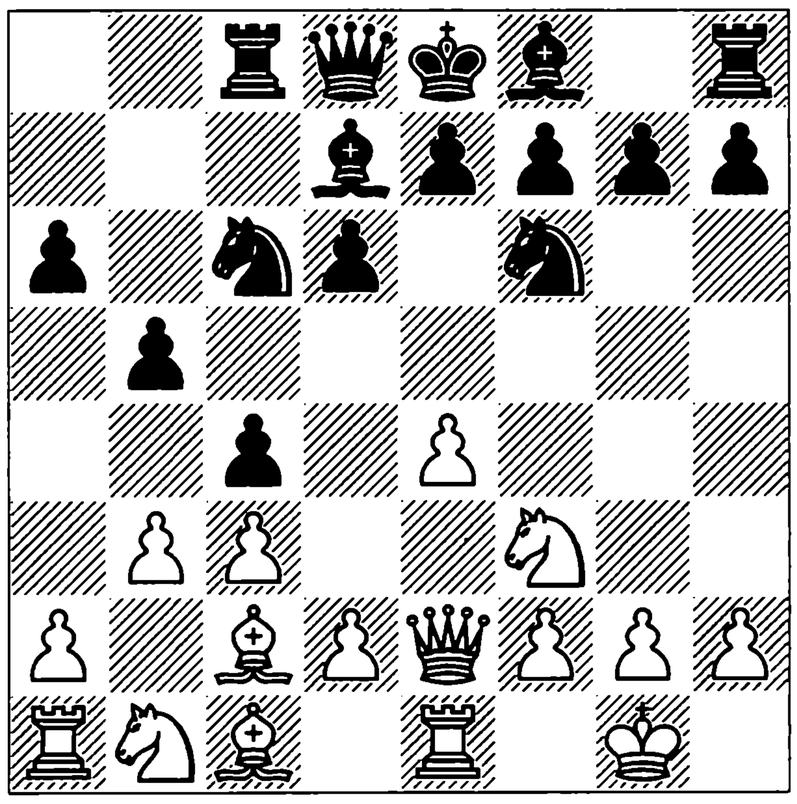
White's alternatives are 7 ♗xc6 and 7 ♗f1.

7...c4! 8 ♗c2

White's most dynamic continuation. The alternative, 8 d4 cxd3 9 ♕xd3 (9 ♗g5, Ara.Minasian-Grivas, Panormo Z 1998) 9...g6 10 c4 (10 ♗f4 ♗g7 11 ♘bd2 0-0 12 a3 ♘e5 13 ♕c2?? ♗xa4 0-1 K.Vlassis-Grivas, Athens 1991) 10...♗g7 11 ♘c3 0-0 = Daniilidis-Grivas, Athens 1993, fails to impress.

8...♖c8 9 b3 b5 10 ♕e2 *(D)*

Interesting is 10 a4 e6 11 axb5 axb5 12 bxc4 bxc4 13 ♘a3 ♘e5 14 ♘d4 ♗e7 15 ♕e2 0-0 16 ♕f1 ♖c5 with unclear play, Tzoumbas-Grivas, Athens 1996.



17...♗xb5!

The greedy 17...♖xc3?! 18 ♖xd7! ♘xd7 19 ♘c4 ♖xc4 20 ♕xc4 leaves White with an advantage. Black must concentrate on completing his development.

18 ♘xb5 ♗c5 19 a4

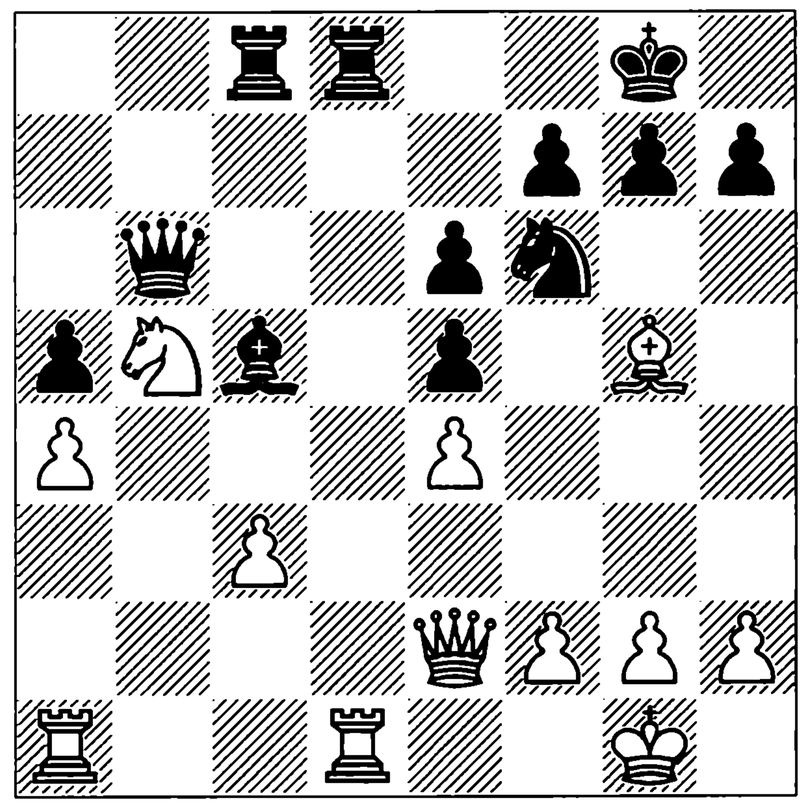
Clearly better than 19 c4? ♕c6! 20 ♖e1 0-0, with advantage for Black.

19...0-0

Completing development and at the same time avoiding the tempting 19...♕c6?! 20 ♗a3! ♕xe4 21 ♘d6+! ♗xd6 22 ♕b5+ ♕c6 23 ♗xd6, when White's initiative is very dangerous.

20 ♗g5 ♖fd8 *(D)*

Black avoids the mistaken 20...♗xf2+? 21 ♕xf2 ♕xf2+ 22 ♔xf2 ♘xe4+ 23 ♔e3 ♘xc3 (23...♘xg5? 24 h4!) 24 ♘xc3 ♖xc3+ 25 ♖d3, which leaves White better, and instead ensures full coordination between his forces.



The central doubled e-pawns fully control the centre, in contrast to the white c3-pawn which, though passed, constitutes a weakness as it can hardly become threatening.

21 ♔f1!

Correct, preventing the threatened ...♗xf2+. The alternative 21 ♗xf6?! gxf6 22 ♕g4+ ♔f8! 23 ♕h4 ♔e7! would be most welcome for Black.

21...♕c6 22 f3 ♗b6

Threatening 23...♕c5!.

23 ♗h4 ♖d7 24 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 25 ♖d1 ♗c5

Black could also try 25...♘c5!? 26 ♖d6 ♕b7 27 ♕d1 with good prospects.

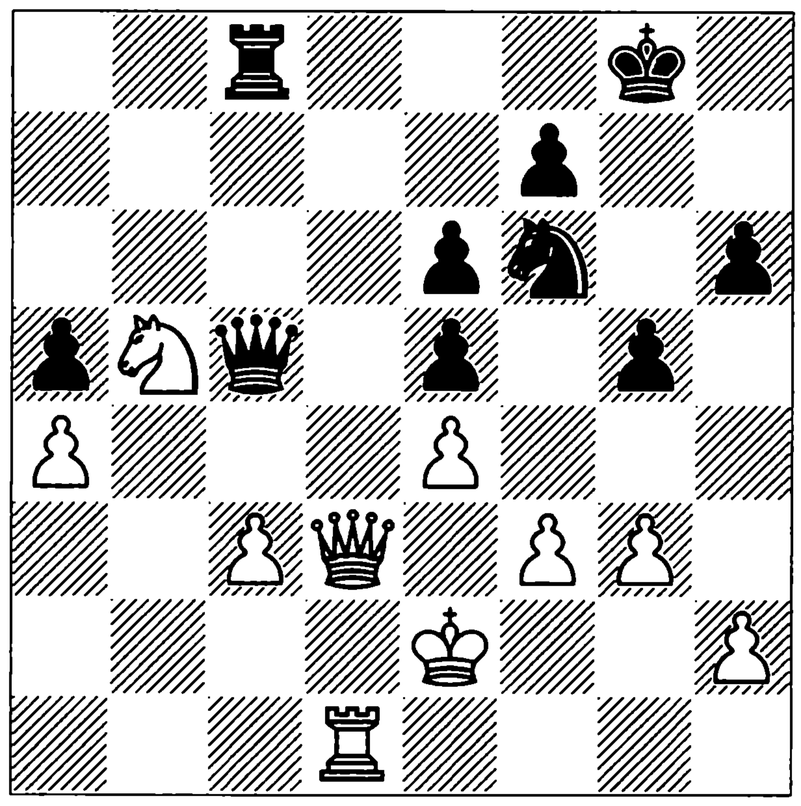
26 ♕d3

The careless 26 ♗f2? ♗xf2 27 ♔xf2 ♘b6! would give Black the advantage.

26...♘f8 27 ♗f2 ♗xf2 28 ♔xf2 h6!

Trying for victory, as 28...♕c4 29 ♘d6 would only suffice for half a point.

29 g3 ♕c5+ 30 ♔g2 ♘h7 31 ♔f1 ♘f6 32 ♔e2 g5! *(D)*



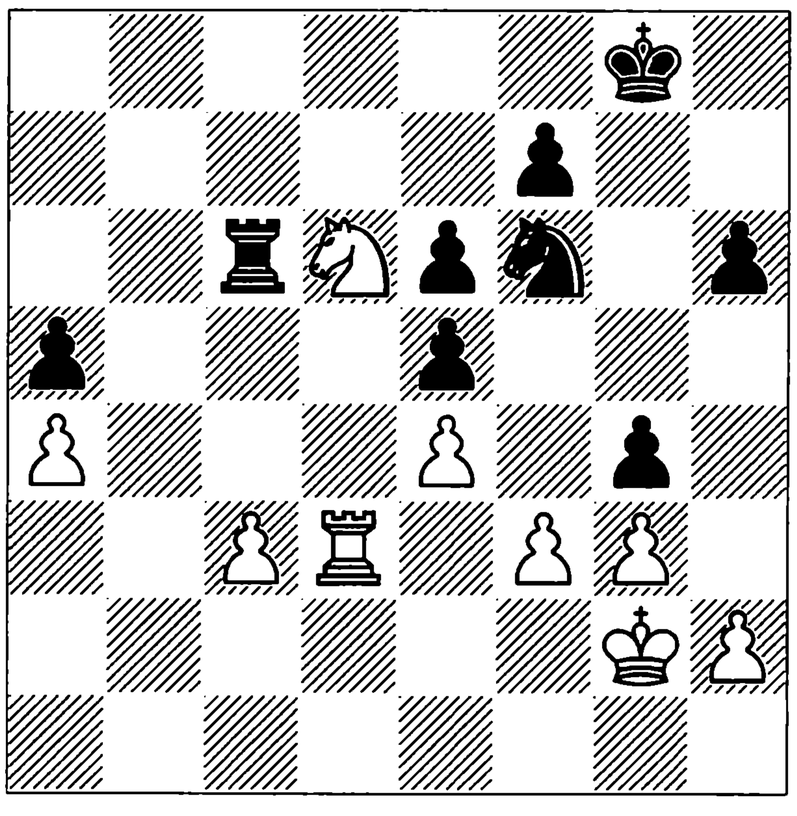
W

Despite the reduced material, Black can obtain the initiative by playing on the side where he has a material superiority, i.e. the kingside. White's problematic situation becomes clear as he lacks a satisfactory plan and is forced to observe the unfolding events.

33 ♔f1

33 g4 h5! 34 h3 h4! intending ...♘h7-f8-g6-f4 also leaves Black on top.

33...g4 34 ♔g2 ♕c4 35 ♘d6 ♕xd3 36 ♖xd3 ♖c6 *(D)*



W

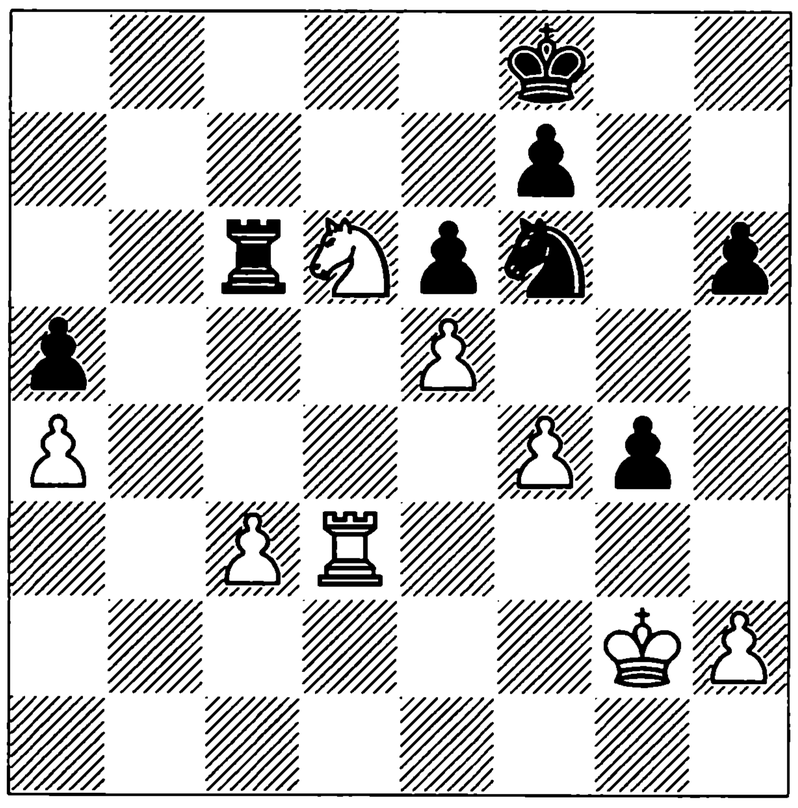
37 f4?

White's position is critical as he has several weaknesses (a4, c3 and e4). Still, he should have played 37 ♔f2, after which he clearly faces problems but has more chances to salvage the draw. It must be mentioned that both players were in terrible time-pressure and the remaining moves up to the end of the game were played instantly, with the expected unfortunate results, marring an otherwise well-played game.

37...exf4 38 gxf4 ♔f8?

A tragic blunder. 38...♘h5! wins.

39 e5? *(D)*



B

White returns the favour and 'forces' Black's hand!

39...♘d5?

Once again Black refuses to play the decisive 39...♘h5!.

40 ♔g3 ♘xc3

Black's last winning try could have been 40...h5 41 c4 ♘b6 42 ♔h4 ♘xc4 43 ♔xh5 f5 44 ♔g6 ♔e7 45 ♘xc4 ♖xc4 46 ♖b3 ♖xf4 47 ♖b7+ ♔d8 48 ♔f6 ♖xa4 49 ♔xe6 f4 but, after so many consecutive gross mistakes, what can one say?

41 ♔xg4 ♘d5 ½-½

Dedes – Grivas

Iraklion 1992

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 g6 3 ♗g2 ♗g7 4 0-0 0-0 5 c4 d6 6 ♘c3 e5 7 d3 ♘c6 8 ♖b1 a5 9 a3 ♘d4!?

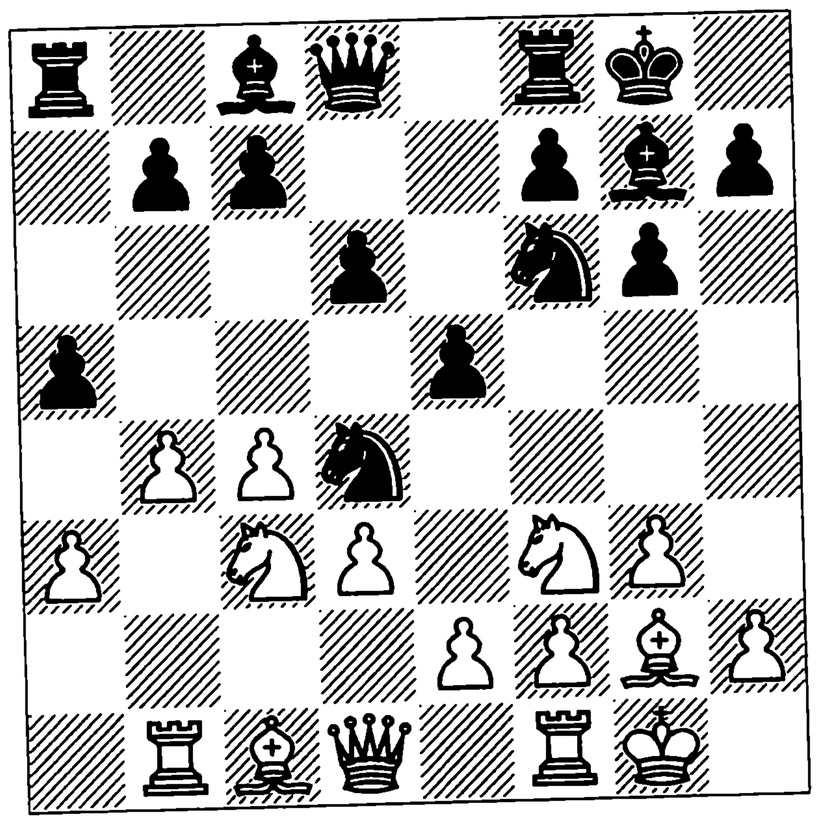
Other moves here are 9...♖e8, 9...♘h5 and 9...h6.

10 b4 *(D)*

White obtained the advantage in Velikov-Grivas, Khania 1992 (analysed in Volume 3 of this series) after 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 12 b4 axb4 13 axb4 c6 14 b5 ♖a3? 15 bxc6 bxc6

16 ♘xd4 exd4 17 ♘a4 c5 18 ♘b6 ♗e6 19 ♘d5 ♗xd5 20 ♗xd5 but Black can improve.

B



10...axb4 11 axb4 c6 12 b5 ♗g4 13 ♘xd4?

This natural move is the start of White's problems. Instead, he should immediately proceed with the exchange of the b-pawns and, more concretely, with 13 bxc6! bxc6 (13...♗xf3? 14 c7! ♕xc7 ½-½ but White is better, Skalkotas-Grivas, Athens 1992) 14 ♘xd4 with chances for both sides.

13...exd4 14 ♘e4 ♘xe4 15 ♗xe4 d5!

Black takes advantage of the placement of the e4-bishop, gaining important central space.

16 cxd5

After 16 ♗g2 dxc4! 17 dxc4 (17 bxc6 cxd3 18 ♕xd3 bxc6 19 ♗xc6 ♖a2 20 ♖e1 ♗f5 21 ♗e4 ♗xe4 22 ♕xe4 ♖e8) 17...♖a2! 18 ♖e1 (or 18 ♖b2 ♖xb2 19 ♗xb2 d3!! 20 ♗xg7 dxe2) 18...d3! Black is much better (19 ♕xd3 ♖xe2!).

16...cxd5 17 ♗f3

Practically forced, as after any other retreat of the e4-bishop the white e2-pawn would come under unbearable pressure (...♖a2 and ...♖e8).

17...♗xf3 18 exf3 ♕d7 *(D)*

Black's advantage is considerable. The doubled d-pawns control important central squares, in sharp contrast to the white doubled f-pawns that don't contribute much. Moreover, the presence of the b-pawns favours Black as the white pawn on b5 is more accessible and thus weaker than the black one on b7. Finally, the c1-bishop is only apparently a better piece than the g7-bishop (due to the presence of the d4-pawn); a more careful examination reveals that the c1-bishop does not have a satisfactory square to move to as it must keep a3 and c3 under control, preventing an invasion by the black rook.

W

19 ♖e1 ♖fc8!

Black cannot expect anything special from using the e-file; in fact, White could in that case proceed with relieving exchanges.

20 ♕e2

White is running out of satisfactory moves, as neither 20 ♗d2 ♖a3! nor 20 ♗b2 ♖c5! is of much help. Now the threat of 21 ♕e7! with counterplay against the b7-pawn forces Black's hand.

20...♖e8 21 ♕d2 h5!

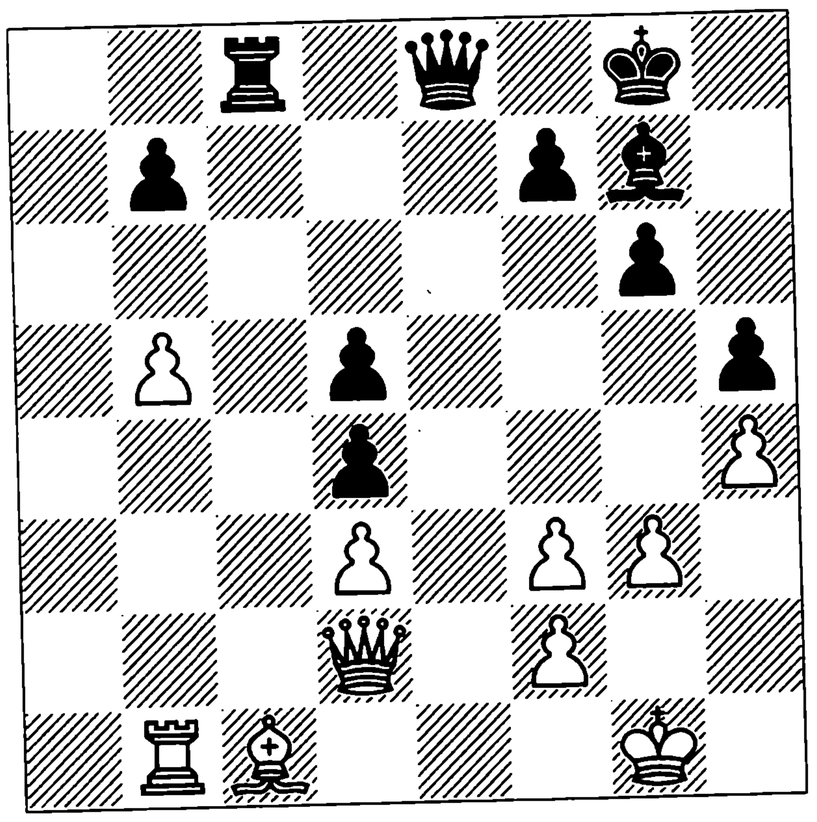
Opening another front, as the threatened ...h4-h3 can only be met by a further weakening of the white pawn-structure.

22 h4 ♖ac8!

Threatening an invasion by 23...♖c3.

23 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8! *(D)*

W



All of Black's pieces are optimally placed, maximizing the dynamic potential in his position. On e8, the queen controls the e-file while also eyeing the b-pawn, while the c8-rook is ready to penetrate White's ranks.

24 ♔g2 ♖c3 25 ♕g5?

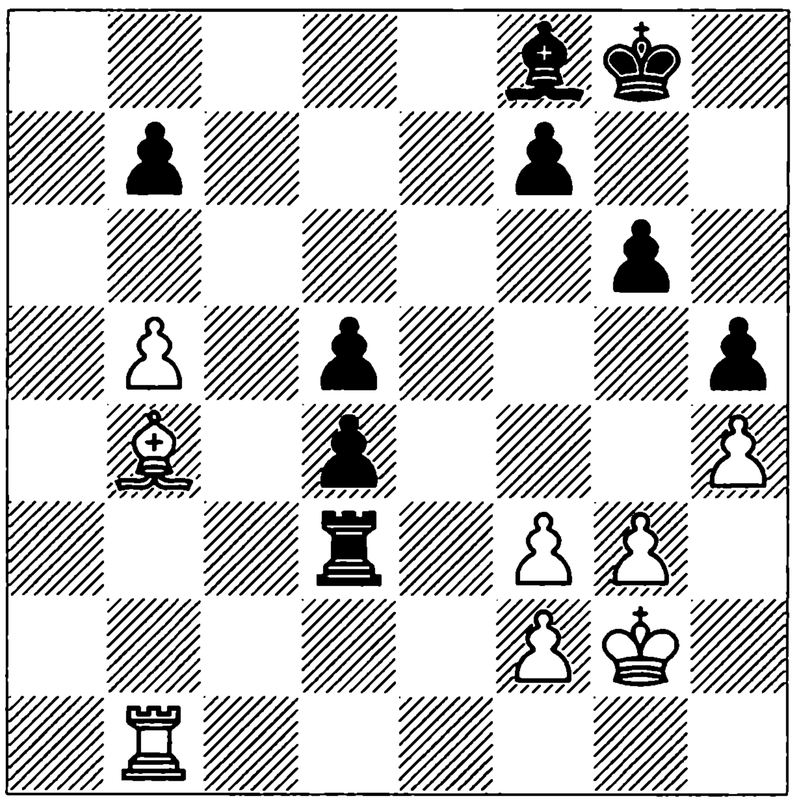
A mistake in time-trouble. White ought to remain passive with 25 ♕d1, when his position is unpleasant, but Black would have to work to prove his superiority (25...♕c8!?, intending ...♕f5 or ...♖c2, or 25...♔h7!? intending ...♗h6).

25...♕e1!

The threat of 26...♖c2! now forces White to retreat.

26 ♕d2 ♕xd2 27 ♗xd2 ♖xd3 28 ♗b4 ♗f8! *(D)*

W



The resulting rook ending is won for Black as the passed d-pawns are very powerful and the black king will be quickly centralized.

29 f4 ♗xb4 30 ♖xb4 ♔f8 31 ♔f1 ♔e7 32 ♔e2 ♖a3!

Black returns his 'optical' material advantage. The white f4-pawn is hardly a worthy opponent for the black passed d-pawn as it is doubled and devoid of prospects. In effect, Black has an extra pawn.

33 ♖xd4 ♔d6 34 ♖b4 f5!

Preventing any counterplay involving a future sacrifice with f5.

35 ♖b2 d4 36 ♔d2 ♔d5 0-1

The ending is easily won as Black enjoys several advantages: centralized king, passed extra pawn, more active rook.

Dervishi – Grivas

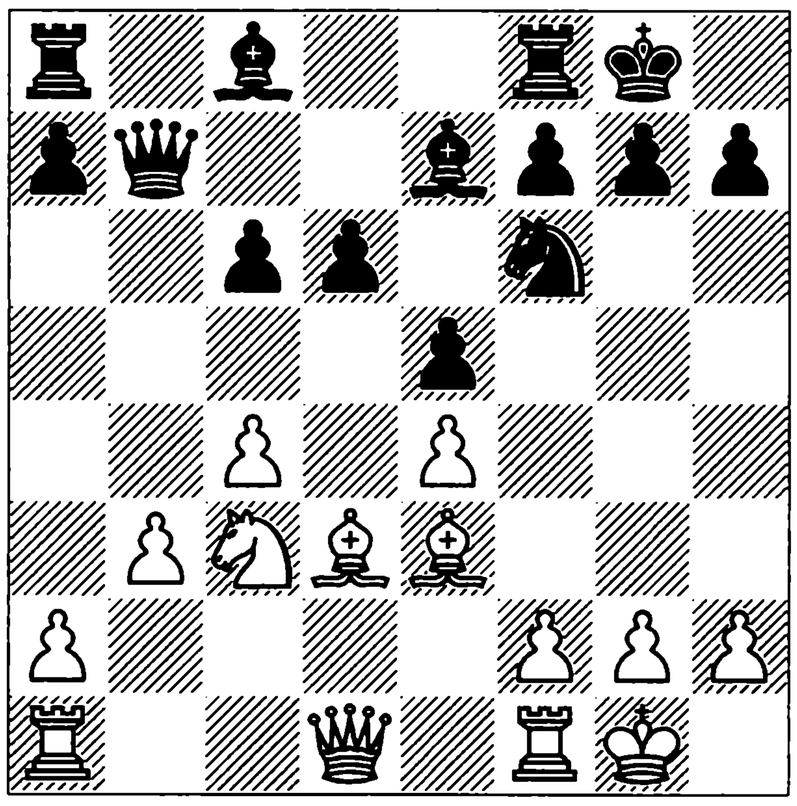
Katerini 1993

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♕b6 5 ♘xc6 bxc6 6 ♗d3 e5 7 c4

White can also play differently, without 7 c4, as in Hector-Grivas, Katerini 1992, analysed in Volume 3 of this series.

7...♘f6 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 ♘c3 d6 10 b3 0-0 11 ♗e3 ♕b7!? *(D)*

W



Black is always aiming for the ...d5 push at an appropriate moment, grabbing the initiative. In general, this type of position is more pleasant for Black.

12 ♗e2 ♗e6 13 ♗f3 ♖ad8 14 ♕e2 ♖fe8 15 ♖fd1 ♘d7 16 ♖d2 ♘c5 17 ♖ad1

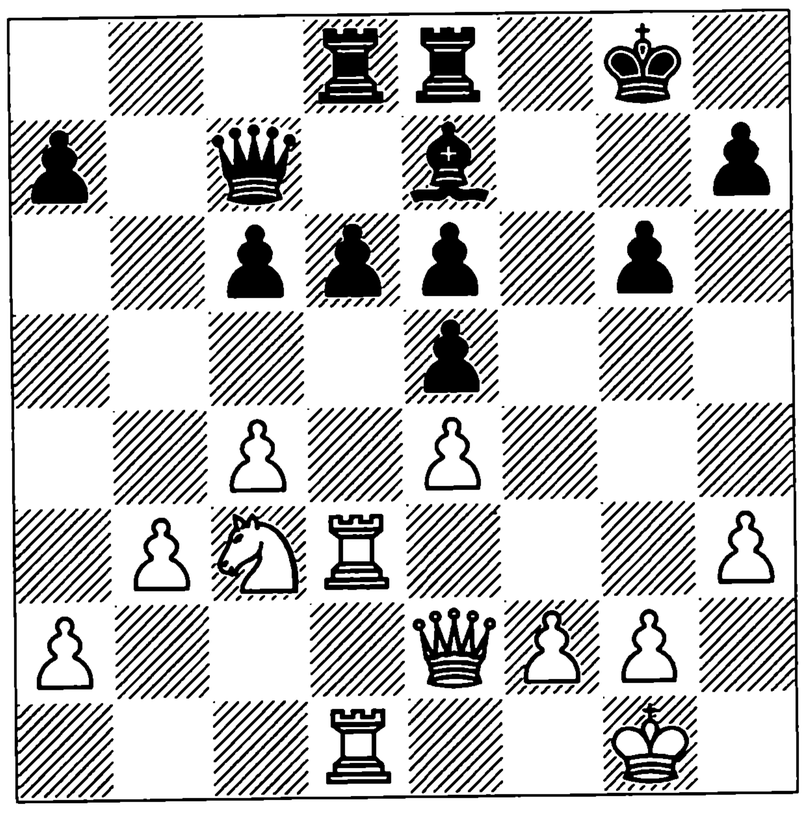
After 17 ♗xc5? dxc5 18 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 19 ♖d1 ♖d4! Black would obtain the advantage. Now White is threatening to take on c5 and exchange all the rooks, after which Black will be unable to exploit the outpost on d4; then he will be left with no compensation for his structural weaknesses.

17...♕b4 18 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 19 ♗g4 ♕a5 20 ♖d3 ♕c7 21 h3 g6!

By threatening 22...f5! Black forces White to double his pawns.

22 ♗xe6 fxe6 *(D)*

The doubled e-pawns help Black to control the centre. The position is approximately equal as White has not created any weaknesses in his camp. A good plan for him would now be to develop a queenside initiative with 23 b4. Instead of this, he opts for play on the wrong flank.



23 ♕g4 ♗f8 24 h4?!

Creating a future target without gaining anything significant in return.

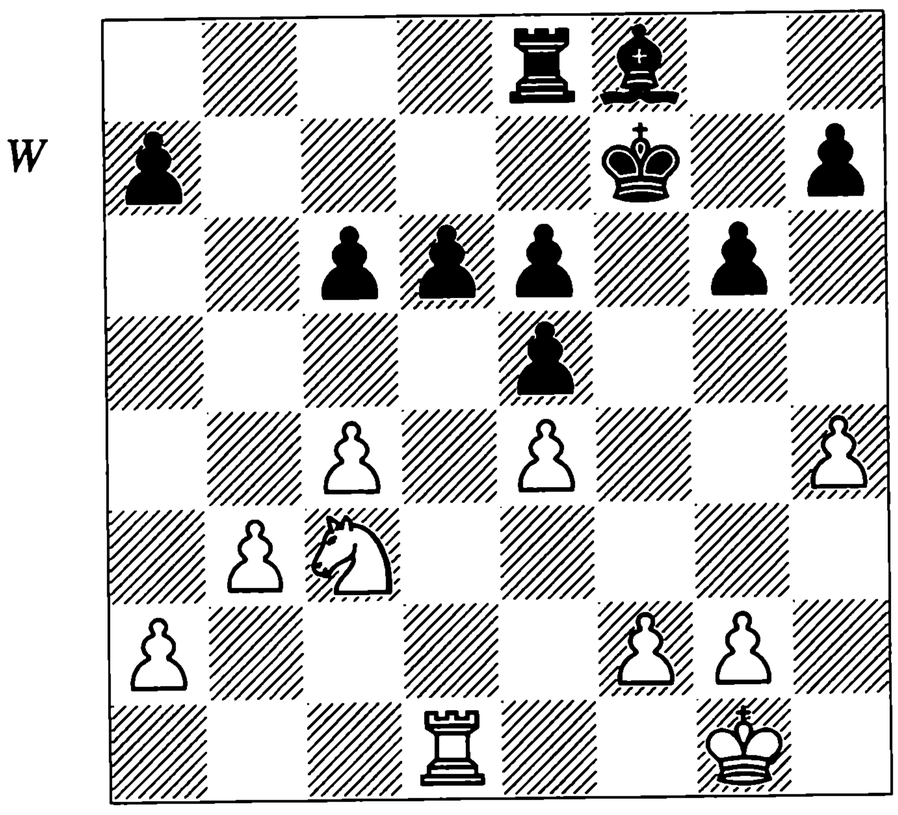
24...♖d7!

Intending to exploit the possible opening of files after White's h5 with ...♖g7.

25 ♕h3 ♖f7 26 ♖f3?!

Exchanges can hardly suit White, as the endgame is in Black's favour. White fails to understand the position.

26...♖xf3 27 ♕xf3 ♕f7! 28 ♕xf7+?! ♔xf7 *(D)*

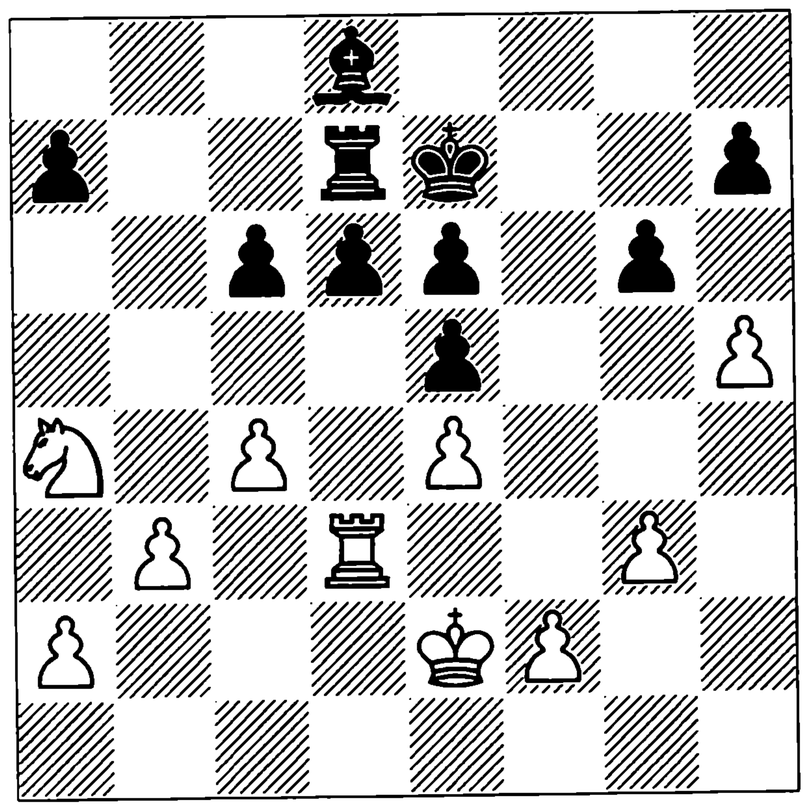


In the ending that has come about, Black is better thanks to his superior centre, strong bishop (the weakness on h4!) and a multitude of pawn-breaks (...a5-a4, ...d5, ...h5 and ...g5).

29 ♔f1 ♗e7 30 ♔e2 ♖d8 31 g3 ♖d7 32 ♖d3 ♗d8!

Intending to improve the potential of his minor piece with 33...♗b6 and ...♗d4.

33 ♘a4 ♔e7 34 h5? *(D)*



This serious mistake hastens the end. White should have remained passive and refrained from making further concessions such as opening the g-file.

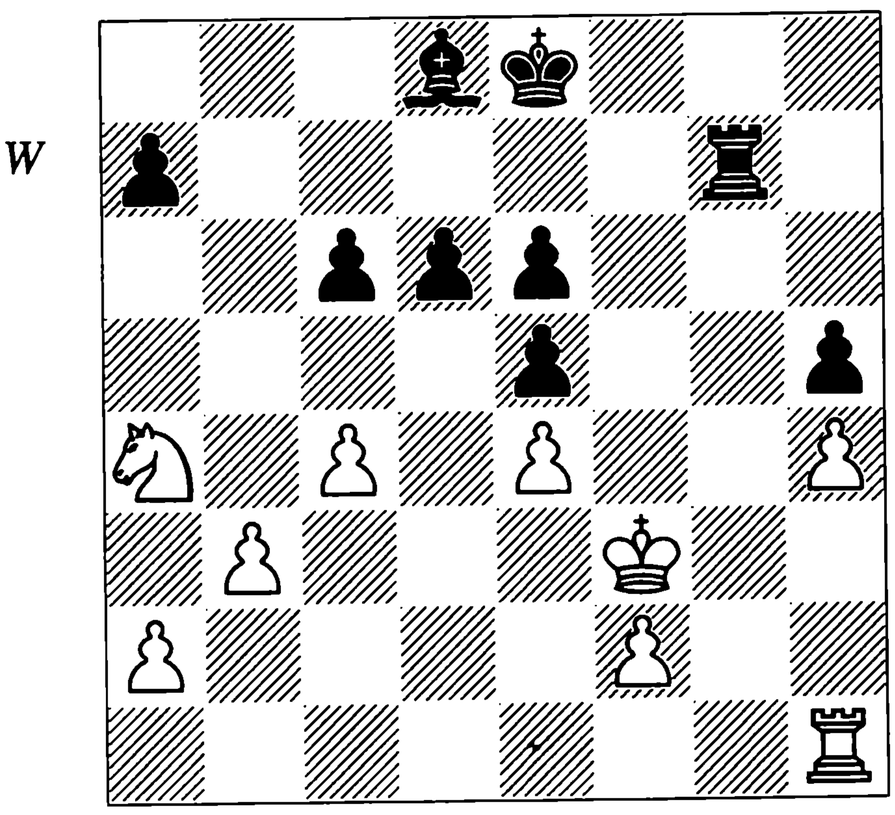
34...gxh5! 35 ♖d1 ♔e8 36 ♖h1 h4! 37 gxh4 ♖g7!

Thus new positional factors have come about (open g-file) and they are in Black's favour.

38 ♔f3

After 38 h5 ♖g4! 39 ♔f3 ♖f4+ 40 ♔e3 ♗g5 victory for Black would be close at hand.

38...h5! *(D)*



Fixing the weakness on h4. White cannot resist much longer, as Black wins material.

39 ♖d1 ♔e7 40 ♖h1 ♖g4 41 ♖h3 ♔f7 42 ♘b2 ♖f4+!

The weak white h4-pawn can wait; other, more important, pawns come first.

43 ♔e3 ♗b6+ 44 ♔d3 ♖xf2 45 ♘d1 ♖f4 46 ♖h2 d5! 47 ♖e2 ♗d4! 48 b4 ♖xh4 49 b5 ♖h3+ 50 ♔c2 cxb5 51 cxd5 exd5 52 exd5 ♔e7 53 ♘f2 ♖h2 0-1

Of course, doubled pawns do not always constitute a source of strength. The games examined so far may have created an illusion of definite power of the doubled pawns, as they have focused on its advantages and means of exploiting these. The following games will help to redress the balance.

Shavtvaladze – Grivas

Athens 2002

1 e4 c5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 ♘f3 e6 4 ♗b5 ♘ge7 5 0-0 ♘g6

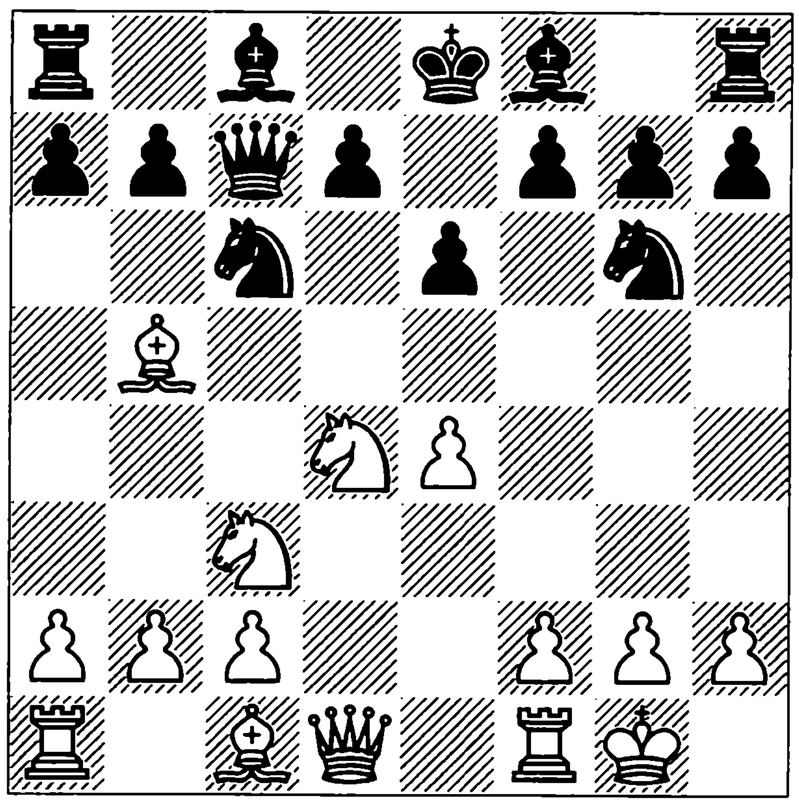
Black more often prefers 5...♘d4 6 ♘xd4 cxd4 7 ♘e2 a6 8 ♗a4 b5 9 ♗b3 ♘c6 10 d3 ♗e7 11 f4 0-0, Yudasin-Moiseenko, Krynica ECC 1997, or 5...a6 6 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♘xd4 ♕c7 9 ♗g5 ♗d6 10 ♔h1 0-0, Christiansen-Nijboer, Reykjavik 1998, with unclear play in both cases.

6 d4

Interesting is 6 ♗xc6 bxc6 7 e5 ♗e7 8 ♘e4 f6 9 d4 cxd4 10 ♕xd4 fxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 ♕xe5 0-0 13 ♗g5 ♗xg5 14 ♕xg5 ♕b6 with equality, Plaskett-Shabalov, Bermuda 1998.

6...cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♕c7 *(D)*

W



8 ♖e1?!

A dubious move, since its contribution to White's plans is virtually zero. 8 ♗e3 is more common, and leads to complicated positions; for example: 8...♗e7 (8...♗d6 9 g3 a6 10 ♗e2 ♗e7 11 f4 0-0 12 a4 ♘a5, Fressinet-Kouatly, French Ch (Méribel) 1998) 9 f4 0-0 (9...a6 10 ♗e2 b5 11 ♘xc6 dxc6 12 e5 0-0 13 ♘e4 c5 14 g3 ♗b7 15 ♗f3 ♖ad8, J.Shahade-A.Khan, USA wom Ch (Denver) 1998) 10 ♔h1 d6 11 ♕h5 ♗f6 12 ♘f3 ♗xc3 13 bxc3 ♘ce7 14 ♗d3 f5 15 exf5 exf5 16 ♖ae1, Mirallès-Kouatly, French Ch (Méribel) 1998.

8...♗d6! 9 g3

After 9 h3 White will find it hard to achieve the central advance f4.

9...♘xd4 10 ♕xd4 a6 11 ♗e2

Disharmonious, but then again 11 ♗f1 ♘e5 12 ♗g2 ♗c5 13 ♕d1 h5! gives Black the initiative.

11...♗e5

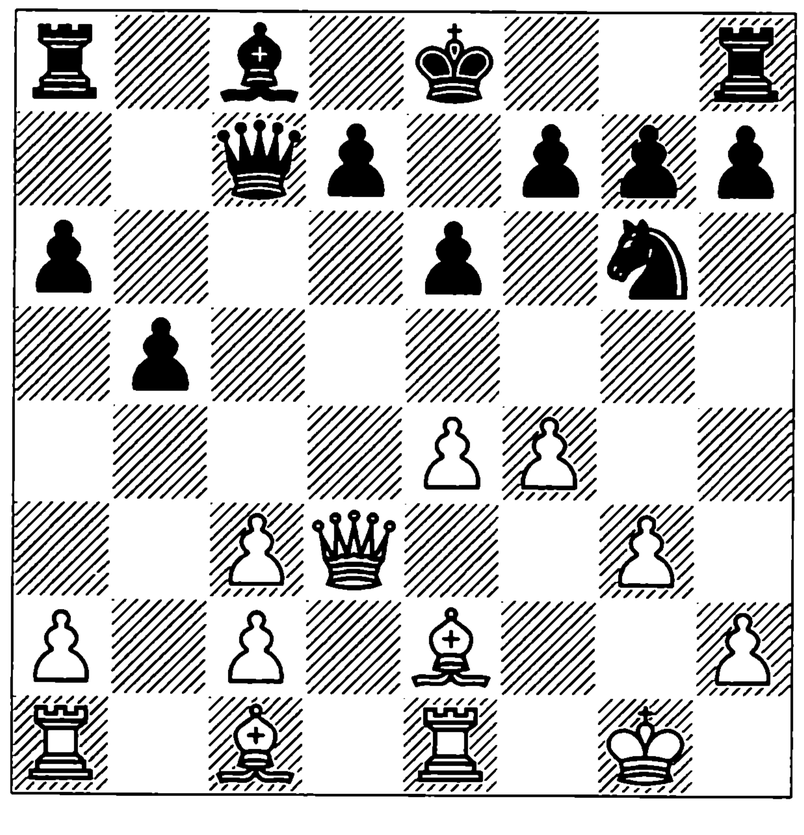
11...♘e5? would now be mistaken due to 12 ♗f4! and 13 ♖ad1.

12 ♕d3 b5 13 f4

White, in his effort to obtain the initiative, creates permanent weaknesses in his pawn-structure. I would personally prefer the solid 13 ♗d2 ♗b7 14 f4 ♗d6 15 ♗f3.

13...♗xc3 14 bxc3 *(D)*

B



Naturally, a queen exchange would favour Black, because White would lack any attacking possibilities as compensation for his doubled pawns.

14...♗b7

14...0-0? 15 ♗a3 ♖d8 16 ♗d6 ♕b6+ 17 ♕d4! would give White the advantage.

15 ♗a3 d5! 16 e5?!

White should seek complications and try to open the position by means of 16 ♗f3!, when Black must be extremely cautious and continue 16...0-0-0! 17 e5 ♘e7! 18 ♗d6 (18 ♗xe7!? ♕xe7 19 a4 ♕c5+ 20 ♔g2 ♔c7 is unclear) 18...♕b6+ 19 ♕d4! (19 ♔g2 ♘f5) 19...♖xd6!! (19...♕xd4+ 20 cxd4 ♘f5 21 ♗c5 ♗c6 =) 20 exd6 ♕xd4+ 21 cxd4 ♘f5 22 c3 ♗c6! with obvious compensation for the exchange.

16...♘e7! 17 ♗xe7?

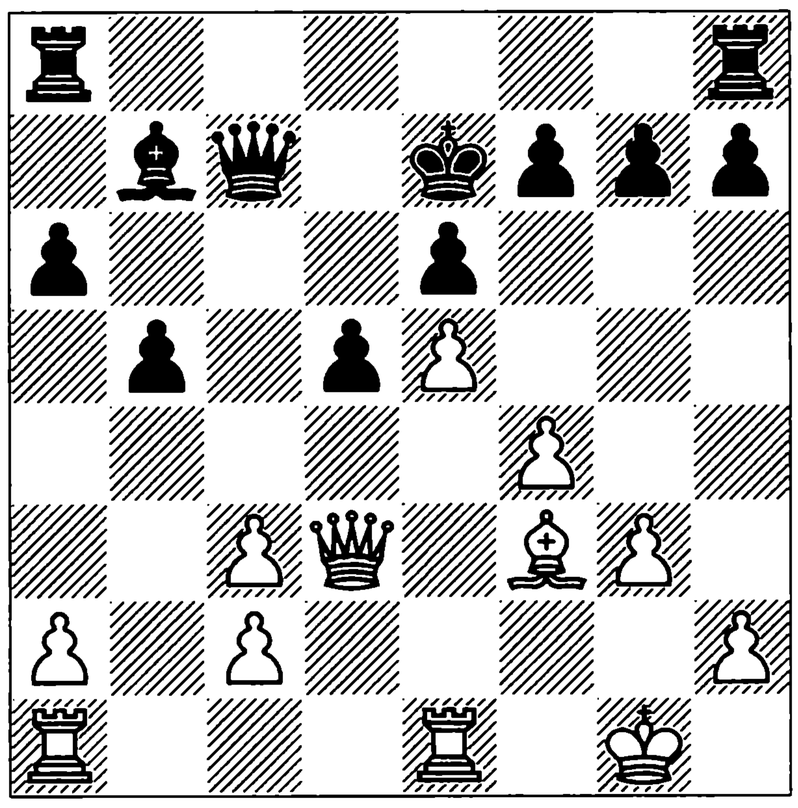
Incomprehensible, as White's only hope is to retain his dark-squared bishop. White would then remain worse, as he cannot dent Black's position, but this aimless exchange leads him into a hopeless position. Thus, White had to go in for 17 ♗d6 ♕d7.

17...♔xe7!

This excellent move prevents White's immediate counterplay connected with 18 a4 due to 18...bxa4 19 ♖xa4 a5 20 ♖ea1 ♕c5+ 21 ♔g2 ♗c6. The black king is perfectly safe and helps his forces to coordinate.

18 ♗f3 *(D)*

B



18...♖ac8

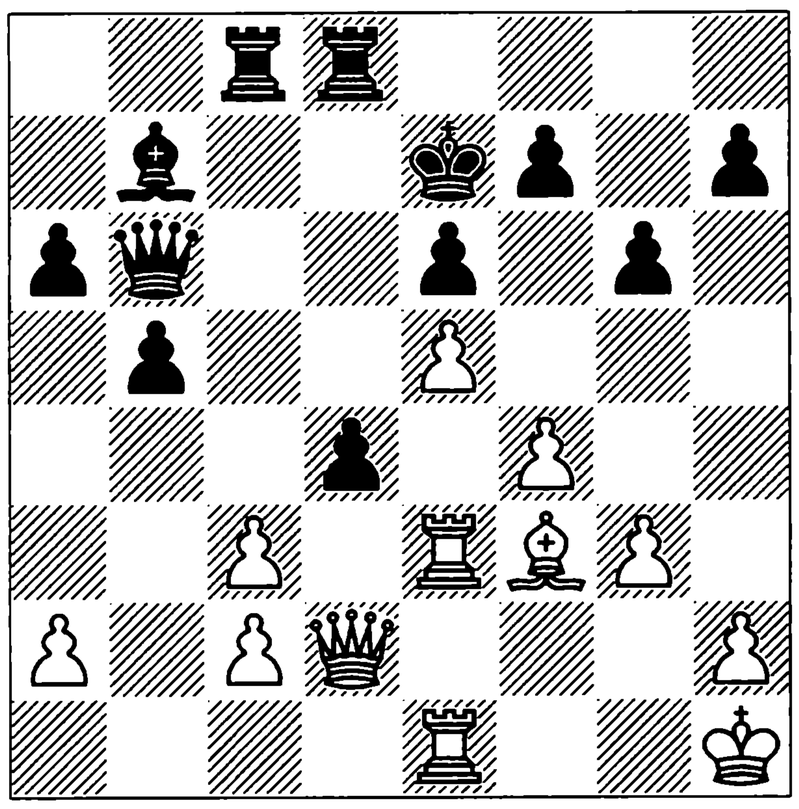
The struggle for the initiative and the creation of weaknesses has concluded in Black's favour. White is left with weak doubled c-pawns and without any compensating factors for this weakness. Black naturally has the advantage exactly because of White's weak pawn-structure; still he needs to come up with a plan to exploit it. In positions of this type the move 18...♖hc8 is more common. However, Black is planning to open the position with the future ...d4 advance, so the other rook will be needed on d8. Black's idea of voluntarily relieving White of his doubled pawns seems irrational, but the invasion of the black major pieces into White's camp and pressure on White's remaining weaknesses (c2 and a2) is much more significant. Besides, if Black simply ganged up against the c3-pawn, White would be able to defend it adequately.

19 ♖e3 ♕b6 20 ♔h1 ♖hd8 21 ♖ae1 g6!

The correct arrangement, as 21...h6?! would allow a future invasion with ♕h7 or counterplay connected with the f5 advance.

22 ♕d2 d4! *(D)*

W



All of a sudden White is relieved of a major organic weakness and still his position collapses! The explanation is simple: the weaknesses in White's position that are accessible to Black increase from one (c3) to three (c2, a2 and the white king).

23 cxd4 ♖xd4 24 ♕g2 ♗xf3 25 ♖xf3 ♕c6 26 ♖f2 ♖c4! 27 ♖c1 b4!

Fixing the weak white queenside pawns and preparing to pressurize them further. If White evaded the exchange of queens he would have to worry about his exposed king as well. But now, the black king is 'freed' and can contribute to the pressure on White's position.

28 ♔g1 ♕xg2+ 29 ♔xg2 a5 30 ♔f1 h5!

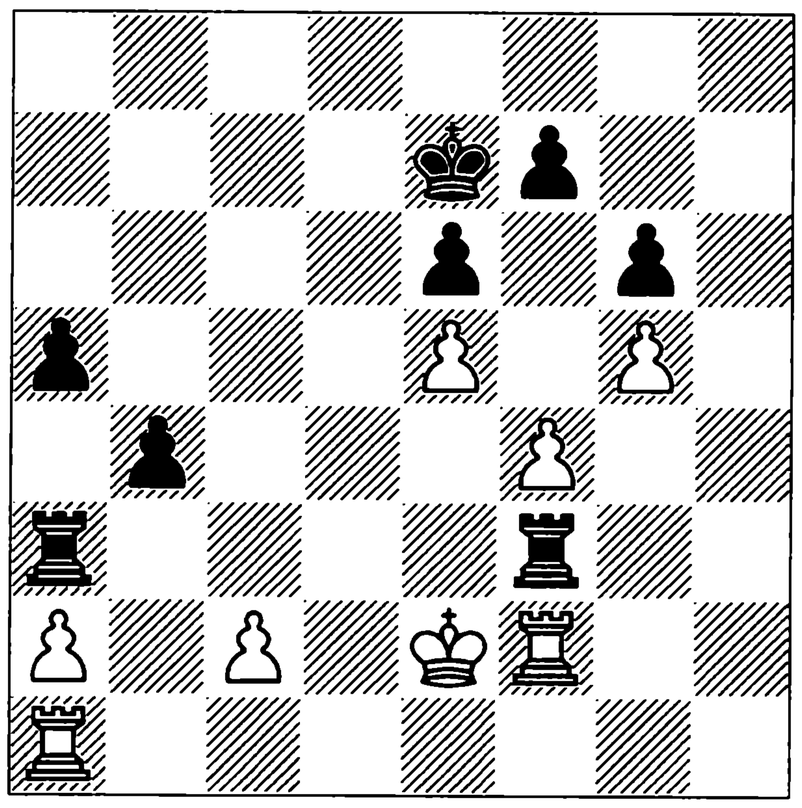
Intending to create one more weakness in White's camp, either on g3 or f4. This is a typical and often decisive idea, useful in plenty of endgames.

31 ♔e1 h4 32 ♔d1 hxg3 33 hxg3 ♖c3 34 g4

Or 34 ♖g2 ♖f3! and 35...♖cc3.

34...♖a3 35 ♖a1 ♖c4 36 g5 ♖cc3 37 ♔e1 ♖h3 38 ♔d2 ♖hf3! 39 ♔e2 *(D)*

B



39...♖xf2+!

The exchange of one pair of rooks eases Black's technical task, since the material White could use to protect his many weaknesses is reduced.

40 ♔xf2 ♖c3 41 ♖c1 ♔d7 42 ♔e2 ♔c6 43 ♔d2 ♔d5!

The black king is decisively activated, while Black at the same time avoids White's last trap: 43...♖f3? 44 c3!.

44 ♖h1 ♔e4 45 ♖h7 ♖c7 46 ♖h4 ♔f3 0-1

The threatened 47...♔g3 is decisive. An instructive detail is that Black eventually captures White's third weakness, the one caused by the move 30...h5!.

Ara. Minasian – Grivas

Zonal, Panormo 1998

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 d6 4 0-0 ♗d7 5 c3 ♘f6 6 ♖e1 a6 7 ♗a4 c4 8 d4 cxd3 9 ♗g5 *(D)*

An interesting move with the idea of preventing 9...g6.

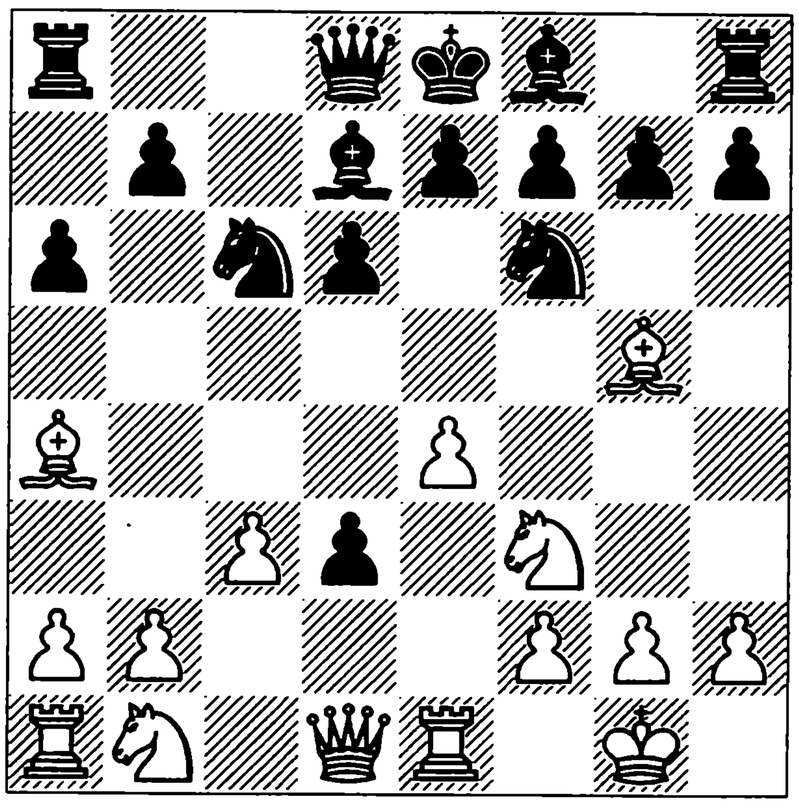
9...e6 10 ♕xd3 ♗e7

Black could try 10...♘e5!? 11 ♗xd7+ (11 ♘xe5 ♗xa4) 11...♘fxd7! (11...♘exd7!?) 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♕g3 ♕c7 with unclear play.

11 ♗xf6

Forced, due to the threatened 11...♘e5. White creates doubled pawns in Black's camp by surrendering the bishop-pair.

B

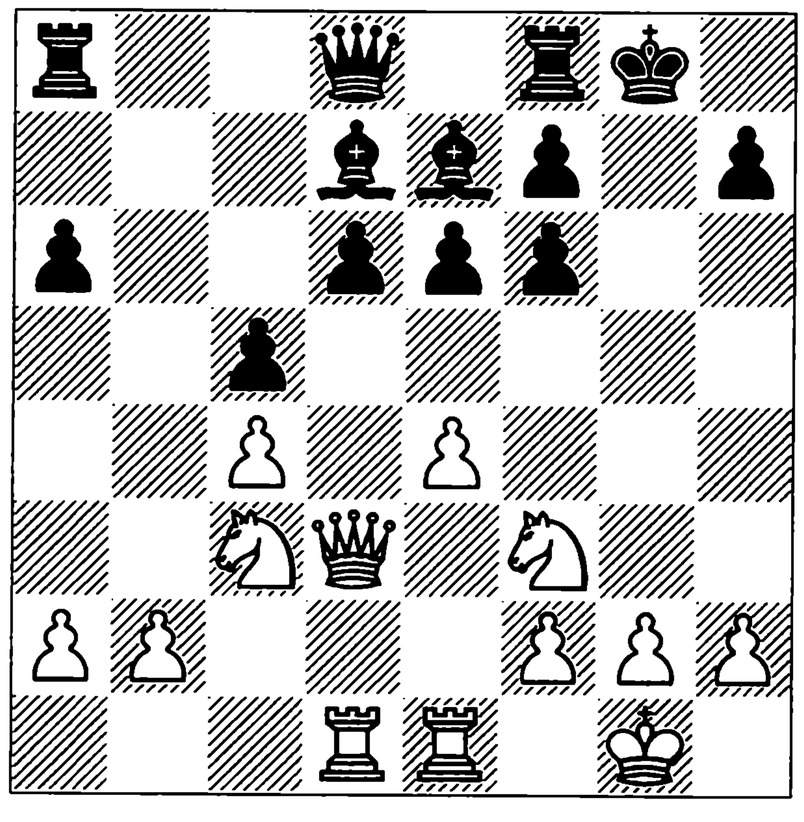


11...gxf6 12 ♗xc6 bxc6?!

Usually pawn captures towards the centre are desirable but here we have an exception to this rule. The question that must be posed revolves around Black's future plans and the choice of flank where he will develop play. The kingside is inflexible, and the same applies to the centre. Therefore Black should retain the possibility of a ...b5 break, or ...d5 if White refrained from c4. In view of the above, 12...♗xc6 should have been preferred, with equal chances in an unclear position.

13 c4 c5 14 ♘c3 0-0 15 ♖ad1 *(D)*

B



Threatening 16 e5! and, as 15...♗c6 16 ♕e3! (threatening 17 ♘d5!) 16...♖e8 17 e5! ♗xf3 18 ♕xf3 fxe5 19 ♖xe5 dxe5 20 ♕g3+ ♔f8 21 ♖xd8 ♖axd8 22 ♕xe5 leaves White better, Black has no choice other than the disharmonious move in the game.

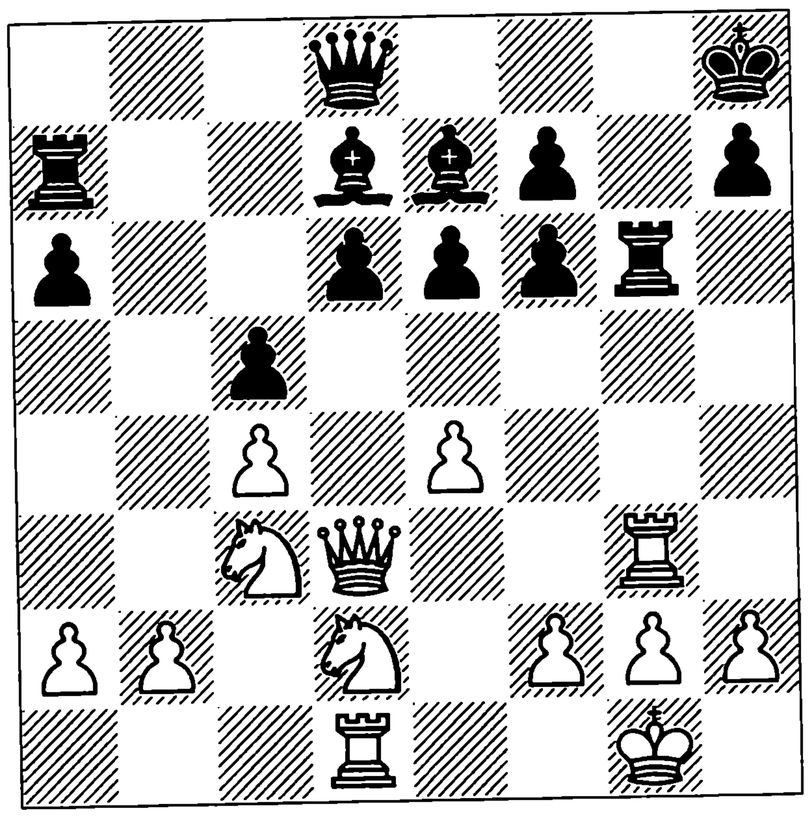
15...♖a7 16 ♘d2!

Freeing the third rank for the white rooks. Black is bereft of a satisfactory active plan.

16...♔h8 17 ♖e3 ♖g8 18 ♖g3 ♖g6?! *(D)*

Too ambitious. Black should have 'worried' and continued 18...♗c6 19 f4 ♖a8! 20 ♘f1 ♕b6 with only a slight disadvantage.

W



19 f4!

The start of an excellent plan which aims to weaken the black e6-pawn. This plan is assisted by the fact that Black does not have a knight; therefore White is not worried about the outpost he will create on e5.

19...♕g8 20 ♘f1 ♗c6 21 ♕e2 ♕g7 22 ♖dd3! ♕h6 23 ♖xg6! fxg6

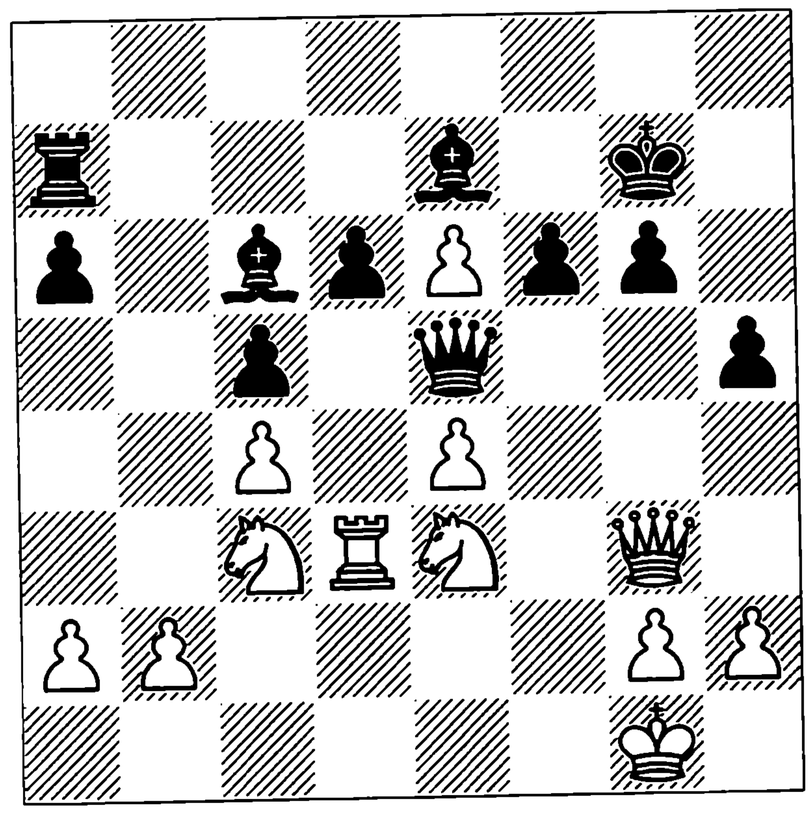
The otherwise desirable 23...hxg6?? loses immediately to 24 ♖h3, while 23...♕xg6 24 ♖g3 ♕h6 25 ♕g4 ♖a8 26 ♘e3 and 27 f5 also promises White the advantage. Black's pawn-structure now seems strong, but in fact it has worsened further as now White can gain the critical d5-square for his knights, thus blunting the black bishops.

24 f5! ♕f4?!

From a theoretical point of view the passive 24...♗d7 25 fxe6 ♗xe6 26 ♘e3 was preferable. Instead, Black is seeking practical solutions, refusing to continue along normal lines.

25 fxe6 ♕e5 26 ♕g4! ♔g7 27 ♘e3 h5 28 ♕g3! *(D)*

B

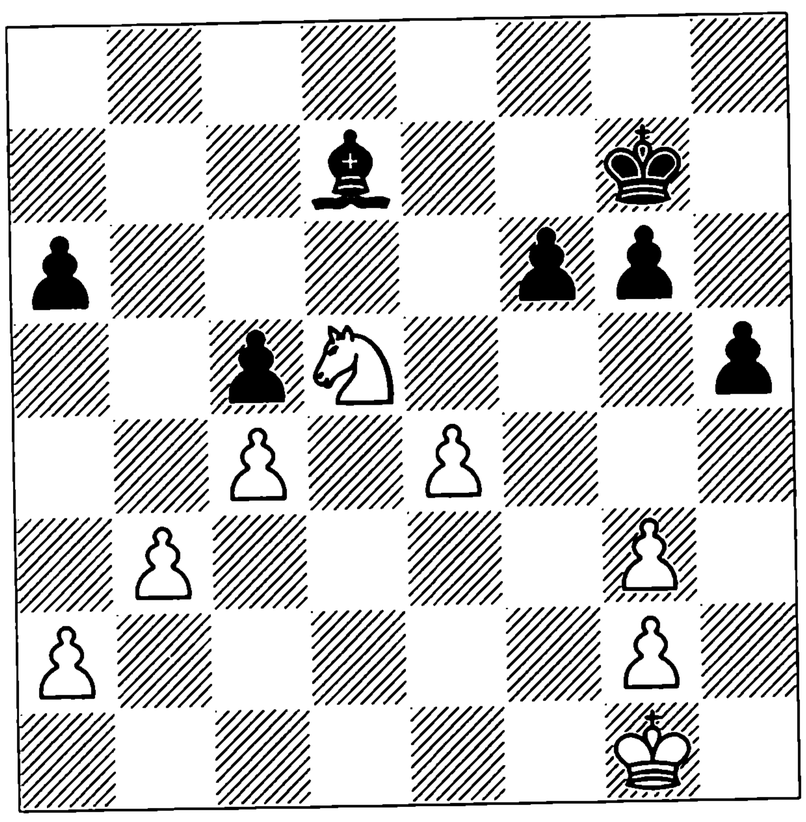


28...♕xg3

Although no real chance for salvation is in sight, Black should have tried 28...♕xe6 29 ♘f5+ ♔h7 30 ♘xe7 ♕xe7 31 ♕xd6 ♗xe4 32 ♕xe7+ ♖xe7 33 ♖e3 f5 34 ♘xe4 fxe4 35 ♔f2, intending ♖a3-a5 and ♔e3.

29 hxg3 ♗b7 30 ♘ed5 ♗c8 31 ♘xe7 ♖xe7 32 ♖xd6 ♖xe6 33 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 34 b3 ♗d7 35 ♘d5 *(D)*

B



35...g5

Black is now totally lost, because neither 35...♔f7 36 ♘f4! nor 35...♗c6 36 ♘c7 can help.

36 ♘c7 ♗c8 37 ♘e8+ ♔g6 38 ♘d6 ♗g4 39 ♘b7 1-0

Backward Pawn

A pawn is backward when it lies on a semi-open file and constitutes the last part in a pawn-chain or group, and thus cannot be protected by another pawn. In several cases an isolated pawn can also be a backward pawn, when it is situated deep in its own camp.

The backward pawn is the only strategic element regarding pawn-structures that has only disadvantages and almost no merits, and therefore one is advised to avoid such pawns unless there are considerable compensating factors.

The backward pawn is the cause of multiple problems and disharmony, as it forces one's pieces to occupy passive positions in order to ensure its adequate protection.

The dangers facing the possessor of such a pawn are serious, because its presence usually leads to passivity and inactivity. The side that is attacking the pawn or is generally trying to exploit its presence has several viable plans at its disposal.

The first plan is simple and concerns the pawn itself. The opponent's pieces focus on it and eventually capture it, securing a material advantage.

The second plan revolves around the passivity of the defending pieces, which allows the opponent's army to develop a dangerous initiative on other parts of the board. This is the most common plan in practice, as the defending side usually succeeds in protecting the pawn.

The third plan consists of exploiting the outpost that is usually created right in front of the backward pawn.

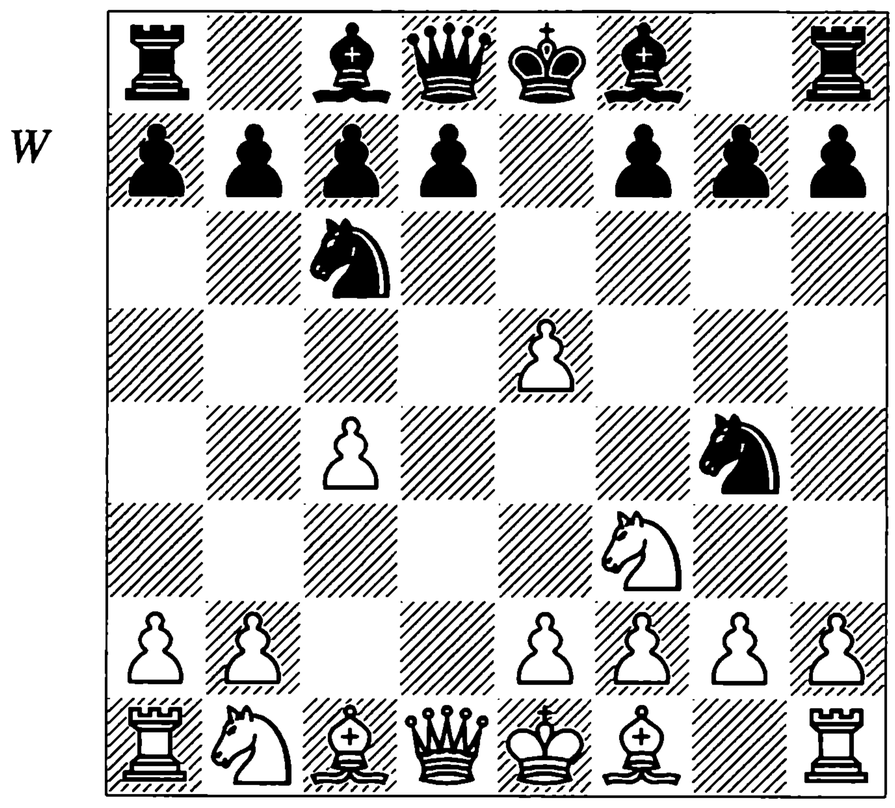
Piece exchanges enhance the weakness of the backward pawn and increase its vulnerability in the endgame, as also happens with all pawn weaknesses in general.

It is also important to understand what exactly the term 'backward pawn' means and when such a pawn really constitutes a weakness for its side in each concrete position. For example, in many variations of the Sicilian Defence the backward black pawn on d6 is not such a serious weakness, as Black enjoys active counterplay as a compensating factor while White finds it very hard to approach the pawn.

Grivas – Kokkinos
Thessaloniki 1983

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 ♘g4 4 ♘f3 ♘c6?! *(D)*

This move-order is inaccurate. The correct sequences to reach standard lines are 4...♗c5 5 e3 ♘c6 and 4...♗b4+ 5 ♘bd2 ♘c6. However, at the time of this game, the difference was not widely appreciated.



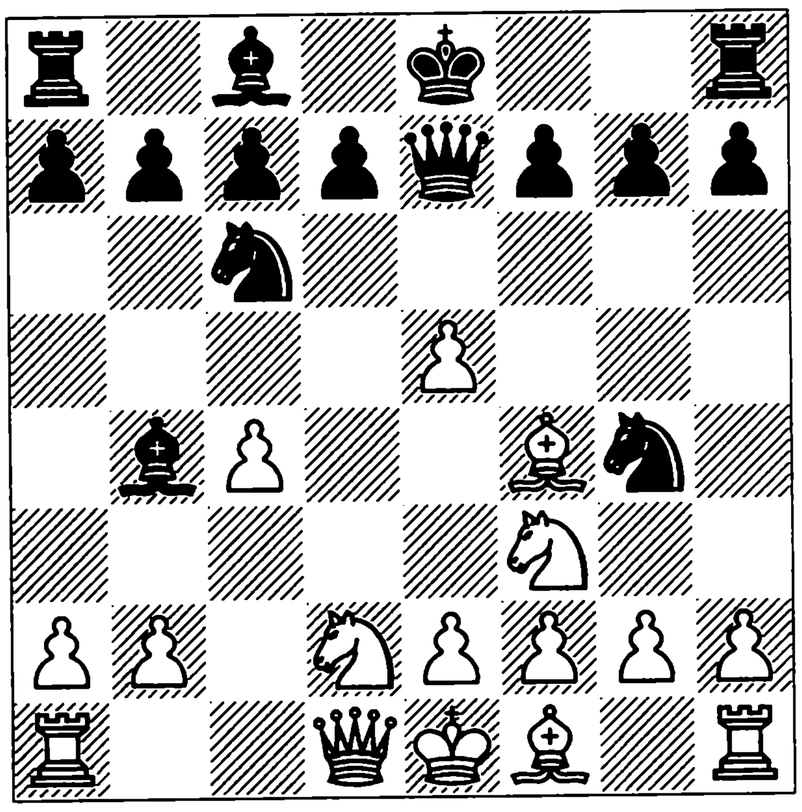
5 ♗f4?!

White has at his disposal a strong continuation by which he obtains a clear and permanent edge: 5 ♗g5! ♗e7 6 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 7 ♘c3; e.g., 7...0-0 8 ♘d5 ♕d8 9 e3 ♘gxe5 10 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 11 ♗e2 d6 12 0-0 c6 13 ♘c3 ♗e6 14 b3 ♕a5 15 ♕d2 ♖ad8 16 f4 ♗g4 17 ♗d1 ♗xd1 18 ♖axd1 ♘g4 19 h3 ♘h6 20 e4 f5 21 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 22 ♔h2 fxe4 23 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 24 ♘xe4 ♕h5 25 ♘g5 ♘f7 26 ♘f3 d5 27 ♕e3 ♕f5 28 cxd5 cxd5 29 g4 ♕c2+ 30 ♖d2 ♕c7 31 ♖xd5 ♖f8 32 ♔g3 ♘d8

33 ♕e5 ♕c8 34 ♕e7 ♕c1 35 ♖f5 ♘f7 36 ♕xb7 g6 37 ♖f6 ♕b2 38 ♕e7 ♕xa2 39 ♕e6 ♕a1 40 h4 ♔g7 41 g5 a5 42 f5 gxf5 43 h5 ♕c3 44 ♖xf5 ♕c7+ 45 ♔h3 ♕c3 46 h6+ ♔g8 47 g6 hxg6 48 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 49 ♖xf7 1-0 Polugaevsky-Nunn, Biel 1986.

5...♗b4+ 6 ♘bd2 ♕e7 *(D)*

W



Both sides have committed one inaccuracy and we have reached by transposition a standard theoretical position, which has served as the starting point for a great number of games.

7 a3

This move is currently considered premature; instead, 7 e3 ♘gxe5 8 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 9 ♗e2 0-0 10 0-0 is more accurate.

7...♗xd2+ 8 ♕xd2 ♘gxe5 9 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 10 e3 0-0

Another possibility, supported in practice by Speelman, is 10...d6 11 ♗e2 b6 12 e4 ♗b7 13 f3 0-0-0 with complex play due to the possibility of opposite-side castling.

11 ♗e2 d6 12 0-0 b6 13 ♕c3!

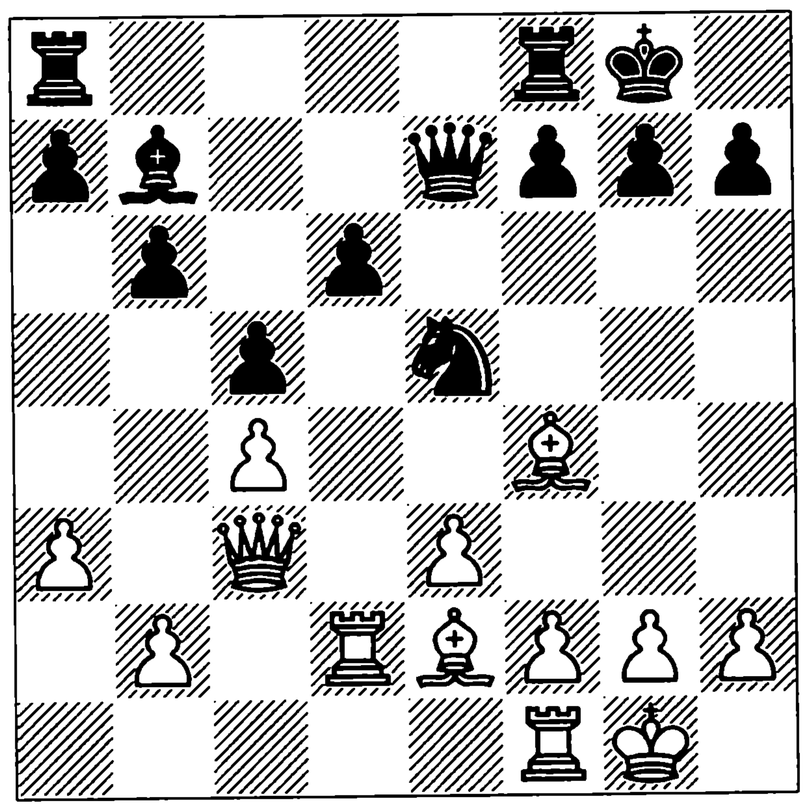
With the idea 13...♗b7?! 14 c5! bxc5 (not 14...♘g6? 15 cxd6! cxd6 16 ♗g3 ±) 15 ♗xe5 ♕xe5 16 ♕xe5 dxe5 17 ♖ac1 and a slight advantage for White, thanks to his healthier pawn-structure.

13...c5?!

This move creates, for no apparent reason, a backward pawn on d6. White would enjoy a slight but permanent edge (two bishops, space advantage) after 13...♘g6 14 ♗g3 ♗b7 15 b4, but this was in any case preferable to the text-move, which creates new weaknesses.

14 ♖ad1 ♗b7 15 ♖d2! *(D)*

B



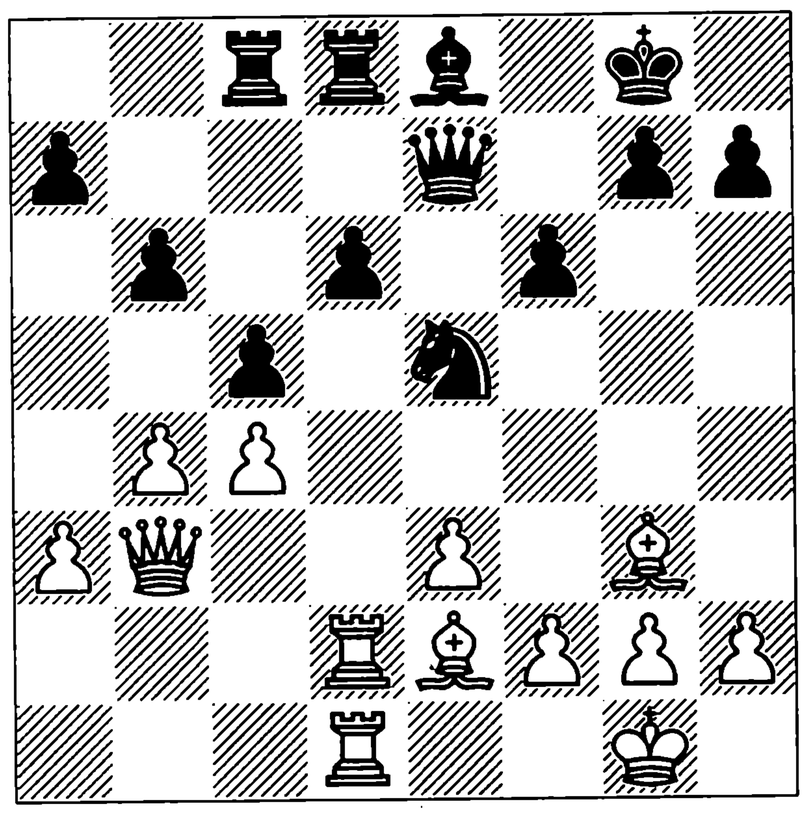
It is very important for White to prevent the advance ...d5, after which Black's problems would mostly disappear.

15...f6 16 ♖fd1 ♖fd8 17 b4!

White is harmoniously developed and controls events in the centre. However, Black's position is compact and cannot easily be breached. Therefore, White turns his attention to the queenside, where a future open file will allow him to enter Black's ranks. There is plenty of time to employ this plan, as Black lacks concrete counterplay.

17...♖ac8 18 ♕b3 ♗c6 19 ♗g3 ♗e8 *(D)*

W



20 b5!

White would almost never play bxc5?, nor would Black opt for ...cxb4?. Thus, the white b-pawn proceeds with its mission, fixing the black queenside pawns and paving the way for

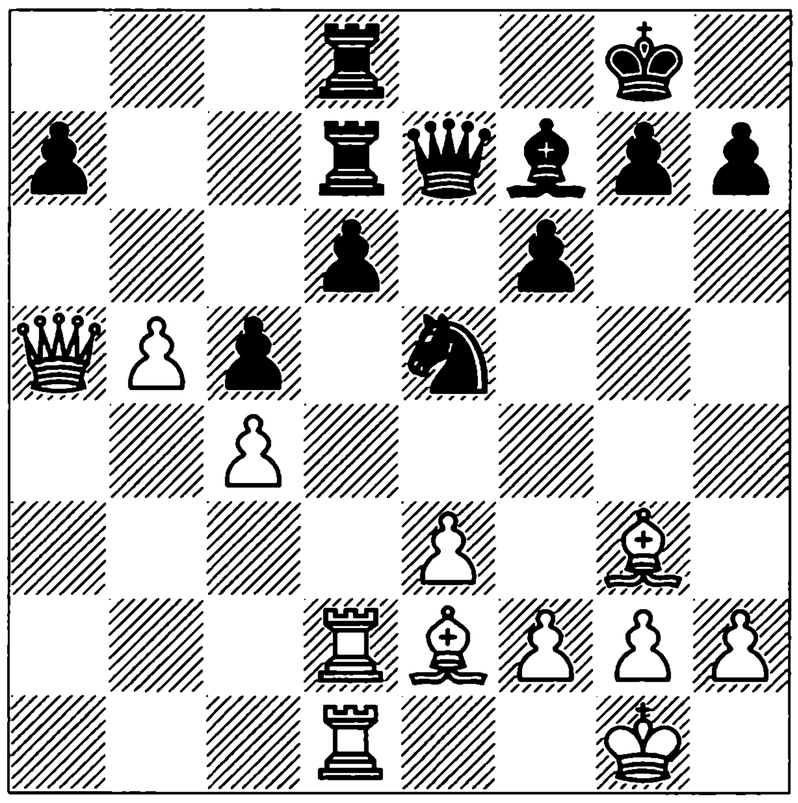
White's essential plan, i.e. the advance a4-a5 that will open up the a-file.

20...♗g6 21 a4 ♖c7 22 a5 bxa5

A tough decision, as one more backward pawn is created on a7. But Black could hardly wait passively for a timely opening of the a-file. Black instead hopes to achieve ...d5 or otherwise find active play.

23 ♕a4 ♖cd7 24 ♕xa5 ♗f7 *(D)*

W



25 ♗xe5!

This is the right moment to exchange off Black's best-placed piece. Black's weaknesses now become fixed, since he can play neither 25...dxe5?? 26 ♕xd8+! nor 25...fxe5 26 e4!.

25...♕xe5 26 ♗f3!

By tactical means (26...♗xc4? is met by 27 ♗c6) White exchanges off the last black piece that can control the outpost on d5, an outpost situated in front of the backward d6-pawn.

26...♕e7 27 ♗c6 ♖c7 28 ♗d5 ♗xd5 29 ♖xd5 ♖cd7 30 h3

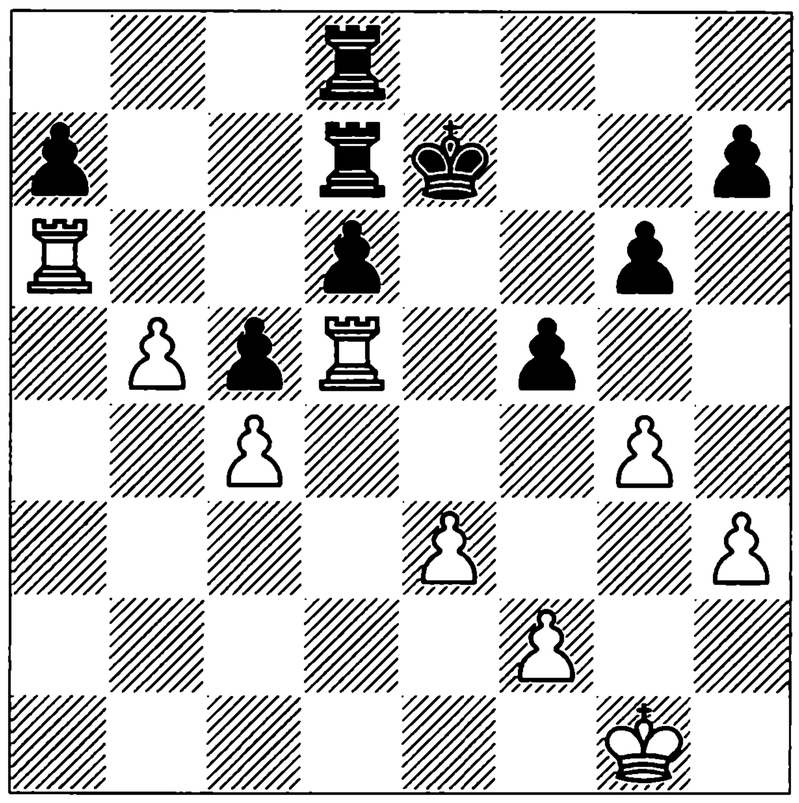
White's superiority is evident as he has clear targets (backward pawns on a7 and d6) and all the time in the world, since Black can do nothing but wait. Even though this superiority may be theoretically inadequate to secure victory, in practice the opponent cannot put up stern and accurate defence for 30-40 consecutive moves.

30...♕e4 31 ♕c3 f5?!

Creating yet another weakness in Black's pawn-structure. The passive 31...♕e7 should have been preferred.

32 ♕d3! ♕xd3 33 ♖1xd3 g6 34 ♖a3 ♔f7 35 ♖a6 ♔e7 36 g4! *(D)*

B



By exploiting Black's inaccuracy (31...f5?!) White will either create a weak isolated pawn (f5) or one more backward pawn (h7).

36...fxg4 37 hxg4 ♖b8!

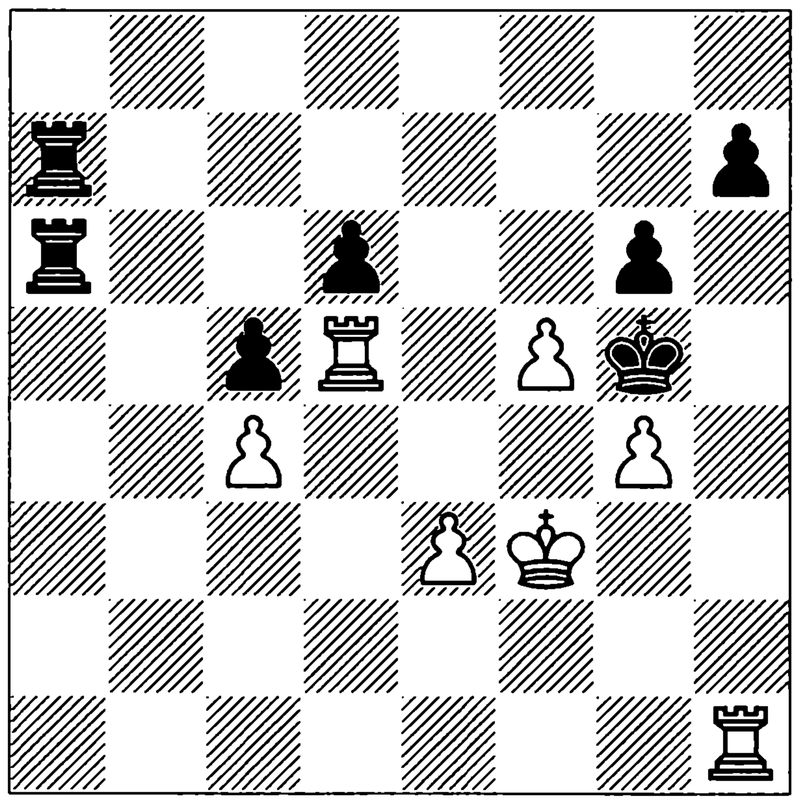
Black must not wait passively any longer and thus, correctly, seeks chances on the queenside.

38 ♔g2?!

White should have continued 38 ♖d3! ♖b6 39 ♖da3 (or 39 ♖a4) with a clear advantage. Now Black rids himself of one of his three backward pawns and, despite ultimately being unable to avoid defeat, significantly improves his position.

38...♖b6 39 ♖a1 a6! 40 bxa6 ♖a7 41 ♖h1 ♔e6 42 f4 ♖bxa6 43 f5+ ♔f6 44 ♔f3 ♔g5! *(D)*

W



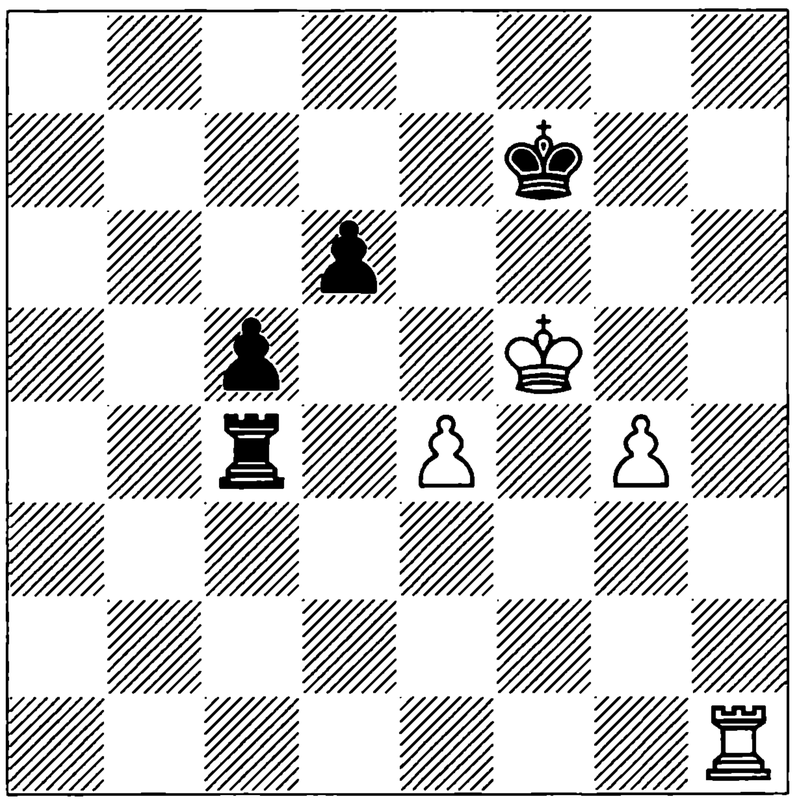
White was threatening 45 ♔f4! g5+ 46 ♔f3 with an easy win, thanks to his protected passed pawn on f5 and the threat of ♖h6+.

45 fxg6+ ♔xg6 46 ♖dh5!

White wins the backward h7-pawn, thereby freeing the path of the g4-pawn; this pawn will prove lethal.

46...♖f7+ 47 ♔e4 ♖e7+ 48 ♔f4 ♖f7+ 49 ♔g3 ♖a3 50 ♖h6+ ♔g7 51 ♖xh7+ ♔f8 52 ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 53 ♔f4 ♖c3 54 e4! ♖xc4 55 ♔f5 *(D)*

B



Despite the fact that material equality remains, the much better placement of the white pieces and the 'fast' g4-pawn give him a decisive advantage.

55...♖d4 56 ♖h7+ ♔g8 57 ♖d7 ♖d1 58 g5 c4 59 ♖c7 d5 60 ♔g6! ♔f8 61 exd5 ♖c1

61...♖xd5 62 ♖xc4 was also easy.

62 d6 ♔e8 63 ♔h7 c3 64 g6 c2 65 g7 ♖h1+ 66 ♔g6 ♖g1+ 67 ♔f6 ♖f1+ 68 ♔e6 ♖e1+ 69 ♔f5 ♖f1+ 70 ♔e4 ♖g1 71 ♖xc2 ♔d7

Or 71...♖xg7 72 ♖c8+! ♔f7 73 ♖c7+ ♔f6 74 ♖xg7 ♔xg7 75 d7.

72 ♔e5 ♔d8 73 ♔f6 ♖f1+ 74 ♔g6 ♖g1+ 75 ♔f7 ♖f1+ 76 ♔g8 ♖h1 77 ♖f2 ♔e8 78 d7+ ♔e7 79 d8♕+ ♔xd8 80 ♔f8 1-0

Grivas – Pekarek

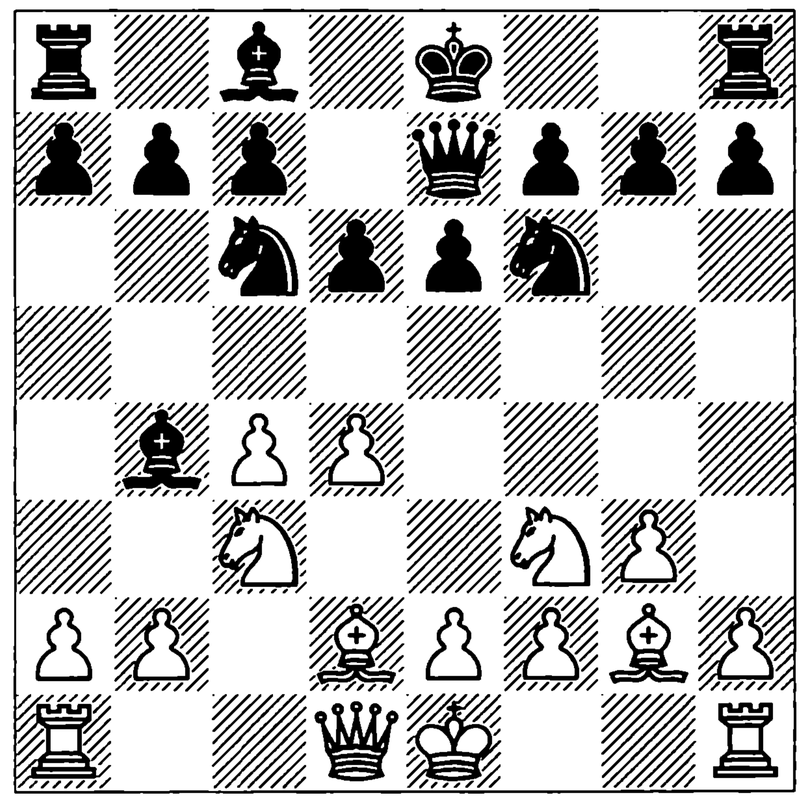
Bucharest 1984

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♗b4+ 4 ♗d2 ♕e7 5 g3 ♘c6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 ♗g2 *(D)*

7...e5?

This immediate advance is known to be inaccurate. The standard continuation for Black is 7...♗xc3 8 ♗xc3 ♘e4 9 ♖c1 ♘xc3 10 ♖xc3 e5 11 d5 ♘b8, with White enjoying slightly better chances.

B



8 ♘d5! ♗xd2+ 9 ♕xd2 ♘xd5 10 cxd5 ♘xd4 11 ♘xd4 exd4 12 ♕xd4 0-0 13 e3?!

White returns the favour. Of course, the advantage remains on his side, but it could have been larger after the correct 13 ♖c1! (13...b6 14 ♕c4!), when Black finds it difficult to proceed with development.

13...♗d7! 14 0-0

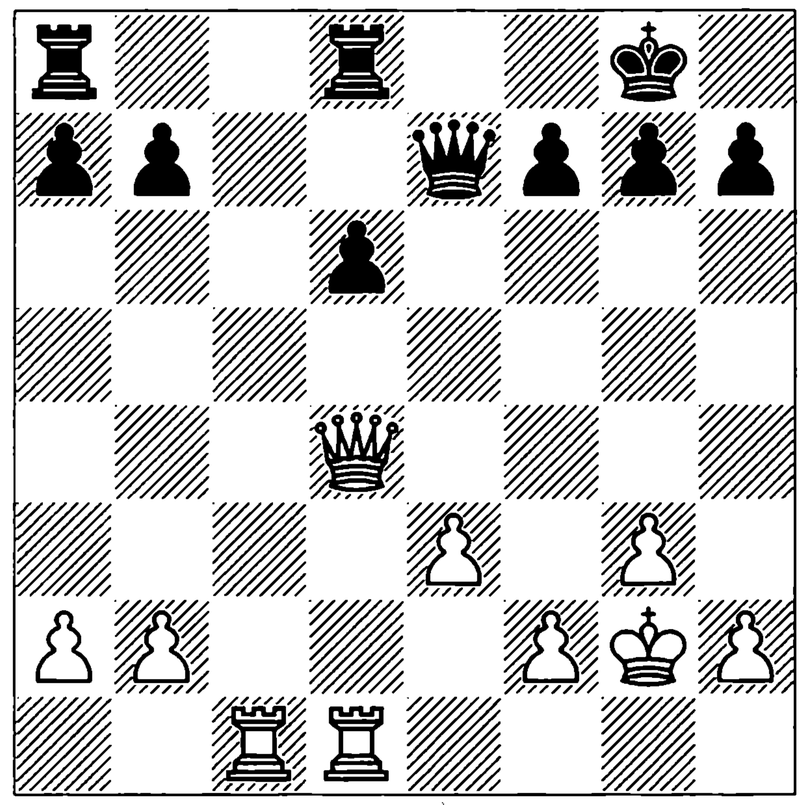
14 ♖c1 ♖fc8 15 0-0 is more accurate.

14...c5! 15 dxc6 ♗xc6

Compulsory, as 15...bxc6?! 16 ♖fd1 d5 17 e4! would drop a pawn.

16 ♖fd1 ♖fd8 17 ♖ac1 ♗xg2 18 ♔xg2 *(D)*

B



In the position that has arisen, the most significant strategic element is Black's backward d-pawn, which is also isolated. The fact that this pawn is not on d5, when we would have a classic example of exploiting the isolated pawn, but on d6 makes White's task harder, as this pawn is less exposed and the black king closer

to it. White does have the advantage, but must discover the correct plans and execute them accurately to fight for victory.

18...a6 19 ♕c4 ♖d7 20 ♖d4 ♖ad8 21 a4 h6

After 21...d5? White knows well what he has to do, in accordance with the principles of attacking an isolated pawn.

22 a5?

A serious error, after which there seems to be no way for White to win. The correct plan was the advance of the b-pawn to b6, from where it would create an invasion base for the white rooks on c7. White could then regroup his pieces with ♕d5, ♖c7 and ♖c1, applying terrible pressure on the b7-pawn; in this case White would have very good chances of victory. This is a typical and practically the only plan in such positions. White would then most likely win by 'technical' means.

22...♕e6! 23 ♖c3 ♕xc4 24 ♖dxc4 ♔f8! 25 ♔f3 ♖e8 26 ♖b4 ♖e5 27 ♖cb3 ♖xa5 28 ♖xb7 ♔e7 29 ♖7b6 ♖c7 30 g4 h5!

This move secures the draw in case Black loses the d6-pawn, provided that the queenside pawns are exchanged in the process. In that case, the rook ending with a 3:2 majority on the kingside will be drawn. White tried for a while:

31 h3 hxg4+ 32 hxg4 ♔d7 33 ♖3b4 ♖c6 34 ♖b8 ♖ac5 35 ♖g8 ♖g5 36 ♖f8 ♔e7 37 ♖a8 f5 38 gxf5 ♖xf5+ 39 ♔g3 ♔f6 40 ♖g4 ♖g5 ½-½

Grivas – Kindermann

Katerini 1992

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 ♗b4+ 4 ♘bd2 0-0 5 e3 c5 6 a3 ♗xd2+ 7 ♕xd2 b6?!

White is slightly better after 7...cxd4 8 ♘xd4 d5 9 cxd5 ♕xd5 10 ♘f3 ♘c6 11 ♕xd5 ♘xd5 12 ♗d2! thanks to his bishop-pair.

8 ♗e2 ♗b7 9 0-0 d6 10 b4 ♘bd7 11 ♗b2 ♘e4 *(D)*

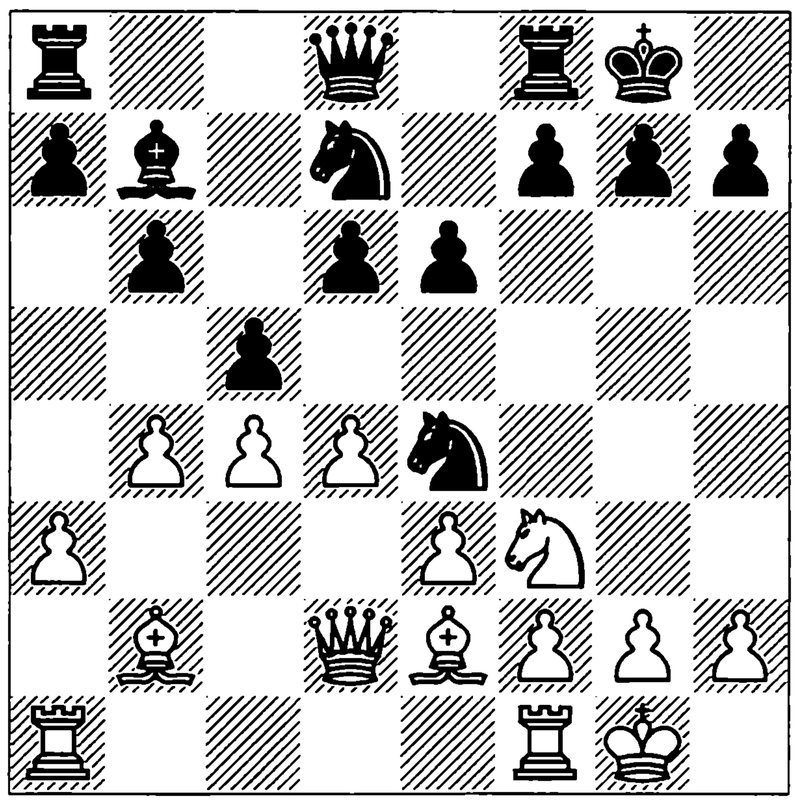
12 ♕d3!

12 ♕c2 f5 13 dxc5 bxc5 14 ♘d2 e5 15 ♖ad1 ♖f6! is unclear.

12...f5 13 dxc5 bxc5?!

13...dxc5 14 ♖ad1 looks ugly as White will control the d-file, but should perhaps be preferred as in the game Black fails to keep White's superiority within reasonable bounds.

W



14 ♘d2! ♕e7

After 14...♕g5 15 f3! (here lies the difference between 12 ♕d3! and 12 ♕c2: the e3-pawn is protected) White retains his advantage.

15 ♖ad1 ♘g5

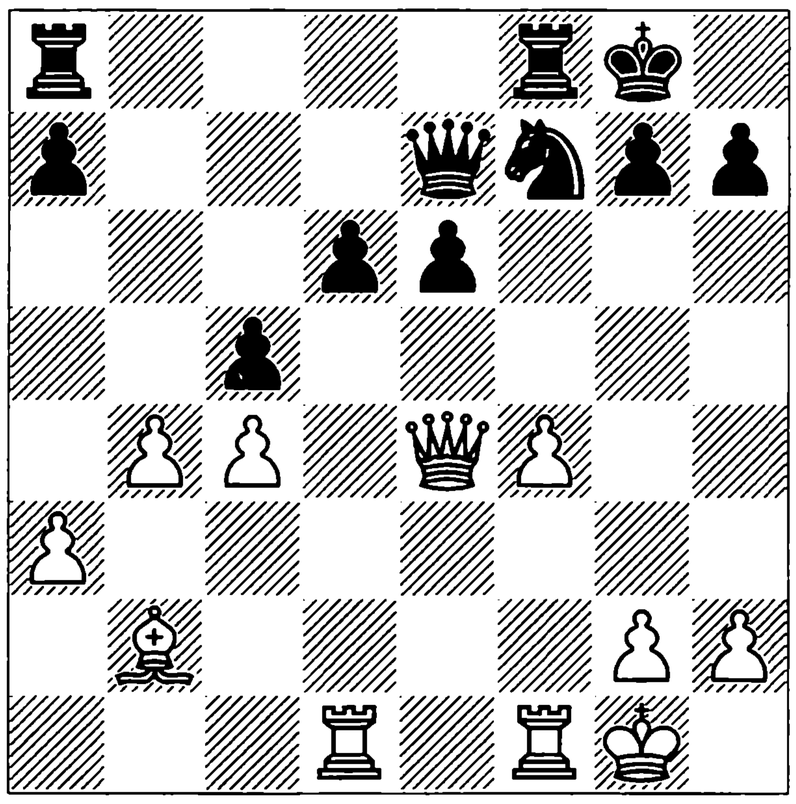
Black had no choice as pawn exchanges in the centre (after 15...d5) would enhance the power of the white bishops.

16 f4! ♘f7 17 e4

White has the upper hand and opening the position is in his favour, as Black's weaknesses will be highlighted.

17...♘f6 18 ♗f3! fxe4 19 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 20 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 21 ♕xe4 *(D)*

B



White is better thanks to his superior pawn-structure (backward black pawns on e6 and d6, isolated pawn on a7) and better minor piece (bishop vs knight). Perhaps Black should proceed with 21...cxb4!?, although White has the

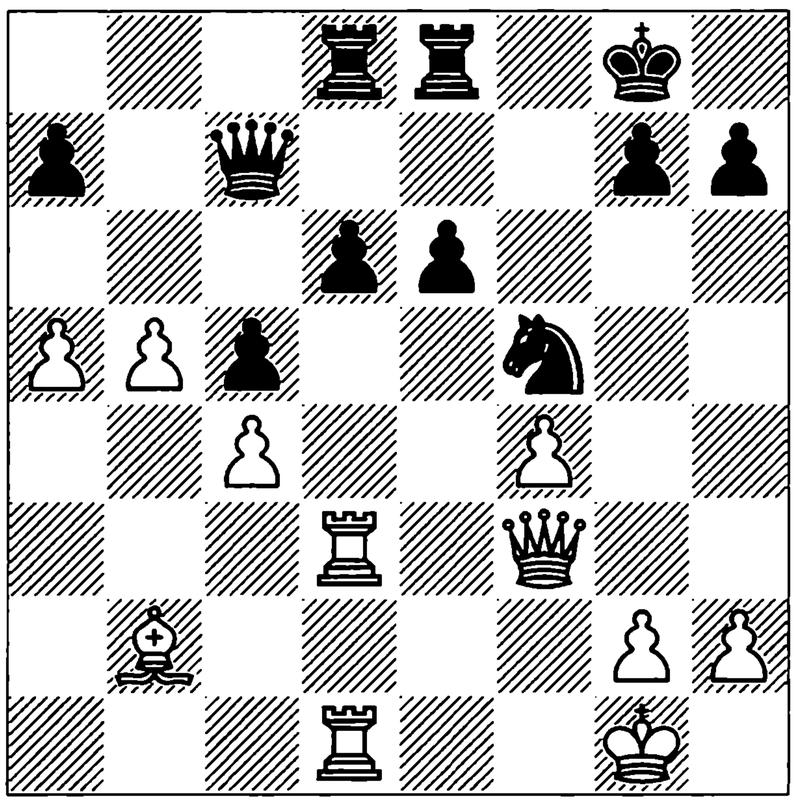
advantage after 22 axb4 ♖ac8 23 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 24 ♕d4 ♕f8 25 b5.

21...♖ac8 22 b5!

Also obtaining a 2:1 pawn-majority on the queenside. In effect, the black central pawns are 'dead' as they have been immobilized on uncomfortable squares and serve only as targets for White.

22...♖fe8 23 ♖d3 ♘h6 24 ♖fd1 ♖cd8 25 a4 ♘f5 26 a5 ♕f7 27 ♕f3 ♕c7 *(D)*

W



28 ♗c3?

A mistake, giving Black the chance to rid himself of part of his problems. White should have played 28 a6!, retaining a clear plus.

28...♘d4! 29 ♗xd4 cxd4 30 ♖xd4 ♕xa5 31 h3

Only now did White realize that the continuation he was planning when playing 28 ♗c3?, i.e. 31 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 32 ♖xd6 ♕e1+ 33 ♕f1 ♕e3+ 34 ♔h1 (34 ♕f2 is a draw) 34...♖f8!, would allow Black good counterplay in exchange for the pawn.

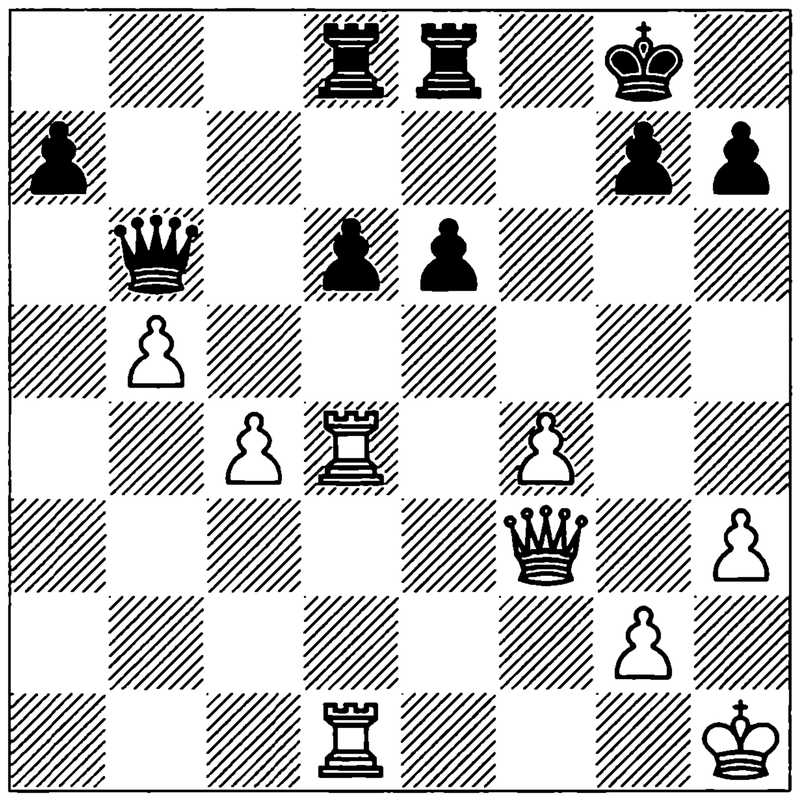
31...♕b6 32 ♔h1 *(D)*

32...h6?!

Black should have played 32...a6!, exchanging another of his weak pawns and thus further decreasing White's superiority. The continuation 33 ♕c6!? ♕xc6 34 bxc6 bears no fruit because of 34...♔f7! (and not 34...d5? 35 f5!). White would retain a slight edge due to the backward black d- and e-pawns, but Black would in return have obtained counterplay against the weak white pawn on c4.

33 ♕d3 ♕c5 34 ♕g6

B



The consequence of the careless 32...h6?!.

34...♖e7 35 ♖e4 ♖de8 36 ♖d3?

36 ♔h2! is correct, with advantage.

36...d5!

The right reaction. Instead, 36...♔h8 37 ♖de3 d5 38 cxd5 ♕xd5 39 ♖e5 leaves White with an advantage.

37 cxd5 ♕xb5?

With the correct 37...exd5 Black can fully equalize, as 38 ♕xe8+? ♖xe8 39 ♖xe8+ ♔f7! is not ideal for White.

38 ♖xe6 ♖f7 39 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 40 d6 ♕d7 41 ♕e4 ♖f8 42 ♕d4! ♖f6

No help was offered by 42...♖d8 43 ♖g3! intending f5-f6. Black is now lost.

43 ♕c4+ ♔h7 44 ♖d4 a5 45 ♕c2+ ♔g8 46 ♕c7 ♖f7 47 ♕xa5 ♔h8 48 ♕a8+ ♔h7 49 ♕e4+ ♔g8 50 ♕d5 1-0

Grivas – Karayiannis

Khania 1992

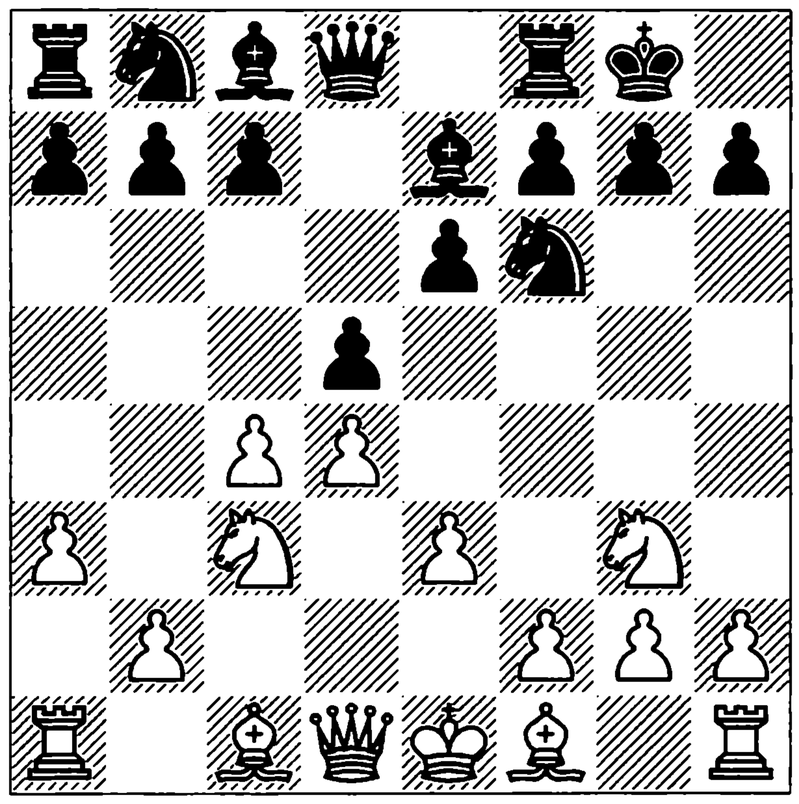
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 0-0 5 ♘e2 d5 6 a3 ♗e7 7 ♘g3 *(D)*

7...a6?!

Black can try several other moves here:

a) 7...c5 8 dxc5 ♗xc5 9 b4 ♗d6 10 ♗b2 ♘c6 11 ♗e2 a5 12 b5 ♘e5 13 cxd5 exd5 14 0-0 ♗e6 ± Nenashev-Nguyen, Asian Cht (Kuala Lumpur) 1993.

b) 7...b6 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♗d3 c5 10 0-0 g6 11 dxc5 bxc5 12 e4 ♘bd7 13 exd5 ♘b6 14 ♕e1 ♗b7 15 ♗h6 ♖e8 16 ♗b5 ♘fd7 17 ♘ge4 a6 18 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 19 d6 ♗d8 20 ♘xc5 1-0 Nenashev-Gogolis, Khania 1994.

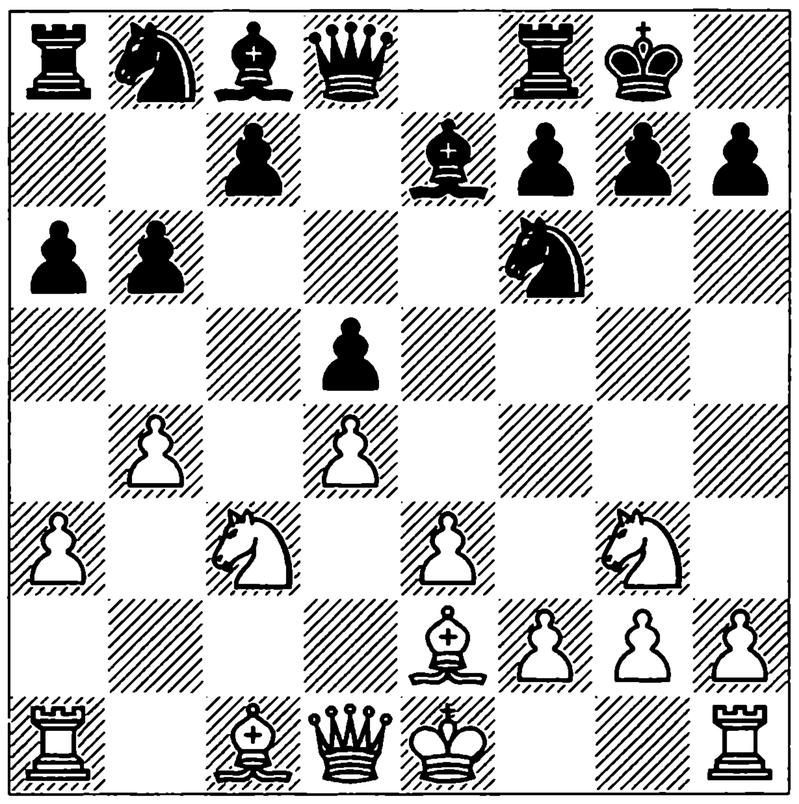

B

c) 7...c6 8 ♗d3 b6 9 0-0 ♗b7 10 ♕e2 ♘bd7 11 ♖d1 ♕c7 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 ♗d2 ± Nenashev-Bogdanovski, Moscow OL 1994.

d) 7...♖e8 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♗d3 c6 10 ♕c2 h5 11 f3 c5 12 ♘ce2 ♕b6 13 dxc5 ♗xc5 14 ♘f1 ♕d6 15 ♗d2 ♘c6 16 0-0-0 ♗d7 17 ♔b1 ♖ac8 18 ♗c3 ♘e5 19 ♘d4 ♕b6 20 ♔a2 ♗xd4 21 ♗xd4 ♖xc2 22 ♗xb6 ♘xd3 0-1 I.Nikolaidis-Aleksandrov, St Petersburg 1994.

The move chosen by Black does not correspond to the requirements of the position and is practically a loss of time.

8 b4 b6 9 cxd5 exd5 10 ♗e2 *(D)*


B

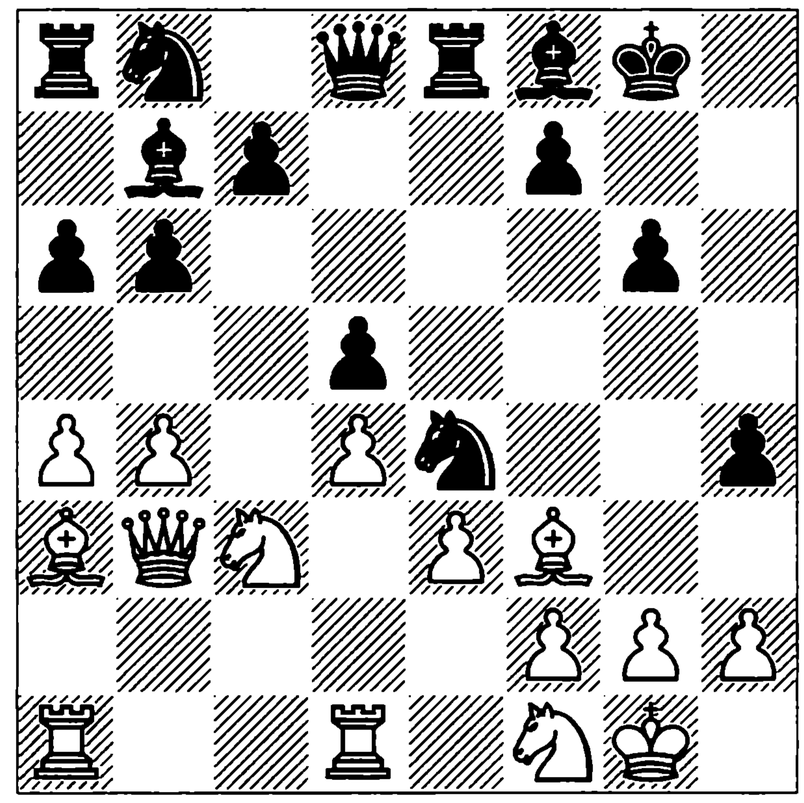
10...♖e8

Black refuses to make the ...c5 advance, which results in an isolated pawn on d5 but also ensures him adequate piece-play. This refusal will result in a backward c-pawn, which will constitute a serious weakness.

11 0-0 ♗f8 12 ♗f3 ♗b7 13 ♕b3!

White is consistently discouraging the ...c5 advance. His next plan is to blockade the c7-pawn, practically making it a backward one.

13...g6 14 a4! h5 15 ♖d1 h4 16 ♘f1 ♘e4 17 ♗a3! *(D)*

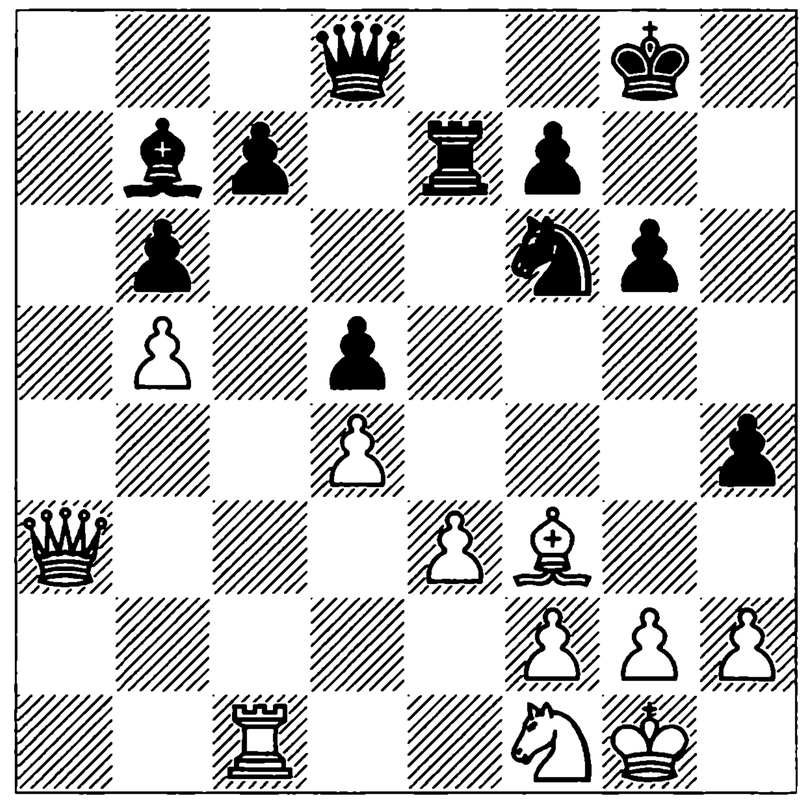

B

The exchange of dark-squared bishops will reduce Black's active potential and at the same time will further weaken the backward c7-pawn, as one of its main supporting pieces will be exchanged.

17...♘xc3 18 ♕xc3 ♘d7 19 b5 ♗xa3 20 ♖xa3 axb5?!

The a-file must remain closed. Black must avoid the involvement of further strategic elements (such as an open a-file), as it will be easier to defend only one weakness.

21 axb5 ♖xa3 22 ♕xa3 ♘f6 23 ♖c1 ♖e7 *(D)*

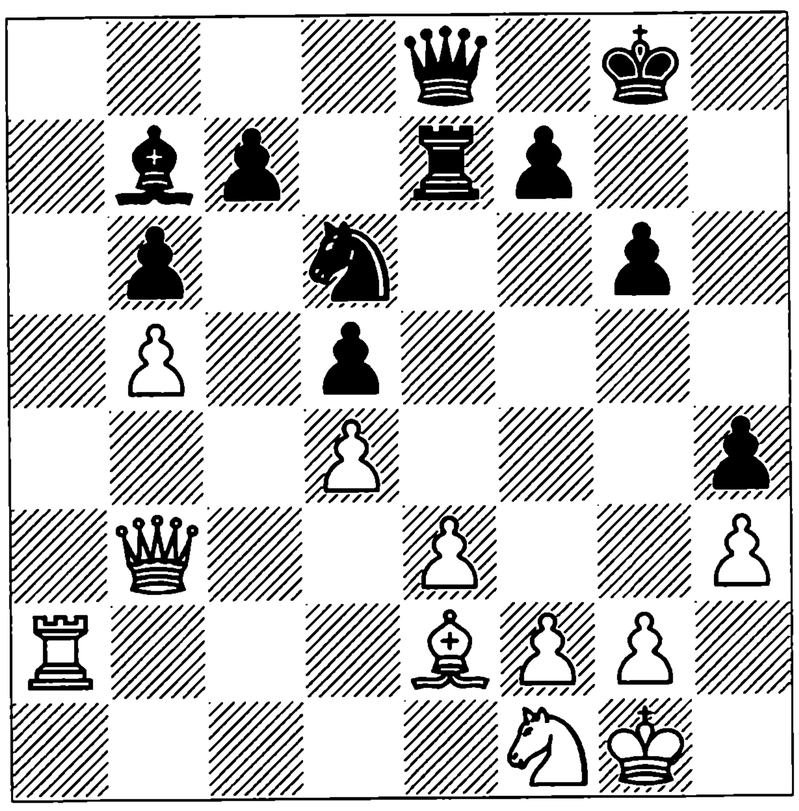

W

White has the advantage, as he can focus his attention on the backward black c-pawn while

his bishop is also stronger than the corresponding black one. If Black achieves the ...c5 or ...c6 advance in the future, then after bxc6 he will be left with an isolated b-pawn. Consequently, no matter what Black does, his pawn-structure will remain unpleasant and his problems will not disappear.

24 h3 ♘e8 25 ♕b3 ♕a8 26 ♖c2! ♘d6 27 ♖a2 ♕e8 28 ♗e2 *(D)*

B



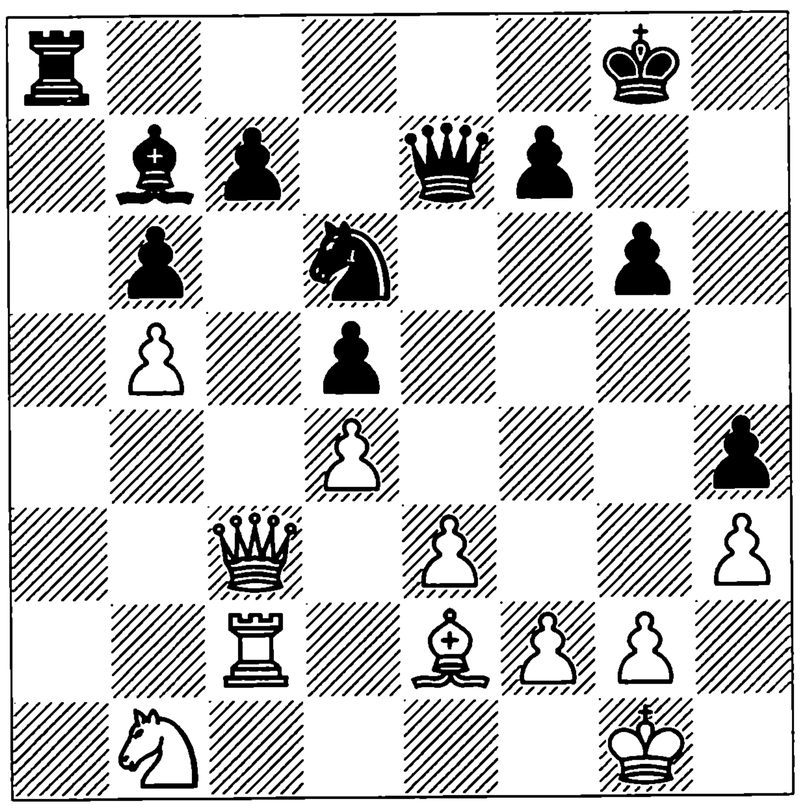
White improves the placement of his pieces, seeking to maximize their power. His knight will be placed on b4 or c3 and the bishop on f3, increasing Black's problems as he will now have to worry about the practically isolated pawn on d5 as well.

28...♖d7 29 ♘d2 ♖d8 30 ♘b1 ♖a8 31 ♖c2!

Pressure on the backward c-pawn is more important than possession of the open a-file, which Black can hardly make use of.

31...♕e7 32 ♕c3! *(D)*

B



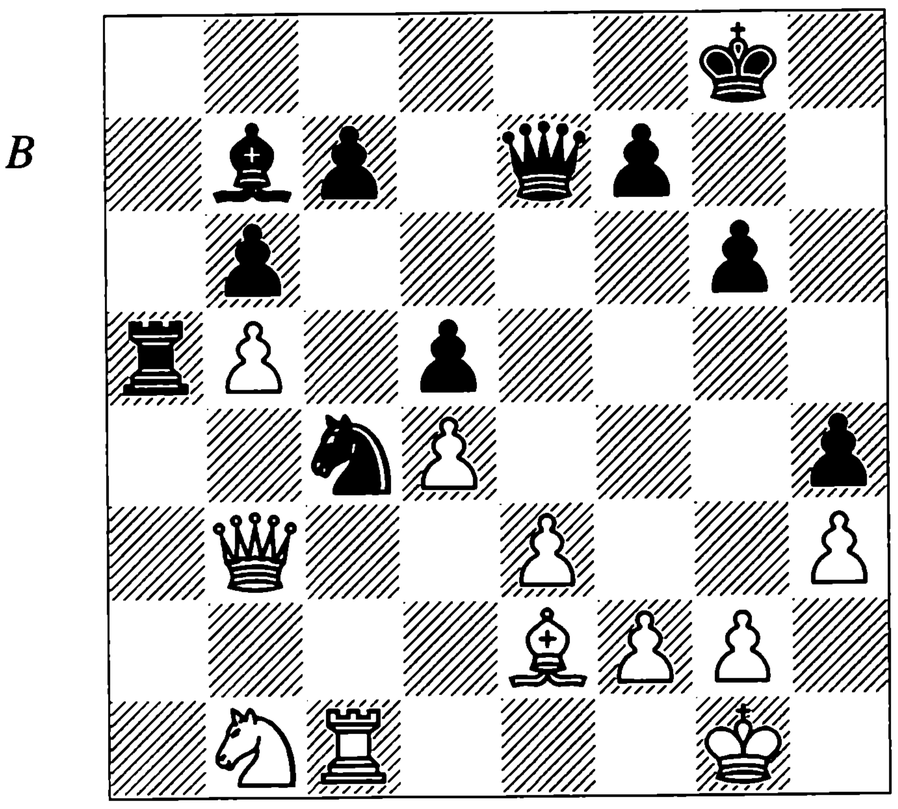
Planning to meet 32...♖c8 by 33 ♘a3! with the idea ♖c1 and ♘c2-b4.

32...♘c4!?

Black refuses to remain passive and proceeds to sacrifice a pawn, aiming to activate his pieces. From a practical viewpoint this decision cannot be criticized, as waiting tactics would give White a free hand.

33 ♖c1! ♖a5 34 ♕b3! *(D)*

B



White is in no rush. If Black so wishes, he can retreat his knight and remain passive!

34...♖a1 35 ♖d1 ♔g7 36 ♗xc4 dxc4 37 ♕xc4 ♕e4 38 ♕f1 g5?!

Black is trying to launch an attack, but this idea is clearly a dream; the only thing Black eventually succeeds in doing is weakening his own structure.

39 ♘c3! ♖xd1 40 ♘xd1 ♕d5 41 ♘c3 ♕b3 42 ♕c1!

White's position is winning.

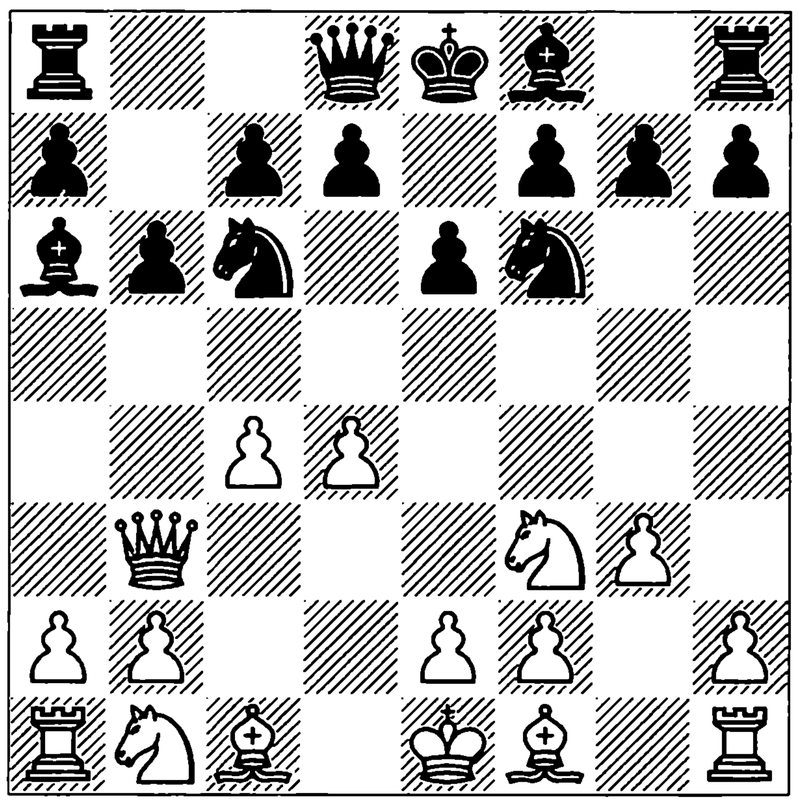
42...♕b4 43 d5 ♕d6 44 ♕d2 ♕e5 45 f4 gxf4 46 exf4 ♕e7 47 ♕d4+ ♕f6 48 ♕c4 ♕d6 49 ♔f2 ♔g8 50 ♕d4 ♕g6 51 ♘e4 f5 52 ♘g5 ♕d6 53 ♘e6 ♕d7 54 ♕f6 ♗xd5 55 ♕f8+ ♔h7 56 ♕xf5+ ♔g8 57 ♕g6+ ♔h8 58 ♕f6+ ♔g8 59 ♘d4 ♗c4 60 ♔g1 ♗d3 61 ♘c6 ♕d6 1-0

Grivas – Kalesis

Komotini 1993

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♗a6 5 ♕b3 ♘c6 *(D)*

6 ♘bd2


W

Black threatened 6...♘a5, though it is worth mentioning that Barlov used to sacrifice a pawn by 6 ♘c3!? ♘a5 7 ♕c2 ♘xc4 8 e4!?.

6...♗b7

6...♘a5 is more common; for example: 7 ♕c2 c5 8 ♗g2 ♖c8 9 dxc5 ♗xc5 10 ♕a4 ♗b7 11 b4 ♗c6 12 ♕a3 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♗d4 14 ♖b1 ♘xc4 15 ♘xc4 ♖xc4 16 ♕xa7 ♗c3+ 17 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 18 ♔xd2 ♘e4+ 19 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 20 ♖hc1 0-0 21 ♔e1 ♕g5 22 ♕xd7 ♖xb4 23 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 24 ♔xd2 ½-½ Grivas-Vaganian, Rome ECC 1995.

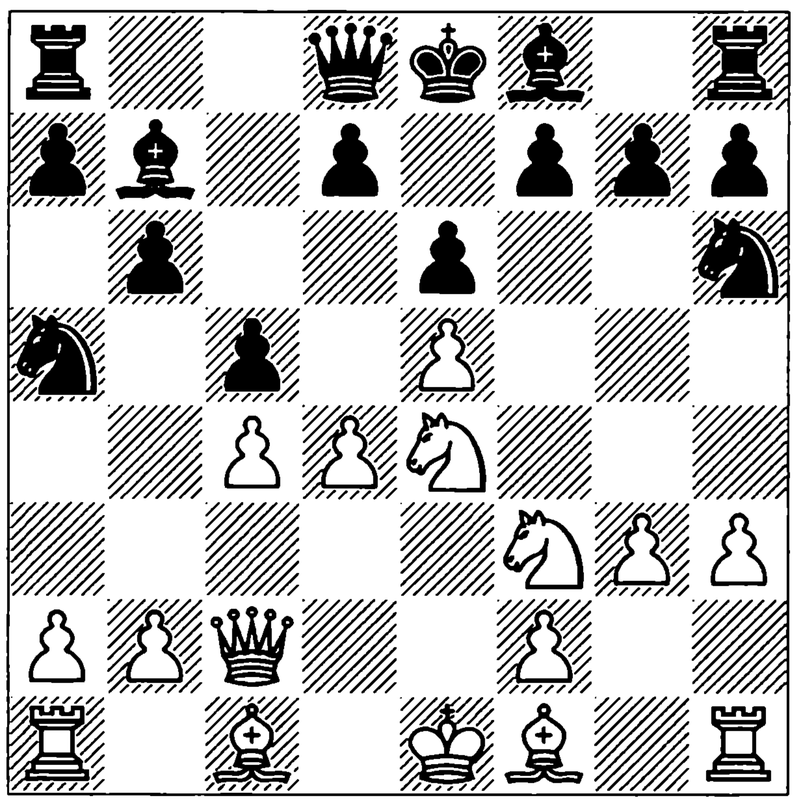
7 e4 ♘a5 8 ♕c2 c5!?

A new idea in this position. Most players prefer 8...♗b4.

9 e5

White could instead play 9 d5!?, with a slightly better position.

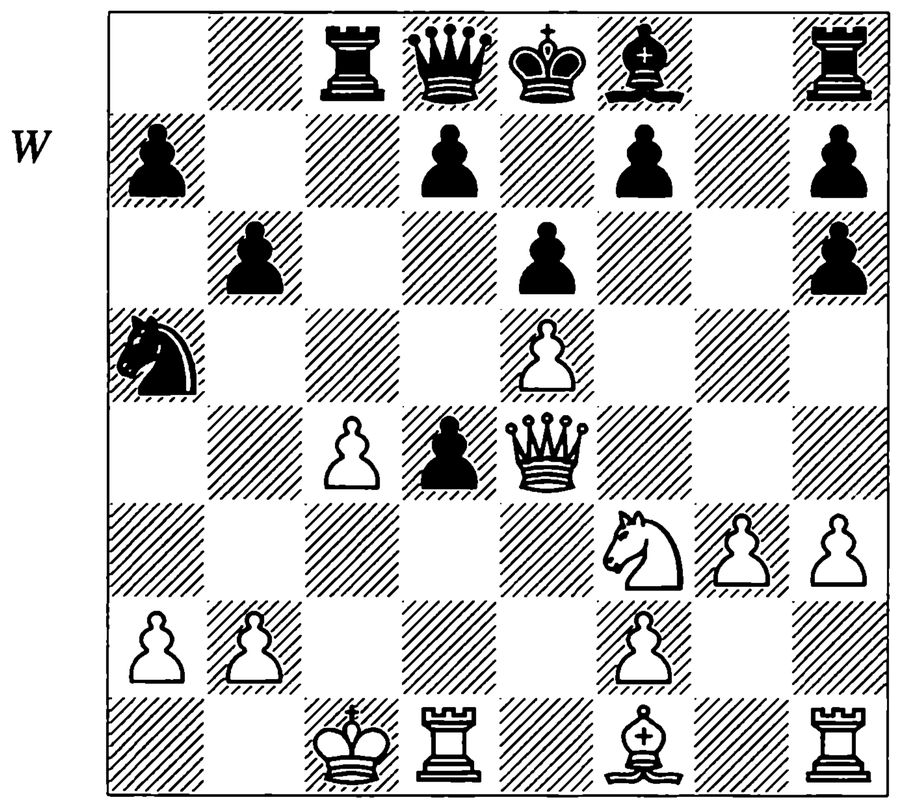
9...♘g4 10 h3 ♘h6 11 ♘e4 *(D)*


B

11...♗xe4?

A serious mistake by Black. 11...♘f5? 12 ♗g5 ♕b8 (12...♗e7?! 13 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 14 dxc5 bxc5 15 g4! ±) 13 d5! exd5 14 cxd5 ♗xd5 15 0-0-0! ♗xa2 16 ♗b5! was hardly satisfactory either, but Black had to choose 11...f5! 12 exf6 gxf6 13 ♗g2 with unclear play and a multitude of possibilities.

12 ♕xe4 cxd4 13 ♗xh6 gxh6 14 0-0-0 ♖c8 *(D)*


W

15 ♔b1!!

A very strong move, after which Black cannot continue with 15...♘xc4 16 ♖xd4 b5 (16...♘a5 17 ♗b5 and ♖hd1, with powerful pressure on the backward d7-pawn) 17 ♗xc4 bxc4 18 ♖xc4 ±. The immediate 15 ♖xd4?! ♗c5! 16 ♖d2 b5! would give Black plenty of hope.

15...♗g7?!

White retains his advantage after 15...♘c6! 16 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗c5 18 ♖d2 ♕c7 thanks to the backward d7-pawn and the weakened black king, but this line had to be preferred anyway.

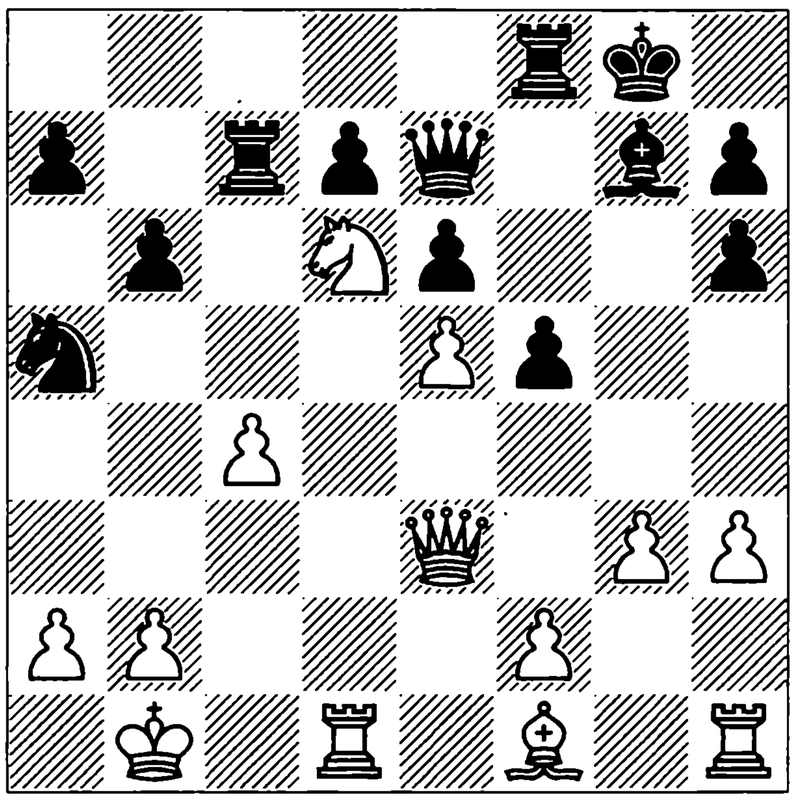
16 ♘xd4! f5 17 ♕e3! ♕e7

Naturally, 17...♘xc4? 18 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 19 ♘xe6! would be disastrous for Black.

18 ♘b5! 0-0 19 ♘d6 ♖c7 *(D)*

White has an excellent position, having fixed the backward black d-pawn with both knight and pawn. Moreover, White's overall pawn-structure is superior and he has a significant space advantage. As a result of the above, his position is almost winning. The only thing White must cater for is possible counterplay by means of 20...f4!? 21 gxf4 ♕h4.

W



20 f4!

Not only stopping the aforementioned counterplay but also preparing ♖h2-d2!, increasing the pressure on the backward d-pawn. The f1-bishop will be developed later, wherever and whenever it will be necessary.

20...♘b7

Threatening 21...♘xd6! 22 exd6? ♕f6!.

21 ♖h2! ♕d8

Black is hardly in an enviable position, but could at least prolong the game with 21...♘c5.

22 ♘b5! ♖c5 23 ♕f3! ♖xb5

And at the same time Black resigned, in view of 24 ♕xb7! ♖c5 25 ♖xd7. No relief was offered by 23...♘a5 24 b4 or 23...♕b8 24 ♖xd7 ♖f7 25 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 26 ♕xb7+!.

1-0

Grivas – T. Wall

Cappelle la Grande 1995

1 d4 ♘c6 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d5 ♘e5 4 ♘xe5 dxe5 5 e4 ♘f6 6 ♗b5+ ♗d7 7 ♕e2 e6?!

More positional is 7...a6 8 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 intending ...e6.

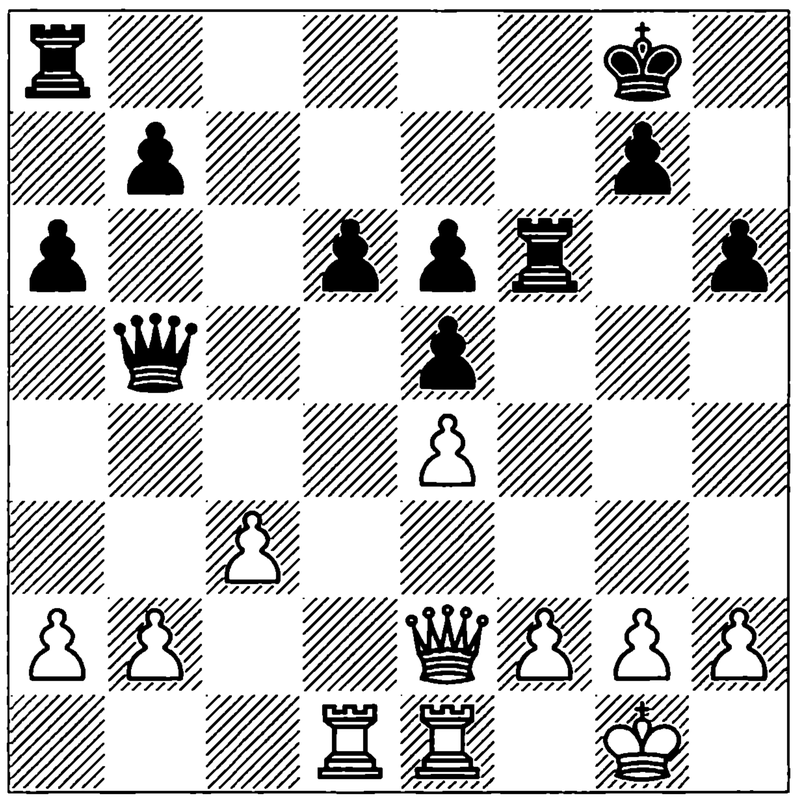
8 dxe6 fxe6 9 ♗g5 ♗b4+ 10 c3 ♗d6 11 ♘d2 0-0 12 0-0 a6 13 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 14 ♘c4 ♕b5 15 ♖fe1 h6 16 ♘xd6!

After an unusual opening, where White obtained a slight edge thanks to his superior pawn-structure, a transformation of strategic elements occurs. White creates a backward black pawn on d6, hoping to take advantage of it in the future.

16...cxd6 17 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 18 ♖ad1! *(D)*

After 18 ♕xb5 axb5 19 a3 ♔f7 Black is able to strengthen his defence of the backward d6-pawn.

B



White retains his superiority solely thanks to the presence of this backward black pawn. His advantage is not great, but it is stable and of a static nature. Consequently, Black has a long and tough defensive effort ahead, devoid of any practical winning chances.

18...♕b6 19 ♖d2 ♖d8 20 ♕e3 ♕c6

Black should have exchanged queens, so as to be able to let the king participate in the defence of d6. The presence of queens suits White, because his queen can perform both offensive and defensive functions, while Black's queen can only defend.

21 ♖ed1 ♖f7 22 ♕h3 ♖f6 23 ♕g4 ♕c5 24 h3 ♔h7 25 ♕e2 ♔g8 26 ♕e3!

Both sides manoeuvre in the background, avoiding a direct clash. Black cannot exchange queens now as he then drops the d6-pawn.

26...♕c6 27 ♖d3 ♖f4 28 f3 ♖f7 29 ♖1d2 b5?! *(D)*

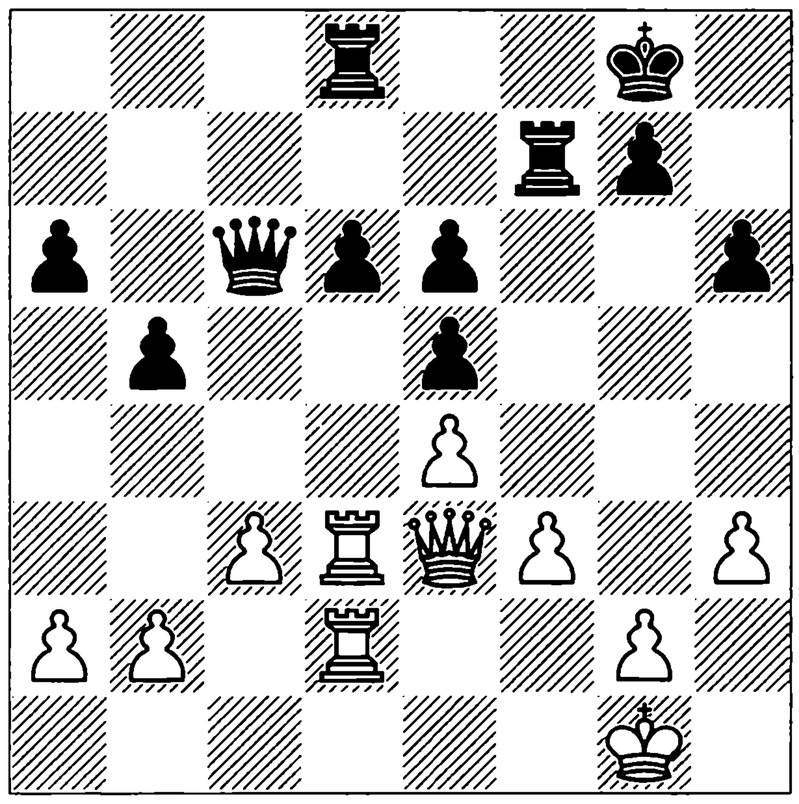
Every pawn move that does not have a specific purpose just creates another weakness.

30 ♔h1 ♖c7 31 a3 ♖f7 32 ♔h2 ♖c7 33 f4!?

White needs a pawn-break in order to achieve his aims. On the negative side, the e4-pawn is now weakened; but Black can hardly put pressure on it for the moment.

33...exf4 34 ♕xf4 ♖f7 35 ♕h4 ♕b6 36 ♕g4 ♖f1?

Black collapses, seeing that after 36...♖e7 (36...♖f6?? 37 e5) 37 ♕g6!, intending ♖d4,



♖2d3 and e5 followed by ♖h4 and ♖g3, White will obtain a strong attack, and sacrifices a pawn hoping for counterplay against the white king. This evaluation is mistaken, as White can defend against all of Black's threats.

37 ♕xe6+ ♔h7 38 ♖d4 ♖e1 39 ♖f2! ♕c5 40 ♖f7 ♖e2 41 ♖d5 ♕e3 42 ♕f5+ ♔h8 43 ♖f8+ ♖xf8 44 ♕xf8+ ♔h7 45 ♕f5+ ♔h8 46 ♖xd6 ♕g5 47 ♕xg5 hxg5 48 b4!

The game is effectively over. It has been decided by simple means, without any deep plans or spectacular moves – a typical example of exploiting a backward pawn.

48...♖xe4 49 ♖xa6 ♖c4 50 ♖g6 ♖xc3 51 ♖xg5 ♖xa3 52 ♖xb5 ♖b3 53 h4 ♔h7 54 g3 ♔g6 55 ♔h3 ♔f6 56 ♔g4 g6 57 ♔f4 ♔e6 58 g4 ♔f6 59 ♖b6+ ♔f7 60 ♔g5 1-0

Frendzas – Grivas

Athens 1996

1 e4 c5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 ♘ge2 e6 4 g3 ♘f6 5 ♗g2 ♗e7 6 0-0 0-0 7 h3 a6 8 d3 ♖e8 *(D)*

Black has played the opening in an unusual way, or an original way if you like. On the other hand, White can hardly fight for an advantage by digging in his heels, and thus decides to play more actively.

9 f4 d5 10 e5 ♘d7 11 ♔h2 b5 12 a4?!

White commands more space but he cannot possibly try to develop an initiative on the side that 'belongs' to Black. 12 d4 is more normal.

12...♖b8! 13 b3?

White should continue with 13 d4 or the manoeuvre 13 ♘b1 and ♘d2-f3. The text-move, apart from being completely useless for White's own plans, gives Black a target for a future ...c4 advance.

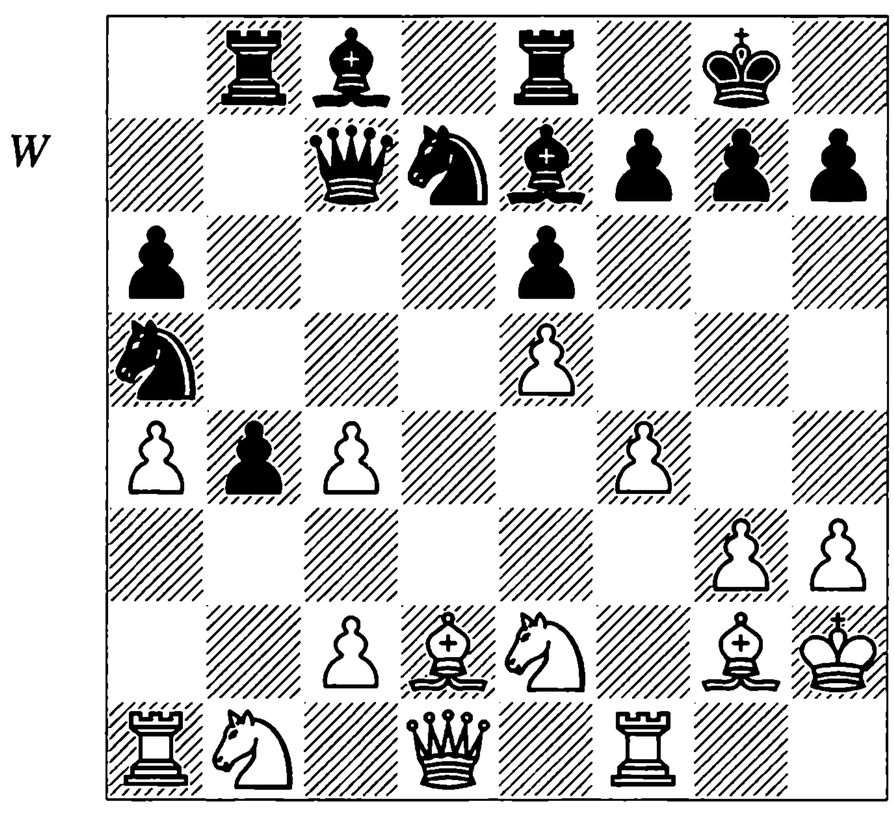
13...♕c7 14 ♗d2?!

White is playing without a plan. His last three moves have greatly damaged his position.

14...b4! 15 ♘b1 c4! 16 dxc4 dxc4 17 bxc4

Forced, due to the threat of 17...c3, which would lock in the b1-knight forever.

17...♘a5 *(D)*



But now the backward c2-pawn will come under strong pressure.

18 ♘d4 ♗b7 19 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 20 ♘b3 ♘xc4

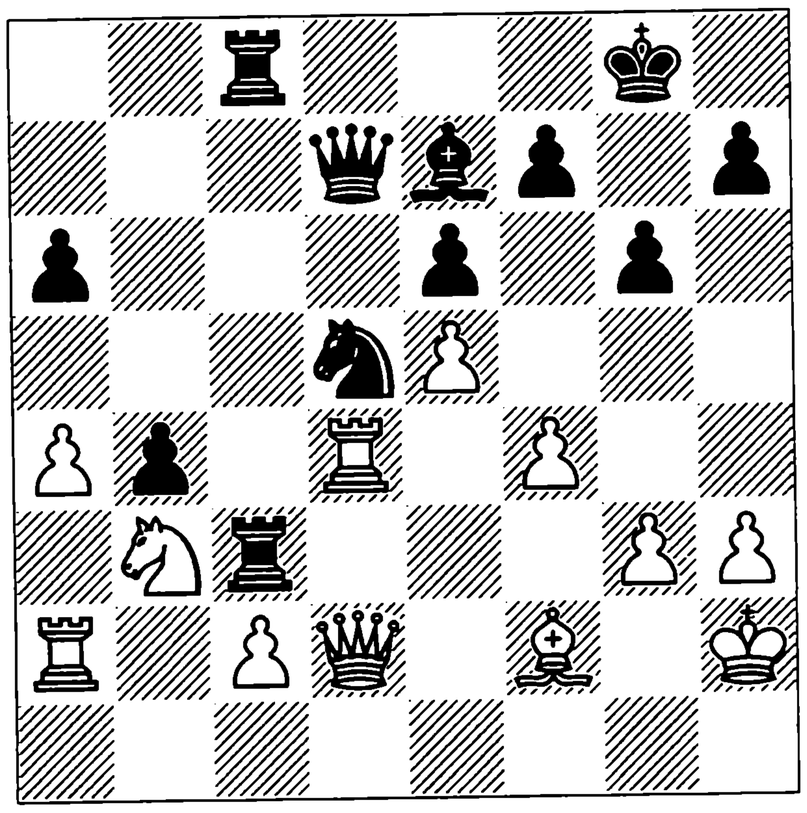
With his last few moves, Black has exchanged the strong g2-bishop and improved the c6-knight's prospects. His advantage is big, as he controls several central squares and has at his disposal a clear plan, to exploit the backward c2-pawn.

21 ♕e2 ♘db6 22 ♗e1 ♘d5 23 ♗f2 ♖c8 24 ♖a2 ♕d7 25 ♖d1 g6

Both sides manoeuvre, but with different aims: White is defending, Black is attacking. In these 'charmless' cases, the attacker can rarely go wrong!

26 ♖d4 ♖bc7 27 ♘1d2 ♘xd2 28 ♕xd2 ♖c3! *(D)*

W



Black's advantage is clear and is not based solely on the presence of the backward c2-pawn, but also on the better placement of his pieces in comparison with White's, the power of which is totally 'wasted' on guarding the weak pawn. If we also take the weakness of the white king into account, we can consider that Black's superiority is nearly decisive.

29 ♖d3 ♕c7 30 ♘d4

30 ♖xc3? ♘xc3 31 ♖a1 ♘e4 would be easy.

30...♗c5!

Exchanging a minor piece will further highlight White's weaknesses on both flanks.

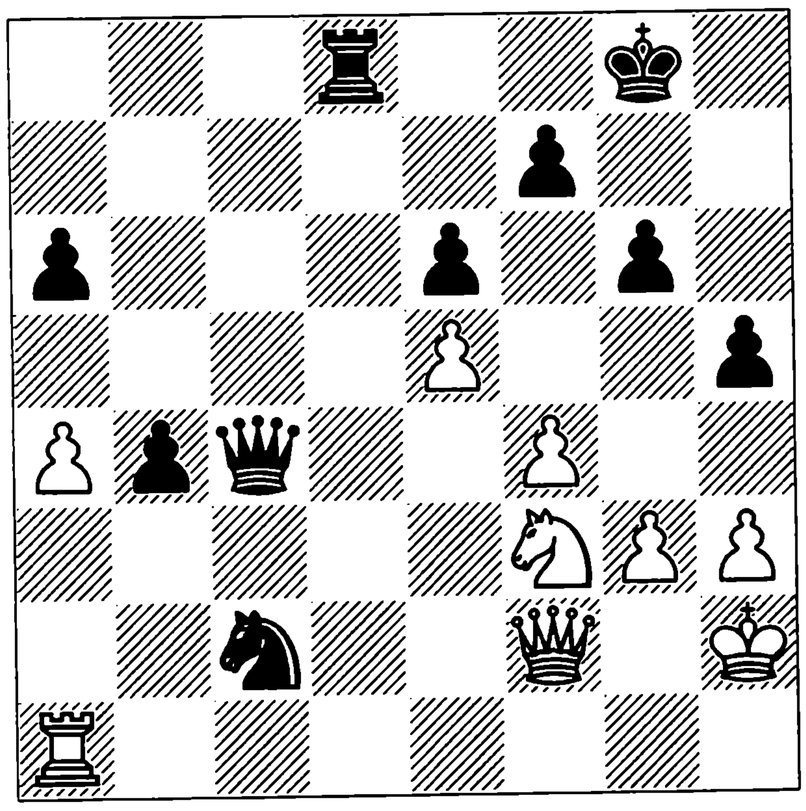
31 ♘b3 ♗xf2 32 ♕xf2 h5!

An instructive moment. Black could immediately win the weak white pawn on c2, but then he would have to exchange his good pieces for White's useless ones. As a result he would have won a pawn that is doomed anyway, but he would also have missed the chance to increase his superiority. This is a good example of non-trivial exploitation of this superiority.

33 ♘d4 ♕c4! 34 ♖xc3 ♘xc3 35 ♖a1 ♖d8! 36 ♘f3 ♘d1! 37 ♕g2 ♘e3 38 ♕f2 ♘xc2 *(D)*

The weak c2-pawn has been lost without Black having to exchange his more active

W



pieces. Black retains an attack and, if he fails to achieve anything more, will just win the ending!

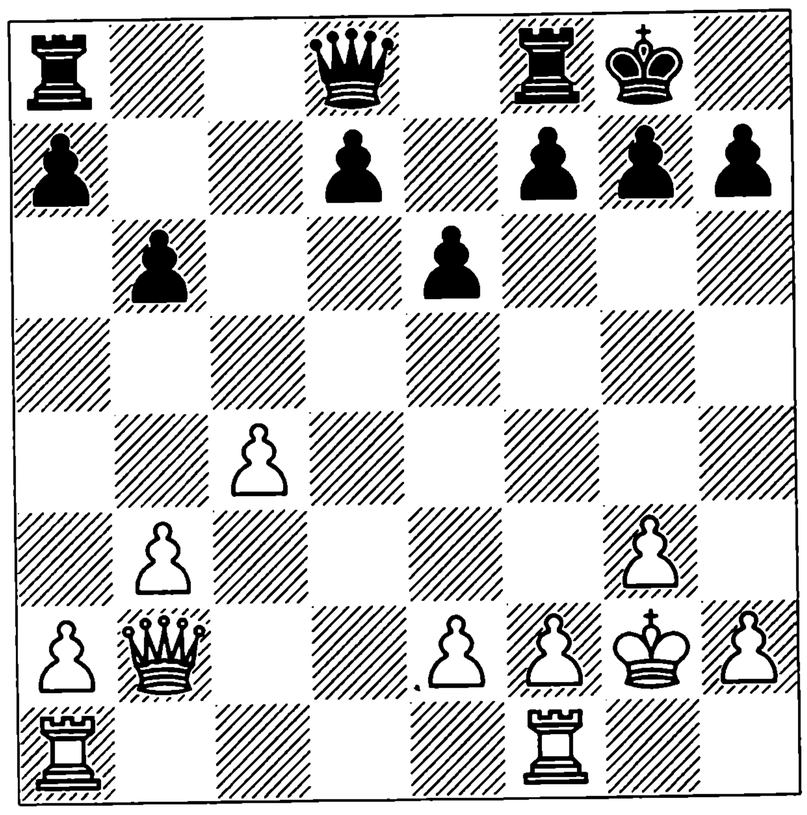
39 ♖b1 ♘d4! 40 ♖b2 ♘xf3+ 41 ♕xf3 a5 42 h4 ♕c1 43 ♖f2 ♕d1 44 ♕b7 ♕e1 45 ♖c2 ♖d3 46 ♕g2 ♔g7 0-1

Grivas – C. Ionescu

Olympiad, Elista 1998

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 b6 4 g3 ♗b7 5 ♗g2 ♗e7 6 0-0 0-0 7 ♘c3 ♘e4 8 ♕c2 ♘xc3 9 ♕xc3 c5?! 10 b3 cxd4 11 ♘xd4 ♗xg2 12 ♔xg2 ♘c6 13 ♗b2 ♘xd4 14 ♕xd4 ♗f6 15 ♕d2 ♗xb2 16 ♕xb2 *(D)*

B

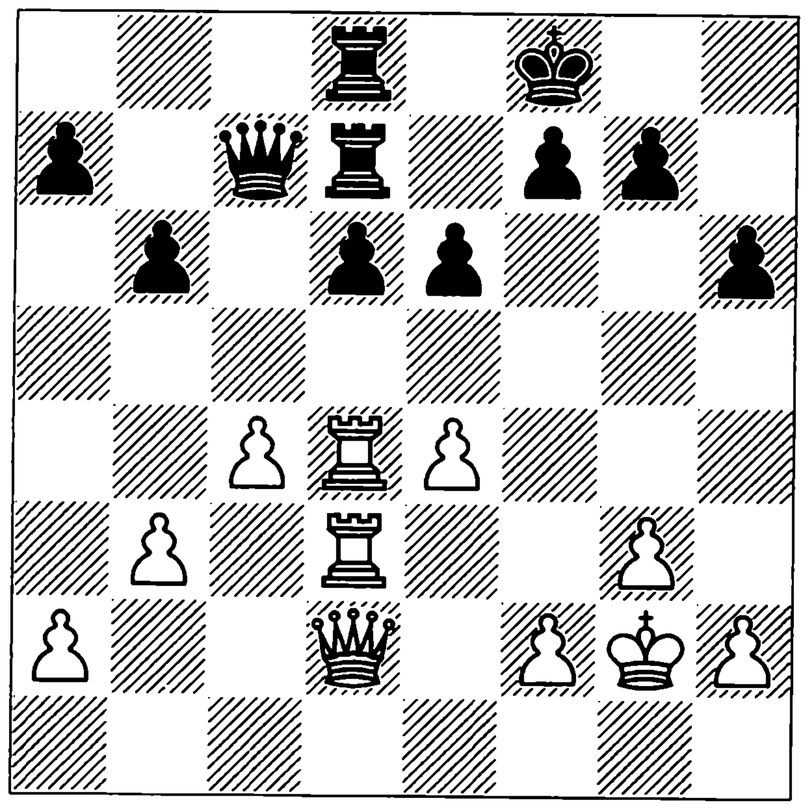


After a long theoretical variation (which is more extensively analysed in Grivas-Khetsuriani, Athens 2003 in Volume 3 of this series) Black is stuck with a weak backward pawn on d7. Naturally, as often happens in this type of

position, White's advantage is not really great, but it is static and consequently long-term, while the danger of defeat is significantly reduced. White's plans are simple and include the doubling of the major pieces on the d-file and the development of an initiative on both flanks.

16...♕c7 17 ♖fd1 ♖fd8 18 ♖d4 d6 19 ♖ad1 ♖d7 20 ♖1d3 ♖ad8 21 ♕d2 ♔f8 22 e4 h6 *(D)*

W

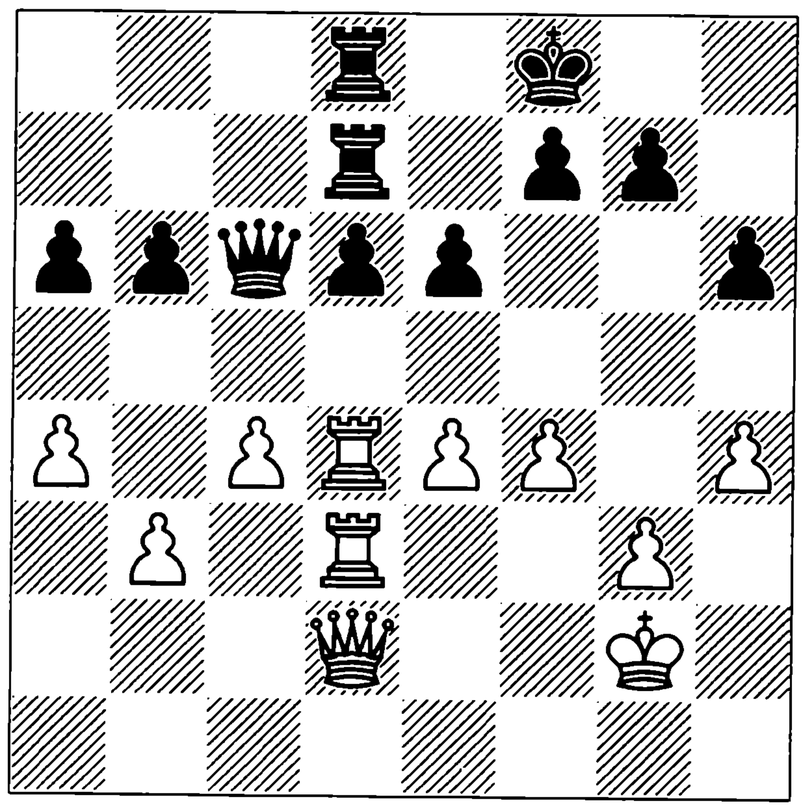


23 f4

Rather premature. The move 23 h4! intending h5 and g4-g5 would cause Black a serious headache.

23...♕c6! 24 a4 a6 25 h4 *(D)*

B



25...f5?!

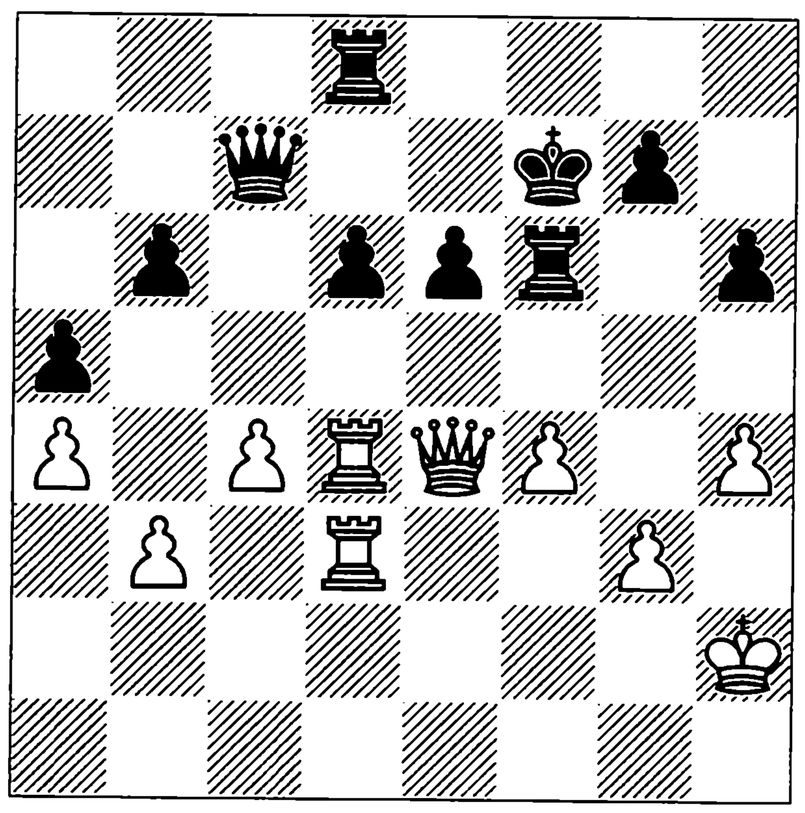
Black finds it impossible to remain passive for such a long time. With this move he also weakens the e6-pawn, but hopes for counterplay based on the exposed white king.

26 ♕e2 fxe4 27 ♖xe4 ♖e8 28 ♕f3 ♖f7 29 ♔h2 ♕c5 30 ♖de3 ♖f6 31 ♕e2 ♔f7 32 ♕d2! a5

Forced, as White was threatening 33 b4!. But now Black has given up the possibility of counterplay with ...b5, the only decent plan he had at his disposal.

33 ♖d3 ♖d8 34 ♖ed4 ♔e7 35 ♕e2 ♔f7 36 ♕e4! ♕c7 *(D)*

W



37 ♔g2?

White had made good use of his position so far and should have now played 37 h5!. Next would be the advance of his g-pawn, supported by the white rooks. It is not necessary to offer specific variations as means of proof, as these plans would take up a lot of time and preparation. The only certain thing is that Black cannot effectively stop White's plan and, as a result, is condemned to defeat.

37...h5!

The only move and a very good one, securing the draw. The question is, of course, why? The answer is simple! The lack of any satisfactory breakthrough favours the defending side. Both flanks have been blocked; as a result, White does not have at his disposal the most useful tool in such positions, i.e. the creation of a second front. This is an instructive and very significant strategic motif.

38 ♕f3 g6 39 ♕e4 ♖d7 40 ♖d2 ♖d8 41 ♔h2 ♖f5 42 ♕d3 ♔e7 43 ♖e2 ♔f7 44 ♕f3 ♖e8 45 ♕e4 ♖e7 46 ♖ed2 ♖d7 47 ♕f3 ♖d8 48 ♕d3 ♔e7 49 ♕e4 ♔f7 50 ♖e2 ♖f6 51 ♖d3 ♖c8 52 ♖ed2 ♖d8 53 ♖d4 ♖f5 ½-½

Hanging Pawns

When we refer to hanging pawns we mean a pair of pawns on neighbouring files, cut off from the rest of that side's pawn-structure. Note that I shall use this term a little more broadly than did the great Aron Nimzowitsch, who reserved the label 'hanging pawns' for two such pawns abreast of one another, both on their fourth rank, and referred to them as an 'isolated pawn-couple' when one of them lagged behind on its third rank. Hanging pawns usually occur on semi-open (for the opponent) files, thus receiving the enemy fire without the possibility of being protected by fellow pawns. Thus, they constitute a kind of static weakness.

If they are situated on the same rank, then both pawns will receive pressure from the opponent's pieces, with the ultimate aim of either winning one of them or forcing its advance. Then, the other pawn will become backward and isolated, while the square right in front of that pawn will become a 'hole', and consequently an outpost for the opponent. As a result of the above, the opponent's targets are clarified and his plans made easier.

On the other hand, the hanging pawns, especially when on the same rank, control the centre and are a permanently threatening dynamic force, usually through the advance of one of them – or both.

The exploitation of the advantages and disadvantages of an isolated pawn is clear-cut. In the case of hanging pawns, their dynamic potential lies beneath the surface and is much more difficult to evaluate. As a consequence, they lead to dynamic positions where combinative play is of primary importance.

As mentioned above, possession of hanging pawns creates possibilities of assuming the initiative, usually culminating in an attack against the opponent's king. Therefore, piece exchanges do not favour the side with the hanging pawns, as they decrease their potential.

As is the case in all cases of pawn weaknesses, the negative aspects of hanging pawns become especially evident in the endgame, where the reduced material makes them more vulnerable, precisely because of the lack of defensive pieces, or pieces in general, that could counterbalance the pawns' weakness with a strong initiative.

As a result of this examination we can conclude the following:

1) Hanging pawns 'crave' to be on the same rank, while at the same time strongly 'dislike' piece exchanges. In cooperation with the other pieces they contribute in the fight for the initiative.

2) The hanging pawns may become a serious weakness when one of them is forced to advance or when they become vulnerable targets of the opponent's pieces in general.

Grivas – Needham

Oakham 1984

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 ♗e7 5 ♗g5 0-0 6 e3 ♘bd7 7 cxd5 ♘xd5

The natural 7...exd5 is preferable.

8 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 9 ♗d3 b6

White is better after 9...♘xc3 10 bxc3 e5 11 ♕c2!.

10 ♘xd5 exd5 11 0-0 ♘f6 12 ♕a4 ♗d7

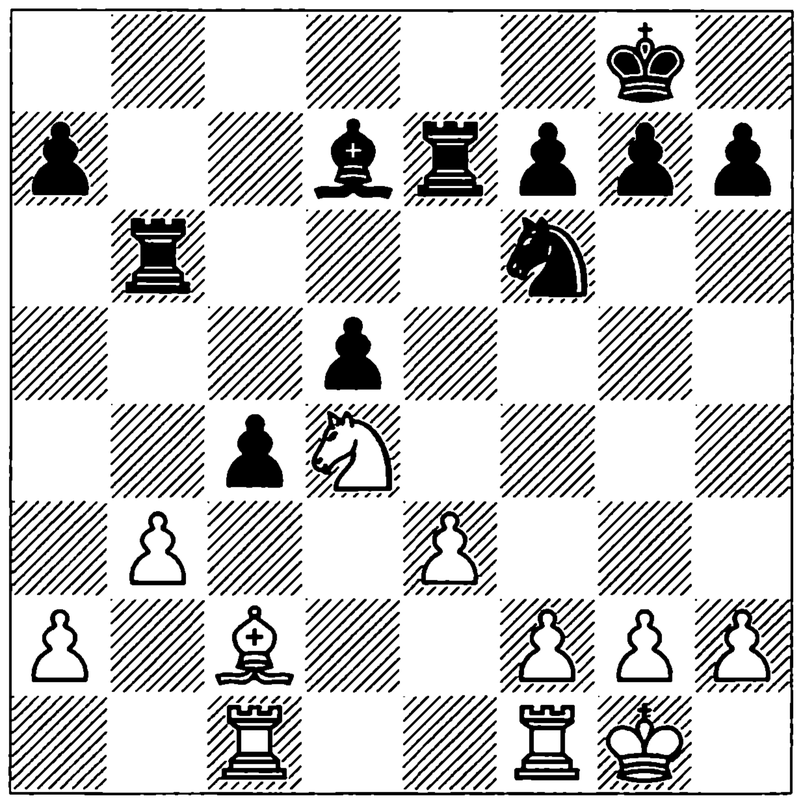
12...♗e6 is more natural.

13 ♕a6 c5 14 ♕a3 ♖fe8?!

A more appropriate idea is 14...♖fc8 15 ♖ac1 ♔f8.

15 dxc5 bxc5 16 ♖ac1 c4 17 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 18 ♗c2 ♖b8 19 b3 ♖b6 20 ♘d4 *(D)*

The outpost on d4 as well as the better bishop promise White a slight but permanent advantage, and more pleasant prospects in general, without any danger of defeat. That is exactly Black's main problem. Of course, a lot of



work is still required in order to bring the point home.

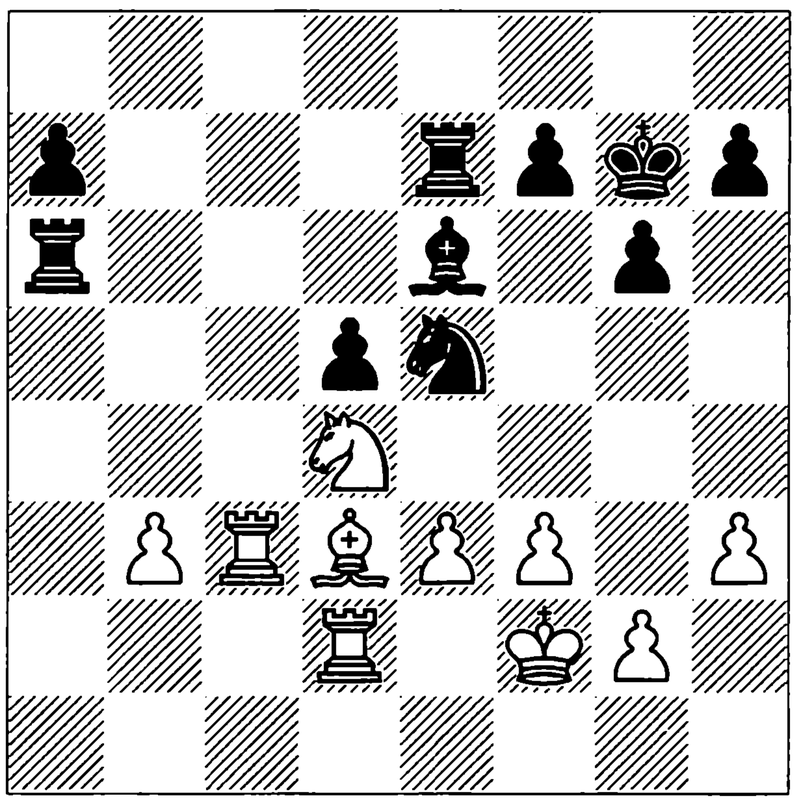
20...♗e6 21 ♖fd1 g6 22 f3!

Controlling more squares and opening a path for the white king, who wishes to join the proceedings.

22...♖a6 23 ♗b1 ♘d7 24 ♔f2 ♔g7 25 ♖d2 ♖b6 26 ♖c3 ♘e5 27 h3 cxb3?

Black should have continued with 27...a5! 28 f4 ♘c6 29 ♘xc6 (29 ♘xe6+ fxe6 30 e4 a4!) 29...♖xc6 30 bxc4! dxc4 31 e4 ±. With the text-move, Black leaves herself with an isolated pawn on d5, at the same time also opening the c-file, which White can immediately put to good use.

28 axb3 ♖a6 29 ♗d3! *(D)*

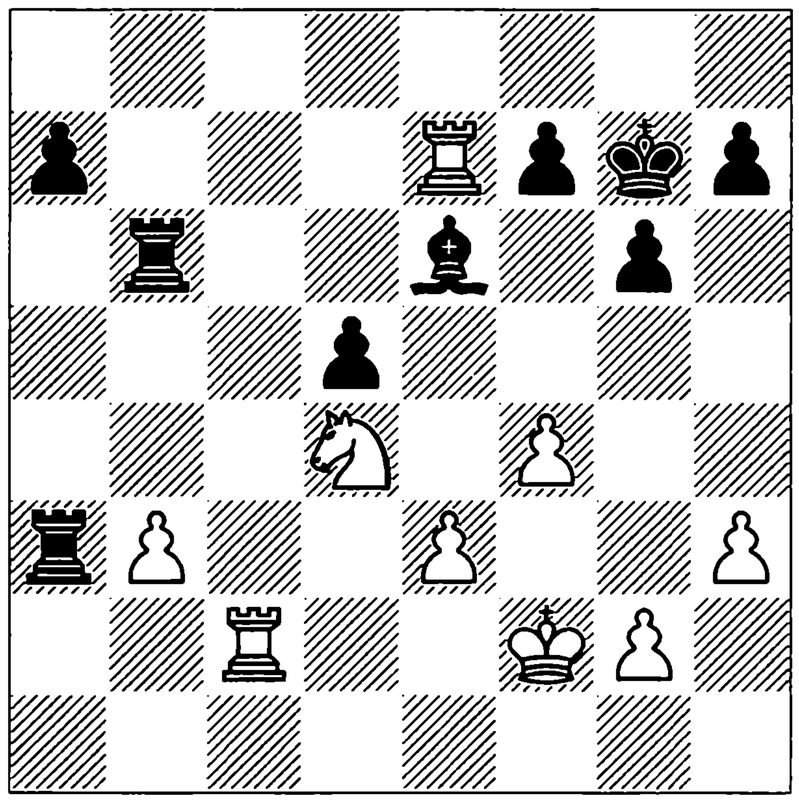


The exchange of the white bishop for the black knight will increase White's superiority, as the remaining pair of minor pieces is definitely in his favour (good knight vs bad bishop).

29...♖a1 30 ♗b5! ♖b7 31 f4 ♘d7 32 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 33 ♖c5 ♗e6 34 ♖c6 ♗d7 35 ♖c5 ♗e6 36 ♖dc2 ♖a3 37 ♖c7! ♖b6

Black's problems increase as the alternative 37...♖xc7 38 ♖xc7 ♔f6 39 g4! h6 40 ♔f3! ♖a1 41 h4! is hardly pleasant.

38 ♖e7! *(D)*



The threatened 39 ♖cc7 and 40 ♘xe6+ is decisive. Thus Black resorts to an exchange sacrifice, without however being able to change the outcome of the game.

38...♖axb3 39 ♘xb3 ♖xb3 40 ♖cc7 ♔f6 41 ♖xa7 ♖b2+ 42 ♔f3 h5 43 g4 hxg4+ 44 hxg4 ♖b6 45 g5+ ♔g7 46 ♖e8 ♖d6 47 ♖aa8 f6 48 ♖e7+ ♗f7 49 ♖aa7 1-0

Grivas – Alexakis

Athens 1994

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 c5 4 g3 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♘c6 6 ♗g2 ♗b4+ 7 ♗d2 ♕a5 8 ♘c2 ♗xd2+ 9 ♘xd2?!

A better option is 9 ♕xd2! ♕xd2+ (9...♕c5 10 ♘e3) 10 ♘xd2 ± (10...d5?! 11 cxd5 ♘xd5 12 ♗xd5 exd5 13 ♘b3).

9...d5! *(D)*

10 0-0 0-0 11 cxd5 exd5

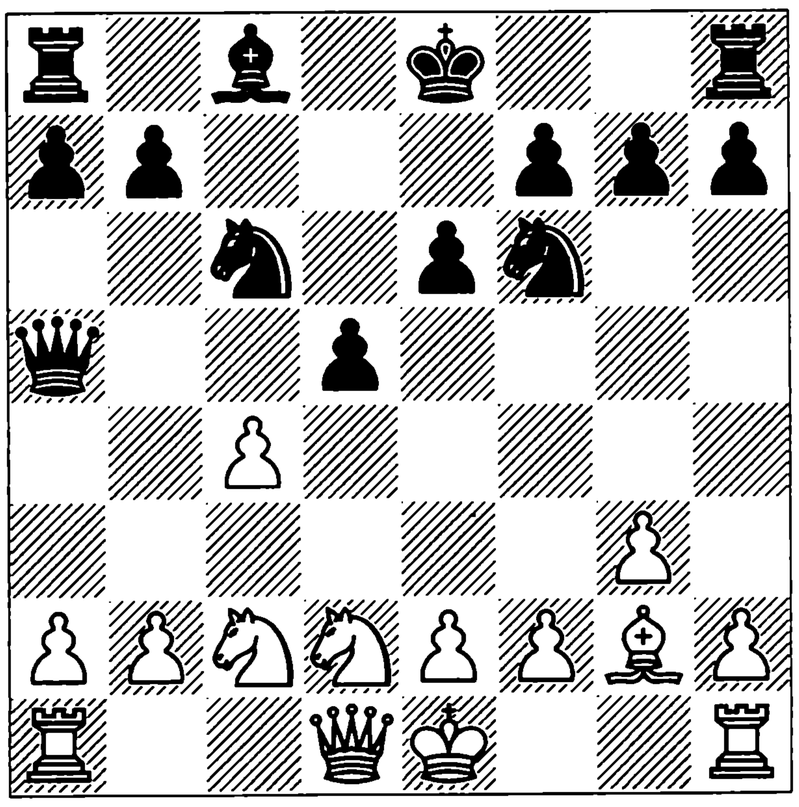
Black could also try 11...♘xd5 12 ♘b3 ♕d8 13 ♘cd4!, with just a slight advantage for White.

12 ♘b3 ♕b6! 13 ♘cd4!

Certainly not 13 ♗xd5? ♖d8 14 e4 ♗e6 15 ♘e3 ♘xe4! with advantage for Black!

13...a5!

W



Black develops a strong initiative on the queenside, trying to harass the white knights away from the d4-square. Moreover, it must be noted that White lacks the necessary time to focus on Black's isolated pawn, as he is constantly required to solve other problems.

14 ♖c1 a4 15 ♘xc6 bxc6 16 ♕d4!

The point of White's play, retaining a slight plus. The hanging pawns that have been created in Black's camp require protection.

16...♕b5

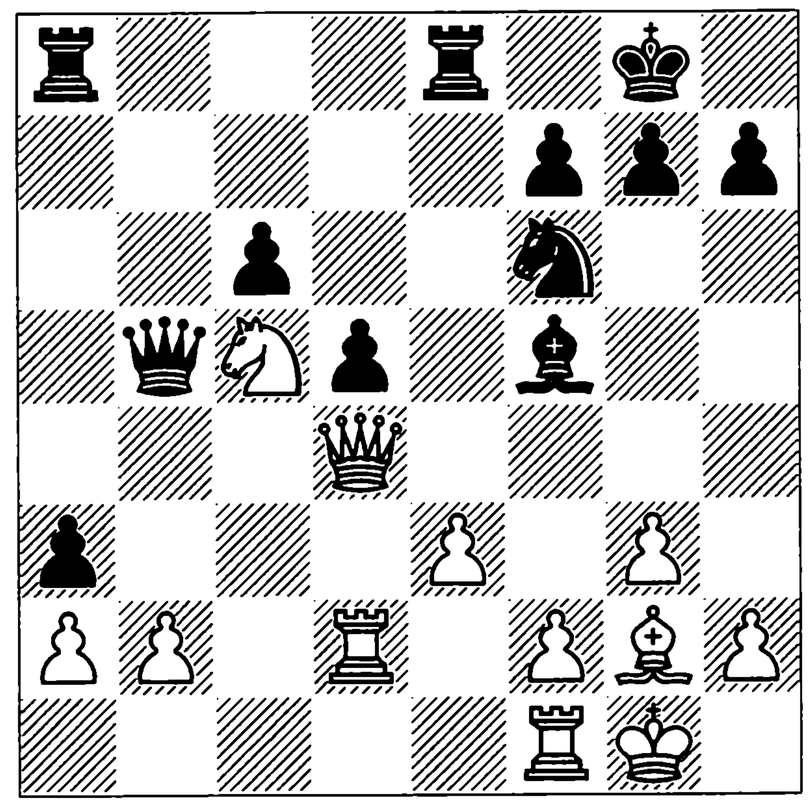
Black has no choice as 16...♕xd4? 17 ♘xd4 costs him at least one pawn.

17 ♘c5 a3!

After 17...♕xe2?! 18 ♘xa4 White's queenside pawn-mass will prove more dangerous than Black's blockaded hanging pawns.

18 ♖c2! ♗f5 19 ♖d2 ♖fe8 20 e3 *(D)*

B



Black has reacted correctly and still enjoys the initiative. White has also played properly and, as a consequence, we have a dynamic position where White retains a minimal advantage.

20...♘e4

20...axb2 21 ♖xb2 ♕a5 is interesting. After 22 ♖c1, Black's hanging pawns are hardly inferior to the white a2-pawn, which cannot really be described as 'passed' in any meaningful sense.

21 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 22 b3

Not, of course, 22 ♖c1?? ♗xg2 23 ♔xg2 ♖e4! 24 ♕c3 ♖c4!.

22...c5 23 ♕c3 c4! 24 bxc4

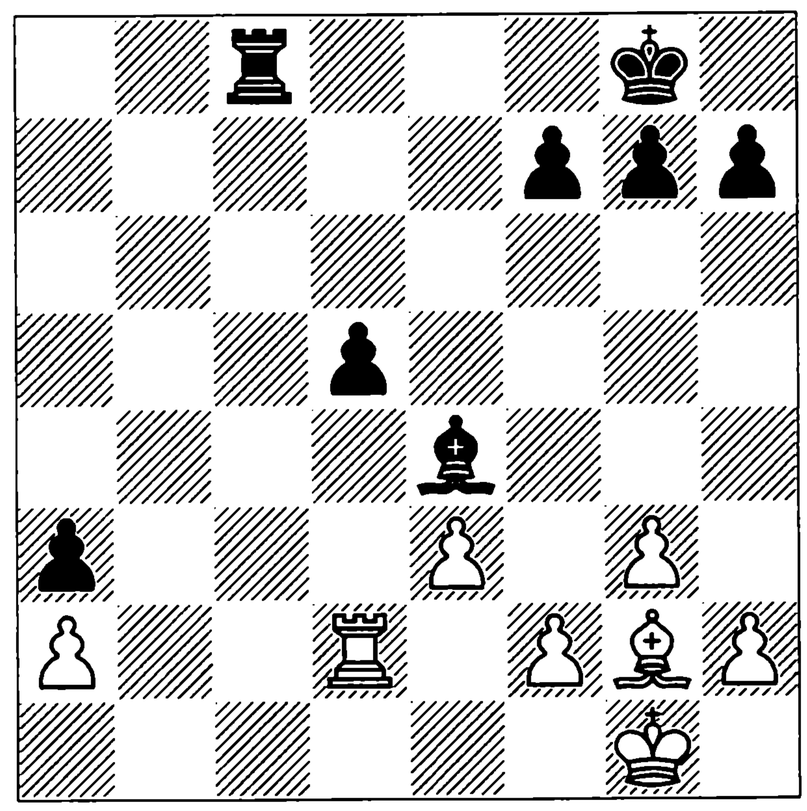
24 ♗xe4?! ♖xe4 is not satisfactory for White, as after a possible 25 bxc4 Black will recapture with 25...♖xc4.

24...♕xc4 25 ♖c1! ♕xc3

After 25...♗xg2 26 ♔xg2 ♖ec8 27 ♕xc4 dxc4 28 ♖c3! White has the upper hand.

26 ♖xc3 ♖ec8! 27 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 *(D)*

W



28 ♗xe4

28 f3?! ♖c1+ 29 ♔f2 ♖c2! 30 ♔e1 ♖xd2 31 ♔xd2 ♗b1 32 ♔c3 ♗xa2 33 ♔b4 would be an easy draw and would thus be a mistaken choice on White's part. The rook ending that now arises is very close to drawn, but Black must play with extreme accuracy.

28...dxe4 29 ♖d7 g6 30 ♖a7 ♖c1+ 31 ♔g2 ♖c3 32 g4!

Trying to isolate the black pawn on e4 and also create other problems for Black's pawn-structure by means of 33 g5!.

32...g5! 33 ♔f1 ♖c1+ 34 ♔g2 ♖c3 35 h4 gxh4?!

This move cannot be criticized, but 35...h6! is simpler. In any case, the ending that has arisen is theoretically drawn. White eventually won the game thanks to some minor mistakes by Black, who stuck to passive tactics and failed to react correctly to the requirements of the position.

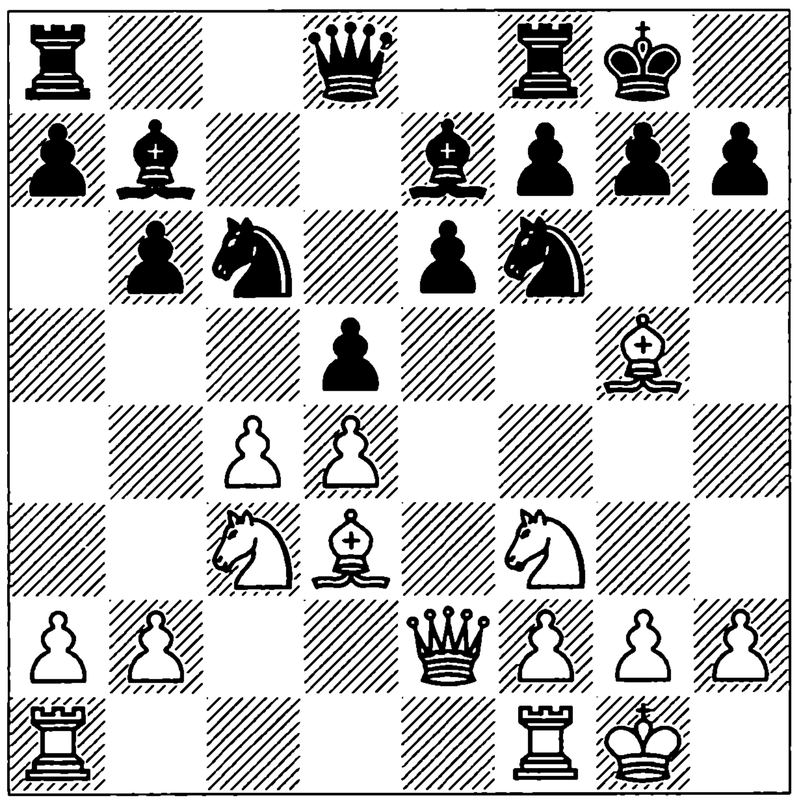
36 ♔h3 ♖c2 37 ♖xa3 ♖xf2 38 ♔xh4 ♖d2? 39 ♔g3 ♖d8 40 ♔f4 ♖e8? 41 ♖a7 ♔g7 42 a4 ♖b8 43 ♔xe4 ♖b4+ 44 ♔f5 ♖b3 45 ♔f4 ♖b1 46 a5 ♖f1+ 47 ♔g3 ♖g1+ 48 ♔f3 ♖f1+ 49 ♔g2 ♖a1 50 ♖a6 ♖a2+ 51 ♔f3 ♖a1 52 ♖a8 ♖f1+ 53 ♔g2 ♖a1 54 a6 h6 55 ♔f3 ♖f1+ 56 ♔e4 ♖g1 57 ♔f5 ♖f1+ 58 ♔e5 ♖g1 59 ♖b8! ♖a1 60 ♖b6 1-0

Grivas – Kalesis

Athens 1995

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♗g5 c5 4 e3 ♗e7 5 ♗d3 b6 6 c4 cxd4 7 exd4 ♗b7 8 ♘c3 d5 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♕e2 ♘c6 *(D)*

W



11 cxd5

The plan 11 ♖ad1 and 12 ♖fe1 should be preferred.

11...♘xd5 12 ♕e4 g6 13 ♗h6 ♘xc3

After 13...♖e8 14 ♘xd5 exd5 15 ♕g4 White is slightly better. The hanging pawns that arise are not a liability, provided that no more piece exchanges take place.

14 bxc3 ♖e8 15 h4?!

White does not succeed in treading the correct path; 15 ♕f4 is better.

15...♗f8! 16 ♗xf8?

Piece exchanges cannot favour White. He should have opted for 16 ♗d2 instead, and then at some point tried to find a use for his rooks.

16...♖xf8 17 h5?!

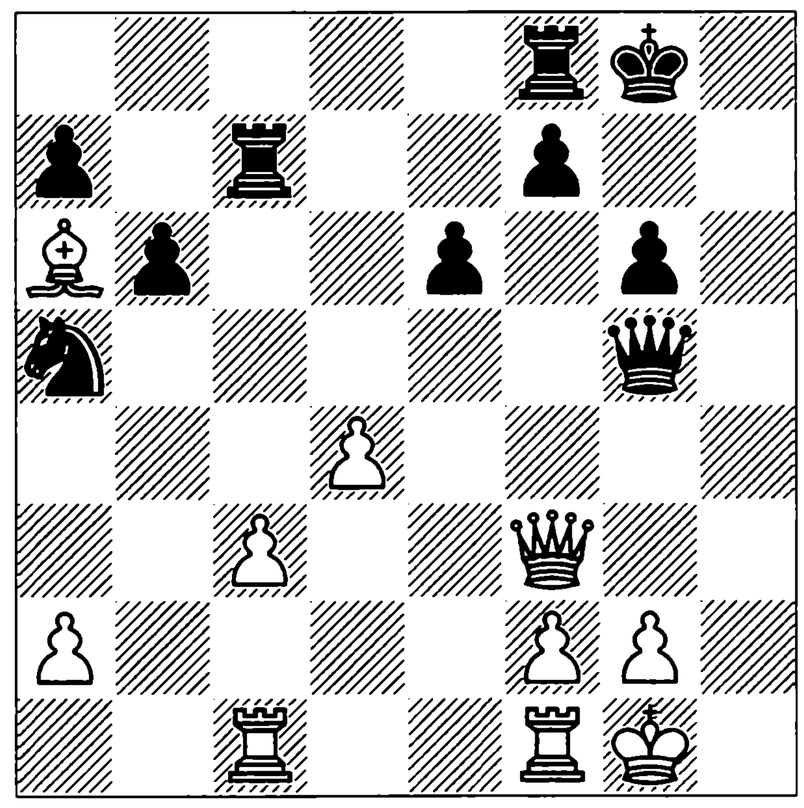
Once again 17 ♕f4 was preferable.

17...♘a5! 18 ♕g4 ♗xf3!

More piece exchanges! With what forces does White intend to attack Black after all?

19 ♕xf3 ♖c8 20 ♖ac1 ♕g5 21 ♗a6 ♖c7 22 hxg6 hxg6 *(D)*

W



Black has the advantage as the piece exchanges he initiated have halted White's attack; moreover, Black now has the initiative in the centre, where he will soon start applying pressure on the hanging pawns. Even the h-file (mistakenly opened by White) will eventually be used by Black. At this point the negative aspects of the hanging pawns become clear; White is tied to passive defence.

23 ♖ce1 ♔g7 24 ♕d3 ♖h8 25 ♖e3

Compulsory, to defend against 25...♕h5 with 26 ♖h3.

25...♕f4! 26 ♖g3

26 g3? ♕h6! would be disastrous for White.

26...♖h5!

By threatening 27...♕h6 Black forces White to exchange queens. Black improves his position methodically and steadily.

27 ♕e3 ♕xe3 28 ♖xe3 ♘c4 29 ♗xc4

White did not manage to avoid this exchange either, but he should have at least allowed it in a different way, after 29 ♖e2 ♖a5! 30 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 31 ♖c1.

29...♖xc4 30 ♖d1 ♖a5 31 ♖d2 ♔f8 32 g3 ♖a3 33 d5?

White loses his bearings and refuses an inferior and passive position after 33 ♖c2, and effectively commits suicide.

33...♖axc3 34 ♖ee2 exd5 35 ♖xd5 ♖c2 36 ♖d8+ ♔g7 37 ♖e7 ♖c7 38 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 39 ♖a8 ♔f6 40 ♔g2 ♔e5 0-1

Of course, things are not always so bad for the hanging pawns; this was also mentioned at the start of this chapter. The following games offer a taste of their potential.

Grivas – Am. Rodriguez

Athens 1984

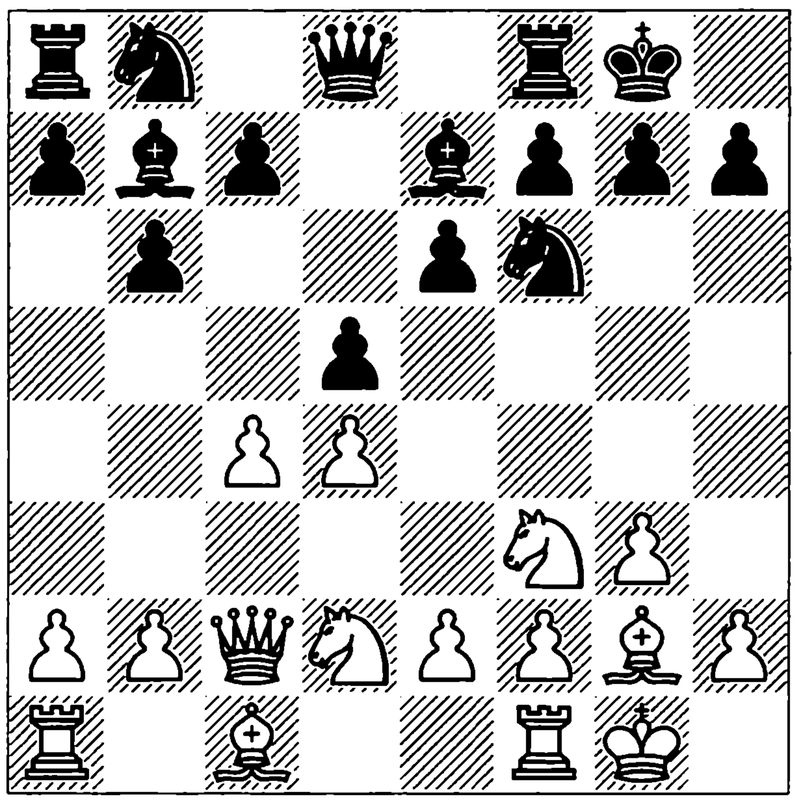
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♗b4+ 5 ♘bd2 ♗b7 6 ♗g2 0-0 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 ♕c2

Other options are 8 b3 and 8 ♖e1.

8...d5 *(D)*

8...c5 seems attractive, but White has at his disposal the strong counter 9 e4! cxd4 10 e5 ♘e8 11 ♘g5!.

W



9 cxd5

9 ♘e5 is preferable, intending ♖d1 and e4, when White retains the minimal superiority he deserves in view of being the first to move.

9...exd5 10 ♘e5 c5 11 ♘df3 ♘a6!

11...♘bd7?! is a mistake, allowing White to exchange a pair of knights. The white steeds (on e5 and f3) both contest the same square (e5) and thus we have the problem of the 'superfluous piece'; it would be irresponsible on Black's part to facilitate the solution of this problem by exchanging one of them. Besides, the a6-knight is destined for e6, from where it will control several central squares.

12 ♗g5 ♘e4!?

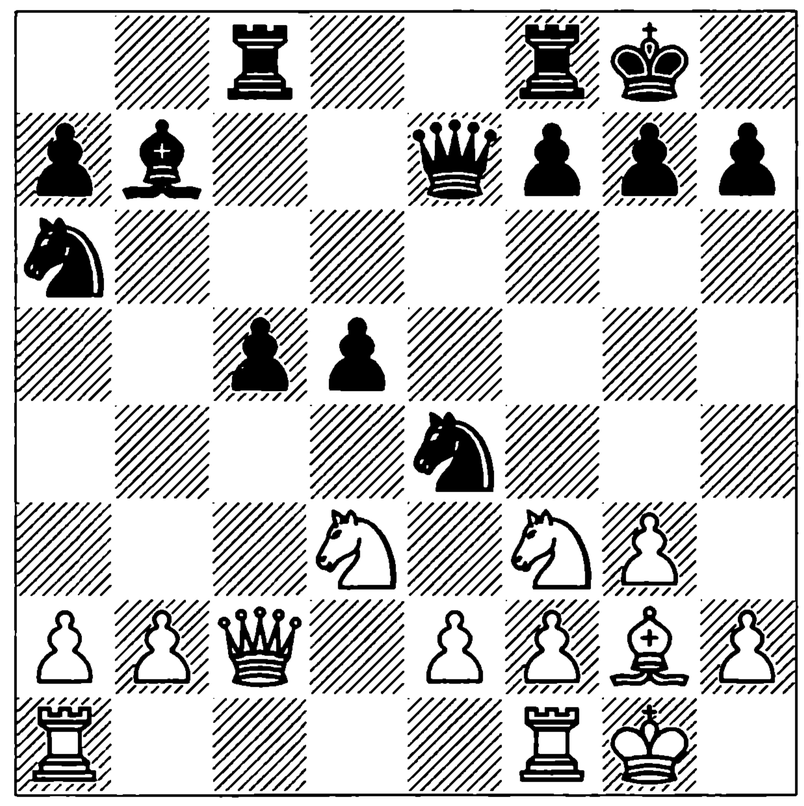
White was hoping for 12...♖c8 13 ♕a4! but Black chose a different path, trying to obtain more space for his major pieces.

13 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 14 dxc5

Black was threatening 14...c4 and so White had no choice.

14...bxc5 15 ♘d3 ♖ac8 *(D)*

W



Black is left with hanging pawns that offer good central control. On the other hand, White has no weak spots. The position offers equal chances.

16 a3

White does not appear to comprehend the position fully. His aimless pawn moves (16 a3 and 17 e3) neither trouble Black nor add to White's position. I would nowadays prefer 16 ♖ad1 intending ♘f4 or ♘d2.

16...♖fd8 17 e3 ♘c7 18 ♘d2 ♘xd2

This move is hardly an error, but I would opt for 18...f5!? instead.

19 ♕xd2 ♘e6

Black enjoys an excellent position, as all of his pieces cooperate wonderfully. His threats (...d4 and ...c4) trouble White, who proceeds clumsily and soon ends up on the edge of disaster.

20 b4?

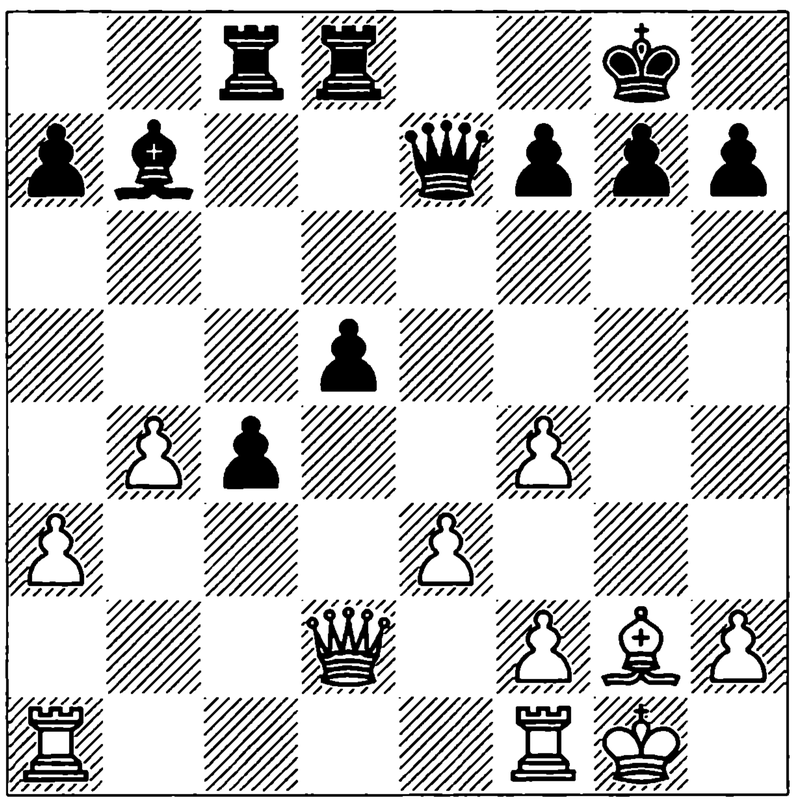
A passive move like 20 ♖fe1 was necessary.

20...c4 21 ♘f4

21 ♘e5 d4! 22 ♗xb7 ♕xb7 23 exd4 ♘xd4 would be disastrous for White.

21...♘xf4 22 gxf4 *(D)*

B



22...d4!!

White needed just one move (23 ♕d4!) to obtain the advantage. Black's pawn sacrifice is correct, as it destroys White's pawn-structure and weakens the white king. Helped by the passed c-pawn, Black will create many threats, interfering with White's defense. All this is achieved at the cost of a practically useless pawn that White will anyway not be able to enjoy for long.

23 exd4

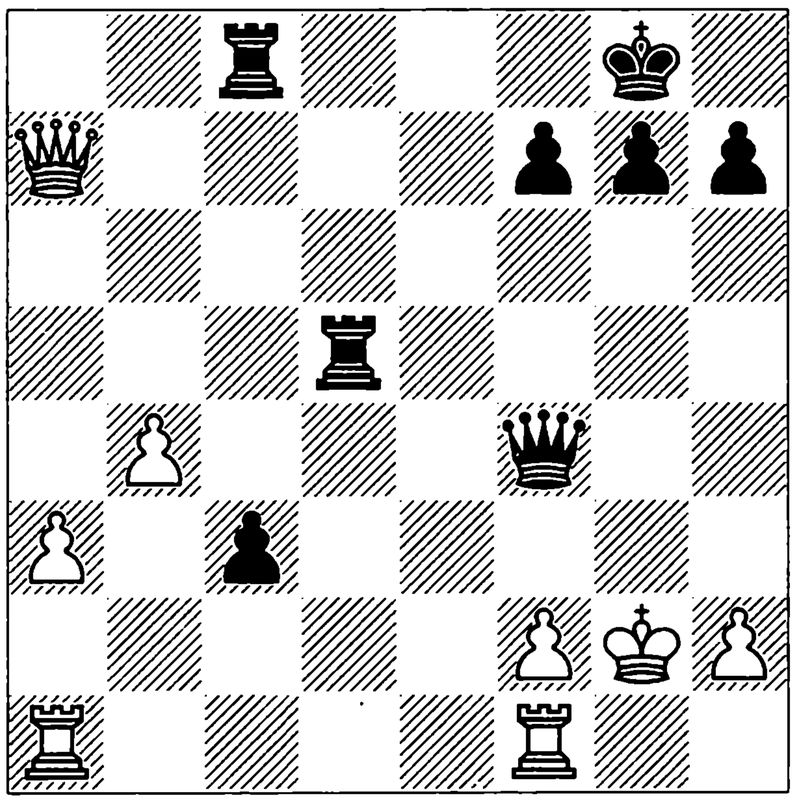
After 23 ♗xb7? dxe3 24 ♕xe3 ♕xb7 White has not even won a pawn!

23...♗xg2 24 ♔xg2 ♕f6! 25 d5

White could not hold on to the pawn by 25 ♖ad1 c3! (or simply 25...♖d5! 26 ♕e3 ♖cd8) 26 ♕d3 c2 27 ♖c1 ♖xd4.

25...c3 26 ♕e3 ♖xd5 27 ♕xa7 ♕xf4 *(D)*

W



Material equality has been restored but the weaknesses around White's king remain just as serious as before and, along with the passed c-pawn, promise Black the advantage. If White could somehow exchange queens he might even be better, but it is not possible to win points with 'if' and 'maybe'!

28 ♕e3 ♕g4+ 29 ♔h1 c2! 30 f3 ♕d7!

The threatened 31...♖d1 cuts White's position in two and it becomes obvious that he will not be able to resist for long.

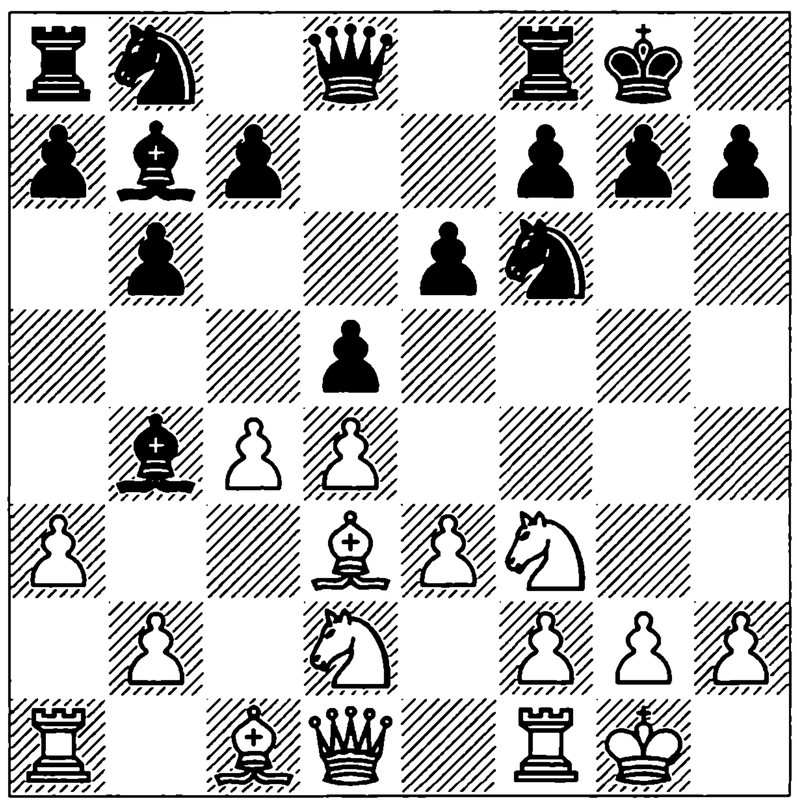
31 ♖ac1 ♖d1 32 ♔g2 h6 33 ♖e1 ♖c6 34 ♕f4 ♖g6+ 35 ♔h1 ♕h3 0-1

Grivas – Inkiov

Balkaniad, Kavala 1990

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♗b4+ 4 ♘bd2 b6 5 e3 ♗b7 6 ♗d3 0-0 7 0-0 d5 8 a3 *(D)*

B



8...♗e7

Theory considers this superior to 8...♗d6 9 b4 ♘bd7 10 c5 ♗e7 11 ♕c2 ±.

9 b3 ♘bd7 10 ♗b2 c5 11 ♖c1

A new move, in place of the known 11 ♕e2.

11...♖c8 12 ♗b1?!

The immediate 12 cxd5 exd5 13 ♗f5 or 12 ♘e5 is preferable.

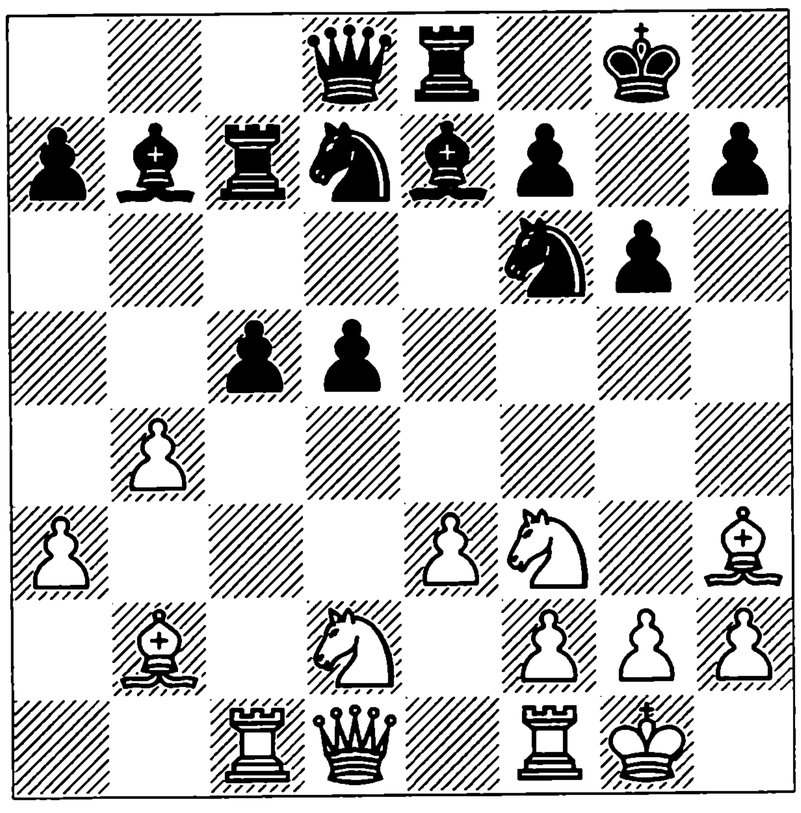
12...♖e8 13 cxd5

White changes his plan, but this move does not mix well with the previous one. Better is 13 ♕e2 intending e4.

13...exd5 14 ♗f5 g6 15 ♗h3 ♖c7 16 dxc5 bxc5 17 b4?! *(D)*

Better is 17 ♘e5 with unclear play.

B



White has proceeded with a very interesting pawn sacrifice, since after 17...cxb4 18 ♖xc7 ♕xc7 19 axb4 ♗xb4 20 ♕a1! he would obtain excellent compensation, while 17...c4? would surrender the centre and the dark squares. Unfortunately, White overlooked Black's truly powerful response.

17...d4!! 18 b5

White declines the slightly inferior position resulting from 18 exd4 cxb4 19 axb4 ♗xb4 20 ♘e5 ♘b6! but, at the end of the day, this was the less risky course. Naturally, 18 bxc5 dxe3 19 fxe3 ♗xc5 was not an option.

18...♘d5!

A dynamic and very strong move, as White cannot play 19 exd4 ♘f4! – his king will suffer.

19 ♘c4 ♘7b6! 20 ♘fe5 ♘xc4 21 ♘xc4 ♗g5 22 ♔h1!? *(D)*

White decides to sacrifice a pawn in order to extinguish Black's initiative, that is growing out of proportions. The alternatives 22 ♘a5 ♗a8 23 ♘c6 ♗xc6 24 bxc6 dxe3 25 ♗d7 e2 26 ♕xd5 ♗xc1! and 22 ♖e1 ♖ce7! would not improve the situation.

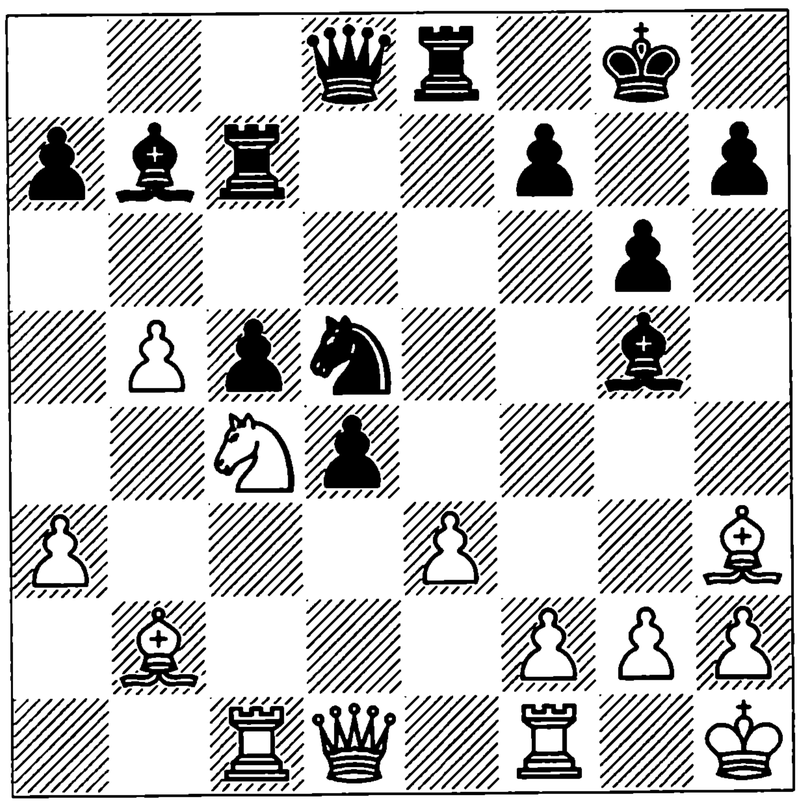
22...h5!

Black is not in a hurry and continues with some useful moves. Acceptance of the sacrifice with 22...dxe3 23 fxe3 ♘xe3 24 ♘xe3 ♗xe3 25 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 26 ♖fd1 would offer White some chances of survival.

23 a4 ♖ce7 24 a5 ♖e4!

The threat of ...♖h4xh3! is deadly and no defence for White is in sight. A very good example of utilizing one's positional superiority by the Bulgarian GM.

B



25 a6 ♗a8 26 ♘d2 ♖h4 27 ♘f3 ♖xh3!

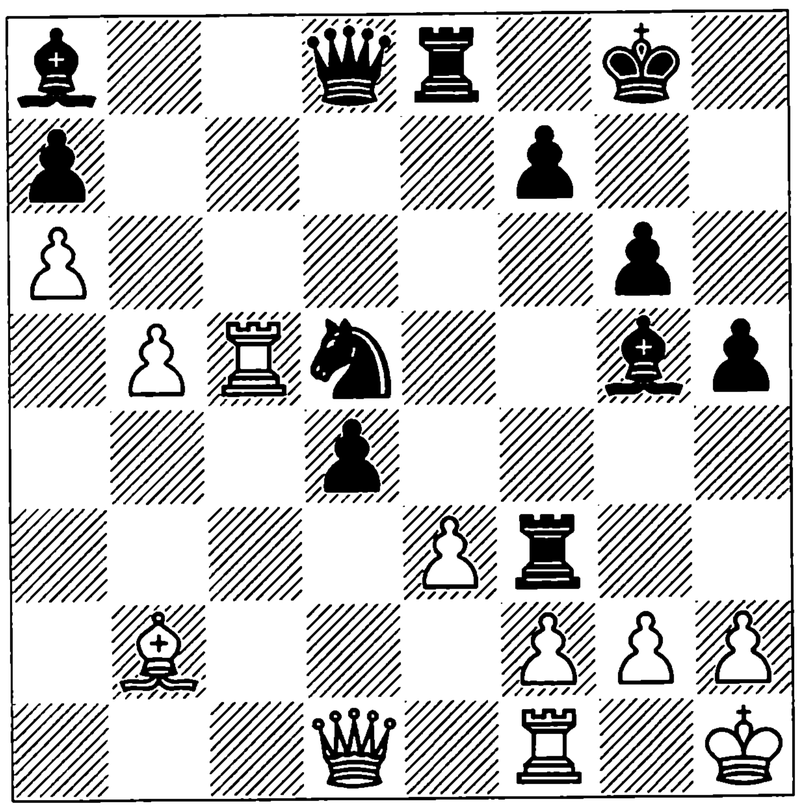
Black finishes off in style.

28 ♖xc5!?

28 gxh3 ♕f6 29 ♔g2 ♗xe3! is simple.

28...♖xf3! *(D)*

W



The black rook continues its raid! There is no salvation for White, as he cannot make use of the a1-h8 diagonal.

29 gxf3 dxe3 30 fxe3

Or 30 ♕d4 ♗f6!.

30...♗xe3 31 ♖c2 ♗b6 32 ♖d2 ♕g5 33 ♖e2 ♘e3 34 ♕b3 ♖c8 0-1

Grivas – Bousios

Corfu 1991

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 c5 3 e3 d5 4 c4 cxd4 5 exd4 g6 6 ♘c3 ♗g7 7 cxd5

By transposition, a rare variation of the Caro-Kann Defence has arisen.

7...♘xd5

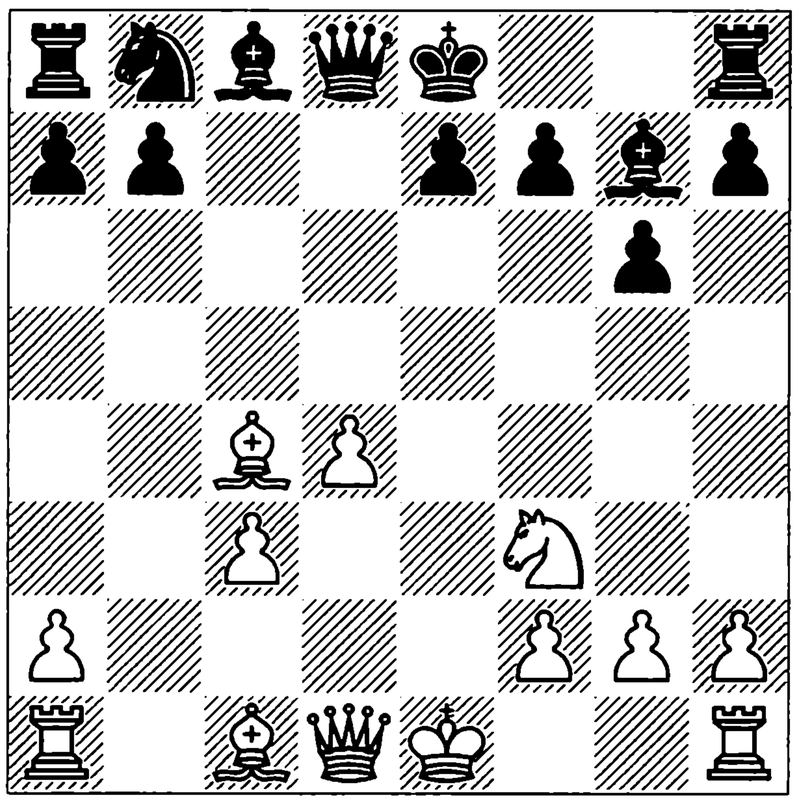
The continuation 7...0-0 8 ♗c4 ♘bd7 intending ...♘b6xd5 seems safer.

8 ♗c4 ♘xc3

Black elects to fight against hanging pawns. Alternatively, he could continue with 8...♘b6.

9 bxc3 *(D)*

B



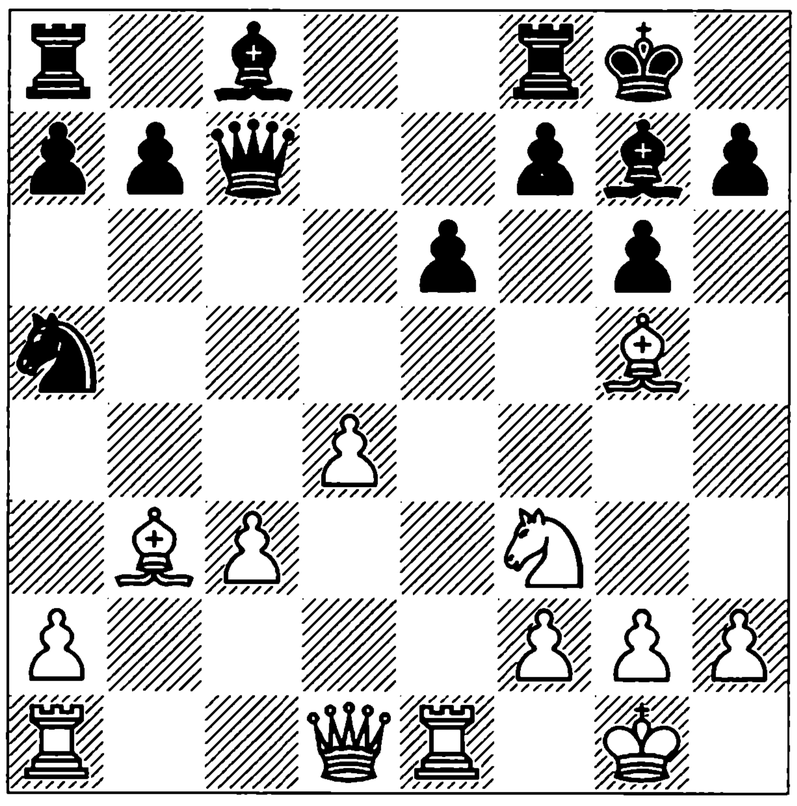
9...0-0 10 ♗b3! ♘c6 11 0-0 ♘a5

Black's plan, although apparently very logical, leaves the kingside without firepower. Instead, 11...♗g4!? 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 ♕xf3 e6 is not bad at all.

12 ♗g5! ♕c7 13 ♖e1! e6 *(D)*

Perhaps Black should have tried 13...♘xb3 14 ♕xb3 e6, but certainly not 13...♕xc3? 14 ♖c1! ♕b4 15 ♗xe7 and White wins.

W



14 ♕d2!

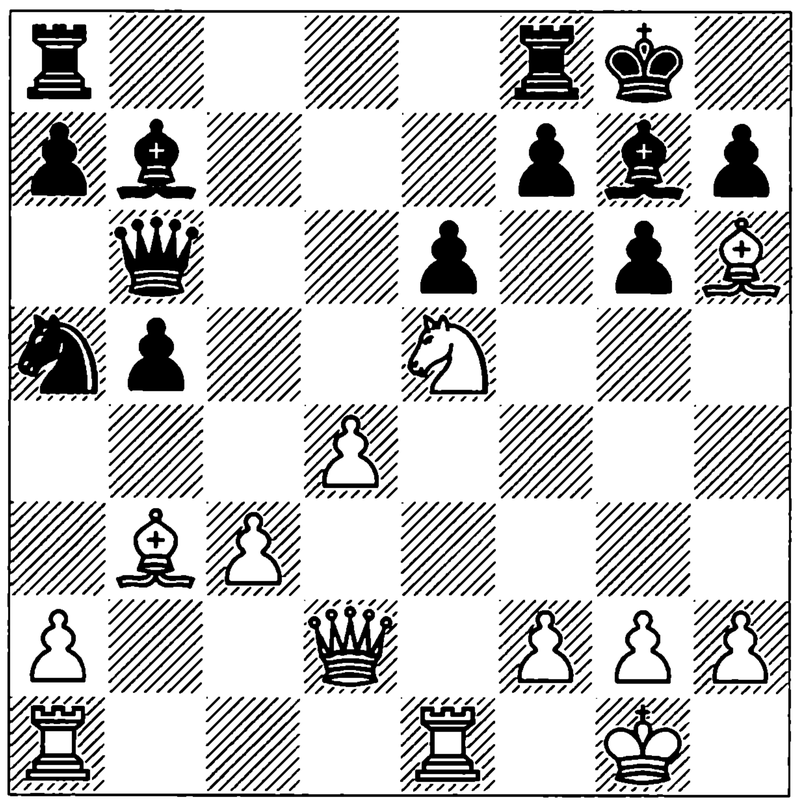
White's superiority is increasing, as the f3-knight is stronger than the c8-bishop while his attacking chances on the kingside are real. The hanging white pawns, as well as the c4-square, cannot be immediately exploited by Black, who has to deal with his development and coordination problems.

14...b5?!

Black should have retained the g7-bishop (his only defensive piece) by 14...♖e8 15 ♗h6 ♗h8. I am of the opinion that Black was playing too optimistically, ignoring White's threats.

15 ♗f4! ♕b6 16 ♗h6 ♗b7 17 ♘e5! *(D)*

B



White has many threats (including ♘d7 and ♘g4) and a substantial attacking initiative directly against the black king while, in contrast, the direction of Black's plan is not obvious at all. White's advantage is nearly decisive.

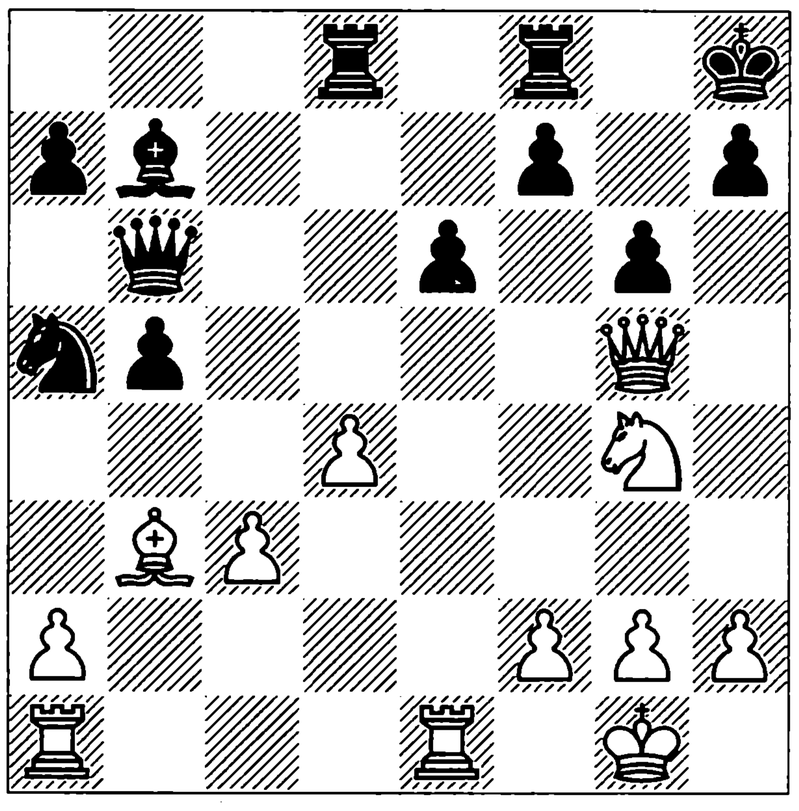
17...♖ad8 18 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 19 ♘g4!

Black's kingside seems denuded!

19...♔h8 20 ♕g5! *(D)*

Threatening 21 ♕f6+ ♔g8 22 ♘h6#.

B



20...f6 21 ♘xf6 ♘xb3 22 axb3 b4 23 ♖e3! ♖f7

Or 23...bxc3? 24 ♖h3 ♖f7 25 ♕xg6!.

24 ♖h3 ♖g7 25 ♕h6

25 ♕xg6?? ♕c7! would be a rather outrageous mistake.

25...♕c7 26 c4!

Retaining the solidity of the pawn-structure, as after 26...♖xd4? Black succumbs to a pretty mate: 27 ♘xh7! ♖xh7 28 ♕f8#.

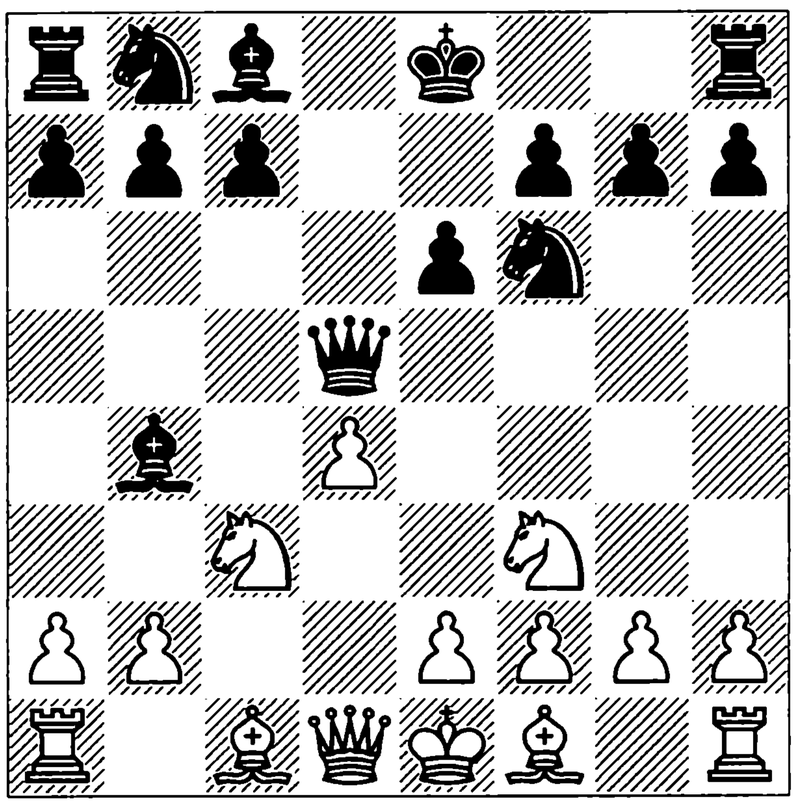
26...♕e7 27 ♕g5 ♖d7 28 ♕e5 1-0

Grivas – Kourkounakis

Athens 1995

1 d4 e6 2 c4 ♘f6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗b4 5 cxd5 ♕xd5 *(D)*

W



An interesting new idea, aiming for centralization of the black queen and easy piece-play. On the other hand, White will enjoy a strong centre and the bishop-pair.

6 e3 c5 7 ♗d3 cxd4 8 exd4 0-0 9 0-0 ♗xc3

9...♕a5 is an alternative.

10 bxc3 b6 11 ♗g5!

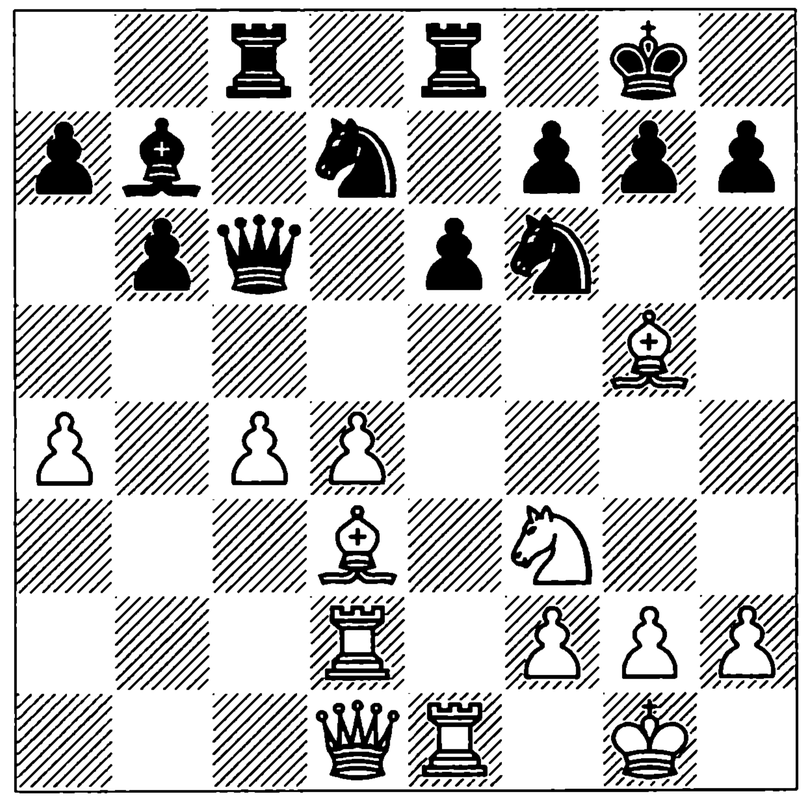
The immediate 11 c4?! ♕h5! would be fine for Black.

11...♘bd7 12 c4 ♕c6 13 ♖e1 ♗b7 14 a4!!

An excellent move with plenty of ideas. It forestalls an eventual ...a6 and ...b5 by Black a repares the rook swing ♖a2-e2/d2. This id borrowed from other openings, showing that ideas are not specific to an individual opening sequence but apply according to the pawn-structure and piece placement.

14...♖ad8 15 ♖a2 ♖fe8 16 ♖d2 ♖c8 *(D)*

W



The black pieces have occupied satisfactory positions but there is a certain lack of coordination among them, while the application of a constructive plan is not an easy matter. As a result, Black is practically obliged to wait for White to define the direction of the game, accepting a passive but very solid stance.

17 ♖de2 ♕d6 18 ♘e5!? ♘xe5 19 ♖xe5

After 19 dxe5?! ♕c6 20 f3 ♘d7 Black would be happy.

19...♘d7 20 ♖5e3

White's hanging pawns control the centre, and together with his bishop-pair, active rooks and attacking chances, add up to an undisputed initiative for him. The direct threat is 21 ♗xh7! ♔xh7 22 ♖h3+ ♔g8 23 ♕h5!.

20...♘f8 21 ♖g3 e5

By disrupting White's hanging pawns, Black hopes to obtain substantial counterplay against them. This typical idea is often used in positions of this type.

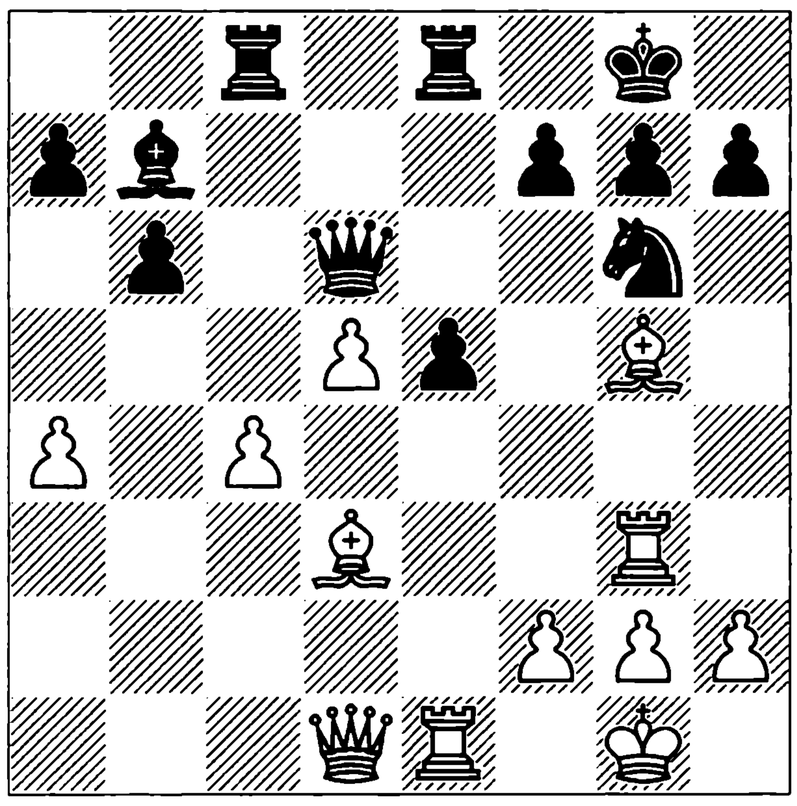
22 d5 ♘g6? *(D)*

The break-up of White's centre and piece exchanges were essential to Black's survival, who should have continued with 22...a6 23 h4 b5 24 axb5 axb5 25 cxb5 ♕xd5 26 ♗f1 ±.

23 ♗c1! ♗a6 24 ♖g4! ♖c7 25 h4 ♗c8 26 ♖g3 f5

After 26...♘xh4? 27 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 28 ♕h5+ ♔g8 29 ♕xh4 White (assisted by the presence of opposite-coloured bishops and the open h-file) has a very strong attack.

27 h5 ♘f8 28 h6!

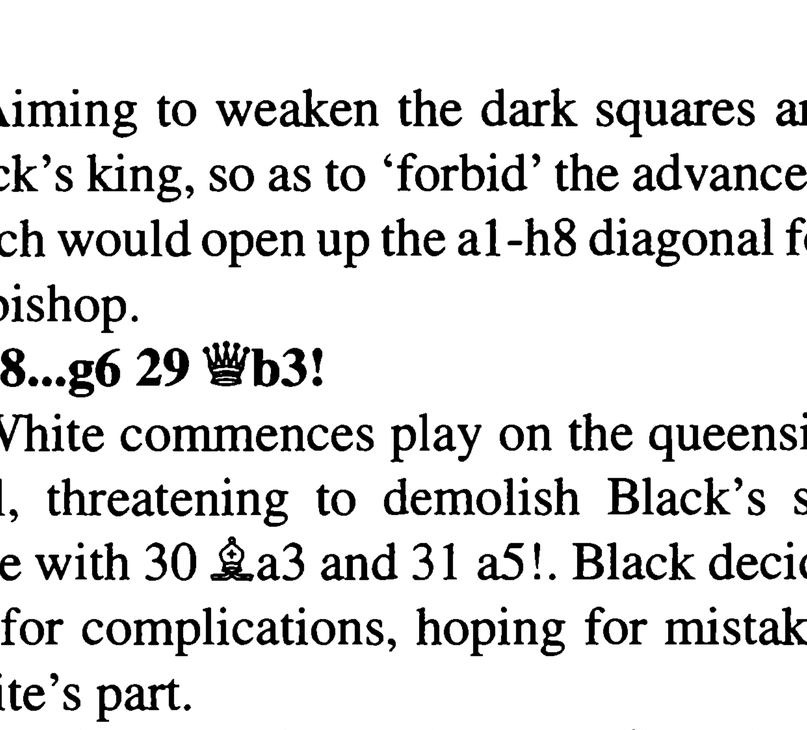


Aiming to weaken the dark squares around Black's king, so as to 'forbid' the advance ...e4, which would open up the a1-h8 diagonal for the c1-bishop.

28...g6 29 ♕b3!

White commences play on the queenside as well, threatening to demolish Black's set-up there with 30 ♗a3 and 31 a5!. Black decides to opt for complications, hoping for mistakes on White's part.

29...♘d7 30 ♗xf5! ♘c5 31 ♕b1 ♗xf5 32 ♕xf5 ♘xa4 *(D)*



33 ♕g4!

Material remains equal but Black's kingside weaknesses have been brought to light: the black e5-pawn is now isolated and will be targeted by the c1-bishop, while the a4-knight is too far away to defend its king. All these factors cause Black great trouble.

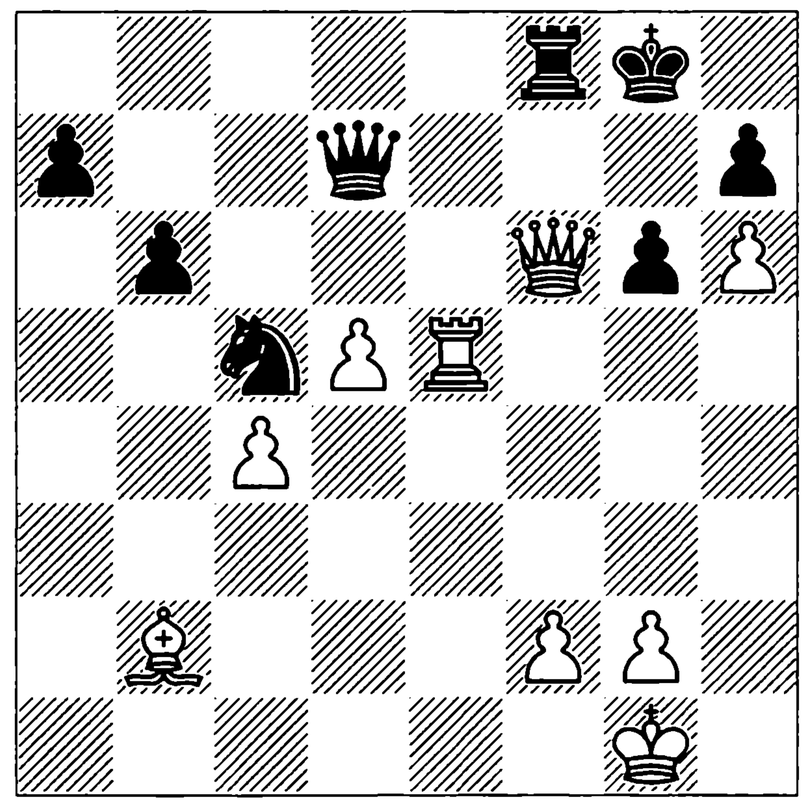
33...♖f7 34 ♖f3!

Exchanging the most important defensive black piece, the one controlling the 7th rank and the g7-square in particular.

34...♕d7 35 ♕g3 ♖xf3 36 ♕xf3 ♘c5 37 ♗b2 ♕a4?

A serious mistake in time-pressure. Black should have tried to defend with 37...♕d6 or test White's endgame technique by sacrificing a pawn with 37...♕f7!?.

38 ♕f6! ♕d7 39 ♖xe5 ♖f8 *(D)*



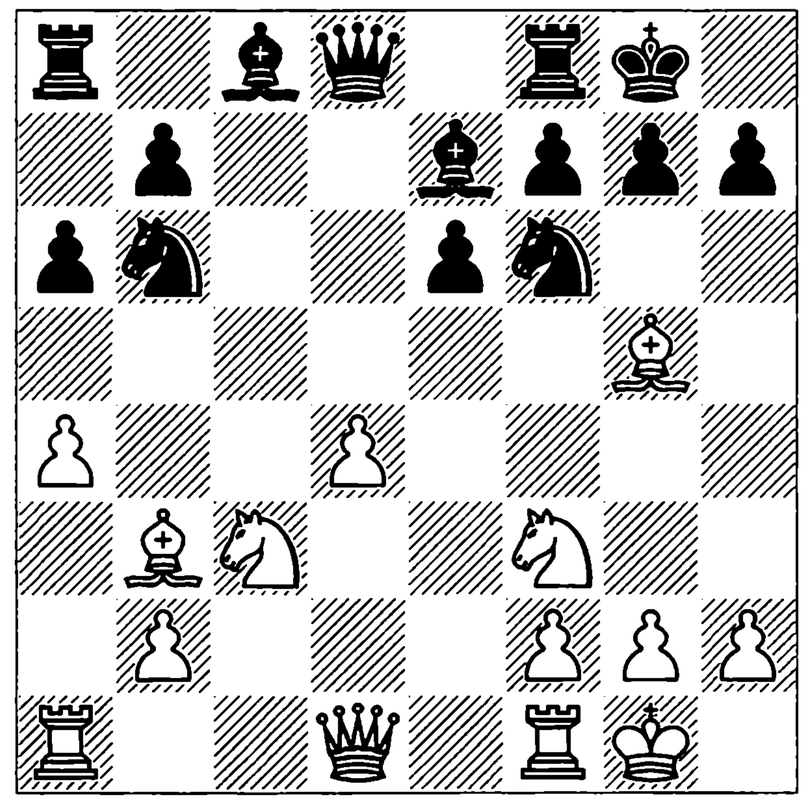
White's great positional and tactical superiority gives birth to the following combination.

40 ♖e8!! 1-0

Grivas – An. Georgiou

Thessaloniki 1988

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗e7 5 ♗g5 0-0 6 e3 ♘bd7 7 ♗d3 dxc4 8 ♗xc4 a6 9 a4 c5 10 0-0 cxd4 11 exd4 ♘b6 12 ♗b3 *(D)*



12...♘bd5!?

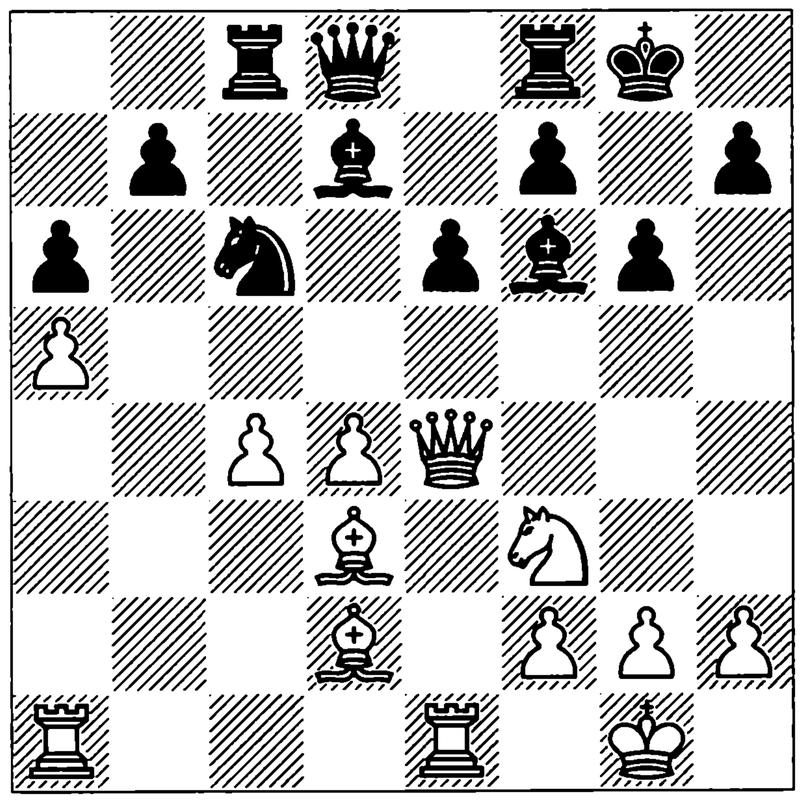
The theoretical continuation 12...♗d7?! allows White to direct the game into an advantageous ending by 13 a5! ♘bd5 14 ♗xd5! ♘xd5 15 ♘xd5 exd5 (15...♗xg5? 16 ♘b6!) 16 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 17 ♕b3! thanks to his better minor piece and possession of the open e-file.

13 ♖e1 ♘xc3?!

Black decides to give White a set of doubled pawns, but I think that 13...b6!? was better.

14 bxc3 ♗d7 15 ♘e5 ♖c8 16 ♕d3 ♖e8 17 a5! ♘d5 18 ♗d2! *(D)*

B

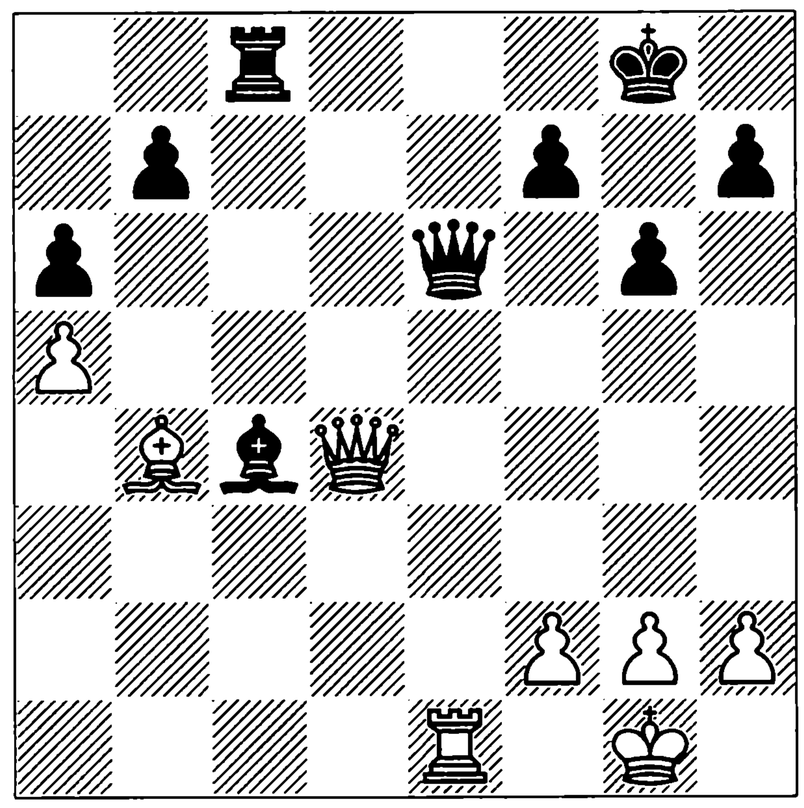


26...♗xd3 27 ♖ad1 ♗c2 28 ♖c1 ♗f5 29 ♖cd1 ♗c2 30 ♘g4! ♗g7 31 ♖c1 ♗b3?

Black should play 31...♗d3!, with an unclear position.

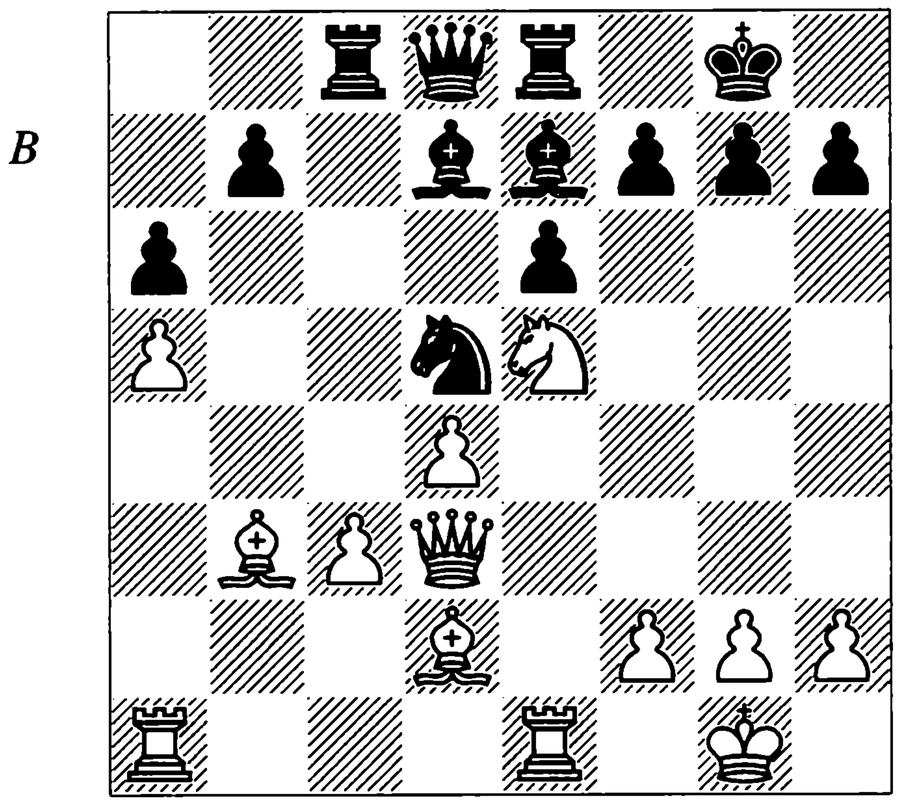
32 ♗b4! ♖e8 33 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 34 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 35 ♕xf6 ♕e6 36 ♕d4! ♗xc4 37 ♖e1 *(D)*

B



White's decision to enter this type of position was excellent. He has attacking chances on the weak dark squares while, should things not go according to plan, he has the draw in hand, thanks to the opposite-coloured bishops and the blocked queenside pawns. Black's (the defender's) greatest problem in such positions is that the opponent can keep 'testing the waters' without taking any particular risks. Here Black has a long and arduous defensive task ahead of him, with White constantly creating threats and Black himself having no chance to win the game. The only plan one can suggest for Black is to exchange queens; this will guarantee him a

B



White controls more space (which is why he declines piece exchanges), greater central influence and attacking chances against the black king; in short, White is better.

18...♖f8 19 c4?!

Premature. Moves like 19 ♕h3! or 19 ♗c2 would create more problems for Black. The knight was not so well placed on d5, and White gives Black a chance to improve this piece.

19...♘b4 20 ♕e4 ♘c6! 21 ♘f3

White correctly evades exchanges. 21 f4?? ♘xd4! would fully satisfy Black.

21...♗f6 22 ♗c2 g6 23 ♗d3? *(D)*

Allowing Black to execute a combination that improves his position. 23 ♖ed1 is better.

23...e5!! 24 dxe5

Instant equality would arise after 24 d5 ♗f5 25 ♕e3 e4 26 dxc6 ♖xc6! 27 ♗xe4 ♖e6! 28 ♘g5 ♗xg5 29 ♕xg5 ♖xe4.

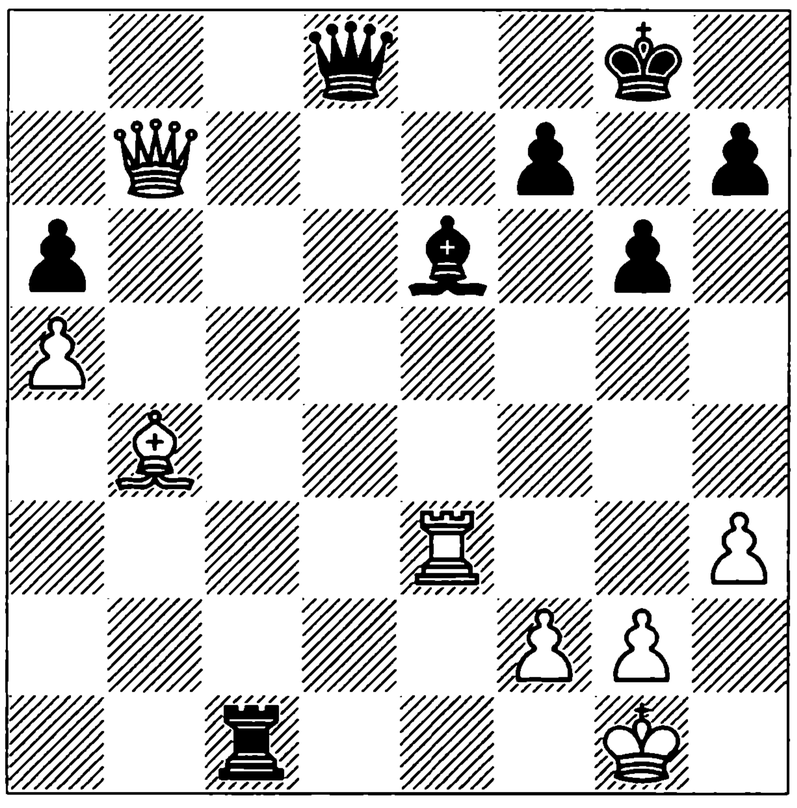
24...♗f5 25 ♕f4 ♘xe5! 26 ♘xe5

Worse is 26 ♗xf5? ♖xc4!, when Black wins material.

draw, but White of course will hardly allow this to happen!

37...♕d5 38 ♕f6 ♕f5 39 ♕e7 ♗e6 40 h3 ♕d5 41 ♖e3 ♕d8 42 ♕xb7 ♖c1+ *(D)*

W



43 ♗e1

43 ♖e1? ♖xe1+ 44 ♗xe1 or 43 ♔h2? ♕c7+! would lead to a draw. White needs all three of his pieces to create threats and there is no need to rush. In due course White will free his pieces and resume the attack

43...♕d2 44 ♕b8+ ♔g7 45 ♕e5+ ♔g8 46 ♔h2 ♕d5 47 ♕f6 ♕f5?

A decisive mistake. Black could maintain equality with 47...♕d6+! 48 f4 ♖c4! 49 ♗g3 ♕d4!. Now, however, he loses in an instructive way.

48 ♕d8+ ♔g7 49 ♗c3+ ♖xc3

Black could not save himself with either 49...f6 50 ♖f3! or 49...♔h6 50 ♕h4+ ♕h5 51 ♕f4+ ♕g5 52 ♗g7+ ♔h5 53 ♖e5 ♗f5 54 g4+ ♔h4 55 ♕g3#.

50 ♕d4+! ♕f6 51 ♕xc3 h5 52 h4 ♗d7 53 ♔g3 ♕xc3 54 ♖xc3 ♗b5 55 ♔f4 f6 56 ♖c7+ ♔h6 57 g3 ♗d3 58 ♖f7 g5+ 59 ♔e3 ♔g6 60 ♖xf6+ ♔xf6 61 hxg5+ ♔xg5 62 ♔xd3 1-0

Pawn-Majority

By the term 'pawn-majority' we mean a numerical superiority in pawns in one of the three sectors of the chessboard (kingside, centre, queenside). The value of a pawn-majority as a strategic element lies in its potential mobility; by its advance it can create multiple problems for the opponent.

It must be clarified that this term does not refer to a material advantage in pawns. Instead, it refers to the asymmetrical distribution of the two sides' pawns. It follows naturally that when one side has a pawn-majority in one area of the board, the opponent also has a majority in one of the others.

There is effectively an exception to the rule, namely that of a deformed pawn-structure, the weaknesses of which (usually doubled pawns) denies it the status of a usable majority. In this case the advantage of the other side becomes more pronounced, as there is no counterpart to its majority.

What is the power of a flexible and mobile pawn-majority? In which ways can we reap the benefits of its advance?

An active pawn-majority first of all offers more space, controls important squares and guarantees the initiative, as the opponent is (usually) obliged to confine himself to defensive duties. Moreover, it also provides one important prospect, that of creating a passed pawn. In this case the advantage is transformed from a pawn-majority into a passed pawn, a significant strategic element examined in the first chapter of this volume. These elements may assist aggressive actions on that part of the board where our majority lies and in general give our plans the necessary boost.

But what happens to the defending side? What shall its actions be so as to avoid defeat? As a rule there are two plans against a mobile pawn-majority. The first one is passive, though not necessarily disadvantageous, because the prevention of the majority's further advance and its eventual destruction is in itself enough for success. The second plan consists of the mobilization of the opposing pawn-majority, in order to counterbalance the dangers posed by its counterpart. In every type of position with structural imbalances the chess-player is obliged to examine the pros and cons of the structure, determine its requirements and act accordingly.

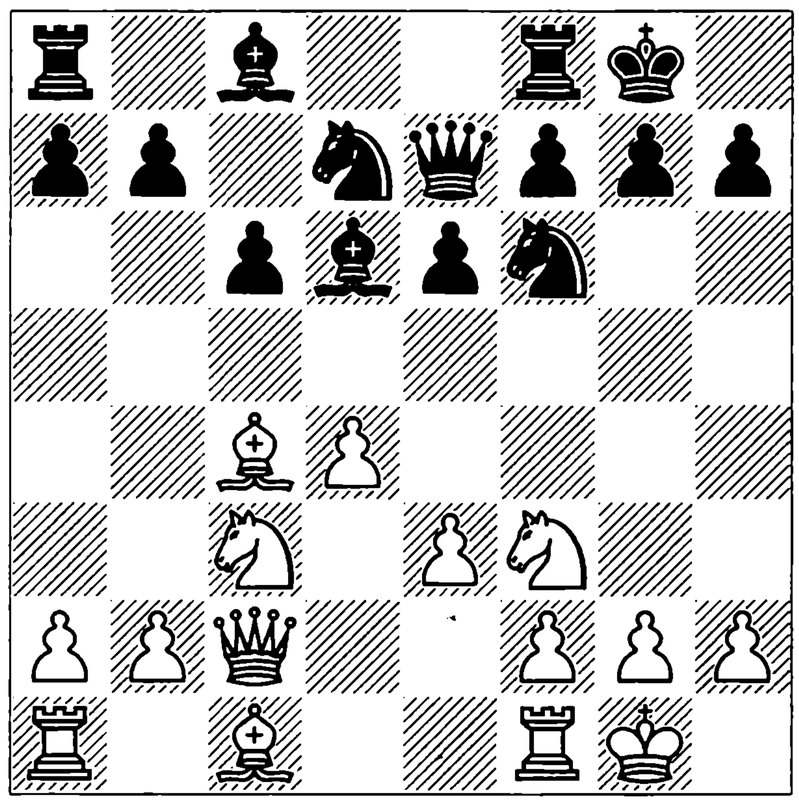
Grivas – K. Nikolaidis

Athens 1992

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 c6 3 c4 d5 4 ♘c3 e6 5 e3 ♘bd7 6 ♕c2 ♗d6 7 ♗e2 0-0 8 0-0 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 ♕e7!? *(D)*

Black develops, awaiting White's next move so as then to decide which of the two available breaks (...e5 or ...c5) to employ. Another interesting option is 9...a6 10 ♖d1 ♕e7 11 h3 b5 12 ♗d3 c5 13 ♘e4 c4! 14 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 15 ♗e2 ♗b7 with unclear play, Karpov-Anand, Brussels Ct (2) 1991.

W



10 a3

Best from a practical viewpoint at least, as 10 h3 c5! 11 dxc5 ♗xc5 12 e4 ♗d6 is satisfactory for Black, Karpov-Anand, Brussels Ct (6) 1991.

10...♗c7?!

10...♗b8!? proved more accurate in Grivas-Atalik, Karditsa 1994.

11 ♗a2 e5 12 h3 h6 13 ♗d2!?

In another Karpov-Anand game, Brussels Ct (8) 1991, White obtained the advantage following 13 ♘h4 ♖e8 14 ♘f5 ♕f8 15 ♘b5! ♗b8 16 ♗d2! a5 17 dxe5 ♗xe5? (17...♖xe5!) 18 f4! ♗b8 19 ♘c3.

13...a5 14 ♘h4 ♖e8 15 ♘f5 ♕f8 16 dxe5!

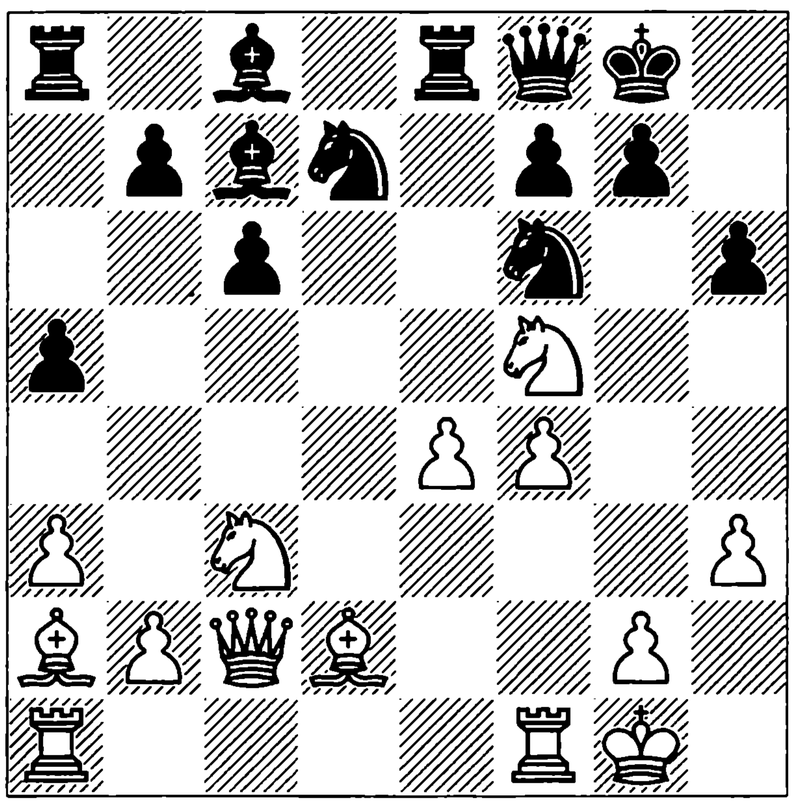
Better than 16 ♘b5 ♗b8 17 dxe5, which transposes to the aforementioned game Karpov-Anand, Brussels Ct (6) 1991.

16...♖xe5

Black also faces serious difficulties after 16...♗xe5 17 f4! (17...♗xc3? 18 ♗xc3 with a winning advantage for White).

17 f4 ♖e8 18 e4! *(D)*

B



White's superiority is indisputable and is mainly owed to his mobile kingside pawn-majority. In sharp contrast, Black's queenside pawn-majority cannot advance without creating weak squares and cannot become threatening. The qualitative difference between the white e4-pawn and Black's c6-pawn is immense and effectively determines the outcome of the game.

18...♘b6 19 e5 ♘h5?!

Black's position hardly inspires confidence, but in any case 19...♘h7 was necessary.

20 ♘xh6+!

White's great strategic plus creates the preconditions for successful combinations.

20...gxh6 21 ♕g6+ ♘g7 22 ♘e4! ♕e7?

White wins after 22...♘d7 23 ♗c3! and ♘f6+ as well, but Black had to play 22...♗d8! 23 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 24 exf6 ♗e6 25 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 26 ♕xg7+ ♕xg7 27 fxg7 with advantage for White. Black now loses simply, as his pieces are suffocating.

23 ♘f6+ ♔f8 24 ♘h7+ ♔g8 25 ♘f6+ ♔f8 26 ♕xh6 ♕c5+ 27 ♔h1 1-0

Black loses too much material.

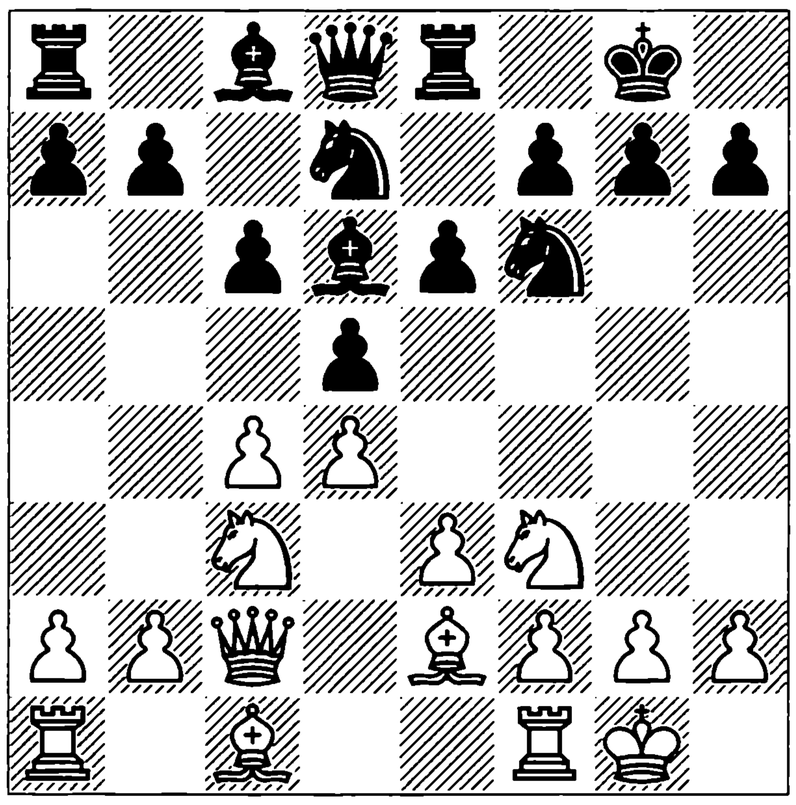
Grivas – Kramnik

Dortmund 1992

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 c6 4 e3 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♘bd7 6 ♕c2 ♗d6 7 ♗e2 0-0 8 0-0 ♖e8 *(D)*

Very accurate, as 8...♕e7 9 e4! dxe4 10 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 11 ♕xe4 e5 12 ♗g5! ♕e6 (12...f6?! 13 ♗d3 g6 14 ♗h6 f5 15 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 16 ♕e3 e4 17 c5 ♘xc5 18 dxc5 ♗xc5 19 ♕c1 ♗e6 20 ♗c4 exf3 21 ♗xe6 1-0 Hübner-M.Gurevich, Munich 1992) 13 c5 ♗c7 14 ♗d3 ♕g6 15 ♕xg6!? (15 ♕e3 exd4 16 ♕xd4 ♕h5 17 b4! ⩲) 15...hxg6 16 ♖ac1 exd4 17 ♘xd4 ♘e5 18 ♗e2 offers White a slight edge, according to Mikhalchishin.

W



9 b3

Only equality is promised by 9 ♖d1 ♕e7 10 e4 dxe4 11 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 12 ♕xe4 e5 13 ♗g5 f6 14 ♗h4 exd4 15 ♕xd4 ♗c5 16 ♕c3 ♘f8, Maiwald-Kramnik, Guarapuava U-18 Wch 1991.

9...♕e7 10 ♗b2

Although this is the most 'logical' move, I believe that Black now faces no real problems. White should continue with 10 ♖d1 b6 11 e4!, when he can fight for the advantage (see the

game Grivas-Koskinen, Gausdal 1993, analysed in Volume 1 of this series).

10...b6! 11 e4

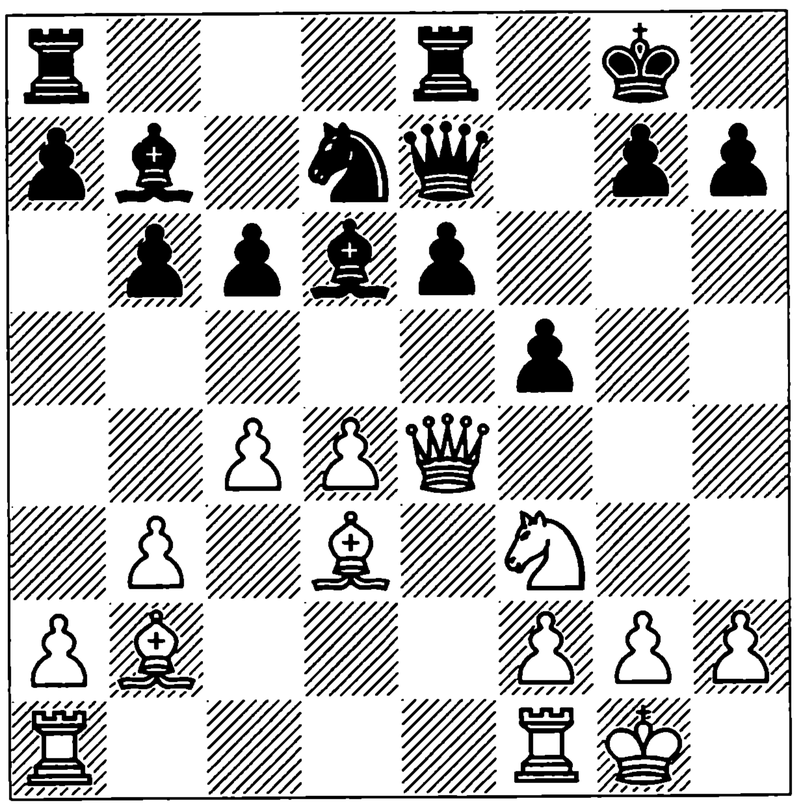
In line with the idea of 6 ♕c2, as White lacks any alternative plans.

11...dxe4 12 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♕xe4 ♗b7 14 ♗d3?!

A pointless move, hoping for 14...♘f6?! 15 ♕h4 h6 16 ♖fe1 with a slight edge for White. He should instead have preferred 14 ♕e3 c5 15 ♖fd1 ♖ad8 16 dxc5 with equality.

14...f5!! *(D)*

W



An excellent idea, aiming to create a mobile pawn-majority on the kingside. Black will exchange his c-pawn for White's d-pawn and obtain a 4:3 majority on the kingside, which will be able to advance menacingly. On the contrary, White's 3:2 queenside majority will remain immobile for several moves or, even worse, will never succeed in becoming threatening.

15 ♕e2 c5 16 ♖ad1?

White fails to comprehend the problems of the position. He should have played 16 h3 instead (16 d5 exd5 17 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 18 ♗xf5 d4!) and tried to defend.

16...cxd4 17 ♘xd4 ♕h4!

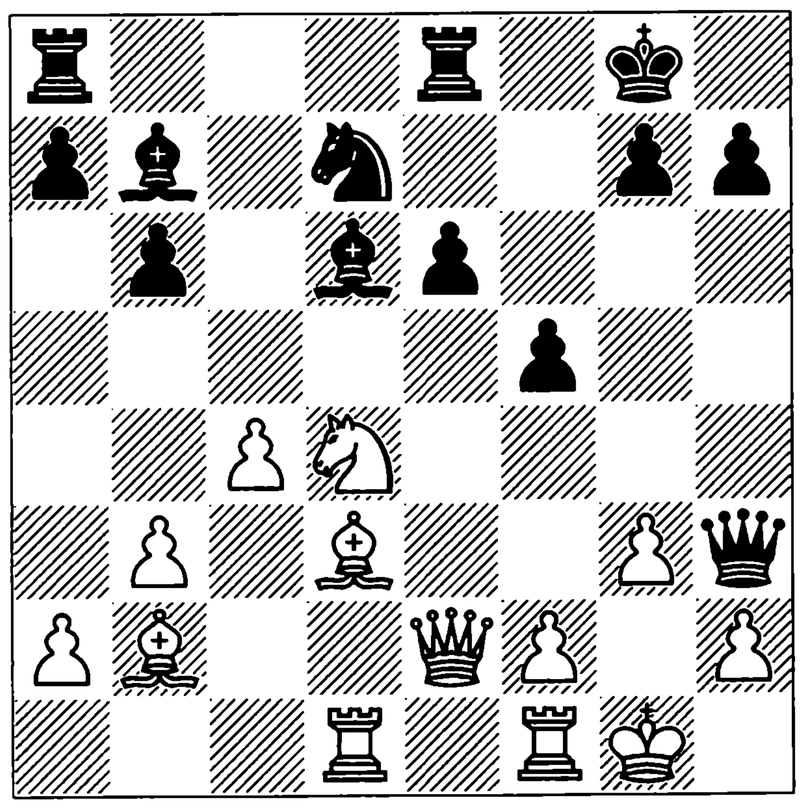
Better than 17...♘c5 18 ♘b5 ♗b8 19 ♗b1 (19 ♗e5!? ♘xd3 20 ♗xb8 ♖axb8!) 19...a6 20 ♘c3 with just a slight advantage for Black, who is demanding more from his position.

18 g3

18 h3 ♕f4! (18...♘e5 19 ♘b5! ♘f3+ 20 gxf3 ♕xh3 21 ♘xd6 ♗xf3 22 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 23 ♘xe8 ♖xe8 {23...♕g4+ =} 24 ♖fe1 is unclear) 19 g3 ♕h6 20 h4 ♘e5 leaves Black with a decisive superiority (then 21 ♗xf5? fails to 21...exf5 22 ♘xf5 ♕g6).

18...♕h3 *(D)*

W



19 f3

Optically displeasing, but the alternative 19 ♘f3 ♘e5!? 20 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 was not helpful.

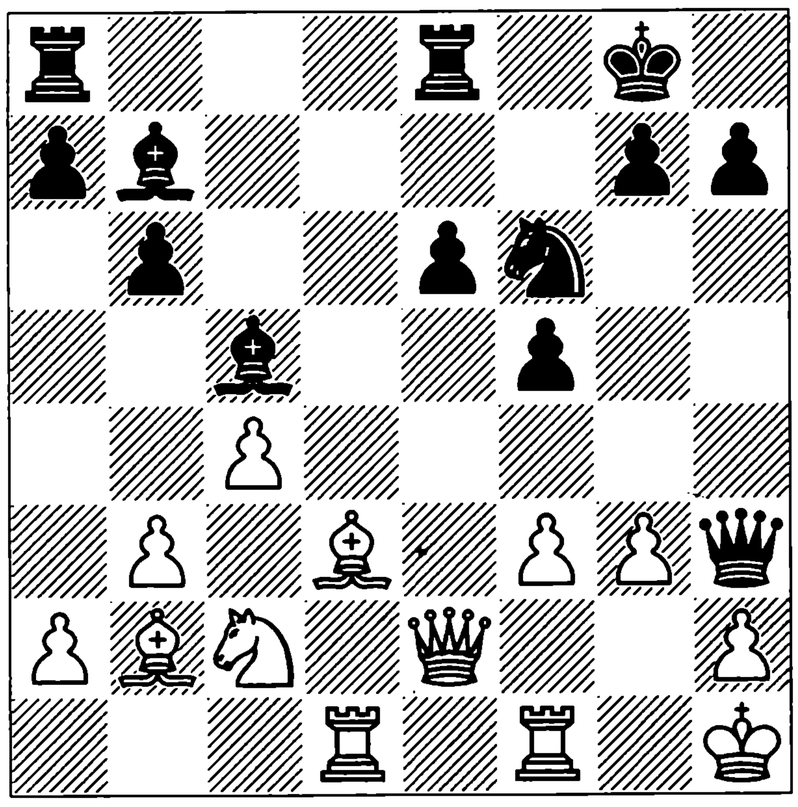
19...♗c5 20 ♔h1 ♘f6

Black's superiority is obvious, as he has some dangerous plans at his disposal (advance of the pawn-majority, attack against the white king) while White cannot react effectively.

21 ♘c2? *(D)*

Allowing the immediate advance of the black pawns. White should struggle on with 21 ♕g2 ♕h5 22 ♗b1 or 21 ♘b5!? ♖e7 22 ♗d4 instead.

B



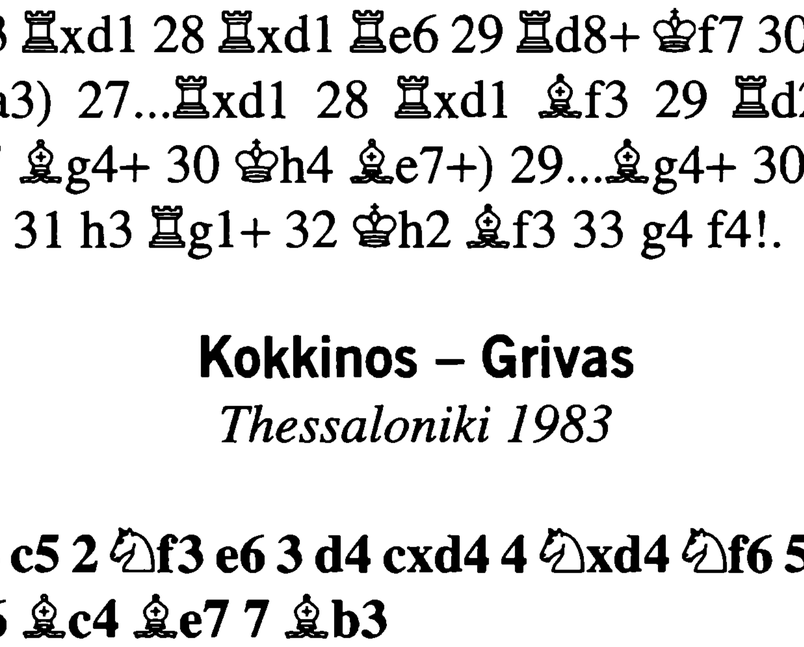
21...e5! 22 ♕g2 ♕xg2+ 23 ♔xg2 e4 24 fxe4

Compulsory, as 24 ♗e2 loses immediately to 24...exf3+ 25 ♗xf3 ♖e2+!.

24...♘xe4 25 ♔h3 ♖ad8!! *(D)*

A 'quiet' move, to which White has no good reply. It must be noted that Black could win an exchange with 25...♘f2+ 26 ♖xf2 ♗xf2 27 ♗xf5, but his position is so good that he seeks to extract even greater gains!

W



0-1

A possible continuation is 26 ♗xe4 (26 ♖xf5 ♗c8) 26...♗xe4 27 ♘a1 (27 ♘d4 ♖d6 or 27 ♘a3 ♖xd1 28 ♖xd1 ♖e6 29 ♖d8+ ♔f7 30 ♗c1 ♗xa3) 27...♖xd1 28 ♖xd1 ♗f3 29 ♖d2 (29 ♖d7 ♗g4+ 30 ♔h4 ♗e7+) 29...♗g4+ 30 ♔g2 ♖e1 31 h3 ♖g1+ 32 ♔h2 ♗f3 33 g4 f4!.

Kokkinos – Grivas

Thessaloniki 1983

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♗c4 ♗e7 7 ♗b3

Alternatively, White has tried 7 ♗e3 0-0 8 ♕e2 (8 f4?! d5 9 ♗d3 dxe4 10 ♘xe4 ♘d5 11 ♕f3 ♘xe3 12 ♕xe3 ♕b6 ∓ Hübner-Petrosian, Seville Ct (3) 1971) 8...d5 9 exd5 exd5 10 ♗b3 ♖e8 11 0-0-0 ♘c6 12 ♘db5 ♗g4 13 f3 ♗c5 14 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 15 ♖xd5 ♗xe3+ 16 ♔b1 ♕f6 17 fxg4 ♗c1 18 ♕xe8+ ♖xe8 19 ♖xc1 with unclear play, Dzindzichashvili-Frias, Lone Pine 1981.

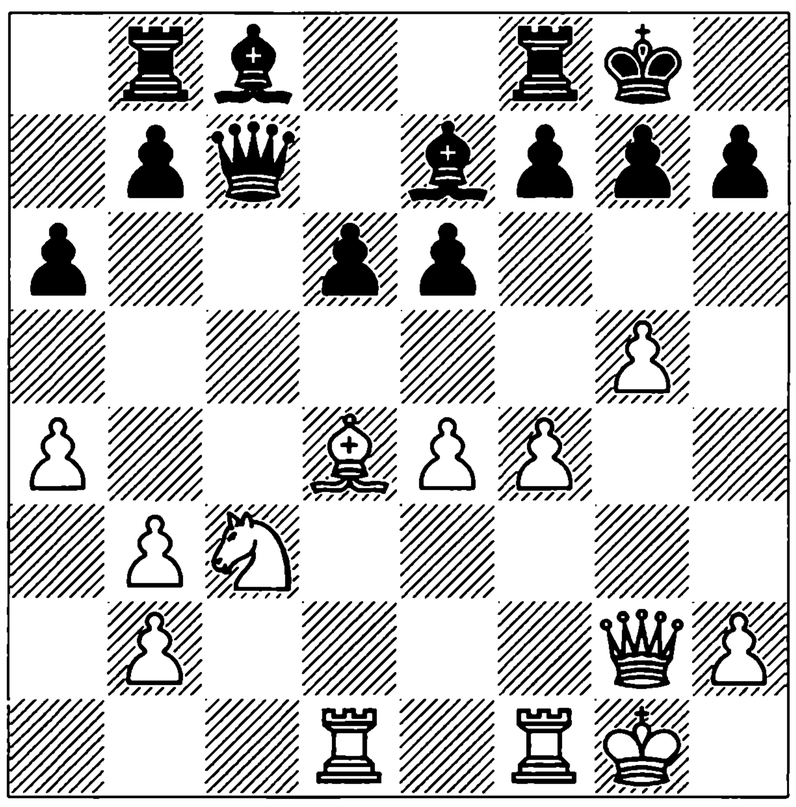
7...0-0 8 ♗e3 ♘a6! *(D)*

9 0-0?!

ECO prefers 9 f3 ♘c5 10 ♕d2 a6 11 g4 ♕c7 12 h4 b5 13 a3 ♘fd7 14 g5 ♘b6 with an unclear position, according to Minić.

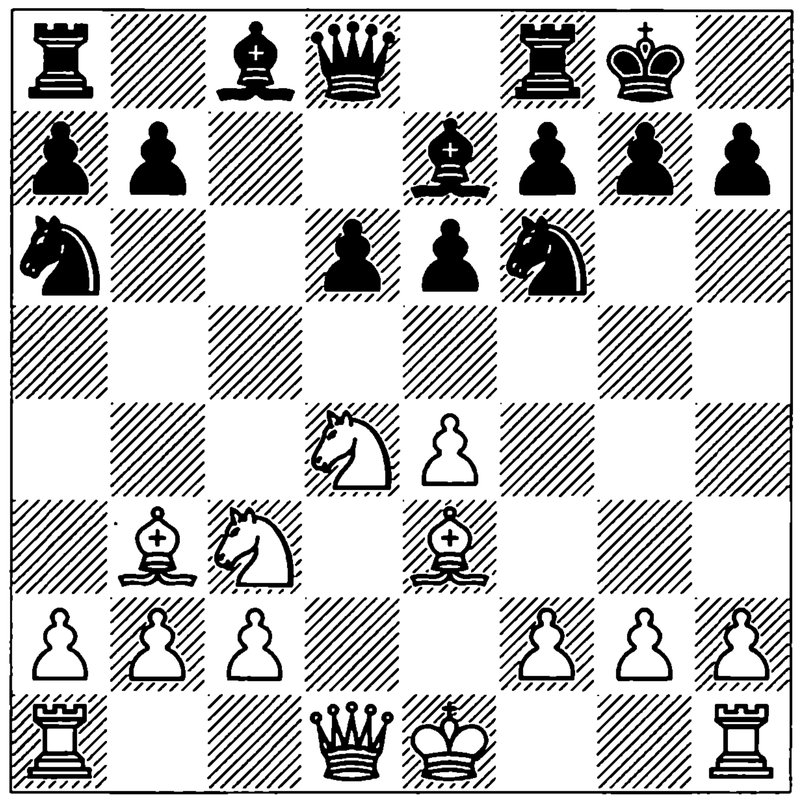
9...♘c5 10 ♕f3 a6 11 ♖ad1 ♕c7

B



Black has a 'clear-cut' 5:4 majority on the kingside, while White cannot claim the same on the queenside, as his doubled b-pawns deny him his 'rightful' majority. Black's main plan is simple: a transition to an ending, where he will be able to exploit what is practically an extra pawn.

W



Black has successfully solved all his opening problems and, as White's initiative in the centre is restricted, is ready to contest the full point.

12 g4!? ♖b8! 13 a4

White could also continue 13 g5 ♘fd7 14 ♕g2.

13...♘xb3! 14 cxb3?

A serious mistake in my opinion, ruining White's pawn-structure. 14 ♘xb3 was a must.

14...♘d7 15 g5 ♘e5!?

15...b6 16 ♕g2 ♗b7 is also satisfactory for Black.

16 ♕g2 ♘c6 17 f4 ♘xd4 18 ♗xd4 *(D)*

18...f5!

An excellent move, stopping White's initiative in its tracks and allowing Black to exchange pieces, further approaching an endgame where he will enjoy the advantages of a better structure and better minor piece (♗ vs ♘).

19 gxf6

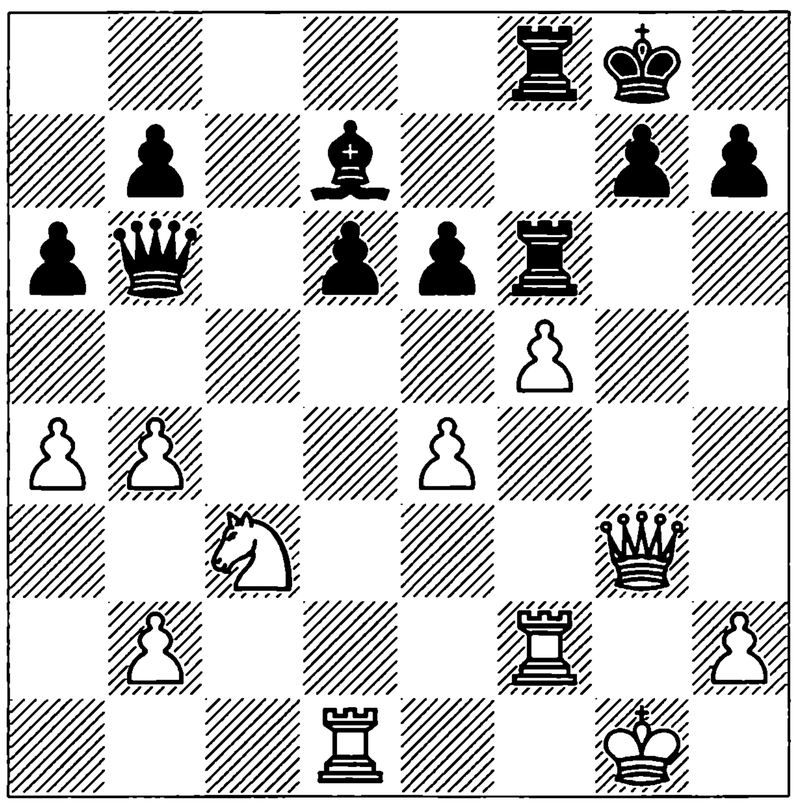
Black would also be happy after 19 exf5 ♖xf5.

19...♗xf6 20 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 21 f5?

The last mistake. White had to try 21 ♕d2 d5! 22 exd5 b5! 23 ♘e4 (23 d6?! ♕c6 24 h3 ♗b7 25 ♔h2 ♖g6 with advantage) 23...♖g6+ 24 ♔h1 ♗b7 25 f5 ♖h6!, where although Black retains the initiative, White has better claims to his share of the chances.

21...♗d7! 22 b4 ♖bf8 23 ♕g3 ♕b6+ 24 ♖f2 *(D)*

B



24...d5!!

A decisive breakthrough, destroying White's pawn-structure and his position in general.

25 exd5 ♖xf5 26 ♖dd2 h6! 27 h4 ♖xf2 28 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 29 ♕xf2 ♕xb4

Black has won material without surrendering his advantages.

30 ♕e3 exd5 31 ♕e5 ♕g4+ 32 ♔f1 ♗c6 33 ♘e2 ♕e4 34 ♕xe4 dxe4 35 ♘c3 a5 36 ♔f2 ♔f7 37 b3 ♔f6 38 ♔e3 ♔f5 39 ♘e2 ♔g4 40 ♘d4 ♗d5 0-1

D. Roos – Grivas

Patra 1983

1 e4 c5 2 ♘c3 e6 3 ♘ge2 ♘c6

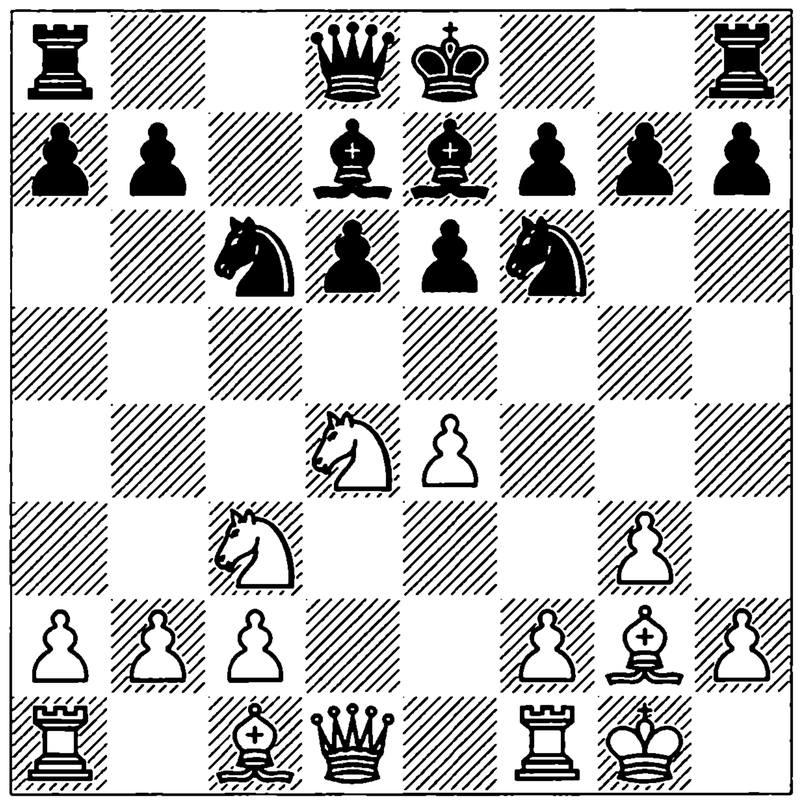
Unclear play results from 3...d5 4 exd5 exd5 5 d4 ♘c6 6 ♗e3 cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♘f6 8 ♗b5 ♗d7 9 ♘b3 a6 10 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 11 ♕e2! ♘e4!, D.Roos-Grivas, Athens 1983.

4 d4

4 g3 d5! 5 ♗g2 (5 exd5 exd5 6 d4? ♗g4!) 5...dxe4 offers equal chances.

4...cxd4 5 ♘xd4 d6 6 g3 ♘f6 7 ♗g2 ♗d7 8 0-0 ♗e7 *(D)*

W



9 ♘db5

I would prefer 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 11 a4 ±.

9...♕b8 10 a4

10 ♗f4 ♘e5 and 10 ♗g5 a6 11 ♗xf6 gxf6 do not bother Black.

10...0-0 11 ♗g5 a6 12 ♘a3 ♕c7 13 ♕e2 ♖ac8 14 ♖fd1 ♘a5

Black has a pleasant position and could have also tried 14...♘e5 15 f4 ♘g6!?.

15 ♖d3 h6 16 ♗e3 e5!

Black weakens the d5-square which, however, cannot be exploited by White. On the other hand, he controls critical central squares and plans a regrouping of his pieces with ...♗e6 and ...♖fd8.

17 ♖d2 ♗e6 18 f3 ♘c4 19 ♘xc4 ♗xc4 20 ♕d1

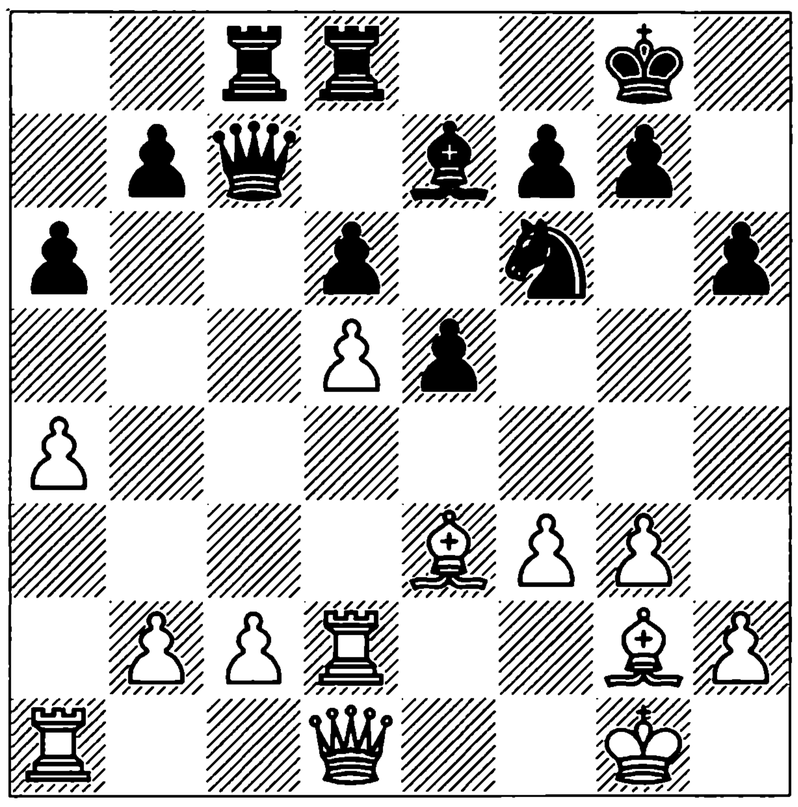
After 20 ♕f2 ♕c6! Black threatens the pawn-breaks ...d5 and ...b5.

20...♖fd8 21 ♘d5

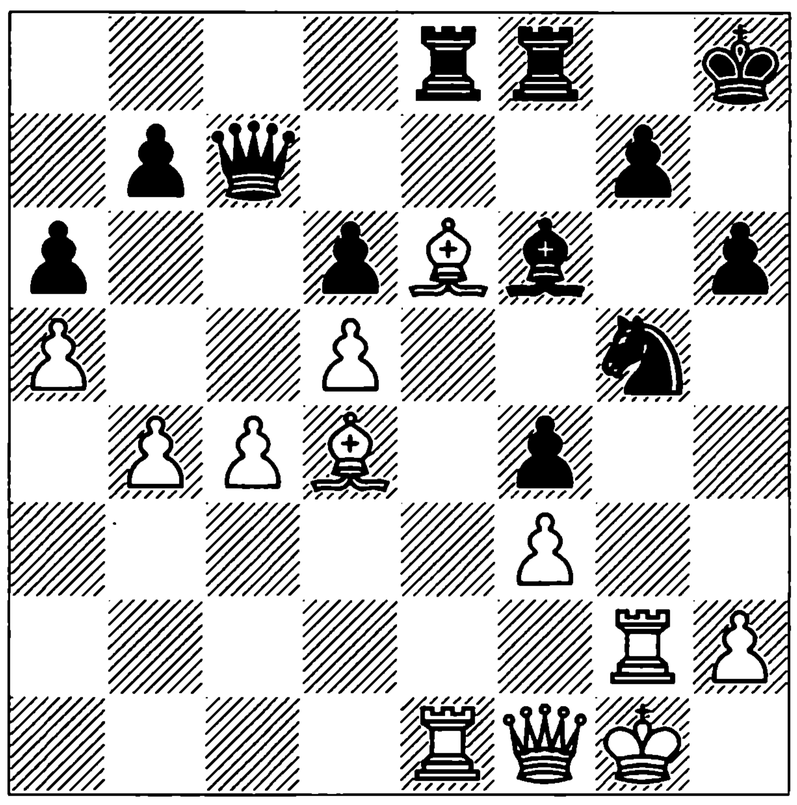
21 a5!? is interesting; for example, 21...d5 22 exd5 ♗c5 23 ♗xc5 ♕xc5+ 24 ♔h1 ♘xd5 25 f4!.

21...♗xd5 22 exd5 *(D)*

B



W



The respective pawn-structures have radically changed. Both sides have obtained a 4:3 majority – White on the queenside and Black on the kingside. The two sides' plans must be adapted to comply with the new situation.

22...♖f8!

A logical regrouping of the black pieces, fully in line with the requirements of the position. The black pieces will be transferred to the kingside where, in conjunction with the ...f5 advance, they will seek to grab the initiative and eventually prove that it is more dangerous than White's on the queenside.

23 ♗h3 ♖ce8 24 a5 ♗d8 25 ♕f1!

A strong move, allowing the white queenside pawn-mass to advance (b4, c4).

25...♘h7 26 c4 f5 27 b4 f4 28 gxf4

Practically forced, since in any other case Black's attack would be strong (...e4, ...♘g5).

28...exf4 29 ♗b6 ♕e7 30 ♗e6+ ♔h8 31 ♗d4?!

White should prefer 31 ♗xd8 ♕xd8 32 ♖e1 ♘g5 33 ♖de2, with chances for both sides in a complicated position.

31...♘g5 32 ♖g2 ♕c7!

And not the naïve 32...♘xe6?? 33 dxe6, when White wins.

33 ♖e1 ♗f6! *(D)*

Black has developed a more troublesome initiative and thus is calling the shots. The exchange of dark-squared bishops would favour him, as then White would no longer possess the bishop-pair.

34 ♗b6 ♕b8 35 ♖g4?

Better was 35 ♖ge2 or 35 ♗g4!.

35...♘xe6 36 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 37 dxe6 ♕c8!

White would have taken hold of the initiative after the careless 37...♗e5? 38 e7 ♖e8 39 ♗d8.

38 ♖xf4 ♕xe6 39 ♕f2 ♖c8?!

In time-pressure Black failed to proceed with 39...d5! 40 cxd5 ♕xd5, when the weakness of the white king, along with Black's better-placed pieces, would give him the advantage.

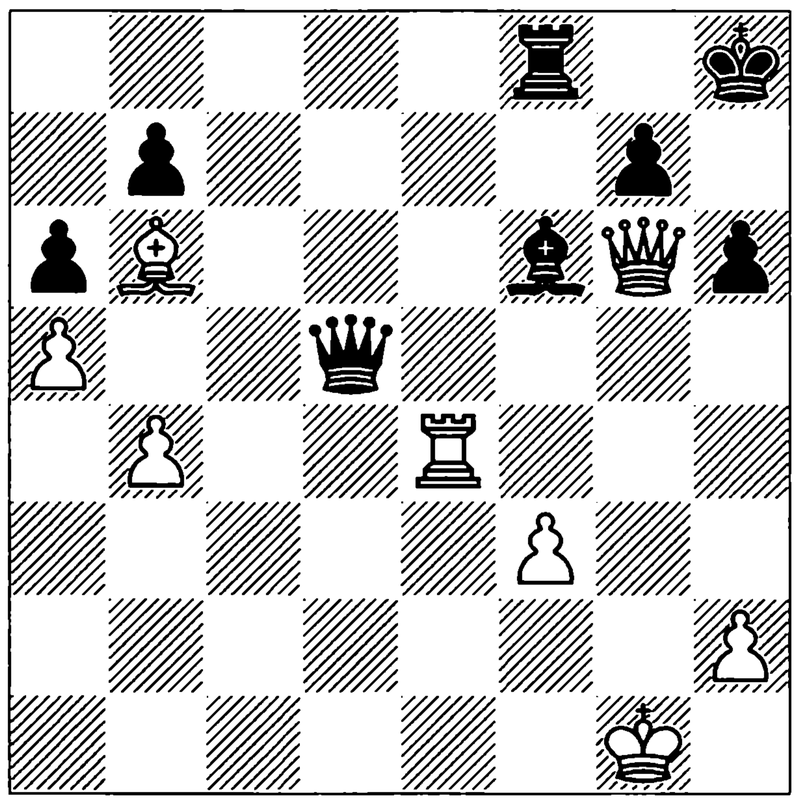
40 ♖e4 ♕f5 41 ♕g3 d5!

Only equality results from 41...♖xc4? 42 ♖xc4 ♕b1+ 43 ♔g2 ♕a2+ 44 ♗f2 ♕xc4 45 ♕xd6.

42 cxd5 ♕xd5 43 ♕g6 ♖f8!! *(D)*

A difficult move, as it abandons control of the open c-file, but the white king is the real target. After 43...♗e5 44 ♗f2! ♖c1+ 45 ♔g2 ♕b5 46 ♗e1! (46 ♖e1?! ♖xe1 47 ♗xe1 ♕e2+ 48 ♗f2 ♗d4 49 ♕g3 ♕b2 with advantage) White can hold the position.

W



44 ♗c5?

This 'easy' move is White's main mistake. He should instead have played 44 ♗f2!, when 44...♕d1+ 45 ♔g2 ♗h4 46 ♕g4 ♗xf2 47 ♔xf2 ♖d8 maintains Black's advantage.

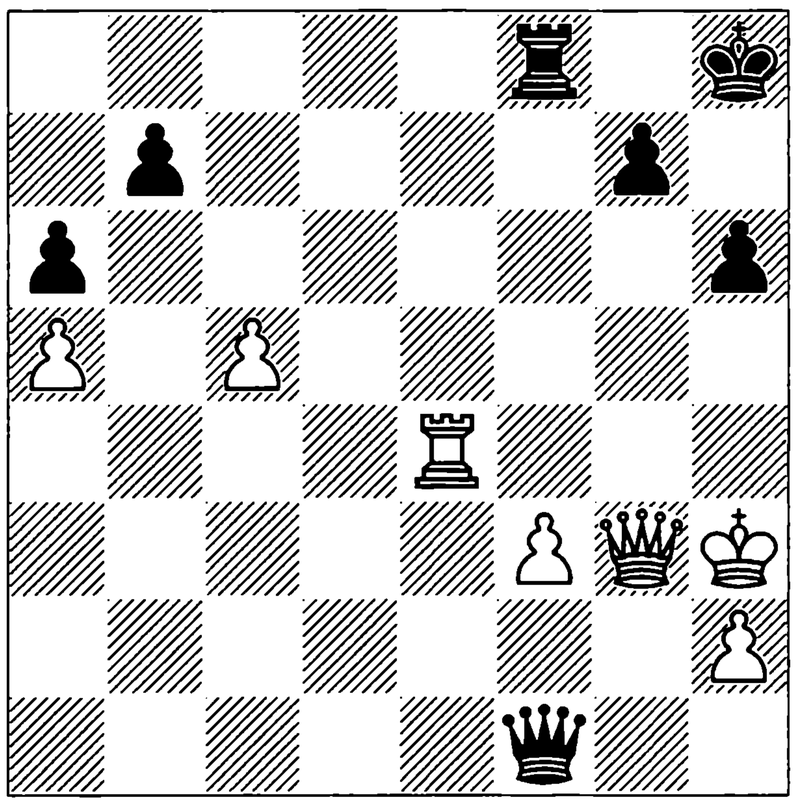
44...♕d1+ 45 ♔g2 ♗d4!! 46 ♕g3

Best, as other moves would lose immediately: 46 ♗xf8?? ♕g1+ or 46 ♗xd4 ♕xf3+ 47 ♔g1 ♕f1#.

46...♕g1+ 47 ♔h3 ♗xc5 48 bxc5 ♕f1+! *(D)*

48...♕xc5 is also winning, but Black correctly demands even more from his position.

W



49 ♔g4 ♖f6 50 ♖e1! ♕d3!

Not, of course, 50...♖g6+? 51 ♔h5!.

51 ♕f2 ♕f5+ 52 ♔h4 ♕f4+ 53 ♔h3 ♕xf3+ 54 ♕xf3 ♖xf3+ 55 ♔g4 ♖c3 56 ♖e5 ♖a3 57 ♔f5! ♔h7!

All would be lost after 57...♖xa5?? 58 ♔g6!. But now Black's victory is certain.

58 c6 bxc6 59 ♖c5 ♖h3 60 ♔g4 ♖xh2 61 ♖xc6 ♖g2+ 0-1

Tischbierek – Grivas

Dortmund 1990

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 d3 ♗e7

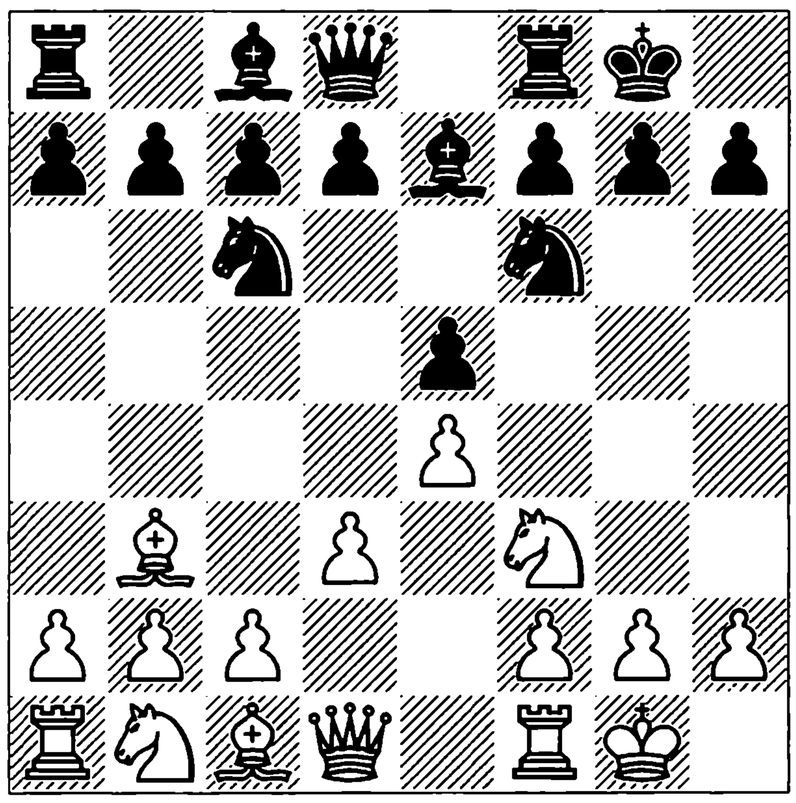
Another solution to the opening problems is the interesting 4...h6 5 0-0 d6 6 c3 g6 7 d4 ♕e7 8 ♘bd2 ♗g7 9 ♖e1 0-0 10 h3, which offers chances for both sides, Dolmatov-Beliavsky, Tashkent 1980.

5 ♗b3

5 ♘bd2 is another common move here, but 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♘d5 ♘xd5 7 exd5 ♘b8 8 0-0 ♗g4 (Borm-Smejkal, Amsterdam 1980) is an inferior approach for White.

5...0-0 6 0-0 *(D)*

B

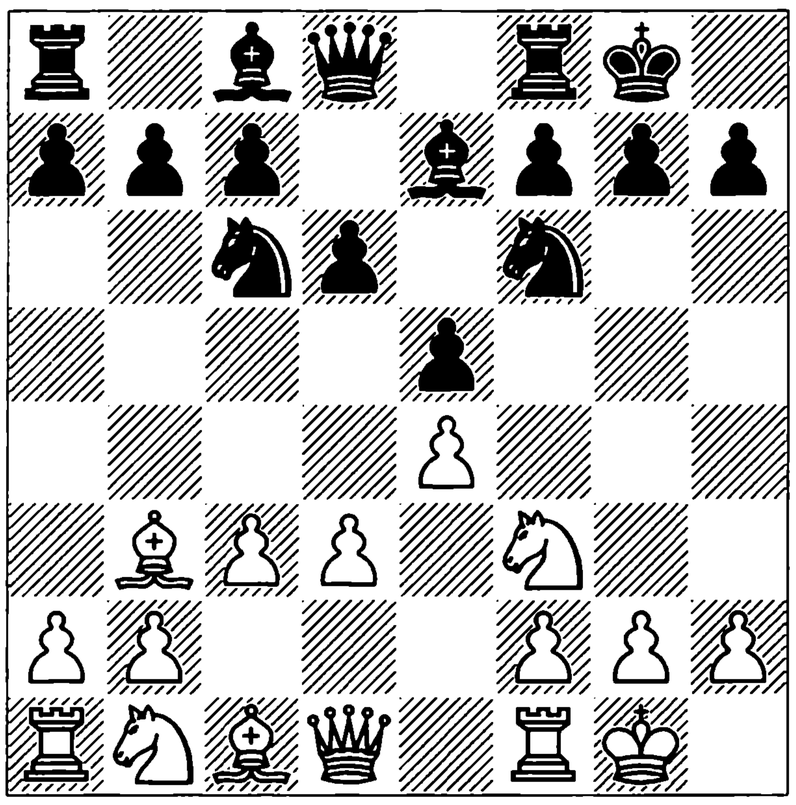


6...d6

I prefer White's position after 6...d5 7 exd5 (7 ♘bd2 dxe4 8 dxe4 ♗c5 9 c3 a5 = Psakhis-Chekhov, USSR Ch (Vilnius) 1980/1) 7...♘xd5 8 ♖e1 ♗f6 9 ♘bd2 ♗g4 10 h3 ♗h5, Beliavsky-Agzamov, USSR 1981.

7 c3 *(D)*

B



7...♗e6

Black has alternatives:

a) 7...♘a5 8 ♗c2 c5 9 ♖e1 ♘c6 10 h3 ♕c7 11 ♘bd2 ♗e6 is unclear, Sax-Beliavsky, Sarajevo 1982.

b) 7...♔h8 8 ♘bd2 ♘g8 9 d4 ♗f6 10 ♘c4 ♗g4 11 dxe5 ♘xe5 12 ♘cxe5 dxe5 13 ♗e3 ♕e7 14 h3 ♖ad8 15 ♕e2 ♗xf3 16 ♕xf3 ♗g5 = Nunn-I.Ivanov, Toluca IZ 1982.

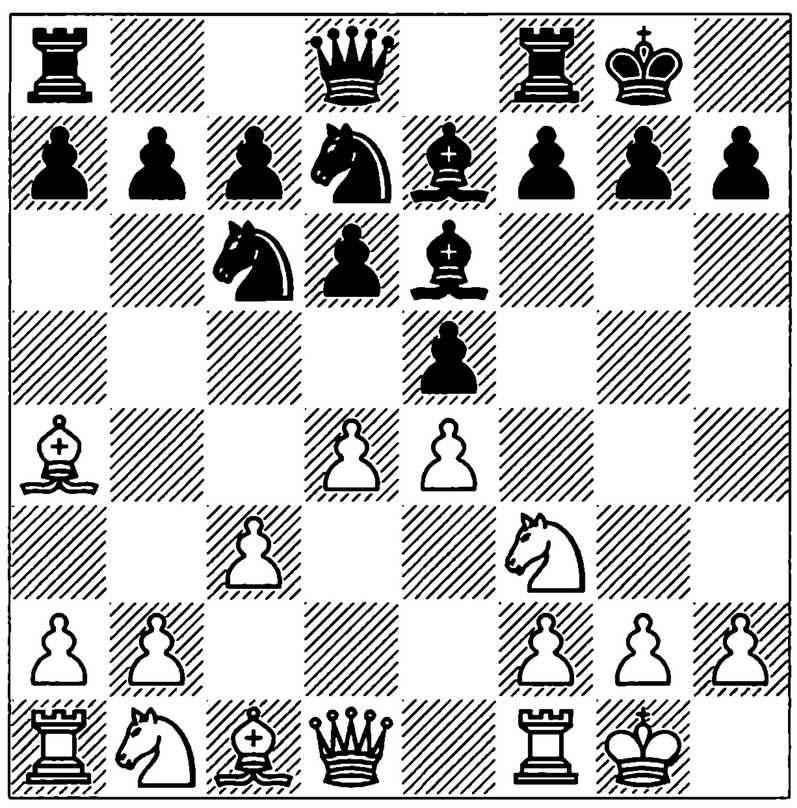
c) 7...♘d7!? 8 ♗e3! ♘c5 9 ♗xc5 dxc5 10 ♗d5 ♗d6 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 12 ♘bd2 ♗e6! 13 ♘c4 f6 14 ♖e1 ½-½ Lirindzakis-Grivas, Khania 1987.

8 ♗a4!?

Other moves lead to equality: 8 ♗xe6 fxe6 9 ♕b3 ♕c8 10 ♘g5 ♘d8; 8 ♘bd2 ♗xb3 9 ♕xb3 ♕c8 10 ♖e1 ♘d8! 11 ♘f1 ♕e6; 8 ♗c2 d5! 9 exd5 ♗xd5 10 ♘bd2 ♖e8 11 ♖e1 ♗f8, Kanavarakis-Grivas, Patra 1987.

8...♘d7 9 d4! *(D)*

B



9...exd4 10 ♗xc6

An interesting try, in place of the unclear 10 cxd4 d5 11 e5 ♗f5!.

10...bxc6 11 ♘xd4 c5!

Only move, as 11...♘e5? loses to 12 f4 ♗g4 13 ♘xc6! (not 13 ♕d2? c5!).

12 ♘xe6

12 ♘c6 is inferior, because after 12...♕e8 13 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 Black has solved all his problems.

12...fxe6 13 ♘d2

Nothing good is promised by 13 ♕b3 ♖f6 14 ♗g5 ♖g6 15 ♗xe7 ♕xe7.

13...♘b6 14 ♕e2 a5?!

Black could and should have proceeded with 14...e5!? 15 ♘c4 ♘xc4 16 ♕xc4+ ♔h8 17 ♗e3 ♗g5 =.

15 f4!

The changes in the pawn-structure have defined the field of action for each side. White has a 4:3 majority on the kingside and Black a similar one on the queenside.

15...a4 16 ♘f3 ♕c8!?

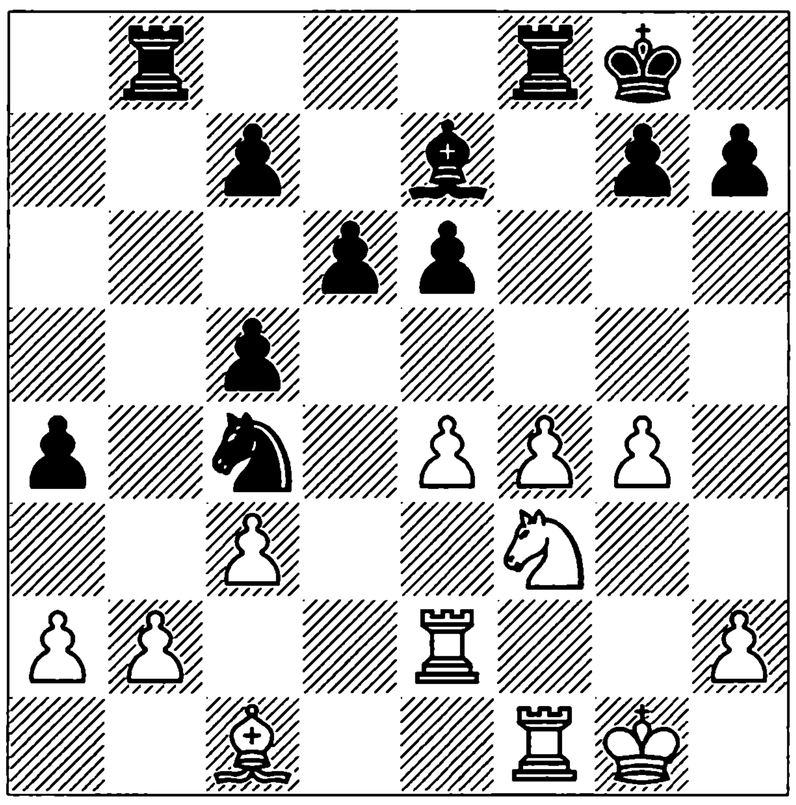
Intending to exchange queens via a6, which would defuse White's attacking potential and weaken the c4-square.

17 ♗e3 ♕a6 18 ♖ae1 ♕xe2 19 ♖xe2 ♘c4?!

The pressure on b2 is ineffective. 19...d5!? 20 ♗c1 ♗f6! offers equal chances, but Black thought he was better.

20 ♗c1 ♖ab8 21 g4! *(D)*

B



White sets his kingside majority in motion; in conjunction with his better-placed pieces this will cause Black some problems. It must be noted that Black's majority is not as mobile. As a result, Black has ended up in a passive position.

21...♖f7 22 ♖ff2 c6

After 22...g6 White would continue 23 g5 followed by h4-h5 and ♘h2-g4, with the advantage.

23 f5 exf5 24 exf5 g6?!

Aiming to weaken the white pawn-mass, but 24...h6 25 h4 ♗f8 is preferable.

25 ♖e4! ♘b6

Compulsory, as 25...d5? would drop material after 26 fxg6 hxg6 27 ♖e6, attacking two black pawns.

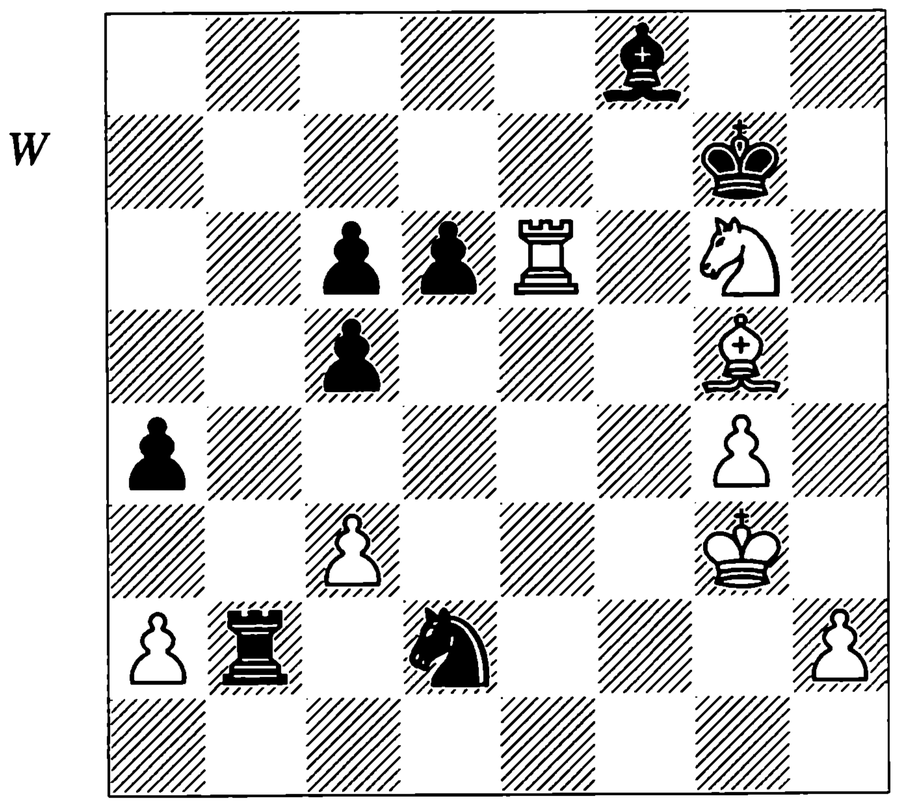
26 ♗g5! ♗f8 27 fxg6 hxg6 28 ♖e6! ♔g7 29 ♘h4! ♖xf2 30 ♔xf2 ♘c4!

With a series of very good moves, White has obtained the advantage. Black is obliged to seek immediate counterplay, as otherwise he will asphyxiate.

31 ♘xg6!

Best, as 31 ♗c1?! ♔f7! 32 ♖xg6? ♘e5! and 33...♘d3+! is a disaster for White.

31...♖xb2+ 32 ♔g3 ♘d2! *(D)*



Threatening to force perpetual check with 33...♘f1+.

33 ♔f4!?

White would win the ending after 33 ♗xd2! ♖xd2 34 ♘xf8 ♔xf8 35 h4 ♖xa2 36 ♖xd6 ♖c2 37 ♖xc6 ♖xc3+ 38 ♔f4 but the text-move also wins. White had a choice to make and from a practical viewpoint it would have been clearly preferable to opt for this endgame, where the possibility of going wrong is small.

33...♘f1 34 ♔f5 ♖f2+ 35 ♘f4?

Time-trouble proves to be White's greatest enemy. He could have won with 35 ♗f4! ♘xh2 36 ♖e8! (36 ♖f6? ♗e7!).

35...♔f7! 36 ♖f6+ ♔e8?

36...♔g8! leads to a draw.

37 h3

Defending the g4-pawn and thus neutralizing the threatened 37...♘e3+!.

37...♖xa2 38 ♗h4?

Another mistake induced by time-trouble. 38 ♔g6! wins.

38...a3 39 ♘e6??

But this mistake is fatal, leaving White lost. Equal chances are offered by 39 ♘g6?! ♗h6!, but White could still have remained on top after 39 ♔g6!.

39...♗e7 40 ♘g7+ ♔d7 41 ♖f7 ♖e2 42 ♔g6 0-1

White resigned in view of 42...a2 43 ♖xf1 ♗xh4 44 ♖a1 ♗e1. His ideas were good, their implementation even better, but his final effort missed the target.

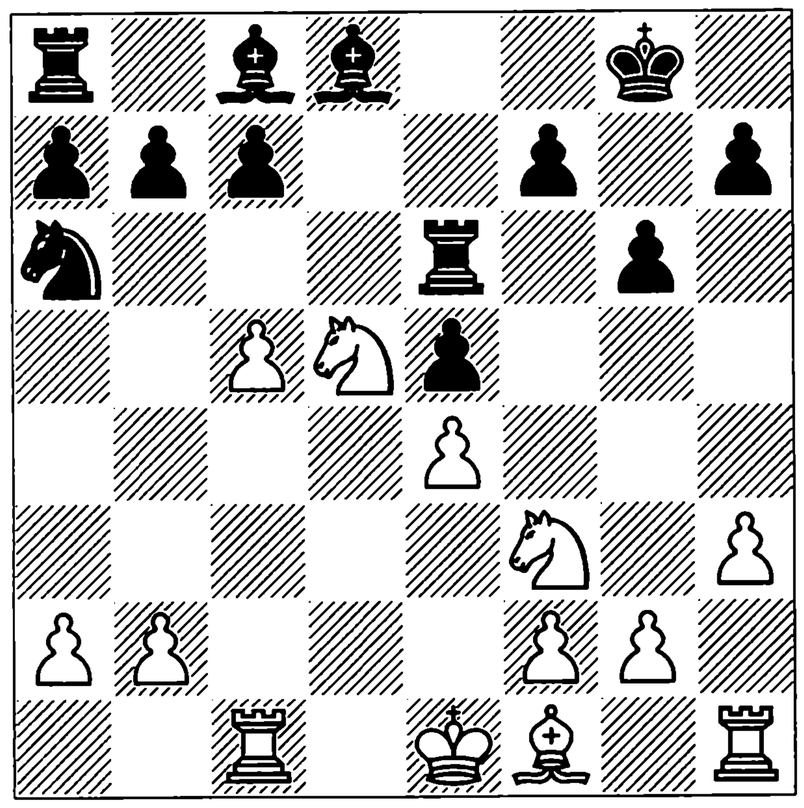
Grivas – And. Tzermiadianos

Korinthos 1997

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 c4 ♗g7 4 ♘c3 0-0 5 e4 d6 6 h3 ♘a6 7 ♗g5 e5 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 10 ♘d5 ♖d6 11 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 12 ♖c1 ♗d8

Best, as 12...c6? 13 c5! ♖e6 14 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 15 ♘xe5 ♖e6 16 f4! f6? 17 ♗c4! fxe5 18 f5 is winning for White.

13 c5 ♖e6 *(D)*



14 a3 c6

14...♔g7 is interesting; e.g., 15 h4 c6 16 ♗xa6 cxd5 17 ♗d3 dxe4 18 ♗xe4 f5 19 ♗d5 ♖e7 20 ♔e2 with unclear play, Grivas-Ilinčić, Varna 1994.

15 ♗xa6!

Worse is 15 ♘e3 b5 16 h4 (16 cxb6 axb6 17 ♗c4 ♖e8 18 ♗xa6 ♗xa6 19 ♖xc6 ♗b7 20 ♖c4 ½-½ Grivas-Mozetić, Karditsa 1994) 16...♔g7 17 g3 ♖e8 18 ♗h3 ♗xh3 19 ♖xh3 with unclear play, Grivas-Boshku, Athens 1994.

15...cxd5

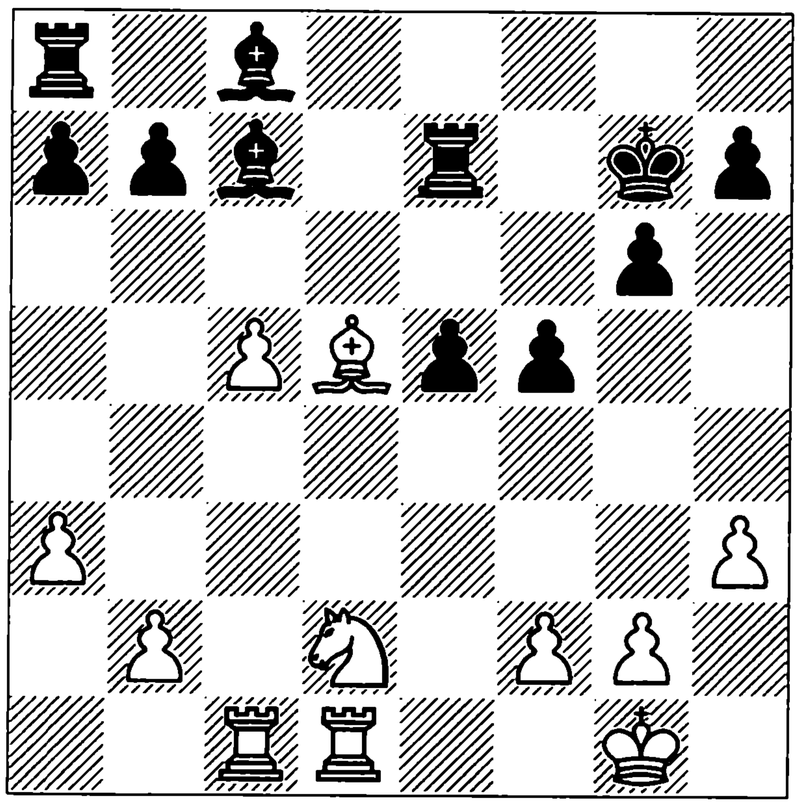
Black has also tried 15...bxa6: 16 ♘e3 ♖b8 17 ♘c4 a5 18 0-0 ♗a6 19 ♖fd1 ♗xc4 20 ♖xc4 f6 21 ♘e1 ♔f7 22 ♔f1 ♗c7 23 ♖d7+ ♖e7 24 ♖xe7+ ♔xe7 25 ♘d3 ♔e6 26 ♔e2 ± Grivas-Pappas, Athens 2000.

16 ♗d3! dxe4!?

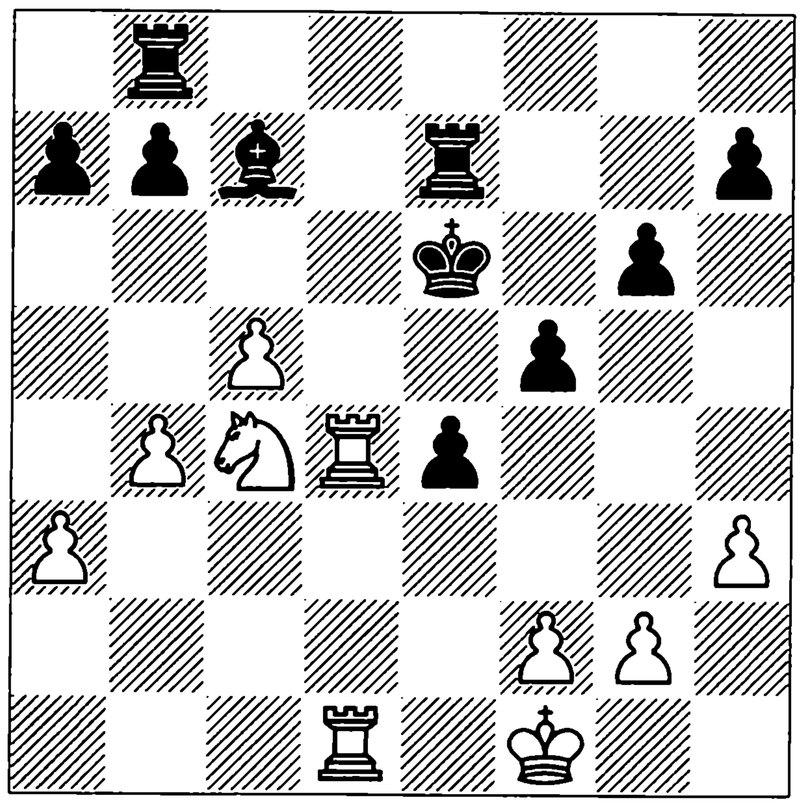
After 16...d4 17 ♗c4 ♖e7 18 ♗d5 ♖b8 19 ♘d2 White will apply pressure with ♘c4-d6. The passed black d4-pawn does not trouble White, as the black pieces lack harmony.

17 ♗xe4 ♖e7 18 0-0 f5 19 ♖fd1! ♗c7 20 ♗d5+ ♔g7 21 ♘d2! *(D)*

B



B



The pawn-structure determines the two sides' play. White is obliged to play on the queenside and the d-file, while Black must seek his chances in the centre and on the kingside. Black's possession of the bishop-pair is counterbalanced by the ability of the white pieces to occupy better posts, mainly on the squares of the d-file. Now the white knight heads for the outpost on d6 and White can claim an edge.

21...♖b8 22 ♘c4 ♔f6 23 ♖d2! e4?

The psychological necessity of advancing his majority is understandable, but it was more important for Black to focus on defence with 23...♗d7! (23...♗e6?! 24 ♗xe6 ♔xe6 25 ♖cd1) 24 b4 ♗c6! with only a slight – but very pleasant – advantage for White.

24 ♖cd1 ♗f4 25 ♖d4 ♗e6?!

A mistaken exchange. 25...♗e5! 26 ♘xe5 ♔xe5 offers Black better chances to hold the position.

26 ♗xe6 ♔xe6 27 b4

White's superiority is large, as he possesses three significant advantages: the 3:2 pawn-majority on the queenside is mobile, he controls the only open file and the c4-knight is a stronger piece than the f4-bishop.

27...♗c7 28 ♔f1 *(D)*

The last remaining white piece enters the battle. Black must passively observe events as they unfold.

28...♔f7 29 a4 a6 30 ♔e2 ♖f8 31 ♘d6+!

White surrenders one of his advantages but can now more easily invade Black's camp. His assessment proves correct.

31...♗xd6 32 ♖xd6 ♖c8 33 a5!

An apparently 'illogical' move, seemingly ruining White's queenside majority. White judged that it is more important to prevent any counterplay with 33...a5, while he will later be able to destroy the black pawn-chain with the c6 advance.

33...♖cc7 34 ♔e3 ♔g7 35 g4!

This is effectively a minority attack. White aims to weaken the black kingside pawn-chain, so as to make it more vulnerable to attack from the white king and rooks.

35...fxg4

Forced, as he loses quickly after 35...♔f7 36 gxf5 gxf5 37 ♔f4. However, the text-move is hardly desirable either.

36 hxg4 ♖f7 37 g5! ♖ce7 38 ♖1d4 ♖f3+ 39 ♔e2 ♖ff7 40 ♔e3 ♖f3+ 41 ♔e2 ♖ff7 42 c6!

White has succeeded in fixing the black pawns (a6, e4 and h7) and turning them into targets. The final stage now commences, i.e. the transformation of the positional superiority into a material one. Black tried to defend actively, but his position proved too weak for this.

42...bxc6 43 ♖xc6 ♖f5 44 ♖xa6 ♖xg5 45 ♖ad6 ♖b5 46 a6 ♔h6 47 ♖6d5 ♖b6 48 b5 ♖c7 49 ♖a4 ♖a7 50 ♖c5 ♔g7 51 ♖ac4 ♔h6 52 ♖xe4 ♖d7 53 ♖a4 ♖a7 54 ♖a5 1-0

Pawn-Minority

As a strategic element, the pawn-minority can offer an alternative active plan when our majority on the other wing cannot readily be exploited. Using our pawn-minority we can attack an immobile majority, aiming to create (after exchanges) a weak pawn in the opponent's camp. This particular action is called the 'Minority Attack'. With this term we imply the activity a side can develop on a flank where this side has fewer pawns than the opponent.

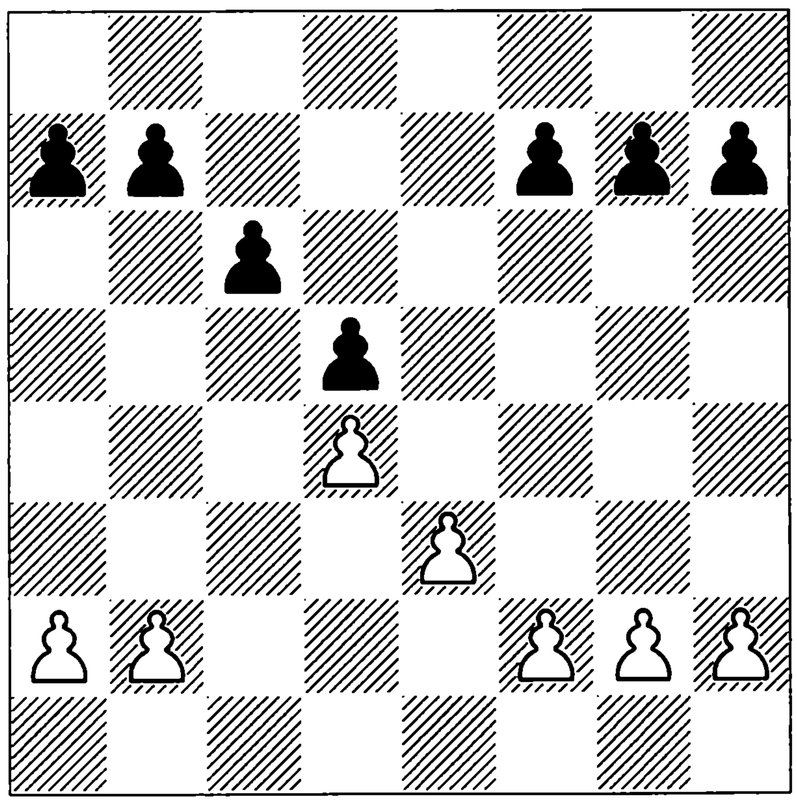
The minority attack is a positional plan aiming to create weaknesses for the opponent and eventually exploit them. Naturally, just as with all positional plans we develop during a game, the minority attack does not guarantee victory on its own, but creates the conditions to develop an initiative and provides the side that employs it with clear targets. It is a very sensitive strategic concept that can easily backfire, leaving the opponent with a passed pawn.

The strategic element of the pawn-minority and the ways of exploiting it can be split into two categories:

1) The first category concerns the asymmetrical but not fixed pawn-skeleton. In this case a minority attack is more difficult to employ, as the opponent's defensive options, active or passive, are several and cannot be accurately described. General principles are in effect here as well, but the dynamics that may result due to the mobility of the respective pawn-structures cannot be effectively classified.

2) The second category concerns fixed pawn-structures. Here things are simpler, as practice has determined the recommended actions for both sides. To understand the play of both the side employing the minority attack and the defending side, we shall use a typical and educational example.

The following diagram is essential for our training in minority attacks. White will plan the



b4-b5 advance, aiming to leave Black with a weak (backward) pawn on c6. But which details should both sides take into account? What are the sensitive points they must be aware of (and which basically concern the defending side)?

2a) Black can and should seek the initiative in the other sectors of the board (centre and kingside). On the other hand, he must also take care over his defensive task. If he can successfully accomplish both these tasks, then he will be able to assume the initiative, thus rendering White's plan unsuccessful.

2b) After White's b4-b5 advance, which will weaken the c4-square, Black can exchange the light-squared bishops and occupy c4 with a knight (via b6 or d6).

2c) He can physically prevent White's b4-b5 advance with ...b5. The resulting weakness on c6 can be covered by ...♘c4.

2d) He may reply to White's b4-b5 with ...c5, ignoring the resulting isolated pawn on d5 and creating a powerful initiative in the centre.

In the application of methods '2b'-'2d' the defending side must consider whether possession of an open a-file is beneficial, and so whether he should play ...a6 (or ...a5) before

b4-b5 comes, thereby forcing White to play a4 (or a3).

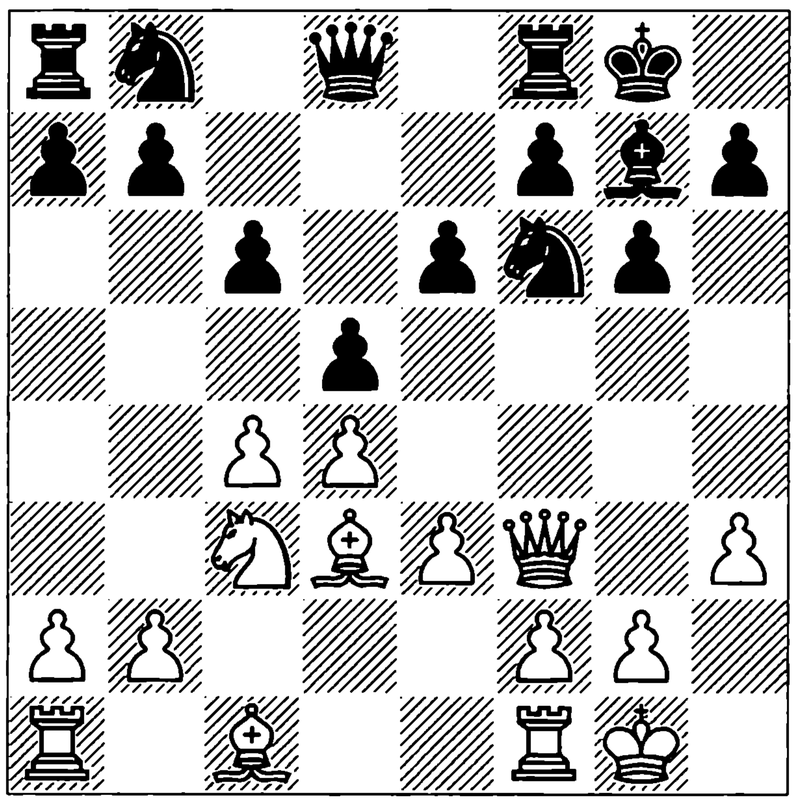
This dissection of our example is valid for every similar pawn-structure (fixed or not) and for both sides, on either flank.

Grivas – Makropoulou

Levidi 2001

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e3 g6 5 ♘f3 ♗g7 6 ♗d3 0-0 7 0-0 ♗g4 8 h3 ♗xf3 9 ♕xf3 e6 *(D)*

W



10 ♖d1

White has also tried other moves in this position:

a) 10 ♗d2 ♘bd7 11 cxd5 cxd5 12 ♖fc1 a6 13 ♖c2 ♖e8 ± ½-½ Grivas-Smyslov, Karditsa 1995.

b) 10 cxd5 cxd5 11 ♕d1 ♘c6 12 ♗d2 ♘e8 13 ♕b3 ♘d6 14 ♘b5 ♘c8 15 ♖fc1 f5 16 ♘c3 ♖f7 17 ♘a4 ♘d6 18 ♘c5 ± Grivas-Crouch, London 1998.

10...♘bd7 11 ♗d2

The immediate 11 cxd5 cxd5?! (11...exd5) 12 ♗d2 a6 13 ♖ac1 ♖c8 14 ♘a4 b5 15 ♘c5 ♘xc5 16 dxc5 left White clearly better in Grivas-Melahrinos, Athens 1998, while 11 e4?! dxe4 12 ♘xe4, despite opening the centre for the white bishop-pair, weakens the d4-pawn and offers Black some targets.

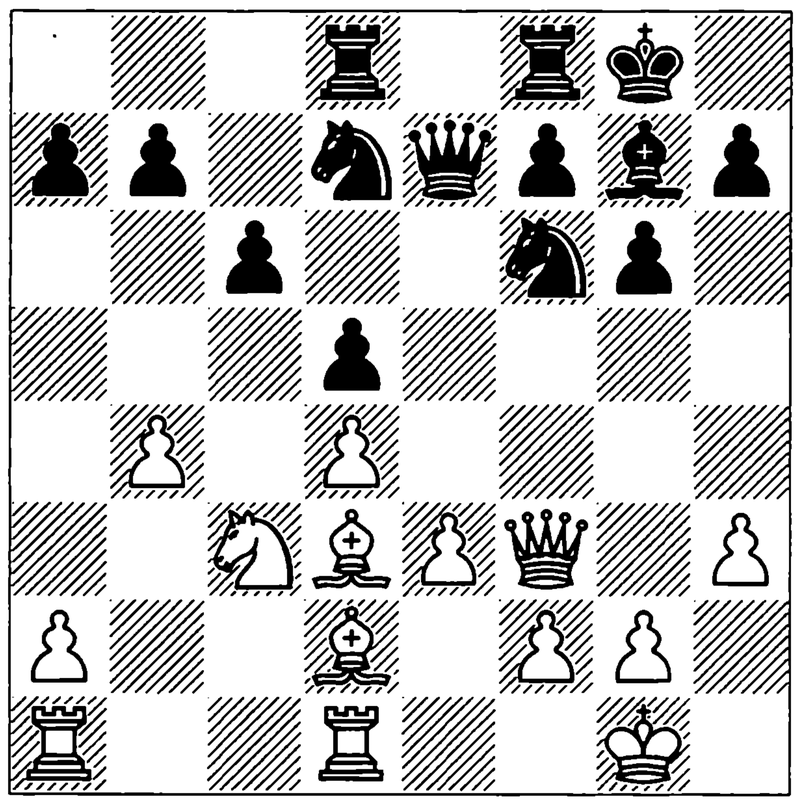
11...♕e7 12 cxd5 exd5!

The correct reaction, as 12...cxd5 would allow White the initiative on the queenside with ♖ac1 and ♘a4 or ♘b5. The pawn-structure has now been defined. White's only logical plan is a minority attack with b4-b5, while Black will seek play on the other side of the board.

13 b4! ♖ad8! *(D)*

13...♕xb4? 14 ♘xd5 would only exchange White's b-pawn for the important central black d-pawn.

W



14 ♗e1

The immediate advance of the b-pawn is premature: 14 b5?! c5! 15 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 16 ♕xd5 cxd4 17 exd4 ♘e5!! is fine for Black. White is in no hurry and carefully prepares the b5 break, as Black cannot pose any immediate danger.

14...♖fe8 15 ♖ac1 ♕e6 16 ♕e2 ♗f8 17 ♕b2 b5!?

Black adopts one of the defensive mechanisms analysed earlier, as White was ready to make the b5 advance.

18 a4 a6 19 a5

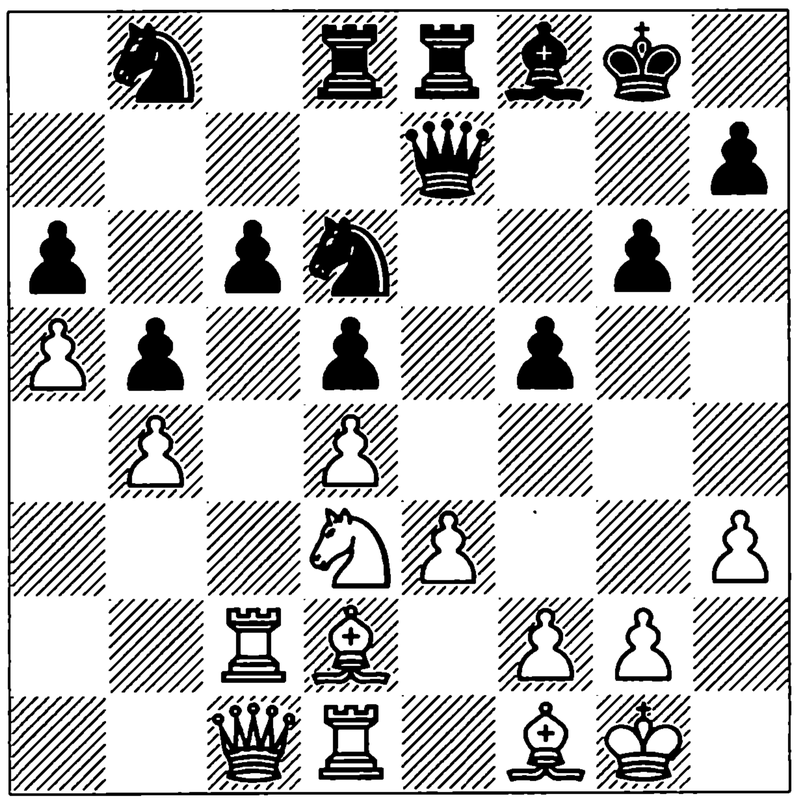
Preventing Black's standard ...♘b6-c4 idea and preparing to apply pressure on the backward c6-pawn.

19...♘h5 20 ♖c2 f5 21 ♘e2 ♘b8 22 ♗d2 ♕d7 23 ♘c1 ♘f6 24 ♗f1 ♘e4 25 ♘d3 ♕e7?!

25...♘xd2? does not solve Black's problems, but 25...♘d6! is essential – then the position is unclear with chances for both sides, and White must seek other plans.

26 ♕c1! ♘d6? *(D)*

Black's handling of the position and its problems had, up to this point, been successful. However, with her last move she allows White an excellent exchange sacrifice, after which her position becomes difficult. After the correct 26...♖c8! there would be all to play for.



W

41...♖xe4!

Returning the exchange allows Black to fight for a positive result.

42 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 43 ♖xd4!

Compulsory, as 43 ♗d2?! ♔e6! 44 ♔f3 ♔d5 would have been satisfactory for Black.

43...♖xd4 44 ♗c3 ♔e6 45 ♗xd4 ♔d5 46 ♗e5?!

46 ♗f6 is clearly preferable, with some winning chances. The excellent placement of the black king in the centre makes White's task very difficult.

46...g5! 47 ♔f3 ♗h6 48 ♗f6 gxf4 49 g5 ♗f8 50 ♔xf4 ♔e6 51 ♗e5 ♗e7 52 ♗d6??

By this stage White had no real winning chances, but this move allows Black to win directly with 52...♗xd6+ 53 cxd6 ♔xd6 54 ♔f5 ♔d5!. It must, however, be noted that both players had very little time at their disposal until the end of the game, with successive errors as a consequence.

52...♗d8??

This is even losing! The black bishop had to keep an eye on the h6-square, preventing the white king from invading. Losing control of the f8-square leaves Black now unable to defend.

53 ♔g4 ♔d5 54 ♔h5 ♔c4

Or 54...♔e6 55 ♔h6 ♔d5 56 ♗f4 ♔e4 57 ♗c1.

55 c6 ♔b3 1-0

27 ♖xc6! ♘xc6 28 ♕xc6 ♕b7

Forced, otherwise Black would lose another pawn.

29 ♕xb7 ♘xb7 30 g4! fxg4 31 hxg4 ♘d6 32 ♘c5

For the exchange sacrificed, White has obtained a pawn, the better pawn-structure, two bishops and clear targets (a6 and d5). His position is preferable.

32...♖a8 33 ♗e1! ♖a7 34 ♖d3 ♔g7 35 ♗g2 ♘e4 36 f3! ♘xc5

White also has a decisive superiority after 36...♘d6 37 ♗g3, intending ♗e5+ and f4.

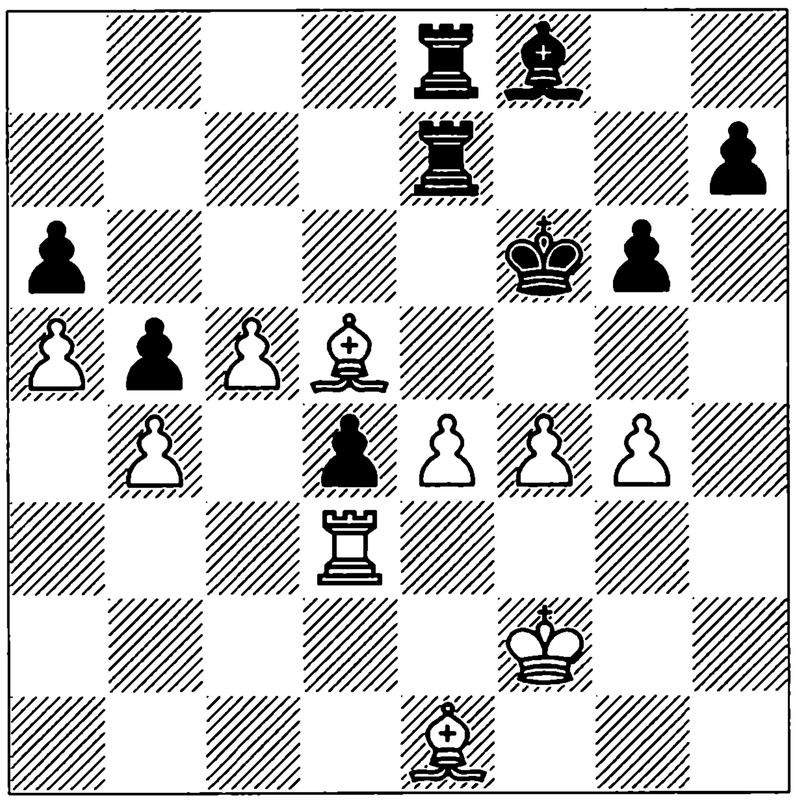
37 dxc5

Now a protected passed c-pawn has been added to White's advantages.

37...♖ae7 38 ♔f2 ♔f7 39 f4?

With both sides in serious time-pressure, White 'cracks' first. Correct was 39 ♗c3! ♗g7 40 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 41 f4! with an easy win.

39...d4!! 40 ♗d5+ ♔f6 41 e4 *(D)*



B

Grivas – Nyysti

European Clubs Cup, Rethymnon 2003

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 g3 d5 4 ♗g2 ♗e7 5 0-0 0-0 6 c4 dxc4 7 ♕c2 a6 8 a4

Most people prefer the direct 8 ♕xc4 b5 9 ♕c2 but the text-move is perfectly valid too.

8...♗d7 9 ♕xc4 ♗c6 10 ♗f4 *(D)*

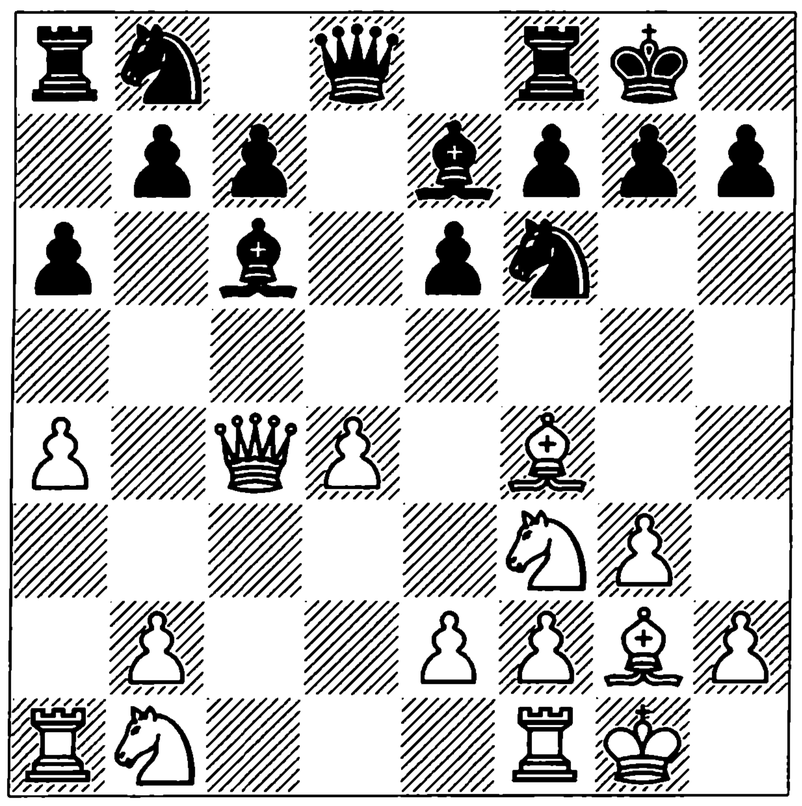
10 ♗g5 is considered to be the main line.

10...a5

ECO recommends 10...♘bd7 11 ♘c3 ♘b6 12 ♕d3 ♘bd5 13 ♗g5 ♘xc3 14 bxc3 ♗e4 as equal, Alburt-Prandstetter, Taxco IZ 1985.

11 ♘c3 ♘a6 12 ♖fe1

Another option is 12 ♖ae1!? ♗d5! (12...♘b4?! 13 e4! gave White the advantage in Korchnoi-Hjartarson, Saint John Ct (8) 1988) 13 ♘xd5 exd5 14 ♕b5 ♕c8 with equality according to



Hjartarson. White has also tried 12 ♕d3 ♘b4 13 ♕b1 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 c6 15 ♖d1 ♗d6 16 ♗d2 ♕e7 = Birnboim-Svidler, Beersheba 1992.

12...♘b4?!

The path to equality goes 12...♗d5! 13 ♘xd5 exd5 14 ♕b5 ♕c8 15 ♕b3 c6 16 ♘e5 ♗b4 17 ♖ed1 ♕e6 = Donchenko-Geller, USSR 1979.

13 ♖ac1 ♘fd5

Black cannot exchange the c6-bishop now, as then the c7-pawn would be lost.

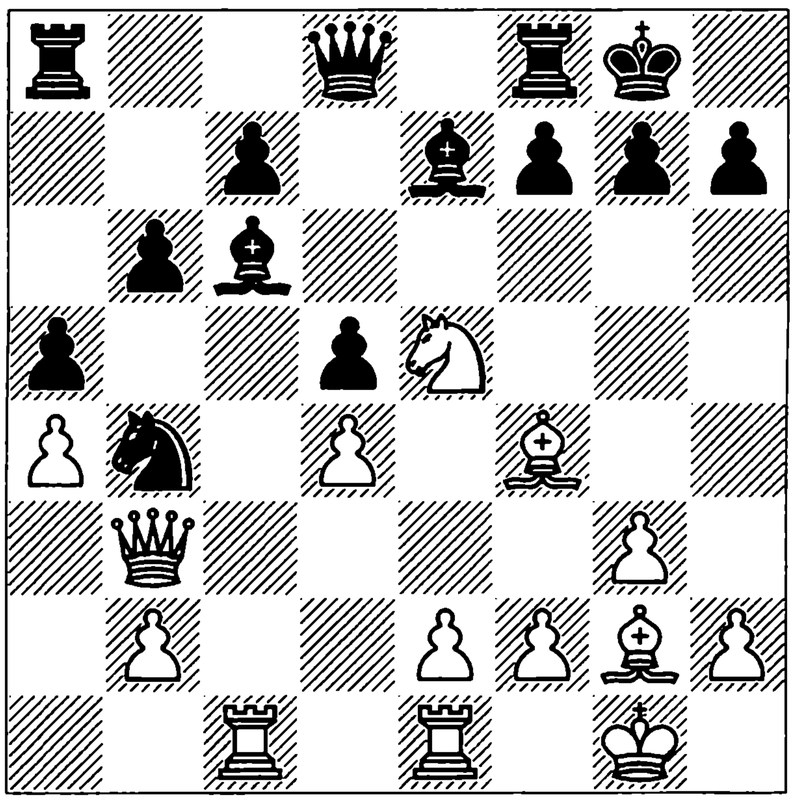
14 ♘xd5 exd5

Forced, as 14...♘xd5? 15 ♘e5! ♘xf4 16 ♗xc6! ♘xe2+ 17 ♖xe2 bxc6 18 ♘xc6 ♕d7 19 d5! gives White a marked superiority.

15 ♕b3 b6?

A serious error. 15...♗d6 16 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 17 ♘e5! was compulsory, with just a slight advantage for White.

16 ♘e5 *(D)*



16...♗b7?

And now Black should have played 16...♗e8 17 e4 with advantage for White. Both players failed to realize the decisive effect of 17 ♘d7!.

17 ♘d3?

The annoying b4-knight must be exchanged, as it prevents White's only appropriate plan, the minority attack. This idea would be fully correct, were it not for the tactical detail mentioned in the previous note.

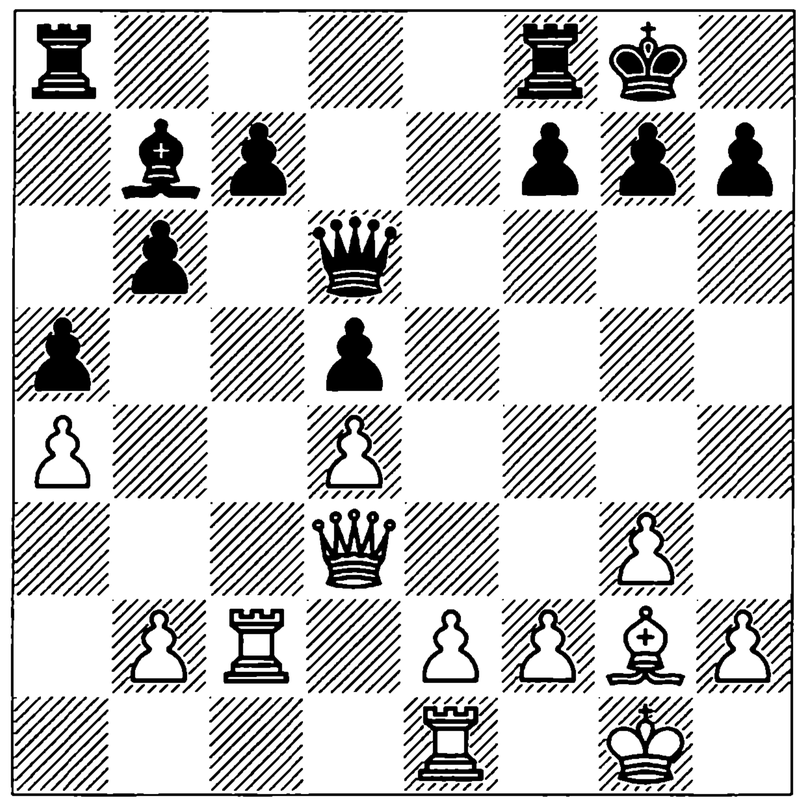
17...♘xd3

White would be better after 17...♗d6 18 ♘xb4! axb4 19 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 20 ♕xd5 ♗xf4 21 ♕xd8 ♖fxd8 22 gxf4 ♖xd4 23 ♖xc7 ♖xf4 24 ♖ec1! ♔f8 25 b3 due to the weak black queenside pawns.

18 ♕xd3 ♗d6

18...c6 19 e4! is even better for White.

19 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 20 ♖c2! *(D)*



White's plan is pressure on the queenside via the semi-open c-file. At the same time, utilizing some tactics, he will advance his pawns on that flank, effecting a minority attack.

20...f5

Black wishes to protect his backward c7-pawn via his second rank and is thus compelled to advance his f-pawn, so as to create the necessary space for piece manoeuvring. However, this creates additional weaknesses.

21 ♖ec1 ♖f7 22 ♕b5!

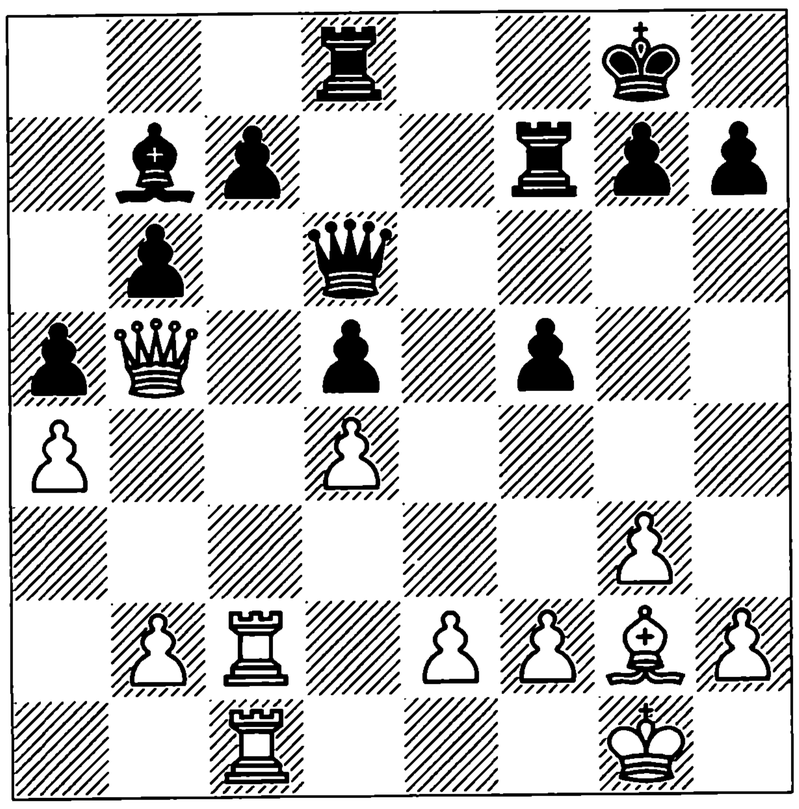
Threatening 23 ♖c6! ♗xc6 24 ♖xc6 ♕d7 25 ♗xd5.

22...♖d8?! *(D)*

Black had to play 22...♔h8 or 22...♖d7 to prevent White's aforementioned threat. The

text-move has similar aims, but leaves the queenside undefended. White immediately exploits this fact in the best possible manner.

W



23 b4! axb4

Black loses after 23...♕xb4 24 ♕xb4 axb4 25 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 26 ♖xc7 ♗a8 27 ♖c2! and 28 ♖b2.

24 a5!

The only move but also very strong, as it breaks up Black's queenside. 24 ♖b2? ♖a8! allows Black to breathe freely and is pointless.

24...♖a8 25 axb6 c6?

Black tries to complicate the position, as 25...♕xb6 26 ♖c5! ♖e7 27 e3 ♕xb5 (27...b3 28 ♖b1) 28 ♖xb5 c6 29 ♖xb4 is clearly advantageous for White. Still, he should have opted for this line.

26 ♕c5?

Completely unacceptable, as White had the excellent 26 ♖xc6! ♗xc6 27 ♖xc6 ♖a1+ 28 ♗f1 ♕d7 29 ♕c5!, winning.

26...♕xc5 27 dxc5 ♖ff8 28 ♗xd5+?!

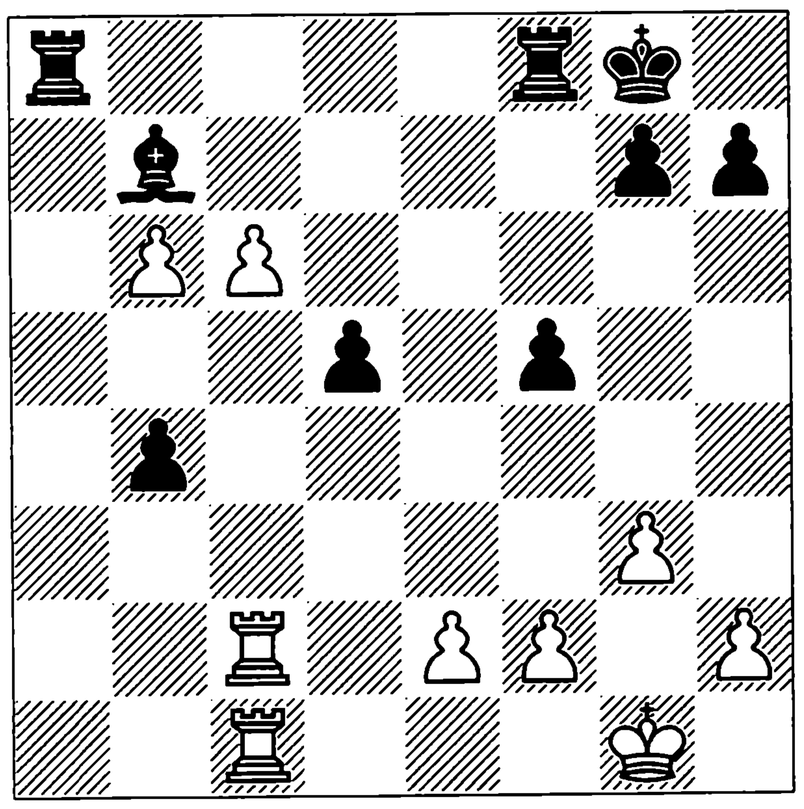
White should have continued 28 ♖b1! ♖a4 29 ♗xd5+! (29 ♖cb2 ♖a5!) 29...cxd5 30 c6 b3!! (30...♗a6? 31 b7 ♔f7 32 ♖cb2! or 30...♖b8 31 cxb7 ♖xb7 32 ♖c8+ ♔f7 33 ♖c7+) 31 ♖cc1 (31 ♖xb3?? ♖c4!) 31...♗xc6 32 ♖xc6 ♖b4 33 ♖c3 b2 34 ♖c2 ♖xb6 35 ♖bxb2 ♖xb2 36 ♖xb2 with a slight edge.

28...cxd5 29 c6 *(D)*

29...♖ab8!

This simple move escaped White's attention when he sacrificed on d5. After 29...♗a6? 30 b7 ♖ae8 (30...♖ab8 31 c7) 31 ♖b1! Black loses

B



quickly, but 29...♖a6 30 cxb7 ♖xb6 31 ♖c7 b3 is also possible.

30 cxb7 ♖xb7 31 ♖c6 ♖fb8!

White lacks the tempo necessary to win the black b4-pawn and is thus forced to compromise with a draw by repetition.

32 ♖c8+ ♔f7 33 ♖8c7+ ♔e6

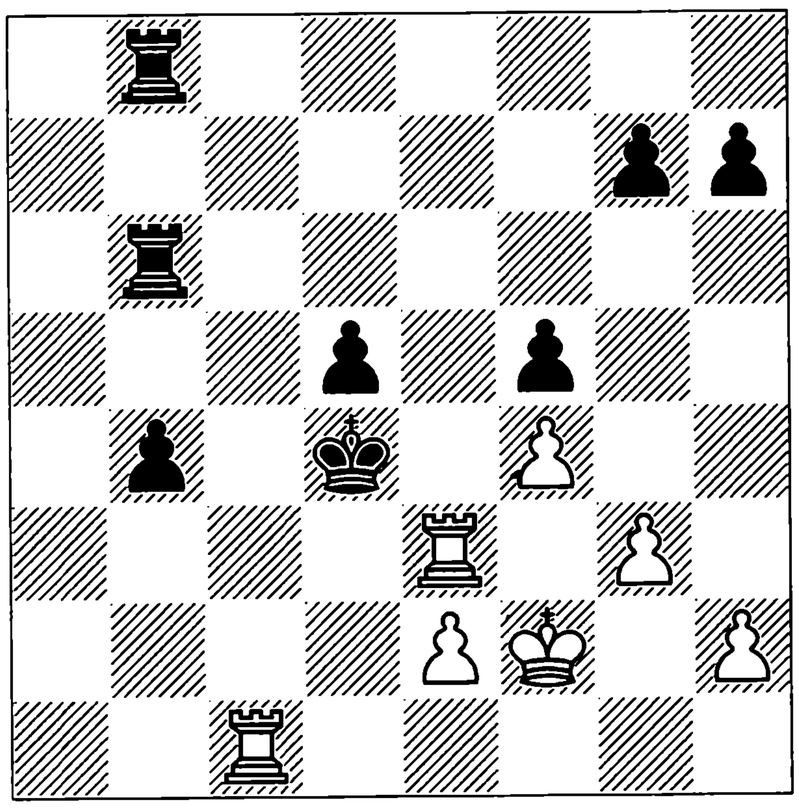
White has a slight advantage in the ending resulting from 33...♖xc7 34 bxc7 ♖c8 35 ♖b1 ♖xc7 36 ♖xb4, although the game would almost surely end in a draw anyway.

34 ♖7c6+ ♔e5??

In time-trouble Black plays for a win, avoiding a repetition with 34...♔f7. However, this is a mistake as the black king is caught in an unusual mating-net, which was very hard to foresee.

35 f4+! ♔e4 36 ♖e6+ ♔d4 37 ♔f2! ♖xb6 38 ♖e3!! *(D)*

B



An unusual position where the black king, despite the reduced material, is trapped in the

centre of the board. White threatens 39 ♖d3+ ♔e4 40 ♖cd1 and 41 ♖d4#, or 39 ♔f3.

38...g5 39 ♖d3+ ♔e4 40 ♖e3+ ♔d4

White made some move repetitions in order to reach the time-control (on the 40th move). From a practical viewpoint this practice is definitely indicated, as it allows a detailed examination of the position without the burden of time-pressure. Even if we are certain of what to play, there is no harm in gaining some time to verify the variations we have calculated.

41 ♔f3

This still wins, but simpler was 41 ♖d3+ ♔e4 42 ♖cd1 gxf4 43 ♖xd5! fxg3+ 44 hxg3 and 45 ♖1d4#, as indicated during the post-mortem by I.Nikolaidis.

41...g4+ 42 ♔f2 ♖h6

There is no salvation, because Black's only other option, 42...♖d6, leads to decisive material losses: 43 ♖c7!! (43 ♖d3+ ♔e4 44 ♖cd1?? d4!) 43...♖bb6 (43...b3 44 ♖d3+ ♔e4 45 ♖e7+) 44 ♖d3+ ♔e4 45 ♖e7+ ♖e6 46 ♖xe6+ ♖xe6 47 ♖e3+.

43 h4 1-0

Black either gets mated or loses a rook, as in the previous note.

Grivas – Skalkotas

Corfu 1989

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗b4 5 cxd5

A quiet continuation, avoiding the complications resulting from 5 ♗g5 dxc4 6 e4 c5.

5...exd5 6 ♗g5 h6

Black has also tried 6...♘bd7 7 e3 c5 8 ♗d3 ♕a5 9 ♕c2 c4 10 ♗f5 0-0 11 ♘d2 ♖e8, Grivas-Hector, Haifa Echt 1989.

7 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 8 ♕b3

Another possibility is 8 ♖c1 0-0 9 a3 ♗xc3+ 10 ♖xc3 c6 11 e3 ♗f5 12 ♗e2 ♘d7 13 0-0 ♕e7 14 b4! with a slight advantage for White, Suba-P.Nikolić, Istanbul 1980.

8...♕d6! *(D)*

9 a3 ♗xc3+

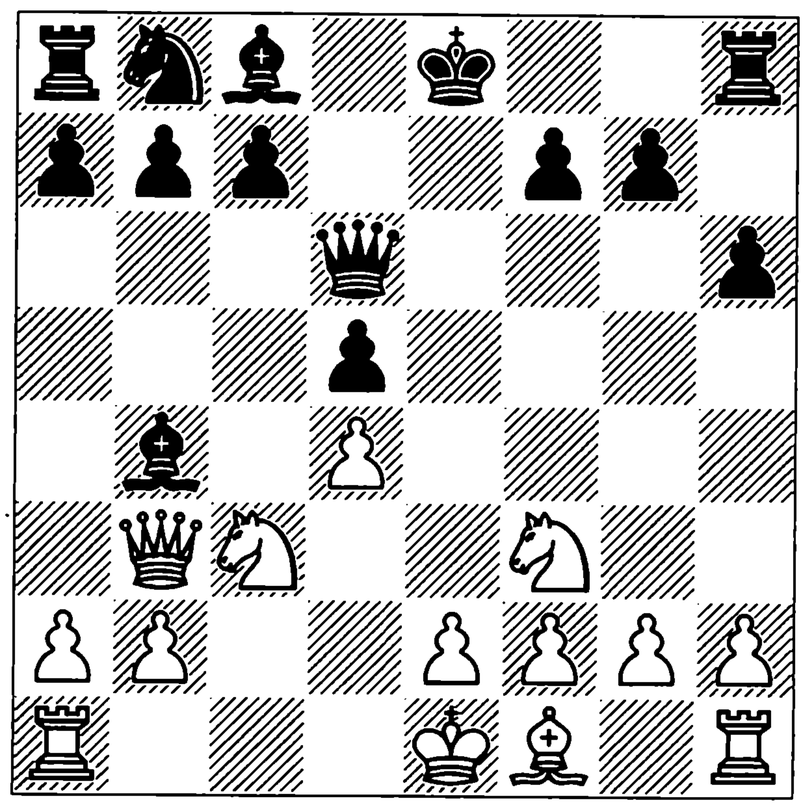
9...♗a5? is a serious mistake: 10 ♕b5+ ♘c6 11 b4 ♗b6 12 ♘xd5.

10 ♕xc3 0-0

Black could also play 10...a5!? 11 b3 0-0.

11 b4! ♗f5 12 e3

W



12 ♖c1 c6 13 e3 seems more 'correct', but White wants to bring his other rook to c1, judging that it is imperative to transfer his pieces to the queenside; that is where his plan lies, none other than a minority attack. This is clear from the stabilized pawn-structure.

12...♘d7 13 ♗e2 ♘f6 14 0-0 ♖fe8

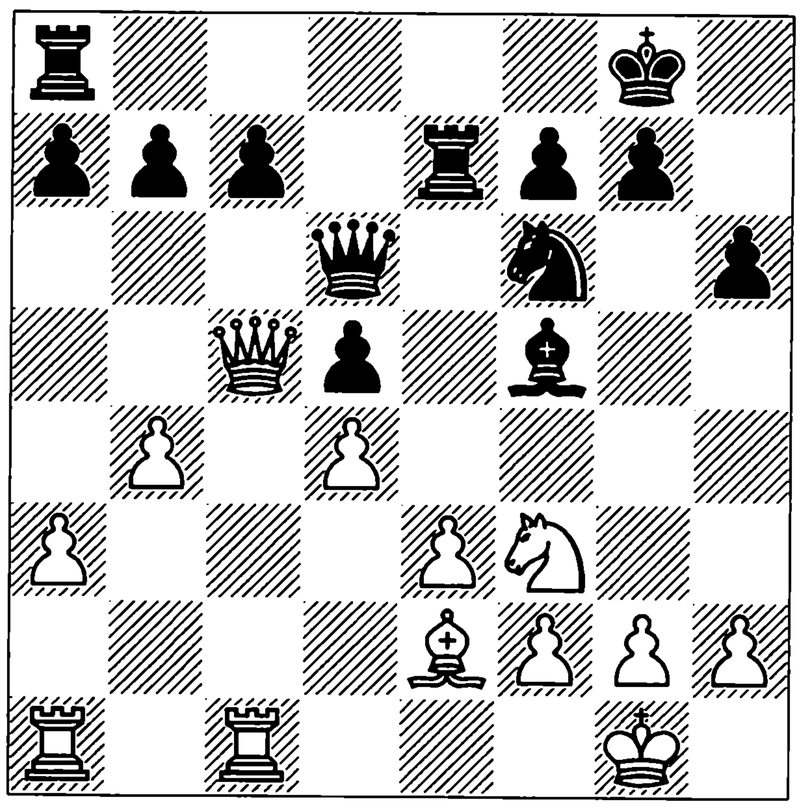
Perhaps 14...♘e4 15 ♕b2 ♖fe8 is more accurate.

15 ♖fc1 ♖e7!

Black avoids placing his pawn on c6 so as not to give a target for an immediate b5 advance. This idea is often met and, as it is of great importance, must always be taken into account.

16 ♕c5! *(D)*

B



16...♕e6?!

Black believes that he can pursue aggressive intentions on the kingside and thus avoids the exchange of queens. However, as this concept is

not really feasible, it is better to play 16...♘e4! 17 ♕xd6 cxd6!, with only a minimal advantage for White.

17 ♘d2 g5?!

Black's aggression is wishful thinking. Fortifying his defence with 17...a6! is more helpful.

18 b5 h5 19 a4! ♔g7

White also retains the advantage after 19...h4 20 a5 h3 21 a6! b6 22 ♕c6.

20 a5 b6 21 ♕c6! ♖c8 22 axb6 cxb6

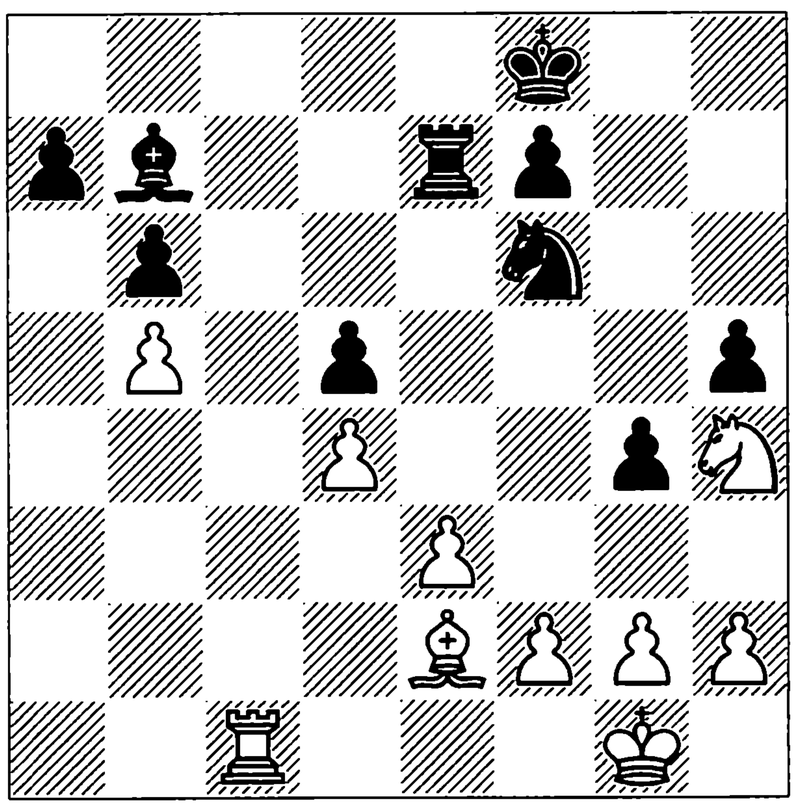
Black could not avoid the creation of a backward pawn, either on a7 or on c7. He opted for one on a7, judging that possession of the a-file (after 22...axb6) would be even more favourable for White.

23 ♕xe6 ♗xe6 24 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 25 ♖c1 ♗b7 26 ♘f3! g4?!

26...♘e4 27 ♘e5 f6! is a better try, although 28 ♘d3! preserves an advantage for White (but not 28 ♘c6? ♖c7 29 ♗xh5 a6!).

27 ♘h4 ♔f8 *(D)*

W



White has a significant advantage, as he has successfully completed his minority attack (the white pawn on b5 is worth as much as a7 and b6 together), controls the c-file, enjoys a better pawn-structure (two pawn-islands versus three, isolated black pawn on d5, weakened black kingside) and more active pieces. The problem that almost always appears in this type of position is that the side with the advantage is unable to improve its position further or immediately exploit its superiority on the flank where this superiority exists. The solution is simple and consists of 'exploiting' the other parts of the board as well (centre and kingside) as the opponent's pieces are tied up with the protection of the queenside, where direct pressure is applied, and will not be able to defend properly.

28 h3!

Threatening 29 hxg4 hxg4 30 ♔h2, followed by 31 ♘f5 and ♘h6.

28...g3

Black's choice is not pleasant, because after 28...gxh3 29 gxh3 followed by ♘f5-g3 he would also lose material.

29 ♘f5! gxf2+ 30 ♔xf2 ♖d7 31 ♘g3 ♔e7

31...h4 32 ♘f5 is similar. White finally converts his positional superiority into material gain.

32 ♘xh5 ♘e4+ 33 ♔e1 f5 34 ♗d3 ♘d6 35 g4 fxg4 36 hxg4 ♔f8 37 g5 ♖e7 38 ♔d2 ♗c8 39 ♖c6 ♖e6 40 g6 ♗d7 41 ♖c7 ♗e8 42 ♘f4 ♖f6 43 ♘xd5 ♖f2+ 44 ♔e1 ♖g2 45 ♘f4 1-0

Grivas – Mastrokoukos

Athens 1992

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 c5 3 e3 g6 4 ♗d3 d5 5 c3 ♕c7 6 0-0

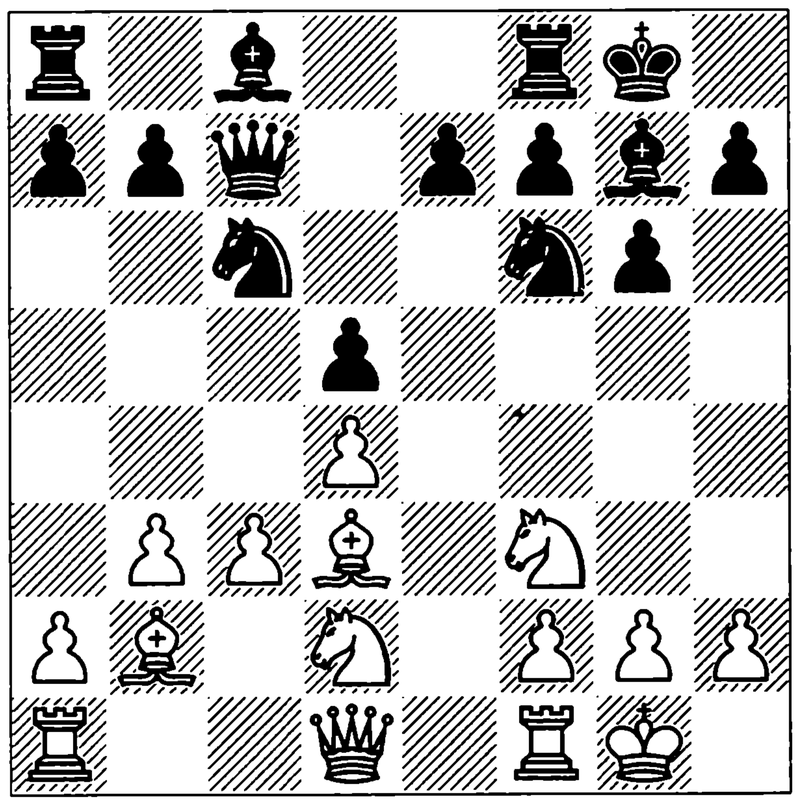
White has chosen to avoid a theoretical dispute in the opening and transfers the weight of the battle to the middlegame.

6...♗g7 7 b3 0-0 8 ♗b2 cxd4

I would prefer 8...♘bd7, when Black plans the ...e5 advance.

9 exd4 ♘c6 10 ♘bd2 *(D)*

B



10...♘h5

Black has not clarified his plans and his moves are random. 10...e5! 11 dxe5 ♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 leads to equality.

11 g3 ♗g4 12 ♗e2 ♖ab8 13 ♖e1 ♖bd8

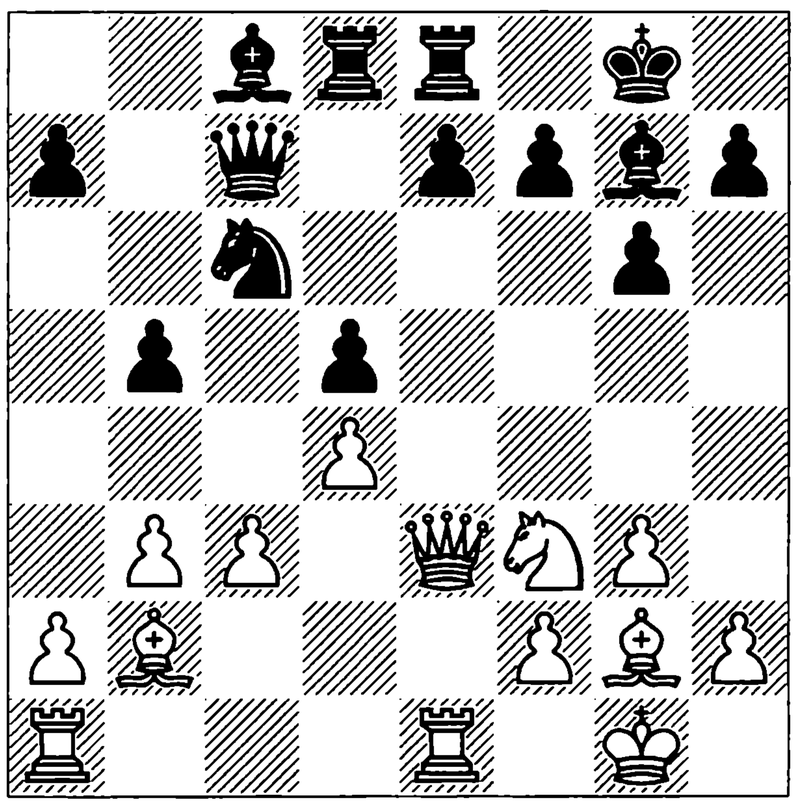
It is clear that Black has no concrete plan, as at first he aimed for a minority attack (...♖ab8 and ...b5) and then changed his mind!

14 ♘f1 ♘f6 15 ♘e3 ♗c8 16 ♗f1 ♘g4 17 ♕e2 ♘xe3 18 ♕xe3 ♖fe8 19 ♗g2

White has markedly improved his position and now plans ♖ad1 or ♖ac1 and then c4, with advantage. Black should now continue with 19...♗g4 20 ♖ac1 ♗xf3 21 ♗xf3 ♕b6, when he has surrendered the bishop-pair but in return exerts strong pressure on the white d4-pawn, preventing the c4 advance. His choice to weaken the queenside is not to be recommended.

19...b5? *(D)*

W



20 ♗a3!

White adapts his plans. Placing the bishop on c5 and then advancing his pawns on the queenside will secure him an advantage.

20...♗f5

After 20...e5 21 dxe5 ♘xe5 22 ♘d4! White is better.

21 ♗c5 ♗e4 22 a4! ♖b8?!

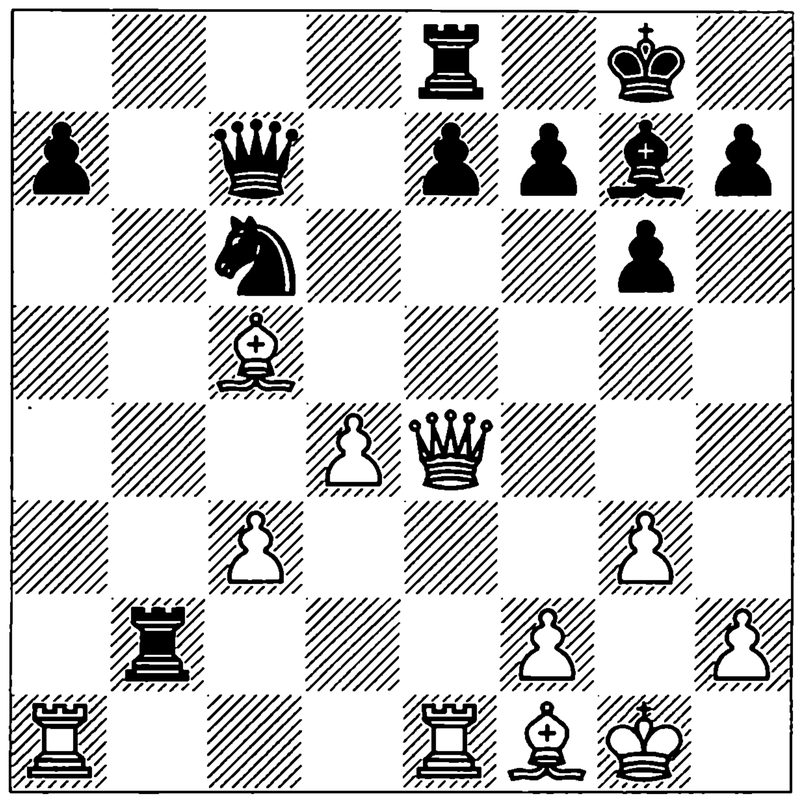
Black had to play 22...bxa4 23 ♖xa4 a5 with some advantage for White. Instead, 22...a6 23 axb5 axb5 24 b4 would signify a standard failure of the minority attack.

23 axb5 ♖xb5 24 ♗f1! ♖xb3

Black faces difficulties after 24...♖b7 25 ♘d2 ♗f5 26 b4! as the pressure on the weak a7-pawn is terrible.

25 ♘d2 ♖b2 26 ♘xe4 dxe4 27 ♕xe4 *(D)*

B



White has an obvious advantage due to his better pawn-structure and the bishop-pair.

27...e6 28 ♗g2 ♘a5 29 ♖e2!

The exchange of Black's only active piece determines the outcome of the game, as then Black cannot hope for any counterplay. The exchange is compulsory (29...♖bb8 30 ♖ea2).

29...♖xe2 30 ♕xe2 ♖b8 31 ♗f3?!

The direct 31 ♕a6! ♘b3 32 ♕xa7 would end the game at once. Mutual time-trouble interferes with the logical flow of the game.

31...h5 32 h4 ♘c6?

Black's only defensive chance lay in the exchange of dark-squared bishops with 32...♗f8! 33 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 (33...♔xf8 34 ♕a6! ♕xc3 35 ♖xa5 ♖b1+ {35...♕xf3?? 36 ♕d6+} 36 ♔g2 ♕e1 37 ♔h3!) 34 ♖a3 ♘c4 35 ♖a6!, when White retains an advantage, but one smaller than in comparison with the position after his 30th move.

33 ♖a6 ♘e5 34 ♖xa7 ♕c8 35 ♗d6 ♖b1+ 36 ♔g2 ♕xc3

Desperation, as 36...♘xf3 37 ♕xf3, threatening 38 ♕xf7+ or 38 ♖a8, would also win for White.

37 ♗xe5 ♖b2 38 ♖c7 ♕a3 1-0

Moutousis – Grivas

Athens 1995

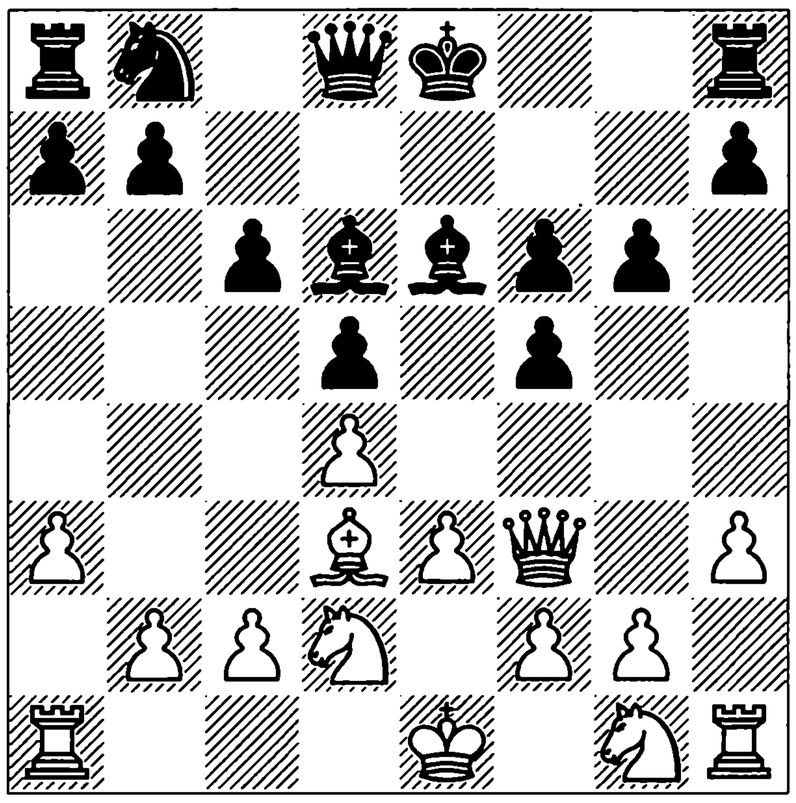
1 d4 f5 2 ♗g5

This line doesn't seriously trouble Black but contains more than a drop of poison, compelling

Black to meet the demands of the position with great care.

2...♘f6 3 ♗xf6 exf6 4 e3 c6 5 ♘d2 d5 6 ♗d3 ♗d6 7 ♕f3 g6 8 a3 ♗e6 9 h3 *(D)*

B



9...♕e7 10 ♘e2 ♘d7 11 ♘f4 ♗f7 12 c4!

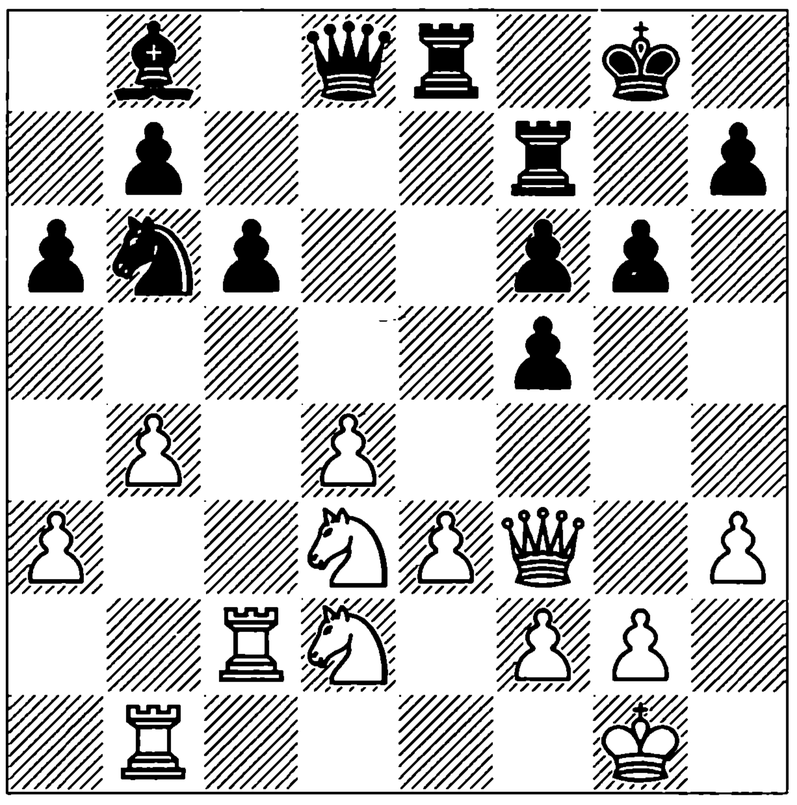
Both sides have developed harmoniously, without coming into direct contact or troubling one another. White correctly decides on the c4 advance, as this represents his most dangerous plan in practice. Later on he can adopt a type of minority attack on the queenside, directed against the black c6-pawn. Naturally, Black's position is fully satisfactory and he can develop his own plans in the centre and on the kingside.

12...dxc4 13 ♗xc4 0-0 14 0-0 ♘b6 15 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 16 ♖ac1 ♖e8 17 ♖c2 ♕d8?

Black should have taken the chance to exchange his dark-squared bishop for the white knight. In that case the chances would be even.

18 ♖b1 a6 19 ♘d3! ♗b8 20 b4! *(D)*

B



White is better due to his superior pawn-structure and the availability of a concrete plan (minority attack against c6). In contrast, Black's kingside attack is essentially a dream. Black failed to appreciate this during the game and, as a result, quickly ended up in a lost position.

20...♖fe7 21 g3 ♔g7 22 ♘c5 h5 23 h4!

A correct reaction, restricting Black's offensive potential.

23...♘d5?

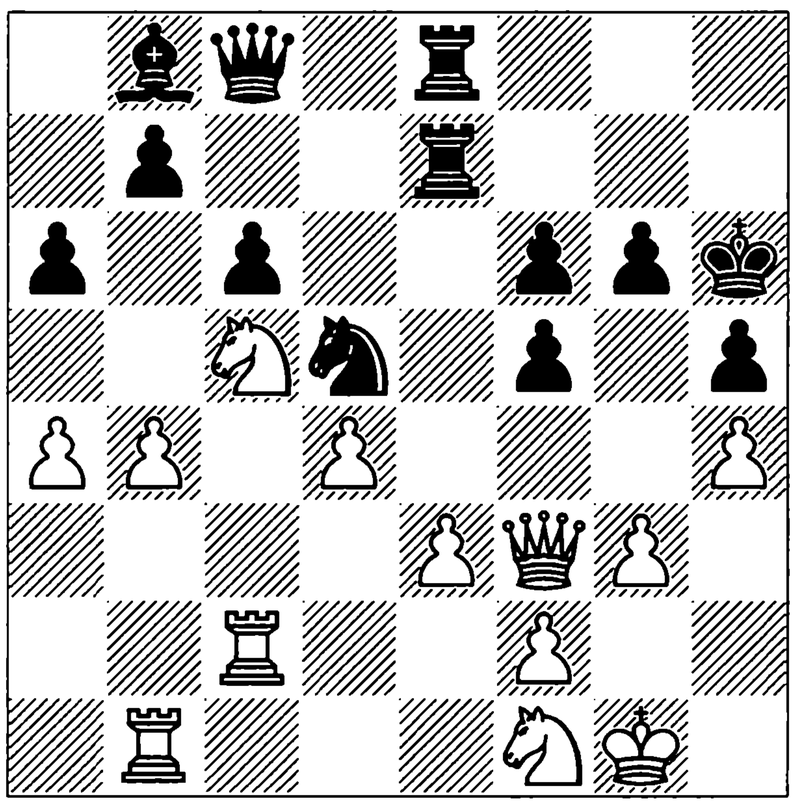
Totally pointless. Black should have opted for 23...♕d5 so as, after a queen exchange, to advance his kingside pawns to counterbalance White's queenside advance. Throughout the entire game, Black's passive treatment of his problems allowed White to proceed with his plans without the slightest hindrance.

24 ♘f1!

A prophylactic move, preventing any sacrificial ideas on e3.

24...♕c8 25 a4 ♔h6 *(D)*

W



26 b5

White has completed his plan while Black is still in search of play.

26...axb5 27 axb5 g5?

Black's game was positionally very difficult, but this move hastens the end.

28 hxg5+ fxg5 29 ♘xb7!!

White's great positional superiority gives rise to tactical combinations!

29...g4 30 ♕g2 ♕xb7 31 ♖xc6+ ♔g7 32 ♕xd5

White has won material while retaining his positional pluses. Black could have resigned

here with a clear conscience, but prolonged the game due to the mutual time-pressure.

32...♖f7 33 ♖a1 h4 34 ♖aa6 hxg3 35 ♘xg3 ♗xg3 36 fxg3 ♕e7 37 ♖e6 1-0

Giddins – Grivas
Gausdal 1993

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 a6!?

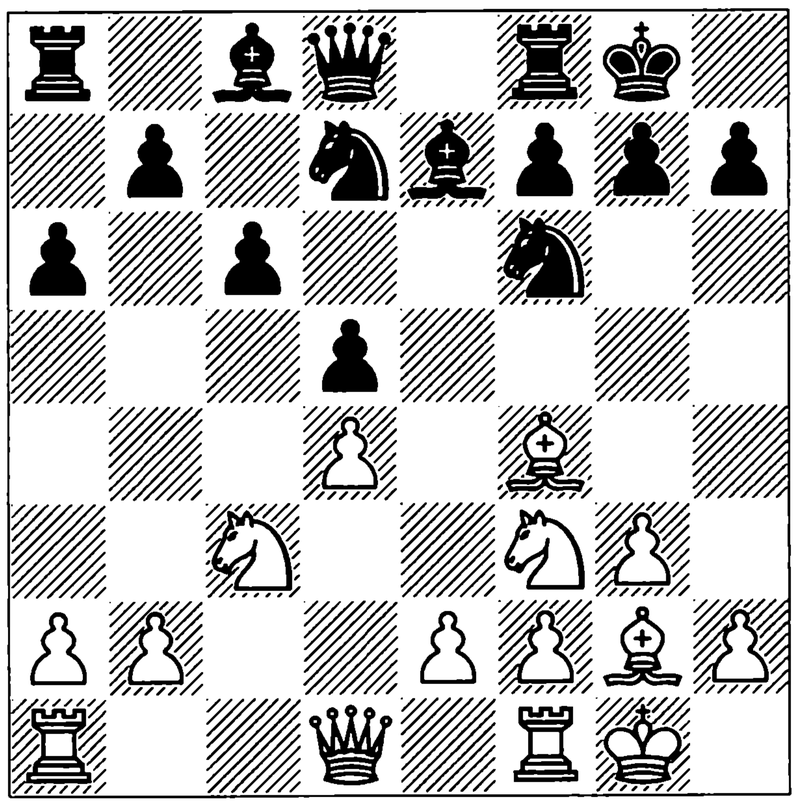
An interesting line, aiming for the pawn sacrifice 4 ♗g2 b5 5 cxb5 axb5 6 ♘d4 d5 7 ♘xb5 c5, when Black has a strong centre and more harmonious development as compensation.

4 ♘c3 d5 5 cxd5

White feared 5 ♗g2 dxc4, but now a future e4 advance is hard to contemplate as it will leave the d4-pawn isolated.

5...exd5 6 d4 ♗e7 7 ♗g2 0-0 8 0-0 c6 9 ♗f4 ♘bd7 *(D)*

W



10 ♖c1?! ♖e8

Black has developed comfortably while, on the other hand, White has failed to contest the initiative. Instead of the colourless 10 ♖c1?! White should have tried 10 ♖b1, planning a minority attack by b4-b5. That is, after all, White's only suitable plan in such pawn-structures.

11 ♘e5 ♗f8 12 ♕b3 ♘xe5 13 ♗xe5 ♘d7 14 ♗f4 ♘b6!

Preventing 15 ♘a4 and planning to regroup the knight with ...♘c4-d6.

15 ♗g5!? ♕xg5! 16 ♕xb6 ♖b8

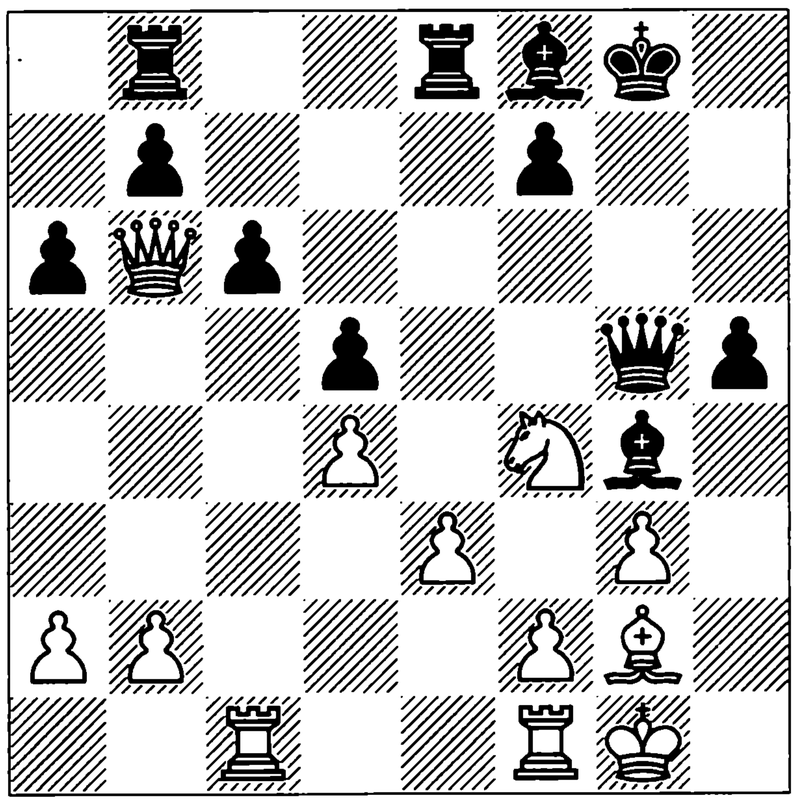
Black now has the bishop-pair and attacking chances on the kingside. By comparison, White is too late with his plan, the minority attack.

17 e3 h5 18 h4?

Although this move seems to halt Black's attack, in fact it only creates weaknesses around the white king. The immediate 18 b4 is better.

18...♕e7 19 ♘e2 ♗g4 20 ♘f4 g5! 21 hxg5 ♕xg5 *(D)*

W



White 'refused' to adopt the standard minority attack plan on the queenside and has therefore failed to react to Black's kingside initiative. His position is inferior and under fire from Black's pieces. This is a good example of punishment for the side that doesn't achieve any plans, a concept of great significance in modern chess.

22 ♕b3 ♗d6 23 ♖fe1 h4

The negative aspects of 18 h4? are constantly highlighted.

24 gxh4 ♕xh4 25 ♘d3 ♕h2+ 26 ♔f1 ♖e6!

Black's attack now crashes through.

27 f3 ♖f6 28 f4 ♖g6 29 ♖c2 ♗h3 0-1

Grivas – Miladinović
Thessaloniki 2001

1 d4 d5 2 c4 ♗f5!? 3 cxd5 ♗xb1! 4 ♕a4+! c6

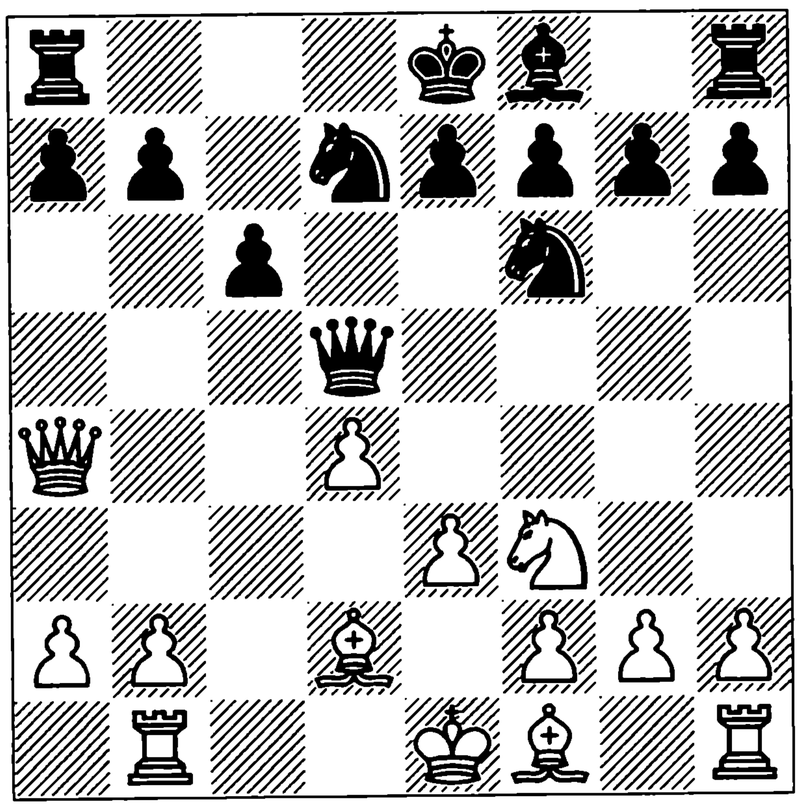
Black has also tried 4...♕d7 5 ♕xd7+ ♘xd7 6 ♖xb1 ♘gf6 7 ♘f3 ♘b6 ± (Euwe).

5 ♖xb1

Black got an excellent position after 5 dxc6? ♘xc6 6 ♖xb1 e5! 7 ♘f3 ♗b4+ 8 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 9 ♘xd2 exd4 10 ♖d1 ♘f6 11 ♘b3 0-0 12 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 13 ♖xd4 ♕c7 14 e3 ♕c1+ 15 ♕d1 ♕xb2 16 ♗c4 b5 17 ♗b3 a5 in Grivas-Klarić, Vinkovci 1989.

5...♕xd5 6 ♘f3 ♘d7 7 ♗d2!? ♘gf6 8 e3 *(D)*

B

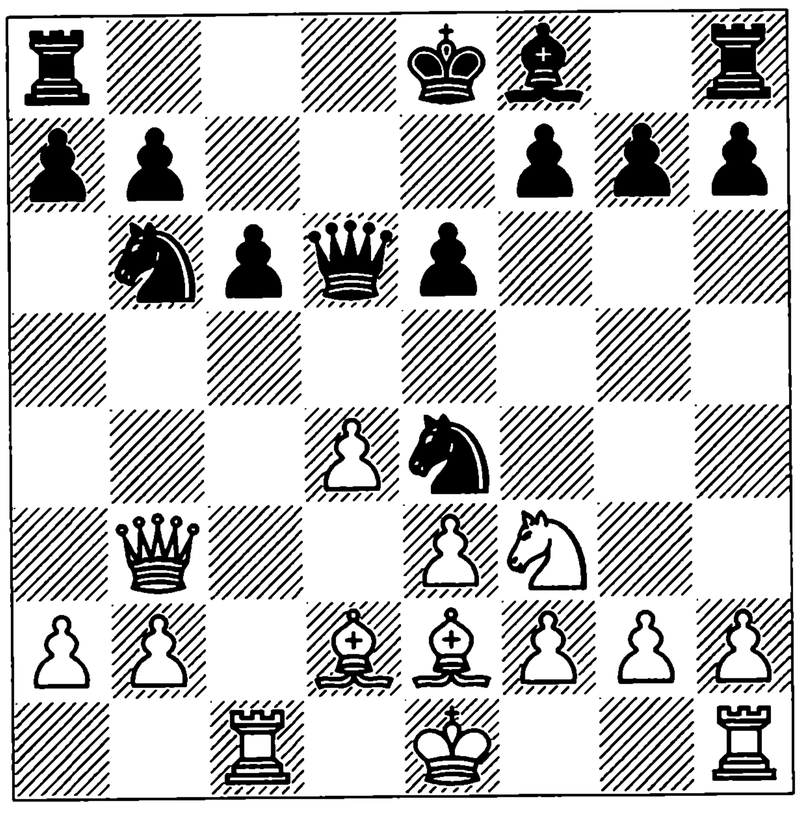


8...e6

Practice has also seen 8...♘b6 9 ♕a5 e6 10 ♗d3 ♘e4 (10...♗d6 11 ♕xd5 cxd5 12 ♔e2 ± Grivas-Ignatiadis, Kalavryta 1997; 10...♗e7 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♖fc1 ♕xa5 13 ♗xa5 ♘bd5 14 a3 ♖ac8 15 ♔f1 ± Grivas-Managadze, Athens 2000) 11 ♕xd5 exd5 12 ♗a5 ♗d6 13 ♔e2 0-0 14 ♖hc1 ♘d7 with unclear play, Grivas-Managadze, Athens 2000.

9 ♖c1 ♘e4 10 ♗c4 ♕d6 11 ♕b3 ♘b6 12 ♗e2 *(D)*

B



12...♘xd2

White was 'threatening' to retain the bishop-pair with 13 ♗a5, which prompted the exchange on d2.

13 ♘xd2 e5 14 dxe5

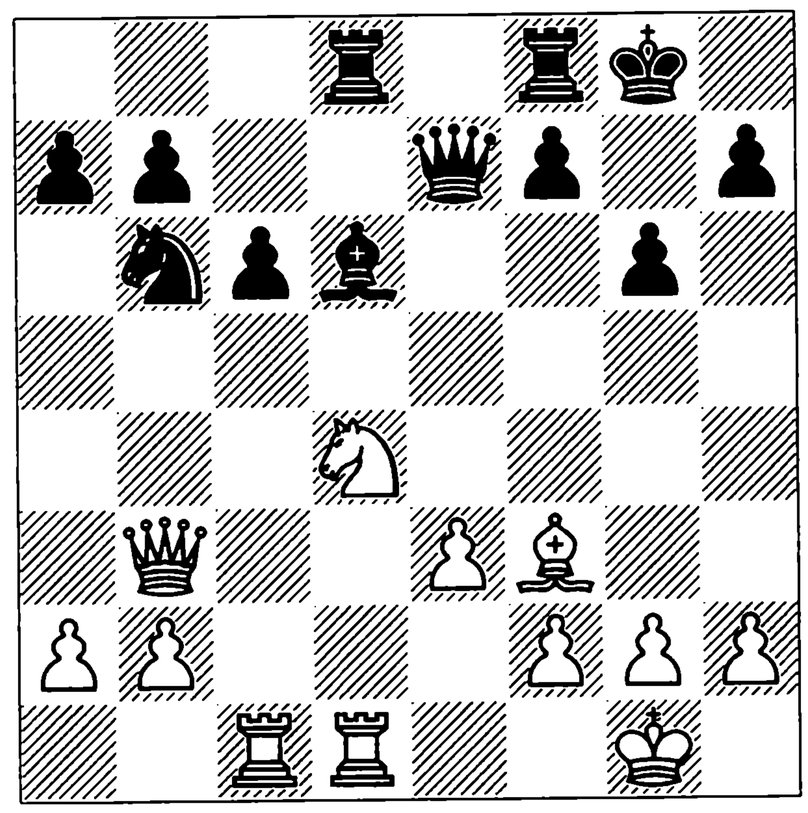
The optimistic 14 ♘c4?! ♕b4+! 15 ♕xb4 ♗xb4+ 16 ♔f1 exd4 17 exd4 only leads to equality and is therefore mistaken.

14...♕xe5 15 0-0 ♗d6 16 ♘f3 ♕e7 17 ♘d4! g6 18 ♗f3!

White has already determined his plan, which consists of a queenside minority attack. Therefore, he places his pieces in such a way that they will be able to cooperate in line with this plan.

18...0-0 19 ♖fd1 ♖ad8 *(D)*

W



20 a4!! ♗c7?

Black also loses after 20...♘a8 21 a5 a6 22 ♗xc6! bxc6 23 ♘xc6, but he had to play 20...♕e5! 21 g3 ♗b8! 22 ♕c2 (intending b4) 22...♕a5 23 b3 ♗e5 24 ♕c5! with a slight advantage for White.

21 a5 ♘d5 22 a6 ♕e5 23 g3

Black's queenside pawn-structure is now destroyed.

23...♕f6 24 axb7 ♘e7 25 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 26 ♗xc6 ♗b6 27 ♗d7 1-0

Central Strike

One of the less acknowledged and analysed strategic/tactical elements is the central strike. This concept refers to the unexpected advance of a central pawn or pawns, temporarily disturbing the flow of the position. Its aim is destruction or domination of the opponent's pawn-centre or generally a pawn-chain.

The element of the central strike is of a short-term nature and, while initially giving rise to a multitude of dynamic continuations, eventually resolves into stability, following the expected central clarification.

Taking into account that the situation in the centre is the basic point of reference for both sides' plans, such a violent mutation is able to force a reassessment of the situation or even fundamentally reshape the position.

It has often been observed that after the execution of a central strike, the opponent temporarily lies in a state of shock, as this violent attempt to disturb the existing situation causes immense psychological pressure.

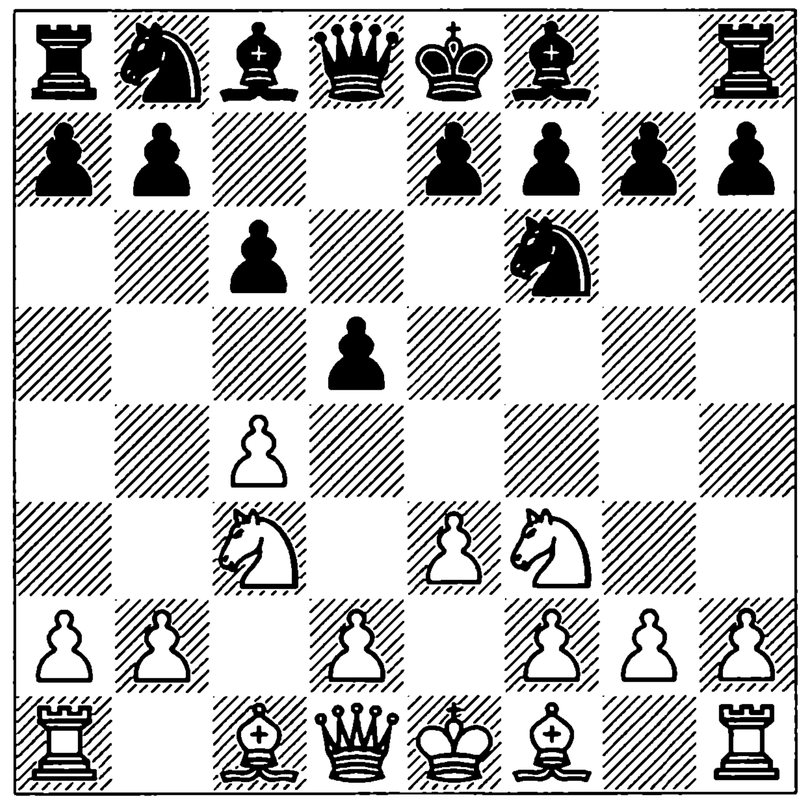
The concept of the central strike is not easy to explain with rules and plans. It is not often encountered and its peculiarities are unique in practically every single game. Nevertheless, we will try to offer a general description with the help of the following examples.

Grivas – Svetushkin

Athens 2001

1 c4 c6 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 e3 *(D)*

B



4...♘bd7

This seems more accurate than 4...e6 as Black retains the option of 5...e5. After 4...e6 5 b3 ♗d6 6 ♗b2 0-0 7 d4 (7 ♗e2 ♘bd7 8 0-0 ♕e7 9 ♕c2 ♖e8 10 ♖fd1 dxc4 11 ♗xc4 b5 12 ♗f1 ♗b7 13 a4 a6 14 ♘e4 ♘xe4 15 ♕xe4 e5 16 d4 is unclear, Grivas-D.Mastrovasilis, Athens 2001) 7...♘bd7 8 ♗e2 ♖e8 (8...♘e4!? 9 ♘xe4 dxe4 10 ♘d2 f5 11 0-0 ♕e7 12 c5 ♗c7 13 ♘c4 is unclear, Grivas-Khenkin, Albena ECC 1996; 8...a6 9 0-0 dxc4 10 bxc4 c5 11 a4 ± Grivas-D.Mastrovasilis, Ikaria 1997) 9 0-0 a6 10 ♕c2 dxc4 11 bxc4 e5 12 a4 ♕e7 13 a5 e4 14 ♘d2 ♘f8 15 c5 ♗c7 16 ♘c4 ♘g4 the position is unclear, Grivas-D.Mastrovasilis, Thessaloniki 1998.

5 ♕c2

The evaluation of 5 b3 e5 is a matter of personal taste.

5...e6

5...e5? 6 cxd5 ♘xd5 (6...cxd5? 7 ♘b5!) 7 a3 leads to a favourable Sicilian Defence type of position with reversed colours. If Black is determined to play ...e5 then he can insert 5...a6!?.

6 b3 ♗d6 7 ♗b2 0-0 8 ♗e2 ♕e7

Another option for Black is 8...a6 9 d4 ♕e7 (9...e5 10 cxd5 cxd5 11 dxe5 ♘xe5 12 0-0 ±) 10 0-0 dxc4 11 bxc4 e5 12 a4, with unclear play.

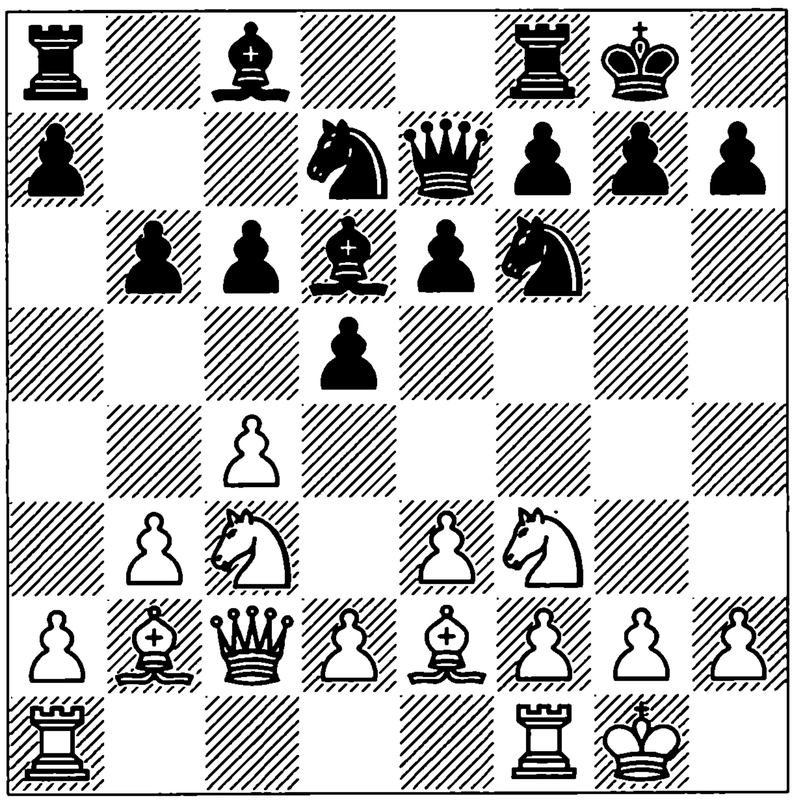
9 0-0 b6?! *(D)*

9...♖e8 or 9...a6 had to be preferred. The move ...b6 is good when White has already played d4.

10 cxd5! cxd5?!

A second consecutive inaccuracy by Black, who should have accepted a slightly worse position after 10...♘xd5. Note that 10...exd5 is even worse due to 11 ♘d4! ♗b7 12 ♘f5!.

W



11 ♘b5! ♗a6 12 ♖fc1

White treats the position accurately. Since the main battle will take place on the queenside, the white pieces are transferred to the battlefield without interrupting their mutual coverage, simultaneously freeing a path for the queen's retreat.

12...♖fc8 13 ♕d1 ♗c5

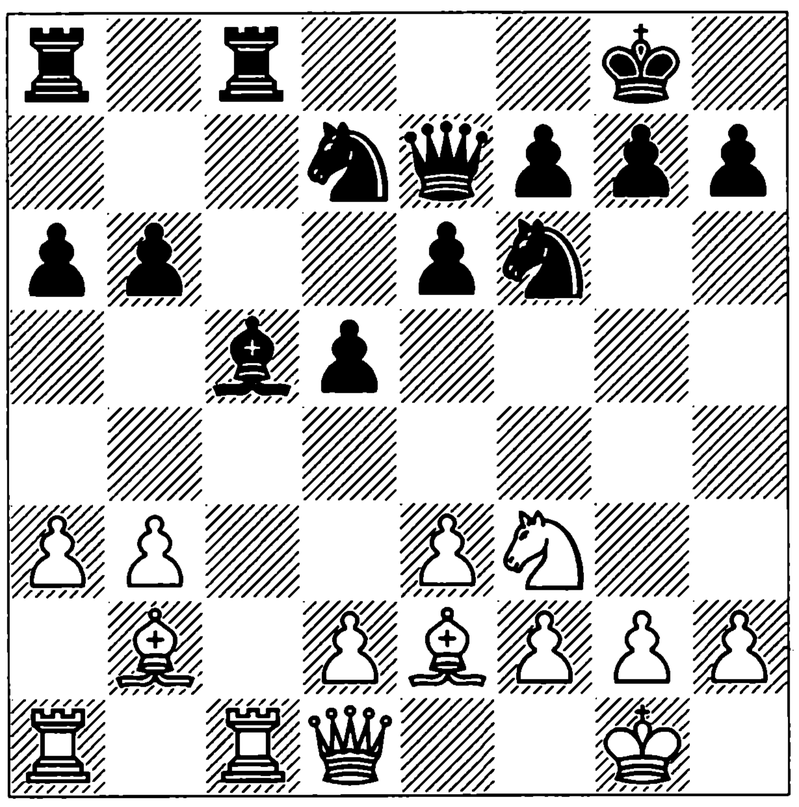
Black does not wish to surrender the bishop-pair. 13...♗xb5 14 ♗xb5 ♗a3 15 ♗xa3 ♕xa3 16 ♘d4! a6 17 ♗c6 ♖ab8 18 ♗xd7! ♘xd7 19 ♘c6 ♖a8 20 b4! would lead to a distinct superiority for White.

14 a3! ♗xb5

In face of the threat of 15 b4, Black had no choice. Now, however, White obtains the advantage of the two bishops, which will prove of decisive importance.

15 ♗xb5 a6 16 ♗e2 *(D)*

B



16...b5

Seemingly strong, but in fact it only succeeds in further weakening Black's queenside. 16...a5 is better, though after 17 ♗b5 White has the advantage.

17 a4! bxa4

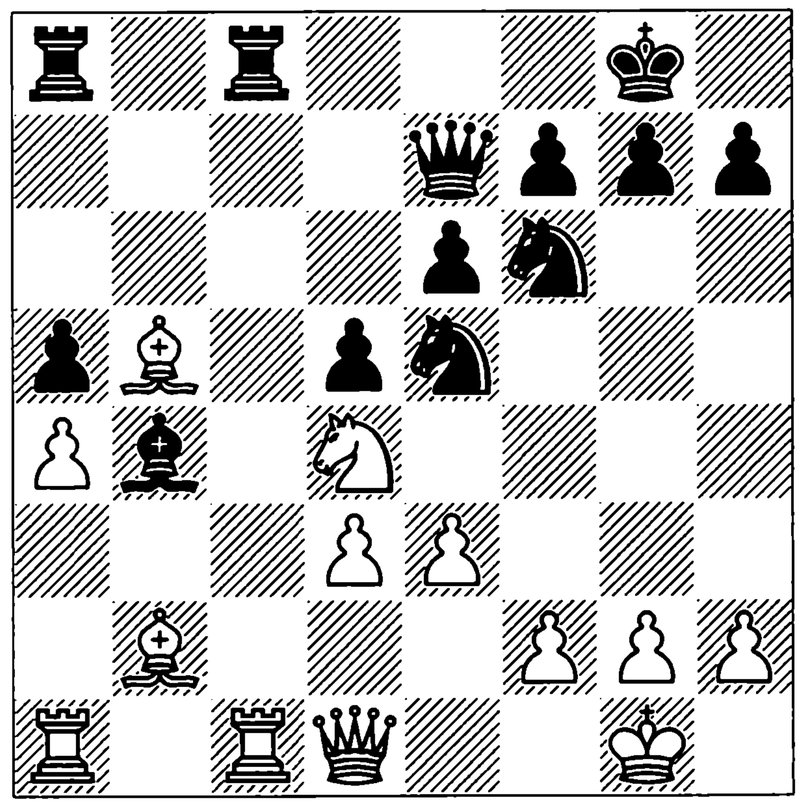
Compulsory, as 17...b4? loses immediately to 18 d4 ♗d6 19 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 20 ♗xa6.

18 bxa4 a5 19 ♗b5

The b5-bishop's field of action has now grown. The light squares in Black's queenside (and especially c6) are very weak.

19...♗b4 20 ♘d4 ♘e5 21 d3! *(D)*

B



What a huge difference it would make if White had mechanically played d4! The b2-bishop would be restricted, the d4-knight would be unable to come across to c6 while the c4-square would become an outpost for a black knight! White is better as he has the two bishops and better-placed pieces, aiming at Black's weakened queenside. Black remains passive, as he lacks an active plan, and is condemned to defending against White's threats.

21...♕d6 22 h3

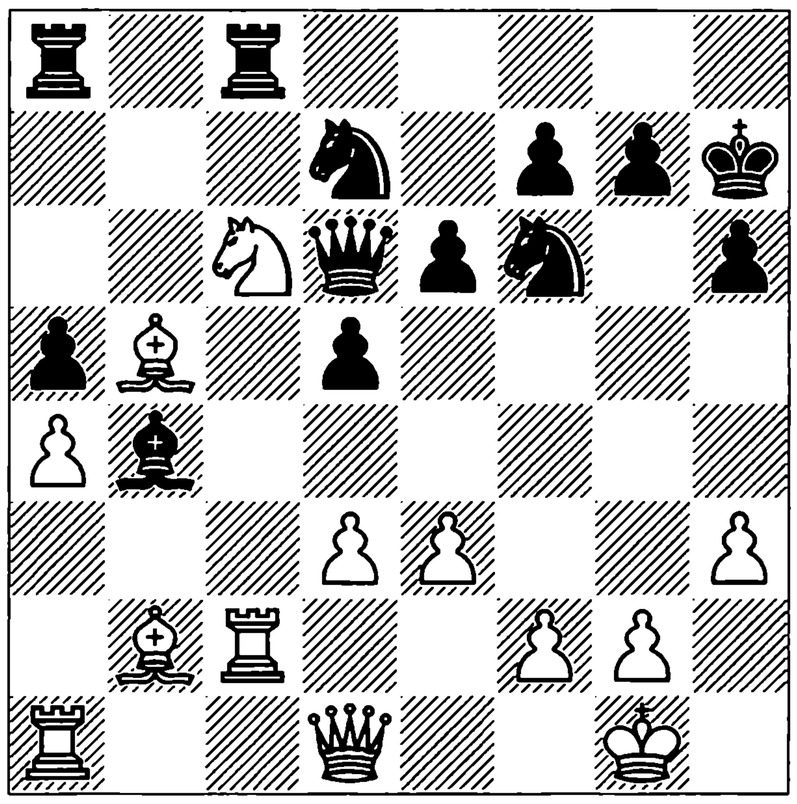
Making *luft* for the king, preventing a future ...♘g4 and also threatening f4 under the right circumstances.

22...h6 23 ♖c2!

White now threatens to wrest control of the c-file as well, with 24 ♖ac1.

23...♘ed7 24 ♘c6 ♔h7 *(D)*

White has a clear advantage and could continue with the simple 25 ♖ac1 or with 25 ♘xb4. However, my attention was drawn to the possibility of opening up the centre, as the lack of


W

28 ♖xc8! ♖xc8 29 [illegible]

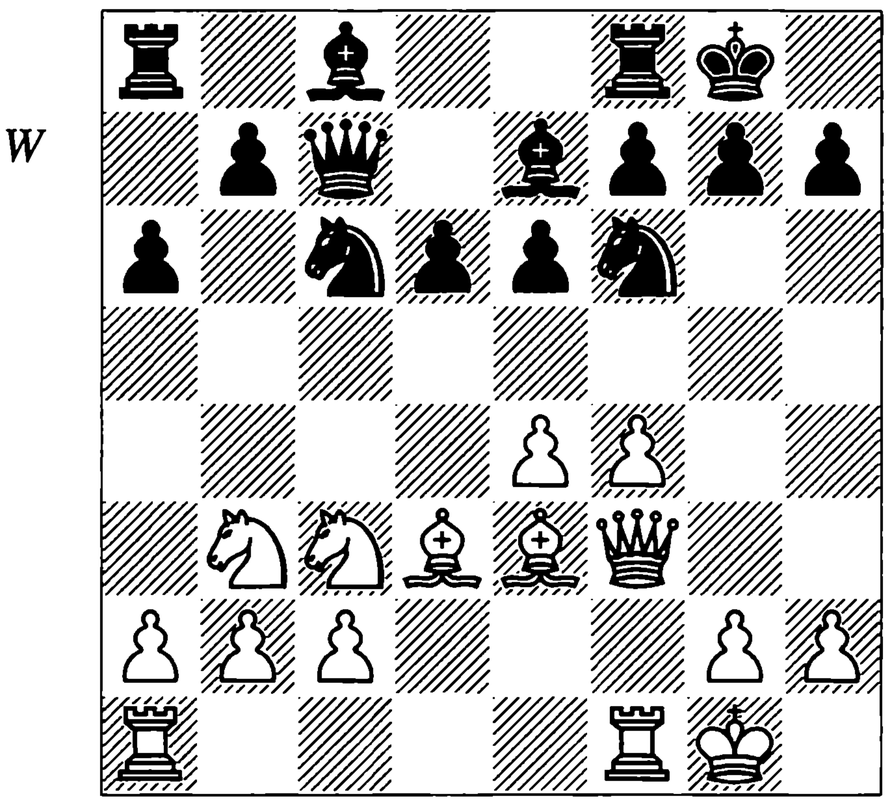
Black submits to his [illegible] as the only [illegible] 29...♘e8 30 exd5, would [illegible] but certain victory.

30 e5 1-0

Nunn – Grivas

Match (game 1), Athens 1991

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♕b6 5 ♘b3 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 e6 7 ♗d3 ♗e7 8 ♗e3 ♕c7 9 f4 d6 10 0-0 a6 11 ♕f3 0-0 *(D)*


W

12 ♖ae1

Sharp positions also arise after the alternative 12 g4!? b5:

a) 13 ♕h3 ♘d7 14 e5 g6 15 exd6 ♕xd6 16 ♘e4 ♕c7 17 f5 exf5 18 gxf5 ♘de5 19 ♕g3 f6 20 ♘d4 ♗d7 21 c3 ♖f7 22 ♔h1 ♖e8 23 ♗c2 ♘xd4 24 ♗xd4 ♗c6 25 fxg6 hxg6 26 ♔g1 ♔g7 27 ♘g5 ♗d6 28 ♘xf7 ♕xf7 29 ♖xf6 ♕xf6 30 ♖f1 ♕e6 31 ♗f5 ♕f6 32 ♗c2 ♕e6 33 ♗f5 ♕f6 34 ♗c2 ½-½ Agnos-Grivas, Athens 1998.

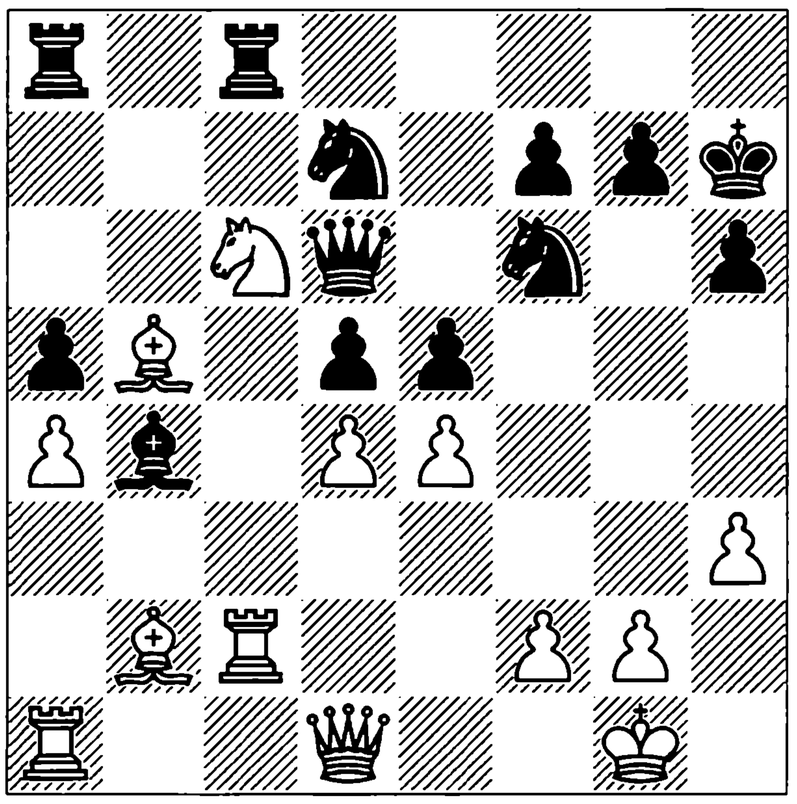
b) 13 g5 ♘d7 14 ♕h5 ♗b7 (14...g6 15 ♕h6 ♖e8 16 ♖f3 ♗f8 17 ♕h4 ♕d8! 18 ♖h3 {18 ♕f2 ♗b7 19 h4 f5 20 exf5 exf5 21 ♖h3 ♗g7 and Black is better, Vouldis-Grivas, Kalavryta 1998} 18...h5! is unclear, Markidis-Grivas, Thessaloniki 1998) 15 ♖f3 g6 16 ♕h6 f5 17 exf5 exf5 18 ♘d5 ♕d8 19 ♘d4 ♘xd4 20 ♗xd4 ♖f7 21 ♘xe7+ ♖xe7 22 ♖e3 ♘e5 23 ♕h3 ♘g4 24 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 25 ♕f1 ♕e6 26 c4 ♖e8 27 ♖c1 ♔f8 28 b3 bxc4 29 bxc4 ♕d7 30 ♖b1 ♕c6 31 ♖xb7 ♕xb7 32 h3 ♕b4 0-1 A.Kofidis-Grivas, Athens 2000.

coordination among the black pieces would prevent them from defending successfully.

25 e4! e5

Forced in view of the threatened 26 e5. 25...dxe4? would be refuted simply: 26 dxe4 ♘xe4 27 ♘xb4 ♕xb4 28 ♗xd7 ♖d8 29 ♕g4.

26 d4!! *(D)*


B

A powerful central strike, after which Black's position collapses. The black pieces remain uncoordinated and unprepared to react to the explosion of the centre.

26...exd4

Black's alternatives were hardly of help: after 26...dxe4? 27 dxe5 ♕xd1+ 28 ♖xd1 he loses a piece while he also loses material in the event of 26...♘xe4 27 dxe5 ♕e6 28 ♘d4! ♕e7 29 ♗c6!.

27 ♘xb4 axb4?!

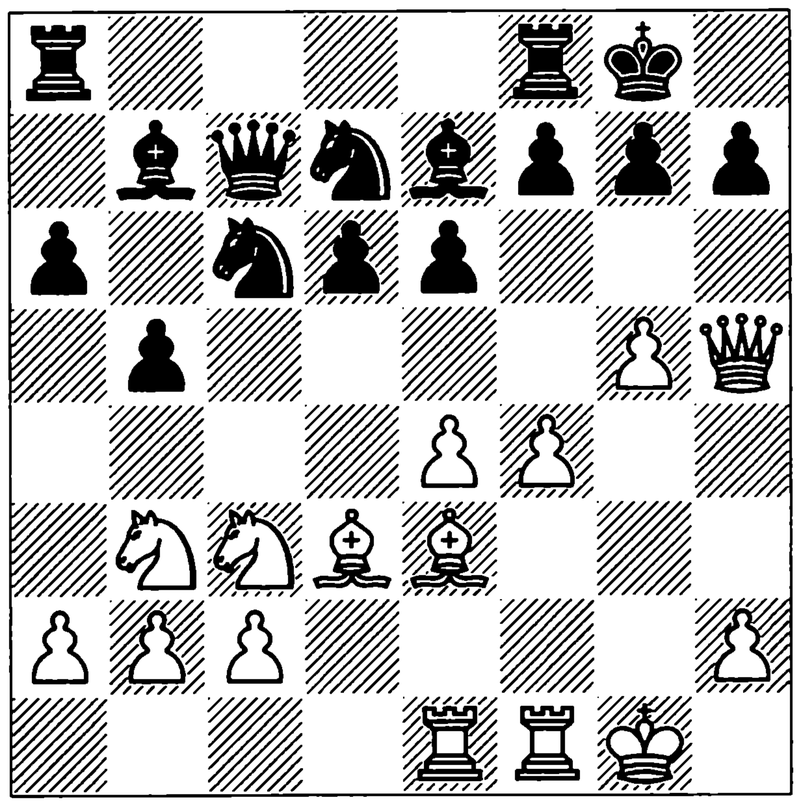
Unpleasant as it may have been, 27...♕xb4 28 exd5 was Black's only chance.

12...b5 13 g4

The most critical line for the evaluation of the position runs 13 e5!? ♘d7 (13...dxe5?! 14 fxe5 ♘xe5? {14...♘d7} 15 ♕xa8 ♘eg4 16 g3 ♗b7 17 ♕a7 ♕c6 18 ♗e4! ♘xe4 19 ♘a5 ♕c5 20 ♗xc5 ♗xc5+ 21 ♕xc5 ♘xc5 22 b4 1-0 Lücke-Grivas, Dortmund 1992) 14 exd6 ♕xd6 15 ♗e4 ♗b7 16 f5! exf5 17 ♕xf5 g6 18 ♕h3 ♕e6 19 ♕h6 ♘de5 20 ♗d5 ♕c8 21 ♗c5 ♘g4 22 ♕f4 1-0 Dervishi-Grivas, Athens 1996.

13...♗b7 14 g5 ♘d7 15 ♕h5 *(D)*

B



15...♘b4

Black has also tried 15...♖fe8 16 ♖f3 g6 17 ♕h6 ♗f8 18 ♕h4 ♘b4 19 ♖h3 h5 20 gxh6 ♖ac8 (20...♘xd3 21 cxd3 b4 22 ♘d1 ♖ac8 23 ♘d4 ♗e7, Agnos-Grivas, Athens 1995) 21 ♖f1 ♘xd3 22 cxd3 b4 23 ♘d1 ♗e7 with unclear play, Dervishi-Grivas, Ikaria 1996.

16 ♖f3 ♘xd3

A novelty and at the same time the only viable move, as 16...g6? 17 ♕h6 f5 18 exf5 exf5 19 ♖h3 ♖f7 20 ♗d4! ♘f8 21 ♗xf5!! wins for White, Chandler-Gufeld, Dortmund 1983.

17 cxd3

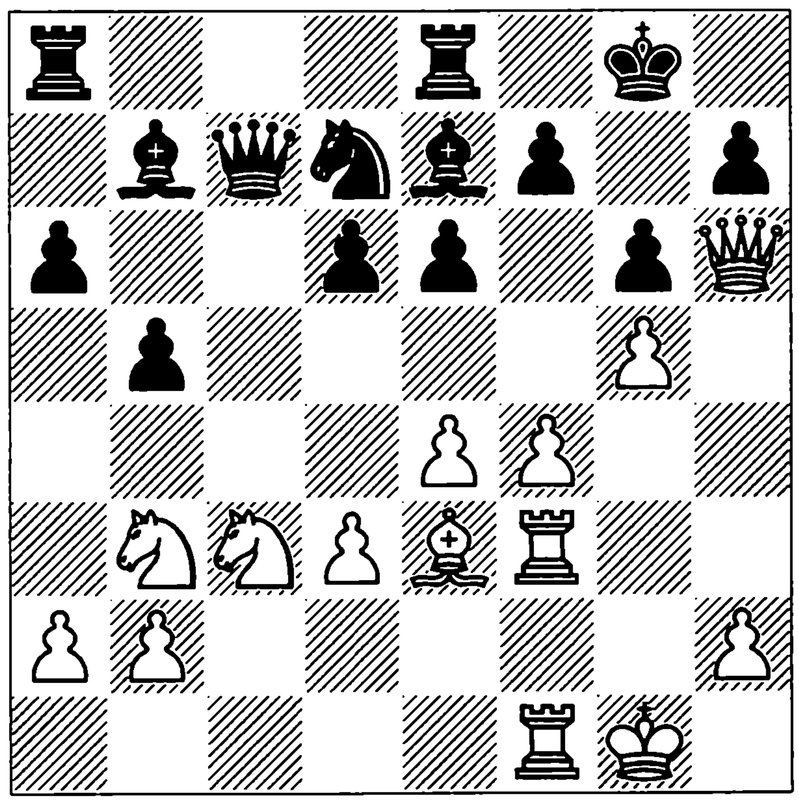
An unclear position, with good chances for Black, arises after 17 ♖h3!? h6 18 cxd3 ♖fe8 19 ♘d5! exd5 20 ♗d4 ♗xg5! (20...♘e5? 21 gxh6 g6 22 h7+!) 21 ♗xg7! (21 fxg5? ♘e5!) 21...♔xg7 22 fxg5 ♖e6 (22...♖h8? 23 gxh6+ ♔f8 24 ♖f1 ♘e5 25 d4 with advantage) 23 gxh6+ ♔h8 24 ♕xf7 ♖g6+!.

17...♖fe8 18 ♖ef1?!

More correct is 18 ♗d4! ♖ac8 (but not 18...g6? 19 ♕xh7+! or 18...♘f8? 19 f5! exf5 20 ♖xf5 g6 21 ♕h6 ♘e6 22 ♖xf7!) with a slight edge for White.

18...g6 19 ♕h6 *(D)*

B



19...♗f8?!

Black can try 19...f5! with unclear play. White must then avoid 20 exf5? ♗f8! 21 ♕h4 exf5 with advantage for Black.

20 ♕h4 ♗g7 21 ♖h3 h5!?

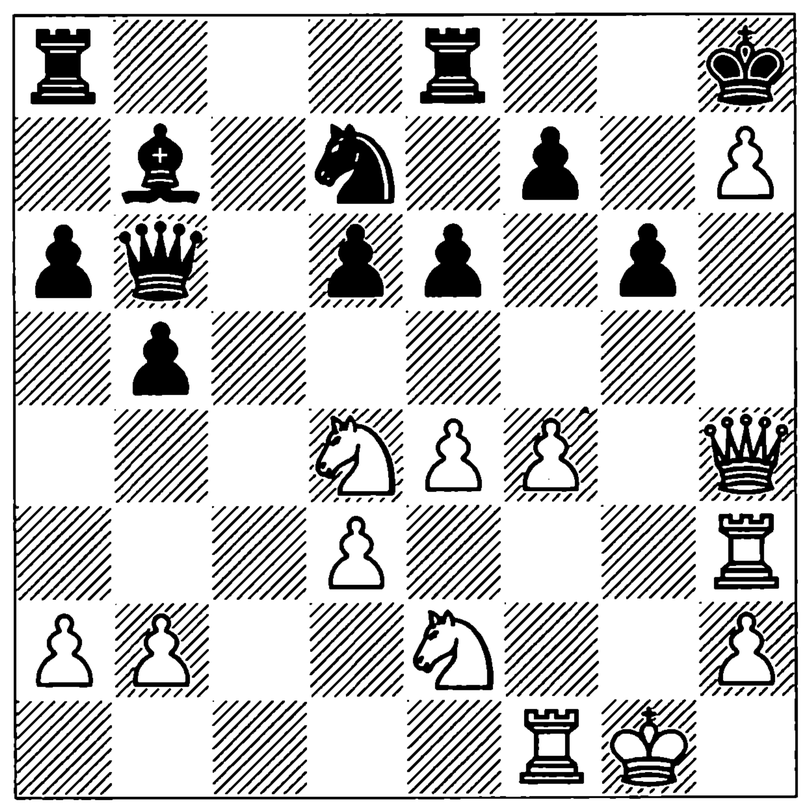
21...♘f8 is somewhat passive. Then 22 ♗d4! (22 ♘d1 ♕e7! 23 ♘f2 f5! is unclear) leaves White better (22...e5?! 23 fxe5 dxe5 24 ♗c5!).

22 gxh6 ♗f6 23 h7+?!

The white pawn on h7 is the black king's best cover! White should play 23 ♗d4! ♗xd4+ (23...e5? 24 fxe5! ♗xh4 25 h7+!) 24 ♘xd4 ♕b6 25 ♘ce2 ±.

23...♔h8 24 ♗d4 ♗xd4+ 25 ♘xd4 ♕b6 26 ♘ce2 *(D)*

B



26...♖ac8

26...e5? is alluring but mistaken: 27 fxe5 dxe5 28 ♖xf7!.

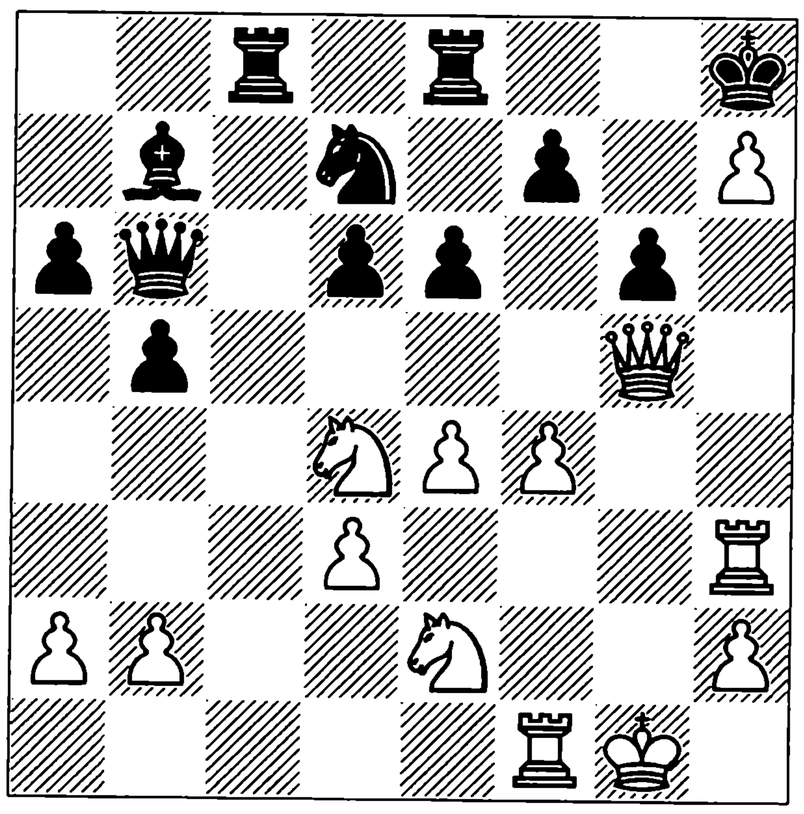
27 ♕h6 ♘f6!

The correct defence, as the active 27...♖c2? 28 ♔h1 ♖xb2 29 ♘xe6! fxe6 (29...♖xe6 30 ♕g7+!) 30 ♕xg6 ♕d8 31 ♖g1, intending 32 ♕g8+, loses for Black. Likewise, 27...d5? 28 e5 ♖c2 29 ♔h1 ♖xb2 30 f5! exf5 31 e6! ♖xe2 32 exf7 ♖f8 (32...♕xd4 33 ♕xg6!) 33 ♘xe2 ♖xf7 34 ♘f4 gives White an obvious advantage.

28 ♕g5 ♘d7 *(D)*

Compulsory. 28...♘h5? 29 ♖xh5! gxh5 30 ♕f6+ ♔xh7 31 ♕xf7+ ♔h6 32 ♔h1! leaves Black in a desperate state.

W



29 ♔h1?!

White should have accepted a draw by repetition (29 ♕h6 ♘f6). His desire for victory entails serious dangers.

29...♕d8 30 ♕h6 ♕f6 31 ♔g1 ♕g7 32 ♕h4 e5?!

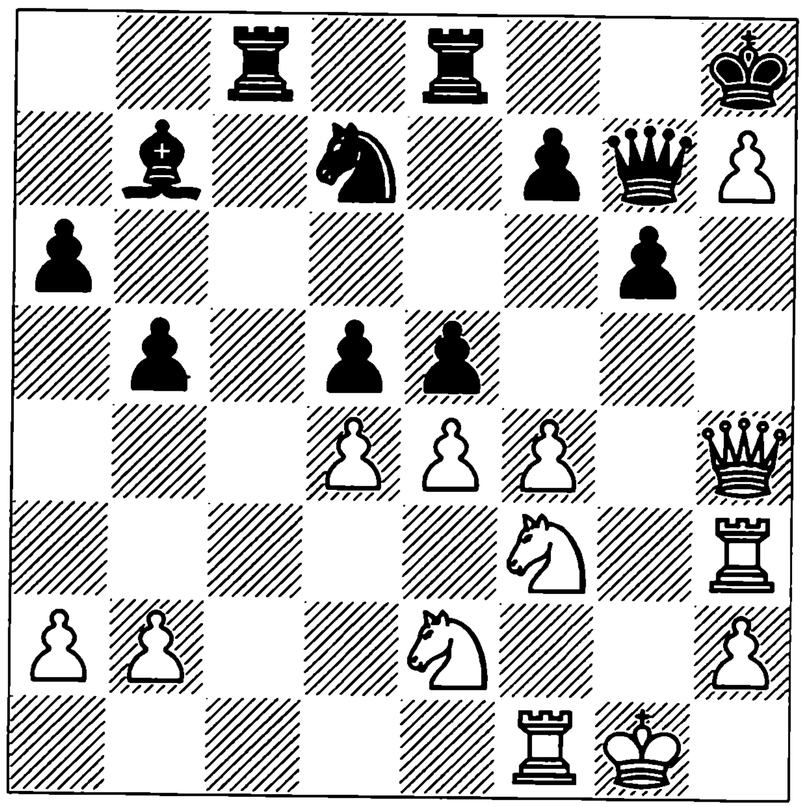
In time-pressure Black failed to evaluate the move 32...f5! correctly; in that case he would have assumed the initiative.

33 ♘f3 d5?!

A second consecutive weak move. 33...♖c2! leaves the position unclear. Black decided to proceed with a central strike (32...e5 followed by 33...d5), judging that the opening of the position would favour him (and particularly the b7-bishop). From a strategic viewpoint the idea is excellent, but it is tactically flawed; White has a strong response at his disposal, that was overlooked by Black.

34 d4!! *(D)*

B



An impressive idea, aiming to keep the position closed and the b7-bishop inactive. White replies to Black's central strike with one of his own, which in this case proves to be the stronger one.

34...♖c2?

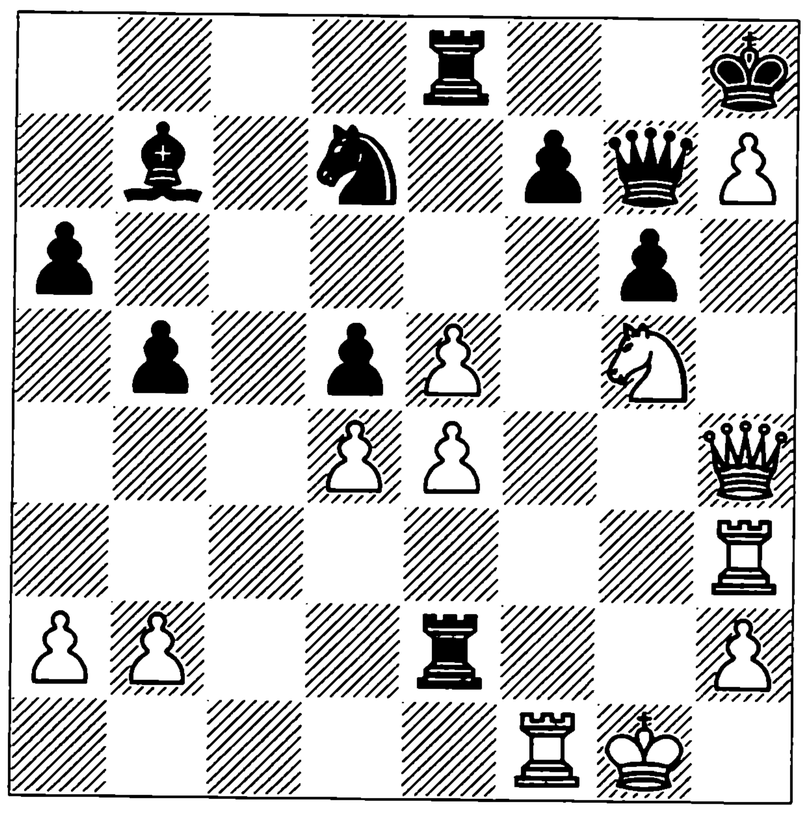
Black loses his bearings after the shock he has suffered. Correct was 34...dxe4! (34...exf4?! 35 e5! or 34...exd4?! 35 e5 f6 {35...d3 36 ♘ed4} 36 ♘exd4 fxe5 37 fxe5 ♘xe5 38 ♘g5!) 35 ♘xe5 ♘f6 36 f5! with a slight plus for White.

35 fxe5!!

Proceeding spectacularly and at the same time forcibly, as any move by the e2-knight would give Black the advantage.

35...♖xe2 36 ♘g5! *(D)*

B



36...f6

Black should have tried 36...♖e7 37 ♖hf3 ♖xe4 38 ♘xe4 dxe4 39 ♕xe7 exf3 40 ♕xd7 ♕h6 41 ♕e8+ ♔xh7 42 ♕xf7+ ♔h8 43 ♕e8+ ♔h7 44 ♕e7+ ♔g8 45 ♕d8+ ♔f7 (45...♔g7 46 ♕c7+ ♔h8 47 ♕b8+) 46 e6+!, when White will eventually win, but time-pressure would have increased the probability of error.

37 exf6 ♘xf6 38 e5 ♘h5 39 ♖f7 ♕h6 40 ♖xb7 ♖f8 41 ♘f7+!

The last, accurate blow (and not 41 ♖b8?? ♕xg5+!! 42 ♕xg5 ♖e1+ with equality).

1-0

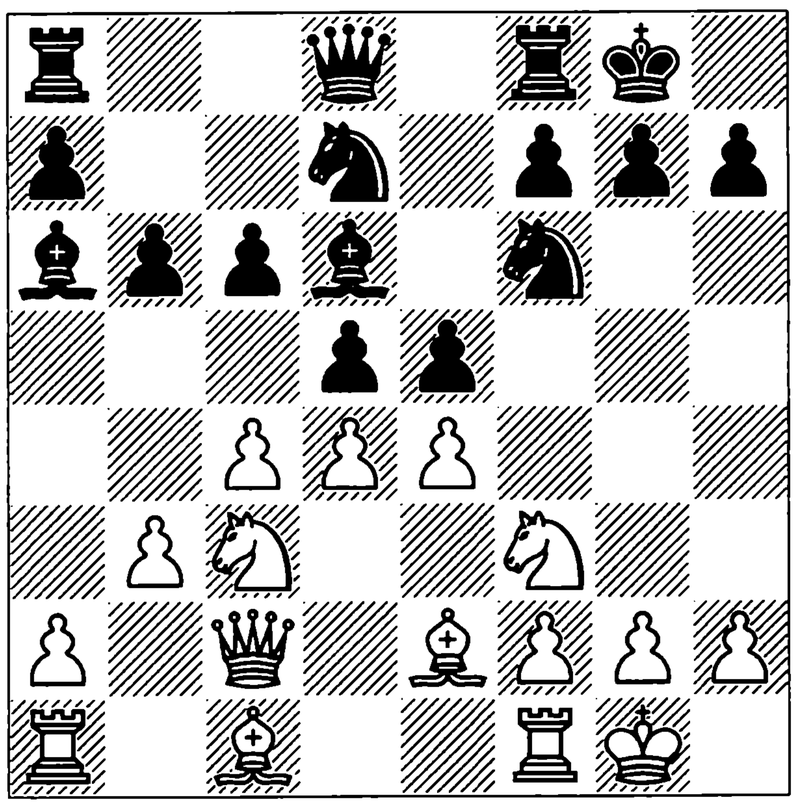
Grivas – Karayiannis
Xanthi 1991

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 c6 5 e3 ♘bd7 6 ♕c2 ♗d6 7 b3 0-0 8 ♗e2 b6 9 0-0 ♗a6!?

A new idea. 9...♗b7 was the previously known move; for example, 10 ♗b2 ♕e7 11 ♖ad1 ♖ac8 12 e4 e5 (12...♘xe4 13 ♘xe4 dxe4 14 ♕xe4 gives White a slight but stable edge) 13 dxe5 ♘xe5 14 exd5 cxd5 15 ♕d2 ♘e4 16 ♕d4 ♘xc3 17 ♗xc3 f6 18 ♖fe1 and White is slightly better, Krechetov-Galliamova, St Petersburg 1996.

10 e4 e5!? *(D)*

W



This is Black's idea. With this central strike he aims to exchange all the centre pawns, so as to equalize. Such a central strike at the end of the opening usually gives rise to great turbulence that resolves into a stabilized position. Thus, both sides must tread carefully.

11 cxd5! ♗xe2 12 ♕xe2 cxd5 13 ♘xd5

After 13 exd5? exd4 14 ♘xd4 ♗xh2+! 15 ♔xh2 ♕c7+ 16 ♔h1 ♕xc3 Black stands well.

13...♘xd5 14 exd5 exd4 15 ♗g5!

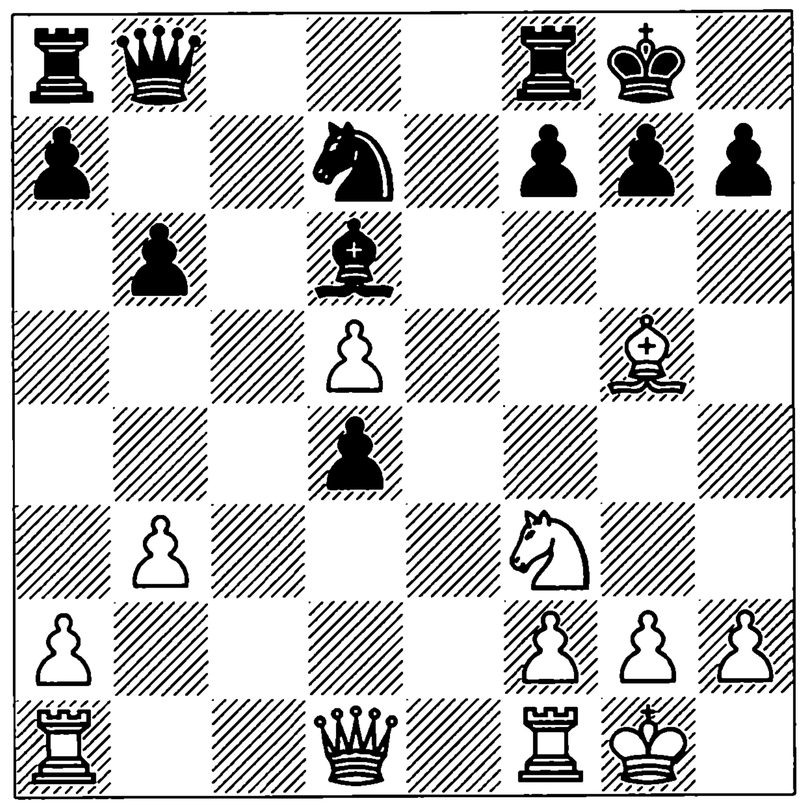
The best move, as 15 ♘xd4? ♗xh2+! 16 ♔xh2 ♕h4+ 17 ♔g1 ♕xd4 favours Black.

15...♕b8!

Moves like 15...f6? 16 ♕e6+ or 15...♘f6? 16 ♘xd4 would ruin Black's position.

16 ♕d1!! *(D)*

B



A very difficult move and at the same time the only one securing an advantage for White. Black cannot now play 16...♘e5? due to 17 ♘xd4.

16...♖e8 17 ♕xd4 ♘e5 18 ♘h4!

Another difficult move, forestalling Black's threats on the h2-b8 and a1-h8 diagonals. Instead, 18 ♕h4? is clearly mistaken due to 18...♘xf3+ 19 gxf3 ♖e5!.

18...♗c5

The only move, as 18...♘g6? 19 ♘xg6! hxg6 (19...♗xh2+? 20 ♔h1 hxg6 21 f4!) 20 ♕h4 secures a decisive advantage for White.

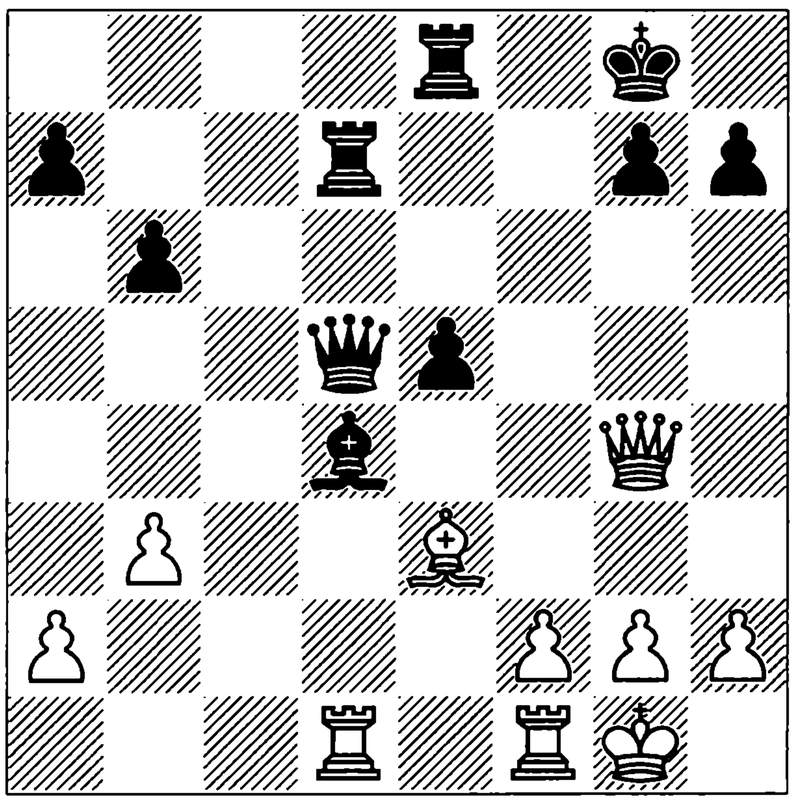
19 ♕d1 ♕d6 20 ♘f3! f6 21 ♗f4 ♖ad8 22 ♘xe5 fxe5 23 ♗g5 ♖d7 24 ♕g4! ♕xd5 25 ♖ad1 ♗d4 26 ♗e3 *(D)*

After a series of forced moves Black has regained his pawn at the expense of weaknesses in his pawn-structure (the isolated e5-pawn). White has obtained a small but stable long-term superiority that allows him to play on without any real danger of dropping more than half a point.

26...♕e6 27 ♕e4 ♕d5?? 28 ♕c2?? ♕c5?

After a mutual blunder (28 ♖xd4! would have won immediately) Black creates another

B



weakness (isolated c5-pawn) in his camp. The waiting move 28...♕e6 was necessary.

29 ♕xc5 bxc5 30 ♖fe1 ♔f7 31 ♔f1 ♖e6 32 ♔e2 ♖a6 33 ♖d2 ♖dd6 34 ♖c1 ♔f6 35 ♖c4 ♔e6 36 ♖dc2 ♔d5 37 f3 h5 38 ♔d3 ♖ac6 39 ♖a4 a6 40 ♖a5 ♔e6 41 ♔e4 g6 42 ♖c4 ♔f6 43 h4!

White now has a won position, as Black has multiple weaknesses and his pieces are doomed to passivity. The end of the game is instructive for such positions with isolated pawns.

43...♖e6 44 ♗c1 ♔e7 45 ♗h6 ♖b6 46 ♗e3 ♖bc6 47 ♖c2 ♔d7 48 ♖a4 ♖cd6 49 ♖ac4 ♖c6 50 ♗c1 ♔c7 51 ♗g5 ♔d7 52 g3 ♔c7 53 g4 ♔b6 54 ♖g2 ♖e8 55 ♖c1 ♖f8 56 gxh5 gxh5 57 ♗d2 ♖cf6 58 ♖f1 ♖f4+ 59 ♗xf4 ♖xf4+ 60 ♔d5 e4 61 b4 exf3 62 bxc5+ ♔c7 63 ♖g5 f2 64 ♖xh5 ♖g4 65 ♖h7+ ♔c8 66 ♖f7 ♖xh4 67 ♖d1 ♗e3 68 ♔c6 ♖f4 69 ♖c7+ 1-0

Volkov – Grivas

European rapid Ch, Panormo 2002

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗e2 0-0 6 ♘f3 e5 7 ♗e3 ♕e7 8 d5 ♘g4 9 ♗g5 f6 10 ♗h4 ♘h6?!

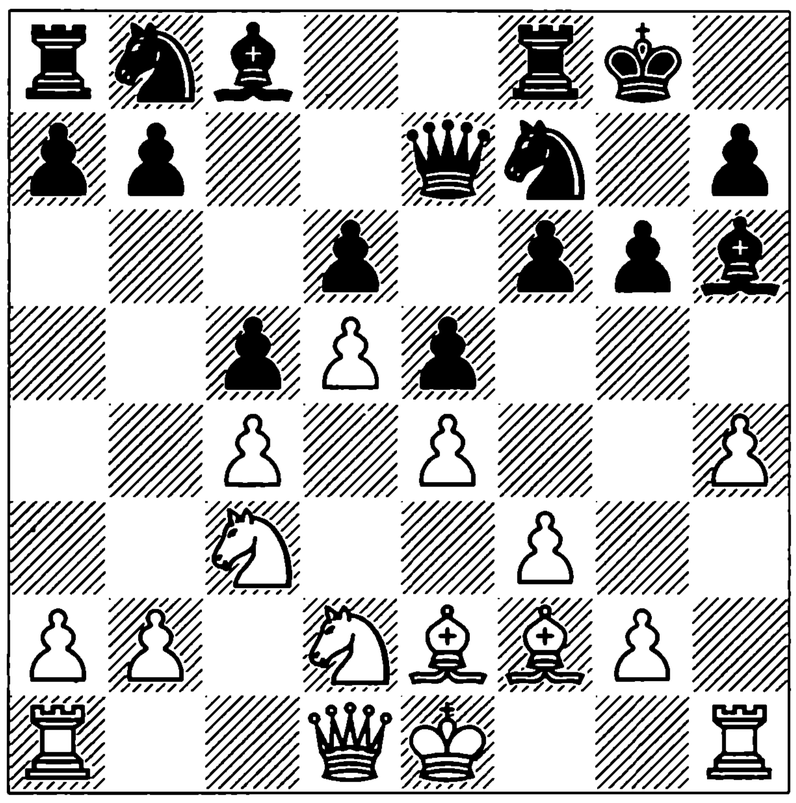
Black handles the opening passively. Better is 10...g5 11 ♗g3 f5 or the direct 10...h5.

11 ♘d2 ♘f7 12 f3 ♗h6 13 ♗f2 c5 14 h4! *(D)*

The white king is absolutely safe in the centre as the position has a closed character.

14...f5 15 h5 ♘d7 16 hxg6 hxg6 17 ♕c2 ♘f6 18 ♗d3 f4 19 ♖b1 g5 20 b4 b6 21 a4 g4 22 a5 ♔g7 23 ♕a2 g3?!

B



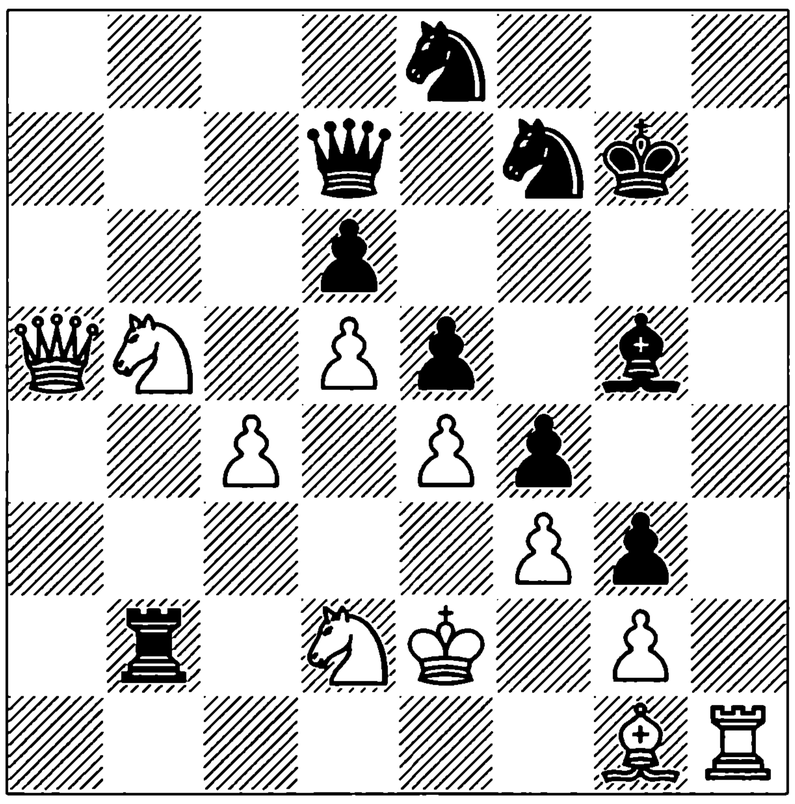
Reducing Black's potential for counterplay on the kingside. Naturally, Black's position is already critical and a satisfactory plan is hard to come by.

24 ♗g1 ♗d7 25 ♗c2! ♗g5 26 ♗a4 ♖fb8 27 ♔e2 cxb4 28 ♖xb4 bxa5 29 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 30 ♗xa7 ♖b7 31 ♗g1 ♕d8 32 ♗c6 ♖b4 33 ♘b5 ♘e8?

Black now acquires a material disadvantage to go along with his positional one.

34 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 35 ♕xa5 ♖b2 *(D)*

W



The invasion by the black rook does not offer anything substantial as the remaining black pieces are uncoordinated. White now has a winning position and the only thing requiring his attention is the base of his pawn-chain on g2.

36 ♗b6

This move cannot be criticized, but 36 ♕a3 ♖xb5 37 cxb5 ♕xb5+ 38 ♕d3 seems much easier.

36...♗d8 37 ♗xd8 ♘xd8 38 ♖a1

38 ♖b1! or 38 ♕a3 are simple and should be preferred. Every piece exchange favours White.

38...♘b7 39 ♕b6!

Black's position looks desperate and, to be honest, he should resign. However, there does remain one last chance and he decided to try it.

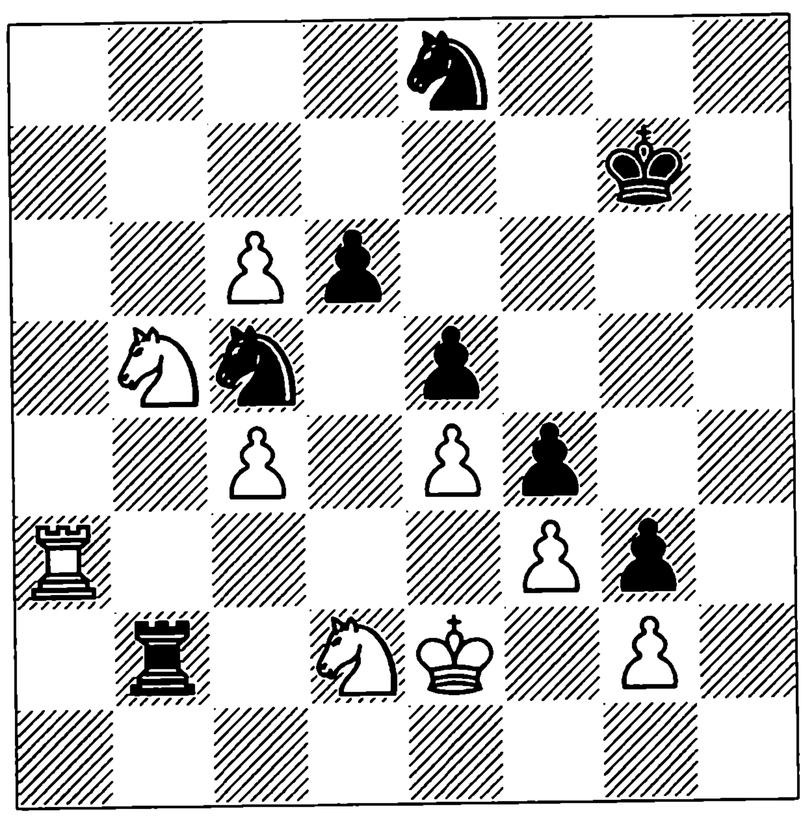
39...♕c8! 40 ♕c6!

The best, as White seems to win quickly, but Black was prepared for this turn of events!

40...♕xc6 41 dxc6 ♘c5 42 ♖a3?! *(D)*

Again this cannot be condemned, but there was an easier win with 42 c7 ♘xc7 43 ♘xc7 ♖xd2+ (43...♘b3 44 ♖d1) 44 ♔xd2 ♘b3+ 45 ♔c3 ♘xa1 46 ♔b2. Of course, White does not relinquish victory with the text-move, but Black now employs a strong central strike that White had overlooked.

B



42...d5!! 43 exd5!

After 43 c7 ♘xc7 44 ♘xc7 dxe4 45 fxe4 (45 ♔d1 e3) 45...♘xe4 46 ♖d3? ♘xd2! 47 ♖xd2 ♖xd2+! 48 ♔xd2 f3! Black wins. Likewise, after 43 cxd5 ♖xb5 44 ♖a7+ ♔f6 45 c7 ♘d6 46 ♖a8 ♖b2! Black's threats are decisive.

43...e4 44 fxe4?

White, in a state of shock and in serious time-trouble, continues simplistically and at the same time mistakenly. With a clear head it would not be hard to find the winning continuation 44 d6! e3 45 c7 ♖xd2+ 46 ♔e1.

44...♘xe4 45 ♖d3 f3+?

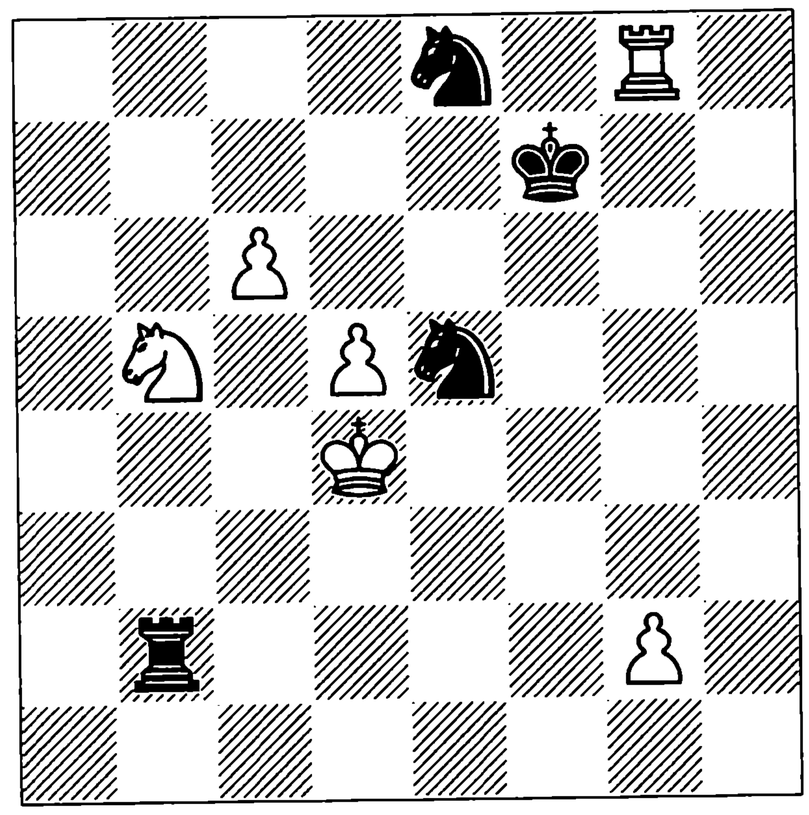
The endgame resulting from the attractive 45...♘xd2 46 ♖xd2 f3+ 47 ♔xf3! ♖xd2 48 c7 is not easy for Black, but objectively it was his only correct option.

46 ♖xf3?

46 ♔xf3! ♘xd2+ 47 ♔xg3! ♘xc4 48 d6 wins without much effort.

46...♘xd2 47 ♖xg3+ ♔f6 48 ♖g8 ♘xc4+ 49 ♔d3 ♘e5+ 50 ♔d4 ♔f7! *(D)*

W



Securing the draw which, taking the course of the game into account, leaves Black perfectly satisfied. Despite the many mistakes that occurred, Black did his best and, thanks in part to White's help, has been amply rewarded!

51 ♖xe8! ♘xc6+!

Black should not rush into the erroneous 51...♔xe8? 52 ♘d6+ ♔e7 53 ♔xe5.

52 dxc6 ♔xe8 53 ♔c5 ♖xg2 54 ♘d6+ ♔d8 55 ♘b5 ♖c2+ 56 ♔b6 ♖xc6+ 57 ♔xc6 ½-½

Index of Games

List of Efstratios Grivas's Opponents

Numbers refer to pages. When a page number appears in **bold**, Grivas had White. Otherwise his opponent had White.

Alexakis **69**
Bousios **74**
Brynell 41
Colović **10**
Dedes 47
Dervishi 49
Duncan 26
Frendzas 65
Gavrilakis 17
Gekas **30**
Georgadze, G. **36**
Georgiou, An. **77**
Giddins 99
Halkias 28
Hug **34**
Inkiov **37**, **73**
Ionescu, C. **66**
Kalesis **62**, **71**
Karayiannis **25**, **60**, **106**
Kindermann **59**
Kokkinos **55**, 83
Kotronias **8**
Kourkounakis **76**
Koustas 16
Kramnik **81**
Lalev **13**
Makridis 21
Makropoulou **91**
Mastrokoukos **96**
Miladinović **99**
Minasian, Ara. 53
Moutousis 97
Needham **68**
Nikolaidis, K. **80**
Nunn 103
Nyysti **92**

Pekarek **58**
Renet **23**
Rodriguez, Am. **72**
Roos, D. 84
Shavtvaladze 51
Skalkotas **95**
Soylu **31**
Spasov, V. 45
Sturua **39**
Svetushkin **101**
Tassopoulos **33**
Tischbierek 86
Topalov 44
Tzermiadianos, And. **88**
Vakhidov **15**
Volkov 107
Votruba **12**
Wall, T. **64**

Other Games

Korchnoi – Karpov 22
Szabo – Penrose 26

Index of Openings

Numbers refer to pages. Codes are ECO codes.

English Opening
A11 *101*; A13 *99*; A17 *21*; A26 *47*; A32 *69*; A33 *26*

Queen's Pawn Misc.
A41 *64*; A46 *39*; A52 *55*; A57 *33*

Dutch Defence
A80 *97*

Caro-Kann Defence
B14 *74*

Sicilian Defence
B22 *26*, *37*, *76*; B24 *65*; B30 *51*; B32 *49*; B51 *45*, *53*; B80 *84*; B82 *103*; B86 *83*

1 e4 e5 Misc.
C55 *86*

Ruy Lopez (Spanish)
C68 *41*, *44*; C77 *16*; C80 *17*

1 d4 d5 Misc.
D04 *96*

Queen's Gambit
D06 *99*; D15 *36*; D38 *95*; D40 *30*; D43 *12*; D45 *81*, *106*; D46 *80*; D53 *22*; D55 *25*; D60 *68*, *77*

Grünfeld Defence
D91 *10*, *15*; D94 *28*, *31*, *91*

Catalan Opening
E05 *92*

Bogo-Indian Defence
E11 *13*, *58*, *59*

Queen's Indian Defence
E14 *71*, *73*; E15 *62*; E16 *23*, *72*; E19 *66*

Nimzo-Indian Defence
E46 *60*

King's Indian Defence
E75 *8*; E90 *34*, *88*; E92 *107*

Improve Your Attacking Chess
Simon Williams
250 puzzle positions to train your king-hunting skills. Every position comes from a top tournament encounter, and features direct attacking play.
160 pages, 210 x 145 mm; $19.95 / £13.99

Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games Volume 1
Igor Stohl
"Stohl often improves on Kasparov's past comments ... one of the year's best chess books" – GM Lubosh Kavalek, WASHINGTON POST
320 pages, 248 x 172 mm, hardback
$35.00 / £22.50

Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games Volume 2
Igor Stohl
Grandmaster Stohl's superb annotations explain the reasoning behind Kasparov's decisions, and the principles and concepts embodied by his moves.
352 pages, 248 x 172 mm, hardback
$35.00 / £22.50

Chess College 1: Strategy
Efstratios Grivas
A wealth of chess instruction on a variety of topics, including: "getting to know ourselves", attack on the king, exchange sacrifices, positional sacrifices, outposts and open files.
112 pages, 248 x 172 mm; $19.95 / £12.99

Chess College 3: Technique
Efstratios Grivas
Topics include bishop vs knight, standard sacrifices against the castled enemy king, opposite-coloured bishops, and advice on how to handle won and lost positions.
112 pages, 248 x 172 mm; $19.95 / £12.99

An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire For Black
Jouni Yrjölä & Jussi Tella
A hugely popular repertoire book. Based around the move 1...d6, Black has a complete answer to any white first move.
272 pages, 210 x 145 mm; $23.95 / £15.99

Chess Endings Made Simple
Ian Snape
The first half of this book covers areas of endgame theory that are most relevant to practical success. The second half features 100 challenging exercises for the reader to solve.
144 pages, 210 x 145 mm; $19.95 / £12.99

Chess for Zebras
Jonathan Rowson
An insight into human idiosyncrasies, in all phases of the game. The reader will begin to appreciate chess at a more profound level, while enjoying a book overflowing with common sense and humour.
256 pages, 248 x 172 mm; $29.95 / £17.99

Chess Tactics for Kids
Murray Chandler
A user-friendly guide to the most common tactical motifs. The illustrative positions, all taken from real games, show the 50 Tricky Tactics that experienced players use to win their games.
128 pages, 226 x 174 mm, hardback
$14.95 / £9.99

Secrets of Chess Transformations
Dražen Marović
"Marović's latest effort features an excellent mixture of classical and modern examples designed to turn the reader into a modern-day chess alchemist." – IM John Donaldson
208 pages, 248 x 172 mm; $27.50 / £15.99

About the Publisher: Gambit is a chess publishing company run exclusively by chess masters and grandmasters. With over 140 chess books in print, there is an extensive selection of titles to assist intermediate-level players to improve. Gambit books are widely used in chess schools and chess camps as training material for students.

GAMBIT

www.gambitbooks.com